



CANADIAN MENNONITE

May 14, 2012

Volume 16 Number 10

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EDITORIAL

Are we an endangered species?

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Are our Mennonite institutions an endangered species? Are they headed for extinction in this post-Christian era when the emphasis seems to be more on “spiritual” than “religious”?

Do our area church and national church leaders quake in their boots when they hear Stuart Murray observe that Christianity, the dominant world religion for 17 centuries, is being pushed to the margins? Or, more specifically, when Willard Metzger, MC Canada’s executive director, tells MC British Columbia delegates gathered for their annual gathering that in Britain both the Methodist and Presbyterian communions have made burial arrangements for their deaths 25 years from now?

While the warning signs are there, let’s not write our own obituary just yet.

Having wrapped up my visits to three area church annual gatherings, I would say there is considerable life left in these organisms; indeed, there are signs of renewed energy on several fronts.

Our camps, struggling with the right ownership/business model for survival, provide an important rite of spiritual passage for our young people. In the natural beauty of these outdoor settings—where campers feel closer to their Creator—having a place to escape from smart phones and computers, while experiencing the modelling of adult counsellors and the

intentional efforts at spiritual formation at this crucial stage of adolescent development, are worth every dollar invested.

And speaking of entry points, the area church serves as a welcoming agent for new ethnic churches from around the globe that are finding a home in the Anabaptist tradition. This is enriching our European-based culture with new dynamism and a reminder of the “first-love” many of us felt as new Christians. To see the radiant smiles of these persons as they fill the stage in welcoming rituals is spine-tingling.

And how better to finesse and hone our collective vision as congregations than to hear keynote speakers such as Murray, who, despite dire warnings about our future, reference the ancient prophet Isaiah telling us to figuratively “build houses, have children and plant vineyards,” even though we might feel at times that we are in exile.

And then to have that same hope echoed across the country by Dan Epp-Tiessen in Leamington, Ont., in his keynote address to MC Eastern Canada delegates, when, teaching from the Book of Daniel, issued the challenge to “know who we are so that we can stand up to ‘empire’ when our faith faces the fire.”

Or to hear Metzger tell Manitoba delegates about an increasing attraction to Anabaptism, especially among the young-



adult population. “I tell you,” he said with some passion, “the Spirit of God is moving. The voice of the Lord is being heard. If we do not lift up the Anabaptist understanding of the gospel, others will gently take it from us and live out its call to radical discipleship without us.”

Where will new congregations and pastors get the resources for capital projects and development, for resolving conflicts, for new pastors discerning their call and ongoing nurture, or for help to plan for credentialing, without the help of area and denominational ministers?

All these are gifts to the congregation that are often underestimated, sometimes ignored. They shouldn’t be. Rather, they should not only be recognized and paid for gratefully, but celebrated for the high value and energy they bring to our faith communities.

Unfortunately, these are too often seen as tools with expensive price tags, rather than life-giving essentials for growth and development. We look at deficit budgets as a cross to bear and an incentive for cost-cutting, rather than a call to greater commitment. It would be much more inspiring if our treasurers could be proposing exciting new innovations, rather than timidly reporting diminishing numbers.

There is hope. This year, two out of the five area churches reported budgets in the black; the others have plans to live within their means. And we, as investors, should balance our holding these institutions accountable with a word of encouragement to those who work to make the best use of these dollars.

With our Anabaptist DNA, birthed out of a protest movement to religious institutional corruption, we tend to view our own institutions as prone to corporate sins, but in a “priesthood,” we are members one of another. We are not endangered as long as we treat each other as “priests.”

ABOUT THE COVER:

MCI student Sarah Martens looks at life differently now after her visit to Hope Community Centre in rural Kenya, where she got to play around with orphaned and abandoned children like Rebecca during a spring break trip. See story and photo on page 17.

PHOTO: MENNONITE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

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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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Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



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AIDEN ENNS

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Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary will henceforth be called Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary: **MARY E. KLASSEN**

It takes a church to raise a child

How congregations and denominational schools are helping parents deal with modern societal realities

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU
MANITOBA CORRESPONDENT

“Are my children going to be okay?” This is the overriding concern that Kathy Giesbrecht, associate director of leadership ministries for Mennonite Church Manitoba, hears and senses from parents. Parents are scared and overwhelmed, and there is no manual for them to keep in their back pocket. If parents a generation ago felt overwhelmed, today’s parents are experiencing changes they could only have imagined when they were growing up.

“The rapid advancements in technology are shaping how our kids are growing up,” says Dave Currie, president of Doing Family Right, an organization that educates and provides counsel on family-life issues. “Parents have to be way more savvy on a lot more things than they used to be.”

The recent recession has heightened insecurities about the future. The competition for university seats is no longer just the student sitting next to their child in the high school biology lab. It’s students in Asia and around the world vying for the same limited spaces. There is pressure to turn out well-adjusted children. There are countless community programs to help, to equip them with skills, to keep them out of trouble, but when struggles emerge, parents stand or fall alone.

And then there is rampant materialism. Both Currie and Gordon Neufeld, a developmental and clinical psychologist and co-author of *Hold on to Your Kids*, blame the pursuit of materialism as a significant negative force in the task of parenting. Generations ago it was the Industrial Revolution that had dramatic impacts on family life, Neufeld says. Now, it is materialism. “Today, decisions about money supersede what is best for the family.” He says that working on Sundays and parents moving to where the money is, rather than where the family support network is, reflect that money is more important than culture and relationships.

In some ways it has always been like this for parents, but a new set of challenges and issues have arisen that complicate the task of parenting today beyond what it was only a generation ago. A mother notes that parenting her youngest, who is graduating from high school this year, has presented her with challenges she never

*‘Our life as parents is easier because we go to church. The church reinforces what we say to our children. Our church is very strong on intergenerational connections. It is easier for us to raise our children because of these natural connections.’
(Linda Loewen, a mother of two)*

PHOTO COURTESY OF MEI SCHOOLS



Parents of students at MEI Schools in Abbotsford, B.C., attend one of Dave Currie's 'i-Parent' sessions, that are billed as 'formatting the next generation.'

faced with her older three children a mere seven years ago, and it isn't just personality related, she is quick to point out.

New technology challenge

At Menno Simons Christian School, Calgary, which offers classes from Kindergarten to Grade 9, principal Byron Thiessen says that most students, once they reach junior high, have their own cell phones or Blackberries. "Parents are looking for help as to what is appropriate and inappropriate use of technology," Thiessen says.

Several principals observe that cell phones serve as an umbilical cord for parents anxious to keep that connection with their child, even if it does interrupt their child in class at times.

However, a mother says of her teenage daughter, "The cell phone should be a way I can keep in touch with her, but that's only an illusion. She has instant contact with everyone, but I have no way to monitor that, and she can conveniently be 'out of range' if I need to reach her." Although her daughter has not been able to find a supportive community in her church or school, she has 300 Facebook friends. While the daughter says this gives her a feeling of connectedness, her mother says, "I'm not sure how valid that feeling is."

How many programs are too many?

Social relationships have also changed and parents are left feeling ill equipped

or powerless to deal with some of them. Either for the sake of intervention, or because they feel the need to equip children with additional skills in an increasingly competitive world, or because they want to keep children from getting into trouble, parents have filled the lives of their children with programs.

Principals in Canada's Mennonite schools witness daily the stresses and anxieties that weigh heavily on parents. Like the one who wonders, "What do I do as a parent that is good for my child?

[W]orking on Sundays and parents moving to where the money is, rather than where the family support network is, reflect that money is more important than culture and relationships.

What do I do if I don't enroll them in a sport activity? Am I a bad parent if I do less than my maximum to help them get skills? Not filling their time feels like I am ignoring my responsibilities."

These same principals witness parents who are "running" as soon as their children are out of school. And as community programs and sports dominate more of their students' lives, they see the results in school, including tired children coming to class.

On the other hand, parents say that by keeping their children busy, they stay out of trouble. But running around to programs means less family time to sit around

the dinner table or attend church together.

The busyness and structure imposed on children is also noticeable in how they are at a loss to use free time when it is given to them. "We notice that they are so programmed that they don't know how to fill free time with creative things," observes John Sawatzky, principal at Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School. "Often the play they resort to is what they have seen on video games or movies."

"There is a growing isolation despite growing activity," suggests Darryl

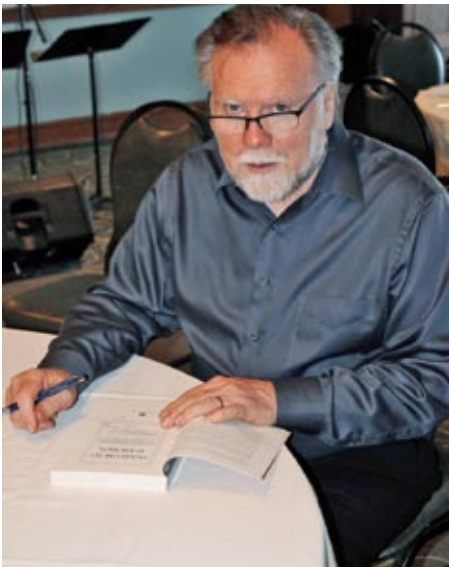
Loewen, principal of Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Man.

The 'hovering' parent syndrome

Parents want desperately for their kids to succeed. "In Kindergarten, they want their children to be connected," says Shawn Burkinshaw, principal at MEI Elementary, Abbotsford, B.C. "When that doesn't happen quickly, or with the right friends, a bit of panic sets in. Our primary discussions with parents are around relationship issues. In my 15 years as principal, this is becoming more prevalent earlier on. We sense parents are becoming more and more involved.

... They try to jump in and 'save' their kids or fix it for them more so than in the past."

Some parents hover over their children during their early years in school, but now "helicopter parents' are weighing in heavily right even into the university years," says MEI Secondary principal David Neufeld. "They want to see their children be successful. It's their way of



*Gordon Neufeld, a developmental and clinical psychologist, autographs his book, **Hold on to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More than Peers**, which he co-authored with Gabor Mate, M.D.*

factoring into their children's lives." It's no longer unheard of for parents to accompany their young-adult children to visit a university professor to discuss a grade.

Giesbrecht is aware of the tension that parents feel. "This generation of parents really wants to be engaged," she says. "For some, the school might be the only place

their children, attract up to 180 parents. They are run by Currie, who was also a former pastor of one of MEI's supporting churches. "The school and church are being called into a role that is unexpected," Smith says. "We are working hard to partner with our churches, youth pastors and parents in talking about issues."

These same principals witness parents who are 'running' as soon as their children are out of school. And as community programs and sports dominate more of their students' lives, they see the results in school, including tired children coming to class.

where they can meet their children's friends. For the kids I see, they like their parents at a close distance. Kids need a space to simply be, to grow and test, not always be 'daughter of...'"

How schools are helping

"The hunger of parents for help and education has surprised me the most," says Heather Smith, MEI Middle School principal. "Parents are walking in off the street seeking help."

This is the second year the school has run a series of monthly meetings for parents throughout the school year addressing parenting issues and challenges. The "i-Parent" sessions, which attempt to build connections between parents and

Menno Simons Christian School will also be offering a workshop for parents that focuses on raising children in this technological age. "Parents are coming to us for advice," says Thiessen. "This is the most current issue that parents are having to deal with."

The risks children face

A mother of two pre-teen daughters is both concerned and sad that today's society puts so much pressure on children to give up their innocence at a very young age. "There is a lot of pressure on families to see this as normal, and you really feel like you are swimming against the current when you say no," she says. "Both my husband and I find it takes up a lot

Parenting resources for parents and churches

- Parenting resources at the Mennonite Church Canada Resource Centre are available to borrow or purchase. Visit online www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/183

• From MennoMedia

Whatever Happened to Dinner?—book
Priority Parenting—book
Shaping Families—weekly podcast

• Gordon Neufeld resources

Power to Parent—DVD series
Making Sense of Adolescence—DVD series
Hold on to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More than Peers—book

- Dave Currie's website, www.doingfamilyright.com, contains podcasts and other parenting resources.

• Other resources

My Monastery is a Minivan—book
Parenting in the Pew—book
Intercultural Marriage—book

of energy to discern what is healthy and optimal for our children. The pressure to push our kids to places they are not ready for is so pervasive these days. Saying no, we're going to do it this way, to your children can give you a bit of a lonely feeling."

Giesbrecht agrees. "Kids have more money, more things targeted at them.

Kids have more money, more things targeted at them. The messages they receive from the music industry and businesses are that they are ready to drink, to have sexual activity, to own a car.

(Kathy Giesbrecht, MC Manitoba)

The messages they receive from the music industry and businesses are that they are ready to drink, to have sexual activity, to own a car."

It takes a church to raise a child

"So many parents are desperately trying to be friends to their children, but it's not what they need," observes a parent. "They need us to be their parents, to be the responsible adults in their lives."

In his book *Hold on to Your Kids*, Gordon Neufeld writes, "Parents haven't changed. . . . The fundamental nature of children has also not changed. . . . What has changed is the culture in which we are rearing our children. . . . For the first time in history young people are turning for instruction, modelling and guidance not to mothers, fathers and teachers and other responsible adults, but to people whom nature never intended to place in a parenting role—their own peers."

He argues that the task of raising children needs to be shared. In this age of mobility and loss of the extended family, he asks, "Where are the adult mentors to help guide our adolescents? Our children are growing up peer rich and adult poor."

"Quite apart from religion, the church . . . functioned as an important supporting cast for parents and an attachment village for children," he writes. But today many churches separate the family as they enter the door, inadvertently preventing these vital intergenerational connections.

"[The role of] the church should [be

to] unapologetically support parents in their role as the primary model for their children," says Linda Loewen, the mother of two daughters and a member of Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. "It should be a place where kids can hang onto their innocence and parents can hang onto their authority and respect."

"Our life as parents is easier because we go to church," says Loewen. "The church reinforces what we say to our children. Our church is very strong on intergenerational connections. It is easier for us to raise our children because of these natural connections."

Some parents are able to find the support they need in small groups within the church, where they can talk about things quite honestly, learn from each other and practise accountability.

But what happens when children's activities draw families away from their

church support structures?

"When the children were young it was easier to draw upon church resources, such as small groups and 'Mothers' Afternoon Out,' but as the children get older the family has stepped aside from some of those involvements," a parent admits. "When you need it most, it seems harder to get," he says of the support he found in the church. "We are drowning in our own worlds and there is little accountability to each other as parents."

What can the church do better if Currie is right in his estimate that "over 80 percent of teenagers from Christian homes are leaving their faith after they graduate from high school"? He believes the church needs to do a better job of coaching parents and giving them the supports and skills they need for the job, lamenting that, "what tends to happen in our churches is that we do a message on family, do one talk and run some six-week session during the year, and then we feel we've done our bit. We need to do ongoing resourcing for families and parents" who want to raise their children in the Christian faith. ❧

The unidentified parents quoted asked for anonymity for their children's sake.

/// For discussion

1. What are some ways that parenting today is similar to, and different from, earlier generations? Were yesterday's parents also "scared and overwhelmed"? Do today's parents tend to hover too much? What role should cell phones play in parenting? Are our children too closely programmed? To what degree is materialism a threat to our families?
2. A parent laments that "society puts so much pressure on children to give up their innocence at a very young age." Do you agree? How can the church help parents reduce this pressure? How closely should parents control their children's playmates and activities? What can we learn about parenting from Luke 2:41-50, where 12-year-old Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem?
3. How does your congregation support parents of children and teenagers? How do children and teenagers get to know and feel connected to adults in the church? How could churches do a better job of coaching parents?
4. What advice would you give to today's parents? Would you recommend Proverbs 23:13-14 regarding discipline? If you were playing the parent role over again, what would you do differently? What role will technology play in parenting in the future?

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. Preference will be given to letters from MC Canada congregants.

✉ 'African' titles misleading

RE: "GREENING AFRICA," "What aid work looks like in Africa," and "African goat project demonstrates group power," April 2, pages 20 to 22.

Africa is not a country. It is the second largest continent in the world, with an incredible diversity of peoples, languages, cultures and ecosystems.

Amazing work is being done in Ethiopia and Kenya, but I highly doubt that it has much of an effect in Morocco or Zimbabwe. Here in Canada, we wouldn't report environmental projects occurring in Rosthern, Sask., with the headline, "Greening North America," but for some reason we continue to treat Africa like it is one big homogenous land mass.

But I guess that's what we get after years of "let's sing the next verse in African."

KYLE PENNER, STEINBACH, MAN.

✉ Peacemakers don't need to know Christ as saviour

RE: "THE BIBLE and the Holy Spirit in tension," April 2, page 4.

John D. Rempel has written a timely article on the issues growing out of biblical interpretation facing the Mennonite church. I have long valued his contributions to theological thought. However, I find unfortunate one part of the article: "... only individuals who have been made whole by Christ can stay the course in bringing wholeness to the world."

We both grew up in a church setting that considered all peacemaking that did not centre on our correct

theology doomed to failure. Sermons would lament that "the world" talked and promoted peace, but it was to no avail because they did not know Jesus as saviour.

The New Testament biography of Jesus reveals that he did not place preconditions on people practising justice, compassion and loving our neighbour. Today, Christ would applaud the man growing weary of making money—lots of it—for power and self indulgence, who discovers immense pleasure in discovering micro-finance loans through Mennonite Economic Development Associates, as he takes visceral delight in bringing wholeness to an entire village.

When Sikhs offer to donate money to MCC to feed the hungry, both they and MCC realize that feeding the hungry is a sacred act.

On my no-exit street in Waterloo, which consists of a kind of village of townhouses, a retired meat packer is the unofficial peacemaker. When someone is not a good citizen—unkempt lawn, late-night noise—he makes conversation until friendly changes occur. When neighbourly disagreements flare publicly, he has the redemptive instinct for peacemaking dialogue.

He is not biblically or church-oriented, however. When I mentioned that I think of him in religious terms, he said, "How so?" I responded with, "Jesus said, '*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.*'"

Should I warn him that, according to Mennonite theology, he cannot make peaceful wholeness until he has first been made whole by Christ? (Sorry, only one party has been made whole by Christ.)

Here's a twist: Jesus commends the Good Samaritan and prefers his living over those whose religion has the faith litmus test codified. Doesn't the Spirit of Christ applaud all who seek justice and walk humbly on God's earth?

JACK DUECK, WATERLOO, ONT.

✉ Has Canadian Mennonite forgotten the Bible?

IN REGARDS TO Rudy Baergen's "Dust off your Bibles!" column, April 2, page 9, I feel *Canadian Mennonite* should do that. There were no Bible stories in *Canadian Mennonite* about Jesus' birth at Christmas or his crucifixion and resurrection at Easter.

Have we forgotten the Bible?

In each publication, please have a Bible story to help our young and old learn the meaning of the Bible.

ROSS VICTOR, KITCHENER, ONT.

✉ 'Strangers' welcomed with open arms

RE: "STILL STRANGERS among us?" editorial, April 16, page 2.

It is always sad to hear of members of Canadian churches who do not feel as welcomed as they should be in their home churches. We would like to share our story as a contrast to the one shared in the editorial, as a way of encouraging churches that are working hard to create and provide a welcoming and caring community.

We were married in 2009 and came from very different Christian backgrounds. Over our first 18 months of marriage, we worshipped at a variety of different churches in an effort to find a church home. These churches ranged from high Anglican to

charismatic Pentecostal. One Sunday in November 2010, God showed us how he truly works in mysterious ways when we "accidentally" ended up at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, Ont. Of all the churches that we had been to—and we had been to at least a couple of dozen quite friendly ones—we felt the most welcomed at St. Jacobs Mennonite right from the first Sunday that we were there. We very quickly realized that we had found a congregation where we both were comfortable and where we both felt totally at home.

We are so thankful that God led us to our new church home, and would like to publicly acknowledge our church family there that has welcomed us with open arms.

**CAROLYN AND IAN VANDERBURGH,
WATERLOO, ONT.**

FROM OUR LEADERS

75 years of church

GARRY JANZEN

So what does it mean to be the church in one place for 75 years? Actually we're the church in many places, yet we are all under one umbrella. Sometimes we call Mennonite Church British Columbia a conference, sometimes an area church, sometimes even a denomination, but how about a network?

We learned from Stuart Murray, author of *The Naked Anabaptist*, that the Anabaptists in Great Britain hang together as a network. At our Leaders, Elders and Deacons (LEAD) conference and 75th anniversary gatherings on March 2 and 3, Murray helped us see how the bare essentials of being Anabaptist are making sense to a lot of people these days. He suggested that Anabaptism is a movement whose time has come.

Wow! So, this is like after 500 years. Anabaptist networks are arising around the world. Intentional communities are arising that embrace Anabaptism. New categories are arising that describe these folks, such as: kingdom radicals and Anabaptist conspirators. In this post-



Christendom time most of the world is moving away from imperial Christianity, and the symbols of our faith are no longer familiar to this generation. This is a context in which Anabaptism is making sense to many.

With an exciting interest in Anabaptist principles from people beyond us Mennonites, yet with limited financial resources and busy people, how do we proceed with participating in the mission of God in our neighbourhoods?

We have a fund available for new missional activity. Since the Mennonite church has been committed to the missional church paradigm for more than a decade, MC B.C. is committed to making missional coaching available to all of our congregations. We are also committed to the churches-planting-churches strategy. What this gives us is a variety of approaches to multiplying based on each congregation's sense of God's leading.

We recently had one of our congregations multiply to a second location based on the campus model. We have a congregation that is looking for ideas because it is bursting at the seams due to being able

to reach a new demographic of people in growing numbers. There is some energy for starting house churches in new geographic areas where there are concentrations of people who are currently drive-in folks to some of our congregations.

Bi-vocational ministry allows for some flexibility to grow low-cost new gatherings. Just recently we have heard of someone seeking another university degree in order to provide employment so as to be able to do affordable church ministry. We may actually have opportunity to move back from the professional model of ministry to more of a lay-minister approach in new smaller gatherings such as house churches.

The pause to reflect on 75 years of being church has been an expectant opportunity to look at how Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever, yet his church is called to respond to what God is doing in each changing generation. The future seems brilliantly interesting and full of potential as we seek to align with God's imagination and initiatives.

Garry Janzen is executive minister of Mennonite Church B.C.

✉ Church needs to fund prison ministry if government won't

IT HAS COME to my attention that the government has intentionally made moves to eliminate funding for a prison ministry called M2W2. It has been reported that funds from the last fiscal year fell short by about \$30,000, and in this fiscal year so far, nothing. The budget had been about \$130,000, but it would seem that the well is suddenly running dry.

It may be fair to say that the doors for “easy money”—government grants—are closing. Having said that, it is my opinion that it is time that we, the church, took Christ at his word and funded our own

initiatives. Prison ministry is the Christian thing to do, so let us support this most-needed project collectively.

What may be unfortunate is the fact that M2W2 is not 100 percent Mennonite and that may well contribute to the reluctance to fund something that is not totally “ours.” But I seem to recall that Paul did not preach to the select few, but to the masses. Here in B.C. we have 238 prisoners who are asking for the friendship and relationship that is brought by M2W2 volunteers.

We don't need to belabour the issue of how much M2W2 is needed. It is well evidenced by the speeches made by the various wardens at the annual volunteer dinners, and let us not forget the overwhelming response that comes from the inmates themselves. I

OUTSIDE THE BOX

No longer, but not yet

PHIL WAGLER

I was engaged for four months before the big day. Engagement is an interval in time determined by things that are no longer and things that are not yet. The engaged are not really single, but not yet spouse. My experience of engagement was of a time in between. It involved longing (hey, I'm a guy and I was longing). It involved work (and a wedding takes a lot of it . . . or at least that's what my fiancé told me). It involved intentionally parting with the past, while not quite being able to step into the future. And it was a time that contained the moment of truth.

Hannah Arendt, the late political theorist, describes what we know to be true, but don't particularly like to experience. History does not lie. History—and our own experiences of times like engagement—reveal that the intervals of confusion in which what we have known is no longer, but what is yet to be is not yet, are precisely the seasons in which what is most true is revealed.

The Bible tells many such stories and reveals God's faithfulness and truthfulness in those lands in between. Israel's slavery in Egypt was a long interval that contained a moment of truth: they were

a people of the covenant. The generation of wandering in the wilderness was a no longer and not yet, but it contained a moment of truth: God was serious about making for himself a people. Israel languished in exile, a time of corporate identity crisis that contained a moment of truth: God wanted a people for the sake of the world and would do what it took to awake them to it. The world waited between the time of the prophets and the birth of Christ, a four-century gestation that contained a moment of truth: God waits for just the right time to be revealed with full disclosure.

We also live in a land in between. We live between Jesus' first appearance and



We live between Jesus' first appearance and his final coming in glory.

his final coming in glory. He is the way, the truth and the life in this messy, hopeful interval. Given that we continue to be part of the shifting sands of culture and history, it is not surprising that we experience times that baffle, in which we are called back to the One who is the truth of every moment, no matter how unsettling.

Are you and yours in a time of no longer, but not yet? Do you find yourself in the mysterious, miserable interval as the actors and witnesses who must become aware of the truth contained in the moment? Many believers, along with their churches and organizations, are these days. Confusion abounds because what once was seems gone forever—even as many fight to recapture seemingly lost ground—and what is yet to come is a strange and foreign land where we don't understand the language or the maps.

Isn't it exciting? Many don't think so. But let's look at it another way. We are privileged—yes, privileged—to walk this historic interval where Christendom is a tourist attraction and the cultural trajectory is towards a world we've come from, but never been to. That's not spin. It is truth. It has always been the actors and witnesses of the unsettling intervals between the no longer and not yet who have the privilege and responsibility of patiently

and obediently anticipating that moment of truth when God reveals a new thing.

Phil Wagler (phil_wagler@yahoo.ca) has been living the interval as an interim pastor in Surrey, B.C. He is the author of Kingdom Culture: Growing the Missional Church.

would suspect that the volunteers are as much loved by those on the inside as those on the outside.

It is a sound suggestion that Mennonite Church Canada fully supports M2W2 and come to a collective decision that it will take over funding before it is too late and our most-needed program is left hanging in the wind because of apathy.

Whether the state does or doesn't fund M2W2 is not at issue. What is at issue is the following of the

divine request to do prison ministry. Those confined to the inside are in need of vision, and volunteers can help supply that, but only if we are there. If it means the church funds the program, so be it.

KEN HINTON, LANGLEY, B.C.

Ken Hinton has been an M2 volunteer for more than five years.

NEW ORDER VOICE

The R's beneath a radical sabbath

AIDEN ENNS

I was asked to preach on Earth Day. If I was a typical Mennonite minister, I would start with a few statistics, cite high levels of consumption, touch on some exotic form of injustice that doesn't implicate us too directly. I'd gently exhort that we're called to care for creation, be good stewards and drink fair-trade coffee, and then I'd offer a rote prayer for courage and wisdom. If Jesus were in the back of the room during that sermon, he'd be snoring, or, more likely, snorting.

I was asked by a group of radical

Christians to preach on Earth Day. Last year, this group engaged in nonviolent civil disobedience; its members held a worship service

literally on the street, blocking traffic and breaking the law to make a point about cars and climate change. This year, they were organizing a multi-church worship service and wanted someone to preach.

If I were a typical "radical" Mennonite preacher, I would start with Jesus, show how he was crucified because of his challenge to the power of the authorities, and then strenuously exhort that we should follow in his footsteps and get arrested somewhere doing something. We could trespass on the grounds of a nuclear

weapons factory or form a human blockade with indigenous people defending their territory. If Jesus were listening, he'd be heartened by the zeal and amused at the naïveté.

I was asked by a group of radical Christians to preach on Earth Day and to do it as a tent revival preacher. This group of radicals had rented a tent, set it up in front of the provincial legislature, had a choir in blue and gold robes singing old-time gospel songs, and invited three people to give their testimonies.



I was an amateur actor, an armchair rebel, a car-driving hypocrite preaching on Earth Day.

The stage was set for me. What would I say? This was my hardest sermon ever. It had to appeal to typical Mennonites, radical Mennonites and fun-loving, bike-riding, social-justice, disillusioned-by-mainstream-approaches-to-solving-our-own-problems Mennonites.

I used four sources. For character development, I watched video footage of old-time preachers like Billy Sunday and Elmer Gantry. For authority, I drew upon the gospels, especially where Jesus caused the Pharisees to grumble. For insight, I

turned to activist theologian Ched Myers and his "Sabbath Economics" booklet. Finally, for passion, I listened repeatedly to sermons preached by Martin Luther King Jr. in the months before his assassination.

On the night before my big performance, I was forlorn. As I practised the sermon, my words fell flat. I was not a black man leading an oppressed racial group to liberation. I was not a conscientious objector with stories of my transgressions. I was an amateur actor, an armchair rebel, a car-driving hypocrite preaching on Earth Day.

As I took the stage, I was so pumped by the clapping, the piano, the Amens. I called us to consider the Sabbath, to restrain ourselves from over-consumption and to redistribute the abundance of creation to those in need. True to form, we had an altar call and invited people to come forward with pledges to new ways to practise the Sabbath.

It felt sacrilegious for us consumers to have a happy time on Earth Day, but we did. Perhaps that was our radical act. I was inspired by the goodwill of Christians gone astray. Let us continue to pray for forgiveness, and be sincere in our prayers for courage and wisdom.

Aiden Enns welcomes your feedback and ideas. He is a member of Hope Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, and co-editor of Geez magazine. He can be reached at aiden@geezmagazine.org.

✉ Cutting taxes won't help MCC coffers

RE: "MCC CANADA should seek independence from government funding" letter, April 16, page 10. The question was asked, in response to "On shaky ground," March 5, page 20, as to whether we should ask the government to "reduce taxes so that genuine supporters can afford to contribute more" to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

On brief reflection, the federal government has decreased the Goods and Services Tax by two percentage points since 2004 while not increasing any other taxes over the same period. A simple calculation reveals that the Mennonite population of Canada has saved between \$50 million and \$100 million in sales taxes per year since that time. Even contributing a tithe of 10 percent of this to MCC would have resulted in noticeable increases to MCC in 2005 and in 2008, when the GST reductions occurred.

I don't recall seeing any statement about sudden increases to MCC revenues on the part of their principal donor constituency. The conclusion, it seems to me, is that a decrease in federal taxes will not translate into increasing support for organizations like MCC. Part of the reason for this may be that decreasing federal government taxes increases the amount we have to pay to private corporations or other levels of government to provide the other services that we actually need.

Without federal government funding, MCC will really need to look for other sources, but the data indicate that simply asking for tax cuts "so that genuine supporters can afford to contribute more" is not likely to lead to a solution to its problem.

W. JOHN BRAUN, LONDON, ONT.

✉ Many 'normalities' in God's creation

TROY WATSON'S COLUMN, "The trouble with normal," April 2, page 13, was very meaningful to me. It brought back memories of the "abnormalities" I experienced in my life journey in trying to connect with other Christians and in building relationships.

My life has been much enriched, mentally and spiritually, from my involvement with "non-normal" people: draft dodgers, hippies, Jesus people (who had dusted off their Bibles), young offenders and mentally troubled people.

I attended different churches over the years: a conservative West Prussian Mennonite church in my adolescent years, a Mennonite refugee church that met in the back room of a bar, and a fundamentalist Baptist church. I joined a Lutheran student congregation, which met in a side chapel of a huge cathedral for its early Sunday morning service. A friend invited

us to a Pentecostal church led by two female pastors, and for a while we attended a charismatic church. I have finally ended up again in a joint Mennonite-Mennonite Brethren church worshipping together.

I worshipped God with these congregations in different ways, from listening quietly to the sermon and bowing my head for prayer, to trying to exuberantly worship God by raising my hands halfway, speaking in tongues and even attempting to join in a dance in the aisles of the church, as David danced before the Lord when bringing the ark into the city.

In our present fellowship, we sing in four-part harmony, listen to the sermon attentively in the chapel of a former convent and respond to it, ask questions and clarify problematic concepts, and share our own experiences. We consider it being "normal" for us.

During these years of observing and participating, my attitude towards fellow Christians has become more inclusive and accepting without affecting my own personal basic faith.

I learned to appreciate the guidance and grace of a generous, outreaching and loving God who looks at the heart and sincerity of the worshipper. From my experience, I have found no "normality," no one-way approach and worship style for God's children that is better than the other.

The venture of stepping out of narrow "normality" once in a while has helped me to discover the richness and versatility of life and of God's creation, and has taught me to be more tolerant and respectful of fellow Christians who live another "normality."

HELMUT LEMKE, BURNABY, B.C.

✉ Pastor clarifies meeting report

THE MARCH 19 "Being a faithful church document avoids the sexuality issue" article on page 15 misrepresents the congregational meeting focusing on scriptural understanding at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church.

Most of the 54 people—under 20 percent of the congregation—did use the questions provided in the Mennonite Church Canada discernment tool as the guideline for small-group discussion. The reader is led to understand that the expressed opinions were mine, rather than comments that reflected reactions of a few participants. I was simply reporting on the meeting.

Personally, I am thankful that MC Canada is providing churches with tools to facilitate discussion and that *Canadian Mennonite* is keeping readers connected to conversations across Canada.

MARLA LANGELOTZ, WINNIPEG

Marla Langelotz is the pastor of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

- Crowe**—Arthur Oren (b. April 14, 2012), to Kevin and Esther Crowe, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon.
- Driedger**—Henri Joel Leis (b. April 19, 2012), to Karen Leis and Joel Driedger, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon.
- Fast**—Owen Asher (b. Jan. 16, 2012), to Jonathan and Megan Fast, Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Friesen**—Silas Raymond (b. April 26, 2012), to Charity and Tom Friesen, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.
- Hilker**—Zoey Ann (b. April 10, 2012), to Sarah and Trevor Hilker, Breslau Mennonite, Ont.
- Jantzi**—Madison Rose (b. March 27, 2012), to John and Mallory Jantzi, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.
- Keane**—Deklan Alexander Ross (b. April 8, 2012), to Jeff and Chrissy (Friesen) Keane, Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.
- Kotz**—Nicholas Ryan Christian (b. Oct. 4, 2011), to Shantelle and Ryan Kotz, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- MacDonald**—Daniel Floyd (b. March 11, 2012), to Caroline Cressman and Steve MacDonald, Hanover Mennonite, Ont.
- Matyas**—Zara Jayne (b. Jan. 30, 2012), to Kristyn and Noel Matyas, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- McKinnell**—Peter Francis (b. April 18, 2012), to Matthew and Teresa McKinnell, Ottawa Mennonite.
- Narine**—Jaden Corydon (b. March 2, 2012), to Corrinne and Don Narine, Springstein Mennonite, Man.
- Reist**—Daniel John (b. Nov. 24, 2011), to Stephen and Carol Reist, Mississauga Mennonite, Ont.
- Schellenberg Grunau**—Oliver Eldon (b. April 13, 2012), to Brian Grunau and Miriam Schellenberg, Langley Mennonite, B.C.

Baptisms

- Clare Schellenberg, Karen LeVasseur, Mike Onyshko**—Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg, Nov. 6, 2011.

Khalid Ahmeed, Hadil Al-Hassani—Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg, Feb. 19, 2012.

Sean Goerzen, Katherine (Dyck) Dubé—Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, April 8, 2012.

Marriages

Epp/Koop—Stefan Epp and Laurel Koop, Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg, Dec. 17, 2011.

Friesen/Thiessen—Kristy Friesen (North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.) and Lucas Thiessen, at Christian Fellowship, Lanigan, Sask., April 7, 2012.

Deaths

Braun—Helene, 92 (b. Sept. 26, 1919; d. April 23, 2012), Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Dyck—Anna, 98 (b. July 15, 1913; d. Jan. 26, 2012), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Friesen—Cornelius, 87 (b. April 16, 1924; d. Jan. 28, 2012), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Nafziger—Neil, 54 (b. June 20, 1957; d. April 14, 2012), Maple View Mennonite, Ont.

Rempel—Justina (nee Plett), 76 (b. July 28, 1935; d. April 19, 2012), Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver.

Retzlaff—Mary (nee Reimer), 81 (b. Nov. 4, 1930; d. April 21, 2012), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Weber—Nelson, 93 (b. Aug. 7, 1918; d. April 21, 2012), St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

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

Pontius' Puddle



ANOTHER TEXTER FAILS TO GET PAST THE PEARLY GATES

WOMEN WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH

Scattering seeds for a new season

BY LIZ KOOP

Spring is here! And with it come various chores around the yard and garden: cleaning out the withered growth left after the snow melted, digging the moist earth to let in air and water so new growth can happen, and pulling out those ever-present weeds.

I'm always amazed at how those pesky dandelions can take root and appear in full bloom before you know it.

Dandelions are noted for their deep roots and ability to thrive in all kinds of weather. Although they bloom predominantly in the spring, their yellow heads can also be seen during the summer and fall. As I write this, the first crop of dandelions on our southwestern Ontario farm's side hill is in full bloom with some just starting to go to seed.

What a beautiful picture as the seeds are scattered by puffs of air to land who knows where, ready to root and begin a new cycle.

For the past few years, Mennonite Women Canada has been using the dandelion to symbolize its ministry. Like the dandelion, our organization has deep roots and thrives through ups and downs. We hope that the seeds we scatter in this new season will find a home in the

hearts of women who want to make a difference in their communities across the street and around the world, as they did in the past.

With this in mind, the theme chosen for MW Canada's 60th anniversary celebrations, to be held on July 14 at the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in Vancouver, is "Scattering seeds for a new season!" The event will include featured guests from the *Mennonite Girls Can Cook* bestseller.

It should also be noted that prior to organizing

nationally in 1952, Mennonite women's groups in various provinces were already formally organized. For example, Ontario Mennonite women were organized into three distinct conferences: Ontario Women's Missionary and Service Commission in 1917, South Western Ontario Women in 1944, and United Mennonite Women's Mission Society in 1947. In 1995, they were integrated as Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada. British Columbia women organized in 1939, Manitoba followed in 1942, Saskatchewan in 1943, and Alberta in 1948.

Throughout the years, women's groups across Canada have faithfully supported their provincial and national organizations by offering their time, talents and

financial donations because they believed that by doing things together they could accomplish more.

However, due to aging members who are finding it difficult to participate in and support women's ministry at the local level, let alone at the provincial and national levels, and the declining numbers of formal women's groups across the country, the traditional support base is eroding. To counter that, the definition of membership in MW Canada was changed in 2010 to include "all women who are part of a Mennonite women's organization or participate in a Mennonite congregation in Canada." The hope is that, over time, all women in our Mennonite churches will feel connected to, and supportive of, MW Canada, whether or not they belong to a women's group.

During the past 60 years there have been many changes in how we interact with each other. The rapid rise of Internet technology and the use of various types of social media available have changed the world. So we have been challenged to keep abreast of this new technology in an effort to reach out to younger women and let them know what we are all about. We have:

- A web page at www.mennonitechurch.ca/mwc
- A blog at www.mennowomencanada.blogspot.com
- A new newsletter called "Connections" that is available electronically (at the blog site) and in hard copy

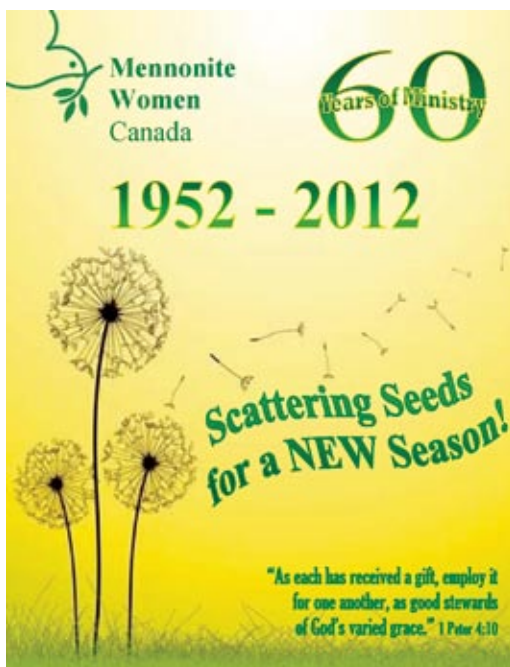
MW Canada is grateful for the help received from various sources, and also the faithful support of the traditional women's groups across the country, who are striving to do their best to continue the legacy of dedication, service and love in pursuit of a women's ministry in today's society.

To participate in that, please plan to attend our 60th anniversary celebration. ☺

Liz Koop is the president of Mennonite Women Canada.



**Mennonite
Women
Canada**



PERSONAL REFLECTION

My own Menno DNA

BY CARL DEGURSE

SPECIAL TO *CANADIAN MENNONITE*

In the 23 years since I married in, I have often listened from the outside as Mennonites match their family trees.

Well, sound the trumpets and widen the circle because, finally, I have experienced a genealogical coincidence worth sharing.

Before relating this memorable encounter that I humbly submit is worth inclusion in the Name Game Hall of Fame, it should be understood that I have always enjoyed listening to the rest of you talk about your family histories—and I'm not just saying that so you pay attention now that it's my turn.

There is likely no need to explain the Mennonite name game in a magazine that goes mostly to Mennonite homes, but I will offer a fictional example in case any readers are anthropologists trying to grasp the subtle complexities of the Menno tribe.

Imagine we're at a Mennonite conference and it's time to dine. The people at the table are strangers, but not for long. Even before the bowls of borscht arrive, they introduce themselves with surnames like Friesen, Peters, Klassen, Rempel, Epp, Toews, Goetz and Thiessen.

Thus begins a quest for connections. Thiessen and Rempel discover they both have roots in Kitchener-Waterloo and, furthermore, both have relatives who were blue-ribbon winners in the annual Kitchener-Waterloo Rollkuchen Cook-off. Both Toews and Goetz went to Louisiana to help flood victims build houses on stilts, and Goetz mentions, with a wink, that his men's group went one better and built dog houses on stilts. Klassen and Peters discover both of their families were originally from Abbotsford, B.C., and their grandmothers attended the same church, where they instigated an upstart quilting group called Quilting

Outside The Lines.

With a surname like DeGurse, I have always lacked the Mennonite DNA ante to enter the game, which is why I am whoop-out-loud excited that, at last, I have had an encounter worth relating. Without further ado—drum roll please—here is my true story:

It happened about 8:30 a.m. on March 24 of this year in Toronto before the annual meeting of *Canadian Mennonite* magazine. My billet dropped me off at a driveway, where we board trustees were to gather and be transported to a day of meetings.

When I arrived, editor Dick Benner was already standing on the driveway with two other men. I sidled up and we engaged in the time-honoured conversational agenda of men everywhere: first, we talked about the weather and hockey, and only then did we start to share personal information.

Ed Heide of Toronto mentioned that he was married to Sharon Roth of Rosthern, a Saskatchewan town of about 1,500 people. Jim Moyer of Lethbridge, Alta., remarked that it was a coincidence because he had also married a Rosthern woman, Beth (Elsbeth) Epp.

I was flabbergasted because I had even bigger news for these two gents. "You fellows aren't going to believe this, but I married a Rosthern girl too, Lois Schmidt, the daughter of Ed and Trudy."

We were silent as we pondered the enormity of the synchronicity. One man from Alberta, one from Manitoba and one from Ontario. We had met on a Toronto driveway, 3,000 kilometres away from Rosthern, but we were united by the

geographical hometown of our brides.

When we got home and told our wives, it got even better. Turns out that our wives all attended high school at Rosthern Junior College and are also related by blood.

They are of different ages and socialized with different groups, but in the way of small towns and Mennonite circles they knew about each other.

"I don't know them, but I know of them. I know who they are," said my wife, using a phrase I often hear among Mennonites discussing the far reaches of their web of relations.



Judith Dyck

One final note: Our three wives share a common matriarch, who sounds like a fascinating woman. Judith Dyck (1832-1906) came from Russia as a widow and single mom with several children to the area that would eventually become Saskatchewan, according to a genealogy composed by Beth Moyer. Long before feminism, the title to her land was in her name, and she founded and named the district of

Eigenheim, meaning "my own home."

She also left another legacy: Three men agreed on a Toronto driveway that the descendants of Judith Dyck make fine wives. ☘



Carl DeGurse is vice-president of the Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service board and an assistant city editor for the Winnipeg Free Press. He lives in Winnipeg

and is a member of Douglas Mennonite Church, where he feels valued despite his lack of Mennonite DNA.



During Julie Bender's recent convalescence from a fractured knee, Kent, a former English student who is studying to become a medical doctor, came to check up on her. Kent says he has claimed Julie and her husband Philip as 'godparents' because of the good things they teach him and his desire to care for them.

MOTHER'S/FATHER'S DAY REFLECTION

A godchild's gift

STORY AND PHOTO BY PHILIP BENDER

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA

Philip and Julie Bender are Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers in China, where they teach English at the Sichuan University of Arts and Science and engage students in matters of the Christian faith.

One of our greatest joys in China has been acquiring several “godchildren,” especially Kent.

Kent, 24, is in his sixth year of medical studies, and was Julie’s oral English student at Chongqing Medical University in 2007.

An eager learner, Kent would sit in the front row and actively participate in class. He also organized the weekly campus “English corner,” an event at which our students had the opportunity to practise their growing English language skills.

At Chinese New Year in 2008, Kent invited us to his family’s rural Sichuan

home. Just three months later, that home was destroyed in a devastating earthquake. He invited us to his family’s new home for New Year celebrations in 2010, 2011 and again this past January.

As our relationship grew, Kent began signing his e-mails “godson.” Then he started calling us “godmother” and “godfather.” And he meant it.

In Chinese culture, godparents play

a vital role. They model good character, mentor the growing child and are believed to bring good luck. According to Kent, godparents must be “rich in love, and maybe have good *guanxi* [connections].”

He said that most Chinese children have at least one godparent. He is already a godfather to a young boy in his village. Usually the child’s parents choose the godparents, although in the past a respected person from the village might make the selection. In our case, Kent chose us. When we asked him why, he said, “Because you teach me good things.” And then he added another reason: “I want to take care of you.”

And he has. During Julie’s recent six-week convalescence from a fractured knee, Kent twice made the three-hour trip from Chongqing to Dazhou to check up on her. Her injury was of special interest to him because he is specializing in orthopedics. He relished poring over the X-rays, giving Julie advice, even phoning her local doctor with questions.

We’ve had many serious discussions with Kent, including about some of the ethical dilemmas he faces. As a doctor, he knows he will be pressured to make various compromises in order to manage in the Chinese medical system. Doctors are often expected to prescribe expensive, sometimes unnecessary, medications and tests for their patients, since hospitals rely on them for much of their income. But Kent wants to be a person of integrity and put his patients first.

Kent reminds us of the “god-fearers” in the New Testament, such as Cornelius in Acts 10, people formally outside of the faith community who were drawn to the Jewish synagogue and early church because of the moral values they observed among believers.

We feel humbled and honoured to have been chosen by Kent for this special role in his life. We also feel a responsibility to live up to his trust.

He has been God’s gift to us. ❧

He relished poring over the X-rays, giving Julie advice, even phoning her local doctor with questions.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

PHOTO COURTESY OF MCI



Derek Janzen, a Grade 12 student at MCI, Gretna, Man., plays with young children at Hope Community Centre in Kenya.

COVER STORY

Looking at life differently now

MCI students, staff reflect on spring break trip to Kenya

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU
Manitoba Correspondent

“You can watch a thousand World Vision commercials and still not fully understand what life is like for some,” says Emily Hildebrand, one of 12 students from Mennonite Collegiate Institute (MCI), Gretna, Man., who spent her spring break living and working with the children of Hope Community Centre in Kenya.

The work-and-learn trip was the first step in an official partnership that MCI hopes will become a long-lasting relationship with the centre that is both a home and school for children who have been orphaned or abandoned. It is located a few hours outside Nairobi in Kinangop.

Lucy Gacheru, who founded Hope more than a decade ago, states on the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Global Family website: “I had a dream to help other needy children like me and show them that God cares and has a plan for them.” Today, the

centre, which is supported by MCC, is home to about 300 children.

The two-week trip to Kenya by Grade 11 and 12 MCI students and two staff members was the culmination of months of preparation. “We met on a regular basis for team-building exercises,” says Chris Regehr, one of the staff members who accompanied the students. “Each student came up with a list of supporters from whom they received both prayer and financial support.”

The students studied the country, the culture and the community centre. They worked individually on related projects. Guest speakers included Joe Gacheru, brother of the founder, who is presently in Winnipeg, and Werner Wiens from MCC’s Global Family program.

Prior to all of this, the board and staff of MCI had given over many months to

discernment, prayer and planning. Last summer, four staff members visited Kenya with the purpose of learning more about the centre.

“We spent 17 days [there] connecting with the staff and students,” Regehr says. “We led a variety of activities, including worship times, sports camps and games. This place had a bit of history for me and my family,” he adds, noting that he visited and worked at the centre several times, the first of which was in 2003, when the centre was about five years old.

All of the planning and preparation paid off for the students.

“I was very impressed with how well it went,” says Sarah Martens, a Grade 12 student. “We adjusted pretty well. We were well-informed ahead of time.”

What they were not prepared for was “the overwhelming sense of community and love for each other” displayed at Hope, says Hildebrand.

“Every moment was enjoyable. Even when things went wrong, you didn’t worry about it,” says Derek Janzen, another Grade 12 student. “Leading devotions in front of about 150 students was kind of scary,” he admits.

The MCI students engaged in many activities, including sports, arts and crafts, reading, drawing and knitting, with Hope’s children, who range in age from preschool to 18.

“I have been on lots of trips that were about having fun, but I went on this trip to learn more about myself, my relationship with God and figure things out a bit more,” Janzen says. “The trip opened my mind. I think more about the things that I do in everyday life. Those kids were so thankful for everything they have. They had gone from living on the streets with absolutely nothing to this loving environment where their physical needs were met. [It] makes me look at things differently here, where we complain and take things for granted.”

“When I experienced how freely they gave love to everyone, including us, whom they didn’t know, I wished we could all be more like that,” Martens says.

“It is too early to say what the ongoing partnership [between MCI and Hope] will look like in the future,” says Regehr, but the students are convinced it must continue in some form. ❧

MC EASTERN CANADA ANNUAL DELEGATE SESSIONS

The beautiful feet of those who bring good news

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
LEAMINGTON, ONT.

On the cusp of its 25th year, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada returned to the place it had its inaugural gathering: UMEI Christian High School.

On April 27, Dan Epp-Tiessen, associate professor of Bible at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, preached on the Book of Daniel, calling his sermon, "The leadership challenge: The mission of the church in a postmodern world." (*To watch a video of his sermon, visit www.canadianmennonite.org.*)

At many other points in the two-day gathering, whose theme was "Leadership for a transformed and sent people," Romans 10:14-15 was used as a theme passage: "*But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'*"

Leadership was focussed on in many ways on April 28.

Muriel Bechtel, area church minister, was feted as she retires this summer. It was noted that one of her key accomplishments during her 12 years in the position was the establishment of the Transitioning into Ministry (TiM) program, a three-year initiation for new pastors, accomplished in coordination with Marianne Mellinger, coordinator of leadership formation. According to Karen Martens-Zimmerly, MC Canada denominational minister, this program, which attempts to help new pastors over the sometimes rough first few years of pastoring, is now being copied across Canada.

As three new emerging congregations were accepted into MC Eastern Canada membership, David Martin noted that the area church now has 105 established, emerging and planted congregations. Of these,

16 percent are first-generation Mennonite congregations. The new churches are Chin Christian Church in Ottawa; Grace New Life Mennonite Church, a Lao congregation in Hamilton; and Maranatha Evangelical Church, an Ethiopian/Eritrean congregation in London.

Emerging status is a time of testing for both the congregation and the area church as to the fit between them. To receive emerging status, a congregation must have regular meetings and a core of committed people; be in essential agreement with Mennonite faith and practice, and be open to exchanging views with other MC Eastern Canada congregations; send delegates to annual gatherings; participate in regional clusters; and be in relationship with area church resource people that meet with congregational leaders.

Four other congregations were guests at the Leamington gathering as they explore

future relationships.

The closing of Toronto United Lao; Église Évangélique Mennonite de Rawdon, Joliette, Que.; and Vision Mennonite, London were mourned, even as many congregational anniversaries, from 25 to 175, were celebrated. Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp, which is celebrating its 50th this year, was acknowledged.

Camp funding was part of the focus as MC Eastern Canada restructures its allotments, while slightly increasing its budget from 2011. The area church inherited four camps with rather different expectations in regard to finances 25 years ago. This year, a decreased amount of money has been put into a "pot" to be spent by the camps in line with MC Eastern Canada priorities of making disciples, growing congregations and forming leaders.

Seeing itself in the role of support to pastors and congregations, the area church will put more staff time and money into attending cluster pastoral gatherings and visiting congregations. These changes reflect both the area church's strategic priorities, and the outcome of a 2011 report on regional conversations about shaping faith and tending congregations.

While painful cuts of around \$70,000 were made last year, this year a surplus of



Muriel Bechtel, left, retiring area church minister, is greeted by Linda Brnjas, assistant moderator and pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church, near Elmira, during Mennonite Church Eastern Canada's 25th annual church gathering.

almost \$10,000 was realized through prudent spending and slightly increased giving. The leadership shown in spending resulted in money being put into the Faithful Steward Fund, an operating reserve, rather than withdrawn, and a discretionary retirement fund receiving a much-needed infusion of cash.

According to Ester Neufeldt, operations minister, service and justice ministries are receiving less money, as per previous consultations with the area church. The sense is to let other organizations, including congregations, support service ministries as they feel led, as has been the case with camping ministries over the years.

A highlight for many was a panel from Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, speaking about being a missional congregation. The lay and pastoral leaders from Steinmann noted being surprised at the invitation, but on reflection thought that they were working with their congregation in missional ways.

Over the past five years, Steinmann has moved from looking inwards to looking outside. A carnival, barbecue, Logos youth program that has more youths from the community than the church, mission trips to work with Mennonite Disaster Service, use of the church's new fellowship hall for events to which the community is invited, a title of 2 percent of its new building mortgage to help fund church building projects around the world, and a new leadership structure that focuses on vision, rather than the nuts and bolts of month-to-month running of the congregation, are all signs of this change in direction, the panel explained. Membership is also less of a concern, replaced by a focus on who is involved.

Responding to the presentation were Scott Brubaker-Zehr of Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, and the pastoral team from Leamington United Mennonite Church. Both congregational reps said they are seeing small incremental growth in their spiritual health, which is also resulting in ministry being done in and through their church. Leamington pastor Vic Winter noted especially that the "small group" made up of the pastors praying and studying together regularly, and also having fun together, is key in what is happening there. ☺



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2012 TOURS

EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (July 10-23)
 LANDS of the BIBLE: JORDAN and ISRAEL/PALESTINE with PASTOR TYLER HARTFORD (July 19-28)
 ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (August 23-September 3)
 TOUR to LITHUANIA (in partnership with LCC International University) (September 12-19)
 MENNONITE STORY in POLAND and UKRAINE (September 18-29)
 SCENIC AUTUMN CRUISE: CANADA and NEW ENGLAND (October 6-16)
 MEDA TOUR to ETHIOPIA and TANZANIA (October 12-24)
 SERVICE TOUR to ISRAEL/PALESTINE with PASTOR JAMIE GERBER (October 13-22)
 ISRAEL/PALESTINE with PASTOR DOUG KLASSEN (October 17-26)
 ISRAEL/PALESTINE with PASTOR KEITH BLANK (November 7-16)
 VIETNAM and SINGAPORE (November 12-26)
 MUSIC and MARKETS: DANUBE CHRISTMAS CRUISE (December 1-9)

2013 TOURS

JAMAICA - Its PEOPLE, NATURAL BEAUTY and FRUITS (January 11-20)
 AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 1-21)
 CHURCHES and SAFARIS in KENYA and TANZANIA (February 8-20)
 PANAMA CANAL CRUISE (February 26-March 8)
 MEDA in MOROCCO (April 2-12)
 ISRAEL/PALESTINE with PASTOR PHIL WAGLER (April 16-25)
 MYSTERY TOUR (April 17-26)

LANDS of the BIBLE with PASTORS SEBASTIAN and CAREY MEADOWS-HELMER (April 28-May 7)
 EXPLORE the WORLD of PAUL with TOM YODER NEUFELD (May 1-17)
 EUROPEAN HERITAGE with PAUL ZEHR (May 2-15)
 GREAT TREK TOUR with JOHN SHARP (May 7-18)
 HESSTON COLLEGE TOUR to EUROPE (May 24-June 6)
 EUROPEAN HERITAGE with JOHN RUTH (June 6-19)
 ICELAND ECO TOUR (June 10-19)
 COLUMBIA BIBLE COLLEGE ANABAPTIST HERITAGE TOUR (July 2-15)
 FOLLOWING the STEPS of MOSES with PASTOR NELSON KRAYBILL (July 22-31)
 RUSSIA and UKRAINE (September 9-21)
 THE BRITISH ISLES (England, Scotland and Wales) with DAVID and JOYCE ESHLEMAN (September 13-25)
 BEHIND the VEIL - EXPERIENCING EGYPT (October 17-28)
 CHINA and a YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (November 1-15)
 EUROPEAN CHRISTMAS MARKETS (December 9-15)

2014 TOURS

THE AMAZON RAIN FOREST and GALAPAGOS ISLANDS (January 16-26)
 SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA and its FJORDS (June 13-26)



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Resourcing the process

MC Eastern Canada trains search committees and resource people

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
KITCHENER, ONT.

For longer than anyone present at an April 10 meeting could remember, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada and its antecedent conferences have been sending a resource person to assist congregations in their pastoral searches.

The April 10 training exercise for congregational search committees was held because the area church is in what some pastors call “fruit basket upset,” with many congregations seeking pastors.

Regional ministers Al Rempel and Gord Alton, together with area church minister Muriel Bechtel, led the group through the process, from the formation of the search committee until the new pastor arrives.

Alton began with a study of the first search process in the New Testament, the Acts 1 replacing of Judas Iscariot with a new apostle. The clear description of who this person needed to be for the needs of

the community at that time encouraged those present to make their searches clear and include the thoughts and desires of as many in their congregations as possible.

One search committee member noted that this training session would have been helpful a year ago, when the committee began, as it actually ended up doing a large amount of the transitional work of helping the congregation develop a vision and pastoral job description, work usually not done by a search committee.

On the other hand, the Congregational Information Form is often completed by the search committee, in conversation with the congregation and its leaders. This form gives pastoral candidates information about the congregation’s history, demographics, and its hopes and dreams for the future.

Each search team and potential resource person was given a file of materials to

help in the process, including a chart to hang in the church foyer to let congregational members know how the search is progressing.

In a conversation later, Herb Schultz, a retired pastor, said that in his time as conference minister some congregations resisted having a resource person while noting that some pastors are suspicious of congregations that resist outside help. ❧

Staff change

Paetkau new MC Eastern Canada area church minister

Henry Paetkau has been chosen as the next Mennonite Church Eastern Canada area church minister. The former president of Conrad Grebel University College begins his position



Paetkau

Not only has Paetkau been directly involved in nurturing leaders for the church, he himself has been the recipient of such formation and care. “I’ve grown up and been formed by the church, and have served the church all my life,” says Paetkau. “It seemed natural and appropriate to continue to minister in a role that prepares people to serve the church.” Through his time at Grebel and his former roles at Mennonite Church Canada, and at Grace, Harrow and Windsor Mennonite churches in southwestern Ontario, Paetkau has had a hand in church leadership formation and development. As area church minister, Paetkau will invite pastors and congregations to be intentional about their mission of making the church relevant in an increasingly secular society. In particular, he will work closely with pastors in discerning their sense of call, assisting with their credentialing, and providing a consistent and strong support for leadership within MC Eastern Canada.

—Mennonite Church Eastern Canada



Glenn Steiner, left, a pastoral search resource person, works together with Richard Haak from Wanner Mennonite Church’s search committee, and Lisa Yantzi and John Wagler, both from Pioneer Park Mennonite Church’s search committee, at an April 10 training event for search committees and pastoral search resource people. Steiner will be assisting Pioneer Park as it seeks a replacement for Brian Laverty, who has served the congregation for 25 years.

'Job well done'

Close competition brings suspense to MC Eastern Canada youth Bible quizzing

STORY AND PHOTO BY BARB DRAPER
Editorial Assistant
TAVISTOCK, ONT.

Excitement ran high at the Mennonite Church Eastern Canada youth Bible quizzing tournament held at East Zorra Mennonite Church on April 14. The two semi-final matches were particularly close, as East Zorra 1 and Markham MYF (Mennonite Youth Fellowship) had to go to a tie-breaker, while Hawkesville defeated Elmizendale (an amalgamation of Elmira, Zion and Bloomingdale) with a point spread of one question.

It was a full day for the 13 teams that were involved this year, up from five a year ago. There were four new teams this year: The Gathering, First Hmong Mennonite and Westheights Brethren in Christ (all from Kitchener); and Markham Christian Worship Centre, a Tamil congregation. The nine returning teams were: Avon, Stratford; Community, Drayton; Maple View, Wellesley; Steinmann, Baden; and a second team from East Zorra, Tavistock.

Quizzing was based on the books of Ruth, Amos and Jonah this year. In their team interpretative questions, participants not only explained the love and faithfulness of Ruth, the frustrations of Jonah, and Amos's call for justice and righteousness, they also applied these concepts to today.

At the end of the day, the Markham MYF team squeaked through to victory for the third year in a row. The quizzing-of-the-year award went to Angelina Reesor, an experienced member of the Markham team. In at least one quiz she gave the maximum of four correct answers for one player—a "quiz-out"—in the shortest possible time.

In his closing comments, David Martin, executive minister of MC Eastern Canada, pointed out that "Dusting off the Bible" is the theme for this year's MC Canada assembly in Abbotsford, B.C. "You have blown the dust off Ruth, Amos and Jonah today," he told the youths. "Job well done!"



For the very first time ever, First Hmong Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont., fielded a youth Bible quiz team. Calling themselves the Lions of Judah, they came with matching T-shirts and made it to the quarter-finals. Pictured from left to right, back row: Maicy Cha, coach Gao Hlee Vang, Timothy Vang and Victoria Vang; and front row: April Vang and Moonie Moua.

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God at work in the Church **Snapshots**

MENNONITE CHURCH U.S.A. PHOTO



The new \$7 million office building for Mennonite Church U.S.A. in Elkhart, Ind., was dedicated on April 14, with around 325 people in attendance. The building is located adjacent to the campus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS). The building brings together 70 staff members of MC U.S.A. agencies and ministries, all who were previously housed in various locations in northern Indiana. The building is a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-certified green facility, designed and constructed using the U.S. Green Building Council standards for sustainable building. Green features of the building include the use of many windows and skylights for natural light, digital heating and lighting systems, bicycle storage, rain gardens, and catchment areas for rainwater to be filtered and absorbed into the ground.

PHOTO BY RICHARD ALBRECHT



Brent Zorgdrager, left, CEO of Mennonite Savings and Credit Union (MSCU) is pictured at the 48th annual general meeting with, from left to right: Rebekah Winter, winner of the 2011 Peace in Action Essay Award; Karen Smith and Dawn Penner of Healing Streams, an international trauma counselling and training organization; and Nolan Andres, CEO of PeaceWorks Technology Solutions. Winter spoke of her experiences since winning the contest, including a recent service trip to Guatemala. PeaceWorks and Living Streams were featured at the meeting, held April 10 at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont. Susan Schultz Huxman of Conrad Grebel University College and Rick Cober Bauman from Mennonite Central Committee Ontario—not pictured—addressed the membership in appreciation for the substantial financial gifts provided by MSCU in support of their respective building projects.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

'As we forgive those who trespass against us'

MCC SALT team feels warmth, acceptance while restoring homes on Attawapiskat First Nation

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent

Mark Bauman's eyes still tear up when he recalls worshipping at the St. Francois-Xavier Roman Catholic Church in Attawapiskat. Most of the service in the First Nation community, located on the western shore of James Bay in northwestern Ontario, was in Cree, but the Lord's Prayer was repeated in English.

It was when the congregation got to "forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us," that it hit Bauman. They were praying for him, a representative of non-aboriginal Canadian society, with whom they were often in conflict. But they were forgiving him, and the governments and churches that have not understood them, their culture or their love of the land.

Bauman, a project manager for Menno S. Martin Contractor Ltd. in St. Jacobs, Ont., and a member of St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, was part of a four-person Serving and Learning Together (SALT) team that went to Attawapiskat in March under the auspices of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario, to help restore some of the houses there to safe liveable standards. Also on the team were Chris Frere, a retired teacher from St. Anns, Ont.; and Lyndsay Mollins Koene and Rod Ryner, of the MCC Ontario Aboriginal Neighbours program.

While Bauman was the only carpenter on the team, all became involved, working side by side with members of the Attawapiskat community. Together, they tore up rotten floors and mouldy wall board, replacing them and the insulation; they also did some plumbing and repairs.

Even with the small group—a larger team

had planned to go, but were stymied by logistical details—the four had to scrounge for materials, as the winter snow roads were breaking up in the unseasonably warm March weather. Frere said she saw people purchasing building supplies for two and three times as much as what she would pay in the Niagara area of southern Ontario.

According to both Bauman and Mollins Koene, the situation in aboriginal communities like Attawapiskat is complex and painful. Dealing with the federal and provincial governments over money issues, clean drinking water, schools, housing, and the residue of generations under the residential school system—which demonized aboriginal language and culture—are all very much part of residents' day-to-day lives.

Bauman and Frere say they both appreciated the sensitivity training they received in Timmins before arriving in Attawapiskat. That, and their experiences in the community, have led them to see and hear news reports from a different

perspective. According to Bauman, reports of the \$90 million spent in the community fail to mention that \$30 million of this is for a new school, and the remainder is spread over five years in a community where everything is three or more times as expensive as it is in the south.

A news report Bauman saw about Attawapiskat ended with a tattered Canadian flag, the maple leaf torn off by the wind, flapping sadly. While there, though, he saw many whole flags flying, and the maple leaf symbol proudly displayed alongside native symbols.

Bauman also says he learned that, while Treaty 9, which is the agreement between the Cree of Northern Ontario and the federal government, reads that the Cree people "cede" the land to the government, oral tradition says that the elders invited the newcomers to "share" the land. Journals from participants in the treaty negotiations agree with the aboriginal memories, but the aboriginal signatories could not read the English document they were signing.

Mollins Koene reports that the SALT team is only one part of a larger response by MCC Ontario to the situation. The organization has sent 1,000 blankets, 500 hygiene/health kits and 25 relief kits; arranged for a bilingual Cree/English Christmas card to be available for MCC Ontario constituents to send north; and took part in a housing conference in the community.

From his conversations with Attawapiskat First Nation Chief Theresa Spence, elders and residents, Bauman feels that solutions for the community must come from both within and without, and the parties involved must refrain from blaming each other. ❧

MCC ONTARIO PHOTO



Mark Bauman of St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, Ont., removes mouldy wood and materials before rebuilding a floor in an Attawapiskat First Nation home this spring.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE REFLECTION

A 'presence' ministry

BY IKE GLICK

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

During World War II, the historic peace churches in the U.S. negotiated alternate service options for conscientious objectors. In Canada, such opportunities are still offered via Mennonite Voluntary Service (VS) units in Lethbridge, Alta., Winnipeg, Montreal, and, most recently, Edmonton.

The VS unit in Edmonton was established last September as a result of two converging interests of Holyrood Mennonite Church. The congregation was searching for ways to enhance its community relevance at the same time as it was brainstorming possible uses of its parsonage. Since recent pastors have chosen to reside elsewhere, the most favoured option was to house a VS unit that would serve in a variety of city service agencies while also participating in the life of the congregation.

It's hardly a coincidence that Holyrood's six-member support committee for the VS household is comprised of VS alumni with positive memories of their own experiences. With the help of First Mennonite and the Lendrum Mennonite Brethren congregations, the five-bedroom home was fully equipped within six weeks, including furniture, kitchen utensils, towels, linens and comforters.

Our first two volunteers have come from Germany, sponsored by Eirene, a German agency. David Kubovsky serves at Ten Thousand Villages, while Simon Schneider works with residents in one of several L'Arche homes. Graduate student Chris Loughheed is part of the household this year while recruitment continues for three more agencies: the Mennonite Central Committee Thrift Store, the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers and Habitat for Humanity.

A history of VS in Alberta

Voluntary Service in Alberta is not new.

Between 1955 and about 1970, nearly 100 young volunteers from across North America embraced a variety of opportunities in mostly aboriginal communities. Some taught in existing schools, while one assisted several isolated communities to negotiate for schools with the Department of Education. Still others set up and managed a dormitory so children isolated along the Northern Alberta Railway line between Lac LaBiche and Fort McMurray could attend school at Anzac.

VS personnel became involved in a variety of other "presence" ministries. This involved nurses, a physician, bush pilots, boys and girls club organizers, youth leaders and gardeners. Initiatives in socio-economic development were also undertaken to provide local employment and marketing assistance for products derived from bush land resources, including aboriginal leather crafts, canoes, wild berries, fence posts, fish boxes and chicken crates.

That some also taught Sunday school resulted in a stern warning by a visiting priest in one community to "beware of the wolves that have come among you." This was during an era of considerable ferment and reform within the Roman Catholic Church following the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). The council convened by Pope John XXIII had profoundly positive impacts both within and beyond his church. It was amazing, yet truly gratifying, how quickly—without e-mail, Facebook or Twitter—the influence of the Pope became apparent in a softening of attitudes even in Alberta's northern hinterland.

We are told that light is a more efficient medium of communication than sound, that we remember more of what we see than of what we hear. No surprise, then, that the Light of the World communicated in the "vernacular" of our

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID KUBOVSKY



VSer David Kubovsky of Germany addresses a group of Mennonites and Anglicans during a Lenten meeting.

existence, so that we could see God's way of life in human form, in order to help us comprehend God's intentions about the quality of life for the human family. As a "presence" ministry, VS has been a means of communicating in the light mode, of giving bodily presence to non-physical values. In numerous settings of chronic disadvantage, through a variety of services, the good news of God's caring has been translated into visible actions that offer hope in these situations.

The advantages of VS

For the volunteer, an MVS household provides an experience in group living with the bonus of self-discovery, the former providing immediate stimulus for the latter!

The apprentice must learn that help is not necessarily helpful just because it is voluntary, because intentions are noble, or because doing things a certain way worked back home. Perhaps the most important discovery is that effective helping, like other forms of communication, involves exchange. VS provides opportunity for venturing and adventuring. Its legacy for volunteers has been its influence on lifestyle priorities, subsequent training and career choices.

The church has been described as an

organization that exists for the benefit of non-members, but, like salt and leaven, it requires “presence.” Most VS-ers affirm that the “benefits” flow both ways. ❧

Ike Glick, a bush pilot for VS in the 1950s and '60s, and his wife Millie are on the Support Committee for the new VS venture at Holyrood Mennonite.

Heaven's Kitchen a source of earthly sustenance

BY HENRY NEUFELD

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
VANCOUVER

Food ministry might well be one of the most powerful and non-threatening outreach tools available to the church today. The Bible is rich with stories of hospitality. Food and fellowship seem to be at the centre of Jesus life, and is a basic and significant form of Christian service.

Heaven's Kitchen, a recent effort at Vancouver's First United Mennonite Church, was an idea that came from its Caring Ministry Committee.

According to associate pastor Joe Heikman, the idea grew out of a concern for an aging congregation. The idea was simple: bring together an intergenerational church group to prepare foods, such as casseroles and soups, whose ingredients have been provided by the church, and then freeze them for future use.

Pastors and other church members can take food on visits to the ill, elderly, new parents or patients recently released from hospital.

Food is also shared with local needy people who stop in at the church requesting assistance. An invitation to a transient to have a bowl of soup and chat in the church basement can lead to meaningful interactions, says Heikman.

Heaven's Kitchen is a simple, low-cost service that is met with surprise and thankfulness. “Food is crucial to all,” the pastor says. “It's a small thing we do, but it's important to many.”

It was Heikman's wife Keri who came up with the name “Heaven's Kitchen,” a take-off on the *Hell's Kitchen* TV show that features an angry chef seeking perfection. Heaven's Kitchen is the opposite, says Heikman, involving ordinary people in meal preparation,



The idea for Heaven's Kitchen, which provides food to both church members and local needy people, came from the Caring Ministry Committee of Vancouver's First United Mennonite Church.

and “showing recipients that we care is more important than perfection.”

Says Al Fleming, a member of the committee, Heaven's Kitchen is “part of our responsibility to our congregation and our neighbours.”

Most recipients are older, which is common for a “Meals on Wheels”-type program. Seniors appreciate the simple gift of food, and often express their thanks during sharing time on Sunday mornings.

In addition to responding to a need for food, the food preparation time also provides an opportunity for intergenerational groups to fellowship together as they work. ❧

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God at work in the World

Snapshots

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA PHOTO BY BOB DICK



One of the scenes Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker Bob Dick will miss about his English teaching ministry at a university in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China, is seeing the twice-daily trek students make to this building to get hot water for drinking and washing. The containers are carried back to student dorm rooms, which have no hot water. Dick, of First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, will return to Canada in July after he completes a two-year assignment.

PHOTO BY WILL BRAUN



An Earth Day tent revival at Memorial Park in front of Winnipeg's Legislative Building attracted around 350 people of all ages, with 200 participating in a walk to the event. Brother Aiden John (aka Aiden Enns) delivered a sermon on the theme of a 'consumption sabbath' and an altar call. (See his New Order Voice column on page 11.) Charleswood and Hope Mennonite churches in Winnipeg were among the sponsors of the event, along with people from other denominations. (See more photos of the event at www.canadianmennonite.org and follow the 'Photo' link.)

JAPAN MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP PHOTO



Hiroshi Minegishi, Japan Mennonite Fellowship pastor, and his wife Yosocho are pictured in the midst of the remains of their church, Kesennuma First Bible Baptist, which was completely levelled by the earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan last spring. In response to the devastation, Japan Mennonite Fellowship, which represents four Mennonite World Conference member churches in Japan, formed the East Japan Great Disaster Relief Assistance Committee to coordinate a response, providing relief to members of the Baptist church. "Some live with God, and some without God," Minegishi said. "We choose to live with God. When we surrender everything, we get the blessing, and we win."

PHOTO COURTESY OF MENNONITE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES

A mother displays one of the millions of malaria nets that Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) has distributed in Tanzania in recent years. Malaria net voucher schemes—both paper and electronic—are proving to be an efficient and cost-effective means of ensuring high usage levels of the life-saving nets in Tanzania. They are also critical to overall malaria control strategies promoted by the World Health Organization as it marked World Malaria Day on April 25, and to achieving the Millennium Development Goal of "near-zero" deaths by 2015. 'Voucher programs provide cost-effective net distribution, while stimulating consumer sales and improved use and ownership,' says Faith Patrick, MEDA's Tanzania country manager. 'At \$8.33 per net, MEDA can ensure that pregnant women and infants—those at highest risk—have access to this simple, yet critical, tool. Almost 9,000 lives will be saved in 2012 alone.'



GOD AT WORK IN US

Investing in environmental and social responsibility

BY RACHEL BERGEN

Young Voices Co-Editor and Reporter-at-large
DELTA, B.C.

SunSelect Produce Inc., a family-owned vegetable producer with Mennonite roots, owns more than 28 hectares of greenhouses in Aldergrove and Delta, which they use to grow more than 9.5 million kilograms of vegetables each year.

The company's greenhouses that grow red, yellow and orange bell peppers in its Delta operation recently began using a new environmental technology called Green Carbon Capture, the first of its kind designed specifically for greenhouses.

James Redekop—of the Redekop clan that invested in the Redekop School of Business at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg—is a partial owner of SunSelect and he helped make the Green Carbon Capture project feasible. For Redekop, whose family came to Canada and made their living farming, investing in SunSelect was an act of conscience as well as a shrewd business move.

“Producing agriculture has always been in my being,” says Redekop, a member of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford. “It’s a part of my heritage. It seemed like a really good fit with what it was and the people I was getting involved with. The technology made financial sense and, along with that, was environmentally and socially responsible.”

Redekop knows the Krahn family, who are the other owners of SunSelect, from when they attended West Abbotsford Mennonite Church years ago. “When I decide to get involved in a partnership, I decide if the people I will team up with are of like mind, similar background and similar ethical standards,” he says. “I found that all to be true [of the Krahns].”

Green Carbon Capture was invented by ProSelect Gas Treating Inc., a group of engineers and scientists from the



the
business
of faith

Netherlands, which SunSelect has an investment in. The new technology makes SunSelect's Delta greenhouses carbon-positive, providing it with thousands of dollars in carbon credits that it can sell or trade. The process also helps offset heating costs for the greenhouses.

Because the plants need a great deal of carbon dioxide in order to grow in greenhouses, the Green Carbon Capture system converts wood waste from a nearby sawmill into fertilizer for the bell peppers, so that SunSelect doesn't need to buy CO₂ in liquid form. Only steam escapes into the atmosphere and all of the CO₂ that the trees from the sawmill accumulated over their lifetime is now used.

“We’ve found something that can increase our credit with the carbon footprint, and we can create CO₂, rather than buying it,” says Edith Gubiotti, a daughter of the Krahns who established SunSelect. “[The work we do at SunSelect] is innovative, good for the business, and good for the world in general,” she says, noting that there are other companies looking at adopting the technology and adapting it to their specifications.

The federal and provincial governments together provided about \$3.25 million towards the \$5-million project.

Not only is SunSelect implementing new cutting-edge green technology, it is also involved in a program to employ Guatemalan citizens to work in the greenhouses. The



James Redekop is pictured in one of SunSelect's environmentally friendly greenhouses in Delta, B.C.

company offers housing nearby and will soon have a large dormitory-style building on the Delta property so that migrant workers can live in close proximity to their work for a minimal charge. ☸

ARTBEAT

Unveil your heart

One-woman play challenges views of veiled Muslim women

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

Rohina Malik was 14 when her family moved from London, England, to Chicago. It was there that she lived through—and continues to live through—the misunderstandings about Muslims, veiled Muslim women in particular.

In an effort to change North American perceptions of such women, Malik wrote and stars in her one-woman play, *Unveiled*, portraying five different veiled Muslim women connected by their lives and tea. Malik brought her play to Conrad Grebel University College on March 30.

The characters include an African American ‘re-vert’ to Islam; a midwestern American lawyer whose husband (who converted to Islam) was murdered while she was raped; a restaurant owner whose brother died trying to help victims in the 9/11 attack; an English rapper; and a seamstress who had her experience of her best friend’s wedding spoiled by a verbal attack by another American.

Each one is a strong, independent woman, able to speak of her life and faith, and explain why wearing the veil is a symbol of her submission to God—not to men—very much like conservative Mennonite women wear the prayer covering as a symbol of *gelassenheit* (yieldedness to God’s will). One character calls on an angry Caucasian to “unveil” his heart in order to see their common humanity.

In his opening remarks, Nathan Funk, a professor at Grebel’s Peace and Conflict Studies Department, said, “Focusing on the peace potential inherent in religious commitment and practice, [Grebel’s Centre for the Study of Religion and Peace] seeks to move beyond one-dimensional conceptions of religion’s relationship to conflict, by exploring ways in which religious teachings and practices can inspire effort to reach out, to encounter, to empathize and

to constructively advocate on behalf of one another.”

He said that *Unveiled* “is directly related to these priorities, and to the idea that whenever our communities are disrupted by anxiety or fear, it is time for us to confront our differences, to discover our much deeper similarities, and come to know one another as neighbours working for a world that is safe for all.”

The mixed crowd stayed after the performance to ask questions, in particular, whether the women portrayed were real women or fictitious. Malik replied that all of them have a historical starting point and are sometimes amalgams of several



Rohina Malik plays a veiled Muslim woman in her one-woman show, *Unveiled*, performed at Conrad Grebel University College on March 30.

women.

One perceived shortcoming of *Unveiled* is its “Americanness,” not because it does not translate to Canadian realities, but because Canadians can tend towards smugness when looking at what they perceive as American issues.

Malik will return to Kitchener, Ont., on June 3, when she will perform at city hall. That event is organized by the Coalition of Muslim Women of Kitchener-Waterloo. ❧

/// Briefly noted

MennoMedia wins American media awards

MennoMedia won two national media awards from the Religion Communicators Council for its *Waging Peace* documentary and its *Shaping Families* radio program. The council’s DeRose-Hinkhouse Awards program, held this year on April 12 in Philadelphia, Pa., honoured the work of its members in the areas of broadcasting, publications, digital communications, social media, public relations, writing, design and photography during 2011. *Waging Peace: Muslim and Christian Alternatives*, an hour-long documentary about overcoming mistrust, hatred, and violence, won an “award of excellence.” Another winner for MennoMedia was an episode of *Shaping Families*, a weekly 15-minute radio program that started two years ago. The “Re-entry After Prison” episode, aired on June 4, 2011, earned a “certificate of merit.”

—MennoMedia



Accepting the media awards for MennoMedia at the Religion Communicators Council convention in Philadelphia, Pa., are Sheri Hartzler, left, director of electronic media, and Burton Buller, producer of *Waging Peace*.

THEATRE REVIEW

Draft dodger Doxology

Gadfly: Sam Steiner Dodges the Draft.

Written and directed by Rebecca Steiner. Starring John Wideman (as Sam Steiner), Kim Walker (as Sue Clemmer Steiner), Benjamin Wert and Rebecca Steiner.

Produced by Theatre of the Beat.

REVIEW AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

gad·fly - [gad-flahy]

1. any of various flies, as a stable fly or warble fly, that bite or annoy domestic animals.
2. a person who persistently annoys or provokes others with criticism, schemes, ideas, demands, requests, etc.
3. Theatre of the Beat's play about Sam Steiner, long-time librarian and archivist at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., describing his move to Canada as a draft dodger during the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War.

The idea for the play about Sam's move to Canada came from Fred Martin, Grebel's development director. He approached Rebecca Steiner (no relation to Sam), a drama student at the University of Waterloo, specifying that period music, in particular that of The Flying Burrito Brothers, a folk-rock band from the 1960s and '70s, be used. According to Martin, "My Uncle" and other Gram Parsons' songs "are a soundtrack for Sam's life."

"It's based on a true story, but it's not biography," Sam says of the play. "It's really their project. I lent my name and parts of my story."

The three sold-out performances on April 20 (44 years to the day since Sam refused the draft) and the following day were examples of great acting and music, and a story that has a message for Mennonites and others in the present. The play unfolds with minimalist staging. The music, costumes, accents and character representations move the play along quickly, together with audio-visual effects.

Beginning with Sam leaving for Goshen (Ind.) College just before the Vietnam War, the play paints him in rebellion against his Mennonite roots in many ways. The cigarette hanging from his mouth through most of the play symbolizes his chosen position outside the church community. It is not until he sees Martin Luther King march through Selma, Ala., that he is converted

spiritually and politically.

But his rough edges keep him in hot water at Goshen. In the play, his writing in a student paper, *MennoPause*, gets him expelled from school, thereby losing his student exemption from the draft. Rather than plead a Mennonite religious exemption, he goes underground, eventually being spirited across the border to Canada.

But before Canadian Mennonites can feel morally superior to Americans, Sam meets up with bigoted and prejudiced Canadians while working in a local Kitchener-Waterloo grocery store.

The playwright has created a piece that moves Sam's 1960s' American political conversion into confrontation with 2010's Canadian comfort. Sam says the grocery store incident isn't historical, but does paint a picture of some of the responses he received. There are questions about what his behaviour would do to the conscientious objector status negotiated in Canada, and musings by some survivors of communist Russia as to his stance regarding communist Vietnam.

While it was performed several times in Winnipeg at Canadian Mennonite University's Peace-It-Together conference, the April 20 show was the first time that Sam and his wife had seen it, although they had read through the text while it was being workshopped.

Both Sam and Sue enjoyed the play, with Sam visibly moved by some sections, in particular, when his character makes the decision to leave for Canada. Sam has hopes that the telling of his story will inspire further generations to work for peace and justice.

The five twenty-somethings who make up Theatre of the Beat certainly have been. ❧

Dave Rogalsky is Canadian Mennonite's Eastern Canada correspondent.



Kim Walker (as Sue Clemmer), left, John Wideman (as Sam Steiner), and other Goshen College students played by Rebecca Steiner and Ben Wert work on the college's student paper in Theatre of the Beat's Gadfly: Sam Steiner Dodges the Draft.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Joining the Doxology

BY SAM STEINER

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

Those who had the opportunity to see *Gadfly: Sam Steiner Dodges the Draft* will recall that this drama—based on the 1960s lives of Sam Steiner and Sue Clemmer—ends with the cast singing the Doxology. “Sam” joined in part way through the hymn. Some observers thought this an abrupt ending, and wondered how a draft dodger, alienated from his church of birth, returned to faith.

The Doxology scene was very moving for me, and symbolized a process that covered six years. The Mennonite community in Waterloo County, Ont., in the late 1960s and early 1970s kept singing until Sue and I joined in. It was a story of hospitality to two dislocated refugees.

When I have reflected on our first years in Canada, I remember how we turned to the Mennonite community when in trouble, and how consistently that community responded positively to young adults they didn’t know.

Dan, a Goshen (Ind.) College professor, and Kathryn Leatherman brought me to Canada in 1968. Kathryn was a Shantz from near New Hamburg, Ont., so my first night in Canada was in Kathryn’s sister’s home. I next sought out a former Goshen roommate, Peter Enns, who lived in Waterloo. I was put in touch with Walter Klaassen, a Conrad Grebel College professor who was active in the local support committee for draft resisters. It must have been Walter who led me to Jim Reusser, then pastor at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

With no hesitation, Reusser told Lester Zehr, a member at Stirling and then still owner of Zehrs supermarkets, that he had a young man who needed a job. Zehr provided one with no questions asked. Reusser also found room and board for me in the home of Stella Cressman, an aunt of his wife Helen. Stella provided

this home for at least six months, and indulged my long Sunday afternoon phone calls to Goshen while Sue finished her degree there. Jim and Helen opened their home to me—and Sue, after she arrived—on more than one occasion, and Jim would smile indulgently when we brought our visiting parents to church even though we didn’t otherwise darken the church’s doors.

The chain of hospitality did not end there. After Sue arrived in May 1969, she got a job at Provident Bookstore. The manager, Aaron Klassen, and his wife Helen became mentors to us, and had us in their home with their young children from time to time to experience “normal” life. Jake Enns, Peter’s father, got me a job at the Mutual Life Assurance Company after about a year in Canada.

When I decided to complete my bachelor’s degree at the University of Waterloo in 1972, the first course I took was Frank Epp’s “Canadian minorities” class. Frank had visited Goshen College while I was there, and had spoken passionately against the Vietnam War. I trusted Frank, and his activist Christian peacemaking attracted me. Walter Klaassen introduced me to 16th-century Anabaptism, which I found absolutely gripping.

About the same time, Sue and I began to occasionally attend Rockway Mennonite Church, then still meeting in the library at Rockway Mennonite School. John W. Snyder, the pastor, had a way of welcoming you without pushing any expectations. There were other “draft people” at Rockway Mennonite, and a sermon on the theology of Bob Dylan convinced me it was time to come back.

I had been baptized as an 11-year-old in my home church, but I asked for baptism again to mark this recommitment. This took place in October 1974, almost

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Taking a bow after Theatre of the Beat’s Gadfly: Sam Steiner Dodges the Draft are John Wideman, left, who starred as Sam Steiner; Sam Steiner himself; his wife Sue Clemmer Steiner; and Kim Walker, who played Sue Clemmer.

six years to the day after I first entered Canada. In my comments on the meaning of the baptism, I confessed my faith was not traditionally orthodox, but the church still made space for me as a follower of Jesus.

Not all encounters with the Mennonite community in our first years were positive, but the balance was overwhelmingly welcoming. The church kept singing, and we eventually joined in.

Did the persona of the marginalized radical refugee survive in any form? Others will have to answer that. I tried law school for part of a year, but discovered it wasn’t for me. My passion was really history. In the 1980s, when part of the executive board of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada and its predecessors, and later with MC Canada, I advocated for conference staff who wished to avoid paying war taxes. I advocated for homosexuals who sought greater acceptance in the church. I worked hard for the conference “integration” in Ontario that became MC Eastern Canada partly because I believed the church needed to include more than our individual Swiss/Amish/Russian Mennonite historical streams.

Thank you for inviting me to sing the Doxology. I hope we continue to invite others to join in as well. ☸

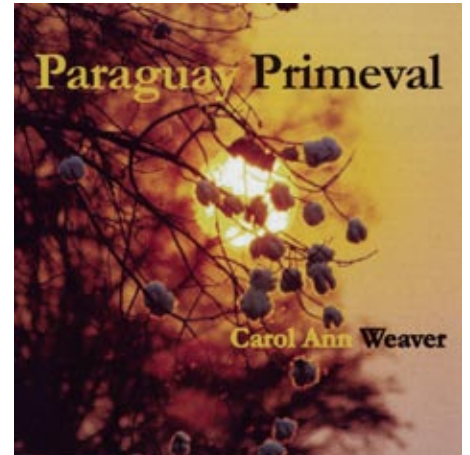
MUSIC REVIEW

Primeval with a modern twist

Paraguay Primeval.

A Lorac Productions recording, 2012.

REVIEWED BY DAVE ROGALSKY



On March 21, the chapel at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., was full to overflowing and warmed by an atypical heat wave in southern Ontario. It was as if Paraguayan weather had invaded just in time for the launch of music prof Carol Ann Weaver's newest CD, *Paraguay Primeval*.

The music, songs and spoken word move listeners from Europe to the depth of the Paraguayan Chaco. The crowd enthusiastically applauded for many of the pieces performed live at the launch, but fell silent after songs like "November Eleven," which describes the deaths over a few days of an entire family early in the settlement process.

Using words by author Dora Dueck for "Puerto Casado," Weaver captures

the emotional and mental dissonance of the settlers as they leave "behind the Motherland . . . the wintertime . . . our villages and houses . . . to find our promised land."

Drawing on other writers, including famed author Rudy Wiebe, and the words of the original settlers from a book edited by Henry and Esther Regehr, Weaver paints a series of musical pictures: of the water that spoiled quickly "in the hottest time of the day" ("Well Water"), and singing "softly falls the snow" during a hot, dry Christmas ("Chaco Christmas").

But it is songs about the moon in the Chaco sky ("Der Mond"), and the closing song, "Chaco Spring," that give words to the hope of the settlers as they make new homes in this foreign land. With the closing words to "Der Mond," Rebecca

Campbell sings, "*Dies ist Heimat, hier bin ich zu Haus*" ("This is our homeland; here I am at home"), providing a fitting ending for the journey from European homes to a feeling of being at home in Paraguay.

While the texts are traditional, sometimes in German, the music is modern and emotionally evocative, sometimes playful while always carrying the listeners along on the journey that encompasses not only geography but mental, emotional and spiritual space.

Paraguay Primeval can be ordered by e-mailing caweaver@uwaterloo.ca. ☼

Dave Rogalsky is Canadian Mennonite's Eastern Canada correspondent.

Urban Missionary / Church Planter

Trinity Mennonite Church in Calgary has identified an opportunity to make (new) disciples of non-churched people in the Southeast area of Calgary. This area consists of several rapidly growing communities – and attracts primarily urban young professional families.

This lifetime opportunity is for someone who loves to minister to people -- to introduce them to Jesus, to baptize them, and to teach them to obey Jesus' teachings. In essence, to make disciples.

It is recommended that interested candidates read *The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren, *The End of Religion* by Bruxy Cavey, and *The Naked Anabaptist* by Stuart Murray before considering this position.

Christian Theological Studies at a Bachelor or Masters level would be an asset.

If you feel the Holy Spirit leading you towards this challenging opportunity, please e-mail indication of your interest along with details about yourself to: missionary@trinity.mennonitechurch.ab.ca

VIEWPOINT

A theology full of paradox

BY CALEB GINGRICH

SPECIAL TO YOUNG VOICES

Is light a particle or a wave? Yes. It is not until we accept this apparent contradiction—the wave-particle duality—that we can understand fully the behaviour of light.

In the same way, the story of my undergraduate career cannot be fully understood until the contradictions of a faith-based life at Conrad Grebel University College and the rational, empirical world-view of systems design engineering at the University of Waterloo are embraced.

At its core, faith requires accepting the unknown, the unknowable, and trusting in the unseen, the unobserved. Engineering depends on the scientific method: a process requiring controlled, repeatable experiments with measurable, quantifiable, falsifiable outcomes observed objectively. How can one person value both kinds of knowledge and trust them equally?

Embracing contradictions is not about double-think. It is not simply believing two mutually exclusive ideas are true simultaneously. Embracing contradictions is about understanding how the two parts fit together, how they complement, enhance and strengthen each other.

Realizing that faith and science answer fundamentally different questions was an important first step for me. Science asks, “How does the world work?” It is predictive and descriptive. Faith asks, “How are we, as human beings, called to live in the world?” It is about our relationships with each other, creation and God. Certainly

these questions interact and overlap, but the answers complement, rather than challenge, each other.

Thus, as core features of the human character, faith and science inform one another. Faith, and its call to right relationships, can inform the practice of science. Concurrently, as Archbishop Elias Chacour of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church in the Middle East, has said, “The more we know, the deeper the mystery.” Science, and the knowledge it provides, can inform our understanding of God.

Consider with me the process of evolution. Individuals with traits that allow them to survive and reproduce more successfully will pass these “superior” traits on to their children, and these traits will slowly become dominant. These traits are coded in the DNA that is passed from parents to children. Successful reproduction requires that the parents’ DNA is copied extremely accurately.

However, positive change will not occur unless different individuals have slightly different traits, and thus different DNA. These differences are often caused by mutations—essentially random copying errors—in the DNA. So evolution requires a balance between randomness and precision: Too much change and life cannot reproduce; too little and life cannot evolve with its surroundings. Could God be this randomness?

Consider mixing cream into your morning coffee. You can mix them together, but it is extremely difficult to

PHOTO COURTESY OF CALEB GINGRICH



separate them. This is because mixing creates entropy, a measure of chaos or lack of order. Separating the cream from the coffee would require decreasing entropy, but the second law of thermodynamics states that entropy cannot be destroyed, only created. This means that everything is always moving towards a state of maximum chaos. There is no force that opposes this trend. Could God be the force that creates order?

But wait! Now we have a God that is both randomness and order. Can God be both? These conceptions of God also push us beyond our usual anthropomorphic images of God. Can God be both familiar—human-like—and unimaginably foreign? I believe so.

Indeed, Christian theology is full of paradox. Consider the Trinity: a monotheistic religion understanding God as three distinct parts forming a complete whole. Surely a Three-in-One God manifested in a man both fully human and fully

divine must be understood as a complete whole made of many contradictions.

Just as my existence in a contradictory world reveals to me a fuller understanding of God, it also reveals a fuller understanding of myself. Coming to understand myself as both a rational engineer and an emotional being was not easy, but it allows me to experience life as a whole human, comprised of contradiction.

So I challenge us all to embrace the contradiction and pursue it. Continue the unending journey of seeking the big picture—the complete truth—that contradiction reveals. For it is in embracing the contradiction that we learn to understand the whole. ☺

Caleb Gingrich is a recent graduate of systems design engineering at the University of Waterloo, Ont. He lived at Conrad Grebel University College while earning his degree, and attends Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

What's old is new again

BY RACHEL BERGEN

Young Voices Co-Editor
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

JAYME ANNE PHOTOGRAPHY PHOTO



Carmen West wears a hairpiece, ring, and necklace that she made herself.

What do you get when you combine thrift store finds, estate sale gems, antique store trinkets, a few online purchases and craft store necessities? Beautiful “up-cycled” jewellery and accessories from Carmen West Creative.

Carmen West (nee Janzen), who grew up attending King Road Mennonite Brethren Church in Abbotsford, is a locally recognized designer and she's even gaining some international recognition thanks to her online store at Etsy.com.

She formed Carmen West Creative in the early part of 2010, but she has been making crafts in the fashion-oriented vein for much longer.

Prior to her current business, she went to the University of the Fraser Valley to study fashion design. She started a clothing company using only eco-friendly fabrics, but she has learned that she doesn't like to be so restricted.

“At heart, I'm more of a tinkerer, and I like to have lots of ‘micro-projects’ going on,” she says.

West has been called a workaholic before because of this. Along with making jewellery, accessories and custom bridal packages, and being a part of various artisan festivals in Vancouver and throughout the Fraser Valley, she also works full-time as a graphic designer for Signal Hill, a human rights advocacy organization that provides information on life issues, women's health and family support.

With all of the work she does for Carmen West Creative, it would appear that she works two full-time jobs. But she sees her own business as a creative outlet and a way to worship God. “I realized more recently that the Lord provides raw materials and the work you do with it is an act of worship and praise,” she says. “I feel restored, excited, thrilled and happy that I can do it,

and that's a gift."

The fact that most of West's work is very eco-friendly is just a part of her. "It just makes sense. . . . It's a way of life," she says.

West shops for materials at Mennonite Central Committee thrift stores, Value Village and estate sales. She repurposes costume jewellery, and finds a lot of materials online. And she uses every single part of it. "Nothing goes to waste," she says. "Everything gets archived into my materials. I even use post-consumer materials for my business cards. When there's an opportunity [to be environmentally conscious], I just go for it!"

She recently made a bouquet entirely of vintage jewellery and put it up for sale on her online Etsy store, from where it was promptly purchased by a bride-to-be in

the U.S. After West spoke to the woman to discern the colour scheme of the wedding, she discovered that the woman was appearing on a special episode of the TLC network's *Say Yes to the Dress: Atlanta*.

West has also had her hairpieces featured at Eco Fashion Week, an event for which she partnered with a wedding-dress designer. She has participated in all of the markets Birch and Bird has organized, Bloom Market and the Robson Artisan Market, among others.

West also prides herself on the interpersonal relationship aspect of the creative process that she shares with her clients. "One of the most special things about my work is meeting clients face-to-face," she says. "How often can you say, 'I met the designer at this fashion show?'" ❧

KIMBERLY CHANDELLE PHOTOGRAPHY PHOTO



Carmen West designed and made this feather hairpiece creation.

Making community intentional

BY AARON EPP

Special to Young Voices

WINNIPEG

The six young adults who live in the three-storey house at the end of Alloway Avenue know each other well by now. They speak with each other openly, respond to each other thoughtfully, laugh easily and each one knows how the other five take their tea. All six want to grow closer to God, and they believe a good way to do that is by living together.

"This living situation has the potential to equip myself and others to make more faithful decisions and to live more faithful lives," says Mark Tiessen-Dyck.

He and his wife Melissa Tiessen-Dyck of Home Street Mennonite Church, Adam Klassen of Hope Mennonite Church, DeLayne Toews of River East Mennonite Brethren Church, and Karin Neufeld and her husband Kurt Lemky of Grain of Wheat Church-Community live in intentional community. They share groceries, meals, household roles and practise spiritual disciplines, striving together to live according to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The six see their intentional community as a supplement to the larger church congregations they belong to.

"The biggest highlight for me is [this is] a space where people can share what they're really passionate about, and where I feel like I can draw from people's faith journeys," says Karin. "Often in a congregational setting . . . I feel like I'm on the fringes a little bit. I really like being surrounded [in the house] by people who have lots of different faith journeys, but also really strong beliefs. I feel like I can draw from that, and feel like I have space to have my own faith and not feel intimidated."

The six contemplated forming an intentional community for a few months before moving in together in last August. DeLayne, Kurt and Karin got an idea of what it might be like after working and living together on a community-supported farm near Winnipeg. Adam had thought about intentional communities since studying at Canadian Mennonite University, and

PHOTO BY AARON EPP



Kurt Lemky, left, Karin Neufeld, Melissa and Mark Tiessen-Dyck, DeLayne Toews and Adam Klassen have lived in intentional community for the past eight months. While there have been challenges, the groups says it is a rewarding experience they are committed to keep working at.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMIE ARPIN-RICCI



When people are genuine and vulnerable with others, they become more of who they truly are, says pastor and author Jamie Arpin-Ricci, who likens living in intentional community to a marriage. It's one of the best and hardest things someone can do, and if it's done well and done right, everyone involved will discover more fullness of life, he says.

Mark and Melissa were exposed to intentional communities while on voluntary service assignments and while Mark studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., for the last couple of years.

Before moving in together, they met a handful of times to create a covenant that outlines their beliefs, how they hope to interact with each other and with the world.

In a category in the covenant called "house politics," the group has identified things like a desire to make decisions by consensus, supporting and encouraging each other's gifts, valuing each other's contributions and sharing meals together.

Another category, "world politics," outlines how the group wants to live faithfully in the world through hospitality, stewardship, "nonviolent peacemaking through Christ-like activism," simplicity, justice, creation care and "creative merrymaking."

The group gets together every Monday night for a house meeting to discuss how things are going, and they take turns making supper each night so that whoever is around at 6 p.m. can eat together. Three times a week, the group practises *lectio divina* (a spiritual discipline that involves reading, meditating, praying and contemplating scripture), and every second Friday they host a potluck open to friends and family.

Jamie Arpin-Ricci, pastor of Winnipeg's Little Flowers Community and author of the book *The Cost of Community*, says that intentional communities are increasingly desirable for people—and something that other Christians should perhaps consider doing—because today's culture continually celebrates and promotes individualism, and people are not created for that kind of

isolated existence.

"What intentional community does is, it provides a context that requires of us to have relationships with greater depth, greater selflessness and, as the name suggests, greater intentionality," says Arpin-Ricci, who has lived in various intentional communities for the past 17 years.

He adds that it is because of the conflicts that can occur that intentional community is so valuable. "Generally what conflict in communities is, is our selfishness and individualism rubbing up against someone else's, and we have a choice to either be self-serving or be humble," he says.

People who can go through the process of being vulnerable and genuine with others become more of who they really are, he adds, comparing it to marriage: "It's one of the best and hardest things someone can do, and if it's done well and done right, everyone involved will discover more fullness of life, both in relationship to their own identities, in their relationship with others and their relationship with God."

After eight months together, the six young adults say they have had no major conflicts so far, but recognize that conflict is a part of living in an intentional community, and that it might just be a matter of time.

"I think we're still in the honeymoon period," Melissa says.

"I don't think we've learned to fight yet," Karin adds.

"I'm looking forward to that in Year Two," DeLayne deadpans.

Everyone laughs. Living together may not be easy, but these six have experienced the benefits and are committed to keep working at it. ☺

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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advert@canadianmennonite.org

Alberta

June 6: Heritage retreat at Camp Valaqua, from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Speaker: Mary Ann Kirkby, author of *I Am Hutterite*. Topic: "Understanding and respecting people with different practices in faith and life." For more information, or to register, call Kurt Janz at 403-271-7477 or Jake Wiebe at 403-242-7370.
June 8-9: Mennonite Central Committee annual Relief Sale, in Didsbury.

Saskatchewan

May 26: RJC fundraising golf tournament, at Valley Regional Park.
June 8-9: MCC Relief Sale in Saskatoon.

Manitoba

May 30: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Grade 7 to 9 spring concert, at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.
May 31: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Grade 10-12 spring concert, at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.
June 1-2: "Youth Ministry as School of Love," an Institute for Theology and Church conference at CMU.
June 2: MCC Manitoba lunch fundraiser at 159 Henderson Highway, Winnipeg. For more information, visit www.mccmanitoba.ca or call Paul Friesen at 204-261-6381.
June 9: MCC Manitoba walk-a-thon and Penny Power fundraiser at CMU. For more information, visit www.mccmanitoba.ca or call Paul Friesen at 204-261-6381.
June 10: Mennonite Collegiate Institute sangerfest, from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Ontario

May 22-25: Quilts for the World, at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church; (22-24) 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; (25) 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Guest artists: Needle Sisters of Elmira. Gift boutique on site. All proceeds to MCC.
May 29: Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp, New Hamburg, is hosting a retreat for retired ministers. Speaker: Don Morgenson. Theme: "Wonder, wisdom and spiritual growth."
June 2: The Wayne Gilpin Singers present "A Place to Stand," a musical celebration of Canada, at Waterloo Christian Reformed Church, at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at the door or by calling 1-800-867-3281.
June 3: Sixth annual Harmonia Sacra Sing, at Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call Will Stoltz at 519-696-2805 or Laurence Martin at 519-208-4591.
June 10: Hagerman Mennonite Church 75th anniversary. Past and present congregants are invited to a special worship service at 10 a.m., followed by

lunch. The celebration will continue with music and storytelling from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

June 16: Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario annual meeting and afternoon bus tour, at Vineland

Mennonite Church, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Speaker: Jonathan Seiling. Theme: "Mennonites, neighbours and enemies during the War of 1812." For more information, call Sam Steiner at 519-884-1040 or e-mail mhso@uwaterloo.ca.



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Announcement

75th Anniversary
Bethel Mennonite Church
Winnipeg, MB
November 3 & 4, 2012.
*"Come journey through the past
and present to the future."*
For details visit
www.bethelmennonite.ca

Travel

Visit Europe the Mennonite Way! Mennonite Heritage Tours 2012: 10-18 day Hotel Tours focussing on Mennonite heritage in Holland, Germany, Poland, Belgium and Switzerland. www.mennoniteheritagetours.eu

For Rent

For Rent: Dunromin cottage.

3 bedroom cottage at Red Bay on Bruce Peninsula, nestled among the maple trees. Short walk to sandy beach and small park. Includes a rear deck. Available June 30 through July 28, and August 11 through September 1. Call Diane at 519-746-4920.

Announcement

The biennial **Schürch (Sherk, Shirk, etc.) family reunion** and genealogical gathering will be held at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario from **August 9-12, 2012.**

For details and registration package see www.schurch.ca, www.schurchfamilyassociation.net, contact schurchreunion@gmail.com, or Meredith at 519-753-0554

Employment Opportunities

Lezha Academic Center in Lezhe, Albania, seeks **MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND ESL TEACHERS**, beginning August 2012. Employment through partnership with Virginia Mennonite Missions. First-year, experienced, and retired educators encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Contact Rita Steiner: rddsteiner@gmail.com or 540-421-7166.

First Mennonite Church, Burns Lake, a small body of believers in northern B.C., is looking for a **PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME SERVANT LEADER PASTOR**. We desire to find a person who shares our vision and will work with us to fulfill it. Our ideal candidate will have an exceptional ability to inspire discipleship, outreach, and a desire to embrace our community, while holding firm to sound biblical doctrine. Our candidate will agree with the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. Please send your resume to FMC c/o Wilf Dueck wedueck@telus.net or Ph 250-692-3455 Cell 250-692-6454

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Elizabethtown College, located in southeastern Pennsylvania (USA), is seeking an organized and detail-oriented individual to fill the role of Research Associate in the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies. The Young Center fosters and promotes the study of Anabaptist and Pietist groups.

Conducting research, interpreting the work of the Young Center to the college community, various segments of the public and to the media, and maintaining research materials are key responsibilities of this position. Candidates should have an associate's degree and should have two years of administrative experience or equivalent; prior research experience is preferred. Individuals must have a knowledge of the history of Anabaptist and Pietist groups in North America, a broad familiarity with beliefs and practices of Old Order communities of Anabaptists in North America, a broad familiarity with research strategies, and especially skills for gathering demographic statistics of Old Order groups.

For full ad and application instructions, please visit www.etown.edu/humanresources

As an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, Elizabethtown College is seeking candidates who will enhance the diversity of its faculty, staff, and administration.



**Administrative Assistant to the Director
of Development and Events Coordinator
Conrad Grebel University College**

Duties include a wide range of tasks related to interacting with donors to the College, recordkeeping, report writing, database maintenance, correspondence, and coordinating the logistics of a range of annual events and special occasions.

Desirable qualities include initiative and the ability to work independently, exceptional people skills, strong communication skills, solid organizational skills, excellent attention to detail and computer literacy. 25 hours per week with initial 12 month contract.

Send letter of application and resumé by **June 5, 2012** to:

E. Paul Penner, Director of Operations,
Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, ON, N2L 3G6
epenner@uwaterloo.ca grebel.ca/positions



ACCOUNTANT

Accountant needed for a full-time, 40 hour/week position working as a member of the accounting team providing day-to-day management and oversight to all accounting and payroll related aspects of the organization at the Communitas office in Abbotsford. All applicants must have prior accounting experience in the non-profit sector and an accounting designation (e.g. CMA, CGA, CA). Position starts September 2012. Applicants must submit an application on our website at www.CommunitasCare.com. In addition, resumes can be sent to:

Layne Bieber,
HR Recruitment & Retention Coordinator,
Email: hr@CommunitasCare.com or Fax: 604.850.2634

Communitas is a non-profit, faith-based social services agency. We provide various resources to persons living and dealing with mental, physical and/or emotional disabilities. We are advocates on behalf of those we serve.



Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
invites applications for

REGIONAL MINISTER

Three-quarter-time Regional Minister required for ministry in the Western Region of MCEC to support pastors and lay leaders for effective congregational ministry. Applicants will require previous pastoral experience, a familiarity with denominational resources, a depth of spiritual maturity, and a commitment to Anabaptist theology. Applicants will be excellent communicators and team builders who are energized by working alongside the MCEC Leadership Team to realize MCEC's mission of *Extending the Peace of Jesus Christ*. Ordination and seminary level training required. Application deadline is **May 31, 2012**. For more information or to request a job description, please contact:

David Martin, MCEC Executive Minister
Phone: 519-650-3806 / 1-800-206-9356 x113
E-mail: dmartin@mcec.ca
www.mcec.ca

PASTOR

*Carrot River Mennonite Church
Carrot River, Sask.*

We are a healthy congregation of 100+, with a diverse range in ages. We hold to the Anabaptist theology, and are a member of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan and MC Canada. We are located in a stable community of 1100, in the parklands area with mixed farming and many recreation opportunities.

We are seeking a pastor with skills for spiritual leadership and a heart for pastoral care. Ministry education and experience would be an asset. Housing available.

Interested candidates may contact the Search Committee chair, Herman Enns, at 306-768-3146 or ennsh@sasktel.net



LEAD PASTOR

Steinbach Mennonite Church (SMC) is located in Steinbach, Manitoba. Steinbach is one of the fastest growing, most culturally diverse cities in western Canada. SMC is seeking a Lead Pastor with strong Anabaptist theology to lead us as we strive to continue to develop our relationships with Christ, each other, and the community.

Candidates should have the following:

- Strong interpersonal relationship skills
- Willingness and vision to help SMC meet challenges
- Energy and willingness to lead staff of German and Youth Ministry
- A Master of Divinity Degree or higher education
- At least 5 years experience in a church leadership position is desirable

We have an average Sunday morning attendance of 500 in two services (German & English). Understanding of the German language and Paraguayan culture would be an asset.

Please send your resumes to 4siemens@mymts.net or contact Jac Siemens at 1.204.326.2697 for more information.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
BETHANY MANOR**

The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of a 272 unit complex. This complex is owned and operated by Saskatoon Mennonite Care Services Inc. The board of directors, which provides guidance and support for the executive director, consists of representatives from 12 Mennonite Churches in Saskatoon and surrounding area.

Qualifications: Strong leadership, proven management skills, strong communication skills, experience working with government agencies, Post-Secondary education, supportive of the Anabaptist faith.

Please submit cover letter, resume and salary expectations to:

Bethany Manor
Attn: Selection Committee
110 La Ronge Rd.
Saskatoon, SK
S7K 7H8
Competition closes **June 15, 2012**

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MWC church provides aid following tribal dispute

Kenya Mennonite Church also assisting with peacebuilding initiatives

Story and Photo by Mennonite World Conference

In the aftermath of recent border clashes between Luo and Kalenjin ethnic tribes in eastern Kenya, Kenya Mennonite Church is helping to provide aid to displaced persons and participating in peace initiatives.

In late February and early March, more than 6,000 people were displaced when Kalenjin youths raided a number of Luo communities, burning crops and houses. The violence was touched off by incidents of cattle theft.

When the violence broke out, Clyde Agola, Mennonite bishop in the Kisumu Diocese and general secretary of Kenya Mennonite Church, a member of Mennonite World Conference (MWC), informed Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Central Committee workers. Both agencies responded promptly with emergency aid, which is being used to provide basic needs for displaced persons.

Now that the violence has abated, the focus is on continuing support for displaced persons and also on addressing issues that caused the violence.

In a mid-April e-mail to MWC, Agola said, "There is still a great need for settlement of 72 families who are still languishing in the rain and cold in the night, and have need for food, medication and casual clothing. Usually February to June is the planting season for the long rains. There is need for purchase of planting seeds and fertilizers and farm tools, such as hoes and machetes, to ensure that these people can immediately engage in their farms once they are given shelter."

The elders are also resolving to be ambassadors of peace, to restrain youths from engaging in war, and to initiate joint projects to engage idle and jobless youths. The elders hope to stage a "peace caravan in the area and eventually sign a peace accord that will bind the communities



Elderly Kenyan men are among those who receive blankets as part of a relief effort under the auspices of the Kenya Mennonite Church following ethnic clashes in eastern Kenya earlier this year.

living in the area," according to Gordon Obado, program coordinator for the relief and development arm of Kenya Mennonite Church in the Kisumu East Diocese.

"We believe enhanced humanitarian support and peacebuilding initiatives will be the pillar[s] to restoration of the lives of the communities around the area where the clashes occurred," Agola said. ☸

*'Usually February to June is the planting season for the long rains. There is need for purchase of planting seeds and fertilizers and farm tools, such as hoes and machetes, to ensure that these people can immediately engage in their farms once they are given shelter.'
(Clyde Agola, general secretary of Kenya Mennonite Church)*