

CANADIAN MENNONITE

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Volume 15 Number 17



Paying attention to
the words we sing

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EDITORIAL

Food as faith formation

DICK BENNER
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

What is it with Mennonites and food? We seem to take great pride in the cultural dishes from our German/Swiss/Russian backgrounds and more recently those national newcomers to our faith—Asian, Latino, African and Eastern European. There isn't a church potluck or social gathering we don't like. Before every important congregational decision we seem to think better if we have first dined together.

Some of our most successful business entrepreneurs from the eastern United States and Ontario are internationally known for mass production and marketing of poultry products, prompting historian John L. Ruth to remark at the zenith of their ventures: "Mennonites have been more successful in exporting their agricultural products than their faith."

The latest bestseller from our bi-national Herald Press, *Mennonite Girls Can Cook*, is already in its third printing, having sold 12,300 copies (9,000 in Canada), while receiving rave reviews from the critics. It adds to the list of food bestsellers of the last century: *The Mennonite Cookbook* (469,300 copies), *More With Less* (866,700 copies), and *Simply in Season* (117,250 copies). It has now surpassed the *The Naked Anabaptist* (10,300 copies), the popular eye-catcher that presents the seven core convictions of our faith brand written by a British newcomer, Stuart Murray.

Next to our food is our ethnicity, most noticeably attracting attention to our Amish and Old Order cousins. The public never seems to let up on its fascination with their quaint, but uncomplicated lifestyle, unencumbered with modern technology and conveniences.

John Hostetler's *The Amish* has sold the second highest number of copies by Herald Press (782,139).

So is this unwanted attention? Do some of us wish these cultural ornaments would just disappear so that we could focus on more substantive issues—like justice, peace, the good news of Jesus and creation care?

Some of us are impatient—sometimes even frustrated and disgusted—with these very un-nuanced public perceptions. On the food issue, some of us who are zealous with healthy eating in an over-indulgent era are not happy with some of the recipes promoted by these bestsellers. Dishes can be high in fat, sugar and calories, contributing to, not negating, the ever-increasing problems of obesity that lead to heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers.

But there are some things in which to take comfort.

First, food in the Mennonite culture is very authentic. Historically, we are an agrarian people. Raising our families in rural Europe and North America, we have always been people of the soil. There is no denying our roots.

We have always taken great pleasure in growing food, in developing seed and soil

for maximum production. Our migrations have taken us to the most fertile valleys and plains of the new frontiers. Empires have sought us out for agricultural development because of our farming skills, strong work ethic and stable families.

Second, because farming was hard work, the food on our tables had to be nutritious and substantive for the energy required to work in the fields. Our kitchen tables were sources not only of delicious meals, but good conversation, helping to develop identity and debate, where an intergenerational dialogue passed on important values. This was borne out in the "Conversations with our mothers" sidebar in *Mennonite Girls Can Cook*.

Our dining room tables were centres of hospitality for fellow church members, neighbours and friends, contributing to the shaping of our narrative as a people and of our faith.

These are things in which we can take well-deserved pride. But instead of turning them into only a commercial advantage and, thus overshadowing the importance of our faith, should they not now become channels of hospitality and welcome for others in the wider society?

Our tables should be, and in many cases are, places of refuge for the weary and isolated, and lead the way to healthy eating through such cookbooks as Doris Longacre's *More With Less* and *Extending the Table*, its follow-up companion that celebrates the dishes of many other cultures.

Only this will redeem our food and identity as enduring virtues worthy of our neighbour's curiosity. If we only claim them for marketing and cultural landmarks, they could pass with the next generation, ending up as relics of a dying civilization.



ABOUT THE COVER:

'Let me write the songs of a nation. I don't care who writes its laws,' 17th-century Scottish politician Andrew Fletcher is said to have exclaimed. Christine Longhurst, in her feature article on page 4, believes that the songs the church sings has a power to shape what we believe about God and the life of faith, and, because of that, we should 'pay attention to the words.'

PHOTO: ISTOCK

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Guiding values:

-Hebrews 10:23-25

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-Seeking and speaking the truth in love

-Open hearts and minds in discerning God's will

-Covenantal relationships and mutual accountability

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Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



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MELISSA MILLER

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Paying attention to the words we sing

BY CHRISTINE LONGHURST
For Meetinghouse



Praise is important, but if we want our relationship with God to be honest, praise alone isn't enough. Our worship needs to make room for a wide range of emotion and response.

“Let me write the songs of a nation. I don’t care who writes its laws.”

This statement attributed to 17th-century Scottish politician Andrew Fletcher about countries also applies to the church.

Christians have long recognized the power of music to shape what we believe about God and the life of faith.

If New Testament scholar Gordon Fee’s statement, “Show me a church’s songs, and I’ll show you their theology,” is really true—and I believe it is—why do we seem to pay so little attention to the texts of the songs we sing?

In many congregations, far more attention is focused on the musical style of our worship songs than on the words we sing. We debate the merits of traditional hymns, gospel songs, praise and worship music, and songs of the global church. We argue over the use of praise bands and organs, unison singing and four-part harmony. Many of us are so focused on musical style that we’ve even named our services accordingly: we speak of “contemporary,” “traditional” or “blended” worship.

In all the workshops and seminars I do, people frequently want to talk about musical style. The question of the text—the words we sing—rarely comes up.

Historically, the word “hymn” referred to the words of a song. Hymns were poems of faith. Early hymnals resembled books of poetry, and rarely included music. Tunes were interchangeable and often used for a variety of different texts. The practice of “interlining” the words of a text between the lines of music wasn’t generally

FILE PHOTO BY RACHEL DERKSEN



With words on the big screens, thousands of Canadian and American youths join in spirited singing at the 2005 youth convention in Charlotte, N.C.

done until the late 19th century, and then primarily in North America.

There's no question that music is important. But how carefully does your congregation choose the song texts it uses in worship? Who evaluates the words you sing? How healthy and balanced are your textual choices? What might be missing?

Consider some of these questions.

To whom are we singing?

How clearly do our songs identify the God to whom we sing? I recall being part of a worship service where God was not clearly named until the start of the sermon. In all of the songs and comments to that point, God was referred to simply as "you." As worshippers, we were left to draw our own conclusions about who this God was that we were singing to.

What about the triune nature of God?

Are the songs we're singing rooted in our understanding of the Trinitarian nature and activity of God?

A few years ago, Lester Ruth, professor of worship at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Ky., studied 72 top contemporary songs used in North

American worship over a 15-year period. He discovered that only three of the 72 songs referred to all three persons of the Trinity. Four songs referred to God as Father, and only six referred to the Spirit. Jesus was named most often, appearing in 32 songs.

Robin Wallace, professor of worship at Methodist Theological School, Delaware, Ohio, discovered much the same thing in a similar study. Of the 47 texts he looked at, 11 songs addressed God as an ambiguous "you." Almost half of the texts made no direct reference to Jesus or any part of his life, death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit was only mentioned in five songs.

How well do our songs reflect the Trinitarian nature of God? Does it matter if a majority of the songs we sing are directed towards only one or another person of the Trinity? What difference might that make to what we believe about God, or about how God is at work in our world?

Who is singing?

One of the characteristics of contemporary worship music is the focus on "I" in worship songs—songs that reflect private religious feeling, and which express the

'Show me a church's songs, and I'll show you their theology.'

(Gordon Fee, New Testament scholar)

desires and commitments of individual worshippers, rather than the gathered community.

This isn't a new phenomenon. We can find numerous examples of "I" hymns from centuries past. What's worth noticing today, however, is that these songs are now surrounded by a larger worship culture that increasingly understands the life of faith as an individual journey. For many today, weekly worship is not seen as a corporate activity—a conversation between God and the gathered community. Instead, it's seen as a private encounter—a conversation between God and me. We may all be gathered in the same room for worship, but the conversations are often private ones.

As Anabaptists, we believe that the faith Jesus calls us to is not simply a private, solitary faith. It is faith lived out in community.

Tertullian, a church leader from the fourth century, wrote: "One Christian is no Christian." How well do our worship songs reflect this reality? Do we have a healthy balance of "I" and "we" songs in our worship?

What do we sing about?

How well do we balance songs about God's nature and attributes (faithful, holy, loving, etc.) with songs about God's actions in history (creation, incarnation, redemption, etc.)?

We've all heard people comment about the "shallowness" of contemporary worship music. In my experience, the shallowness people sometimes experience is directly related to a lack of balance between songs about God's attributes and God's activity. Singing about God's faithfulness wears thin unless we remember the ways in which God has been faithful. Our praise and worship of God is best rooted in our recognition of what God has done.

In the same way, it's important to balance songs of revelation with songs of response. One of the best gifts contemporary praise and worship music has brought to the church has been the gift of response—songs that offer worshippers a chance to sing directly to God, instead of primarily singing about God. But an exclusive diet of response songs can lead to worship that is more about me and how I feel about God than it is about who God is and what God has done.

On the other hand, if we just sing songs of revelation—songs that point us to some objective truth about who God is

How is textual diversity tied to musical diversity?

Like it or not, the texts we sing are directly related to musical style. Different musical styles bring with them different kinds of texts. My own decision to use a variety of musical styles in worship is not based primarily on musical considerations, but on a concern for the texts that accompany those different styles.

An exclusive diet of praise and worship songs is not enough. Neither is an exclusive diet of traditional hymns, contemporary hymns, or songs from Taizé, the Iona Community or the global church.

texts, traditional texts and newly composed contemporary texts. It balances finely crafted poetic texts to which we can return again and again with colloquial texts written in the immediacy of the moment without regard to literary quality. It values texts that speak to God, texts that speak to one another, and texts through which God speaks to us. It seeks to include texts from both the global Christian community and our local Christian communities.

Just as in conversations with one another, our dialogue with God is enriched by a wide diversity of content and style, both textual and musical.

If our worship is to rise above mere entertainment or education—if we truly believe that worship is a conversation between God and God's people—then the words of that conversation need to be chosen with great care. ❧

Just as in conversations with one another, our dialogue with God is enriched by a wide diversity of content and style, both textual and musical.

and how God has acted—but rarely have a chance to respond to what that truth means in our lives, then our worship can easily remain at the level of information only, and never bring us to a place where real transformation can happen.

Songs of revelation naturally lead to songs of response. A healthy diet of worship music seeks to balance revelation and response.

Balance is also important when it comes to the range of emotion expressed in the songs we sing. Praise is important, but if we want our relationship with God to be honest, praise alone isn't enough. Our worship needs to make room for a wide range of emotion and response.

There's also the matter of balancing the imminence (nearness) of God with God's transcendence (otherness). Both views of God are true: God is both companion and creator. How well do our song texts hold these truths—intimacy and awe—in tension with one another, so that God is neither too approachable nor completely out of reach? How well do our overall song choices balance texts like, "O Lord, you're beautiful, your face is all I seek," with texts like, "Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes"?

Healthy worship draws on a wide variety of different textual—and therefore musical—styles. It seeks to balance objective texts about who God is and what God has done with subjective texts that offer worshippers a chance to respond personally to God. It tries to balance topical texts that explore biblical themes and contemporary issues with contemplative texts that allow worshippers to simply spend time in God's presence.

Healthy worship includes scriptural

Christine Longhurst is a sessional instructor at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Man., and regularly leads workshops on worship across Canada. Visit her blog for worship planners and leaders at re-worship.blogspot.com. Meetinghouse is an association of North American Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ publications.

❧ For discussion

1. How are the songs and music chosen in your congregation? How much thought is given to the words when songs are chosen? Do you agree that we focus on the style of music more than the words we sing? What might help us focus on the words?
2. If someone analyzed the songs your congregation has used in the past year, what would they say about what you believe? Are the songs balanced with a wide range of emotions and a variety of texts? How might you work at broadening the types of songs you sing?
3. Are there some songs that have special meaning or are used at specific times in your congregation? What makes them special? Are there songs that are congregational favourites? How do they become favourites? How are new songs taught?
4. At this summer's Mennonite Church Canada assembly, Mark Diller Harder reported on the work of the Mennonite Binational Worship Council, which is considering how to best provide worship and music resources for our churches. What advice would you give this council regarding hymnbooks or other music resources for the Mennonite church in the 21st century?

VIEWPOINTS

/// Readers write

We welcome your comments and publish most letters sent by subscribers intended for publication. This section is largely an 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. Keep letters to 400 words or less and address issues rather than individuals. We do not countenance rancour or animosity. Personal attacks are inappropriate and will not see the light of print. 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. Preference will be given to letters from MC Canada congregants.

✉ Treasurer defends MC Canada cutbacks

RE: "MC CANADA applauded for unpopular cutbacks" letter, July 11, page 8.

I'm heartened to hear that letter writer Jake Rempel is going to send more money to Mennonite Church Canada to help run its programs. I am, however, disheartened by his comment that MC Canada and other church organizations need to trim our "bloated budgets."

I would like to challenge Rempel to tell me and the rest of the board of MC Canada how our budgets over the past four years or so were bloated? The cuts that were made have brought our spending in line with donations, but at the cost of having to cut some programs and restructure others.

How is this dealing with a bloated budget? Should we have asked our staff to take pay cuts to keep programming going as it was? We're already feeling a lack

Revisiting 9/11

ARLYN FRIESEN EPP

South of the border, there was lots of attention again this year around Sept. 11, especially given that it was the 10th anniversary of those terrible events. That it happened to fall on a Sunday made me think of offering a voice of lament, confession and a call for nonviolent peacemaking.

This is our challenge, too, even in Canada, where Sept. 11 has also led to our calamitous involvements in Afghanistan and elsewhere, has "justified" increased military spending, and led to more rigid immigration policies, among other changes.

My prayer for Sept. 11 and the days that follow, when a voice of peace needs to be heard, is this:

"Merciful God, we mourn the violence and injustice that takes root in many forms and in many places far and near. Merciful God, we thirst for your peace. We recognize the roots of conflict in ourselves and our complicity in systems of power and control. Merciful God, we thirst for your reconciliation. We confess

that stereotypes, envy, suspicion and racism shape our perceptions and influence our actions. Merciful God, we thirst for your truth. We acknowledge that at times we fear our neighbours. Merciful God, we thirst for your love. We repent of the ways we contribute to suspicion, fear and violence. Guide us as we reaffirm our calling as your peacemakers. Grant



FROM OUR LEADERS

us courage to risk loving each of our neighbours at home and around the globe. Satisfy our thirst by leading us to your living water. Amen." (From *Words For Worship 2*.)

In the days following that "first" Sept. 11, I wrote a hymn based on Psalm 46, now found in *Sing the Journey*: "God is our refuge and strength / Our help in times of terror and trouble / Therefore we shall not fear / Though the earth shall change / Though the mountains shall shake in the heart of the sea / God is our refuge and strength." I encourage us to draw from Scripture, especially the

Psalms, in times of uncertainty.

Emboldened by God's care and vision, strengthened by God's Spirit, how will we now act for peace in our neighbourhoods and communities? Will we say—with our voice and our tax dollars—"Stop!" Will we support the initiative to establish a Canadian Department of Peace? Will we join the Mennonite church conversation at liveforpeace.org? Will we engage with our neighbours, and risk bridging the gaps that exist in our own backyard? Will we pray? Will we shape our worship to reflect the Prince of Peace? Will we

look at the causes of violence, and seek restorative solutions? Will we advocate for the least of these? Will love overcome our fear?

We cannot be silent. With God's grace, we must proclaim and practise the first fruits of God's reign on earth as it is in heaven. God's peace to you!

Arlyn Friesen Epp is director of the Mennonite Church Canada Resource Centre, Winnipeg, Man. For further worship resources on peace at a time of war/conflict, see www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1604.

of applicants for our vacant positions because we're at the bottom end of the pay scale for this kind of work.

Yes, good leadership will make the hard choices, but it has made MC Canada a smaller organization. Are we less bloated by being smaller?

There are many exciting things happening in Canada among our brothers and sisters from around the world. They want to be Mennonites, and now we may not be able to provide much support for that to happen.

I pray that many more people are convinced to send us more money, so we can replace some of the programming that was cut, so our church can grow and

God can continue to do great and marvellous things in his church.

GORDON PETERS, SASKATOON, SASK.

Gordon Peters is treasurer of MC Canada.

✉ In praise of *Canadian Mennonite*

I WANT TO thank you all and commend you for your intense and enticing contributions to the *Canadian Mennonite*. I have been a reader of *Canadian Mennonite* for about a year or so and I have always

Talking about shopping

DORI ZERBE CORNELSEN

In the retail shopping world, the dog days of summer are no longer known as "August," but rather "back-to-school." This has become the year's second largest seasonal shopping event behind "winter holidays" (not "Christmas"). Advertising campaigns have made the link between these high seasons of shopping, suggesting that back-to-school for parents is "the most wonderful time of the year."

When Statistics Canada reported that sales edged up slightly in May, retailers anticipated a stronger back-to-school shopping season. This wasn't the case in the United States, where the National Retail Federation (NRF) predicted a slight dip in back-to-school spending.

NRF president and chief executive officer Matthew Shay suggested, "Families aren't opposed to spending on what they need, but parents want their children to take a good look around at what they already have before deciding what to buy for back-to-school this year." When the dust settles, the question is, how did families negotiate what children need in this highly charged season of buying?

Without routine communication between parents and children about money,

it is tough to settle spending disputes in the middle of a seasonal rush. Instead of hoping that money issues will just resolve themselves, families need to have regular values-based money conversations, according to Nathan Dungan, author of *Money Sanity Solutions: Linking Money and Meaning*. Dungan's research has found that adolescents whose families openly talk about money issues are less focused on spending and have improved self-esteem in comparison with other adolescents.

Dungan encourages families to first talk together about money assumptions, such as how to distinguish between needs and wants. Everyone experiences

GOD, MONEY AND ME

"gotta have it now moments," Dungan says. Being able to step back and decide whether something is a need or a want is an important life skill. Finding a good balance between the two is another.

Here's a suggestion: Parents and children could go through back-to-school purchases and talk about which were need items and which were want items. If different conclusions are reached, this provides the chance to talk about the values that help each person tell the

difference between the two. It can also be very enlightening for parents to invite children to talk about how they experience household spending with regards to needs and wants.

With this foundation, parents and children can begin tackling other questions together, such as:

- Do brands really matter?
- How does peer pressure affect the spending decisions of every family member?
- What are appropriate technology needs?
- Can we all agree to spend less on ourselves and share more with others?

Given that the largest seasonal shopping event is just around the corner, this could be the perfect time for families to start talking about money and values. There are resources to help with this, including Dungan's book (sharesaves-

pend.com) and MFC's *First Things First* (mennofoundation.ca).

Let good conversations begin!

Dori Zerbe Cornelsen is a stewardship consultant at the Winnipeg, Man., office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit MennoFoundation.ca.



enjoyed it.

However, I have really noticed the magazine upping its intensity in the past month and have found the conversations surrounding politics, sexuality, involving youth, including other cultures as part of the Mennonite mainstream, and involving those with other professional gifts to be especially pertinent and enlightening.

I have been feeling like I am learning something new every time I read *Canadian Mennonite* and it often

causes me to feel inspired. I feel it is important to let you know, based on the results of your reader survey, that this is coming from a young reader.

STEPHANIE ENS, WINNIPEG, MAN.

✉ Future church will be in good hands with Harmony

AFTER 50-PLUS YEARS in the same congregation,

In praise of stubbornness

MELISSA MILLER

A common interaction at our house goes something like this. Person One says (with some heat): “You’re so stubborn!” Person Two then replies (with some indignation): “I am not stubborn. I’m principled. I’m determined. I’m firm and have integrity of opinion.”

Stubbornness is not usually a quality we are eager to claim. Stubborn has synonyms like obstinate, bull-headed and even mulish. We know that too much stubbornness, too much of an attitude of “my way or the highway,” strains intimate relationships and fractures family connections. In such situations, former marriage partners may find themselves locked in bitter court battles, and parents may sadly be estranged from their children. Is it possible that many church splits have happened because of stubbornness on the part of one or more parties?

Given these negative connotations, how curious it is that Jesus promotes stubbornness in not one, but two, stories in the Gospel of Luke. In these stories, though, the quality is known by its gentler cousins of persistence or perseverance. In Luke 11, Jesus praises a pesky man who wakes his neighbor at midnight,

looking for food to give to a guest. Similarly, Jesus commends the persistent widow in the wryly surprising story he tells in Luke 18. The woman is successful in her petition to an unjust judge only because he is worn down by her repeated pleas. In both stories, the stubbornness that Jesus extols is stubbornness in our prayers, as we ask God for daily bread, for forgiveness of our sins, for our own capacity to forgive others, and in our quest for justice.

So it seems like stubbornness has a useful, even virtuous, place in our lives. I wonder, after a decade of living on the



FAMILY TIES

Prairies, if such persistence and backbone wasn’t crucial for the survival of the first settlers in this part of Canada. Where would our churches be if our spiritual ancestors had not had sufficient temerity to survive the cold and isolation of a long Manitoba winter? How did those parents raise a large family on a precarious farm income back in the early days without some stubbornness?

Conflict resolution specialists speak of five styles or kinds of responses to conflict, all of which have their time and place in healthy conflict management.

Each style also has negative consequences or limitations to when it can be used effectively. One of these responses is designated as a “competitive” response, where the person is primarily focused on his or her goals, and not as concerned with the other individual’s needs or interests, or with tending the relationship between the two people. This could be called a stubborn response, when one person persists in a personal agenda irrespective of what the other person is seeking. Such a response can be useful in an emergency, where there is injustice occurring or when someone needs to be protected from harm.

In Jesus’ stories, we see two people who persist in having their goals met: the man wanting bread for his guest and the woman’s quest for justice. Jesus himself used this kind of response, for example,

when he spoke forcefully to rigid religious leaders about their abuse of the poor, and when he defended the woman accused of adultery. Following Jesus’ teaching, if we’re going to be stubborn, let’s be stubborn in praying, in asking God to give us forgiving hearts, and to pursue justice for those who are vulnerable or oppressed.

Melissa Miller (familyties@mts.net) lives in Winnipeg, Man., where she ponders family relationships as a pastor, counselor and author.

it should be no surprise to anyone that I have been discouraged from time to time.

What has been very encouraging for me, in the last few years is working with the young people in the group now known as Harmony: Mennonites for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered) Inclusion. I was encouraged not so much by getting a resolution in front of the Mennonite Church Canada assembly this summer, as by the young people's faith, and their dedication to, and, in the importance of the church.

MC Canada, it seems to me, will continue to be in good and faithful hands in the future.

JIM SUDERMAN, WINNIPEG, MAN.

✉ MDS changed logo to better reflect 'helping' ethos

RE: "JUST TRYING to help," July 11, page 4.

I appreciated Will Braun's article about Christians helping those in need and was happy to see a Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) reference/picture included. In response to the section subtitled "Overcoming differences" on page 6, I would like



to highlight the logo change at MDS as evidence of progression in changing our thinking.

Our old logo had hands on an angle—one hand reaching down to the other—implying that the help

is coming from someone "higher" and "pulling up" the disaster-affected person. This logo (pictured) was intentionally redesigned in the late 1990s to now show an equal partnering of the helper/person being helped.

I think this is a great example of what Braun was describing in that section, as aspects we need to work on as we continue helping those around us who are hurting.

LOIS NICKEL, WINNIPEG, MAN.

Lois Nickel is Region V manager of Mennonite Disaster Service.

/// Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Andres—Zoe Rose (b. June 6, 2011), to Becky and Blaine Andres, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.

Barrett—Brooke Loren (b. May 15, 2011), to Ken and Kathy Barrett, Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask.

Bauman—Cassidy Scarlett (b. July 26, 2011), to Randy and Jackie Bauman, Floradale Mennonite, Ont.

Boynton—Silas Frede (b. Aug. 7, 2011), to Carissa and Jeff Boynton, Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford, B.C.

Breen—Lucas Xintan (b. Oct. 21, 2009), adopted by Dennis Breen and Alta Peachey, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Cressman—Hannah (b. June 3, 2011), to Daniel and Kathryn Cressman, Nith Valley Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.

Dear—Oliver Reginald (b. July 14, 2011), to Jonathon and Teddi Dear, Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask.

Dueck—Susanne Louise (b. July 20, 2011), to Michelle (Jantzi) and Trevor Dueck, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Friesen—Taten Russell (b. March 20, 2011), to Ryan and Deanne Friesen, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Jackson Wiebe—Oliver (b. July 15, 2011), to Heidi Jackson and Scott Wiebe, Ottawa Mennonite, Ont.

Moffatt—Raven Sora (b. June 5, 2011), to Kris Moffatt and Katherine Finn, Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask.

Riano-Bohorquez—Sophie (b. Aug. 1, 2011), to Jefferson Bohorquez and Gina Riano, Osler Mennonite, Sask.

Sauve—Tyson James (b. July 6, 2011), to Jocelyn and Quentin Sauve, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Unrau—Ethan David (b. July 13, 2011), to Maikel and Rowena Unrau, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Van Den Tempel—Anika Hope (b. June 10, 2011), to Dave and Lauren Van Den Tempel, Poole Mennonite, Milverton, Ont.

Baptisms

Paul Dyck—Charleswood Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., June 12, 2011.

Melissa Kildaw, Lindsay Penner, Horst Reda, Walter Schlichting—First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., June 12, 2011.

Jonas Cornelsen, Samuel Dyck, Norman Gross—Hope Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man., May 8, 2011.

Erica Doucette—Osler Mennonite, Sask., May 22, 2011.

Michael Epp, Ryan Epp, Jamieson Fitzgerald, Matthew Hildebrandt—Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., June 12, 2011.

Laura Carr-Pries—St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont., May 29, 2011.

Marriages

Bergen/Thesen—Kyle Bergen (North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.) and Marci Thesen, in Nipawin, Sask., July 30, 2011.

Cressman/Wiebe—Benjamin Cressman and Annamarie Wiebe, Herschel Ebenfeld Mennonite, at Rosetown Alliance Church, Sask., June 18, 2011.

Eisler/Harder—Dwight Eisler and Wendy Harder, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Aug. 1, 2011.

Epp/Zehr—John Epp and Marilyn Zehr, at Toronto United Mennonite, Ont., July 24, 2011.

Fast/Unrau—Mackenzie Fast and Sarah Unrau, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask., Aug. 6, 2011.

Friesen/Gutek—Wade Friesen and Raechel Gutek, Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask., in Saskatoon, Sask., June 4, 2011.

John/Musselman—Rufus John and Jennifer Musselman (St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.), at St. Jacobs Mennonite, July 30, 2011.

Roseboom/Wiens—Jacquelyn Roseboom and Joel Wiens, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta., June 30, 2011.

Roth/Thornton—Kyle Roth (Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.) and Meghan Thornton, in Saskatoon, Sask., Aug. 6, 2011.

Tiessen/Toews—Peter Tiessen (Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.) and Lisa Toews (Breslau Mennonite, Ont.), in Winnipeg, Man., July 3, 2011.

Deaths

Boehr—Bernhard Loyd, 91 (b. April 21, 1920; d. June 27, 2011), Lethbridge Mennonite, Alta.

Braun—Frank, 71 (b. Oct. 1, 1939; d. July 17, 2011), Lethbridge Mennonite, Alta.

Brillinger—Judy (nee Bradley), 70 (b. Dec. 14, 1940; d. June 7, 2011), Gretna Berghthaler Mennonite, Man.

Bruch—Katie, 81 (d. April 15, 2011), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.

Derksen—Mary (nee Martens), 93 (b. Feb. 1, 1918; d. July 6, 2011), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Dyck—Margaret, 80 (b. Jan. 9, 1931; d. July 9, 2011), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Fast—Jakob, 90 (d. July 15, 2011), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.

Friesen—Elmer W., 84 (b. Nov. 17, 1926; d. June 28, 2011), Tiefengrund Rosenort Mennonite, Laird, Sask.

Friesen—Laura, 83 (b. March 8, 1928; d. July 17, 2011), First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Good—Olive (nee Axt), 88 (b. Aug. 17, 1922; d. July 22, 2011), Nith Valley Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.

Heinrichs—Wes, 77 (b. Oct. 5, 1933; d. Aug. 9, 2011), Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

Janzen—David, 93 (b. Feb. 20, 1918; d. July 2, 2011), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

Jesse—Henry, 77 (b. July 7, 1934; d. July 15, 2011), Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Koch—Alice (nee Nahrgang), 98 (b. Feb. 1, 1913; d. Aug. 7, 2011), Nith Valley Mennonite, New Hamburg, Ont.

Loewen—John, 71 (b. May 12, 1940; d. June 2, 2011), First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Neustaedter—Helene (nee Schroeder), 92 (b. Nov. 13, 1918; d. Aug. 1, 2011), First Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

Rolfe—John, 61 (b. May 23, 1950; d. July 31, 2011), Riverdale Mennonite, Millbank, Ont.

Lichti—Willis, 92 (b. Dec. 25, 1918; d. July 15, 2011), East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

Schmidt—Enid (nee Culp), 91 (b. Feb. 1, 1920; d. July 21, 2011), Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

Schroeder—Ervin, 73 (b. Sept. 13, 1937; d. Aug. 2, 2011), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

Snyder—Pamela (nee Schmitz), 32 (b. April 12, 1979; d. July 11, 2011), Shantz Mennonite, Baden, Ont.

White—Gail, 62 (b. Dec. 27, 1948; d. Aug. 1, 2011), Wilmot 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



I'm a human being

BY TROY WATSON

There were 16 of us gathered around the U-shaped table configuration. Everyone seemed unusually sophisticated, experienced and educated at this particular multi-faith dialogue. We began with what were supposed to be brief introductions, but each became more august than the one before. The mountain of noteworthy achievements, careers and vocabularies piling up in the room began to intimidate me. I was nearly last to share and felt compelled to demonstrate my capacity to facilitate our discussion by describing myself in the most impressive manner possible. I even wanted my autograph by the time I was done.



created us to be: human beings. God doesn't expect peach trees to be anything but peach trees and God doesn't expect humans to be anything but human!

I'm not sure why this was revelatory to me. The beginning of the Bible tells us God created us as male and female, and said we were "very good." To be human is to be very good. It is we religious

folk who have become obsessed with the process of regulating how we can "save" (make more religious) our humanity, instead of embracing it and living it out fully.

Christianity has become so consumed with the "fall" and "depravity" of human-

according to what separates us—be that male or female, Jew or gentile, Muslim or Christian, conservative or liberal—and learn to lose our "self" in the unifying love of God who is Parent of all. In fact, Scripture tells us that Christ emptied himself—let go of what set him apart—and became fully human. Is this not what we must do to follow the way of Jesus?

This doesn't mean overlooking or denying our differences, but discovering them as gifts, even when they come to us as puzzling disguises. We learn so much from our differences when we stop trying to fix, convert or obliterate them.

Of course, celebrating our humanity is not the same as tolerating everything humans do, or are capable of doing. Our potential for all kinds of wickedness (rape, torture, genocide, etc.) is well documented throughout human history, including church history. But these atrocities are not manifestations of our humanity; they are crimes against humanity! They are extreme examples of inhumane behaviour. Such selfishness and cruelty are symptoms of losing one's

LIFE IN THE POSTMODERN SHIFT

After I finished, the individual next to me paused, looked around the table and introduced himself with one simple sentence: "My name is Jim and I'm a human being." The end.

The silence was deafening.

I began inching towards the floor to climb under the table, which didn't seem like a difficult manoeuvre at the time, as I felt about a couple centimetres tall. While internally counselling myself through the overwhelming sense of humiliation, I experienced an epiphany. The point of life is simple: to be human.

For my entire life I have been trying to figure out—and live out—what it means to be an authentic Christian. It finally dawned on me that evening that God isn't a Christian and God didn't create me to be a Christian either. God's intention for humanity is to simply be what God

ity that we lose sight of the start of the biblical story where God looks at us and exclaims, "Wow! It's like looking in the mirror!" Our humanity is the image of God. It is something to be explored and celebrated, not eradicated or mistrusted.

As I minister in the midst of the post-modern shift, I'm seeing more and more people losing their religion to focus on being authentically human. People are letting go of allegiances to organizations and ideologies that embody division (creating an us vs. them mentality) and are consciously joining the human family, recognizing that everyone is one "*in God whom we all live and move and have our being.*"

I believe Jesus intended for us to stop identifying and valuing ourselves

humanity and one's sense of interconnectedness to all.

I believe that when we find our core identity in our humanity—the one thing we share with all humans—we experience a profound sense of kinship with all people. And this creates a wellspring of love, compassion and peace in our hearts.

My own questions about what it means to be authentically Christian or Anabaptist are on the backburner for a season while I focus on what it means to be authentically human.

I believe our answers to this question hold great significance for the future of Christian faith in the emerging paradigm. ☿

Troy Watson is a human being.

It finally dawned on me that evening that God isn't a Christian and God didn't create me to be a Christian either. God's intention for humanity is to simply be what God created us to be: human beings.

The language of the unheard?

BY VIC THIESSEN

The riots which shocked London, England, in early August began in the neighbourhood of Wood Green Mennonite Church, which my wife Kathy and I attended for more than seven years. A number of London Mennonites reside in the neighbourhood and have shared their feelings of living in a war zone: constant helicopter surveillance, empty streets and fear of venturing outside.

What started as a peaceful demonstration against an allegedly unjustified police shooting morphed into a riot that involved extensive looting, burning and violence, sparking further riots in London and across the country. Politicians and commentators were predictably quick to condemn the rioting and attribute it to small groups of hooligans taking advantage of the unstable situation and mob mentality to steal and destroy, similar to what happened in Vancouver following the Stanley Cup final in June. Few took the time to consider the root causes of the rioting, which suggest that the resemblance between London and Vancouver is largely superficial.

A quick glance at the last decade in the United Kingdom is instructive. In February of 2003, almost every member of Wood Green Mennonite Church participated in one of the largest anti-war demonstrations in history. That evening, we heard Prime Minister Tony Blair announce how proud he was to live in a democracy where people had the right to express themselves in this way, but the invasion of Iraq was going to happen anyway. Millions of people in the UK, especially the young, were utterly disillusioned by their government's response to the will of the people and questioned whether they were truly living in a democracy.

Since then, this disillusionment, especially among the poorer people in the UK,

has only grown stronger. The financial crises of recent years were not caused by the poor, but it is they who suffer most of the consequences. So while the UK government continues to spend more than \$50 billion annually on the military and keeps taxes low for its wealthiest people, it has made huge cuts to social services, especially services affecting young people. Last year, despite mass student demonstrations, the cost of university education skyrocketed. As a result, countless thousands of young people in the UK now have no access to post-secondary education, no jobs and no prospects.

In the absence of any hope for a future that might include fundamental structural changes, these young people

feel voiceless. With little to lose, rioting seems like the only way to be heard and looting the only way to acquire the goods that our Western consumerist mindset says we need for self-worth.

The underlying causes of the UK riots are not that different from those that fuelled the mass demonstrations of disenfranchised young people in countries around the world, including Egypt, Libya, Syria and Iraq. The political aims are/were certainly clearer in most of these countries than they are in the UK, but the sense of deprivation, powerlessness and hunger for grassroots change can be found in all these places.

An example is Sulaymaniyah, Northern Iraq, where Kathy recently spent three months working with Christian Peacemaker Teams. Encouraged by the outcome in Egypt, thousands of Kurdish people in Sulaymaniyah demonstrated daily for 62 days against the political corruption that has left so many young people with no jobs and no prospects.

In a world where the wealthiest few people on the planet acquire ever-greater wealth, while the poor get poorer, demonstrations and riots—including food riots—should not come as a surprise. Indeed, decades ago, Martin Luther King Jr. said: “When you cut facilities, slash jobs, abuse power, discriminate, drive people into deeper poverty and shoot people dead whilst refusing to provide answers or justice, the people will rise up and express their anger and frustration if you refuse to hear their cries. A riot is the language of the unheard.” To me, this sounds like a perfect description of what is happening in the UK.

Unfortunately, as long as the UK government treats the rioting as criminal activity, demanding ever stronger security measures while it fails to address the root causes of the rioting, like poverty, I believe the rioting will continue. It comes back to what precipitated the peaceful demonstration that sparked the riots, namely the government failure to carry

VIEWPOINT

out its democratic duty to look after all of its citizens and respond speedily to alleged misuses of authority.

An Anabaptist response to the rioting is not to condone the riots, but to seek ways of giving a constructive voice to the voiceless, empower the powerless and provide hope to those in despair. God's future demands that we share a vision of the earth in which all have enough and all have an opportunity for a meaningful creative life. Only this vision leads to a sustainable future and I believe it is a vision the disillusioned young people are eager to embrace.

The Mennonites in Tottenham responded by helping to organize post-riot clean-ups, which have created a sense of community where none existed before. What a hopeful start! ❧

Vic Thiessen is Mennonite Church Canada's chief operating officer and the former director of the London (England) Mennonite Centre.

GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

PHOTO COURTESY OF L'ÉGLISE ÉVANGÉLIQUE MENNONITE DE JOLIETTE



Noémie Jean-Bourgeault encouraged the L'Église évangélique Mennonite de Joliette, Que., congregation to be creative in transforming an old ladder into a new object, saying, 'This is not a ladder.'

'This is not a ladder'

L'Église évangélique Mennonite de Joliette revises God's plans for the church

BY DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent

At the general meeting of the members of L'Église évangélique Mennonite de Joliette, Que., on June 12, the pastor's mandate was not renewed. The congregation was shocked and surprised, but members feel now that God knew what was coming.

In the days that followed, five different young adults suggested to the church council that the congregation should stop normal programming and take time to seek God face to face, to more fully experience God's love and intimacy.

The Joliette church was founded by Harold and Pauline Reesor, a church-

planting family sent to Quebec by the Mission Board of Mennonite Conference of Ontario in 1960, and by Mel and Leeta Horst, who bought a farm in the Joliette area and functioned as self-supporting missionaries. From 1995-2007, there was no pastor, but lay leadership shaped the congregation into a loving, family-oriented community that often reached out to serve the community.

From 2007-11, André Ouimet served as half-time pastor, but the church continued to decline and fewer and fewer young adults were involved in church life. After a pastoral review in April, church council

recommended that Ouimet continue for a third two-year mandate, but this proposal did not receive the required approval of 75 percent of the membership on June 12.

Church council decided that the following four Sundays would be led by the young adults and be focused on praise, prayer and worship. The council subsequently issued an invitation to all those who felt the call, to participate in a working group to recreate the congregation's vision. Among the 10 people who responded, five are under 30.

The working group will continue to meet into September to discern God's fresh vision for the church and then submit a recreated vision to members in October. Group members believe that God is at work and look forward to the adventure God has prepared for them.

Noémie Jean-Bourgeault, one of the young adults, who had just returned from a missionary trip to England and China, where she held various responsibilities in the arts with Youth With A Mission, felt called to share a series of messages at the church. The first, Proverbs 9:1 and James 3:17, concerned the wisdom that comes from above.

She encouraged the congregation to be creative in transforming an old ladder into a new object, saying, "This is not a ladder." She was inspired by the painter René Magritte's painting of a pipe entitled "This is not a pipe."

The challenge was to agree on how to transform the ladder and go through the creative process together in wisdom. The ladder became a mobile with one retained part that supports the other parts, which have been creatively transformed.

During the process, one woman shared a dream she had had earlier that week. In her dream, she met a previously unknown race that sang and danced in a sublime way; together with the others, she washed and restored the ruins of an ancient church to be able to celebrate.

As they continue to pray and seek God, working group members are full of hope as they experience this re-creation process. They believe God is calling young people to find their place in the church and to join other generations to see the glory of God and God's kingdom come to Joliette and the Lanaudière region. ☸

Worshipping 'well'

Denominational worship distinctives less important to young adults

By AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent
ABBOTSFORD, B.C.

A worship group designed expressly for young adults is operating in Abbotsford, a cooperative effort of several different churches, including Level Ground Mennonite.

"Well worship night," which began last September, ministers to the post-high school age group, a demographic whose members can find themselves in flux once they graduate from high school and traditional youth groups.

In addition to Level Ground, cooperating congregations include Immanuel Baptist, Bakerview Mennonite Brethren, Central Heights Mennonite Brethren and Sevenoaks Alliance.

The group meets on the last Monday of every month for a time of worship, including speaking and singing, followed by a group discussion.

Level Ground, which has an active young adult group, has found that "Well worship night" has been a good follow-up to the

Rethink Café ministry, a coffeehouse discussion group which no longer functions.

According to Dan Loewen, pastor at Level Ground, the cooperation between the different denominations is valuable. A joint committee of representatives from the various churches plans the worship evenings, taking turns hosting the event as well. "They try to mix up people from different churches in the discussion time," Loewen says.

Laura Auxier, a Level Ground young adult who has attended "Well worship night," believes denominational differences are less important for her generation. "It's great to be part of a bigger community with unity under Christ," says Auxier.

A recent gathering drew about 50 people, but Auxier hopes that the word spreads and more will attend in the future. "I'm looking forward to seeing where this leads," she says. ❧

Inaugural Peace Camp draws enthusiastic youth

By DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent
WATERLOO, ONT.

"Our son is still raving about his first day at Peace Camp. He told me all about how to do mediation on the way home!" wrote a mother after the first day of Conrad Grebel University College's first-ever Peace Camp on Aug. 8.

The camper had just practised some peer mediation skills with Fae Samuels, a retired educator who specialized in bringing peer mediation into the schools in Toronto, Ont., throughout her career as a

principal.

Peace Camp is a new initiative at Grebel. Eighteen youths aged 11 to 14 learned how to think about peace and social justice issues while having fun, playing games and listening to guest speakers.

They watched a drama put on by the University of Waterloo's Sustainability Project about choices and food issues. They also heard about Zambia from Daryl Good, who recently returned from a Mennonite

PHOTO BY KATHRYN HEEREMA



Campers learn mediation skills at Conrad Grebel University College's Peace Camp held last month in Waterloo, Ont.

Central Committee volunteer experience in that country.

Herb Goldstein, a Jew from Toronto, told about his experiences in high school during the Holocaust. In response, one camper said, "It's different hearing someone's story out loud than reading about it in a book."

The Peace Camp program was developed by Devon Spier, a fourth-year peace and conflict studies and religious studies student at the University of Waterloo. Her staff team was very diverse. "It's an amazing experience to be a student from a Jewish background and be able to coordinate a Peace Camp with a wonderful team of two Muslims and a Catholic, hosted by a Mennonite institution," she said.

Other activities during the week involved hearing about refugee issues; playing Peace Camp Jeopardy, and a Risk-like game on nuclear weapons and disarmament brought by Scientists for Peace; and an art show on the final day, when the community was invited to see and hear from the youths.

"In light of recent events in England, where concerns about youth are being expressed, it is even more important that we make and take opportunities to inspire our young people with the idea that they can make positive changes in their world," said Lowell Ewert, the director of peace and conflict studies, the program that sponsored the Peace Camp. ❧

Grace Mennonite, Pauingassi form new partnership

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU
Manitoba Correspondent

“An exciting new partnership is emerging between the Pauingassi community and Grace Mennonite Church in Steinbach,” says Norm Voth, director of the evangelism and service ministry of Mennonite Church Manitoba. “For the first time, Grace Mennonite is partnering with Pauingassi to offer a family camp in mid-August.” In turn, Allan Owen, pastor in this remote and isolated First Nations community, will be visiting the Grace congregation and participating in Sunday morning worship later this fall.

This new partnership is one of several relationships that continue to evolve between aboriginal communities in northern Manitoba and MC Manitoba congregations in the south.

“Steinbach Mennonite Church and Manigotagan have the longest-standing partnership,” notes Voth. “They are in their 12th or 13th year.”

Winnipeg’s Springfield Heights Mennonite Church is in its fifth year of partnering with Matheson Island. A group of youths and young adults offered a four-day Vacation Bible School (VBS) program at Matheson Island. Church members also worked with the community on the maintenance upgrading of community homes in July following two similar trips in the spring.

Several adults and youths from Sterling Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, worked together with Living Word Church in Cross Lake to provide a week of VBS in July. More than 100 children took part in the program. The Sterling group also spent time helping Living Word and the local community council prepare for their annual family camp.

“This year, they are expecting a thousand people at the camp,” says Voth of the second-year partnership.

Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, and Riverton Fellowship are also continuing their tradition of working together to

lead a VBS program for the Riverton community this summer.

In October, the Partnership Circles will have their semi-annual gathering in Winnipeg to evaluate the events of the past year, and discern needs and responses for the coming year. ☘

Fun in the summer sun

STORY AND PHOTO
BY NADINE KAMPEN
Canadian Mennonite University
WINNIPEG, MAN.

While children are now back to school, last month was a different story for those who attended the Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) Sports Camps.

During the first week of August, bike campers were “spinning their wheels” at the inaugural Blazer Bike Camp, learning safety and maintenance tips, all while touring the scenic trails of the Assiniboine Forest to such destinations as the Children’s Garden at Assiniboine Park and Fort Whyte Alive. Later in the week, instructor Thomas Epp had the bike campers testing their new skills on CMU’s cyclocross challenge course.

“Afternoon campers have learned new skills and been challenged with a multitude of sports,” says CMU athletics director Russell Willms. “Beach volleyball, kick-ball, soccer, basketball and dodge ball are just some of the sports that have been highlighted.”

CMU summer camp co-directors Maraleigh Short and Evelyn Kampen developed *Win it in a Minute*, a series of daily challenges for the campers based on *Minute to Win It*, a popular television game show.

Other activities throughout the month included volleyball and basketball camps for both junior and senior high youths.

The “Pass it on” theme was a significant part of camp, challenging campers to make a difference in the places they find themselves. ☘



Athleticism and fun were part of each day’s activities at Canadian Mennonite University’s summer sports camps.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

'Churches are too quiet'

Korea Anabaptist Center director calls for opposition to government's plan to turn UNESCO 'peace island' into a naval base

BY DAN DYCK

Mennonite Church Canada

"The sad thing is, the churches are too quiet," says Kyong-Jung Kim, director of the Korea Anabaptist Center, in Seoul, South Korea. "Either they don't pay attention to this or they don't want to step on boundaries that are not welcome by government."

Kim is referring to the expropriation of property to build a naval base on Jeju Island, which has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and designated an "Island of World Peace" by South Korea's former president, Roh Moo-Hyun, in 2006.

The naval base is being "forcefully" constructed near Gangjeong, a village of perhaps 1,500 farmers and fishers, say activists. As a strategic military location in close proximity to South Korea, mainland China and Japan, the island has endured colonization and conflict for centuries.

Jeju Island became an autonomous province of South Korea in 1946, but has

enjoyed little autonomy. Just two years later, a civil conflict that spilled over from mainland Korea cost the lives of 30,000 islanders.

For its part, the Korean navy claims that the new "eco-friendly" naval base will create jobs and increase security for the island.

However, Anders Riel Müller of the Korea Policy Institute, an independent research and educational organization, who recently visited the island, reports, "[I]t is difficult to imagine an eco-friendly 50-hectare naval base that will house 8,000 marines, up to 20 destroyers, several submarines and two 130,000-tonne luxury cruise liners."

In an e-mail prayer request, Kim notes that there are many legitimate reasons for civil society to seek a halt to the construction of the naval base. Local protesters cite environmental destruction, loss of an agrarian culture and the changes it will

bring to the local economy, as well as the transformation of a peaceful island into a military target.

While these are strong humanitarian incentives, Kim focuses on a more important reason, one that should inspire churches to take action. "[W]e as Christians cannot help thinking of Jesus' teaching and action for peace. Jesus would have wept over again if he were standing with us in our situation today," he says, citing Luke 19:42 and Psalms 2:1.

Advocacy letters can be sent to: Embassy of the Republic of Korea, 150 Boteler Street, Ottawa, ON K1N 5A6. ☞

☞ Briefly noted

Luncheon offering raises \$9,267 for famine relief

SASKATOON, SASK.—How much is lunch worth? Members of First Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, found out recently when they were invited to give up their usual restaurant fare after church in favour of a simple bag lunch. Instead of hosting a potluck-and-pass-the-hat meal to raise funds for Mennonite Central Committee's East Africa drought relief projects, people met in the church basement after the Aug. 7 service to share a simple sandwich. In keeping with the theme of remembering the poor and the suffering, a video of the 50th anniversary of Mennonites in Canada that had taken place in Steinbach, Man., in 2008 was shown; deeply moving accounts of their persecution and loss seemed fitting in light of the reality of the famine in East Africa. Offerings were quietly left in baskets on the tables amid the comfortable chatter of church members. "In Scripture we read how one small boy gave his lunch to help feed five thousand hungry people. He must have known that when he gave it to Jesus a miracle would happen," said Mary Patkau, who noted that when all the donations were gathered, proceeds amounted to \$9,267.

—BY KARIN FEHDERAU



A banner on the shore of Jeju Island reads, 'Stop the naval weapons base! No more relocation [of the base] to the beautiful village of Gangjeong!'

PHOTO BY CHARLES OLTFERT



Gerry Unrau, left, of Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Sask., cuts wood with Tewolde Zeresenai, owner of the fence.

Mending fences, building bridges

BY KARIN FEHDERAU
Saskatchewan Correspondent
SASKATOON, SASK.

Harvey Martens from Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, was making some fence repairs for his church one day. Nestled snugly into a large residential area, Wildwood shares a fence on one side with a neighbour.

Before starting the task, he let the neighbour know of his plans, and in the course of their conversation it came up that the back part of the man's fence needed mending as well. Since the man, in his 60s, was facing health issues, he was personally unable to fix the fence himself, so Martens offered the church's help to do the job for him.

A call went out for volunteers to come and help replace the fence. A robust crew of men and women showed up the fourth weekend in July to tackle the job. Willard Dyck was assigned the task of purchasing the needed materials. Dyck described the neighbour as a man who often chats over the fence that borders the

community garden that the church hosts on its property.

"He's a good friend of ours," said Dyck.

The job involved tearing down the old fence, putting in some new fence posts and building the new fence.

"There was also a lot of garbage in the backyard and we made arrangement to have it taken away," Dyck added.

Eager to help out in any way they could, the neighbour and his family, whom Dyck described as immigrants to Canada, prepared a barbecue lunch to feed the group of Wildwood Mennonite volunteers.

The following Sunday, Dyck spoke briefly during the service about the couple's response to the finished fence. "They could hardly express their gratitude," he told the congregation. ☿

Residential school survivors share painful past

Humour, forgiveness part of powerful evening

BY RICKI LANE
Special to Canadian Mennonite
VANCOUVER, B.C.

Can you imagine living in a society where a government agent can unexpectedly arrive at your door, seize your children, and take them away to a government-controlled school where they will be submerged in a different culture, forced to learn a foreign language

and religion, and punished severely if they attempt to deviate from the expected cultural norms in any way? To add to the trauma, your children may also face physical, mental and sexual abuse at the school. They are perhaps allowed to visit you for a brief summer vacation if they survive the high death rates at their school, but they have been told that your ways are wrong and so they no longer fit into your home or your culture.

These and other stories of Canada's indigenous peoples in residential schools were the subject of an informative evening recently at Vancouver's First United Mennonite Church. Scrutiny of Canada's not-so-distant colonial past reveals the painful separation of families and cultural genocide that were actually forced on aboriginal Canadians in the residential school era from the 1840s to well past the mid-20th century.

Elder Ben David of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth First Nation addressed the 70 people present, speaking extensively of the ongoing violent physical and sexual assault that he had experienced at school. Listeners were shocked at his frank depiction of the graphic details. That he spoke about forgiveness and his gratitude to God, and to his German wife who helped him recover and rebuild his life, is a story of

triumph over a long period of tormented alcoholism.

Andy Yellowback, a Cree schooled in Manitoba, emphasized that the indigenous people's strength lies in their ability to forgive. Forgiveness is the empowering path that many aboriginals embrace for their healing process. Yellowback's sharing about the separation and loneliness he had felt as an Indian Residential School student was interspersed with uplifting little jokes, revealing another powerful attitude that had helped save his life.

With the ability to forgive and to see humour, and most significantly with the love of the amazing Creator, those who spoke shared how they had come through the fire.

A Gitksan elder sang an inspirational song in dramatic contrast to her story of living the life of a hopeless alcoholic until

the day she faced the possibility of losing her grandchild before he was even born, at which point she pleaded earnestly with God to accept her commitment to change her life if he would just allow her to keep her grandson and help him grow up in a better world.

Those in attendance learned that an Indian Residential School Survivors Society has been formed to assist First Nations members in British Columbia address the long-term effects of traumatic childhood memories, and to seek healing in traditional indigenous ways. Their oral narrative techniques of humour, storytelling, song and poetry are being put to use to tell the truth and move forward. ☼



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GOD AT WORK IN US



Getting back to the garden

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent
NEAR BEAUSEJOUR, MAN.

Nestled in the bend of the Brokenhead River at the very end of a country road is a small Christian community trying to live responsibly and faithfully. Four family units are shareholders of this 58-hectare piece of land that was formerly a commercial strawberry farm.

Ploughshares Community Farm was incorporated in 2006, one of the many steps in a long journey that began more than seven years ago when a “seed group” of Winnipeg’s Grain of Wheat Church Community began to study *The Economics of Love*. Soon they were discussing food issues and then specific rural issues. Eventually, several of them decided it was time to put their energy and resources into what they had discussed and studied.

“It’s difficult to know how to step out of the structures without having some control of capital and resources like land and water,” says David Braun, who, together

with his partner Ruth Maendel, moved on to the community farm in 2007. Marcus Rempel, his wife Jennifer Nast-Kolb and their two young daughters moved to the farm in May 2010.

Referring to the Mennonite Central Committee coffee table book, *A Dry Roof and a Cow*, Rempel says, “The book not only reveals how fundamentally basic and decent the aspirations of the poor are, but also makes me question why do I think I need so much more than a dry roof and a cow to be content and have a meaningful life.”

Matthew Wiens and his wife Elizabeth Redekopp, from Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., moved to the farm in early 2010. With their two young children, they live on the third floor of the straw-bale house that the community has built together. For Redekopp, the move carries some ambiguity. “I am a person

that needs a lot of personal space,” she says, adding, “Although I will admit that some days it is difficult to navigate . . . boundaries and roles, I really do believe we are better off together.”

The other household consists of Rachel Braun and her 10-year old son, Ethan, who, together with Braun and Mandel, have living quarters on the second floor of the house. Rempel and Nast-Kolb live in a more primitive house on the property.

Rempel has taken major responsibility for a large garden that will produce food for the four family units throughout the year. Some of the food will go to farmers markets, giving Rempel some income. Two young pigs happily root about nearby, unaware of their destiny this fall.

Sophia and Johanna Nast-Kolb are busy raising rabbits for the community and for sale.

Maendel owns a flock of laying hens. The eggs feed the community and the extra eggs are sold for profit for Maendel.

Wiens and Redekopp raise a flock of pastured broiler chickens and Wiens manages the field crops with support from Braun, who is planning to start a small herd of milking goats that will help to feed the community. Grazing cattle is part of the long-term plan.

The community is grateful that most of them have work in the Beausejour area. Braun works full-time as a social worker, Wiens works for the provincial agriculture department, Nast-Kolb works part-time as a massage therapist, and Rachel Braun is a full-time teacher.

“Many of the farm expenses are shared and paid out of a corporate/joint bank account, but each family takes responsibility for their own finances,” explains Redekopp.

“We formed the corporation, which owns all the land and buildings, and we each pay rent to offset the mortgage payments,” Rempel adds.

The community eats together once a week, gathering in the large common kitchen on the main floor of the straw bale house. They meet together every other week to make decisions that affect the community and twice a year they meet with their advisory group, who, Rempel says, “we invite in as respected outside



Johanna and Sophia Nast-Kolb with two of their rabbits.

listeners who have some wisdom, discernment, and abilities to listen, observe and reflect well."

They have at times worshipped together, and both Rempel's and Wiens's families have connected with the Anglican church in town.

There is a gentleness and humility in their approach to this new lifestyle. Many Christians are involved in a personal search for authenticity and for a more faithful response to the issues of injustice and affluence, but these families are seeking to do it together in a rural setting.

"I spent a lot of time in my teens and 20s, pointing my finger at the world without really wrestling with my own complicity and addiction that whole system is feeding," Rempel muses. "This is a place for me to try and get the log out of my own eye and take responsibility for the food I eat at least." ❧



Marcus Rempel and Johanna Nast-Kolb tend plants in the Christian community's greenhouse.

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ARTBEAT

FILM REVIEW

On killing bullies

Captain America: The First Avenger.

Directed by Joe Johnston. Starring Chris Evans, Hugo Weaving, Stanley Tucci.
A Marvel Entertainment release, 2011.

REVIEW BY VIC THIESSEN

“So you want to kill some Nazis?” Dr. Erskine asks the short, skinny asthmatic wanna-be war hero in this summer’s big superhero film. “I don’t want to kill anyone,” comes the reply. “I just don’t like bullies.” Somehow this convinces Erskine that the young man, whose name is Steve Rogers (Chris Evans), is a good, compassionate person.

A few scenes later, Erskine (Stanley Tucci) chooses Rogers to be the guinea pig for his experimental body-enhancing serum. Why Rogers? Because the serum also enhances the person’s character, as it has done, to disastrous effect, to the villain of the film, Johann Schmidt (Hugo Weaving). We are led to believe that

mowing down those awful Hydra soldiers with his machine gun without hesitation, taking life after life without apparent regret. I suppose when Rogers said he didn’t want to kill anyone, he meant it in an abstract ideal-world kind of way, because in the real world the dehumanized Nazi/ Hydra soldiers need to be stopped by any means possible.

There is much to like about *Captain America*, including the beautiful cinematography, the score and the acting. Tommy Lee Jones as a colonel was a joy to watch and Hayley Atwell was a good choice as the token love interest. Actually, the romantic element was unusually compelling for a superhero film and Atwell provided a very

I suppose when [Steve] Rogers said he didn't want to kill anyone, he meant it in an abstract ideal-world kind of way, because in the real world the dehumanized Nazi/Hydra soldiers need to be stopped by any means possible.

Schmidt was a bad person who has now become the embodiment of pure evil—the Red Skull—worse, even, than Hitler himself. So one can suppose that with the serum Rogers will now become a much better and compassionate person. To me, that suggests Rogers will become more like Jesus.

But while the serum does turn Rogers into a superhero (*Captain America*), I failed to see any evidence that it makes him more like Jesus. On the contrary, the skinny well-meaning young man who didn’t want to kill anyone becomes a killing machine,

strong female lead. That would be laudable if it did not mean that she is as capable of violence as a man.

I particularly enjoyed the first third of *Captain America*—before the action takes over—because I completely understood where Rogers was coming from. I used to be that skinny, asthmatic little kid who constantly drew the attention of bullies, not least because I stood up to them with words, which they responded to with fists. And I would also have answered the doctor’s question by saying: “I don’t want to kill anyone; I just don’t like bullies.”



But thanks to my wonderful Mennonite Sunday school teachers and camp counsellors, I would have meant it literally, believing that when Jesus told us to love our enemies and do good to those who persecute us—no matter how evil they might be—he meant that using violence against a bully was simply not an option.

Captain America is supposed to be a family-friendly action film, which explains why there was a five-year-old girl in the row in front of us. But what the girl saw was a war film where hundreds of soldiers are killed in the name of peace and freedom.

I live in a city that recently acquired an NHL hockey team called the Jets. On their jerseys, inspired by the RCAF, will be a logo which I call Captain Canada: the new CF-18 fighter jets our country is purchasing (with our taxes) for the sake of peace and freedom. *Captain America* may just be another fun summer action flick, but as long as we live in a country that proudly spends its people’s money on machines of death and the colonization of our imaginations, we cannot watch such films, or take our children to see them, thoughtlessly. ❧

Vic Thiessen is Mennonite Church Canada's chief operating officer and the former director of the London (England) Mennonite Centre.

BOOK REVIEW

Bringing Soviet tribulation to life

Favoured Among Women: The Story of Greta Enns.

By Hedy Leonora Martens. CMU Press, Winnipeg, Man., 2010. 425 pages.

REVIEWED BY BARB DRAPER

As Mennonites living in the peace and prosperity of Canada, we sometimes wonder how to keep the stories of our past alive. We wonder whether our children and grandchildren will know about the hardships and suffering of an earlier generation. *Favoured Among Women*, a biographical novel, is an important tool in sustaining these memories as it brings to life the tribulation of Mennonites living in the Soviet Union in the 20th century.



Favoured Among Women is an unusual book. Hedy Martens interviewed an elderly woman named Greta, whose life is the basis of the story, and it is an account based on fact. But it is also fiction, in that Martens in-

terprets the story for the reader. The characters come alive through this narrative, often through conversation. Martens found that the real Greta had an amazing memory for details, but this fictional interpretation of the story takes it beyond the basic facts.

The amazing thing is that it works.

Using a technique popularized by 19th-century author Victor Hugo, the book provides occasional historical snapshots to help the reader understand the broader picture of what is happening. These backdrop explanations are well-researched and concise, and help to provide context for the story. Perhaps most unusual for a work of fiction are the author's personal reflections, which appear from time to time, sometimes in prose and sometimes in poetry. The amazing thing is that it works. It is a tribute to Martens's writing style that the story is enhanced by these various levels of commentary; it does not

seem choppy or disjointed. The story begins with Greta Enns's childhood in the Fuerstenland Colony in what is now Ukraine. Her early life in a Mennonite village has the usual mixture of happiness and anxiety; she enjoys her large extended family, but she misses her father, who died when she was only six.

After her mother's remarriage, the family moves to the Ignatyev Colony, where its members experience the effects of the political chaos of the Russian Revolution and the subsequent famine. Greta marries Heinrich Martens and so there is joy in the midst of hardship, but there is also bitter grief as the family is divided when some are able to emigrate to Canada, but Greta and Heinrich are

forced to stay behind.

As the children come along, Greta and Heinrich struggle to find accommodation large enough for their family. During the 1930s, Heinrich's leadership in the church becomes dangerous, as the Soviets clamp down on religion. When Heinrich is arrested, Greta and her children struggle on alone. The book ends during World War II, as they are herded onto a box car to be transported eastward, away from the advancing Germany army.

The reader is left wondering about their fate. It is clear from the epilogue that Greta survived to tell her story, but there are hints that there is much more to this narrative. Hopefully, Martens will soon write the rest of the story in Vol. II. ❧

Barb Draper is the Books & Resources editor for Canadian Mennonite.



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VIEWPOINT

Connecting with history

How do young adults relate to the language of our church?

BY KIRSTEN HAMM

Special to Young Voices



Being in relationship is one of the best things we can ever do, and yet it is often one of the hardest. If only we could be in perfect relationship with each other and with God I imagine we would come pretty close to heaven on earth.

Yet the younger generations are not in relationship with their history, and I think this is one of the major issues the North American church is facing today. By now, the answer a lot of people give to the question, “Why are you Mennonite?” is, “Because I go to a Mennonite church.” These words that used to be so transformative are losing their significance. We, the younger generations, have learned how to use the terms, but do we know what they mean?

I recently heard a conversation at a coffee shop where two post-secondary students from a Christian institution were talking about blurring lines between

time, and the times have been changing at a pace that the church has a hard time keeping up. It is no one’s fault, and it should not be blamed on apathy or disinterest. It is simply a fact of the world we live in.

In a perfect scenario we would all be products of the church and social shifts would not create gaps, but, alas, we are human and the secular world has a large impact on our lives and the words we use. Language is so basic and fundamental, it often gets overlooked when issues are being discussed. The first step should be to make sure we are all using the same definitions. As well, we need to know why we are using those definitions.

Making sure that everyone is on the same page is important in so many areas. Something as simple as contextual explanation—especially before a reading from the Old Testament—can go a long way.

But, really, we are all products of our time, and the times have been changing at a pace that the church has a hard time keeping up.

denominations and how “non-denominational basically means charismatic.” The meaning of so many words has changed in the last 50—or even 15—years, that it is often hard to know what we are really talking about.

There can be a tendency to lay the blame for a generational dichotomy on the various faults of the young and old. But, really, we are all products of our

I recently opened my Bible to Zechariah and started to read. But I quickly lost interest, as I was unsure of the historical situation. This led to a mini-Bible study of sorts, flipping back and forth between Zechariah, Haggai and Ezra, and their introductions, until I had my background information sorted out. Suddenly, Zechariah became interesting because I could put myself in the space of

the Israelites. Knowing the history created a connection; it created relationship between me and the Word in a new and refreshing way.

But if we cannot connect to the language of our church, church does not feel like a place we should be. To state the obvious, if we feel alone in church, the motivation to continue to come and make it an important part of our lives starts to disappear.

One solution could be a discussion topic at a youth group or in a Sunday school class, with questions like:

- What does in mean to be Mennonite?
- Why, and because of whom, are we Mennonite?

But it's important that the answers aren't just historical facts. It needs to come alive in a real way for people, in order for them to feel connected to it and to understand how that is part of their own story.

Relationships are important, and our relationships with the church and language are two that are particularly formative, yet they are rarely discussed together. Historical reminders and definitions are small details that can go a long way in connecting church and language, and helping people of all ages feel like church is a place they can feel a part of.

The world is full of stories about relationships, stories with depth that we can connect to, and the church has one of those stories. Our task is to muddle through generational differences and language to make sure that everyone knows this story of good news, and feels like they are in relationship with it. ✎

Kirsten Hamm graduated from Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Man., in 2011, and recently finished a pastoral internship at Langley Mennonite Fellowship, B.C.

I come in peace

Young adults spend time with offenders

BY RACHEL BERGEN

National Correspondent

Even in Christian circles, murderers, rapists, child abusers and hardened criminals are viewed as some of the most reprehensible people in society. They are left to rot in jail and then chased out of communities when they are released from prison. Many people in Canada believe that these offenders are too far gone to ever be healthy, functioning human beings again, unless they somehow pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

But there are some young people involved in restorative justice programs who have learned that no one is too far gone or undeserving of help. They have also seen that the current justice system isn't working very well for the people who are victimized or for the people who are incarcerated.

Winnipeggers Adam Klassen, who attends Hope Mennonite Church, and Daniel Epp, who attends Douglas Mennonite

Church, have seen these truths firsthand.

Epp, a volunteer at Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA), a voluntary program for men at high risk of reoffending, has seen incredible transformations in those who had committed heinous crimes in the past. The men in these programs have very difficult, violent habits formed over many years to break. "It takes a lot of work to defeat [the habits], but it is possible," Epp says.

Klassen, who volunteered at Open Circle and now is the community facilitator at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba restorative justice program, Journey to Justice, has learned that people who are incarcerated are just like everyone else. "You can talk to them about sports, the weather and politics," he says. "They are regular, everyday people who have done some pretty terrible things."

While a lot of people believe that

PHOTO COURTESY OF MCC MANITOBA



Adam Klassen of Hope Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., volunteers with Circles of Support and Accountability, a voluntary program for men at high risk of reoffending.



Daniel Epp of Douglas Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., is the community facilitator at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba restorative justice program, Journey to Justice.

prisoners or ex-cons are terrible people, Epp believes they just don't understand where such people are coming from. "A lot of people are not taught that they are important or that they have value," he says. "They end up committing acts of violence because they were victimized themselves. It's important to stop cycles of violence by understanding them and the people who commit them. . . . We are all fundamentally human beings."

Klassen, who is working with a group of people from the community through the use of listening exercises—learning how to listen to other people's stories, and discussing their own stories, in rela-

tion to justice—is trying to help people in the Winnipeg area to understand those who are incarcerated at Stony Mountain, a nearby penitentiary. Community group members are given a chance to see the people behind the acts of violence in their

backyard. For the inmates, they are given the opportunity to interact with people like those that they hurt, he explains. Klassen sees his work with Journey to Justice as social gospel, believing that the Bible calls people to social action. "We need to follow Christ's example and not only care for people's souls, but also people's bodies, minds and spirits," he says. "Restorative justice does this in a really beautiful way."

Epp says that working with the men in the CoSA program gives him a profound sense of shalom. "I have a good connection to God," he says. "Through that, I have a good connection to others and to myself.

[Adam] Klassen sees his work with Journey to Justice as social gospel, believing that the Bible calls people to social action.

Circle meetings are good examples of that shalom."

Both Epp and Klassen plan on working in the restorative justice field for a long time to come. ☞

tion to justice—is trying to help people in the Winnipeg area to understand those who are incarcerated at Stony Mountain, a nearby penitentiary. Community group members are given a chance to see the people behind the acts of violence in their

Young entrepreneurs write and publish electronically

BY AARON EPP

Special to Young Voices

Three Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) alumni have launched an independent digital press and are currently selling their first electronic book (e-book). The youth adventure novel entitled *Owen Grey and the Changeling* tells the story of a 12-year-old boy who is kidnapped and taken to a fairy land, where he is forced to be a rich man's servant. He must navigate mysterious rooms and goblin prisoners in order to escape.

Stephan Wiebe, 29, a middle school art

teacher who lives in Calgary, Alta., wrote *Owen Grey and the Changeling* with his brother Reg, 30, who graduated from CMU in 2002 and is studying for a Ph.D. degree in English literature. They were inspired to write a youth adventure novel after talking about their shared love of the Harry Potter series, as well as the adventure stories they grew up reading as children, stories like *Treasure Island* and *The Black Stallion*.

"The general themes revolve around the creation of community, the importance of



PARKA BOOKS

family and the challenges of making the right decision when it's much easier to make the wrong one," says Krista Wiebe, the brothers' sister-in-law, who edited the book.

The three started their publishing company, Parka Books, in January. It aims to be on the cutting edge of storytelling by using the digital medium to sell books that might not otherwise see the light of day.

"My first love will always be [physical] books, because I love reading and I love holding a book," says Krista, 26, a freelance editor who graduated from CMU in 2007 with a degree in English literature. "But there's something so neat about what's taking place right now with this new technology and how we can use it to our advantage."

Krista says that one of the benefits of publishing books electronically is the ease with which Parka Books can get its publications to readers. "Using Twitter and Facebook and posting a link . . . we can get [people] directly to the Amazon bookstore [Amazon.com] and they can buy their e-

publisher, the author will be paid significantly more if they publish with Parka Books, he says.

"Looking into the publishing world and seeing the author get [only] 5 to 10 percent of what their book sells for, when they're the one who's created something the reader connects with," doesn't seem fair, says Stephan. "They don't connect with the publisher or the agent [who] should be helping the creator, the author or the illustrator get their work out to the public. They should be helping, not putting up roadblocks and then taking all the credit or making the author feel like they're beholden to this company."

The idea for Parka Books came to them when they didn't have any luck finding a publisher for *Owen Grey*. Stephan credits learning that one doesn't need to follow the prescribed system to the time he spent studying at CMU. "My time at CMU influenced where I am, and my philosophies," he says. "I met a lot of creative people who were trying [different] things and willing to experiment with ideas."

[Parka Books] aims to be on the cutting edge of storytelling by using the digital medium to sell books that might not otherwise see the light of day.

book and it can be directly imported to their Kindle in a matter of minutes," she says.

Parka Books will soon launch versions for the Kobo e-book reader and iBooks, the e-book application from Apple. A second book, written and illustrated by Stephan, will also be available soon.

Stephan says that another benefit to the digital medium is that it keeps costs low, so they will be able to pay authors more for their work. Instead of only receiving 10 percent from the sale of their book, which they might get from a regular book

Reg, Stephan and Krista are looking forward to working with other authors and publishing more books in the future. "Publishing is such a tricky business and if your manuscript doesn't fit into familiar niches, it often gets discarded," Krista says. "We want to take these books that are being rejected from big publishing houses and really work with the authors and get them out to people. We want to get their work the recognition it deserves and find a readership for them."

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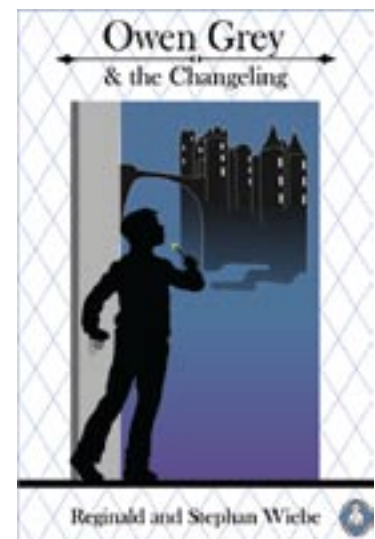
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Calendar

British Columbia

Sept. 30: Mennonite Disaster Service dessert fundraiser with great food, good music and reports from the Level Ground youth group who served in Kingcome Inlet in July, at Level Ground Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, at 6:30 p.m.

Oct. 1: Mennonite Disaster Service dessert fundraiser with great food, good music and reports from First United Mennonite youth group who served in Kingcome Inlet in July, at First United Mennonite Church, Vancouver, at 6:30 p.m.

Oct. 1, 2: Thanksgiving Vespers with

Abendmusik Choir at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford, 8 p.m. (1) and at Knox United Church, Vancouver, 8 p.m. (2).

Oct. 3-5: Pastor/spouse retreat at Camp Squeah. Theme: The Life-giving Sabbatical—three perspectives.

Alberta

Oct. 15: Deadline to register for the Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta 25th anniversary celebration with Jim Lore's view of Mennonite settlement in Carstairs/Didsbury area, happening at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury, on Oct. 29. Register by calling 403-250-1121 on Thursdays, or e-mail mhsa@mennonitehistory.org.

Saskatchewan

Sept. 16-18: Saskatchewan Mennonite Youth Organization junior high youth retreat at Youth Farm Bible Camp.

Manitoba

Sept. 19: "Stories for thought" at Sam's Place, Winnipeg, featuring stories from artist Kevin Lee Burton and activist Will Braun on housing and water issues on First Nations communities; from 7:30 to 10 p.m.

Sept. 23-24: Brandon MCC Relief Sale at the Keystone Centre; (23) barbecue supper and musical group The Keenagers; (24) sale and auction.

Ontario

Sept. 9-11: "Building Community" retreat at Hidden Acres Camp for persons with disabilities and their supporters. Trudy Beauline will speak on "Belonging and contributing." For information or to volunteer, contact Mariette at 519-569-8723 or professor_flatbread@yahoo.ca.

Sept. 10: Wanner Mennonite Church

hosts a tri-congregation corn roast in support of the Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank, beginning at 5:30 p.m. Admission is a donation of cash or a bag of groceries. Meal includes corn, hotdog or sausage on a bun, dessert and drink. For more information, call 519-658-4902.

Sept. 17: "Companions on the 'Lonely Path': The Conference of Historic Peace Churches, 1940-63. Lauren Harder-Gissing of the Mennonite Archives of Ontario will tell the story of how the need to respond to World War II brought Mennonites, Amish, Brethren in Christ, Quakers, Hutterites and other peace churches together; at the Detweiler Meeting House, Roseville; 7 p.m.

Sept. 21: Peace Day at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

Sept. 23: MC Eastern Canada and MCC Ontario present Wired: Building Relationships, an event to strengthen family relationships; at St. Catharines United Mennonite Church, 7:30 p.m.

Sept. 24: MC Eastern Canada and MCC Ontario present Cries From the Dark, a seminar on at-risk youths, for



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Nearly a billion people in the world are hungry. What can you do?

FAST for CHANGE

Oct. 16 is World Food Day. Join Canadian Foodgrains Bank in marking this event by fasting, praying, giving and advocating to end global hunger.

To participate, or to order free resources for your church or small group, visit fastforchange.ca or call 1.800.665.0377.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank
 A Christian Response to Hunger

parents, pastors, youth workers and church leaders; at St. Catharines United Mennonite Church, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Until Sept. 27: "Just food: The right to food from a faith perspective" exhibit of original art on the theme of food and justice by 19 artists from around the world, on display at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo. Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, call 519-885-0220.

Sept. 28: MC Eastern Canada workshop, "Preparing pastors and

congregations for the new frontier: Tools to engage new media with integrity," with Geoff Vanderkooy of PeaceWorks Technology Solutions; at Conrad Grebel University College, 1 p.m. Webcasts to Niagara, Toronto and Leamington.

Oct. 7: CD release party for Kyle Wijnands' Beautiful Brokenness; at Milverton Mennonite Church, 8 p.m. Wijnands is the part-time youth pastor at Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank.

Classifieds

Employment Opportunities

ASSOCIATE PASTOR PEACE MENNONITE CHURCH RICHMOND, BC

Peace Mennonite Church invites applications for the full-time position of **Associate Pastor**.

This position places major focus on youth ministry and family ministries, along with a minor focus on general congregational ministry.

Applicants should have a relevant degree in Christian ministry, an understanding of contemporary Anabaptist theology, and an interest and ability to relate to young people.

Please send resumes either by mail to: The Search Committee, Peace Mennonite Church, 11571 Daniels Rd., Richmond, BC V6X 1M7, or by e-mail to office@peacemennonite.ca.



Conrad Grebel University College invites applications for the position of STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAM ASSISTANT

The role of Grebel's Student Services Department is to engage students in building and celebrating a living and learning community. The Student Services Program Assistant participates in this work by assisting with residence admissions, the chapel program, organizing and participating in local and international service learning opportunities, and program planning. The Program Assistant will also be available to students for supportive care, giving focused attention to first-year students.

The successful candidate will have demonstrated creativity, energy, an innate love for young adults and a keen interest in working as a team player to further students' success. Desirable qualities include a Master's degree in a related field, previous experience working with a student population, and international travel and living experience. An ability to respond sensitively and thoughtfully to a broad range of student issues is essential. Candidates must have a demonstrated Mennonite faith commitment.

This role is defined as half-time (18 hours per week) with periodic evening and weekend work. This is a 12-month contract position starting in mid- to late fall. Approximate salary will be \$1,800 per month.

Please send letter of application and resumé by **Sept. 30, 2011**, to: E. Paul Penner, Director of Operations, Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6 or e-mail to: eppenner@uwaterloo.ca.

UpComing

Deadline approaching for Global Leadership Summit

Willard Metzger, general secretary of Mennonite Church Canada, is inviting pastors, lay leaders and anyone interested to a Global Leadership Summit. He says the Sept. 29-30 simulcast conference will be a great way for churches to kick-off the fall. The Summit will include an interview with Reginald Bibby, University of Lethbridge sociologist specializing in religion, and presentations by bestselling author and marketing blogger Seth Godin, and Mama Maggie Gobran, Nobel Peace Prize nominee and founder and chief executive officer of Stephens Children Ministry. The Summit, sponsored by the Leadership Centre of Willow Creek Canada, is in its 11th year. Max Canada insurance is helping to offset costs for MC Canada participants. For details, visit mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1600 or call MC Canada's Resource Centre at 1-866-888-6785. Registration deadline is Sept. 21.

—Mennonite Church Canada



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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC DEAN AND BOARD

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary seeks applicants for Executive Secretary to the president, vice-president, academic dean and board. This full-time position requires skills in secretarial functions, communication, organization and working with people. B.A. preferred. At least five years of experience expected. Knowledge of the Mennonite Church helpful. Commitment to Jesus Christ and to the mission of the Mennonite Church and AMBS expected. To apply, send by Sept. 15, a letter of application, resume and names of three references to President, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, or swshenk@ambs.edu. See full job description at www.ambs.edu/employment.



Mennonite Central Committee Ontario

invites applications for the position of

GENERAL MANAGER, CHRISTIAN BENEFIT SHOP St. Catharines, Ont.

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

Qualifications include: strong interpersonal skills with demonstrated leadership skills, willingness to work as a team with board and volunteers. Previous retail experience is an asset.

This salaried position begins November 2011. Application deadline: Oct. 10, 2011. The Assistant Manager position will be advertised in the next issue.

Complete job description available on www.mcc.org/serve. To apply, send cover letter and resume to Cath Woolner, 50 Kent Ave., Kitchener, ON N2G 3R1, or cathw@mennonitecc.on.ca.



Tornado rips lakeside town apart

BY DAVE ROGALSKY
Eastern Canada Correspondent

Within two hours of an F3 tornado strike on the town of Goderich, Ont., on Aug. 21, Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) Ontario board member Glenn Buck and his wife Esther were in the picturesque Lake Huron community to investigate, and arranged for 16 volunteers to assist homeowners with clean-up the following day.

Due to extensive damage to the town's infrastructure—news reports show that many buildings in the centre of the city were dangerously unstable—the municipal government restricted access to the areas hardest hit, making it impractical to invite volunteers for more than the one day at that point.

MDS Ontario, under the leadership of Orlan Martin, will begin accepting volunteers as soon as it can ensure volunteers access to meaningful work. Visit mds.mennonite.net, to check for volunteer opportunities in Goderich.

MDS attempts to work in partnership with other volunteer agencies to provide the best service possible for people in need. In Goderich, it is again affiliating with Samaritan's Purse and Christian Reformed World Relief Committee. These affiliations allow each organization to offer the services they do best without duplication and overlap. ☞

MDS ONTARIO PHOTOS BY GLENN AND ESTHER BUCK

