

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

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## Partnership Circles

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## EDITORIAL

## Transition gifts

DICK BENNER  
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

**H**enry Paetkau left his position as president of Conrad Grebel University College last year and entered into a new phase of life, which was not quite retirement, but left him wondering about his role and identity. He is now employed as area church minister for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

The wisdom he shared about this transition period is too good to be kept to the 50 or so persons who heard him discuss this at a recent Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) breakfast. It needs the wider audience of *Canadian Mennonite* readers. Here are the 10 gems he learned or “unpacked” in his life in the last 14 months.

*Appreciation for a supportive spouse.* I couldn't have gotten through this period of rediscovering my new identity without Leonora's support—and her pay cheque! This reversal of roles found me listening to her experiences at school over dinner rather than hearing my stories of university management. It wasn't that we didn't share the experiences of our lives, but I was now freer and better able to hear hers.

*The gift of close friends.* Many friends didn't know what to say or what to ask. They were supportive, but many backed off, not knowing how to express that. Frankly, I didn't know what to say, either, in describing my new undefined role. But a few close friends kept in regular

touch and that meant so much as I journeyed this uncertain path.

*Connections with colleagues.* It was important to get out regularly and engage my colleagues on an ongoing basis. As an introvert, I was not bored or got tired of my own company; it was very easy for me just to stay confined to our home. The risk was that I would become too cloistered. So, at my own initiative, I engaged my colleagues of the last number of years, those persons in the worlds that I had inhabited, connections that gained importance as time passed.

*Learning the meaning of the use of time.* Frankly, with all this time on my hands, I felt guilty. I had to re-learn the use of time, to just lie fallow for a time and not feel the need to grow things or do things. I had more time to spend with my family, our children—my grandson in Winnipeg. Spending time with my aging parents was important. I discovered that time passes more quickly when you aren't doing “required stuff”—planned work. I learned to ask the question: “What does God want me to learn today?”

*Redefining, rediscovering myself.* I recognized that I was defined by my work and that my work defined me. I found that I often distracted myself with “busyness” rather than devote time to “important” things. It was a challenge to slow down; it took several months to learn focus and to quiet myself. I

rediscovered how important “calling” is. As an ordained minister, I had never needed to look for work; now I was looking for a job, a position. What does it mean to discern a calling while looking for work?

*Importance of routines.* I needed to create order in my life, to establish new routines. One of these was to go to the gym regularly. I had to re-learn new priorities and to focus, again, on what is healthy and life-giving.

*Learning new things.* Renegotiating new arrangements, such as me doing the cooking and having dinner ready in the evening. Beyond barbecuing and the slow-cooker, I didn't know much about the kitchen. It was an adjustment for me—and for Leonora—to make room for my learning curve.

*Attending to the inner being.* Can't overstate this, spending time in prayer and meditation, singing hymns (as loudly as I wanted at home), chasing these rabbit trails of scripture I always wanted to. I realized how left-brained I had become. I learned to attend to my body when anxiety rose.

*Staying in the present.* Not dwelling in the past, but preparing for the future, not feeling guilty about past mistakes but preparing for new opportunities. It takes conscious effort to gain this new centering, this focus on the importance of the moment.

*Exploring new interests.* Lots of volunteer opportunities. I joined the board of thirty-somethings who are starting an organic farm—and rediscovered how much I enjoy gardening. There was a real gift in choosing something that I was not required to do, but which I found meaningful, something that I really enjoyed.



## ABOUT THE COVER:

**Randy Hildebrand, youth pastor at Steinbach Mennonite Church, leads a rousing version of “Pharaoh, Pharaoh” during Vacation Bible School at Manigotagan, Man. Hildebrand has been bringing young people from Steinbach to teach VBS in Manigotagan for 15 years. See photo story on page 20.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF STEINBACH MENNONITE CHURCH

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**Guiding values:**

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# Choosing a pastor

*Is a pastor groomed from within the congregation as good a choice as one from outside?*

BY KARIN FEHDERAU  
Saskatchewan Correspondent

*In the old days, an unpaid pastor was chosen for life and respected as a major decision-maker. When a pastor is paid, and seen as employed by the congregation, it may influence how he preaches.*

**W**hich is better for the church, a pastor with seminary training or a layperson groomed for the role and invited from the local context?

While a seminary-trained pastor may be regarded as more professional, in some settings there are advantages to other models of leadership.

“The seminary pastor is trained to lead a congregation within the context of our culture,” explains Harold Peters-Fransen, lead pastor at North Kildonan Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Rebecca Slough, Dean of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), agrees.

“A good theological education helps us see trends that are happening in the local congregation,” she said, adding, “It helps pastors to minister to people who are in deep places of need.”

Nearly 500 years ago, emerging Anabaptist congregations looked to Scripture for guidelines in choosing pastors. Arnold Snyder, history professor from Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, says that the Anabaptists did not have a single system for choosing leaders, but the earliest confession indicates that they began their journey with simple adherence to Scripture.

“We have been united as follows concerning shepherds in the church of God. The shepherd in the church shall be a person according to the rule of Paul, [1 Tim. 3:7] fully and completely, who has a good report of those who are outside the faith,” says the Schleithem Confession of 1527. Article V goes on to say, “But if the shepherd should be driven away or led to the Lord by the cross, at the same hour another shall be ordained [or “installed”] to his place, so that the little folk and the little flock of God may not be destroyed, but be preserved by warning and be consoled.”

For the next few hundred years, most Mennonite congregations chose pastors from within the congregation. Training was limited and often came after installation. Pastors were given a great deal of respect, but generally they were unpaid.

Mennonite biblical training was available by the early 20th century, but it wasn't until after the 1950s that congregations expected professional training. By the 1970s most MC Canada churches were hiring seminary graduates and paying them salaries that reflected their training.

That shift in expectation put small rural churches in a difficult situation. They cannot afford the cost of supporting a seminary-trained pastor and sometimes they have trouble attracting and keeping graduates in isolated locations.

"We're only 40 people; it's hard to support a seminary-trained pastor," says Frank Elias, a deacon at Graysville Mennonite Church in Manitoba.

Ethnic churches also often look at part-time or unpaid ministers. For Laotian Mennonites with a background in Buddhism, it means treating the pastor similarly to a Buddhist priest who is dependent on offerings of food and money from the believers.

"Lao Mennonite churches are first generation believers. For them to hire or have a paid pastor is highly unlikely due to economic reasons," says Chinda Kommala, pastor of the Lao Canadian Evangelical Mennonite Church in Toronto.

### **Lay pastor models**

The lay model comes in different shapes and sizes. One church might hire someone well-known to them but with little or no Bible training. For example, Bruce Jantzen from Laird, Sask., worked in a pulp-and-paper mill in Prince Albert for 20 years before being asked to serve. His father had been a pastor and was hoping

Jantzen would choose the same path. Jantzen had a



*Harold Peters Fransen, leading pastor at North Kildonan Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.*

few semesters of Bible school under his belt but no degree. He served his father's church for 18 months before being asked to lead the congregation at Laird.

"For me it's been a wonderful experience. I didn't know I had a call," Jantzen said of his pastorate at the Laird Mennonite Church.

Another congregation might choose someone who has a degree from an established Bible college but has not gone the seminary route and chooses to work in the community and serve the church on the weekends.

Rob Wiebe lives in Burns Lake, B.C. He originally received a degree from Canadian Mennonite Bible College (now Canadian Mennonite University) planning to enter the ministry. After an unpleasant experience, he decided to take a break. Having worked as a bread salesman and then for 20 years in a sawmill, Wiebe had logged in life experience before he was approached about serving in a remote community an hour away in Granisle. Every Saturday morning, he and his family make the trip north and spend the weekend serving the church.

"In looking at my ministry, I feel the need to get more tools," he said listing the particular needs of a retirement community church.

Others may have no Bible training and are asked to serve in a paid position. Russ Friesen pastors the Tiefengrund Mennonite Church in Sask. He grew up in the church and has been trucking or farming for most of his adult life.

Les Regier, church chair at Tiefengrund, explains the benefits of hiring from within the congregation.

"We feel comfortable with Russ, we know him," he explained. Regier believes the lay model can work for larger churches too. But perhaps the lay model works for small groups because it's also easier on the church budget. It seems as though each congregation works out their own interpretations of the lay model.



*Rob Wiebe of Burns Lake, B.C., works full-time at a sawmill and serves a church an hour away.*

### **Trained versus lay ministry**

A sampling of minds from across the country exposes various opinions on the lay pastor model versus the trained pastor.

"The lay model was [in the past] helped along by strong preaching. The pastor was educated in the pew and at home," said Herb Sawatzky, pastor of Avon Mennonite in Stratford, Ont. But, he cautions, it wasn't always a rosy picture. His grandmother saw the resulting heartache when a church over-used a pastor. She felt strongly that it was not a good system, said Sawatzky.

Frank Elias, a man in his seventies, has watched the changes in the Mennonite church firsthand. He joined Graysville Mennonite in 1957 when the congregation still depended on unsalaried ministers. In 1974 the change to paid leadership was made.

"The reason the model failed, even if you have the abilities, is that it was too much for one person," said Elias.

The pastor's salary plays a role in the pastor-congregation relationship. In the old days, an unpaid pastor was chosen for life and respected as a major decision-maker. When a pastor is paid, and seen as employed by the congregation, it may influence how he preaches.

"My father was a lay minister and he did remark to me on more than one occasion that he had more freedom to preach than I, as a paid pastor, did," said Harold Peters-Fransen.

Sawatzky isn't so sure. "It depends on how big a part of the community [you] are. You're preaching to people you live with, do business with. . .that would muzzle the tongue. If you're afraid of conflict, then various inhibitions come into play."

Choosing a pastor from within the congregation can be complicated if the church assumes that decisions are made by the congregation. If there is conflict between the pastor and congregation, asking the pastor to leave is not really an option.

### **The importance of training**

Mennonite pastors of ethnic congregations believe that a pastor needs a call from God, but training is also important.

“To me, early Anabaptists had the right belief by choosing their leader from within,” said Kommala. “Some individuals may only want to study just to have a better job, but not being called by God and they end up destroying others spiritually,” he said.

Joseph Liou, pastor of the Calgary Chinese Mennonite Church says that, for a pastor, a call from God is very important.

“It’s a post-modern world. I would prefer a church calls from within but [the individual] still needs to be

## Growing young pastors

*Story and photo by Rachel Bergen*

YOUNG VOICES CO-EDITOR

**W**hen a church is in need of a lead or associate pastor, do they nurture these characteristics in the youth and young adults in their congregation or search for ready-made pastors outside of their congregation? The trend among Mennonite churches is to search for pastors who are educated in seminary or at one of the many Mennonite schools in Canada and abroad. While the trend has moved away from choosing a pastor from within the congregation, some Mennonite churches are providing opportunities for the young people in their midst to worship lead, be a part of committees, and even to preach.

This is the case for Rebecca Steiner of Community Mennonite Church in Stouffville, Ont. and Serena Smith from Jubilee Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. Steiner has recently been hired as the enrichment coordinator at her church. She is responsible for engaging young adults, for community outreach, and for creative worship. But her engagement with the church began long before this.

“Since I was a child, I grew up in the church. In the past few years I’ve been away at school, but I’ve sat on committees and been a part of worship services, I’ve done some preaching and now that I’m back in Stouffville, I’m hoping to be more involved,” Steiner said.

Smith is a youth sponsor and has been for a few years. She has helped teach adult Sunday school, she has been on retreat planning committees and has occasionally led worship. Her leadership started because her potential was noticed by a youth sponsor.

“When I was 16, one of my youth sponsors positively pressured me to go to MinistryQuest and ever since then I’ve tried to get involved in a leadership role,” Smith said.

Because her church has raised her to be a leader, Steiner hopes to lead within the church and help others move into leadership roles.

“It takes a community to raise a child and it also takes a community to raise a leader. When there’s this

community that has supported you all along that way, it’s a beautiful thing when that person can give back to the church and to continue the cycle of life within that congregation. That makes sense,” she said.

“That being said, going away to school to learn and discern and receive some education is really important to be a strong leader. Perhaps that education can happen within the church, too.”

Smith believes that one is often most comfortable speaking up in their own congregation.

“If I were to go to another church, it would take me quite a few months to speak up and suggest things to them. You gain that confidence from within your own congregation,” she said. On the other hand, Smith recognizes that while a church is nurturing leadership qualities in a potential pastor, the church may not be receiving the leadership it needs. ☸



*Rebecca Steiner (left) and Serena Smith at the Mennonite Church Canada Assembly in Vancouver.*



trained. Training is important; not for personal gain but to help the church,” he said.

Most full-time pastors today would agree that the paid model is easier on the pastor’s family because the pastor is not working two jobs. In addition, a seminary-trained pastor learns administration and counselling skills and cultivates a connection to the seminary because there’s already a relationship established there.

“Seminary education has its strengths,” admits Vic Winters, a ministry coordinator in the Leamington Mennonite Church. The pastor can then devote all his energies to the church. There are no problems with divided loyalties between his or her job and the church.

Slough concedes that a person without theological training can pastor a church but stresses the importance of being supported by other pastors.

“It’s possible to lead a congregation effectively if [the pastor] can be willing to meet with his or her own peers,” she said, especially other pastors who are willing to grow in their own walk with God.

“For the most part, congregations are thankful that their leadership can dedicate their working life to the work of the church, so find it a healthier model,” said Peters-Fransen

### **Models for the future**

In the Leamington Mennonite church, a large urban congregation of 400-500 people, paid pastors first began to appear on the scene in the eighties. Winters is a retired educator who brought the occasional message to the congregation. When the church was replacing the lead pastor, he was asked to serve but has no background in theology. As a ministry coordinator, he believes strongly that pastors are not hired simply to do all the work.

“I believe in a busy, muscular church. Churches should work hard; it’s not a spectator sport. Leadership is modelling for others,” said Winters.

Over the past number of years, Mennonite colleges and universities in Canada have worked at providing enhanced theological training so that students can do more studying locally

without moving to Indiana for years of seminary.

In response to the request for more options in seminary training, the Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Indiana is working at offering more distance education choices. There is not one model for all congregations, but hopefully churches that cannot afford a pastor with a regular seminary degree can help their leaders find ways to develop their skills and deepen their biblical knowledge.

According to Rebecca Slough, Dean of the seminary, AMBS is looking at the idea of hybrid degrees in which the person wanting to study theology will be able to take part of their degree online and only need to spend one or two weeks of intensive study on the seminary campus.

There are benefits to being able to study online and stay in one’s own community. Families can avoid the painful task up uprooting their children during their formative years; heavy debt loads can be avoided since the spouse of the student can live and work in their own community to support the student and the student can apply what they are learning online directly to their ministry situation. But there needs to be a balance, she said, citing some very important aspects of a seminary experience.

Some students, for example, have been badly hurt from ministry and seminary is

a place where they can come and heal. “Ministry is a hard place to be,” she pointed out. Since many pastors can’t find places of support where they can share their challenges, seminary becomes for them, a community of like-minded people who can identify with ministry issues and offer encouragement to each other.

Another plus, is that leaving home to study allows a person to make a complete break from their home environment.

“Sometimes when we stay in one place, we lose the skill to see things more broadly.”

Added to that, she believes that children can gain from being in a new situation. But ultimately, the parents must decide if their child can handle being in a racially-integrated learning environment.

And there are drawbacks to studying in an online environment. A person needs to be disciplined and have the time to devote to the course. It can be hard to keep motivated; not having a classroom environment to be accountable to. The temptation to hide behind a computer screen or fall behind in one’s studies is a real danger. And in the final analysis, there are no savings, she said, either for the school or for the student.

Slough herself has been tasked with writing a proposal to move the idea from paper to policy. The seminary hopes to have everything in place by fall of 2013. ❧

### **❧ For discussion**

1. What has been the history of how a pastor is chosen in your congregation? How many people from your congregation have entered the pastoral ministry? How did the congregation help them develop leadership skills?
2. What do you think are the advantages or disadvantages of having a professionally trained pastor paid by the congregation? What are the major differences between having a professionally trained pastor paid a salary by the congregation and an untrained, unpaid pastor chosen from within? Who has the authority to make decisions in each model?
3. How important is it for future pastors to attend the Mennonite seminary in Elkhart, Indiana? How do Mennonite Church Canada, the Area Churches and the church schools help to train pastors? Should more mature adults be encouraged to enter pastoral work?
4. In what ways does your congregation groom its people for leadership? How might churches do a better job of giving more responsibility to younger people?

## 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.*

## ✉ Church is called to minister to pagans

The editorial of the Sept. 3 issue, "Rejoice with the Congolese," identifies a major shift in western missionaries' practices and beliefs regarding mission work. We carry shame and guilt for our past actions. As a Christian church we now seek to show greater respect for the person, nation, and spirituality of those to whom we are sent. The word "pagan" is defined as one "who is not a Christian, Jew or Mohammedan." The church is called to minister to pagans.

I find the editorial message clear in the call that we be more sensitive and respectful of other people's spiritual base. This I affirm. However, the author gives us a message I feel we might seriously ponder. I squirm when I read, we have "... labelled the people of Africa 'pagans' who were to be rescued from their witchcraft and magic rather than recognize this as their authentic spirituality." I ask for a fuller understanding of the sentence.

We served in the Brazilian Amazon region for eight years among "pagans." The culture was saturated with witchcraft and shamanism. One might clearly state that our mission was to "rescue" the enslaved people from demonic powers, from evil Satanic powers.

The Yanomami culture, had no word for "love" or "thank you." We loved these people. We lived among them, raised four children among them and I often trekked the jungle with them. I believe we did recognize their "authentic spirituality." They lived (and many still do) in fear of spirits, of which they had no control except through the shaman. The shaman had four tasks: give direction to the hunter in finding

game, heal the sick, dispel negative spirits from fellow tribesmen, and, curse any person or shaman in another tribe whom they disliked. Revenge was a strong cultural value. Shamanism was one significant means of revenge.

Jesus was not tolerant in any way to demonic forces. The church cannot make compromises with witchcraft and magic.

—JOHN PETERS, WATERLOO, ONT.

## ✉ Scripture reveals God's truth through Jesus Christ

Re: "Shedding Sola Scriptura" by Troy Watson, Sept. 3, page 12.

The Apostle John declared that the law was given through Moses; grace and truth was realized through Jesus Christ, (John 1:17). Paul tells us that the law was a school teacher to bring us to Christ, (Gal. 3:24). John tells us at the end of his gospel that these things were written that we might "*believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing you may have life in His name,*" (John 20:31). I believe that everything in the recorded scriptures—Old and New Testaments—was written for the sole purpose of revealing God's truth and grace through Jesus Christ.

Laws for human behaviour (the do's and don'ts) can be found in many writings such as the Torah, the Koran, and in Buddhist and Hindu writings, but the perfect balance of truth and grace is only found in the life of Jesus Christ.

The only place we will find a fulfilled and final record of Jesus Christ is in the recorded Christian scriptures. I agree with Mr. Watson that it is possible to worship the creation rather than the creator, or as he wrote, mistake the finger for the moon, but to use that as an argument to, shed *sola scriptura*, is weak and misleading.

The Latin term, *sola scriptura*, was invoked at a time when the leaders of the church practiced two basic things that the reformers rejected:

1. The silence of the scriptures: Permissive or prohibitive?

One of the controversies that has raged for centuries is whether or not the "silence" of the Scriptures must be respected or ignored. Some allege that whatever is not expressly forbidden is allowed in religious practice; others contend that anything not authorized is not permitted. If I understand correctly, the Anabaptists held to the position that anything not authorized is not permitted.

2. The traditions of the Fathers were equal to the Scriptures. This teaching opened the door for many areas of confusion and exploitation including venerable holy images, indulgences, prayers to and for the



dead, sacred vessels and vestments, etc. etc.

Luther, and other reformers, said these traditions should not be included as part of the authoritative word of inspired Scriptures. Some reformation leaders maintained teachings of the traditions of the Fathers to justify fighting wars, infant baptism and the sacraments. The Anabaptists felt the other reformers had elevated *sola scriptura*, which diminished the centrality of Christ. Herein lies the struggle of the ages.

Do we want to shed *sola scriptura* so we can equally embrace the other writings of other faiths? As precious as these writings may be to the people who declare them as sacred, they are incomplete and lack the grace, the power and the truth to reconcile us to God.

—DAVID SHANTZ, MONTREAL, QUE.

## ✉ Dress codes help provide respect and order

Re: “Must respect be earned, or simply expected,” Aug. 20, page 8”

I am somewhat perplexed by the comment, “A woman has every right to dress as she pleases, and males have a responsibility not to have lustful thoughts.” I have been driving a car for many years and have learned that I cannot drive just the way I please and not have other drivers get upset with my driving. There is a desperate need for order and respect on the road.

As far as dress code is concerned, many

## FROM OUR LEADERS

# Spirit sent!

KAREN MARTENS-ZIMMERLEY

Sailboats seemed so idyllic—until I went sailing. I discovered that what looked peaceful from a distance was physically vigorous. It involved constant alertness, team work, and careful attention to the instructions of my friend. Only then could we align the sails of our boat with the powerful prairie wind and experience the exhilaration of being caught and propelled! Work, joy and vulnerability were wrapped together in experiencing this force that was so much greater than us.



The Faith and Life

Committee (FLC) of Mennonite Church Canada is one of the leadership bodies called to help the church align with the wind of God's Spirit through discerning God's will on issues of theology, ethics, polity and practice. This past summer's study assembly, “Dusting off the Bible for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” grew out of the vision and initiative of the FLC. Delighting in Scripture, reading Scripture with fresh eyes, and delving into hermeneutics (the study and interpretation of the Bible) are practices that place the church in good

“sailing” conditions so that we can discern the direction of God's Spirit. Only then can we begin to understand God's call to the church as it lives and gives witness in a world swirling with diverse cultures and faiths, fragile creation, vulnerable economics. Only then can we wrestle with deep questions of doubt in how things have been done in the past and live into experiments of creativity and

*My prayer is that such efforts will help each one of us catch the wind of where the Spirit is blowing in our time*

hope.

The FLC desires to equip and strengthen the church in her ability to be a faithful church, not only on questions of sexuality, but in the diversity of issues that face us in the second decade of this 21<sup>st</sup> century. To build on lifting our biblical sails, the FLC has initiated a season of prayer called “Hear what the Spirit is saying” with our 225 congregations across Canada. Each congregation was asked to identify two people who have a passion for prayer and God's Word. Over the

summer months these people of prayer were invited to read study and meditate on Matthew 8-10, listening attentively for what the Spirit may be saying. These leaders are now involved in an electronic dialogue about “what is the Spirit saying to us, the broader church?”

In November the FLC will meet to consider the wisdom that this season of prayer has to contribute to the Being a Faithful Church process and more broadly, what other areas of faith and life Mennonite Church Canada should be addressing.

Bible reading, Bible study and prayer are practices that the church has engaged in since Pentecost and so we are in continuity with our Christian heritage. These

sacred practices have led to renewal and charting new waters of being the faithful church. My prayer is that such efforts will help each one of us catch the wind of where the Spirit is blowing in our time, and with both faith and joy we will be propelled to join the work and mission that our ever renewing God has already begun!

*Karen Martens Zimmerley is the denominational minister for Mennonite Church Canada.*

organizations have a definite code they abide by. God has made woman especially beautiful and man with a desire that can get out of hand if not controlled. I therefore feel there is a special need for mutual respect and order for male and female to live and walk with genuine integrity in the way they have been created.

We, that is, male or female, cannot do this alone; we need mutual support in order to fulfill the purpose of our being.

HENRY NEUFELD, DELTA, B.C.

## FAMILY TIES

# When we're not busy

MELISSA MILLER

**W**e often greet each other with a question like, "Keeping busy?" For many of us the answer is yes, and we may add a summary of our current tasks or activities to the one who greeted us. Or we may mentally review the kinds of things that are keeping us busy. As we do so, we could feel stimulated by these pursuits and well-engaged with life. Or possibly we feel overloaded and stressed. Whether we feel fulfilled or frustrated with busy-ness, we likely think of ourselves as being "normal" when we are busy. There's an assumption that most people are fully occupied with things to do, people to visit, and tasks to complete. And if we're not busy, then something is wrong.

In fact, all of us aren't busy. Or all of us aren't busy all the time. Some of us struggle with the opposite dynamic. Instead of the constant hum of compelling activity, we endure long, too-quiet hours. Rather than a "full dance card" of social engagement, we are lonely and yearning for meaningful connection.

A number of circumstances could come into play. In some cases, physical or mental illness has sidelined us from the busy railroad track of life. For some people, unemployment or underemployment makes for long days and longer

nights; without a job to occupy us, we can feel unmoored and lacking in self-worth. For others, a move to a new community disrupts our social network and the activities that go along with it. Changes in family circumstances are another factor, as when children grow into adulthood and leave home, or when a spouse dies.

Some of the elderly are less busy than they would like to be, perhaps unable to



*How do we live fully when life feels more empty than full?*

keep up with events as they did in the past, or perhaps because their social circles have grown smaller. And young adults may find themselves to be under-engaged with life, feeling adrift and purposeless.

How do we live at such times? How do we manage our disquietude and discomfort? How do we live fully when life feels more empty than full?

First of all, we do well to remember that emptiness is part of the spiritual landscape. Biblical stories abound of people meeting God in the empty places of the desert and the wilderness. While we may feel discontented or even fearful of the emptiness, we can trust that God is

fully with us at such times. And certainly we learn different things about ourselves and about God when we are quiet, still and even bored or lonely than we do when life is bursting with activity.

We also can turn to the two pillars of love and work on which to fill the bare spaces of our lives. Love that offers us satisfying bonds of connection. And work that provides meaningful purpose and activity, whether that be paid or voluntary. If we find ourselves to be "not busy" and distressed, perhaps we can search out possibilities for love and for work. Is there a family member or neighbour who might welcome some contact? Could we fill our long hours with prayer for particular people or places? Is there a

church or community need where we can volunteer, using our gifts to share God's love? Are there creative possibilities to pursue—a memoir to write, a woodworking project, painting or song to bring forth?

Finally, let's be gentle with ourselves, not falling prey to the illusion that busy-ness means fulfillment, contentment or healthy balance.

*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.*

## LIFE IN THE POSTMODERN SHIFT

## Is the Bible Reliable?

BY TROY WATSON

When I was eighteen I participated in a “street evangelism” campaign at the Boston University campus as part of a Bible course I was enrolled in. A few of the BU grad students decided to have a little fun and interrogate us with some questions of their own. We were steamrolled by their merciless intellectual superiority. My ignorance was not bliss on this particular occasion. I was deeply humbled and walked away from the experience realizing I didn’t actually know much about my faith, God or the Bible. In the afterglow of this outreach debacle I decided to apply my mind to better understand what I believed and why I believed it.

One of the many significant questions they raised was, “How do you know the Bible is reliable?” This is a much more complicated question than it first appeared to me.

First of all, is our Bible a reliable version of the original manuscripts? I believe it is. Despite the fact that we have no original manuscripts of our sacred texts, the vast majority of the tens of thousands of manuscripts we do have are centuries removed from the originals and there are more variations among our existing manuscripts than words in the New Testament, most scholars agree that the Biblical books we have today are extremely close renditions of the originals. It is important to recognize our Bible is not a perfect or exact version (I believe this is providentially significant) but it is what marketers today would advertize as 99.9 percent pure.

Second, were the original manuscripts reliable accounts of the events, teachings, revelations, etc. that they record? I



can’t even begin to address this complex question in an article this size. Instead I’d like to focus on a third aspect of the Bible’s reliability—is the canon reliable?

What I mean by this is whether the right documents or “books” were chosen to become part of what we now call the Bible. There was an

abundance of Christian literature being written and distributed in the first few centuries before the church had an official canon. Many of the earliest Christian writings, addressed as false teaching by what is now considered “orthodox” teaching, likewise addressed what is now considered “orthodox” teaching as false

*It is important to recognize our Bible is not a perfect or exact version . . . but it is what marketers today would advertize as 99.9 percent pure.*

teaching. Is the Bible yet another case of the victors writing history?

The first Christian Bible produced in the early church was by a Christian teacher named Marcion who was later excommunicated as a heretic. Marcion’s Bible contained 11 books: 10 Pauline epistles, 1 gospel (an edited version of Luke’s gospel), and no Old Testament books. Marcion was rejected as a heretic primarily for his belief that the God of the Gospel and the God of the Old Testament were two completely different gods. Although Marcion’s Bible was rejected by the church at large, the debate within Christianity about which books were reliable as Scripture carried on for another century.

At least 46 early Christian writings

were considered potentially Scriptural in status at some point or quoted from as “scriptural” by one of the early Christian authorities. (The number of times early Christian authorities quoted from a book in a Scriptural manner was one of the factors official church councils used to determine its credibility as Scripture.)

The first time in history we see our current 27 New Testament books listed as the Christian canon is in 367AD by Athanasius the bishop of Alexandria. We finally see consensus in the western church on a closed canon by the end of the fourth century and by the end of the fifth century in the east, with some books still being questioned sporadically throughout history.

So is this canon reliable? Did they pick the right “books”? This question is clearly a matter of faith and it is not only a question of faith in God but of faith in the early church leaders and the politically motivated post-Constantinian church authorities that met to debate and make decisions at official church councils. For

us to assume the leaders and processes used to make weighty decisions on matters like closing the canon in the fourth century were any less messy and human than the church leaders and processes we use to make decisions today would be extremely naïve in my opinion.

There is a bigger set of questions underlying the question of Scripture’s reliability—do we trust God to move through human beings and human processes and how do we discern if God is or has?

To be continued...

*Troy Watson is pastor of Quest Community. This is part four of an ongoing series on “The Role of Scripture for Postmodern Life.” troy@questcc.ca*



## VIEWPOINT

# Narrowing doors for refugees

*Health cuts among unfair measures*

BY LUIS ALBERTO MATA

**A**lthough the Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act was supposed to improve Canada's immigration system, this latest law actually closes social services for refugees and refugee claimants in Canada.

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has said this legislation will help stop foreign criminals, human smugglers and those with unfounded refugee claims from abusing Canada's generous immigration system. However, human rights organizations such as Amnesty International, the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers and the Canadian Council of Refugees have raised concerns. Individuals and families who fled their home countries and came to Canada seeking protection will now find making their claims more difficult and unfair.

In only two months of working with immigrants and refugees, I have seen this negative trend. In a short period of time (one to two years), Canada will have hundreds or perhaps thousands of people living underground. These high levels of exclusion will bring poverty and new social problems. What logic is there in a country with a healthy economy but an unhealthy society?

Mennonite Central Committee has also expressed concerns about how Canada will decide who is a refugee. "We oppose any list of so-called 'safe' countries, since any country can be both 'safe' and 'insecure' depending upon the particular situation of an individual refugee claimant" said Ed Wiebe, MCC Canada's National Refugee Program Coordinator.

Many asylum seekers in desperate

situations, trying to avoid conflict or fleeing violence, have found "help" through smugglers. More drastic laws won't stop the flow of refugees; it will only force refugee and asylum seekers to sell everything in order to pay the smugglers. The new law will punish the refugees, not the smugglers.

Voices in favour of immigration reform argue that many Canadian Permanent Residents have applied under Protected Person status, but they have obtained this status based on a fraudulent process, and

once they have been granted Permanent Residence have travelled for vacations to their country of origin, showing that everything was fake. However, these cases are a minority; we cannot judge negatively the honest majority based on a wrong minority. Besides, some of them have travelled to their countries driven by despair or difficult family issues.

Canadian Permanent Residents will also risk losing their status if the conditions in their countries of origin improve. But what does it mean to "improve?" Will that be when these countries have signed free trade agreements with Canada, when they have had an electoral process or if Canadian mining companies have business there? The list of safe countries will be decided autonomously by the

Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Canada has been concerned about human rights violations in other countries, but in many cases if business interests are involved and if the violations are committed by government agents, the official advocacy for human rights is nothing more than a formality. It sometimes appears that business and wealthy immigrants are more important to the current government.

One negative trend in this new law are cuts in social services including health care for refugees and refugee claimants. Many voices have been raised against these cuts, including a doctors association. Doctors Jane Pritchard and Miriam Wiebe from Toronto United Mennonite Church and New Life Mennonite Church in Toronto have been actively advocating for those refugees in need of health coverage by serving with extra time.

My final concern is related to Convention Refugees with their lives on hold because, although they were accepted through an Immigration

*In a short period of time (one to two years), Canada will have hundreds or perhaps thousands of people living underground. These high levels of exclusion will bring poverty and new social problems.*

and Refugee Board hearing, for different reasons they have not arrived in Canada yet. They live as refugees in limbo, even though they may have undergone decades of injustice. How will this latest immigration reform affect those Convention Refugees in limbo? What will happen to them? New times of struggling to defend and promote the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms are coming! ❧

*(Luis Alberto Mata is member of the Toronto United Mennonite Church and advocates for immigrants and refugees in his work with settlement issues in Toronto.)*



## Dispatch from the dusty side of the rural-urban divide

BY WILL BRAUN

Senior Writer

Last week, my family and I moved from an apartment in downtown Winnipeg to a 7.5-acre farmyard near Morden, Manitoba, 140 kilometres southwest of the concrete jungle that had been my home for much of the last couple decades.

It is a relief to plan a huge garden (no skimping on cukes or cantaloupe), to have a traffic-free environment for the kids and to hear nothing but crickets at night. But I don't want to romanticize. I don't want to imply that the country is better than the city because that would emphasize the rural-urban gap when my goal is to shrink it.

As I left Winnipeg, with my 5-year-old son next to me in the U-Haul, I was aware of heading in a direction opposite that of human history. Humanity has been steadily urbanizing ever since cities came into being. Even the biblical narrative begins in a garden and ends in a paved paradise. I was once headed in that direction too. I grew up on a farm and I loved it. But I still left right after high school. I intended to do *more* with my life than *just* grow food. That is the logic of urbanization—to “progress” to something better than rural, agricultural life.

Now, 20 years after making my own “escape,” and only 13 miles (no kilometres here) from the farm I left, I find myself wondering where to plant raspberries and considering a gradual move into growing

food for sale (in addition to writing). As I buck the urbanization trend, I also lament the rural-urban divide.

My concern about the divide is basic: who will grow the food of the future?

Urbanization brings the urbanization of values. Around the world, growing food and caring for the land is considered a lesser vocation, if it is considered at all. For example, consider the anti-rural assumption embedded in education. Novelist and part-time ruralite Barbara Kingsolver writes about the “powerful presumption that education is a key to moving away from manual labour and dirt—two undeniable ingredients of farming.”

While there is growing urban interest in local food—which is great—how many farmer's market patrons want their kids to be farmers? The devaluation of farming has implications for what we put in our Spirit-indwelled bodies and for who cares for God's creation.

If humanity leans evermore to the city, fewer and fewer people will be left to grow food and care for land. This means bigger and different farm operations. It means that those agri-businessmen most oriented to the economic growth model and most tied to the huge agri-corporations will grow more and more of our food. In some places it results in absentee landlords—the

opposite of farm-based communities with a direct interest in passing on good land to future generations. It means evermore disconnect between humanity and the basic miracle of food.

The big business model may have advantages in terms of efficiency, and many of the people involved are very fine folk, but it has problems too. It is carbon intensive, highly profit-driven, beholden to agri-businesses with dubious track records overseas, and, by its expansionist nature, it pushes smaller farmers out.

Who then will grow our daily bread? It's not as simple as idealizing “small family farms,” as that term is an oversimplification, but my own preference is for trustworthy food. That is, food I can trace to a known, trusted source. Relationship is key. Big ag tends to grow anonymous food.

I believe city folk, country folk, and certainly educators need to collaborate to reverse the urbanization of cultural values. Agriculture needs to be understood and valued so that rural communities can thrive and healthy discussions can happen across lines.

The Germinating Conversations event held not far from here last March was an excellent example of that. The event, held at the Bergthaler Mennonite Church in Winkler, brought city folk out to hear from five very different farmers about issues they face. It felt good to have diverse views shared openly among diverse people in a church fellowship hall.

Religious denominations are one of few formal settings in which urban and rural people mix. They're in a very good position to help narrow the gap. But it's a tough task. My new neighbours surely include large Mennonite farmers. I feel nervous about them reading this. But surely we can find enough mutual respect, conflict transformation expertise and common ground within the faith context to talk through critical issues.

The conversation about food is too important not to have. I look forward to the next Germinating Conversations event this fall in Winnipeg and I hope similar events happen across MennoLand. I also hope my big ag neighbours stop by, especially if they have manure for my little garden of eden. ☘

## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Andrews**—Mylah Dawn (b. Aug. 5, 2012), to Tracy and Tyler Andrews, Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

**Birrell**—Alistair David (b. July 4, 2012), to Chris and Katherine Birrell, Ottawa Mennonite, Ont.

**Burnham**—Laurel Sophia (b. Aug. 23, 2012), to Janelle and Tim Burnham, Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

**Hiebert**—Gianna Maribel (b. Sept. 15, 2012), to Amalie and Stefan Hiebert, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**MacLaren**—Abigail Heather (b. July 3, 2012), to David MacLaren and Pam Albrecht, Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

**Morwood**—Oliver Claire (b. Aug. 26, 2012), to Nathan and Teresa Morwood, Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

**Regehr**—Connor Richie (b. Aug. 8, 2012), to Dinho and Marnie Regehr, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

**Tiessen**—Peter Henry (b. July 4, 2012), to Lisa Toews (Breslau Mennonite, Ont.) and Peter Tiessen (Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon), in Winnipeg.

### Marriages

**Bonifas/Wiens**—Andrew Bonifas and Teresa Wiens (Hershel Ebenfeld Mennonite, Sask.) at Elk Ridge Resort, Sask., Aug. 11, 2012.

**Fortin/Steele**—Jocelyn Fortin and Leslie Steele, Ottawa Mennonite, Ont., Sept. 1, 2012.

**Good/Nyakudarika**—Caralee Good (Wilmot Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.) and Elijah Nyakudarika of Sydney, Australia at Wilmot Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont., Aug. 19, 2012.

**Horrock/Marshall**—Trevor Horrock and Amy Marshall, First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Aug. 4, 2012.

**Klein/Zehr**—Bethany Zehr and Dan Klein at East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Aug. 11, 2012.

**Marshall/Tahimic**—Jeffrey Marshall and Alexis Tahimic, First Mennonite, Winnipeg, June 23, 2012.

**Neufeld/Shenk**—Philip Neufeld and Ellen Shenk, Ottawa Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 31, 2012, in Ottawa.

**Sandberg/Witzel**—Oscar Sandberg and Janelle Witzel (East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.) in Sweden, Aug. 18, 2012.

**Valle/Wiebe**—Hugo Valle and Carmen Wiebe, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Aug. 4, 2012.

### Deaths

**Dyck**—Lydia, 97 (d. Sept. 5, 2012), Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Eby**—Pearl Elizabeth, 92 (b. July 27, 1920; d. Aug. 1, 2012), Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

**Epp**—Edna, 86 (b. Dec. 4, 1925; d. Aug. 30, 2012), Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask.

**Mills**—Annie (nee Dyck), 67 (b. Jan. 22, 1945; d. Sept. 5, 2012), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

**Van Dyke**—Gord, 53 (b. Oct. 20, 1958; d. Sept. 5, 2012), Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

**Willms**—Katharina (nee Janzen), 88 (b. April 8, 1924; d. Aug. 23, 2012), First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

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

## Pontius' Puddle





## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

## Long pastorate provides stability in mobile congregation

*Don Friesen retires from Ottawa Mennonite Church after 34 years*

**DAVE ROGALSKY**  
Eastern Canada Correspondent

**P**ierre Trudeau was Canadian prime minister for the first time. Jimmy Carter was president of the United States and Leonid Brezhnev of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Gasoline sold for under 50 cents a litre and the Canadian Constitution had not been repatriated when Don and Dorothy Friesen moved to Ottawa so he could begin pastoring the Ottawa Mennonite Church (OMC).

Friesen retired in June this year after 34 years.

Friesen was a young minister coming from a four-year associate pastorate at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. He had grown up in Langham Saskatchewan, going to high school in Saskatoon and had a background in engineering and political science. For 19 years after it was founded in 1959, OMC had had several short pastorates—Bill Dick, Frank Epp, Bill Janzen and Adolph Enns in co-ministry for several years, and Alma Coffman from Virginia. Friesen was offered a three-year contract at three-quarter-time (Dorothy worked as a teacher); he notes that only toward the end did he get five year contracts. He didn't finish the last contract at retirement, mostly due to health reasons.

Friesen and the congregational leaders note that the church has been very



*Friesen preaches in 1980. Over time, only the colour of his beard has changed.*

mobile. Many people come to Ottawa to work for the federal government or in the tech industries and are posted elsewhere or move on. Friesen has joked that during his time there he has pastored at least three congregations.

The congregation has many leaders and he felt they were seeking a pastor who wouldn't tell the congregants what to do. He gives the longstanding refugee ministry which he instigated in 1979 as an example. "I consulted with congregation, and had a congregational meeting. They took on the work; and in the memory of the congregation the work emerged out of the congregation." His low key leadership got it going, others took leadership and he was comfortable in a facilitating role. Similar leadership led the congregation to begin annual sales with Ten Thousand Villages that eventually resulted in two retail outlets in Ottawa.

The congregation averaged 85 in 1978 and now has around 250 in average attendance. Friesen also saw the congregation through two building projects in his 34 years.

Listening and coming alongside, he thinks, are key aspects to his ministry and his longevity as pastor. His first funeral in 1986 was that of a young boy. Friesen felt



*Don and Dorothy Friesen enjoy the service of retirement, recognizing Don's many years of pastoral service at the Ottawa Mennonite Church.*



*Friesen at the piano in the early years.*

the support in the congregation for the family and for him. Friesens had a young son with medical problems as well. The congregation supported him with regular sabbaticals and helpful reviews with strong support each time. As the years have flowed on, he became more vulnerable to the congregation, more willing to show his weaknesses.

According to Friesen, OMC is a very diverse congregation with people all over the political spectrum and with diverse theologies. Some of the refugees from Africa and Latin America sponsored by OMC have continued to attend the congregation.

Leaders Monica Scheifele (congregational chair) and Jennifer Driediger (chair of ministerial committee which includes the deacons) warmly remember Friesen's preaching as connecting with the congregants through humour and strong biblical content. Driediger in particular remembers his connection with the children during and outside of worship. She also felt he was especially strong in the crisis situations

of funerals and weddings. Scheifele notes that Friesen is already missed as he carries so much of the congregational memory, and so much of the unwritten structure of things that need to be done.

Friesen and his wife are retiring to Winnipeg, home to one of their three

children (the other two are in Calgary and Ottawa) and many friends from different times in their lives. He's planning to take a year to 'unwind' and then may just keep on unwinding. OMC has hired an intentional interim to help the congregation to transition to a new pastor in 2013. ☸

## Sargent MCC Thrift Shop Relocates

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent  
WINNIPEG, MAN.

**"I** was born in 1921, one year after MCC was created and our family benefited from the relief supplies that were sent to Russia during the famine," said John Friesen, 91. Out of that deep sense of gratitude and awareness of MCC's response to need, Friesen volunteered one day a week

to help organize the workshop and install shelving, hooks, brackets and other needed items at the recently opened Sargent MCC Thrift Shop. Friesen was usually the first one at the new location, showing up regularly at 7:00 a.m.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Mennonite Central Committee Thrift Shop movement. When the Sargent MCC Thrift Shop first opened in Winnipeg in 1972, it was the third MCC thrift shop to open. "Sales on the first day were \$13.70," recalled Henry Fast, president of the West End MCC Community Assistance Centre that oversees the Selkirk and Sargent MCC Thrift Shops in Winnipeg.

Those modest beginnings were remembered at the recent opening of the new Sargent store on Sept. 15. The store expanded in 1984 and 1991 but with this recent move, total retail space increases from 1800 sq. ft. to 3300 sq. ft. "Plus there is room for quilting, sorting, pricing, storage and a large board and staff room," said Fast. "The move was prompted by the need and desire for more space so when a newer, larger building that was only two blocks from our existing location was put up for sale, we seized the opportunity."

The new building was purchased over a year ago but patience was required as they waited for the rezoning and planning processes to grind their slow wheels. "Renovations finally began in the beginning of June and in just over ten weeks we were ready to open for business," said Fast.

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“I would never have guessed that this huge renovation and re-location project could have been carried out in such a short time, thanks to the tremendous volunteer support. A rough tally shows that just over 500 volunteers (person days) put in 2900 hours of work in approximately 55 working days. It was like an Amish barn raising.”

“In its last fiscal year the Sargent store netted \$145,000 of which we were able to send \$100,000 to MCC, after expenses,” said Fast. “Based on the experience of other shops that have expanded, we expect sales to increase significantly in the new location.” The West End neighbourhood is a poorer community with a wide ethnic diversity.

The Sargent MCC Thrift Shop employs one paid full-time store manager and has a roster of about 85 active volunteers, “but we are in need of more. Volunteerism has been a crucial strength among Mennonites, at least for the older generation, based on deeply held values and beliefs and we would encourage more of our younger retirees to take up this lifestyle as well,” said Fast.

Today there are 56 MCC thrift shops in Canada and 57 in United States which have contributed \$167 million over the past 40 years, said Fast. The Altona (Manitoba) MCC Thrift Shop which opened in 1972 was the first MCC thrift shop. ❧

PHOTOS BY HENRY FAST



*John Friesen, at 91 years of age, was a regular volunteer every week during the renovations at the new Sargent MCC Thrift Shop.*



*Customers line up at the new store on its first day of business on Aug. 14, 2012 at its new location 644 Burnell Street, just off Sargent.*



## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD



Store manager, Bryan Heidebrecht (L), and board member Harvey Friesen, hold a ribbon made of thrift store ties at the grand opening of the new location for Edmonton's Mennonite Central Committee Thrift Store.

## Edmonton thrift store grand opening

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD  
AB Correspondent

Even with a 50-percent-off deal store-wide, Edmonton's Mennonite Central Committee Thrift store had record sales at its official grand opening. On an average day 60 customers walk through the door and spend about \$550.00. On Sept. 15, 211 customers left \$1,965.00 at the till. Operating in North Edmonton since 2003, the store moved to its current location at 9251, 34 Avenue, in June of 2012. Store manager, Bryan Heidebrecht, noted a number of reasons for the move including the lease being up, a desire to increase profitability for MCC, and the fact that most volunteers are in the south part of the city. Asked about his hopes, Heidebrecht laughed and said; "My hopes are that we are way too busy and don't have enough space! The goal is to give money to MCC."

Susan Reynar, the Alberta Thrift Shop Coordinator for MCC, commented on

## We're hiring a family!

**Mennonite Savings and Credit Union (MSCU)** is currently seeking a family who would like to walk the journey of faith and finances with us, up close and personal. By inviting us into your lives in 2013, we can share in your interactions with each other and with MSCU. It will be a learning experience that will enrich our members' view of faith, finances, and their credit union.

Conversations and interactions will be shared through a variety of media. As with everything we do, MSCU's approach will be respectful and reflect our core values: integrity, compassion, and responsible stewardship.

It's important for the family to have: a membership at MSCU; multiple generations; a wide variety of life experiences; and a willingness to have fun and share in this journey with MSCU.

**We recognize this will be a significant commitment so the family will be financially compensated for their time.**

For more information or to discuss this opportunity, call or email me under no obligation.

Frank Chisholm, Marketing Manager  
Phone: 519.772.5233 | Email: fchisholm@mscu.com



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Pastors from a variety of Mennonite churches read blessings as part of a service of dedication for the Edmonton Mennonite Central Committee Thrift Shop. Pastor Kerry Dyck, of the River West Christian Church, blesses store manager Bryan Heidebrecht in front of his office.

the store's proximity to a Value Village just a block away. "Anyone can set up a thrift shop. It's our 'why' that's different, that sets us apart," Reynar said. Since 1972, Thrift Shops across Canada and the United States have raised more than \$167,144,871 to support MCC's humanitarian work. ❧

### /// Briefly noted

#### **Arli Klassen appointed as fundraiser for MWC**

KITCHENER, ONT.—Arli Klassen of Kitchener, Ont. will serve as Development Manager for Mennonite World Conference (MWC) beginning Oct. 1. Until May or June of 2013, she will work half-time with responsibilities for MWC fundraising and donor relations in North America. Then her role could become full-time with fundraising responsibilities not only in North America but also in other parts of the world. "I am passionate about the global church," commented Klassen. "We don't understand God fully," she added, "until we get to know people from other cultures and hear about their understanding of God." Her leadership positions with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) for the past 12 years have given Klassen contact with the global church. From 2008 through March of 2012, she served as MCC Executive Director, based in Akron, Pa., representing MCC at the annual meeting of the MWC Executive Committee. Klassen's earlier experience includes eight years (1999-2007) as Executive Director of MCC Ontario, and a time of service in Lesotho, Africa. Since leaving her position with MCC, she had been looking for a fundraising role she said, and looks forward to talking with people about the value and importance of global relations through MWC. "We need each other," she emphasized.

—Mennonite World Conference



**Klassen**

**To recognize the beginning of a new building project at 50 Kent Avenue, Kitchener, Ont., sod is turned on Sept. 5 by Karen Cornies (left), Mennonite Central Committee Ontario (MCCO) board chair and Sara Cressman, MCCO treasurer. Watching are (from left), David Martin, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC) executive director, Mary Margaret Laing, MCCO operations director, Ester Neufeldt, MCEC operations minister, and Rick Cober Bauman, MCCO executive director. In his dedication prayer, Clare Frey, chair of the building committee, prayed, "Except the Lord build the house, the builders labour in vain," from Psalm 127, focussing on the desires of all those involved in the building project.**



PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCC B.C.

**Auctioneer Clyde Dougans works the crowd at the MCC Festival for World Relief held at the Abbotsford Tradex on Sept. 7-8. "More than Hearts and Roses" (shown here) was the highest selling finished quilt, selling for \$4,000.**

**The quilt auction raised \$21,075 while the traditional loaf of bread went for \$180,000 from a multitude of bidders. One of the success stories of the weekend was the Pedaling for Hope cyclathon which had double the riders from last year and raised over \$90,000. The initial count for all donations indicates the event raised over \$650,000.**





## COVER STORY

# Manitoba partnership



Steinbach Mennonite Church and Manigotagan Community Chapel have enjoyed a partnership for over 40 years. This year 14 youth and 4 adult sponsors were in

Manigotagan from Aug. 13-19, with 45 children at Daily Vacation Bible School every day from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. In the evenings they hosted another 25 youth from 7-9 p.m.

The young people love their experiences in Manigotagan. Many said it was their best week of the summer and most have already signed up for next year. ☞



Springfield Heights Mennonite Church (SHMC) of North Kildonan, Winnipeg, has been sending youth and young adults from their congregation to Matheson Island since 2006 to put on a kids camp July 16-20. This past summer over 30 campers spent the week playing games, swimming, doing crafts, and learning about the parables of Jesus. Camp directors Terrell and Janna Wiebe were elated to have four youth from Matheson Island join their team of 13 staff. ☞



# circles



There were 27 people from Grace Mennonite Church of Steinbach, Man. who spent July 30-Aug. 4 organizing the Pauingassi Family Camp. They fed over 125 people for supper most nights and had to fly in their 3,500 lbs of gear with Mission Aviation Fellowship. Family Camp is located a 2-mile boat ride from Pauingassi and is run by Southeast Child and Family Services. The kids from Pauingassi were asking for weeks ahead of time when Family Camp would be. Kyle Penner, youth pastor at Grace Mennonite Church together with Eric Kennedy, the social worker, planned the broad outline of the camp, while a leadership team from Grace planned the nitty-gritty details. ☼



# Woolner passionate about climate change

BY DICK BENNER

Editor/publisher

KITCHENER-WATERLOO, ONT.

**G**len Woolner is evangelistic about the environment and what we must do to develop a sustainable future. He is certain that unless we immediately take specific action to save our planet from destruction by lowering our energy consumption and using renewable resources future generations will suffer increased disease, shortened life expectancy and extreme weather.

And, as a member of Erb Street Mennonite Church in Waterloo, he is disappointed that we are not talking about practical measures individuals and congregations can take to avoid this impending disaster. As a founding member of Community Renewable Energy Waterloo (CREW), he is working with local congregations in doing energy audits, installing solar panels and taking other environmental measures to lower their energy consumption, six of which are already on board. They include Erb Street Mennonite, Elmira Mennonite, Hillcrest in New Hamburg and Mennonite Savings and Credit Union. His goal is to have 25 churches/organizations in the program by

the end of the year.

To the end of raising awareness, CREW recently sponsored an Energy Futures afternoon-evening seminar, inviting in engineers, health professionals, a United Church minister, among others to discuss all aspects of climate change and the state of energy consumption.

The doctors went first, issuing their warnings about how the continuing use of fossil fuels is polluting the air, warming our planet and contributing to an increase in disease and drought in the developed countries of the West and shortened life span and infant mortality in developing countries

“If anyone still doubts there is global warming,” said Dr. Alan Abelsohn of the University of Toronto, “the measurements since 1968 show that oceans and atmosphere are getting warmer, the air more humid and sea levels are rising. “We can expect more violent storms in the future, more contamination of food and water, leading to more diseases like malaria and fevers. Glaciers are getting smaller, there

is less snow per season and drought will become more common, affecting our food security and production.”

Lyme disease will become more prevalent, he elaborated, making it imperative to warn people to have ready treatment. “If you think New York City or Toronto have challenges meeting the effects of climate change,” he said, “think about a city in the developing world, like Bangladesh. This will produce more refugees with population displacement; nutritional value will spiral downward. Similarly the Arctic, on our own continent, will become more susceptible.

Dr. Cathy Vakil, another medical professor from Queen’s University, decried the waste from nuclear reactors that “will bury future generations.” She said we have no idea how what we are doing presently will affect our children and grandchildren because we are just “kicking the can down the road,” consuming only to meet enormous present needs for energy, something she calls “unconscionable and unethical, even diabolical.”

Tim Weis, an engineer from rural Alberta (Pembina Institute) focused on how the oil sands are affecting climate change and how coal plants, expensive to maintain and spewing pollutants into the air, are still the major producers of energy despite 60 percent of our energy coming from electricity. The Sundance reactor plant near Edmonton is the largest source of greenhouse gases, making Alberta the highest consumer of coal with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia following closely. The latter two provinces, though, have now banned coal as has Quebec. Canada is the 6th largest consumer of energy in the world,

Coal plants are very expensive, Weis said, costing almost twice as much as natural gas; wind is much cheaper to produce and solar, even less. Most coal plants are not scheduled to come off-line until 2030, but Ontario, sensibly, is ahead of the national goal, successfully phasing itself out of coal by 2015, 15 years ahead of the national goal.

Ray Copes, a medical doctor who is the chief of Environmental and Occupational Health for Public Health Ontario and associate professor at the University of Toronto, discussed Wind Power Renewables and



*Glen Woolner (right) talks with Sarah Brown at the Energy Futures seminar. Brown is Climate Collaborative Project Manager for the Kitchener-Waterloo area while Woolner is a founding member of CREW (Community Renewable Energy Waterloo).*

Health, noting that Canada presently gets only 2 percent of its energy from wind. He outlined the controversies with critics saying there are unique hazards associated with wind, it is riskier than using other energy sources, taking more land to place turbines. Since it is such a new source of energy, regulators are failing to meet targets. Then there is the NIMBY factor by citizens, the “not in my backyard” mentality that, on the one hand approves of this energy source as long as “it doesn’t affect my natural and social setting.” People complain about levels of sound and increase in stress, though these are no more than the noise of traffic and construction.

Despite the controversies, wind, he insisted, is preferable over gas and coal plants. Production is certainly not riskier and it is renewable, all of which represent health benefits such as fewer particulates in the air, and a decrease in lung and respiratory diseases.

Rev. Ted Reeve of First United Church of Christ in Waterloo, noted a “mind-blowing shift” in our theological conversation about climate change, from a traditional “dominionist” view to a “web-of-life” concept where a new spirit of awe and respect has religion, based on the aboriginals’ view of nature, interacting with science as a new “spirituality” to save our planet. ❧

not want another civil war,” she says.

Since the spring, MCC has shipped four containers—containing blankets, relief kits, hygiene kits, school and infant care kits—to Jordan. Two have been sent to Lebanon.

In addition, MCC is working with its partners in Syria to provide food baskets, medicine, fuel and cash for families affected by the conflict in the Homs area. In Jordan, MCC is working with Caritas Jordan to provide milk and diapers to 250 Syrian families.

As of the end of August, MCC’s Middle East crisis appeal had received \$400,000. Adams says MCC is thankful for all of the support received so far. But as the situation worsens, both prayers and donations are urgently needed.

“Imagine yourself in the middle of a conflict that you didn’t create,” Adams says. “The trauma and the death you might have seen in your family.” And she’s asking people to consider how they might help. “What prayers can you offer? What donations can you give that will help give back a sense of normalcy, and meet the basic needs for people in this crisis?”

Donations can be made online ([www.donate.mcc.org/project/middle-east-crisis](http://www.donate.mcc.org/project/middle-east-crisis)) and should be designated Middle East Crisis. For information about assembling relief kits please call your nearest MCC office or visit [mcccanada.ca/kits/relief](http://mcccanada.ca/kits/relief). ❧

## MCC says donations to Middle East crisis urgently needed

Mennonite Central Committee Canada  
WINNIPEG, MAN.

**A**lmost 1.5 million Syrians are now seeking a safe place to live within their own country, displaced by conflict that has moved from city to city. Four hundred thousand have fled the country altogether—many with only a suitcase and the clothes on their backs. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers say the demand for everything from food to fuel has reached a critical stage and the need for donations is urgent.

Sarah Adams, MCC’s representative in Lebanon and Syria, says communities are struggling to keep up with the surge in arrivals. In one Syrian town, a population of 35,000 has opened its doors to 90,000 newcomers.

“The host communities are overwhelmed by the needs,” says Adams. They are trying to keep up with the demand. “People are being generous to their new neighbours. They don’t call them displaced or refugees. They call them guests.”

Adams says Syrians are arriving in Lebanon and Jordan with no idea of when they will return home. “A lot of the people coming, especially the children, are traumatized. Not just that they’ve been displaced, but they’ve heard the bombings and

shelling.” She says for many adults, there’s an additional burden. “These are people who’ve cared for themselves their whole lives, and suddenly they’re vulnerable. And there’s some shame,” she says.

The conflict that has raged in Syria for more than a year is spilling over into Lebanon. MCC is working with partner organizations to build peace. “Lebanese do



*Syrian children play at a centre in Mafraq, Jordan. MCC partner Caritas Jordan operates the centre, where Syrians are able to register, receive material aid and register for school.*

MCC PHOTO BY SILAS CREWS



## Taking his 'fight for peace' to the international stage

BY DICK BENNER

Editor/publisher  
TORONTO, ONT.

“Our people have to walk 50 miles to buy an aspirin and pregnant mothers have to walk 100 miles for pre-natal and medical care in birthing,” Bishop Ntambo Nkulu Ntanda of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) told reporters and students here at Emmanuel College as part of a tour to raise international awareness of the re-emerging war on its borders.

The bishop, one of several religious leaders visiting the United Nations, Washington DC, Toronto and European cities, said many of those mothers “die on the way to the medical clinic.” His country, the DRC, has been at war for some 16 years, he said, killing 5.4

million people. His mission is to stop the redevelopment of war largely over “conflict minerals”—especially coltan, a mineral used in cell phones and laptop computers.

From meeting basic medical needs to negotiating with militia, Bishop Ntambo has worked at multiple, interrelated levels to build sustainable peace in the Katanga province. He organized care for street children, helping to reduce recruitment of child soldiers. He built brick churches and fishponds, helping the people of Kamina to stand firm, not flee, in the face of approaching rebels.

But now, he and other religious leaders,

including Danisa Ndlovu, former president of Mennonite World Conference, think it is time to take their case to the international community, believing that the lack of international pressure on belligerent parties allowed the 1998 war to devastate their country.

In mid-September they presented a petition on behalf on millions of Congolese citizens to the United Nations and met with members of the U.S. Congress, members of the White House staff, and in the same week with government officials in Ottawa.

Having exhausted efforts by their churches, the leaders, in their petition, want the West, through the UN “to help the Congolese army to stop once and for all the invasion of their country, the plundering of her resources and the Congolese women violations.”

They are calling for the arrest of all war criminals whose names appear in the different UN reports and the arrest and trial of all those who have committed war crimes



*Bishop Ntambo Ntanda admires the Congolese dress that Pamela Courture, the Jane and Geoffrey chair of Church and Community at Emmanuel and one of the organizers of the Toronto meeting, wears in solidarity with the Congolese people, while Mama Emman Selemani, another of the DRC leaders looks on. Courture is currently doing ethnographic research on the peace building efforts of indigenous Congolese persons.*

in the DRC and neighbouring countries.

They reject Rwanda's running as a candidate to be a non-permanent member of a UN organization due to recurrent violations of the UN charter.

And they are applying, without delay, all of the UN decisions in favour of peace in the DRC.

When asked what sustains him in the pursuit of peace for his people, Bishop Ntanda says it is the "quest" that drives him despite all the odds for suffering. "If we have peace, we can help the children. If we have peace, we can save the women."

Professor Raymond Mande Mutombo of the University of Lubumbashi and an interpreter for the group, reminded his western

friends that, unlike them who don't have to worry about where their next meal is coming from, his people face each day not knowing if they will have a meal or not.

"What do you tell your people?" asked a student. "It's easy to bring Christ's message to happy people," said the bishop with a smile. "But what do you tell people in distress, who have nowhere to turn for help, for food, for medical help?" he asked rhetorically, his face darkening with sadness.

"I give them the message of hope. I tell them that God is with them in their suffering, that they should not turn bitter and against each other, but rather they should forgive each other, live in love."

He spoke with authenticity and grace

from his own experience of facing down fear of the Mai-Mai militia who had killed a Roman Catholic priest and eaten him when that man of the cloth tried to meet with their leader. At a time when even the governor would not meet the Mai-Mai leader, Bishop Ntambo invited Chinja Chinja to dinner in his home, a powerful gesture of welcome. Reducing the "otherness" of the Mai-Mai, he made it clear that they were also "children of the community" and first and foremost human beings.

With such fearlessness and yet passion for peace, it was not difficult to understand that Ntambo was asked to facilitate reconciliation during a crisis in 2005 in the United Methodist Church in Nigeria. In 2007, he was asked to be a senator in the Congolese Parliament of Katanga province.

His final words, carrying the weight of experience and convictions, is: "stop it" — to the militias that are now converging again on his country in a fight over minerals. This time, though, he is enlisting the help of the international community to get involved in the "fight for peace." ❧

## /// Briefly noted

### Head for the Hills nets record support

WINKLER, MAN.—This year's Head for the Hills bike ride on Sept. 8 had the largest contingent of riders and raised more than previous years for the Eden Foundation. The tenth annual Head for the Hills event had 140 bicyclists and met the challenge of raising a total of half a million dollars in support of Eden Health Care Services. The money raised supports services such as helping people receive professional counselling, and helping people who have been referred to the organization to find work, a place to live and a sense of belonging to the community. Eden Health Care Services believes that people with issues of mental health can achieve hope, healing and recovery. Head for the Hills organizers received thanks for a well-organized event and for well groomed trails and were impressed by the fact that land-owners in the area allowed their land to be used for this event and in some cases participating in the grooming of the trails. The 2013 Head for the Hills is scheduled for Sat. Sept. 14, 2013.

—Eden Foundation

## /// Briefly noted

### MDS Region V launches 'Hay drive east'

The Saskatchewan Unit of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) has launched a Hay Drive to assist farmers in drought-stricken areas of Eastern Ontario and the U.S. Midwest. Drought has severely impacted the livestock sector. MDS is working at moving surplus Saskatchewan hay to drought-stricken areas. MDS Ontario is working collaboratively with other organizations to be positioned to receive hay, and to distribute it in the most effective way possible. Farmers willing to donate hay should contact Ike Epp via e-mail at [birwood@littleloon.ca](mailto:birwood@littleloon.ca) or call the Region V office, (866) 261-1274. Donations to help defray the cost of moving the surplus hay can be sent to the MDS Region V office, 6A-1325 Markham Rd Winnipeg, MB, R3T 4J6, or any MDS Unit. Farmers in Ontario or Quebec suffering from the drought and in need of assistance should e-mail Delmer Erb, [edm@cyg.net](mailto:edm@cyg.net) or call the Region V office, (866) 261-1274. The U.S. Hay Drive launched by the Eastern Ohio/Northwest PA MDS unit is still underway.

—Mennonite Disaster Service

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## GOD AT WORK IN US

## OBITUARY

# ‘Her friendship is in our hearts’

BY DICK BENNER,  
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER  
WATERLOO, ONT.

“Friendship is a jewel in life. Delphine Martin knew how to polish that jewel,” said Melba Tanner, a fellow family therapist at the memorial services of her friend held at Waterloo North Mennonite Church Sept. 9. Delphine, age 78, died Sept. 5 after battling Parkinson’s disease and cancer.

“Delphine’s delicious sense of humour (usually delivered in succinct one liners) combined with a down to earth approach to life intrigued others at Interfaith Pastoral Counselling Centre,” continued



*Delphine Martin*  
Aug. 10, 1934 – Sept. 5, 2012

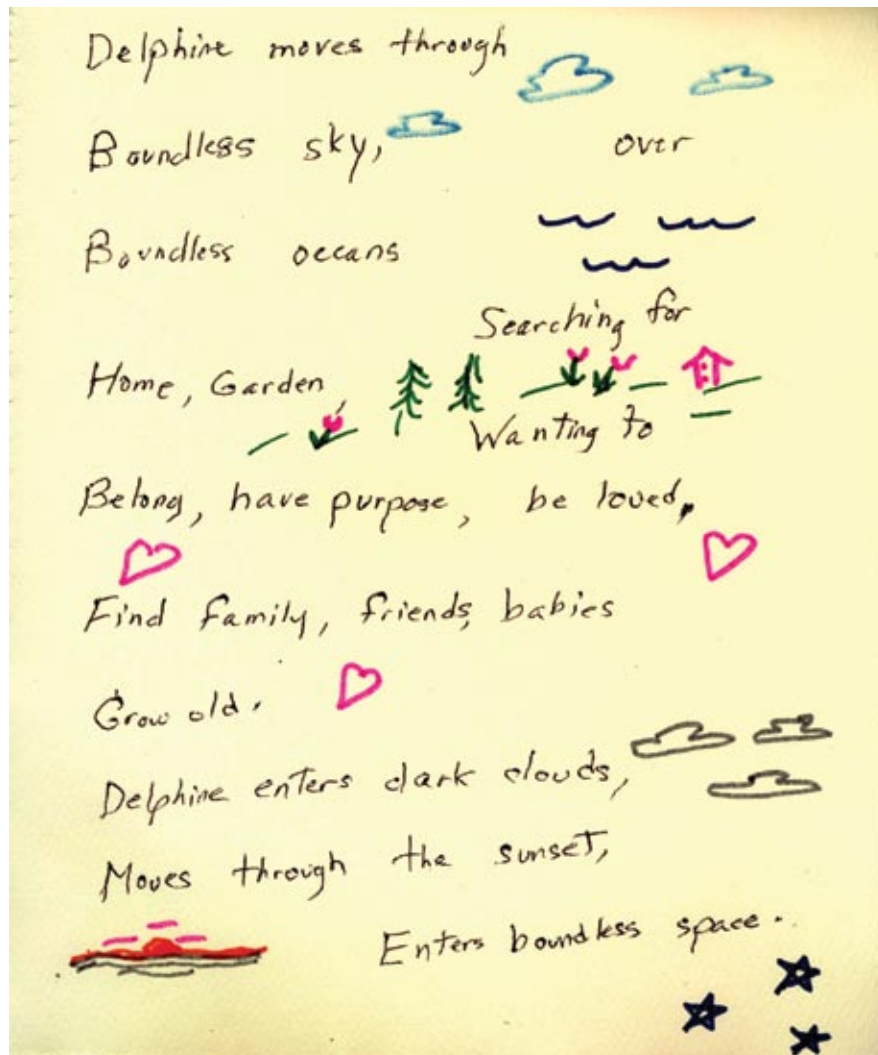
Ms. Tanner. “The icing on the cake was that she was beautiful and as I quickly learned that beauty went to the bone. Though very intelligent (often choosing to hide her intellectual ability under a bushel), she allowed her light to shine through her children who are a testimony to her strong creative intelligence.”

Holding a master’s degree in psychology and counselling, Ms. Martin served as executive director for six years, clinical director for 10 years and then part-time counsellor for four years, for a total of 20 years.

She was a founding member of Shalom Counselling when it started under the charter of Mennonite Central Committee in 1982. She, along with Ralph Lebold, Gary Gerber, Glenn Brubacher, Mark Yantzi, Martha Smith Good, Gerald Good, Herb Schultz, Rufus Jutzi, Ellen Moyer, Aldred Neufeldt, Darrell Fast and Bill Dyck, met in November, 1981 to begin planning for Shalom.

“Delphine navigated these shifts in administrative roles with dignity, always extending respect and encouragement to those who took on her previous role,” said Wanda Wagler-Martin, a fellow church member and executive director of Shalom since 1977. “Throughout her entire tenure at Shalom, she always worked as a counsellor in addition to her other responsibilities, balancing the administrative and clinical roles with much grace. Delphine touched many lives as an esteemed counsellor who extended much compassionate wisdom in her work with clients. Many people were assisted to move beyond their struggles as a result of her capable care.”

Delphine is survived by her husband, Lloyd, five sons—Rick, Roger, Brad and Terry—and a daughter, Jackie,





and grandchildren Shelley Abdulla, Stephanie, Lloyd, Daniel, Emily, Taylor, Eli and Evelyn Martin, and Penelope and Felix Giesen. Burial was in the St. Jacobs Mennonite Cemetery, followed by a reception at Waterloo North.

"It hurts to say goodbye," lamented her friend Ms. Tanner. "But it is not goodbye. The treasure of her friendship is in our hearts. Our love and friendship are stars in her new boundless space." Delphine wrote about that "boundless space" in a poem shortly before her death. ❧

## Obituary

### Helen Kornelsen

(Sept. 17, 1920 – May 15, 2012)

By Justine M. Heese

Helen Kornelsen was born on Sept. 17 1920, in the Mennonite village of Kusmitzky in the Ukraine, during the troubled times of revolution. She had many vivid memories of her family's miraculous escape via Moscow in November of 1929. While they were fortunate to receive permission to leave the Soviet Union, that same permission was denied to thousands of other Mennonites in the same straits.

This escape did not mean that all went well for the Kornelsen family; two of Helen's sisters succumbed to childhood diseases while they were in a refugee camp in Germany. The family arrived in Watrous, Saskatchewan on March 27, 1930, just as the dust, dirt and hard times of the Depression settled over the prairies.

Helen was a bright student and an avid reader; she learned English and finished sixth grade, but then had to stay home to help on the farm. She was baptized on her confession of faith on Aug. 6, 1939 at the Bethany Mennonite Church at Watrous. After that she attended the Rosthern Bible School where her love for reading and learning blossomed and in 1945 she graduated from the German English Academy (now Rosthern Junior College).

She was forever grateful to the principal of the German English Academy, K.G. Toews, who saw her potential and encouraged her to continue her education. Helen felt called to be a missionary even before she completed high school, and always

considered education a special blessing.

The Women's Conference in Saskatchewan chose Helen as their special mission project and supported Helen with prayers and finances as she studied at Bethel College and prepared for her departure to India. Helen was ordained for her missionary service by Rev. J.J. Thiessen at the North Star Mennonite Church, at Drake, Sask. and left for India in Sept. 1948. The special relationship between Helen and the women's groups in Saskatchewan often brought quick tears to Helen when she remembered how crucial their support had been to her education and ministry.

Helen was a dedicated language student and became proficient in Hindi. She worked in the area of Christian education and formation, ran literacy classes, translated materials into Hindi and organized special events for young women.

After seven years in India, Helen came back to Sask. to visit her family and earned her Master of Education in Wichita, Kansas, and studied at Cornell University. Helen continued her work in India, and for the last ten years she taught at the Pune Seminary near Bombay. She retired in 1985, and was quick to say, "my years and experiences in India were God's gifts."

In her retirement, Helen pursued a new interest—genealogy. She published two books based on her research of her own family story. In addition, she translated the diaries and writings of others that were done in the German Gothic script. She was intrigued and excited about the links she found as she read and did original research. Helen had a natural curiosity and a good sense of humour. Reading her diaries

reveals a great circle of friendships and a life of hospitality.

I thank God for the privilege of sharing in Helen's well-lived life.

## /// Briefly noted

### MCC aids earthquake-stricken Iranian families

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is sending blankets and providing locally purchased temporary shelter supplies to Iranian people affected by twin earthquakes that shook East Azerbaijan province Aug. 11. Five cities and hundreds of villages were stricken. More than 150,000 people felt the impact and more than 300 died. MCC has shipped a container of about 7,500 blankets from its warehouse in Plum Coulee, Man. The temporary shelter supplies include sleeping bags, plastic sheeting and tents. The MCC effort is being carried out with partner organization Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS). The IRCS determined the most urgent needs by speaking to thousands of Iranians affected by the earthquakes. MCC partnered with IRCS in responding to major earthquakes in Iran in 1990 and 2003. There is a high level of political tension between Iran and many Western countries. On Sept. 7, the Canadian government severed diplomatic ties with Iran. MCC welcomes donations of money to support the earthquake response.  
—Mennonite Central Committee Canada



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## ARTBEAT

PHOTO BY MARCEL ST. PIERRE, COURTESY OF KITCHENBAND



A scene from *Petrichor* includes (from left): Andrew Penner (Dick), David Tompa (Peter), Monica Dottor (Susan), Shannon Taylor (Mary).

## Erin Brandenburg plays at Toronto's Summer Works

*'That smell when the water first hits the earth. That bittersweet smell. Acrid and earth and heat and sweat and green growing things. That smell. There should be a word for that.'*

**DAVE ROGALSKY**  
Eastern Canada Correspondent  
TORONTO, ONTARIO

The theatre was dim. A projection screen showed an animated scene of a farm yard by night. The wind rippled through the trees and grass. Clouds blew across the moon. Crickets chirped in the background as the low voices of the patrons

sounded like the voices of farm dwellers on the porch in the cooling evening after a hot day on the fields. A single actor walked onto the stage, picked up his guitar and sang, "I'm a hard worker, you should see me hoe tomatoes, I'm faster than fast. Oh

the other boys faces when the last plant in my row falls to the dust, they're still in their starting places" (*Leamington*—music and words by Henry Adam Svec). Other actors and musicians join him on stage, hoeing, hammering and working rhythmically.

Erin Brandenburg is becoming known for writing plays about empty places, unknown places, places with Mennonite connections, but written for people whose only knowledge of Mennonites is of horses, buggies and head coverings. As part of Kitchenband, a collective of theatre creators, writers, musicians, actors, visual artists and designers based in Toronto, she and her compatriots aim to tell stories of the Canadian landscape and history that blur the lines between theatre, live music and visual art. In a "culture obsessed with 'of the moment' and 'shiny' she tells stories



about forgotten places, lost things.”

“Canadian history is seen as boring,” she says, “but there are so many amazing stories out there—talk to your neighbour.” Her stories are about her background and family, including those of her husband, Andrew Penner, an actor and front man for Sunparlour Players, an alt country band currently touring across Canada. “The ruins of a place have a lot to tell you,” she says.

Her latest offering, *Petrichor*, played at in the Factory Theatre at Toronto’s Summer Works Festival August 10 - 19. The word “petrichor” is a technical term created by two researchers for the smell of certain plant and bacterial compounds released by rain newly fallen on dry ground.

The story delves into Brandenburg’s background of working and living in and around Harrow Ontario, near Windsor. There she encountered Mennonites from Mexico, both in school—“They were often the smartest in the class”—and on the farms, hoeing tomatoes and doing other manual labour. She also encountered the bigotry against the “Mexican Mennonites” and felt the need to hide her own Mennonite connections at Harrow Mennonite Church for fear of being lumped in with the others.

*Petrichor* follows Henry, a Canadian boy, the son of the farm owner, and Susan, a Mennonite from Mexico with some kind of secret which keeps her in bondage. The farm is suffering a summer of drought, paralleling the conditions in Southern Ontario this summer. Somehow Susan’s conservative, Old Colony Mennonite upbringing and church, here portrayed as misogynist and binding, no longer sustain her in life. She and her brother are living and working with their sister Mary and her husband Dick. Along the way the “Mennonite Mafia” appear—transporting marijuana from Mexico to Canada. But it is not only Susan who is asking questions about life and not fitting in—Henry doesn’t want to farm, he’d rather sing. Played by Henry Adam Svec, it was songs written by Svec that moved Brandenburg to write the play in the first place, songs of work and of longing. Inspired especially by the song “Leamington,” she interviewed farmers and workers in the Leamington area

before writing.

While she hopes *Petrichor* will play in Mennonite communities, she wonders what response it will have “back home” in Leamington. Its “labour issues, questions about where our food comes from are more universal issues. Some farmers treat their workers well, others . . .” she let’s the question hang and muses, “How to ask those questions of a community with all the economic and political entanglements.” When “people don’t want questions,” it “makes her more interested.” She asks, “Aren’t we to love each other, be concerned about justice issues, other places and our backyard . . .” The play purposely has no answers, attempting to “open the discussion.”

Brandenburg has been acting since her days in high school at United Mennonite Educational Institute, and professionally in a troupe in Windsor from the same time. Her play *Reesor* played in Toronto a few years ago, also produced by Kitchenband. The collective “are all there from the beginning, designers, instrument makers, animation, writers, musicians,” a process

PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIN BRANDENBURG



*Erin Brandenburg with her husband Andrew Penner and their son Jack.*

that satisfies Brandenburg.

Brandenburg is already busy workshoping *Boblo*, a play about an abandoned amusement park that will play at The Theatre Centre in Toronto in November this year. ☘

## The not-so-typical journey of a Mennonite actor . . .

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## FOCUS ON EDUCATION

## Muslim and Mennonite women enjoy study and friendship

BY DORA DUECK

Canadian Mennonite University  
WINNIPEG

On a warm summer evening in Winnipeg there is lots of laughter, picture-taking, and food—it's very much a typical "girls' night out." But this party is unique as more than half the women are Shia Muslims from Iran and they're celebrating the end of an intense week of the study of Christianity. They're also celebrating the friendships they've formed. For many of them, interfaith encounters are a first.

"Some things about Christianity you can learn from books," says Mariyam Naqvi, "but when you learn from people practicing it, it's completely different. Then you can understand with your whole soul and body."

"Introduction to Christianity," held June 11-17 at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), grew out of an initiative by Iranian scholars in 2011, when a group of female Muslim students came to Winnipeg for a one-week course on Christian understandings of peace and justice taught by CMU professors Irma Fast Dueck and Sheila Klassen-Wiebe.

This spring, there was a request for CMU to offer a second course, for a second group of women graduate students from the Jamiat Al-Zahra, an international Islamic women's institute Qom, this time for an introduction to Christianity.

It seemed a wonderful opportunity, a further link in a chain of Muslim-Mennonite interaction that goes back to 1990 when Mennonite Central Committee responded to the devastating earthquake in Iran. Educational exchanges followed that first contact, as well as a series of five scholarly dialogues between Mennonite theologians and Iranian Muslim clerics in Iran and at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont. and Canadian

Mennonite University.

This year's course examined the history, practices, and core theological beliefs at the heart of the Christian faith. Each day's session began with Bible study, followed by lectures and discussion on topics such as Jesus, salvation, the trinity, Christian ethics, and the church. Fast Dueck and Klassen-Wiebe facilitated and taught parts of the course, with other CMU professors contributing in their areas of specialty. A number of Mennonite women sat in on the course as well.

The week included visits to a Hutterite colony, the Mennonite Central Committee offices and warehouse, and Sunday morning attendance at Charleswood Mennonite Church. And there was homework: a reading journal of at least ten entries, on articles in *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* and selected Scriptures.

The nine visiting scholars, most in their twenties or early thirties, most quite fluent in English, participated keenly in everything. They jumped in with questions when things weren't clear to them, sometimes breaking into the Farsi language to help each other understand the concepts being taught.

The women say they were surprised at "similarities" they encountered in Christianity. They found challenges too, such as the Trinity. "I just can't understand it," says Nafise Amiri.

"It has changed lots of my thinking about Christians—in a good way," Zahra Golzar offers. "Before this, I thought that just *we* love God."

Faculty involved in the course acknowledge that aspects of the interfaith dialogue have been controversial within parts of the Mennonite community, not least because of Western political tensions with Iran. They feel joyfully drawn, however, to continue to engage with Muslims, to articulate the Christian faith, and hopefully to also make a small difference on behalf of the struggling Christian church in Iran.

"It's a Christian calling," Irma Fast Dueck says firmly.

"It's about breaking down stereotypes," adds Sheila Klassen-Wiebe. "And about building relationships—with smart, funny, strong, devout women." ❧



Muslim women spent a week at CMU this summer, learning about Christianity.

## New Master of Peace and Conflict Studies degree will equip visionary leaders

Conrad Grebel University College  
WATERLOO, ONT.

**K**itchener resident Patty Dorsey was at a crossroads in life. After raising five children and working with mentally challenged individuals for twenty years, Dorsey needed a change in direction. At the encouragement of her husband, she returned to school as a student in Social Development Studies and Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS). Dorsey felt like life was perfect. However, a year later, her husband was diagnosed with cancer and passed away within eight months. After a short break from school, Dorsey completed her Bachelor's degree and was then accepted into the Master of Peace and Conflict Studies (MPACS) program at Conrad Grebel University College.

Combining rigorous interdisciplinary scholarship with concrete application, MPACS is designed to be a vibrant academic program that empowers students with the knowledge, research, and practical skills needed to contribute to nonviolent peacebuilding efforts. The MPACS program places a unique focus on the pivotal role that individuals within civil society play as catalysts for peace.

"The main reason I chose MPACS was because it is a small, specialized program focusing not only on peace and conflict issues, but also civil society as a whole," Dorsey explained. Although she's not certain what direction her future will take her, Dorsey is interested in conflict resolution and would love to work as a mediator and possibly go overseas. "To work with an organization where I could combine traveling and support those who are marginalized would be amazing."

In its inaugural year, the MPACS program welcomed 11 full-time and 5 part-time students. "We have a very interesting and diverse group of students and are delighted by the experience, perspective and energy that they bring to our program," noted PACS Director Lowell Ewert. These trailblazing students include persons who have worked as community mental health workers, a pastor, with NGOs, in non-profit finance, an ESL teacher, and others from different areas of civil society with varied experiences.

"It is our hope," projects Ewert, "that our first incoming class will be inspired

CONRAD GREBEL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE PHOTO



*Patty Dorsey signs a beam, a sign of community at Conrad Grebel University College.*

to continue working towards the ideals that they represent in building community, becoming engaged in local and global issues, fostering compassionate service, direct involvement in active peacemaking, and promoting responsible global citizenship. When they finish our program, our students will be better equipped to provide the visionary leadership necessary to respond to the complex challenges facing our world today."

There are 6-8 MPACS courses offered a term including varying numbers of cross-listed courses with the Political Science, Global Governance, Theological Studies and International Development departments at the University of Waterloo. Students have the option to take a skills-training workshop from Grebel's Certificate Program in Conflict Management and do some extra academic work to receive academic credit. As well, a number of students have already expressed interest in the program's internship option for next spring.

"When my husband passed away," reflected Dorsey, "it reinforced to me how precious life is, and it should not be wasted. Whether that means opening a group home, working in a war zone, or bring peace and reducing conflict in some other way every person has an important part to play in making this world a better place." ❧

### /// Briefly noted

#### CMU opens graduate school of theology and ministry

WINNIPEG—Canadian Mennonite University opened its new Graduate School of Theology and Ministry on Sept. 19, with a program of celebration. "Opening the Graduate School renews and formalizes CMU's commitment to inspire and equip students for pastoral ministry, leadership, scholarship, and service," says Karl Koop, Director of the Graduate School at CMU. "The Graduate School of Theology and Ministry continues to have significant connection with various inter-Mennonite denominations. It will serve uniquely as a teaching center of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary Canada, and is a member of the Winnipeg Theological Cooperative and a partner with Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Indiana) and Steinbach Bible College. CMU's graduate programs of study include a Master of Arts in Christian Ministry and Master of Arts in Theological Studies, as well as a Certificate in Christian Studies, with courses in Bible, History, Theology, Ethics, and in Practical Theology and Ministry.

—Canadian Mennonite University



# Popular prof named president-elect for CBC

BY BARRIE McMASTER

MB Herald  
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

**B**ryan Born, professor and director of intercultural studies, has been recommended to succeed Dr. Ron Penner as president of Columbia Bible College (CBC).

Born joined the Columbia faculty on his return to North America from the mission field. He rapidly gained a reputation as a challenging teacher, widely praised for his commitment to his students. Born served with MB Mission in Botswana and Lesotho from 1992 to 2004. He holds an MDiv from MB Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Cal., and an



MTh and DTh in missiology from the University of South Africa.

Penner announced his retirement last summer and CBC. The search committee and directors are recommending Born as president-elect. Born's candidacy goes before the CBC's annual general meeting

on Oct. 11.

CBC is run by two partner conferences, the B.C. Mennonite Brethren and Mennonite Church B.C. The school is debt-free, even after opening a new residence building in the past year. Discussions

## /// Briefly noted

### Schmidt joins Goshen faculty

GOSHEN, Ind.—Kristopher Schmidt, assistant professor of biology, is among the new faculty members at Goshen College for the 2012-13 school year. From Langley, BC, he received degrees from Trinity Western University, the University of British Columbia and his PHDC from Simon Fraser University this year. His spouse, Kathryn, is originally from Winnipeg; they have one son, Jonah, and attend Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen.

continue on leadership transition measures, timing and other details. ///

—reprinted with permission from the *Mennonite Brethren Herald*

PHOTO COURTESY OF CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY



**Jonah Langelotz (back row, second left) and Jordon Zimmerly (back row, fifth from left),** members of the Canadian Mennonite University's men's soccer team, worked with the Los Canarios soccer club in Puerto López, Ecuador, this summer. Each day, the two CMU athletes spent their mornings in Spanish-language classes, volunteered at a day-care over the lunch-break, and spent afternoons working with the football club. The Manitoba to Ecuador project, founded by Mark Reimer of Steinbach Regional Secondary School, seeks to bring Manitoban soccer players to Puerto López, Ecuador, to teach soccer and develop good character traits in the boys. Langelotz and Zimmerly also had the opportunity to participate in a friendly match when Los Canarios hosted a local club. The two Blazers played alongside an Ecuadorian professional and a few semi-professional players in the match. The cherry on top came early in the match for Langelotz when he netted the game's first goal for his adopted club—a real highlight for the second-year midfielder.

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/// Briefly noted

**New master's program in intercultural leadership at Goshen College**

GOSHEN, IND.—Building on the success of its master's degree programs in environmental education and nursing, Goshen College will offer a new Master of Arts in Intercultural Leadership, starting in January 2013. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools approved the program on Aug. 22. The program is designed for mid-career working professionals, who want to enhance their preparation for engaging the multiple cultural contexts in which modern organizations operate. The 18-month program consists of three 9-day residential sessions on campus (in Jan., July and Jan.) as well as on-line coursework. This master's degree is one of several initiatives that were part of a \$12.5 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., which Goshen College used to establish the Center for Intercultural Teaching and Learning launched in 2006. —Goshen College




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## A time for protest

*Has the Mennonite Church lost its call to assertive advocacy?*

BY NICK SCHURMAN

Special to Young Voices

PHOTO COURTESY OF IAN STUMPF



*Ian Stumpf is co-host of the radio show/podcast “Community Revitalization” on [soundfm.ca](http://soundfm.ca) Wednesday mornings.*

There’s been no shortage of headlines involving protest in recent years. The events surrounding the 2010 G20 Summit in Toronto, the Arab Spring that began that same year, and the Occupy Movement, whose gatherings first began taking place in the fall of 2011, all saw thousands of men and women engage in public demonstration. Given the significance of these events and the actions that accompanied them, what role should protest take in the life and work of the church today?

Ian Stumpf believes that there is a place for more assertive advocacy in the church. Stumpf has played a central role in the organization of and support for demonstrations like those at the G20 Summit, but is careful to avoid identification with one specific group. “I wouldn’t necessarily define myself with all of these specific protest movements, but certainly it is often the case that it is a necessary and important step in achieving what we want—the social change that we are after.”

As a native of Kitchener-Waterloo, and someone who’s faith and work has been shaped in part by Anabaptist tradition, Stumpf has been involved with numerous advocacy organizations. Those include the We Remember Ashley Smith Campaign and Poverty Makes Us Sick, which “works to eradicate the systems of oppression that cause poverty while contributing to creative solutions for immediate relief.”

The Mennonite Church in Canada has historically been known for its involvement in justice, development, relief and peace work both internationally and here on Canadian soil. There is a certain “satisfaction in being a Mennonite, and being concerned with social justice,” given its

distinct and central part of the denomination’s identity, admits Ian, who has been involved with various Mennonite congregations in Kitchener-Waterloo.

And yet, while much good work has been done and continues to be done, both through MCC and local congregations, he suggests that there is a sense of urgency that has been lost in the comfort, prestige and careerism that occupies so much of our lives. That is perhaps why Christians are so reluctant to engage more thoroughly in the costly work of social justice which, he argues, will at times require public demonstration.

“The work that the church has been doing in certain areas has reached its potential,” he suggests, “and there needs to be something more assertive.”

When social media campaigns, letter writing, committees, lobbying, and casting our ballot have proved ineffective and insufficient means to enact social change, the urgency of our call to love our neighbour and work for justice ought to compel us to use means more immediate and vocal.

Here he cites a recent example involving the Minister of Public Safety which he finds particularly troubling, both in the news itself, and the lack of reaction he has seen in response. The Minister (himself the son of Mennonite immigrant parents) has been forced to release documents detailing directives given to Canada’s spy service, the RCMP, and Canadian border security to accept and share information derived by means of torture.

“In a sense, we are OK with this, because there will be meetings, there will be letter writing, there will be articles written, but clearly that is not enough right now.” It is

that conviction, of things being “not enough right now” that drives Stumpf in his work to what he calls “assertive forms” of justice work.

This work, he explains, whether it takes the form of distributing clothes, public education, or staging protests, is nurtured by community, informed by a life of devotion, and a sustained practice of powerlessness.

“Within the church it really leaves me heartbroken, wondering, how much are we still believing in and depending on God, and submitting to God’s will to be a different voice and counterculture?” For Ian, that understanding of dependence means that, while we are part of the work of redemption

here—which will at times take the form of protest—reconciliation is ultimately found in Christ.

“Who am I,” he asks, “to sit back and not actively live out my love, my love that would lay down my life for somebody, knowing that Jesus was tortured, and hung on a cross and died for that person?” ❧

*Ian Stumpf of Kitchener Ontario is an anti-capitalist who works for God. Currently he is prayerfully working to have Mennonite churches acknowledge their participation in the Residential School legacy and to offer a meaningful, ongoing and active apology to First Peoples.*



Stefan Epp-Koop (far right) with his “impromptu translator” (left).

## Canadian-Iranian diplomacy ends, but peace work continues

STORY BY RACHEL BERGEN

Young Voices Co-Editor

The Canadian government has called on its diplomats in Iran to leave the embassy, abruptly and unilaterally cutting off all diplomatic ties there. The evacuation of the five diplomats from the capital, Tehran, as well as Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird’s expulsion of all Iranian diplomats in Canada has undoubtedly made poor relations with the country worse.

Stefan Epp-Koop, 27, who attends Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg is,

to say the least, disappointed by this move, seeing it as a move likely to bring about violence, not peace. Mennonite Central Committee Canada has also expressed their concern in a letter to the Minister.

On behalf of MCC Canada, Don Peters, Executive Director of MCC said, “we urge you to do everything possible to de-escalate tensions and minimize the likelihood that Iran or other nations will resort to violence.”





MCC PHOTO

*MCC is sending 7,500 blankets to Iran.*

MCC, who has worked in Iran for more than twenty years, continues its relief work there. They recently helped Iranians in the East Azerbaijan province recover from two earthquakes by providing 7,500 blankets.

“We recognize that MCC’s efforts have been modest, but we continue to pursue them because of our deep conviction that the resolution of disagreements and dangerous situations requires more—rather than fewer—opportunities for dialogue,” Peters’ letter said.

Epp-Koop believes these dialogues are “one step towards bringing people together from these two divides. To realize we aren’t enemies, we have lots in common, and we should focus on that and not demonize each other.” He finds this end to diplomacy puzzling and disappointing, having travelled to Iran in 2008, and feeling very welcomed by the people.

“I was amazed at how friendly, welcoming, and open the people were. One woman served as an impromptu translator for me at a museum, demonstrating the kind of hospitality I received everywhere during my visit.”

His time as a tourist in the country helped him to realize that there is a divide between the West and that part of the Middle East, or “the axis of evil,” as former U.S. President George W. Bush called it.

“I met people very concerned about what the world thought about Iran. There was frustration that people expressed and people were embarrassed by their leadership,” Epp-Koop said, adding, “We need to be able to distinguish between government and the people.”

This is something for Canadians to keep in mind. If there is tension, it won’t be the leadership who suffers; it will be the Iranians who will bear the brunt of whatever happens.

Canada’s government has called the government of Iran, “the most significant threat to global peace and security in the world today,” yet this young peace-builder believes it is important to press on.

“At times of tension and escalating tension like this, it is exactly the time that we need to be reaching across the divide,” said Epp-Koop. ☿

## Undoing colonialism

*How do we as Christians work with Indigenous communities without doing further harm?*

BY JOHN BERGEN

Special to Young Voices

I’ve been told that I have a problem. Well, not me in particular, but all of us as Christians. Many people still blame Christianity, or a Christian worldview, for our current environmental crisis—a world view that places the focus on another world, or God’s statement that we “have dominion” over the world. Many Christians have responded by uncovering those parts of our faith that emphasize the holiness of the earth and the importance of creation care.

But a different part of our response has created a problem as I learned on a delegation to Grassy Narrows First Nation this summer. As more and more Christians have become aware of the damage being done to the non-human world, we have

changed our faith. As we become involved in building more sustainable communities, in community gardens, and in teaching our children about finding the beauty of God in this world, what it means to be a Christian has changed.

Change is not necessarily a bad thing—if certain radical believers hadn’t decided to redefine themselves back in the 16th century, there would be no Mennonites. But one of the ways that we have changed is the incorporation of elements of indigenous traditions. And this is a problem. This change runs the spectrum from a broader cultural focus on New Age wholeness and creation-centered spirituality, to those who participate in sweat lodges and vision

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CPT



*John Bergen*

quests. Non-indigenous people—Mennonite, Christian, and non-Christian—have tried to adopt more of the spirituality of the people who lived in this land before we settlers arrived.

This summer, I participated in a Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation to the Grassy Narrows reserve in northern Ontario. CPT works with communities around Ontario as an ally to those fighting for indigenous self-determination. I was blessed to be able to meet with members of the community who fight against alcoholism, sexual violence, and corruption within the community and the unjust practices of logging companies and the Ontario provincial government. The problems and discrimination are ongoing, as is the struggle.

One activist, a member of the delegation who has experienced discrimination throughout her life because of her indigenous heritage, made it clear that the correct way to apologize for centuries of colonialism is not to co-opt the spirituality of the communities we systematically dismantled. In many cases, it is one of the few things they have left.

Our delegation discussed the effects of clear-cut logging on traditional hunting lands with Shoon, who spends much of his time teaching skills that have been lost in the past few generations to young people on the reserve. In the discussion, I was faced with painful questions: How can I undo the damage that allowed my ancestors to settle here? How can I, as a college student, fight against the practices of Weyerhaeuser and

other paper companies that cause so much devastation in these communities?

There are no easy answers to this problem that we have. There is no doubt that the traditional teachings of Christianity have been used as tools for colonialism and environmental destruction. But incorporating Indigenous teachings into our faith doesn't necessarily undo that damage.

Undoing colonialism begins with undoing the colonial practices of cultural appropriation and material destruction that we non-indigenous peoples are complicit in. It continues with becoming an effective ally by giving traditionally marginalized communities the space to speak. This includes educating ourselves, and those around us, on the reality faced by those living in a society that privileges white men.

We as non-indigenous Christians do have a problem, but there is hope because we are also a people who follow the God who proclaimed, "*freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free.*" (Luke 4:18)

We non-indigenous Christians cannot proclaim freedom for the oppressed with one hand if we steal with the other. Just as we cannot proclaim this message without working to heal our hurting environment. This is difficult place to stand, but we are not called to the wide and easy road, we are called to be followers of Christ. ☸

*John Bergen is a student at Oberlin College in Ohio. He participated in a CPT delegation to Grassy Narrows this summer.*



*Shoon teaches traditional skills that have been lost over generations to young people on the reserve.*



*Asubpechoseewagon Netum Anishinabek (Grassy Narrows First Nation).*



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## Calendar

### British Columbia

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

**Oct. 13:** Pastoral Care and Biblical Perspectives Symposium, ACTS Seminaries, Fosmark Centre, Langley, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Practical steps to respond to domestic violence. Contact [endabuse@mccbc.com](mailto:endabuse@mccbc.com) for more information.

**Oct. 27:** Columbia Bible College annual fundraising dinner. Visit [www.columbiabc.edu/fundraisingdinner](http://www.columbiabc.edu/fundraisingdinner) for more details.

### Alberta

**Oct. 12-13:** Mennonite Church Alberta festival, hosted by First Mennonite Church, Edmonton.

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

**Nov. 13-15:** Pastors and spouses retreat at Camp Valaqua. Contact Dan Graber, [dan@mennonitechurch.ab.ca](mailto:dan@mennonitechurch.ab.ca) or Tim at [pastor@edmonton1st.mennonitechurch.ab.ca](mailto:pastor@edmonton1st.mennonitechurch.ab.ca) or 780-436-3431.

### Saskatchewan

**Oct. 12-14:** Quilting and scrapbooking retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

**Oct. 12-13:** RJC Alumni volleyball, soccer and football tournament.

**Oct. 19-20:** Sask Women in Mission annual retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre. Theme: "Called to rest, called to renewal." Speaker: Dora Dueck of Winnipeg.

**Oct. 23:** RJC Perogy Supper fundraiser at Bethany Manor, Saskatoon.

**Oct. 27:** Equipping Day at Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

**Nov. 2-3:** MCCS Encounter and AGM at First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

**Nov. 18-19:** RJC fall theatre.

### Manitoba

**Oct. 11:** Eden Health Care Services fall workshop, "Forgiveness and mental health—a stepping stone to recovery,"

with speakers David Weaver-Zercher and Randy Goossen, at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church, registration at 8:15 a.m.

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

**Oct. 18-20:** Mennonites and Human Rights: Grappling with State Power Past and Present, a Mennonite Studies conference at the U of Winnipeg. Visit [mennonitestudies.uwinnipeg.ca/events](http://mennonitestudies.uwinnipeg.ca/events) for information.

**Oct. 19:** CMU Campus visit day.

**Oct. 27:** Canadian Foodgrains Bank fundraising concert with Eastman Male Choir of Steinbach and U of M Concert Choir at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m.

**Oct. 27:** MC Manitoba and MC Canada hosting Partnership Circle Meetings at Sterling Mennonite Church, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

**Nov. 2:** MCI soup and pie fundraiser and fall concert, at Buhler Hall, Gretna.

**Nov. 13:** Evening of the Arts at Westgate Collegiate, 7 p.m.

**Nov. 23:** CMU Campus visit day.

**Nov. 24:** Christmas@CMU, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

**Nov. 25:** Installation of Cheryl Pauls as CMU President at River East MB Church, 2:30 p.m.

### Ontario

**Oct. 12-14:** Marriage Encounter weekend at Jericho House, Port Colborne. Go to [www.marriageencounter.org](http://www.marriageencounter.org) or call 519-669-8667.

**Oct. 13:** "Celebrating Women" with Women of MCEC at Vineland United Mennonite Church, registration at 11:30 a.m. Register with Linda Wiens 905-708-0075 or [linwiens@cogeco.ca](mailto:linwiens@cogeco.ca) by Oct. 1.

**Oct. 13:** Mennonite Historical Society fall meeting with storyteller Mary-Eileen McClear at Wellesley Mennonite Church, 157 David St., Wellesley, 2 p.m.

**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.

**Oct. 14:** Hidden Acres Camp 50th anniversary benefit concert at Steinmann Mennonite Church, 7 p.m. featuring Daniel Lichti, Brandon Leis, Charlene Nafziger and Cherchez Vivre.

For tickets contact 519-625-8602 or info@hiddenacres.ca.

**Oct. 18-20:** Ten Thousand Villages festival sale at Hamilton Mennonite Church, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. (18, 19) and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (20). Enjoy soup and dessert at the Villages Café.

**Oct. 20:** Mennonite Disaster Service dessert night at Breslau Mennonite Church. Guest speakers: Eric and Judy Squires, NL project; Janet Plenert, Region V Manager; Nick Hamm, Region V Director. 7 p.m.

**Oct. 28:** CD release concert for 'Sing for Joy,' the third recording by Lifted Voices; at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, at 7 p.m.

**Nov. 1-4:** Business as a Calling, MEDA convention at Niagara Falls. Go to businessasacalling.org or 1-800-665-7026 for information.

**Nov. 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10:** Premiere of *Job's Blues: A Blues Opera*, a musical based on the Book of Job with words and story by R William Muir (managing ed. of *Canadian Mennonite*), at Harriston

Town Hall Theatre. All shows 7:30 p.m. except 2 p.m. on Nov. 4. Call 519-338-2778 for tickets.

**Nov. 3:** Mennonite and Brethren Marriage Encounter annual meeting at 3950 Lawson Line, RR 3, Wallenstein. 4 p.m. with supper at 5 p.m. Phone 519-698-2091.

**Nov. 17:** Fairview Mennonite Home handicraft sale with Christmas crafts, decorations and more; 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. with lunch available.

**Nov. 23-24:** Spirit of Christmas music and craft show at Nairn Mennonite Church, Ailsa Craig, with Valleyview Men's chorus and local talent, Ten Thousand Villages, crafts and tea room 7-9 p.m. (23) 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (24). Call Barb at 519-232-4720 for information.

**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

### Announcement

**75th Anniversary  
Bethel Mennonite Church**  
Winnipeg, MB

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### Employment Opportunities

#### VICE PRESIDENT & UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC DEAN

**EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY (EMU)** seeks qualified candidates for Vice President and Undergraduate Academic Dean to lead the undergraduate division of the university, working collaboratively with the graduate and seminary divisions. The successful candidate will provide vision for program quality and development; guide long-range strategic planning; oversee day-to-day operations of undergraduate programs; develop and monitor program budgets; recruit and hire undergraduate faculty; supervise department chairs; communicate effectively and work collegially. To apply, send a letter of application and resume to Fred Kniss, Provost, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802 or e-mail to provost@emu.edu. For more information, visit our website: www.emu.edu/humanresources. EOE

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND PEACEBUILDING

**EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY (EMU)** seeks qualified candidates for the position of Executive Director of its Center for Justice and Peacebuilding (CJP). We seek candidates with an entrepreneurial outlook and strong management skills to provide vision for program quality and development, guide strategic planning, build external relationships, network with key stakeholders, direct external communication and marketing efforts, provide overall direction for academic and outreach programs, oversee fiscal management, communicate effectively with faculty and staff, and work collegially. To apply, send a letter of application and resume to Fred Kniss, Provost, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802 or e-mail to provost@emu.edu. For more information, visit our website: www.emu.edu/humanresources. EOE

#### MENNONITE CHURCH SASKATCHEWAN

Employment Opportunity:

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan is seeking an **AREA CHURCH YOUTH MINISTER** to begin on January 1, 2013. The successful candidate will possess a strong personal commitment to Christ, will be in agreement with the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, will have a record of successful ministerial experience and a history of congregational involvement, will have appropriate relevant training and experience in youth ministry and will be able to demonstrate a love for and an ability to relate well to youth. Duties will include guiding area church youth programming, working collegially with area church youth pastors and youth sponsors, organizing youth retreats and events and serving as a resource person regarding youth programming for the 32 congregations of MC Sask. This is a .6 FTE position with salary commensurate with MC Canada pastors' salaries guidelines.

Please apply with a resume and contact information for three references by October 30, 2012 to George Epp, Personnel Committee, MC Sask, Box 148, Rosthern, SK, S0K 3R0 or email to g.epp@accesscomm.ca. Phone 306-232-5633.

#### VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY (EMU)** seeks qualified candidates for Vice President and Dean of Graduate Studies to lead the graduate division of the university. We seek candidates with an entrepreneurial outlook and strong management skills who will provide vision for program quality and development, guide long-range strategic planning, inspire and facilitate the development of new graduate programs, oversee day-to-day operations and budget management, recruit and hire excellent graduate faculty, assess programs, communicate effectively and work collegially. Depending on interest and qualifications, the appointment may include part-time involvement in one of EMU's graduate programs. To apply, send a letter of application and resume to Fred Kniss, Provost, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802 or e-mail to provost@emu.edu. For more information, visit our website: www.emu.edu/humanresources. EOE

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