

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

January 16, 2017

Volume 21 Number 2



‘Everything  
turned into  
**a sea**  
for three days’

Read about MCC flood relief efforts in North Korea on pg. 18-19

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## GUEST EDITORIAL

## Making the list

AARON EPP  
YOUNG VOICES EDITOR

At the end of every year, I get together with a group of friends and we discuss our favourite music that came out in the previous 12 months. As a starting point for the discussion, each of us creates a list of our 10 favourite albums of the year.

When we began this music night many years ago, I was tempted to come up with an objective list of the Top Ten Best Albums of the Year. It would be a definitive list of the undeniably best music released in all of the world.

I soon realized my naïveté. Just because I think the latest record by California art-metal iconoclasts Deftones is the best thing I heard in 2016 doesn't mean I can convince a classical music fan that it's better than anything she's heard.

What does this have to do with *Canadian Mennonite*? I mention it because the feature article in this issue consists of a list. In this case, it's a list of 10 people who are 30 years old or younger who are making a difference in their community.

This past fall, we put out a call to readers. We wanted to hear about the young adults who are making a difference in your community, the emerging Mennonite leaders from across Canada who care about and support the church.

When I first pitched the idea for the feature to my editors, part of me thought that this feature would end up being the Top 10 Best Young Mennonites in Canada Right Now. Much like I have been tempted to do

in the past with my annual list of favourite albums, I somehow thought I could come up with a definitive, ranked list of people who are objectively the best young Mennonites in Canada today. I imagined this list being populated by young people doing extraordinary things, that it would perhaps feature the Mennonite equivalents of Mark Zuckerberg and Kanye West.

In reality, the 10 people included in this issue's feature article are extremely ordinary, and they would be the first to tell you so. They are everyday people using their gifts and talents to live out their faith in Jesus Christ.

Ironically, the fact that everyone on our list is extremely ordinary is what makes the feature special for me. It reminds me that if you really want to make a difference in the world, you have to start small. It also reminds me that all of us—not just a select few who we deem as somehow extraordinary—have a part to play in God's kingdom.

So why highlight the 10 people you will read about in this issue? According to our mission statement, "*Canadian Mennonite* exists to educate, inspire, inform and foster dialogue on issues facing Mennonites in Canada as it shares the good news of Jesus Christ from an Anabaptist perspective."

It is my hope that our "10 under 30" list on page 4 will educate, inform and inspire you by exposing you to some bright young people you may not have heard of before. And, like the lists my friends and

I share about our favourite music, I also hope this feature gets you talking with your friends and family about the bright young people from MC Canada who would be on your list.

If you think of some people doing good work, be sure to let us know.

**Farewell and welcome**

We say farewell to Phil Wagler with his "Outside the Box" column in this issue, and welcome his successor, Ryan Jantzi.

Phil has cajoled, challenged and sometimes chastised his readers over the past 12 years. We will miss the energy of his writing and the sometimes prophetic thread of his thoughts, and wish him well as he continues his ministry to our wider Anabaptist family among our cousins, the Mennonite Brethren.

At the same time we welcome his successor, Ryan Jantzi, in a yet-unnamed column in the upcoming Feb. 13 edition. Ryan is a pastor with Kingsfield-Zurich Mennonite Church in Ontario. He and his wife Brittany are the parents of three, with one on the way. Ryan previously enjoyed five years leading bi-vocationally with a church plant, Kingsfield-Clinton. He holds a master of divinity degree from Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary at Trinity Western University, Langley, B.C., and is particularly fascinated with how both traditional and new expressions of church can work together to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

—DICK BENNER,  
EDITOR/PUBLISHER



## ABOUT THE FRONT AND BACK COVERS:

**A local North Korean official takes a moment to survey the reconstruction efforts in Yonsa County following Typhoon Lionrock last fall. Story/photo spread about MCC's part in the process begins on page 18.**

PHOTO: JOHN LEHMANN, MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

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Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



YOUNG VOICES FEATURE

# 10 under 30

BY AARON EPP

YOUNG VOICES EDITOR

*'When I was growing up, I was told I had to go to church. My parents dragged me, so when I got to college I actually stopped going. I lasted one week without going to church.'*  
(Catherine Cooper, Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, Vancouver)

**W**e asked and you responded. This past fall, *Canadian Mennonite* put out a call to readers. We wanted to hear about the young adults who are making a difference in your community—the emerging Mennonite leaders from across Canada who care about and support the church.

We asked that you suggest people who are 30 years old or younger; who are active in a Mennonite Church Canada congregation; who possess a gift or skill that benefits the church or community; who can articulate their faith and how they have experienced God; who show care for others through acts of service or volunteering; and who have not been profiled in *Canadian Mennonite* in the past three years.

What follows are the 10 people *Canadian Mennonite* chose from the nominations we received. A woman working towards indigenous-settler reconciliation, a dancer who works with inner-city youth in Winnipeg, a musician who writes new songs for special occasions at her church, and a youth worker passionate about ministry in Toronto, are just a few of the people you will read about in our inaugural 10 Under 30 list. Alas, no one was nominated from Alberta, the only area church not represented.

They are all faithful Christians doing significant work that you have not read about in these pages before. They are also an indication that the church is in good hands.

In alphabetical order by last name, our 10 Under 30 are:

### 1. Sara Anderson, Ottawa

For Sara Anderson, following Jesus Christ means amplifying the voices of the marginalized and working for social justice through nonviolent activism.

Over the last several years, the 25-year-old has contributed to the movement for reconciliation between indigenous and settler cultures in Canada. She teaches, writes, leads worship, develops programs and campaigns, and does community organizing.

Anderson has developed these skills in a number of contexts, including through her master's degree at Carleton University, where she focussed on Anabaptist-indigenous relationships in Ontario; her work as the reconciliation education project coordinator under the Indigenous Rights program at Kairos; as a member of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario's board; and at Ottawa Mennonite Church, her home congregation.

Anderson was a member of the committee that brought the resolution on the Doctrine of Discovery to MC Canada's Assembly 2016.

Her reconciliation work is personal. Anderson's father's background is indigenous. He was part of the "Sixties scoop," in which thousands of indigenous and Métis children were taken from their homes and put into foster care or were adopted into white families.

"His story fits within the larger narrative of the broken relationship between indigenous peoples and settlers in Canada, and it was this realization that sparked my thirst for knowledge about these issues," Anderson told her congregation in a sermon she gave last year.

Anderson's work has not always been welcomed and encouraged, and she has identified and experienced part of inter-generational cycles of trauma and abuse. At the same time, she has not let this discourage her.

"I'm pretty hopeful," she tells *Canadian Mennonite*. "I get to have a lot of interactions in the work that I do with a lot of people around the country, and I'm continuously encouraged by how many people are interested and want to be involved in this reconciliation journey."

### 2. Nichelle Bauman, Durham, Ont.

A lifelong musician, Nichelle Bauman leads the worship and music ministry at Floradale Mennonite Church. The best part of the quarter-time position is when someone approaches her after church and tells her that the songs she chose helped them to worship well. "That's really meaningful to me," says Bauman, who turns 26 this month.

Bauman often writes new songs for special occasions. After a farmer from her congregation died and the family asked Bauman to sing at his funeral, she wrote a song about the man with the refrain, "You gotta know that my soul is at home."

"I didn't know him super well, but the family said that the song really fit," Bauman says. "As depressing as it sounds, singing at funerals is super meaningful for me. It's such a rich time."

In addition to her church role, Bauman and her husband are involved with ReLearning Community, an MC Eastern Canada program designed to equip lay and pastoral leaders to reach out into their communities based on local needs and congregational passions.

"It's been awesome because I think a lot of things, as a young person in the church, that I see and that I'm frustrated with, ReLearning Community addresses," she says, adding that the program is about having meaningful conversations about faith with people and "walking with each other, instead of just walking past each other."

For her, worshipping God and loving others is at the heart of what it means to follow Jesus.

Recently, it's her two-year-old son, Reuben, who was born with Down syndrome, who has been teaching her how to love. "I look at him and I see how he lives and how he loves people, and how he's loved by God," she says. "It reminds me that God has a bigger picture of what life and love should look like."

### 3. Catherine Cooper, Vancouver

Ask Catherine Cooper about her family's theological background and she will quip that they are

(Continued on page 6)

PHOTO BY ELEANOR DYCK



1. Sara Anderson

PHOTO BY GREG MCCORQUODALE



2. Nichelle Bauman



(Continued from page 5)

MethoMennoLutheEpiscoGationalists. Cooper, 28, is originally from Madison, Wis., and her family moved around as a result of her father's academic career. They attended Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopalian and Congregationalist churches, but after discovering the Mennonite faith, her parents co-founded Madison Mennonite Church.

When Cooper moved to Vancouver almost six years ago for grad school, she did a Google search looking for Mennonite congregations in her neighbourhood. She came across Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship and began attending. Since then, she has gotten involved in leading worship and singing, and preaching the occasional sermon. She is also actively involved in volunteering with the refugee food bank run out of Sherbrooke Mennonite Church.

"When I was growing up, I was told I had to go to church," she says. "My parents dragged me, so when I got to college I actually stopped going. I lasted one week without going to church."

She is motivated to be involved at her church because she values the community there. "It's wonderful to have so many different perspectives and so many different age groups," she says.

Last year, Cooper finished her dissertation for a PhD in anthropology at the University of British Columbia, specializing in archaeological chemistry. "It's a puzzle," she says of archaeology. "[You're] trying to find out what people's lives were like in the past, how they interacted [and] how they connected to each other."

Her ideal job would be to teach at a small school that focusses on undergraduate training, where she could encourage students to think in an interdisciplinary fashion.

Cooper is thankful for the community at Point Grey. "Every Sunday I get to talk to artists, scientists, musicians, and it's this sense of belonging," she says. "It's a wonderfully supportive group of people."

#### 4. Michal Goertzen, Winnipeg

Michal Goertzen has danced since she was four. "I love the way it gives you an

outlet of expression without having to use words," she says. "In every style of dance, from hip hop to ballet, you can be sharing [your] love of God with others and conveying your own thoughts of worship to him."

Goertzen, 22, teaches seven hip hop dance classes at Masterworks, a Youth for Christ ministry in downtown Winnipeg. Her students range in age from 9 to 50.

"I really love . . . how [Masterworks reaches] out to anyone and everyone who wants to dance, and wants to dance in a way that's glorifying to God," she says. Working as the director of the summer program that Masterworks runs, which allows young people to attend week-long dance camps, has been a highlight. "It's really exciting to see how much the care and love we . . . share with our students can impact them and their growth as people."

Beyond Masterworks, Goertzen is heavily involved at Jubilee Mennonite Church. She is on the music team and has been a music team leader for years. She helps plan worship services as a member of the worship committee, she serves on the refugee resettlement committee, and she recently served on the pastoral search committee.

Goertzen also works with the children in the congregation. In 2015, she helped plan and lead a Sunday morning service in which only children were involved in everything from leading the music to taking the offering.

Goertzen holds a degree in biochemistry and is thinking about becoming either a doctor or a nurse. "I'm a big advocator for showing my love through actions and really just following the call to love others and care for those around me," she says.

#### 5. Sylvia Hook, Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont.

Since she and her husband started attending Erb Street Mennonite Church in Waterloo in 2014, Sylvia Hook has gotten involved in a variety of capacities. She sits on the website and information technology committee, the newsletter committee, and the worship and arts ministry

PHOTO BY ROSIE PERERA



3. Catherine Cooper

PHOTO BY AARON EPP



4. Michal Goertzen

PHOTO BY CLAIRE WAYMAN



5. Sylvia Hook

committee. She is a frequent member of ad hoc choirs and regularly serves as a worship leader.

"I'm just a church nerd," says Hook, 26, who recalls regularly singing hymns with her family at the dinner table when she was growing up in Rochester, N.Y. "I love this stuff"

Hook is passionate about challenging her congregation to live out its mission to be a welcoming space to all. She was part of a group of people encouraging Erb Street to install a second bicycle rack so people wouldn't be turned away by a lack of parking. She also makes sure the church adheres to its scent-free policy by using unscented soap in the washrooms to accommodate those with scent sensitivities, and is encouraging the church to discuss practical steps it can take to be more actively welcoming of LGBTQ people.

As a bisexual woman with scent sensitivities, Hooks knows what it's like to not fit the norm. "[The church] has been a very good and life-giving place for me, and I want it to be a more-inclusive and life-giving space for others," she says. "Everyone is welcome at Christ's table."

Hook represented Erb Street at the MC Canada assembly this past July, and says the discussion surrounding LGBTQ inclusion in the church was both painful and hopeful. "I love church," she says. "I don't always love all the institutional structures, but I also think that the church is not so broken that we can't do better. We can do better, and I can help us do better."

### 6. Josh Martin, Moorefield, Ont.

Ask 23-year-old Josh Martin to name his favourite Bible passage and he points to Matthew 22:37-39, in which Jesus lists, "*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,*" and, "*Love your neighbour as yourself,*" as the greatest commandments.

"I try to live my life fully committed to God and loving him, and loving all his children here on Earth," says Martin, who has been the part-time youth worker at Community Mennonite Fellowship in Drayton, Ont., since October 2013.

He is currently finishing a degree in religious education at Emmanuel Bible College in Kitchener. During the summer months, he works as a carpenter.

As the church's youth worker, Martin leads Wednesday evening Bible studies and weekend activities that range from going to hockey games to serving at soup kitchens.

He recently led a group of youth and young adults in reading through the Bible in a year, and for the past three years he has coached the church team that competes in MC Eastern Canada's youth Bible quizzing competition.

Martin is passionate about MCC's Toronto Ontario Opportunities for Learning and Service (TOOLS) program, which combines opportunities for service along with space for learning and reflection around issues of poverty, homelessness and marginalized people living in Canada's largest city.

He has participated in TOOLS almost 10 times, including twice with his church youth group. "When I go there and I'm talking with somebody on the street, I just get the overwhelming sense of God's presence and that I'm actually speaking to Jesus," he says.

Martin enjoys the mix of work that he currently does, and hopes to continue with carpentry and youth ministry. "I just love being able to see the youth wrestling [with questions] and making their faith their own," he says.

### 7. Melissa Schulze, Vineland, Ont.

When The First Mennonite Church in Vineland gave Melissa Schulze the opportunity to write the children's Christmas pageant in 2015, she accepted the challenge. What resulted was a unique drama in which a fictional news team reports on Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.

"It took me a long time to write . . . but it was really cool to see something that I made acted out," says Schulze, 16. "I think the kids enjoyed it."

Schulze brings that same creativity to a variety of different roles at her church. She helps with the children in Sunday school and during the worship service. She is also active in selecting themes

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T&J STUDIOS PHOTOGRAPHY PHOTO



6. Josh Martin

PHOTO BY KARLEEN SCHULZE



7. Melissa Schulze



*(Continued from page 7)*

and displays for the church's historical cabinet, a display in the foyer meant to teach churchgoers something about their congregation's history.

PHOTO BY JON MILLER



**8. Stephanie Siemens**

Beyond her church, Schulze has participated in Coldest Night of the Year in Beamsville, an annual event meant to raise money and awareness of the issue of homelessness.

She has also volunteered at Camp Crossroads in the Muskoka Lakes region of Ontario. Washing dishes at a summer camp may not seem like a lot of fun, but, for Schulze, it's been one of her highlight experiences serving in the community. "You get to feel the accomplishment that you really helped," she says.

A gifted pianist, Schulze is currently a Grade 11 student at Eden High School in St. Catharines, where her favourite subjects are music and science.

She hopes to become an optometrist some day. Until then, she's looking forward to the summer, when she will be a leader-in-training at Camp Crossroads.

For Schulze, following Jesus means loving and serving others, whether it's abroad or right at home in her own community. "I like doing things to help other people because it makes me happy that I can make other people happy," she says.

PHOTO BY DUSTIN PALMER



**9. Curtis Wiens**

### **8. Stephanie Siemens, Saskatoon**

Since she started going to Osler Mennonite Church in 2005, Stephanie Siemens has become heavily involved in the life of the congregation. Currently, she serves on the church council and worship committee, teaches Sunday school, leads some youth events, works the sound booth on Sunday mornings and for church rentals, serves on a ladies group committee, leads worship and helps with various other things that happen in the life of the church, including food prep at a recent funeral.

"I really don't feel as though I do any more than what is my part," says Siemens, 27. "I love my church family. . . . They are not perfect, which means I don't have to be perfect, but they genuinely seek to live lives that reflect God's love for and service to one another and the world. Who

wouldn't want to be involved with such a group?"

Asked to talk about an experience at Osler that sticks out as a highlight or particularly meaningful, Siemens struggles to pick just one. Countless service opportunities at the local soup kitchen, the MCC Relief Sale, and Canadian Foodgrains Bank—not to mention potlucks, summer outdoor services and picnics, and Christmas parties—have all been significant in her building relationships with her church family.

Siemens is in her first year of studies at the University of Saskatchewan, and in 2017 she hopes to get more involved with groups on campus. She also plans to continue her involvement at Osler.

"My hopes for the church would be that we continue to stay relevant to those within our congregation and beyond, that we embrace change, but, more importantly, embrace people, and that we continue to create strong relationships, and to work for peace and justice with ourselves, others and creation," she says.

### **9. Curtis Wiens, Waldheim, Sask.**

Generally speaking, Curtis Wiens's goals focus on working towards ecological justice and finding solutions to the problem of climate change and ecological degradation.

"I just bought an electrical car, but, for me, that's only one step in my own life that I'm taking," the 25-year-old says. "A medium- to longer-term goal is to live in a house that's net zero carbon emissions. We'll probably install solar panels in the spring."

Wiens, who has a degree in applied plant ecology from the University of Saskatchewan, shares his passion for creation as an employee at Shekinah Retreat Centre. He has lived at Shekinah, located 20 minutes north of Waldheim, for three-and-a-half years. While his official role is maintenance, Wiens does a little bit of everything. He has run the programming for school groups that visit Shekinah and has also been involved with the centre's summer-camp program.

"The mission statement of Shekinah is for all [who visit] to be able to experience



the glory and presence of God,” he says. “That’s easy to do at a place like Shekinah because it’s a really beautiful setting, but it’s also really accessible [because] it’s close to Saskatoon.”

Wiens attends Eigenheim Mennonite Church near Rosthern, and serves on MC Saskatchewan’s Listening and Discernment Committee. The committee was formed to address how congregations can discuss same-sex marriage and orientation among themselves and with each other. Wiens also sings with A Buncha Guys, a men’s choir made up predominantly of Rosthern Junior College alumni, which performed two fundraising concerts for Shekinah last month.

Because Shekinah is a ministry of MC Saskatchewan, Wiens believes that it can be an example to others. “If they see us responsibly managing our natural space, that helps to send a message to other people that [creation care] is an important value for us,” he says.

### 10. Keli Whitworth, Vancouver

Most of the people at Sherbrooke Mennonite Church know Keli Whitworth for the dynamic energy she brings as a singer in one of the congregation’s worship teams, but she also does a lot behind the scenes, too.

The 29-year-old dental assistant serves on the board of directors at Place of Refuge, an addictions recovery house run by four Mennonite churches in south Vancouver. She coordinates the communication efforts for this work.

She is involved with Kingcrest International Neighbours, a Christian organization that supports and empowers newcomers to Canada through English-language learning and community-building.

Her interest in helping newcomers has extended to helping a refugee sponsorship group at Sherbrooke that is assisting a family of four from Syria as they settle into Vancouver life.

“If there is someone in need, and if I have the capabilities to help them out of maybe the bad place [they are in] or [move] toward a place that’s in some way better for them . . . I want to be a part of

that,” Whitworth says.

She grew up attending a Baptist church, an Alliance church and a Mennonite Brethren church before she began attending Sherbrooke six years ago. She first got connected to the church when a friend invited her to its young adult group. The invitation came at a time when Whitworth was going through a rough patch in her faith journey, and she was hungry to grow closer to God.

“I experienced quite a few cycles of spiritual happiness with my relationship with God, and times of dissatisfaction with my faith walk and disconnect [from] God,” she says. “I also experienced hurt in relationships, to [the] point of isolating myself from others, including God. But God was faithful . . . and guided me out of the pain, and helped me heal and is continuing to help me heal.” ❧

PHOTO BY KELI WHITWORTH



10. Keli Whitworth

### ❧ For discussion

1. Who would you nominate as a young adult who cares about the church and makes a difference in your community? Which of the young people featured here would you most like to have as part of your congregation? Why?
2. Aaron Epp writes about the featured young people, that “[t]hey are all faithful Christians doing significant work . . . They are also an indication that the church is in good hands.” Do you agree? What makes you hopeful about the future of the church?
3. Catherine Cooper says that she values community, and that her church is “a wonderfully supportive group of people.” How important is community in the lives of the young adults you know? What is needed for a community to be vibrant and supportive? What situations tend to diminish a sense of community?
4. Sylvia Hook says that she loves the church but doesn’t always love all of its institutional structures. What is it about institutional structures that might make her pessimistic about them? What would it mean to de-institutionalize our congregations? How can we improve the strong relationships between people that these young adults seem to value?

—BY BARB DRAPER

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## VIEWPOINTS

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## ✉ Being pro-Palestinian is not being anti-Jewish

RE: "A BETTER way than BDS?" letter, Nov. 21, 2016, page 10.

One distinction that is often forgotten in discussions about Israel-Palestine is the difference between Jew and Israeli. The current State of Israel was brought about by violence after the Second World War. People who are citizens of that state can be called Israelis. They are not all Jewish, nor do they all support the decisions of the government of Israel. Both Palestinians and Israelis have legitimate rights that have been violated since the founding of the State of Israel.

To be pro-Palestinian is not to be anti-Jewish. To boycott products from Israel or eliminate personal or corporate investment in Israel is not anti-Jewish. To boycott and divest is to try to put economic pressure

## FROM OUR LEADERS

## All aboard for the future

DAVID MARTIN

The timing was tight. I had made it to the airport parking lot and was then shuttled to Terminal 1 at Toronto's Pearson International Airport to catch my flight to Winnipeg for yet another round of meetings with executive staff and moderators from each of the five area churches and Mennonite Church Canada. Security went smoothly and I just had enough time to grab a coffee and get to the gate in time for boarding.



Who should I bump into at the gate but Marg, who until recently has served on the family services committee that supports my wife's work at the House of Friendship in Kitchener, Ont.!

We exchanged pleasantries, and I discovered that Marg and her husband Norm were headed to Winnipeg to visit family. It was an advance visit, in lieu of Christmas, planned to beat the bitter winter chill that besets Winnipeg in late December.

Mother Nature, however, was not going to defer to Marg's hope to escape the Winnipeg deep freeze, and we were all headed from -2C temperatures to -22C.

I then explained what was taking me to Winnipeg: "I am heading to another Future Directions meeting." The goal of this restructuring effort that was approved last July is to reshape how we work at being the church across the country. My hope, I indicated, is that the end result will be a transfer of some of the national resources to the area churches, especially the smaller ones. That way, the area churches can better support congregations to engage the new challenges they are facing and to become increasingly involved in witness and outreach in their local communities, while taking even greater ownership for the future of international witness. The intention of the new model, I commented, is to also connect us even more closely together as a national Mennonite people.

Marg and Norm affirmed the new

directions and liked what they heard, but then Marg made a very astute comment: "You know, if this is going to work, then it means that each one of us needs to get involved in our local congregation. The only way congregations are going to have an impact on their local community is, if each one of us takes ownership and is supportive of our church and engaged in the witness and outreach of our congregation. In fact, every one of us should commit to prayerful discernment about what Future Directions means for each of us, our congregation and for the whole church."

"Thanks, Marg!" I said. "You just identified the foundation of this whole restructuring enterprise. Without solid prayer support and the committed engagement of each one of us, Future Directions will only be an abstract bureaucratic exercise."

In the final analysis, it is only going to work if, like Marg and Norm, we each respond to the promptings of the Spirit and align ourselves with what God is doing in our congregation and in our local and global communities.

David Martin is the Mennonite Church Eastern Canada executive minister. Find out more about this vision at [FutureDirectionsMC.ca](http://FutureDirectionsMC.ca).



on the Israeli government to change its actions in Israel.

I do not agree with Russel Snyder-Penner's statement that boycott and divestment involve Christians shunning Jews. It is non-Israelis shunning the actions of the Israeli government.

It is the same kind of action as the boycott and divestment against the actions of the South African

government. Just as there were people of colour working to end apartheid, there are Jews working to end the illegal settlements that exist on Palestinian land. There are Jews working to tear down the wall built by the Israeli government that divides Israelis from Palestinians.

Let us work with people of all faiths to end injustice  
(Continued on page 12)

## OUTSIDE THE BOX

# Strengthen what remains

PHIL WAGLER

I wonder what it was like to be on the receiving end of those seven letters to the churches named in Revelation 2 and 3. The words of Jesus to fellowships in present-day western Turkey were both encouraging and at points sharp with direct challenge. Jesus is serious about the health and vitality of his body, no matter where they are or what they are staring down.

To disciples in the city of Sardis the Lord speaks bluntly: *"I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God"* (Revelation 3:1-2).

What would it have been like to receive that word and know it's about you? Your fledgling community of the Way is a generation removed from the resurrection, you're fighting to be faithful, and others seem to notice. And then you hear that your reputation is not the reality. Jesus knows. In this moment he is a doctor anticipating time of death: "You are dead." This fellowship is on life-support. Something remains—but it must be strengthened, and soon.

This is my last contribution to *Canadian Mennonite*. I have been praying for something worthwhile to say to the Mennonite Church Canada community for 12 years. That suddenly

seems like a long time, and whether these ramblings were worthwhile may be open for debate!

For the past six years I have been serving in pastoral ministry and now global mission leadership within the Mennonite Brethren family. I am thankful to the readership and staff of this magazine for giving me the opportunity to serve Jesus by writing what I always hoped would be thought-provoking, Jesus-glorifying and mission-activating pieces, even as I was an MC Canada outlier.

I have sojourned as an Anabaptist mutt. I was formed in an Ontario Mennonite church that I'm grateful for; a year with



*I would be unfaithful if I did not conclude this run of columns without calling the MC Canada family to hear the words of Jesus to the church at Sardis as a word for us now.*

Mennonite Central Committee shaped me profoundly; I was blessed to serve as pastor of two MC Canada fellowships; worked for a time in an Evangelical Missionary Church school; was encouraged by the too-brief privilege of being among the Northwest Mennonite Conference on the Prairies; and I now contribute to our wider Anabaptist family among the MBs.

In each of these circles I have been challenged and transformed by the Holy

Spirit's fire evident in the diversity of this branch of the family of God, and I have come to see that all is not well. So perhaps it is this "mutt-ness" that fans the fire in my Germanic belly for a renewed, Jesus-centred, mission-focussed work of the Spirit among us. I would be unfaithful if I did not conclude this run of columns without calling the MC Canada family to hear the words of Jesus to the church at Sardis as a word for us now. Do not live off a reputation for being alive. Wake up. Strengthen what remains. Do it soon.

The gift the Mennonite churches are to be to this misguided and broken world will not come through brilliant structural renewal, proud intellectual declarations or figuring out how to please culture. We will only remain a blessing as we boldly recover the story we are blessed to undeservedly steward: A God of love is

on the move, calling peoples and nations to repentance and salvation through Jesus Christ and his "foolish" cross, and commanding us to a Christ-like, cross-life lived out as the redeemed community of the King, joyfully swept up by the power of the Spirit in his counter-cultural reconciling mission. This is the narrative that must be embraced unashamedly. What will the future look like if what remains is not strengthened? Jesus still speaks to the churches. Who has ears to hear?



(Continued from page 11)

in Israel-Palestine. Let us work to bring God's peace to a region that has only had war for decades.

ROBERT BOARDMAN, SCARBOROUGH, ONT.

## ✉ Executive minister sets the record straight

RE: "B.C. PASTORS seeking to break away should be 'denounced'" letter, Dec. 12, 2016, page 11, and "No more closed doors" editorial, Nov. 7, 2016, page 2.

I just want to correct a few inaccuracies, since I was involved in giving leadership to these meetings.

## GATHERING AROUND THE TABLE

# Sharing baked goods by the dozen

BY BARB DRAPER

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

PHOTO BY RUTH BOEHM

**F**rieda Woelk loves to bake. When she gets up in the morning, she thinks, "What can I bake today?" Although she is in her mid-80s and lives in a seniors apartment in the Leamington (Ont.) Mennonite Home complex, she keeps very busy with cooking, baking and socializing. She is so busy that when her children want to spend time with her they ask, "When can we pencil you in?"

Frieda still makes quantities of traditional foods such as zwiebach (bread rolls), rollkuchen (fritters) and paska (Easter bread), as well as pies, cookies and squares, but her specialty is raisin bread. Whenever there is a funeral in her congregation, Leamington United Mennonite Church, she makes 25 loaves of raisin bread. In the fall of 2016 there were three funerals in 10 days, so she made 75 loaves. Although she uses a mixer to make zwiebach, she thinks the raisin bread turns out better if she kneads it by hand.

As a member of the Auxiliary of Leamington Mennonite Home, Frieda bakes for its fundraising sales and other special events. At Christmastime she puts together trays of cookies, squares and raisin bread to give away, sharing with friends and the ministers at her church.



*Although Frieda Woelk didn't spend much time in the kitchen when she was young, she quickly learned to cook and bake when her children came along.*

Every weekday evening the residents of the apartments come together for tea in the common room, a ritual begun by Frieda and her friend Mary Rempel, and Frieda regularly bakes goodies for everyone to enjoy. The local historical society gathers every weekday morning for coffee, and Frieda provides baked goods for the members once a month.

"I like sharing with others," says Frieda. It is her way of giving to the community and making a contribution. She gives from a full heart and with a sense of thankfulness.

Although she didn't spend much time in the kitchen when she was young, she quickly learned to cook and bake when her children came along. In the early 1970s she ran a catering business, but when her 16-year-old son was hit by a drunk driver and permanently disabled, she could no longer continue. She coped with the tragedy by cooking and baking. Her son now lives in the long-term-care home where she can visit him every day.

For some years Frieda worked in the cafeteria at the Heinz plant, where she perfected her pie dough recipe. Each year she submitted pies at the annual Leamington fair and won lots of ribbons. She laughs now and says, "My rhubarb pie never won first prize. All the other kinds, I won ribbons for."

In 1994 Frieda put together a recipe collection. It was so popular it was re-issued a number of times, the last time in 2011. She also ran a bed and breakfast in her home until 2007, when she and her husband moved to the apartment.

Although she only has a small kitchen, Frieda continues to turn out lots of wonderful baking. She has no trouble finding people who appreciate her generosity.

Visit [canadianmennonite.org/raisin-bread-recipe](http://canadianmennonite.org/raisin-bread-recipe) for her specialty dish.



Our pastors' gathering on Sept. 20, 2016, was a listening meeting, and everyone honoured that expectation. There was no discussion or any attempt at persuasion. Strong positions were articulated by some, and these may have been viewed by some as attempts at persuasion, but each pastor simply stated his or her response to Being a Faithful Church (BFC) 7. The pastors gathering was Part 1 of a planned two-stage process. Part 2 was the Oct. 22, 2016, gathering of people from our congregations for discussion and sharing of ideas for the way forward. This gathering was open to anyone who cared to attend.

The development of a letter of response from a group of pastors calling for Mennonite Church B.C. to leave MC Canada (based on BFC7) came shortly after the pastors gathering. This letter received the signatures of 11 pastors. I distributed it to all the MC B.C. congregations for their awareness as part of an invitation to the Oct. 22 gathering.

The place in the Oct. 22 congregational gathering when this proposal was presented was after the roundtable conversations and sharing of how individuals and congregations are responding to BFC7, not at the beginning. We received more than 20 ideas for the way forward at that gathering. We consolidated these into six options, and sent them out for the people in our congregations to rank as a way to hear the voice of the MC B.C. people. We are receiving the return of the surveys at this time.

**GARRY JANZEN, ABBOTSFORD, B.C.**

*Gary Janzen is the executive minister of MC B.C.*

## ✉ Church employees 'live in a bubble of excessive lifestyles'

**RE:** "NO MORE closed doors" editorial, Nov. 7, 2016, page 2.

I like the way Dick Benner put "pastor" in quotation marks. I have long had an issue with the word. I see it as creeping or encroaching Protestantism into the Mennonite church; I prefer "minister."

It is my belief that the Mennonite church has become increasingly over-bureaucratized, and church employees live in a bubble of excessive lifestyles and excessive salaries.

My mother said that the "old people" claimed that when ministers were paid a salary, they would tell people what they want to hear, instead of what they need to hear. I have come to the conclusion that they were correct.

It is totally my opinion that the affluence we have is based on greed and the use of military force to keep the imbalance of the distribution of wealth in favour

of the rich: us. While I doubt that my grandfather had much understanding of economics and politics, he knew that, based on his understanding of the teachings of Jesus, it was wrong for him to participate in war.

**LARRY BENDER, TAVISTOCK, ONT.**

## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Bartel**—Beau Violet Jude (b. Dec. 8, 2016), to Karen (Fouk) (Faith Mennonite, Leamington, Ont.) and Jon Bartel.

**Craddock**—Samuel David (b. Dec. 5, 2016), to Matt and Amanda (Warkentin) Craddock, North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

**Falk**—Benjamin Drew (b. Oct. 31, 2016), to Marv and Kristin Falk, Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Lobach-Champagne**—Maximilian James Ross (b. Nov. 18, 2016), to Natalia (Lobach) and Stephane Champagne, Toronto United Mennonite.

**Rody**—Claire Margaret (b. Sept. 24, 2016), to Jessica and Matthew Rody, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Rogalsky**—Amos Allan (b. Dec. 6, 2016), to Allan and Christine Rogalsky, Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

**Sawatzky**—Heidi Lucia (b. Dec. 4, 2016), to Joel and Chalan Sawatzky, Osler Mennonite, Sask.

**Wenger**—Simon Albert (b. Nov. 9, 2016), to Tim and Stephanie Wenger, North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

### Marriages

**Bowman/Martin**—Jeremy Bowman and Christina Martin, both of Floradale Mennonite, Ont., at Floradale Mennonite, Sept. 10, 2016.

### Deaths

**Bueckert**—Ella, 89 (b. April 7, 1927; d. Nov. 17, 2016), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Dyck**—Neta (nee Siemens), 91 (b. Feb. 23, 1925; d. Dec. 5, 2016), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.

**Ens**—Henry, 88 (b. July 31, 1928; d. Nov. 8, 2016), Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Epp**—Hugo, 88 (b. Dec. 1, 1928; d. Dec. 13, 2016), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Guenther**—John, 90 (b. Sept. 22, 1926; d. Nov. 7, 2016), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Hildebrand**—Amanda, 101 (b. Aug. 3, 1915; d. Dec. 4, 2006), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Kehler**—Henry, 90 (b. Jan. 7, 1926; d. Nov. 30, 2016), Altona Bergthaler Mennonite, Man.

**Klassen**—Margarethe, 99 (b. Oct. 11, 1917; d. Oct. 21, 2016), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.

- Klassen**—Sonja, 95 (b. Dec. 2, 1921; d. Dec. 13, 2016), Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Krueger**—Else (nee Andres), 101 (b. Aug. 2, 1915; d. Nov. 25, 2016), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Loewen**—Edwin, 86 (Jan. 9, 1930; d. Nov. 19, 2016), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.
- Marthol**—Hans, 86 (b. Aug. 11, 1930; d. Oct. 25, 2016), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.
- Mueller**—Bill (Witold), 86 (b. Jan. 6, 1930; d. Nov. 23, 2016), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Redekop**—Dagmar, 92 (b. May 18, 1924; d. Oct. 25, 2016), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Schindle**—Susan, 88 (b. Oct. 3, 1927; d. June 19, 2016), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Tiessen**—Cathy, 79 (b. Jan. 16, 1937; d. June 5, 2016), North Kildonan Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Tomkow**—Agatha (nee Giesbrecht), 91 (b. Aug. 8, 1925; d. Dec. 12, 2016), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.
- Unger**—Margaret (nee Kroeger), 87 (b. Jan. 23, 1929; d. Dec. 9, 2016), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Unger**—Victor, 76 (b. March 7, 1940; d. Oct. 20, 2016), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.
- Wiebe**—David, 87 (b. Jan. 14, 1929; d. Nov. 27, 2016), First Mennonite, Winnipeg.
- Yates**—George, 89 (b. Jan. 6, 1927; d. Oct. 23, 2016), St. Catharines United Mennonite, Ont.

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

## /// Briefly noted

### Mennonite photographic database shortlisted for national award

The Mennonite Archival Image Database (MAID) website, which showcases 80,000 photographs of Mennonite life, was recently shortlisted for the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Community Programming. MAID is a partnership of eight Mennonite archives. The award celebrates "small, volunteer-led community organizations in the creation of innovative programming that commemorates unique aspects of [Canadian] heritage." The judges identified MAID as "a very special project since it, in many ways, is helping to bring together a diasporic community" by sharing "heritage across vast distances, but also through the cooperation of archival professionals invested in the community." "We feel honoured to be considered for an award of excellence in community programming," says site administrator Laureen Harder-Gissing, "since MAID is all about sharing our archival treasures with communities worldwide." MAID originated as a project of the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada. With software development provided by Peaceworks Technology Solutions of Waterloo, Ont., the site went live at [archives.mhsc.ca](http://archives.mhsc.ca) in 2015, and acquired its first cross-border partner in 2016. As MAID's reach grows, site visitors reach back to contribute facts and stories, order photographs online and express their thanks. "The photo you sent me shows real people from the past with real struggles," wrote a visitor in Tasmania. "MAID is a truly wonderful project." —Mennonite Archival Image Database

## A moment from yesterday



Cornelius R. Funk shows plant growth in his new home in Menno Colony, Paraguay. In 1926, Funk and 1,785 other Mennonites from Saskatchewan and Manitoba left for Paraguay because they did not trust the Canadian government. New York banker Samuel McRoberts helped them sell their land and acquire new land. McRoberts saw successive waves of immigration as a financial opportunity. A series of 252 photos were taken from 1926 to 1929, showing the progressive and successful farms of the new immigrants. Conflict arose over the use of the photos. McRoberts wanted to use them to spur on more emigration, while masking the harsh climate and the fact that it took until 1928 for the Mennonites to get onto their new land. Meanwhile, 187 people had died in Paraguay and another 371 people had returned to Canada.

Text: Conrad Stoesz

Photo: Samuel McRoberts photo collection / Mennonite Heritage Centre



[archives.mhsc.ca](http://archives.mhsc.ca)



## VIEWPOINT

## What's in a name?

DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

ALBERTA CORRESPONDENT

We eyed each other's books and wondered who would ask the "Mennonite" question first. Our names, Donita Wiebe-Neufeld and K.V. Doerksen, were emblazoned across our books (*Thirty Bucks* and *Blessed are the Dead*, respectively), and since book sales were slow at the library, we had time to talk.



Although we discovered some shared heritage, the name "Mennonite" carries different meanings for us. For me, the name brings positive thoughts of a peace-church identity, a place where questions are welcome and current issues discussed. Conversely, she had associations with a culturally backward community that her mother's family had left a generation ago. "Why keep Mennonite in your church name?" she asked.

It's a question Suzanne Gross, manager of community engagement programs and partnerships, has heard debated for the full 16 years she has worked at the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers. Some feel the name is limiting or a turn-off for newcomers looking for help. "Every now and then the question, 'Do you serve only Mennonites?' comes up," she said.

She has also experienced the name drawing people into the centre. One man came in wanting to donate money to help refugees. He told her, "I am not a man of faith, but I believe in Mennonites," Gross recounted. Many newcomers who access the centre refer to it simply as "Mennonite."

This past October, the Mennonite Foundation of Canada took Mennonite out of its name as an invitation to a broader ministry, hoping the move will attract partnerships with other

denominations. In an article in the Aug. 10, 2016, issue of *Canadian Mennonite*, executive director Darren Pries-Klassen is quoted as saying: "We believe changing our name to Abundance Canada will invite Christians across Canada to partner with us and experience the joy of generosity" ([bit.ly/mfc-name-change](http://bit.ly/mfc-name-change)).

Any name can carry expectations that may be limiting or inviting, depending on the observer's past experiences. Often those only cursorily acquainted with Mennonites equate the name to a particular conservative cultural group. For example, Gross, who used to live in Indiana, has experienced Americans confusing Mennonites with the Amish. In a similar way, Mennonite Church Canada Mennonites in Ontario are sometimes confused with Old Order Mennonites, while those in Alberta may get associated with Hutterites or even Mormons.

While such assumptions may not be negative, they can affect the number of people who walk through the doors. When asked about the pros and cons of the name of his church, Lethbridge (Alta.) Mennonite, Pastor Ryan Dueck said in an email: "One thing that is perhaps unique to our area is the 'problem' of being associated with Mexican Mennonites. This group doesn't have a great reputation down here, particularly in the Taber/Grassy Lake area. They are associated with being kind of culturally backward, causing social problems, having high rates of addiction and family conflict, and even occasionally running drugs up from Mexico. So I sometimes have to explain, 'No, wait, we're not those Mennonites.' But it's usually an opportunity to have a good conversation, if nothing else."

Dueck values the associations the name has with Anabaptist peace theology, community discernment and believers baptism. "I think 'Mennonite' continues to mark out theological territory that we continue to think is valuable," Dueck said.

Edmonton Christian Life Community Church—formerly Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church—had compelling reasons for its name change. Pastor Ken Tse said: "We took 'Mennonite' out of our church name because the Chinese translation of Mennonite has one word the same as 'Mormons.' Many Chinese people had the impression that our church was a Mormon church. We also took 'Chinese' out of our church name because we are not a church just for the Chinese. Non-Chinese are welcome to join us and feel they belong."

There are many positive stories about the branding that goes along with the name that speak in favour of its retention. Referring to the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Gross said, "I was at the point of saying, maybe we've outgrown the name; then the Syrian refugee crisis happened." The reputation of Mennonites, built through years of the relief work of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and good refugee settlement work at home, has resulted in a wide diversity of people calling Mennonite institutions to ask how they could help during the recent refugee crisis. "Donations came in at an unprecedented rate," she said.

And Ev Buhr, office administrator of Edmonton First Mennonite Church, said she regularly receives calls from people who "know that Mennonites help refugees" and she directs them to the Centre for Newcomers or MCC, as appropriate.

So, names can carry a powerful freight of history and identity. Depending on who is responding, the message may be either restrictive or welcoming, leaving each institution with the opportunity for good conversation, if nothing else. ▮

## VIEWPOINT

# Staying afloat in a sea of change

JOHN LONGHURST

SPECIAL TO CANADIAN MENNONITE

**F**or some in Mennonite Church Canada, this might be a frightening time, as the denomination faces an uncertain future. It might be cold comfort, but you are not alone; most denominations in Canada are facing the same uncertainties today.

I know this because last year I interviewed people who do fundraising for 15 Canadian denominational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that represent 30 denominations. Everyone I spoke with agreed that this is a challenging time for denominations and the programs they support.

And what are those challenges facing denominations today?

- **AN AGING** donor base. Many Canadian churches are greying. As churches age, the best and most loyal givers—older people—are dying. The next generation has not yet shown it can, or will, be as generous.
- **A SHRINKING** donor base. Along with growing older, many churches are getting smaller; the pool of donors is declining. The decline is more precipitous for the mainline denominations, but others are also seeing a downturn in membership and attendance.
- **WANING DENOMINATIONAL** loyalty. Much denominational giving today is predicated on the old idea that members will give loyally to that denomination and its programs: You are Mennonite and we are Mennonite, so you will naturally give to us. That is pretty much over. People today give to agencies that match their values or ignite their passions, not because they “own” them.
- **CHANGING ATTENDANCE** patterns. Twenty-five years ago, if you asked people if they went to church regularly,

they would assume you meant weekly. Today, many churchgoers are what Reg Bibby, a University of Lethbridge sociologist, coined as “monthly plus”—people who attend once, maybe twice, a month. They are still religious, but if they aren’t in church they can’t be reminded about the financial needs of the church—or put any money in the offering plate.

- **INCREASED COMPETITION.** The number of churches and donors is declining, but the number of charities seeking money from them seems to be rising. Para-church agencies, such as World Vision, Samaritan’s Purse and Compassion Canada, are especially aggressive—and sophisticated—in seeking donations in this shrinking market.
- **GROWING SECULARISM.** The fastest growing religion in Canada today is the unaffiliated, also known as the “nones.” That figure is now at about 25 percent of the population, or 7.5 million people, up from 12 percent in 1991. While many are deeply spiritual, they have no interest in organized religion.
- **OTHER CHALLENGES** include internal competition within a denomination itself—between the different ministries, programs and schools; changing donor expectations—more people want to give to projects, not ongoing programs; the narrowing of giving, as churches decide to keep more funds at home for local programs; and the general economic uncertainty—giving is falling in general in Canada.

The result? Less money to support longstanding programs, ministries and agencies, putting their futures in jeopardy. Some of the first to feel the effect are publications; last fall, two historic church publications, the *Presbyterian*

*Record* and the *Western Catholic Reporter*, closed due to falling circulation and lack of funds.

Of course, the church is about more than money. But a drop in giving is a sign of something going on, something that leaders need to pay attention to. And sometimes a good old-fashioned financial crisis can be the thing that sparks new and creative ways of imagining a new future. If the old way of doing church is no longer working, what would a new way look like?

One person who wrote about this challenging time was Phyllis Tickle. In 2008, she published *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why*. In the book she posited that every 500 years the church has a garage sale—a time of upheaval and transition when it gets rid of things it no longer needs.

The last sale, she said, was the Great Reformation. We are due for another one today. In an interview in 2009, she told me that during these times of rearrangement and upheaval, three things usually happen:

- **FIRST, A** new, more vital form of Christianity emerges.
- **SECOND, THE** organized and dominant expression of Christianity is reconstituted into something new.
- **FINALLY, SHE** said, “Every time the incrustations of an overly established Christianity are broken open, the faith has spread dramatically, thereby increasing the range and depth of the church’s reach.”

Are the challenges facing the church in Canada a sign of that great garage sale? Maybe. Is it terrifying? Certainly. Do we know what is next? Not yet. Will it be the same as what was before? Probably not. Is there hope? Absolutely, since God seems to be doing a new thing.

Now we just need to wait to see what that is, and when it will happen. ☺

*John Longhurst directs fundraising, communications and public engagement for Canadian Foodgrains Bank. He also puzzles aloud about the challenges facing church NGOs on his blog at [makingthenewscanada.blogspot.ca/](http://makingthenewscanada.blogspot.ca/).*



## WOMEN WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH

# Deepening our faith journeys

BY SHIRLEY STAUFFER REDEKOP

*“Jesus calls us to life-long journeys of faith—shaped in part by our age and stage in life. Faith practices are deepest and richest when our Christian community embraces and nurtures all these different ages and stages of our lives in a variety of contexts.”*

These words from an overview of the goals of the planners of the first-ever “Deep faith: Anabaptist faith formation for all ages” conference held at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, Ind., last fall, resonated with the goals of Mennonite Women Canada and MW U.S.A. to encourage women to nurture life in Christ, acknowledge and share their gifts, and hear and support each other, as we serve/minister across the street and around the world.

So we decided to help sponsor and support this conference, which offered three keynote speakers and 30 workshops, 19 of them led by women. It was inspiring to observe the ways in which women and men learned about different aspects of nurturing faith together, encouraging and empowering each other for the varied ministries in which we serve.

In her “Making room for formation: Practically communicating hospitality” workshop, Shannon Dykus, conference planning group member and co-pastor of First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, Ind., explored the nature of Christian hospitality and how the practice of this helps people become ever more like Jesus—especially in the offering of hospitality to “the stranger.”

Much of her presentation grew out of the practical realities her urban congregants face as they learn to relate to vulnerable strangers who may join them during worship, and highlighted the importance of experiencing both the difficulties and the goodness of hospitality, while remaining true to themselves.

Her example of engaging with a vulnerable, possibly unemployed stranger in conversation, stands out in my memory. Often we ask newcomers to our worship services about their place of work, but clearly that’s not the way to start a comfortable, hospitable conversation with an unemployed person. Alternatively, perhaps telling them a bit about why you like worshipping at this church could open the way for them to share something

they enjoyed during that morning’s worship service.

Dykus concluded her session with a prayer that I believe, if prayed regularly, could deepen our practice of hospitality and strengthen faith formation in all of us: “Jesus, make our hearts ever gentler and more humble, so that we may be present to those you have entrusted to our care, and in this way make us instruments of your love, which gives life and joy and real freedom. Amen.”

And in a plenary presentation on “Ordinary time forgiveness,” Rachel Miller Jacobs, spiritual director and assistant professor of congregational formation at AMBS, noted that forgiveness is an aspect of faith formation that presents a somewhat unique challenge for Anabaptists who value the virtue of peace and “reconciliation as the centre of our work.” She said that Anabaptists “often experience difference and disagreement as a terrible departure from the way things ought to be, and forgiveness as a grudging duty.”

So we need to develop forgiveness skills in the everyday offences we all commit and endure. Her illumination of the Greek word *afieme*—often translated as “forgiveness,” but which can also be translated as “letting go, remitting, cancelling, releasing or sending away”—widened our understanding of this, and provided some good ways forward in dealing with a biblical mandate we hold so dear.

Another workshop on “Women empowering women,”

*So we need to develop forgiveness skills in the everyday offences we all commit and endure.*

by Marlene Bogard, staff person for MW U.S.A., drew attention to the ways in which doing something “like a girl” still carries more negative associations than positive ones. Women still need empowerment, which can begin by naming, noticing and celebrating each other through intentional friendships. She shared stories and research data that indicate that women’s minds are hardwired for friendships. Women tend and befriend, creating deep relationships that can counteract stress, allow vulnerability and create belonging. She explained that friendships among women empower the deepening of faith in our lives as followers of Jesus, allowing us to be who God created us to be. ❧



*Shirley Redekop of Elmira, Ont., began as president of Mennonite Women Canada last July. She now works as a full-time outreach worker for House of Friendship in Kitchener.*





## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

# 'Everything turned into a sea for three days'

*MCC partners in North Korea work to ease the suffering of thousands affected by flooding and landslides*

BY RACHEL BERGEN

Mennonite Central Committee

Partners of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, also known as North Korea, are working to provide relief assistance for the hundreds of thousands of people affected by flooding and landslides in the isolated country.

From Aug. 28 to Sept. 2 of last year, heavy rains caused by Typhoon Lionrock pounded six counties of Hamgyong Province in the northeast part of the country. According to the United Nations, 138 people were killed, more than 100,000 were displaced and 600,000 others are in need of assistance.

One of MCC's partners in the region, the

Canadian organization First Steps, visited the affected areas along the Chinese-North Korean border to survey the damage and deliver relief assistance.

In Yonsa County, Bong-Suk Shin, 65, and her grandson Kum-Hyok Kim, 11, dug through the ruins of their home, looking for any possessions they could salvage. "Everything turned into a sea for three

days," Shin recalls.

Shin and Kim lost all their personal keepsakes and household belongings, including kimchee pots used to store the staple winter food. In their county alone, 81 are dead or missing, and of a population of approximately 40,000 people, more than 27,000 are homeless.

Susan Ritchie, executive director of First Steps, was part of the group that went to visit the region. She was startled by the immensity of the damage. "When First Steps went to visit in October, we travelled in a big circle, driving for a full day and most of the night. In that journey, all we saw was devastation," she says, including destruction and damage to many homes, schools, clinics, bridges, roads and rail lines.

But among this devastation, Ritchie saw signs of hope. "Everywhere we went we saw people who were affected by the flood, as well as people who had been mobilized from all over the country, to work to rebuild their homes," she says. "There

*'There were people of all ages gathering stones, which I assume will be used in construction. People are working hard to try to get their lives back on track.'*  
(Susan Ritchie, First Steps)

MCC PHOTOS BY JOHN LEHMANN



*Kum-Hyok Kim, 11, helps his grandmother, Bong-Suk Shin, 65, whom he lives with, look through the rubble of their home for anything they can salvage. It was destroyed in flooding due to Typhoon Lionrock.*



*Byong-Yoon Song, 81, a retired finance officer of a shoe factory in Yonsa County sits in front of his former home. He is currently living in a makeshift structure of thin plastic on the side of a nearby mountain as the community works to rebuild his house and hundreds of others.*





*In Musan County, a group of workers stand beside one of the region's many destroyed bridges.*

were people of all ages gathering stones, which I assume will be used in construction. People are working hard to try to get their lives back on track.”

In September, MCC's American partner, the Christian Friends of Korea, distributed 500 relief kits and 110 school kits to respond to the flooding in Musan and Yonsa counties.

In addition, MCC, through First Steps, will purchase 6,060 square metres of corrugated steel roofing for rebuilding damaged daycares, Kindergarten classrooms and clinics in Yonsa. Approximately 4,200 children will benefit from this project.

“Thanks to MCC, children in Yonsa will have a safe place to study and play where they will be shielded from the cold, allowing more family members to focus on rebuilding the community,” Ritchie says. “Patients will be able to take refuge from the cold as they seek medical attention.” ❧



*Workers unload a First Steps' shipment of relief supplies.*

## VIEWPOINT

# Questions for an uncertain year

WILL BRAUN

SENIOR WRITER

The year we left behind created big uncertainty for the year that lies ahead. Here is a glance at key questions that hang over what is sure to be an interesting and consequential year.

## What will Trump do?

He is the most “un-ignorable” guy in the world. He dominated the news in 2016—including the year-end reviews of religious news outlets—and the biggest question of 2017 is how the decisions of his administration will play out in the U.S. and abroad.

Will he disappoint his followers as the hype of campaigning grinds into the banality of governing, something that could feel a lot like re-establishing the establishment? Following his lead, will significant numbers of Americans claim open season on blacks, Hispanics, Muslims or whoever happens to be the trending enemy of choice? Will he be able to return prosperity to his disgruntled base, or will he and they realize that most of those “lost jobs” went to machines, not other countries or immigrants?

Might he put meaningful limits on Wall Street greed? Might he be unexpectedly bipartisan as a pragmatic dealmaker?

His record at home will have some bearing on his boldness abroad, where his decisions could affect not only people directly impacted by U.S. foreign policy, but the overall complexion of humanity. Will his bombast fuel fires of anti-minority nastiness elsewhere in the world, or will it cause the pendulum to swing back the other way?

Just as importantly, how will his opponents respond? The Trump movement powerfully and importantly illustrated the deep frustration with the current

political-economic system. Will his opponents learn from that or just push back at him in an ever-descending cycle of polarization? Will they find something more constructive to do than repeatedly and self-righteously exclaim how unthinkable ridiculous he is? Can they find it in themselves to understand the legitimate concerns, parsed from the raw bigotry, of Trumpers? Can we?

Trump is an unpredictable guy creating an unpredictable world. By this time next year we will have a much better idea of what he will actually mean for the world.

And let’s face it, Trump had a lot of closet supporters—people who might not have told friends they liked him but were attracted to much of what he stood for. A good number of such people surely exist within Mennonite circles on both sides of

WIKIMEDIA PHOTO (BIT.LY/WIKIMEDIA-TRUMP)



Donald Trump at the New Hampshire Town Hall at Pinkerton Academy, Aug. 19, 2015.

the border. The challenge for all is to find mature ways to deal with our shadowy sentiments, whether toward minorities or Trumpers.

## Will Syria stabilize?

After years of tragic obscurity, the Syrian conflict came to prominence in the media in September 2015, due largely to the photo of Alan Kurdi’s little body on a beach, and maintained that profile throughout 2016. As the conflict enters its sixth year, the death toll is around 400,000, and 11 million people—half of all Syrians—have been displaced either within the country or outside it.

The Russian-backed forces of President Bashar al-Assad have been responsible for a majority of the civilian deaths, but the so-called rebels are not exactly “good guys” either, consisting of countless groups, including brutal extremists.

After taking back the City of Aleppo, al-Assad has significant momentum. Will 2017 mark a turn towards stability, even if under dictatorship, or will the conflict continue to fester?

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) continues to work with Syrian church groups and others who deliver aid and pursue peace-related initiatives in some of the hardest hit areas of Syria.

## What lies ahead for MCC?

MCC will continue to respond to the global displacement crisis, as refugees leave places like Syria, Iraq, northeast Nigeria, Congo and Ukraine. Bruce Guenther, director of disaster response for MCC Canada, says MCC will also continue support for refugees who have resettled in Canada. He also foresees “increasing support for soil and water conservation activities, such as conservation agriculture with small-scale farmers, in light of climate change.

## What will be the next steps for MC Canada?

Mennonite Church Canada delegates are expected to have a long-awaited Future Directions proposal to vote on at a special session in October. Will it be administrative reshuffling or an infusion of fresh vision to enliven those of us who



don't get enlivened by matters of church bureaucracy?

**What will happen with MC B.C.?**

Last year was the one in which MC Canada delegates voted to allow congregations to explore non-traditional views on same-sex relationships. This vote has implications for Future Directions, as the departure of congregations over same-sex matters means less money for MC Canada, and less money is a driving factor in the Future Directions process.

A dozen pastors within MC B.C. are calling for the entire area church to pull out of MC Canada. Many in B.C. are not pleased with the same-sex resolution vote last year, nor the process that led up to it, nor the way in which denominational leaders have handled it all. Those with concerns are not looking for another protracted discernment process. They want action. That means MC B.C. faces major decisions in 2017, and those decisions could have significant implications beyond B.C. ☘



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# 'Consult or consent'

*Public forum on indigenous land rights probes responsibilities of settler neighbours in upholding UN Declaration*

BY BETH DOWNEY SAWATZKY  
Manitoba Correspondent

Mennonite organizations played a large role in putting on a public panel discussion on indigenous land rights in Canada and how they impact social groups at the community level, held late last year at Winnipeg's Circle of Life Thunderbird House. Entitled "Consult or consent," the event was sponsored by Mennonite Church Canada, the Canadian Mennonite University Student Council, and Kairos (of which Mennonite Central Committee is a member), along with three other organizations.

The panellists included Winnipeg MP Robert Falcon-Ouelette; Saskatchewan's Sylvia McAdam, co-founder of Idle No More; and Quebec MP Romeo Saganash, who served as a United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) negotiator on the Northern Gateway pipeline project that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recently halted.

Key points of discussion included:

- **THE LEGAL** necessity of obtaining free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) from relevant indigenous groups before the government or any private contractor can proceed with a land-development scheme, such as a dam or pipeline project.
- **BILL C-262**, a private member's bill currently facing parliamentary debate, written by Saganash to ensure Canadian laws remain consistent with obligations outlined in UNDRIP.
- **How UNDRIP** obligates various sub-groups of Canadian society to take action—not least of these, religious groups.

After the markedly recalcitrant Harper administration, many Canadians had hoped the Trudeau government would deliver swift remedy to the current state of indigenous relations in Canada. But after a year of slow progress, fear that the realization of UNDRIP may be a lost cause

in this country has been growing. All three "Consult or Consent" panellists took care to address this fear.

Saganash declared that, as Trudeau called for a radical change when he promised "a new nation-to-nation relationship" between first nations and settler Canadians, "our responsibility is to hold him to that promise." He referred with hope to the progress he has seen in his own home province: "The rules of the game are clear in Northern Quebec. Any developer who arrives [there] knows the rules. There hasn't been one project developed without the consent of the Cree."

Falcon-Ouelette said he "still [believes] in the desire of our government to make the change in our country," but cautioned listeners that "there has to be something on both sides." He said that currently, "the

question is, how do we go about ensuring [UNDRIP] has effect in all of Canada's laws?" He emphasized the power of the individual, and of community cooperation, citing the James Bay treaties as a case in which local stakeholders laid hold of a vision for a better future, and forced the government to negotiate.

McAdam set the bar highest for Christians specifically, laying on them the burden of responsibility to redefine the old, dominating relationship paradigms established by the church over the last century. "What churches can do is understand the history of the Indian Act," she said. "We are all horrified and outraged by the apartheid system, but those



*Pictured from left to right, front row, at the 'Consult or consent' panel discussion in Winnipeg on Nov. 12, 2016: Grandma Shingoose, an elder who gave an opening welcome and prayer; Quebec MP Romeo Saganash; Sylvia McAdam, a co-founder of Idle No More; and Winnipeg MP Robert Falcon-Ouelette.*

Europeans came here and took the Indian Act and applied it there. If we are going to walk together, you will need to know what FPIC is. You can't separate me from my people's lands."

McAdam's comments underline the fact that many of Canada's present difficulties with indigenous-settler relations were in-

*'What churches can do is understand the history of the Indian Act. We are all horrified and outraged by the apartheid system, but those Europeans came here and took the Indian Act and applied it there.'*  
(Sylvia McAdam, Idle No More)

curred as a direct result of collusion between churches and the state in colonization initiatives like residential schools—a bitter pill for all Christians, but uniquely so for Mennonites.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) cast a wide net over religious groups generally when it published its 94 Calls to Action in 2015:

**48. WE CALL** upon the church parties to the Settlement Agreement, and all other faith groups and interfaith social justice groups in Canada who have not already done so, to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms, and standards of UNDRIP as a framework for reconciliation. This would

include, but not be limited to . . . engaging in ongoing public dialogue and actions to support UNDRIP.

**49. WE CALL** upon all religious denominations and faith groups who have not already done so to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius* (a Latin expression deriving from Roman law meaning “nobody’s land,” which is used in international law to describe territory

which has never been subject to the sovereignty of any state).

If, for most Mennonites, the number of articles in the TRC’s report were not enough in itself to recall Martin Luther’s 95 theses, the document’s tone and structure undoubtedly filled in the gap. This fact, along with Mennonites’ enduring traditional peace commitments, may have accounted for their level of involvement in this panel discussion. ❧

## The refugee highway

*Three Mennonite lanes for refugee support in Kitchener-Waterloo*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
KITCHENER, ONT.

“**W**hy are there three Mennonite organizations working on refugee support in the Kitchener-Waterloo area?” was the question being answered at a Nov. 29, 2016, meeting at 50 Kent Avenue in Kitchener. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), Reception House and Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support, which all work at the refugee question from different angles, provided some answers for those in attendance.

Providing humanitarian aid to refugees in many overseas locations is one of MCC’s ways to support refugees. It is also a sponsorship agreement holder, meaning that it can facilitate private refugee sponsorships in Canada. This work began with the Southeast Asian “boat people” crisis of 1979, when Canada accepted 77,000 refugees over three years from Vietnam and other countries. In the past year MCC Ontario has worked with 249 groups to sponsor 757 refugees.

MCC helps groups to plan for the coming refugees and then supports the groups as they support refugees for a year. A key help is getting families onto the Child Tax Benefit so that the support monies for food and clothing do not have to go to pay rent.

Reception House was begun by the Kitchener-Waterloo House Church

Assembly in 1985 to supply short-term housing to government-assisted refugees. In 2008, it moved to a community board structure and is one of 36 such organizations in Canada. It has housed 250 to 300 refugees a year over the first 30 years of its existence, but in the past year (October to September), it had housed 700 and expected another 200 by the end of 2016.

A house on David Street in Kitchener proved too small, so the Holiday Inn in Cambridge is now used to support the main location. Generally, Reception House provides two to three weeks of temporary housing for refugees.

The Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support was founded in 1982 by Kitchener’s First Mennonite, Stirling Avenue and Olive Branch churches, and Breslau Mennonite. It works with people who claim refugee status either when entering Canada, or after they are in Canada on a short-term visa, and decide that it is unsafe for them to return to their country of origin. Up to 10 percent of the refugee claimants the coalition works with are from the LGBTQ community who face harassment or worse in their home countries.

Refugees have 15 days to file for status after they have been accepted into Canada temporarily, and then between 30 and 45



*Wendy Adema, program director for MCC Ontario who gives leadership to the Refugee Resettlement Team, left; Shelley Campagnola, director of the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support; and Lynne Griffiths Fulton, client support service director for Reception House, listen to Marlene Epp, professor of history and peace and conflict studies at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, at the ‘Three lanes on the refugee highway’ presentation at 50 Kent Avenue in Kitchener late last year.*

days to gather all the evidence they need to support their claim. The coalition helps them find housing and other supports they need, often turning to Welcome Home Refugee House or Open Homes, which places claimants in homes with volunteers for between three and 12 months.

Each of these three organizations work to get individuals and families into English-language training, their children into school, and all of them into health and dental care.

One of the questions from the floor was about what happens after the refugees have spent a year in Canada when the groups and government step back from immediate support. The response was that they work to make a smooth transition, especially in those cases where refugees who have become permanent residents have not been able to find work and need to go onto social assistance. Shelley Campagnola, director of the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support, said that the three groups want to present a united front because they feel like “we are in this together.” ❧




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## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

# No longer alone

*Ottawa Mennonite Church has new Mennonite neighbours*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent

OTTAWA

In past years, there were only two Anabaptist congregations in Ottawa, the nation's capital, one Mennonite Brethren and the other, Ottawa Mennonite Church, a member of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada.

But there has been an explosion of congregations of late: two new Mennonite Brethren associate congregations; a Brethren in Christ satellite of Oakville's Meeting House; and four more MC Eastern Canada congregations: Church of the Living Word and Oromo Evangelical Church (both Ethiopian), Chin Christian Church, and Village International Mennonite Church, which just announced it is leaving MC Canada and MC Eastern Canada over the Being a Faithful Church 7 resolution on same-sex marriage.

Anthony Siegrist, pastor of Ottawa Mennonite, a congregation of between 250 and 300 congregants, spoke to *Canadian Mennonite* recently about how the new riches of area church neighbours is affecting Ottawa's oldest Anabaptist congregation.

Siegrist feels that having been farther away from the large concentration of MC Eastern Canada congregations in central and southwestern Ontario has been good for Ottawa Mennonite, having given it room to try new things while at the same time see the gifts and treasures of being Anabaptist.

As a member of the Capital Area Christian Council, Ottawa Mennonite has been an Anabaptist voice in this ecumenical group. It actually has more contact with other churches than the Anabaptist ones.

Church of the Living Word formerly worshipped in Ottawa Mennonite's building, but does so no longer. Attempts to



*Pastor Anthony Siegrist is pictured in the worship space at Ottawa Mennonite Church.*

worship and fellowship together were uncomfortable, since Ottawa Mennonite is an established congregation, made up of largely established Canadian Mennonites, with a paid staff and a large building.

Bernard Sejour, the area church's mission catalyst for Ottawa and Quebec, has organized meetings for the MC Eastern Canada pastors to fellowship and chat, which resulted in their congregations coordinating a joint food drive. But "relationships are a challenge," says Siegrist, as most of the other congregations have volunteer leaders and members working hard to keep up. Prayer requests from the other leaders focus on their youth's commitments and inclusion in the church, since ethnicity is not enough to keep them in the fold.

Ottawa Mennonite is "compromised in all kinds of ways," says Siegrist with a

smile. Many of the congregants are federal government employees who might have trouble seeing the system at arm's length and cannot pretend about government use of force or foreign policy. Ottawa Mennonite benefits from being part of society, as the congregation has professional musicians in its ranks, many drawn to Ottawa through National Arts Centre opportunities.

Congregants cannot pretend to be "the quiet in the land," says Siegrist. They "live in ambiguity." Compared with the early church, which saw itself as a spiritual elite distinguished from society, Ottawa Mennonite is made up of "everyday folk making decisions of distinction about life in the marketplace," the pastor adds.

At the same time, Ottawa Mennonite has many who come to the nation's capital to work with organizations like the Mennonite Central Committee national office, making the congregation a place of "Christians negotiating with culture," Siegrist says.

Siegrist, an ethnic Mennonite from Lancaster County, Pa., sees Canadian Mennonites as different from those in the U.S., since they involve themselves more in politics here. One way the congregation is learning about faith and politics is from congregant Jack Mugendi Zoka, the Tanzanian high commissioner for Canada and Cuba, and a Mennonite church member.

Ottawa Mennonite is "a vital congregation, and it is important for it to be in the nation's capital," says Siegrist, adding, "Thriving now, it is finding ways to be a blessing and resource in this post-Christendom time." With vibrant worship, including all the senses, ecumenical connections, and a welcoming stance towards families with children, the congregation has hope.

But there are concerns. "Will young people come when their parents don't bring them?" Siegrist wonders, adding, "A number of families are composed of parents from different Christian traditions, and find themselves torn between [Ottawa Mennonite] and another congregation." His own Mennonite, Anglican and evangelical roots have been appreciated in the congregation, adding to its liturgical depth

and historical weight.

Siegrist says Ottawa Mennonite is a “gift to the community,” as it has brought a Ten Thousand Villages sale to the community

for the past 40 years. Many members also volunteer in the community, and the congregation has helped sponsor more than 100 refugees since 1959. ✎

## Engraved on the heart of God

*Sunrise service welcomes the Christ child into the world*

STORY AND PHOTO BY ANGELIKA DAWSON

Special to *Canadian Mennonite*  
YARROW, B.C.

**W**ith the moon still peeking over the mountains and the stars twinkling in the clear sky, more than 60 people gathered together in the wee hours of Christmas morning at the Epp family farm in Yarrow to celebrate Christmas with a sunrise service.

The service, entitled “While by my sheep,” was written by Heidi Epp, and included singing, monologues, Scripture reading and fireworks. Epp was very intentional about having the service outdoors and at sunrise.

“We think of the Christmas story as

though it’s a Christmas card, but it wasn’t,” she said. “It was uncomfortable. Bethlehem was crowded. The stable was full of animals. It wasn’t convenient.”

Congregants sat on hay bales covered with wooden planks and kept warm by the bonfire as they listened to local actors share their perspectives on the Christmas story. Mary talked about God bringing “Emmanuel, God with us,” into the world to live “out loud,” calling people today to do that same. Joseph spoke from the perspective of a carpenter and being carved in the palm of God’s hand. The innkeeper

shared how she helped Mary deliver Jesus, marvelling at Mary’s hospitality as she welcomed shepherds and wise men to draw near.

Each monologue was introduced with Scripture and the singing of carols, and when the angels enter the story, fireworks were set off into the sky. At the conclusion of the service, guests were invited to stay and visit, drink hot apple cider, and to carve their initials into the manger or stable as a symbol of being engraved on the heart of God.

For Epp, the service was a dream come true. As she thanked her family and all those who helped make the service happen, she said it was a gift to have so many people step into her dream and make it happen. The response from those who attended was so positive that she is already planning for next year.

“This will definitely be an annual event,” she said. “I’ve already had people asking!” ✎

### /// Briefly noted

#### Former Gretna pastor faces jail time for child pornography, voyeurism

Marco Funk, 36, a former pastor of Gretna (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church, was sentenced earlier this month in Steinbach to four years and eight months in jail after being convicted of producing and possessing child pornography, accessing child pornography and voyeurism. According to an Oct. 13, 2014, story in *Canadian Mennonite*, “charges were laid after two girls found a mobile device taking photos and video of them in a washroom at a private Moose Lake Provincial Park residence in the summer of 2012. The RCMP began its investigation when the matter was reported” in December 2013. The device was found to contain still images and video of the two girls.

—BY ROSS W. MUIR  
(with files from *Pembina Valley Online*). For a fuller story, visit [bit.ly/marco-funk-jailed](http://bit.ly/marco-funk-jailed).



*With the moon still peeking over the mountains and the stars twinkling in the clear sky, more than 60 people gathered together in the wee hours of Christmas morning at the Epp family farm in Yarrow, B.C., to celebrate Christmas with a sunrise service.*

GOD AT WORK IN US

## OBITUARY

# Mission worker befriended Jews and Palestinians

*Florence Cressman Kreider*  
 Sept. 26, 1929 - Nov. 1, 2016

BY WIL LAVEIST  
 Mennonite Mission Network



**F**lorence Cressman Kreider was a friend to both Jews and Palestinians, and she sought to spread peace wherever she travelled. The former mission worker died in Broadway, Va., on Nov. 1, 2016, at the age of 87.

A native of Ontario, Florence Cressman was a graduate of the Ontario Mennonite Bible Institute of Kitchener in 1948 and of Eastern Mennonite College (now Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.) in 1952. It was soon after graduation that she began to serve in missions.

She displayed a special concern for people who were enduring hardship and injustice. She also had a heart for fostering cultural understanding and mutual respect. In July 1953, she and her husband, Roy Kreider, were sent by Mennonite Board of Missions (a predecessor agency of Mennonite Mission Network) to Israel. The Kreiders raised their family there.

Amid the longstanding conflict between Israel and neighbouring Palestine, the Kreiders nurtured bonds of friendship with both Jewish and Palestinian communities. For 32 years, they served in the areas of peacemaking, interfaith healing and reconciliation.

The Kreiders were unashamed of their Messianic foundation and orientation, and they helped nurture the budding Messianic community in Israel that has grown in maturity and influence since 1980, says Wilbert Shenk, who was director of the Overseas Ministries Division of the Mennonite Board of Missions from 1965 to 1990. He says their actions showed great courage amid the political and religious tensions in the region. "Roy and Florence were pioneers in developing a dynamic theology of presence

rooted in their understanding of the life and ministry of Jesus," he says.

In 1985, the Kreiders returned to the

Shenandoah Valley region of Virginia, to Cornerstone Churches, where they developed pastoral counselling ministries.

"Her gracious hospitality, compassionate heart and gentle spirit were an inspiration to those who knew her, and her faith, down-to-earth spirituality and wisdom made her a mentor to many whose lives she touched with her friendship and care," reads a statement from her family.

Kreider is survived by her husband; two sons, David and his wife Mary Ann, of Harrisonburg, Va., and Jonathan and his wife Fran, of Lima, N. Y.; and daughter Rosemary and her husband James Hess, of Broadway, Va.; 11 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. ❧

## /// Staff changes

### Pastoral transition in Ontario

• **DAWNE** and **KEN DRIEDGER** have been serving as co-transformational interim pastors at Wideman Mennonite Church north of Toronto since last October. "Transformational interim pastor" may be something of a misnomer, they say, "since all pastors are really called to be transformational in some sense. In this case, our mandate is to serve as pastors at [Wideman], but as we do that, to also work with the church at addressing some issues that have hindered the church from doing its work, so that it can be more effective in the future." Previously, Ken served as an interim supply pastor at Wideman, and Dawne as transformational interim pastor at Milverton (Ont.) Mennonite Fellowship. Before that, they co-pastored Zion Mennonite Fellowship in Elmira, north of Waterloo.

—BY DAVE ROGALSKY



### Pastoral transitions in Saskatchewan

• **CELESTE WRIGHT** began her ministry to the Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite Church on Dec. 1, 2016. Wright, who grew up in Toronto and lived for many years in Guelph, Ont., says she had a variety of jobs before becoming a pastor, including taking care of monkeys as an animal health technician, and being a sessional lecturer at the University of Guelph. Most recently, she served as pastor of Waters Mennonite Church near Sudbury, Ont. Hoffnungsfelder Mennonite consists of three small rural congregations located near the communities of Rabbit Lake, Glenbush and Mayfair, Sask., about 180 kilometres northwest of Saskatoon. Wright, who was licensed toward ordination on Dec. 11, 2016, says the congregations are looking to her to provide a strong community presence. "We anticipate growth," she says.

• **ZACH DUECK** was hired as a part-time associate pastor of youth at Mount Royal Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. Prior to beginning his new job on Dec. 1, 2016, Dueck earned a bachelor's degree in biblical and theological studies from Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. He has served as interim youth pastor at Zion Mennonite Church in Swift Current, his home congregation, and as a counsellor and a camp pastor at nearby Camp Elim.

—BY DONNA SCHULZ





## ARTBEAT

# Play tells stories in refugees' own words

*Anabaptist ties to university's new theatre group*

BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. Correspondent

LANGLEY, B.C.

One of today's most pressing social issues came to life onstage last year at Trinity Western University (TWU) with the world premiere of the original drama, *disPLACE: Refugee Stories in their Own Words*. The play was presented through Dark Glass Theatre in association with the university's Humanitas Anabaptist-Mennonite Centre.

University theatre personnel sifted through more than 20 hours of audio interviews in order to find the words to use in the drama.

"The script was created through a collaborative process that included my actors, stage manager, assistant director and me," says Angela Konrad, artistic director of the newly formed Dark Glass Theatre and chair of TWU's School of the Arts, Media and Culture. "The words for the monologues were verbatim testimony of the refugees; scenes and songs included quotations and were inspired by refugee experiences, both those we interviewed and some from the broader conversation."

Experiences portrayed included the horrors of death and torture that refugees had fled, and the difficulties they faced when they settled in their adopted land of Canada.

Five actors portrayed a variety of refugees from various settings, from Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem and continuing to the post-Second-World-War Russian Mennonite experience in Europe. Also portrayed were modern-day people fleeing Colombia, Congo, Iraq and Syria.

The actors also performed vocal and instrumental music that had been composed for this production.

In one scene, one of the actors recited oft-heard excuses people give for not

helping refugees settling in Canada today.

Knowing that all the refugees' stories were true made them all the more powerful. "You can't tell these stories without [noting] their resilience," said Konrad.

*Experiences portrayed included the horrors of death and torture that refugees had fled, and the difficulties they faced when they settled in their adopted land of Canada.*

"These are real people."

Humanitas Anabaptist-Mennonite Centre, which has ties to TWU, is the umbrella organization for Dark Glass Theatre and will continue to support the company's future productions.

"In our view, the theatre initiative in general, and refugee stories in particular, connect with our mandate to develop and connect an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective to both the academy and the lived

experience of people," says Myron Penner of TWU's faculty of humanities and social sciences, and the director of Humanitas.

The mandate of Dark Glass Theatre is to tell stories "that enable us to see, face to face, people we might not otherwise meet, thereby decreasing judgment, increasing compassion and fostering empathy," says the Dark Glass Theatre website. "We aspire to tell stories that build bridges between groups or individuals separated by discord or trauma, and to equip individuals to explore and express their own stories of forgiveness and healing."

The Humanitas Anabaptist-Mennonite Centre is the product of a partnership between the Mennonite Faith and Learning Society and TWU. The Society is a registered non-profit organization that exists to

promote Mennonite studies in higher education through establishing chairs and research centres at Canadian universities; it has partnered with TWU to establish this multi-disciplinary research centre focussed on bringing an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective to addressing today's challenges and pressing issues, and fostering research and teaching on Anabaptist-Mennonite history, practice and values. ❧

DISPLACE PRODUCTIONS PHOTO BY JEF GIBBONS



*The cast of disPLACE is composed of Uliana Akulenko, Emmett Hanly, Jane Oliphant, Keenan Marchard and Kate Nundal.*

# Letting his spirit grow

*Saskatchewan musician dedicates gospel album to the church he grew up in*

By DONNA SCHULZ

Saskatchewan Correspondent  
CHRISTOPHER LAKE, SASK.

Like many Mennonites, Larry Krause grew up singing in Sunday school and church choirs. Music has always been an important part of his life, but in the past decade it has taken on greater dimensions.

As a singer/songwriter in the roots, western and country gospel traditions, Krause has recorded four albums. His most recent effort, entitled *Let Your Spirit Grow*, features gospel music. An earlier gospel album, *The Gate is Open*, won the Saskatchewan Country Music Association Gospel Album of Year Award in 2007.

Krause describes the 12 songs on his latest work as “a reflection of my faith.” The album is dedicated to Eigenheim Mennonite Church, the congregation Krause grew up in. He now lives near Christopher Lake, about 40 kilometres north of Prince Albert, Sask., but is still a member of the church near Rosthern.

“I spent close to 40 years there,” he says. Even while living away from home, “everything always kept drawing me back

to Eigenheim,” he adds. “I think that of any environment that I’ve ever been in, nothing has shaped me more.” In the album’s liner notes, Krause writes, “It was in that community . . . that my love of music, concern for my fellow man and my faith in God began.”

“The majority of songs on the album are older than I am,” says Krause, “but good gospel music is timeless.” Selections such as “Don’t Wait for Judgment Day” by Wilf Carter, and “Build Me a Cabin in Gloryland” by A. Parris and Curtis Stewart emphasize the importance of being ready for, and looking forward to, life after death.

*‘The majority of songs on the album are older than I am, but good gospel music is timeless.’  
(Larry Krause)*

Other songs, like the album’s title track, which is one of Krause’s own compositions, speak of the need for faith to meet the challenges of this life.

A former cattle rancher, Krause now works full-time as a correctional officer at the Saskatchewan Penitentiary. For many years he worked in both medium- and maximum-security facilities, but after being involved in what he describes as “more than my fair share” of violent incidents, he was forced to take a leave of absence to seek treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder.

Krause says the song “ASAP”—an acronym for “always say a prayer”—came out of this difficult time. It was prayer that got him through the experience and helped him move forward. He’s back at work now, although at the minimum-security Riverbend Institution.

Charity and fundraising concerts are a big part of Krause’s musical career, but he is offhanded about why he does them.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LARRY KRAUSE



*Larry Krause says his music is a reflection of his faith.*

“You’ve got a gift, and you don’t have to look far to find people who need a hand with something,” he says. One charitable organization he supports is the Shock Trauma Air Rescue (STAR) Service Foundation, which provide air ambulance service to remote regions of western Canada. “If you’re not helping in your community, you’re a liability,” he adds.

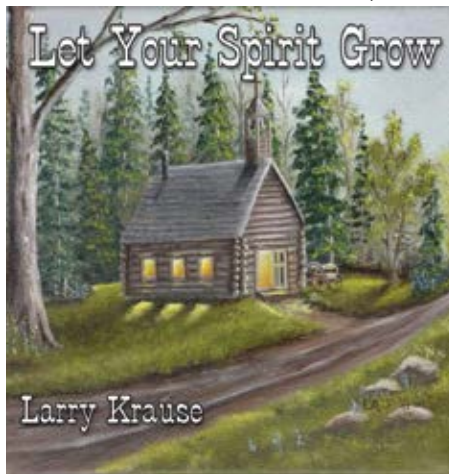
In addition to performing concerts, Krause hosts *The Timberline Music Show* on the Prince Albert Shaw TV network. The show features songs by, and interviews with, local country and roots artists, and is in its fifth season. Like *The Tommy Hunter Show*, which aired nationally on CBC Television for many years, Krause closes each episode with a gospel song.

“I’m pretty comfortable flipping back and forth between roots western and country gospel,” says Krause. His music “basically reflects the times, people and places that went before us and created the West that we know today,” he adds, noting, “Faith is kind of a winding theme that always runs through it.”

Let Your Spirit Grow is available at [larrykrause.ca](http://larrykrause.ca).



ALBUM ARTWORK BY LINDA JABUSCH



*Larry Krause’s latest album, Let Your Spirit Grow, is dedicated to Eigenheim Mennonite Church, the congregation he grew up in and is still a member of.*



## /// Briefly noted

### Canada's first 'tenx9' event launches in Winnipeg

WINNIPEG—Nov. 30, 2016, marked an important day for the Canadian literary scene, as a Winnipeg cohort launched the country's first ever "tenx9" story-telling event at the Good Will Social Club, a local cafe and music venue near the city's downtown core. Similar to the CBC's Vinyl Cafe's Story Exchange, "tenx9," which originated in Belfast, Ireland, in 2011, and now operates in 10 satellite locations around the world, invites groups of nine local storytellers, including amateurs and professionals alike, to share true stories no more than 10 minutes in length based on a theme. The fledgling Winnipeg event, "tenx9: Strangers," drew a crowd of nearly 100 people. Even within the prescribed theme, stories varied greatly in subject matter and tenor, drawing listeners through every response from raucous laughter and tears, to silent captivation. One conspicuous consistency, however, was a strong Mennonite representation throughout. The organization team, speaker line-up and audience all boasted substantial Mennonite representation, including many who identified simply as "culturally Mennonite." Co-organizer Sue Sorensen says it's "too early to say" whether this indicates any telling arts-and-culture correlation. Winnipeg's next "tenx9," scheduled for Feb. 5 at 7 p.m., will run on the theme "Signs."

—BY BETH DOWNEY SAWATZKY



*Nov. 30, 2016, marked an important day for the Canadian literary scene, as a Winnipeg cohort launched the country's first ever "tenx9" story-telling event at the Good Will Social Club.*

## ONLINE NOW!

at [canadianmennonite.org](http://canadianmennonite.org)

### Top 10 online stories of 2016

What topics were the online readers of *Canadian Mennonite* most interested in last year? [canadianmennonite.org/top-2017](http://canadianmennonite.org/top-2017)



### Australians speak for the stranger

In Australia, advocating for asylum-seekers is an act of faith for diverse believers who are drawn to Anabaptism.

[canadianmennonite.org/australians-speak](http://canadianmennonite.org/australians-speak)



### Third Way's 2016 top 10 quirky queries

The website Third Way averages 1,000 hits a day from visitors who are curious about Mennonite practices and beliefs. Here are some of their questions.

[canadianmennonite.org/quirky-queries](http://canadianmennonite.org/quirky-queries)



### Worship and song submissions, recommendations sought for new hymnal

MennoMedia is inviting Mennonites to suggest songs and worship resources, as part of the listening and study phase that will lead to a new hymnal collection.

[canadianmennonite.org/submissions-hymnal](http://canadianmennonite.org/submissions-hymnal)



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## Calendar

### British Columbia

**Feb. 24:** LEAD conference, at Langley Mennonite Fellowship.

**Feb. 25:** MC B.C. annual gathering, at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford.

### Alberta

**Feb. 24-26:** Senior-high snow camp, at Camp Valaqua, Water Valley. For more information, call 403-637-2510 or email [valaqua@explornet.com](mailto:valaqua@explornet.com).

**March 17-18:** MC Alberta annual general meeting and assembly, at Trinity Mennonite Church, DeWinton.

### Saskatchewan

**Feb. 11:** Mega Menno Valentine's Day event for youths in grade 6 to 12; at Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon; at 7 p.m.

**March 10-11:** MC Saskatchewan annual delegate sessions, "Extending the table: Enough for all"; at Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

**May 26-28:** Junior-high retreat, for youths in grades 6 to 9, at Shekinah Retreat Centre, Waldheim.

### Manitoba

**Feb. 2-3:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate presents three one-act plays by its junior-high students, at the Franco-Manitoban Cultural Centre,

Winnipeg.

**Feb. 8:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate open house, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.

**April 9:** Mennonite Community Orchestra presents its spring concert at the CMU chapel in Winnipeg. Works include Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 5" and Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony."

**April 27-29:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate, Winnipeg, presents its senior-high musical.

**May 8:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate bursary banquet, at the Canad Inns Polo Park, Winnipeg.

**May 17:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate work day, Winnipeg.

**May 31:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate presents its Grade 7-9 spring concert, at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.

**June 1:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate presents its Grade 10-12 spring concert, at Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.

### Ontario

**Until April 13:** "Tesatawiyat (Come in)" photography exhibit at the Grebel Gallery at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo. The community photography project features indigenous people near Hamilton, Ont., sharing their stories in their homes.

**Until April 21:** Exhibit at the Mennonite Archives of Ontario at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo: "Conchies speak: Ontario Mennonites in Alternative Service."

**Feb. 3:** Bechtel Lecture with Kenneth Nafziger, choral conductor and hymnody expert. Topic: "Melting the boundaries of our being: Explorations in singing together. Conrad Grebel University College Great Hall, Waterloo; at 7 p.m. For more information, visit [grebel.ca/bechtel](http://grebel.ca/bechtel).

**Feb. 4:** Song leaders workshop with Kenneth Nafziger, Bechtel lecturer, choral conductor and hymnody expert; at the Conrad Grebel University College Chapel, Waterloo; at 1:30 p.m. For more information, email [melodie.sherk@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:melodie.sherk@uwaterloo.ca).

**Feb. 5:** Community hymn sing with Kenneth Nafziger, Bechtel lecturer, choral conductor and hymnody expert; at the Conrad Grebel University College Chapel, Waterloo; at 2 p.m. For more information, visit [grebel.ca/bechtel](http://grebel.ca/bechtel).

**March 3:** Mary Jo Leddy, this year's Rodney and Lorna Sawatsky Visiting Scholar at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, presents a public

lecture entitled "Room enough for hope? Canada's response to the refugee crisis."

**March 25:** Menno Singers present Bach's "St. John Passion," with orchestra and soloists, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener.

**April 29,30:** Pax Christi Chorale presents Elgar's "The Apostles," at Grace Church-on-the-Hill, Toronto; (29) 7:30 p.m.; (30) 3 p.m.

**May 13:** Menno Singers present Honegger's "King David," and a world premiere of a new work by Colin Labadie, at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener.

**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). For more Calendar listings online, visit [canadianmennonite.org/churchcalendar](http://canadianmennonite.org/churchcalendar).**



## Classifieds

### Employment Opportunities

**MCI**

MENNONITE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE



Mennonite Collegiate Institute, located in Gretna, Manitoba, is searching for a principal to start in August 2017.

Our mission is to educate young people in an Anabaptist-Christian context, seeking to develop each student's God-given potential, providing a practice ground for maturing faith in Jesus Christ, in thought, love and action.

Our principal must be passionate about our mission, provide effective leadership, promote a vision for Christian education and build community – both within the school and its supporting constituency. We are seeking a person with a strong calling to serve within this dynamic context.

MCI continues to build upon a strong heritage of Christian education which began in 1889. Our school includes students from Grades 9-12. Approximately one-half live on campus in the school's residence.

To find out more about this exciting position or to submit a resume, please contact the search committee at [searchteam@mciblues.net](mailto:searchteam@mciblues.net).

Applications close March 31st, 2017.

[www.mciblues.net](http://www.mciblues.net)

## UpComing

### Application deadline for !Explore 2017 is Feb. 1.

ELKHART, IND.—"!Explore: A theological program for high-school youth," the summer youth leadership development program at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), is looking for youth in grades 10 to 12 to apply. The program consists of a group experience at AMBS from July 11 to 26, and a congregational experience working alongside a pastor for 100 hours over the summer. To learn more, or apply, visit [amb.edu/explore](http://amb.edu/explore). —Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary





EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

First Mennonite Church Edmonton is a multi-generational, urban church, of approximately 180. God has called us to be an inclusive, affirming, Christian community. This congregation is seeking an Intentional Interim Pastor for a term of approximately one year to commence spring/summer of 2017.

We are looking for someone with the following qualifications:

- Anabaptist/Mennonite training
- experience in the field of interim ministry
- pulpit speaking skills
- pastoral care skills
- a capacity to assist a congregation in visioning
- ability to effectively build relationships
- ability to assess the congregation's needs in looking for a new permanent pastor

Please contact Adela Wedler, Chair Pastoral Search Committee, at [mwedler@shaw.ca](mailto:mwedler@shaw.ca) for further information or to submit a resume. A Congregation Information form is also available from Mennonite Church Canada.

<https://sites.google.com/site/edmontonfirstmennonite/>



Westgate Mennonite Collegiate is seeking a Vice Principal commencing September 5, 2017.

The Vice Principal will assist in the management of the administrative and educational components of Westgate, a faith-based independent school in the Anabaptist tradition. As a member of the administrative team, excellent communication and interpersonal skills will be required to interact and communicate with staff, students, parents, and members of the wider school community.

Key duties will include:

- Assist in staff supervision and staff goal setting
- Assist in fostering positive student comportment within and outside the classroom
- Monitor daily activities of staff and students
- Attend to scheduling and logistical matters
- Serve as a resource to others in the school and the wider school community

Requirements:

- Valid Manitoba Teaching Certificate
- Five years classroom teaching experience
- Possess or working towards Master's degree
- Possess or working towards Level 1 or 2 Administrator/School Leadership certificate
- Member of a Mennonite Church of Canada congregation

Please submit a cover letter, vitae and a list of three references by February 6, 2017 to either 86 West Gate, Winnipeg MB R3C 2E1, [bhummelt@westgatemennonite.ca](mailto:bhummelt@westgatemennonite.ca) or fax to 204-786-1651.

[www.westgatemennonite.ca](http://www.westgatemennonite.ca)



## Goshen College seeks candidates for PRESIDENT

The next president of Goshen College will be energized by the call to lead the institution toward a thriving future in a changing, complex and competitive higher education environment. Committed to the Anabaptist Christian faith, Goshen College's 17th president will embody the core values of the college: Christ-centeredness, passionate learning, servant leadership, global citizenship, and compassionate peacemaking. S/he will also hold a terminal degree (or equivalent experience), and demonstrate a successful higher education leadership record (or equivalent executive leadership experience). The ideal candidate will have a substantial record as an innovative leader, skillful collaborator and faithful disciple as described in the following qualifications:

### Innovative Leader

- Creative, resilient, interculturally competent leader with strong communication skills and the ability to articulate, promote and build affinity for the college's core values
- Strategic thinker and experienced change agent committed to creating and promoting an inclusive community of learners that embraces both traditional and new constituencies, while embodying and promoting Anabaptist values and priorities
- Able to ensure a sustainable future by increasing enrollment, expanding fundraising, and developing new streams of revenue

### Skillful Collaborator

- Relational leader able to galvanize an administrative team, inspire faculty and staff, and build connections among an increasingly diverse student community
- Enthusiastic supporter of faculty, staff and student development and scholarship
- Able to develop fruitful partnerships with the various constituencies of the college, fostering healthy relationships with churches, donors, and Mennonite educational partners, and increasing the visibility of the college with local, state, national and international entities

### Faithful Disciple

- Follower of Jesus Christ who demonstrates faith and commitment to Anabaptist values in daily life
- Passionate advocate for justice and peacemaking, with an unwavering commitment to dismantling racism
- Able to nurture the spiritual vitality of the campus community

**Search Process:** Nominations and/ or letters of application with CV or resume may be submitted to Goshen College Presidential Search Committee at [GCSearch@mennoniteeducation.org](mailto:GCSearch@mennoniteeducation.org), or through postal mail to: Goshen College Presidential Search Committee, Mennonite Education Agency, 3145 Benham Avenue, Suite #2, Elkhart, IN 46517. Candidates from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Goshen College is an equal opportunity employer.

A man in a green uniform is seen in profile, looking out of a window. He is holding a pen and a small notepad. The window looks out onto a landscape of destruction, with a village that has been largely destroyed, leaving only rubble and a few remaining buildings. In the background, there are hills under a clear blue sky. The interior wall is dark and textured.

*From Aug. 28 to Sept. 2 of last year, heavy rains caused by Typhoon Lionrock pounded six counties of Hamgyong Province in the northeast part of North Korea. According to the United Nations, 138 people were killed, more than 100,000 were displaced and 600,000 people are in need of assistance. One of MCC's partners in the region, the Canadian organization First Steps, visited the affected areas along the Chinese-North Korean border to survey the damage and deliver relief assistance.*