

C A N A D I A N

Meat canning reprise

April 4, 2005
Volume 9, Number 7

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Examining our vocation

Do you ever wonder whether God called you to your occupation? Parker Palmer, in his early 30s began, literally, to wake up to questions about what he was doing. Things seemed to be going well, “but the soul does not put much stock in appearances. I had started to understand it is indeed possible to live a life other than one’s own. Fearful I was doing just that, I would snap awake in the middle of the night and stare for long hours at the ceiling” (Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*, page 2).

He reflected upon the Quaker saying, “Let your life speak,” and felt called to a higher purpose. Lining up the most elevated ideals, he tried living up to them. “The results were rarely admirable, often laughable, and sometimes grotesque...always they were unreal, a distortion of my true self—as must be the case when one lives from the outside in, and not the inside out” (page 3).

With a good education, Palmer held a great job (advocating social justice in Washington, D.C.). He left that job and began to examine his vocation (calling) at a Quaker study centre.

Twice in his 40s he suffered bouts of paralyzing depression, even while leading a spiritual community. He began to understand he had lived an ungrounded life at an unsafe altitude. Depression pulled him down to the ground where he discovered that the way to God is not up, but down. Deep inside he felt the urge from his soul to become one whole life—beliefs, deeds, and being.

Moses told Israel that “life” is a deliberate and serious choice: “This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses.... I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life...listen to his voice.... For the LORD is your life”(Deuteronomy 30:19-20—NIV).

Palmer gradually discovered and chose the “creation of God” inside his being. He began to move out in confident

vocation to serve the world. Today he’s a much-sought-after speaker and writer.

How can you and I examine our occupation and vocation?

In our churches we have tried to balance orthodoxies (sound doctrines) and orthopraxies (sound practices). Often we argue about which is more important.

Both are inadequate by themselves. Orthodoxies tend to put on blinkers and sneer at deeds that do not mouth our doctrines. Orthopraxies don’t always have deep connections to the total imperatives of God in Jesus—such as justice for all in all.

In a 2003 lecture at Canadian Mennonite University, John Paul Lederach, a Mennonite mediator, said *orthovoxis* can help us in our examination. *Voxis* means “voice,” the root word for “vocation.” Voice helps us to articulate words, but it goes much deeper. Voice is where blood and breath mix. It gets to the essence of our being. The dynamic connection of breath and “voice” is seen in Genesis: God breathed life (Genesis 2:7)! Christian vocation is our God-gifted “voice.” This can become our unique gift to the world. Our life begins to “speak” as God created us to speak.

Mennonites have often used theology to become private enclaves, instead of giving our unique gifts to the world. The world is starving for our Anabaptist gifts, such as nonviolent peacemaking in church and family. Gifts of spiritual calling make a difference when openly placed on the altar of commitment. Jesus urges us to bring our gifts. If we are not rightfully offering them to the community, we must stop enroute to make things right; then offer the gifts (Matthew 5:23). Such an examined life (vocation) “speaks” to the whole world.

—Bernie Wiebe

The author is a former editor of *The Mennonite* and is the current chair of *Canadian Mennonite’s* board.

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Web site preview

Get a preview of the next *Canadian Mennonite* before it comes in the mail. Selections are posted on our web site at www.canadianmennonite.org on the Thursday before the issue date. So you can check out the April 18 issue by April 14.

Cover: Kathy Shantz shows off her new hand-sewn and beaded hide mittens she bought from a Cree elder in Attawapiskat on the shores of James Bay. MCC Ontario photo.

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Orodara, Burkina Faso

My courtyard gets a beating: A first-person account

We will beat your yard two Tuesdays from now," announced Mother Howa, the matriarch of the courtyard. "All you need to do is buy the sauce ingredients and meat to feed everyone."

"No problem," I said. "How much meat should I buy?"

"However much you want," she replied.

"No, I need at least an idea. Do you want one kilo or five kilos or ten kilos?"

Mother Howa laughed. "Buy what you want!" she repeated.

I decided to try from another angle. "How many people will be there?"

"I don't know. I told many people, but I don't know how many will come."

"Well, how many people do you expect to feed?"

"However many people come and help."

I took a deep breath, searching desperately for a way to get a precise answer. "How much meat would you buy if you were buying meat?" There, that should do it.

The old lady laughed out loud like it was the funniest joke she heard in a long time. Giving up, I stomped (as politely as I could) out of her kitchen hut.

"Why can't they just give me a straight answer?" I fumed.

"They want lots of meat but they are scared to say how much because what they say might be less than what I meant to buy so they would lose out, and they don't want to look too greedy by saying an outrageously high amount even though they know I would be stupid enough to buy it all without asking questions."

I was so tempted to buy them one kilo just to see how they would respond. In the end I bought six kilograms and everyone got a piece, down



About 10 young women with "pounders" line up and beat to the music. Everyone works together and in time.

I can understand why the drum is the heartbeat of Africa because so much of their work involves pounding, which they do together, in rhythm.

to the smallest child.

My yard was beaten two years ago when I moved into my new house, but the rains came too soon and it had turned into a sandbox. Another heavy rainy season would wash my yard out

to the fields. This is why I asked if it could be fixed. Pounding a courtyard leaves a hard, smooth surface like cement, which is easy to keep clean—cats can't use it as a litter box either.

Everyone took their part in preparation for the courtyard beating. The teenage

boys went to the woods to collect "sausage pods" which the women pounded and then put in water to soak for two weeks. This water turns green and stinks, but is sticky, which makes a hard surface when mixed with mud. The little boys dug up my yard with dabas or hoes; then the little girls beat apart the hard clumps of dirt. The old women smoothed the surface out with their hands, taking out the lumps that were too large, and levelling the area.

On the morning of the beating, the old women gathered early and scattered gravel over the yard. The young women hauled water on their heads from the stream (the stinky stuff too). I even helped!

Three musicians arrived and the old women prepared the area by sprinkling water on the ground. Then the fun part began. About ten young women got a "pounder," lined up and started beating to the music. Everyone worked together and in time.

I can understand why the drum is the heartbeat of Africa because so much of their work involves pounding, which they do together, in rhythm. And they dance and laugh and goof off and have a great time. And the work gets done.

—Lillian Haas

The author, a member of Bluesky Mennonite Church, Alta., is a Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker who is developing a writing system for the Siamou speaking people in the region. This work is foundational to literacy teaching and Biblical translation. She requests prayer that village elders will grant permission to teach a literacy primer, that literacy teacher training will be successful, and that literacy students will learn to read.

I have to forgive

On this second Sunday after Easter we have another opportunity to remind ourselves that God has delivered the world from fear and set our feet on the path of love. And at the same time, we reflect on how difficult it is to believe how good the news is. In the passage from John 20:19-31, Jesus comes saying three times, "Peace be with you" to his doubting friends and disciples.

Jesus meets them on the evening after Peter and John have seen the empty tomb, and after Mary Magdalene had told them, "I have seen the Lord!" Despite this good news, the disciples are meeting in secret, with doors locked for fear of the Jews. They can't quite believe it. Jesus' words, "Peace be with you," are meant to settle their fears. Jesus does not rebuke them because they had deserted him, nor for being afraid, nor for lacking faith; Jesus is kind even to Thomas, stressing his belief, not his doubts. The disciples respond with joy.

Next, Jesus sends them out with an incredible mandate; they are given the power to forgive sins and to hold back forgiveness.

Again Jesus says, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.... If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Earlier in his ministry, Jesus provided a caution and a warning against withholding forgiveness. In Matthew 18, Jesus tells his listeners the story of a servant who accepted forgiveness but was not himself prepared to forgive. At the end of the story, the master placed in prison his servant who had not forgiven his debtor, even though he himself had been pardoned. Jesus concluded: "This

is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

After the disciples had received God's spirit, in Acts 5, they boldly tell all about the new life that God brought about. When the angel releases them from prison, it tells them to go to the temple courts, "and tell the people the full message of this new life!"

Luke writes that both forgiveness and repentance are unearned gifts. It's the end of accusations, the end of finding fault. It's time to make known the righteousness God assigns to women and men. This is what it means to proclaim the message of life.

I want to offer three illustrations that can encourage our faith that evil has been conquered and that we are free to live in service modelled on what God did for us.

The first an excerpt from the Easter Sunday sermon of Martin Luther, a 16th century preacher. Luther's words are clear and graphic as he describes Christ's conquest over sin. Jesus ends, in a fundamental and real way, the power of sin in the cosmos. Through Jesus, God terminates the punishment for sin everywhere for everyone.

From Luther's Easter sermon 1529:

You have heard in the Passion how Christ let himself be crucified and buried and how sin and death trampled him underfoot.... Sin, death and the devil are his lord.... But in the instant when [the devil] believes him destroyed, the Lion tears himself away from sin, death, hell and the jaws of the devil.... This is our comfort, that Christ comes forth: Death, sin, and the devil cannot hold him. The sin of the entire world is powerless. When he appears to Mary Magdalene, one sees in him neither death nor sin nor sadness, but sheer life and joy...everything that the devil, sin and death have done is destroyed. It is easy to say such words, but still no one believes it....

To have faith is to believe you are good despite all evidence to the contrary. Repentant sinners see in themselves

Continued on page 6

Sadly, in its desire to encourage a life of discipleship, the church has pointed the faithful towards probing self-examinations intended to expose failure in their lives.

Forgive *From page 5*

sin; but they also believe themselves to be justified, or made righteous and good, by God in Jesus. Sadly, in its desire to encourage a life of discipleship, the church has pointed the faithful towards probing self-examinations intended to expose failure in their lives. In the resulting cacophony of guilt, who can believe Paul when he claims God has made us righteous in his letter to the Romans?

A letter from an MCCer, about her grief at the death from AIDS of her Christian friend, illustrates the harm done

when we concentrate on sin. Then, she writes, “we will always try to hide our actions, we will not set it out for all to see, and as long as we condemn sinners, we will continue to be silent about HIV/AIDS.”

With sensitive insight the letter writer urges us to “place sin alongside God’s grace and love and mercy [and then] it becomes not an object of scorn or ridicule, but a symbol of movement from brokenness to wholeness, from sickness to grace, from hate to love.”

It is important for us to realize that God is at work liberating and freeing today as much as he was in the days of the resurrection.

There is a touch of irony when one discovers this work in a secular paper such as the *Globe and Mail*. A recent article by Stephanie Nolan shows God active in the life of a Rwandan woman whose husband was tortured and killed 10 years ago.

Her experience represents God’s work in the whole human race—stained with sin we reluctantly accept the reality of God’s healing. Her name is Athanasie Mukarwego and she herself was captured and for three months suffered unspeakable brutality and violence. Her existence can be seen as a paradigm of living in hope and decency while still

stained by sin. In the midst of her hell she questioned her belief in God.

“I asked myself, Does God exist? ‘We were always taught that God loves us—he would not have let me live through this. Clearly, he does not love me.’”

After her release she found herself surprised that life continued, although it was difficult to hope. She was sure she had HIV, so she went to be tested. When the physician told her the tests were negative, that she did not have HIV, she did not believe him.

“So he explained, you don’t have HIV. And I said, ‘But that is impossible. Me? I don’t have it? You’ve made a mistake. I was raped by more than 500 men. Your machines don’t work. I told him what had happened to me.’ And he said, ‘Well, do you believe in God?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ And he said, ‘So believe in this result.’”

She did believe, and her life is now a positive expression of living in faith and hope. She works for a project called Village of Hope. It helps village women live meaningful lives with their families by offering them training. Twice a week she stands before hundreds of poor and weary widows. She tells them about medical care, family planning and about the law—a new law that gives women the right to inherit land.

“The work I do is like a medicine, it’s like a cure for what I have lived through.... I’m good these days.”

This does not mean it’s all fine. As she walks in her village, she sees the wives and fathers of the men who killed her husband and who hurt her.

“It’s like a film before my eyes, it never turns off—in the shower, at the table. I have to forgive so that things are different for my children.”

May we help each other to believe that the news of God at work is indeed great. And let us, like this Rwandan woman, believe that we are good these days and respond in hope through lives of service and unbounded good will towards others.

—John Klassen

The sermon was originally preached at Langley Mennonite Fellowship, B.C., on April 18, 2004.



‘It’s like a film before my eyes, it never turns off—in the shower, at the table. I have to forgive so that things are different for my children.’

Elkhart, Ind.

Jubilee Sunday school material touches worldwide church

Congregations in the Hokkaido (Japan) Mennonite Conference are graying, says Teresa Thompson Sherrill, but their attention is focused on the young. “The harsh reality of aging [Japanese] congregations and aging church leadership has many considering the importance of excellent Anabaptist curriculum for the spiritual formation of the next generation of leaders,” she says.

That means celebrating Jubilee in Japanese. Mennonites there are investing energy in the For the Sake of the Children Task Force, composed of volunteers from seven congregations of the Hokkaido Mennonite Conference’s western region. This task force is translating and adapting some of the Jubilee Sunday school materials produced in North America.

“Some have been skeptical about the relevance of North American materials for the Japanese context,” admits Sherrill, working in Japan through Mennonite Church Canada Witness and its partner, Mennonite Mission Network. “However, many have been thrilled to have materials of the quality of the Jubilee series. The series contains creative ideas to teach the fullness of the gospel from an Anabaptist perspective. It has been a delight to explore and teach these materials in a Japanese context.”

The translation of the Jubilee materials and the training of Sunday school teachers also serve as spiritual formation for the adults who participate.

Notes Sherrill, “They appreciate that learning can take place in fun and creative ways. They feel that Jubilee enables children’s imaginations to work with the stories and bring the stories into their own lives and contexts.”

On the other side of the Pacific



Using Jubilee-based Sunday school material, children in Hokkaido, Japan, learn how God made clouds during their Sunday school class.

MC Canada photo by Teresa Sherrill

Ocean, Margrit Kipfer de Barrón echoes Sherrill’s evaluation of Sunday school as a spiritual discipline for children and their teachers alike. Kipfer de Barrón, a Swiss Mennonite working with the Bolivia Mennonite Church, organizes training workshops for Sunday school teachers every three months. Mennonite Church Canada Witness provides a \$12,000 grant to ministries in Bolivia.

Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers around the world engage in mission through Sunday schools. After the Brazil Mennonite Church commissioned Betty Hochstetler, a Mennonite Church Canada Witness/Mission Network-supported worker, about five

years ago, she has been facilitating the translation of Jubilee Sunday school curriculum into Portuguese and adapting it to the Brazilian culture.

“Brazilians are proud of the cultural differences that separate their nation from the Spanish-speaking countries around them,” Hochstetler says. “We are developing materials that are concise, creative, culturally appropriate in the Brazilian context and consistent with Anabaptist theology.”

Across Brazil’s western border in

Bolivia, Kipfer de Barrón has organized an entire gamut of ministries for children, including “Happy Hour” clubs, Sunday schools, youth meetings that feature Bible quizzes, discipleship and leadership-training classes and youth conferences that are alternatives to carnival-time partying. Anabaptist educators in Central and South America used the Jubilee outline, but collaborated to write this series specifically for the Latin American context.

The Jubilee series is produced in North America by Mennonite Publishing Network, Brethren Press and Evangel Publishing House. In Japan, the Mennonite Education and Research Center of the Hokkaido Mennonite Conference provided editorial and financial support for the development of the Sunday school curriculum. In Latin America, the project is administered by two Anabaptist agencies: SEMILLA, a seminary in Guatemala, and CLARA, a resource centre in Colombia. A Schowalter grant subsidized the development of the Sunday school curriculum in Brazil.

—Lynda Hollinger-Janzen

Letters

Paying taxes is a civic duty

I want to register another perspective on taxes for this forum than the one expressed in a letter in the Feb. 7 issue (page 15).

I agree that sometimes governments are ineffective and wasteful. But just because the execution is imperfect, doesn't mean the plan is wrongheaded.

I posit that taxes play a key role in maintaining the physical, social and economic infrastructures that support our society and all the individuals in it. Everyone benefits from the roads, railroads, water lines and wilderness parks that form part of our physical infrastructure. All benefit from social infrastructures such as healthcare, museums and sports leagues. The economic infrastructures provided by taxes also benefit everyone, whether that be an education, a regular pay cheque for work done, a disability pension or welfare cheque to stave off the worst effects of poverty, or corporate tax breaks intended to stimulate profitability for investors and economic growth for the community.

All benefit. A democracy such as ours depends on the participation of all citizens. All should gladly contribute taxes to the maintenance of society. And I think it is fair that taxes should be geared to income.

I do not expect taxes to accomplish a just redistribution of wealth, but I do expect taxes to accomplish a minimum standard of existence and level of infrastructure in our society. I see taxes not only as a short-term drain

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.

on my own pocket, but as an investment in society that will benefit the children and grandchildren of my generation.

—Ron Flaming, Waterloo, Ont.

Legal unions and sacred marriages

After many months of casual consideration on this topic, and reading many opinions about what the "real" issue is from many angles and positions, I sincerely now believe that the correct and obvious answer to the debate lies in the letter by Darren Kehler (*Canadian Mennonite*, March 7, 2005, page 12).

You would have done well to reprint this short letter on the cover, back cover, and in the space provided for the Wider Church segment, as well as sending it off to every elected official you can think of. Mr. Kehler has indeed found the solution.

It is too bad Mr. Nighswander and Mr. Eriksson have been dragged through the quicksand of a ludicrous argument when the real issue gets lost far in the dust in the panic to demand answers to an unfair question. The unfair question being brought before religious leaders and politicians across the country regarding same sex-marriage is, "Are you then a bigot or a

blasphemer?" This kind of question does not merit an answer, but I am afraid that in an attempt to politely respond, "Neither," Mr. Eriksson and Mr. Nighswander will, of course, be branded both.

I propose Mennonite Church Canada adopt Mr. Kehler's position and advocate for the immediate separation of church and state: Legal unions and sacred marriages.

—Carl Froese, Winnipeg

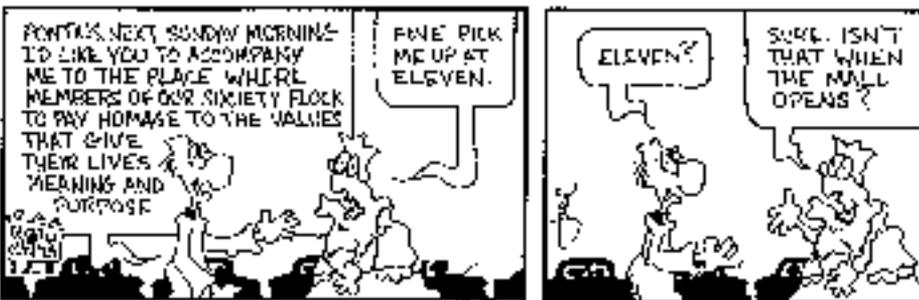
Cost to Charlotte a concern for some

Our Charleswood Mennonite Church is committed to being a full participant in all conference matters. We want to do our fair share. We do, however, have concerns about the costs and our ability to do the Canadian agenda at Charlotte.

When we put the total costs per delegate together for the Charlotte assembly in July, CMC can expect to pay in the neighbourhood of \$2,000 per delegate or about \$10,000-\$12,000 for our church of 270. If we decide to send only three delegates, that could come to \$6,000 for our church. If all our 200 Canadian churches did the about the same thing, then the total assembly cost is in the neighbourhood of \$1 million. That is a lot of money!

Now we read in the same issue that the general board is wrestling with a projected shortfall of \$120,000. Since the Canadian delegates will spend major time with the bi-national agenda, I wonder if we will have enough time to be able to pay proper attention to our Canadian Conference issues. I know the delegates at the Winkler assembly in 2004 approved the meeting at Charlotte, but to us it

Pontius' Puddle



does not seem to be good stewardship to do so at this time. It does suggest that for our church we might be making a more meaningful contribution by giving a contribution to the general budget instead.

—**Peter H. Peters, Winnipeg**

MCC relief discussions need to continue

I am pleased that MCC Canada responded promptly to Jacob Dyck's concerns over sending relief kits to Indonesia.

MCC Canada executive director Donald Peters' points do have validity since North American Mennonites want to feel connected with victims of disasters, and MCC wants to listen to, and actively foster relations with, local partners and churches. Peters is candid with readers in stating that serious discussions within MCC over material and development continue.

North American Mennonites are already involved and connected to people in need through quilt making, and volunteering at relief sales, thrift shops, during beef canning season, and in sundry other ways.

When future natural disasters strike, we need to be ready. Purchasing and assembling relief kits after the fact, and then shipping them where they are needed are both praiseworthy and inefficient activities. Money moves quickly, whereas relief kits assembled here take weeks to get to where they are needed.

North American Mennonites could donate money to MCC for relief kits. In turn, MCC, in consultation with local partners and churches, could seek out supplies made or available locally (or closer than North America and likely at lower costs). Then MCC, with local partners and churches, could plan on how the relief supplies are assembled and distributed quickly and efficiently.

I would like MCC to raise a permanent and substantial contingency fund now, before the next disaster strikes. This fund could then go to work immediately when it is needed. The fund would then have to be replenished for the next disaster, and the ones that will certainly follow. Second,

I would like MCC to continue the relief and development discussions—even inviting constituency members to join them.

—**Richard MacBride, Waterloo, Ont.**

God's love must guide same-sex marriage discussions

I read that the process of discernment on same-sex marriage has started (*Canadian Mennonite*, March 7, 2005). I wish you well with this divisive topic. At the very least, it can help us understand tolerance, and give us new opportunities to practise it.

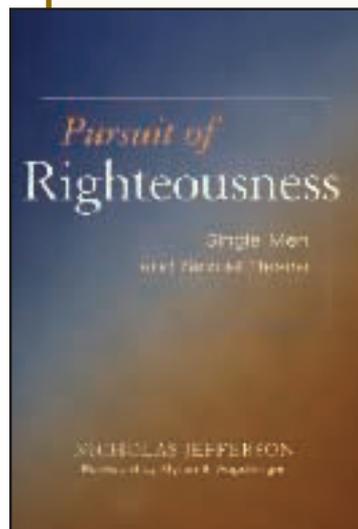
The odds suggest that there are gay and lesbian members in the Mennonite church. Given the "church's call to extend the love of Christ to all...who seek ministry and guidance," how does it respond to a gay or lesbian couple who wish to publicly proclaim their love for each other in their church community, and seek to obtain acknowledgement, acceptance and blessing of their relationship? Can we accept the relationship but deny sanctifying it? Do we split hairs and accept the people, but reject their

choice? Is that truly acceptance? When we talk of strengthening the family, are we being overly restrictive? Should we start by examining how our love of God is expressed in all relationships?

Personally, I support gay and lesbian marriage because I cannot see how the broader Christian principles of love, community and acceptance allow us to exclude people from the support of their church.

As I look back over the public debates on this topic over the last several years, the thing that seems paramount to me is that the lesbian and gay community does not feel accepted or acknowledged by the larger "straight" community. Ironically, their feelings of abandonment and rejection are mirrored by the feelings of those on the other side who feel marginalized by the government that supports same-sex marriage. However the marriage topic is resolved, this feeling of not belonging is one that must be addressed. Separate but equal no longer cuts it. It is not acceptable to ride the bus, but be restricted to the back.

May God's love guide your discussions.
—**Bruce Bauer, Kitchener, Ont.**



Pursuit of Righteousness Single Men and Sexual Desire

Young Christians often feel alone as they struggle with the biblical command of chastity before marriage. In this book, **Nicholas Jefferson** equips single Christian men with a biblical roadmap to a lifestyle pleasing to God. Among the topics Jefferson examines are: the meaning and purpose of "being single," the benefits of spiritual fathers and mentors, and understanding sex and sexual desires.

Jefferson calls on single Christian men to hold relationships in biblical perspective and undertake a godly pursuit of righteousness that will unlock their divine potential.

Paper, 100 pages, \$11.29



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Winnipeg

MCC mobile meat canners given reprieve

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada has received confirmation from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) that scheduled meat canning sessions in Ontario and Manitoba can continue until the end of this year. A letter of confirmation, signed by the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Andrew Mitchell, is expected soon.

Early last month, the CFIA announced that it was enforcing an immediate ban on mobile meat canning facilities in Canada, effectively cancelling Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) canning events scheduled for Ontario and Manitoba in April and November.

Concerns expressed by MCC staff and supporters played an important role in the agency's decision on March 15 to allow the completion of MCC's 2005 canning schedule.

Bill Janzen, director of MCC's Ottawa office, said the CFIA expressed regret for the abruptness with which the agency delivered the news, and "did not mean to slam it shut."

MCC has complied with all CFIA regulations regarding mobile meat canning since it first started canning in Guelph, Ont., nine years ago. However, the discovery of a single case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy—known popularly as mad cow disease—in Alberta in 2003 put CFIA under international scrutiny. The government agency is facing severe restrictions on meat products leaving this country.

The decision to ban mobile meat canners was sudden and unexpected, leaving the planners of the 2005 canning schedule in a predicament. The extension of the ban application deadline to the end of the current year creates an important window of opportunity to finish the planned schedule and to explore options with the CFIA.

According to Don Peters, executive director of MCC Canada, "This ruling

does not mean there will be no further canning in Canada. We will continue to can," he said. "However, it does mean we will be in further dialogue with the Minister of Agriculture and CFIA to discover whether there is a way to continue mobile canning or whether we will need to develop more permanent set-ups."

Canned meat has become a symbol of MCC's commitment to humanitarian aid around the world. MCC has sponsored meat canning events in the

United States since the 1940s and, in 1997, Canada held its first MCC canning event. Each year, the mobile canner makes 37 stops across North America, where volunteers work together to produce a half-million tins of beef, pork and turkey. The meat provides much-needed protein for pregnant and nursing women, children and the elderly in countries dealing with economic uncertainty and war. — MCC Canada release by **Tara Tharayil**

Bacino Brdo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Returning refugees given seed, fertilizer

Last fall, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) purchased 14 tons of seeds and fertilizer, and trucked them to Bacino Brdo, a village that was devastated by the Yugoslav civil war. Through Church World Service and Merhamet (a Muslim aid organization), MCC gave 100 kilograms of wheat and an equal amount of fertilizer for the fall planting season to 140 families.

Following the harvest in summer 2005, the families have agreed to donate half their yield to Merhamet's soup kitchens and to keep half for the following planting season. The vegetables and wheat will be used to feed people, regardless of their religious or ethnic background.

Even before the supplies were distributed, the feeling of pride among the seed recipients was clear.

"Finally, we will produce and be able to help other people with our harvest in the

spring," said Hava Gulic, a grandmother who fled Bacino Brdo during the war.

Years of war divided communities and eventually led to the downfall of Yugoslavia. For more than 10 years, many of the villagers of Bacino Brdo lived far from their homes, relying heavily on aid agencies and waiting for the chance to return to a way of life that puts them in charge of their future.

MCC and its partners are providing families the chance to "earn our bread with our own hands," says Gulic, adding, "It is time for us to live with dignity again."

—MCC report by **Tara Tharayil**



Hava Gulic awaits the distribution of wheat and fertilizer with her two grandchildren in the village of Bacino Brdo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. This family and many others in Bacino Brdo fled their homes during the Yugoslav civil war.

MCC photo by Dzevad Avdagic

Winnipeg

MC Canada works on vision, finances

Mennonite Church Canada's Leadership Assembly held at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, March 3-5, provided an opportunity for the General Board and boards of all three church councils to meet together for reporting and decision-making.

The General Board approved the national church's 2005 budget, which slightly lowered spending from the previous year, prepared for the upcoming assembly in Charlotte and approved a new statement of identity and purpose to be considered by delegates at the Charlotte assembly.

A new body, tentatively called the Faith and Life Commission, was also proposed. As presented, this five-person group will help "discern direction on issues of theology, ethics, polity and practice and to facilitate, create and distribute resources for study and guidance to the church." This idea is expected to be presented

to assembly delegates for consideration this summer.

Council work was characterized by creativity and lots of hard work in the midst of ongoing budget constraints.

Formation Council, chaired by Sue Steiner, began with a meditation on the "significance of the insignificant" by Rudy Franz. Our culture celebrates big things, he said, but Jesus calls us to give what we have—like the woman

with two coins—which may seem miniscule but it can make a big difference.

Issues discussed included the need to make the Lenten and Advent resources more applicable for use in large church settings and the need to produce and market top-notch resources, such as Sing the Journey hymnal supplement and the Gather

Continued on page 12



Photo by Leona Dueck Penner

Formation Council members and staff met at last month's Leadership Assembly in Winnipeg. Pictured from left to right: Dave Bergen, Sue Steiner (council chair), Elsie Rempel and Don Rempel Boschman.

Leaders consider congregational membership changes

Church moderators, executives and conference ministers from across Canada discussed membership and inter-church relationships, and shared their experiences during meetings last month at the Mennonite Church Canada Leadership Assembly here.

Membership was a major point of discussion. Current MC Canada bylaws make national church membership automatic if a church becomes a member of its area conference.

In February, MC British Columbia delegate passed a resolution asking the MCBC executive to pursue the possibility of making the temporary "Provincially Active Only" status permanent (see March 21 issue, page 21). However, the national church membership question has also arisen elsewhere.

"I don't think this is just a B.C.

issue. We are facing this in Alberta," said Alberta moderator Marguerite Jack. "I anticipate this will happen here and there in other conferences."

The general sentiment among the group was that the national church should find ways to make membership more flexible. There was support for making this a discussion item for delegates at this summer's national church assembly.

"Our current model forces [churches] out before they have a chance to work it out" said Ken Bechtel, Saskatchewan Conference minister. "This is the thing that puts extra pressure on the system. I'm not sure we are handling it well. I wish we had flexibility that would take the pressure off and allow for future flexibility."

Edgar Rempel, executive director of MC Manitoba, shared that church's recent decision to add an affiliate church membership status as a way of broadening who can participate.

Participants identified how graduated membership would affect participation in

Mennonite Church Canada ministries such as its Witness workers, pastor pension and benefits plans, Sunday school and worship resources, denominational and government relationships, and other national church programs, if it was adopted.

Issues of what the national church should be doing versus what should be areas of area church responsibility were also significant topics of conversation. A repeated point from several leaders was that different relationships need to recognize the differences between regions and churches. Smaller area churches stressed their greater need for MC Canada support in areas of Christian education and worship materials.

Each area church also shared with the others their joys and concerns from the past year and each was prayed for in turn by another area church at the end of their reports.

—**Timothy Dyck**

Leadership *From page 11*

Round Sunday school curriculum—with limited funding.

Elsie Rempel, Formation staff member, just returned from meetings on the Gather Round material in the U.S. "There's lots of really good work that's been done," she said. "It's a good reflection of a missional understanding of church and theology." The curriculum includes a piece on "understanding Canadians" by Rempel.

'It's a good reflection of a missional understanding of church and theology.'

Some discussion took place around the development of a clear educational vision for Mennonite Church Canada. A fall event is anticipated which will bring together school and area conference education representatives to explore ways to strengthen the relationship of church and school, support the leadership development role of our schools, and to encourage an enhanced level of partnership.

The Formation Council also engaged in an animated conversation with Sven Eriksson, denominational minister, touching on issues such as revising the pastor/congregational relationship packet, the importance of listening, providing support for retired pastors and identifying what kind of pastors are needed.

Chaired by Willard Metzger, Witness Council spent time prioritizing International Ministries locations and discussing a regular tri-yearly review of the Congregational Partnership Program.

Janet Plenert, International Ministries director, noted that feedback from the review indicates the constituency is "pleased that we're visible and would like more visibility, but they also recognize that we're at our capacity." The key thing, said council members, is the "multiplication effect," best accomplished through the training and nurture of local facilitators within congregations, rather just depending on staff.

Plenert noted that the most significant thing staff did last fall was to take the list of council priorities and

apply them to ministries in all 39 countries, trying to find an intersection of how programs match priorities.

Kathy Fast, executive assistant and National Ministries coordinator, highlighted the importance of "being aware of the waters in which we swim" in Canada. She wondered if members know that Canada's native population is now nearly a million, but that less than 2 percent of them attend church. She also noted that, with the high number of immigrants coming to Canada, a great opportunity exists in

welcoming them into faith in Christ and MC Canada churches.

Council expressed gratitude and appreciation for work of Walter Franz, Native Ministry director, who is retiring this summer, thanking him for many years of passionate and dedicated service.

Support Services Council (SSC) spent time talking with Mennonite

Foundation of Canada and Canadian Mennonite staff and board representatives about how to strengthen partnerships and previewed "Healing and Hope in a World of Witness," a creative new fundraising initiative which "tells the story MC Canada ministry in a new way." The package includes posters for church foyers highlighting areas of ministry, a "gift-giving catalogue" that makes ministry opportunities more accessible, and "a generosity report" that celebrates relationships with congregations, area conferences and other ministry partners.

"This is an exciting, dynamic strategy," concluded SSC chair Louie Sawatzky. "It has tremendous potential!"

At the concluding plenary session, Esther Peters, vice-moderator, echoed the thoughts of many when she said she found the meetings "incredibly exciting. It was tremendous working together, both in plenary and in smaller groups. There was such a wonderful spirit."

—**Leona Dueck Penner** with additional reporting by **Timothy Dyck**

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Winnipeg

CMU interns thank Women in Mission for support

A highlight of this year's Canadian Women in Mission (CWM) annual meeting—held in conjunction with the Mennonite Church Canada Leadership Assembly in early March—was a series of reports from Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) students about their internships made possible by CWM's Service and Internship Program.

Christina Plett spent a term in Chicago with DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection), Jessica Klassen worked for the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers in Edmonton, and Betina Kliewer was in the Philippines for seven months working in a community development project. All of them spoke of how much they learned from the people they worked with and how their experiences continue to impact their career choices. "This opportunity helped me a lot," Plett told the CWM delegates.

"For this I'd like to thank you." Her words were echoed by the other two.

Besides funding the internships, CWM sponsored six women studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) through its Spiritual Growth Assistance Fund, and continued to contribute financially to the Botswana AIDS Counselling Centre and to the publication of Timbrel and its Bible Study Guides.

Erna Neufeldt, president-elect (who will take over from Dodie Lepp at the bi-national assembly in Charlotte in July), led the visioning process. She was pleased with the decisions made, noting that CWM wants to "celebrate women at all ages and generations within the

church." Another goal, she said, is to "nurture one another, valuing the wholeness of ourselves and the people around us within the church, our communities and at work."

Neufeldt said she and the other more experienced executive board members are "very thrilled" with the younger women who are now part of the executive. "They bring new enthusiasm, new ideas, creativity and, let's face it, new energy!"

CWM wants to 'celebrate women at all ages and generations within the church.'

Ruth Jantzi is the new CWM secretary-treasurer, joining four new provincial presidents: Betty Anne Hildebrand, Manitoba; Shirley Redekop, Ontario; Evelyn Buhr, Alberta, who will take over from Beth Moyer in May; and Esther Patkau, Saskatchewan, who resumed her former role for the "time being" after Tina Williams stepped down due to health reasons. Only Veronica Thiessen, British Columbia, will have more than one year of experience on the executive.

Budget-wise, Lepp reported that "probably for the first time ever" CWM did not actually receive enough income to meet its budget of \$42,000; donations totalled \$40,587, leaving a balance of \$1,413. However, expenses were also less than expected, which meant that, in fact, CWM had an excess of receipts over disbursements of \$5,672 and didn't have to dip into reserves to cover the shortfall.

Lepp added that the executive is working hard at streamlining accounting procedures, especially since CWM also receives a large amount in designated funds each year, mostly for overseas projects. This year, those funds totalled \$37,554. These are forwarded directly to Mennonite Church Canada for receiving purposes, since CWM doesn't have charitable organization status.

—**Leona Dueck Penner**



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Vancouver

Mennonite housing society turns 20

More Than a Roof Mennonite Housing Society (MTR) marked its 20th anniversary by launching the More Than a Roof Housing Foundation late last month at the Roundhouse Community Centre, Vancouver. The foundation was established to address urban poverty and homelessness.

According to Lorne Epp, the society's executive director, the foundation board plans to use its 20 years of expertise in business, entrepreneurship and philanthropy to raise \$500,000 this year as seed capital for its first urban homeless housing initiative.

"The alarming trend of increased homelessness, combined with the pressures of hosting the Olympics [in 2010], makes this a matter of considerable urgency for all," Epp said.

In attendance was guest speaker Lorne Mayencourt, Member of the B.C.

Legislative Assembly, who congratulated More Than a Roof for its significant contribution to ending poverty and helping those at risk of homelessness. Mayencourt also announced a goal of creating stable housing for 13,200 people in the City of Vancouver over the next six years.

"Our city can be recognized as making the most progressive efforts in housing for the poor, homeless and disenfranchised by the time the Olympics has come and gone," said Mayencourt, who was to begin meetings with housing groups the first week of March.

More Than a Roof Housing Society has been working to alleviate poverty and homelessness in British Columbia for two decades. The society has a staff of 23 dedicated employees with a variety of skills, talents and expertise. The annual operating budget of More Than A Roof is approximately \$4



Lorne Mayencourt, MLA, presents More Than a Roof Housing Society co-chairs Patti Penner and Helmut Lemke their certificate for the newly launched housing foundation.

million and, currently, the society manages assets of just under \$20 million through six facilities in the Lower Mainland and Prince George. —More Than a Roof release

Saskatchewan

Pastors want more local stories

Spending a week in Saskatchewan during his fourth Listening Tour since becoming editor of *Canadian Mennonite*, Tim Dyck met separately with two groups of Saskatchewan pastors—one in Rosthern and one in Saskatoon—to hear from church leaders on the direction they want the publication to go.

Eight pastors, including those from Warman, Hanley and North Battleford, sat together over a bag lunch on Feb. 24 at Bethany Manor in Saskatoon to offer Dyck their ideas and concerns for the future of the magazine.

After an introduction detailing how he came to *Canadian Mennonite*, Dyck then asked for comments from the group around the table. "There are a great many things around this country that you folks are seeing," he said. "We can share these things with each other."

More local stories are needed in the magazine, they said, a suggestion that has been repeated often as Dyck has

travelled through British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba.

Several pastors commented on the recent peace articles. Audrey Mierau Bechtel, chaplain, reminded Dyck to spend time with the youth as he entertained ideas for the paper. "We should be listening to the students at RJC too," she said.

The idea of using the magazine to connect people in Saskatchewan brought forth a fair bit of discussion.

"Can our provincial issues and discussions be covered in *Canadian Mennonite*?" queried Eric Olfert. Would the rest of Canada want to read about that? he wondered.

There could be inserts put in just for Saskatchewan Mennonites, responded Dyck. Or a small notice on the cover could announce to people in this province about special articles in the magazine that would help clarify the discussion around a certain topic that MC Sask is dealing with.

Many people, said Dyck, have made comments about the Letters section. That is always an area of concern and sometimes confusion, he said, noting that it is interesting that letters to the editor in the *Star Phoenix* are always understood to be separate from the views of the editorial staff. Just because someone writes it, doesn't mean the staff agrees with it, he said, acknowledging, though, that readers of a church publication often feel differently. "We need to use the 'letter space' with care," he admitted.

Readers of the magazine enjoy when someone submits a sermon they heard their pastor deliver, Dyck said, adding that sermons fit well in the Faith and Life section and articles on how to live the Christian walk are always needed. "This has to be a [magazine] for everyone," Dyck concluded.

—Karin Fehderau

The idea of using the magazine to connect people in Saskatchewan brought forth a fair bit of discussion.

Kitchener, Ont.

Buhrs receive humanitarian award

Martin and Pauline Buhr received the Founding Fathers Humanitarian Award at a luncheon reception held by the Catholic Family Counselling Centre in Kitchener on March 3. The award recognizes humanitarian service to society through actions that have helped improve the welfare of humankind. Award winners exemplify the commitment to the welfare of individuals, children, families and society that distinguished the Catholic Family Counselling Centre's founders—Father Thomas Brennan and Father Hubert Gehl.

Jim Hallman, the counselling centre's president, said: "This award was almost tailor-made for Martin and Pauline."

In 1961, Pauline became a volunteer with Mennonite Central Committee. She served at the National Institute of Health as well as with an integrated MCC volunteer group in Atlanta, Ga., working for a time with the late Martin Luther King Jr. at the headquarters of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Married in 1964, the Buhrs continued together on a journey in the field of community development and social service. Martin, who learned the virtues of caring and generosity as a child from his parents, received an MSW from Wilfrid Laurier University and was employed by the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services before he became executive director of House of Friendship for the next 20 years.

During this time, Pauline served as secretary at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church. She also served as secretary in the House of Friendship offices from 1988-1998.

In their retirement, the Buhrs participated in several short-term

voluntary service assignments in Taiwan (where Martin had served in his youth), Georgia and New Hampshire.

In 2001, Martin joined an MCC Ontario working group exploring the need for affordable housing. Since then he has been president of MennoHomes

Inc., a non-profit charitable organization providing housing to households of low and modest incomes. Pauline assists him in the running of the MennoHomes office.

In his tribute to the Buhrs, Rick Cober

Bauman (representing MCC Ontario and MennoHomes) said, "Look at these two. Beneath the veneer of civilization, they are actually rule breakers!" One of the rules they broke, Bauman said, was: "To make things happen, you have to push people out of the way." Quite to the contrary, Martin and Pauline Buhr have drawn people in as

'Martin and Pauline Buhr have drawn people in as they have done their work.'



Photo by Maurice Martin

Martin and Pauline Buhr received the Founding Fathers Humanitarian Award at a luncheon reception held by the Catholic Family Counselling Centre in Kitchener on March 3.

they have done their work."

In his response Martin said, "Pauline and I have worked and volunteered together for most of our married life, so thanks for making this a 'couple' event." Paraphrasing a quote by the winning coach of this year's Super Bowl, he encouraged those present, "May you continue to climb any mountain you encounter."

—**Maurice Martin**

St. Catharines, Ont.

JoinHands provides renovation grant

Joy was evident on Feb. 27 when Lao Christian Fellowship gathered to celebrate God's generosity. A JoinHands grant of \$13,000 was gratefully accepted toward renovation costs in their meeting place in St. Catharines. This assistance is a practical symbol of our interdependence as congregations within Mennonite Church Canada.

Pastor Kuaying Teng led in worship and prayer, and a young adult worship band and women's choir led in music in both English and Laotian. Rebecca Yoder Neufeld delivered the gift on behalf of Marvin Baergen, coordinator of Mennonite Church Canada's JoinHands program; she also offered a

blessing for those who made it possible, and presented the morning's Biblical reflection.

"JoinHands donors can feel encouraged that to give is not to lose, but to sow seed," said Neufeld. "The multiplying of that seed is evident in the maturity and ministries of Lao Christian Fellowship."

Neufeld also thanked the Lao congregation for the ways they have given of their gifts to enrich the wider Mennonite Church. Among those gifts was the delicious spread of Laotian food enjoyed by all after the service.

JoinHands gives financial assistance to new churches seeking to build or purchase their first, permanent meeting house. Since 1985, JoinHands has provided grants in excess of \$1 million to 40 congregations in Canada, the U.S. and overseas.

Carman, Man.

Sales soar at refurbished thrift shop

More than \$1 million has been raised by the Carman MCC Thrift Store in its 30 years of operation.

“And that’s all by nickel and diming it,” said Caroline Elias, Carman store president. During this time, the small community has suffered some economic hard times, but the thrift shop has seen only steady growth. At the end of November, it moved into a new facility, which increased the store’s size by 2,000 square feet.

The expansion of the Carman store, part of a network of 108 shops across North America (58 of which are in Canada), presented a prime opportunity for implementing the new mission-based marketing plan that MCC hopes to introduce in all of its stores, explained Judy Dyck, Canadian coordinator for MCC Thrift Shops.

“Judy was thrilled with the store space and we were overwhelmed,” said Elias. “She encouraged us to spend; to do it right the first time. We probably wouldn’t have purchased brand

The library at the new Carman MCC Thrift Store has proved to be popular with shoppers.

new hardware. We would have just kept using what comes through the thrift store.”

For several volunteers, this was a difficult change, being accustomed to using only donated goods with all proceeds going directly to MCC, explained Elias as she offered tea from a salvaged kettle that took longer than the interview to heat up.

“Both Paul Friesen, MCC Manitoba Thrift Store coordinator, and Judy guaranteed us that if we changed the way the store operated, spent some money, and priced and carried out new merchandise every day, instead of once a week, our sales would increase,” said Elias. “This is proving to be true.”

Sales have increased steadily over the past four months since the changes were made—in stark contrast to the larger business community that,

in the same time period, suffered a 20 percent loss in income, largely due to big box stores opening in a neighbouring community.

With 2,000 square feet of additional space the new store looks inviting. The store displays the new signage that is one component of the mission-based marketing plan for all MCC shops, explained Dyck. This sign package helps to communicate the mission of MCC to volunteers, customers and donors. “Customers are pleased to discover ‘where in the world their purchase makes a difference,’” she said. New shelving, tasteful displays and spacious areas all help to give the store a fresh, new image that keeps bringing customers back.

One area of the new store that volunteers are particularly proud of is the library. A large corner—complete with carpet, couch, rocking chair and lamps—invites customers to pull a book off the shelf or a magazine from the rack and take a break from their shopping. It’s a quiet comfortable oasis.

“We get a lot of compliments,” said Elias. “We hear, ‘We have never seen a second-hand store like this.’”

The average age of the volunteers is 65. Getting more and younger volunteers remains a challenge, as it does across the country, where the median age of the current volunteer force for all the shops is 69.

“Strategies for recruiting the next generation continue to be developed,” said Dyck.

In Carman, youth groups and women’s groups from some of the churches help with rag cutting. In this community of approximately 3,000, volunteers come from over 10 different denominations.

“The store is breaking down barriers between people,” said Elias.

With an aging volunteer base, some of the changes are difficult to adjust to, said Elias. “We have to run our thrift shop more like a business now, rather than as a church organization.”

—Evelyn Rempel Petkau



Photos by Norm Wiebe

New signs and an additional 2,000 square feet of space make the new Carman MCC Thrift Store an inviting place to shop.

FOCUS

Elementary and Secondary Education

Langley C.S.S. students pack relief kits

Everybody wants the job of stomping on the bucket lid because it looks like the fun, easy part of the job. But once you've put four bath towels, soap, laundry detergent, toothbrushes and paste, and all the other items for a relief kit into the bucket, pounding that lid down is a lot harder than it looks.

Still, for a group of Grade 8 students from Langley Christian Secondary School, packing kits at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) warehouse in Abbotsford was an enjoyable way for them to put their faith into action as it connected them with people in Indonesia who are doing exactly the same thing.

In Indonesia, volunteers from three Indonesian Mennonite conferences have gathered to pack kits exactly like the ones the Langley students packed in B.C.

Volunteer Ani Widjaja feels strongly about the relief kit assembly. "This is something valuable I can do to feel connected with the people who are suffering from this disaster," she said.

Grade 8 teacher Charis Rempel



MCC B.C. photo

Students from Langley Christian Secondary School are pictured with some of the 75 relief kits they packed at the Mennonite Central Committee warehouse in Abbotsford, B.C. These kits will benefit tsunami victims in Indonesia.

added, "While we would have done a service project anyway, it is neat that we can be helping [tsunami survivors] with these kits. It connects students to current events and the kids enjoy it; they like hands-on stuff."

Students at Langley Christian Secondary School all participate in service projects at least four times a year as a way to help students see how they live

out their faith.

"It's as much about learning a servant attitude as it is doing the actual work," Rempel said. "It's getting to serve like Jesus did."

Supplies for the kits in B.C. were donated by church groups and individuals, just as they were in Indonesia. —MCC B.C. release by Angelika Dawson



It has been said that people don't remember days, they remember moments. The 21st annual Sweet Interlude held on March 12 at Menno Simons Christian School (MSCS) left attendees with many "Menno Moments" to remember. The event raised \$30,000, with about half of that coming from the cake auction. Attendees were also treated to musical entertainment by the Menno Singers, a musical group comprised of staff from the school. The first half of the group's program consisted of spiritual-style music, followed by performances of 1950s era music, with staff dressed in period costumes. They finished the evening off with a memorable performance of *Old Man River* from the musical *Showboat*.

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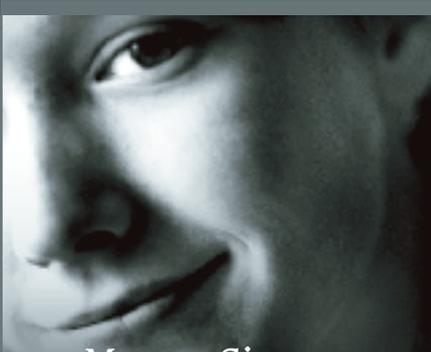
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Rosthern Junior College photo



Students from Rosthern Junior College got a taste of rural life in Guatemala this winter during a Work and Learn Trip to the Central American country. They are pictured on their way to church “Kekchi Menonita” style. Describing the scene, chaperone Charles Olfert writes, “Soon the road becomes a trail and the trail becomes a path.” Upon arrival at Iglesia Evangelica Menonita, though, they are greeted by the sounds of an electric worship band inside the church and children, chickens and turkeys outside.



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w i n d o w

Technology: How will it help us worship?

The printing press, the clock, air conditioning, microphones and projectors all have changed our patterns of worship. With video recording and playback, PowerPoint and the Internet, change continues.

Rebecca Slough, AMBS associate professor of worship and the arts, says the primary question congregations must consider is: "How will these tools serve the congregation's gathered worship?"

She asked that question more than once during a workshop on using technology in worship during AMBS Pastors Week at the end of January. Change has been with the Christian church from the beginning, she reminded participants. As we incorporate new resources into our worship, we need to use them wisely and be aware of what will be different because of them. "Whenever we introduce something new, it changes the way we act and the way we interact with others in the service," Rebecca said.

Using technology to project words or images for worship can achieve a variety of benefits for those who worship. Lyrics projected without the musical notes can show us the structure of a song. Still images, because they are different from the moving

images we are more used to, can quiet us and lead us into prayer and contemplation. Studying an image for a period of time—also different from our usual experience of viewing moving images or skimming print materials—can create a deeper response in us.

At the same time, we need to recognize that integrating these elements into our worship asks something different of us. We may need to learn new skills for how to read hymn texts. We may need to learn new ways of looking at images so that we can be open to the potential for contemplation or prayer.

As we bring these resources into our worship, we will make mistakes, Rebecca acknowledged. But we should continue to work with these resources and get feedback from the congregation about their experiences with these tools. "Evaluate, evaluate, evaluate," Rebecca urged.

To help with this feedback, Rebecca provided several discerning questions:

- What is the purpose of the visual work, either

text or image, in the service?

- How will worshippers engage the work? (read, contemplate, sing, etc)?
- What interpretive skills are needed for worshippers to understand the work?
- What worship action will this work aid or accomplish?
- How will worshippers respond to the work?

Most of all, we need to continually ask: How does this help us pray, sing, praise, listen or speak to God more fully? How does this serve the congregation's gathered worship? ●

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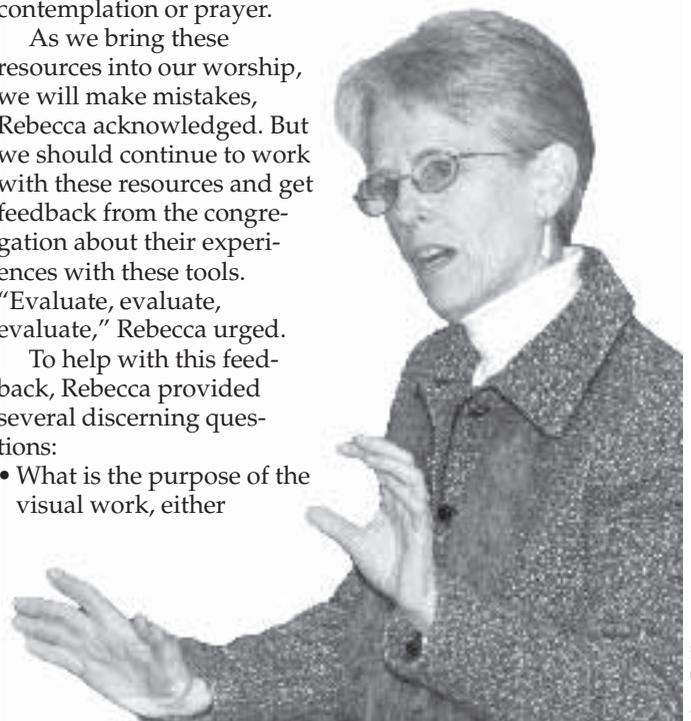
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Panorama



Mary E. Klassen

Resources for learning about worship available to everyone

Even if you are not a student at AMBS, you can use AMBS resources to learn about worship ... and you can benefit from the many ways in which learning about worship pervade the curriculum at AMBS.

Worship Planner workshops: One-day workshops at AMBS are available to all who help plan and lead worship. These events are scheduled regularly each year for the seasons of Advent and Lent. The entire range of worship planning—prayers, drama, oral interpretation of scripture, preaching, music, visual elements and symbols—is included.

A Worship Planner for Ordinary Time is planned for August 6, 2005.

AMBS degree programs and courses: Students pursuing five of seven degrees offered by AMBS are required to take a foundational course in worship and preaching. All programs that prepare people for pastoral ministry, for pastoral counseling, for youth ministry and for mission and evangelism require this basic course. Only students in the programs that prepare them for further academic study or teaching are exempt from this requirement.

In addition to the basic requirement, AMBS offers a wide variety of worship courses, including Celebrating the Christian Year, Worship and Mission, Hymn and Song Leading, Drama in Worship, Advanced Preaching, Communion and many more.

Master of Arts in Christian Formation focus in worship: AMBS offers a focus specifically on worship in the two-year Master of Arts in Christian Formation. This program of study prepares people to work on a pastoral team in a congregation or in a conference or retreat setting where the main assignment is to plan and lead worship.

Undergraduate distance education: Students in Pastoral Studies Distance Education (PSDE) and in

Journey: A Conference-based Leadership Development Program, both undergraduate programs for ministry preparation, take one unit of study, called "Salt and Light: Preaching, Worship, Evangelism." This unit, one of five in the program, helps students learn about planning and leading worship. ●

The PSDE program and the worship planner events are coordinated by the AMBS Church Leadership Center.



John Rempel, assistant professor of theology and Anabaptist studies, taught the course, History of Christian Worship, during the fall semester. John has published several books on worship, including *The Lord's Supper in Anabaptism* (Herald Press, 1993), and he served on the worship committee for *Hymnal: A Worship Book*.



Laurie Oswald and Homare Miyazaki lead singing in a summer class at AMBS that focused on how rituals can help us worship.

I learned how important rituals and symbols are to shaping full-bodied worship and rich congregational life. I also got in touch with how much I and other Mennonites are starved for rituals and symbols. We are a "word" tradition but are bringing balance to our respect for scripture by enflashing those words in sounds, sights, tastes and movements.

I am news service director for Mennonite Church USA and serve as a chapel committee member in the denomination's Executive Leadership offices in Newton, Kan. I have gleaned understandings and practices from the class that help shape my input on the committee.

— Laurie Oswald, participant in summer class, *Celebrating Christian Ritual in Worship*



Worship nourishes our souls just as food nourishes our bodies, Marlene Kropf says. So *Preparing Sunday Dinner* is the working title of the upcoming book on worship and preaching by Marlene, June Alliman Yoder and Rebecca Slough.

Emphasizing collaboration in preparing for worship

Worship and preaching happen together—preaching is always done in the context of worship and worship often includes a sermon or message. That is why three AMBS professors are developing a book that encourages collaboration in these important parts of congregational life.

June Alliman Yoder, professor of preaching and communication; Rebecca Slough, associate professor of music and the arts; and Marlene Kropf, associate professor in spiritual formation and worship, are developing this book in part from their experiences of team-teaching “Foundations of Worship and Preaching”

at AMBS. Worship and preaching are taught separately, June said, so this book is unusual in its approach. “It grows out of our roots as a community of interpreters.”

With the working title *Preparing Sunday Dinner*, it addresses steps of planning, preparing, and hosting worship, comparing them to steps in serving a meal. It emphasizes the value of worship planners and preachers working together to prepare for what the congregation will experience.

Herald Press will publish the book with a release date in late summer. ●

Prayer resource

Take Our Moments and Our Days: An Anabaptist Prayer Book provides a two-week cycle of morning and evening prayers with themes that are especially important in the Anabaptist tradition. See more at www.ambs.edu/prayerbook. Find informa-

tion there about how to purchase copies from the AMBS Cooperative Bookstore and Pandora Press in Kitchener, Ont.

The editorial committee is Arthur Paul Boers, Gloria Jost, Eleanor Kreider and John Rempel. ●

Call to Worship

We come together this morning
as people who have much in common:
we are God-formed, God-created, declared to be good.
We come together as people of God
to declare the praise of God.
In the middle of our morning tiredness and mountains
of questions,
in the middle of our unspoken expectations
and searching for hope,
we bring our lives to worship God.
The unchanging God who is the same
yesterday, today and forever.
Use the strength of your breath this morning
to praise God together with one voice.

Written by AMBS student Lois Siemens
for Pastors Week, January 2003.

Campaign Report



The Chapel of the Word, a small chapel for teaching worship and preaching converted from a classroom, is the first fully-funded project of the Next Generation campaign.

Next Generation, the fund-raising effort of AMBS, includes the following components. To find out more, see www.ambs.edu/NextGeneration.

	Goal	Received (US dollars)
		2.28.05
AMBS Fund	\$ 5,800,000	Ongoing
Library and campus center	6,300,000	\$3,790,169
Chapel renovation	1,100,000	22,400
Preaching laboratory	170,000	Fully funded
Church Leadership Center	2,800,000	2,310,209
Scholarships	2,330,000	1,595,005
Endowed faculty chairs	1,500,000	1,178,623
Other		467,853
Total	\$20,000,000	\$16,383,348 82%

In the earliest reference to Christians in official government records (A.D. 112), a Roman governor named Pliny described what he had learned about Christian devotion by interrogating believers who were on trial:

their entire guilt or error consisted in the fact that on a specified day [Sunday] before sunrise they were accustomed to gather and sing an antiphonal hymn to Christ as their god and to pledge themselves by an oath not to engage in any crime, but to abstain from all thievery, assault and adultery, not to break their word once they had given it, and not to refuse to pay their legal debts.

Even an opponent such as Pliny recognized that worship was at the center of Christian faith—and that worship made an impact on the ethical behavior of



believers.

We become like what we worship. Worship is about allegiance, about offering our lives to something or someone greater than ourselves.

Rituals of allegiance abound in our world. Our society bows to fluctuations of the stock market, genuflects to the latest technology, sacrifices for a prestigious education and glosses over injustice when we tell the story of our nation. With rituals to countless gods all around us, it is vital for Christians to have daily and weekly cycles of worship that reorient us to God and to the Lamb.

At AMBS in the past year there has been a burst of emphasis on worship. We

have seen a new Anabaptist daily office (*Take Our Moments and Our Days*), a new facility for classes in preaching and worship (Chapel of the Word) and a soon-to-be released book on worship leading (*Preparing Sunday Dinner*). Faculty and students have made regular chapels life-giving, and community prayer for joys and concerns has been common.

During this year of worship renewal at AMBS, students have organized construction of a Habitat for Humanity house. When followers of Jesus daily give devotion to the God made known in Jesus, we become like Christ—serving, building bridges and speaking good news of healing and hope.

If we were on trial for being Christians, would there be enough evidence to convict us, and would others see how worship changes our behavior?

— J. Nelson Kraybill

Panorama

"Not going as planned"

"If I look back at my high-school yearbook, I am certain I wouldn't find 'Most Likely to Attend Seminary' anywhere near my photo. I've learned, however, that just because things aren't going as planned, doesn't mean they aren't going as they should." Nekeisha Alexis-Baker, AMBS student and staff person with Mennonite Mission Network, tells some of the story of how she came to AMBS on the AMBS web site. Her story, and the stories of other students, can be found by

going to www.ambs.edu; select *Admissions and Financial Aid*, then *Student Stories*.

Teaching the Sunday School Lesson

Each quarter, AMBS offers a workshop for teachers of the Uniform Lesson series. Videos of these sessions, in both VHS and DVD formats are available. For more information, call the AMBS Church Leadership Center, 574.296.6207, or see the web site: www.ambs.edu; select *Church Leadership Center*, then *Continuing Education*.



The 1866 Wadsworth bell and a new bell tower were installed on campus December 16, 2004. The bell, which used to call people to worship in the first Mennonite institution of higher education in North America, now calls student and faculty to worship at AMBS.

Two AMBS graduates and one current student earned places in the 2004 John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest. **H. Jean Hess** (Master of Arts in Theological Studies 2004), Keith Benner, current Master of Divinity student, and **Tamara Sawatzky** (Master of Arts in Theological Studies 2002).

Linda Gehman Peachey (Master of Divinity 2004) is director of the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Women's Concerns Program.

Walter Bergen (Master of Divinity 1992) is vice president for advancement at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, B.C.

Kelly Carson (Master of Divinity 2000) was ordained Jan. 16 at Chicago Community Mennonite Church for chaplaincy work.

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The purpose of *AMBS Window* is to invite readers to call people to leadership ministries, and to provide ways for readers to become involved with AMBS through financial support, prayer support and student recruiting.

Editor and Designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos by Mary E. Klassen

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People & Events

Hanoi, Vietnam—Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai issued an executive order on Feb. 4 that may give Protestant Christians greater freedom. The instructions focus particularly on several hundred thousand Christian communities among the ethnic minorities, primarily in the inland mountainous areas. Several thousand of these Christians in a few dozen communities are related to the Vietnam Mennonite Church. Under the new directions, the prime minister said they should be “guided to practise their religion at home” and permitted to acquire a place in their village to meet when needed. If they meet as a congregation, the local authorities are to create favourable conditions for them to carry out their religious activities. In the highlands of central Vietnam, the statement calls on the government to recognize more congregations of the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (ECVN). When the ECVN was formally granted legal status in 2001, several hundred congregations of ethnic minority Christians were not recognized by the government and were subsequently closed. In the past two years about 20 congregations have been organized, and the ECVN has been authorized to open a seminary in the highlands.
—Mennonite World Conference release

Winnipeg—After more than 20 years of working in Haiti, Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) has concluded direct programming in the Caribbean country. “When our most recent contract with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) ended at the end of November, we closed the office and said goodbye to many long-term and dedicated staff in our Haiti office,” says

Kim Pityn, MEDA’s vice-president of International Operations. “This is due in large part to a change in focus for donor funding in Haiti towards relief and community [not economic] development.” A new indigenous agency is poised to continue working in the country, as some of the core managers and staff of MEDA are launching a local non-profit called Foundation Action for Economic Development, and a for-profit entity called Action for Economic Development, Inc. “The new organizations will allow these individuals to continue their good work and to take advantage of the shift among some donors to work directly with local partners,” says Pityn. “MEDA is encouraged by this idea and will support the efforts of this group to realize that goal, and perhaps in the future we can work in partnership with these new organizations.”
—MEDA News Service

Winnipeg—For millions of people the world over, the story of Alemayehu Michael is an all too familiar one. The 46-year-old frontier farmer in Ethiopia and his family depend entirely on agriculture. Year after year, in spite of hard work, life for them boils down to a struggle for sheer survival and a dependence on emergency aid. In a country like Ethiopia, where half the population suffers from moderate to severe malnutrition, one must become relentlessly self-reliant. Alemayehu’s experience and many others appear in the 2005 Bread for the World Institute’s Hunger Report—Strengthening Rural Communities—on the state of world hunger. MCC is a long-time sponsor of the Hunger Report, contributing \$6,200 annually for its production. An electronic copy of the 2005 Hunger Report can be downloaded for free at www.bread.org and a printed copy can be purchased at the same website.
—From MCC release

Transitions

Births/Adoptions

Bergen—to Charla and Dwain, Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a son, Noah David, Feb. 14.
Friesen—to Stephanie and Garry, Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Avery Leah, Jan. 23.
Gartner—to Tricia and Cameron, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, a son, Lucas Wieler, Nov. 9.
Grasmeyer—to Sheryl and Gerald, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, a son, Reuben Gerhard, Nov. 30.
Hildebrand—to Melanie and Curtis, Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., a daughter, Naomi Paige, Feb. 8.
Hildebrandt—adopted by Christine and Erv, Peace Mennonite, Richmond, B.C., a daughter, Naomi Xin, Feb. 16 (b. Oct. 2, 2003).
McLean—to Ruth and Lawrence, St. Catharines Mennonite, Ont., a daughter, Kaya Morgen, Feb. 11.
Neeb—to Lisa and James, Wellesley Mennonite, Ont., a son, Jackson James, March 16.
Poole—to Karena and Victor, Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., a son, Noah Ronald, Feb. 22.
Unrau—to Jennifer and Brian, Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont., a son, Owen James, Jan. 11.

Deaths

Epp—Alma, 81, Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask., Feb. 28.
Fehr—Cornie, 69, Emmaus Mennonite, Wymark, Sask., Feb. 10.
Hesse—Bonnie, 33, Emmaus Mennonite, Wymark, Sask., Feb. 21.
Kopp—Henry, 84, Grace Mennonite Church, St. Catharines, Ont., Feb. 22.
Kornelsen—Gertrude (Gerda), 80, Bethany Mennonite, Watrous, Sask., March 1.
Penner—Mabel Elida, 91, Zoar Mennonite, Waldheim, Sask., March 4.

Regier—Gertrude, 82, Bethany Mennonite, Watrous, Sask., Jan. 25.
Schwartzentruber—Grace, 74 (b. Sept. 5, 1930), Steinman Mennonite, Baden, Ont., March 9.
Schwartner—Franz, 92, St. Catharines Mennonite, Ont., March 6.
Thiessen—Maria, 93, First Mennonite, Strathmore, Alta., Jan. 1.
Wall—Edna, 72 (b. Oct. 22, 1932), Osler Mennonite, Sask., March 8.
Warkentin—John, 75, Bethel Mennonite, Langley, B.C., March 4.
Wieler—Hildegard (Heinrichs), 91, St. Catharines Mennonite, Ont., March 11.

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.

Witness intern returns to Canada for treatment

Please pray for healing and guidance for Janessa Otto, Mennonite Church Canada Witness intern from Waterloo, Ont., and a member of Steinmann Mennonite Church in St. Jacobs.

Janessa, who was serving at the Bethesda Health Clinic in Benin, Africa, recently began experiencing severe chest pains. After a series of tests, which resulted in her being admitted to the clinic for pain control, she was transferred to the University Hospital in Benin for assessment. It was determined there that she should return to Canada for further treatment at St. Mary’s Hospital in Kitchener, Ont.

Janessa, accompanied by her physician, Dr. Agboton, left Benin on Good Friday. Please pray for Janessa, her Witness co-workers, Nancy Frey and Bruce Yoder, who expedited her return to Canada, and for the doctors, family and community that surround her.

Mennonite Church Canada

April Equipping ready for churches

Highlights in this month's Equipping package for Mennonite Church Canada congregations include an announcement inviting guests to join a Learning Tour to China in the fall of 2005, an overview of a Charlotte 2005 discussion topic regarding the purpose of the church, and a Resource Update highlighting new and seasonal church resources available from the MC Canada Resource Centre. Stories about mission in Benin and Cuba, and English teaching opportunities at the Korea Anabaptist Centre are also noted. News from the Canadian Mennonite University bookstore, updates from publishers Herald Press and Faith & Life Resources, and a notice about the Jubilee Sunday school curriculum are included in the packet. Ask your church office for the whole package.

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Spring conference at Rockway

The 18th annual spring conference will be held April 22-23 at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener. The Friday evening session will begin at 7 p.m., an hour later than in previous years, and will include the presentation of the proposed framework for a re-structured conference. If the delegates approve in principle the proposed organization and staff structure, implementation will begin in the fall of 2005.

David Brubacher, Minister to Conference, has announced his resignation, effective October 2005. A search committee is working to find a team leader to develop the new

conference structure. Two other conference staff will be moving to pastoral ministry this summer. Mark Diller Harder, half-time minister of Student and Young Adult Ministries, will begin at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church in August, while Matthew Bailey-Dick, part-time minister of Peace and Justice Evangelism, has accepted a call from Erb Street Mennonite Church, Waterloo.

—**Barb Draper**

Bible quizzing correction

Because fewer teams are participating in quizzing this year, all matches will be held on April 9. No quiz finals will be held April 23.

Mennonite Church Manitoba

Women's Enrichment Day set for May 7

On May 7, Manitoba Women in Mission is inviting all women to the Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church for a day of worship and enrichment. "Secure in God's house," this year's theme for Women in Mission groups, will be the focus for this day. Worship will include inspirational singing led by Marilyn Houser Hamm. A memorial service led by Ruth Falk will give time for reflection and remembering.

Laura Unger, keynote speaker in the morning, will share from her experiences in Africa. From 1980-1983, she and her husband Eric worked with Mennonite Central Committee in Nigeria. From 1990-2004, they lived in Kenya, where Unger began a Bible Study Fellowship group with expatriate women. The group grew quickly and in more recent years Kenyan women were the predominant participants. Unger also worked in a Mother Theresa

Home in Nairobi, where she cared for infants and children with disabilities. "Kenya has been a big part of our lives and each of our children would like to go back," says Unger of their three young adult children.

After a brown bag lunch, stories of providing security and shelter within the context of God's love will be told by Bev Dyck from Eden Health Care Services, Brenda Stoesz from Pregnancy Crisis Centre, and a representative from the Genesis House women's shelter.

Registration for the day begins at 8:30 a.m. with the opening session at 9:30. All are welcome. No pre-registration is necessary. Participants should bring their own brown bag lunch and join in the fellowship and worship.

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

Urban, rural churches strengthen ties

Before MC Sask began talking about strengthening ties between urban and rural churches, three conference churches had already taken the initiative in their area. An annual exchange involving Grace Mennonite in Prince Albert, Horse Lake Mennonite in Duck Lake and Tiefengrund Mennonite in Laird was rumoured to have begun when one pastor jokingly said to another, "Call me in the coldest month of the year and we'll get together."

The most recent exchange, on March 6, was hosted by Horse Lake Mennonite during the morning service. Several choirs, including one combined choir, contributed.

"Because of the amazing acoustics at Horse Lake Mennonite, the men's group continued singing after the service," noted Ed Olfert, pastor of Grace Mennonite.

The building is a well-

preserved indication of what an early 1900s church looked like.

A history of the churches and the region was also given by Ray Funk from Grace Mennonite, along with a tribute to the life and ministry of Walter Jantzen, who has pastored in Horse Lake for many years.

The exchanges began five years ago when Olfert asked Lorne Epp, pastor of Tiefengrund, what Grace Mennonite could do to support the rural congregation of Tiefengrund during some difficult farming years. A friendship had formed between both men during pastor-peer group meetings and this seemed a natural outflow of the friendship.

As well, a number of other connecting points bring perspective to this relationship-building venture. Historically, two of the congregations worked together to support a missionary couple. Both Grace Mennonite and Tiefengrund Mennonite share in the ministry of Todd and Jeanette Hanson. And the Tiefengrund body helped to start worship services in Prince Albert and Horse Lake.

New study guide now available

Pastors and Sunday school teachers can take a deep breath and relax.

For a month of Sundays, you don't have to prepare any lessons. It's all been done for you! Just call the conference office in Saskatoon and ask for a copy of the Vibrant Rural Churches Discussion Guide.

The new four-session study guide created by Eric Olfert and Naomi Unger has been issued for MC Sask churches. Working from their findings in the Vibrant Rural Churches Project, the authors have developed a series of questions to make people think about

their church's potential in their community.

It also takes urban Sunday school or Bible study groups a step closer to understanding their rural neighbours. Topics like "Becoming intergenerational" and "Working interdenominationally" help group members get a grasp of rural church reality.

Both Olfert and Unger are available as resource people to kick-start the series aimed at adults. Options for groups to add singing to the sessions are included and background material for session leaders is also provided in each lesson.

Olfert can be reached at eric@mcsask.ca and Unger at dnunger@sasktel.net.

Mennonite Church Alberta

In Like a Lamb, Out Like a Lion

In typical Alberta spring fashion, thermometers reached 18 degrees in early March in some areas, causing many Albertans to dream of summer and venture out in hope of

purchasing seeds for the garden. The snow was gone from Edmonton, and in Calgary tulips were sprouting. The mild temperatures, however, came to a predictable end with Palm Sunday hosannas accompanied by rasping windshield scrapers, rustling parkas and crunching snow shovels. Gardeners got a good dose of Alberta realism, and sunrise services and Easter egg hunts are likely to be indoor events in 2005!

MC Alberta meets at Camp Valaqua

On March 18-19, MC Alberta hosted its annual All Committees Meetings at Camp Valaqua. Committee members from across the province gathered to work and process events of the February delegate sessions in their separate committees and as a large group.

Camp Valaqua decisions were highlighted by the engine failure of its ancient, well-used tractor. The camp is looking into whether it is finally time to purchase a newer model. The group decided to go ahead

with a loan to replace the leaking roof of the main lodge building. Fundraising efforts will be announced soon, with the goal of paying off the loan as quickly as possible. Summer staff hiring is well under way, with the camp still actively searching for applications for counsellors (especially female), out trip leaders and an assistant cook. Adult volunteers in the areas of first aid, kitchen help and maintenance are always appreciated.

The Congregational Life Committee is still exploring the possibility of a summer Daily Vacation Bible School troupe, but as of the meeting still only had one applicant. Application deadline for the troupe was March 31.

The Congregational Leadership Committee is looking forward to hosting the annual theological studies week at Camp Valaqua on May 30- June 3. John Neufeld will be coming out from Winnipeg to speak on marriage and family issues in the church.

The MC Alberta executive spent some time discussing the tabled motion that would see Calgary Inter-Mennonite

Church removed from membership within MC Alberta. Moderator Marguerite Jack expressed optimism that ongoing discussions will be constructive for all parties.

Mennonite Church British Columbia

Camp Squeah seeking summer staff

Camp Squeah is still looking for summer program staff. Young people 18 years of age and over are encouraged to consider a rewarding and challenging summer of service for God while nurturing kids. Interviews will be held April 21 at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church in Vancouver. For more information, contact Rob Tiessen at 800-380-2267 or visit www.squeah.com.

Unless otherwise credited, the articles in TheChurches pages were written by: Leona Dueck Penner (Mennonite Church Canada), Maurice Martin (Eastern Canada), Evelyn Rempel Petkau (Manitoba), Karin Fehderau (Saskatchewan), Donita Wiebe-Neufeld (Alberta), Angelika Dawson (B.C.). See page 2 for contact information.

The Company of 1000

As we pay attention to the pastoral scene in Mennonite Church Canada, it is clear that in the next 10 years a significant number of our pastors will be retiring. Will the supply of pastors keep up with the demand?

Calling young people and older people to pastoral leadership ministry is a high priority in every congregation. Many young people are feeling the stir of interest in the ministry call. For some years now Mennonite Church Canada has been encouraging these emerging pastoral leaders through a study reserve fund called the Company of 1000.

Melissa Miller of Charleswood Mennonite church in Winnipeg and a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary is a Company of 1000 beneficiary. In a recent letter she states:

"I am writing to say thank you to the donors of 'The Company of 1000.' I

have been a recipient of your generosity this year as I study at AMBS. I came to explore a call to congregational ministry. By studying at AMBS, I have been able to engage with Biblical and theological material, well-grounded in Anabaptism. I feel like I am at a feast, being fed bountiful riches offered by competent, thoughtful professors and stimulating conversations with other students."

The Company of 1000 is a voluntary network of special people who have committed themselves to the support and encouragement of men and women preparing themselves for pastoral and church-related ministries.

Through the Company of 1000, loans are granted on the basis of financial need and are made in consultation with area conference ministers. Loans are forgiven on the basis of service to the church, following the completion of studies. The Company's reserve fund distributed \$44,000 to a total of 38 students in 2004.

From our leaders

The Company of 1000 provides of wonderful opportunity to give your support to students who are preparing for pastoral and leadership ministry in Mennonite Church Canada.

Do you know someone who is interested in pursuing a pastoral ministry vocation? Or perhaps you, or someone you know, is interested in supporting students through the Company of 1000. In either case, I encourage you give someone a shoulder tap of encouragement.

God is at work in the world. Let's celebrate it!

Information and an application form are available on the Mennonite Church Canada web-site: www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/leadership/leaves/.

Sven Eriksson is Mennonite Church Canada's denominational minister



Employment opportunities

Mennonite Central Committee is looking for a

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

based in Akron, PA. The director leads a 14-member department that carries out much of the human resource function of MCC, including recruitment, screening, placement, training and care of workers; compensation and benefits administration; personnel policy development; and maintenance of personnel data.

Qualifications include experience in personnel management and administration; knowledge of human resources policies, practices and tools; and solid skills in writing, problem-solving and negotiation. Cross-cultural experience and prior Christian service preferred. Candidates from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and /or bilingual (Spanish/English) candidates, and women are encouraged to apply.

For a copy of the job description contact:

Prem Dick
E-mail: psd@mcc.org

Menno Homes of Sask. Inc., Waldheim, SK requires an

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director is responsible for leadership and management of staff who provide supportive living and employment services for developmentally challenged adults.

Inquiries and applications may be directed to:

Peter Guenther, Board Chair
323-310 Herold Road
Saskatoon, SK S7V 1H9
Phone: (306) 373-0314
E-mail: peter.guenther@sasktel.net

Applications must be received by April 15, 2005.



Bethany College, Hepburn SK, invites applications for one full-time position for the 2005-06 year:

ASSOCIATE DEAN OF STUDENTS (WOMEN)

Qualifications are:

- Commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour
- Commitment to the ministry of biblical education
- Anabaptist/evangelical theological perspective
- Effective teaching, administrative, and relational skills
- Motivation and leadership initiative
- Masters degree in related field

Specific qualifications:

- Director of Student Services (Women)
- Relevant experience and training

Submit resumes by May 15, 2005 to:

Academic Dean, Bethany College
Box 160, Hepburn, SK S0K 1Z0
Phone: (306) 947-2175; Fax: (306) 947-4229
E-mail: Rmccorkindale@bethany.sk.ca

PASTOR

Faith Mennonite Church, in Leamington, ON has an opening for a full time pastoral position. The position will be available in early summer 2005. Experience would definitely be considered an asset. Faith Mennonite is a church of about 200 members with many young families. We are located about 35 minutes from Windsor.

Any interested person/persons may ask for a church profile and/or apply at:

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
4489 King St. E
Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2
Attn: Muriel Bechtel
E-mail: Muriel@mcecc.on.ca

IDEAL SUMMER JOB in WORSHIP LEADING! Niagara United Mennonite Church, a large congregation in Niagara-on-the-Lake, is looking for a

SUMMER MUSIC WORSHIP LEADER

This paid position would include providing leadership for the praise and worship band and for children's worship, as well as participating in the choir (in early summer). The applicant should be willing to work with traditional and contemporary worship styles. We are looking for a devoted follower of Jesus with a passion for music in worship. The applicant should have experience in leading congregational worship.

This would be an ideal summer position for a student. Accommodation can be arranged if needed. Interested applicants, please contact:

Ruth Willms
1668 Concession #6, RR 2
Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0
E-mail: rmw1275@hotmail.com
Phone: (905) 984-2166



Bethany College, Hepburn SK, invites applications for one full-time position for the 2005-06 year:

DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS/ INSTRUCTOR

Qualifications are:

- Commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour
- Commitment to the ministry of biblical education
- Anabaptist/evangelical theological perspective
- Effective teaching, administrative, and relational skills
- Motivation and leadership initiative
- Masters degree in related field

Specific qualifications:

- Director of Missions/ Instructor in Missions and General Studies or Biblical Studies:
- Cross-cultural missions experience and training

Submit resumes by May 15, 2005 to:

Academic Dean, Bethany College
Box 160, Hepburn, SK S0K 1Z0
Phone: 306-947-2175; Fax: 306-947-4229
E-mail: Rmccorkindale@bethany.sk.ca

**FULL TIME ACCOUNTING CLERK /
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

We are growing and are looking for an experienced person to join our head office staff located in Cambridge, Ontario.

You will have successfully completed either a College certificate in accounting or a University level accounting degree and will have a proven track record in a computerized environment for accounting, payroll, accounts receivable and accounts payable. You will be skilled in using Word, WordPerfect, and Excel spreadsheets with excellent oral and written communication skills. You must be able to take direction and work well in a team environment.

If the above describes you, please send your resume along with a covering letter by Friday April 8, 2005 to:

**Finance Director
Fairview Mennonite Homes
515 Langs Drive, Cambridge, ON N3H 5E4**

Thank you for your interest, however, only qualified applicants will be contacted for an interview.

Woodland Christian High School invites applications for

TWO TEACHING POSITIONS

for the 2005-2006 school year. Teachers who are qualified to teach a combination from the following are encouraged to apply:

- Mathematics
- Science(Biology)
- Bible
- French
- Choral Music

Please address inquiries to:

**Gary VanArragon, Principal
E-mail: principal@woodland.on.ca**

Information about Woodland Christian High School is available on our website at www.woodland.on.ca

Zion Mennonite Church in Swift Current, Saskatchewan invites applications for the position of

HALF-TIME YOUTH PASTOR

Duties:

- 20 hours/week focused on Children and Youth ministries
- develop and coordinate a clubs program, junior and senior youth program
- work with volunteer sponsors

Qualifications:

- keen interest and ability in working with children and youth
- an Anabaptist/Mennonite expression of the Christian faith
- biblical education, youth ministry training and experience are an asset

Starting Date: end of August 2005

Application deadline: May 2, 2005

For additional information or to apply with three references, please send resume to:

**Search Committee
c/o Zion Mennonite Church
78 6th Ave. NE
Swift Current, SK S9H 2L7
Phone: (306) 773-4770; E-mail: zion@sasktel.net**

Niagara United Mennonite Church, a 600+ member congregation in Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON invites applications for a

**FULL-TIME ASSOCIATE PASTOR
of YOUTH and EDUCATION**

The applicant should be a devoted follower of Jesus with a passion for youth and young adults. The individual should be committed to anabaptist values and be willing to work as part of the ministry team. A minimum bachelor's degree is required. Relevant experience is preferred. The position is available in early summer 2005.

For additional information or to apply, please contact the chairperson of the search committee by May 15, 2005.

**Fred Teichgraf
E-mail: fteichgraf@wurthcanada.com
Phone: (905) 468-4798**



B.C. REGIONAL CORRESPONDENT

Canadian Mennonite is seeking a part-time (20% time) Regional Correspondent for the bi-weekly Mennonite periodical. Resumes will be considered starting April 30 and the position will be open until filled. Remuneration is salary plus expenses.

Responsibilities include filing bi-weekly reports and features on B.C.-based events; being a Canadian Mennonite contact person for B.C. churches and Mennonite organizations; assigning stories to others; and developing and assisting other writers in B.C.

Applicants should have strong knowledge of and a passion for the MC B.C. church and for Canadian Mennonite's ministry and mission to B.C. readers; strong listening, interviewing, news writing and photography skills; and an ability to work independently and as part of our cross-Canada staff. Come and serve the wider church in this exciting way!

Direct inquiries and applications to:

**Timothy Dyck, Editor and Publisher, Canadian Mennonite
490 Dutton Dr., Unit C5, Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7
Phone: 1-800-378-2524, x225
E-mail: editor@canadianmennonite.org**

For sale

Caskets and urns handmade in Winnipeg. Call Rick at (204) 228-4741 or visit www.thevillagecasketmaker.com

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

Wanted

Caregiver required for two toddlers in Thornhill (suburb just north of Toronto) starting late Aug. for minimum one year term. Salary commensurate with experience. Send resume lookingforcaregiver@yahoo.ca or S. Conrad, 1328 Northaven Dr. Mississauga, ON L4G 4E9

Room for rent in home with pets in West Toronto near TTC. \$375 monthly. For information please call (416) 252- 2824.

Calendar

British Columbia

April 22-24: Camp Squeah paddle-a-thon. For more information, call 800-380-2267.

May 3: Columbia Open 2005 at Chilliwack Golf & Country Club. Banquet and auction at Columbia Bible College.

May 15: Mennonite Concerto performed by Irmgard Baerg, at Central Heights MB Church, 3 p.m. Sponsored by Mennonite Historical Society of B.C.

Alberta

April 23: Alberta Rosthern Junior College fundraiser, Bears paw Community Centre, 7 p.m. Silent and live auctions,

entertainment, refreshments. Call Howard Enns at 403-547-3130 for tickets or to donate items.

April 28, 29, 30: Musical at Menno Simons Christian School, Calgary.

April 29-30: Alberta Women in Mission Enrichment Days at First Mennonite Church, Edmonton. Speakers: Tobia Veith, Susan Reynar. Topic: Living to make a difference. Call Evelyn Buhr at 780-439-3594.

May 6: Camp contact meeting, 8 p.m., at Camp Valaqua. Contact Don at 403-637-2510.

May 7: Camp Valaqua work day. Contact Jeff Schellenberg at 403-637-2510.

May 28, 29: Songfest in Rosemary. Theme: "Can't keep quiet."

May 30-June 2: Theological Studies Week at Camp Valaqua.

Lecturer John Neufeld on marriage and family.

June 4: Hike-a-thon to raise money for new lodge roof at Camp Valaqua. Call Don at 403-637-2510 for pledge forms.

June 5: MCC fundraiser "Glimmers of Hope." An evening with Stephen Lewis, UN Secretary General's special envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa. 4 p.m. MacEwan Hall, University of Calgary. Call MCC Alberta at 403-275-6935 for tickets.

June 10: Grade 9 graduation at Menno Simons Christian School, Calgary.

July 15-16: MCC Alberta Relief Sale in Sherwood Park, Edmonton. Call April Hauck at 403-275-3711 or Ernie Wiens at 780-431-2134 for more information.

Saskatchewan

April 22: MC Saskatchewan youth Hungerfest.

May 1: CAMS concert of Mennonite school choirs at Bethany College, Hepburn.

May 2-6: AMBS seminary course in Saskatoon with Karl Koop.

May 14-15: 40th anniversary celebration at Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon. RSVP by April 15 to 306-374-1364, e-mail:

h.b.neufeldt@sasktel.net.

May 15: Spring concert at Rosthern Junior College.

May 18: Prairie Falcon motorcycle rally—MCC fundraiser.

May 25: Work day at Rosthern Junior College.

June 10-11: MCC relief sale and auction in Saskatoon.

Mennonite Savings and Credit Union is a progressive faith-based financial institution with six full-service branches, more than \$500 million in assets under administration and serving a membership base of more than 15,000. Currently we are seeking two individuals for the position of

Financial Planner

Waterloo (full time); Kitchener (part time)

MSCU Financial Planners provide thorough investment counselling services to members, including expert counsel on a broad range of investment products and services. The successful candidates will also assist the Branch Manager in providing leadership, in the area of investments, to staff within the branch setting.

The ideal candidates would have:

- a Certified Financial Planner designation
- a Mutual Fund License
- a university or college degree and/or work-related experience; courses in business, finance and economics
- highly motivated and results-oriented approach
- strong analytical, administrative and interpersonal skills
- an awareness and understanding of the Amish, Brethren in Christ and Mennonite communities in Ontario
- a commitment to MSCU's co-operative philosophy and values

Interested persons should send their resume by April 8, 2005 to:

Pam McCartney, Human Resources Manager
1265 Strasburg Rd., Kitchener, ON N2R 1S6
tel: (519)772-5228 or 1-888-672-6728 • fax: (519)746-1045
email: pmccartney@mscu.com



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June 17-19: Youth Farm Bible Camp 40th anniversary celebrations.

June 23-25: Spring musical at Rosthern Junior College.

June 25-26: Camp Elim 60th anniversary celebrations.

June 26: Graduation at Rosthern Junior College.

Manitoba

April 23: Benefit concert with House of Doc for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder branch of MCC Manitoba at Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, 7:30 p.m.

April 23-24: Graduation weekend at Canadian Mennonite University: spring concert (23), convocation (24).

May 1: North Kildonan Mennonite Church Quartet spring concert, 7 p.m.

April 30: Young adult volleyball tournament at Mennonite Collegiate Institute, Gretna.

Registration begins at 10 a.m. Call Chris at 204-261-0033 to register.

May 7: Women's Enrichment Day at Altona Berghaler Mennonite Church, 8:30 a.m. Theme: "Secure in God's house." Bring a lunch.

May 20-22: Camp Moose Lake workathon.

May 24-28: Youth ministry course on sexuality with Roland Martinson at Canadian Mennonite University. Visit www.cmu.ca for details.

May 26: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Senior 2-4 spring concert, 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

May 27-29: Birding Retreat at Camp Moose Lake, with Adolf Ens and Fran Giesbrecht.

May 28, 29: Benefit concert for Mennonite Heritage Village Museum by Manitoba's Faith and Life Male Choir and Women's Chorus, 7:30 p.m. MCI, Gretna (28), Bethel

Mennonite Church, Winnipeg (29).

May 30- June 1: Plus 55 Retreat at Camp Moose Lake with speaker Jim Brown.

Theme: "Our story as part of God's story."

June 1: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Grade 7-Senior 1 spring concert, 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

June 6-8: Plus 55 Retreat at Camp Koinonia with speakers Jake Neufeld and Jake Harms. Theme: "Parables of Jesus."

June 6-10: Congregational Peacebuilding training with Nan Cressman and Dean Peachey at Canadian

Mennonite University. Contact Shirley Plett at 204-487-3300.

June 12: Eden Foundation, Big Brothers/Big Sisters charity golf tournament, Winkler.

June 17-18: MCC Festival and Relief Sale at Canadian Mennonite University campus.

June 25: Camp Koinonia golf tournament, Winkler Golf Club. Contact Matthew at 204-534-2504 for more information.

June 27: Westgate Mennonite Collegiate Senior 4 graduation at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.

Ontario

April 15: MCC meat canner fundraising dinner, Hamilton Mennonite Church, 5-7 p.m. Music by Hope Rising. Call Edgar Rogalski at 905-387-3952 or the church office at 905-528-3607.

April 16: Women of MCEC Enrichment Day at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock. Theme: God's calling. Speaker: Nancy Mathies. Call 519-356-2387 for more information.

April 17: Convocation at Conrad Grebel University College.

April 22-23: MCEC spring conference at Rockway Mennonite College, Kitchener.

April 23: MEDA banquet at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, with speakers Robert and Lisa Shuh.

April 25-29: MCC meat canning in Guelph. To volunteer call Earl J. Martin 519-664-2528.

Apr. 28-May 2: MCEC young adult trip to Chicago: The Blowing in the Windy City—From Inner City to Mega Church. Contact Mark Diller Harder at markd@mcec.on.ca form more information.

April 29-30: Engaged Workshop at Living Water Fellowship, New Hamburg. Call Delmar and Mary Bender at 519-656-2256.

April 29-30: Women's retreat at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp and Retreat Centre. Theme: "Remember who you are." Speaker: Wendy Janzen, St. Jacobs Mennonite. E-mail info@hiddenacres.ca for more information.

May 7: Riverdale Mennonite Church's 9th annual Goods and Services Auction in Millbank, 4-7 p.m. All proceeds for mission outreach.

May 7: Slalom Counselling Services fundraising breakfast and AGM at Steinmann Mennonite Church, 8:30 a.m. Call 519-886-9690 for tickets.

May 13-14: Winnipeg's House of Doc performs at the Church Theatre, St. Jacobs, 8 p.m. May 14: Springfest at Niagara United Menonite Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

May 15: Menno Singers perform Bach's Mass in B Minor at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Kitchener, 3 p.m.

May 16, 17: Seniors spring retreat at Hidden Acres Camp. Topic: Mercy and do justice. (Same program each day.)

May 25: MCEC retreat for retired and retirement age pastors and spouses at Hidden Acres, 9:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

May 28: Ontario Mennonite relief sale, New Hamburg. **May 28-June 2:** Father Elias Chacour, Palestinian peace-maker, priest and educator, is speaking in Kitchener-Waterloo, the GTA and St. Catharines areas.

May 29: Willowgrove Primary School, Stouffville, Ont., 10-year celebration and open house, 2-4 p.m.

CAMP VALAQUA, 1 hour NW of Calgary, is seeking a mature individual or couple to act as

INTERIM CAMP MANAGER

this June through August. This is a volunteer position with room and board included. Duties will include hosting rental groups, general maintenance, working with staff and summer volunteers, etc. If you are interested in being part of Valaqua's ministry for all three months or just a portion of this term, contact:

Paul Neufeldt
Phone: (780) 439-4376
E-mail: neufeldt@ualberta.ca

TEACHING OPPORTUNITY

in Blue Creek, Belize, Central America. Private Christian school, "Linda Vista School" now accepting applications for August 2005 to May 2006.

Please contact:

Abe Rempel: aberempelpilot@yahoo.ca or
John Krahn: johnmariankrahn@yahoo.com

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

Grade 2 (1.0)
Grade 5 (1.0)
Secondary Mandarin (1.0)
Teacher Librarian (1.0)
Guidance/Career Counsellor (1.0)

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

Walk with me hand-in-hand up the bell tower at St. Francis Xavier parish in the Cree community of Attawapiskat on the shores of James Bay. Our host is Father Vezina, priest and friend to many. As part of an MCC Ontario experiential cross-cultural learning experience called “Hands Together,” we are guests of Father Vezina and the community he serves.

A little out of breath as we climb the final ladder into the sunlight, we are given a new perspective on the beauty that surrounds us. In front of the church lies the frozen “ice road”—the Attawapiskat River—laid out like a carpet welcoming us to this isolated town of 1,700 members. Turn around and you see such identifiable land-

marks as the store, hospital, homes and schools.

Despite its small size, Attawapiskat First Nation does not have just one school, but a series of disconnected portables each housing an individual class. As one of a group of 11 Mennonites who travelled north by van, train and the ice road, I wonder how the teachers and students struggle to create some sense of community when they are isolated from each other. How are the more than 200 children and youths to be cradled and carried into adulthood with the educational tools they need to further their education? Why are there different standards for different communities?

How are we—as Canadians, northerners and Christians—to

reconcile the beauty we see from the church tower with the struggles that continue to be faced on the ground, struggles that we can’t even hear from up here?

We confess, God, that our world has not changed and we ask forgiveness when we are blinded by our own agendas and pious attitudes. Open our eyes to the realities of our world and open our hearts to the life-giving Spirit of Christ. Amen.

—From a reflection by **Lyndsay Mollins Koene**

The author is the regional program coordinator for MCC Ontario in Timmins.

Hands Together “**ta-ko-nee-kae-ween**”

MCC Ontario photo



Father Vezina, priest of the St. Francis Xavier parish in Attawapiskat, gave members of MCC Ontario’s cross-cultural learning experience—“Hands Together”—a unique view of the James Bay community from the church’s bell tower.