

The background of the cover is a photograph of a church interior. It shows a long, narrow hallway with a wooden floor. On the left side, there is a row of tall, slender, fluted columns supporting a decorative archway. At the end of the hallway, a large wooden door is open, leading to a bright, sunlit outdoor area with green foliage. The lighting is warm and golden, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

CANADIAN Mennonite

March 8, 2004
Volume 8, Number 5

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This sombre season

O wearisome condition of humanity!
Born under one law, to another bound;
Vainly begot and yet forbidden vanity;
Created sick, commanded to be sound.
What meaneth nature by these diverse laws?

This time of year one is tempted to lapse into the weary frustration of the poet Fulke Greville (1554-1628) who penned these lines in a tragedy called *Mustapha*. They are wintry lines, appropriate for the end of a long, cold season, and the doleful introspection of Lent.

The poet is frustrated with Nature's contradictions: "Tyrant to others, to herself unjust, / Only commands things difficult and hard.... / Makes easy pains, impossible reward." Why does life have to be so difficult?

Greville's own life demonstrates the fickleness of nature that he lamented. Heir to privilege, he was a friend of Edmund Spenser and Philip Sidney, poets whose fame continues to shine brightly while Greville has been largely forgotten. He was knighted and given the historic Warwick Castle, but his life ended in ignominy when a discontented servant murdered him. His legacy was passed on to an adopted son.

Greville sounds a lot like the preacher of Ecclesiastes, another man who found life contradictory and tiresome: "All the toil of man is for his mouth, yet his appetite is not satisfied. For what advantage has the wise man over the fool? And what does the poor man have who knows how to conduct himself before the living... The more words, the more vanity, and what is man the better? For who knows what is good for man while he lives the few days of his vain life..." (Ecclesiastes 6:7-12).

In keeping with this sombre season, we offer a review of the two Jesus movies being hotly debated in the public press

these days, particularly the controversial *The Passion of the Christ*, which opened in theatres on Ash Wednesday (see page 9). Opinion on this movie has ranged from fervent endorsement by Christians ("God made this movie," said one Canadian cleric) to howls of disgust at its excessive violence and narrow focus ("fundamentalist pornography," declared one reviewer; "the greatest gory ever told," said another). Added to that clash of opinion is the intense debate over whether the movie is anti-semitic.

The review in this issue will hopefully provide us with some guidelines as we make our way through this noisy clamour of extremes. Regardless of one's reaction to this movie, director Mel Gibson can be credited with one of the most brilliant marketing schemes ever seen in the industry. Everyone is talking about the passion of Christ this Lenten season. It's a good chance for us to explore more deeply what all that suffering means.

To cheer us up during this sombre season, we offer a summer preview, complete with vacation suggestions, summer events and recipes. See the Focus on Summer section on pages 21-25. As you begin to plan your summer, don't forget the Mennonite Church Canada assembly to be held July 7-11 in Winkler, Manitoba.

Another inspiring feature in this issue is a look at creative retirement. The meditation by Leona Dueck Penner (page 6) approaches retirement as a journey, linking it to the journey through Lent. Accompanying this meditation are stories about people who are doing unusual and creative things during their retirement years (pages 4-5). Look for more of these stories in the next issue.—**Margaret Loewen Reimer**

Everyone is talking about the passion of Christ this Lenten season. It's a good chance for us to explore what all that suffering means.

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Head office: 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7
Phone: (519) 884-3810 **Toll-free:** 800-378-2524 **Fax:** (519) 884-3331
E-mail: office@canadianmennonite.org

Interim Editor/Publisher: Margaret Loewen Reimer
E-mail: editor@canadianmennonite.org

Staff: Betti Erb, associate editor; Natasha Krahn, admin. assistant; Tammy Sawatzky, art director; Barb Draper, editorial assistant.

Advertising: Barbara Burkholder **Phone:** 800-316-4052
Fax: (519) 884-3331 **E-mail:** advert@canadianmennonite.org

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National correspondent: Leona Dueck Penner, Winnipeg, Man. Phone: (204) 888-6781
E-mail: dueck-penner@mennonitechurch.ca

Regional correspondents:

Eastern Canada: Maurice Martin, Phone: (519) 662-1031
E-mail: mauricem@sympatico.ca

Manitoba: Evelyn Rempel Petkau, Phone: (204) 745-2208
E-mail: erpetkau@cici.mb.ca

Saskatchewan: Karin Fehderau, Phone: (306) 933-4209
E-mail: k.fehderau@sasktel.net

Alberta: Donita Wiebe-Neufeld, Phone: (780) 436-3431
E-mail: timanddonita@attglobal.net

British Columbia: Angelika Dawson, Phone: (604) 870-0494
E-mail: ajdawson@telus.net

Board of directors: *British Columbia:* Henry Neufeld (chair), *Alberta:* Brenda Tiessen-Wiens, Jan Wilhelm. *Saskatchewan:* Bernie Thiessen. *Manitoba:* Aiden S. Enns, Bernie Wiebe, Paul Krahn. *Ontario:* Mary Lymburner, Brice Balmer, Ester Neufeldt.

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Web site preview

Get a preview of the next *Canadian Mennonite* before it comes in the mail.

Selections are posted on our web site at

www.canadianmennonite.org on the Thursday before the issue date. So you can check out the March 22 issue by March 18.

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Leona Dueck Penner.**

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Elmira, Ont.

A man of many talents

Some people are so busy making a living that they don't have time for life. That could never be said about Paul Fretz, a member of Bloomingdale Mennonite Church.

Paul spent 36 years as an educator, 26 as an elementary school principal. He retired at age 54

"with many years left," as he put it, "to be God's servant."

Among countless interests, Paul and his wife Viola established a rabbit-breeding business in 1958. They supplied rabbits to the Ontario Veterinary College in Guelph for experiments, and showed rabbits at fairs, including the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto. (In 1960 they won top prize for the best rabbit in Canada.)

"We became the largest rabbit and accessory outlet in Ontario. God blessed our business," said Paul.

In 1959, Paul began a rabbit meat outlet for a growing market. He was founding president of what became the Ontario Commercial Rabbit Growers Association, and remained its secretary until the early 1970s. Because of his efforts, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Agriculture Canada recognize rabbit farming as a legitimate livestock enterprise.

During their over 40 years in the rabbit industry, the Fretzes met hundreds of people and were listeners to many in need.

"God allowed us to minister in unique ways within the secular community," says Paul.

Independence for Paul came early. At age 10 he developed asthma that he could not shake because of the damp climate in which he lived—in Selkirk, Ontario, beside Lake Erie. At age 14 he went to live with an aunt and

uncle.

Paul was in Rockway Mennonite Collegiate's first graduating class in 1948. He completed Grade 13 at Kitchener Collegiate Institute and taught for seven years near Bancroft, Ontario.



Viola and Paul Fretz

He has been deeply involved at Floradale and Bloomingdale Mennonite churches over the years—as Sunday school teacher (for a remarkable 55 years in total), elder and committee member. For 18 years—15 as chair—he has been on the personnel committee for the House of Friendship in Kitchener.

He is called on to minister, from time to time, in a United Church near Fraser Lake Camp, near the family cottage. Paul was one of the founders of the camp. For 12 years he was a member of the Gideons.

For years Paul maintained two good-sized gardens and kept bee hives to supply raw honey to clients. Currently he is mentoring a younger man who wishes to be a beekeeper.

Paul's solid faith and lifestyle choices have kept him sturdy in the face of a significant challenge: a diagnosis of bone cancer in 1995. He and Viola sold the rabbit business and moved to Elmira. He goes two days a month for treatment.

Paul and Viola have three daughters: Barbara teaches at the University of Perth in Australia; Bonnie works in the alumni office at the University of Waterloo; and Beverley teaches at the University of Guelph and is a corporate mediation consultant.

Paul has a stamp collection he

began at age nine. He enjoys photography, gardening, repairing projects and woodworking. He built a mini-shop behind their home, and sells plastic tees for industrial and agricultural purposes. The Fretzes try to travel to one new area each year—this year to Belize, with Beverley as guide.

Many incidents confirm for the Fretzes how God has led throughout their life journey. Paul says that without Viola's practical wisdom, he would never have covered so much ground.

"I have always felt, even as a youth, that God was leading my life, day by day," he said. His daily prayer is, "Lord, lead me to someone today to whom I can be of service."—**Betti Erb**

Gretna, Man.

Retiree chooses people over activities

To inaugurate her retirement at age 65, Helen Braun went on a five-day hike with her six sisters in the Rocky Mountains. Braun's enthusiasm for adventure has not waned in the 10 years since then, but talking about them is not something she likes to do.

Her pastor Rudy Franz (Gretna Berghaler Mennonite Church) and his wife Kathy are much quicker to point out Braun's involvements in the community, church and "any children's ministry."

"She has done a lot of Sunday school teaching over the years and still does," said Kathy. "She is our rep for MCI [Mennonite Collegiate Institute] and has kept us on top of all kinds of things. She does a fabulous job and is a valuable member of the MCI board."

When Braun retired from more than 20 years of public school teaching, her first resolution was "to get off the gerbil wheel."

"I made up my mind to say 'no' to everything the first year."

Braun does not make New Year's resolutions or a list at the start of a

Retiree rescues horses

When Walter and Mabel Paetkau thought about retirement, they considered the usual options: service assignments, church committees, and becoming snowbirds—although they knew that last option wasn't really for them.

Walter had spent a good deal of his life in service, at work and at church. He retired a few years ago as executive director of Abbotsford Community Services, an organization he founded nearly three decades ago.

Having grown up on a farm in Alberta, Walter has always loved animals, especially horses. He decided he wanted to get back to his roots and work with horses. He considered buying his own horse or exercising other people's horses. Neither idea appealed.

Then he heard about Circle F Horse Rescue, for animals that would

otherwise be slaughtered. The woman running it didn't know how to do all the administrative work or how to recruit volunteers. Walter volunteered with the organization for a couple years. When the woman moved back to Alberta, a decision had to be made: would the organization fold or reorganize?

Walter found himself doing with Circle F what he had done with Community Services—starting a new organization from the ground up. Circle F now has 20 volunteers who feed and care for the horses. There are now 60 members, with 100 people on the mailing list.

"My son says I've just moved from



Paetkau

doing social work with people to doing social work with horses," Walter muses. It is true that many of the skills he used in his career have translated into this work as a volunteer.

Many people ask why he works with horses rather than, say, in an MCC thrift shop.

"When I was first retired, I met some guys...volunteering at MCC, and they asked me why I didn't join them," he said. "The implication was that it was more significant helping poor and disadvantaged people...."

At the time, he replied that God created animals, too. Since that encounter he has given a great deal of thought to the significance of what he is doing. He has read extensively about horsemanship and found writers using language that was familiar to him.

"I was reading about nonresistance and nonviolent ways of dealing with animals," he says. "Many writers were quoting scripture and were observing the way that horses dealt with one another in nature as being nonviolent." He grew up with the concept that if a horse isn't responding, "it could be as much your fault as the horse's."

Walter believes that in communicating with horses, you can develop a cosmic, God-given understanding.

"God speaks to us through all creation, if we're prepared to listen," he says. And what does God say?

"That I'm here also; this is part of Me. Pay attention and listen to what I've created. Respect the mystery of it," says Walter.

"The Psalmist says, 'If I go to the depths of the sea, you are there.' God is there.... Horses, animals, the world—it's not a commodity. I've become more sensitive to what is around me."

Walter believes that no matter what people do in retirement, they need to enjoy what they are doing. He got involved with horses because of his love for animals but also because it was a cause, just like his friends at the MCC thrift shop.

"Even if you don't know where it will lead, it gives you energy," he says. "I never think in the morning: 'Why do I have to get up?' If there's something out there that fits who you are, then you have a stronger wellbeing."

—Angelika Dawson



Helen Braun and grandson Ethan

new week. She builds her time around people rather than activities. Being one of only two siblings who live close to her father, she provides lodging for family and friends from farther away.

"It's good to have time, especially when my parents have been ill."

She also makes time for her three grandchildren. "My next project is to teach them something like quilting."

She enjoys daily two-mile walks with friends, curls in winter and enjoys yard work in summer. Reading and quilting are two other passions. Last year Braun taught a quilting class to a

group of home school students.

"Education is very important to her and John [her husband]," said Franz. "Each year, for many years, they have supported an MCI student who has financial need. Helen was able to graduate because someone did that for her and so they want to

assist in that way."

Braun has suggestions for those considering retirement. "You've got to have a passion for something," is the first one. Braun and her husband, also a teacher, did not retire at the same time and she believes that was helpful.

"It helped me find my own niche." It allowed her independence "to decide whether and what to do. Don't let others push you into doing things," she advises.

"There are a lot of things you can't control—like health. We've been blessed."—Evelyn Rempel Petkau

Journey to retirement: A Lenten exploration

Coming to terms with aging and retirement became a Lenten discipline for this writer, with reading, reflection and conversations with retirees. The next issue will continue with stories of people in different stages of retirement. See also pages 4-5.

Last fall, on my 60th birthday, I entered the decade of pension and retirement. In spite of gratitude for reasonably good health, and an unusual number of birthday greetings and gatherings with family and friends, I didn't celebrate the day with my usual enthusiasm.

Perhaps I sensed that because this day marks a significant turning point in our society (the beginning of the "third age," as some call it), I should have spent it in reflection and retreat. I should have reviewed my life's journey and prepared myself to receive the next stage of the journey.

Instead, I entered a period of melancholy as I sought to come to terms with aging in general, and retirement in particular.

Now it is Lent, a season which encourages self-examination and inward journeys—a fitting time to reflect on "retirement." The word itself has to do with retreat and withdrawal from one's occupation to a place of seclusion or privacy.

So, I decided to explore retirement as a sort of Lenten discipline, not only to find some direction for myself, but also because it is an important issue for many. Following are some of the insights I gleaned as I researched the theme at various libraries, spent time in reflection, and listened to the stories of several retirees.

To the library

My journey of exploration began with a stop at the United Church of Canada Resource Centre Library where my librarian friend responded to my retirement query with delight.

"That's a theme I've been exploring for the last eight months as I think about when to hand in my retirement notice!" she exclaimed. "I'll give you a list of the books that I've found most helpful."

After a few days of reading, my brain was reeling with retirement truths, challenges and opportunities, such as:

- the need for careful preparation, financially, emotionally, spiritually;
- anticipation of a one- to three-year transition or adjustment period;
- the importance of good nutrition and healthcare;
- more leisure time, more opportunities for travel and education;
- more time for family and friends;
- endless possibilities for meaningful volunteering at home and abroad;
- the challenge of a second or third career;
- the importance of planning for all these things now!

Overall, this was interesting reading, though little of it seemed new or inspiring. With the emphasis on planning ahead, I heard echoes of comments by Mennonite Central Committee co-workers in Zambia who, while still in their 20s, declined another term of service because they had to return to North America to build up their retirement funds.

I was dumbfounded at the time. (Later, after seven more MCC terms, we wondered briefly if they'd been right. Like the grasshopper who hadn't prepared for winter, we wondered if we had made a huge mistake when we returned to Winnipeg at mid-life, facing career changes at a time when jobs were hard to find and the financial media encouraged at least one million dollars in retirement savings!)

What attracted me most in my Lenten readings were the books that focused on retirement as a spiritual



journey. For example, in *The Spirit of Retirement: Creating a life of meaning and personal growth*, James A. Autry encourages self-examination prior to retirement as much as practical preparation.

Retirement is a “time to make that *new start* so many of us dream about. In fact, it is the grand opportunity to stop *doing* and concentrate on *being*, to become the person you want to be.” Though this may be leaving self-discovery to rather late in life, he nevertheless offers an important corrective by promoting “being” in our doing-oriented culture.

Another book that encourages a reflective approach to retirement is *I Never Found a Rocking Chair: God’s call at retirement* by Richard L. Morgan. He shares meditations on his own journey.

In the foreword, Kathleen Fischer writes: “Morgan takes us further than the usual discussions of money, educational and travel opportunities, good nutrition, volunteering, and second careers. He shows us how retirement (redirection, as he prefers) is a spiritual passage. He helps us find God in it. He shows us how to make sense of the retirement experience and live it with courage and meaning....”

God’s call

In one meditation, Morgan reflects on the call of “semi-retired” Moses in the burning bush story in Exodus 3, and concludes: “It is strange to think of God’s call at retirement. We think of a calling at the dawn of a person’s career or even at mid-life, when people shift gears and take other directions. But I am convinced that God also calls at retirement, into larger and greater opportunities.”

That was an exciting concept for me. Not so much the focus on “larger and greater opportunities” but the recognition that we continue to be “called” to meaningful ways of living, no matter what stage of life we’re in. There is no need to feel redundant, or put out to pasture, just because we’re no longer paid for what we’re doing. Exciting worlds await our exploration.

Morgan reminds us of the Psalmist’s invitation to plan our remaining days wisely so that we may gain “a heart of wisdom.” Retirement offers us a final

A retirement ritual

Opening song

Reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8:

“There is a season for everything....”

Honouring the gifts of the one retiring:

“We are gathering here today to show our appreciation for the gifts our friend has given us and others through her years of work. Let us now share these fruits with her.” (Those present express their gratitude, and may bring a symbol of their appreciation.)

Reflections on the working years:

The person retiring shares her reflections on cherished experiences, regrets, what she will miss, unfulfilled dreams she hopes to turn to in retirement.

Blessing with oil:

“May the God of Exodus and Emmaus, the God of our season and turning points, be with you in this time of transition. May she who is the midwife of change teach you to be gentle with yourself as you let go of the old and await the birth of the new. May she who is the womb of time strengthen you with this oil of wisdom and gladness.”

Offering of spiritual gifts:

Those present offer the retiree a prayer, a blessing, a wish, a promise of support.

Closing song, refreshments and celebration.

(From *Autumn Gospel* by Kathleen Fischer.)

chance to reverse our lives of “rush and acquisition.”

In *Life Abundant: Rethinking theology and economy for a planet in peril*, Sally McFague picks up the theme of “going inward.” Though not writing specifically about retirement, she exults in finding God in a new way in the sixth decade of her life as she practises a different form of prayer.

“Finally, after years of talking about God (what theologians are paid to do!), I am becoming acquainted with God. This conversation has occurred quite deliberately: I engaged a spiritual director and have undertaken a daily pattern of meditation. I am doing what is called ‘practicing the presence of God,’ setting aside time for relating to God.



“To say that it has been instructive would be a gross understatement; it has been revelatory. Revelation, as I now see it, is God’s loving self-disclosure, and that is what I have experienced. I am meeting God and God is love.... The overwhelming emotion that I have experienced from this revelation of the mystery of things—from meeting God and knowing that God is love—is similar to Ebenezer Scrooge’s on Christmas Day. He kicked up his heels, exclaiming, ‘I didn’t miss it after all!’

“In the sixth decade of my life, I

Continued on page 7

‘Retirement is not a destination, it is a journey.’

‘It feels good to simply be me, to be a human being, not a human doing.... The Third Age is a time of stripping away all masks and illusions and facing ourselves honestly without pretence.’

(Morgan)

Journey From page 7

have been invited on a new journey, which seems like a great adventure, perhaps the greatest adventure of which human beings are capable.”

This is exciting stuff for someone just entering the retirement decade! Clearly, many adventures still lie ahead.

Personal stories

The truth of these readings was brought home to me when personal retirement stories began to pour into my life.

Jona Leppky, a retired businessman and computer consultant, happened to sit beside me in church and asked if I'd be interested in doing a story on a new MCC furniture store he and other retirees have just begun. Though Leppky didn't know I was working on retirement stories, he was clearly delighted with this new venture.

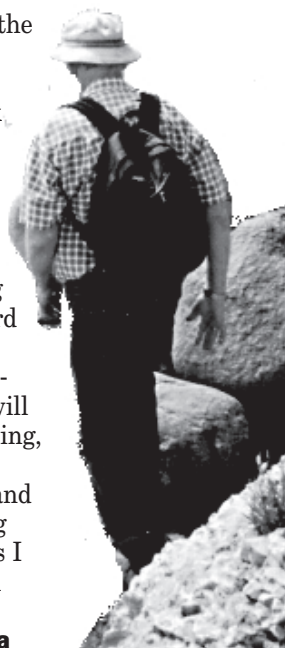
Next followed interviews with people at various stages of the retirement process. When I called Henry Rempel, who retired from teaching economics at the University of Manitoba a year ago, he was wallpapering the recreation room together with his artist wife, Grace. Then they were planning to drive to Steinbach on the coldest day of the Manitoba winter (minus 55 with wind-chill) to visit his mother (age 94) before Henry left on a two-week consulting trip to Kenya. Even so, they agreed to chat about retirement.

A call to Larry and Jessie Kehler, seven- and nine-year retirees, brought me a modest “I guess we could do it” response after they checked their diaries.

Susan Froese, retired for 15 years and widowed for 3, agreed to chat about her experiences over coffee at a restaurant instead of her home, which was being painted “with bright new colours under the supervision of a professional decorator” for the first time ever.

Finally, my 88-year-old mother happened to move into a nursing home while I was writing this article, and her response melted away the last of my melancholy feelings. Look for these stories in the next issue.

As Easter approaches, I'm beginning to look forward to the next “spiritual passage” which will lead, God willing, to a renewed sense of call and many exciting adventures as I enter my own retirement years.—**Leona Dueck Penner**

**Facts about retirees:**

- Since 1950, the average global life expectancy has climbed 20 years—to 66 years, according to the United Nations. One of every ten persons is now 60 years or older; by 2050, it will be one of five.
- In Canada, the senior population is growing, from 12% of the population in 1995 to an estimated 23% by 2041. The majority live at home (92% in 1996, 29% of them alone).
- According to Duke University Medical Center research, seniors who attend church regularly have healthier immune systems. While previous research has shown that church attendance is associated with better health, this study examines the specific pathways by which religion affects health.
- Income of seniors has risen at a faster rate than other age groups over the past decade. They are a significant consumer force. They are also the largest per capita donors to charity.
- An estimated 23% of Canadian seniors give some volunteer time each week. In 1995, just under 20% looked after children at least once a week. The economic value of volunteer work by seniors is estimated at between \$764 million and \$2.3 billion annually. As caregivers to family and others, seniors are also a vital force in reducing health care costs.—From United Church and Health Canada resources

Resources on retirement

Autry, James A. *The Spirit of Retirement: Creating a life of meaning and spiritual growth*. Prima Publishing, 2002. An inspiring and practical aid in the task of living fully during retirement.

Diehl, William E. and Judith Ruhe Diehl. *It Ain't Over Till It's Over: A user's guide to the second half of life*. Augsburg Fortress, 2003. The writers prefer the term “senior living” to “retirement,” and give many examples of how one can minister to others in retirement years.

Fischer, Kathleen. *Autumn Gospel: Women in the second half of life*. Paulist Press, 1995. The author explores the

spiritual dimensions of women's middle and later years as she weaves together stories, experience and research from a variety of traditions.

Funk Wiebe, Katie, ed. *Life After 50: A positive look at aging in the faith community*. Faith and Life Press, 1993. Nine authors and educators lead a challenging discussion of faith issues related to aging in the church and society.

Martz, Sandra Haldeman. *Grow Old Along With Me, The Best Is Yet To Be*. Papier-Mache Press, 1996. A celebration of aging in poetry, prose, photographs.

Morgan, Richard L. *I never found that*

rocking chair: God's call at retirement. Upper Room, 1992. Short meditations on the spiritual dimensions of retirement.

Saussy, Carroll. *The Art of Growing Old: A guide to faithful aging*. Augsburg, 1998. Each chapter moves from theory to practice with thought-provoking questions, suggestions, and illustrations of how the tasks of aging can be accomplished.

United Church of Canada. *Joys & Challenges of Aging: A congregational study guide*, 2001. Eight sessions based on the United Church's “Ethical and Theological Statement on Aging,” adopted in 2000.

The Passion and the Gospel

The tradition of portraying Jesus in art is as old as the catacomb paintings of the second century. Since film is just over 100 years old, makers of Jesus films are still struggling to bring together artistic vision, historical credibility, theological depth, and emotional engagement.

The most recent Jesus movies, *The Gospel of John* (2003) and *The Passion of the Christ* (2004), reflect all the problems and prospects of the medium.

The strength of *The Gospel of John* (available from www.gospelofjohnthefilm.com) is also its greatest weakness. A film needs a good script. This three-hour film is a word-for-word dramatization of the Good News Bible text. The voice-over narration interrupts the viewer's experience and keeps the characters and the viewer in separate worlds.

But that limitation is overshadowed by Christopher Plummer's crisp narration, and by a Jesus (Henry Ian Cusick) who is energetically joyful about his calling. This film is an engaging way to experience the Gospel. The special features disc includes a variety of resources, from scholarly commentary to an interactive map of gospel events. This three-DVD set should be in every church library.

Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* is an artistic re-creation rather than a transposition of the story into a different medium. By recreating the ancient world with its Latin and Aramaic languages (English subtitles), along with its superb cinematography and rich realism, the film draws the viewer into its world. This film will generate conversation, as much good art does, about why it both repels and attracts.

This tension can be explained in part by paying attention to the film's excesses and idiosyncrasies. The movie seems completely absorbed by a fascination with graphic and brutal violence (hence its 18A rating in most of Canada, "R" in U.S.). Both Jews and

Romans are caricatures. The movie does not reflect the complexity of social and political reality in first century Palestine, and therefore fails to place Jesus' death in historical perspective.

There are numerous extra-biblical scenes and characterization (some of which depend on Christian tradition). One should expect visual clichés (children as demons, the devil as a woman, a black crow on one of the crosses, a teardrop from the eye of God). These elements illustrate both the difficulties of communicating a transcendent perspective and some serious flaws.

This film will generate conversation in at least three ways. First, in the tradition of the passion play, the movie depicts only the suffering associated with Jesus' last 12 hours, and is disconnected from the larger story that makes sense of the suffering. There are flashbacks to Jesus' childhood and teaching ministry, but these are thin and make sense only when the viewer knows the whole story. Will this film invite viewers into the larger good news story of Jesus?

Second, the excessive violence makes the movie an emotional experience that borders on an assault, or a manipulation. Yet the movie clearly shows Jesus' loving response to human violence. In his suffering he "takes on" and even absorbs the violence of others, thereby beginning the process of overcoming it.

In one poignant scene, as he carries his cross, he tells Mary, "See, Mother, I make all things new." Will the movie invite viewers to participate in the new creation or to perpetuate the old ways of violence and domination of imperial power?

Third, at the heart of the movie is

both the redemptive suffering of Jesus and the human sharing in his suffering. Still, the movie seems to present a view of atonement that runs something like this: because humankind sinned so grievously, Jesus must suffer very, very much. Suffering itself becomes salvific.

Some viewers are saying the movie helps them to imagine "how much Jesus suffered for me." Yet is the point of the gospel the "how much," or the good news that Jesus exposes the violence of the cross as powerless over the resurrection power of God? Will the movie invite viewers to explore the many ways



Jesus' life, death and resurrection might shape their lives so that violence is transformed by love?

Gibson's Jesus film reflects his own worldview and artistic vision. Will its excesses and emphases draw believers to a deeper understanding of Jesus? Only time will tell.—**Gordon Matties**

The reviewer teaches Biblical Studies and a course in Film and Faith at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg.

Film editor from B.C.

Dave Rempel, a British Columbia native who attended Mennonite Educational Institute in Abbotsford, was a film editor on Mel Gibson's movie, *The Passion of the Christ*. He was in Abbotsford in late February to speak to pastors.

Rempel was a film and Bible studies major at Biola University in California, where he came to see the importance of story in teaching spiritual wisdom. He worked at Sony Pictures before applying for a film internship on the *Passion* set two years ago.

Rempel feels the movie accurately depicts the violence of Jesus' death but that children are advised not to attend because of its graphic portrayal.—From Feb. 26 *Abbotsford News*

Calgary, Alta.

Great response to first arts festival for youth

The first Fine Arts Peace Festival for Youth was held on February 14 at Alberta Bible College here. The event was the brainchild of Kim Thiessen, Peace Ministries coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee Alberta, and hosted by that program.

The theme was "Art and Soul—Taking peace on the road," with youth from grades 7 through 12 submitting art in various categories: music, technical, writing, drama and visual. The prizes were \$500 to \$2000 scholarships to any post-secondary Christian school.

Sponsoring schools (which provided the scholarships) were: Alberta Bible College in Calgary, Augustana University College in Camrose, The King's University College in Edmonton, Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Steinbach Bible College in Manitoba, and Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ontario.

The response was overwhelming. The auditorium of Alberta Bible College was filled to overflowing for the festival.

Visual art far outnumbered the others. There were paintings on fabric, canvas and paper, and sculptures out of papier-mâché, wood and plastic. Each identified a peaceful pursuit.

A quilted collage of peace symbols attracted attention. In sharp contrast was another collage of two pieces of canvas. One was covered in black paint with the outline of a barbed-wire fence behind a sad-looking girl in sombre colours. The other side had bright colours and the same girl in light colours.

Some of the submitted songs were performed, including grade seven entries: Naomi Harbeck's "One day of peace" and Kristin Gee's "Peace is hope." Some entries were submitted on CD. The one drama entry, "Iris," was presented by students of Summerside Community Church in Edson. Technical submissions were in PowerPoint photography.

The event was hosted by "Captain Stubby of the Loveboat" (Gery Schubert). Judging was according to audience favourites. Since there were

many entries and voters, judging could not be completed that evening. To allay audience disappointment, Captain Stubby coerced Doug Klassen, pastor of Foothills Mennonite Church, and Abe Janzen, director of Mennonite Central Committee Alberta, to join him in a hilarious vaudeville act.

Winners were announced later. First prize went to Anisa and Bethany Loewen for their duet, "Small ways." The two have been invited to perform at the "Peace it together" conference at

CMU in March. Second prize went to the drama group from Edson, and third prize to Meghan Thiessen for her poem, "Peace is like...."

Some of the art will be on display at the Alberta Songfest. The quilted collage will be at the MCC sale in Coaldale in June.

Organizers are already looking forward to a bigger and better festival next year.—From a report by **Irene Klassen**

Arts notes

Call for art

"The Beatitudes" is the title of this year's juried art exhibit at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg. Artists are invited to submit works inspired by Matthew 5:3-10. Send slides, photos or electronic images of the works (up to five), along with a note indicating to which beatitudes your works relate. Submission deadline is October 1. Send to the MHC Gallery, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4, e-mail: rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca. Ray Dirks, curator of the gallery, recently returned from Elspeet, Netherlands, where he set up the "In God's Image" exhibit from Mennonite World Conference. The exhibit will move to Emden, Germany, at the end of April, and then on to Paris and Bienenberg, Switzerland, this summer.—From Gallery releases

Art exhibit in Waterloo

"Iconoclastic: Contemporary / Mennonite / Visual / Art" is the title of an exhibit by four young artists at the University of Waterloo Art Gallery (263 Phillip St.). The exhibit, which runs from February 26 to March 18, features the paintings and photography of Karim Awad, Paul Janzen, David Lobe and Matthew Tiessen, who call themselves "The Mennonite Artists." They use the term "iconoclastic" to emphasize the "otherness" of visual arts within the Mennonite community, which has traditionally

focused on word and music. The group hopes to contribute to conversations about Mennonite cultural identity and future. Their web site is at: www.themennoniteartists.com.—From release

Low German prince

The Little Prince, a classic by Antoine de Saint Exupery, will be performed as a Low German musical in Manitoba in late March. *De tjliena Prinz* was translated from the French by Jack Thiessen, and dramatized by Wilmer Penner, who is also directing the production. Original lyrics and music are by Walter Kruse. The first performance is a dinner theatre fundraiser on March 20 at the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach. Call (204) 326-9661. The March 21 performance is at the Winnipeg Planetarium Theatre at 2:30 p.m.—From Heritage Village release

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All proceeds benefit
The Mennonite Centre
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goerz@sympatico.ca
905-356-4576

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johnaharder@yahoo.ca
905-468-3770



Paying for war

The season of income tax filing is upon us. As you prepare your tax return, consider that in 2003 approximately 7.9 percent of your federal tax was used for military purposes.

This 7.9 percent represented a total of \$12.4 billion for the Department of National Defence last year. Canada ranks as the 12th largest military spender in the world (when military spending is compared to budget).

In earlier times, countries needed men to fight wars, so conscription was instituted. In our day, countries need bodies less than they need money. Income tax has become a way that the government finances its military expenditures. In fact, income tax with deductions at source by the employer was instituted by the Canadian government during World War II as a way of helping to pay for Canada's war effort.

Traditionally, conscientious objection has been associated with military service. However, a growing number of pacifists argue that it should extend to paying taxes. What is the point of

praying for peace, when you are paying for war?

Currently, there is no legal means for conscientious objectors to re-direct the military portion of their tax to peaceful purposes. Organizations such as Conscience Canada have been pressing for such legal options for many years.

In the meantime, some individuals withhold their "military tax" and put it into a Trust Fund held by Conscience Canada to be held until it is possible to direct that tax to peaceful purposes. Some Canadian Mennonites have chosen this act of civil disobedience.

One important thing that you can do is to enclose a letter with your income tax return indicating that you object to paying for the military, and that you desire a legal means for re-directing that tax. You can find additional information on the Conscience Canada website at members.shaw.ca/consciencecanada/—**Esther Epp-Tiessen**

The writer is Peace Ministries coordinator for MCC Canada. Reprinted from Grapevine, the newsletter of Charleswood Mennonite Church.

Letters

Lectionary use raises significant questions

In preparing for worship in the season of Epiphany, I was surprised by the lectionary. In both Year A (Gospel of Matthew) and Year C (Luke), the Sermon on the Mount logically follows Jesus' ministry.

But what troubled me was that the texts on "not resisting" and "love of enemy" fall late in Epiphany (Sunday 7), and might be used only when Easter falls late enough to actually get to Sunday 7. Even then, much of the rest of Jesus' "sermon" is omitted.

What does this mean for an Anabaptist congregation that is using the lectionary? Can we be content to have the latter half of the Sermon on the Mount used only rarely in worship, especially the teachings of "not resisting with evil" and "loving one's enemy"? Perhaps none of our congregations are so tied to the lectionary that they cannot create other series to concentrate on God's vision for peace.

As a minister, I have benefited from part-time use of the lectionary. First, it is one way of ensuring that I don't preach only one sermon throughout my ministry, since I don't get to choose only my favourite texts. Second, the worship resources provided for Advent and Lent have brought significant "newness" to the ways we worship, especially creativity, diversity and more liturgical patterns. Third, we are in sync with the mainstream church when we use the lectionary.

But what are we doing theologically if we repeat certain biblical texts every Advent and Lent, while risking the omission of texts that have been central to our understanding of Jesus and the Christian life?

I write as one recently returned to congregational ministry and looking at our practices with fresh eyes. I write to raise questions for worship committees and denominational structures.

I wrote most of this letter just before reading the Spring issue of *Leader*,

Sample letter

Below is a sample letter you can send to Finance Minister Ralph Goodale. Enclose a copy in your income tax return and send additional copies to party leaders and your member of parliament. Send to House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6 (no postage needed).

Dear Minister Goodale:

As a Christian pacifist, I cannot in good conscience contribute to preparing for war or war-making. It is vitally important to me that the government pass a bill to enable those of us who are conscientious objectors to military taxation (taxes used for producing, selling and buying weapons, and sending others to kill or to be trained to kill) to redirect the military portion of our taxes towards non-military means of security-building.

Canada has recognized the rights of conscientious objection to military service since 1793. And there have been points when the Canadian government allowed for alternatives to the payment of military taxes. In 1841 conscientious objectors were allowed to redirect the taxes to public works. During WWI and WW II, special government bonds were created that were used only for the relief of suffering due to war.

Please let me know what you will do to help ensure that the right of freedom of conscience, including the payment of taxes, be fully recognized by the government.

Sincerely, [your name and address]

where the merits of using the lectionary are being debated, and where Advent and Lent are called “high” seasons. Surely our highest calling is to be a people of resurrection in the spirit of peace. Offering the church the new worship series for Easter to Pentecost seems to be a step in this direction.

Might there be a need for creative worship series on “peace (in its broadest definitions) as the will of God” and “Discipleship and stewardship: Our response to God’s grace?” I believe our congregations would be grateful for such help in having our worship and our life’s work be one.

The *Second Mile: Peace Journey* education series has been a pleasant discovery in our congregation this winter. Perhaps this series has laid some foundation stones for further work in worship planning.—**Mary Mae Schwartzenruber, Kitchener, Ont.**

Clarifications on thrift shop story

The article on the Saskatoon thrift store manager (Feb. 23, page 4) had several inaccuracies and may have raised confusion.

The three Village Green Thrift Shops in Saskatoon are owned and operated by Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan. Each shop is part of a network of 106 shops in the MCC Thrift Shop Network in North America. There is no connection to Ten Thousand Villages Canada. The “general manager” model described in the story does exist elsewhere in the thrift shop network.

The story implies that the manager alone determines the business strategies of MCC Thrift Shops. While it is true that these shops operate within an increasingly competitive marketplace, they work first within the mission of Mennonite Central Committee, and second within the operating principles that guide our work:

“We commit ourselves to Christian faith in action by offering a friendly, caring presence in our communities, volunteering our time and talents, receiving and reselling donated items, informing the churches and community of the MCC mission, supporting the mission of MCC by generating income.”

All MCC thrift shop marketing strategies focus on maximizing contributions to MCC. Recent issues of our newsletter, *Shoptalk*, have encouraged shops to improve sales per square foot without significant dollar investment, such as more frequent turnover of donated inventory and colour-blocking of clothing to improve visual appeal.

The story notes that “many conversations begin when people find out they don’t have to pay tax on purchases.” That is not true of all MCC thrift shops in Canada. Provincial and Goods and Services taxes are collected wherever required.

The story also mentions that the

The timing of apologies

Let me clarify that the adept apologist noted in my previous column is my teenaged son, a special gift of grace. His parents are more challenged in their capacity to express remorse, often getting stuck on whether an apology is warranted.

Timing can also be a problem. For example, Person A, spewing hotly about the offence, may not even hear Person B’s apology even though it’s offered multiple times. In fact the next day, Person A may refer back to the incident, declaring, “The least you could do is apologize.” To which Person B replies in a slightly wounded tone, “I thought I did,” taking the wind out of Person A’s sails, and hopefully paving the way for restored connection. (In our case, Person A and B are interchangeable.)

Given anger’s intensity, there often needs to be a release or cooling down before an apology can be received. Some relationships can hold explosive expressions; others use time and space to manage anger. Part of the challenge and satisfaction of long-term relationships comes from learning what works for the individuals involved.

A few months ago, my mom let me know that I had offended her. I listened quietly while she spoke her mind fast

and furiously. Each time she paused for breath, I inserted an apology. Finally I asked whether she was interested in my point of view or if she simply wanted the space to vent.

“I guess I’m just venting,” she replied, so I held my tongue.

Several days later, as we bid farewell, she hugged me and said, “Thanks for letting me blow off steam.”

Family Ties

Melissa Miller



“You’re welcome,” I answered, “and any time you want my point of view, I’ll be happy to offer it.” We parted laughing, with my “valuable” viewpoint unspoken.

Some relationships are strained by too many apologies, which, though well intentioned, can come across as meaningless and even irritating. Apologies that work demonstrate that the apologist has genuinely considered the other’s perspective.

Individuals who apologize frequently are often self-conscious and don’t want to bother anyone. Their self-consciousness can get in the way of considering others thoughtfully. Frequent apologies draw attention back to themselves, as others try to assure them, “You aren’t a bother.” As the cycle loops inward, the person receiving the apology can become quite bothered!

“A soft answer turns away anger,” urges Proverbs 15:1. Apologies are often intertwined with anger, either from past hurts or misunderstandings, or by imagining future ones. Careful attention to anger, my own and others, strengthens my interactions. A soft answer might include listening while the other expresses frustration, offering a well-timed apology, or even cheerfully affirming, “I want you to bother me!”

Emotional tending strengthens our relationships. Where does the disconnection occur, and how can we reconnect? Are apologies helping or fraying the connection? These questions may guide you to effective apologies.

The writer, a counsellor and author, operates Family Ties in Winnipeg. She is a member of Charleswood Mennonite Church.

Saskatoon store “gives away thousands of pounds of clothing each year.” The unfortunate reality is that goods at the end of their life also arrive at the shops. MCC Thrift Shops has pioneered creative ways to rework these goods into saleable items such as comforters, placemats, and rugs. Donors can be assured that responsible stewardship of the goods entrusted to us is an important component behind the success of these shops.

—**Judy Dyck, MCC Canada Thrift Shop coordinator**

Missional emphasis a good reminder

I appreciated Jack Suderman’s articles on “Revisiting the missional church vision” (Jan. 28, Feb. 9).

In spite of some buzzwords and faddish qualities, I believe the current “missional church” emphasis is reminding us and our congregations of something vital that we are all too prone to forget—that we are called by God to participate in a story larger than our own story, and to serve a purpose greater than ourselves.

—**Philip Bender, Hamilton, Ont.**

A response to ‘four spiritual truths’

While I appreciate most of what Nelson Kraybill had to say in his “Mennonite version of the Four Spiritual Laws” (Jan. 26, page 6), I have some strong disagreement with his treatment of “substitutionary atonement” theology.

In particular, I noted a subtle change in Spiritual Truth 3: “Jesus died on the cross because he confronted the powers of sin that fracture our world.” That would certainly be news to Paul who seemed to think that Christ died for the ungodly, and his death proved God’s love for us (Romans 5).

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us...” (Galatians 3:13).

Substitutionary atonement theology also seemed okay to Peter. He was quite sure that Christ suffered for sins

once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring us to God: “He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit” (1 Peter 3:18).

Jesus wasn’t “overpowered” in some kind of struggle with evil. He laid down his life willingly: “I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again” (John 10).

Why? Because God said that it is blood that makes atonement (Leviticus 17:11). Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins (Hebrews 9:22). So, even though Jesus knew no sin, God made him sin for our sake, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The late Bill Bright did not leave us with a complete view of salvation. As for anyone finding justification to support violence, Paul stated that Jesus gave himself that he might redeem us from iniquity and purify for himself a people who are zealous for good deeds (Titus 2:14).

While Christ has triumphed over the powers of violence, hate, fear and greed, it still had to be accomplished by means of a violent death. His willingness to die on a cross for our behalf is the only way any of us will share in God’s new humanity.—**Pat Murphy, Ayr, Ont.**

Kraybill responds

I hope Pat Murphy continues to preach substitutionary atonement, because it is biblical and helpful in understanding the meaning of the cross and resurrection. I touched on a variety of biblical images for the atonement, and say we “need them all, including vicarious (substitutionary) suffering, sacrifice, redemption, reconciliation, justification and adoption.”

I hope the Mennonite Church takes the whole New Testament seriously in presenting the Good News of salvation. If we always limit ourselves to one biblical image of salvation, we offer only part of the biblical message.

Murphy rightly points to New Testament passages that interpret Jesus’ death as a substitution. But note how Paul in Colossians 2:13-15 joins imagery about personal forgive-

ness with Christus Victor (“Christ triumphant”) images: “And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.”

This is among dozens of passages that speak of Jesus triumphing over the powers—a message the Christian church urgently needs in the United States today when we are being seduced by spiritual powers of imperialism and consumerism.

The church needs to preach that the atonement, in addition to paying for personal sins, offers God’s strategy for overcoming powers of violence, hate, fear and greed.—**Nelson Kraybill**

Anti-gay camps should not be supported

I applaud the Winnipeg School Board in its decision not to use the Mennonite Church Manitoba camps for its winter educational programs (Feb. 9, page 15). Church camps which publicly promote an anti-gay policy, as Camps with Meaning does, should not be supported through public funds.

Our government institutions have rightly decided that any discrimination based on sexual orientation is fundamentally wrong. Perhaps a strong economic pinch will help awaken our Mennonite institutions to the same realization.—**Victor Fast, London, Ont.**

Letters express the opinion of the writer, not necessarily those of Canadian Mennonite or the church. We publish as many as space permits, unless they attack individuals or become too repetitious. Letters are edited for length and style. See page 2 for address information.

Hamilton, Ont.

Committee plans future of voluntary service

Five representatives from Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) units in Winnipeg, Hamilton, Toronto and Montreal met here February 13-14 to set a course for the future of the MVS and Service Adventure programs.

The meeting grew out of a task force on the future of service programs in Mennonite Church Canada. When the MC Canada General Board decided in November to end financial support for MVS and Service Adventure, the task force reorganized itself as an informal association to restructure the programs to function at a grassroots level.

Congregations that continue to sponsor units will have to work together to tap into the commitment to voluntary service that remains within the MC Canada constituency.

The February meeting began with sharing. Marilyn Zehr and Bill Bryson told how Danforth Mennonite Church in Toronto opened a unit last September, despite the termination of MVS. Carolyn Minor from Montreal Mennonite Fellowship related the struggles of a young unit that is unable to remain open now but hopes to reopen in September 2005.

Karen Shiel from Hamilton Mennonite Church related the 38-year history of a unit that started a church and has remained active even when there were no volunteers. Louie Sawatzky from Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg told about a unit that started in 1984 and in recent years has become a magnet for German volunteers.

Ernie Engbrecht from the Service Adventure unit in Lethbridge, Alberta, shared his contribution via e-mail.

Factors that motivate congregations to host a unit include: the needs of agencies where volunteers work, the contribution volunteers make to host congregations, and the growth of volunteers themselves. Leadership development is also crucial to the future.

A visioning process produced a significant metaphor for the future. We imagined the stump of a tree. The roots are strong, however, and include a rich history of service and the support of the MC Canada constituency. A fragile green shoot is growing out of the stump. Eventually the shoot will cover the stump, from which it will draw sustenance.

Other growth forms a protective cover over the cut—the support of alumni, churches and agencies that have benefited from the program. Our vision is a forest of new growth: active units, supportive congregations and partnering agencies.

Another important outcome of the meeting was organizational restructuring, combining both programs to become Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure. A steering committee will set vision and policy, drawing on partnerships with congregations and organizations. A management group



Current and former members of Maison Menno, from left: Julia Hogue, Emily Schaming, Johanna Rempel-Petkau, Jennifer Moyer and Katherine Pettit.

will work on details.

First on our list of partners is MC Canada, with whom we are discussing the roles each organization will play.

Membership in Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure is open to individuals, congregations and organizations that feel they can benefit from, or contribute to, the new growth of Mennonite voluntary service through local congregations. The next year will be an intense period of restructuring and renewal, and we ask for your prayers.

To keep informed, visit our web site at www.mvsa.net.—**Carolyn Minor**



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Publishing network repays \$2.3 million loan

At the end of January, Mennonite Publishing Network completed its Barn Raising Campaign after paying off \$1.3 million of a \$2.3 million short-term loan. (All figures are in US dollars.) The remaining \$1 million is to be amortized over eight years.

The campaign, launched in spring 2002, was part of an effort to halt rising debt and transform the publishing ministry. Along with major downsizing and re-structuring, Mennonite Publishing Network obtained a loan of \$2.3 million from an anonymous donor to pay back holders of unregistered debenture notes.

Of the \$1.3 million raised during the campaign, 63 percent came from donations in Canada and the U.S., and 37 percent from operations.

"We're grateful for the generosity and support of so many people," said

Ron Rempel, executive director. "The donations toward debt reduction are just one sign of the church's re-embrace of publishing as an essential ministry." For the remaining \$1 million, MPN obtained a loan from the Church Investment Loan Fund, administered by Eastern Mennonite Missions in Salunga, Pennsylvania.

"While we are enormously grateful for the generous contributions from our constituency in Canada and the United States, we recognize that the publishing network will require ongoing financial support from the church," said Ron Sawatsky, board chair.

"We must still pay back the remaining portion (about \$3.7 million) of the original debt of \$5 million. We plan to do this over the next eight to ten years using a combination of funds from MPN operations and annual contribu-

tions."

The goal is to raise about \$300,000 in annual contributions. It is consulting with Mennonite Church Canada and MC USA to develop an ongoing fundraising program.

A portion of contributions will be used for projects such as a new Sunday school curriculum to be released in 2006. Contributions will also be used for payments not only on the \$1 million loan from Eastern Mennonite Missions, but also on an additional \$2.7 million of debt, most of this in loans from Mennonite Church USA and MC Canada.—From MPN release

Kitgum, Uganda

Bicyclists with MCC blankets killed

Three men transporting Mennonite Central Committee blankets by bicycle here were ambushed, and two killed, on February 5. The attackers were members of the Lord's Resistance Army, say MCC workers.

The cyclists were part of a team of 270 cyclists helping to transport blankets to rural areas in northern

Uganda, where the rebel group has been wreaking havoc for 18 years.

Raymond Akena, 25, and Thomas Akena, 27, died in the attack. The third man, Alex Ojera, 32, was abducted and later rescued by the

Ugandan army. They were part of a church-sponsored effort to distribute the blankets. MCC has made a financial contribution to the families of the young men who died.

In six years of relief distribution in northern Uganda, MCC "has never had an incident of this sort," report MCC workers.—MCC release



Bicyclists prepare to deliver MCC blankets in northern Uganda. The ambush occurred later.

Photo by Charles Darwin

Waterloo, Ont.

Nicaragua showing renewed confidence

Although Allan Sauder, president of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), has visited Nicaragua many times since 1990, he was impressed during a January 31-February 8 MEDA tour by "a new confidence in Nicaragua that the future will be brighter."

This feeling was reinforced during a visit to ASOPROL, an association of some 300 small farmers that MEDA worked with about a decade ago.

"From those early days...this association has emerged as a strong group with ready markets for their beans and coffee," Sauder says. "They have almost half a million dollars invested in cleaning and sorting equipment and storage facilities, and they now have access to bank financing."

Association members "spoke of the difference that MEDA made for them in those early years in terms of board development, business planning and farmer training," says Sauder. "Now, they are keenly interested in MEDA's new rural credit program to enable their members to increase production."—MEDA release

Waterloo, Ont.

Assembly was great encouragement, says Zimbabwe bishop

The Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe will never be the same for having hosted the Mennonite World Conference assembly, said Danisa Ndlovu, a bishop in Zimbabwe and vice-president of MWC.

Ndlovu visited Ontario in February. He was a guest at a reunion of Assembly 14 participants at Waterloo North Mennonite Church on February 8, and he spoke to faculty at Conrad Grebel University College the next day.

That the assembly even happened was a miracle, said Ndlovu. Many North Americans registered concern about the shortage of food in Zimbabwe, and that they would appear to be endorsing Robert Mugabe's government.

"It was important for the church to come," said Ndlovu. "It was a matter of relationships." North Americans made a bold statement about peace. In a country with a history of racial tension, it was striking to see so many white people on the streets of Bulawayo.

How wonderful, said Ndlovu, that blacks and whites could mingle as friends without having to treat one another with "undue respect."

The conference helped to validate the church in Zimbabwe. The Brethren in Christ are only a small part of the Christian community there, he said, and Christians from other groups said to him: "We had no idea that you were part of a worldwide body!"

It was marvelous to see laughter in the midst of suffering, to see people volunteer their time. Rural and urban, rich and poor Zimbabwean Christians worked together, he said. Assembly 14 also gave Zimbabweans a chance to enjoy their own tourist attractions.

"I didn't know we had this facility in Bulawayo!" was an often-heard exclamation.

Life since then hasn't been easy. The economy has taken a nosedive, and inflation is running at 625 percent. Eighty percent of the population is unemployed. Many families can no longer afford to send their children to



Ndlovu

school. He has observed people walking a daily round-trip of 30 kilometres because they can no longer afford transportation.

Politically things are quieter, said Ndlovu, but there are still tensions. A by-election guarantees a display of violence. Government officials view meetings as subversive and dismiss them with tear gas. The churches—Catholic, Zimbabwe Council of Churches, and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe, of which the Brethren in Christ are a part—are trying to bring the ruling party and opposition to the table.

The Brethren in Christ have established a new peace and justice committee. It will need trainers, he said, to help its members understand the risks they face. One risk, he said, is that government agents will follow them.

The meeting at Conrad Grebel included discussion about how Assembly 14 participants remain connected. Larry Miller, executive secretary of MWC, said that to have had an intimate relationship with the Zimbabwe church and then nothing further feels like "a one-night stand." What does "fellowship" mean, now that the assembly is over?

"We are not structured," said Miller, "to relate permanently and intimately with each national church, but we can monitor what's happening, along with MCC and various mission agencies."

People-to-people links are happening through letters and other forms of communication, said Ndlovu. The most important links are person to person, congregation to congregation, one institution with another.

Ndlovu's trip included visits to churches, agencies and schools in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Ontario. He and his wife Treziah have three children: Thinkgrace, Trustworthy and Devotion.

His hopes for Zimbabwe? That there will be peaceful change, that his country can avoid civil war. Although violence continues, he does not lose hope.

"God's timing," he says, "is different than ours."—**Betti Erb**

Strasbourg, France

Positive fund balance for Africa assembly

Mennonite World Conference (MWC) continues to stand in solidarity with the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe and to engage in "sharing gifts in suffering and in joy," the Assembly 14 theme.

MWC will work with the new Peace and Justice Committee of the Zimbabwe church in presenting concerns to the government there. Ray Brubacher of the MWC office in Canada is the contact person for this.

MWC finances at the end of 2003 showed a balance of \$47,000. European and North American registrations for Africa 2003 were good, contributions were strong, and costs were carefully controlled.

While inflation soared and the value

of Zimbabwean currency plunged, the bottom line on the international budget remained virtually unchanged. Travel and operating funds also ended with positive balances.

The Assembly Fund balance will finance future assemblies, including a feasibility study on the location of Assembly 15 in 2009. MWC has received invitations from Paraguay and eastern Pennsylvania. Paraguay has five Hispanic conferences and three German-speaking ones.

Feasibility studies of both locations will be done and a recommendation brought to executive committee meetings in Strasbourg July 28 to August 4.—From MWC release

News briefs from MCC

Kinshasa, Congo

Conference banner saves a life

A Mennonite World Conference banner saved the life of a Mennonite man here last summer.

Ngonda Daniel, a 56-year-old business owner, was asked to make the banner on behalf of the Congolese Mennonite Brethren Conference. When he brought it to the Mennonite Peace Center, he had bandages around his arm.

"Your banner saved me from being killed by gangsters," said Daniel. He was in a taxi when two men in the back seat with him pulled out guns. They took him outside Kinshasa and took everything he had: \$3.00, pens, peace materials and the banner.

One of them took a closer look at the banner and asked, "Are you a Christian?" Daniel said he was.

The man asked Daniel more questions while the others beat him and broke his arm. One of the attackers said they should kill him, but the man with the banner and peace materials said, "Don't kill him. He carries a Christian flag with Jesus' cross. He is from a church."

The attackers threw Daniel into a bush and left him without any clothes. A passerby took him to a hospital.

"The banner with Jesus' cross saved him," said Pascal Kulungu from the peace centre.—From *Mennonite Weekly Review*

Jordan girls' school gets books

A world of learning will open up this year to students at Adasiyyeh Girls School, in rural Jordan. With funds from the Mennonite Central Committee Global Family program, the school is purchasing 750 books in Arabic and English for its library, which until now had been almost empty. Some 350 girls, most from poor farming families, attend Adasiyyeh, which offers kindergarten through high school. For more on the Global Family program, see www.mcc.org/globalfamily.

Loans for Ukrainians

Revolving loan funds begun with capital from MCC are helping families in Odessa, Ukraine, move toward self-sufficiency. "Before, we were just making it from day to day, never having anything left over to move forward. But now we work part of the week to pay back the fund and the other half for ourselves, our family and church," said Lala Salimov. The Salimov family came to Odessa from Azerbaijan, where war has destroyed much of society's structures. Lala and her sister Reina sell *shaurma*, flatbread wrapped around meaty fillings, salads and snacks. The loans are administered by local churches.

Chicken, rice and fish

In the Noakhali district of Bangladesh, many farmers have tiny plots of land and food production struggles to keep pace with population growth. Intensive farming can make the

difference. MCC is promoting a system where chickens, fish and rice coexist on a fifth of an acre of land. Farmers build thick dikes around their land. At one end is a fishpond with a chicken shed over it; rice is grown in the rest of the area. Chicken droppings feed the fish; the fish droppings fertilize the rice. Vegetables grow on top of the dike walls.

Helping Manila street kids

In Manila, Philippines, an agency called Bahay Tuluyan runs two group homes for children whose families live on the streets. The children come from situations so abusive that they have been removed temporarily from their families. Through MCC's Global Family program, 27 of these children are receiving money for uniforms, books, lunch and transportation money for school. The group homes are also drop-in centres for other street children. Older students are trained to help younger ones through a junior educator program.

Health projects

MCC is adding a health component to the food program it supports in Boricha, an impoverished district in Ethiopia. Carried out by the Meserete Kristos Church, the project will train 72 birth attendants and 10 community health attendants. It will also provide family planning and HIV/AIDS information, and hygiene and sanitation training to 20,000 people. MCC is donating \$26,500 for the project. The district of 223,000 people has only two health centres and three clinics, and the region has faced severe drought.

In Vietnam, HIV infections have increased five-fold in the last six years. In Phu Tho Province, more than 90 percent of infections are attributed to intravenous drug use. The government has begun committees to combat this, but they have almost no training and meagre budgets. MCC is providing \$14,350 to two groups engaged in AIDS prevention work. For more on MCC's 10-year Generations at Risk initiative, see www.mcc.org/aids.

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Dave Pankratz of Mennonite Central Committee (second from left) watches Erwan LeGrand (left) of Aide Medicale Internationale deliver TB medication to Saleh al-Mukhtar (right), director of a medical centre in Hilla, Iraq. MCC contributed \$75,000 for the medicine. Pankratz, from Winnipeg, tracked MCC's \$4 million Iraq emergency response during a six-month term there.—MCC Canada release

Winnipeg, Man.

Letter of thanks from Colombia

In January, Mennonites in North America were urged to pray and send letters to governments on behalf of Ricardo Esquivia in Colombia. Esquivia is a Mennonite peace and justice worker who is being threatened with arrest (see Feb. 9, page 24).

Letters and faxes have poured in by the hundreds. Mennonite leaders and workers in Colombia have since had positive meetings with government officials, as well as with U.S. and human rights representatives in the country. The immediate threat of detention has subsided, but Ricardo's future remains uncertain.

Recently, Esquivia sent a letter of thanks, translated below by Jack Suderman.

"I send you warm greetings and thanks. Perhaps you do not even imagine the impact that your work is having on the Colombian governmental officials. The international response has been great. In the High Commissioner for Peace's office they told us that we were 'mobilizing the world.'

"Thanks to you, friends, for having created and maintained this environment of international protection. Every day I am more convinced that the only possible security for a human rights and peace worker is community.

"Thanks and may the God of Life continue to bless you. With affection and gratitude, Ricardo Esquivia."—From MC Canada reports

Winnipeg, Man.

Desire to forget 'heresies'

It's taken 400 years, but some denominations are now seeking reconciliation for condemning early Anabaptists.

The Swiss Reformed Church has invited Mennonites, Hutterites and Amish to a celebration this summer to commemorate Felix Manz and other Anabaptists who were killed for their faith during the Reformation.

Recently, the Canadian head of the Christian Reformed Church, William Veenstra, approached Mennonite Church Canada about addressing a condemnation of Mennonites in its confession of faith. And last summer in Winnipeg, the Lutheran World Fellowship passed a resolution to address the condemnation of Anabaptists in its confession of faith.

Helmut Harder of Winnipeg continues to represent Mennonites in a seven-year dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church aimed at reconciliation. Harder will attend a symposium on martyrdom in Italy this spring.

"It's taken a long time, but...we are

seeing the end and indeed the healing of some of those battles and experiences that took place in the past," said Dan Nighswander, executive secretary of MC Canada. He referred to these and other examples of conflict in a sermon on "Loving enemies." The sermon can be heard in audio format at www.mennonitechurch.ca/files/multimedia/love_enemies.mp3.—MC Canada release



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June 24 to 27, 2004 at Wilderness Edge Retreat Centre,

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For more information contact the MMA office at 614-299-8922, menmed@menmed.org, or www.mennmed.org

Newton, Kansas

Stronger link with missional church in USA

A recent survey of Mennonite Church USA members shows that the missional church is becoming less of a mystery and that a fair share of people are excited about the direction of the new church.

About one-third of 1,100 survey participants said they are excited about the future of the church, and 25 percent identified “missional” as joining God’s work in the world. The survey, “The people in the pew: Perceptions of Mennonite Church USA,” was conducted by Mennonite Mutual Aid for MC USA.

The findings encourage the Executive Board, which has worked hard to communicate that “missional” is not denominational agenda but a way for all parts of the church to discover God’s agenda together.

About 40 percent of participants said that they are uneasy about, or confused by, the merger of the former Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church. One in five admitted to having paid little attention to the transition, and one in five disliked the word “missional.”

In their recommendations, Barth Hague and James Nofziger from Mennonite Mutual Aid said Mennonite Church USA leaders must develop more face-to-face relationships if a shift in loyalty is to occur. Leaders also need to communicate a holistic focus, they said, because many feel the church is more issue-oriented than Christ-centred.

People surveyed said that spiritual growth among members should be the number one issue for the denomination, followed by peacemaking and missions.

Hague’s two biggest surprises were the widespread support among pastors for the new church and the fact that many people called for a stronger and clearer identity for MC USA.

Other findings highlight several challenges:

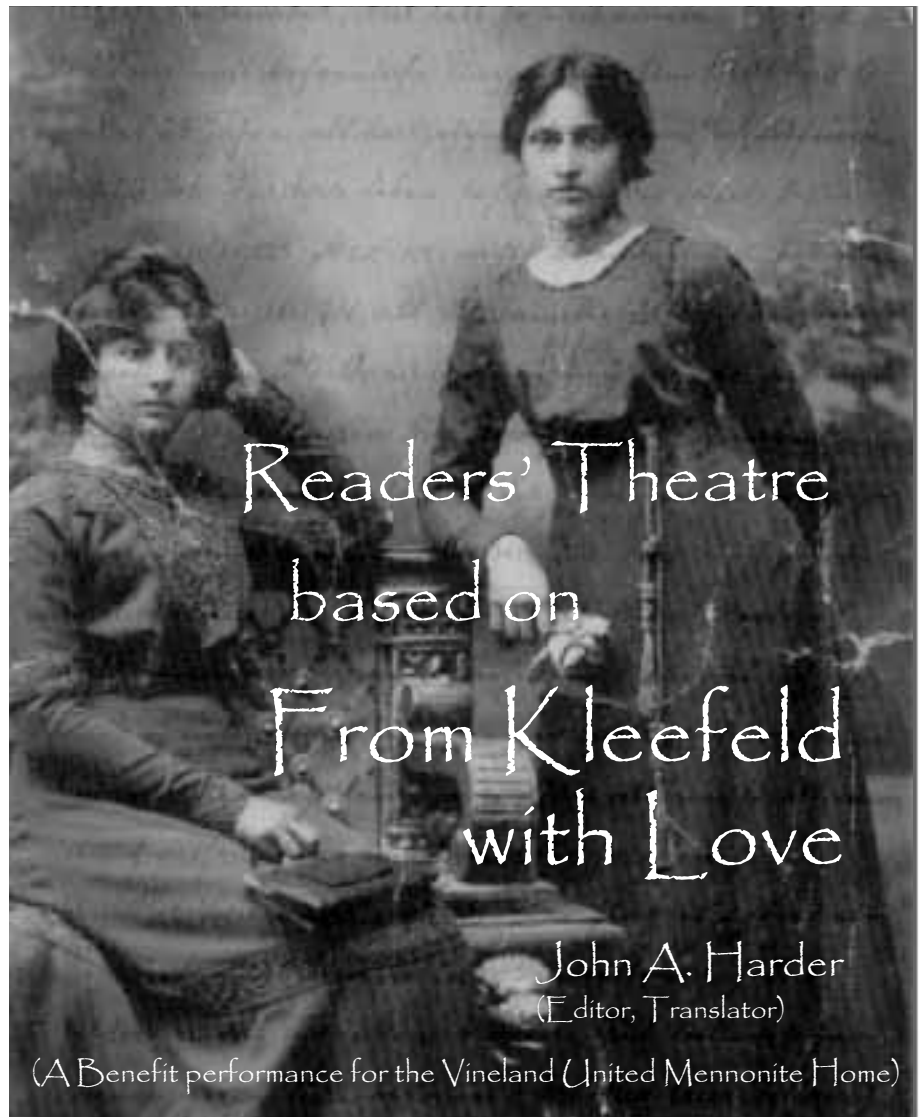
- Only one in five say they feel connected to Mennonite Church USA. Five years ago, before integration, two in five said they felt connected.
- Roughly half agree that denomina-

tional leaders share their values and priorities.

- Slightly more than half feel it is important that their congregation be part of Mennonite Church USA. Fully one-quarter say it is not important.

Despite feeling somewhat discon-

nected, most want the new church to work, said Hague. “For the most part, people want Mennonite Church USA to work, and to work well.... They are just looking for a few more handles that can help them understand and support it.”—From MC USA release



Vineland United Mennonite Church Auditorium
Friday, March 26 @ 7:00 p.m.
3327 Menno Street
(Discussion and refreshments to follow)

News briefs

Canadian Cree makes history at Urbana

History was made on December 29 at Urbana 2003 in Chicago when Ray Aldred, Cree pastor and director of First Nations Alliance Churches of Canada, became the first native North American speaker in Urbana's 57-year history. Urbana is the student missions convention of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Reports described Aldred's address as "a watershed moment" and "one of the most profound...insightful and prophetically challenging messages ever heard at Urbana." While it included a "rebuke of the harm that has been done to native North American and other peoples by Christian missionaries," the address also provided a "practical and biblically-grounded way forward for effective Jesus-centred, cross-cultural missions work in a postmodern age," wrote Wes Markofski of Inter-Varsity. Aldred co-chairs the Aboriginal Task Force of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and is a board member of the North American Institute for Indig-

enous Theological Studies. He was born in northern Alberta and lives in Saskatchewan. Go to www.urbana.org for the full text of his address.—From reports

Story recalls MEDA work in Colombia

It's been almost 30 years since Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) left Colombia, but traces of its work remain. This was evident in the February issue of *Christianity Today*, which published an article titled "Forgotten casualties of an uncivil war." The article mentioned two Colombians—a councilman and a mechanic—who were targeted by rebels and had to flee. Spurned by some churches, they found their way to Teusaquillo Mennonite Church which, the article says, "welcomed them and referred the pair to MENCOLDES, a Mennonite outreach for displaced people and others in need. There they found food and other assistance." MENCOLDES was

started by MEDA in the early 1970s under the direction of Roger Friesen. MENCOLDES went on to undertake a wide range of development projects, from agronomy and business to health and education.—From MEDA release

Church planters share stories in Manitoba

More than 35 participants from various denominations—a group called Manitoba Catalyzers—gathered in Winnipeg on January 28 to hear stories about creative church planting in Manitoba. Mennonite Ted Enns Dyck, pastor of the Seeds of Life Community Church in Altona, was among the presenters, who all shared the conviction that church needs to be good news for people outside the faith community. Each emphasized the importance of relationships over programs, the importance of intergenerational participation for healthy community life, and the importance of food and table fellowship in building community.—From report by **Norm Voht**

AMBS is a place to be inspired by God and by those around you, in life and in history. Now, in the midst of piles of library books, shared laughter in Greek class as we translate 1 John together and the fellowship of students from around the world, I am eager to discover what will come next.

— Tim Dyck, AMBS student in the Master of Divinity program from Waterloo, Ont.



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Summer: Travel, Food & Events

Heritage celebrations in Manitoba

Summer provides many opportunities to celebrate the 130-year Mennonite heritage in Manitoba. Holiday options include fairs, festivals, museums and community visits. Here are the main attractions, grouped geographically:

Altona: In the heart of the Mennonite West Reserve, this town hosts the Manitoba Sunflower Festival July 16-18. Other attractions: an aquatic centre with a huge play area and a new Millennium Exhibition Centre (as well as a replica of Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" on an easel seven storeys tall).

Gretna: Site of the Mennonite Collegiate Institute, the oldest Mennonite school in Canada. A cairn nearby, in memory of the Mennonite pioneers, will be the site of the 2004 "Hot Spot" Festival September 4-5.

Post Road: Post Road Memorial Tours take participants through the West Reserve, from Fort Dufferin where Mennonite settlers got off a steamer and set foot on Manitoba soil in 1875, through Mennonite villages as far as Mountain City (now a ghost town) near Morden.

Winkler: Manitoba's fastest growing city, built by Mennonites and industrialists, hosts the Winkler Harvest Festival and Exhibition on August 13-15. The Pembina Valley Threshermen's Museum

holds a reunion September 10-11, featuring old-time threshing and traditional Mennonite food.

Plum Coulee: The Plum Coulee and District Museum houses items relating to the Jewish, Ukrainian, German and Mennonite pioneers, and is filled with photos of its time as a mercantile centre. The rejuvenated community has recently added a nature walk beside the Plum River, and is planning an interpretive centre in the elevator.

Rosenort: Situated on the Morris River, this town was founded by Kleine Gemeinde (Evangelical Mennonite Conference) in 1874. Roselane Heritage House & Tea Room is one of the community's attractions.

Steinbach: The heart of the Mennonite East Reserve, Steinbach is home to the Mennonite Heritage Village museum. The Heritage Village celebrates 40 years at its Pioneer Days July 30-August 2. The Livery Barn Restaurant serves traditional Mennonite fare in a

pioneer setting. The general store offers locally crafted items, stone-ground flour and souvenirs.

Niverville: One of the oldest Mennonite communities in Manitoba, it features the Niverville Old-Tyme Country Fair June 11-13. Nearby is the Mennonite Memorial Landing Site, the junction of the Red and Rat Rivers where Mennonites first landed in Manitoba in 1874.

Grunthal/Kleefeld/Blumenort: These villages near Steinbach each host summer events: the Hanover Agricultural Fair & Exhibition (Grunthal), the Kleefeld Honey Festival, and the Blumenort Fair.

Winnipeg: With over 22,000 Mennonites, this city has over 40 Mennonite churches, as well as a Mennonite theatre company, children's choir and symphony orchestra. The Canadian Mennonite University campus houses the Mennonite Heritage Centre and Gallery, as well as offices of Mennonite Church Canada and Manitoba.

Continued on page 22

Summer service opportunities for youth and groups

One-week to one-month options for individuals.
Week-long options for groups.

- Youth Venture
- SOOP (Service Opportunities for Older People in cooperation with MCC Canada and Mennonite Association of Retired Persons)
- Group Venture
- DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection)

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Mennonite Mission Network

The mission agency of Mennonite Church USA

Youth Venture

SOOP

Group Venture



Manitoba From page 21

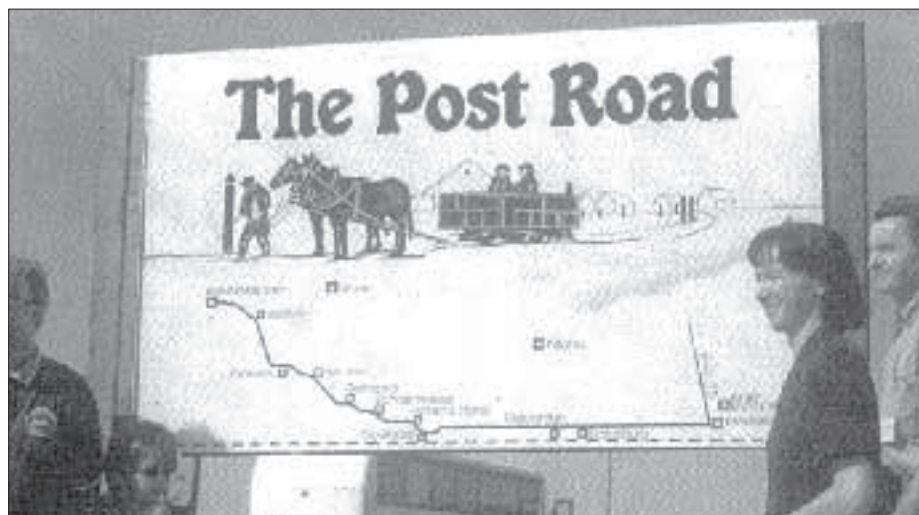
Boissevain: Mennonites from Russia began a church in this western Manitoba town in 1927. An attraction is the nearby International Peace Garden, dedicated to the peaceful relationship between Canada and the United States. It includes a campground, interpretive centre and hiking trails. Boissevain and nearby Killarney, also influenced by Mennonites, are located in the Turtle Mountains of western Manitoba.

Austin/MacGregor: Cheaper land attracted Mennonites from the West Reserve to this area in the 1940s. The Manitoba Agricultural Museum at Austin, with the largest collection of vintage farm equipment in Canada, is celebrating its 50th anniversary during its Threshermen's Reunion and Stampede July 28-31. The Homesteaders' Village simulates village life in the late 19th century.

Menville/Morweena: These Interlake communities near Riverton were begun around 1950 when Kleingemeinde Mennonites moved here seeking land. An attraction is Integrity Foods, run by Cornelius and Dora Friesen. They bake up to 80 loaves of bread at one firing in an outdoor brick oven—Compiled by Elmer Heinrichs

Passion play in Manitoba

Each summer, Oak Valley Productions performs *The Carpenter*, based on Jesus' passion, on an outdoor stage near La Riviere, Manitoba. Executive producer is Richard J. Klassen. Oak Valley is a non-profit organization which encourages Judeo-Christian and family values through creative expression and outdoor activities. The theatre troupe also performs in various communities during the year. Oak Valley is an outdoor site in the Pembina Valley with rugged hiking trails, including a "Way of the Cross" meditation trail, and picnic areas. This year's Passion Play runs July 9-11 and July 16-18. To contact Oak Valley, phone (204) 242-3160 or e-mail: passionplay@oakvalleyproductions.org. —Elmer Heinrichs



Photos by Elmer Heinrichs

The Post Road Memorial Trail takes visitors through the historic West Reserve, settled by Mennonites from Russia in the 1870s.

Camping trip to native community

Mennonite Central Committee B.C. is hosting a camping trip with aboriginal neighbours on Vancouver Island this summer. The group will tour the north coast of Vancouver Island, see old growth forests with a Mennonite forester and visit the Umista Cultural Centre in Alert Bay, and spend time with the

Kwagwiltz First Nations in Port Hardy. The trip is July 14- 18. Transportation and expenses are to be borne by participants. MCC will book sites, and coordinate the tour. For more information, contact Darryl Klassen, e-mail: abneighbours@mccbc.com or phone toll-free 1-888-622-6337.—MCC B.C.

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Social Relationships and Behaviour: May 4-June 10

Practical Theology
Worship as the People's Work (featuring instructor John L. Bell, Iona Community, Scotland): July 19-23

TESOL
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Courses: May 3-June 11

Advanced Youth Ministry
A Contemplative Approach to Youth Ministry (Instructor, Michael Hryniuk): May 24-28

Evangelical Anabaptist Seminary Program
Old Testament Theology: April 19-23
Preaching the Sermon on the Mount: April 26-30
The Book of Revelation: April 30-May 1 and May 3-7

Music Theatre Summer Camp
August 9-20: Ages 15 - 18
Learn dancing (jazz, hip hop, and elementary tap), drama (mime, improvisation, character development), and singing (interpretation of song, vocal technique).

Linux Computer Camp July 5
(for those entering grades 10-12)
Hands-on learning about and playing with the Linux operating system individually and in teams.

AIA Soccer Camp
July 26 - 30: Ages 12-17: M & F

AIA Basketball Camp
August 9-13: Ages 12-18: M & F

AIA Volleyball Camp
August 16-20: Ages 12-18: M & F

CMU Volleyball Team Camp
August 23-27: Ages 15-18: M & F

CMU Courses

Seminary

Music

Linux

Sports

Historic sites in Ontario

Altona Mennonite Meetinghouse near Stouffville was home to a congregation that began in 1890. The congregation was dissolved in 1974.

Black Creek Pioneer Village in Downsview (Toronto) is a 19th-century village with over 35 restored shops and homes, staffed with costumed guides.

Brubacher House at the University of Waterloo is a restored 19th-century Mennonite house, operated by Conrad Grebel University College.

Detweiler Meetinghouse in Roseville is a stone meetinghouse built in 1855 and restored in 1996. It may be rented for events. Call (519) 696-2805.

Doon Heritage Crossroads in Kitchener is a living museum of a village and two farms, where interpreters welcome guests to the year 1914. Doon is also the main repository for the Region of Waterloo's museum collections.

Heritage Historical Library in Aylmer is a collection for research in Amish history and genealogy.

Jordan Museum of The Twenty is a community museum which includes local Mennonite history and a display of fraktur. Jordan is the heart of the first Mennonite settlement in Canada (1786). Nearby is The First Mennonite Church of Vineland, begun in 1801.

Joseph Schneider Haus Museum in Kitchener is the 1816 farmhouse built by a Mennonite pioneer from Pennsylvania. It features German-Canadian folk art and artifacts.

Millbank Information Centre, which operates out of Riverdale Mennonite Church, interprets the Amish and Mennonite story in that area.

Visitor Centre (formerly The Meeting Place) in St. Jacobs offers a multi-media journey through Mennonite history, displays and replicas of an Old Order Mennonite kitchen and meeting-house.—Compiled by Betti Erb

Shekinah marks 25 years

Shekinah Retreat Centre in Saskatchewan is celebrating 25 years of camping/retreat ministry on July 2-4. Former staff, managers and board members are invited to a reunion July 2-3.

On July 4, Shekinah invites the public to join in worship and an all-day folkfest. A new amphitheatre will be the setting. Performers will include House of Doc, Kimbal Siebert, Road Less Travelled, Louella Klassen Friesen, Buncha Guys, and Susan Enns Funk & Jake Enns.

Contact Lill Friesen for more information, by phone at (306) 945-4929 or e-mail: retreat@sasktel.net.

Summer in Saskatchewan

The Station Arts Centre in Rosthern is gearing up for its annual spring concert series. On May 2, The Station Singers, under the direction of Duff Warkentin, will give its concert. On May 8, a folk and gospel group from Nutana Park Mennonite Church, the Saskatune Singers, will perform. On May 28, Laura Regier will give a piano recital. She will share the evening with Kalissa Regier, jazz vocalist, and her father, Ted Regier.

Each summer, the Station Arts Centre puts on a drama. This summer, *The Perilous Pirate's Daughter*, will run from July 8 to August 8. The play, written by Anne Chislett, uses musical numbers composed by David Archibald.

"Anne Chislett asked us to do it," said Station Arts director Kathy Thiessen. The centre earlier produced Chislett's play about Amish in Ontario called *Quiet in the Land*.—Karin Fehderau



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Music David Archibald
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Louella Klassen Friesen, Susan Enns Funk & Jake Enns, and more...

Any former counsellors, directors, camp managers and board members are invited to attend the reunion.
Contact Lill Friesen to receive an information & registration packet.
E-mail: retreat@sasktel.net Phone: (306) 945-4929

Recipes for summer

A summer staple in the Russian Mennonite tradition is Rollkuchen (crullers), eaten with watermelon. Recipes differ slightly, as do textures (some like them soft, some crisp). Here are two recipes from different Mennonite cookbooks. The third recipe for summer is a marinade for barbecued chicken.

Rollkuchen 1

4 c. flour	1 c. sour cream
2 tsp. baking powder	1 c. milk
1 tsp. salt	4 eggs

Mix dry ingredients in bowl. Add sour cream, milk and eggs and mix well. Take ball of dough and roll out until 1/4 of an inch thick. On floured counter, cut rolled dough into 2 x 4" strips and cut a slit in the middle. While cutting dough, heat up oil on stove top (or in deep fryer). When oil is hot, drop in strips of dough. Turn when one side is done (golden brown). Leave in longer for crispy pieces. Place in bowl lined with paper towel. Excellent with watermelon and with Roger's Golden Syrup.
(From *The Mennonite Treasury of Recipes*.)

Rollkuchen 2

1/4 cup butter	1 tsp. salt
1/2 cup milk	3 eggs
3 cups flour	

Melt butter in small saucepan. Remove from heat and add milk. Combine flour and salt in mixing bowl. Add milk mixture and eggs. Mix well to smooth, hard dough. Roll out on lightly floured surface as thin as possible (1/8 inch). Sprinkle with flour to prevent sticking. Cut in rectangles or desired shape. Fry in deep fat till brown, turning once. Drain on paper towel. Serve with borscht or watermelon on a hot summer day.
(From the *Canadian Mennonite Cookbook*.)

Chicken breast for the barbecue

Mix thyme marinade (below) and pour over 4 boneless chicken breasts. For quick cooking, cut the chicken pieces to 1/2 inch thick. Marinate in the fridge for a few hours. Cook chicken on barbecue for 15-20 minutes. Drizzle marinade on chicken during first 5-10 minutes. Discard remaining marinade.

Thyme marinade	
3/4 cup dry white wine (or apple juice)	1/2 tsp. gr. celery seed
1/4 cup oil	1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. garlic powder	1/4 tsp. black pepper
1/2 tsp. onion powder	1 tsp. thyme

Building bridges in eastern Canada

"Building bridges among Mennonites and other Christians around the world through custom-designed travel" is TourMagination's mission. TourMagination's Canadian Maritime Provinces tour from August 7-16 will experience the culture and history of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick.

In Halifax, we will visit Pier 21, a national historic site where Mennonite refugees entered Canada in the early 1920s when they came by ship. Peggy's Cove, the beautiful Cabot Trail and, of course, a performance of *Anne of Green Gables*, as well as a visit to Green Gables, are highlights of the tour.

Mennonites are not widely known in Canada's Maritime provinces. However, in 1960 a small group from the Western Ontario Mennonite Conference bought land and moved to the Petitcodiac area of New Brunswick. We plan to visit this Mennonite congregation and have a fellowship meal with them.

In Nova Scotia, we will visit the Northfield community of the Kleinegemeinde Mennonites. We will learn about their migrations from Manitoba, Mexico, Belize and Paraguay as we worship and visit with them.

TourMagination also offers fellowship as Mennonites and other Christians from across the United States and Canada become a travelling Christian community. Call 1-800-565-0451 to register.—Wilmer Martin, president

Focus on...

Watch for the next Focus on... advertising sections:

April 5: Elementary/
Secondary Education
May 3: Focus on Books and
Resources
May 31: Focus on Seniors

Attractions in western Canada

To learn about Mennonites in Saskatchewan, visit the Mennonite Heritage Museum located on the campus of Rosthern Junior College. It is open every weekend from the May long weekend until the end of September. Visitors can make appointments by calling Ed Schmidt at (306) 232-5130.

Two museums in Alberta are good places to visit to learn about the history and culture of western Canada.

The Glenbow Museum in Calgary is western Canada's largest museum. It houses an art collection and many galleries of artifacts. The library and archives provide much valuable material for researchers.

The Provincial Museum of Alberta in Edmonton provides a wide range of exhibits and activities, for every age and interest, on the natural and human history of Alberta.

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What's new in Mennonite magazines?

The field of Mennonite magazine publishing is flourishing. In the unlikely event that you are not aware of some of the new magazines, the following is a totally unrepresentative cross-section.

- *Mennonite Enquirer*—a collection of offbeat, incredible stories about Mennonite life.

Headlines include: "Mennonite pastor claims to have eaten only three meals a day for over 20 years," "Woman sings in four-part harmony by herself," "Person reads Revelation and understands it all," "Man spends four years at Mennonite college without getting married," "Mysterious image of Menno Simons appears in bowl of mashed potatoes," "16 ways to diet without changing your eating habits."

- *Mennonites in Unity*—a publication that chronicles examples of Mennonite unity. A small newsletter, published once or twice a decade.

- *Mennonite Housekeeping*—a magazine that is chock-full of tips about efficient living. Contains features on how to make curtains with bits of

string, how to reuse paper plates and polish Tupperware. Regular columns include: "10 more things to do with bread wrappers," "New kitchen gadgets of the week," and "Javex bottle lawn ornament of the month."

- *Coverings*—subtitled "The Mennonite Fashion Magazine," this periodical offers fashion tips and news from the Anabaptist tradition. Recent articles are "The 10 worst-dressed conference bureaucrats," "Polyester—the miracle fibre preferred by Mennonites," "Cape dresses of the rich and famous," "Rediscovering the plaid leisure suit," and "Suspenders for all occasions." Each issue includes patterns.

- *Kingdom People*—a chatty little broadsheet that keeps tabs on the lives, loves, heartbreaks and victories of people in the church. Contains no-holds-barred accounts of alleged wrongdoings, suspected infidelity, potential conflicts, hints of scandal and fabricated shortcomings. Some congregations may not require a subscription as they generate similar

material on their own.

- *Menno Arts Monthly*—a quarterly magazine of Mennonite arts, music, literature, poetry and quilt block patterns. Features stories have included: "Is there a hidden message if you sing 606 backwards?" "Dismissing this modern art stuff," and "Why do Mennonites write fiction when they have their history to write about?" Columnists review concerts (such as "Menno and the Simonizers—MennoRock's brightest stars"), films ("And if they should question—a film about how to control dissent") and recitals ("School choirs and the urge to sleep").

- *Shortening and Sugar*—a bi-weekly exploration of the world of recipes and food, complete with mouth-moistening pictures from recent potlucks. Recipes have included: chocolate lentil chew, breaded deep-fried bacon, lard surprise, ham with marshmallows, and jello sandwiches. Articles cover topics such as "Force feeding the family," "Greens are for goats," "Making sure you get enough salt," and "Eating as if your life depended upon it." The regular columns include: "Getting excited about leftovers," "Avoiding fibre," and "New uses for old macaroni."—September 14, 1987



Emke Retro
Ivan Emke

Winnipeg, Man.

Businessman offers rural reprieve

Small towns are dying all across the Canadian prairies. But Martin Harder believes God has given him an opportunity to help save a few of them, one grain elevator at a time.

Harder, 54, is owner of Delmar Commodities, a small grain company that he started in 1995. In 1996, he began to purchase elevators slated for demolition. So far, he has bought four of them, in the towns of Somerset, Mariapolis, Gladstone and Jordan. In summer he opened a soybean crushing plant at the Jordan facility.

“When a grain elevator closes, a town begins to die,” says Harder, who spent 21 years at multinational Cargill. At one time, almost 6,000 of these “prairie skyscrapers” or “cathedrals on the prairies” dotted the landscape across Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

They were more than just places to collect and store grain before it was loaded into railway cars. They were economic engines for the small towns that grew up around them, and they functioned as social centres for farmers.

Today, only a few hundred of these structures remain in use. Rail companies want to close the branch lines on which they are located. It’s much more efficient to drop off and pick up 75 to 100 rail cars at a time at the new concrete super elevators on better-used rail lines. Unfortunately, many of the new elevators are located in the middle of nowhere.

In the four towns where Harder operates his elevators, the story is different. According to Louise Blair, chief administrative officer for the town of Gladstone (population 850), keeping their elevators means they can keep local businesses going.

“It means a lot to have an operating elevator,” she says. “Without it, local



MEDA photo

Martin Harder is purchasing old grain elevators, a move that helps keep rural communities alive.

‘When an elevator is torn down, it’s seen as a sign that the town is dying.’

farmers wouldn’t be coming to town; they’d have to travel 30 miles away to the new super elevator. Local businesses would suffer, and there’d be the loss of jobs at the elevator itself.”

Plus, she says, losing an elevator is symbolic for a town. “When an elevator is torn down, it’s seen as a sign that the town is dying.”

But Harder isn’t buying elevators because he feels

sorry for people in rural Manitoba. He’s doing it because it makes business sense.

“There’s an opportunity to make a good living as a smaller company at this,” he says. “There are smaller customers out there who need our services.”

It’s also about putting his faith into action.

“This is God’s call for my life,” says Harder, a member of Bethel Bergthaler Mennonite Church in Hochfeld. “It’s a way for me to live out my faith.”

In addition, he benefits from a strong sense of community goodwill when he saves an elevator. All of this spells success for the company. Today Delmar Commodities and Jordan Mills employ 24 people; last year over 1,000 farmers brought their crops to his elevators, generating over \$33 million in business.

Harder was raised on a farm and has lived in small towns all his life. “I have a feeling in my bones for this,” he says. “I feel like I’m doing my little bit to push back the tide that is running over rural life in Canada.”

A special memory is a fall day last year, after he bought the elevator in Gladstone. A line of farm trucks a kilometre long was waiting to unload at the elevator he had saved from destruction a year earlier.

“It was an incredible feeling, all those people having confidence in me,” he said. “It’s really great to be able to...add to the life of these communities.”—MEDA report by **John Longhurst**

Baden, Ont.

Shantz congregation bids farewell to pastors

Vessels of faith” was the theme of a farewell service for pastors Jim and Ingrid Loep Thiessen, at Shantz Mennonite Church here on January 18.

A vessel half-filled with pebbles and water stood inside a large basin in front of the pulpit. All of us, including children, lined up and dropped a pebble into the water.

At first it seemed as if nothing much was happening, but before long the water in the vessel rose to the brim, and when a little girl stretching on her toes dropped in her stone, a streak of water slid down the side of the vessel. As more people added their pebbles of various colours and sizes, the water

overflowed steadily into the basin. Our faith, small pebbles individually but added together as a community of believers, was overflowing our little church into the community and beyond.

This symbol was the congregation’s expression of appreciation for Jim and Ingrid’s dedicated service of many years, and a blessing for their future mission of church planting.

Their last sermon together, entitled “Popcorn in fifty-pound bags,” was full of humour, yet conveyed their central message: “God’s peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Jesus Christ” (Philippians

4:7).

After the potluck dinner, which featured “overflowing” tables of delicious food, we celebrated with a farewell party, including a video show and gifts. Nearly everyone shared a fond memory or hilarious episode involving Jim or Ingrid.

There were recurring comments about Jim’s sense of humour and his compassion, and about Ingrid’s passion for worship and her infectious enthusiasm in organizing events.

The congregation will dearly miss Jim, Ingrid and their three children, Thomas, Anneli and Joanna. We wish them blessings, and our prayers will be with them.—**Morio Ogasawara**

Edmonton, Alta.

Alberta youth ‘get up and go’ at Valaqua

On January 23, youth from five Alberta churches drove the icy roads through the fog to Camp Valaqua. The 60 junior youth, 20 sponsors and helpers came to enjoy a weekend of worship, learning, singing, great food and fun.

The theme for the weekend was “Get up and go,” with a focus on service. The speaker was Tim Wiebe-Neufeld from First Mennonite in Edmonton. He caught the attention of junior youth by giving examples of voluntary service in the movie, “Lord of the Rings.”

On Saturday, we made posters of who we can help, and how, and then talked about them. Each group came up with a number of different ideas. On Sunday morning Tim talked about service in the Bible.

On Saturday afternoon we braved the cold in a camp-wide treasure hunt. At some stations, groups were required to complete a cooperative games activity. Then we headed inside to warm our frozen fingers and toes by the fire, drink hot chocolate, eat cookies, play games and do crafts.

A highlight of the weekend was a thrift-store formal in which we all dressed up in thrift store wear. Everyone enjoyed the meat and vegetable fondue. Some of the sauces for dipping were made by Ginny Heindman from

Water Valley, our cook for the weekend.

In the evening we gathered in the lodge to sing, and Bethany and Anisa Loewen from Bergthal Mennonite shared their musical talent. They wrote a theme song for the weekend, appropri-

ately named “Get up and go.”

Late Saturday night we got back into our snowsuits to play Mission Impossible in the snow. Even though the weather was less than agreeable, the weekend was a success.—**Carolyn Wedler**



Snow camp youth enjoy a fondue at a thrift-shop banquet.

Edmonton, Alta.

MCC Alberta approves joint facility

How do 98 people get to an important Mennonite Central Committee meeting when the temperature is minus 30 and they are scattered all across Alberta?

Delegates to the January 24 meeting of MCC Alberta answered this question creatively and successfully by using teleconference equipment. Four meeting sites were set up—in La Crete, Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge. Delegates travelled to the nearest site to hear and see (on overheads) the information delegates at other sites were also receiving.

MCC Alberta needed a delegate decision on financing for a building project. The project, in discussion for over a year, involves a shared facility for MCC Alberta, Mennonite Mutual Insurance of Alberta, the Calgary MCC Thrift Shop, and the Mennonite

Historical Society of Alberta.

The four organizations are proposing to build an addition to the current thrift shop. Inside the existing store, on a mezzanine, would be space for MCC Alberta Material Aid, as well as a historical society meeting area and archives. MCC Alberta offices would occupy a second floor, while Mennonite Mutual Insurance would occupy the third floor of the new addition. The thrift shop would use the first floor for additional retail and warehouse space.

The building project will cost approximately \$2.4 million. In order to

proceed, MCC Alberta proposed to borrow \$800,000 from Mennonite Foundation, with the remaining funds to come from fundraising, a Mennonite Mutual Insurance purchase of a 20 percent share in the facility, from Mennonite Historical Society participation, and from the sale of the existing MCC Alberta offices.

After all information was presented to delegates, and questions were answered, 96 percent of the delegates voted to go ahead with the proposed loan. Groundbreaking was held on February 14.—**Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**

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Ground-breaking ceremony in Calgary

It was not a pleasant day—cold and foggy with ice crystals in the air—so it was good to see a large gathering at the ground-breaking ceremony for Mennonite Central Committee Alberta's building project.

An 18,000-square-foot, three-storey expansion will be attached to the existing thrift store and material resource centre.

Phil Klassen, chair of the board, greeted the gathering. Sterling Rempel from Mennonite Mutual Insurance presented a cheque for \$100,000 to Klassen. Henry Goerzen, representing the historical society, was pleased that the expansion will enable them to preserve the history of Mennonites in Alberta. Peter Dueck of the thrift shop board commented that having the MCC Alberta offices in close proximity will strengthen ties between them.

Ten pairs of hands symbolically turned the sod with the "golden" spade, and Harry Heidebrecht, pastor of Highland Mennonite Brethren Church, spoke a prayer of blessing and supplication for accident-free construction.

—From report by **Irene Klassen**



Four Alberta Mennonite agencies break ground for a new facility. From back left: Ed Buschert, contractor; Henry Goerzen, historical society; Phil Klassen, MCC Alberta chair; Harold Friesen, builder; Jake Elias, MCC Alberta treasurer; Harry Heidebrecht, pastor. Front: Sterling Rempel, Mennonite Mutual Aid; Peter Dueck, thrift shop board; Cheryl Janzen, Mennonite Mutual Insurance; Abe Janzen, MCC Alberta director.

Calgary, Alta.

From Calgary to Colombia

When First Mennonite Church here heard about the learning tour to Colombia in November, people felt no hesitation—our pastor, Marv Thiessen, should go.

Thiessen, who speaks Spanish, had been in contact with the Iglesia Berna (Mennonite church) in Bogota by e-mail ever since it was selected as a sister congregation more than a year ago. He was eager to go, with some trepidation about the unrest in parts of Colombia, and leaving his wife (who had recently undergone surgery) and his three children.

The tour, sponsored by Mennonite Church Canada, included Jack and Irene Suderman, former missionaries to Colombia. The purpose was to see the situation firsthand and build bridges of understanding.

In short order, funds were collected to send Thiessen and Jamie Janssen, a young man from the congregation. Thiessen kept the church informed by e-mail almost daily.

The reception in Bogota, the capital, was warm. Thiessen was greeted by Roberto Caicedo, pastor of the Berna church. In the Justapaz office (the Colombian Mennonite Church's agency for peace and justice), Thiessen met Margarita Gil, a young woman who had gone to school in Calgary before her application to immigrate was denied.

Bogota is a modern city—many people dress well and live comfortably. But there is also a poor section where displaced persons find refuge. Pastor Hernandos of the Mennonite church has a ministry to people displaced by violence. He recounted a dramatic meeting in which an ex-paramilitary and ex-guerrilla realized that they had been coerced into hating each other. Next day, both came to church.

Part of the group attended the largest Mennonite church in Bogota—quite an experience for sedate Canadian Mennonites. There was enthusiastic singing, loud music, speaking in tongues and communion with footwashing.

In Cachipay, where the Mennonites have a retreat centre, the group

visited the local pastor and a youth group. At La Mesa they visited a Mennonite school and played basketball with students. In Ibague they drove through barrios of displaced people who have fled violence. The church and city are trying to develop small businesses among these people.

Back in Bogota, the group toured a Mennonite seniors' home and met with people at Justapaz. Director Ricardo Esquivia has made a tremendous impact but lives under threats to his life. The group heard a lecture on the history of the violence in Colombia.

The delegation visited a salt mine, and walked deep into the earth past 14 Stations of the Cross sculpted out of salt. They sang hymns in a chapel in the mine.

On Sunday Thiessen preached at the Iglesia Berna. There was much



Sunday morning at Iglesia Berna in Colombia, with Marv Thiessen in the pulpit.

greeting, handshaking and hugging. At least three times during the service people moved about to greet one another. Later the churches exchanged videos and watched them together. They want to continue communication.—From report by **Irene Klassen**

Chicago, Ill.

Spiritual accompaniment in Colombia

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) members are watching and praying with families in Los Yeques and La Florida, fishing and farming communities in northern Colombia. CPT's presence has supported the return of over 100 families in the Opón region since 2001.

Community members, displaced by violence in Colombia's 40-year-old civil war, face continual threats by armed groups demanding collaboration from civilians.

The Colombian CPT team accompanied the pastor and five members of a Protestant church from nearby Barrancabermeja on a recent pastoral visit to Los Yeques and La Florida. The group distributed school kits, Bibles and toys while the pastor preached a sermon and led in prayer and singing.

The CPTers got a taste of life along the Opón River, with paramilitary gunfire erupting moments before their arrival. An hour later three armed guerilla members approached the school where the service was being held.

Team members explained who they were and urged the guerillas to respect the community's right to the spiritual accompaniment they had requested. The armed men conveyed suspicion of evangelical pastors from outside the community. Several years ago they accused another pastor of collaborating with the paramilitaries and later they assassinated him.

The pastor and church members seemed unperturbed by events and expressed their desire to continue nurturing spiritual connections.—From CPT release

Abbotsford, B.C.

B.C. women's group ponders uncertain future

British Columbia Mennonite Women in Mission was founded in 1939 for women to support one another and do good for others. For 65 years, this organization of women's groups has supported mission work overseas, projects at Camp Squeah, and scholarships for students at Columbia Bible College and other Mennonite schools.

At a business meeting in early February, however, the future of this work was called into question. Several key positions had no prospective candidates.

"We don't have anyone to fill the treasurer or secretary positions and we have two vacancies on the program committee," said president Veronica Thiessen. "If these positions aren't filled by our Inspirational Day in April, we will have to fold."

The uncertainty didn't prevent the 51 women who attended the meeting from celebrating the many good things that have been accomplished in the past year. Money raised supported mission work in Ukraine and Chile, and provided scholarships for two Columbia students. Two women received bursaries.

The women floated ideas on what could happen if Women in Mission were to fold. One option: asking churches to take turns planning and hosting the annual inspirational day. The annual women's retreat at Camp Squeah could continue with a program committee reporting to the executive of MC British Columbia.

But the loss of support for missions, students and Camp Squeah is the one Thiessen would feel most keenly.

"B.C.'s Mennonite Women in Mission have always been an essential 'glue' of our conference of churches," said Rudy Kehler, executive director of Camp Squeah. "The carpool travel to retreats at Squeah, the eating, the laughter, the crying, the sharing and the support of projects they have provided over the years...is all too good to let go. I hope this unique and eclectic group continues to flourish."

A bursary Val Hooek received this year from the Women in Mission was one of the only ones for which she qualified as a part-time student. She speculates that part of the problem is that many women in the churches don't realize all the things that the group does.

Providing substantial bursaries isn't "something we can just do on our own as churches," she said. "Maybe what



Women from last year's B.C. Women in Mission retreat enjoy a meal. Val Redekop and Erna Janzen are seated facing the camera. Across from them is Irmgard Thiessen.

we need to do is re-vision, help the next generation to catch this vision so that they own it."

Thiessen will do what she can to prevent the group from folding. Information letters have gone out to churches, telling women it's not too late to respond to committee vacancies or share ideas for the future of Women in Mission.

"When you look back at the minutes and read about the desire of these women to help the poor, even though they were poor themselves—and now it might end, it makes me sad," said Thiessen. "I am still praying that it will not happen."—**Angelika Dawson**

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People & Events

Bloomington, Ont.—Last fall, Rudy and Sharon Dirks, returned Mennonite Church Canada workers, shared stories at Bloomingdale Mennonite Church about their work among people with HIV/AIDS in Botswana. Mennonite Central Committee had just introduced its AIDS kits project, and we thought Advent would be a wonderful time to get involved. Each Sunday one item for the kit was featured. Children took baskets through the congregation to collect the items. Two older children collected donations and the offering. Youth told a children's story about the featured item and how it would be used. On January 4, tables displayed the materials collected. As worship ended, people put one of each item into a box. We gathered around the completed kits and prayed that God would ease the suffering of people with AIDS. Our congregation collected 39 kits and \$1,247.40 for the project. (Zellers stores offer a discount for items if a pastor writes a letter explaining how they will be used.) It was one of the most thrilling missions drives we have had in years.—**Martha Snyder**

Toronto, Ont.—On October 29, Johanna Wall from Warden Woods Mennonite Church was made a member of Alpha Sigma Nu, the honour society of Jesuit schools of higher education. The honour is based on scholarship, loyalty and service. Wall has been studying at Regis College, the Jesuit College at Toronto School of Theology. She completed a master's degree in ministry and spirituality there last November. Currently she is working on a diploma in spiritual direction at Regis while working with two hospices in Toronto, doing volunteer training and work with staff.—From Warden Woods report

Transitions

Births/adoptions

Bartel Dahl—to Pamela and Gregory, of Toronto, Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a daughter, Olivia Jayn, Feb. 4.

Heavener—to Kelly Brooks Heavener and Kevin, Hunta Mennonite, Ont., a son, Cole Hunter, Feb. 20.

Heppner—to Donna and Mike, Grace Mennonite, Steinbach, Man., a son, Jordan Anthony Wiebe, Feb. 17.

Hunsberger—to Michelle and Keith, Trinity Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., a daughter, Jenna Dawn, Dec. 13.

Janzen—to Jennifer (Peters) and Jeremy, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Juniper Joanne, Feb. 10.

Kim—to Angelique Toews (Arnaud Mennonite, Man.) and

Gus, a daughter, Lauren Grace, Jan. 28.

Peters—to Janet and Eric, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., a daughter, Raya Miriam, Jan. 10.

Steinmann—to Alyce and Todd, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., a daughter, Samantha Christina, Feb. 20.

Thiessen—to Fiona and Steven, of Chertsey, Que., Morden Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Anna Rebekah, Jan. 26.

Marriages

Funk-McLean—Matthew and Danica, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., Feb. 14.

Deaths

Janzen—Paul, 70, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Feb. 5.

Klassen—Katherina, 87,

Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Feb. 10.

Klassen—Katie (Wiebe), 92, First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Feb. 1.

Krahn—Katharina, 89, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Jan. 6.

Redekop—Annie (Rempel), 84, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Jan. 23.

Rempel—Peter Dietrich, 84, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Dec. 15.

Steckley—Ella, 83, Brussels Mennonite, Ont., Feb. 8.

Wall—Jacob, 76, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Nov. 4.

Willms—Sara, 91, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., Jan. 29.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes transitions announcements within four months of the event. When sending by e-mail, please identify congregation (name and location).



These Canadians were among 36 workers who began Mennonite Central Committee assignments in January. From left: Susan Fehr, Chatham, Ont., is employment and settlement coordinator in Chatham; Helena Guenther, Mt. Salem Evangelical Mennonite, Aylmer, is receptionist/settlement worker in Aylmer; Antoinette Gammel-Marchard; Norma Neufeld, South Abbotsford Mennonite, B.C., is provincial thrift shop coordinator; Yayumi Uyeno, Calgary, is human resource representative in Calgary; Raechel Fehr; Laila Brand is youth/young adult animator in Kitchener, Ont.; Patty Ollies, Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank, Ont., is provincial thrift shop coordinator; Kelly Klassen, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, is financial assistant in Calgary; Evonne Komaromi, Danforth Mennonite, Toronto, is project development coordinator in Toronto; Samuel Falk; Christina Falk, Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church, Man., is community health worker in Brazil; Duane Falk, Winkler EMMC, Man., is water and appropriate technology worker in Brazil; Betty Marshall, Zion Mennonite, Elmira, Ont., is thrift shop manager in Elmira; Cory Giesbrecht; Masami Giesbrecht, Winnipeg, is coordinator at a pregnancy and family support service; Iona Rowat Taylor; Kira Rowat and Stuart Taylor, of St. Pierre-Jolys, Man., are agriculture and nutrition officers in Zambia.—MCC release

Mennonite Church Canada

Financial future encouraging

Preliminary financial reports for 2003-04 show that 99.8 percent of a \$3.9 million donation budget has come in to Mennonite Church Canada. The results are generating renewed hope for the possibilities of MC Canada ministries, leaders say.

The numbers also suggest a renewed sense of ownership of MC Canada, and that financial recovery is the result of many people responding.

"The reaction from all parts of the church, expressed in many different ways over the past year, has shown that people care deeply about this faith community," said Dan Nighswander, general secretary. Sources of donation income are congregations, individuals, and corporate donors. "We are grateful for the support of so many people in response to God's call," added Nighswander.

Al Rempel, director of development, noted how the donation and expense sides of the equation have been working in concert to encourage leaders. "There were specific donations to help rebuild reserves that were drawn down last year. Volunteers graciously gave time to help reduce costs of some activities," said Rempel.

Henry Krause, moderator, said, "There were sacrifices and gifts made this past year by staff, volunteers, and leadership, and I am grateful for them all. This kind of dedication and belief in the church is what makes our denomination a community I am proud to be a part of.... It is exciting, challenging and important work God calls us to do."



Cliff Dueck, second from left, with campers in Ukraine. Dueck is a Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers and this year's donations from Canadian churches will assist his camping program there.

Prayer request

Pray for Walter Franz, director of Native Ministry for MC Canada, as he receives chemotherapy treatments for leukemia.

"After my last set of treatments, it appeared as though the cancer cells had developed resistance to the drug being used," he wrote recently. Treatment was put on hold as a newer drug was explored. The new drug takes longer to administer and may initiate a reaction for the patient. Franz was scheduled for further treatment at the end of February.

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Mennos and Muslims in Metro

About 20 Mennonite young adults participated in a Toronto weekend in February entitled "Mennonites and Muslims in Metro." They met with a similar number of young adult Muslims.

Included in the exchange was a visit to a mosque and

Sunday morning worship at Danforth Mennonite Church in Toronto. A fuller report will appear in the next issue.

Micah fund grants awarded

Since 1996, following Ontario government cuts to social services, some MC Eastern Canada constituents have contributed to the Micah Fund to support social programs. This year the funds will go to ministries in Montreal, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Kitchener.

The projects include: dictionaries to help school children with their homework; start-up kits for immigrant/refugee families settling into new homes; opportunities for seniors in subsidized housing to get together; office equipment for those helping newcomers to Canada find meaningful employment and safe housing; and a revolving loan fund for families in crisis.

The next issue of *Share the Light* (available after April 1 at www.mcec.on.ca/missions) will provide more details.

Holy Land visit

Glenn Witmer, Israel liaison to North American Mennonite churches, will lead a tour through Israel and Palestine from April 17 to May 1. The learning tour will include biblical sites and modern political issues. Witmer is supported by Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Chaplaincy office is refuge for students

"I feel at home here. This is my quiet spot at the university to take a break." This comment was made by a University of Manitoba student who enjoys the refuge of the Inter-Mennonite Chaplaincy Office at the University of Manitoba.

Mark von Kampen has been serving as the Mennonite chaplain on campus since September 2003. Since that time more than 65 students and 6 staff have visited his office at the University Centre.

"A number of these come by the office regularly. Some come several times a week," said von Kampen.

The Inter-Mennonite Chaplaincy Association is a joint campus ministry of four Manitoba conferences: Evangelical Mennonite, Evangelical Mennonite Mission, Mennonite Church Manitoba and Mennonite Brethren. It also receives support from congregations and individuals. The board of directors has representatives from each conference.

The Mennonite chaplain's office serves as a quiet place for meditation or study, a setting for counselling, a place for sharing information from churches and related organizations, as well as a gathering place for fellowship, discussions and worship, said von

Kampen.

"The office provides valuable information and contacts for church related activities," commented a student. "It's a great place to ask questions, discuss issues, meet friendly people and get ideas."

Von Kampen is in the office on Monday mornings and all day Thursday and Friday.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Grants to Saskatchewan churches

The board of Mennonite Trust Ltd. of Waldheim, Saskatchewan, has announced that it is giving \$3,400 to each of the owning conferences in 2004. The conferences that own Mennonite Trust are: Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches and The Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches.

In the past, the conferences have used these profit distributions for prison ministries, missions, church planting and scholarships.—From Mennonite Trust release

Mennonite Church Alberta

New at Camp Valaqua

A new camp schedule featuring slighter shorter camp weeks with a Friday evening closing program will debut at Camp Valaqua this summer. The Friday evening closing will allow camp staff to rejuvenate themselves and clean up the facility more adequately between camps. It will also allow families a full Saturday for their own summer activities.

Camper brochures, promotional materials, and staff opportunity information will soon be available.

Albert men enjoy curling bonspiel

The annual Alberta Mennonite Men's Curling Bonspiel was held February 13-14 in Didsbury. The event is as well known for its relaxing social atmosphere and great pies as it is for enthusiastic sportmanship.

This year 22 teams participated, playing a total of 41 games to determine winners in 4 separate events. A big thanks goes to organizer Herman Epp and the many volunteers who make this recreational event something many in Mennonite Church Alberta look forward to each winter!

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Delegates facing three motions

Mennonite Church B.C. delegates are meeting March

13 at Bethel Mennonite Church in Aldergrove to decide on three motions relating to their relationship to MC Canada.

Since the last meeting in November, the executive worked together with four individuals representing different voices in the church community to prepare these motions. The four individuals were Waldo Neufeld, Karen Heidebrecht-Thiessen, Ed Janzen and Philip Wheaton. They processed the feedback from the November 29 meeting, as well as feedback sent to the conference office afterwards.

The first motion recommends the formation of an ad hoc committee to deal with the concerns that B.C. churches have voiced with regards to MC Canada and the perception of a growing acceptance of homosexual practice within the church.

The second motion proposes that MC B.C. executive focus

its energies on the vision for future ministry of MC B.C. The third is to hold study seminars on sexuality and the issue of structure and governance as it relates to theological discernment and practical ministry.

The motions also include a request for churches to remain formally tied to both the provincial and national conferences during this process. In a letter to the churches, moderator Doug Epp thanked the churches for their prayers and participation in the process.

"I am thankful for the many prayers that we have shared with our Lord on MC B.C.'s behalf," he wrote. "It is good to know we are supporting each other in this way."

Reports on the delegate session will appear in an upcoming issue.

Resources for congregations

Through Lent, Mennonite Central Committee has invited people to fast one day a week as a lament for the violence in the world, and as an act of hope for peace. The resource is available on the web site at www.mcc.org/fast. It is built around readings from the Common Lectionary. The materials include articles, stories, a brief meditation and prayer.

"Peace: The Ultimate Trick," a new video/DVD from Mennonite Central Committee, introduces kids in grades 5 to 9 to MCC's work around the world and challenges them to work for peace. The 12-minute video is narrated by Ryan, a boy from Ontario who likes to skateboard. Skateboarding tricks are hard, he says, but overcoming violence is even more difficult—it's the ultimate trick. Viewers see an MCC Colombia program that helps youth, displaced by war, learn conflict resolution skills. The resource is available for free loan from MCC offices.

Mennonite World Conference has released a CD of music from Africa 2003, the assembly in Zimbabwe. A major part of the CD is music by the international choir that led worship music during Assembly 14. It also

contains recordings of the choir at the Lobengula Brethren in Christ Church. The CD, produced by choir member Bryan Moyer Suderman, is available for \$18 plus shipping from The Bookshop at Pandora Press, phone toll-free 1-866-696-1678, or visit www.pandorapress.com.

Friends of the Mennonite Centre in Ukraine are planning bicentennial celebrations of the Molotchna Colony this spring, June 3-6. There will also be a celebration on October 10 when the Mennonite Heritage Cruise visits Molochansk. For information on the Mennonite Centre, visit www.mennonitecentre.com/. For details on the bicentennial academic conference and celebrations, e-mail Harvey Dyck at: hdyck@chass.utoronto.ca.

For congregations who want to discuss Mel Gibson's controversial movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, there is a helpful web site which includes a bulletin insert. The web site (www.nccusa.org/pdfs/passionfilmguide.pdf) comes from the Interfaith Relations Commission of the National Council of Churches in the United States. The guide is "excellent," says Elsie Rempel, director of Christian Education and Nurture for MC Canada Formation.

Employment opportunities



MCC EAST ASIA DIRECTOR

in Akron, Pa. This person is responsible for programs and workers in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, China, Japan, North and South Korea and Taiwan. Experience in East Asia required, preferably at primary and management levels. Demonstrated administrative, supervisory and relational skills needed, along with a Christian faith, active church membership and commitment to nonviolent peacemaking.
Contact:

Charmayne Brubaker
Phone:(717) 859-1151
E-mail: cdb@mcc.org

or your nearest MCC office for a job description.

Application review begins immediately. Position available June 1, 2004.

TEACHER LIBRARIAN

required at Christian Alliance International School (CAIS) in Hong Kong. Applicants should have relevant experience and possess a B.Ed. or B.A. with a library science major. Previous experience as a teacher librarian in an international school setting and a master's degree is desirable. Further details about the position and application process may be found at the school web site at: <http://www.cais.edu.hk>

Personal data will be used for recruitment purposes only.

Christian Alliance International School (CAIS) in Hong Kong requires the following full-time

TEACHERS

- Grade 5 (1.0)
- Secondary and middle years English (2.0)
- Domestic science (1.0)

Applicants should possess a B.Ed. (or equivalent) with the relevant major. Further details about the position and application process may be found at the school web site at: <http://www.cais.edu.hk>

Personal data will be used for recruitment purposes only.

**Mennonite Disaster Service
COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR**

The communications coordinator is responsible for management and production of MDS print and digital media. Applicants must have a Communications degree or equivalent experience and excel in writing, editing, photography, desktop publishing and web design. Compensation package includes salary with benefits.

Position begins: May 2004
Location: Akron, Pennsylvania

Submit resume by March 31 to:

MDS Human Resources, Attn: Carla Hunt
1018 Main Street, Akron, PA 17501
E-mail: chunt@mds.mennonite.net
Phone: (717) 859-2210; Fax: (717) 859-4910
www.mds.mennonite.net

Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba is accepting applications for the position of

RESOURCE GENERATION TEAM LEADER

in the Winnipeg, MB office. Working cooperatively with current staff in material resources, communications and resource programs, this position is responsible for coordinating and supporting the resource generation and promotional activities of MCCM. Familiarity with MCC constituency and strong relational and administrative skills are required. Fundraising or marketing experience are an asset.

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

Please direct applications and inquiries to:

Janelle Siemens or Sol Janzen
MCC Manitoba

Phone: (204) 261-6381

jms@mennonitecc.ca or sjj@mennonitecc.ca

*Application deadline is March 31, 2004.

VICE PRINCIPAL

required at Christian Alliance International School (CAIS) in Hong Kong. Applicants should have relevant administrative experience and possess a B.Ed. (secondary) or equivalent. Previous teaching or administrative experience in an international school setting and a M.Ed. is desirable. Further details about the position and application process may be found at the school web site at: <http://www.cais.edu.hk>

Personal data will be used for recruitment purposes only.

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Teaching Positions for 2004-2005: Rockway is seeking to fill full and part-time teaching positions in:

MATHEMATICS

(Grade 11 University/College; Grade 12 Algebra /Geometry; Grade 12 Data Management)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

(1 year, full-time, term position in boys Physical Education). Extra curricular Volleyball coaching experience desired.

Qualified applicants should forward resumes

c/o Principal

Rockway Mennonite Collegiate
110 Doon Road, Kitchener, ON N2G 3C8
E-mail: principal@rockway.on.ca

Menno-Hof is accepting applications for

VOLUNTEER HOST/HOSTESS

plus light housekeeping. Opportunity to share your faith in the Anabaptist tradition with people from around the world! Menno-Hof provides a completely furnished apartment, with all expenses paid plus a monthly stipend. Position available mid-September 2004.

For more information contact:

Joseph Yoder
Box 701 Shipshewana, IN 46565
Phone: (260) 768-4117
E-mail: mennohof@tln.net

Trinity Mennonite Church is inviting applications for a full-time

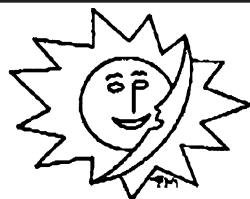
LEAD PASTOR or CO-PASTOR TEAM

We are part of a rapidly growing community in southwest Calgary and have a congregation of approximately 100 with diverse ages and occupations.

We seek a pastor(s) who will provide strong leadership and focus on the vision, mission, and values defined by our congregation, working together with our members and participants to foster a faith community that is open and welcoming to new participants and is founded upon the Anabaptist understanding of the Christian faith.

Please send resume or inquiries to:

Pamela Fast
234 Everglade Way SW
Calgary, AB T2Y 4N2
E-mail: pamelafast@hotmail.com



**MUSIC for
YOUNG
CHILDREN_R**

TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES

This acclaimed Canadian music programme for children ages 3 and up is training new teachers for several areas in Southwestern Ontario.

Contact: Sandra Poolton
Southern Ontario Coordinator
1-866-884-3080
other areas across Canada
Contact: MYC 1-800-561-1692

Minimum Requirements:

**GRADE VIII PIANO • GRADE II THEORY
EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH CHILDREN**

OTTAWA MENNONITE CHURCH is inviting applications for a full-time

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTER

We are a growing congregation of approximately 200 people, situated in Canada's capital city. The primary responsibilities of the Youth and Young Adult Minister position include relationship building, program development and coordination, elements of congregational ministry and community service.

This is a full-time position, commencing in August, 2004. Applicants should have (or be nearing completion of) a post-secondary education in Christian theology, at least at the Bachelors level. Resumes will be accepted until March 26th, 2004. An information packet will be sent to all applicants.

Please direct inquiries and resumes to:

Peter Farris-Manning
c/o Ottawa Mennonite Church
1830 Kilborn Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1H 6N4
Phone: (613) 733-6729
E-mail: farris-manning@bellnet.ca

LIBRARIAN urgently needed in Asmara, Eritrea, AFRICA. Contact Anna at <wuens@gemel.com.er> or phone Rudy at (416) 252-2824

Announcements

REACH LOST SOULS OVER CHRISTIAN RADIO. MINISTERS AND LAY PERSONS CONTACT: DAVID or LINDA AT (705) 235-3072 E-mail: cksofm@vianet.ca www.cksofm.netfirms.com

**Mission Fellowship Visit to Europe
June 1-16, 2004**

Explore ministry sites supported by Mennonite Mission Network and Mennonite Church Canada Witness and meet workers in England, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

For more information contact:

Diana Cook
1-866-866-2872
www.MennoniteMission.net

New Dates for MCC's alumni celebration in Vietnam. MCC, VNCS and EMM Vietnam alumni are invited to celebrate **Mennonite Central Committee's 50 years of work in Vietnam** on **September 24-26, 2004** in Hanoi, Vietnam.

For more information or to register, contact Diane Gehman:

E-mail: deg@mcc.org
MCC, Box 500
Akron, PA 17501

**Parking lots, ploughs
and prayers**

It's not supposed to snow when it's so cold, but one week in January the white stuff came down in Edmonton all day Wednesday and continued in flurries until Saturday.

Shovels scraped noisily at every pause in the downfall but the wind repacked the tiny crystals into ever harder drifts. Wind chills were into the minus 45 degree range for the entire week.

Lyle Franz has the unenviable job of clearing snow at First Mennonite Church. The tractor felt it was too cold to leave the garage that Sunday morning. Lyle, armed with only his shovel, was stuck looking at drift-covered sidewalks, and a large, snowy parking lot.

So he did what any First Mennonite member would do—he called Jake Baergen. Jake, the go-to guy for any facility concern, was also frustrated in his attempt to rouse the tractor. Defeated, he went to get gas for his car, already formulating an apology for the morning announcement time.

At the gas station, Baergen noticed a grader stopping for fuel. "Now, why wouldn't I talk to that guy?" thought Jake. Even though the grader was not privately owned, the busy driver agreed to help. A few minutes later the lot was expertly cleared and ready for the morning influx of cars. "Whom do I make the cheque out to?" Jake asked.

"There's no charge," was the reply. "Pray for me." That morning, we at First Mennonite were all ministered to by a passing grader operator, showing us that God's goodness is alive in our city.—**Donita Wiebe-Neufeld**

Reception for Arthur Gingrich

London, Ont.—An afternoon honouring the life and work of Arthur Gingrich will be held on April 25, 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m., at Valleyview Mennonite Church. Gingrich, 90, has spent his life serving the church and working with humanitarian organizations.

He and his wife Marie spent 30 years under the Ontario Mennonite Mission Board in northern Ontario. They then worked with troubled youth at Ausable Springs Ranch, and pioneered a program in Naim as houseparents for psychiatric patients.

Arthur has written a number of books, and the proceeds support various social programs. His books will be available at the gathering.—From reports

Westgate searches for alumni

Winnipeg, Man.—Westgate Mennonite Collegiate is compiling a list of alumni to keep them informed of what is happening at the school. Former students are requested to send their year, name, address, phone number, e-mail address, and some indication of what they are doing.

Send information to Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, 86 West Gate, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2E1, or e-mail: alumni@westgate.mb.ca.—Westgate release

Women's group on self-esteem

Waterloo, Ont.—Shalom Counselling Services of Waterloo is again offering a seven-week group entitled, "Women and self-esteem: Discovering your best self," on Monday evenings, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. beginning March 22. To register, call (519) 886-9690.—Shalom release

Seminar on faith and law

Waterloo, Ont.—Lawyers, judges and law school graduates who are affiliated with Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches are invited a conversation at Conrad Grebel University College on April 17.

The day, sponsored by the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies at Conrad Grebel and Mennonite Central Committee Ontario Peacebuilders program, will focus on the difficult question of upholding and enforcing the law in one's work, while practising a nonviolent Christian ethic.

Participants will address uncomfortable areas in the intersection between faith and work as a lawyer, how the faith community views the legal system and the legal profession, and how we view the role of law in society and in the church.

For more information, call Lowell Ewert at (519) 885-0220, extension 380, or e-mail: lmewert@uwaterloo.ca.—From Conrad Grebel release

Calendar

British Columbia

April 3, 4: Abendmusik Lenten Vespers at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford (3), and Knox United, Vancouver (4), 8:00 p.m. Benefit for Menno Simons Centre.

April 25: B.C. Women in Mission Inspirational Day at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, with speakers Kendra Loewen and Louise Bergen. For details, phone (604) 823-6101.

May 1: Scrapbooking fundraiser for youth at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Phone (604) 327-3913.

May 29: MCC World Fair in Black Creek. Call Sharon Janzen at (250) 337-4004.

August 20-22: 50th Anniversary Homecoming at Burns Lake Mennonite Church. Contact Rob Wiebe, e-mail: rcwiebe@futurenet.bc.ca, fax: (250) 698-7363.

Alberta

March 19-20: Missional Church training at Camp Valaqua.

April 23-24: Conference and annual meeting of Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta in Edmonton, at Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church (23) and First Mennonite (24). Speakers: John B. Toews, Tena Wiebe, Lorne Buhr.

May 7: Camp Contact meeting at Camp Valaqua, 8:30 p.m.

May 8: Workday at Camp Valaqua. Call (403) 637-2510 for details.

May 15: Songfest at Foothills Mennonite, Calgary. Conductors: Mark Bartel and Joanne Wiens.

June 5: Hike-a-thon for Camp Valaqua. Call (403) 637-2510 for details.

June 18-19: MCC Alberta Relief Sale in Coaldale.

Saskatchewan

March 24: MEDA banquet at Bethany Manor, Saskatoon, 5:30 p.m. Presentation on Nicaragua.

March 27: Shekinah fundraising banquet and auction at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

April 2: Evening of Quartets fundraiser for MCC at Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, 7:30 p.m.

April 3: Saskatchewan Women in Mission Enrichment Day at Osler Mennonite Church.

April 7: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon with Gordon Enns on Heifer Project, 7:30 a.m.

April 19-23: Seminary class on "Becoming a missional church."

May 7: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon with John McLeod, aboriginal businessman, 7:30 a.m.

May 16: Rosthern Junior College spring concert.

June 2: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon with Jim Dyck on world food industry, 7:30 a.m.

June 6: Shekinah Bike-a-thon. **June 11-12:** MCC Relief Sale in Saskatoon.

June 24-27: Rosthern Junior College musical and graduation (27).

July 2-4: Shekinah 25th anniversary celebrations.

July 7: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

August 4: MEDA breakfast at Grainfields Restaurant, Saskatoon, 7:30 a.m.

September 10-12: Junior high retreat.

September 30-October 2: Canadian Mennonite Health Assembly at Shekinah.

Manitoba

March 20: Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary Schools spring banquet at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 6:00 p.m. Call 885-1032 or 261-9637.

March 31: Open house at Canadian Mennonite University.

April 2-4: Marriage Encounter weekend in Winnipeg. Contact Peter and Rose Dick at (204) 757-4705.

April 15-17: Senior high drama at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Winnipeg.

April 18: Graduation for Outtatown students at Canadian Mennonite University, 2:00 p.m.

April 20: Meeting on diverting taxes from military, at Canadian Mennonite University.

April 24-25: Canadian Mennonite University spring concert (24), 7:30 p.m. and convocation (25), 2:30 p.m.

May 1: Manitoba Women in Mission Enrichment Day at Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg. Speakers: Pam Driedger and Marilyn Houser Hamm on prayer.

May 14-16: "Come walk with me," a gathering of the Supportive Congregations Network at Crossways (222 Furby St.), Winnipeg. Contact Karen Schlichting at (204) 772-9610.

May 27, June 3: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate concerts at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. Senior high (May 27), junior high (June 3).

June 28: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate graduation at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

Ontario

March 13: DaCapo Chamber Choir performs music by local composers, at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener, 8:00 p.m.

March 15, 16: Grandparent-Grandchild Days at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp. Leader Dorothy Bowman on "Patchwork stories." Call (519) 625-8602, e-mail: laura@hiddenacres.ca.

March 18: MEDA Breakfast at Stone Crock, St. Jacobs, 7:30 a.m. Speaker: Steve Rannekleiv.

March 26: MCC meat canner fundraiser dinner at Hamilton Mennonite Church, 5:00 p.m. Music by Hope Rising. Call Martha Wells at (905) 679-6506.

March 26-27: Engaged Workshop at Hawkesville Mennonite Church. Call (519) 656-2256.

March 27: Pax Christi Chorale Hymn-a-thon at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham.

March 27: Menno Singers second Hymn Sing Fundraiser at W-K Mennonite Church, Waterloo, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Call 576-9853.

March 27: Mennonite Aid Union Management Association annual meeting, Bingemans, Kitchener, 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Register at (519) 634-5267, ext. 210.

March 30: Mennonite Savings and Credit Union 40th annual meeting at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church. Speaker Henry Paetkau; music by Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir, 7:30 p.m.

March 30, 31, April 1: Rockway Mennonite Collegiate gr. 6-8 drama, "Charlotte's Web," 12:30 p.m. matinee (30); 7:00 p.m. (31, 1)

April 17: Women of MC Eastern Canada Enrichment Day at St. Catharines United Mennonite Church, 10:00 a.m. Theme: "Not a laughing matter," with speaker Anna Lisa Salo. Call (519) 356-2387.

April 19-23, 26-30: MCC meat canning in Leamington (19-23) and Guelph (26-30).

April 23, 24: Menno Singers and Pax Christi Chorale perform Vaughan Williams' "Dona Nobis Pacem" and Durufle's "Requiem" at Benton St. Baptist, Kitchener (23), and Yorkminster Park Baptist, Toronto (24), 8:00 p.m.

April 23, 24: Mennonite Church Eastern Canada annual delegate session, United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington.

April 30: MEDA spring banquet at Conrad Grebel University College with speaker John Fast.

April 30: Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Envirathon-Servathon.

April 30-May 1: Engaged Workshop at Living Water Mennonite Fellowship, New Hamburg. Call (519) 656-2256.

April 30-May 1: "Bound without boundaries," women's retreat at Hidden Acres Retreat Centre, with Janine Schultz. Register by April 26 at (519) 625-8602 or info@hiddenacres.ca

May 8: Springfest at Niagara United Mennonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

May 10, 11: Seniors' spring retreat, "Self care for seniors," at Hidden Acres Camp.

Speaker: Miriam Frey. Noon meal provided. (Monday program repeated on Tuesday.) Call (519) 625-9602.

May 16: Spring concert at

United Mennonite Educational Institute, Leamington, 7:30 p.m.

May 20: Spring concert at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

May 28-30: "Sound in the land" music festival/conference at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

June 15-18: Summer Training Institute for church leaders by Conciliation Services Canada, at Conrad Grebel University College. Phone Nan Cressman, at 1-866-782-0287.

June 19: Graduation at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener.

June 20: United Mennonite Educational Institute graduation, Leamington, 2:30 p.m.

July 11: United Mennonite Educational Institute Pancake Breakfast, 8:00 a.m. Service 10:00 a.m.

United States

March 22-25: Mennonite Camping Association convention at Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, Oregon.

March 25-28: Mennonite Health Assembly in San Francisco. Phone: (219) 534-9689, e-mail: info@mhsonline.org.

April 16-18: Connecting Families Weekend on minority sexual orientation issues at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, Pa. Call (301) 864-6633, e-mail: larandsteph@aol.com.

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Contact information:

Canadian Mennonite, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 6H7
Phone: (519) 884-3810 Toll-free: 1-800-378-2524 ext.221
Fax: (519) 884-3331 E-mail: office@canadianmennonite.org



A hammer ringing

**I wonder, must you make this journey, Lord?
But I see you pale and calm, your jaw determined
as they say it was the day you left the carpenter's bench.**

**Three years of fishing lessons, Immanuel, and questions
still buzz like flies in my brain. But I am bound to follow
the light, so once again we make the circuit, hill and valley.
All around you hands tugging, voices pleading. And voices
of rage, but you evade the mob's fury with quick word
and action. Nights in ancient villages with crumbling walls,
goats and children everywhere. Strange, how you
sense the rooster girding to salute the day.**

**Here in lush Jericho you set tongues wagging
when you plucked a wily old sinner, ripe
for turning, out of the sycamore tree.**

**Now, palms behind, we trudge the dismal wilderness.
Heat shimmers over rocks and crags, air fills
with choking sand. This desolation oppresses, Lord.
You grow sorrowful, besieged — trying to shake off
a pounding in your ears,
telling about an unthinkable execution.**

**Finally, the holy city, distant towers gleaming.
In nearby Bethany, loved ones rejoice at your voice,
almond blossoms sweet on the breeze, your gaunt figure
a shadow in the glow of evening torches. Still**

**you do not rest. Why this wearying shuffle
between Olivet and city? Come, a new day.
You must take heart at the hosanna crowd. Yet
now you weep, my Lord, for the stubborn city!**

**And what of your startling roust of temple merchants,
your rawboned heaving of their tables?
A dangerous provocation, surely. Calm, my Lord.
After the Passover clamour we may find haven in David's caves,
or that other land where once you waited out a murderous king.**

**But why that strange pall in the upper room,
and now this chilling haste to the garden,
somewhere a hammer ringing, and you
groaning with dread?**

Esther Regehr

The poet, a member of Hillcrest Mennonite Church, lives in Waterloo, Ontario.