

C A N A D I A N
Mennonite

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To serve and build up

I greet you all in the name of God and our lord and saviour, Jesus Christ. This is my first issue as the new Editor and Publisher of *Canadian Mennonite*. It is a profound privilege to lead this publication and through it, to serve the larger church. Given the editors that have preceded me since our start in 1971, I have some big shoes to fill!

I come to this position with a background in commercial print journalism. For seven years, I was a senior writer and a manager at a U.S.-based weekly newspaper on computer technology (with some time out to do a Masters degree in journalism). I was secure in my position and outwardly satisfied with my career.

Well, God was about to intervene in that settled life.

I clearly remember reading the June 17, 2002 issue of *Canadian Mennonite*. "Calling pastors" was the theme of the issue. The editorial was "Responding to the pastor shortage."

I had no idea that there was such a need for church workers before that issue. Like the still, small voice Elijah heard, the realization that the Holy Spirit might be calling me to serve the church full time cut right through the noise of my everyday life. When you have those thoughts about what you should be doing that just don't go away, I've found that's often the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The following year, I left journalism (or so I thought) and went to our church's seminary, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana, to see what God might do with my life. It was both a scary and an exhilarating decision.

"Okay, God," I thought, "you got me here. Now I'd really like to know what you're going to do with me."

In December 2003, I received a message out of the blue from Henry Neufeld, chair of the Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service board, asking if I would be interested

discussing the Editor/Publisher opening with him. After four months of seeking God's guidance and careful consultation with others, I was offered and accepted the job.

I've come to see my role in *Canadian Mennonite's* ministry as my current calling from God. I think God had a good chuckle at me leaving journalism to go to seminary only to leave seminary to go back into journalism. I never would have predicted it!

At the very moment I received that first e-mail from Henry, I was immersed in the text of 1 John, for it was the night before a Greek final exam. The prologue of that book speaks powerfully to me now: "We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete" (1 John 1:3-4).

It is my deep hope that the magazine will be a way all of us in Mennonite Church Canada declare to each other what God is doing, and so increase our joy and fellowship. I believe this publication exists to serve and build up the church. I dearly love our church and thank God for it. Being able to help all of us share God's work with each other through its pages is an ongoing encounter with the holy for me.

I ask for your prayers, counsel and support for *Canadian Mennonite* as staff across Canada seek to carry out our ministry. I will be travelling to all five area conferences in upcoming months on a listening tour to meet as many of you as I can. I want to seek out the wisdom of the broader church in refining our mission and to hear how we can serve the church better.

I will also be forming an editorial advisory board to provide ongoing counsel on what we should be presenting to the church in our pages each issue.

Thank you, our readers, for your ongoing passion for the paper. May we all see God at work in it.—**Timothy Dyck**

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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 Sept. 6 issue by Sept. 2.

Cover: Campers around the fire at Camp Valaqua in Alberta. See also page 5. Valaqua photo.



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Abbotsford, B.C.

Youth pastor for life

Egon Warkentin knows the exact moment he decided to be a youth pastor: “Sitting in a yellow bug with Anna Rehan [youth worker] in front of my house, talking about what I could be.”

That was nearly 20 years ago, and Warkentin has never looked back. With 14 years of experience in urban, suburban and rural settings, he feels more than ever that this is what he wants to do until he retires—“or until God tells me otherwise.”

Warkentin completed a degree at Columbia Bible College in 1989 and began working in an unusual situation: as the first English pastor at Vancouver Chinese Mennonite Church.

“My congregation consisted of 30 to 40 high school kids, a few university students and one couple,” he said. “That’s where I learned to do campus ministry.”

Warkentin found himself doing things he had never been taught, such as teaching English and learning about the dynamics of the inner city. He preached at the monthly joint services with a translator, and council meetings were always translated.

Since then he has worked at West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, and is currently in his second term at First Mennonite Church in Greendale, a small farming community west of Chilliwack. Warkentin enjoys the laid-back approach to ministry in the country.

“They talk about ‘Greendale time’ out here,” he said. “I used to show up 15 minutes early for meetings; everyone else would show up 15 minutes late. It’s a relaxed approach to things.”

Greendale is not close enough to Chilliwack for youth to get there easily, so creating social opportunities within the community is important. That suits Warkentin’s approach.

“My philosophy is to create an environment in church where youth can create lifelong friendships,” he

says. “I may not be the best Bible study teacher, but if I and my volunteer staff can create an environment where kids can build friendships, they will always stay in the church.”

It’s a philosophy from his own experience. His mother and her friends consciously created activities—in the absence of a formal youth program—for him and his friends so that they would bond within the church.

Warkentin points to others who have had an impact on his life. Anna Rehan was his first youth worker at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church where he grew up. Others in the church nurtured him, as did provincial youth pastors and camp directors. Their longevity influenced him when he began to think about youth ministry as a career.

He challenges the notion that youth ministry is a stepping-stone to “real” ministry.

“Our conference doesn’t reflect that,” he says. He remembers Dave Kropp, youth pastor at Eben Ezer Mennonite Church in Abbotsford for more than a decade, and others who have served several terms. He points to Rehan who has been involved in youth ministry for many years.

Still, he sometimes encounters the stigma that youth ministry is not serious ministry.

“It still seems to be a new thing to call us youth ‘pastor,’ he says. He is often introduced as “Egon, who works with the youth.”

Warkentin feels that youth ministry requires an attitude of longevity.

“The best times in youth ministry are after the first three years. That’s when it really takes off.” Partly, this is



Egon Warkentin spends time with a friend at the weekly drop-in centre for kids at First Mennonite Church in Greendale.

because it takes time for a leader to put his or her stamp on the program. Warkentin feels that if a youth pastor can invest in the younger kids in those first years, he or she will have kids committed to the youth group.

Youth ministry has its challenges. “You have to develop a thick skin,” he says. It’s important to have a strong relationship with the parents and with the senior pastor. Without that, he says, youth ministry can be awfully lonely.

But for the most part, youth ministry is filled with rewards. “Seeing kids step forward to do stuff you didn’t prompt them to do, because you and your volunteer staff have created the environment for that, is the best part of youth ministry,” he says.

It’s these experiences that will keep Warkentin in youth ministry for a long time.—**Angelika Dawson**

Calgary, Alta.

California service for Calgary youth

On July 4, nine youth and eight adults from First Mennonite Church here left for our third summer service week. This year we flew to California to work with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) in forest-fire cleanup.

We were met by Freeman and Verba Hershberger, MDS coordinators for our project in Julian, California. The drive to Julian was an eye-opener on what wildfires in 2003 had done to the area.

"The devastation...was incredible," said Scott Bergen, a youth participant. "It was heartbreaking to see the loss the people we were helping had to deal with."

After a 6:20 a.m. wake-up call next morning, we were taken to our first worksite—a summer camp totally destroyed by fire. All that remained were the shells of a few stone buildings. We cleared the hillside of brush and cut down trees to prevent future fires from spreading quickly.

The youth fed branches into a chipper and others cut trees into logs for firewood. At the end of the day, group members were covered from head to toe in black, sooty grime that took two washings to remove. It was definitely not glamorous.

"It was boring and repetitive work," said Jeff Wiehler. But "knowing it was for a good cause made the days go by very fast."

For the rest of the week, the group was split into two, with some returning to the camp and others heading into Julian to chip branches. MDS works with the Julian Resource Centre to help residents dispose of branches by getting volunteers to turn them into woodchips.

"It was challenging to work all day for people we didn't get to meet," said Kristin Harms, a youth sponsor. "God calls us to serve him and each other without receiving anything in return, and this opportunity allowed me to grow in that area of my life."

It was when we helped people in the town that we realized the positive impact MDS is having in the region. A couple who had lost everything when their house burned was moved to tears when expressing their appreciation for the group's having come "all the way from Canada."

"The appreciation we saw wherever



Calgary youth raised funds for their service trip in a variety of ways, from Bible read-a-thons to putting on dramas and selling pizzas.

we went, whether talking to a server in a restaurant in San Diego or sitting next to someone on the plane ride, really made the trip worth it," said Bergen.

Other participants included Lindsey Elias, Nikki Elias, Les Elias, Carla Ens, Trevor Ens, Christine Fiss, Lauren Harms, Michael Harms, Moni Janssen, Andrew Thiessen, Brent Thiessen, Daniel Thiessen, Erwin Thiessen and Lisa Thiessen.—**Trevor Ens**

Campfire at Valaqua

Campers at Camp Valaqua in Alberta gather for worship under the tall spruce trees. The camp is located an hour northwest of Calgary, in the Foothills of the Rocky Mountains on the Little Red Deer River.

"Camp Valaqua is dedicated to proclaiming the Good News that God is the Creator, we are God's people, and the earth is placed in our hands as a gift and a trust," says its mission statement.

The 250 acres of spruce and poplar forest offer hiking, mountain biking and nature study trails. Facilities include a modern lodge, 12 rustic cabins, recreation hall, climbing wall, ball diamond and nature centre. (See cover photo also.)



Camp Valaqua photo

Too much for some: Tested in the desert

The first meditation on “Enough for all” in the last issue focused on the miracle of manna in the desert, and of God using our meagre loaves and fish to feed the world. In these meditations, Tom Yoder Neufeld explores the theme further.



In the Bible, manna is related to being put to the test. Deuteronomy 8: “The Lord humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, in order to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”

These words remind us of Jesus’ own test in the desert, where he fended off Satan with the same words: “One does not live by bread alone.” We are then not surprised that when Jesus asks Philip, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?” the

writer adds: “He said this to test him” (John 6:6).

We so easily praise the God “who doeth wonders,” such as feeding 5000 people with so little. But do we really believe it? That’s the test this story puts before us.

In the first of this series, we sat on the ground with the crowd, or stood with the boy with the lunch bag. Now let’s put ourselves in the place of Philip, Andrew, and the other disciples Jesus put to the test.

This test is about what the disciples are made of: whether they notice that people are hungry, whether they trust God in the face of such need, whether they are generous and resourceful, and whether they are faith-filled about what they offer for meeting the need.

Most of all, they are tested on whether they understand who Jesus is, whether they appreciate how deeply their very existence is dependent on Jesus—the word made flesh, the bread of life. Let’s look at the story again as a set of test questions Jesus puts to us.

Testing our trust

We began this series on a note of thanksgiving for the care and resourcefulness of our manna-giving Creator. The test question here is whether we truly believe that.

Think of belief as “trust.” Do we trust God in the desert of our own need—as individuals, as families, as congregations, as Mennonite Church Canada? Do we trust the God who calls us to participate in his multifaceted mission to save the world?



We speak of being a missional church. Do we trust that God will be with us or do we fear the call to mission, too overwhelmed by the needs of the world? Are we like Andrew who offers the boy's lunch but immediately discounts it as not being enough?

The wonderful thing about our text from John 6:1-14 is that we can admit that what we bring is not enough. It becomes enough only because of the generosity of God. We need to trust that the little we have to offer actually is the raw material of manna.

Maybe we won't be given everything at once. We may need to collect manna for a long time. It all comes down to trust, to faith. We often refer to "faith" as what we have come to believe, what we confess. We have this faith in written form—in our Confession of Faith and in the great apostolic legacy that ties us to the global church.

But such a faith dare not exist in isolation from the life we actually live. The creed of the church must instil in us confidence that pushes us into full participation in the work of God.

Without such faith we will never be able to answer Jesus' question: "How will you provide food for them?" with anything other than despair or tired cynicism.

Without such trust we will never engage each other openly, vulnerably and hopefully on the great questions that threaten to divide us. We will instead retreat into a defensive posture that leaves us all hungry.

So when Jesus tests us with the question: "Do you believe?" perhaps the best we can do is to answer like the father of the afflicted son: "Yes, I believe. Help my unbelief!" If the first part sounds confident, the second is perhaps a more profound expression of trust: "I trust you, Jesus, to handle my lack of trust!"

This is trust in the manna-giving God who accompanies us in the desert of our doubts and spiritual poverty, and who can take even our few morsels of faith and work wonders with it.

Testing our generosity

The next question John sets for us in this story tests our generosity, our willingness to bring what we have.

A lesson in the manna story forms the background. Each one will have enough if no one at the end of the day has too much. Sure, some will gather more, some less. After all, some are stronger and faster than others. Some come with bigger buckets. But no one will go away empty.

In the case of manna, hoarding would do no good anyway. It would melt and rot. We think of Jesus' reminder in the Sermon on the Mount: "Don't pile up treasure which moth and rust eat away." With manna, "too much for some" is nothing short of theft. Hoarding in the presence of need is a betrayal of divine provision.

This rubs hard against the economic reality of Canadians like us. We live in a culture of hoarding. We enjoy our abundance in the presence of dire need. I recognize that there are great complexities in how we might live out Jesus' call. We need to listen carefully to our economists, our business folks, our farmers, to those who know the practicalities of bringing what we have to Christ. They are a gift of Christ to the church.

But if the answers are complex, the question Jesus asks remains maddeningly simple: How will you feed them? It is being put to us as directly as it was to the disciples of 2000 years ago. Our abundance, our "too much," is a test, just as was manna in the desert, or Israel's plenty in the promised land. This test question must be answered.

Our story has invited us first of all to think of our material blessings in relation to the needs of our world. But there are other needs among us too. We wrestle with a diversity of worship habits and styles, with seemingly intractable issues of sexuality. We wrestle with identity and belonging: racism and ethnocentrism remain persistent thorns within our increasingly diverse church.

We wrestle with the fragility of marriage bonds, and even the notion of marriage as an institution. We wrestle with theological diversity and different understandings of the Bible. We desperately need manna.

Will we be generous with what we bring to the table? Some of us come with a full bag of answers. Others may feel they have little more than half-baked buns of opinion. With Andrew we are likely to ask: "What is this little bit in relation to so much need?"

We are being tested today as to whether we have the faith and the generosity to bring what we have to Jesus, whether plentiful or measly, and let him transform our offerings into food for the many.

Our story has invited us first of all to think of our material blessings in relation to the needs of our world. But there are other needs among us too.... Will we be generous with what we bring to the table?

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Tested *From page 7*

Jesus the true manna

The story of Jesus feeding the crowd ends with a recognition that Jesus is the promised prophet. The crowds are enthusiastic. But then a disturbing surprise: Jesus flees, because they wish to make him king.

Later in the chapter, Jesus confronts these same crowds with the words: “You are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.”



These are harsh words, but the people have an interesting comeback: “What must we do to perform the works of God?” (literally, to “work the works of God”). We might think it means to see that the hungry have food, that the oppressed go free.

But Jesus’ surprising answer is: “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.”

Then they say, “What sign are you going to give us, so that we may see it and believe you? Our ancestors received the manna in the wilderness.”

Jesus says, “My father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which gives life to the world. I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

Some of us are very comfortable with claiming Jesus as the manna from heaven, the bread of life, the source of our salvation. We understand this in a personal, spiritual way. As profound as that is, this understanding sometimes goes along with a diminished attention to the crowds who need food, and those who suffer the ravages of oppression and war.

Jesus will flee this adulation. We will flunk the test.

Others of us sound like those in the crowd who say: “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’” Many of us know Jesus the son of Joseph, but not the Jesus who has “come down from heaven.”

We may think of Jesus as the ultimate example of one who cares for the poor, the hungry, and the ostracized, who is passionate about justice and peace. But sometimes he becomes little more than a poster boy for our own agendas. That’s not enough.

If Jesus flees the private spiritual arrangements people like to make with God, he will flee this kind of adulation

just as quickly.

John 6 makes it clear that we will catch on to the “sign” in the story of the fish and loaves only if we see in the giver of food the food itself. The story makes it just as clear that we will understand that sign, hear that word, taste that manna, only in proximity to human need.

We find this Word only in the flesh. We find the Word, the Manna from heaven, at the wedding where the wine has run out, in the temple kicking over the tables of commerce, at the well with a woman no one wants to talk to, and where the crowds are ravenous.

There the Word-become-flesh asks us how we will feed real people real food. And then, as we busy ourselves with that necessary task, he will ask us the harder questions: Do you know me? “Work the works!” Do you love me? Feed my sheep, even if they number in the thousands! Give me what you have.

Tough exam, isn’t it? When his disciples heard the answers, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” A few verses later we read: “Because of this many of his disciples

We will catch on to the ‘sign’ in the story of the fish and loaves only if we see in the giver of food the food itself....

turned back and no longer went about with him.”

Jesus then asks the remaining disciples, and us: “Do you also wish to go away?” May we join in Peter’s response: “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

More than enough: You are what you eat

The previous meditation tested those of us who have not only enough, but maybe too much. When Jesus identified himself as the true manna from heaven, many of his followers left him.

But we stayed and we get to eat with Jesus. We get to participate in a feast in which he offers nothing less than his own life, his flesh and blood, so that we might live. As Jesus puts it in John 6: "I am the bread of life. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

"Enough for all" is hardly adequate to capture the wonder of Christ's generosity. Even twelve baskets overflowing with the manna of life do not capture the feast Christ has prepared. This is about

"more than enough." The multiplication of loaves and fish anticipates the great banquet in the Kingdom of God when the Lord of hosts "will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of

rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear" (Isaiah 25).

Early followers of Jesus already made a connection between this story and their celebration of the Lord's Supper. The words spoken at the Eucharist include many phrases from John 6.

Jesus *takes* the bread; he *gives thanks*, and then *distributes* the bread to the hungry. Later in the chapter, Jesus announces that he himself is the Bread of Life, and that unless we eat his flesh and drink his blood we will not have life—words that resonate closely with those we usually recite at communion: "Take, eat, this is my body; this is my blood of the covenant, poured out for many. Drink, all of you."

Strangely, John does not record any such words in his account of the Last Supper Jesus had with his disciples. What takes centre stage in John's account of that meal is Jesus' act of voluntary slavery—washing his disciples' feet. But only in John's gospel is the story of the fish and loaves expanded into a teaching on communion.

Something very important happens in the process. Our gaze shifts from the relationship of communion to Jesus' death to the relationship between communion and Jesus' life.

We need to thank God for the gift of multiple tellers of the great story of salvation. I love the multiplicity of the Bible. Communion is far too rich in meaning to be celebrated always in the same way with only one set of associations.

Celebration of life

In John's account, communion is not so much a memorial of Jesus' death for us as a celebration of the life we have

received in Christ, a joyous re-enactment of ingesting Jesus, the manna from heaven, the bread of life. But what does it mean to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus?

From our Anabaptist forebears we have learned to think of communion as "symbolic" of the body and blood of Jesus, as remembering his death and testing our relationship not only to Christ, but to each other in the church, calling us to renew our willingness to follow Jesus.

John 6 invites us to move beyond the guarded language of memorial and symbol. It asks us to take in Jesus, the life-giving manna, and make it a part of us, for our sake and for the sake of the world. Jesus literally demands that his hearers "chew" or "munch" his flesh, using a word indicating a crude way of eating.

I hear Jesus inviting us to chew with our mouth open, to eat with our hands. We are to eat as those who have not eaten for a long time, who are ravenous for the bread of life! We are to ingest the living Jesus:

- the Jesus who puts on the towel of a slave and washes our feet, thereby showing his true kingship (John 13).
- the Jesus who breaks taboos and crosses lines to give life to those with unquenchable thirst (like the Samaritan woman in John 4).
- the Jesus who creates enormous tensions because of his commitment to

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Communion is far too rich in meaning to be celebrated always in the same way with only one set of associations.



Enough *From page 9*

justice/prayer/the things of God (as at the temple in John 2).

- the Jesus who participates in life's celebrations (like the wedding in John 2).
- the Jesus who goes after the lost sheep (John 10).
- the Jesus who loves the world so much that he will give his own life to save it (John 3).
- the Jesus who is one with the Father and wants to draw us into that unity (John 17).

"Lord give us today our Daily Bread—give us yourself!"
Or in the words of John 6: "Lord, give us this bread always!"

Jesus offers us not only his flesh as the bread of life, but his blood, which we commemorate with the fruit of the vine. We should not too quickly see this image only in terms of Jesus' death for us, as important as that is. The overriding motif in this chapter of John is on life, on what gives life.

For Jesus and his contemporaries, blood was the juice of life itself—rich and vibrant (see Deuteronomy 12:23). Jesus gives us his blood: he gives us life! We live not only because he died; we live because he lives!

We become what we eat

For us to eat and drink this Jesus means not only that he resides in our heart, as we sometimes say, but that he resides in our bones, in our feelings, in our reactions, there from where we love, from where we hate, from where we act.

For us to become what we eat, to eat this heavenly manna, means that when we see hunger around us we don't wait for Jesus to ask: "With what will we feed them?" We demand an answer, knowing already that we're implicated in the answer.

- It means that when we see the darkness around us—the shroud of selfishness, war and oppression cast over the nations—we move into that darkness with the light of Christ within us.

- It means that our peace position becomes a peace disposition, a character trait we can't shake, no matter how severe the provocation.

- It means that, when we see economic greed replace devotion to God, we kick over the tables that defile our worship.

- It means that when we notice someone pushed to the side, perhaps because of misdirected attempts at quenching thirst, we sit down at the well and let them know about the living water.

- It means that when we see a sister or brother get lost, we join the Good Shepherd in the search as if it is the very last sheep he owns.

- It means that when we see that the lost have been found, sinners forgiven and transformed, the violent peaceable, we're ready to celebrate, joining the angels already partying in heaven. We find our own ways of making water into wine.

This is who we become if this is the bread we eat. This is what new birth looks like. So let's chew the bread of life and drink deeply of the juice of life, and so

participate in the saving presence of the Word made flesh and blood in and for the sake of the world God loves.

This is more than "enough for all!"

—**Tom Yoder Neufeld**

The above are from sermons given at the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in July. The writer teaches New Testament at Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo.

Music from Winkler 2004

Worshippers at the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in July were introduced to new songs through the Assembly Worship Book. If your congregation wishes to use these songs, note the following:

- Songs by Bryan Moyer Suderman are free for one-time use in the congregation. Permission for ongoing use or inclusion in a permanent collection can be obtained, for a fee, through Elsie Rempel by e-mail: erempel@mennonitechurch.ca; or phone toll-free: 1-866-888-6785.

- For other songs, congregations must contact publishers for permission to use.—From MC Canada release

Illustrations from "The Works of Mercy," Ade Bethune Collection.



Funny in a tragic way

Miriam Toews' new novel, *A Complicated Kindness*, has reviewers scrambling for words to describe its combination of bitter anguish and wacky humour.

"Lord in heaven, it all sounds grim," said Bill Richardson in *The Globe and Mail*. "So why the compulsion to laugh so often and so heartily?" Other reviewers used words such as "gutbusting humour and heart-wrenching sorrow," and "wise, edgy, unforgettable."

The book is "at times painfully funny, and at others just painful," said one reviewer.

Nomi Nickel, the 16-year-old protagonist, is being compared to Holden Caulfield of *The Catcher in the Rye*. Nomi responds in "amazed, amused anger" to a Mennonite community that has come to "brutalize more than it embraces," according to Richardson. Yet Nomi also recognizes that there is in her judgmental town "a kind of goodness, a complicated kindness... it is not, at least, a place of uncluttered cruelty."

Typical of Nomi is her response to the blood smear above her bed, dating back to the time she fell from her bike and came home with gravel embedded in her cheek. "It bothered me... to have a brown smear of blood on my wall but I also liked it because every time I looked at it I was reminded that I was, at that very moment, not bleeding from my face. And those are powerful words of hope, really."

Rebecca Caldwell began her article in *The Globe* with the words, "Who knew Mennonites could be so damn funny?"

"It's one thing to expect the followers of Menno Simons... to produce heavyweight, serious writers such as Rudy Wiebe," said Caldwell. "But then there's Miriam Toews..."

Toews, who grew up in the Manitoba Mennonite town of Steinbach, is concerned about how her book will be received by the religious community. She wants to be clear that it's the fundamentalism, not the faith, she takes issue with.

"I've seen the damage that fundamentalism can do," she told Caldwell. "It's a culture of control, and that emphasis on shame... and punishment and guilt is not conducive to robust mental health."

Toews insists she is not Nomi ("I had a relatively easy childhood"), but she does project her own sense of "loss with no answers" onto Nomi in this book. Toews recounted her own loss in *Swing Low* (Stodart, 2000), which tells the tragic story of her father.

"I don't know if there's a Mennonite type of humour, but growing up with

my dad, from day one I felt it was my job to make him laugh," says Toews. "I worked very hard at it, without much success..." *Swing Low* was a grim departure from her first two novels which both won humour awards.

In *A Complicated Kindness*, Toews for the first time aims her devastating wit at the smothering religiosity of small-town Mennonitism. But hers is no gentle poke at Mennonite foibles, as in the tradition of Armin Wiebe; this book cuts deep to expose the pain and longing of a contemporary teenager.

In this the book moves far beyond a "Mennonite" identity.—**Margaret Loewen Reimer**



Toews

Mennonite world through teenage eyes

Miriam Toews, *A Complicated Kindness*. Knopf Canada, 2004, 256pp., 29.95.

At the beginning of this novel, 16-year-old Nomi Nickel describes her situation: "Half of our family, the better looking half, is missing." Nomi lives with her father in East Village, a Mennonite town near Winnipeg.

On the verge of her high school graduation, Nomi takes stock of her world and sees her destiny as working at the local chicken slaughterhouse. This, and the mystery of why her mother and older sister are missing, consumes her.

As a coming of age story, this novel examines the struggle of someone who knows she doesn't fit into her community. Author Miriam Toews helps us to understand the feelings of the disenfranchised, encouraging us not to judge by dress and behaviour.

In Trudie, Nomi's missing mother, Toews skilfully describes the life of a woman compelled to maintain the illusion of a happy family. Trudie's identity within the community is tied to that of her brother, the pastor of a church that readily shuns non-conformists. Many of the characters represent aspects of people familiar to the Mennonite community, whether we care

to admit it or not.

Although set in a particular place, the novel transcends the Mennonite community, as evidenced by the widespread interest in the book. Reviewers often remark on Nomi's desire to move to New York, which represents her desire for broader opportunities.

The tourists who come to visit the "pioneer village" museum offer outsiders' superficial views of a Mennonite community. Nomi's musings on Menno Simons and the occasional use of *Plautdietsch* (Low German) may carry more meaning for Mennonite readers.

Toews contrasts the difference between an outsider's view and one's inner struggles, and opines that it may not be possible for everyone to become self-aware within the confines of conformity.

This novel is beautifully written and our heart aches for Nomi in her journey to understand the world around her. For those of us who struggle with our Mennonite identity, Toews offers a wry assurance that things will work out, although the way may be unpredictable.—**Cynthia J. Klaassen**

The reviewer lives in Toronto.

Amish in the city

The latest reality show on television, "Amish in the city," is generating lots of comments in a variety of media. The show places five Amish young people in a house with non-Amish urban youth. The "plot," of course, is driven by their differences.

When the show was announced earlier this year, many tried to stop it, including Mennonites, senators and tourism officials. Donald Kraybill, a Mennonite sociologist interviewed by *Christianity Today* last January, called the idea for the show "absurd and ridiculous" and "a cultural slap in the face to the Amish."

The Amish are "easy prey because they don't fit the standard taboo list of religion and race" that protects other groups from exploitation, said Kraybill.

The show's producer said the idea came from the Amish practice of *rumspringa* (running around), a custom that allows youth considerable freedom before they are baptized.

The *New York Times* (July 28) polled several Amish people for their opinions about such a show.

"If I had children that age who could be one of the ones plucked out, I would be upset," said one young mother.

"They're making a fool out of themselves," said an Amish teen. She confessed, however, that she would like to watch the show. She knew about it from reading *People* magazine at her employer's home.

Miriam Yoder, who appears on the show, admitted that she has "always been more adventurous than a lot of the Amish girls." According to the *New York Times*, Yoder has been living in an Amish community in Florida where she shed her traditional way of life.

Her hope is that the show will portray the differences among Amish individuals: "It's hard to portray Amish as one; there are a lot of levels."

Charles Colson, an evangelical commentator, denounced the project.

"Dating and going to parties is one thing," he said. "The hedonism that's standard fare on Viacom [MTV network] is quite another." He feels that the network is mocking the Amish and inviting America "to laugh

at their blunders."

John Doyle of *The Globe and Mail* observed that the show isn't "as exploitative or repulsive" as critics had hoped "in their zeal for condemnation." The Amish are "nice young people, curious and agog at the vacuity—not the modernity—into which they'd been thrust.... It's the allegedly cool, contemporary kids...who are truly awful." Nevertheless, he finds the show "tasteless and unpleasant."

Chris Armstrong, writing in *Christianity Today*, was pleased by how the first episode pitted the "superficiality, fixation on sex and appearance, and deep-rooted self-centeredness" of the urban kids against the "ambivalent residue of communal spirit and Godly anchoring evident in the Amish young people."

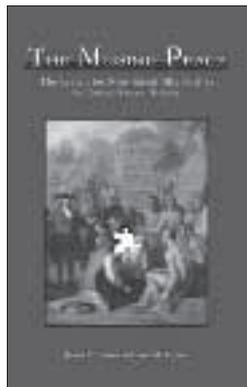
Publishing notes

An expanded second edition of *The Missing Peace: The search for nonviolent alternatives in United States history*, by James C. Juhnke and Carol M. Hunter, is now available from

Pandora Press and Herald Press.

The book challenges the myth of redemptive violence in the history of the United States and offers a reading from a peace perspective. It sells for \$34.50.

Nonviolent America: History through the eyes of peace, a 1993 volume edited by Louise Hawkey and James C. Juhnke, has been reprinted. Twenty historians, theologians and social scientists examine the history of the United States in light of peace values. The book, co-published by Bethel College and Pandora Press, sells for \$28.50. For more information, go to www.pandorapress.com.



Viewers can expect "a far more interesting dynamic than the 'let's-see-if-we-can-make-the-innocents-sin' project," he said. His article went on to describe Old Order faith, using Donald Kraybill and Carl Desportes Bowman's book, *On the Backroad to Heaven* (Johns Hopkins, 2001).

Armstrong predicts that the outcome will not be the corruption of the Amish kids but the "postmodern piety that 'your way and my way are just two different routes to the same goal' and 'we can all be friends' as we travel our different roads."

His hope is that, just maybe, the show will cause some to consider "the dark side of modernity" through the eyes of the Amish.—**Margaret Loewen Reimer**

Hymnal supplement

More than 400 submissions for a new hymnal supplement awaited hymnal committee members when they met June 22-23 in Harrisonburg, Virginia. The supplement will debut at the joint convention of Mennonite Church Canada and USA in Charlotte, North Carolina next July. The committee, appointed by Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN), includes Jeff Enns from Elmira, Ontario and Marilyn Houser Hamm from Altona, Manitoba, as well as Eleanor Snyder, director of Faith and Life Resources for MPN. Chair is Marlene Kropf, minister of worship for Mennonite Church USA. This is the first of two supplements that will go into developing a new hymnal. The first will focus on music and worship resources through the seasons of congregational life. The second, to be published in 2007, will focus on the life of Jesus. Submissions may be sent to Randall Spaulding, 3342 Glouster Street, Sarasota, Florida 34235.—From MC USA release

Arts notes

Peach Pickers ministry

The Peach Pickers, a bluegrass gospel band from Niagara, Ontario, focuses its ministry on raising funds for the Mennonite Centre in Ukraine. A recent CD, "Memories of home," includes compositions by John Harder and Eric Goerz on Mennonite memories of Ukraine. Several other original songs, such as "Niagara moon," were first recorded by the Lincoln County Peach Pickers in 1953 on 78 rpm records. That group from the 1950s country music scene has "re-invented" itself in recent years. Current members, along with Harder and Goerz, are Al Teichroeb, Karl Goerz, Ed Enns, and George Rout. For more information, contact John Harder, phone (905) 468-3770, e-mail: johnaharder@yahoo.ca.—From release

On the road

In September, the House of Doc—a musical group from the "Doc Schroeder" family in Winnipeg—will leave jobs and studies to travel and perform for a year. They will also work on a second CD. The group, including Rebecca and Matt Harder, David and Andrea Wiebe, and Daniel Wiebe, have played at church fundraisers, at folk festivals in Texas and Winnipeg, and at the Western Canadian Music Awards in Regina. Their music is a mix of bluegrass, folk, Celtic and gospel—what they call a "prairie grass" style. To book House of Doc, call Andrea Wiebe at (204) 298-4359 or go to www.houseofdoc.com.—From report by **Evelyn Rempel Petkau**



Isam About discusses his art with a group of newcomers to Canada.

Jazz fundraiser for refugees

Jazz pianist Amy Rempel (19), currently studying piano at the University of Memphis, delighted approximately 100 listeners at a fundraiser for Afghani refugees on July 23 at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. The event opened with a mother and son drumming and singing team—refugees from Sierra Leone. The evening was organized by members of Aberdeen Evangelical Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, Rempel's home congregation. The church sponsors three Afghani students. The event raised approximately \$2,800. Rempel is the only female in the 18-member top jazz group at the University of Memphis. She has been asked to write a jazz composition for a guest trombonist there.—From report by **Leona Dueck Penner**

Sudanese artist

In May, Sudanese artist Isam About and his wife Heba arrived as refugees in Winnipeg. About was among the artists who left Sudan in the late 1990s to escape military conscription. These artists were friends of MCC workers in Africa and part of an exhibit organized by Ray Dirks that toured North America a few years ago. As a welcome to Canada, Dirks, curator of the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, offered About an exhibition of his work, along with Mennonite artist Ruth Maendel. Students from About's language class, from many countries, came to the exhibit on July 19. The exhibit closes at the end of August.—From Gallery release

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More unanswered questions

What happens if you get scared half to death twice?
Why do "fat" chance and "slim" chance mean the same thing?
Why do "overlook" and "oversee" mean opposite things?
Why are places for sitting called "stands"?
Doesn't "expecting the unexpected" make the unexpected expected?
Why are a "wise man" and a "wise guy" opposites?
Why do we put suits in garment bags and garments in a suitcase?
(See earlier questions in June 28 issue, page 37. From the web.)



A Canadian scandal that makes few waves

The report of Ottawa's Auditor-General last winter made Canadians upset about the waste of public money in the "sponsorship scandal." Two months before the federal election, a different sort of audit revealed a scandal that should have made even bigger waves. But it was not an election issue.

The richest province in one of the world's richest countries is home to 300,000 people who do not have enough to eat. That scandal has become so familiar that many Canadians seem to take it for granted.

The many hungry people in Ontario is one of the shocking facts revealed by a social audit carried out by the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC). Social audits assess the impacts of legislation and government programs on people. When ISARC consulted 1500 people—including our poorest citizens—it uncovered a scandal that featured more than numbers.

"My kids aren't getting a proper diet," a Toronto mother told ISARC volunteers who held hearings in 13 communities in 2003. "I can't afford to buy a cantaloupe or a nice bunch of grapes. I'm not asking to be rich. We just want a proper diet."

The ISARC report, *Lives in the Balance: Ontario's Social Audit*, is the third that the small group has published since it was formed in 1986. Each report showed that more people among us are poorer. Instead of programs to help them, cutting taxes is the order of the day and more people are being forced to turn to food banks.

Dow Marmur, a rabbi and veteran ISARC volunteer, pointed out another paradox—between social justice and charity. His contribution to the audit is called, "The Scandal of Poverty: A Jewish perspective."

"Capitalism teaches that 'What's mine is mine and what's yours is yours.' If you have less than I have, it's your problem. Should I decide to share a little of what I have, it's at my

discretion.... Therefore, I expect you to be grateful for my generosity and society should praise me for my philanthropy," says Marmur.

"The present preoccupation with tax cuts and the determination to hail charitable work as a noble pursuit are manifestations of this way of thinking."

Lives in the Balance is a particularly important book for faith communities that provide food banks and meal programs, carrying forward the urgent task of helping hungry people in our prosperous country. The report offers a balance of the anecdotal and the analytical. Contributions by activists explore the housing, labour market, health and disability policies that have contributed to the deterioration of public services to our most vulnerable citizens.

Meanwhile, another audit has uncovered a related scandal. Ontario's Auditor-General revealed that the Conservative government paid a consulting company called Accenture \$66 million more than had been budgeted to revamp the computer system that runs the welfare system.

Although the consultants eventually pocketed \$284 million, technical glitches meant that the subsequent government had to pay an extra \$20 million to fix the \$500 million computer system. But the poor people will have to wait until next March for their little raise.—**Jamie Swift**

The writer, from Kingston, Ontario, is co-director of the Justice and Peace Office of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul. MCC Ontario is a member of ISARC.

Cambodian youth put nonviolence training to work

Recently, some Cambodian youth on their way home from training in conflict resolution learned firsthand the power of active nonviolence.

Mennonite Central Committee Cambodia partners with Youth for Peace, an organization that works primarily with high school students. In addition to helping youth build their identities and understand their responsibilities in promoting peace and social justice, the curriculum includes training in resolving conflict through active nonviolence.

Twenty-five students and staff were travelling in the countryside when their bus nearly sideswiped an oncoming motorcyclist. The bus stopped and the driver got out to see what had happened. The motorcyclist was not hurt, but he and the bus driver exchanged angry words. The motorcyclist pulled a gun and pointed it at the bus driver's head.

Outh Renne, director of Youth for Peace, got off the bus, followed by some students. Renne observed that the bus driver had been in the wrong. "We should not have been on this side of the road. Please apologize," he told the bus driver.

After some hesitation, the bus driver offered an apology. The motorcyclist insisted on seeing identification. He wanted to report the incident to the police and bus company, and have the driver lose his job.

Renne spoke to the motorcyclist, who

'We are wrong, but you also are wrong,' Renne said.

was still pointing his gun.

"We are wrong, but you also are wrong," he said. "It is illegal to have a weapon and so you are committing a crime by pointing this gun at us. We have apologized for our mistake but you also are responsible for a mistake."

The motorcyclist put away the gun and left without another word.

The students had just completed a workshop called "Culture of peace." They received an object lesson that they will not forget.—From report by **Shari Yordy**, MCC Cambodia

Letters

Trust God in finding a marriage partner

The book, *Katelyn's Affection*, advertised as a "coming-of-age story" (July 12, page 8), prompts me to write.

The book's cover shows a pensive young girl, presumably thinking about her romantic dilemma. Does she stay faithful to her first boyfriend of two years, or start a new relationship? I have not read the book but I believe that books of this nature are detrimental to our teens.

In our culture, dating is encouraged with the rationale that teens need to experience a range of people before they settle on the right one. However, as I view it from a Christian perspective, dating sets the scene for premarital intimacy and broken hearts.

I believe that most young people would say that they enjoy group activities more than one-on-one dating. The seriousness of dating burdens adolescents with a premature commitment to one person.

Then how does one find a marriage partner? Quite simply: leave it to God. We need to encourage young people to seek God's will for their future partner. We must help them focus on growing in

their faith rather than expending energy on relationships that often lead to heartache and rejection.

Counselling teens to save their affections for marriage ensures that their marriages will be free from the memories of past relationships. I know several married couples that didn't participate in the dating game. Prior to entering into courtship, they committed themselves to seeking the Lord's timing and choice. These couples are enjoying strong marriages, free from former entanglements of the heart.

For the sake of our children, we need to start thinking courtship rather than dating. The book by Josh Harris, *I Kissed Dating Goodbye*, is a good place to start. Let's help our children to trust in the Lord's leading. He knows who our mates should be.—**Joy McKee, Surrey, B.C.**

Iran story omits Bahais

I read with interest the article, "Iranian editor works for a peaceful society" (July 12, page 22).

However, I came across a curious omission. The article states that "although 98 percent of the people are Muslim, they are tolerant towards

minorities, whether they are Zoroastrian, Jew or Christian."

What about the Bahais? The Bahais are the largest religious minority in Iran, making up two percent of the population, according to the Encyclopedia of the Orient. (The encyclopedia breaks down the religious makeup of Iran as 88 percent Shia, 8 percent Sunni, 2 percent Bahai, a little over 1 percent Christian, with Zoroastrians and Jews making up the remainder, with communities of about 50,000 each.)

The Iranian government views Bahais as heretic Muslims and persecutes them. Human Rights Watch reported in 2003 that Bahais face continued persecution in Iran and that at least four Bahais are serving prison terms for their religious beliefs. While I applaud Saeed Khatibzadeh's search for a third way, I think it is important that a complete picture of what is happening in Iran be expressed.—**Kari Snyder, Mississauga, Ont.**

This section is a forum for discussion and discernment. Letters express the opinion of the writer, not necessarily that of *Canadian Mennonite* or the church. We publish most letters, unless they attack individuals or become unnecessarily repetitious. See page 2 for address information.

The first cut is the deepest

My cousin Joel is by far my favourite relative in Gretna, Manitoba. I have told him this. I don't think he is impressed. Go figure.

Seriously though, Joel is lots of fun. He always has a new joke at his fingertips, and the one I am about to share is no exception.

An Anglican minister enters a barbershop. As the barber snips and trims, the minister asks: "What do I owe you?"

"No charge," replies the stylist. "You pastors do great work and I want to show my appreciation."

The next morning, the barber walks onto his front porch and sniffs. Something smells good. He looks down and sees a freshly baked pie, courtesy of his Anglican customer.

Later that day, a Lutheran pastor eases himself into the chair. The barber begins to cut and shape

"How much do I owe you?" asks the Lutheran minister, perhaps thinking about a parishioner's recent statement: "If you



keep yourself humble, we'll take care of keeping you poor."

"On the house," says the barber. "You folks do good work."

The next morning, the barber finds several baskets of ripe peaches on his doorstep, courtesy of the Lutheran pastor (whose favourite topic just happens to be,

"The fruits of the Spirit").

The next day, a Mennonite minister plops himself down in the chair. Before the barber can even begin work, he asks: "What's this going to set me back?"

"Nothing," says the barber. "You people of the cloth deserve a good deal."

The Mennonite minister seems elated, and talks a blue streak for the next 30 minutes.

The next morning, the barber walks onto his front porch and there he sees...five more Mennonite ministers!

I have one quibble with Joel's story. If I had been the person in the barber's chair, I would not have brought my friends to his front porch. I would have asked directions to the Anglican minister's house so I could sniff out a leftover piece of cherry pie!

The writer teaches at Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna, Manitoba. This is the last column in the Pilgrim Pieces series.

Letters

Focus on Christ provides common denominator

When I began reading Doug Epp's article (July 12, page 35), I was encouraged by what I thought was a conciliatory approach to conflict within Mennonite Church Canada.

Then, about halfway through, he writes: "It has often been suggested that B.C. should focus on the things we can agree on and not worry so much about those things where we disagree." And then, this astounding conclusion: "To follow that advice will lead to growing diversity, always moving to the lowest common denominator of agreement."

That may be true in the everyday parade of life, but never in all my years have I seen that to be true in the church when Christians focus on the centre of their faith, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Then he is the important one, and not the wave that appears about to engulf us.

Then we no longer have to defend the purity of the church or the holiness of God. God is quite able to take care of those details. We don't have to transform anyone. That is done much more effectively by the Holy Spirit than by us.

As we subject ourselves to Christ, as we love each other, the world may indeed see that we are Christ's disciples and be brought into the family of God.

I do not agree that Saskatoon '86 or Stratford '98 are lines on which we can build. As Epp states, they are "lines in the sand."

Jesus' commentary on sand is that it is lousy foundation material. As Paul says, "Other foundation can no one lay than that laid, which is Jesus Christ."—**Jake Nickel, Saskatoon, Sask.**

Should church statements determine membership?

I agree with Doug Epp when he says we should not encourage "a growing diversity, always moving toward the lowest common denominator of

agreement" (Leaders' column, July 12). I believe strongly that our congregations and our denomination must have standards for behaviour, just as Jesus set out standards.

Where Epp and I part ways is when he says the Saskatoon and Stratford statements are the standards that should be used.

There are at least two issues implicit in Epp's position which deserve attention.

1) Are we prepared to have one specific position on sexuality and marriage as one of the standards by which we define ourselves as Mennonites? In other words, is it necessary to agree on one position in order for us to worship together and accept each other as Mennonites?

2) Are we prepared to hold the statements from Saskatoon and Stratford as prescriptive for membership? Are we required to examine members and baptismal candidates on their belief in and adherence to statements of faith which are approved by national or regional conferences?

I think it is important for all our congregational and denominational leaders (not just those in B.C.) to know how much or how little support there is for the standards that Epp says will apply in B.C.—**Robert Boardman, Toronto, Ont.**

What boundaries does Jesus draw?

Doug Epp considers it necessary to draw a line (July 12, page 35). His words on church statements make it clear that the line he wishes to draw is about homosexuality.

In my understanding, God is more about opening boundaries than drawing them. Jesus opened many boundaries drawn by leaders of his time. As recounted in Matthew 15:21-28, Jesus once tried to draw a line to exclude a foreign woman: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He was led across that line moments later.

Jesus did draw lines on divorce. Yet today, how many churches would refuse membership to someone who has divorced and remarried? My second marriage was part of the path that

brought me to the Mennonite church.

I look for the boundaries that Jesus placed on homosexuality...and find none. So I fall back on, "Love thy neighbour as thyself." That line demands a very uncomfortable stretch in my own boundaries. Despite that, or perhaps because of it, I look to it as the call of God.—**Burton Patkau, Guelph, Ont.**

Clarification on Lord's Supper

A reader wrote me in response to my article on the Lord's Supper (June 14, page 6), asking whether the exception I allowed for unbaptized believers to come to communion would be included in the invitation during the service or only on the basis of a previous pastoral arrangement.

My understanding is that this could happen only on the basis of a pastoral relationship in which the minister concluded that the longing to participate in the Supper by someone growing towards baptism should not be denied.

I included it simply because I found it risky to claim absolutely that an unbaptized person could never come to the Lord's Table. But I am persuaded from the New Testament and Anabaptist theology that the meal of covenant is to be entered through the act of covenant, baptism.—**John D. Rempel, Elkhart, Ind.**

Worship is crucial to who we are

I attended a Mennonite Church Canada assembly for the first time this year. The listening committee said that most people favoured a business-oriented conference one year and a worship-oriented one the next. I want to speak against that.

It is worship that draws us together, makes us one. The business can't run as smoothly without the worship ever reminding us of our oneness.

There needs to be a balance between them. The business of the church is important but worship is what makes us a church. It should always be the foundation of who we are.—**Linda Neumiller, Carstairs, Alta.**

Strasbourg, France

Paraguay chosen for next world assembly

Assembly 15, Mennonite World Conference's next global gathering, will be held in Paraguay in July 2009. The MWC executive committee reached agreement on the site at its annual meeting here July 29 to August 4.

Committee members considered two strong invitations. One came from eight Mennonite conferences in Paraguay, including Spanish-speaking, German-speaking and indigenous groups. An invitation to eastern Pennsylvania came from the Brethren in Christ, Mennonite Church USA and the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.

Larry Miller, executive secretary of MWC, and Ray Brubacher, associate secretary, conducted studies of both locations and reported that either country was feasible.

Both sites present issues. Paraguayans have no history of working together to host an event of such magnitude and no one facility has everything that would be required. In the case of Pennsylvania, the fact remains that for people from the South, it is difficult to get a visa to enter the U.S.

The factor that tipped the balance was that it seems to be Latin America's turn. The last assembly there was in Brazil, in 1972. The executive committee encouraged U.S. conferences to host the gathering in 2015.

European Mennonites have suggested that an assembly be held in Europe in 2025, the 100th anniversary of the first Mennonite World Conference gathering and the 500th anniversary of the first Anabaptist baptism. That would mean a date adjustment, since gatherings are normally held every six years.

The executive made the decision on Assembly 15 by consensus, a change from traditional voting. Nancy R. Heisey, president of MWC, introduced the process and subsequent decisions in the meeting were made by consensus.

Despite gloomy financial projections

a year ago—given so many uncertainties around the assembly in Zimbabwe—treasurer Paul Quiring reported that 2003 ended with a surplus and that 2004 accounts will balance.

The executive prayed for churches in difficult situations and sent a letter of support to the church in Vietnam, where six Mennonite leaders have been imprisoned.

Ron Mathies, Karen Klassen Harder and Harriet Sider Bicksler reported on Mennonite Central Committee and its relationship to Mennonite World Conference.

In other business, the executive endorsed nominees from each continental region for a new Youth Continuation Committee. The report on the five-year dialogue between Mennonite World Conference and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity was received for study in MWC churches.

An afternoon excursion took executive and staff to Anabaptist sites in the Vosges mountains and to a World War II concentration camp. They joined local Mennonite churches for worship on Sunday.—From MWC release by **Ferne Burkhardt**

Akron, Pa.

Aid to refugees in Chad

As the crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan continues, Mennonite Central Committee is shipping milk powder and relief supplies to neighbouring Chad, where tens of thousands of Darfur residents have sought refuge.

Part of the shipment will go to southern Chad for refugees from the Central African Republic, whose situation is no less dire. Some 40,000 refugees from civil war are in United Nations camps and villages in Chad. MCC's church partners there have been taxed to their limits in attempts to assist the refugees.

Total value of the shipment is \$173,000.

An assessment team travelled to Sudan in July to determine how MCC could respond to ongoing needs in Darfur and other regions. MCC will draw on well-established relationships with Sudanese church organizations in crafting a long-term response.

Some 15,000 to 30,000 people have been killed in Darfur and a million more displaced in recent months. In what the United Nations has described as "ethnic cleansing," militias are attacking indigenous villagers, leaving a trail of death, looting and rape. Both U.S. and U.N. officials are urging a swift response

to the crisis.

Cheques for refugee families in Chad should be marked "Sudan Emergency Assistance" and sent to MCC at 134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9, or call (888) 622-6337. MCC also requires kits and other supplies.—From MCC releases

Flooding in Haiti

In the wake of devastating floods in Haiti and Dominican Republic, countries that share the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, a Mennonite Central Committee assessment team visited affected areas June 8-17.

MCC is making \$76,000 available for relief assistance, recruiting a service worker, and hosting an environmental study tour on disaster prevention. The worker will be seconded to the Lutheran World Federation for a year to work with its partners in Haiti.

At least 2,000 people died in the floods, which began with heavy rainfall May 23. Hundreds more people are still missing. Severe deforestation in Haiti contributed to mudslides that buried homes, animals and people.

To donate to MCC's relief efforts on the island, call (888) 622-6337.—From MCC release

Goshen, Ind.

MC Canada joins new Africa mission partnership

Mennonite Church Canada Witness was one of seven African and North American groups which created a new vehicle for mission in Africa at a meeting here in June.

Signing the Joint Ministry Agreement of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) was a high point in a week of meetings of mission leaders. One of the signers was Janet Plenert, director of International Ministries for MC Canada Witness.

The banquet on Saturday was an opportunity for AIMM alumni to

venture include the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso, Mennonite Church of the Congo, Evangelical Mennonite Church of the Congo and Mennonite Brethren Church of the Congo.

The Evangelical Mennonite Conference and Mennonite Mission Network of Mennonite Church USA also gave assent. The mission agency of the Canadian and US Mennonite Brethren conferences indicated its intention to join soon.

The inaugural meeting of the new International Central Council is

tentatively scheduled for Burkina Faso this fall, to be followed by meetings of the various country-based partnership councils.

In the new arrangement, decisions about program and budget will be made in the country in which mission activity is to occur. African conferences will be full and equal partners in decisions, and the size of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission's central office will be scaled down significantly.—From AIMM report by **Dave Dyck**



AIMM photo

Janet Plenert of MC Canada Witness signs the new agreement with North American and African mission leaders.

reconnect with one other and with African church leaders. The evening ended with a challenge by Siaka Traoré, vice-president of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso, to support the new vision for mission and to work in unity.

Through the Commission on Overseas Mission of the former General Conference, Mennonite Church Canada has had a rich history of involvement in Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. Peter Rempel of MC Canada Witness is chair of the interim executive committee of the new International Central Council. MC Canada will continue involvement in Burkina Faso, Congo, Botswana and South Africa, and join those countries' partnership councils.

African churches joining the new

Pinawa, Man.

Medical groups focus on 'missional healthcare'

Mennonite nurses and physicians reflected on the theme "Missional healthcare" during a meeting in Manitoba on June 24-27. It was the annual convention of the Mennonite Nurses Association and Mennonite Medical Association.

Pam Morrison Driedger and Marilyn Houser Hamm of Altona Mennonite Church led worship. Eleanor Martens, a nurse, and Jennifer Wiebe, a doctor, talked about their ministry at Hope Centre Health Care of Winnipeg under the topic "Holding on to hope: the joys and challenges of working in an inner-city clinic."

They emphasized the importance of extending love and respect to all patients and reflected on their sense of

call in working at the centre.

Cornelius Woelk, a family physician from Winkler, Manitoba, captivated the audience with his stories. The House of Doc, a music group from Winnipeg, provided Saturday evening's entertainment.

Sunday morning worship focused on healing others out of our own brokenness. Participants anointed one other with oil.

The annual business meetings of both organizations were held during the conference. For more information, visit mna.mennonite.net and mennmed.org.

Next year's convention is June 23-26 at Laurelville Church Center in Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania. Guests will be Esther and Josiah Kawira from Shirati, Tanzania.—From MMA and MNA release

Philadelphia, Pa.

First pastors ordained for Vietnam church

The first two pastors of the newly reorganized Vietnam Mennonite Church were ordained to Christian ministry in an unusual ceremony at the Vietnamese Mennonite Church in Philadelphia on July 18.

One of the pastors, currently in prison, was ordained in absentia. Since the Mennonite church is not officially recognized in Vietnam, state authorities would not have considered ordinations there valid.

Freeman Miller, a Lancaster Mennonite Conference bishop, led the service of ordination for Nguyen Quang Trung, president of Vietnam Mennonite Church. Then Miller daubed the oil of anointing on the certificate of ordination for Nguyen Hong Quang, general secretary who was arrested in Vietnam on June 8.

Tran Xuan Quang, with whom Trung worked in Vietnam prior to

1975, preached the sermon.

Trung was on a private trip to the United States, a gift from his children, to visit friends. Hearing of his plans, Eastern Mennonite Missions helped facilitate his visit. Trung spoke in several churches in the eastern U.S. and visited Mennonite institutions before he left on July 19.

The Vietnamese church had requested that North American leaders conduct the ordination. The Lancaster conference, a provisional member of Mennonite Church USA, hesitated at first, but written testimony by Quang provided the basis for ordination.

"As I read through the materials, I was struck with similarities between Pastor Quang and the Apostle Paul," said Carl E. Horning, assistant moderator. "In an appeal to the authorities of Vietnam to establish equitable laws governing the exercise of religion, he

appealed to them using material from Chairman Ho Chi Minh, and Chairman Fidel Castro! Not the kind of authorities we would invoke, but reminiscent of Paul in the Areopagus.

"Quang's treatment at the hands of the authorities and his response to it also invoke comparisons to the Apostle Paul. [Quang] also noted that "the Lord Jesus was Asian, his 12 disciples were Asian, a fact we often ignore."

Trung, who is 64, has given leadership to a house church in Ho Chi Minh City for many years. Several years ago he also became overseer of several house church groups in Quang Ngai province. He was chosen president of the Vietnam Mennonite Church at the church conference in July 2003.

Ngo Thi Bich, Trung's wife, continues involvement in social ministries. They have three adult children and two grandchildren.

Quang, 45, serves as vice president and general secretary. In mid-July, the Vietnam church named his wife, Le Thi Phu Dung, acting vice president. They have three young children.—From Vietnamese Ministries report

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Church life continues despite arrests

Leaders of Vietnam Mennonite Church met for prayer and spiritual renewal on July 12-13, a month after the arrest of Nguyen Hong Quang, their vice president and general secretary.

Another arrest occurred on June 30 when Le Thi Hong Lien, one of the church's deaconesses and a trainer of Saigon Christian scouts, was taken into custody. Four of Quang's associates have been in prison since March 2.

The two-day conference focused on Psalm 77, a lament to God. Duong Thanh Lam, pastor of the Assemblies of God, spoke on Acts 6, the account of Stephen's arrest. Hoang Van Phung of the Church of God International, spoke on the story of Ahab and Jezebel seizing Naboth's vineyard (I Kings 21).

The 80 representatives from five districts chose interim leaders to serve until Quang is released. Quang's wife, Le Thi Phu Dung, will be acting vice-president of Vietnam Mennonite Church. Truong Tri Hien, Quang's assistant, was named acting general secretary.

The conference called for the quick



Le Thi Phu Dung lights candles and prays with Vietnam Mennonite Church members for the release of her husband and other church leaders.

release of Quang and the other five, the return of confiscated church property and an end to police harassment.

On July 20, Mennonite World Conference officials met for a second time with United Nations officials in Geneva to discuss the harassment of the Vietnam Mennonite Church.

An appeal by Mennonite Church Canada on behalf of the Mennonite Church of Vietnam is being distributed by Mennonite World Conference to the global Mennonite church.—From Vietnamese Ministries release

U.S. passes Vietnam rights act

The United States House of Representatives recently passed a Vietnam Human Rights Act that speaks of the imprisonment of Mennonite leaders Nguyen Van Ly and Nguyen Hong Quang. They are listed among leaders who have been persecuted for "the peaceful expression of dissenting religious and political views." The act states: "Congress finds the following: the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a one-party state, ruled and controlled by the Communist Party of Vietnam, which continues to deny the right of citizens to change their government.... The government of Vietnam permits no public challenge to the legitimacy of the one-party State. It prohibits independent political, labor and social organizations, and it continues to detain and imprison persons...." —From Vietnamese Ministries report

Syracuse, Indiana

Mission workers share cultures and concerns

Mission Seminar 2004 brought together nearly 100 people from Mennonite ministry in 23 countries. The six-day July seminar was for mission workers of Mennonite Church Canada and MC USA.

The event included worship, Bible study, relaxation, meetings and workshops to prepare outgoing workers and reintegrate those returning to North America.

There was heartfelt sharing about the challenges facing parents of missionary kids who grew up overseas and are reentering North American society, a foreign society for many of them.

Workers in politically sensitive countries spoke about the necessity of secret baptisms, the dangers of inappropriate language, the uncertainty of visa renewals. They valued being able to worship God openly.

Evenings focused on ministry in different regions of the world, extending the morning Bible study theme—peace and mission in Acts—into an exploration of cultures represented.

In a game show format, contestants competed by repeating phrases in another language and accepting dares to down delicacies from another country. Canned silkworms were a flavour contrast to chocolate-covered dessert sticks.

One evening included a demonstration soccer game, complete with passionate fans representing Argentina and Brazil. Some workers dramatized situations and invited the audience to guess inappropriate cultural behaviours. Each night, workers wore the colourful garments of their service setting.

The interactive activities provided ways for workers to relate to one another in a common understanding, share concerns and make new friends.

All asked for prayer as they confront the challenges of new cultures and languages.—From MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**



Photo by David Fisher-Fast

Julie Bender from Hamilton Mennonite Church in Ontario (second from right) celebrates a correct answer during a game show at Mission Seminar 2004. Bender is an MC Canada Witness worker in China.

NEEDED IN 2005: MCC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This person will lead Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and build understanding and support for its mission among an increasingly diverse constituency.



For a job description or application, please contact search committee chair Donella Clemens, PO Box 64439, Souderton, PA 18964; dmclemens@mindspring.com.

Application review begins Sept. 1, 2004, with a January 2005 appointment and a June 2005 start date.

In 2004, MCC budget was \$63 million U.S., with 1,200 people serving in more than 50 countries.

Edmonton, Alta.

First awards evening for immigrants

We should have been holding this dinner for years, said the speaker at the first RISE Awards hosted by the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers on May 20. Over 250 people attended the awards banquet that recognizes immigrants' successes.

Eleven awards were given to individuals and organizations. Edmonton, the fifth largest destination for immigrants in Canada, welcomes some 4,000 newcomers annually.

Awards acknowledged accomplishments in arts and culture, the professions and business, community development, health and social services. Two awards were geared to young people.

The lifetime achievement award honoured the business, volunteer and philanthropic efforts of Peter Kule, who came to Canada from Ukraine 50 years ago.

The evening included entertainment by African drummers and South Asian dancers, a silent auction and food. Among dignitaries attending was Liberal Member of Parliament David Kilgour, whose riding includes Edmonton's most multicultural district.



Nancy Hannemann, global education coordinator at the University of Alberta's International Centre, presents an award to the Canadian Kurdish Friendship Association, represented by Jalal Barsanji and Sabah Tahir.

The banquet was also a fundraiser for the centre, as well as raising awareness in church and community. The centre prides itself on being a "one-stop" source of services for newcomers. It provides English

language training, settlement programs and employment services now operating out of three offices. It houses the Centre for Survivors of Torture and Trauma, which has received international acclaim.

One area of groundbreaking work is a program for foreign-qualified professionals.

"This is the single biggest area of concern for immigrants," said Jim Gurnett, executive director. The centre has partnered with several agencies to retrain engineers for employment here and will soon begin a program for accountants.

Other plans include a housing project for refugees in a building adjacent to the centre's main office. The project will be the first in Canada to provide full support for traumatized refugees.

"The evening was tremendous because it was not just a fundraiser and not just for recipients," said Gurnett. "People were joyous. Getting nominees from 16 or 17 countries and tremendous community participation shows how Edmonton has been built by diversity."—From report by

Randolph Haluza-DeLay

Winnipeg, Man.

New interns leave for service

Mennonite Church Canada Witness invites prayers for several self-supporting mission interns who begin service this fall.

- Gina Loewen (Charleswood Mennonite, Winnipeg), Jeremy Martens (Steinbach Mennonite, Manitoba), and Allison Pauls (Winkler Bergthaler, Manitoba) will be teaching English and providing resources through the Korea Anabaptist Centre in Seoul, South Korea, for one year.
- Debbie Martens (Aberdeen Mennonite, Saskatchewan) will be at working at the Bethany Children's Home in Umtata, South Africa, for four months.
- Heather Shantz (St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ontario) will be working at La Casa Grande orphanage in Benin for four months.
- Mylene Melancon (Joliette Mennonite,

Quebec) will be in Colombia for one year, first in Bogotá working with displaced people, then in La Mesa, teaching English and conflict mediation at the Mennonite school.

Cheryl Woelk of Swift Current, Saskatchewan, who began as a one-year intern in South Korea, has renewed her term for a third year. She is now a Witness worker, not an intern.

Janet Plenert, director of International Ministries for MC Canada Witness, will spend the fall in Cachipay, Colombia, working with the Colombia Mennonite Church. Her husband Steve and daughters Gabrielle, 17, Natasha 14 and Katrina 11 will work as volunteers at the Mennonite retreat centre. The girls will also be attending school in Colombia.—From MC Canada reports

Harrisonburg, Virginia

Pastoral letter addresses global anxieties

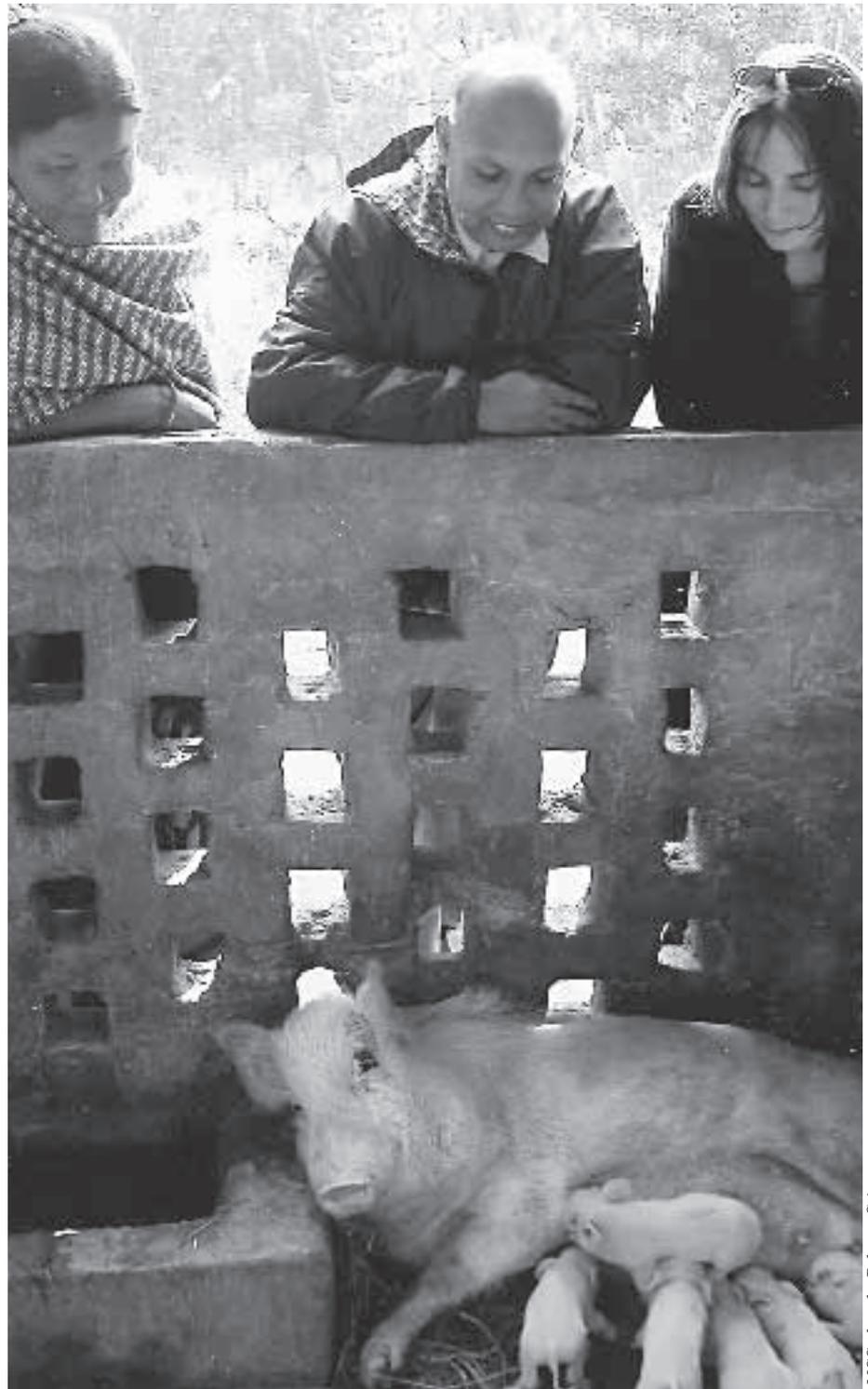
We live in troubled times. In the wake of September 11, 2001, and the threat of new terror attacks, many feel anxious and afraid. Our congregations and communities have been directly impacted by the war on terror, with the deaths of nearly 1,000 U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq....”

So begins a pastoral letter to congregations from the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. The board approved the letter on June 26.

The letter acknowledges that “failures of both the church and of national policy have contributed to this current global disorder. The church has not consistently been the world’s salt and light, nor has it always extended God’s grace, healing and hope. In the war on terror, our nation has increasingly acted as an imperial power, eschewing the counsel and concerns of other countries.”

The letter calls on members of Mennonite Church USA to:

- Embrace our baptism. This means identifying with Christ in his death and resurrection, following him daily in life, and joining in a church that “transcends national borders and bridges divisions of class, gender and race.”
- Remember our confession. The *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* offers guidance for this time: “Led by the Holy Spirit, we follow Christ in the way of peace, doing justice, bringing reconciliation, and practising nonresistance, even in the face of violence and warfare...we witness to all people that violence is not the will of God. We witness against all forms of violence, including war among nations, hostility among races and classes, abuses of children and women, violence between men and women, abortion, and capital punishment.” (Article 22).
- Acknowledge our national citizenship. “While our primary identity is rooted in Christ and the church, we are citizens of the world’s dominant economic and military power. Given this context, our sisters and brothers around the world have asked us to exercise our right and privilege to speak out on their behalf.” The letter acknowledges the many Iraqis that “have been abused, humiliated and killed” in the recent turmoil.
- Pray and act together. The letter calls the church to “repentance, prayer and action” for all who have been touched by



Mennonite Central Committee has helped develop a hybrid pig to improve the standard of living for the Mandi people in northern Bangladesh. The pig grows quickly and produces a larger quantity of meat. Pictured, from left, are farmer Nilima Rema, MCC officer Shyam Chakroborty, and MCC agriculture worker Nadene Sawyer.

violence—friends and foes.” It invites the church to pray for Iraq and encourages church-to-church visits. Finally, the letter invites congregations “to pray for and call

upon the U.S. government to ‘move toward justice, peace and compassion for all people’ (Article 23, Confession of Faith).”
—From MC USA release

MCC photo by Rebecca Geisler

Chananaw, Philippines

Student charts culture of tribe in Philippines

In a village in northern Philippines, Tristian Isaak spent a year documenting Chananaw traditions, including farming practices, weddings and funerals, as well as challenges facing the region.

Isaak, a member of Jubilee Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, was a participant in the Mennonite Central Committee's SALT (Serving and Learning Together) program.

"Since the world and reality that the Chananaw face is changing so quickly it is important to preserve and remember who the Chananaw people are," says Isaak, who worked under the direction of the tribal assembly.

Until the 1960s, travel outside the village was not common. This area is still not linked to larger towns by a road. Residents must hike down the mountain to access transportation. But things are changing.

"As the tribe is being influenced by the outside world to a greater extent every day, the people, especially the younger generation, are beginning to adopt outside ways," says Isaak.

Isaak helped to create a brochure that introduces readers to Chananaw, and recorded historical and cultural information that tribal leaders feared would be lost. Chananaw is not a written language and there is little written about this culture.

"The most moving thing that I have



MCC photo by Matthew Lesiser

The village of Chananaw is nestled in the terraced rice fields in the Cordillera mountains.

learned is the value that the Chananaw put on all people. It doesn't matter who you are or why you have come to the village, you will be accepted and given both food and a safe, dry place to sleep," Isaak said. "They will...often sacrifice the few luxuries or excess they have to help a complete stranger."

The village of Chananaw is nestled in the picturesque Cordillera mountains in northern Luzon, the largest island in the Philippines. The indigenous peoples of the Cordilleras comprise roughly 2 percent of the population and come from more than 20 ethno-linguistic subgroups.

The people of the Cordilleras have long suffered government neglect in education, health care and other services. MCC supports local organizations such as the tribal assembly.

MCC's Global Family program also supports Ichananaw Youth Education Scholars, a project that funds university students from this area.

Isaak returns to international development studies at Canadian Mennonite University this fall.—From MCC release

Correction

In a photograph of Canadian Women in Mission organisational leaders (August 2, page 23), several positions were listed incorrectly. They should read as follows: Ingrid Janzen Lamp, past secretary treasurer; Ruth Jantzi, new secretary treasurer; Veronica Thiessen, president of B.C. Women in Mission; Erna Neufeldt, president elect; Esther Patkau, president of Saskatchewan Women in Mission; Shirley Redekop, president of Women of Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada; Beth Moyer, president of Alberta Women in Mission; Pat Gerber-Pauls, past president of Manitoba Women in Mission. Dodie Lepp was listed correctly as president.

Reminder to Congregations

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Saskatoon, Sask.

Saskatchewan-Alberta choir tours Middle East

John Elias wasn't worried, even though only half the choir was present for the impromptu practice in the chapel at the Toronto airport. The first full rehearsal would take place 16 hours later in Damascus, Syria, just before a tour of Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox churches in Syria and Lebanon.

Most choirs would have spent months getting ready.

"This tour was more a matter of worship than performance," said Elias, an organizational psychologist from Saskatoon and one of 21 volunteers from Saskatchewan and Alberta who took part in the Easter visit from April 8-23.

A cross-cultural exchange had been suggested some years ago by Mennonite Central Committee Middle East staff. When it became apparent that Easter celebrations would be happening simultaneously by the Eastern and Western church in 2004, people on both sides of the ocean began talking about possibilities.

With the help of MCC Lebanon workers Suzanne and Randal Nickel, who had family ties in western Canada, the proposal became a reality.

Elias said the idea of a learning tour was appealing. "We were totally sold on that kind of education," he said.

Because distance made it impossible for choristers to practise as a group before leaving, conductor Duff Warkentin chose familiar hymns such as "The Lord's my shepherd," and "Heilig, Heilig, Heilig."

The choir's first official practice was at the St. Elias Monastery in Damascus.

"After the first downbeat, we were confident that things would work out," said Elias. "All the choir members had joined because they love to sing."

"Judging from the warmth of the reception and attendance at the concerts, it was very well received," said Eldon Wagler of MCC Syria. A patriarch of one of the Syrian Orthodox churches commented that angels

had been singing with the choir.

Elias was surprised by the positive feedback, given the conflict in Iraq. "We were received with tremendous hospitality," he said. "We met people who were profoundly sad.... I sensed a weariness over these military ways of trying to resolve issues."

The choir will sing and share stories at MCC meetings in their home provinces. A Lebanese pacifist will

address delegates at the MCC Alberta annual meeting this fall. Elias expects conversations between choir members and people from Middle East churches to continue via e-mail.

The trip was about more than sharing music, said Elias. "We were there to encourage and give them support, to develop relationships, and grow in our own faith," he said.—From MCC release by **Jonathan Tiessen**

Tofield, Alta.

Community honours minister of 60 years

Paul Voegtlin died following heart surgery on June 14 after 60 years of service as a minister in the Mennonite Church (Northwest Conference). At his funeral at Salem Mennonite Church here on June 17, his nephew, Fred Martin, read a poem he had written called "Reflections on Uncle Paul—The Carpenter." It begins:

Carpenters create—that's what they do.

They work with wood and saws and nails and glue;

They see the possibilities of pine,
And now and then a greater plan divine.

Here was a carpenter from first to last,

Shaped by a fellow tradesman, now long past.

He looked to richer mediums than wood

To build of hearts and minds a greater good.

The poem was read again at a memorial service the following day in Edson.

Paul Voegtlin was born in 1920. In 1943, he married Freda Maurer. They have two sons and one daughter.

In 1944, Voegtlin was ordained as a minister in the Salem congregation. In 1973, he became pastor of Edson Mennonite Church and served there until retirement. He continued to serve church and community after his retirement.

As a young man, Paul spent several winters attending Bible school that was held for congregations in the Northwest

Conference. In 1948 he spent a term at Hesston College. In 1956, the family left the farm and moved to Edmonton, where Paul attended the University of Alberta. He earned degrees in arts and education. He taught high school for 13 years.

Throughout his life, Paul promoted the nurturing of young people in their faith. He loved music and, in his earlier years as a minister, took choral groups on tours to churches as far as Ontario and Oregon. He helped initiate the interdenominational carol festivals that have become popular in the Tofield area. He sang with a choral group at the University of Alberta and with the Harmony Singers in Edson.

Paul served the conference as secretary, conference minister and, most recently, on the historical committee that planned the conference centennial celebrations. He served the wider Mennonite Church as a member of the Publication Board and on the General Board.

After retiring, Paul's hobby was building lawn furniture from discarded pieces of lumber and donating the products to Mennonite Central Committee sales and other charities. A few years ago, the Chamber of Commerce in Edson honoured Paul and Freda by declaring them Senior Citizens of the Year.

The appreciation and respect in which they were held was demonstrated by the large number of community people who attended Voegtlin's funeral and memorial service.—From report by **Joseph J. Voegtlin**

Winnipeg, Man.

El Salvador pastor inspired Summerbridge participant

It's been nearly two decades since his family fled civil conflict in El Salvador, but 29-year-old Alex Galdamez still remembers a church leader killed by government soldiers for feeding a band of guerilla fighters.

"He was a man of peace," said Galdamez, a participant in MCC Canada's Summerbridge program. Galdamez' family fled because they feared similar attacks for having spoken with guerillas passing through their village. The impact of a peaceful witness never left him.

Now, Galdamez plans to begin a peaceful witness of his own, providing moral and spiritual support to people in his home community of Langley, British Columbia. Through Summerbridge, he is working at First United Spanish Mennonite Church, spending time with youth and seniors, preaching and teaching.

Summerbridge allows participants of diverse cultural backgrounds to work in their home communities.

Galdamez is organizing a leadership and theology conference for people in his church so they can "be more aware of who they are." He is working with youth leaders from another church to distribute food to people living on the streets so that young people learn "that our Christian beliefs go beyond going to church on Sunday."

He is spending time with seniors in

his church, taking them on field trips, going grocery shopping and talking with them.

Once his Summerbridge term wraps up in August, Galdamez plans to return, with his wife and five-month-old daughter, to Goshen College, where he is pursuing degrees in nursing and theology. He anticipates that his education will provide him with tools to combine his love for God, learning and people.

"You can build a good friendship with patients if you're interested," he said. He also wants "to continue helping in the church," he said.—From MCC Canada release by **Jonathan Tiessen**



Galdamez

School notes

Showalter resigns

Goshen, Ind.—Shirley H. Showalter, president of Goshen College, is resigning this fall to become vice-president for programs at Fetzer Institute, a foundation that supports education and service programs.



Showalter

Showalter began as Goshen president on January 1, 1997. Prior to that she had taught English there since 1976. She was the first woman to lead the 110-year school. During her administration, the college added several programs of study, including American Sign Language interpreting and conflict studies, as well as a music centre. "We are losing an articulate voice for Mennonite education," noted Carlos Romero of the Mennonite Education Agency (MEA), which oversees Mennonite Church USA schools.—From Goshen College and MEA release



Summerbridge participants met in Winnipeg June 26-29 for an introduction to the work of Mennonite Central Committee and to meet their counterparts working in other provinces. Summerbridge, an MCC Canada program, gives an opportunity for people of diverse cultural backgrounds to work in their home communities during the summer. Back row, from left: Julien Cournoyer, St. Eustache, Quebec; Karol Salazar, Medicine Hat, Alberta; Sylvain Schambourg, Verdun, Quebec; Philip Chiang, Surrey, B.C.; Lisa Francis, Hammonds Plains, Nova Scotia; Nathan Bonneville, Dunham, Quebec; Han La, Calgary. Middle row: Nsele Munene Minkutu, Montreal; Peter Man, Vancouver; Alex Galdamez, Vancouver. Front row: John Moua, Kitchener, Ontario; Julieth Alexandra Arredondo, St. Jérôme, Quebec; Jean-François Dextraze, Montreal; Davinder Nijjar, Scarborough, Ontario.—From MCC Canada release

Montreal, Que.

A moving baptism in Montreal

After living in Montreal for 10 years, Ross Brownlee's only regret is that he didn't start attending Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal sooner. A regular for the last two years, Brownlee publicly confirmed his relationship to the church and to God in a moving ceremony on July 11.

Pastors Jean-Jacques Goulet and Lucille Marr baptized him and welcomed him into the family of Christ.

"It felt very meaningful to me, and very affirming," said Brownlee, who grew up in an Anglican church in Winnipeg where he was baptized as an infant. "It's true that this wasn't the first time, but I think it was the right time and the right place," he said.

Although he will be returning to Winnipeg in August, it was important to him that he be baptized here. "These people...made me feel welcome, started me on my re-faith journey and I feel so comfortable around them. I couldn't think of a finer group of people!"

Brownlee was "turned off" religion when his Anglican church suffered divisions. He came to Montreal to study trombone performance and found his calling as a high school music teacher, a job that "energizes me to make great music with kids, whom I love," he said.

He visited the congregation with a friend, and was surprised at how casual and personal the atmosphere was.

"At first I thought it was a bit bizarre," he said. "Having come from Anglican churches to this little

basement group, I was nervous by all the openness and intimacy.... Now I love and cherish that; it's the reason why I keep coming."

He was also impressed by members' dedication to "living their lives according to how they thought Jesus said we should live, which can be hard to do in Montreal, because it's such a diverse place. They live in the world, but bring to it something extra."

Brownlee credits the church's pastoral team for helping him make

sense of his feelings and faith.

"I'm good friends with Jean-Jacques. I feel blessed to have a great friend who happens to be a pastor and spiritual leader.... I was taking his church membership class when I got the job offer in Winnipeg, and he asked me if I wanted to be baptized. He was worried that I might lose the chance to have that public—yet intensely personal—testimony. So I did, and now it has brought me a great sense of happiness and relief."



Ross Brownlee (centre) celebrates his baptism with Jean-Jacques Goulet and Lucille Marr, co-pastors of the Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal.

Brownlee plans to visit the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach to "dig more information out of it" before he starts his new job as band director at St. John's Ravenscourt School. He will also look for a new church community in Winnipeg.

"I'm looking forward to spending more time with church people," he said. "I also feel very glad in my relationship with God, now that God knows that I've made this public commitment."—**Sasha Dyck**

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Didsbury, Alta.

Bergthal holds first cowboy service

A bird's clear song accompanied a reading of Psalm 8. Summer breezes flitted between rows of lawn chairs. A dozen horses stood quietly while members of the Bergthal Mennonite Church praised God in a country-style worship service on July 11.

Organizers Michael Brown and Eric Froese were pleased with the congregation's first attempt at a "cowboy service." Two antique cars, ten horseback riders and a wagon pulled by



Singing at the outdoor 'cowboy service' in Didsbury.

Froese's draft team arrived at the church at 10:15 a.m., fashionably late for the scheduled 10:00 a.m. start. Western tack, straw bales, and bouquets in real cowboy boot vases provided atmosphere.

Paul's sermon in Athens from Acts 17 formed the scriptural centerpiece for the morning. Dale Thompson, a cowboy poet from Grande Prairie, shared humorous rhyme along with his testimony. One of his poems included the lines, "So all I do and all I am, whatever road I plod, whatever talents or abilities, all glory be to God."

Homegrown talent Jennifer, Bethany and Anisa Loewen sang three country-style songs while congregational singing and prayer invited a congregational response.

After the service, barbecued hamburgers, beans and watermelon were served for lunch. Froese invited children onto his wagon for rides around the churchyard.

Inspiration for the outdoor service came from Trinity Mennonite Church's annual cowboy service in Calgary, which Froese attended. Brown attended a similar service during Crossfield's annual "cowboy days." Both were encouraged by pastor Elwin Garland to host a similar service at Bergthal. July 11 was chosen to correspond with the Calgary Stampede.

Will they do it again? "Definitely," said Brown. "This year was a kind of trial run...but it went really well."—

Donita Wiebe-Neufeld

Award to cowboy poet

Fort Worth, Texas—Doris Daley, member of Trinity Mennonite Church in Calgary, is the first Canadian to win top honours as a cowboy poet from the Academy of Western Artists. She received the Will Rogers Award here on July 13. This was Daley's third top-five nomination as best female cowboy poet in North America, and the first time any Canadian has won the cowboy poetry category.



Daley

Daley grew up in a ranching family in Alberta and began writing cowboy poetry in 1990. She has been a performer at cowboy gatherings in Canada and the U.S. She also leads poetry workshops. From 1984 to 1999, she worked with MCC's Ten Thousand Villages in Pennsylvania, Ontario and Alberta.—From release

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Kitchener, Ont.

Eastwood surrenders plans to MennoHomes

On July 27, the board of Eastwood Mennonite Community Homes Inc. surrendered its charter as a non-profit organization. Plans are to build new facilities for seniors under another corporation.

Eastwood was established in 1985 by four Mennonite churches in Kitchener—First Mennonite, Kitchener Mennonite Brethren, Rockway Mennonite and Stirling Avenue Mennonite—to develop a facility for seniors at 1414 King Street East.

The founders envisioned a continuum of care, from independent living to extended nursing care. Given the retrenchment in government funding in the 1980s and onerous guidelines for the allocation of nursing beds, Eastwood was unable to implement all of its goals.

It did build a 12-storey, 103-unit condominium with ownership of individual units. In 1987, a condominium corporation was registered and a board took over. The board has owned three-quarters of an acre adjacent to the condominium which was never developed.

In 2000, the board decided to



Photo by Chuck Kruger.

The final board of Eastwood Mennonite Community Homes, from left: Agnes Eby, secretary; Vern Sherk, president; Pauline Bauman, treasurer; Martin Buhr, Clara Jutzi, Ed Cressman, Elvera Goerz, David Rudy and Polly Good. Absent: Tamara Sommer.

dissolve if it could find a successor that would fulfill the original vision—additional facilities for seniors. Eastwood selected MennoHomes Incorporated, a non-profit that builds and operates affordable housing for

singles, families and seniors in the region.

On July 29, the vacant land was transferred to MennoHomes and a restrictive covenant registered on title.

According to the covenant, MennoHomes will develop a facility for seniors compatible with the existing condominium. MennoHomes, whose board president is Martin Buhr of Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, will consult with founding churches and the condo board on the building.

MennoHomes will apply for governmental capital assistance and raise funds to finance about 40 percent of the project. The remainder will be covered through a mortgage.

At the meeting of the Eastwood board on July 27, it was noted that board members Agnes Eby and Polly Good sat on the original board. Eby commented that the condo owed a debt of gratitude for the leadership of Milton Good and Alson Weber in the early years.

Current president Vern Sherk observed that Eastwood is making a valuable contribution of land and assets to MennoHomes, gifts that will enhance MennoHomes' application for funding.—From report



On June 24, Tofield Mennonite Church in Alberta was demolished to make way for a new sanctuary, still in the planning stages. Last August, the congregation said goodbye to the old building, which had served the community for 60 years, in a service of singing and reminiscing.—From Tofield release

Kelowna, B.C.

Loss of home brings grief and gratitude

Harry and Gertrude Loewen's spacious home has huge windows that offer a spectacular view. To the right you can see Okanagan Lake, its west bank dotted with vineyards. But the view to the left is most interesting.

"Once, all you could see was green trees," Harry says. Now, all that is left are blackened trunks. A road winds up the hill to the lone house that miraculously escaped the Okanagan fires that swept through Kelowna last summer. But Loewens were not so lucky.

"Everything you see here is new," Harry says, gesturing around their home. The Loewens lost virtually all their material possessions in the fire.

But as we sit down to a meal, the conversation does not focus on the Loewens alone. They want to know about my life as well. As we eat, a young woman wanders into their back yard. The Loewens had noticed her waiting in her car and invited her to relax in their back yard instead.

Eventually, the Loewens talk about what it meant to lose everything. Although the fires had been burning for weeks, they never believed their home was in danger. While other areas were given week-long evacuation notices, their notice was 20 minutes. How do you decide what to take?

"Important papers, photos, pictures," Gertrude says. "But we still didn't think that our house would go. Later you think, why didn't I take this or that? Why didn't I take a winter coat?"

When their son gave them the news that their house had burned they were understandably devastated. But their tears included tears of gratitude as well.

"Had it not been for our family, friends, the church it would have been a lot harder," Gertrude comments. "I said we've survived Stalin and Hitler, we'll survive this too!"

As they think about the past year, they are not looking for answers.

"So many people ask why the Lord allowed this to happen and they offer answers. We don't talk that way," Harry says. What they do talk about is

what they've learned. One of the hardest things, was learning to accept the generosity of others with grace.

"I am a person who likes to give; it is very hard to receive!" Gertrude exclaims.

"I like to be in control and now I was

what was left of their home. Harry walked through the devastation and had a long conversation with God.

"I said, 'Lord, I don't know what you had in mind for us, how long you had planned for us to live,' but I offered the Lord a bargain!" Harry says, laughing.



Harry Loewen contemplates the devastation after forest fires destroyed his house last summer.

helpless," says Harry. "I had to learn to accept and be grateful for others' love."

Gertrude's sister Elizabeth, living in Abbotsford about three hours away, organized the extended family to replace some of what was lost. Young people arrived with a truckload of things.

One of their greatest losses was Harry's library—he lost more than 2000 volumes of theology, history and literature accumulated over a lifetime of university teaching. As the news spread, Harry began receiving phone calls from colleagues all over the world offering to help him rebuild his library.

"I have one section that I'm going to call the Peter Erb section of my library," Harry says fondly. "He sent me five boxes of books."

After the fire was over they viewed

"I said, 'How about you give us another 15 years!'... I'm sure the Lord has a sense of humour."

The young woman seated in their back yard is invited to come in and help herself to some reading material from the new, albeit smaller, library. Although Harry and Gertrude lost their house, it is clear that they have not lost their home.—**Angelika Dawson**

Correction

John Wiebe's donation to the MCC Alberta sale was incorrectly described in the August 2 issue (page 24). He created five sets of steel bookends and gave them to the sale.

Saskatoon, Sask.

Shekinah celebrates 25 years

A few tents and a tarp kitchen” is how Lorne Friesen, Camp Shekinah’s first director, remembers the early days. “And it was great,” he adds.

On July 3-4, campers, staff, volunteers and friends from the past 25 years returned to the sheltered forests, dramatic hills and welcoming ravines on the North Saskatchewan River Valley, to celebrate the transformative power of a place where God and geography meet in a little more apparent way.

A slideshow traced the history of the camp. Jesse Ens from Rosthern presented images that chronicled the faces and experiences of a generation of campers and staff, and the development of camp facilities.

The current facility has a grand timber lodge, a natural swimming and skating area, cabins, a chalet, a rustic hermitage, a flying-fox and climbing wall—all developed in relation to their natural surroundings.

“We learn to tread softly here,” said

Lynne Martin of Arnaud, Manitoba, in a powerful meditation on Sunday morning. To the large congregation gathered in a tent at the base of the valley, she said, “We see God’s glory in every leaf, in every show of northern lights, in every diamond willow.”

Shekinah offers an opportunity to “strip away the artificial filters of the world” she said. Lynne and her late husband Omar spent several years as camp directors and experienced many moments of “awakening.”

One night, while walking by the light of the moon and stars, they realized they could see everything around them. They were met on the path by counsellors who had flashlights to light their way. The Martins stepped aside to see if they would be noticed. They were not. All the counsellors could see was the narrow tunnel illuminated by the artificial light.

Shekinah invites us, said Martin, to shut off our flashlights and allow God, Christ and nature to guide our path.

That such a small parcel of land has affected so many people so profoundly speaks to the natural beauty of the camp and the insistence that it stay that way.

“Whether Mennonite, First Nations, Christian or not, people frequently remark that there is a spirit here,” said Bernie Thiessen, current board

Shekinah invites us to shut off our flashlights and allow God, Christ and nature to guide our path.

chair. “We need to make sure we never let that get lost.”

Friends of Shekinah were invited to plant trees in memory of loved ones touched by the spirit of the place.

The weekend included a folk music festival, and a concert featuring Kimball Siebert and House of Doc. Shekinahfest ’04 ended with an evening communion service.—From report by **Brad Nichol**

Floradale, Ont.

City visitors enjoy country peace

For 20 years, Floradale Mennonite Church has hosted visitors from the Jane/Finch area of Toronto. On June 26-27, about 15 visitors came to spend the weekend in this rural community. This exchange has developed into lasting friendships over the years.

Guests from the city came by school bus and met their hosts at a local farm. After a barbecue lunch, people spent the afternoon and evening with their host families.

On Sunday morning, everyone gathered at the park for the church’s annual outdoor service. Although the sun shone intermittently, people shivered in the cool breeze. Everyone enjoyed the music of Menno Valley Sound, although some of the singers had trouble staying warm.

The children’s story had an unusual twist when Mary Frey-Martin, telling the story of the lost sheep, led the children on a search party and found a baby goat!

Clayton Kuepfer, pastor at the Black

Creek Faith Community in Toronto, talked about the value of the Floradale exchange. He quoted participants who have talked about Floradale as “a place of peace,” and “a good place to eat the best food!” Other comments were, “I wish I could stay longer” and that “colour doesn’t matter and there’s good fellowship.”

Clayton and Amy Kuepfer are supported by Mennonite Church Eastern Canada through the Jane/Finch Ministry. The Black Creek Faith Community, which meets in a highrise apartment building, has an attendance of about 25 people. They run a thrift store and organize

a variety of activities to reach out to the Jane/Finch community.

Visiting continued over the potluck meal and during the children’s activities. By 3:30 p.m. the guests from Toronto were back on the bus. In December, members of Floradale will spend an afternoon and evening in Toronto for the other half of the exchange.—**Barb Draper**



Doreen Cave (left) from Toronto, and Alice and Ralph Weber from Floradale work out a puzzle together during Floradale’s church picnic.

Photo by Roy Draper

Mennonite Church Canada

Jacobs resigns from Native Ministry

Donovan Jacobs, Constituency Education and Partnership Facilitator with Native Ministry, has resigned, effective August 31. He will become Aboriginal Justice and Advocacy Coordinator with MCC Manitoba, effective September 1.

In announcing the resignation, Walter Franz, MC Canada Native Ministry director, expressed regret that the perspective Jacobs brings "will no longer be a part of our team." Jacobs has worked with MC Canada Native Ministry since February 2002.

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Committee for seniors working at mandate

The Senior Services Committee of MCEC is seeking to understand how it can best serve seniors in the area church. Several years ago its program were significantly curtailed and its mandate became unclear.

In 2002, the committee conducted regional focus groups to discern what is being done by and for seniors. It became apparent that seniors are busy people. As one congregation said, "Seniors are integral to many aspects of congregational life." Another congregation reported: "Some (many?) seniors have very full lives and may not be looking for more activity."

Activities include service projects such as quilting, helping with thrift stores, or making crafts. Some visit other seniors who are home-bound or disabled, or provide transportation. A number of congregations have monthly seniors

meetings—games nights, social activities or speakers—and seasonal events such as Christmas banquets.

Occasionally they get together with other seniors in neighbouring congregations.

Those surveyed agreed that it is not always helpful to separate the generations. "It makes us older," one person remarked. They do not always need to be served by younger people—they can help themselves or be of assistance to each other.

The Senior Services Committee commented: "We were impressed by the wide variety of activities in which seniors were involved and the energy, enthusiasm and humour with which these seniors shared their sense of community and faith."

Asked what topics would be of interest for a regional event, seniors' answers included: information on government policies, end of life counselling, dealing with loss, funeral planning, information on long-term care, mediation for dealing with difficult issues, living wills and power of attorney.

The Senior Services Committee decided that its first project would be to share information on Parish Nursing. Three Parish Nurses working within MCEC congregations, and two who do similar work, will be invited to meet with the committee.

Parish Nursing speaks to some of the concerns raised by seniors. The nurses' role includes counselling, advocacy, teaching and health promotion. They work as a liaison between individuals and community health and home care personnel.

The August MCEC resource mailing includes a reading list and list of speakers available to describe Parish Nursing to congregations. The Senior Services Committee plans to do occasional mailings of resources for seniors. The chair

is Del Gingrich, phone (519) 669-1138.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Worship seminar planned for October

Leadership Ministries of MC Manitoba is offering a seminar on worship planning and leading following the successful format of last year's preaching workshops.

Irma Fast Dueck, who teaches at Canadian Mennonite University, will present the seminar, "Where two or three are gathered," on two occasions: October 30 at Graysville Mennonite Church and on November 6 at Douglas Mennonite Church.

This seminar will examine our theology of worship, and deal with practical implications for worship planning and leading. The purpose and meaning of worship will be addressed. Issues will include planning worship for the church year, creating orders of service, and praying publicly, as well as problems related to current practices.

Cost for the seminar is \$20. Participants are asked to register at least four days prior to the seminar.

Advent Planning Day in Steinbach

Gary Martens, pastor at Steinbach Mennonite Church, is inviting Manitoba congregations to join his church on September 25 to plan Advent/Christmas worship services. The event will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

"Each year...the Worship Council at Steinbach Mennonite Church invites interested people to get together to brainstorm and plan our Advent and Christmas services," said Martens. "It ends up being a wonderful experience, with the people

who come excited about getting involved." This year they are stretching the circle, inviting others to join them.

People can address any aspect of the planning—worship leading, children's features, drama, music, etc. Martens encourages participants to look over lectionary texts and conference resources and to bring helpful material to the meeting.

Those planning to attend should contact Martens at Steinbach Mennonite Church by September 10. Lunch and coffee breaks will be provided for \$5.00.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Workshop on stress for church leaders

Four Mennonite agencies, including MCC Saskatchewan, are hosting a workshop on dealing with day to day stress. The workshop, to be held on September 30, is aimed at pastoral leaders who may struggle with stress.

The two and half hour session, which includes lunch, will feature Lois Edmund, a psychologist from Winnipeg, as keynote speaker. Conference ministers Ken Bechtel (MC Saskatchewan) and Ralph Gliege (Mennonite Brethren) will be facilitators.

Developments at Herbert Nursing Home

The Herbert Nursing Home, a Mennonite facility, now has the support of the community in a dispute regarding the future of health care in the Herbert area.

After the provincial health minister in May suggested a hospital closure and reductions to health services in Herbert, the community developed an advisory committee to advocate for health care in the area. Sitting on the committee are councillors from rural areas

plus the board chair from the Herbert Nursing home.

The healthcare minister said the Herbert Nursing Home will lose 15 long-term care beds and gain 6 acute-care beds.

According to Pete Peters, nursing home board chair, the news is worrisome for two reasons: "Integration of acute services to the nursing home can only happen with MC Saskatchewan because it is the lone shareholder," explained Peters. Further, the home does not want to lose any beds.

However, the development of the advisory committee is seen as a positive step forward.

**Mennonite Church
British Columbia**

**B.C. leaders comment
on Winkler assembly**

Doug Epp, moderator of Mennonite Church B.C., was generally encouraged by the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in July, although his comments were mixed. He felt there was a good atmosphere and that people appreciated the new format of meeting around tables to discuss topics and have the opportunity for all to have a voice.

While the worship times were not personally as meaningful,

he "sensed a very positive spirit." He appreciated the speaker, Tom Yoder Neufeld.

Epp also appreciated that a committee handled resolutions before the assembly. He was "concerned," however, with the way the resolution from the Rosemary, Alberta, church was handled (there was very little discussion before it was tabled).

Some delegates from B.C. were frustrated because they resonated with the resolution and would have liked to see more discussion on it. He did say, however, that when he discussed the motion to table with the person who proposed it, it was not that person's intent to brush it off but to allow the General Board time to properly consider it.

Epp was also very encouraged by the good turnout from B.C.—over 50 delegates representing half of the churches (last year B.C. had only 17 delegates). He felt the increase was probably due to geography and family connections, but he knew that some churches made an intentional effort to be there as part of the process of strengthening ties between MC B.C. and MC Canada.

"This was one of the best conferences I've attended in all my years of conference

going," said Henry Kliever, B.C. conference pastor.

The roundtable discussion "included everyone from rookie to junkie," and many who would never have spoken at a mike were comfortable speaking in small groups.

"If we as a conference are trying to develop relationships, then the round tables were a wonderful tool for doing that," he said. He also times like Friday afternoon in the park where people could get to know one another.

Kliever found the worship very meaningful and enjoyed Yoder Neufeld's sermons. For Kliever, the worship was an extension of his experience at the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Africa last year—the theme in particular. He recalled the talk about feeding the 5000 and how when we give our little bit to God, miracles can happen.

One frustration he heard was that the plenary sessions just didn't give enough time for discussion.

"There was a sense that people had been freed up by the round table discussion to talk and then didn't get a chance to really discuss things thoroughly," he said. But he recognized the challenge to fit everything into the agenda,

"especially when you're trying to make it not just an issues thing but a...relationship-building event."

Kliever was also pleasantly surprised by the number of pastors from B.C. and those who are taking B.C.'s 18-month discernment process seriously. MC B.C. also had a conversation with representatives from MCEC.

**Pastor/spouse retreat
planned for October**

The annual Pastor/Spouse Retreat is being planned for October 4-6. This retreat enables pastors and their spouses to get away from work and be inspired.

A guest speaker leads the group in study times. The opportunity to talk with other pastors and their spouses is often the most valuable part of the event. Churches are encouraged to give their pastors the opportunity to take this time to be renewed.

For more information, contact Henry Kliever at the MC British Columbia office, phone (604) 850 6658.

From reports by correspondents.

Changes come with faithfulness

Integration and changes, transition and changes, evaluations and more changes—these words ring true for most of my work at Mennonite Church Canada during the last five years.

As I clean out my desk and organize Formation files for my successor, I notice many real changes. The names of many files have changed, some budgets have been reduced or re-assigned, some programs have disappeared and a few new ones have been added.

As I reflect on the changes, I feel again the intense pain that accompanied some of them. I also realize that many changes were a result of a natural evolution of priorities and programs.

The bigger changes, such as from a binational denomination to two national churches, were not made in a hurry. Multiple meetings, proposals, consultations and feedback from the constituent

cies preceded the actual changes.

One of the primary tasks of the church is to discern God's work in the culture and context in which the church exists. Our context is constantly changing, so the ways in which we discern also need to change.

The Formation program of the congregation and denomination is vital to the church becoming an organism that is able to discern the work of God. The church needs to be "formed" through the reading and understanding of the Bible so that faithful discernment can take place.

We are exploring new ways of being faithful to God and we know that the discernment process is not complete. When a decision is necessary before there is a consensus, we can feel vulnerable. Sometimes it is difficult to give ourselves enough grace to extend the time of discernment. Sometimes it seems impossi-

**From our
leaders**

ble to wait for discernment to end.

It is good to remind ourselves that discernment is the ongoing agenda of the church, and that the process by which we discern God's ways is as important as the decision we need to make.

Ultimately, changes in the church are not about us as individuals or congregations, but about doing God's work to the best of our understanding. Changes need to be firmly rooted in a deep dependence on the faithfulness of God. We need to be formed by the God who promises us that "The Lord will keep our going out and our coming in from this time on and forevermore" (Psalm 121:8).

Justina M. Heese, outgoing executive secretary of MC Canada Formation



Winnipeg, Man.

Women's group recalls history

Home Street Mennonite Church's Women in Mission group met for the last time in February.

The group was organized in April 1958. They chose the name "Sewing Sisters." Up to 45 women attended.

"I was amazed at what had been accomplished," noted Betty Klassen, who summarized their activities at the February 14 service.

The women memorized Bible verses, read articles on the family, sang and prayed. They exchanged names to support each other as "prayer sisters." They sent cards and visited the sick, the bereaved, parents of newborns and polio patients. Groups also went to the Selkirk Mental Health Hospital and put on birthday parties for residents.

They were involved in mother-daughter events and interacted with other women's groups. They prepared programs for the church and looked after little ones in two nurseries on



Photo by Tym, Elias and Phyllis Wiebe

The Home Street Women in Mission group is disbanding. Seated in the front row are charter members, from left: Mary Janzen, Helen Wiebe, Olga Teichroeb and Betty Klassen.

Sunday morning. They collected money at their meetings, and had a missions gift box at home as an extra incentive to give.

They gave to the library, bought toys and rugs for the nursery, stocked the kitchen with 100 settings of dishes and flatware. They cleaned and waxed pews, hemmed and embroidered tea towels, served meals at weddings and other functions.

In addition, there were projects such as MCC Christmas bundles, curtains for a cabin at Camp Assiniboia, and a blanket drive. They supported native children in summer camps and needy people elsewhere, as well as mission workers in various countries.

Although they have stopped meeting, "our work will continue in various ways," said Klassen.—From Home Street church report

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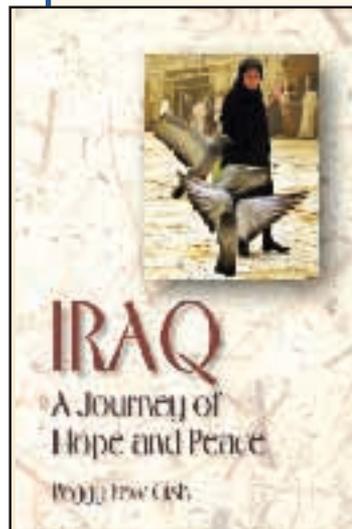
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Iraq

A Journey of Hope and Peace

Peggy Gish went to Iraq in an attempt to prevent war. But on March 20, 2003, the bombs began falling on Baghdad. Here is Gish's moving story of the Christian Peacemaker Teams' work in Iraq, before, during, and after the 2003 war. Told as her personal story, Gish makes real the horrors of war and her passionate vision for peace. From the fall of 2002 to the spring of 2004, Gish chronicles her Iraq experience, including a brief "Postscript." Here are stories of sleeping in a tent during bomb attacks, villages surrounded in razor wire, being

deported out of Iraq, fighting for justice for Iraqi prisoners, and through it all—seeking the way of Christ's peace. Paper, 296 pages, \$25.29



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People & Events

Kitchener, Ont.—The Gathering, a new church plant here, will receive \$10,000 for audiovisual equipment from the Wilfred Schlegel Memorial Fund. Jim Loepp Thiessen, who is heading the church plant, said the venture would be geared “to people not familiar with the [faith] story.” Brice Balmer, chaplain at House of Friendship here, was awarded \$7,000 from the fund for developing materials to train church leaders in “relating to the multifaith reality in their context.” The Schlegel fund, administered by Mennonite Foundation of Canada, provides one-time “venture capital” grants of up to \$15,000 annually.—From release

Winnipeg, Man.—On June 26, Terry Goertzen, associate pastor at Jubilee Mennonite Church here, entered the *Guinness Book of World Records* for riding the world’s highest bicycle. He built his own 5.5 metre-high bike, beating the record of a 4.3-metre-high bicycle. He had to ride at least 100 metres. The bike had crossbars to climb up and down, and was powered with an 11-metre-long chain. Over 200 people were present for the feat. The church sold hot dogs and drinks, raising funds to purchase bicycles for students in India.—From June 27 *Winnipeg Free Press*

Toronto, Ont.—Rebecca Johnson and Jim Loney have been appointed co-coordinators of Christian Peacemaker Teams Canada, both half time and based in Toronto. They replace Doug Pritchard, who has been appointed co-director of CPT. Loney, 39, from Toronto, has been a CPT reservist since 2000. He is a founding member of the Toronto Catholic Worker community and has won awards for his writing in *Catholic New Times* and *The*

Mustard Seed. Johnson, 40, from Parry Sound, Ontario, has also been a CPT reservist since 2000. She is founding coordinator of the World Council of Churches’ Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel, where she has been working for the past year and a half. She is a member of the United Church.—From CPT release

Toronto, Ont.—Several Christian Peacemaker Team members were worshipping in churches close to those which were bombed in Baghdad, Iraq, on August 1. Greg Rollins from Surrey, B.C. and Sheila Provencher from Indiana were worshipping at St. Raphael’s

Catholic Church when the first bomb exploded in an Armenian church a quarter-mile away. Doug Pritchard of Toronto and Peggy Gish of Ohio were worshipping at St. Yousef’s Chaldean Church in the same neighbourhood. So far no one has claimed responsibility for the attacks, a new element in the violence in Iraq. Gish and Pritchard, who is co-director of CPT, were pulled into a nearby home where a family recounted their tragic experiences. “Saddam was a killer,” they said. “Now there are many Saddams.” They fear that Iraq is now dangerous for Christians. “All Christians want to leave Iraq now,” said the mother. “There is no safety for them here now.”—From Christian Peacemaker Teams release

Park, July 3.
Schroeder-Marsh—Thomy and Mary, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., July 24.
Shamim-Andres—Vahid and Leticia, Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, B.C., July 31.
Unrau-Wiens—Jake and Judy, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., July 16.
Young-Hubert—Ryan Andrew and Jacqueline (Jackie), Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, B.C., July 23.

Deaths

Biickert—Anne, 92, Eden Mennonite, Chilliwack, B.C., June 6.
Derksen—Abram, 99, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., July 26.
Dyck—Christine (Braun), 84, Clearbrook Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C., Aug. 3.
Friesen—Cornelius, 88, Niagara United Mennonite, Ont., July 22.
Hoepfner—Margaret, 98, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., July 20.
Martin—Aden S., 79, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 7.
Neufeld—Jacob, 83, Tofield Mennonite, Alta., July 29.
Nickel—Margaret, 92, Laird Mennonite, Sask., July 19.
Penner—Agatha, 92, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., July 3.
Redekopp—Dave, 84, Laird Mennonite, Sask., July 24.
Wiebe—Margaret, 83, Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask., July 2.

Baptisms

Breslau Mennonite, Ont.—Pam McCartney and David Toews, May 30.
Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.—Samantha Albrecht, June 27.
Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask.—Frieda Waldner, May 26.

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

Transitions

Births/adoptions

Bartel—to Patty Neufeldt and Mark of Rochester, New York, Valleyview Mennonite, London, Ont., a son, Julian Ronald, July 19.
Bergsma—to Karen and Melvin, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., a son, Jacob Douglas Armstrong, July 22.
Fletcher—to Alea and Randy, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Joellah Francis, July 25.
Mierau—to Cindy and Keith, Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask., twin sons, Justin Richard and Logan Maynard, July 9.
Nieves—to Diana Diaz and Omar, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., a son, Joshua, July 27.
Ropp—to Wanda and Andrew, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., a daughter, Alayna Grace, July 4.
Wiebe—to Laura and Greg, Trinity Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., a son, Kyle David, July 13.

Marriages

Crouch-Nickel—James and Tiffany, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., July 31.
Frey-Kuepfer—Derek and Renee, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., June 12.
Janzen-Lumley—Kurt and Jorie, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., July 17.
Martens-Jepsen—Les and Laurie, Laird Mennonite, Sask., July 11.
Matyas-Arlt—Noel and Kristy, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., July 24.
Pauls-Regier—Matthew and Laura, Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Aug. 7.
Penfold-Holst—Joshua (Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont.) and Rebecca, (Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.), at Hidden Acres Camp, Aug. 7.
Ramer-Baerg—Nathan and Erin, Rosemary Mennonite, Alta., Aug. 7.
Regehr-Tanner—Dinho (Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.) and Marnie (Peace Mennonite, Regina, Sask.), at Waskesiu

Employment opportunities



Stewardship education and service
from an Anabaptist perspective

Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC) is a charitable foundation serving seven Anabaptist church conferences across Canada. These conferences combine to form a constituency of 60,000 people in 480 churches. MFC currently manages \$64 million in charitable assets and has distributed \$28 million to charities over its 30-year history.

GENERAL MANAGER

MFC is seeking a General Manager at its head office in Winnipeg, MB. This person will be responsible to manage the overall operations of the Foundation and ensure that MFC's biblical stewardship message and charitable gift and estate planning services are effectively carried out.

The successful candidate will:

- Have management training and experience
- Be innovative, entrepreneurial, and a person of vision
- Possess strong written and verbal communication skills
- Possess excellent public relations skills
- Support MFC's stewardship message and principles

This position reports directly to MFC Board. The candidate must be a member of one of MFC's seven participating conference churches. MFC offers a competitive salary and benefits package.

Applications should be submitted by September 30, 2004 to:

Personnel Committee
12-1325 Markham Road
Winnipeg, MB R3T 4J6
E-mail: gmsearch@mennofoundation.ca
www.mennofoundation.ca

Mennonite Central Committee urgently needs three workers to support the MCC program in **Bangladesh** through a major transition.

A SERVICE WORKER COORDINATOR

is needed for one to three years to provide support for the expatriate service worker team as they adjust to life and work in Bangladesh. Previous overseas experience and a degree in Human Resources, social work, international development or related field required.

A MARKETING/PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER

is needed to assist the NGO partner develop a marketing strategy and determine new products. A degree in business administration or public relations/marketing and three years of related experience are required. Three-year term preferred.

A BUSINESS CONSULTANT

who knows the fair trade sector is needed for one year to do in-depth financial analysis and recommend financial restructuring for an MCC organization moving to independence as a local NGO.

For more information about these positions, contact:

Jan Siemens
E-mail: jds@mcc.org
Phone: (717) 859-1151
or read the assignment descriptions on our web site
www.mcc.org/serve

MCC Canada seeks applications for the position of

INTERIM WEB EDITOR

(in the Winnipeg, MB Canada Office)

The website editor will ensure that MCC's mission, programs and initiatives are well represented on the MCC website. Although the website editor is accountable to the Director of Communications of MCC Canada, he/she will also take direction from the MCC Binational Director of Communications. This is a two-year term position beginning November 1, 2004.

Qualifications:

- A good understanding of web technology as a communication tool
- Strong writing and editing skills
- Familiar with HTML and emerging web technologies
- Pro-active and energetic
- Strong organizational skills – ability to take an idea and turn it into reality within established time limits
- Creative
- Strong inter-personal skills with the capacity to communicate over distance and think strategically, taking into account the needs of a geographically diverse organization.
- Understanding of MCC structure/program/perspectives
- Basic knowledge of web design, indexing, cross-referencing, etc.

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

For more information contact:

Marsha Jones or Marilyn Funk in the MCC Canada office.
Phone: (204) 261-6381
E-mail: mgj@mennonitecc.ca or mrf@mennonitecc.ca



Conrad Grebel University College

ACADEMIC DEAN

Conrad Grebel University College, a Mennonite college on the campus of the University of Waterloo, is seeking a dynamic and energetic person to serve as Academic Dean beginning July 1, 2005. The Academic Dean is the chief academic officer of the College and a member of the administrative leadership team.

Conrad Grebel is the residential and teaching college of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada. Its undergraduate academic program is fully integrated with the University of Waterloo and includes departments of Music and Peace and Conflict Studies as well as courses in Religious Studies, History, English, Sociology, Philosophy and Interdisciplinary Arts. The College also offers a graduate program in Theological Studies and is affiliated with the Toronto School of Theology.

Preference will be given to candidates who have established themselves as excellent teachers and scholars, have experience in academic leadership and administration, stand within the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition and are Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada.

For more information, please contact the President's Office at cggpres@uwaterloo.ca. Applications or nominations, to be received by October 18, 2004, should be addressed to:

Dr. Henry Paetkau, President
Conrad Grebel University College
Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6

Shekinah Retreat Centre is accepting applications for the following positions:

MAINTENANCE MANAGER (Full Time)

starting as soon as possible. Qualifications should include training/experience of building, grounds and equipment maintenance; working knowledge in the areas of plumbing, electrical, refrigeration, general construction; mechanical skills; possess the ability to work well alongside other people; solid communication skills to ensure clear communication within the staff team, both year-round and summer; have a thorough understanding of Shekinah's philosophy, aims and objectives and a willingness to uphold Mennonite/Anabaptist practices; be in sympathy with the faith statements as outlined in Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective as a guide to daily living.

FOOD SERVICES COORDINATOR (Full Time)

starting as soon as possible. Qualifications should include training/experience in the area of food services; preparing balanced menus, purchasing groceries, cooking, monitoring food inventory, ensuring that all guidelines in health and food safety are followed; have a food handling certificate; possess the ability to work well alongside other people; solid communication skills to ensure clear communication within the staff team, both year-round and summer; have a thorough understanding of Shekinah's philosophy, aims and objectives and a willingness to uphold Mennonite/Anabaptist practices; be in sympathy with the faith statements as outlined in Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective as a guide to daily living.

Interested parties can contact Shekinah's main office at **(306) 945-4929** for a complete job description. Applications will be accepted until each position has been filled and should be addressed to:

**Carl Wiens, c/o Shekinah Retreat Centre
Box 490, Waldheim, SK S0K 4R0**

The Mennonite Church of Vernon (founded in 1980) in the interior of beautiful B. C. invites applications for the position of

FULL-TIME SENIOR PASTOR

Our urban church is a multigenerational group of approximately 150 people actively involved in outreach, small groups and youth activities. We value and encourage everyone's gifts and incorporate a variety of music. We seek a warm welcoming person with good interpersonal and organizational abilities whose primary responsibility would be pastoral care, visitation, preaching and building relationships in the community. Candidates should have training in Theology/Religious studies and possess a commitment to the value and visions of the Anabaptist Mennonite church. Starting date to be negotiated. Direct applications to:

**Search Committee Chair, Ann Thiessen
Phone: (250) 542-8581
E-mail : aathiess@junction.net**

MANAGING EDITOR

Herald Press, Mennonite Publishing Network, is seeking an editor for its book division. For more information visit www.heraldpress.org. Send letter of application to:

**Herald Press Director
616 Walnut Avenue, Scottsdale, PA 15683 or
E-mail: levi@mph.org**

Applications will be reviewed immediately, and position remains open until filled.

Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) is seeking an

EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR

to lead in the implementation of "Partnership Africa", AIMM's renewed vision for an international and inter-Mennonite mission venture in, and from, Africa. While responsibility for actual program decision-making is being shifted to Partnership Councils operating in the country of mission activity, certain networking and facilitating responsibilities will be required centrally. Hence AIMM will maintain an International Central Council (ICC) with a small central office staff.

The Executive Coordinator will work on behalf of, and be accountable to, the AIMM ICC. The actual full-time equivalent (fte) of the position is negotiable. It will, however, be the responsibility of the Executive Coordinator to ensure that all the necessary functions of the central office are professionally attended to, either by the Executive Coordinator or other staff. A list of these central office functions is available on request.

The successful candidate for this position should have the following qualifications:

- (1) an Anabaptist/Mennonite approach to Christian faith and mission,
- (2) experience and knowledge of mission in Africa,
- (3) fluency in English and French,
- (4) ability to build and coordinate a new organization.

Currently the AIMM administrative office is located in Goshen, Indiana but the Executive Coordinator may be located elsewhere in North America or in Africa. The position may begin as early as January 1, 2005 or as late as July 1, 2005. Salary, benefits and FTE negotiable. Applications should be received by September 15.

Letters of application or other inquiries should be sent to:

**Dave Dyck, Transition Coordinator
660 Bardal Bay,
Winnipeg, MB, Canada R2G 0J2
E-mail: dmdyck1@mts.net
Phone: (204) 663-4342**

GRACE MENNONITE CHURCH, BRANDON, MANITOBA is seeking an individual or couple-team to make up a

FULL-TIME PASTOR

We are a 70-member Mennonite Church Canada congregation with a varied ethnic and occupational mix - the largest age group being retirees - in a growing 40,000 population centre a 2 1/4 hour drive west of Winnipeg. Needed amenities are within a 10-minute driving radius.

We need leadership towards growth, especially with youth/young adults. We appreciate well-researched biblical-based and theologically Anabaptist messages and teaching and seek a pastor who has a strong desire to get to know and meet the needs of his/her congregation through active visitation.

For further information and submission of resumes:

**Pastoral Search Committee Chair
Phone/Fax: (204) 728-4515
E-mail: pletkeman@westman.wave.ca
Post: 951 10th St., Brandon, MB R7A 4H2**

CURRICULUM MANAGING EDITOR

Publishers of the forthcoming Gather 'Round Sunday school curriculum seek experienced, full-time editor to help edit materials, manage scheduling and production of all products, and assist project director with overall development and administration. Applicants should be well-grounded in Mennonite or Church of the Brethren beliefs and practices, have excellent editorial and communication skills, and have high ability to manage detail. Denominational balance on project staff will be a significant factor in selection.

Location: Elgin, Ill., preferred.
Start date: Negotiable, but participation in September writers conference desired. Contact:

Anna Speicher, Project Director,
E-mail: gatherround@brethren.org
1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120
Phone: 800-323-8039, ext. 209

Deadline for applications: Sept. 3rd.



Mennonite Central Committee (Ontario) invites applications for the position of

MENNONITE IMMIGRANTS REGIONAL DIRECTOR

This position requires a person with a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking. MCCO is seeking an individual with an empathic understanding of and appreciation for the Low German Mennonite culture, faith expression and way of life. Fluency in Low German is important. Skills and experience in program management, including planning, personnel supervision and budgeting. This full-time position works out of both Chatham and Leamington and is available on a salaried basis beginning in October 2004. Application deadline is September 15, 2004. Send resume and cover letter to:

Cath Woolner, Mennonite Central Committee
50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1
Phone: (519) 745-8458
E-mail: cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca

Floradale Mennonite church is seeking a half-time
YOUTH PASTOR

Floradale is a congregation of 210 members, 20 minutes from Kitchener-Waterloo, with an active youth group. A major area of responsibility will be to facilitate the planning and directing of the youth program.

For more information, contact:

Muriel Bechtel, MCEC Pastoral Services
4489 King St. E. Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2
Phone: (519) 650-3806; fax: (519) 650-3947
E-mail: muriel@mcec.on.ca

Guitar teacher wanted immediately to work at an established studio in New Hamburg, ON. Please call (519) 662-9432.

For rent

Shared Accommodation in Mennohouse, Woodbine & Danforth, Toronto. Sublet room for August. Beautiful house. Share bathroom, living room, kitchen. Seconds to TTC. Interview required. \$600.00 Inclusive. (416) 686-1480 or (416) 422-2406.

Toronto United Mennonite Church is seeking a
PASTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES

This person will coordinate the youth and junior youth programs, providing pastoral care to sponsors, youth, and children. We are looking for someone with a heart for faith development who will model Christian discipleship in an urban, multi-cultural setting. A person with additional gifts and interest in ministry to young adults, or in children's education, is especially welcome. Some graduate training is desirable; this is a 0.5 - 0.75 FTE position.

For more information, or to apply, please contact:

Muriel Bechtel, MCEC
4489 King St. E. Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2
Phone: (519) 650-3806; Fax: (519) 650-3947
E-mail: muriel@mcec.on.ca

Faith Mennonite Church, in Leamington Ontario has an immediate opening for a

FULL TIME PASTOR or INTERIM PASTOR

to serve a congregation of about 250 persons. We are a church with a large number of young families. We are seeking a person/s, who will provide spiritual leadership and guidance to our congregation. Previous pastoral experience is preferred.

For further information, or to send a resume, contact:

Muriel Bechtel
MCEC (Mennonite Church Eastern Canada)
4489 King St. E., Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2
Phone: (519) 650-3806; Fax: (519) 650-3947



MANAGING EDITOR

Canadian Mennonite is seeking a Managing Editor. This full-time position begins Jan. 1, 2005 and is based in Waterloo, Ontario. A resumé and two news-writing samples should be submitted by Oct. 22, 2004.

The person filling this position will have the responsibility of editing and producing each issue. Duties include working with the Editor on story ideas and soliciting contributions, overseeing layouts, and proof reading. The Managing Editor also will do some reporting and writing.

Applicants should have: a passion for the church and for Canadian Mennonite's mission; excellent communication and listening skills; the ability to manage multiple tasks and details, and flexibility and creativity under pressure.

Direct inquiries and applications to:
Timothy Dyck, Editor and Publisher, Canadian Mennonite
490 Dutton Dr., Unit C5, Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7
Phone: 1-800-378-2524,
E-mail: editor@canadianmennonite.org

www.canadianmennonite.org



Next issue:
September 6

Win a trip to visit mission workers

Winnipeg, Man.—Todd and Jeanette Hanson, Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers, are inviting guests to visit them in Nanchong, China. And for one person, the trip could be free.

Bonaventure Travel has offered a \$2000 gift certificate for a visit to a Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker. The winner of the "WOW! What a Draw" contest could visit workers in Europe, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East or Asia. There are also second and third prizes.

Contestants must submit a 300-word statement on why they want to visit an international worker. Entry forms can be found at www.mennonitechurch.ca. The draw will take place on November 1. —From MC Canada

Young adult retreat on 'community'

Winnipeg, Manitoba—The annual North American Young Adult Fellowship retreat will be held at Canadian Mennonite University October 1-3. The theme, "Community: Living the tension," touches on western culture's desire for intimacy and its fear of that connectedness.

Events will include worship, a coffee house, Bible study, and a tour of a Hutterite colony. The Young Adult Fellowship is a network of young adults (ages 18-30) and staff from Mennonite Church Canada and MC USA. The purpose of the retreat is to encourage young adults to explore faith and discipleship, and provide tools for thriving in a diverse culture.

Congregations have received registration information. For further details, phone Bob Wiebe at (204)-896-1616 or e-mail: bwiebe@mennochurch.mb.ca.



Dan Dyck photo

MC Canada staff Janet Plenert, Kathy Fast and Al Rempel launch the WOW! What a Draw! contest at the assembly in July.

Conference to focus on North American Mennonite history

Winnipeg, Man.—The Chair in Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg is hosting a conference, "North American Mennonite history: The state of the art," on October 1-2. The conference will include looks at missions, literature, gender, ethnicity, justice, theology, economics

and church life.

The keynote address, at 7:00 p.m. on October 1, is by John Lapp, former Mennonite Central Committee leader, with a response by African writer Barbara Nkala. Sessions begin at 9:00 a.m. both days.

For more information, go to uwinnipeg.ca/academic/as/mennstudies.—From report by **Royden Loewen**

School embroiled in 'Mohawk' controversy

A high school in southern Manitoba will decide by December 21 whether it will change the name and logo of its sports team, the Morden Mohawks. The school has been embroiled for months in a controversy over the name, dividing students and the community. (The name has been controversial for decades.) The board has remained largely silent, except for one member who publicly vowed he will not allow a change. An aboriginal group, United Against Racism (UAR), has threatened legal action if a more "culturally sensitive" name is not chosen. UAR says its intent is "to educate, not embarrass, the students/people of Morden." UAR members gave students an overview of aboriginal history, noting the reasons why the name and especially the logo (a screaming Indian head) is offensive.

—From reports

Calendar

British Columbia

September 17-18: MCC Festival at the Tradex, Abbotsford. Call (604) 850-6639 or visit www.mcc.org/bc.
September 19: MCC Festival of Praise at South Abbotsford Mennonite Brethren Church, 2:30 p.m.
September 25: MCC Fall Fair at Civic Centre, Prince George.
October 4-6: Pastor/spouse retreat.
October 15-17: Women in Mission retreat on "Prayer," with speaker Karen Heidebrecht-Thiessen.
October 21: MCC Thrifts Shops evening with "quilt lady" Elda Martens, 7:00 p.m. Call Norma Neufeld at (604) 850-6639 for details.
October 22-23: MC British Columbia workshop on homosexuality with Willard Swartley, Toni Dolfo Smith and Neil Rempel.
October 22, 23, 29, 30: Mennonite Disaster Service information evenings, at Willow Park MB Church, Kelowna (22), Sardis Community Church (23), King Road MB Church, Abbotsford (29), First United Mennonite, Vancouver (30), 7:00 p.m.
November 6: MCC B.C. annual meeting.

Alberta

October 15, 16, 17, 18: Community Justice Ministries celebrations with speaker Wayne Northey (from M2W2 in B.C.), in Edmonton (15), Calgary (16), Rosemary (17), Didsbury (18).
January 21-23: Junior high Snow Camp at Camp Valaqua.
February 25-27: Senior high Snow Camp at Camp Valaqua.

Saskatchewan

September 10-12: Junior high retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre. Speakers: Aiden and

Karen Schlichting Enns.
September 12: Opening program at Rosthern Junior College, 2:30 p.m.
September 30: MCC workshop on living with stress, at MCC office, Saskatoon, 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
September 30-October 2: Canadian Mennonite Health Assembly at Shekinah.
October 15-16: Saskatchewan Women in Mission retreat.
October 20-23: Christian Peacemaker Team meeting at Shekinah.
October 28-29: Missional church workshop for lay leaders at Camp Elim.
November 5-6: MCC Saskatchewan annual meeting.
November 5-7: Quilting and scrapbooking retreat at Shekinah.
November 12-13: Music Fest at Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim.
November 13-14: Musical, "Pull of the land," at Rosthern Junior College. Fundraiser for Mennonite Heritage Museum.
February 25-26: MC Saskatchewan annual sessions at Rosthern Junior College.

Manitoba

September 11: "Head for the hills" cyclathon in Pembina Hills for Eden Health Care Services. Phone (204) 325-5355, e-mail: edenfdn@valleycable.com.
September 18: MCC Relief Sale at Big M Centre, Morris.
September 19: MCC Manitoba alumni barbecue at Mitchell Park, 2:00-8:00 p.m. Call (204) 261-6381, toll-free: 888-622-6337.
September 21: Meeting of Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Society at Bedson campus, 7:00 p.m.
September 24-25: MCC Relief Sale at Keystone Centre, Brandon.
September 25: Advent Planning Day at Steinbach Mennonite Church. Contact church by Sept. 10 if attending.
September 26: Opening program at Canadian Mennonite University, part of Homecoming Weekend. See www.cmu.ca.

October 1-2: Conference on North American Mennonite history at University of Winnipeg. Speakers John Lapp and Barbara Nkala Oct. 1, 7:00 p.m. Visit web site: uwinnipeg.ca/academic/as/mennstudies.
October 1-3: Young Adult Fellowship North American gathering at Canadian Mennonite University on "Community: Living the tension." Contact Bob Wiebe, phone (204) 896-1616, ext. 254; e-mail: bwiebe@mennochurch.mb.ca.
October 2: MC Manitoba Equipping Conference at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg.
October 3: Opening program of Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School at Portage Ave. Mennonite Brethren Church, 2:30 p.m.
October 6-7: John and Margaret Friesen Lectures at CMU with Barbara Nkala from Zimbabwe.
October 15-16: 24-hour women's retreat at Camp Assiniboia, with speaker Kathy Koop on "Faithful women: then and now."
October 19-20: J.J. Thiessen Lectures at CMU with Peter Erb of Wilfrid Laurier University.
October 23: Manitoba Women for MCC conference at First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 10:00 a.m. Bring bag lunch and bar of soap.
October 30: Seminar on worship planning and leading with Irma Fast Dueck at Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

Ontario
August 27: Ontario Mennonite Music Camp final concert at Breslau Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m.
September 10-12: Building Community Retreat for people with disabilities, at Hidden Acres Camp. Speaker: Irma Janzen. Call (519) 578-2608.
September 12: George Albrecht (spouses Elizabeth Bauer and Maria Hammer) potluck reunion at Khaki Club, Wellesley, 1:00 p.m. Call Gwen

Albrecht at (519) 662-2927.
September 12: Service of remembrance at Altona Mennonite Meeting House (near Stouffville), 3:00 p.m. Speaker Martha Smith Good.
September 17-19: Student and young adult retreat at Crieff Hills on "Finding a home in a disconnected world."
September 18: Relief sale at Black Creek Pioneer Village.
September 19: Celebration of 50 years in ministry with Jim and Helen Reusser, at Waterloo North Mennonite Church, 3:30 p.m.
October 5, 12, 19: MCEC regional meetings at Hillcrest Mennonite (5), Elmira Mennonite (12), Vineland First Mennonite (19), 7:00 p.m.

October 23: Marriage Encounter Auction and Banquet at Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church. Call (519) 743-5255.
October 25: Mennonite Savings and Credit Union meeting on proposed investment and elections, at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m.
November 5-7: MCEC Youth Exchange Weekend.
November 6: Lay leadership training by SAFARI at Steinmann Mennonite Church, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
November 21: Junior Youth Breakaway at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, 10:00 a.m.

Subscriber services CANADIAN Mennonite

How to subscribe:

- Individuals who are part of Mennonite Church Canada or one of its five area conferences can ask to be placed on their congregation's group subscription list. The subscription is paid by the conferences.
- Others who wish to order a subscription can use this form. See contact information below.
 Rates: \$32.50 for one year (includes \$2.13 GST); \$52.50 (Can.) to U.S.; \$73.00 (Can.) for overseas.

Name _____
 Address _____
 _____ Postal Code _____

- Payment enclosed
 Charge my VISA Mastercard

_____ card number _____ expiry date _____

Subscription changes:

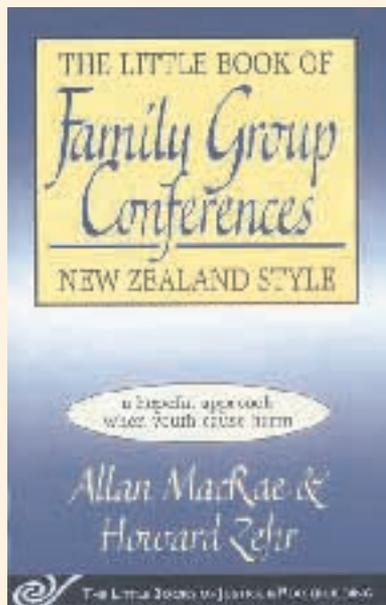
- When submitting a change of address or cancellation, please use the subscription number:

Subscription number	Expiry date
A999999	00/00/00
Kathy Mennonite 999 Menno St. WINNIPEG MB X0X 0X0	
- Subscription changes are not considered Transitions notices. (Please send Transitions to the editor.)
- Changes will be made immediately but may take 4-6 weeks to take effect because of printing schedules.**

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

Is there a better approach to youth misconduct?

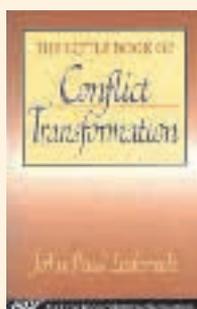


The Little Book of Family Group Conferences
by Allan MacRae & Howard Zehr
76 pages • paperback
\$6.95 (Canadian) / \$4.95 (U.S.)

Since their introduction in New Zealand, Family Group Conferences have been adopted and adapted in many places throughout the world. They have been applied in many arenas including child welfare, school discipline, and criminal justice, both juvenile and adult. In fact, FGCs have emerged as one of the most promising models of restorative justice.

This *Little Book* describes the basics and rationale for this approach to juvenile justice, as well as how an FGC is conducted.

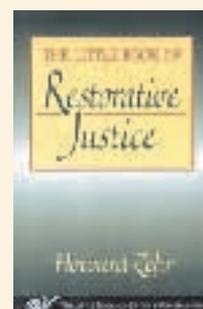
Allan MacRae is Southern Regional Coordinator for Youth Justice in New Zealand, overseeing youth justice for much of the South Island. Howard Zehr is one of the founders of the field of restorative justice and is often called upon to interpret restorative justice in many parts of the world.



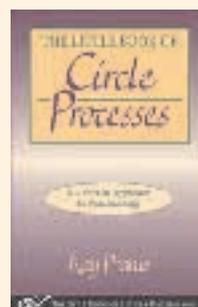
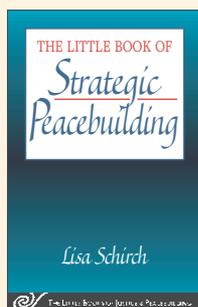
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