

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

September 11, 2017

Volume 21 Number 17



## Back to school around the world

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## GUEST EDITORIAL

## Dare to dream again

WILLARD METZGER

Many of the stories in the pages of this magazine reflect the dreams of the people in our church family. There are stories of successful ministries, families reunited, young voices full of energy and hope. We also read stories of broken relationships, unanticipated outcomes, and of God at work in miraculous, unplanned and unexpected ways.

These stories of personal achievement, defeat, hope and surprise are also the stories shared by the wider church.

In 2000, we organized ourselves as Mennonite Church Canada. We dreamed of new possibilities for ministry. It was an exciting time. There were many brainstorming sessions. There were detailed planning teams. Optimism was in the air. We envisioned dynamic new ministries.

Hopes ran high. Many volunteers and leaders were appointed. New programs were created and new staff hired to lead them. Everyone was fully engaged and deeply passionate about the future. Many good people did excellent work. They persevered and dedicated themselves in every sense.

However, what we dreamed never fully gained sustained flight. Our dreams were impacted by significant culture shifts. There were some tough financial years. Controversial matters and differing perspectives on how to be faithful required our focus. We soared at first, but over time our dreams began to slowly sink like

a helium-filled balloon. Eventually, we landed on hard ground. Our dreams no longer seemed probable.

This could feel like defeat. It shouldn't, though. Coming together as MC Canada required us to be vulnerable to God's leading. That's a good thing, even if the best laid plans did not work out as we hoped. The pages of this magazine have carried many, many stories of how MC Canada ministries touched and changed lives "from across the street to around the world." Each one is cause for celebration.



realized. Meanwhile, a younger generation, less invested in the past, is eagerly peering ahead. They are imagining and dreaming of a church that is freer and less encumbered by historic patterns and processes.

We are living in a different time, and for this time we need to explore ways of being and doing that may look different from our past. We are being asked to make ourselves vulnerable again, and, in doing so, make our hearts and minds fully available to the Spirit's leading. Perhaps we are being called to dream differently. Maybe we are to be open to new dreamers. That can make us feel vulnerable.

But we can, and should, be confident in our vulnerability. God has made us confident in Christ and competent ministers of the gospel (II Corinthians 3).

No one knows what God has in store for



*We are living in a different time, and for this time we need to explore ways of being and doing that may look different from our past.*

But we now find ourselves in a different place. It is important to name this emotional space. Those who recall and invested heavily in the early days of MC Canada may be grieving and lamenting that certain dreams were never fully

our church at Special Assembly 2017, Oct. 13 to 15 in Winnipeg, but, as God's people, we can always dare to dream again.

*Willard Metzger is executive director of Mennonite Church Canada.*

## ABOUT THE COVER:

This issue's publication date coincides with the start of the school year for many children—and adults—around the world. On our front and back cover, and on pages 16-17, we present 'Back to school around the world,' a photo essay of many of Mennonite Central Committee's educational endeavours across the globe.

PHOTO: JULIANE KOZEL, STANSBERRY'S CHILDREN'S HOME, BOLIVIA

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Hebrews 10:23-25 • Accuracy, fairness, balance • Editorial freedom •

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Award-winning member of the Canadian Church Press



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GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH FEATURE

# What is the Spirit saying to our churches today?

BY DAVID MARTIN

MENNONITE CHURCH EASTERN CANADA

*“Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches” (Revelation 3:22).*



PHOTO COURTESY OF CENTRE4WOMEN

*Westview Christian Fellowship, a Mennonite Church Eastern Canada emerging congregation in St. Catharines, Ont., operates during the week as the Westview Centre4Women, offering a place of respect, dignity and safety for women in the neighbourhood. Erika Klassen, the centre's executive director, left, is pictured with Engie, who heard of the centre when she was feeling suicidal because of chronic pain. After receiving love, acceptance and support there, Engie offered her photographic talents to the neighbourhood women, taking portrait pictures of each of them. The event has become so popular it is now held annually.*

**T**hese words of John from the Island of Patmos are as relevant for us today as they were to the seven churches in the province of Asia who were struggling to adapt to the ever-changing realities of living under the rule of Roman emperors.

John challenged these churches to remain faithful to their call and to withstand the pressure of the emperor cult bearing down on them. He urged them to continue to shine brightly from the lampstands where they have been placed and to faithfully cast the light of Christ into the neighbourhoods of their respective cities. He challenged his churches to refocus on their original call to be the light of Christ. Each generation of the church needs to hear this challenge afresh.

The shifting weight of empire and culture impacts our churches today and calls us to carefully examine what faithfulness means in our present context. Are congregations and the wider church attentively listening for the voice of the Spirit, or are we mired in behaviours that are no longer relevant or faithful to the changing circumstances in which we live?

### ***Different context, same issue***

Speaking of context, this summer my congregation held an outdoor worship service at a nearby camp. It was a gorgeous summer morning and the sunlight sparkled off the leaves of the massive shade trees under which we sat. Neatly lined up in rows of lawn chairs, we faced the worship leader at the front. Through the portable sound system, we listened to a lovely prelude of guitar music before the worship leader led us in a lovely call to worship and gathering prayer that alerted us to the beautiful creation around us. The song leader led us in some opening hymns; Scripture was read from the front; the children gathered as usual for their worship time before the pastor led us in a short sermon.





PHOTO BY MICHEL MONETTE

*Hochma, an 'emerging congregation' in Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, serves a weekly breakfast to people in its Montreal neighbourhood. Congregants have been amazed by God, as lives change and relationships grow.*

Without realizing it, we had simply transplanted the behaviours and patterns of indoor worship into a context in which it didn't seem quite as natural or relevant. It made me wonder, is this a parallel to how we in the church are continuing to behave in ways that no longer fit the larger context in which we find ourselves?

The context for churches in Canada has changed dramatically in the past 50 years. We now live in a society that is rapidly losing any sense of the Christian story. Our social context is no longer framed by Christian understandings and assumptions. Many in our increasingly secular culture simply do not see any benefit in a faith-based worldview. The percentage of those who identify as religiously unaffiliated in Canada has grown from 4 percent in 1970 to 24 percent in 2010. Meanwhile, monthly worship attendance has dropped from 43 percent in 1986 to 27 percent in 2012, according to the Pew Research Forum.

### **No longer a robust spiritual heritage**

Closer to home, we are experiencing the breakdown of the historic bonds that have held Mennonite churches together. The bonds of kinship, culture and

shared history that have held the church together in past generations are swiftly disappearing. For many, both within the Mennonite church and for those who have distanced themselves from it, Mennonite has just become another cultural heritage rather than a robust spiritual heritage. With a weakened sense

*In the local congregation, we need to embrace behaviours that shift us from implicit faith formation to explicit sharing of our faith stories.*

of our faith identity, we have become more prone to being ensnared by an individualistic, consumer-driven culture that is suspicious not just of the church but of institutions in general.

When our context has changed so dramatically, is it faithful for the church to simply continue the same behaviours we have engaged in in the past? In fact, is blindly retaining those behaviours a renunciation of Christ's call to be light to the world today?

For instance, when the society around us was steeped in the Christian story,

churches in North America could, with some justification, declare that the "mission field" for the church was not on our doorstep. The "mission field" was "over there" among the heathen and those who had never heard the gospel. The task of the local congregation was simply one of worship, nurture and service. "Mission" was the mandate of the select few and was primarily engaged in overseas.

### **Where is the mission field today?**

In a society that is no longer meaningfully informed by a Christian worldview, it begs the question whether this assumption is still a faithful one. Perhaps the church needs to re-examine its assumptions and ask if the "mission field" is closer to home than it thought, and perhaps warrants not just one—but two—fronts.

Just as I was reaching the height of my restlessness in the outdoor worship service, my musings about how the church is inhabiting its context were interrupted. I sat up and took notice when I heard that the children were being dismissed to go and build Succoth booths out of branches to engage them with the story of Jesus and the Festival of Booths. Nice touch, I thought. It's great that the children's activity is geared to the outdoor worship context.

And then it was the adults' turn. We were instructed to turn our lawn chairs around to face each other in small clusters and informally share a faith story. Then we were sent off to experiment with new creative ways of praying: People were encouraged to move to prayer stations where they could pray using leaves or flowers, offer thanksgiving by blowing soap bubbles or simply take a prayer walk. As I ended my prayer walk, I was blessed by my pastor with a shower of soap bubbles cascading over me. I thought, now we are engaging in some

new behaviours that are relevant to this worship context. My worship experience somehow felt more authentic and faithful.

Like my summer worship experience, we don't have to abandon everything we have done in the past, but the church will quickly become irrelevant if it doesn't address the task of discerning which behaviours are appropriate for the new context. In the local congregation, we need to embrace behaviours that shift us from implicit faith formation to explicit sharing of our faith stories.

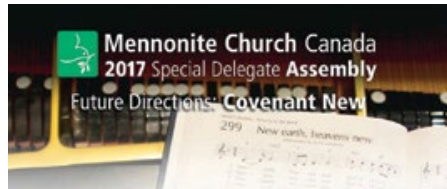
Please, no more Mennonite cookbooks! Let's focus instead on "Mennonite" as a spiritual heritage defined by our Anabaptist history and theology. The current preference for using "Anabaptist" is in large part due to the heavy cultural baggage with which we have encumbered the name "Mennonite."

If we are to be faithful within the current social context, then congregations need to be asking: Where is the mission field today? We must accept the fact that the average Canadian will not darken the door of a church any sooner than one of us will go uninvited to a Hindu temple.

Religion has become a foreign experience for many in our culture. I believe the Spirit is nudging us to take our experience of faith into our secular context and look for where God is already present and active in our workplaces, the hockey rink, our schools or our neighbourhoods. We need to re-learn how to be a people of faith in the community far beyond our church walls. We can experiment with new forms of missional communities that live out God's justice and peace in our neighbourhoods. To do so, we will also have to learn to overtly express our faith in simple everyday terms that make sense for the inhabitants of the new context.

### **Future Directions: Covenant New**

Faithfulness also requires us to re-examine the relevancy of our wider church structures. I am so grateful for the Mennonite Church Canada "Future Directions: Covenant New" process that is seeking to adapt the wider church structures to better support congregations to be agents of God's mission



in the new context in which they find themselves.

If congregational lampstands are going to shine brightly, then we need structures that provide greater congregational engagement, support and opportunities to discern how God is inviting us to engage in the life and mission of the church. With more flexible, adaptable structures that draw closer to the congregations, the wider church will be in a better position to support congregations in deepening their engagement in mission and witness, both internationally and here at home.

In short, if we are to faithfully allow the Spirit to revitalize the mission of the church in our new contexts, then we need to focus on congregational health and vitality and to invite leadership both locally and nationwide to call us back to the basics.

I believe that the Spirit is calling us in this time and place to re-imagine and re-tool the church. Revitalized congregations can support each other in having an impact in the different neighbourhood contexts in which God has placed us, whether that be here at home or in the international community.

As we become ever more attentive to the voice of the Spirit, we will be faithful to John's vision of the Risen Christ standing amidst the church lampstands animating the churches that are called to bear his image and light to the world. We will then experience anew what it means to be empowered by the Risen One to be his very presence in the places in which we live. ❧



*After 25 years of congregational ministry in Ontario, David Martin now serves as Mennonite Church Eastern Canada's executive minister.*

### ❧ For discussion

1. Have you ever thought of your church as a lamp on a lampstand casting the light of Christ into the neighbourhood? Is this an encouraging or unsettling thought? Name some ways in which your church has reflected God's light into its surroundings.
2. Is it important that people actually enter your church building and attend worship there? Why or why not? How is God already at work in the community outside your church walls? Consider ways in which members of your church are taking their experience of faith into their secular context.
3. Is there any practice in your congregation that might no longer serve its purpose? Why? Should it be abandoned or could it be modified to better match the current realities? Can you think of something that might replace it?
4. What are some dreams you have for how your congregation—and the larger Mennonite church—could be an agent of God's mission in the secular Canadian society? What supports would you and your congregation need to live out these dreams?

—BY VIRGINIA A. HOSTETLER

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## VIEWPOINTS

## /// Readers write

We welcome your comments and publish most letters from subscribers. Letters, to be kept to 300 words or less, are the opinion of the writer only and are not to be taken as endorsed by this magazine or the church. Please address issues rather than individuals; personal attacks will not appear in print or online. In light of the many recent letters on the topic of sexuality, we will edit any letter on this topic to a paragraph and post the rest online at [www.canadian-mennonite.org](http://www.canadian-mennonite.org). All letters are edited for length, style and adherence to editorial guidelines. Send them to [letters@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:letters@canadianmennonite.org) and include the author's contact information and mailing address. Preference is given to letters from MC Canada congregants.

## ✉ Why aren't Mennonites holding federal Liberal government to account?

I HAVE BEEN waiting for the deluge of reader letters and opinion columns expressing shock and disappointment that the current federal Liberal government has announced massive increases in military spending, but the silence is deafening.

On June 7, the Trudeau government announced a 73-percent increase over the next decade, translating into \$32.7 billion annually by 2026, compared to the current \$18.9 billion per year. It also announced that this spending includes 88 new fighter jets, compared to the previous Conservative government plan of 65 new jets.

Where is the outrage? In a five-minute search of past issues, I found several references from readers and columnists lamenting the Harper government's

*(Continued on page 8)*

## FROM OUR LEADERS

## Pay attention to each other

ED JANZEN

I am soon transitioning out of a leadership role with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Alberta.

Before this, I was a country rep in Bolivia, and before that a director with Fairview College. I was asked to write an Alberta piece for this space and was told it doesn't need to be about leadership. Maybe it isn't. I think it's about community.

The chair of a church conference once told me that, since he was a successful businessman, the conference should also be run as a business. It would be more successful. But a church isn't a bottom-line organization. And in a way, businesses aren't either. There is always a community that matters, with personalities, ideas, interests and motivations that bring people to their places of work. If little attention is paid to them as a diverse community of contributors, the energy of the business, the church, the conference, MCC, will shrivel up. We are not beings



who ditch our souls at the door and then contribute exclusively to someone else's bottom line, nor even to our own.

Donald Trump won the U.S. election partly because he paraded the notion that, as a successful, very rich businessman, he was suited to making America great again. I am not sure he is finding anything out, but most of the world already sees with some trepidation the troublesome leadership south of the border, where he makes it clear that certain sections of the population are dispensable.

The bottom line, if that is what drives Trump, is not all that keeps a nation of people together. It helps, but the need to belong, to matter to a community and contribute to its health, has to be a key ingredient that any enterprise, including MCC and the church—and the United States—should want to integrate into their cultures.

A week into my role as country rep for MCC in Bolivia back in 1991, Nestor

Perez, whom I barely knew at the time, sat down in my office one morning. "Don Abram," he said, this isn't going to work."

Seriously? I had already messed up?

"When you come to work in the morning," he said, "you can't go to your office. Not right away. You need to come to the back, where the rest of us are starting our day as well. One by one," he continued, "you shake everyone's hand and visit a little. Then go to your office or do whatever you need to be doing. But your work day always starts with the rest of us. Find us," he said.

Nestor died about eight years ago. He became a dear friend during our years in Bolivia, and his advice was one of the more important pieces of leadership wisdom I have been given. His advice to leadership, and to the building and nurturing of any community of human beings: "Pay attention to each other. Pay even more attention if you are the leader."

*Ed Janzen has been the executive director of MCC Alberta for 21 years. He still shakes pretty much everyone's hand every day.*



(Continued from page 7)  
military priorities, including:

- “IN THE last five years, since [Prime Minister Stephen] Harper began, militarism of Canada is increasing” (Nov. 10, 2010).
- “[G]OVERNMENT SPENDING by the Harper government has increased by an average of 6 percent

annually. Spending an additional \$16 billion on fighter aircraft is consistent with the military priorities we have now. During an election campaign, being a conscientious objector would suggest working actively to elect members of parliament who declare an interest in peace” (April 11, 2011).

- “IT IS a blatant and constant reminder of [Conservative] military priorities” (May 28, 2012).

## KINGDOM YEARNINGS

# When coffee replaces swords

RYAN JANTZI

Five hundred years ago, our spiritual ancestors were on the cusp of an extended bloodbath of religious violence. In marked contrast, I just enjoyed a three-hour conversation over coffee. Our time was filled with laughter, joy and mutual sharpening. We parted ways with warm hugs. What a difference half a millennium has made. Thanks be to God!

Catholic, Lutheran and Mennonite are the three stripes of the Christian church in the small town where I pastor. While the story certainly isn't faultless, these three congregations have a history of working together. We have hosted celebration dinners at the opening of one another's new church buildings. We team up annually for a village-wide Vacation Bible School program.

Together we operate a community thrift store and food bank, and gather for ecumenical worship twice each year. Different

flavours, to be sure, but these sisters and brothers in Christ have sought to extend his kingdom side by side.

At points in the conversation, we—the three Christian ministers of our town—nodded in unison with hearty agreement. At other points, we simply listened as the other articulated a theological idea or

ministry practice we remained unconvinced about. Throughout, though, the central underlying theme of our camaraderie was this: “Jesus is Lord.” Together, we unabashedly declare that through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, our sin has been forgiven and the power of evil has been defeated. Despite the variances in our doctrine and practice, we are truly sisters and brothers in Christ.

There is no question that there are some things that puzzle me about the way my Lutheran and Catholic colleagues practise their faith. Some differences give rise to pleasant curiosity. Other pieces I observe with concern, believing them to be distortions of the faith Jesus has called

and respect them. Sometimes, acknowledging the differences and then freeing one another to fully be who you believe God calls you to be, is a more beautiful glimpse of Christian harmony.

Someday, in the new heavens and new earth, we will stand side by side as one indistinguishable people, confessing together that “Jesus is Lord.” We will experience perfect Christian unity. Perhaps then, together we will understand fully what Jesus was getting at when he said, “Do this in remembrance of me.” Or maybe we'll have ironed out the exact relationship between faith and works. And possibly, by that point, none of it will really matter.

Until then, we will live and serve as a Christian family here in our little town. We are members of one household, even though we may occupy different rooms. We will worship and serve in unison at some points and diverge at others. In all things, we will declare together, “Jesus is Lord!”

I'm thankful that long, coffee-fuelled



*Someday, in the new heavens and new earth, we will stand side by side as one indistinguishable people, confessing together Jesus as Lord.*

us to. It is my hunch that this is a mutual feeling for all three of us.

Perhaps some might long for the merging of these flavours into one shared expression of the Christian church. I am not convinced. Rather than whitewashing the significant secondary issues which distinguish us, I prefer to acknowledge

conversations followed by hugs have replaced the fear and anger that once was.

*Ryan Jantzi pastors Kingsfield-Zurich Mennonite Church, Ont., where he's fascinated with exploring the interplay between traditional church and new expressions of mission.*



Now that many of us have helped elect members of parliament “who declared an interest in peace,” why are we not holding them to account? Will we again “work actively” during the next election to defeat this government with its apparent military priorities? Or are their “sunny ways” blinding many of us to the broken promises, hypocrisy and outright lies?  
HERMANN ENS, WATERLOO, ONT.

### ✉ Reader likes to read about missionaries

RE: “GOING FURTHER together” feature, July 3, page 4.

We have had the *Canadian Mennonite* publication for many years. It was interesting, but not many  
(Continued on page 10)

## GATHERING AROUND THE TABLE

# Midwestern recipe has surprising origin

BY KEN REDDIG

The intercultural migration of foods is very interesting. My mother-in-law, Helen (Faul) Fadenrecht, who lived in North Dakota, regularly made a recipe she called Bean Sprouts, because that was the primary ingredient. Helen was a good cook, considered one of the best in the community, and her Bean Sprouts dish was unusual and delicious. It became one of her specialties.

It was a family favourite, and her children went on to use the recipe for their families. Everyone assumed it was a *Schwäbisch* (Swabian) recipe because my mother-in-law had roots in southwestern Germany and made many other *Schwäbisch* dishes. When I was introduced to the family and visited Willa's farm home, I was served Bean Sprouts at my mother-in-law's table, and they quickly became a favourite of mine.

When Willa and I were married 50 years ago in Munich, N.D., our honeymoon was a 10-day tour of the northern states and the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba. Travelling through Northern Ontario, we stopped for dinner at the Panda Chinese Restaurant in Kenora, Ont., and decided to try a Chinese dish we had heard of but had never eaten before. We chose Egg Foo Yung.

To our surprise, when the dish was



PHOTO COURTESY OF KEN REDDIG  
Willa and Ken Reddig

*To our surprise, when the dish was brought to the table, both Willa and I stared in astonishment. Egg Foo Yung looked and tasted exactly like Bean Sprouts!*

brought to the table, both Willa and I stared in astonishment. Egg Foo Yung looked and tasted exactly like Bean Sprouts! That began a search for how Egg Foo Yung became a staple in a rural North Dakota Mennonite farm home.

Following some research and sleuthing, we discovered that Willa's grandparents on the Fadenrecht side—her father's parents, not her mother's—had befriended missionaries to China who were home on furlough, and somehow the dish was passed on to them. Willa's mother enjoyed the recipe, and eventually it

became part of her repertoire.

When our ancestors lived in Russia, they borrowed a lot of recipes from the Ukrainians, often adding their own little twist to them.

Egg Foo Yung is one of those dishes that experienced cooks will often vary, including the ingredients beyond the

basic bean sprouts and eggs, but no one doubts that the dish originated in China.

*Ken Reddig is a member of the Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service board of directors.*

*With editorial assistance from Barb Draper.*

*To see this recipe that comes from Helen Fadenrecht, visit [canadianmennonite.org/bean-sprouts](http://canadianmennonite.org/bean-sprouts).*



*(Continued from page 9)*

Christian workers were written about until the July 3 issue. This is wonderful, informing us about overseas missionary workers. You could go into more detail of the work of our many overseas and local workers.

I pray for all our workers, one a day of course, and half of my 10-percent tithe goes to support our overseas work.

Thank you so much.

I am 87 years old and living in a wonderful seniors residence, Sunny South Lodge in Coaldale, Alta.

**OLGA EPP, COALDALE, ALTA.**

## ✉ Alan Kreider remembered in England

**RE:** "A MAN of 'Christian faith and its joys and struggles,'" June 19, page 19.

On 11 July, more than 100 people gathered in central London for a thanksgiving service for the life of Alan Kreider. Alan and Eleanor had been Mennonite mission workers in England for 30 years, until 2000; for much of this time they were the directors of the

London Mennonite Centre. The service mirrored an earlier service at Prairie Street Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind., using the same hymns and readings.

Over refreshments, including scones and Alan's favourite Oxford marmalade, many shared stories of Alan and reflections on his influence in their lives. Others wrote in with their tributes. Chris Horton called Alan "a quiet, humble giant in the kingdom. He was like yeast, someone who started much 'patient ferment' in the U.K." Andrew Francis wrote: "We have rich memories of times of teaching, conversation, laughter and good counsel. Together, Alan and Ellie have helped us reshape our lives' priorities Jesus-style."

Plans are emerging for an Alan Kreider Legacy Fund to support scholars working in the areas of early church history and Anabaptist studies, and to facilitate exchange visits and learning tours between Anabaptists and Mennonites from different parts of the world. Donations to this fund can be made via the Mennonite Trust. For details, email [administrator@menno.org.uk](mailto:administrator@menno.org.uk).

**STUART MURRAY WILLIAMS,  
LONDON, ENGLAND**

## ✉ Cross-cultural birthday party reminds us of our 'refugee' roots

ON MAY 28, a group of Canadian newcomers held a birthday party in St. Catharines, Ont. There were two families that had come from Colombia in the last three years and a family from Syria who arrived a year-and-a-half ago. Three families from The First Mennonite Church in Vineland were represented. The birthday party was for Canadian-born Adolpho Garcia, who had just turned a year old.

This gathering was a moving expression of the Canadian refugee experience. Many there were born outside of Canada, even most of the Mennonite church sponsoring families. Nearly everyone's mother tongue was not English. Yet here we all were, speaking English, Spanish and Arabic, and dancing to Latino music. After whacking the piñata, the children picked up their candy and toys, and we had birthday cake.

It was such a joy to be part of this group. Trusting relationships had been cultivated around the church sponsorship experience, and everyone felt secure together. The struggle of their journey to Canada and the hardships of the refugee exodus, while still fresh in their memory, were overshadowed by laughter on this day.

It was energizing to be part of an endeavour that has brought sanctuary and safety to people whose lives were shattered by war and violence. As Mennonites, our story in south Russia was similar to our new friends from Colombia and Syria. We can all be thankful for the



*The children hold hands just before the piñata is whacked at Adolpho Garcia's first birthday party.*

haven that Canada has been for so many people.

The happiness of this cross-cultural get-together fortified us all in our resolve to be active in helping change the world. One family at a time, congregations can make a difference. The mustard-seed approach, which Jesus reminds us of, can prompt us to do efforts of service that bring hope to a hurting world.

**TOM NEUFELD, VINELAND, ONT.**

*Tom Neufeld is a member of The First Mennonite Church, Vineland, Ont.*



## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Bartel**—Daxton Anthony (b. July 21, 2017), to Steve and Kaylyn Bartel, North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

**Friesen**—Blake Ezra Robert (b. March 30, 2017), to Evan and Erika Friesen, Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.

**Richert**—Maida Gerbrandt (b. March 31, 2017), to Virginia Gerbrandt Richert and Andrew Richert, Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.

### Baptisms

**Naomi Derksen, Aaron Phoenix**—Zion Mennonite, Swift Current, Sask., June 4, 2017.

### Marriages

**Braun/Dib**—Joey Braun (Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.) and Isabel Dib, at La Broquerie, Man., June 17, 2017.

**Froese/Voth**—Lena Froese and Corey Voth (Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.), at Emmanuel Mennonite, Winkler, Man., June 16, 2017.

**Martin/Petrovov**—Kyle Martin and Heather Petrovov, Elmira Mennonite, Ont., July 15, 2017.

**McLean/Wildeman**—C.J. McLean and Jeannesta Wildeman (North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.) in Saskatoon, July 21, 2017.

**Neff/Robillard**—Madeline Neff and John Robillard, Elmira, Mennonite, Ont., June 24, 2017.

### Deaths

**Bartel**—Linda Emma (Gerbrandt), 97 (b. Sept. 25, 1919; d. July 13, 2017), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

**Berg**—Walter, 82 (b. Feb. 20, 1935; d. June 28, 2017), Grace Mennonite, St. Catharines, Ont.

**Berlet**—Deborah (nee Clemmer), 62 (b. Sept. 22, 1954; d. July 20, 2017), Erb Street Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

**Cressman**—Erma May (nee Dedels), 100 (b. Jan. 18, 1917; d. July 18, 2017), Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

**Dyck**—Christopher Terence, 38 (b. July 18, 1979; d. July 22, 2017), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask., in Coaldale, Alta.

**Enns**—Helen, 86 (b. Oct. 13, 1930; d. July 5, 2017), Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.

**Flaming**—Jacob, 93 (b. Feb. 8, 1924; d. July 15, 2017), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

**Friesen**—Elizabeth April (nee Klassen), 88 (b. April 18, 1929; d. July 15, 2017), North Star Mennonite, Drake, Sask.

**Hamm**—Victor, 90 (b. May 27, 1927; d. July 13, 2017), Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite, Waterloo, Ont.

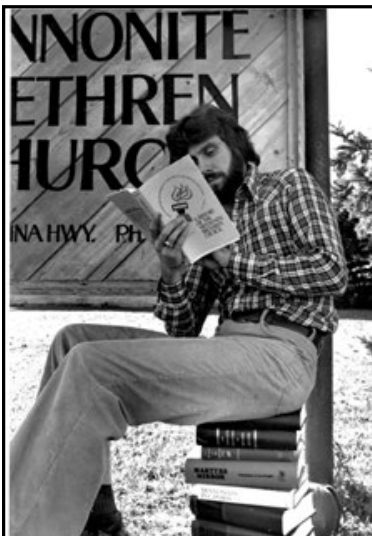
**Jack**—William Daniel (Dan), 64 (b. Jan. 7, 1953; d. July 17, 2017), First Mennonite, Calgary.

**Martin**—Gordon, 82 (b. Dec. 16, 1934; d. July 3, 2017), St. Jacobs Mennonite, Ont.

**Peters**—Abe, 76 (b. Dec. 15, 1940; d. July 16, 2017), Bergthaler Mennonite, Altona, Man.

**Please send Milestones announcements by e-mail to [milestones@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:milestones@canadianmennonite.org), including the congregation name and location.**

## A moment from yesterday



Bill Koop sits on a stack of Mennonite history books, leaning against the Fort Garry (Man.) Mennonite Brethren Church sign. Recently deceased Canadian storyteller and broadcaster Stuart McLean wrote in *Vinyl Café Turns the Page*: “Choosing a hero is a delicate business, one that shouldn’t be undertaken frivolously. For the heroes we choose, whether real or imagined, whether from the world of fact or from the pages of fiction, will determine, to a greater or lesser degree, the things that we do, and if we allow them the privilege, the lives that we lead.” Who are your heroes? How are they shaping your life?

Text: Conrad Stoesz / Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies

Photo: Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies



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

## WOMEN WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH

# Embracing traditions



BY MEL HARMS

**H**ave you ever wondered about your family traditions? What are they and when did they come to be? That's been me this summer. Every summer we have our "must do" plans, and my girls go along without question because it's tradition. This year, it became clear that some of our habits have become family traditions.

Ever since I was a child my family has travelled from Saskatchewan out to Vancouver Island to visit my grandparents and uncle. Each summer we'd pack up our stuff, and, for two weeks, head out on our adventure. As a kid,

those two days of driving our faithful route on the Yellowhead seemed like they took forever! When Mom was kind enough to let us sit in the front seat, you became so excited for a better view of the mountains.

My grandparents and uncle shared 1.2 hectares that sat between two highways. When you'd walk over to Grandma's from Uncle's house, you'd

walk on this amazing path past the massive woodsheds, through the tall cedars and maples, and over a small bridge at the creek that separated the properties. The peacefulness that you'd feel on just that short walk is like nothing else. Once you got to Grandma's, you knew that it wouldn't take long for the cards to be broken out and the cribbage games would begin. I learned how to play crib at a young age and learned quickly, because I had to be a part of this fun that I'd been missing!

There were also other holiday things we needed to do as tourists in B.C. We had to see all the attractions the area offered, such as travelling to Chemainus to see the murals, to Duncan to see the totem poles and watch some being carved, to the Coombs country market to see the goats on the roof, and to Cathedral Grove to see



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MEL HARMS

*Mel Harms takes a selfie on Vancouver Island this summer.*



*A four-generation game of cribbage. From left to right: author Mel Harms; Mel's grandmother, Karla Svendsen; Mel's daughter Mya; and Mel's mother, Wendy Desmarais.*

trees bigger than we'd ever seen before. Every trip was an adventure, even if we'd been there many times before.

Now, here I am, years later, married and with three beautiful teenage daughters of my own. We still make the annual trek west. Taking that Yellowhead highway, we travelled so many times with Dad before he passed away in 2009, we made many of the same stops that hold so many memories.

This summer, travelling with Mom—who still joins us every year—and my daughters, I realized how many traditions we've made over the years. My own family has embraced many of them; some we've slowly let go, while slowly adding our own things along the way.

This year we went tubing down the Cowichan River, which could easily become a new tradition, since it's a chance to relax and cool down while providing us hours of time together. We even made *rollkuchen* to eat by the ocean, which was definitely a first.

But one of the traditions that hasn't died is our games of crib. The highlight this year was being able to play crib with four generations of women. How many people can say they've done that? It truly was a moment that I'll never forget.

It's all of these moments that make us who we are. For it's in these traditions that we embrace and acknowledge our beginnings. They're part of our roots, and I'm thankful for the memories they bring.

But more importantly, none of this is possible without God, who created the beauty that surrounds us and has been with us in all these moments, even if we weren't paying attention, watching over us on our adventures and blessing us greatly with loving family traditions. It took me years to realize this, but now I give thanks for God's patience and unending love. ☩



*Tubing on the Cowichan River in B.C.*

*Mel Harms, a member of Warman Mennonite Church, represents Saskatchewan Women's Ministry on the board of Mennonite Women Canada.*



## GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

# 'We sing the same songs'

*Mennonites join Cree community for music, dancing and food*

STORY AND PHOTO BY DONNA SCHULZ

Saskatchewan Correspondent

MARCELIN, SASK.

“Next to food as a gift from God . . . song pulls us together.” With these words, Harry Lafond welcomed singers, dancers and audience members to a very special concert.

Muskeg Lake Cree Nation hosted the culture-sharing event, which took place Aug. 20 in a large outdoor shelter known as the Arbour. The people of Muskeg Lake and Mennonite Church Saskatchewan's Walking the Path Committee worked together to plan the event.

A little over a year ago, during MC Canada's assembly in Saskatoon, a group of assembly participants toured the first nation. Ben Pauls, pastor of Zoar Mennonite Church in Waldheim, led participants in singing for their Indigenous hosts in the Arbour. At the time, Pauls noted the facility's excellent acoustics. That event became the spark for this summer's Shared Land, Shared Song gathering.

In preparation, Pauls assembled a choir of about 20 singers from as many as eight MC Saskatchewan congregations. The choir performed a rich program of works ranging from classical to contemporary, including several pieces with Indigenous origins.

Dolores Sand, a Muskeg Lake elder, sang a number of songs in the Cree language. She also sang “Will You Come and Follow Me” (familiar to the Mennonites in the audience as No. 39 in the *Sing the Story* songbook). As Sand took her seat, Pauls noted the common ground shared by Mennonites and their Indigenous neighbours. “It's nice to know we sing the same songs,” he said.

Cree dancers in full regalia performed traditional powwow dances, accompanied by the Two Nations Drummers. Cal Arcand, the master of ceremonies who

was also one of the dancers, explained the significance of each dance. He encouraged the audience to show appreciation for the dancers with their applause not only after—but during—their performances.

Jordan Daniels, a young fiddler from the Mistawasis First Nation, performed solo and also accompanied Katie Boyer of Rosthern, Sask., as she introduced the audience to several traditional Métis dances.

Arcand and the Many Nations Dancers brought the concert to a moving conclusion as they led everyone present in a round dance.

A group of recent immigrants from Saskatoon's Open Door Society also joined Mennonites and Muskeg Lake residents for the concert. They had arrived earlier in the afternoon for a tour of the first nation.

Finally, performers and audience members alike were invited to join in a potluck feast featuring Mennonite-style farmer's sausage and first nations-style bannock. Lafond said that, in planning the event, they felt that sharing food was essential: “Our people totally enjoyed the Mennonite sausage the first time we were together, so the menu was easy.” An abundance of salads and desserts also graced the buffet.

Eric Olfert, who is part of the Walking the Path Committee, said the event was certainly a success in terms of attendance. He estimated that 70 to 75 Mennonites attended, along with the 50 newcomers from the Open Door Society. About 45 to 50 residents of Muskeg Lake acted as hosts for the event.

But numbers don't tell the whole story. “This weekend was [also] a success in terms of building relationships,” said Olfert. “It felt like we were getting to the objective of being comfortable in each other's presence.”

Lafond is no stranger to building relationships. As executive director of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner, he has had many years of experience facilitating conversations between diverse groups. “Getting people into the same room is one of the key things,” he said, along with “providing ways of engaging that feel safe.” Sharing a meal, he added, can provide a safe place for conversation to begin.

What is the next step along the path? Olfert cited Lafond: “Harry says relationships develop best around stories, music and food.” As this event focused on music and food, perhaps a future gathering will feature an exchange of stories. Lafond has heard of the possibility of one MC Saskatchewan congregation joining the people of Muskeg Lake for a prayer exchange.

Whatever the future holds, it seems certain these two communities will continue walking the path together. ❧

See videos and more photos online at [canadianmennonite.org/shared-land-shared-song](http://canadianmennonite.org/shared-land-shared-song).



*Mennonite choir members, first nations drummers and dancers, and recent immigrants from the Saskatoon Open Door Society gather for a group photo at the Shared Land, Shared Song event.*

# 'Now is the time to respond'

*Congolese Mennonites suffer atrocities amid displacement of 1.4 million*

BY WILL BRAUN  
Senior Writer

[WARNING: This story contains graphic descriptions of violence.]

Dozens of Congolese Mennonites have been killed, hundreds of their homes have been burned, and thousands of them have fled, as violence consumes the Kasai region, birthplace of the Mennonite church in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) reports 36 confirmed deaths of Mennonites, 12 church schools destroyed or attacked, 16 churches destroyed or attacked, and 342 homes destroyed. Those numbers may rise in the coming days.

Speaking through a translator via Skype, Pastor Adolphe Komuesa Kalunga—head of the Mennonite Church of Congo as well as an elected member of the government of President Joseph Kabila—emphasized that it is difficult for church leaders to communicate with people in the Kasai region because many are in hiding in the forests.

Those Mennonites are among an estimated 1.4 million displaced persons in the region, including roughly 850,000 children. The death toll is more than 3,000.

The violence started last year with tension between the government and a chief in Tshimbulu, a town in a region considered opposed to the government. After being sidelined by the government, the chief, who carried the traditional title *Kamuina Nsapu*, formed a rebel militia that destroyed a local government post. Government forces then killed him and refused to return his body.

The chief's militia, also under the name *Kamuina Nsapu*, then grew, fuelled by unequal distribution of wealth, disenfranchisement and adherence to a particular deity that rebel leaders claimed would

render fighters invincible.

Government forces responded by reportedly killing indiscriminately door-to-door in areas associated with the rebels. This spring, as hostilities continued, a second particularly brutal militia—*Bana Mura*—was formed with participation of elements of the government, according to the UN. Much of the violence fell along ethnic lines, with all sides reportedly guilty of atrocities. Entire villages were destroyed on the basis of ethnicity.

## Gruesome accounts

A Mennonite assessment team made up of Congolese church people heard stories of mutilations, beheadings and sexual violence. The team met with a range of survivors, including some Mennonites, in Tshikapa and Kikwit.

Rod Hollinger-Janzen, executive coordinator of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM), which has been involved in the region since 1912, visited Congo in July. He spoke with Joseph Nkongolo, a member of the assessment team. Nkongolo recounted the story of a mother handing a newborn baby to her six-year-old daughter before being killed along with her husband. The rebels then sent the girl away with the baby.

Another woman witnessed her husband's decapitation and was then forced to carry his head to a sort of altar used by the killers. Hollinger-Janzen saw pictures of heads gathered around an idol-like figure.

Children witnessed their parents being hacked to death with machetes.

Roughly a third of the people the assessment team spoke with were too



PHOTO © UNICEF / DUBOURTHOUMIEU

*A primary school plundered during March clashes between *Kamuina Nsapu* rebels and police in the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of Congo.*

traumatized to even say whether their greatest need was water, food or clothing. Some families were eating only one meal a day.

While Nkongolo appeared “shattered” by what he witnessed, Hollinger-Janzen expressed deep admiration for the strength of the assessment team members, saying, “They are carrying the pain of so many people.”

Earlier this summer, Hollinger-Janzen learned via an email from Adolphine Tshiana, president of the women's organization of the Mennonite Church of Congo, that her brother and several of his family members had been killed by the *Bana Mura* militia in two separate attacks. On Aug. 6, her sister-in-law, niece and three of her niece's children—all thought to be dead—miraculously showed up after hiding in the forest for nearly three months.

Tshiana was unavailable for an interview due to illness.

At the Kalonda Bible Institute, several kilometres outside Tshikapa, the army moved onto the mission compound next to the school. Amid severe tension, the school relocated to a church compound in Tshikapa, where graduation was held in July.

## Cursed with wealth

The history of Congo, formerly Zaire, is drenched in violence and exploitation. The second-largest country in Africa, it gained



independence from Belgium's oppressive control in 1960. Four years later, Mobutu Sese Seku seized power in a coup, beginning 32 notoriously ruthless years in power.

In 1994, following the Hutu-led genocide in neighbouring Rwanda, Mobutu sided with Hutus who fled to Congo and wanted to attack Tutsis in the country. That mushroomed into a war that cost five million lives. In 1997, Mobutu was replaced by Laurent-Désiré Kabila, whose son Joseph is now president.

Despite vast mineral deposits, Congo ranks 176 out of 188 countries on the UN Human Development Index. Kasai is a particularly poor region.

Although the constitution required the younger Kabila to step down when his second eight-year term ended in 2016, he has delayed a vote, saying the government cannot afford the required voter-registration process.

Some have suggested the killing of Kamuina Nsapu was intended to create chaos that would further delay an election.

### **Mennonites in the middle**

Congo is home to more than 235,000 Mennonites in three main groups: Mennonite Church of Congo, the Mennonite Brethren Church of Congo and the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Congo. Only the U.S., Ethiopia and India have more Anabaptists.

Dozens of Mennonite churches lie within the Kasai conflict area. The Mennonite Church of Congo—the main Anabaptist denomination represented in the Kasai region—reported 19 districts, each with five to eight congregations, directly affected by the violence.

Mennonites not directly affected are working to address the needs. Families—many very poor themselves—are hosting displaced people; congregations are collecting aid; and the churches are collaborating with MCC, AIMM and other agencies in a broader response.

The response will be focussed in Kikwit and Tshikapa, the largest destination for displaced people, and home to about 25 Mennonite churches.

Some people have fled to Angola, where Mennonites are involved in hosting refugees, according to Mennonite World

Conference.

Bruce Guenther, head of disaster response for MCC, said it is “alarming” to see how few aid agencies are involved in the Kasai region. MCC is proceeding “urgently and carefully” in collaboration with numerous organizations and churches on the ground in affected areas. He says MCC wants to “accompany the local church to respond as they see fit.”

Komuesa said the five priority needs at this point are food, healthcare, housing (especially with the rainy season approaching), schooling and reconciliation. While some sources indicate the ethnically

pastor and government official, his message to the militias is to stop using violence. He said the role of government is to protect the population and restore security.

### **Inner plea**

Hollinger-Janzen emphasized the amount of stress many Congolese live with. The majority of people live in “abject poverty,” struggling daily to feed their families, he said, adding that a state system has never worked for the people, with officials extorting bribes and leaving citizens with no recourse. Then add a spark of violence.

“I try to think my way into that and im-



PHOTO © UNICEF / DUBOURTHOUMIEU

*Children carry water in the conflict-plagued Kasai region, 30 kilometres from Mbuji-Mayi.*

charged conflict has tested the unity within the Mennonite church—which includes numerous ethnic groups that split along ethnic lines in the 1960s—he said harmony still exists within the church. “We need to reach out,” he said, “and share the peace and reconciliation that we have with other people.”

Mulanda Jimmy Juma, the MCC country representative for Congo, said via phone that reconciliation starts with the aid response. The goal will be to get people of different ethnic groups working side by side to deliver aid to diverse recipients. With considerable peacebuilding experience in various parts of Africa, he also spoke of the value of bringing children from different groups together, partly because when parents see diverse children playing together it helps change their perspectives.

Komuesa said the situation is gradually getting better, with tensions subsiding. As a

agine what it is like,” he said.

Grappling with the immensity of the situation, he said, “I want to believe that the God we worship can come to anyone in any situation . . . that somehow God’s love can be communicated no matter what.”

He encouraged people to support MCC’s Kasai Response—among the organization’s other worthy causes—as a concrete expression of love. “Now is the time to respond,” he said. “This is why we are believers. This is what Jesus calls us to.”

Like Juma and Komuesa, he emphasized prayer as the primary response, “trying in some way to enter into what it would be like for people to live in this situation.”

“Let’s deepen our compassion,” he concluded. And when we do not know what to pray, “the Spirit prays within us.” ❧

See more photos online at [bit.ly/congo-mennonite-atrocities](http://bit.ly/congo-mennonite-atrocities).



### Seed of Hope: Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

MCC PHOTO BY JAMES SOUDER

*This education program through MCC's partner, Assemblies of God AIDS Action, pays for school, food and medical costs for children affected by HIV and AIDS. Pictured, Theodore Kangambega gives advice to children during one of the organization's monthly meetings, during which families socialize and participate in lectures and debates centred on health and education.*



### PHOTO ESSAY

# Back to school around the world

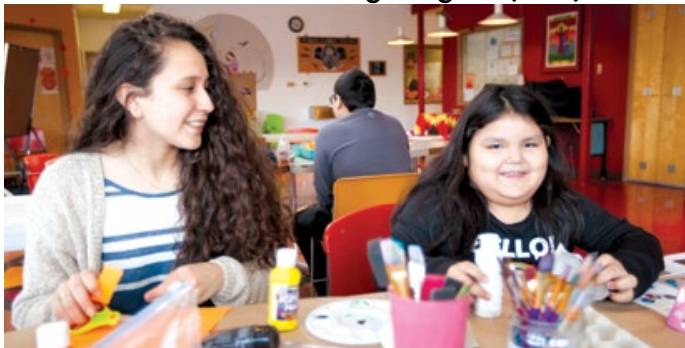
COMPILED BY RACHEL BERGEN

Mennonite Central Committee Canada

**W**hen a child learns, communities benefit and lives change. From Afghanistan to Canada, and Bangladesh to Burkina Faso, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is promoting education in order to foster leadership capabilities and help young

people overcome obstacles locally and around the world. By working alongside local communities and partners, MCC hopes to increase access to education, improve the quality of learning, support vocational training and promote peace. Welcome to class. ☘

### International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP): Canada



MCC PHOTO BY ALISON RALPH

*Moving across the world can be an education in and of itself! Shirley Vaca Vargas, left, originally from Bolivia, is volunteering at the Indigenous Family Centre in Winnipeg through MCC's IVEP program, a year-long work and cultural exchange opportunity for Christian young adults. Vargas enjoys working with children like Jordin LeClaire, right, improving her English and learning about the indigenous peoples in Canada at the same time. At home in Bolivia, Vargas studies medicine and plans to return to school there at the end of the year.*

### Adult Learning and Education Facilitation: Kabul, Afghanistan



MCC PHOTO BY MATTHEW LESTER

*Life can be difficult for women who haven't had a formal education. The Adult Learning and Education Facilitation project in Kabul concentrates on skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for these women to successfully navigate the literate world. Through classes on literacy, numeracy and conflict resolution, the MCC-supported project helps participants make better-informed decisions to positively impact the well-being of their families and communities.*



**Church of Bangladesh Social Development Programme: Rajshahi, Bangladesh**



MCC PHOTO BY DAVE KLASSEN

*Indigenous communities are among the most vulnerable in Bangladesh, facing poverty and language barriers. MCC addresses these issues by supporting multilingual education and homework clubs for children from these communities through its partner organization, Church of Bangladesh Social Development Programme. This organization runs a multilingual education program in six schools in Rajshahi district, including the school where Megha Baski, left, and Prity Murmu study.*



## GOD AT WORK IN THE CHURCH

# Celebrating 125 years of God's faithfulness

*First Mennonite congregation in Western Canada marks a special anniversary*

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DONNA SCHULZ  
Saskatchewan Correspondent  
ROSTHERN, SASK.

When members of Eigenheim Mennonite Church realized it had been 25 years since the church's centennial, they decided it was time for another celebration. To mark the congregation's 125th anniversary, planners chose "Celebrating God's faithfulness" as their theme.

Current and former members gathered at the church, about 79 kilometres north of Saskatoon, on Aug. 19, for an evening of reminiscing and visiting. Kara Wolfe and Barb Froese shared memories of growing up in the congregation. George Epp, the master of ceremonies, reflected on the church's history and presented a slide show with photographs spanning the century-and-a-quarter of the church's existence.

The celebration continued on Aug. 20 as the congregation and many visitors gathered for worship. The service included old familiar hymns along with newer ones. Ryan Siemens, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan's area church minister, brought greetings from both the area church and MC Canada. Erwin Tiessen, a former member of the congregation, spoke on the chosen theme, using Ruth 1 as his text.

Following the service, members and their guests savoured a potluck lunch, browsed through photographs and visited with old friends.

There is some debate over the exact age of the congregation. The church formally organized in 1894 and occupied its first building two years later, in 1896. But the first Mennonites to settle in the area began worshipping together in 1892, forming the first Mennonite church in what was then the Northwest Territories. Originally part

of the Rosenort group of congregations, Eigenheim became an independent congregation in 1929.

The first building, a log structure, was replaced in 1902. A second building project took place in 1954. Flooding in the church basement in 2007 led to the decision to erect a completely new building on the same site. The congregation moved into its current home in 2010.

Interspersed throughout the celebrations were reminders of difficulties the church has faced over the years. Froese told her



*Old friends Elsie Siemens, left, and Mary Roth greet one another at Eigenheim Mennonite Church's 125th-anniversary celebration.*

audience that Eigenheim is no stranger to conflict. She spoke about the controversy surrounding her father's request to be readmitted as a member after serving in the military during the Second World War.

Earlier this year, a significant number of the church's members split from the congregation, citing theological differences. Epp and Tiessen encouraged those attending the anniversary to remember that God is faithful and that the church's future is in God's hands. ❧

Visit [canadianmennonite.org/eigenheim-125](http://canadianmennonite.org/eigenheim-125) for more photos.



*Mary Krause, left, Barb Froese and Mel Siemens reminisce over a display of old photographs at Eigenheim Mennonite Church's 125th-anniversary celebration.*

## /// Staff changes

### Pastoral transition in Ontario

• **PASTOR JONATHAN ABRHAM** was licensed toward ordination on May 20 at the Shalom Worship and Healing Centre, which meets at First Mennonite Church in Kitchener. While Mennonite Church Eastern Canada saw this as a licensing, Abrham's community celebrated it as a full ordination, with guests from all over Canada.



—BY DAVE ROGALSKY

### Pastoral transition in British Columbia

• **TIM KUEFFER** was installed as the new English pastor of Vancouver Chinese Mennonite Church on Aug. 20, as the congregation looked back with gratitude and forward with hope during its 40th-anniversary celebration. Pictured below, Tim and wife Sandra kneel as members of the church lay hands on them in dedication. Garry Janzen, Mennonite Church B.C. executive minister, preached the sermon on "Love leads the way," based on I John 4:7-21, in a joint Chinese-English service. Following the service, members of the church family enjoyed a dim sum lunch in a Chinatown restaurant.

—BY AMY DUECKMAN



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM KUEFFER

## /// Briefly noted

### A special visit home

When Werner Peters of Winnipeg left his Rabbit Lake, Sask., home 60 years ago, he took a love for the place, the people and his Mennonite faith with him. He has returned for a visit almost every year since then, but for the last two years that hasn't been possible because he is on home kidney dialysis every night. He wanted to come "home" one more time, so his wife Eileen, younger brother Bill and local cousins made the necessary arrangements, and for two days in July his prayer was answered. The weekend in Rabbit Lake began as a Giesbrecht and Peters family gathering that grew to include old friends and neighbours, and even former classmates, meeting for food and fellowship. At their worship service in Rabbit Lake Mennonite Church, Cornie Martens told the story of the Giesbrecht family coming to Canada in 1925 and reflected on how life has changed since then. He reminded those gathered to celebrate life, to be thankful to God and not forget all God's benefits in the past and present. Werner Peters demonstrated those truths all weekend long!

—BY NAOMI UNGER



PHOTO COURTESY OF NAOMI UNGER

*The weekend in Rabbit Lake began as a Giesbrecht and Peters family gathering that grew to include old friends and neighbours, and even former classmates, meeting for food and fellowship.*

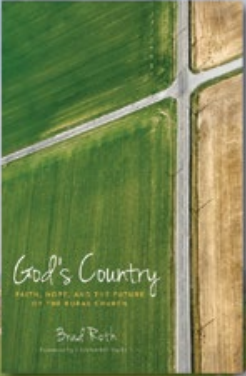
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GOD AT WORK IN US

## OBITUARY

# A life well lived

*Harold Christian Reesor*  
Nov. 11, 1930 – March  
12, 2017

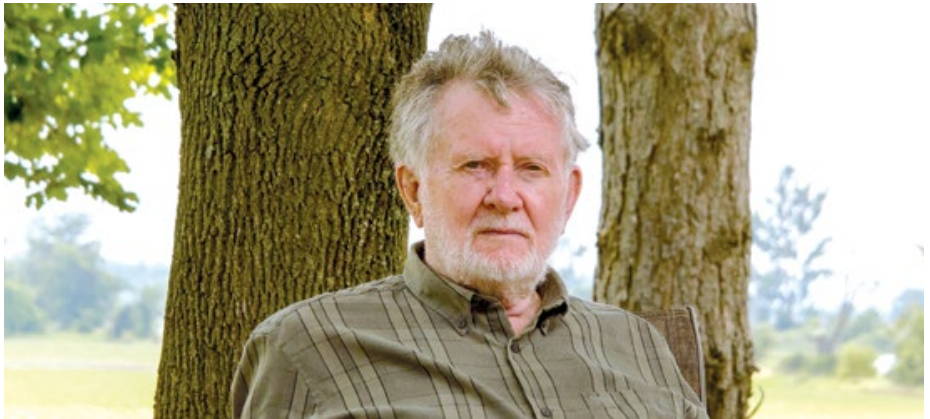
BY JOANNA REESOR-MCDOWELL  
Special to *Canadian Mennonite*

A large group of family members and friends gathered in Markham, Ont., on March 18 to remember the life of Harold Reesor, who died at the age of 86, six days previous. Although his early and later years were lived in the Markham/Stouffville area, where his Reesor ancestors settled 200 years ago, he lived in Quebec for more than four decades, working as a mission worker and farmer.

Harold met Pauline Short from Ohio at Ontario Mennonite Bible College and, after their marriage in 1955, they established a home, first in Joliette, Que., and later settled on a farm in Mascouche, Que. They were called by the Mennonite Board of Missions to leave tightknit Mennonite communities and to learn a new language and culture, with the purpose of establishing a Mennonite presence in a province that was at first predominantly Catholic and later markedly secular. They were joined in their work by Janet and Tilman Martin, also from Ontario. Their homes were places of hospitality, where people met for food, fellowship, prayer and worship.

The work was not easy, but the two couples—and other Mennonites who came later to Quebec—worked in partnership with local evangelical groups and built bridges with Catholics at a time when there was significant tension between Catholics and Protestants in the province.

Eventually, Mennonite congregations in Joliette, Rawdon and the Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal, along with the House of Friendship service ministry,



*'Harold delighted in his many grandchildren, telling them tales of childhood mischief and stories that usually ended with a deep, infectious belly laugh and shoulder shake.'*  
*(Spoken at the funeral by one of his children)*

were established. Over the years, House of Friendship has served a multicultural community, with services such as a daycare for low-income families, language classes, refugee resettlement, and, more recently, a student residence for those looking for a Christian community.

Harold and Pauline had 25 busy years together raising seven children, farming and doing mission work before tragedy struck with her premature death in 1980.

Two years later, Harold married Alice Deckert, a teacher from Saskatchewan. They were active in supporting the work of the Quebec church and the House of Friendship, as well as their farm and family life, for 15 years, then they retired in Ontario in 1997. They lived in Stouffville and were members of Community Mennonite Church. In 1999, Harold experienced another loss with the death of Alice.

The last 15 years of his life were full. He married Stella Reesor, the widow of his brother Elmer, in 2001, and between them, they had 13 children and many grandchildren. Both were comfortable with young people coming and going on a regular basis, and sometimes staying for a while.

Harold and Stella, who survives him, enjoyed trips, gardening and hosting visitors together before life slowed down somewhat with his declining health.

At the funeral, his children said, "Harold delighted in his many grandchildren, telling them tales of childhood mischief and stories that usually ended with a deep, infectious belly laugh and shoulder shake."

In his funeral remarks, Pastor Cameron Kaufman-Frey said, "Harold lived for this day" in the way that he thought about what is truly important in life and tried to walk humbly with God. "Harold believed in a God of love and grace, and he found in his faith what he needed to face challenges and loss." ❧

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## ARTBEAT



PHOTO COURTESY OF PHIL CAMPBELL-ENNS

*Phil Campbell-Enns's song 'May Your Spirit Give Life' will feature prominently at the assembly along with the selected theme song, 'New Earth, Heavens New' (Hymnal: A Worship Book, No. 299) by Harris J. Loewen.*

## A new song for Special Assembly 2017

BY DEBORAH FROESE  
Mennonite Church Canada  
WINNIPEG



Planning Special Assembly 2017 worship might be a daunting task, but with the right team—and the right music—the spirit of the event will follow people home.

With that idea in mind, the worship committee for Mennonite Church Canada's special assembly in Winnipeg, to be held from Oct. 13 to 15, is bringing to the event a new song written by Phil Campbell-Enns.

"May Your Spirit Give Life" will feature prominently at the assembly along with the selected theme song, "New Earth, Heavens New" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*, No. 299) by Harris J. Loewen.

A songwriter, guitar builder and pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, Campbell-Enns shaped lyrics around the assembly theme text found in

*'It's the reason you write a song specifically, so that when people go home they have something creative or artistic to take away, to be associated with the event.'*  
(Phil Campbell Enns)

II Corinthians 3:1-6. It describes a new covenant, written on people's hearts. "It's a take-off point," Campbell Enns says of the Bible verses.

Campbell-Enns is the chair of the assembly's worship committee that includes Moses Falco of Sterling Mennonite, Winnipeg; Anneli Loepp Thiessen, a member of Emerging Voices Initiative living in Winnipeg; Vernelle Enns Penner of Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg; and Johise Namwira of Fort Garry Mennonite, Winnipeg.

The committee helped Campbell-Enns fine-tune the lyrics to "May Your Spirit Give Life," but he says that was outside his creative norm. He's used to working on his own. "It's me hanging out on the couch at 7 in the morning with a cup of coffee," he says. He works slowly and randomly, especially at the beginning. Once a general form is established, he spends a few weeks editing his ideas and turns-of-phrase.

Working with the committee gave him a new perspective on what he does. Falco raised questions about the thoughts behind various lines, but getting a change in lyric to fit the musical meter was another challenge. "Every song, you're dealing with a limited vocabulary," Campbell-Enns says. "You're looking for words that are just as effective so you don't sing the same word over and over again."

This isn't the first time he has written music for an MC Canada assembly. "Mountain of God" was featured at the 2001 assembly at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, B.C., and "Your Beloved Child" resonated throughout the 2013 Fat Calf Festival at Camp Assiniboia near Winnipeg.

There is always something new to take away from church assemblies, Campbell-Enns notes, and he and the worship committee for Special Assembly 2017 hope music will be a large part of that.

"It's the reason you write a song specifically, so that when people go home they

have something creative or artistic to take away, to be associated with the event," he says. "You hope that even the first couple of notes might remind people of the event, of the national church coming together." ❧

*Phil Campbell-Enns shares a preview of "May Your Spirit Give Life" at [philcampbell-enns.com/songbook.html](http://philcampbell-enns.com/songbook.html). Scroll through the alphabetically arranged list of song titles.*







Ken Roth with some of the many dishes he has made in his retirement. The Trinity bowl, front row right, is prominent.

## Spiritual lessons from 'junk' wood

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DAVE ROGALSKY

Eastern Canada Correspondent  
TAVISTOCK, ONT.

**W**hen Ken Roth retired, he was looking for a hobby that would be creative, be a blessing to himself and others, and needn't be profitable.

A member of East Zorra Mennonite Church near Tavistock, where he lives,

Roth has served on the pastoral care team there for many years. Having worked in construction and as a cabinet maker and carpenter, he struck on woodworking, mostly lathe-turned bowls and platters, with some wooden serving dishes carved

with an angle grinder when the piece doesn't suit the lathe.

What he discovered in the heart of the pieces of "junk" wood and firewood shows a deep contemplative streak. Working with a piece that was rotten at the core he was about to give up, since it was such a mess. Suddenly through the black rot a white shape appeared. At first he thought it a maple leaf, but another person saw a symbol of the Trinity, and Roth was hooked. "It's hard stuff, but it's beautiful," he says.

The bowl reminds him of his daughter Janelle, who died in 1989 of cancer at age 17. Although she struggled, the beauty at



*PHOTO LEFT: Maple leaf or symbol of the Trinity? 'God the Father,' says Ken Roth, 'all-knowing and in control. Christ's amazing love for all of us, and the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us.'*

*PHOTO RIGHT: A heart at the heart of a piece of Manitoba maple doesn't need much imagination to see in Ken Roth's lathe-turned bowl.*





**PHOTOS ABOVE AND BELOW:** *Two identical bowls with different histories. One of these bowls shattered as Ken Roth was turning it. Although he wanted to just ‘chuck’ it, an inner voice told him, ‘Glue it back together, finish turning it.’ Two bowls, like the two brothers in the Prodigal Son story, both useful—one always, one after restoration.*



the core of her being continues to show up in unlikely places, as people remember her grace and generosity.

Through the years, piece after piece has brought lessons, prompting Roth to share his stories in many settings, including his home church, other local Mennonite churches, other denominations, and even a Kindergarten class in a nearby Kitchener school.

While he has sold some bowls, and even takes commissions, mostly he gives the work away. In particular, bowls made from burls—slowly formed scars in trees from broken branches—are given to people who have survived, or are struggling with, brokenness in their lives, as encouraging symbols of what God can make out of brokenness. Roth looks past the ugliness and wounds to the beauty inside, both in wood and in people. He thinks God does the same. ❧

Visit [canadianmennonite.org/junk-wood](http://canadianmennonite.org/junk-wood) for more photos.



## An introduction to Special Assembly 2017

BY VIRGINIA A. HOSTETLER  
Executive Editor

**I**mportant decisions will be made about the future of Mennonite Church Canada at Special Assembly 2017, to be held in Winnipeg from Oct. 13 to 15. Gathering around the theme “Future directions: Covenant new,” congregational delegates will review the final recommendations of the multi-year Future Directions process and make decisions about the future priorities, vision and structures of the church.

What delegates decide will affect how decisions are made in the church, how money is raised and spent, the priorities for missions, leadership formation, and much more.

Has your congregation selected delegates? The registration deadline is Sept. 17.



### What will happen there?

Business sessions will be interspersed with times of worship. There will be no workshops, tours or children’s activities. Youth will participate in the main sessions, with time apart for orientation and debriefing. It is expected that the final decision on the proposal will be made at the Oct. 14 evening session. The event will conclude with a worship service on Oct. 15.

### How you can follow

- **CHECK OUT** the MC Canada and Future Directions websites, and connect via social media.
- **READ THE** posts on the Future Directions website: [Futuredirectionsmc.ca](http://Futuredirectionsmc.ca).
- **WATCH FOR** updates and participate in conversations on the Future Directions Facebook group.
- **CHECK OUT** the MC Canada Facebook page or join the MC Canada Facebook group.
- **WATCH THE** event via livestream. All the main sessions, including the worship service, will be livestreamed. More information will be on the MC Canada website.
- **FOLLOW ON** Twitter. MC Canada (@mennochurch) and Canadian Mennonite (@CanMenno) will be tweeting.

### To read and discuss

- **NOW IS** the time for your church to have conversation, to give guidance to your delegates. You can use “Conversation starter for congregations,” which was sent to each congregation earlier this summer. It’s online at [home.mennonitechurch.ca/winnipeg2017](http://home.mennonitechurch.ca/winnipeg2017).
- **CHECK OUT** the key documents on the Future Directions website: [Futuredirectionsmc.ca/documents](http://Futuredirectionsmc.ca/documents).
- **TO UNDERSTAND** the process so far and the next steps, read the eight-page “Covenant new: Report.”
- **TO READ** recommendations on specific areas of church life—including missions, leadership and communications—check out the individual reports of the Working Groups.
- **FOR MORE** on the reasons behind the proposal, the new structure and FAQs, read the 22-page “Covenant new: Background to the discernment guide.”
- **FOR THE** documents central to the discussion and decision-making at Special Assembly 2017, read the 42-page “Covenant new: Discernment guide.”

For more information, go to [home.mennonitechurch.ca/winnipeg2017](http://home.mennonitechurch.ca/winnipeg2017).





## MOVIE REVIEW

# Refugees grow faith from seeds of hope

*All Saints.*

Directed by Steve Gomer. Screenplay by Steve Armour. Starring John Corbett.

An Affirm Films/Provident Films production, 2017. Rated PG.

REVIEWED BY AMY DUECKMAN

B.C. CORRESPONDENT

Episcopalian priest Michael Spurlock has a problem. His diocese has ordered him to oversee the closing of the dying All Saints Church in Tennessee, but then a group of Karen refugees from Southeast Asia start attending. Michael senses God's call and sees an opportunity for both the congregation and the immigrants to prosper through farming a small plot of land adjoining the church. The crops grown can both feed the congregants and be sold to pay the bills.

Of course, nothing goes smoothly. Weather problems, money problems and resistance from the church hierarchy, not to mention a particularly cantankerous parishioner, throw challenges in Michael's path, threatening the whole project. Did he really hear God's call or was he only following his own stubborn ego in thinking he could make a difference? In the end, despite what he considers failure, Michael learns that bringing faith and hope to his community is his true mission.



Inspired by a true story, this is the plot of *All Saints*, the latest offering in a recent spate of so-called "Christian" films to be released in national theatres. John Corbett (*Northern Exposure*, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*) stars as Michael Spurlock, and, adding authenticity to the film, the Karen refugees of Smyrna, Tenn., play themselves. The movie was filmed on location

at the real All Saints Church there.

One problem with "faith-based" films—a label which many in the industry say is not helpful—is that they can come across as preachy, predictable and unrealistic. Also, frankly, sometimes the writing and acting are sub-par. *All Saints* is better than some other recent offerings in this regard.

Christian movies also tend to appeal to believers while turning off those who don't believe. The viewer might do well to ask why he or she is choosing to see such a film. Is it to feel good about one's faith? Is it to get away from the cursing, sex and violence of more mainstream movies? Do we believe such films can have an influence on society, even in a small way?

In a refreshing change from the sometimes-trite conversion formulas of the Christian film genre, *All Saints* does not present an "accept Jesus as your Saviour" message, as the Karen people are already Christians. Rather, the message is "live out your faith to the best of your ability," which many Mennonites will find appealing. Non-Christians may be unclear on the message of this movie. Therefore, those Christians hoping for a conversation with non-believers should be ready to engage them about their faith and how they deal with life's disappointments.

*All Saints* asks good questions about following God's will, hearing God's voice and discerning how God's presence is revealed in everyday life. At one point in the movie Spurlock says, "Let's keep [the Karen] in our prayers and ask for God's help," to which his young son replies, "Aren't you God's help?"

This film will appeal especially to those who have welcomed immigrants and refugees into their communities and who appreciate the contributions those newcomers offer. Those who have problems in general with faith-based films probably won't mind passing on this. If, on the other hand, you like to be inspired in your entertainment experience and want to encourage the continued production of similar movies, go ahead and enjoy *All Saints*. ☸

## /// New Release

### Learn how to grow a spiritual garden

How does your spiritual garden grow? What do you do to keep your Christian life flourishing? Darla Weaver explores these ideas as she connects gardening to spiritual growth in a new Herald Press devotional, *Water My Soul: 90 Meditations from an Old Order Mennonite*. Touching on themes such as humility, contentment, right living and forgiveness, each meditation includes a daily Scripture reading, prayer, and journal prompt or response idea, designed to motivate and strengthen readers. As an Old Order Mennonite living in southern Ohio, Weaver bares her heart in these devotionals, all drawn from her home-centred life, and encourages readers to root themselves deeply in Christ's love and service to others.

—MennoMedia



Read 'Surrey church embraces Karen refugees' online at [canadianmennonite.org/karen-refugees](http://canadianmennonite.org/karen-refugees).





## young voices

# Youth wanted

*EVI planning financial assistance, special events for youth attending next month's assembly*

BY AARON EPP  
Young Voices Editor

Members of the Emerging Voices Initiative (EVI) are hoping that financial assistance and special events aimed specifically at high school students will encourage youth to attend Mennonite Church Canada's special delegate assembly next month.

EVI members will lead special discussions and debriefing sessions for youth at the assembly, which takes place from Oct. 13 to 15 at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Winnipeg. Youth will also have the opportunity to integrate with adult delegates during table discussions.

"I know there are youth out there who would thrive in this kind of setting," says Anneli Loepp Thiessen, an EVI member and one of the lead planners of the initia-

*'I know there are youth out there who would thrive in this kind of setting.'*  
(Anneli Loepp Thiessen)

tive. "It's important they know their voice is heard and listened to."

The young adults calling themselves EVI came together when the Future Directions Task Force presented its broad-strokes proposal for reshaping national and area church structures. They came from congregations across the country and longed to pursue further conversation about the Future Directions proposal.

Their desire led to the creation of EVI's vision statement and a response to the proposal, developments that were met with enthusiasm and encouragement from the wider church body.

When EVI held a cross-Canada tour

in late 2016 and early 2017, members repeatedly heard about the importance of encouraging youth involvement in area and national church initiatives.

EVI is inviting people to donate so that youth who register for the assembly can receive financial support. The objective is to raise \$20,000. Financial assistance for youth attending the event won't hinge on them attending with youth groups.

Youth who attend Assembly 2017 will meet with EVI members at the Radisson and engage with the Future Directions proposal during the evening of Oct. 13 to prepare for discussions the next day. Youth will integrate with adult delegates during table discussions, with EVI members circulating to answer any questions they

might have, empowering them to speak. Following the closing session, there will be time for debriefing.

With the changes happening in MC Canada, it is important to get as many perspectives and hear as many voices as possible, says EVI member Alex Tiessen, who is helping plan the youth initiative. "This is a changing church, and we want this next generation of youth who are coming into the church to have a voice in the changes that are happening," he says.

Youth will stay together on the same floor of the Radisson, with lots of food and opportunities to socialize in a fun setting.

*(Continued on page 28)*



PHOTO BY DEBORAH FROESE

*Anneli Loepp Thiessen, left, and Katrina Woelk are two of the lead planners for youth participation at the upcoming Assembly 2017.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF MC CANADA

*There will be room at the table for youth at next month's Assembly 2017.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF MC CANADA

*EVI member Alex Tiessen, right, pictured with Lori Pauls at last year's assembly, wants youth to know they have a voice in the church.*

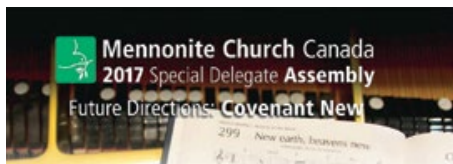


PHOTO BY AARON EPP

*Youth worship together at last year's assembly in Saskatoon.*

*(Continued from page 27)*

"We are trying to make the weekend something that will be enjoyable for youth, and fun and a positive memory," Loepp Thiessen says.

EVI is hoping to attract as many youth as possible.

"We want youth to care [and] we want to be supports for them," Tiessen says. "We want to show them this is important stuff, and it's not just for people who are middle-aged or older. The things going on in the church are for everybody."

Anyone interested in donating to help make it easier for youth to attend Assembly 2017 can visit [donate.mennonitechurch.ca](http://donate.mennonitechurch.ca). Once MC Canada knows the total amount that will be available, and the total number of youth that will be accessing the fund, it will reimburse youth delegates

proportionally. In the meantime, youth are encouraged to register online at [home.mennonitechurch.ca/winnipeg2017](http://home.mennonitechurch.ca/winnipeg2017), complete with full payment.

Tiessen encourages youth to visit EVI's website at [emergingvoiceonline.wordpress.com](http://emergingvoiceonline.wordpress.com), where they can read blog posts reflecting on the Future Directions process. He is also hoping to have a special preparation guide for youth posted to the website in advance of the assembly.

Loepp Thiessen stresses that all youth are invited, no matter what their knowledge of MC Canada and the Future Directions proposal is. "It's not too late," she says. "We can fill you in. You can be a part of this." ❧

*With files from Deborah Froese of MC Canada.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNIKA KRAUSE

**Annika Krause**

## 'We need to learn to dream as a church'

*Young adults share their hopes for Mennonite Church Canada in the next decade*

**BY AARON EPP**

Young Voices Editor



PHOTO COURTESY OF REBECCA JANZEN

**Rebecca Janzen**

**N**ext month, those gathered at Mennonite Church Canada's special delegate assembly will make major decisions about the structure of the church based on proposals from the Future Directions Task Force.

With that in mind, *Canadian Mennonite* asked young adults from across Canada: What are your hopes and dreams for MC Canada in the next 10 years?

**Annika Krause, 29, Sherbrooke Mennonite Church, Vancouver**

"There's been a lot of conflict over [Being a Faithful Church], and I think it especially hit B.C. hard," she says, referring to the six-year process MC Canada undertook to address sexuality in the life of the church. "My biggest dream is that we come back to a place of unification, where we can agree to disagree but work toward our common

goals, and essentially see Christ in the people we disagree with."

**Rebecca Janzen, 21, First Mennonite Church, Edmonton**

Her key hope for the future is that the 200-plus churches that make up MC Canada stay connected. "I know that there needs to be a change in the structure of MC Canada, but, honestly, it makes me nervous," she says.

She believes the changes that the Future Directions Task Force is proposing will put a lot of pressure on the area churches, and things won't go as smoothly as they have in the past. "It's hard to know what is going to happen because we've never done this before," she says. "There are just a lot of unknowns at this point."

In the future, she hopes to see more serious attention paid to youth and young adult



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLAIRE HANSON

**Claire Hanson**



voices. Creating more space for youth and young adults during delegate sessions, and lowering the cost of attending assemblies, are two things she believes would improve the national church: “It’s quite inaccessible to a lot of people, especially youth and young adults who don’t have a lot of money right now. It becomes a lot more challenging to go to the delegate sessions.”

**Claire Hanson, 19, Rosthern Mennonite Church, Sask.**

For her, it’s important that the Mennonite church continues its efforts to work toward reconciliation with Canada’s Indigenous population. She points to two recent events that have taken place in Saskatchewan as examples of the work she would like to see continue: the Spruce River Folk Fest, a fundraiser for landless first nations to raise money to apply for land claims; and the Shared Land, Shared Song event that featured a Mennonite choir performing with a group of dancers from Muskeg Lake Cree Nation.

“These events are very encouraging to me and show me that the Mennonite church does take reconciliation seriously,” she says. “We are moving forward in our relationship, one small step at a time.”

**Gabby Martin, 20, Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim, Sask.**

“I’d like to see a little more trust in the [Future Directions], that things are going to work out,” she says. “Instead of putting energy into pointing out the flaws, accept that change needs to happen and move on.”

“People have spent a lot of time planning this and proposing this, and they’ve been given a lot of backlash,” she adds. “We need more trust that it’s going to work out.”

**Melanie Kampen, 27, Springfield Heights Mennonite Church, Winnipeg**

“Over the next 10 years, I would love to see the Mennonite church become what it has long professed to be: witnessing the gospel, the good news, of liberation in the world,” she says.

“Mennonites are known as a peace church and a church that stands up against injustice. However, [I] and many other young adults have noticed that this has become romanticized and idealized

by many inside and outside of the church doors. [MC] Canada is not seen as an organization on the front lines of social justice work in Canada. If MC Canada wants to be a witness of the gospel, then it needs to take a stand against harm in our own Mennonite communities, as well as others in which our constituents are situated. To me, this means protecting and supporting survivors of sexual violence and other forms of abuse; doing anti-racism work in our churches and engaging in solidarity with those who are racially marginalized in our cities; and unapologetically accepting and supporting gender and sexual diversity.”

**Colin Reimer, 24, Whitewater Mennonite Church, Boissevain, Man.**

He is passionate about both camp ministry and working toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. “I think those both play a huge role in what I would love to see from our church” in the future, he says. Camp ministry provides an avenue for shaping the faith formation of youth, and putting money towards supporting that is key for him. “They’re the future of our church, and I think it’s important we honour that.” He believes that MC Canada has done great work in recent years in its efforts to build relationships with Indigenous peoples. He would like to see that continue. “I think it will both advance our church . . . and create positive outlets for people on both sides,” he says.

**Laura Carr-Pries, 22, St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, Ont.**

“My wild hope and dream for the church really isn’t that wild,” she says. “[It’s] that the church can be a body of believers that come together in worship and conversation.” That could be conversation that leads to action on social justice issues or it could be conversation for the purpose of discernment or fellowship. “I think that’s a big part of what the church is, and should continue to live into, and I think that’s often where we’ve found ourselves fragmented—[when there’s been] that inability to have conversation and inability to come together in fellowship in spite of differences.” She adds, “We need to learn to dream as a church, and to do so [placing our] faith in God, not ourselves.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF GABBY MARTIN  
**Gabby Martin**



PHOTO COURTESY OF MELANIE KAMPEN  
**Melanie Kampen**



PHOTO COURTESY OF COLIN REIMER  
**Colin Reimer**



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURA CARR-PRIES  
**Laura Carr-Pries**

## Calendar

### British Columbia

**Sept. 30:** MCC B.C. annual general meeting, at South Abbotsford Church, Abbotsford.

**Sept. 30:** Mennonite Heritage Society of B.C. presents “Mennocomedynite” at the Mennonite Heritage Museum in Abbotsford, at 7 p.m., featuring Orlando Braun and Matt Falk. For more information, visit [mhsbc.com](http://mhsbc.com).

### Alberta

**Sept. 30:** Mennonite Central Committee Alberta annual general meeting, at Springridge Mennonite Church, Pincher Creek.

**Oct. 14:** Mennonite Historical Society of Alberta fall conference, Gem of the

West Museum, Coaldale, at 1:30 p.m. Theme: “Tapestry of two uprooted cultures: Japanese and Mennonites in southern Alberta.” Speakers include author Joy Kogawa.

### Saskatchewan

**Sept. 30:** Mega Menno youth kick-off event, at Nutana Park Mennonite Church, Saskatoon.

**Oct. 27:** MDS awareness and fundraising event, at Grace Mennonite Church, Neuanlage; supper at 6:30 p.m. For reservations, call 306-342-4344 by Oct. 20.

### Manitoba

**Sept. 23:** MCC Relief Sale, at the Keystone Centre in Brandon.

**Sept. 24:** Colourful Faith exhibition of

Yoruba life, at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, Winnipeg. Runs until Nov. 18.

**Sept. 24:** Celebration of the ministry of Camp Moose Lake, at the camp. Worship and reminiscing start at 2:30 p.m., followed by a barbecue supper. For more details, visit [mennochurch.mb.ca](http://mennochurch.mb.ca).

**Sept. 30:** Westgate Mennonite Collegiate cyclathon and homecoming, at Bird’s Hill Provincial Park.

**Sept. 30:** Camp Assiniboia square dance and pie auction/walk fundraiser, from 6:30 to 9 p.m., in the camp barn. No dancing skills required! Pies will be needed. For more information, visit [campswithmeaning.org](http://campswithmeaning.org).

**Sept. 30-Oct. 1:** Steinbach Mennonite Church celebrates its 75th anniversary: (30) Stories and Songs, at 7 p.m.; (1) worship service, at 10 a.m., followed

by a thanksgiving dinner. For more information, visit [steinbachmennonite.ca](http://steinbachmennonite.ca).

### Ontario

**Until May 2019:** “Sites of Nonresistance: Ontario Mennonites and the First World War” exhibit of letters, photographs and documents from the Mennonite Archives of Ontario, at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo.

**Sept. 16:** “Mennonite life in the Detweiler Neighbourhood 150 years ago,” a presentation by Sam Steiner, at the Detweiler Meetinghouse, Roseville, at 11 a.m.

**Sept. 16:** Toronto Mennonite Festival in support of MCC, at Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto, at which a 50th-anniversary quilt will be auctioned off.

## UpComing

### ‘Great Day of Singing’ announced for Oct. 22

A 16-page sampler of the new Mennonite worship and song collection is available for free congregational download at [MennoMedia.org/Resonate](http://MennoMedia.org/Resonate). Called the “Great Day of Singing,” the sampler is designed as a resource to plan worship for Oct. 22. This one-day event is planned by the binational Mennonite Worship and Song Committee as a way for individuals and congregations to sample some new music and worship resources, and to provide feedback to the committee. “We want to bring Mennonites together around some new songs and worship resources while opening up a space for worshippers to reflect on God’s gift of song,” says Bradley Kauffman, project director and general editor. “The sampler offers six songs from outside our current collections, along with worship resources and a proposed framework for planning.” In addition to the 16-page sampler, links to selected accompaniments, tutorial videos and an image inspired by the Psalms are available for free download. A survey for congregational feedback on the sampler is posted as well. “The ‘Great Day of Singing’ sampler is the first of several anticipated collections for testing new material. Plus it includes information on the new worship and song collection—with some rough projections about what this will cost congregations,” says Amy Gingerich, MennoMedia’s editorial director.

—MennoMedia



## UpComing

### Registrations being accepted for Yella 2018

Yella, a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario and Mennonite Church Eastern Canada three-week learning tour to Israel and Palestine for young adults, has been a life-impacting experience for those who have been a part of it in the past. “Travelling around Galilee and the Jezreel Valley, and going through the West Bank and Hebron, has lifted the veneer off this place,” writes Reid Kennel. “We saw the tourist sites and the beautiful landscapes, but now we have seen some of what lies beneath. There are so many people on both sides of this conflict who want peace but have had many barriers put up to stop them from working together.” Yella 2018 provides an opportunity for young adults to explore questions of Christian faith and life while interacting with Christians, Jews and Muslims, encountering complex peace and conflict issues, and considering the context of Jesus’ life and ministry. The trip has grown over the past 10 years to include faith partners who offer a place for participants to connect, engage and dialogue with as they share this faith-forming experience amid the complexities of Israel/Palestine. Applications for the May 1 to 24, 2018, event are being received until Oct. 31. For more information, visit [mcco.ca/yella-2018](http://mcco.ca/yella-2018).

—MC Eastern Canada / MCC Ontario



YELLA 2018 PHOTO

*Walk where Jesus walked during Yella 2018 and spend time reflecting at the Sea of Galilee.*



**Sept. 17:** Jim Reimer Memorial Bluegrass Concert, at Conrad Grebel University College's Great Hall, at 2:30 p.m., featuring Rescue Junction and 5 on the Floor. In support of the Reimer Scholarship in Theological Studies.

**Sept. 24:** Grand opening of Rockway Mennonite Church's new facility

in Kitchener. Open house and celebration begins at 2:30 p.m.

**Sept. 26:** "Refugee sponsorship: A lunch and listen event," at 50 Kent Avenue, Kitchener, at noon. For more information, visit [mcco.ca/](http://mcco.ca/) events.

**Sept. 30:** MCC Ontario annual

general meeting, at 50 Kent Avenue, Kitchener, from noon to 3 p.m. For more information, visit [mcco.ca/aggm](http://mcco.ca/aggm).

**Sept. 30:** Ride for Refuge in support of MCC. For more information, visit [mcco.ca/ride](http://mcco.ca/ride).

**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**



**Employment opportunity**  
Lead Pastor

Niagara United Mennonite Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario is inviting applications for a FULL-TIME LEAD PASTOR. Start time is early 2018.

We are a congregation with approximately 200 in attendance for worship and seek a pastor to lead in growing people as intentional followers of Jesus and missional servants to our community. The pastor we seek will be committed to Anabaptist theology with strengths in leadership, evangelism through community engagement, preaching, teaching and pastoral care.

Inquiries, resumes and letters of interest will be received until the end of September 2017 and may be directed to: [pastoraltransitions@mcec.ca](mailto:pastoraltransitions@mcec.ca)

To view the Pastoral Profile, visit <https://mcec.ca/jobs/lead-minister>.



**Employment opportunity**

Mennonite Church Manitoba is accepting applications for the position of Associate Program Director of Camping Ministries (APD). The APD oversees all aspects of our summer and winter programs including their design, promotion, implementation and evaluation. The APD also provides ongoing support and training to all summer program staff and volunteers. This is a 1.0 FTE position.

The application deadline is September 21, 2017. For more information please visit our "News" page at <http://www.campswithmeaning.org>.



**Conrad Grebel University College**

**Faculty Position in Musicology**

Conrad Grebel University College at the University of Waterloo invites applications for a regular, full-time, tenure-track faculty position in Music, effective **July 1, 2018**. This position involves undergraduate teaching, scholarship, service, and community education. The successful candidate will have teaching and scholarship expertise in Music History, as well as one or more of the following areas: church music and worship, sacred music, and music in religious traditions. The preferred candidate will be able to lead one of the music ensembles in the Department, and mentor students in practical skills related to music and worship.

*Review of applications will begin November 1, 2017.*

Conrad Grebel University College is committed to employment equity and welcomes applications from all qualified persons. Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. See the full position description for specific duties, qualifications, reporting structure, and materials needed by applicants for submission at [grebel.ca/positions](http://grebel.ca/positions)

**Employment opportunity**

**Three Regional Ministers**

MCEC is seeking three .25 FTE Regional Ministers to support pastors in MCEC.

The position requires pastoral experience, a familiarity with denominational resources, a depth of spiritual maturity and a commitment to Anabaptist theology. Applicants will be excellent communicators and pastoral care providers who are energized by MCEC's mission of Extending the Peace of Jesus Christ. Ordination and seminary level training required. Application deadline is September 15, 2017. For more information or to request a position description, please contact:

Brent Charette, Church Engagement & Operations Minister  
Phone: 1-855-476-2500 Ext. 709  
E-mail: [bcharette@mcec.ca](mailto:bcharette@mcec.ca)  
Web: [www.mcec.ca](http://www.mcec.ca)





**Guarderia Moises: Santa Cruz, Bolivia**

STANSBERRY PHOTO BY JULIANE KOZEL

*MCC partners with Stansberry's Children's Home in Bolivia's capital. The children's home has been a refuge for abandoned children since 1954. It also runs a daycare program called Guarderia Moises, providing a safe, educational environment in which children can learn and grow while their parents are focussed on sustaining their families. Pictured, pre-Kindergarten students stand outside their daycare program classroom.*



For more online, visit  
[canadianmennonite.org/back-to-school](http://canadianmennonite.org/back-to-school).

