

CANADIAN MENNONITE

June 4, 2018
Volume 22 Number 12



Winnipeggers take to the street
in support of *Nakba* survivors
(Story on back cover)

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EDITORIAL

Building a new thing

TOBI THIESSEN
PUBLISHER

In April, two U.S.-based Mennonite publications—*The Mennonite* and *Mennonite World Review*—announced plans to merge by 2019. The merger is the result of talks that started in 2016, and originally included this magazine. All three of us face the same challenges: declining revenue from subscriptions and advertising plus the need to build a digital presence for the current age of communication. We each have a unique product, yet all offer a forum for news, opinion and dialogue in the Mennonite church. There is overlap between our audiences.

However, our situation at *Canadian Mennonite* is different from that of our U.S. counterparts, which is why they are making plans to merge, and we are not.

For us, subscription revenue has not fallen as severely. This is because, within Mennonite Church Canada, we established the Every Home Plan (EHP) back in 1998. Anyone who attends an MC Canada congregation may subscribe to *CM* through their church. Fees are paid collectively through the larger church bodies. Decline is occurring anyway, but the existence of the EHP has slowed the rate. Today, subscription revenue covers 33 percent of the cost of producing the magazine and website.

CM covers the rest of our costs with advertising, donations and a federal grant called the Canada Periodical Fund (CPF). The purpose of the CPF is to support Canadian content in magazines. This magazine qualifies since it has Canadian



writers, most articles relate to activities in Canada, there is an independent board of directors and a paid subscription plan. The grant has buffered us while advertising and subscription revenues decline.

However, we are now in the uncomfortable position of relying on federal funding. We would not want to have to cutback dramatically if we didn't receive the grant one year. More importantly, we would never want our independence as a church publication to be compromised if strings were ever attached to the funding. (There is no indication that this will happen, but it is something we think about.)

Therefore, while *CM* is not merging with another Mennonite publication, neither are we in any position to stand still. I like to quote John Longhurst, chair of *Mennonite World Review*: "You can manage something in decline, or you can build something new, and it is much more fun to build something new."

We believe a print publication continues to be a valuable tool for connecting our national church family, but the current format is 20 years old. We are looking at redesign options to help it be more inviting, including possibly changing to white paper for higher contrast and better photo reproduction.

We are also considering other changes. Do you have ideas? Feel free to suggest them to us, a member of the board or your regional correspondent.

People of all ages from across the country come to our website. They read people

stories, opinion pieces, articles about congregations, theological reflections, and more. They leave thoughtful comments. It is becoming a central place where people in our church can be informed. The collection of stories and conversations housed here helps maintain a sense of national identity, just as the magazine does.

As a next step, we envision a more active social media presence, where we encourage and moderate online conversations about faith and life. Such a role involves taking material from the magazine and discussing it in the online community.

In reverse, conversations that develop online can lead to new story ideas for the magazine. This is a new way that *Canadian Mennonite* can build on the strength of its grassroots connections with Mennonites across the country, while pursuing the same mission: "to inform, educate, inspire and foster dialogue on issues facing Mennonites in Canada."

We invite you to join us in building a new thing.

Introducing Nicolien Klassen-Wiebe, Manitoba Correspondent

Nicolien was born and raised in Winnipeg within the faith community of Charleswood Mennonite Church. She just completed her last year of a bachelor's degree in communications and media at Canadian Mennonite University. She spent many summers working at Camps with Meaning as a counsellor and nature instructor, and last summer she interned with Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba in the communications department. She enjoys travelling and recently went on an eye-opening tour of Jordan and Israel/Palestine. She loves reading, singing in choirs, and, of course, writing!



ABOUT THE COVER:

Around a hundred people gathered at a busy intersection in Winnipeg on May 15 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the *Nakba*, which means 'catastrophe' in Arabic. For more, see the back cover.

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CANADIAN MENNONITE

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

Guiding values:

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

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

• Covenantal relationships and mutual accountability

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

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Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH FEATURE

Paving the way to the Promised Land

Why transitional ministry is important for congregations

BY DONNA SCHULZ
SASKATCHEWAN CORRESPONDENT



PHOTO BY ERNIE JANZEN

After serving as interim pastor at Grace Mennonite Church in St. Catharines, Ont., Waldo Pauls ended up staying on as minister for seven years. He is pictured with his wife Pam at their farewell service following Waldo's retirement in 2014.

“You don't go quickly from Egypt to the Promised Land,” quips Harold Schlegel. “The wilderness is where God forms us.”



Harold Schlegel

The wilderness Schlegel speaks of is the transition in a congregation's life between one pastor and another. Church leaders suggest it's a time that's ripe for interim or transitional ministry.

An interim pastor, hired for one or two years, may be a supply pastor who preaches and provides pastoral care, or an intentional interim pastor who helps a congregation work through difficult issues. In Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, some pastors are hired as transformational ministers for three to five years, with the intention of changing the congregation's culture.

Some congregations are uncomfortable spending any time in the wilderness and prefer to hire a new pastor as soon as the previous one leaves. But, according to Schlegel, who has served in five interim roles in both Ontario and Manitoba, “if congregations don't take time to do transition well, the next pastor is very short-term.” Ken Bechtel, whose experience in transitional ministry spans more than two decades, says this person can become an “unintentional interim pastor.”

Rick Neufeld, director of Leadership Ministries for MC Manitoba, says, “Some congregations hesitate because they see [interim ministry] as stalling. In fact, the opposite is true.” He says interim ministry can give congregations “opportunity to revisit their goals and vision,” and can “assist in the health of the congregation.” Bechtel says, “The time between pastors can be really fruitful.”

In MC Eastern Canada transitional ministry is strongly supported. “We try to advocate and encourage interim ministry in most of our congregations when they are in transition,” says Henry Paetkau, regional church minister for MC Eastern Canada. At any given time, says Paetkau, the regional church may have eight to 10 interim ministers in place.

There are likely as many reasons for being an interim pastor as there are interim pastors. For some, the short-term nature of the commitment is attractive.

Neufeld also encourages MC Manitoba congregations to consider interim pastors. "I think there would be good reason for every congregation to have an interim minister," he says, "but not every congregation chooses to do so." In the past year five MC Manitoba congregations had transitional pastors.

Further west, engagement of an interim minister depends on availability. "If we had more available interim pastors we might use them more frequently," says Tim Wiebe-Neufeld, MC Alberta's executive minister. Alberta congregations have sometimes looked beyond their borders as well as beyond their denomination for interim ministers. Edmonton First Mennonite Church, for instance, currently has an interim pastor from the United Church of Canada.

While any congregation can benefit from the care of an interim pastor, there are certain circumstances in which transitional ministry is especially helpful:

- **FOLLOWING THE** departure of a long-serving pastor. In such cases, congregations may hope their new pastor will either be just like a previous, much-loved pastor, or the exact opposite of a pastor congregants have grown tired of. In this case, an interim pastor can provide space to reflect on and celebrate what was, and prepare for what is to come.
- **FOLLOWING CONGREGATIONAL** conflict. This can include trauma or clergy misconduct. It can also include repetitive negative behaviour patterns and what Bechtel calls "stuckness." Schlegel, who currently works as director of donor development at Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna, Man., says a transitional pastor can hold a mirror up to the congregation, "not to bring shame, but to help them see themselves as wonderfully made, loved and lovely, without needing to be perfect."
- **WHEN A** congregation considers closing its doors. If an aging or dwindling

congregation feels it can no longer continue, an interim pastor may be called upon to guide it toward closure. On the other hand, an interim pastor may breathe new life into such situations, helping congregations re-invent themselves.

Grace Mennonite Church, in St. Catharines, Ont., hired Waldo Pauls as an intentional interim pastor. Congregational chair Ted Kopp says the church thought Pauls would "assist them toward a peaceful termination." Instead, his presence rejuvenated the church. "He made us feel like we could still accomplish things," Kopp says. Today the congregation employs David Brubacher as lead minister and Doug Schultz as outreach pastor.

There are likely as many reasons for being an interim pastor as there are interim pastors. For some, the short-term nature of the commitment is attractive. After eight years as executive director for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Saskatchewan, Claire Ewert Fisher longed to return to pastoral work. But, she says, "I didn't know if I had the energy to get into full-time, long-term ministry." A one-year, half-time position with Grace Mennonite in Prince Albert, Sask.,

was just right for her. Similarly, Wanda Roth Amstutz found the short-term nature of interim ministry appealing as a way to re-test her calling after a stint with MCC in Ethiopia.

For other pastors, the nature of the work is attractive. "Interim ministry can be very change-focussed," says Melissa Miller. Currently serving at Home Street Mennonite in Winnipeg, Miller admits, "I'm drawn to change, to where the Spirit is leading."

Bechtel echoes Miller's viewpoint. "In interim ministry the attraction is that you get to see some things happen in a congregation. There's excitement around that," he says.

Inherent in transitional ministry is the assumption that difficult issues are on the table, which can also be attractive. As Bechtel points out, in long-term ministry a pastor can spend many hours just getting permission to tackle those difficult issues. In transitional ministry, tackling difficult issues is one of the things the pastor was hired to do.

It follows, then, that an interim pastor may not always be popular with a congregation. Ryan Siemens, MC Saskatchewan's executive minister, says, "They're there to stir the pot, and, in some cases, be disliked." Gerry Binnema, whose first pastorate was an interim position with Living Hope Christian Fellowship in Surrey, B. C., says, "Sometimes there are sacred cows that need to be taken down. You can be a bad guy in a way, and set the new person up."

Brubacher, who has also been an interim pastor, doesn't find the bad-guy model helpful. "People are more receptive to



Waldo Pauls



David Brubacher



Claire Ewert Fisher



Wanda Roth Amstutz



Melissa Miller



Gerry Binnema

hard truths if spoken with love,” he says. “Once you’ve gained their trust, it is easier to speak, and for them to hear. People will embrace change if they can be convinced change will be a blessing.”

But when the timeline is short—typical terms last one or two years—how does a pastor gain the congregation’s trust? Ewert Fisher says, “It’s like speed dating. You’ve got to know people really quickly.” And that’s not always easy. “I was not familiar with the church’s history, so I had to rely on the memory of members,” she says. “You just have to know how to ask questions.”

Neufeld says that interim ministry may not be for every pastor. “You have to have the ability to work under stress and to manage conflict,” he says. “You have to have the skill to give a congregation the opportunity to really see itself and to move toward a healthy relationship with their next pastor.”

Brubacher, again, feels differently. “Interim ministry is not rocket science,” he says. “It involves pastoral care and making sure the congregation knows that you love them, building up trust as you care for them.”

Besides the dynamics of human relationships, there are other challenges that come with the territory. An interim pastorate may require either commuting or uprooting one’s family. For this reason alone, younger pastors may not be drawn to the work.

But if transitional ministry attracts more experienced pastors—pastors nearing or already enjoying retirement—this may stand congregations in good stead. Brubacher points out that depth of experience is essential in dealing with critical issues, especially when congregations have experienced conflict.

While experience is helpful, transitional pastors also value the training they have had. Many have availed themselves of courses offered through the Interim Ministry Network based in Baltimore, Md. In B. C., both Janzen and Binnema participated in a course offered by Delta-based Outreach Canada. Brubacher trained as a clergy coach with Rob Boyle of the Clergy Leadership Institute.

These courses are all ecumenical in

nature, but Brubacher doesn’t see a problem with that. “We’re a small denomination,” he says. “If there are resources offered outside [the Mennonite church], how much do we need to do?” He adds, “There are benefits to being trained alongside others of other denominational backgrounds.”

Within the Mennonite church, MC Canada and MC U.S.A. have collaborated since the mid-1990s to offer short courses in transitional ministry. Bechtel has led six of these courses. “It’s fun doing trainings,” he says. “Pastors bring their own observations.” As part of the course, Bechtel gives them incomplete case studies to respond to. “It’s great to see the different approaches they come up with.”

Regardless of whether they have had training specific to transitional ministry, most pastors acknowledge they have learned many lessons along the way. Bechtel notes that each congregation has its own unique personality. “What works in one congregation won’t work in another,” he says. Miller agrees. “Adaptive leadership is critical in interim ministry,”

she says. “There will be surprises along the way.”

Brubacher stresses the importance of listening. “You can’t be a leader without listening,” he says. “You listen so that you know what language they speak.”

Roth Amstutz says transitional ministry is “really about facilitating room for the Holy Spirit to be at work.” Miller also speaks of the awareness she has gained of “the many ways God’s Spirit is at work in congregations, in both celebration and fracture.” Likewise, Schlegel sees transitional ministry as God’s work. “I’m not responsible for what comes out,” he says, although, “I can help congregation members listen to each other and for what the Holy Spirit is saying to them.”

Whether interim ministry is necessary each time a congregation is in transition is debatable. But when a church finds itself at a crossroads, it may be worthwhile to spend some time in the wilderness. “One of our biggest challenges is the impatience that is prolific in our culture,” says Schlegel. “Sometimes we need to take time and let the Spirit work.” ❧

/// For discussion

1. Have you ever felt that you were “in the wilderness” when your congregation was between pastors? Why do some congregations keep their pastors for a long time and others are always changing? Does your congregation look for a transitional pastor between long-term pastors? How can an interim pastor play a beneficial role?
2. Donna Schulz quotes Harold Schlegel as saying, “If congregations don’t take time to do transition well, the next pastor is very short-term.” Does this match your experience? Why might a lack of transition time shorten the next pastor’s tenure?
3. Do you know congregations that have experienced significant conflict during the time of a pastoral change? How could an intentional interim pastor have helped deal with the situation? What skills are important for intentional interim pastors?
4. In previous centuries Mennonite ministers were chosen from within the congregation (by lot in some traditions) and were generally not supported financially. How does your congregation choose a pastor? How does the way a church leader is chosen change the expectations of the role? What are the advantages and disadvantages of having the congregation employ the pastor?

—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. 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.

✉ It's not easy being single in the church

THERE WERE NEVER many girls my age at the Mennonite church in Scarborough, Ont., prior to my adolescent years, nor did my becoming a teenager make much difference.

There were many personable Upper Canada College girls at the high school I attended. But Mom said, "No!" They were not "Deetch."

By the time I reached the age of 20, the young peoples group had been gutted by marriage. With whom was I to chat, let alone date?

Married couples rarely invited me to their homes. One of the reasons seemed to be that the women considered me to be a woman hater, if not worse.

(Continued on page 8)

FROM OUR LEADERS

Living into all our relations

GARRY JANZEN

In these recent years of walking with our Indigenous neighbours, I have been both blessed and intrigued by the words of encouragement often expressed at the end of a talk: "All my relations."

My understandings of this saying come mostly from the reflections of Richard Wagamese, the Ojibway author of the book *Indian Horse*, who says that it means everything. It has the solemn sense of being a benediction, a blessing and a call to unity. It means that we recognize everything as alive and essential to our being, so there is nothing that matters less than anything else.

When a speaker makes this statement, it is meant as a recognition of the principles of harmony, unity and equality. It means that we are all related. It means that all living things are connected to each other and to the Creator.



It is to say that I cannot exist without you and you cannot exist without me. What I do affects you and others, and what you do affects me. Everything we do has an effect on others and on our world. The place where we may have differing beliefs in

It has the solemn sense of being a benediction, a blessing and a call to unity.

Christian and Indigenous worldviews is in the understanding that it means everything has a spirit, and in this way we are connected to each other as well as to the Creator.

"All my relations" seem to carry a very similar tone to the Hebrew word "shalom."

Now when we are committed to living into all our relations, we engage in a journey of discovery that has the potential of great joy and peace. Acknowledging our relations certainly gives us a deeper appreciation for caring for God's creation. In our human relationships, it calls for an

approach to each other of love and respect. It gives us a curiosity to know the other rather than dismiss the other as different and pass certain judgments on the other.

From the lens of our missional perspective, it affirms the approach of looking for what God is doing in our neighbourhoods and seeking to align with God's activity, bearing witness to the love of Jesus as we go.

When we encounter challenging times in our communities of faith, it leads us to believing the best in others, and finding our way through challenges wearing this lens

of "All my relations." It says, "I am with you and for you rather than against you."

If we appreciate the understandings of "All my relations," we should walk with all peoples as fellow learners along the way.

A Scripture passage that I am drawn to is Colossians 3:11: "Here there is no gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all."

Garry Janzen is executive minister of Mennonite Church British Columbia.

(Continued from page 7)

Eventually, I got into various kinds of shiftwork; this had the effect of killing most of my social life.

As a retired security officer who never married, I look into my past and then into my future:

- I DID not know the love of a good woman, nor did I have the challenge and joy of bringing up children

to maturity. There was so much that I missed by not being able to marry.

- THESE DAYS, because of the squabbling between pro- and anti-homosexual contingents within Mennonite Church Canada, I, and other singles, are tacitly pushed to the sidelines.

- Although I will likely pass on some time after my brother and sister have drawn their last breaths, some

KINGDOM YEARNINGS

From mountain to plain and back again

RYAN JANTZI

Mountaintop experiences. Those moments where God is undeniably present. When he shows up in power and glory. We are left riding high on a spiritual wave, convinced that God is at work in wonderful ways. What have your mountaintop experiences been?

There are a few that jump to my mind. On one occasion, the Holy Spirit was poured out on some unsuspecting Bible college students at a dormitory meeting. We didn't see it coming. Suddenly, his presence filled the room. Many of us were moved to tears as we proceeded from heart-to-heart conversations to passionate pleas of prayer and back again. Significant healing happened among us that night. It was a mountaintop experience.

On another occasion, I responded to a preacher's call for repentance. The weight of conviction was upon me, and I stepped forward to let God know that I meant business. I wanted to be faithful. I knew he had spoken. The course of my life was altered that night, and I've not been quite the same ever since.

We're in good company with our mountaintop experiences. Moses spoke with God face-to-face on Mount Sinai. His

face glowed with radiance following these experiences. The Apostle Peter, too. He met with Jesus, Moses and Elijah on a summit. While Jesus shone brightly, God spoke audible words of affirmation. I imagine Peter was profoundly impacted by this occasion.

However, as we all know, mountaintop experiences do not last forever. Life is not sustained on a peak. Rather, we spend much of our time working in the valley or even wandering through the desert. Our biblical inspirations knew this as well as you and I do. Moses led a grumbling, dissatisfied people for many years, struggling to trust and restrained from his ultimate goal. Peter's journey following the Mount of Transfiguration wasn't exactly "happily ever after" either.



Peter's journey following the Mount of Transfiguration wasn't exactly 'happily ever after' either.

So what do we do with these mountaintop experiences? How might our delight and worship at the pinnacle inform our plodding on the plains?

One great danger is that the sweet memories of God's power and presence lead us to dissatisfaction and even bitterness at all other points. We anxiously strain ahead, demanding that God meet us gloriously

once again. We can become consistently filled with disappointment because life is not what it had been at that high point.

An alternative danger is that we guard ourselves. It happened once, but "that was then." We're not sure how to get back there, so we settle in, put our heads down and faithfully serve the Lord. We don't want to be disappointed when it doesn't happen. Nor do we want to get "carried away." We live as if this is all there is on our side of heaven. When we do this, might we be hardening ourselves to God's surprising work?

Mountaintop experiences are a precious gift from God. May we receive them and yearn for them as such. May we raise them as "ebenezers," as monuments to God's power and presence, so that we may be spurred on through the dry, painful or mundane times. They inspire us to believe there is more than what we see right now. And may we also pray to God for our next mountaintop experience. Let us ask God if

maybe, once again in his good time, heaven might undeniably touch earth, right here in front of us.

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

of my nieces and nephews will be at my bedside.

♦ **CONTRARY TO** what some married cronies may think, I have not been without joys in my life. During the last five years, I have had the privilege of speaking to others about Jesus.

To the married, continue to love and care for each as long as you are able. As for me, I will be ready for glory

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Epp—Laura Susanna Louise (b. April 26, 2018), to Erik and Cara (Warkentin) Epp, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Green—Victoria Carol (b. March 28, 2018), to Andrea and Nick Green, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Hiebert—Lucia Gabrielle (b. Feb. 24, 2018), to Toni and Kayla Hiebert, Steinbach Mennonite, Man.

McLean—Ayla Jade (b. April 30, 2018), to CJ and Jeannesta McLean, North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

Yantzi—Max John David (b. Jan. 24, 2018), to Erin and Dustin Yantzi, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Deaths

Andres—W. Orville, 87 (b. May 7, 1930; d. April 11, 2018), Grace Mennonite, Prince Albert, Sask.

Feick—Lorne Edward, 84 (b. July 22, 1933; d. May 9, 2018, in Saskatoon), Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Friesen—Sara, 99 (b. Jan. 13, 1919; d. April 23, 2018), Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.

because I inadvertently remained single. So there!

HANS SAWATZKY, WINNIPEG

The author is a member of North Kildonan Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Heinrichs—Anna, 97 (b. Jan. 4, 1921; d. April 29, 2018), Arnaud Mennonite, Man.

Klassen—John, 84 (d. April 19, 2018), Morden Mennonite, Man.

Sawatzky—Louise (nee Kasdorf), 95 (b. Feb. 28, 1923; d. April 30, 2018), First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Tiessen—Harry, 90 (d. April 24, 2018), Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones

announcements within four months of the event.

Please send Milestones announcements by email to milestones@canadianmennonite.org, including the congregation name and location.

/// Correction

Naim Ateek's first name was incorrectly spelled in the second paragraph of "We have to begin by crying out for justice," May 21, page 29. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the error.

A moment from yesterday



Tea is served on the front porch of Brubacher House Museum at its opening in 1979. The University of Waterloo, Ont., acquired the house and land to expand its campus. In 1968, the house suffered a devastating fire, but it was rebuilt with the help of Mennonite craftsman Simeon Martin. The university invited Conrad Grebel University College to operate the house as a museum of 19th-century Mennonite farm life in Waterloo County. Today, within sight of a high-tech research park, Brubacher House maintains an active program of social and artistic events and historical education. How are your local museums faring as Canadian views of pioneer life and culture are changing?

Text: Laureen Harder-Gissing

Photo: Mennonite Archives of Ontario



archives.mhsc.ca

VIEWPOINT

Let's try talking
to the 'enemy'

RUSSEL SNYDER-PENNER

I have a few observations to make about the open letter from the Mennonite Church Canada network of regional working groups on Palestine and Israel ("MC Canada working groups call for sanctions against Israel," May 21, page 28). You will need to read this letter to understand and evaluate my comments.



asked to do hard things to individuals on the other side. Many people are uneasy about this. We find it easier if our target is part of a group that is clearly in the wrong and obviously "has it

coming."

The open letter proceeds with a narrative that associates a particular group (Jewish Israel) with collective wrongdoing. To my knowledge, the facts in the narrative are materially correct and they are very troubling. What the narrative does not include are facts that would complicate the picture, that might make it difficult to decide what to do, or that might spread the blame.

In brief, this account strives for clarity and certitude. It justifies Mennonite alignment with our Palestinian brothers and sisters, and against Israel. It establishes the wickedness of the adversary.

Demonstrating commitment

In the final sentences of the open letter, the alliance with our brothers and sisters in opposition to Israel is sealed by a small aggression—a little metaphorical bloodletting. That is, the authors—and Mennonite Church Canada—advocate nonviolent sanctions against Israel until a "comprehensive solution is found." Based on the 70-plus-year history of the conflict, that could be a long time.

It may seem a little harsh to describe such sanctions as aggression and "metaphorical bloodletting." The fact of the

We find it easier if our target is part of a group that is clearly in the wrong and obviously 'has it coming.'

matter is, economic sanctions have been part of the warrior's toolkit throughout recorded history. Furthermore, sanctions tend to "work" by making someone, somewhere, suffer.

An extreme example may be found in Gaza, which has been suffering under economic sanctions and blockades by Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority. I am quite certain that the authors of the open letter do not intend these kinds of sanctions.

Unfortunately, it is not clear what they do intend. The authors do not explain how sanctions will help, or how deeply they may bite before ceasing to be "nonviolent." One wonders whether this tactic may just as likely inflame or prolong the conflict as resolve it. What the push for sanctions does makes clear is who we are with, who we are against, and that we have joined the battle.

Knowing our enemies

In summary, by this very minor act of hostility directed at Israel, Mennonites have acknowledged not merely that they have enemies, but that they are quite capable of making them.

I am not arguing that there is anything shameful in having enemies, or even in making them, if it is done through an act of integrity. The problem, for people who purport to follow Jesus, is figuring out how to love one's enemy.

My concern with the open letter is that it relies on polarizing rhetoric and resorts to an act of symbolic aggression, both of which are tried and true techniques of triggering ancient patterns of very real social aggression.

As an alternative, I suggest the following: Now that MC Canada has joined the struggle against Israel, congregations need to take seriously their calling to love their enemies. This should include trying to open lines of communication with the people who may receive that call for sanctions as a personal attack. Checking in with the closest synagogue could be a worthwhile first step to opening a difficult if crucial dialogue. ☸

Russel Snyder-Penner works as a lawyer in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont., and is a student of theology at Conrad Grebel University College.

Taking sides

When people go to war, social pressure to take sides can become intense. Hesitating to declare oneself can feel like a betrayal of friends and acquaintances. This is one of the many reasons love of enemy is easier said than done.

To act out love of enemy may seem like a rejection of friends and acquaintances whom the enemy has injured. This is also why expressions of solidarity are such a risky business for a peace church. Expressions of solidarity easily get mixed up with the ancient social instinct to pull together with friends and family in the face of an adversary.

It is in this light that I observe that the open letter begins with a kind of declaration of allegiance. The authors align with "our Palestinian Christian brothers and sisters," and is a response to their call to end Israel's illegal occupation.

Not only does the letter call for justice, it appears we are defending our own brothers and sisters against Israel. Lines are being drawn on a ground prepared for binary thinking: family/not family, insider/outsider, neighbour/stranger, friend/enemy. This binary outlook ends up influencing much of the rest of the open letter.

Moral certainty

When engaged in conflict one may be

WOMEN WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH

Carrying seeds from Colombia to Palestine

BY HANNAH REDEKOP

Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada



Five years ago I set out on a journey with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), providing international accompaniment to human rights defenders in Colombia. (See story online at bit.ly/2r1W8Y0). Now, as I transition into new experiences with CPT in Palestine, I will take with me the following lessons I have learned from brave Colombian peacemakers:

- **KEEP SOWING** seeds of hope. As I left my friend Rubiela's house on my last visit, she pointed to a large bush that had gone to seed on her front lawn. "Take seeds and plant them, so that you'll never forget about us," she said, urging me to remember the small farmers of Colombia who continue to sow seeds even when they know the multinational companies will come to destroy their crops. It is an act of resistance and of faith, that one day they will sow seeds that will grow to feed their children and grandchildren.

- **COLOMBIA IS** a gorgeous land that has been hidden from the world, and especially from tourism, because of the ongoing conflict. From jungles to deserts, mountain tops to oceans, Colombia holds second place for the world's highest biodiversity. These natural wonders have been protected by guerrilla fighters, who value environmental conservation and have upheld protection practices. Since the peace accords and the disarming of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrillas in 2017, these untouched regions are now open not only to tourism, but for foreign exploitation, multinational mining and mono-cropping.

- **VICTIMS OF** violent conflict want truth, not punitive justice, which usually involves jail, fines or some type of punishment. Victims of a conflict need to know what happened, they need to know where their children are, they need to know how their father was killed. This was illustrated in a referendum. A slight majority of Colombians voted against the first version of the peace accord, with the argument that the courts were going to be too lenient with the guerrilla fighters and that they needed tougher sentences and more jail time. But this vote came from the cities, from those least affected by the conflict. The vast majority of first-hand victims of the massacres and displacement voted yes to the agreement, choosing forgiveness, reconciliation and a truth-telling process in which guerrilla fighters can lessen their

sentences if they recount the truth of what happened.

- **DOING JUSTICE** is hard work. As in the Old Testament story of Esther, pursuing justice is often a matter of life or death.

Esther, a Jewish minority immigrant, has come to a position of power when her uncle informs her of a racist edict to destroy the Jews and asks her to speak with the king. Esther doesn't really have an option. Either she risks her life to speak up for her people, or she stays silent and perishes with them. It's a matter of dignity. CPT accompanies leaders like Esther; we walk alongside Colombian farmers and human-rights defenders who are putting their lives on the line for human dignity. Many of them live with the knowledge that they are likely to be killed, but they'd rather die fighting for change. They are living in the hope that their message will flower and bear fruit.

On the chalkboard in the CPT office in Palestine, there's a quote by a Greek poet that reads: "They tried to bury us, but they didn't know we were seeds." As I leave for Palestine, I take these lessons with me, like the seeds from Rubiela's garden, and pray they may grow alongside many others who have given their lives for dignity, peace and justice. ☸

For more photos, visit canadianmennonite.org/carrying-seeds.



CPT PHOTOS BY CALDWELL MANNERS

Rubiela, left, outside her house during her last visit with Hannah Redekop.



Dora Guzman of the Organización Femenina Popular talks about a new mural representing the organization as a phoenix rising out of the ashes.



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

A picture of gradual decline

Giving to nationwide and regional churches is trending downwards

BY WILL BRAUN

Senior Writer

Often our society relies too much on numbers. In gravitating to quantification we tend to short-circuit the truth, which is nuanced and multilayered.

But when it comes to our denomination, I would like to see more numbers. Specifically, how has overall giving to area/regional churches and Mennonite Church Canada changed over time?

The charts below provide that info. They represent the imperfect result of many hours of phone and email communication with 17 different people over the course of more than a month. Even so, the numbers are rough, complicated and require explanation. Income numbers here do not include rental income, investment income or income from foundations. For the most part, they also do not include large

bequests that could skew the numbers for a given year. And they do not include camps. There are also “pass through” donations to Mennonite World Conference and Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, among others, which may or may not be included, depending on the church body.

The various church offices do not record income in the same way, making apples-to-apples comparisons tricky. Plus, accounting gets tangled and is not always governed by common sense. At least there is talk of standardizing financial reporting among the offices in the future.

Canadian Mennonite's main goal was to gauge the financial commitment of congregations and individuals to denominational offices over time. So consider the numbers a general indication of that. Hopefully they

also serve as a sort of baseline that will allow for comparisons of pre- and post-Future Directions decisions.

That said, part of the story here is that it is all so complicated, non-standardized and caveat-laden that readers should be careful not to read too much into the figures.

Still, numbers provide some useful sense of the broader picture. That picture is one of gradual decline. A decade back, congregations and individuals gave \$7.1 million, combined, to area and national church offices. Last year, that was down to \$5.3 million, and estimates for this year are \$5 million.

Note that the increase in recorded giving to most regional churches from last year to this year is largely because offerings now

Donations from congregations and individuals to national and area/regional church bodies. (All dollar figures adjusted to 2018 dollars.)

	2007	2012	2017	2018 (expected donations)
MC Canada	3,169,000	2,868,000	1,939,000	300,000 ¹
MC Eastern Canada	1,787,000	1,531,000	1,399,000	2,078,000
MC Manitoba	1,106,000	1,017,000	700,000	1,299,000
MC Saskatchewan	349,000	308,000	519,000	507,000
MC Alberta	282,000	331,000	371,000	471,000
MC B.C.	422,000	379,000	334,000	358,000
Totals	7,100,000	6,400,000	5,300,000	5,000,000

Dollar amounts to be forwarded to MC Canada in 2018. (Not included are contributions from regional churches to post-secondary schools or added budget lines for staff to take over some tasks previously performed by MC Canada staff.)

MC Eastern Canada	712,000
MC Manitoba	440,000
MC Saskatchewan	127,000
MC Alberta	96,000
MC B.C.	30,500

¹ With the restructuring, congregations and individuals will contribute only to regional churches, which will pass on a portion of those donations to MC Canada. The exception is designated giving to Witness.

go only to regional churches, not to MC Canada. That means that projected giving to regional churches for 2018 includes amounts that would have gone directly to MC Canada in the past. Each regional church will forward a set amount to MC Canada from the offerings received. Some designated giving to MC Canada for its Witness programs is still expected.

MC Eastern Canada is an exception. It has long forwarded offerings to MC Canada through its books. For the sake of consistency in the chart, those offerings are recorded as going to MC Canada, not MC Eastern Canada, in years prior to 2018.

MC Eastern Canada is an exception more broadly as well. Its financial situation is relatively robust. And since it already accepts offerings for MC Canada, the Future Directions shake-up changes relatively little for it.

On the national front, last year MC

Canada set the goal of trimming its budget to \$1.9 million for the current fiscal year. Income would come from the five regional churches (\$1.5 million), designated Witness giving, and “self-generated” income. In May, the Joint Council approved a slightly higher \$2.1 million budget for the current fiscal year, even though projected income from regional churches has dropped slightly since the \$1.5 million estimate last fall. Joint Council hopes to be closer to the \$1.9-million overall budget goal next year.

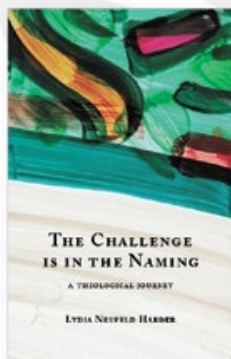
All of this requires one more big caveat:

Money is not the measure of a church’s health, but it is one fairly accurate indicator of its priorities. Other measures of church health might be church attendance, volunteer hours, meals delivered to those in need, number of hugs, volume of congregational singing, culinary quality of potlucks, demographic mix in the pews and engagement with marginal groups, among others. Even all of that would not get at the wonderfully intangible essence of church. Church is not about numbers. But hopefully these numbers provide a useful lens through which to consider the bigger picture. ☘

/// Briefly noted

MC Canada Joint Council update

- **SEVEN MONTHS** after the creation of a new structure for Mennonite Church Canada, the Joint Council met for its third meeting on May 5 and 6, in Toronto. Members approved “in principle” a budget of \$2.08 million for the nationwide church’s fiscal year ending in January 2019. This exceeds the target of \$1.92 million originally proposed, but is seen to be more realistic at this point in the transition.
 - **THE JOINT COUNCIL** set the date for the first delegate sessions of the restructured denomination, to happen June 29 to July 1, 2019, in British Columbia. The business sessions will be paired with a “major inspirational gathering,” open to non-delegates as well.
 - **IN OTHER BUSINESS**, the Council continued discussion on two long-term pieces of the transition: the development of an overall communications strategy and a strategy for pastoral leadership development across the church.
- BY VIRGINIA A. HOSTETLER



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Witness workers to Burkina Faso, Germany return to Canada

Mennonite Church Canada
WINNIPEG

Mennonite Church Canada is concluding its Witness worker positions in Burkina Faso and Germany, and celebrates the contributions of Norm and Lillian Nicolson in Burkina Faso, and of Gregory Rabus and Jennifer Otto in Germany, as they return to Canada.

“We are grateful for the depth of leadership and commitment Norm and Lillian, and Gregory and Jennifer have brought to their work with Witness,” says Willard Metzger, MC Canada’s executive minister. “The words in Matthew 25 come to mind: *‘Well done good and faithful servant.’*”

“The impact of these ministries will never be truly known,” says Metzger, who calls on the nationwide church family to pray for the two couples and their families.

Jennifer Otto of Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden, Ont., and Gregory Rabus of Montreal Mennonite Fellowship were originally invited to plant a church in Mannheim, Germany, six years ago, in partnership with the Conference of Southern German Mennonite Congregations and the German Mennonite Mission Committee.

Together, they established a community-building ministry at Ludwigshafen Mennonite Church. They used their linguistic, organizational and hospitality gifts to develop Friedenshaus (Peace House), a community centre working especially with refugees that offered German language instruction, community-building events, friendship and help with settling into a new country and culture.

As reported in 2017, Gregory, Jennifer and their children Alex and Ian are returning to Canada this month. Otto has accepted a position as assistant professor of Christianity at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta.

Twenty years ago, Lillian (Haas) Nicolson of Bluesky Mennonite Church in Fairview, Alta., was invited to Burkina Faso to minister in the work of literacy which



MC CANADA PHOTO

Former Witness workers Jennifer Otto and Gregory Rabus and their son Alex are pictured in 2017.

then grew into Bible translation. Alongside literacy and Bible translation, she has also been involved in church planting within the community.

Norm Nicolson of North Peace Mennonite Brethren Church in Fort St. John, B.C., has ministered in Burkina Faso since 2007. He taught and assisted people to develop trade skills that enabled them to better meet the needs of their families, congregations and communities. He also created audio recordings of biblical and other teaching materials to share the gospel with those who have limited literacy abilities.

The Nicolsons and their children Kenneth and Nadine returned to Canada at the end of May. Celebrations of faithful ministry will be planned with the family and the congregations that have supported them.

MC Canada continues to strongly affirm, and be engaged in, international ministry with its Witness partners. All Witness projects are currently being reviewed by MC Canada, a process that has led to the conclusion of the involvement of the nationwide church in the work in Burkina Faso and to the transition of the German

ministry to local ownership and leadership. ☞

☞ Staff change

MEDA president announces his retirement



• **ALLAN SAUDER**, the longest-serving president of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), announced his intention

to retire at the end of 2018. “My 31-year career with MEDA has been a wonderful experience and has given me opportunities that I would not exchange for any other,” he says. “As I look back, I am proud of the impact and growth that the MEDA team has been able to achieve, but I think most often of the many rewarding friendships that have developed along the way.” Sauder started at MEDA in 1987 as project director for the Mbeya Oxenization Project in Tanzania. In 1998, he became executive vice-president of international economic development. In 2002, he became MEDA’s president. Under his leadership, MEDA developed and implemented a strategic direction that was both grounded in MEDA’s Mennonite roots and adaptable to its complex multinational environment. Sauder has led MEDA through its transformation from a small economic development organization into a large, thriving institution whose reach encompasses millions of people worldwide and whose reputation for providing innovative business solutions to poverty is widely known and highly respected.

—Mennonite Economic Development Associates

Nonviolent action in history and today

Peace initiatives thrive at school heritage fair

BY NICOLIEN KLASSEN-WIEBE

Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG

“In the Second World War there were over 10,000 loyal Canadians who served Canada without weapons. What were they called?” This is the question Conrad Stoesz has been asking students at the Red River Heritage Fair for more than a decade.

War has long been the popular narrative throughout history and it continues to be justified by mainstream society today. Believing in an alternative often feels like a rare position to take. Over the years, the most prevalent topics among the displays, awards and student projects at the fair have been war and war heroes, says Stoesz, archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Archives.

That’s why he teaches students, teachers and parents about conscientious objection. “Canada’s had provisions for conscientious objectors since . . . before Canada was even a country . . . and the kids need to know that,” he says. “That’s part of our history.”

The annual fair is held at the University of Winnipeg, where approximately 300 students in grades 4 to 11 gather to learn about history. They present their history projects for judging, participate in workshops and go on a scavenger hunt among the booths of many different historical organizations. Coordinators of the fair are pleased to have Stoesz because his booth brings a new perspective on war and history into the mix.

For several years, Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) has also sponsored the Impact of Faith Award. It recognizes a student project that highlights how faith has played an important part in history. This year’s winning project examined religious demographics in Canada. Stoesz says the award is important because religion has been an important influence throughout history and today’s public schools shy away from discussing religion.

Three years ago, Stoesz decided there

needed to be more at the fair about non-violence than just his small booth. “I was encouraged by a teacher who each year lamented the strong ‘might makes right’ message of the workshops around the war themes,” he says.

Karen Ridd, an instructor in peace and conflict resolution studies at Menno Simons College in Winnipeg, led the workshop the year it was created and at this year’s fair.

Her workshop this year included the Village Game, an interactive activity she adapted to explore the experience of non-violent action. Groups drew and wrote on big sheets of paper what their ideal communities would look like, and had to figure out a creative response when the facilitators began ripping away pieces of their community. Afterwards, they discussed the exercise and connected what they had learned to their own projects.

Ridd then showed students examples of creative nonviolent action in Canadian history, such as the story of the Wolseley elm, Indigenous peoples’ resistance to residential schools, and the Doukhobor protests, among others.

“If we want to help the world live more peacefully, we need to have peace heroes,” Stoesz says. “We need to have people to emulate and stories to share of those who have stood for peace. . . . The values in them and the actions taken by the actors in the stories influence our own values and actions.”

Both the booth and workshop have received a positive response from teachers, parents and students. Often nonviolent action and conscientious objection are new terms for people, yet students who come by Stoesz’s booth are starting to say they have heard the term in the classroom.

“Those comments are the ones I really appreciate, because then I know it is being taught in the schools, and I’m getting more of that as time goes on, rather than less,” he says.

Ridd agrees that students are engaged in this topic. During the Village Game, the young people organized faster and more effectively. “I think they’re less implicated into thinking that we need to be violent, and they were very creative very quickly at coming up with solutions,” she says. ❧



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE RED RIVER HERITAGE FAIR

Karen Ridd facilitates the Village Game during her workshop at this year’s Red River Heritage Fair at the University of Winnipeg.

Growth to preserve what is, 'not for vanity'

Kindred Credit Union thrives through change in its first full year

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

2017 was Kindred Credit Union's first full year under its new name and public profile, although it existed for 53 years under other names, most recently Mennonite Savings and Credit Union.

Shortly after the name change was accepted in February 2016—at a record-attendance annual meeting—the billboards and other advertising were all over Waterloo Region. “Banking with purpose” grabbed people's attention from many angles.

This year's annual meeting, held on April 10, was the first chance for senior staff and the board to report on the effects of the name change.

Membership was up by more than 800 in 2017, pushing the total to more than 22,000. Both savings/investments and loans were up significantly as well.

While John Klassen, chief finance and compliance officer, noted that Kindred isn't yet where it wants to be in terms of growth, Brent Zorgdrager, chief executive officer, said that growth is needed to preserve what the Kindred already has, and is “not for vanity.”

One of the videos shown that evening was of Pastor Brooke Ashfield of Knox Presbyterian Church in Uptown Waterloo touting the ways in which its new relationship with Kindred is better than with a bank. “The bank asks, ‘You get your money by passing a plate every week. What if no one gives?’” he said. According to Ashfield, Kindred “gets” churches.

Zorgdrager noted in a conversation with *Canadian Mennonite* that the name change, as well as the move to no longer require membership in an Anabaptist congregation a few years ago, made Kindred attractive to Knox. Members now just need to agree to Mennonite World Conference's

Seven Shared Convictions.

Creekside Church in Waterloo, where the annual meeting was held, has Baptist affiliations but has chosen to be a Kindred member.

The annual meeting was punctuated by three community partner stories: Hospice Waterloo Region; the Kindred Credit Union Centre for Peace Advancement at Conrad Grebel University College; and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Their success stories added to the overall celebrative tone of the meeting.

The name change has grown the institution and made its services available to



Brent Zorgdrager, Kindred Credit Union's chief executive officer, addresses the 54th annual meeting on April 10. Zorgdrager has announced that he will be retiring this year, but 'not to the golf course or garden.'

more similar-minded people is the conclusion Zorgdrager and outgoing board chair Leroy Shantz draw.

In a side note, *CM* discussed the issue of credit unions calling what they do “banking.” The conclusion last year was that credit unions do not want to call themselves banks but they do want people to do banking-like transactions with them. As long as the language stays in the realm of verbs—banked or banking—and not nouns—a bank—the federal regulator is satisfied. ☺

MCC may allow exceptions to 'lifestyle expectations'

Hundreds sign letter calling for change

BY TIM HUBER AND MENNONITE WORLD REVIEW

The boards of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada and U.S. have approved the possibility of exceptions to the “lifestyle expectations” for some MCC personnel, although those parameters have not been completely defined.

The updates came as the boards reviewed MCC's human resources framework at their annual joint meeting earlier this year in Abbotsford, B.C.

Human resources is one of eight frameworks that are approved by the two boards to govern MCC's work in relief, development and peace. The frameworks are reviewed regularly on a four-year cycle.

Before the boards met, a petition and letter criticizing MCC's current policy on

LGBTQ personnel was signed by hundreds of current and former MCC workers and volunteers. The letter called on MCC to alter or eliminate what it called a discriminatory qualification.

MCC requires “sexual celibacy for personnel outside of a heterosexual marriage relationship during their terms of service.” Workers who identify as LGBTQ are considered by MCC for service positions if they are willing to abide by the celibacy policy and agree not to “use MCC as a platform from which to advocate for same-sex sexual relationships.”

In a joint statement released on March 19, MCC Canada and MCC U.S. reiterated that MCC personnel and board members

are expected to abide by an understanding of sexual intimacy only within marriage between one man and one woman, among other aspects of personal conduct.

“The framework also includes a clause whereby exceptions may be made,” stated MCC. “The process to apply exceptions is not fully determined, but exceptions must be approved by the two national executive directors, who are responsible to their respective boards.

“Exceptions will not be granted to leadership personnel, workers with significant interaction with MCC’s constituency and service workers in international assignments.”

Cheryl Zehr Walker, the MCC U.S. director of communications, said by email that the clause for exceptions pertains to the full framework and code of conduct.

MCC noted that discussions within the organization—and with input from Anabaptist church leaders in Canada and the U.S.—have been long, and will continue.

“Board chairs Peggy Snyder and Ann Graber Hershberger expressed confidence that this framework allows MCC to recognize the various contextual differences in Canada and the U.S., and to continue to focus on its ministry,” stated MCC.

The updated framework will be implemented in the coming months, along with a code of conduct outlining the faith, personal and professional conduct expectations of personnel and board members. ❧



Peggy Snyder



Ann Graber Hershberger

/// Staff changes

Pastoral transitions in Ontario

• **JIM LOEPP THIESSEN** began as lead pastor at Floradale Mennonite Church on May 1. He most recently served a two-year interim pastorate at North Leamington United Mennonite in Leamington. A graduate of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., he served for 10-and-a-half years planting The Gathering Church in Kitchener.



• **SARA ERB** was ordained for ministry at Breslau Mennonite Church on April 29. She has served there since Aug. 1, 2015, and was licensed on March 6, 2016. She is a graduate of AMBS. She begins as pastor of faith formation at Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden on Aug. 1.



• **HEATHER WHITEHOUSE** was ordained for ministry at Bethany Mennonite Church in Virgil on May 5; she was previously licensed toward ordination on Jan. 24, 2016, at Bethany. She received a master of divinity degree from Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., and also completed a course in clinical pastoral education and a two-year program in spiritual direction. In the past, she served as associate pastor of Welcome Inn Church in Hamilton; for six years now, she has served as the community chaplain at Bethany, and on behalf of that church serves in the broader Niagara-on-the-Lake community.



• **MARGARET NALLY** was ordained by Henry Paetkau, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada regional church minister, for community ministry at Fresh Ground, a café and meeting space run by The Working Centre in downtown Kitchener, on April 16. Her education and formation in religious studies at St. Jerome’s University, and theological formation at Conrad Grebel University College, both in Waterloo, followed years spent with a sense of call to be of service in the world. She attended to ongoing training as a spiritual director through AMBS and is studying towards a master of theological studies degree there.



• **WALDO PAULS** began May 1 as the intentional interim minister at Niagara United Mennonite Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake. He most recently served as pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in St. Catharines, Ont., from 2007 to ’14, and then as part-time chaplain at Tabor Manor, also in St. Catharines, from 2014 to ’17. He earned a bachelor’s degree from Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont., in 1970, and a master of divinity degree from Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif., in 1976.



—BY DAVE ROGALSKY

/// Staff changes

New principal at RJC

• **JIM EPP**, long-time principal of Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College (RJC), will retire at the end of June. Epp has taught for 32 years, all of them at RJC. He served as vice-principal for 12 years and as principal for the last six. Epp, who holds a bachelor of theology



degree from Canadian Mennonite Bible College (a founding college of Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg), and bachelor of arts and bachelor of education degrees from the University of Saskatchewan, says he plans to enjoy some “sabbath rest” in the coming months. Having recently welcomed his first grandchild, he says he also plans “to become an expert in early childhood education.”

• **RYAN WOOD** will replace Epp as principal, effective July 1. Wood, who holds a master’s degree in education from the University of Saskatchewan, has taught at RJC for 15 years and has served as vice-principal for the past five.



—BY DONNA SCHULZ

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

Both ends of the pipeline

Alberta pastors weigh in on the polarizing impacts of the proposed Trans Mountain pipeline expansion and the arrest of MC Canada staffer Steve Heinrichs while protesting against it

BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent

On April 20, Mennonite Church Canada's Indigenous-Settler Relations director was arrested on the West Coast for protesting the proposed Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline expansion.

But what is happening in Mennonite churches at the other end of the pipeline?

At Trinity Mennonite, on the south side of Calgary, Pastor Will Loewen listens to trains carrying oil rumble past his church building every day. While clearly unwilling to be "painted into a side on the issue," he would rather have that oil travel in pipes.

Issues surrounding the controversy are

complex and polarizing, often pitting economic and environmental claims against each other, and making conversations uncomfortable. While there are certainly cogent arguments of all sorts, it is crystal clear that the oil economy is important, perhaps crucial, to Alberta. Many Alberta Mennonites rely on jobs resulting from the energy industry, and both MC Alberta and MC Canada receive significant funds from the offerings of people earning a living in the oil industry.

In a May 20 sermon at Edmonton First Mennonite, speaker Donna Entz asked a key question. "Steve Heinrichs went back

home to B.C. to stand in solidarity with the Indigenous people protesting the pipeline," she said. "But here in Edmonton I walk with a neighbour, who for three years is not yet out of a financial hole . . . since the downturn in the oil industry. What might justice look like for him?"

The question of justice is applicable along the whole length of the pipeline and includes those who rely on the industry for a living.

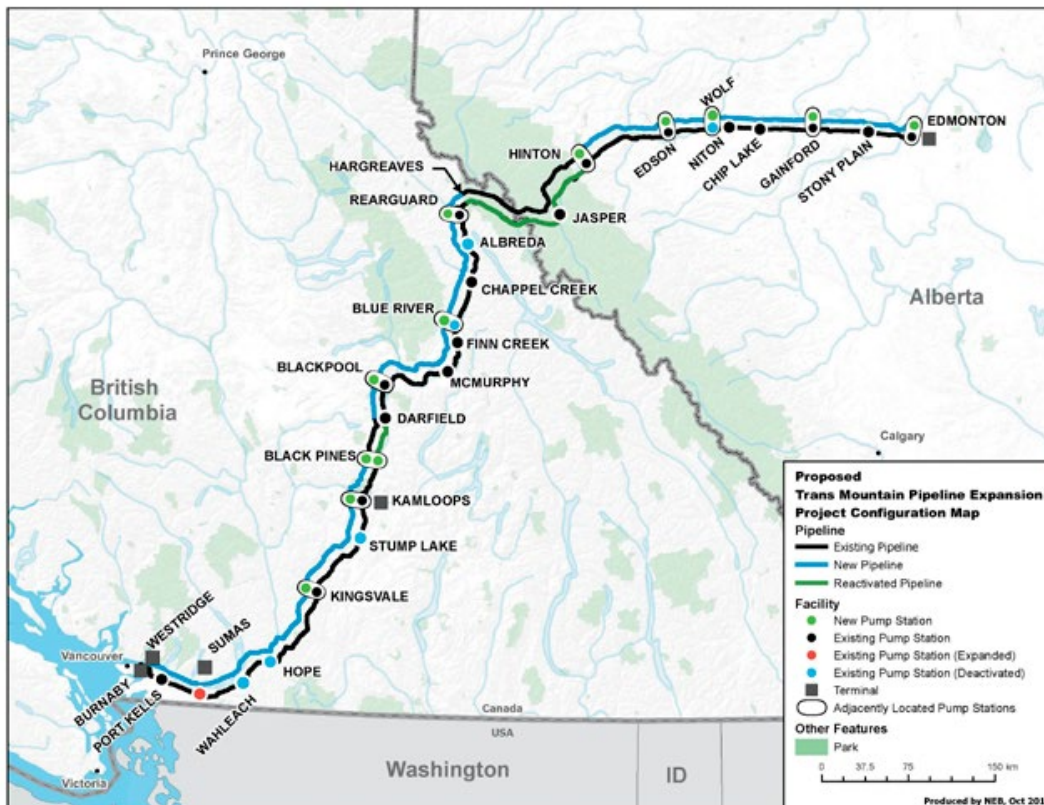
"I am proud of the devotion my church members have at their jobs in the oil economy," Loewen says. "They work hard within stringent safety and environmental regulations. Using their God-given gifts and personal passion to make improvements around efficiency and the environment as a part of their faith is what we ask of all people in professions in all industries."

Pastor Werner DeJong of Holyrood Mennonite Church in Edmonton is concerned about the environmental implications of a continued reliance on fossil fuels and of possible spills on a fragile coast, yet does not see the issue as black and white.

He would like to see some important questions asked. "I question if it is realistic at this point in time for

Canada to produce all of its energy from green sources," he says. "Can we stop producing oil in Alberta today? Tomorrow? How much oil do we need to keep on producing in order to help transition to a clean energy economy? And if we do still need to produce oil, how can we get it to market? . . . In the midst of the very intense debate, these are the kind of questions that I would like to have answered, or at least discussed."

Loewen does not trust what he is hearing on either side of the issue. Instead, he says, "I would be far more interested in hearing a conversation around the First Nations community response to this issue. A number of First Nation communities support the



pipelines and rely on it for much-needed job support?”

Harold Schilk, the pastor of Springridge

Alberta especially would welcome that. In the long-range view for a more sustainable caring for God’s creation, we need some

*Steve Heinrichs’ actions ‘make it even harder for various members of our congregation to feel any sense of connection to the national church and its staff.’
(Will Loewen, pastor of Trinity Mennonite Church, Calgary)*

Mennonite in Pincher Creek, led a discussion on May 20. “When I brought this incident up with the Springridge adult Sunday school class, general thought was that pipelines are better than rail tankers, and that if we are going to continue to be a petrol-consuming society, that we will need to support our development of this resource. Not to do so is inconsistent with our consumptive practices,” he says.

“If we are to envision a more renewable world, then we will have to actively work towards that,” he adds. “In the meantime, stop-gap measures will likely have to happen, and that could very well mean further pipeline construction. Economically, we in

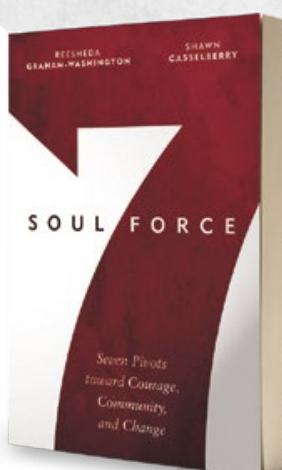
prodding to decrease our dependence on the fossil-fuel lifestyle. Perhaps Steve Heinrichs’ action a few weeks ago was a poke of God’s goad?”

The pastors interviewed for this article express respect for Heinrichs and his willingness to stand with the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation. However, serious reservations about his actions and arrest are also being expressed.

Loewen raises the spectre of western alienation, pointing out how the actions of Heinrichs can lead to other voices in the church feeling silenced. “I know Steve and respect his passions, but I interpret his actions as being representative of Manitoba

[where Heinrichs lives and works], not Canada. His actions make it even harder for various members of our congregation to feel any sense of connection to the national church and its staff. Salaries from oil company staff and profits from oil company investments are part of the funds voluntarily contributed to pay his salary,” Loewen says.

DeJong sums up the thoughts of many Alberta Mennonites when he says: “I very much favour informed discussion on this issue. One concern I have is that the heated rhetoric coming from some people on both sides [especially at the political level] is undermining our ability to listen deeply and intelligently to all concerns and perspectives. A related concern is that this debate has significant potential to divide Canadians, and to pit residents of Alberta against residents of British Columbia. Finally, I am praying regularly that God would give wisdom to all leaders who are involved in making this decision, and that the decision-making process would lead to greater reconciliation, and not greater division.”



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PHOTO ESSAY

Kindred partners with Rockway to serve the community

PHOTOS BY JENNIE WIEBE PHOTOGRAPHY

TEXT BY CHRISTINE RIER

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate
KITCHENER, ONT.

As the presenting partner of this year's Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Envirathon Servathon, Kindred Credit Union had its staff join 300 students and teachers, who fanned out across the region on May 7 to do everything from planting trees and preparing garden beds, to sorting clothing donations and serving meals.

"When Kindred talks about inspiring peaceful communities, one of the things we mean is peace with creation, or our environment, and that's why supporting Rockway's Envirathon Servathon is such a perfect fit," says Frank Chisholm, Kindred's brand and marketing director. ☘



John Klassen, a Rockway alumnus and board member and Kindred's finance and compliance chief, right, helps a Rockway student mulch flower beds at Mennonite Central Committee Ontario's building in Kitchener, where Thrift on Kent is located.



Rockway alumnus Ben Janzen, left, now Kindred's values integration director, loads wheelbarrows with earth for the planting of kale at Hacienda Sarria Market Garden, along with a Rockway teacher and students. 'Looking back, I can see how Envirathon Servathon helped to shape my view of the community and what the purpose of education is,' Janzen says.



Kathy Clemence, right, a Rockway alumna and Kindred's member support manager, helps with the gardening at the Steckle Heritage Homestead in Kitchener.

Rockway principal Ann L. Schultz sorts donations at Thrift on Kent in Kitchener with a group of students. 'All in all, students witnessed first-hand how, when we work together with shared values, we come closer to the peaceful, just communities to which we all aspire.'



'When Kindred talks about inspiring peaceful communities, one of the things we mean is peace with creation'
(Frank Chisholm)



/// Briefly noted

HoF tapped to administer Rapid Access Addiction Clinic

KITCHENER, ONT.— Brad McLeod is the first face clients see when they enter the new Kitchener Rapid Access Addiction Clinic. A peer support worker, he has walked the path of recovery himself and



**Brad
McLeod**

welcomes others on that path into a safe, non-shaming space. Funded by the Ontario government through the Waterloo Wellington Local Health Integration Network, the clinic is administered by the House of Friendship, a social service agency with deep roots in the Mennonite community of the Waterloo Region. Based on scientifically proven harm-reduction strategies, the site functions as a walk-in clinic, promising that anyone who comes will see a peer support worker and a counselor that day, and usually also a physician. The Kitchener site joins one in Guelph, with a third planned for Cambridge. The clinic's purpose is to help those who "want support to address substance dependence, need help to reduce cravings, are using substances to avoid withdrawal symptoms, have health concerns related to substance abuse, and need a place to talk about substance abuse without judgment." Working from a health and illness model, rather than a moral or legal one, the clinic works with both drug and alcohol addiction. The goal is to help people develop and manage a strategy to manage their addictions, and get them back to their primary medical caregiver. The clinic also offers support for those dealing with problem gambling, internet use and gaming.

—STORY AND PHOTO
BY DAVE ROGALSKY

MCC learning tour hears of Indigenous hope and resiliency

Former residential school being repurposed as a school of higher learning

Mennonite Central Committee Alberta Story and Photo
ST. PAUL, ALTA.

Paul Bergen was prepared to walk through the “weightiness” of a former residential school and to hear the haunting stories of the survivors of that place. The surprise, however, was how his spirit lifted with amazement and joy at evidence of the resilience and hope of those survivors.

On May 12, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Alberta, together with the University nuhelot’jine thaiyots’j nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills, hosted a learning tour at the site of a former residential school in St. Paul, about 200 kilometres northeast of Edmonton. Eighteen people, including three MCC Alberta staff, took part in the day-long experience.

Jim Shantz, MCC Alberta’s Indigenous Neighbours coordinator, feels that such tours are “on the ground” situations from which we get unfiltered information from those who may not normally have a voice.”

The group heard stories of student survivors as they toured the former residential school area of the current Blue Quills University.

Participant Robert Proudfoot wrote of the experience: “We trod carefully upon sacred Indigenous ground and learned about personal and community experiences of suffering and loss, particularly involving children who were students at the former residential school. . . . Horrible recollections of harsh discipline—kids being shamed in front of peers for soiling their beds; locked in dark, basement “cells”; or a teenage girl whipped while other students were forced to watch—trouble me. Yet healthy feelings of

hope and resiliency were also expressed. . . .

“The former residential school is a memorial to past abuse and neglect of humans by Christian colonists bent on assimilating them, yet the austere building has been reclaimed, renovated, repurposed and spiritually cleansed, to become a positive and safe place for learning and socialization.”

Blue Quills University (bluequills.ca) is unique, as it is owned and operated by First Nations. Open to students of any background, the university offers a variety of academic and technical courses, as well as a core focus on the reclamation of traditional knowledge and practices.

Tour participant Natasha Wiebe was impressed by the Indigenous leadership involved in repurposing the former residential school: “I am very encouraged by

the sincere and eloquent folks we met representing [Blue Quills], so much so that I will likely donate to them myself.”

The issue of funding for the school became of interest and concern to tour participants. As a “one-of-a-kind” learning facility that is not chartered by the Alberta government but, instead by the federal government, Blue Quills does not receive the same support other provincial universities do, resulting in a precariousness that threatens program continuation.

Proudfoot expressed his support. “Just as we all want to respectfully learn, and thus rebuild bridges of friendship and understanding, [Blue Quills] also needs us to advocate on its behalf with the federal government, to receive fair, secure and long-term funding, rather than being required to apply annually for ‘project grants,’ and compete with larger and more widely influential, post-secondary institutions like University of Alberta, for limited federal money.”

MCC has so far made three visits to Blue Quills, including a small exploratory delegation in 2016. It is continuing to explore what this growing friendship with the Indigenous university means.

Proudfoot is hopeful for the future of learning tour experiences to Blue Quills, writing: “I believe that we built together rapport and understanding on May 12 that, with continued walking together, can help bring reconciliation, at least between Alberta Mennonites and Cree and Metis peoples of the Saddle Lake/St. Paul area.” †



The former residential school bathroom, with cups for toothbrushes and hooks for towels, is a reminder to survivors of the lack of privacy and indignities, such as the cutting of hair and harsh scrubbing, that they endured as children there.



MCC PHOTO BY MINYOUNG 'BLEE' JUNG

Community members get ready for a food distribution in a drought-affected area of eastern Kenya. MCC's partner, Utooni Development Organization, distributed food assistance in the villages of Kathyaka and Ngulu.

VIEWPOINT

How emergency food distribution works

MINYOUNG 'BLEE' JUNG

MCC / MWC

In many parts of the area near Kibwezi, Kenya, I saw corn that had dried up. Driving around, it was hard to find any corn that people would be able to harvest this season.

In February of this year, the Utooni Development Organization (UDO), a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) partner that I volunteer with, started a food relief project in one of the drought-affected areas in the eastern part of Kenya near the town of Kibwezi. The distribution was being done in two villages, Kathyaka and Ngulu, and was funded by MCC's account with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

I participated in the food distribution as a photographer, and it made me think about how easy it is to access fresh water in my home country of South Korea, where there is a reliable water system.

But it's not common in rural Kenya.

In the village where I live with my host family, people have to harvest water, and it is not easy to find clean water. People farm in Kibwezi, but the dry climate means the land is unproductive. They work hard for a better life, but through no fault of their own they are suffering.

UDO has already done three distributions of food in these villages because the drought persisted. People here use conservation agriculture techniques taught by UDO, but the drought made it impossible to harvest crops this year.

UDO also works to improve food security and enhance sustainable livelihood opportunities for small-scale farmers in Machakos, Mukueni and Kajiado counties using conservation agriculture.

When we arrived at the distribution locations, many people were already gathered to wait for us. After a brief introduction, we started distributing the

food assistance.

Each group had a supervisor appointed by people from the village, and another helped to confirm everyone had enough and was able to carry it home. Because the sun was very hot, people worked slowly to help each other carry their rations home. Each person received 30 kilograms of maize, four kilograms of beans and 1.5 litres of oil.

Most people looked happy to receive the food and many thanked us for the assistance.

When I return to South Korea, I want to discuss the poverty I saw in Kenya with my friends, and talk about what we should do about this. ☺



MCC PHOTO BY BRENDA BURKHOLDER

Minyoung 'Blee' Jung is a 2017-18 Young Anabaptist Mennonite Exchange Network (YAMEN) participant from South Korea serving in Kenya. YAMEN is a joint MCC-Mennonite World Conference (MWC) program.

ARTBEAT

CM honoured by national church press association

By ROSS W. MUIR
Managing Editor
HAMILTON, ONT.

Canadian Mennonite editors Virginia A. Hostetler and Ross W. Muir were present at the Canadian Church Press (CCP) convention and awards banquet in Hamilton on May 4, and came away with five awards for work published in 2017. CCP, an association of more than 60 publications, exists to “encourage higher standards of religious journalism and a more positive and constructive Christian influence on contemporary civilization. CM’s awards of merit are:

• **“BACK to school around the world,”** by photographers Juliane Kozel, James Souder, Alison Ralph, Matthew Lester and Dave Klassen, and designer Ross W. Muir (*Photo Essay-Magazine, first place*).

Judge’s comment: “This set of photographs does indeed tell a story. . . . You did a wonderful job; children are very difficult to photograph. . . . I would be remiss if I did not remark on my favourite photograph in this series. It was the fifth in the series, the two girls looking at each other [by Dave Klassen]. Emotional, also the tension of

the two girls is wonderful. I also notice you have managed to capture three children in the background all looking at each other. This is done subtly, slightly out of focus . . . a very professional move.”

• **SEPT. 25, Oct. 9, Oct. 23 issues** (*General Excellence-Magazine, three-way tie for second place; no first-place award given*).

Judge’s comments: (Sept. 25 issue) “Cover: beautiful photo beautifully shot. . . . Intriguing layout by back-paging it. Creative thinking. . . . Nice clean masthead/

contents page. . . . I feel for you having to run the same anti-gay letters over and over You could say that unless letters add to the debate, they won’t be published. Either side.”

• **“MAKING SPACE for the Spirit,”** by Virginia A. Hostetler (*Editorial-Magazine, second place*).

Judge’s comment: “Continues the discussion of the real takeaway from the Being a Faithful Church assembly by raising questions about how the church will create a space for difference. Asks readers to think about two questions to see a way to allow those differences no matter how they may contradict (or even offend) their beliefs. Well structured and thought provoking.”

• **“PRODIGAL PASTOR,”** by Will Braun (*Biographical Profile-Magazine, second place*).

Judge’s comment: “You created a strong structure with an engaging opening that comes full circle at the end. You acquaint readers well with the subject of your profile.”

• **“THINE IS the kingdom, the power and the glory,”** by John D. Rempel (*Biblical Interpretation, third place*).

Judge’s comment: “It helps to understand

that this article was adapted from a sermon addressing a particular day in the church calendar—the day to remember those who’ve died and to confess hope in the life after death. It’s a sermon that adapted quite well to print. [The author] brings biblical rhythms and resonance to a presentation that embraces personal experience and demonstrates expository breadth discussing a rather tricky bit of scripture (Revelation 7:13). And he ends with a hopeful call to ethical action. Bravo.”

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CANADIAN MENNONITE SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

Seed of Hope: Otagodougou, Burkina Faso



PHOTO ESSAY
Back to school around the world
COMPILED BY RACHEL BERGEN
Mennonite Central Committee Canada

When a child learns, communities benefit and lives change. From Afghanistan to Canada, and Bangladesh to Burkina Faso, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is promoting education in order to foster leadership capabilities and help young people overcome obstacles locally and around the world. By working alongside local communities and partners, MCC hopes to increase access to education, improve the quality of learning, support vocational training and promote peace. Welcome to class.

International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP): Canada



Moving across the world can be an education in itself. Prity Marwa, left, originally from Bolivia, is volunteering at the Indigenous Family Centre in Winnipeg through MCC's IVEP program, a year-long work and cultural exchange opportunity for Christian young adults. Marwa enjoys working with children like Justin LacChaire, right, improving her English and learning about the Indigenous peoples in Canada at the same time. At home in Bolivia, Marwa studies medicine and plans to return to school there at the end of the year.

Adult Learning and Education Facilitator: Kabul, Afghanistan



Life can be difficult for women who haven't had a formal education. The Adult Learning and Education Facilitation project in Kabul concentrates on skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for these women to successfully navigate the litrate world. Through classes on literacy, numeracy and conflict resolution, the MCC-supported project helps participants make better-informed decisions to positively impact the well-being of their families and communities.

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Church of Bangladesh Social Development Programs: Rajshahi, Bangladesh



Indigenous communities are among the most vulnerable in Bangladesh, facing poverty and language barriers. MCC addresses these issues by supporting multilingual education and homework clubs for children from these communities through its partner organization, Church of Bangladesh Social Development Programs. This organization runs a multilingual education program in six schools in Rajshahi district, including the school where Mylene Baski, left, and Prity Marwa study.

Serving in Japan as 'ordinary people'

Book chronicles life of long-term missionaries

STORY AND PHOTO BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

Retired missionary Mary Derksen didn't start out to write a book about the 45 years she and her late husband spent as missionaries in Japan. But she has just completed the story of the couple's ministry there: *Rise and Shine! 45 Years in the Land of the Rising Sun*. She describes it as "the story of one ordinary Christian family's life with an extraordinary God in a beautiful land that has become home, Japan."

Peter and Mary Derksen served God in Japan from 1954-99 with the Commission on Overseas Mission of the former General Conference Mennonite Church. After two years of language study, they did evangelism, church formation, church planting and English teaching in several Japanese cities.

"We were missionaries blundering our way in a strange culture and language among highly educated people," she recalls. "Missionaries are ordinary people like you. One short-termer said, 'The importance of being real can't be overstated. Now I



Mary Derksen of Abbotsford, B.C., has chronicled the story of her Canadian missionary family serving in Japan in her new book, *Rise and Shine! 45 Years in the Land of the Rising Sun*.

see that if there's anyone who can't afford not to be genuine, it's a missionary. So the next time you catch yourself putting missionaries into a box, take the lid off . . . and experience a bear hug for yourself!"

When the Derksens retired and returned to Canada in 1999, they settled in Abbotsford and related first to West Abbotsford Mennonite Church and then to Emmanuel Mennonite.

During their years in Japan, Derksen had become interested in writing when she had to send reports and letters to supporters back home.

Upon retirement at age 70, she began writing their story, initially for family, but adds, "I got much encouragement from our writers critique group and webinars, and decided to write as a thank you to God and to all our supporters, including family."

Health problems for the couple put a hold on the project for a while. Her husband experienced heart problems and Parkinson's disease. Shortly after his death in 2014, she underwent blood transfusions and had a kidney removed.

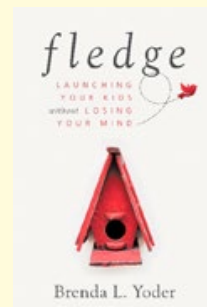
Then she received a letter from the Oita [Japan] Mennonite Church asking her to write her testimony. It was the last thing she felt like doing. But the church persisted, and she began to write. "To my surprise, I found it quite therapeutic to share our experiences," she says. "I wrote a long testimony in Japanese."

The book evolved from there. Derksen credits her editor Alvin Ens and publisher Dave Loewen for helping her through the maze of computer work and the other details that go with publishing a book.

"This book is my expression of thanks to God for restoring my health, and for his marvellous presence throughout our life, my life," she says. "It is also a thank you to

/// Briefly noted

New book helps parents prepare for when kids fly the coop



Preparing children to leave home is a daunting task, and parents often feel unprepared for this stage of life. Brenda L. Yoder, a counsellor, educator and mother, helps Christian

parents navigate this transition in *Fledge: Launching Your Kids Without Losing Your Mind* from Herald Press. With biblical wisdom and firsthand experience, Yoder has practical advice for parents with children preparing to spread their wings and leave home. She answers questions like: "How do you parent tweens at home and young adults away from home at the same time?" "What's a good balance between boundaries and freedom?" "What do you do with all that mom grief?" Yoder is a licensed mental health counsellor, and mother of teens and young adults herself. She has a master's degree in clinical mental health counselling and a bachelor's degree in education. Her work has been published in the *Washington Post* and *Chicken Soup for the Soul's Reboot Your Life*, and she has been a columnist for *Ten to Twenty Parenting* and *Whatever Girls*. She is a former high school teacher and middle school counsellor.

—MennoMedia

our family, our many friends and churches in Canada and the U.S. who supported us for 45 years in Japan." ///

Although the book is not in bookstores yet, a print-on-demand copy is available at bit.ly/mary-derksen-book.



**ONLINE NOW!**at canadianmennonite.org**Bluffton archivist tells story of Ephrata Martyrs Mirror**

An archivist explains the religious and historical significance of the 1748 edition of this classic Anabaptist-Mennonite book.

canadianmennonite.org/ephrata-martyrs-mirror

**Gala celebrates 40 years of PACS with stories of peace**

"Pursuing peace: stories from home and abroad" was the theme of the anniversary event, which included an address by former Ontario premier Bob Rae.

canadianmennonite.org/pacs-anniversary-peace

**AMBS grads encouraged to fulfill 'other half' of Jesus' mandate**

Palmer Becker told seminary graduates that, as followers of Jesus, they have been given a mandate not only to teach but also to cast out broken and evil spirits.

canadianmennonite.org/mandate-spirits

**Canadians invited to pray for end to famine**

On June 10, Canadian Foodgrains Bank will join Christians around the world in a Global Day of Prayer to End Famine. You are invited to pray.

canadianmennonite.org/pray-end-famine



June 10th is the Global Day of Prayer to End Famine




CANADIAN MENNONITE

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Schools Directory featuring Canadian Mennonite University

Research: A cornerstone of CMU's growth and success

By Jonathan Dueck
Canadian Mennonite University
Winnipeg

“Research” is part of every CMU profes-
sorial contract, along with “teaching”
and “service.” Teaching and service are easy to
see as essential; without them, we would not
have classes and we would not function as an
organization.

But research is just as central to CMU's
thriving; without research, CMU's deep
relationships with our students, our con-
stituencies, and our communities would be
immeasurably diminished.

Research is often understood as work
towards the making of new knowledge. Like
other kinds of work, it involves us and others
working together. And like other kinds of
work in church and school, it is both effortful
and creative, both pragmatic and beautiful.

When we work together towards under-
standing something new, we come into new
relationship with each other. Research pushes
this kind of work outside of campus, and
brings us into relationship with a broader set
of collaborators in Winnipeg, Canada and
beyond.

For students, engaging with the creation of
new knowledge is the most distinctive piece
of study at the university level, and it can be
life-changing.

The CMU Farm and the Metanoia Farmers
Workers Cooperative here on campus,
for example, were co-created using CMU
student research that explored the social and
environmental role of farming in urban life,
aided and energized by students returning
from practicum placements on farms. People



CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY PHOTOS

*Aided and energized by students re-
turning from practicum placements on
farms, the CMU Farm on campus was
based on CMU student research explor-
ing the social and environmental role of
farming in urban life.*

often claim their point of contact with CMU's
campus begins with the farm; typically, they
have a share in the farm and love the food.
Or they have visited the farm and find urban
farming thought-provoking.

Seeing the institution that CMU has
become, and the way that it's engaging the
community and church and world, I'm more
convinced than ever of the vibrancy, poten-
tial, and energy of CMU.



*Jonathan Dueck is the academic vice-
president of Canadian Mennonite
University.*



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young voices



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TERRI LYNN FRIESEN

Terri Lynn and Thomas Friesen are the founders of the Vine and Table intentional community.



Located in Saskatoon's historic Riversdale neighbourhood, the Vine and Table can accommodate 10 residents.



Eating delicious, healthy food is central to life at the Vine and Table.

Forming intentional community with young adults

The Vine and Table will be a place 'to live, learn and grow in Jesus-centred community'

BY AARON EPP
Young Voices Editor

When Thomas and Terri Lynn Friesen met, Terri Lynn was a guest at the Burrow, an intentional community Thomas was living in with eight other young adults.

This coming September, a few weeks before the couple's second wedding anniversary, they will embark on a new adventure together: opening their Saskatoon home to form an intentional community called the Vine and Table.

The couple describes it as "a place for students and young adults to live, learn and grow in a Jesus-centred community."

As September draws nearer, and an idea that they had last fall comes closer to becoming a reality, the Friesens—who will

The Friesens' vision is for up to eight young adults to join them in the house, which has three floors and a developed basement.

More than just paying rent for a place to sleep, residents will share household life together. The Friesens see the Vine and Table as a place where community members will be supported in their academic and vocational goals, share healthy meals, give and receive hospitality, receive companionship on their spiritual journeys, and seek to be good neighbours within the home and beyond.

They chose the name because the vine represents growth and the table represents sharing life together.

When they bought the house, the Friesens began thinking about how they might use the space beyond simply making it a personal residence.

live onsite as coordinators for the house, facilitating and participating in the life of the community—are excited.

"It's kind of a step in faith," says Terri Lynn, 33, who works half-time as the pastor of faith and community at Osler Mennonite Church.

"It's exciting and also a little bit trepidatious to try to be bold with our prayers, and bold with the ways in which we step out into this," adds Thomas, 28, who works as a spiritual director. "I guess for myself, [I'm] just learning what it is to trust God with these hopes and these longings I have for the house."

The Friesens purchased their big blue house, located in Saskatoon's historic Riversdale neighbourhood, in March 2017. They have been renovating the home, which was built in 1912, since then. It's located within walking distance of downtown, half a block from a bus route that runs to the University of Saskatchewan, and within walking distance of a trail system along the South Saskatchewan River.

When they bought the house, the Friesens began thinking about how they might use the space beyond simply making it a personal residence. The idea for the Vine and Table took root last Thanksgiving,

when they heard about Emmaus House, an intentional community for university students in Winnipeg.

"It was an exciting moment to hear about other people who were doing something we could imagine doing in a similar way," Terri Lynn says.

She and Thomas have had positive experiences living in community in the past.

Terri Lynn studied agriculture, and has lived and worked on farms in Cuba and Ethiopia, as well as Ontario, Florida and Texas. Thomas first experienced living in community as a resident at the Life Together House in Calgary, and joined the Burrow a few years later.

The couple drove to Winnipeg last November, when they met with Emmaus House founders and coordinators Rod and Susan Reynar to talk about the possibilities.

"It was a really encouraging weekend of getting to know them," Thomas says.

The Reynars, who were inspired by their Anabaptist-Mennonite faith to open Emmaus House in September 2014, felt the same way. "It was exciting because it felt like there was another sister community with whom we share a similar DNA," Susan says.

"It's satisfying to know people are considering similar ventures in other places," Rod adds. "They're just a wonderful, wonderful couple, and really bring rich backgrounds

into what they're doing. I can see it working very well for them as a couple, and the community of people with whom they'll live, I think, will have a rich experience also."

For Thomas, living in community has allowed him to see the image of God in other people, and respond to God's call to love them. He hopes people who live as part of the Vine and Table can do the same.

Young adulthood is a rich time during which people are making sense of their studies, their work and their faith, Terri Lynn adds. "We don't expect [the Vine and Table] to replace a church community for folks," she says. "In some ways, it's a place you can digest maybe all that you are learning from your faith community, and have a groundedness in for the rest of your week."

One of the benefits of living in community, Terri Lynn adds, is that everyone brings different gifts and abilities to the group. "When we come together as a community, dedicated to each other at least for a season, we can do more than we can on our own," she says. "It's exponential." ❧

The Friesens are accepting applications for the 2018-19 season (which starts Sept. 1) until July 2 or until the house is full.

For more information, visit

vineandtable.ca.



'It's kind of a step in faith,' Terri Lynn Friesen says of starting the Vine and Table.

Worth the wait

Southern Manitoba singer-songwriter Kenzie Jane makes her debut with Love Me From Scratch

BY AARON EPP

Young Voices Editor
WINNIPEG

If good things come to those who wait, exciting times are ahead for Kenzie Jane.

The Winnipeg-based singer-songwriter recently released her debut EP, *Love Me From Scratch*, more than three years after she first started recording it.

Jane says she was encouraged to take her time by her mentors in the Winnipeg Folk Festival's Stingray Young Performers Program. She participated in the program, which gives young people aged 14 to 24

the opportunity to learn from professional musicians and then perform at the festival, in 2016 and 2017.

"They talk a lot about how to release a CD successfully, and part of that is not rushing it," says Jane, 24, who recently graduated from Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. "It was good timing for me to be graduating and releasing this EP. It worked well for me."

(Continued on page 30)



PHOTO BY LYNETTE GIESBRECHT

No stranger to the stage, Kenzi Jane grew up performing music with her family.



PHOTO BY ROBYN ADAM

Kenzie Jane recorded her EP in Altona, Man., where she grew up.

(Continued from page 29)

Judging by the quality of *Love Me From Scratch*, the wait was worth it. It's a fully-realized, five-song collection that blends folk, R&B and jazz.

Jane recorded the album at AccuSound, a recording studio in her hometown of Altona, Man. AccuSound co-owner Lynette Giesbrecht produced and engineered the EP, with assistance from her brother Evan Giesbrecht. Jane's friends Daniel Friesen and Nathaniel De Avila of Point Row Records

was straight from my soul. It just came out one day."

Jane—who attends Seeds of Life Community Church, a Mennonite Church Manitoba congregation, when she's in Altona—says the song was also partially inspired by her faith. "'Who I Am' was inspired by being a spiritual being having a human experience, and . . . knowing there's something greater than myself," she says.

Now that school is over and *Love Me From Scratch* is out, Jane has her sights set on play-

'It's taken me a lot of time to get confident with my music and feel like I'm good enough to do something with it.'
(Kenzie Jane)

put the finishing touches on the album in Winnipeg.

To augment her vocals, guitar parts and keyboard playing, Jane enlisted her friend Nolan Kehler to play drums and her father Curt Friesen to play bass.

Jane comes from a musical family, and performed with them when she was growing up. Having her father play bass on *Love Me From Scratch*, and at some of the shows she is playing in support of the EP, is special, she says. "A lot of what I'm able to do musically comes from what I've learned from him and my mom," she says. "It's neat to be able to be on stage, knowing I am where I am partly because of how he influenced me and raised me."

When she chose the title *Love Me From Scratch*, she wasn't sure exactly what it meant. That's changed in the years since.

"*Love Me From Scratch* [means] love me for who I am," she says, adding that she first chose the title because many of the songs she was writing were love songs—albeit love songs she based on experiences she observed her friends having.

Her favourite song on the album, however, is not a love song. "Who I Am," the closing track, is a highly personal statement about navigating life's ups and downs.

"It's a pretty honest song," she says, adding that "Who I Am" earned her a spot as one of the top 25 finalists in CBC Music's 2016 Searchlight competition. "A lot of my songs tend to be inspired by other people, but this

ing live. She is performing at the Northern Touch Music Festival in Winnipeg that runs from June 29 to July 1, and at the Winnipeg Folk Festival on July 6.

After that, she's headed west, eventually making her way to Keno City, Yukon, for an appearance at the Keno City Music Festival on Aug. 3 and 4.

Even though she's been performing since she was a child, Jane says that the confidence to get in front of a crowd does not come naturally to her. "It's taken me a lot of time to get confident with my music and feel like I'm good enough to do something with it," she says.

Whenever she starts comparing herself to other artists, she reminds herself to focus on her own music and her reason for making it. "Being able to do something I love, as opposed to trying to keep up with [others], that's where my confidence comes from," she says. ❧

For more information, visit manitobamusic.com/kenziejane.



COVER ART BY SYDNEY FRIESEN

'Love Me From Scratch [means] love me for who I am,' Kenzie Jane says.

CANADIAN MENNONITE Your print subscription includes a digital version. Sign up at canadianmennonite.org/subscribe/digital

Calendar

Alberta

June 30-July 1: Springridge Mennonite Church, Pincher Creek, is celebrating its 90th anniversary. All past and present congregants are invited. RSVP to delwillms@gmail.com. For more information, visit springridgemennonitechurch.ab.ca.

Saskatchewan

June 22-24: RJC homecoming and graduation, Rosthern.
July 26: Way Back: Relearning Ways of Peace event, at Wanuskewin Heritage Park, featuring a performance of "Discovery: A Comic Lament" by Ted & Co.

Manitoba

Aug. 21: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate annual fundraising golf tournament, at Bridges Golf Course, Starbuck. For more information, visit westgatemenonite.ca.

Ontario

June 12: 52nd annual chicken barbecue and pie auction fundraiser, at Hidden Acres Camp, New Hamburg, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Advance tickets required. To reserve a ticket, email info@hiddenacres.ca.

June 23: New Hamburg Nithview annual community strawberry social, from 2 to 4 p.m., and from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

June 23: MennoHomes' Out-spok'n for Affordable Housing bike-a-thon, beginning at Elmira Mennonite Church. Options for hikers, cyclists and motorcyclists. For more information, call Dan Driedger at 226-476-2535.

June 24: Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville, hosts the Fair Wind, who will perform traditional music of the British Isles, at 2:30 p.m. For more information, call Laurence Martin at 519-208-4591.

June 25: Launch of the Mennonite Church Canada book, "Unsettling the Word: Biblical Experiments in Decolonization," edited by Steve Heinrichs. Event features four of the contributors. At Church of St. Stephen-in-the-Fields, Toronto.

June 30-July 1: 70th anniversary celebration of Nairn Mennonite Church, Ailsa Craig. Weekend activities culminate with a worship service of praise and thanksgiving on July 1 at 10:45 a.m. Those planning to attend are asked to let the church know at 519-232-4425.

July 21: Willowgrove 50th anniversary

open house, in Stouffville, beginning at 11 a.m. Willowgrove's former staff, school families, volunteers, campers and church constituency are invited. Events include the final public performance of the Rouge River Connection. For more information, email info@willowgrove.ca.

Classifieds

Employment Opportunities



Mennonite Central Committee
Relief, development and peace in the name of Christ

British Columbia


Director of Development and Advancement

This full-time position will provide leadership in developing and implementing strategies that generate awareness, relationships, engagement, support from the MCC BC constituency and the broader public.

Qualifications: 3 years senior management, 5 years fundraising or related experience; excellent communication and interpersonal skills; effective strategic planner & entrepreneurial attitude; servant leader, strong networking ability and familiarity with MCC constituency.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to personal Christian faith, active church affiliation and non-violent peacemaking.

Anticipated start date: September 1, 2018
 For full job description and to apply visit: mccbc.ca/openings.
 For more information, contact Sophie Tiessen-Eigbke, MCC BC HR Manager at 604-850-6639, Ext 1129.



Mennonite Church Canada
 Our nationwide community of faith

Employment opportunity

We invite all congregations and members of Mennonite Church Canada to join with us in prayer as we seek an **EXECUTIVE MINISTER**. We invite applications and nominations for an individual who will work cooperatively with the Executive Staff Group to nurture, represent and inspire a unified vision of MC Canada.

This full-time chief executive officer is accountable to the Joint Council, and responsible for working with the Executive Staff Group for the nationwide program of Mennonite Church Canada.

This position requires considerable travel within Canada and occasional travel outside of Canada. Living in the Winnipeg area is required. Assistance will be provided to cover relocation expenses.

Start date to be negotiated.

Inquiries, resumes and letters of interest may be directed to:
searchcommittee@mennonitechurch.ca

Review of applications will begin on July 31, 2018, and continue until a suitable applicant is found.

Completion or updating of the Ministerial Leadership Information forms will be required as part of the process.

To view a full job description for the Executive Minister role, visit:
www.commonword.ca/go/1551
 or
home.mennonitechurch.ca

Cottage for Sale

A-frame two bedrooms in loft, and full bath, cottage for sale at Chesley Lake Camp (67 Chapel Drive). Furniture and appliances included in sale price. Furniture includes a six-leaf table (great for family gatherings) and six wooden chairs. Also included is a 10"x12" shed and a large treed lot close to the lake (five-minute walk). Chapel and restaurant close by. For more information contact Frank or Jean at frankjeanerb@gmail.com. Call 226-338-4248 or 519-656-2380.

Cottage for Rent

Three-bedroom cottage at Red Bay on the Bruce Peninsula, nestled among maple trees. Short walk to sandy beach and small park and includes a rear deck. Available June 30 through Sept. 1. Call Diane at 519-746-4920.

Winnipeggers take to the street in support of Nakba survivors



STORY AND PHOTO BY NICOLIEN KLASSEN-WIEBE
Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG

Around a hundred people gathered at a busy intersection in Winnipeg on May 15 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the *Nakba*, which means “catastrophe” in Arabic. The *Nakba* refers to the dispossession of more than 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and lands that followed the creation of the State of Israel in 1948.

Participants stood on the corners of a busy intersection wearing *keffiyehs*, a traditional scarf worn by Palestinians, and T-shirts commemorating the anniversary. They held signs with the names of villages that were destroyed when the State of Israel was created,

and handed out leaflets about the conflict, chanting for an end to Israeli occupation and justice for all.

The event was sponsored by the Mennonite Church Manitoba Working Group on Palestine and Israel, the Canadian Palestinian Association of Manitoba, Independent Jewish Voices Winnipeg, the Canada-Palestine Support Network-Winnipeg, Peace Alliance Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid. Members of these groups and *Nakba* survivors spoke to those gathered. ☸