

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

December 16, 2013

Volume 17 Number 24

## Peacebuilding as 'God's vocation'

pg. 26

### inside

Discipleship as citizenship 4  
How the Grinch saved Christmas 17  
Heinz closure shocks community 27

## EDITORIAL

## The angels' song

DICK BENNER  
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

**“G**lory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to [all]  
on whom his favour rests”

(Luke 2:14) will be read and re-read in our places of worship this Advent season as well as sung with gusto, sometimes glibly, to the words of Henry Longfellow: “I heard the bells on Christmas Day.”

Oh, how we need these words and music of hope at the end of 2013 when the nightly news brings us anything but a world of peace and tranquility: killings continuing in Syria, the police brutally beating protesters in Ukraine, Thailand's downward spiral into citizen unrest, and sabres rattling between China and Japan over the ownership of a small, uninhabited island group in the East China Sea.

As we read the Lukan passage and sing the familiar Christmas carols to this noisy, violent backdrop, are we escaping to an ancient idyllic time romanticized by the gospel writers mesmerized by the coming of Israel's messiah? Can we possibly apply the angels' song to surprised shepherds on that peaceful Judean hillside to our own strife-riven world? Or are we just seeking refuge in some ancient folklore for a seasonal respite?

Faithful followers of Jesus could be excused for some cynicism at the end of this tumultuous year, but this is all the more reason to enter once again into the joy and hope of the season, but with a new appreciation that joy and hope are needed more than ever in our troubled world. For

it is this time of year, at this time of history, that we remind ourselves again that our God reigns despite the surrounding despair that often engulfs us.

Yet, as an ancient story, it is hardly idyllic, or even romantic. While we have embellished this revolutionary event with the soft symbols of a baby in a manger, wise men bringing expensive gifts and shepherds leaning on their staffs while parents glow in the joy of a birth, the back story is far more dark and complicated.

God's chosen Israel was living under oppressive Roman rule. Their own Jewish leaders, more concerned with the letter of Torah than in seeing the larger narrative of the coming Messiah as foretold by the prophets, were not prepared to accept the humble son of a carpenter as “God made flesh.”

The juxtaposition of peace and unrest are familiar parts of the story. The temptation is to romanticize the Joseph/Mary narrative and to overlook the fact that the ushering in of God's reign in Bethlehem depends a lot on us who have committed ourselves to being God's agents for peace in this unredeemed world.

We are now first and foremost citizens of God's kingdom (see “Discipleship as citizenship,” page 4) and as such are commissioned to sing the angels' song over and over again. Or as the editors of the newly released Herald Press book, *Revolutionary Christian Citizenship*, say in their introduction: “As Israel's

Messiah, [Jesus] claims the title of king and announces that God's reign is finding fulfilment in him.

“He then gathers a community around himself and shows them how to relate properly to God, one another and wider society in all of its social and political dimensions. . . . Rather than confront rival kingdoms with violent revolution, he claims that God's kingdom is manifest in service rather than dominion, vulnerability rather than coercion, love rather than fear. Jesus teaches his followers how to approach enmity, power, conflict, money and community in ways that are basic to any genuine political order.”

**New multi-cultural column**

Beginning in the new year, *Canadian Mennonite* will feature, on a rotating basis, a column in which New Canadians will give voice to the views and news of Mennonite Church Canada's

emerging church plants, representing the growing edge of our denomination. Brian Quan, pastor of the English-speaking Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church, leads off with the first such column on Feb. 17, replacing the New Order Voice of Winnipeg's Aiden Enns, who is retiring as a columnist after eight years. We thank him for his challenging, sometimes contrarian views that kept us on our toes as faithful disciples. He also served on *Canadian Mennonite's* board and was a national and Manitoba regional editor for *Mennonite Reporter* in earlier years. He continues as an occasional contributor.



**Brian Quan**

**ABOUT THE COVER:**

**At a pilgrimage of peace at Imjingak, close to the border between South and North Korea, pilgrims attach prayers for peace on the iron fence. See story of the World Conference of Churches assembly on page 26.**

PHOTO: JOANNA LINDÉN-MONTES, WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

*Circulation: Please contact Lisa Jacky toll-free at 1-800-378-2524 ext. 221 or by e-mail at office@canadianmennonite.org for subscriptions and address changes. Subscriptions can also be ordered at our web site. We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund for our publishing activities. ISSN 1480-042X*

**Canada**



# CANADIAN MENNONITE

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40063104 REGISTRATION NO. 09613

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE ITEMS TO CANADIAN MENNONITE  
490 DUTTON DRIVE, UNIT C5

WATERLOO ON N2L 6H7

Phone: 519-884-3810 Toll-free: 1-800-378-2524 Fax: 519-884-3331

Web site: [canadianmennonite.org](http://canadianmennonite.org)

*Please send all material to be considered for publication to:*

**General submission address:** [submit@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:submit@canadianmennonite.org)

**Readers Write:** [letters@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:letters@canadianmennonite.org)

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Material can also be sent "Attn: Submissions/Readers Write/Milestones/Obituaries/Calendar"  
by postal mail or fax to our head office.

**Reprint requests:** [reprints@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:reprints@canadianmennonite.org)

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**One-Year Subscription Rates**

**Canada:** \$44 + tax (depends on province where subscriber lives)

**U.S.:** \$66

**International (outside U.S.):** \$89.10



Award-winning  
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Canadian Church Press



# contents

## Discipleship as citizenship 4

'While the language of "discipleship" has served as the core watchword for a few generations,' CMU professor **GORDON ZERBE** says it is 'easily susceptible to an individualist interpretation . . .' He suggests 'heavenly citizenship' instead.

## Another Canadian 'TIM' 20

MC Canada models online pastoral coaching on Eastern Canada's in-person program with cost containment in mind.



## Peacebuilding as 'God's vocation' 26

WWC assembly in South Korea includes pilgrimage to border with North Korea and plenary speech by Nobel Peace Laureate **LEYMAH GBOWEE**.

## From opera to open spaces 30

**TERRY** and **MONIQUE MIREAU** now raise their voices for sustainable food production, rather than applause.

## Challenging facile conclusions 32

*For God and Country (In That Order)* challenges 'our polarized expectations both about the military and about Christians,' says author.

## Young Voices 33-36

**AARON EPP's** personal journey—"A Year of Reading Biblically"—starts now. Plus, 'CPT extends offer of peace' to **MARK DRISCOLL**.

## Regular features:

For discussion **8** Readers write **9** Milestones **18** Pontius' Puddle **19** Schools Directory **31** Calendar **37** Classifieds **38**

## The angels' song 2

**DICK BENNER**

## Avoiding meaninglessness 9

**KEN WARKENTIN**

## The question the church needs to answer 10

**PHIL WAGLER**

## Hope for a doubting disciple 11

**KATIE DOKE SAWATZKY**



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Web-exclusive stories from Religion News Service include "C.S. Lewis's popularity 50 years after his death," and "Christians help West Bank farmers."

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GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH FEATURE

# Discipleship as citizenship

*The legacy of the Apostle Paul*

BY GORDON ZERBE

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

In the first 300 years of the Christian church, before church and state became fused, preachers and leaders regularly used the language of “citizenship” to describe the Christian community and its way of life. Where did this come from, and why was this linguistic practice forgotten?

The most explicit example of this imagery comes from an anonymous piece of writing now known as the “Letter to Diognetus,” one of numerous writings of the second century designed to provide a reasoned defence of the Christian faith and its practice in a suspicious and often hostile environment:

“For the distinction between Christians and the rest of humanity is neither in land [geography] nor language nor customs. For Christians do not dwell in cities in some place of their own, nor do they use any strange variety of dialect, nor practise an unusual livelihood. . . . Yet while living in both Greek and barbarian cities [Greek: *poleis*], according as each obtained his lot, and following the local customs, both in clothing and food and in the rest of life, they show forth the admirable and confessedly paradoxical condition of their own distinctive citizenship [*politeia*, political formation]. They dwell in their own nations, but as resident aliens; they share all things as citizens, but endure all things as foreigners. Every foreign country is their nation, and every nation [in which they dwell] is a foreign state. . . . They pass their time upon the earth, but they have their citizenship [*politeuontai*] in heaven. . . . To put it shortly, what the soul is in the body, that the Christians are in the world. The soul is spread through all members of the body, and Christians throughout the citizen-states [*poleis*] of the world.”

Other writers of the post-apostolic church similarly highlight Christians as “those determined to practise citizenship (*politeuesthai*) according to the gospel itself,” and explain their corporate life as a “citizen-polity [*politeia*] lived according to the gospel,” as documented numerous times in Eusebius’s *The History of the*

*(Continued on page 6)*

*While the language of ‘discipleship’ has served as the core watchword for a few generations, there are significant limitations to it. For instance, ‘discipleship’ is easily susceptible to an individualist interpretation or practice limited to a particular religious sphere of life.*



*Vintage engraving from 1870 of a scene from the New Testament by Gustave Doré showing Saint Paul preaching to the Thessalonians.*

(Continued from page 4)

*Church*, completed soon after AD 325.

One of the earlier examples of this use is in the letter of Clement of Rome to the church in Corinth, written in the 90s, advising readers as a community “to practise [their Christian] citizenship worthily of Christ” (I Clement 2:8; 3:4; 21:1).

And in the middle of the second century, Polycarp, leader of the church of Smyrna, promises his persecuted community the blessings of the age to come, “if we practise citizenship worthily of Christ,” and “remain loyal” as citizens of Christ (Letter to the Philippians 5:2). Shortly thereafter, Polycarp suffered a martyr’s death at the hands of the Roman empire.

### **Paul’s citizenship language**

In each of these cases, the inspiration comes directly from the Apostle Paul, especially his letter to the Philippians, where Christians are encouraged to be a kind of counter-citizen-society with an alternative loyalty and manner of life. The thesis statement of the letter comes in the first chapter: “*Just one thing matters: politeuesthe [politicize] in a manner worthy of the gospel of Messiah*” (Philippians 1:27).

Drawing on the imagery of a Greek citizen-state (*polis*), Paul uses the Greek verb *politeusthe* here in way that cannot be easily rendered into English: It involves the call both to “be a citizen community,” and to “practise the citizenship identity” that members of that community have been “graciously granted”

(1:30), a meaning covered up in standard English translations until very recently (see TNIV, NLT).

Paul stresses the alternative foundation, formation, being and practice of this alternative citizen-community (*polis*), whose foundational “constitution,” or point of reference, is specifically “the gospel of Messiah.” For Paul, citizenship is not so much what Jesus-loyalists do in the world in relation to politics as usual, but who they are as God’s newly reconciled and always reconciling community.

Later in the letter, Paul emphasizes again the matter of a Christian citizen identity: “*For our politeuma [polity] exists in heaven, and from there we await a Deliverer, Lord Jesus Messiah, who will transform the body of our lowliness to be conformed to the body of his splendour, in*

## **Remembering and honouring ‘soldiers’ of Christ**

BY GORDON ZERBE

**I**n Philippians 2:25-30, the Apostle Paul advises the violently besieged Christian community in Philippi to grant special “honours” to a “fellow-soldier” who has “risked his life” in service of Christ. The cadre of Jesus loyalists, suffering under pressure from Roman imperial authority, is invited by Paul to take up a unified but nonviolent defence in the face of those who would want Christ’s global “citizen community” destroyed (Philippians 1:27-30, 4:5). In effect, Paul asks the congregation to grant one of their own the Victoria Cross, the highest military decoration awarded for valour “in the face of the enemy” in Commonwealth countries.

Other letters help us appreciate the varied ways that Paul applies military imagery not only to God’s “battle” to free humans from bondage to various levels of cosmic and human “powers,” but also to the “struggle”—a military term—that Christians find themselves in at the time.

But they are a very strange sort of soldier, taking up and putting on only the virtues (fidelity, love, hope, righteousness, goodness, purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, truth, prayer) as their defensive attire and offensive “weapons” (I Thessalonians 5:8; II Corinthians 6:6-7; Romans 6:13, 12:21, 13:14, 15:30; and Ephesians 6:15).

And they “wage war” of an unusual kind, seeing beyond what appears on the surface of human social

and political reality (II Corinthians 10:1-18), ultimately engaged only in God’s warfare of love to restore the universe.

The use of military imagery by Paul and other New Testament writers needs to be carefully weighed, especially since it is intimately tied up with his peace theology. This usage certainly does not mean that Paul endorses Roman imperial militarism, or any other kind of earthly use of lethal force. It does not necessarily mean that Paul’s rhetoric permits or promotes crusader violence or legitimizes violence in God’s name. It does not mean that we should use military imagery uncritically in our modern context, without reflecting on its violent potentiality.

It does mean, though, that Paul lived and worked in a context steeped with military practice and imagery. It does mean that Paul understands peace not as passivity, but as a striving peacemaking towards a peace won through militant struggle. It does reflect Paul’s commitment to the God of liberating, transforming justice. It does mean that Paul envisioned God’s warfare of love as ultimately bringing an end to war and war machinery. In a very important way, Paul uses military language while attempting to subvert all military violence.

So, then, how do we as Christians honour our “war” heroes near and far?



*accordance with the power with which he is able to subject the universe to himself*" (3:20-21).

Here, Paul draws on the imagery of a government in exile—in exile because a hostile, unjust and illegitimate power is now supreme in the divine regime's rightful dominion, the whole earth. It is for this reason that the loyal believers must wait expectantly and faithfully until the sphere of God's claim throughout the cosmos is fully liberated (2:9-11). The word *politeuma* in this text refers to the "ruling structures of a *polis*" ("citizen-state"), that is, its "government," and by extension to the "political identity" and "citizenship" of those who place their hope in that regime.

Paul is not referring to heaven as the

To the congregation in Thessalonica, another community facing pressures and demands of ultimate loyalty from the Roman empire, Paul similarly does not hold back: "*We exhort you [all] . . . to walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into his own kingdom*" (I Thessalonians 2:12).

Ultimately, this language of politics and citizenship for a Greek-speaking audience derives from Jesus' equally bold proclamation of exclusive loyalty to the "kingdom of God."

### **Not dual, but global citizenship**

Although born in Japan as a foreigner—but not thereby receiving Japanese citizenship, since citizenship there was genealogically defined, as in the ancient

citizenship, so as to avoid competing claims on our loyalty, I would argue that Paul, Messiah's envoy (*apostolos*) of an alternative politics, would discourage trying to hold Christian and a national citizenship in some kind of equal balance. The former must always trump the latter when it comes to any competition over our loyalty, and notably when it comes to creating a new, truly international people under Christ's sovereignty, one that is oriented to God's universal dominion as Creator (Philippians 3:21).

And so I was, and still am, troubled by my words to "be faithful" and "bear true allegiance" to a particular and particularizing human sovereignty, since there are no qualifications attached to those words of oath. My primary loyalty goes not to the great mother Queen of an earthly empire, but, to use Paul's words, to our great "mother Jerusalem above," who is truly "free," that is, under no domination from any other power (Galatians 4:26).

Paul here uses the image of the "metropolis" ("mother-city") in relation to its multiple, scattered outposts. My "truest allegiance" was declared in oath at the moment of my baptism into Christ, the Christian citizenship ceremony. And it is for this reason that balancing my two earthly citizenships is an insignificant matter because of my primary commitment to Christ's world-reconciling regime. By contrast, no modern state sovereignty is interested in having its subjects or citizens making oaths to a global citizenship that trumps narrow state or national interests, whether that global perspective is construed theologically, politically or ecologically. But the imperative for such a globally oriented citizenship, what the Stoics called "cosmo-politanism," is becoming increasingly critical.

When speaking at my home congregation last year, I explained why regular church attendance has become a habit for me. Among other reasons, I explained that I simply enjoy international travel. Every week, when I cross the threshold into Christ's sacred space, I leave Canada. I suggested that we should have a sign on the inside as we leave, "Entering Canada," to remind us of our truest identity and

*Paul is not referring to heaven as the homeland, nor as the destination for the faithful; rather, heaven is the place where God's rule still remains supreme . . . .*

homeland, nor as the destination for the faithful; rather, heaven is the place where God's rule still remains supreme, in a kind of exile, the location from which the global reclamation will finally and imminently emerge. In the interim, citizenship includes, among other things, a commitment to the practice of forbearing reconciliation (4:5), in the context of a security "guarded" only through the "peace of God" (4:7), ultimately established under the rule of the "God of peace" (4:9).

The final global victory of that regime (*politeuma*) will mean a dramatic change in the fortunes of its loyal adherents, specifically pertaining to bodily life, but will also embrace the whole cosmos (3:20-21). Paul's words, in effect, are the declarative counterpart to the prayer of Jesus, that "*God's regime be established on earth as it is in heaven*" (Matthew 6:10).

The case of Philippians reveals that Paul uses politically loaded imagery especially in situations where the gospel was coming into conflict with Roman imperial power, with its claim for universal and ultimate allegiance.

world—and while receiving American citizenship as an accident of pedigree, in my adulthood I made an oath of allegiance to the "Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors." I "affirmed," but it was an oath of loyalty just the same. And while some inductees were troubled by the monarchist imagery, I found it an apt symbol of the claims of state sovereignty. States do make sovereign claims on our being and loyalty, and even "demo-crazy" specifically invokes a form of "ruling power" (*kratia*). According to Canadian doctrine, it is exactly at the moment when one takes this oath (for those not born into it) that one becomes a Canadian citizen and is "welcomed into the Canadian family," while accepting "the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship."

So I now hold dual earthly citizenship. Nevertheless, I do not subscribe to the notion that one can always be a good dual citizen of Christ's regime now secured in heaven—which is technically a global citizenship anyway—and a particular earthly regime. Just as the United States explicitly discourages dual

*[I]n the middle of the second century, Polycarp, leader of the church of Smyrna, promises his persecuted community the blessings of the age to come, 'if we practise citizenship worthily of Christ,' and 'remain loyal' as citizens of Christ (Letter to the Philippians 5:2).*

loyalty.

There is a long history in the West of sacred spaces providing an exception (“sanctuary”) from the regular rules of citizen-states. For instance, being born in “embassy space” for Americans is as good as birth in the home country, making one eligible to become president. It is in this sense that, when we enter the space (anywhere) of Christ’s world-reconciling work, we are entering an international space, as explained in the Letter of Diognetus above: “Every foreign country is their nation, and every nation (in which they dwell) is a foreign state.”

### **Recovering the language of Christian citizenship**

This biblical language of citizenship is in desperate need of recovery. While the language of “discipleship” has served as the core watchword for a few generations, there are significant limitations to it. For instance, “discipleship” is easily susceptible to an individualist interpretation or practice, limited to a particular religious sphere of life. Moreover, it has become a church or Bible word, otherwise out of currency in the regular world. It is not even a very good translation of the original words that it translates, which would more closely mean something like “menteeship,” nor does it express very well the more original imagery of “following.”

The notion of “citizenship,” however, not only conjures up the crucial element of personal loyalty and practice, but also that of a spiritual-social and global-ecological vision in Christ, along with a communal formation, mission and identity—even if an identity that confounds prior identities, or undermines the very notion of identity—that is, altogether, a different kind of “politics.”

Moreover, were we to keep talking

about our “Christian citizenship,” both as an identity and as a practice, we would immediately and always be reminded that our Christian faith and practice as a citizen always cuts across other citizenship identities and responsibilities, sometimes in harmony with them, sometimes in conflict with them. And at the same time we may begin to regard our faith in Christ primarily as a dynamic “loyalty” that applies to all arenas of life, not as a dogmatic “belief” pertaining to the limited sphere of the spiritual or religious. ❧

*Gordon Zerbe is professor of New Testament at Canadian Mennonite University and a member of Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg. He is the author of Citizenship: Paul on Peace and Politics (Winnipeg: CMU Press, 2012). He is nearing completion of a commentary on Philippians for the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series.*



### ❧ For discussion

1. Do your Christian values make you feel like a resident alien in Canada? How strong are your ties of loyalty to Canada? How strong is your allegiance to your local community or municipality? How do these ties of loyalty compare with your allegiance to your church community?
2. Do you find it helpful to think of your allegiance to Christ as heavenly citizenship? What are the implications for earthly citizenship? If we are dual citizens, where does our primary allegiance lie? Do you agree with Gordon Zerbe that “heavenly citizenship” is a richer image than “discipleship”?
3. Zerbe says that the Apostle Paul encouraged the Philippians to see themselves as “a kind of counter-citizen society.” Is it appropriate for such “counter-citizens” to hold office in Canadian government at the federal, provincial or municipal level?
4. Zerbe points out some of Paul’s military imagery. Does this imagery encourage Christians to think militarily? What are the drawbacks of using citizenship or military language? How can the church better honour its heroes of nonviolence?

—BY BARB DRAPER



## VIEWPOINTS

## /// Readers write

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## ✉ Reader finds issue 'disturbing'

THREE ITEMS IN the Oct. 28 "peacemaking" issue disturbed me:

- **I DEPLORE** that Dennis Gruending's corrective of the Sept. 16 "Holy Contradiction" feature was made necessary. Thanks for printing his "A little humility is in order" letter.
- **IN** "LET nobody judge them," I appreciate the courage taken in examining and embracing the subtle and not-so-subtle truths lurking among "both pacifists and non-pacifists [who] have in common major sins of omission."

However, with the article's unsupported Pollyanna-like conclusions like "U.S. Mennonites were pretty much unanimous in their non-resistant stance since

*(Continued on page 10)*

## FROM OUR LEADERS

# Avoiding meaninglessness

KEN WARKENTIN

**W**hat is the nature of the church today and the nature of the church to come? Will it continue to be important to organize our churches into denominational bodies or is there another way for God's people to come together?

These are some of the questions that the Future Directions Task Force grapples with. Recently, it produced a paper testing the idea of a new denominational structure for Mennonite Church Canada including the national church and each area church.

The interim report states, "[T]he foundational unit of the church . . . is the local congregation. Through the local congregation individual followers of Jesus experience the fullness of salvation, the 'grace, joy and peace' that a community can give. Just as God exists in



community, there can be no privatized follower of Jesus. The congregation is the primary expression of church, the primary setting for worship, faith formation and fellowship."

We are testing this idea in a time of change. The national church and the area churches are looking at their ministry and wondering about long-term sustainability. Some congregations are experiencing significant change as well. Some are facing wonderful new ministry opportunities, and some are facing declining and aging populations. Some congregations are unsure if they need to build a new building, or if they need to refocus their budget priorities to address their community's needs?

How will the changing face of our church affect our mission? I trust that our national vision will continue to inform how we are organized as the church. That vision reads, "God calls us to be followers

of Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world."

The church described in this vision exists to be the presence of Jesus Christ flowing out to the world around us. It exists not for the sake of the church, but for the communities in which we find ourselves. When we forget that, we run the risk of becoming irrelevant.

I have been inspired by the writings of Abraham Heschel. In his book *I Asked for Wonder*, he identifies the results of a faith unable to meet the inevitability of change. He writes, "When faith is completely replaced by creed, worship by discipline, love by habit; when the crisis of today is ignored because of the splendour of the past; when faith becomes an heirloom, rather than a living fountain; when religion speaks only in the name of authority, rather than with the voice of compassion, its message becomes meaningless."

My prayer is that the changes we will experience in our church locally, regionally and nationally will focus our energy on following Jesus Christ in the wonder and beauty of his body.

*Ken Warkentin is executive director of Mennonite Church Manitoba.*

(Continued from page 9)

the First World War,” I raise the corrective that one exception breaks the rule! Limited entirely to my own rather small sample of American-based relatives, there exists the story of one mother sending a Mennonite food-care package to her son who had requested it after enlisting in the Vietnam-based air force, only to die in combat before the newly sought-after comfort

food arrived.

• **LASTLY, THE** editorial, “Peace prevails,” provides inspiring seeds of hope on how Stouffville, Ont., citizens quietly turned the war-hawks’ front-page rewrite of history lemons into the lemonade of a “peace plaque [that] is [now] a permanent fixture in the centre of town, and the Peace Festival is scheduled to become

## OUTSIDE THE BOX

# The question the church needs to answer

PHIL WAGLER

Every other Saturday evening the discipleship group our family participates in meets. Various ages, including a boatload of energetic children, gather to enjoy life together, be encouraged, and seek ways to meet the needs of one another and our community as followers of Jesus.

While the big people talk and drink copious amounts of coffee, the kids play in our basement. They have a great time until parents eventually descend the stairs and find themselves among a virtual volcanic eruption of toys, games and stuffed animals. Soon follows the adult eruption, “What happened here?”

The little ones are simply doing what little ones do. Unconcerned about the mess, they always have rather entertaining answers to that most serious of grown-up questions. For the kids, this was simply vivid imaginations and short attention spans bursting forth in a new creative mess each week. And that eruption, that colourful mess of childlikeness, always prompts the question seeking an answer.

Many are the questions posed to the church these days. Some ask us to have answers for complex quandaries about the relationship between science and

spirituality, the how and why of past church mistakes, or the intellectual stumbling blocks connected to the rationality of faith or the existence of God. All these Christians must be ready to engage in with humility, courage and confidence in the truth of the gospel.

At the same time, these are not the primary questions the church must have an answer for. It has been pointed out that a close study of the Book of Acts reveals that the majority of the preaching in it happens in response to questions being posed by those outside the church. A question is asked and the church proclaims the reason for the hope it has. The gospel becomes the answer to the wondering about what is going on in the life of the visible community of God’s children. In essence, as the church lives its day-to-day life, it is observed that something unique has happened and people ask what it’s all about.

“What is this new reality?” This becomes the first question the church gives an answer to, and the good news of another world—the kingdom—revealed in Jesus Christ and confirmed by his resurrection from the dead is the answer. It’s like the world watches what the children of God have done, see a new reality and ask, “What happened here?”

Which brings us to an unsettling

thought: What is observed of Christian community these days that prompts this question? When Peter calls the first Christians to, “[a]lways be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (I Peter 3:15), it is in the context of the uncommon reality of unity, shared love, blessing even enemies and suffering for righteousness’ sake.

So we come back to it: How are we, as churches planted and incarnated in the hovels and hamlets of humanity, living in such a way as to awaken this question by those who watch us? Peter assumes that the life of the Christ-like community would inevitably draw out the question like adults walking into the imagination of another world brought to life. Be ready he says. Live ready.

The problem is, we’re so busy cleaning up the gospel, and maintaining tidy and safe churches, that any childlike faith that erupts into wonderful imagination remains stunted or reprimanded. People will not ask the question that matters because we sang some songs well, used cool fonts on our websites or had appealing politics. But they just might if we were radically committed to love, humility and a life of suffering for righteousness’ sake. Are we ready? Perhaps that is actually the first question we need to answer.

*Phil Wagler (phil\_wagler@yahoo.ca) lives in Surrey, B.C., where he longs to faithfully lead this type of question-worthy community.*



an annual event—celebrating peace, not war.”

Frankly, on its own, the quoted guide-post, “*Do not resist an evil person,*” has quite literally lost its salt. Shining new light on how Arnold Neufeldt-Fast, through pro-active, persistently non-aggressive but assertive community-building steps, helped the community birth the change—in spite of all the politics to the contrary—would, in my opinion, have been more

helpful in unpacking yesteryear’s actively non-passive verse into today’s word-and-deed language.

**EDUARD HIEBERT,  
ST. FRANCOIS XAVIER, MAN.**

## NEW ORDER VOICE

# Hope for a doubting disciple

KATIE DOKE SAWATZKY

**W**e just got back from a church lunch. Sitting at our table was our young family, a couple in their early 30s and three people in their senior years: a couple and a widow. While our life situations were different, I am learning to pay attention to moments where young and old listen to each other. At the end of October, I attended the Kairos Elements of Justice Intergenerational Gathering. On unceded Squamish territory at the Cheakamus Centre in Paradise Valley, B.C., 130 participants representing several Christian denominations and justice advocacy groups met to learn about, and network around, indigenous rights and ecological justice.

The participants’ ages were diverse. Mothers came with their children, university students drove out together, and 20- and 30-something not-for-profit workers and activists led workshops. Middle-aged and older participants led worship elements, networked around the tables at meal-times, and shared their wisdom during group sessions.

A memorable moment of the weekend was a plenary session given by Caleb Behn, a young Dene man working against hydraulic fracking—energy-intensive

natural gas extraction—on his ancestral land in northeastern B.C. Behn is studying law in order to gain opportunities to interact directly with the oil and gas industries exploiting his people and land. His address to the group was informal and respectful, but also pointed. He was open about the abuse his family experienced at residential schools and his scepticism of the church.

In what could have become a tense encounter, Behn asked us to name our strengths as faith-based communities. Looking back, it was a dynamic moment: a young, passionate indigenous voice



*I am learning to pay attention to moments where young and old listen to each other.*

asking predominantly white church folk to name their core values in the hope of finding common ground. What struck me about our group’s response was that it was the elders who answered right away with passion equal to Behn’s: Openness, willingness to listen, compassion, stewardship.

I didn’t speak up. At this point in my life, I’m wrestling with the failures of the church more than championing its values. But I was thankful for the answers the older voices gave, to be reminded that

what I seek within my faith community is indeed there, upheld by elders who have weathered doubt and shame, and remain hopeful. The rest of the session was fruitful. Behn appreciated the answers given and went on to brainstorm practical ways the church can work for ecological justice.

Moments like this one happened all weekend. They ranged from the surprising enthusiasm of seasoned participants about communicating through social media, to a casual conversation I had with a university chaplain over breakfast that quickly became an exchange about faith backgrounds and personal growth.

These people were compassionate, open and dedicated to taking care of the earth. Yes, one didn’t know how YouTube works and another became angry during a group discussion because of silliness that, to her, was distracting from sober realities. But their voices were listened to because all the participants—young, middle-aged and old—were united around a common goal: Justice for all.

This shouldn’t have surprised me, considering church bodies are often inter-generational. But the interactive, inter-generational community I experienced at the Kairos gathering gave me reason to pursue and celebrate relationships with elders of my faith. Because, as a young, doubtful disciple, it’s what I need. I need to see glimpses of what I wish to become and be encouraged to remain hopeful.

*Katie Doke Sawatzky (katiesawatzky@gmail.com) lives in Vancouver.*



## ✉ 'Teach them to obey all that I have commanded'

RE: "LET NOBODY judge them," Oct. 28, page 6.

The feature article was the source of intense discussion in our adult Sunday school class at Wanner Mennonite Church, Cambridge. The emotional examples—real and hypothetical—offered by class members cast doubt on our historical understanding of being a disciple of Jesus. That reflected the gist of "Let nobody judge them," as has been the situation in other controversial topics fragmenting our denomination.

This article virtually ignored the extensive teaching and supportive ministry of some Mennonite pastors and parents during those war years. Time limitation probably prevented our class from including the following article, "Uncle Sam goes to jail," which could have lent more balance to our discussion.

As a youth reared in the context of a large historical Mennonite congregation composed mostly of those whose ancestors arrived in the late 1800s, I have memories of that post-war era. Any lack of teaching regarding the love ethic of Jesus that may have been lacking earlier—even as it often is now—was altered during the 1950s. There were inordinate numbers of Mennonite youth from western Canada responding to the challenge of Christian discipleship as expressed in global voluntary service, career missionary commitments and local service-oriented ministries.

Our churches, then as now, were weak in discipling potential or new Christians. Baptismal classes were impersonal and vows were litanies voiced by a group of us. The eventual membership dropout rate was probably higher than that of returning Mennonite soldiers.

Of my four close relatives to enlist during the Second World War, none had been active in the church and only one returned to a Mennonite church, but remained relatively inactive and never altered his views regarding war participation. I suspect that most returning soldiers chose not to associate with Christians opposing war. Can we not allow them that choice?

While the pull of family ties is significant, let's not get Mennonite ethnicity and theology confused in this discussion. Even now, we have members who do not agree with our "official" positions. Why only blame the church leadership of that time? To be fair, I have also heard about uninformed and inconsistent lives of conscientious objectors throughout the wars of our 20th century.

Unmentioned have been those Mennonite and non-Mennonite veterans who became strong peace advocates. Some have been featured in *Canadian Mennonite*.

I believe that we still have the challenge of "teaching them to obey all that I have commanded" (Matthew 28:20). This is a responsibility for both church and home.

IVAN UNGER, CAMBRIDGE, ONT.

## ✉ 'Mystery' ad piques reader's interest

PERHAPS IT'S A mark of good advertising to make you curious. On that score, *The Preacher and the Shrink* ad (Oct. 28, page 3) has succeeded. The ad is provocative in many ways, but the only one I'll mention is this: I've read the page at least six times and I cannot determine where it is playing, although it appears not to be in the city or even the province where I live. I could, of course, look up the telephone area code, but that would spoil the allure.

DALE TAYLOR, CALGARY



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Isaiah 9:6a KJV

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## VIEWPOINT

# Western influence embraced, opposed

BY HAROLD SCHILK

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

In the space of three weeks I have experienced two very different but also similar cultures. These experiences have left me with a sense of disconnect and even befuddlement.

## A 'western' church grows in China

This September I participated in Mennonite Church Canada's China Vision pastoral exchange. The exchange also included a tour, which provided a cultural and religious blend. My exchange pastor was the leader of an unofficial church, so this group of Christians did not feel itself bound to governmental limitations on evangelism. They were prepared to share the gospel with all whom they could reach.

Thinking that the gospel they would share would be in a culturally Chinese manner, I was quite surprised to find their approach to doing church extremely western. A wedding I attended was replete with a white bridal gown, tuxedoed groom, suitably coifed attendants, a parental/couple lighting of wedding candles and even a tossing of the bride's bouquet. Organ music, PowerPoint pictures and animated images filled in this very western service.

But the similarity was not limited to that one service. Regular Sunday morning worship in one of the state-sanctioned churches included a choir, piano and a robed speaker who delivered a sermon could have fit in perfectly with

any mainstream denominational service back here in Canada.

Another church's particular ministry was to teach keyboard to people from unevangelized areas so that they could provide a music ministry when they returned home. The songs were western in tune while the words were in Mandarin. When I asked whether there would be benefit in teaching people to play traditional Chinese instruments like the *erhu*, *guzheng* or the *pipa*, my host laughed and winced. While these instruments might be culturally appropriate, they were not a part of the western Christian package, which I sensed received significant western financial backing from those who have a concern for evangelism in China. Regrettably, finances often have a way of influencing form.

## Dealing with forced assimilation in Canada

Upon my return, I took in a day of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings in Lethbridge, Alta., for those affected by the legacy of church-run Indian Residential Schools. I was struck by the distance between some indigenous people who were subjected by force to colonization and indoctrination, and the Chinese church that has enthusiastically embraced western influence.

One clear difference is that the one culture was forced into change, while

the other was not. The one was subjected to cultural destruction while the other seems to embrace a new cultural construction.

A case could be made that the indigenous culture experienced the worst of western society, while Chinese society is embracing the best. But Chinese history is not without its memories of the opium wars or the destruction vindictive European troops wreaked on Chinese landmarks or the many conflicts since then.

Both cultures have difficult pasts to contend with. For the Chinese, success and advancement at all cost seem to outweigh what is left behind. For Canada's indigenous peoples, coming to grips with the past is of paramount importance. One seems to move effortlessly; one seems to move slowly. Which is the more holistic approach? The one which seems to advance or the other which is wrestling with its past so that cultural genocide might not be repeated?

The need for both the Chinese and indigenous cultures to develop theology and governance apart from western influence is key in how rooted Christianity will become for these groups in the years ahead. One residential school survivor who is now an Anglican rector in a first nation community said that an Anglican indigenous council is moving towards appointing and ordaining its own bishops. This is a good thing for autonomy, culture and even governance's sake. It is also likely good for the sake of Jesus and the gospel.

We could argue that the church has been extremely fractious and needs to come together in unity. I would agree. But that does not necessarily mean that unity needs to come from a singularly western or monocultural approach. The damage caused by the church to forcibly mould indigenous children into people Canadian society deemed "useful" came at a horrific cost. The damage which might be caused to the Chinese church in its tight embrace of all things western is yet to be seen. ❧

*When I asked whether there would be benefit in teaching people to play traditional Chinese instruments like the erhu, guzheng or the pipa, my host laughed and winced.*

*Harold Schilk pastors Springridge Mennonite Church in Pincher Creek, Alta.*

## VIEWPOINT

# Human rights are about community

BY LOWELL EWERT

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

Critics of the international human rights movement often argue that rights are primarily a western concept that undermine the culture and positive values of traditional societies. According to this view, rights emphasize individualism over the collective needs of the community, and give priority to selfish claims that each



rights of these young people cut down in the prime of their life as they were studying animal husbandry or horticulture is clear. If human rights were truly protected in Nigeria, these bright young minds would still be learning how to strengthen the nation's food security, rather than being mourned at their funerals. I can feel morally

smug in the revulsion I feel when I condemn the perpetrators and their sponsors for this act of evil.

Unfortunately, it is not quite that simple. While it is true that many rights emphasize civil and political concerns—such as the right to vote, protest, join unions, enjoy freedom of speech and conscience—they also include other “rights” that are essential for life. Human rights also guarantee the right to food, healthcare,

housing, an adequate standard of living, and the basic necessities that give life meaning and affirm the dignity of all. As the former Ghanaian head of state Acheampong once said, “One man/one vote is meaningless unless accompanied by one man with bread.” Human rights are bigger, and more expansive, than what those of us in the West often think of in terms of rights. If you don't have the basic necessities of life, your rights are violated whether or not you can vote, protest or worship in peace. This is the point where the ongoing dialogue I have been having with Mary Lou Klassen of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Nigeria makes me very uncomfortable. Klassen keeps

reminding me of the practical impact of political or economic decisions on the lives of individuals. Her focus is on the victims—who are equally dead, whether shot in their sleep by the Boko Haram or they perished from starvation, lack of medical care or lack of housing due to having no safe place to live.

I tend to keep the conversation focused on the complicity of the actor, the person who is making the decisions. So I hold the militants accountable who shot the agricultural students sleeping at Yobe State College of Agriculture. Because I don't go around killing people, my conscience is clean. But Klassen won't let us forget that global policies that benefit our global economic order and way of life can result in death for others even if it is not as immediate or direct as a shot in the head while sleeping. Oppression and injustice can kill just as surely as the bullet does, albeit more slowly. But the end result is the same for the victim, whether death comes fast or slow.

Perhaps it is in this understanding that the true value of human rights and our faith tradition can be understood. Looking at it this way, my concern should not just be the 50 students who are

*Because I don't go around killing people, my conscience is clean.*

killed, but should also encompass the 500 million people in our world whose lives are at risk because their right to food, healthcare, housing and education is not fully respected. An approach to “rights” that is concerned about the totality of the individual, not just their civil and political rights, is truly one that is focused on community. When we see the world as a global community, instead of a collection of nations, we are all implicated and responsible for demanding political, economic and social policies that affirm the dignity of all. ☸

*Lowell Ewert is director of peace and conflict studies at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont.*



## COUNTERPOINT

# Which human rights are about community?

BY MARY LOU KLASSEN

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

When the story of the late September attack on a northeastern Nigeria agricultural college by the Boko Haram that killed at least 50 students in their sleep managed to find its way into the international press, Lowell Ewert sent me a brief two-sentence e-mail. It said, “How does one explain the ag. school shooting? Pretty awful.”



slaughtered the innocents. They should be caught, charged, tried and punished. They are terrorists. Simple.

Not quite. For one thing, we are talking about a conflict situation. Who is responsible for enforcing the students' human rights? Where was the government? It is known that schools are targets. What

I'm not sure why I felt annoyed at an inquiry that was intended to show interest. Perhaps it was the random focus on one incident in an ongoing situation of horror. Perhaps it was because I felt put on the spot to explain the complexities of the world I now inhabit. Ironically, to me,

about the religious rhetoric that rationalizes attacks as part of true faith? What about the communities from which the young men are recruited for the movement? Where are the jobs that could provide an alternative means of survival? I have been told that some young men will join a fight for as little as two to three

*I have been told that some young men will join a fight for as little as . . . a piece of bread.*

the news of the attack on the agricultural college broke as the stand-off in the U.S. government over the Affordable Health Care Act got underway. As a Canadian, I was both befuddled and dismayed by the way that a few extremists could hold a whole country hostage over more equitable healthcare.

On the face of it, these two issues are about as far away from each other as the U.S.A. and Nigeria. The loss of life in the attack on the agricultural college was terrible and deeply distressing, both as an isolated incident and as part of a bigger ongoing conflict. The human rights that were violated in the attack are clear. The perpetrators can be identified: the leaders who gave orders and the attackers who

dollars or even a piece of bread.

Tucked towards the end of the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” is Article 25, which states, “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care and necessary social services. . . .” Article 26 states, “Everyone has the right to education.”

I am a sceptical latecomer to human rights as a framework for describing justice that makes for peace. This is partly because I have not been clear how a focus on rights relates to my duties to care for the least of my brothers and sisters, as Jesus implies in his parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25.

Discussions of rights seemed too narrowly focused on guaranteeing political rights like freedom of expression, the right to vote, to not be tortured and to have due process. They seemed too individualistic, as Ewert describes. Imagine my surprise, then, when I “discovered” the articles that enshrine social and economic rights. How would the conflict in northeastern Nigeria be mitigated if social and economic rights were also enforced in those impoverished, poorly educated people?

To my mind, Articles 25 and 26 are where the conflict over healthcare in the U.S. and the Boko Haram conflict in Nigeria converge. While there is some debate about how much poor nutrition, ill health and illiteracy are the causes of violent conflict or terrorism, there are undisputed connections. Regions or countries with equitable and better living standards have less violent social conflict.

As Ewert points out, it is undeniably easier to draw a straight line from perpetrator to victim in the agricultural school attack, and so discern who is guilty of violating the students' Article 2 “right[s] to life, liberty and security of person.” However, if we are to take the Declaration seriously, it is no less important to draw lines between perpetrator and victim when people's other rights are violated. And these rights include the right to adequate food, shelter, medical care, education and equal pay for equal work.

I realize the recent shutdown of the U.S. government expressed a conflict more complex than simply about “Obamacare.” Likewise, the conflict in northeastern Nigeria is more than about terrorism. Human rights give us new questions to ask about each situation and the possibility of seeing the connections between what appear to be vastly different issues. Surprisingly, human rights may provide a 21st-century framework for avoiding being rejected as the goats in Jesus' parable. ❧

*Mary Lou Klassen works as a peace studies lecturer in Nigeria with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The views expressed do not necessarily represent those of MCC.*

## ADVENT REFLECTION

# Guadalupe: A story to heal a hemisphere

BY WILL BRAUN

SENIOR WRITER

Every Advent I recall December 2003 when I found myself swept along in the tide of pilgrims advancing toward one of the world's most visited holy sites. The crowds were drawn by the gravity of a story that dates back to 1531 and a little hill in Mexico.

By 1531, colonization and Christianization of the “New World”

were in their early stages of devastation. Conversion and violent conquest had progressed rapidly since the colonizers first brought Christ nearly 40 years earlier.

Then Mary his mother appeared. She appeared on her own humble, gentle, dark-skinned terms. No ships, no guns, no flags to plant. She came with roses and words of mercy.

On the hill called Tepeyac, Mary appeared to a poor widower with no children. Juan Diego was his Spanish name, although he spoke Nahuatl, his mother tongue.

As he passed the hill one day, Diego heard other-worldly birds singing and a voice call to him. On the rocky crest of the hill, Mary spoke softly to Diego in his native tongue. She declared her mission as one of compassion and protection. She asked him to instruct the bishop to build a chapel for her on the hill.

Of course, we children of the scientific era are programmed to dismiss such accounts as empirical impossibility. If we do this, we miss the spiritual inspiration millions have drawn from a story that speaks to a place beyond scientific constructs, to truths greater than facts.

The bishop brushed the peasant off. So Diego went back up the hill and sug-

gested Mary send someone else. But Mary had chosen him. So he returned to the bishop a second time. Meeting the same scepticism, Diego vowed to return with a sign.

Back on the hill, Mary sent him to pick roses among the stony crags, even though it was mid-December, far past rose season. Diego returned to the bishop with a glorious bouquet of *rosas de Castilla* under his cloak, which was made of cactus cloth. When Diego opened his cloak to reveal the miraculous roses to the bishop, an image of Mary, as he had seen her, appeared on

the inside of his garment.

With this image on a peasant's cloak, new possibilities for the history of the New World appeared.

A chapel was built for Our Lady of Guadalupe, as she identified herself, on the hill, which is now surrounded by the

sprawl of Mexico City. Later, a basilica was built; in it hangs the 482-year-old cactus cloth cloak with its remarkable image.

In the image—which is nearly ubiquitous in much of Latin America—Mary's skin is a shade more indigenous than European. The stars on her cloak, the crescent moon under her feet and other parts of the image would have found immediate symbolic resonance with the indigenous people of that time, as they do now.

Every Dec. 12, Catholics and indigenous people celebrate side by side within Guadalupe's enduring embrace at Tepeyac. An estimated 10 million people visit annually.

While some Catholic historians cast Mary's appearance as a boost to the church's conversion campaign—a reported nine million indigenous people had joined the church by 1541—her image could hardly be more different than that of the conquistadors who are immortalized and immortalized in bronze statues throughout the Americas.

She stands reverent, quiet, dignified. Hers is a gentle power. I believe she came not to accelerate colonial history, but to redeem it. Her agenda had more to do with indigenous protection than Catholic expansionism. Her message, I think, was less a call to embrace Judeo-Christianity than a comforting whisper to a people caught between Aztec and European societies, each with their own human sacrifices.

The mighty men of history have left their mark in the officialdom of text books and place names. Mary has found her place in the hearts of commoners in countries where history has been against them since Columbus first arrived with his sword and Bible.

For me, the story of Guadalupe beautifully acknowledges the Euro-Christian reality and affirms the traditional indigenous reality. It creates a holy healing space in which they can come together peacefully. ☿

(More photos are available at [canadianmennonite.org/guadalupe](http://canadianmennonite.org/guadalupe).)



## CHRISTMAS REFLECTION

# How the Grinch saved Christmas

BY ANDREW SUDERMAN

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA

Next to biblical nativity stories, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* by Dr. Seuss is one of my favourite seasonal tales. We read it as a family every Christmas Eve.

While we typically view this vintage Dr. Seuss yarn as a reminder that there is more to Christmas than its trappings, it offers something unexpected too. It shares an example of restorative justice at work.

The story begins when the Grinch steals holiday embellishments from the Whos down in Whoville in an attempt to thwart Christmas. He soon learns that the Whos are undaunted by the loss of gifts, decorations and food. The Grinch waits to hear the boo-hoos of the



each other.

His conversion—or enlightenment—illustrates the widely accepted moral of the story: Christmas “doesn’t come from a store,” and, “Maybe Christmas . . . perhaps . . . means a little bit more!”

But the story doesn’t end with that revelation. After his epiphany about the purpose of Christmas, the Grinch’s heart “grew three sizes that day.” This growth is actually a change of heart that makes him appreciative, and stirs his desire to alter the way he acts. As a result, he returns everything he had stolen. The story ends with the Whos sitting side-by-side with the Grinch carving roast beast for the merry Whoville feast.

*The Grinch as an offender takes responsibility for his actions and, in his desire to repent, assumes a different way of being, living in an alternative way.*

Whos, but, instead, he hears something unexpected:

“ . . . the sound wasn’t sad!  
Why, this sound sounded merry!  
It couldn’t be so!  
But it was merry! Very!”

With the Whos’ surprising response, the Grinch experiences conversion and enlightenment. As the Whos stand together, holding each other’s hands while singing, the Grinch slowly realizes that Christmas is about more than stuff. It is about a community of people who are thankful for what they have and for

As remarkable and miraculous as the Grinch’s repentance is, so too is the Whos’ response. They warmly accept the change that takes place in him. They forgive him for his offences and welcome him into their community. They even give him the honour of carving the roast beast. What a surprising and revolutionary response!

The response of the Whos to the Grinch, unfortunately, does not often get much attention. Yet without their response, the damaged relationship they have with the Grinch could not be restored.

As light-hearted as this Dr. Seuss tale



may seem, the lesson is profound. The Grinch, as an offender, takes responsibility for his actions and, in his desire to repent, assumes a different way of being, living in an alternative way. Those who were harmed by the offender’s actions accept his repentance. In doing so, they restore the broken relationship between them. Relationships cannot heal or be restored without both of these components. Instead of depicting a retributive or punitive understanding of justice, Dr. Seuss teaches the logic of restorative justice.

This story, although fictitious, reminds us that the meaning of Christmas is indeed not found in stores, boxes or bags. It also reminds us that communities that seek to live in right relationship must repent for wrongdoing, as well as extend forgiveness and embrace those who actively seek restoration. This pursuit of reconciliation gives witnesses to shalom, the embodiment of peace and justice.

Merry Christmas, Mr. Grinch! ❖

*Andrew Suderman is a Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker in South Africa and is the director of the Anabaptist Network in South Africa.*




**Do you know of someone in your congregation not getting Canadian Mennonite?**

Ask your church administrator to add them to the list. It is already paid for.



## VIEWPOINT

## A faithful failure

BY DAVID DRIEDGER

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

*“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? . . . Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand?”* (Luke 14:28, 31).

I recently read two chapters from different books that seemed to be either almost alike or completely different.

The first was Chapter 1 from Malcolm Gladwell’s new book, *David and Goliath*. Gladwell reverses the traditional reading of David beating Goliath as some miracle and simply sees David as making strategic choices to his advantage, noting that a skilled sling-shot hurler in this situation is something like taking a pistol to a knife fight. David was shrewd and put things in his favour.

The chapter tells the story of a junior high girls basketball team. The team was not very tall or overly athletic, and the coach was a fairly recent immigrant who did not know basketball very well. This coach noticed that teams on defence rarely pressed the other team inbound in their own end. Through a focus on physical conditioning and determination, this coach taught his team to play a full court press the whole game, every game. Other school teams did not know how to handle this approach and the team went

on to the finals of its division.

The other reading was a chapter from a book by Jack Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure*. The chapter opens with the acknowledgement that our culture reflects a system that produces losers. Halberstam writes that “the queer art of failure turns on the impossible, the improbable, the unlikely and the unremarkable. It quietly loses and, in losing, it imagines other goals for life, for love, for art and for being.”

Halberstam goes on to recount those who rejected success or, more often, were rejected by success. He calls this a queer art because it can be so evident in how the gay and lesbian community has been viewed as having no future, and no means or ability to progress, and how it has imagined other ways of living in light of being labelled failures.

This chapter asks us to face the darkness which is our fear of failure. Halberstam quotes one “loser” who speaks of his own failure and speaks of his search for any source of light. He

writes that, “as the years went by, it did not get any lighter, but I became accustomed to the dark.”

One is a story of the possibility of beating the system and the other is a story of what is possible when the system beats you. To be sure, we will always try to pick the first story, but we can be just as sure that the more athletic teams will not be caught off guard next year. The system will not change through the first story. But in the second story, there is a chance to re-imagine when we are rejected by, drop out or reject the system.

This brings me back to the gospel reading. I am not sure how you have experienced this text, but I have almost always heard it in the context of discerning and careful planning. Look again at the examples. The first image speaks of the resources needed to build a tower and the second speaks of a strategic military census. What do those two images bring to mind? I read these as references to the building of the tower at Babel and to David’s sin against God in taking a census of military-aged men. But there is nothing in the text that makes this reference explicit. It is like Jesus is simply placing both images before us; the desire to succeed in daily life and the bigger system that continues to produce failures.

Talk about the future of the church continues to multiply within and beyond the Mennonite church. In my small addition to this conversation, I would ask that we remember our failed Messiah, it is the only account of resurrection we have.

*David Driedger is associate pastor of First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg.*

## /// Milestones

## Births/Adoptions

**Andres**—Eli Jacob (b. Nov. 19, 2013), to Blaine and Becky Andres, Foothills Mennonite, Calgary.

**Carlson**—Brody Hunter Drake (b. Oct. 31, 2013), to Angie and Tyler Carlson, Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Enns**—Hadley Anne (b. Oct. 21, 2013), to Stacie and Travis Enns, Carman Mennonite, Man.

**Giannakouras**—Iris Rose (b. Sept. 21, 2013), to Nick and Carrie Giannakouras, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Klassen**—Nolan Isaiah (b. Nov. 20, 2013), to Holly and Leander Klassen, Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Peters**—Lianna Macy (b. Oct. 31, 2013), to Steven and Shantelle Peters, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Sportack**—River Sabine Ronja (b. April 6, 2013), to Aaron and Diedre Sportack, Peace Mennonite, Richmond, B.C.

**Winter**—Aubrey Hannah (b. Nov. 3, 2013), to Ben and Sarah Winter, Leamington United Mennonite.

### Baptisms

**Rebecca Bauman, Sonya Martin, Noah Steinmann**—

Elmira Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 20, 2013.

**Haley Bauman**—Elmira Mennonite, Ont., Nov. 17, 2013.

**Jason Wilke**—Hanover Mennonite, Ont., July 14, 2013.

**Makayla Entz, Justin Gerber, Matthew Jantzi, Micah**

**Kipfer, Janelle Ropp**—Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., Nov. 10, 2013.

**Kelly Scott Hildebrand**—Rosenfeld Bergthaler Mennonite, Man., Oct. 20, 2013.

### Marriages

**Bell/Martin**—James Bell and Emily Martin, Hanover Mennonite, Ont., at Cedar Rail Camp, Chesley, Ont., Oct. 5, 2013.

**Melatti/Willms**—Santino Melatti and Jennifer Willms, Leamington United Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 12, 2013.

### Deaths

**Barg**—Charlotte (nee Dueck), 91 (b. Feb. 1, 1922; d. Aug. 30, 2013), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Bestvater**—Henry, 87 (b. Sept. 21, 1925; d. Aug. 27, 2013), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Dick**—Ella Louise (nee Willms), 83 (b. Jan. 5, 1930; d. Nov. 17, 2013), Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.

**Dyck Wall**—Helena, 83 (b. May 3, 1930; d. Oct. 1, 2013), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Enns**—Henry, 87 (b. June 18, 1925; d. Feb. 13, 2013), Trinity Mennonite, Mather, Man.

**Friesen**—Henry, 77 (b. Sept. 8, 1936; d. Sept. 27, 2013), Carman Mennonite, Man.

**Harms**—Helena, 93 (b. July 12, 1920; d. Sept. 15, 2013), Trinity Mennonite, Mather, Man.

**Jutzi**—Merlin, 89 (b. Feb. 12, 1924; d. Nov. 4, 2013), First Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

**Kampen**—Helene, 90 (b. Sept. 15, 1923; d. Nov. 24, 2013), Springfield Heights Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Klassen**—John, 58 (b. July 24, 1955; d. Nov. 11, 2013), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Lebold**—Frieda, 90 (b. July 16, 1923; d. Nov. 10, 2013), Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

**Pastrick**—Maria “Mary” (nee Wiebe), 87 (b. Sept. 17, 1926; d. Oct. 19, 2013), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Plenert**—Henry, 89 (b. Sept. 30, 1923; d. Aug. 10, 2013), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Rempel**—Rudolph, 86 (b. March 6, 1927; d. Oct. 21, 2013), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Schiller**—Louise, 68 (b. Dec. 23, 1944; d. Nov. 1, 2013), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Schmidt**—Florence, 94 (b. Sept. 4, 1918; d. Aug. 28, 2013), Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

**Snyder**—Dorothy, 83 (d. Nov. 5, 2013), Waterloo North Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

**Thiessen**—Gerhard, 87 (b. Feb. 8, 1926; d. Oct. 4, 2013), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Weber**—James Robert, 71 (b. Jan. 14, 1942; d. Nov. 13, 2013), Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

**Weber**—John Herbert, 73 (b. Oct. 15, 1939; d. Oct. 7, 2013), Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

### Canadian Mennonite welcomes Milestones

*announcements within four months of the event.*

*Please send Milestones announcements by e-mail to [milestones@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:milestones@canadianmennonite.org), including the congregation name and location. When sending death notices, please also include birth date and last name at birth if available.*

## Pontius' Puddle



HOWCUM' WHEN WE REFLECT BACK OVER THE PAST YEAR, WE'RE MOST GRATEFUL FOR A GOD WHO KNOWS OUR HEARTS AND MINDS...



## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

# Another Canadian 'TiM'

*MC Canada models online pastoral coaching on Eastern Canada's in-person program with cost containment in mind*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DEBORAH FROESE

Mennonite Church Canada  
WINNIPEG

**T**iM has been launched in Western Canada—and this isn't another story about a coffee franchise. Transitioning into Ministry (TiM) is Mennonite Church Canada's new two-year online coaching program that connects beginning pastors over the Internet for conversation, networking and, perhaps, coffee.

"The program is designed to help first-time pastors intentionally develop habits, resources and networks that will sustain them in both the joys and challenges of ministry," said Karen Martens Zimmerly, MC Canada's denominational minister. "We know that the first two years of ministry are most critical. Early experiences determine whether or not a pastor will stay in ministry. By having good strong supports in place, they can share their experiences, find commonalities and learn where to go with the challenges they face. This networking allows them to feel less isolated and empowers them for success."

TiM was inspired by a well-received program of the same name initiated by MC Eastern Canada in 2007. The three-year area church program brings participants together for two retreats each year and for regular face-to-face coaching sessions between retreats.

The national church has adapted the concept with cost containment in mind. Its two-year program will bring participants together for five or six online sessions each year, as well as an additional two online sessions in the second year. Those sessions will include the beginning pastors and their congregational leaders, and explore topics related to leading congregations.

The first online TiM encounter for the area churches of British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan took place on Oct. 15,

when five new pastors met online with leader David Brubacher, interim pastor at Bethany Mennonite in Virgil, Ont., and clergy coach for the MC Eastern Canada TiM program. (MC Manitoba did not have a participant this year.)

After working solo for her first year in ministry, Lydia Cruttwell from First United Mennonite Church in Vancouver was eager to take part. "I felt quite isolated, and wanted to have more chances to interact with other new pastors and to be able to ask questions of an experienced pastor," she said via e-mail, adding that she was encouraged to discover that issues "I thought

were mine alone were actually common among the group."

Other participants included Jordan Mohler of Black Creek United Mennonite, B.C.; Ryan Dueck of Lethbridge Mennonite, Alta.; Joe Heikman of Wildwood Mennonite, Saskatoon, and Joshua Wallace of Warman Mennonite, Sask.

"My early experience in ministry led me to appreciate the value of coaches and mentors," said Brubacher in an e-mail interview of his experience with the MC Eastern Canada TiM program. "One of the things I have observed over my time of involvement with TiM is to see the sense of collegiality that emerges in the group. Finding common experience often generates that sense." He said he could already see those connections emerging during the Oct. 15 online meeting.

Cruttwell viewed the session as both encouraging and practical. "I'm very pleased that David Brubacher is going to be focussing on leadership, since I think that is an area that is often lacking in M.Div. studies, which tend to focus on pastoral care, preaching, biblical interpretation and theology, rather than on the specifics of



*Karen Martens Zimmerly, MC Canada's denominational minister, helped to develop Transitioning into Ministry (TiM), the national church's new two-year online coaching program. It is designed to connect beginning pastors via the Internet for conversation, networking and, perhaps, coffee.*



how to lead a congregation.”

Martens Zimmerly was enthused by participant response to the first meeting. “These beginning pastors are technologically savvy,” she said. “They were chatting back and forth right away and immersing themselves in the process.” ❧

### ❧ Briefly noted

## Changes in store for Saskatchewan museum

ROSTHERN, SASK.—The Mennonite Heritage Museum, housed in the two-storey, red brick schoolhouse that was, until 1968, home to Rosthern Junior College (RJC), will undergo a transformation this winter. Since its inception, the museum has served as a place to collect and display artifacts depicting Mennonite culture and faith in the Saskatchewan Valley area. This year, the museum board reached a decision to transform the space into an interpretive centre, which will explain to visitors the history, culture and faith of Mennonites living in the area. The first phase of the project is scheduled to open to the public next May. Future projects will likely include interpretive work on the legacy of the German-English Academy and Bishop David Toews. Museum board chair George Epp says the board is looking for advice as well as practical and monetary assistance for the project, and would especially like to hear from alumni of the German-English Academy and RJC, as well as former residents of the Rosthern area. Epp may be contacted by e-mail at [g.epp@accesscomm.ca](mailto:g.epp@accesscomm.ca).

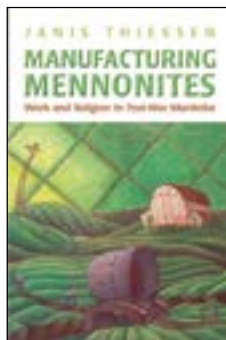
—BY DONNA SCHULZ

MENNONITE HERITAGE MUSEUM PHOTO



A 1915 photo of the museum building.

## New from University of Toronto Press



### Manufacturing Mennonites

Work and Religion in Post-War Manitoba  
by Janis Thiessen

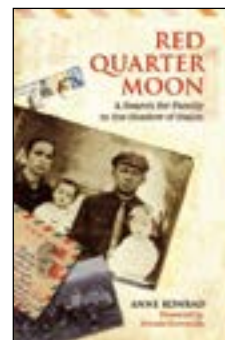
*Manufacturing Mennonites* examines how religion can affect business history, and how class relations have influenced religious history.



### Village Among Nations

“Canadian” Mennonites in a Transnational World, 1916-2006  
by Royden Loewen

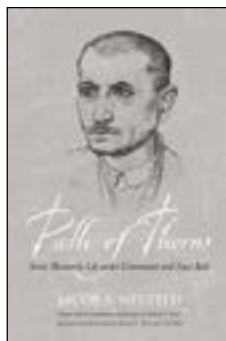
This book tells the story of Mennonites who emigrated from Canada to isolated regions of Latin America for cultural reasons but returned in later generations for economic and social security.



### Red Quarter Moon

A Search for Family in the Shadow of Stalin  
by Anne Konrad

A gripping account of Anne Konrad’s search for her family members lost and disappeared within the Soviet Union. *Red Quarter Moon* offers a unique look at the lives of ordinary people in the USSR.

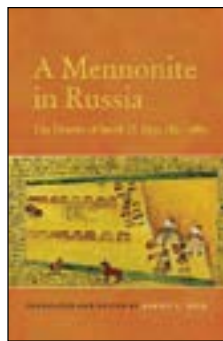


forthcoming in January 2014

### Path of Thorns

Soviet Mennonite Life under Communist and Nazi Rule  
by Jacob A. Neufeld

*Paths of Thorn* narrates the life and suffering of Soviet Mennonites through the story of survival of Jacob Abramovich Neufeld, a prominent Soviet Mennonite leader and writer.

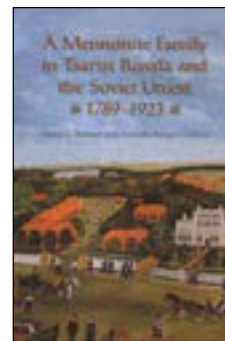


new in paperback

### A Mennonite in Russia

The Diaries of Jacob D. Epp, 1851-1880  
edited by Harvey L. Dyck

The diaries of Jacob Epp, a Russian Mennonite school-teacher, offer a remarkable picture of community life in Imperial Russia during a period of troubled change.



new in paperback

### A Mennonite Family in Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, 1789-1923

by David G. Rempel

In this engaging book, Rempel draws a vivid portrait of life in Russian Mennonite settlements during the landmark period of 1900-1920.



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*Linda Brnjas, left, one of two Mennonite Church Eastern Canada regional ministers, chats with Pastor Karen Sheil of Rainham Mennonite Church at the 'Come to the lakeshore' retreat held at Floradale Mennonite Church, Ont., on Oct. 19, to whet appetites for the next round of 'Tending the soul of individuals and congregations' program.*

## A 'calling in my soul'

*Lay leaders encouraged to learn more about 'tending the soul of individuals and congregations'*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
FLORADALE, ONT.

With a focus on the spiritual practices involved in Jesus making breakfast for his disciples in John 21, a recent retreat at Floradale Mennonite Church endeavoured to help participants learn with mind and emotions what "tending the soul of individuals and congregations" is all about.

The two-year "Tending the soul" program was last run from September 2010 to April 2012, and had 25 participants complete it. The first year of the program focuses on personal growth in listening to God, self and others through small groups, one-on-one listening and meeting with a spiritual director, as well as retreats and reading. In the second year, participants think about how to apply spiritual practices in the life of their own congregation in such capacities as congregational chair,

Sunday school teacher, worship planner and leader.

The program was spawned by a number of pastors in Mennonite Church Eastern Canada who participated in the Eastern Mennonite Seminary (EMS) Summer Institute for Spiritual Formation, who knew that few lay people in congregations would be able to take the time to participate in the institute themselves.

One of those who took the part in the 2010-12 program was Brent Horst of St.

Jacobs Mennonite Church. He was resistant at first. "Frankly, I thought I didn't need it," he said. Other factors were that it would involve a lot of work and time, spiritual direction was a new concept to him, and he wasn't sure contemplation or the small group work were for him.

Encouraged by Barb Smith Morrison, now pastor at Bloomingdale Mennonite Church, and Sandy Shantz, both leaders in the first program, Horst gave it a try. Quickly he felt the draw to "go deeper" with God, saying he felt a "calling in my soul."

A major area of growth for him was in compassion for others in their places in life, as well as sensing more closeness to God. He has continued in a small group with two other men who share his vocation in information technology.

Stephanie Calma of Hillcrest Mennonite Church was encouraged by her pastor, Jan Steckley, another EMS Institute graduate and leader in the 2010-12 program. Calma was inspired by her participation to go to Regis College, part of the Toronto School of Theology, to study to become a spiritual director.

Having taken a seminar at Toronto's Tyndale University College and Seminary with Alan and Eleanor Kreider, she sees great connections between missional church thinking and contemplative spirituality. In both cases, she said people are looking to find out where God is already working or moving, and to join God in God's work, rather than doing their own thing and asking God to bless that.

The recent "Come to the lakeshore" retreat was held to encourage new participants in a new "Tending the soul of individuals and congregations" program beginning in January 2014. For more information, or to register, contact Sandy Shantz at 519-669-8981 or by e-mail at sshantz@golden.net. ☞

*[P]eople are looking to find out where God is already working or moving, and to join God in God's work, rather than doing their own thing and asking God to bless that.*



# Collaboration needs to replace one-way partnerships

STORIES AND PHOTOS BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

“There’s nothing like this in the rest of Canada when it comes to having congregations in relationships with other congregations.” Steve Heinrichs, indigenous relations director of Mennonite Church Canada, said this in reference to the Partnership Circles between Mennonite Church Manitoba congregations and northern first nation communities.

The partnered churches and communities met on Nov. 2 at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, for their annual fall meeting to review the events of the past year and plan for the coming year.

While growing numbers of children are participating in Vacation Bible School programs brought by southern Manitoba

churches to their northern partners, and ongoing relationships are being built between the churches, one persistent question remains as these relationships grow and deepen: How can the partnership circles build more than a one-way partnership?

“How do we build peer-to-peer engagement and learn together?” asked Heinrichs. “I would like to see our churches have more critical conversations around

that internally and with the communities. How do we stretch towards mutuality. The Pauingassi community bringing the worship service on Sunday to Steinbach Grace Mennonite Church is a move in that direction. Can we extend those invitations more and equip more?”

“What are the various types of engagement that the community itself is naming that they could see us collaborate on? What are the contemporary colonial issues that might have a place in the partnership circle?” are questions with which MC Canada and MC Manitoba continue to grapple, he said.

Norm Voth, MC Manitoba’s director of evangelism and service, said he hopes that, “as we continue to build these relationships, and as we listen to each other,

*(Continued on page 24)*

*‘We still struggle with how to find a way to be together that is not driven by program. That is an important piece of it, but we need to find other ways, too.’  
(Norm Voth, MC Manitoba)*



Alan Owens leads the Fellowship Chapel at Pauingassi, Man., and was part of the group from Pauingassi that recently brought a Sunday morning service to Grace Mennonite in Steinbach. ‘We are like the Good Samaritan story,’ he said. ‘That’s what happens to us. Others just pass by us on the other side. They don’t come to our reserve, but Kyle [Penner, youth pastor at Grace Mennonite] has been our Good Samaritan.’

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(Continued from page 23)

we will identify some of the ways we can give up power and control. We still struggle with how to find a way to be together that is not driven by program. That is an important piece of it, but we need to find other ways, too.”

Norman Meade, an elder from Manigotagan, said, “We have to change our colonial minds and thinking. Colonial law has got us all confused and allows us to think that we can have ‘dominion over,’ that we can do whatever we want.”

He expressed concern over the destructive effects of fracking, hydro development’s impact on northern communities, broken treaties, foster home shortages, inadequate housing and substance abuse. “We have a lot of work to do on the

aboriginal side, but you do too,” Meade said. “There are lots of big issues.”

Voth and Heinrichs will be examining ways and resources that can help the churches and communities address these issues as true partners.

“One of the things that has developed since the beginning of the Partnership program 10 year ago, and which I had not envisioned, is the Building Bridges event we have every spring,” said Voth. Each year, MC Canada and MC Manitoba invite an indigenous leader to speak to the various issues. “We have heard from some of the northern churches how much they appreciate that event,” he said. “They see important indigenous leaders speaking to us and giving voice to some of their concerns. There is so much we have to learn.” ❧



*Norman Meade, pastor and elder from Manigotagan, Man., urged the partners, ‘We have to broaden our hearts and our thinking. There are many issues that will impact our partnerships and we need to understand each other and converse together.’*

## A risk worth taking

*MC Alberta holds successful first Equipping Day for church pastors and leaders*

BY DOUG KLASSEN

Mennonite Church Alberta  
CALGARY

It is always a risk beginning something new. Who will come? Will it go well? Will expenses be covered?

A number of years ago Mennonite Church Alberta dropped its ministers and deacons meetings in the hope that something new would emerge. That new thing happened on Nov. 9 in the form of Equipping Day at Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary, where 90 people gathered to begin their day together with worship.

Chau Dang, pastor of Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church, suggested that the event be held on the November long weekend, in order to make travel possible for more of the Vietnamese church members from Edmonton. He also offered to arrange for a Vietnamese lunch to be catered.

Five streams of workshops were then offered:

- **ONGOING ISSUES** regarding Canada’s history with residential schools and



*Chau Dang, left, pastor of Calgary Vietnamese Mennonite Church, encouraged MC Alberta to schedule its Equipping Day at a time when as many Vietnamese representatives as possible could attend. He also offered to arrange for a Vietnamese lunch to be catered for the 90 participants.*

the current efforts of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, led by Ryan Dueck and Will Loewen, with Yvonne Johnson—co-author of *A Stolen Life: The Journey of a Cree Woman* with Rudy Wiebe—providing a personal testimony.

- **HOW PREJUDICES** get in the way of the gospel’s call to love all neighbours,

led by Delmar Epp, professor of psychology at Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg.

- **EFFECTIVE BOARD/COUNCIL** leadership in the congregation, led by Ed Kauffman, pastor of First Mennonite Church, Calgary.
- **EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP** in Vietnamese churches and effective outreach in Asian neighbourhoods, led by Pastor Tuyen of Philadelphia.

- **SOUL-CARE FOR** church leaders, led by Gay Kauffman and Ruth Preston-Schilk. Church leaders can have all of the latest strategies, but if care of their own soul is neglected, the church suffers.

The participants left with many good stories and strategies for use in their congregations, and a warm sense of fellowship that was shared around the lunch tables. Many said they wished more from their churches had come.

Because of strong attendance, \$800 was left over after all expenses were paid. This money will go to scholarships/bursaries for the MC Alberta women’s retreat next spring. ❧

*Doug Klassen is pastor of Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary. He and Chau Dang organized the Equipping Day events.*

PHOTO BY STU IVERSON



*The Pinawa Christian Fellowship, a congregation affiliated with Mennonite Church Manitoba, celebrated its 50th anniversary on Nov. 3.*

## Called to nourish Christian life

*Pinawa Christian Fellowship turns 50*

Pinawa Christian Fellowship  
PINAWA, MAN.

**P**inawa Christian Fellowship celebrated five decades of ministry 50 years to the very day—Nov. 3—and in the same location—F.W. Gilbert Elementary School—where the first service was held in 1963.

The Fellowship has its roots in the establishment of Pinawa, a federal government town for workers at the then-new Whiteshell Nuclear Research Facility of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL).

As the new town of Pinawa was being planned in Deep River, Ont., in 1963, a multi-denominational Protestant church was also being planned to serve this community. It was not to be in the form of a non-denominational community church, but rather a fellowship where members could maintain their identities and affiliation with their denomination of choice.

It was initially established with recognition and support from the Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Mennonite, Presbyterian and United Church denominations, and currently maintains official ties with all but the Baptists.

As the Very Reverend Jim Dugan, dean of St. Alban's Anglican Cathedral in Kenora, Ont., noted at the anniversary celebration, this was “very forward thinking by the group planning this new church in 1963,” suggesting that this concept

“may be leading the way into the future,” especially as many smaller centres across Canada continue to shrink.

In the beginning, the congregation included many AECL workers. By the end of the first decade, it had more than 20 Sunday school teachers and had celebrated many baptisms and confirmations, with just a handful of funerals.

As the young community and congregation grew together, it started to reach out to the first nation communities in Fort

Hope and Little Grand Rapids in mission in the '70s.

The '80s were a vibrant time, with expansion in both the community and church. The congregation faced difficult decisions about whether to construct a church building. It decided not to build and several times thereafter the issue came up again. However, about five years ago, it was concluded that meeting in the elementary school should continue in the same place, and it has.

During the '80s and '90s, the Fellowship was busy with family retreats, youth groups and a thriving junior choir. But new challenges began to emerge as many of the faithful families were transferred to other AECL locations or were laid off.

In the new millennium, the worship service of between 50 and 70 people continues. It is now an older congregation, with many retired people, “snowbirds” and only a handful of young families. The congregation gives thanks for a church that continues to invest in people and ministry, rather than buildings and maintenance.

While the congregation has changed, as has the town, the gathered body of Christ endeavours to follow its 1965 constitution to “nourish Christian life in this community through regular worship and devotions in an atmosphere of brotherly love and concern.” ❧

### ❧ Briefly noted

#### **Youth challenged, inspired at B.C. retreat**

HOPE, B.C.—A weekend full of community, worship, spirituality and good old-fashioned learning was enjoyed by 100 senior youth and sponsors who attended Mennonite Church B.C.'s annual senior youth Impact retreat from Nov. 15 to 17 at Camp Squeah. Kathy Giesbrecht, MC Manitoba's associate director of leadership ministries, spoke on the theme, “All of God meets all of me,” exploring the bigness of God and challenging the youth and sponsors to dare to believe in a God that is bigger than imagined, who also meets God's people in community, individually and in the deep, precious places of their full humanity. She offered the high school students a practical hope grounded in the communal experience and faith in God. It was a weekend saturated with inflatables, dodge ball and rain, and it was evident that the youth and their sponsors left challenged, encouraged and inspired.

—BY CHRIS LENSCHYN



GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

COVER STORY

# Peacebuilding as 'God's vocation'

World Council of Churches  
BUSAN, SOUTH KOREA

Perspectives of peacebuilders, shedding light on how peace can be achieved in communities, societies and nations, were featured at a plenary session of the 10th

WCC PHOTO BY  
PETER WILLIAMS



Leymah Gbowee

assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC). The Nov. 7 plenary focusing on the theme of "God of life, lead us to justice and peace," included Nobel Peace Laureate Leymah Gbowee, a graduate of Eastern Mennonite University, and Korean theologian Chang Yoon Jae.

Gbowee, who led the women's movement that helped end Liberia's civil war in 2003, referred to her inspiration for peacebuilding as "God's vocation." The anger she experienced at the conflict in Liberia, child soldiers and threats to the values of traditional African community, Gbowee said, was used by her as a force to work towards peace through nonviolent resistance. She traced her inspiration and introduction to peace struggles to a Lutheran church in Liberia.

Gbowee also challenged churches not to become bystanders amid violence or to be "co-opted" by governments. She said that such actions by the churches "break her heart."

Chang, speaking about peace on the Korean peninsula, urged an advance beyond the Korean Armistice Agreement of 1953, after which the Koreans kept living in the "fear of war." He said there still needs to be a transition from "unfinished war" to "permanent peace."

To achieve peace, Chang said he envisions a "world free of nuclear power plants and weapons." Since the last WCC assembly in India in 1961, Chang pointed out that the number of nuclear states in the region has more than doubled.

Despite the horrendous consequence of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he said several nuclear tests are still being conducted without any consideration of their impact on local communities. "Nuclear weapons cannot co-exist with peace and Christian faith," said Chang.

Chang invited the audience to observe a moment of silence in darkness, lighting a candle as a symbolic act to remember human dependency on electricity produced in nuclear power plants. ❧

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 Mennonite Church Canada



# Heinz closure shocks community

*Virtually every local family affected by decision of U.S. corporate giant*

STORY AND PHOTO BY BARRY BERGEN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*  
LEAMINGTON, ONT.

After being an integral part of the town of Leamington for more than a century, the HJ Heinz Corporation will shut its processing plant next June, putting 740 employees out of work and leaving more than 40 local tomato growers wondering what they will be planting come spring.

In 1909, Heinz began making pickles in Leamington and a year later began processing tomatoes into what it came to describe as “Canada’s finest ketchup.” Last February, news that Heinz was being purchased by Berkshire Hathaway and 3G Capital for \$28 billion was announced; the deal closed in June.

Heinz is the town’s largest single employer and it seems like every family in town has had a member work for the company at one time or another. That’s why the news of the plant’s closure has caused such a widely felt shock. Not only will the employees and farmers lose their livelihoods, but the effects will be felt by many different sectors in the community and beyond, including seasonal workers, many of them from Mexico and the Caribbean who come each year to earn money to send to their families back home.

John Klassen has worked at Heinz for three-and-a-half years as a millwright helping to maintain the plant’s machinery. Ironically, he had a history in the automotive industry and left it for Heinz, feeling it would provide greater security.

According to Klassen, many others are in the same category, having come to Heinz after being laid off in other sectors of the economy. “So they’re used to this kind of thing happening, and are not as surprised as those who have been around for 20 years or more,” he says.

Employees are as yet unsure what will happen to their benefits and pensions.



*After being an integral part of the town of Leamington, Ont., for more than a century, the HJ Heinz Corporation will shut its processing plant next June, putting 740 employees out of work and leaving more than 40 local tomato growers wondering what they will be planting come spring.*

“Dealing with the unknown is the tough part,” Klassen says. “Once you know, then you can adjust.”

He believes that employees make their own job security, and he has taken advantage of every training opportunity that came his way. He maintains a good attitude throughout this time, saying that Heinz has been a positive experience for him overall.

Dave Epp is a third-generation tomato producer for Heinz who finds himself left in a tough spot.

*[I]t seems like every family in town has had a member work for the [Heinz] company at one time or another.*

Modern tomato farming requires specialized equipment that doesn’t come cheap. “Because of this, Heinz and its producers developed a three-year contract security clause, which protected producers from fluctuating demands for tomatoes,” Epp says, explaining, “It was negotiated that, if a drop in production was required, then all producers would share that cut equally. Heinz has told its growers that they will honour the spirit of that contract.”

But he is uncertain how the spirit of the security clause will be upheld. “What is our percentage of a zero percent production requirement?” he wonders.

Yet he also remains positive, claiming that Heinz has been a very good company to have contracted with for so many years. “There was never a question as to if they would honour a contract, or if the money would be there” he says. At a time like this, “It will have to boil down to our attitudes.”

The local ministerial group held an ecumenical prayer service in front of the Heinz factory on Nov. 19, with 17 clergy representing 13 different Leamington congregations. A prayer of lament and thanksgiving written by Vic Winter, pastor of Leamington United Mennonite Church, was distributed beforehand. The last lines of the prayer echo the sentiment of many in Leamington: “God, you are a God of resurrection, of making things new. We cling to that hope in Leamington too.” ❧

# Storytelling used to teach peace

*Mennonites learn about their own peace position as well as that of others at historical society gathering*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONNA SCHULZ

Saskatchewan Correspondent  
SASKATOON

A conscientious objector and a city councillor were among four speakers who brought their diverse points of view on peace during a time of storytelling at Mount Royal Mennonite Church in Saskatoon.

Don Regier of Rosthern was first to speak at “Peace Saturday,” put on by the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan event on Nov. 9. He recalled the convictions that led to his becoming a conscientious objector (CO) during the Second World War. “The Bible says, ‘Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,’” said Regier. “That seemed like a good enough reason not to kill anyone.”

Regier spoke of the hardships and humiliation experienced by COs during their alternative service, maintaining to this day, “Our victory is not in the battlefield. Our victory is in the cross.”

Charlie Clark, a Saskatoon city councillor who attends Osler Mennonite Church, told how his grandparents, Fred and Percival Ritchie, influenced his decision to study conflict resolution at Menno Simons College in Winnipeg. Reading selections from his grandfather’s memoirs, Clark described how the tank commander in Italy during the Second World War came to believe that war does not solve conflicts.

“I marvel at the bravery I saw at the front,” wrote Ritchie, “but am terribly saddened to remember the many deaths and the suffering of the wounded. No war is worth the human sacrifice which goes with it. . . . We must work and pray for peace, and appeal strongly to our governments to legislate for peace. There is no other way.”

Barb and Wilmer Froese, retired pastors from the Laird area, spoke about building peace with members of the Young

Chippewyan First Nation. In the late 1970s, the Froeses learned that the land they farmed might still belong to the indigenous community. Emotions flared, but the issue remained unresolved for decades.

In the spring of 2006, the first nation approached people living in the area to hold a celebration on the land. They were not interested in getting the land back, the indigenous leaders said, but, rather, were seeking financial restitution from the government. So in August of that year, Mennonites and Lutherans met with members of the Young Chippewyan First Nation. They talked, ate together and signed a memorandum of understanding that they would work together “for peace, justice and sufficiency for all.”

The experience taught the Froeses that, like Mennonites, the Young Chippewyans are a people of peace and that peacebuilding can take place only when people meet face to face.

“We have so much to gain from peace,

and so much to lose from hostility,” said Wilmer.

David Neufeld of Herschel told stories about his family’s trip to Vietnam, where he learned from a Buddhist monk that people of other faiths also pray for peace.

He also spoke of working alongside indigenous people at the Ancient Echoes Interpretive Centre in Herschel, where the elders speak of a prophesied period of healing and reconciliation to be ushered in by the birth of a white buffalo. In 1994, a white buffalo calf was born in Montana, so the elders believe that the current period of time is one of healing and reconciliation. Mennonites need to share with them, said Neufeld, but they also need to learn from them.

To close his presentation, Neufeld sang, “We Are All One People,” a song written by Joseph Naytowhow, an indigenous storyteller and songwriter. (*To listen, visit [canadianmennonite.org/onepeople](http://canadianmennonite.org/onepeople).)*

Common threads emerged in the discussion that followed:

- **MENNONITES ARE** not unique in their desire for peace; people of other cultures and other faiths also work and pray for peace.
- **MENNONITES CAN** learn from the peace traditions of others and from those who have adopted a peace stance through their experiences in war.
- **BY LISTENING** to one another and working together, the Mennonite peace witness is strengthened. ❧



*Presenter David Neufeld chats with Leonard Doell, a member of the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan at the ‘Peace Saturday’ event at Mount Royal Mennonite Church in Saskatoon on Nov. 9.*



*Kim Thiessen and Darryl Neustaeder Barg perform songs from their new CD, *Even in the Smallest Places*, at the 2013 Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan annual meeting on Nov. 2 in Saskatoon.*

## 'Food and a theology of enough'

*MCC Saskatchewan supporters 'encounter' food-justice issues at annual general meeting*

STORY AND PHOTO BY JESSICA BUHLER

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

SASKATOON

**“W**e are here because we have decided to love each other.”

With these words, Abe Janzen of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Alberta welcomed participants to the 2013 MCC Saskatchewan “encounter” and annual general meeting entitled “Food and a theology of enough.”

In keeping with the theme, Eileen Klassen Hamm, MCC Saskatchewan’s peace and justice director, led a workshop called “Food justice,” inviting three local agricultural speakers to “bring the issue close to home.” The three young inspired agriculturalists offered participants insightful views on food security today and what local communities and society in general can do to foster it.

Chris Buhler of Floating Gardens Greenhouse in Osler, Sask., was en-

couraged to begin growing food for the local population when he realized that Saskatchewan only grows 4.7 percent of its own fruits and vegetables. His idea of “imperfect agriculture” is currently catering to a high-end market to provide for those who would otherwise not have access to locally grown food.

Terri Lynn Paulson, a master of environmental science candidate at the School of the Environment and Sustainability at the University of Saskatchewan, told the group, “I’d like to see more people eating together.” With a steadily growing fast-food-reliant population, Paulson said there is a need for basic meal preparation knowledge. She commented on her desire to celebrate food, rather than look at the situation with anger or despair. “Food is a gift,” she said.

After several years working at the Winnipeg Food Bank, Ben Martens Bartel said he began to realize that social change is needed in order to gain back the “ability to take care of ourselves.” Many families would collect from the food bank, he said, but once the food was available, they did not know what to do with it. Martens Bartel of Grovenland Farm, Drake Sask., also said he believes that it is important to “re-populate rural areas” in order to promote change.

Dave Meier, coordinator of Canadian Foodgrains Bank in Saskatchewan, then spoke of how far his organization and MCC have come in striving towards “a world without hunger.”

Other workshops included “Land for the landless: What’s next for the Young Chippewyan?” with Leonard Doell and Ray Funk; “Environment in the media,” with Myriam Ullah; “Trauma healing,” with

*‘We are part of a global community, and change needs to be initiated by and within the community.’  
(Bruno Baerg, MCC)*

Heather Peters; “Things I have learned,” with Elaine Harder; and a “Learning tour to Colombia” report, with Dan and Carol Siebert.

The participants who met at Massey Place Community Church, Saskatoon, on Nov. 2, were able to communicate with Bruno Baerg, MCC area director for Southern Africa, via Skype. Baerg gave a positive report on development work happening in the area, where MCC is making life easier for farmers in Mozambique and Zambia by building sand dams and wells to capture precious water for everyday use. “We are part of a global community,” said Baerg, “and change needs to be initiated by and within the community.”

MCC Saskatchewan also recognized Gladys Block, Elaine Harder and Dorothy Bartel, long-term staff members, for their dedication and service to the organization. ☘



## GOD AT WORK IN US

# From opera to open spaces

*Couple now raise their voices for sustainable food production, rather than applause*

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent  
NEUBERGTHAL, MAN.

When Terry and Monique Mierau moved to rural Manitoba in 2011 with their three young children, they had, for the most part, stopped singing. The former opera singers, professionally trained and with no shortage of singing engagements in Europe, wanted to give heart, soul and even their voices over to farming—although they do add their voices in congregational song at Altona Mennonite Church, where they now attend.

The couple met as students in 1999 at the International Opera Studio in Amsterdam. Terry grew up in Langham, Sask., and studied music at Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg and McGill University in Montreal. Monique grew up in Holland, where she studied music before they met in their final year of study that would launch them into their professional careers.

Professional work meant that they would be away on a production anywhere from six weeks to three months several times each year.

“It was a stressful life because it all depends on your voice and what other people think,” says Monique from their home in Neuberghthal in southern Manitoba. “After a couple of years, the stresses of the job got to us.”

The romance of staying in different hotels, eating in different restaurants, and staying in different cities began to wear off.

“Our life in singing was very public,” says Monique. “We were always working with large groups of people and standing in front of huge audiences. We needed a place away from cities and away from that whole lifestyle where we could just be.”

They found that place one summer while

visiting Terry’s parents in New Brunswick. About 10 years ago they bought an abandoned farm of nearly 40 hectares. During their time there, they began attending Petittcodiac Mennonite Church, which became a significant community in their lives.

“We had absolutely no intention of farming, even of growing a garden,” says Monique. “We bought it as a place we could be when we were not singing, usually two or three months in total at various points throughout the year.”

Monique grew up in a place where food was always fresh, local and of good quality. Eating on the road and the processed food from Canadian supermarkets began to erode her health.

“Waking up in that farm house and seeing all that land, it became very obvious what had to happen,” says Monique.

The couple began to accept singing engagements that worked around their gardening schedule. Then they added a few laying hens and a rooster, that soon multiplied into more than a dozen meat birds, and a couple of pigs.

“We were still traveling and singing,” says Terry. “Usually we came home in May.



*Former opera singers Terry and Monique Mierau with their youngest son, Hein, at their house-barn home in Neuberghthal, Man., where they practise sustainable farming.*

Sometimes we did short festival deals in summer that took us away, but it started to get harder as the farm kept pulling us home. I remember specifically turning down a contract because I realized if I signed that contract I wouldn’t be able to have pigs the next summer. Economically, it made no sense. It would’ve made more sense to take the money and buy the meat.”

After their first child, Isabelle, was born, “we dragged her around Europe for a year-and-a-half,” he says. “Wherever we went, Monique’s mother would come with us. It worked fine, but what if we were to have

more children?"

It was finally the Jersey cow that tethered Terry to the farm.

"That was exactly what we needed at that time and place," he says. "After all those years of trains, planes, hotel rooms and rented apartments, and travelling, we really needed something you can't leave, so in 2006 I stopped signing contracts," he says. "Now this place would have to give us a living."

Although Monique continued to accept engagements, when it was time to return to her singing career after the birth of their second child, Pieter, she could no longer bring herself to leave the farm.

At this point, they were working harder than ever.

"It was really blood, sweat and tears, and we made so many mistakes, which meant we had to work even harder, but those are the lessons you remember," says Terry.

The farm became more than a retreat and a way of avoiding overly processed food. It also became a way of addressing issues concerning the quality of food, the way animals are raised, and the way food is grown. They read and discovered that half of the food that is grown goes to waste, and that land and water resources and health are being compromised in the production of so much processed and wasted food.

What they learned led them to raise their voices and model alternatives. Their Christian faith is in everything the couple does, says Monique.

Adds Terry, "What does God require of you, but to seek justice? Once you know of injustice, you don't have a choice any more."


A year-and-a-half ago, following Terry's parents who had moved back out west, they and their animals travelled halfway across the country to Neuberghthal, where they continue to raise all their own food as well as food for 15 other families.

In the short time they have been living in their house-barn in Neuberghthal, they have had nearly a thousand visitors to their farm.

"I see people grasping for community," says Monique, "so many who are searching and wanting to learn another way of living. We see that in many of our farmer friends and we are lending our voice to those who feel they have no voice." ❧

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## ARTBEAT

# Challenging facile conclusions

*'Patriots and pacifists alike need to see soldiers in much more complicated terms—in less homogenous and predictable light,' says new Herald Press author*

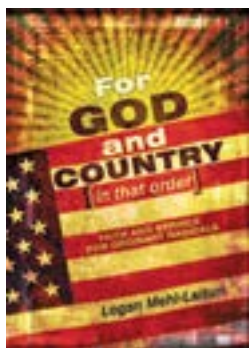
BY MELODIE DAVIS  
MennoMedia

Logan Mehl-Laituri, a veteran of the war in Iraq, has written a new book, *For God and Country (In That Order): Faith and Service for Ordinary Radicals*, the first book written by such a recent war veteran published by Herald Press.

Mehl-Laituri, a member of St. Joseph's Episcopal Church in Durham, N.C., was a fire support specialist in the U.S. Army from August 2000 to November 2006.

Now a professor, he points out that combat veterans today can go from "an intense firefight to the comforts of home in less than 48 hours." Even a hero's welcome home can keep vets "from grieving the heart-wrenching events witnessed in combat," and be spiritually and morally confusing for men and women of faith in the armed services who are genuinely conflicted, he says.

According to him, countries "venerate soldiers without attending to the moral



pain acquired by combat. Patriots and pacifists alike need to see soldiers in much more complicated terms—in less homogenous and predictable light."

Mehl-Laituri is the author of a previous book telling his own journey from soldier to conscientious objector, *Reborn on the Fourth of July: The Challenge of Faith, Patriotism and Conscience* (InterVarsity Press, 2011).

His purpose in writing *For God and*

*Country (In That Order)* is to profile dozens of people from biblical times to today who have served as soldiers and pondered their faith in light of that service. The book also tells the stories of pacifists from ancient times to the present. The profiles and sto-

ries "challenge easy assumptions, especially as they pertain to war and military service," Mehl-Laituri says of his book.

Desmond Doss, a Seventh Day Adventist during the Second World War, refused to carry a weapon or to work on the Sabbath, garnering death threats from his unit mates. He ended up receiving a Congressional Medal of Honor for one heroic episode—when he still did not pick up a gun. However, he did bend the rule of working on the Sabbath, observing, "Even Jesus worked on the Sabbath."

On the other hand, Tom Fox, a Quaker loosely affiliated with a Mennonite congregation, served 20 years in the army, but later went to Iraq with Christian Peacemaker Teams, where he was taken hostage with three others. Fox was finally killed, "paying the ultimate price for God, not country," writes Mehl-Laituri. "My point is to challenge our polarized expectations both about the military and about Christians."

He notes that, on the left, many books suggest the military is inherently corrupt and such service is irreconcilable with the Christian faith. On the right, some hold the military up as the epitome of Christian service, as in the days of chivalric knights.

*'My point is to challenge our polarized expectations both about the military and about Christians.'*  
(Logan Mehl-Laituri, author)

"This book, on the other hand, challenges facile conclusions," says Mehl-Laituri.

The book is intended for Christians of all denominations and is written on a popular, rather than academic, level. Mehl-Laituri is currently adjunct professor at Methodist University in the Department of Philosophy and Religion in the Fort Bragg town of Fayetteville, N.C. He earned a master of theological studies degree from Duke Divinity School. ❧

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## PERSONAL JOURNEY

# A Year of Reading Biblically starts now

*If you've never read the Bible cover to cover, 2014 might be the year to do it*

BY AARON EPP

YOUNG VOICES CO-EDITOR



**W**hy read the Bible? I posed that question on Facebook last month. More than 20 friends, including Christians, agnostics and atheists, responded.

Some responses were snarky, most were serious and all were revealing. Reasons ranged from the importance of reading the Bible as a work of literature, to the importance of reading the Bible for its historical and theological significance.

A few of my favourite comments:

- **“IT CONTAINS** stories of repentance and gratitude, and reading these stories can itself become a practice of repentance and gratitude.”
- **“GRRRRRRRRRRR,** MY mother is a fundamentalist, so I believe it reinforces judgmental, unreflective thinking. Basically, it magnifies your bias. If your bias is [educated] and virtuous . . . then the Bible is a wonderful guide. If it's in the hands of the wrong people, it's a weapon of hate.”
- **“I DO** not lay claim to Christian beliefs. But I deem the Bible incredibly important to read due to its incredible impact on shaping history as well as present-day politics and philosophies.”
- **“I'D SAY** that while I'm not of the modernist mindset—that there is one sole truth, and the Bible contains it—I do think that the Bible contains truth about not just the character of God, but

also deals with some very important questions that most people try to answer throughout their life.”

- **“BECAUSE WE** regard it as sacred Scripture and our source for knowing who Jesus was and who God is. As such, it also functions as a significant [albeit not the only] source for Christian [and particularly Anabaptist] ethics.”
- **“THE OLD** Testament has stories of calling and freedom for people who didn't deserve it any more or less than I do. And then there's the story of God becoming human and disarming power by dying and rising. Those are reasons for me to read [and think about] the Bible.”
- **“SO AS** not to become one of those people that have never read the book they so willingly thump.”

I asked the question, “Why read the Bible?” because, in the coming year, I will be reading my Bible from cover to cover. I'm not as familiar with Scripture as I'd like to be. If one claims to be a Christian, I think it's important that one turns to, with at least some regularity, the book that tells the story of what Christian beliefs and history are based on.

I have not done that in recent years. I'm sure I've read most of what's in the Bible at various points—one of my majors in university was biblical and theological

*(Continued on page 34)*



*Have you ever read the entire Bible before? What are you learning as you read through it? When are you making time to read it? What are you enjoying about it? What are some of the challenges? What questions do you have? I want to know.*

*(Continued from page 33)*

studies—but there's more pop culture trivia rattling around in my brain than there is knowledge from the stories that my faith is supposedly built on.

I don't like that.

Ask me anything about U2's catalogue or the TV show *Breaking Bad* and in seconds I'll give you the answer, with some thoughtful analysis. But ask me a question about the Ten Commandments, the minor prophets or the synoptic gospels, and I'll struggle to give you a coherent response.

I want to have deep thoughts. I want to ponder my faith a little bit. I figure one of the best ways to do that is to immerse myself in the Bible. I've never read the Bible from beginning to end and, more

*Canadian Mennonite's* Twitter account ([twitter.com/CanMenno](https://twitter.com/CanMenno)) using the hashtag #yorb14. Feel free to do the same.

I'll also post my articles to *Canadian Mennonite's* Facebook page ([facebook.com/Canadian.Mennonite](https://facebook.com/Canadian.Mennonite)), and of course you'll be able to read them in the magazine and online. You can leave a comment on Facebook, comment on the articles on *Canadian Mennonite's* website ([canadianmennonite.org](http://canadianmennonite.org)) or in the magazine ([letters@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:letters@canadianmennonite.org)), or send me an e-mail at [youngvoices@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:youngvoices@canadianmennonite.org).

Have you ever read the entire Bible before? What are you learning as you read through it? When are you making time to read it? What are you enjoying about it? What are some of the challenges? What

*I'm interested in getting a discussion going during A Year of Reading Biblically because I think it will make the experience that much richer for everyone involved.*

importantly, reading my Bible on a regular basis has not become a habit in my life. I'd like it to be.

I'll read a New International Version Bible I received in church when I was in Grade 9. I'm following a reading plan that requires me to read one to three chapters each day. You can visit it at [www.tinyurl.com/cmorb14](http://www.tinyurl.com/cmorb14) or cut out the first four months of the reading guide on page 35. I'm calling this A Year of Reading Biblically, and each month in Young Voices, I'll write a reflection on what I'm learning and how it's impacting my life.

I invite you to join me in A Year of Reading Biblically. My articles will appear in the Young Voices section, which is a part of the magazine aimed at readers between the ages of 16 and 30. But regardless of your age, I want you to take part if you are interested.

Pick a translation of the Bible you're comfortable with and check out the reading plan I'm using. The goal here is progress and not perfection, so if you miss a day or two, that's okay. Do what you can to get back on track and keep reading.

I'd also like to interact with you during A Year of Reading Biblically. In between articles, I'll tweet my thoughts from

questions do you have? I want to know.

I'm interested in getting a discussion going during A Year of Reading Biblically because I think it will make the experience that much richer for everyone involved. And selfishly, I know there are many people in Mennonite Church Canada and beyond who are much smarter than I am, as my initial Facebook post shows. I'd like to learn from you. Hearing your thoughts, reflections and questions along the way will help me through A Year of Reading Biblically, and also shape the direction of my reflections.

I don't want this to be just about me, however. I want this to be about us, together, exploring what it might look like if we became more biblically literate.

"I read the Bible to understand God/Jesus/[the] Holy Spirit better and what is required of me," one of my friends commented on Facebook. "I find comfort in the pages of the Bible. I find entertainment in the stories of the Bible. I find encouragement in the lives of the people revealed in the Bible. I find life-giving hope in the Bible."

I'm looking forward to finding the same. How about you? ☘

## Daily guide for A Year of Reading Biblically: Part I

Jan 1: Gen 1-3  
 Jan 2: Gen 4-7  
 Jan 3: Gen 8-11  
 Jan 4: Gen 12-15  
 Jan 5: Gen 16-18  
 Jan 6: Gen 19-21  
 Jan 7: Gen 22-24  
 Jan 8: Gen 25-26  
 Jan 9: Gen 27-29  
 Jan 10: Gen 30-31  
 Jan 11: Gen 32-34  
 Jan 12: Gen 35-37  
 Jan 13: Gen 38-40  
 Jan 14: Gen 41-42  
 Jan 15: Gen 43-45  
 Jan 16: Gen 46-47  
 Jan 17: Gen 48-50  
 Jan 18: Ex 1-3  
 Jan 19: Ex 4-6  
 Jan 20: Ex 7-9  
 Jan 21: Ex 10-12  
 Jan 22: Ex 13-15  
 Jan 23: Ex 16-18  
 Jan 24: Ex 19-21  
 Jan 25: Ex 22-24  
 Jan 26: Ex 25-27  
 Jan 27: Ex 28-29  
 Jan 28: Ex 30-32  
 Jan 29: Ex 33-35  
 Jan 30: Ex 36-38  
 Jan 31: Ex 39-40

Feb 1: Lev 1-4  
 Feb 2: Lev 5-7  
 Feb 3: Lev 8-10  
 Feb 4: Lev 11-13  
 Feb 5: Lev 14-15  
 Feb 6: Lev 16-18  
 Feb 7: Lev 19-21  
 Feb 8: Lev 22-23  
 Feb 9: Lev 24-25  
 Feb 10: Lev 26-27  
 Feb 11: Num 1-2  
 Feb 12: Num 3-4  
 Feb 13: Num 5-6  
 Feb 14: Num 7  
 Feb 15: Num 8-10  
 Feb 16: Num 11-13  
 Feb 17: Num 14-15  
 Feb 18: Num 16-17  
 Feb 19: Num 18-20  
 Feb 20: Num 21-22  
 Feb 21: Num 23-25  
 Feb 22: Num 26-27  
 Feb 23: Num 28-30  
 Feb 24: Num 31-32  
 Feb 25: Num 33-34  
 Feb 26: Num 35-36  
 Feb 27: Deut 1-2  
 Feb 28: Deut 3-4  
 Mar 1: Deut 5-7  
 Mar 2: Deut 8-10  
 Mar 3: Deut 11-13

Mar 4: Deut 14-16  
 Mar 5: Deut 17-20  
 Mar 6: Deut 21-23  
 Mar 7: Deut 24-27  
 Mar 8: Deut 28-29  
 Mar 9: Deut 30-31  
 Mar 10: Deut 32-34  
 Mar 11: Josh 1-4  
 Mar 12: Josh 5-8  
 Mar 13: Josh 9-11  
 Mar 14: Josh 12-15  
 Mar 15: Josh 16-18  
 Mar 16: Josh 19-21  
 Mar 17: Josh 22-24  
 Mar 18: Jud 1-2  
 Mar 19: Jud 3-5  
 Mar 20: Jud 6-7  
 Mar 21: Jud 8-9  
 Mar 22: Jud 10-12  
 Mar 23: Jud 13-15  
 Mar 24: Jud 16-18  
 Mar 25: Jud 19-21  
 Mar 26: Ruth  
 Mar 27: 1Sam 1-3  
 Mar 28: 1Sam 4-8  
 Mar 29: 1Sam 9-12  
 Mar 30: 1Sam 13-14  
 Mar 31: 1Sam 15-17  
 Apr 1: 1Sam 18-20  
 Apr 2: 1Sam 21-24  
 Apr 3: 1Sam 25-27

Apr 4: 1Sam 28-31  
 Apr 5: 2Sam 1-3  
 Apr 6: 2Sam 4-7  
 Apr 7: 2Sam 8-12  
 Apr 8: 2Sam 13-15  
 Apr 9: 2Sam 16-18  
 Apr 10: 2Sam 19-21  
 Apr 11: 2Sam 22-24  
 Apr 12: 1King 1-2  
 Apr 13: 1King 3-5  
 Apr 14: 1King 6-7  
 Apr 15: 1King 8-9  
 Apr 16: 1King 10-11  
 Apr 17: 1King 12-14  
 Apr 18: 1King 15-17  
 Apr 19: 1King 18-20  
 Apr 20: 1King 21-22  
 Apr 21: 2King 1-3  
 Apr 22: 2King 4-5  
 Apr 23: 2King 6-8  
 Apr 24: 2King 9-11  
 Apr 25: 2King 12-14  
 Apr 26: 2King 15-17  
 Apr 27: 2King 18-19  
 Apr 28: 2King 20-22  
 Apr 29: 2King 23-25  
 Apr 30: 1Chron 1-2

*Part II of the guide will appear in the March 31 issue.*

## CPT extends offer of peace

*Organization crowdfunding to send mega-church leader Mark Driscoll on peacebuilding mission to Colombia*

BY RACHEL BERGEN  
 Young Voices Co-editor

“Jesus is not a pansy or a pacifist.” That’s what Mark Driscoll, pastor of the Mars Hill multi-venue mega-church conglomerate, said in its *The Resurgence* magazine recently.

The article went on to condemn those who teach that God stood for peace,

claiming that the Bible makes a distinction between killing and murder as evidenced in the sixth of the Ten Commandments.

Driscoll isn’t the only person who thinks pacifists are pansies, but those who work for peace in some of the worst conflict

*(Continued on page 36)*

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF TYLER TULLY



*The official Send Mark Driscoll campaign photo.*





*Melanie Kampen of Winnipeg believes that Mark Driscoll would be a good candidate for a CPT delegation because he obviously reads and is discerning of the biblical texts.*

*(Continued from page 35)*

zones in the world know this isn't true.

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), an ecumenical partner organization that risks injury and even death by waging nonviolent direct action to confront violence and oppression, is taking a peaceful approach in response to Driscoll's comments.

Tyler Tully, 33, of San Antonio (Tex.) Mennonite Church suggested a project that encourages interested individuals to pool their money through an online crowdfunding platform—([www.crowdrise.com/sendmarkdriscoll/fundraiser/tylertully](http://www.crowdrise.com/sendmarkdriscoll/fundraiser/tylertully))—in order to send the outspoken pastor on a CPT delegation. Tully isn't an employee of CPT, but admires its work and hopes to go on a delegation himself one day.

"I thought it was really demonstrating nonviolence," he said in a Skype interview. "It's not about confrontation, but it's about speaking in love."

Peter Haresnape, a full-time CPT staff member, is also involved in the crowd-

fundraising initiative. Heights Mennonite Church in Winnipeg and a graduate student at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont., said that, based on her research of Driscoll, she thinks that he would be a good candidate for the delegation because he obviously reads and is discerning of the biblical texts.

"It's evident that he looks into different sources, commentaries, and studies the original language in which the Scriptures were written," Kampen said. "To me, those are signs of a thoughtful Bible reader. But I disagree with the conclusions he comes to."

By the end of November, the fundraisers had collected more than \$500 towards their goal of \$2,700. If Driscoll turns down the opportunity to go on a delegation, the money raised will be used by the CPT general scholarship fund to empower delegates to visit peacemakers around the world.

Tully has pledged to go on the delegation with Driscoll if he accepts the invitation, seeing it as a beautiful opportunity for dialogue. "CPT goes to places that are

### *CPT wants to invite Driscoll to see what its Christian partners are doing in the area to work for peace.*

ing initiative. The 28-year-old member of Toronto United Mennonite Church said that if Driscoll accepts the invitation to attend, CPT will likely send him to the Magdalena Medio region of Colombia, where more than four million Colombians have been displaced due to violence. CPT wants to invite Driscoll to see what its Christian partners are doing in the area to work for peace.

"Mark Driscoll is constructing a wimpy Christianity that he can deconstruct," Haresnape said. "There's nothing less wimpy than turning the other cheek. It's neither fight nor flight."

Since she heard about the crowdfunding opportunity in early November, 24-year-old Melanie Kampen has been actively sharing the initiative on social media. She shared the link on her own timeline and on the Mennonite Church Manitoba and MC Canada Facebook groups. She also donated money and encouraged her peers to do the same.

Kampen, a member of Springfield

scary, where there's a lot of injustice," he said. "They embody Jesus there and embody agents of the Prince of Peace. That's what Christian pacifism is all about. If Mark could see something like that, and why it's needed and necessary, I think that would be a wonderful opportunity."

"I think he stands to gain everything from going," Tully added. "If his experiences change his perspective, then it's a win. If his experiences don't change his opinion, it's still a win."

Driscoll and Mars Hill Church declined to comment, saying they were too busy to accommodate the media request. CPT has been unable to get in touch with him as well.

CPT also sends delegates to Iraq, Palestine, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the U.S./Mexico borderlands, as well as to first nation communities in Canada. ❧

## Calendar

### Alberta

**Jan. 12:** Ordination of William Loewen at Trinity Mennonite Church, DeWinton, at 11 a.m., with celebration lunch to follow.

**Jan. 19:** Truth and Reconciliation Awareness Day at Lendrum MB Church, Edmonton. Terry LeBlanc, director of My People International, will lead the morning service at 10 a.m. The evening service at 7 p.m. will include a workshop and discussion on how non-aboriginal people can work towards better relationships.

**Jan. 24:** An evening of storytelling with Richard Wagamese, celebrating and exploring aboriginal identity and culture in light of the residential schools, will be held at St. David's United Church, Calgary, at 7 p.m. Tickets are available at the MCC Alberta office. For more information, e-mail office@mccb.org.

### Saskatchewan

**Jan. 3-4:** RJC alumni basketball, hockey and choir weekend, at RJC. (Please note change of date.)

**Jan. 17:** RJC winter theatre production.

**March 2:** RJC Guys and Pies concert fundraiser.

**March 7-9:** Prairie Winds worship retreat, at Shekinah Retreat Centre, Waldheim. Keynote speaker: John Bell. For more information, visit mcsask@mcsask.ca or call 306-249-4844.

**March 16:** RJC/CMU concert, at RJC.

### Manitoba

**Jan. 23:** IDS Esau Public Lecture Series, with Nettie Wiebe, at Menno Simons College. For more information, visit mscollge.ca/esau.

**Jan. 24-25:** CMU opera workshop,

(Continued on page 38)

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from the MennoMedia staff!

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**(Continued from page 37)**

in the Laudamus Auditorium, at 7:30 pm. For more information, visit [cmu.ca/programs/music.html](http://cmu.ca/programs/music.html).

**Jan. 24:** New Songs for Worship workshop, in Winkler, led by CMU prof Christine Longhurst. For more information, or to register, call 204-487-3300 or e-mail [clonghurst@cmu.ca](mailto:clonghurst@cmu.ca).

**Jan. 30:** CMU Face 2 Face | On Campus. Topic: "The universe is expanding, just like our minds: Beyond quantum physics and what it all means." For more information, visit [cmu.ca/face2face](http://cmu.ca/face2face).

**Jan. 30-31:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate presents three one-act plays by its junior-high students, at the Franco-Manitoban Centre.

**Feb. 5:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate open house, at 7 p.m.

**Feb. 13:** CMU celebration fundraising dinner, in Winnipeg, at 7 p.m. For more information, visit [cmu.ca/events.html](http://cmu.ca/events.html).

**Ontario**

**Jan. 8:** UMEI Christian High School community stakeholder meeting to discuss how to best use its \$150,000 investment commitment from MC Eastern Canada, at the high school, at 7 p.m.

**Classifieds****Employment Opportunities**

**EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: LEAD MINISTER**  
Ottawa Mennonite Church is seeking a lead minister for our congregation of approximately 225 people. We are diverse in culture, education, age, marital status, and faith traditions. Mennonites by choice, we love to worship, to sing, and to serve Jesus in our community.

We are searching for a person of deep faith, schooled in the Anabaptist tradition, who is able to communicate and connect with people of all ages. Through well-planned and thoughtful worship services and a strong preaching and teaching ministry, the applicant will equip us to live as loving, faithful and joyful Christians in our various settings.

Start date: Summer/Fall 2014, applications due: January 6, 2014, for more information, please contact Henry Paetkau, MCEC Area Church Minister at [hpaetkau@mceec.ca](mailto:hpaetkau@mceec.ca)

**Jan. 17-19:** Fathers and kids retreat, at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp, Sauble Beach. For more information, or to register, visit [slmc.ca/retreats](http://slmc.ca/retreats).

**Jan. 18:** MC Eastern Canada pastors, chaplains and congregation leaders event, "The Lord's Supper and the 21st-century Mennonite church," at Rouge Valley Mennonite Church, Markham.

**Feb. 7-9:** MC Eastern Canada youth winter retreat at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp, Sauble Beach.

**Feb. 19-21:** MC Eastern Canada School for Ministers, "Will you come and follow me?" with Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

**U.S.**

**Jan. 27-30:** Pastors Week at AMBS, Elkhart, Ind. Theme: "Help me see Jesus! Help me see, Jesus." Presenters: Rachel Miller Jacobs, Andy Brubacher Kaethler, Safwat Marzouk and Allan Rudy-Froese. For more information, or to register, visit [www.amb.edu/pastorsweek](http://www.amb.edu/pastorsweek).

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



**Vineland**  
United Mennonite Church

**Employment Opportunity**

**VINELAND UNITED MENNONITE CHURCH** invites applications for the **FULL TIME** position of **LEAD MINISTER**. We are located in a semi rural community in the heart of Ontario's Niagara Peninsula.

We are seeking a person who is committed to an Anabaptist understanding of faith and theology, deeply rooted in biblical teaching, a confident preacher, excels in developing relationships with the congregation and willing to work as part of the leadership team. Candidates should have previous pastoral experience, a Masters of Divinity or equivalent is preferred. Start time is negotiable.

Please submit inquiries, resumes and references by February 15, 2014 to:

Henry Paetkau, Area Church Minister,  
Mennonite Church Eastern Canada  
#201 - 50 Kent Ave.,  
Kitchener, Ontario N2G 3R1  
Tel: 226-476-2500 \*704 or 855-476-2500  
Email: [hpaetkau@mceec.ca](mailto:hpaetkau@mceec.ca)

**DIRECTOR****MSCU CENTRE FOR PEACE ADVANCEMENT**

The Director of the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union (MSCU) Centre for Peace Advancement (CPA) will provide leadership for this new Centre within Conrad Grebel University College at the University of Waterloo. The Centre will be comprised of faculty, staff, graduate students, affiliate and partner organizations, researchers, and community mobilizers. The Centre's core activities will be research, training, and community engagement. The Director will have a significant role in establishing and shaping the CPA, convening an advisory committee, representing the Centre publicly, directing its activities, and supervising CPA staff and researchers. The Director will foster a culture of collaboration and creativity among the Centre's partners and affiliates to position the Centre for significant impact and recognition.

This is a .5 FTE position for an initial two year term beginning July 1, 2014. Applications are invited until March 1, 2014.

Applications and inquiries should be directed to  
**Dr. Jim Pankratz, Dean**  
Conrad Grebel University College  
University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON, Canada  
[cgsearch@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:cgsearch@uwaterloo.ca)

[www.grebel.ca/positions](http://www.grebel.ca/positions)



**Conrad Grebel**  
University College

**Announcement**

**Parent Support Group:** Announcing a bimonthly support group for Mennonite parents of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) persons in Southwestern Ontario. We provide confidential support, fellowship, resources and op-

portunities for dialogue in the Spirit of Christ. For more information please contact the following: [rvfast@rogers.com](mailto:rvfast@rogers.com), [pmsnyderangel@rogers.com](mailto:pmsnyderangel@rogers.com), or Roy and Mary Gascho, 519-742-1850.



## Employment Opportunity Communications Specialist



**Mennonite Foundation of Canada**, a donor-advised charitable foundation committed to helping others live generously with the financial resources God has entrusted to them, is seeking a Communications Specialist.

As the ideal candidate you will have:

- a passion for faith-based generosity
- strong writing, verbal and grammatical skills
- a background in effectively communicating and interacting with multiple audiences - both internal and external
- the ability to work on multiple projects in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment
- experience producing a wide variety of communications and promotional materials
- creativity and innovation in communicating complex information
- proficiency with MS Office
- experience and/or expertise with software related to photo editing, graphic design, web design, video and audio editing, and online content marketing
- post-secondary education and 3 or more years of related communications experience
- ability to travel within Canada and the USA.

MFC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time, salaried position.

Please submit resumes by January 6, 2014 to:

**Jesse Huxman, Director of Communications**  
Mennonite Foundation of Canada  
207-50 Kent Avenue, Kitchener, ON, N2G 3R1  
Fax (519) 745-8940  
Email: [jhuxman@MennoFoundation.ca](mailto:jhuxman@MennoFoundation.ca)

**MennoFoundation.ca**

## Employment Opportunity Stewardship Consultant *Abbotsford, BC*



**Mennonite Foundation of Canada**, a donor-advised charitable foundation committed to helping others live generously with the financial resources God has entrusted to them, is seeking a Stewardship Consultant to work from our office in Abbotsford, British Columbia.

As the ideal candidate you will:

- promote biblical stewardship of financial resources and provide charitable gift and estate planning services,
- support and incorporate MFC's core values of stewardship in your personal life,
- communicate effectively with individuals and in public presentations,
- have knowledge of, or ability to learn, charitable gift and estate planning,
- be creative, organized, and self-motivated in balancing multiple projects,
- be willing and able to contribute as part of an inter-dependent staff team, and
- have the ability to travel within Canada and the USA.

MFC offers a competitive salary and benefits package. This is a full-time, salaried position.

Please submit resumes by January 3, 2014 to:

**Milly Siderius, Director of Stewardship Services**  
Mennonite Foundation of Canada  
207-50 Kent Avenue, Kitchener, ON, N2G 3R1  
Fax (519) 745-8940  
Email: [msiderius@MennoFoundation.ca](mailto:msiderius@MennoFoundation.ca)

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### Travel

Visit Europe the Mennonite Way with Mennonite Heritage Tours! Small group Hotel Tours focusing on Mennonite/ Anabaptist heritage in Holland, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Poland and Ukraine. [www.mennonite-heritagetours.eu](http://www.mennonite-heritagetours.eu)

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[www.mysteriesofgrace.com](http://www.mysteriesofgrace.com)

### For Sale

## Book for Sale

*From the Dniepr to the Paraguay River*, by Victor Janzen, (Steinbach, MB, 2010), pb. 178 pp., \$25.00

A personal account of the re-settlement of a group of Mennonites from Osterwick, now called Dolinskoye, near Zaporozhye on the Dniepr to Paraguay, South America, during and after World

War II. Includes life in Soviet Ukraine and founding of Colony Volendam, on the River Paraguay.

Available from Mennonite Heritage Village Bookstore by calling 1-204-326.9661, *The Mennonitische Post*, 1-204-326-6790, and from the author 1-204-326-6194 for \$25.00 incl. S & H



*Mennonite Church Saskatchewan moderator George Epp likes to think outside the box when considering the future. At MC Canada's fall leadership assembly in Winnipeg in November, he suggested that, instead of planting the institutional church, the church should consider planting Mennonites who demonstrate their commitment to peace and justice issues by connecting with others at a community level as witnesses for the church. 'People are attracted to a world where justice and peace prevail, and environment is a top priority,' he said. Epp concludes his term as MC Saskatchewan's moderator in March 2014.*

# God at work in the World Snapshots

PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

*Leroy Hill, left, and artist Arnold Jacobs present a plaque to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario on the occasion of the dedication of the new 50 Kent Avenue building in Kitchener on Nov. 9. MCC Ontario gave the Haudenosaunee leaders a white pine and blankets; tradition has it that the Six Nations people buried their weapons under a white pine when they made peace with each other. In return, the leaders of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, on whose land the new building sits, gave MCC Ontario the plaque as a symbolic representation of the friendship between them and the Mennonites. MCC Ontario executive director Rick Cober Bauman, right front, looks on.*

