



NADIA ANNOUNCEMENT

May 11, 2015
Volume 19 Number 10

MCC 50th full of historic symbolism pg.14

PM40063104 R09613

inside
A love for all seasons 4
The last Pontius' Puddle 11
History surprises 25

EDITORIAL

\$3.33 a day does it

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

That's right—the mere cost of a cappuccino at Starbucks by 33 of your friends every day for three months provides relief for 1,000 refugees or some 200 families in war-torn Syria.

This innovative fundraising appeal launched by Allan Reesor-McDowell, community engagement coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario, has already raised nearly \$78,000 toward a \$100,000 goal from 270 donors online and additional cheques from 10 donors. With a fetching title—“SOS for Syria” (sosforsyria.mcco.ca)—written up by our Young Voices co-editor Rachel Bergen on page 34 of our April 13 edition—the campaign provides a new platform for giving, especially among young people.

This is an important development for two reasons:

- **FIRST, GLOBAL** disasters are becoming almost daily fare. Not only has the Middle East been a boiling cauldron of war, destruction and mind-boggling displacement of its citizens, but as we have just witnessed, natural disasters like the earthquake in Nepal are hitting our planet with increasing regularity. We who have been spared these awful consequences need to develop a mindset of generosity that is as important as eating and sleeping, yes, as integral to our daily living as drinking a cappuccino at Starbucks or a mocha at Tim Hortons.
- **SECOND, IT** is making it possible for

Millennials to be just as generous in their giving to MCC as the more affluent Boomers and their predecessors have been over the past 90 years of MCC. There has been not a little concern by those of my generation as to whether the younger generation, who will never experience the level of affluence of many of their parents, will have either the means or the motivation to give in the millions of dollars that has enabled MCC to expand its efforts over the years.



Add to that the long-term effects of these disasters and the increasing rapidity of their destruction, and we have what could best be described as “sustained suffering” in much of the world at any given time. Syria, for instance, is entering its fifth year of conflict characterized by extreme violence and brutality. The UN estimates that more than 210,000 people have been killed, with an additional million people injured in violent clashes. Some 7.6 million people have been internally displaced and more than 3.3 million refugees are currently seeking asylum in neighbouring countries.

The more than 6,000 killed in Nepal's recent earthquake—that number expected to rise to 10,000—has destroyed the homes and livelihood of those families in one of the poorest countries of the world. Imagine the long years of struggle to get back to some state of normalcy with such an abrupt interruption in your family and community.

When we hear these numbing numbers and view the dramatic scenes on our TV and computer screens, we can be overwhelmed and think that our small efforts hardly count in addressing such huge needs.

There's where the imagination of Reesor-McDowell's new approach to the problem is nearly ingenious. What he is tapping into, as a Millennial himself, is the crowdfunding model already gaining currency with his generation. What they might lack in big dollars is made up by large networks of friends who love to get behind projects that are of interest to them. Hence, the appeal for small amounts of money to large numbers of people.

Persons like Jeremy Enns, featured in Bergen's article, are looking for great ideas to get behind. Further, it has peer-to-peer appeal, rather than some institutional person coming to them with his hands out. Friends respond to friends much more readily than to persons employed to do fundraising.

The foundation is already there for both older and younger donors. With so many actors in the field of fundraising, MCC has earned the trust of our own faith community as well as a growing number of people outside our circles, who have come to put explicit faith in an organization that spends very little on administration and has developed the channels at the receiving end that avoid government corruption and other obstacles that prevent the food, clothing and other aid from getting immediately into the hands of those who need them.

What's more is that this new approach by Reesor-McDowell is expected by him to bring some 150 to 200 new donors to the scene—expanding the efforts of those of us who have been faithful donors to the needs as they have been presented to us by MCC.

What a thrilling mustard-seed concept!

ABOUT THE COVER:

MCC Manitoba executive director Ron Janzen, left, presents a gift of handmade moccasins to Joe Clark, a former prime minister of Canada, in gratitude for his participation in the celebration of MCC Manitoba's 50th anniversary last month in Winnipeg. The moccasins bear the MCC logo on the top in intricate beadwork. See Cover Story on page 14.

PHOTO: ALISON RALPH, MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Circulation: Please contact Lisa Jacky toll-free at 1-800-378-2524 ext. 221 or by e-mail at office@canadianmennonite.org for subscriptions and address changes. Subscriptions can also be ordered at our web site. We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund for our publishing activities. ISSN 1480-042X

Canada

CANADIAN MENNONITE

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40063104 REGISTRATION NO. 09613
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE ITEMS TO CANADIAN MENNONITE
490 DUTTON DRIVE, UNIT C5
WATERLOO ON N2L 6H7
Phone: 519-884-3810 Toll-free: 1-800-378-2524 Fax: 519-884-3331
Web site: canadianmennonite.org

Please send all material to be considered for publication to:

General submission address: submit@canadianmennonite.org

Readers Write: letters@canadianmennonite.org

Milestones announcements: milestones@canadianmennonite.org

Obituaries: obituaries@canadianmennonite.org

Calendar announcements: calendar@canadianmennonite.org

Material can also be sent "Attn: Submissions/Readers Write/Milestones/Obituaries/Calendar" by postal mail or fax to our head office.

Reprint requests: reprints@canadianmennonite.org

Mission statement: *To educate, inspire, inform, and foster dialogue on issues facing Mennonites in Canada as it shares the good news of Jesus Christ from an Anabaptist perspective. We do this through an independent publication and other media, working with our church partners.*

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.

Board of Directors (by appointing body):

MC Canada: **Doreen Martens, Henry Krause, Bryan Moyer Suderman,**

MC B.C.: **Linda Matties,** MC Alberta: **Kuen Yee;**

MC Saskatchewan: **Vacant;** MC Manitoba: **Ken Reddig**

MC Eastern Canada: **Tim Reimer;**

CMPS: **Carl DeGurse, Tobi Thiessen, Lois Epp**

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, rachel.bergen19@gmail.com

Virginia Hostetler, Web Editor, webeditor@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, 204-822-8288;

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

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

Donna Schulz, Saskatchewan Correspondent, sk@canadianmennonite.org, 306-232-4733;

J. Neufeld, Manitoba Correspondent, mb@canadianmennonite.org, 204-221-8022;

Dave Rogalsky, Eastern Canada Correspondent, ec@canadianmennonite.org, 519-577-9987.

One-Year Subscription Rates

Canada: \$44 + tax (depends on province where subscriber lives)

U.S.: \$66

International (outside U.S.): \$89.10



contents



A love for all seasons 4

MURIEL BECHTEL urges the church to say yes to God's gift of sexuality, but offers a word of caution: 'Because our passions are intoxicating and powerful, they need to be tested.'

Chin Christians receive Mennonite teaching with joy 13

MC Eastern Canada's **DAVID MARTIN** reports on a successful visit to Myanmar and Malaysia.

A warming world should make us uncomfortable 19

MC Canada's **WILLARD METZGER** takes part in an ecumenical cross-country tour to get Christians thinking about poverty and climate justice.



A giant has passed 22

The death of **ROY G. SNYDER** of Waterloo, Ont.—the 'father of artificial insemination'—is mourned by the MEDA community.

How Mennonites worship God 24

MennoMedia teams with MC Canada and MC U.S.A. to begin planning for a new song collection project due to be completed in 2020.

Young Voices 27

'Youths change lives on MDS trip... including their own' by **RACHEL BERGEN**. 'The Mennonite and the Lurmen' by **KYLE RUDGE**.

Regular features:

For discussion **6** Readers write **7** Milestones **11** Pontius' Puddle **11** Schools Directory **26** Calendar **30** Classifieds **31**

\$3.33 a day does it 2

DICK BENNER

Where are things not right in your world? 7

GARRY JANZEN

Do we love him? 8

PHIL WAGLER

A different kind of disaster 9

KATIE DOKE SAWATZKY



Online NOW!

at canadianmennonite.org

Web first:

- MCC begins response to Nepal earthquake
- Kenya Mennonite Church launches history book
- 'Best Church Potlucks Ever' contest launched
- News Briefs

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to see new stories as they are posted.

[Facebook.com/Canadian.Mennonite](https://www.facebook.com/Canadian.Mennonite) [@CanMenno](https://twitter.com/CanMenno)

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH FEATURE

A love for all seasons

Saying yes to God's gift

BY MURIEL BECHTEL

Adapted from a sermon she preached at Wilmot Mennonite Church, New Hamburg, Ont., on July 6, 2014.

“Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come . . . Rise up my love, and come away”
(Song of Songs 2:10b-12a, 13b, KJV)

I learned these words from Song of Songs by singing them in choirs, but I've never heard them read or sung in church. Over the many years of wider church conversations about human sexuality and studying the Bible to seek God's will, I don't recall Song of Songs ever being used.

As I was preparing my sermon, I was also reading *The Rosie Project*, in which the main character, Don, is a likable and brilliant genetics professor who has Asperger's Syndrome. At the urging of his friends to find a wife, Don starts with the approach he knows best: a research project he calls “The Wife Project.” He develops a five-page questionnaire for potential candidates to fill out and tracks the results of his research on a spreadsheet.

Don gets into some awkward predicaments in the process of looking for candidates to fill out his questionnaire, and it soon becomes evident that things aren't going so well. So his friend Gene introduces Don to Rosie who, it turns out, doesn't fit any of Don's top five qualifications for “the perfect wife.” But emotions become involved, his own and hers. Don knows how to deal with facts, but not emotions!

We in the Mennonite church are a little like Don. We stick with what feels familiar and safe: beliefs, official statements, “do's and don'ts.” We gravitate to Paul's writings, but we keep a safe distance from the emotions and sensual language and images of Song of Songs. Such erotic poetry is way outside our comfort zone.

We write safe church policies to protect children and the adults who care for them from confusing and abusive relationships, and we teach our youth to say no to their passions, but we spend very little time teaching people how to say yes to their bodies.

I don't remember ever hearing a sermon or Sunday school discussion on Song of Songs. Nor are there hymns based on Song of Songs listed in the scripture index of *Hymnal: A Worship Book*.

We in the Mennonite church . . . gravitate to Paul's writings, but we keep a safe distance from the emotions and sensual language and images of Song of Songs. Such erotic poetry is way outside our comfort zone.



Was it always like this?

According to Derek Suderman, Old Testament professor at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont., “In the early centuries of the church you were more likely to hear a sermon from Song of Songs than from one of the gospels or [Paul’s letters].” Back then, these love poems were read as an allegory for the love between Christ and the church. The closest equivalent I can think of is the familiar hymn, “I Come to the Garden Alone,” which depicts walking and talking in the garden with Jesus as with a lover.

Do we ever think of God as a lover with feelings of desire? More likely we were taught or shamed into believing that desire is wrong. Yet desire is woven throughout Song of Songs. The wisdom literature of the Bible views desire as good, as a vital and life-giving aspect of the way we were created. The Psalms are full of longing and desire for God. To be sure, the Bible condemns misguided desire such as envy or lust, especially when acted on. But without desire, our lives would be impoverished.

Desire is a vital aspect of our spiritual and our sexual longings. Can you imagine yourself in a time of loneliness praying for God to hold you like the lovers in Song of Songs? *“O that his left hand were under my head, and that his right hand embraced me”* (2:6) Or imagine God feeling disappointed when you leave or push away: *“I opened to my beloved, but*

my beloved had turned and was gone. My soul failed me” (5:6).

If we read these love songs in our worship and prayers, would we develop a new and deeper awareness of God’s desire for us and our desire for God? How might our attitudes toward our bodies and sexual feelings be different? Might we be more affirming of our bodies and see our sexual and spiritual desires as a beautiful part of how we are created?

Would that affect how we teach our children about their bodies and sexual feelings? What if the church would include portions of Song of Songs in our children’s curriculum to teach them how God created us?

The love poems in Song of Songs help us, in that they celebrate embodied hu-

Because our passions are intoxicating and powerful, they need to be tested.

man love as good. They affirm that God created us as sexual beings with desires, attractions and feelings that enrich our lives and relationships immensely. These feelings are God’s way of bringing us close to one another. They lift us out of the mundane into ecstasy: *“Look, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag”* (2:8-9a), or:

“As a lily among brambles, so is my love among maidens” (2:2).

Philip Sheldrake, a prominent theologian and former Jesuit, challenges us to own our attractions and desires in his provocative statement: “Passion, for all its dangers, needs uncaging if we are to move toward completeness as human beings and if our walking with Christ in faith is to pass beyond the cerebral and emotionally anaemic.” He acknowledges that there are dangers associated with passion, as does Song of Songs: *“Love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame”* (8:6b).

We don’t have to look far to find confirmation of how compelling, powerful and potentially harmful sexual feelings

can be. A recent letter to “Dear Ellie” began this way: “I’ve fallen in love with my husband’s best friend. Neither he nor I could stop it because our feelings are so powerful.”

Because our passions are intoxicating and powerful, they need to be tested. Discernment is critical as we choose what we will do with those feelings. The lovers in the letter to “Dear Ellie” made

one choice, claiming they could not “stop it,” regardless of the harm they caused to others. The lovers in Song of Songs make a different choice, choosing instead loyalty and faithfulness, two qualities often associated with God.

Furthermore, the lovers in Song of Songs exercise a respectful mutuality. Neither lover forces or takes advantage of the other. In several places in the text one of the lovers withdraws or seems to hold off. Three times we hear the caution “not to stir up or awaken love until it is ready!” The lovers in Song of Songs, like God, never force themselves on the beloved who is not ready or who wants space. God always gives us a choice to say yes or no. God waits for our consent.

As Christians, we can be grateful that the sages of Israel preserved and passed on these songs as a compelling expression of incarnation, of embodied human love.

An all-too-common distortion of our culture—and often the church—is placing all the emphasis on sex and genital relations, so that people who are single or choose celibacy are often seen as incomplete human beings. Song of Songs challenges that narrow understanding of sexuality.

Like the lovers in Song of Songs, all of us experience our sexuality in a variety of ways. For Mennonites, congregational singing is an embodied and often ecstatic expression of our sexuality, as male and female voices listen to each other, breathing and blending their voices together, becoming one body: the body of Christ.

Another lie that deceives us is that youth and couples are the measuring stick for everyone’s sexuality. We are sexual beings, whether we are “*bounding over the hills like a gazelle*” (2:9), or walking with a cane.

What a beautiful thing it is to watch older people live out their love as friendship. Despite all the frustrations, disappointments and ambiguities of human love, they have learned to enjoy touching, holding and simply being together as ways of expressing their love with partners or friends.

They show God’s love and grace in the way they love and forgive each other for past failures and are companions in the

/// Reference materials

- **CHRISTINA BUCHER**, *Song of Songs* (Believers Church Bible Commentary series, Herald Press).
- **JIM COTTER**, *Pleasure, Pain & Passion: Some Perspectives on Sexuality and Spirituality*. Cairns Publications, 1988.
- **KATHLEEN FISCHER**, *Winter Grace: Spirituality and Aging*. Upper Room Books, 1998.
- **ROLAND E. MURPHY**, “Canticle of Canticles,” *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Geoffrey Chapman, 1990.
- **JAMES B. NELSON**, *Between Two Gardens: Reflections on Sexuality and Religious Experience*. The Pilgrim Press, 1983.
- **RENITA J. WEEMS**, “Song of Songs,” *The Women’s Bible Commentary*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1992.

midst of sorrow, suffering and pain. They have learned what it means to say yes to God’s gift of love in all seasons. These people make friendship more sacred for the rest of us. They show us that, in the words of Song of Songs, “*many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it*” (8:7a). //

Muriel Bechtel is a former area church minister for Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, and a former pastor of Warden Woods Mennonite Church, Toronto. She holds degrees from Emmanuel College and the Toronto School of Theology, and from McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont.



Another lie that deceives us is that youth and couples are the measuring stick for everyone’s sexuality.

/// For discussion

1. Can you think of examples of older couples who hold hands after many years of marriage? What does this say about their relationship? How important is touch in expressing love? When is it important to lay hands on someone the congregation is praying for?
2. Do you agree with Muriel Bechtel that the church has tended to emphasize beliefs and official statements, but has tried to keep a safe distance from emotions and passion? Where do we express passion for God in worship? Are there other ways we might express passionate love for God?
3. Philip Sheldrake says that passion needs to be part of our lives, “if our walking with Christ in faith is to pass beyond the cerebral and emotionally anaemic.” Do you agree? What happens if we try to keep our passions locked up?
4. Bechtel equates sexuality with sensuality or physicality, arguing that it is much more than genital relations. Do you agree? When is it important to keep passion under control? Would our churches be healthier with more expressions of emotion?

—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 **300 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.

✉ Polarizing sexual debate distresses reader

I AM DISTRESSED by the polarizing debate on sexuality in Mennonite Church Canada congregations. I wonder if adequate consideration is given to two questions that are central to a more productive dialogue:

- **IS THERE** cultural equivalence between the Old and New testaments and modern cultures? I find the biblical references refer to cultural practices that we now consider sexual abuse associated with rape and pedophilia. Understanding the historical contexts avoids seeing culture as static.
- **DOES ALL** of Scripture have equal authority? Are Christians followers of Moses or Paul or Jesus?

Gareth Brandt recently reminded MC B.C. delegates that "the Bible is not the word of God, Jesus is."

(Continued on page 8)

FROM OUR LEADERS

Where are things not right in your world?

GARRY JANZEN

I have been caught by the need for justice in our world of late. I am on the e-mail list of Rabbis for Human Rights who are actively standing up for justice for all people who are getting a bad deal in Israel and Palestine. I just recently took in the Canadian Friends of Sabeel Conference in Vancouver, an organization actively engaged in partnerships of solidarity that promote the perspectives and peace vision of the Palestinian Christian community (endorsed by Mennonite Central Committee [MCC] B.C. and MCC Canada). One of the speakers, Jonathan Kuttab, a Palestinian Christian lawyer who is also the board chair of Bethlehem Bible College, emphasized that the only way to peace in Jerusalem is if no one



claims exclusivity, and all the participants find a way to affirm each other's presence there. According to Kuttab, Palestinian Christians are almost entirely pacifist, so this conviction informs their approach in the pursuit of justice.

I was looking for New Testament scriptures that speak to this call for equal justice for all, but they are hard to find. The Old Testament has lots to say on the topic of justice, including, of course, Micah 6:8; but also the words of Zechariah 7: 9-10: "Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor." Ted Grimsrud at peacetheology.net points out that Jesus incarnates Old Testament justice. So that's very cool; we don't need New Testament scriptures on the matter, we have a living example.

Grimsrud also points to the fact that the Greek word *dikaiosune* can usually be translated either righteousness or justice. So if we substitute "justice" for the word "righteousness" in passages like Matthew 5:6,10 and 6:33, it gives new meaning. Grimsrud also points out that Jesus' ministry of justice centres on "love of neighbour." When we understand "love" as an action word, this commandment casts us directly into the call to act justly.

I met with the Anabaptist Network in South Africa (ANISA) while on sabbatical last October. Concrete acts of justice are being done by one of the ANISA participants who works with an organization that helps people acquire land for their homes.

Whether it is gender equality, indigenous and non-indigenous relations, racial equality, the ability for young adults to acquire a home in the expensive Vancouver housing market, or any other matter of inequity, working towards establishing a level playing field so that no one is privileged over another seems to be our calling. "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24).

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

(Continued from page 7)

Jesus addresses questions of sexuality as they relate to healthy relationships that are loving, just, non-judgmental and always seeking the good of the other.

Can this Spirit of Christ bring both sides in the debate together for respectful and healthy dialogue?

JOHANN FUNK, PENTICTON, B.C.

✉ Are sexuality debates 'chasing after wind'?

I CONTINUE TO be amazed by the amount of energy and resources allocated to the issue of homosexuality, as evidenced by the number of articles and letters in *Canadian Mennonite*, and the seemingly interminable and unnecessarily divisive discussions in some of our

OUTSIDE THE BOX

Do we love him?

PHIL WAGLER

My beautiful wife and I had the pleasure recently of leading a couple's retreat on an island just off British Columbia's mainland. It was a glorious weekend—sans kids for us—with glorious blue skies and majestic panoramic views of the coastal mountains. Precious memories.

Nine other couples participated in the weekend. Some, like us, have been married for several years, with grey hair to show for it. Others, however, have been married less than a year. Cynics among us might wonder why they already needed a retreat—they haven't even come up against reality yet!

You might be surprised to know they were deeply inspiring. There was a joy, a wonder, a refreshing spark that they brought to our gathering. In fact, one of the big takeaways for me was a renewed sense of the glorious mystery that drives us from our fathers and mothers into the arms of someone so different in every way. We left renewed by what we witnessed of the way of young man and his maiden.

The experience left me pondering something else, though. I'm struck by how many North American Christians—particularly those who grew up "churchified"—have lost their sense of the glorious mystery of salvation. One begins to wonder if we ever grasped it deeply

enough in the first place.

A few months ago our church hosted our city's biker church. Tattooed, mustachioed, bicep-bulging former "tough-guys"—and "tough girls"—worshipped God in full voice, confessing their joy in salvation. One middle-aged man, once feared when he went riding by, cried like a baby describing how surrendering his life to Jesus gave him the joy of knowing how to love. His family was there, all equally weepy, as they embraced shamelessly in light of the mystery of the love of God for sinners. The long-time "churchified" in the room were moved, but struggled to find a similar frame of reference. There was something so beautiful about young love.

We are sinners without hope in the world apart from the grace and mercy of God. It seems we have forgotten this. It seems we are so determined to solve

I'm struck by how many North American Christians—particularly those who grew up 'churchified'—have lost their sense of the glorious mystery of salvation.



every problem that we have forgotten in all our churchiness what it is to be the bride who is loved and who loves. Jesus' trinity of piercing questions to Peter should trouble us deeply: "Do you love me?" (John 21:15, 16, 17). Do we love him? Or are we just playing organizational politics and religious roulette?

Peter was ashamed because of his betrayal, but Jesus calls to his heart. He is still calling.

The church of Ephesus sounds awfully familiar in this light. Hard-working, persevering, always testing the pervading voices and surviving great hardship. Jesus says they're a commendable lot. However, not all is well: they have forsaken love. Not love for the marginalized, or love for those who have no voice, or love for justice or love for a pet-project or religious observance. The Ephesians have forsaken the main thing: love for Jesus. They had developed amnesia regarding the mystery of grace and mercy that first overwhelmed them like a warm flood (Revelation 2:4). It was this love-forsakenness that required repentance. This love-forsakenness risked snuffing them out.

Are we, the "good-deeds-churchified," in the same peril? Do we love him? Are

we known for our love of God? Are we star-struck lovers still? If not, it seems repentance is required.

Phil Wagler (phil_wagler@yahoo.ca) lives in Surrey, B.C., home of Solid Rock Biker Church. He is yearning for that first love to stay warm.

area church's congregations.

In my Bible, there are at most a half dozen references to this topic. Compare this to the hundred or so references of less than acceptable behaviour that should be more familiar to most of us: lust, gluttony, greed, wrath, laziness, envy and pride.

If we have our knickers in a twist about lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/queer (LGBTQ) issues, how

much time do we spend on pacifism, reaching out to the poor and homeless, the aliens among us, the prisoners?

Why is sexuality demanding such a disproportionate quantity of our finite resources? Is it really the elephant in the china shop we are making it out to be?

I posed this question to an area church minister

(Continued on page 10)

NEW ORDER VOICE

A different kind of disaster

KATIE DOKE SAWATZKY

My family and I often walk through the old-growth forests that surround the University of British Columbia (UBC) campus and then down to the waters of English Bay. There is lots to look for along the way: pileated woodpeckers and black-capped chickadees in the trees, slugs on the trails, and, when we get to the water, crabs under the rocks at low tide. Being from the Prairies, it took a while to get used to the ocean air and the smell of seaweed drying on the rocks. But the beach has become a more familiar place.

So when I turned on the radio on April 9 and heard there had been an oil spill in English Bay only a day earlier, my instinct was to rise up off the couch and go down to help. Here was a real ecological disaster not five kilometres from my door. But then the announcer said that Vancouver residents were urged not to help clean up the beaches.

That job was for the professionals, like the Western Canadian Marine Response Corp., an organization funded mainly by Kinder Morgan. It turns out that bunker fuel—the spill came from a freighter stationed in the bay—is very toxic and requires special equipment to remove

from surfaces because it's so thick.

When there are tornadoes, hurricanes or fires, humans always help in the aftermath. But this type of disaster is different. While the actual spill is hazardous to oceanic ecosystems, helping out—scrubbing oil off shore rocks with soapy water—is hazardous to us.

In short, we can do nothing about oil spills. What's done is done. Clean-up crews remove as much oil as they can, but it's rarely, if ever, all collected. Birds are coated and damage underneath the water's surface isn't known until tests are



Transporting goods quickly and safely is what we do. It's how we live and move and have our being.

taken. It's been happening for a while, too. Over the past 40 years there have been eight spills in the Burrard Inlet/English Bay area alone, most of them more severe than the one on April 8.

A week later, after dropping my son off at pre-school, I drove down to the beach. I carried my three-month-old in her car seat and set her on a big flat rock near the water. I took the time to look around me. I didn't see any oil residue. The seaweed was still green, the crabs were still there, herons fished farther out in the bay. I

turned around and watched the people walk along the paths and heard the sound of dogs barking echo off the forest's edge.

I wondered if I was the only one there thinking about the spill. I asked myself why we create 80,000-tonne behemoths in the first place and fuel them with life-killing compounds? Isn't it bound to go wrong?

I looked out at the water and mountain views, and then I looked at the car seat sitting on the rock next to me. It's a price we're willing to pay, I guess. Transporting goods quickly and safely is what we do. It's how we live and move and have our being.

While the media is concerned with the slow response of the federally funded Coast Guard, I realize it's not about blaming the slow response of a few. It's about the complicity of the many in economic

systems that privilege consumptive human lifestyles over non-human life.

Some know this and try to make things right. Directly Affected, an initiative of the Raincoast Conservation Foundation, filmed people cleaning up rocks in English Bay a day after the spill. Despite the health risks, the smell and the grease, they were on their hands and knees scrubbing the rocks.

Katie Doke Sawatzky can be reached at katiesawatzky@gmail.com.

(Continued from page 9)

who recently visited our congregation. His opinion was that the endless debate is reflective of the inflated importance of the contemporary individual within and outside the church. It's all about me and my issues.

In our Bible study group, we are reading Ecclesiastes and I wonder if this issue is "chasing after wind"?

HAROLD MACY, COURTENAY, B.C.

✉ Hague Mennonite lauded for taking a stand

RE: "WE WEREN'T on the same page," April 14, page 19; and "It's time for a vote" column, March 30, page 14.

Congratulations to Hague Mennonite Church, Sask. I strongly support its decision to declare its position on same-sex marriage, liberalism, women in ministry and peace issues.

We may agree or agree to disagree, but too many times these serious issues simply slide along and the confusion that follows creates much confusion, hurt and long-term negative results.

Regarding Russel Snyder-Penner's column, I believe that we need to heed this strong word of counsel, come out of the closet and have the watershed moment that many church leaders are shying away from. I believe that a clarification of issues is important because now our discussion is simply going in circles. It is said that insanity is defined as repeating the same action, yet hoping to get different results.

Other denominations have gone through this discerning process and they have survived. Let us not be afraid! Life will go on. The sun will set and rise, it will be the evening and the morning of a new day.

Yes, it is time for the leaders to come out of the closet.

DAVID SHANTZ, MONTRÉAL

✉ Openness sought on issues of identity and sexuality

THERE CONTINUES TO be more dividing and pain in groups and families because of questions of sexuality and sexual orientation. I wish we could say enough dividing and pain and secrecy. We need to find ways to stand together, to be good neighbours, In such conversations, we must be gentle with one another, respect one another.

Sexuality can be hard to talk about. We have few tools and little experience in talking about sexuality, in distinguishing between sex and sexualities. A line from *Beauty and the Beast* is true in this area: "We

don't like what we don't understand."

So what is really the question? For most, the question is not about sexuality. Most are not trying to understand the range of maleness and femaleness, most are not trying to understand the critical part that sexuality has in identity for each of us. That may be a question, but usually it is not the main concern. For many groups and for many families, the current question is how do we not rip our families and our groups apart on "this question."

As we look around the table at each other and our values, what do we really see? These are our children, our brothers and sisters, friends of our children, children of our friends. They grew up in our communities and groups. We taught them our values. Many have our faith. We cannot throw them out. We cannot ask them to lock up their identity and their energy.

I ask for openness. I wish for an end to secrecy, pain and separation on questions of identity and sexuality. I wish for family gatherings with no empty chairs at the table. I wish for churches where all can come to pray.

RAY HAMM, NEUBERGTHAL, MAN.

✉ Why does the church continue to exclude marginalized people?

RE: "FIRST WE need to define what is sin" letter, April 13, page 11.

Not only was the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/queer (LGBTQ) community singled out in this letter, but people who struggle with addictions as well. As a youth addictions worker, I have seen firsthand how harmful this attitude towards LGBTQ people and people with addictions can be. Both of these groups are filled with guilt and shame over things that are out of their control, especially if they have grown up in the church.

Yet many people in the church act as though all these people need to do is "pray the gay away" or "pray for healing from addictions." Prayer is powerful and important, but what happens to these youth who still are gay after they have prayed? What about the ones who are still addicted?

What these people need is unconditional love because what they are dealing with is so misunderstood on neurological and spiritual levels.

The letter does not mention love, but does dictate the conditions on which someone can be a member of a church. If people could just stop being gay or just stop using drugs, don't you think they would? Yet this view of "just stop" or "just pray" is still going strong, despite all the facts and research to the contrary.

I guess the old saying is true: "Ignorance is bliss."

RYAN SCHMIDTKE, KITCHENER, ONT.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Andres—Kristoffer Kaden (b. April 9, 2015), to Jason and Leanne Andres, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.

Bergen—William Isaac (b. March 27, 2015), to Bill and Emily Bergen, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Dick—Kara Lynn (b. April 21, 2015), to Jonathan and Sandra Dick, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Ishaka—Jesse Josiah Maïsha (b. April 7, 2015), to Noah and Angela (Brubacher) Ishaka, Floradale Mennonite, Ont.

Baptisms

David Nelligan—Toronto United Mennonite, April 19, 2015.

Marriages

Balzer-Peters/Johnson—Alina Balzer-Peters, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, and Daniel Johnson, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., at Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, April 12, 2015.

Crockett/Enns—Katie Crockett and Matt Enns, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., in Orlando, Fla., March 19, 2015.

Deaths

Derksen—Jake, 74 (b. Oct. 3, 1940; d. April 7, 2015), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Dick—Eva (nee Harms), 84 (b. June 16, 1930; d. April 13, 2015), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

Enns—Peter, 83 (b. Feb. 3, 1932; d. April 8, 2015), Grace Mennonite, St. Catharines, Ont.

Friesen—Elizabeth (nee Epp), 86 (b. Feb. 21, 1929; d. March 25, 2015), Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Neufeld—Mary (nee Hiebert), 101 (b. April 28, 1913; d. Feb. 27, 2015), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Pankratz—Ernest, 86 (b. Dec. 19, 1928; d. April 9, 2015), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Pauls—Dora (nee Peters), 88 (b. Nov. 17, 1926; d. Jan. 22, 2015), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Schroeder—Kaethe (nee Rempel), 85 (b. Feb. 7, 1929; d. Jan. 8, 2015), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Taves—Henry C., 99 (b. Feb. 6, 1916; d. April 18, 2015), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Wideman—Eunice Nita Margaret (nee Yake), 91 (b. March 9, 1924; d. March 29, 2015), Wideman Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

Wiebe—Kaethe (nee Derksen), 90 (b. April 25, 1924; d. March 22, 2015), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Wood—Donald Earle, 60 (b. July 3, 1954; d. April 9, 2015), Morden Mennonite, Man.

/// Corrections

• **RE:** “**GOD** is at work in the church in China,” April 27, page 15: An editing error made it sound like George and Tobia Veith established the Mennonite church in Taiwan, when, in fact, the church there was started by other earlier missionaries. Also, in the photograph at the bottom of the left-hand column, Tobia Veith is in the middle and Denise Epp is on the right; their names were reversed by mistake in the photo caption.

• **THE LEADERSHIP** in Ministry event, on which John H. Neufeld’s “A word for ministry: Imagination” reflection was based, took place in February of this year. Incorrect information appeared on page 14 of the April 13 issue.

Canadian Mennonite regrets the errors.

Pontius' Puddle



WOMEN WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH

'Burning bush moment' leads to refugee children singing

BY NAOMI UNGER



It was a “burning bush moment” that got Marian Hooge Jones of Rosthern (Sask.) Mennonite Church started on her lengthy involvement with the sponsorship of refugee families from Myanmar (formerly Burma) living in refugee camps in Thailand. While glancing through a church bulletin one Sunday, she read that refugee sponsors were urgently needed by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

“Those were God’s words to me,” says Hooge Jones, “so I invited some people over to pray and talk together about this need. An older couple advised us to approach the Rosthern Ministerial Association to broaden the sponsorship base and to spread the workload. Their wisdom affirmed my burning bush experience.”

In the fall of 2007, Hooge Jones asked the ministerial’s congregations to join in bringing refugees to Rosthern, and Alliance, Anglican, Catholic, Evangelical, Lutheran, Mennonite and Seventh Day Adventist churches agreed to work together for this cause, which, she says, was “God’s doing.”

An inter-church refugee committee chaired by Hooge Jones was established, with all donations going through the ministerial’s treasury. And together with others, including MCC Saskatchewan and translators in Thailand, the committee dealt with the immense amount of paper work needed for each family. “But every effort is worth it, despite the long wait for their arrival,” says Hooge Jones. “It’s always a miracle that the door opened a crack for even one family to get through.”

Now there are four families of Karen ethnic background from Myanmar who call Rosthern home, including eight adults and 23 children.

Last year, some of the Karen children sang at two of MCC Saskatchewan’s 50th-anniversary celebrations—first in Regina, where they sang at Peace Mennonite Church, and in October at a musical evening in

Saskatoon. For that event, they learned a medley of Karen children’s gospel songs off the Internet and added verses to “Don’t Be Afraid.”

“I wanted to bring more children that evening,” says Hooge Jones, “but only six were able to attend because volunteer drivers were busy with Halloween activities.”

Hooge Jones is a strong advocate for “her” children, wanting to give them experiences that Canadian kids have, so she applies for grants for music, art or dance lessons. She also encourages them to play soccer, learn how to swim and skate, and attend summer camps and Vacation Bible School programs, and to be involved in their schools.

Nowadays, her main connection with the refugee children is through literacy programming. Several years ago, the extra language help that their school could provide seemed inadequate. When she heard about the Canadian Bible Society’s “Mission: Literacy” program, she felt that was God’s timing. The Bible Society provides free books, manuals and training. The local school gives free photocopying and Rosthern Mennonite Church provides space in its education wing. All these are reasons to praise God, she says.

Last fall, when Hooge Jones shared frustrations about insufficient volunteers for ongoing literacy needs with Dana Krushel, the MCC Saskatchewan refugee assistance coordinator, she responded, telling Hooge Jones, “I can get some volunteers for you: Bethany Bible College students.”

And sure enough, several students came to Rosthern for two hours every Wednesday evening to assist with language activities, including singing, word games and homework help. “I thank God for these committed young people,” says Hooge Jones. “They’re a gift from God.”

Hooge Jones is encouraged when people tell her, “Don’t let anybody stop you in this work.” She says she continues to be in it for “the long haul because it’s God’s kingdom work,” and she gives thanks for burning bushes; the support of Rosthern churches, schools, library and community; and MCC Saskatchewan.

Because of this, program needs are being met, and refugee families are gradually becoming independent and integrated. “In every part of this story, God is to be glorified,” she concludes. ☿

Naomi Unger is a member of Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite Church, Glenbush, Sask., and is a former member of Saskatchewan Women in Mission program committee.

MCC SASKATCHEWAN PHOTO



Karen children—refugees from Myanmar—sing at a Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan event last fall.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Chin Christians receive Mennonite teaching with joy

BY DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent

David Martin was invited to Myanmar (formerly Burma) in March 2015 to preach two or three times and to teach from the book of Galatians in four sessions over two days. By the time he returned he had also performed two graveside memorial services, baptized six, preached at a wedding, and took part in many more services in Myanmar and Malaysia. Martin, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada's executive minister, travelled to South Asia with Pastor Jehu Lian Ching of the Kitchener (Ont.) Chin Christian Church.

The Chin are an indigenous group living in western Myanmar's mountainous Chin State. Overwhelmingly Christian, they face significant pressure from the Buddhist central government.

Jehu (the Chin generally go by first names) feels a strong affinity to Anabaptist/Mennonite theology and has worked to convince a number of other American and Canadian Chin congregations to join local Mennonite bodies. Part of the reason for the visit, at the invitation of Chin Christian leaders in Myanmar, was to talk with an American Baptist-connected denomination which is interested in a relationship with Mennonite World Conference (MWC). Martin and Jehu will communicate with MWC that the group is seeking some kind of connection.

Meanwhile, some individual congregations in Myanmar are renaming themselves with Mennonite as part of their names. One of these is the church formerly pastored by Jehu's father, Rev. Teichum Lian Ching. Jehu's brother, Chan Kep Tu, also pastors in Hakha, capital of Chin State.

Jehu notes that many Christians in Chin State have the belief that, while salvation is through Jesus Christ, they must keep many Old Testament laws in order to live as Christians. Martin's teaching on Galatians was planned to counteract that way of

thinking. Paul in Galatians preaches a salvation by grace through faith without the need to follow the Jewish law. Martin and Jehu believe the study was well received by the pastors and theological students who attended.

Myanmar's government has moved toward a more liberal democracy over the past five years and many western governments have lifted sanctions. Cell phones and motorcycles are ubiquitous in the country now. Jehu was amazed at these changes and the building and roadwork going on, compared to a visit he made just a year ago. But many Chin refugees in places like Malaysia are left in difficult situations. After fleeing from religious and ethnic persecution, they are in Malaysia without papers and unable to work, and cannot return without documentation. If arrested without papers, they can languish in jail for years, experiencing regular and debilitating beatings.

As part of their trip, Jehu and Martin visited Chin believers in Malaysia. At a service



David Martin, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada executive minister, centre, poses with the baptismal candidates from the addictions recovery group in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

where Martin preached, the pastor's wife shared about having been released just the day before, after several weeks in prison, even with proper documents.

Martin believes that all have gifts to share and all have needs that can be met by others in the worldwide church. Benefits of his visit to Myanmar for MC Eastern Canada include the joy with which Anabaptist/Mennonite ideas are received there, encouraging Canadian Mennonites to re-evaluate the treasures they have in their historical faith. The Chin Christians' commitment to share the good news they have received and their commitment to basic Christian faith are both gifts.

"They are a generous, dedicated people," Martin says. He was taken to several retreat centres built as places of prayer. Videos of the trip show large groups singing praise to God with joy and entering into intense times of prayer. ❧

/// Briefly noted

Historical Society hosts program and works to expand archives

SASKATOON—It's 140 years since Russian Mennonites first came to Canada, and the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan marked the occasion with a series of talks on Mennonite migration to western Canada, held in conjunction with its annual general meeting at Saskatoon's Bethany Manor on March 6 and 7. John Friesen, retired professor of church history at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, spoke on "The Mennonites who arrived in Manitoba in 1874" on March 6. The next morning, he talked about "The legacy of the Prussian Mennonites." Historical Society members Leonard Doell and Dick Braun followed in the afternoon with a presentation on "The arrival of the Mennonites in 1895 to Saskatchewan District, Northwest Territories." In addition to hosting history events such as this, the Society continues to develop its archives, housed in the basement of Bethany Manor. Treasurer Elmer Regier reported that from 2012-14, \$67,000 was raised for the work of developing the archives. The group plans to more than double its 150 square-metre space in the coming years.

—BY DONNA SCHULZ

MCC PHOTOS BY ALISON RALPH



Elder Margaret Harris and Donna Roach flew in from Vancouver to celebrate with MCC Manitoba at Knox United Church in Winnipeg.

MCC 50th full of historic symbolism

BY WILL BRAUN

Senior Writer
WINNIPEG

As the choirs' final note of "Die Zeit ist Kurz" hung sublimely in the sanctuary of Knox United Church on April 18, the indigenous drums began to beat and the Buffalo Gals started into the "Wolf Song." Once they were done, it was back to the Faith and Life choirs and the University of Manitoba Women's Chorus for "Come Let Us All Unite to Sing."

The back-and-forth of hymn and drum song, settler and indigenous, culminated with a song described as a "prayer for our grandchildren" led by elder Margaret Harris. Each line of the Cree song was

echoed by the huge joint choir behind her, with many of the 900 audience members joining in as well. The commissioned work closed out Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba's long-anticipated 50th anniversary benefit concert.

While the choral piece was rich in symbolism and powerful moments, it also felt like a first-time collaboration, at times a bit hesitant, the juxtaposition somewhat imbalanced. The three choirs were big, uniformed in black and polished. The Buffalo Gals in the front were barely more than a dozen in number, including kids and

elders, and featured authenticity and spirit more than polish.

The drum group holds no auditions and has a more flexible, although deeply symbolic, dress code. The black, white and rainbow colours of the ribbons in the women's skirts illustrate "inclusiveness towards all nations," says Jaki Skye, the group's coordinator. Rooted in indigenous teachings, the Buffalo Gals meet weekly at Winnipeg's North End Women's Centre to support each other on their journeys. They occasionally perform for others, but their focus is healing.

Widely regarded conductor Henry Engbrecht, standing on the front pew before the stacked choirs, simply let the drum group do its thing.

Earlier in the evening, Joe Clark, former prime minister and foreign affairs minister, delivered a keynote address in which he praised MCC and highlighted the importance of reaching out to people who are different from ourselves.

Clark recalled a time during his tenure as Canada's foreign minister when the government was delicately trying to open dialogue with Palestinian leaders. MCC played an "intermediary role," with Linda and Ken Stucky hosting the first meeting of the two sides at the MCC house in East Jerusalem.

Clark also highlighted the leading role Mennonites played in sponsoring Vietnamese boat people, again extending a welcome to people very different than ourselves.

"You also face up to hard issues at home," Clark said, referring to the controversy that resulted in the postponement of the anniversary event last November. At that time, the host venue, Immanuel Pentecostal Church, indicated the Buffalo Gals would not be allowed to hold a private smudging ceremony on the grounds prior to singing, as is their custom. MCC chose to postpone the event.

Clark applauded MCC for the quiet, respectful and resolute manner in which it handled the situation. "On questions of faith there will be genuine differences," said the seasoned diplomat. "I hope we can work out those differences."

Earlier in the day at Canadian Mennonite University, Clark had spoken at an event entitled "From truth to reconciliation,"

which focussed on indigenous relations.

In the evening, Clark noted that MCC has often worked with people of other faiths around the world. Given the tensions in the world and the temptation to build walls, Clark said the need to venture beyond our personal zones of comfort has never been greater.

The speech, which included light-hearted anecdotes from Clark's broad international experience, drew a standing ovation, punctuated by the beating drums of the Buffalo Gals in the front pew.

The evening concert raised \$40,000 for a major affordable housing initiative that MCC is undertaking with Eden Health Care Services. An additional \$80,000 in sponsorships and corporate donations had been raised in advance.

The Buffalo Gals, along with some MCC staff and Clark, smudged in the church prior to the event. But other than Clark's mention of the November postponement, and emcee Michelle Sawatzky's opening acknowledgment that we met in Treaty 1 territory, no attention was drawn to the smudging controversy that had highlighted the diverse views in the Mennonite community and what MCC Manitoba director Ron Janzen calls the need for ongoing dialogue.

Although the role of the Buffalo Gals was not played up, there was no missing the historic significance of an indigenous elder leading the finale of one of the biggest Mennonite events of the year in her own language with a drum in hand.

As for the performance itself, the shades of awkwardness were perhaps fitting. Despite decades of Indigenous Neighbours work and international outreach, a broad-based coming together of indigenous peoples and settler Mennonites is relatively new. It is bound to be a little tentative at first.

When Harris, who was recovering from bronchitis, struggled to reach the high notes in the final song, the multitude of voices behind her gently lifted the Cree melody to the rafters and beyond.

Afterward, more people posed for selfies with the former prime minister than the Cree elder, and Clark had a nicer car waiting for him at the door. But it was the presence of the Buffalo Gals that most aptly illustrated the path toward the next 50 years of MCC bridgebuilding. ❧

Church planting involves listening to God

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
KITCHENER, ONT.

A recurring theme at the church planters gathering at First Mennonite Church in Kitchener on April 24 was voiced by Ryan Jantzi, pastor of Kingsfield-Clinton: "Sometimes the church seems to get in the way of the mission."

What he and others, including those from established congregations (up to 175 years old) meant was that if the mission of Christians is to share the story of Jesus with others, sometimes doing the work of the institution seems to get in the way. Fruitful networking and sharing took place at this Mennonite Church Eastern Canada event as stories and a noon meal were shared.

Planters from Kitchener, Clinton and Toronto told stories and shared prayer requests. Stories ranged from the Thursday afternoon barbecue that serves 300 hot-dogs to underprivileged youth and children, to house churches that wonder what to do when they get too big for the house.

Brian Bauman, MC Eastern Canada's mission minister, noted that the focus was more on the apostolic and evangelistic roles from Ephesians 4 than the shepherding and teaching roles. Three seemingly parallel streams mould his thinking: servant leadership, Anabaptist evangelism and multicultural churches.

In the afternoon, Jim Loepp Thiessen, one of the pastors at the Gathering Church in Kitchener, a 10-year-old church plant, shared a prayer practice he and his congregation use to witness to the presence of God in the world. The practice is based on I Corinthians 14:25: "After the secrets of the unbeliever's heart are disclosed, that person will bow down before God and worship, declaring, 'God is really among you.'" Without asking about a specific need, an individual or group takes time in silence listening for what God has to say to the person for whom prayer is requested. After a time, the individual or group share what

the Spirit had shared with them about the person's need or situation, and words from God about the need or situation.

Loepp Thiessen shared story after story of how God had opened the minds of the pray-ers to understand what the pray-ee needed. The group then practised both one-on-one prayer and a group praying for an individual. While Loepp Thiessen noted that the pray-ers might hear nothing, time after time individuals reported that those praying for them had heard God speaking into their current situation. Like the many New Testament passages that speak to the Spirit being the guarantee of God being present in a person's life, those present experienced God at work. ❧



Brian Bauman, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada missions minister, teaches about his passions at the church planters event on April 24 in Kitchener, Ont.



Chris Brnjas, left, Dimitri Faludy, Rachel Brnjas and Esther Kissor talk about their work at the 2015 Mennonite Church Eastern Canada annual church gathering. The Brnjases work in churches in Kitchener, Ont., while Faludy and Kissor are from the Jane Finch Faith Community in Toronto.

MC Eastern Canada gathering hears stories of faith

DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
KITCHENER, ONT.

Paul Wideman, moderator of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, challenged the 28th annual church gathering, saying, “How can we encourage one another by sharing our faith?” The day-and-a-half event was filled with faith stories and had little actual business. Advertised as such, the gathering at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate in Kitchener on April 24 and 25 was fully subscribed with some watching the live streaming from home.

David Martin, executive minister, started off the sharing on April 24. He said that while studying at Conrad Grebel University College he slipped into a clinical depression and became suicidal as his “naïve faith” was challenged by what he was learning in Bible and theology classes. But like an unseen hand holding him up, he experienced the “miracle” of God rebuilding his sense of self, and his faith, putting him back together. His experience and intellect were brought together as he “descended with the mind into the heart.” He admitted that as a church leader even his winter recreation with a pastors curling league is within circles of faith. Where are his opportunities to share his faith?

The first night’s sharing was rounded out

with Fanosie Legesse, an Ethiopian-born member of Bethel Mennonite Church near Elora, saying that sharing one’s faith means submerging one’s own goals and ego in God’s desires.

Instead of reporting on April 25, staff allowed their written reports to stand and shared their own faith stories instead.

Henry Paetkau, area church minister, noted that his faith in action, including church attendance, is simply part of who he is. He believes that there is good in the world he would not sense without a belief in God.

Brent Charette, church engagement minister, spoke of Emmaus Road experiences of meeting Jesus when he pays attention to the people he is with.

Ester Neufeldt, operations minister, told the story of a faith developed through her parents’ habits of faithfulness, habits that she believes “enable each other to follow Jesus Christ, a good habit to have.”

Brian Bauman, mission minister, has found that in sharing faith with others he needs to be silent, that God is already having a conversation with a person before he comes on the scene.

Jeff Steckley, congregational ministries, noted that God is mystery, but “mystery is not unknown, but that which is infinitely understandable.”

Others who told their stories were Joanna Loepp Thiessen, a “preacher’s kid” who had to find her own faith; Tim Wagler’s story of getting spiritual advice from a former street person; Maciel Arias Hernandez from the Toronto Mennonite New Life Church, a Hispanic gathering; Joel Warkentin, a teacher at the UMEI Christian High School in Leamington; and Bernard Sejour, an MC Eastern Canada staff person catalyzing church planting in Ottawa.

Twice the gathering was broken into with difficult stories. Rick Cober Bauman, executive director of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario, spoke about the 7.8 magnitude earthquake that ravaged Kathmandu, Nepal, that morning, reporting that all MCC staff, including Leah and Luke Reesor Keller from Erb St. Mennonite Church in Waterloo, were safe.

In the afternoon, an open mike time



Mennonite Church Eastern Canada executive minister David Martin, with hand raised, prays for the Jane Finch Faith Community Church during the area church’s annual church gathering on April 25 after church members learned of a fire in the building where the church meets to worship and where many members live.



Brandon Leis, music director at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., leads singing.

was cancelled to allow for prayer for the Jane Finch Faith Community Church that meets in a 25-storey building in Toronto. A fire on the fourth floor where some church attenders live was filling the building with smoke. The stage was covered with folk praying for community members.

Business included accepting the Chin Christian Church in Kitchener into full membership; correcting a 27-year-old clerical error that meant the Toronto Mennonite New Life Church had never had its full membership acknowledged; and a

celebration of Ester Neufeldt's 27 years of ministry coming to an end in June.

Delegates accepted a balanced 2014-15 financial statement, and a slightly smaller balanced 2015-16 budget. These balanced budgets were made possible by transfers from reserve funds which grow from bequests to MC Eastern Canada. For the next year these transfers total over \$300,000, or about 15 percent of the total. Such budgets were acknowledged not to be sustainable in the long run. The sale of MC Eastern Canada's old buildings on King Street East in Kitchener closed on the day of the gathering. It was also reported that the boards of the area church and the Warden Woods Community Centre were meeting regularly and expected a non-litigated solution to the ownership of the building which houses the Centre and used to be the home of a Mennonite congregation. A new church plant may be part of the solution to this conflict.

The Legacy Initiative Fund, based on a large bequest from Enid and Harold Schmidt, continues to fund new programming. Included are a program to help congregations make disciples more effectively, plans for church planters in under-resourced urban areas, and a new

Anabaptist learning workshop, developed with Conrad Grebel University College, for new Canadian leaders and congregations, people without higher education or with lower English language proficiency.

MC Canada's Future Directions Task Force report took up 45 minutes of reporting and discussion. While not a decision-making time, reporting from table groups seemed to favour decentralization of the national church. ❧

/// Staff changes

Pastoral transitions in Ontario

• **TANYA DYCK STEINMANN** was ordained at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock, Ont., on April 12. She earned a master



Tanya Dyck Steinmann

degree of theological studies at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., and has completed the Tending the Soul of Individuals and Congregations course. Her work background includes seven years as associate pastor at East Zorra; co-camp director of Camp Valaqua, Alta.; and five years as youth pastor of First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont. Her special interests include spiritual direction.

• **SARAH FREEMAN** was licensed toward ordination and installed as associate minister of outreach and faith formation at Elmira Mennonite Church, Ont., on April 26. Freeman has written curriculum for Gather 'Round, coordinated the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre and the Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholar's Network in Toronto, and served as a youth minister at First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.



Sarah Freeman

—BY DAVE ROGALSKY

/// Briefly noted

Norm Voth leaves MC Manitoba for Manitoba Hydro

Norm Voth has resigned after nearly 14 years as director of evangelism and service for Mennonite Church Manitoba. Over the years, Voth oversaw a number of initiatives, including the creation of partnerships between Mennonite churches in southern Manitoba and churches in northern indigenous communities. "Norm's love for the church, his passion for cross-cultural ministry, his desire for the development of new expressions of faith communities, and passion for practical ministry addressing the needs of the marginalized in our society have been a tremendous blessing to [MC] Manitoba and he will be truly missed," said the area church in a press release. Dorothy Fontaine, who previously worked as a chaplain at Siloam Mission and a pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church, has been appointed to replace Voth at MC Manitoba for a one-year term. Voth is moving to a new job as a community liaison officer for Manitoba Hydro, helping to build bridges and strengthen relationships between northern communities and the provincially owned provider of electricity and natural gas. "[Manitoba Hydro] realized they need to change some of their culture and so they invited me to apply for this position," says Voth of his new job.

—BY J. NEUFELD



Norm Voth

Building houses and learning to serve

Saskatchewan camp uses mission trip to train staff

By DONNA SCHULZ

Saskatchewan Correspondent
ROSTHERN, SASK.

It may not be typical summer camp staff training, but Mark Wurtz says the Youth Farm Bible Camp's annual trip to Mexico is "probably more worthwhile than orientation." The camp has been taking senior staff members and youth on short-term mission trips for the past eight years, and Wurtz sees the trips as highly valuable in developing camp staff.

This year, five senior staff and seven youth participated in the 10-day trek to Tijuana, where they partnered with Amor Ministries to build a house for a family in need. In exchange, participating youth are expected to work as counsellors-in-training for at least one week of summer camp and are strongly encouraged to work a week of adult special needs camp as well.

It's all about learning to serve and to sacrifice, says Wurtz. The trip to Tijuana takes the group through Las Vegas and San Diego, where they witness opulence and luxury. The relative poverty of Tijuana comes as a stark contrast then, and participants realize that "we have so much here, we can give up some of that," says Wurtz.

The homes they build are small by Canadian standards, measuring just 3.4 by 6.7 metres on a lot measuring 7.6 by 12.1 metres. The family they built for this year lost their previous home to fire. Each of the new homeowners is deeply appreciative. Wurtz says that on several occasions in recent years, including this year, homeowners have said to him, "This is our home, but it is also your home whenever you return to Mexico."

For many participants, the Easter worship service they attended was significant. Wurtz says the youth were amazed to find they had "come all the way to Mexico and here are people worshipping the same God that we believe in."

He hopes participants learned a few other lessons, too, including, "Don't take what we have for granted," and, "You can become a servant in Canada, too." ❧

To read a blog and view a video of this year's trip to Mexico, visit yfbcc.com/mexico and follow the links.



PHOTO BY MARK WURTZ

Holly Epp, volunteer coordinator for Youth Farm Bible Camp, in the blue ball cap, enjoys communicating through pictures with the neighbourhood children in Tijuana, Mexico, where a group from the camp built a house.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DEVIN WIENS



A choir provided special music on April 19 as Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite Church (Sask.) celebrated its 90th anniversary. Pastors Margaret Ewen Peters and Gary Peters led the morning worship. Using Romans 12:1-2 as his text, former pastor David Neufeld challenged the congregation to look forward and to reflect on the church's relationship to the boarder community. The celebration continued with a potluck lunch and informal visiting. A scrapbook created for the occasion by Brenda Peters sparked conversation and storytelling as current and former members browsed its pages.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

A warming world should make us uncomfortable

Willard Metzger joins ecumenical conversation on climate change and poverty issues

BY J. NEUFELD

Manitoba Correspondent

It's time for some uncomfortable conversations about climate change and poverty, says Willard Metzger, executive director of Mennonite Church Canada.

"We're trying to work for a better environment, but we're benefitting from the industries that are ruining the environment. Somehow we need to at least acknowledge that," said Metzger, speaking with *Canadian Mennonite* on a cross-country tour about poverty and climate justice organized by the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) and Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ).

"I think we're struggling—as the rest of Canadian society is struggling," Metzger said. "We like the benefits [of the fossil fuel industry]. We know that our lifestyles should be evaluated. We know simplicity is a good thing for us, but it's hard to say no to the things we've grown to enjoy. These are uncomfortable conversations, but we need to stay in them. If we try to make them comfortable, we're never going to get engaged."

Poverty in Canada and climate change are the two issues Canadian Christians are most concerned about, according to the CCC, an ecumenical body representing 25 churches, including MC Canada. In 2011, member churches signed two declarations, one calling for efforts to reduce poverty in Canada and one urging action on climate change.

"We need to change wasteful patterns of production and consumption," the climate declaration states. "This calls for a cultural transformation that brings the values of sustainability to the forefront of the public consciousness." The document also urges the Canadian government to make binding commitments to reduce carbon emissions and contribute to a fund to help

the "poorest and most affected countries adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change."

But no one in the pews seemed to notice the declarations. "In 2011, churches spoke together for the first time in the history of Canada on climate change," said Joe Gunn, CPJ's executive director, during the cross-country tour's stop in Winnipeg. "How many people heard a sermon on that?"

No one in the audience raised a hand.

So this year the two organizations decided to send a delegation of church leaders across Canada to share information about poverty and climate justice, and learn what churches in different regions are already doing. Based on their findings, the two organizations will draft a statement to present to the Canadian government this spring. The upcoming federal election makes this a strategic time for churches to raise their concerns, said Gunn.

The delegation is travelling from Vancouver to Ottawa, with stops in Edmonton, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont., Halifax and

Montreal.

One thing that has become very clear to all the delegates on the tour is that the issues of ecological and economic justice are inextricably linked. While the wealthiest of the planet's citizens burn a disproportionate amount of fossil fuels, contributing to the planet's rising temperature, the poorest people are already suffering the effects: drought, crop loss and increasingly violent weather events.

Tasha Carriere-Spillett, a young woman of Cree descent who spoke at the event in Winnipeg, said her peers are concerned about the health of the land. "If you look at the structure of our communities, they are very intimately connected to the well-being of our homelands," she said. "Within our worldview, you cannot separate a person and their welfare from that of the territory they occupy."

"One of the things that has become very clear tonight," said Susan Johnson, national bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, "is that we cannot separate issues of poverty and climate justice in this country from issues of indigenous rights and reconciliation."

Metzger believes that Mennonites have an opportunity to look beyond their own communities in order to work with other faith groups and secular organizations working for ecological justice. "Our efforts have been fragmented," he said. "There are a lot of different initiatives and each by themselves can look and appear as though they're not very effective because they're not drawing huge crowds. But when we start to put all that together into one collective force, there's a lot of potential." ❧

MC CANADA PHOTO BY DAN DYCK



Susan Johnson, left, Willard Metzger and Joe Gunn discuss poverty and climate change in Winnipeg during a cross-country tour organized by the Canadian Council of Churches and Citizens for Public Justice.

Churches 'on the healing side'

Ecumenical committee hosts event in response to missing and murdered indigenous women

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONNA SCHULZ

Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON

“We are all equal. Not one person is above others.” Elder Marie Linklater’s words set the tone for a day of learning and discerning on April 18, when about 200 women and men from Saskatoon and area gathered at Mayfair United Church for an ecumenical response to murdered and missing indigenous women and girls. Representatives from eight denominations or groups, including Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, organized the event called Voices of our Sisters.

Winona Wheeler, associate professor of indigenous studies at the University of Saskatchewan, and Glenda Abbot, visitor services manager at Wanuskewin Heritage Park near Saskatoon, shared the history of indigenous women. In pre-colonial times, grandparents cared for the community’s children while their mothers provided food and clothing and tended the fires. Men were the hunters and protectors of the community. “Man and woman were equally needed, but each had his or her own role,” said Abbot.

With colonialism came three new values—individualism, materialism and patriarchy—that were diametrically opposed to the indigenous way of life. Treaties relegated first nation communities to reserves, paving the way for European settlement. The Indian Act furthered the government’s plan to assimilate indigenous people into white culture through inter-marriage and education.

Initially, the plan wasn’t successful because of the dominant role elders played in children’s lives. The government eventually realized that to assimilate the children they would have to remove them from their communities. In residential schools, children were forbidden to

speak their language or practise their culture. Education “consisted of convincing people that their way of life was bad,” said Wheeler. “When you are told that you are no good for several generations, you start to internalize that message.”

This, she said, is where many indigenous people are today. The suicide rate among indigenous people is five times the national average, and although indigenous people represent only 4 percent of Canada’s population, they make up 23 percent of the federal prison population. In Saskatoon’s Pinegrove Correctional Centre, indigenous women comprise 90 percent of the inmate population. “This is the manifestation of the internalization of colonialism,” said Wheeler. But, she added, “We need to understand where we are now before we can go forward.”

Keynote speaker Pauline Muskego of Onion Lake Cree Nation told how her daughter Daleen Bosse disappeared in May 2004 while studying at the University of Saskatchewan. Muskego felt frustrated by how police handled her daughter’s case.

“To the police, she was just a file number,” said Muskego, “but she was our daughter.” Four years after her disappearance, police found Bosse’s remains. Each summer since then, Muskego walks the 325 kilometres from her home in Onion Lake to Saskatoon, commemorating her daughter’s death and raising awareness of the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women.

A panel of presenters from various perspectives told their stories and offered ideas for what could be done to address the issue. Several panel members spoke of the work of *Iskwewuk E-wichiwitochik*—Women Walking Together—an advocacy and support network for families of missing

and murdered indigenous women. Helen Smith-McIntyre, a member of Amnesty International and one of the founders of *Iskwewuk*, was the only non-indigenous panel member. She urged participants to “speak out in favour of a national inquiry so that all stories are told and so that we white folks aren’t telling them what to do.”

Participants broke into smaller groups to brainstorm possible responses to what they had learned. Suggestions included:

- **PROVIDE SUPPORT** groups for families in need.
- **RESPECT INDIGENOUS** language, spirituality and traditions.
- **EDUCATE ONESELF** and one’s children and grandchildren about what happened to Canada’s first nations.
- **INVITE AN** indigenous person to a meal in one’s home.
- **HELP INDIGENOUS** people trust in churches again.



At a recent Saskatoon ecumenical event in response to missing and murdered indigenous women, Pauline Muskego of Onion Lake Cree Nation shared the heart-breaking story of her daughter’s disappearance and the discovery, four years later, of her remains.

Phyllis Goertz of Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, represented MC Saskatchewan on the planning committee. “I attended a workshop in Regina on the issue and it really touched my heart,” she said. “I committed to pray daily about this. So maybe I ended up being involved as an answer to prayer.” Goertz expressed disappointment that only a handful of Mennonites attended Voices of our Sisters. She feels it is important for different denominations to collaborate on this issue. Christians working together can be “a very powerful voice for change,” she said.

“The church, through its participation in residential schools, has contributed significantly to the creation of this issue,” said Goertz. “We need to be on the healing side now.” ❧

To view a video of Mark Kleiner, a Lutheran pastor from Biggar, Sask., performing a song he had written called ‘Indian Time,’ visit canadianmennonite.org/indian-time.



/// Briefly noted

Saskatchewan youth take small steps toward big changes

Worms, balloons, dolly carts and minimal sleep were all part of a Saskatchewan Mennonite Youth Organization event held in partnership with Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan on April 8 and 9. This year’s Honouring the Earth event focussed on how making small changes to food consumption habits can have a big impact on the global food market. The event began in Saskatoon with an interactive workshop exploring the hardships and obstacles producers face around the globe. After that, the youth experienced how they can better manage food waste by creating their very own vermi-composting bins, complete with worms. From there, the youth moved to Zoar Mennonite Church in Waldheim, where discussion on food waste focussed on the recent documentary, *Just Eat It* that revealed that approximately 40 percent of food produced around the globe is wasted.

—STORY, PHOTO AND VIDEO BY KIRSTEN HAMM-EPP

To view the video, visit canadianmennonite.org/honouring-the-earth.



Honouring the Earth participants Kennedy Martens, Amy Wiens, Sydney Martens, Johanna Wiebe and Naomi Klassen learn about vermiculture as a way of better managing food waste.

Global. Life-Changing. Inspiring!



Music from around the world will be featured at “PA 2015.” And lots of singing together! Inspiration and wisdom from leaders from all continents. Small groups. Fellowship—making lifelong friends. Tours (half day and full day). Dozens of seminars. Global communion service. Register (full-time or part-time): mwc-cmm.org/PA2015.

walking with God
caminemos con Dios
en marche avec Dieu



July 21–26 • Register Today! • Things are Filling Up!

GOD AT WORK IN US

OBITUARY

A giant has passed

*Roy G. Snyder, 99**Oct. 23, 1915 – Feb. 11, 2015*

BY WALLY KROEKER

The Marketplace

Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) lost one of its most enduring and faithful supporters on Feb. 11 with the passing of Roy G. Snyder of Waterloo, Ont. He was 99.

He was a MEDA stalwart for more than half a century. He was one of the initial board members of MEDA Canada and a signatory on its charter. He oversaw programs in the Philippines and Bolivia, the latter country producing many successful MEDA ventures. The long family connection continues with Allan Sauder, his son-in-law who is MEDA's president.

Snyder's calling and lifetime passion was the cattle industry, in which he had few equals, and for which his many recognitions include induction into the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame and the Waterloo Region Hall of Fame.

He was acclaimed as "the father of artificial insemination" and pioneered the use of frozen semen and embryo transplants in cattle. Under his innovative leadership, the Waterloo Cattle Breeders Association was the first organization in the world to use 100 percent frozen semen, setting an example for the rest of the breeding industry.

Throughout his career, he travelled to 80 countries, building up Canada's semen-exporting trade. He rubbed shoulders with dignitaries and prime ministers, including John Diefenbaker and Pierre Elliot Trudeau. Diefenbaker and his wife Olive showed up at the annual "bull night" of the Waterloo Cattle Breeders Association and ended up at the Snyders' home to catch up on some rest.

Snyder had a hand in MEDA's maiden undertaking in Paraguay, which aimed to bolster the cattle herds being raised by Paraguayan Mennonites. Sustained

efforts—to which Snyder contributed by sending a shipment of Holstein semen—were so successful that the Mennonite colonies virtually dominate the country's dairy industry today.

Up to the week before he died, Snyder remained engaged with MEDA. A few days before his death he was reading the last issue of *The Marketplace* and felt enough connection and vigor to offer a few points of critique. We will miss him. A lot.

Snyder was active in all aspects of Erb Street Mennonite Church, Waterloo, where he was a member, and on the board of Conrad Grebel University College and the Mennonite Central Committee Heifer Sale, in addition to his role with MEDA. He was a partner in the Kitchener Stock Yards,



Roy G. Snyder

which later became St. Jacobs Market.

Snyder was predeceased by his wife Clara Belle Weber Snyder on May 21, 2005, to whom he was married for 61 years. He is survived by his sister Erma Horst and sisters-in-law Beatrice Snyder, Mable Sauder (Lewis Sauder), and Vera Weber. His surviving children are Jean (Bruce) Fretz, Nancy (John) Brubacher, Donna Snyder (Allan Sauder) and Laura (Roger) Tiessen. A memorial service was held on Feb. 15 at Erb Street Mennonite Church. ✎

Originally published in the March/April issue of The Marketplace. With files from Canadian Mennonite.

Relationships important in lending

Tiffany Meyer cares for 120-plus clients at Mennonite Savings and Credit Union

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
NEW HAMBURG, ONT.

Coming from a conservative Mennonite Background, the Midwest Mennonite Fellowship, Tiffany Meyer absorbed what it meant to be Christian and Mennonite through both church and family. But she and her husband desired a less "bounded" faith experience and moved first



Tiffany Meyer

to a Mennonite Brethren congregation and now to Creekside Church, a Waterloo church plant of First Baptist in Kitchener.

She believes her Mennonite background influences the work she now does at Mennonite Savings and Credit Union (MSCU), New Hamburg branch.

35 MEDA
20 under 35
20 Young Professionals
Changing the World

As a twenty-something she is a senior account manager, overseeing more than 120 families in a wide range of agricultural and commercial industries.

Ben Janzen of MSCU nominated Meyer for the Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) 20 under 35 honour. In an e-mail he said he nominated her because of the length of time in her role with MSCU, having served members in different branches, living out her values in the job and serving members who do similar work to what MEDA does in agricultural communities.

While not an entrepreneur herself, she serves many entrepreneurs in her work, supporting them as they create businesses. She sees her work as service, “fulfilling our purpose on earth,” especially when she can give a listening ear to members with difficult stories to tell. She does the same with her friends, family and relatively new neighbours in New Hamburg, living out her internalized Christian and Mennonite values: “community, fellowship and mutual aid.”

Meyer entered employment at MSCU as a teller and worked her way up, eventually going to head office in Kitchener for nine months to be trained for her current job. There are ongoing courses she takes online to keep up with her position, but a big part is building relationships with clients and families. She is glad that she has time to listen to the story, rather than just look at the numbers, especially if a client or family has fallen into a difficult situation, whether financial, health or relational.

“But this is still a business,” she adds, noting that in some situations MSCU has to move to end a loan or mortgage in spite of trying other avenues first.

Meyer takes the lead in weekly meetings in the branch, reviewing lending, and making and following policies. Annually she is part of the team that reviews all files. MSCU does “not just loan and then leave [the client] for 10 years,” she says.

The new connection with MEDA, including the chance to travel to the annual convention in Winnipeg last November, opened her to the sense of wanting to be more involved with MEDA in the future, although she still feels humbled to have been chosen for the award. ❧

MC Alberta Women's Retreat

We were made to
thrive

May 22, 23, 24 2015

Sunnyside
Christian Retreat
Centre,
Sylvan Lake, AB

www.mcaawomen.com

Residential Mortgage Special
2.99%*
5 Year Term

**Lending is
different at MSCU**

“We encourage responsible use of credit, apply faith-based stewardship principles, and seek to live out our values every day. When you choose co-operative banking you're more than a customer. You're a Member and an Owner.”

Call your local **Personal Lending Specialist** today and experience the MSCU difference.

Welcome to
co-operative banking
**Credit Unions
of Ontario**

**Mennonite Savings
and Credit Union**

www.mscu.com | 1.888.672.6728

* Rate subject to change. Rate includes relationship pricing. Annual Percentage Rate (APR) is equivalent to the Annual Interest Rate. APR assumes no fees or charges apply. If fees or charges apply, your APR would increase.

ARTBEAT

How Mennonites worship God

Timeline set for new song collection project

MennoMedia

Some say Mennonites do not have a liturgy or a set form of worship, but rather it is in singing together in church week after week where they express their Christian faith.

Meeting the week of April 13 in Minneapolis, representatives from MennoMedia, Mennonite Church Canada and MC U.S.A. laid the foundation for a new Mennonite song collection that is anticipated to be released in 2020.

The new collection will be more than a printed hymnal, and will certainly include an electronic version as well as other

supporting products. Full feasibility studies exploring the range of potential products for the collection are underway.

“We are eager to see this new song collection serve and nurture the next generation of Anabaptist Mennonite believers, a generation characterized by broad diversity, incredible creativity and inspiring passion for God’s mission,” says Dave Bergen, MC Canada’s executive minister of Christian formation and chief administrative officer.

The project is expected to take about five years, with a final printed hymnal slated to

be available in the summer of 2020.

While MennoMedia will publish the new song collection, it will do so in close partnership with the two national churches. The three parties first started exploring the need for a new hymnal in 2008, when they surveyed worship and music leaders in Mennonite congregations. That work continued in 2011, when “The heart of Mennonite worship” was released as a jointly produced study guide inviting Mennonite congregations to think more deeply about worship. As one part of that study, congregations were asked to submit lists of the songs they sang each week through an online survey.

“We have a tremendous amount of data from congregations in the 2008 and 2011 surveys about the songs they sing each week and how they access music,” says Russ Eanes, publisher at MennoMedia. “Congregational responses show that it’s time to begin this project, as many congregations are noting wear and tear on their existing hymnals.”

MennoMedia plans to hire a full-time project director and a part-time project assistant for the duration of the project. In addition, a 10- to 12-member hymnal committee will be appointed to work closely with the project staff. This committee will solicit and review music and texts, paying close attention to singability, theology and clarity. Three members of the committee will be asked to serve in part-time capacities as music editor, text editor and worship resources editor, respectively. All the other positions will be filled by volunteers.

Those interested in being part of the hymnal project committee will be able to apply for the positions in late 2015 at MennoMedia.org. Application reviews will start in January 2016.

When completed, the new volume will replace *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (1992), which succeeded *The Mennonite Hymnal* (1969).

Fundraising work for the project has already started; MennoMedia plans to raise in excess of \$400,000 to produce the new collection. ☛

SHORT
and Sweet!

With a rate this sweet, now is a great time to invest with MSCU!

Speak with our **Investment team** today.

GIC Special
1.60%*
14 Month Term
*Rate subject to change



...Psst. You don't have to be Mennonite!



Mennoite Savings and Credit Union

www.msqu.com | 1.888.672.6728

History surprises

Sam Steiner releases new history of Mennonites in Ontario

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

Lewis Burkholder's *A Brief History of Mennonites in Ontario*, published in 1935, is a "brief" book compared to Sam Steiner's new book on the same topic: *In Search of Promised Lands: A Religious History of Mennonites in Ontario*.

The book was released on March 28 at Conrad Grebel University College, where the retired Grebel librarian and former Mennonite Archives of Ontario archivist used the opportunity to focus on seven of the 20-odd "surprises" he said he came across as he wrote *In Search of Promised Lands* over the past eight years:

1. THE AMOUNT of suffering Mennonites in the Niagara Region endured during the War of 1812 was much more than anywhere else in Ontario. Some farms were overrun or commandeered by both sides in the war.

2. THE NUMBER of female Mennonite ministers in the 1880s. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ (MBiC), now Evangelical Missionary Church in Canada, followed Paul's admonition that both men and women could prophesy and so it allowed women to preach. In the early 1900s, under the influence of evangelicalism and fundamentalism, this practice died out.

3. THE MBiC was the largest denomination among Mennonites in Ontario in 1900, but divisions, including many leaders leaving to join the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, reduced its numbers by 25 percent before 1910.

4. ALTHOUGH SWISS Mennonites and Amish in Ontario tend to see "Russian" Mennonites as urban and urbane, they were rural people, settling in Niagara and Essex counties, where they formed farming communities, co-operatives and the Niagara Credit Union.

5. THERE HAS been a rapid growth in Low German-speaking Mennonites in Ontario in the past 30 years. As farming became

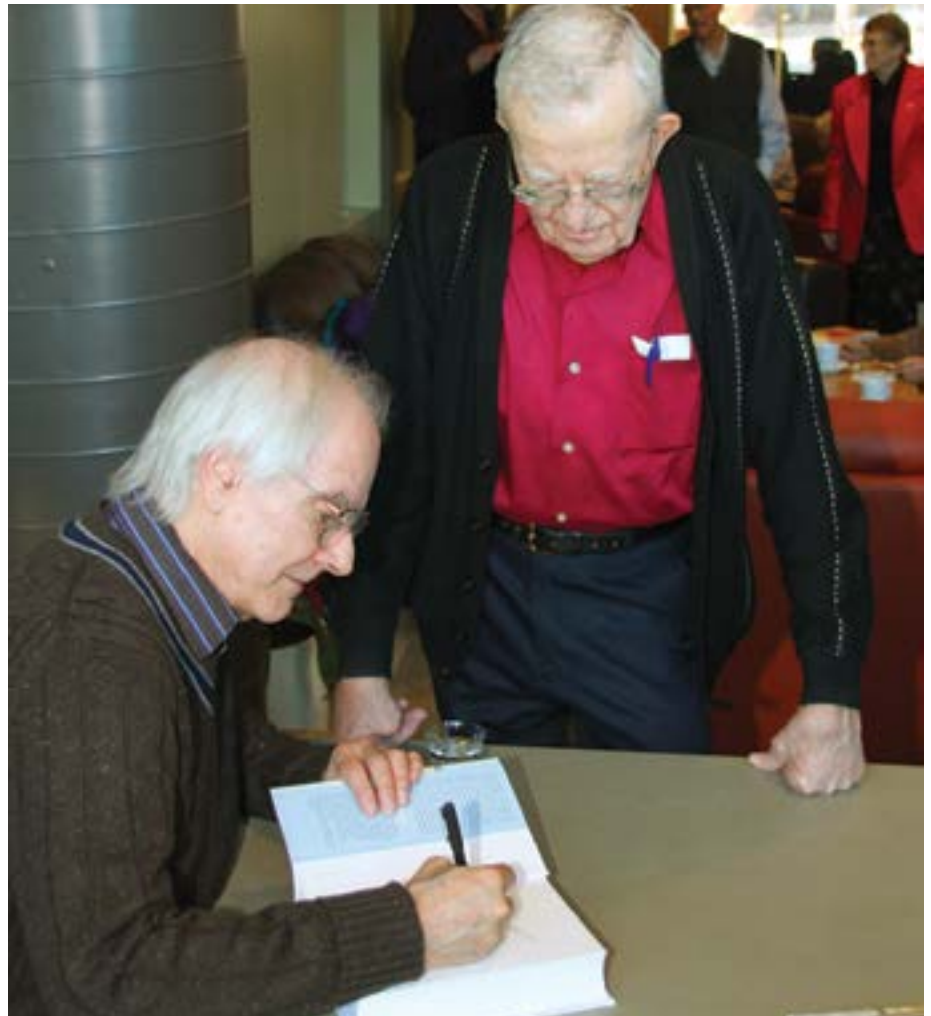
unprofitable, and drug violence escalated in Mexico, many moved to Ontario to join Old Colony, Evangelical Mennonite and Evangelical Mennonite Mission churches. But in 2004, 60 percent had no religious affiliation. In 2011, there were more than 40,000, 25 percent of the total Mennonite population in Ontario.

6. THE DIVERSITY of Amish in Ontario is astounding, with Old Order and Beachy

two among eight different groups. Those who modernized in the 1880s by building structures strictly for worship had divided more than those who stayed with worship in houses and barns. They continue to grow, retaining most of their youth through a private school system.

7. THE CREST of Mennonite institution-building has passed as governments regulate seniors complexes and educational institutions become more independent. Steiner wonders if Mennonite Central Committee could even become a para-church organization in time.

About 90 people attended the book launch and peppered Steiner with questions following his presentation. ❧



*Sam Steiner signs a copy of *In Search of Promised Lands: A Religious History of Mennonites in Ontario* for Joe Grove of Hanover (Ont.) Mennonite Church at a book release event at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., on March 28.*

Promotional Supplement

Schools Directory featuring Eastern Mennonite University

A passion for restorative justice

Eastern Mennonite University

Students stay in school and keep learning when restorative justice techniques emphasizing intervention, empathy and communication are used to handle conflicts and discipline issues in the school community. That's what the data proves, and that's what Katherine Evans, Ph.D., is teaching around the country and around the world as assistant director of education at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU).

Evans has presented research at conferences and annual meetings in Pennsylvania, Louisiana, California and Indiana; New Zealand; and in Newfoundland and British Columbia.

Recently, she has worked collaboratively with

EMU's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding and the Zehr Institute for Restorative Justice to develop an interdisciplinary concentration in restorative justice education within the current master's in education degree program. Both programs begin this fall.

Creating equitable opportunities for all students has interested Evans since her years as a middle and high school special education teacher working with students identified as having learning, behavioural and emotional challenges.

"Restorative justice, also known as RJ, offers a completely different model of addressing classroom discipline problems that focusses on building effective relationships both

between teachers and students, and among students," she says.



Katherine Evans

Her belief in RJ and enthusiasm for its implementation has resulted in travels around the world, but steps taken close to home are just as important, she says. Last month, Evans co-facilitated a local training attended by 70 school district employees, including administrators, counsellors, teachers and social workers, as well as police officers, probation officers and the commonwealth's attorneys.

"I'm excited to see more future practitioners join us, learn about the benefits of this unique model, and go back into their classrooms to make a difference with their students," she says.

Elementary/Secondary

Menno Simons Christian School
Integrating sound academic learning with growth in character, faith and service to God.
CALGARY, ALBERTA | www.mennosimonschristianschool.ca
An Education for Life!

MENNONITE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE
GRADES 7-12
Experience His Life,
Choirs, Sports,
Academics,
& More!
www.mci blues.net
GREYNA, MB

RJC Rosthern Junior College
Christian Day & Residence
HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 10-12)

Be Transformed
Accepting Applications
For more information call 306-232-4222
or email admissions@rjc.sk.ca
www.rjc.sk.ca ROOTED IN FAITH. ORCHestrating THE FUTURE.

FORMING FAITH... BUILDING CHARACTER

ROCKWAY
MENNONITE COLLEGIATE
110 Doon Road | Kitchener | N2G 3C8
www.rockway.ca | 519-743-5209

...inspiring and empowering students to live as people of God

WESTGATE COLLEGIATE
www.westgatemennonite.ca

Post-Secondary

THE COLLABORATIVE
MBA
Bluffton University, Goshen College
& Eastern Mennonite University
Together we can do more.
collaborativemba.org

COLUMBIA BIBLE COLLEGE
Prepare to Make a Difference.
columbiabc.edu

CMU
CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY
cmu.ca
Arts • Science • Business • Music
Exemplary Academics
Faith-filled Community
Discover the Alternative

EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY
Harrisonburg, VA & online
emu.edu

GREBEL
Challenging Mind and Spirit
Hundreds of programs.
Dozens of friends.
One campus.
grebel.uwaterloo.ca

Youths change lives on MDS trip . . . including their own

BY RACHEL BERGEN

Young Voices Co-editor

A group of Manitoba youths and young adults from the Bunker, a ministry of Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church, recently went to High River, Alta., to work with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS). They thought they would leave tired and covered in drywall dust, but had no idea they that they would actually help heal a man's broken spirit.

Manda Enns, 24, says she never really had a yearning to do missions or service work, but the experience was inspiring. "The whole week actually affirmed my belief in second chances," she says, largely because of one of the High River homeowners the group helped.

Rob's story

Even as late as a month ago, Rob Kroll wouldn't go out at night. If he saw a group of youths, he would walk away and not make eye contact. His fear stemmed from a brutal attack that took place in 2011, when he was nearly beaten to death by nine young men outside his home.

The teenagers were loitering in Kroll's neighbourhood, stealing from cars and backyards. Kroll called the RCMP, but when the teenagers approached a neighbour's 14-year-old daughter and he heard her start to cry, Kroll reached the end of his patience.

"By the time I could say, 'Okay, boys, enough is enough, I got a hit to the head,'" Kroll recalls.

He was beaten for approximately 20 minutes, after which he says he didn't have the strength to protect his head with his arms. He remembers the boys winding up and kicking him in the head, while another sat on his chest and punched him in the face.

"They broke my eye socket, nose, jaw and neck," he says. "I have two titanium plates holding my neck together. I've got nerve damage and a brain injury, too."

Kroll couldn't speak properly for almost a year and had to re-learn how to walk. Three years later, he was just beginning to get his life back together, when, in 2013, his community was hit with heavy rainfall. It triggered catastrophic flooding of the Bow, Elbow, Highwood, Sheep, Little Bow and South Saskatchewan rivers, and was described by the Alberta government as the worst flooding the province had ever seen.

Kroll's home was classified as uninhabitable, but the government's disaster response program and Kroll's insurance would only cover about one-third of the \$172,000 needed to repair it. Kroll and his wife Dana lived in a tent trailer in their backyard for almost two months while they worked to repair their home, mostly at their own expense.

"We went way over our heads and ran out of time and money," Kroll says.

That's when they were pointed in the direction of MDS.

"Within a week, two fellows came over to our house and said they were going to help us," he says. They repaired floors and then said a group of volunteers could finish up. The only problem was, the group was made up of youths and young adults, prompting Kroll to initially decline their help.

Getting a hand up

Eventually he accepted. The group from the Bunker did a lot of finishing work around his home, installing siding, and

PHOTOS THIS PAGE COURTESY OF ROB KROLL



The aftermath of the 2013 flood in High River, Alta.



Rob and Dana Kroll in front of the possessions they salvaged from the flood.

(Continued on page 28)

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BUNKER



The crew from the Bunker are pictured right to left, front row: Manda Enns, Logan Klassen, Latisha Temmerman and Emily Fehr; and back row: Jon Harms, Jayden Rempel, Chris Heinrichs, Doug Janzen and Martin Lay (long-term MDS service workers), Jon Fehr, Michael Buhler, Em Heinrichs and Curt Reimer.

(Continued from page 27)

priming and painting.

“They came in and it was a real neat experience,” Kroll says. “They were really nice kids. They came over, and after working for a couple of hours I all of a sudden started feeling different.”

operations for MDS, says the organization is working to facilitate intergenerational service. “Sometimes it surprises [young people] to learn of how valuable their service was in restoring hope in others,” Plenert says, adding, “Clients are often amazed that young people would give up

‘We went way over our heads and ran out of time and money, Kroll says. That’s when they were pointed in the direction of MDS.’

Enns was part of the group, but says she didn’t know the extent of Kroll’s problems and his fear of being near youths. “Having these kids work so hard and not know necessarily what they were working to fight against, the perspective they were changing without even knowing it . . . I was a proud mama bear,” she says with a laugh.

Janet Plenert, the director of Canadian

their spring break to physically work in the house of a stranger, and it can be wonderfully transformative.”

It seems as though the biggest transformation took place in Kroll. He says he has a renewed faith in humanity. “It changed my whole view of how I looked at young people. It changed me a lot, that experience.”

VIEWPOINT

The Mennonite and the Lurmen

Star Wars episode leads to lesson in pacifism

BY KYLE RUDGE

SPECIAL TO YOUNG VOICES

PHOTO COURTESY OF KYLE RUDGE



Kyle Rudge is the founder of Geekdom House, a ministry devoted to loving and serving the nerd and geek community.

Are there parallels between the Star Wars universe and Anabaptism?

I asked myself that recently after watching an episode of *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, an animated TV series.

The episode, entitled “Defenders of the Peace,” begins like any other episode in the series: Separatist forces are winning and the Jedi arrive to help turn the tide. This time, however, reactions are different. The Jedi run into the Lurmen and a key character named Asoka is baffled by their beliefs.

The Lurmen are a neutral race and fervent believers in pacifism. The separatists

land, lay claim to the planet and extend their “protection”—easily understood as oppression—to the villagers. The Lurmen don’t necessarily want this, but they don’t resist.

As I watched the episode, I considered my own background. I went to a Mennonite high school and graduated from a Mennonite university. The beliefs of the Anabaptist movement run deep in my veins. I see similarities between the historical Mennonites and the Lurmen.

I asked Conrad Stoesz to watch and discuss this episode with me. Stoesz is an archivist at the Mennonite Brethren Archives and Mennonite Church Canada

Archives in Winnipeg, and is an expert on Mennonite history.

Rudge: *Did the episode in any way relate to Mennonites, or am I way off?*

Stoesz: No, you're not way off. The struggle's between values and practicality. The leader that wanted to stay true to the things that have been done, the way they have been taught, and the younger ones not seeing a practical alternative.

Rudge: *Was there anything lacking?*

Stoesz: The episode portrays only two options. The fight or the flight, the good or the bad. Yet we know in life there is a grey area. There can be a third option that takes creativity to find.

Rudge: *If you were the leader of the Lurmen, what could be a creative alternative?*

Stoesz: Let me answer that with a story. There's a woman named Elizabeth Buhler. She lived in Winkler, Man., for many years until she was 106 years old. . . . She died a couple of years ago. She tells the story of when she was in Russia and bandits broke into her home. They rounded up the family and held them at gunpoint while the house was being looted. She had no idea what to do. She saw the guitar next to them, so she picked it up and just started playing something. Quietly at first. Eventually a little louder, a little louder, a little louder. She started playing some religious songs. The leader of this group finally just said to the other bandits, "Stop! Stop what you're doing! We shouldn't be here. We should be ashamed of ourselves. Put everything back." And they did and they left. There was some kind of inspirational third option that appeared. So part of our task is to be open to inspiration and not just think it's a fight or flight issue.

Rudge: *Then what about Asoka and Captain Rex? They commented on the Lurmen, saying they don't have any pride or any courage. Is that something that Mennonites experienced in their history with their pacifist beliefs?*

Stoesz: Oh sure! In the Second World War, they were called shirkers and

yellow-bellies and whatnot for refusing to join the military. And some of them maybe were cowards, but then there were also people in the military who were also cowards and did not stand up to public pressure and say, "No." It goes both ways. If we are following a nonviolent leader and he is asking us to do the same, what does that mean for us? Is efficacy important or is faithfulness more important? And for those who are choosing the conscientious objector's stance, they may not use these exact words, but the idea of being faithful is what's most important.

Rudge: *If the Jedi hadn't come to defend them, the Lurmen would be dead. How did the Mennonites even survive? How do pacifists survive in this violent world?*

Stoesz: On all sides of the conflict there are good people still. During the Russian Revolution there was a lot of anarchy. People would be subject to raids and a lot of atrocities that happened. So there were these self-defence units set up. They were trained by German military. They tried to provide some kind of harm-defence because they couldn't stand anymore their houses being looted, their wives and mothers being shot and raped, and all that. Some church leaders were dead-set against that, while others said it was your own personal decision to make. At first, these self-defence units were successful in warding off bandits. But later on, the bandits figured out the tactics of these self-defence units and started to specifically target them. The last part of this episode the old leader ends with, "Yes, but at what cost?" In the end, some Mennonite communities suffered even more because of their resistance. ❧

Kyle Rudge is the founder of Geekdom House, a ministry devoted to loving and serving the nerd and geek community. He is also a radio show host, web developer and programmer in Winnipeg. A longer version of this article originally appeared on GeekdomHouse.com. Read it at bit.ly/1DssS5g.



Conrad Stoesz is an archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, a ministry of Mennonite Church Canada in Winnipeg.



THE COLLABORATIVE MBA

The Collaborative
MBA welcomes new
partner school Canadian
Mennonite University.

Apply now
to start fall of 2015

collaborativemba.org

Spring Series from Herald Press



Simply in Season
10th Anniversary Edition
A World Community Cookbook.
Proceeds go to nourish people
worldwide. New color photog-
raphy, gluten-free and vegetarian
labels, seasonal menus, and an
expanded fruit and vegetable guide.



Reuben
Ellie's People, Book 4
Amish teen Reuben Weaver loves
fast horses. Will a dare get him into
trouble? Ages 10 and up.

Hutterite Diaries
Wisdom from My Prairie Community
Plainspoken series, book 3. What
would it be like to share all your
possessions and live in Christian
community?

Order today at your local bookstore,
by calling 1-800-245-7894, or online
at www.Mennomedia.org



Calendar

Alberta

May 22-24: Mennonite Women Alberta hosts its "Thrive" retreat at Sylvan Lake. Speaker: Faye Reynolds, director of women's ministry for the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada. For more information, visit www.mennonitechurch.ab.ca.

May 31: Edmonton First Mennonite hosts "Bicycle Built for Two" by Theatre of the Beat, at 7 p.m. For more information, call 780-436-3431.

June 1-3: MC Alberta Christian faith studies event, "Understanding Anabaptist approaches to Scripture," with Loren L. Johns from AMBS, at First Mennonite Church, Calgary. For registration information, e-mail Dan Graber at dan@mennonitechurch.ab.ca or call 403-909-5105. Johns will also deliver two public lectures at 7 p.m. each night: (1) "Understanding Anabaptist approaches to Scripture: What's different and why?" and (2) "The impact of the 20th century on reading the Bible."

June 3: All-day heritage retreat for people 50-plus, at Camp Valaqua, Water Valley, with MCC storyteller Abe Janzen and the Corpus Christi Male Chorus. To register, e-mail Hugo Neufeld at hdneufeld@shaw.ca or call 403-201-4358.

June 5-6: MCC Alberta charity auction and sale, at the Didsbury Sportsplex. For more information, visit mccreliefsale.com.

Saskatchewan

May 30: RJC fundraising golf tournament, at Valley Regional Park.

May 31: 70th-anniversary celebrations at Superb Mennonite Church, Kerrobert; from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, visit www.superbmennonite.com; to RSVP, e-mail superb70anniversary@gmail.com.

June 26,27: RJC year-end musical performances.

Manitoba

May 22: University of Winnipeg hosts a public lecture by Perry Bush, chair of the Department of History at Bluffton University, Ohio, in Convocation

Hall, at 7 p.m. Topic: "The professor as peacemaker: C. Henry Smith and the Mennonite intellectual tradition, 1918-48."

May 22-24: SpringFest, MCC Manitoba's annual quilt show, plant sale, walkathon and barbecue, in Winnipeg. For more information, visit mccmanitoba.ca/events.

May 24: MHV Auxiliary Faspa, at Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach, at 2:30 p.m., featuring the Sisters of the Holy Rock. For more information, visit www.MHV.ca.

May 24: MCC Manitoba's fundraising lunch at Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church, Winnipeg, from noon to 2:30 p.m. Come-and-go faspa-style meal.

May 27: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Grade 7 to 9 spring concert at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m. For more information, call 204-775-7111.

May 28: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Grade 10 to 12 spring concert at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m. For more information, call 204-775-7111.

June 7: Mennonite Heritage Village, Steinbach, hosts the Lions Car Show. For more information, visit www.MHV.ca.

June 9: CMU President's Golf Classic at Kingswood Golf and Country Club, La Salle.

Ontario

May 20: 18th annual Low German Networking Conference, at Meadow Brook Church, Leamington. For more information, e-mail Lily Hiebert Rempel at lilyhr@mennonitecc.on.ca.

May 22-24: Community Mennonite Fellowship, Drayton, celebrates its 25th anniversary. (22) Youth and sponsors reunion. (23) Community carnival. (24) Worship service at 10:30 a.m., followed by potluck. For more information, e-mail communitymennonite@bellintet.ca.

May 24: Martin Family Singers and KW Chamber Orchestra perform a fundraising concert for the New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets available at MCC Ontario and MSCU branches.

May 24: Silver Lake Mennonite Camp

annual general meeting at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener, at 1 p.m.

May 29-30: New Hamburg Mennonite Relief Sale. More than 20 food booths and three auctions, including the largest quilt auction in Canada. For more details, visit nhmrs.com.

June 3: Retired ministers and spouses retreat at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp, New Hamburg, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Palmer Becker will share about his recent ministry in Israel and South America. Pre-registration required. Participants are to bring their own lunch.

June 9: Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp, New Hamburg, hosts its annual fundraising chicken barbecue and pie auction, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Advance tickets required; available by phone at 519-625-8602 or e-mail at info@hiddenacres.ca.

June 18: MCC Ontario annual general meeting at Sommerfeld Mennonite

Church, Aylmer, at 6 p.m. For more information, or to register, call 519-745-8458 or visit mcccanada.ca/Ontario-agm.

June 20: Annual strawberry social at Nithview Community, New Hamburg, from 2 to 4 p.m. and from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

June 20: MennoHomes "Out-spok'n for Affordable Housing" bike-a-thon, at Elmira Mennonite Church. Options for hikers, cyclists and motorcyclists. For more information, contact Dan Driedger at 226-476-2535 or ddriedger@mennohomes.com.

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



Classifieds

Employment Opportunities



Employment opportunity

Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church is seeking an experienced full-time lead pastor for our congregation. We are a church of approximately 300 regular attenders worshipping in a blended style with an outreach ministry to many elderly members at various offsite locations. We follow the traditional, Biblical understanding of marriage.

We are a church in the city of Winkler, Manitoba, located approximately 1.5 hours south of Winnipeg. We are looking for a pastor with the leadership qualities to lead us in living out our vision and mission statements. Senior pastor

Vision statement:

To align ourselves with God's intentions for our world, our community and our church.

Mission statement:

The Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church is part of the body of Christ, bonded together in love and fellowship, to worship and praise God, to nurture and train its members, to be a responsible and caring community of faith, to express its faith commitment in service to one another, and individually and corporately serve, witness and evangelize in our community and beyond.

Please contact Alvin Thiessen, Search Committee Chair, at thiessenfam@yahoo.com, by June 1/2015.

www.wbmc.ca



Avon Mennonite Church

Avon Mennonite Church (www.avonmennonite.com) in Stratford, Ontario, a 120-member community of on-the-way believers from diverse denominational backgrounds, is seeking a part-time Youth Leader to be responsible for Youth and Junior Youth programs.

Together with active volunteers, this person will employ his/her gifts, education and experience to shepherd and encourage our youth in the development of personal faith and the discovery of their calling and gifting as disciples of Christ in the local and global community.

The successful candidate will evidence a genuine relationship with Jesus, strong relational skills with youth and an appreciation of biblical truth and Anabaptist values. For job description or to submit your resume, please email avonyouth15@gmail.com by May 15th, 2015.

IT Service Opportunity

We are inviting you to consider a unique service opportunity to apply computer skills to meet basic human needs in a community setting. You would work as part of an IT team, supporting a diverse array of initiatives run by The Working Centre in downtown Kitchener, Ontario. Built on the ideas of the Catholic Worker Movement, we regularly engage the ideas of service, hospitality and community.



Valuable technical skills are network administration and hardware trouble shooting. However, most important is the ability to learn quickly, investigate and solve technical problems, work co-operatively and with others, relate in a patient attentive manner with non-technical people, and demonstrate flexibility, dedication, and enthusiasm.

For more information please visit www.theworkingcentre.org/it-service-opportunity, or contact Martin to explore potential timelines -- martine@theworkingcentre or 519-743-1151 x116.

Cottage for Rent

Cottage, sleeps 10, on a large lake with shallow sandy waterfront, great for small children. Sailboat, canoe, and kayaks are available. North of Huntsville on Lake Bernard. Available June 26-July 4 and August 14 - 21. \$875/week. If interested we will email photos. Contact John at 519-580-3401 or bagelbergen@hotmail.com.

Cottage for Rent

Three-bedroom cottage at Red Bay on the Bruce Peninsula, nestled among maple trees. Short walk to sandy beach in small park. Includes a rear deck and a new kitchen stove. Available June 27 through September 5. Call Diane at 519-746-4920.

Travel

Visit Europe the Mennonite Way! Multiple Hotel Tours focussing on Mennonite-Anabaptist history in Holland, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Poland and Ukraine. Organized by Mennonite Heritage Tours, www.mennoniteheritagetours.eu

Announcement

Mennonite Support and Advocacy Group for Parents and LGBT persons in Southwestern Ontario. We provide confidential group and individual support, resources, fellowship and opportunity to dialogue for family members and LGBT persons. For more information contact rvfast@rogers.com, pmsnyderangel@rogers.com, or Roy and Mary Gascho 519-742-1850

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



On a rainy April 9, dignitaries gathered for the ceremonial ground-breaking for a \$1.2 million renovation and expansion of the Shalom Counselling Services building in Waterloo, Ont. At press time, the project had received more than \$850,000 in donations from more than 120 donors. Among those present were, from left to right: Dave Jaworsky, mayor of Waterloo; Wanda Wagler-Martin, executive director of Shalom Counselling Services; project manager Murray Leis of Murray Leis Construction; Kitchener-Waterloo MPP Catherine Fife; Kitchener-Waterloo MP Peter Braid; and Kitchener Centre MP Stephen Woodworth.

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



The seventh annual Peace and Justice Breakfast at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont., on April 11, featured 'A dramatic look at life after incarceration,' performed by women from Arise, a Mennonite Central Committee restorative justice initiative. The actors portrayed a series of vignettes that demonstrate some of the real-life challenges women face both in prison and afterwards.

God at work in the World Snapshots

PHOTO BY MARIA H. KLASSEN



Staff and volunteers from the Ten Thousand Villages (TTV) store in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., recently visited the TTV store in Oakville, where they learned from assistant manager Sigrid Kajiwara how these rugs, from intricate florals to hand-spun natural dyed wool tribals, are designed and hand-knotted by highly skilled and fairly paid artisans in Pakistan.