

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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Environmental evangelism

See back cover

inside

Male roles in shift 4

MCEC new congregations 14

Manitoba camping proposal 16

EDITORIAL

Wrestling with the 'powers'

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

His voice was anxious. Member of Parliament Paul Calandra was on the other end of the line. From his office in Ottawa, he seemed uncomfortable with the interview, hesitating, from time to time, to answer my questions. There were several mixed messages.

I knew this exchange wouldn't be easy, but it was necessary. I knew I had to talk directly with the planner of an event in Stouffville, Ontario that wasn't sitting well with the historic peace churches in that town—namely a commemoration of a military honour guard connected with the War of 1812. Many of these were our churches (Mennonite Church Canada congregations).

I had never met Paul Calandra. Yes, I had heard other people's impressions and I had an idea what to expect. I had read the story in the *Globe and Mail* headlined "War of 1812 celebrations an 'affront' to Ontario town's pacifists." There were more than 300 responses from all over the province and Canada.

But I wanted to lay aside the filters and talk to this man one-on-one. I needed to hear his arguments, first-hand, for myself, give him the benefit of the doubt. I needed to hear the inflexions in his voice, see how he framed his arguments.

I was disappointed, but not surprised. After all, here was a high profile politician

voted into office by a majority in his riding and steeped in the military narrative of his country—a loyal patriot. He was



quite willing to talk and took my questions in stride even though uneasy with their pointedness. A man with strong feelings (we would say "convictions" in our parlance), he was quite sure he was right. Having a great deal of authority at his disposal, he is, as part of the majority government, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage. He felt duty-bound to honour, with full regalia, the sacrifice of the war dead. There would be no such distractions as recognizing those who wanted to include another narrative.

But now, he was on the defensive. After all, a person of this certitude would be "surprised" that a group of his constituents, not sharing his enthusiasm and pride, would be so down on Canada's "honourable" military accomplishments. He grudgingly acknowledged that the town was settled by war resisters, but that was then, this was now.

"We can recognize that at a different time and place," he insisted. In 30 minutes of conversation, he had not moved a bit. Besides, using a tired political "divide and conquer" ploy, he blamed the protestors for dividing the town, saying it was only one or two individuals and not a widely-organized group.

By contrast, I visited with two of the organizers of the peace church protest to the upcoming event, Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, the associate academic dean of Tyndale Seminary and a resident of the town, and Pieter Niemeyer, pastor of the local Rogue Valley Mennonite Church. Arnold rode up to greet us this sunny Friday afternoon on his bicycle. Pieter was relaxed and confident that the upcoming council meeting would be a great opportunity to witness to our "life-giving" way of peace.

Neither of them were anxious or argumentative. Arnold, a diligent historical scholar, had done his homework. He was sure that, after laying out the historical facts of the town's roots, the town officials and even the biased MP Calandra, could be convinced that the upcoming military event would make room for the historical and ongoing peace component in the narrative. He noted the slim historical military connection to Stouffville.

Pieter, with a wide smile and embodying all the grace of a compassionate pastor, had high hopes. "It is very much our desire to build understanding, de-escalate the present situation with integrity, find good resolution and work for peace of our broader community," he said. Spoken like a true peacemaker.

The outcome, at the May 15 meeting was not as expected. The town council, torn between their MP and the peace contingent, postponed any formal recognition of the town's pacifist roots in the June 15 commemoration and parade. It will not be recognized.

Why should we be surprised? This is a classic ongoing conflict with the "powers" about which the Apostle Paul warned the Ephesians (and us) eons ago: "*For our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers.*"

ABOUT THE COVER:

Noah Thiessen, left and Kaya Thiessen help carry a rotten mattress out of the bush lot beside Edmonton's First Mennonite Church during the 'Capital city clean-up' event on May 6. See back cover for more photos.

PHOTO: DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD, CANADIAN MENNONITE

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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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contents

Male roles in shift 4

While serving as CMU Pastor in Residence, **Doug Klassen** spoke about changes in male role models. The resulting discussion convinced him that males in our society find it difficult to know who they should aspire to be.

Dusty Bibles? 13

Gerald Gerbrandt, Tom Yoder Neufeld and **Sheila Klassen-Wiebe**, speakers for Mennonite Church Canada's assembly July 12-15 reflect on what it means to dust off the Bible.



Graduates of 2012 19-21

Canadian Mennonite University and Conrad Grebel University College celebrate graduations.

Stouffville responds to war celebration 23

Dick Benner tells the story of how Stouffville's peace churches are responding to plans for a military commemoration that ignores the town's peaceful history.

From a mustard seed 24

The work of MCC thrift shops began over 40 years ago in Altona, Manitoba.



MCC thrift shop destroyed by fire 26

An early morning fire on May 3 destroyed the MCC thrift shop in Yarrow, B.C.

Crossing barriers in your own culture 34

During an MCC Alberta tour to Kenya, **Theodore Wiebe** reflected on barriers within his own culture.

Regular features:

For discussion **7** Readers write **8** Milestones **11**

Yellow Page **31** Calendar **38** Classifieds **39**

Wrestling with the 'powers' 2

DICK BENNER

Senior Blessing 8

ELSIE REMPEL

A hundred years from now 9

MELISSA MILLER

Needed: Life specialists 10

SHERRI GROSZ

Online NOW!

What's so Christian about family? asks **Susie Guenther Loewen** a Young Voices blogger.

Go to <http://YOUNGVOICES.CANADIANMENNONITE.ORG>

Shifting

*How do we raise our boys to
become godly men?*

BY DOUG KLASSEN



Doug Klassen, pastor of Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary, Alta., served as Pastor in Residence at Canadian Mennonite University in late January and early February 2012. His presentation about the role of men in society at the CMU Monday forum sparked lots of discussion. He reflected further on the topic in a sermon at Foothills Mennonite on February 12, 2012.

"We are living at an important and fruitful moment now, for it is clear to me that the images of adult manhood given by the popular culture are worn out; a man can no longer depend on them."—Robert Bly

This year is the 100th anniversary of the first and only voyage of the Titanic. The captain and crew, trying to show off how quickly they could cross the ocean, went too quickly through a cluster of icebergs. One of them pierced the ship's hull and it began to sink. As the boat began to go down, the ships' crew and most of the men on board helped get women and children into the life-boats first. Since there was not enough life-preserving equipment, many men and all of the crew went down with the ship. That is what men did. They were the guardians and protectors of women and children—that is part of what it meant to be a man up until and including the early 1900s.

This was mentioned hundreds of times in the news story surrounding the sinking of the Costa Concordia. The captain, trying to show off how close he could get to the shore, got too close and a rock from the shoreline pierced the hull and it began to sink. As the boat began to go down, some of the ship's crew and a good number of the men on board began to push women and children

male roles

out of the way to get into the lifeboats and get to safety. Many men no longer considered themselves the guardians and protectors of women and children.

Is this what it means to be a man today? What has happened to men in the last 100 years—even the last 50 years? There have been huge changes. We see it illustrated in the media as well.

Male role models of yesterday

How many of us grew up watching the show “Leave it to Beaver”? The Cleavers were the 1950s All-American family where each person had a role. In this fictional suburban family, Father, Mother and two sons live a very traditional existence. The father goes off to work every day in a suit. The mother does not work (as they said back then) but raises the two boys and tends to all the needs of the household, wearing a dress, heels, and often an apron. It is from that era that we get the saying, “Just wait till your father gets home,” and the telephone solicitor asking, “May I speak with the man of the house?”

Until the 1950s and early 60s, men had a prescribed role. They were the bread-

winners of the house; they got to work early, supported wife and children, were admired for their decisive attitudes, and made all the major decisions.

Over time though, the ground began to move beneath our feet. By the 1990s when Robert Bly wrote his book, *Iron John: A book about Men*, he began by saying, “We are living at an important and fruitful moment now, for it is clear to me that the images of adult manhood given by the popular culture are worn out; a man can no longer depend on them.

“By the time a man is 35 he knows that the images of the right man, the tough man, the true man, which he received in high school do not work in life. Such a man is open to new visions of what a man is or could be.”

I think our culture has realized this. And what often happens in our culture when something becomes uncertain? We poke fun at it. A while ago we began poking fun at men.

The Ward Cleavers, the Jimmy Stewarts who were the models of manhood began to disappear and some new models began to appear. Who have become the new role models, generally

speaking, for men in our society over the last 20-30 years?

Contemporary male role models

Maybe the most popular, and certainly the most vocal about men’s issues in the last 20 years is a character we know as Homer Simpson. He has come to be a defining character for an aimless man. He does not go to work early, but sleeps on the job when he gets there. He is forever shirking his responsibility, except for the commitment he feels to get to the bar every night. And he wants this for his son too. In one episode he is disagreeing with what his wife is saying to their son, Bart. Homer says to her, “Marge, don’t discourage the boy! Weaseling out of things is important to learn. It’s what separates us from the animals! Except the weasel.”

In a different episode, during one of those poignant father/son moments he says to Bart, “I want to share something with you: The three little sentences that will get you through life. Number 1: Cover for me. Number 2: Oh, good idea, Boss! Number 3: It was like that when I got here.”

Homer is a symbol of a man who has

abdicated responsibility and just tries to find his way through life under the radar, hoping that his wife will shoulder the responsibilities. Close behind him would be Peter Griffin of *Family Guy*, and to a degree, Ray Romano, Jim Belushi, Tim Allen, and many others, all who have played bumbling or even buffoon-type characters alongside their sensible, responsible, over-burdened wives. You find this even in the *Berenstain Bears* children's books, for crying out loud.

That is the one expression of how men are portrayed. The other prominent expression comes from men like Arnold Schwarzenegger, Vin Diesel, Chuck Norris, Russell Crowe. They play the image of the fighter/warrior who is out of touch with most of his emotions, except his anger toward a villain and maybe his weakness for the beautiful but frail and melancholy woman that he seems to attract. To them, life is like a sport, or a fight.

In the movie, *Any Given Sunday*, Al Pacino has a famous locker-room speech that illustrates it. He says, "In either game—life or football—the margin for error is so small. I mean, one half a step too late or too early and you don't quite make it. One half second too slow, too fast and you don't quite catch it. The inches we need are everywhere around us. They're in every break of the game, every minute, every second. On this team we fight for that inch. On this team we tear ourselves and everyone else around us to pieces for that inch."

Arnold Schwarzenegger said, "For me life is continuously being hungry. The meaning of life is not simply to exist, to survive, but to move ahead, to go up, to achieve, to conquer." There are other portrayals of men, but I think these are the two major stereotypes.

Many are left confused

My vantage point in this topic comes from my work as a pastor. I lead a very interesting life and interact with all kinds of men. Most weekday mornings I am in my neighbourhood gym at 5:30. Most of my friends there would fall into the category of being a "man's man." When you are there at 5:30, you are not there to fool

around. The guy that I train with carries in over 300 lbs. of his own weights every morning because what the gym has is not heavy enough. We egg each other on, we provoke each other, we do talk about serious things, but just in small sound bites—I mean, we are guys.

Throughout my day I see men that are right across the spectrum. I see men who still get excited about strength, endurance and pushing the limits. I see men that push against the bad weather or other obstacles in their work. And I see men who seem to be emasculated, stripped of their role, their voice, even their personhood. And I see and visit with men everywhere in between.

I would say, that of all of the men that I train with, or visit with, or counsel, very few of them, feel a deep sense of confidence as to where they are in life and what they are doing. As Robert Bly says, "The male in the past 20 years has become more thoughtful, more gentle. But by this process he has not become more free.

He's a nice boy who pleases not only his mother, but also the young woman he is living with. But inside, things are not good."

I know for certain that many men are in such a state that they dare not think too much about what is going on inside, for if they do, they might break down, and never get it back together.

David and Absalom's story

Perhaps a story that could best describe where the modern man is at is the story of David and his son Absalom. This is an ancient story, but it is a story that maybe best illustrates how men have abdicated their roles. It goes like this:

Almost from the start, Absalom had a number of strikes against him. For one thing, he was much too handsome for his own good, and his special pride was such a magnificent head of hair that once a year when he trimmed it, the trimmings

alone tipped the scales at three and a half pounds. For another thing, his father King David, was either spoiling him rotten, reading him the riot act or ignoring him. This did not promote stability of character in the boy. Absalom murdered his brother who had violated his sister, and when the old army general Joab wouldn't help Absalom patch things up with his father, Absalom figured, "Fine, I'll show you," so he set Joab's barley field on fire.

Even with these outrageous acts, all of Israel was entranced with Absalom, so that when he eventually led a revolt against his father, many joined him. On the eve of the crucial battle, his father, King David, was a wreck. He was afraid that he might lose his throne; he was afraid even more that he might lose Absalom. He felt like a failure. The boy was a thorn in the flesh, but he was also the apple of his eye, and before the fighting started, he told the chiefs of staff, till they were sick of hearing it, that

And what often happens in our culture when something becomes uncertain? We poke fun at it. A while ago we began poking fun at men.

if Absalom fell into their clutches, they must promise to go easy on him for his father's sake. David was feeling so guilty.

During it all, as Absalom was riding his mule through some thick branches of a great oak, his hair was caught in the branches, and he hung there. Joab, whose field he had burned, heard of it, and he and his men ran to finish him off.

When they broke the news to David, his heart broke. When he cried, "O my son Absalom, . . . Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom," he meant it—from the bottom of his broken heart he meant it, for David felt the guilt of what his boy witnessed in his growing-up years. Absalom was his father's son.

Though our circumstances are seldom as intense as this story, there are many men who feel as David felt about much of his life. At moments, when we read the Psalms, we see David is on the right track. He wrote so many good things—his heart

was in the right place. But at other times we see how David felt about what his life was amounting to in all of this.

What is a godly man?

So it is with men today. They live as if everything is fine, but deep down many know their work is meaningless. They are desperately lonely, they are deprived, and they are afraid of the darkness that is

I know for certain that many men are in such a state that they dare not think too much about what is going on inside, for if they do, they might break down, and never get it back together.

deep inside of them. But what many men fear the most is that someone is going to blow their cover. So to hide it they live passively, even robotically, only to get old and die, holding on to a lot of unfulfilled dreams and deep disappointments.

I wonder sometimes, if you take away from most men their football, hockey and beer, what do you have? You take all that away, and you take away their valium, their drug. And while most at first would be mad, in a short while they would become anxious and even scared.

I have found when talking about this that the men in the crowd began to look stronger. Their posture changed, their eyes became intense. I was touching on stuff that was deep inside of them and I sensed they wanted to hear more. The women, on the other hand, looked uneasy. Many women have worked at jobs where they were paid less than a man for equal work. Most middle-aged and older women remember a time when the women were the ditzy, flighty small-minded ones on the sit-coms. And the looks of concern I have received told me that they were not interested in any discussion that was going to inspire men to “take control” and “put them back in their place.” It wasn’t until I commended the liberation that has come to women, and said that there needs to be more yet, that the women relaxed and looked less concerned.

So where does this leave us? Are men

just doomed to live in limbo—somewhere between the Titanic and the Costa Concordia? One thing that would help us would be to think more intentionally of what it would mean to live as a godly man.

There is a lot of talk circling around in the Christian blogosphere about this. Some writers like Mark Driscoll and John Piper are saying things that, in my opinion, are attempting to subjugate women

again. And they are using the language and symbols of aggression. It is causing a lot of concern and some pain.

Biblical role models

What are the good examples for us?

There are several places in the book of Acts where Paul acts as a role model, but in his letters to Timothy we see Paul mentoring Timothy and showing him what it meant to be a godly man. In 1 Timothy 6, Paul warns Timothy about those who argue, who talk about

meaningless things, and those do not know truth. Paul tells Timothy about the temptation of seeking to be rich, and how that has ruined people. “But as for you, man of God, shun all of this; aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness . . . take hold of what is eternal as you did in your baptismal vows. . . . Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you.”

In Winnipeg, we talked about this subject off and on all week. I had people giving me books to read. It hit a nerve. May this discussion continue.

Our church has WISK (Women’s Intergenerational: Seniors to Kids) so what about something for the men and boys? Maybe we could start an MBA (Men and Boys Association) at Foothills Mennonite Church where men and boys could get together for meaningful interaction, for fun and activities, and to remind ourselves that we are not to be like Homer Simpson, or Chuck Norris. We are to embody the best parts of Paul, Silas, Timothy, Josiah, Elijah and a host of others, but most of all, we are to be like Christ.

There is many a symbolic Costa Concordia out there, where men need to find a renewed sense of purpose, for the sake of Christ and his Kingdom. ❧

/// For discussion

1. What role models are boys and young men exposed to today? How well do our families and churches do in providing healthy male role models? Does pop culture provide positive as well as negative images of what it means to be a man? Who were the positive role models of earlier generations?
2. Klassen says that when we are uncertain about something we poke fun at it. Do you agree? Why do you think situation comedies and other television shows poke fun at male characters? What has made Homer Simpson such a well-known character? How much do shows like The Simpsons influence our perceptions of masculinity?
3. What can we learn about relationships from the David and Absalom story of 2 Samuel, chapters 15-19? What are the limitations of taking a male fighter/warrior stance? What biblical characters would provide a better role model?
4. Klassen says that the continuing discussion about male role models through his week at Canadian Mennonite University shows that the topic hit a nerve. Do you agree? What can congregations do to help young men find good role models? How could we reduce the influence of pop culture?

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.

✉ Mennonites can serve Jesus Christ . . . or Stephen Harper

THE DAY AFTER the last federal election, which gave the Conservatives the majority that they wanted, a sign—or shrine—went up on the Highway 1 in the Fraser Valley: "Highway of Heroes." It is a blatant and constant reminder of this government's military priorities.

Our country, which is partly responsible for thousands of Afghanistan lives having been lost or crippled, is attempting to emulate the military mentality of its southern neighbour.

The irony in all of this is that Mennonites have been part of the constituency that has voted for this government! My dear Mennonite brothers and sisters: We have blood on our hands! It is now that we need to confess our sins—as we read in James—so we might be healed.

FROM OUR LEADERS

Senior blessing

ELSIE REMPEL

With a Canadian average life expectancy of about 80.7 years, many of us are—or will be—classified as "seniors" for the last third of our lifespan. Researchers on aging now claim people in North America live through more life stages as seniors than they experienced in the first third of their lives!

So how are we going to use this final third of our lives?

People over 55 go through several stages that are recognized in popular culture by terms that include "older adults," "seniors," "elderly" and "frail," or "go-go," "slow-go," and "no-go" labels. But our life experiences, rather than chronology, determine our stage of older adulthood—and it is always in flux. For instance, after sustaining a fractured ankle and wrist in a car accident on Feb 10, I became a "slow-go" senior for about six weeks. Thankfully, the condition was temporary.

Because of lingering ageist attitudes that label older people as outdated "geezers,"

many people over 55 don't like to think of themselves as seniors. However, older adulthood should be desired and celebrated. It is time for the church to boldly proclaim this biblical attitude!

After the Feb. 10 accident, I am particularly thrilled to anticipate my 60th birthday this summer. I intend to purposefully celebrate each additional year the Lord gives me. I am convinced that I've been saved for a purpose. My life as a senior will be full of challenges, but also blessings, and I hope to be a blessing to others as well.

Due to high birth rates and low infant mortality rates between 1945 and 1964, along with increasingly good medical care, young seniors abound in North America. Most of us have lived privileged lives, which, in turn, have afforded us many options as seniors. From Scripture, we know that much is expected from those to whom much has been given. I am convinced that God is challenging



this privileged generation to claim their senior years as a time to mentor, encourage and bless the younger members of our faith communities, whether these people are our biological or spiritual family members.

Unless we learn to deliberately encourage and bless the younger participants in our congregations, our larger numbers could easily dominate and overwhelm emerging generations of leaders. This concern was one of the major findings of the 2006 "God's People Now" tour by Mennonite Church Canada's former general secretary, Robert J. Suderman, who personally visited nearly every MC Canada congregation.

Encouraging and blessing the younger generations has now become part of my work as formation consultant. After several years of work and assistance from a wonderful team, I have written a book entitled *Please Pass the Faith: The Spiritual Art of Grandparenting*, which is anticipated for release by MennoMedia on July 1 this year. I hope and trust that it will provide meaningful tools for my generation to become a blessing to those in the first third of life.

Elsie Rempel is MC Canada's formation consultant.

The government of Canada is selling out to the lowest common denominator. Instead of doubling the money that we donate to Mennonite Central Committee, the government has discontinued support that previous humanitarian leaders of Canada initiated. This government chooses, instead, to spend borrowed money on war and jails for Canadians. Essential Canadian programs, such as infrastructure, education and health remain underfunded. Canadian

Mennonites need to learn from history to understand what military preparedness leads to.

To lead a fully integrated life, Mennonite cannot vote for a Conservative government and follow the Prince of Peace at the same time. "Chose ye this day whom you will serve. As for me and my house, we will serve Jesus."

WALTER QUIRING, SURREY, B.C.

FAMILY TIES

A hundred years from now

MELISSA MILLER

Will it matter a hundred years from now? This is a question I have come to ask myself when I'm tied up in knots about a family or work situation. I find it to be especially helpful when I'm stuck on my perspective and having difficulty being open to others' perspectives. The question can be expanded: is the emotional investment, the sleepless nights and the churning stomach, the battle that I'm waging—is it really worth it? Is this how I want to be using my time and energy? Will it even matter a hundred years from now?

The question itself usually comes with an answer. Most typically, the answer is no. The goal that I am so earnestly striving for is not one of lasting significance. A hundred years from now, the outcome, whether or not it's my preferred one, will matter not one whit. The consequences will be as fading as the grass described by the biblical psalmist. "As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more." (Psalm 103:15-16)

The hundred year question and its

most likely answer gives me space to unhook from fleeting pursuits and recommit to larger goals. Again the psalmist has a word for us when we are reminded that a thousand years in God's sight are like a day. (Psalm 90:4) The thousand- or hundred-year concept challenges our futile striving and self-preoccupation, even as it comforts us with a vision of God's timelessness.

Perhaps the fathers among us can take heart at such musings. Maybe they are



Thank God for fathers who leave a worthy inheritance, one that will matter in a hundred years.

useful for all of us as we mark Father's Day. Fathers and mothers wonder about the ultimate significance of their efforts. Will it matter how I parent my child? Will our sons and daughters catch the values we are trying to pass on? Will my caring, my teaching, my discipline have a lasting impact? A hundred years from now, will it matter?

My father's influence on the lives of his children has now lasted over a half century, as his sons and daughters move through middle age. Going about

my life, I often think about him. I call on his boundless physical energy to strengthen me when I am tackling a job that seems to be too hard. I recall the gracious way he apologized to his children for hurtful actions of the past. I feel his delighted smile spread across my face when I welcome my adult son home, much as Dad did his children. During morning devotions, I remember his love of scripture, a love that I share. I hear his wise counsel when I am facing a challenging situation at work. I treasure his Christian witness of renewal and transformation.

As one child reflecting on one father, it is easy for me to imagine that his legacy will last one hundred years or more. While I may not make the century mark, his labours have already shaped me for decades, influencing how I respond to those around me.

The gifts he gave to me are ones that I carry with me; I use them today and pass them on to my son and to others, who may do the same. Thank God for fathers who leave a worthy inheritance, one that will matter in a hundred years.

Melissa Miller (familyties@mts.net) lives in Winnipeg where she works as a pastor and counsellor. Her family ties include that of daughter, sister, wife, mother and friend.

✉ House church thankful for generous support

RE: "AGAPE FELLOWSHIP on the rebound, April 2, page 15.

Since Agape Fellowship, London, Ont., is not funded by Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, churches within the Stratford Cluster, including, Avon, Cassel, East Zorra, Nairn, Tavistock and Valleyview,

along with St. Agatha, Zurich and Poole, play vital roles in keeping Agape operating. These churches give financial, encouragement and prayer support.

Valleyview Mennonite is a special sister-church to Agape. This sister donates garage sale items, books, retreat leadership, meals, food for special events, baking ingredients and community cupboard supplies, and provides pianists for special events and weekly transportation for Agape members to come to church,

GOD, MONEY, ME

Needed: Life specialists

SHERRI GROSZ

According to Moses Znaimer, founder and CEO of ZoomerMedia Limited, "Everybody wants to live long, but nobody wants to be 'Old.'"

What do you think of when you hear the words "senior" or "senior citizen?" Seniors are a growing group in Canada. Our seniors are both older and younger than ever. Life expectancies are growing and people are living longer. Residents in their 90s or 100s is not unusual in many care homes. At the same time, the word "senior" is applied to an ever younger group. A few decades ago, you needed to be age 60 or 65 to receive a senior's discount; now sometimes even 50-year-olds qualify.

Many institutions in Canada segregate by age and churches are no exception. We may all gather to worship but may not interact much during worship time. The gatherings, groups, and Sunday school classes are often broadly age defined—the children go here, the youth go there, the seniors meet in this space and the rest of the group meets somewhere else. I'm simplifying, of course. We can learn much from each other, both from those who are just a little farther down the road

we're travelling and from those who travelled that road many years before. Some details may have changed but the big questions often remain the same from generation to generation: What is my purpose in life? What does God want from me? Will I get through this valley?



The Bible is full of seniors who followed the direction of God and did surprising and wonderful things.

Where is God?

Sometimes what we really need is assurance that this will pass, that God does love us and that those around us care and pray for us. Sometimes we need practical advice on dealing with loved ones, transitions, and the challenges that life can bring our way. Often we need both. Our seniors are life specialists and have much to offer—time, experience, knowledge, and wisdom.

Many of the folks that pay close attention to my travels are seniors. They let me know on Sunday mornings that they are holding me in prayer for safe travels, clear words and a calm spirit. It's wonderful to know that I'm remembered and held

in prayer even when I'm away from my congregation.

So how can churches help bridge the generation gap? You could interview your seniors and share the information with the congregation. You could hold intergenerational events where all ages are mixed together. Youth and seniors could cook together and share a meal, tie comforters, quilt or can fruit and vegetables. Some congregations pair older and younger members of the congregation including youth, young adults and young families and help establish cross-generational friendships.

The Bible is full of seniors who followed the direction of God and did surprising and wonderful things. Abraham and Sarah were seniors when they finally

had a baby. Elizabeth and Zachariah were older when they gave birth to John. Moses was past middle age when he led the Israelites out of Egypt. What are the amazing things that seniors are doing in your congregation? What can these life specialists in your congregation teach you?

Sherri Grosz is a stewardship consultant at the Kitchener, Ontario office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada. For stewardship education and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit www.mennonitefoundation.ca.

among other supports.

Valleyview also welcomes Agape participants to special worship services, picnics and retreats, and the Valleyview Male Chorus does fundraising concerts for Agape. Valleyview both covers the cost of Agape's rent and makes a donation towards expenses each year. The members of Valleyview generously contribute to most of Agape's fundraising events.

For Agape members, the Valleyview church building feels like home. It is a safe, welcoming place to

worship, enjoy activities and gather with friends. Some Valleyview members have built friendships with Agape members.

What an amazing sister-church, landlord and support Valleyview is to Agape Fellowship. Agape Fellowship members extend our warmest gratitude and thank you to all who care about our community.

LYNNE WILLIAMS, LONDON, ONT.

Lynne Williams is pastor of Agape Fellowship.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Driedger—Henry Joseph (b. April 22, 2012), to Gina and David Nighswander Driedger, Rouge Valley Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

Eidt—Alexander (b. March 30, 2012), to Chad and Jill Eidt, Nith Valley Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.

Fast—Hannah Marie (b. April 11, 2012), to Ernest and Pam Fast, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Grainger—Scott Jamie (b. April 21, 2012), to Brent and Kim Grainger, Kingfield-Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Greene—Madison Alexa Paul (b. April 15, 2012), to Adam Greene and Shannon Paul, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Ivanov—Mira Dianne (b. Feb. 17, 2012), to Merilee and Laurel Ivanov, Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite, Sask., in New South Wales, Australia.

Keller—Benjamin (b. April 16, 2012), to Mark and Stacey Keller, Nith Valley Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.

King—Addyson Mary (b. Feb. 20, 2012), to Mark and Samantha King, Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont.

Kroeker—Erin Avery (b. April 19, 2012), to Paula (Thiessen) and Jamie Kroeker, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Schroeder—Owen Abram (b. May 2, 2012), to Alan (Avon Mennonite, Stratford, Ont.) and Etsuko Schroeder, in Tokyo, Japan.

Wahl—Penelope Dorathia Marguerite (b. March 30, 2012), to DJ. and Sheree (Doell) Wahl, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Zehr—Landon (b. Feb. 14, 2012), to Keith and Candice Zehr, Nith Valley Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.

Baptisms

David Nighswander Driedger—Rouge Valley Mennonite, Markham, Ont., April 8, 2012.

Marriages

Friesen/Peters—Mike Friesen and Ariel Peters, at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Feb. 18, 2012.

Gerbrandt/Hiebert—Dallas Gerbrandt and Jenny Hiebert, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., at Roseau River Bible Camp, Man., May 12, 2012.

Deaths

Baergen—Ernest, 79 (b. Dec. 24, 1932; d. April 22, 2012), Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Barkman—Betty, 81 (b. April 14, 1931; d. April 15, 2012), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Brown—C. Henry, 90 (b. Dec. 21, 1921; d. April 5, 2012), Bergthaler Mennonite, Didsbury, Alta.

Colquhoun—Mildred Elaine, 79 (b. Feb. 19, 1933; d. April 28, 2012), Kingsfield-Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Epp—Agatha, 101 (b. Nov. 22, 1910; d. April 22, 2012), Laird Mennonite, Sask.

Franz—Johann (John), 84 (b. April 14, 1928; d. May 3, 2012), First Mennonite, Calgary.

Gerber—Paul, 70 (b. Sept. 16, 1941; d. April 23, 2012), East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Gingerich—Neil, 91 (b. Jan. 11, 1921; d. April 27, 2012), Kingsfield-Zurich Mennonite, Ont.

Krause—Katherina (nee Falk), 100 (b. Sept. 20, 1911; d. May 6, 2012), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Peters—Heinrich, 80 (b. Sept. 21, 1931; d. April 28, 2012), Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, B.C.

Sawatzky—Maria (nee Schapansky), 78 (b. June 24, 1933; d. Feb. 15, 2012); First Mennonite, Greendale, Chilliwack, B.C.

Shantz—Beatrice, 88, (b. July 3, 1923; d. April 22, 2012), Nith Valley Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.

Voth—Peter C. 91 (b. April 3, 1921; d. April 17, 2012), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Wiens—Elfriede (nee Wiehler), 96 (b. Dec. 6, 1915; d. April 26, 2012), First Mennonite, Calgary.

Zacharias—Frank "Carl" Peter, 52 (b. Nov. 9, 1959; d. April 26, 2012), Blumenort Mennonite, Gretna, Man.

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.

LIFE IN THE POSTMODERN SHIFT

Extending grace, elevating consciousness

BY TROY WATSON

“Father forgive them,
for they know not
what they do.” I

was seven years old when the power of Jesus’ prayer for the very people murdering him first hit me. These words still challenge and inspire me. “Father forgive them”—not only are we called to extend grace to all in need of God’s forgiveness—“for they know not what they do”—we are simultaneously called to elevate consciousness in other people, helping them become aware of what they are doing, why they are doing what they are doing and the impact their actions have upon themselves and others.

This twofold mission is reflected in the prophetic and priestly roles of the church. A priest extends God’s grace to others through proclamation, prayers, and rituals. A prophet initiates individual and social transformation by elevating consciousness, shedding light on people’s behaviour as well as the consequences of their actions and the deeply embedded ideas that cause them to act certain ways.

Of course, before we begin elevating consciousness and extending grace to others we must start with ourselves.

Extending God’s grace to oneself is not about groveling for God’s forgiveness on the one extreme, nor glossing over our wrongdoing because Jesus already paid our debts on the other. It involves repentance, which means to change one’s mind or the way one thinks. Transformation, according to scripture, also involves repentance or “the renewing of your mind.” Grace, transformation and elevating consciousness, or renewing one’s mind, are intricately interwoven dance partners.



Authentic inner transformation is a process involving a constant reciprocating movement between extending grace and elevating consciousness.

Here is an example of the process. Say I become aware I’ve reacted to someone in a hurtful manner. My consciousness is elevated when I take responsibility for my

behaviour. Externally, I attempt to make amends whenever it is appropriate but internally I need to extend grace to myself in order to maintain the transformation process.

What normally happens after I mess up, however, is not grace but judgment.

“That was a really stupid thing to say. What a total overreaction...” This typically escalates from judging what I did to judging myself. “What is wrong with me? I’m so insensitive...” The problem is judgment doesn’t lead to greater understanding of the root issues that caused my negative reaction. It only leads to more judgment, resulting in feelings of inadequacy, guilt, and shame, adding to the pile of stuff I’ll need to sort through on the way to greater self-awareness and transformation.

Jesus commands us not to judge because judgment always leads to more judgment. Practicing non-judgment with ourselves is essential because how we deal with our own imperfection is how we deal with other people’s imperfection.

We may say and truly believe we “judge the sin but not the sinner,” but our judgmental response to others will replicate the automated pattern of how we judge ourselves, even if we’re not aware of it.

So, instead of judgment, I extend grace to myself for reacting to that person in a hurtful way. Then I am able to move to elevating consciousness again, shining a light deeper within, becoming more aware of the root ideas, fears, insecurities, and triggers that move me to react in hurtful ways in certain situations.

Holding my negative behaviour in non-judgment is not the same as condoning it obviously. I’m simply focusing on the transforming power of truth. When I become aware of a truth about myself, this is positive, even if the thing I have become aware of is negative. This awareness is positive because, as Jesus says, “the truth will set you free.”

As I extend grace to myself for responding to someone in a hurtful way I am able to see more clearly what is causing me to react this way. I enable myself to look deeper within to look for engrained negative patterns, fears, insecurities, prejudices, biases, etc. that unbeknownst to me, influence and

Grace, transformation and elevating consciousness, or renewing one’s mind, are intricately interwoven dance partners.

control my behaviour, instead of being preoccupied with the symptomatic reactionary behaviour on the surface. This will further elevate my consciousness and bring new awareness, inevitably revealing more ugly truth about myself, necessitating the need to extend grace to myself again...and the process continues.

Spiritual development is slow, difficult work. Nobody said it was easy. Yet, if we continue to trust God’s guiding presence and persevere in the dance between elevating consciousness and extending grace, we gradually experience genuine inner transformation.

Troy Watson is the Spiritual Life Director of Quest Christian Community, St. Catharines, Ont.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Dusty Bibles?

Dusting off the Bible for the 21st Century theme for MC Canada Assembly

BY DEBORAH FROESE

Mennonite Church Canada
WINNIPEG, MAN.

Dusting off the Bible? Does that mean we aren't using our Bibles, or is it an overstatement meant to capture our attention? Perhaps it implies looking at scripture with new eyes, learning to see beyond the familiar so that we can apply biblical teachings to life in today's world.

Assembly keynote speakers Gerald Gerbrandt, Tom Yoder Neufeld, and Sheila Klassen-Wiebe—accomplished theologians and educators—are aware that the theme for Assembly 2012 has sparked discussion.

Current president of Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), Gerbrandt says that the image of a dusty Bible may be an exaggeration, but “we're in a time where the Bible isn't as prominent in church people's thinking as it was when I grew up.”

“The rise of scholarship has sometimes indirectly communicated that only scholars can make use of the Bible,” he says. “We're living in a time where all authority is questioned. I think it's helpful today to ask what is it and how might we become more enthused about scripture so that it remains central for us.”

Yoder Neufeld, Professor of Religious Studies (New Testament) for Conrad Grebel University College at the University of Waterloo, concurs. “I am aware that for many persons, including many

Mennonites, the Bible has fallen into disuse. There are numerous factors, I'm sure. It may even be that folks like me need to take some responsibility for that in giving the impression that if you really want to understand the Bible, you need experts to help you.” Yet, he says, the Bible is really, “the record of our long and ongoing conversation with God.” The Bible is intended for everyone.

As Associate Professor of New Testament at CMU, Klassen-Wiebe says she has noticed that some of her students are not as scripturally literate as previous generations. She points to information overload and hectic schedules as possible factors. In addition, the Bible may be viewed by some as a book of old and out-of-date stories. “Sometimes people think the Bible is only an ancient book . . . but the Bible is not an old tome that should sit on the shelf gathering dust. It does speak to us in the 21st century.”

The Assembly will include a wide number of workshops covering topics like how to read and apply scripture, and how the Bible came to be; two scripture-based videos commissioned from actor, writer and humorist, Ted Swartz; an art exhibit, worship and fellowship.

“It's life-giving to read and understand the Bible,” Klassen-Wiebe says. “We need to be grabbed by the power of scripture to help us be a faithful people.”

Gerbrandt will address the Assembly on Friday morning and Sat. evening. Yoder Neufeld is scheduled to speak on Sat. and Sunday mornings, while Klassen-Wiebe will lead Bible studies during the later half of Friday and Saturday morning sessions.

Registration deadline is June 15, 2012



Young adults attending Mennonite Church Canada Assembly in Vancouver are invited to a late night, West Coast Beach Party at Garry Point Park on Sat. July 14. This informal party is hosted by Mennonite Church British Columbia and local Mennonite young adults not attending the assembly are also encouraged to come. Participants will be carpoled to Garry Point Park after the Saturday evening worship.

(www.mennonitechurch.ca/vancouver2012). ☎



Yoder Neufeld



Klassen-Wiebe



Gerbrandt

New congregations bring hopes and fears

MC Eastern Canada accepts three emerging congregations

STORY & PHOTOS BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent

LEAMINGTON, ONTARIO

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada Executive Minister David Martin noted that 16 percent of MCEC congregations are now “first generation” Mennonite. With 105 congregations (established, emerging and recognized church plants) and four other congregations observing MCEC’s annual church gathering, this has been a period of rapid growth in the number of congregations, even with the closing of a number of smaller congregations. Three congregations were accepted

into “emerging status” at the annual church gathering on April 28.

To receive emerging status a congregation must have regular meetings, a core of committed people, be in essential agreement with Mennonite faith and practice, be open to exchanging views with other MCEC congregations, send delegates to annual gatherings, participate in regional clusters, and be in relationship with MCEC resource people that meet with leadership persons in the congregation.

The Chin Christian Church of Ottawa is a congregation of 70 which has been meeting since 2003. Renting space from a Chinese Christian Church, they came to know about MCEC through Ching Jehu Lian, the pastor of the Chin Christian Church which meets in the First Hmong Mennonite Church in Kitchener.

Chin come to Canada, usually as refugees, from Burma, the name they prefer over Myanmar. The Chin of Ottawa see joining a larger church body as a step forward in their maturity. This will give them opportunities to help others, to give and receive. As a legal congregation they hope to help smaller congregations and reach not only the 200 Chin living in Ottawa, but to reach out with the good news to others as well. They have no fears about the future as they sense God with them in this work.

Maranatha Evangelical Church in London is a group of about 15 Ethiopian and Eritrean Christians who know about Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia, though this group’s background is Full Gospel. They have been meeting for five years. They too hope to bring the good news to others, not only Ethiopians but anyone whom God sends their way. Negash Muctare, an elder in the congregation, spoke up on the delegate session floor wondering where the youth and young adults were, saying he would have expected that 40 percent of the attendees would have been young. Both he and Pastor Eshefu Asfaw also noted some concerns about cultural differences between their parishioners and Canada, resulting in the need to deal with depression.

Other concerns included the references to homosexual relationships in some presentations and wondering why so few



Members of the Grace New Life Mennonite Church, including Pastor Sririsack Saythavy (light blue shirt) prepare to be accepted as an emerging congregation at MCEC’s annual church gathering.



David Martin, executive minister, welcomes members of the Chin Christian Church of Ottawa as an emerging congregation in MCEC at the annual church gathering on April 28 in Leamington. From left: David Thawm, Nei Mang, Caleb Sawi Thuam, Nilian Sum, No Kio Bik.

speakers prayed to “God the Father” and “in Jesus’ name.” One thing they thought they could contribute to MCEC was a heightened attention to emotion in worship. They want to work together with the other congregations and Christians in MCEC in a spirit of love, encouraging the church to not give in to culture.

Grace New Life Mennonite Church is a Lao congregation in Hamilton. They have been meeting since 1991, associating with a Christian Reformed group. Later they connected with the Lao Mennonite Conference, which formed in 2002, with Kuaying Teng, pastor of the Lao Christian Fellowship in St. Catharines, assisting them in making these connections.

Over and over again these new Mennonite congregations are drawn into MCEC through personal connections. In a building they bought four years ago, the 35 people who call Grace New Life home minister to both Laotian and Thai believers—the languages are similar—but they hope to be an international church, drawing in other ethnicities as well. Though they fear



Pastor Eshefu Asfaw and elder Negash Muctare of the Maranatha Evangelical Church, an Ethiopian congregation in London, Ont., enjoy refreshments at MCEC's annual church gathering.

at times that they will not communicate the gospel clearly, they trust in God for the future. Even though they are a small congregation, they love God and are willing to sacrifice what they have for the sake of the gospel. They hope to hire a youth pastor to

work with those born in Canada, having one foot in each culture.

Each of these new congregations seeks the prayer and support of the larger Mennonite Church, and they offer their prayers in return. ❧

‘Seek peace and pursue it’

A Rabbi talks to Mennonites

BY HENRY NEUFELD

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
VANCOUVER

“Easter and Passover both teach redemption: the world does not need to continue as it is,” Rabbi David Mivasair’s told Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship on a recent Sunday morning.

Mivasair, rabbi at Vancouver’s Ahavat Olam congregation, also provides chaplaincy services in Vancouver’s notorious Downtown Eastside at First United Church. He values the image of the divine in all people, and calls on both Israelis and Palestinians to work towards a peaceful resolution in the Middle East.

Mivasair explained that the Rabbinic tradition has 613 divine commandments for Jewish people, but only two of those talk about what to pursue: “seek peace and pursue it, and pursue justice.” “These

are things we are to go out and create,” he said.

“After 400 years in Egypt, the Passover event became the foundational narrative for Judaism,” he said, adding, “Every person is obliged to see themselves as if they left Egypt.” Mivasair said the experience of slavery in Egypt reminds Jews of the need to care for the stranger and the orphan because they were slaves in Egypt. God told Abraham to be a blessing to all people, he said, asking, “How are we doing at this?”

He described Passover as a model of how life can be. “We can bring about change in human history,” he said, noting that the Bible talks about a Passover for all people and that the promise of liberation and redemption is for everyone.

Citing Abraham’s negotiation with God about saving the righteous people in Sodom and Gomorrah, Mivasair maintained that a truly righteous person argues with God; it was this arguing with God that made Abraham stand out. All families of the world will be blessed through Abraham, he said: “Paul took the message beyond the Jewish people. It’s for everyone, not just Jews.” Speaking about the Jewish people, he said, “We are not the children of the prophets; we stoned the prophets.”

Mivasair said Mennonites are God’s agents, acting out the godly drama. “What is God trying to get you to do?” he asked before closing with these words: “Seek, pursue and engage.” ❧



Young people who attended the regional meetings were passionate about the camps but also understood the need for change.

Regional meetings to discuss Manitoba camping proposal

MC Manitoba proposes closing Camp Moose Lake

STORY AND PHOTOS BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

Loyalties to the three camps of Mennonite Church Manitoba run very deep. Recently Mennonite Church Manitoba board and staff discovered again just how deep these feelings run.

The three camps, Assiniboia, Koinonia and Moose Lake, which form the ministry Camps with Meaning (CwM), have been the focus of serious debate and conversations for many years. Recent factors have necessitated those conversations be pushed along to some drastic actions. The MC Manitoba board gave the Camp Planning Committee (CPC) the task of coming up with a sustainable camping ministry plan. It was a challenging task and the resulting proposal, approved by the Board, was sent to the 49 congregations that make up MC Manitoba in early April. It included an invitation to attend one of five regional meetings where Ken Warkentin, executive director, and board members would present information and listen to concerns and questions. (See Camps with Meaning Sustainable Camping Ministry Proposal sidebar)

“MC Manitoba’s environment is changing fairly dramatically,” Warkentin told those who attended the various meetings. “The most significant change is that we no longer have the human resources to run the camps as we have had in the past. Every year it becomes increasingly difficult to find leadership staff, summer camp staff and volunteers. In 2010 the decision was made to shorten the camping weeks from 6 days to 5 and to close two weeks of camp in an effort to address the lack of staff.”

Hans Werner, board chair, explained another change MC Manitoba faces. “Our people are generous. However, there are significant shifts in giving. Giving to local programs and related organizations has increased but giving to denominational structures has been consistently declining.”

Costs for running the camps have increased substantially, “due in part to changes in regulations,” noted Warkentin. “And our church groups are getting smaller. We still have fifteen to twenty MC Manitoba church groups that use the camps every



Maria Dueck is on the leadership team for Camps with Meaning this year and sees the rationale behind the proposed changes, but she is not sure that closing one camp will mean more staff available for other camps or what it will mean for campers.

year but these groups are smaller. Church demographics suggest a trend to smaller youth groups.”

Five proposed changes are outlined in the proposal: shutting down operations at Camp Moose Lake over the next 2 years; relocating Camps with Meaning administrative offices to Camp Assiniboia; hiring a full-time Camp Director with responsibilities for communication, public relations, networking and financial resource development; developing year-round programming; and expanding the circle of support to those outside the MC Manitoba constituency who use the camps. Of these five, the closing of Camp Moose Lake stirred up the strongest emotion and debate.

Over 300 people attended the evening meetings in Boissevain, Springstein, Winnipeg, Steinbach and Altona during the weeks of April 23 and 30. “I am humbly grateful for the tone of these conversations, the grace that was extended everywhere even by those for whom this proposal was very difficult,” said Warkentin.

Among those who attended were a significant number of young people, 25 years of age and younger who have devoted much of their youth to working at the camps and continue to feel passionately about them. Dustin Loewen who has served as a camp leader, director and counsellor, said, “There are issues with finding staff and

particularly male staff. There were times I was really scared to let a cabin group happen because of the staffing choices we as camp staff had."

By closing Camp Moose Lake some wondered what would become of the ADV (Adults with Disabilities Ventures) summer program. Warkentin explained that because these groups are not restricted to a school calendar, the camps could be made available to them in May and June. Additionally, this would make summer camp work more attractive to post-secondary students who are looking for 4-month employment that under current camp programming MC

Manitoba cannot provide.

Maria Dueck is part of the camp leadership team preparing for summer camp and wondered "how are we going to support staff working for four months when we know how much support needs to be in place for those who work two months? I am definitely very afraid for some weeks because at this point there are some weeks where we have only two male counsellors that are both under 18. I have tapped every shoulder I know of"

Some voices requested more information. "The Board will be sending additional information to the churches in the next few

weeks. We want to hear more direction from the congregations. Mostly it has been individuals," said Warkentin. Requests came to slow down the process. "We're not sure that's possible. We are experiencing significant shortages that are even more critical this year. We're not sure we have time to slow down," said Warkentin. The Board also heard strong voices of support within each of the regions.

"It is important to note that the Board has not made any decisions regarding this proposal. However, we believe this is our best thinking and does represent a viable direction for our camping ministry" ❧

Camps with Meaning: Sustainable Camping Ministry Proposal

April 2012

After much consideration and agonizing with difficult questions the Camp Planning Committee proposed the following path forward for MCM camping ministries:

1. A phased shut-down of operations at Camp Moose Lake over two years.
 - a. March-August, 2012 – ongoing site management by MCM
 - b. July-August 2012 – operating summer program
 - c. Sept. 2012-June 2013 – guest group rentals
 - d. July-Aug. 2013 – option of operating summer program
 - e. Sept.-Nov. 2013 – close down site, transfer movable assets to Assiniboia or Koinonia
 - f. Dec. 2013 – lease or ownership transfer of remaining assets to third party(ies)
2. Consolidation of Camps with Meaning (CwM) administrative functions to be relocated to offices on-site at Camp Assiniboia.
 - a. Sept.-Dec. 2012 – planning and preparing
 - b. March-Aug. 2013 – adapting and building office space at Assiniboia
 - c. Sept. 2013 – shifting CwM office functions from MCM offices to Assiniboia
3. Development of a communications strategy for CwM that informs stakeholders more intentionally and more effectively, incorporating needs and opportunities for resource development. A full-time Camp Director with executive oversight of all camp operations, would spend

half their time/effort focused on communication, public relations, networking and financial resource development. Implementation: December 2012

4. Camp programs and facilities at the remaining two camps sites be evaluated in relation to the needs, desires and vision within MCM for camping and retreat ministry. Ideas and timeline include:

- a. Year-round programming – camp as a learning/training centre, including gap-year programs, service opportunities, Bible training, supporting churches, cross cultural training/opportunities.
- b. Upgrading facilities to better accommodate families, seniors and people with disabilities.
- c. Explore mobile camping ministries (out-tripping, northern communities, urban ministry, etc.)

5. MCM expand the circle of support for CwM by offering levels of engagement and involvement for those outside of the MCM constituency. Approximately 70 percent of those who participate in the year-round camping ministry of MCM are not part of the MC constituency. We propose communicating with all those who participate in our camping ministry more as equals than outsiders, and more intentionally invite their participation in fundraising, work projects, etc. As MCM remains the "owner" of the camp assets, decision-making authority remains within parameters and structure set by the MCM Board of Directors.

The MCM Board believes these changes are necessary to further camping ministry in a sustainable way.

Celebrations of Service

BY KARIN FEHDERAU
Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON

Back in the early fifties, a group of young women met in the home of J.J. Thiessen, then pastor of First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon, to organize a Junior Ladies Mission Society which later adopted the name Naomi Mission Society.

"Meetings were held every two weeks and the work included rolling bandages and finishing off blankets for MCC," said Sally Kasdorf at a recent 60th celebration. "Another of our projects was to support missionaries," she added. Many fundraisers were planned in the ensuing years to raise the money needed for their various projects, such as catering at weddings, publishing a cookbook and organizing rummage sales. But they also volunteered to cook meals for the poor and serve at the Red Cross Blood donor clinic to meet needs in the community.

"During those years when most of the women were mothers of young children, the Society meetings offered an outing, a time of sharing, fellowship and support which cemented close friendships," said Kasdorf, jokingly adding, "The husbands knew that every second Wednesday evening, they were on duty as babysitters."

That creativity in service and willingness to think of others continues across the province today.

One more reason to celebrate is the resiliency of women's groups in Saskatchewan. There are a total of 28 groups that continue to meet and reach out in service to their communities.

"Some groups are more ecumenical," explained Wolfe, outgoing secretary for Saskatchewan Women in Mission. These are women who will try to connect with women's groups from other churches. For example, a woman from an Mennonite Brethren church in northern Saskatchewan was helped by men and women from several MC Sask churches, joining her to complete a large quantity of unfinished quilts

for MCC.

Quilting continues to be a defining activity for some women's groups with First Mennonite ladies topping off at 400 tie-quilts a year. But others are looking beyond the traditional way of serving to see other needs in their communities.

In Fiske, for example, the women make receiving blankets for the Rosetown Hospital. Another group sews prayer shawls for those who are grieving. The women at the Zoar Mennonite church in Langham chose the theme of compassion

for their activities and looked for ways to show compassion to others. They decided, since the town is close to Saskatoon and everyone drives in for medical services, that the women would help to pay the parking costs for anyone who needed to be in the hospital. It costs \$50 a month to park at the Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon; a day pass is \$18. The groups used the money from their monthly offering and gave it to families in need to put toward parking fees. There were some people travelling in for cancer treatments and one family dealing with a premature baby, said a source at the church.

Prison visitation is also an avenue of service when women from the Glenbush area make a yearly visit to spend the day with inmates in a women's prison. ❧

❧ Briefly noted

Saskatchewan women urged to remain 'rooted in Christ'

ROSTHERN, SASK.—More than a hundred members of the Saskatchewan Women in Mission organization got together at the end of April to celebrate 70 years of working tirelessly for charities, most of it for Mennonite Central Committee. The theme for the day was "Rooted in Christ," and to emphasize it, an entire tree designed by Kathy Thiessen and made of tar paper was displayed on the front wall of the church. Linda Bartel gave the message, reiterating the significance of branches remaining attached to the vine. During a short business session, new members were elected to the executive: treasurer Verna Olfert, and Lois Siemens as a member of the program committee. The ambience in the afternoon was more recreational, as participants watched slides of various groups at different times over the last 70 years. A memorial service was conducted by the Glenbush Women in Mission for those who had died during the past year; 52 ladies whose average age was just over 80 were named. It was announced that Dora Dueck, author of the award-winning book, *This Hidden Thing*, will speak at this fall's gathering at the Shekinah Retreat Centre.

—BY DORIS THIESSEN



The senior members of the Saskatchewan Women in Mission organization pose for a group photograph at this year's Enrichment Day event, held in Rosthern.

PHOTO BY RICHARD ALBRECHT



Sara Wyngaarden, Larry Martin and Steven Janzen accepted the 2012 Green Sacred Space Award for Elmira Mennonite Church at a ceremony at St. John's the Evangelist Anglican Church in Kitchener on May 12. The other award went to Trinity United, also in Elmira. The awards are given by Greening Sacred Spaces and are accompanied by grants from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

CMU celebrates Class of 2012

BY NADINE KAMPEN
Canadian Mennonite University
WINNIPEG

Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) formally recognized the accomplishments of its students over three days in April, awarding degrees to 86 graduates during its 2012 graduation exercises.

Presiding over graduation ceremonies for the final time, Gerald Gerbrandt, who is retiring as the school's president on June 30, addressed the Class of 2012 with words of praise and appreciation for their efforts and accomplishments.

"We are extremely proud of the achievements of our 2012 graduates," said Gerbrandt, welcoming students and their

families from a wide range of regions in Canada and the United States for the conferral of degrees and weekend festivities.

The valedictory address was given by Helena Schroeder, who graduated with a four-year B.A. degree with an English major. "Tomorrow," said Schroeder, "we will be swept up into the next chapter, a new song; perhaps grand adventures, or work or more school. The people of CMU and the ideals that shape this place have fostered in us more than just confidence in our abilities. . . . The place has modelled the possibilities for trust despite uncertainties,

/// Briefly noted

God's grace can break down the lies women believe: Janine Schultz

The Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (WMCEC) met in Zurich, Ont., on April 21 to enjoy their annual Spring Enrichment Day. From the morning coffee to the final



Schultz

note of the sung benediction, the day was packed full of flowers everywhere, a quilt display, good food, a variety of music performed and participated in, words of Scripture, encouragement and hope. Phyllis Ramer welcomed everyone and shared "the flavour of Kingsfield Zurich" while Melanie Siebert shared "the flavour of Kingsfield Clinton"; Clinton is the newest member of the Wellesley West Cluster. Guest Speaker Janine Schultz, a Christian counsellor and founder of By Peaceful Waters spoke on "God's extravagant grace," sharing many Bible verses and segments of her own story to help the women understand that God's grace is abundantly able to break down the barriers of the lies that they believe about themselves, including the lies of "I don't exist, I don't belong and I am not worthy." Greetings were delivered from Liz Koop, president of Mennonite Women Canada, and MC Eastern Canada executive minister David Martin.

—Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

leadership in many forms, and service."

Susan Schultz Huxman, president of Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., delivered the graduation address. "Today, I want to share with you a set of provisions that you will need for the long haul, the journey of life after CMU, the provisions of hindsight, foresight and insight," said Huxman. Of these, she said,

if Christians do not have insight, “we have not captured the distinctive of Mennonite education, which says knowledge is not sufficient; practice is not sufficient, unless it is connected to a witness grounded in Christ, committed to peace and practised in the community. It’s all about connecting received wisdom with visionary leadership in the context of relational and radical discipleship.”

“Hindsight is built upon remembering strong faith and academic traditions, of telling and retelling your foundational stories, to honour your past here,” she continued. “Foresight is built upon seizing the opportunities to maximize your liberal arts training, and chasing big aspirations. It employs and motivates you. Insight,” she concluded, “is built upon distinctive peace witness practised in community. It awakens and transforms you.”

In conferring degrees, Gerbrandt was joined by other academic leaders to present 78 bachelor’s degrees and six master of arts degrees. Additionally, two students earned program certificates.

“Each year, CMU awards the President’s Medals to two students recognizing their qualities of scholarship, leadership, and service,” Gerbrandt explained as he handed out the awards to Rebecca Hill (bachelor of music degree, with a concentration in music education) and Katherine Olivia Polle (four-year bachelor of arts degree, international development studies major).

It was announced at the graduation ceremonies that academic vice-president Earl Davey will act as interim president until Cheryl Pauls assumes her duties as president on Nov. 1. ❧

CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY PHOTO



Gerald Gerbrandt, who retires as president of Canadian Mennonite University at the end of June, leads his final graduation recessional on April 22.

Outtatown grads share stories of discovery

BY NADINE KAMPEN

Canadian Mennonite University

WINNIPEG

Graduates from the 2011-12 Outtatown program gathered on the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) campus to celebrate their experiences in Africa and South America last month.

CMU’s largest-ever program for Outtatown featured four teams travelling to South Africa, Guatemala or Burkina Faso. The many highlights from the different teams included a meeting with a conservation organization working among indigenous people in one of Guatemala’s high-altitude rainforests and a rare visit with South Africa’s Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Students participating in the new French West Africa program discovered historic and cultural connections linking the cities of Winnipeg, Montreal, Paris and Ouagadougou; in Burkina Faso, students encountered a culture in which people’s sense of identity is deeply rooted in family, community, church and nationality.

“One of the highlights for me was hearing students talk about their experience of community,” says Outtatown director Cameron Priebe.

The Outtatown Discipleship School offers students seeking a life-changing experience

of adventure, travel, service, and Christian studies, the opportunity to serve and learn while earning academic credit.

About a third of this year’s graduates plan to continue their studies at CMU in the fall. ❧

CMU PHOTO



Outtatown graduates celebrate the completion of their international program at Canadian Mennonite University last month.

CONRAD GREBEL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE PHOTO



Conrad Grebel University College's 2012 class of nine master of theological studies graduates are surrounded by the department's faculty. Pictured from left to right, front row: Jeremy Bergen, Linda Brnjas, Amanda Zehr, Julie Ellison White, Allison Murray, Victoria Roeder Martin, Laura Stemp-Morlock, Bethany Tulloch, Jared Both, Andrew Stumpf and Derek Suderman; and back row: Jim Pankratz, Tom Yoder Neufeld, Troy Osborne, Arnold Snyder and Marianne Mellinger

'Releasing our graduates to the world'

BY JENNIFER KONKLE

Conrad Grebel University College
WATERLOO, ONT.

Welcoming almost a hundred graduating students—the largest cohort yet—and their families, Conrad Grebel University College president Susan Schultz Huxman described the basis of Grebel's community. "We seek to connect, not divide the spirit from matter, the arts from the sciences, study from play and intellect from faith," she said. Just as students gather together with faculty and staff for chapel and community supper, so we "celebrate community, connection and the precious gift of releasing our graduates to the world."

In her valedictory speech, liberal studies graduate Rebecca Steiner urged her classmates to think of Grebel as a springboard into the mysterious and thrilling unknown. "The world is ready for us to dream and accomplish the seemingly impossible," she declared. "Use your abilities, wisdom, and young-heartedness to serve your communities and seek new roads, making opportunities wherever you go. We are leaving behind a legacy."

Andrew Stumpf represented the nine students graduating with a master of theological studies degree, four of whom are already involved as Mennonite Church Eastern Canada ministers. He thanked the faculty for their wisdom, insight, care and friendship in helping to form strong foundations in each student, preparing them to go on and build beautiful structures – whether physical or intangible. He encouraged the graduates and their supporters in

attendance to "take your stand for what's good and true and right, because light needs to be shone in every area of our society, beginning with relationships and the places where we study and work each day."

Mark Weber, a Grebel alumnus from

the 1990s, gave the convocation address. He asked students to ponder four questions: Who are you? Who do you want to be? Who will you surround yourself with? What contribution will you make? While each person's answers differ, he said all answers point to a fifth question: How will you find a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Ending with a quotation from author Frederick Buechner, Weber said, "The place God calls you to is where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." ❧

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Canadian Mennonite earns top award

CANADIAN MENNONITE
Toronto, Ont.

Canadian Mennonite earned the top award given by the Canadian Church Press at an awards banquet here Friday, May 10, receiving the A.C. Forrest Memorial Award which is presented annually for "excellence in socially conscious religious journalism."

The \$1,000 first place award was based on two features in the Jan. 24 and Feb. 21, 2011 editions entitled "Building up God's Kingdom Together" and "The Changing Face of Mental Illness among Mennonites" with articles written by Joe Neufeld, Evelyn Rempel Petkau, Bryon Rempel-Burkholder and Ken Reddig.

"Comprehensive, ambitious and hugely under reported," said the judge in his recommendation; "this was a remarkable look at mental illness in our congregations and how the church might help. The depth of research, originality and relevance made this package stand out."

The top award was one of a total of 10 taken away from the event, including another placing first in the category of service journalism for an article by Christine Longhurst on "Paying Attention to the Words we Sing." Judges called this "an excellent take on a topic rarely discussed—courageous and needed; excellent use of song lyrics to illustrate the point."

Earning second place for a front cover was the Oct. 3, 2011 "Say No to the Logo," designed by managing editor Ross Muir and designer Dan Johnson on an inside article questioning the militarism in the new Winnipeg Jets logo. Another second was earned in the biographical profile category by Dave Rogalsky for an article on retired Canadian Broadcasting Co. (CBC) music commentator and choral conductor Howard J. Dyck of Kitchener entitled "In Gratitude of J.S. Bach."

The magazine also placed second in the Letters to the Editor category with the judges characterizing them as "strong issues with an obviously engaged and

thoughtful readership, with clear views."

Third place honours were given in the media reviews category for book reviews by Vic Thiessen, David Driedger and Will Braun, a column by David Martin on "Mennonite' Not Eaten Here," a news story by Muir on "Bolivian Mennonite Rape Trial ends in Conviction," and in the in-depth treatment of a news event for the various writers on sexual inclusivity issues presented at MC Canada's national assembly in Waterloo.

The sexuality debate also took third place honours in the features category for the "Unwrapping Sexuality" article by Keith Miller Graber.

The top award and the total number of awards is a "first" for the bi-weekly publication, says Dick Benner, editor/publisher. "It is deeply gratifying to receive this kind of approval from professional peers in religious journalism. It is a credit to our staff and many writers and contributors."

The competition for these honours is among such mainline publications as the *Catholic Register*, *Anglican Journal* and the *Presbyterian Record*, publications with much larger circulations and constituencies, Benner said. ☺



PHOTO COURTESY OF ARNOLD NEUFELDT-FAST



Getting debriefed for the Town Council meeting are, from left, Pieter Niemeyer (Rouge Valley), Joanna Reesor-McDowell (Hagerman), Susan Reesor, Eugene Reesor, Ken Reesor, Glenda DeVries, Rene DeVries (all of Community Mennonite, Stouffville). Wideman Mennonite and Heise Hill Brethren in Christ were also well represented.

Stouffville responds to war celebration

By DICK BENNER

Editor and Publisher, *Canadian Mennonite*
STOUFFVILLE, ONT.

A task force was asked by the town council here Tuesday, May 15, to look into a proposal by the area's peace churches to select a site and erect a plaque in honour of the founders' conscientious objection to the War of 1812.

The recognition of "peaceful Canadians" will not be finished in time, though, for an upcoming parade on June 16 that celebrates the so-called military heritage of Stouffville, named after a Mennonite, Abraham Stouffer, who in 1805 along with 55 other families, was seeking religious freedom and refusing to "take up the bayonet and rifle" on religious grounds.

An organized effort by local Mennonite and Brethren in Christ historic peace churches to, in the words of organizer and spokesperson Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, "address this significant distortion and re-writing of our town's earliest history," has failed to bring its perspective into Freedom of the City military commemoration planned on short notice by Member of Parliament Paul Calandra and virtually rubber-stamped by the town council.

Town mayor Wayne Emerson told *Canadian Mennonite* that the council couldn't move fast enough to incorporate any of the pacifist history into the June 16 celebrations, but instead a three-

component task force comprised of the local Heritage Committee, the local museum staff and a contingent of Mennonites, would look into a site—probably the existing Memorial Park—and work with the group on the wording of a plaque.

Not all of the town councillors, who voted in an earlier meeting 4-2 to okay the military celebration, were happy with the decision. Councillor Susanne Hilton, one of the two opposed, was frustrated that Mr. Calandra sprang this proposal on the town at such late notice (April 27)—no staff reports on cost, availability of venues, staff time available for Council to review. "There was no consultation with the Mennonites," she said. "It reflected an ignorance of the community's history and was thus divisive for the Town."

But, in an interview with *Canadian Mennonite* after the meeting, MP Calandra essentially blamed the peace church protesters for dividing the town over the issue, saying it was "only two or three individuals" who were pushing back. When reminded that this was an organized effort of several churches, he cited one unnamed peace church which distanced itself from the protest.

Other non-Mennonite community leaders are also weighing in. Cathy Molloy, director of nearby Markham Museum, who earlier objected to the request for her town

to do a similar commemoration, said: "I read about the Stouffville controversy, and heard one of the CBC "As it Happens" interviews last week.

"Interestingly, some were keen to have an 1812 celebration in Markham. Markham also has a pacifist history, even Button's Troop had no tangible link to 1812. It's too bad that someone recommended that the Governor General's Honour Guard be connected to 1812 in Stouffville. Someone did not have the knowledge, or do the research, before going forward. The problem could have been avoided if Freedom of the City was kept to a strictly GGHG event and done with community input. From what I understand, only one pacifist community is a part of 1812 celebrations and only because that community offered food and shelter to soldiers who needed it."

Pieter Niemeyer, pastor of the Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, who along with Pastor Steve Authier of the Heise Hill Brethren in Christ Church, made the proposal, was also disappointed with the immediate outcome and says MP Calandra continues to give mixed messages. "On the one hand he insists that this is strictly an honour of the GGHG and has nothing to do with the War of 1812, but then goes on to say there is an historical connection."

Beyond a distortion of historical fact, he says, "this is a great discomfort in our community about what we see as a gradual, but steady militarization of Canadian culture in the last decade."

The military contribution of Stouffville is small compared to what the "peace Canadians" have given to the community, insists Neufeldt-Fast. It is not known for its long "military heritage," as MP Calandra has projected, but rather it is the national headquarters of two large charitable, non-governmental aid and relief organizations, Emmanuel International (EI) and Christian Blind Mission (CBM).

And at its heart, he elaborated further, the mill site where Stouffville first began, "we have the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Care-and-Share Thrift Store. These efforts are a positive witness about the importance of building peace and reconciliation globally. ☸

Note: see a longer version of this story on *Canadian Mennonite's* website.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

From a mustard seed . . .

Forty-year-old thrift shop network has generated \$167 million for MCC

BY GLADYS TERICHOW
Mennonite Central Committee
ALTONA, MAN.

Forty years ago, four women in the southern Manitoba community of Altona opened a thrift shop to raise funds for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). It was the beginning of a network that has grown to 56 shops across Canada and 57 in the U.S. that have generated \$167 million for the work of MCC.

"This is unbelievable," exclaims Linie Friesen, 90, one of the founders of the Altona shop, which opened on March 17, 1972. "Our mustard seed has turned into a big tree and it is still growing."

Friesen, who was a regular volunteer at the shop until a year ago, says the seemingly insignificant beginnings of MCC thrift shops and their steady growth remind her of how the blessings of God can turn small contributions into miraculous growth. "I think it has grown beyond our wildest dreams and hopes," she says. "The Lord has blessed our efforts. It is just a remarkable thing."

Reflecting on the early years, Friesen recalls her friend Selma Loewen, who had attended the MCC Manitoba annual meeting in February 1972. There, Loewen heard John Hostetler, then director of MCC's material resources program, report that the ministry was reducing shipments of used clothing for overseas distribution.

Hostetler was also the one who made the now legendary statement: "What we need is a machine that will turn clothing into cash."

Within a few days of the 1972 meeting, Loewen had invited Friesen and two other friends, Sara Stoesz and Susan Giesbrecht, to her home, where they discussed the idea of selling used goods locally and donating the proceeds to MCC. Friesen said that women's groups contributed \$125 to cover

the first month's rent of the shop, known back then as the Altona Community Self Help Centre. A month later, a thrift shop opened in Steinbach and later that year two shops opened in Winnipeg. These four shops contributed \$6,300 to MCC in 1972.

Their remarkable success inspired people from Mennonite churches in other Manitoba communities to open thrift shops, and in 1974 thrift shops opened in Saskatchewan, Ontario and Ohio. In the early years, most shops were started and administered by women, but it didn't take

too long before men became involved in the shops, Friesen recalls.

Thrift shops not only generate funds for MCC; they are also an integral part of local communities, says Stoesz, 81, who still spends two hours almost every day sorting and pricing items. The many benefits of the shops include the availability of affordable goods, reusing and recycling items that would otherwise be thrown away, and meaningful opportunities for people to get to know each other and contribute to worthwhile causes.

"I have made a lot of friends here I didn't know before," says Stoesz. "It is very enriching to volunteer at an MCC thrift shop. It is fulfilling because it is helping others—at home and overseas."

People donating items to MCC thrift shops, buying items or volunteering may feel their contributions are inconsequential. But Friesen emphasizes that the success of MCC shops demonstrates that collectively these efforts make a difference in local communities and around the world. Last year, the shops in Canada alone contributed \$7.2 million to MCC. ❧

MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PHOTO BY TONY SIEMENS



Sara Stoesz, left, and Linie Friesen are pictured in the Altona, Man., MCC thrift shop they helped start 40 years ago.

CMU business grad heading to Zambia

By J. NEUFELD

Canadian Mennonite University

One of the first graduates of the new Redekop School of Business at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) has a job in Zambia. Christina Scheerer graduated this spring with a four-year degree in business and organizational administration. And, in a few months she will be heading to Zambia to work with a local church-based organization that assists people living with HIV/AIDS.

The one-year placement through Mennonite Central Committee's year-

long cross-cultural Serving and Learning Together (SALT) program will involve Scheerer in the Compassionate Ministries organization run by the Zambian Brethren in Christ Church. She expects to use her new business skills to help improve HIV/AIDS prevention and home-based care, education, counselling and training initiatives. She will also help the organization develop new agriculture and water and food security programs.

Scheerer will live with a Zambian host

family in the town of Choma, halfway between the capital city of Lusaka and Victoria Falls, a popular tourist destination. She has never been to Africa before, and says she expects to come home changed. "I'm really excited for the experience," she says. "I know I'll have a different perspective when I finish the program."

Scheerer, who attends Milverton (Ont.) Mennonite Fellowship, says the job posting intrigued her because it called for applicants with a background in business or international development studies. "The whole position just seemed very relevant to what I had just spent the past four years studying, and it seemed like a unique and challenging opportunity," she says.

At CMU, Scheerer took a concentration of international development classes together with her business studies. "I learned a lot about leadership and management and implementing programming," Scheerer says of her educational experience.

After her year of service in Zambia, Scheerer says she hopes to continue working with non-profit organizations. ❧



Scheerer

PHOTO COURTESY OF URSULA TIESSEN



Ursula Tiessen, Sandra Petryschuk, Jenna Renwick and Jayne Latam hold prom dresses that were sold at Leamington United Mennonite Church's second annual prom project. The three-day event sold 400 donated prom dresses to girls graduating this year. Last year the program sold 60 dresses; this year they sold that many on the first day. A group of nine women from two of the Mennonite churches in the area undertook the project after Jayne Latam heard about a similar one on Detroit radio. Girls from over 50 kilometres away come to the event where all dresses are priced at \$10. Those who buy dresses are encouraged to donate them back the following year. The money raised is split between the church and the local MCC Thrift Shop which accepts and stores the donated dresses.

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MCC B.C. PHOTO



The MCC Thrift Shop in Yarrow, B.C., suffered irreparable damage in an early morning fire on May 3.

MCC thrift shop destroyed by fire

By ANGELIKA DAWSON
Mennonite Central Committee B.C.

The original Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) thrift operation in Yarrow, B.C., was irreparably damaged on May 3 by a fire. While the fire department is still investigating, it is believed that

the fire started in the kitchen at the back of the building.

“The back of the building is basically destroyed and the rest of the building has suffered major smoke damage,” says Doug

Willms, MCC B.C., provincial thrift shop coordinator.

The shop was completely run by volunteers, who are meeting to consider next steps. It is likely that the shop will not be able to open in the same location.

“The volunteers love their shop and have a real passion for the ministry of MCC,” Willms says. “They will definitely be looking for ways to keep the shop going.”

The Yarrow MCC Thrift Shop has its roots in the 1940s, when local Mennonites collected clothing to be shipped to needy people in war-torn Europe. When the war ended and MCC’s efforts expanded globally, warm winter clothing was no longer in demand. It was decided that this clothing would be sold and the funds used for material resources needed overseas. Thus the MCC thrift movement in B.C. began.

“We want to stay in this community, since our roots here run deep,” Willms says. “We’re asking for prayer as we consider next steps.”

There are nine MCC thrift shops in B.C., raising funds for the relief, development and peace work of MCC in more than 50 countries around the world. Last year, the B.C. thrift shops contributed over \$1.4 million to this ministry. ❧

Martens receives Caring Canadian Award

LEAMINGTON, ONT.
By Barry Bergen

When William Martens received the initial phone call on April 17, telling him he was in line for an award, he thought it might have been a telemarketer on the line. In fact it was a representative from Rideau Hall, the Governor General’s residence, with news that he had been granted the Caring Canadian award, along with 28 others from across Canada.

William has indeed shown himself to be a caring Canadian, volunteering in various spheres of activity since 1963. For over 20 years he has supported refugees integrate into Canadian society. He has volunteered for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, serving



on the growing committee and volunteered with the MCC Mobile Meat Canner, a project that aims to feed the most vulnerable people in the world. He taught secondary school in Nigeria

through MCC for three years from 1963-66 and also spent five years with CIDA, teaching science and agriculture in a teacher training college in Tanzania from 1970-75.

William has been to Africa 31 times in total; most of these trips were one-month teaching engagements. For 20 years he directed the Leamington High School

chess club. At the award ceremony he was described as, “A man of multiple talents. Mr. Martens is always ready to go the extra mile to help those in need.”

An application for the award was submitted by a friend from his congregation, the North Leamington United Mennonite Church. His pastor and two others also wrote recommendations. Martens was honoured to receive the award, and his wife Barbara attended the ceremony with him. He found the ceremony very formal with a lot of protocol, but Martens described the luncheon afterward as wonderful and the whole event as very first-rate.

When asked why he spends so much time volunteering, especially in Africa, William replied, “You can take the boy out of Africa, but you can’t take Africa out of the boy. In my opinion it’s the neediest continent on earth. We in ‘have’ nations owe it to help those in ‘have not’ countries, because the gap is huge.” ❧

It's 'just food' ... or is it?

BY KARIN FEHDERAU
Saskatchewan Correspondent

Hungry faces. Haunting looks. These images and more face viewers of the cross-Canada Just Food exhibition that stopped recently at the MCC Centre in Saskatoon and the Station Arts Centre in Rosthern. Various artists from around the world portray the issues around hunger in their own countries from a faith perspective.

"It was put together by a Mennonite committee on human rights," says Claire Ewert Fisher, executive director of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Saskatchewan. Based in Winnipeg, the ad hoc group looks at people's right to food.

One piece portrays an African woman and a child in soft pastels. Different nationalities living in different economic situations, yet the truth of their reality is shown without anger or judgment.

A painting by Bert Monterona of the Philippines, entitled *The Pain of Poverty*, brings a sober reminder of the lost and the poor. A survey by the Philippine government in 2006 showed that almost a third of the population struggles to get enough to eat. And they're not the only ones.

In the midst of it all, there is a comforting Canadian scene that the viewer instantly connects with: a meal served in a church basement. Whether seen as a fall supper or a church potluck, the warm fellowship of such a familiar event somehow brings a solace to the disturbing realities of empty stomachs across the globe.

"That's my favourite," says MCC Saskatchewan staff member Lois Mierau with a smile.

"People were really impressed by the international content of the show and the quality of the art," says Denise Epp, visual arts coordinator at the Station Arts Centre. The centre contains a small restaurant that has a reputation for buying local produce, a gift store and the Kathy Thiessen Gallery, named after the centre's founder. According to Epp, four small farms helped pay transportation and shipping costs for the exhibit, so that MCC didn't have to cover the expense. ☞



'The Pain of Poverty,' by Bert Monterona of the Philippines, is a vivid reminder of the hunger that stalks many around the world.

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Rick Cober Bauman, centre, executive director of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario, talks with John Cornies, left, and John Peters at the sixth of seven 'dessert evenings' held in March and April to acquaint pastors and congregational representatives with the fundraising campaign for MCC Ontario's new building at 50 Kent St., Kitchener. It was announced on April 12, that the fund had reached \$2.5 million, with the hopes of reaching \$4 million by May 7. The evenings kicked off the congregational and individual donor portion of the campaign. The new building will house numerous Mennonite offices, including a Mennonite Savings and Credit Union branch, and the offices of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, which will be the two 'anchor' tenants.

GOD AT WORK IN US

OBITUARY

Radio preacher witnessed to God's love

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU
MANITOBA CORRESPONDENT

It was a life-long dream of Frank "Carl" Peter Zacharias to be on the radio, said his daughter, Lisa Zacharias, in the eulogy she gave at her father's funeral on May 2, 2012. That dream became a reality when he started his own radio ministry about three years ago. *Zacharias Fetalt*, was a half-hour weekly Low German program that aired from 30 radio stations in seven countries.

Zacharias, who died on April 26, 2012, at the age of 52, "was a people person," said Hedy Falk, a member of Blumenort Mennonite Church, where Zacharias was commissioned as a lay minister two years

ago. "He loved people."

The scripture passage that guided Zacharias's ministry was Ephesians 3:16-21. "It speaks about the endless boundaries of God's powerful love," said Lisa. The mission he brought to his radio program was to "let people know they had worth and value, were not alone and were loved unconditionally."

The audience for his radio program was primarily the Low German-speaking people in Mexico, Central and South America, and Germany, said Falk. "He knew the challenges people in those communities faced and through these programs he tried to reassure them of God's love. He would incorporate news from Belize, Bolivia, Mexico and Canada to help people keep in touch with each other. He included Bible instruction, stories and once did a series on 'Who is a Mennonite?'" He aired his last program in September 2011 before he became too ill from Multiple Myeloma to continue.

Zacharias spent much of his childhood in Paraguay and Belize where his parents, Frank and MaryAnne Zacharias, served as missionaries. The family moved to Manitoba and Zacharias completed his high school education at the Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna. After graduating with a degree in agriculture, Zacharias married Esther Elias in 1983. Together they lived and served in Belize in the mid-1980s under the EMM Church, teaching, managing a credit union and filling in wherever they could, said Zacharias's cousin, Ingrid Friesen. They served two terms under Mennonite



Zacharias reassured others of God's love

☞ Briefly noted

Lobe to retire from MWC at end of the year

Bert Lobe of St. Jacobs, Ont., has announced that he will retire from his work with Mennonite World Conference (MWC) at the end of 2012. He has served with MWC since



Lobe

2008. During this year he will assist the new general secretary, César García of Colombia, with the many transitions that come with a leadership change. As the North American MWC representative, Lobe will also continue to nurture relations with MWC members and participants in North America by facilitating visits of the general secretary and representing MWC at meetings. Together with Merle and Phyllis Good of Pennsylvania, Lobe coordinates fundraising activities in North America. Further, he represents MWC in developing and supporting cooperative programs with Mennonite Central Committee. He is also delegated by the general secretary to relate to the Asia caucus and MWC member churches in Asia. "We are thankful for the gifts, wisdom and service that Bert is investing in the global church," commented García. "We will miss his energy and work capacity."

—Mennonite World Conference

Central Committee in Bolivia from 1990-94 and 2000-03. "He was always very passionate about his Christian witness and this was borne out in his passion for living, working, playing, everything he did," said Friesen. In Reinland and Winkler Zacharias was involved with real estate, woodworking and farming.

Zacharias is lovingly remembered by his wife Esther, children Matthew, Lisa and Kristina, and mother MaryAnne Zacharias. Donations in his memory may be made to the MCI where he served on the Board for many years. ☞

OBITUARY

Sing a new song, and sing it well: A tribute to Bruno Epp

BY WILL BRAUN
SENIOR WRITER

August 28, 1927 - April 13, 2012

For Bruno Epp, school was an exciting place to be. Before he was old enough to attend the one-room Plum Hollow school next to his family's farm near Lena, Manitoba, he would slip onto the playground when the school kids were out and then sneak into class with them, staying until the teacher would notice him and shoo him back home.

He would later study at Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Bethel College before becoming a teacher at Rosthern Junior College in the early '50s. There he met and married Elizabeth Jantzen of Laird, Sask. They were married for 59 years, until Bruno's death this past April, at age 84, in St. Catharines, Ont.

In addition to Elizabeth, Epp is survived by six children and their families, as well as two brothers and five sisters.

From Rosthern, Sask., the Epps went to work among the Mennonites of South America. Over an 18-year period, Epp held a variety of church and school roles. He also left a musical mark.

Menno Wiebe recalls fondly singing with Epp on the Volendam Colony in Paraguay (as they had done growing up in Lena, and then Mount Lehman, B.C., where both families moved). Wiebe speaks highly of Epp's role in conducting the choir at the Tiefenbrunn church in Paraguay, leading choir trips to other villages, and organizing small groups to sing for the sick.

"Wherever [Epp] went in Paraguay and Brazil he left his choral imprint," says Wiebe.

According to Wiebe, Epp insisted on "good singing" and his rehearsals were



"highly disciplined"

While in South America, Epp also served as a Christian education consultant, editor of *Bibel und Pflug*, and Mennonite World Conference Executive Secretary for South America, a position he held during the 1972 World Conference in Curitiba, Brazil.

Part way through their time in Paraguay, the Epp family moved to Elkhart, Ind., where Bruno did seminary studies. Then it

was back to Paraguay and later Brazil before returning to North America for good in 1972. Epp then completed his seminary studies and took pastoral placements in Springstein, Man., and at Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church in Abbotsford, B.C.

According to the eulogy prepared by Epp's son Loran, Epp was devastated when "Eben-Ezer decided they did not want [him] as the minister anymore." But he found a new way to serve. In his mid-50s at the time, Epp trained to become a hospital chaplain and worked in a Sudbury, Ont. hospital until his retirement. He developed a multi-faith approach to chaplaincy that spread to hospitals across Canada.

While Epp dedicated much of his life to service of the Mennonite church, later in life he joined to the United Church.

Through many roles in many places over many years Bruno Epp applied himself to God's work. Whether behind a pulpit or in front of a choir, whether standing in a classroom or sitting at a hospital bed, he sought to be in tune with God's call to serve. 卐

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ARTBEAT

Forced to make 'hard choices'

Banks exclude the poor, book by Menno Simons professor shows

By J. P. NEUFELD

Canadian Mennonite University
WINNIPEG

A new book by Jerry Buckland a professor at Menno Simons College, a Canadian Mennonite University institution in downtown Winnipeg, reveals how Canada's banking system excludes the poor.

In *Hard Choices: Financial Exclusion, Fringe Banks and Poverty in Urban Canada*, published this year by the University of Toronto Press, Buckland

takes an in-depth look at the tough choices low-income people living in Canada's inner cities face.

Data demonstrate that over the past 30 years mainstream banks and credit unions are abandoning low-income neighbourhoods, while the business of fringe financial services—such as pawn shops, cheque-cashers and payday lenders—booms. These fringe banks often charge far higher service



*Jerry Buckland, a Menno Simons College professor, is pictured at the April launch of his new book, **Hard Choices**, at McNally Robinson Booksellers in Winnipeg.*

fees; payday lenders in Manitoba charge up to \$51 on a \$300 two-week loan.

"Low-income people often do an amazing job of managing a very tight budget, frequently without access to credit or any reasonably priced credit," says Buckland.

Buckland's research team conducted interviews with people facing financial challenges in inner-city neighbourhoods in Winnipeg, Toronto and Vancouver. Although the qualitative interviews don't serve as statistical data, they depict the real-life "perspective of low-income Canadians and the hard choices they have to make about financial services," says Buckland, who fleshes out the big picture using data from national surveys, statistics and policy documents.

The author hesitates to heap too much blame on fringe bankers themselves. "I'm ambiguous about fringe bankers," he says. "I'm unwilling to say that just because they're operating a fringe bank they're exploiting poor people. But I'm also unwilling to say that low-income people aren't being harmed. It's systematic exploitation when poor people end up paying more for dead-end financial services. The system is failing."

Part of the problem is that most mainstream banks aren't very interested in serving the poor, Buckland's book suggests. "Banks just aren't very interested in having low-income people saving money, so they don't set up the systems needed to do so," he says. ☞

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FOCUS ON SENIORS

Never Again

World War 2 veteran promotes path of peace for younger generations

BY JAKE BUHLER

Charlie Clark, who grew up in the United Church tradition, listened carefully to the stories of his beloved Grandpa Ritchie on his fruit orchard in Naramata, B.C. The stories came from a gentle man who had seen war up close and who believed there was a better way to solving problems.

Fred Ritchie was a Canadian tank commander in Italy during World War 2. Tall at 6'3", he answered the call of the Armed Forces feeling that he was responding patriotically to a cause that would wipe out evil. "There was pressure on us to enlist" he observed in a talk in Saskatchewan a few years ago. "We were made to feel guilty if we did not join up." After the war Fred became active in the Canadian Legion to spread the slogan "never again."



Fred Ritchie reads a peace book to great-grandson, Simon Clark.

"That has all changed," he says. "No more does anyone say never again; we old vets are now used as propaganda to advance a new kind of Canadian patriotism that promotes the military." Fred belongs to

a group called VANA (Veterans Against Nuclear Arms). When Fred attends a Remembrance Day Ceremony he wears a white beret to indicate his allegiance to the path of peace. "For this," he says, "I have been criticized."

Remembering his grandfather's stories, Clark took courses at the Justice Institute of British Columbia. Searching for more places to pursue peace alternatives, he enrolled at Menno Simons College in Winnipeg and studied conflict resolution. While there he came across Mediation Services of Winnipeg and took a position there as an MCC volunteer, spending two years learning about and teaching conflict resolution strategies.

It was there that he crossed paths with another MCC volunteer, Sarah Buhler, who coordinated the Inner City program in downtown Winnipeg. Sarah had grown up in Thailand and was a recent graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, now CMU. They met in a downtown church where Sarah asked Charlie what size shoes he was wearing. She was concerned for a homeless person who needed a pair of large shoes and judged Charlie's

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feet to be about the same as her homeless friend. This strange introduction led to a further relationship.

Now Charlie and Sarah are passing the peace tradition to their children. Simon (6) and Benjamin (3), are surrounded by friends who play with toy guns. "Guns are bad," says Simon who is a first grader. Little Ben is still finding his way explaining a crude Lego pistol that he made: "This isn't a gun," he said, "it's a laser that shoots only good things."

If Charlie came to his peace position with a fine role model, Sarah was influenced by the well-known story of her great-great-aunt "Taunte Liese" (Elizabeth Unger Buhler) who stood up to the terror of the dreaded Russian bandit, Makhnov. In 1919, in the midst of a raid on her family in the village of Grigorjewka, with the women huddled in one corner of the *Grote Shtov* (large living room), 20-year-old Liese glanced unwittingly at the Kommandant. For a second he noticed the glance. Then fearlessly she took her guitar and sang folk songs and hymns. The Kommandant was so moved that he ordered his posse out of the village.

Fred Ritchie also met his enemy. In a lull from the fighting, he dismounted from his tank and sought refuge in a depression. Unbeknownst to him, a German Nazi had chosen the same refuge. As Fred rounded an obstruction, he came face to face with his enemy. "For a frozen second," he told Charlie, "our eyes met. Each of us knew that the other had a sidearm. And then as quickly as we had met, we walked past each other. I think of that young teenager from time to time and wonder what would have happened if we had done what we were trained to do. One of us would be dead."

Soldiers and those they killed should all be remembered. And their families. And the names of Conscientious Objectors should also be remembered. As 94 year old Veteran Fred Ritchie says, "Never Again."

Fred Ritchie lives in retirement in Penticton, B.C. Sarah is a professor of law at the University of Saskatchewan and Charlie is a City Councillor in Saskatoon. Sarah and Charlie have a third child, Rachel. They are active in Osler Mennonite Church. ❧

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The MCC Alberta team takes a tour of sand dams in Kenya

Crossing barriers in your own culture

BY THEODORE WIEBE

Special to Young Voices



Theodore Wiebe (second from right) and the rest of the MCC Alberta group met for the first time at the Calgary airport on their way to Kenya.

On March 24, I travelled with a group of 16 from the Calgary airport to Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. We spent the next two weeks on a learning tour, studying and working on MCC projects, travelling across rural and urban areas and meeting many people from across many walks of Kenyan life. The thing that none of us in the group thought about before getting on the plane was differences that might exist between us.

From a distance our group looked very much like a homogenous mass; a collection of people that was largely white with a disproportionate amount of sandy, vaguely brown hair. But upon further inspection many small seams and colours spread across the faces of our team, turning our monolith into a subtle mosaic. We were nearly split down the middle in terms of gender. We represented a wide

spread across the spectrums of age and Mennonite denominations. There were differences in everything from worldview to personal habits to—most dangerous of all—opinions.

I quickly decided that I would need to be very judicious in how I spoke my thoughts and that I better avoid speaking my mind.

The flight to Nairobi was long, two stretches of over eight hours each, with a rushed layover in Amsterdam that my memory has now turned into a madcap comedy that seems made for a Jerry Lewis film. The plane landed late! (It didn't.) We only had minutes to make our connection! (We had a couple of hours.) Nobody knew how to get to the next terminal! (The Dutch are really great with the clarity of their signage.) Everybody needed to run! (Mostly, folks just power walked.)

I had barely spoken ten words on that

first flight, preferring the company of books and music but that tiny slice of adventure in Amsterdam drew me out. Whether they knew it or not, it drew everybody else out, too. I started to know and understand the people with whom I was travelling. Construction teams began to assemble and bridges began to form. For my elitism, that was the beginning of the end.

As the trip continued, our group shared experiences and continued to grow closer. There were the car rides that rattled the dust from everyone's bones, the shared challenge of trying to meet people through a language barrier, the truth of character that comes out from sweat and labour and the frustrating cliché of North American

guilt. These experiences were a communion. The differences in age, history, and opinion never left, but gradually they ceased to matter. By the end they didn't seem to matter at all.

So I went to Kenya and learned something about sand dams, NGOs (non-government organizations), the struggle of living with extreme poverty, and using holes in the ground as toilets. It was powerful and affecting and I hope that I can live up to the challenges that opportunity provided. But standing shoulder to shoulder with all of that is another realization, much smaller but no less real.

You don't have to cross an ocean to find and conquer a divide.



The MCC Alberta team takes a tour of sand dams in Kenya

Young adults pursue walk with God in other Christian traditions

BY AARON EPP

Special to Young Voices

Sometimes when people change churches or denominations, it is because they are looking for a more contemporary form of worship. For Jonathan Dyck, it was the opposite—one of the things he appreciates about switching from a Mennonite church to worshipping in an Anglican one is how rooted the Anglican church is in liturgy, and saying and singing the same words every Sunday.

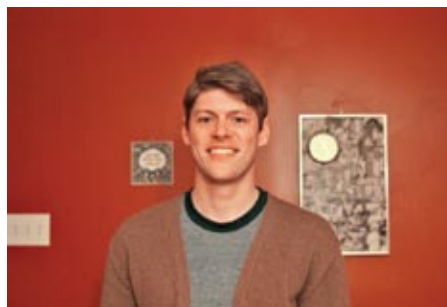
Dyck, who grew up attending Covenant Mennonite Church in Winkler, Man., began attending St. Margaret's Anglican Church in Winnipeg when he was a student at Canadian Mennonite University. Today he attends Christ Church, an Anglican parish in Edmonton, where he is finishing his Master's degree in English Literature and Cultural Theory at the University of Alberta.

"Part of what drew me to St. Margaret's, and what kept me going there, was the sense of history that they had," the 26-year-old says. "They seemed very rooted in their liturgical tradition and I appreciated the repetition of the liturgy each week. Finding new meanings in old words appealed to [me]."

North America's religious landscape has shifted in many ways over the past two generations. In 2009, the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, an extensive survey detailing statistics on religion in America, found that more than one quarter of the 35,000 Americans who responded to the survey had left behind the tradition in which they were raised. If you count movement within Protestantism, that proportion rose to over 40 per cent.

People change churches and denominations for a variety of reasons. Daniel Eggert says he began attending the church he now worships at because it has inspired his faith in new ways. Eggert grew up at First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, and now attends Church on 99, a popular non-denominational church in the city. Eggert appreciates the explicitness with which the leadership at Church on 99 talk about issues like finances, friendship, marriage and sex from the pulpit.

"It's inspired my faith," Eggert explains. "By going [to Church on 99], my relationship with God has grown, I'm excited about God, I'm excited about sharing God with other people, and just by having that



Jonathan Dyck grew up in a Mennonite church but now worships in an Anglican parish. "Part of what drew me to St. Margaret's, and what kept me going there, was the sense of history that they had," the 26-year-old says. "They seemed very rooted in their liturgical tradition and I appreciated the repetition of the liturgy each week. Finding new meanings in old words appealed to [me]."

relationship with God, sort of everything else in life happens in a really wonderful way.”

Rudy Dirks, lead pastor at Niagara United Mennonite Church (NUMC) in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., says he has observed young adults from other denominations joining his congregation, as well as young adults who grew up at NUMC leaving to attend different churches. If someone goes to a different church and they are able to draw closer to God as a result, they go with Dirks’s blessing.

“The kingdom of God is much bigger than one congregation [or] even than one denomination,” he says. “It’s much better that we have people who feel free to pursue their walk with God in other churches and denominations than if they would leave the church altogether and feel they couldn’t pursue God.”

Attending Church on 99 has certainly helped Eggert pursue God. He values his upbringing in the Mennonite Church and says the things he was taught affect the way he handles himself as a commercial property developer. He appreciates the community at First Mennonite that helped raise him, and he still worships at the church on occasion.

Still, while social justice and service are important to Eggert, he believes the

Mennonite Church is missing an opportunity when it focuses on those things at the expense of inspiring people in their faith. “I think right now the [Mennonite Church] has to make a decision on whether it wants to clothe the naked and feed the poor, or whether it wants to be a community of followers of Christ,” he says.

“By focusing continually on social justice and motivating people to take action in that regard, it’s a little bit like harvesting all the crops and not re-planting the seeds—like owning a stock and taking all the dividends and never reinvesting. We can focus on the outcomes of faith, which are things like social justice, changing our marriages, changing our society for the better, and that’s good, but if we don’t continue to focus on faith and growing the number of believers, then it minimizes the future fruits.”

Dyck from Christ Church says he now worships in a non-Mennonite setting because it is something that he feels called to and something he wants to be a part of. At the same time, he still renews his membership at Covenant Mennonite Church each year.

“If I ever live in Winkler, that will be my church—no question,” he says. “I feel like the relationships that I’ve made at Covenant are going to be with me for a long time.” ❧

Nursing the soul

BY RACHEL BERGEN

Young Voices Co-Editor



From left: Jas Cheema, Rani Srivaslava, Janice Clarke, and Evelyn Voyageur served as panellists discussing religion, spirituality and health care from their respective positions in the health care industry.

It takes a special kind of person to be a nurse. It takes someone who will stay up all night rocking and singing to a screaming child. Someone like Carly Penner who will respect diverse faith traditions and care for a child while their mother goes to say her prayers five times a day as required by the Islamic faith. Someone who will go out of their way to care for a patient, even if they have different ideas of care based on culture.

For Penner, a nurse at Winnipeg Children’s Hospital who attends Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg, her faith allows her to care for children and

their families with her whole heart.

“Jesus shows his love to my patients and their families through the care that I give,” she said. Even with patients who come from different faith traditions, showing love and respect allows a trusting relationship to grow.

“If you have a trusting relationship, they can open up to you about questions they have. Trust is a really big part of nursing,” Penner said. “This is definitely a part of my faith.”

Erin Braun, a nurse in the Pediatrics inpatient unit at Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre who

attends Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford, has been told that her faith is evident in her work.

"Families say, 'I can just tell you're a Christian,'" Braun said. And she can often see her faith intertwining with her work because she sees families at low points in their lives and finds ways to support them.

"Their child is sick and they have been admitted to continuing care. They often come up to our unit from the Emergency department where their child has possibly been poked, scanned, prodded, x-rayed, and tested for diagnoses; it's a difficult time."

"I find that throughout my work day, my faith is intertwined in my work. A quiet prayer for a stressed family, or a discussion with a family about my upbringing when they ask," Braun said.

At the same time, Braun does her best to provide culturally sensitive nursing care in a city that is very culturally diverse.

"Ultimately in my experience and education, respect for religious differences and individualized nursing care is most important and has been the best way for me to bridge different faith gaps," she said.

National Nursing Week took place May 7-13. In conjunction with this, Trinity Western University in Langley, B.C. held

a Faith and Nursing Symposium featuring speakers and panellists from diverse work positions and faith traditions. Focusing on the interface between religion, spirituality, nursing, and health care ethics, the symposium featured a panel on May 11 called, "A MultiFaith Dialogue on Diversity and Health Care Services." Panellists included Jas Cheema of Fraser Health, Janice Clarke of the University of Worcester (UK), Rani Srivastava of the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health in Toronto, and Evelyn Voyageur of the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada.

Anna Douglas, a second year nursing student at TWU who attended the symposium, said that spiritual care is not something that's technical and out of a nurse's reach. "Attending this symposium has helped me understand the need for spirituality in order to provide proper, holistic, quality care." Douglas said.

According to Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham, Director of the Master of Nursing program at TWU, "It's inevitable to bring faith into work. We're trying to make it intentional and more mindful."

"Our president [at TWU] says we're here to meet the deepest and most pressing needs. In nursing, we face this all of the time. So we need to tap into resources in order to better meet these needs," she said. ❧



Carly Penner

When I was your age

What four grandparents wished they knew when they were young adults

BY EMILY LOEWEN

Young Voices Co-Editor

As the stereotype goes, when you were a teenager you might have thought your parents and grandparents didn't know anything. You knew best and when you got it wrong, were loath to admit it.

But the stereotype also dictates that when you get a little older, maybe move out or attend university, you realize that life experience counts for something. While Young Voices is a place for young adults to share and discuss their ideas, sometimes it's also important for us to listen to good advice.

There are many young adults who take advantage of their grandparents' wisdom, but many don't think to do so before it's too late. Thankfully others, including *Canadian Mennonite* Editor Dick Benner, shared their advice. Young Voices interviewed four grandparents about what they wish they knew as young adults, and got their suggestions for our generation (like get a mentor, remember to have fun). See what they had to say in an audio slideshow online at youngvoices.canadianmennonite.org ❧



Gilbert Brandt, Winnipeg, suggests that young adults find a mentor they can ask for advice.

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Calendar

British Columbia

July 21: Camp Squeah 50th-anniversary event, beginning at the camp at noon. For more information, visit Squeah.com/50th-celebration, join the Camp Squeah alumni page on Facebook or call 1-800-380-2267.

Oct. 12-14: Women's retreat weekend at Camp Squeah. Theme: "Simply majestic." Speaker: Jackie Ayer, family literacy coordinator for Chilliwack Community Services.

Alberta

June 16: Camp Valaqua hike-a-thon at Cox Hills, Kananaskis. For more information, call 403-637-2510.

Oct. 12-13: Mennonite Church Alberta festival, hosted by First Mennonite Church, Edmonton. More details to follow.

Oct. 16-18: Pastors/spouses retreat at Camp Valaqua. For more information, contact Tim Wiebe-Neufeld at 780-436-3431 or twimmer@aol.com.

Saskatchewan

June 21-24: Saskatchewan Truth and Reconciliation event at Prairieland Park, Saskatoon.

June 22,23: RJC year-end musical performances.

Manitoba

June 18-29: Canadian School of Peacebuilding at CMU. For more information, visit csop.cmu.ca.

June 23: CMU hosts a retirement event for Gerald Gerbrandt, at the Loewen Athletic Centre, at 7 p.m.

July 7: Cycle Clear Lake bike-a-thon fundraiser for MCC Manitoba. For more information, or to participate, visit www.mccmanitoba.ca/cycleclearlake.

July 11: MCC Manitoba fundraising golf tournament at Bridges Golf Course, Starbuck. For more information, visit www.mccmanitoba.ca or call Paul Friesen at 204-261-6381.

Aug. 28: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate fundraising golf tournament, at Bridges Golf Club.

Sept. 28-29: CMU fall festival.

Oct. 16-17: J.J. Thiessen Lectures at CMU.

Ontario

June 9-10: Valleyview Mennonite Church, London 50th anniversary celebration. For more information, visit www.valleyviewmc.ca.

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 10: 1812 Bicentennial Peace Plaque Dedication Tour at Bertie Brethren in Christ Church, Port Dalhousie Peace Garden and The First Mennonite Church, Vineland, 2 to 5 p.m. For details and map, visit mcco.ca/1812events.

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.

June 23: Strawberry social at Nithview Community, New Hamburg; from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6:30 to 8 p.m.

June 23: East Zorra Mennonite is hosting a 50-year Mennonite Youth Fellowship (MYF) reunion as part of its 175th anniversary celebrations this year. All former MYFers are invited. Informal visiting begins at 2 p.m., followed by a barbecue at 4 and a celebration service at 7:30. For tickets or more information, e-mail ezmyf50threunion@gmail.com.

June 24: Poetry and music with poet Cheryl Denise (author of *What's in the Blood*) and No Discernible Key, at Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville, at 3 p.m. For more information, call 519-669-5775.

June 24: Wanner Mennonite Church 175th anniversary commemorative service. Service begins at 10:30 a.m., followed by a potluck picnic lunch.

June 29-July 1: Hidden Acres 50th Anniversary celebration. BBQ, Anniversary DVD premiere, floating campfire (30), dedication service Sun. p.m. Registration forms, schedules and accommodation information available at www.hiddenacres.ca or call 519-625-8602.

July 22: Male Chorus Gospel Sing, at Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call Will Stoltz at 519-696-2805 or Laurence Martin at 519-208-4591.

Aug. 12: Third annual Contemporary Music 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.

Aug. 25: Fourth annual Sacred Harp All-Day Sing, at Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. For more information, e-mail Gillian Inksetter at gillian@inksetter.com.

Sept. 8: Wanner Mennonite Church annual corn roast, at the church at 5:30 p.m. Bring a donation for the local food bank.

Oct. 14: Ninth annual Gospel Vespers, at Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call Will Stoltz at 519-696-2805 or Laurence Martin at 519-208-4591.

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

Classifieds

For Rent

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.

Employment Opportunities



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.

MUSIC COORDINATOR

Nutana Park Mennonite Church in Saskatoon is looking for a music coordinator and choral director. This is a part-time (.4) position.

Please send all inquiries and/or resumes to: Selection Committee, Nutana Park Mennonite Church, 1701 Ruth Street, Saskatoon, SK, S7J 0L7; or email: npmc@npmc.net. The deadline for applications is **June 21, 2012**.

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

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN, seeks to fill three development officer positions beginning between July 1 and August 1, 2012.

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, Elkhart (full time)

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, Great Plains (Kansas, full time)

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, Northeast (Pennsylvania, half time)

Job descriptions and application information are available at www.amb.edu/employment, or contact Missy Kauffman Schrock, director of development, mkschrock@amb.edu, 574-296-6223.

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

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Environmental evangelism



Nearly 40 volunteers from First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, spent much of May 6 taking part in 'Capital City Clean-up,' picking up garbage around their small corner of the city, where they discovered a bizarre dumping ground in a small woodlot at the edge of the church lot. This was the 25th year that Edmonton has sponsored a spring clean-up and the first year the church has volunteered. The effort was supported by First's Ecological Footprint Leadership Group. "It's a way to look outside our own private little parish, to be visible and do something practical and useful," says John Woollard, who suggested taking part.

PHOTOS BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD



Joseph Tut seems reluctant to toss Santa onto the pile of discarded items he and other First Mennonite Church members picked up from property around the Edmonton church.



Lowell Thiessen hauled out a lot of empty oil pails deposited in the woods near the church. Other items included a wooden ladder, broken chairs, children's toys, a rotten mattress and fire extinguishers.