

C A N A D I A N
Mennonite

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Cleaning up their act

Our country is a global leader in mining and resource extraction. In 2003, 64 percent of mining companies worldwide that reported significant exploration plans were based in Canada, according to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Furthermore, Canadian mining companies spend almost two-thirds of their exploration budgets on projects located outside our borders.

Unfortunately, the social and environmental leadership Canadian companies have shown has not often matched their considerable economic power. Researcher Maryanne Mutch recently returned from a one-year MCC assignment in the Philippines, where she examined a large gold mine run by Calgary-based mining and drilling company TVI Pacific, Inc. (See "Mining for truth in Mindanao," page 13.)

There has been negative news on the activities of Canadian companies for decades. Christian peace and justice organization Kairos Canada highlighted Placer Dome's mining practices in the Philippines in the 1980s and '90s. In 2002, a United Nations report to the UN Security Council described the actions of five Canadian mining companies, among others, in the Democratic Republic of Congo as "mineral rape" that "amount[s] to a multi-billion dollar corporate theft of the country's mineral assets." That's not the kind of language I want associated with my country.

From March to June of this year, a subcommittee of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade heard testimony from witnesses and read submissions on this issue, including input from MCC. The committee's report, presented to the government in June, contains strong language on its concerns and on what the Canadian government needs to do differently.

"These hearings have underlined the fact that mining activities in some developing countries have had adverse

effects on local communities, especially where regulations governing the mining sector and its impact on the economic and social wellbeing of employees and local residents, as well as on the environment, are weak or non-existent, or where they are not enforced," the report states.

The committee expresses concern that Canada does not currently have any laws that require Canadian companies to conform to human rights standards in their work outside Canada. It recommends that laws be established for this purpose and also recommends that Canadian government assistance to Canadian mining companies depend on them "meeting clearly defined corporate social responsibility and human rights standards."

Linking assistance to corporate social responsibility is already the case in the Netherlands and Belgium, according to Sandra Elgersma, a policy analyst at MCC's Ottawa office. She reports that the government currently provides quite a bit of help to mining companies, including tax forgiveness for foreign taxes paid and risk insurance offered through Export Development Canada.

These recommendations that link aid, law and respect for people and the environment could lead to a major shift in how Canadian companies operate overseas.

Just good recommendations aren't enough, of course. They need to lead to further action. The Canadian government is scheduled to release a response to the report on Oct. 19. Kairos Canada provides a number of ways to express support for these recommendations by contacting the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Industry, and the Minister of Natural Resources Canada (these are online at www.kairoscanada.org/e/urgent/uaMining0508.asp). The government needs to follow up on its committee's good work to ensure Canadian mining and oil companies set an example for the rest of the industry to follow.

—Tim Miller Dyck

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ToMorrow

Cover: Admirers view "Heart of Roses," which sold for a record \$8,000 at this year's annual Mennonite Central Committee B.C. Festival Auction and Relief Sale (see full story on page 32). MCC B.C. photo



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Winnipeg

Original Witness workers reflect on Korean service

One thing is clear: Erwin and Marian Wiens, recent Witness returnees from Chun Chon, South Korea, delight in the three years they spent “walking with” their brothers and sisters in the Jesus Village Church (JVC) there.

Sure, there were some challenges to face:

- Occasional bouts of homesickness. They have six adult children and two grandchildren “scattered all over.”
- Predictable struggles with language and cross-cultural adjustments.
- Not to mention a few administrative glitches to overcome due to being the first couple placed by MC Canada after its reorganization into a single denominational body—from Conference of Mennonites/General Conference/Mennonite Church—in Canada.

But nothing that couldn't be dealt with via a few extra e-mail and telephone conversations, and a little more time spent in prayer and reflection.

At least that's how they told it during a recent, laughter-punctuated conversation with MC Canada communications and *Canadian Mennonite* staff in which they reflected on some of the highlights and learnings they gleaned from “a memorable and positive experience” made possible by JVC and MC Canada Witness working together.

Marian, an experienced counsellor-administrator, began by singling out

JVC fast facts

- JVC (Jesus Village Church) is the only Anabaptist congregation in Korea.
- The congregation arose in 1996 out of a house church and study group deeply committed to a New Testament kind of church. Their studies included the writings of John Howard Yoder and led to deepening relationships with Mennonites in North America.
- Between 75 and 100 people attend services at JVC.

the joy of discovering that she liked teaching. “That was a big thing,” she said, laughing. “It felt like I discovered another part of me at age 62! Seeing the enthusiasm of the students was really great!”

After the JVC women indicated, in an evaluation, that they wanted more time with her, she established a women's group using materials on relational boundaries, written by Christian psychologists and translated into Korean. “The women quickly picked up the concepts and practised them,” Marian said. “I had to set a time frame, [otherwise] it could have gone on forever!”

After teaching the course twice, she asked one of her students to take over, using her notes, while she started up a couple's group. “That worked out very well,” she said. “I especially enjoyed the day-to-day interaction on a practical home and family basis.”

Asked about “spiritual learnings” she'd experienced in Korea, Marian noted that in their second year there, she went through “a down time, questioning what I was doing there. Couldn't we be doing the same things better at home?” she wondered.

Out of that questioning she came to realize that “my purpose was to be faithful to where I am and what God is doing in my life now.... To be still and listen is not easy for me, but God's spirit works through my intuition.... That was a big change for me.”

For Erwin, a seasoned pastor and teacher, prayer stood out as his most significant learning experience.

“Korean people are committed to prayer,” he said. “I felt I was a total



Erwin and Marian Wiens, Witness workers in South Korea, receive a certificate of recognition on the completion of a three-year service term at Jesus Village Church in South Korea. Gordon Janzen, right, oversees international ministry programs in Asia.

Photo by Dan Dyck

beginner. Maybe not even a beginner! I didn't really know how to pray. [At JVC] prayer envelops everything.... I remember the first evening prayer meeting, sitting on the floor, until my butt got sore!... It was simply overwhelming! Somebody would lead out with Scripture or a prayer or a song...then everybody would pray.... For example, when we prayed for the reunification of the North and South Korea [a common theme], the whole room erupted.... All praying at once, it would get very intense.... There would be tears.... And waves and waves and waves of prayer [filled the room] from 9 to 12 p.m. This was just awesome!

“Also, on Saturday morning, at 5:30, leaders would gather,” he continued. “The Scripture for Sunday would be read. Then we'd pray for the Sunday service and for Sunday school. They held [these things] and the church universal before God.... Praying together with others—this was not Pentecostal, but communal, prayer.”

“I wonder how we can translate this to the Canadian church,” Erwin mused. “I've...thought of having an equivalent assignment [to ours] for a Korean to come to Canada to help us develop a prayer ministry....”

While recommending others thinking of taking early retirement to do what they did—because, as Marian said, “You get back a hundred percent”—they caution couples going out to do some “relational work” beforehand. “Working and living together in a small apartment [in another setting can be a challenge],” she noted. “But you can also continue to grow.”

Asked if they had any other messages for the broader church, Erwin warned against getting caught up in focusing on yourself. “Look beyond the local congregation,” he urged. “Recognize your brothers and sisters [elsewhere].... Keep your eyes and ears open to what’s happening around the world and build relationships with them. Don’t limit yourself to your own little world. Be part of the church universal...the divine universal.”

The Wiens went through a discerning process at JVC before they came back to Canada. “A powerful message came through,” Marian said. “They told Erwin to go back into pastoral ministry and counselling work for me.”

Erwin added: “Their message to us, was, ‘Your place is in Canada. Minister there.’ It was the truth. We walked with them [for three years], then they let us loose [to use our gifts]. I look forward to more years of ministry [in Canada].”

“I want to listen and pray [for a while],” concluded Marian. I’m tired. I’ll take a break, then do part-time counselling.”

The conclusion of Wiens’ three-year term represents the end of the first full cycle of Mennonite Church Canada fully owning its international mission agenda, commented Janet Plenert, director of International Ministries. “Erwin and Marian were the first couple Witness interviewed, appointed and sent into international service,” she noted. “To see them return to Canada three years later, vibrant and grateful for their experience, and with thanks and praise from our South Korean partners, is very gratifying. We are more convinced than ever that the opportunity to function as a Canadian church [rather than a bi-national one] has opened healthy opportunities for us.”

—**Leona Dueck Penner**
with **Dan Dyck**

Vancouver

The wisdom of God’s peace

First United Mennonite Church in Vancouver held its first ever neighbourhood Rollkuchen and watermelon lunch on Aug. 28. During the service that preceded the lunch, member Jane Qu, a Chinese immigrant, gave her testimony (based on Matthew 5:38-48), which is reprinted in part below.

One night I was so nervous that I had a dream, in which I had a conversation with Matthew, I mean Gospel Matthew. I poured out all my questions in the dream: “How do you define neighbour or enemy?” “How can human beings really love their enemies?” When I woke up, only those unresolved questions clearly remained.

I immigrated to Canada four years ago with my husband, Frank Hu. I grew up in the military harbour town called Lüshun, which has long been a strategic location for military operations.

One of the historical sites in my hometown is the Mausoleum of Ten Thousand Martyrs. In 1894, during the China-Japan war, the Japanese landed at Lüshun and massacred more than 18,000 people. Only 36 survived the four-day slaughter.

There stands a white tower—Baiyu [White Jade] Tower. Known as the “Hall of Ashes,” the tower took the shape of a candle on one side, offering a sacrifice to the souls of the deceased, and on the other side it resembles a bullet, which symbolizes the military force of Japan.

I do have some special feelings about the Japanese and Japan. Complicated emotions—shame, disgrace, humiliation and sadness—are rooted in my heart. I never thought these feelings could be diluted in the future.

But in 2003, our landlord rented out our next-door apartment to a Chinese husband and a Japanese lady with two kids. In the following days, I felt so exhausted hearing the two kids fighting,

crying, screaming, and the Japanese lady’s blaming.

I read a sticker that says, “Endurance is not just the ability to bear a hard thing, but to turn it into glory.” I put it on the wall to reduce the headache my neighbour gave me.

One day, Frank forgot to take garbage can out. When realizing the garbage might be kept for another week, I rushed out and found my neighbour—the Japanese lady—was taking out our garbage can. I could not help saying thank you in Japanese—“Aligado, Aligado”—to her.

When I was back in my room, I kept thinking that since they moved in I hadn’t missed any chance try to fight back by turning the volume up about any anti-Japanese news. How ridiculous and ignorant I was!

What happened that day may not totally change my views about the bloody history between China and Japan; however, it made me think deeply about the correct way to please our God as a Christian in this situation.

Since that day, I talk to my neighbour and started to play with their two kids. When they went back to Japan for a visit, I really missed them.

At the last Chinese Mid-Autumn festival, our landlord invited us and our neighbours to have a dinner together, to enjoy the full moon. That night, I really enjoyed talking with the Japanese lady. There is a Chinese saying, “When the moon is full, mankind is one.” I could feel the moonlight of Mid-Autumn Festival bring particular warmth and peace to the hearts of everyone.

I asked myself if that wasn’t the way God wants me to be? All of sudden, I knew the purpose of God was to change me. When Jesus died for us, to that extent love was the greatest sacrifice. What sacrifice can I contribute to the people I love, to my neighbour, my enemy, and most importantly, to my Lord Jesus Christ?

—**Jane Qu**



Qu

Christian Zionism: Their theology, our nightmare!

Christian Zionism of the premillennial dispensationalist variety tells a dramatic tale: the rapture of believers, the rise of the Antichrist, and Jesus' violent, triumphant Second Coming. Within this dramatic narrative the return of the Jews to the Holy Land plays a pivotal role, and the modern State of Israel thus becomes of great theological significance to Christian Zionists; in fact, some Christian Zionists have suggested Hurricane Katrina was God's punishment on the U.S. for failing to support Israel as it pulled its settlers out of Gaza in an attempt to create what they see as an unbiblical peace. The following articles—originally published in the July-September MCC Peace Office Newsletter—offer a critical analysis of Christian Zionist theology and readings of Scripture. For more information about the peace office, visit www.mcc.org/respub/pon/index.html.

On a pleasant Sunday afternoon in July 2000, members and pastors belonging to local Palestinian evangelical congregations from the Palestinian territories gathered at the Bethlehem Hotel to celebrate the formation of their council.

An American woman who was present at the meeting approached one of the pastors and asked if she could say a few words to the assembly. When the lady took the microphone, I couldn't believe the words that came out of her mouth. She professed to the Palestinian evangelical Christians assembled there that she had a word from the Lord for them. "God," she said, "wanted them all to leave Israel and go to other Arab countries." She added that they must leave to make room for God's chosen people, the Jews. She warned the pastors and the audience that if they did not listen to the instructions that God had given her, God would pour his wrath on them.

When her agenda was recognized, one of the pastors came and whisked her away from the pulpit, but not before she had served the whole assembly a mouthful of what is known today as Christian Zionism.

What are the theological and eschatological (end time) beliefs of Christian Zionism?

- Jews have special favour with God, and neither time, history nor the religious conditions of Jews can affect or alter that favour.
- The Holy Land belongs to the Jews. It always has and it always will. Neither history, nor the passing of centuries, nor the religious or moral condition of Jews today, can alter

this fact.

- Jews today are an extension of the Israelites in biblical times. Therefore, just as the nations during the Old Testament era were judged as to how they treated ancient Israel, the same is true today.
- Old Testament prophecies, although uttered thousands of years ago, are being fulfilled in Israel today and have been since 1948, when the state was born.
- God's "end time" plan is directly connected with modern Israel. Christians can speed up the coming of Christ as they help bring about the fulfillment of prophecies that pertain to Israel.

Most adherents of Christian Zionism are not aware of the destructive theological, religious and political implications of these ideas.

Theologically, Christian Zionism is a contradiction in terms. Zionism is a secular political movement that has clear political goals and has been nonreligious from its conception. Zionism deviates from the heart of the New Testament. New Testament Christianity proclaims, "For God so loved the world," while Christian Zionism proclaims, "For God so loved modern Israel." According to the Book of Acts, Jesus made clear to Peter in a vision that God no longer favours one nation over others:

"Then Peter began to speak: I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism, but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right" Acts 10:34-35.

In the epistle to the Galatians, Paul confronted a group in the churches of Asia Minor who wanted to drag the new believers back to Judaism:

"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs accord-

ing to the promise" Galatians 3:26-29.

Christian Zionism influences its followers to be indifferent to the biblical mandates on peace and justice. Hard-line Christian Zionists teach that peace between Israel and her neighbours could only be established by the Antichrist, the archenemy of Christ. Consequently, religious or political leaders or organizations that endeavour to make peace between Israelis and Palestinians, can be seen as a tool of the Antichrist. Thus the more turmoil and suffering that the nations of the Middle East undergo, the greater the evidence that God is carrying out his eschatological program. Eschatology for many Christian Zionists is far more important than Biblical teachings on peace and justice.

Christian Zionism is adding fuel to the tension between Christians and Muslims. Many Christian Zionists, especially after Sept. 11, 2001, began to see Muslims as enemies of God. TV evangelists went on the air publicly denouncing Muslims and Islam. Christian Zionists continue to talk about reaching the world for Christ. How can they do so when they are alienating and building walls of mistrust between them and over a billion Muslims?

Palestinian Christians have existed in the Holy Land since the day of Pentecost and have kept the torch of Christianity burning faithfully for the past two thousand years. If the Christian Zionist agenda is carried out, it will mean the death of Christianity in the Holy Land. The erosion of Christianity in its birthplace is a loss for the Body of Christ everywhere.

Unlike the prophets of the Old Testament, Christian Zionists have no prophetic words of rebuke for the State of Israel when the Jewish state indulges in oppression. Christian Zionists do not call for the State of Israel to do justice. Israel confiscates Palestinian land, demolishes the homes of the poor, destroys their agricultural land and siphons off their water resources, while many Christian Zionists continue to bless Israel and sing her praises. There are Israelis today, however, like the brave prophets of ancient Israel, who do not hesitate

to call their compatriots to pursue justice.

Jeremiah reflected that courage when he said:

"O house of David, this is what the LORD says: 'Administer justice every morning; rescue from the hand of his oppressor the one who has been robbed, or my wrath will break out and burn like fire because of the evil you have done—burn with no one to quench it'" Jeremiah 21:12.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ calls all his followers to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9). His teachings are often referred to as the good news. They are God's good news for the entire human race. Can we intentionally proclaim his teachings as good news for some, but bad news for others? When the Bible is used to endorse the theft of countries and the suppression of nations, then the good news becomes bad news and the Bible is twisted into a manual for occupation.

—Rev. Alex Awad

The author is pastor of East Jerusalem Baptist Church and professor at Bethlehem Bible College.

Christian Zionism influences its followers to be indifferent to the biblical mandates on peace and justice.

Musa Taha, a Palestinian farmer northwest of Jerusalem, lost most of his farmland last year when the Israeli military confiscated it to construct part of a system of walls and fences that cuts through the occupied Palestinian territories. Taha is one of 43 Palestinian farmers who received vegetable seedlings through a project supported by Mennonite Central Committee, in partnership with Palestinian organizations. The project is intended to help farmers cope with losing land seized by Israel.



MCC photo by Chris Seidel

A view from the Palestinian church

But Israel is Christian!” Bill exclaimed after I had spoken to a church group during an adult Bible study session. I paused, never having heard it stated that way before, but Bill, in those four words, had summarized western Christianity’s unconditional support of the State of Israel against the rightful claims of the Palestinian people.

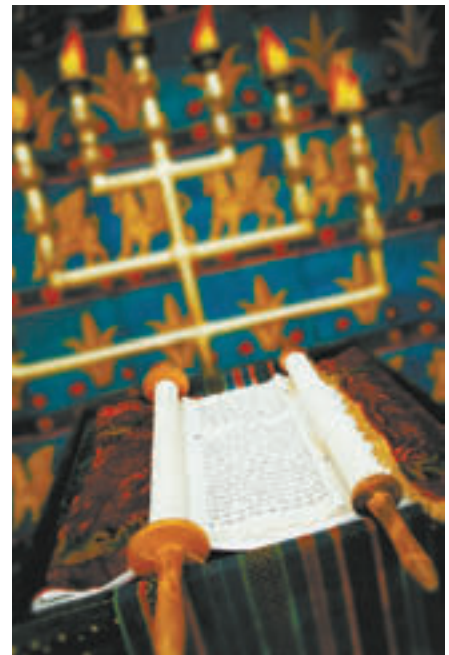
It is widely believed in western churches, and taught in theological seminaries, that the Bible provides the title deed for the establishment of the State of Israel. The displacement of the indigenous people—which from the beginning was the intention of Zionism—is not only overlooked but also justified.

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 is often interpreted by western Christians as fulfillment of prophecy. This view clashed painfully with the reality of our experience as Palestinian Christians. We were totally disoriented by our physical dispossession and displacement, by the loss of home and property, of homeland and identity, and by the negation of our history and memory. Our spiritual grounding, which we groped to hold onto, was pulled from under our feet. We were left orphaned, physically and spiritually. We felt forsaken by heaven and earth.

Many people abandoned their faith when they most needed it. Many wanted to throw away the Old Testament because it was being used as an instrument of oppression against them. Bishop Kenneth Cragg, in his book *The Arab Christian*, has expressed it perfectly: “Christians in the west can have the exploits of Samson, Samuel, Saul, David, and Jahu and the rest, in lectionary and psalm, as ancient sagas happening to strange ‘heathen’ far away. Arab Christians have to accommodate them—if at all—in the immediacy of their own dispossession and exile. The biblical victims are their own people, their predecessors in the land.”

Luckily, some brave people laboured to discern what God intended for both Israel and the Palestinian people. A Palestinian theology of liberation was born, which helped Palestinian Christians to hold onto their faith, to resist oppression non-violently, and to work for justice and peace. Sadly, many others left the land of their ancestors to find peace in other countries, but could not escape Christian Zionism that denied the authenticity of their narrative.

While Palestinian Christians yearn for a peaceful solution to the conflict and bravely stand up for the human and national rights of their people, resisting oppression non-



violently, Christian Zionists work hard to thwart every peace effort because it stands in the way of their theology of a violent end time vision. Human rights that they would fight for in their own countries are dismissed in Israel and Palestine because the “chosen people” have divine rights that allow—or even mandate—them to have no mercy for the people of the land.

By demonizing Islam and idolizing the State of Israel, Christian Zionist leaders are putting Palestinian Christians—who are an integral part of the Arab nation and of the Christian world—on the defensive, instead of using their ideal placement to further peace and understanding.

While the international community works to end the Israeli occupation and reconcile the two sides of the conflict, Christian Zionists encourage Israel not to give back any part of occupied Palestinian land and encourage the building and expansion of illegal Israeli settlements.

In brief, Christian Zionists are changing the course of history in the direction of injustice and oppression. Human and national rights for the Palestinians are totally disregarded in favour of so-called divine rights.

—Cedar Duaybis

The author is a Palestinian Christian laywoman who serves on the board of the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center.

Human and national rights for the Palestinians are totally disregarded in favour of so-called divine rights.

And so all Israel will be saved: Reflections on a Christian Zionist reading of Romans

Romans 9 to 11 is undoubtedly one of the most challenging passages in the New Testament. Here Paul wrestles passionately with questions that shake him to the core. These questions lead him to ponder the imponderable, as he struggles to understand the purposes of God in the world. How does Israel figure within God's redemptive purposes, since Israel does not recognize Jesus as the Messiah whom God has sent for their salvation? What becomes of God's covenant with Israel? "Has God rejected his people?" (11:1). "Have they stumbled so as to fall?" (11:11).

Paul answers his own questions with utmost confidence: "By no means!" (11:1, 11). A sudden, happy insight tells Paul that the "stumbling" of Israel is, in fact, an integral piece of God's cosmic plan for the salvation of all humankind, Jews and Gentiles alike. In God's "inscrutable ways" (11:33) the "stumbling" of Israel means that "salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous" (11:1). And this "jealousy" will ultimately lead to Israel's "full inclusion" (11:13) and the salvation of "all Israel" (11:25).

For Paul, this matter is a theological conundrum that he simply entrusts to the infinite wisdom of God. But in the post-1948 world, Paul's words are as politically controversial as they are theologically challenging. Who is the "Israel" to whom Paul points? What relation does this "Israel" have to the modern State of Israel, founded in 1948? And what is meant by the "salvation" of "all Israel"?

The International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem (ICEJ), a prominent Christian Zionist organization, sees itself called "to declare the truth of God's word that bequeaths to the people of Israel the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession." Accordingly, the ICEJ views the modern State of Israel as the prophetically grounded restoration of biblical Israel. And it is within this theological framework that the ICEJ appeals to Romans 9 through 11. Christian Zionists thus connect Paul's words in Romans and the national aspirations

of the Jewish people.

But is the picture this simple? Careful attention to Paul's message in Romans 9 through 11 would suggest otherwise. This much is historically indisputable. In 1948, a new state came into being in the Middle East. This new state, intended as a homeland for Jews from around the world, was named "Israel." But serious questions must be raised about the relationship of this new state to biblical "Israel," in specific, to the "Israel" of which Paul speaks in Romans 9 through 11. Four observations come into focus.

1. The "Israel" of Paul's day is not an autonomous nation, but a people living under military occupation.

2. The "Israel" of which Paul speaks is, rather, a people group, Paul's own "kindred according to the flesh" (9:3). More to the point, it is a faith community. It is this people group and this faith community over which Paul anguishes as he considers the purposes of God.

3. Paul views the purposes of God in messianic fashion. Accordingly, Paul's anguish in these chapters stems from Israel's failure to recognize Jesus Christ as the central actor in God's redemptive purposes. Paul's words about the "salvation of Israel" point not to the national aspirations of an occupied people, but to their membership—their full inclusion" (11:12)—in the messianic faith community through which God's salvation purposes are being worked out.

4. Paul's vision in Romans 9 through 11 includes both Jews and Gentiles as mutually essential actors in the drama of God's redemptive purposes. Israel's present "hardening" (11:25) opens the door to salvation for the Gentiles (11:11, 12, 15, 25). And the incoming of the Gentiles into the messianic faith community creates a "jealousy" among the Jews that will ultimately lead them to "full inclusion" (11:12), "life from the dead" (11:15), and the salvation of "all Israel" (11:26).

God's redemptive purposes, in Paul's view, have nothing to do with a "restored Jewish state." As Paul sees it, God's redemptive purposes seek to draw all humankind—Jews and Gentiles alike—into the inclusive and reconciling fellowship of the messianic community of Jesus Christ.

—Dorothy Jean Weaver

The author is professor of New Testament at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

A sudden, happy insight tells Paul that the "stumbling" of Israel is, in fact, an integral piece of God's cosmic plan for the salvation of all humankind, Jews and Gentiles alike.



Christian Zionism and the Genesis promise of land

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" Genesis 12:1-3.

When Israel and Judah are kingdoms and control territory, the biblical mandate is justice, not the promise of more territory.

I have talked with many North American Christians who, when faced with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, will ask in puzzlement, "But didn't God promise this land to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and their descendents? Didn't God give this land to the Jews?"

Christian Zionists assume that the answer to these questions is an unqualified yes and that the implications for foreign policy are obvious. Christian Zionists are usually evangelicals who begin with a literal reading of the biblical text and a conviction that the Genesis promises are prophecies being fulfilled in the modern State of Israel.

The text quoted above doesn't specifically mention land, but is generally linked to other Genesis passages that do promise land to Abraham's descendents (Genesis 13:14-17, 15:18-21 and 17:4-8). Especially influential is Genesis 17:8, in which God promises the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendents "for an everlasting possession."

Since Abraham's name means "the father of a multitude of nations" (Genesis 17:5), one might assume that both Jews, as the descendents of Isaac, and Arabs, as the descendents of Ishmael, have a claim to the land. But when Christian Zionists read the Bible, they find a biblical mandate to endorse the politics of the State of Israel, established by the rightful descendents of Abraham. Such an interpretation frequently leads to a dismissal of Palestinian land rights and an inability to see injustice when Palestinian property is seized and ownership restricted, because "God's will" privileges any Jewish possession of the land.

But the "land traditions from the ancient texts are open to a variety of readings and responses, some which make for war and not for peaceable habitation," theologian Walter Brueggeman says. What are the readings of these Genesis texts that present more life-giving options for both Israelis and Palestinians? What follows are sketches of five recurrent themes:

1. God is the rightful owner of the land. Psalm 24:1 declares, "The earth is the Lord's." The "monotonous regularity" with which the Bible repeats the Torah phrase "the land which the Lord God will give you" makes it clear that God finally owns the land and it is a gift, not an entitlement.

God's ownership of the land relativizes all other land claims, and gives primacy to God's directions about how to live on the land.

2. God's gift of land is always linked to covenant responsibility. Leviticus 18:24-30 and Deuteronomy 8:17-19 make clear that those who ignore God's commandments will not enjoy the land, but will "perish" or be "vomited out." The promise of land is not unconditional, but depends on justice for all its inhabitants (Ezekiel 47:21-23).

3. God promises land to the landless and warns those who control territory to practise justice. The promise of land occurs in a specific context. When Israel and Judah are kingdoms and control territory, the biblical mandate is justice, not the promise of more territory.

4. Interpreting the promise of land is linked to our concept of God.

Through the ministry of the prophets and the experience of exile, the people of the Old Testament come to see that God is not narrowly confined to a specific geography or land, but reigns over all nations and loves every land and its peoples. The God who promises land has the wellbeing of the world in mind.

5. God's purpose in giving the land to Abraham's descendents is to bless all nations. The land is not an end in itself, but should lead to a blessing of all the nations.

These perspectives on the promise of land in Genesis present challenges to a Christian Zionist interpretation of the texts. Rather than an unqualified endorsement of one side's claim to the land, these themes suggest another conclusion.

Says Mitri Raheb in *I Am a Palestinian Christian*, "The land happens to be the homeland of two peoples. Each of them should understand this land to be a gift of God to be shared with the other. Peace and the blessing on the land and on the two peoples will depend on this sharing. Only then will the biblical promises be fulfilled."

—**Patricia Shelly**

The author is professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, Newton, Kan. She served as MCC Palestine country representative from 1996 to 2000.

Waterloo, Ont.

Music camp 'brings down the house'

The musical featured by Ontario Mennonite Music Camp at its final concert was *Samson: The Day God Brought Down the House!* starring Doug Epp from Milton, Ont. as Samson and Melissa Scheele from Chicago as Delilah.

The musical—presented at Breslau (Ont.) Mennonite Church—had many memorable lines. When Samson's mother was told she would have a child, she asked, "Can't we keep it secret?" The narrator replied, "Sorry, Bible characters don't have secrets!"

And Samson, after his fall from grace, said, "I had to lose my vision to regain my sight."

Clearly Ontario Mennonite Music Camp is "a habit of the heart" for many individuals and their families! The Scheele family has sent a child to music camp each

year; this year, they sent three. Henry and Joyce Turman from Stouffville Ont. had two children as campers, and one as staff, so they too are a long-time "OMMC family." Henry is on the 2005 board.

According to camper Stephanie Epp, Ontario Mennonite Music Camp helps participants learn leadership skills through leading at campfires and chapels, among other events. "It also improves our musical ability for use in church," she says, adding, "It gives us a good reason to work at music."

I caught up with Stephanie and her friends during free time in Conrad Grebel University College's Great Hall, where they were preparing a skit based on the *Wizard of Oz* for that evening's Camper Coffee House. "Yesterday it was music, tonight it is skits," they informed me.

Of course, all of them had a part in

the final concert, whether it was performing the piano prelude, as part of an instrumental ensemble, or singing a solo or in the choir.

Besides the music, Stephanie—who plays the trombone—said that a big part of fun at camp is hanging out with friends.

Orla Tyrrell from Mississauga, Ont. said, "It's a great experience, lots of fun, being away from home." She added enthusiastically, "And camp is growing. There are 10 more people here this year than last."

Director Ian Carruthers was recognized for his association with the music camp for 11 years—as camper, then counsellor, and for the past two years as director. Susan Schwartzentruber, chair of the board, was also recognized for her 10-year affiliation with the camp.

—Maurice Martin



Photo by Maurice Martin

Orla Tyrrell, left, and Stephanie Epp agree that Ontario Mennonite Music Camp is a blast.



Photo by Roy Draper

Vernon and Eva Brubacher, still in costume, chat with photographer Wilhelm Nassau, after shooting scenes for a new audiovisual presentation for the Brubacher House Museum in Waterloo, Ont. The 15-minute DVD, scheduled to be ready for the 2006 season, is being produced by the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario for showing to museum visitors.

Winnipeg

Chicken Soup for the Mennonite soul

If some of the ingredients taste familiar in the latest volume of *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, that's because there is a decidedly Mennonite flavour stirred in.

Contributions from eight Mennonites, including two Canadians—Winnipeggers Madeleine Enns and Joanne Klassen—provide part of the peace church seasoning to *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Stories for a Better World*.

"The idea was to tell stories that are an example of people not going for violence, not revenge or retaliation; instead, going for compassion, communication, creativity and courage," says editor Linda K. Williams, of her purpose behind this 101st volume in the best-selling inspirational series popularized by writers Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen.

"I think the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* [books] are the best way to get the message out there of peace, compassion, forgiveness and harmony," says Williams, who hopes this volume will have wide distribution across North America. The first printing of 30,000 books sold out within a week.

In her story "Concepción's Circle," Enns tells how one Guatemalan woman decided to confront soldiers marching into her war-torn village, instead of hiding from them. She encouraged other women and children to form a circle around the startled soldiers and spoke of wanting peace. Slowly the soldiers lowered their weapons and left.

The retired teacher heard this story in 1994 when volunteering to accompany Guatemalan refugees back to their villages after eight years of exile in Mexico. She wrote Concepción's story as a way to record what an ordinary person can do to make peace in a tense situation.

"I think she has an incredible story

to tell and so much wisdom," Enns says of Concepción. "To still have a vision that healing can happen, that was amazing."

In Klassen's three-page story, she relates how her daughter, Tiffany,

'Because we are wanting to portray alternatives to violence, we also had to portray what the violence was.'



Winnipeg Free Press photo by Wayne Glouacki

Madeleine Enns, left, and Joanne Klassen, both members of Fort Garry Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, contributed stories to the most recent *Chicken Soup for the Soul* book subtitled *Stories for a Better World*.

then 10, motivated and mobilized her two siblings and parents to donate money to a needy family. The school-girl took a creative approach to the already stretched family grocery budget of \$150 by convincing everyone to buy and eat only \$10 of food for a week. The remaining \$100 would be donated to a charitable organization to feed a family of six for a year.

"The gift was awareness on a cellular level," says Klassen, recalling the

seven days she ate oatmeal while her husband enjoyed the bacon and eggs he had purchased. "It's different than writing a cheque. It's something you feel in your body."

Initially, this book had a more pointed title: *Chicken Soup for the Peace Lover's Soul*, says Williams, who pitched the idea to Canfield six years ago. But with the United States at war and many Americans with strong opinions for or against, the title was changed just before the Aug. 23 release of the book.

"The parent company had to be sure they were going to come up with a massively marketable product," says

Williams. "They really believed if it was going to be called a peace lover's soul [it would be harder to sell] than as *Stories for a Better World*."

Whatever the title, Williams is thrilled stories of how people overcome violence with good will be on the mass market in a popular format. The 399-page book follows the usual *Chicken Soup* format of short stories collected from published sources and by authors from many backgrounds, but differs in intensity.

"We are presenting real live cases where people had very difficult, very challenging, very hard things to deal with," explains Williams. "Because we are wanting to portray alternatives to violence, we also had to portray what the violence was."

For Enns and Klassen, both members of Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship in Winnipeg, this book is an expression of their belief in

making peace and the power of a well-told story.

"I really believe we do change the world one story at a time," says Klassen, who launched the book with Enns at a Winnipeg bookstore in September.

—**Brenda Suderman**

The author is a columnist for the Winnipeg Free Press and a member of Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. She can be reached at bsuderman@mts.net.

I looked across at the misty peaks displaying the telltale signs of slash and burn agriculture as the TVI engineer spoke reassuringly into my ear. “See those hills? If we had not come along, they would have destroyed the environment anyways,” he said of the indigenous people of Mindanao’s Zamboanga Peninsula in the Philippines.

And then, as if buoyed by that hopeful thought, he went on to reassure us that this mountain would soon recover from the effects of this project and that it would only be a matter of time before the land we were standing on would be yielding crops or serving as a golf course for rich tourists. He assured us that, in the long run, the area would be much better off because of the additional income that TVI’s presence brought into the area.

Feeling the sun on my face and looking at the breathtaking beauty surrounding us, I was tempted to believe that this place really did have a bright future ahead of it. But when I looked down, I was confronted by the grim reality. My black rubber boots were planted firmly in a sea of rust coloured mud and clay.

TVI Resource Development (Phils.) Inc. (TVI) had only been open-pit gold mining here for a year and already the area looked irreparably ravaged. I was standing on a three-hectare level plateau that used to be the tip of Mt. Canatuan and the engineer was informing me that the plan called for the eventual mining of more than 80 hectares. By 2006, TVI hopes to be processing around 800 tonnes of ore

TVI Resource Development (Phils.) Inc. (TVI) has been open-pit gold mining for only a year on Mt. Canatuan on Mindanao’s Zamboanga Peninsula in the Philippines and already the area looked irreparably ravaged, despite company claims to the contrary.

Maryanne Mutch photo

Mining truth^{for} in Mindanao

per day.

Later, I was asked by a member of a small community that still lives and works less than a kilometre from the path of the bulldozers, “Is it legal in Canada for a company to come in and do what they are doing to us? To evict people and bulldoze their land? To make them vulnerable to flash floods and poisonous chemicals in their water? To kill the river’s fish?”

I did not know what to say. As a Canadian learning about mining issues in the Philippines, I tried to approach things with a balanced perspective. While working for a year with a small non-profit organization in Mindanao, I struggled to process and weigh all the competing claims and accusations that inevitably swirl around such controversial mining projects.

There were at least four different groups with differing interests and interpretations of what was going on up that mountain. However, the evidence and testimony we have gathered indicate that TVI has failed to obtain the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous people, to make adequate provisions for the relocation and compensation of affected persons, and to ensure that the natural environment is not adversely affected.

Conflicts such as this are being repeated all over the world. Canada is a major player in the global mining industry. Of the world’s mining companies that reported significant exploration plans in 2003, 64 percent

were based in Canada. While these companies are based in Canada, a significant portion of their expenditure and exploration activity takes place outside of Canada—almost two-thirds of the worldwide budgets of these companies was allocated for programs outside of Canada.

This spring, residents from Canatuan and Siocon journeyed to Canada to make statements in front of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (SCFAIT) regarding their experience with TVI. TVI also appeared.

As a result of this and other discussions, the committee tabled a report to the Canadian Parliament that makes a number of recommendations, including the adoption of stronger norms for corporate conduct and an investigation into TVI’s operations in Canatuan. The Canadian government is to formulate its response this month.

This is an opportunity for the government to put in place a proactive policy of public support for companies conditioned on compliance with international human rights and environmental standards, and to follow the example of countries such as the Netherlands and Great Britain, that have strengthened their abilities to monitor and enforce existing Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development guidelines. It is also an opportunity for me to have a better answer the next time I’m faced with questions about the conduct of a Canadian company.

—Maryanne Mutch, Winnipeg

The author has recently returned from a one-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment in the Philippines, where she worked as a researcher and an international communications resource for DIOPIM Committee on Mining Issues, a local Catholic-based NGO.



Mutch



Letters

MWC expresses support for Hurricane Katrina victims

As Mennonite World Conference (MWC) officers, staff and especially the MWC family around the world, we stand by and with you at this difficult time. We have seen and heard from the media heart-rending accounts of devastation of homes, infrastructure and indeed of lives as a result of Hurricane Katrina that hit the Gulf of Mexico and its environs.

Many of us cannot find words, but can only imagine what you, our brothers and sisters, have gone through and some of you are still going through. MWC joins you in prayer that in God you will find solace and comfort in your distress. You have indeed been a subject of our concern and supplications ever since the ravaging effects of the hurricane began to unfold. In the midst of all that we are going through,

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 or to "Letter to the Editor," Canadian Mennonite, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C5, Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7.

let us not forget that "God is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble" (Psalm 46:1).

We thank God for the many relief organizations, some having close ties with us, such as Mennonite Disaster Service and Mennonite Central Committee, that have responded to the call of bringing reprieve and also to enable the affected communities to rebuild their lives. We also thank God for the many individuals, some from the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America, that are already serving or are on standby to go and serve in these distressed communities as volunteers.

MWC is calling upon its members to be aware of the ever-increasing needs among its membership around the world due to natural causes, as well as poor political and economic management. Your recent expressions of concern for your sisters and brothers in Zimbabwe have meant so much to them. In like manner, they now stand with you, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in your hour of need.

Whatever the reasons, it is our calling to "help to carry one another's burdens. So let us not become tired of doing good. As often as we have a chance, we should do good to everyone, and especially to those who belong to

Honouring the contract

The extended family gathered early at a camp for the wedding. Shortly before the service began, one mother called to her four-year-old, "Katie, it's time to get dressed." The daughter, playing happily, declined. Pressed for time and sensing a struggle, the mom cut to the chase. "Katie, I'm going to start counting to three"—code language for something like "serious consequences will result if you don't come here now." Katie continued to play.

"One," the mom began.

"Two, three!" interrupted two-year-old cousin Clara, joyfully displaying her newly acquired numerical skill.

Another family member laughed. "Clara hasn't learned which side she's on yet," referring to the parent-child divide which tends to align one older generation against a younger one. On any given day, one can find parents of various ages commiserating with each other about the trials of their children. At the same time, children of various ages can be found complaining about their parents. In the turbulent interplay of power negotiations, it's natural to turn to a sympathetic ear from someone in a similar position. Like seeks like.

But it can become quite awkward for other friends and family members. Difficult questions might include: When do I hold in confidence the information I've received from, or about, a young person? Or alternatively, when do I carry that information to parents or others responsible for the young person's wellbeing? As one parent asked me when

Family Ties

Melissa Miller



I was working in a high school, "Isn't there some parental contract that needs to be honoured? Don't I have a responsibility to share information with other parents?"

Yes, I would say, there is a parental contract. Children and young people do not have all the information and maturity they need to negotiate the world, and the adults around them are beholden to guide and protect them. Nor do individual parents have all the wisdom and resources they need for their task of parenting. It does take a village (or

church) to raise a child. Sometimes extra adults can see critical needs or offer vital information the parents may be missing. Especially in the faith community, we need to be open to give and receive counsel about our young people and how we are to care for them.

Parents may encourage such counsel by asking grandparents, other family members or close friends to advise them about a specific situation or to give more general feedback. Openers like the following might help: "I am wondering what you think about which school to choose for Maya for next year," or, "Jordan doesn't seem to be feeling very good about himself. Any ideas about how we can help him?" Caring individuals on the outside of the parent-child duo may respectfully offer an observation like, "It seems like Ben and you are struggling to communicate." Such a comment might be the initiative a sorely pressed parent needs.

False values like individuality and the privacy of the home have replaced Christian values of mutual accountability and shared burdens. Honouring the parental contract could be a step in the right direction.

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

our family in faith" (Galatians 6:2; 9-10).
—**Danisa Ndlovu, MWC vice-president, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe**

Stories of peace are really 'today's top stories'

I was encouraged to read about the summer peace camp at Givat Haviva in Israel (Aug. 22, page 22), which brings Jewish and Arab children together for fun and friendship. I have often wondered about the potential for breaking the cycles of hatred and violence if only the children could become friends with one another early in life. This peace camp reminds me of Jesus' promise that the kingdom of God is like a "mustard seed," small at first, but wonderfully multiplied by God's power and grace. May this camp and similar initiatives be so! I am thankful to *Canadian Mennonite* for bringing these hopeful good news stories to our attention.

In the same week our daughter

borrowed an OWL magazine (Jan./Feb. 2003) from the library, and I was pleased to see an article about the Neve Shalom—Wahat al Salam (Oasis of Peace) community in Israel, in which Jewish and Arab families came together 28 years ago to live in intentional co-existence. The article interviewed a Jewish girl named Neriya and a Palestinian girl named Sama who grew up together as close friends. Their story, as well as the photo spread of these two high school students delighting in their friendship, was a wonderful contrast to the images that so often come from the Middle East.

How important it is for us to avail ourselves of alternative perspectives on what is happening in the world. The mainstream media relentlessly repeats "today's top stories," but what are the noteworthy stories from the vantage point of God's subversive reign of peace? And while the evening news can cause despair, the mus-

tard seed stories of hope encourage me to pray with new resolve, especially for these things that are already happening.

Of course we cannot deny or minimize the magnitude of ongoing strife in Israel or elsewhere, but please also keep digging up the little stories of hope, so that we can bless them with our prayers.

—**Kevin Drudge, Winkler, Man.**

Correction

In the Sept. 5 *Canadian Mennonite* article "Remember your history..." on page 21, it was stated that Ben Fast, 94, was the oldest living alumnus of Rosthern Junior College. He is, in fact, the oldest living graduate from the 1926 Grade 11 class. Agnes (Regier) Ewert of Drake, Sask., who graduated in 1927 from Grade 12, is, at 98, the oldest living alumnus. *Canadian Mennonite* apologizes for any confusion this error may have caused.

Peacemaking 'au naturel'

In the Muskoka Lakes region of Ontario, swimming in the great outdoors usually has to wait until summer when the water has warmed up. Indeed, the "ice out" date for that area—when all the ice on the lake has finally melted—tends to be later in April.

Every May long weekend when I was growing up, our family went to a cottage on the north shore of Lake Muskoka. One of the first things I did when I arrived was walk down to the water's edge, take off my shoes and socks, and feel the water. Yowzers, it was cold!

Can you imagine what it would be like to cast off more than just one's shoes and socks, and to wade into this untamed water up to one's waist? And beyond? Surely not!

Ephesians 6:15 challenges us to put shoes on our feet that will make us ready to proclaim the gospel of peace, but what if there are times when God calls us to remove our shoes? What if our shoes and skates and boots get in the way of our peacemaking work?

I can think of two situations in which God might be calling us to remove our shoes for the sake of a renewed peace ministry.

The first situation has to do with our peace theology. To put it overly simply, I think we are very good at organizing peace theology conferences, publishing peace theology books, and talking about peace theology. While all of this seems better than just not talking or thinking about peace at all, I wonder if we lull ourselves into a false comfort by resting on our theological

Shoes for your feet

Matthew Bailey-Dick



laurels, instead of seeking practical ways to embody the theology in the real world.

Sometimes we are "armchair peacemakers" in the sense that we read a lot about peacemaking, but we don't really do much. In order to walk the talk, what would it mean to take off our theological shoes? Of course, this is a complex question if we think of theology as inseparable from action and discipleship.

The second example has to do with e-mail and the Internet. While Internet technology is amazing, I sometimes feel

that it unduly distracts and paralyzes us. We spend five minutes, 15 minutes, an hour on the computer and then we're pooped. Who has time to actually attend a peace vigil or write a letter to the government? Who has time to go through nonviolence training? On another level, to what extent do our computers mold us into passive receivers, rather than active creators, of peacemaking activity? If the Internet was inoperative for a month, how would we go about joining God's peacemaking work in the world?

Getting back to the waters of Lake Muskoka, it was on a sunny morning in May last year when I cast off more than just my shoes and socks in order to test the waters. Indeed, there was not a stitch of clothing on my body when I plunged into the swimming bay for a morning dip. After a few moments of absolute terror, there was a new feeling of calm. It actually felt good and refreshing!

God's grace comes to us in the strange mixture of wading into uncomfortable waters and being revived, going out on a limb and receiving the gift of a new opportunity. So take off your shoes and proceed "au naturel." The gospel of peace is on the move, bare feet and all.

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

Bayou La Batre, Ala.

Disaster partnership formed in Katrina's wake

When Kevin King, executive director of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), arrived in southern Alabama to assess the needs following Hurricane Katrina, he came to Bayou La Batre, a town of 20,000 people that had lost 80 percent of its homes in the huge tidal surge. The town had lost its livelihood as shrimp boats were tossed up on shore and fish processing plants, ice houses, markets and transportation systems were destroyed.

When King shared his concern for this town with leaders of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a new disaster partnership was formed. Usually MDS handles disaster response in Canada and the U.S., while MCC focuses on international disasters, but in this case they agreed that MCC would assist with material resources where MDS requested.

On Sept. 5, four MCC trucks arrived in Bayou La Batre. The next morning, hundreds of people waited to get ice, water, food and other aid. Augmenting the emergency supplies were stacks of MCC relief buckets, cartons of canned meat and piles of blankets, many handmade by Mennonite women. This aid had arrived just in time to meet

a desperate need. Constantly, MDS and MCC people were showered with thanks for helping thousands of people who had lost everything.

"We're just so grateful for all your help," said Jaqueline Bennett, whose home had partly shifted off its foundation while trees had damaged the roof.

MDS is not yet accepting volunteers for Katrina's destruction zone because it takes time to decide in which communities MDS can be most effective, to organize living quarters for volunteers, and to screen which disaster

survivors most need MDS help. In the meantime, MDS hopes volunteers will serve at projects in Florida and California, where they are still rebuilding from previous disasters. There is a concern that volunteers, affected by media accounts of need in the Gulf region, will find it less appealing to work at existing projects.

Monetary donations can be made to MDS. By mid-September, more than \$400,000 had been donated by Canadians.

—From MDS reports

Winnipeg

Canadian prayer support for Gulf Coast Mennonites

Mennonites in Canada have been watching the heartbreaking news of the Gulf States disaster along with many other Canadians. However, few Canadian Mennonites probably know that there is a Mennonite Church USA area conference in the region. Mennonite Church Canada received a news release from MC USA that can help us be informed.

The following compilation of facts will help the wider church pray for and be in solidarity with our brothers and sisters there:

- The Gulf States Mennonite Conference is the second smallest area conference in MC USA, comprising 14 congregations in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas.
- No loss of life of conference members has been reported thus far.
- All but two of the congregations have been affected

in some way and many members have received property damage or lost homes.

• The Gulf States Mennonite Conference's Pine Lake Fellowship Camp has been a place of peace, reconciliation, relationship building and safety since its founding in 1966, and it has served as a refuge from hurricanes of the past. Today, it is a staging area for Mennonite Disaster Service projects following this storm, although upcoming retreats have had to be cancelled.

Arlyn Friesen-Epp, director of Mennonite Church Canada's Resource Centre, worked with Mennonite Central Committee in New Orleans in 2000 and 2001. "We still have connections with some of the folks in the downtown community we lived in, some with the larger ecumenical church circle we worked with, and with some of the MC USA congregations along the Gulf," he says, expressing particular concern for the "inner-city residents we had come to know who will [probably] not have had means to have left the city."

Shane Perkinson, associate pastor at Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, has a mother and grandparents who live along the Gulfport area of Mississippi. They managed to evacuate to Jackson and are safe. The grandparent's home is totally demolished. His mother's home was flooded with six feet of water.

MC Canada has sent a letter of concern and prayerful support to the Gulf States conference and MC USA.

—MC Canada release by **Dan Dyck**



MDS photo

Mennonite Disaster Service and church volunteers help victims of Hurricane Katrina search for photographs and other personal keepsakes.

Manilla, Philippines

MCC closes program in Philippines

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) closed its program in the Philippines in August after 33 years. Farewell celebrations in Manila and in Davao City served as a time of celebration and lament, with past and present MCC workers, partners and friends sharing stories, memories and thanks.

“Thanks so much for walking with us,” said Priscilla Ramoso, a former Catholic sister, at a recent farewell celebration in the southern island of Mindanao. “Your hands were empty. But you were holding our hands. You listened. You didn’t say so much. But thank you for making Jesus’ presence present with us.”

The withdrawal is part of a larger shift of resources in MCC’s international programs.

“Because the Philippines has a vital and experienced sector of nongovernmental organizations, we made the difficult decision to wrap up MCC’s work there,” said Ed Martin, director of MCC’s Central/Southern Asia programs.

MCC worked in the Philippines from 1946 to 1950 as part of post-World War II rehabilitation in Abra Province in northern Luzon.

In 1975, the late William Snyder, former executive director of MCC, identified Mindanao as a major flash-point for conflict in southeast Asia. At the time, the Philippine government, with considerable U.S. military aid, was fighting a Muslim effort to achieve more political autonomy on that island that had been their traditional homeland.

Filipino Christian and Muslim friends in Mindanao identified for MCC the issue of land as being at the heart of the struggle. In 1977, the first MCC workers focused their writing and public witness efforts on the impact of large multinational

agribusiness companies, such as Dole pineapple plantations, in Mindanao. Later, MCC workers lived in Muslim and indigenous tribal communities in Mindanao to stand with the people and to share their stories through the global church and press outlets.



Photo provided by MCC Philippines

At a farewell celebration, orchid leis were presented to past and present MCC workers, from left to right, Earl Martin, Chris Vertucci, Brenda Recaña, Priscilla “Chic” Ramoso, Bruce Glick, Jon Rudy and Carolyn Rudy.

Filipinos identified another major area of concern for MCC attention: the presence of Subic Naval Base and

Clark Air Field, the two largest U.S. military bases outside of American soil. The bases spawned a dehumanizing economy of sex bars and sleazy entertainment for the thousands of foreign troops sailing in and out of those bases. MCC workers sat with Filipino women in those bars and together organized an empowerment effort to support their entrapped friends. When Filipinos spoke out against those bases, MCC workers supported them with articles and audiovisuals in the North American press and in testimony to the U.S. Congress.

A Muslim partner of MCC in recent years, Guaimel Alim, from Cotabato, Mindanao, said at the recent farewell, “I bring a testimony that Christians and Muslims can not only work and play together, but they can love each other.” Recalling how he and his wife were invited into the MCC house in Manila during her medical treatment in the capital, he said, “I learned from that what is taught in the Holy

Book: ‘to do to the least of these is to do unto me.’”
—MCC release



MCC photo by Sarah Adams

Evelinah Moloi, along with other volunteer caregivers and AIDS patients at Khanyisile, an HIV/AIDS project in South Africa, raises money for items such as medication and food for patients by making and selling beaded pins depicting the red AIDS ribbon on a white background. Mennonite Central Committee is currently offering these pins for a suggested \$20 donation to support MCC’s HIV/AIDS work. To learn more about this work, visit: www.mcc.org/aids.

Nanchong, China

Growing up in China: A seven-year-old's perspective

Last week, my daughter Claire's primary school hosted a group of substitute teachers—or perhaps “squadron” is a more precise term. It was military training week for the primary school students.

I visited Claire's homeroom teacher the week before and explained that our beliefs encouraged other ways of showing love and support for one's country. I assured her that Claire would not just play while she was at home, but that she would do some other “serve the people” kinds of activities. Claire's teacher had no problem with that. Claire's tutor thinks that military training puts more emphasis on “training” than on “military,” offering an opportunity to “toughen up” coddled children with no siblings.

I interviewed Claire after some discussions about why she wasn't with her classmates out on the playground.



Photo by Todd Hanson

Chinese primary school students receive marching lessons as part of their military training.

Mom: *How does it feel to be a Canadian living in China? Do you ever feel different in any way?*

Claire: I feel different from other Canadians because I'm supposed to be in Canada. I know Mandarin characters and *pinyin*, but Canadians don't know that. I'm different from people in China because I have curly hair. Sometimes my friends get jealous because they don't have curly hair. My classmates always get 100 percent on tests and I don't because I speak English and because I'm Canadian. I feel different because my teacher doesn't make me stay late after school when I get a bad mark—like one time I got 89 and I didn't have to stay, but some classmates who got 80-something had to stay.

Mom: *Today you are staying at home because your classmates are taking military training. Why are you staying home?*

Claire: Because [you] wouldn't let me go to school. Also because I know a better way to love my country.

Mom: *Which is your country?*

Claire: I'm a bridge. I don't have a country. Sometimes I'm in Canada, sometimes in China, sometimes in other places.

Mom: *What does it mean to be a bridge?*

It means that I can help people in Canada who don't understand much

Loving the motherland

During her time off school in Nanchong, China, when the other students received military training, seven-year-old Claire Hanson, daughter of MC Canada Witness workers Todd and Jeanette Hanson, wrote about her activities (originally in Mandarin).

What does it mean to love your country?

I think that it means to love the people in your country. Yesterday, I helped my mom get school supplies ready to give to the children in the orphanage. I also helped my dad package books to send to other schools. I played

with my little sister.

I think that people are all one family. We should all help each other. In the whole world we are also one family. Today, I realized that I am like a bridge. I have two home countries, one is Canada and one is China. If a Canadian asked me if I could fight against China, I have to say no because I know that if I fight against China I will be fighting against my classmates Yang Yirui and Yao Yao, my teachers, and even Teacher Zhang. If a Chinese person asked me if I could fight against Canada, I have to say no because I know my grandmas, grandpas, uncles and aunts live there.

Today, I helped my mom write something that I hope will help Canadian children to understand China a little better. These are two good ways of loving your country.

—Claire Hanson

Claire Hanson, seven, with two of her classmates, Yao Yao, left, and Yang Yirui, right, ham it up.

Photo by Todd Hanson



about China. I can also help people understand more about Canada when I'm in China.

Mom: *What is a better way to love your country?*

Claire: To love the people inside your country and not to fight other people in other countries.

Mom: *What are some ways you can do this?*

Claire: I can help people, like giving my seat on the bus to someone who needs a seat, or if someone drops

something and they didn't notice it, then I could pick it up and give it to them, even if it is a stranger.

Mom: *What have you been doing these last two days?*

Claire: I have been trying to think how you can make your country cleaner, figure out what to do with garbage. I have been trying to help people. I gave my seat up on the bus. Yesterday, we collected toys from around our house and from my bag of dolls, and packed them up for the children at the orphanage. We packed school supplies for

the students in the orphanage that go to school.

Mom: *Some people say that China is an enemy. Some people in Canada and the U.S. say we should be scared of China. What do you say about that?*

Claire: I don't think it's scary. I think China is sort of big. There are some robbers here, but most of the houses have security doors so the robbers can't get in. There are lots of people from the U.S. and Canada that live here. They don't think that this is a scary place.

—**Jeanette Hanson**

Todd and Jeanette Hanson, Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers in China, frequently reflect on their experience and ministry. Their two children—Claire, 7, and Kate, 3—often add new perspectives to the family's experience.

Jimma, Ethiopia

Ethiopian church responds to AIDS

Nine-year-old Meron Masrecha lost her mother to AIDS two years ago, becoming one of an estimated 1.2 million Ethiopian children who have been orphaned by the disease.

Meron was fortunate to be adopted by her aunt, Tadeletsch, who has children of her own. "It was difficult to feed another mouth," Tadeletsch says. "But family is family, and God wants us to stay together."

AIDS is taking a heavy toll in Ethiopia, where the United Nations estimates 5,000 adults are infected with HIV every week. Although Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world, the government and non-governmental organizations are working hard to combat the disease.

Tadeletsch asked for support from her community to be able to raise her niece. She found it from a local congregation of the Meserete Kristos Church, an Ethiopian denomination that belongs to Mennonite World Conference.

With support from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and German Mennonites, the Meserete Kristos Church helps its congregations respond to the effects of HIV/AIDS in their communities. Local initiatives include drama presentations to lessen the stigma of living with HIV/AIDS and small grants to help orphans.

Ika Kejella, a regional HIV/AIDS coordinator for the Meserete Kristos Church, gave Tadeletsch a grant of 300 Birr (\$44) to help her raise Meron.

Kejella advised Tadeletsch to invest it by buying and raising sheep, which she did.

"I fed the sheep until they became fat, then my aunt sold them at the market," Meron says with a smile.

The profits are helping Meron go to school, which she enjoys very much. "My favourite subject in school is math," she says.

Meron says that someday she would



Photo by Nancy Charles

Meron Masrecha, nine, was adopted by her aunt, Tadeletsch, when her mother died of AIDS. The Meserete Kristos Church gave Tadeletsch a grant to help her raise her niece.

like to become a pilot—a dream to travel as far as she wishes to go.

—MCC release by **Nancy Charles**

The author teaches English at Meserete Kristos College, Addis Ababa, as an MCC worker in Ethiopia.

Soroti, Uganda

Eager for success and support: Displaced students return to classroom

In an area where families were forced from their homes because of violent attacks by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) recently provided funds for school materials to help pupils returning to the classroom.

The LRA has been carrying out violent raids in northern Uganda for nearly two decades, sweeping into villages and districts, attacking homes and people, and abducting children. Hundreds of thousands of people fled their homes when the attacks spread into the Teso Region of northeastern Uganda in June 2003.

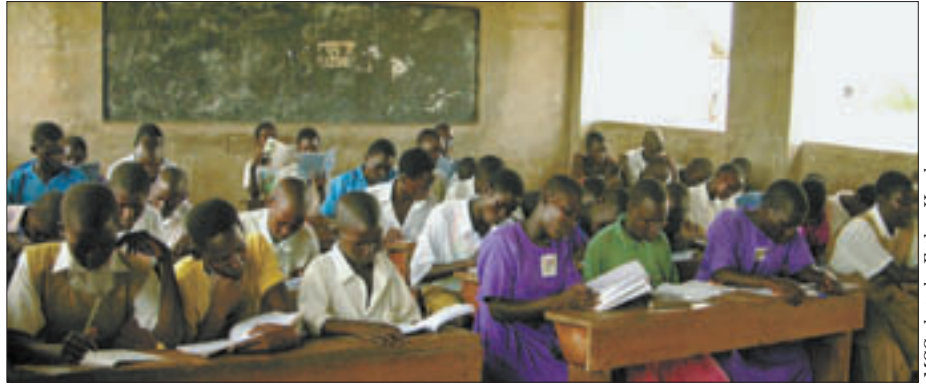
In Katakwi and Kabermaido districts, parents seized their children and the belongings they could carry and fled to neighbouring towns, seeking shelter from anyone who would take them in. Those who had no place to go constructed makeshift huts in cramped camps for displaced people.

Families faced food shortages. Water was equally scarce, with a camp for 18,000 people relying on a single borehole. While parents searched for firewood and other necessities, children often spent their days in line waiting to fill jerry cans with water, instead of sitting in classrooms filling their minds.

As rebel attacks in the area gradually lessened, people moved to camps closer to their village, or even back to their homes, but their struggles have not ceased.

Living in camps for the better part of a year kept families from planting their gardens, so hunger remains high for the returnees. Most families eat only one meal a day. Many children have returned to their home schools, but there is no money for books, uniforms or other needed supplies.

As part of a broad response to the ongoing violence and severe needs in northern Uganda, MCC provided \$12,350 for education materials, which were distributed in the Teso Region by the Diocese of Soroti, an MCC partner in Uganda. Nearly 12,000 students



MCC photo by Esther Harder

Students in a Form Six class at Kaberpilla Primary School, Uganda, look over their new exercise books and label them with their names. Mennonite Central Committee provided funds for school materials for pupils in areas of northern Uganda, where families had fled their homes for more than a year because of conflict and are now returning home.

and more than 300 teachers in some 30 schools benefited, with a total of 66,240 exercise books, 5,849 pens, 11,827 pencils, and 576 mathematical sets given out according to grade level.

At each school, pupils and teachers had a slightly different story about how they were coping.

In Katakwi District, Abota Primary School's single block of classrooms was bright with freshly washed and painted walls. In the classrooms, however, only scant clusters of students gathered at the few desks situated in the middle of the room. Many desks were empty.

In June 2003, members of the LRA camped at the Abota school and burned a classroom block, chasing away families and teaching staff, and killing the head teacher. By late spring 2005, most of the students who fled had still not returned to the area. The students present at Abota were unnervingly silent, watching meekly as teachers entered and exited, and waiting patiently for whatever would be offered to them.

Students at Kaberpilla Primary School and other schools in Kabermaido District fled their homes early last year when LRA rebels entered the area and began attacking their communities.

Yet for the 45 pupils in the Form Six classroom at Kaberpilla Primary School, supplies funded by MCC seemed to spark hope for the future. Students clutched their six new exercise books and pen, excitedly writing their names on the fronts of the books.

As their classroom teacher began his social studies lesson on weather, hands quickly shot up in response to questions. For a few moments, hunger was forgotten in the face of new supplies. Several of the students reported that they hoped to become teachers and doctors if they could manage to succeed in secondary school and go on to university. That will only happen with food, peace, faith and committed family support. These books and pens are only a step along the continued journey to self-sufficiency and success.

MCC also provides emergency relief for families displaced by the long-running insurgency, and supports peace and reconciliation efforts of inter-faith groups. An MCC Global Family program helps fund a girls school in Masindi District, which includes students abducted in the violent LRA campaigns.

—**Esther Harder**

The author is serving as an information, education and communication worker with MCC in Uganda.

Sapporo, Japan

Friendship message brushed in calligraphy

A high school math teacher, Igarashi-san was in his 40s when a massive stroke left his right arm useless. As therapy, he began to learn traditional Japanese calligraphy writing with his left hand.

“As part of his Christian formation he wanted to do Scripture,” says Teresa Sherrill, long-term Mennonite Church Canada Witness and Mennonite Mission Network worker in Sapporo. She says the practice was spiritually “enriching in a dark and bleak time” of Igarashi-san’s life.

Igarashi-san’s art has now gotten church exposure in North America. This summer, Sherrill, with husband Mike and children Isaiah, Jeremiah and Sophia, and Grandma Juanita, returned from Japan to North America to visit their supporting congregations. As a gift, they left behind wall hangings sent by Igarashi-san as a reminder of an ongoing friendship and partnership between believers in two very different parts of the world.

Though Igarashi-san has returned to teaching, he continues calligraphy as a ministry to the Shiroishi Mennonite Christ Church. He frequently brushes Scripture onto *washi* paper that is hung where churchgoers can read and meditate on the words.

Just as North American congregations have commissioned the Sherrills for their work in Japan, the 19 congregations in the Hokkaido Mennonite Conference sent them back across the Pacific to share stories of God’s work in Asia. The calligraphy Igarashi-san gave to the Sherrills featured Isaiah 6:8: “And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me!’”

Equipped with a map that highlights each of the Sherrills’ stops, Japanese Mennonites who gather for Wednesday prayer meetings will remember the Sherrill family and each congregation they will be visiting.

“There was really a sense that they were trying to come alongside and support and encourage and pray for us as we minister in congregations,”



Photo by Esther Harder

Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers Mike and Teresa Sherrill brought Japanese *shikishi* boards with Scripture verses written in traditional Japanese calligraphy to their supporting congregations as a symbol of friendship between Christians.

Teresa says.

Mike says wall hangings are a window into Japan’s history and culture, and tie into “the biblical story and power of Scripture.”

The Japanese churches hope their message comes through; they desire a spiritual partnership with their fellow believers in North America.

The couple has focused on storytelling during their congregational visits so their supporters can see Japanese believers as “very real people, quite a bit like us,” Teresa says.

“Culturally, we’re very different,” Mike notes. “But we’re part of a global Christian family.”

—Bethany Keener



Pheng Thammavong weaves silk at the Phontong Handicraft Co-operative farm. The Lao cooperative trains and encourages farmers to grow silk and hires local women to weave it into products such as scarves that are sold in Laos and abroad. Mennonite Central Committee workers Jane Snider and Larry Nafziger of Ottawa, Ont., are working with the cooperative to design handicrafts and market items from this farm, as well as other Lao enterprises, to international and local businesses.

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Former MWC president wins city seat

A former Mennonite World Conference (MWC) president and leader of the Meserete Kristos Church has been elected to the council of Ethiopia's capital city. Million Belete takes office this month in the regional parliament, which serves Addis Ababa.

Belete's political entry is a radical departure from the thinking and practice of Mennonites and most evangelical Christians in Ethiopia, said Carl E. Hanson, resource development director for Meserete Kristos College in Addis Ababa. "In the last several decades, there has been a strong consensus of opinion among evangelicals that 'true Christians' will not get involved in politics," Hanson said. Involvement includes political rallies, voting and being a candidate. However, that opposition has softened as Ethiopia's formerly Marxist dictatorship has become a more democratic government, he added.

Belete led a campaign by the Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia to encourage Christians to participate as voters and candidates in the May national elections. When someone asked him why he didn't run for office himself, he decided to pray about it and he asked others to pray too. Some people cautioned him against running; others encouraged him.

He was told he would not win if he ran as an independent, so he accepted the invitation of the six-month-old Coalition for Unity and Democracy Party to run on its ticket. Belete won his seat. A student from Meserete Kristos College was also elected.

Belete believes he had no choice as a Christian but to enter politics, to be an example. "Moses...was a Member of Parliament with God to write a law," said Belete. "Being light and being salt in the political world is needed."

—MWC release from a report in *Mennonite Weekly Review*

Akron, Pa.

MCC invites discussion on economic responses to Israeli occupation

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is inviting Mennonites and Brethren in Christ to discuss economic responses to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory.

MCC staff have worked with Israeli and Palestinian peacemakers to write two papers exploring possibilities for economic action to promote justice, peace and security in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. Such action could include shareholder activism, divestment or consumer boycotts.

The papers are titled:

- "Peacebuilding in Palestine/Israel: A discussion paper," and,
- "Frequently Asked Questions:

Economic pressure as a tool for establishing a just peace in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict."

Both papers are available on the MCC website: www.mcc.org/papers.

"Palestinian and Israeli peacebuilders have urged MCC to explore questions of socially responsible investment in Palestine and Israel with our supporting churches," says Bob Herr, co-director of MCC's Peace Office. "The discussion papers are intended to start a conversation among Mennonites and Brethren in Christ about what role economic pressure might play in restoring hope and promoting security for both Palestinians and Israelis."

Staff in the MCC's Middle East programs, with support from the Peace Office, are in conversation with church leaders and church-affiliated institutional investors about the possibility of arranging a visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, to learn about socially responsible investment as it relates to the Israeli occupation.

—MCC release

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Orodara, Burkina Faso

I can read in my own language!

Minata, give me peanuts.” The three students slowly sound out the words written on the board, searching for meaning in the strange squiggles. But the strange squiggles are becoming more familiar and suddenly Sumayila laughs out loud. “Minata, give me the peanuts!”

He understands. I nod my head vigorously, point at the written words with my stick and hold out my hand to Minata. Fanta turns to Minata and reinforces the message. “Hey, give her peanuts!” She laughs as well and hands me a pack of peanuts, which we all share.

I never before thought about all the skills needed to be able to read. Just learning what reading is, is a challenge if one has never been exposed to it before. The primer introduces one letter a day, which seems too fast now that we are over halfway through the book. But the students are reading!

Literacy classes started out with five students who had never gone to school and four who know how to read in French and Jula. The beginning class has shrunk to three because of the need to prepare the fields before the coming rains. With four weeks left to go, I am hoping we don't lose any more.

The advanced class finished the book in three weeks and the students are writing fables—texts of several pages—in Siamou. I am overwhelmed by their interest and motivation to write in their own language. The most exciting part is they are using the orthography (writing system) I have proposed and “it is good!”

A night class started with nine students. They couldn't start with the first advanced class because they were teaching Jula in other villages. They study from 6 to 9 every evening, huddling around kerosene lamps over their books, determined to read their language. These are the potential Siamou teachers for next year! My present life revolves around these classes. Mamina and I co-teach, so one plans the lesson for the following day



Lillian Haas tests an orthography (writing system) primer of the Siamou language with village children near Orodara, Burkina Faso. Until now, Siamou has been an exclusively oral language.

while the other is teaching.

We are in class from 7 a.m. to noon and from 6 to 9 in the evening every day except for Saturday. Here, Saturday is the holy day; market day in Orodara, which everyone religiously attends. (It reminds me of how Sunday used to be observed in North America when everyone flocked to church.) Classes resume on Sunday night.

Graduation Day

“Never before have I received a certificate for anything!” A student stood up proudly during the closing ceremony of literacy classes. “I want to thank the teachers for this opportunity to learn how to read and write in my own language. I am proud to be among the first readers of Siamou and I hope to help others learn to read.”

The other students applauded, raising their voices in agreement and then, after a flurry of picture-taking, everyone scattered to their homes.

Classes were over and they were anxious to get to their field work.

Mamina and I breathed a sigh of relief. In teaching the same material to four different classes in three months we had pushed ourselves hard and we were tired. At the same time we rejoiced at the enthusiasm of the students and how quickly they had learned and how much we had learned through the process.

During the season, 27 people learned how to read in Siamou. More than half the students received a mark of more than 80 percent and one wrote a perfect final exam. Another student found inspiration in writing and has already filled a 50-page notebook with Siamou fables, with no sign of slowing down. This first literacy season came to a close on June 5.

—Lillian Haas

The author is originally from Blue Sky Mennonite Church, Alberta.

Winnipeg

Christian labour association gains foothold in Manitoba

In January, a group of close to 200 educational assistants in the Hanover School Division in heavily Mennonite southern Manitoba voted to unionize. They chose the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) as their union, becoming the first permanent CLAC bargaining unit in Manitoba.

Founded in 1952 by Dutch Christian Reformed immigrants who were troubled by the adversarial state of labour relations in this country, CLAC is today one of the fastest-growing unions in Canada, currently 39th largest of around 1,000 Canadian unions.

While its roots are Calvinist, in recent years CLAC has hired a number of Mennonite staff, including Manitoba regional director Eric Stutzman and research assistant Bruce Guenther.

“The way we engage society comes from two very different starting points,” notes Guenther. “They start from a neo-Calvinist perspective, which is concerned with reforming the culture, working within the system as it is, even if that means some compromise.”

Stutzman notes that Mennonite staff at CLAC come with different language for their motivation. “Discipleship, justice, peace work—there’s a sense of trying to live according to what Jesus taught, wherever we find ourselves, and that we stick to that,” he says.

While Anabaptism has not traditionally been concerned with effecting change in and through society’s institutions—but instead with creating faithful, recognizable alternative models of life based in the church—most

Canadian Mennonites don’t live and work in separate cultural enclaves anymore. With CLAC opening its doors to Mennonites who are trying to live and practise their Christian discipleship in the secular labour force, these two long-separated Christian streams are gently pushing and pulling one another in the age-old balancing act of engagement versus compromise.

Stutzman, speaking from the newly opened CLAC office in Winnipeg, reflects on why CLAC is growing. “People want to have trusting and productive relationships with their employers,” he says. “People want to work in a peaceful environment.... We



Stutzman

without the adversarial approach of mainstream unions that see a fundamental divide between the interests of workers and management. Its members rarely strike—only four times in the last 35 years. It has found its approach to result in “an enviable record of excellent agreements,” according to Stutzman.

He tells encouraging stories from both sides of the bargaining table, recalling a worker on the Hanover bargaining team spontaneously approaching him to say, “This has been so good for me. I feel empowered. People treat me with respect.” Stutzman also remembers the smile of relief from the

owner of a small construction business after an hour-and-a-half of negotiations. “I’ve always been afraid of unions,” the owner admitted. “But this was not scary at all. This was really good.”

Unlike many unions, CLAC allows employees to opt out of membership and will allow workers to leave their current unions to join CLAC. This irks the Canadian Labour Congress, whose bargaining units refuse to take dissatisfied members from other unions they are trying to leave, viewing this as a threat to worker solidarity. CLAC sees this as a monopoly that infringes on freedom of association.

Not surprisingly, the large established unions have not welcomed CLAC’s competition. In 1963, a grievance went all the way to the Supreme Court about whether a “Christian” organization could represent diverse Canadian workers.

CLAC representatives are Christian, but they don’t impose their faith on union members. The Supreme Court found that CLAC was “no more sectarian than any other trade union,” which also have specific worldviews—including Marxist or socialist. CLAC just wears its worldview on its sleeve.

—Evelyn Rempel Petkau



CLAC photo

Bargaining committee member Carla Heckert, foreground, and 200 of her Hanover School Division co-workers in southern Manitoba joined the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) in January.

can do good labour relations through building good relationships in the workplace.”

It is a philosophy that comes out of a Christian worldview that values the dignity of every human being and seeks to, “if it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all” (Romans 12:18). CLAC clearly advocates on behalf of employees, but

Newton, Kan.

Mennonite Women USA teams up with African women theologians

Sensing the call of the Spirit, Mennonite Women USA has entered into a new relationship with a group of female African theologians, beginning a new partnership between African and North American women.

In November 2004, a committee of women church leaders from five African countries—the African Women Theologians (AWT) group—met in Nairobi, Kenya. Among the goals they set was that by 2009, the year of the next Mennonite World Conference (MWC) assembly, at least 20 additional Mennonite and Brethren in Christ women across Africa will be trained in theology.

“It seemed like we might be a relatively good fit as a partnering agency that could work with these women in reaching their goals,” says Rhoda Keener, executive director for Mennonite Women USA. “We’re familiar with scholarship work because of our decades-old International Women’s Fund, and three years ago Mennonite Women USA launched Sister-Link, a program which connects women across geographical and cultural divides. But entering into the vision of these African sisters would require taking Sister-Link into a new dimension.”

Months and many, many hours of conversation later, a new Sister-Link is now underway. It encompasses three parts.

First, Keener will be correspond-

ing with the AWT leaders, talking about ways this group can develop and implement their vision for ministry.

Second, Sylvia Shirk Charles of Goshen, Ind., is coordinating one-on-one pen pal connections between the seven AWT leaders and seven North American pastors, theologians and theology students, including Mary Mae Schwartztruber of Bloomingdale, Ont., who is corresponding with Beatrice Hayalume Kadi of the Congo. The hope is to develop friendships, share theological ideas and writings, and to support and challenge one another as women leaders in the church.

Third, Mennonite Women USA will assist in the collection of funds for scholarships for African women to attend local theological schools. These funds will be separate from the organization’s budget and ongoing International Women’s Fund program, although its board has designated about \$7,000 as seed money. AWT leaders will select the scholarship recipients, and Mennonite World Conference is helping with dispersal.

The Sister-Link is intended to last from now until the 2009 Mennonite World Conference assembly in Paraguay, when participants will meet face-to-face and evaluate future direction.

—**Cathleen Hockman-Wert**

The author is editor of Timbrel, the publication of Mennonite Women USA and Canadian Women in Mission.

Mennonite Savings and Credit Union (Ontario) Ltd.



Shawn Good

Ben Doan

The Board and Management of Mennonite Savings and Credit Union are pleased to announce the following appointments.

Shawn Good has been appointed to the position of Manager, Branch Operations, based in the MSCU head office in Kitchener. In the twelve years that Mr. Good has been employed at the Credit Union, he has excelled in many roles, most recently as Branch Manager in Elmira. His new duties at head office began on September 19, 2005.

Ben Doan has been appointed to the position of Branch Manager in the MSCU branch in Elmira, effective September 12, 2005. Mr. Doan began working at MSCU in 2003 as a Commercial & Agricultural Lender. In addition to his experience at MSCU, he has a strong background in management and lending gained though 28 years working in financial services.

Mennonite Savings and Credit Union was founded in 1964 to bring together the principles of financial stewardship and mutual aid within a financial cooperative. Today, MSCU operates as a closed-bond credit union that serves more than 15,000 individual members from the Mennonite, Amish, and Brethren in Christ church community in Ontario. MSCU operates six branches, five partial service outlets, and various Extended Area Services, including Internet banking. Total assets under administration exceed \$560 million.



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The celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Fernheim Colony in the Chaco of Paraguay faithfully reflected their three historic phases expressed so well in German—“Die erste den Tod, die zweite die Not, die dritte das Brot,”—which mean, “The first generation, death; the second, poverty; the third, bread.” Peter Dyck, second from left, represented the MCC at the celebrations. He is pictured with friends Susie and Ernst Friesen, at right, and a guide, left, in front of the Fernheim Colony Cooperative.



Photo provided by Jack Scott

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Winnipeg

Youth ministries director named

Mennonite Church Manitoba has appointed Elisa Barkman to the position of interim director of Summer Camp and Youth Ministries.

Barkman is a member of Hope Mennonite Church. She has previously worked with MC Manitoba's Camps with Meaning programs in various capacities, with Circles of Support and at Menno-Hof Interpretive Centre.

Barkman will be serving MC Manitoba Education Ministries for a one-year term, during which time she will be responsible for the summer programs of Camps with Meaning as well as for MC Manitoba Youth Ministries. During this term a review of Education Ministry operations, in-

cluding program staff responsibilities, will be conducted.

—MC Manitoba release by **Bob Wiebe**

Akron, Pa.

MCC holds workers' orientation

Forty-eight workers—including 10 Canadians—participated in orientation at Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) offices July 6 to 20. Thirty-six are beginning overseas assignments; 12 are beginning North American assignments.

Canadian participants beginning overseas assignments:

- Darren Birch of B.C. is beginning a three-year assignment in the West Bank as an outreach coordinator.
- Kenneth Henry and Maxine Natalie Fehr of St. Pierre, Man., are beginning three-year assignments as English teachers in Jordan.
- Clarke and Heather Fretz of Stevensville, Ont., are beginning

three-year assignments in Croatia as rural development consultants.

- Avonne Trainor of Winnipeg is beginning a two-year assignment with China Educational Exchange as a teacher.

Canadians beginning North America assignments:

- Christina Chiu of Vancouver started a two-year assignment as an English as a second language teacher in Vancouver.
 - Erna Toews of Steinbach, Man., started a two-year assignment as a database manager in Winnipeg. She is a member of Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.
 - Eva Unrau of Abbotsford, B.C., is beginning a two-year assignment as a church community worker in Alberta. She is a member of Living Hope Christian Fellowship, Surrey, B.C.
 - Anne Whitford of Winnipeg is beginning a two-year assignment as a support worker in Abbotsford, B.C. She is a member of Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg.
- MCC release

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Kitchener, Ont.

Egg rolls + faith + hope = mortgage burning

This is a day of celebration; it is the day the Lord has made!" said Dan Yang, pastor of First Hmong Mennonite Church, Kitchener, on Sept. 3, as he welcomed people to a service commemorating 25 years as a congregation. The service also celebrated burning the mortgage on their present church building.

On July 12, 1979, the first 11 Hmong families immigrated to Canada, most of them sponsored by Mennonite churches. In 1980, 34 people from seven Hmong Christian families began Sunday services at Grandview Public School, New Hamburg, Ont., with the help of Steinmann Mennonite Church, one of the sponsoring congregations. Later, the church moved to Wilmot Mennonite Fellowship Hall, Baden, Ont.

In 1981, Hmong leaders and their sponsors met to discuss their financial, leadership and facility needs. They accepted an offer from Kitchener's First Mennonite Church to share their facilities.

First Hmong chair Peter Vang said, in introducing First Mennonite's pastor, Gary Knarr, "He is representing the church that never says no to a stranger! A church we will call 'Mother Church' forever."

"It has been a special relationship to share our meeting place with you

and come to know you," Knarr responded. "This accomplishment [paying off the mortgage] is a testimony to your faith.... God doesn't miraculously put money into pockets. But God miraculously opens people's hearts, to give of what God has given them."

Deb Simpson represented Mennonite Central Committee and its refugee sponsorship program.

Between 1979 and 1981, 60,000 refugees from Asia came to Canada, more than 4,000 of them sponsored by Mennonites. "How our Canadian society has been enriched by your immense hope and faith through extreme hardship," she said. "Our investment is so small, compared to what we have gained!"

David Brubacher spoke on behalf of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, which received the Hmong congregation as members and licensed their leaders for ministry. "It helps to know more than one language," he quipped, as he told the story of the cat who barked like a dog to fool the mouse.



Photos by Maurice Martin

Rev. Wang Chou Yang, former pastor of First Hmong Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., and current congregational chair Peter Vang burned the church's mortgage at a 25th anniversary service on Sept. 3.

Referring to the celebration bulletin's theme, "An exalted house for the Lord," Brubacher said, "What makes this an 'exalted house' is your desire to reach out to other Hmong people. It is what God wants to do. It is God's work that makes this an exalted house."

The congregation first changed its name from Hmong Church to Hmong Christian Church, then in 1985 to Hmong Christian Church (Mennonite), and on Dec. 31, 2000, to First Hmong Mennonite Church.

In 1996, under the leadership of Rev. Wang Chou Yang, their first building—at 93 Doon Road in Kitchener—was purchased with the financial support of the Hmong, Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC), Mennonite congregations and individual Mennonites.

Alan Macnaughton described Mannheim (Ont.) Mennonite Church's role in providing an interest-free loan of \$65,000. "What do you do when a church has too much money?" he asked. Mannheim, the beneficiary of an unexpected bequest, decided not to spend it on themselves, but to offer it for use by the Hmong congregation.

In his sermon, Yang referred to



Members of First Hmong Mennonite Church in Kitchener, Ont., are pictured in their traditional garb at a special service commemorating 25 years of ministry and celebrating the burning of their mortgage.

Hope, B.C.

Squeah reunion reunites friends, raises funds

After more than 40 years, it is clear that some things have changed at Camp Squeah. There are more buildings on the property and the swimming pool has a cement deck, not a wooden one. The Edelweiss Hall, which was once the camp's kitchen and dining hall, is now used as the crafts room and health centre during the summer, and as kitchen, dining hall and meeting space for small groups during the rental season—another thing that was not in existence in the 1960s.

But as nearly 200 alumni gathered for a reunion at Squeah on Aug. 20, what was striking was not the things that had changed, but what had stayed the same. The same passion and vision for summer camping that inspired the BC Mennonite Youth Organization to purchase the Squeah property in 1962 is still strongly felt in those who run the camp and its programs today.

The reunion was designed with people in mind. The schedule was set up to give people maximum time for visiting. A photo gallery of archival

Psalm 126: "He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him." He spoke in Hmong, while English was projected on a screen.

In concluding the three-hour service, Peter Vang, congregational chair and worship leader, said, "Of course, everyone who came here today, and others who were not here, are also friends of the First Hmong congregation."

At the end of a short slide presentation he commented, "Amazing grace is behind all of this. What reflects our past will surely also reflect our future."

Renovation of the building is a continuous task, said church treasurer Thomas Vang, adding, "The building already needs to be enlarged! Self-sufficiency is our goal."

But their larger underlying goal



Camp Squeah alumni enjoyed a picnic lunch at a recent reunion fundraiser.

photos was set up and alumni were encouraged to bring along their photo albums to leave at tables for people to look at. Tours were offered of the camp property and alumni were given a chance to do some of the activities that camp is famous for.

The program included singing old Squeah songs and sharing from camp directors. Squeah Jeopardy—a camp trivia game designed by Ian Brown on the format of the popular game show—gave alumni a creative opportunity to see how well they knew the camp's history. No one knew that the camp was once called "Lincoln Park," but everyone knew that Jim Thiessen was associated with the cabin "Alder."

A silent auction included photographs, a 1972 Squeah album, as well as a "blue plate special"—a complete set of melmac dishes used in the

is to extend faith to the Hmong from Laos who continue to move into the Kitchener-Waterloo area, seeking to escape a communist regime. They also plan to participate in a mission to the Hmong people who remain in Asia.

After the service, as people gathered on the sidewalk in front of the church, the mortgage was burnt, a debt that was paid off through many fundraising projects of the congregation. They did farm work, had car washes, and performed lawn care work.

But one could truly say that the biggest part of the debt was paid off one egg roll at a time. Their tasty egg rolls were at the heart of their fundraising efforts. Many people within the MC Eastern Canada constituency have enjoyed them, and thus shared in this church building project.

—**Maurice Martin**

kitchen ever since the camp began. But it was the live auction that created the most interest. Since all the cabin signs had recently been replaced, the old signs went on the auction block and some cabins invoked fierce competition—Alder, Elm and Goldenrod, to name a few. All totalled, the two auctions raised \$3,843 towards the building of a ropes course on the property.

But as the program directors shared, it became clear that although the place is special,

it has always been the people who make Squeah so. Army Froese directed the summer program in 1978, but reminisced about his experience as a camper, and how his counsellor led him to the Lord. Squeah continues to be a significant place for young people making significant decisions, he said.

Dave Kropp, who directed in the '80s, also spoke of those significant moments at chapel when campers would stay behind to pray with their counsellors and shared stories of recent baptisms where people mentioned Squeah as a place where they became Christians.

"We sometimes think a week is such a short time, but we can't forget the seeds that are planted here sometimes take years to grow, but God honours that work," he said.

"Squeah is still the best leadership training program in [MC] B.C.," John Dawson (director from 1987-1991) said. "And I would have loved the opportunity to work with the quality people that are here this year."

As people packed up to head home, there were many lingering conversations in the parking lot, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses exchanged, and hopes that this kind of event would happen again. That is the intent of the alumni event planning committee and discussions are already underway for future events. In the meantime, to keep in touch with what's happening at Squeah, visit www.squeah.com/alumni or call 1-800-380-2267 and send the camp your current contact information.

—**Angelika Dawson**

The author is a Squeah alumnus from 1984 to 1991 and 1996.

Hepworth, Ont.

Use of local produce connects camp to community

Last summer, when Tim R. Dyck was volunteering in the kitchen at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp, he found it strange to use vegetables from as far away as Mexico when the local area is so fertile and has such bountiful produce. He suggested that the camp try getting fresh local organic produce for the 2005 season.

Camp director Ben Janzen was interested in the idea and contacted the community gardening cooperative used by Dyck's family. Because the camp runs only during the months of July and August, instead of the four to five months when fresh produce is available, some negotiating was needed. The producer was very accommodating and agreed that the camp would get double its share of produce every week while the camp was running. It was arranged that the camp would pick up its vegetables each Saturday morning in nearby Owen Sound, where the producer attends the



Photo submitted by Barb Dyck

Gardener Holly McKay, left, of Saugeen River Community Shared Agriculture, near Durham, Ont., is pictured with Barb Dyck, who picked beans for Silver Lake Mennonite Camp, Hepworth, Ont., this summer.

weekly farmers' market.

The kitchen staff at the camp had to be flexible in menu planning this summer because they didn't know from week to week exactly what vegetables would arrive.

"It was a bit of a gamble, in that sense," said Janzen.

Fortunately, the head cook was interested in working with organically grown food and was willing to be flexible. It was helpful that the fresh vegetables withstood being stored for a while and the steady supply of lettuce allowed regular salads.

The switch to using locally grown produce was intentional on the part of

the staff at Silver Lake Camp.

"We were interested in connecting the kids, and ourselves, with the food we eat," said Janzen.

While the staff spent some time talking about the ideology of using local food, there was less discussion with the campers.

"For the most part, the kids didn't notice," said Janzen.

At the same time, there were no complaints.

Acquiring local produce required more time, thought and flexibility, but when asked whether he would do it again, Janzen said, "For sure!"

—**Barb Draper**

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Photo submitted by Olga Epp

The youths of Coaldale (Alta.) Mennonite Church spent a week in July on their second Mennonite Disaster Service assignment. They painted rooms in the former Dodson Hotel in Vancouver, a low-income complex surrounded by drug dealers, addicts and others caught up in the spiral of addiction. Pictured from left to right, front row: Mark Dyck and a Dodson resident; and back row: Jennifer Giesbrecht, Joel Penner, Tessa Janzen, Lynette Wall, Meagan Dyck, Bonnie Quinn, Beth Janzen, Kelsey Janzen, Maxine Janzen, Elyse Courterille and Karissa Donkersgoed.

Cambridge, Ont.

Waterloo Region Mennonites do Habitat build

For two weeks this summer, Mennonites worked alongside their neighbours in a Habitat for Humanity “build” of three houses on Schleuter Street in Cambridge. One was a multi-faith project, the second was sponsored by the Lions Club and Unrau family, and the third, a “quick build” done August 15 to 26, was known simply as “the Mennonite House.”

However, to keep all the volunteers busy, a number of people on the house sponsored by Mennonites of Waterloo Region worked on the other two houses where needed, or while awaiting inspection on phases of the project. Many of the area pastors who presented the morning meditations reflected on the theme of building community in this way.

The Habitat partner family for the Mennonite House is Pam Cromwell and her four children: Sherise, 16; Stephanie, 15; Kain, 9; and Kirsten, 5. “This is exciting,” Cromwell said. “I’ve had a lot of bad luck lately. I can’t wait to get into the house. The people who have worked on our house are a great bunch—generous and helpful. The family advisors have gone beyond the call of duty in supporting me.”

The Habitat partner family is committed to contributing 250 hours of “sweat equity” on their house or at other Habitat projects. Cromwell and daughter Sherise have been working at their house, while Stephanie has given some time at the Habitat Restore outlet. Cromwell works as an office associate at Westco.

Elmer Shantz, long-time Habitat volunteer and chair of the steering committee for the coalition of Mennonite churches, said that of 40 Mennonite churches contacted, more than 20 responded with financial donations, raising approximately \$100,000. Of this amount, 10 percent was sent to Habitat’s overseas projects. The cost of sponsoring a house is \$65,000, so there is a surplus in hand. Shantz noted, “Habitat would like us

to stay in and sponsor half a house next year. The steering committee will make a decision at their debriefing meeting.”

Richard Davison, Habitat project manager for the region, commented that this build moved along exceptionally quickly, with the energetic group of “amateur” volunteers and a significant core of tradespeople who gave their time and expertise to critical aspects of the project.

Doug Wagner, also a very experienced Habitat volunteer, was the onsite “house leader,” assigning duties and in general helping things run smoothly. His commitment to the project was clear, as he was on site daily, literally from dawn

to dusk.

—Maurice Martin



Photo by Maurice Martin

Doug Wagner, right, acted as onsite “house leader” during the Habitat for Humanity project in Cambridge this summer.



Photo submitted by Carrot River Mennonite Church

A farewell service was held on Sept. 11 at Carrot River (Sask.) Mennonite Church for Pastor Craig and Amy Hollands and their children Chandra and Joel. The service included raising voices in praise, a time for tributes and sharing, and a gift presentation on behalf of the congregation. The Hollands family is moving to Saskatoon, to be replaced on Oct. 16 by Pastor Ed Cornelson from Winnipeg, who will be serving as interim pastor at the church for six months.

Abbotsford, B.C.

Tradex Relief Sale tops half-million-dollar mark

The annual Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) B.C. Festival Auction and Relief Sale held at the Tradex in Abbotsford last month raised more money and brought in more people than ever before.

Tradex staff indicated that attendance on Friday evening was the largest ever for an MCC event. Thousands of people attended both days, enjoying good food, entertainment, children's activities, sales and the auction.

The main auction traditionally begins with the auctioning of a loaf of bread, "the staff of life." Loaves of bread were auctioned Friday evening and twice on Saturday, bringing in more than \$100,000. Instead of having one buyer for the loaves, auctioneers gave anyone who wanted to bid on the bread the opportunity to do so. Because the theme of the festival this year was water projects, containers of water were also auctioned, raising thousands of dollars more.

The quilt auction brought in a record amount, with nearly \$45,000 worth of quilts sold. The highest-selling quilt, "Heart of Roses," sold for an astonishing \$8,000. This is the third time this quilt has been sold. It was originally donated to the MCC Relief Sale in Saskatoon. The buyers then donated it to a raffle at Bethany Manor in Saskatoon, and its winner donated it to the MCC festival in Abbotsford. "Threading Through the Seasons," this year's feature quilt



MCC B.C. photo

Aaron Dawson with a container of popular Rollkuchen.

quilted by the MCC Quilters, sold for \$5,250.

Penny Power raised more than \$10,000 for an MCC water project in Palestine. These funds will be matched three-to-one by the Canadian International Development Agency.

Overall, the MCC festival raised more than \$515,000, this being a conservative, initial count.

"The donations are still being counted and there are still donations that will come in over the next few weeks, so the final total may still be much higher," George Hoepfner, Relief Sale co-coordinator, told the large audience that attended the closing Festival of Praise at South Abbotsford MB Church on Sunday afternoon. This celebratory event raised funds for MCC's WaterWorks projects around the world, including cisterns in Brazil, dams in Kenya, and wells in Laos.

"We are grateful to all who gave so generously to provide those in need with clean water," said MCC executive director Laura Loewen. "And we continue to pray that God will bless both these gifts and all those who gave."

—MCC B.C. release
by **Angelika Dawson**

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People&Events

Waterloo, Ont.—During recent meetings at Conrad Grebel University College here the Global Mission Fellowship (GMF) Planning Committee discussed its future relationship with Mennonite World Conference (MWC). In other business, the planning committee discussed ways of connecting to existing and new global mission networks among Anabaptist-related groups, in particular the International Mission Association initiated by Eastern Mennonite Missions and the Global Mission Alliance initiated by the International Committee of Mennonite Brethren. The committee is searching for a replacement for Peter Rempel, who has resigned as planning assistant; Rempel will begin a full-time position with Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba on Nov. 1. The planning committee will need to raise between \$30,000 and \$40,000 in addition to expected contributions, based on initial projections of meeting costs. Up to June 30, the GMF Fund had received \$17,158 in fair share contributions from members and interest, and had spent \$7,162.78. —Global Mission Fellowship release

Semarang, Indonesia—The Jemaat Kristen (JKI) conference of churches has almost completed its “holy stadium” that seats 12,000 people, making it the largest Anabaptist church building in the world.

Petrus Agung, the lead pastor, told the moving story of how the church received all the required permission documents from the 12 governmental department heads and from the mayor, a Muslim cleric, in just four days. God also moved people to give to this cause in unusual ways. In one offering, the church received more than \$2 million; as a result, it was able to build without debt.

An unexpected gift came from Honduras. At last year’s meeting of the International

Missions Association (IMA) in Honduras, Yesaya Abdi, a missions leader and IMA participant from Indonesia, pressed a \$100 bill into the hand of Melvin Fernandez to help the Hondurans with their own church building project. At this year’s IMA meetings in Semarang, Fernandez gave the Indonesian church \$1,000—a 10-fold payback.

The church in Semarang started in 1997 with 25 people. Today it has over 8,000 in attendance, most of whom are young people. —MWC release from an EMM report

Transitions

Births/Adoptions

Bender—to Angie and Daryl, Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Lydianne Rose, July 31.

Bueckert—to Veronica and Eddy, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Salomie Denise, July 25.

Dick—to Kathy and Timothy, North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont., a son, Thomas James, Sept. 15.

Ellison White—to Julie and Mike, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Emma Lucille, Aug. 28.

Fieguth—to Betty Pries and Paul Fieguth, Waterloo North Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., a son, Stefan Peter Pries, Aug. 31.

Krahn—to Susanne and George, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Emily Brielle, Aug. 24.

Loewen—to Julie and Matthew, North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont., twins—a daughter, Amanda Julie, and a son, Matthew Donald— Aug. 27.

Pooley—to Elizabeth and David, Waterloo North Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., a son, Joshua William, Aug. 31.

Scherer—to Jodie and Mark, North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont., a daughter, Molly Catherine, Sept. 6.

Srigley—to Ann, North

Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont., a daughter, Olivia Kay, Aug. 28.

Unger—adopted by Lisa and Jason, North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont., sisters Macey Catherine (four), and Ela Sonja (two), Sept. 1.

Marriages

Bender-Morrison—Gord and Shirley, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Sept. 3.

Blackport-Jeffares—Jamie and Heather, First Mennonite, Edmonton, at St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, Aug. 9.

Boschman-Penner—Jason and Melissa, Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, July 16.

Carleton-Isaak—Chris and Penny, First Mennonite, Edmonton, May 21.

Dick-van Sintern—Matthew and Cathrin, North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont., Sept. 10.

Dualt-Enns—Mark and Marla, North Leamington United Mennonite,

Leamington, Ont., Sept. 3.

Fisher-LePage—Michael (Wilmot Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.) and Anna, July 30.

Fleming-Cornies—Noah and Heather, North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont., Aug. 20.

Goertzen-Martens—Tim and Andrea (Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.), at Morden, Man., Aug. 13.

Heinrichs-Klassen—Robert and Lisa, First Mennonite, Edmonton, July 16.

Hiebert-Penner—Rodney (Taber Mennonite, Alta.) and Adelee (Arnaud Mennonite, Man.), near St. Malo, Man., Aug. 6.

Kirkaldy-Taylor—Owen and Jennifer, First Mennonite, Edmonton, July 30.

Kuehne-Morasch—Matthew and Angila, First Mennonite, Edmonton, Aug. 6.

Krahn-Arbic—Darrell and Lynn, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Sept. 10.

Leis-Kuepfer—Brendan and Sheryl, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont., Sept. 17.

Lesser-Fuhr—Terry and Melissa, First Mennonite, Edmonton, Aug. 27.

Neufeld-Unrau—Vern and Ruth, members of Lethbridge Mennonite, Alta., in Coaldale, Alta., Sept. 10.

Thiessen-Heinrichs—Arlen (Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.) and Mary, at Winkler, Man., Aug. 20.

Deaths

Boldt—Victor, 77, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., Aug. 19.

Eby—Ivan, 82, St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont., Sept. 10.

Epp—Maria, 88, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Aug. 31.

Erb—Mabel, 88, Crosshill Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 25.

Hildebrand—Justina, 88, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 31.

Hoepfner—Justina, 99, Morden Mennonite, Man., Sept. 11.

Martens—Dietrich, 80, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Sept. 19.

Martin—Harvey S., 80, Floradale Mennonite, Ont., Aug. 25.

Schmitt-Snyder—Dorothy (nee Shantz), 88, First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., Sept. 7.

Schowalter—Hans, 80, Sherbrooke Mennonite, Vancouver, Aug. 30.

Steckly—Marjorie, 80 (b. Aug. 12, 1925), Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont., Sept. 4.

Voth—Abe, 89, Morden Mennonite, Man., Sept. 6.

Wiebe—Louise, 80, Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Aug. 31.

Baptisms

Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg—Leigh Peters-Fransen, Sept. 18.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes Transitions announcements within four months of the event. Please send all Transitions announcements by e-mail to 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 Eastern Canada

Continuing education offered for pastors

In the midst of changes in the "culture" of congregational life, the role of pastors has shifted, with a focus on specialization in various areas of ministry. As a consequence, many of our congregations have a team of ministers to cover the broad range of expectations.

Marianne Mellinger says that pastoral teams can often be like the little girl in the nursery rhyme: "When they are good they are very, very good and when they are bad they are horrid."

The "Developing the pastoral team for ministry" course that Mellinger is leading this fall will assist pastoral teams to be "good" or better by focusing on issues that can get in the way of team effectiveness. Work will be done in the areas of developing a team covenant, understanding personal conflict style, the use and misuse of power, gender dynamics, and the effect of personality type in team ministry.

One of the shifting paradigms of congregational leadership is the emergence or resurgence of lay leaders. Many congregations have a "mixed team" model of lay and credentialed pastoral leaders.

In October, Gary and Lydia Harder will offer the "Evoking ministry, sharing power" course. This seminar will encourage pastors to reflect on how they practise ministry in the midst of emerging leadership models. Topics to be explored include: engagement with the laity, experience of leadership, and practice of power. In each of these areas the group will seek to bring to light the operational theology beneath the practice of ministry.

For these and other courses, register through MCEC by e-mail: joan@mcec.ca, or by phone: 1-800-206-9356.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Pastoral transitions

Albert Cheng was installed as pastor of Winnipeg Mennonite Chinese Church on July 3, replacing John Wang.

Jarrod Chamberlin completed his ministry at Carman Mennonite at the end of June and began as pastor of Elim Mennonite Church in Grunthal on Aug. 2.

Kelli Downey began her assignment as assistant/youth pastor at Carman Mennonite in August. Downey moved from Swift Current, where she served as part-time youth pastor for two years.

Harold Hildebrand Schlegel began his new position as pastor of Morden Mennonite Church on Aug. 2. Schlegel spent the last two years in Elkhart, Ind. Harold Peters Fransen, who served as interim pastor in Morden for the past year, is taking an interim position in Drake, Sask.

Dianne Hildebrand Schlegel began a new half-time associate pastor position at Morden Mennonite Church on Aug. 2. She graduated from AMBS in May 2005.

Kyle Penner, a recent Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) graduate who was active as a youth sponsor in Grace Mennonite Church in Steinbach, began as youth pastor at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church in Winnipeg on Aug. 2.

Ken Quiring began as pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in Brandon in late August.

Deanna Loeppky began a half-time interim youth pastor position in Niverville

Mennonite Church on Sept. 1. She will continue working for the Outtatown program at Canadian Mennonite University.

Walter and Hilda Franz began as part-time voluntary service pastors at Riverton Fellowship Circle in September.

Lisa Enns-Bogoya was ordained in Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg on Sept. 11.

Camps with Meaning Celebrates season

Camps with Meaning is bringing its 2005 camp season to a close with a series of celebration banquets. The banquets will offer great food, stories, songs and fellowship.

The banquets are slated for Whitewater Mennonite Church in Boissevain on Oct. 29, 6 p.m.; Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church on Nov. 5, 6 p.m.; and Douglas Mennonite Church in Winnipeg on Nov. 6, 5 p.m.

The theme is "Finding the way." Kathy Giesbrecht is the guest speaker and The Knackzoats will provide the musical entertainment.

A free will offering will be taken to support Camps with Meaning.

For tickets, call one of the host congregations or 204-895-CAMP.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Nursing home to be sold

Herbert Mennonite Nursing Home is being sold to the Cyprus Region Health Authority (CRHA).

The decision to sell the home—rather than manage it together with the region—was initially considered at a June

14 meeting in Saskatoon. Delegates were invited to vote on a list of recommendations by the MC Saskatchewan executive and also consider a proposal for the conference to continue ownership of the present building and for the health authority to own any new construction.

Instead, a motion was made to sell the building to the CRHA. Plans are now underway to negotiate the sale. This means that staff of the nursing home will, by law, be joining a union.

Before this decision, MC Saskatchewan and two other Mennonite churches in Herbert helped to manage and guide the facility; now the health authority and an advisory board from the surrounding community will have input into the home's operation.

Mennonite Church Alberta

Camping season successful

Camp Valaqua has completed another successful summer camping season. The total number of campers registered in 2005 was 507, down by just 17 campers from 2004.

The summer was challenging for long-term staff members, as both the manager and the director positions were filled by volunteers for part of the season. During the first six weeks of summer, managers Jeff Schellenberg and Ingrid Janssen were granted leave to take their family on their first summer vacation in the eight years since they took on the position.

Many thanks to the hard-working volunteers who kept the camp and its programs running smoothly. In all, more than 60 volunteers gave of their time and talents to keep campers and staff fed,

inspired through God's Word, and enjoying a clean, safe environment.

In his last camp director report, Dyck Steinmann commented on the importance of camping ministry. "In the past four years we have seen so many excellent staff grow and develop as leaders both at camp and beyond as they get involved in other ministry areas. It's wonderful to see this growth and reminds us how important camp is to develop Christian faith and leadership among staff as well as campers."

Camp Valaqua will soon begin searching for a new director, with details to follow.

Corn boil may become an annual event

On Sept. 4, Trinity Mennonite Church held a corn boil on the site of their as yet unfinished church building. Church

members Doug and Anne Marie Boyse got the idea from their pastor neighbours, and thought it was good enough to copy. Tables were set up on the 60-foot laminate beam that will eventually support the church roof. Sixty-five people attended the meal and enjoyed the famous Taber corn, watermelon, *Rollkuchen* (Russian Mennonite fritters) and squares.

Anne Marie commented, "It was great fun. Many people suggested that this was our first annual Labour Day corn boil!"

Mennonite Church British Columbia

New youth pastor as Sherbrooke

Russ Klassen is the new youth pastor at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver;

he began his position on Aug. 1. Klassen, with wife Julia and two-year-old-son Isaac, came from Tofield, Alta., where he had volunteered as youth coordinator at Tofield Alliance Church. He has also worked with youth in several other denominations.

Klassen replaces former Sherbrooke youth pastor James Wittenberg, who is pursuing further education at Regent College in Vancouver.

Picnic, swim kick off Abbotsford church year

East Abbotsford Community Church celebrated its annual fall kick-off weekend, Sept. 24 to 25, with family activities and a special worship service. The church family gathered Saturday afternoon and evening for volleyball, swimming and a potluck supper at one of the member's homes. The youth presented a drama and

a devotional.

Sunday morning's worship included another drama, based on Revelation 3, written by Pastor Dave Hobson and performed by the church drama team.

East Abbotsford Community Church is now in its third year of worshipping together, with upwards of 120 attendants each week. They plan several informal events a year to give members a comfortable place to invite unchurched friends.

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) and Amy Dueckman (British Columbia). See page 2 for contact information.

Healing prayer

"I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and raised him up... (Acts 3:6).

I had not expected Michele Hershberger to finish the first message at the Mennonite Church Canada/USA assembly in Charlotte by saying that the church [meaning us] "was the lame man." The Acts 3 text has always been preached in a way that has us Christians identified with Peter and John, the joyful believers, who, by the power of the risen Christ, healed the lame beggar. As Mennonites, we have tended to see ourselves in the good guy-healer role, not with the abject neediness of a lame beggar. But the speaker at our Monday evening worship service clearly identified us, the Mennonite Church of USA and Canada, with the lame man in the story.

Allow for a moment that the speaker is making an apt connection: what implications would it have? If Mennonite Church Canada is the lame man, off to the side, helpless, broken and needing

healing, what difference would that identity make in how we related to God and to one another?

First, we would see each other with a new compassion. We would relate to each other with patience and forbearance. Our sense of brokenness and need would qualify us to minister compassion to each other and others outside the church. One part of the body would not condemn another part for its incompleteness or its brokenness.

Renewed prayer would be another implication of identifying with the lame person in the story. He was laid at the gate of the temple to wait expectantly as he called out for help. Unlike the whole and healthy worshippers who came and went through the temple gate, his entire presence there was an acted-out supplication. The implication of our identification with the lame man is clear: we are helpless; we are unable to do for ourselves what needs to be done; we need to pray.

Happily the story does not end with the lame man remaining in abject helplessness. He ends up "walking and leaping and praising God!" Such was

From our leaders

the power of God's healing in his life. It started in brokenness; it ended with wholeness and joy. The link between brokenness and joy is prayer.

Sue Steiner called a number of us together to pray for our church during the Charlotte assembly. Her call was to pray "for the soul of Mennonite Church Canada." This phrase caught my attention because it names the soul of a church as a more profound identity than its structure and organization, and bigger than all its diverse parts. It is precious, at risk and calls for healing.

Let us pray for the soul of Mennonite Church Canada. Let us pray for the delicate unity that we enjoy. Let us pray for the incoming general secretary, Jack Suderman, and his empowerment for the leadership transition period we are entering. Let us pray for the staff that oversee the national and international ministry. Let us pray for all among us who sit waiting to be healed.

Sven Eriksson is Mennonite Church Canada's denominational minister.



Employment opportunities

Mennonite Church Canada invites applications for the positions of

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY FOR MC CANADA WITNESS (1.0 FTE), and MISSION PARTNERSHIP FACILITATOR FOR AFRICA (.4 FTE) and EUROPE (.3 FTE)

Mennonite Church Canada is a dynamic and exciting place to work and serve, where the team players are enthusiastic, energetic, and strive to put their faith into practice. These positions, based in Winnipeg, Man., participate in the Christian Witness Council's mandate to lead, mobilize and resource the church to participate in holistic witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in a broken world. Both positions require considerable travel within and outside of Canada. Duties would commence in fall of 2005.

All staff are expected to exhibit a personal faith commitment to Christ as Saviour and Lord, uphold the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, and the vision of Mennonite Church Canada as a missional church. For a list of qualifications and responsibility areas for each position, see the job descriptions posted at www.mennonitechurch.ca/getinvolved/jobs/.

A letter of intent and a resume, or any inquiries or nominations, can be directed to the following people:

For the Executive Secretary position:

Dan Nighswander, General Secretary
E-mail: dnighswander@mennonitechurch.ca

For the Africa and Europe positions:

Jack Suderman, Executive Secretary, Witness
E-mail: rjsuderman@mennonitechurch.ca

Both may also be reached at:

Mennonite Church Canada
600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4
Phone: 204-888-6781; toll-free: 866-888-6785

Application processing will begin October 11th.



MCC CANADA seeks applications for the following salaried position in Winnipeg:

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT
(To be determined, between .8 and 1.0 FTE)

The Director gives leadership to staff in the MCC Canada Communications department. Previous experience in journalism or public relations required.

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

Contact: Marsha Jones
Phone: 204-261-6381
E-mail: mjg@mennonitecc.ca
View job description on the web at: www.mcc.org

Applications will be considered beginning October 12, 2005.

Columbia Bible College announces an opening for
VICE-PRESIDENT for STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

We are seeking a Senior Administration position in Student Development for Spring 2006. For a full list of qualifications, job description, and contact information, please consult our website at: www.columbiabc.edu.

Please forward resume to the attention of Dr. Paul Wartman. Resumes will be received until October 31, 2005; the post will be open until position is filled. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed in the first instance to Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

FULL-TIME SENIOR PASTOR

Holyrood Mennonite Church in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, is seeking a full-time senior pastor. The tentative starting date is January 1, 2006.

We are members of Mennonite Church Alberta and Mennonite Church Canada. Average attendance is 80-100 in a congregation diverse in cultures, ages and walks of life. See www.holyroodmennonite.ca for further information about the congregation. Interested applicants, please contact:

Chair of Pastoral Committee, Guenther Toews
Phone: 780-458-9358
3 Oakview Crescent
St. Albert, AB T8N 6H8
Alberta Conference Minister, Jim Shantz
Phone: 780-485-2518

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Springstein Mennonite Church in Springstein, Man., invites applications for a half-time Associate Pastor whose primary focus is on Youth and Young Adult ministry.

We are a semi-rural congregation located 15 minutes from the city of Winnipeg with a Sunday morning attendance of approximately 100. Join our ministry team, which includes a 2/3 time Lead Pastor, and give leadership to an energetic and committed congregation. Responsibilities to commence as soon as possible.

Please direct inquiries to:

Pastoral Search Committee
c/o Sheila Rempel
Springstein Mennonite Church
Box 38, Springstein, MB R0G 2N0
Email: rempel_cars@hotmail.com

Upcoming Advertising Dates

Oct. 31 Books & Resources

Copy due Oct. 18

Nov. 14 Focus on Music

Copy due Nov. 1

Nov. 28 Mission & Service

Copy due Nov. 15

PRESIDENT

BETHEL COLLEGE
North Newton, Kansas

Founded in 1887, Bethel is a four-year, co-educational, primarily residential liberal arts college of 525 students and has been recognized for seven straight years by U.S. News and World Report as a "Best Value" institution. It ranks first among all Kansas colleges and universities in the percentage of graduates who go on to earn doctorates. Bethel offers 27 majors and 10 concentrations with 4 certificate programs and is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges, the State Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and the Council for Social Work Education.

Bethel College, along with six other institutions of higher education, is affiliated with Mennonite Church USA through the Mennonite Education Association. The core strengths that identify the institution are academic excellence; opportunities for participation; an intentional, caring community; and the expression of faith-based values. These strengths underlie its institutional model: a student-centred, (primarily) residential, liberal arts, church-related college in the Anabaptist tradition.

Applications and nominations are encouraged and will be accepted until the Board has made its selection. A letter of introduction and a current CV, or requests for more information, are to be directed to:

Richard M. King
President & CEO
Kittleman & Associates, LLC
300 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 1710
Chicago, IL 60606
312-986-1166
rking@kittleman.net

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

Housing

Waterloo, Ont., 2 bedroom in quiet triplex. Close to downtown. Laundry, parking, shed for bikes. No smoking, no pets. Please call 519-656-2983.

For sale

Great gift CDs by saxophonist Willem Moolenbeek with Boyd McDonald, piano. Songs without Words—classical favourites; Heartsongs—romantic favourites; and The Christmas Songs. \$22.50 each includes postage. Order by mail: Willem Moolenbeek, 220 Fern Cr., Waterloo, ON N2V 2R1. Phone: 519-880-8240, or e-mail: singingsax@rogers.com

To advertise, contact:
Barbara Burkholder
1-800-316-4052
advert@canadianmennonite.org

Ottawa

Mennonite kids stronger, healthier than peers

A new study funded by the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) shows that Old Order Mennonite children living near Mount Forest, Ont., living a similar lifestyle to that of previous generations, tend to be fitter, stronger and leaner than children living a contemporary Canadian lifestyle—this despite the fact they do not have physical education classes and do not participate in organized sports.

"What this study proves is that you don't need to do triathlons to stay fit and active," says Mark Tremblay, a professor of kinesiology at the University of Saskatchewan. "Children living traditional lifestyles have exercise embedded in their daily lives. In contrast, today's children engage more in passive activities, such as video games. This may go a long way in explaining why they are less physically fit."

The study found that Old Order Mennonite children, on average, do up to 18 minutes more moderate or vigorous physical activity a day than their urban and rural counterparts. Researchers estimate that, all else being equal, this translates into a caloric difference between the Old Order Mennonite children and children living a contemporary lifestyle of more than 40 pounds of fat per person per decade.

The 124 Old Order Mennonite children in the study also had leaner triceps than urban Saskatchewan children, a greater aerobic fitness score than rural Saskatchewan children, and greater grip strength than the 275 rural and urban Saskatchewan children. These findings were true for girls and boys. Researchers attribute the Old Order Mennonite children's strength and fitness to the fact they get a great deal of physical activity through walking, traditional farming activities and household chores.

Lisa Sullivan, manager of research and policy at CIHI's Canadian Population Health Initiative, says, "This research gives us a unique glimpse into the past that may help to explain the rising rates of obesity over the past few decades."

Approximately 30 percent of all the children in the study were classified as overweight.

News brief**Zambian students, teachers get school supplies from MCC**

In Zambia, community schools provide an education for those who cannot afford school fees, books or uniforms required by other government-run schools. But students are often forced to learn without desks, exercise books, pencils or pens. Teachers' supplies—such as planning books, dictionaries and materials to make posters—are also in short supply. This year, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is providing school desks, school kits and locally purchased school supplies to eight community schools in Lusaka and Choma, Zambia, as well as one centre for children living on the streets. The aid will reach some 1,800 students and 60 teachers.

—MCC release

'Emerging mission' theme of conference

Almaty, Kazakhstan—When the Global Mission Fellowship of Anabaptist-related Churches gathers in Almaty a year from now it will meet under the theme: "Emerging mission: From all churches to all people." Speakers and Bible study leaders will include Wilbert Shenk, U.S.; Danisa Ndlovu, Zimbabwe; and Shekar Singh, India. Workshops, networking, reports from regional caucuses, a business meeting, prayer and worship times, and closing communion will fill out the agenda for the gathering. The Global Mission Fellowship will join the Turkic Altai, a conference on missions to Turkic peoples, for some of its sessions.
—Global Missions Fellowship release

News briefs

Canned turkey, kits on their way to Congo

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is sending a \$25,000 shipment of canned turkey, newborn kits, clothing, school kits, personal hygiene materials and other items to the Democratic Republic of Congo. These items will be distributed by Congolese Mennonites, United Methodists and Baptists, to victims of civil war in the country's eastern region. MCC estimates that the shipment will directly benefit 1,000 families.
—MCC release

Failed harvest prompts MCC response

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is giving \$26,000 to provide 60 metric tons of corn to a region in Burkina Faso that is suffering a food shortage. A partner organization, Office of Development of Evangelical

Advent/Christmas music fest planned

Langley, B.C.—An Advent/Christmas music fest for Mennonite Church B.C. congregations is planned for the first Sunday in Advent, Nov. 27, 2:30 p.m., at Langley Mennonite Fellowship. Congregations are invited to send worship groups to perform seasonal songs; they will also sing together as a group. *Faspa* and fellowship will follow the musical program.

The MC B.C. Program Committee encourages churches to attend this gathering that focuses on worship and fellowship, rather than business. Come and enjoy this time together of celebrating the Lord's coming.

—**Amy Dueckman**

Churches, is providing the corn to 600 families in the provinces of Soum, Oudalam and Seno, where drought and locusts have destroyed crops. Corn will be donated to the poorest families and sold at a discount to others, with the proceeds helping to fund the project.

—MCC release

Tsunami relief includes fish racks

In Indonesia, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is helping a village in Aceh province replace racks for drying fish. Before the Dec. 26 tsunami, the people of Rheum Baroh dried a type of small fish that they exported to Medan, Indonesia, but the screens they used were lost. MCC, which plans to continue work in this village, is providing \$552, which will rebuild a fish dryer with about 100 simple drying racks.
—MCC release

Calendar

British Columbia

Oct. 21-23: B.C. Women in Mission annual retreat at Camp Squeah.
Nov. 3-6: MEDA annual convention, Whistler, B.C.
Nov. 5-6: Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, 25th anniversary celebration.
Nov. 18-20: Senior Youth IMPACT Retreat at Camp Squeah.
Nov. 27: Advent/Christmas music festival for MC B.C. churches at Langley Mennonite Fellowship, 2:30 p.m., followed by *faspa*.

Alberta

Oct 21: Mennonite Disaster Service dessert/information evening, 7 p.m., Dalhousie Community Church. Speaker: Gerald Klassen. Everyone welcome.
Oct. 24: First Mennonite, Calgary, is hosting "A taste of Mennonite Church Canada from across the street to around the world." Banquet, 6:30 p.m.; stories to follow. Call Marvin Baergen at 403-256-2894 for tickets.
Nov. 5-6: Rosemary Mennonite Church 75th anniversary celebrations.

Saskatchewan

Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13: "Stories Jesus told: A look at the parables," with Vern Ratzlaff, Nutana Park Mennonite Church.
Oct. 28-29: First Mennonite dessert and theatre/refugee fundraiser, at 7:30 p.m.
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 Mennonite Church.

Dec. 3-4: Handel's *Messiah*, Bethany College, Hepburn.

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

Oct. 14-15: Manitoba Women in Mission annual retreat at Camp Assiniboia. Theme: "Prayer—just do it." Leaders: Pam Dreidger and Marilyn Houser Hamm.

Oct. 15: Lay church leaders seminar on "Management matters and charitable issues for churches," Rosenort EM Church, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, e-mail Mennonite Foundation of Canada: mfc-wpg@mennofoundation.ca.

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. 20, 27, 28: Eden Foundation "Song of the Soul" banquets, 6:30 p.m. with program and special music by new music therapist Joel Klassen to follow. Steinbach Mennonite Church (20); Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg (27); Altona EMM Church (28). For tickets, call 204-325-5355.

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. 22: Annual MMYO volleyball tournament, Winkler, Man. Register by Oct. 14 by calling 204-896-1616 or by e-mail at office@mennochurch.mb.ca.

Oct. 27: MC Manitoba fall delegate session at Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 7 to 9:30 p.m.

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

Oct. 29, Nov. 5, Nov. 6: Camps with Meaning celebration banquets. Kathy Giesbrecht will speak on "Finding the way." Whitewater Mennonite Church, Boissevain (29, 6 p.m.); Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church (5, 6 p.m.); Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg (6, 5 p.m.). For tickets, call 204-895-2267.

Nov. 1: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Winnipeg, annual general meeting, 7:30 p.m.

Nov. 5: Camps with Meaning celebration banquet at Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Nov. 6: Camps with Meaning celebration banquet at Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

Nov. 4-6: Quilting retreat at Camp Koinonia. Call 895-2267 or e-mail camps@mennochurch.mb.ca to register.

Nov. 4-6: Quilting retreat at Camp Moose Lake. To register, call 895-2267 or e-mail camps@mennochurch.mb.ca.

Nov. 11-13: Quilting retreat at Camp Moose Lake. To register, call 895-2267 or e-mail camps@mennochurch.mb.ca.

Nov. 18-20: Canadian Mennonite education leaders gathering at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg. Theme: "Church and church school: Committed partners or a company of strangers?"

Jan. 13-15: Young adult retreat at Camp Koinonia: "Get engaged!...With the church!"

Jan. 20-22: MMYO junior youth retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Feb. 3-5: MMYO senior youth retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Feb. 10-12: MMYO junior youth retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

Feb. 24: Leadership seminar at Gretna Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Feb. 24-25: Annual del-

egate session at Mennonite Collegiate Institute, hosted by Gretna Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

March 3-5: Families, friends and persons with a disability retreat at Camp Assiniboia.

March 10-12: MMYO junior youth retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

May 29-31: Plus 55 retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

June 5-7: Plus 55 retreat at Camp Koinonia.

Ontario

Oct. 7-9: Weekend Celebrating Bethany Mennonite's 40 years of ministry. Share thanksgiving to God for Bethany as a faith community "...growing God's goodness..." in Niagara. Guest Speaker: Walter Bergen of Abbotsford, B.C. (former MCC Director in Moscow).

Oct. 14-15: MCEC weekend with Tony and Peggy Campolo. Theme: "Is the homosexual my neighbour?" For more information, visit: www.mcec.ca/WhatsNew, or call 1-800-206-9356.

Oct. 15-16: 80th anniversary of Mennonites living in Essex and Kent counties. Visitors are welcome.

Oct. 16: Commissioning service for Pastor Willard Metzger to the position of World Vision Canada director of church relations, Community Mennonite Fellowship, Drayton, 2 p.m.

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

Oct. 22: MCEC fall workshop at Vineland United Mennonite Church, 9:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Theme: "The missional church." Speaker: Donna Jean Foster of Welcome Inn.

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

Oct. 24, 25, Nov. 1, 2: Mennonite Savings and Credit Union regional meetings. Erb St. Mennonite Church, Waterloo (24); Wellesley

Mennonite Church (25); Elmira Mennonite Church (1); Faith Mennonite Church, Leamington (2). Registration at 7:30 p.m., meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Oct. 25-29: Ten Thousand Villages Festival Sale, a sale of traditional and contemporary international handicrafts to benefit artisans from developing countries. Aylmer Old Town Hall (upper floor), 38 John Street South, Aylmer, Ont.

Oct. 28-30: Silver Lake Mennonite Camp fall work weekend. Call 519-747-0627 for details.

Nov. 2-5: 19th annual Ten Thousand Villages Festival Sale at Vineland United Mennonite Church. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. (2,3,4); 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (5). Tea room open each day.

Nov. 5: Silver Lake Mennonite Camp annual meeting and fish fry at Kitchener-Waterloo Mennonite Church, 4:30 to 8 p.m. Call 519-747-0627 for more information.

United States

Jan. 23-27: AMBS pastors week, Elkhart, Ind.

March 9-15: MWC mini-assembly, U.S. Center for World Missions, Pasadena, Calif.

June 1-3: "Holding fast to our faith: Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective 10 years later" conference, AMBS, Elkhart, Ind.

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

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Gretna, Man.

Students raise \$1,027 for MCC and hurricane relief

Mennonite Collegiate Institute (MCI) students raised more than \$1,000 in the opening weeks of school this year. The money was split between the wheelbarrow of cash at the Morris (Man.) Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) sale and the Mennonite Disaster Service effort to bring relief to Hurricane Katrina victims in the southern U.S.

Organized by teacher Tim Wiebe, the loose change fundraiser is an annual event at MCI in which grades compete for the highest total. This year's winning class, the Senior 4s, raised an all-time class high of \$508, earning themselves a "shopping spree" at the Altona MCC Thrift Store.

The 2005 total sets a new high, topping last year's record of \$900.

—MCI release

Conrad Grebel University College photo



Frosh leaders Gary Hallman, left, and Tina Ashley helped 91 new frosh move in to Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., on Labour Day.

frosh week 2005

Columbia Bible College photo



"It's been an exciting week at Columbia Bible College," says Melanie Olfert, director of admissions at the Abbotsford, B.C., learning institution, as the college welcomed 230 new students on campus during frosh week, and re-united with another 260 continuing students.