

# CANADIAN Mennonite

September 5, 2005  
Volume 9, Number 17



**RJC turns 100**

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**On the threshold**

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## Brother Roger's gift to the church

Just as he had sung so many times in his life, Roger Louis Schutz has again found rest and peace in God alone.

The 90-year-old Swiss monk and pastor, better known simply as Brother Roger, died a few weeks ago on August 16, killed by a woman who was probably mentally ill. He was attacked as he prayed during an evening service at the Reconciliation Church in Burgundy, southern France, while 2,500 young people were present worshipping.

Schutz affected the church in a way few have in the past century. He founded the now-famous Christian community in Taizé, France in 1944.

Helping both Jews hiding from persecution and, later, German prisoners of war, the small community of monks demonstrated a life based on the reconciling love of Christ. Taizé would be a place where, in Schutz's words, "kindness of heart would be a matter of practical experience, and where love would be at the heart of all things."

Despite its small size, the community has had great influence on Christian worship around the world through its pattern of contemplative singing, community and personal prayer, candle lighting and, especially, silence. Many were attracted to a less word-filled practice of worship and thousands, mostly young people, now come from around the world to visit Taizé each summer.

Taizé worship has been a revitalizing gift to Christian churches regardless of denomination, language or location.



**Brother Roger showed how compelling quiet worship and prayer could be.**

Its familiarity is a testament to how many have felt the depth of God's presence in a new way through it.

Taizé has helped restore the mystery and high holy reverence of worshipping our almighty God.

Through its silences, it showed that God was worth waiting for. Through its simple, profound song lyrics, it taught us old truths about our faith. Through repetition and reflection, it helped those truths come to rest deep within our souls, ready to emerge later when needed.

Many of you have experienced Taizé services or have seen Taizé ideas influence regular worship at your church. In remembrance of Brother Roger's life, we'd welcome your comments describing or reflecting on the influence Taizé has had on the church.

Part of the entrance vows of the Taizé community state, "So, refusing to look back, and joyful with infinite gratitude, never fear to rise to meet the dawn, praising, blessing, and singing Christ your Lord."

Thank you, Brother Roger, for rising each day in the service of Christ our Lord.

**Shoes for your Feet:** We are starting a new column series this issue, Shoes for your Feet (see page 14). Over the next few months, Mennonite pastor Matthew Bailey-Dick will help equip us in our calling as Christian peacemakers. The basis of the column is Ephesians 6:15: "As shoes for your feet, put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace." Matthew's goal is to reflect on Christian peacemaking practices and figure out what kinds of "footwear" we need for the justice journey, both as individuals and as congregations.

—**Tim Miller 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](http://www.canadianmennonite.org) on the Thursday before the issue date. So you can check out the September 19 issue by September 15.

**Cover: Kristina Friesen, Gary Friesen and Louise Friesen, along with Blake Friesen, cooperate in lighting the candelabra at Rosthern Junior College's centennial celebration. Kristina, Gary and Louise are, respectively, great-granddaughter, grandson and daughter of the school's founder, Bishop David Toews. Photo by Henry Harms.**

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Abbotsford, B.C.

## That has a nice ring to it: B.C. bell ringer sets world record

**D**ing-a-ling.” “Dead ringer.” “It rings a bell with him.”

Joe Defries of Abbotsford has heard all the bell jokes and puns, but he doesn't mind. In fact, to a man who collects jokes, they are music to his ears.

The 54-year-old handbell choir director at West Abbotsford Mennonite Church recently rang his way into the record books by playing handbells continuously for more than 28 hours. Currently, he is awaiting official verification of his accomplishment by the Guinness World Record organization in London, England.

“What I'm trying to do,” says Defries, “is to promote an awareness of handbells, a truly unique and beautiful instrument.”

He became intrigued with record-setting when looking through a Guinness World Record book last fall and thought, “I could do that.” His passion for handbells inspired him to pursue setting a handbell-ringing record, which he was surprised to learn had never been done.

Defries then began the lengthy process of making an official application with the Guinness organization, which eventually led to his marathon ringing session at the B.C. Guild of English Handbell Ringers convention in Penticton, B.C., on July 5 and 6.

“Now I know why no one's ever done it,” says Defries in retrospect. “It's very demanding.”

Much preparation was required for such an ambitious feat. To assure he was in the best possible physical condition, Defries lost 52 pounds in the months before his record attempt. He also practised playing handbells for hours at a time. And with the largest bells weighing about 20 pounds, he practised lifting weights.

Rules for qualifying for the world record attempt were exact and inflexible:

- A maximum of 30 seconds between compositions played.
- One 15-minute break every four hours.
- The pieces played had to be published, recognized compositions at least two minutes long.
- No piece could be repeated in a four-hour period. (Defries took it one step further, deciding not to repeat any piece at all during his entire marathon. He had 1,300 selections prepared.)
- There had to be two witnesses present at all times and constant documentation, which was done through live feed on the Internet. Defries and his team had to supply a videographer to film everything and purchase timing equipment to conform to Guinness' standards.

Defries began playing his bells at 8 a.m. on July 5 with “O Canada” and just kept going, one piece at a time, through hymns, Christmas carols, and popular, classical, children's and folk songs. All his careful preparation worked. Defries had methodically arranged the order of pieces by key to make transitions more smooth.

During his allowed pauses he did stretching and finger exercises in order to prevent carpal tunnel syndrome.

He credits his team of assistants with taking care of the external details to make his marathon ringing session possible. In addition to making sure the washroom was available for him with no line-ups at breaks, the team supplied energy drinks and a bucket of ice water for Defries to plunge his head into for rejuvenation.

Another source of rejuvenation came at about 24 hours of playing, when he learned that his third grandchild had been born. Defries had known that his son Joel, youth pastor at the West Abbotsford Church, and his wife were



Amy Dueckman photo

**Joe Defries, the handbell choir director at West Abbotsford Mennonite Church, B.C., is awaiting confirmation from the Guinness World Record organization that his nearly 29 hours of continuous handbell ringing is, in fact, a world record.**

planning to name their son Elijah, and he was prepared with the chorus “Days of Elijah” to honour the new baby.

After about 28 hours of playing, Defries felt the bells were truly taking their toll on him.

“I was starting to clink bells together and that's bad,” he says. “Also I started to reverse bells. That's when I knew enough was enough.”

Realizing he had reached his limit, Defries decided to end the session with the song he had pre-selected to be his last, “Jesus Loves Me.” His final time: 28 hours 50 minutes 21 seconds.

With all the paperwork submitted to Guinness, Defries now has to wait to see if the organization will officially acknowledge his feat. He knows there is no guarantee. But no matter what the decision, Defries knows what he has accomplished and has gained tremendous satisfaction from his effort.

Defries has always asked himself how his bell ringing could be used for God's glory. He feels he has achieved a “higher communion with God” through his playing. “It's been a great experience,” he says. “All things are ‘possibell!’”

(Visit [www.possibells.com](http://www.possibells.com) to learn more about Defries and his bell-ringing record.)

Morden, Man.

## Perogy maker helps spread the gospel in Pauingassi

**H**elena Rempel can't sit still. Either the phone rings or someone is at the door. It seems there is no time for an interview, but she puts on the kettle and brings out photos, and still has time to inquire of each person who stops by or calls. She is afraid she might miss them as she shuffles slowly across the floor, hanging on to every wall and corner for balance.

"I'm coming, I'm coming," she calls quietly with each careful step.

At 88, Rempel has no idea how many dozen *Glums Warenecki* (cottage cheese perogies) she has made this year, but she has raised \$528 for the vacation Bible school (VBS) program in Pauingassi, Man., this summer. Last year, she raised more than \$1,000 by selling her perogies for \$3.50 a dozen.

The young people in her church—Morden Mennonite—have been flying to the remote First Nations community of Pauingassi in northern Manitoba for the past five summers to offer a VBS program there. Pauingassi was among the most needy of the communities that Mennonite Church Canada worked in before program cuts were made several years ago.

"I thought to myself, what can I do?" said Rempel of the need to help.

And so she began her VBS perogy fundraiser. It's a quiet campaign that keeps her busy. Her only advertisement is an announcement in the church bulletin—with a phone number to place an order, but no name.

Rempel is reluctant to talk about what she does, or to put her name or picture to this effort. "...and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast," said Rempel quoting Paul in Ephesians 2:8b-9.

With some urging and much humility, Rempel talks about her life. Several years ago, her church under-



**Helena Rempel does her daily devotions with an open Bible and *World of Witness* book. She collects the money from her perogy sales in a plastic container. This summer, she passed on her earnings for the VBS program at the northern Manitoba First Nations community of Pauingassi, and she is now collecting her earnings for MCC Global Family program and the Canadian Bible Society.**

took a major building expansion.

"From the first load of gravel to the last shingle, I walked every day past the church," she recalled. "I would stop and say a prayer."

She also made and sold perogies to help fund the project.

"I had a container where I put all the money and my granddaughter would help keep track of the money," she said. "One weekend it was so low, and I wanted to give up, but then the next Saturday I sold 22 dozen! It put me to shame."

She raised more than \$1,000 for the building project by using her pension cheque to cover her ingredient expenses.

Twenty-three years ago, after her second husband died, Rempel did not let her loneliness pull her down. She went to the local personal care home and volunteered.

"I picked up older people and drove them around, describing to them the scenery because they couldn't see it themselves," Rempel said. "They could experience the beauty through my eyes."

She also helped feed the residents, assisted in the activity room and shared times of Bible reading, singing

and prayer with residents for 17 years.

There is a part of a life that still "hurts to the core of the soul," though.

In 1941, when her oldest son was just over a year old and three months before her second son was born, her first husband died suddenly of double pneumonia in Siberia. As a widow with two children she had to go back to school. She became a Kindergarten teacher in Russia and Germany.

"But not for long," she said. Because of the Second World War, "we were always fleeing."

With two children, Rempel said, "we needed to find a way to come over" to Canada. She learned of a Mennonite farmer in the Morden area who was willing to sponsor her and her two children. In 1949, they came to Canada.

"He was a wonderful father and grandfather," she said of her second husband. "I have 20 great grandchildren and 10 grandchildren."

VBS is over for this year. Rempel is now filling her jar of earnings from perogy sales for Mennonite Central Committee's Global Family program and the Canadian Bible Society.

—Evelyn Rempel Petkau

Photo by Evelyn Rempel Petkau

# In Christ all things together

*The following sermon—based on Colossians 1:3-4, 9-20—was preached by John Rempel, assistant professor of theology and Anabaptist studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and associate director of the Institute of Mennonite Studies, at the centennial celebrations for Rosthern Junior College (RJC), Rosthern, Sask., on July 31. For more RJC news, see pages 21-22.*



**A** hundred years is a very long time in the life of a school. Each year and each class gathered here adds a layer to the centennial birthday cake. We have gathered here to taste all the layers of the cake—the people and events that have made RJC into an enduring institution, an agent of God’s grace in shaping the minds and inspiring the visions of generations of students, and through them, church and society in western Canada.

Retracing the steps of the past is rewarding because it brings to life the ideals, struggles, failures and achievements that have worked together for the good we now celebrate. As I read *Education With a Plus*, Frank Epp’s history of Rosthern Junior College, I was astonished at the tenacity of those teachers, ministers, parents and students who went against the grain in each generation and refused to give up on the dream.

Over a year ago I received a letter from Geri Baltzer on behalf of the Centennial Worship Committee. The invitation was an opportunity to get to know the story of a sibling Mennonite institution, striving with us at AMBS, to make Christ relevant to church and society. She said that much of the weekend would be devoted to memories of the past. What the planners wanted on Sunday morning was a vision of how RJC might enter the future inspired to prepare young people to take responsibility in church and society in the spirit of Jesus.

We live in a time of thrilling, but also confusing and overwhelming, change. We ask ourselves, in the midst of this tumult, how we find a stance toward the world that is neither a retreat into a fortified Mennonite sphere in

which we provide only for our own, nor such an uncritical embrace of society around us that our salt loses its savour. I want to sketch out a vision of Christian identity that finds its way between these extremes.

The letter to the Colossians was written to people who were tempted by many gods and authorities, as we are. Paul writes that it is only in Christ that all things hold together, only in him that the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. These are audacious words in a pluralistic society!

What led me to this passage for this occasion? It’s grandeur! Paul confesses nothing less than Christ as the clue to the meaning of history. In Christ the purposes of God have become known. His light is more powerful than all darkness. In his presence we recognize, but need not despair of, our frailty. Like Paul, we know that we are earthen vessels, clay jars. It is not we who bring healing to ourselves or to the world; it is God’s transcendent power in us and through us.

But how are we to recognize this transcendent power at work in everyday life? The hardships and perplex-

ities of day-to-day existence dull our awareness of the wonder of God's intervening presence. Even when we don't feel it, Paul reminds us that we already belong to a new reality. We have been rescued from the power of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of God's beloved Son.

As we read on, we see the grandeur of the text unfold. In Christ, all things in heaven and earth were created. Paul goes from one amazing claim about Christ to the next. Reading through this passage is like climbing higher and higher on a mountain.

I once had the enormous thrill of visiting Nepal, the land of breathtaking peaks. We asked villagers whether there was a way for people without training as mountain climbers to get a view of the highest peaks. They gave us directions to Nuggarkoat, the lowest mountain directly opposite Mount Everest. I will never forget the ecstasy of arriving at the tip of Nuggarkoat at sunrise on a cloudless morning and having my breath taken away by the sight of the mythic mountain.

Nuggarkoat is an image for the church: it is the place from which we glimpse God's grandeur. The sun is an image for Christ—in him God's purposes are disclosed. Everest is an image for the kingdom—it is the final, shimmering outcome of those purposes.

To put it into Paul's words: In Christ, all things have been created. In Christ, all things hold together. In Christ, all things are reconciled.

Mennonites have rightly placed great weight on Jesus' earthly ministry, teaching and death. We believe that Jesus' life is the pattern for our lives. What counts is living his kind of life amidst the conflicting demands of our existence.

What we sometimes forget is that the reality of Christ is greater and nearer than his years in human history. Christ is our window to God. Through him we look into the mystery of love. Christ is also God's window to us. Through him we grasp the meaning of being human.

As Christians become more and more a minority in North American society, and as we make our way in an increasingly complex and divided world, we are tempted to conclude that

the God of the Bible is too small to provide enough love to go around.

But listen to Paul: "Christ himself is before all things and in him all things hold together." The molecules of the biosphere, the institutions of culture, the thoughts of the mind! Paul declares that in the man from Judea everything God has made coheres. In him, everything God intends for the cosmos is summed up.

If we open ourselves even a little to this stupendous claim that Christ is the tangible and unifying presence of God in the world, the intimate reality that grounds the life of the church and of each believer, we gain a fresh perspective on the baffling antagonisms of the "culture wars" of our time.

As mainstream Mennonites in Canada and the United States assimilate, our identity moves from that of a separate, homogeneous religious culture to full participation in a multi-cultural, multi-religious, multi-ideological society. Here, partisan loyalties pull our small church in many directions and pit us against one another. Liberal Mennonites follow one credo, conservative Mennonites another.

If we were clearer about the centrality of the Christ, "in whom all things hold together," many other convictions and experiences that divide us would be negotiable. In order to find the way of faithfulness we need the whole Christ—social activist, teacher, redeemer, living presence.

Right now in Mennonite Church Canada and USA, we pick the parts of Jesus we like. Some choose Jesus the redeemer, who brings us to heaven. Others follow Jesus the

**Continued on page 8**



Photo by George Epp

**Representatives of Rosthern Junior College staff, board, students and alumni over the years prepare to light the centennial candelabra.**



Photo by Henry Harris

**Quilt designer Alma Elias of Saskatoon introduces the audience to the components of the quilt after the unveiling.**

**Hold together** *From page 7*

prophet, who brings heaven to earth. The New Testament offers us the whole Christ, the one who is all these things.

Each faction in our church follows a Christ who is too small, smaller than the picture the Bible gives us of him. Some of the issues we fight about are really proxies for the suspicion we have of each other's view of Christ, but are unwilling to address plainly. If we could agree that the Christ we follow is bigger than all our favourite parts of him, many of the agonizing questions—about different worship styles, views of homosexuality—and arguments about the mission of the church would lose much of their sting.

I'm not talking here about dissolving all the convictions we hold into a happy haze. But I am saying that if all of us made ourselves accountable to the whole Christ, we would have enough of a shared faith to trust one another in working the other things out.

The world is desperate for people with convictions they are willing to live for and die for. Let us make this centennial a turning point in which we confess humbly and non-violently that Christ is the way, the truth and the life. It is that foundation which makes a life of sacrifice possible and worthwhile. When we live that way, Muslims are not our enemies, consumerism is not our god, and the environment is our sacred trust.

As of yesterday, RJC's first century came to a close. Today, the sun rises on a new century of educational challenge. We have climbed the mountain of nostalgia and been rightly inspired by the myriad ways Rosthern Junior College has shaped the lives of generations of individuals and the wider life of MC Canada.

But soon we will descend from the heights of remembering and envisioning, to return to the flatlands where love has to wear work clothes. As we go, may we be guided by the down-to-earthness of Jesus, our fellow-activist, as well as the grandeur of Jesus, God's intimate presence, wherever the call to ministry leads us.

As we go, let us remember that this reality is big enough to encompass all our conflicts and all our dreams. Let us follow in the footsteps of the teachers, ministers, parents and students of RJC, who went against the grain in their generation and refused to give up on the dream of living as if the reign of God is present now.

No one who believes that will be put to shame. Amen.



# Mennonites on the threshold

**A**s a child growing up on a farm, I had no shortage of play spaces. I could climb the maple trees in the front yard, play hide-and-seek in the barn, and explore the big, bushy gooseberry plants beside the house.

Then there were the more distant corners of the property: the evergreens on the other side of the river and the fence rows along the farthest field. The most daunting place was just beyond our property where there was an overgrown dirt road—a road that wasn't marked on any map—that headed off toward who-knows-where.

So it was that I discovered the peripheries, the boundaries, the forbidden zones of life. Yet, along with the danger I discovered opportunity. I discovered that it is precisely at the periphery that I sometimes get the best perspective on things.

Instead of broken bones, I'd rather see our Mennonite community inviting strength and courage as we explore our thresholds together.

I believe the Holy Spirit is working within our Mennonite communities to bring a heightened sense of our peripheries, our "thresholds." It's not really up to us to build the thresholds in the first place; that's what God does. And I believe that God is working to change us from within by urging us beyond what we think are our boundaries.

"Being on the threshold" has two seemingly contradictory meanings. On the one hand, to be on the threshold is to be standing on the doorsill, the entryway from one room to another. On the other hand, "threshold" also refers to an upper limit, a ceiling beyond which something becomes unbearable or impossible.

A scholarly textbook might refer to this as a "dialectic"—a circumstance defined by two opposing forces. Perhaps we can simply see it as a healthy tension in our lives. Part of what happens at "threshold moments" is that the more we push the limits, the more we confirm what is at the core. In terms of human communities,



there are times when we realize that those on the periphery actually embody more of the identity of the community than we want to admit.

Think of the early Anabaptists whose identity was based on their radical opposition to the most entrenched church practices of that time. Even within the Anabaptist movement, some of the most powerful advancements in theology came as a result of the preaching and writing of some who were seen as radicals, perhaps even lunatics.

And yet the fascinating thing about Anabaptist history is that the whole project was about getting back to the roots of Christian faith—ranging far and wide in order to return to the core. Our spiritual forebears defined the traditions and set the boundaries while simultaneously breaking new ground for the sake of faithfulness to the gospel.

**Continued on page 10**

**Threshold** *From page 7*

If we look to the early Christians, they too were regarded as peripheral and treasonous, even though their intention was to reinvigorate the central truths of the Jewish faith. Jesus himself was the “pioneer and perfecter” of calling people back to the centre—being in faithful relationship with God—while at the same time eating with outcasts, ministering on the margins, and proclaiming bold new truths about loving enemies and overcoming evil with good.

Our history is punctuated with these threshold moments in which the impetus for healthy church growth comes from more than reiterating popularly accepted views.

To bring all of this close to home, I find that those who are regarded as being on the periphery of today’s Mennonite community are often providing the most helpful perspective on what being Mennonite is all about. I find that the radicals are the ones who are testing and confirming the issues that are central to our faith.

So the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective will probably undergo some fascinating changes when we more fully understand the perspectives of our Mennonite brothers and sisters who are pioneering new forms of nonviolent social change, who are promoting environmental sustainability, or who are challenging our theological horizons. These apparent peripheries will allow us to clarify and strengthen our core identity as Christians because they are, in fact, at the core.

Our peacemaking ministries provide a very tangible example of a current threshold not only for Mennonites, but for Christians in general. For example, I’ve talked to folks who are surprised that the “radical” work of Christian Peacemaker Teams is actually sanctioned by our Mennonite churches.

Paradoxically, the gospel of peace—as much as it seems to push the limits—is also the core of our faith. God’s work in the world is the work of overcoming evil with good, transforming violence and rectifying injustice. This was the core of Jesus’ ministry.

Today, our peace work takes us back to the core, and yet it takes us to completely uncomfortable places where we stand on street corners with prayer vigils, put ourselves out there with letters to the government, and call for peace when many other voices call for war.

I believe that our current vocation as a Mennonite community has a lot to do with how we embody the gospel of peace. I agree with those who point out that our “quiet in the land” chapter has now drawn to a close, and that the coming years will see us much more actively involved in bringing healing and hope to our communities.

By the power of the Holy Spirit, our sticking close to home will be in our taking the peacemaking message “out there” with gusto. I’d like to see our Mennonite community inviting strength and courage for the road ahead.

Incidentally, that overgrown road near our farm didn’t hold me back forever. I remember times when I biked clear through to the other side of that “scary spot,” and then I found beautiful farmland with even more places to wonder about and explore.

Yet, as much as I needed to expand the horizons, I also found myself more and more intrigued by what adventures could be had right around our house. The going out was connected to the sticking close to home, and in that truth—grasped only later in my life—there was something of the grace of God.

—**Matthew Bailey-Dick**

*The author is a husband of one, father of two, and half-time pastor of many at Erb Street Mennonite Church in Waterloo, Ont.*



Abbotsford, B.C.

## Mom learns to *Treasure the Moments*

**F**or Laurel Hildebrandt, being a wife and mother to two children while juggling a counselling career means life is full. But Hildebrandt found that in the midst of it all, she wanted to be able to treasure the moments with her husband and children—especially when she had had a particularly rough day. One of her habits is to journal and to find the blessings in each day. The result of this habit is a new book entitled *Treasure the Moments, Spiritual Insights for Motherhood*.

“Some moments were scary, funny or just wonderful kid moments, but the important thing was, ‘What can I learn from this? What is God teaching me?’” she says.

“At the time it was being written I was in the midst of two years of severe sleep deprivation.... Joshua, our youngest,... was severely colicky and just wouldn’t sleep,” Hildebrandt recalls. “I wanted to hold onto moments. Those moments and the writing of them became my sanity because I was looking for the next chapter, I was looking for treasureable moments which added much joy to being a mother.”

Using a storytelling format and sharing from her own experience, Hildebrandt connects those moments to the lessons that can be learned from them. Chapters with titles like “A higher calling,” “Feeding time at the zoo,” and “Super Mom,” highlight a humorous approach to topics that hit home to most mothers.

In the chapter titled “A day in the life of...,” Hildebrandt shares the experience of a sleep-deprived day when she questioned her sanity:

“My tired brain runs through the juggling act I seem to be performing. I have a two-year-old. I have a baby who refuses to sleep and cries much of the time. I have a private counsel-

ling practice that I can’t keep up with because of my lack of sleep.... I can barely stay awake to supervise my intern counsellor and have zero time for any administrative work. My self-analysis seems to ring true in my very tired brain. Diagnosis: crazy mom.”

But as she considers her diagnosis, she also wonders if Jesus’ mother, Mary, ever felt like she was losing her mind. Considering all that Mary had to deal with in simply bearing the Son of God, it would be understandable if Mary felt at loose ends. Yet, Hildebrandt says, all indications are that Mary accepted her calling with grace: “Mary understood that she had been called for this purpose in her life and completely trusted God with her calling, no matter what the consequences.”

It is this simple insight that has made the book popular with mothers.

“People are telling me that they love the book and are encouraged by it,” she says. “People are telling me that they are now okay with just spending some quality time with their kids rather than fretting about cleaning up all the messes that little ones make—with balance of course!”

Her greatest hope is that the book will draw people closer to God, whom she sees as the perfect parent. She felt that God was with her throughout the writing of it. “I asked God how I should pray for this book,” she says. “His answer was simple, ‘Pray that it gets published and widely read to my glory.’ Praise God for the first part of answered prayer. Now I am on the second part of that prayer—to God be the glory!”

*Treasure the Moments* is published by Tate Publishing & Enterprises. Ordering information is available at Hildebrandt’s website: [www.laurelhildebrandt.com](http://www.laurelhildebrandt.com).

—**Angelika Dawson**



Goshen, Ind.

## Mennonite women of colour share stories of faith

**S**tories collected from Mennonite women of colour from around the world are now ready to be shared and to connect persons of faith.

The documentary *Living Water, Living Faith* is the culmination of more than two years of work by Pat McFarlane, associate professor of communication at Goshen College, Linda Christophel, a licensed clinical social worker and 1983 Goshen College graduate, and professional video producer Ed Cundiff. Its premiere was at the binational convention of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA in Charlotte, N.C., on July 7.

“We believe these videos will allow for many people in the Mennonite church to hear the often unheard stories of Mennonite women of colour—their faith stories, their stories of perseverance and courage, their stories of forgiveness and overcoming discrimination,” says McFarlane.

Over three years, the team collected stories from 41 women throughout the United States, as well as interviewing 11 international women at the 2003 Mennonite World Conference in Zimbabwe. “Linda and I are passionate about this project because of our own awareness that the voices of women of colour in the church often remain unheard,” said McFarlane. “Our hope is that the Mennonite Church as a whole will experience the great contribution of these women’s stories of faith and courage.”

Christophel and McFarlane will continue with this project by writing a book about the women they have interviewed, including stories not featured in the documentary and interesting things that happened throughout the process.

The DVD will be available to purchase this month by e-mailing [barbjs@goshen.edu](mailto:barbjs@goshen.edu).

—Goshen College release by Jennifer Rupp

Nanchong, China, and Sapporo, Japan

## Baritone sings of peace, understanding in East Asia

As the last note hung in the otherwise silent auditorium, listeners sat in wonder of Anthony Brown's voice, wiping tear-damp eyes. Then the crowd burst into applause, the sound of their hands ringing into the building's rafters.

Brown, well versed in opera, oratorio, art song, contemporary works and spirituals, made his Asian debut on a tour May 9 through June 13. Hosted by Mennonite Church Canada Witness partners China Educational Exchange (CEE) and Mennonite Mission Network (MMN), the baritone gave concerts and lectures in China and Japan at universities, concert halls, churches and Mennonite centres. In each venue, Brown's goal was to connect across race, language and culture to promote peace and help his audiences focus on their oneness in the family of God.

"If I can go to a very different part of the world and connect deeply with others and find in our meeting our



Photo submitted by Witness workers Jeanette and Todd Hanson

During his first Asian tour, singer Anthony Brown, right, greeted members of Nanchong (China) Christian Church following a Sunday morning worship service. Translating for him was Li Na, a senior at China West Normal University, left.

common humanity, something very significant has occurred," Brown said.

According to Teresa Sherrill, Witness worker in Japan, Brown's presentations allowed for self-examination, encouraging listeners to look deeper at their own attitudes and see beyond others' exteriors to the Christ inside.

"As Japanese society continues to be confronted by their Asian neighbours for their past and ongoing racial tensions, Tony's words were thought-provoking and led us to consider the power and presence of the transcendent one," Sherrill said.

In Japan's busy and competitive society, current trends have brought "a relativism and freedom that was not tolerated or encouraged in the past," Sherrill said. "Allegiance to the group identity has been diluted and more people are expressing their own preferences."

In Nanchong, a music professor expressed gratitude for the baritone's willingness to learn from the Chinese. Audience members were delighted to join Brown in singing several African-American spirituals, as well as a Chinese folk tune the singer learned

on the road. He also visited the Nanchong church, leading a Saturday afternoon choir workshop, singing in the Sunday morning worship service, and then visiting with Chinese Christians.

According to Gordon Janzen, who oversees Witness ministries in Asia, the Anthony Brown tour illustrates the benefits of working with partner agencies. "In this case, Tony Brown, through Hesston College [where he is artist-in-residence], was able to minister to people of another culture in another continent. The world of international ministry would be so much smaller without these networks," said Janzen.

Brown said the tour helped him understand and feel solidarity with the Chinese and Japanese. "My family has been increased and I thank God for the opportunity to share my life and to receive the gift of new brothers and sisters," he explained. "Hearing their stories only confirmed for me just how much we are alike and just how much we need each other."

—MC Canada Witness release  
by **Bethany Keener**

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## Letters

### Work article connects with our Mennonite heritage

As a Mennonite Brethren member, Mennonite Church Canada has always had a place in my mind to one degree or another, but I have not taken the time to look at its publication (*Canadian Mennonite*) or the website ([www.canadianmennonite.org](http://www.canadianmennonite.org)) until today.

The article, “Can work be redeemed?” (June 13, page 6), caught my attention because it connected with much of what is part of our mutual heritage. By the time I read the section, “Work as our defining characteristic,” I reflected on hearing news that the mandatory retirement age of 65 will soon go out with the horse and buggy.

My ex-employer offered early retirement and that has its own challenges. Keeping busy or productive is not one of them, but how and why are the bigger questions.

Questions like “Does work define you?” and, “Have you found the balance between being and doing?” are sadly, in my opinion, the typical Mennonite way of asking, “What is your financial status and level of independence?”

I ask myself and others if I have found that balance that satisfies me and my relationship with God and my church, and will there be continued respect and fellowship even though it may not include the “sweat of the brow”? I can hear hypothetical leaders in our congregation reply with, “Yes,” providing you donate your tithes and offerings to the church.”

—**R. Hiebert, Abbotsford, B.C.**

### FASD articles help educate churches, communities

As parents of an adopted FASD (fetal alcohol spectrum disorder) child, we

**This section is a forum for discussion and discernment. Letters express the opinion of the writer only, not necessarily the position of Canadian Mennonite, any of the five area churches or Mennonite Church Canada. Letters should address issues rather than criticizing individuals and include the writer's contact information. We will send copies of letters discussing other parties to the named individuals or organizations to provide the opportunity for a response. Letters can be sent to [letters@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:letters@canadianmennonite.org) or to “Letter to the Editor,” Canadian Mennonite, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7.**

were extremely pleased to see the articles in the June 27 issue of *Canadian Mennonite*.

Our experiences are so similar to what was written—the negative labeling, isolation, guilt feelings of “being a bad parent,” and, for the child, rejection.

We are so glad that awareness is being created, and feel very strongly that our churches and community need to show more care, compassion and support to families suffering from this totally preventable syndrome, but they need to be educated. We need to educate and look at how we can help and understand, rather than label and judge both the child and the adoptive parents.

We basically diagnosed our daughter ourselves after reading *The Broken Chord* by Michael Dorris. We were able to get an official diagnosis for our daughter from a geneticist when she was 18. Until that time, we were on our own, searching, seeking and struggling to find help and understanding, feeling very inadequate and alone, as we tried to understand what was going on with our child.

She is now on a disability pension, since holding a job is almost impossible. To people who see her for a short time, she appears perfectly normal, but the bottled emotions, frustrations, hurts and frequent explosive behaviour are hidden behind her smile. Consequences have no meaning for her. She struggles daily to be accepted and not be taken advantage of.

She is affected for life.  
—**George and Irma Hildebrandt, Kingsville, Ont.**

### McLaren books provide Christian cultural insight

Phil Wagler asks for responses regarding Mennonite culture (“Our future is politically incorrect,” July 11, page 11).

To begin to understand how Christianity is shaped and informed by a larger culture, I recommend reading and studying books like Brian D. McLaren’s *A New Kind of Christian* and *Adventures in Missing the Point*.

The first book is a conversation between two characters: one a pastor, the other formerly a pastor. It begins: “Sometime in 1994, at the age of thirty-eight, I got sick of being a pastor. Frankly, I was almost sick of being a Christian.”

McLaren has his characters converse about many topics. One topic is about the Bible; one of the characters suggests that we should perhaps “let the Bible read us,” rather than the other way about.

The second book is by McLaren and Tony Campolo; each writer contributes essays and they then respond to each other’s essays. Campolo, as many know, is highly regarded in evangelical circles in the United States and, perhaps, in Canada. For those who are concerned about homosexuality, Campolo’s essay on this may surprise some.

When we begin to understand how our larger culture is informing and shaping Christianity generally, we may be able to begin to see how the larger culture affects our Mennonite faith specifically.

—**Jim Suderman, Winnipeg**

## True discipleship means following Christ's example

I was glad to read Joel Dick's timely argument that the Mennonite Church risks its relevance unless it debates the meaning of true discipleship ("Prophetic peace witness needed," July 11, page 10).

We have indeed been wasting our time recently with the same-sex controversy. To say the least, the discussion around this issue has not been a shining example of peace.

The Mennonite Church is in danger of losing its authenticity unless it returns to root principles of pacifism. I would argue, as Dick seems to suggest, that we are inextricably involved with affairs of power and state, even those of us in the "helping professions." Our education and welfare systems, for example, may well primarily serve the state's own interests. I would further

argue that "liberal" and "conservative" alike need to examine the church's role in this moral labyrinth.

Of course I'm not advocating withdrawal from the larger society, although some more traditional Mennonites may choose that option. But for the sake of our own salvation, we need to examine the possibilities of Christ's example of peace.

—Robert Martens, Abbotsford, B.C.

## Jesus liberated women; church should do the same

In the July 11 issue of *Canadian Mennonite*, Reynold Kipfer expresses concern that of the 13 Canadian graduates of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 10 were women ("Modern trends will lead to decline in the church," page 10). In the next paragraph, he paints a picture of the church of the future as "almost 100

percent" female. It appears that Kipfer is suggesting that women in leadership may be the underlying cause for his predicted change in church membership.

Rather than blaming women, a study should be undertaken to explore why men are not choosing pastoral ministry as a vocation or why men are withdrawing from services of worship and church membership (if that is the case). Accountability and responsibility are part of the commitment made to God and to our sisters and brothers at baptism, regardless of one's gender.

Perhaps the "secular women's liberation movement" would not have been needed if the church had continued to follow the patterns of liberation set by Jesus. In his culture, a man was forbidden to speak with a woman in public, nor was he to have contact with the Samaritans. The story of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan

## Radical faith and running shoes

*"As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace" Ephesians 6:15.*

**W**hat happens if you imagine our collective peacemaking ministry as a race? What are the running shoes that you would recommend to someone who wants to join this race? How is your church finding ways of taking the gospel of peace and running with it?

Hebrews 12:1-2a contains the following challenge: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...."

This passage offers a wonderful encouragement for us to continue running forward with boldness even while we look back at the "radical" pioneer in whose footsteps we follow.

Ours is a radical faith because it also takes us back to the root of Christian faith—the word "radical" comes from the Latin word for "root"—to the Bible, to the life of Jesus, to the moving of the Holy Spirit, to the love of God. It is here at the taproot of our faith that we discover how

gospel peacemaking and gospel evangelism are essentially the same task.

Ours is a radical faith because it is challenging and transformative: The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel that calls us to speak daringly for peace when many others holler for war. It is a gospel that calls us to take real-life risks as we join in the peacemaking work that God is already doing among us.

This gospel is definitely on the move. That's why we need running shoes!

I feel excited about how this radical faith is becoming embodied in the peace

violence and injustice, I encourage you to explore what it means to be a radical follower of Jesus Christ. I encourage you to see how the gospel of peace is on the move and then to join this movement with concrete acts of prayer, resistance, justice advocacy, nonviolent intervention, or whatever other forms of Christian peacemaking to which the Spirit leads you. And I encourage you to find tangible ways of sharing both your successes and your struggles with others. It is through learning from each other that our collective peace and justice ministry will become strongest.

This column has been titled "Shoes for your feet" because of the challenge offered in Ephesians 6:15. This passage gives us a sense that we have already been equipped. (Check out also Paul's words in II Corinthians 5:11-21.) The "shoes" or "tools" are here among us already. We just need to put them on and proceed with the work at hand: proclaiming the good news of peace.

We are living in a time of tremendous opportunity. May God give us courage and wisdom as we find ways to walk the talk of peacemaking. And may we pull on the shoes that are already at hand.

*The author is a husband of one, father of two, and half-time pastor of many at Erb Street Mennonite Church in Waterloo, Ont.*



and justice work of our churches, and I feel a strong sense that God is calling us to become even more fired up about our peacemaking ministries. The Holy Spirit is moving, people in our churches are yearning for new ways of doing things, and our world urgently needs the ministries of reconciliation and peacemaking. This is a powerful combination.

During these times when our world seems to be suffocating because of

woman at the well must have been an important story in the early church for it to have become a part of the Gospel of John. Jesus broke the old taboos and even had a theological discussion with a woman of a despised race. She took that gospel of liberation back to her city and invited “the people” (NRSV)—probably women and men—to meet Jesus.

I am grateful that we have both male and female leadership in the church today.

—**Grace Bauman Weber, Kitchener, Ont.**

### Abuna Chacour stories provide eye-opening insight

I commend you for your July 11 issue which included extensive and informative coverage of Abuna Elias Chacour’s first-hand accounts of life in Palestine from the perspective of a Palestinian Christian cleric who is profoundly committed to practical expressions of peacemaking.

We read there a perspective on an incredibly difficult life in the midst of a constantly boiling cauldron. His is a perspective that we are deprived of in the popular press and by the dominance of attitudes driven by Christian Zionism. Chacour’s stories are both eye-opening and inspiring, as he shows by example how peacemaking can be worked at in tangible and helpful ways, beyond just talk.

My sympathies for the plight of the Palestinians began while sharing a small office at the University of Guelph with a Palestinian soil science doctoral candidate during the Six-Day War in 1967, as he daily agonized over the unknown plight of his family, and then over the loss of the family farmlands, with centuries-old vineyards and orchards that had been in his family’s hands for generations.

To those who count themselves among the massive Christian Zionist throng, which seems to be to be fanning the fires of conflict in the Holy Land, I encourage a careful reading of the July-September issue of the MCC

Peace Office newsletter: “Christian Zionism and peace in the Holy Land.” It offers a critical analysis of Christian Zionist theology and readings of Scripture.

—**Dave Cressman Waterloo, Ont.**

### Jazz musician appreciates coverage

Thank you for your very kind and thoughtful words about my *Keeping Time* project (“Keeping church time to a jazz beat, June 27, page 12).

It is always an encouragement to me to know that there are at least a few people out there whose imaginations are being engaged by this music. I share your hope that our churches will, in coming years, be ever more willing to seek and embrace new (old?) ways to connect with God.

—**Nelson Boschman, Abbotsford, B.C.**

## Family Visits

**F**ive days. That is one friend’s time limit for visiting in her parents’ home. Or that of her in-laws. “Less than that,” she says, “and it doesn’t feel like we’ve had the chance to connect. More than that and tensions start to build.” You may agree, or find your limit is different. Perhaps like my mom, you say, “I’m glad when they come home and I’m glad when they leave so I can get my rest!” Drawn by a deep instinct to ground our identities with lineage and place, many of us spend a portion of our summers crisscrossing roads or sky routes. We do so to honour our family relationships, and we do so knowing full well we may encounter such disruption and disappointment that we question if the effort is worthwhile.

This summer I was a guest in my relatives’ homes for more than five days. I learned (again) some valuable lessons. The weather can be a boon or a curse. Oppressive heat stifles. Rain can trap everyone indoors, bringing on claustrophobia. Double dip ice cream cones refresh. So does access to large bodies of water, especially when shared with young ones, whole bodies squiggly

with glee. “Cross-cultural” encounters and conflicts are normal, on a range of issues, including food, religion, politics and leisure activities. Humour helps, and flexibility, and not taking oneself too seriously. (For example, I played *The Game of Life* with my nieces, aged 9 and 11. My playing piece was a tiny car, with a pink person—me—in the driver’s seat. When I reached the marriage spot on

eluded me. I sought encouragement (or was it avoidance?) in daily devotions from a prayer book I carried along. One challenging day, I read, “God be in my head, and in my understanding. God be in my eyes, and in my looking. God be in my mouth, and in my speaking. God be in my heart, and in my thinking. God be at my end, and at my departing” (from the *Sarum Primer*).

I felt calmed by these words. If I was approaching relationships with a sense of God’s presence in me, I was more patient and understanding. Later that day, at table blessing, my host prayed, “God, help us when we are impatient and frustrated. Help us to be kind with each other.” I felt the Spirit hovering, nudging, wrapping us in compassion.

A final lesson. Anticipate joy. A fierce hug from one who loves you from a distance. The pleasure of summer foods in the presence of those who share your bones and blood. The blessing that comes when holding the hand of your oldest relative.

Yes, it is worth it.

*Melissa Miller is a pastoral counsellor, author and teacher from Winnipeg.*

### Family Ties

Melissa Miller



the board, my younger niece told me that I could move over and let my husband drive, “if you want to...or you can just sit in the back seat and bug him from there,” she offered with a smile.)

At points, though, I was discouraged. I seemed far removed from the mid-life maturity I’ve cultivated. My best conflict resolution skills and Christian charity

Winnipeg

## Suderman to be new MC Canada General Secretary

**T**he General Board of Mennonite Church Canada has announced the appointment of Robert J. (Jack) Suderman to the post of General Secretary. He will succeed outgoing General Secretary Dan Nighswander, who served in the post since 1999.

Esther Peters, Assistant Moderator, made the announcement to staff on behalf of the General Board and search committee. Peters noted that the Search Committee and the General Board unanimously supported the decision. Together with staff, Peters offered a prayer of guidance and blessing for Suderman.

Suderman has served the Mennonite Church in Canada since 1996, most recently as executive secretary of Mennonite Church Canada Witness, the mission and outreach ministry of the national church. He has nine years of experience at the executive leadership level, and played a key role in the transformation process of the former bi-national General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church to Mennonite Church Canada.

Suderman noted that the shift will trigger a “domino effect” as Witness will seek a successor for his current role as executive secretary of Witness. “I feel that my own energy and vision for what Witness can be had not yet been exhausted. I was looking forward to continuing to lead this department. However, the encouragement, from so many quarters, to consider this other position, has simply been too strong to ignore. At some point I felt that I did need to listen to these voices from the church,” he said. Suderman invited prayers for this time of transitional adjustment.

In response to the announcement, Suderman said that the agenda for Mennonite Church Canada, though simple, has complex implications.

To be “... a Mennonite church within Canada as well as a church for the world from a Canadian base

[is a] simple agenda, but also very complex and complicated. We need all the gifts we can muster, and more,” Suderman said, alluding to the confidence he placed in his staff colleagues.

As a founding chair or director of five organizations in Canada and Colombia, Suderman has used his extensive experience as a teacher, principal, facilitator, and consultant to hone his leadership, administrative, and team building skills. In recent years he has enjoyed keeping abreast of the evolving church by teaching various courses in theology in Canada and Latin America.

Suderman is fluent in Spanish, having completed his doctoral studies in the Spanish language in Bogotá, and has authored several books in Spanish and English, as well as numerous papers, articles, and curricula. He has served in international ministry in Bolivia, and Colombia, and has worked and lived in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario.

Henry Krause, Moderator for



Suderman

Mennonite Church Canada, said, “I am very pleased with the decision to appoint Jack Suderman as the next General Secretary for Mennonite

Church Canada. Jack’s rich experience working with the church in Canada and globally will be a real asset as he assumes this new role. His passion for the church and vision for the future will help us as a national church to continue to move into what God is calling us to.”

The transition from Nighswander to Suderman will begin in September.

Suderman, who will officially begin in the role on Dec 1, noted his gratefulness for Dan Nighswander’s significant contributions of energy and devotion to the formative years of Mennonite Church Canada.

Suderman is married to Irene (Penner). They have three married sons: Derek and Rebecca (Zoe), Bryan and Julie (Matthew), and Andrew and Karen, all of whom reside in Ontario. —Mennonite Church Canada release by **Dan Dyck**

Mindanao, Philippines

## Muslim peace movement looks for Mennonite encouragement

**A** Muslim leader in Marawi City in Mindanao, Philippines, was banned from many mosques when he initiated dialogue with Christians. The Muslim peace movement, he said, needs Mennonite encouragement.

And that’s what it got from April 24-May 2, when five Mennonites travelled through conflict-ravaged areas of Mindanao in the southern Philippines. The group was there for the purpose of learning from Christians and

Muslims—who are in dialogue with each other—about ways to reduce the violence that has plagued this land.

Relying on faith in God and trust in the many partnerships cultivated by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) during its 28 years of presence in Mindanao, the delegation began its sojourn in Davao City, where I live and work.

Besides myself, the group travelling through the violence-prone area included Dann Pantoja, a Filipino



Basilan Island, Philippines

## War trash to art is swords to ploughshares

The name Basilan Island strikes fear in the hearts of many foreigners. This is where the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group held hostages, killed villagers and terrorized the whole island for nearly four years. This is where missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham and Debra Yapp were held hostage for more than a year before Martin Burnham and Yapp were killed.

The island has seen fighting and death since the 1970s, when Ferdinand Marcos, former dictator of the Philippines, declared martial law. The conflict has left much debris scattered throughout communities. In hanging on to it, the islanders are constantly reminded of past trauma and pain.

In giving it up to the War Trash Project, they are offered a chance to let go of the hate so associated with the violence.

The War Trash Project is designed to provide healing for communities while



Photo by Jon Rudy

Flourantine Pamposa works to convert war trash into art.

providing some income from the refuse of war. Through this program, which trains youths in metallurgical skills, this poorest of the Philippine islands is being given a chance for economic advancement.

The project currently turns 105-millimetre howitzer shell casings into works of art, such as candleholders, steel flower

arrangements and pencil holders. In the future, they hope to melt brass bullet casings into traditional gongs and bells.

As a measure of the success of this project, Dedette Suacito, director of Nagdilaab Foundation on Basilan Island, says, "We have been asked to replicate this project in Jolo," another island in the Sulu Archipelago, where fighting and tensions are ongoing.

"Communities were first suspicious of this project," Suacito admits. "They thought we were collecting war trash to report to the army which communities still have lots of guns."

But, Suacito asked the communities, "Do you want to hang on to this stuff forever? If you are ready to give it up, it can be part of your healing." They won the trust of people by explaining that collecting the debris from years of fighting—spent rifle cartridges, machine gun shells and mortar casings—could be part of a healing ritual for them.

— Jon Rudy

member of Peace Mennonite Church in Vancouver, B.C., who now serves in Mindanao; Richard Rancap, president of the Integrated Mennonite Churches (IMC) of the Philippines; Luke Schrock-Hurst, an Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) worker in Manila; and David Shenk, global missions consultant with EMM.

As the 10-day journey across Mindanao's primarily Muslim regions began, Shenk led a one-day seminar on "Christians ministering in Islamic communities" at a theological seminary in Davao. "Islam," Shenk said, "needs to be engaged at a spiritual level. Christians are equipped for this conversation since our understanding of God is that he is dialogical."

Pantoja, who felt called to begin work among Muslims after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States, invited the Mennonite delegation into conversations with his Muslim housemates and the mayor of Sultan Kudarat, a small town in central Mindanao, where he serves.

"When I first came, I was ignorant

Continued on page 18

## Closer Than a Brother

### Men's Series

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**Muslims** *From page 17*

of any peace-building and dialogical methodologies,” Pantoja mused. “But I jumped in and immersed myself.”

At first, the predominantly Muslim community was very suspicious of Pantoja. They had suffered at the hands of soldiers who were predominantly “Christian.” But as he set about listening to people’s stories of trauma, offering relief to displaced people in the area, and demonstrating Christ’s love in his behaviour, barriers broke down.

Often it just takes one person to initiate dialogue, to reach across the gap that so easily divides people of different religions. Violence narrows the range of what people see as possibilities in any given situation. We were so encouraged to see people of faith offering innovative alternatives to revenge and retribution. By showing the world that Christians and Muslims can live in harmony, the myth that this is a religious conflict will be put to rest.



Photo submitted by Jon Rudy

**A Mennonite group including Jon Rudy, left, Richard Rancap, Dann Pantoja, David Shenk and interviewer Melody Arandela visited Mindanao, Philippines, to learn about how the Christian-Muslim dialogue there is helping to bring about peace between the two religious communities.**

In Cotabato City, the group visited an evangelical partner of MCC’s that works in predominantly Muslim communities. A leader in this effort told us that the project’s role is to bring “Jesus to the community” through acts of service, not to bring community members to church.

Several times as the group of

Mennonites spoke with Muslim student groups they raised the difficult question of forgiveness as the students shared their stories of pain and loss at the murder of loved ones.

“Christianity is centred in forgiveness through Christ’s atonement,” Schrock-Hurst told a student group. “Our own spiritual ancestors suffered, as you have, but through God’s grace we have been called to forgive our enemies.”

The group was inspired by the example of an evangelical church leader in Mindanao who organizes a “Bless Muslims Day” every Sept. 11. Under his leadership, the church is awakening to the call for holistic development.

The group also visited Father Sebastiano, a Catholic priest who has formed the Silsilah Dialogue Movement in Zamboanga City. They approach interfaith dialogue from the context of deep spirituality and prayer, seeking to mend broken relationships.

“What we heard consistently from Muslims and Christians on this trip was the importance of Mennonite encouragement to them on the sometimes lonely road of peacebuilding and dialogue,” Shenk said. “Muslims have respected Mennonites because they recognize that the church, when true to Christ, marches to a different tune than the government. On this trip we’ve again been moved to see that love in action overcomes fear.”

—Joint MCC and EMM release  
by **Jon Rudy**

*The author is a regional peace resource person for MCC in Asia and is an EMM co-missionary.*

Winkler, Man.

## Eden Health Services like a rock

**E**den Health Care Services reported another successful year at its annual general meeting at Winkler Berghaler Mennonite Church on June 16. Pam Driedger was elected incoming chair, following Dr. Paul Peters. Driedger has served on the board in various capacities for the past nine years.

In reflecting on her new role, Driedger shared the following analogy: “The Eden organization is a lot like a rock face, thrown up by the violent forces of the world, carved out by the constant battering of life, yet enduring, sustaining life, and offering shelter and the promise of a new and better perspective. Serving on the board of the organization might be compared to setting the belays for those who will climb the cliff.”

Eden Health Care Services includes an acute treatment mental health facility, residential care services and counselling services, as well as vocational assessment and training. Donations to Eden are used for mental health services not covered by government funding, including supported housing and employment,

and professional counselling services.

Following the business meeting, the community was invited to a celebration and dessert evening that featured pastor, author and storyteller Dan Unrau from Richmond, B.C. Unrau illustrated the need for strong relationships that celebrate the good times, but which must also remain there for the “darker” times. Even when we may not expect it, a genuinely “spiritual” connection is made when we attend to those who pass through our lives if even just momentarily.

Local musician, music teacher and choir instructor Wes Hamm, together with his family, provided music for the evening. Images in the lyrics carried on the theme of strong relationships involving both holding on and letting go.

After dessert, farewells were said to Ted and Mary Goossens, Eden supporters who are moving to Thompson, Man., to pastor the Mennonite Brethren Church there. Melvin Smith, a family friend, presented the Goossens with a framed print of a sketch created by their son Josh, with an inscribed quote by Henry Nouwen and the theme verse for the evening: “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

—Eden Health Care Services release

London, England

## Davis joins Christian call for aid to global poor

**R**obb Davis, executive director of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), joined a transatlantic gathering of Christian leaders in London in late June to call upon wealthy nations to do more to help the world's poorest people.

Davis joined leaders of Christian denominations and organizations in the United States, Great Britain and Ireland for a "Transatlantic Forum on Global Poverty." The forum was hosted by Rev. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, and included Rev. Jim Wallis, executive director of Sojourners, and Rev. Ron Sider, president of Evangelicals for Social Action.

The forum called specifically for a greater commitment to ending poverty from the Group of Eight (G-8) major

industrialized nations, which was preparing to meet for a summit in Gleneagles, Scotland in early July. At the summit, the G-8 nations pledged to cancel the debts of 18 of the world's poorest countries and provide \$50

billion US in aid to impoverished countries by 2010.

"While we are excited about the aid and debt forgiveness being offered by the G-8, we must continue to educate ourselves and advocate for just implementation of the promises made," Davis said after the G-8 summit.

Focusing on the needs of the world's poorest people should lead Christians in wealthy countries to reflect on the great disparity between their lifestyles and those of many of their sisters and brothers, Davis added.



Davis

"We are excited at MCC about the possibility of partnering with Mennonite World Conference to create a broad dialogue about these issues," Davis noted. "We hope to learn from our brothers and sisters in the global South about how we can better partner with them to confront poverty and examine how consumption choices here affect them."

—Joint MCC/MWC release

Cuauhtemoc, Mexico

## Judge declares MCC Canada service worker innocent

**A** judge in Cuauhtemoc has confirmed that MCC Canada service worker John Janzen is innocent of all charges laid against him in early April. After reviewing them, the judge issued a written decision declaring that no evidence had been presented to substantiate the charges. Mexican officials did not release the nature of the charges. The written decision brings an end to the investigation that began on April 6 with Janzen's arrest in Mexico.

"It is good to see this positive outcome," says Don Peters, MCC Canada executive director. "The Janzens' experience underscores both the challenges and the opportunities of the service assignment they accepted."

Peters is also grateful for the very capable support of the local Mennonite leaders during the investigation.

Janzen, a retired school principal from Manitoba, and his wife Ruth began a two-year service assignment at the new Addictions Treatment Centre near the city of Cuauhtemoc in September 2003. They offered support in establishing the guiding principles for the centre, facilitating job training programs for local staff, assisted in the development of prevention programs and in writing job descriptions. The centre celebrated its grand opening on Feb. 15, 2004.

With the completion of their two-year service term in Mexico, the Janzens have returned to North America.

—MCC release by **Herb Heppner**

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## News brief

**MCC Manitoba appoints new executive director**

Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba has appointed Peter Rempel as executive director, beginning Nov. 1. He will assume full duties from Ron Loepky, interim executive director, after the annual general meeting in Arborg, Man., Nov. 18 and 19. Rempel, a member of Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, brings a strong understanding of the Mennonite Church and its mission, having most recently worked for MC Canada Witness as facilitator for partnerships in Africa and Europe. As well, he has been engaged with Mennonite World Conference and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in various roles. "He comes with passion for MCC, MCC's work, and putting Christianity into action," says search committee member Irma Janzen. Rempel holds master's and bachelor's degrees from the University of Manitoba; he began his educational journey with a bachelor of theology degree from Canadian Mennonite Bible College (now Canadian Mennonite University). —MCC Manitoba release



MCC Manitoba photo

**Inmate Mike Gantner, left, and Jim Motherall, a volunteer with Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba's Open Circle program, performed songs from their CD for more than 80 people at a barbecue picnic celebrating the launch of the new Community Integration Program (CIP) that will extend the ministry of Open Circle outside of prison walls. CIP will allow volunteers and inmates to continue and deepen their relationships after their sentences have been served. Those recently released will have a community of support to turn to as they adjust to a new life. Murray Barkman assumes the role of CIP's community integration coordinator and Don Collins steps into the prison visitation coordinator position formerly held by Barkman. To learn more about Open Circle, visit [www.mcc.org/manitoba/programs/opencircle.html](http://www.mcc.org/manitoba/programs/opencircle.html).**

**Matthew Sawatzky, left, and Milton Friesen were two of 74 participants who took part in the 10th anniversary Bike the Whiteshell fundraiser in Manitoba. This year's two-day, 160-kilometre ride raised \$60,286 for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC); the funds will go towards providing clean water for people in countries such as Honduras, Brazil, and Laos. "It's been a fun thing to do," says 21-year-old Sawatzky, regarding his annual participation in this MCC Manitoba fundraiser. "I like the projects they pick," says Sawatzky, who is in the process of finishing a degree in international development studies at Canadian Mennonite University. "I like their grassroots feel."**



MCC Manitoba photo

Rosthern, Sask.

## A century of higher education on the Prairies

**R**osthern Junior College turned a hundred this year.

Tucked into a corner of this small Prairie town of 1,500 inhabitants, the Mennonite high school—which isn't really a college at all—began life in a rented room around the turn of the century with just eight students and a single vision burning in the hearts of the community leaders.

Like one small light in a dark room, the impact of RJC has radiated across the country—and even the ocean—as year after the year the institution has sent one graduating class after another into the community and beyond to live their lives for Christ.

It all began with an idea and one man willing to take leadership. In 1903, Reverend David Toews began meeting with others about developing an education system for their youth.

“Implicit in this perceived need were concerns among Mennonite settlers for the preservation of...the German language, concerns that arose directly from the pressure in the province to make education English and assimilative,” notes George Epp, RJC board chair.

Their experiences of religious persecution and threats to their pacifist way of life contributed to preserving what their convictions had helped establish. In addition to the preservation of language and culture, the training of teachers for local high schools was important. And encouraging church leadership for the growing Mennonite community was necessary. Another important factor was the training of Mennonite youth in case they could not, or didn't want to, go into farming.

A strong Anabaptist focus was visible in the first courses offered that day on Nov. 14, 1905. The first teacher was Herman Fast and classes offered included church history, Bible stories, German language, Bible reading and world history. Most were taught in

German.

Not everyone shared the vision, however, and in the ensuing years many requests for donations were sent out to keep the school running. In particular, the exhausting task mostly fell to the principals. Rev. Toews was the first principal and by the 1930s principals were spending increasing amounts of time keeping up with the growing demands of the school.

Five years after the school opened, classes were moved to a two-storey brick schoolhouse, and in 1912 a girl's residence was opened. By the 1940s, the need for a larger school became

apparent, but nothing was begun for another decade. Even then, the new building was only finished in 1963.

During the 1940s, a desire was expressed to expand the curriculum so students could get a head start on a university education. The name of the school was changed from the German English Academy to Rosthern Junior College with this plan in mind. Plans to continue along this vein were never fully developed and the idea was eventually dropped, although the name stuck.

Support from beyond the govern-

### Remember your history, oldest RJC alumnus advises

**B**en Fast stands to greet me as I enter the room. Almost 95 years old, and dressed in a three-piece suit, Fast is feeling popular these days. The reason? Rosthern Junior College celebrated its centennial this summer and the diminutive former educator is the oldest, living alumnus of the school.

Attending from 1923 to 1926, he took in Grades 8 through 11 at a time when the school only offered classes up to Grade 11. Fast was one of only four siblings from a large family to get a chance at this education and it came at a great cost to his parents.

From RJC, he went on to earn three degrees, including one in theology. For 60 years, he taught in the Saskatoon public school system. For 25 of those years, he also led three different churches, working as a teacher during the week and as a pastor on Sundays.

Fifteen years ago, Fast lost the use of his voice when a bout of cancer destroyed his larynx. He would be voiceless today except for the “electrolarynx” he uses to speak. Despite this setback, he still has a lot to contribute to the

conversation. His memory is crystal clear and he includes many interesting details about his experiences at the school.

I ask him if RJC helped him in his Christian walk? “Oh yes, definitely, it was a wonderful thing,” he replies emphatically, adding that it prepared him for leadership roles in the church.

His advice to present day RJC students: “Don't forget the Mennonite history.”

Coming from a man who contributed to the history of Mennonites in Saskatchewan, it seems like a fitting comment at the twilight of a long and productive life.

—Karin Fehderau



**Oldest living RJC alumnus Ben Fast is pictured with his wife Mary in their home.**

Photo by Karin Fehderau

**RJC** *From page 21*

ing authorities didn't fall into place until 1964, when the Liberal government promised students of separate schools an \$85 per pupil grant. Those payments have continued up to the present, increasing according to the cost-of-living index. Today, the provincial grant accounts for 30 percent of the school's budget.

Over time, many graduates continued on in their studies.

Ernie Epp, who spent 13 years as RJC principal, conducted a survey in the 1970s to see how students fared after leaving. He found a high number of students went on to further education. He also realized that 75 percent of RJC graduates ended up in conference leadership and 95 percent were members of the Mennonite Church.

Traditional jobs like nursing, teaching, farming and mission work made up the backbone of the careers of those who graduated from the college. But some students ended up following slightly different paths. Cornelia Lehn, who graduated in the 1940s, became a well-known author of children's stories told from a Mennonite perspective (*see her obituary, August 22, page 5*). Raymond Funk served as a member of parliament (NDP) for the Prince Albert area.

More recently, Chris Epp, a 1980s graduate, pursued a path in the media and today works as a video reporter for the CBC. Mathew Schaaf, who finished high school in 1994, spent time with the Christian Peacemakers Team.

What does the future hold for the school?

Erwin Tiessen has been the principal for 17 years. One focus right now, he says, is to develop further support networks. "We hope to explore more intentional relationships with some (MC Saskatchewan) commissions, such as the camping, youth and Christian Ed groups," he says.

Building and renovating is always a sign that forward thinkers exist within an institution, and RJC is no different. First, says Tiessen, a building fund needs to grow and, along with that, a financial assistance fund for prospective students. "The number of students needing financial assistance



George Epp photo

**Principal Erwin Tiessen, Mel Siemens and Vic Krahn plant the centennial oak.**

to be able to attend...continues to grow," he explains.

Always aware of the changing needs of today's youth, board and staff make it a priority to shape their programs accordingly. That includes exploring a need for building Grade 9 into the program—the school currently offers Grades 10 to 12—and making sure the second language program stays current with the needs of the community.

In honour of RJC's past, present and future, staff, supporters and former students celebrated its centennial from July 29 to 31. To commemorate the event, a quilt was designed and stitched together by graduates across the country, a history book was assembled and a cookbook was written, all in an effort to commemorate what God has done in Rosthern.

—**Karin Fehderau**



Karin Fehderau photo

**Pastor Peter and Marg Sawatzky stand with several couples he married while ministering in Saskatoon over a 17-year period. During that time, he performed 150 weddings. One summer, 11 couples tied the knot under his leadership.**

Regina

## Grace Mennonite celebrates ‘God’s gift of grace’

The theme of the 50th anniversary of Grace Mennonite Church of Regina was “Celebrating God’s gift of grace.” The sanctuary resounded with the singing of “Old 606” as the natural acoustics of the building re-echoed the deep feelings of all those who came to participate in the festivities.

On July 23 and 24 the fellowship of more than 200 parishioners past and present gather for hugs, tears and warm greetings, in addition to the singing, reminiscing, praising and praying. The food and weather helped as well. Storytelling, a Jeopardy-style game of answers and questions, and some gentle roasting and toasting were all part of “getting to know you again.”

Stories like the one about how the old manse had been sold for a herd of cattle are captured in the history book prepared for the occasion: *Celebrate the Journey: Grace Mennonite Church 1955 - 2005*. “Peter Epp, Irvin Martens and Ed Heinrichs drove to the farm in the fall of 1973 to make arrangements to take possession of the herd (12 cattle). Along the way back these three enterprising gentlemen stopped at a neighbouring farm to inquire if by chance the neighbour might wish to purchase the aforementioned cattle. [Ed says it was Peter’s serendipitous following his nose story.] The neighbour agreed and the cattle were sold for cash.”

The Sunday morning service featured a mass choir that included members from the Laotian and Chinese Fellowships—as well as old-timers—and was accompanied by a string quartet as well as organ and piano.

A number of former pastors were able to attend. Pastor Fred Unruh (1969- 1975) encouraged the worshippers, saying, “We celebrate God’s abundant goodness that has nurtured us here.” He added, though, “There are also stories we won’t tell, stories that contain memories of mistakes, failures, broken relationships, shame and sorrow. These experiences are also part of our shared history, and



Tony Nickel photo

**Parishioners old and new celebrated the 50th anniversary of Grace Mennonite Church in Regina in July. The theme of the two-day event was “Celebrating God’s gift of grace.”**

in some ways they show us more about the greatness of God than our accomplishments.”

Ken Bechtel, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan conference pastor, also addressed those gathered. “We and you also share this inheritance as God’s own people...in order to grace yet others,” he said.

Elmira, Ont.

## New York volunteers work the Civic Holiday

During the first week of August, a group of 23 volunteers from a Reformed church in Wallkill, N.Y., arrived in Waterloo Region to participate in a one-week Habitat for Humanity build. The group has volunteered with Habitat for 14 years.

This year, they chose to come to Waterloo Region to commemorate Mel and Esther Weber from Hawkesville Mennonite Church who were killed in a car accident in northern Michigan while driving home from Winnipeg a year ago. The volunteers wore scarves (pictured) to remember them—Mel had been very involved with Habitat.

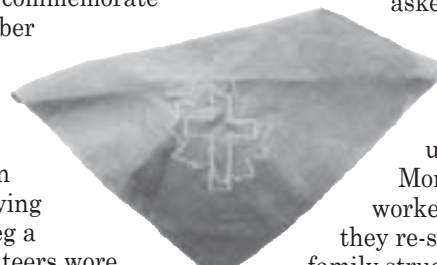
Two weeks before their arrival in Ontario, Dave Haldeman, the leader of the group, was disappointed to

A record of the Grace Mennonite story is available on a short DVD as well as a 400-page *Celebrate the Journey* book. A video of the 50th anniversary events was also made. All three are all available—at cost—from: Grace Mennonite Church, 2935 Pasqua Street, Regina, SK S4S 2H4. —**Tony Nickel**

discover that Aug. 1 was a holiday in Canada and Habitat would not be building that day. Haldeman had worked with Mel and Esther’s daughter and son-in-law, Marlene and John Nighswander, during an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Kentucky in the early 1980s, and so he asked the Nighswanders what other work they could do.

Four different job sites were lined up for the holiday Monday. Half of the group worked in Elmira, where they re-shingled the roof of a family struggling to maintain their home, and did some house repairs for a single mother. The rest of the group worked in the Cambridge area, where Wanner Mennonite Church hosted the group for the week.

—**Barb Draper**



Although they came by car to the Taste of Benin Mission Festival, Michael Thiessen of Wanner Mennonite Church, Ont., found it much harder to transport his daughter Hannah, seven, and a load of baskets on a bicycle, a popular mode of transportation in Benin.



Photos by Ross W. Muir



Mennonite Canada Witness workers Nancy Frey and Bruce Yoder spoke about their work in Ghana, Nigeria and Benin, where they live. Their efforts include working with the Benin Bible Institute, which trains indigenous pastors, and partnering with organizations involved in health, development and microfinance, and the Casa Grande orphanage.



In the African tradition, Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker Nancy Frey leads parishioners in an offering dance at the Taste of Benin Mission Festival held outdoors at Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont. Nearly 400 people donated \$8,136 to MC Canada Witness.

# Benin comes to Ontario

The Benin Festival Singers actually doesn't have any Beninese singers. The group consisted of vocalists and musicians from Poole, Steinmann, St. Jacobs and Wanner Mennonite congregations in Ontario.



Ardra Fisher-Skau of Toronto learned one of the simple games Beninese children play.





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## People&Events

**Nairobi, Kenya**—Joe Shenk, a long-time Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker in East Africa, died on July 21 in Nairobi, Kenya. Shenk, 67, who was serving as principal of Mennonite Theological College of East Africa in Musoma, Tanzania, died from injuries after being hit by a truck while jogging on July 9.

—Joint MCC/EMM release



**Shenk dies in accident**

## Transitions

### Births/Adoptions

**Bauman**—to Dana (Batchelor) and Steven, Floradale Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Kate Olivia, Aug. 3.

**Funk**—to Daina and Roger, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Reed Avery, Aug. 12.

**Gingerich**—to Monica and Bryan, Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Julia Carol, Aug. 15.

**Harper**—to Colette and Craig, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., a son, Alexander Frederic, Feb. 27.

**Kuepfer**—to Claudia and Dale, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., a son, Brandon John, May 26.

**Lebold**—to Susan and Terry, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., a son, Brody Terry, July 7.

**Logan**—to Lori Kroeker and Dennis Logan, Toronto United Mennonite, a daughter,

Emilia, June 9.

**Mohr**—to Sarah and Tony, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., a daughter, Avery Elizabeth, May 19.

**Nafziger**—to Cheryl and Larry, Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont., a son, Nolan Larry, Aug. 22.

**Peters**—to Lee Ann and Shawn, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Brynley Jade, Aug. 8.

**Polanco**—to Rosanne and Ricardo, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., a son, Juan-Carlos Norman, May 25.

**Scott**—to Jennifer (Thiessen) and Nathan, The First Mennonite, Vineland, Ont., a daughter, Abigail Jessie Thiessen, May 11.

**Snyder Cairns**—to Carrie and Kevin, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., a daughter, Flora Linda, Aug. 8.

**Stoesz-Gouthro**—adopted by Yvonne Stoesz and Brent Gouthro, Pembina Mennonite, Morden, Man., a daughter, MeiLing Joyce, May 15 (born April 10 in China).

**Toews**—to Brunilda and Franklin, Steinbach Mennonite, Man., a son, Florian Matthew, Aug. 18.

**Wiens**—to Amanda (Hiebert) and Joe, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a son, Gavin Jeremiah, July 27.

**Wiens Soshycki**—to Teresa Wiens and Darryl Soshycki, Toronto United Mennonite, a son, Dylan, Aug. 3.

**Wirth**—to Melissa and Jason, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., a daughter, Hayley Alexis, Aug. 15.

### Marriages

**Andrews-Loewen**—Mark and Elizabeth, Toronto United Mennonite, Aug. 20.

**Cressman-Ropp**—Chris and Janna Lynn, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Aug. 6.

**Dyck-Keely**—Andrew and Eiméar, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., June 25.

**Dyck-Thiessen**—Myron and Julia, Altona Mennonite,

Man., at Altona Park, May 28.

**Elias-Fast**—Rob and Alison, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., near Altona, July 16.

**Fehr-Enns**—Jason (Mennonite Fellowship of Rosthern, Rosthern, Sask.) and Niki (Calgary Inter-Mennonite, Calgary), at Camp Valaqua, Alberta, Aug. 28.

**Friesen-Falk**—Shane (Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.) and Kim, in Winnipeg, Sept. 3.

**Heinrichs-Wong**—Andrew III (Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.) and Sandy, Sept. 4.

**Klassen-Myert**—Carl and Dawn, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., in Winnipeg, July 9.

**Kliwer-Bruck**—Karl and Kathleen, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., Aug. 6.

**Pot-Iutzi**—Chris and Amanda, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., Aug. 13.

**McKay-Penner**—James and Kristi, Altona Mennonite, Man., in Winnipeg, Aug. 1.

**Miller-Doell**—Jordan and Diana (Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.), near Altona, Man., June 18.

**Ramer-Steinmann**—Philip and Candace, Steinmann Mennonite, Baden, Ont., Aug. 6.

**Regier-Jantzi**—John and Joanne, Waterloo North Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 19.

**Rempel-Schritt**—Jeff and Brenda, Altona Mennonite, Man., near Altona, June 11.

**Ropp-Logel**—Greg and Dana, Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont., July 23.

**Ruby-Leis**—Dave and Kim, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., July 27.

**Shantz-McFeeters**—Ryan and Leslie, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., Sept. 3.

**Southorn-Neufeld**—Michael and Brigitta, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., July 15.

**Vanderform-Neufeld**—Steve and Amanda, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont., Aug. 20.

**Veldhoen-Dyck**—Jason and Kristin (Trinity Mennonite, Calgary), in Okotoks, Alta., July 16.

**Voth-Wiebe**—Colin (Altona

Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.) and Carla (Winkler MB Church, Man.), Sept. 5.

**Wiebe-Clyne**—Jeff and Tracy, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., in Winnipeg, July 2.

## Deaths

**Baergen**—Henry (Heinrich), 96, Niagara United Mennonite, Ont., May 30.

**Bahmann**—Peter, 76, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., Aug. 15.

**Bender**—Rosetta, 87, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., July 28.

**Burkholder**—Helen, 86, Breslau Mennonite, Ont., July 28.

**Dick**—Adolf, 82 (b. Sept. 16, 1922), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., July 10.

**Dueck**—Diedrich (Dick), 73, Toronto United Mennonite, Aug. 24.

**Horst**—Osiah, 85, Danforth Mennonite, Toronto, July 4.

**Jewitt**—Shirley, 64, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., July 28.

**Kavelman**—Joan, 65, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., April 21.

**Krueger**—Jacob J., 84, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., July 2.

**Letkeman**—Nettie, 82, Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., Aug. 14.

**Pauls**—Mary, 88, Warman Mennonite, Sask., July 9.

**Snyder**—Clara (Weber), 85, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., May 21.

## Baptisms

**Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.**—Andrew Cressman, May 15.

**Springstein Mennonite, Springstein, Man.**—Todd Rempel, Aug. 14.

*Canadian Mennonite welcomes Transitions announcements within four months of the event. Please send all Transitions announcements by e-mail to [transitions@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:transitions@canadianmennonite.org), including the congregation name and location. When sending death notices, please include birth date and last name at birth if available.*

## Mennonite Church Canada

### Financial Update

Leaders say they are thankful to God and givers for Mennonite Church Canada's financial performance to date. Donation revenue is tracking about 1% ahead of annual projections.

The expense side of the ledger indicates spending is 1.5% less than annual projections, due largely to later-than-planned timing of some expenses.

Donation income for the first half of the fiscal year represents about one-third of total anticipated donations. Typically, two-thirds of donations are received in the second half of the fiscal year.

Leaders are cautiously optimistic, but remain concerned about how the rest of the year will shape up. Some congregations are struggling or are already fully committed for the year, and many donors from the agricultural sector are facing a disastrous year. Church-wide prayers are encouraged for families and congregations struggling to make ends meet. —**Dan Dyck** for Mennonite Church Canada

### September Equipping harvest of resources

The September issue of *Equipping* notes an abundant harvest of education resources and opportunities that are now available in your church offices. These include:

- A new KidsPak, "Peace Roots & Fruits," offers many suggestions on how to help peace take root and grow in congregations, such as making white poppies for Remembrance Day, and signing on for "virtual peacemaking" at [www.alternativeservice.ca/teachers](http://www.alternativeservice.ca/teachers).
- The 2005-2006 Faith &

Life Resource catalogue which highlights exciting third quarter Sunday School curriculum on themes such as "Peace Heroes" (Junior High), "Generation Why Bible Studies" (Youth Ministry) and "Second Mile: a peace journey for congregations."

- A Resource Centre update that highlights new resources encouraging intentional inter-generational worship.
- Information on a North American Young Adult retreat on "Morality: Learning at the Mountain" at Hidden Acres Camp, New Hamburg, Ontario from Sept. 30-Oct. 2 and for the Pastors Week conference on "Enacting Our Faith: Rites of Celebration and Commitment in Community," at AMBS from January 23-26, 2006.

Also included are several inspiring letters from Mennonite Church Canada leaders reflecting on issues such as healing prayer for the "soul" of church structures (Sven Eriksson), coming of age celebrations in former "mission" churches (Dan Nighswander) and moving from "vision to practice" in the missional church (Jack Suderman).

## Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

### Punk rock band tours churches

Sisters Tonia and Maegan Wagler, with their cousin Devon Wagler, all from Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden, Ont., and their high school friend, Graeme Harvey, formed a band called Blank Blue Sky. They relate in their web site ([blankblueskyband.com](http://blankblueskyband.com)) that they "found a way to put their messed-up thought processes and constant musical opinions into a positive force." Their focus stems directly from the source of all their lives, God. They are trying to show "whoever will listen, the love,



**Devon Wagler of Blank Blue Sky**

strength and truth that they have found in Jesus Christ."

The group went on tour August 19-27, singing music from their CD *Hallways of Complacency*, performing at several area Mennonite churches.

According to Pat Wagler, mother of the two sisters and their resident "booking agent," they are trying to spread the Word of God in a way that is not "in your face," in ways that youth can relate. Pat (youth worker at Riverdale Mennonite Church) admits that their music is "loud," therefore may not be appreciated in just any Mennonite church!

Tonia and Maegan say that they started playing acoustic guitar, only to find that nothing could quite compare to the rock show; feeling the bass beat in your chest and hearing a concert from a kilometre away was what their acoustic experience was missing. The opportunity to write about all the things that had been stuck in their hearts and heads all their lives, being able to belt those same sentiments out on stage, this passion was what was missing.

Blank Blue Sky members are constantly improving their music to provide a better live performance. With the motivation of spreading God's word, the group writes all their own lyrics from life experiences and play from the heart, in the hope of touching lives.

## Mennonite Church Manitoba

### Young Adult Invitation

Bob Wiebe, director of Education Ministries for MC Manitoba, sees a "growing vision" in the area of young adult ministry. "I see the growing vision in places like Dan Nighswander's article in the June 27, 2005 Canadian Mennonite (p. 34) and in the reports from Charlotte where young adults shared their passion for the church's future," said Wiebe. "Young adults have not given up on the church. Rather, they wish to be engaged in meaningful ways."

"I think our work with young adults at the (Manitoba) conference level is also ripe for renewal. I am hoping that the Young Adult Retreat (January 13-15, 2006 at Camp Koinonia) will be a time for fruitful brainstorming and visioning." On September 11, the Young Adult Council is facilitating a meeting in Winnipeg at 581 Cathcart Street to plan this retreat.

The Young Adult Retreat will focus on "the idea of how young adults engage or want to engage with and participate in the church. We envision the retreat as a time of discussion, sharing, debating, hearing one another's perspective, worship, prayer and of course, broom-ball," said Wiebe.

"An opportunity for 'growing vision' at the bi-national level has yet to be claimed," said Wiebe. "MC Manitoba is offering to pay registration for the North American Young Adult Fellowship Retreat scheduled September 30-October 2 at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp in Ontario."

For more information about these events contact Wiebe at 896-1616 ext. 254 or [office@mennochurch.mb.ca](mailto:office@mennochurch.mb.ca).

**Continued on page 28**

**Mennonite Church  
Alberta**

**Trinity building  
taking shape**

The new Trinity Mennonite Church building is taking shape! The foundation and main floor are complete and volunteers are working hard to set up the walls. Building has been slowed somewhat by the busy construction scene in Calgary which has kept contractors stretched to their limits. Heavy August rains also slowed the work down.

Tentatively, the congregation hopes to move into their new church in early spring. Pastor Erwin Wiens began his ministry with the congregation in August, and will be officially installed with Trinity on Sept. 18, 2005.

Until the new building is completed, the congregation will continue to meet in the Menno Simons School facilities on Sunday mornings.

**Pastors back  
from leave**

Two Alberta pastors experienced sabbatical leaves this summer. Roy Hewko, of the Rosemary Mennonite Church, has just returned from Africa. Doug Klassen, of Foothills Mennonite in Calgary, has just completed a sabbatical in clinical pastoral counseling.

**Mennonite Church  
British Columbia**

**Fire-damaged  
church razed**

Demolition crews took just three days to reduce the former Olivet Mennonite Church in Abbotsford to a pile of rubble the week of August 8. After a major fire last December and a smaller fire in April, the church building was deemed unusable. The decision was made to raze the church, which had been built in 1961 with several further additions between 1963 and 1980.

Construction of a new building is planned to begin early in 2006, and an architectural firm has been selected to design it. Completion of the building is expected to take up to a year and a half.

Meanwhile, the Olivet congregation is back in its temporary home at the Columbia Bible College chapel after being displaced from that facility in July. When the chapel was unavailable for several weeks due to a previous college commitment, Olivet joined the East Abbotsford Community Church for Sunday morning worship services.

**Peace opens facilities  
for fellowship group**

The gym at Peace Mennonite Church in Richmond is anything but quiet most Friday evenings as the Vancouver Christian Events group holds weekly volleyball games there. Mostly singles in their thirties and forties, the VCE has been meeting regularly for volley-

ball at the Peace gym for two years. An e-mail list informs the group not only about volleyball but also concerts, seminars, retreats and other social events.

VCE provides a way for singles in the Vancouver area to get together and make friends. Members from smaller churches like Peace, which lack large numbers of single adults, especially appreciate this opportunity. It is also an outreach to non-churched friends and a place that provides them with a diverse faith community to relate to.

*Unless otherwise credited, the articles in TheChurches pages were written by: Leona Dueck Penner (MC Canada), Maurice Martin (Eastern Canada), Evelyn Rempel Petkau (Manitoba), Karin Fehderau (Saskatchewan), Donita Wiebe-Neufeld (Alberta), Amy Dueckman (British Columbia). See page 2 for contact information.*

**Purpose leads to  
being and doing**

At the recent Mennonite Church Canada assembly in Charlotte, our delegates discussed, edited, and approved a recommended Statement of Purpose and Identity for our church (see Aug. 1, page 13).

Our hope is that this brief statement can help focus not only the activities and strategies of the national church, but also those of each congregation and each part of the church. Purpose must lead to a way of being and doing things in the life of the church; it must be implemented.

I have been thinking about how purpose turns into action. Five integrated, complementary, crucial ingredients come to mind (in no particular order):

**Delight** in the giftedness that God

shows on the church. I love to see people do well what they are gifted to do. It is

energizing for everyone. God has gifted each of us. Let's delight in that, encourage each other in our areas of giftedness, and make lots of space for all gifts to function at full capacity.

**Equip** the giftedness that God has offered to our church. Gifts are not automatically useful: they can be misused or under-used. It is the task of the church not only to delight in God's gifts but to equip these gifts for effective and focused ministry.

**Focus** the giftedness and the equipping of gifts towards a clear and compelling vision for the vocation of the church in the world. Equipped gifts, without vision, can still be misused, under-used, and abused. A simple and compelling vision of the purpose of the church is needed so that the giftedness God bestows on us is indeed used for the purposes these gifts were designed for.

**Envelop** God's giftedness to us in community. Indeed, God's gifts are given to strengthen the vocation of the church. Gifts are not meant to be the private property of the individual. Gifts need to

**From our  
leaders**

be discerned, affirmed, equipped, nourished, and utilized by the community of God for the sake of God's purposes in the world.

**Use** the gifts and seek effective ways that God's giftedness to us can engage God's world for the sake of reconciliation and redemption. Gifts of God to persons, encouraged in community, equipped for God's purposes, and aligned with God's vision for the world need to "hit the road." We talk about this as "sending" the church to "engage" the world with the reconciling intentions of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

When I think about this simple yet profound strategy that God is using to redeem the world, I am hopeful. These are practical steps that each person, each congregation, each organization, and the national church can work at. By doing so our stated purpose is converted into effective, joyful, and meaningful ministry and our vocation as a church.

*Jack Suderman is Executive Secretary of Mennonite Church Canada's Christian Witness Council, and the church's next General Secretary.*



## Employment opportunities

Mennonite Central Committee Ontario invites applications for the position of



### YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT COORDINATOR (BASED IN TORONTO)

The position requires a person with a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. MCC is seeking an individual with a commitment to invite youth and young adults into vital engagement with MCC at all levels, and excellent communication and interpersonal skills, especially in interactions with youth and young adults.

This position includes the coordination of the TOOLS (Toronto Ontario Opportunities for Learning and Service), a learning and service program of MCC Ontario in Toronto.

This full-time salaried position is available beginning December 1, 2005. Application deadline: September 15, 2005.

For more information, contact:

**Cath Woolner**  
Phone: 519-745-8458  
E-mail: [cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca](mailto:cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca)

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan (MC Sask) is seeking a full-time

### CONFERENCE MINISTER

The Conference Minister gives overall leadership and direction to the mission, ministry and well-being of MC Sask., with particular focus for pastors and congregations.

Qualifications include an understanding of and commitment to Mennonite/Anabaptist theology and a preference for education and training in a Mennonite/Anabaptist institution, significant pastoral experience within the Mennonite Church, well developed listening and communication skills, ability to relate to theological diversity, and demonstrated administration and organizing skills. The successful candidate will exemplify boldness and creativity in implementing and building on the vision set by the Conference. Willingness to travel throughout the province is a necessity. A detailed job description is available on the website [www.mcsask.ca](http://www.mcsask.ca). For more information and to apply, contact:

**Henry Block, Search Committee**  
3214 Milton Street Saskatoon SK S7L 3X4  
Phone: 306-933-4660 (day), 306-683-0524 (evening)  
E-mail: [h.gblock@sasktel.net](mailto:h.gblock@sasktel.net)

The appointment will commence mid-February 2006. Applications will be considered until September 30, 2005.

## For advertising information:

**Barbara Burkholder**  
1-800-316-4052  
[advert@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:advert@canadianmennonite.org)



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Our client is a visionary organization having proven that profitability and ethical values can be blended successfully. This newly created senior position is just one example of the values-based growth they are experiencing and wish to further.

The CFO will have ample opportunity to be creative in molding this role from the inside out. Engaging with the Board, management team, staff and clients, this position will encompass all financial and treasury functions. The potential impact of this position on the growth and development of the organization is nothing short of outstanding.

The ideal candidate will likely see a CFO position as the next step in his/her career. Experience and competencies in financial, business and human leadership are prerequisites. A university education and professional qualifications are required.

Our client's instructions are to locate a candidate with proven experience, potential and a values-based approach to all corporate matters. They are offering a competitive compensation and benefits package that reflects the importance they place on this role.

The organization is located in a significant community west of Toronto where there are ample social, sports, cultural, educational and medical facilities. Relocation support will be provided.

To pursue this opportunity, in strict confidence, forward your resume by email to

**CFOSEARCH@performancehouse.com**

Though we do not wish to be discourteous, only those candidates that we view as matching the client's needs will be contacted.

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



### STREET PASTOR FOR LAZARUS RISING, TORONTO

This position requires a person with a commitment to Christian faith, active church membership and non-violent peacemaking.

MCCO is seeking an individual who will develop pastoral relationships and connect those who live on the streets of Toronto to an existing Christian community.

The ability to walk with people from diverse experiences, ability to access community resources, pastoral skills, and Biblical approach to street ministry are preferred.

This half-time position (may expand into full-time ministry in the future) is available on a salaried basis.

Application deadline is September 15, 2005.

Inquiries and requests for applications may be directed to:

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



**Peggy and Tony Campolo**

## A weekend with Tony and Peggy Campolo

**Ontario**—“Is The Homosexual My Neighbour?” we ask? Isn’t that an insensitive question? Of course the homosexual is my neighbour! Yet, regrettably it is an all too credible and pertinent question because many of us Christians have not been treating homosexual persons as our neighbours,” states the event preparation material.

Tony and Peggy Campolo will be presenting talks and dialogues on the topic of “Is the homosexual my neighbour?” on Oct. 14-15 in southern

Ontario. This series is sponsored by MC Eastern Canada and is part of the conference’s Season of Discernment on homosexuality. The Friday evening public address is at RIM Park in Waterloo and Saturday sessions are at Breslau Mennonite. A pastor’s dinner with the couple is also being held on Friday. Space is limited for some events.

For more information go to [www.mccc.ca/WhatsNew](http://www.mccc.ca/WhatsNew) or call 1-800-206-9356.

## Calendar

### British Columbia

**Sept. 23-25:** Mennonite Church of Vernon 25th anniversary celebration

**Sept. 29-Oct. 1:** Mennonite Disaster Service B.C. dessert/information evenings: Kelowna Mennonite Church (29); Westwood MB Church, Prince George (30); Northgate MB Church, Dawson Creek (1); all meetings at 7 p.m. Lois Nickel, guest speaker.

**Oct. 1:** Special delegate session to present final report of MC B.C. ad hoc committee on future of MC B.C. at Bethel Mennonite Church, Aldergrove, 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

**Oct. 1-2:** Thanksgiving ves-

pers with Abendmusik Choir at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford. Donations to Menno Simons Centre.

**Oct. 3-5:** MC B.C. pastor/spouse retreat at Mountainview Retreat Centre, Hope.

**Oct. 13, 14, 16:** Mennonite Disaster Service B.C. dessert information evenings: Willingdon MB Church, Burnaby (13); Eben Ezer Mennonite Church, Abbotsford (14); Yarrow MB Church (16); all meetings at 7 p.m. Kevin King, guest speaker.

**Oct. 15:** Mennonite Historical Society of B.C. banquet at CBC, 6 p.m. Speaker: John Ruth. Topic: “From American with love.”

**Oct. 20:** CBC annual meeting

## Announcement

For part-time evening self employment/small business training, call ASSETS Vancouver, 604-708-0448.

## For rent

Sleepy Hollow Cottage. All season, 3 bedroom cottage/home in a peaceful wooded valley in the heart of the Niagara region. Excellent as a small retreat center or for family holiday. Walk to the Bruce trail. Minutes from other Niagara attractions. For further information and rental costs phone (705)476-2319 or e-mail [coffmanjohnh@hotmail.com](mailto:coffmanjohnh@hotmail.com)

## Housing

For Rent: New Hamburg area, 2 storey, 2 bedroom “Doddy” house. Quiet, rural, secluded. Large deck, treed yard. 20 minutes from K-W. Call: 519-625-8899.

Farmhouse near Springstein, Manitoba, west of the Perimeter. Available October 1st. Two storey, 3+ bedrooms, 2 washrooms. Please call 905-468-2398.

in the chapel.

**Oct. 21-23:** B.C. Women in Mission annual retreat at Camp Squeah.

**Nov. 5-6:** Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, 25th anniversary celebration.

**Nov. 18-20:** Senior youth IMPACT retreat at Camp Squeah.

## Alberta

**Sept. 25:** Coaldale Sunbeam Ladies Aid celebrates its 60th anniversary, 3 p.m., at Coaldale Mennonite Church. Former members and friends welcome.

**Oct 21:** Mennonite Disaster Service dessert/information evening, 7 p.m., Dalhousie Community Church. Speaker: Gerald Klassen. Everyone welcome.

**Nov. 5-6:** Rosemary Mennonite Church 75th anniversary celebrations.

## Saskatchewan

**Oct. 2:** Eyebrow Mennonite Church Thanksgiving and 50th Anniversary celebration. Morning worship service and lunch followed by informal afternoon program and fropa. For more information, or to register, call 306-759-2185.

**Oct. 4:** Annual fall supper at Youth Farm Bible Camp, Rosthern.

**Oct. 14-15:** Women in Mission retreat at Shekinah.

**Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13:** “Stories Jesus told: A look at the parables,” with Vern Ratzlaff, Nutana Park Mennonite Church.

**Oct. 29:** Equipping conference at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

**Nov. 4-5:** MCC annual meeting in Yorkton.

**Nov. 4-6:** RJC visioning meeting with Jeff Steckley.

**Nov. 4-6:** Quilting retreat at Shekinah.

**Nov. 7-8:** “Personal financial management for families” workshop with Jim Brown of Mennonite Foundation, Osler

## Employment opportunities



### CARPENTER ASSISTANT

Way-Mar Inc. is seeking an effective self-motivated individual to assist with general carpentry tasks. Some experience in woodworking would be an asset but is not required.

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Mennonite Church.

**Dec. 11:** RJC Christmas concert.

**Jan. 13-15:** Refreshing Winds retreat at Shekinah. Theme: "Worshipping through music," with a focus on the new *Hymnal* supplement.

**Manitoba**

**Sept. 20:** Retirement event for Walter Franz, MC Canada Native Ministry director, at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, 6:30 p.m. To register, phone: 204-888-6781 or 1-866-888-6785.

**Sept. 23-24:** Brandon MCC Relief Sale at Keystone Centre.

**Sept. 23-24:** Canadian Mennonite University Homecoming 2005. Theme: "Building, renewing, celebrating." For more information, contact 1-877-231-4570 or e-mail alumni@cmu.ca.

**Sept. 24:** Westgate Collegiate Cyclathon.

**Sept. 25:** Westgate Collegiate opening program at Bethel Mennonite Collegiate, 3 p.m.

**Sept. 30-Oct. 1:** "Mennonite Hosts and Refugee Newcomers: 1979-Present" history conference at Eckhardt Gramatte Hall, University of Winnipeg.

**Sept. 30-Oct. 2:** Camp Moose Lake workathon.

**Oct. 1:** Equipping the Congregation conference at Winkler Berghthaler Mennonite Church.

**Oct. 14-15:** Manitoba Women in Mission retreat at Camp Assiniboia. Theme: "Prayer—just do it" with Pam Driedger and Marilyn Houser Hamm. Arrive 5 to 6 p.m. with supper at 6:15 p.m. All women welcome.

**Oct. 18-19:** J. J. Thiessen Lectures at Canadian Mennonite University with Paul J. Griffiths, professor of Catholic studies, U. of Illinois, speaking on "Curiosity: Towards a theology of intellectual appetite."

**Oct. 22:** Manitoba Women for MCC annual conference at Rosenort EMC. Registration at 9:30 a.m.; session begins at 10 a.m. Bring a brown bag lunch,

bar of soap, and a new or used article to be sold.

**Oct. 28-30:** Manitoba Mennonite and Brethren Marriage Encounter weekend in Winnipeg. For more information call Peter and Rose Dick at 204-757-4705.

**January 13-15:** Young Adult Retreat at Camp Koinonia: "Get Engaged! ... With the Church!"

**Ontario**

**Sept. 9-11:** Annual cross disability "Building Community" retreat at Hidden Acres Camp. Theme: "Jesus and community." Speaker: Allan Strong. Volunteers needed. Call 519-748-0539.

**Sept. 11:** A service of remembering and thanksgiving at Altona Mennonite Meeting House, 3 p.m. Call Joe Nighswander at 905-640-1536 for details.

**Sept. 11-12:** Storyteller and stewardship theologian Lynn Miller is speaking at Grace Mennonite, St. Catharines, 7 p.m. each evening. Topics: "Putting the camel on a diet is not what Jesus is talking about" (11); "How to give your life away" (12).

**Sept. 17:** Black Creek Pioneer Village Relief for MCC, Toronto, Ont. Gates open at 10 a.m.; quilt auction at noon in new pavilion.

**Sept. 18:** UMEI Fish Fry, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

**Sept. 18:** Sandra Birdsell, author of *The Russländer*, will do a free reading from her new novel *Children of the Day* in the Conrad Grebel University College Chapel, 7 p.m.

**Sept. 21:** My Self-help/Ten Thousand Villages Journey to the Philippines and Laos: Edith Kool tells stories of artisans and view some of their handiwork. SCOC Meeting Room, 2701 St. Clair Ave. East, Toronto at 7:30 p.m.

**Sept. 24:** Worship and music leaders workshop on the new hymnal supplement *Sing the Journey*, Conrad Grebel University College Chapel, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Registration includes the new songbook.

**Sept. 25:** UMEI School opening at North Leamington United Mennonite Church, 2:30 p.m.

**Sept. 26, 27:** Seniors retreat at Hidden Acres Camp. Theme: "Welcoming the stranger as our neighbour." Speaker: Barbara Lehto. Same program each day. Registration deadline: Sept. 19. For more information, e-mail: jscheifele@sympatico.ca.

**Sept. 30-Oct. 2:** Young Adult Fellowship annual retreat at Hidden Acres Camp. Theme: "Morality: Learning at the mountain." For more information, e-mail: bwiebe@mennon-church.mb.ca or markrachel@golden.net.

**Oct. 14-15:** MCEC weekend

with Tony and Peggy Campolo. Theme: "Is the homosexual my neighbour?" For more information, go to www.mcec.ca/WhatsNew or call 1-800-206-9356.

**Oct. 16:** Christian Steinman(n) reunion at Shakespeare Optimist Hall. Potluck at 1 p.m.

**Oct. 22:** Launch of the second *Hope Rising* CD at Hamilton Mennonite Church, 7 p.m. Proceeds to MCC Ontario's Circles of Support and Accountability Program.

Please send Calendar events by e-mail to: calendar@canadian-mennonite.org.

**Subscriber services** Mennonite

**How to subscribe:**

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## Oops!

*Voted by readers of the shipoffools.com website, the Top 10 winners in the Parish Pump Church Magazine Misprint Competition 2005 are:*

10. Calvinism—and the doctrine of predestination—is clearly alive and well in Ft. Myers, Fla. The First United Methodist Ash Wednesday bulletin announced that Lent was a time for us all to **“...prepent of our sins.”**

9. Paul Mitchell, of Guildford, Western Australia, was surprised to discover Jesus acquired a useful domestic skill during his time on earth. The local paper, quoting Luke 24:35, informed its readers that **“the Lord was known in the baking of the bread.”** We can only presume that his use of self-raising flour was meant to be a sign.

8. Worshippers at St. Mary Magdalene, Ashton-on-Mersey, U.K., were invited to stay behind after a recent carol service to enjoy **“coffee and mice pies.”** No one’s heard a squeak out of them since.

7. Anna from Chicago, Ill., wonders just what kind of food was made available to guests at a local Episcopalian Church function recently. Tied in with one of America’s biggest sporting events, Anna received an invitation to attend **“a Super Bowel Party.”**

6. Just how far was the destination, wonders Kat, when the weekly notice sheet at Aylesbury Methodist Church, Bucks, U.K., energetically announced that **“the Wesley Guild walk will start from the Hen and Chickens car park at 10 a.m. Please bring a packed lung.”**

5. Isabel Clark from Peterborough, U.K., noted that in the recent edition of her local Christian newsletter, the Friday night service was listed as **“a service of prayer and medication.”** At the meeting that followed, she reports, all the worship leaders were laid low with flu.

4. Kory Stamper from Amherst, Mass., told us how his overworked pastor faithfully typed up hymns on transparencies for use on an overhead projector—until one fateful Sunday. During the classic hymn, “Crown Him With Many Crowns,” congregants were exhorted to **“Awake, my soul, and sin....”**

3. Daisymay sent us a misprint of diabolical proportions. The Graham Kendrick-penned classic hymn usually reads “For this purpose, Christ was revealed / To destroy all the works of the evil one.” When put through a demonically oppressed spell checker, the Easter Sunday service sheet read

instead, **“For this purpose, Christ was revealed / To destroy all the woks of the evil one....”** Clearly a case of “Repent—or be stir fried.”

2. The advent of the computer spell-checker has ensured that the church secretary doesn’t need to proofread the service sheets any more—or does she? In one church, the word “speaking” was spelled incorrectly, so the spell-checker gave the nearest equivalent. As a result, puzzled worshippers sang **“Teach us, Lord, the art of spanking.”** It didn’t help that the next verse in the hymn begins with the words, “You release us from our bondage....”

1. One character—or lack of it—can make all the difference in encouraging the faithful to devotions. Winner of the Parish Pump Church Magazine Misprint Competition 2005 is a Baptist Church near Ambleside, U.K., which recently announced that **“the meeting will be gin with prayer.”** Worshippers left looking tired and devotional.

