

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

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Pretty in pink

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## EDITORIAL

# Congregations, too, want 'new wineskins'

DICK BENNER  
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

It's too bad the New Wineskins consultations of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), that covered a four-year period and got Mennonites together from all over the world, didn't "become a hot topic" in the pew, as Will Braun observes in our main feature on page 4.

Because what is emerging is life-changing for all of us and should be engaging us far more than it is. MCC, as it turns out, has touched—and continues to touch—us at so many levels. Birthed as an attempt to rescue our sisters and brothers suffering from unspeakable military cruelty at the hands of army bandits in southern Russia and from widespread famine, it today reaches out to the hungry and poor, the disadvantaged and pillaged, the oppressed and downtrodden in 62 countries outside of North America, not to mention addressing such things as mining injustice and aboriginal rights within our own borders.

It may be the single most attractive Mennonite establishment, capturing the imagination of our young people, giving them opportunities to experience the planet in ways they otherwise couldn't. It appeals to their growing sense of justice and to their idealistic goals of making a difference in a violent and environmentally degraded world.

And the non-Mennonite world of

national and community leaders has taken note of what small administrative costs there are in delivering aid and services through MCC compared to other well-known relief agencies. In other words, aid gets more fully intact to the end receiver than with some other organizations in the same helping business. We can all take much satisfaction from this.



Because of this, and because of the changing culture of our own congregations here at home, the Wineskins conversations—conducted most seriously inside administrative circles in a kind of corporate culture with what was termed the "appreciative inquiry" process—should have triggered more serious thought and conversation at the congregational level.

The process, while implemented with good intentions by MCC discussion leaders in many locations, seemed scripted with no follow-up steps. What happened to all those recorded comments on flip charts and white boards, for instance? We never heard back from the planners regarding common themes, trends in thinking, changing paradigms or strategies voiced by people in the pews.

"Appreciative inquiry," reduced to its essentials, takes the stance that we should look at the future through lenses that see life positively, not negatively, and consider "willing possibilities," not constraints

and prohibitions.

While this sounds good on its face, a kind of sophistication can evolve that says that what is basically an internal restructuring shouldn't be of great concern to constituents, an attitude that smacks a little of elitism and is not exactly congruous with our Anabaptist ethos of communal decision-making and sharing.

To their credit, MCC leaders, as voiced by Arli Klassen, were willing to change course in developing a global model that did not sit well with non-North American partners because of what was perceived as its "imperialistic" nature.

All of which is to say that MCC wisely and realistically realizes we are living in a vastly different world than when it was born and developed over these 90 years.

These consultations and their outcomes are exhilarating and heady, not only for our major Mennonite enterprise, but for those in the pew who might want to, and should, take some ownership of the process and its outcomes.

The evolution of MCC's mission and mandate for the 21st century is exactly what should be happening at the local level: more partnerships with like-minded organizations, a changing paradigm in which we look beyond ourselves and see our Anabaptist faith distinctives as part of a larger ecclesiastical fabric in our communities, a new confession that calls us "to listen to, and learn from, people of other cultures."

A local congregation might think "appreciatively" about teaming up with other congregations when its youth group is too small to nurture on its own, or to team up with other local congregations in meeting the needs of immigrants or low-income neighbourhoods where a local coordinated effort could do so much better.

## ABOUT THE COVER:

The MC B.C. women's retreat at Camp Squeah began with the 94 participants getting a pink manicure in keeping with the theme of 'breast cancer awareness.' See story on page 23.

PHOTO: WALTRUDE GORTZEN, MC B.C. WOMEN'S MINISTRY

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# MCC centrality questioned

*Global church re-directs Wineskins re-visioning process*

BY WILL BRAUN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*



*'Will MCC try to become a more effective NGO, or will it serve the church?'  
(Ron Mathies, former MCC binational director)*

**M**ennonite Central Committee (MCC) is the largest and most influential Anabaptist organization in the world. It has nearly 1,200 workers and an annual budget of \$82 million. Its reach extends to 62 countries abroad, and here in North America it encompasses 14 denominations, covering the spectrum from Amish grandmothers to the Meeting House, a Brethren in Christ church that is Canada's coolest mega-church and a major MCC supporter.

MCC's publication, *A Common Place*, goes to more than 75,000 people—that's more than *Canadian Mennonite*, *MB Herald*, *Mennonite Weekly Review* and *The Mennonite* combined.

And the organization drew more than 16,000 Canadians to volunteer at its stores, relief sales and material resource centres in the past year.

The fact that MCC is so prominent says much about who we are as Mennonites. We are not centred around an academic institution, a geographical location (like the Vatican), a leader, or even our church conferences. Rather, the closest we have to a core is a collective, practical expression of Christian care. We are people who help, and much of our helping is done through MCC.

For the many of us who have lived in huts abroad, sorted blouses at thrift stores, sold pies at relief sales, written cheques or otherwise invested ourselves in MCC, the organization is close to the heart of what it is



*The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) revisioning process seeks to address the tension of being rich Christians in an age of global inequality—an age in which golf tournaments in Manitoba (as exemplified by the cover of MCC Manitoba’s latest annual report, left) fund hurricane recovery efforts in Haiti (MCC file photo by Ben Depp from the back cover of Canadian Mennonite’s April 19 issue, right).*



to be Mennonite. It creates commonality among North American Mennonites and it connects us to the rest of the world.

Given the centrality of MCC, its four-year re-visioning process should be of interest to us. The New Wine/New Wineskins initiative, which started in 2008, has brought together a total of 2,000 people from 50 countries at 60 meetings to give input to the evolution of MCC.

To date, MCC has invested about \$850,000 in its effort to make the process as thorough and broad as possible. That money is split between consultants’ fees and travel, with the latter making up the larger chunk. Staff time is not included. For perspective, the \$850,000 figure is more than the total donations received for flood relief in Pakistan and is enough to fund the Bolivia program, with 39 staff, for a year.

Although the likely outcomes of the process are fairly clear, and the consultation phase is over, final decisions have yet to be made, and implementation is only expected to be completed in early 2012.

### **Behind the scenes**

From the beginning, Wineskins was a two-headed process. One major issue was how to make MCC more accountable to international partners. “The people who you’re trying to help ought to have a say,” says MCC binational director Arli Klassen. Wineskins sought the best way to include the vast array of international partners in decision-making in a more thorough way than is currently the case.

The other issue at play has been how to “make more space for national differences between Canada and the U.S.,” to use Klassen’s words. That’s code for the fact that the Canadian branch of MCC is eager to oversee more international programming from Winnipeg, Man., instead of sending two-thirds of the money raised in Canada to Akron, Pa., where most administration of international programming now happens. (Roughly half of overall MCC income is generated in Canada). It’s also code for the fact that MCC in Canada accepts millions in government money, while MCC in the U.S. has a staunch tradition of not accepting government money, and thus keeping its

distance from American foreign policy.

In addition to these two divergent issues, other agenda items included strengthening MCC’s ties to churches at home and abroad, and finding better ways for the provincial, regional and national MCC offices to coordinate decision-making.

These cross-currents created some muddy waters. And the lack of a clear, single focus may have had something to do with the fact that Wineskins did not become a hot topic in the broader Mennonite community. For instance, *Canadian Mennonite* received only two letters to the editor on the topic and one was from an MCC board member. Nevertheless, the process was important.

Two main outcomes have emerged.

First—and this one admittedly deals with the sort of institutional shuffling that consumes administrators and confounds the rest of us—MCC’s Canadian office will most likely be granted its wish to administer a significant proportion of MCC’s international programming from Winnipeg, in addition to the smaller pieces of that work it already does.

In simple terms, as a result of some



cross-border administrative jostling, considerably more of MCC's programs will be overseen from Winnipeg, instead of Akron. Little will change from the standpoint of MCC supporters or the people MCC works with abroad. And MCC's provincial and regional offices will not undergo significant changes. "We're not changing what we do, but how we do it," Klassen says.

In insider lingo, the working proposal is that MCC Binational be disbanded, with its work given over to MCC Canada and MCC U.S. These two branches of MCC would maintain their own boards, but would work collaboratively and with a single identity overseas. A new council would oversee overall governance of MCC, guide the vision, set standards, and "protect MCC's brand," says Klassen. The council would have as few as seven members—including MCC Canada and

MCC U.S. representatives, as well as church and international voices—and no more than five staff in a location as yet to be determined.

Theoretically, the shift would facilitate smoother and closer relations between MCC's Canadian office and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the federal government's foreign aid department, although changes at CIDA may mitigate this trend. MCC Canada director Don Peters says the CIDA factor has not been a "driving force in the Wineskins process."

MCC's provincial and regional boards, as well as the denominational conferences that ultimately "own" MCC, will

have a role in approving changes. The approval process and the numbingly complex task of figuring out how to divide the work between Canada and the U.S. are expected to take much of 2011.

Ron Mathies, who served as MCC binational director for nine years, suggests three questions for assessing the value of the re-organization:

- Will international program delivery improve or become more complex due to duplication and conflict?
- Will MCC's profile, support and witness in Canada and the U.S. increase or decrease?
- Will MCC remain one organization, two, or many?

*In insider lingo, the working proposal is that MCC Binational be disbanded, with its work given over to MCC Canada and MCC U.S.*

## VIEWPOINT

# 'For such a time as this'

BY JACK DUECK

**W**orship is remembering, said the prophet Jeremiah. The past holds regenerative power.

I'm a human being living in Canada today because of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC); some of my family in southern Russia (now Ukraine) were rescued from famine and annihilation.

Historically, Anabaptist Mennonites were invited to regions for what they could contribute, but were then harassed and even forced to leave for what they believed, which accounts for my people's journey from Holland to Prussia and finally to southern Russia.

The Russian land that Catherine the Great had expropriated from indigenous habitants blossomed like a rose under my forebears. A 700-year-old oak on Chortitza Island spanning some 50 metres, its roots clutching the very curvature of the Earth, symbolized for some the spread of the many thriving Mennonite

villages in this area.

But World War I and the 1917 Russian Revolution changed everything. Mennonite villages were overrun by the White and Red armies, and Makhno bandits. Each army confiscated materials, food and livestock. Famine ruled. Soon, with gun butts pounding on doors at midnight, many Mennonites vanished into the Gulag Archipelago of Siberia.

In response to these atrocities, American Mennonites founded an organization to aid their ethnic and spiritual brothers and sisters in southern Russia. In an entrepreneurial surge, various relief agencies combined into one organization: MCC. Clothing and food stuffs were gathered and shipment to Russia was arranged.

Orie O. Miller, Arthur Slagel and Goshen College student Clayton Kratz were delegated to accompany the very first aid shipment by the fledgling organization. In September 1920, they crossed the Atlantic to Constantinople, Turkey. From there, the relief goods were shipped across the Black Sea to Sevastopol on a U.S. naval destroyer—an irony of ironies. Granted entry, they brought relief not only to Mennonites, but also to surrounding peasant villages.

Sadly, Kratz was arrested and never heard from again, and the ancient oak grew gaunt and lifeless. However, someone brought an acorn from the dying Chortitza oak and planted it in Canadian soil. Today,



Mathies suggests it will take “a couple of decades” to see if the re-organization proves wise. In the meantime, he expresses “great faith” in the broad MCC community. “It’s the peoplehood,” he says, “who pull things out of the fire,” when necessary.

### **The rich help the poor**

The more interesting Wineskins issue is about “what it means to be globally accountable in today’s world,” to quote Klassen. How can the people most affected by MCC decisions be more a part of those decisions?

The matter could be framed more broadly. Being a rich and powerful North American organization creates an awkward imbalance between the helpers and those who are helped. Although our faith emphasizes simplicity, sharing, equality and humility, we in North America

remain far richer than the people we help, and in some ways we remain above them. The Wineskins question about global accountability was an important way of grappling with the inherent awkwardness and complexity of the rich helping the poor.

“Our temptation is to think of ourselves as possessing what other people need,” says Earl Martin, who served for 25 years with MCC. There is some truth in this, of course, but how can we have authentically mutual relationships with sisters and brothers around the world when we are always the helpers and they are always the helped? This imbalance of roles can lead to self-importance on our end and erosion of dignity on the other.

This complexity is not new to MCC. When the MCC Africa department consulted African colleagues in 1993, the resulting report said that “the old ‘fixing/

saving/meeting human need’ paradigm [should] be subsumed and transformed under a larger paradigm of building global community and particularly global church community.” The current questions about accountability are part of an ongoing quest for a more genuine equality in a world of gross inequity.

### **Globalization of MCC**

In this context, a fundamental re-shaping and “globalization” of MCC was on the table from the beginning of the Wineskins process. One of the main models considered was for a variety of overseas Anabaptist service agencies to come together under the MCC umbrella, with the expanded global MCC possibly being based outside North America.

This general concept was on the table when 27 Anabaptist church and service groups from 18 countries met in Addis



**Clayton Kratz**

one of the oak’s grandchildren proclaims its life—and its symbolic voice—on the Conrad Grebel University College campus in Waterloo, Ont.

The kingdom of God is like that acorn. Once we’ve uttered “In the name of Christ” in faithful action—feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned—the acorn germinates to meet human needs. In Menno Simons’ words: “True evangelical faith . . . becomes all things to all people.”

In the beginning, MCC was considered a temporary project. But soon other needs arose and called for new wineskins. Evangelical faith prodded *die Stille im Lande* (the quiet in the land) to become a public voice

for people in need.

Over the past 90 years, the call to remember “in the name of Christ” has moved MCC into the new wineskin-fashioning business, confronting a wide array of needs by creating programs like Ten Thousand Villages, Mennonite Disaster Service, Aboriginal Neighbours, Victims’ Voice, Canadian Japanese-Mennonite Scholarship, creation care, peace ministries, the thrift shop network, relief sales, meat canning, school kits, refugee assistance, and more.

At its origin, three young men with a meagre budget represented MCC in addressing a need in communist Russia. Today, with an annual budget of \$82 million, MCC personnel and volunteers represent the compassionate body of Christ the world over.

Now, MCC finds itself challenged to think differently in a vastly changed 21st-century world. Old wineskins offer comfort zones, where non-profit boards and their administrators have a tendency to prefer changing the wine, but keeping the old skins. New wineskins need to weave a management protocol suited to the organization’s current size and complexity. We must continue learning how to do good better.

Thinking about new wineskins puts MCC into the creative company of inspired skin-makers: Moses, Jeremiah, Mary, Peter, Menno Simons, and Jesus, the inveterate new skin-maker. It is “for such a time as this” that we, the living, must fashion new skins for this priceless new wine entrusted to us.



*In a day and age when relief supplies can be purchased in countries close to disaster sites—providing stimulus to their often hard-hit local economies—does it make economic or environmental sense to continue making blankets and relief kits of all kinds in North America and then ship them around the world?*

Ababa, Ethiopia, last August. While the gathering, which was convened by Mennonite World Conference (MWC), was not part of the Wineskins process per se, the potential globalization of MCC was a primary factor in discussions.

In a decision with considerable consequence for the history of MCC, the global organizations at the gathering opted not to be part of an expanded MCC. “People were very grateful to MCC,” says Pakisa Tshimika, MWC’s global church advocate, but they did not want to “take MCC and turn it into a global entity.” The groups decided to work towards greater collaboration within a formal network, but they did not want to become “little MCCs,” says Tshimika. They did not want MCC to globalize in the way it had been

considering.

It was a sobering moment for MCC. But the organization seems to have taken it well.

“It was humbling to be told we are not the centre of the Anabaptist service world,” Klassen says. The new global network is “not going to be within MCC [or have] an MCC identity,” she says.

Don Peters, who was also at the consultation, says some people within MCC were disappointed, but upon reflection there was recognition that the direction given in Addis Ababa is “an appropriate post-colonial way to go global.”

Similarly, Klassen admits that it was “pretty ethnocentric to think that others would want to become part of MCC.”

Tshimika, who is from the Democratic

Republic of Congo, uses the word “imperialistic” to characterize the MCC-centred option that was rejected.

While MCC is a central body for North American Mennonites, it turns out it is not the central committee for the global Anabaptist community. Ironically, at the Addis Ababa meeting, MCC’s position of wealth and prominence was a disadvantage as much as a strength.

Tshimika is clear that the decision of the group was not a rejection of MCC itself—which received affirmation—but of the approach it had been considering. He says MCC took the message “very seriously.”

So MCC will not “take on an entirely different shape,” a hope Klassen expressed in 2008. International representatives will likely be added to the MCC Canada and MCC U.S. boards, and the global entity envisioned at the Addis Ababa consultation will provide another element of international accountability, but MCC will remain a North American organization, something MWC had actually been advising for years.

### **Elephant and mouse**

Mathies says that in terms of MCC’s global accountability, the key question now is the future relationship between MCC and MWC. The latter represents 99 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ national churches from 56 countries, and is the only Anabaptist body, Mathies says, with a truly global mandate. But despite its unmatched mandate, it is dwarfed by MCC in terms of budget and capacity; MWC’s annual budget is \$1.4 million and it has 26 staff, 22 of whom are based in North America or Europe.

Tshimika uses the elephant and mouse metaphor to describe MCC’s prominence in the realm of global Anabaptist organizations. Despite this imbalance, he says that in Addis Ababa, it felt like “everyone was on the same level.” This speaks to the potential for MWC to create a forum in which MCC can practise genuine mutuality.

Although the global Anabaptist church, in the form of MWC, provides the most logical forum of international accountability for MCC, it also has



limitations. First, not nearly all of MCC's overseas partners or aid recipients fall under the MWC umbrella. MWC cannot represent MCC partners who are not Mennonite or Christian. A further limitation is expressed by some people within MCC who feel closer ties to MWC would mean that in certain circumstances MCC would give preference to MWC-affiliated partners, rather than non-Mennonite partners that may be better suited to particular initiatives.

In a presentation at MCC's 90th anniversary this summer, Mathies articulated something of this tension by asking, "Will MCC try to become a more effective NGO, or will it serve the church?" Stated differently: Is the mission of MCC to raise as much money as possible, and help as much as possible, or is it to foster mutually enriching exchange between the two halves of what Mathies calls MCC's "two-fold constituency" (the North American donor churches and the "program partners and participants around the world")?

Surely the answer is some of both, but sometimes the two conflict. For example, an effective way for MCC to maximize donations is to tell feel-good, non-complicated stories that cast North Americans as noble helpers—stories that say, in essence, "look how great it is that you made a difference by helping." But such stories maintain the divide between helper and helped.

### **A humble, unifying role**

While MCC sometimes feeds this divisive noble helper identity among its supporters, it also has an outstanding record of fostering unity and exchange among an exceptional diversity of people. This ability is surely one of MCC's greatest strengths, more unique and impressive than its fundraising ability. Perhaps MCC can address the global accountability question, which is also a question of authentic human equality and mutuality, not only by adjusting organizational charts, but by doing more to show North Americans how much the rest of the world has to offer them.

Both Mathies and Martin are most passionate when speaking about how the

*For the many of us who have lived in huts abroad, sorted blouses at thrift stores, sold pies at relief sales, written cheques or otherwise invested ourselves in MCC, the organization is close to the heart of what it is to be Mennonite.*

different parts of MCC's two-fold constituency "desperately need each other," as Mathies puts it. He says people "in the Global North have material resources and those in the Global South have spiritual resources that require exchange for their mutual benefit." Martin says that while we are called to share what we have, "just as strong or stronger is the call or opportunity to listen to and learn from people of other cultures." This requires that we "take a humble stance."

While MCC has always been good at listening and learning, the Addis Ababa gathering called the organization, and, by extension, its North American supporters, to a deeper humility. Part of the lesson was that the awkwardness and complexity of its role as the "elephant" will not be done away with by simply globalizing organizational structures. A shift in posture here at home may be the more important factor.

Klassen says that in Addis Ababa, MCC personnel were challenged "to let go of some of [their] ideas." Perhaps that also captures what MCC's North American supporters can take from the Wineskins process and the Addis Ababa gathering. We need to let go of the tendency to see ourselves primarily as helpers, fixers and possessors of what others need.

We are indeed people who help, and we must help generously and competently, but, more importantly, we must also be people who recognize the complexities of helping and the need to be humble recipients. ❧

*Will Braun served for five-and-a-half years with MCC in Brazil, B.C. and at the Winnipeg office. He attends Hope Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, Man., and can be reached at wbraun@inbox.*

### /// For discussion

1. In what ways are the people of your congregation involved with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)? Which generations are most involved? How high are the feelings of support and loyalty towards MCC? Do you know Mennonite churches that do not support MCC?
2. Was anyone you know involved in the New Wineskins discussions? Why do you think it didn't become a "hot topic"? Are you comfortable with the structural changes that MCC is implementing? Does it concern you that MCC in Canada accepts millions of dollars in government money?
3. At the conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, MCC was told that Mennonites around the world did not want to join a global MCC, as it would be "imperialistic." What was the message for North Americans? Do you support leaving MCC as a North American organization?
4. Should we be concerned about the disparity between the helper and the helped? Should MCC maximize donations by telling lots of feel-good stories that emphasize noble helpers? What do you think about Earl Martin's comment that MCC needs to "take a humble stance"?

## VIEWPOINTS

## /// Readers write

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

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

## ✉ Mennonite publishing must remain strong after media merger

I AM OF two minds regarding the merger of Mennonite Publishing Network and Third Way Media. On the one hand, organizational streamlining makes sense. On the other, neither Third Way Media nor its parent, Mennonite Mission Network, have been in the publication business.

As one who remains to be convinced that electronic media is an intrinsic improvement over print journalism—except that it's faster—I worry over how mature judgment, spiritual discernment and deepening conversation can be maintained in the church community without vigorous periodicals, stimulating pamphlets and engaging books.

Herald Press and Faith and Life Press have surely been less than perfect, but for nearly a hundred years they have provided significant Sunday

## GOD, MONEY AND ME

## Thy will be done

ARNIE FRIESEN

Preparing your personal will in light of the Lord's Prayer makes a lot of sense if you seek to do God's will on earth as it is done in heaven.

As Christians, we acknowledge that we don't really own anything; we are simply managers of the resources God has entrusted to us. We should take utmost care to invest in kingdom initiatives while we are alive. Furthermore, how we distribute our resources after we die should also reflect the will of God. Completing a will increases the possibility that more will be left to distribute for charitable purposes and less will be used up by the courts.

Our families are also entrusted to us by God. We should seek God's will when providing for our children, especially if we were to die before they are able to take care of themselves. This includes selecting guardians who share our faith and value system.

But we might want to consider whether it is appropriate to leave our entire estate to our children. Warren Buffet, a multi-

billionaire, once commented, "I want to give my kids just enough so that they would feel that they could do anything, but not so much that they would feel like doing nothing."

Dying without a will simply means that your provincial government will decide how your assets are divided. Chances are



*Dying without a will simply means that your provincial government will decide how your assets are divided.*

this will not be according to your wishes, and maybe not God's either, for that matter.

Nearly 50 percent of Canadian adults do not have a will. If you find yourself in this group, your resistance probably stems from one of these excuses:

- Wills cost too much. (Ask about the will rebate offered by Mennonite Foundation in connection with free will-counselling services.)
- Not enough assets to really matter.
- Planning to do a hand-written will or use a "will kit."

- Don't expect to die anytime soon.
- Superstition. I fear I will die sooner if I have a will.

If one of these excuses is yours, please contact a Mennonite Foundation consultant to discuss your concerns. Don't procrastinate!

If you already have a will, you are to be commended. But keep in mind that a will should be reviewed periodically, especially if there are changes in your family, such as births, deaths, retirement or changes in financial status. Other reasons for re-visiting a will include: your executor or guardian has moved or passed away, you

marry or re-marry, or you have moved to another province.

Doing the will of God quite plainly means teaming up in doing what matters to God. Completing an estate plan is really doing "God's will."

*Arnie Friesen is a stewardship consultant at the Abbotsford, B.C., office of Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC). For stewardship education and estate and charitable gift planning, contact your nearest MFC office or visit [MennoFoundation.ca](http://MennoFoundation.ca).*

school materials and a long list of books essential to Mennonite life and ministry. These presses, along with their book stores, have been essential ingredients to the Mennonite witness.

I am grateful for the contribution of Cascadia, Pandora and CMU presses, and Good Books, to Mennonite thought and witness. But don't we also need a publisher that represents the ministry of the denomination? It is important to recognize that Mennonite Publishing Network represents both

Mennonite Church Canada and MC U.S.A., and I would regret if the transnational character of the Mennonite voice was further weakened.

My hope is that the vision that inspired Faith and Life Press, Mennonite Publishing House and Mennonite Publishing Network will be strengthened and extended. My prayer is that the publication enterprise will maintain its high standard of productivity. One need only note the Believers' Church Commentaries, the Peace Shelf books, Studies in

## FAMILY TIES

# God in the nooks and crannies

MELISSA MILLER

**O**n the first Sunday of Advent, many of us will hear the proclamation, "*The Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour*" (Matthew 25:44). Advent worship resources from *The Leader* have highlighted the words "an unexpected hour" as a theme for this season. We are called to make space to receive God's presence among us by slowing down and slipping into silence.

The time craziness that our society labours under becomes even more frenetic during the weeks before Christmas. Many parents are rushing through meals to herd their children to musical programs or sports events. Many teachers are loaded down with the combined weight of rehearsals for school programs and completion of report cards. Health care professionals may find themselves juggling their family lives with the increased winter needs of the sick. Church volunteers and pastors have their own struggles to mount the greatly treasured, if fractious, Christmas programs. And, of course, there's the shopping, the concerts, the partying. How can we possibly find the time to experience God's presence in all our busy-ness?

Others of us may experience another kind of time-problem burden. We are

lonely, grieving the loved ones who have passed on, or missing the opportunity to enjoy our family and friends because of their busy-ness. Some of us are unemployed or stuck in soul-sapping jobs. Some of us have transitioned from paid employment to retirement and are finding the change to be a difficult one. How do we experience God's presence in the empty hours?

Perhaps we begin by inviting God into the nooks and crannies of our lives, whether they are crammed full of high-paced activity or achingly bare. Some of



*The time craziness that our society labours under becomes even more frenetic during the weeks before Christmas.*

us might benefit by doing less, finding little ways to step off the frenzied hamster-wheel and into the spacious, life-giving presence of God. As we are counselled in *The Leader*, we can make fewer cookies, reduce our shopping and forgo office work to join the youth ice skate. Others of us may more deliberately invite God into the forlorn spaces of our lives.

Rachel Miller Jacobs, writing in the same issue of *The Leader*, invites us to dip into the Isaiah scriptures of the season, passages that hold out a vision of heart-melting peace, surprising growth and

overwhelming abundance. With such a backdrop, we can ask for God's eyes to see the extraordinary in the ordinary moments of our days. We can keep our eyes peeled for signs of Emmanuel—God-with-us—in our lives.

I had such a moment not too long ago. On a late summer evening, my husband, son and I were enjoying a pleasant dinner on the patio. I stepped into the house briefly to get more food. As I moved from the golden light of the outdoors into the shadow of the darkened hallway, I received in my heart a visitation of happiness. "I am so blessed," were the words that came with the happiness. Blessed by simple things: an outdoor patio, warm sun on skin, delicious food and drink, and, especially, loved ones to share in such bounty. I stood in the silence for a moment, marvelling at the unexpected joy, a pleasure so intense that I could

scarcely take it in.

Advent is a season of waiting and wondering. This year, may we seize the opportunity to seek and to find the God who keeps coming to us, transforming the ordinary into the awesome, bringing light into our darkness, astonishing growth in the desert, and all-powerful love through the tiniest of humans.

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



Anabaptist and Mennonite History, and the *More With Less* cookbooks, to sense the importance of a strong publication program.

I feel so deeply about the significance of a vigorous and imaginative publishing program that I propose that, whenever the new media structure is established, a campaign be launched immediately to raise a substantial fund to support this part of the church's life.

Stuart Murray of the Anabaptist Network in the United Kingdom says he met this tradition through the publications of Doris Janzen Longacre and John Howard Yoder. For this to continue, denominational publishing requires strong spiritual, intellectual and financial support.

JOHN A. LAPP, AKRON, PA.

*John A. Lapp is executive secretary emeritus of Mennonite Central Committee.*

## ✉ Trees are meant to be managed and used, not worshipped

RE: "A TREE is not only something that stands in the way," Nov. 15, page 4.

I am a firm believer that God created this universe and has loaned it to us to care for (Matthew 21:33-40). I believe that he made everything to be interdependent. And yes, I believe that the trees and other living plants are perfect examples of the miracle of life that God gives and sustains each day.

However, I am also one employed by the forest industry in central British Columbia, and believe that companies such as the one I work for—whether they are managed by Christians or not, and whether they realize that the responsibility they have to manage the forests we use properly is a God-given calling or not—are doing just that.

### FROM OUR LEADERS

# What to believe?

JANET PLENERT

The daily bombardment of advertising from radio, billboards, newspapers, the Internet, fliers and TV leaves me discouraged and fatigued. Relentless messages urge me to cling to an insidious mantra, to believe that I will be a better person for using a particular product or service, to believe that advertisers are honest and want the best for me.

Consumerism is delivered with such a significant plea that people don't know what to believe any more, even about the church.

I find it important—and reassuring—to return to some basic truths, some steadfast advice drawn from the solid foundation of Scripture and the cloud of witnesses who have lived faithfully in ages before me. From this base, I remind myself what I believe:

- **I BELIEVE** that God is forming a people in every corner of this world that is God's love incarnate. I believe that this people—the church—is God's key strategy to transform and restore creation to God's original design. I believe that the most critical task for God's people is to

dedicate their individual and corporate lives to God by constantly testing their doing and being with God's redeeming purposes for the world.

- **I BELIEVE** in a church that is a safe place to be real, to be vulnerable, to ask hard questions. I believe in a church that is so joyously grateful and grace-filled that it overflows with generous gifts of time, talent and money, always asking how they can best be used to strengthen the body of Christ in the world. I believe in a church that nurtures its members to lead worshipful lives; that calls forth the gifts



*I believe in a church that understands God is calling us to abandon the common wisdom . . .*

of each member and holds each one accountable for wise stewardship of them; that walks with one another interdependently in mutual accountability across generations and cultures.

- **I BELIEVE** in a church that delights and immerses itself in the study and discernment of Scripture, and humbly submits itself to the corporately discerned

wisdom emerging from it. I believe in a church that does not fear different perspectives or diversity; a people that is not afraid to be bold, to change or to stand in contrast to secular society. I believe in a church that, like Christ, is not afraid to take risks of radical hospitality by generously extending abundant welcome to strangers and to strange ideas. I believe in a church that is not afraid to celebrate, not afraid to let the Spirit mess up our plans, and not afraid to engage society's most difficult situations or take chances with difficult people.

- **I BELIEVE** in a church that understands God is calling us to abandon the common wisdom and rules that have colonized our minds, and instead, to radically imagine, believe, model, live, share, inspire and teach an alternative

imagination of how to bring justice and peace among all peoples.

- I believe in this church. I believe this is what Mennonite Church Canada is, and is becoming.

What do you believe?

*Janet Plenert is executive secretary of MC Canada Witness.*

I noticed with interest that many of the quotes that are cited with regards to logging practices in B.C. come from folks living and writing in Ontario. What I don't think they understand is that the B.C. Forest Practices Code requires that logged areas be regenerated with species normally found in that area within a four- to seven-year timeframe. Today, there is more land in B.C. under forestation than there was 30 or 40 years ago. I have heard that up to 30 percent more trees are put into the ground every year than what are harvested. To me, this sounds like regeneration and creation care.

Forest companies may be driven by the desire to make money, but they also realize that the livelihood of entire communities lies in the forests around central B.C. and have committed themselves to doing what they can to ensure the longevity and sustainability of these forests. We all enjoy camping and being out in God's nature, but we also realize that God has given us a responsibility to manage and care for his creation.

God has given resources like the tree to care for, manage and use—not worship. I believe there is an inherent danger in the environmental movement to move into worshipping nature through protectionism, and to vilify those who use it. God has said that our worship must only go to the Creator, not to the created.

ROB WIEBE, BURNS LAKE, B.C.

*I believe there is an inherent danger in the environmental movement to move into worshipping nature through protectionism, and to vilify those who use it.*

## ✉ 'Living more with less' a dilemma for the less-abled and their caregivers

I RESONATED WITH Valerie Weaver-Zercher's article, "Confessions of an editor trying to live more with less," Nov. 1, page 26, on several levels. I, too, long to join the inspiring group of people who choose to live with less. And I share her ambivalence when contemplating ideas for living more sustainably.

However, after caring and advocating for my 10-year-old who has autism and my six-year-old who has juvenile arthritis, I have little time and energy left for household tasks or socializing. Coping with chronic fatigue, a result of breast cancer treatment several years ago, increases my own challenges with daily tasks and choices, as well as those of my family. To save time and energy, we often feel we need to use the car for errands, buy ready-made meals, put on a video, and purchase—rather than make—items like clothes or gifts. There are doubtless many other individuals and families dealing with illness or disability who experience similar dilemmas.

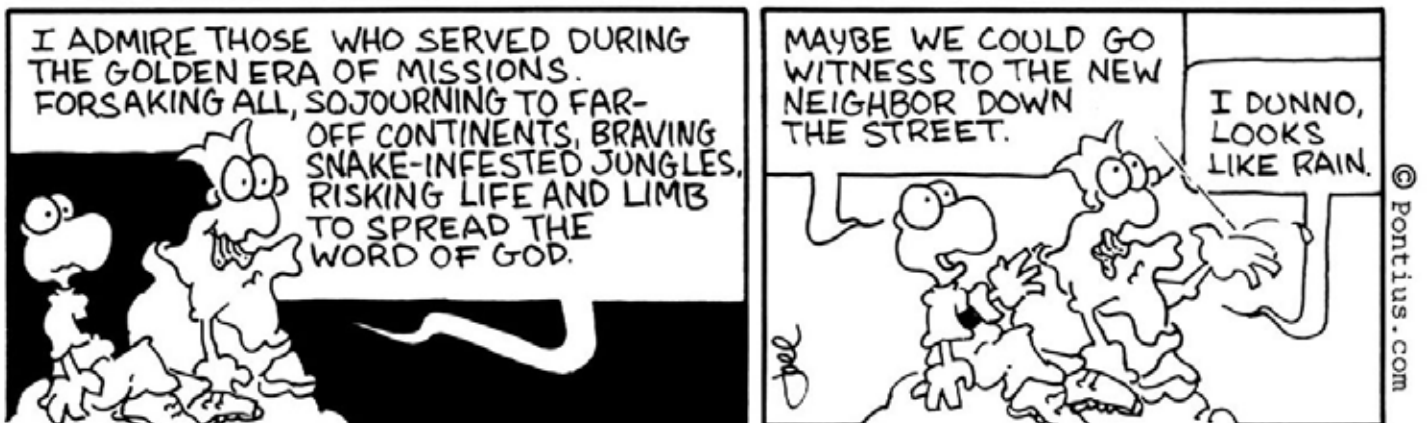
I believe there are different ways of living—new habits—that my family and others like us can put into action to reduce our footprint on the Earth and nurture our health and relationships. Our challenge is to uncover suggestions that don't require more of our already limited time and stamina.

Perhaps we also need to be open to new ways of seeing things. I agree that we have much to learn from people who have been making do with less due to financial limitations. I hope we will also hear from those who have insights to share about making do with less while living with illness or disability.

Weaver-Zercher's description of moving from ambivalence to grace during the editing of *Living More With Less* was encouraging. I will take the time to read this book. I may even buy a copy.

LISE WERNER, COCHRANE, ALTA.

## Pontius' Puddle



## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Bueckert**—Ryley James (b. Oct. 24, 2010), to Dustin and Amanda Bueckert, Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

**Harder**—Jay Anthony and Reese Marie (b. Oct. 29, 2010), to Les and Crystal Harder, Rosenfeld Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Hohl**—Brayden Douglas (Oct. 21, 2010), to Sherry and Doug Hohl, East Zorra Mennonite, Tavistock, Ont.

**Mauer**—Anna Louise (b. Oct. 29, 2010), to Robert and Rosemarie Mauer, Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

### Baptisms

**Lauren Bender, Jared Hoch, Aaron Jantzi**—Maple View Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont., Oct. 31, 2010.

**Alan Ng**—Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal, Que., Sept. 28, 2010.

**Roger Rempel**—Rosthern Mennonite, Sask., Nov. 14, 2010.

### Marriages

**Fox/Witzel**—Justin Fox and Laura Witzel, at Cassel Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 23, 2010.

**King/Zehr**—April King and Shawn Zehr, Poole Mennonite, Ont., Oct. 2, 2010.

**Shantz/Strub**—Ryan Shantz and Jaimie Strub, Mannheim Mennonite, Petersburg, Ont., Aug. 27, 2010.

**Stalford/Swartzentruber**—Catherine Stalford and Tom Swartzentruber, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont., Nov. 6, 2010.

### Deaths

**Andres**—Sue, 60 (b. Jan. 14, 1950; d. Oct. 21, 2010), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

**Bergman**—Elmer, 79 (b. March 23, 1931; d. Oct. 13, 2010), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

**Dyck**—Frank, 84 (b. March 20, 1926; d. Oct. 18, 2010), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

**Dyck**—Susan, 88 (b. July 16, 1922; d. Aug. 16, 2010), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont.

**Fehdrau**—Sadie (Sarah), 87 (b. Sept. 8, 1923; d. Oct. 21, 2010), Hague Mennonite, Sask.

**Fransen**—Mary Dyck, 86 (b. Feb. 28, 1924; d. Oct. 18, 2010), Vineland United Mennonite, Ont., in Reedley, Calif.

**Friesen**—Elmer, 80 (b. Sept. 12, 1930; d. Nov. 10, 2010), Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.

**Friesen**—Hedie, 73 (b. March 17, 1937; d. Aug. 27, 2010), First Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

**Froese**—Louise, 83 (b. Oct. 15, 1926; d. Oct. 3, 2010), Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.

**Gerbrandt**—Leonard, 69 (b. Feb. 21, 1941; d. Oct. 23, 2010), Ottawa Mennonite, Ont.

**Gingerich**—Reta, 98 (b. Aug. 13, 1912; d. Oct. 25, 2010), Wilmot Mennonite, Ont.

**Klassen**—Abe, 85 (b. Sept. 20, 1925; d. Oct. 10, 2010), Mount Royal Mennonite, Saskatoon, Sask.

**Letkemann**—Abe, 87 (b. Sept. 13, 1923; d. Nov. 9, 2010), Bethany Mennonite, Virgil, Ont.

**Lohrenz**—Anna (nee Wiebe), 98 (b. March 9, 1912; d. Oct. 9, 2010), Sargent Avenue Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Mierau**—Esther, 91 (b. May 19, 1919; d. Oct. 22, 2010), Zoar Mennonite, Langham, Sask.

**Neufeld**—Alexandra (nee Janzen), 99 (b. March 15, 1911; d. Oct. 31, 2010), Ottawa Mennonite, Ont.

**Neufeld**—Ed, 74 (b. March 18, 1936; d. Sept. 24, 2010), Foothills Mennonite, Calgary, Alta.

**Petkau**—Margaret (nee Zacharias), 77 (b. April 22, 1933; d. Nov. 11, 2010), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

**Reimer**—Mary, 90 (b. Sept. 20, 1920; d. Sept. 26, 2010), Home Street Mennonite, Winnipeg, Man.

**Schroeder**—Anna Marie (nee Radke), 89 (b. Feb. 15, 1921; d. Oct. 24, 2010), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Shantz**—Ellis, 78 (b. March 2, 1932; d. Oct. 26, 2010), Cassel Mennonite, Ont.

**Steckley**—Ken, 74 (b. Sept. 10, 1935; d. Aug. 30, 2010), Mapleview Mennonite, Wellesley, Ont.

**Steinman**—Mahlon, 86 (d. Oct. 17, 2010), Tavistock Mennonite, Ont.

**Thiessen**—Agatha, 67 (b. Nov. 11, 1942; d. Oct. 23, 2010), Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Verreault**—Doris (nee Zacharias) (Hildebrandt), 60 (b. July 17, 1950; d. Oct. 19, 2010), Rosthern Mennonite, Sask.

**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 include birth date and last name at birth if available.**



## THIS PREACHER HAS 22 MINUTES

## The last three minutes

BY ALLAN RUDY-FROESE

**H**ow do you know when the sermon is about to be over? Let's say the preacher has been preaching for some time and the child sitting next to you in church whispers, "How much longer?" Here are some handy tips to take into consideration for your response.

Simply watching the time is the most obvious way to determine when the sermon will end. Preachers who have been preaching for a few years or more will usually be consistent when it comes to how long their sermon will be. If 22 minutes is the norm, and the preacher is at the 19-minute mark, you can simply respond, "Three more minutes."

In the middle of the 20th century, preachers were not so much bound to the duration of a sermon as to the precise time when it should end. If you were listening to J. B. Martin of Erb Street Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ont., in the 1950s, you could bet that the sermon would end at noon. It did not matter where he was in his argument, commentary or pleas for Christian obedience—J. B. would abruptly end his sermon at high noon by looking to one of the elders to close with prayer.

A sermon style of the early to mid-20th century had an obvious beginning, middle and end. A sermon on God's love would simply move from Genesis through to Revelation with that topic at the fore. Not every book of the Bible could be included, but in 40 or so minutes the congregation would hear an orderly biblical account of God's love. So when the preacher is closing in on Revelation, you know the sermon is coming down.

If the sermon is broken up into points

or sections, then it is often easy to tell when the sermon will wrap up. Presumably, when the preacher gets to the third point of a three-point sermon, you can start reaching for your hymnal. The problem here, though, is that the points can be uneven. The preacher may get through the first two quickly and then belabour the third.

It can work the other way as well. A preacher I heard not long ago announced at the very beginning of his sermon that he had nine points. The first three took nearly 15 minutes. If you do the math—and people in the pews were doing the math—the preacher had listeners calculating a 45-minute sermon. Thankfully, when the preacher got to the fifth point he looked at the clock and forced a sloppy rush though to the end.

The more typical sermon I hear today has a kind of plot, story or argument trajectory to it, which often provides a natural clarity to the end of the sermon. A plot sermon begins with a question or complication from the text or from life, moves through some possible ways of looking at the question, and then concludes with a gospel answer or solution. In this case, when there is resolution to the complication, the sermon is drawing to a close.

Where one biblical story makes up the bulk of the sermon, the ending of

the story ought to mean the end of the sermon. When the preacher, dressed in a multicoloured bathrobe, is telling the

part of the story where he surprised his brothers at the banquet table, you know the sermon is coming to an end. Or is it?

One of the issues with sermon endings is that too often the preacher simply goes on longer than he needs to. Sometimes the preacher thinks that the three points that were clearly made need to be reiterated or "applied" to a number of real-life situations as though listeners are not capable of

making applications on their own. The preacher dressed up like Joseph gets out of character at the end of his monologue and gives the "moral of the story," as though the congregation did not "get" it. The preacher who has preached the good news in 10 minutes feels he needs to add some "filler" as though there is some sacred duration to shoot for.

Students in preaching classes that I have been involved with often preach eight- to 12-minute sermons that have more gospel depth, breadth and punch than many drawn-out 22-minute sermons.

When the gospel has been preached and heard, the preacher should simply sit down. An African-American proverb for preachers says it best: "Go slow / rise high / strike fire / sit down." ❧

*Allan Rudy-Froese is completing his dissertation, "Preaching as promise: Bridging Lutheran grace and Mennonite ethics in the preached sermon," at the Toronto School of Theology. This is his last "22 Minute" article. He can be reached at [allanrf@rogers.com](mailto:allanrf@rogers.com).*



See the new "Sermons" feature, a category under 'Browse' on our newly re-designed website at [canadianmennonite.org](http://canadianmennonite.org).

## VIEWPOINT

# How green was Calgary 2010?

BY JOANNE MOYER

In 2007, Mennonite Church Canada delegates passed a resolution to work for more sustainable gatherings. Mennonite Creation Care Network has worked with conference planners in subsequent years to provide guidelines for greening and to assess events. We present here some results and reflections from the 2010 MC Canada assembly at Ambrose College in Calgary, Alta.

## Successes

- Ambrose College has dual-flush toilets and uses 100-percent recycled toilet paper.
- Lodging was available on campus and shuttles were provided for people staying in hotels. Bicycle racks were also available, although their use was negligible.
- Bulk water was provided, rather than bottled water, and participants were encouraged to bring refillable mugs, which many people did.
- Electronic registration and conference reporting was available. Printed paper was kept to a minimum and printed double-sided on recycled paper.
- A well-attended creation-care-themed seminar was presented, focusing on Alberta's tar sands.

## Major challenges

- Food is always one of the greatest challenges at events such as these, because we must rely on the ability of local facilities to meet our requests.

Vegetarian options were available upon request, but non-meat protein options were not included in general meals. Seasonal, local and organic food was not offered.

- Reusable china would have cost 40 percent more than disposable dishes, but since Ambrose College promised that

the disposable dishes and cutlery would be compostable, the planners chose the cheaper option.

Upon arrival, we discovered that most of the dishes were not compostable, and even for those that were, no composting facilities were available. Elsie Rempel of MC Canada investigated and was informed by the cook that the supplier ran out of compostable dishes and that composting facilities are lacking in Calgary.

- Transportation to the annual conference locations is also an ongoing challenge.

To facilitate reflection on this issue, Mennonite Creation Care Network conducted an informal survey, asking Calgary conference participants to indicate their mode of transportation and the distance they travelled by placing coloured stickers on a map of Canada. About two-thirds of conference attendees from beyond Calgary participated in the survey: 72 percent travelled by car, with 43 percent of these in cars containing three or more people; 26 percent travelled by air; only four people travelled by bus or train.

Approximate calculations indicate that participants emitted 136,300 kilograms of carbon dioxide—about 375 kg per person—to travel to Calgary for this gathering.

- Rough cost estimates for this travel by Dave Hockman-Wert, a member of the Mennonite Creation Care Network and a systems analyst, came to \$11,700 in fuel consumption for the 157 registrants who travelled by car, \$25,720 for airfares for the 57 who flew to Calgary, and \$1,019 for the four who travelled by bus. The average travel distance was 3,460 kilometres, while the average distance for those who came by car was 858 km.

## Moving forward

- In the tar sands seminar, Don Peters of Mennonite Central Committee Canada noted that large-scale energy developments of this nature are ultimately driven by society's demand for fuel.

As disciples of Christ, therefore, it is our responsibility to be conscious of the energy we use, and to work to reduce it. Mennonite Creation Care Network has attempted to assist in doing this, although the delegates in Calgary affirmed the value of having yearly gatherings.

- Delegates also reconfirmed their commitment to greening their assemblies, resolving to “commit ourselves to continued efforts that care for the earth which sustains us, in faithfulness to our calling as stewards of God's good earth.”

We therefore encourage reflection on ways we can reduce our footprint, noting food and travel as areas of greatest concern. The conference planners are already anticipating ways to improve food services and other aspects of the gathering in Waterloo, Ont., next year, but travel choices rest with individuals.

- The map survey provided a striking visual of the geographic concentrations—Vancouver/Fraser Valley, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and southern Ontario—from which participants travel to reach conference locations.

Efforts are already being made by some to carpool. When we gather in Waterloo, can we increase the number of carpools? Will some people come by bicycle? Could we arrange to travel collectively by train?

How can you contribute to greening our future assemblies? %



*Joanne Moyer is one of two Canadian members of the binational Mennonite Creation Care Network.*



Canadians and newcomers alike gathered at Speaker's Corner in Kitchener, Ont., on Nov. 4 to show their support for those seeking refugee status in Canada and to voice their concerns about the impact of proposed anti-human-smuggling legislation, Bill C-49, that has severe consequences for the human rights of refugee claimants in Canada. The event concluded with a candle-lit moment of silent prayer for all those in Canada and around the world seeking refuge from fear and persecution.

#### VIEWPOINT

# Going to bat for Behrukh

STORY AND PHOTO BY LEAH REESOR

Every day at the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support in Kitchener, Ont., we work with people like Behrukh, a young woman who was forced to flee to escape the growing influence of the Taliban in Pakistan.

When the Taliban threatened to kidnap her children unless she and her husband paid them large sums of money, Behrukh and her family sold everything they had to hire a smuggler to get them out of the country. Only Behrukh and her eldest daughter arrived in Canada; her husband and other children were detained in Pakistan.

With support from numerous Mennonite churches in Waterloo Region, the coalition is walking with Behrukh and her daughter as they try to navigate the complicated process of claiming refugee status here in Canada. We've tried to become her Canadian family and offer whatever support and community connections she needs.

Yet to truly serve Behrukh and her

daughter, we are called to go beyond the level of direct individual service. Without addressing the way that Canadian law treats refugees, our ability to truly serve vulnerable individuals seeking protection in Canada is limited.

The prophet Isaiah calls us to care for the needy among us and emphasizes that an important part of that caring is speaking up to those in power on behalf of those who are powerless. I like the way Eugene Peterson's *The Message* paraphrases Isaiah 1:17: "Work for justice. Help the down-and-out. Stand up for the homeless. Go to bat for the defenceless."

As Christians, how do we "go to bat" for Behrukh and others like her that come to Canada seeking refuge from persecution?

Under the proposed anti-human-smuggling legislation of the newly tabled Bill C-49, both Behrukh and her young daughter would face detention upon arrival in Canada with no review for a year. Once granted refugee status in Canada, Behrukh would have to wait a minimum

of five years before applying for permanent residency. That means it would likely be seven years before her husband and children in Pakistan would be able to join her and her daughter in Canada. Without permanent resident status, Behrukh would not even be able to travel to a safe third country to visit her family while waiting for reunification in Canada.

It's clear that to be able to help Behrukh and others like her in a meaningful way, we need to go beyond our comfort zone of providing direct service and address the bigger, more complex piece of speaking to those in power about how public policy impacts the lives of individuals. To go to bat for Behrukh, and to live out Isaiah's call to service as advocacy, we have to stand up, speak out and tell our government officials to respect the God-given human rights and dignity of all. ☸

*Leah Reesor is an intern at the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support. She attends Erb Street Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ont.*



## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

## CREATION CARE ACCOUNT

# Tree-planting project takes root

STORY AND PHOTO BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent  
CARMAN, MAN.

On Nov. 9, a wagonload of 37 trees and an eager group of Carman Mennonite Church members armed with spades, including a massive tree spade powered by a tractor, showed up in the church parking lot. A plan to enhance the parking lot, provide shelter from the winds and care for the environment had been developed years ago and now was about to take root.

The congregation chose maple and basswood trees to frame the church property on three sides.

“We chose to do this not only for protection and beauty, but also as a way of looking after this small piece of the world where we come to nurture our faith,” said pastor Bob Pauls. “It’s a small expression and effort to extend care to God’s creation as well.”

Located on the north end of Main Street in Carman, the church feels the project will also benefit the community by offering a more attractive view to visitors and passers-by.

The fiery colours of the Amur maple trees in fall will be spectacular,” said Eugene Peters, one of the organizers, as he heaved a shovelful of dirt.

Manitoba Hydro’s Forest Enhancement Program provided about half of the funding for the project. The program, which is open to non-profit, non-governmental organizations, provides funding for tree-planting activities, forest education and innovative forest projects throughout the province.

Program chair Shane Mailey said that Carman Mennonite’s application satisfied all the criteria to be eligible. “The application had very positive volunteer contributions, very sound layout and tree selection plan, along with an excellent maintenance plan,” he said.

Thirty-seven Manitoba churches have completed projects across the province since the program began in 1995.

“This program is a practical, made-in-



*Jake Rempel and Brian Wiebe prepare a hole to plant one of 37 trees that will border the Carman Mennonite Church property on three sides. About half of the funding came from Manitoba Hydro’s Forest Enhancement Program.*

Manitoba approach to recognize the loss of forest cover that results from construction of Manitoba Hydro’s transmission lines, generating stations, substations and gas

operations,” said Mailey. “The response to the program has been excellent. . . . To date, approximately 105,000 trees have been planted and counting.” ❧

## /// Briefly noted

### Indonesian Mennonites reach out to victims of back-to-back disasters

YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA—Indonesian Mennonites have been struggling to keep up with relief efforts following at least three natural disasters that have come in quick succession over six weeks this fall. Most recently, on Oct. 26, the Mount Merapi volcano erupted in Magelang, Central Java. Because of the relatively close proximity of Mennonite churches, Mennonite Diakonia Service—the peacebuilding and service arm of the Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia Mennonite Church—was able within days to open a shelter in Sewukan, a village on the slope of the mountain. Churches, especially those in Central Java and Yogyakarta, are sending volunteers and logistical help to run the shelter. They are providing food, basic sanitation services, trauma counselling, children’s activities and medical care to some 1,300 people who were evacuated from their homes. The Merapi volcano eruption eclipsed flash floods that devastated Wasior, an area on Indonesia’s easternmost large island, Papua, in early October, and the Oct. 25 tsunami that hit the Indonesian Mentawai Islands. Mennonite Central Committee is providing \$145,000 to help with the relief efforts. —Mennonite World Conference

# MCC food account at lowest level in years

By GLADYS TERICHOW  
Mennonite Central Committee

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) food account at the Canadian Foodgrains Bank is at its lowest level in years, drained by the large number of food projects MCC has supported over the past year.

The low equity, however, is good news in the sense that it means that thousands of people are benefiting from Canadians' contributions to MCC's account at the foodgrains bank, explains Willie Reimer, director of MCC's food, disaster and material resource programs. "Our account . . . is well supported. People are unbelievably generous," he says.

However, Reimer is keeping an anxious eye on surging global food prices. Corn prices jumped 8 percent in one day in early October, hitting a two-year peak and leading other food commodity prices higher.

As in 2008, rocketing prices are the result of rising demand and localized food shortages caused by droughts and floods. Higher food prices push more people in low-income countries into poverty and, at the same time, reduce the food-buying power of international aid organizations.

"When the prices of food and food commodities go up, our money does not go as far," explains Reimer. "We would like to replenish our account so that we have more funds for unexpected emergencies."

At the beginning of 2010, MCC had \$1.5 million in equity at the foodgrains bank, but that amount dropped to a low of approximately \$140,000 in early October.

Although the number of urban donors to the account is growing, the farming community remains the financial backbone.

"The generosity of farming communities is amazing," says Harold Penner, a

Manitoba farmer and a regional coordinator for the foodgrains bank. "Even if we have tough times, we know that the people we are helping have a tougher time than we have."

Volunteers in 200 Canadian communities joined together this fall to harvest community-growing projects planted in the spring, which they sell and then donate the proceeds to a member account at the foodgrains bank. Such donations help MCC and other member agencies distribute food in times of emergency and help

people in developing countries improve their ability to grow or produce food.

In 2009-10, total donations to foodgrains-bank-supported projects reached \$10.5 million, with 40 percent coming from grain donations. These funds, along with matching funds from the federal government's Canadian International Development Agency, made it possible for the foodgrains bank and its 15 member agencies to support 96 projects that touched the lives of more than two million people in 32 countries this past year. ☞

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# Challenged to 'put food in the budget'

*Waterloo Region poverty advocates, social agency workers and writers try to eat for \$20 a week*

**STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY**  
Eastern Canada Correspondent  
WATERLOO, ONT.

Greg deGroot-Maggetti had to change his plans for Saturday night. The \$20 he had allotted for himself for food for the week of Sept. 24 to Oct. 1 was quickly depleting. He didn't have enough money to go to any restaurant, and did not want to depend on the largesse of his friends, although they offered.

DeGroot-Maggetti, poverty advocate

for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario, was one of 10 writers, social advocates and frontline workers who attempted to live for a week on the amount allotted by the Ontario government for adults on social assistance. Resourceful, living and working in downtown Kitchener, he used St. John's Kitchen, which serves meals for free, raided his yard for dandelion greens and family garden plot for vegetables to supplement his diet, and, as he put it, looked forward to snacks at work supplied by co-workers or leftovers from events.

Many of those on social assistance cannot get to places like St. John's Kitchen, as the amount they receive for rent does not allow them to live in the downtown core and they can't afford transportation. After paying rent from their \$500 monthly allowance, many have no money left for food, and the places



*Greg deGroot-Maggetti, poverty advocate for MCC Ontario, sits in a downtown Kitchener café with his morning's bread shopping totalling more than he was allowed for an entire week for all of his food purchases while taking the Put Food in the Budget Challenge at the end of September.*

where they live aren't fancy. And food bank hampers, handed out once a month, often include mostly canned goods, off the list for diabetics or those with food allergies.

DeGroot-Maggetti and many of the others who took part in the challenge found that as hunger became normal from day to day it became more difficult to think about anything other than food, and their energy levels dropped. His response to someone who asked how he was doing late in the week was, "I'm having a crappy day," and he knew it was because of the hunger.

As Sheryl Loeffler, director of philanthropy for YWCA Kitchener-Waterloo, put it, "You just might be able to squeak by on \$20 a week if you're strong of mind: planning my food purchases took hours and hours this week; and strong of body: shopping took me five only-occasionally painful hours on foot this week; if you've got an extended social support network; if there are no surprises: sickness, an accident; and if you never need anything else."

Advocates across Ontario are calling for an immediate \$100 monthly increase in food allowances, telling politicians and others to "do the math," and inviting others to contact their provincial politicians. DeGroot-Maggetti notes that social services were cut to balance government budgets during the 1990s and many have not been raised since. ▄

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## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

# Lao church dedicates new worship space

STORY AND PHOTO BY ALLAN REESOR-MCDOWELL

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

TORONTO, ONT.

**W**hy would several hundred people enter a storefront on Finch Avenue West in northwest Toronto late in the afternoon of Sept. 26? Not to get a haircut; that's next door. No, these people were gathered to celebrate.

Located in a mall alongside offices and amidst an assortment of commercial activity, Lao Canadian Evangelical Mennonite Church—home to more than a dozen families—hosted a dedication and grand opening ceremony of its new 185-square-metre worship and community facility.

“Many miracles have happened in this tiny congregation,” said Chinda Kommala, one of the pastors. “We trust totally in God and in our brothers and sisters in the Mennonite family.”

Established as a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada congregation in September 2004, the Lao church began in a living room. The meeting place was later moved to a warehouse, but the people soon realized that space wouldn't do and expanded their vision. The Lao congregation sees the purchase and use of this space as part of its calling, as disciples sent into the world.

The Lao church has “opened her doors to serve the Lord in the community,” said Kommala.

Marvin Boettger travelled halfway across the country to bring greetings and a blessing from Salem Mennonite Church, near Tofield, Alta. Thirty years ago, Salem helped sponsor refugees from Laos who are now leaders in the church. Other church partners from across Ontario who have shared and supported the vision participated in the celebration as well.

“As followers of Jesus you are a sent people,” said MC Eastern Canada mission minister Brian Bauman, sharing a message of encouragement to the gathered body on

behalf of the area church. “You will gather here, but the ministry and mission of this church is out there.”

Playing on the words of Jesus to his disciples in John 17:18, Bauman encouraged the church, “As God the Father sent Jesus into the world, Jesus sends the disciples of [Lao Canadian Evangelical Mennonite] into the world.”

It took zoning changes, public hearings and a lot of donated money over a two-year period to convert the former repair shop into a place where immigrant Laotian families and Caucasians of German/Russian descent now mingle, according to Dale R. Bauman, vice-president of MAX Canada who is the new congregation's board chair and preacher on the first Sunday of each month.

Bauman told *Canadian Mennonite* that the church received a grant of \$150,000 and an interest-free \$50,000 loan for five years



*Lao Canadian Evangelical Mennonite Church youths welcomed guests to a fellowship meal following a grand opening celebration for the congregation's new worship space at a mall in northwest Toronto.*

from MC Eastern Canada, while Join Hands (formerly Mennonite Men—now joined with Mennonite Women) gave another \$40,000. All this, with a \$135,000 mortgage from Mennonite Foundation Canada, “helped to bring it all together,” he said. ❧

*With files from Dick Benner, editor/publisher of Canadian Mennonite.*

## /// Briefly noted

### Menno Simons Christian School fundraiser a ‘sweet success’

CALGARY, ALTA.—Menno Simons Christian School hosted its annual Sweet Interlude on Oct. 16, raising nearly \$18,000 for a new playground. The donated cakes generated plenty of bidding, and many were sold for more than \$1,000 each. Besides the auction and dessert buffet, guests enjoyed an evening of musical entertainment from Kim Thiessen and Darryl Neustaedter Barg, who shared stories from their recent trip to Kenya, where they witnessed first-hand the terrible impact HIV/AIDS has had on the local population. The school's senior choir joined the duo on stage for four songs, including the title track from the pair's latest CD, *Take Your Place*, a compilation of folk and traditional songs. Proceeds from the sale of the CD went directly towards Mennonite Central Committee's Generations Program, which provides support for orphans and vulnerable children, AIDS testing kits and medical supplies, prevention education, and home-based care. Menno Simons Christian School is operated through a partnership of Palliser Regional Schools and the Mennonite Educational Society of Calgary, with classes from Kindergarten through Grade 9; it has been in operation since 1983.

—Menno Simons Christian School

# Practising countercultural spirituality

*Modern Mennonites have much to learn from the desert fathers and mothers, as well as their Anabaptist forebears*

BY RACHEL BERGEN  
National Correspondent  
WINNIPEG, MAN.

It's noon in Death Valley, Calif.; the sun has reached its peak and the temperature is about 57 degrees Celsius in the shade. In a few hours, it will be freezing cold. There is no water and no place to escape the wild and dangerous climate.

This is the place that Christians should

seek out in order to reach the spiritual goal of apathy, said Belden Lane during the second of three lectures he presented on Oct. 19 and 20 at Canadian Mennonite University's J.J. Thiessen Lecture series entitled "From desert Christians to mountain refugees: Fierce landscapes and

*'The desert doesn't care if you have a Ph.D. after your name, a Reverend before your name, or any other distinction that makes you different than anyone else.'*  
(Belden Lane)

countercultural spirituality."

According to Lane, a professor of theology at Saint Louis (Mo.) University, in the fourth and fifth centuries Christians went into the desert beyond the Nile, reacting to Constantine and the state church's support of prosperity theology, the gospel of success and militarism. It was here that they learned to practise *apatheia* (spiritual apathy).

"*Apatheia* was a fierce indifference to unimportant things," Lane said, but this doesn't mean being spiritually lazy or sloth-like about important things. The early Christians who practised this spiritual discipline learned to affirm their true self in Christ.

And so, these "desert fathers and mothers" became tax drifters who refused to fund the military. They lived in small desert communities, spending time in prayer, reflecting on their cares and loves in the world. It was here, in this place of death, that the desert Christians died to their old self. According to Lane, this is the voice that says, "Don't make a fool of yourself and care about what others think about you."

This "other self" is still relevant many centuries later, Lane said; therefore, Christians today must seek out these dangerous spiritual landscapes to die to this old self. "The desert doesn't care if you have a Ph.D. after your name, a Reverend before your name, or any other distinction that makes you different than anyone else," he said. "It is here that we realize that we aren't the centre of the universe." However, those who learn this then learn "they are truly loved" by the Creator of the world.

In response to a question about what the most urgent calling of Christians today is, Lane explained that there are many religious lies out there. "We must strive for something authentic, to have a real life of Christ being lived that holds ourselves accountable." Christians must "aim *apatheia* at acedia [a sense of despair leading a person to give up] to achieve *agape* love" in the silence of the desert, he answered.

Lane also drew examples of *apatheia* from Swiss Anabaptists in the 16th century who questioned the Magisterial Reformation of Luther and Calvin and were forced to hide in barns and flee to caves in the Jura Mountains on the border of France and Switzerland. ▮



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## COVER STORY

# Pretty in pink

Theme of 2010 MC B.C. women's retreat is 'breast cancer awareness'

STORY AND PHOTO BY WALTRUDE GORTZEN

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

HOPE, B.C.

Camp Squeah was decked out in pink like never before, for the British Columbia Mennonite women's retreat held last month. This year's focus on breast cancer brought out women ranging in age from 16 to 73.

Feather Janz of Abbotsford, a double breast cancer survivor at age 38, was the keynote speaker. Janz was diagnosed with breast cancer and had her first mastectomy at age 23, and underwent another mastectomy following a second bout with cancer in 2009. Janz shared her personal experience with breast cancer in one session, and focused another on the medical aspects of the disease. During the Oct. 17 worship service, she shared her faith journey through her cancer experience.

Lisa Adrienne of Yarrow provided special music, and shared her own story of losing her mother to breast cancer.

The women prepared for the Pink Dress-up Dinner on Oct. 16 by having a pink manicure the evening before (see front cover). Also helping get the women in the mood for their photographs, the Superior Propane "breast cancer" delivery truck—painted pink in support of breast cancer awareness—paid a visit to camp.

Even the food had special pink touches: cookies and cupcakes with pink icing, and pink whipping cream for the fresh fruit for the heart-shaped waffle breakfast.

As a service project in keeping with the weekend's theme, participants were asked to bring bras that were then donated to the Fraser Valley Pregnancy Centre. Staff at the centre loved the gesture, saying that they very rarely, if ever, get bras donated to them, and how happy their clients would be.

Two-thirds of this year's 94 participants either attended the annual retreat for the first time or were returning after an absence of a year or two, which pleased the

planning committee.

"We realized that this year we had reached a whole new group of women, not just younger women but women who had never before attended a ladies retreat," said a committee member. "It was what we had hoped for when we started to plan."

Participants were effusive in their comments at the final evaluation.

"Over the years I've stayed away from retreats, as they were too 'churchy,'" wrote one woman. "This was a perfect blend of Christ and the real world. I just wish I could have brought along five or six more friends!"

"Because of the topic that was discussed there was a sense of shared sisterhood,"



Breast cancer survivors attending this year's MC B.C. women's retreat at Camp Squeah include, from left to right: Eva Hofenk, Veronica Thiessen and keynote speaker Feather Janz.

wrote another. "This was the blessing that came from introducing such a topic that we can all relate to. It has affected us all, and, as Christian sisters, we can be there to support each other." ❧

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## /// Staff change

### Ken Warkentin new MC Manitoba executive director

Ken Warkentin is new executive director of Mennonite Church Manitoba. Warkentin brings with him a strong vision for MC Manitoba and looks forward to working with congregations in building the area church. He will begin his position on Jan. 1, 2011. Warkentin grew up in Saskatchewan, where he also began his ministry at First Mennonite, Saskatoon, as a pastor of youth and music from 1981-86. In 1986, he came to Manitoba, where he worked at Elim Bible Institute, founded by the Bergthaler and Blumenortler Mennonite churches, and then as youth and music pastor from 1988-96 at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church. From 1996 to 2006, he served in various pastoral roles at Church of the Way, an independent non-denominational evangelical congregation. Since 2006, he has pastored Niverville Community Fellowship, where he was ordained on Nov. 7. Warkentin is a graduate of Canadian Mennonite Bible College (now Canadian Mennonite University), and is completing a master of divinity degree through the Winnipeg Theological Consortium Program of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. MC Manitoba has been without an executive director since the retirement of Edgar Rempel in June.

—Mennonite Church Manitoba



Warkentin

## /// Briefly noted

### MSCU moves up Top 50 employers list

For the second straight year, Mennonite Savings and Credit Union (MSCU), headquartered in Kitchener, Ont., has made the list of the Top 50 Best Small and Medium Employers in Canada, moving up to 19th place from its debut at No. 47 in 2009. The latest list was published in the Nov. 8 issue of *Maclean's* magazine. "MSCU's significantly improved ranking speaks volumes about our staff's growing commitment to serve our members well and to live out our core values: integrity, compassion and responsible stewardship," says chief executive officer Brent Zоргdrager. The study to determine which organizations make the list requires that they have been in business for at least three years and that they have between 50 and 399 Canadian-based employees.

—MSCU

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GOD AT WORK IN US

# Faith seeking understanding

High school grad honoured for her service to community, publishes her first book of poetry.

BY EVELYN REMPEL PETKAU

Manitoba Correspondent

Senior year in high school is generally busy, but Sarah Ens managed to pack more activities and achievements into Grade 12 than many do in a lifetime, combining academic excellence while pursuing her passions for social justice, writing and volunteerism.

In February, Ens was one of 30 Canadian high school students who received the Loran Award from the Canadian Merit Scholarship Foundation worth \$75,000 over four years of undergraduate study. This award is based on the criteria of “character, leadership and community service both within the school and out in the community,” with an 85 per cent average as the minimum academic



Ens

requirement.

In April, she was awarded the YWCA's Women of Distinction Prairie Award of Promise at a gala banquet in Winnipeg. This awards program honours Manitoba women who have made a unique and exemplary contribution to the development of others in the community.

Behind these awards is a young woman who is surprised, grateful and excited about this recognition. “I remember going to the interviews [for the awards] and thinking that everyone else was so awesome and that there was no way I would get it,” she says. “So sometimes I ask myself, ‘What is it that they saw in me?’”

Ens, who attends Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, graduated from Landmark Collegiate, Man., a half-hour east of Winnipeg, in June. She was president of the student council and the Inter-Scholastic Christian Fellowship Group, and editor of the school yearbook. She played an active role in an anti-bullying program, developing and giving presentations to foster tolerance among her fellow students, and she started an Eco Club in an effort to eliminate the use of Styrofoam and plastic materials at the school. She led junior high band classes, had major roles in school musicals, and scored 100 per cent on the Manitoba Grade 12 English Language Arts Standards Test.

“I think I was lucky growing up in a really small school, in that I was able to be involved in whatever I wanted,” Ens says of her school experience. “I think sometimes it’s easier to take charge when there are only 30 other people in your class. Because of this I was a leader in a lot of aspects of our school.”

In addition to this, she has had several stories and poems published in different magazines and contests. Last December, she self-published a book of her poetry.

While her last year of high school was very difficult and busy, that didn’t stand in the way of volunteering outside of class.

“I’ve gone on two DOOR [Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection] trips with two different youth groups to Denver and Chicago, worked at Camps with Meaning for two summers and participated in various trips to soup kitchens and drop-in centres with friends or youth groups,” she says.

But of all the highlights, there was one that tied it all together. In June, she was baptized at Bethel Mennonite.

“I can’t separate my faith from who I am,” she says. “For awhile I had been sort of

## The Crash

By Sarah Ens

Because it’s like driving cold and restless I put my arms up and out and feel wind pushing me pushing me pushing me like an aching like a crumbling like an

ending

you ask if I’m conducting I am I am but

it’s like a pirate ship a sinking ship a spaceship half gone but people are on the lookout and write about it in their news

I want to tell you about blue dot days about loss and everything happy I have you could teach me how to be less unsure more cautious more in the lines

you could tie rainbows together and smack me over the head with them and while I’m bleeding the covenant of God from my skin like a parade like an awakening I might find some courage

because it’s like dreaming red yellow pink green up in sparks in fireworks and crashes

one crashes into another

I crash into you and we spill

colour



waiting for this moment when everything would make sense and all my questions and doubts would fall away. Eventually, I realized that that wasn't ever going to happen, that I would never understand everything and always would have questions. But suddenly it was important to me to make a public commitment to keep trying to chase after understanding and grow in faith and make God an integral part of my life."

Although Ens knew she would be studying creative writing at the University of British Columbia (UBC) for the next several years, she wanted to have roots somewhere and be able to "branch out from this important choice."

"My faith has a lot to do with my writing,"

she says. "All my confusion, anger, wonder, questions, love, hope, doubts, sadness, joy, gets expressed in my writing. I can't separate who I am from my writing, and I can't separate my faith from who I am. When I'm feeling very bitter with God, that shows up in my stories, and when I'm marvelling at God's goodness, that comes out as a poem."

Far away from home and adjusting to life on a busy campus, Ens says, "I feel pretty distant from the Christian community, especially the Mennonite community." But she is looking forward to finding ways of living out her faith by pursuing her passion for writing and serving in her new community. ❧

#### OBITUARY

## Cassel Mennonite 'bag lady' mourned by community

*Audrey Langfield*

*July 11, 1941 – Oct. 6, 2010*

BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent

Audrey Langfield didn't wait to hear what the government, political parties, the media or trendsetters had to pontificate about; she just went to work and did it! She was one of those people who took Jesus' words seriously and literally about un-cool and un-trendy things like "feeding the hungry," "clothing the poor" and "taking responsibility for the welfare of others."

Every Sunday Langfield would come to church and park her car next to Howard and Ada Gerber's van at Cassel (Ont.) Mennonite Church and transfer at least a hundred sewn fabric bags into their trunk for the Mennonite Central Committee thrift store in New Hamburg. These 5,200 bags or more each year became health kits, school kits or emergency kits. Made from donated material, every one of them was the product of Langfield's own hands and time.

Sandra Swartzentruber remembers that Langfield, working as a parking attendant



PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM WHITEHEAD

*Audrey Langfield chats with Vacation Bible School children at Cassel Mennonite Church.*

for the Stratford (Ont.) Shakespearean Festival, would bring her sewing machine along and sew while the festival patrons

were in the theatre.

Langfield came to Cassel Mennonite more than 40 years ago on the invitation of neighbours, and became an important part of the church community. She taught Sunday school, led crafts every summer at Vacation Bible School, took her turn at leading the women's quilting group, and did terms on Cassel Mennonite's mission and worship boards. There was nothing "theoretical" about her theology; it was totally practical and hands-on! She saw a need and did what she could to help.

On Oct. 6, at age 69, Langfield suffered a sudden heart attack and died with no warning. The whole church community mourned her loss.

When Anna Whitehead heard of her death, she stood there for the longest time with a very long and sad face and then asked her father, "But Dad, how can we have church without Audrey?" ❧

*With files from Jim Whitehead, pastor of Cassel (Ont.) Mennonite Church.*

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## ARTBEAT

# MC Canada approves MPN/Third Way merger

BY KARIN FEHDERAU  
Saskatchewan Correspondent  
SASKATOON, SASK.

What began as a bit of a barn-burner issue settled down into a few comforting embers during the Mennonite Church Canada leadership assembly in Saskatoon earlier this month, when members of the General Board approved the merger of Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN) and Third Way Media.

During a brief meeting, the General Board spoke with MPN executive director Ron Rempel and board chair Phil Bontrager over the phone to gain further clarification of the proposed union.

"Are we satisfied the process has been a healthy one?" MC Canada moderator Andrew Reesor-McDowell then asked the General Board members.

"I support the vision," said MC Eastern Canada rep Aldred Neufeld. "The method of approach to dealing with this is good."

"There's a growing excitement in me," said Rempel, who is retiring next summer. "It seems like a good move from a vision and a financial standpoint."

MPN and Third Way first pitched the idea to MC Canada's Christian Formation Council in October. A number of issues came to the fore, the strongest one reflecting fears of Canadian interests being left

behind because the new business would be located in the U.S. The queries pushed MPN and Third Way to consider issues previously overlooked in their initial presentation to Formation Council, specifically concerns about Canadian staffing, content and culture being adequately represented.

"We want to make sure what we publish serves the needs of both countries," Bontrager told the General Board, in an attempt to sooth any lingering fears.

While the proposal seemed to take Formation Council by surprise when it was first proposed at an Oct. 19 meeting in Ontario (see "Formation Council recommends approval of MPN/Third Way merger," Nov. 15, page 18), an attitude of eager accommodation soon emerged on all sides to facilitate the move.

"Formation Council found out about this a bit late," admitted chair Lisa Carr-Pries, suggesting, though, that MPN had other things on its mind during initial merger considerations, including meeting the needs of its staff.

As both agencies have come together over a number of projects in the past, a merger is now considered a good idea.

According to a statement prepared by

Rempel and Stanley Green, executive director of Mennonite Mission Network, which funds Third Way, the move will strengthen both the print publishing and electronic media sides of the new organization.

The case for a merger is bolstered by similar visions. While MPN works inside the Mennonite community and Third Way looks beyond it, both want to serve the church. And although both have struggled financially in the past, it is believed the merger will cut down costs—by sharing a chief executive officer—and cause less competition for dwindling funds.

As well, the move is being done with future generations in mind. Young people are accessing electronic media with increasing frequency, the General Board was told. To reach such new markets and demographics, MPN will need to be knowledgeable in the electronic media.

Carr-Pries agrees. "We know that the possibility of putting together print media with other media is just the way of the future," she said.

Dave Bergen, executive secretary of Formation Council, spoke positively about the move. "I think, overall, the sentiment about the move, there's a lot of potential here," he said, adding that the issues raised by Formation Council would have been concerns even before the merger, simply because of being partnered with a comparatively large organization like MC U.S.A.

MC Saskatchewan moderator Renata Klassen sees the merger in practical terms. "If we don't want this [merger], we're out [of the publishing business]," she said succinctly. "The market in Canada is too small. We can't afford it." ❧

## Promotional video for *Whatever Happened To Dinner?* created

BY JOHN LONGHURST  
Mennonite Publishing Network

A short promotional video about the new Herald Press book, *Whatever Happened to Dinner?*, can now be found on YouTube, courtesy of Wayne Gehman, a video producer at Third Way Media.

For Ron Rempel, executive director of Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN), the video illustrates the merit of merging MPN and Third Way Media. "It shows

how we can work together to utilize various forms of media," he says, noting that in the past MPN had to contract with external producers to make videos.

"The energy and creativity that projects like this generate gives us great hope for the future," adds Sheri Hartzler, current interim co-director of Third Way Media.

To view the video for *Whatever Happened to Dinner?* visit [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) and do a search for "Whatever Happened to Dinner." ❧

## FOCUS ON MISSION &amp; SERVICE

# Downsizing for service

*Pennsylvania couple hit the road for SOOP*

BY DEVONNA R. ALLISON  
Mennonite Mission Network

A year ago, Dave and Karen Mast traded their 240-square-metre home in Ephrata, Pa., for a 12-metre-long travel trailer.

Dave, 51, and Karen, 48, now travel across the eastern U.S. as volunteers for Service Opportunities for Older People (SOOP), a Mennonite Mission Network (MMN) volunteer opportunity throughout the U.S. and Canada for adults and families.

Having logged more than 5,600 kilometres, the Masts have worked at Woodcrest Retreat Center in Ephrata; the Hermitage in Three Rivers, Mich.; Unique World Gifts in Hickory, N.C.; Lakewood Christian Retreat Center in Brooksville, Fla.; and Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center in Toano, Va. They are currently serving at Camp Friedenswald in Cassopolis, Mich.

What motivated this couple to forego the comfort and structure of their traditional lifestyle for this nomadic existence? Primarily, they see their choice as a calling.

"Through prayer, conversations with spiritual mentors and recognizing a desire of our hearts, we pursued [volunteer] ministry," Karen says.

After reading about the SOOP program online, knew they had found a perfect fit for ministry.

While full-time voluntary service is often seen as something to fill the gap years between high school and college, or college and a career, Del Hershberger, MMN Christian service director, says people are finding ways of weaving service into their lives. "We are excited to see more and more



*Dave and Karen Mast have traded their home in Ephrata, Pa., for a trailer that they take with them on their assignments with Service Opportunities for Older People (SOOP), a Mennonite Mission Network ministry.*

people at various points in their lives who are exploring opportunities for service outside their own communities," he says.

Arloa Bontrager, national director of SOOP and Youth Venture, agrees. "The Masts' decision to pursue service involved some big risks, but they embraced a sense of God's leading and are joyfully pursuing that call," she says.

Although volunteering takes the Masts

to various retreat centres, both stress that their work is no vacation. The couple juggles a complicated schedule of service, relocation and family. Since Dave continues to work as a commercial airline pilot based out of Harrisburg (Pa.) International Airport, Karen drives him to local airports, where he catches flights to and from Harrisburg, while she continues work on the service projects.

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FOCUS ON MISSION & SERVICE

MENNONITE DISASTER SERVICE PHOTO

"I do wish I could spend more time on the projects," Dave says, acknowledging, though, that his work makes their ministry possible. His flight time keeps him away for up to five days at a time. "I try to get a schedule that allows me two to three days off between flight schedules," he explains, since that gives him an opportunity to work on the projects.

Asked what they miss most about their former life, Karen's response is immediate: "The children and grandchildren, definitely."

Prior to their life on the road, the couple acted as primary caregivers for their oldest grandchild, and another grandchild was born since the couple left Ephrata. Despite the difficulties and personal sacrifices they've made to follow this path, they remain confident their choice was the right one. "God put this all together. He's in charge of all the little details that make it work," Dave says. "And when God makes it clear he's leading us in another direction, we'll follow." ❧



Glenn Buck of Mennonite Disaster Service, left, Tony Deweerd of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, and Stephen Joudry of Samaritan's Purse Canada discuss how to coordinate efforts to maximize strengths of the various organizations to help the people of Newfoundland-Labrador recover from the aftermath of Tropical storm Igor. Story begins on next page.

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# Igor meets Menno

*MDS to help in rebuilding in Newfoundland-Labrador*

By **DAVE ROGALSKY**  
Eastern Canada Correspondent

**T**ropical storm Igor battered Newfoundland-Labrador on Sept. 21, dumping 238 millimetres of rain on the community of St. Lawrence by late afternoon and producing peak wind gusts of 163 kilometres per hour at Sagona Island on the province's south coast.

Just over a month later, insurance claims had exceeded \$65 million, but, according to Glenn Buck of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), "most households affected will not be covered by insurance since coverage is most often restricted to water damage caused by sewage back-up or sump back-up."

While residents are sure that the provincial government will come through with the needed funds for rebuilding and repairs, there is some question as to whether this will happen before winter, when work and travel will be very difficult.

Buck, who is to lead an MDS team with his wife Esther, were to begin repairing damage on two homes in Bonavista and Catalina on the northeastern Bonavista Peninsula earlier this month with the help of a team from New Brunswick. A team from Nova Scotia was to replace them in a week, but flooding in Nova Scotia may mean a team from Ontario comes instead.

Both homes had significant flooding. In one case, an elderly couple had their main floor submerged under about 60 centimetres of water. The whole downstairs has been gutted and the MDS team will rebuild, including drywall and flooring.

In the second case, a widower in his mid-70s with a "bad leg" had water come in after wind lifted the shingles. His laundry room and bedroom will receive new insulation, vapour barrier, drywall, fixtures and flooring.

## FOCUS ON MISSION & SERVICE

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## FOCUS ON MISSION &amp; SERVICE

MDS will stay in the community for three to four weeks for now. During that time Buck will get a sense of whether a further project in the spring is called for, when conditions for building are better, and it is clearer who will be eligible for government

assistance.

Buck has great praise for Eric Squires, the priest at the local Anglican church, and his wife Judy, relating the story of an elderly man whose house was damaged, "He never asked me if I go to church, he just helped"

Besides Squires, MDS has been working together with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee and Samaritan's Purse Canada. ❧

## Briefly noted

## MDS responds to Bella Coola flooding

When more than 200 millimetres of rain fell in 24 hours on Bella Coola, B.C., in late September, Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) B.C. responded quickly. An initial assessment team of Gerald Dyck and Erich Penner travelled to Bella Coola to determine how the organization might respond, and eventually two crews of three volunteers each travelled to the remote town to help repair homes damage caused by flooding. Residents on agricultural land and those living close to streams and the river were particularly affected. By the time the MDS crews arrived, says Gerald Dyck, the waters had receded and such work as clearing out damaged drywall and insulation from homes remained. According to MDS B.C. coordinator Leonard Klassen, the volunteer teams worked a total of 36 days in Bella Coola in October, clearing out debris from 13 homes. MDS continues with ongoing discussion as to how to respond to other affected areas on the B.C. coast.

—By Amy Dueckman

## Volunteers help make MCC canning project successful

BY ED NYCE

Mennonite Central Committee

In 1997, when Martin Rahn heard that volunteers in an Ontario town were making plans to host a portable meat canner, his first thought was, "I need to stop this."

Rahn, a food processing specialist for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), was sure it would never work. For him, well-meaning volunteers packing meat with insufficient knowledge of detailed governmental safety laws was bad news.

Today, Rahn is one of several local food industry regulators who give annually of their time before, during and after the April arrival of the meat canner in Rahn's hometown of Leamington, Ont. Employees from canning plants in Leamington and people from churches of a variety of denominations are also key participants.

The 2010-11 season began in October and continues through April. The canning crew is scheduled to stop at 32 sites in two Canadian provinces and 13 U.S. states this year.

At each site, the crew sets up the canner, a 13-metre-long trailer, and oversees

the cooking and packaging of meat to CFIA and United States Department of Agriculture standards. The crew and volunteers fill more than a half-million cans of meat each year. Last season, 519,000 cans of turkey, pork or beef went to 13 countries, including Canada and the U.S.

Members of this year's canning crew are George Wieler Jr. of Wheatley, Ont.; Jeffrey Durksen of Philadelphia, Paraguay; Ryun Lawrence of Goessel, Kan.; and Aaron Ressler of Tiskilwa, Ill. Crew members commit to two-year terms, spending seven months on the road and maintaining the canner and doing other duties for MCC in the off-season.

Some of the work required before the canner's arrival includes addressing Rahn's initial concern: securing all necessary legal safety inspections. When a sceptical Rahn went to Guelph, Ont., in 1997 to see what it was all about, he found that the local canner committee was attending to the required details. "They were talking to all of the right people," he says.

Satisfied with the safety of the operation, Rahn became excited about the mission of the canner. He volunteered for two years at Guelph. By 1999, Rahn and others completed the groundwork for hosting the canner and welcomed the crew to Leamington for the first time.

As in Leamington, volunteers comprise the canner committees in communities the meat canner visits. The committees coordinate the many details and volunteers needed to carry off the actual canning operation successfully. For instance, committee members manage efforts to raise funds to cover the cost of canning. ❧



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Panorama

Fall 2010  
Volume 20 Issue 3

# AMBS window

## Ministry will require unusual imagination

Sara Wenger Shenk, AMBS president

The trees flaming in all their red and golden glory against the brilliant blue immensity of Indiana sky brightened my first days as president of AMBS. The changing of the seasons never fails to stir gratitude in me for the gifts of God's good earth.

The church, called to embody God's good news in the world, also knows its varying seasons. We're in the midst of change that is massive on so many fronts that it will require unusual imagination, nimbleness, and courage to negotiate the turbulence. Epic change, some call it. Depending on your perspective, it looks like the onset of winter or like a spring thaw.

A young adult seminary student sat in my office recently and spoke of his delight with these so-called postmodern times. With a gleam in his eye he even called it an ideal time because of how the Christian imagination has been freed from the straight-jacket of propositional rationalism that characterized

theological inquiry a generation ago.

He went on to enumerate reasons to give thanks, including more comfort with mystery and ambiguity, a freedom to use our biblical narratives to communicate the wonder of belief, a new renaissance of artists tuned in to the Spirit, increased synergy between scientific and spiritual ways of seeing, a surge of resolve to care for the earth, a widespread new intrigue with Jesus, accompanied by a desire to live in communities in which disciples are committed to embodying his radical, nonviolent love.

Hearing this young man talk, I couldn't imagine a place I would rather be right now than this Anabaptist learning community renowned locally and around the world. For generations, AMBS has nurtured many of the most gifted pastors, scholars, evangelists, peacemakers and denominational leaders of the Mennonite Church in Canada, the United States and

internationally, as well as leaders from the broader Christian family.

There are other schools that prepare all manner of public servants. But as Craig Dykstra of the Lilly Endowment reminds us, leadership of the church requires a complexity and integrity of intelligence that is unusual. "One has to be smart in lots of really interesting ways," he said, involving substantive knowledge and practical know-how, along with the remarkable ability to move into varying contexts that are full of joy, misery and conflict, and name what is really going on through the eyes of faith.

AMBS serves the church as a learning community with an Anabaptist vision, educating followers of Jesus Christ to be leaders for God's reconciling mission in the world. "Blessed be the name of God from age to age, for wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons... O God of my ancestors, I give thanks and praise...." (Daniel 2:20-23) ●

# Youth explore leadership and ministry

2010 participants in !Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth reflect on their experiences



**!Explore** gives teenagers opportunities to test their gifts and experience ministry both in their own congregations and in a group experience centered at AMBS. These excerpts from their reflections reveal strong commitment to the church and to leadership in the church.

**Adrian Suryajaya**  
Philadelphia Praise Center, Philadelphia, Pa.

"Throughout the whole !Explore experience, I felt affirmed by God in my future vocation. I have a dream of becoming a physician and serving the people in parts of the world that need medical help. Using personal

prayer time, I have been praying and listening to God's voice regarding the vocation in which He called me into. I believe, as long as we are in God's track and listen to His voice we will be successful in every vocation that He called us into."

**Emma Hooley**  
First Mennonite, Canton, Ohio

"As I reflect on this summer, I am trying to remember that even though !Explore didn't give me much more of a clear sense of direction or what I "want to do with my life," I am seeing that all the experiences I am having are showing God to me in little pieces. All the adventures are preparing me for something I cannot even begin to imagine now. I think I will continue to be surprised when situations or discussions come up and I realize I have changed, and I am still growing and processing everything I have seen, heard, and learned through !Explore."

**Matt Rappolt**  
Breslau Mennonite, Breslau, Ontario

"I think that these !Explore experiences will change the way I live my life in several ways. For one, I have a much better understanding of the way that poverty works. I feel like I connected with the people that we met, and in doing so learned a lot about their situation. This, I believe, will motivate me to help people of that situation

whenever I can. Whether that is volunteering, writing, advocating change, or even just talking with the people themselves, I feel more comfortable and more empowered to make change.

Secondly, I feel more connected to the Church after witnessing some of the passion and dedication of many of the speakers/pastors/leaders. After witnessing many of the things that I did, I feel a new commitment to the Church and look forward to pursuing some of the work which I started through !Explore."

**Kate Friesen**  
Zion Mennonite, Archbold, Ohio

"One of the more important things that I've learned is that leadership in the church is not just something for adults or men or confident people; rather, it is an important activity for everyone in the church. It sounds a bit obvious, but it was a bit of a revelation when it hit me that I, a young, sometimes absent-minded girl could be a leader in the church now—not just after college, or when I'm really mature. In fact, not only can I be a leader in the church, my voice is important in the church, and it's important for me to use the gifts that God has given me!" ●

**Left: Adrian Suryajaya and Lindy Johnson, from Community Mennonite Church in Markham, Ill., joined in the summer study and activities of !Explore, which encourages young people to consider ministry as a life calling.**

## Your gifts at work: Institute of Mennonite Studies

**Left: At the celebration launching *Prophetic Peacemaking*, editor Keith Graber Miller (left), said he and writer J.R. Burkholder (right) "intend for these essays to function not simply as 'period pieces,' but as reflections on faithful living that are yet relevant for future generations of peacemakers. In his modeling and teaching, J. R. inspired scores of students and colleagues toward peacemaking vocations, and I believe his voice still resonates for 21st-century followers of the one Christians call the Prince of Peace. This book needed to be published, for the sake of the church and the world."**

**B**ringing together Mennonite scholars and friends to discuss issues during consultations; facilitating publication of resources in the areas of life, faith, work and witness; and encouraging research and scholarship in Anabaptist history and theology are among the goals of the **Institute of Mennonite Studies**.

Your contributions to the seminary make it possible for IMS to prepare resources for both for congregational



# Committed to the church and leadership in the church

We asked several young adults why they are committed to being leaders in the church. These are their responses.



**Mark Tiessen-Dyck,**  
MDiv student  
Winnipeg, Man.

I am part of the church because I believe that there can be no greater joy than to worship God

in authentic community. The joy of authentic community—constituted by true worship of God—ought to be an integral aspect of the church's witness to a world that does not know God's grace or recognize God's imminent reign. By God's grace the church has the potential to be a tangible sign of creation as God intended it and an alluring foretaste of creation as it will be when God redeems it. This hope is too irresistible for me to reject.



**Joanne Gallardo,**  
MDiv 2010  
Associate campus pastor, Eastern Mennonite University; coordinator of ministries for Peace House, Harrisonburg, Va.

The church has been a place where I have experienced worship, learning, growth, healing, truth-seeking, truth-telling and unconditional community. I have found my "home"

in the Mennonite Church, and that is why I want to spend my life giving back at least part of what the church has given me. As campus pastor, I have the opportunity to work with young adults who have had varied experiences with the church, both good and bad. Regardless of these mixed experiences, I think young adults have a unique ability to see Christ "in" the church, as well as "beyond" our human institutions. While the church is indeed fallen, it is also redeemable, and the same can be said for any of its members. I pray that young adults can work to make the church the "redeemed community" that God intends it to be, both in the pews and in the streets.



**Charles Bontrager,**  
MDiv student  
Goshen, Ind.

My faith gives me the language to express who I am and how I understand the

world. This past year while doing policy work at the National Coalition for the Homeless I found that though I was working for justice it required me to use another language that I was not comfortable with and I did not find orienting. In the church I find a community that shares my language of faith. It is both a place of retreat that orients and energizes me and a group of people working to realize the Reign of God in the world. I want to work

in the church because it offers me the chance to work towards the Reign of God while speaking the language of faith. While the church certainly isn't perfect I'm excited about the possibilities I see for the church to usher in the Reign of God.



**Charissa (Reece) Retzlaff,**  
MDiv 2009  
Youth pastor, Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Sask.

In the church, I experience community. I

experience broken and healed persons coming together to worship God, and to find meaning in their lives. In the gathered body, we come together with our various experiences to discern where God is moving in our midst, and how we can join in this holy dance. I choose to invest my energy in leadership in the church, because this is where I feel called. I enjoy engaging questions and biblical texts, discerning in community, with our various experiences, what it means to be faithful to our calling. In community, we can contextualize this call, be it as a high school student dealing with bullying, a university student dealing with exam stress, an expectant parent facing anxiety, or someone facing end-of-life concerns. Together, we are the body of Christ, and with discernment, we listen for the Divine Voice to speak into each other's lives. ●

life and scholarly study. Recent publications include:

- *Prophetic Peacemaking: Selected writings of J.R. Burkholder*, copublished with Herald Press
- *Take Our Moments and Our Days: An Anabaptist Prayer Book – Vol 1 (Ordinary Time) in a new printing, Vol 2 (Advent through Pentecost) in a new edition*
- *Mission from the Margins: Selected writings from the life and ministry of David A. Shank*, copublished with Herald Press;
- *Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology*, Fall 2010 issue, focusing on Teaching the Bible in the Congregation. *Vision* is copublished with Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Man.

Thank you for helping to make these resources accessible to readers in many Christian traditions who are interested in Mennonite and Anabaptist discipleship and mission.





# AMBS

## alumni news

**Yusak Setyawan** (MATS 2003) completed Ph.D. studies at Flinders University, Australia, and returned to Indonesia where he serves as head of academic affairs, Faculty of Theology, Satya Wacana Christian University.

**David Heusinkveld** (MDiv 1995) is executive director of Pleasant View Home in Kalona, Iowa. Previously he was director of MDC Goldenrod, a faith-based ministry to people with developmental disabilities.

**Reece Retzlaff** (MDiv 2009) is youth pastor of Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Sask.

**Alissa Bender** (MDiv 2007) is pastor of Hamilton Mennonite Church, Hamilton, Ont.

**Craig Neufeld** (MDiv 2008) is pastor for youth and young adults at Rosthern Mennonite Church, Rosthern, Sask.

**Emily Dueck** (MAPS 2009) works with Mennonite Central Committee in Toronto, Ont., leading teams for urban short-term service experiences; and serves half-time as street pastor for homeless people in Toronto through an organization called Lazarus Rising.

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## Encountering Christianity from another perspective

**P**atricia Urueña, second from right, illustrates for a fall class how on the path of life, the Bible illuminates where we are going, while our life experiences illuminate how we interpret and understand the Bible.

Patricia and César Moya (right) are guest instructors for the fall class, Transformation of Christianity in Latin America. They are Colombian Mennonite missionaries serving in Quito, Ecuador, and this year they are mission scholars in residence at AMBS.

Some of the questions the class explores are: How has free-church

Protestantism grown so quickly in Latin America? Why is Latin American Protestantism often Pentecostal in style? How has the role of women contributed to these movements?

Class members bring multicultural perspectives to the discussions, with students coming to AMBS from Korea, Paraguay, Ecuador, Canada and the U.S. Co-teacher for the class is Walter Sawatsky, AMBS professor of church history and mission. ●

## panorama

### Fall 2010

#### Volume 20 Issue 3

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

Editor: Mary E. Klassen

Designer: Nekeisha Alexis-Baker

Photographers: Mark Gingerich, Steve Echols, Peter Ringenberg and Mary E. Klassen

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to *Canadian Mennonite* and *The Mennonite*.



A seminary of  
Mennonite Church USA and  
Mennonite Church Canada

**Monthly webinars** bring AMBS resources directly to those who are asking for them. Upcoming sessions feature Nelson Kraybill, past president of AMBS, discussing his newest book on Revelation; and Andy Brubacher Kaethler, director of !Explore, discussing how to minister to young people in a technological culture. All the webinars are listed online at [www.ambs.edu/webinars](http://www.ambs.edu/webinars)

**A pilgrimage to religious communities in Kentucky** will be led, May 22–29, 2011, by Marlene Kropf, associate professor in spiritual formation and worship. For details, visit [www.ambs.edu/academics/courses/summer/kentucky](http://www.ambs.edu/academics/courses/summer/kentucky)

**Loren L. Johns**, Ph.D., was promoted to Professor of New Testament, effective July 1, 2010. AMBS honored him on November 15, and he presented a lecture, "Do Mark 16:9–20 and John 7:53–8:11 belong in our Bibles? A case study in scholarship serving the church."

**Preaching with imagination and creativity in the post-modern era** is the theme of Pastors Week, January 24–27, featuring Dr. Cleophus LaRue, professor at Princeton Theological Seminary. Workshops and worship details are available online at [www.ambs.edu/pastorsweek](http://www.ambs.edu/pastorsweek) ●

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## Calendar

### British Columbia

**Jan. 24-28, 2011:** Missions Emphasis Week, Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford.

**Jan. 28-30, 2011:** Missions Fest, Vancouver.

**Feb. 4-6, 2011:** Young adult "Impact" retreat, Camp Squeah.

**Feb. 25, 2011:** LEAD conference, Living Hope Christian Fellowship, Surrey.

**Feb. 26, 2011:** MC B.C. annual general meeting, Living Hope Christian Fellowship, Surrey.

**Feb. 11, 12, 18, 19, 2011:** MCC fundraising banquets: (11) Bakerview MB Church, Abbotsford; (12) Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond; (18) South Langley MB Church, Langley; (19) Sardis Community Church.

### Alberta

**Jan. 21-23, 2011:** Junior high snow camp at Camp Valaqua. For more

information, call 403-637-2510.

### Saskatchewan

**Jan. 7-8, 2011:** RJC alumni Tournament of Memories.

**Jan. 21, 2011:** RJC open house for prospective students.

### Manitoba

**Dec. 11, 12:** Faith and Life Choirs concert; (11) Winnipeg, (12) Winkler.

**Dec. 16:** Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary and Middle School Christmas concert, at Immanuel Pentecostal Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m. For more information, call 204-885-1032.

**Dec. 16, 17:** MCI Christmas concerts at Buhler Hall; (16) 7:30 p.m.; (17) 1:30 p.m.

**Jan. 14-16, 2011:** Manitoba Mennonite Youth Organization junior youth retreat at Camp Koinonia.

**Jan. 21-23, 2011:** Manitoba Mennonite Youth Organization junior

youth retreat at Camp Moose Lake.

**Jan. 23, 2011:** "A Thousand Hallelujahs" 25th anniversary concert by the Faith and Life Male Choir, at Centennial Hall, Winnipeg.

**Jan. 25-26, 2011:** Winter Lectures at CMU; keynote speaker Romand Coles, Ph.D., McAllister Chair in Community, Culture and Environment at Northern Arizona University

**Feb. 3-5, 2011:** Refreshing Winds conference, "Here in this place," at CMU.

**Feb. 4, 2011:** CMU choirs and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra perform Seven Gates of Jerusalem, Penderecki's Symphony No. 7, at the Centennial Concert Hall.

**Feb. 10-11, 2011:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate junior high students perform three one-act plays, at Franco-Manitoban Centre, Winnipeg.

### Ontario

**Dec. 4:** University of Waterloo Choir presents "Peace for Our Times," at Knox Presbyterian Church, Waterloo, at 7:30 p.m.

**Dec. 4:** Wayne Gilpin Singers present "Star of Glory," at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church, Kitchener, at 8 p.m. The concert features the group's sixth annual "Jazz Messiah," plus Christmas songs and spirituals.

**Dec. 4:** Make-a-Difference Market at Conrad Grebel University College, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Holiday shop for international and local handicraft gifts; a portion of the proceeds go to MCC to help create school kits for children in developing countries.

**Dec. 4, 5:** Pax Christi Chorale presents Bach's "Christmas Oratorio I, VI & Cantata 140," "Wachet Auf", Carols and Motets with guest conductor Howard Dyck at 7:30 (4) and 3 p.m. (5).

**Dec. 5:** Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir presents its annual Christmas concert, "Let Us Adore Him," at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, at 3 p.m. For more information, or tickets, call 519-669-4296.

**Dec. 7:** Rockway Mennonite Collegiate Christmas concert, Kitchener.

**Dec. 11:** Second annual The Children's Messiah designed for the younger crowd with Pax Christi Chorale and Gallery Choir of the Church of Saint

Mary Magdalene; at Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, Toronto, 4-5 p.m.

**Dec. 11:** Grand Philharmonic Choir presents Handel's Messiah with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, at Centre in the Square, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call toll-free 1-800-265-8977.

**Dec. 12:** Menno Singers present "Three Choirs at Christmas" with the Menno Youth Singers and Inter-Mennonite Children's Choir, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, at 3 p.m.

**Jan. 11, 2011:** Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Grade 9 student/parent night for prospective students, at 7 p.m.

**Jan. 14:** Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, "Shadow Day" for prospective students.

**Jan. 14-16, 2011:** MC Eastern Canada winter youth retreat, at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp. Theme: "From the mountaintop to the streets."

**Jan. 15, 2011:** MC Eastern Canada pastors, chaplains and lay leaders event, at Crosshill Mennonite Church. Speaker: Arnold Neufeldt-Fast. Topic: "Spiritual formation as apprenticeship." Open to the public.

**Jan. 29, Jan. 30, 2011:** Camper registration for Silver Lake Mennonite Camp: (29) Waterloo Region—Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church, Waterloo, 6:30 to 8 p.m.; (30) Niagara Region—Bethany Mennonite Church, Virgil, noon to 2 p.m.

**Feb. 12, 25, 2011:** February Potato Blitz events for House of Friendship. (12) Drop your spuds off at local participating supermarkets, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (25) Community potato lunch at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Kitchener, noon to 1 p.m.

**Feb. 12, 2011:** Grand Philharmonic Choir presents the premiere of John Burge's "Declaration" with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, at Centre in the Square, Kitchener, 7:30 p.m. For more information, or to purchase tickets, call toll-free 1-800-265-8977.

**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).**

## UpComing

### Give a Living Gift this Christmas

We have been told that money can't buy happiness, but it can at Ten Thousand Villages (TTV). Happiness, hope and even empowerment can be bought this holiday season with the



purchase of a Living Gift at any of the 49 TTV stores across Canada. A \$20 Living Gift will stock a women's fishery in India, providing families with much-needed income and nutrition, while a \$300 Living Gift means a whole community benefits from a barnyard full of animals. "Living Gifts are the highlight of the season," says Don Epp, TTV's chief executive officer. "Gift givers and receivers are excited by presents that make a real difference, uplifting global stories become part of conversations, and the world becomes a little better." Living Gifts are available from Nov. 6 until Dec. 24 at TTV stores or online at [TenThousandVillages.ca](http://TenThousandVillages.ca). Each Living Gift sold helps TTV's parent organization, Mennonite Central Committee, carry out important relief and development work. All donations are tax deductible.

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## Classifieds

### 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 opportunities for dialogue in the Spirit of Christ. For more information please contact the following: rvfast@rogers.com, pmsnyderangel@rogers.com, or Roy and Mary Gascho, 519-742-1850.

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### Announcement

**WESTGATE HISTORY PROJECT**  
I'm collecting stories about people's experiences and memories of Westgate Mennonite Collegiate (Winnipeg, Man.) in order to write a history of the school. I hope to interview alumni, former staff members, former board members and former pastors of supporting churches. Interested individuals are requested to contact me directly: Janis Thiessen, Teacher, Westgate Mennonite Collegiate; Phone: 204-282-0785; e-mail: jthiessen@westgatemennonite.ca.

### Travel

**Visit Europe the Mennonite Way!** See website for the 2011 Hotel and Youth hostel Heritage Tours, including Holland, Germany, Poland, France and Switzerland. www.mennoniteheritagetours.eu.

### DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, RELIGION AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Open Faculty Position: **Fresno Pacific University**, Fresno, Calif.; Dean of the School of Humanities, Religion and Social Science; Full-time faculty member. Starting Date: July 1, 2011. Job description and application may be obtained from the university website: [www.fresno.edu/hr](http://www.fresno.edu/hr).



### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes (MCC GL)** in Goshen, Ind., seeks candidates for Executive Director (ED). The ED is responsible for all programs, staff and activities in the GL region, and is responsible to the MCC GL board. The ED will play a key role in guiding the transition as GL works with all of MCC to implement new vision and structures.

The position requires: familiarity with MCC constituency, strong relational administrative skills, cultural competency, strong Christian faith and practice, ability to relate and build relationships with theologically diverse constituents and partners, ability to articulate Anabaptist theological perspectives as the foundation of MCC's work, and passion for and commitment to MCC's mission and vision. Experience with budgeting and administration also required; fundraising experience preferred. Position includes significant travel time within the region.

A job description is available at <http://mcc.org/serve/positions/executive-director-great-lakes>. Submit resume and letter of interest by Dec. 31, 2010, to: Prem Dick at: [psd@mcc.org](mailto:psd@mcc.org).

### Employment Opportunities



#### DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

**Mennonite World Conference** connects more than 1.6 million Anabaptists in 80 countries worldwide for fellowship, worship, service and witness. MWC is currently seeking applications for the position of **Director of Finance and Administration**. The successful applicant will be responsible to oversee all financial aspects of the organization (budgeting, fund accounting, multiple currencies, accounts payable, donation receipting and payroll) and administrative oversight of human resources, information technology and regulatory compliance. Qualifications for this position include a degree in accounting or business, excellent computer skills, excellent communication skills, and an appreciation for the various Anabaptist communities around the world. This position is based out of Kitchener, Ont. with a possibility of working remotely.

Please direct applications and inquiries to: Mennonite World Conference; 50 Kent Ave, Kitchener, ON, N2G 3R1; 519-571-0060; [jobs@mwc-cmm.org](mailto:jobs@mwc-cmm.org).

[www.mwc-cmm.org](http://www.mwc-cmm.org)



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#### Campus Hosts

#### Conrad Grebel University College at the University of Waterloo

Conrad Grebel University College, a residence and teaching facility affiliated with the University of Waterloo, seeks a married couple for the position of Campus Hosts (formerly known as Senior Residents), beginning approx. **June 1, 2011**. The role involves living in an apartment in the College's residence building and supervising the College during non-business hours. Rent and utilities are free in exchange for performance of duties. Applicants should be mature, responsible and able to relate to a broad range of people, especially students in residence. Application deadline is **February 1, 2011**. If interested contact:

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### Upcoming Advertising Dates

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*Focus on Elementary and Secondary Education*

Jan. 24, 2011    Jan. 11, 2011

# Winnipeg snapshots

*Students at Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary and Middle Schools' Bedson campus participated in unique activities at a worship fair held on Oct. 29. Pictured, students were taught to worship by Katie Hollander of Devoted Ministries using only two sticks, a bit of music and a heart for God. No eyes were poked out, and no lights were broken, and a lot of people realized that when given an opportunity to do something unique, children are capable of doing some pretty impressive things. Other worship activities included singing, painting, praying, sign language, actions and drama.*



WMEMS PHOTO

MENNONITE CHURCH CANADA PHOTO



*Members of Jubilee Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man. toured the Mennonite Church Canada office in Winnipeg last month, joining staff for refreshments. The visit "helped me put faces to names," said church secretary Donna Wiebe, left. Also pictured from left to right: associate pastor Martin Blumrich, Judy Segstro, Ruth Pauls, community minister Anna Marie Geddert, Mary Funk and pastor Dan Nighswander. The office was "very warm and welcoming," said Geddert. "It helped me to know who to connect with when I need resources." To book a visit to MC Canada, e-mail chief operating officer Vic Thiessen at [vthiessen@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:vthiessen@mennonitechurch.ca) or call him toll-free at 1-866-888-6785.*