

CANADIAN MENTORSHIP

June 14, 2010

Volume 14 Number 12

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around the world who are making
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EDITORIAL

Mission and identity under construction

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Not only is the younger generation, labelled “natives” in my last editorial, holding authority and institutions in less regard, the modality of leadership has also changed in the last half-century. This, too, represents a seismic shift in the perception of our mission and identity as a Mennonite culture.

Binational leadership for our mission and service from the 1950s forward was articulated and administered by very bright, multi-gifted personalities, such as Frank H. Epp, Harold S. Bender, Orie O. Miller, Peter J. Dyck and John Howard Yoder—iconic, bigger-than-life church statesmen who, with the force of their giant intellects and charismatic personalities, led the church in clearly redefining its Anabaptist theology and uniting the scattered Mennonite diaspora around common causes.

In retrospect, as their biographies have emerged, some of these leaders were shown to have had some serious character flaws, perhaps diminishing their legacies somewhat in the eyes of this generation.

Bender, for instance, who defined us better than most with his now famous “Anabaptist Vision,” also possessed a giant ego, according to his biographer, the late Al Keim, and ironically didn’t take kindly to the biting criticism of his brightest disciple, John Howard Yoder. Yoder,



leading a group of young theological rebels calling themselves the “Concern Group of Seven” in the early 1950s, was told by Bender, when challenged for his “Zwinglian tendency [defending the religious status quo],” that Yoder and his cohorts were “helping fringe men and movements who are beginning to open up vistas of individualistic action and constitute a disintegrating threat.”

Yoder, who went on to become our most high-profile biblical scholar and ethicist, best-known for his radical Christian pacifism, confessed to allegations of sexual misconduct several years before his death in 1997, submitting to the discipline of the Indiana-Michigan Conference of what is now Mennonite Church USA.

While these personal shortcomings should not detract from these leaders’ brilliant leadership, it has cast a shadow over them and the institutions they helped to shape. The younger generation of Mennonites, although theologically formed by the likes of Bender and Yoder, are not as awed by these institutions as were their elders.

Leadership, at the institutional level, appears to now have shifted from the force of personalities to the force of the corporate model—from the strong voices of a few to the multi-voices of many with specific gifts and expertise.

Those who lead our mission and service agencies—colleges and seminaries, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Christian Peacemaker Teams, and MC Canada Witness and Christian Formation—are no less dedicated than their high-profile predecessors, but are, well, much more low-profile.

This doesn’t mean that our mission and identity has changed substantially. It does mean that congregants, thinking there is the absence of a personal dynamic, find it harder to make a personal connection, and thus reach into their pockets with spontaneous giving and personal identification with the mission.

We, at the congregational level, should take the initiative in getting to know more intimately both the mission and leadership of these multi-voiced, multi-faced partners, and our institutional leaders should make a more compelling case for our common cause. Our mission and identity are one and the same.

Meet your board member

Carl DeGurse of Winnipeg, Man., represents Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service on the publica-



tion’s 12-member board. Currently an assignment editor for the *Winnipeg Free Press*, he has 30 years of experience at small and large newspapers as a reporter, columnist, editor and manager. He is a member of Douglas Mennonite Church, where he is currently a deacon and has taught Sunday school to teenagers for 15 years. Married to Lois Schmidt, they are the parents of three sons: Paul, 20; Thomas, 16; and James, 14. He can be reached at 204-632-7609 or by e-mail at: carl.degurse@freepress.mb.ca.

ABOUT THE COVER:

Pictured at the Buriram Refugee Camp in Thailand in 1979, Tak-Chhing Cheng with his daughters Lo Mey, far left, Lo Chiang, left, and Lo Sing, in his arms, along with his wife Khantry Cheng, background left, await their move to Canada through one of the original private refugee sponsorships arranged through Mennonite Central Committee Ontario. See ‘Stories to tell’ refugee feature beginning on page 4.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TAK-CHHING CHENG

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Mission statement: *Canadian Mennonite (CM)* is a bi-weekly Anabaptist/Mennonite-oriented periodical which seeks to promote covenantal relationships within the church (Hebrews 10:23-25). It provides channels for sharing accurate and fair information, faith profiles, inspirational/educational materials, and news and analyses of issues facing the church. In fulfilling its mission, the primary constituency of *CM* is the people and churches of Mennonite Church Canada and its five related area churches. *CM* also welcomes readers from the broader inter-Mennonite and inter-church scene. Editorial freedom is expressed through seeking and speaking the truth in love and by providing a balance of perspectives in news and commentary. *CM* will be a vehicle through which mutual accountability can be exercised within the community of believers; the paper also encourages its readers to have open hearts and minds in the process of discerning God's will.

Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching (Hebrews 10:23-25, NRSV).

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Stories to tell

MCC Ontario seeks to reconnect with sponsored refugees from years gone by

BY LAURA STEMP-MORLOCK
Mennonite Central Committee Ontario

'Every time someone left the house, whether it was Mamdoh going to work or Tabarak to school, I assumed I would never see them alive again.'
(Suad Saidam)

After welcoming us into her new home, Suad Saidam promptly excuses herself, re-emerging with ice-cold water bottles on a silver tray. In Arab cultures, guests are always served refreshments in this way, one of the many hallmarks of their unending hospitality.

Suad, her husband Mamdoh, and their four children, Tabarak, 12, Ali, 11, Assal, 10, and Yuseef, 6, have only been in Canada for four months, but they're working hard to make a life for themselves in Cambridge, Ont., having arrived in this country through Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario's refugee sponsorship program and the efforts of Wanner, Breslau and Preston Mennonite churches in southern Ontario.

The Saidams are quick to express their gratefulness and joy at their new lives in Canada, frequently punctuating their narratives with *el-Hamdallah* ("Praise be to God").

Translator Noha Abdul Ghaffar explains that the name of their refugee camp on the Iraq/Syria border, *Al Hol*, translates roughly as "the nightmare." The family spent five years there after fleeing their native Iraq, when violence erupted between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims.

Referring to that time, Suad explains, "Every time someone left the house, whether it was Mamdoh going to work or Tabarak to school, I assumed I would never see them alive again."

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MCC ONTARIO



Suad Saidam, right, explains to translator Noha Abdul Ghaffar how she feels about life in Canada.

The whole family witnessed scenes of torture, and Suad's cousin was killed because he was Sunni. When a classmate of Tabarak's was kidnapped and murdered because she, too, was Sunni, the Saidams decided they had had enough.

The family first tried to escape into Jordan, but they had no citizenship. Although both Suad and Mamdoh were born and raised in Iraq, as were their parents before them, their grandparents came to Iraq from Palestine, which made their entire family ineligible for citizenship. Jordan, not wanting to encourage Palestinian refugees, would not accept them. The family, along with several other Iraqi Palestinians, could do nothing but literally sit in the desert for two months with almost no resources.

Mamdoh explains that for the first two days they had no food or water, and they were worried about their children. The men built a circle with suitcases and used their coats as a roof to provide some

protection from the heat for the women and children. Finally, the United Nations brought rations, and eventually moved them to *Al Hol*.

With neither Iraq nor Syria willing to claim them, Palestinian Iraqi refugees are stranded on an isolated stretch of desert. This isolation had devastating effects for the Saidams, who lost a newborn daughter, Gazal, when they didn't have access to a hospital.

Adjusting to a new language and culture isn't easy. They struggle with loneliness, and Suad particularly misses her mother, who fled to Cyprus and is unwell. "Every time I speak to her she tells me she is afraid she will die before I can see her," Suad says. "I am trying very hard to find a sponsor for her, but it isn't easy."

Despite their troubles, Mamdoh says his greatest joy in Canada is how bright the future looks for his children. Suad agrees, and mentions the joy she finds in the people who have helped them.

Sponsored by the three Mennonite congregations, the Saidams appreciate that "the Mennonites are very respectful of us and our culture." Mamdoh says of the MCC Private Sponsorship Program, it is "the best way. At every step we have been taken care of and supported."

Christina Edmiston, a member of Wanner's sponsorship committee, feels strongly that the sponsorship program is a two-way street. "I absolutely do not think that this is just us giving to them," she says. "We have been so blessed from their friendship. They have taught us a lot about our priorities with regard to time, family, etc."

'Surely this was the work of God'

Johanna Dyck agrees with Edmiston's assessment. Her church, Kitchener Mennonite Brethren, Ont., sponsored the Avalos family from El Salvador in 1990. "We used to have potlucks, because that ensured there was something for the



Johanna Dyck welcomes Ana Rosibel Avalos at Pearson International Airport, Toronto, Ont., in 1990.

family to eat that was familiar,” she says, adding, “and, of course, that meant we got to eat their delicious food, too!”

Dyck recalls meeting Marina and Antonio Avalos, along with their children, Ricardo, Ana and Willmer, at the

airport when they arrived in March of 1990. “It was a very cold day, and they were all dressed for the tropical climate they had come from, with bare feet and sandals,” she says. “Fortunately, there were snow suits for them to change into. But their hotel room wasn’t ready, so we had to sit in a cold basement room with them until about 2 a.m.”

While they sat together, the family and their sponsors got acquainted. As it turned out, Antonio had become good friends with MCC workers in the refugee camp in El Salvador, where they lived for most of the 1980s. These MCC workers had suggested they find a Mennonite church to attend once they arrived in Canada. They were very moved that, of all the sponsors and new arrivals in this group, they had been matched with the only Mennonite church involved.

“Coincidence?” Dyck wonders.

“No, surely this was the work of God,”

A refugee helping refugees

Congolese immigrant now assists other newcomers to continue the work they did at home in Canada

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
WINNIPEG, MAN.

For Serge Kaptegain, the opening ceremonies for Ref-Nyota, a new business venture that promotes the skills and talents of refugees, was an answer to prayer. The event was held at Le Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain, Winnipeg, on April 23.

Kaptegain came as a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2005. Always a man dedicated to peace, Kaptegain, a young soft-spoken French teacher in a Congolese village, was trying to bring rival rebel groups together to dialogue with one another when he fell into the wrong hands.

Friends assisted him in his escape and he was hastily delivered to Winnipeg, with no time to inform his wife and two young children. Once in Winnipeg, the adjustments were many, not least of them being the courage to walk into Home Street Mennonite Church that

presented him with a sea of white faces. If it weren’t for the words “merciful peace” that he heard from the pulpit, he says he would have turned and left. But he wanted to hear more.

In 2006, Kaptegain told Dan Dyck of Mennonite Church Canada, “My country, my people, need this Mennonite message of peace.” He became the coordinator of Hand in Hand for Peace in the Congo, a local Congolese group working to raise awareness of a conflict in their country. At that time Dyck wrote, “His story has just begun.”

While he continues to teach French in Winnipeg, Kaptegain has never lost focus of the gospel message that promotes love, peace and reconciliation. He is involved with Save the Children in Congo and with War Child Canada, but for the past year most of his energy has gone into building Ref-Nyota.

“All the refugees of war who come to Canada have problems getting jobs that use their skills and talents,” says Kaptegain. “So far, the new business has worked mostly with refugees from Angola, the Congo and Sudan, but it is not just for refugees from those countries. There is no boundary to suffering.”

Ref-Nyota assists the refugee community to become fully engaged in the Canadian workforce by introducing their products, services and creative strengths to potential employers.

Kaptegain gave the example of one refugee who came to Winnipeg with his family. He was a tailor and a maker

she quickly adds.

Like most new Canadians, the Avalos family struggled with language. This provided a memorable time for Dyck, when Marina went into labour in the middle of the night. Dyck rushed to the house of their translator to take her to the hospital, but couldn't get a response with the doorbell or by knocking. She ended up climbing through the bushes to pound on the windows and yelled until she succeeded.

Over the past 20 years, the Avalos family has remained closely connected with Kitchener MB, and continues to express its deep appreciation to MCC and the congregation for all of their support. This has included the birth of a fifth child, and the arrival of Antonio's oldest daughter, who he had believed was dead.

Early refugee works hard to succeed

Family reunions are one of the greatest joys of the MCC private sponsorship

program.

Fleeing the Khmer Rouge, Lo Chiang Cheng's family came to Canada from Cambodia in 1979, when she was seven years old. The family—including her parents Tak Chhing Cheng and Khantry Chin, and two younger sisters, Lo Mey, 3, and Lo Sing, 1—were soon joined by Tak Chhing's uncle and his family, reuniting cousins that had grown up together as siblings. After that, Tak Chhing's sisters and brothers were sponsored in Ottawa, so the Chengs moved from Orillia, Ont., to be near them.

Coming as a child, Lo Chiang is the embodiment of new arrival Mamdoh's hopes for his children. With a master of business administration degree from Queen's University, Kingston, Ont., Lo Chiang works in management for the federal government.

"My parents viewed this as a second chance, and drilled it into us to work

hard, so we would never have to start from scratch again," Lo Chiang says.

Both parents led by example, with Tak Chhing eventually opening his own construction company.

Like Yuseef, the youngest member of the Saidam family, Lo Chiang was too young to remember her life in Cambodia before the Buriram Refugee Camp in Thailand, where her family spent two years. She remembers the challenges of life in the camp, though, particularly never having enough food.

She recalls with a laugh how, when anyone in Canada would give her or her sisters something to eat, they would hide it to save for later. When asked to reflect on her joys of growing up in Canada, she immediately exclaims, "Not being hungry! And feeling safe. Also, having a lot of support. The church [Christian Fellowship Chapel, Orillia, Ont.] was always there for us."

of cloth. He wanted to continue the work he was familiar with, but as it is with so many refugees, "the cultural differences, the language, the stress got in the way," says Kaptegain. Ref-Nyota, which means "refugee stars" in Swahili, helped establish "a network of stores to which he now sells his cloth. He is able to work with his wife at home," notes Kaptegain.

This new service has also helped musicians find venues where they can perform, enabled one woman to offer African cooking classes, provided legal assistance and helped with publicity for refugees. "There are 14 of us with different skills who are directly involved in Ref-Nyota," he says, "but indirectly we are more than that. It is amazing to see how the community has responded to this. The Canadian community has a big heart to help people."

Several years ago Kaptegain was able to save enough money to help his wife and children move to Germany while they waited for documents to immigrate to Canada. "We kept in touch on the phone and I visited them in Germany, but my wife got married there," he says. "It was very hard. Everything was ready, but I am learning to accept."

On March 18, Kaptegain became a Canadian citizen. He knows that he will never be able to return to the Congo, but that does not lessen the passion and concern he has for his people, including more than 500 families who have come to Winnipeg.

Kaptegain continues to attend Home Street

PHOTO BY RON LAMOUREAUX



Ref-Nyota president and CEO Serge Kaptegain and vendor Freddy Mahoungou, centre, are joined by Manitoba Liberal leader Jon Gerrard, left, and Ben Rempel, assistant deputy labour and immigration minister, right, at the grand opening of Winnipeg's new refugee centre on April 23.

Mennonite Church on an occasional basis. "Mennonites have a conviction of peace, but to belong to a particular religion, I avoid that," he says. "I have seen what religion was able to do and how it divides people. I belong to God. I'm a believer."

"Because of the evil I have seen people commit, I don't see God in people, but I try to see people through God's eyes," he says, adding, "I try to love because God is love. This continues to keep me strong."

When some local kids started bullying Lo Chiang and Lo Mey, the church immediately stepped in.

“One of the sponsors’ daughters started walking us to school and [the church] talked to the teachers,” she says.

Lo Chiang became close with another little girl, who remains a good friend, saying, “My sisters and I were much smaller than we should have been for our age, and I just remember her taking care of me, and protecting me.”

Hilda Gowanlock, one of the church sponsors, remembers just how malnourished the children were. “One night, while my husband took the parents to an ESL [English as a second language] class, I babysat the girls,” she says. “They were a little afraid, so I decided to lie on the bed with them to make them feel more secure. The baby was so emaciated she

couldn’t even sit up on her own. I was so worried that she wouldn’t make it. But she did!”

Seeking to reconnect with refugees

It was people such as the Chengs that brought the MCC sponsorship program into being in the first place. In the 1970s, images of the humanitarian crisis in Southeast Asia prompted an outcry that resulted in the sponsorship of hundreds of thousands of refugees to Europe, Australia and North America. In Canada, MCC signed an agreement with the federal government constituting the first ever Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program.

To this day, Canada is the only country in the world that allows private sponsorships. Churches, individuals and even small businesses have responded by the

thousands, sponsoring more than 50,000 refugees through MCC to date. With a number that large, it is important to remember that every one of these “refugees” is a person who has a life beyond their traumatic ordeals. They have their own hopes, dreams and memories, and each has a story to tell.

People often forget how much these new Canadians enrich and contribute to this country. That’s why MCC Ontario is seeking to re-connect with former refugees who have come through its sponsorship program, believing that having former refugees become more involved in the work of MCC Ontario will provide invaluable new insight for its programs, particularly the sponsorship program.

Reflecting on her involvement with the Avalos family, Dyck explains that her interest in sponsorship is the result

Inspired by ‘my second dad’

*Laotian refugee has photo selected
by National Geographic*

BY GLADYS TERICHOW
Mennonite Central Committee
DRAKE, SASK.

Inspired by Western Canada’s prairie landscape and the ever-changing light in the sky there, Chai Boupaphanh spends his leisure time exploring his surroundings through the lens of a camera. His most recent success is having a photograph that he entered in a contest selected for the *National Geographic* collection of photographs (see page 9).

“The timing was perfect, the beam of light looks like energy coming from two people in love,” he says as he reflects on the photo that captures intense rays of sunlight engulfing a couple on their wedding day. The photo was taken at the Jackfish Lodge Golf Course in North Battleford, Sask.

Boupaphanh’s interest in photography goes back to his childhood, when the late Wally Ewert, a man that Boupaphanh describes as “my second dad,” captured treasured memories of birthday parties, picnics and many other family events through photography. “Wally took a lot of pictures of our family,” recalls Boupaphanh,



Boupaphanh

adding, “He was a photographer and was always taking pictures.”

This was among many small and seemingly insignificant gestures of friendship that helped Boupaphanh, his parents and two younger brothers feel at home in Drake, a small rural village north of Regina. The refugee family from Laos was sponsored by North Star Mennonite Church, Drake, through the newly formed Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada private sponsorship program.

Boupaphanh, now an employee at Drake Meats, was 11 years old in 1980 when his family arrived in this village of fewer than 300 people on a blustery winter day in February.

“We felt we were living in the middle of nowhere,” says Boupaphanh, explaining that their sense of isolation markedly decreased the first Sunday they attended North Star Mennonite. “We went to church and saw 200 people in church. We realized then, there are people

of her own experience, having come to Canada from Russia with her mother in the 1920s, when she was five. This was at the same time that MCC was founded as a response to Mennonites in Russia and Ukraine who were suffering from persecution and famine. While most of MCC's work at the time involved material aid, it also helped settle thousands of these people in Canada and the U.S.

Seventy years later, Dyck "paid it forward," as her church helped to sponsor a family that came through the MCC private sponsorship program that came into being as a result of people like Lo Chiang Cheng and her family.

For more information, or to become involved, e-mail our.stories@mennonitecc.on.ca or call toll-free 1-800-313-6226. ❧



Tak-Chhing and Khantry Cheng at their 30th anniversary in Canada celebration, May 22, 2010.

living here."

It was through the church that the Boupaphanh family met Claire Ewert Fisher, now executive director of MCC Saskatchewan, her late husband Wally, their children and extended families.

"Claire and Wally had lived in Vietnam and could relate to the political situation that forced us to emigrate," Boupaphanh says. "We became very close. We became a family."

One of the first treasured memories of this friendship was of receiving the May 1979 issue of *National Geographic*, an issue that featured stories, photographs and a map of Saskatchewan.

"That's how I learned about Saskatchewan," he explains. Over the years, Wally gave him many more issues and they shared an enjoyment of admiring the high-quality photographs in the magazine.

In 1984, the Ewerts served as MCC workers in Thailand for four months and visited Boupaphanh's maternal grandmother and other relatives. "Wally took pictures of my mom's family. That was very special for our whole family," he says.

Boupaphanh's volunteer activities include taking photographs for the Open Door Society in Regina, an organization that supports newcomers to the province's capital city. A rewarding project was taking photographs for the 2007 public education calendar, "Dispelling the Myths," that shows the strength of newcomers and the contributions they make.

In 1991, the Boupaphanh family was part of the Ewert family's support network when Wally died unexpectedly

PHOTOS © BY CHAI BOUPHAPHANH



Taken in North Battleford, Sask., this photograph is Chai Boupaphanh's first for National Geographic. It's on display at thenationalgeographicstock.com.

from a heart attack. "They [the Boupaphanh family] received support when they needed it," says Claire, "and over the years they have supported us in ways we would not have imagined."

"Such a strong bond of friendship develops between people who care about each other that you indeed become one family," she says, adding, "We have felt that kind of support from them and they continue to treat us like family."

How to become a refugee sponsor

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario assists refugees who have suffered persecution, violence and human rights abuses to resettle in Canada through partnerships with churches and other constituencies.

In partnership with constituent churches, the refugee sponsorship program facilitates the process of refugee sponsorship to Canada. Churches or constituent groups commit to provide the sponsored family with housing, financial support for food, clothing, transportation and other materials needed for one year.

As refugees are resettled, they are given the gift of a new beginning.

Training opportunities and support are provided to the sponsoring churches throughout the stages of the process.

Sponsorship priorities include women at risk, large families and families with no links to Canada. Cases for resettlement are referred to MCC by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, MCC partners overseas, churches and families.

With the support of MCC, Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches can help to welcome refugees to Canada. By offering hospitality, you can be assured that the king will say to you, *"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me"* (Matthew 25:40).

For more information, contact Moses Moini at mosesm@mennonitecc.on.ca or call toll-free at 1-888-622-6337.

—From ontario.mcc.org

A history of private sponsorship

A new Immigration Act for Canada in 1976 included a provision for private sponsorship of refugees. A Mennonite Member of Parliament, Jake Epp from Steinbach, Man., had been advocating this option in order for church and community groups—the private sector—to become involved in settling people in Canada.

Along with changes in Canadian immigration policy in the late 1970s, the international scene changed dramatically and there was a huge exodus of people from Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. They were fleeing persecution and unstable political and economic conditions. Hundreds of thousands of people were fleeing, some over land, others crowded onto boats and became known as the "boat people."

Across Canada that year—1979—churches, community groups and others were offering to sponsor refugees. There were more than 7,000 groups involved, primarily church groups. During this time, the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ottawa office initiated discussions with the government to draft a refugee sponsorship agreement. The purpose of this agreement was to make the process easier.

MCC would assume the overall responsibility for all Mennonite churches and groups that wanted to sponsor refugees. These churches and groups would not have to deal with the government bureaucracy; MCC would do that. It was a remarkable innovation. MCC became the first official sponsorship organization. The Canadian minister of immigration at the time, Bud Cullen, attended a signing ceremony at the MCC offices in Winnipeg.

Mennonite churches sponsored almost 4,000 refugees from Indochina in 1979 and 1980, which was more than 10 percent of all private sponsorships. Almost half of all Mennonite churches across Canada sponsored a family.

From an article by Tim Wichert in Ontario Mennonite History, November 2003.

For discussion

1. What experiences have you or your congregation had in sponsoring refugees? What have been the most challenging and rewarding parts? What motivates a congregation to sponsor a refugee family?
2. Some of the refugees, previously assisted by Mennonites, now have their own congregations (such as First Hmong Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.). Should refugees be encouraged to attend or join their sponsoring church? What happens when the refugees are devout Muslims?
3. Refugees arrive in Canada virtually destitute. How can sponsors help them maintain their dignity? How much gratitude should sponsors expect? When refugees move to another city or community after the year of sponsorship is over, how should that be interpreted?
4. The Canadian government is presently discussing Bill C-11, which would deport more refugee claimants by refusing appeals (see May 17 issue, page 18). Does Canada have a good policy in dealing with refugees? Should we accept more refugees?
5. Chai Boupaphanh describes how rural Saskatchewan felt like the middle of nowhere to his family. What are the advantages and disadvantages of settling refugees in a small town rather than a multicultural city? What can rural churches do to help refugees with feelings of isolation?

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**CANADIAN
MENNONITE**

VIEWPOINTS

/// Readers write

We welcome your comments and publish most letters sent by subscribers intended for publication. Respecting our theology of the priesthood of all believers and of the importance of the faith community discernment process, this section is a largely open forum for the sharing of views. Letters are the opinion of the writer only—publication does not mean endorsement by the magazine or the church. Letters should be brief and address issues rather than individuals.

Please send letters to be considered for publication to letters@canadianmennonite.org or by postal mail or fax, marked "Attn: Readers Write" (our address is on page 3). Letters should include the author's contact information and mailing address. Letters are edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines.

✉ Preachers need to be brave, not brilliant

"WHAT'S THE MATTER with preaching?" Harry Emerson Fosdick asked that question in a *Harpers* magazine article 82 years ago. Fosdick packed churches Sunday after Sunday, with line-ups of people wanting to get in to hear him preach.

Barbara Brown Taylor raised the same question about preaching in a recent lecture at the Vancouver School of Theology. Her audience was predominantly clergy. A former Episcopalian priest, she's the author of 12 books, including *Leaving Church* and her most recent, *An Altar in the World*.

Fosdick focused on relevance, stating that mediocre sermons are uninteresting and pathetic, and pointed out that sermons need to establish a connection with people and the pulse of the text. The idea of the sermon as a solo performance is what's wrong with preaching, said Taylor. She suggested pastors meet with a group of people and discern how a sermon would fit with people's needs. Good sermons are absorbed by the people who listen, she said.

"Wrestling with people over questions of life and death takes time and a lot of risk," she said, noting that preaching should be more focused on life than on religion. "What the congregation needs is not brilliance, but bravery."

Effective sermons are not produced magically, and skill alone is not enough; preachers need to know how to be human. "Who are your nighttime visitors when you can't sleep? Can you speak of this with truth?" Taylor asked.

Preachers need to take risks, she said, and preaching from life is much harder than preaching from books.

"Start with issues that preoccupy people in front of you." Quoting others is fine for a sentence or two, but people came to hear you, not someone else. "Preachers must be willing to appear dumb and vulnerable," she said.

Taylor says it's important to identify each church's "culture of listening." When asked about the mega-churches that draw thousands to their services, she said these churches address the pressing issues of people's lives and deal with questions of the human condition.

Preaching is often lonely, she said, and dialogue with the congregation is important.

Taylor noted the stress on preachers who preach Sunday after Sunday. "You'll have some thin sermons," she said, adding that every poor sermon allows people to work out the gospel on their own. "The proclamation of the gospel does not depend on the golden tongue, but on the Holy Spirit."

HENRY NEUFELD, VANCOUVER, B.C.

✉ Emeritus prof defends TWU stand on academic freedom and faith

YOUR "WHEN FAITH collides with academic freedom" article, May 3, page 15, addresses a question of enormous importance for Christian universities interested in an ongoing relationship with their secular counterparts.

My experience with religion and academia includes attending five Mennonite schools and teaching at Trinity Western University [TWU] for more than 30 years. I was personally involved as we developed policies and practices from 1978 to 2007 after TWU became a degree-granting university.

I responded critically to the unfavourable report of the Canadian Association of University Teachers [CAUT] in October 2009, which attacked TWU's statement of faith. The CAUT report reflects a naïve reading of the evidence of how TWU professors do research and teach. They took descriptive catalogue phrases at face value and ignored actual experience and results of TWU faculty teaching and research.



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From the moment it became a four-year university, TWU's faculty, working closely with the administration, initiated a determined effort to achieve two goals: excellence in scholarship and teaching, and a commitment to the Christian faith that embraced a wide variety of confessions.

Faculty designed hiring, tenure and promotion criteria that compensate those who attain Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degrees. It rewarded lively and up-to-date teaching which integrated faith and subject. For scholarship, the criteria meant work which

was reviewed by external peers from the world's best journals, critics and publishers. The editors and their selected anonymous readers would not have agreed to publish our work had it been marked by doctrinal blinkers. TWU scholarship is recognized by peers around the world.

Academic freedom and tenure policies were very important to the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada when we applied for membership. It and CAUT have a legitimate ongoing interest in the status of academic freedom in all universities. It is also

OUTSIDE THE BOX

No more cheap church

PHIL WAGLER

Nearly four score years ago Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote *The Cost of Discipleship*. Every Christian should read it because the German martyr was on to something: He exposed the scourge of cheap grace. "Cheap grace," he wrote, "means grace as a doctrine, a principle, a system. It means forgiveness of sins proclaimed as a general truth, the love of God taught as the Christian 'conception' of God."

He saw the church peddling grace as an idea about God, not proclaiming Jesus Christ, whose lavish sacrifice and invitation to follow demands unconditional surrender. "Cheap grace," Bonhoeffer continued, "is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ." The drift of religious Christianity is towards this bargain-store spirituality; we like God and his benefits on the cheap and with as little personal cost as necessary.

The contagion of cheap grace is cheap church. If we expect God and his goods on our terms, with our desires untouched, we will want church just as conveniently.

Dare we admit that many adhere to the doctrine of cheap church and fervently believe it to be true. We want church that costs nothing beyond our cash, interests

and occasional attendance. We want church that will not require the gruelling tasks of loving, forgiving and offering grace to those we're sure shouldn't get it. We want to consume our bargain-store spirituality and happily shop with others who think the same. We want a church of the holy potluck, the holy project, the holy huddle, but we're not so keen on a church of the Holy Spirit.

I mean, really, have you read what the Holy Spirit did to the church in Acts? Who wants that mess and cost anymore? Now that we've got everything pasteurized and organized, we can get on with church on the cheap and defend it almost like we mean it and mean it as if we like it!

We seem to expect church to be unrealistically perfect for our sakes. We want our church to have the spit and polish that convinces us we're really some-

spared no expense and yet many who have been absorbed into the body of Christ by grace long for church on the cheap.

The church does not exist to prop up our wants. Rather, it requires us to collapse in the costly joy of dying to self and living alongside others who are not always easy to love, because Christ died for us—and them—and is risen from the dead! The church is to be a window into what can be when people spend themselves in forgiveness, reconciliation and mission together precisely because the grace they received was lavishly expensive.

Jesus still wears scars. How can we who are now his earthly body expect to wear anything less? The church extracts a cost many may have never fully embraced: It will cost us our rights, preferences and comfort.

The church is not easy! Get over it! It is a costly adventure in being a resurrected Holy-Spirit-endowed people, and the



We want a church of the holy potluck, the holy project, the holy huddle, but we're not so keen on a church of the Holy Spirit.

thing. We'll give to that—particularly if there's a tax break to be had! We'll raise our communion shot glasses to that!

The church is foremost and always God's cherished possession. Church is not something to hoard, but give away! We give away Christ and with him always a costly piece of ourselves. God in Christ

cheap church many practise is as much a swindle as cheap grace ever was.

Phil Wagler (phil@kingsfieldcommon.ca) lives in Huron County, Ont., where he seeks to count the cost with the churches of Kingsfield. He is author of Kingdom Culture.

in the interest of TWU supporters, that it continues to pursue academic freedom.

JOHN KLASSEN, LANGLEY, B.C.

John Klassen is professor emeritus in TWU's history department.

✉ Loving and challenging abusive power not mutually exclusive

RE: "REBUTTING 'A pernicious message,'" May 17, page 11.

Aiden Enns's challenge to "cause those in power to grumble," will no doubt be taken seriously by the

NEW ORDER VOICE

A five-year retrospective

WILL BRAUN

This is my 30th New Order Voice column since Aiden Enns and I started writing for *Canadian Mennonite* five years ago. It's not a huge milestone, but an occasional look back can be fruitful.

Although I have not always written about contentious topics—for example, tributes to the *More-with-Less* cookbook and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) thrift stores—the times when I have broached sensitive matters—like discriminatory treatment of Mexican Mennonites, the war-mongering views of Franklin Graham or a critique of MCC's us-helping-them narrative—the editors of this publication have never stood in the way. For this I am grateful.

Those times I have entered the waters of controversy—often with more trepidation than you would imagine—the reader backlash for which I braced myself was replaced with positive feedback. This surprised me. I have no illusions that I reflect majority views, but the feedback I receive demonstrates the importance of providing space for a range of views, including the views of those who doubt and question.

The most difficult aspect of writing for *Canadian Mennonite* has been the interviews with leaders of conferences, schools and service agencies. With a few

exceptions, the institutional defensiveness, predictably bureaucratic language, and a lack of spirited Anabaptist vision from leaders I interviewed, has left me uninspired, or worse. Leading Canadian thinker John Ralston Saul has said that "if you listen to people as they rise in power they tend to say less and less intelligent things."

And so I have found myself lamenting what I see as a move towards fewer leaders and more administrators. However, my disappointment, ultimately, is not with these individuals, but with the church culture from which they take their mandate. What troubles me within our priesthood of believers is the degree



In talking to leaders, I have felt that we are too readily adopting the growth model.

to which organized church energies are focused on institution-building. In simplest terms, I see an adherence to the secular dogma that says bigger is better. Forget "more with less"; we want more, more, more. Bigger churches, bigger programs, bigger budgets, bigger barns. Forget simplicity and community; we want institutions with *schlitz* foyers.

In talking to leaders, I have felt that we are too readily adopting the growth model. We attach the parable of the talents to it, then add a closing prayer and

assume we're building the kingdom of God, rather than just our own kingdom. Taking millions from a pharmaceutical company of ill repute—as Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary has done—becomes a no-brainer, and \$500-a-plate fundraisers—an annual event at Canadian Mennonite University—is deemed consistent with the story of the widow's mite.

That said, the discipline of speaking directly with people whose views I find difficult has been formative. When I interview someone with whom I generally disagree, my job is still to understand them as fully as possible and to present their most convincing arguments. Even if I critique them, my duty is to listen and understand. My efforts at this have been imperfect, but what I've found is that once I put in the effort, my critique is always less jagged, less simplistic. Church leaders and church institutions—just like you and I—are a mix of the good and not-so-good. We all depend on grace, which God supplies in abundance.

I continue to write this column with enthusiasm because I believe in good questions and open discourse. I write because I believe the Mennonite church can contribute an element of simplicity, community, humility and integrity to our world. I write to create a bit of space for others, however few or many, who share those beliefs.

Will Braun attends Hope Mennonite Church, Winnipeg. He can be reached at wbraun@inbox.com.

Mennonite Church Canada assembly in Calgary, Alta.

Very few of us—likely not even Enns himself—are free from “structures that grant [us] power and privilege.”

I believe most of us “seek to follow a Jesus who migrated to the margins of society to bring healing and hope . . .” We do this together as a Christ-centred community of faith striving for peace and justice.

If I were to erect an urban hen house, or protest police brutality, then, according to my sense of Enns’s article, I wouldn’t have to be compassionate, kind,

patient or humble.

I support fully Ruth Preston Schilk’s “Live the brand, wear Christ,” message that Enns mentions. We, as the body of Christ, must present a solid, loving alternative even as we confront the injustice and violence of evil’s empire.

Being loving and challenging those who abuse power are not mutually exclusive. Neither is easy. Both are necessary to achieve effective Christ-like subversion.

MARLENE KRUGER WIEBE, GRETNA, MAN.

FROM OUR LEADERS

Discerning alone and together

MURIEL BECHTEL

“Discernment” is the latest buzzword among leaders, not only in the church but also in corporate and business circles. Every day, it seems, a new book appears and promotes a new way of discerning direction and vision. In the church we often speak of discerning God’s Spirit.

Several months ago at a conference on leadership, one of the speakers made the statement that, “in a time of constant change and chaos such as ours, leaders need to learn how to lead in ‘permanent whitewater.’” When I quoted this to a monthly gathering of interim pastors, one of them quipped, “Whitewater canoeing can be a hoot, but you can only do it for so long. Then you need calmer waters.”

With the ever-increasing diversity in the church, sometimes our communal discernment can feel like navigating “permanent whitewater,” where reacting is the predominant way of responding.

But discernment requires getting out of the “whitewater rapids” and into a place where we can once again hear that inner

voice of wisdom, of God’s Spirit within. It requires getting into the calm, steady stream of what God has done, is doing and will do, and it requires remembering who we are. It requires relinquishing our tight grip on making things go our way, and offering our hopes and opinions to be woven with others into God’s larger purpose for the world. Our Anabaptist forebears called that *gelassenheit*.

For that deeper discernment, we need time alone and in community. As Mennonites, we often move to communal discernment and bypass the individ-



God’s Spirit speaks to people in many ways, the gathered community being only one.

ual part of the process. We begin talking and reacting without spending time listening deeply to each other and being grounded in our own inner wisdom.

God’s Spirit speaks to people in many ways, the gathered community being only one. In our own understanding of Scripture, in our own consciences, and

by using our powers of judgment and observation of our own life experiences and those of our brothers and sisters around the world, and in the broader wisdom of science and creation, God has given us aids to discern what seems best in any given circumstance.

In the gospels, Jesus often withdrew into the wilderness or to the mountain, sometimes alone, other times with a few of his disciples. He withdrew at precisely those times when the next step was not clear or just plain hard: at the start of his ministry; before choosing his disciples; when the crowds were clamouring for him and he had to choose between staying and going on to the next town; at the Mount of Transfiguration when he was about to enter Jerusalem; and in the garden when he was facing almost certain death.

Discernment takes place within the

context of a living, loving relationship with God and with God’s people. For those relationships to be nurtured, we need time to listen deeply alone as well as in community.

Muriel Bechtel is conference minister of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

YOUNG PROPHETS

Learning through global relationships

BY KRISTINA TOEWS

One does not generally see a group of five ethnically diverse young people, each person from a different continent, walking about and discussing the needs and struggles facing youths and young adults the world over.

But this is exactly what happened when the new Mennonite World Conference (MWC) Youth Task Force met together in Strasbourg, France, in February to determine the vision, focus, structure and programs for our generation, based in part on feedback gathered during the Global Youth Summit of 2009 and the six-year experience of the former MWC youth committee, Amigos.

The five of us—Ayub Omondi Awich from Kenya, Marc Pasqués from Spain, Melani Susanti from Indonesia, Carlos Álvarez Woo from Colombia, and myself (from Abbotsford, B.C.)—were chosen after being delegates for our national churches at last summer's youth summit in Paraguay.

When I found out that I was chosen as the North American representative on the youth task force many months ago, I was excited about the huge opportunity to work with new people from broad cultural backgrounds. I was also terrified at the enormity of the task and the people I would be representing over the course of the next year, as we will be working on a proposal to present to the MWC executive committee. There are so many young people, with a huge diversity of experiences and views in the United States and Canada. How could I possibly represent them all?

Although my task is daunting, I am

consistently reminded of God's faithfulness. I feel that I am learning more and more that is how it is supposed to be. We're not meant to accomplish huge tasks on our own, because following

MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE PHOTO



The new Mennonite World Conference Youth Task Force includes, from left to right, front row: Kristina Toews from Canada, Melani Susanti from Indonesia, and Carlos Álvarez Woo from Colombia; and back row: Ayub Omondi Awich from Kenya, and Marc Pasqués from Spain.

Christ is all about working together.

As members of the task force, each of us needs to work alongside others on our respective continents and alongside each other. Yet even with the help of others, it is only by God's strength that we can move forward.

The importance of community is continually being emphasized to me the more I work with others in MWC. Reading stories about the God's people can leave an impression, but I have found that I learn, and am challenged to grow so much more, through the relationships I forge with people who are different than I am—like the four others on the task force.

For example, in North America we don't generally discuss the activity of angels, demons and spirits among us, yet that is not the case everywhere. It was eye-opening for me to hear firsthand accounts of interacting with spirits from Susanti's Indonesian perspective, where spirits have a prevalent role in her culture.

There are challenges with this work that I did not expect, that force me to grow in new avenues. Communication is one such challenge. We all have a different first language, and although we all speak English I am being stretched to grow in my listening and communication skills.

There are moments when I need to force myself to be silent, so that the others have time to think and translate. Sometimes I like to talk a bit too much, so this is a good lesson for me to learn.

Often we can see diversity as a struggle or an obstacle, and working on an intercontinental team is not always easy. Still, what stands out for me most from our first meetings is how we were able to work together. We met in Paraguay not knowing one another well, but we left France as a team.

We are all passionate and excited about working together and with others on our continents, to help young people participate even more in the work of MWC and the national churches around the globe. This lifts my spirits about the tasks we must accomplish, although they are big.

Through working with brothers and sisters from different continents, God has opened my eyes to how much I still have to learn. I can't even begin to comprehend all the variety of ways that God is at work in this youth task force—and our world. ☸

Kristina Toews, a student at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, B.C., is currently working towards a bachelor of arts degree majoring in biblical studies. She is also a half-time youth worker at Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, where she works with both middle school and high school groups.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Neufeldt—Brielle Eileen (b. May 3, 2010), to Lisa Doepker and Andrew Neufeldt, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Neufeldt—Cayden Isaac (b. May 13, 2010), to Joani and Paul Neufeldt, First Mennonite, Edmonton, Alta.

Reyburn—Henry John (b. May 19, 2010), to John Walsh and Karen Reyburn, Waterloo North Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Suarez—Paul Xavier (b. Jan. 7, 2010), to Jorge and Maria Suarez, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.

Thiessen—Joni Mae (b. May 14, 2010), to Mark and Janet Thiessen, North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Warkentin—Weston Henry (b. Jan. 5, 2010), to Henry and Rhonda Warkentin, Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.

Baptisms

Kieran Derksen, Meghan Entz, Ally Forrest, Nathan Lazar, Ryan Morwick, Emily Penner, Karleen Peters, Kristen Wiebe, Brendan Wiebe—Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., May 16.

Delfina Aguiar, Brigitte Funk, Natalie Rempel, Ruth Rempel, Paul White—North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Joshua Derksen, Anna Janzen, Charlotte Janzen, Clayton Janzen, Jed Janzen, Madeline Janzen, Ashley Nickel—Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Dora Alexander, Alexandra Lobach—Toronto United Mennonite, Ont.

Marriages

Lloyd/Ward—Ryan Lloyd and Amelia Ward, Zurich Mennonite Church, Ont., May 29, 2010.

Patterson/Schwartzentruber—Beulah Patterson and Calvin Schwartzentruber, at Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., May 30, 2010.

Rooney/Ruby—Benita Rooney and Shane Ruby, at Tavistock Mennonite, Ont., April 3, 2010.

Deaths

Peters—Bertha (nee Balzer), 84 (b. Aug. 5, 1925; d. March 10, 2010), Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask.

Peters—Cornelius, 85 (b. April 12, 1924; d. April 1, 2010), North Leamington United Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.

Peters—Elizabeth (nee Born), 97 (b. Aug. 5, 1912; d. Feb. 22, 2010), United Mennonite, Black Creek, B.C.

Plett—John B., 81 (b. April 6, 1929; d. April 10, 2010), Gretna Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Poetker—John, 81 (b. Aug. 19, 1928; d. April 18, 2010), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Roth—William, 92 (b. Jan. 21, 1918; d. April 27, 2010), Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

Schmidt—Anna, 81 (b. April 22, 1928; d. April 4, 2010), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

Shantz—Lena (Mabel), 90 (b. May 18, 1919; d. April 29, 2010), Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Snider—Almeda (nee Bearinger), 89 (b. May 14, 1921; d. May 22, 2010), Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

Weber—Donna, 70 (b. June 22, 1939; d. March 19, 2010), Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

Yantzi—Cheryl, 48 (d. May 12, 2010), Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones

announcements within four months of the event.

Please send Milestones announcements by e-mail to

milestones@canadianmennonite.org, including the

congregation name and location. When sending death

notices, please include birth date and last name at birth if available.

Pontius' Puddle



GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

Remembering God's future: Youth Assembly 2011

BY DEBORAH FROESE

Mennonite Church Canada Release

As delegates begin to register for Mennonite Church Canada Assembly 2010, planners for Youth Assembly 2011 are remembering the future—a reference to the assembly's theme text which calls on Christians to envision God's future of a city where all people will live in harmony.

Youth Assembly 2011 will share the theme, "It's epic: Remembering God's future," with the adult delegate assembly that will take place at the same time. It is based on Revelation 21:1-4 and Revelation 21:19

-22:6.

Several youth assembly planners are enthusiastic about the upcoming event, sharing their thoughts in an e-mail exchange.

"Come one, come all, this is going to be epic!" says Scott Eyre, youth pastor at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham, Ont.

Emma Bartel concurs and adds that she is excited about the event. "We have had so many great ideas and great energy in the planning team so far, and I think the conference is going to be a great time for youth to

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come together in Waterloo!" she says.

Trang Tran comes from a small church and doesn't have a lot of opportunity to travel. "I am very excited for the interaction I'll get to experience with everyone," she says. "I definitely look forward to making new friends!"

"We had a lot of fun at our March meeting, brainstorming and getting ideas down for the theme tag line, activities, schedule, etc.," offers Aaron Neufeld. "I'd say we definitely have a fantastic planning committee."

The jam-packed event is scheduled to take place from July 4-8, 2011, at the University of Waterloo, Ont., and the adjoining Conrad Grebel University College. The planning committee is looking for ways to reach out to the Kitchener-Waterloo community, create opportunities for interacting and enhancing the youth relationship with the larger Mennonite church, and nurture participants' relationships with Christ.

A variation on Mennonite Church Canada's Peace in the Public Square initiative, Peace in the Public Polygon (P3), is anticipated to invite youth participation in a public expression of peace and the liveforpeace.org website. Interaction with the regular delegate assembly and non-stop activities such as tours and seminars are also on the agenda.

"It's energizing to watch youth come together to worship and learn and play," says Anna Rehan, MC Canada youth ministries facilitator. "They are always energized and ready to take on any challenges we present."

"Youth Assembly 2011 will be a space to solidify, stir, spark and spur radical faith," says Home Street Mennonite Church youth pastor Kathy Giesbrecht of Winnipeg. "Our youth are open to the challenge of the gospel. . . . Are we?" ❧

MC CANADA PHOTO BY DAN DYCK



The Mennonite Church Canada Youth Assembly 2011 Planning Committee includes, from left to right: (on floor) Jean Lehn Epp, associate pastor of youth and family ministry, Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Ont.; (seated) Scott Eyre, youth pastor, Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham, Ont.; youth planners Aaron Neufeld, Luke Derksen and Trang Tran; Anna Rehan, MC Canada youth ministries facilitator; youth planner Emma Bartel; and Kathy Giesbrecht, associate director, MC Manitoba/associate pastor, Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.; and (in back) Rod Wiebe, associate pastor of youths and young adults, Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C.

Scripture text to live by

Calgary pastor/keynote assembly speaker takes Colossians 3:12-17 to heart in both his ministry and his marriage

BY DEBORAH FROESE
Mennonite Church Canada Release

For Doug Klassen, Colossians 3:12-17—the theme verse for this year’s Mennonite Church Canada assembly, “Reclaiming Jesus: Gladly wear the name,” in Calgary, Alta., later this month—describes in a nutshell what it means to be a Christian. It is a passage of personal significance to him.



Klassen

assembly’s three keynote speakers. “For a grasp on the Christian ethic, this is it. This text is deeply ‘rooted’ in me. It is how I choose to live everyday. When I get off track, it resets/recalibrates me to what I am looking to do in life.”

Klassen was first captured by the spirit of this particular text in 1990, the year before

“You want to know how to live as a Christian? Here it is,” says Klassen, senior pastor of Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary, and one of the

he graduated from Canadian Mennonite Bible College (now Canadian Mennonite University). At that time, graduate Bryan

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Moyer Suderman framed his valedictory address around this passage and, as it drew to a close, he engaged all those gathered in a call and response singing of “Let the Word of the Lord Jesus Christ be With You.”

“It was an absolutely mystical moment,” Klassen says. “I don’t remember [Suderman’s] words exactly, but his challenge was to all of those graduating ‘to live out our faith, doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.’”

Later that same year, Klassen and his fiancée, Rose Retzlaff, chose the Colossians text for their wedding. “Of all the texts we studied, we felt this was the one that best described what we wanted our marriage to be,” he says. “Rose’s dad married us in the Vineland United Mennonite Church, and the words of his homily challenged us to see these verses as a guide/template for our marriage. We have done our best with this, and have a very blessed marriage.”

While some people develop mission statements or life objective statements, Klassen says he has never done so. “But if I were to co-opt a Scripture passage into one that I would write for myself, it would be this one,” he says. “I try to live this out when I am at home, when I am working in the congregation, when I am meeting my neighbours, and when I am coaching my son’s basketball and baseball teams.

“It is not always easy,” he acknowledges. “Growing up in somewhat of a hockey culture, the tendency is to want to drop the gloves, rather than talk things through. But I have learned that living Colossians 3:12-17 can actually redeem situations, whereas aggression and violence often serve to escalate them.”

He points to congregational life as an example. “So much in congregational conflict has to do with misunderstanding and miscommunication, with people not feeling appreciated,” he says, adding that reflecting on this passage helps him to step back, take a breath and consider all sides of any conflict he encounters. //



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Columbia theology prof one of three keynote speakers at MC Canada's Assembly 2010

BY DEBORAH FROESE
Mennonite Church Canada Release

Gareth Brandt, professor of practical theology at Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, B.C., says that the courses he teaches—from faith formation and spirituality, to the Psalms—are all about the human relationship with God. He also says that he is troubled by his participation in a selfish consumer-based system in which it is difficult to integrate the theology he teaches into all aspects of his own life.

"I fail most of the time," he says, "but my quest is that it becomes part of family life at home, how I go about my life on my way to work, at work, my relationships with people, even shopping."

Brandt will share that message with delegates to Mennonite Church Canada's Assembly 2010, which takes place in Calgary, Alta., from June 30 to July 3. He is one of three keynote speakers, including Lucy Roca, a Quebec church planter and former Colombian refugee, and Doug Klassen, senior pastor of Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary.

The text for Assembly 2010, Colossians 3:16-17, is familiar to Brandt, having had the opportunity to explore it at MC Alberta's annual meeting in 2009. "Words that are personally meaningful to me are the word 'dwell' in verse 16 and 'in all you do' in verse 17," Brandt notes. The Colossians text expresses "the everydayness in all I do," he says. "The dwelling of the word of Christ is deep, not esoteric but ordinary."

He likens it to the clothing—or spirituality—that he wears every day. With four children, ranging in age from 9 to 20, the Brandt family has only one car, in an effort



Brandt

to reflect the conscious decision to slow down and simplify that Brandt and his wife made when they were first married. "The exterior pace affects interior pace," he says.

The decision has had financial, physical, environmental and spiritual benefits. "I think of it every rainy day when I get on my bike," he says. "My first thought: I'm going to get wet. My next thought: it's part of all I do as I attempt to live responsibly and to do small things in my commitment to faith."

Brandt has written extensively on life and theology for a number of Anabaptist/Mennonite publications, including *Canadian Mennonite*, *Rhubarb* and *Geez* magazine. His book, *Under Construction:*

/// Briefly noted

Youths, elderly work together at Camp Valaqua

WATER VALLEY, ALTA.—Camp Valaqua hosted its annual spring work day on May 8. This year's event was especially relevant due to a major spring storm that dumped 45 centimetres of heavy snow and brought wind gusts in excess of 80 kilometres per hour. The camp's tall spruce trees suffered terribly under the load and when the storm was over there was a lot of clean-up to do. Among the 50 volunteers who hauled brush and split wood were members of several youth groups from Alberta churches and grey-haired workers who had travelled for hours to be there. Despite the physical labour, there was a lot of laughter and smiling.

—Camp Valaqua Release

Reframing Men's Spirituality, was published in 2009 by Herald Press. (See review on page 26.) //

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RECLAIMING
JESUS™

Graduates called to give bread, not a stone

BY MARY E. KLASSEN

AMBS Release
ELKHART, IND.

Voices in six languages set the stage for the commencement service of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) on May 22, the day before Pentecost.

Members of the graduating class read in their first languages—Amharic, Lithuanian, Spanish, English, French and Japanese—the call in Matthew 7 and Luke 11 to care for others the way God does. These six were part of the class of 40 who received degrees and certificates in the afternoon service.

C. Arnold Snyder, professor of history at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., challenged the graduates by suggesting that the Anabaptist Vision, set forth in H. S. Bender's classic essay in 1944, must be significantly refocused. Bender's essay proposed three key characteristics of Anabaptism: the essence of Christianity is discipleship, the church is to be a fellowship of believers, and believers are marked by a new ethic of love and nonresistance.

However, Snyder pointed out that the



Three 2010 graduates of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary came to the seminary from Canada. From left, they are Joseph Vallejos, originally from Central America; Timothy Froese; and Rolando Sosa Granados, also originally from Central America.

“Anabaptist Vision is not Anabaptist enough.” A life of discipleship, being committed to other believers and caring for others requires a spiritual rebirth and “calls for the continued gift of God’s grace,” he said.

He noted that Bender himself, in an article published in *Mennonite Quarterly Review* in 1961, said, “A life of discipleship is one in which the Holy Spirit works with power.” Snyder indicated that Bender wished this last article, published just before his death, would receive as much attention as the earlier one, because it is in this later document that Bender answers

the central question of how one becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ.

“This cannot be accomplished without prayer, meditation on Scripture and cultivation of our relationship with the vine,” Snyder said. “Take time to ponder the truth expressed by Anabaptist faith parents. Have a heart open to the living God. Then we can go forth in the confidence that we can indeed give not a stone, but bread, to those who hunger.”

Three 2010 graduates came to AMBS from Canada:

- Timothy Froese, a member of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C., earned a master of divinity degree; he is currently pursuing a pastoral ministry assignment. He previously earned a bachelor of arts degree in biblical studies from Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford.
- Rolando Sosa Granados, originally from Central America, became involved with a Mennonite congregation when he and his family moved to Calgary, Alta. He completed a master of divinity degree at AMBS and a master of social work degree at nearby Andrews University in a dual-degree program. He is pursuing a bi-vocational ministry assignment.
- Joseph Vallejos, also originally from Central America, is serving as a bilingual therapist for an Elkhart city agency, after receiving a master of arts: peace studies degree from AMBS and a master of social work degree from Andrews University. ▮

/// Briefly noted

Menno Simons College gets permanent home

WINNIPEG—For the first time in its 20-year history, Menno Simons College has found a permanent home. Through a significant gift from the David and Katherine Friesen Family Foundation, the college has purchased the first two floors of 520 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, the building where it has leased space since 2005. The college—which is affiliated with both Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) and the University of Winnipeg—plans to renovate the 1,530-square-metre area beginning in May 2011 to create new and improved faculty and administrative offices, classrooms, student facilities, and a centre for peace and social justice. Since its inception in 1990, Menno Simons had been leasing available space at the University of Winnipeg. In the 10 years since CMU was established, both institutions have “expressed the goal of providing [Menno Simons] with a permanent home, a place where its identity can grow and where it can more effectively serve its students,” says CMU president Gerald Gerbrandt. The purchase of space at 520 Portage Avenue provides this permanent location.

—Canadian Mennonite University Release

END OF SCHOOL YEAR NEWS

Brenneman reappointed to second term as Goshen College president

BY DICK BENNER
Editor/Publisher

James E. Brenneman has been reappointed to a second four-year term as president of Goshen College, Ind., by the college's board of directors. The decision was reached earlier this year after a six-month review process.

Brenneman's reappointment, coming on the heels of financial stresses that called for the laying off of 29 faculty and staff members, and a heated controversy about the college's decision to play the national anthem

at some sporting events, found strong support from the board as well as administrators, faculty and staff members, students and leaders of Mennonite Church USA, according to Phil Bontrager, the board's vice-chair who led the review process.

While the staff layoffs are not part of a hiring freeze, the decision to cut some 10 percent of the 225-member faculty and staff complement enabled the college to reduce its \$35 million budget to \$33.9 million for the year 2010-11.

The college's endowment fund decreased in value from \$125.3 million in June 2008 to \$85.4 million in June 2009 as a result of the drop in the stock market, causing a decline in endowment payouts. As of this March, the value of the endowment stood at approximately \$104 million. And although student retention continues to be excellent overall, it was lower than anticipated based on prior years, according to Jim Histan, vice-president for finance. Full-time enrolment stands at approximately 900 students.

The national anthem controversy embroiled Brenneman and the board in a protest that included the signatures and comments of some 1,260 alumni,



Brenneman

theologians, lay people, pastors, priests and students, and involved a protest march on the campus on April 5, that expressed disappointment, concern and sadness at the school's decision to break with its 114-year-old practice and longstanding witness of nonconformity to this nationalistic ritual.

Brenneman graduated in 1977 from Goshen College, where he pursued an interdisciplinary degree combining Bible,

biology and natural science, and spent a

semester in Honduras through the college's international education program. He completed a master of divinity degree from Fuller Theological Seminary in 1982. At Claremont Graduate University, he earned a doctorate with a focus in Hebrew Bible/Old Testament studies in 1994.

Ordained in 1986 as a credentialed minister of MC USA, Brenneman was the founding lead pastor of Pasadena Mennonite Church, Calif., and spent 20 years there. He was named Goshen's president-elect on Nov. 18, 2005, and joined the college full-time on July 1, 2006. ✎

—With files from Goshen College.

/// Briefly noted

Canadian athlete leaves his mark on EMU, takes away its mark on him

HARRISONBURG, VA.—Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) student athletes receiving academic achievement awards for having the highest grade-point-average on their respective teams included Justin Reesor of Stouffville, Ont. Reesor, a member of the men's volleyball team, said that his four years with the Royals taught him about life as well as sports. "As in life, you aren't going to win every day, and you might even sometimes go a long time without winning. But it's how you handle the losses and the hard times that determine who you are," he said at the awards banquet. Reesor said that when he was struggling during his freshman year with his decision to play volleyball, his dad gave him some good advice: "[He said], 'Justin, you must leave your mark on EMU in some way. If it's not with volleyball, it can be with academics or something else, but you must leave your mark.' . . . I will take with me the EMU sportsmanship, selflessness and joy wherever God leads me from here. I think I can safely say that not only have I left my mark on EMU, but also that EMU has left a significant mark on me."

—Eastern Mennonite University Release



Reesor

END OF SCHOOL YEAR NEWS

/// Staff change

EMU promotes Heisey to vice-presidency

HARRISONBURG, VA.—A current faculty member will begin a three-year term as vice-president and undergraduate academic dean at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) as of July 1. Nancy Heisey is a professor of biblical studies and church history at EMU and currently chairs the Bible and religion department. Vernon Jantzi, professor emeritus of sociology, has been serving as interim undergraduate academic dean this academic year. Heisey joined the EMU faculty in 1999 following a career involving administrative leadership with Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pa. She received a B.A. degree from Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.; an M.Div. degree from Eastern Mennonite Seminary; and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa.

—EMU Release



Heisey

/// Briefly noted

CMU students graduate to the words of Jeremiah 29:11

WINNIPEG, MAN.—Nearly a hundred Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) students walked across the stage at Immanuel Pentecostal Church, Winnipeg, on April 25 to receive their degrees and to proceed to the next stage of their lives. The graduates took these symbolic steps with the words of Jeremiah 29:11 in the back of their minds: “*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’*” The valedictory address given by Michael Bueckert, who graduated with a four-year bachelor of arts degree in international development studies, echoed the theme of the graduation verse when he cautioned his fellow grads against believing that their education is a result of their own individual achievement. Bueckert said that, “certainly, as individuals, we had a hand in this process; however, our education is not a product that we have created, or even something we have earned, but rather it is something that we have received as a gift.” This was the largest CMU graduating class to date, with 95 students receiving bachelors degrees and one student earning a masters degree.

—BY RACHEL BERGEN



Bueckert

EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY PHOTO BY JIM BISHOP



James and Marian Payne check out the new “Jamar” classroom made possible by their contribution to the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding (CJP) program at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va. The 118-square-metre, state-of-the-art classroom was carved out of space on the ground floor of EMU’s Hartzler Library. The new classroom name comes from the first letters of the first names of the Paynes, primary donors to the classroom construction. The Paynes, both 1958 EMU grads, are retired educators and church workers. The Paynes were founding donors of the CJP program that began in 1994-95 and contributed \$100,000 towards the new classroom construction. The classroom with adjoining kitchenette facilities was completed in time for the start of the 15th annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute.

Day-long tour connects Saskatchewan congregations

BY HENRY PATKAU

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

Fifty-six members of various Mennonite Church Saskatchewan congregations spent May 1 on a bus travelling to three churches as part of a day-long touring mission fest organized by the area church's ministries commission.

Prayer request

Leamington congregants hit hard by tornado

A fierce tornado in the early morning hours of June 6 wreaked millions of dollars in damage to Leamington, Ont., but thankfully there have so far been no reports of deaths or injuries. According to David Martin, executive minister of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, many members of North Leamington United Mennonite have suffered damage; three families have lost greenhouses and another farmer has lost buildings and equipment. Faith Mennonite has had a few members affected, with one family living along the lake seriously hit. Attempts to reach Leamington United Mennonite had not been successful at press time. Martin and Robert J. Suderman, general secretary of MC Canada, invite the wider church community to pray:

- That community churches in the area will be able to serve others even as members themselves recover and rebuild;
 - For all area farmers who have suffered significant damage during a critical crop production time;
 - For those who may lack insurance or other means of recovery;
 - For exhausted emergency personnel; and
 - Mennonite Disaster Service workers who are discerning how to respond.
- MC Canada Release

Grace Mennonite Church, Regina, shared the history of how Mennonite settlers in the Truax and Trossachs areas in the 1920s met for worship and fellowship, and how that led to the founding of a church in Regina in 1955 and its subsequent renovations that began in 1966. The congregation's prayer has been, "May the renovation of our building inspire renovation in our hearts."

Motives of peace and grace are fundamental to ministry at Grace. Laotian people who have moved to Regina are part of the congregation that is exploring ways to reach out to its community.

Peace Mennonite Church, a house church in Regina, had its beginnings in 1986. It is involved in refugee assistance and its ministry is international in scope

although it is quite different than traditional churches in many ways.

Stories were told by some of the refugees who have been helped to find their place in Canadian society through the ministry of Peace. People who come to Regina for study and work find Peace Church to be the place for them to connect to a faith community.

A three-hour bus ride from Regina brought the touring group to Aberdeen Mennonite Church, northeast of Saskatoon. It is a country church that is going to celebrate its centennial this year. Aberdeen has a history of being a "singing church," and members of the congregation led in prayer and singing, and inspired the group with special numbers in song by five men.

The 12 hours spent together by members of the touring mission fest group helped all to understand better who they are, what they have in common, how they seek to share their faith in Jesus Christ, and practise being the "people of God" in the Saskatchewan communities in which they live. ❧

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GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

New Cree translation celebrated

STORY AND PHOTO BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON, SASK.

A large group of educators, church workers and Cree speakers turned out last month to help celebrate the release of a new Cree translation of the New Testament Gospel of Mark. A united effort between Wycliffe Translators, the Canadian Bible Society and Saskatchewan Cree-speaking individuals, the translation built on the dedicated efforts of Reverend Stan Cuthand. The book is being sold along with a spoken version on CD, recorded by Delores Sand.

Oral traditions are strong in Cree communities and stories are often passed down using the spoken, rather than the printed, word.

According to Ruth Heeg of the Canadian Bible Society, the Cree translation was begun in the 1980s when Cuthand was hired by the society to begin the work. A complete translation of the Bible was accomplished in the 1860s, but was done in syllabics and is used mostly in northern communities. This new version, said Heeg, uses both syllabics and the written word.

Learning the Cree language was not encouraged in earlier generations due to the painful influence of residential schools. Aboriginal parents were told to speak English to their children because it would supposedly help them make it in the wider world, explained Sand. "That was so wrong," said Sand, a member of the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, during introductions for the evening event on behalf of the local working group of Cree translators.

Teresa Warkentin, youth pastor at Wildwood Mennonite Church, sits on the Mennonite Church Saskatchewan Ministries Commission. She said the commission has been looking closer at working with the First Nations communities in the province. "We're trying to figure out as a commission how we can relate better to the aboriginal community," she explained.

The commission has been learning

from Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan's Aboriginal Neighbours program and MC Canada Native Ministry co-directors Edith and Neill von Gunten, to determine what would be most helpful to the aboriginal community in Saskatchewan. The ministries commission was encouraged to attend the Cree translation release as a way of bridge-building to the First Nations community.

During the event, local translators spoke about defying real-life pressures to forget the Cree language, citing the example of family members who taught them the language even though they were told not to.

Ethel Ahenakew, who helped with the translation efforts, spoke on what this new book could mean for her people. "I have

high hopes that the Bible in Cree will bring our people back to the church," she said, adding, "The Bible is an effective guide to spiritual strength. In our Cree language, though, it is much more meaningful and deeper."

Edith von Gunten agrees. "As we all know, language is not only the heart of a people, but it is the vehicle that embodies the cultural understandings of a people," she said in an e-mail correspondence. "We have often wondered if things would be different today if more people had been able to read the Scriptures in their own language all these years. We have seen people's eyes show much feeling as they finally understood what the Scripture passage was saying, as they heard it in their own language, and with their own background and cultural understandings."

The packaged Book of Mark and accompanying CD will be available at the Canadian Bible Society website (biblesociety.ca) and hopefully for sale directly in Saskatchewan. About 500 copies were created in the first press run. ❧



Stan Cuthand, 92, a member of Little Pine First Nation, worked for years on the draft of a Cree translation of all of the New Testament and 40 percent of the Old Testament. The newly released Gospel of Mark is based on his work.

GOD AT WORK IN US

Celebrating faithful servanthood: 'Jesus is here!'

Ministry to Siksika Nation honoured by both band members and Mennonites alike

BY MARVIN BAERGEN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
SIKSIKA NATION, ALTA.

Members of Siksika Nation and Mennonite Church Alberta gathered twice on May 2 to give honour to God for a lifetime of faithful ministry by Alvin and Helen Lepp.

With the faithful support of his wife, Lepp has been visiting Siksika Nation for more than 30 years, sharing God's love through friendship and support during life's good times and bad. Over the years he has led Bible studies, served as a lay leader in local congregations, and become friend and confidant to many in times of joy and loss.

In the afternoon at the Siksika commun-

prayer warrior and a help during times of bereavement.

Dan Jack, a past member of the Mennonite Church Alberta Missions and Service Committee, told a story of traveling around the community one day with Lepp as he made his rounds. They drove onto one particular yard and observed a young boy at play. As soon as he saw the car approach, he ran to the house as if he was terrified. They quickly stopped the car and as they were getting out, Jack said they heard the young lad yell out to his family in the house: "Jesus is here!"

Neill and Edith von Gunten, co-direc-

Neill von Gunten calculated that Alvin Lepp had probably logged more than 750,000 kilometres of ministry travel, and in a brief meditation likened him to the tree in Psalm 1: 'Planted by the water, it yields its fruit in season.'

ity hall, Todd Munro, founder of Bridging the Gap Ministries, engaged the audience with stories of how Lepp had touched their lives. He spoke of recently visiting the Glenbow Museum, Calgary, and studying a picture of the signing of Treaty 7 in 1877 when his eyes were drawn to a figure in the back row. Pulling out a magnifying glass he said he was both "surprised and excited" to see that it was Alvin Lepp, a playful reference to the many years that he has been visiting the First Nations community.

Others commented on Lepp's gifts over the years as a servant, inspiration,

tors of Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministry, also commented on this ministry of presence that Lepp has quietly gone about these 30 years. Neill calculated that Lepp had probably logged more than 750,000 kilometres of ministry travel, and in a brief meditation likened him to the tree in Psalm 1: "Planted by the water, it yields its fruit in season."

In closing, they presented the Lepps with a cedar clock created by retired Native Ministry worker Henry Neufeld. It was offered as a reminder of the many times when "just a minute more" of time

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEILL AND EDITH VON GUNTEN



Alvin and Helen Lepp pose in front of a mural in the Siksika community hall, Alta., following an afternoon honouring them for their service to people of the First Nation.

spent with someone in need stretched out to 45 minutes or more of storytelling and support.

The evening service at Rosemary Mennonite was attended by approximately 120 people. Once again stories of how Lepp had impacted lives on Siksika Nation were told.

Particularly moving were the stories of Herman Yellow Old Woman, who now serves as a band councillor. He was a 14-year-old boy when Lepp first befriended him, and he recalled how he and two siblings subsequently went to Swift Current Bible School, Sask., with Lepp's help and encouragement. His mother, Eve Yellow Old Woman, spoke of the spiritual influence Lepp had on their family and finished her comments with a very moving prayer.

Lepp's son Steve talked about another of his father's ministry involvements: distributing Bibles and other Christian literature on the First Nation. Steve said his father had recently called him to ask if he could borrow a truck to pick up a shipment of Bibles from Calgary. Steve readily agreed and then Alvin asked whether they would have the use of a forklift to unload them. "A forklift to unload Bibles! I think not! I'm sure we can do it by hand," was Steve's reaction. When he got home from work the following day, though, Steve said the truck was full with a load of Bibles higher than the cab and the springs were down to the axles! ❧

ARTBEAT

BOOK REVIEW

Men need to understand their 'warrior' side

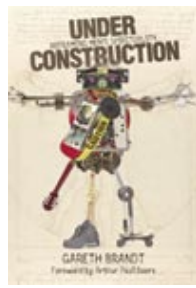
Under Construction: Reframing Men's Spirituality.

Gareth Brandt. Herald Press, 2009, 225 pages.

REVIEWED BY SCOTT BRUBAKER-ZEHR

Gareth Brandt has written a personally grounded book on men's spirituality as a resource for men's prayer or discussion groups. His goal is to reframe the basic contours of the field of men's spirituality, which he considers neither practical nor biblically resonant.

Brandt begins with his personal story and the quest for his own "unique spirituality as a man," and then surveys some of the literature in the field. Much of this literature adopts the Jungian



framework of archetypes put forth in 1990 by Moore and Gillette in their influential book, *King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of Mature Masculinity*. Brandt takes issue with the notion of archetypes in general and in particular with that of the "warrior."

He describes how various evangelical authors have latched onto this image in a disturbingly patriarchal fashion. Brandt does not "find the warrior at all helpful for developing a relevant and constructive male spirituality in an age of increasing terror and violence. Surely men can be spiritually adventurous and courageous without becoming dominant and violent," he writes.

Instead of archetypes, which he considers "almost coercive," he suggests a framework of metaphors based on the life of Joseph, which offers greater flexibility and biblical resonance.

While I agree with Brandt's critique of the evangelical appropriation of the warrior metaphor, I am not convinced of the necessity to do away with archetypes altogether. He seems to dismiss them without clearly understanding their nature or depth.

Richard Rohr, whom he

quotes numerous times, claims in his book *Adam's Return: The Five Promises of Male Initiation* (Crossroad Publishing) that all of the images he has encountered in his extensive work with men can be boiled down to "versions of the big four." Rohr also claims that "liberals generally do not understand the good and necessary meaning of the warrior," and I think Brandt may be a case in point.

The warrior archetype has to do with the natural male realities of passion, inner drive, and the desire to achieve and protect. In and of itself, warrior energy is not bad. Rohr promotes the archetypes as a means of meeting these realities within ourselves; by facing them—especially their shadow side—we open ourselves to transformation for Christian discipleship. Rohr says he has met many men in the peace movement with unresolved anger and an ambiguous witness due to a repression of the warrior archetype within them. I'm also reminded that Gandhi considered healthy warrior energy a prerequisite for successful training in nonviolent resistance.

After dismissing the archetypes, Brandt devotes the rest of the book to exploring the metaphors for a new construction of men's spirituality based on the biblical story of Joseph. There is much good content for discussion here. I particularly appreciate his poignant reflections on his own boyhood wound, and his subsequent journey of healing. The book is written with integrity and is recommended for group study and reflection. ❧

Scott Brubaker-Zehr is pastor at Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.

PHOTO BY AMY DUECKMAN



*Author Gareth Brandt, seated, signs copies of his book *Under Construction: Reframing Men's Spirituality* at this spring's book launch at House of James Christian bookstore, Abbotsford, B.C.*

New book speaks out on the environment and justice

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

Alberta Correspondent
EDMONTON, ALTA.

The original prologue to *Speaking for Ourselves* was written with a pencil stub sharpened on rough stairs and then lost by prison officials. Retired chief Robert Lovelace of the Ardoch Algonquin First Nation, who was serving a six-month sentence for blocking a road after a mining company had illegally occupied aboriginal land in the winter of 2006-07, had to then write it a second time.

Speaking for Ourselves



It is a tragic, albeit ironic, introduction to a new collection of essays by scholars and activists examining the relationship between the environment and justice in Canada. At a March 24 book launch at Edmonton's Greenwood's Book Shoppe, co-editor Randy Haluza-Delay, a member of First Mennonite

Church, Edmonton, spoke about the importance of the issues. "Social justice and environmental sustainability are the two legs we're walking into the future with," he said.

Speaking for Ourselves (UBC Press, 2010) consists of 13 chapters written by a wide variety of Canadians, including academics and activists, women and men, First Nations people and others.

In the introduction the editors write: "We highlight the conversations relating to environmental justice espoused by the

contributors, rather than attempting to denote all that environmental justice can be. . . . We hope that the stories shared will be part of a larger conversation in which relations between humans, non-humans, the environment and social justice on the ground (and in the air and water) can be moved in a good way toward more equitable relations."

As Canadians drive cars, upgrade technology and stock fridges, they notice the immediate impact on their wallets, but do they notice the more subtle effects on society's collective well-being? Do they grasp the extent of debt exacted on the environment and society?

Gail Greenwood, Greenwood's Bookshoppe owner, doesn't think so. She thinks the general public has not made the connection between the environment and justice issues, and does not understand that these problems occur on Canadian soil. After the launch of *Speaking for Ourselves*, she encouraged Haluza-Delay to look into producing a trade version of the book because "this is an important topic. No one has done this yet."

Speaking for Ourselves: Environmental Justice in Canada is edited by Julian Agyeman, Peter Cole, Pat O'Riley and Haluza-Delay. It is available online at chapters.ca. ❧



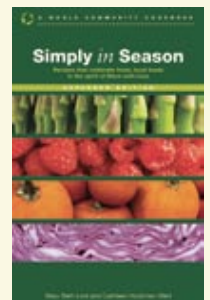
Randy Haluza-Delay, a member of Edmonton's First Mennonite Church, signs a copy of *Speaking For Ourselves: Environmental Justice in Canada*, a UBC Press book that he co-edited.

/// Briefly noted

Simply in Season receives honourable mention at Green Book Festival

The expanded edition of *Simply in Season*, a Herald Press cookbook that celebrates cooking and eating locally and seasonally produced food, received an honourable mention at the 2010 Green Book Festival in San Francisco. The festival, which honours books that contribute to greater understanding, respect and positive action on the changing worldwide environment, judges books in a variety of categories, including cookbooks, fiction, non-fiction, children, youth, gardening, poetry and others. Co-authored by Cathleen Hockman-Wert and Mary Beth Lind, *Simply in Season* contains recipes that use locally grown and fairly traded seasonal foods, together with stories that reflect on how North Americans buy and eat food, and how it affects their local and global neighbours. For more information about *Simply in Season*, or to order the book, visit www.mpn.net/simplyinseason.

—Mennonite Publishing Network Release



Re:connections

MCC, Bethany College dramatize victim-offender relationship

BY KARIN FEHDERAU

Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON, SASK.

Kelsey Regehr found herself dealing with the difficult subject of murder and victim-offender reconciliation in April. Not personally, however, but dramatically. A member of Niverville Community

Fellowship, Man., Regehr is in her second year at Bethany Bible College, Hepburn, Sask., and part of the Bethany Players drama team.

“It was a great growing experience,” she

said of the four roles she took on in the production

Re:connections, which played in various centres across the Prairies this spring. “It’s great to see how we can talk through this, but it’s hard to see the pain that [the characters] are in.”

The idea of bringing the Bible college together with the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Victim’s Voice and Restorative Justice programs was the brainchild of Stephen Siemens, MCC Saskatchewan’s restorative justice program co-ordinator. Wondering if there was some way to bring more attention to prison issues, he approached Wilma Derksen from Victim’s Voice in Winnipeg to ask if she had a drama

that would help promote the concept.

Derksen knew of a play written by the John Howard Society that explored the issue from the offender’s perspective. Together with some others, Derksen had authored a second drama in response that brought in the victim’s viewpoint.

For a long time, the two works sat separate on the shelf until Siemens began exploring the concept of bringing the two ideas together. Derksen agreed to rewrite some parts and add the ending so that the often-raw emotions of a victim-offender relationship could be better portrayed on stage.

“I re-wrote a lot of the script,” she explained in a post-production interview, admitting she was moved to tears during the dress rehearsal because of her personal identification with the issue, having lost a daughter to murder in the mid-1980s.

At times painful to watch, the play is true to life and looks closely at the deep hurt and remorse suffered on both sides by a life-changing and random act of violence. Both offender and victim struggle to find meaning in it all and the audience observes the process they go through.

During a discussion after the play, James Loewen, restorative justice coordinator with MCC Canada, spoke about crime and the public justice system. There are 11 million crimes committed in Canada every year, he noted, but only a small number of cases go through the courts.

While acknowledging the dedication and hard work of Corrections Canada, he wondered if reconciliation was a better option. “We need to tell Corrections Canada [that] we can’t change people, can’t hit them over the head and expect them to change,” he suggested.

Derksen, in her role with Victim’s Voice, lent a note of balance to the issue, admitting it’s not easy to bring two sides together within the victim-offender model. “We need to create safe places [for a meeting],” she said, pointing out, though, that even if both sides come together there can be no expectations on the part of the victim that the offender will change.

Still, Loewen holds out hope. ☞

PHOTO BY DARLENE DYCK



*Chris Frostad, left, plays a troubled young man opposite Kelsey Regehr (as his high school teacher) in the play *Re:connections* put on by Bethany Bible College students in Saskatoon, Sask., on April 28.*

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Staff changes

Amy Gingerich to become new MPN editorial director

The retirement this summer of Eleanor Snyder, editorial director for Faith & Life Resources, has prompted some changes at Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN). Beginning in mid-June, Amy Gingerich, currently editorial director for Herald Press, will assume the new position of editorial director for all MPN products. In this role she will provide leadership for all Herald Press and Faith & Life Resources products. This will include managing the process and the staff required to develop the editorial content. She will work out of Hudson, Ohio.



Gingerich



Rempel-Burkholder




Weber

Assisting Gingerich will be Byron Rempel-Burkholder, currently part of MPN's Faith & Life Resources' editorial team, who will become managing book editor. In this role he will edit and manage all titles with the Herald Press imprint, and will continue as *Rejoice!* editor. He will work out of Winnipeg, Man. Mary Ann Weber of Goshen, Ind., has been appointed managing curriculum editor. Weber, who graduated from Eastern Mennonite University with a degree in early childhood education, and from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary with a degree in Christian formation, begins her new position in July. Weber is presently the human resources coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Great Lakes.

—From MPN Releases

Schools directory

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News Update

Check out NEWS UPDATE, the newest feature on *Canadian Mennonite's* website: www.canadianmennonite.org. It highlights important breaking calendar events of the week across the provinces, significant personnel changes and other happenings that are of significance to you, our readers.

Calendar

Alberta

July 1: Mennonite Women Canada's annual meeting, lunch and workshop, "Bridging the gap and enlarging the tent," at Ambrose University College, Calgary, from 12:30 to 2:45 p.m. Part of the MC Canada annual assembly events.

July 24-25: Salem Mennonite Church, Tofield, 100th anniversary celebration. Pre-registration by May 31 is imperative. For more information, or to pre-register, contact Joe and Elaine Kauffman by phone at 780-662-2344 or e-mail at jolane72@gmail.com.

Saskatchewan

June 24: RJC musical performance for youths, at 7 p.m.

June 25,26: RJC spring musical, *Oliver*, at 7:30 p.m. each evening.

July 2-3: Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim, celebrates its 100th anniversary.

July 16-18: Zoar Mennonite Church, Langham, celebrates its 100th anniversary.

July 24-25: Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite Church, northeast of Laird, celebrates its 100th anniversary. Register by June 15 to Box 57, Laird, SK S0K 2H0, or e-mail trmc@sasktel.net.

Aug. 23-27: Natural building school at Shekinah Retreat Centre.

Aug. 28-29: Laird Mennonite Church celebrates its 100th anniversary.

Manitoba

June 24: Eden Foundation hosts its annual fundraising Ironman Golf Tournament at Winkler Centennial Golf Course.

June 27: Opening of the "Decorative arts in the Mennonite home: Manitoba heritage furniture and floor patterns" exhibit at Friesen Housebarn

Interpretive Centre, Neuberghal (near Altona). Curators: Ron and Sandi Mielitz.

July 15: MCC Manitoba eighth annual golf tournament in support of literacy and education efforts in Afghanistan. To register online, visit manitoba.mcc.org/golf. Registration limited to first 144 golfers. Early bird deadline: June 30.

July 17: Eden Foundation hosts its third annual Tractor Trek through southern Manitoba, beginning in Reinland.

Ontario

June 25-27: Direct descendents of Christian Reesor and Fanny Reiff are invited to attend a family reunion in Markham. For more information, visit reesorfamily.on.ca.

June 26: Nithview Community strawberry social at Nithview Home, New Hamburg, from 2 to 4 p.m. and again from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Sponsored by the Nithview Auxiliary.

June 27: Milverton Mennonite Fellowship hosting "Truckers Sunday." Events include a truck parade at 9:30 a.m. from the Milverton Co-op; church service at 10 a.m. with speakers Vernon Erb and Len Reimer; and special music by Rescue Junction; barbecue lunch; and children's activities.

July 1-4: Family camping weekend at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp, New Hamburg. Tent, trailer or book a cabin. For more information, or to make a reservation, call 519-625-8602.

U.S.

July 19-22: Native assembly, North Cheyenne Reservation, Ashland, Mont. Theme: "I am the potter, you are the clay" (Isaiah 45:9 and Jeremiah 16:8). Sponsored by MC Canada Native Ministry and Native Mennonite Missions USA. Registration forms available from MC Canada office.

Aug. 6-7: If your last name is Shirk, Sherk, Sherick, etc., consider attending the biennial reunion of the Schürch Family Association of North America, Harrisonburg, Va. For more information, e-mail Verne Schirch at vmschurch856@gmail.com or visit schurch.ca.

To ensure timely publication of upcoming events, please send Calendar announcements eight weeks in advance of the event date by e-mail to calendar@canadianmennonite.org.

Classifieds

Employment Opportunities

TWO-THIRDS-TIME PASTOR

Erie View United Mennonite Church, Port Rowan, Ont., is in search of a two-thirds-time pastor to commence in the late summer or early fall of 2010. We are a rural congregation located on the north shore of Lake Erie in southwestern Ontario. Average Sunday attendance is 40 people. General duties would include worship planning, preaching, pastoral care, and working with the youth and young adults.

For further information or to submit an application, please contact W. Michael Wiebe, Chairperson of the Pastoral Search Committee, at wmwiebe@brimage.com or by telephone at 519-426-5840; or Muriel Bechtel, Conference Minister, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, at mbechtel@mcec.ca or by telephone at 519-650-3806.

PASTOR

Tofield Mennonite Church is searching for a pastor who is fearless and passionate for God, and is gifted in the areas of community outreach, preaching and teaching. We are an Anabaptist congregation of about 70 members in a growing town of about 2,000 people, with many acreage and farm families living in the surrounding area. Edmonton is only about 45 km northwest of us. Blessed with a newer sanctuary and fellowship hall, we look forward to working together with a pastor who has an outgoing personality and is eager to help our church bring Jesus to our community. The opportunity is great. Is God calling you?

Please direct resumes to:
B. Goerzen, Search Contact, Box 443, Tofield, AB T0B 4J0
or e-mail: bgoerzen@hotmail.com

FULL-TIME PASTOR

Lethbridge Mennonite Church, located in southwestern Alberta, invites applications for a full-time **Lead Pastor**, starting October 2010. As a servant-leader in the congregation, the pastor needs to be committed to the Christian faith, as exemplified in the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*, and have gifts as a preacher, a teacher, a counsellor and a spiritual leader for all age groups.

We are an urban congregation with a membership of about 80, with diverse ages and occupations. We are actively involved with MC Canada, MC Alberta, MCC and local community organizations.

To express your interest in this position, please contact Lethbridge Mennonite Church, c/o Pastoral Search Committee, 4303 - 3 Avenue South, Lethbridge, AB T1J 4B3, or e-mail lmsearch@hotmail.com.

Upcoming Advertising Dates

Issue Date	Ads Due
July 12	June 29
Aug. 2	July 20
Aug. 23	Aug. 10
Sept. 6	Aug. 24

WORK PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITY!

**Always dreamed of spending time in the Netherlands?
Are you between 18 and 26 years of age?**

Two Dutch Mennonite conference centres are offering you the possibility of making your dream a reality.

Sign up for a paid work placement position in the Netherlands before July 5, 2010. Only **six** placements are available. Send your email to w.brink@mennorode.nl.

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**EDEN MENTAL HEALTH CENTRE
ADMINISTRATOR & PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

Eden Mental Health Centre, in Winkler, Man., provides acute in-patient psychiatric treatment and out-patient psychiatry services, as well as community mental health services to the RHA-Central Manitoba in conjunction with other Eden Health Care Services programs.

Qualifications: The successful candidate will have:

- Demonstrated experience in the practices and principles of health care administration and health care management;
- Several years of progressively responsible, comprehensive managerial experience, preferably in the mental health field;
- Thoroughgoing familiarity with mental health programming, emergent issues, trends and challenges.

Duties include:

- Provision of overall administrative leadership and program direction to Centre services within the context of an interdisciplinary leadership team.
- Ensuring effective patient care consistent with organizational mission and values.
- Regular reporting to the EMHC Board.
- Financial management.
- Attracting, maintaining and developing human resources.
- Maintaining effective working relationships with related programs, services and agencies.

Eden Mental Health Centre is a program of Eden Health Care Services, an Anabaptist/ Mennonite faith-based organization providing a range of mental health recovery programs as a service of Manitoba Mennonite churches and in collaboration with the Regional Health Authority – Central Manitoba.

Direct applications to:

CEO, Eden Health Care Services
Box 129, Winkler, MB R6W 4A4
E-mail: jfriesen.ehcs@mts.net
Phone: 204-325-5355 Fax: 204-325-8742
www.edenhealth.mb.ca

Closing date: June 30, 2010, or until position filled.



**PAX CHRISTI CHORALE
ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR**

Pax Christi Chorale is a 90-voice auditioned oratorio choir drawing together singers from across the GTA, including local Mennonites and many from other faith traditions and cultures. A sixteen-voice Chamber Choir is incorporated within the choir. The Pax Christi Youth Choir, conducted by Lynn Janes, is in its second season.

Artistic Director Stephanie Martin is dedicated to performing the great works of choral literature, with a view to achieving musical excellence and sustaining a supportive choral community.

The Pax Christi Board of Directors is currently seeking an Assistant Conductor for the organization. For a full position description, or to submit your resume for consideration, please e-mail Laura Adlers, General Manager, at laura.adlers@paxchristichorale.org. Deadline for applications is July 30, 2010. Interviews will be held in August 2010.

For Rent

For Rent: Bedroom and access to common living spaces in a newly remodelled 1,160-square-foot house, **2 kms from CMU**. E-mail hjfranz@mts.net for more information.

Waterloo house for rent.

Owners going overseas on MC Canada assignment, looking for reliable family/individuals. Must commit to one-year lease beginning September 1, 2010. Inquiries at erv_marian@hotmail.com.

For rent: Dunromin Cottage. 3-bdrm cottage at Red Bay on Bruce Peninsula. Nestled among maple trees. Short walk to sandy beach and small park. Rear deck. Available June 26-Aug 21. Phone 519-746-4920.

Announcement

REESOR REUNION 2010 - Direct descendents of CHRISTIAN REESOR and FANNY REIFF are invited to attend a family reunion June 25, 26 & 27, 2010 in Markham, Ontario. Please visit www.reesorfamily.on.ca for details.

Looking to Adopt

LOVING FAMILY READY TO ADOPT. We are a loving happily married couple with a 5-year-old daughter. We are eager to adopt and hope to have an open relationship with you. We offer plenty of love, patience, financial stability & all the advantages for your child. If you've been contemplating adoption, we would love to hear from you. Please e-mail familywaitingtoadopt@hotmail.com anytime.

From Plum Coulee to Reynosa

PHOTO COURTESY OF DOROTHY CHLUPAC



Bob Siemens of Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Man., spent 10 days over Easter helping refurbish a centre for homeless Mexican children.

Bergthaler Mennonite youth group helps refurbish centre for homeless Mexican children

BY CLEO HEINRICHS

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

Sixteen senior youths and four adult leaders from Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Man., brushed up on their Spanish while helping out at Children's Haven International (CHI) in Reynosa, Mexico, over Easter vacation this spring.

CHI's facilities in Reynosa include six four-bedroom homes, each of which house up to 10 Mexican children and their house-parents, known as *tio* and *tia* (uncle and aunt). Working in teams of four, the youths stripped the walls of old paint, sanded the surface, and then repainted. Some groups were involved in sorting and organizing donated clothes. The work shifts started at 8 a.m. and lasted until mid-afternoon.

When the work was done for the day, the youths—10 young women and six young men—and their leaders devoted their time to the Mexican children, who soak up the love and attention given them. Some of their favourite activities are playing soccer and swimming in the local pool.

"The Mexican children have no personal space boundaries, and attach themselves easily to new people on the compound," noted youth pastor Rob Penner upon their return, adding that their affection was shown freely and joyfully. At suppertime, the visiting Canadian youths sat down with the kids of the *casas* (houses) and the house-parents to enjoy their meals together.

The 10 days away, including Easter Sunday, came to an end so quickly, but the memories and challenges will hang around for a long time!

Erin Loewen summed up her experience by saying, "The whole episode impacted me very much. It made me rethink a lot of stuff: how those people are so poor and yet so happy. I had to rethink my priorities."

"We were strangers when we met, but not for long," said Peter Heinrichs. "Soon we were friends. What also touched me was that they don't have nearly as much as we do, and yet they're so satisfied with what they have. And they love to play soccer!" ❧