

# CANADIAN MENNONITE

FEBRUARY 18, 2019 VOLUME 23 NUMBER 4



## Journey of a beloved camp treasure

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## EDITORIAL

# Can church be more like camp?

Tobi Thiessen  
PUBLISHER



Every winter, I hear a radio advertisement for a back-to-the-woods summer children's camp in Ontario. The

ad closes with the tagline, "You send us your child, and we'll send you back a new one." It's a great slogan. It points out that renewal and transformation occur when people are pulled away from their daily routines to spend time in the great outdoors.

"You send us your child, and we'll send you back a new one." On the face of it, this slogan could apply to Mennonite church camps across Canada. We send our children to camp, and they come back renewed and transformed. They are usually radiant from the fresh air and exercise, bubbling with excitement. They often leave camp reluctantly, humming camp songs or chuckling to themselves in the car all the way home. They might ask about going back again next year.

The slogan is not perfect. Renewal and transformation do occur and, when we say those words as Mennonites, we are also talking about spiritual renewal and personal transformation because of the worship and faith-based discussions that are part of church camp life.

We understand transformation differently, but there is another reason why the secular camp's slogan isn't quite right for a Mennonite camp. It is that renewal and transformation are not even the best part of going. A Mennonite slogan would somehow capture that the best part of camp is the community. "You send us your children, and they'll find a place to belong."

One of our core convictions as Anabaptists is that we live out our faith

in community with one another, offering mutual support, encouragement and accountability. Our nationwide vision statement says that we are called "to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world?"

Camps offer communities of grace and joy, and they work towards peace. Have you noticed? They put together a disparate group of children into a cabin on day one and a week later send home kids who are tearfully hugging each other goodbye.

The camp community has a long-lasting pull. Most campers are keen to go back. As they get older, they stay in touch with camp friends during the school year. They might organize reunions or look for camp friends at larger church youth gatherings. As adults, they may go back as volunteers or help at fundraisers.

The church probably has something to learn from the camps. We would like people to experience renewal, transformation and a sense of belonging. We want children to identify the church as their community, and to become leaders who pass on the faith to the next generation. We would like that long-lasting effect on the people who come through our doors because it helps us carry out the larger mission of healing and hope.

Both camps and churches have been struggling with how to adapt to broad social change and demographic shifts in Canadian society. Among the changes are decreased interest in regular church worship attendance and fewer children in our families than in previous generations. The camps have responded by reaching out to new audiences. They have also been adapting programs and facilities to remain

current and fresh.

Some churches are also adapting their model of being church. Mennonite Church Eastern Canada has a program called ReLearning Community that assists congregations in precisely this kind of church experimentation. Others worry that such changes mean we are losing our identity.

Look again at the camps. To remain viable, the camps have been willing to change programs and facilities but their mission and values remain the same. The camp culture lives on. They continue to excel at generating a sense of community.

Churches cannot completely emulate camps, of course. Our leadership and worship styles will not be as fun-focused and full of youthful energy. Sometimes we deal with weighty issues. However, camps reach out to attract newcomers and are very intentional at extending their welcome to all. They build strong communities that are able to keep up beloved traditions of the past while developing new ones at the same time. ❧

## /// Corrections

- **Miriam Sainnawap's** surname was spelled incorrectly and Mennonite Central Committee's International Volunteer Exchange Program was misnamed in "MCC cuts Canadian programs to focus on advocacy," Feb. 4, page 14.
- **The photograph** on page 30 of the Feb. 4 issue was taken by Jonathan Boerger. Incorrect information appeared in the "Indigenous art on display at the Grebel Gallery" news brief.

*Canadian Mennonite* regrets the errors.

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PHOTO: DARRYL NEUSTAEDTER BARG, MENNONITE CHURCH MANITOBA

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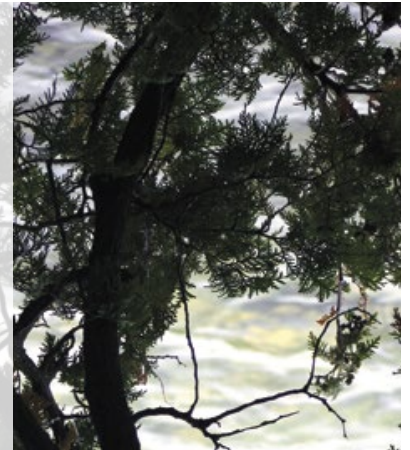
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## LENTEN FEATURE

# Evil is right there with me

By Ryan Dueck



**S**omething needs to be done about all the hate in the world.

This morning I encountered no fewer than three pieces of media expressing incredulity that the internet seems not to have transformed humanity into an oasis of harmony and mutual understanding, but has, instead, degenerated into a cesspool of anger and ignorance.

The headlines were a mixture of bewilderment, frustration and resignation: “The internet will be the death of us,” “I thought the Web would stop hate, not spread it,” and “The business of internet outrage.” The creators of these pieces seem to be struggling with the realization that the online world has laid bare some of the worst human tendencies, and that there are vast sums of money to be made by creating content that stokes the flames of righteous anger.

I am as puzzled by their puzzlement that the internet hasn’t “stopped hate.” Really? You’re surprised that dark things lurk beneath the surface of human hearts and minds? You’re surprised that the market will reliably generate content that is profitable? You’re surprised that people like a fight—even “enlightened” people—and that even more people like to watch a fight? You’re surprised that tribalism is alive and well? You’re surprised that hatred seems to be a rather stubborn feature of the human experience?

I am convinced that one of the things we are in desperate need of right now is a more honest

ISTOCK.COM/FOTOGENG PHOTO

*‘[W]e all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away’ (Isaiah 64:6b).*

anthropology.

When I was growing up, many things in the Bible bewildered me: the weird miracles, the apparently divinely sanctioned slaughter, the tedious genealogies and hard-to-pronounce names, the bizarre symbolism and excruciatingly detailed legal codes. Not to mention, there was too much talk of foreskins for my liking. There is plenty in the Bible's pages to give cause for the scratching of foreheads and the furrowing of brows.

But one biblical theme that completely resonated with me was that of the conflicted nature of all human thinking and acting in the world. Take passages like Jeremiah 17:9, for example: *"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"*

Or Isaiah 64:6: *"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away."*

Or I John 1:8: *"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."*

Or one of the most psychologically astute passages in the New Testament, in my opinion, Romans 7:15, 21-23: *"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do, I do not do, but what I hate I do. . . . Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me."*

These words told the truth of my lived experience. They described me by holding up an unflattering but devastatingly accurate mirror. They seemed to express the deep conflict at the heart of what it means to be a human being. We want to do good but we aren't always able or willing to do it.

We are a mystery to ourselves, a bundle of contradictions. We are inherently prone to self-deception, particularly when it comes to justifying our own behaviours and assumptions. We are not nearly as pure or virtuous as we imagine ourselves to be. We are, each one of us, capable of beautiful and terrible things.

We are human beings.

It's important to acknowledge this. If we are to make any headway in addressing all this hatred, we have to recover language to express some of these irreducibly human tendencies and experiences.

If we don't, we just continue to neatly partition the world—online or otherwise—into good people like me and bad people who say and do wicked things that I don't. Then we'll keep feeding the hate machine, lining the pockets of those who parasitically feed on our outrage, widening the divides that frustrate us and avoiding the truth.

This doesn't mean that we don't name

evil honestly, or resolutely resist injustice, or add our voices to those protesting the degradation of our collective discourse. It just means that we do it from a more honest and ultimately more hopeful starting point.

Something needs to be done about all the hate in the world. ☿



*Ryan Dueck is pastor of Lethbridge (Alta.) Mennonite Church. Adapted with permission from his Oct. 31, 2018, blog, Rumbblings ([bit.ly/evil-right-there](http://bit.ly/evil-right-there)).*

# Repentance

A time to water and weed

By Paul Foth

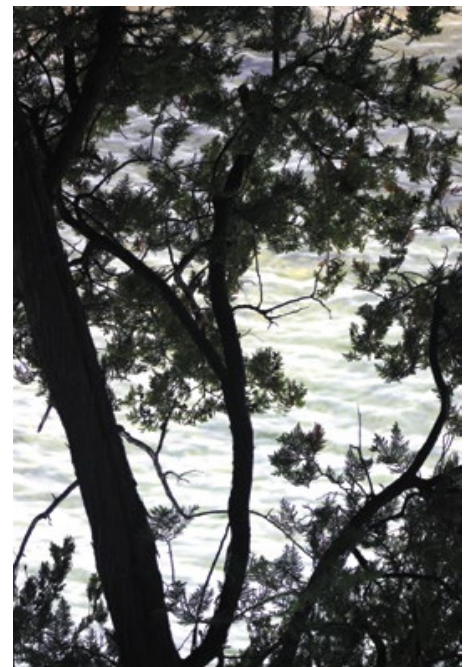
**G**rowing up as an evangelical Protestant, I knew a little bit about Lent. It meant renouncing something superfluous like ice cream or movies. If I thought about it, I might also spend a little time in prayer and contemplation of the passion of Jesus. But Lent was mostly an exercise in restraint.

For early Christians, Lenten fasting served the larger purpose of repentance. Lent began as Christians fasted alongside new converts, or catechumens, who were preparing for baptism at Easter. Prayer, charity and almsgiving accompanied these communal fasts. Lent was a time not only to root out sin, but also to cultivate virtue.

## Atomic charges

It could be said that repentance, like an atom, has "positive" and "negative" elements that together make up the whole. The negative turning from sin and the positive attraction toward Christ through prayer and good works are the two sides of the process of repentance.

An early Christian prayer clearly



MENNOPIX PHOTO BY ROSS W. MUIR

describes this process. A ministry colleague introduced this prayer of humility and repentance to me during a staff prayer time:

“O Lord and Master of my life, take from me a spirit of laziness, despair, lust of power, and empty talk. But give rather a spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to your servant. Yes, O Lord and King, help me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother or sister, for blessed are you unto ages of ages. Amen.”

This prayer is attributed to Ephrem of Syria, a fourth-century church father known for his beautiful theological poetry and hymnody.

Since learning this prayer, I have used it as a plea for repentance, humility and love.

### Turning away

Saint Ephrem’s prayer begins with a petition for God to take away the vices that bind and blind us.

First is sloth, or laziness, with its passivity and love of comfort. In this busy technological age, sloth can manifest itself not merely in the absence of action, but in wrongly placed attention and effort. Laziness means forsaking love and obedience to Christ for lesser distractions.

Despair, or despondency, considered a sort of eighth “deadly sin” by early Christians in the Greek East, is a state of all-encompassing negativity, giving up on the grace of God.

Ambition, manifest as lust for power, leads us to try to control one another and shape our world through coercion.

Empty talk catches us up in frivolous pursuits that distract our souls from seeking Christ. And, as James reminds us, the tongue can lead a person’s entire life down a path of destruction (James 3:5-6).

In this prayer, I seek deliverance from these forces that ensnare my soul and trap me in selfishness and despair. This turning from evil is the “negative” side of repentance.

### Turning toward

To be stripped of these vices alone would do little were they not replaced by the fruit of the Spirit.

Chastity, or “whole-mindedness,” according to Orthodox writer Alexander

Schememann in *Great Lent*, is rightly ordered love and attention.

Humility, which Augustine called “the foundation of all the virtues,” delivers us from pride and despair.

Patience and humility together help us resist the impulsive drives to promote ourselves and dominate others.

Love is the crowning fruit of the Spirit, our right orientation toward God and others.

This turning to Christ and growing in the fruit of the Spirit reflects the positive side of repentance—not only being emptied of sin, but being filled with good.

### Humility

Finally, this prayer encourages humble self-reflection as an antidote to judgment, harkening to Jesus’ admonition to consider the plank in our own eye (Matthew 7:5).

Asking God to help us see our own sins is not an invitation to despair and self-loathing; rather, it guards against pernicious pride, leading us toward a realistic and humble picture of our own sinfulness

and God’s overwhelming mercy. True repentance is grounded in true humility.

The prayer of Saint Ephrem, which Orthodox Christians use throughout Lent, reflects both the negative and positive aspects of repentance. Repentance means turning from sin, turning to God and seeking to walk in the way of Christ.

John the Baptist commanded the Pharisees to “*produce fruit in keeping with repentance*” (Matthew 3:8). Lent is an opportunity to cultivate this fruit, not only to weed out harmful, selfish and gluttonous habits from our lives, but also to seek to grow in the grace of the Holy Spirit. ❧



*Paul Foth is studying church history at MB Seminary in Langley, B.C., after working with prison inmates and*

*migrant farmworkers in Washington state. Originally printed in the Winter 2019 issue of the MB Herald. Reprinted with permission of the author.*

### For discussion

1. Who are the good people and who are the evil people in our world today? Do we tend to think that “we” are good and “they” are evil? Do we see the world as “us versus them” more than earlier generations? How willing are we to recognize that there is evil within ourselves?
2. Ryan Dueck says about the internet that “there are vast sums of money to be made by creating content that stokes the flames of righteous anger.” How can righteous anger be sinful? How does the internet help to spread hate?
3. Dueck also says that we are “inherently prone to self-deception,” and that we should acknowledge our innate tendency towards sinfulness. Why is it important to acknowledge our evil tendencies? How is this related to repentance?
4. Paul Foth suggests that Lent is a time to weed out our vices and to cultivate virtues. What are the vices that are important to root out and the virtues we should nurture? How might despair be regarded as sin?
5. To which fruit of the Spirit do you most aspire (Galatians 5:22-23)? What are some specific ways we can cultivate our virtues?

—By Barb Draper

See related resources at  
[www.commonword.ca/go/1451](http://www.commonword.ca/go/1451)

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## /// Readers write

### ✉ Colombian reader moved by CM feature article

**Re: “Holding hands with the FARC,” Jan. 7, page 4.**

I read this story with tears and with profound sentiments. I’m part of a Colombian generation that has lived a life tormented by a not-recognized civil war. My whole life was often crossed by news or sadness because a friend, social justice leader or human rights activist was killed. I lost hundreds of friends from the Patriotic Union (Unión Patriótica) during the genocide against this civil opposition movement. Today, reading this article, I feel compelled more than ever to support the peace in Colombia . . . and everywhere! Thanks to Robert Suderman and to *Canadian Mennonite*.

LUIS ALBERTO MATA (ONLINE COMMENT)

### ✉ Canada should have censured Israel at UN Assembly

**I am ashamed that on Nov. 29, 2018—on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People—when the UN Assembly overwhelmingly passed six motions that censured the State of Israel for its treatment of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, Canada voted against all six of them!**

On Dec. 5, Israeli soldiers came to the South Hebron Hills village of A-Simiya and demolished the local elementary school and confiscated the equipment. The school was to have opened on Dec. 9 and would have served 55 children.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau travels the world championing human rights. How can he instruct our UN representatives not to censure an ally of ours, the State of Israel, when it flaunts the Geneva Conventions to which Canada is a signatory? He sets up a future prime minister to apologize to the Palestinian people, just as he was forced to apologize to the Jewish people because Canada had sent a boatload of people back to the Nazi death camps during the Second World War.

Is Canada not glaringly hypocritical?

GERHARD NEUFELD, WINNIPEG

*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. 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.*

## /// Milestones

### Births/Adoptions

**Erb**—Violet Amanda (b. Jan. 12, 2019), to Jeremy and Janice Erb, Crosshill Mennonite, Ont.

**Loewen**—Sophia Elizabeth Guenther (b. Jan. 4, 2019), to Emily Loewen and Bruce Guenther, Hope Mennonite, Winnipeg.

### Marriages

**Lippmann/Weber**—Peter Lippmann (Pleasant Point Mennonite, Clavet, Sask.) and Lyle Weber, at St. George’s Anglican Hall, Saskatoon, Nov. 5, 2018.

### Deaths

**Block**—Dolores (Friesen), 85 (b. Dec. 29, 1933; d. Jan. 3, 2019), Hope Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Cook**—Barbara (nee Witmer), 94 (b. June 4, 1924; d. Dec. 8, 2018), Stirling Avenue Mennonite, Kitchener, Ont.

**Driedger**—Lydia Darlene (Koehn), 87 (b. July 29, 1931; d. Nov. 5, 2018), Charleswood Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Dyck**—Dorothy (Friesen), 81 (b. March 15, 1937; d. Dec. 30, 2018), Steinbach Mennonite, Man.

**Dyck**—Elmer, 94 (b. July 18, 1924; d. Jan. 19, 2019), Morden Mennonite, Man.

**Funk**—Edd, 74 (b. Dec. 6, 1944; d. Jan. 23, 2019), Jubilee Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Goerzen**—Henry David, 90 (b. Oct. 28, 1928; d. Jan. 11, 2019), Bergthal Mennonite, Didsbury, Alta.

**Harder**—Mary (Wiebe), 90 (b. April 12, 1928; d. Jan. 13, 2019), Bethel Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Klaassen**—Karoline (Unrau), 80 (b. May 22, 1938; d. Jan. 15, 2019), Sterling Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Koop**—Wilmer, 62 (b. Nov. 11, 1955; d. Sept. 30, 2018), Jubilee Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Miller (Thiessen)**—Helen (Loewen), 88 (b. Jan. 12, 1930; d. Jan. 12, 2019), Sterling Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Thiessen**—Vivian (nee Derksen), 98 (b. Oct. 29, 1920; d. Dec. 31, 2018), First Mennonite, Saskatoon.

**Wiebe**—Peter G., 94 (b. Feb. 7, 1924; d. Jan. 3, 2019), Charleswood Mennonite, Winnipeg.

**Woelk**—Helen (Koop), 91 (b. Nov. 16, 1927; d. Jan. 8, 2019), Leamington United Mennonite, Ont.

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

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**OBITUARY**


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**Jacob P. Siemens**  
**July 11, 1931 - Jan. 2, 2019**

Jacob Pete Siemens passed at Bethesda Regional Health Centre in Steinbach, Man. He was born to Peter and Katharina (Nickel, Kroeker) Siemens at Saint Francois Xavier, the third child of nine. Jacob had happy childhood experiences on the farm at Pigeon Lake and Marquette, Man., and later in Vineland and Dunnville, Ont.



Education was important to Jacob! After high school graduation from Gretna's Mennonite Collegiate Institute in 1949, he continued studying in Winnipeg—at the Manitoba Normal School (teacher training) and the University of Manitoba, where he earned three degrees. Sadly, his employment in a Welland, Ont., blast furnace factory eventually led to severe hearing loss. As a teenager, Jacob accepted Jesus as his Saviour. He was baptized upon confession of his faith in the Vineland United Mennonite Church on July 25, 1948. Jacob was an active member of several churches, concluding with Steinbach Mennonite Church. For 33 years he served Manitoba public schools, mainly in Hanover School Division No. 15. He was involved with The Manitoba Teachers' Society and a charter member of the Hanover Retired Teachers' Association. Following early retirement, he relished chances to travel and offer voluntary service in various countries. Jacob's creative writing contributed to *Die Mennonitische Post* and *Das Blatt für Kinder und Jugend*. Passions for history and genealogy were expressed by authoring family books and promoting clan reunions.

Jacob was a complicated man. The trauma his parents suffered in the U.S.S.R., along with events in Jacob's early years, shaped his character. At that time there were no tools to process these experiences, so he expressed them in his own way.

On July 11, 1953, Jacob married Susana Braun. They raised seven children and fostered four children/young adults. Jacob and Susana enjoyed their homes, beginning in rural teacherages. Eventually they built

their dream hobby farm east of Steinbach. With a professional homemaker at his side, resourceful Jacob managed to raise a large family and give generously to charity. He was fond of gardening. Jacob and Susana's greatest concern was that all of their descendants

would love Jesus and serve Him. Family devotions and prayer were daily activities.

Jacob was predeceased by his wife Susana on Dec. 31, 2016; three grandsons (Darcy Peters, Mitchell Morgan and Genesis Kennedy); three sisters (Margaret Siemens, Mary Kendall and Nettie Brown); and his parents. He leaves to mourn his children and their families: Karen and Willie Peters (Kristel Peters and Daniel Thomas with Gunner and Otis; Kevin and Jennifer Peters with Myles and Jewel; Korey Peters and Alexandra Nohlgren with Gray); Daniel and Joyce Siemens (Jonathan and Nicole Siemens; Rachel Siemens; Timothy Siemens); W. Jac and Audrey Siemens (Brett and Natalie Siemens with Brody, Madison and Payton; Britta Siemens and Aaron Corris); Lois Siemens; Irma and Jordan Morgan (Evan Morgan and fiancée Gina Ciavaglia; and Jordan Morgan); Iris and Brian Kennedy (Noah Kennedy); Luella and Vernon Peters (Clinton and Larissa K. Peters with Jackson; Larissa Susan Peters). Jacob is survived by three sisters (Helene Vollick, Elizabeth Kopeschny and Linda Lachnit), and two brothers (Peter Siemens and George Siemens), as well as numerous extended family members and friends.

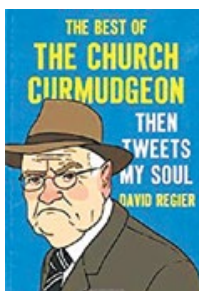
At a later date Jacob will join Susana in the Schoenwiese Cemetery, a graveyard in The Municipality of Rhineland, Man. If you wish to honour Jacob, find an opportunity to be a volunteer! Those who desire may make a donation in Jacob's memory to The Gideons International in Canada or Mennonite Central Committee.

**Paid obituary submitted by  
the family of Jacob P. Siemens.**

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**Et cetera**


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**"But no one can tame the thumb; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison,"**  
**(James 3:8, Twitter Standard Version).**

(Courtesy of the Church Curmudgeon, @ChrchCurmudgeon.)



## FROM OUR LEADERS

# Deepening our walk with each other

Ryan Siemens

**D**uring this past year, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan has focused on the theme of “Deepening our walk with Christ,” in the hope of increasing our openness to encounters with God’s presence in our lives. This theme grew out of an awareness that, if we desire to live well in this day of great turmoil and uncertainty, we need to come back to the One who calms the storm and brings us peace.

## The question before us isn’t whether we will have disagreements or challenges with one another, but rather, how will we live together when we do?

To help us deepen our trust in Christ, we were encouraged to take up the daily and weekly practices of Sabbath keeping, Scripture reading, prayer, sitting in silence, worship and reflection. Nothing overly new here!

Yet in our frenzied lives, not only can these practices help us keep our heads above water in shifting seas, but, by deepening our awareness of God’s presence, we can navigate these seas with trust and confidence.

This coming year, we continue to build upon this theme. While it can be tempting to “individualize” our spirituality and

focus only on “Jesus and me,” in the hope of re-grounding ourselves in our core Anabaptist/Mennonite commitments, we are being invited to “Deepen our walk with each other.”

In many ways, this should not come as a surprise. When Jesus is asked about the greatest commandment, he responded, “*Love God with all your heart, soul and mind, and love your neighbour as yourself.*” When the prophet is asked,

“*What does the Lord require of you?*” the response is “*to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.*” Throughout the biblical story there is a direct correlation between our love of God and our call to love each other.

Palmer Becker, in his book *Anabaptist Essentials*, boldly claims that “Community is the centre of our lives.” And while we all yearn to belong to an authentic Christian community, if we’re honest with ourselves, life together is not always easy to do. When Matthew records Jesus saying, “*Whenever two or three are gathered, I will be present,*” I

sometimes wonder if he misheard, and Jesus actually said, “Whenever there are two or three gathered, there will be conflict,” because, as we know from the earliest days of the church community, there has been conflict, disagreement and schisms.

Spoiler alert: These will not disappear any time soon. The question before us isn’t whether we will have disagreements or challenges with one another, but rather, “How will we live together when we do?”

To deepen our walk with Christ is to deepen our walk with each other—locally, regionally, nationally and globally. We cannot separate these. Therefore, by the grace of God and for the sake of God’s beloved world, let us continue walking together. ❧



Ryan Siemens is executive minister of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan.

## A moment from yesterday



An accordionist serenades a literary society meeting at Chesley Lake Camp in Ontario, in 1949. Chesley Lake was the first Mennonite church camp in Ontario and one of the first in Canada. Literary societies were common in Ontario Mennonite churches at the time, as social outlets and avenues for artistic expression. In today’s fast-paced world, do our congregations need camps, art, music and community more than ever?

Text: Laureen Harder-Gissing  
Photo: David L. Hunsberger /  
Mennonite Archives  
of Ontario



archives.mhsc.ca

## IN THE IMAGE

## 'I think I saw yellow'

Ed Olfert

I drove to the nursing home to visit a dear old friend. She was sleeping when I entered her room, so I pulled up a chair to wait.

Waiting would not be a chore. As I gazed at her visage, relaxed in sleep, I explored memories of our friendship over several years. My friend had some hard chapters in her story, and those chapters were increasing with age and deteriorating health. And yet an important line of defence was a robust and earthy sense

Suddenly, Pearl turned a face toward me that was as radiant as I've always pictured Christ on the mountaintop. And her words were, "Do you know what happened today? I think I saw yellow!" She hurried on to say that when the care aide had come by that morning to help her into her clothes, she had sensed yellow before her face. She had asked, "Are you wearing yellow?" It was true. Pearl added, with obvious emotion in her face, "It has been a very long time since I've seen yellow!"

**When the experience is that powerful, that emotional, that real, it becomes about hope. It becomes about a reason to live with joy and passion.**

of humour that sometimes left tears of laughter on my cheek.

My reverie was interrupted by a soft voice. A staff person was leaning into the room. "While you're waiting, would you like to talk to Pearl? She doesn't get many visitors." As we crossed the hall, I was informed, "Pearl is blind."

Sight limitations aside, Pearl did not live in a dark and secluded place. She was delighted with having company. We quickly and honestly touched on important parts of her story, her family, her passions and her loneliness.

It was a holy moment. When the experience is that powerful, that emotional, that real, it becomes about hope. It becomes about a reason to live with joy and passion.

The church has not done a good job of pointing, of opening eyes, of offering blessing in situations like Pearl's and her glimpse of yellow. We have held back from naming spontaneous moments of joy—of excitement—as events of spiritual importance. We have stumbled to point to lives healed, struggles conquered, as steps on a holy path, unless they are accompanied by holy language.

And yet, sitting in Pearl's presence, gazing into her face, hearing her voice, reading her emotion, that was about the greatness of God.

We are created in the image of God. In that simple and yet deeply complex notion, I find the stuff that makes my life good and my spirit soar. Every person to whom I've offered the dignity of respect has returned something of that holy heritage. A corollary would then be that when I have not experienced that glimpse of God from another, it is connected to my own withholding of respect and dignity.

Yet we of the church have not produced language or theology to point in that direction. We have largely assumed that when God is glimpsed, that glimpse will be generated by the people of God.

Can the people of God be more inclusive? Can the people of God be those referred to in Genesis 1:26? Can the people of God include my friend in the truck-driving world who insists that the church would combust if he stepped in the door? Can it include incarcerated friends who feel the need to hide vulnerability behind facades of anger and intimidation? Can it include the street person who visits me in the church, and then my phone disappears?

I hope so. Because, like Pearl, I want my face to shine. ❧



Ed Olfert ([p2ptheo@sasktel.net](mailto:p2ptheo@sasktel.net)) discovers awe in central Saskatchewan.

## Et cetera



JOHNNY\_APPLESEED1774 PHOTO (CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG)

## Amish growth spurt

**"Sociologists of religion have identified the Amish as among the fastest growing religious communities in the U.S., doubling in size every 20 years over the past century, with a total population of nearly 300,000 baptized members."**

(Quoted from "Ex-members of ultra-traditional groups share stories," by John D. Roth, in *Mennonite World Review*, Oct. 8, 2018.)

## BOOK REVIEW

# Bible commentary geared for younger readers

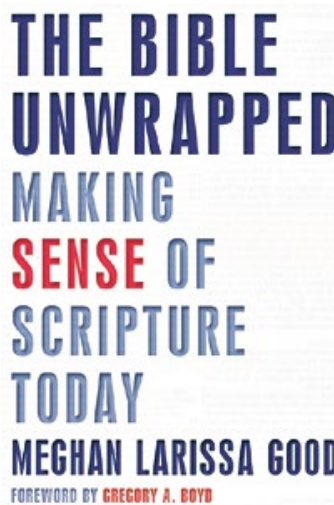
*The Bible Unwrapped: Making Sense of Scripture Today.*  
Meghan Larissa Good. Herald Press, 2018, 312 pages.

Reviewed by Barb Draper  
BOOKS & RESOURCES EDITOR

Reading the Bible can be challenging; it is a complex collection of books written thousands of years ago in different cultures. *The Bible Unwrapped* has easy-to-read explanations for inexperienced readers to get a handle on how to make sense of it all. The author is a teaching pastor at a Mennonite church in Arizona and she gears her writing style toward younger readers, using modern-day images and expressions.

Meghan Good points out that the Bible is not really a manual or a rule book, it is more of a collection of narratives that invite us to see how God has worked with people in the past. We can participate in a conversation and, like the story of Jacob wrestling with the stranger, we need to wrestle with Scripture. It cannot be mastered or labelled, she says, but Scripture has power to show us a world beyond our experience. She also compares the Bible to a telescope; it needs to be used to make it effective, not taken apart to scrutinize each piece.

Among the many short chapters in *The Bible Unwrapped* are those that explain how the various books of the Bible came to be considered authoritative. The Old Testament grew out of an oral tradition



that was eventually written down, but the details of how that happened are a mystery. She declares that there was no conspiracy that decided which books were part of the New Testament. Over hundreds of years the church simply recognized which books were already functioning authoritatively.

In the second section, she points out the various genres, explaining that the Bible is like a bookstore compressed into one book. Because we are like eavesdroppers, hearing various details of stories from another time, we need to

understand some of the historical and literary context of what we hear. She describes the different kinds of Scripture; for example, pointing out that the epistles are like journals of early explorers. She also gives some concrete examples of how particular passages might be understood.

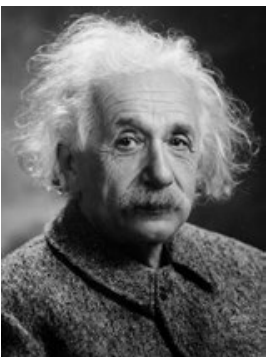
In the third section, she explores how the Bible has been interpreted, pointing out that often there is disagreement. She suggests that, just as the consequences of decisions are often only revealed over time, so we should be aware that our discernment of what the Bible means might look different from interpretations in another time and place. The Bible gives few clear and definitive answers, says Good, pointing out that the enemy of biblical faith is not uncertainty, but fear.

*The Bible Unwrapped* is not suitable for biblical scholars, but it provides lots of helpful information for someone with limited experience in studying the Bible. This would be a good resource for a youth study group. ☺

A nine-week study guide is available online from Herald Press at [bit.ly/bible-unwrapped-guide](http://bit.ly/bible-unwrapped-guide).



## Et cetera



### Einstein on the Bible

**“The word ‘God’ is for me nothing more than the expression and product of human weaknesses, the Bible a collection of honourable, but still primitive, legends which are nevertheless pretty childish.**

(Albert Einstein, in his 1954 “God letter” that was recently auctioned off.)

PHOTO BY ORREN JACK TURNER (COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG)

## WOMEN WALKING TOGETHER IN FAITH

# Conversation Circles offer women hope

By Kathy Giesbrecht

MENNONITE WOMEN MANITOBA

Last fall, ignited by curiosity about what we would hear if we invited women to share their experiences of life within Mennonite Church Manitoba congregations, Mennonite Women Manitoba decided to host two Conversation Circles, one in Winnipeg and the other in southern Manitoba.

Jayme Friesen, abuse response and prevention coordinator with Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba, facilitated both conversations, which engaged two questions:

1. **Through the eyes and experiences as a woman in the church, what is going well?**
2. **What would make our congregations a healthier space for women?**

As we listened to each other's experiences and observations during those events, certain themes began to emerge in both Circles, despite the wide age demographics represented. These included comments like:

- **"In our Manitoba church family, there are places where women are involved at all levels of leadership, but there are also places where we still feel merely tolerated on the margins of the 'old boys club.'"**
- **"Safe places to talk about power, gender and abuse are generally missing."**
- **"While appreciating the inclusion of feminine names for, and metaphors about, God in our worship life, we also long for more stories about women in sermons."**

Many women also acknowledged that MC Manitoba congregations had experienced positive movement in areas such as women in leadership and in more inclusive worship language.

However, this acknowledgment came alongside expressions of frustration over many congregations not having moved fast or far enough on these issues. Numerous comments reminded us of this, as did ongoing stories of horrendous abuse in the church, overpowering patriarchy, shaming through language and exclusion due to gender, all of which have their

own place of stifling pain.

A few weeks after these Conversation Circles, participants were asked to share what these conversations had left them with. Their comments further expanded awareness of women's experiences in our churches. For example, one woman wrote that she was "extremely excited to be asked to be part of this discussion. As an immigrant and not a native English speaker, I often feel people don't have the patience to listen to me."

Another participant noted that what struck her most was "the fact that we clearly journey together within a church that is a complexity of paradoxes. We exhibit and hold on to the hope of the way things should be with gender equality and sensitivities, and sometimes do that really well, but at other times the church fails miserably and causes deep pain and hurt."

Still another commented that, as she reflected "on the wealth of experiences expressed, one theme that lingers in my mind is the need to support, encourage and champion the gifts that women, young and old, bring to the church. I came away thinking that we are not in a time of limiting. . . . The church is more open to us now than ever before."

Overall, these Conversation Circles turned out to be powerful experiences of intergenerational storytelling and cross-congregational connecting, offering many words of encouragement and hope. These, in turn, led to the creation of a Conversation Circle Summary Statement that will be passed on to MC Manitoba's Ministerial Leadership Committee, with the hope that there might soon be "faster and further" movement on women's issues among us. ❧

*Kathy Giesbrecht attends Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, and is MC Manitoba's associate director of leadership ministries. She is the MC Manitoba staff person on MW Manitoba, whose other members include Larissa Pahl, Janet Peters, Cheryl Thiessen and Elsie Rempel.*



*Read John Longhurst's On Faith Canada blog, "Remembering Peggy Unruh Regehr, pioneer for women's rights in Mennonite churches," at [bit.ly/peggy-unruh-regehr](http://bit.ly/peggy-unruh-regehr).*



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHY GIESBRECHT

*Larissa Pahl, associate pastor of Morden (Man.) Mennonite Church, left, and Elsie Wiebe were active participants in the Conversation Circles last fall.*



# 'This is what God calls us to do'

Three Mennonite churches help build subsidized housing in the Greater Toronto Area

By Joelle Kidd  
Special to *Canadian Mennonite*  
MARKHAM, ONT.

A group of churches in Markham is ready to break ground on its latest affordable housing project.

Markham Inter-Church Committee for Affordable Housing (MICAHA) is a group of 13 founding-member churches in the Markham area, including Hagerman Mennonite, Rouge Valley Mennonite and Wideman Mennonite. Since 1988, the committee has provided an estimated 5,000 homes in Markham, a city in the Greater Toronto Area.

Its latest project will provide 32 new units for seniors and at-risk children and youth.

"Markham is a rather affluent community," says MICAHA president Mike Clare, noting that rents in the area are much higher than the Canadian average. Because of this, people with low incomes and vulnerable populations like seniors and children have difficulty finding appropriate housing, he says.

In the late 1980s, a group of churches in the area banded together and decided to respond. While each church was

passionate about creating housing, "the churches realized that if the building project failed, they would be responsible for the shortfalls," he says. To avoid this, MICAHA was incorporated to shoulder the legal responsibility.

The Committee's first project, Cedarwood Manor, was completed in 1991. The building houses 150 units for seniors, with 80 percent of the rental units subsidized to a percentage of the tenant's income. The group has since built two other projects in the area.

While the original building is still going strong, demand continues to grow.

"In order to get into a Cedarcrest Manor apartment, there's a 10-year waitlist," Clare says. "For every [successful] application there are 2,400 others."

MICAHA was looking to do another building project. "We tried a couple of ideas with the City of Markham, and they didn't quite take off," he says.

In December 2015, York Region requested shovel-ready proposals. The Committee knew that, with high land prices in the Toronto region, the only way it could put a proposal forward would be if it had land donated.

That was when MICAHA realized some untapped potential at Cedarcrest Manor. Because many of the building's residents no longer drive, much of its parking lot was not being used.

"There was a chunk of land that we didn't have to buy," says Clare. "We jumped at the opportunity."

The new building will offer 32 units and is expected to be five storeys high. Twenty-five units will be standard one-bedroom apartments for seniors; five will be barrier-free apartments

accessible for seniors with disabilities; and two units will be designated for use by 360Kids, a local organization that helps at-risk children and youth.

The designated apartments at the new building will be held for teens or young adults exiting the program, who are waiting for permanent housing and are ready to move on to schooling or apprenticeship programs, according to Clare.

"We're trying to get a mix of young people and seniors," he says. That way, "seniors get a chance to see young people in a positive light," and the young adults, some of whom may not have spent much time with seniors or elders, can benefit from the stability of the building. There may also be opportunities for practical apprenticeship at Cedarcrest Manor, he adds.

Clare, who attends Grace Anglican Church, adds that he has been impressed with the participation of the Mennonite churches in the area: "They really walk the walk."

When asked why it's important for Christians to be involved in affordable housing, he says, "If you want to build community and do Christ's work, the fastest way is to provide shelter."

A housing-first model, in which permanent housing is provided to all regardless of employment status, sobriety or any other factor, offers both individual and social benefits, he says. If people have housing, they experience less police interaction and use fewer emergency services. Those living with mental health issues are able to fill prescriptions with a permanent address. There is also less anxiety and pressure when housing is secure. Providing housing helps people find "a place to sleep and some permanency in [their lives]," he says, adding, "This is what God calls us to do."

If all goes to plan, the new building is expected to be completed by the end of this year and ready for occupancy in January 2020, according to Clare. ☿

To learn more, visit [micahinmarkham.ca](http://micahinmarkham.ca).



PHOTO BY MYRON NICHOLSON

A crane breaks ground on the former parking lot at Cedarcrest Manor in Markham, Ont. The new building will have 32 units for low-income and disabled tenants.



# Militia lays down arms in the Congo

*Churches work and pray for healing*

By Will Braun  
Senior Writer

**A**s truckloads of militia drove into Tshikapa to lay down their arms, Joseph Nkongolo went to meet them. Nkongolo—Coordinator of the Service and Development Department of the Mennonite Church of Congo—spoke of militia members saying they want to re-enter civil life. “Pray for us,” they said to him, “we have done horrible things; forgive us for what we have done.”

The city of Tshikapa lies on the periphery of the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, an area ravaged by violence since a conflict erupted there in 2016. The conflict has hit Congolese Mennonites hard, as the Kasai region is the birthplace of the Mennonite church in the Congo. Many Mennonites in the Kasai experienced unspeakable horrors, including the massacre of family members and prolonged periods of hiding in the forest.

The militia who are now coming into Tshikapa are members of the Kamuina Nsapu rebels, one of three militias in the region. The other two, said Nkongolo, have

yet to surrender their arms. In areas where they operate, many people are not able to work their fields or travel safely.

As part of the Mennonite response to the lingering crisis, Nkongolo said six Mennonites in Tshikapa are now trained to lead groups in trauma healing. He hopes this work will extend to both victims and perpetrators of violence.

Speaking by phone from Tshikapa—with translation by Rod Hollinger-Janzen of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission—Nkongolo reported how, just the day before, a 17-year-old ex-rebel had come to the church where Nkongolo was.

Many others come seeking help as well. The church is “inundated” with requests. Nkongolo spoke of a group of women who had come to the church the day we talked. They were part of a new wave of displaced people. In addition to the hundreds of thousands who fled villages for larger cities like Tshikapa, thousands who originally fled to neighbouring Angola have now been evicted from that country and are arriving in places like Tshikapa.

“We have very limited means,” said

Nkongolo, “but with the means that we have we are trying to help the people who are there.”

Congolese Mennonite churches are working in partnership with a coalition of Mennonite organizations, including Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), to address the needs of displaced people. The work focuses on material aid as well as trauma healing. Nkongolo and his colleagues are also involved with income-generation projects—including animal raising—and a literacy initiative carried out jointly by the three Mennonite groups in the Congo.

When asked how the church deals with the horrors and ongoing suffering, Nkongolo said, “The church sympathizes with people in their suffering.” He noted two parts to that: material aid and prayer.

He emphasized the significance of the Mennonite church handing out aid “without discrimination,” in contrast to some other groups. The Kasai crisis heightened tensions between various ethnic groups, and the demonstrated impartiality of the Mennonites attracted people to the

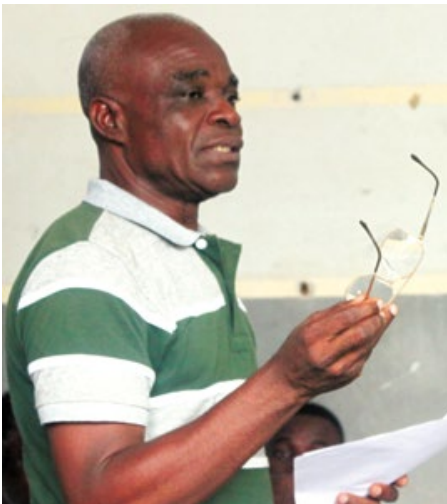


PHOTO BY ZACHARY COOKE

*Joseph Nkongolo leads a literacy training session.*



PHOTO BY JOSEPH NKONGOLO

church, said Nkongolo.

When asked what his prayer is for the church, he said: “That the love that God has given us, may that love return. That the unity that God has given us, may that unity return.”

He also emphasized the need for help from partners. “We need others who can help us do this work.”

Francisca Ibanda echoed that. Based in the Congo, she is the Mennonite World Conference regional representative for Central/West Africa. Via email, she said: “My message to the churches of Canada is to continue supporting us through your prayers, and to relieve, even if just a bit, the suffering. . . . My hope is that our brothers, sisters in Canada and the U.S. can also become knowledgeable about the problems in the Congo in order to better direct their prayers.”

Amid the overwhelming need, the surrender of the Kamuina Nsapu is a “real sign of hope for the country,” said Nkongolo. “If all of the militias can follow through and lay down their arms . . . then our roads can be safe, our homes can be safe, and we can have a new start.”

When asked what he would say if he found himself in a Canadian Mennonite



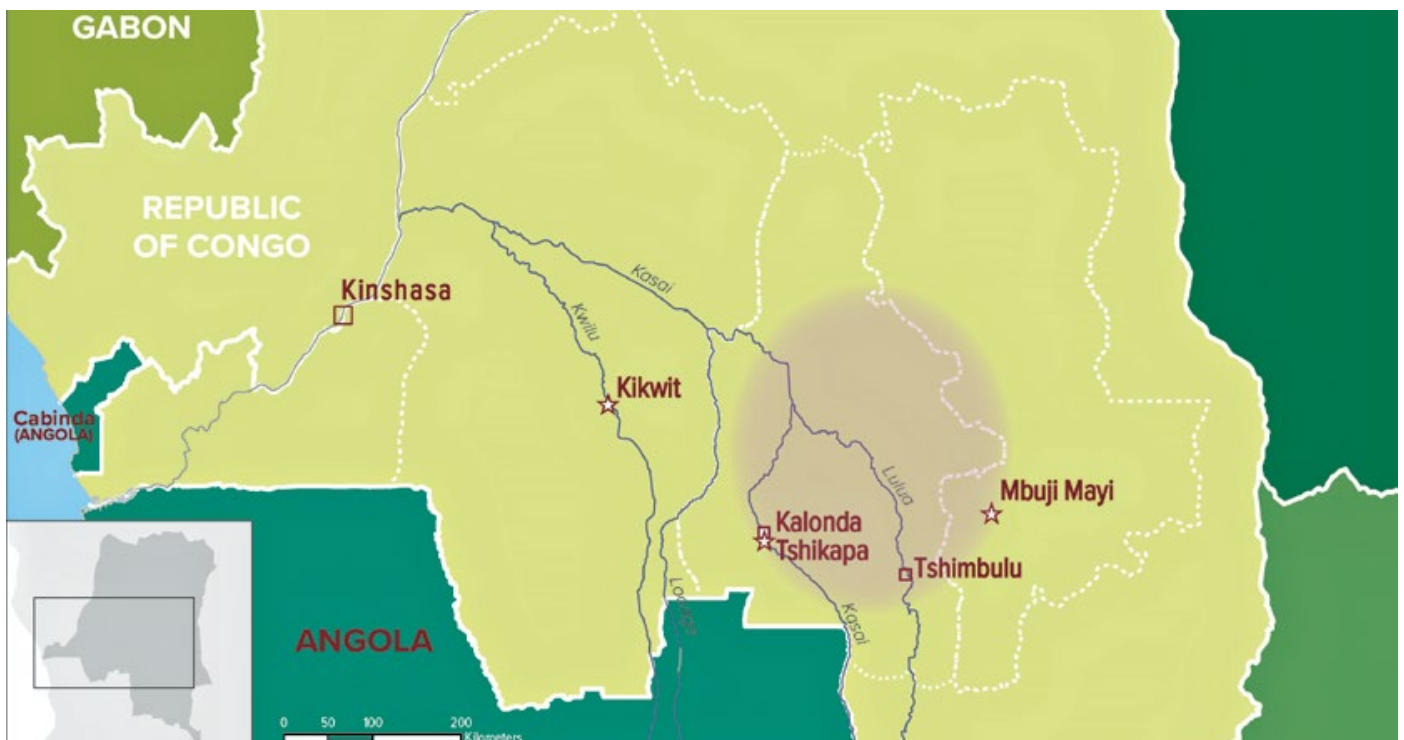
PHOTO BY JOSEPH NKONGOLO

***A truck of militia members enter the Congolese city of Tshikapa to lay down their arms on Jan. 29.***

church, Nkongolo hesitated, then, his voice brimming with emotion, said: “What I am just completely overwhelmed by is that people who have never met us—people who have never seen us—they hear about what is happening and they care enough to give, to help. [I] just thank people for the love that they have for the people of Congo.”

César Garcia, general secretary of

Mennonite World Conference, commented on how the broader Mennonite church can support Congolese Mennonites: “Walking together is crucial. . . . praying together, sharing burdens, sending financial support, letting them know—through social media for example—that we think about them, pray for them and stand with them. . . . [G]lobal support of the body of Christ gives real hope to overcome suffering.”



MAP DESIGNED BY BETTY AVERY

# 'How can I help?'

*'It takes a church' to stage a Broadway musical*

By Janet Bauman  
Eastern Canada Correspondent  
BRESLAU, ONT.

**D**riving to the cottage while listening to a recording of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, Justin Martin had an idea. Could Breslau Mennonite Church stage it? More than a year-and-a-half later, that dream came true.

Enthusiastic visioning from a group in their 30s and 40s was matched by wholehearted support from others in the congregation, who simply asked, "How can I help?" What started from a small seed turned into five soldout performances.

From Jan. 31 to Feb. 3, an intergenerational cast from ages 4 to 64 put on the popular musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice. Supported by a live band of six musicians and a crew of dozens more, the performances were truly a church-wide effort.

Most notable, everyone involved was connected to the church, where the pool of musical and artistic talent runs deep. Many people who were involved had previous experience, both on- and off-stage in musical theatre and drama productions, singing in a choir or playing in an ensemble. Whole families joined the

project, in some cases including several generations. Many more helped out in whatever way they could, from sewing costumes to serving snacks.

As Karen Good, house manager for the production, said, "It takes a church."

Director Julia Gingrich marvelled at the "community-building" benefits of the "collective effort."

Breslau Mennonite's musical version featured a chorus of 14 children who helped to tell the biblical story of Joseph, the dreamer, favoured with a special coat of many colours by his father Jacob. Sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, Joseph faces both his darkest hour and his eventual rise to great power in Egypt. This sets up an awkward family reunion, when the brothers, facing famine at home in Canaan, come to Egypt to buy grain. Fighting against his impulse to punish them, Joseph chooses instead to forgive, and is reunited with his family.

In the scene where Joseph is in prison in Egypt, the children appear carrying lights to offer him hope, foreshadowing that his life will take a turn for the better. Having



PHOTOS BY CHRISTINE SAUNDERS

**Janice Klassen, left, Amanda Snyder and Karl Braun dance and sing 'Go, Go, Go Joseph,' to assure him that he's not beaten yet and that his fortunes will change.**

the children so involved also helped to foster intergenerational relationships among the participants.

After rehearsals took place for months in the church gym, the sanctuary was transformed into a theatre, complete with stage lighting, a set that included blocks in the shape of pyramids, and dramatic, colourful costumes suited to each genre of music. It was a different way of engaging with a Bible story and a different way to do church.

How many pastors can say they danced and sang calypso, jazz and disco in costume, in their church sanctuary, while telling a Bible story? For Pastor Eleanor Epp-Stobbe, it just seemed natural to join in when the call went out last spring for participants, so she joined the choir. She commented on how the themes of brokenness, redemption and forgiveness found in the Joseph story are part of everyone's life. "This could be us," she said.

As enjoyable and exciting as it was to perform the shows, Chris Steingart, who played Joseph and served as artistic director, noted that "the journey to get there has been just as rewarding."

Like Joseph, who sings that "any dream will do," Breslau Mennonite knows the



**Chris Steingart, as Joseph, shows off his amazing Technicolor dreamcoat while his brothers look on with disgust from the background.**





*Justin Martin, right, who played Issachar and served as production manager, explains to his father Jacob, played by Phil Martin, left, what happened to Joseph and why there will be 'one less place at the table,' while one of the brothers looks on.*



*Chris Steingart, Joseph and artistic director, and Stacey VanderMeer, far right, narrator and musical director, begin to tell the children the story of Joseph and his dreams.*

power of a dream when a whole church gets behind it. And the children in this

production are already dreaming about the next one.

Besides drawing the church together, the production will also benefit the wider Breslau community. All the proceeds from the concession sales will support the church's summer camp, a free, week-long

program for community children entering Senior Kindergarten to Grade 6. ❧

*For more photos, visit [canadianmennonite.org/joseph](http://canadianmennonite.org/joseph).*



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# 'We really need each other a lot'

*Alberta pastor and wife debrief after four months of service in Ethiopia*

By Donita Wiebe-Neufeld  
Alberta Correspondent

**W**erner and Joanne DeJong returned to Edmonton's Holyrood Mennonite Church excited about the Anabaptist church in Africa and at home. They see possibilities for ongoing partnerships that benefit both the rapidly growing church in Ethiopia and the declining church in Canada. "We really need each other a lot," Werner says.

The Ethiopian church, unlike its North American counterparts, is growing faster than its ability to train leaders. Meserete Kristos is the largest Anabaptist denomination in the world, and the college, located just southeast of Addis Ababa, has a unique and profound contribution to make to this dynamic environment.

"They have a peace and justice stream and a community development stream," says Joanne of the college. "The other evangelical schools don't have this."

Adds Werner: "They can lose the

uniqueness of what is Anabaptist if they aren't careful, and that is what is needed: The peace theology and teaching, the whole notion of Christianity as discipleship, and following Christ in everyday life."

The impact of good teaching is hard to underestimate, according to the DeJongs. Students come to the college from different people groups all over the country and then return to their churches with what they have learned.

Once, after presenting a full-day workshop on discipleship formation, the pastor of a local independent evangelical church told the DeJongs: "The best way to describe the Mennonites that have come [to Ethiopia] over the years is that they 'walk straight,'" meaning that they live out the things they teach.

While at the college, the DeJongs also "walked straight."

Joanne says their joy was in the students.

"We spent every minute we could with the students. We went to their homes, churches, events. . . . We tried to be incarnational. You have to be involved in their lives for them to see you living out your faith."

The DeJongs also took the opportunity to visit with Sudanese Christians in Gambella, Ethiopia. Many of these people have been displaced from their homes in Sudan and have relatives in the South Sudanese Mennonite Church in Edmonton.

Solid Anabaptist teaching is what the DeJongs see that the North American Mennonite church can provide the church in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian church, in return, has significant gifts to offer.

"For me, the most significant thing I take away from them is their dependence on God," says Werner.

Whereas prayer in North American churches begins with human ideas and then asks God to bless them, prayer in Ethiopia begins with praying for God's ideas and then follows with obedience.

Werner was immediately able to apply this concept at Holyrood upon the couple's return in early 2019, starting regular prayer meetings. According to him, "The emphasis on waiting on God, praying and seeking God's direction dovetails perfectly with Vision 20/20," Mennonite Church Alberta's call to prayer for the future direction of the church.

Werner says that his students repeatedly asked about church decline in North America: "What is wrong with the church? Are you not praying? Do you not trust God? Are you not listening to the Holy Spirit? He found himself torn between feelings of defensiveness and being constructively challenged by these questions, which were asked out of curiosity, not judgment.

"They have something to give us. God is there." Joanne says. "Ask any student what plan God has for their life and they have an answer."

The DeJongs felt a sense of freedom because the Ethiopian culture is not secular, but one in which God is openly acknowledged. People were open and eager to discuss matters of faith and life.

Werner, who recently completed a doctorate in spiritual formation, worked as an instructor at the College, while Joanne



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DEJONGS

*Werner and Joanne DeJong spent from September to December of last year at Meserete Kristos College in Ethiopia. They are pictured with a couple of college staffers on New Year's Eve.*

preached, engaged students and served anywhere she could.

They raised their own sabbatical funds, using a relational funding model, and were accountable to the church through Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Church Canada.

Their time at the College has confirmed a sense of calling for the DeJongs. However, what exactly God's plan looks like is still in process for them. Upon return from sabbatical, Werner is committed to at least a full year of pastoring at Holyrood, as well as praying about "how this relationship with the Meserete Kristos College can

continue." ❧

To learn more, visit [bit.ly/dejong-facebook-post](http://bit.ly/dejong-facebook-post).



## Geez magazine moves offices from Winnipeg to Detroit

By Nicolien Klassen-Wiebe  
Manitoba Correspondent  
WINNIPEG

After more than a decade of operating out of Winnipeg, *Geez* magazine is moving its offices to Detroit, Mich.

The quarterly publication bills itself as "contemplative cultural resistance, explores religion, social justice and politics, pushing boundaries and sparking conversations." *Geez* published its first issue in 2005 under the direction of editors Aiden Enns and Will Braun and designer Darryl Brown. The shift comes at the same time as Enns is retiring from his role as editor.

"For the past couple of years, I and the board of directors have wanted to pass on leadership to a younger, more diverse team," Enns says. "I'm very self-conscious about my role as an older, white, heterosexual, male leader working with ideas to promote inclusion and equity for people of colour, ability and gender diversity.

"We tried to keep the publication in Winnipeg, but it's hard to find talented, educated, dedicated, LGBTQ people and/or people of colour, and ask them to work half-time at slightly more than minimum wage with no benefits and lots of responsibility," he says.

They found the right fit south of the border. Replacing Enns as editor is Lydia Wylie-Kellermann. She has been a *Geez* contributor for many years, co-edits RadicalDiscipleship.net and is part of the Catholic Worker community in Detroit. Lucia Wylie-Eggert, Kateri Boucher and Em Jacoby make up the rest of *Geez's* new team.

"We want to honour *Geez's* Canadian



GEEZ PHOTO

***Geez's* new Detroit-based staff includes, from left to right: Lucia Wylie-Eggert, Lydia Wylie-Kellermann and Kateri Boucher.**

roots and the beautiful work Aiden Enns has done as editor as we journey into the belly of the U.S. empire beast," says Wylie-Kellermann. "For each of us, our own spiritualities and cries for justice have been formed here in Detroit. It is a place where the shadows of capitalism, racism, militarism and environmental destruction are blatant and visible. It is also a place filled with resistance, community and hope. It is from that geography that the magazine will now be sent out."

The transition will extend over two issues and is set to be complete by June 2019. ❧

### News brief

#### Pinterest idea takes root at Winnipeg congregation



PHOTO COURTESY OF ADELIA NEUFELD WIENS

The Christmas tree in Bethel Mennonite Church's foyer this past Advent season was made not of pine needles, but of books. Lorraine Petkau, who has been doing visuals at the Winnipeg church for several years, created it when she saw the idea on Pinterest and decided it was time for a change from the worn-out tree the church uses every year. She gathered unused books from the church library and thrift shop that were going to be recycled, and built the tree on a base of timber blocks. The first level is created from children's books and displays a nativity scene. The rest of the tree contains old hymnals, love stories and cookbooks, to name a few. "I kept thinking, these are books that people from way before my generation have touched and opened and held," says Petkau. "They'd been used a lot by different people. . . . I thought that was quite neat." She says visuals are important in worship because some people connect more to visual experiences than auditory ones. Old people and tiny toddlers alike were drawn to the tree of books. "It just seemed like the tree kind of brought everybody together," she says.

—BY NICOLIEN KLASSEN-WIEBE

## PEOPLE

# 'Grace.' 'Arbor Una Nobilis.' 'Ad Astra.'

*CMU alumni compose songs sung by current students*

By Rachel Bergen  
Contributing Editor  
WINNIPEG

Two young composers who are alumni of Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg recently had their compositions performed by a choir from their alma mater.

Jesse Krause and Mark Holmes à Court contributed a total of three choral pieces for a pop-up concert at Winnipeg's Portage Place Shopping Centre given by the CMU Singers on Jan. 29 as a part of the Winnipeg New Music Festival. The Singers' repertoire focused on music that explored the theme of gratitude and praise for land, for its creatures and for the work of the Creator.

Krause, 33, is working as a composer and music teacher in Winnipeg, and is also currently pursuing a master of composition degree at the University of Manitoba.



**Jesse Krause**

He contributed two pieces to the concert. One, entitled "Grace," is music set to a George Herbert poem of the same name. It was sung by the male singers.

The other, "Arbor Una Nobilis," was originally written to be sung at Winnipeg's St. Margaret's Anglican Church on Good Friday. It's about a tree that's aware of being harvested, although it doesn't know for what, but eventually it is used as Jesus' cross.

"[The tree] imagines it will have another purpose, but then it's used for something that's pretty horrific," Krause says. "There's a shift in the music to reflect the realization of the tree when it knows what it will be used for."

À Court, 24, who is currently a graduate student of music composition at York University in Toronto, says his a cappella choral piece, "Ad Astra," was originally written last year to be performed in the Via

Rail station in Winnipeg.

"I wanted to write something that could reach up high [to the high ceilings of the building] and have a lot of breaks in it, so you could hear the voices bouncing off the walls," à Court explains.

"Ad Astra" means "to the stars" in Latin and is based on a text by Seneca. The full text is about trying to reach the stars.

Krause attended the concert at Portage Place and said that, although the venue was noisy and some of the intricacies of the pieces were difficult to hear, it was a joy to listen to. "They're bringing choral music into a setting where it wouldn't be necessarily. It's a pretty cool thing for the New Music Festival to do and for CMU to be a part of it," he says.

For à Court, having his piece performed by the CMU Singers was gratifying. He graduated from the university last spring with a bachelor of music degree. "It's super cool! I'm actually hoping to visit Winnipeg in March, and hopefully the CMU Singers will be able to perform it for me," he says.

For Janet Brenneman, an associate professor of music at CMU, including music written by people from the CMU community was a special experience. "I am thrilled that we could take this music to the wider community," she says. "It is wonderful knowing that we play a



**Mark Holmes à Court**



PHOTO BY MATT DUBOFF PHOTOGRAPHY

*The CMU Singers performed at Portage Place Shopping Centre on Jan. 29.*

small part in giving life to the music of Canadian composers.”

Both Krause and à Court say their CMU experiences contributed to their love and knowledge of music composition.

“Getting to work with different composition teachers and working in choir, I got to know how things work in a choral setting and how to write music that’s singable. It gave me the tools to know what’s effective,” à Court says.

For Krause, the theology courses gave him a grounding from which to write sacred music. “The musical training I received was pretty invaluable, but what was most valuable to me as a composer was the theology courses that I took. That’s had an influence on how I think about music and what it should do. It’s why I’m writing sacred music in particular,” he says.

///

## /// Staff changes

### Pastoral transitions in Ontario

• **Greg Yantzi** began as interim pastor at Nith Valley Mennonite Church, New Hamburg, last September. Most recently, he served as health and safety coordinator for Yantzi’s Feed & Seed Ltd. in Tavistock, and as Ontario program fundraiser for Mennonite Central Committee Ontario. Prior to that, he was pastor of Harrow (Ont.) Mennonite Church (1999-2012) and studied at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. (1996-1999).



• **Danielle Raimbault** was licensed toward ordination on Jan. 27 at Listowel Mennonite Church, where she is an associate pastor. She also works as a chaplain in a long-term care facility. She completed her undergraduate degree in music, worship and biblical studies at Providence University College, Otterburne, Man., and her master of theological studies degree from Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont.



• **Len Rempel** was licensed toward ordination on Jan. 20 at St. Agatha Mennonite Church, where he is serving in his first pastoral role. He also works part-time with Mennonite World Conference. He has taken courses in the master of theological studies program at Grebel. He did a pastoral internship at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock, many years ago.



—BY JANET BAUMAN

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# 'God can help me every day'

*Prince Albert senior tells of his faith and God's faithfulness*

Story and Photo by Donna Schulz  
Saskatchewan Correspondent  
PRINCE ALBERT, SASK.

**W**es Neepin, a long-time member of Grace Mennonite Church in Prince Albert, has been through some tough times in his 86 years, and God has been there with him.

Born in Gillam, Man. (1,065 kilometres north of Winnipeg), Neepin is the oldest of six children. His father died when Neepin was 12. Three sisters attended residential school, but his mother needed him at home. "I had to look after the two young ones while my mother was trying to survive off the land," he says.

As a teenager, Neepin would play in the public schoolyard. One day the teacher told him she wanted to see him in school the next day. He went, but three-and-a-half days later she told him he had to leave because Indigenous children weren't allowed in the public school. "When the teacher asked me, she didn't know I was a Treaty Indian," he says. "So I had three-and-a-half days of schooling, and that's pretty much all I had for schooling for the rest of my life."

At 17, he lied about his age to get a job with Canadian National Railway (CN). Because he was a hard worker, he was promoted to foreman and given charge of 19 kilometres of track, with four or five men reporting to him. He was further promoted to supervisor, but his lack of formal education made it difficult for him to do the job well. After a year, he returned to his former job as a labourer.

Neepin married at 21. He and his wife had six children, including twin sons.

During his time as foreman, he had to undergo training every two years. In 1976, during a five-day training course in The Pas, Man., he received a late-night phone call from his wife. Their youngest son, also

named Wes, had been shot and killed. The younger Wes had a wife and son. A second son was born eight months later. After her husband's death, the young widow moved with her boys to Swan River, Man.

Later, Neepin transferred to Swan River to be near his grandsons. As they grew, he took them fishing or blueberry picking, woodcutting or just out for lunch. "It was the biggest joy at that time for me," he says.

Two years after his son's tragic death, Neepin's marriage ended due to his growing dependence on alcohol. "I made a lot of mistakes in my life because of alcoholism," he says. "We divorced after 25 years of marriage—all because of alcohol."

In 1983, Neepin met a man who introduced him to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). "He came over to my house and said, 'My name is George and I'm going to an AA meeting. Do you want to come?'" says Neepin. Although his answer was no then, George persisted, he says, until one day "I took my hat and my jacket and I went with him. And from that day on I never took another drink."

"He saved my life," says Neepin. "If I had kept on drinking like I did . . . I would have never made it."

Neepin moved to Regina when he retired from CN in 1989. Some time later, he travelled north to Prince Albert, liked what he saw and decided to move there. He began looking for a church there, and he met Betty at the Salvation Army. The two became friends and eventually married. His search for a church continued until Betty suggested he try "the Mennonite church." She knew the pastor and said he seemed like a nice man.

So Neepin started attending Grace Mennonite Church and became involved



*Wes Neepin relies on God's help every day.*

in congregational life. He helped with renovations on the church building and eventually served as a trustee.

Some years ago, he experienced more grief than many families go through in a lifetime. First, his granddaughter Joanne was severely beaten in Winnipeg; she died of her injuries several days later. Just weeks after her death, Neepin's son—Joanne's father—died of a heart attack. A month after that, this son's twin brother also died of a heart attack. A daughter, Clara, died a short time later.

"It was very hard to lose all that family," he says, "but I always trusted in God, that he would heal my body and my heart."

"I think what really helped me was coming to [Grace Mennonite]," he says. "After a little while I started recognizing that I should do something. So I started making lunches for the hungry people."

He opens his Bible and points to Jesus' words in Matthew 25: 34-36. "That's what I do," he says.

Neepin relies on God to help him with this ministry. "God can help me every day as long as I'm willing to believe in him," he says. "And I pray every night and every morning for guidance." ❧



# FOCUS ON

# Camps

## Journey of a beloved camp treasure

By Nicolien Klassen-Wiebe  
Manitoba Correspondent

**M**oose Lake was one of three camps under the umbrella of Camps with Meaning (CwM), Mennonite Church Manitoba's camping ministry. It opened in 1957 and closed in September 2017, in order to create a more sustainable model for the regional church's camping ministry.

The picnic shelter was built in 2008 with funds raised by the camp and church community, and has been well loved by campers of all ages. Eating meals, face painting and worshipping are just some of the activities that took place in the shelter, which provided refuge from bugs and bad weather.

CwM decided to keep the building in memory of the love and energy that supporters poured into Moose Lake. With the financial support of a donor from the Steinbach area, CwM was able to move the structure to its new home among the



PHOTO BY DARRYL NEUSTAEDTER BARG

*The former Camp Moose Lake picnic shelter at its new home at Camp Assiniboia.*

cottonwood trees at Camp Assiniboia, where it will serve the camp community there for many years to come. A dedication will take place this spring, the date still to be announced. ☞

*To watch the picnic shelter's journey to Camp Assiniboia, visit [canadianmennonite.org/picnic-shelter-move](http://canadianmennonite.org/picnic-shelter-move).*



### PERSONAL REFLECTION

## Stepping outside the comfort zone

Sarah Geiger  
Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp  
NEW HAMBURG, ONT.



**I** had the pleasure of leading the Leaders in Training (LIT) and Advanced Camper Experience (ACE) programs at Hidden Acres

last summer. Both programs offer youth a chance to further develop leadership skills, study the Bible, build community, spend time outdoors, and learn the ins and outs of serving at camp.

Taking on the role of facilitating these programs was daunting to me at first, but I am so glad that I stepped out in faith. God had so much growth, opportunity and incredible moments in store for everyone involved in these programs.

*(Continued on page 24)*



PHOTO BY CHRIS POT

*Campers learn to canoe on Lake Laverne at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp.*

## FOCUS ON CAMPS

(Continued from page 23)

I got to watch as young leaders stepped out of their comfort zones and into the gifts and talents that God has given them. I got to see barriers of fear broken by love, and friendships blossom out of a simple “hello.” I got to see people look at faith, prayer and God in a new way, and hear of the unique journeys that God has brought each person on.

All of this was incredible, but I think that one of my favourite things about last summer was the community that was built.

The staff, LITs and ACEs were composed of small but very mighty groups of people. Although having fewer numbers in each of these groups than in some years could have been discouraging, I think a lot of us realized that it was actually an intentional blessing. Instead of hiding behind others, or always allowing other people to take on tasks, each person was called to step out into relationships, into their gifts and into leadership. This also called for close, supportive community, and reliance on each other as a team.

Another one of my favourite parts, naturally, was that we got to spend so much time outdoors. The ACEs got to have an extended camp-out, accompanied by a long hike, and the LITs got to experience a three-night out-trip at a nearby Scouts camp. Both of these experiences were highlights because each of us got to unplug, marvel at creation, and share quality time and laughter together. ☸

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

# Witnessing God at Camp Assiniboia

Nadya Langelotz  
Camp Assiniboia  
CARTIER, MAN.

As I prepare to enter my eighth summer as a camp staffer, I have an overwhelming abundance of memories to reflect on. From childhood weeks at Camp Moose Lake and the pubescent discoveries at Camp Koinonia, all the way to last summer, when I fell into awkwardly new territory to direct at Camp Assiniboia. I arise out of these memories with the knowledge that I have been shaped significantly by these places.

This past camp season, I went into the summer with little knowledge about Camp Assiniboia and I was directing with someone who had also never directed before. We were nervous and, although I think we pulled it off well, many days were heavy-laden with stress. I witnessed my fellow leadership staff take on new and stressful roles, I challenged myself to learn to love a new camp, and I met campers whose stories of witness were also stories of pain. I witnessed so much but struggled to be a witness.

However, I also saw beautiful glimpses of campers and staff witnessing God: a folk festival in the garden; campers chopping freshly picked vegetables while listening to staff play music on the impromptu stage; a conversation with a young camper who, while asking about the spring Adults with



PHOTO BY DARRYL NEUSTAEDTER BARG

Nadya Langelotz is pictured at a 'theme meal' during a junior-high week at Camp Assiniboia.

Disabilities Venture weeks, thanked me for the work we do at camp; and staff who reminded me through tender words

and gentle actions that God was indeed dancing through the muck of camp's chaotic glory.



## FOCUS ON CAMPS

This “necessary love” forced me to rely on others when I couldn’t bear to be a witness myself. It forced me to recognize the brokenness, often my own, and trust that God’s love would be shown through

the people and places around me. Being a witness meant holding both the love and pain, and choosing the love day after day. This choice is one that camp makes easy, this necessary love: my life. ❧

### VIEWPOINT

# Fun is a camp byproduct

Jason McDowell  
Fraser Lake Camp  
BANCROFT, ONT.

The word “fun” is often used in association with camp but, from my perspective, fun is not the meat and potatoes of what happens at camp. Fun is the byproduct of an accepting community and doing silly, exciting and difficult things together.

A young camper sat at the table with a flurry of craft supplies spread around. She was quiet and moved slowly. She drew some blue lines on a blue piece of construction paper with the corners cut off. I ripped two pieces of tape for her and said it looked like there was some room

on the counsellor’s back. Our time was almost up. She got up, navigated through the crowd, stuck her creation to the counsellor, and returned, all smiles.

Doing things for the first time is not easy, making new friends is not easy, canoeing across a lake, setting up tents, starting a fire and making a dinner are not easy. Tacking your creation to the back of a camp celebrity is not easy.

The value in having campers get into a kayak for the first time is not the fun they will have. The value is in growing confidence and self-esteem. The value in singing

at campfire every night isn’t entertainment; the value is in doing things you feel shy or embarrassed to try and learning to forget the power of expectation.

Nothing makes me happier than talking to parents, because the mission of a summer camp is such an easy thing to get behind. I am constantly reminded that my team is not just running some sort of children’s resort; we are partners in parenting with hundreds of families, creating space for children to grow and thrive away from home.

Summer camps can be the most tangible experience children get of silly, judgment-free community, a niche which parents seem to be increasingly finding the value of. ❧



PHOTO BY JANINI REESOR

*Canoeing across a lake at camp for the first time is not easy.*

### News brief

#### Eastern Canada youth sing from hymnal-in-progress

SAUBLE BEACH, ONT.—Mennonite Church Eastern Canada hosted its annual youth retreat on the first weekend of February at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp, Sauble Beach, Ont. This year, more than 40 youth from seven regional churches attended the retreat, says Jean Lehn Epp, interim youth ministry resources coordinator. This number has declined in recent years, with the trend towards more local retreats, she says, adding that, for those who attend, retreats are valuable times for youth to connect and relate with young people from other churches. This year’s retreat theme was exploring the new Mennonite Church Canada hymnal, *Voices Together*, that is expected to be released in 2020. The teens learned new songs from the hymnal, as well as different styles of worship, such as Taizé. Sarah Johnson, worship resources editor of the *Voices Together* committee, spoke, and youth leader Kim Rempel and students from Conrad Grebel University College led the worship sessions. The youth were also able to flex their creative muscles with a music video activity; groups wrote songs based on Bible lessons or stories, then filmed and screened their own music videos. There were also activities like snow-fort building, snowshoeing and indoor games.

—BY JOELLE KIDD



PHOTO BY JEAN LEHN EPP

*Isaac Hirtle, right, a youth sponsor from Community Mennonite Fellowship, Drayton, Ont., and two youth make a presentation at Mennonite Church Eastern Canada’s youth retreat at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp earlier this month.*

## FOCUS ON CAMPS



PHOTO BY MICHAEL TAVES /

TEXT BY DONITA WIEBE-NEUFELD

*From Jan. 11 to 13, approximately 50 young people from grades 7 to 12 gathered for a 'Don't stop believing'-themed snow camp at Mennonite Church Alberta's Camp Valaqua. Lauren Harms, pastor of Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church, was the speaker during a weekend filled with song, devotions, good food, and games in the snow.*

# This Ground is on holy ground

*Group connects with Camp Assiniboia through volunteering, worship, fellowship*

By Nicolien Klassen-Wiebe  
Manitoba Correspondent

**T**his Ground is a collective that meets to work, worship and eat together in aid of Camp Assiniboia near Cartier, Man.

"This ground, this is the place when we come here we are participating in worship just by looking up at these big trees and recognizing God's greatness," says Sandy Plett.

Plett and her husband Barrette initiated This Ground in September 2017, after they volunteered at the camp during the summer and were inspired by the way their children connected with the place. They share leadership with a group of 12 adults who have been committed to the project from the beginning and have really bonded as a community. "This group embraced the vision from the start and have made these gatherings happen," she says.

This Ground welcomes everyone, from children to adults of all ages. It has attracted as many as 40 people at one gathering, although between 10 and 20 is more typical.

The group gathers on Sunday afternoons for about three hours. For their first year, they met every other Sunday from September to March, even in the snow and

frigid temperatures. This year they met five times in the fall and twice in winter, and are planning to meet another five times in the

spring.

In autumn, both adults and children get their hands dirty harvesting carrots,



PHOTO BY BARRETTE PLETT

*This Ground participants harvest potatoes from the farm at Camp Assiniboia in the fall.*

## FOCUS ON CAMPS



PHOTO BY BARRETTE PLETT

*After an afternoon of working outside at Camp Assiniboia and eating a potluck together, This Ground participants gather to sing and worship together.*

potatoes and onions from the camp farm. They move hay bales to insulate

the bunny hutch and chicken coop, and rake leaves into mountains.

In winter, the adults bring in wood from the forest, and split and stack it while their children explore the woods and run through the snow. They patch drywall, organize cross-country skis and clean up after events. An electrician participating in This Ground once was even able to solve  
*(Continued on page 28)*

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## FOCUS ON CAMPS



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#### Once Round the Bard: Twang edition

Grab your cowboy hat and don't mind the barn smell! In his latest video rant, Will Braun urges Mennonites to listen to more country music.

[canadianmennonite.org/barn-twang](http://canadianmennonite.org/barn-twang)



#### Is there such a thing as a Mennonite song?

New on the CM blog: Darryl Neustaedter Barg writes about his communal experiences of creating new songs for worship at Manitoba camps.

[canadianmennonite.org/mennonite-camp-songs](http://canadianmennonite.org/mennonite-camp-songs)



#### Celebrating 50 years in Canada

New on the CM blog: Sue Steiner reflects on the anniversary of her husband arriving in Canada as a Vietnam-era draft resister.

[canadianmennonite.org/50-years-canada](http://canadianmennonite.org/50-years-canada)



#### Two countries, one mission

Peace education and reconciliation: an update on the ministry of Mennonite Central Committee in North and South Korea.

[canadianmennonite.org/peacebuilding-korea](http://canadianmennonite.org/peacebuilding-korea)

*(Continued from page 27)*

an electrical issue.

After fixing, chopping and adventuring, the participants share in a potluck meal under the tall trees. Then they worship together by the river, weather permitting.

"I think God works in us when we open ourselves up to God's creation," says Sandy. "The space itself is holy, and we can honour the space by going there and working, but also God is present in specifically that place."

In a circle around a fire they sing their theme song every time they meet. They read the Bible, especially the parables, and talk about what they mean in their lives. It is informal, Spirit-led worship.

"I think our goal has been to really give people a chance, first of all, to share what's going on in life, so we can pray for each other, and then to reflect on Scripture and what's the challenge in the Scripture for us in the week or two to come," she says.

Sandy says she's talked to people who list church picnics as the closest they've come to worshipping outdoors. "I don't think we get into nature enough as a whole. . . . As a city dweller for many, many years, I didn't get into nature very often. . . . I didn't get to just marvel at the space around me."

"The land is healing," she says. "When we walk on the land, we are healed and our relationships are healed. We connect with nature, we connect with each other. There are just so many good things about stepping out and connecting at camp and in nature."

Although the churches of Manitoba own camps Assiniboia and Koinonia, and should be invested in them, many people seldom make it out to the physical places, says Plett. She hopes church and youth groups will start joining them at This Ground, which she says is a great opportunity to spend time at camp and get outside, even if people don't have time for a full weekend retreat.

"I think it's important," she says. "We really need our church families that own the camps to take ownership, and the only way to do that is for people to get there and realize, 'Oh my goodness, this is amazing.' We need to keep this going so that people can connect with God here." ❧

## Canadian Mennonite 48th Annual Fundraising Dinner



featuring  
**Accent Women's Ensemble**

Directed by Meredith Hutchinson

**Saturday, April 6, 2019,**

**6:30 pm**

at Mennonite Heritage Village,  
Steinbach, Manitoba

**accent**

Tickets are free but reservations are required.

To reserve your seats:

email [office@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:office@canadianmennonite.org) and put "CM April 6 dinner"  
in the subject line, or call 1-800-378-2524 ext 221.

Donation baskets will be available

**CANADIAN  
MENNONITE**

## Calendar

### British Columbia

**Until March 31:** "Mennonite churches of the Fraser Valley" exhibit, at the Mennonite Heritage Museum Gallery, Abbotsford.

**March 9-10:** Lenten Vespers with the Abendmusik Choir: (9) at Emmanuel Free Reformed Church, Abbotsford; (10) at St. Philip's Anglican Church, Vancouver. Both events at 7:30 p.m. Offering to help the Menno Simons Centre.

**June 28-July 1:** "Igniting the imagination of the church" MC Canada delegate assembly, at the Quality Hotel and Conference Centre, Abbotsford: (28) leaders assembly; (29) business/ delegate meeting; (29-1) inspirational conference. Special events for youth and children.

### Alberta

**March 15-16:** MC Alberta annual delegate sessions, at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Didsbury. Theme: "Vision 20/20: Discerning God's

call." Keynote speaker: Betty Pries of Credence & Co.

### Saskatchewan

**March 8-9:** MC Saskatchewan annual delegate sessions, "Anchored: Deepening our walk with Christ," at Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim. Plenary speaker: David E. Fitch of Northern Seminary.

**March 22-23:** Women's retreat, at Shekinah.

**March 26:** Youth Farm Bible Camp Vereniki fundraiser, at Rosthern Mennonite Church

**July 28-Aug. 1:** Prairie Youth Gathering, at Shekinah Summer Camp. Theme: "Shake: Rattled by the Radical (Jesus)." Open to students from across Canada entering grades 6 to 12 in the 2018-19 school year. Hosted by MC Saskatchewan and MC Manitoba. Information coming soon to prairieyouth.ca. Follow on Instagram @prairieyouth.ca for the latest updates.

### Manitoba

**Until March 9:** Two exhibitions

at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, Winnipeg: "Legacy" by Anita Kroeger, and "Reverence: Icons and Motorcycles" by Michael Boss.

**March 10:** Mennonite Community Orchestra, performs at CMU, Winnipeg, at 3 p.m. Featuring CMU student pianist Emma Heinrichs.

**March 15:** Exhibitions by Melissa Coyle and Sandra Campbell open at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery, Winnipeg. Runs until April 27.

**March 15:** CMU Festival Chorus and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra perform Verdi's "Requiem," at Winnipeg's Centennial Concert Hall, at 8 p.m.

**March 26:** CMU spring open house, begins at 10 a.m.

**March 30:** Jazz at CMU, at 7 p.m.

**March 31:** Handbell and guitar ensembles perform at CMU, Winnipeg, at 7 p.m.

### Ontario

**Until April 12:** "Gichitwaawizi'Igwin: Honouring" exhibition of artworks by Catherine Dallaire, at the Grebel Gallery, Conrad Grebel University

College, Waterloo.

**Feb. 28-March 1:** Credence & Co. presents "Understanding conflict resolution," at Conrad Grebel University College, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Speakers: Marg Van-Herk and Keith Regehr.

**March 8,9:** 2019 Sawatsky Visiting Scholar lecture and workshop, at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo. Speaker: Ysaÿe Barnwell, former member of Sweet Honey in the Rock a cappella ensemble. (8) Lecture, at 7:30 p.m. (9) Workshop, at 7 p.m.

**March 9:** Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, March break open house, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**March 9:** Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp annual bowl-a-thon fundraiser. For more information, visit hiddenacres.ca.

**March 11,12:** Grandparent and Grandchild Days, at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp, New Hamburg. (Same program each day.). For more information, visit hiddenacres.ca.

**March 19,26:** Worship clinic for Waterloo Region, at Rockway Mennonite Church, Kitchener, from

**(Continued on page 30)**

**DEEPENING OUR WALK WITH CHRIST**

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan

**MENNONITE CHURCH SASKATCHEWAN**  
Annual Delegate Sessions

**March 8 & 9, 2019**

Sessions at Zoar Mennonite Church, Waldheim  
Co-hosted by Eigenheim Mennonite & Zoar Mennonite

For more information visit:  
www.mcsask.ca

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**(Continued from page 29)**

6 to 9 p.m. each evening. For lay worship leaders, pastors and those who want to reflect on worship practice. Instructor: Sarah Johnson.

**March 22:** "Let's talk tech," at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, from 6 to 10 p.m. For youth aged 12 to 18, to explore how technology impacts the church and society.

**March 23:** Worship clinic for Niagara Region, at Vineland United Mennonite Church, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For lay worship leaders, pastors and those who want to reflect on worship practice. Instructor: Sarah Johnson.

**March 31:** Pax Christi Chorale presents Miziwe... (Everywhere...), the world premiere of a newly commissioned oratorio sung in the Ojibwe Odawa language (with subtitles), at Koerner Hall, Toronto, at 3 p.m.

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



## Classifieds

### Employment Opportunities




**SARGENT AVENUE MENNONITE CHURCH**

**Employment Opportunity  
Associate Pastor**

Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., invites applications for an Associate Pastor who will work as part of a pastoral team. Focus areas would include preaching and pastoral care along with other strengths a candidate might bring to complement the gifts of the current staff.

Applicants must have a commitment to Anabaptist theology and preferably a graduate seminary degree. Applicants are expected to be gifted in relating to people of all ages. The position is .8 to 1.0 fte and will be filled as soon as a suitable candidate is found. Meet us on line at:  
<https://www.samc.ca>

To apply or for more information, contact Rick Neufeld at [rneufeld@mennonitechurch.mb.ca](mailto:rneufeld@mennonitechurch.mb.ca)



**Employment opportunity  
Intentional Transition Pastor**  
Calgary, Alberta

We are a multigenerational, urban church of 174 members. The fellowship was established in 1956 and is a member of Mennonite Church Alberta and MC Canada.

An Intentional Transition Pastor is sought to guide the congregation after the departure of its lead pastor of 20 years. We invite you to acquaint yourself with us by visiting our website, [www.foothillsmennonite.com](http://www.foothillsmennonite.com). Foothills MC is an Anabaptist faith community that desires to embody, share and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Calgary is a large, modern city with excellent educational opportunities and ready access to Canada's national mountain parks.

Please direct inquiries to: [office@foothillsmennonite.ca](mailto:office@foothillsmennonite.ca), Attention of the Chair, Search Committee.

## Fort Garry Evangelical Mennonite Church

**Employment opportunity  
Full-time senior pastor**

Fort Garry Evangelical Mennonite Church is seeking a full-time Senior Pastor for an established, dynamic congregation with an average Sunday attendance of 170 people. We are an intergenerational, ethnically diverse congregation, located in Winnipeg, near the UofM, with a strong ministry to English-language learners.

Working out of their own commitment to the Lordship of Christ, the ideal candidate is a gifted speaker, who would lead and collaborate with the pastoral team, discerning and pursuing God's purpose in our church. They possess a reputable theological education at the graduate level and are committed to a theology shaped by Anabaptist tradition.

**How to Apply**  
Submit queries and résumés to the Pastoral Search Committee at [fgemcpastoral2018@gmail.com](mailto:fgemcpastoral2018@gmail.com). Further info: <https://fortgarryemc.radiantwebtools.com/about/careers>

**Employment opportunity**

**Mission Minister**

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada invites applications for Mission Minister. The Mission Minister will be a leader who inspires, invites and resources church leaders in disciple-making. Primary areas of responsibility will include overseeing church planting, fostering congregational disciple-making initiatives, and building intercultural competency within MCEC.

The applicant for this full-time position will be a strong team builder and a skilled communicator with excellent listening skills. He/she will work with the senior staff team to realize MCEC's mission of extending the peace of Jesus Christ.

Applicants will have previous leadership experience, a commitment to Anabaptist theology, and experience in church planting. Experience in intercultural settings and the ability to speak more than one language would be an asset.

Post-graduate theological training is preferred. The start date is flexible but preferably late Fall 2019. Résumé and current Ministerial Leadership Information form are due by March 15, 2019. MCEC also welcomes nominations for this position. For more information, a job description, or to submit an application or nomination contact:

**Brent Charette**  
MCEC Operations and Church Engagement 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)



**Mennonite  
Church  
Eastern  
Canada**



**Mennonite Central Committee**  
*Relief, development and peace in the name of Christ*

**British Columbia**

Employment opportunity  
**DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

This full-time position provides leadership and expertise to the accounting operations of MCC BC and its subsidiaries, and manages the various administrative functions of the organization.

**Qualifications**  
CPA Designation. Minimum of 5 years of accounting experience in a leadership and supervisory role. Knowledge and experience of both for-profit and not-for-profit accounting principles & regulations strongly desired. Strong analytical and communication skills. Ability to coordinate finance and administrative needs in a multi-faceted organization.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to: a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership; and nonviolent peacemaking.

Anticipated Start Date: May 1, 2019  
For full job description and to apply visit: [mccbc.ca/openings](http://mccbc.ca/openings)  
For more information contact Sophie Tiessen-Eigbike, MCC BC HR Manager at 604-850-6639 Ext 1129



**Wildwood Mennonite Church**

Employment opportunity  
**1/2 to 3/4-time pastor**

Wildwood Mennonite Church in Saskatoon invites applications for a half to three-quarter time co-pastor. The successful candidate will work closely with our current co-pastor (who is half-time). Ideal start date is early summer 2019, however we are flexible with the start date! Learn more about us at [wildwoodmennonite.org](http://wildwoodmennonite.org)

Please email applications to Les Klassen Hamm  
[searchchair@wildwoodmennonite.org](mailto:searchchair@wildwoodmennonite.org)

Or to Ryan Siemens, MCSask Executive Minister  
[minister@mcsask.ca](mailto:minister@mcsask.ca)



Employment opportunity  
**Investment Advisor (full-time)**  
**Location: Saskatoon or Waldheim, Saskatchewan**

**Role Purpose**  
Manage and develop strong relationships with a book of investment clients and assist with administration of files for those clients.

**Key Responsibilities**

- Meet with investment clients and prospects to discuss investment objectives, evaluate their risk profile, and offer suitable investment options for their needs.
- Prepare documents for all files and ensure organization of files is orderly and complete.
- Complete required maintenance of investment portfolio including review of investment files and required client disclosure.

**Submit applications with a resume in confidence to:**

Mennonite Trust Ltd.  
PO Box 40, Waldheim, SK S0K 4R0  
Phone: 306.945.2080  
Email: [jobs@mtrust.net](mailto:jobs@mtrust.net)

**For complete job description:**  
[www.mtrust.net/jobs/](http://www.mtrust.net/jobs/)

We thank all applicants for their interest, however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.



Employment opportunity  
**Loan officer (full-time)**  
**Location: Saskatoon or Waldheim, Saskatchewan**

**Role Purpose**  
Manage relationships with a book of loan clients and assist with administration of files for those clients.

**Key Responsibilities:**

- Manage and grow a primarily consumer loan portfolio by meeting with loan clients to manage relationships, discuss borrowing needs and prepare loan applications based on those needs.
- Prepare documents for all files and ensure organization of files is orderly and complete.
- Complete required maintenance of loan portfolio including review of loan files and required client disclosure.

**Working Conditions:**  
Capable of managing multiple priorities and deadlines in an office environment.

**For complete job description:**  
[www.mtrust.net/jobs/](http://www.mtrust.net/jobs/)

We thank all applicants for their interest, however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

**For Sale**

**132-acre farm for sale** in the Bulkley Valley, B.C. This 2-bedroom 3-bathrooms log home with outstanding panoramic views is situated 45 km West of Smithers. Great land for farming with a 25'X

50' greenhouse, includes all farming equipment, a deep well with excellent drinking water. For more information contact: [seatonmountainviewfarm@gmail.com](mailto:seatonmountainviewfarm@gmail.com) or call 250-877-7755.

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FRESH AIR.



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[WWW.MENNONITECAMPING.ORG](http://WWW.MENNONITECAMPING.ORG)

