

CANADIAN MENNONITE

October 9, 2017
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Snapshot
in time ('Faces and places in an aging China' on pgs. 20-23)

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EDITORIAL

Nurturing a shared identity

TOBI THIESSEN
PUBLISHER

In the Future Directions conversations, many people expressed a lingering concern that the proposed regional network forming Mennonite Church Canada could cause us, as a church family, to lose a nationwide sense of shared mission and identity. The fear is that each region will be preoccupied with its own local agenda and, therefore, will pull back from connecting with the broader church.

Several volunteer-led working groups have tabled reports on specific aspects of our national church ministries, and how questions or risks might be addressed in the new structure. All reports are available at mennonitechurch.ca; follow the “2017 Special Assembly” link.

People who have relatives in other Mennonite churches, or have attended more than one Mennonite church in their lives, take for granted the idea of a larger church family. Newcomers, whose experience of the Mennonite church is in their local congregation, are less likely to feel connected to congregations elsewhere. With newcomers to the church being the growing part of our denomination, it is good to examine why a shared identity matters.

To this end, the report from the Working Group on Vision and Identity is a must-read. After re-affirming the well-known Healing and Hope vision statement, the working group walked through the biblical basis for being a

church together across theological and geographical diversity, and pointed out the benefits of a nationwide church identity. It outlined the types of actions that nurture identity, examine our current strengths, and discuss the vulnerabilities of the new structure.



Since 2015, when the Future Directions Task Force tabled the report that proposed the regional network model, it was clear to us at *Canadian Mennonite* that this

magazine is a connecting thread across the country. Under the network model, the role of a publication like ours to share what is happening across the churches becomes even more important. We are gratified that the Vision and Identity Working Group, under the proposed structure, believes *Canadian Mennonite* would be an important vehicle to help keep people in communication with one another.

It also suggested “story sharing,” in which each congregation across the country could contribute at least one story, blog, sermon or worship resource a year, and suggested there be a comprehensive list of podcasts, sermons, or blogs from pastors in our denomination. Both of these suggestions are similar to ideas we have discussed at *Canadian Mennonite* and would like to build into our website. Stay tuned for details.

Independent of the above, the Communications Working Group reviewed the communication efforts of each

area and national church and considered the work that *Canadian Mennonite* does, before issuing its report: “In light of the Future Directions’ call for greater focus on local congregations within their regions, cross-Canada communication will be more important than ever if the church is not to be completely localized. . . . The denomination needs to tell its story—and its many stories—of how God is working through the church (locally, regionally, nationally and beyond) and through its members. . . . The intent is to keep aiming for the overarching story of us as a Mennonite people in relation to God’s story.” The working group encouraged us, as a whole church with many voices, to tell our stories in print, online and in person, and to ensure that we allocate the financial resources necessary to make this story-sharing possible.

When affirming the continuation of this magazine as a partner in church communications, the Communications Working Group added a challenge: rethink the role and format of this publication. They said to consider “rebranding to create a new thing and [do] some bridge-building in areas where trust has been damaged.”

Canadian Mennonite is a magazine and online presence for, and of, the church. We note the call of the Communications Working Group, and must consider further their suggestions. We are glad, however, to be recognized for having our own role to play in maintaining—even strengthening—a sense of shared identity.

ABOUT THE COVER:

This man is 102 years old. ‘I couldn’t resist capturing his image as he gazed out a window in Taizhou,’ says Anita Bergen of her and her husband’s training mission to China in March of this year. See pages 20-23 for ‘Snapshots in time: Faces and places in an aging China.’

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Guiding values:

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

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

• Covenantal relationships and mutual accountability

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Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH FEATURE

Prodigal pastor

How an elderly B.C. congregation brought Lee Hiebert back into the fold and set him on his way to 'a joyful adventure'

BY WILL BRAUN

SENIOR WRITER



PHOTO COURTESY OF LEE HIEBERT

Lee and Rachel Hiebert with his beloved Harley.

Seventy-four-year-old George Ediger rushed out of church during the final song and caught up with the newcomer in the parking lot before the big young visitor with the shaved head and biker beard could escape in the maroon hot rod that stood out among the grey and beige sedans.

That gesture of welcome, although not entirely welcomed at the time, was one of many that ushered Lee Hiebert along an unlikely path of transformation.

In a meeting with Lee the day before he started his job as pastor of Steinbach (Man.) Mennonite Church, his boxes of books are sitting at his front door, ready to move into his new office. "It's pretty cool," he says, brimming with anticipation rooted in a remarkable story of change.

'I felt God had let me down'

Born into a troubled family that attended Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary, Lee experienced an untenable contrast between what he heard in church and the abusive levels of conflict he experienced at home. When he was 11, his parents began a divorce that would drag out for two years until his mom decided to move with her two sons to Kelowna, B.C., where they had extended family.

He was bitter about the family he had been dealt, saying, "I felt God had let me down."

In Kelowna, he attended a Mennonite Brethren church, but his life was headed away from God. He was aloof and snarky at church. "I was that kid you didn't want to have in your care group," he says.

After high school, a new world of opportunity presented itself, and Lee quickly chose options other than church. He delivered pizza and partied his tip money away.

Having left behind his upbringing, in the following years he created a new identity for himself. "I was a lean, 280-pound, six-foot-three guy," he says. Although his tone is anything but intimidating now, he says he was



PHOTO BY MARGARET EDIGER

Lee Hiebert with Jacqueline Neun at the 70th-anniversary celebration of Kelowna (B.C.) First Mennonite Church earlier this year.

“respected and feared” back then, imposing, as he did, his will on others and on life itself.

“I was the kind of guy who would walk into a bar and people would buy me drinks,” he says. “I was a bruiser.” To round out the image, imagine an ’86 Camaro with loud pipes, a stereo blasting AC/DC, and a 640-horsepower engine, which he recalls with evident fondness.

He had shaped himself into what he wanted. “I thought I could control things,” he says.

‘When are you coming back?’

The details of Lee’s life become graphic and cinematic, but he doesn’t want sensational anecdotes to overshadow God’s role. “The story I want to tell is how God has transformed me,” he says.

In those years, he would go to family gatherings only reluctantly and briefly. He recounts how his tiny *oma* (grandma) would reach way up and grab his face in both hands and, almost in tears, would say, “Lee, when are you coming back to church? When are you coming back?”

“She knew who I was,” he says. “She kept calling me back.”

In 2001, his mom managed to get

him to attend Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg. But after a semester spent mostly in the “back 40,” he returned to his old life in Kelowna.

Eventually, cracks developed. At one point, distraught over the breakup with his girlfriend of six years and in need of support, he went to a party at a friend’s place. But his buddies said he was bringing them down and suggested he come back when he was feeling better. He stormed out, beginning to realize how alone he really was. He came to see what he had left behind—people who actually cared.

Things started to turn. Over the next four years he tried to “fix” himself in preparation for a return to church. He quit drugs and smoking. Friends from that scene dropped away.

Having abandoned the identity he had created, he didn’t know who he was anymore. “I didn’t know how to talk to people,” he says. He would eat all the food in his cupboard to avoid a trip to the store, where he would have to face people.

Eventually, he deemed himself ready for church, although the next step terrified him. It was 2007; Lee turned 27. He had been adrift for most of a decade. He tried two of the big churches in town, but

never really connected with people there. His mom encouraged him to try Kelowna First Mennonite, but he considered it an “old person’s church.” She persisted, eventually taking him shopping for church clothes, because he “wanted to look the part.” Still, he was torn.

For several Sundays, he got in his car, slowed as he approached the church, but drove by, circling the block in his Camaro while the battle brewed within. “I’m not good enough,” he would tell himself. Yet he longed for the sort of caring church community he had tasted as a kid.

Connecting with the newcomer

Eventually, he made it as far as the back pew of First Mennonite, walking in late and leaving early to avoid contact. George Ediger, who loves connecting with newcomers, had noticed Lee in the back pew but didn’t catch him before he left.

On a subsequent Sunday, George says he was ready. “I had to run after him but I caught up with him at his car,” he tells me by phone from Kelowna. “We had a nice chat. I asked him about himself and his past and his understanding of God.” He visited Lee later that week. Although decades apart in age, George and Lee struck up a friendship that embodied the long-awaited embrace Lee experienced at the church.

First Mennonite was indeed an old people’s church. Most people were at least twice Lee’s age. They were also exactly what he needed. “When I walked in the door there, I immediately had 20 sets of grandparents,” he says. “The people of the church accepted me because I was a beloved child of God, and for no other reason,” he adds, his voice softening with emotion.

Still, it was scary. “I knew the hymns, I knew the traditions and I knew every one of those elderly women could see right through me,” he says.

“They saw God in me,” he says, but they also saw what held him back. Various church members, including Larry and Helene Wieler, spotted his reluctance to join the choir or stay for coffee, and they lovingly, persistently dug to the roots of his fear. They became mentors for Lee, walking him through the first years of his new commitment.

“This is the congregation that nourished me back,” he says of First Mennonite.

Becoming involved with the church and God

Lee joined Jacqueline Neun on the church’s education committee. While she struggled at first with his “my way or no way” approach, she came to value his contributions.

The first person Lee told about his return to church was his *oma*. Although she was too weak to open her eyes at the time, when Lee knelt by her bed and said, “Oma, I’m going back to church,” she simply reached out and embraced him.

In 2008, Lee was baptized. This stood as his solemn commitment to yield control of his life to God.

After the service, church member Harry Loewen approached Lee in the foyer, put his hand on Lee’s shoulder and said, “I think you’re gonna be a pastor.”

“I just laughed,” Lee recalls, but Loewen encouraged him to think about it. The seed was planted.

Lee says his mom and Neun encouraged him to go back to school. Although he was making good money delivering drywall, he needed to save for his studies. Neun, now 85, allowed him to move into her guest suite, despite her children’s doubts, to reduce his rent payments.

Eventually, he applied to CMU, although his earlier stint gave him pause. A school official promptly called to express excitement over his return. Neun—whose family had welcomed Lee as one of them by that time—gave him back the money he had paid her for accommodations. He bought an aging red Chevy truck from a church member, packed up and headed to school in Winnipeg.

Two years later, Lee took on a part-time pastoral assignment at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, in addition to his studies.

In 2012, he married Rachel Enns, a fellow CMU student who became another in a growing list of people who accepted and cared for him despite his doubts that they would.

From Winnipeg, Rachel and Lee moved to Elkhart, Ind., where Lee

Most people were at least twice Lee’s age. They were also exactly what he needed.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LEE HIEBERT

Lee Hiebert

attended Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. He graduated this spring, and on Aug. 1 he loaded his boxes of books into his car and took them to the lead pastor’s office at Steinbach Mennonite in

southern Manitoba.

Neither Harry Loewen, who foresaw Lee’s path to ministry, nor his *oma* are alive to share this step with Lee, but he says that when he told his *opa* (grandpa) of his job, his *opa* had tears coming down his face as he said, “Lee, I’m so proud of you.”

Lee is still 6-3, although not as lean as he once was, and he still has a shaved head, but his beard is tamer. The Camaro gave way to a Cruze, but he still likes to put on the leather and go for a “rip” on his Harley (which his mom calls his “throwback”). He may not look like a pastor on his bike, but that’s what he is.

“They’ve got my name on the door,” he says of his new office. “It feels great.”

Lee is eager to “bear witness to the transforming love of God that is so evident among the people of God.”

Predictably, back in Kelowna, the warmth flows. Jacqueline speaks glowingly about Lee’s recent visit and his “new maturity.” And George says of Lee’s new role: “Isn’t that wonderful! We certainly wish him well. I think he’ll find ministry a joyful adventure.” ❧

/// For discussion

1. Will Braun describes a time in Lee Hiebert’s life when he was “aloof and snarky at church.” Was there ever a time in your life when you felt aloof and snarky? What do such feelings show about our relationship with God and with our church family? What is needed to overcome such feelings? Where does transformation start?
2. What stereotypes do we have about young men with beards who wear leather jackets and ride motorcycles? How well does that stereotype fit Hiebert?
3. What role did Hiebert’s mother and grandmother (*oma*) and George Ediger play in bringing him back to church? Braun quotes Hiebert as saying, “The people of the church accepted me because I was a beloved child of God, and for no other reason.” What needs to happen for that kind of acceptance to flourish?
4. What do you find most inspiring about Hiebert’s story? Can you think of an example in your congregation where someone was loved into the church?

—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. All letters are edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines. Send them to letters@canadianmennonite.org and include the author's contact information and mailing address. Preference is given to letters from MC Canada congregants.

✉ Kudos to 'Shared land' organizers and participants

RE: "SHARED LAND" photo, Aug. 28, back cover.

My husband and I attended and appreciated the focus on learning about and respecting the thousands of years of history of our land. It was a profound and honest way to celebrate Canada's 150 birthday.

Bringing that historical focus into the present so that we can move forward together, Bryan Yellowhorn, an Indigenous elder, reminded us that both settlers and Indigenous people need to be patient with each other's culture and religion.

Thank you to Dave Neufeld and everyone associated with the Ancient Echoes Interpretive Centre, to the First Nations presenters and all the guests for demonstrating that kind of patience, together with respect and good will, throughout the weekend.

NAOMI UNGER, RABBIT LAKE, SASK.

FROM OUR LEADERS

The gift of sabbatical

INTRODUCTION BY GARRY JANZEN

REFLECTION BY AARON ROORDA

Introduction

A couple of Mennonite Church British Columbia pastors have been given sabbaticals this year. I would encourage all of our congregations to find a way to give their pastors a sabbatical. It is a win-win situation for both the congregation and the pastor. While it is vital to establish the discipline of Sabbath rest in order to find a weekly rhythm of renewal, it is also significant for pastors to be given sabbaticals for the sake of their ministry focus renewal.

Aaron Roorda, associate pastor of Eden Mennonite Church in Chilliwack, has put together a reflection on his experience. A study leave is often couched in the language of "sabbatical," and he has been able to get the best of both worlds. But he takes it one step further in recognizing the opportunity of renewal that a

sabbatical can be for the congregation.

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



I found this rest and self-work to be essential to creating the right focal points for my sabbatical time. (Aaron Roorda)

Reflection

The first word that comes to mind when I think about my sabbatical is the word "gift." My sabbatical was a gift for me as pastor, but also a gift for my church. It was a gift that offered rest but also invited intentional self-work for both my congregation and me. Sabbaticals are gifts that give pastors space to find their identity outside of their role as a pastor and give churches space to find their identity outside of the personality/gifts of the

pastor. When this work happens, it most often brings the pastor and church back together in a richer and healthier way.

I found this rest and self-work to be essential to creating the right focal points for my sabbatical time. The sabbatical gave me intentional space and time with my family at the same time as it gave me opportunity to use some of the sabbatical time for learning and growing in my

understanding of "pastor" as well as in my understanding of "self."

I did this by taking two seminary formation courses, one focussed on spiritual formation for ministry leaders and the other focussed on mental health awareness.

This sabbatical time gave me space for self-rest and self-engagement in rich and full ways that prepared me to re-engage my church and my role as pastor with a new sense of health and wholeness.

I am thankful for this gift.

✉ Front cover considered exclusive

RE: “BACK TO school around the world” front and back cover photo, Sept. 11 issue.

For six years of their school lives my daughters did not go back to school in September. Living in the southern hemisphere (Botswana, Africa) we enjoyed a different

pace of life with our summer holidays in December and a new beginning and grade in January. The front and back covers seem to suggest that all children around the world go back to school in September. Perhaps a different title would have been more inclusive.

SUSAN ALLISON-JONES, CAMBRIDGE, ONT.

KINGDOM YEARNINGS

I didn't share the Bridge Diagram with her

RYAN JANTZI

She sat on the sidewalk of the busy street corner, five months pregnant and without a place to call home. We sat there with her on the cold concrete, listening to her story of unwarranted eviction and the seizure of all her possessions. She didn't know how it would work out, but she expressed certainty that she'd have a place to live by the time the baby arrived. If not, the authorities would take her precious child away.

This was a story that seemed worlds away from my own. It was a story of injustice.

I long for everyone, everywhere, to confess Jesus as Lord. I believe that extending this invitation to faith is the primary—but certainly not the entire—calling of the church. To be frank, I can't fathom how a Jesus-follower can read the Book of Acts and see it any other way. While it's not perfect, I also believe the Bridge Diagram can be one helpful way of giving a peek into what God has done to reconcile us to himself through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

And yet, there in that moment, this dear woman didn't need a napkin illustration. She didn't need a clichéd gospel presentation. She didn't need to be proselytized. What she needed was a glimpse

of the kingdom of God.

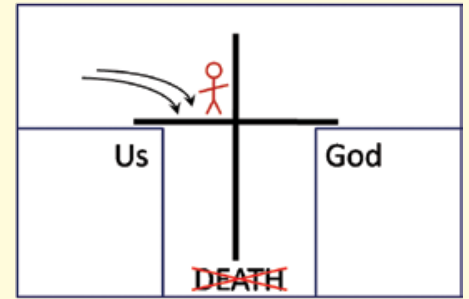
So there we sat on the side of the street. We bought her a carton of milk. We looked her in the eye as she shared her heart-wrenching story. We were simply present as the world hustled by, just inches from us. Towards the end of our time, she asked, “Why are you doing this?”

In a stumbling manner, we shared that we were Jesus-followers. We said we figured this was something he would have done. She smiled and said she liked that. Even though she didn't like “religion,” she thought Jesus was a pretty good guy.

Jesus did not say, “Anyone who has two shirts should preach the gospel to the one who has none.” Rather, he urged us to share our two shirts (Luke 3:11). He commanded us to live out the gospel

Jesus did not say, 'Anyone who has two shirts should preach the gospel to the one who has none.'

of Jesus Christ. He called us to embody his love in a way that reflects—or points toward—the complete revelation of his love at the cross. The good news of Jesus is not simply a call to personal salvation. It is a warm welcome into a kingdom. It is a kingdom where God is present, where beauty and truth abound. And so we must seek to display this kingdom



LAURELHILLBAPTIST.ORG BRIDGE DIAGRAM

alongside—or even prior to—our pointing to the king.

I'm not sure what the rest of the story is for our friend on the street. After about 15 minutes, we shared a Subway gift card, got up and awkwardly wished her well. We knew we hadn't changed her situation in any substantial way. But we had been present and we had cared. Hopefully, this could be one small step forward in her story.

I didn't share the Bridge Diagram. I didn't invite her to confess Jesus as Lord. I pray that one day this leap of faith might become a part of her story. I also pray to God that this small and somewhat awkward display of the kingdom of God on that street corner might be a step in

that direction. But most of all, I hope she got a glimpse of the Jesus who sits with us, entering our uncertainty and sorrow.

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



✉ General Board confession to the LGBTQ community

AS THE GENERAL Board of Mennonite Church Canada anticipates potential change following Special Assembly 2017, we are reminded of things done and not done. We are deeply aware of weakness and strength. We are aware of successes and failures. We are aware that the journey is not over, and significant challenges remain.

We want to take this opportunity to share with you, sisters and brothers of MC Canada, some final reflections and confessions, especially as related to one of the most difficult parts of the journey that we have travelled, namely, our efforts to help our church discern faithfulness as related to questions of same-sex relationships.

The delegate assemblies of the General Conference Mennonite Church (Saskatoon, 1986) and Mennonite Church (Purdue, 1987) passed resolutions articulating the position of their denominations regarding same-sex relationships. Both resolutions committed the denominations to ongoing conversations regarding same-sex relationships and with same-sex-attracted persons and their supporters.

At its formation in 2000, MC Canada integrated the Canadian congregations of these two binational denominations and agreed to uphold and implement these resolutions of the binational denominational bodies. The General Board of MC Canada had, and continues to have, the responsibility to lead the implementation of the inherited resolutions. An important aspect of these resolutions is a commitment to “mutually bear the burden of remaining in loving dialogue with each other.”

We acknowledge that few if any LGBTQ individuals have characterized these 30 years as reflecting a loving dialogue. The General Board acknowledges the difficult experiences expressed by LGBTQ individuals involved in this process.

As we reflect on our past actions, we acknowledge that until recently LGBTQ individuals and groups were not permitted access or exposure at MC Canada assemblies. Furthermore, LGBTQ individuals have been requested to discontinue their positions of leadership. We admit that this is not how mutual discernment should occur.

The Being a Faithful Church (BFC) 1-7 process was another attempt, in part, to fulfill the promise to remain in “loving dialogue.” This was a more intensive and sustained conversation—with seven cycles of congregational feedback.

While the BFC process was not restricted to discernment of same-sex relationships, it was designed to

encourage our church to function as a discerning/interpreting community, and to be a resource and guide to discerning God’s call in various questions facing the church. It was our intention, however, that the subsequent documents and assemblies would allow us as a church to faithfully discern questions of same-sex relationships, Scripture and the Christian tradition all within our 21st century context.

The General Board decided at the outset that the BFC process should reflect the congregationally based polity of the denomination. This meant that discernment of faithfulness would emerge from the congregations and not only from the academy, advocacy groups, institutional structures or a representative committee.

The BFC Task Force was mandated by the General Board, not to do the discerning, but to design a process that would allow all voices in our church to speak, to be heard and to hear what others were saying.

Despite this sustained effort, LGBTQ individuals bear testimony to being ignored, verbally abused and silenced at times during the BFC process. Despite our best planning, we can see now how past decisions and actions limited LGBTQ experiences and perspectives from being heard in our documents as well as in the planning and leading of assemblies. We sincerely regret and apologize for the actions and decisions within our body that caused such testimony to emerge. We confess that at times the body of Christ did not act like his body.

While we recognize that hurtful words were expressed by persons from various perspectives, we acknowledge that the dominant group needs to take primary responsibility for failure of loving dialogue.

Therefore, the General Board of MC Canada apologizes to our LGBTQ members as well as their family and friends for these mistakes.

Understanding that the structure of the church is again under significant change, and not knowing the future role of the General Board of MC Canada, we ask the future leadership of the church to learn from our mistakes. We ask for greater care and attentiveness to the past and present harm experienced by LGBTQ individuals. We ask the church to ensure that all relevant voices are properly present and acknowledged in all matters of discernment and decision-making.

**GENERAL BOARD OF
MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA**

The General Board is responsible for overseeing the policies and work of MC Canada. The names of the members are listed at home.mennonitechurch.ca/gb.



/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Bergen—Nyah (b. Sept. 4, 2017), to Valerian and Dorothea Bergen, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Brubacher—Felix John (b. June 19, 2017), to Max and Megan Brubacher, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

Guenther—Nathan Theodore (b. Sept. 4, 2017), to Joshua

and Thea Guenther, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont.

Saikaley—Luke Edward (b. July 14, 2017), to Rachael and Matt Saikaley, Hamilton Mennonite, Ont., in Ottawa.

Wiebe—Annalina Poppy Friesen (b. Sept. 9, 2017), to Sara Jane Friesen and Jeremy Wiebe, Breslau Mennonite, Ont.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Shifting identities

MARY RABER

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA

Many people ask me “how things are” in Ukraine. When I think of the complex history of the country, I sometimes wonder how to respond.



connections—oversees the Soviet memorial.

Broniki is in the province of Volhynia. It was here that the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), dedicated to the creation of an independent, single-eth-

nicity Ukrainian state, cruelly murdered up to 100,000 Polish civilians between 1943 and 1945. Fighting continued between Poland and the UPA until 1947. Ominously, memories of that conflict linger in the present-day political and military struggles.

One luminous evening in May, friends took me to visit a bright blue 19th-century Orthodox church on a hill in the western village of Broniki. Beside it, rows of crosses mark a Second World War military memorial. They aren't traditional Orthodox crosses with their three crossbars. Instead, the square-cut stone crosses represent a party of invading German soldiers. While bathing in a nearby stream one day in July 1941, they were ambushed by Soviet partisans. Their mutilated bodies were hastily buried in a common grave.

Meanwhile, a plaque on the wall of a nearby village club explains that the building was originally a Czech Brethren meetinghouse. When the Soviets took over at the end of the Second World War, they closed it down and commandeered the building. The displaced church moved to the home of my friends' grandparents. The original house now lies in ruin, but in their present home my friends' mother still proudly preserves a pew and other artifacts rescued from the church. The family attributes their present-day Christian faith to their Czech neighbours.

These are just some examples of the confusing jumble of changing populations, crisscrossing boundary lines, and shifting identities of friends and enemies that characterize Ukraine today.



PHOTOS BY OLGA DYATLIK

PHOTO ABOVE: A 19th-century Orthodox church in the village of Broniki, Ukraine. **PHOTO BELOW:** Beside the church, rows of crosses mark a German World War II military memorial.



Mary Raber is a Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker through Mennonite Mission Network in Ukraine. She teaches at Odessa Theological Seminary, Tavrisky Christian Institute (Kherson), and at other theological schools in Ukraine and Eastern Europe as requested.

Baptisms

Adrian Thiessen—Arnaud Mennonite, Man., June 4, 2017.

Emily Hiebert, Zach Hiebert, Andrea Bouvier,

Savannah Bouvier—Sterling Mennonite, Winnipeg, April 30, 2017.

Mekiah Yonda, Andrew Lee—Sterling Mennonite, Winnipeg, May 7, 2017.

Naomi Derksen, Aaron Phoenix—Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask., June 4, 2017.

Marriages

Albrecht/Snook-Schneider—Christopher Mark Albrecht and Nikketa-Marie Bianca Snook-Schneider, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., July 8, 2017.

Dotzert/Lebold—Doris Irene Dotzert and Ronald John Lebold, at Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., July 15, 2017.

Dyck/Zerbe—Willow Dyck and Micah Zerbe, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, at CMU, Winnipeg, Aug. 5, 2017.

Friesen/Klassen—Michael Friesen and Nicole Klassen, Altona Berghaler Mennonite, Aug. 26, 2017.

Kendel/Plett—Stefan Kendel and Christine Plett, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, at CMU's Marpeck Commons, Winnipeg, July 22, 2017.

Koch/Kuepfer—Shannon Noelle Koch and Craig Roland Kuepfer, at Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., Sept. 9, 2017.

Deaths

Epp—Elfrieda, 103 (b. July 16, 1914; d. Sept. 4, 2017), First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Federau—Heinrich, 84 (b. July 13, 1933; d. Sept. 10, 2017), Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Friesen—Victor, 78 (b. Oct. 11, 1939; d. April 19, 2017), Sterling Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Froese—Jacob, 84 (b. June 27, 1933; d. Aug. 22, 2017), Grace Mennonite, St. Catharines, Ont.

Klassen—Jake, 85 (b. Jan. 4, 1932; d. July 30, 2017), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Teichroeb—Abram, 84 (b. Aug. 7, 1932; d. July 7, 2017) Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Toews—Margarete (nee Sudermann), 85 (b. May 21, 1932; d. July 5, 2017), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Voth—Ed C., 83 (b. May 11, 1934; d. Aug. 7, 2017), Altona Berghaler Mennonite, Man.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones

announcements within four months of the event.

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

A moment from yesterday



Jacob Y. Shantz (1822-1909) of Berlin, Ont., (now Kitchener), with his family. Shantz was involved in fruit growing and maple-sugar production. He was a building contractor and industrialist but is also remembered for his role in the establishment of Mennonite communities in Manitoba. The Manitoba village of Shantzenfeld is named in his honour. Shantz wondered if fruit could be grown in Manitoba. In 1877, he sent 424 apple, 313 pear, 300 plum and 300 cherry trees to Manitoba. Two years later, he was pleased to see a harvest of apples. Have any of these varieties survived in Manitoba today?

Text: Conrad Stoesz / Mennonite Heritage Archives

Photo: Mennonite Heritage Archiveshren



archives.mhsc.ca

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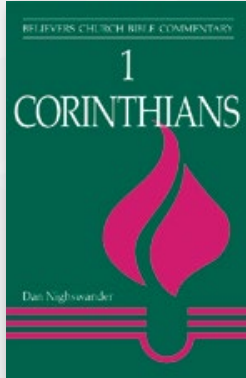
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Luke Martin, director
directeur@maisondelamitie.ca

To learn more:
maisondelamitie.ca/copie-de-projet-de-restauration

Contributions received



Contributor	Amount
Federal government	\$92,297 (36%)
Individual donations	\$81,100 (31%)
Foundations	\$34,000 (13%)
Provincial government	\$3,050 (6%)
Credit Unions	\$15,240 (5%)
Businesses	\$12,937 (5%)
Local City Borough	\$6,393 (2%)
Maison de l'amitié	\$16,188 (1%)

Silver Dollar foundation

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GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Celebrating 80 years and education with a quilt

BY DEBORAH FROESE
Mennonite Church Canada

When retired teacher Martha Wiens of Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church turned 80, she threw herself a birthday party with a purpose. She auctioned off a specially made quilt to raise money in support of a young woman's education at Meserete Kristos (MK) College in Ethiopia. But she didn't stop there, pledging to pay for a full four-year scholarship to make sure the lucky recipient has no interruptions in her study.

Wiens conceived of the idea after learning about MK College through Fanosie Legesse, a former student and Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker in Ethiopia. The college was established in 1995 to offer a Christian ministries program serving Meserete Kristos Church, the fastest growing member church of Mennonite World Conference. In 2014, 19,000 members of the church were baptized. In 2016, the college began construction of a women's

dormitory on its main campus in Debre Zeit with the help of some generous donors.

Legesse told the Leamington church about the strong desire for Christian education in Ethiopia and of a special need to garner support for female students. That idea connected deeply with Wiens. "I'm a female," she says, "and sometimes females don't have the same opportunities as fellows do. I was a high school teacher, and education is important to me."

Making quilts is also something that is important to Wiens. When she was a child, her mother taught her to sew and embroider, but she had no time to engage in those activities while she was teaching high school. After retiring in 1996, she picked up quilting with a group of friends and has been dedicated to the art ever since. "I prefer to piece the tops or appliqué and do machine or hand embroidery," she says, adding that she gets someone else to

machine-quilt the result of her creative efforts.

Wiens lives near Point Pelee National Park. Her surroundings inspired the 127-centimetre-by-152-centimetre quilt auctioned off at her birthday. Each of the quilt's 20 squares contains an embroidered appliqué of a bird native to the area.

The birthday celebration was held on June 10—five days before Wiens's actual birth date—at the home of quilting friend Joanne Philips and her husband Jerry Philips, who live near Colchester, Ont. Wiens rented a tent and used her own china, silverware and napkins for table settings. A friend catered the event with appetizers and lemonade, and other friends and relatives pitched in to park cars, take photographs and sell raffle tickets. Sold at \$10 apiece to the 40 guests in attendance, the tickets raised \$740.

The quilt was won by Katie Froese, also of Leamington United Mennonite. "I was overjoyed to win it. . . . It's just gorgeous," says Froese, pointing out the attention to detail evident in the quilt. She adds, "I kind of had a feeling I was going to win, but I was still surprised when I did." ❧

To learn more about MK College and the role of women in Meserete Kristos Church visit news

[.mennonitechurch.ca/dormitory-create-equal-opportunity-women](http://mennonitechurch.ca/dormitory-create-equal-opportunity-women).



PHOTO BY MICHAEL WIENS

Martha Wiens stands in front of a quilt she made to raffle off at her 80th birthday party in support of a scholarship for a young woman to attend Meserete Kristos College in Ethiopia.

Harvesting ideas for a new MC Saskatchewan

Retreat participants discern where God is leading the area church

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DONNA SCHULZ

Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON

It's harvest time on the Prairies for farmers on their combines, and this year for members of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan as they met for their second Refresh, Refocus, Renew mini-retreat.

About 75 participants, representing 24 MC Saskatchewan congregations, gathered at Wildwood Mennonite Church in Saskatoon on Sept. 15 and 16. Betty Pries, a managing partner with Credence & Co. (formerly L3 Group), based in Kitchener, Ont., led the weekend workshop.

The evening session on Sept. 15 began with a review of the first mini-retreat held at Mount Royal Mennonite, also in Saskatoon, back in April. Following that event, the reference group appointed by MC Saskatchewan invited congregations to participate in a season of prayer during the summer months, focussing on three questions:

- **LORD, WHAT** are you calling us to embrace?
- **LORD, WHAT** are you calling us to let go of?
- **LORD, WHAT** are you calling us to live into?



Betty Pries of Credence & Co. tells members of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan that their true identity lies at the heart, where they are already beloved of God.

Pries said she would lead September participants in discerning the fruits of their prayers. "This weekend we will be harvesting our listening," she said. Silently and in conversation, participants explored the question, "How are we hearing God leading MC Saskatchewan?"

Responses varied widely, but as the weekend wore on, several themes emerged. The first was a desire for "deeper spirituality."

Area church minister Ryan Siemens said, "The April event was spiritually nourishing and very life-giving." He wondered, "Does that event itself name a calling?"

If God is calling the church to deeper spirituality, then the church's programs and activities must be spiritually grounded as well.

Claire Ewert Fisher of Mount Royal Mennonite said, "Everything we've been doing is really good but needs to be rooted in our relationship with God. Young people don't want to hear about God; they want to have an experience with God."

A second theme that emerged was the desire to "embrace and live out Anabaptist theology."

Terri Lynn Friesen of Osler Mennonite said, "Sometimes the culture we celebrate gets in the way of the good things we have to offer."

Celeste Wright agreed. "I think we're called to shift away from being ethnic Mennonites to being faith-based Mennonites," she said.

Eric Olfert of Mount Royal Mennonite said he sees God leading MC Saskatchewan "to become Christ-centred and deliberate about how we live out [our faith] in the community." He added, "I think that's where our energy lies for the future."

A third theme threading its way through



Craig Neufeld, standing, and Bruce Jantzen brainstorm ways of making the dream of 'deeper spirituality' a reality.



Valerie Wiebe and Carrol Epp listen as Char Bueckert, right, shares her ideas for implementing the three themes that emerged during MC Saskatchewan's Refresh, Refocus, Renew mini-retreat.



Marg Peters listens as Berny Wiens shares his thoughts.

the discussion was that of "service to the community and to the world."

Patrick Preheim suggested that service begins within MC Saskatchewan. "I have a sense that we are being called to collaborate between congregations for mutual support and for reaching beyond ourselves."

Berny Wiens of Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite said, "I can't help thinking God would like us to engage on a larger scale with First Nations people."



Pauline Steinmann adds her group's sheet of ideas to the sanctuary wall during MC Saskatchewan's second Refresh, Refocus, Renew mini-retreat. Participants were encouraged to think of practical ways of implementing each of three themes that emerged during the retreat.

Peter Peters of Regina's Peace Mennonite noted that the church has both history and skill in areas of restorative justice.

As Sept. 16's session began, Pries used a simple line drawing of a human figure to illustrate how people view themselves. Each individual or congregation has wounds that appear on the edges of who they are, she said, but it is a mistake to think these wounds represent the sum total of one's identity. Rather, "the heart is where we are already beloved of God, and this is where our identity truly lies," she said.

Pries then invited the table groups to name three characteristics of MC Saskatchewan. When one group mentioned ethnicity, Pries said she wanted them to think about values rather than character traits. To which Ray Friesen of Emmaus Mennonite in Wymark countered, "I think we have value around history, tradition and ethnicity. I don't think it comes from heart of God, but I think it comes from who we are." Pries replied, "There may be values we have to retire."

Other values listed included humility, compassion, community, generosity and hospitality, reconciliation and peacemaking,

and being a priesthood of believers.

Finally, participants were asked to take the three themes that emerged during the previous day's discussion and develop practical ideas for implementing them. A range of suggestions followed.

Char Bueckert of Zoar Mennonite in Langham proposed that all of the area church's commissions, committees and boards incorporate the three themes into their agendas, and that the Ministries Commission adopt all three themes as their portfolio.

"Maybe we need to do an evaluation of our programs, and see how they match up with the three proposals," said Craig Neufeld of Rosthern Mennonite. "If it does [match up] keep it; if it doesn't, let it go."

It will be up to the Refresh, Refocus, Renew reference group to develop a plan for implementing the three themes in the coming years. That plan will be unveiled at MC Saskatchewan's annual delegate sessions in March 2018. ☞

Saskatchewan congregation adopts new English name

BY DONNA SCHULZ

Saskatchewan Correspondent
GLENBUSH, SASK.

Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite Church has a new name. Now known as Fields of Hope Mennonite Church, the congregation once met in three neighbouring communities: Glenbush, Rabbit Lake and Mayfair, Sask., about 195 kilometres north of Saskatoon. Today, although the three churches still exist as

legal entities, services are primarily held at the Glenbush church.

"The decision was precipitated by the fact that the German Mennonite community has shrunk, and the surrounding community is English-speaking," says Pastor Celeste Wright. Surprisingly, she adds, there was no opposition to the

change. She senses that the church has been quite flexible in the past. When, after mature deliberation, the congregation deems change to be necessary, it isn't afraid to implement that change, she says.

Wright feels it is still too early to gauge the response of the larger community, but is hopeful that the new name will help bridge the gap between the congregation and its neighbours. "Since the church considers itself to be part of the community and wants to engage the community, it made sense to Anglicize the [church's] poetic name," she says. ☞



PHOTO BY ALAN LAUGHLIN

Members of Fields of Hope Mennonite Church gather around their new church sign. Celeste Wright, far right, is the congregation's pastor.

/// Staff changes

Pastoral transitions in Manitoba

• **PAUL LOEWEN** concluded his time at Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg on Aug. 11 after nearly a decade as youth pastor there. Loewen has moved to Vancouver, with his wife Jeanette and three sons, to complete a master's degree in theology at Regent College. Loewen, 31, speaks glowingly about his time at Douglas. He plans to return to Winnipeg, where he grew up, for further pastoral work after completing his studies. As a parting gift to the Douglas youth, Loewen wrote *Before I Go: Nine Ideas You Should Know*.



• **MARV THIESSEN** began as lead pastor of North Kildonan Mennonite Church in Winnipeg on Oct. 1. He takes over from interim pastor Franz Wiebe. Thiessen, the son of an Evangelical Mennonite Church (EMC) pastor, was born in Mennville, Man., and later spent much of his youth in Blumenort, Man. Thiessen, now 58, served as youth pastor at an EMC church from 1987 to '98 and as lead pastor of Calgary First Mennonite Church from 2000 to '10. Previously, he managed a Mennonite Central Committee Thrift Store in Winnipeg and attended Home Street Mennonite.



• **DALE FRIESEN** began as a youth and young adult pastor at Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg on Aug. 14. For the seven years prior to that Friesen was the sole pastor at Glenlea Mennonite Church just south of Winnipeg, where he and his family live. Friesen, who has undergrad and master's degrees from Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, speaks very fondly of his time at Glenlea, saying he is leaving on a positive note. He looks forward to getting back into youth ministry and being part of a team ministry. He served as youth pastor at Morden Mennonite Church from 2006 to '09.



• **CHERYL BRAUN** began a one-year term as interim pastor at Glenlea Mennonite Church in Manitoba on Sept. 1. Having grown up in Winnipeg, she spent the past 23 years in Gretna, Man., as a teacher, and, most recently, as principal of Mennonite Collegiate Institute.



• **BOB PAULS** concluded 17 years of pastoral ministry at Carman Mennonite Church in southern Manitoba at the end of August. Pauls, 64, shies away from the word "retirement." He is eager to continue serving the church, mentioning the many volunteer opportunities that exist. He says of pastoral ministry and his

time in Carman, "It has been the best possible thing I could ever do." Pauls and his wife Martha will remain in Carman for now. He says he has not planned the next phase of life, preferring to take a pause in which to listen more intently to God's leading without his own plans getting in the way.

• **TIM WENGER** completed a two-year term as faith development pastor—serving children, youth and young adults—at North Kildonan Mennonite Church in Winnipeg in mid-September. Wenger is finishing a master's degree at Canadian Mennonite University.

—BY WILL BRAUN

Pastoral transition in Ontario

MARILYN RUDY-FROESE was installed as interim associate pastor of family ministries at East Zorra Mennonite Church in Tavistock on Sept. 10. Rudy-Froese has a bachelor's degree in social work from Goshen (Ind.) College and a master of divinity degree from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. She was a chaplain at Fairview Mennonite Home in Cambridge, Ont., from 1992 to 2001; and pastored at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., from 2003 to '11, and Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship in Goshen from 2012 to '17. She is a sessional instructor at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., and a coach for Mennonite Church Canada's online Transitioning into Ministry program. She was ordained in 1997.



—BY DAVE ROGALSKY

MCC Saskatchewan hires new program director

• **AMANDA DODGE** has been hired as Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Saskatchewan's new program director. For the past nine years, she worked at the Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City (CLASSIC), first as executive director, then as supervising lawyer, and most recently as the Systemic Initiatives Program coordinator. She has daily experience with Indigenous and newcomer communities, and strong experience in program and policy development, project management and evaluation, and fundraising and budget oversight. "My Christian faith is the impetus and sustenance for my social justice work," Dodge says. Over the years, as I have worked for secular agencies and volunteered for Christian ones, I have longed to integrate and align my faith and my social justice work. Working with MCC would allow me to do just that."



—MCC Saskatchewan

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

On a journey towards reconciliation

New sign at Conrad Grebel University College expresses new realities

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

Twelve years ago, Conrad Grebel University College planted a black walnut tree and erected a sign marking the 200th anniversary of the arrival in 1805 of the first Mennonite settlers from Pennsylvania and the establishment of the “German Company Tract.” But time has a way of altering understandings of events and history. On Sept. 22, a new sign was erected beside the old one, acknowledging the larger and longer history of the land.

Led by Marlene Epp, Grebel’s dean, and Reina Neufeldt, professor of peace and conflict studies, the ceremony began with Indigenous smudging and a Mohawk welcoming song performed by the Waterloo Aboriginal Education Centre at St. Paul’s

University College at the University of Waterloo.

Epp acknowledged that the sign was being erected on the “traditional territory of the Attawandaron [also known as Neutral], Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. Grebel and the University of Waterloo are situated on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to the Six Nations [of the Grand River] that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.”

Neufeldt noted that the original sign expressed “a limited narrative” about the land. “We also know we need time to think, to reflect and to educate ourselves. And most of all, to engage in ongoing

dialogue and activity towards recognizing and repairing our relationships with Indigenous peoples as part of a journey towards reconciliation, here on UW campus and elsewhere.”

The new sign, crafted from a tree removed for a Grebel building project and designed by artist Megan Harder, acknowledges that “as buyers and settlers, Mennonites were, and are, implicated in a larger process of Indigenous dispossession.”

“Like the garden, we are under construction as we educate ourselves and alter our understandings and our narratives to reflect neglected histories,” she said. “We chose to leave the current plaque as a reminder of settlement history. And we hope to invite you here again in the future for the next phases of transformation.”

Lori Campbell, director of the education centre, responded by saying that she will “always be a visitor on this land,” and that “reconciliation is not a ‘check-box’, it’s not something that’s just complete. What we’re looking for is the ongoing reciprocal relational piece. We really appreciate this about Conrad Grebel.”

The unveiling ended with the singing of “Come Walk with Me, the Journey is Long” and the sharing of fry-bread from the education centre, apples and popcorn. ☼



The old and new signs at Conrad Grebel University College. The new sign, unveiled on Sept. 22, acknowledges the history of the land in relationship to Indigenous peoples.



Marlene Epp, dean of Conrad Grebel University College, left, and Reina Neufeldt, professor of peace and conflict studies, tell the story of the new sign acknowledging the history of the land at Grebel’s garden on Sept. 22.

See more photos at
canadianmennonite.org/grebel-new-sign.



'For Christ's sake, we better do something about it'

'We support Bill C-262' marchers of all ages declare their solidarity

STORY AND PHOTOS BY NICOLIEN KLASSEN-WIEBE

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
WINNIPEG

“Walk the talk of nation to nation. Implement the declaration!”

More than a hundred people chanted these words as they walked for Indigenous rights in Winnipeg, situated on Treaty 1 land, on Sept. 23.

The group met at Stephen Juba Park and walked 12 kilometres to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in support of Bill C-262, a private member's bill that, if passed, would begin the process of harmonizing Canada's laws with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The day began with a smudge, an Indigenous ritual of purification, and prayers of blessing for the walk. A banner proclaiming “We support Bill C-262” led the way as the group walked along busy streets to the drumbeat of an 87-year-old and the cheers of a 7-year-old.

“[Walking] makes us visible,” said Kathy Moorhead Thiessen, who works for

Indigenous Peoples Solidarity of Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT). “When we were walking down Pembina [Highway] we had lots of honks and people going ‘Yeah, I believe in that!’ and bringing some awareness to people who don't know about the bill and declaration. It shows how many people care. I've heard from the Indigenous people . . . that they can see that we are serious about reconciliation by doing this.”

This is not the first time people have walked to advocate for Indigenous rights. This spring, Mennonite Church Canada and Indigenous Peoples Solidarity organized the Pilgrimage for Indigenous Rights (PfIR), a 600-kilometre march from Kitchener, Ont., to Ottawa, to engage churches in conversations around UNDRIP.

“The church has a pretty bad record with regards to Indigenous rights,” said Moorhead Thiessen. “We came here and were welcomed by the Indigenous people,



Katrina Woelk, a CMU alumna, and Anna Goertzen Loepky, a CMU student, hold signs in support of Bill C-262.

and we did not do right by them.”

Kathleen Vitt, another PfIR participant and a member of the Walk the Talk Coalition For Bill C-262, agrees that the church has a big part to play in reconciliation. “The church needs to own its part in residential schools and its colonial legacy,” she said. “It's also [about] following the gospel message of Jesus, which speaks to shedding light on oppressed people and walking alongside people as brothers and sisters.”

Bill C-262 was introduced by NDP MP Romeo Saganash in April 2016, and is set for a second reading in October. This quickly approaching deadline spurred a flurry of action in Winnipeg in addition to the Sept. 23 walk. The same weekend, giant letters spelling out “#Pass Bill C-262” were



Walkers hold signs advocating for Bill C-262 on their way to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation in Winnipeg.



Kelsey Wiebe, front, and other walkers for Indigenous rights head for a pit stop at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

emblazoned across the bridge at Canadian Mennonite University.

CMU students also hosted a documentary screening about PflR and set up a table during lunch hours for students, staff and faculty to sign postcards encouraging their MPs to “walk the talk.”

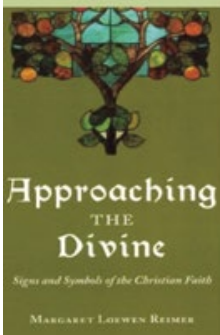
“The response from students has been really positive,” said student Erin Froese, who helped organize PflR and co-emceed the event at the end of the walk on Sept. 23. “We had a lot of students come out to the walk, a good turnout to our documentary screening and many postcards signed.”

“More and more Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians are joining forces together, sending a clear message to the Trudeau government that it’s time to honour fundamental Indigenous human rights in this country,” said Leah Gazan, professor at the University of Winnipeg and Indigenous rights activist.

Gazan was one of the speakers who addressed the gathering at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, where the walk ended. Along with speakers like Michael Redhead Champagne, Gramma Shingoose and musician Leonard Sumner, Gazan reminded people that there is still a lot of work to do and urged them to keep walking the talk for Indigenous rights.

Steve Heinrichs, MC Canada’s director of Indigenous relations who is fasting for Indigenous rights, said, “The image that I had in mind [coming to the walk] was just a picture of Jesus. It’s clear in the gospel tradition that . . . the litmus test for the well-being of the church is how the vulnerable and the marginalized are treated in society. Indigenous peoples are the oppressed in Canada. So, for Christ’s sake, we better do something about it.”

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SNAPSHOTS IN TIME

Faces and places in an aging China

STORY BY ANITA BERGEN, WITH CAMERON NICOLLE

PHOTOS BY ANITA BERGEN

Like Canada, China is facing an aging population. There is a growing need for elder-care homes, as families shift away from the cultural norm of taking care of their aging loved ones. Churches have stepped in and have begun to build elder-care homes to address the need. These churches have reached out to faith communities in North America that have a long history of running nursing homes, to hear about their experiences.

In March of this year, my husband, Cameron Nicolle, and I were invited to spend four weeks in rural China providing training to church-based elder-care homes in five cities south of Shanghai, as part of a collaboration between the China Christian Council and Mennonite Partners in China.

With my 17 years working as a long-term-care nurse and my husband's nine years as executive director of an agency serving people with intellectual disabilities, we were asked to make presentations on such topics as dementia, resident-directed care, board development, human resources and wound care. We were thrilled to learn that our sessions were attended by staff from more than 60 homes, and we have been encouraged by the knowledge that significant networking has taken place among staff from the various homes.

Our time in China was remarkable. We will always remember the incredible hospitality, the warmth of the people and, of course, the amazing food! ☘

To view a slide show of more photos, visit bit.ly/bergen-china-2017.



This sanctuary near Wenzhou was one location for our training sessions. The pews have pop-up ledges for placing books or computers on in order to take notes.



In Wenzhou, women greet us from the window of an apartment near one of the elder-care homes. Note the laundry and an umbrella hanging in the background.



A country church near Wenzhou beside small canola fields and larger rice fields, complete with water buffalo.



A butcher located in a nearby market where elder-care staff in Taizhou go daily to purchase meat and produce that will be used that day for meals.



A man out for a stroll along the river in Wenzhou.



These residents in Taizhou meekly ask whether we have the time to take a picture with them. We were so honoured.



This resident of Taizhou enjoys her afternoon, swinging with her dog and singing at the top of her lungs.



An elder-care home near Shaoxing amid fields of tea. We learned that all teas—white, green and black—are made from the same plant. Who knew?



We were fascinated by the modes of transportation in China, many of which were electric, including this one in Taizhou. This vehicle has muffs over the handlebars to provide warmth on cold mornings.

/// Staff changes

Witness worker transitions

Four Witness worker couples in Africa, Asia and Europe are transitioning out of their ministries in 2017 and 2018:

• **TARYN AND NATHAN DIRKS** of Niagara United Mennonite Church, Ont., have served in Botswana since 2012. The couple worked with local African Independent Churches (AIC) congregations to establish Bible studies for young people. This led to a prison ministry facilitated by young adults from the AIC churches. The Dirks also helped lead the development of an ecologically sustainable sports and recreation park in the Bontleng neighbourhood to draw vulnerable young people away from surrounding bars and activities linked to crime and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. They have already returned to Canada, where they have been itinerating in congregations, sharing stories of the people and ministry they have experienced. Nathan is looking for employment, and hopes to remain engaged in the PULA Sports Development Association, an outgrowth of the Bontleng sports and recreation park, from his home base in Ontario. They leave behind an eight-person team to continue the prison ministry. The couple have a three-year-old son, Malakai.



• **CHRISTINA AND DARNELL BARKMAN** of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C., have served in the Philippines, since 2012, with a previous internship during 2008-09. They have established Peace Church, a home-based congregation in Manila with members coming from a variety of neighbourhoods, some characterized by unemployment and poverty. The ministry of Peace Church has led to many opportunities to share about nonviolence and reconciliation via radio ministries, regular gatherings in the community, special events and with leaders from the wider church in the Philippines. Designing and building innovative, storm-resistant homes with local, ecologically sustainable materials and labour has enabled the Barkmans and Peace Church to practise hands-on peacebuilding in the aftermath of devastating typhoons. The Barkmans plan to return to Canada in April 2018, resettling in Abbotsford. Darnell will continue his master's studies in peacebuilding, through which he is learning that the ministry of reconciliation is a gift from God. The couple have three children—Makai, Cody and Teyah—who are all expecting a tiny younger sibling to arrive in late September.



• **JENNIFER OTTO** of Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont., and **GREGORY RABUS** of Montreal Mennonite Fellowship were originally invited to plant a church in Mannheim, Germany, in 2012, in partnership with the Conference of Southern German Mennonite Congregations and the German Mennonite Mission Committee. However, those plans changed when Germany began accepting a huge influx of refugees from Syria, shifting their partnership to work with the Conference of Southwest Mennonite Churches. Together, they established a community-building ministry at Ludwigshafen Mennonite Church. The couple are fluent in German and, with Gregory's training in Arabic, they were able to use their linguistic, organizational and hospitality gifts to develop Friedenshaus (Peace House), which works especially with refugees. Matthew 25:35 has been a guiding scripture for their ministry of welcome: "[F]or I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me." They plan to return to Canada in June 2018; Jennifer has accepted a position as assistant professor of Christianity at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta. The couple have a three-year-old son, Alex, who will become a big brother in late 2017.



• **MARLA AND KARL LANGELOTZ** of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, completed a nine-month term of voluntary service in June. They served as colleagues of Gregory Rabus and Jennifer Otto in the Friedenshaus (Peace House) ministry in Ludwigshafen, Germany. Karl taught German to refugees and immigrants, while Marla supplied hospitality and relationship building. Socializing with newcomers was also high on their task list, including a quilting group facilitated by Marla. Such activities are key for newcomers to practise their conversational German language skills. The couple say it is their worldview that motivated them to volunteer in Germany: "*That God so loved the world that he sent his only son. . .*" And that this son modelled the best way to follow God; to care for those in need, on the fringes of society; to show this love in our actions towards all people, not just our friends and fellow Christians." Now back home in Winnipeg, Marla will return to her pastoral ministry at Sargent Avenue Mennonite, and Karl will resume teaching at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate.
—Mennonite Church Canada



ARTBEAT

CANADIAN MENNONITE PHOTO BY AMY DUECKMAN
The Mennonite Heritage Museum of B.C. hosted a book launch on Sept. 23 for John B. Toews' newest book, All-Russian Mennonite Agricultural Union (1923-1927): Minutes, Reports, Correspondence. Utilizing historical materials from both Mennonite and Russian archives, the story in two volumes covers the agricultural reconstruction of Russia and Ukraine following the two revolutions in 1917 and the agricultural reconstruction following. Toews is professor emeritus of church history and Anabaptist studies at Regent College in Vancouver. All proceeds from the book will go to benefit the Mennonite Historical Society of B.C.



God at Work in the Arts Snapshots



CANADIAN MENNONITE PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Rescue Junction—from left to right: Nick Huber on dobro, Kyle Gerber on mandolin, Kaitlyn Gerber on guitar, Roger Martin on banjo, and Dallas Roth on upright bass—sing at the Jim Reimer Memorial Bluegrass Concert held at Conrad Grebel University College on Sept. 17. More than \$10,000 was raised for the Reimer Scholarship in Theological Studies in Grebel's master of theological studies program and the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre at the Toronto School of Theology.

FOCUS ON EDUCATION

PACS grads create a strong society

By KELLY BROWN

Conrad Grebel University College
WATERLOO, ONT.

At Conrad Grebel University College, parents of prospective peace and conflict studies (PACS) students often ask, “What kind of job will my child get after graduation?” What we say with confidence is that an undergraduate or graduate PACS degree equips students with highly sought-after skills in today’s job market. This kind of education leaves the door open to a multitude of fields, some of which are yet to be created, fields that will require adaptable minds, critical thinking, strong interpersonal skills and the ability to thrive in challenging environments.

PACS is unique, as it taps into students’ individual vocations and nurtures their social entrepreneurial spirit that will lead them to find their calling.

Renowned academic and anthropologist William Ury outlines 10 roles that

individuals fill in society to create a stronger, healthier, peaceful climate: provider, teacher, bridge-builder, mediator, arbiter, equalizer, healer, witness, referee and peacekeeper. Looking back at recent graduates, PACS and MPACS alumni have not only filled these roles but have flourished and made unique contributions within them.

For example, mediators like Darren Kropf, (MPACS ’15) engage all stakeholders to discuss and make decisions on possible points of contention. He works as a neighbourhood strategic engagement associate for the City of Kitchener, Ont., and facilitates dialogue within communities to help develop plans for neighbourhood engagement. During his MPACS internship, he worked at Border Peace School in Cheorwon, South Korea,

where he taught peace education and advised on program development of a new peace school seeking reconciliation and reunification of the Koreans.

Healers like Jessica Reesor Rempel (PACS ’11) listen, acknowledge and provide guidance to those struggling. As a founder of Pastors in Exile, she connects with, and provides guidance to, youth and young adults who feel marginalized within the church.

Peacekeepers work with people facing a direct threat against their well-being and seek to protect them. Nadine Hiemstra and Cass Bangay (both PACS ’12) worked in Colombia with Christian Peacemaker Teams, using their presence to stand alongside vulnerable communities and act as nonviolent peacekeepers to decrease the threat of violence.

PACS and MPACS alumni continue to exceed expectations within the job market and in their scope of impact. When parents ask what their child’s job will be after completing a PACS or MPACS degree, we no longer put parameters around it. We simply look to our alumni as shining examples of the flexibility and impact of a PACS or MPACS degree, and leave students with the power to dream big. ☸

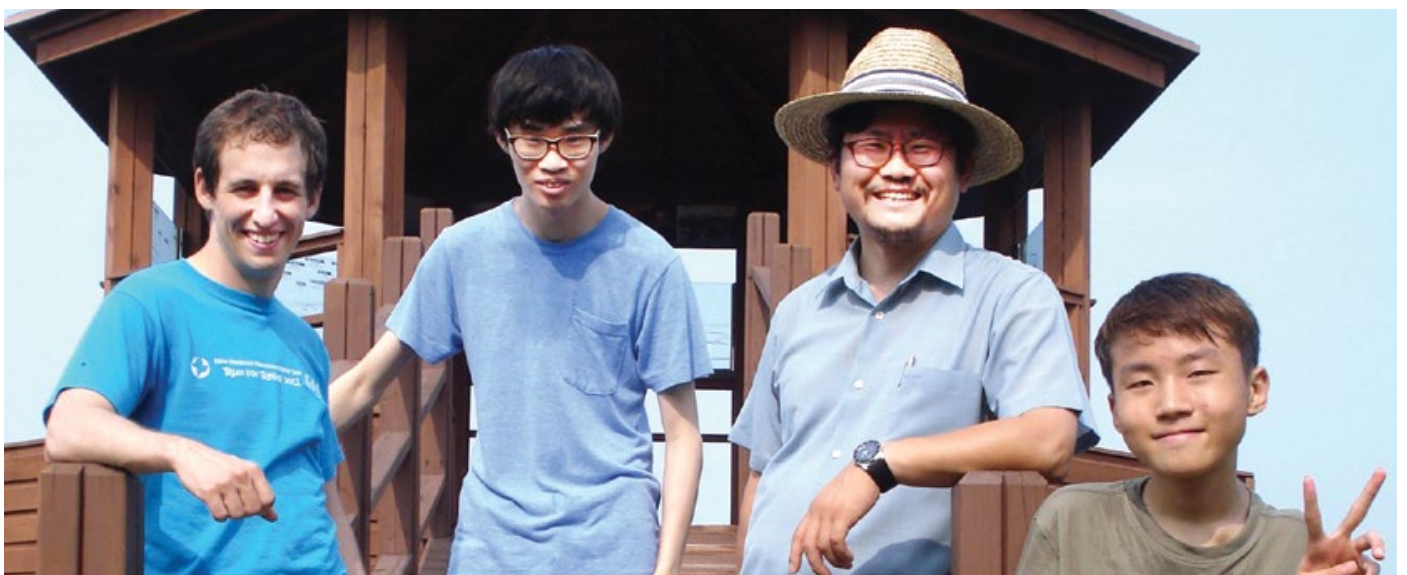


PHOTO COURTESY OF DARREN KROPF

During his MPACS internship, Darren Kropf, left, worked at Border Peace School in Cheorwon, South Korea, where he taught peace education and advised on program development of a new peace school seeking reconciliation and reunification of the Koreans.



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FOCUS ON EDUCATION

A passionate advocate for Mennonite education

By DAVID LOBE

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate
WATERLOO, ONT.

Mennonite institutions endure based on the hard work and dedication of those who believe in their impact on individuals and the broader community. On Jan. 31, 2018, Rockway Mennonite Collegiate will lose a passionate advocate for Mennonite education, one the school will sorely miss, when Dennis Wikerd retires as the school's assistant principal after 39 years of service.

Following time with Mennonite Central Committee in Africa, Wikerd came to Rockway; in addition to leading the school



Dennis Wikerd

through a variety of highs and lows, he built a strong language program and led the France/Germany Exchange for 21 consecutive years.

During those nearly four decades of service, he worked alongside five principals, who were uniform in their praise of his work and dedication to Rockway:

• **WILLIAM KRUGER**, the principal who hired him, noted that he was a great team person who understood the power of integrating faith and education, and was a strong diplomat when working

with parents and teachers.

• **ALBERT LOBE**, principal from 1989 to '96, commented, "Dennis was an anchor, consistently among the first to address challenges. He consistently rose above what tended to hold Rockway down. His vision, professionalism, dedication to kindness, attentiveness to honour, and his respect for students, faculty and staff were always on display"

• **TERRY SCHELLENBERG**, principal from 1996 to 2009, noted that he was "deeply loyal, trustworthy and embodied 'tradition' in the best sense of the word. He gifted me with a commitment to memory—to an understanding of the patterns, commitments and rituals that shape a place like Rockway"

• **BETSY PETKER**, principal from 2010 to '12, reflected on his personality, saying, "Although he has a quiet and reflective presence, his sharp wit often takes you by surprise; he can also cut right to the chase and say it like it is."

• **ANN L. SCHULTZ**, Rockway's current principal, noted, "Dennis knows Rockway intimately and has lived out its mission in his faith and works. He has dedicated his career to Rockway, and it is clear that he loves it dearly. This has been demonstrated through his commitment to excellence in the classroom, his vision and passion for cross-cultural experiences and his love for students"

On behalf of the thousands of students that he impacted, Rockway, its families and students say thank you. ☺

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Canadian MBA students explore the common good

Bluffton University
BLUFFTON, OHIO

Ten graduate students, including five Canadian Mennonite University students, gathered on the campus of Bluffton University for a week in August for the fourth annual Collaborative MBA (master of business administration) residency. While the students began as strangers from vastly different backgrounds, they left with newfound ideas on leadership and lasting bonds.

“It’s a big commitment, but I like learning, and I think it’s going to be worth it,” said Jim Cheng, who works at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg.

The residency is one of the unique aspects of the collaboration between Bluffton University, CMU, Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., and Goshen (Ind.) College. Because of the partnership, students have access to a large group of professors with diverse backgrounds from the partner schools.

“The fact that people are together for a whole week—taking classes, learning about the program, eating meals together, housing together—they become a very close-knit group. You can see the spirit in the group becomes very strong,” said George Lehman, director of the Collaborative MBA and Howard Raid professor of business at Bluffton. “The residency creates a very supportive environment and it carries them through the whole next year when they’ll be learning and working together through videoconference.”

During the residency, students begin their first course on leadership and management for the common good that is taught by Lehman. The class is part of the Collaborative MBA’s focus that revolves around personal formation and competency, building relationships, and making a profit without harm to people or the environment.

“My undergraduate [degree] was in a pretty conservative business setting, so I

think this definitely takes a more holistic approach to business and is much more in line with what I feel personally,” said Adara Kaita, who works in the area of Indigenous relations for the Province of Manitoba.

The group will meet in person again in the summer of 2018 for an international residency in Costa Rica, which will highlight how a particular country has been able to address issues of sustainability while serving the common good.

For the remainder of the 21-month program, participants will meet for class once a week through videoconferencing and will advance as a cohort. ❧



BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY PHOTO

Graduate students in the Collaborative MBA discuss elements of leadership during a residency on the campus of Bluffton University. Pictured clockwise from top left: Anna Herdeck of Chicago; Gordon Damien of Winnipeg; Annalisa Brenneman, with Mennonite Central Committee in Cambodia; Marcus Ebright Zehr and Ben Bontrager, both of Goshen, Ind.; and Adara Kaita of Winnipeg.

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Learning to be vulnerable

ISAAC SCHLEGEL

MENNONITE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

I graduated from Mennonite Collegiate Institute (MCI) in Gretna, Man., in 2016, and it is where I first learned to be vulnerable.

Vulnerability is exposure, letting our true self shine through the layers of defence we build up around it. It is full, undaunted expression. Self-expression will mean something different to each person, but for me it meant finding my voice through singing.

I was sceptical about the idea of singing in choir. Singing has a certain association with impending judgment. I felt like it was too risky, too open to criticism.

I did ultimately come to MCI and



MCI PHOTO

Isaac Schlegel

hesitantly sang in the choir. My jaw was tight and my tongue curled back. I didn't trust my voice and I certainly wasn't going to experiment while other people were present, lest any Simon Cowells were to make their voices heard. I was terrified of being on stage, and that hasn't totally faded. But I was happy to be in the larger choir, where my voice was least noticeable.

Things really changed for me when I joined chamber choir in Grade 11. I had long admired these singers and their confidence, but from a distance. Although I felt myself an impostor, I stayed and took advantage of it and grew to love the choral experience.

Singing is a spiritual activity for me. I encounter God in that space shared between singers, conductor and audience. There my spirits are lifted and I feel myself creative and coexistent. I did not experience this immediately. It was only when I allowed myself to fully join in, to mix voices with others and lend my own, that this process could begin. I had to be willing to put my soul and heart out into the room.

By Grade 12, I was singing in every group that would take me at MCI. In university, I have continued to sing, more to fulfill a need than a want. Music moves me, as I participate both as creator and listener, on a spiritual, emotionally resonant level. My faith life without singing, and the vulnerability it demands of me, would now feel incomplete.

For me, it is an ongoing struggle to maintain vulnerability, to be open. Because I have found that vulnerability is a requirement for living. The world is bounteous, and I am glad MCI helped me open myself to it. ☺



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PHOTO BY BRIAN YODER SCHLABACH
First-year Goshen (Ind.) College students put on waders and gather water samples to study during their visit to the Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College in Wolf Lake on Aug. 27. That same weekend, Goshen College welcomed its largest class since 2009, with students from 24 states and eight countries.

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FOCUS ON EDUCATION

New award brings diversity to Grebel campus

Conrad Grebel University College
Waterloo, Ont.

Living in Toronto for 46 years, Mary Groh was increasingly surrounded by a multicultural society. As an active member of Danforth Mennonite Church there, following the closure of Warden Woods Mennonite Church, she witnessed the growth of various Mennonite congregations in the east end of Toronto.

When she saw a photograph a few years ago of students from Conrad Grebel University College, she noted that “students from long-established Mennonite churches were the ones getting the excellent Christian-based education, and the new Canadians were not.” She shared her concern with Fred Martin, Grebel’s director of advancement, that “this didn’t seem right in a church community where equality is fundamental.”

The admission policy at Grebel is to have approximately 50 percent of residence students come from Mennonite congregations. While Mennonite Church Eastern Canada students make up the majority of this portion, congregations from newcomer communities are under-represented.

Groh recently sold her house in Toronto to move closer to family in Kitchener. At that time, she discussed her concern for a more inclusive church community with a variety of people, including Brent Charette, operations and church engagement minister at MC Eastern Canada, who encouraged her to include Grebel in her conversations.

After several exchanges, she discerned a way of supporting students at Grebel. With funds from the sale of her house, she established the Mennonite Diversity Award, which is designed to make an educational experience at Grebel accessible to Mennonite students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

“My hope is to see a student body at the college that is more representative of the



Mary Groh

cultural diversity of the present and future Mennonite church in Canada,” she said. This vision is focussed on students from Mennonite church families who immigrated since 1975 and Indigenous Mennonite students.

The award is divided among three programs at Grebel: residence, master of the theological studies, and master of peace and conflict studies. With matching funds from MC Eastern Canada, these three awards will be up to \$10,000 for each successful applicant, as long as the funds last.

Groh worked with Sherri Grosz, a gift-planning consultant at Abundance Canada, to set up a gifting account to fund the award.

Jim Pankratz, Grebel’s interim president, said of Groh’s initiative, “We are grateful for your generosity that will provide support for many new Canadian Mennonite students. We are pleased by the interest already shown by church leaders from newcomer congregations. We are also grateful that the leadership of [MC Eastern Canada] has encouraged this initiative and will provide some matching funds. This partnership with Mary and [MC Eastern Canada] . . . enables us to help them fulfill their vision for this award, and to fulfill our mission to seek wisdom, nurture faith, and pursue justice and peace in service to church and society.”

For more details, visit uwaterloo.ca/grebel/financial-aid-and-awards.



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Schools Directory featuring the Collaborative MBA Program

Looking out for the 'triple bottom line'

Collaborative MBA Program

When Mike Duerksen was looking for a stronger foundation in his work leading a Winnipeg-based charity, he enrolled in the Collaborative Master of Business Administration (MBA) program jointly offered by Bluffton (Ind.) University; Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg; Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va.; and Goshen (Ind.) College.

"I wanted more tools to help me become a better leader," says Duerksen, executive director of Generation Rising, a Christian organization dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty in Latin America through education.

Unlike many MBA programs that focus

only on developing technical skills, the Collaborative MBA program includes additional emphasis on personal formation, competency, relationships, and business without harm to people or the environment.

For Duerksen, one of the best parts of the program was the diversity of students in his cohort, which included people who work in insurance, manufacturing, banking, the energy sector and the non-profit world. "We learned from each other as much as we learned from our profs," he says.

He adds that travelling to Costa Rica with his classmates and professors in the middle of the program was another highlight. While in Costa Rica, they toured different companies with different business models, all of which were focussed on the triple bottom line: people, the planet and profit.

The trip allowed him to see the concepts he was learning about applied in real life.

Duerksen graduated this past April and says the Collaborative MBA program has empowered him and his fellow graduates. "We all feel a lot more confident in our abilities to do our jobs," he says.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKE DUERKSEN

'We all feel a lot more confident in our abilities to do our jobs,' says Mike Duerksen, executive director of Generation Rising, a Christian organization dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty in Latin America through education, of his time in the Collaborative MBA program.

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MCC responds to Irma's devastation in Caribbean

In response to the Sept. 7 storm, Mennonite Central Committee began its relief efforts in Haiti and Cuba. canadianmennonite.org/mcc-irma

Mennonite helps Lutherans commemorate the Reformation

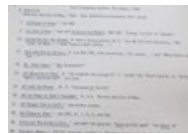
How an invitation to preach and serve communion was an act of ecumenical reconciliation. canadianmennonite.org/mennonite-lutherans

Annual relief festival raises \$1 million

More than 20,000 people attended the annual MCC British Columbia Festival for World Relief. And gave to the cause. canadianmennonite.org/bc-festival-relief

Viewpoint: Why we change hymn texts

Should hymns be sung in their original form or should their texts be updated? canadianmennonite.org/change-hymns



FOCUS ON EDUCATION

/// Briefly noted

GAMEO finds new home at Goshen College

GOSHEN, IND.—The Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (GAMEO), the most trusted online source for information on Anabaptist groups around the world (gameo.org), has found a new home with the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism at Goshen College. Earlier this year, members of the GAMEO management board voted unanimously to transfer oversight of the project to the Institute, whose director, John D. Roth, will serve in a new position as the project's general editor. "The origins of GAMEO go back to the creation of the Mennonite Encyclopedia in the 1940s and 1950s at Goshen College," Roth says. "As the scope of Anabaptist-Mennonite research here has broadened to include the global church, it is fitting that we could bring the long tradition of 'scholarship for the church' to support now the global vision of GAMEO in the digital age." Sam Steiner, one of the founders of GAMEO and an ongoing associate editor, said, "This new institutional home, together with additional associate editors, will expand GAMEO on the good foundations shaped by Richard Thiessen over the past six years." GAMEO will continue to be owned by its six institutional partners: Mennonite World Conference, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, Mennonite Church U.S.A., Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission, and the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism.

—Goshen College



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FOCUS ON EDUCATION



Serving students and learning from mistakes

Student council presidents reflect on their hopes for the 2017-18 school year

BY AARON EPP
Young Voices Editor

In addition to faculty and staff, student council members can play a key role in shaping campus life at colleges and universities. By advocating for their peers, planning social events and organizing service projects, these young leaders have a big impact on what goes on between and after classes.

Canadian Mennonite spoke with the student council presidents from the three Canadian post-secondary institutions affiliated with Mennonite Church Canada about their hopes and dreams for the 2017-18 school year.

Niamh Reynolds **Columbia Bible College** **Abbotsford, B.C.**

Niamh (pronounced Neeve) Reynolds views being student council president as a way to contribute at Columbia Bible College. “I’ve seen how impactful my time has been here,” says the 21-year-old, who is originally from Dublin, Ireland. “I wanted to be a part of creating that for other students.”

“I want to see students going on a journey with God, where he teaches them and disciples them,” she says, hoping that student leaders will actively listen to God and that they will be willing to put their plans aside and pursue God’s.

Reynolds, who is in her fourth year of a degree program in counselling and human services, has previous student leadership experience. During her second year she served on student council as the vice-president of communications, and last year she was a residence assistant.

One of the biggest challenges of student leadership, she says, is feeling ill-equipped for the task. “Leadership is constant learning and failing and learning from mistakes,” she says. “I’m constantly having to

[remember that] I’ll never reach that place of, okay, I know everything I need to know for leadership now. It’s humbling to have to learn that the first time.”

She adds that the start of the 2017-18 school year has been great: “I think it’s going to be an exciting year of God taking people where he needs them to go.”

Sarah Janzen **Canadian Mennonite University** **Winnipeg**

Sarah Janzen’s No. 1 goal for the student council at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) is to serve students. “We’re supposed to be the voice of all the student body, so we really want to keep our ears open to their hopes and their dreams, as well as make sure people are able to connect in places they’re passionate about,” says Janzen, who turns 22 next month.

Born and raised in Winnipeg, she is completing a degree in psychology this year. Last year, she served on student council as a commuter assistant, a role designed to help students who commute to CMU feel more connected to campus life. “I was really pushed out of my comfort zone and

(Continued on page 36)



PHOTO COURTESY OF NIAMH REYNOLDS

Niamh Reynolds wants to see students at Columbia Bible College ‘going on a journey with God.’



PHOTO BY AARON EPP

‘We make a really good team,’ Sarah Janzen says of the student council at Canadian Mennonite University.

FOCUS ON EDUCATION

(Continued from page 35)

I was able to meet people I hadn't really talked to before, and it just kind of made me feel connected to CMU at a whole new level," she says of the experience. "I really appreciated that"

So far, the subcommittees that make up CMU's student council have planned a few events, including a folk festival as well as an event raising awareness about Bill C-262, an act to ensure the laws of Canada are in harmony with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

"We make a really good team," Janzen says of the 20-plus students on student council. "They have exciting ideas that I hope will come through this year."

Mark Whyte
Conrad Grebel University College
Waterloo, Ont.

Mark Whyte isn't new to student leadership. Two years ago, he served as co-editor of *Grebel Speaks*, the student newspaper at Conrad Grebel University College, and last year he served as a residence assistant. "I'm a big believer that you need to grow wherever you're planted," says the 21-year-old,

who is from Sauble Beach, Ont. "Wherever you are, it's important to help those around you, and I think student leadership is a great way to do that."

As student council president, Whyte wants to encourage Grebel's students to use the resources available to them through the University of Waterloo, from academic papers to funding for entrepreneurs. "I want to make sure students know about the ways they can get involved," says the fourth-year science student.

Promoting mental health issues and working to ensure that students are maintaining a healthy life balance is important to Whyte and his 10-member student council.

Being transparent to the student body is also key. "We really want to explain what we're doing and why we're doing it . . . so that students can offer advice and feedback."

So far, the school year is going well, he says. It's interesting welcoming returning students back to campus while also encouraging them to be hosts to new students. "It's always fun to see that play out," he says. "Everyone can feel this energy in the air. It's a palpable feeling." ❧

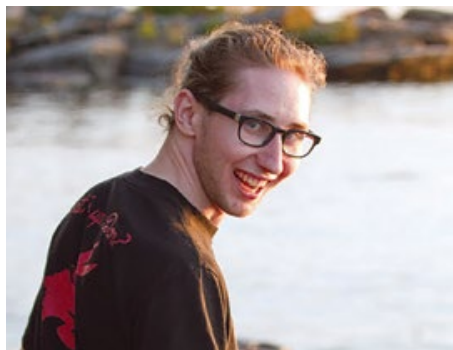


PHOTO COURTESY OF MARK WHYTE

'It's important to help those around you,' says Mark Whyte, student council president at Conrad Grebel University College.

The kids are all right . . . aren't they?

College dean explores emerging-adult faith development in doctoral dissertation

BY AARON EPP
Young Voices Editor

Gil Dueck doesn't have a one-size-fits-all plan for how churches can better engage with the young adults in their congregations, but he has some ideas.

While questions about "how the kids are doing" can quickly become cliché, he says, ultimately, they are healthy.

"They are, at rock bottom, expressions of love and concern," Dueck tells *Canadian Mennonite* by phone from his office at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, B.C., where he works as the academic

dean. "That's a beautiful thing, because [it shows] we care about the next generation, we care about how they're doing."

Dueck, who holds a PhD from Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, has a deep desire to see young adults grow and develop as Christ-followers. His doctoral dissertation explores emerging-adult faith development. He likens the dissertation to two maps:

• **THE FIRST** traces what the transition to



PHOTO COURTESY OF
COLUMBIA BIBLE COLLEGE

I would say this to older Christians: Don't be afraid to offer guidance,' Gil Dueck says.

adulthood looks like for young people in the 21st century.

• **THE SECOND** explores what it means to grow and mature as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

The dissertation explores “emerging adulthood,” a phrase coined in 2000 by American psychologist Jeffrey Arnett to describe a new stage of development between adolescence and adulthood. Whereas before, people typically got an education, got a job, got married, bought a house and had children, all by their mid-20s, many young adults today are taking more time to reach those milestones.

Emerging adulthood is both the observation that young people are taking longer to get to adulthood, and the observation that adulthood as a destination is less desirable than it once was.

“There’s sort of an acceptance that it’s on the horizon, [that] you have to get there eventually, but it’d be okay if you waited

check in and maintain a relationship with young adults, even if they aren’t showing up to church every Sunday morning.

Everywhere you go, he says, people are saying that the church needs to have honest conversations with young people, and hear them out about where they are in life and what they are feeling. Broadly speaking, he says, that’s good advice, but it has its limits.

“I would say this to older Christians: Don’t be afraid to offer guidance,” he says. “I think there’s a sense sometimes that older people can be a little bit nervous and timid about [offering guidance], maybe because they experienced older people in their life as quite dominating or coming with cookie-cutter solutions or quite dogmatic . . . and so they’re really keen to back away from that and just say, ‘Well it’s not my job to tell you what to think or what to do.’

“I want to affirm the need for hospitality and for patient listening, and for giving space for young adults to describe what

Young adults today . . . have unprecedented choice and possibility when it comes to the direction their lives can take, and they are growing up in a culture that has largely repudiated the Christian faith

awhile, because it’s probably not going to be all that fun—it’s going to involve things like mortgages and taxes,” Dueck says.

Young adults today, he adds, are coming of age in the midst of a uniquely challenging cultural moment: They have unprecedented choice and possibility when it comes to the direction their lives can take, and they are growing up in a culture that has largely repudiated the Christian faith.

One of the implications of this is that young adults are spending more time away from the church than they might have in the past. “Obviously there’s more time for people to drift away, and that’s what I think is behind some of the cultural anxiety that we sense in the church these days about young adults,” he says.

So what can churches do? Dueck is leery of programmatic solutions, because not all churches have the resources to implement them.

“Low-key, relational kinds of contact points are a big part of this,” he says. That could mean having people in the church

the world looks like and what challenges they’re facing,” he adds, “but I think there’s also a need for the church, for older people at least, to be a bit bolder in terms of offering [the] wisdom we have.”

Ultimately, Dueck says, there is a more profound question he would like to see the church wrestling with: Where are we going?

“It might be that our lack of clarity on the question of how the kids are doing is making us so anxious, because we are less certain about where we’re going, that we might not be totally clear on what it means to be an adult, that we might not be clear on what Christian maturity actually looks like in terms of practical outcomes,” he says.

“There’s a question about what is the end goal here that I think we need to drill into as churches,” he says, concluding, “I’d like to see us use this conversation about young adults as a stepping stone into larger conversation about some of those themes.” ❧

Calendar

British Columbia

Oct. 26: Columbia Bible College view day.

Oct. 27-28: Mennonite Heritage Museum presents Telling Stories: A Conference for Writers, featuring Rudy Wiebe and other authors, poets and illustrators, at the museum, Abbotsford; (27) at 7 p.m.; (28) from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., plus lecture by Rudy Wiebe, at Level Ground Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, at 7 p.m.

Nov. 2-5: MEDA Business as a Calling convention, at the Westin Bayshore, Vancouver. Keynote speakers: Samantha Nutt, Wally Kroeker and David Esau. For more information, visit medaconvention.org.

Nov. 3: Pastor/spouse retreat at Camp Squeah.

Nov. 4: Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. presents its annual fall genealogy workshop.

Nov. 12: Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. fall fundraiser, A Legacy: The Mennonite Conscientious Objectors,

featuring "The Last Objectors" film by Conrad Stoesz, at King Road MB Church, Abbotsford, at 3 p.m. Fropa to follow. For more information, visit mhsbc.com.

Nov. 17: Senior youth Impact retreat at Camp Squeah.

Nov. 19: Symphony of Hymns II fundraiser to benefit MC B.C.; featuring Calvin Dyck, violin, and Michael Berg, tenor; at Level Ground Mennonite Church, Abbotsford; at 3 p.m.

Nov. 20-25: Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. annual Christmas market at the Mennonite Heritage Museum, Abbotsford. Visit mennonitemuseum.org for more information.

Nov. 23: Columbia Bible College view day.

Alberta

Nov. 25: Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta conference, Tapestry of Two Uprooted Cultures: Japanese and Mennonites in Southern Alberta, featuring authors Joy Kogawa and Rudy Wiebe, followed by cultural dancing,

music and food; at 1 p.m. Call the historical society at 403-250-1121 by Nov. 16 to register.

Saskatchewan

Oct. 27: MDS awareness and fundraising event, at Grace Mennonite Church, Neuanlage; supper at 6:30 p.m. For reservations, call 306-342-4344 by Oct. 20.

Oct. 28: MC Saskatchewan Equipping Day, at Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim.

Oct. 28: Mega Menno youth event, at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

Nov. 3-4: Women's retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre, Waldheim. Theme: "Embrace your call." For more information, visit mcsask.ca.

Nov. 11: Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan hosts a peace event at Bethany Manor, Saskatoon, at 2 p.m. Walter Klaassen will tell three short peace stories followed by two short films on conscientious objectors.

Nov. 18: Mega Menno youth event at Osler Mennonite, at 7 p.m.

Manitoba

Until Nov. 18: Colourful Faith exhibit by Segun Olude and Gibril Bangura, at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery.

Oct. 19-21: Mennonite/s Writing VIII: Personal Narratives of Place and Discernment conference, at the University of Winnipeg, featuring Miriam Toews and Rhoda Janzen. Presented by the Chair in Mennonite Studies and the "Journal of Mennonite Studies." For more information, email Royden Loewen at rloewen@uwinnipeg.ca.

Nov. 9-11: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate senior-high drama, "Radium Girls," at the Gas Station Arts Centre, Winnipeg.

Nov. 21: Evening of the Arts, at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.

Nov. 27: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate annual general meeting, at 7 p.m.


Dec. 4: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Christmas concert, at Westminster United Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.



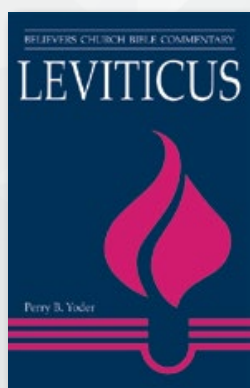
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Ontario

Until Dec. 15: Painting a Picture of Dignity exhibit explores the theme of dignity through paintings created by people with Alzheimer's and dementia, at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

Until May 2019: Sites of Nonresistance: Ontario Mennonites and the First World War exhibit of letters, photographs and documents from the Mennonite Archives of Ontario, at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

Oct. 14: Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario celebrates a century of Mennonite sewing circles in Ontario, at 50 Kent Avenue, Kitchener, at 2 p.m. Visit mhso.org for more information.

Oct. 15: Sixth annual Male Chorus Sing at the Detweiler Meeting House, Roseville, at 2:30 p.m. Song leaders: Laverne Martin, Charles Kruger and Laverne Brubacher. For more information, call Sam Steiner at 519-884-1040.

Oct. 26: Benjamin Eby Lecture, at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, at 7:30 p.m. Speaker: Reina Neufeldt. Topic: "When good intentions are not enough: Confronting ethical challenges in peacebuilding and reconciliation."

Oct. 29: Pax Christi Chorale presents Romantic Masters, at Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto, at 3 p.m.; featuring works by Bruckner, Brahms and Beethoven.

Nov. 17-18: Spirit of Christmas celebration at Nairn Mennonite Church, Ailsa Craig, featuring homemade treats and crafts by local talent and Ten Thousand Villages, plus music of the season. Canned goods welcomed for the local food bank.

Nov. 18: Fairview Mennonite Home in Cambridge presents its annual handicraft sale, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; includes decorations, gifts, sweet shop, wreaths, knitting, woodworking; refreshments in the tea room.

Nov. 18: Nithview Christmas Bazaar, in New Hamburg, featuring a bake sale, silent auction and community vendors, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Nov. 18,19: Soli Deo Gloria Singers present their fall concert, To God Alone be the Glory; (18) at UMEI, Leamington, at 7:30 p.m.; (19) at

Leamington United Mennonite, at 3 p.m. For more information, call 519-326-7448.

Nov. 25: MennoHomes annual general meeting and Inshallah ensemble concert, at Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, at 7 p.m. For more information, visit mennohomes.com.

Nov. 26: Fifth annual Welcome Advent event at Detweiler Meeting House, Roseville, at 2:30 p.m. Featuring Lifted Voices. For more information, call Sam Steiner at 519-884-1040.

Dec. 15-17: Listowel Mennonite Church presents An Advent Journey Marketplace: (15 and 16) from 7 to 9 p.m.; (17) from 2 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. For more information, call 519-291-2350.

Dec. 16,17: Pax Christi Chorale presents "Gloria" by Poulenc, and other works, including French carols, at Grace Church on-the-Hill, Toronto: (16) at 7:30 p.m.; (17) at 3 p.m.

U.S.A.

Feb. 2-4, 2018: Mennonite Arts Weekend 2018, at Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, Ohio. Canada's Theatre of the Beat will be among the featured performers. For more information, visit mennoniteartsweekend.org.

March 16-17, 2018: Mennonites and the Holocaust conference, at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Featured speaker: Doris Bergen, who holds the Chancellor Rose and Ray Wolfe Chair in Holocaust studies at the University of Toronto. For more information, visit mla.bethelks.edu/MennosandHolocaust.

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

**Classifieds****Employment Opportunities**



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For more information, a job description, or to submit an application contact:
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MCEC Operations and Church Engagement Minister
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Become Mature
Behave like Christ

Unit 1: Believe in God		Believe in God introduced by Palmer Becker
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		In the Holy Spirit Fanosie Legesse
		In the grace of God Dr. Nakhle Bishara
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		With a common vision Janessa Otto
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		Bible reading Grace Buller
		Prayer Ralph Brubacher
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		In response to need Rick Cober Bauman
		Knowing yourself Jessica Reesor Rempel
		Using your experiences Dave and Mary Lou Klassen
		In ministry and mission César García