

CANADIAN MENNONITE

January 21, 2019 Volume 23 Number 2

Called to **bleed**
and die for the
sake of the nation

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EDITORIAL

In conversation

VIRGINIA A. HOSTETLER
EXECUTIVE EDITOR



What are Mennonites talking about? As a national publication, *Canadian Mennonite*

pays attention to the issues that matter to readers far and near. Here are some topics that emerged in 2018.

In the spring, attention was on the protest against the Trans Mountain pipeline in B.C., particularly the involvement of Mennonite Church Canada's Steve Heinrichs. We covered both his arrest and his sentencing, and we published letters responding to his stance. Some Alberta pastors weighed in with opinions at the "other end of the pipeline."

How involved were Mennonites in the Nazi ideology and actions? Last year, *CM* reported on a conference on Mennonites and the Holocaust and carried a report of an eyewitness to the Nazi occupation. Readers weighed in, offering online comments to these and older reports on the same topic. It is no surprise that their responses show that Mennonites view history from several differing perspectives.

The subject of sexual misconduct in Mennonite congregations and institutions gained attention this past year, with viewpoints and reports on the #ChurchToo topic. Our report on alleged sexual abuse at a Mennonite camp drew both criticism and praise.

In the fall, senior writer Will Braun wrote "Modern ghosts of a horse-drawn scandal," a four-part series on the so-called "ghost rapes" among Old Colony Mennonites in Bolivia. He considered the stance of their more "progressive" North American cousins and looked at the recent Miriam Toews novel, *Women Talking*. Web-only

content led to online conversation.

We expect that new ways will emerge for how communications happens across the church, and we are exploring how *CM* can continue facilitating the conversation. In 2019 and beyond, we will continue covering these larger stories and others that none of us can yet anticipate. What are Mennonites talking about in your circles? How are these conversations happening?

New roles, familiar faces

As our staff prepares the print version of *CM*, we are aware of—and grateful for—the loyal readers who hold the magazine in their hands, picking and choosing which articles to read. (Hurray to those of you who read it all!) Your thoughtful letters add

in 2007 as *CM*'s national correspondent. After two years, he left for other journalistic endeavours, but returned in 2013 as co-editor of the Young Voices section, where he faithfully helped younger Mennonites tell their stories and share their projects and dreams. He lives in Winnipeg, where he has been working part-time at Canadian Mennonite University and writing a column for the *Winnipeg Free Press*. He begins in this full-time position at the end of January, so watch for his online presence.

In the Jan. 7 issue, we announced the discontinuation of the Young Voices section along with *CM*'s intention to keep building connections with younger readers. Starting



At the same time, we're challenged to consider other venues where Mennonites are reading and conversing.

to the dialogue.

At the same time, we're challenged to consider other venues where Mennonites are reading and conversing. Unfortunately, most of our staff can't sit down for a chat in your local coffee shop, but we know *CM* content is showing up on your Facebook and Twitter feeds. Followers of *CM* across Canada and beyond are accessing articles and opinions on mobile phones, tablets and computer screens.

As publisher Tobi Thiessen has said, we see a place for *CM* in the larger digital world, to "actively encourage and moderate conversations about faith and life" in social media and through *CM*'s web presence.

So we introduce a new position—online media manager—and the person who will fill that role, Aaron Epp. He first began

in mid-January, Rachel Bergen takes on the new part-time role of contributing editor, with responsibility for finding and telling the type of content that formerly appeared in Young Voices. She first came to *CM* as national correspondent and was involved in the early days of YV nine years ago. She left in 2015 to pursue other journalistic opportunities, including writing for Mennonite Central Committee and CBC. She lives in Thompson, Man.

We see great potential for both these roles and look forward to the future contributions of Rachel and Aaron. Feel free to connect with them; their email addresses are on page 3. ✎



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H.G. Mannhardt was a Mennonite pastor and writer in northeastern Germany during the First World War. He espoused the values of German nationalism and exceptionalism that were prevalent in his day. 'Called to bleed and die for the sake of the nation' begins on page 4.

PHOTO: MENNONITE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES / BETHEL COLLEGE

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FEATURE

Called to bleed and die for the sake of the nation

What are we to make of those unsavoury details in the Mennonite story?

By Karl Koop



MENNONITE HERITAGE ARCHIVES PHOTO

The Mennonite church built in Danzig from 1817 to 1819. In 1941, it had about 1,200 congregants, of whom 505 were members in good standing. The Mennonite congregation in Danzig dates back to circa 1560.

As a minister of the Mennonite church in Danzig (now Gdansk, Poland), Hermann Gottlieb Mannhardt knew how to challenge and encourage his congregants in matters of faith and moral conduct. He also knew how to energize a crowd in matters related to politics and patriotism.

During the First World War, as Germany's armed forces were unleashing a path of destruction across Europe, Mannhardt made his way to the Danzig Hotel to give a rousing address to his fellow citizens in support of his nation's war efforts. He urged his listeners to remember

earlier struggles for liberty and nationhood, reminding his audience that long ago Germanic tribes had defeated Roman armies in the Teutoburg Forest. Drawing on the literary sources of poets and songwriters associated with the 19th-century German wars of liberation, he waxed eloquently about Germany's exceptional place in the world. Then, with a battle cry urging ultimate sacrifice, he called on men and women to bleed and die as heroes for the sake of the German nation.

Mannhardt's speech may shock us, especially if we are accustomed to thinking of Mennonites as a people opposed to war. Together with other religious

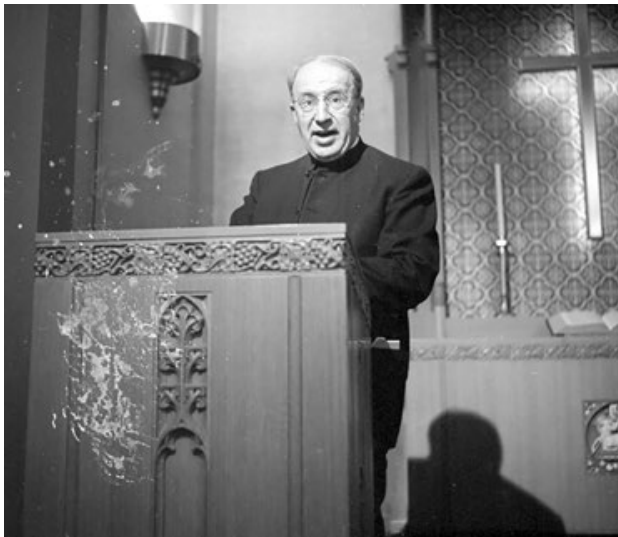
communities, such as the Church of the Brethren and the Quakers, Mennonites typically have been associated with the historic peace churches. And yet it seems that there may be another side to the Mennonite story that may call some of this thinking into question.

Indeed, the 500-year Mennonite story is multi-faceted and not without blemish. Some 16th-century Anabaptists, for example, were pacifists, but there were many who identified with—and even participated in—the peasant uprisings in the environs of present-day Switzerland, South Germany and Austria. There were also revolutionary and sometimes violent expressions of Anabaptism in the northern cities of Amsterdam, Delft and Münster.

Following these tumultuous years, Mennonites were hardly the “quiet in the land.” In the 17th century, some Dutch Mennonites armed their ships with cannons. A century later, they were involved in the militant Dutch Patriot Movement, bent on overthrowing the monarchy. A few years later, Swiss and Prussian Mennonites fought in the Napoleonic wars. In the early 20th century, some Mennonites joined self-defence units to protect Russian Mennonite villages from roving anarchists. And during both World Wars, some Mennonites from both sides of the Atlantic fought on the battlefields of Europe, and some even collaborated with the Nazis in carrying out atrocities against Jews.

Retouching a negative portrait of Anabaptism

To be sure, there has always been a non-resistant or pacifist thread running through the Mennonite story. Throughout the centuries, one can find countless examples of strong opposition to warfare. Mennonite confessional statements have almost, without exception, maintained principles of nonresistance or pacifism. Yet Mennonite lived-experience has not always mirrored churchly ideals, and sometimes Mennonites have behaved in ways that many modern-day observers would find abhorrent. When brought to the surface, these details can be troubling and can lead to questions about Mennonite identity and the way in which the Mennonite story has been told.



THE CANADIAN MENNONITE /
MENNONITE ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO PHOTO

Harold S. Bender of Goshen, Ind., speaking at the Church and State study event, which he chaired. The event, held in 1957 at Chicago Temple Methodist Church, was sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section.

For hundreds of years, Catholics and Protestants painted a negative portrait of Anabaptism. History books described adherents of the tradition as fanatical, sectarian, and even dangerous. In the middle of the 20th century, however, the portrait was revised, thanks to revisionist historians who rallied to set forth a counter-narrative, focussing on Anabaptist exceptionalism. In describing the early Anabaptists as heroes, a generation of scholarship was successful in rehabilitating the story.

A central figure who was responsible for this revisioning was Harold S. Bender, a widely respected Mennonite leader from Goshen, Ind., who wrote a highly influential essay called “The Anabaptist Vision.” His essay focussed on the beginning of the Swiss Anabaptist movement and highlighted the extent to which early Anabaptists managed to live out the gospel while emphasizing discipleship, community and the practice of nonresistance.

This revised account was enormously helpful for European Mennonites who were trying to make sense of the devastation in the aftermath of the Second World War. In North America, the revisionist theme likewise provided an inspiring road map as Mennonites in the United

States and Canada were migrating to the cities and seeking direction while running up against fundamentalist, evangelical and liberal-Protestant alternatives.

This revising of the Anabaptist story also came at a critical juncture after the war years, as Mennonites in North America were energetically building institutions such as camps, schools, mission and relief agencies and financial organizations. The emphasis on discipleship, community and peace set a welcoming tone for a generation of builders and leaders who needed a vision for their various endeavours.

A multi-faceted emerging portrait

Yet such revisionist story-telling would fall on hard times. While it would continue to resonate in church circles, it would not survive in the academy. Beginning in the 1970s, European and North American historians, less worried about defending denominational ideologies, began poking holes through what obviously had become an unsustainable narrative. In the following decades, the edifice holding up this ideal vision would crumble.

Most scholars today describe an Anabaptism of many stripes and characteristics, a portrait that includes examples of discipleship, community and peace, but also instances that look much different. Sometimes the images are more mystical, sometimes more worldly, sometimes more violent and always more complex.

The emerging portrait underscores the extent to which Anabaptist ideas were never particularly original. Scholars note the way in which Anabaptist ideas and practices were clearly shaped by social and political movements, and the way in which Anabaptist spirituality was thoroughly influenced by Catholic and Protestant realities.

Rather than a pristine “naked Anabaptism,” with thick boundaries maintaining religious

purity, scholars now observe a great deal of hybridity between the Anabaptists and their surrounding environs. The boundary lines between Anabaptism and the so-called outside world are seen to be exceedingly porous, with impulses moving across the lines in both directions.

Complex, dynamic and 'worldly' origins

Another important and perhaps more profound development in the scholarship has been the interest in looking at the longer history that appears to be every bit as dynamic as the story about beginnings. Beyond the 16th century, the curious observer encounters an evolving movement, reflecting an ever-growing and wide-ranging spiritual expression. Clearly, the unhinging of historical writing from narrowly constructed confessional narratives has opened the door to a Mennonite world that is complex, dynamic and "worldly." Such encounter with the past is more truthful and can often be inspiring. But honest scrutiny of the historical details will lead to disagreeable specifics as well. What are we to make of those unsavoury details in the Mennonite story?

A good dose of historical perspective is important. It may be easy for us, for example, to disavow and distance ourselves from Hermann Mannhardt's strident address that he gave at the Danzig Hotel. We have the benefit of hindsight and can observe the lines that connect his speech not only to the atrocities of the First World War but also to the hyper-nationalism and anti-Semitism of Hitler's Third Reich.

Mannhardt, however, did not have the benefit of our 21st-century perspective. He was limited by the horizons of his day and not immune to the influences and assumptions that shaped early 20th-century German society. In his time, the pressure to proclaim "Germany first" was real. For more than a hundred years, the Prussian government had exerted massive pressure on minority groups, such as the Mennonites, to embrace nationalism and to champion values of racial superiority and German exceptionalism. It would have been truly extraordinary for someone like Mannhardt to have opposed the reigning values of his day.

We could point a finger at Mannhardt's ignorance, but perhaps a better strategy

would be to use his story to reflect on our own vulnerabilities. Were we to live in his world, would we have acted differently? In our own time, are we truly immune to destructive forms of nationalism? What are the blinders that may be obscuring our current vision?

In the context of church life and in conversation with others, it is important that Mennonites not idealize their story. To be sure, there are heroic stories to tell. When narrated well, such stories have the capacity to inspire and empower. But we also need to tell other stories—even those that cast dark shadows. Such telling will be an act of truthfulness, and along the way we may have an opportunity to learn something about human nature and ourselves. ❧

An earlier version of this essay appeared with the title, "On judging the past," in Mennonite Historian, 42, No. 3 (September 2016), pages 2, 4-5, 10. For more information regarding Hermann Mannhardt's speech, see "German nationalism and the First World War: Hermann G. Mannhardt's heroic deeds and heroes," by Walter Klaassen, Harry Loewen and James Urry, published in Mennonite Quarterly Review, 88, No. 4 (October 2014): pages 517-536.



Karl Koop is professor of history and theology at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg.

/// For discussion

1. Do you have stories about "black sheep" in your family or congregational history? Do you find these stories stimulating or disheartening? What motivates us to tell or suppress negative stories from the past? Why might it be important to air at least some of these "unsavoury details?"
2. Karl Koop describes how Harold S. Bender's "Anabaptist Vision" led to a revision of Mennonite history. How did Bender's emphasis on discipleship, community and peace change the Mennonite church? Why do we keep revising history?
3. Do you think traditionalist Mennonites have been able to keep their self-identity from changing? How do they try to avoid being influenced by Canadian culture?
4. Koop says that "Mennonite lived-experience has not always mirrored churchly ideals, and sometimes Mennonites have behaved in ways that many modern-day observers would find abhorrent." What are some of his examples? Can you think of other examples of people not living up to ideals? How do you deal with these "unsavoury details?"
5. Just as H.G. Mannhardt accepted and proclaimed the idea of German nationalism more than a century ago, what are some ways of thinking that we absorb from Canadian culture today? Why is it important to monitor the influence that culture has on our thinking?

—BY BARB DRAPER

See related resources at
www.commonword.ca/go/1696

CommonWord
 Bookstore and Resource Centre

/// Readers write

✉ Editorializing, apology weaken abuse survivor's statement

Re: "Decades-old sexual abuse comes to light," Sept. 10, 2018, page 13.

It seems to me that *Canadian Mennonite* and Dave Rogalsky (former Eastern Canada correspondent) owe Ruth-Ann Klassen Shantz an apology for the poor handling of her statement. Mixing the abuser's apology in with the article has done nothing but heap further abuse on her head. I read her original statement, which was well written and would have stood on its own without any editorializing or comments by anyone else. It took immense courage for Ruth-Ann to come forward. To have it handled so poorly has not been encouraging for others to come forward.

RUTH MARTIN, DUTTON, ONT.

✉ Lament for my neighbour

Lady Liberty / Your light is burning low / Chilling winds blow across the land.

The Eagle is troubled / The skies are clouded with fear / Values are lost in the fog.

The flag and the Bible are tangled and twisted / Freedom and truth are weakened by divisiveness / The health and freedom of the press is in decline.

The visions of the brave and the free are fading / The voice of the poor is getting weaker / Justice has a skin disease and is in retreat.

My neighbour / I am sad for you, for all of us / The ripples of your dream, and also your troubles, spread far and wide.

RAY HAMM, NEUBERGTHAL, MAN.

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.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Dyck—Jacoby Gunnar (b. Aug. 17, 2018), to Heidi (Epp) and Sean Dyck, Eigenheim Mennonite, Rosthern, Sask., in Minnedosa, Man.

Froese—Lucas Alexander (b. Nov. 14, 2018), to Alex and Melissa Froese, Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Mulholland—Reginald Regis (b. Dec. 1, 2018), to Amanda and Guy Mulholland, Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Baptisms

Delaney Fehr—Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Dec. 2, 2018.

Braydon Zacharias—Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask., Nov. 25, 2018.

Deaths

Bartel—Arno, 89 (b. March 25, 1929; d. Nov. 1, 2018), Niagara United Mennonite, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont.

Braun—John, 91 (b. Jan. 29, 1927; d. Nov. 24, 2018), Kelowna First Mennonite, B.C.

Braun—Josephine (Mireau), 74 (b. Jan. 1, 1944; d. Dec. 15, 2018), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

Brenneman—Earl, 73 (b. Nov. 29, 1944; d. Nov. 25, 2018), Maple View Mennonite Wellesley, Ont.

Buschert—Carl I., 81 (b. Jan. 20, 1937; d. Nov. 27, 2018), Elmira Mennonite, Ont.

Dick—Agnes (Enns), 91 (b. Jan. 22, 1927; d. Nov. 29, 2018), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

Drudge—Norman, 88 (d. Nov. 27, 2018), Rouge Valley Mennonite, Markham, Ont.

Janzen—George, 87 (b. Sept. 24, 1931; d. Sept. 30, 2018), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Kinzie—Willard L., 99 (b. Sept. 26, 1919; d. Nov. 25, 2018), Preston Mennonite, Cambridge, Ont.

Koop—Astrid (nee Gossen), 80 (b. Feb. 23, 1938; d. Nov. 19, 2018), North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

McGhie—Marlene P., 81 (b. Jan. 10, 1937; d. Dec. 13, 2018), Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.

Penner—Lydia, 91 (b. Feb. 17, 1927; d. Nov. 22, 2018), Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Pries—Helen (Schoenfeld), 92 (b. Aug. 16, 1926; d. Nov. 23, 2018), Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon.

Sawatzky—Irene, 74 (b. Aug. 4, 1944; d. Oct. 27, 2018), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg.

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

FROM OUR LEADERS

'To be more like them'

Brent Charette

I often have the same thought when visiting a first-generation Canadian congregation: I wish my home congregation of Rockway Mennonite could see this!

Invariably, when I visit a congregation that worships in a language other than English, I anticipate a service that is typically longer—because they often are longer—and I anticipate that it will feel longer because I do not understand most of the music, prayers and sermon. Yet so often the time flies by.

On a Sunday morning last fall, Meheret Evangelical Church opened its new building on Krug Street in Kitchener, Ont. The space was packed. Worship started a little later than what was posted, but that was to be expected, given that the majority of their leaders live life on a more Global South notion of time than what I expect as a westerner. Indeed, the entire service went along with little or no deference to the clock. Songs and sermon—yes, plenty of both—all started slowly and built to a crescendo. The pace and energy were infectious.

As the crescendo built, people began to vocalize their affirmation of what was being sung or said, people clapped and danced in the aisles, others raised their hands and nodded their heads. As someone born and raised outside of these

traditions, I was uncertain what I should do. Since these are not actions that naturally flow from me, I merely enjoyed their enthusiasm.

But enjoyment was overtaken by another

emotion, a sincere wish that I could do what they were doing. They seemed to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and their bodies, minds and hearts expressed that love and energy freely. Sure, I could easily have raised my hands and shouted for joy, but that would have felt unnatural. (For the record, I did clap, which is a pretty big deal for me!)

We have much to learn from congregations and people new to the Mennonite fold. They offer us gifts of the Holy Spirit, a heart for disciple-making, and a willingness to give a large share of their personal resources so that the congregation can birth yet another church. It is inspiring and humbling to witness their faith.

As Canadians, we all have access to the richness of other cultures. This richness is sometimes thought of as a new and interesting dish, music, crafts or dances.

However, among the growing number of new Anabaptist churches in North America, there is something else: healthy and vibrant parts of the Body of Christ without which we are incomplete.

We have much to learn from congregations and people new to the Mennonite fold. . . . It is inspiring and humbling to witness their faith.

In First Corinthians 12 we hear about the many parts that make up the Body of Christ: *“God has placed each part in the body just as he wanted it to be. If all the parts were the same, how could there be a body? As it is, there are many parts. But there is only one body.”*

I thank God for the churches that offer us all glimpses of the full Body of Christ. As they settle in Canada and become more “western,” may they not lose the richness that they have right now, and may God find a way to help me to be more like them. ❧



Brent Charette is the Mennonite Church Eastern Canada operations and church engagement minister.

— A moment from yesterday —



As the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, staff at the state archives in Odessa, Ukraine, worked diligently to microfilm Russian Mennonite documents in its possession. Collected by Peter J. Braun during the turbulent years of the Russian Revolution and Civil War (1917-1920), and later confiscated by the Soviet state, the records languished in obscurity until discovered independently by two Canadian researchers. Historian Harvey L. Dyck coordinated the effort, supported by a number of Mennonite and non-Mennonite academic institutions, to microfilm the Braun archive and distribute it to Mennonite archives and libraries in the West. This story is repeated often around the world today, wherever historical memory is threatened by war and civil unrest.

Text: Laureen Harder-Gissing
Photo: Mennonite Archives of Ontario



archives.mhsc.ca

IN THE IMAGE

‘What’s he doing out there?’

Ed Olfert

I have friends who live in Fond du Lac, a small, isolated community in northern Saskatchewan on the shore of Lake Athabasca, near the border with the Northwest Territories.

A years-ago visit found me there in late November. One day, I found myself in a home with a half-dozen men visiting over mugs of coffee. Actually, “visiting” isn’t quite accurate, because conversation was mostly in Dene. One fellow, who had lived “down south” for a time and was more aware of “down south” etiquette, translated stories into English for my benefit.

Fond du Lac, like a number of northern communities, is a First Nation community that faces significant struggles. Despite the isolation, or because of it, the fragile Dene culture is besieged by the dominant southern culture, which bombards residents with reminders that the good life is found in things such as soft drinks, junk food, satellite TV, alcohol and illicit drugs. Cultural confusion is linked to violence, addiction, abuse, a high death rate and much sadness. Certainly, in this circle of men who included me, glimpses of that struggle could be read on their faces. Yet laughter came often as outrageous stories were shared.

The house faced the shore of Lake Athabasca. A cutting November wind

gusted wisps of snow between huge boulders, polishing new ice and creating a bleak scene beyond the large window. Into that picture, an old man shuffled around the corner of the house, hood drawn up, shoulders hunched. He made his way slowly to the lake’s edge and began gingerly but doggedly to walk out onto the thin ice.

I noted that the conversation in the warm room had stopped. The men around me had also noted the scene outside. Into the silence, with a gesture toward the man on the ice, I asked, “What’s he doing out there?”

A number of responses were offered and translated. The ice walker had been sick for some time and had grown somewhat frail. He was now unable to hunt, and so his supply of caribou meat for the coming winter was undoubtedly meagre. With some urgency, he was checking the ice thickness, to see how soon he could set fishing nets in order to feed himself and his dogs.

As I listened, as I “felt” the stories being offered to me, I became aware of a new dynamic. The image being played out on the ice seemed to serve as a reminder to these men. In the words, in the translations, and again in the feeling in the room, I sensed that when there

was enough snow for snowmobiles and toboggans to again go hunting, and the herds were found, meat would appear on this old man’s doorstep.

There was no rushing out to convince the elderly gentleman that he would be cared for, that he could return to safe ground. There was no drawing up of schedules. Neither was there paper work needed to prove his need, no worker to call. There was simply, in the stoic faces around me, an acceptance of responsibility.

I had received a gift. I had been offered a glimpse of something holy. I had been reminded that a generous God was present in the culture of this barren windswept community long before the white man, long before the Christian church appeared. This community, this people, this fragile culture, carries a measure of that which is created “very good,” if we but wait quietly for the invitation to glimpse it. ☿



Ed Olfert (p2ptheo@sasktel.net) continues to seek out “very good” glimpses of God.

Et cetera

This church at a rural crossroad near Elora, Ont., was ‘attacked’ by a wayward bale of hay late last year.



PHOTO BY BARB DRAPER

BOOK REVIEW

'The music ever changing'

The Pastor-Congregation Duet.

By Gary Harder. Privately published by Friesen Press, 2018, 282 pages.

Review by Marilyn Rudy-Froese

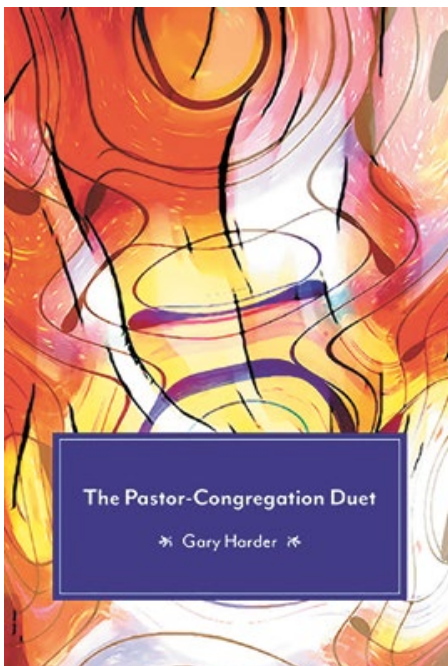
MC EASTERN CANADA CHURCH LEADERSHIP MINISTER

In *The Pastor-Congregation Duet*, Gary Harder weaves together his love of pastoral ministry and his love of music. It is clear from the outset, that his call to ministry ran deep, and his love for making music and appreciating music helped to sustain him in his call, feeding him in times of drought and comforting him in times of discouragement. He uses musical imagery, describing the relationship between pastor and congregation as a complex duet, "with the music ever changing."

He honestly names the challenges of learning the moods and dynamics of this complex relationship. "In the end," he writes, "it still comes down to each partner trusting the other to stay in harmony, even when they hit sour notes along the way, and even when they argue over which key to sing in. If you don't trust your partner, you can't harmonize with them, and the song will end."

In this book, Harder sets out to review his pastoral journey in order to understand what was enjoyable, sustaining and life-giving. This book is steeped in deep gratitude for a journey in ministry that was not without its challenges, but that was deeply fulfilling for him. He reviews his ministry honestly, sharing vulnerably about his own struggles to recognize and own the part he played in those struggles. He lets us see his frailty and mistakes and invites us into the lessons he learned. He shares the times when situations do not end neatly, the messiness of relationships and human shortcomings remains, and God's grace abounds.

He also wrestles with what it means to be a pastoral leader, recognizing how the church and its understanding of, and expectations for, pastors changed during his years of ministry. We walk with him in his growing understanding of what



that meant for him. Finally, he shares with us sermons, articles and prayers he used in his ministry. In these, we see his theology come to life for a particular gathering of God's people in a particular time.

The heart of ministry, and the heart of this book, is the relationship between pastor and congregation. This is the relationship that Harder tended and nurtured in his 50-plus years of ministry.

Part 1 focuses on the congregation as duet partner. There are four chapters dedicated to the four stages of his ministry: early education and call, two congregations, and intentional interim experiences.

In Part 2, he shares his journey to finding and claiming his own voice. He highlights the importance of physical and emotional well-being, sharing stories of golfing on Mondays and the place of music to nurture his spirit. There is a

chapter dedicated to the rhythms of the marriage duet, in which he shares about his own journey of accepting his wife Lydia's gifts for ministry, and of their partnership in ministry that evolved and grew as he grew more comfortable with his own pastoral voice and gifts.

Part 3 examines the special occasions in congregational life: baptism, parent-child dedication, weddings and funerals. He shares a variety of stories in which we witness his growth, his vulnerability and ability to laugh at himself, and his ability to grapple theologically with situations that don't fit the normal pattern.

Part 4 looks at times when the music is discordant. Conflict is a normal part of any relationship, and no less true in the pastor-congregation relationship. He specifically looks at the Anabaptist theology of church and its implications for pastoral leadership. The foundational belief in the priesthood of all believers, into which every voice is welcomed and valued, creates challenges for a pastoral leader in finding her/his own voice.

He names power and control, and says a pastor's job is to "sort out a healthy use of . . . power while respecting the fuller power of the congregation. A pastor is hired to lead but not to control. Inevitably there will be tensions in this sorting out."

He shares stories of navigating those tensions, focusing on the role of the pastor in committee meetings being to help every voice find a place around the table.

This is a book for pastors and congregations. Congregants will benefit from this honest look into life and ministry from a pastor's perspective, and it could prompt them to consider how they would articulate the pastor-congregation relationship. ❧

BOOK REVIEW

Revisiting a third way

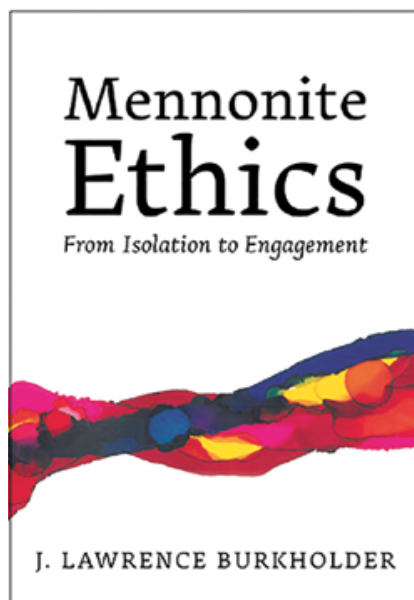
Mennonite Ethics: From Isolation to Engagement.

J. Lawrence Burkholder, edited by Lauren Friesen. Privately published by Friesen Press, 2018, 650 pages.

Reviewed by Maxwell Kennel

J. Lawrence Burkholder's experiences as a relief worker in China in 1947 caused him to think about the nature of power. His dissertation, "The problem of social responsibility from the perspective of the Mennonite church," was completed in 1958 but not published at the time because it challenged Mennonite teachings. Burkholder called for Mennonite social engagement rather than sectarian isolation.

When the dissertation was finally published in 1989, Burkholder wrote in the preface: "What impressed me most was the ambiguity of power. Without power, nothing could be accomplished, but when power was exercised, invariably some people were helped and others were deprived or hurt." As a Mennonite philoso-



J. Lawrence Burkholder provides a Mennonite political theology that rejects simplistic suspicion of the world and instead gives a model for socially responsible nonviolent action.

pher and theologian, he was reflecting on how power affected practical service, from his early master's thesis through his dissertation to his later book manuscript about a "third way."

Mennonite Ethics collects these three works and provides a retrospective look at Burkholder's career, from his early education, to his work in China with the United Nations, to his time as president of Goshen (Ind.) College. Edited by his son-in-law, Lauren Friesen, *Mennonite Ethics* makes Burkholder's most important works available in one volume.

Burkholder provides a Mennonite political theology that rejects simplistic suspicion of the world and instead gives a model for socially responsible nonviolent action. Distinctions between "church" and "world"

are not clear, he suggests, arguing that, in both church and world, "It is not enough for the churches to be committed to love and justice while ignoring power." But for him, power is profoundly ambiguous and cannot be taken up without some measure of risk and the possibility of failure.

The first section of the book is an edition of Burkholder's master's thesis in which he investigates the distinctive doctrine of nonconformity in the Mennonite church, examining how Swiss Anabaptists, Hutterites, Amish and the Mennonite church of his day negotiated with, and were separate from, the "world." The second section contains his dissertation on the problem of articulating a socially responsible Mennonite ethic in between the call for peace and justice, and the ambiguities

of power. The final section of *Mennonite Ethics* presents a book manuscript on the "third way" written by Burkholder in the late 1960s, while he was teaching at Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass.

Like his dissertation, the *A Third Way* manuscript was rejected by Herald Press for challenging the orthodox Mennonite position of his day. Whereas his dissertation was suppressed by Harold S. Bender because it was directly critical of Mennonite nonconformity, his final book manuscript was rejected by Herald Press for not being Mennonite enough.

The Mennonite church and academy cannot afford to ignore the public and scholarly voice of Burkholder any longer, for his work represents an early and sustained effort to come to terms with the systemic abuses of power that are manifest in racism, sexism and economic oppression. Against these social evils, Burkholder's paradoxical third way understands dialogue, compassion and conflict resolution to be acts of both incisive intervention and humble service. Rather than presenting a supposedly neutral middle ground that conceals real contradictions and injustices, he rejects easy answers and provides inspiration for difficult mediations of complex and paradoxical situations. %

Maxwell Kennel is a doctoral candidate in the department of Religious Studies at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont., where he is writing a dissertation on violence, Mennonites and metaphysics.



NEWS

Church steps up to help local food bank

Story and Photo by Zach Charbonneau

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
HARROW, ONT.

In December, Essex County was preparing to rest. The land had done its work, providing crops for farmers to harvest and get to market. The temperature dropped and the workload followed suit. Tractors were in the sheds and off the roads. Farmers and rural folk became shoppers and headed to urban centres to hunt down that perfect gift for Christmas.

Things seemed to be business as usual, but there was something new happening here.

Nestled just north of the four corners, past the Tim Hortons and Danielle's Soft Serve, is a small building with a gravel parking lot and a sign by the roadside that reads "Harrow Mennonite Church." It was windy outside, but otherwise quiet. Inside, though, it was a different story, with chatter and a spirit of cheer among people gathered around and surrounded by cardboard boxes.

The boxes were filled with non-perishable

food donated by local wineries, public schools and other local initiatives, for the Harrow Foodbank, an effort of the local Society of St. Vincent de Paul chapter that provides baskets of non-perishable food items to more than 50 local families in need throughout the year.

And while it is a necessary service, the food bank had needs of its own. Formerly housed in the local Catholic church, the charity was forced to relocate to a soccer field concession booth when a section of the church had to be torn down. The new space was not ideal for receiving, sorting or shipping donations. This situation led to a unique partnership and opportunity for people to serve in a new, energizing way.

"Isn't it part of our goal to be involved in the community?" wondered Margaret Wieler, a feisty octogenarian sorting cans of beans and checking best before dates in an unused Sunday school room at Harrow Mennonite. The room had been

transformed into something of a production line for sorting cans and other food items. "This is our way of doing it as a small church. We're trying to support the mission of the food bank," she said, answering her own question.

With just over 20 regular congregants, Harrow Mennonite is indeed a small church, but the effort it is making through this local partnership is a big one. With ads in the local paper and online, more and more food arrived in the days leading up to Christmas, meaning more work for this rural congregation.

"This is a congregation that really likes to do things," said Pastor Karen Sheil, who has led the way into this joint effort through intentional conversations with the food bank and with the help of volunteer coordinator Elaine Lepp in finding lots for the whole congregation to do.

Sheil described sorting parties at which groups of volunteers spanning generations get together to sort and pack boxes for monthly distribution. "We're reconnecting with folks who have been less active and engaging younger people a bit more," she said. "Youth with connections to the church are interested in helping. Everyone can get involved but not everyone has to be involved all the time."

While there can be organized groups that come in to sort, Sheil is also encouraged by the possibility of what she describes as "drop-in volunteering." Members can get into the church when they have some time to spare and sort the food when it works for them. This makes volunteering even more accessible for people with unusual schedules or for seniors who are able to work for shorter periods of time. The flexibility and energy around such a fruitful partnership have made this effort appealing to every demographic.

When asked about any significant challenges in taking on this effort, congregant Elaine Lepp couldn't think of any. "It's interesting because more and more people seem to be coming out of the woodwork," she said. "People ask me about this when I'm at the grocery store and the bank, and they want to know how they can help. It's opening a door to other interested people."

✎



Pictured from left to right, Elaine Lepp, Pastor Karen Sheil, Margaret Wieler and Elma Lepp pack Christmas hampers for the local food bank in a Sunday school classroom at Harrow Mennonite Church.

Correcting false impressions about Mennonites

Mennonite Media

The Third Way website (thirdway.org), which was originally known as Third Way Café, was launched in 1998, just over 20 years ago now. It came about in part because of *The Mennonite Hour* radio program that began in the early 1950s.

The Mennonite Hour aired on both religious and secular stations across the United States and Canada, and many people had never heard of Mennonites. As listeners wrote letters to the broadcast requesting free literature and eventually Bible correspondence courses, they tried valiantly—but often unsuccessfully—to spell the name: The Midianite Hour, Man of the Knight Hour, Moonlight Hour, Minnow Night Hour and Midnight Hour, according to a partial history, *Mennonite Broadcasts: The First 25 Years* by Hubert R. Pellman, published in 1979.

Queries arrived by letter and phone, and eventually by email and online questions to the Third Way website. By the end of 2018, the number of emails had shrunk from hundreds to dozens, since the curious often just Google their questions and find answers. But some have questions that are not easily answered in an online search—nor are they easy to answer for the current volunteer, Dennis Kuhns, a retired Mennonite pastor in Harrisonburg, Pa.

Here is an overview of 10 questions Kuhns received in 2018:

• Members from the '50s?

Is there a list of members from the 1950s? I have pictures of meetings from that time, and I think my family religion of that time was Mennonite, but in the newspapers it just read: nondenominational. However, when I was growing up, we would meet at other members' homes and each would take turns reading from the Bible and telling how it had affected them that week. Just trying to find any connections.—Lynda

• What about Buddha and Mohammed?

Jesus preaches, “Love your enemies; do not hate, be reconciled.” How about this: Have no enemies. Following Jesus is one way, but there are better ways. What about the way of Buddha? What about Krishna? What about Mohammed? I'm not trying to argue with you or outsmart you. I just don't like how Christians say that Jesus is the only way. Also, Christians say if I do not believe in God and Jesus Christ, then I'm going to hell. Also, how can we ascertain that Jesus specifically said, “Love thy neighbour” and all various commands? The Bible was written after Jesus' so-called death. Also, I heard in documentaries that names like Paul, Matthew and John are “pen names.” We don't know their real names. I question the validity of the Bible.—Name withheld

• Rules of the church.

I am looking for a church in the area of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. I am also curious on the rules of the church. Thank you so much! —Gina

• Going Mennonite or Amish.

I am a 21-year-old female that is interested in going [into] the Amish and/or Mennonite community. I have never supported society and their ways of life and have become more fearful of where it may be heading. Ever since I can remember I have longed to learn how to live off of the land, farming and raising a family. There is a chance that I may be with child. My fiancé and I both do not agree with modern expectations in society and want to give our family the greatest chance of walking in the light of the Lord.—Sadie

• Running short on rent.

I was encouraged through my prayers to finally reach out for help. I started coming to your church and have been [there] several times, but my visits have been somewhat

sporadic due to my health. I now find myself broken and in need. I will be having major surgery in several weeks, but my sickness benefits have run out and I am struggling while waiting for my disability to come through. I am a single mom with a 16-year-old son and am running short on my rent and everything else. I don't want to lose everything because of a short-term setback. I am college educated, have always been employed until a downsizing layoff about 14 months ago. I am writing to find out if the church can offer any kind of one-time assistance just to bridge the gap?—Tracey

• Mennonite relief camps in Worms?

Would you know whom to contact about Mennonite camps near Worms, Germany, from 1944 to 1953? I have been looking online; however I cannot find anything. I do remember being in one, and a nice lady by the name of Snyder gave me a pair of white new shoes which I never forgot. Being 73 years old now, my relatives don't have any knowledge.—Roswitha

• Gift for singers?

We have a wonderful community of Mennonites in our small town. They want to come sing for us at our home! I don't know what to give them in return?—Valta

• Enslavement.

Why are Mennonites against slavery?—Ann

• Nursing culture project.

I am a first-year nursing student and I have a culture project due Sept. 17, and my culture topic is Mennonites. I'd like to know what your beliefs are in regard to health and healthcare. Perhaps the church's view on illness/health; pain; traditional or religious healing practices; concerns with modern treatment; increased risk of any particular disease; family dynamics; dietary considerations; respect; modesty; social concerns; hygiene; touch/personal space; end of life.—Kenya

• Finding Jesus.

How do you know you found Jesus? —Tyriah ☯

Viral theology

Winnipeg student talks about his Hauerwasian Memes for Pacifist Teens Facebook page

Story and Photo by Aaron Epp
Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
WINNIPEG

When Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) students Micah Enns-Dyck and Nathan Dueck created the Facebook page *Hauerwasian Memes for Pacifist Teens* last April, they thought its appeal would be limited to their classmates. Not so. Today, the page—which bills itself as “the ultimate destination for dank theological memes from a pacifist/Anabaptist/Radical Orthodox/post-liberal perspective”—has more than 4,000 likes from people all over the world.

“It was basically a joke at first, but surprisingly, it started taking off,” says Enns-Dyck, 20, who is from Altona, Man. “So, we went from there.”

CM: Why did you choose American theologian and Duke University professor Stanley Hauerwas to name the page after?

MED: He’s become my favourite theologian, so he was the obvious choice for the page. He’s really provocative, which I really like. He’ll sometimes say things that will shock people, and they’re usually controversial on the surface level, but then you read and you understand how his positions are nuanced and what his foundations are. He’s just really interesting, the way he sort



‘It was basically a joke at first,’ Micah Enns-Dyck says of his popular Facebook page.

of understands theology and ethics as these interdependent tasks.

CM: Does anyone help you with the page?

MED: I have a team of five or so moderators who help me respond to comments, and they help me come up with ideas for memes as well. Those are all people I just met on the internet, on the page, who have been interacting with the memes. You sort of pick out the friendly faces and the people who are always returning, so now they’re a part of the team. [It] feels kind of

weird because it almost feels like a business, although it’s really not. It takes some discipline [though] because I try to upload at least one meme a day, sometimes two. Nathan still helps out as well when he can.

CM: What makes a good meme?

MED: I think when memes first started, it was sort of like a picture with text on the top and the bottom, then it sort of became this word that referenced a joke that everyone was talking about. Something can become a meme that’s not even an image or a picture or really a joke at all. A person can become a meme just because of how much they’re talked about and joked about.

So I think a good meme is [something that] sort of plays on what is currently being talked about and joked about [online]. I wouldn’t say I’m a funny person. All I do is plot labels on stuff or think of theological topics to joke about, and then I’ll just take a meme template and plot it on.

I think what makes a good meme is something that makes you instinctively laugh without even analyzing the joke. It’s not even rational, but you just laugh. I can’t even explain it because it really makes no sense.

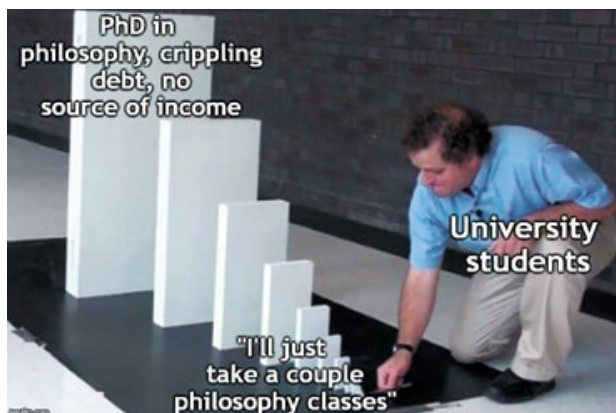
CM: What’s it like having thousands of people following the page?

MED: It is weird to have so many people follow the page. I have friends that I’ve met online who run meme pages, and some of them have 200,000 likes on their pages. So it feels very small compared to that, but also it does feel sort of large. Over 4,000 people are interested in the page, and I had never expected that. I thought maybe we would get 50 or so CMU students, be really niche, but it didn’t happen that way.

CM: There’s some significant theological discussion that happens on the page. What impact have those discussions had on you



The Facebook page bills itself as ‘the ultimate destination for dank theological memes from a pacifist/Anabaptist/Radical Orthodox/post-liberal perspective.’



One of Micah Enns-Dyck's Hauwerwasian memes.

as a student?

MED: I think the biggest thing is that it disciplines me to keep thinking about things. I'll make a meme about a specific topic, and then someone will comment and challenge me. It's a good exercise in writing to come up with my response and just deal with the way people are reacting to the images. . . . I'm uploading every day, so

I'm constantly thinking about theological topics and philosophical topics. It also sort of coincides with my studies. So if I'm in a certain class, I'll have content to bring to the meme page and make memes about. They sort of go hand-in-hand. ☺

This interview has been edited and condensed for reasons of space.

Alumni award winner works tirelessly for peace

Story and Photo by Jennifer Konkle
Conrad Grebel University College
WATERLOO, ONT.

A crowd of old friends and alumni, as well as people interested in restorative justice, filled the Grebel Gallery last fall to hear from Dean Peachey. He reflected on the seeds of peace that were sown during the 25 years he and his wife Melissa Miller spent in Kitchener-Waterloo.

As Grebel's 2018 Distinguished Alumni Service Award winner, Peachey returned to the college to take part in a discussion entitled "Backward/forward: Reflections on peace, conflict and human rights" with Reina Neufeldt, Grebel's peace and conflict studies professor.

At one point in the evening, he reflected on the collaborative work that he and others did in Waterloo Region, as they made efforts to transform the justice system. He participated in conversations that led to Community Mediation Service, the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program, Community Justice Initiatives, Police-Based Victim Services Program, Circles of Support and Accountability, and Network for Conflict Resolution. "We put a lot of effort into trying to change the world," he concluded.

Peachey completed an MA in 1982 and a PhD in 1986 in psychology, both from the

University of Waterloo. While completing his MA, he worked with Conrad Brunk, a Grebel professor, to develop Community Mediation Service in 1980, the first such program in Ontario. He was the coordinator of the program from 1980 to '85.

As a student, Peachey showed a passion for active peacemaking. He played a key role in a symposium on nonviolence hosted at Grebel in 1975. The impetus for the symposium helped to lay the groundwork for what would become the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) at Grebel. Two years later, in 1977, it became an academic offering in peace and conflict studies with UWaterloo's faculty of arts.

Peachey taught at Grebel as a PACS adjunct instructor between 1982 and 2000, offering courses such as community conflict resolution. During this time, he worked to establish the Network for Conflict Resolution, which emerged from a coalition of community-based conflict resolution agencies across Canada in 1985, and he served as its coordinator until 1995.

Peachey now serves as the executive director of Global College at what he called "the other UW," located in Winnipeg. He is coordinator of the human rights program.



Marcus Shantz, Conrad Grebel University College president, left, stands with Grebel's 2018 Distinguished Alumni Service Award winner, Dean Peachey. Peachey was honoured on Oct. 11, 2018, for his far-reaching contributions in promoting peace in church and society.

With his extensive contributions promoting peace in the church, community, nation and world, the impact of his work is immeasurable. His drive to educate and dialogue embodies the ideals and mission of Grebel; for that reason, he was named Grebel's 2018 Distinguished Alumni Service Award Winner. ☺

Correction

Abner Martin's wife's maiden name was Jantzi. Incorrect information appeared in "Conductor. Father. Farmer. Christian." Jan. 7, page 26, due to an editing error. *Canadian Mennonite* regrets the error.

Introducing *The Ferment*

New podcast hosts big names to discuss cultural unrest, faith and radical love

By Nicolien Klassen-Wiebe
Manitoba Correspondent

At his home on Ploughshares Community Farm in South St. Ouen's, Man., Marcus Peter Rempel chops a lot of cabbage. But, instead of making a salad or throwing it in a soup, he squishes it in a giant bucket, covers it and lets it sit at room temperature for several weeks. He lets it ferment, a step required to make sauerkraut.

This is one of the inspirations behind *The Ferment*, a new podcast that Rempel co-hosts with Manitoba musician Alana Levandoski. The fermentation process could not be more different than that of canning, which requires complete sterilization. "It's alive with something healthy that makes it good and safe and transforms it into something . . . [with] even more life and health for you in the food than there was to begin with," says Rempel.

Fermentation creates the conditions for a good culture to grow and thrive. The two creators hope their podcast can do the same.

A multi-talented creator, Rempel is the author of *Life at the End of Us Versus Them: Cross Culture Stories* and has worked as an occupational therapist, pastor and gardener, to name just a few. The son of Mennonite mission workers, he

is currently studying for his master's degree in marriage and family therapy, and working at the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre.

Levandoski worked in the music industry for 10 years, writing with folk icons like Sylvia Tyson, recording and performing internationally. She now writes and performs songs and chants rooted in the Christian tradition and lives with her family near Riding Mountain National Park, where they're exploring sustainable farming.

The self-described "farmer philosopher" and "mystic folkie" have so far released five episodes, including interviews with CBC personality David Cayley and two gay clergy, Tim Otto and James Alison, as well as a live recording of one of Levandoski's concerts.

Each episode includes an introduction by the co-hosts, a conversation with a guest and Levandoski's music, selected to complement the conversation. Upcoming episodes feature other big names, such as author and theologian Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, prominent peace activist Kathy Kelly, award-winning musician Steve Bell, and many others.

Rempel first considered doing a podcast

'If we're just kicking at the darkness, I'm not sure that's how the daylight breaks. There's another kind of energy that's not a kicking energy, that's a wakefulness energy.'
(Marcus Peter Rempel)

while writing his book, which created connections with people who were previously only names on the spines of his favourite books. He was eager to open up the conversation to other voices after it was published.

The co-hosts first met at the Refreshing Winds conference held at Canadian Mennonite University. When a friend shared Rempel's Kickstarter campaign for his book on Levandoski's Facebook feed, she became one of its first contributors.

The Ferment was officially born in 2017, when Levandoski played a concert at a tiny church in Rempel's rural community and stayed at his home on the farm. Over breakfast in the straw-bale house, they exchanged ideas and the project was formed. Producer Samantha Klassen and web manager Matt Wiebe joined the project later, completing the team.

We're living in a time of cultural unrest, when fear whispers in our ears, and "us versus them" language runs rampant, says Rempel.

Levandoski agrees. When she leads workshops on how to write protest songs, people almost always include language about "them" and "me" in their music. "It's this idea that I'm going to hold my opinion . . . 'cause I can't have it change and I can't have it transform or turn into something different," she says. "I think we're really seeing culture clash on a big scale because



Musician Alana Levandoski and author Marcus Peter Rempel co-host the new podcast, *The Ferment*.

one generation to the next can have a very different culture.”

“But out of the ferment, something good is rising,” the co-hosts say on their website. They quote philosopher René Girard, another of *The Ferment’s* inspirations. “Sooner or later the ferment of the gospels will cause the breakup of the social order it infiltrates and of all similar societies, even so-called Christian societies that claim to be based on it.”

“He has this sense in which the gospel, as a kind of bubbling, subversive yeast of the kingdom . . . ends up really overturning a social order that’s basically a social order of us versus them,” says Rempel.

People are living in a time when those holding positions of power and oppression are being challenged, and new opportunities are emerging, but this new era needs to be powered by a force of love, says Rempel. He points to Bruce Cockburn’s famous lyric, “Got to kick at the darkness till it bleeds daylight,” and says, “If we’re just kicking at the darkness, I’m not sure

that’s how the daylight breaks. There’s another kind of energy that’s not a kicking energy, that’s a wakefulness energy.” This energy, much like nature’s metaphor of fermentation, teaches people not to get stuck in one way of thinking, he concludes. ❧

The *Ferment* invites people to rethink how they live out love and grow friendship. Join the conversation at theferment.ca or subscribe on iTunes.



News brief

Church members come through with ‘unexpected Christmas challenge’

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Christmas 2018 was a little merrier for residents of Kinghaven Treatment Centre, a 62-bed treatment centre helping men recover from substance abuse and addiction, and the George Schmidt Centre, a second-stage housing facility for men wishing to continue their recovery journey, thanks to members of Level Ground Mennonite Church. For the past several years, Level Ground has been distributing Christmas gift packages to a hundred residents of both facilities, located right next door to the church, and a local Tim Hortons franchise had supplied gift cards to include in the packages. A few days before the church was going to give the gifts to the residents late last year, organizers found out Tim Hortons’ partnership in this program would not be happening in 2018. Organizers put out a plea on Facebook for help from the congregation, and Level Ground responded in a big way. “Thanks to everyone who helped out with our ‘Unexpected Christmas challenge,’” said a Facebook posting the next day. “Within 24 hours, we had collected 120 Tim Hortons cards for the guys . . . as well as enough money to buy a chocolate bar to also include in each gift bag. You are amazing!”

—BY AMY DUECKMAN

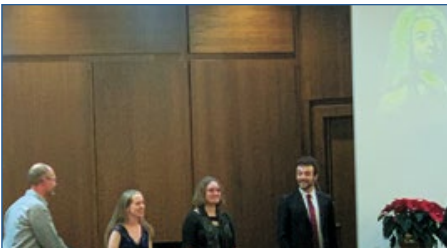


PHOTO BY LARRY SHANTZ /
TEXT BY JANET BAUMAN

Pictured from left to right: Mark Diller Harder, assistant director, acknowledges university student soloists Elizabeth Lepock (soprano), Madeline Cooper (mezzo-soprano), and Wesley Harrison (tenor), along with Menno Singers artistic director Brandon Leis (off camera right), after a Messiah Sing-A-Long on Dec. 16, 2018. Menno Singers, a Waterloo Region-based choir, rooted in the Mennonite tradition, hosted the annual event at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church, where some 300 eager audience singers, arranged by voice parts, joined with an orchestra in a rousing rendition of the Christmas section and other selections from Handel’s ‘Messiah.’

News brief

New VBS curriculum helps children love others



Neighbours are more than people who live next door. Children will expand their ideas about neighbours and how to

love others in the new Vacation Bible School curriculum from MennoMedia. “Who is my neighbor? Learning to Love like Jesus,” is available now for the summer of 2019. Through five carefully selected Bible stories, “Who is my neighbor?” tells the story of Jesus teaching people the importance of loving God and each other; the parable of the good Samaritan; Isaac and Rebekah’s skirmish over wells; guests invited to a special banquet who refuse to attend; and the early disciples sharing with one another. “Who is my neighbor?” can help churches address changing communities in positive ways while teaching children to follow the way of Jesus in all of life. Editor Mary Ann Weber says that the theme “gets to the heart of the fact that we are to care for everyone. . . . The stories and activities offer concrete ways we can show care and concern to anyone.” Written by various writers, the Bible story curriculum becomes real through worship, music, drama, crafts, games and other activities. Two student books for children of different ages are offered, along with promotional material, a resource CD, a Bible memory verses poster and participation certificates.

—MENNOMEDIA

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How steam wells work to relieve droughts in Ethiopia

Mennonite Central Committee

In parts of the world where the effects of climate change are severe and rains are dangerously infrequent, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is supporting innovative projects to improve access to water.

In the Afar region of Northern Ethiopia, MCC supported the Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA) to build and maintain a steam well benefitting 60 households.

According to Bruce Buckwalter, an MCC representative in Ethiopia, the Afar region is particularly dry and arid. Because there are few livelihood opportunities outside of farming, many people rely on their herds.

“Traditionally, the Afar pastoralists have been largely dependent on surface water, like stream beds, shallow hand-dug wells or traditional cisterns, for human and livestock water needs,” he explains. “Climate change is seriously affecting the pastoralists who have few options for access to water.”

But a steam well in the Bidu district of Afar is changing things in the region. Here’s how:

Making use of geothermal activity

Geographically, the Bidu district is located where three tectonic plates meet. Mild volcanic activity, such as steam vents, are common. Subterranean water that is relatively near to the surface is geothermally heated and produces steam. The steam moves up through a fault line in the earth

and escapes through vents.

Steam wells don’t function like other wells. They are not holes in the ground where water accumulates. Rather, this kind of well is a dome built over steam vents. The Bidu dome is made of concrete and captures the steam from three vents. As the steam enters the dome, it cools and then condenses into water. The water then runs through a pipe to a large concrete cistern, where it is stored for future use.

This technology is adapted from traditional Afar water harvesting techniques.

Supporting an age-old method

People from Afar have been able to harvest water for generations by capturing and cooling the steam in a stick and mud trap built over a circular rock well surrounding the vent.

“This steam vent is an improvement on a traditional technique that has been used for many years,” Buckwalter explains.

This Bidu vent is significantly bigger than an Afari steam well, and requires much less upkeep, he adds.

Low-cost maintenance

The well, which was built in January and February of 2018, requires very little money for additions or maintenance, Buckwalter says.

All it needs is occasional cleaning, and for roaming animals to be kept away.



Sisay Kasu, left, project manager for MCC Ethiopia, and Hussien Edris, project co-ordinator for Afar Pastoralist Development Association (APDA), look at the sediment trap leading into a birkat, a traditional water catchment system that MCC and APDA have expanded and modernized as part of an emergency water project in northern Ethiopia.

There are no moving parts that need to be replaced.

Additionally, in times of emergency, the steam-well cistern doubles as a collection point for water that must be trucked in. The steam well provides another option for access to water in a remote part of the world.

Less stress on limited resources

Bidu is on the border of Ethiopia and Eritrea. Because of the ongoing economic and political instability across the border, hundreds of thousands of refugees have fled to Ethiopia since September, when the border, which had been closed for 20 years, reopened.

Buckwalter says that can put added pressure on resources that are already very limited. But the steam well is helping to alleviate some of that pressure.

In addition to the steam well, MCC is also supporting an emergency water project in the Afar region. That included repairing and building traditional in-ground cisterns called *birkats*, assisting to contain an outbreak of cholera, and training water committees to oversee the upkeep and management of the steam well and water system in the communities. ☿



MCC PHOTOS BY ROSE SHENK

MCC’s first steam well, constructed in Bidu, Afar, in northern Ethiopia.

'It's going to take all of us'

Rooted and Grounded speakers call for changed value systems, worldviews

By Annette Brill Bergstresser
Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary
ELKHART, IND.

As the floodwaters of Hurricane Florence crested in South Carolina last fall, three keynote speakers at the 2018 Rooted and Grounded conference on land and Christian discipleship at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) told participants that shifts in the dominant western belief systems and priorities would be needed for people to live in right relationship with God's creation in the present climate crisis.

Deconstructing a western worldview

Randy Woodley, an author, activist/scholar, wisdom keeper and American Baptist minister, who is a legal descendant of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, asked his listeners to stand and face the four directions with him as he sang in an Indigenous language, "Creator, when you look down on me today, have pity on me and remember I'm just a human being."

He wove traditional Indigenous stories and humour throughout his message as he invited participants to consider flaws associated with a western worldview as well as the theological possibilities that an Indigenous worldview offers.

Noting that "the winners always write history," Woodley cited John Mohawk, who wrote that distorted and even dishonest renderings of the past are found in many modern accounts of ancient peoples and contemporary "primitive" peoples, serving to reinforce the sense of difference between modern people and those who have come before, and to distance them from unflattering legacies from the past.

Quoting Robert Francis, Woodley spoke of the effects of colonization, which has its roots in "theology that serves to raise the colonizers above those to be colonized."

"When a people develop the idea that they have exclusive possession of communication from God and exclusive control of the means of salvation, all the peoples of the earth stand in peril," he said, still quoting Francis. "So an alternative to colonial religion requires a different foundation."

Woodley spoke of an "aha" moment in the early 2000s, when he and Edith, his wife, were leading a pilgrimage along the Cherokee Trail of Tears and reading Walter Brueggemann's writings on shalom. He realized that the Cherokee had a similar concept—*elohéh*—and began researching different tribes' names for shalom, eventually writing his doctoral dissertation on the subject: "The harmony way: Integrating Indigenous values within Native North American theology and mission."

"I called it 'the harmony way' because it encompassed everything," Woodley said, and named 10 core values he found were shared widely among 45 Native American tribes across the U.S. and Canada:

- **Tangible spirituality.**
- **Life is governed by harmony.**
- **Community is essential.**
- **Humour is sacred and necessary.**
- **Cooperative communality** (the dignity of the process of consensus).
- **Morality.**
- **Present and past time orientation**, rather than the present and future orientation more typical of European-Americans.
- **An open work ethic.**
- **Hospitality and generosity.**
- **A natural connectedness to all creation.**

Noting that belief in "the Indigenous problem" is still present in the western psyche, with Indigenous peoples being



PHOTOS BY PERDIAN TUMANAN

Randy Woodley, distinguished professor of faith and culture and director of intercultural and Indigenous studies at George Fox University/Portland (Oregon) Seminary, gave a keynote address on 'Resurrecting ancient wisdom and worldview.'



Karenna Gore of Union Theological Seminary in New York City gave a keynote address on 'A moral framework for concern about climate and related environmental issues.'

blamed for not accepting the terms of their colonization, he identified several characteristics of the western worldview that he sees as problematic as well as un-Christian:

- **Dualism or** investing in the spiritual or abstract realm to a higher degree than the physical realm.
- **The idea** that salvation is only for people's souls, not about the whole earth that Jesus created.
- **A focus** on hierarchy that results in dehumanization of particular people groups and nature.
- **Utopianism or** living for the future or an idealized past.
- **Individualism and** the loss of the corporate nature of humanity and of Scripture.
- **Competitiveness over** cooperation.
- **Majority rule** over consensus.
- **Beliefs and** systems that keep whites in control of governance, knowledge, wealth and power.

(Continued on page 20)



Valerie Bridgeman, dean and vice-president for academic affairs at Methodist Theological School in Ohio, gave a keynote address entitled 'If only: Learning from creation.'



Ken Quiring, pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in Brandon, Man., and a member of the Network of Biblical Storytellers, gave a presentation on biblical storytelling and creation care stories, and presented Scripture for a number of the worship sessions during AMBS's Rooted and Grounded conference.

(Continued from page 19)

He said that he sees dualism as creating a disembodied theology and resulting in binary thinking: "It's the belief that God is at work in the church more than God is at work in the world. It's either right or wrong, legal or illegal, heaven or hell, sin or holiness, success or failure, civilized or primitive, saved or lost."

"It makes it difficult for western thinkers to hold two seemingly incompatible things in tension without having to find resolution," he continued. "This is part of a false assumption that everything can be understood and every problem can be solved. But we might be at the place where we can't solve it anymore—the political problem, the race problem, the earth problem."

For Woodley, the way to counter the misunderstandings that he believes Christians have developed of Jesus and

his shalom kingdom, of their duty to the marginalized and of the very nature of God, is both structural and relational. It involves western thinkers deconstructing their worldview; understanding Jesus as the cosmic creator and God as restoring harmony and shalom to all creation, not just humans; viewing the stories of Jesus through a local, Indigenous, place-based theological lens; allowing themselves to be vulnerable and to learn from the cultural "other"; and understanding their equality and interconnectedness with creation.

It also involves education of the dominant culture. "A more Indigenous viewpoint has direct implications for how we live our lives, how we understand our salvation and healing, and how we go about doing mission," he concluded. "It's going to take all of us."

Challenging existing value systems

Karena Gore, founder and director of the Center for Earth Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, focused on what she sees as two of the root causes of climate change. First is the belief that humans are separate from, and superior to, the rest of the natural world, which, she said, "is so pervasive and secularized that often we don't even detect it . . . as though nature were a kind of backdrop."

She referenced Luke 12:56-57, where Jesus says, "*You hypocrites, you know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky. Why don't you know how to interpret the present time? And why don't you judge for yourselves what is right?*" then pointed to the signs: stronger and more frequent storms and floods, heat waves, droughts, wildfires, melting Arctic ice, rising sea levels, climate refugees, and extinctions that also threaten global food supplies.

The second cause Gore named is the economic growth paradigm that values short-term monetary gain, no matter how inequitable or destructive, and the associated "externalization of costs." She cited warnings against greed, quoting Matthew 6:19-21, and a passage from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Cost of Discipleship* about the accumulation of material wealth creating a barrier between oneself and God.

"We should not underestimate the importance of recognizing spaces for

Christian witness in this time, because the aggregate effect of all of these projects all over the world in which corporate rights are held over community rights is the destruction of the livability of the planet," she concluded.

Honouring the interrelatedness of all creation

Valerie Bridgeman, dean and vice-president for academic affairs at Methodist Theological School in Ohio, chose to focus on Job 38, in which God responds to Job's prayers and questions with a series of questions, all related to aspects of creation, from the recesses of the deep to the constellations in the sky.

She shared stories, including one of learning about medicinal plants from Makota Valdina Pinto, a Brazilian historian, herbalist and healer, while studying the varieties of black religious experiences, as a way of reflecting on these questions.

Her day with Pinto evoked memories of her maternal grandmother, also a traditional healer, whom Bridgeman described as being "in synergy with the earth and with all creation."

"If only we would remember that we are companions on the earth; we are not merely caretakers," she said. "The earth is also our caretaker, if we would but pay attention. There are roots and leaves that do not need to pass through pharmacology to heal us."

Bridgeman continued to examine society's perceptions of the earth, raising the influence of perspectives on gender as she shared, "A friend says to me, 'Perhaps we don't treat the earth well because we call her Mother. . . . How can we speak of care for the earth when we cannot . . . be safe as women? No wonder Mother Earth is not safe. . . . We rape her of resources and destroy her breath by the emission of gases into the atmosphere.'"

She concluded by quoting John Kilzer, a blues musician and Memphis pastor, who once said, "If you're not living on the edge, you're taking up way too much space." ❧

Recordings of the keynote speakers are available online at soundcloud.com/followambbs.



OBITUARY

‘That is a Christian!’

Alvin Lepp
Dec. 14, 1932 - Dec. 30, 2018

By Donita Wiebe-Neufeld
Alberta Correspondent

Members of the Rosemary Mennonite Church community and the Siksika Nation gathered together on Jan. 4 to praise God for the life of Alvin Lepp.

Pastor Fred Krulicki, who led the service, likened Lepp to Barnabas, who is described in Acts 11:24 as “a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.” Krulicki said, “There was . . . a man I’d point out to other people and say, “That is a Christian.”

Lepp was an active member of the church, a farmer, and a school bus driver. He is especially remembered for his life and service among the Siksika people. He officially served in the Conference of Mennonites in Canada’s Native Ministries program for 19 years, and his many good friendships and involvements continued long after he retired.

Herman Yellow Old Woman, a councillor with the Siksika Nation, near Brooks, remembers meeting Lepp when he first visited the community in 1979. Yellow Old Woman had been out riding horses with other children, and Lepp gave him a ride home. He remembers Lepp as exceptionally good at building relationships: “Alvin became friends with not only the people who went to church there, he was friends with the Anglicans, the Catholics and others. . . . He was out here all the time for wakes, funerals, birthday parties, any community event. He became a part of our community. . . . He knew everybody. Our reserve is almost 70 miles long. He knew almost every family from the east to the west.”

Lepp had a great passion for sharing the gospel, and his love for people was obvious. He led many Bible studies in homes and distributed Bibles as well as recordings of Scripture read in the Blackfoot language. He visited people when they were in hospital or in prison and always tried to help



FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF
NEILL AND EDITH VON GUNTEN

Alvin and Helen Lepp pose in front of a mural at the Siksika Nation community hall following a service honouring them for their service to the First Nation in 2010.

those who needed it.

He learned a few hymns in Blackfoot and would sing these for the seniors when he visited. He carried treats in his pockets, and Yellow Old Woman said, “A lot of the kids around here called him Grandpa.”

In the 1980s, Lepp encouraged Siksika youth and young adults, including Yellow Old Woman, to attend both Camp Valaqua and the Swift Current Bible Institute.

Marvin Baergen and Hugo Neufeld both served on boards with Native Ministries in the 1980s and worked with Lepp. Asked what they remember of him, both immediately referred to his enthusiastic and warm relationships with the Siksika people. “He knew so many people,” Baergen said.

In his funeral tribute, Yellow Old Woman thanked the Rosemary church for the support it gave to Lepp. “He couldn’t do it alone,” Yellow Old Woman said.

Krulicki said that, “even in his last days he was all praise for God. There was no fear in his eyes, just a quiet understanding that he knew where he was going.”

Lepp is survived by his wife of 62 years, Helen (Retzlaff), four children, 11 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren. ❧

Staff changes

Pastoral transitions in Saskatchewan

• **Claire Ewert Fisher** began as interim pastor at Rosthern Mennonite Church on Jan. 2, replacing Craig Neufeld, who served in various ministries at the church since 2010. Ewert Fisher is a former executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan and most recently served as interim pastor at Grace Mennonite Church in Prince Albert, Sask.



• **Vern Ratzlaff** retired as pastor of Aberdeen Mennonite Church on Nov. 25, 2018. He had served the congregation since 2006. Prior to that, he was pastor of Nutana Park Mennonite in Saskatoon for 19 years.



—BY DONNA SCHULZ

Transition, ordination for B.C. pastor

• **Bob Boehr** began serving a one- to two-year term as transitional pastor at Emmanuel Mennonite Church of Abbotsford on Dec. 16, 2018, following the completed term in November of former lead pastor April Yamasaki. Boehr is currently finishing his master’s degree in leadership at Trinity Western University and has completed a workshop in transitional ministry from Outreach Canada. From 2008 to 2018, he served as youth pastor and then pastor of discipleship and administration at Living Hope Christian Fellowship in Surrey. He had started an ordination process with Living Hope before he was invited to apply for the pastor role at Emmanuel Mennonite, and on Dec. 30 he was ordained to the ministry at Living Hope at a service officiated by MC B.C. executive minister Garry Janzen.



—BY AMY DUECKMAN

The desire to ‘make it up north’

MCC supports vulnerable people on the move

By Linda Espenshade
Mennonite Central Committee

Daniel (a pseudonym, for security reasons) doesn't have just one reason for leaving his daughter, 8, and parents in Honduras. He has many reasons for joining a caravan of thousands of migrants walking toward the U.S. border with Mexico.

"I was forced to leave because there weren't jobs or opportunities, plus the insecurity and violence. It was a little bit of everything," he says.

"The gangs," he adds to the list. "Where I'm from there are gangs, and it's really pretty dangerous there. That was a factor, too."

Daniel's hometown also is threatened by a mining company whose work has poisoned the town's water, explains Lars Åkerson, who is the connecting peoples coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Honduras. Children who bathe in the water get rashes, and vocal residents who have opposed the company now have warrants out for their arrest.

Daniel decided to travel with a caravan because it offers him more security, food and protection than he would have if he were travelling alone. He's tried to reach the U.S. southern border twice before, but



MCC PHOTO BY LAURA PAULS

A mural at Centro de Atención a Migrantes en Éxodo (Center for Attention to Migrants in Exodus), a migrant shelter for families and individuals in transit, depicts Jesus riding on top of 'La bestia' ('the beast') with migrants who ride the train to the north.

he was detained in Mexico and returned home both times.

He is motivated to keep trying to reach the U.S., he says, not just because of the difficulties where he lives, but by what he is hoping for: to provide financially for his parents and daughter.

According to Aldo Ledón, director of

Mesoamerican Voices, an MCC partner in Mexico, Daniel's situation is one of the better ones. For many, he says, "It's not about seeking better conditions. It's about being able to remain alive. They say, 'We are going to die at home if we do nothing, so better to die trying.'"

MCC supports Mesoamerican Voices' efforts to protect the human rights of migrants, including children and youth, while they are kept in a Mexican detention centre. It is now coordinating volunteers from San Cristobal, Mexico, to walk with people in caravans.

The volunteers' presence helps to diminish the chance of violence from authorities or organized crime in the area, Ledón says. People in the caravans also benefit as volunteers listen to them, advise them about safe routes and pay extra attention to those who lag behind.

To address migrants' physical needs, MCC is funding mobile units—carrying water, food, first aid, footwear and canteens—that accompany caravans of migrants through the Mexican states of Chiapas and Oaxaca.

At House of Migrants, an MCC partner in Guatemala City, Guatemala, MCC



PHOTO COURTESY OF DANIEL

Daniel (a pseudonym) took this photo as members of the caravan he is with in Mexico climb aboard big trucks that will carry them north for a while.

contributed blankets and hygiene kits to some people who were part of a recent caravan and to other migrants earlier in 2018. And at the Mexico-U.S. border, other MCC partners offer hospitality and job training for people who choose to stay in Mexico.

Migration is a universal right, says Abby Hershberger, a program assistant at MCC's United Nations Office, explaining one of the reasons why MCC offers support to migrants. The right to request asylum also is enshrined in U.S. law, says Tammy Alexander, senior legislative associate for domestic affairs with the MCC U.S. Washington Office.

Although people have the right to migrate, most don't want to, says Ledón: "When I ask people in the caravan if they would have stayed home if they could have, they look at me as if I were an idiot. Of course, they would have stayed home. They are leaving their roots; they are expelled."

"Barbed wire and border walls won't stop people fleeing poverty and violence," Alexander says. "If we want to reduce the number of asylum seekers coming to the U.S., we should invest, instead, in programs that help people stay in their home communities."

That is why most of MCC's work in Central America is focused on addressing the root causes of violence and poverty that motivate families to flee their home countries.

Daniel says he expects to enter the U.S. without official permission. He recognizes that it violates U.S. law to do this—a misdemeanor for a first crossing—but he sees it as a necessary step he must take for his family.



MCC PHOTO BY JILL STEINMETZ

María Socorro Pineda, centre, stands with her daughter Evelin Briggith Lopez Pineda, 17, and son Herson Alfredo Pineda, 13, at their house. The family left with a migrant caravan in October but were forced by illness to go back home.

"We just want to get there, work and make a little money before we return to our country," he says. "It's not that we want to spend our whole lives in North America. We know that [the U.S.] is a country with lots of employment opportunities."

Daniel says that God has been his companion on the way through Mexico: "I have seen God's hand over me and over many of the other immigrants, protecting them and keeping them from harm, from any harms along the way: thieves, accidents, violence. Thanks to him, I am here and trusting in him [that] we'll make it up north." ❧



MCC PHOTO BY MATTHEW LESTER

When Magdalena Marcos Perez of Guatemala learned to diversify the produce in her garden through an MCC-supported project, she began to make more money. She used to consider migrating to the U.S.



MCC PHOTO BY KATHERINE SMITH

An asylum seeker at Casa Alitas, a respite house in Tucson, Ariz., shows his ankle-tracking monitor put on by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent at the Nogales, Ariz., port of entry.



MCC PHOTO BY ANDREW BODDEN

MCC East Coast funds the work of Rachel Diaz, left, a consulting attorney who helps immigrants attending Anabaptist churches in the U.S. to know their rights and get the legal status they are seeking. She is pictured with clients Maria Lopez Solis and Genry Rivas and their son Daniel Andre Rivas Lopez.

‘It was just helping people’

Former service repairman credits family, church for his life of service

By Janet Bauman
Eastern Canada Correspondent
KITCHENER, ONT.

For 34 years, Keith Wagler lived out his Christian faith by serving others through the Appliance Repair Program of the House of Friendship (HoF), a social service agency in the Waterloo Region of Ontario. His job involved servicing and repairing appliances for people living on a low income, who could not afford to pay for a regular service call or to replace their appliances. He also repaired donated appliances in his workshop. Until his retirement last fall, funds from the regional government and HoF donors paid for his work.

In reflecting on his long commitment to the program, he named “service for others” as both a motivation to apply for the job and a reason to stick with it for so many years.

As a young man in his 20s, Wagler served for a year with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), doing repair work after disasters in Canada and the United States. It was the experience of helping vulnerable people who otherwise did not have the means to rebuild that motivated him to seek work that served others in his local

community.

A trained electrician, Wagler began with the appliance program in 1984, taking over after Bruce Weber, who developed it in 1980, returned to his family enterprise.

Martin Buhr, former HoF executive director, says that he knew it would be hard to replace Weber’s skills and “whole-hearted commitment.” But he says that having Wagler succeed Weber “was like receiving manna from heaven,” since both men viewed “community work as local Christian ministry.” Buhr recalls that Wagler was the kind of person who even used his vacation time to volunteer for MDS doing hurricane recovery work.

In the early years in the program, Wagler did a variety of minor household maintenance and repairs, but soon focused his work on the four primary appliances: refrigerators, stoves, washers and dryers. Clients learned about the program from social service workers and by word of mouth.

Wagler found fulfillment in helping people in difficult circumstances. He says

that repairing appliances right away for people reduced their stress and anxiety about money and resources. They didn’t need to worry about saving enough money for a repair bill. Nor did they have to throw out spoiled food from a faulty fridge or spend scarce cash at a laundromat.

For Wagler, the work was about more than fixing appliances. While doing repairs, he often listened to the stories of his clients. It was common for them to offer him a cup of coffee or tea, appreciating the time he took to listen and the dignity and respect he showed them. He says, “Listening sometimes is just as important as getting the thing fixed.”

Contact with clients opened his eyes to needs in the local community and the wider world. He got to know people from several waves of immigrants and refugees, most recently Syrians fleeing war in their homeland. He often referred people to other programs and services available at HoF or elsewhere in the community.

Describing his work, he says, “It was just helping people.”

Brian Hunsberger, who worked as the HoF development director for many years, describes Wagler as “one-of-a-kind,” given his unique combination of technical and human-relations skills. He “made over 26,000 service calls in his 34 years of service,” with no record of a complaint, Hunsberger says.

With Wagler’s retirement last October, the unique Appliance Repair Program came to an end. The number of calls for repairs had declined, due in part to the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP

Keith Wagler, left, in the early years with his appliance repair van, and, right, in 2018, before he retired after 34 years on the job.

reality that modern appliances are more specialized and replacement parts are so expensive. Also, the portion of funding coming from Waterloo Region was discontinued.

While he feels for people who still need support, Wagler is quick to credit regional councillors who supported the program for so many years. "Without them, the program would not have existed," he says. "I am thankful for the 34 years they were able

to find funding for it."

Wagler saw himself as part of a "circle of resources working together" that included local politicians, HoF staff, Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program. For him, the longevity of the program is a testament to that strong partnership.

In his retirement, Wagler is appreciating more time to enjoy nature and catch up on jobs around his Wilmot Township

home. And he continues to find ways to serve others, recalling how his family modelled service as a way of life, and how his church, Steinmann Mennonite in Baden, encourages people of all ages to participate in service opportunities. He is committed to carrying on that legacy as long as he is able. ☼

Peacebuilding monster

Artist Anna Bigland-Pritchard's interests lie in the intersection of music, peacebuilding and practical theology

By Aaron Epp

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
WINNIPEG

Anna Bigland-Pritchard never anticipated becoming a monster, but today she wouldn't be anything else.

The 26-year-old Winnipegger is a member of children's musical act Seanster and the Monsters. The group, which describes itself as "stuck somewhere between They Might Be Giants and Fred Penner," released its sophomore album, *Stripes with Platypus*, earlier this month.

In addition to singing backing vocals and playing glockenspiel on the album, Bigland-Pritchard sings lead on a couple of tracks. She wrote one of them, "The Wind is Made of Sky," after hearing a conversation between band leader Sean Hogan and his son Jude, 5.

"It's a cute little lullaby," she says. "I have a little niece called Eva, and also my nephew Simon, who I kind of sing it for in my heart."

Seanster and the Monsters formed in 2011. Bigland-Pritchard joined two years ago, a few months after completing a degree in vocal performance and music ministry at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU).

She heard through a friend that Seanster and the Monsters were looking for an additional member. She was sceptical at first, but having just taken a course for young artists, in which the instructor encouraged students to take opportunities whenever



PHOTO COURTESY OF
ANNA BIGLAND-PRITCHARD

Winnipeg musician Anna Bigland-Pritchard has a diverse list of musical projects on the go.

they arise, she decided to contact the band.

"The band needed a vocalist that could also be a silly person and play classroom instruments, . . . which is, in fact, an exact description of me," she says with a laugh. "I have my Orff Level 1 training, I took early musical development at CMU and I have a decent collection of children's classroom instruments."

Seanster and the Monsters started working on *Stripes with Platypus* shortly after she joined the band.

One of the things she most enjoys about

being in the group is the friendships she's formed with its members, which, in addition to Hogan, include Tim Braun, Marcel Desilets and Scott Young.

"I didn't expect that a core part of my friendship group would end up being a group of middle-aged dudes, and I really love them," she says. "It's been really awesome to make music with them and go on adventures with them."

The feeling is mutual, says Hogan, who adds that it's been a pleasure watching Bigland-Pritchard grow as a vocalist since joining the band, as well as sharing her clever songwriting with the group.

"Anna's a real gem," says Hogan, who has been a children's performer for 20 years. "It was really happenstance that we got to meet her, and I'm really glad that we did."

Seanster and the Monsters isn't Bigland-Pritchard's only musical outlet. She is working toward a post-baccalaureate diploma in performance at the University of Manitoba, she is a private voice teacher, she works as the music chaplain at Booth University College and she teaches singing classes at the Manitoba Conservatory of Music and the Arts.

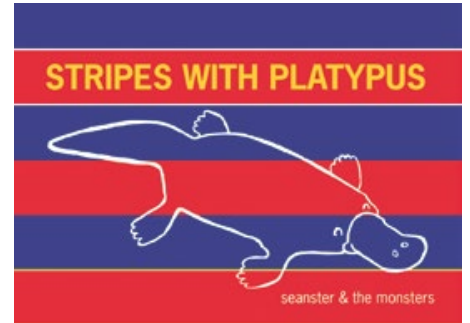
She is also the 2018-19 artist-in-residence at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. She has completed a few small projects in that role, and will continue to

(Continued on page 26)



PHOTO BY MIKE LATSCHISLAW

Anna Bigland-Pritchard, right, with her Seanster and the Monsters bandmates, pictured from left to right: Tim Braun, Scott Young, Sean Hogan and Marcel Desilets.



Stripes with Platypus is the second album from Seanster and the Monsters.

(Continued from page 25)

share her gifts in the musical arts with the congregation when she preaches and presents an original song later this month.

She is also organizing a Holy Saturday service at the church that she is looking forward to. "It's my favourite day of the year because we, the church, let ourselves be sad for one day and we don't have to fix [anything] that day," she says.

Bethel is pleased with Bigland-Pritchard's work, says Erwin Warkentin, who sits on the church's worship committee. "[She's] vivacious, energetic, musical, friendly, outgoing, but she also knows her boundaries, and that's something I appreciate very much," he says. "She's a busy woman, but we very much appreciate and value the time she is able to give us."

Bigland-Pritchard says her vocational interests lie in the intersections of music, peacebuilding and practical theology.

"I think that those things are inextricably connected for me," she says. "I see the arts as my tool for peacebuilding, and that desire for peacebuilding, I think, is driven by my faith."

She grew up in England and Saskatchewan, the daughter of two activists.

"I've always been aware that the world is hurting and I've always found a way to use music and art to transform pain," she says. "I think art has to be activism, especially today, so I'm excited about the roles of art—specifically music—in bringing us together and helping us to heal together and develop resiliency." ❧

/// Staff change

AMBS installs Beverly Lapp as academic dean

• **Beverly Lapp** of Goshen, Ind., was installed as vice-president and academic dean of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., in a worship service on Oct. 19, 2018, at the seminary's Chapel of the Sermon of the Mount. "We're grateful for the leadership Beverly brings to our community, which has already been confirmed in so many ways," noted Sara Wenger Shenk, AMBS president, during her opening remarks. Bruce Baergen of Edmonton, AMBS's board chair, led the installation portion of the service, noting that the dean's role of providing visionary leadership and administrative oversight for the AMBS faculty and its curriculum is vital not only to the seminary's mission but also to the church as a whole. "The role of academic dean at AMBS is not simply a job, but a calling," he said. Lapp brings more than two decades of experience in academic affairs, teacher development, curriculum design and intercultural exchange to her work in the dean's office at AMBS. She is an active church music practitioner with a deep interest in the relationship between music and theology and in the spiritual power of congregational song. She previously served on the Goshen (Ind.) College music faculty for 23 years, where she chaired the music department, directed the core curriculum and led four study-service term semesters in China, Peru and the Dominican Republic.

—ANABAPTIST MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY



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TESTIMONIES

'Djagalah anak kambing koe' (‘Tend my lambs’)

By Paul Gunawan

Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia / Mennonite World Conference

Renewal 2027 is a 10-year series of events organized by the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) Faith and Life Commission to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the beginnings of the Anabaptist movement. This series highlights leaders in the movement from the past to the present.

This is the story about how Tee Siem Tat (1872-1940) and his wife, Sie Djoen Nio (1875-1962) were transformed by the Holy Spirit and founded Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia (GKMI).

Tee was a successful businessman in Kudus, Central Java, where he ran a big co-partnership printing company named Sam Hoo Kongsi. This company progressed very well and served government offices, companies and schools.

Healing

In 1917, Tee became seriously ill. He visited some necromancers and *klenteng* (Confucian temples) and he also tried the modern medication of doctors from the Netherlands. Nothing worked. He felt desperate.

Sie remembered the stories she had read in a Malay-language Bible that she had received from an aunt in Yogyakarta. She loved to read the Bible. She was so

impressed by Jesus: his sacrifice on the cross, his miracles. “Can Jesus heal my husband too?” she wondered.

She talked to her husband. They agreed to ask for help, as in the Bible. But from whom?

They remembered an uncle, Oei Biau An, who knew about Christianity. Oei introduced them to Lieutenant Tanuhatu, a Salvation Army officer from Ambon, who lived in Rembang. Tanuhatu gladly came to Tee’s house in Kudus many times to teach him about Christianity. Tee wanted to know Jesus. His faith grew strong. Along with it, his fear and illness were gone.

Connected with the Mennonites

Tee read the Bible diligently and earnestly. He attended services at the Salvation Army church in Rembang and invited Tanuhatu to come teach his friends about the Bible.

However, Tee came to disagree with the church’s practice of baptism and its



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GKMI

Sie Djoen Nio, left, and Tee Siem Tat, founders of GKMI.

adoption of military codes. He approached the Seventh Day Adventists but disagreed with its adherence to Old Testament law. He then approached the Salatiga Mission but disagreed about child baptism.

Finally, Tee approached the Mennonite missions in Jepara, Pati and Tayu. He quickly felt that Mennonite teaching fit very well.

So, on Dec. 6, 1920, Tee held a baptism for 25 new believers in his house in Kudus. Leonard Silalily preached, Nicolai Thiessen served the baptism and Johann Hubert prayed for the children. This became the birth day of the Muria Christian Church in Indonesia or GKMI.

GKMI has spread from the hillside of Mount Muria to Central Java and the Indonesian archipelago. Today, there

(Continued on page 28)



Many came to honour GKMI church founder Tee Siem Tat at his funeral in 1940.

(Continued from page 27)

are 61 GKMI churches and hundreds of church plants in Indonesia.

Evangelism strategy

Tee based his evangelism strategy on Acts 1:8. *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem (the closest family: husband/wife, children, sons/daughters-in-law, grandchildren), and in*



The grave stones of Tee Siem Tat and Sie Djoen Nio, founders of GKMI.

all Judea (extended family), and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (friends, coworkers, business relations and those who don't know about Jesus).”

Even though they were new Christians, Tee and his friends had a huge spirit for spreading the gospel. Using the Javanese-Malay language, they were accepted across ethnic boundaries. They were also well known as good people in business and good examples in everyday life.

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The home of Tee Siem Tat and Sie Djoen Nio.

In serving the poor and needy, Tee took his principle from Matthew 10:8: *“Freely you have received, freely give.”*

Last words

On his deathbed, Tee Siem Tat called his two sons and his son-in-law. To them, he spoke his last words: *“Djagalah anak kambing koe”* John 21:15 in Old Bahasa, which means *“Tend my lambs.”*

Reverend Herman Tan, his grandson, believes Tee’s last words were to ask his children, in-laws, grandchildren and the generations to come that GKMI would stay faithful to a Mennonite perspective. ❧

Paul Gunawan is a senior writer and editor for GKMI. Translation from Bahasa Indonesian by Mark Ryan.



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at canadianmennonite.org



Congolese army officer arrested in U.N. murder case

An arrest was made in connection with the death of a Mennonite United Nations investigator.
canadianmennonite.org/congo-arrest



Metzger takes on senior role with Citizens for Public Justice

The former executive director of Mennonite Church Canada joins the staff of CPJ.
canadianmennonite.org/metzger-cpj



Canada announces funding to empower women and youth in Senegal

A five-year agreement between MEDA and the federal government of Canada will support agricultural projects in Senegal.
canadianmennonite.org/meda-senegal



Ukrainians witness amid suffering, hope

In the land that thousands of Mennonites fled generations ago, Anabaptist congregations carry out a new vision.
canadianmennonite.org/ukraine-witness



Stroll through the moral maze of Mennonite generosity with Will Braun. Watch it now:

canadianmennonite.org/stories/once-round-barn-pat-back-edition



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CMU | CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY

Calendar

British Columbia

Until March 31: "Mennonite churches of the Fraser Valley" exhibit, at the Mennonite Heritage Museum Gallery, Abbotsford.

Feb. 22: LEAD conference, at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond.

Feb. 23: MC B.C. annual general meeting, at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond.

June 28-July 1: "Igniting the imagination of the church" MC Canada delegate assembly, at the Quality Hotel and Conference Centre, Abbotsford: (28) leaders assembly; (29) business/delegate meeting; (29-1) inspirational conference. Special events for youth and children.

Alberta

March 15-16: MC Alberta annual delegate sessions, at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury. Theme: "Vision 2020: God's leading."

May 13-15: Faith studies conference.

Saskatchewan

March 8-9: MC Saskatchewan annual delegate sessions, "Deepening our walk with Christ," at Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim. Plenary speaker: David E. Fitch of North Seminary.

March 22-23: Women's retreat, at Shekinah.

July 28-Aug. 1: Prairie Youth Gathering, at Shekinah Summer Camp. Theme: "Shake: Rattled by the Radical (Jesus)." Open to students from across Canada entering grades 6 to 12 in the 2018-19 school year. Hosted by MC Saskatchewan and MC Manitoba. Information coming soon to prairieyouth.ca. Follow on Instagram @prairieyouth.ca for the latest updates.

Manitoba

Until March 9: Two exhibitions at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, Winnipeg: "Legacy" by Anita Kroeger, and "Reverence: Icons and Motorcycles" by Michael Boss.

Feb. 7: Opera workshop, at CMU's Laudamus Auditorium, at 7 p.m.

Feb. 9: Discover Outtatown, at CMU, at 9 a.m.

Feb. 11: "A matter of life and death," a Face2Face discussion at CMU's Marpeck Commons, at 7 p.m.

Feb. 12-13: ReNew 2019: Resourcing pastors for ministry (Death, funerals and the Christian Hope), at CMU, Winnipeg. Keynote speaker: Thomas Long.

Feb. 13: Verna Mae Janzen Music Competition, at CMU's Laudamus Auditorium, at 7 p.m.

March 1: Music Therapy coffeehouse, at CMU's Marpeck Commons, at 7 p.m.

March 8-10: MC Manitoba junior-high youth retreat, at Camp Assiniboia.

March 10: Mennonite Community Orchestra, performs at CMU, Winnipeg, at 3 p.m. Featuring CMU student pianist Emma Heinrichs.

March 15: Exhibitions by Melissa Coyle and Sandra Campbell open at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, Winnipeg. Runs until April 27.

March 15: CMU Festival Chorus and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra perform Verdi's "Requiem," at Winnipeg's Centennial Concert Hall, at 8 p.m.

March 26: CMU spring open house, begins at 10 a.m.

March 30: Jazz at CMU, at 7 p.m.

March 31: Handbell and guitar ensembles perform at CMU, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.

April 4: Spring at CMU fundraiser, at CMU, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m. Featuring the presentation of the 2019 CMU Pax Award to author Rudy Wiebe.

Ontario

Jan. 30: MennoHomes' annual general meeting, at 50 Kent Avenue, Kitchener, at 2 p.m. For more information, call 226-476-2535.

Jan. 31-Feb. 2: Breslau Mennonite Church presents "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat"; (31 and 1) at 7:30 p.m., (2) at 2 and 7:30 p.m. For tickets online, visit breslaumc.ca.

Feb. 1-3: Youth winter retreat, at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp. Theme: "Music: Voices together." Join youth from across MC Eastern Canada to learn some new songs, talk about worship and create worship materials.

Feb. 2: "Leading council, committees and congregational meetings," at

Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Speaker: Betty Pries of Credence & Co.
Feb. 8-9: "For the journey: Refreshing Christian faith and spiritual tradition for the weary and wary" retreat with Steve Bell, at St. James Anglican Church, Dundas. (8) 7:30 to 9 p.m., (9) 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. To register, visit bit.ly/on-the-journey- Dundas.

Feb. 9: Anabaptist Learning Workshop, at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Topic: "Shacking up: Sex, love and church commitment." Speaker: Irma Fast Dueck.

Feb. 14-16: "People on the move: Human rights and global migration," MCC Ottawa Office's student seminar. For more information or to register, visit mcco.ca/student-seminar.

Feb. 15: MCC Ontario heifer sale fundraiser, in Listowel.

Feb. 18: Family Day open house, at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp, New Hamburg, from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Puzzles, pretzel making, sledding and more. RSVP to 519-625-8602.

Feb. 20-21: Anabaptist Learning Workshop, at Conrad Grebel

University College, Waterloo. Topic: "School for ministers: The audacious pastor." Speaker: Anthony D. Bailey.
Feb. 28-March 1: Credence and Company presents "Understanding conflict resolution," at Conrad Grebel University College, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Speakers: Marg Van-Herk and Keith Regehr.

March 19,26: Worship clinic for Waterloo Region, at Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, from 6 to 9 p.m. each evening. For lay worship leaders, pastors and those who want to reflect on worship practice. Instructor: Sarah Johnson.

March 23: Worship clinic for Niagara Region, at Vineland United Mennonite Church, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For lay worship leaders, pastors and those who want to reflect on worship practice. Instructor: Sarah Johnson.

March 31: Pax Christi Chorale presents *Miziwe ... (Everywhere...)*, the world premiere of a newly commissioned oratorio sung in the Ojibwe Odawa language (with subtitles), at Koerner Hall, Toronto, at 3 p.m.

U.S.A.

Feb. 25-28: Pastors and Leaders 2019 event, at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. Theme: "Loving our neighbours in tense times." For more information or to register, visit bit.ly/ambassadors-leaders-2019.

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




Home Street Mennonite Church **Employment opportunity**
 Co-Pastor of Christian Formation

Home Street Mennonite Church is seeking a 0.75 Co-pastor of Christian Formation who brings a passion for nurturing faith across generations. Home Street is a vibrant, welcoming, Anabaptist congregation in Winnipeg's inner-city.

For more information please contact Rick Neufeld at
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Mennonite Central Committee
Relief, development and peace in the name of Christ

British Columbia

Employment opportunity
 DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

This full-time position provides leadership and expertise to the accounting operations of MCC BC and its subsidiaries, and manages the various administrative functions of the organization.

Qualifications
 CPA Designation. Minimum of 5 years of accounting experience in a leadership and supervisory role. Knowledge and experience of both for-profit and not-for-profit accounting principles & regulations strongly desired. Strong analytical and communication skills. Ability to coordinate finance and administrative needs in a multi-faceted organization.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to: a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership; and nonviolent peacemaking.

Anticipated Start Date: May 1, 2019
 For full job description and to apply visit: mccbc.ca/openings
 For more information contact Sophie Tiessen-Eigbiker, MCC BC HR Manager at 604-850-6639 Ext 1129

Classifieds

Employment Opportunities



Employment opportunity
Executive Director

Hidden Acres is a long-established, year-round Christian camp in Perth County, Ontario. We are seeking an Executive Director to guide development of the overall ministry of the camp and oversee program, personnel, public relations, fundraising and administration.

Position
 Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director (ED) manages camp operations in a manner consistent with the by-laws, vision and mission statement of Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp. The ED should have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, exhibit evidence of a consistent and growing faith, as well as a commitment to the Anabaptist vision. The ED will exemplify servant leadership and be a proven team player.

Employment to begin June 2019.

Application deadline February 6, 2019.

For more information:
hiddenacres.ca/opportunities/ed-search

For Sale

132-acre farm for sale in the Bulkley Valley, B.C. This 2-bedroom 3-bathrooms log home with outstanding panoramic views is situated 45 km West of Smithers. Great land for farming with a 25'X

50' greenhouse, includes all farming equipment, a deep well with excellent drinking water. For more information contact: seatonmountainviewfarm@gmail.com or call 250-877-7755.



UMEI PHOTO /

TEXT BY ZACH CHARBONNEAU

At UMEI Christian High School in Leamington, Ont., A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens was brought to life by Chani Wiens's Grade 11 students in December 2018. Every year, the students put on a different play for the community, raising money for the school's drama department. The 2018 show brought out more than 1,500 audience members and raised nearly \$4,700 to be put towards a needed audio/visual upgrade for the stage. 'The play is not about marks,' said Wiens. 'It's about working together to build something from the ground up. We want to create something entertaining and meaningful for the audience.'

Photo finish

AMBS PHOTO

The Library of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., recently received a donation of a Low German Bible published in 1599-1600. Now housed in the Library Special Collections Room, it fills a gap in the library's extensive Studer Bible Collection, which lacked a historic Low German Bible, according to Karl Stutzman, director of library services. A translation of Martin Luther's High German Bible, the AMBS copy is bound in leather with decorative brass corners and leather clasps. A former owner, Father Jensen, hand-copied missing text out of a 1621 Low German Bible and bound it in at the end. The donor, a retired German professor, was raised in a Mennonite community and thought it fitting to give this Bible to a Mennonite library, Stutzman says.

