

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

April 10, 2017  
Volume 21 Number 8

## Suffering from Bach withdrawal?

Pax Cantata Chorus founded  
to meet a musical need

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### inside

Be a CO at tax time 4

'Not just an activist political group' 12

Focus on Books & Resources 19-24

## EDITORIAL

## Church lessons

VIRGINIA A. HOSTETLER  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

My church experience has included at least 13 Mennonite churches, a Baptist church, an inter-denominational church and two Catholic schools. That represents more worship services and Sunday school lessons than I can count! Not many details from the sermons and classes stick in my mind, but those experiences taught me many lessons over the years. Here are a few.

Childhood churches in Virginia, Indiana and Ontario linger as hazy memories. But I do remember singing from a little yellow songbook, playing with church-toy magnets shaped like Scottie dogs, and marching into Vacation Bible School to the non-pacifist tune of “Onward Christian Soldiers”! Most of all, those churches taught this preschooler about God’s acceptance and love—a lesson I have had to relearn many times throughout my life.

The Catholic schools I attended in Brazil were operating in the atmosphere of Vatican II, a time when new expressions of faith were finding their way into the lives of common people. Through attending regular mass I learned respect for varying ways of expressing devotion.

My Mennonite missionary parents helped nurture three young Mennonite congregations in Brazil, and they expected their children to be involved in congregational life. There I heard the call to follow Christ and I made a commitment to a life of discipleship. Baptism by immersion—take a deep breath and hold your nose!—was a

metaphor for the excitement and scari-ness of following in the footsteps of Jesus. Those small churches needed the gifts of all members, however undeveloped those gifts might be. So this adolescent sang in music groups, told children’s stories, taught Sunday school and served as Sunday school superintendent.



As a university student I took part in a tiny church in the back “hollers” of Virginia. There I encountered the requirement that women cover their heads while teaching Sunday school. So this young woman reluctantly wore a small lace “doily” in submission to the customs of the local Christian community. In a larger country church my husband and I took on the role of congregational and then conference youth sponsors, learning valuable lessons about planning, organizing and mentoring. And committee meetings!

The city church in Virginia offered me lessons on how to help quiet voices be heard when the church body made decisions, the importance of intentional small groups and the need for a Christian community to cultivate both inward and outward vision. As North American Mennonite conferences were beginning to call women into pastoral leadership, it was at this church that this twenty-something woman began honing skills in worship planning and public speaking.

In the Pennsylvania congregation I was nurtured into a deeper community life, as members trusted each other enough to share vulnerabilities that don’t often

get expressed in church. Brothers and sisters shared stories of brokenness and healing as they struggled with eating disorders, alcoholism, mental health issues and more. It was the place where the 30-something could share her own stories of infertility, and it was the place that welcomed her young children to take their first steps on the faith journey.

The Baptist church in the city of Nazareth, Israel, worshipped in Arabic, and this foreigner learned about worshipping God even when many words were unfamiliar and the sermon ran long. Could I pray with fellow Christians even when I didn’t understand the words of their prayer? Working and living among people of many denominations in that city taught me to seek our commonalities while valuing the faith perspectives of Christians different from my own.

God still has lessons to teach me at congregation No. 13, in Kitchener, Ont. Here I see an attention to issues of faith and justice, grounded in Scripture. If we pay close attention to the preaching of the prophets, the Psalms, the words of Jesus and the Magnificat, how might that focus express itself in relationships with our indigenous neighbours, the adherents of other faiths, people struggling with financial insecurity and other “outsiders”?

My church is still teaching me. What lessons has God taught you through your church?

**New contact information**

At the end of March *Canadian Mennonite* bid farewell to editor/publisher Dick Benner. Tobi Thiessen has assumed the role of publisher and I now hold the role of executive editor. In the coming months you’ll hear more from both of us in these pages. In the meantime, feel free to be in touch. See page 3 for contact information.

**ABOUT THE COVER:**

Sean Gortzen, founder and conductor of Winnipeg’s new Pax Cantata Chorus, right, is pictured with other members at a rehearsal before their first concert, held April 2 at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church. See story online at [canadianmennonite.org/pax-cantata-chorus](http://canadianmennonite.org/pax-cantata-chorus).



PHOTO: BETH DOWNEY SAWATZKY, CANADIAN MENNONITE

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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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# contents

APRIL 10, 2017 / VOL. 21, NO. 8

## Be a CO at tax time 4

**MARY GROH**, the president of Conscience Canada, urges all tax-paying Mennonites to consider becoming 'conscientious objectors to military taxation.'

## Creation care in action 11

Eastern Canada correspondent **DAVE ROGALSKY** reports that, after nearly four years, MCC Ontario is pleased with its 'green' building at 50 Kent Avenue in Kitchener.

## 'A season of change and a search for vitality' 16

At their annual meeting, MC Alberta delegates learned of the loss of three churches because of the Being a Faithful Church same-sex resolution, the closure of its Women in Mission group due to dwindling numbers, and a deficit budget.

## Reading books in prison 18

**MARGARET LOEWEN REIMER** reflects on her participation in the Kitchener, Ont., chapter of Book Clubs for Inmates. 'As a relatively sheltered Mennonite woman, reading... books together with inmates continues to stretch and surprise me,' she writes.

## Young Voices 27-29

In his photo essay 'Be not afraid,' YV editor **AARON EPP** explores how Manitoba artists face their fears at the annual Mennofolk art exhibition. He also profiles **ERIN FROESE's** efforts in helping plan this month's Pilgrimage for Indigenous Rights from Kitchener, Ont., to Ottawa.



## Regular features:

For discussion **6** Readers write **7** Milestones **10**

A moment from yesterday **10** Online NOW! **17**

Schools Directory **26** Calendar **31** Classifieds **31**

## Church lessons 2

**VIRGINIA A. HOSTETLER**

## A parting blessing 7

**TIM WIEBE-NEUFELD**

## Reclaiming Scripture 8

**RYAN JANTZI**



Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD FEATURE

# Be a CO at tax time

BY MARY GROH

*Based on a sermon she preached at Danforth Mennonite Church, Toronto, on Sept. 18, 2016*

**R**eligious wars raged in 16th-century Europe between Catholics and Protestants. In northern Holland, Jan Smit was captured by the Catholics and was being pressed into service as an oarsman. His captors commanded him to join a crew of prisoners and row across the lake for a battle against Haarlem. But Smit declared, "I have no enemies and cannot in good conscience row the boat so that you can go and fight."

He was a genuine CORB (conscientious objector to rowing a boat). "He was sharply examined in his faith," a historian says, "and found to be of the Mennonistic religion."

Today's acronym is COMT (conscientious objector to military taxation). How do we deal with Jesus' answer to the question, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" The biblical setting (Mark 12:13-17) helps us to better understand the thrust of Jesus' answer: "*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.*"

Jesus was seriously getting under the skin of the Pharisees and Sadducees with his radical teaching and huge following, and they were determined to get rid of him. So they got some spies to set up a sting operation to entrap Jesus by outing him on the poll tax. This tax required everyone to pay what amounted to the daily wage for a labourer. To devout Jews, it represented the bitter fact that the country was subject to a pagan foreign power. The denarius, the silver coin they had to pay, was idolatrously stamped with the image of Tiberius, and around the edge was an inscription as offensive, probably, as the words "In Caesar we trust."

So if Jesus would say that it is legal to pay the tax, he would be condoning the sovereignty of Rome and its oppression, and he would lose a lot of his popular support. For Jesus to say that Jews should not pay it would have been seen as insurrection and would have given the authorities grounds to arrest him. The sting

*What currency does God have for the building up of the kingdom? We are coins for God's use if we are stamped with the image of Jesus. This minting of the Holy Spirit shows that we belong to God.*



*So if Jesus would say that it is legal to pay the tax, he would be condoning the sovereignty of Rome and its oppression, and he would lose a lot of his popular support. For Jesus to say that Jews should not pay it would have been seen as insurrection and would have given the authorities grounds to arrest him.*

was never meant to get an authoritative answer to a vexing question, but to demolish Jesus. Of course, he saw through his questioners clearly and was not about to stumble into their trap. Rather, as in all his encounters, he used the moment to bring these men to self-recognition and a new commitment to God.

The spies approached Jesus with barefaced flattery. “Teacher,” said the spokesman, “we know that you are true, and care for no man, for you do not regard the position of men, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?”

“Show me a coin,” Jesus responded. Roman currency, as we know from

other New Testament stories, was unfit to be used in the temple and had to be exchanged for Jewish shekels when the worshipper wanted to buy an animal or bird for sacrifice, pay the temple dues or make a charitable donation in the temple. The moneychangers had to operate in the Court of the Gentiles so that imperial coins could go no farther into the holy precincts.

We are well aware of how indignant Jesus was, knowing that the Temple Money Mart was taking advantage of people by charging high rates of exchange and inflated prices for the animals, making as much money as they dared. Jesus saw this exploitation of the worshippers under the guise of maintaining purity

in the temple as the height of hypocrisy. Now the Pharisees’ ability to readily produce a Roman denarius revealed that their own purity did not reach down as far as their purses.

Jesus’ often quoted pronouncement, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s,” leaves us wondering if the separation between what the state rightly owns and what belongs to God is as clear-cut as it sounds. We don’t have currency to send to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and church currency to send to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

But one commentary I read actually says, “Civil and religious duties need not interfere with one another. . . . The two duties are as distinct from one from another as your Jewish coinage is different from that of the Romans.”

Really? Was Jesus telling his followers to pay the tax, turning a blind eye to the violence of the Romans? They would have been all too familiar with the sight of criminals hanging on crosses. And yet, how were Jesus’ followers to behave when a Roman soldier demanded that they carry his gear for a mile? Show that you have no enemies. Be a friend and carry it for two miles. This just might be transformative for the soldier; he might press his next victim into carrying his load for only half a mile.

When Jesus was arrested and put to a torturous crucifixion, he submitted to it, and those complicit—Pilate, the centurion, no doubt others involved—must have inwardly questioned whether God was being truly served as they rendered to Caesar what they believed they owed him.

When Jesus held up the denarius, he was not speaking to people living under a democratically elected government, but to Jews far from the power in Rome who had no say in how their poll tax was spent. We might feel that we have no say in how our taxes are spent, but we are responsible for electing good Members of Parliament and letting them know our minds about social policy and military expenditures. We need to try to get them to work with us to render to God the most peaceful society possible.

What currency does God have for the building up of the kingdom? We are coins for God's use if we are stamped with the image of Jesus. This minting of the Holy Spirit shows that we belong to God. "We are being transformed into his likeness" (II Corinthians 3:18).

Bearing the image of Jesus, unfortunately, has cost many their lives. Jan Smit—the 16th century coin—for his refusal to contribute to the war effort, was hanged from the gallows by one leg until dead. There are places in the world still today where conscientious objectors (COs) are given dire punishments for obeying their conscience instead of the governing authority.

For most of us, being a CO does not mean refusing to carry a bayonet rifle and shoot at a soldier in an opposing army. But who is more guilty of fuelling war these days: the military officer remotely controlling the drones or the taxpayer remotely paying for those drones and the bombs they drop on foreign homelands, killing not just the violent, but so many innocents, turning cities to rubble and thousands of people into refugees?

We wish this interminable war would end, yet we go on perpetuating it with our taxes, throwing up our hands and saying, "Caesar will be Caesar."

Real COs will think about how they can express their objection. Henk Kossen, a 20th-century Dutch COMT, objected to paying the 9 percent of his income tax that went to the military. Knowing there were 572 nuclear missiles placed by NATO in Western Europe, one year he withheld 572 cents, the next year 572 dimes, then finally 572 guilders (\$280 USD).

After several years of this, the tax authorities at last were aroused and announced a public auction at his property in Amsterdam. The Defense-Tax-Refusal-Movement saw its opportunity. They publicized the auction widely. Reporters came to interview Kossen about the meaning of the sign on his door. He explained his convictions to his neighbours and invited them to the auction. Supporters brought banners and public-address equipment. Many people arrived. Coffee was served, and Kossen,

*We might feel that we have no say in how our taxes are spent, but we are responsible for electing good Members of Parliament and letting them know our minds about social policy and military expenditures.*

several MPs and peace-niks addressed the crowd.

When the bailiff arrived, he could hardly get in. The auction began, and a table, piano, desk and TV were bid up one dime at a time by Conscience Netherlands members using re-directed tax funds. At the end of the day, the bailiff got what was owing to Caesar and a hearty "Long live the bailiff" from the crowd.

But not a stick of furniture left the Kossen house. And Amsterdam was better educated about nuclear evils and how to withstand militarism. ❧

*For Canadians whose taxes are sent in by their employers, and for people whose income is below the taxable level, Conscience Canada has created a way to*

*protest in the Peace Tax Return: Option A. Those who owe tax are strongly encouraged to use Option B and actually re-direct the military portion to the Peace Tax Fund. To learn more, visit [consciencecanada.ca](http://consciencecanada.ca).*



*The stories of Jan Smit and Henk Kossen are taken from Seeking Peace, Titus and Linda Gehman Peachey's collection of stories of COs.*

*Mary Groh is president of the Conscience Canada board of directors.*



### ❧ For discussion

1. Have you ever felt called to speak out or take action against injustice or violence against others? What are some examples of campaigns for social justice? What is needed to make such campaigns successful? Under what conditions should Christians bring attention to detrimental government policy?
2. What is your response to Mary Groh's question about whether war is fuelled more by the military officer or the taxpayer? How responsible should Christians feel about the choices made by their governments? How involved should Christians be in trying to influence government policy?
3. When Jesus was asked if it is right to pay taxes, he said, "Render to Caesar what is Caesar's . . ." (Mark 12:13-17). How do you understand this passage? What do you think Jesus would say about paying taxes today?
4. If Christians are coins that God uses to build his kingdom, what type of coins should we be? What are some ways that those who are conscientiously opposed to war can express their objections?

—BY BARB DRAPER

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## 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.canadian-mennonite.org](http://www.canadian-mennonite.org). All letters are edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines. Send them to [letters@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:letters@canadianmennonite.org) and include the author's contact information and mailing address. Preference is given to letters from MC Canada congregants.*

## ✉ 'The faith of our fathers lives on'

**THERE USED TO** be a hymn we sang in our congregation: "Faith of our Fathers, Living Still."

As a person ages, one has more memories from the past. Often in the present, we make decisions for the future with knowledge from the past. So from the past to the present, we have had many dedicated servants in our Mennonite congregation: ministers, pastors, teachers and active committee members.

What stands out most in my memories is the life of my father. Father was really a back-bencher; he never spoke up at meetings, never belonged to a committee, was never really in the limelight.

And yet, as a faithful member of the church, he served behind the scenes. In the Depression years, he took in the homeless. His hired helper received a bonus above the going wage. He sponsored refugees

*(Continued on page 8)*

## FROM OUR LEADERS

## A parting blessing

TIM WIEBE-NEUFELD

**A**t my first Mennonite Church Alberta assembly as area church minister, one of my official tasks was to offer a prayer of release to Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church. It was one of two congregations that had withdrawn its membership from the area church in response to the Being a Faithful Church decision at MC Canada's 2016 Saskatoon assembly.



Three of its leaders had accepted our invitation to come to the afternoon session so we could offer each other a parting blessing. It was an odd feeling. Their church had been a part of MC Alberta for more than 30 years. While we, as MC Alberta congregations, may not have always shared the closest of connections, we had walked alongside each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. Now their congregation had decided to go its own direction.

In a society that feels increasingly fragmented, it is a challenging time to be the

church. While Mennonites have a long history of parting and dividing, in today's world unity seems more difficult to achieve than ever. In our highly charged political climate, divisions seem amplified around the globe.

This past January, Mennonite World Conference prepared worship materials for World Fellowship Sunday highlighting two familiar Bible passages.

One was the Genesis passage of the Tower of Babel. It is a story that begins with unity. People are of one language and one mind, fixed on building a tower with its top in the heavens. Yet their true goal is to "make a name" for themselves, aside from God. As the story goes, this trust in human achievement ends in confusion and division. The people cease to understand each other's language, and as a result are scattered abroad over the face of the earth.

The second passage was the story of Pentecost from Acts 2. In this passage, the movement is reversed. People from

every nation are living in Jerusalem. When God's presence arrives in the form of divided tongues, as of fire, the gathered people are bewildered that they can hear Jesus' followers speaking in their own language. The arrival of God's Holy Spirit transcends the boundaries of speech and culture, speaking into human divisions in witness to the unifying power of Christ. This power does not promote any one people, nation or human achievement, but offers hope to all in the name of Jesus.

In my prayer to the Calgary Vietnamese church leaders, I offered lament that Jesus' call for unity among his followers has not fully come to pass. I acknowledged our common desire to be faithful to God's calling. We offered each other God's blessing as we prepared to go our own directions in figuring out what it means to be faithful followers of Christ in our various contexts.

As the Vietnamese church representatives prepared to leave our meeting, one offered me the words, "Hope to see you again soon." This is also my hope, and I believe it is God's hope.

(Continued from page 7)

and took them in, never asked for travel expenses and was a strong supporter of Mennonite Central Committee.

As a pacifist, he served for a few years in the Red Cross in the First World War. He never had a driver's licence, but in the early years he enjoyed the horse-and-buggy days. He helped the homeless to become

independent. He suffered time and money sending his family to college.

So the faith of our fathers lives on to future generations. So life is always past, present and future.

JACOB J. UNGER, BOISSEVAIN, MAN.

## KINGDOM YEARNINGS

# Reclaiming Scripture

RYAN JANTZI

**W**e must not hand them back. Others before us fought long and hard to get them back into our hands. Through blood, sweat and tears, they were returned to the rightful owners. And now, slowly but surely, we are returning the Holy Scriptures to those who hoarded them for so long.

It was in the language of the people that the New Testament Scriptures were first written. However, as time marched on, this beautiful truth was forgotten. Much later, they called this unusual dialect "Holy Spirit Greek" because it didn't fit the classical Greek of the courts of law and halls of learning. It must have been sent from on high, extraordinary and uncorrupted, they figured. That was until it was discovered as the script of a grocery list!

This 1897 archaeological find in Egypt had unearthed papyri containing this *koine* dialect of Greek, matching that of the Bible. It turns out that this was the jargon used in conducting the affairs of the marketplace. Thus, it was remembered that the Christian Scriptures had been originally written in the language of the commoner.

Unfortunately, over the centuries the Scriptures were stolen from the hands of the people. Carefully guarded and controlled, the scholars and clergy ensured that only they would interpret

and proclaim God's Word. Even as the Christian faith expanded into new territory, the Bible was sealed into the Latin of Rome. It was no longer passed along in the language of the people.

After more than a millennium of this darkness, in the 14 century, John Wycliffe began to stir things up. "Christ taught the people in the language that was best known to them. Why should people today not do the same?" Timothy Paul Jones quotes Wycliffe as saying in *Christian History Made Easy*. In response, his followers began to translate the Bible into English. Later, after his death, when his followers completed the English translation, church authorities declared Wycliffe a heretic, digging up and burning his bones.

The early Anabaptists were among the many who carried the torch lit by Wycliffe. Indeed, many of the initial leaders were



*We entrust our learning of the Scriptures to sermons by Bruxy Cavey... rather than diving in ourselves.*

scholars or former priests. However, that first treasonous act of re-baptism was the fruit of a group Bible study. It is noteworthy that this took place in a home. The Scriptures were being returned to the realm of the commoner.

Those who have gone before us paid a high price to get the Scriptures back into the vernacular. They fought, and

even died, to get us to this place. Today, we have more than 50 different English versions of the Bible available. And yet, here we are in the age of biblical illiteracy. A 2013 study conducted by the Canadian Bible Society discovered that a mere 14 percent of Canadians read the Bible at least once per month. The church is not immune to this reality.

Our cornflakes are accompanied by Facebook rather than God's book. We entrust our learning of the Scriptures to sermons by Bruxy Cavey, Andy Stanley or Greg Boyd, rather than diving in ourselves. In our small groups we do one topical book study after another but rarely plumb the depths of Scripture together. In our Sunday morning worship, increasingly few Bibles are opened, whether they be leather- or screen-bound. Ironically, in an age when centralized authority is trusted less, we delegate Scripture interpretation to the "professionals."

Slowly but surely, we are handing the Scriptures back.

Throughout our history, when the Scriptures were controlled by ministers, it led the Church of Jesus Christ to a dark place. Might we find ourselves in this

place again? Quite possibly. Only this time, it will be our own voluntary doing. We must not hand them back.

*Ryan Jantzi pastors Kingsfield-Zurich Mennonite Church, Ont., where he's fascinated with exploring the interplay between traditional church and new expressions of mission.*



## VIEWPOINT

# 'Are we driving our children away from God—literally?'

TIM BENTCH

As I write this article, I am already feeling guilty about my own deficiencies as a parent—all the ways I could have helped my children excel in sports, music and academics. I could do more! All the missed opportunities to help my children become successful in life! We parents are plagued by guilt and we also feel constant pressure from our society to be super parents and to turn out super kids.

But are these pressures and expectations in balance with what we know is the ultimate goal of Christ-following parents, which is to help our children find Jesus? Are we helping our children find God and doing all we can to model a pursuit of God for them?

One area we need to take a strong look at is the current sports obsession, although there are admittedly many obsessions in other areas. With this in view, I ask the question: Are you driving your children away from God—literally? When you drive your child to a soccer match or practice on Sunday mornings, what is that teaching your child?

My wife and I served in Eastern Europe beginning a few years after the fall of communism. In many of the countries under Soviet domination, Christians faced discrimination and persecution. In Moscow, I met a talented young musician who played the clarinet beautifully. He was in his late 20s. Why, I asked, didn't he go to the conservatory of music or to a university for formal studies?

He looked at me with a puzzled expression that said, "Don't you know?" Under communism, there was no way he could be accepted into a conservatory or a university because he was active in the church, which meant automatic disqualification. But he chose to be faithful to

God by staying active in the local church even though it meant that "success" for him in a musical career—or in any other field that required a college education—was not possible.

I met an outstanding singer in Timisoara, Romania. He had one of those voices you usually only find in the East: a deep, dark, profound, resonant voice. When I heard him sing, I was incredulous. "Why aren't you a leading soloist in the opera?" I asked. Again, that puzzled look: "Don't you know?"

He told me that when he finished conservatory, he was offered a contract to be a soloist with the opera. But they said there's one thing: "You will have to give up going to church. A soloist in the opera cannot be known to be a Christian."

He told them immediately, "No way,"

*When we are driving our children to a practice or a game, instead of Sunday worship or instead of a Wednesday night youth meeting, what message does that send to our children?*

and turned down the contract. Instead, he took a position with the choir of the philharmonic. It wasn't nearly as prestigious, but he stayed active in his local church.

I think about many others who made huge sacrifices in order to be faithful to Jesus and to honour him by serving in church.

Yet we choose sporting events over church! Really? When we are driving our children to a practice or a game, instead of Sunday worship or instead of a Wednesday night youth meeting, what message does that send to our children? Are we saying that we only go to church

PHOTO COURTESY OF SOUDERTON (PA.)  
MENNONITE CHURCH



when there's nothing better to do? Are we placing sports—or work or leisure—above knowing and serving God? The Bible calls this idolatry.

Proverbs 22:6 says: "Train up a child in

*the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."*

The patterns that we give to our children will stay with them the rest of their lives. If we are communicating that church is not important now, how can we expect that they will go to church when they are older? If we are modeling for them a faith that requires no sacrifice, then what good is it? What on earth could be more important than our children's eternal destiny? ❧

*Tim Bentch is lead pastor of Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Church. Reprinted by permission of the author.*

## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Banack**—Everett James (b. Feb. 22, 2017), to Clark and Kendell Banack, Toronto United Mennonite.

**Campbell**—Jessica Linda Rose (b. March 1, 2017), to Zach Campbell and Brittany Struthers, Brussels Mennonite, Ont.

**Foster**—Molly Jane (b. March 6, 2017), to Shelby (Tiessen) Foster (Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.) and Michael Foster.

**Helmuth**—Walter Russell (b. Jan. 23, 2017), to Shawn and Emily Helmuth, Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

**Miller**—Anna Eirene Toews (b. March 7, 2017), to Emily Toews and Bryce Miller, Jubilee Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Wiebe**—Paxton Levi (b. Jan. 15, 2017), to Graham and Andrea (Battershill) Wiebe, Jubilee Mennonite, Winnipeg.

### Deaths

**Bryson**—William (Bill) Harvey, 79 (b. June 7, 1937; d. March 1, 2017), Danforth Mennonite, Toronto.

**Bueckert**—Katie, 87 (b. July 21, 1929; d. Feb. 24, 2017), Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon.

**Gascho**—LaVone (nee Zehr), 91 (b. June 19, 1925; d. Dec. 21, 2016), Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

**Klippenstein**—Peter A., 96 (b. April 22, 1920; d. March 10, 2017), Morden Mennonite, Man.

**Kroeker**—George, 85 (b. June 29, 1931; d. March 9, 2017), North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

**Krueger**—Anne, 93 (b. Dec. 27, 1923; d. March 9, 2017), Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.

**Nafziger**—William “Dean,” 51 (b. Sept. 30, 1965; d. March 16, 2017), Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

**Redekop**—Henry J., 99 (b. Feb. 6, 1918; d. March 1, 2017), First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

**Reimer**—Ruth (nee Froese), 92 (b. Aug. 31, 1924; d. March 4, 2017), First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

**Schmidt**—Anita (nee Brown), 66 (b. Jan. 14, 1951; d. March 14, 2017), North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

**Smith**—Norma (nee Diller), 81 (b. April 27, 1935; d. Feb. 23, 2017), Listowel Mennonite, Ont.

**Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones announcements within four months of the event. Please send Milestones announcements by e-mail to [milestones@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:milestones@canadianmennonite.org), including the congregation name and location.**

## /// Correction

Josef Estabrooks was “commissioned”—not “installed”—last fall as the new pastor of Winnipeg’s Fort Garry Mennonite Church, which is part of the lay ministry tradition. The incorrect term appeared in “Pastoral transition in Manitoba,” Feb. 27, page 13. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the error.

## A moment from yesterday



Boys on horseback pose in front of the main entrance to the Ailsa Craig Boys Farm, a home for troubled boys, in the 1960s. The farm, begun in 1955, was the brainchild of Jack Wall. With the help of Harvey Taves at Mennonite Central Committee and a handful of families eager to start mission work with a social welfare focus in Ailsa Craig, Ont., he gained support for the project from Ontario Mennonite churches. This was just one example of Canadian Mennonites looking for ways to demonstrate God’s love by setting up organizations to serve their local communities in the post-war era. Can you think of others?

Text: Lauren Harder-Gissing / Mennonite Archives of Ontario

Photo: Mennonite Archives of Ontario



[archives.mhsc.ca](http://archives.mhsc.ca)

## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

# Creation care in action

*MCC Ontario pleased with 'green' building at 50 Kent Avenue*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
KITCHENER, ONT.

**B**uilding to green standards using cutting-edge technology is a significant expense.

After nearly four years in its 50 Kent Avenue building, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario is pleased with the choices it made and feels that its constituents can be satisfied that the extra expenses have paid creation-care dividends. Most initiatives have met or exceeded expectations, especially with the rising price of electricity in the Ontario market.

The 45,000-litre tank under the recycling, storage and locked bicycle storage shed behind the main building provides water for toilets and urinals, even in winter, from water collected on the 5,100-square-metre roof and porch roofs at the entrances. When everything is working properly, the building, which houses numerous offices as well as Thrift on Kent, only uses as much water per month as a family of four in a private home: 22 cubic metres.

Except for shipping and receiving, the building heats and cools using air-to-air heat pumps with no backup systems. If temperatures drop below -23 degrees Celsius, the system cannot keep up, but fortunately this happens seldom in southern Ontario and is short lived.

Parking-lot lighting has been LED from the opening in 2013. Now, Kitchener-Wilmot Hydro is providing a grant for the main floor of the building to be switched from fluorescent to LED, with a payback period of less than two years. Bob Lebold, the building's physical services coordinator, says that the present bulbs and ballasts are wearing out faster than expected and so needed to be replaced anyway.

Lighting on much of the second floor, though, is aided by large windows to the outside and with large clerestory windows

bringing natural light down to workers. A smart system also moves warm or cool air around the building to areas that are either too cool or too warm, using less energy than cooling or heating the air.

But one of the biggest green aspects of the building is the 200-kilowatt solar electric installation on the roof. At a cost of between \$100,000 and \$200,000, the building was made ready for the panels and system when it was built, even though the system was only installed last year. Community Energy Development Co-operative, which owns and runs the installation, rents roof space. The system supplies as much electricity as the building uses on the hottest days in July. After 20 years, ownership will transfer to MCC Ontario. The panels also create measurable shade on the roof, further reducing cooling costs.

Bike riding is encouraged with the provision of a locked bike shed, which is already more than full, as well as connections to the Iron Horse Trail that passes nearby. Showers were installed in both the bathrooms on the second floor for riders. Light-rail transit will pass right in front of the building, with a stop a few hundred metres away, furthering smaller energy footprints.

It is difficult to measure the energy savings of such a building, compared to the former one on the same site. The current energy costs of \$10,000 per year anecdotally are seen as very good. Rick Cober Bauman, executive director of MCC Ontario, believes that the building itself is a good witness to MCC's goal of creation care. That the Community Energy Development Co-op is renting the building for its annual meeting this spring, to show off both the roof-top installation and the energy-efficient building, is a good news



*Bob Lebold, 50 Kent Avenue's physical services coordinator, stands in front of the air-to-air heat exchange units on the roof of the building and under the 200-kilowatt solar electric installation.*

story in itself.

All of this work has not been lost on Sustainable Waterloo Region, which just honoured MCC Ontario with its 2016 Greatest Greenhouse Gas Reduction Award. ❧

For more photos, visit [canadianmennonite.org/green-50-kent](http://canadianmennonite.org/green-50-kent).



# 'Not just an activist political group'

*Manitoba delegates learn of the work of MC Canada's Palestine and Israel Resolution Working Group*

STORY AND PHOTO BY BETH DOWNEY SAWATZKY

Manitoba Correspondent  
WINKLER, MAN.

Mennonite Church Canada's resolution on Israel and Palestine took centre stage during an informative workshop in early March at the MC Manitoba annual general meeting. Hosted by co-leaders Byron Rempel-Burkholder and Carolyn Epp-Fransen, the workshop aimed at helping members of the area church better understand what the resolution has given rise to through the Palestine and Israel Resolution Working Group of MC Canada, and what these new efforts mean for local congregations.

For many, a particular concern since the resolution first passed last summer at the MC Canada assembly in Saskatoon has been how it will impact relations between Mennonite, Jewish and Palestinian neighbours.

"First of all, it is very important when we have these conversations to distinguish between Israel, or the Israeli state, and Israeli or Jewish people," Epp-Fransen said, sporting a prayer shawl from the region.

"Political power is fundamentally unbalanced between Israel and Palestine," Rempel-Burkholder said, addressing the issue of Christian Zionism on the oblique, "which makes a conversation about

'balancing' the discussion [on Israel-Palestine] a tricky or sensitive thing. It is important for members of the church to understand that this resolution is a response to the direct call of the Palestinian church for nonviolent response to the Israeli occupation." He added that, for those who may find themselves troubled by the conflict between what they are hearing about Israel's occupation of Palestine and what they read about Israel's role and significance within Scripture, it may be helpful to recall that "there is a difference between optimism and hope."

The Palestine and Israel Working Group was founded in the wake of the national church resolution, "in keeping with the church's practice of communal discernment." At its formation, Tim Froese, executive minister of MC Canada Witness, recruited members through recommendations from local ministers and the movers of the resolution. A seven-member cohort resulted, which has been meeting monthly ever since. Currently, its two primary mandates are public education on the issues central to the resolution, and "networking with Palestinian, Jewish and other church groups working toward peace and justice in Palestine and Israel."

The workshop, along with other local information sessions hosted in the weeks prior, represents a core part of the Working Group's effort to keep the public informed of its work and to secure support for practical action in the near future. Rempel-Burkholder said he "[hopes] the resolution and its followup reflect a process of communal discernment that seeks to be biblically and ecclesially based," one that demonstrates the Working Group is "not just an activist political group."

The workshop had two key strengths:

- **ITS EMPHASIS** on growing a compassionate, critical, grassroots discussion on the needs of this issue such as will give rise to a cohesive and—as much as possible—effective response from the Mennonite church in Canada.
- **ITS PROMOTION** of a cohesive list of practical recommended resources, "Pathways for peace and justice in Palestine and Israel: A congregational study," which Rempel-Burkholder called one of the Working Group's "key early accomplishments." (For more about the resource, see below.) ❧

## /// Briefly noted

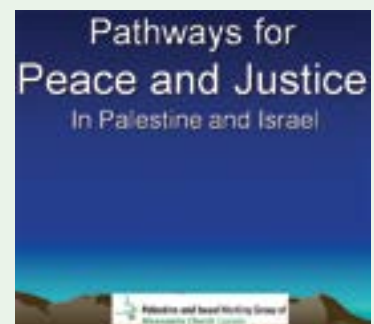
### Palestine and Israel resource material now available online

Delegates attending Mennonite Church Canada's Assembly 2016 in Saskatoon voted by a wide margin in favour of a resolution seeking nonviolent responses to injustices in Palestine and Israel. In followup to that resolution, the Palestine and Israel Resolution Working Group appointed by MC Canada has compiled several resources for congregational study. The materials provide information and perspective on the Palestine and Israel situation that will be useful to groups and individuals interested in further study about their relationship. The package that includes a PowerPoint presentation, a script and discussion guide, and a list of recommended books, studies, videos and links, is available for download at [commonword.ca/go/1032](http://commonword.ca/go/1032).

—Mennonite Church Canada



*Byron Rempel-Burkholder, second from right, co-leads a workshop at the MC Manitoba annual general meeting in early March in Winkler focussing on the Israel-Palestine resolution passed at last summer's national church assembly.*



# Church opens doors to exercise club

*'We're creating space for the community,' says Nutana Park Mennonite pastor*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONNA SCHULZ  
Saskatchewan Correspondent  
SASKATOON

Everyone's welcome, it's free of charge and refreshments are served. Those selling features should attract Mennonites by the dozen. Surprisingly, though, most participants in Nutana Park Mennonite Church's seniors exercise club aren't Mennonites at all.

Five-and-a-half years ago, Walter Wall approached his congregation about starting an exercise program for seniors. The Saskatoon Health Region offered training for volunteer leaders for a program called Forever in Motion. Wall and Arnie Nickel took the training and became the first leaders of the church's Forever in Motion Club.

"There are a hundred clubs across the city, but ours is by far the most active," says Wall, noting that meetings in the church's fellowship hall happen three times a week, year round, even on statutory holidays.

Patrick Preheim, one of the church's pastors, says that initially most of the club's participants were church members. But that changed as people from the community started joining.

Three years ago, June Giles became the group's coordinator. She invited her yoga class to attend, and participation soared. Now the group regularly accommodates 25 to 30 exercisers, with attendance sometimes climbing to more than 35.

Giles says that she and her husband Howard started attending Nutana Park six years ago because "there always seemed to be something going on" at their neighbourhood church. "I didn't know you didn't have to be born Mennonite," she adds with a chuckle. The welcome they received from the church made her readily agree to take on the role of the club's coordinator. "We were welcomed so warmly, it's easy to welcome others," she says.

Today, most participants have no connection with the church other than the exercise group. They represent a broad range in both age and ability level, but, as Giles points out, the group's motto is, "Come when you can; do what you can." Although participation is free, a collection is taken once a year to cover the cost of the coffee and cookies served at the end of each session.

When some participants quit attending because they couldn't hear the trainer's directions, the church purchased a cordless, hands-free microphone for the club to use; the club also contributed to the cost of the microphone. Recognizing that the activities are hard on the flooring, the club also took a collection to help pay for new carpeting in the hall.

The club currently has five volunteer trainers. Alma Elias, a member of Nutana

Park Mennonite, and Elaine Muth, a community participant, share responsibilities with Wall, Nickel and Giles.

"Each trainer adds uniqueness," says Nickel, a retired physician. He uses his medical background as he leads the exercises, but adds, "I don't try to push them." He sees regular exercise as important for both the physical and mental well-being of participants.

Exercises develop flexibility, strength, cardiovascular endurance and balance. Wall says that he finds it rewarding to notice how much some regular participants have improved over the years.

Howard Giles underwent triple bypass heart surgery 18 months ago. He says that when the surgeons learned he participated in regular exercise through the Forever in Motion program, they moved his surgery date ahead because they were confident he would recover well.

Preheim isn't sure whether the program should be considered a ministry of the church but says the club is "lowering the barriers between community and congregational life, and the more ways we do that, the better." He adds, "I think it's ministry insofar as we're creating space for the community, and opening up additional avenues for God to work in people's lives." He also wonders, though, whether "maybe we can learn some things from the way this group conducts itself, such as 'how do we welcome new people?'" ❧



*Retired physician Arnie Nickel, wearing the headset, is one of five volunteer trainers who lead the Forever in Motion Club that meets at Nutana Park Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. For more photos and a video, visit [canadianmennonite.org/fim](http://canadianmennonite.org/fim).*



# Serving up social justice

*Café plans pay-what-you-can—or more—business model*

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent  
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

More than just food will be on the menu when the Abby Eats Café opens here next year. The non-profit eatery, according to founder and proprietor Kyle Dyck, will focus on social justice and food insecurities and offer a culture of welcome for customers of all socioeconomic groups. The unique twist is that this restaurant will be “pay what you can.”

Dyck, who until recently served on the pastoral staff of Immanuel Baptist Church in Abbotsford, was inspired with the idea while watching a TV program featuring a pay-what-you-can restaurant in the U.S. He researched the concept and realized there was no restaurant of this type in western Canada. He and his wife had been wondering where God was leading them next to minister in Abbotsford, and this unique type of café seemed to be the



answer. The Abby Eats enterprise has been in the works since the start of 2017.

This venture sounds like “a crazy idea,” Dyck admits. He has no experience in business and has never worked in the food industry, but in this endeavour he is aligning himself on the core start-up team with people who have those skills. “I do have a

heart to help people,” he says. “Hope and faith are shown through actions.”

Dyck notes that this type of restaurant is not a food-bank giveaway or soup kitchen, however. The core team envisions a place where patrons of any economic level may find a warm, welcoming atmosphere and a tasty, affordable meal. The difference will be in how they pay for that meal, with several options offered:

- **PAY WHAT** you can afford.
- **PAY FULL** amount of suggested meal price.
- **PAY FULL** amount of suggested meal price, plus a little extra to “pay it forward.”
- **GIVE TIME** in service to pay it forward for someone else to enjoy a meal.
- **GIVE TIME** in service to pay for your own meal.

For this model to be sustainable, Dyck estimates that 60 percent of customers will need to pay full menu prices and 20 percent will need to pay extra, with an estimated 20 percent paying less. As a ministry, the café will be run mainly with volunteers, with only a few paid staff in kitchen and management. An estimated \$50,000 in donations will be needed annually to keep the business running.

No venue has been secured yet, but Dyck and his team are hoping for a central location near the downtown Abbotsford core. Furthering the community flavour, they hope to utilize locally grown food as much as possible.

Dyck and his team are counting on the support of churches in the area to get on board with their project. He plans to contact churches in Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Mission to encourage them to support Abby Eats as a “practical way to show the love of Jesus.”

Plans are to open the café early next year, so the remainder of 2017 will be spent on raising the necessary start-up capital of \$75,000. First of these will be a 60-day crowdfunding campaign beginning April 25, with a goal of raising \$25,000. ☘

*The donation link—[chuffed.org/project/abbyeatscafe](http://chuffed.org/project/abbyeatscafe)—will be live as of April 25. More information can be found online at [abbyeatscafe.com](http://abbyeatscafe.com).*



## ☘ Briefly noted

### Maud Lewis painting found at New Hamburg Thrift Store

NEW HAMBURG, ONT.—Maud Lewis, a Nova Scotia painter known as a primitivist or untrained folk painter, died in 1970. In her lifetime, she sold many paintings for \$2 or \$3, but now her works are selling for up to \$22,000. A sharp-eyed volunteer at the New Hamburg Thrift Centre saw the painting; his wife is a collector of Lewis's works and had written several articles about her. Taking the painting from the \$2 bin, where it had languished for some time, it has now been authenticated as a Lewis and will be sold by auction in May. The painting has been at the shop for so long that it is impossible to trace it back to the donor. Serendipitously, a film about Lewis is just being released; showing of the documentary *Maudie* will take place at the Princess Twin Cinema in Waterloo on April 20 at 6:45 p.m., and at a post-show party at the Delta Hotel in Waterloo the bidding on “Portrait of Eddie Barnes and Ed Murphy, Lobster Fishermen, Bay View, N.S.” will begin. Tickets are available online at [mcco.ca/maud-lewis](http://mcco.ca/maud-lewis) or by calling 519-745-8458. The auction will close on May 19. Between those two days, the painting will be on view at the Homer Watson Gallery in Kitchener. All proceeds will go to Mennonite Central Committee Ontario.

—BY DAVE ROGALSKY



# Is there room enough for hope?

*Sawatzky Visiting Scholar asks Canadians what kind of Canada they want*

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
WATERLOO, ONT.

Mary Jo Leddy asked those gathered on a cold Canadian evening in Waterloo what kind of Canada they want to be part of: One that is mean and nasty, with borders open for business but not for refugees? Or a Canada that is just, good, caring and decent, with borders open to invite people to join in the responsibility for this place?

Leddy, the director of Romero House in Toronto, a transition house for refugees, was the 2017 Rodney and Lorna Sawatzky Visiting Scholar at Conrad Grebel University College, who spoke on March 3.

When Romero House was founded, the staff and board did not spend time connecting with their neighbours. This came to a head when they wanted to build, and neighbours protested a simple electrical permit, she said. But when one neighbour reached out to Leddy and other neighbours, relationships began to grow. After 25 years, those initial relationships now result in a large street party annually; donations from neighbours of clothes and furniture; job offers; homes being opened for emergency shelters of newly arrived refugees; and more.

On the 25th anniversary, she said neighbours invited an indigenous dance

and drumming troupe from Northern Ontario to perform on the street as a gift to Romero House. She wondered what it was that brought the staff, refugees and neighbours together, and decided that it was a common responsibility for the street itself, not just the private houses along it.

If any one person or group tried to control the street, it resulted in conflict. When any one person or group refused to take responsibility, the same happened. The indigenous troupe brought home to her that this idea could be extended to the country as a whole. Indigenous people do not claim to own the land but rather invite settlers to shared responsibility for it.

So the question stood. What kind of Canada could the audience imagine during the 150th anniversary of confederation: One in which everyone shares responsibility for the land or one in which some try to control the resources and the borders? One in which new people are invited into shared responsibility or one in which the oldest residents and potential new ones are excluded?

Refugees, she said, come to Canada because they have heard about the generosity and inclusion they hope for. Can Canadians have a similar hope about the land, themselves and potential newcomers? ❧

CONRAD GREBEL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE PHOTO



Mary Jo Leddy, left, poses with Lorna Sawatzky at the 2017 Rodney and Lorna Sawatzky Visiting Scholar Lecture on March 3.

/// Briefly noted

## MCC canned meat helps North Korean

In the isolated country of North Korea, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) canned meat is providing critical nourishment for thousands of people suffering from tuberculosis and hepatitis. In partnership with its U.S.-based partner, Christian Friends of Korea, MCC helps meet up to 50 percent of protein needs in the nearly 30 hospitals, rest homes and clinics the organization serves. The director of a tuberculosis rest home, whose name and location can't be named for security reasons, told MCC that the canned meat is a valuable part of the patients' diets. "For the treatment of TB patients, it is important to have the protein for recovery. Patients really need the canned meat," he said. "The patients really like it very much!" Because access to protein locally is so limited, MCC volunteers in Canada and the U.S. can meat to ship overseas. Last year, more than a quarter of all the meat MCC canned fed patients and those caring for them in North Korea. Between 8,000 and 12,000 patients directly benefit from the canned meat each year.

—Mennonite Central Committee

MCC PHOTO BY JENNIFER DEIBERT



Patients staying in North Korean rest homes, hospitals and clinics who suffer from tuberculosis or hepatitis typically eat a meal like this, with MCC canned meat boiled into a soup.

## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

# 'A season of change and a search for vitality'

*MC Alberta reports on a year of blessing and challenge*

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent

DEWINTON, ALTA.

**B**oth challenge and blessing were in evidence at the 88th annual Mennonite Church Alberta delegate sessions on March 17 and 18 at Trinity Mennonite Church in DeWinton.

In comments preceding the business session, moderator Dan Jack was clear in naming some of MC Alberta's challenges for the coming year: "[We are] expecting a difficult year and a deficit budget. The economy and the [Being a Faithful Church (BFC)] process has had some impact with involvement."

Calgary Chinese and Vietnamese Mennonite churches both withdrew from the area church in 2016, while Edmonton Vietnamese Mennonite Church has indicated it will withdraw at the end of 2017. The BFC decision on same-sex relationships at the MC Canada assembly in Saskatoon last year played a part in all three withdrawals.

Several members of the Calgary Vietnamese church addressed last month's gathering, expressing blessings and best wishes, and asking that congregations remember to pray for each other as everyone seeks to serve Christ faithfully.

A letter from the Edmonton Vietnamese congregation, read aloud by Jack, expressed a similar tone of blessing and love. Jack and area church minister Tim Wiebe-Neufeld reported having had a very good conversation with the Edmonton leaders prior to their vote to withdraw.

Ev Buhr, president of Alberta Women in Mission, announced the folding of the group after 69 years, due to dwindling numbers. "Our women's groups are encouraged to continue to support Mennonite Women Canada," she said. "We



PHOTO BY TIM WIEBE-NEUFELD

*Leng Thang of Calgary Chin Christian Church addresses the MC Alberta annual delegate sessions on March 18.*

are working with the [provincial] executive on a plan for women's ministry in Alberta." The continuation of an annual women's retreat is one project that is expected to continue.

Alberta's current economic difficulties and the unknowns surrounding a new structure for MC Canada made budgeting a challenge for 2017. While the financial report for 2016 showed a surplus of \$13,200, this was due to a few months with no area church minister, as well as a \$20,000 contribution from MC Eastern Canada toward costs of the Future Directions process. Giving from member churches and individuals was down by just over \$38,000, and the projected deficit for 2017 is \$33,800.

In its report, the Finance Committee wrote: "We feel that since this is a transition

year for the area and national churches, it is not the right time to make significant shifts in our programs."

The Executive Committee will add fundraising to its agenda in efforts to increase individual donations in 2017, while programs such as Camp Valaqua and the North Edmonton ministry to local Muslims will continue to fundraise as well.

Camp Valaqua came in exactly on budget and reported that much-needed kitchen renovations were made possible through a donation in memory of Ingrid Janssen, camp co-manager who passed away in 2015. A water-filtration system will be installed before summer camping begins, and a complete washroom renovation is planned for the fall. Valaqua reported a slight decrease in camper numbers for 2016, citing the economy and a computer "hack" of its information website for the decline.

Seventy percent of last year's campers claimed no church affiliation, a record number for Valaqua. Director Jon Olfert reported: "Our ministry opportunities continue to be crystal clear. . . . We cherish this opportunity to share the teaching of Jesus with children from such a diverse background."

The installation and blessing of Tim Wiebe-Neufeld as area church minister was led by Paul Bergen, chair of the Congregational Leadership Committee.

Two "home-sourced" keynote speakers blessed the sessions with stories from their ministries.

Donna Entz, MC Alberta staff person for the North Edmonton ministry, spoke about living faithfully both locally and globally. "If we are to share the light of Jesus, we have to be as relevant in our day as Jesus was in his day," Entz said.

Pastor Leng Thang of Calgary Chin Christian Church spoke of unity in Christ. The topic is poignant for him, as his Mennonite congregation is made up of people from six different denominational backgrounds. "Church is not the building," he said. "It is our confession, our life for Christ, our togetherness."

At the close of the sessions, Jack said, "Now we enter a season of change and a search for vitality." ❧



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID MARTIN/FRIARS' BRIAR



**Mennonite-skipped teams swept the podium at this year's Friars' Briar, held in Victoria, B.C., last month. The gold medal-winning team, pictured, was skipped by David Martin, third from left, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada's executive minister; the rest of the team was made up of Lutherans, from left to right: Wendell Grahman, Terry Delion and Wayne Schroeder. The silver medal-winning team was skipped by Sieg Wall, a Mennonite Brethren lay minister from Winnipeg, and the bronze medal-winning team was skipped by Pam Bartel, the student services administrative assistant at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont.**

 **ONLINE NOW!**  
at [canadianmennonite.org](http://canadianmennonite.org)

**Living with a carbon footprint conundrum**

John Longhurst considers the conundrum of being concerned about climate change but being reliant on fossil fuels.  
[canadianmennonite.org/carbon-footprint](http://canadianmennonite.org/carbon-footprint)



**'I'm pretty earnest about living responsibly'**

Is caring for creation a faith practice? For Brenda MacDonald—and her church—the answer is most definitely yes.  
[canadianmennonite.org/living-responsibly](http://canadianmennonite.org/living-responsibly)



**Catalysing mission**


Bernard Sejour's faith journey led him to support and encourage mission and ministry in Ottawa and Quebec.  
[canadianmennonite.org/encourage-mission](http://canadianmennonite.org/encourage-mission)



**'I like how we roll'**

For Christina Bartel Barkman and her son Cody, switching from a car to scooters has pumped new energy and insights into their morning commute.  
[canadianmennonite.org/scooter-commute](http://canadianmennonite.org/scooter-commute)





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## GOD AT WORK IN US

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

Reading books  
in prison

BY MARGARET LOEWEN REIMER

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

Seven years ago, two friends and I from Rockway Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., agreed to begin a book club with inmates in the local Grand Valley Institution for Women, a federal prison. Except for breaks in the summer, every month since then we have made our way through prison security and along a maze of corridors to a room where we are joined by a dozen or so women eager to talk about the latest work we have read. We read mostly fiction and some memoirs.

Favourite books the first year were *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls, *The Cellist of Sarajevo* by Steven Galloway, and *The Book of Negroes* by Lawrence Hill (probably the most popular book over the years). Hill visited our club the next year, impressing the inmates with his interest in their own writing. Other authors who have visited our book club include Marina Nemat (*Prisoner of Tehran*) and Camilla Gibb (*Sweetness in the Belly*).

This year, books evoking lively discussion were *A House in the Sky* by Alberta writer Amanda Lindhout, and *Indian Horse* by Canadian indigenous writer Richard Wagamese.

Our book club is part of a network called Book Clubs for Inmates, founded in 2009 by Carol Finlay, an Anglican priest and former teacher. Beginning in a Kingston, Ont., prison, the organization now sponsors 26 clubs in federal prisons from Nova Scotia to B.C. The program is supported by donations. The books, which the inmates can keep, come through First Book Canada, a non-profit organization that connects



publishers with community programs.

The book club expands not only the world of the inmates. As a relatively sheltered Mennonite woman, reading these books together with inmates continues to stretch and surprise me. The women speak frankly and feel free to disagree with one another and the author; some of our best discussions have concerned books they liked the least. Probably the most moving session was an evening with Elvira Toews, mother of author Miriam Toews. The book was *All My Puny Sorrows*, and

Elvira's generous, warm spirit opened the way to an emotional discussion with painful disclosures.

At one of the fundraisers for Book Clubs for Inmates, a former inmate said, "I quit school at Grade 8 and never read books. Who would have thought I would be in prison reading books like *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*?" Most of all, he was proud of joining the ranks of those who have read "the classics," such as novels by Charles Dickens. At another event, a former inmate read a moving poem he had written entitled "I was in prison, and you visited me."

At one of our book club meetings, we asked members why they like to read. "It takes me out of my own misery and puts me into someone else's," said one woman. Most agreed that they enjoy the escape into other worlds. "Reading makes me free to be anyone I want," said another.

They especially like feisty, resilient female protagonists who overcome great difficulties in their lives. ❧

For further information, visit [bookclubsforinmates.com](http://bookclubsforinmates.com) and interviews with Carol Finlay on YouTube.



## Briefly noted

## EMU alumnus among confirmed dead in Democratic Republic of Congo

Michael J. "M.J." Sharp, a 2005 graduate of Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., and a United Nations official kidnapped with five others in the Congo two weeks ago, has been confirmed as deceased by the Congolese government, according to Reuters on March 28. The bodies of two Caucasians, a male and female, were found in the Central Kasai region, where Sharp and a female UN colleague went missing. A third body, later confirmed as their Congolese interpreter, was also found. "We are saddened to hear of this development, and our prayers go out to M.J. and his family, as well as to the families of others devastated by violence in the [Congo]," said EMU president Susan Schultz Huxman. Sharp was part of a UN panel of experts investigating ongoing civil conflicts in the country at the time of his disappearance. Violence had escalated recently, with the murder of 42 police officers tasked with fighting a regional militia known as Kamuina Nsapu. In January 2015, he spoke to National Public Radio in the U.S. about serving alongside the Congolese Protestant Council of Churches; their efforts to persuade rebel fighters to lay down arms had convinced some 1,600 fighters to do just that.

—Eastern Mennonite University



Michael  
'M.J.' Sharp

## FOCUS ON BOOKS &amp; RESOURCES

## BOOK REVIEW

# Mennonites in Vietnam conflicted during war

*A Vietnam Presence: Mennonites in Vietnam during the American War.*

Luke S. Martin. Masthof Press, 2016, 584 pages.

REVIEWED BY BARB DRAPER

BOOKS & RESOURCES EDITOR

As the government of South Vietnam teetered on the brink of collapse in the spring of 1975, Mennonite missionaries living in Saigon agonized over whether to leave or stay. In the end, mothers and children left the country, and only a few men stayed to experience the communist takeover.



struggled to know how much to cooperate with the U.S. military. In the early years, it often helped distribute food for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and it felt natural to work with the army's medical staff. As the U.S. increased its military presence

through the 1960s, MCC workers were more and more uncomfortable accepting assistance from, or being identified with, U.S. troops.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination had been working at spreading Christianity in Vietnam since 1893, and early Mennonite missionaries cooperated with the Alliance mission programs and the broader Protestant church in Vietnam.

As U.S. military intervention increased, Mennonites grew more concerned about the American patriotism expressed by some missionaries. Seeing how the Vietnamese people were suffering due to the ongoing war, Mennonites tried to distance themselves from U.S. policy.

One Sunday morning in 1966, Doris Janzen Longacre was filling in as the guest organist at a worship service at which many Americans were present. She was so repulsed by the glorification of American nationalism and militarism that she walked out after the second verse of a hymn.

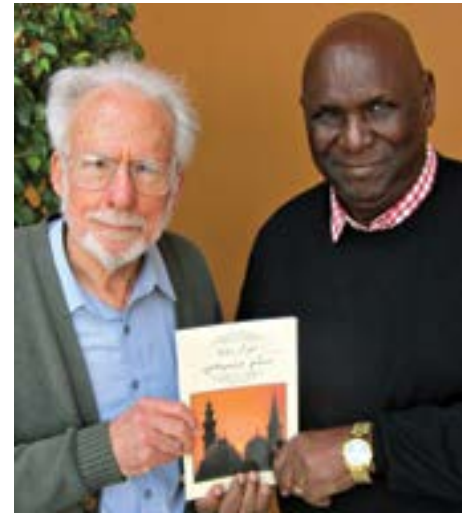
The MCC and mission workers in Vietnam also helped to change the attitudes of Mennonites in North America.

Until the mid-20th century, Mennonites had been taught to pray for the government but not to interfere, but in the 1960s, as Mennonites in North America heard the passionate anti-war protests of those who saw the effects of the war first-hand, they began to speak out about government policy.

*A Vietnam Presence* is not difficult to read, except that the many details are almost overwhelming. This is a large book both in the number of pages and the size of the pages. Anyone who shared some of Martin's experiences will not find the exhaustive detail oppressive, but this is not a book to read in one sitting.

Most compelling are Martin's honest reflections about the challenges of serving God with integrity while U.S. bombs were dropping all over Vietnam. Serving as a Mennonite missionary in that context required great courage. ❧

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANDRES PRINS



**Since 1980, A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue by David W. Shenk, left, and Badru D. Kateregga has been helping Christians and Muslims cultivate mutual understanding. On March 15, prominent Egyptian Muslim and Christian leaders gathered at All Saints' Cathedral in Cairo to celebrate the official launch of the Arabic translation of the influential book.**

Luke S. Martin intended to return to Saigon after a short visit to Bangkok to meet with a representative of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and to see his family, but the end came sooner than expected, and returning in time was not possible. He believed that staying through the chaos of revolution was important so that the fledgling Mennonite church in Vietnam would not feel abandoned.

Martin has written a comprehensive and detailed history of the work done by Mennonites in Vietnam between 1954 and 1975. His research is thorough and he quotes from many letters and other documents. The maps and photos are helpful in telling the story.

The roots of the Mennonite church in Vietnam go back to the 1950s, when MCC began its relief work there (1954) and when the first Mennonite missionaries from North America arrived (1956). Luke and Mary Martin served in Vietnam from 1962 until 1975, mostly working as missionaries, but Luke also supervised the work of MCC during some of those years.

MCC in Vietnam had many unsettling moments through the war years, as it

## FOCUS ON BOOKS &amp; RESOURCES

## BOOK REVIEW

## Getting unfrozen about climate change

*Unfreeze Yourself: Five Ways to Take Action on Climate Change Now.*  
By Christine Penner Polle. Outskirts Press, 2015. 214 pages.

REVIEWED BY DAVE ROGALSKY

EASTERN CANADA CORRESPONDENT

Christine Penner Polle knows well the warning in Al Gore's presentations and his 2006 movie, *An Inconvenient Truth*. It is possible to move from denial to despair in regard to climate change, both of which result in nothing being done and people being frozen in place.

First, she had to be unfrozen herself. Climate change and its connection to the burning of fossil fuel seemed to be just too big and complicated. But as she became convinced of the science, she also began to read about hope. Humanity had



faced other issues and, together, could face this one, too.

To this end, she has peppered *Unfreeze Yourself: Five Ways to Take Action on Climate Change Now* with stories of hope. The third section is a call for readers to become heroes on a daring

adventure to grow hope for themselves and others.

The five methods referred to in the book's subtitle are all ones that she has used herself:

- **IN "TALK therapy:** Changing the climate conversation," she focusses on each person speaking to five others weekly about climate change, giving helpful advice, such as not arguing science with people, and using "I" in speaking and not an accusatory "you."
- **IN "GROUP therapy:** Connecting with others," she writes that each person needs others who believe or know the same thing to keep on going in the face of many who will throw up anecdotal tidbits and false news as "deal-breaker" facts.
- **IN "NATURE therapy:** Spending time with Mother Nature," Polle expresses her conviction that people do not care enough about the planet because they do not spend enough time in nature, both enjoying the good that is there, or seeing the changes that are happening at an increasing rate.
- **IN "SCIENCE matters:** Know the consensus," she states that "97 percent of climate scientists agree, based on the evidence, that global warming is happening and is human-caused." Polle points to this overwhelming consensus and encourages readers to simply hold to the facts, instead of arguing against boorish references to unscientific opinion given by non-scientists on unreliable blogs or websites.
- **IN "KEEP calm and price carbon:** A solution big enough for the problem," Polle focusses on this as the solution, noting that the problem is bigger than individual lifestyle changes can solve. Governments, which depend on science to do their planning and work, can influence the market to reduce how much carbon is spewed into the atmosphere, she writes, favouring a revenue-neutral carbon tax herself.

### /// Briefly noted

#### Institute of Mennonite Studies releases J. Lawrence Burkholder memoir

ELKHART, IND.—A new memoir published by the Institute of Mennonite Studies traces the development of former Goshen (Ind.) College president J. Lawrence Burkholder's thought as it intersected with the events of his life. Entitled *Recollections of a Sectarian Realist: A Mennonite Life in the Twentieth Century*, the memoir is based on interviews that C. Arnold Snyder conducted with Burkholder in 2005. Snyder, who is professor emeritus of history at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont., shared about the process of creating the book and reflected on what he had learned about Burkholder at a March 7 book release celebration at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. The memoir draws on Burkholder's Mennonite upbringing in a small Pennsylvania town and his experiences of pastoring in upstate New York; doing relief work in India and China; pursuing graduate studies at Princeton (N.J.) Theological Seminary; teaching at Goshen (Ind.) College and Harvard Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass.; engaging in civil rights activism; and serving as president of Goshen College (1971-84). Burkholder's daughter Myrna and Snyder co-edited the memoir.

—Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary



The book has helpful hints throughout on working on climate change, including lists of organizations and websites, plus an appendix filled with media of various kinds that help inform and connect readers who want more information. ///



# Spring 2017 List of Books & Resources

## Theology, Spirituality

*Anabaptist Essentials: Ten Signs of a Unique Christian Faith.* Palmer Becker. Herald Press, 2017, 182 pages.



Becker has written a concise explanation of the core values of the Mennonite/Anabaptist faith, using the three central points of Jesus, community and reconciliation. He provides a fresh look at what Mennonites believe, using clear and simple language. This book is very suitable for small-group study and Christian-education settings. The 12 chapters include discussion questions.

*Dancing with Elephants: Mindfulness Training for Those Living With Dementia, Chronic Illness or an Aging Brain.* Jarem Sawatsky. Privately published, 2017, 148 pages.



Facing his own degenerative disease, Sawatsky writes to encourage others facing a difficult prognosis. Rather than fighting the disease, he advises learning to dance with the fears and limitations. Using many examples from his own life, he encourages everyone to embrace life with love and compassion. The book is also available as an eBook on Amazon.

*Is God a Scientist? Religious Views of Science.* Daryl Culp. Privately published, 2016, 196 pages.



Culp explores a variety of questions about the intersection between religion and science, arguing that they approach reality from different perspectives. With a PhD in theology, Culp considers how history,

biology, physics, psychology and sociology approach these questions. The book is available at [createspace.com/6667298](http://createspace.com/6667298) in paperback or eBook format.

*The Leviathan Factor.* Lawrence E. Burkholder. Wipf and Stock, 2017, 368 pages.

Burkholder, a Mennonite pastor, has written about science and the paranormal. Using the term "Leviathan," he argues that the origin of evil is a cosmic being, often referred to as Satan.

*Living the Anabaptist Story: A Guide to Early Beginnings with Questions for Today.* Lisa D. Weaver and J. Denny Weaver. Cascadia Publishing House, 2015, 114 pages.



Designed to be used in new-member classes or other congregational study groups, this book outlines the history of the early Anabaptists, inviting readers to reflect on what the story means for our lives today.

*Philippians: Believers Church Bible Commentary.* Gordon Zerbe. Herald Press, 351 pages.

This commentary provides detailed explanatory notes for Philippians, including the context in which the words were written. The introduction and essays at the end also provide helpful tools to understand the text. Zerbe is academic vice-president of Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg.

*Prayers for a Simpler Life: Meditations from the Heart of a Mennonite Mother.* Faith Sommers. Herald Press, 2017, 200 pages.

This book offers 13 weeks of meditations based on Scripture to be used as daily devotions, primarily geared for women. Also included are short prayers and a daily question for personal reflection. The writer is from a plain/traditionalist Mennonite group.

*Re-Imagining the Church: Implications of Being a People in the World.* Robert J. Suderman. Wipf and Stock, 2016, 242 pages.



In this collection of essays, "Jack" Suderman reflects on what it means to be the church. He expresses some complex ideas, but also has some practical suggestions for congregations and leaders as they identify and carry out the mission of the church.

*(Re)union: The Good News of Jesus for Seekers, Saints and Sinners.* Bruxy Cavey. Herald Press, 2017, 228 pages.



Using lots of anecdotes and references to modern life, Cavey takes a fresh look at the gospel. Writing both to spiritual seekers and to Christians looking for deeper faith, he considers the true meaning of sin and salvation, and what it means to say "Jesus is Lord."

*Smart Compassion: How to Stop 'Doing Outreach' and Start Making Change.* Wesley Furlong. Herald Press, 2017, 176 pages.



Using stories from his own experience, Furlong writes about how churches can change their neighbourhoods through "smart compassion." He outlines the wise strategies that he believes Christians need to use to bring Jesus' love to their neighbourhoods. Now working for the Evana network, Furlong was a Mennonite pastor in Florida for many years.

*Still Daring to Hope.* John Regehr. CMU Press, 2016, 164 pages.

Using sermons from his days as a Mennonite Brethren pastor, Regehr presents biblically based devotional material that

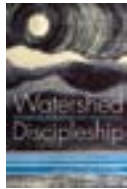
## FOCUS ON BOOKS & RESOURCES

reflects on situations where we need hope in our everyday lives. He includes some poems and reflections by his wife Mary. Regehr is a former professor at CMU.

*A University of the Church for the World: Essays in Honour of Gerald Gerbrandt.* Paul Dyck and Harry J. Huebner, eds. CMU Press, 2016, 290 pages.

The essays in this collection all ponder the question of what it means to be a Mennonite university. How does involvement with the academic world benefit religion and the church? The contributors do a good job of considering all aspects of these questions, making the case for an institution like Canadian Mennonite University.

*Watershed Discipleship: Reinhabiting Bioregional Faith and Practice.* Ched Myers, ed. Cascade Books, Wipf and Stock, 2016, 246 pages.



This collection of essays takes seriously the climate crisis facing human civilization, examining what Myers calls "ecological theology and practice." The contributors write from a wide variety of perspectives, offering ideas on how to live in a way that is sustainable and promotes environmental justice.

### History

*A Book of Remembrance: Mennonites in Arkadak and Zentral, 1908-1941.* Peter Letkemann. Privately published by Old Oak Publishing, 2016, 462 pages.

Letkemann has traced the history of Mennonite families and individuals who lived in specific settlements in Russia. These communities, established from 1908 to 1910, felt the effects of the 1917 revolution and were completely scattered after 1941. The book is available from the Mennonite Heritage Centre in Winnipeg.

*Emmanuel, God With Us: As I Lived It.* Robert Witmer. Privately published, 2016, 188 pages.

Witmer's memoir tells of his growing-up years on a farm in Ontario, his struggle to afford college while supporting a family, and his years serving as a missionary in France and Quebec. To order, contact robwit@golden.net.

*Recollections of a Sectarian Realist: A Mennonite Life in the Twentieth Century.* J. Lawrence Burkholder. Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2017, 260 pages.

This memoir is based on interviews that C. Arnold Snyder conducted with Burkholder in 2005 and is edited by Burkholder's daughter Myrna and Snyder. A former president of Goshen College, Burkholder passed away in 2010. As suggested by the title, Burkholder was known for his critique of the traditional Mennonite point of view.

*A Vietnam Presence: Mennonites in Vietnam During the American War.*

Luke S. Martin. Masthof Press, Morgantown, Pa., 2016, 584 pages.



The author served as a Mennonite missionary in Saigon, South Vietnam, during the 1960s and writes a first-hand account of the development of a Mennonite church there. He also describes the challenges of distributing aid through Mennonite Central Committee while trying not to be identified with the U.S. military presence. The book can be ordered at orders@masthof.com or by calling 610-286-0258.

### Other Books

*Beloved Amish and Mennonite Quilts: A Coloring Book.* Herald Press, 2016.

This meditative colouring book uses many traditional quilt designs with accompanying Scripture passages and information about the quilt patterns. It comes with perforated high-quality paper.



*When Did Everybody Else Get So Old? Indignities, Compromises and the Unexpected Grace of Midlife.* Jennifer Grant. Herald Press, 2017, 187 pages.

Exploring what it means to be in mid-life, the author uses personal experience to find some humour and insight into the challenges of growing older.

*Where the Truth Lies: Selected Essays.* Rudy Wiebe. NeWest Press, 2016, 312 pages.

In these essays and speeches, Wiebe

reflects on a variety of topics, including writing, the meaning of words and the controversy within the Mennonite Brethren Church sparked by his first novel, *Peace Shall Destroy Many*.

*Yours, Mine, Ours: Unravelling the Doctrine of Discovery.* Cheryl Woelk and Steve Heinrichs. Mennonite Church Canada, 2016, 165 pages.

This special issue of *Intotemak*, the publication of Mennonite Church Canada's indigenous relations department, contains a wide variety of contributions reflecting on what it means to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery. It also includes many photos, a study guide and suggestions for further reading.

### Resources

*Digging for Treasure: Parables Revealed.* MennoMedia, 2017.

This year's Vacation Bible School curriculum features the parables of Jesus. It is available as a starter kit or a full boxed set. Each day's theme is centred on a Bible story and comes with suggested songs, stories, drama and children's activities.



*Upside Down Living: Sabbath* by Anita Amstutz.

*Upside Down Living: Technology* by Becca Lachman.

*Upside Down Living: Money* by Leonard Dow.

*Upside Down Living: Identity and Aging* by Eleanor Snyder. Herald Press, 2017.

These are the first four of a six-part Bible study series designed to get Christians thinking about important issues in their lives. They are intended for small-group Bible studies or adult Sunday school classes.

### Video

*The Last Objectors.* Andrew Wall. Refuge 31 Films, 2016, 45-minute documentary.

This documentary tells the story of Canada's conscientious objectors during the Second World War, primarily told through the voices of the COs themselves, who reflect on why they chose alternative service rather than going to war, and reminisce about what life was like 75 years ago. To arrange a

screening, contact Conrad Stoesz at archives.mennonitechurch.ca.

Many of the featured titles on the book list are available for purchase or to borrow from CommonWord Book Store and Resource Centre in Winnipeg. For more information, visit [commonword.ca](http://commonword.ca), or call 204-594-0527 or toll-free 1-877-846-1593.



—Compiled by Barb Draper  
Books & Resources Editor

### /// Briefly noted

#### Connecting quiet times with God to the rest of life

Quiet times with God can feel disconnected from the rest of an overflowing day. Faith Sommers, a conservative Mennonite mother, wife and columnist for *Ladies Journal*, a publication for Amish and Mennonite women, has written a new book, *Prayers for a Simpler Life: Meditations From the Heart of a Mennonite Mother*. The book contains 90 devotionals for women to help them connect with a simpler life. Sommers firmly believes that devotions should affect how Christians live their lives. “When I realize that God knows all about everything, I learn to trust in his grace and seek to obtain his wisdom,” she explains. The devotional also includes prayers, journal prompts, and ideas for how to simplify life and strengthen faith. Above all, the author hopes *Prayers for a Simpler Life* guides readers toward a deeper commitment to the way of Jesus. Aimed at serious Christians who want to draw closer to God and actively serve Jesus, the book strives to put readers back in touch with many basics of Christian living.

—MennoMedia

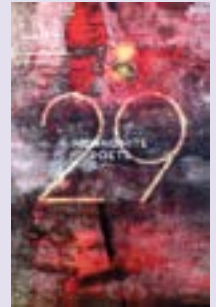


### /// Book review brief

#### Culture-shaping poets tackle a formidable battery of themes and styles

A fresh anthology by the Mennonite Literary Society, *29 Mennonite Poets*, is a welcome new frame for stand-out Canadian poetry. For years, Canadian poets have battled the challenges of a national literary climate that almost universally favours prose. In the world of Mennonite literature, this has meant that, while celebrated novelists like Miriam Toews and David Bergen steadily rise in fame and influence, their poet colleagues must fight hard for exposure. Many exceptional poets and poems languish for years in small, highly localized collections, newspapers and magazines. However, thanks to this broad-reaching and deeply tasteful new anthology, collected by the publishing team behind *Rhubarb* magazine, there is finally one single volume to which invested readers of Canadian, Mennonite or just plain poetry can turn. *29 Mennonite Poets* brings together important, culture-shaping poets from across Canada and the U.S., gathering into a communion a formidable battery of themes and styles. Di Brandt, Sally Ito, Audrey Poetcker, David Waltner-Toews, Julia Spicher-Kasdorf and two dozen others invite readers to run the gauntlet from questions of church and faith, sex and gender politics, and identity and racism, through to family life, nature, history, peace, violence, love, grief and more. Whether reading in the classroom, from the pulpit or in the bedroom, *29 Mennonite Poets* is an invaluable new resource. To order, visit [bit.ly/29-mennonite-poets](http://bit.ly/29-mennonite-poets).

—REVIEWED BY BETH DOWNEY SAWATZKY



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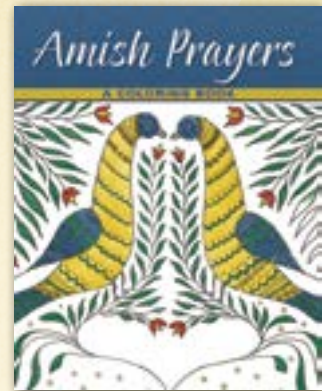


### Prayers for a Simpler Life

Meditations from the Heart of a Mennonite Mother

Plainspoken Devotion Series, Book 1

In this 90-day devotional for women, plain Mennonite mother and wife Faith Sommers helps connect your moments with the Lord to the rest of your life.



### Amish Prayers

A Coloring Book

Spend time in prayer with this interactive and meditative coloring book of Amish prayers. Each prayer comes from a centuries-old Amish prayer book that the Amish and Mennonites still use for family devotions and personal prayer. Coloring pages illustrated with fraktur, a Pennsylvania Dutch folk art.



### Upside-Down Living (A Bible Study series)

#### Money

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#### Identity and Aging

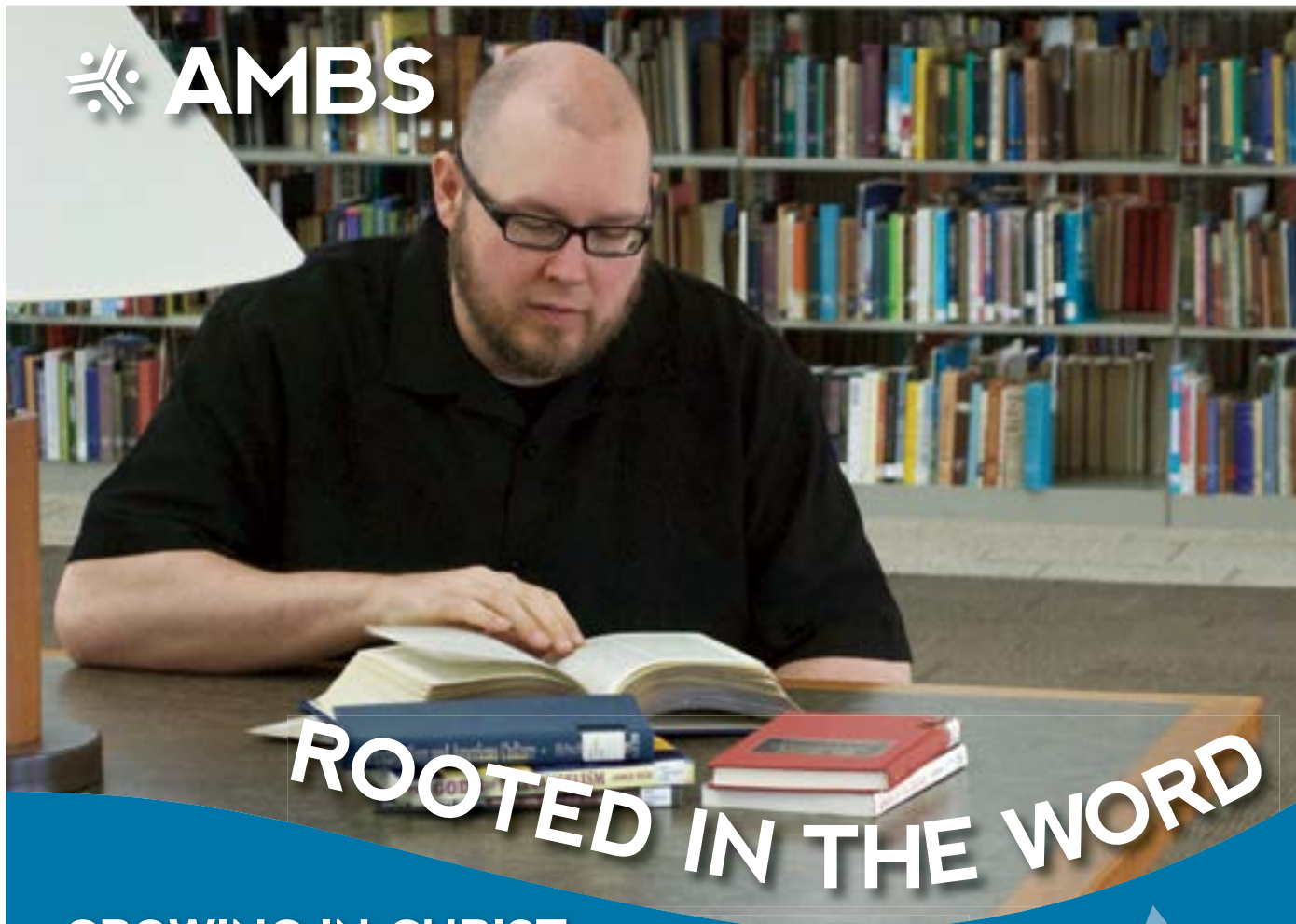
We get older every day, and as we age our lives change. In moving from youth to young adulthood, from middle-aged to retiree, we discover that life marches on even as our situations and identities continue to change. This study explores how we can age faithfully and gracefully, embracing ourselves through each phase of life.

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# EMU prof an award-winning director

Story and Photo by Eastern Mennonite University


A documentary has been garnering international awards for Zelkjo Mirkovic, professor in the visual and communication arts department at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, Va. *The Promise*, filmed over four years, features French winemakers who move to Rogljevo, Serbia, to revive the ancient tradition of

Serbian winemaking.

At EMU since the fall of 2016, Mirkovic teaches video camera and non-linear editing, narrative video and social media applications. He is completing his PhD dissertation at the University of Vienna, Austria, in the media and communication department on the topic of media and war.


Since its release last August, *The Promise* has won Best Cultural Documentary at the Eugene (Oregon) International Film Festival; Best Cinematography Documentary Feature at the Red Dirt Film Festival in Oklahoma; and Best Documentary at the Mediterranean Film Festival (Winter Edition) in Italy. The film is also an official selection of the Queens (New

*(Continued on page 30)*



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# Be not afraid

*Manitoba artists face their fears at annual Mennofolk art exhibition*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY AARON EPP  
 Young Voices Editor  
 WINNIPEG

**“F**ear[full]: We shall [not] be consumed” was the theme at this year’s Mennofolk, an annual event that celebrates art and music made by people associated with the Mennonite community in southern Manitoba.

More than 30 artists submitted artwork to the event, held on March 25 at X-Cues, a café and lounge in Winnipeg’s West End. Local bands Rosebud and Darling Twig performed.

Given the current political climate in North America, fear seemed like an appropriate theme for the show, said Jami Reimer, a member of the event’s planning committee. “In the face of fear, arts are one of the most powerful modes of conversation we have at our disposal,” the 26-year-old said. “Investing in that when we’re feeling afraid brings communities together, and it’s just plain healthy.”

*(Continued on page 28)*



*This piece by Stephen Kang takes its name from two quotations from the 2005 film Batman Begins: ‘Took quite a fall, didn’t we, Master Bruce?’ and, ‘And why do we fall, Bruce? So we can learn to pick ourselves back up again.’*



*‘To a litany for survival & lisa’ by Laura Tait. In an artist statement, Tait said that this piece is a response to her relationship and experience with the poem, ‘A Litany for Survival’ by feminist and civil rights activist Audre Lorde.*



*An acrylic painting by Jen Kornelsen. In an artist statement, Kornelsen said that she ‘comes from a family of creative people and has always enjoyed adding beauty to whatever blank space she has.’*

(Continued from page 27)

Reimer added that part of what she enjoys about Mennofolk is that it gives people who are not professional artists an avenue to showcase their work. "All kinds

of people have hobbies and modes of expression that maybe they keep sequestered outside of their real life," she said. "This is a place to invite those voices to come together and celebrate it." ❧



A piece by Haeon (Grace) Kang, who is an immigrant from South Korea.



'Crafty Minions' by Andrew Hiebert. 'The work is based on the lure and potential dangers in travel, adventure and pushing the boundaries, with an assumption of God's presence throughout,' Hiebert said in his artist statement.

For more artwork, visit [canadianmennonite.org/mennofolk-2017](http://canadianmennonite.org/mennofolk-2017).



'Vague Orange Man' by Jon Owen; acrylic paint on canvas, 2017. Owen is an American studying art in Winnipeg. 'A Mennonite by choice instead of culture, I'm inspired by the low peaceable folk's smoldering action,' he said in a statement.

PHOTO BY AARON EPP



Erin Froese is co-organizing MC Canada's upcoming Pilgrimage for Indigenous Rights.

## A personal pilgrimage

Young woman's interest in indigenous rights leads her to co-organize MC Canada trek

BY AARON EPP  
Young Voices Editor

For Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) student Erin Froese, taking a break from studying in the classroom has allowed her to pursue her interest in

healing broken relationships between indigenous and settler peoples.

Feeling exhausted when her semester ended this past December, Froese

decided to take the current semester off. That meant the 21-year-old environmental studies major was able to say yes when she was offered an internship at Mennonite Church Canada to co-organize the upcoming Pilgrimage for Indigenous Rights with Steve Heinrichs, director of indigenous relations.

Starting on April 23 in Kitchener, Ont., 30 to 50 walkers will journey 600 kilometres, arriving in Ottawa on May 14. MC Canada is co-planning the event with Indigenous Peoples Solidarity of Christian Peacemaker Teams. The goal of the pilgrimage is to raise awareness about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which the Canadian government accepted in the spring of 2016.

"I am excited to have the space to walk alongside other people, to hear the stories of people I'll be walking alongside and to hear the stories of the land I'll be walking on," says Froese, who attends Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

She adds that the pilgrimage will allow her to physically respond to the shifts her thinking has undergone in recent years at camp and at CMU in relation to topics like indigenous-settler relations and land rights. "I'm looking forward to this movement of my body alongside this movement of my thoughts and where my heart is going," she says.

For Froese, who is helping organize the pilgrimage as part of an independent studies project at CMU, the work is personal. Her late grandfather, Ike Froese, was a predecessor to Heinrichs in his work with indigenous peoples.

Froese has also spent the last 12 summers as a camper and then a staff member at Camp Koinonia, one of three camps that belong to Mennonite Church Manitoba's Camps with Meaning ministry.

In 2015, she learned that Camp Koinonia, located three hours west of Winnipeg in Turtle Mountain Provincial Park, is situated on Crown land that is sacred to the Dakota peoples.

Working as the camp's nature instructor at the time, Froese decided to research the history of the land the camp occupies. Her aunt, who lives in nearby Boissevain, connected her to an historian and a Dakota

elder, who travelled to the camp to meet with Froese and the rest of the leadership team prior to the start of camp. The two men spoke to Froese and her colleagues about the importance of the land to the Dakota peoples, and the damage and brokenness they felt being separated from it.

"That was a big realization for me," Froese says. "I struggled with these feelings for a while, knowing that I had the privilege of being at this place that was important and sacred to me, at the expense of someone else's relationship with that spot."

"That's kind of when these topics of connection to land, land rights and indigenous territories became more personal and more real in my life," she adds.

Helping to organize the Pilgrimage for Indigenous Rights, which is intentionally ecumenical, has been a positive experience so far, she says. She's learned about how different organizations work and what it takes to mobilize communities, as well as how denominations differ in their approaches to indigenous-settler relations.

"It's a very different sort of learning than I've done in university classrooms—a more active and engaged sort of learning," she says.

Heinrichs says that he appreciates working with Froese.

"[She is] someone who cares about matters of peace and justice and doing right . . . so there's a solidity about her," Heinrichs says, adding that he feels honoured that she has chosen to engage with the pilgrimage in the way that she has. "She's doing this for independent study, but it's more than that. I know [she's doing it] because she cares deeply about these things. She's putting a lot of time into this."

The goal of the pilgrimage is to engage churches in conversation about UNDRIP, explore why it matters, the hope it offers and how Christians can respond. Local communities are invited to attend conversation circles en route.

"I hope the pilgrimage will stir the church to work on this relationship with indigenous peoples, which has so much brokenness," Froese says. "We have to work on the slow process of healing these wounds that run really deep within this country, within this land." ❧

CAMPS WITH MEANING PHOTO



*Topics like indigenous-settler relations and land rights issues became real for Erin Froese, middle, while working at Mennonite Church Manitoba's Camp Koinonia.*

## PILGRIMAGE FOR INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIN FROESE



*Historian James A.M. Ritchie is one of two people who taught Erin Froese the history of the land that Camp Koinonia sits on.*

Promotional Supplement

**(Continued from page 26)**

York) World Film Festival. In March, the French and Serbian embassies in Washington, D.C., co-hosted a screening during the D.C. Francophonie Cultural Festival.

Mirkovic's films have won 45 international awards, have been featured at more than

200 international film festivals, and have been broadcast over TV stations throughout Europe, the U.S. and Asia.

*The Second Meeting*, about the friendship of an American F-117A pilot and the Serbian missile officer who shot him down in 1999, was an Oscar candidate.



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## CANADIAN MENNONITE

### Annual Fundraising Banquet "Stories and Songs"

April 22, 2017, 6 p.m.  
Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church

RSVP, before April 15, to  
alexandra.LT.siebert@gmail.com  
or 343-262-1002

Freewill offering.  
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Soprano

Jason White  
Accompanist



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Mount Royal Mennonite Church  
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Saturday, April 29, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.



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For more information, go to [www.mcsas.ca](http://www.mcsas.ca).

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Register at [mcsask@mcsask.ca](mailto:mcsask@mcsask.ca) or call 306.249.4844

## Calendar

### Alberta

**April 29:** Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta meets at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury: annual general meeting at 10 a.m.; sessions at 1:30 p.m. Lunch and 4 p.m. f.aspa provided. For more information, call 403-250-1121.

### Saskatchewan

**April 22:** Parkland Restorative Justice holds its "Spring banquet in the woods" fundraising event at the Prince Albert Wildlife Federation.

**April 28-30:** A Buncha Guys 20-year reunion, in Saskatoon.

**April 30:** A Buncha Guys spring concert, featuring the 20-year reunion choir, at Knox United Church, Saskatoon, at 2:30 p.m.

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](mailto:calendar@canadianmennonite.org). For more

Calendar listings online, visit [canadianmennonite.org/churchcalendar](http://canadianmennonite.org/churchcalendar).



## Classifieds

### Employment Opportunities



Employment Opportunity  
VICE-PRINCIPAL

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate invites applicants for the position of Vice-Principal. Rockway is a dynamic Christian school of more than 250 students from many faith backgrounds and countries, that walks with students as they become responsible, reflective, compassionate and globally minded learners. ([www.rockway.ca](http://www.rockway.ca))

The Vice-Principal is a Senior Administrator who is part of a five-member Administrative Team. The person is responsible for providing educational leadership for program and instruction of students, supervising staff and students, maintaining a positive learning environment and discipline in the school, and managing the day-to-day operations of the school. This is a full-time position effective September 2017 and includes a benefit package.

**Required Skills, Knowledge and Attributes:**

- Understand and be committed to Rockway's Mission
- Support in faculty supervision and staff goal setting
- Foster strong inter-personal relationships between students and parents
- Engage with daily activities of faculty and students
- Possess strong administrative skills and attend to scheduling and logistical matters
- Teach one course in one's area of expertise
- Demonstrate a strong understanding of the Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum and be aware of current educational trends
- Be an active and collaborative member of the Rockway Faculty and Admin Team

**Required Education and Work Experience:**

- Bachelor of Education (at least 5 years of teaching experience)
- Ontario College of Teachers Certification (or Equivalent) with Intermediate or Senior Qualifications
- Minimum three years of experience in educational leadership, preferably as a Vice-Principal
- Preferably completed Principal's Qualifications for Public Education or Private School's Principal Qualification Part I and II.

Interested applicants to send a cover letter, resume and a list of three references to [employment@rockway.ca](mailto:employment@rockway.ca) by Friday, April 28, 2017.



**Mennonite Central Committee**

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### Executive Director - MCC Alberta

The Executive Director provides overall leadership to the work of MCC in Alberta. This position bears responsibility for upholding and implementing the vision, purpose, and values of MCC. The Executive Director guides the work of MCC in Alberta as set by the MCC Alberta Board of Directors.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to: a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership; and nonviolent peacemaking. MCC is an equal opportunity employer, committed to employment equity. MCC values diversity and invites all qualified candidates to apply.

Candidates must be legally eligible to work in Canada to apply. Application deadline May 31, 2017. To view the complete job description and apply visit [www.bit.ly/MCC-AB](http://www.bit.ly/MCC-AB)



Employment Opportunity  
Facilities and Environmental  
Stewardship Director

Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and Retreat Centre, New Hamburg, Ontario, is seeking an inspirational and committed person or couple to fill this newly created position on the Hidden Acres leadership team beginning in Fall 2017.

Guided by the camp's mission statement, the FES Director will live on site and bring practical maintenance and organizational skills along with a broad vision for Creation Care in its fullest sense to camp life and operations. The successful applicant(s) will display an entrepreneurial attitude, a willingness to work hard, the desire to be a positive part of Christian community, a genuine interest in working with young people, a love for nature and the outdoors, and a proven capacity to improvise, adapt and overcome.

For more information and a job description visit: [www.hiddenacres.ca](http://www.hiddenacres.ca). Please forward your resume or any questions to Campbell Nisbet at [director@hiddenacres.ca](mailto:director@hiddenacres.ca).

### For Rent

Furnished, 4-bedroom home for short-term rental in Kitchener, ON, May-August 2017. Easy bus access to universities, Uptown Waterloo or Downtown Kitchener. Contact [jargen@golden.net](mailto:jargen@golden.net) for details.

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