

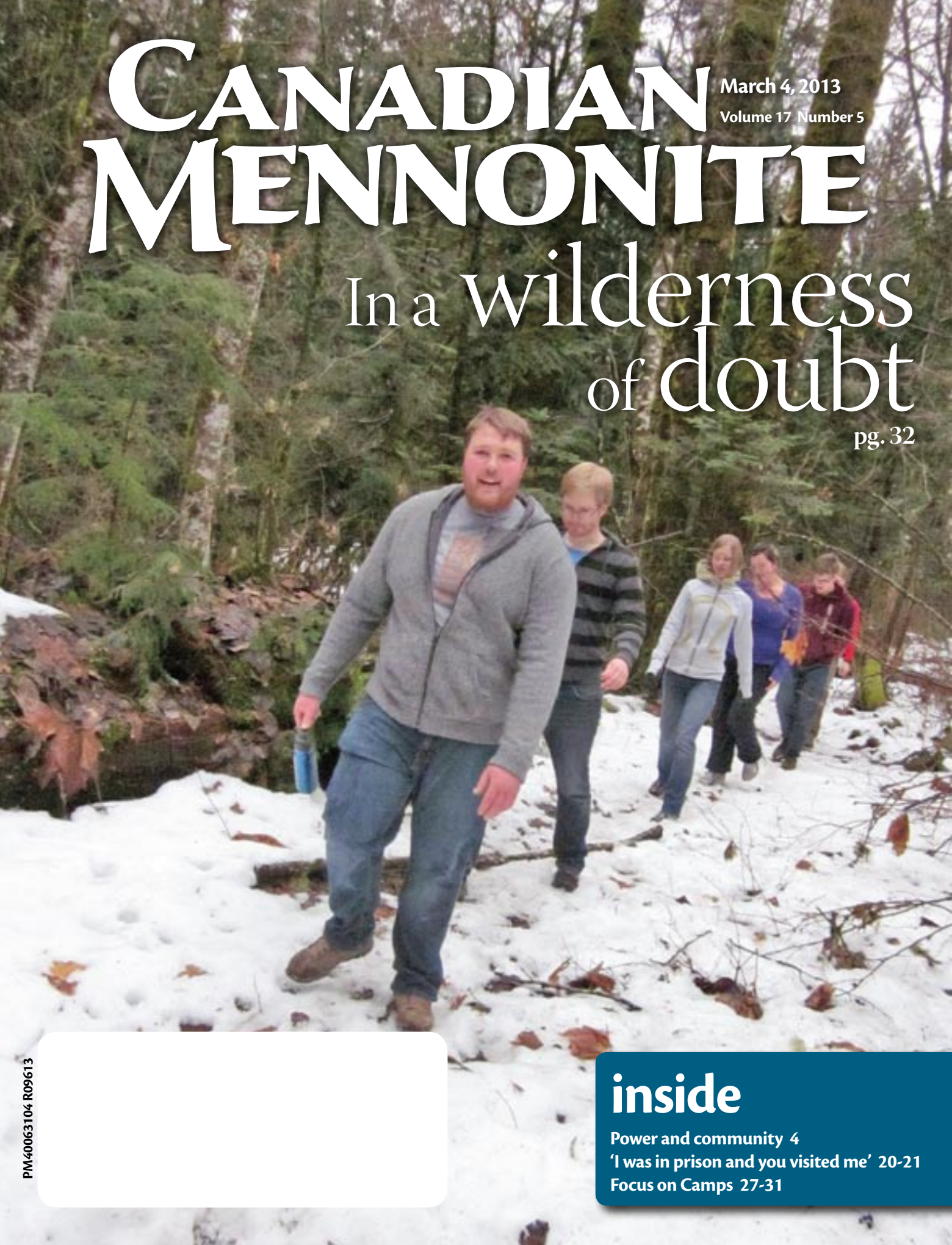
CANADIAN MENNONITE

March 4, 2013

Volume 17 Number 5

In a wilderness of doubt

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EDITORIAL

A hidden darkness

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

While the Mennonite faith community has sometimes been contentiously consumed over the past two decades with one aspect of sexuality—homosexuality and same-sex marriage—another darker side has quietly escaped our notice: sexual abuse of women and children.

And for good reason. Sexual abuse is usually shrouded in secrecy, most often to hide or obscure the identity and reputation of the abuser. Children, and sometimes vulnerable women, are told by the abuser that this is “our little secret.” And since the abuser often holds greater power, the abused person has no real recourse. The abuse can be hidden for years, until the trauma of the experience results in loss of self-esteem and self-identity as the child reaches adolescence and adulthood.

These destructive dynamics were brought to light in two recent Sunday school discussions in my congregation, when two psychology professionals working with Mennonite Central Committee Ontario’s Sexual Misconduct and Abuse Resource Response Team (SMARRT) took us through the seriousness of the problem and the preventative remedies in which our growing congregation, with many children, could engage.

This is not a new problem. One of our Mennonite writers, Rudy Wiebe, exposed sexual abuse inside families and the church some 50 years ago in his gut-wrenching novel, *Peace Shall Destroy*



Many. As the social science profession developed since that time, many of our own practitioners in the field investigated sexual abuse in our homes and congregations, and were perplexed to discover

that this darker side was no less prevalent in our own circles than it was in society at large. Statistically, one in four girls and one in six boys will experience some sort of sexual abuse/exploitation by the age of 18, they cite.

I remember well sitting with Carolyn Holderread Heggen, a Mennonite psychotherapist from Albuquerque, N.M., over lunch several years ago on a related issue of the abuse of power by a Mennonite pastor, when she was just launching into an investigation of sexual abuse. “I haven’t even formally begun my study,” she said, “and already I have heard from some 300 persons with stories of sexual abuse.”

Later, when publishing her study, she issued these alarming signs: “A disturbing fact continues to surface in sex-abuse research. The first best predictor of abuse is alcohol or drug addiction in the father. But the second best predictor is conservative religiosity, accompanied by parental belief in traditional male-female roles.”

Our Sunday school discussion helpfully raised an awareness of these dangers and put some preventative handles into place. First, we heard the compelling story of a young mother who has struggled over the years from abuse when she was six. It brought the issue up close and personal.

Most helpful were the tools given by our SMARRT experts to parents to talk openly with their children about the danger signs when it comes to making a choice when confronted by an abuser in sexual activity:

- **PARTICIPANTS—CHILDREN AND the adult**—must understand what the activity involves and the potential consequences of engaging in the activity.
- **THERE CANNOT** be any reasons for engaging in the activity other than wanting to.
- **IF THERE** is a power differential between participants, then there is “attributional ambiguity” about the lower-power individual’s freedom of choice.
- **IT IS** the responsibility of the person in the role or position of greater power to resist the sexual activity.

The reason sexual abuse can thrive in secrecy, we were told by one of the presenters, is what she referred to as a “safety net,” citing common reasons children do not tell their parents about abuse:

- **THEY BELIEVE** it is their fault or that they will get into trouble.
- **THEY MAY** believe their parents will be disappointed.
- **THE OFFENDER** may have said that he would hurt them or their family.

The reason this instruction and guidance is important is that it makes both parties to the activity responsible, but puts the greater responsibility on the one with the greater power.

It is time we, as a faith community, remove the cloak of secrecy from sexual abuse and deal with it openly, working harder at setting up a safe environment for our children.

ABOUT THE COVER:

Mike Currie, Sam Dueckman, Tami Dueckman, Jordanna Roblee and James Dueckman hike on the mountain behind Camp Squeah during last month’s Mennonite Church B.C. young adult retreat that featured the theme of ‘I doubt it.’ See reflection in Young Voices on page 32.

PHOTO: J.D. DUECKMAN, SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

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Guiding values:

Hebrews 10:23-25 • Accuracy, fairness, balance • Editorial freedom • Seeking and speaking the truth in love • Open hearts and minds in discerning God's will • Covenantal relationships and mutual accountability

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ON THE USE OF SCRIPTURE: PART II OF III

Power and community

BY BRUCE HIEBERT

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE



Because [the Bible] carries such powerful images that can radically change our ideas about what is possible, everyone wishes to control the way it works.

Reading the Bible for ethics is an act of power. Reading the Bible for ethics is about using the language and images of the Bible to transform ourselves and those around us. It is not the power called control or force. It is the power called “shaping the operational imagination.” It is the power of seeing the world one way and not another, and then acting differently because of that way of seeing.

Reading the Bible for ethics is about finding a set of images that can be used with authority and confidence to confront others and change circumstances. The Bible does this by providing us with powerful images and imaginations of what the world can be like, and what it means to live in a universe under the control of a loving God.

The problem is that the Bible does this in the midst of the systems, groups and communities within which we live, and that makes it complicated. It isn’t just about an operational imagination that lives in God’s world. The power of the Bible is about each of us trying to get our lazy way in the midst of those with whom we live, work and play.

That’s the tension of the Bible and its power: We get to use it and sometimes we use it to create the world God wants, and sometimes we use it to create a very self-centred world. In thinking about the Bible and power, one more point we need to pay attention to is that power is always relational.

ISTOCK IMAGES



Power is not something one has; it is something that emerges in the give-and-take of everyday interactions. My power to change the world only exists in so far as you can be changed to match the world I want to create. My use of the Bible confronts your use of the Bible as we each seek our own version of the world.

The result is that the Bible is a contested document. Because it carries such powerful images that can radically change our ideas about what is possible, everyone wishes to control the way it works. If I am able to determine which images and language are authoritative, and you are not, then I can influence your behaviour in the direction I want. Conversely, if you can control it, then you determine the direction. This is why the issue of interpretation is so important. Whoever controls the interpretation is the one who is then in a position to guide the behaviour of the others in the fashion

he or she chooses.

Of course, no one of us can control the Bible. Control of the Bible is something we determine as communities. We develop standards and practices about how the Bible can be used and who can do the using. Central to those standards are the points of social consensus as we develop the strategies and practices of our communities as a whole.

For example, if we honour only university-educated people and call upon them for leadership in our communities, then they will be the ones who determine the standards and practices for using the Bible. They will control the images, and they will have the power to shape our

communities. But if our communities demand that leadership is earned on the basis of gifts of the Spirit, or stability of marriage, or integrity under stress, then those who fit the alternative criteria will determine the standards and practices for using the Bible.

What is vital to remember is that it is community choice that determines who has the power to use the Bible, and it is the result of these choices that make the Bible a tool of power. Those fundamental choices about leaders, made collectively through our sense of their social qualities, fitness for the job and reliability, determine the interpretive outcome. There are no final standards for what the Bible

That's the tension of the Bible and its power: We get to use it and sometimes we use it to create the world God wants, and sometimes we use it to create a very self-centred world.

means to our lives, only the standards that those in charge of biblical interpretation provide to shape us in directions they find appropriate. The consequence is that when we try to use the Bible for our collective ethics, we must be extremely careful about who we use as our source of interpretation. The interpretation will emerge from the interpreters, and not from the Bible in and of itself.

But it isn't just the interpreters we need to watch, it is also ourselves. The interpreters we desire will always be those who most look like ourselves, who reflect our own selfish class and social interests. Each of us is always most comfortable with those who match our education, social standing, occupation and life experience. Those are the folk who think most like us and will challenge us the least. They allow us the greatest level of comfort with our existing biases and preferences. Our choices of those who interpret will always be those who make us feel the happiest with the way we are right now. We cannot be trusted to choose those who will shape our interpretation.

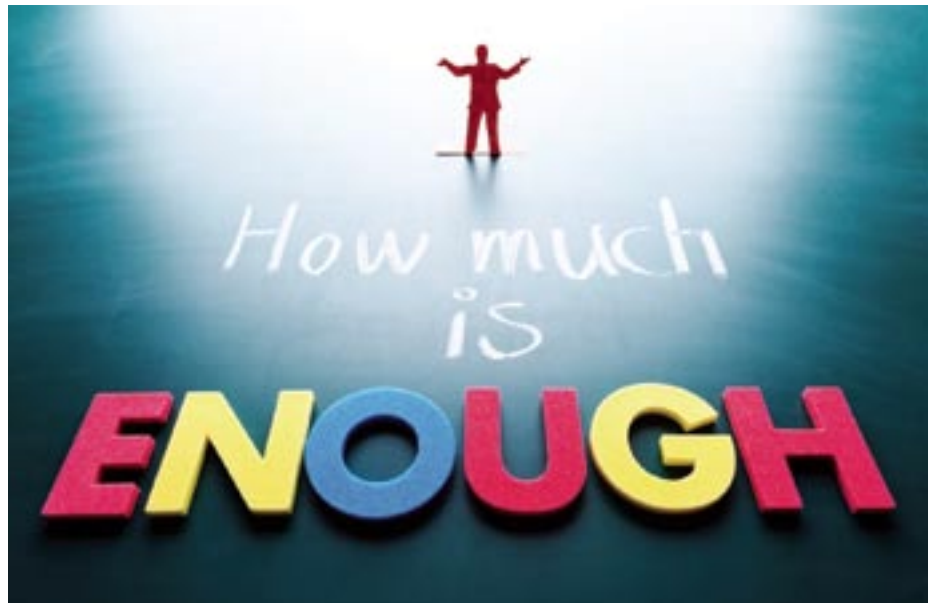
Oddly enough, the solution to this situation is to read the Bible. The Bible is not holy by accident. It got that way because it has the power to transcend and confront all those who read it seriously, regardless of their level of education, ability to interpret or social standing. The images transform our way of seeing and challenge the structures of power, even while they become the pillars of power. It is a continuous process of renewal and change, as the Bible unsettles each one of us.

An economic example

Let's look at the economic issue of what constitutes "enough." When have we accumulated enough goods or had enough wonderful experiences, that we can say we have enough?

There are two simple biblical answers to the question of what constitutes "enough":

- **THE FIRST** is that there is never enough. God rewards those who do God's will with an abundance of material resources. The Bible is laced with images



and imaginations of God's superabundant grace of material bounty to those who demonstrate obedience. It might be Abraham, or it might be Job, or any of dozens of passages that spell out the

are any number of teachings and images of holiness found in and through poverty. God sees the poverty of those who seek the well-being of others as a divinely approved existence.

The Bible is not holy by accident. It got that way because it has the power to transcend and confront all those who read it seriously, regardless of their level of education, ability to interpret or social standing.

theme of blessing. According to this answer, there is never enough because God never tires of blessing the good.

As you may have noticed, there are any number of preachers willing to spell out this interpretation in detail. They will identify how and why God rewards the good. They will identify exactly what one must do to be that kind of good. They will preach with intensity and at great length on the goodness of God and how God's goodness flows down to those who worship God. These are typically smooth-talking folk, older and clean shaven, dressed in high-middle-class styles and living lives of relative opulence.

- **THE OTHER** biblical answer is that any wealth is too much. God calls those who have, to give to those who have not. This is Jesus' explicit message in Luke. In Acts, it is a key commitment of the first Christians. Throughout the Bible, there

As you may have noticed, there are any number of preachers willing to spell out this interpretation in detail. They will identify who is poor and who is wealthy, and how the wealthy can contribute to the needs of the poor. They will fervently preach at great length on the responsibility that wealth brings and how God has a preferential option for the poor. These are typically rough-talking folk, young and bearded, dressed in low-middle-class styles and living lives of relative poverty.

Now here is where it gets difficult. Which you think is right, or most right, is more predictable on the basis of your current situation than on anything in the Bible. It is not a matter of biblical interpretation; it is a question of which plays closest to your existing biases. Those who influence you and help you to make decisions about "enough" will be those who

help you live just the way you are living.

For the relatively prosperous, the idea that God blesses the good is almost impossible to ignore. For the relatively poor, the idea that God blesses those who

want our interpreters to do for us: Give it to us simple and never really challenging.

However, the Bible is a power that is a challenge to our personal, community and congregational power. A careful read

awe and frustration—awe that our story is that of a loving God deeply entrenched in the muck of ordinary life, and frustration that it isn't simple, and just maybe we are going to have to do some work of our own.

Reading the Bible for ethics is an act of power. Ultimately, it is our power, a power liberated by the text, but requiring our decisions, our hard work, our discipleship. But it is also our power because it breaks our power, confronts our interests, challenges our easy answers and violates our boundaries. It is not the type of power that makes us happy, but it is the power that leads to ultimate peace. ❧

Bruce Hiebert, M.Div., Ph.D., is a faculty member in business ethics at University Canada West, as well as a lecturer in Mennonite history at the University of the Fraser Valley, and adjunct faculty member in ethics at the Vancouver School of Theology. He is a former Mennonite minister and long-time member at Langley Mennonite Fellowship, to whose members this document was addressed.

The Bible both affirms and challenges every perspective. That does not mean there is no consistency. Somehow every story and theme has the same origin: A loving God. And the same goal: human peace.

are generous to the point of poverty is almost impossible to ignore. The power to influence is in the economic class, not the Bible.

The Bible itself goes in neither direction, or, rather, in both directions, and a dozen more. The Bible opens paths that challenge every perspective. Wealth? Well, yes and no. But so also other issues. Slavery? Well, yes and no. Women in authority? Well, yes and no. Divorce? Well, yes and no. War? Well, yes and no. And on and on.

The Bible both affirms and challenges every perspective. That does not mean there is no consistency. Somehow every story and theme has the same origin: A loving God. And the same goal: human peace. But how those two get worked out is so very different that almost every strategy we can think of is biblical in some sense.

If we had our way, it would all be simple and unchanging, and just like us. But that is not the Bible. Nor would that bring a complex and diverse humanity to a place of peace. It takes truly holy Scripture to force us to step outside of our complacent boxes, no matter what shape our boxes may be.

Biases on both sides

Both liberals and conservatives are trying to make the Bible say what they want it to say, to interpret it for their own conditions and prejudices. The poor, no less than the rich, desire to interpret Scripture in a way that helps them feel good about their condition. That is what it means to be human and subject to power. And that is what we would do to the Bible if we could, and that is what we

of the Bible, a deeply committed read, holding holy Scripture as transcendent, leaves us in no happy place. It never leads to authoritative interpretation or teaching positions. It does not clarify truth or help us understand the world in divine terms.

Instead, that careful, committed read of holy Scripture leads to the inability to rest at peace with any stand on any issue. It pushes us to know that there is always more, that God's universe is bigger than we can imagine, and that the story is never really said and done. It forces us to look at each other with a question mark, not a certainty, and to sit together in both

/// For discussion

1. Who in your congregation takes a leadership role in interpreting the Bible? How do they acquire that role? What happens if anyone challenges their interpretation? Who has been most influential in the development of your personal understanding of the Bible?
2. Bruce Hiebert writes that the one who “controls the interpretation is the one who is then in a position to guide the behaviour of the others,” and also that “interpretation will emerge from the interpreters and not from the Bible in and of itself.” Do you agree? How can we minimize our biases and preferences? Does God ever speak to us outside of our social context?
3. Using an economic example, Hiebert suggests that the Bible is very complex and speaks in many directions at once. Do you find his economic example convincing? Can you think of perspectives that are not challenged in the Bible? Do you agree with Hiebert that we dare not allow ourselves a simple and unchallenging approach to the Bible?
4. What happens when we read the Bible the way Hiebert suggests, with “both awe and frustration,” never being certain that we have the correct interpretation? Do you agree with him that this approach will not make us happy? What would happen if the Bible was not unsettling? Do you find his ideas helpful?

—BY BARB DRAPER

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.

✉ How to stretch our 'peace' taxes

RE: "ARE WE paying for peace or war?" by Ernie Unger, Jan. 21, page, 12.

Personally, it is refreshing to see Unger's viewpoint so well put together with the pertinent statistics.

I also appreciate his line about "... knowing that our money is going to be used to hurt others." That is virtually the bottom line in virtually all military spending; one exception might be retaining Arctic sovereignty.

There seems to be a lot of merit in Unger's three suggestions, but might I propose a fourth: Why not make a declaration of conscience by submitting another cheque of 8.39 percent of our taxes to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank? Would not this money be certainly used to help others?

And by virtue of the current arrangement between the Canadian International Development Agency and the Foodgrains Bank, that matches each dollar donated to with four federal dollars, would donors

FROM OUR LEADERS

Hearing Jesus as
songwriter

BRYAN MOYER SUDERMAN

In the 1930s, Woody Guthrie took a song by Albert Brumley and adapted it for fellow Oklahomans fleeing the "dust bowl."

"This world is not my home, I'm just a-passing through / My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue / The angels beckon me from heaven's open door / And I can't feel at home in this world anymore," became "I ain't got no home, I'm just a-ramblin' round / I work when I can get it, I roam from town to town / The police make it hard wherever I may go / And I ain't got no home in this world anymore."

The source of the tune is unmistakable, but Guthrie's adaptation spoke directly and in a powerful new way to the poverty and injustice of the Dirty Thirties. Thoroughly steeped in the traditions and forms of folk music, and keenly aware of

current realities and struggles, Guthrie repeatedly wrote new songs with variations on familiar tunes.



I can't help but hear Jesus as a songwriter. Mark 12:1-9 records Jesus' "cover version" of Isaiah's ancient "Song of the Vineyard" (Isaiah 5:1-10). More than a "cover version," it is a bold reworking of the tradition. Much like Guthrie, Jesus transforms familiar poetry into a hard-hitting, finger-pointing song that took direct aim at a contemporary cast of characters.

Jesus appropriates Isaiah's imagery, where "*the vineyard is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting*" (Isaiah 5:7), and transposes it into a new key. Jesus' version introduces new characters—tenants, the owner's messengers and son—and extends the plot dramatically. The result

is provocative. The prophetic judgment of Israel/Judah has become a sharply focused critique of Israel's current leadership, the tenants charged with care of the vineyard.

This is not the only way that Jesus is portrayed working with Scripture. Mark 12 goes on to describe a series of interactions and scriptural debates about hot-button issues of the day. There is much we can learn from the way Jesus reads Scripture—and his context—in many other texts.

Will we dare to sing this Jesus/Isaiah song today? How can it be voiced in light of the experience and reality of the original inhabitants—first nations—of the Canadian vineyard? How should all of the current tenants—old and new—relate to each other, and to the vineyard itself? What does the owner of the vineyard have to say about all this?

We are called to be steeped in Scripture and attentive to the realities and struggles of our context. In the words of another biblical songwriter: "*How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?*"

Bryan Moyer Suderman (smalltallmusic.com) is a member of Mennonite Church Canada's Church Engagement Council.

not then successfully direct tax dollars to a cause that helps, not hurts, others?

By making such a tax-deductible donation to the Foodgrains Bank, wouldn't taxpayers further lower the amount of their taxable income, thus reducing their share of the money going to military purposes?

On the other hand, assuming that military budgets and commitments will be met by our government, by diverting our 8.39 percent are we not requiring someone else to pay their portion plus ours. Is it ethical for us to make someone else pay double for what we think is ethically wrong? Just wondering.

ARMIN ENS, REINLAND, MAN.

✉ Reader takes pleasure in Bible study

RE: "ON BEING Wisdom's child," Jan. 7, page 17. I am very grateful for prophets the likes of Tom Yoder Neufeld. I love what he said to the pastors at the Conrad Grebel University College's annual pastors breakfast.

As for Yoder Neufeld's challenge to an "erotic pleasure in studying the Bible, to infect others with pleasure in studying the Bible," I find enormous pleasure from the eroticism of reading, studying, note-taking and memorizing Scripture from the "Daily Bread" devotional and Radio Bible Class.

This reading through the Bible in a year—both Old and New testaments—has been most salutary.

GOD, MONEY AND ME

Summer camp: More than a facility

GARY SAWATZKY

Summer camp had a very significant influence on my life. I remember being nervous before attending for the first time at age six, and I found the idea of going to camp very scary. I didn't want to leave home to spend a week with strangers! But after the first couple of days, I began to develop friendships with some of the other kids. In fact, some of the fellow campers I met that year are still friends today.

Bible stories were an important part of my church camp experience. Hearing Bible stories from somewhere other than home, from someone other than Mom and Dad, helped me understand that other people shared the same faith.

It was during my week at camp when I was nine that I came to know Jesus personally. Around 2 o'clock in the morning the Holy Spirit was wrestling with me. I got out of bed and went down to the speaker's cabin and knocked on his door. The speaker was Mr. Quark; to this day

I still remember his name. He answered my knock and we had a long conversation and that's when I made a commitment to follow Christ.

The camp influence stretched beyond just one week each summer. As a teenager, Dad and I would go to the camp



But camp is more than a facility. It's a safe place for spiritual interaction and learning responsibility.

on weekends to hammer nails and help with maintenance and renovation of the camp's facilities.

In my late teens I was wrestling with my faith and was moving away from God. Once again, a speaker at camp had a significant influence. He challenged my spiritual journey to the point that I quit my job and enrolled at Bible school after I got home.

Many have similar stories of how much of an impact summer camp has made on their lives. Today, I'm grateful for

the people who had the vision to build the camp, for those who gave money to support it and to those who volunteered there. I'm thankful for the investment of all those who gave of themselves and their resources.

But camp is more than a facility. It's a safe place for spiritual interaction and learning responsibility. It's about making friends and finding out how to relate to others who are different than you. It's about learning to take your turn on the dish crew while others are out playing.

The challenge for today's camps is: Who will invest the time, energy, prayer

and financial support? Investing in camps can have significant returns. Please support church camps with your time, prayer and finances. You just never know whose life may be changed.

Gary Sawatzky is a stewardship consultant at the Calgary office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For more information on impulsive generosity, stewardship education, and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit mennofoundation.ca.

The Bible is my operator's manual and helpful also in checking out my theology when I study it with my "Daily Bread" buddies in the style of Job 34:4.

And there is more that my eroticism leads me to believe.

GEORGE H EPP, CHILLIWACK, B.C.

✉ Guns entice their owners to fire them

IN MY WORK as chaplain for the Correctional Service of Canada I have spoken with several inmates about the feelings they had about guns. Several told me that when they had a gun they felt invincible, unstoppable, in love with the gun. Some kept them near . . . under their pillow while they slept. They would clean it, caress and talk to it like it was a person or a lover.

FAMILY TIES

What are your vices?

MELISSA MILLER

“What are your vices?” Now there's a conversation starter.

Try asking your dinner guests to weigh in on that question or drop it into family reunion conversations. That's exactly what happened to me recently with a small group of friends. I can't remember how we got started on the subject, but it definitely was a turn away from normal chit-chat.

We teased each other about things like our consumption of certain substances and questionable entertainment choices. We debated what was a vice and what was simply a bad habit. We cheerfully volunteered our perspectives on each other's vices.

One friend described me as being “preachy,” which caused me to wonder, “If a preacher preaches, is she preachy? How would a preacher preach without being preachy?” (You can sense, Gentle Reader, that I am still feeling a little sensitive to this particular critique.



Perhaps the resolution lies in the degree to which the preacher is preaching in a judgmental, strident or self-righteous manner. Perhaps not.)

At any rate, when one friend offered, “I haven't always stood up for the people that mattered most to me,” we heard honest vulnerability. A holy moment as one person bravely examined her heart and

confessed a vice.

It's Lent. Our vices—our sins—might occupy some of our focus during this season. “Vice,” by the way, means wickedness or moral defect. Its synonyms are strong words like “depravity,” “corruption” and “iniquity,” a word familiar to Bible readers. On Ash Wednesday, we may have heard these words from Psalm 51:2: “*Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*” The psalm is credited to King David, written after he acknowledged the vices of sexual wrongdoing and murder he had tried to hide. Hearing this verse at the beginning of Lent compels us to examine the secret places of our hearts, and bring to light the vices that lie there.

Similarly, on the first Sunday of Lent, churches using the lectionary always read the story of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. As we contemplate our

Our resistance to temptation, our capacity to avoid giving into vice, is strengthened by our rootedness in God . . .

humanity, with its vices and virtues, it is helpful to remember Jesus' humanity, the temptations he faced and his response to such temptations.

Jesus answered the tempter with sharp, clear principles, direct quotes from Deuteronomy. One does not live by bread alone. Worship and serve only

God. Do not put God to the test. With such resistance, Jesus affirmed his unity and oneness with God, rooted in his deep understanding of God's word.

Our resistance to temptation, our capacity to avoid giving into vice, is strengthened by our rootedness in God, and by our intimate connection with God's word, keeping it “in our hearts and on our lips.” We know that word through Scripture; through Jesus, the word-made-flesh; and through the living word moving among us today.

There is good news to be gleaned in examining our vices. When David cried out for God to wash him from sin, and make him clean as snow, God answered in the affirmative. Jesus' life, his teachings and his shameful death on a cross are aimed at freeing us from our vices and sins, and opening to us the oneness he shares with God. The Easter celebrations we walk towards on the other side of Lent are God's resounding yes to free us from our vices.

God certainly knows our vices, and loves us all the same. How might we

be freer and stronger if we face them squarely and confess them to at least one trusted friend?

Melissa Miller (familyties@mts.net) lives in Winnipeg. She is wrapped in the family ties of daughter, sister, wife, mother, friend and pastor.

It came alive in their hands as they felt the kick, the movement and noise of the gun when fired. The smell of the gun powder was also intoxicating. The desire to become more and more accurate with it was often a challenge and a competition between friends. For some guys, going to gun shows, their collection and their knowledge of guns were all that they really cared

about.

The reality of practising at the target range slowly reduced their fear of the gun and it also diminished their fear of firing it. It increased the desire to shoot the gun.

I remember pulling the trigger for the first time on the .22 single-shot rifle that my brother Murray

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Less please: Pop theology for Lent

BY WILL BRAUN

SENIOR WRITER

ARTWORK BY EISENBÄHNER/
FLICKR CREATIVE COMMONS



The customary practice of self-sacrifice during Lent carries tinges of earnest piety and religious compunction. It can feel like a moral “heavy.” But it also has a certain appeal.

Despite relentless societal reminders of the benefits of having more, somewhere in the undercurrent of human experience we retain the knowledge that less can be more, that life abundant is not synonymous with life over-indulgent.

The appeal of less became particularly clear to me as I sipped a Coke on the eve of Lent back in the mid-1990s. As I poured the fizzy dark sugar water into my temple of the Holy Spirit, I had an unusual moment of clarity. It was also a moment of repulsion.

I was repulsed by my action. Not only was I willfully doing incremental harm to my body, I was also making a donation to Mr. Coca-Cola and bringing more plastic into the world in the process. All for the sake of bubbles and sugar. I felt duped.

I do not wish to imply that people who buy soft drinks are bereft of moral fortitude. We are all indictable on multiple counts of less-than-noble consumption, and likewise all worthy of boundless



grace regardless of our shopping habits. I’m just saying that in that moment I knew the decision to give up something for Lent had been made for me.

I realized the power of Lent as a liturgical antidote to consumer stress and excess.

Overcoming the allure of more stuff is a tough task. Rather than continually

I'm not saying Lent should be a season of anti-corporate self-righteousness. The focus must be Easter redemption.

trying to conjure the willpower to resist the offerings of the marketplace, I like to think of allowing myself to be drawn into the spiritual tide of Lent, an ancient rhythm tapped into the human knowledge that less can be more.

The liturgical calendar presents us with a season of simplification, of de-carbonating our bellies and souls. I think of it as practical liturgy.

The perennial peeling away of consumptive layers need not start or finish with soft drinks. The long list of candidates for the Lenten chopping block is conveniently provided for us by the advertising industry. For me, soda was a good first experiment.

When I swore off soft drinks for Lent I knew there would be little reason to revert to my carbonated ways of old after Holy Week. I wouldn’t celebrate Easter with a two-litre of Mountain Dew. With few exceptions—mostly involving fizzed-up punch—I haven’t strayed from my original commitment. Nor have I been particularly tempted to.

I feel good about the de-carbonation of my being. I feel good that my money doesn’t contribute to the global cause of fizz.

Of course, the remaining consumer shortcomings in my life help prevent that satisfaction from becoming self-satisfaction. That’s important. I’m not saying Lent should be a season of anti-corporate self-righteousness. The focus must be Easter redemption.

Lent looks forward to the mystery at the heart of life abundant. The practical, self-sacrificial liturgy of the season offers the possibility of peeling away layers that distract us, bit by over-sweetened bit, from that life abundant.

received for a Christmas present back the late 1950s. What a thrill! I well remember the power that I felt when I pulled the trigger.

But if you carry around a hammer, after a while everything begins to look like a nail that you would like to tap on. Same with a gun. Carry it around and everything becomes a target to be aimed at.

DAVID SHANTZ, MONTREAL

✉ Reader raises 'perplexing critical questions' about the Bible

RE: "THE PATHS and ditches of biblical interpretation" series.

The articles are a useful primer for biblical interpretation. However, a close reading of the Old Testament raises a number of perplexing critical questions:

- **IS THE** Old Testament a reliable historical account, as literalists believe, or the historical memory of an

oppressed and disheartened people living in exile?

- **WHEN DOES** Israel refer to the failed nation in the Old Testament or the present secular Israeli Zionist state, and when is Israel a metaphor for God's faithful people throughout the ages?

- **HOW IS** the warrior god who fights battles for Israel and demands acts of genocide related to the gracious loving God who sacrifices his own son to redeem all humankind in the New Testament?

Perhaps, I am the only one asking these kinds of questions. I personally appreciate the Bible as an anthology that shares the failures and triumphs of many people of faith as they try to grasp the reality of God's presence in their midst, much as Christians do today.

In that sense, the Spirit inspires each story to be instructive for my personal and our collective pilgrimage of faith, to find the "paths" and avoid the "ditches" towards a more intimate relationship with God.

JOHANN FUNK, PENTICTON, B.C.

I personally appreciate the Bible as an anthology that shares the failures and triumphs of many people of faith as they try to grasp the reality of God's presence in their midst, much as Christians do today.

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LIFE IN THE POSTMODERN SHIFT

The professionalization factor

BY TROY WATSON

I addressed the “priority problem” of Bible reading in the lives of many Christians in my last article (Feb 4, page 13). Here, I want to address the “professionalization factor,” which is what happens when Canadian Christians, and there are many of them, look to experts—pastors, priests, scholars—to read, study and unpack the Bible for them.



Christians from regularly reflecting on and applying the teachings of Scripture on their own. However, it is more positive than negative, in my opinion. The need for educated professionals who can provide greater understanding of biblical texts has never been greater. As much as I agree with early Anabaptists

that much of the New Testament is easy to understand, there are many passages that seem obvious, but are not straightforward at all upon scholarly analysis.

Take the parable of the pounds (*minas*) in Luke 19 that resembles the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. I had been raised to believe the message of these two parables was one and the same. The traditional interpretation proposes that people who effectively use what they have been given, whether it be money, gifts, abilities or faith, for example, will be rewarded by God as a good and faithful servant, while lazy servants will be judged.

This is not what Jesus is communicating in Luke 19 at all, and it took an expert in biblical studies to show me this:

• **FIRST, LOOK** at the placement of this parable in the narrative. Luke has Jesus telling this parable right after the story of Zacchaeus, a man who had “effectively” increased his money. Yet Jesus tells us that he found salvation in giving it away.

• **SECOND, HISTORICAL** research reveals that Jesus is most likely referring to the story of Herod Archelaus, a claimant to the throne of Judea, in this parable. Just like the ruler in Jesus’ parable, Archelaus travelled to a foreign country, Rome, to appeal to Caesar. A Jewish delegation opposed him because

of his ruthless cruelty and greed. Rome made him king anyway and he came back and killed his opponents, including three thousand of his own countrymen, in the temple precinct. The parallel between Jesus’ parable and the story of Archelaus is no coincidence. The direct contrast to what is about to happen to Jesus is also no coincidence.

Luke strategically records Jesus telling this parable right before the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, where people welcome him with the title of king. Disciples expect him to take the throne now, for he is the rightful claimant to the throne.

However, a delegate of Jewish leaders oppose Jesus’ kingship. Jesus is then taken to the Roman embassy, but not to make a bid for kingship, like Archelaus. He is taken by his opponents and, instead of being made king by Rome and then slaughtering those who oppose him, like Archelaus, he is slaughtered by Rome and his opponents.

Finally, instead of three thousand of Jesus’ own countrymen being slaughtered by his faithful soldiers, three thousand of them are converted to Christianity at Pentecost by his disciples near the temple, proclaiming, “Jesus is Lord [King].”

Jesus is clearly telling this parable to contrast his kingdom with the kingdoms of this world. He is preparing his followers to expect his kingdom to be the opposite of worldly kings like Herod Archelaus.

Jesus is certainly not comparing God to a cruel and ruthless ruler in this parable, as traditional and “obvious” interpretations imply. Neither is Jesus saying that God rewards those who effectively increase what they have been given. God and Jesus are on the side of the poor servant who wasn’t “successful” and the bystanders who question the unjust economic management of this ruthless king.

This is a serious difference in interpretation! Thank God for professional scholars! #

Troy Watson (troy@questcc.ca) is pastor of Quest Community, Saint Catharines, Ont.

Unlike most Reformers, the Anabaptists thought the majority of Scripture, especially the New Testament, was easy to understand. They argued that the real difficulty was found not in understanding texts, but in applying what they clearly teach, so they encouraged Christians to focus their energy on applying what they understood as they read Scripture, rather than worrying about the parts they didn’t get.

I agree that the “professionalization factor” is a problem when it hinders

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Ewert—Logan Marshall (b. Jan. 31, 2013), to Tom and Jess Ewert, North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

Funk—Lacey Joanne (b. Dec. 21, 2012), to Tari and Nate Funk, Morden Mennonite, Man.

Gerber—Cheyanne Avigail (b. Jan. 25, 2013), to Chad and Kaitlin Gerber, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

Hidalgo—Manuel Ezra (b. Jan. 16, 2013), to Jorge and Dareleen Hidalgo, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Hildebrand—Seth Blake (b. Nov. 27, 2012), to Cam and Annie Hildebrand, Bergthaler Mennonite, Plum Coulee, Man.

Nickel—Hugo Alfred (b. Jan. 5, 2013), to Andrew and Kristina Nickel, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Peters—Chelsea Barbara Lorraine (b. Jan. 27, 2013), to Willy and Danielle Peters, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Shantz—Peter Leroy and Jacob Andrew (b. Feb. 12, 2013), to Mike Shantz and Elizabeth Buhler, Hamilton Mennonite, Ont.

Vanderlee—Hannah Elizabeth (b. Jan. 20, 2013), to Scott and Yvonne Vanderlee, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Wall—Lucy Rose (b. Jan. 10, 2013), to Dave and Maria Wall, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Wiebe—Griffen Ronald (b. Feb. 1, 2013), to Trevor and Stacy Wiebe, Bergthaler Mennonite, Plum Coulee, Man.

Marriages

Bergen/Driedger—Bill Bergen and Emily Driedger, at Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Jan. 26, 2013.

Castillano/Tiessen—Mary Grace Castillano and Matthew Tiessen, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., in the Philippines, Dec. 29, 2012.

Deaths

Andres—Mary, 89 (b. April 29, 1923; d. Feb. 4, 2013), Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Bender—Louisa (nee Brenneman), 82 (b. Nov. 4, 1930; d. Feb. 3, 2013), First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

Derksen—Katharina, 87 (b. April 11, 1925; d. Jan. 12, 2013), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Doerksen—Jacob Martin, 83 (b. Sept. 18, 1928; d. July 15, 2012), Erie View United Mennonite, Port Rowan, Ont.

Dyck—John, 91 (b. Sept. 9, 1921; d. Jan. 31, 2013), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Epp—Hans (John) Georg, 67 (b. Aug. 25, 1945; d. Feb. 1, 2013), Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver

Friesen—Katharina (Tina) (nee Schellenberg), 89 (b. Aug. 2, 1923; d. Feb. 2, 2013), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Froese—Evelyn, 77 (b. June 23, 1935; d. Feb. 7, 2013), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Hamm—Carolyn Anne (nee Mandryk), 63 (b. Dec. 15, 1949; d. Dec. 27, 2012), Erie View United Mennonite, Port Rowan, Ont.

Howe—Waltraud, 57 (b. April 19, 1955; d. Jan. 26, 2013), Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Kornelsen—Edward, 78 (b. Aug. 20, 1934; d. Jan. 28, 2013), First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Martens—Henry, 89 (b. Aug. 1, 1923; d. Jan. 24, 2013), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones announcements within four months of the event.

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

Pontius' Puddle



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

From pieces to peace

Anabaptists meet Down Under to explore being neighbours in a multi-faith world

BY MARK S. HURST AND NATHAN HOBBY

Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Jan. 26 is Australia Day, the equivalent of Canada Day. Over the Australia Day weekend the Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand held its biennial conference in Sydney with the theme, “From pieces to peace: More than just neighbours in a multi-faith world.”

The conference began with a traditional aboriginal acknowledgement of place and country, led by Ray Minniecon, an aboriginal pastor and leader of World Vision Australia’s indigenous program. He reminded those gathered that aboriginals call Australia Day, “Invasion Day.” In a controversial comparison, he said, “Think what it was like for Jewish people in Germany during the Nazi regime.” In the same way, Australia Day is a day for mourning—not celebration—for the original inhabitants of Australia, he said.

Dave Andrews, who has lived and worked in intentional communities with marginalized people groups in Australia,

Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Nepal for more than 30 years, gave the first presentation of the weekend. Entitled “The Anabaptist tradition and peaceful Christlike interfaith conversations,” he addressed many of the questions Christians raise when thinking about relating to people of other faiths.

Isn’t our task to convert others? “No,” he said. “Conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit. Our task is to be a witness.” Quoting Matthew 23:15, “*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves,*” he said Jesus wanted his followers to produce disciples who were witnesses—salt and light in their world.

What about Jesus being the only way to God? Jesus showed the “way” in how he related to the “other,” Andrews said. Jesus taught Christians to not only love other Christians, but to love their enemies, he said, suggesting that is the “way” they are to follow.

The response to his talk came from Nora Amath, chair of Australian Muslim Advocates for the Rights of All Humanity. “The challenge in interfaith conversation is to establish ‘safe places’ where we can hear each other,” she said, stressing that “love of neighbour” was central to Islam as well as Christianity.

Rabbi Zalman Kastel joined the conversation. From the Lubavitch Hasidic tradition of Judaism, Zalman called the conference participants to “walk into the sea” in multi-faith relationships, trusting God as the people of Israel did when facing the Red Sea.

Zalman approaches interfaith conversations firmly committed to his own religion, noting that, while in the past people



Australian aboriginal singer Johnny Huckle performs songs about what it is like to grow up in a land that took children from their parents and destroyed the aboriginal family structure in the process.

killed each other over differences, today, unfortunately, people pretend differences don’t matter. He later remarked that there is a high price for relativism.

To a question about the authority of the Bible—a key question for many Christians—he said that he saw the Hebrew Bible as the “literal Word of God,” particularly the first five books, with the prophets as a kind of inspired interpretation.

Matt Anslow, young adult coordinator of Transformation-Empowerment-Advocacy-Relief (TEAR) Australia, presented a Bible study called “A (recovering) racist’s reading of Matthew 15:21-28.” He suggested that the story there about a “Canaanite woman” is a reversal of the destruction of the seven nations in Deuteronomy 7. “Even Jesus is forced to deal with the racism of his day,” Anslow said. “He is forced to make space for the other, spurred on by the challenge of the other.”

On the final evening, Johnny Huckle, an aboriginal singer from Canberra, sang “Journey of Healing” and “Listen to the Spirit,” about what it is like to grow up in a land that took children from their parents and destroyed the aboriginal family structure in the process. It was a fitting ending to the Australia Day weekend.

For more information about the Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand, visit anabaptist.asn.au. ▮

ANABAPTIST ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
AND NEW ZEALAND PHOTO



Speakers at this year’s Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand conference include, from left, Dave Andrews, who has lived among marginalized people groups for more than 30 years, and Nora Amath, chair of Australian Muslim Advocates for the Rights of All Humanity.

CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY PHOTO BY NADINE KAMPEN



For five days in January, Carol Ann Weaver, composer and pianist from Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., toured Manitoba communities, playing songs from her latest recording, Paraguay Primeval, with vocalist Rebecca Campbell. Stops included Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), pictured, Gretna, Winnipeg's Douglas Mennonite Church, Steinbach and Altona. Paraguay Primeval is a musical work featuring stories of Mennonites who fled to Paraguay from Russia and Canada in the 1920s and beyond. Of the Manitoba tour, Janet Brenneman, dean of CMU's School of Music, said, it "takes this music to some of the very people who were born in Paraguay but have moved back to Canada."

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Dorothy and Gordon Erb's 63-and-a-half-year marriage won them the door prize for the longest married couple at the Ontario Mennonite and Brethren Marriage Encounter 'Valentine Banquet,' held Feb. 9 at Waterloo North Mennonite Church, Waterloo. Between the meal and an auction of desserts and other items, enough funds were raised to offer the weekends of marriage enrichment to anyone, regardless of their ability to pay. A special prayer concern raised at the banquet was for a local minister to act as pastor at the two annual enrichment weekends. The current pastor drives up from Pennsylvania.

God at work in the Church

Snapshots

PHOTO COURTESY OF MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA



'Even non-religious people have two expectations of the church,' said Willard Metzger, left, during an Ecumenical Week of Prayer service at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, on Jan. 20. 'The first is that the church gets along. . . . The second is that the church should be the leader in addressing issues of poverty and social justice.' Metzger, Mennonite Church Canada executive director, was one of several leaders representing a variety of denominations who attended the service. Karen Martens Zimmerly, MC Canada's denominational minister, fifth from right, and Rudy Baergen, Faith and Life Committee chair, fourth from right, also took part. To read Metzger's full sermon, visit mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1966.

BETHANY COLLEGE PHOTO



A completely remodelled student centre—as the fictional town of Yieldsburg—greeted more than a hundred youths from Western Canada last month for Bethany College's Yield: Youth Advance 2013 event. The shops and businesses were meant to draw the students to embrace the theme verse of the weekend: "If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it" (Matthew 16:25). Besides listening to keynote speaker and Bethany alumnus Phil Wiebe speak about the painful loss of his infant son, the youths spent the time playing games, watching a dinner theatre production, and participating in Hockey Night in Hepburn, workshops and worship.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD



Mar Elias High School students Sally Dabbah, left, and Miyas Nassar, right, are pictured with Westgate Mennonite Collegiate student Avery Letkemann during a recent visit from Israel/Palestine. Letkemann and other Westgate students will be making a return visit to Israel later this year.

Student hospitality transcends borders

Westgate and Arab Israeli students exchange visits

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG

The hallways at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate in Winnipeg were abuzz with excitement. Eight students and their teacher, Emil Haloun, had arrived from Mar Elias High School in Ibillin, Israel, to spend two weeks with the Westgate students and their host families.

Their first shock was stepping out of the airport on Feb. 11 into the brisk -4 degree C Manitoba air. After that, they took to the ski slopes with Westgate students on their annual ski day and tried their hand at curling with Jewish students at Gray Academy.

The Middle Eastern high school is part of the larger Mar Elias Educational Institutions comprised of kindergarten, elementary, junior and senior high in Ibillin, an Arab village in northern Israel. "Our school is unique," said Haloun. "You

will never see Jewish and Muslim teachers on the same staff at other schools." It was founded by Father Elias Chacour, archbishop of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church, in the early 1980s; the students are of Palestinian descent but are citizens of Israel.

Their visit is part of an exchange that will see 16 students and two instructors from Westgate travel to the Middle East in June. Last year, when Westgate teacher James Friesen was leading the study tour, he got in touch with Haloun, who suggested the idea of an exchange between the two schools.

Once the idea took root in Friesen's mind, he was surprised at the ready support of the Westgate community. "So many people in our community said it was a wonderful idea, and it was the easiest and

fastest fundraising we've ever done," he said. "People came up to me in church and said we hear you are bringing Palestinians here to visit. We want to support you." The fundraising covered \$9,000 in airfare for their visitors.

For Haloun, the challenges to bring his students to Winnipeg were greater. Lengthy questioning from authorities and the fact that this is the middle of a semester did not weaken his resolve. "I feel good that this could be done," he said. "I learned from the archbishop that the impossible is possible."

Sally Dabbah, 17, and Miyas Nassar, 18, are two Muslim students from Mar Elias. When asked how they prepared for this exchange, they pointed to the thermal clothing they were wearing to protect themselves from the cold. "I love seeing the snow, but I don't like to be cold," said Dabbah.

Both were impressed with the religious activity in the school, including chapel, prayer, singing and Christian studies, and remarked positively about the much smaller classes, and the inclusion of music, drama and more sports options at Westgate.

They are looking forward to showing the Canadian students their culture in June.

"We don't have equality because we are treated differently," said Dabbah. "We don't get our rights. We live in Israel and not in the West Bank, so we don't have to go through checkpoints, but Israelis do control our movement. Although we don't see as much violence, we feel sad for so many of our Palestinian brothers and sisters because it is so difficult for them to go to their schools and lands."

"I want to show [Westgate students] the [separation] wall so that they can see the fear that the people in the West Bank feel," she added. "I want to show them Jerusalem and the mosque which is always being fought over."

"I want to show them our food and culture," said Nassar.

On his visits to Mar Elias, Friesen has been impressed with the efforts of the school to build cultural and religious bridges. "We want to plug into that kind of thinking, instead of the negativity that builds security barriers between people," he said. "We want to talk about reconciliation and peacebuilding . . . by building relationships and having fun together." ❧

PHOTOS BY JESSICA BUHLER



The 2013 Ice Cycle, put on by the Saskatoon Winter Shines Festival, was more colourful this year, with nearly 50 participants bearing the flags of their home countries, thanks to Mennonite Central Committee's annual International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP) mid-year conference held Feb. 6 to 13 in Saskatoon. For many of the 43 young adults, biking in snowy weather was a new experience, but exhilarating. The week-long conference included educational sessions and local attractions like curling, Wanuskewin Heritage Park and spending time at Shekinah Retreat Centre. The participants also organized an international worship festival on Feb. 10 at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, which displayed cultural dress and dance.

God at work through IVEPers

Snapshots



David Hadiyanto, left, an IVEP participant from Indonesia, has been working at Central Christian School in Kidron, Ohio, teaching information technology to high school students. Rayanne Soares, an IVEP participant from Brazil, has been spending her year in St. Catharines, Ont., working as a support staff person at the Benefit Thrift Shop.

'I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU VISITED ME' (MATTHEW 25:36)

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Never a waste of time

BY ERIC OLFERT

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

Jan. 4 was a good, complete day. In the morning, I had occasion to browse the latest *Canadian Mennonite* online. In so doing, I discovered and resonated strongly with Sean East's Viewpoint article, "Asking the right questions." In a concise, gentle and compelling way, he asks, "What if the question we should be asking isn't how we can help people to find and come to us, but how we as communities of faith can go and find them?"

That evening I and two others drove from Saskatoon to Prince Albert, Sask., to attend Mike Foley's funeral at Grace Mennonite Church. Mike died in December of an apparent heart attack at

with the then new Person to Person (P2P) program to meet with an outside visitor once a month. He identified that point as the beginning of improvement in a life that, until then, had been all downhill. He visited first with Helmut Isaac, who drove regularly to Prince Albert with a group from Glenbush, Sask. When a transfer for programming interrupted that connection for a time, he began visiting with Len and Betty Anne Bushman for 20 years, still through P2P.

When Mike became eligible for parole in 2003, he became part of the Prince Albert Circle of Support and Accountability (CoSA), run by P2P. This

Grace Mennonite Church and formed many warm friendships in the congregation. Mike was passionate about his faith and spent hours in prayer, meditation and reading.

The theme I came away with from Mike's funeral was that of the transforming power of community and family. From a desperate, frightened and bullied youth unable to trust, Mike had grown into a healthy man with many friends, with his major life goals reached and a good life, both physical and spiritual. It was in the context of his P2P/CoSA community that Mike found this healing.

I'm guessing that about half of the 100 or so present at the funeral were Grace Mennonite Church members. The rest were a wide variety of Mike's friends, from his parole officer to former employers and fellow employees from many businesses. His whole CoSA family was there, although none of his biological family was able to attend. His various P2P visitors were there. Even the realtor

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAN JOHNSON



age 50. As we heard in the eulogy, Mike's was a hard life. Growing up in Vancouver, he was one of those children who didn't quite fit, who was bullied and abused, who couldn't trust enough to make friends.

His rock was his mother, whom he remembered as very gentle, soft-spoken and safe. Her death when he was 15 left him feeling completely alone and cast out into a cold, unfriendly and dangerous world; soon drugs became his alternate refuge. Living under bridges, his life became more and more violent until he found himself, still a young man, doing a life sentence in the Prince Albert penitentiary.

Some 30 years ago, Mike signed up

CoSA group meets monthly and often connects at other times for coffee and projects. It becomes community and family—and even church—not only for the "core members" like Mike, but for all its members. Mike blossomed in the context of this community.

Mike was able to hold a series of minimum-wage jobs and, amazingly, he was able to save a substantial amount of money. His dreams were to own a home, have a cat and tend his own garden. Several years ago, with guidance from his P2P family, Mike bought a small house on a large unkempt lot. A few days after moving into his new home, Mike got his cat Misty from the humane society, and it wasn't long until his garden was one of the loveliest flower beds in the city. His family worked with him to reshingle his roof and make other home repairs.

Mike became a baptized member of

A few days after moving into his new home, Mike got his cat Misty from the humane society, and it wasn't long until his garden was one of the loveliest flower beds in the city.

who sold him the house that Mike always boasted was "so big"—actually less than 56 square metres—was there, commenting that he had never sold a house to anyone more excited than Mike. The nearby Tim Horton's franchise, where Mike worked at the time of his death, was well represented; it also supplied the coffee, doughnuts and muffins for the after-funeral lunch.

For me, the day got its wrap-around when Orville Andres, the founder of P2P in Prince Albert, got up to reminisce: "Thirty-five years ago, when my wife and I gathered the courage to begin this work, we were accosted by a fellow pastor here in the city. 'What are you thinking?' he asked us. 'This ministry will never add to the numbers in your congregation. It is a waste of your time!' . . . Just look around you," Orville went on, "and tell me if it was a waste of our time!" ❧

'I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU VISITED ME' (MATTHEW 25:36)

PERSONAL REFLECTION

What to do when a friend is charged?

BY JOHN LONGHURST

What do you do when a friend is accused of a crime? And what if that crime is creating and disseminating child pornography?



cope spiritually, emotionally and psychologically when a loved one commits a crime.

When it comes to support for families of people accused or convicted of crimes, "there isn't much available," says Joan Carolyn, director of Circles of Support and Accountability, a church-supported program that helps sex offenders re-integrate into society.

A few services exist, she says, but they are "usually parts of other programs, a subsection of working with offenders."

The result, she says, is that families of the accused or offenders are on their own, struggling to find ways to support their loved one but still take the crime seriously.

Glenn Morison, who directs Open Circle, another church-supported program that provides support for offend-

That's what's happened to me. Before Christmas, a friend was arrested and charged with that crime. The news came as a shock. My friend has been involved with his national church body and is also involved in his local church. Although he lives in another province, and we don't see each other very often, I have always admired his skills and abilities, and appreciated our conversations.

But now he faces very serious charges . . . and I'm conflicted. He is, of course, innocent until proven guilty. But if it's true, how can I not be repulsed by what he is accused of doing? On the other hand, however, I want to reach out, to be

I want to reach out, to be of support in some way—to let him know that I still value our friendship.

of support in some way—to let him know that I still value our friendship.

But if I do that, will people think I don't take the crime of child pornography seriously? Will I be judged for wanting to still be his friend? Worse, would I be considered guilty by association? And what about my friend's wife and children? How do they feel? Are they getting the support they need?

It was while pondering this that I realized that crime involves more than just the offender, the victim and the victim's family and friends; it happens to the offender's family and friends, too. The difference is that, while there are services and supports for victims and their families, there isn't much to help people

ers, agrees. "There's a giant need" for this kind of support, he says, adding that people who are related to an offender often fear they will be "painted with the same brush." Some informal efforts have been started in Manitoba to help offenders' families, he says, but they haven't continued. If such a program could be launched, "I can't help but think it would be valuable," he says.

One person who knows only too well what it's like to go through this kind of hell is Canadian Shannon Moroney. Her then-husband, Jason Staples, was arrested in 2005 for sexually assaulting two women.

Dealing with the shock of her husband's crime was hard enough, she says, but she also had to deal with people who

wondered why she didn't see "any signs of the brutality that was to come, but the fact is that there were no signs. I couldn't have known."

Following her husband's arrest, Moroney says she was on her own, "frequently chosen as the target of accusations, judgment and blame. I even lost my job. Police victims' services turned me away. Upon learning that I had visited Jason, some people demanded to know what was wrong with me." Were it not for the "compassionate support of my family and other friends, I wouldn't have survived," she says.

Moroney says of her experience, "Families of offenders face an uphill battle to overcome the stigma of guilt-by-association and to regain control of their lives after their loved one has committed a crime. At times, I felt so vulnerable and desperate that I wished I could trade places with Jason—that I could have 24 hours a day in solitude, a place to think

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAN JOHNSON



and three meals a day delivered to me—instead of having to mop up the disaster he had left behind."

Today, Moroney is remarried and promotes restorative justice as a way to deal with crime, including crime done by a loved one. Through it all, she says she has found "the peace offered by forgiveness," as she faces the "harmful effects of losing so many hopes and dreams to crime."

As for my friend's family, I pray that they will find the support they need during this difficult time. I will pray for those victimized by child pornography. And I will pray for my accused friend, too. ✎

Republished from the Jan. 12 Winnipeg Free Press with the author's permission.

GOD AT WORK IN US

'Stayed on thee'

Mennonite Church Manitoba website posts devotionals

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG

Bill Block has more than 1,300 sermons that sit in his bottom filing cabinet drawer, evidence of his many years of working for the Mennonite church as a pastor, chaplain and conference minister.

Although retired from active church work, Block's desire to nurture the soul has not retired.

He says he has been drawn to writing devotional articles that offer "something more theological about the teachings of Christian faith, something that would touch on and invite thought. It's much of a



Block

sideline. Sometimes I leave it for a long period of time," he adds, but he is always drawn back to devotional writing.

When Darryl Neustaedter Barg, associate director of communications for Mennonite Church Manitoba, learned from Block that he was quietly creating devotional pieces, but with

no clear goal to publishing them, he began to think of ways they could be shared.

"I was amazed that he was doing this simply because he felt moved to," says Neustaedter Barg. "This is creative and

remarkable."

It took several years for MC Manitoba to develop a website that is more functional and user-friendly, but last summer Neustaedter Barg was able to begin posting Block's devotionals under the title 'Stayed on thee' on a regular bi-weekly basis at the area church's website: mennochurch.mb.ca/category/resources/stayed-on-thee/.


Block hopes that the material will encourage thought and meditation on the Christian faith. "I follow a bit of a systematic theological approach, rather than a biblical theological approach," he explains. "I use the themes of Christian faith: trinity, human sin, creation, salvation, truth, discipleship."

Writing from an Anabaptist Mennonite perspective, Block imagines a readership that is like "many of the parishioners I've had, who may not have studied at a Bible college but are interested in thinking about their faith. I also hope I can reach young adults."


However, his devotional writing didn't start with an audience in mind. "Through writing I am able to clarify my own thinking," he says. Through his years of writing and self-study, Block has sharpened his own understanding of his faith. "I have a master grid, 'God's Order,' that frames my theology and I try to work that into these writings," he says.


"Essentially, God is first and most important in all of life," Block says. "Then humankind is next and we are all equal in the sight of God. That is perhaps the hardest lesson to learn. Thirdly is the created order. Whenever this order is tilted, sin and problems result. This is what guides me ethically. Does it keep God above all else? Does it keep creation below humanity?"

Providing care for his wife Delores has been Block's main focus in retirement. Translation projects and woodworking are retirement sidelines, but always he is drawn back to feeding the soul, whether by meditating on each word of the Lord's Prayer during wakeful hours at night or shaping a devotional that will encourage his and others' faith. ❧



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ARTBEAT

MWC beefing up online presence

New website and publication changes are part of communications plan for 2013

Mennonite World Conference
BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

Last year, the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) General Council approved a global communication strategy calling for changes in the reach, frequency, form and content of the organization's communications.

Undergirding the new plan is the goal of seeking to connect as many people as possible across cultures within the global Anabaptist family. The guiding conviction is that the global connections facilitated through MWC help individuals and churches gain a fuller understanding of God and equip them for joining God's redemptive work in the world.

Central to the strategy is a new website—mwc-cmm.org—which was launched early last November. Users can switch between English, Spanish and French, and most content is available in all three languages. The site includes stories and photos about churches and people from the global Anabaptist community of faith, and can also be viewed on mobile devices.

The site also highlights the work of MWC's four commissions—Deacons, Faith and Life, Mission and Peace—and its related networks, such as the Young Anabaptists.

A second part of the strategy is an increased use of electronic communication. A new position called MWC web communications worker has been created to ensure that the website is up to date and

user friendly. Filling this role is Kristina Toews of Abbotsford, B.C. The MWC position will be the main part of her three-year assignment as a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) volunteer in Bogota, Colombia, where both MWC and MCC have offices in the same building.

As web communications worker, Toews will be part of the MWC communication team headed by Ron Rempel of Waterloo, Ont. She will manage web content, write and repurpose content for the web, serve as editor of a monthly e-alert, and provide leadership for social media initiatives. She will also be involved in writing and overall communication planning.

Since 2009, Toews has been the North American representative on the MWC Young Anabaptists Committee that she also chairs. Toews has served as a youth worker on the pastoral staff of Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, since 2007.

"I'm very excited to serve with MWC and MCC in this position," says Toews. "I have been blessed and learned so much from the global Anabaptist family, and I'm eager to develop more relationships in the global church. I'm also looking forward to



Toews

improving my Spanish and being a part of the local church in Bogota."

The third part of the strategy builds on the long history of MWC communication through its quarterly magazine, *Courier/Correo/Courrier*. For more than 20 years, the magazine has carried a mix of longer feature and inspirational articles, as well as a digest of news. The plan calls for a change in the frequency and timeliness of publication.

Beginning this year, *Courier/Correo/Courrier* will be published every other month as a four-page newsletter. With the subtitle "News/Noticias/Nouvelles," the newsletter will include short profiles of people and churches, prayer requests, most recent news and other timely updates. Twice a year, the newsletter will become one section in a 16- to 24-page magazine.

The magazine will also carry the name *Courier/Correo/Courrier* and will include inspirational articles, study and teaching documents, and longer features that are not time-sensitive. Both the newsletter and the magazine will be published in English, Spanish and French, and will be available electronically or in print form.

Taking on the role of editor and writer for MWC is Devin Manzullo-Thomas of Harrisburg, Pa. He has an undergraduate degree in English from Messiah College, Grantham, Pa., and graduated recently with a master of arts degree in history from Temple University.

"In a world increasingly plagued by intolerance, intransigence and lack of understanding, MWC plays a crucial role in nurturing international Anabaptist solidarity," says Manzullo-Thomas.

Since 2009, he has served the Brethren in Christ Church U.S. as an associate for communication and congregational relations.

In his role as editor, Manzullo-Thomas succeeds Canadian Byron Rempel-Burkholder, who served part-time as editor of *Courier/Correo/Courrier* for its 2011 and 2012 issues. ❧



Manzullo-Thomas

'I have been blessed and learned so much from the global Anabaptist family, and I'm eager to develop more relationships in the global church.'

(Kristina Toews)

Take a break

New book by pastor April Yamasaki invites pausing for spiritual refreshment

MennoMedia

If you think spiritual disciplines are all about working hard and denying yourself pleasure, think again.

Just in time for Lent, April Yamasaki has written a new book, *Sacred Pauses: Spiritual Practices for Personal Renewal*. In it she describes spiritual disciplines as spiritual practices that can refresh and delight, including “having fun” or “making music.”

Yamasaki, lead pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C., also blogs on spiritual practice, faith and life at aprilymasaki.com.

“I find that most people recognize the need to pause even if they think they can’t do it,” says Yamasaki. “Comments like, ‘I really do need a break, but how can I?’ and, ‘I so need a vacation,’ express a longing for something more and deeper than their daily routines.”

Her own current favourite sacred pause is simply becoming quiet. “I turn away

from the computer, shut off the TV, set aside my own busy thoughts and simply become quiet in God’s presence,” explains Yamasaki. “Sometimes simply becoming quiet is enough, and sometimes it’s a prelude to prayer or writing in my journal or some other practice.”

While spiritual discipline, spiritual exercise and spiritual practice are often used to mean the same thing, Yamasaki prefers to speak of spiritual practice, because “‘practice’ reminds me that I am still learning.” She notes that practices may take some discipline or focus, but they can also be a delight. “We aren’t forced to do any of these things as some kind of punishment,” she points out. “It’s not that kind of discipline.”

Yamasaki says her book is “for all those seeking rest and personal renewal, whether or not they are already familiar with spiritual practice, whether or not they think of themselves as spiritual, and whether or

not they feel they are disciplined. I hope readers will feel free to experiment and be refreshed as they read the book on their own or use it with a group.”

Sacred Pauses includes personal stories and many scriptural allusions with references. There are also journal prompts and suggested practices. While the chapters build on one another, each chapter also stands on its own. Readers can start with whatever spiritual practice might draw them in.

Yamasaki has published numerous articles and several books, including *Remember Lot’s Wife and Other Unnamed Women of the Bible* (FaithQuest), and *Making Disciples: A Manual for Baptism and Church Membership* (Faith & Life Press). She has a bachelor of arts degree from the University of British Columbia, and a master’s degree in Christian studies from Regent College, Vancouver. She has taught college-level courses in Bible and English, adult enrichment courses on prayer and journalling, and seminars and retreats on Christian living.

A third-generation Canadian of Chinese descent, Yamasaki was born and raised in Vancouver and lives in Abbotsford with her husband Gary, who teaches biblical studies at Columbia Bible College. ☼

PHOTO BY ANGELIKA DAWSON



Author April Yamasaki signs copies of her new book, Sacred Pauses, at a book launch at House of James, Abbotsford, B.C., on Feb. 4.



Schola Magdalena, led by Stephanie Martin, director of Toronto's Pax Christi Chorale, third from left, brought sacred medieval and modern music to Uptown Waterloo's Jazz Room bar on Feb. 7.

Sacred music in a secular place?

Stephanie Martin brings Schola Magdalena to the Jazz Room

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

Medieval music and a pub bring Orff's *Carmina Burana* to mind, as the poems Orff used are bawdy, irreverent and satirical.

Stephanie Martin's Schola Magdalena, on the other hand, sang spiritual, reverent and sacred songs from the same time period in Uptown Waterloo's Jazz Room bar on Feb. 7, as well as compositions by Martin herself and two premieres of 21st-century music.

Martin is best known as the director of Pax Christi Chorale, a.k.a. "Toronto's Mennonite Choir," as well as being the daughter of Abner Martin, founder of Waterloo Region's Menno Singers. Schola Magdalena grew up at St. Mary Magdalene, an Anglo-catholic Anglican church in Toronto, where Martin served as music director until last year.

The audience at the Jazz Room was made up of regular subscribers to Numus (New Music Society) and students from Wilfrid Laurier University, as well as many

of Martin's family and friends from local Mennonite congregations.

Abner felt the acoustics in the pub were not as good as St. Mary Magdalene's and the space did not allow for as much singing while processing, but the audience received the music enthusiastically, especially the premieres of plainchant music by Emily Walker and Meghan Bunce.

Bunce's piece was a setting of a prayer by Abdu'l-Baha, founder of the Baha'i. All the words were in Latin, except Bunce's Arabic text, so the audience was largely there for the experience of the music, mostly a cappella voices occasionally supported by Ben Grossman on hurdy gurdy and percussion.

The six voices of Schola Magdalena supplied a deeply spiritual, peaceful and uplifting evening of music in a rather different place. Martin spoke of it as music for a feast of food and drink, alluding to communion. ☞

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MUSICAL REFLECTION

A premiere 272 years in the making

BY PETER NIKIFORUK

On March 23, Menno Singers, joined by Nota Bene Baroque, will present J. S. Bach's *Mass in G minor*, BWV 235, along with the North American premiere of Jan Dismas Zelenka's 1741 *Missa Omnium Sanctorum*, ZWV 21, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, Ont., at 8 p.m. Soloists are Erin Bardua, soprano; Amanda Wilhelm, mezzo-soprano; Christopher Fischer, tenor; and Kirk Lackenbauer, bass.

This concert had its genesis 17 years ago. In 1996, I had the privilege of making the first of three tours to Central Europe with Howard Dyck and Consort Caritatis. On all three of these trips, Prague was our port of entry and exit, with ample free time for exploring. As an economy newly freed from the fetters of the former Soviet Union, Czech culture was relatively unknown to us, particularly the large musical heritage that predates Dvorak and Smetana.

Czech baroque and early classical composers, let alone their music, were virtually unknown to North Americans, and to some extent still remain so. These

include names such as Ryba, Brixi, Planicky, Michna and Zelenka, none of whom I knew and all of whom were being recorded in the early 1990s by very fine Czech professional musicians.

Over the three trips, I came back with quite a collection of CDs and it became a dream of mine to be able to present some of this exceptionally attractive music at home in Canada. Until this year, finances, practicality and timing always seemed to get in the way.

Of all of these Czech composers, Zelenka is probably the best known, partly because he spent more than 30 years at the court of the Elector of Saxony in Dresden, Germany. Ironically, his music, particularly in print, is still relatively hard to come by, due to the fact that he worked for the Elector of Saxony. The Saxon royal family at the time was very possessive of its composers and, even though Zelenka was both poorly treated and poorly paid, upon his death his scores were locked up in the court library as the personal possessions of the Elector, and access was virtually impossible.

Over time, with no dissemination and

changing fashion, Zelenka, like many composers, faded from view. During the Second World War, with the fire-bombing of Dresden, it was feared that all of the manuscripts were lost. Fortunately, they had been moved for safekeeping and were rediscovered in the 1960s. Since that time, they have slowly started appearing in print and many of his smaller works are now quite easily obtainable.

Last year, as we were planning the current Menno Singers season, the time seemed ripe to pursue my project of bringing Zelenka to Kitchener. Pairing him with his contemporary and friend, Johann Sebastian Bach, seemed an obvious match, as Bach thought highly of his skills as a composer and had some of his scores in his personal library.

As I began researching performances of ZWV 21 for the choir to listen to, it became clear to me that no one has performed the work in North America.

Stylistically, in this work Zelenka is much more of the rococo style than Bach ever was, and utterly individual as a composer. His string writing is idiomatic and exciting, and he clearly knew his way around a choir as well. Like Bach, he had a strong interest in counterpoint and the learned side of composing. At the same time, he was open to influence from more fashionable composers and developed a varied vocabulary that he uses to great effect throughout the *Missa*.

BWV 235, composed in the late 1730s, is one of Bach's four surviving Lutheran masses and almost exactly contemporary with Zelenka's work. This short form of the mass, Kyrie and Gloria only, had precedence in the first version of the *Mass in B minor*, which also only contained these texts.

And finally, in his later years, Bach was regularly adapting cantata movements into more universal forms and language, such as the *Latin Mass*, as a way of preserving their use outside of the narrow confines of the liturgical calendar. The *Mass in G minor* makes use of pre-existing cantata movements from Cantatas 102, 72 and 187. ♫

Peter Nikiforuk is artistic director of the Menno Singers.

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FOCUS ON CAMPS

VIEWPOINT

Why invest in camping?

BY TINA WHEATON

HIDDEN ACRES MENNONITE CAMP

As Hidden Acres prepared to introduce and inform our many supporters about our new Camper Subsidy Fund at our 50th anniversary benefit concert I had a few butterflies in my stomach.

Would people get it? Would our supporters understand why it is so important that any camper who wishes to go to camp should not be denied because of finances? Would they realize what one week away at camp can mean for a low-income single mother and her family? Would they be moved to contribute, or would it flop?

Fortunately they did get it, contributing \$15,000 towards the fund that evening. However, this made me reflect on why camp is so important. Why, when there are thousands of causes to contribute to, should camps make the cut? Here are just a few reasons why we know that a camp experience can make a real difference:

Kids' reasons

1. **YOU CAN** run around cheering and yelling with your face painted and no one will look at you funny.
2. **YOU WILL** meet a whole cabin of new friends
3. **YOU CAN** eat your pudding without a spoon. (Shhh . . . Don't tell your parents).
4. **YOU WILL** leave with lots of songs that will be stuck in your head for the rest of the year!
5. **NOTHING BEATS** hitting a bulls-eye in archery, reaching the top of the climbing wall or finishing the perfect "gimp" bracelet.

On a more serious note

1. **RISK-TAKING.** **CAMPERS** will learn to step outside of their comfort zone in a safe environment and be encouraged to

grow into their potential.

2. **CAMPERS ARE** given a chance to grow in their faith, develop socially and experience independence in a supportive space.

3. **CAMPERS HAVE** the opportunity to build relationships with positive young-adult role models.

4. **BEING ACTIVE.** After a whole day of climbing, canoeing, sports, games, swimming and more, campers realize how much fun it is to be outdoors and active!

5. **TAKING A** break from technology . . . something we could all use. Camp is a great time to unplug ourselves and connect with nature.

How churches and individuals can help

1. **CHURCHES CAN** consider providing subsidies to campers in their congregation and providing financial support to staff who choose to work at a Christian camp, instead of taking a higher-paying job elsewhere.

2. **CONSIDER MAKING** a donation towards camper subsidies at a camp in your province.

3. **ENCOURAGE THE** children and youth in your life to give camp a try!

4. **ENCOURAGE YOUTH** and young adults to work or serve at Christian camps and recognize the valuable role this experience can play in leadership development.

5. **PRAY FOR** the camp ministries in your area.

One particular e-mail we received after last summer has really stuck with me. Matthew, who attended our Supported Young Adults Camp thanks to a camper subsidy, reflected on his experience to his grandmother: "He had nothing negative

HIDDEN ACRES MENNONITE CAMP PHOTO



I-J Bellamy climbs Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp's rock wall.

to say about camp at all. He thought the leaders were great and he said, "They all like me!"

All of the points listed above boil down to Matthew's statement that camp is a place to be liked, to experience God's love and to belong. That is why it is so important. ❧

Tina Wheaton is Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp's assistant director.

CAMPING REFLECTION

Finding God in the 'thin places'

BY DAVE ERB

SILVER LAKE MENNONITE CAMP

“I’m a better person when I get home from camp.”

The quote was recently shared with me by Reed’s father. I was struck by this statement and have pondered it, turned it around in my mind, and compared it to my own experience with Silver Lake, in an attempt to understand and explain it. Why is it that so many campers and counsellors report coming away from camp with a deeper sense of being grounded and connected to themselves, their peers and to God?

Last summer, David Csinos, an author, speaker, practical theologian, researcher of children’s spirituality and former children’s pastor, joined the staff during orientation to discuss issues of spirituality and the emerging church. He explored

the Celtic notion of “thin places,” where the space between us and God is thinner. For most people, these thin places are found in nature.

If you look for some biblical roots of this notion, they aren’t obvious or easy to find. The contemporary experience of a world divided up into certain locales, some of which are easier than others to connect with God from, is likely far from what God had in mind with the creation story in the book of Genesis.

Eden, representing the entire created world, was a thin place. God was everywhere: in the trees, the air, the earth and the water. If it’s true that most people find their thin place in nature, then as we’ve divided and developed Eden is it any wonder people have lost their faith, their connectedness to God?

For most of us, it’s difficult to find thin places when the computer monitor is always on, an endless string of sticky notes are pasted across the desk, the calendar is full, the window looks out on a few trees and plenty of concrete, and the weather is far from any historical norm. Like Adam and Eve, we’ve corrupted Eden and, in doing so, have limited or, at the very least, hindered our connectedness with God.

So let’s flip this around. Perhaps we should not think of thin places in a limited way to describe just a few of those locales where God is nearer to us. Rather, let’s consider what it would be like to take a “thin place” approach to all of life.

If we were to become less thick, we might be able to perceive God’s presence not only in a few places, but in all of life. Perhaps this is what Reed and others experience at camp. Perhaps camp is a thin place where they can find God in the trees of the Enchanted Forest and the

SILVER LAKE MENNONITE CAMP PHOTOS



Sailing is a popular activity at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp.

algae at the frog pond, in the tastiness of a wild raspberry, or in the harmony of a song at the campfire.

Specifically, perhaps camp is a place where Reed can be more truly Reed, free from busy schedules, away from concrete—except the basketball court—and disconnected from TVs, computers, cell phones and other electronic devices. At camp we disconnect from the material world and reconnect to the spiritual world, and in doing so connect more easily to God.

Thin places are good! Camp is a thin place to certain people for certain reasons. Perhaps if we take time to consider what makes certain places thin, we will be inspired to seek out and create more thin places for us and our children where, like Reed, we can all be better people. ❧

Originally published in the Fall 2012 edition of Silver Lake Mennonite Camp’s ‘Woodbox Newsletter.’ ❧



Nathan Warkentin leads a lakeside worship service at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp.

FOCUS ON CAMPS



'Mudfest' is a popular activity at Glenbrook Day Camp.

'Camp with a purpose' at Willowgrove

By ERIC MUSSELMAN

Willowgrove

As a parent, you know that for your son or daughter to be successful in life they need to be well rounded. They need to be strong academically, but also socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually. At Willowgrove, your child will discover that some of life's greatest lessons are learned in unexpected places. By offering two unique summer camp programs, Willowgrove offers choices to suit the learning needs of most children.

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Three hours northeast, near beautiful Bancroft, Willowgrove's 107-hectare Fraser Lake Camp blends recreational

and traditional overnight camp activities, and includes mature pine and deciduous forests, a large clean lake, spacious fields, hiking trails, playing areas, a climbing wall and plenty of local wildlife.

Parents appreciate that both camp

programs are delivered on beautiful, natural sites that are the perfect setting for teaching life lessons based on Christian values like independence, teamwork, conflict resolution, leadership, responsibility and social justice. "Camping with a purpose" has been the motto and motivation of the camp programs for many years, and parents often report noticing increased levels of maturity and responsibility when their campers return home.

Perhaps the best description of the value of Willowgrove's Glenbrook Day Camp and Fraser Lake Camp comes from our older campers who return year after year. "Camp creates people who are amazingly supportive, positive and creative, and puts them [back] into the world, ready to work with whatever is thrown at them," says one former Fraser Lake camper who is now a summer staff member.

At both Willowgrove camps, programs and extra support are available for children with a wide range of special needs, as they are integrated into the daily activities of the camp community.

Willowgrove has offered quality education, camping and recreation programs for many thousands of children since 1968. Visit willowgrove.ca for full program details. ❧

Eric Musselman is camp director of Willowgrove.

WILLOWGROVE PHOTOS



Paulo 'blobs' his friend off the water trampoline at Fraser Lake Camp.

FOCUS ON CAMPS

Camp Squeah offers indigenous education

Program may be added to camp's summer activities

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
HOPE, B.C.

With its very name meaning “place of refuge” in the local Salish dialect and its location on Sto:lo territory, Camp Squeah has always felt an innate connection with first nations. A new initiative at the camp is exploring ways to make greater connections with local indigenous people.

Although Camp Squeah is busy in summer months with traditional church camps, the rest of the year it relies on bookings from school and community groups to keep the camp going. A number of activities, such as archery and rope climbing, are offered under “outdoor education” for

these groups.

Recently, program director Tim Larson had been thinking about ways to expand and strengthen the first nations connection with a different spin on outdoor education. “I feel strongly my own sense of grief over the past/current destruction of culture of those who preceded us here, and feel it’s a good and godly thing to get to know others and to become vulnerable with others, to build healthy relationships and dialogue,” he says.

Larson contacted Harvey Robinson, chief of the Klemtu First Nation, who lives in Hope, to see if he would be interested in

educational programs at Squeah. Robinson was keenly interested and very willing to share with young people at Squeah his love of his people’s traditional culture and answer their questions.

“Harvey was great with the children and was excited to share his stories and culture,” reports Larson. “He managed to encourage a few children to dress in traditional native clothing and even a few were willing to sing and dance with him.” Additionally, Robinson brought along six large salmon that the Squeah kitchen staff barbecued and served to the whole school group of more than a hundred people.

Thus far, the first nations culture option has only been offered to school groups that come during the school year, and camp staff hope there will be more groups that take up the program in the coming months. “Our initial feedback indicates it’s a positive thing,” says camp director Rob Tiessen. “We may look into the possibility of expanding into the summer program.”

Camp staff hope that offering such programs to school groups will continue to enrich their lives and open their hearts, so that relationships with first nations people might grow and be enriched.

Adds Larson, “I hope, too, that our understanding and respect as staff from Squeah would also grow for each other and that, by association, our Mennonite folks might be blessed by these relationships.”

Mennonite Church B.C. indigenous relations coordinator Brander McDonald affirms the close relationship with indigenous people at camp. “The directors and leadership of Squeah are very aware of their neighbours and the need to continue to grow this relationship,” he says. “They have bought into the deep respect for relationship-building that our indigenous neighbours understand as a strong cultural value, and the main way to heal and to do the work of reconciliation. Squeah knows and holds this value.”

A new initiative at the camp is exploring ways to make greater connections with local indigenous people.



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All this and more

Why young musicians love music camp

By INGRID LOEPP THIESSEN

Ontario Mennonite Music Camp
WATERLOO, ONT.

“This will be my last year!” say the 16-year-olds, sadly bemoaning the fact that after this summer they will be too old for Ontario Mennonite Music Camp, held each summer at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

Teens love this camp, they come year after year to get their fill of singing, playing, acting and collaborating around music. It’s the highlight of the summer for musically minded youth looking for ways to hone their skills and develop new musical expertise.

On the last night of camp, when the musical is finished, the applause has faded, signatures have been gathered, photos taken, and the parents have started looking at their watches thinking about the length of the drive home and all the junk that still needs to be loaded up, then the tears will flow.

Why do kids love music camp so much?

Is it the incredible fun of working with other teens to create a really great closing show in just two weeks? Definitely! In recent years, the 40 campers and their eight leaders have managed to stage versions of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Godspell*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and a world premiere of a musical about recycling.

Is it the mentoring that happens around the campfire and in the music sessions? Absolutely!

Is it the master classes in voice, piano, strings, band and guitar? Yes, master classes suit the needs of beginners and advanced musicians.

Is it the talks with counsellors who listen and want to talk about all the pressing issues of life? Yes.

Is it the permission to practise your instrument in the middle of the summer for several hours a day? Actually, yes!

Is it the holy moment when one can sense the nearness of God as the music floats out over the Grebel chapel? Absolutely yes!

Is it the sincerity of prayer as your new friends gather to share and talk? Yes!

Why do kids love music camp so much?

Or is the wonderful sense of belonging and community that develops and grows, demanding reunions throughout the year? Of course.

Actually, it’s a combination of all of these things and more. This has been the legacy of the camp since 1983. Over

the years many things have changed, but basics have not. From the beginning until now we have wanted to encourage and train young musicians from Mennonite and other churches and backgrounds to sing and play the songs of our faith with passion. We sing old songs, tried and true for generations. We sing new songs, just written or in process, alive for this generation. We grow in musical skill, we grow in faith.

“This will be my first year!” say the new young campers, excited about their two weeks away at Ontario Mennonite Music Camp. It’s going to be a great year. We are celebrating 30 years of camp music-making this summer. Be part of the fun!

Anniversary reunion event

The Ontario Mennonite Music Camp is holding a reunion on Aug. 18 at Conrad Grebel University College. All previous campers are encouraged to visit uwaterloo.ca/grebel/campers/ontario-mennonite-music-camp and register for the event. ☘



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COVER STORY REFLECTION

In a wilderness of doubt

BY J.D. DUECKMAN

SPECIAL TO YOUNG VOICES

PHOTO BY J.D. DUECKMAN



University of British Columbia astrophysicist Don Wiebe and Tim Froese, associate pastor of Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, share a 'Science: Meet Faith' moment together at the Mennonite Church B.C. young adult retreat last month at Camp Squeah.

Doubt is common to everyone, but it seems to be especially so for young adults, since we are the ones who are starting our own independent lives and have uncertainties about our future, ourselves, our faith, and so on.

Given that, the theme at the Mennonite Church B.C. young adult retreat, "I doubt it," was an intriguing draw for the nearly 50 young adults from across the Fraser Valley who came to Camp Squeah in Hope from Feb. 8 to 10 with Tim Froese, associate pastor of Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver.

The first night was free time for us mingle and to get to know each other. Games and snacks were shared in the main dining area, while others talked or read by the fire.

Our first session on Feb. 9, "Truth in the midst of contradictions," was led by John Gifford. He looked at both the doubts and truths that come from Scripture. We had several small-group discussions during which we could share the doubts that we experienced from the Bible, such as why God would call people to war in the Old Testament and yet Jesus taught love for enemies in the New Testament. It was remarkably powerful to see how others shared similar doubts that I hold myself.

Gifford highlighted how much of Scripture depends on context, and raised an interesting point: While we consider history as "just the facts," the Israelites wrote their history from eyewitness accounts, and for a purpose, since those were important for storytelling.

The afternoon was left as free time. Many played games or socialized indoors. Several people, including myself, went on hikes on the mountain trails behind Squeah. (*See front cover.*)

The evening's session was led by Chris Lenshyn from Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford. He focused on a fundamental question of doubt: "Why?"

He led with the story of Doubting Thomas, but followed with one which was closer to home: The story of how his wife's cousin had been murdered in 1984 and the struggle that the victim's family had gone through. They had grappled with doubt for more than 20 years, not knowing the "who" or the "why" of the murder. It was only after they had come to peace with it that the police announced they had cracked the case and found the man responsible, forcing them to face the experience all over again.

Lenshyn showed a video of his wife's aunt, Wilma Derksen, describing her experience, and the 15 things she learned to let go of over the course of the ordeal, including fear, grief and the need to know.

'If religion comes from faith, and faith comes from me, then that's a problem, since there is no objective, independent way to verify that.'
(Don Wiebe, UBC astrophysicist)

She also talked about how she and her family made the conscious choice to put love first and justice second, a profound but apparently liberating choice.

The final session, held on Feb. 10, was led by University of British Columbia astrophysicist Don Wiebe, and was entitled “Science: Meet Faith.” This was a talk I was especially curious about, since Wiebe is both a physicist and a Christian.

He showed a short video, *Inventory of the Invisible*, which brilliantly highlighted how much more there is that we don’t know than what we do know, despite centuries of scientific effort.

He then made the curious analogy that science is like an onion. He elaborated, saying scientists like Stephen Hawking are trying to peel away this onion layer by layer in order to get to the centre, to find what’s really going on at the core. But Wiebe felt it was the opposite: We are at

the centre of the onion, trying to peel away the inner layers to find our way out, but each new layer is bigger than the last one.

On science and religion, he posited, “If religion comes from faith, and faith comes from me, then that’s a problem, since there is no objective, independent way to verify that. And as a scientist, how am I supposed to believe it?” But he raised the point that science has no absolutes either. It does not explain the world; it only makes models that simulate the world. So science is not free from doubt, either.

Morgan Govereau of Cedar Valley Mennonite Church, Mission, found peace in her doubts about faith and God: “What this weekend taught me most is that, even though you have doubts, God is willing to meet you there and push you forward. And I realize that he may not give you specific answers, but he will give you peace about not knowing everything.” ☸

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Now that I have seen, I am responsible

BY KAYLA DRUDGE

SPECIAL TO YOUNG VOICES

On my recent two-week visit to Palestine/Israel, I had the pleasure of meeting the renowned author and archbishop, Elias Chacour. Referring to the Israeli occupation of his homeland, Father Chacour said, “People come for a few days and they go home and write a book about it. They come for a few weeks and they go home and write an article. But people who come for a year or two go home and are silent. They are too confused.”

Here I am, writing an article . . . and I am confused.

I think it started as I stood on a roof in Bethlehem, now a sprawl of concrete boxes boxed in by concrete, and looked over the separation wall between Israel and Palestine to the red-roofed Israeli

settlements on the next hill. It was the first day of my visit, and I was meeting the wall for the first time in its most heart-breaking form. On the Palestinian side, the cold, crass concrete is spray-painted over with colourful messages and elaborate illustrations proclaiming a hope for peace, freedom and better days to come. One message read, “Now that I have seen, I am responsible.”

I wasn’t confused yet. Instead, I was angry, as though the wall’s violation of this land infringed on my own fragile belief in peace. Then the Palestinian man standing next to me spoke. “If you want to help Israel,” he said, “help end the occupation. The occupation is evil. It is hurting their reputation, not ours.” In the midst of Palestinian reality, the man on

PHOTO BY HARRY HUEBNER



Kayla Drudge with Elias Chacour, a Palestinian archbishop and author of Blood Brothers.

PHOTOS BY KAYLA DRUDGE



Bethlehem on the Palestinian side of the separation wall.



Above the old city streets of Hebron, netting catches refuse thrown by Israeli settlers out of the windows from their homes above.

the roof was not making a political claim, simply an observation.

And now, as I think back to his words from the far-removed vantage point of snow-blown Manitoba, I begin to understand why they keep coming back to me. There is an old Palestinian woman who must enter her house by climbing a ladder onto her roof; her front door opens on an Israeli settler's road and she is not allowed to use it.

Another Palestinian woman runs a small family store, surrounded by the wall on three sides. What used to be a thriving business on a busy street is now a cornered store from which the woman sells her story to tourists, making money off their pity.

Above the old city streets of Hebron, which are packed with Palestinian villagers, tarps and netting are strung. They are meant to shelter villagers from refuse thrown out of the windows of Jewish settlers living above: furniture, garbage, even bleach.

The occupation is a situation of tangible oppression in which Israel wields the power, and, as with any system of oppression, there is a patent element of evil in this reality. In a world of walls, it is natural to find oneself standing on one side of the conflict. It is easy for me to pick a side from the comfort of my Canadian home. But I am not as convinced as I once was that being pro-Palestinian is the way towards peace, that

simply picking a side—even if it seems to be the “right” one—is the best way to help the oppressed.

My brief window into the reality of Israel and Palestine reminds me that the conflict affects real lives on both sides, that this is a conflict of individuals with unique histories, not just of one political group opposed to another.

In Palestine, the face of Israel is found less in its prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, than in the 18-year-old sitting on a roof in Hebron, holding a machine gun with his finger on the trigger, obviously bored as he watches Palestinian children playing in the rusted playground below. The gun in his hands does not make him any more evil than the children he is watching. The occupation also occupies the occupier; it oppresses the oppressor as well as the oppressed. Now that is confusing.

So as I return to my life in Manitoba, far from those faces in Palestine and Israel, I often think back to the roofs of Bethlehem and Hebron with their jarring paradoxes of politics and humanity. I pray I will never forget that this conflict is made up not only of walls and history, but of roofs and real lives, too. I may remain confused, but may I not be silent. Now that I have seen, I am responsible. ❧

Kayla Drudge, 17, has been home-schooled all her life. She attends Covenant Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man.

From thesis to exhibition

Artist combines knitting and video in first solo show

BY AARON EPP

Special to Young Voices

WINNIPEG

When I interviewed her in her studio overlooking Winnipeg's historic Exchange District, artist Chantel Mierau was hard at work putting together materials for her first-ever solo exhibit. The video installation was opening in two weeks (it opened on March 1), and Mierau still had some minor video editing to do. She was also sewing sheets to project her videos onto.

"It's scary and good," Mierau said when asked how she feels about the upcoming exhibit. "It's exciting."

Titled *Homemaking*, the exhibition is in some ways the culmination of the last seven years of Mierau's art practice. After attending Canadian Mennonite University for two years, Mierau transferred to the University of Manitoba, where she earned a bachelor of fine arts degree in 2011.

The 27-year-old said that while her thesis was officially in drawing, it functioned as a multimedia program where she could explore a variety of different artistic disciplines, including knitting, which she learned when she was 18 years old. Learning to knit has influenced not only the form of her work, but also the subject matter, Mierau said, noting that she has always been interested in domesticity and Mennonite tradition.

"There's something about knitting that's really fascinating," Mierau said. "It reminds people of grandmothers, comfort and home; that's all packed into it. So as soon as you use knitting, it has those associations [with domesticity and tradition]."

Consisting of six videos, *Homemaking* weaves together imagery from weekly chores and insect

lifecycles. Mierau said these sources provide a way of exploring tradition and other ingrained habits, particularly "their ability to both provide great comfort and create great discomfort."

The work explores the theme on two levels, Mierau explained. It explores broader traditions as well as small things like the chores people repeat every day. "You do your dishes, and the next day there are more dishes to do," Mierau said. "All humans are stuck in that repetition of a chore; we're stuck in our bodies. The exhibit is about all those things."

A statement accompanying the exhibit reads, "The artist asks earnestly whether the homes and cultures we spin for ourselves are indeed homes, or if they might possibly be inescapable traps."

The parallel with insect lifestyles came about as Mierau worked with thread. She made webs of material, much the same way spiders, silk worms and moths spin webs. Plus, insects are industrious, and the theme of the exhibit has to do with doing chores.

In one video, entitled "Larva," a human hunched over in a restrictive pink knitted larva costume walks back and forth, attempting to hang laundry on a wooden structure on a warm prairie summer day.

In "Hatching," a hand struggles to break free of the cocoon of white thread that surrounds it.

And in a third video, entitled "There Were Socks," the camera pans over piles of light and dark socks as the narrator recites a reading that turns the Genesis 1 creation story into a meditation on doing

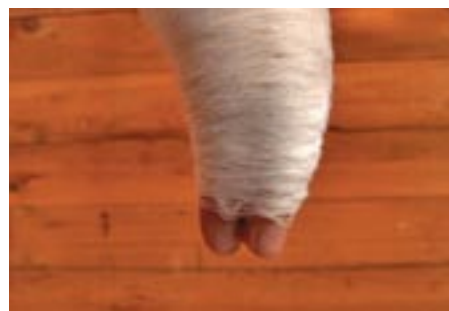
PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHANTEL MIERAU



*The six videos that make up Winnipeg artist Chantel Mierau's new video installation, *Homemaking*, explore tradition and engrained habits. In 'Wednesdaying,' a group of women get together to knit a web.*



A scene from 'Larva.'



In 'Hatching,' a hand struggles to break free of the cocoon of white thread that surrounds it.

Learning to knit has influenced not only the form of her work, but also the subject matter, Mierau said, noting that she has always been interested in domesticity and Mennonite tradition.

PHOTO BY AARON EPP



Chantel Mireau with some of the tools of her artistic trade.

the laundry.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now, the earth was formless and void, except for a pile of dirty socks," Mierau recites. "And God said, 'Let us separate the socks into lights and darks. Let the light socks be called Day, and the dark socks be called Night.' And it was so."

"Mennonites are really good at seeing the holy in the everyday and I wanted to do something that was kind of about that," said Mierau, who grew up in Langham, Sask., where she attended Zoar Mennonite Church. "It elevates doing laundry to creation story status."

The artist said her work is not explicitly


Mennonite, but a lot of it does speak to being Mennonite. "I want to make something that is relevant to me and tells people about myself and the questions I have about the world: 'What should we do while we're here?' 'How should we spend our time?' 'What sort of lifestyles should we lead?'"

So what impact would Mierau like *Homemaking* to have on its audience? "I hope they feel it has something to do with them," she said. "That's all I can ask for, really."

Homemaking is on display at Winnipeg's *aceartinc.* gallery until April 5. For more information, visit chantelmierau.com. ☼

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Calendar

British Columbia

March 23: Fundraiser for humanitarian relief in Syria, at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, at 7 p.m. Desserts and refreshments will be served.

March 23,24: Lenten vespers with Abendmusik Choir at 8 p.m.; (23) at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford; (24) Knox United Church, Vancouver. Offering for Menno Simons Centre.

March 28: Columbia Bible College campus view day.

March 28,29: Good Friday Blues services at the House of James, Abbotsford, featuring the Good Friday Blues Band, at 7:30 p.m. both evenings. For more information, visit goodfridayblues.wordpress.com. Proceeds to the Cyrus Centre.

Apr. 12-14: Youth Jr. Impact retreat at Camp Squeah.

Alberta

March 22-23: Mennonite Church Alberta AGM at Menno Simons School, Calgary. Guest speaker: Cheryl Pauls, CMU president.

April 27: Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta annual general meeting and conference, at First Mennonite Church, Calgary, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Theme: "Historical roots of mutual aid as practised among Mennonites." Speakers, panel discussion, exhibits and lunch. To register (by April 20), call 403-250-1121 or e-mail mhsa@mennonitehistory.org.

Saskatchewan

March 17: RJC Guys & Pies fundraising

event.

April 13: A Buncha Guys spring concert, at Mayfair United Church, Saskatoon, at 7:30 p.m.

April 14: "Songs for the Sale" fundraiser for the MCC Relief Committee, at Forest Grove Community Church, Saskatoon, at 7 p.m.

Manitoba

March 15: CMU campus visit day.

March 21: CMU hosts the Verna Mae Janzen Music Competition.

March 29: Winnipeg First Mennonite Church presents Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* at the church on Good Friday, at 7 p.m. A free-will offering will be taken.

April 4: CMU spring banquet and fundraiser.

April 8: Jazz@CMU.

April 14: Sargent Avenue Mennonite

Church adult choir presents Parts II and III of *The Messiah*, at 7 p.m.

Ontario

March 11,12: Grandparent and Grandchild Days at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp, for children in Grades 1 to 6. "You can shine," with Julie and Bryan Moyer Suderman. For more information, or to register, visit hiddenacres.ca or call 519-625-8602.

March 14-15: Bechtel Lectures at Conrad Grebel University College chapel. "Violence, victimhood and recovery: Insights from the parables of Jesus," with Chris Marshall.

March 15-16: Engaged Workshop, for engaged or newly married couples, at Living Water Fellowship, New Hamburg. For more information or to register, call Denise Bender at 519-656-2005.

(Continued on page 38)

UpComing

Goa to discuss public discourse at Canadian Mennonite banquet

David Goa of the University of Alberta will discuss "Religion, journalism and public discourse" as the banquet speaker for the annual general meeting of the Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service (CMPS), March 14, at Lethbridge (Alta.) Mennonite Church. The banquet begins at 6 p.m. As the director of the university's Chester Ronning Centre for the Study of Religion and Public Life, Goa's work focuses on religious tradition and modern culture, and the civil life, and public institutions in service to cultural communities and modern civil society. He counts philosophical theologian Paul Tillich, religion scholar Mircea Eliade, historian Zenos Hawkinson, political philosopher Hannah Arendt and Yale professor Jaroslav Pelikan among the scholars who have most influenced his work. Matt Groenheide, a well-known local percussionist specializing in classical percussion and world drumming, will provide musical entertainment for the evening along with flautist Jodi Bartell. The banquet and entertainment are free to the public, but meal tickets must be obtained from the church office by calling 403-329-8557 or e-mailing lethmenn@telusplanet.net. Jim Moyer of Lethbridge, a CMPS board member representing Mennonite Church Alberta, and Roger Epp of Edmonton, representing MC Canada, planned the event.

—*Canadian Mennonite*



Goa

UpComing

'Storm Comin' for Easter

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—The Good Friday Blues Band is back in rehearsals preparing for this year's Good Friday Blues Services, to be held at the House of James, Abbotsford, in March. The theme—"Storm Comin'"—is also the title of the opening song and sets the tone for the rest of the service that includes the opportunity to nail your "blues" onto a cross and to receive prayer, a sermon by actor John Dawson and a spoken-word piece by poet Olivia Sharpe. "The song by the Wailin' Jennys talks about the fact that a storm is coming and there's nothing you can do about it, so you simply need to embrace what's ahead," explains Angelika Dawson, one of the organizers and band members. "I imagine that this is exactly how Jesus felt as he approached the events we celebrate on Good Friday. He knew what was coming and went into that storm willingly." Last year's service was so popular that the venue had to turn more than 60 people away at the door. That's why there are two services this year, on Maundy Thursday, March 28, and Good Friday, March 29, both starting at 7:30 pm. Proceeds from the services will go to Cyrus Centre, a local ministry that works with street youth.

—Good Friday Blues Band



Byron Wiebe on harmonica performs at last year's Good Friday Blues Service.

(Continued from page 37)

March 23: Elmira meat canning fundraising breakfast buffet, at Calvary United Church, St. Jacobs, at 8 a.m. Speaker: Ron Mathies, MCC executive director emeritus. For advance tickets, call MCC Ontario at 519-745-8458.

March 23: Menno Singers/Nota Bene Baroque concert, featuring works by Bach and Zelenka, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, at 8 p.m. For ticket information, visit mennosingers.com.

April 5: "Peace, Pies and Prophets" presented by Ted and Company Theater Works, at Conrad Grebel University College's Great Hall, at 7 p.m. Fundraiser for Christian Peacemaker Teams. For more information, e-mail canada@cpt.org.

April 5-7: Marriage Encounter weekend at Jericho House, Port Colborne. For more information, visit marriageencounter.com or call Marjorie Roth at 519-669-8667.

April 9: Mennonite Savings and Credit Union's 49th annual meeting, "Stories of social justice," at Steinmann

Mennonite Church, Baden. Registration at 6:30 p.m.; meeting at 7 p.m. An excerpt from Theatre of the Beat's newest production will be featured.

April 12: Benjamin Eby Lecture with Leonard Enns at Conrad Grebel University College chapel.

April 12: "Peace, Pies and Prophets" presented by Ted and Company Theater Works, at Toronto United Mennonite Church, at 7 p.m. Fundraiser for Christian Peacemaker Teams. For more information, e-mail canada@cpt.org.

April 12-14: Dinner and theatre presentation at Floradale Mennonite Church; *Mom, It's Time to Sell the House* by Barb Draper. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. (12, 13); play begins at 8 p.m.; 2 p.m. matinee (14). For dinner reservations, call 519-669-4356.

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.

Upcoming

CMU school of peacebuilding prepares for 2013

WINNIPEG—Canadian School of Peacebuilding (CSOP), an annual summer peace and justice program of Canadian Mennonite University (CMU), will welcome seven renowned instructors over two weeks, each to teach a week-long intensive course relating to peace, justice and conflict resolution. This peace/justice summer school is now in its fifth year. The first session, June 17-21, will feature three courses: "Healing the wounds: Peacebuilding through transformative theatre," led by Armand Volkas; "Human rights and indigenous legal traditions," by Val Napoleon; and "Collaborative and culturally responsive partnerships," by Wendy Kroeker. Courses in the second session, June 24-28, are: "Train the trainer: Working for conflict transformation," led by Karen Ridd; "Reconciliation and forgiveness: Exploring biblical and contemporary understandings," by Ched Myers and Elaine Enns; and "Finding your voice: Understanding nonviolent action for today's complex world," by Mubarak Awad. In addition to the CSOP summer program, courses are available year-round at CMU's Shaftesbury and Menno Simons College campuses.

—Canadian Mennonite University

Upcoming

'Fat Calf' registration begins!

The table has been set, and now guests can officially RSVP. From July 29 to Aug. 2, youth



from across Canada will experience a wide range of activities, workshops and times of worship that illuminate the four key themes of the Prodigal Son story drawn from Luke 15: discontent, wandering, returning and celebration. "It is going to be a colourful and exciting event," says event coordinator Dorothy Fontaine, of Fat Calf, which takes place at Camp Assiniboia, Headingley, Man. On opening night, participants can expect to experience the sights, sounds, scents and colours of an ancient night market complete with entertainers, storytellers and games. Stage events will feature a variety of performance artists. A pig roast followed by a square dance, rodeo and games will conclude another evening. And there will also be a private party at Winnipeg's largest water slide park, Fun Mountain. To register by the May 15 deadline, visit fatcalf.mennonitechurch.ca/registration.

—Mennonite Church Canada

Classifieds

Travel

Visit Europe the Mennonite Way!

12-15 day individual or group hotel Tours focusing on Mennonite/ Anabaptist heritage in Holland, Belgium, Germany, Poland and Switzerland. www.mennoniteheritagetours.eu

SCHÜRCH (SHERK, SHIRK, SHERICK) SWITZERLAND HERITAGE TOUR

Sept 29 - Oct 8, 2013 sponsored by Schürch Family Association of North America. Visit key Anabaptist sites and Schürch homesteads including four days in Swiss Emmental Valley. Departure from Toronto or Newark. Contact Sue Shirk, suesbug@msn.com, 717-394-2947.

Announcement

Canadian Word Guild AWARDS

MYSTERIES OF GRACE AND JUDGMENT DVD

For special awards sale see:

www.mysteriesofgrace.com

Advertising Information

Contact *Canadian Mennonite*

Ad Representative

Graeme Stemp-Morlock

1-800-378-2524 x.224

519-664-2780

[advert@](mailto:advert@canadianmennonite.org)

canadianmennonite.org

Employment Opportunities

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH, BURNS LAKE, a small body of believers in northern BC, is looking for a **PART TIME OR FULL TIME SERVANT LEADER PASTOR.**

We desire to find a person who shares our vision and will work with us to fulfill it. Our ideal candidate will have an exceptional ability to inspire discipleship, outreach, and a desire to embrace our community, while holding firm to sound biblical doctrine. Our candidate will agree with the Confession of Faith in the Mennonite Perspective.

Please send your resume or MLI to FMC c/o Dennis Bock
dgbock@telus.net or Phone 250-692-3830

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

TORONTO UNITED MENNONITE CHURCH (TUMC) invites applications for a full-time Associate Pastor position. This position has a primary focus on children and youth ministry (grades 6-12), with a secondary focus on supporting the lead pastor and lay ministry team in pastoral care and ministry to the full congregation. TUMC is a vibrant urban Church in the Mennonite Anabaptist Tradition that serves members and adherents from across the greater Toronto area. For more information, please visit: www.tumc.ca.

We seek an Associate Pastor who has a strong theological background and commitment to Mennonite faith and Church, an appreciation for diversity, a passion for ministry, empathy for the particular issues that youth face, and enthusiasm for walking with the youth and the congregation through our personal and collective journeys. The full job description is available at: www.mcec.ca/jobs/pastor-associate

We encourage interested candidates to contact Henry Paetkau, Area Church Minister for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, at: hpaetkau@mcec.ca before March 31, 2013.

NORTH LEAMINGTON UNITED MENNONITE CHURCH in Leamington, Ontario is inviting applications for a full time **PASTOR.** The pastor will be someone who has a passion for ministry, possesses visionary leadership and values building relationships.

The pastor will work as part of a pastoral team ministering to all age groups. Involvements will include worship and preaching, relationship building, developing and growing lay leaders, congregational visitation and missional outreach.

The pastor will be committed to Anabaptist theology and practices and have received post secondary training from an Anabaptist seminary or university or have pastoral experience in an Anabaptist congregation.

Inquiries, resumes, and letters of interest may be directed to:

Henry Paetkau, Area Church Minister
Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
4489 King St. E.
Kitchener ON N2P 2G2
Phone: 519-650-3806
Fax: 519-650-3947
E-mail: hpaetkau@mcec.ca

SQUEAH CAMP & RETREAT CENTRE has an opening for **HEAD CHEF.** The Head Chef, a mature Christian, would work alongside the Food Services Manager. They will be an experienced team leader dedicated to the mission, vision, strategic outcomes and values of Camp Squeah. The Head Chef would oversee the cooking and cleaning of the kitchen, food & menu development, spiritual mentoring and training of part-time staff. This is a full-time, year-round position.

Head Chef Job Description

Main Objective: To oversee the cooking and cleaning of the Squeah kitchen, as well as work alongside the Food Services Manager in menu development and staff training.

Principle Tasks:

Overseeing the day to day operations of the kitchen

- Cooking of meals
- Maintaining a clean work environment
- Training staff
- Effectively leading an organized shift in a busy and stressful environment
- Enforcing FoodSafe principles to foster a culture of food safety
- Menu development
- Working alongside the Food Services Manager to create menus for our groups, keeping in mind the clientele and their individual needs
- Research and Development
- Research and develop new menu items in order to support Squeah's on-going food service program
- Utilizing our grounds for food services
- A knowledge of the Barbecue Pit
- A general understanding or a willingness to learn basic gardening skills
- Using the composting program
- Integrate new projects as they are implemented

General Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- A heart for serving our guests and staff through food services, and a passion for food & cooking
- A strong knowledge and experience of cooking for and serving between 40-200 guests
- A healthy knowledge and understanding of nutrition
- Minimum certification in FoodSafe level 1
- A knowledge of food allergies and dietary concerns
- An attitude of striving for excellence and continuous improvement
- An ability and willingness to teach

Hours:

- This is a full time year-round salaried position with a minimum of 40 hours per week.
- The busy season typically begins late April and ends in late November.

Supervision:

- Works alongside the Food Services Manager as the Squeah Kitchen Leadership Team.
- Directly supervises the sous chefs and cooks.

To apply, contact Rob Tiessen, Executive Director. Tel. (604) 869-5353 (x.102) or rob@squeah.com.
Web site: www.squeah.com

Upcoming Advertising Dates

| Issue Date | Ads Due |
|------------------------|----------|
| April 1 | March 19 |
| <i>Focus on Summer</i> | |

Outdoor ministry

it's what Jesus did!

British Columbia

Camp Squeah – Hope
www.squeah.com

Alberta

Camp Valaqua – Water Valley
www.campvalaqua.com

Saskatchewan

Shekinah Retreat Centre – Waldheim
www.shekinahretreatcentre.org

Manitoba

Camps with Meaning – Winnipeg
www.campswithmeaning.org

Camp Assiniboia – Cartier

Camp Koinonia – Boissevain

Camp Moose Lake – Sprague

Ontario

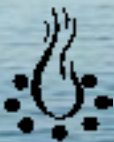
Willowgrove – Stouffville
www.willowgrove.ca

Fraser Lake Camp – Bancroft
www.fraserlakecamp.com

Glenbrook Day Camp – Stouffville
www.glenbrookdaycamp.com

Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and
Retreat Centre – New Hamburg
www.hiddenacres.ca

Silver Lake Mennonite Camp – Hepworth
www.slmc.on.ca



Mennonite Camping Association
www.mennonitecamping.org

- Seeking God's face in creation
- Receiving God's love in Christ
- Radiating God's Spirit in the world