

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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Challenged, changed, rewarded

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EDITORIAL

Peace more than pacifism

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Every year at Remembrance Day and Peace Sunday, Canadian Mennonites are torn between honouring those who lost their lives through war and entering into a ritual that celebrates violence as a way of resolving international conflict. In doing one, do we negate the other?

We have attempted compromise by wearing, instead of the poppy, a peace button that proclaims: "To remember is to work for peace." And every year we struggle with that compromise, this year being no exception, with a rigorous discussion on social media as to the merits of the peace button. Are we still tilting the narrative too much toward celebrating war, rather than witnessing to peace as the better alternative? Or are we still dishonouring the dead by suggesting there is a better way? Are we exploiting these patriotic rituals to bring our own countercultural message?

Some settle their consciences by wearing both the poppy and the Mennonite Central Committee peace button. Others of us, conflicted by the matter, wear neither, and pray for peace instead in silent reflection. Listening to the intensity of feelings on both sides of this conversation, it is doubtful that we will ever come to a resolution on the matter.

What is more important at this juncture in history is to understand and respond to the ever-evolving meaning of war and peace. Regarding war, despite

the fact that there are still more than 37 separate wars going on globally in 2015, and despite the fact that over the past five years there has been a dramatic increase in organized violence, especially in the Middle East, the world is much less



violent than during the Cold War and the World Wars of the 20th century, according to the Uppsala Conflict Data Program.

So maybe, hopefully, world leaders are seeing that war is less and less the answer in resolving conflict, and are turning more often to diplomacy and international aid as a solution.

Likewise, peace as a core Anabaptist belief and practice is evolving. It is more than pacifism. No longer seen as mostly a negative response to war and armed conflict, we are seeing it more and more as a positive force in our world. We view peace in many more dimensions than primarily opposing war, as in conscientious objection to war and seeing ourselves as an historic peace church, compared to other communions who see war as a "necessary evil." Many of them have believed in a "just war," such as the Second World War, when the violent take-down of an "evil" Hitler, for instance, was seen as a redemptive act.

But while honouring our own conscientious objectors of the World Wars, as Conrad Stoesz, a denominational archivist, is doing with a forthcoming documentary on our "peace heroes," we are rightfully expanding our view of

peace to such things as becoming activists in climate change, for instance.

It is more than raising our own awareness and practices, such as turning off the lights or installing solar panels on our roofs, riding bicycles instead of cars, or signing a "fossil-free memo"—as good as these measures are. It is, as Mark Bigland-Pritchard, a Mennonite activist from Saskatchewan, says, we need to move beyond individual and congregational practices to pressure our local and federal politicians to enact legislation that will see CO2 emissions gone in five years to avoid a global catastrophe.

Or with the world's growing refugee crisis, we need to likewise encourage government action in order to find homes, medical aid, education and jobs, in addition to opening many of our homes to these families. Standing with them is important, but our efforts need to be expanded by wider action of community groups and provincial and federal agencies.

At the forefront of an expanded peace initiative is the creation of the Centre for Peace Advancement at Conrad Grebel University College, discussed in our feature on page 4 by its director Paul Heidebrecht. Calling it a peace "incubator," its developers are convinced that "new approaches to advancing peace in our world need to be nurtured with intentionality and purpose." Its vision is to use Mennonite approaches to peace-building by using the tools and resources of innovation ecosystems.

This is a strong example of pushing our historic belief and practice of peace into new frontiers in the 21st century while keeping it within the framework of what Jesus taught us: Love our enemies, do good to those who persecute us, and love our neighbours as ourselves.

ABOUT THE COVER:

The Children's Care Centre, a Mennonite Central Committee Global Family program, is located in the downtown core of Durban, South Africa. It is an 'edu-care' centre run by the Union of Refugee Women. The centre provides a safe learning environment that brings together refugee and South African children. See photo essay of Aaron Janzen's time in South Africa on page 35.

PHOTO: AARON JANZEN, SPECIAL TO YOUNG VOICES

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Guiding values:

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

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Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH FEATURE

Incubating peace

Making space for the Spirit to move

BY PAUL HEIDEBRECHT

MENNONITE SAVINGS AND CREDIT UNION CENTRE FOR PEACE ADVANCEMENT

In addition to paying attention to peace as a conviction or ideal, and in addition to pursuing new theories and skills of peacebuilding as a field of study or practice, we need to give due attention to the vehicles through which we can apply our values and knowledge to particular challenges and contexts. Incubation mashes together theory and practice in an entrepreneurial community of peers whose measure of success is learning and impact.

Innovation is all the rage in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont., the place I now call home.

A day does not go by without stories about another high-tech start-up in the local paper, stories that regularly achieve national prominence. It is no longer enough to describe our community as being the home to “Canada’s most innovative university” for 23 years running. Many now pride themselves on being part of an innovation hub that is the envy of much larger metropolitan centres the world over. “Silicon Valley North,” as some like to call it.

To be sure, innovation is now a preoccupation across Canada. It seems as though political, business and civic leaders everywhere are in a race to embrace change, to disrupt the economic status quo, and to create new identities for communities that can no longer count on old ways to face contemporary challenges.

This is the context that many of us are striving to be church in the midst of. Have you noticed all the hype over innovation? Does it make sense to you? Does it trouble you? How does it impact the way you think of your church?

‘Barn-raising’ innovation

While I still have some suspicions and concerns, over the past year I have come to appreciate the intentionality and effort that went into building the innovation ecosystem that is thriving in my community.

Another reason why I have become excited about building bridges with a previously unfamiliar world is that I perceived resonances with a more familiar landscape.

For example, I have met more and more people focussed on innovation not as an end in itself, but as the means to improving the human condition, or as a way to make a positive social impact. Indeed, this is another important side to our community’s innovation story that, although it is an old story, it has only recently started to get some profile. After all, long before we had BlackBerrys in our pockets, congregations and community organizations sparked creative new efforts to address poverty, crime, refugee resettlement and many other challenges.

A little over a month ago, the University of Waterloo hosted the 2015 Innovation Summit, which has become an annual gathering of global experts and leaders from the high-tech sector, universities and governments. And as I waited for the opening session to begin, I was surprised to see images of Old Order Mennonites

flash across the enormous screen behind the stage.

I think it may have been David Johnston, the former University of Waterloo president and current Governor General, who first credited the “barn-raising” mentality that characterizes Kitchener-Waterloo for our successes in innovation. In any case, that image has now become a frequently used shorthand to describe the collaborative nature of our innovation ecosystem. Thus, the images of horses and buggies alongside images of impressive new buildings, 3D printers and hip looking youngsters gathered around white boards.

Although you would never know it by the way innovation leaders are idealized in the media and pop culture, the consensus of scholars is that radical innovation is always a product of collective insight and action. It isn’t a solitary pursuit.

Innovation is the result of people helping each other, and innovation ecosystems are characterized by a “pay it forward” ethos in which assistance is offered without expecting any immediate return. The unpredictability of fruitful collaboration seems to cultivate an attitude of generosity, not hubris. Trust, rather than secrecy, is the norm.

In addition to this emphasis on collaboration, another counterintuitive discovery for me was the extent to which scholars of innovation insist that our most cherished technological innovations don’t actually contain anything new. They are just new combinations of old things, or old things put to new use. Thus, the more interesting and varied the materials you have to work with, and the more you can empathize with potential users, the more creative you can be.

What this understanding of innovation

looks and feels like to me is respect for the past and an appreciation for diversity, more than being enamoured with the latest and greatest. It is something akin to what Duke University theologian Gregory Jones has termed “traditioned innovation”: an approach that doesn’t force us to choose between preserving tradition and pursuing change. Indeed, Jones argues that this is what characterizes the New Testament—the calling to bear witness to the Holy Spirit, the One who is both “making all things new” and conforming us to Christ.

Innovation, ecclesial ecosystems ‘not simply in lockstep’

To be clear, the innovation and ecclesial ecosystems I find myself in are not simply in lockstep with each other. There are both rubs and gaps to be found, and by highlighting two contributions I have gleaned from my immersion experience I think can prod the church in helpful ways:

- **THE FIRST** is the permission, or rather the encouragement, to take risks. Now, I realize that being a faithful church is a big responsibility, but do you ever wonder if we are playing it safe? Do you ever wonder if the sophistication of our institutional existence makes it hard to break out of our boxes and follow where the Spirit may be leading us? Over the past year, I have been humbled by those who embrace slogans such as “failure is an option.” Talk about an openness to the unknown! Talk about accepting our own humanness!

Certainly we can point to our Anabaptist forebears and other persecuted ancestors to highlight a heritage of bold and courageous risk-taking; of

thriving on, rather than simply surviving, upheaval and change. And certainly this heritage is alive and well in many parts of the global Mennonite communion. So perhaps this prodding from the contemporary culture of innovation could actually move us towards a posture that aligns well with our true calling.

- **A SECOND** lesson is what I have come to term “the necessity of seeing it through.” In my experience, churches have lots of great ideas. Ideas that will strengthen their communities, and, more importantly, will make the world a better place. But ideas are actually the easy part. Innovation ecosystems aren’t just concerned with generating new ideas, they are actually focussed primarily on the challenge of putting wheels to new ideas—on the hard work of figuring out how to sustainably implement, test and scale up an idea.

For all the collaborative spirit and creative energy that churches exhibit in coming up with innovative new ministries, it seems to me that the “how” questions are often an afterthought to us. How can we make it happen? How will we know if we are on the right track? How will we fund it?

A new definition of ‘incubator’

I think we Mennonites can learn something from the practice of incubation.

Incubators have long been common fixtures in the neonatal intensive care units of hospitals and on chicken farms. Warm, safe places where new life is nurtured. But if you look in the Oxford English Dictionary, you will find a new definition: in North America, an incubator can also mean “a place, especially with
(Continued on page 6)

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CENTRE FOR PEACE ADVANCEMENT PHOTO



(Continued from page 5)

support staff and equipment, made available at low rent to new small businesses.”

There are now upwards of 140 business incubators across Canada, and so perhaps it isn't surprising that the visionaries behind the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union Centre for Peace Advancement chose to include the Frank and Helen Epp Peace Incubator in the design of our new space on the Conrad Grebel University College campus in Waterloo. And like all incubators, ours is more than a space. In addition to making available the use of six “hot desks” (an office organization system that involves multiple workers using a single physical work station or surface during different time periods) and promising proximity to other new peacebuilding projects, initiatives and organizations, this fall the Peace Incubator announced a program that includes access to mentors, training workshops and seed funding.

We have developed this program because we are convinced that new approaches to advancing peace in our world need to be nurtured with intentionality and effort. In addition to paying attention to peace as a conviction or ideal, and in addition to pursuing new theories and skills of peacebuilding as a field of study or practice, we need to give due attention to the vehicles through which we can apply our values and knowledge to particular challenges and contexts. Incubation mashes together theory and practice in an entrepreneurial community of peers whose measure of success is learning and impact.

Ironically, I don't think this attention to incubating peace is something that finds resonance in the Mennonite tradition. Indeed, I don't think we are predisposed to put our best energy into the “how” questions, preferring instead to dwell on “why?” and “what?”

I would argue that this pattern has theological roots, going back to the anti-sacramental bent of early Anabaptists and their concern to stress that salvation depends on God's action, not our own. I think it is also evident in our understandings of conversion and regeneration—the idea that our personal commitment to,

and lived expression of, faith is a natural response to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

In any case, the recent embrace of the language of Christian formation in our Gather 'Round and Shine Sunday school curricula is evidence that things may be changing, and there is now openness to enriching the traditional Mennonite emphasis on discipleship by talking more about the process of becoming a disciple of Jesus. In addition to things such as Bible study and church discipline, we now are interested in the formative nature of worship, spiritual disciplines, service, stewardship and education.

I agree that we need to be careful when talking about the formative nature of church practices. They are not simply instruments, tools or techniques. I agree with those who stress that Christian practices do not assume their formative power in a straightforward cause-and-effect fashion, but precisely because it is the Spirit who is working through them. However, insisting that making new Christian disciples is the job of the Holy Spirit should not mean that we can't say anything about the process through which this happens.

Likewise, insisting that the

development of impactful new peacebuilding initiatives depends on the power of the Holy Spirit should not mean that we can't say anything about the process through which this happens. I wouldn't go so far as those who suggest that incubation is a way to “engineer serendipity,” but it can create the conditions for good things to emerge that we never would have anticipated.

Just as Mennonite understandings of Christian formation have benefited from ecumenical engagement, I am convinced that Mennonite approaches to peacebuilding can benefit from engaging the tools and resources of innovation ecosystems. Perhaps the same is true for Mennonite congregations. ❧



Paul Heidebrecht is the director of the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union Centre for Peace Advancement. This feature is based on his presentation to the Mennonite

Church Eastern Canada Pastors Breakfast on Oct. 27 at Conrad Grebel University College.

/// For discussion

1. What new ideas has your congregation implemented recently? Where did the ideas originate? Was the implementation a collaborative effort? How much does the fear of failure keep us from trying new ideas? Would the Mennonite church benefit from more innovation?
2. Paul Heidebrecht says that innovation is often used to preserve tradition, in that we find new ways of accomplishing something that has been around for a long time. Can you think of examples in your church or community? Does your church tend to fear or welcome new ways of doing things?
3. Heidebrecht says that “new ideas are the easy part” and the real challenge is “putting wheels to new ideas.” Do you agree? He also suggests that Mennonites tend to dwell on “why” and “what,” rather than on “how.” Do you agree? Should we be encouraging the church to take more risks?
4. In what ways was Jesus an innovator? If you were participating in a peace incubator, what ideas would you contribute? What are the challenges to implementing these ideas?

—BY BARB DRAPER

VIEWPOINTS

/// Readers write

We welcome your comments and publish most letters from subscribers. Letters, to be kept to 300 words or less, are the opinion of the writer only and are not to be taken as endorsed by this magazine or the church. Please address issues rather than individuals; personal attacks will not appear in print or online. In light of the many recent letters on the topic of sexuality, we will edit any letter on this topic to a paragraph and post the rest online at www.canadianmennonite.org. All letters are edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines. Send them to letters@canadianmennonite.org and include the author's contact information and mailing address. Preference is given to letters from MC Canada congregants.

✉ Leis family 'victimized by tragedy

RE: "EDITORS 'LACK . . . understanding on issues of clergy sexual abuse'" and "Readers disappointed in handling of the Vernon Leis matter" letters, Oct. 26, page 10.

I personally feel that the family of Vernon Leis has also been victimized by this tragic turn of events. For them to come forward is a dangerous thing because, if they only found out now, as the rest of us, how do they respond? They can't ask Leis and get his side of the story or get angry with him for betraying their trust.

Jesus never condemned the woman at the well; he only told her to go and sin no more. And when confronted with the mob and the woman to be stoned, his message on the ground had people leaving without a stone being thrown.

Being a pastor or a pastor's family within a church

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FROM OUR LEADERS

Ministry in diversity

ROBERSON MBAYAMVULA

"Lord, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I need to be, I am not what I am going to be, but, thank God Almighty, I am not what I used to be."

(Prayer from an African leader)

By its presence, teaching and action, the church is the salt and the light of the world. Because of this, it is called to have a prophetic and edifying voice in the world. Experience has shown me that we need new strategies to offer salt and light to believers and seekers who coexist in the same faith community, but come from all kinds of backgrounds.

In 2007, I came as a refugee to Toronto from a Mennonite Brethren Church in Africa. After observing and learning about my new context for five years, I was called to be a pastor at Hagerman Mennonite Church, Markham, Ont. I've discovered that, although our churches and society are increasingly diverse and multicultural, we can use this tension



as a positive opportunity to strengthen ministry. Here are three ways to do this:

- 1. LISTEN CAREFULLY.** I did not feel accepted in Canada until I found a place where I could openly share my story and know that I was heard and understood. We need to hear each other's stories. Challenges will emerge because we have different expectations rooted in different cultural backgrounds, but if we truly listen to each other, we will learn and grow, be transformed by God's love and make disciples for Christ (Matthew 28:19-20).
- 2. COLLABORATE.** Hagerman shares its facility with Markham Chinese Mennonite Church and Markham Christian Worship Centre. We collaborate for an annual church work day, coffee time and fellowship after church, joint worship services, workshops and youth

ministry. Collaboration has broadened my own understanding of diversity. It introduced me to the differences between memorial services in Canada and in Africa, where the pastor handles everything and the family may or may not be involved in planning. For collaboration to work, we need to seek council and advice, be ready to accept correction, and be available to help others in the same way.

3. DREAM TOGETHER. All three congregations in our church community are involved in a renovation project designed to meet the present and future needs of our youth. One of the challenges we face is that our youth want to worship in English, the language of their daily lives, while elders prefer their native tongue. Our hope is that the church will be a place that brings people together, not a place of division. I would love to be in a family of faith which recognizes the principle of unity in diversity and respects differences (I Corinthians 12:27-30).

The future of the church involves our readiness to change and grow, trusting each other in faith and modelling the love of Christ.

Besides pastoring at Hagerman, Roberson Mbayamvula is a member of the Mennonite Church Canada Witness Council.

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body is not easy, and they are heavily scrutinized. I know this because so many in my family tree have been, or are, there. So for us on the outside looking in, we need to be compassionate and non-judgmental, just as Jesus was. Throwing a stone in the air and not knowing where it will land is not fair to everyone involved.

ROB MARTIN, ELMIRA, ONT.

✉ Being 'born again' comes with responsibilities

IN JOHN 3:3, Jesus said, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

I have given this a lot of thought. It seems to me that when one is born again, one sees things completely differently from what one is used to. One realizes

FAMILY TIES

It's a miracle

MELISSA MILLER

December 24. Late morning. I am in the kitchen, making a pot of soup, savouring its scents and colours. Lovely Christmas music pours from the radio. I'm hoping this domestic activity will centre me in the wake of the stormy currents that accompany the season. How do we ponder all these things, like Mary did, when we are assaulted by such a crush of busyness?

My partner wanders into the kitchen and kindly points out that there is no need for me to be cooking, that there are plenty of leftovers in the fridge. I thank him politely. I refrain from screaming, "Leftovers! On Christmas Eve?" My restraint is a Christmas miracle.

Soon I will leave the house to do some last-minute Christmas shopping. I do not believe in last-minute Christmas shopping, yet my principles have been compromised again. Torn between living with integrity and joining in the massive gift-giving of the season, I feel the stress meter rising.

After shopping I will put the final details on the Christmas Eve service, or that's my intention. The service has twisted and turned far from its original inception, with participants signing up and then backing out. My desire for order and predictability has been severely tested. The fact that I haven't given vent to any of my co-planners is another wee miracle.



The trials continue. Later in the day, I mop up water from the washing machine, after a backed-up drain flooded the basement floor. Then I called a plumber who arrived promptly to solve my problem. Another miracle, I think, that this kind man could be found for a reasonable rate on Christmas Eve.

Coming up the stairs from dealing with the little flood, I take a phone call from a man soliciting funds for a non-profit agency. He begins by asking me how I'm doing, and I allow stress to colour my answer. "Tired," I say, "and really busy."

"Yeah, aren't we all?" he glibly replies, and then proceeds into his pitch.

"No," I interrupt him, with heat. "I really, really cannot take this call right now," and I hang up, feeling more than a little like Scrooge.

Sometime before the day ends, I will wrap Christmas presents. In my ideal

mother before I went to the kitchen to make soup. My mother recently returned to her home after an eight-week stint in nursing care, following a fall that left her with broken bones and limited abilities in both arms. Broken bones healed and casts removed, she, too, is cooking, preparing for family guests arriving later in the day. "I'm exhausted," she tells me, "and I haven't even done anything." This after reporting on her previous 24 hours of grocery shopping, cookie baking, cleaning, and more.

She sounds weary. I weep silently on the other end of the phone, saddened by her struggle, and the sober realities of suffering, aging and loss. We bravely bid each other Merry Christmas and return to our respective kitchens.

There is much to weep about this season. It's likely Mary also wept as she held her baby, pondered the previous nine months and wondered about the future. Sometimes all we can do is to clear a little

How do we ponder all these things, like Mary did, when we are assaulted by such a crush of busyness?

world, the presents would have been wrapped, ready to tuck under the tree, to brighten December's dark days with cheery anticipation. I am not living in my ideal world. If I look too closely, I might think I'm a Christmas failure.

The day's greatest challenge—or the biggest reason to give over to prayerful meditation—was a phone call with my

space to make soup, or its equivalent, and to savour the mysteries of tender aches and graces. Doing so may enable us to receive God's best gift.

Melissa Miller (familyties@mymts.net) has a passion for helping people develop healthy, vibrant relationships with God, self and others.

more clearly what it means to love one's neighbour as oneself. One looks at the environment differently, as something we have to preserve as a God-given gift.

I was born in 1926. We made our living on our farm, which consisted of one section of land, two cows, about 30 chickens, six sheep and two pigs to be butchered in the fall. We had all we needed. We never went on vacation. If we drove, we drove to visit friends or to

shop for groceries and needed farm supplies.

Now it seems that one cannot farm unless one owns several sections of land, large farm machinery, and works day and night . . . so we can go to warmer climes for two months every winter when we retire.

How many hungry people could we feed if we stayed home for the winter?

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GOD, MONEY AND ME

Sometimes you need to receive

DARREN PRIES-KLASSEN

Some time ago, during a morning walk, I found a wallet a few blocks from my house. I looked around, hoping the owner might still be close by, but there was no one. Just me. A peek inside revealed a library card, a health card and \$25 in bills. That was it. No credit cards. No driver's licence. Nothing with an address or a phone number. All I knew was the owner's name—we'll call him Jim—and his health card number. I called the police to report a lost wallet and soon after a cruiser came by my house, picked it up and promised to return it to the owner.

A few hours later, my phone rang. On the other end of the line was an ecstatic woman gushing praises about honesty and integrity, and how there were still good people left in the world. She told me she had to beg the officer for my name and number so that she and her brother could thank the "Good Samaritan" personally.

She went on to tell me that her older brother was born with an intellectual disability and had lived with her ever since their parents died several years ago. "My brother has a small paper route," she said. "It pays very little money, but he would really like to thank you personally. Could

we come over now for a few minutes?"

I insisted it wasn't necessary, but she would hear none of that. "Okay," I said, a little sheepishly.

A few minutes later, I answered a knock on the door and was immediately bear-hugged by a smiling man who kept saying, "Thank you, thank you." Eventually, he let go of me and pulled a \$5 bill from his wallet, the same wallet I had found earlier, and presumably, the same \$5 bill I had seen when I looked through it.

He placed the bill in my hands with

Accepting money from Jim felt wrong on so many levels, but he and his sister were unwavering in their insistence.

the same force he used to hug me. Meanwhile, his sister spoke loudly and non-stop about her brother's love of walking, how he didn't listen when she told him to leave his wallet at home, how they had scoured the neighbourhood looking for it, and how their despair had changed to joy when the officer called. She kept calling me a Good Samaritan.

I felt a little awkward amid all the fuss and said the \$5 gift wasn't necessary. Accepting money from Jim felt wrong on so many levels, but he and his sister were

unwavering in their insistence.

"Okay," I said, placing the bill in my pocket while feeling a little like I had just robbed the man. "Thank you. I will use it for something special." They thanked me again, Jim gave me one final bear hug and they left.

Gratitude is a funny thing. Being the recipient of someone else's gratitude is awkward when the person expressing it is, for all intents and purposes, the one who should be the recipient. But Jim's bear hug of gratitude and his \$5 bill turned the tables and forced me to acknowledge my distorted assumptions about giving and receiving.

Dom Helder Camara, a former Archbishop of Brazil, said, "No one is so poor that they cannot give, nor so rich that they cannot receive." Jim showed me the truth in that statement. More than a hug and a \$5 bill, Jim gave me

perspective.

Thank you, Jim. Your gift was a blessing. You taught me that sometimes I need to be the recipient just as much as you need the opportunity to show gratitude.

Darren Pries-Klassen is the executive director of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For more information on impulsive generosity, stewardship education, and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit MennoFoundation.ca.



(Continued from page 9)

I was an avid motorcyclist. One spring I spent \$1,400 on tires and licence, just to drive my motorcycle for fun. How many people could one feed for \$1,400 in a Third World country?

In Matthew 25:41-42, Jesus said of such people: "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me,

you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink.'"

JACK DRIEDGER, SASKATOON

Correction

Currently, eight groups are utilizing space in the Peace Incubator at the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union Centre for Peace Advancement, Waterloo, Ont., not four, as was cited in "Hatching peace," Oct. 26, page 15. The four not mentioned in the story are: Intercultural Dialogue Institute KW, which aims to contribute to the improvement of diversity, pluralism and multiculturalism; Peaceworks Productions, an effort to inspire and equip young people with the tools and skills they need to make peace; Peace Camp, a Conrad Grebel University College initiative that facilitates hands-on peacebuilding training for youth; and the UWaterloo Rotoract Club, which focusses on the development of young adults as leaders in their communities and workplaces. Also, Howard Armitage no longer runs the Conrad Business Entrepreneurship and Technology Centre that he founded. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the errors.

✉ Neighbourliness is 'a spiritual task'

WE ARE OBLIGATED to focus on the needs of refugees, but what about those with needs already among us? In December 2014, the *Edmonton Journal* reported, "More than 17,000 turned away from Alberta's women's shelters last year"

Helping an immigrant neighbour and her daughter out of an abusive situation has been a labour of love that has been our life for almost a year. Being a "good neighbour" requires an anointing because it is a spiritual task. Sponsoring refugee families can become an emotional issue that will require a long-term commitment.

But as Gregory Rabus is quoted as saying: "The churches are among those best equipped to help by bearing witness to God's love, tending to physical and spiritual needs, and just being good neighbours to those around us."

WES EPP, CALGARY

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LIFE IN THE POSTMODERN SHIFT

Advent is life

TROY WATSON

The weeks leading up to Christmas brought an overwhelming spirit of anticipation to our household when I was growing up. In fact, the intensity of waiting to open our gifts on Christmas morn was too much for my brother and me to bear.

Every December we searched our house high and low looking for our presents and every year my father's hiding places became more creative and obscure. One year he removed the nails from one of the corners of a wood panel wall in our basement and stashed the gifts inside the wall. It took many hours of relentlessly exploring every nook and cranny of our house till we finally noticed the missing nails. I reached in behind the loose panel and pulled out the bag of treasure, delighted to discover that our parents had purchased the video game we'd begged them for.

That Christmas morning we unwrapped the video game and pretended to be surprised and elated. We installed the cartridge into our Atari game console and much to our surprise—and dismay—our names immediately popped up on the TV screen along with our high scores. You see, we'd been playing the game in secret since we'd found it.

I'll never forget Dad's face as his confusion morphed into a look of realization and disappointment. That was the last year he stored Christmas presents at our house.

This story contains all the elements of the Advent experience for most Christians: expectation, pretending and disappointment.

Churches work hard to creatively recapture the agonizing longing of the Jewish people in the first century who



waited for their long-expected Messiah. Yet it is difficult to authentically share in this expectation of Christ's arrival. At least it is for me. Some Christians focus on the second coming of Jesus to inspire such longing, but for whatever reason this doesn't rouse within me the ancient Advent cry: "How long, O Lord, must we wait?" Perhaps my life

is too comfortable for such sentiment.

For some of us, Advent feels like pretending. Like my brother and me preparing to be surprised at Christmas presents we'd already been playing with for weeks, Advent can feel disingenuous as we strive to long for and be surprised by something we've already received.

For others, Christmas comes and goes, year after year, bringing only more of the same. The climax of Advent is a dis-

I'll never forget Dad's face as his confusion morphed into a look of realization and disappointment. That was the last year he stored Christmas presents at our house.

appointment, a recurring letdown set to the soundtrack of Bono from U2 singing, "Nothing changes on New Year's Day."

In spite of all this, I've come to appreciate how significant the season of Advent is to my spiritual journey. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "Our whole life . . . is Advent . . . a time of waiting for the ultimate, for the time when there will be a new heaven and a new earth . . . when all people are brothers and sisters and one."

Advent so powerfully captures the reality of existence and the paradoxical tension between the kingdom of God being "already but not yet" here. It embodies both our gratitude for God's shalom in our midst and our longing for God's

shalom to come. Advent is life.

For a long time I understood Advent to be a celebration of the past and hope for the future. However, Advent is now about the present moment for me. It calls me to train my eyes and ears to be prepared for Christ's arrival today. My Advent prayer is no longer, "Come Lord Jesus," but, instead, "Help me to notice when you come today, Lord Jesus."

He told me in Matthew 25 where to look: "I will come to you as a single mother and child in need of food. I will come to you as a first nation community in need of clean drinking water. I will come to you as a homeless teenager in need of clothes and shelter. I will come to you as a man in prison and a lonely elderly woman shut in her apartment. I will come to you as a foreign refugee family. I will come to you in need, Christmas day and every day. And I tell you the truth, whatever you do for these brothers and sisters of mine, no matter how unimportant they seem, you do for me."

Advent reminds me the coming of

Christ is always a surprise I'm likely to miss if I'm not prepared. Yet if I hunt for Christ the way I did for the presents my Dad hid in the wall so many years ago, I will probably find him. ☞

Troy Watson (troydw@gmail.com) is slowly learning to practise what he preaches.




Do you know of someone in your congregation not getting Canadian Mennonite?

Ask your church administrator to add them to the list. It is already paid for.

REMEMBRANCE DAY REFLECTION

Still no end to my tears

DOROTHY FRIESEN

I remember the morning of Nov. 3. I sit in Winnipeg's Bethel Mennonite Church with the gathered mourners. We all stand as the casket enters the sanctuary followed by my 82-year-old second cousin, the grieving widower, and his family. Tears spill silently down my cheeks.



The first one shot was the grandfather of my second cousin, the second cousin who at this very moment is limping up the aisle with the help of his cane and the supportive arm of his daughter. I notice his face is pale and drawn, bereft of vitality.

It was a systematic killing in Eichenfeld, followed by an orgy of brutal rape. The next morning before dawn, the raiding party rode out, wagons filled with treasures of the harvest and bread the women had been forced to bake all night. Most males over 16 years of age were killed.

I remember hacked and mutilated bodies sprawled in the barns or on the manure piles. Miraculously the father of my second cousin, 19 years old at the time, survived.

Women and children, chilled and grief stricken in the foggy morning air, ran across the muddy fields to get help from

The feared anarchists—thousands of them—streamed through the village, some already drunk, looking for food, weapons, gold and women.

I also remember Oct., 26, 1919. It was a cool day. The Machnowze, followers of anarchist Nestor Makhno, entered the Mennonite village of Eichenfeld in what was then the U.S.S.R. The harvest had already been gathered and it was a week of special Bible teaching and revival meetings led by five evangelists, two of whom were women: Liese Huebert and Regina Rosenberg.

Those were turbulent years across Russia. As the First World War raged, the Russian-German front kept shifting ground, and as the Bolshevik Revolution fought to gain ascendancy, farmers were forced to billet White armies, then Red armies—whatever force moved through the area.

But Eichenfeld had been spared some of the worst woes. The night before the Machnowze came, the people sang hymns of gratitude deep from their bellies and prayed for protection.

I remember the sound of horses' hooves and the crack of the wagon wheels on the road. The feared anarchists—thousands of them—streamed through the village, some already drunk, looking for food, weapons, gold and women. Their primary order of business, though, was the men, property owners and village leaders.

neighbouring villages. The following days began the back-breaking, heart-breaking work of digging mass graves for 83 unwashed bodies: 77 men and six women. No service, only the prayers and cries of those left to remember.

The Eichenfeld widows and orphans were taken in by relatives. My second cousin's father, the 19-year-old Eichenfeld survivor, came to live with my grandfather's family and so it happened that his name was attached to the Dietrich Friesen passport and he was taken to Canada in

1923, the first year Mennonites were allowed to leave the Soviet Union.

This survivor married in Canada and had children—one of them, my second cousin—the figure I now see stooped in mourning for the loss of his dear life partner of 58 years.

(My second cousin and I did not meet until we were adults, and we are not particularly alike in life pursuits or perspectives, but whether you are the person taken in by a family, or you are a member of the family taking someone in, there is a particular bond that extends back in time, forward through the generations, and laterally around the world.)

My tears continue to flow through the Scripture reading and hymns: tears for my second cousin and his children; tears for his grandfather who was shot; tears for his father who escaped death, but was witness to atrocities; tears for desperate Syrian families running for their lives—a young mother barefoot in a field, a baby on her hips, the father, clutching a suitcase with one hand, hanging on to his child with the other. Gun shots ring out behind them.

The eulogy, then the closing prayer, but still no end to my tears: tears for Palestinian children killed daily in the latest tumult in their land, with no international coverage or response, as though this is perfectly acceptable and not worthy of attention; tears for the thousands of missing and murdered indige-

nous women and men, for the generations before them—small children, elders—bodies and families torn apart, victims and survivors of genocide; tears for the whole world and for myself, we whose hearts have not yet fully remembered the horrors arising from state-sponsored and organized violence.

I want to re-member. ❧

Written on Nov. 11—Remembrance Day—at Dorothy Friesen's writing group in Winnipeg.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Harkness—Evan Henry Funk (b. Oct. 4, 2015), to Marlis Funk (Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask.) and Ken Harkness, in Winnipeg.

McKinnell—Annie Jude (b. Sept. 11, 2015), to Matthew and Teresa McKinnell, Ottawa Mennonite.

Peters—Isabelle Hailey (b. Oct. 25, 2015), to Kyle and Renee Peters, Morden Mennonite, Man.

Schwartzentruber—Isaac Allen (b. Sept. 19, 2015), to Jesse and Valerie Schwartzentruber, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

Teichroeb—Eden Olive (b. Oct. 19, 2015), to Jonathan and Andrea Teichroeb, Waterloo North Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Baptisms

Gwendolyn Laughlin—Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite, Rabbit Lake, Sask., Sept. 6, 2015. (*Correction of an Oct. 12 announcement that identified her surname as Martens.*)

Marriages

Kabazimya/Mbulu—Noella Kabazimya and Mwami Mbulu (Ottawa Mennonite), at Ottawa Mennonite, Aug. 1, 2015.

Deaths

Dick—Isaac, 103 (d. Oct. 3, 2015), Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask.

Hoepfner—Jake Edward, 79 (b. Feb. 1, 1936; d. Oct. 22, 2015), Morden Mennonite, Man.

Horst—Paul Richard, 67 (b. Sept. 29, 1948; d. Oct. 18, 2015), First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

Janzen—Henry David, 83 (b. July 14, 1932; d. Sept. 21, 2015), First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

Letkemann—Helen, 92 (b. Aug. 1, 1923; d. Oct. 4, 2015), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Rempel—Vince, 82 (d. Oct. 4, 2015), Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask.

Sauder—Stanley, 92 (b. May 18, 1923; d. July 30, 2015), First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

Wiebe—Elizabeth (nee Brosowsky), 93 (b. Nov. 21, 1921; d. Oct. 11, 2015), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Wiebe—Joan E. (nee Rusling), 63 (b. May 19, 1951; d. May 8, 2015), Valleyview Mennonite, London, Ont. (*Correction of a Sept. 28 announcement that identified her maiden name as Prowling.*)

Willms—Esther, 81 (b. June 4, 1934; d. Oct. 21, 2015), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

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

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

A moment from yesterday



This photo is of the 1958 winning Bible Quiz team from Virgil (Man.) Church. Pictured from left to right: Bob Warkentin, Henry Neufeld, coach Harold Jantz, Kathy Voth, Erika Neufeld and Erna Goertzen. Knowing Bible facts was once a significant value. Hours of effort were poured into memorizing Bible verses, knowing the books of the Bible and learning Bible stories. Some even participated in Bible knowledge competitions. Studies now tell us people's interest in church attendance and knowing the Bible is sharply declining.

Text: Conrad Stoesz, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies

Photo: Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies



archives.mhsc.ca

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

'These records are unique'

Original letter of invitation to Mennonites discovered in conference basement

STORY AND PHOTO BY J. NEUFELD
Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG

The looping cursive script has turned brown, the yellowing pages are smudged with fingerprints and held together with aged pieces of tape. In the top left corner of the document, the faded blue ink of a rubber stamp reveals the date this document was written and signed: July 24, 1873.

The letter is a significant historical artifact for Mennonites: it is the original invitation from the Dominion of Canada to Mennonites living in Russia (modern day Ukraine) offering them land, freedom of religion and exemption from military service.

The document, known as the Privilegium, was unearthed a couple of months ago when the Christian Mennonite Conference (CMC, formerly the Chortitzer Mennonite Conference) decided to sort through 20 boxes of old papers and financial records in the basement of its offices in Steinbach, Man.

"It was a mess that needed to be cleaned up," says Dave Reimer, the conference bishop. "I knew there was a lot of historical value in the boxes and I didn't have time to look at it."

Reimer contacted a few local Mennonite history buffs who were happy to look through them. One of the first items that emerged was the Privilegium.

"We knew the document was down there," says Reimer. "What we did not know was that there was an original German copy of it. . . . It's just neat to have the actual copy in your hand."

The letter, signed by the secretary of the Department of Agriculture, made 15 provisions for the Mennonites. It reserved eight townships in southern Manitoba for Mennonite settlement and offered each Mennonite adult a free quarter-section of

farmland (65 hectares), with the option to purchase the remaining three quarters of the section at a price of \$1 per acre (\$2.50 per hectare).

A close look at the brittle pages reveals something else. Three of the 15 numbered provisions have been marked with small X's, as though someone chose to single them out for special attention. Highlighted are exemptions from military service and the swearing of legal oaths. But perhaps the most significant article singled out is the one offering Mennonites "the fullest privilege of exercising their religious principles . . . without any kind of molestation or restriction whatever," along with the freedom to educate their children in their own schools.

The letter was written at a time when Mennonites in Russia and Ukraine were getting nervous, explains Conrad Stoesz, archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives in Winnipeg. Changing legislation meant Mennonites were required to teach Russian in schools and were no longer given complete exemption from the military. So the Mennonites sent delegates to North America to look for a new home. A delegation that included four leaders—David Klassen, Jacob Peters, Heinrich Wiebe and Cornelius Töws—visited Canada in 1873. "They came back to recommend Manitoba because Manitoba offered this kind of document," says Stoesz. The U.S. didn't offer Mennonites the same religious and political freedoms.

The Dominion of Canada was looking for hardworking European farmers to settle its newest province, Manitoba, which the government had recently cleared of its indigenous inhabitants. Between 1874 and 1880, 17,000 Mennonites left Russia. Seven



The original letter of invitation from the Canadian government to Mennonites living in Russia (modern day Ukraine) written in 1873.

thousand of them came to Manitoba. Most made the voyage in small family groupings, but one colony moved in its entirety. The Bergthal Colony, consisting of a few thousand people, made the voyage to Manitoba between 1874 and 1876, and settled east of the Red River on land known as the East Reserve. They carried with them many documents, including copies of sermons and ledgers from the Waisenamt, an organization that functioned like a community bank and held inheritance money in trust for orphans and widows. "The Waisenamt had enough money to fund the entire colony to move, rich and poor, young and old," says Stoesz.

Stoesz is helping the CMC sort through the documents with the help of volunteers who are skilled in reading German gothic script. The documents will be transferred to the Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives for safekeeping and research purposes.

"With other moves, either because of the transitory nature of the Mennonites, or because of the forced nature of the move, the records stayed all in Russia," says Stoesz. "These records are unique." ❧

PHOTO BY DENNIS BURKHARDT



Comforters are knotted during Kitchener First Mennonite Church's Assembly Scattered celebration on Oct. 3. First Hmong Mennonite, a daughter church of First Mennonite, was invited to the party. Pictured knotting the comforter are Hmong youth, from left to right: Isaiah Her, Zack Mua, Tong Her, Ezekiel Her and Faith Her.

'We should do this again'

A glimpse of Assembly 2015, a glimpse of God's intention to bring peoples together, a calling for one multicultural congregation

BY REBECCA YODER NEUFELD

First Mennonite Church
KITCHENER, ONT.

"We should do this again!" commented a Hmong young adult, a sentiment heard often after Kitchener First Mennonite Church's Assembly Scattered weekend in early October.

Nearly 60 youth, children and adults from the congregation were privileged to gather with almost 8,000 Anabaptist believers from 77 countries in July at the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Harrisburg, Pa. Those who went wanted to share the experience with the home crowd.

With the support of many volunteers and a generous estate gift, the rest of the congregation got to experience a bit of that multicultural worship, service, play and sharing food together with guests from other congregations, including Hmong, Eritrean and South Sudanese brothers and sisters in Christ.

During the afternoon of Oct. 3, First's space buzzed with Hmong and Swiss and Russian Mennonite men and women comforter-knotting together. South Asian women did henna artistry on the hands

of Colombian girls. Eritrean girls served Hmong spring rolls. Central Americans and long-time Canadians of European heritage packed 406 hygiene kits for Mennonite Central Committee. A diversity of children enjoyed craft activities. At a nearby school, players braved the rain for a local version of the "Anabaptist World Cup." A world feast included main dishes prepared by Hmong, Eritrean, Colombian and South Sudanese participants, accompanied by potluck sharing by all. As at the precedent-setting "green" assembly, meals were served on fully compostable dinnerware.

The assembly experience was also shared at First Mennonite through photos and videos, well-attended story-telling sessions from a variety of ages and perspectives, and singing.

After the potluck supper, the worship space filled with music from around the world and people from at least a half-dozen countries joined in heartfelt praise to God in a variety of languages and took up an

/// Briefly noted

Man pleads guilty to assault in Old Order Mennonite case

A 34-year-old man has pleaded guilty to six charges of assault with a weapon and one charge of common assault in connection with a case of systemic child abuse in a colony of Old Order Mennonites in southern Manitoba. The assaults were committed against seven children between 2008 and 2013. One of the victims is the daughter of the accused. According to Crown Attorney Jim Ross, the girl was repeatedly strapped with a leather belt even when she was so terrified she would throw up. Another victim, a 12-year-old boy, was strapped repeatedly until he confessed to crimes he hadn't committed, according to the Crown. In a courthouse in October, the offender was in tears and said he was "sorry and ashamed" of his actions, and that he takes responsibility for what he did. The judge has reserved sentencing until later this year. The offender is one of a group of people facing charges in the case. In 2013, Manitoba Child and Family Services took 42 children from the community. All but six of the children have been returned to their homes after their families followed a community safety plan, sought the help of professional counsellors, and attended workshops on parenting and discipline.

— BY J. NEUFELD

From an Oct. 31 story in The Brandon Sun.

offering for Mennonite World Conference.

The morning worship on Oct. 4 echoed the assembly format by including music from the global church, greetings from other denominations (Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ), and a pairing of older and younger adults of two different cultures for the message on community and autonomy, one of the assembly's themes. ///

Parkview Home celebrates 50 years of service

By JOANNA REESOR-MCDOWELL

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
STOUFFVILLE, ONT.

The Parkview auditorium was filled on Sept. 27 as residents, past and present board members, and community supporters gathered to celebrate 50 years of service to the community by Parkview Home. Established jointly by people from local Mennonite, Brethren in Christ and Missionary churches in 1965, it has provided a caring Christian environment for elderly members of the community for a half-century.

The late Joe Nighswander, a former administrator, wrote in the Home's history book, published in 1995, that there were sustained discussions in the early 1960s about the theological basis for such a home: "There came to most people a gradual realization that to set up a facility and to employ others to provide the necessary care, services and accommodation, was an expression of the desire to care for family members, rather than an abdication of such filial responsibility."

During the '80s and '90s, the Parkview board expanded services to include seniors housing on a seven-hectare site called Parkview Village, a short distance away from Parkview Home. Prompted by new standards introduced in 1998 by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, a new 128-bed facility was built on one corner of the same campus and Parkview Home relocated there in 2006.

George Reesor, a local historian and board member in the 1980s, spoke at the anniversary celebration and observed: "The Parkview of today could not have been conceived or planned in its entirety back in the 1960s. Rather, each added project has been built upon vision, experience and expertise gained from earlier endeavours."

Harvey Sider, a retired missionary and bishop in the Brethren in Christ Church, now lives with his wife Erma at Parkview Village. He led in a devotional at the

celebration and shared that the original vision to show Christian love and compassion is still experienced at Parkview in countless ways. He also observed that, in order to provide the range of services that Parkview has today, partnerships and cooperation with governments and other agencies have been essential.

Part of the anniversary program included singing hymns of praise, as the room was filled with joyful song by those in attendance expressing their gratitude for all the ways that God has provided the people and resources needed to meet the challenges over 50 years of service. ❧



George Reesor, front row right, a local historian and Parkview Home board member in the 1980s, spoke at the anniversary celebration and observed: 'The Parkview of today could not have been conceived or planned in its entirety back in the 1960s. Rather, each added project has been built upon vision, experience and expertise gained from earlier endeavours.' His wife Anna is seated beside him.

❧ Briefly noted

La Maison de l'amitié launches building restoration campaign

After 42 years at the same location on Duluth Avenue in Montréal, la Maison de l'amitié ("House of Friendship" in English), the warmth of reception one feels at this three-storey, red brick building is no longer mirrored by the warmth of its rooms. Believing that home needs to be a place where people not only feel welcomed, but also safe, comfortable and healthy, the organization has launched a project called "La Maison de l'amitié Restoration Campaign: Let's make it happen!" Its

goal is to bring the house up to current standards of liveability and comfort. The campaign aims to repair the brickwork, and replace the front door, windows and heating system in the building, all of which will result in a warmer and more environmentally responsible space during the long, cold Montréal winters. The west roof will be redone in order to prevent further leaks, and the interior will be repainted after 15 years of fading and chipping. While the immediate costs of all these repairs add up, the savings in heating will allow money to be set aside for the next wave of repairs and will free up resources to put towards better caring for the space—which is also shared with the Mennonite Fellowship of Montréal and other community organizations—on a daily basis. For more information on how to contribute, visit maisondelamitie.ca/.

—LA MAISON DE L'AMITIÉ



Retreat sparks women's spiritual gifts

STORY AND PHOTOS BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
HOPE, B.C.

Warmth was evident all around at the annual B.C. Women's Ministry retreat. Held from Oct. 16 to 18 at Camp Squeah, there was warmth in the fire and fireplace decorations that adorned the lodge and warmth in the fellowship among participants.

Continuing with last year's retreat theme of "Spiritual gifts," this year's theme was taken from II Timothy 1:1-14, focussing on "Do not neglect your gift" and "Fan into flame the gift of God within you." April Yamasaki, pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford and the author of several books, was the keynote speaker for the second year in a row.

Yamasaki talked about igniting the "God-given spark within us" in sessions on Oct. 17 and 18. "Our specific gifts may be quite different from Timothy's, but we,

too, have received gifts from God," she said. "Whatever spark we have inside us, whatever gifts God has given us, we can learn from Timothy's experience and Paul's encouragement."

Throughout the weekend, gifts of creativity were encouraged and displayed. Many women enjoyed doing something they had not done since childhood: colouring pictures specifically created for adults as a relaxing tool. Workshops included such creative ventures as vegetable and fruit garnishing, music, art and digital photography. A talent show offered quilting, music, drama and a first aid demonstration.

A used book sale, silent auction, live auction and gift basket draw all helped raise



Gloria Laurence, left, auctions a vase held by Rita Siebert at the fall B.C. women's retreat. The live auction and other fundraisers during the weekend raised nearly \$1,640 for women's ministries, including retreat assistance bursaries and the Mennonite Church Canada Spiritual Growth Assistance Fund.

nearly \$1,640 for Mennonite women's ministries in B.C. and Canada.

Although the women's ministry in B.C. is no longer organized as it was in past years when B.C. Women in Mission was in operation, the annual women's retreat remains popular with all generations. Even with the terms of four women on the committee ending, three more came forward to volunteer to plan next year's retreat. ❧



Women attending the B.C. Mennonite women's retreat in October got in touch with their inner child through colouring, a new trend for adults. Finished pictures were displayed and retreat participants voted for their favourites.

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GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Stewarding agricultural diversity across cultures

Seed-saving at CMU leads to relationships between Mennonites and indigenous peoples

Canadian Mennonite University
WINNIPEG

Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) made headlines this fall when it was revealed that workers at its CMU Farm had successfully grown an ancient variety of squash from seeds shared with them by the White Earth Seed Library in Minnesota. The squash was grown in collaboration with members of Manitoba's Métis community.

The story that accompanied the "Gete-Okosomin" squash seeds was that they were found in a clay ball at an archaeological excavation near the Wisconsin-Illinois border. It went on to suggest that the dating of the clay ball indicated that the seeds were more than 800 years old.

The story captured the imagination of seed savers and gardeners across the continent. It is a good story—but how true is it?

Kenton Lobe, an instructor in international development studies at CMU and one of CMU Farm's founders, smiles. "The truth of the story of these squash seeds is still emerging," he says.

Further digging into the history of the Gete-Okosomin seeds—which, roughly translated, means "cool old squash"—revealed that they were originally given to David Wrone, an emeritus University of Wisconsin historian, by some elder women gardeners from the Miami Nation in Indiana in 1995. One of these squash had been grown and saved by the Miami people for many generations, perhaps even thousands of years.

The men and women stewarding the seeds took care to grow them so that they would not cross-pollinate with other kinds of squash, maintaining the variety and characteristics that Lobe suggests resulted



Kenton Lobe, left, an instructor in international development studies at CMU and one of CMU Farm's founders, and Caroline Chartrand, who describes herself as 'the landless Métis seed saver,' each hold a Gete-Okosomin squash.

in a tasty and prolific squash.

One of the squash grown this season weighed in at more than 14 kilograms.

In a note to the White Earth Seed Library, Wrone, who has spent much of his career studying the history of indigenous peoples around the Great Lakes, relates that he had earlier received squash seeds that had been found deep underground in a cave in Kentucky. They were well preserved in perfect temperature and humidity, and were estimated to be several thousand years old. Wrone reports that he grew them out, but that they were "smallish and not as tasty."

The seeds from the Miami women were shared with Wrone and eventually with the White Earth Seed Library. Over time and through many tellings, these two squash seed stories crossed and turned into one.



Matthew Dueck hand-pollinates a Gete-Okosomin squash plant at the CMU Farm.

The seeds shared with CMU Farm were, in fact, those grown by the Miami women.

"The truth is, the work of seed saving has opened up space for indigenous-settler dialogue and has been both hopeful and helpful," Lobe says, adding that CMU Farm lies on what was a Métis river lot in the 1870s, and which is still part of Treaty 1 territory.

While the new development in the Gete-Okosomin story may not seem as exciting as the story the farmers originally received with the seed, it is still fascinating, and shows the care and commitment the Miami people had for this variety of squash.

"The story opens up people's imagination to indigenous seed varieties and the stewarding of agricultural biodiversity, which has been done by indigenous farmers from time immemorial," Lobe says, adding that the story "plays a part in cultivating agricultural biodiversity on the farm and in restoring relationships with people who were here before the Mennonites arrived in this region."

The squash seeds will eventually be available for sharing through the fledgling Red River Regional Seed Library hosted on CMU's campus. ❧

CMU PHOTOS

VIEWPOINT

Will Trudeau boost Mennonite causes?

WILL BRAUN

SENIOR WRITER

When a provincial election brought a wave of optimism to Manitoba—or at least parts of it—in 1999, a colleague said, “Yep, the reign of God should descend upon us any time now.”

So what might the change in Ottawa mean for a few issues of particular concern to Mennonites with the Liberals in power and Markham-Stouffville MP Jane Philpott, a member of Community Mennonite Church, Stouffville, Ont., appointed as the new Minister of Health?

Social values

Traditionally, Mennonites have cared about conservative social issues, such as abortion and same-sex rights. But Conservatives dropped those battles years ago, so change is a moot point.

Aid

Canada’s official development assistance budget has sunk to 0.24 percent of Gross National Income, far below the 0.7 percent goal set in 1969 by a United Nations commission led by the late Lester Pearson, a former Liberal prime minister. Will Justin Trudeau live up to Pearson’s ideal? During the campaign, Liberal Party president Anna Gainey said the party “will aspire to reach this allocation,” noting that “[Trudeau], in particular, is strongly committed to Canada fulfilling this obligation.” Good intentions, but no



commitment.

The Liberal platform does commit to refocus aid on “the poorest and most vulnerable,” reversing a Conservative trend toward blending aid with commercial, political and ideological goals. Jennifer Wiebe, who directs the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)

Ottawa Office, says she’ll be watching for reassessment of Canada’s list of 25 priority countries to include fewer middle-income nations.

Justice

There is nothing about Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA), the bold and innovative program struggling to survive after being largely dropped by Ottawa, in the online version of the Liberal platform. Last year, there were 16 CoSA organizations across Canada, many with Mennonite ties, that matched released high-risk sex offenders with volunteers who provide friendship and accountability.

The CoSA offices had received about \$650,000 annually from Correctional Service Canada. Public Safety Canada had also funded a \$7.5-million demonstration project that allowed for significant expansion of the programs between 2009 and 2014. That project proved the program to be effective at reducing re-offences and saving government money. Despite that, last year Ottawa cut about

half of the \$650,000 and offered nothing to replace the demonstration project funding.

Eileen Henderson, who heads CoSA work for MCC Ontario, says four of the 16 CoSA organizations no longer function and the others are struggling to stay alive. She is hopeful the new government will shift its justice focus from punishment to rehabilitation and reintegration.

Refugees

One photograph had all parties suddenly scrambling to appear responsive to refugee concerns in September. The Liberals promised to bring 25,000 government-sponsored refugees from Syria and Iraq to Canada by year’s end. Practicalities may be a challenge, but it is clearly part of a shift.

Among various promises to make it easier, faster and cheaper to become Canadian, the Liberals committed to reinstate health coverage for people in the immigration process, reversing a Conservative move that stung refugee claimants and sponsors alike.

Brian Dyck, who serves as MCC Canada’s director for its migration and resettlement program, will be watching to see whether overall refugee settlement targets rise, or whether Syrians will simply fill existing limits while displacing others.

War

The Liberals have committed to “maintain current National Defence spending levels,” although they will opt for something cheaper than the F-35 stealth fighter jets the Conservatives had on order. They have made vague commitments to increase Canada’s role in UN peacekeeping missions, something former prime minister Stephen Harper had nearly eliminated. And, of course, Trudeau has said he will end the combat mission in Iraq, while still training local forces.

(Continued on page 20)

Brian Dyck, who serves as MCC Canada’s director for its migration and resettlement program, will be watching to see whether overall refugee settlement targets rise, or whether Syrians will simply fill existing limits, displacing others.

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Peacebuilding thrives amidst Burundi unrest

Amidst rumours and political unrest, MCC-trained peacebuilders help youth from opposing political parties learn to get along.

canadianmennonite.org/peacebuilding-burundi

**Being part of the global church**

At this year's retreat Saskatchewan youth discover how they can participate in the broader church community.

canadianmennonite.org/part-global-church

Pax reunion celebrates MCC service experiences

Past participants in MCC's Pax program tell stories of how their life journeys were shaped by service to others.

canadianmennonite.org/pax-reunion-celebrates

**An end to all kinds of wars**

Blogger Susie Guenther Loewen considers domestic violence as a "war" that a peace-loving church must confront.

canadianmennonite.org/end-all-kinds-war

(Continued from page 19)

Kairos

Kairos, the national ecumenical organization best known for having its funding abruptly cut by the Conservatives, is hoping for change. In an e-mail, Kairos director Jennifer Henry said that at the time its funding was nixed, "assurances were made to [Kairos] from all opposition parties that they would restore funding." She hopes the new government will "honour this commitment."

The chill

Church organizations and aid agencies have felt the threat of Ottawa coming after them if they publicly ruffled Conservative feathers. That has changed. Julia Sánchez, head of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, said via e-mail: "Our sense and our expectation is that the chill is off." She added that organizations have become so "used to self-censoring over the past few years" that it may take time to readjust.

Wiebe points to the section of the Liberal platform that says the party will "allow charities to do their work on behalf of Canadians free from political harassment." The platform refers to "an understanding that charities make an important contribution to public debate and public policy."

Let me exercise this new freedom to say the Liberals, like other parties, pandered to the financial self-interest of voters as much as they invoked a broader vision for society. Still, the new government may well extend its "sunshine" to some of "the least of these." Mennonites will be there to encourage and collaborate if they do. ☺

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Welcoming the stranger

MCC Saskatchewan delegates explore a response to the refugee crisis

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONNA SCHULZ

Saskatchewan Correspondent
REGINA

“You maybe can’t save all the lives, but you can save some.” With these words, Doha Kharsa encouraged her audience to sponsor refugees. Kharsa, herself a Syrian refugee who arrived in Canada a year ago, spoke at Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Saskatchewan’s Encounter and annual general meeting, held Nov. 7 at Parliament Community Church.

In her opening meditation, Rose Graber, pastor of Grace Mennonite, Regina, reminded delegates, “We are [all] strangers and aliens, caretakers of the earth God owns,” adding, “We welcome [strangers] because when we do, we welcome Jesus.”

Hany Al Moliya, a 22-year-old Syrian who documented his life in a Lebanese refugee camp through photographs, shared his story in an Encounter workshop. His vision severely impaired, Al Moliya’s camera

became his eyes as he snapped pictures of family members and friends in the camp. But his handicap also became his ticket out of the camp. Because of his need for medical treatment, Al Moliya and his family were selected to come to Regina for resettlement.

Although he came to Canada with his parents and siblings, Al Moliya’s uncles, aunts and cousins remain in Lebanon. He wants to help those still living in the camps, and believes one of the greatest problems faced by refugees is boredom. “What they need most is to fill their minds,” he said of his fellow refugees. Many are educated professionals, but they are “sitting doing nothing,” he said. For this reason, Al Moliya dreams of establishing the first-ever library in a refugee camp. “If [Syrian refugees] came here,” he added, “I would be the first to volunteer to help them.”

Peter Neufeldt of Grace Mennonite, joined them in urging delegates to consider sponsorship. Since 1979, his congregation has sponsored refugees from numerous countries. “They have enriched our lives,” said Neufeldt. “We have become friends. I would encourage us all to do what we can to help those who have had their lives turned upside down, and to share of the abundance that we have.”

Rami Shamma of the Development for People and Nature Association in Ramallah, Lebanon, which cooperates with MCC on several projects, spoke of the desperate situation facing his country. With the influx of refugees from neighbouring Syria, the Lebanese population has grown by 25 percent. Tensions are also growing between refugees and Lebanese citizens, as jobs are scarce and the country’s infrastructure cannot support the increased population.

He described a summer camp the association held for 80 Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian youth; through art, music and video-making workshops, the youth learned peacebuilding skills. He said the greatest need in his country is the establishment of a peacebuilding institute.

(Continued on page 22)

Leadership changing at MCC Saskatchewan

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONNA SCHULZ

Saskatchewan Correspondent
REGINA

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Saskatchewan is entering a season of transition.

Claire Ewert Fisher has resigned as executive director, a position she has held for the past seven years. In her final report to delegates, Ewert Fisher said, “It is time for new energy and vision in this role. It is time for me to slow down a bit and move more intentionally into what I understand to be my primary giftings.”

Eileen Klassen Hamm, MCC Saskatchewan’s program director, will serve as interim executive director until a new executive director is hired.

In addition, Dan Siebert will replace Peter Guenther as board chair. Guenther, who also sits on the board of



Wrapped in a quilt he purchased at the MCC Saskatchewan Relief Sale and Auction in June, and surrounded by fellow board members and delegates, Dan Siebert seeks God’s blessing as the new chair of the provincial organization’s board of directors. Also pictured from left to right: Peter Guenther, outgoing board chair; Peter Neufeldt; Eileen Klassen Hamm; Claire Ewert Fisher, outgoing executive director; Don Peters, MCC Canada’s executive director; and Carlin Fehr.

MCC Canada, will continue to serve as a member-at-large for MCC Saskatchewan until his term on the MCC Canada board is completed.

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(Continued from page 21)

Brian Dyck, MCC Canada's national migration and resettlement program coordinator, offered statistics to help delegates understand the scope of the refugee crisis. Syria is the country of greatest need, both in the number of refugees who have fled the country and in the number of internally displaced persons, he said.

The ultimate goal for refugees is repatriation, said Dyck. When this is impossible, the second choice is integration in the country to which they have fled. The third

choice is resettlement in another country, such as Canada.

Refugee resettlement was a major issue in the recent federal election, and the new Liberal government has promised to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees by the end of 2015, said Dyck. This means that the Prairies can expect a 360 percent increase in refugees in the near future. Dyck suggested that delegates educate themselves and their churches, advocate on behalf of refugees, and pray for peace and for the safety of people in the Middle East. ☸



Doha Kharsa, centre, a Syrian refugee who came to Canada a year ago, told delegates at MCC Saskatchewan's Encounter and annual general meeting to try to imagine what it would be like to lose everything they had and become a refugee. Also pictured are Peter Neufeldt of Grace Mennonite Church, Regina, left, and Dana Krushel, MCC Saskatchewan's refugee assistance coordinator.

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GOD AT WORK IN US

A God bigger than this mess

HENRY PAETKAU

MENNONITE CHURCH EASTERN CANADA

As part of our occasional Faith Journeys series, we share Henry Paetkau's experience with readers. As Mennonite Church Eastern Canada's area church minister, he originally presented this story as a monologue of a Sunday morning encounter with a neighbour at this spring's annual church gathering:

Hey neighbour! Beautiful Sunday morning!
Yup, off to church. You've seen me in my gardening clothes, and these aren't them!



with college buddies, and discovered that the only way my life could have meaning, and I could live in hope and learn to love,



Why do I get up Sunday morning to go to church? Good question.

I ask myself the same question from time to time. I could be flippant and say it's my job or that it's a habit, or that I meet some good people and my best friends are there, and that we have great potluck lunches!

That's all true enough. But, you know, there's more to it, a whole lot more that I don't often actually think about. It goes to my core and it has to do with making some meaning out of life in this crazy world. Left the farm and went to college in 1970, thinking I had my life and myself kind of figured out. But then I discovered a big, bad world: the Vietnam War, protests, violence, social upheaval, injustice, poverty, homelessness, hunger. These didn't fit my worldview or my understanding of a loving God. How was I to make sense of life? I was tempted to reject God.

But, you know, funny thing is, the only way I could make sense of life, and find meaning and purpose and hope, was to believe in a God who was bigger than this mess, the mess we were making of the world—a God who wanted a better world and a better life for me and for everyone.

I read and studied and prayed, and talked and debated through the night

create peace and find joy, was to believe in and learn to know the God revealed in the Bible: the God Jesus showed us, and the love Jesus showed, and the way Jesus lived in his crazy world and time, and the way he invited others to live. I learned to know this Jesus in a deep and personal way through a Spirit which is his presence here and now.

I know! Sounds crazy! But not as crazy as what's going on in our world.

I can't explain it, really, but this Jesus and the Spirit are as real to me as the air I breathe and the wind in my hair, what's left of it! (You should have seen my long black mane in college; it made my mother shudder.)

Anyway, without God my life wouldn't make sense and I couldn't make sense of this world because there's so much beauty, wonder, mystery and hope, love and joy, and peace to be found. And these I can't explain or understand without a God who is all of that and more!

Anyway, enough sermonizing. Got to run. Hey, maybe you want to come along sometime? ☺

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ARTBEAT

BOOK REVIEW

Miller had major impact on the church

My Calling to Fulfill: The Orie O. Miller Story.
John E. Sharp. Herald Press, 2015, 442 pages.

REVIEWED BY BARB DRAPER

BOOKS & RESOURCES EDITOR

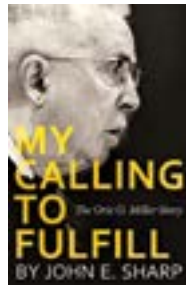
The story of Orie O. Miller is also the story of how Mennonites in the 20th century moved from being isolationist and the “quiet in the land,” to being a church with strong institutions involved in North American society and around the world.

In many ways, Miller was at the centre of these changes. He worked tirelessly to serve God by promoting the work of the church through education, missions, refugee resettlement, relief work and development. He also served on a multitude of Mennonite boards and committees, and had a profound impact on the church.

When Miller moved from Indiana to Lancaster, Pa., after his marriage in 1915, he felt an inner call to serve God and fully expected to become a minister. Although he was in the lot three times, he was never chosen. Initially, he was puzzled by this, but came to realize that he could use his gifts of administration to serve God through church agencies in ways that he could not have done as a pastor.

As Sharp writes in his preface, “For 23 years, Miller simultaneously served as chief executive of both Mennonite Central Committee and Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM)—all without salary. Under his leadership, both agencies expanded their work dramatically.”

Miller was at the centre of some of the most dramatic moments of the 20th century. He was among the first Mennonite relief workers from North America to



serve overseas in 1919. He visited Russia in 1920 to organize the process of bringing relief to suffering Mennonites, and is regarded as the instigator behind Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). He helped to re-organize Goshen College after it closed in the early 1920s, and served on the Mennonite Board

of Education for 45 years. He was passionate about foreign missions, and in the 1930s travelled to Africa to decide where EMM would begin its missionary work. He strongly supported Mennonite World Conference.

In the 1940s, he helped to organize a program for conscientious objectors and worked on various committees to promote peace. Under his leadership, MCC assisted Mennonites in Europe displaced

by the war. He is also credited as one of the founders of Mennonite Economic Development Associates, and frequently travelled to South America. Through it all, Miller ran MCC and, almost on the side, supported his family by working at his shoe company.

Sharp's biography emphasizes that Miller was passionate about working for the church and was away from his family many days each year. Sharp points out that Miller was an excellent administrator and businessman; his company flourished while he was at the helm and the Miller family was relatively prosperous.

This book provides good insight into the Mennonite world of the 20th century, especially the “Swiss” Mennonite world in North America. Although Miller lived and worked in the U.S., his institutions had a profound impact on the Mennonite churches of Canada.

Miller's dedication to the work of the church is awe-inspiring. I find it hard to imagine that one person could serve on so many boards and committees—up to 25 at a time. I appreciate that Sharp portrayed Miller with character flaws, so that he did not come across as too superhuman.

Sharp presents an interesting story in an easy-to-read style. He does not include a lot of photos, but they are carefully chosen. It's amazing to contemplate how much one dedicated Amish Mennonite farm boy from Indiana could accomplish in his lifetime. ❧

Clip from national church video part of Pier 21 exhibit

BY DEBORAH FROESE

Mennonite Church Canada

A three-minute clip from a documentary produced by Mennonite Church Canada is now featured in a permanent exhibit at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax.

The “Negotiating Settlement” exhibit appears in the newly opened Canadian Immigration Hall and draws from “Nation to Nation: Honouring the

Royal Proclamation of 1763” (<http://bit.ly/1NoZUaN>).

The documentary was produced in 2013 when a delegation of first nation leaders and supporters visited London, England, to mark the 250th anniversary of King George III's issue of the Royal Proclamation, a legal document confirming the rights of indigenous people to their unceded lands

PHOTO © CANADIAN MUSEUM OF IMMIGRATION AT PIER 21. USED WITH PERMISSION.



An opening scene in *Negotiating Settlement*; a permanent exhibit within the Canadian Immigration Hall at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax, is a clip from the Mennonite Church Canada documentary, *Nation to Nation: Honouring the Royal Proclamation of 1763* (<http://bit.ly/1NoZUaN>). The video exhibit is available for viewing on a tablet at the museum.



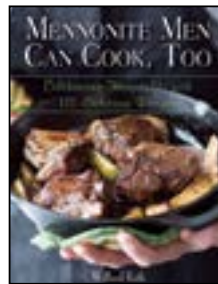
throughout North America.

The section in which the exhibit is located in the museum introduces key concepts about immigration, according to Monica MacDonald, the museum's manager of research. Those concepts include "the fact that there are different perspectives on immigration, and also that immigration is very much connected to the aboriginal experience in Canada. We must recognize that colonization and immigration have had a tremendous, often negative, impact on Aboriginal Peoples."

Pier 21—a National Historic Site of Canada—marks the location where almost a million immigrants, including Mennonites, entered Canada between 1928 and 1971.

"This year the museum is projecting upwards of 50,000 visitors, including everyone from families with young children to those who themselves immigrated to Canada through Pier 21," MacDonald says in an e-mail, noting that the museum chose the MC Canada video clip "because it shows that the Royal Proclamation, as the document that laid the foundation for treaties in British North America/Canada from 1763 on, remains relevant today." ❧

New from Good Books



MENNONITE MEN CAN COOK, TOO

Celebrating Hospitality with 170 Delicious Recipes

by Willard Roth

Well-known Mennonite church leader and long-time cook and food lover, Willard Roth, presents his favorite recipes for men and women of all ages to prepare and enjoy! Roth's exquisite recipes (with full-color photos) come from across North America and around the world.

A true treasure trove of delicious foods. Perfect for yourself and others.

MARY'S CHRISTMAS GOODBYE

An Amish Romance

by Linda Byler

Thirty-year-old Mary Stoltzfus accepts an invitation to teach in Montana. Arthur Bontrager, a bachelor, meets her at the train station. Some things are quite different than back in Lancaster. Mary struggles to adjust, all the while observing the fascinating Arthur. Another wonderful Christmas romance from Linda Byler.



BAKING WITH WHOLE GRAINS

Recipes, Tips, and Tricks for Baking Cookies, Cakes, Scones, Pies, Pizza, Breads, and More!

by Valerie Baer

A gorgeous full-color cookbook celebrating nutritious, delicious grains. Recipes, tips, and tricks for baking cookies, cakes, scones, pies, pizza, breads, and more!

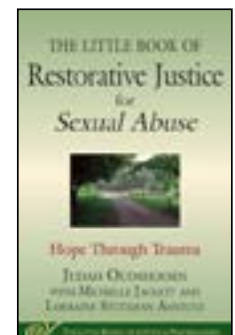
Valerie is a whole-grains expert with years of experience baking in her home kitchen—and she explains how to do it in a way that makes baking fun and easy for everyone. A treasure of a book!

THE LITTLE BOOK OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FOR SEXUAL ABUSE

Hope through Trauma

by Judah Oudshoorn with Michelle Jackett and Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz

An excellent resource for mapping possibilities in the use of restorative justice in response to sexual abuse. Criminal justice tends to sideline and retraumatize victims, and punish offenders. This book focuses on healing and accountability. Tackles a difficult but urgent subject.



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FOCUS ON MISSIONS & SERVICE

Coffee for Peace wins UN award

BY DEBORAH FROESE
Mennonite Church Canada

Coffee for Peace won a certificate of achievement from the United Nations Development Programme. It was one of six winners in the UN's IIX N-Peace Innovation Challenge for "sustainable, scalable, inclusive peacebuilding, that has long-term and transformative impact." The award was presented to Coffee for Peace founder and CEO Joji Pantoja in New York City on Oct. 23.

N-Peace is a network of peace advocates in Asia that grew out of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 acknowledging the pivotal role women play in conflict resolution and establishing sustainable peace. Businesses eligible for the award are either run by women or support women's needs.

Pantoja responded to an N-Peace survey followed by an interview with Kalyani Basu from the IIX N-Peace Business Development Team. Basu encouraged her to join the challenge.

Pantoja noticed that whenever she met with those engaged in conflict, they served coffee. That sparked the idea for Coffee for Peace, a fair-trade business that benefits local farmers and the environment while embodying principles of peacebuilding. Coffee for Peace is a program of Peacebuilders Community Inc., a ministry of Mennonite Church Canada.

"You cannot have peace with an empty stomach," Pantoja told United Nations Radio host Dianne Penn during an interview on Oct. 22. "Peace is not just absence of war. Peace should be addressing your stomach, your culture, your being, and having peace with your neighbour."

Growing and selling fair-trade coffee in the Philippines helps promote a culture of peace, Pantoja said. Coffee for Peace brings indigenous farming communities together to grow and process the highest-quality

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE UNITED NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



On behalf of Coffee for Peace in the Philippines, Joji Pantoja, right, accepts a certificate of achievement from the United Nations Development Programme. Coffee for Peace was one of six winners in the UN's IIX N-Peace Innovation Challenge.

coffee beans and sell them to a worldwide market for a sustainable income. At the same time, the industry restores areas decimated through heavy logging by planting trees that not only provide shade for the growing coffee plants, but control soil erosion on slopes.

Being recognized by the UN was encouraging, Pantoja said, because "it shows you cannot have development without peace." ☺

To learn more about the ministry of Coffee for Peace, watch "Matt Epp and Coffee for Peace, Philippines," at <http://bit.ly/1WJcDPP>.



Passing on the passion

Making a difference through growing a crop a natural fit for Arnaud Mennonite Church youth

BY AMANDA THORSTEINSSON
Canadian Foodgrains Bank

In the Bible there's a well-known story about Jesus miraculously feeding five thousand with only a few loaves and fish.

That story inspired the Arnaud (Man.) Mennonite Church youth group in its quest to help make a difference for hungry people around the world, but its success wasn't due to a miracle—at least not the same supernatural kind. It was due to hard work, the support of the community and a good Manitoba growing season.

"In class at school, a lot of us were learning about hunger in Africa and Asia," says youth group member Meagan Schlorff.

The group decided it wanted to do something to help end hunger, and started brainstorming ideas. "We started talking to people at church," says Schlorff. "The idea for a growing project field came up."

The youth group decided it would raise money to buy all the inputs needed to grow the crop and then donate its sale to the Foodgrains Bank. It was a natural fit for the group, many of whom come from farm families.

"Grain farmers provide food for the world already," says Schlorff. "We all help out our parents. It's something we know how to do."

So the youth started talking to members of their church, many of whom are farmers. Art Enns, offered to donate a 14-hectare field for the project.

Getting youth involved in the work of the church is important to Enns. "We need to pass on our passion for helping those who are hungry to a new generation," he says.

The youth group organized a fall supper at the church, and before long \$2,000 had been raised toward input costs.

While the experience has been rewarding, it wasn't without its challenges for the youths, who are in grades 9 to 12. "It's a really busy time for us," says Schlorff. "We don't live close together, so it's hard to

all get together to plan. . . . People at our church are really generous, though. That's helped out a lot."

At the end of the season, the group's field yielded 1,800 bushels of wheat worth \$12,600—an exciting success for the group. Including donations, the group raised \$15,750.

"We have exceeded our goals," says Schlorff excitedly, adding that the best part is "knowing we're helping to make a difference by coming together."

Last year, 260 projects across Canada raised \$6.7 million for the Foodgrains Bank. ☘

CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK PHOTO



Arnaud Mennonite Church youth group members Meagan Schlorff, left; Cole Holdrick, second from left; Liam Thiessen, third from right; and Adrian Thiessen, right, are pictured with youth leader Ewald Boschmann, third from left, and Art Enns, the farmer who donated the land, to celebrate a successful harvest that raised \$12,600 for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY



Youth perform a traditional 'bamboo dance' using PVC pipes at the Chin Christian Fellowship of Canada fundraiser for flood relief in Myanmar on Nov. 7 in Waterloo, Ont. The pipes both give rhythm by being banged on the boards and create danger by opening and closing while the dance proceeds. In July, 17.5 centimetres of rain fell on areas of Chin State in Myanmar, as much in one day as monsoon rains bring in a week. A mountainous area, roads and villages were wiped out, with many still living in emergency shelters four months later. Chin youth in the Waterloo Region banded together to raise funds through Vision Ministries Canada. Their efforts raised \$64,000.

'You are my family'

Winnipeg churches throw a wedding party for Syrian refugee couple they sponsored through MCC

By EMILY LOEWEN

Mennonite Central Committee

When Brian Darweesh and Reem Younes got married, they were living as refugees in Lebanon. They left their homes in Syria, fleeing violence and a threat on Darweesh's life. At their wedding there was no white dress and no party. Just a civil ceremony in a foreign country.

But then a little over a year later, the couple had another wedding ceremony, this time in Winnipeg. Although most of their family and friends were a world away, the church was still full. People from Winnipeg's Douglas and Jubilee Mennonite churches, their new family and friends, gathered to support them.

The congregations had sponsored the couple as refugees to Canada through a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) private sponsorship agreement.

Douglas Mennonite had also sponsored Darweesh's sister Maysoun, along with her husband and two daughters, who arrived in 2012. The family has become a part of that church community: they're in a small group, have friends in the congregation and Maysoun is a member of the church. "We didn't feel lonely," she says. "My family is very far away, but I have a family here."

When it became clear her brother and his wife needed refugee status too, the church decided to help. In partnership with Jubilee Mennonite, enough money was raised to support the couple for one year and the churches worked with MCC on the application process. Once it was approved, the resettlement committee quickly found and furnished an apartment. And after the couple arrived, the church helped with practical things such as signing up for healthcare and a bank account.

Douglas Mennonite has experience welcoming refugees. Since its founding, it has sponsored seven families from Sierra Leone, Bosnia, Colombia, Eritrea and now Syria. The congregation has always been supportive, says Heidi Reimer, who is on

the resettlement committee, especially because many of them or their family members were refugees themselves. "We do it because we love people and we feel that this is what God calls us to do: to reach out, to welcome the stranger, to be hospitable, to share what we have," she says. And when the families also become part of the church community, that is an added benefit.

It was while Darweesh and Younes were still in Lebanon that the congregation got the idea of throwing a wedding celebration, a day that could fulfill Younes's dream of wearing a white dress and saying wedding vows in front of God and people who support them.

While the couple's lives have been filled with challenges over the last year,

a celebration was something church member Krista Neustaedter Barg felt she could give them. "We heard Reem's childhood dream had not come true," she said at the reception. "She married the man of her dreams, which was awesome, but she didn't get to have the wedding of her dreams. And so I told her I couldn't fix most of the other problems in her life, they were too big for me, but planning a party? We could do that."

The celebration was pulled off with the help of many people from the church and community. Some helped with tailoring the clothing, volunteers worked with Maysoun to make a traditional Syrian dessert, invitations were printed free of charge and much of the food was donated.

It is clear that although they have been with the congregation for less than a year, Darweesh and Younes are becoming part of the community, just like Maysoun and her family. As Younes said to everyone gathered at the reception, "Even if my family is not here, really you are my family." ❧

MCC PHOTO BY MATTHEW SAWATZKY



Brian Darweesh and Reem Younes came to Canada as refugees from Syria. They were first married in a civil ceremony in Lebanon, then people from Douglas Mennonite and Jubilee Mennonite churches in Winnipeg organized a wedding celebration for them after they arrived. The congregations had sponsored the couple as refugees to Canada through Mennonite Central Committee's private sponsorship agreement.

FOCUS ON MISSIONS & SERVICE

/// Briefly noted

New assignment in Cambodia

Thanh Pham left for Cambodia on Oct. 1 to begin a two-year ministry assignment with the North American Vietnamese Mennonite Fellowship in partnership with Mennonite Church Canada. He will serve as assistant pastor at Phnom Penh Vietnamese Mennonite Church. Pham, originally from Vietnam and now holding Canadian and U.S. citizenship, says more helpers are needed for the Mennonite church in Cambodia, where many Vietnamese reside. “Many Vietnamese [migrants] don’t feel safe in Cambodia,” he explains. “They are not always wanted there. Sometimes they have to pay to become permanent residents or citizens.” These challenges are similar to those of migrants to many countries. His new assignment will begin to bridge the distance between the communities; it includes encouraging fellowship between Phnom Penh Vietnamese Mennonite Church and the Phnom Penh Cambodian Mennonite churches. Pham is no stranger to Cambodia; he visited in 2011 for the dedication of the relatively new church in Phnom Penh and again earlier this year to familiarize himself with the church. He says he is excited about his assignment and the broad range of responsibilities he will have, ranging from pastoral ministry and teaching, to leading a youth choir. Pham previously served as pastor of Winnipeg Vietnamese Mennonite Church.

—Mennonite Church Canada



Thanh Pham

/// Briefly noted

Metzger invited to attend UN climate change conference

WINNIPEG—Willard Metzger’s passion for climate justice and his respected participation in Canadian ecumenical bodies has garnered him an invitation to attend the United Nations Framework Climate Change Conference that begins Nov. 30 in Paris. He is attending on behalf of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC). In her letter of invitation, CCC president Karen Hamilton acknowledged the “valuable voice of the Mennonite family in our ecumenical work,” and Metzger’s “unique ability to bridge relationships across the various Christian expressions” in the CCC. For Metzger, Mennonite Church Canada’s executive director and a CCC vice-president, pictured at right, concern for climate justice is a natural extension of Christian faith. “When people are left hungry, thirsty and homeless, there is no justice and there is no peace,” he says. “When we care for creation, we take fundamental steps toward peace.”

—Mennonite Church Canada

PHOTO BY KAITLIN BARDSWICH



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Fall 2015
VOLUME 26 ISSUE 1

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Studying the illuminated text
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President's Window

AMBS window

Seeing, hearing, and praying with the St. John's Bible

Rebecca Slough, PhD, academic dean and associate professor of worship and the arts

Monks at St. John's Abbey and professors at St. John's University in Collegeville, Minn., wanted to mark the dawn of a third millennium of Christian witness. In collaboration with Donald Jackson, the calligrapher for the Queen of England, the idea emerged to create a handwritten illuminated Bible—the first one in over 500 years.

The St. John's Bible draws upon the best of recent biblical scholarship, contemporary artistic imagination, traditional methods of manuscript production, and the twenty-first century realities: proliferating scientific knowledge, world-wide violence, oppression, the fragility of interdependent human and environmental webs of life, and the persistent hope of Christian faith. Artists used gold leaf wherever they wanted to heighten awareness of God's possible presence or activity in the biblical narrative; the use of gold is what makes the St. John's Bible an illumination.

We at AMBS had the privilege of hosting an exhibit that included twenty full-sized gicleé prints from this Bible: eleven prints for Hebrew Bible texts and nine prints for New Testament texts.

These St. John's Bible prints help us see new dimensions of the selected scriptures. Visual art helps us see relationships between actions and their settings all at once. When we hear or read the Scriptures we can miss how these relationships unfold throughout the passage. Reading, hearing and seeing each reveal something of God's love, mercy, judgement, and grace, *but they each reveal differently.*

The St. John's Bible prints offer a fresh expression of God's word for our time. They inspire us to wonder and to pray.

This exhibit at AMBS was the gracious gift of the Bridgefolk Community. A second set of prints from the St. John's Bible is coming for Pastors Week, January 2016, and will be on display during the month of February. ●

At AMBS we immerse ourselves in the Scriptures. One of our seven core practices is "to interpret, preach, pray, sing and tell the biblical narratives. As disciples centered in Jesus and attuned to the Spirit, we revel in the Bible and its ability to reveal God to us."

We anticipate delving deeply into the gospel of Mark during Pastors Week, and offering new ways for all in the church to draw on the biblical insights of AMBS professors through online courses. Read more in this issue of AMBS Window to discover how we, professors and students, learn to read and interpret the Bible together and invite all in the church to join us in this life-giving practice.

Photo: Lawrence Giden, student in the Master of Arts in Christian Formation degree program, examines one of the St. John's Bible prints with Rebecca Slough, academic dean. **Credit:** Mary E. Klassen

Where's my verse?

Loren L. Johns, professor of New Testament



Have you ever been in a Bible study on John 5 and discovered that your Bible is missing verse 4?

Where did it go? Is your Bible defective?

Most modern translations of the Bible do not include John 5:4 in the text. Instead, most have a footnote at that point, indicating that the oldest and best—or perhaps “some”—manuscripts do not include those words. In fact, the New Revised Standard Version, the Common English Bible, the Revised Standard Version, the English Standard Version, the Message, the New International Version (both the 1984 NIV and the 2011 NIV), the New Jerusalem Bible, the NET Bible, the New Living Translation, and the Good News Translation all omit this verse or relegate it to a footnote.

These issues matter deeply because we understand the Bible as the Word of God—a gift from God that reveals God as well as life itself. It is important to treat the Bible with respect, thus not allowing later scribes to add things to the inspired Word of God, however “helpful” those additions might seem (as with John 5:4). Most translations treat Scripture with so much respect that they study carefully what words are original and what came to be added centuries later. Thanks be to God for such dedicated study!

The reason most translations omit it is because the scholars who prepared those translations judged that this verse was added to the Gospel of John by later scribes who thought some additional information at this point might be helpful. In his textual commentary

on the Greek New Testament, Bruce Manning Metzger says that (1) none of the earliest and best manuscripts contain this verse; (2) more than 20 manuscripts that contain this verse also contain marks next to it that indicate that the scribe thought the authenticity of this verse was questionable; (3) many of the words in this verse appear nowhere else in John's writings; and (4) the manuscripts that do have this verse disagree with each other about the wording. Overall, Metzger considers it quite certain that this verse was not original to John.

So how did it get its own verse number? Verse numbers were not added to the Bible until the 16th century. Because the King James Version was translated from a Greek text based on later, inferior manuscripts, which contain late scribal expansions, there are a number of verses in the King James that do not appear in most modern translations of the Bible.

This is not an isolated phenomenon in the New Testament. Other “spurious” verses include Matthew 17:21; 18:11; 23:14; Mark 7:16; 9:44; 11:26; 15:28; Luke 17:36; 23:17; Acts 8:37; 15:34; 24:7-8a; 28:29; Romans 16:24; and 1 John 5:7b-8a. The two larger passages that are not original are Mark 16:9-20 and John 7:53-8:11. Bible readers would do well to notice that these passages were added later.

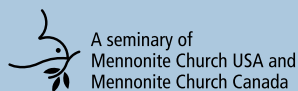
Loren Johns, PhD, (above) is professor of New Testament at AMBS. Among the courses he teaches for graduate students and for online non-credit students is one on how the Bible came to be—how it was formed from ancient manuscripts. ●

AMBS Window Fall 2015 Volume 26 Issue 1

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ALUMNI NEWS

Willard Swartley (Bachelor of Divinity 1962 and Professor Emeritus) recently had an entry, “The Bible in Society,” published in *The Cambridge History of The Bible: 1750–2000*, Vol. 4.

Rebecca Kauffman (Master of Divinity 2012) was ordained for pastoral ministry at Paoli (Ind.) Mennonite Fellowship in July 2015.

Dorothy Yoder Nyce (Master of Divinity 1981) recently self-published a 200-page book titled *Mennonites Encounter Hinduism: An Annotated Bibliography*. It annotates writing by about a hundred Mennonite Brethren, General Conference Mennonite and Mennonite Church individuals, from

anecdotes to disciplined academic studies of Hindu thought or practice.

Ryan Siemens (Master of Divinity 2007) is Area Church Minister for Mennonite Church Saskatchewan.

Innocent Mashakiro (Master of Arts: Peace Studies 2002) began this fall as a professor of social work at Taylor University, Upland, Ind.

James E. Horsch (Bachelor of Divinity 1966) provides the annual daily Bible readings for the Committee on the Uniform Series. These appear in the *Adult Bible Study* guide and are the basis of devotionals in *Rejoice!* from MennoMedia. ●

Engaging the Bible at AMBS

Semester courses,
short courses, special events

AMBS offers others in the church the opportunity to join with us in careful, faithful exploration of Scripture:

Pastors Week, January 25–28

The Bible Says *What?* Discovering Scripture Anew in Jesus' Company will focus the conversation at Pastors Week. We will dig deep into the book of Mark to discover what we can learn about how Jesus used Scripture.

- Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, AMBS Dean of Lifelong Learning
- Bryan Moyer Suderman, Bible teacher and music minister

Visit www.ambs.edu/pastorsweek

Interterm courses

Hybrid courses: online study with only one week on campus, January 11–16, 2016

- Isaiah, taught by Ben Ollenburger
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Visit www.ambs.edu/academic/interterm.cfm

Online Short Courses

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- Creating a Scene in Corinth: Conflict in 1 Corinthians, taught by Reta Halteman Finger
April 13–May 24, 2016
- Exploring Peace and Justice in the Bible, taught by Mary Schertz
March 2–April 13, 2016

Visit www.ambs.edu/churchleadershipcenter ●

Studying the illuminated text



In the gallery where the exhibit of the Saint John's Bible exhibit began, we gathered for chapel on Sept. 8 (shown above). After singing together, AMBS students, faculty and staff gathered in small clusters around the prints, reading the biblical text in each and exploring how the accompanying art reflected that text in both modern and traditional ways. At left and going counter-clockwise, Brenna Harker, admissions counselor; Mary Schertz, professor of New Testament; Eileen Saner, director of library services; and students Austin Roberts and Ben Bouwman share what they see in one of the prints. ●

YOUR GIFTS AT WORK

Recent economic challenges make it difficult for students to fund seminary study. AMBS attempts to keep tuition affordable; our tuition increases have remained below inflation and our levels of financial aid have remained consistent. However, for many different reasons, the cost of seminary study looms as a barrier for some.

Your gifts can ease the financial burden for students. Daniel Grimes (right), director of enrollment and financial aid, and other administrators at AMBS have set a goal to increase AMBS financial aid and scholarships so that more students have access to quality seminary education without incurring large debts. These contributions also will help ensure the strength of the church as seminary-educated leaders join congregations who are involved in God's reconciling mission in the world. ●



AMBS PANORAMA

Anabaptist Witness explores food and mission

The theme of the fall issue of *Anabaptist Witness* is “Taste and See: Anabaptism, Food, and Mission,” exploring how the food we eat connects us with the Creator and with others living around the world.

All content is available at no charge online: www.anabaptistwitness.org. The site also provides information about purchasing print copies.

Were you one of the 661?

The AMBS Church Leadership Center registered 661 participations in the 2014–15 year. These resources included theological, biblical and practical ministry short courses, webinars and seminars for people seeking personal enrichment, along with undergraduate study programs and professional development for people in ministry. To discover more of what AMBS offers in its wide array of programs for everyone in the church, visit the Lifelong Learning section of the website: www.ambs.edu

Seminary Preview Day

Do you know someone who should be part of the 2016 incoming seminary

class? Encourage him or her to plan a campus visit. Seminary Preview Day, March 18, is the best time to meet professors and students and learn about financial aid and degrees. Register at www.ambs.edu/visitAMBS

Seminary community prays for Obed and Phena Dashan

When AMBS graduates Obed and Phena Dashan visited AMBS in late September, telling about the challenges of ministry in Nigeria in the context of Boko Haram violence in Nigeria, the seminary community surrounded them in prayer.



Obed said, “In loving and praying for them [Boko Haram], we find encouragement to keep going. Where we find strength is in the Word of God.”

Obed and Phena were honored with the annual Alumni Ministry and Service Recognition during their visit to AMBS.



!Explore resumes

!Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth will be offered in summer 2016. Young people who have completed grades 11 and 12 and their congregations may apply. The program introduces teens to theological and ministry study and gives them opportunities to test their gifts in internships with their pastors. The goal is for both the young people and their congregations to learn from each other while youth are encouraged to listen for God’s call to ministry.

Information about the program and application forms are available online. Complete and send in forms by February 1: www.ambs.edu/explore ●

PRESIDENT’S WINDOW SARA WENGER SHENK



Our most ardent hope is that leaders formed at AMBS will learn how to humbly and confidently interpret the Scriptures in light of Jesus’ reconciling life and witness, becoming spiritually mature catalysts for transformative change and wholesome community life wherever they work.

In late September, we were astonished by the powerful witness of two of our graduates, Obed and Phena Dashan. They are denominational and educational leaders in the two million member

Church of Christ in Nations, a sister church to the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria and surrounding countries. We awarded them the AMBS Alumni Ministry and Service Recognition.

“At AMBS we learned from professors who knew the Word of God and knew the history of God’s people,” said Obed. “The Church in Nigeria is going through persecution. Boko Haram is killing people, burning churches, destroying villages. 500 congregations have been lost. Many, many people have been killed or displaced. There are killings on a daily basis. We always know when we go out that we may be killed.

“We find strength in the Word of God,” Obed said. “The Word of God revealed in Jesus Christ is the truth we preach. We were deeply enriched by the presence of truth, the power of truth, and the inspiration of truth at AMBS, a true community built around daily meditating on the Word of God. Please pray for us. We are tempted to retaliate. The Word of God has given us direction.

Don’t hit back. You are more in charge when you let go than when you take control. We pray for Boko Haram. We love them, but we don’t like them. In loving them and praying for them we find the courage to keep going.”

Phena is the first woman to head a theological school in her denomination. She coordinates a Theological Education by Extension Program for more than 3000 students. She spoke with the supreme composure of one who knows a ‘peace that passes understanding’ in every cell of her being. “We feel love surrounding us,” she said, “and the love of God’s people. In little ways we do our best to proclaim the gospel of peace. Jesus is our peace and he came to bring peace. When you have peace—you have everything!”

In these anxious times, what a blessing it was to see two courageous leaders personify the power that a deep rooting in Scripture and Spirit provides for authoritatively disarming fear as they serve their people. ●

PHOTO ESSAY

Challenged, changed, rewarded

*A former service worker visually reflects
on his MCC experience in Africa*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY AARON JANZEN

SPECIAL TO YOUNG VOICES

My partner Suzanne Braun and I spent three years as Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) service workers in South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho from 2011-14. As the connecting peoples coordinator and planning, monitoring and evaluation coordinator, we worked to support a wide variety of MCC partner organizations throughout the SwaLeSA area. Much of what we did was

unglamorous, computer-based work. However, we were also privileged to have the opportunity to travel frequently around the SwaLeSA area.

Our experience challenged, changed and rewarded us. We met and worked with wonderful people who are making important contributions to their communities. We learned about ourselves, grew in confidence, and gained new insights into the impact of race and poverty. These photos provide a brief summary of some of the geographic and programmatic areas in which we worked. ☘

Originally from Coaldale, Alta., Aaron Janzen, 29, lives in Winnipeg and attends Charleswood Mennonite Church. He is a student in the master of natural resources management program at the University of Manitoba.

For more photos, visit canadianmennonite.org/janzen-photo-essay.



Durban, South Africa, with a population of 3.4 million people, was our home. It is located on the southeast coast in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.





Daniel is a student at the Children's Care Centre in downtown Durban, South Africa. The centre is one of MCC's Global Family programs.



In Durban, and KwaZulu-Natal more broadly, much of MCC's work revolved around working with refugees and South Africans to promote peace and respond to xenophobia. This is a march on World Refugee Day sponsored by MCC's partner, Refugee Social Services.



Hlobisile Nxumalo, the executive director of Acts of Faith, stands in front a recently arrived shipment of blankets and HIV/AIDS care kits donated by MCC's constituency. These materials will be distributed by home-based caregivers to people living with HIV/AIDS in the Ezulwini Valley of Swaziland.



Lesotho is a small kingdom located high up on a plateau in the middle of South Africa. A dry climate, lots of soil erosion and changing seasons make agriculture very difficult. MCC works with Growing Nations Trust to promote conservation agriculture to local farmers. This photo shows some of Growing Nations Trust's experimental plots.



Most of our travel was for MCC work purposes, but occasionally we had the opportunity to travel for recreation. This photo shows some Basotho men dressed up for tourists at the top of Sani Pass, a road that connects Lesotho and South Africa right through the Drakensberg Escarpment.



Photographer Aaron Janzen and Suzanne Braun were MCC service workers in South Africa, Swaziland and Lesotho from 2011 to 2014.



PHOTO LEFT: Thanks to laptops, we were able to work anywhere. Suzanne Braun, right, and James Alty, who was MCC co-representative for SwaLeSA while we were there, do some work while waiting for a meeting with the director of an HIV/AIDS clinic in rural Swaziland.

PHOTO RIGHT: Durban, South Africa, was our home. It is located on the southeast coast in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.



Calendar

British Columbia

Jan. 24, 2016: Joint MC B.C./Columbia Bible College service at Cedar Valley Mennonite Church, Mission, at 10:30 a.m., with a lunch to follow. Music by Columbia students.

Feb. 26-27, 2016: MC B.C. LEAD conference and annual meeting at Level Ground Mennonite Church, Abbotsford.

March 5, 2016: LifeBridge Ministries fundraising concert at Level Ground Mennonite Church, Abbotsford.

April 15-17, 2016: MC B.C. Junior Impact youth retreat, at Camp Squeah, Hope.

April 16: Camp Squeah paddle-a-thon.

April 30: MC B.C. Women's Inspirational Day, at Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, Abbotsford.

Alberta

March 18-19, 2016: MC Alberta annual general assembly.

Saskatchewan

Dec. 18: RJC Christmas concert at RJC at 7 p.m.

Jan. 8-9, 2016: RJC alumni basketball and hockey weekend.

Feb. 5, 2016: RJC Friday Night Live youth event, at 7 p.m.

Feb. 28, 2016: RJC/CMU concert, at RJC.

May 13, 2016: RJC spring choir concert, at 7 p.m.

May 28, 2016: RJC golf tournament at Valley Regional Park.

Manitoba

Dec. 1: An evening with Nick Spaling of the Toronto Maple Leafs and Community Mennonite Fellowship, Drayton, Ont., at Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m. Learn what it's like to be a Christian in the NHL and get an autograph. Free will offering in support of MC Canada's youth assembly and MC Manitoba's Camps with Meaning.

Dec. 2: Learn about CMU's Outtown Discipleship Program on campus. To

sign up, call 204-487-3300.

Dec. 3-4: "The Aria: A study of the staged solo," presented by the CMU Opera & Theatre Workshop, at the Laudamus Auditorium, at 7:30 p.m. To reserve tickets, call 204-487-3300.

Dec. 7: Westgate Christmas concert at Westminster United Church, 7 p.m.

Dec. 19: "Singin' in the Grain" fundraising concert for Canadian Foodgrains Bank at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Winkler, at 7:30 p.m., featuring the Winkler Men's Community Choir. For more information, call 204-829-3570.

Jan. 19, 2016: Westgate Grade 6 Day.

Jan. 21, 2016: Westgate Grade 5 Day, from 4:30 to 7 p.m.

Jan. 21-22, 2016: Westgate Jr. High one-act plays, at the Franco-Manitoba Cultural Centre.

Feb. 3, 2016: Open house at Westgate, 7 p.m.

Feb. 5, 2016: Open house at CMU. For more information, visit www.cmu.ca/campusvisit.

Feb. 12, 2016: Learn about CMU's Outtown Discipleship Program on campus. To sign up, call 204-487-3300.

March 11, 2016: Open house at CMU. For more information, visit www.cmu.ca/campusvisit.

March 18, 2016: Learn about CMU's Outtown Discipleship Program on campus. To sign up, call 204-487-3300.

March 30, 2016: Open house at CMU. For more information, visit www.cmu.ca/campusvisit.

May 9, 2016: Westgate bursary fundraising banquet.

Ontario

Until Dec. 18: "Exploring resilience through the artwork of Shannon Moroney," at the Conrad Grebel University College Gallery, Waterloo.

Nov. 29: Fourth annual "Welcoming Advent" at Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville, at 2:30 p.m., with Christmas music by Lifted Voices and Laurence Martin leading historic Christmas songs.

Dec. 5, 6: Pax Christi Chorale and the York University Dance Ensemble present "L'enfance du Christ," at Grace Church on the Hill, Toronto. (5) at 7:30 p.m.; (6) at 3 p.m. For tickets, e-mail

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boxoffice@paxchristichorale.org.
Dec. 12: Pax Christi Chorale presents "The Children's Messiah," at Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto. For tickets, e-mail boxoffice@paxchristichorale.org.

Dec. 13: Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir presents "Follow the Star," at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, at 3 p.m.

Dec. 18-20: "An Advent Journey," at Listowel Mennonite Church: (18) 7 to 9 p.m.; (19) 7 to 9 p.m.; (20) 2 to 4 p.m.

and 7 to 9 p.m. For more information, call 519-291-2350/

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

Travel

Christmas special -- *In Search of Promised Lands: a Religious History of Mennonites in Ontario.* \$60 (regular \$79.99) plus actual shipping cost (\$14-\$18 in Ontario). Contact Sam Steiner (steiner.sam@gmail.com).

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Visit Europe the Mennonite Way! Faith based Hotel Tours to Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Poland and Ukraine, focussing on the Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage. More information online: mennoniteheritagetours.eu

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Employment Opportunities

The Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona, Manitoba, is seeking a full-time interim pastor for our rural congregation of 300-325. We are looking for someone with a strong commitment to Anabaptist values to help us continue in our journey to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

For more information please contact our search committee chair, Stephanie Friesen, at marsteph@mymts.net.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY Waterloo, Ontario

We are a vibrant Anabaptist congregation located in the heart of Canada's Technology Triangle and within walking distance of two universities. As a welcoming church, we honour our 165-year heritage as well as celebrate our diversity.

Our faith community exists to make a difference:

- in the individual lives of our members
- within the social, academic, and cultural setting of Waterloo Region
- and to a larger post-modern world searching for meaningful connections to the sacred

We invite inquiries from qualified pastors who wish to partner with us in this leadership challenge. Contact Henry Paetkau, MCEC Area Church Minister, at hpaetkau@mcec.ca

Senior Executive Assistant

Mennonite Savings and Credit Union (MSCU) has a 9 month contract opportunity, for an experienced administrative professional to provide executive level administrative and organizational support to the CEO, as well as to the Board of Directors and various Board Committees.

In this capacity you will pro-actively support the CEO on current and emerging priorities and the senior leadership team as they discover, plan and act towards creating our best shared future.

For a full description of this position visit www.mscu.com/Careers

Mennonite Savings and Credit Union is a Mennonite financial cooperative serving communities of faith across Ontario. We provide everyday banking services to over 20,000 members with the "barn-raising" mutual aid traditions of the Waterloo County Mennonite community. MSCU has eight full-service branches and five on-site service locations offering a complete range of banking, investing and lending products and services.

Interested persons should send their cover letter and resume by December 5, 2015 to:

Mennonite Savings and Credit Union
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