

CANADIAN MENNONITE

October 14, 2013
Volume 17 Number 20

'I've been
everywhere'

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EDITORIAL

What's ahead?

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

It was Soren Kierkegaard who said: "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards."

So what lies ahead for *Canadian Mennonite*? After four years at the helm of this publication, I see challenges ahead in three major areas of our church life together:

1. Technological and demographic changes

In the fast-moving communication environment of the 21st century, we are holding fast to a print product that has served us well for the past generation. In a 2011 readership survey, mostly older respondents were adamant that we continue our efforts on the printed page, rather than succumb to the faddish new ways brought on by the Internet—receiving information electronically on computer screens and smart phones.

While we have developed a website and are active in social media networking, our business/distribution model remains running on traditional rails—putting words on paper and distributing them through the mail to some 13,000 households under an Every Home Plan across Canada. The model is slow and archaic—and must change. Delivery of the content of *Canadian Mennonite* will slowly but surely change to more electronic and less print. Right now, our board and staff are working intentionally at specific ways to make this happen.

More emphasis will be placed on visual presentation of our content, meaning

more use of photography and video, and more linking to background sources in our reporting and commentary.

The overall narrative will lean more towards personal expressions of faith, and more focus on vision and experience, while not neglecting the intellectual undergirding as a context for our stories.



Unite a diverse culture

Just as an English-language publication brought together

diverse cultures of Mennonites 60 years ago with the launching of *The Canadian Mennonite*, this publication is destined to bring together new multicultures of new congregations representing the cutting edge of our denomination today. As time has brought changes to our own character of European origin, so the new ethnicities from all over the world are bound to change both our culture and language over the next millennium.

And we have not yet entirely amalgamated the east-west and Swiss-German/Russian differences in our attempts at a common ethic and theology. The 1999 merger may have brought together two major bodies—the General Conference Mennonites and the Mennonite Church—and the separation of the American and Canadian structures, but it is a little like the adage: "You can take the boy out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the boy."

In polity, the predominantly Russian General Conference Mennonites were

accustomed to strict autonomy of the congregation in faith and practice, while the largely Swiss-German Mennonite Church was more hierarchical, investing authority in bishops and conference leaders, and looking to their church institutions to divine confessions of faith. While we are striving to work through these different approaches, deep-seated orientations die slowly.

Third-generation Mennonite migrants—18 to 34-year-olds—have little awareness of these divides and even less patience with them. In some cases, they are striking out on a "third way" as they develop their faith. It is the ongoing challenge of *Canadian Mennonite* to bring focus to the things that unite us in our faith, rather than those cultural aspects that might continue to divide.

3. A progressive theology

More important than bridging this cultural divide is to come to some common ground on just what our core Anabaptist-inspired beliefs are and how will we bear witness to them in our faith and practice. The four pillars that have held us together for nearly 500 years are a strong belief in biblical authority, community, discipleship and peace. All of these are anchored in what the Apostle Paul told the ancient Corinthians: "No other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

The formation of our faith, however, is unfinished business. Ours is a "progressive" faith. We are on a journey. We, as a faith community, have not reached our destination. To that end, *Canadian Mennonite* will continue to push the edges, explore new pathways, and listen to our sisters and brothers as they call us to new witness and action.

ABOUT THE COVER:

Wilmer Martin, president and co-owner of TourMagination, sitting front left, and Yvonne Martin, back in sunglasses, enjoy tea while travelling in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan on a joint TourMagination/MEDA trip in 2007. See Focus on Travel cover story on page 32.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF YVONNE MARTIN

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Please send all material to be considered for publication to:

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Guiding values:

Hebrews 10:23-25 • Accuracy, fairness, balance • Editorial freedom •

Seeking and speaking the truth in love • Open hearts and minds in discerning God's will •

Covenantal relationships and mutual accountability

Area churches and MC Canada financially support 38 percent of Canadian Mennonite's annual budget.

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Board Chair: **Tobi Thiessen,** tobi.thiessen@sympatico.ca, 416-622-7850

Head Office Staff:

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

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

Barb Draper, Editorial Assistant, edassist@canadianmennonite.org

Dan Johnson, Graphic Designer, designer@canadianmennonite.org

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

Aaron Epp, Young Voices Co-editor, youngvoices@canadianmennonite.org

Rachel Bergen, Young Voices Co-editor, ca@canadianmennonite.org

Advertising Manager: **D. Michael Hostetler,** advert@canadianmennonite.org

toll-free voice mail: 1-800-378-2524 ext. 224

Correspondents:

Will Braun, Senior Writer, seniorwriter@canadianmennonite.org

Amy Dueckman, B.C. Correspondent, bc@canadianmennonite.org, 604-854-3735;

Donita Wiebe-Neufeld, Alberta Correspondent, ab@canadianmennonite.org, 780-436-3431;

Karin Fehderau, Saskatchewan Correspondent, sk@canadianmennonite.org, 306-933-4209;

Evelyn Rempel Petkau, Manitoba Correspondent, mb@canadianmennonite.org, 204-745-2208;

Dave Rogalsky, Eastern Canada Correspondent, ec@canadianmennonite.org, 519-577-9887.

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GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD FEATURE

Rethinking peace

Is it 'up to us to make peace in the world in the sense of marching for peace'? How affluence, acculturation and evangelism have changed the way Mennonites in Canada view peace in their hearts, the church and the world

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU
MANITOBA CORRESPONDENT

“In the last 15 or 20 years, I have heard only one sermon on peace,” says Bernie Loeppky, a member of Grace Mennonite Church in Winkler, Man., and a member of the Evangelical Anabaptist Fellowship (EAF).

Loeppky retells the story of Siegfried Bartel, who grew up in the Mennonite church in Germany between the World Wars. “He was an officer in Hitler’s army,” he recounts. “He always had misgivings about his role in the army, but it was only after he came to Canada and became involved with Mennonite Central Committee [MCC] that he came to a peace position and became a strong advocate for peace.”

Even though Bartel grew up in the Mennonite church, he was never made aware of the peace position before his involvement with MCC, says Loeppky, who recounts this story because of his concern that peace and discipleship have become divorced from the message of salvation.

A strange peace dichotomy

In 2010, Mennonite World Conference (MWC) asked its supporting churches, “How is your church doing in its desire to be a Peace Church?” Gordon Allaby, pastor of Osler Mennonite Church in Saskatchewan, was asked to conduct this peace audit for Mennonite Church

PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU



Arlyn Friesen Epp, director of Mennonite Church Canada's Resource Centre in Winnipeg, recalls peace lamps being introduced at the 2002 MC Canada assembly in Saskatoon. Congregations were invited to purchase the lamps and pray for peace. Some churches continue to light the peace lamps today.

Canada. "I found it surprising how many congregations, and even provincial churches, were kind of drifting away from a passion of connecting peace and justice to following Christ, almost as if peacemaking is being relegated or diluted to more humanistic reasoning," he says.

A few years ago a letter writer to this magazine asked if Jesus was really necessary if world peace could be achieved through human means.

That dichotomy is strongly reflected in some Mennonite congregations.

Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite Church in Manitoba is "definitely moving to a place in the future where 'Mennonite' may be dropped from our name because this next generation does not connect to that [peace position] in any way," says Robert Penner, the church's youth pastor. "There is a real push for evangelism and

bringing the gospel, a desire to have the Spirit and personal peace with God and others, but when it comes to nations, that would be very different."

Several years ago, the Plum Coulee congregation offered a prayer of blessing over a young person who was joining the military. "We prayed a blessing over him for protection, that he will be the light of Christ wherever he is and that he would use his words and actions to bring reconciliation and peace," says Penner. "He is the first one [in our congregation] who has joined the military. We have one person who is currently in the process of joining the reserve."

"Of course, we love peace," says Artur Esau, pastor of Hague Mennonite Church in Saskatchewan. "The first peace we talk about is the peace between God and man, and that as a consequence of

that peace we will make peace with our neighbour. When it comes to wars and rumours of wars, not too much can be done about it. It is not up to us to make peace in the world in the sense of marching for peace. Our good Mennonite brothers and sisters who march for peace around Canada and the U.S. usually do it without Christ. The governments around the world do the same."

Church efforts to promote peace

"Article 22 of our Confession of Faith [in a Mennonite Perspective] brings into focus the many scriptural imperatives of nonviolent peacebuilding," says Willard Metzger, executive director for MC Canada. "The governance structures of our national church have not changed their position on peacebuilding in any way. We continue seeking to live into a

'I think it is important for Mennonite congregations to emphasize that we are a Peace Church because we have committed our lives to Jesus . . . , not because peace is an Anabaptist distinctive that we must preserve at all cost.'
(Esther Epp-Tiessen)



gospel of peace.”

“In 2008, a congregation brought a resolution to the assembly in Saskatchewan to promote more active peacebuilding within our church,” says Dan Dyck, MC Canada’s communications director. “The ‘Live for Peace’ project launched a public education initiative called ‘Peace in the public square,’ which involved creating a website [liveforpeace.org] that is still up and offers a challenge to area churches and congregations to raise public awareness. MC Alberta and Saskatchewan were the ones that took it and ran with it. Our role is to resource the congregations and area churches.”

Osler Mennonite was one of the churches that embarked enthusiastically on this campaign. “Our church still is involved in putting ads in the local paper and putting signs along the highway,” says Allaby, but “there has been some waning lately and it is troubling. But our church would still identify itself very much as a Peace Church.”

Robert J. Suderman, former general secretary of MC Canada and

now secretary of the MWC Peace Commission, did a cross-country visit of all member congregations during his MC Canada term. “What at first sight appears to be a knee-jerk reaction of the ‘of course, we are a Peace Church’ nature, a second look would reveal a significant impact of ‘just war’ theory, including now the ‘responsibility to protect’ (R2P) doctrine, which both the United Nations and the World Council of Churches are using as a more humane but more compelling justification to violence,” he says. “It is striking to me how the R2P doctrine has become a new way out for almost-pacifists to be pacifists.”

Acculturation—affluence—evangelism

Esther Epp-Tiessen of MCC Canada has worked closely with churches on a peace initiative to build awareness and gather support for tighter legislation regarding cluster munitions. “Within the Anabaptist-Mennonite family, I think MC Canada churches are likely doing more to preach, teach and witness to

peace than in some other denominations/conferences,” she says. “However, I think more could be done.”

Epp-Tiessen reports that of the 65 petitions signed by Mennonites regarding cluster munitions, “many of these petitions came from MC Canada congregations.” However, she says she has observed that “there is considerable reluctance to engage in public peace witness. . . . People are reluctant to put themselves ‘out there.’ They prefer a more private peace commitment. Many people express a quiet peace witness by sponsoring refugees, visiting prisoners, living simply. . . . I do not wish to discount this kind of witness, which is very important, but we also have an important message that we should be sharing with the wider world.”

In his report to MWC about MC Canada’s peace efforts, Allaby writes, “We are a Peace Church and we desire to improve our journey of and to peace. . . . Yet we are of many opinions and perspectives.” One factor that contributes to a waning commitment to peace is affluence, says Allaby. “We are very much ‘in culture’ now. We’re fairly affluent and that has decreased our desire to follow Christ. We’ve got more to risk in speaking out and countering our culture.”

“Many Mennonites are very acculturated in their lifestyle and in their thinking about some of these issues,” says Epp-Tiessen, in agreement with Allaby. “We have become quite comfortable and so it is hard for us to become passionate about engaging in life and death issues. . . . We are reluctant to take risks.”

Loepky adds the assimilation process as another factor in the church’s drift away from a peace position. He says he finds it “ironic that the local

MENNONITE CHURCH SASKATCHEWAN PHOTO



Baptist pastor has chided the Winkler Mennonites for not wanting to be different. They want to be like everyone else.

“Another contributing factor was that following World War II there were some negative experiences with Mennonite young men who came back from the war and their relationship to the church was often troubling,” he says. “There was an overreaction in some churches that resulted in stopping the preaching and teaching [of peace].”

(For more on the issue of how the church reacted to those who opted to serve overseas during the Second World War, read “Let nobody judge them” in the next issue of Canadian Mennonite.)

“Another factor is the influence of the evangelical movement in many churches over the past decade, which focuses just on a personal conversion,” says Allaby. “Some have adopted a two-kingdom approach. There has been a shift in theology that makes it more palatable to go along with the culture and redemptive violence.”

But Allaby, who was drawn to the Mennonite faith because of its peace position, says a peace witness and evangelism cannot be separated. “The peace witness is what it means to be a follower of Christ,” he says. “If we want to take the Great Commission seriously, that is what it means to be part of redemptive salvation. I don’t recall that we have the luxury of picking and choosing what we want to focus on.”

Loeppky, who describes the EAF as an ad hoc group of different Mennonite conferences that exists only in Manitoba today whose mission is to promote the core beliefs of Anabaptism, particularly Christian discipleship, agrees that there is no either/or dichotomy. “The heresy we



Osler (Sask.) Mennonite Church took its peace message to the community’s 2012 Canada Day parade. Described as the ‘For Peace Marching Band,’ the group played peace songs on its kazoos, earning a blue ribbon from parade organizers for ‘creativity.’

face today is salvation without discipleship,” he says. “And if you take salvation seriously, you have to take the words of Jesus seriously.”

Inspiring examples but ‘not there yet’

Epp-Tiessen observes many signs of churches passionately living this out today. “I am very inspired by congregations, such as those in Stouffville [Ont.], which are actively witnessing for peace in their community; the Home Street congregation in Winnipeg and the role their youth have played in promoting the Department of Peace initiative; the Grace Mennonite congregation in Prince Albert [Sask.], which is actively promoting reconciliation with indigenous neighbours; [and] the Langley Mennonite Fellowship in B.C., which has for years helped to host an arts and peace festival.”

“Certainly there are many national church programs and ministry examples of our commitment to nonviolent

peacebuilding at the national church level,” says Metzger. “Collaboration with the Canadian Council of Churches and the Canadian Department of Peace in political advocacy; international ministry, such as our support of Dann and Joji Pantoja in the peacebuilding work in the Philippines; and our interfaith work, are just a few examples.”

One of the ways to build a stronger peace identity is through education, according to Epp-Tiessen. “People are very much influenced by what they hear in the media, and if the churches do not provide an alternate narrative, that is, a Peace Church narrative, these people will easily be persuaded or convinced by the arguments they hear in the media and in society,” she says.

Canada’s participation in the Afghanistan war offered a telling example of this, she says, noting, “I found many Mennonites reluctant to critique that involvement. Many had accepted the

*‘The heresy we face today is salvation without discipleship, and if you take salvation seriously you have to take the words of Jesus seriously.’
(Bernie Loeppky)*

arguments that Canada needed to fight terrorists in Afghanistan and needed to help 'bring freedom and democracy' to Afghans. They didn't have a good way of responding from a pacifist faith perspective to the arguments about Canada being at war. I was struck by how non-chalant a lot of Mennonites were about Canada's participation."

EAF's mandate is to keep this issue front and centre. "Right now, we are doing a series of one-minute Sunday morning broadcasts called 'Peace Moment' on three different radio stations in Manitoba," says Loeppky. "EAF has produced a video series providing an overview of church history with an emphasis on Anabaptists and what they believe, a five-lesson booklet on peace, and a couple of years ago presented 12 'Power of Peace' concerts in Manitoba and Saskatchewan." For more information, visit the EAF at anabaptists.ca.

"I think it is important for Mennonite congregations to emphasize that we are a Peace Church because we have committed our lives to Jesus, the one whose life, death and resurrection reconciles all things, not because peace is an



'Another factor is the influence of the evangelical movement in many churches over the past decade. . . . There has been a shift in theology that makes it more palatable to go along with the culture and redemptive violence.'
(Gordon Allaby)

MENNONITE CHURCH SASKATCHEWAN PHOTO



Mennonite Church Saskatchewan's Peace and Justice Group developed a bus campaign in conjunction with MC Canada's 'Peace in the public square' initiative in 2010. For two months that year, messages such as the one pictured above and on page 6 were seen on Saskatoon streets.

Anabaptist distinctive that we must preserve at all cost," says Epp-Tiessen. "I think many people, not just Anabaptists, are eager to hear this message." MCC Canada began to create a Peace Sunday packet for churches across Canada in the 1990s; the 2013 packet is available at mcccanada.ca/peace/peacesunday.

Allaby concludes his MC Canada peace audit this way: "Mennonite Church Canada hopes and prays to become the Peace Church the world needs us to be and what God wants us to be. We do not compare ourselves to any other faith journey or organization; our model and inspiration is only Christ as we respond to God's redemptive love. We are a Peace Church, and our desire

for wholeness is strong, yet we know we are not there yet." ❧



Evelyn Rempel is Canadian Mennonite's Manitoba correspondent.

❧ For further reading

See canadianmennonite.org for Gordon Allaby's 2011 peace audit of Mennonite Church Canada for Mennonite World Conference.

❧ For discussion

1. What would happen if someone in your congregation joined the military? Would your church have a prayer of blessing to send him on his way? What does peace mean to you? Can someone who loves peace serve in the military?
2. Do you think Mennonite Church Canada churches are drifting away from a strong peace position? Do you agree with Esther Epp-Tiessen that Mennonites have been reluctant to critique Canada's participation in Afghanistan? How does your congregation teach peace theology?
3. How do you respond to arguments for redemptive violence? Can violence ever serve to promote peace? What is most persuasive about the "just war" theory? Are you swayed by the arguments of the United Nations' Responsibility to Protect doctrine, the idea that force must sometimes be used to protect vulnerable people?
4. How effective are petitions, signs or marches in promoting peace? What should be the church's role in influencing government policy? What does it mean to take a public stand for peace? What are some ways we can work at building peace?

—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.

✉ Enough already about gender issues

IN MY OPINION, the question of human gender comes up way too often among us and way beyond its importance to society as a whole.

Let's just use our God-given brains. This is primarily a biological issue. All of us are born with both male and female hormones. As exists in all aspects of the creation, the bell curve applies: there are always a few individuals at each end of the curve who will be exceptions.

In the case of sexuality, there will always be a few people who are born with more or less equal amounts of both male and female hormones, so their social and physical expressions could go either way. These are human beings just like the rest of us, and deserve to be accepted and treated just like the rest of us.

Regarding the Bible, any negative mention of gender most often reflects the tribalism—ignorance—of the times. We've come way beyond that in our society,

(Continued on page 10)

FROM OUR LEADERS

'Better together'

GARRY JANZEN

Mennonite Church British Columbia exists to help our congregations be healthy, vibrant, missional and connected. I want to explore this value of being connected. At MC B.C. we like to say that we are "better together."

How does MC B.C. work hard to create opportunities for congregations and pastors to network, share resources and support each other in ministry?



One way we help pastors from different congregations stay connected is with our monthly lunch gatherings in Vancouver and the Fraser Valley. This is a time to catch up with each other, discuss matters of importance to us, and pray with each other. We miss our pastors serving beyond the Lower Mainland, but distance does make it harder to connect.

We have the annual retreat for pastors and their spouses, and we encourage each congregation to make it possible for

them to attend.

Then we have the Leaders, Elders and Deacons (LEAD) Conference, which is a time for our pastors and church leaders to meet to be strengthened and encouraged. LEAD 2014 will focus on creation care, with Rick Faw of A Rocha as our speaker.

While our MC B.C. annual meeting is often viewed as simply a business meeting, it is a time to connect. At times we have squeezed it into a shorter time block in order to respect the activity-filled lives of our delegates, but the piece that always gets lost is the time to connect. For the 2014 edition, we will open up more time for connecting again.

Beyond the larger gatherings, we want to be creatively present with each other. We have a weekly e-mail exchange of prayers and information among our pastors and church staff. We seek to ensure that all pastors have a pastoral care rep to meet with, who will encourage them as well as hear their needs and concerns.

How about being well-connected in our

communities? Some pastors take in cross-denominational pastors' gatherings where they live. For our September gathering, we chose one day for all our pastors to spend at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Vancouver. Then we met together for dinner to reflect on our experiences of hearing the stories of Indian Residential School survivors, as well as their journeys into a new way forward. We are challenged to join in this healing journey by building relationships with the indigenous people in the communities where each of us live.

How do we help our congregations to experience their connection in the wider Mennonite church? Like every other connection, we get the information out there to our people and encourage them to get involved in MC Canada and Mennonite World Conference opportunities.

Finally, MC B.C. is available, and seeks to work with pastors and congregational leaders through all the matters of their life together, to ensure that no one feels disconnected. We invite everyone to join in being present with each other in the best ways possible.

Garry Janzen is MC B.C.'s executive minister.

(Continued from page 9)

except perhaps some of our poor brothers and sisters in places like Mexico and Bolivia.

If we call ourselves Christians—that usually means followers of Jesus of Nazareth known as the Christ—we need to show the tolerance and acceptance that he showed in deed and word.

RICHARD PENNER, CALGARY

✉ Kudos for Canadian Mennonite

THANKS FOR THE Sept. 16 editorial, “A magazine is born.” Brings back many memories!

I enjoy every issue. You are doing a remarkable job. Keep it up! Look forward to coming issues.

TED FRIESEN, ALTONA, MAN.

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Things I'm learning from AA

PHIL WAGLER

I was invited to a birthday party. A hunched-over seventy-something Scottish gentleman from my church family was turning 34. With that kind of math, who wouldn't want to go? So I dragged my 13-year-old son along and we made our way to one of the shadiest parts of town for Derek's “cake”: the celebration of his 34 years of sobriety.

The room was full. Derek sat down front in his best suit that looked like it hadn't been dry-cleaned since 1983. There were grey-haired businessmen and tattooed young men all buff and imposing. There were worn older women and young gals with rings in their noses.

One of these young women was called. She reluctantly meandered to the podium, confessed her name and addiction, and spoke words of adulation and respect for my brother in Christ who had impacted her journey towards sobriety.

The parade of heartfelt appreciations went on for a long time. Then Derek spoke. He talked about losing his marriage and livelihood to alcohol and how Alcoholic's Anonymous (AA) rescued him. But, more than that, Derek—who needed to be chided from the back to “speak up!”—declared with soft surety that the God of his understanding, Jesus

Christ, was the source of his hope and redemption. Applause. Cake.

Then cigarettes, some latent grumbling about something messed up in social services, and the throng dispersed into the cool night to continue the battle.

My son and I sat there. He just needed to soak this in, smell the humanity of it all, and shake the hand of an overcomer. I watched the room and hummed a lament. Why are our churches not more like this?

Every follower of Jesus should go to

*Every follower of Jesus should go to AA.
Never mind if you're a teetotaler.*

AA. Never mind if you're a teetotaler. Seriously. Go.

Here's what I'm learning from AA that every church should learn:

♦ **LIFE IS** too short for male-bovine-excrement. I'd use the other word, but you'd all write letters and that would sadly underline the point. My brothers and sisters in Christ who have been through AA have learned to speak from a poverty of spirit, a humility that humbles the proud, and that is thoroughly refreshing. They also see quickly through pretense because they've seen and tried it all. I'm tired of church life that can't go there. Aren't you?

♦ **LIFE REQUIRES** help. We need God's help. AA takes you there immediately. There is the expectation within AA that you will serve and help others on the way. It is an inter-generational affair of interdependence. This awareness of neediness challenges our individualism and even the way we structure our churches. Further, the AA community is never closed. Countless discreet gatherings scattered everywhere provide an open welcome where even the ready “backslider” is embraced. I'm tired of church life that talks about dependence and mutuality, but doesn't really practise it. Aren't you?

♦ **LIFE IS** messy, let's just admit it. Derek's life is far from perfect, but he's one of the best members of our Sunday morning welcome team and his presence in the front row is a sermon to me. The journey to a “cake” is no piece of cake, but taking just one more step is enough. In AA, the

mess is not celebrated—in some “let's go on sinning that grace may abound” perversion—but neither is it denied. I'm tired of church life that is too often an exercise in denial. Aren't you?

Now, AA is not everything, but in the hinterland that has become the North American church, with all our protests and pretending, don't you think there's something to learn from Derek?

Phil Wagler (phil_wagler@yahoo.ca) is proud to call Derek a brother in Christ. Come and be welcomed by him some Sunday morning in Surrey, B.C.



✉ Ministry must never be practised alone

RE: "HEALING SEXUAL abuse," Sept. 2, page 2.

I like the title of this editorial. It speaks of God's unlimited grace so prevalent throughout the Scriptures.

True, it's repulsive to learn about John Howard Yoder's sexual sins. I had him as my theology

professor at AMBS in Elkhart, Ind., in the early 1960s. It would be redundant to speak of his brilliance, fame and influence well beyond the Mennonite Anabaptist fold. How could he have committed such sexual evil?

I am reminded of the David and Bathsheba story. How repulsive was the treachery and strategized deceit against Uriah, a Hittite and David's trusted officer,

(Continued on page 12)

NEW ORDER VOICE

I felt the Spirit under an umbrella

KATIE DOKE SAWATZKY

It's Sunday morning and, instead of sitting comfortably in a sanctuary, I'm standing with my family in the pouring rain in downtown Vancouver. We're soaked. The stroller is collecting water, we only have one umbrella and we're running out of snacks. And, of course, we've forgotten the soother.

We've bussed downtown to take part in the first-ever Walk for Reconciliation, the finale of Reconciliation Week in Vancouver (Sept. 16 to 22) and a conclusion to the B.C. chapter of the federally initiated Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Bernice King, daughter of Martin Luther King Jr., is about to give the keynote speech, before the walk begins.

I can tell people are excited to hear her. But after standing for an hour in the rain, two-year-old Leo is crying and I'm grumpy. This is an historic moment, a powerful, public demonstration for equality and respect between indigenous and settler peoples in Canada. But all I can think about is how wet and cold I am, and how annoying my whiny kid must be to the strangers next to us. Will we even be able to make it through the speech?

As King takes the stage, we slowly move up the street to find a drier spot but

the crowd is so thick that we're forced to stop. It's awkward to be this close to strangers, and yet it's at this moment that I begin to relax.

I notice that people are standing so close to each other that their umbrellas are resting on and under those next to them, creating a canopy over everyone nearby. I catch on and raise our umbrella into the space above me, placing it delicately over the one my neighbour is holding. Since we've found a "drier spot" and Leo is eating his apple, I am able to focus and listen to King.

Her words are loud, clear and weighty.



She commends Canada for the TRC events over the past three years, noting that no such events have happened yet in the U.S. for African Americans.

She commends Canada for the TRC events over the past three years, noting that no such events have happened yet in the U.S. for African Americans. She speaks of freedom yet to be won for her people and empathizes with the suffering of Indian Residential School survivors. She preaches a message of nonviolent social change that will only come when everyone reaches out and opens up despite pain and division.

"We are all in this together," she says.

"We are tied in an inescapable network of mutuality, caught in a single garment of destiny and what affects one person here in Canada, no matter their background, directly affects all indirectly."

Leo starts to whimper and I make eye contact with the man next to me. He holds my umbrella as I search my backpack for a second apple. I can tell he's making a special effort to preserve the canopy above us. My spirit is buoyed by this and I don't rush the way I normally do when a stranger lends a hand.

We cheer as King ends her speech with her father's iconic "Free at last" benediction. But as soon as she's done, we push through the crowd to a side street that takes us to the nearest bus stop. The weather has gotten the best of us and we decide to go home.

Despite my disappointment that we're missing the walk, I think about King's words as we ride home. About "a single garment of destiny" made of umbrellas

and upheld by thousands of strangers. About needs met almost as soon as they're felt, by a Spirit of mutuality, a Spirit I've felt during church services I've attended.

And I'm reminded that that Spirit moves where two or more are gathered in solidarity, whether it be in Christ's name or the Creator's. Even in the rain.

Katie Doke Sawatzky lives in Vancouver. She can be reached at katiesawatzky@gmail.com.

(Continued from page 11)

putting him in a place where the battle was most intense. Yes, he's the same King David of whom Samuel the judge said following the rejection of King Saul, "The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart."

David was severely chastised by Nathan for having murdered Uriah and stolen his wife. Psalm 141:5 gives us some guidance for how we, too, need to take steps to keep our lives pure, and that is to invite accountability to a trusted brother or sister. (I have asked for that, but for whatever reason there is reluctance to do it.) But we need it for our own protection from any multitude of sins and so grow into the likeness of Christ.

It is noteworthy to recognize the strategy of Jesus in sending out the disciples in teams of two. Paul practised this with his many co-workers: Timothy, Titus, Peter, Apollos, Barnabas, Lydia and more. This

strategy was preceded already in the Old Testament with Moses and Aaron, and Joshua and Caleb, among others.

Henry Nouwen writes of learning this lesson in *In the Name of Jesus*, after having taught at Harvard with great acclaim before moving to Daybreak, the L'Arche community for disabled adults in Toronto. He refers to Jesus' comments to Peter: "Feed my sheep." In many ways he makes it clear that ministry is a communal and mutual experience.

In our individualistic society, it was a great temptation for Yoder among the theological elites to go it alone. May this be a lesson for us to learn, that we need to partner in our ministry as disciples in God's economy. May we learn as individual disciples, including senior pastors and elders, the lessons of partnering in ministry. Small groups should be a safe place to practise this discipline.

GEORGE H. EPP, CHILLIWACK B.C.

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✉ Bishops existed in early church, reader claims

RE: "HOLY CONTRADICTIONS," Sept. 16, page 4.

Will Braun quotes without comment Garry Wills's claim that "the office of bishop did not exist in the first century." But I Timothy 3:1 refers to bishops (aka "overseers") and Ignatius of Antioch uses the same Greek word to describe a single leader of a congregation responsible for church unity and correct celebration of the eucharist, in letters written before his martyrdom under Emperor Trajan, who reigned from 98-117 AD.

Furthermore, even if I Timothy was written in the second century, these "unbiblical" bishops were responsible for deciding that our Bible should include it, Matthew and the rest of the New Testament.

We often forget that the first complete list of the 27 books in our New Testament appears not in the time of Jesus or the apostles, but in a letter from Athanasius in 367 AD.

But if the early church was utterly wrong to develop the office of bishop, how can we trust their development of the Christian Bible over the subsequent 250 years?

Whether we need bishops today is another question, and these early church leaders were certainly fallible. But the argument that they unanimously corrupted an obvious biblical teaching is too strong: it undermines not just bishops, but the Bible itself.

MICHAEL BUTTREY, TORONTO

✉ A timely reminder

THANK YOU FOR you sharing the article “Seven shared convictions,” Sept. 2, page 19. We need to be reminded about our convictions.

MARLENE HIEBERT,
BLUMENORT, MAN.

/// Correction

Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna, Man., has been offering education grounded in Anabaptist Christian values since 1889. Incorrect information appeared in the “MCI enrolment up,” article, Sept. 30, page 33. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the error.

VIEWPOINT

A cause for concern?

BY WILLARD METZGER

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA

Quebec’s proposed Charter of Values has the potential for many reactions.

At first hearing, Christians might feel defensive—as though it is a purposeful assault on religion—especially since it appears to strengthen the value of a secular society. Christians already fearful of governments distancing themselves from a heritage built on Christian faith values could see this as a government’s latest effort of abandonment.

However, when thoughtfully considered, the proposed charter could be understood as a recognition of religious diversity. To ensure that no particular religion is honoured is a way of honouring all religions.

Our Anabaptist/Mennonite forebears traditionally did not depend on the government to promote Christianity. They saw their faith, church and sacrificial acts of mercy as the explanation for their motivations. The proposed charter places no restrictions on the general public or faith communities as they gather. It does restrict members of faith communities who work as civil servants from publicly favouring any particular religion while in service of the entire population.

I am concerned that the proposed charter could increase racist activity. For those already fearful of newcomers to Quebec/Canada, the charter has been used in a misguided way to support this

fear. Reports of racist assaults against religious minorities have already increased following the initial introduction of the charter.

Such action is not reflective of a healthy society, whether religious or secular. Severe—or exaggerated—protectionism is not reflective of God’s character. Nor does it represent the qualities of an enlightened humanity. Perhaps this negative behaviour is evidence that a society is better served by religious practices of welcoming the stranger.

Do we, as religious communities, bear some responsibility for the attraction to secularism?

I do not oppose Christian values in the public sector. But neither do I see the basis for a protected embrace of any particular religion in an increasingly multifaith context. I sincerely believe that when Christian values are displayed as closely reflecting the example of Jesus as possible, a secular society will not only take note, it will be attracted. True and pure Christianity need not fear comparative examination. It can hold its own.

Perhaps it is also important to review reactions that are not necessarily prompted by Quebec’s proposed Charter of Values. For religions that necessitate certain dress codes and symbols, the proposed charter would exclude them from

public employment opportunities. For followers of Christ who have been taught to love their neighbours as themselves, this possible discrimination should be problematic. Should the proposed charter prompt Christians to express solidarity for the rights of other religious expressions? Such a response would provide an important alternative to the perceived antagonism of religious behaviour. In this context, perhaps, Christians can best express the love of Jesus by standing in solidarity with those of other religious expressions.

Self reflection may be another important result one might not anticipate. The media has reported that a significant number of the Quebec population supports the proposed charter. This should prompt honest reflection by people of all faiths. Has religious behaviour made a fully secular society seem preferable? Do

we, as religious communities, bear some responsibility for the attraction to secularism? An honest look at such questions would be a good exercise.

The proposed Charter of Quebec Values should not be ignored, but neither should it be feared. It is an opportunity for some important reflection and dialogue. It may also provide an opportunity for people of faith to surprise a secular society with a display of confident and sincere cooperation. Indeed, the world is in need of such a display. Surely God’s people can rise up for such a task. ❧

Willard Metzger is executive director of Mennonite Church Canada.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Billings—Chloe Rose (b. Aug. 13, 2013), to Rochelle and Chris Billings, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Cole—Cora Marie (b. Sept. 10, 2013), to Shannon and Brian Cole, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Dalman—Benjamin David (b. Sept. 16, 2013), to Aaron and Beth (Enns) Dalman, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., in Martensville, Sask.

Gerling—Justin Michael (b. Sept. 11, 2013), to Kathryn and Jason Gerling, First Mennonite, Calgary.

Greco—Patrick James Raymond (b. Sept. 11, 2013), to Mark and Janna (Brubacher) Greco, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

Guenther—Brysen Christopher (b. Aug. 26, 2013), to Greg and Andrianna Guenther, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

Guigon—Addison Irene (b. Sept. 17, 2013), to Charles and Kim Guigon, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., in Camrose, Alta.

Ludwig—Landon Layk (b. Sept. 21, 2013), to Jason and Renee Ludwig, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Martin—Elouise Mary Riley (b. Aug. 28, 2013), to Justin and Jen Martin, Breslau Mennonite, Ont.

Mauer—Michael David (b. Aug. 16, 2013), to Rob and Rosemarie Mauer, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Overton—Theodore Christopher (b. Aug. 23, 2013), to Christopher and Sarah Overton, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Rausch—Paige Lilian (b. Sept. 6, 2013), to Ryan and Kathy Rausch, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Reimer—Natasha Faith Pauline (b. Aug. 30, 2013), to Abram and Catherine Reimer, Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont.

Witzel—Riley David (b. Sept. 21, 2013), to Brad and Laura Witzel, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Wright—Hudson Glenn (b. Sept. 5, 2013), to Chad and Carissa Wright, Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont.

Baptisms

Danielle Leanne Friesen—Morden Mennonite, Man., June 16, 2013.

Jaye Warkentin—North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask., Sept. 22, 2013.

Marriages

Charles/Rempel—Ashlee Charles (of Winnipeg) and Matthew Rempel (Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.), in Winnipeg, Sept. 7, 2013.

Coppola/Epp—Mike Coppola and Kerri Epp (Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.), at Leamington United Mennonite, Sept. 14, 2013.

Cressman/Ruby—Bethany Cressman (Nith Valley Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.) and Ross Ruby (East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.), Sept. 14, 2013

Foerster/Shantz—Mark Foerster and Ashley Shantz (St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.), at St. Jacobs Mennonite, Sept. 14, 2013.

Georgescu/Metzger—John Georgescu and Valerie Metzger (St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.), in Kitchener, Ont., Aug. 24, 2013.

Ginther/Wiebe—Lisa Ginther and Anthony Wiebe, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Aug. 17, 2013.

Goulet/Saltzman—Andre Goulet and Moira Saltzman, Montreal Mennonite Fellowship, at Long Lake, Mich., Aug. 24, 2013.

Mogk/Otto—Bradin Mogk and Katie Otto, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Sept. 7, 2013.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones announcements within four months of the event. Please send Milestones announcements by e-mail to milestones@canadianmennonite.org.

Pontius' Puddle



GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Waste makes haste

Is deep-fryer diesel the fuel of the future?

BY WILL BRAUN
Senior Writer

When Ken Rempel stopped for a construction delay on Highway 2 near Winnipeg, the flagman asked if he was the guy who ran his car on vegetable oil. The flagman had confused Rempel with another Highway 2 commuter, but just the same, Rempel's interest was piqued.

Three days later, he spent a few thousand dollars to get his car converted to burn waste vegetable oil (WVO). His wife's car was next. In the five years since then, the Elm Creek couple has driven over a half-million kilometres, combined, on deep-fryer leftovers.

Coincidentally, the driver for whom the flagman mistook Rempel, was Brad Reimer, who commutes down the same highway from Fannystelle to the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba office in Winnipeg. He drives MCC Manitoba's WVO-powered VW.

The car was relatively new to MCC at the time. Reimer, who serves as director of communications and donor relations, says MCC was needing a new vehicle and "wanted to do something different," to "make a statement" about care for the environment.

After researching options, MCC decided on a diesel Jetta wagon and a partnership with Frank Motors, a Winnipeg business that installs vegetable-oil conversion kits. MCC got the work done for free. MCC purchases filtered WVO which Frank Motors sells for \$0.76 per litre. The oil comes from restaurants.

Most people with WVO cars, like Rempel, collect and filter their own oil.

The conversion kit involves a second fuel tank and fuel line, one or two heating devices to warm up the oil before it enters the engine, and a means to switch the fuel source from diesel to veggie oil. Nothing in the actual engine is altered.

Generally, the car needs to run on diesel until the engine and the oil warm up, at which point a manual or automated switch changes fuel sources. About 30 seconds before shutting off the engine, the system must be purged or back-flushed to clear out the oil prior to the next start up.

"Overall, we've been happy with it," Reimer says of the system.

MCC has included the car in its display at rural Manitoba fairs in recent years, wanting to show people that WVO is a viable alternative to fossil fuels. Reimer says the idea has been "very, very well received."

A lot of people had heard of it, but had never seen it. While Reimer knows of only a handful of converts as a result of the MCC car, he says dozens have considered it seriously.

The main drawback, he says, is convenience. Collecting and filtering your own oil, or even getting it from a lone source, as MCC does, is not as easy as pulling into

the nearest service station. In addition to initial set-up costs, there are also added maintenance costs, most notably regular fuel filter changes.

Rempel, who is a member of Elm Creek Mennonite Brethren Church and works in seniors housing development, used to try to convince his friends to make the switch, but doesn't any more, saying it's not for everyone. "You've got to have a passion for it," he says, noting that it makes most sense for people who put on a lot of highway miles and have the time and inclination to gather and filter oil.

Rempel's interest in WVO comes both from the financial savings—he pays no more than 25 cents per litre—and environmental thriftiness. "I am proud of the fact that I'm using something that quite often goes to the landfill," he says.

Statistics related to use of vegetable oil for fuel are hard to find other than rough estimates that suggest if all WVO were used, it would account for up to 2 percent of total energy needs in North America.

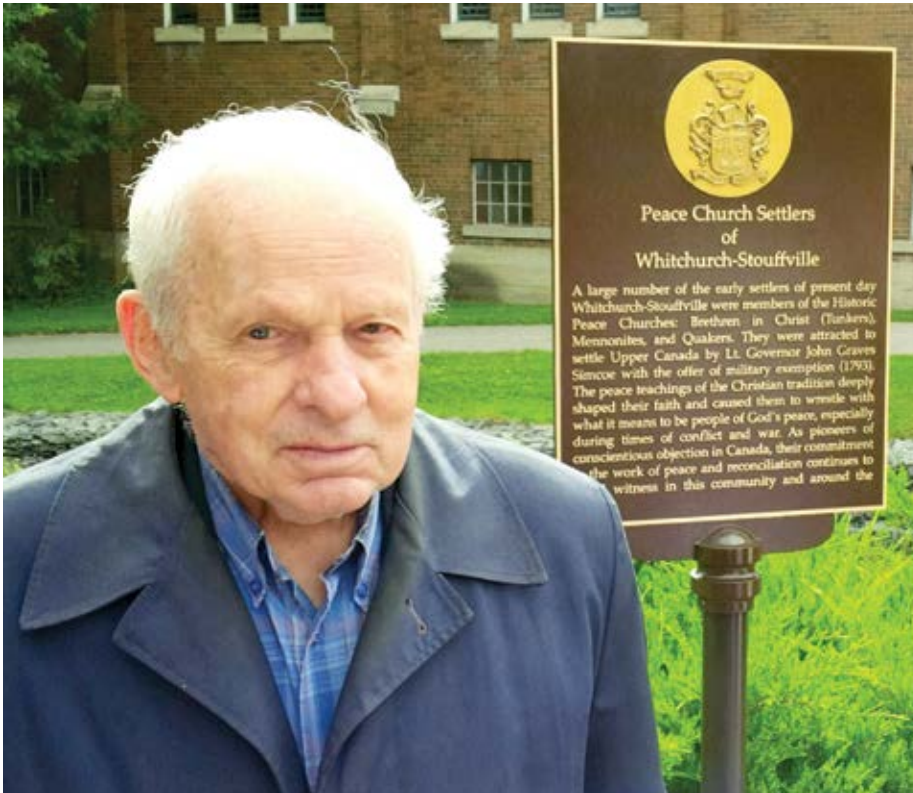
It's fair to say the technology—which actually dates back to the original diesel engine, which ran on peanut oil—is not catching on quickly. Perhaps because car culture, at its core, is about convenience.

That said, Ken Rempel and Brad Reimer have no plans of switching back to conventional fuel. ☘



Brad Reimer with MCC Manitoba's waste vegetable oil-powered vehicle.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ARNOLD NEUFELDT-FAST



John Reesor, a resident of Stouffville, seen here with the peace plaque, was a conscientious objector during the Second World War.

Peace triumphs in festival

BY DICK BENNER

Editor/Publisher

When the white doves flew up from the newly installed peace plaque in the centre of Stouffville, Ont., Arnold Neufeldt-Fast's heart must have stopped.

In less than two years, there was the almost unheard-of public celebration of peace, not war, as was the case when he and his colleagues representing the Mennonite, Brethren in Christ and Quaker communions (Historic Peace Churches) tried their best to convince town officials that any celebration of the War of 1812 had to include an acknowledgement that Stouffville, named after a war resister with 55 like-minded families in tow, was founded by people who refused to take up arms.

In the frenzy of last year's nationalistic push to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, town officials, led by their federal Member of Parliament, voted

Peace plaque dedicated in Stouffville

STORY AND PHOTO BY JOANNA REESOR-MCDOWELL

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
STOUFFVILLE, ONT.

Members of local Peace Churches, elected officials and interested people from the community gathered on Sept. 22 to unveil a bronze plaque in downtown Stouffville recognizing the pioneers of Canadian conscientious objection who settled in the community prior to the War of 1812.

Many of the earliest hamlets in what is now the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville were founded by pacifist Quakers, Mennonites and Brethren in Christ families.

Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, a member of Community Mennonite Church in Stouffville, stated in his historical overview, "This plaque is a commentary on the peace dove at the top of our town crest. The dove is a tribute to the peace story that shaped the character, the actions, and the contribution of our first settlers."

After the plaque was unveiled by youths in the local Peace Churches, white doves were released.

Although the idea of a peace plaque emerged out of a time of controversy in the town, the dedication ceremony was a moment of grace, with the mayor, several town councillors, and the federal and provincial members of parliament present as the story of these early settlers was told and recognition was given to the local faith communities who continue to bear witness to Jesus' way of peace today.

Town council approved a proposal from the local MP in May 2012 to host a "Freedom of the Town" event celebrating military activities and commemorating the War of 1812. Members of the local Peace Churches raised concerns that the event would not be appropriate, given that most of the residents at that time were conscientious objectors, but the commemoration went forward as planned. The controversy was broadly covered by the media, including *Canadian Mennonite*.

against any official recognition of the peaceful settlers—despite several appeals and a divided vote on the town council—to include a “peace” segment in the town’s militaristic parade and fly-over.

But the dynamics of this conflict seemed to fade when a special day was set aside on Sept. 22, as a peace festival, the likes of which Gerry Caplan, a local historian, author, teacher and political activist, labelled as “so novel, so outrageously unusual, that you had to shake your head and say, ‘You know, I don’t remember when the last one was.’”

And to bring the point of peace home with unambiguous clarity, Caplan was joined on a panel by Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish, the well-known Gaza physician, who, instead of seeking revenge in the tragic loss of his three daughters in an Israeli shelling of his home in 2009, wrote a best-selling book entitled *I Shall Not Hate*.

Instead of revelling in triumph, Neufeldt-Fast, a professor of theology at Tyndale University College and Seminary, Toronto, and a local ordained minister, said simply: “This plaque is a commentary on the peace dove at the top of our town crest. The dove

is a tribute to the peace story that shaped the character, the actions and the contribution of our first settlers.

“A foundational category for Mennonite and Brethren in Christ ethics is the simple biblical command, *‘Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, [boldly] turn to him the other also’* (Matthew 5:39). For Mennonites, this was not considered a saintly or heroic stance, but simply a description of the life of a people that gathered by and around the Jesus story. *‘Do not repay evil for evil, but . . . live peaceably with all’* (Romans 12:17,18). To abandon this teaching would be to abandon the one who teaches it. We can’t understand who these first settlers were without understanding this teaching.

“But this teaching was hardly theoretical for those first settlers.

“Abraham Stouffer’s grandfather, with his parents and siblings, were very likely amongst those Swiss Mennonites who had their property confiscated and were expelled from Switzerland in 1710. The Canton of Bern—from which the Stouffers and Reesors and many settler families

hail—was threatened in those years by the aggressive expansionist campaigns of Louis XIV, King of France. The predominant reason given by the Bernese authorities for the expulsion of Anabaptist/Mennonites in 1710 and 1711 was their outright refusal to bear arms and serve in the military.”

To bring peace into the modern setting, Neufeldt-Fast noted three solutions presented by a peace panel during the festival: education, interaction and imagination.

“Ignorance is our enemy,” said Abuelaish. “No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin or his background or his religion.”

Brief stories from persons with different perspectives provided the interaction, Neufeldt-Fast said, proving that “the more human beings interact and the more we get to know one another, the more likely we will be able to understand another person’s perspective and find peace with them.

“Around the third theme, imagination, it became clear this is a secret ‘weapon’ for peace,” he said. “Often the path of peace is harder to imagine and therefore harder to enact than the path of violence.” ❧

The idea of a plaque was proposed by the Peace Churches, processed with the local historical committee and approved by town council in December of last year.

The wording on the plaque recognizes the early settlers and reads, in part: “The peace teachings of the Christian tradition deeply shaped their faith and caused them to wrestle with what it means to be a people of God’s peace, especially during times of conflict and war. As pioneers of conscientious objection in Canada, their commitment to the work of peace and reconciliation continues to stand witness in this community and around the world.”

The plaque dedication was part of a weekend peace festival that included a performance of *Commemorate!* by Theatre of the Beat, and a peace panel discussion with Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish, a three-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee, and Gerry Caplan, a Canadian authority on genocide and its prevention.

The organizers hope that the peace festival will continue as an annual event in Stouffville.



A plaque honouring the peaceable intentions of the first settlers of what is now the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, Ont., is unveiled by youths in the local Peace Churches on Sept. 22. The unveiling was followed by the release of white doves into the air. Pictured from left to right: Merveille Mbayamvula of Hagerman Mennonite Church, Markham; and Emily Neufeldt-Fast, Annika Kaufman-Frey and Emily de Vries, all of Community Mennonite Church, Stouffville.

'Settlers' warned against feeling guilty

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
LONDON, ONT.

Grace Smallboy, an Indian Residential School (IRS) survivor, sat on a small folded blanket in the middle of the Valleyview Mennonite Church sanctuary while around her others—including London area Mennonites—stood on their own blankets representing a variety of Canada's indigenous people groups.

The "blanket exercise" was part of an event put on by the southwestern Ontario chapter of Kairos, a national ecumenical justice initiative that includes Mennonite Central Committee Canada, on Sept. 28.

Presenter Sarah Burm represented a European settler during the exercise, beginning as a cooperative player but slowly taking control of the land being shared by the natives.

In the debriefing that followed, participants and observers spoke of feeling anger towards the system that had taken the land from the indigenous peoples, of unbelief that it had been so organized and

concerted, and of guilt about living in and from the proceeds of the theft.

But Matthew Stevens, an Ojibwe elder and ordained United Church minister, who led the exercise, counselled against guilt, as it can lead to passivity, rather than action.

In his introductory remarks, David Janzen, a member of the local Kairos board, a Christian Peacemaker Teams reservist and a member of Valleyview Mennonite's Missions Committee, said that the hope was for the event to move folk from knowledge to action.

Enos Kipfer, a member at Valleyview, said that, having acted as if "we know better," settlers have cut themselves off from so much learning from this country's indigenous peoples.

The morning concluded with Burm and Smallboy giving a history of the IRS system and recounting children being punished for speaking their indigenous language to their visiting parents, most of whom



Grace Smallboy sits among the decimated residents of North America/Turtle Island after many years of settler activity in the blanket exercise at a Kairos event held at Valleyview Mennonite Church, London, Ont., on Sept. 28.

did not speak English. Many in the group were surprised to learn of the schools, like the Mohawk Institute located in nearby Brantford, which had been tasked with "killing the Indian in the child."

In the afternoon, participants watched Smallboy's presentation to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in which she spoke of her missing memories of her three years in an IRS institution, memories she is fairly certain she does not want to recover. By learning that both her parents had been in residential schools and from the experiences of others, as well as through both therapy and traditional healing, she has been able to reconnect with her siblings and her son, and to move from suicidal self-harm to working to help others—both indigenous and settler—gain healing.

The day closed with Sue Wilson, vice-chair of the Kairos board, sharing a theological reflection. "[T]he life and mission of Jesus reveal that the kingdom of heaven is shaped by people that have a contemplative heart laced with prophetic and political energies," she said, noting that contemplatives are sometimes accused of passivity, while activists are accused of unreflective action. Wilson called for participants to take the best of both streams to be builders of God's kingdom. ❧

/// Briefly noted

EMM workers near Westgate Mall unharmed and ministering

NAIROBI, KENYA—Eight Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) workers and their five children frequent the Westgate Shopping Mall attacked by al Shabaab terrorists last month, but none were in the Nairobi mall at the time of the attack—which made international headlines for days—and none were injured. The Westgate Mall is less than three kilometres from the Mennonite Guest House and EMM residences in Nairobi. Three days of national mourning began on Sept. 25 for the dead and wounded. Aram DiGennaro, EMM regional representative for East Africa, who lives at the guest house, said, "Choppers were circling overhead, reminding us every three minutes of the carnage around the corner." DiGennaro said the whole team is thankful that no EMM or Mennonite Central Committee workers were injured, but they are all impacted by the tragedy. Despite the chaos and uncertainty in Nairobi, training has begun for a new EMM Youth Evangelism Service team that arrived in Nairobi on Sept. 21. "The team is committed to being here and is concentrating on doing what must be done," DiGennaro said. "The Holy Spirit goes on overdrive at times like this. We are spending deep time in prayer."

—Eastern Mennonite Mission



Larry Epp, left, and Ashraf Elbakri converse easily during a break at a Mennonite-Muslim gathering on Aug. 25 at the Shekinah Retreat Centre.



Reema Asfour, a high school student, shares her thoughts on a Mennonite faith story during a Mennonite-Muslim gathering at the Shekinah Retreat Centre on Aug. 25.

Mennonites and Muslims share their faith stories

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KARIN FEHDERAU
Saskatchewan Correspondent

For the second year in a row, Mennonites and Muslims met together in a friendly, get-to-know-you kind of way at the Shekinah Retreat Centre, near Waldheim, Sask.

Although a large representation from the Mennonite Church Saskatchewan community was the first to show up at the Aug. 25 event, several families from the Muslim community came later, being delayed by work commitments, explained Hanan Elbardou, one of the organizers.

People around the tables talked about their jobs and shared information on when their families came to Canada. Then different faith stories were shared and responded to.

"These are stories that are important to us as Mennonites," said Harry Harder, pastor of Pleasant Point Mennonite Church, Clavet, who also helped organize the event. Harder's connection with Muslims began during a Mennonite Central Committee

assignment in the Middle East. Now he does business with them regularly.

Two Muslims were then asked by Harder to share a faith story that was important to them. Both spoke about Mohammed and the life he lived.

For the two Muslim women sitting at one table, the talk turned to outward signs that define them.

"What does wearing the hijab mean to you?" asked one Mennonite participant.

"I feel protected," answered Sophie Asfour, a woman in her 30s. "It shows the world that I'm meant for one man. I don't show my beauty to other men."

"It is about modesty," said Reema Asfour, a Grade 10 student, adding that, while important, modesty is also a matter of the heart. "You can dress modestly but not act it," she said.

Both stressed that the decision to wear the hijab is a personal choice. Women don't have to wear it, they agreed.

"What's it like to be Muslim in Saskatoon?" asked George Epp, MC Saskatchewan moderator.

"It feels like we're just a part of it," Asfour said.

The Saskatoon population of Muslims has grown substantially in the last few years, explained Elbardou. "I think there are about 3,000 now," she said.

Although there was lots of laughter in the room, there were also undercurrents of uncertainty.

One pastor shared about his members having concerns about the event itself. "They wonder why we [MC Saskatchewan] are doing this," said Ben Pauls of his Carrot River congregation. "They don't know what's going on."

So why did the area church host this event?

"We are just trying to build connections to the Muslim community," Harder said.

Although the discussion around the tables was warm and friendly, there was a distinct line drawn when it came to worship. After a shared meal, the Mennonites went outside to worship while the Muslims held their service inside the building. ❧

Syrian refugees face uncertain future

Foodgrains Bank commits more than \$4 million to help 55,000 people

By JOHN LONGHURST
Canadian Foodgrains Bank

“I have a headache every day worrying about how I will pay my rent and feed my family.”

That’s what Syrian refugee Amoun Habouch, who is caring for eight children, told Foodgrains Bank executive director

Jim Cornelius in August when he visited her in Lebanon.

Habouch, like many thousands of other refugees in that country, is facing an uncertain future. She and her family can’t go back home, but life in Lebanon is very hard. Rent is high for their one-room apartment, and it is difficult for her husband to find a job.

Ali Hussein and Khadide Namouk and their six children also fled to Lebanon after their home near Damascus was bombed. They found shelter in an apartment in Shabriha, which they share with six other refugee families. Hussein and the other

WORLD RENEW PHOTO



Syrian children look for something to do in a refugee camp in Lebanon.

fathers are looking for work to support them.

But they are also finding it hard to get work. The large flood of refugees that have crossed into Lebanon means there are more people looking for work than jobs, and wage rates have fallen. Sometimes there is only work available for children at very low wages.

/// Briefly noted

Church seeks to respond to Middle East violence

In the wake of American efforts to build international support for a military intervention to the Syrian crisis, Mennonite Church Canada leaders are seeking ways to once again speak out against a violent solution. In May, MC Canada executive director Willard Metzger added his signature to 23 others on a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper advocating for nonviolent solutions to conflict in the Middle East. *(To read the full text of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) letter, as well as "Five ways you can act on the crisis in the Middle East," visit mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/2135.)*

Led by CCC, representing 24 Christian denominations, the letter called the Canadian government to "hold firm to the obligation for all state and non-state actors in the region, without exception, to respect international law, particularly in situations of armed conflict." Harper referred the communiqué to John Baird, the foreign affairs minister, who has not yet responded. Meanwhile, Metzger is seeking a meeting with the leader of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Canada, Archbishop Elia Bahi, Patriarchal Vicariate of Canada, to express solidarity with Syrian Christians and discuss how Mennonites can best respond to what seems an intractable situation. Mennonite World Conference leaders have issued a letter to all Mennonite Church Canada congregations seeking prayer, advocacy with other Christians and governments, and sharing of resources.

—Mennonite Church Canada

Namouk spoke sadly when she told Cornelius, "I will have to take two of my children out of school to work to help the family, to help buy the food we need."

Many others also told him of sending their children to work to help support their families.

"Most of the refugee families I spoke with are spending a lot each month to pay for rent, even for the most basic accommodations, such as tool sheds, garages or permission to pitch a tent," Cornelius says. "After paying their rent, they have very little money, if any, left over for food and medical expenses."

Through its members, the Foodgrains Bank is responding to the needs of Syrians affected by the conflict; to date, the organization has committed nearly \$4.2 million to provide food for some 55,000 displaced

people and refugees in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan each month. The projects are being implemented by Foodgrains Bank members like Mennonite Central Committee, while other Foodgrains Bank members are developing additional responses.

"This crisis is a catastrophe for the families and children caught in the crossfire," says Cornelius, adding that, with more than six million people displaced, "it has turned into one of the worst humanitarian crises of our time."

"These are people just like us," says Cornelius. "Before the war, they lived peaceful and stable lives in cities, towns and farms. They had jobs, a house, and were able to feed their families. Now they have fled for their lives, with no way of knowing how or when the conflict will end, or even if they will ever be able to go home again." ///

Cattle fraud charges withdrawn

BY BARB DRAPER

Editorial Assistant
ELMIRA, ONT.

Howard Bauman and Merle Shantz, cattle buyers from Elmira, Ont., and members of Floradale Mennonite Church, are thankful to see the end of their year-long legal struggles. *(See "Elmira region men charged with cattle fraud," April 2, 2012, page 18.)*

All charges of fraud and theft laid last year by the Ontario Provincial Police were withdrawn, and at their final court appearance in June, Bauman pleaded guilty to one count of false pretences over \$5,000. All charges against Shantz were dropped. Because both men have been working at restitution, a small fine was the extent of Bauman's sentence.

Serious problems for Central Ontario Cattle Ltd. go back to 2003, when the "mad cow disease" crisis resulted in plummeting beef prices and the men tried to look after their customers, especially the Old Order Mennonites who do not accept government subsidies. For years, they tried to get their company back on its feet, but they

suffered significant losses when a deal with a new packer went sour. Struggling to avoid bankruptcy, the two men put some of their personal assets into the company.

It still wasn't enough and Bauman finally decided that Central Ontario Cattle needed to shut down. Although he knew that not all cheques could be covered, he intended that unpaid customers could access help from the Livestock Financial Protection Board, an organization designed to help in this type of situation.

"I didn't know what to do," said Bauman. "I thought I was doing the right thing."

Through it all, Bauman and Shantz have been thankful for the support of their customers, many of whom didn't want them to close. They have continued buying and selling cattle, operating under someone else's licence.

It's been a difficult journey. "Without my faith, I don't know where I'd be," said Bauman. Shantz agreed, but said the whole experience "also challenges your faith." ///



Tom and Christine Poovong of Trinity Mennonite Church, Calgary, transition to Thailand in October to explore locations for a three-year church planting assignment. They will work in consultation with other Anabaptist/Mennonite groups in Thailand, as well as with Living Water Church in Borabu. They have a one-year-old son, Joseph.

Mennonite Church Canada congregants are embracing short- and long-term ministry assignments in Thailand, South Korea, England and Israel/Palestine



Jeanette Hoepfner began a five-month assignment in August with Bethlehem Bible College in Israel/Palestine, assisting with the guesthouse offering hospitality for groups, supporters and international guests to the college. Her home congregation is Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Winkler, Man.



Bock Ki Kim and Sook Kyoung Park of the Shalom Adonai congregation in London, Ont., left for Chun Chon, South Korea, in September. The couple, who formerly were part of the Korean Fellowship at Winnipeg's Charleswood Mennonite Church, will be church planting and assisting new Anabaptists in partnership with the Korea Anabaptist Center for a three-year term. Daughter Jin Sol and son Daniel are both enrolled in studies at the University of Waterloo, Ont.



Michael and Cheryl Nimz of Didsbury, Alta., are settling into life in Birmingham, England, where Mike will support the emerging Anabaptist Network of Communities (ANC), part of the Anabaptist Network in the United Kingdom, for a three-year assignment that includes a ground-breaking role to expand the ANC in new directions. Mike has been a pastor at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury, Alta., and more recently the couple has connected with Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach, Man.

God at work in the World

Snapshots



Jerry and Kara Buhler, together with daughter Laura, arrived in Israel/Palestine in early September to serve at Bethlehem Bible College doing volunteer driving and maintenance duties, and volunteering in the library, for a six-month term. Laura graduated from Rosthern Junior College in June. The Buhlers attend Mount Royal Mennonite Church in Saskatoon.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Bethania Group dismisses CEO

Ray Koop to repay nearly \$75,000 in salary and benefits

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

Four months after being placed on administrative leave by the board of Bethania Group Personal Care Homes, chief executive officer Ray Koop was let go on Oct. 3 following the release of an independent review ordered by Manitoba's health minister, Theresa Oswald.

The review—which also dealt with allegations of nepotism, staff intimidation and financial mismanagement—arose after a government audit revealed the board had ratified a 2012 retire/rehire contract with a salary increase for Koop, contravening a provincial freeze on executive pay to organizations receiving government funding. Bethania receives \$9.5 million annually from the province to operate the Bethania and Pembina personal care homes in Winnipeg.

In April, the Bethania board defended its deal with Koop, stating in an April 15 *Canadian Mennonite* article (“Manitoba orders Bethania Group to terminate CEO”): “[T]he board maintains it has the right and legal responsibility to hire the CEO . . . and to determine the terms and conditions of the contract.”

But in the wake of his dismissal, the *Winnipeg Free Press* reported that Koop has agreed to repay Bethania \$73,526 for salary and benefits, and has already reimbursed the organization \$30,000.

Dave Dyck, former board chair of Mennonite Central Committee, was appointed to conduct the independent investigation. The review, released Sept. 19, was accepted by the provincial government and the Bethania board. It addressed concerns and made recommendations regarding intimidation, nepotism, senior staff appointments, allocation of financial resources and board governance.

“A simple continuation of the status quo is not a functional long-term option,” wrote Dyck in his review. “Without significant change in the leadership provided by the CEO and, to some degree, the board, Bethania will lurch from crisis to crisis.”

Leni Lousier, first vice-chair of the Bethania board, said this has been one of the most painful experiences she has had. “The last number of months has been extremely difficult, a very stressful time for Bethania,” she said. “The allegations have had an effect on everyone, not just the board, but the senior leadership team, our frontline staff, our residents, our families

‘Without question, it is true that the publicity surrounding the retire/rehire scenario and the attempt to increase the salary for the CEO has dealt a serious blow to the reputation of Bethania . . .’
(Dave Dyck)

and our Mennonite community at large.”

“The recommendations speak to every single issue, to every allegation,” said Lousier. “We need to make sure we are doing the best we can to make sure people feel valued at Bethania. We have started implementing the recommendations already.”

“There are those at Bethania who like to think that if only the minister and the deputy minister at the time had been less confrontational and more restrained with public comment, all would be well,” wrote Dyck in his report. “Without question, it is true that the publicity surrounding the retire/rehire scenario and the attempt to increase the salary for the CEO has dealt a serious blow to the reputation of Bethania

within its own long-standing and generous supportive community. Hopefully that trust can be rebuilt and hopefully this investigation will contribute to a factually based rebuilding process. All that, however, does not alter the reality that changes needed to come to Bethania and the question remains whether the necessary changes would have been implemented without some public embarrassment and pressure to do so.”

“We can’t be destroyed by our failures. We have to learn from them,” said Lousier. “We need to remind ourselves to work through the troubled times and do everything with the faith that God is going to continue to lead us and help us move forward.”

Throughout this difficult time the quality of care was never in question.

“High-quality resident care is paramount for the staff at Bethania and I’m pleased this report recognizes the great care frontline staff at Bethania provide every day,” said Oswald in a government release. “We support the board in its decision and are pleased we were able to work together to come to this resolution.”

“Our government has said from the outset that we value the role of faith-based facilities in our health-care system and we want to ensure both Bethania and Pembina Place remain Mennonite-run personal care homes,” said Oswald. “I believe the recommendations in this review will not only allow Bethania Group to provide excellent, faith-based care, but it will also ensure these homes continue to thrive for years to come.”

Les Janzen, chief operating officer for Concordia Hospital, has been serving as Bethania’s interim CEO and will continue to do so until a new CEO is found. ▮

Learning English from the Bible

Church ESL class meets during Sunday school hour

STORY AND PHOTO BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

Every Sunday morning a group of adults gathers in a Sunday school room at Emmanuel Mennonite Church to discuss Bible stories. But this class is not the traditional Sunday school lesson series for church members. Instead, it is a language class for immigrants to Canada who want to become more fluent in English as their second language.

The class began in 2007, when Emmanuel's Missions, Peace and Justice Committee was searching for ways to minister to the surrounding community. The church building, situated in a part of the city that, in recent years, has become largely populated by South Asian families, found itself in an ideal position to reach out to immigrants at its doorstep. What started off as a six-week summer course eventually grew to several times a week during fall and winter.

Advertising through posters outside the church—a place where many neighbourhood people gather—has been effective, as have been word-of-mouth and distribution of flyers.

When it became clear that Abbotsford had many good English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classes that met several times a week, the church decided to reduce it to the weekly Sunday morning meeting time, and now calls it more of an “ESL support” class, rather than a primary ESL class.

Class members, who usually number six to 10, have come from a number of different countries over the years. Current attendees come from Japan, India, Taiwan and Thailand, and range from teens to seniors.

Sue Kehler has prepared a basic curriculum that all three groups of teachers follow. Alternating teaching every third Sunday are Kehler, Phil and Jean Hood, and Hans and Eva Hofenk. The class begins with a

Bible story written in simple English that everyone reads aloud together. Teachers take note if some words pose particular difficulty in pronunciation, or if class members seem to have a problem understanding. This is followed by general conversation and then a short grammar lesson, for example, noting verbs in the story, or finding two sentences written in the past or present tense.

This year, says Kehler, the class will also use books that teach basic Christian values. As she explains in the curriculum handout: “In our ESL lessons we will share stories that help us look at ourselves through the struggles and victories of other people. These stories help us keep the adventures and experiences of other people alive.”

On a recent Sunday, the Hoods talked about the importance of stories in all cultures and the basic elements that are common to stories, whether biblical or secular,

such as common people struggling on a journey and the help they receive along the way.

“I believe we have been created with a story in our hearts,” says Phil. “It’s because when we hear a story from another culture, if we recognize the plot, we will know it’s a true story.”

He later explained that, although the Bible is intentionally used as a method of sharing the gospel, “we are very respectful of the fact that [class members] come from different religious backgrounds.” Of course, the teachers are eager to answer questions the students may have about spiritual matters as prompted by the lesson, and to welcome them to other church activities if they choose to come.

The newcomers are also eager to learn about Canadian culture in general, so the group sometimes meets outside class for parties or other celebrations. Christmas is a favourite time for a party, and the Hoods say they have intentionally decorated their home for a “classic Canadian Christmas” for their international students to enjoy.

Involvement with the ESL class, the Hoods have found, benefits them as much as the students. “We have learned so much from them,” says Phil. “They are wonderful, intelligent people.”

Adds Kehler, “Friendship is one of the great goals. We love meeting these people.” ☸



Jean and Phil Hood, in background, relate to students of many ages and cultures at Emmanuel Mennonite Church's Sunday morning English class.



The worship team at Bethel Ethiopian Evangelical Church in action on Sept. 8.

Charismatic worship, Mennonite connections

Bethel Ethiopian Evangelical Church joins MC Eastern Canada

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
KITCHENER, ONT.

The pews had German and English hymnals, but no one was using them. The worship team was singing to a synthesized band played on a keyboard. The worship time, led by a man backed by four women in choir robes, depended on the leader lining out the words. For over an hour of contemplative, centring singing, punctuated by times of prayer by the male leader, the congregation joined in. People in the pews raised their hands, swayed and ululated; one woman broke into a long impassioned prayer as the songs moved to



more expressive music and words.

Except for the ululation (a howl or wail expressing strong emotion), it could have been any North American charismatic or

“contemporary” worship service. That and the Amharic language.

Bethel Ethiopian Evangelical Church is one of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada’s newest emerging congregations, joining the area church in April.

The approximately 100 adults, youth and children meet at Kitchener’s Central Baptist Church on Sunday afternoons from 2:30 to 4:30 or 5; worship time is flexible. Children and youth are present for the worship time, but leave during the sermon for English-language Sunday school.

Mesfin Woldearegay is employed as the congregation’s full-time pastor, reaching out to newcomers in the community, speaking on a Wednesday evening radio program on Faith FM 94.3, administering and preaching most of the time. Woldearegay has been in Canada for 21 years, 15 of those as pastor of a variety of congregations. While he speaks English well, the congregation is exploring the hiring of an English-speaking youth pastor/worker, since many of the youth and children born in Canada can barely understand, never mind speak, Amharic.

Many of the congregants at Bethel have been on the move for years through Africa and Europe, fleeing the persecution of their homeland’s former Marxist government. Some of them are continuing to struggle with the psychological impact of living in refugee camps. Others left Ethiopia looking to improve their income and lifestyle.

When Bethel was forming three years ago, congregants decided that they would join a Canadian denomination. MC Eastern Canada was a logical choice, as many in the congregation have roots in the Anabaptist Meserete Kristos Church, the largest single member of Mennonite World Conference.

Befekadu Kassa, the preacher on Sept. 8, focused on turning-point experiences in the Bible—Paul in Acts, Jacob/Israel and Moses being key—using Stephen’s address to the Sanhedrin in Acts 7 as a jumping-off point, in which he challenged the Jewish leaders to also turn to Jesus.

Woldearegay noted afterwards that, while the turning point is important, people do not change instantly; that is a work of God that takes years. ❧

'Blessed by God to be a blessing'

First Mennonite Kitchener celebrates bicentennial

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
KITCHENER, ONT.

A 200th anniversary fiesta broke out on First Mennonite Church's parking lot on Sept. 28 with a bouncy castle, face painting, and worship in Spanish and English with the invitation "¡Bienvenidos todos y todas!"

Bishop Clayton Derstine, who served the congregation in the early part of the last century, would not have recognized the scene. Known to both pointedly wake up parishioners during his sermons, or

emphatically quiet children and youth he deemed to be too noisy, Derstine pastored First Mennonite Church, Kitchener for nearly 40 years, overseeing the addition of around 400 new members in those years as Swiss Mennonites moved from farms and villages into the city.

Tom Yoder Neufeld, a member of the anniversary committee, noted that Derstine was seen as radical in his time, pioneering the city's House of Friendship and other

projects.

Besides the fiesta, planned by the Hispanic part of the congregation, two worship services and a tree-planting service happened on Sept. 29. Janet Plenert of Mennonite World Conference and Mennonite Disaster Service spoke at the afternoon service on the anniversary theme, "Blessed by God to be a blessing."

As current congregational chair Brent Martin put it, beginning to look to the church's 200th anniversary set the congregation on a renewal journey. There were questions about the building, which was not fitting the needs of the congregation. The successful Logos program, with a hundred children and youth, could really use a gym. And as the style of worship evolved, the sanctuary did not really fit their needs.

But the idea of a multi-million-dollar project and the ensuing mortgage led him and others to the conclusion that they were not really unified around their vision as a

PHOTO COURTESY OF ELIZABETH RUDY



Earlier in First Mennonite's bicentennial year, the Women's Missionary and Service Commission (WMSC) held a Pioneer Tea to celebrate in skirts the contributions of women like Mary Brubacher, wife of founding Bishop Benjamin Eby and mother of his 10 children; Barbara Bowman Shuh, first president of the Ladies' Aid in 1908; and Mary Ann (Nahrgang) Cressman, who organized women's work at the church and in the broader Ontario Mennonite community for more than 40 years. During the tea, a commemorative wall-hanging by Lisa Packull, second from right, and sewn, quilted and appliquéd by members of the WMSC was unveiled. Also pictured, from left to right: Grace Weber, Pat Janowski, Judy Gascho-Jutzi and Elizabeth Rudy.

congregation. A multi-year renewal journey has resulted in new energy and focus. The end of the journey coincided with a complete turnover of staff last year for a variety of reasons and gave the congregation the freedom to hire Nancy Brubaker as lead pastor, René Baergen as pastor of Hispanic ministries, Christina Edmiston as pastor of worship and music, and David Penny as youth pastor. Penny resigned just before the bicentennial.

One of the major decisions in the renewal was that the congregation is multicultural. It presently has two worship services, one mainly Spanish on Saturday evening and the other mainly English on Sunday morning, but they are both full worship services of the congregation. There is no plan for the Hispanic part of the congregation, made up of refugees and their families from Central and South America, to begin their own congregation as the Hmong did after worshipping at First for many years

before starting First Hmong Mennonite Church in their own building

In many ways Kitchener has grown up around First. Now in the downtown core, the church was in the country when it was founded by immigrants from Pennsylvania in 1813. Edmiston noted that there are many opportunities for the congregation by being downtown, including continued interaction with refugees like the Hispanic and Hmong, and now many others.

Sharon Lamont, currently church historian, said the building is a major resource that the congregation is already sharing with the community, but which has many more potential uses in the future. Shalom

Healing and Worship Centre, an Eritrean congregation of 90 that is exploring a relationship with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, meets in the building on Sunday afternoons.

Although attendance is down from Derstine's heyday, the 170 regular congregants are focused together with energy on their future as a multicultural urban church. The descendants of the Swiss/South German founders are learning with their Hispanic co-members what it means to be Anabaptist Mennonite in a new century. ☸

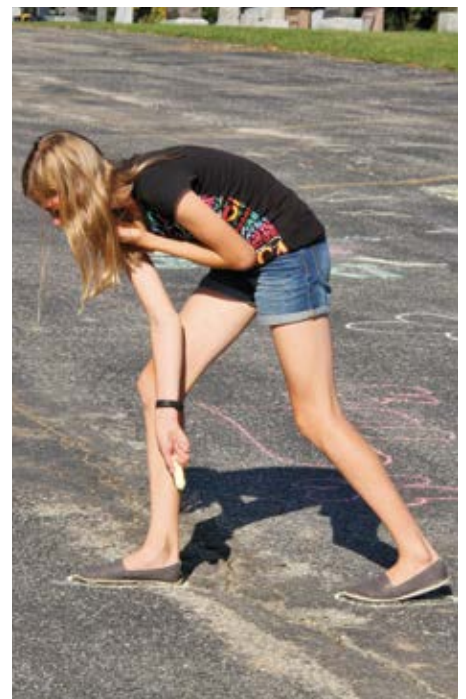
PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Christina Edmiston, worship and music pastor, guides a young participant at First Mennonite Kitchener's 200th anniversary fiesta on Sept. 28 to hear Ronno, an internationally known children's performer who makes First Mennonite his home.



Dave Rivera cooks up dinner at First Mennonite Kitchener's 200th anniversary fiesta.



Rachel Kehl makes her own path to the future at First Mennonite Kitchener's 200th anniversary fiesta.

MENNONITE HERITAGE TOURS

Affiliated with the California Mennonite Historical Society

SEEING POLAND THROUGH MENNONITE EYES

June 14 - 25, 2014

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June 30 - July 11, 2014

Tour leaders: Paul Toews and Olga Shmakina

THE MENNONITE PAST AND PRESENT IN NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM

July 21 - August 1, 2014

Tour Leader: Paul Toews

www.calmennon.org
 ptoews2000@yahoo.com
 lnptrs@comcast.net



PHOTOS BY PHYLLIS GROFF



A group of K'ekchi' women play their instruments together in worship.

K'ekchi' women develop their musical talents

BY CHRIS FRETZ AND PHYLLIS GROFF

Eastern Mennonite Missions
ALTA VERAPAZ, GUATEMALA

K'ekchi' Mennonite women played musical instruments and led worship during their annual two-day women's retreat in June for the first time in the retreat's history. In the past, musical instruments in K'ekchi' Mennonite churches were played only by men.

The church is not theologically opposed to women playing musical instruments in church, but because K'ekchi' men have the money to purchase instruments, and often have more schooling than women, they have typically been their churches' worship leaders.

At last year's women's retreat, Maria Chub, the newly elected president of the K'ekchi' Mennonite Women's Association, was sad to see no worship band accompanying the women. Chub began to dream of empowering women from her church to organize a worship band.

She talked with her pastor about her vision for teaching women to play musical instruments, and he agreed it was a good idea. Together they asked the men in the worship band at their church if they would give permission for women to practise with their equipment. Tomas Bok, a deacon gifted at playing the guitar, agreed to teach the women.

When the church invited women to learn to play instruments, eight responded.

Each woman committed herself to two-hour practice sessions held three times a week for eight months in order to prepare for the 2013 women's retreat.

The Chiyaxut church took offerings to purchase guitars for each of the women, and later the women's group in the church took special offerings to pay for the

women's transportation to the retreat. Bok took time off from his work to accompany and support them during the two-day event, attended by 96 women from 23 different churches. The group of women leading worship at the retreat delighted the participants, many of whom had never seen women playing musical instruments in a church setting.

Since the retreat, the women have continued to use their new skills. They now lead worship occasionally for the Sunday morning services at their church in Chiyaxut. Two other congregations have also begun instrumental music lessons for women in their communities. ❧

❧ Briefly note

Zehr/Huber share Tutu spotlight

HARRISONBURG, VA.—Howard Zehr, Ph.D., semi-retired faculty member of Eastern Mennonite University who is globally recognized for his seminal role in restorative justice, was the first local honoree of the Mahatma Gandhi Center for Global Nonviolence at nearby James Madison University (JMU), as was the late Vida Huber, Ph.D., who chaired EMU's nursing program from 1967-84 and then held leadership roles at JMU until her sudden death in 2005. Desmond Tutu was given the first award from the Ghandi Center six years ago. Zehr, dubbed the "grandfather of restorative justice," gained worldwide attention after publishing *Change Lenses: A New Focus for Crime and Justice*, and is widely sought after as a resource person and speaker in peace causes. He was one of several keynote speakers for the international peace conference jointly hosted by Conrad Grebel University College and Wilfrid Laurier University's Dept. of Global Studies this month. At the time of her death, Huber was an associate dean of JMU's College of Integrated Science and Technology; she was also director of JMU's Institute for Innovation in Health and Human Services and professor of nursing.

—Eastern Mennonite University



Howard Zehr

ARTBEAT

An inkling into the Inklings

New institute explores work of Lewis, Tolkien, among others

Trinity Western University
LANGLEY, B.C.

Trinity Western University has established a new research unit dedicated to the study of a group of popular British authors and thinkers, the Inklings. While the name may not be immediately familiar to many, the most famous members—C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien—are certainly household names, conjuring memories of favourite childhood fantasy stories.

Led by English professors Stephen Dunning and Monika Hilder, the Inklings Institute of Canada gives a name to what's already been taking place at TWU for more than a decade, and solidifies it as an official hub of Inklings research.

The Inklings, says Hilder, have ongoing relevance today, “not just as imaginative writers, but as culture critics. Their work invites us to ask questions that many of us have not yet begun to consider—and their answers are potentially transformative.”

She has written three books on Lewis that discuss gender and the interplay of theology and cultural studies. Along with Dunning, who specializes in the writer Charles Williams, she has seen a significant uptake in Inklings-related study at TWU. Together, the professors bring more than

The Inklings have ongoing relevance today, 'not just as imaginative writers, but as culture critics. Their work invites us to ask questions that many of us have not yet begun to consider—and their answers are potentially transformative.' (Monika Hilder)

40 years of research on these authors.

Their expertise will fuel the Institute as TWU becomes a base for Inklings-related conferences, a vehicle for research funding, and a draw for graduate students and additional top-tier researchers in this area.

Additionally, they hope it will give the public a greater awareness of these authors and their innovative thinking.

“Most of us come to this group through Lewis or Tolkien,” says Dunning, pointing to Lewis’s popular *Chronicles of Narnia* and Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. But, he notes, both of these writers were heavily influenced by a group of colleagues, especially by those who regularly gathered through the 1930s and '40s, including Owen Barfield and Charles Williams, their peer Dorothy L. Sayers, and earlier

mentors George MacDonald and G.K. Chesterton.

These authors shared an open exchange of ideas during their Oxford years, but, says Dunning, “in many ways these people did not agree on a lot of key issues. Tolkien was influential in Lewis’s conversion, but Tolkien was deeply disappointed that his friend didn’t become a Roman Catholic. And while both owe a strong debt to Owen Barfield, according to Lewis, Barfield had read all the right books, but gotten the wrong thing out of all of them.”

Much like the rich group of thinkers who gathered in Lewis’s Oxford University rooms—including a doctor, Robert Havard; an historian, Lord David Cecil; and even a ship owner, Percy Bates—the new Institute is cross-disciplinary. In addition to literature scholars, it includes scholars in the fields of arts and media, communications, philosophy, physics, and political and religious studies from across the TWU faculty, as well as scholars internationally.

“You can’t do Inklings studies without that diversity of discipline,” says Dunning. “It’s part of a bigger picture. These authors didn’t just explore what it means to be a writer or a Christian thinker, but what it means to be human.”

TRINITY WESTERN UNIVERSITY PHOTO



English professors Monika Hilder and Stephen Dunning together bring more than 40 years of research on the Inklings’ authors. They head the newly formed Inklings Institute of Canada at Trinity Western University.

Icons bridge art, church traditions

BY AARON EPP

Young Voices Co-editor
WINNIPEG

Today, when people think of the word “icon,” images of computers and technology come to mind. For centuries, though, the icon—derived from the Greek *eikon* or *ikon*—has referred exclusively to images of the divine or sacred. Serving an integral role in the liturgical practices of the Eastern Orthodox Church in particular, icons represent “windows into heaven,” directing the minds and hearts of the faithful towards God.

“Embracing the i-kon,” an exhibit showing at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg until Nov. 9, aims to remind people of the history and impact of icons. Curated by art historian Rachel Baerg, the exhibition features a selection of historic icons, including folk variants from Ethiopia and Asia alongside the work of local Ukrainian iconographer Vera Senchuk and five Winnipeg artists: Michael Boss, Ray Dirks, Seth Woodyard, Christian

Worthington and Michele Sarna.

Baerg notes that, historically the Mennonite church has not embraced icons or the visual arts in general, as other traditions have done. She and Dirks, gallery curator, began talking about the exhibit three years ago, with the idea that exploring the tradition of icons might engage the community in discussion on the current relationship between contemporary art and Christian traditions.

“The whole point of this show [is] really to give a fuller understanding of icons, their meaning, their significance, their past and present uses in Orthodox traditions, and [to] see how artists today are tapping into those traditions,” says Baerg, an art educator at the Winnipeg Art Gallery who attends River East Mennonite Brethren Church.

She adds that the majority of people

COURTESY OF MICHAEL BOSS



Michael Boss began creating icons, including this 1998 image of St. Michael, as a way of tapping into an art tradition larger than himself.

COURTESY OF SETH WOODYARD



'Book,' a 2007 painting by Winnipeg artist Seth Woodyard.

see 3,000 images each day, and, especially for young people, images are a key way of communicating.

“The [Protestant] church is wanting to use that as a way to bring young people in . . . but we don’t know where to turn,” Baerg says. “We haven’t really invested in this rich tradition that sort of ended with the Protestant Reformation. There’s renewed interest and conversation, particularly with Protestants, to look at other traditions—Roman Catholic, Orthodox—with renewed openness [to] renew these traditions of worship.”

The artists included in the exhibit come from divergent faith backgrounds and work in a variety of media, including wood, canvas, clay and metal.

Their works provide for engaging dialogue concerning the appropriation of traditional Christian images and explore the often tenuous relationship between traditional art and the church today, and between contemporary art and the expression of personal faith.

Michael Boss says he first began creating icons in 1996 after becoming disenchanted with the contemporary art world, in which artists typically focus on themselves. He had been investigating his family’s cultural

history—his father is Ukrainian Catholic and his mother is Mennonite—and looked to icons as something he could create that did not need to be about his own psyche or his own creativity.

“There’s a long tradition of artists and craftspeople who are working on imagery for churches and personal devotions,” he says. “I picked that up and I just started working on very traditional-type icons as a spiritual devotion and as a way of using the gifts I believe I had been granted, which is this interest in, or orientation toward, being an artist. I was kind of giving [my talent] back to God.”

Boss adds that icons are great tools for meditation because the imagery is of stories from the Bible, or saints and figures from throughout history who have led exemplary lives. “It gets you to focus on the sacrifices

they made, the hardships they faced, the glory of God that shone through their lives,” he says. “It gets you to focus on things other than your worldly cares.”

Dirks says that the response to the exhibit has been very strong.

“Certainly for us, the response [is] overwhelmingly positive,” he says. “Maybe in the past these things have been outright rejected, but . . . to present this kind of art, most people are open to it now.”

Baerg hopes people approach the exhibit with an open mind and that they become curious about the role of icons in church history, and how they might be used in Mennonite churches today. “Gradually, if we have an open mind and are willing to learn, I think we will find ourselves with incredible opportunities to experience worship in a whole different way,” she says. ❧

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Rachel Epp Buller, centre, assistant professor of art at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., together with her fellow editor, **Kerry Fast**, right, a freelance editor from Toronto, hand **Hildi Froese Tiessen**, Conrad Grebel University College professor emerita, a signed copy of their book *Mothering Mennonite* at the Grebel-sponsored book launch on Sept. 14. Buller and Fast outlined the content of the book at the launch, and **Magdalene Redekop**, University of Toronto professor emerita, read from her essay, ‘Picturing my mother: The looking glass revisited.’ The book, while academic, is filled with first-person stories and poetry, making it accessible to those interested in the effects of religion, history and culture on mothering.

COURTESY OF MICHAEL BOSS



A copper crucifix, created in 2000 by Michael Boss.

FOCUS ON TRAVEL

COVER STORY

'I've been everywhere, ma'am'*Yvonne Martin travels to learn and enjoy*

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
ELMIRA, ONT.

Yvonne Martin, retired from the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union, and her husband Murray, also retired, have travelled to many places—all of Canada, half of the U.S., and many locations in South and Central America, Europe, Africa, New Zealand and Asia—reminding one of Geoff Mack's 1962 song, "I've Been Everywhere, Man," sung by Canadian country music icons Stompin' Tom Connors and Hank Snow

But it was a trip last fall to Vietnam and Singapore with TourMagination that

flagged them as frequent travellers.

"The tour included a few purposeful travel or 'faithprint' components," says Sandra Reimer of TourMagination. "The group visited and worshipped with Vietnamese Mennonites, and dialogued with Mennonite Central Committee personnel and local workers from other non-profit organizations. As well, the travellers gave a donation to further leadership development in the Vietnamese Mennonite Church."

Martin says that she and her husband

PHOTO COURTESY OF YVONNE MARTIN



Yvonne Martin, right, observes an irrigation project in Zambia while travelling in 2011.

use tours when they are going places where they don't know the language. They've travelled with both TourMagination and Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA). One of her favourite and most meaningful trips was actually a joint trip between the two to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, touring MEDA projects as well as seeing the sites and experiencing the culture.

On May 9—Victory Day (over the Nazis in 1945)—they travelled out into the country to see an irrigation project. Once there, they encountered Muslim workers having a celebratory meal. Recognizing them as westerners, the mostly male workers insisted that they sit down with them and eat. It was "a holy moment," says Martin, as they experienced the hospitality of a group that certainly had less than the travellers and "served us their food." On that day, she says the travellers also "became the parade" to lay flowers at a monument to the "victory" as local residents lined the street.

Having been in a country like Egypt, where she has seen people living in the dumps around Cairo, and the anger in the young men's eyes as they sort garbage for things to sell or to use, the news on TV or in print now means more to her. She says it makes her more thankful for what "we have here" in Waterloo Region that was partially established by her ancestors among the Swiss/South German settlers.

The Martins are off on a TourMagination trip to India this month to celebrate the Mennonite Christian Fellowship of India's 50th anniversary. ❧

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Feb 12-20/2014
Israel/Palestine with Pastor David Boshart
April 24-May 3/2014
Holy Land Tour with Pastor Darrel Toews
October 19-28/2014
From Nazareth to Rome with Pastor Jim Brown
Nov 3-15/2014
Explore the World of Paul with Tom Yoder Neufeld
May 27-June 12/2015

HERITAGE TOURS

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June 24-July 7/2014
Amish European Heritage Tour with John Ruth
July 6-28/2014
Poland & Ukraine: The Mennonite Story with Audrey Voth Petkau
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First step towards reconciliation

Mennonites pledge their commitment to building peace with their feet

STORY AND PHOTOS BY RACHEL BERGEN

Young Voices Co-Editor
VANCOUVER

“Walk together, children, don’t you get weary,” said Bernice King, daughter of the legendary Martin Luther King Jr.

Those words were spoken to a crowd that organizers estimated at 70,000 who were about to take symbolic and literal steps towards reconciliation on Sept. 22, the day after the Vancouver Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) events ended.

Thousands from around British Columbia and across Canada flocked to downtown Vancouver that day to participate in the four-kilometre-long Walk for Reconciliation, holding signs, drumming and singing, and pledging their commitment to building peace.

King greeted those clad in rain gear and holding umbrellas as brothers and sisters

Janzen, Mennonite Church B.C.’s executive minister. The Emmanuel Mennonite Church youth group from Abbotsford walked with the Mennonite Folk.

Chris Lenshyn, Emmanuel’s associate pastor, said the event was an opportunity for the youth and their sponsors to act on the reconciliation demonstrated and called for in the Bible. “We believe in reconciliation,” he said. “We participate in a gospel, in a faith in a God that’s all about reconciliation, so to be a people of faith means to be people of action, which means we need to be here. Or I would be afraid of what our faith would stand for.”

Gerald and Rie Neufeld, also members of Emmanuel Mennonite, brought their three young children to participate in the walk. “We explained quite a bit this past week what’s going on in Vancouver,” Rie



Mennonites from Vancouver and beyond were among the approximately 70,000 people walking through rainy downtown Vancouver calling for peace, justice and reconciliation in Canada.

*‘As Mennonite settlers, we have benefitted greatly from your dispossession and marginalization.’
(Garry Janzen, Mennonite Church B.C.)*

of the human race, all inhabitants of what she called the “global house” that is “made up of many races, ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. We must learn to live together as brothers and sisters or we will perish together as fools.”

Among those walking were two groups of Mennonites. One billed itself as “East Van Mennonites and Friends,” and the other called itself “Mennonite Folk,” led by Garry

said. “The kids are old enough to understand the history of what the indigenous people are struggling with.”

Earlier that week, MC Canada and MC B.C. representatives, along with members of churches in the area, attended the TRC events at the Pacific National Exhibition.

Representatives from MC B.C. and various Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren

(Continued on page 34)



Along with taking part in the Walk for Reconciliation, many Mennonites actively engaged in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission events throughout the week before.

(Continued from page 33)

churches in B.C. offered a statement of reconciliation on Sept. 19. Janzen led the statement, along with David Heinrichs of Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship; Isadore Charters, a member of Sardis Community Church; Don Klaassen, a church mission coach with Outreach Canada; Darryl Klassen of Mennonite Central Committee B.C.'s Aboriginal Neighbours program; and others.

"As Mennonite settlers, we have benefited greatly from your dispossession and marginalization," Janzen told the crowd.

Heinrichs added, "We commit to working towards reconciliation as we follow the example of Jesus, whose life and mission modelled peacemaking and bringing justice."

Although many people attended the TRC and made positive steps toward reconciliation, some felt there wasn't enough done by the Christian community to encourage participation.

Some Christian and secular schools in B.C. cancelled classes or made efforts to help students attend the TRC events, but those that didn't received negative feedback from students and alumni.

Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford offered students the opportunity to miss class without penalty in order to attend. Trinity Western University in Langley cancelled classes and provided transportation

/// For further reading

For further reading, see our web exclusive, "When will we Christians ever learn," at youngvoices.canadianmennonite.org.

to the events. Most UBC faculties closed for the first day, although Regent College, UBC's graduate school of theology, did not close and held its student and faculty retreat on the weekend when many statements of reconciliation were offered and the walk was held.

Jordan Shaw, a Regent student who used to attend Emmanuel Mennonite Church until he moved to Vancouver, spoke out about the decision. "I feel like the right choice here would have been to make this [Walk for Reconciliation] accessible to the students and faculty of Regent," he said. "There is so much hurt and pain here, and Regent is looked at as a leader in evangelical thought. . . . I really want to love this school, but I must follow my conscience as well," he said, explaining that he did not attend the retreat in order to participate in the last day of TRC events and attend the Walk for Reconciliation. ///

VIEWPOINT

The 'dos' of purity

An orientation for single sexuality

BY KARLA BRAUN

MENNONITE BRETHERN HERALD

I'm not waiting for marriage. Like many other evangelical teenagers, I signed a yellow "true love waits" index card in youth group and wore a chastity ring. These symbols may create a temporary bulwark against raging teenage hormones, but a message that boils down to "just don't give out

your v-card till after the wedding" isn't theologically robust enough to withstand the cultural bombardment of "everybody's doing it." The message of "wait so it'll be great" isn't enough to sustain a standard of purity when years turn into decades.

This isn't to say I've stopped believing

marriage marks an important boundary for healthy sexual activity. However, I find my parameters not through a checklist of don'ts, but by discovering who and what God calls us—as embodied souls—to be and do.

As singles become a larger proportion of the total population, our society needs a church that models what holiness looks like in relationships: for teens in love and single thirtysomethings, as well as for married people.

Follow Jesus, not the bridal path

Consider the fellowship groups and programs at our churches. They're usually organized around age and marital status: children's ministry, youth, young adults, young marrieds, family programs, empty nesters and seniors. And sermon topics:

*I don't need rules about not having sex.
I need the church to help me reject the lie
that desire is the most important thing.*

What's the ratio of marriage and parenthood messages to those on singleness? How many illustrations derive from the context of a nuclear family, rather than the daily interactions of an individual? This language and structure betrays a distorted focus on marriage that fails the married people it idolizes almost as much as the single people it marginalizes.

If we are co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:15) and co-workers with God (Ephesians 2:10), why does the church have so little room for anyone who doesn't match our "traditional family" stereotype of husband, wife, children, minivan and pet? As evangelicals, who take our very name from the good news, why do our churches seem to worship families instead of Jesus?

The gospel has no special provisions for married people. We're all grafted through salvation, adopted precious children of the Father. The commission Jesus gave to his followers before he left earth was not to settle into families in safe neighbourhoods, but to make disciples (Matthew 28:19).

I'm convinced that the best thing the church can do to encourage holy living

is to help us follow Jesus, not a spouse. By teaching us to respect ourselves and others as beloved of God with a purpose to fulfill, the church can equip its people, married or single, to choose purity, and to withstand the temptation to take without giving, exert power instead of grace, and put our desires above God's calling.

Tell me no lies

While culture implicitly and repeatedly urges me to "do what feels good," the church constructs a fortress of denial; both deceive by giving desire more influence than it deserves. I don't need rules about not having sex. I need the church to help me reject the lie that desire is the most important thing.

The Apostle Paul teaches there are more than two possible responses—give

in or get out—to desires, whether good or evil. His advice isn't easy, but it lights the path to holiness: the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2). We steward our urges and conform to a different pattern by shifting the focus off ourselves and what we want, and onto God and his purposes. Each Christ follower is called to witness to God's reign in the world by our different lives, irrespective of marital status.

The challenge of intimacy

The popular notion that a romantic partner will complete me is as harmful to those who are married as those who are single. Paul follows his instructions for holiness in Romans 12 with a picture of the body of Christ as an inter-dependent aggregation of parts. As members of one body, we have different gifts. Neither married nor single are complete on their own, yet it is the body, not a partner, that makes a whole. As a single adult, I need the church to be the covenant community promised in the Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith: "[members who] love, care and pray for each other, share

(Continued on page 36)



Karla Braun

(Continued from page 35)

each other's joys and burdens, admonish and correct each other."

Independence and its partner loneliness are gifts and burdens for all people, but they can be heightened for single people who have fewer built-in, cross-gender, intergenerational relationships to foster accountability and provide opportunity for intimacy. The church should not only be a haven for marriage, but a refuge for singles.

A celibate life may offer more opportunities to minister, since my schedule isn't constrained by a husband's meetings or children's activities, but on the flipside, it may not provide enough occasions of being ministered to, like when I need help to hang a shelf, or someone to listen as I process at the end of the day.

If my God-given need for intimacy was tied up in waiting for a spouse to complete me, I'd have fallen into despair and bitterness long ago.

So I'm not waiting for a spouse, for sex or for my own little nuclear family. I'm learning what it means to be a Christ follower, distinct from the patterns of the world, active in service, in relationship with others. Whether I'm single or married, the pursuit of purity isn't about how I don't—but how I do—steward my body, emotions and mind in ways that honour myself, those around me and God. ☺

Karla Braun is associate editor of the Mennonite Brethren Herald. This article originally appeared in the September 2013 issue of The Herald.



'A life sentence for nothing'

Diagnosed with FASD at four, woman warns others of the dangers of drinking while pregnant

BY KRYSSTOFER PENNER

Maia was four years old when she was diagnosed with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). She remembers being confused and upset. In many ways, the anger the Winnipegger feels towards her mother hasn't dissipated after more than 30 years. "My mom did what to me?" she asks. "What happened?"

Maia was adopted when she was a year old, and her adoptive parents decided not to

alcohol while pregnant. It results in mental, cognitive and behavioural disabilities.

Maia has difficulty with multiplication tables and counting money. A handful of change can stump her, and she even has trouble with bills.

"I can only understand multiples of 10," she says. "So if I have a \$5, \$10 and \$20 bill, I won't know what to do with the \$5."

Like many people with FASD, sensory

Forming and keeping healthy relationships is also difficult for Maia, a trait common to many people with FASD



Maia was diagnosed with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder when she was four years old.

send her back to the adoption organization when she was diagnosed. She is lucky they kept her. Up to 80 per cent of children with FASD will not be raised by their biological parents, according to statistics from the Manitoba government, ending up instead in the child welfare system.

FASD is a physical disability that alters the brain of a fetus when a mother drinks

perception is important to Maia. She has a self-proclaimed obsession with down pillows and blankets, because she loves the way they feel. She often plays with things, such as jingling a pocket full of change, which people may see as rude.

"I need things to fiddle with, otherwise I'd go crazy," she says.

Academics were difficult for Maia, and

she was bullied in school. Boys on her street would chase her, throw things at her, laugh and call her names. One teenage boy used to pull down her pants and spank her every day. Another, who also had FASD, raped her. She stopped going outside because she was afraid, and didn't even know how to explain these things to her parents.

"It was really awful," she says.

Forming and keeping healthy relationships is also difficult for Maia, a trait common to many people with FASD, according to the Healthy Child Manitoba website of the provincial government.

People with FASD can be compulsive and friends may feel they are being smothered. Maia says people often think she is stalking them, but she just doesn't

recognize boundaries. This often results in friends telling her she can only call on certain days or at certain times. Maia finds this offensive, but understands that people need their space.

"It's just difficult because I don't have a lot of friends," she says.

Maia copes with life through her artistic side. She writes stories about an alien crew of misfits that travel through the galaxy.

She also enjoys playing the bagpipes. "I really like the drones and the feeling of the bag under my arm," she says. But she has difficulty reading music and mustering the required coordination to play, and is considering quitting. "You try and try to get to the next level, but you can't," she says.

A favourite activity is her work with the


Manitoba Visions and Voices program, which lets Maia speak in schools about her disability. She doesn't want other children to suffer the challenges of FASD because their mother didn't know, or care, about the effects of drinking while pregnant.

"It's like a life sentence for nothing," she says, adding that those who have FASD "didn't do anything wrong." ❧

The Voice of the Voiceless articles were written for Canadian Mennonite University's Journalism: Practices and Principles course during the Winter 2013 semester. Teacher Carl DeGurse is vice-chair of Canadian Mennonite's board of directors and assistant city editor of the Winnipeg Free Press.

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Calendar

British Columbia

Oct. 26: Columbia Bible College annual fundraising dinner. For more information, development.events@columbiabc.edu.

Nov. 2: Mennonite Church B.C. special delegate session, at Langley Mennonite Fellowship.

Saskatchewan

Oct. 26: MC Saskatchewan Equipping Day, at Rosthern Mennonite Church.

Nov. 16: Mennonite Disaster Service Saskatchewan fundraising dinner and information evening, at Cornerstone Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, at 6 p.m.

Manitoba

Oct. 22-23: CMU presents the JJ Thiessen Lectures with Travis Kroeker. For more information, visit cmu.ca/publiclectures.html#jjt.

Oct. 24: IDS Esau Public Lecture Series,

with Shirley Thompson, at Menno Simons College, Winnipeg. For more information, visit mscollege.ca/esau.

Oct. 26: CMU hosts Bachtobertfest. For more information, visit cmu.ca/programs/music.html.

Oct. 26,27: Camps with Meaning celebration banquets: (26) Camp Koinonia, Boissevain, 6 p.m.; (27) Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 5 p.m. For more information, call 204-895-2267 or e-mail camps@mennochurch.mb.ca.

Oct. 30: CMU Face 2 Face | On Campus. Topic: "When cheap is costly: Sweatshops and the clothes I buy" For more information, visit cmu.ca/face2face.

Nov. 1: MCI soup and pie fundraiser and fall concert, Gretna. For more information, visit mciblues.net.

Nov. 2: New Songs for Worship workshop, in the CMU Chapel, Winnipeg, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., led by CMU prof Christine Longhurst. For more information, or to register, call 204-487-3300 or e-mail clonghurst@cmu.ca.

Nov. 15: CMU dessert fundraising

evening, in Steinbach. For more information, visit cmu.ca/events.html.

Nov. 17: Mennonite Community Orchestra concert at CMU. For more information, visit cmu.ca/programs/music.html.

Nov. 19: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate's Evening of the Arts, at the school, at 7 p.m.

Nov. 21: IDS Esau Public Lecture Series, with Patricia Allen, at Menno Simons College. For more information, visit mscollege.ca/esau.

Nov. 22,23: Canadian Foodgrains Bank presents "Singin' in the Grain," a musical grow project fundraising concert: (22) Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7:30 p.m.; (23) Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Winkler. With the MCI Chamber Choir and the CMU Women's Chamber Choir.

Nov. 28: CMU Face 2 Face | On Campus. Topic: "On being good neighbours: Urban reserves in Winnipeg." For more information, visit cmu.ca/face2face.

Nov. 25: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate annual general meeting, at the school, at 7 p.m.

Nov. 28-30: Cottonwood Community Drama presents *Parfumerie*, a dramatic comedy by Miklos Laszlo, in MCI's Buhler Hall, Gretna, at 7:30 p.m. each evening. For more information or tickets, call MCI at 204-327-5891.

Nov. 30: Christmas@CMU, at 2 and 7 p.m. For more information, visit cmu.ca/Christmas.html.

Ontario

Oct. 19: Peace and Justice Studies Association concert, featuring Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, at Centre in the Square, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m. Centre in the Square, Kitchener. To book tickets, visit grandphilchoir.com/event/war-requiem.

Oct. 19: Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario meets at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham, with George Reesor and Lorne Smith presenting "The role of the shoebox historian," at 1 p.m., followed by a visit to the old Reesor church and cemetery. A bus will leave Waterloo Region at 10 a.m. For information, contact Sam Steiner at 519-884-1040.

Oct. 20: 10th annual Gospel Vespers at the Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville,

with a focus on *Life Songs II*. Leader: Bob Shantz. For more information, call Will Stoltz at 519-696-2805.

Oct. 25-27: Marriage Encounter weekend at Jericho House, Port Colborne. For more information, visit marriageencounter.com or call Marjorie Roth at 519-669-8667.

Oct. 26: Menno Singers presents "Explorations: Concert No. 1—West," with Willem Moolenbeek on saxophone, at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, at 7:30 p.m.

Oct. 30: "Healthy pastoral relationships: Caring for self and others": an MC Eastern Canada workshop at Hamilton Mennonite Church.

Oct. 30: MennoHomes' benefit concert at Calvary United Church, St. Jacobs, at 7:30 p.m., featuring Jim and Jean Strathdee, internationally honoured hymn and song writers, worship leaders and concert artists.

Nov. 3: MC Eastern Canada's "Junior Youth Make a Difference Day" at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

Nov. 4: "Keep your fork: The best is yet to come," a dinner celebrating the 70th anniversary of Fairview Mennonite Home and the 50th anniversary of Parkwood Mennonite Home, at Bingeman Park, Kitchener, at 6:30 p.m. Keynote speaker: Michael "Pinball" Clemons. Live and silent auctions. For tickets, call 519-653-5719 x367. Proceeds for the renovation of the Fairview kitchen.

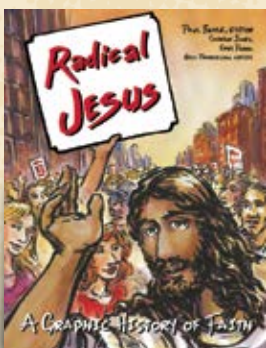
Nov. 6,13: MC Eastern Canada's "Tackling tough texts: Violence and vengeance": a two-session preaching seminar with bag lunch forum at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

Nov. 9: MCC Ontario fall conference, "Sharing God's love and compassion," with guest Sarah Adams, MCC representative for Syria and Lebanon.

Nov. 16: Handicraft sale at Fairview Mennonite Home, Cambridge, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Featuring Santa's Sweet Shop, fresh baking, tea room, crafts, preserves and used books. For more information, visit www.fairviewmh.com or call 519-653-5719.

Nov. 17: Senior youth event hosted by Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, 3 p.m. For more information, contact Rebecca Gibbins at rsjgibbin@uwaterloo.ca.


Radical JESUS



Editor: Paul Buhle
978-0-8361-9621-4
Paper. 175 pages.
Due out: 10/31/2013

In this compelling, graphical rendition, *Radical Jesus* tells the story of Jesus and his social message, not just in his own time, but also through the Radical Reformation, recent centuries, and our own time. Featuring illustration by industry standouts Sabrina Jones, Gary Dumm, and Nick Thorkelson-*Radical Jesus* offers a fresh and inspiring look at basic Christian concepts and social justice themes from the life of Jesus onward.

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 Herald Press

Classifieds

For Sale

FARM FOR SALE-PRIVATELY

99 acres near Tiverton, Ontario-20 acres bush, 75 randomly tiled workable- 60 acres rented (fall wheat).

House- built 1979, 2 storey, 3 bed, 2.5 bath, large open/bright kitchen/familyroom, wood fireplace converted to propane, partially finished basement, new windows/roof, mostly hardwood floors- no carpeting.

Horse Barn- built 1999, 32' X 64' large windows, 8 box, 2 standing stalls, insulated, hay storage above, attached 18' X 20' bedding shed.

Sheds- small 18' X 22' insulated carriage shed and larger 40' X 56' drivingshed with insulated workshop.

Buildings suitable for many uses, income from land rent. Asking \$829,000, e-mail hydale@gmail.com for pictures.

Allan Hyde, 519-368-4860, #601 Conc.6 Municipality of Kincardine, RR#2 Paisley, On. N0G 2N0

Travel

Visit Europe the Mennonite Way with Mennonite Heritage Tours! Small group Hotel Tours focusing on Mennonite/ Anabaptist heritage in Holland, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Poland and Ukraine. www.mennonite-heritagetours.eu

For Sale

Canadian Word Guild AWARDS

MYSTERIES OF GRACE AND JUDGMENT DVD

For special awards sale see:

www.mysteriesofgrace.com

Announcement

Parent Support Group: Announcing a bimonthly support group for Mennonite parents of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) persons in Southwestern Ontario. We provide confidential support, fellowship, resources and opportunities for dialogue in the Spirit of Christ. For more information please contact the following: rvfast@rogers.com, pmsnyderangel@rogers.com, or Roy and Mary Gascho, 519-742-1850.

Employment Opportunities



Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, is inviting applications for a FULL TIME LEAD PASTOR to commence in summer 2014.

We are seeking a person with a strong Anabaptist theology as well as ability to engage the congregation through worship and preaching. This person will have strong administrative skills and the ability to work with and lead a multi-member pastoral team. Our desire is that the successful candidate, along with the pastoral team, enable and nurture the gifts of the congregation in order to enhance the overall mission of the church. Pastoral experience, along with a Masters of Divinity or equivalent is preferred.

Please send resumes to hpeters@shaw.ca or contact Hugo or Jake Peters at 204-256-9545 or 204-889-5094. For additional information about Bethel Mennonite church go to: <http://bethelmennonite.ca>.

Writers needed

Shine: Living in God's Light, a new Sunday school curriculum produced by MennoMedia and Brethren Press, is accepting applications for writers. Details are available at www.ShineCurriculum.com. Application deadline is December 31, 2013.

MUSIC MINISTRY COORDINATOR

Are you being called to:

- work closely with the planning of worship services?
- mentor new musicians in leading music in worship?
- lead music in a variety of styles?

Then, consider the position of MUSIC MINISTRY COORDINATOR at the Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona. We are a rural congregation of 400, located in southern Manitoba, seeking a quarter time person to assist the congregation in planning blended worship, teaching new songs and mentoring new musicians in our worship services.

Start date negotiable.

Please send resumes to andrew_rempel@yahoo.ca, or call Andrew Rempel at 204-324-1741, Search Committee Chair Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona 117 2nd St. NW, Altona, MB R0G 0B1



Administrative Assistant

Winnipeg, MB

MFC has an opening for a self-motivated, organized, and capable individual.

Successful candidates will have:

- strong organizational skills
- exceptional computer skills,
- superb verbal and written communication skills
- high degree of professionalism
- ability to travel.

Areas of responsibility include:

- administrative support to MFC's governance groups (schedule meetings, take minutes, maintain corporate records)
- MFC staff support re: group insurance and CRM software
- support MFC clients enrolled in the MFC/MSCU retirement fund program.

MFC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. A complete job description is available upon request. Expected start date for this position is December 2, 2013.

Please submit resume by October 25, 2013 to:

Rick Braun-Janzen, Director of Finance

Mennonite Foundation of Canada

12-1325 Markham Road, Winnipeg, MB R3T 4J6

Tel: (204) 488-1985 Fax: (204) 488-1986

Email: rbjanzen@mennofoundation.ca

Mennofoundation.ca

God at work
over the years

Snapshot

PHOTO BY TOM YODER NEUFELD



Brent Martin, chair of the First Mennonite Church Kitchener leadership team, left, and Nancy Brubaker, lead pastor, right, along with many member of the congregation, watch as Noa Baergen helps plant a tree at the church's 200th-anniversary celebrations on Sept. 29. During the planting service, Martin said, 'The tree is . . . a symbol of our connection to nature and God's creation. We recognize that we are part of God's universe and ultimately one small part of a larger master plan. As part of God's creation, we strive to be environmental stewards of the earth. Planting a tree is an ecologically friendly way to demonstrate our commitment to this task and be models for others to respect God's creation.' For story and more photos, see page 26.