

# The Mennonite

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January 10, 2006



## *The delicate dance of* **stewardship**

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## Get in the car and drive

*People who seek peace in things, places, people and activities—or in world-flight, poverty and humiliation, whatever the avenue or degree—look in vain, for there is no peace this way.—Meister Eckhart*



**Anne Stuckey**  
is associate  
pastor at Zion  
Mennonite  
Church in  
Archbold, Ohio.

I crested a hill on Highway 401 in the dark and was presented with a view of three lanes of traffic stretching as far as I could see. The night seemed to emphasize the endless string of red tail-lights, and the cars ahead were indistinguishable from each other at this distance. In the dark I could not differentiate models or brands of vehicles. The usual rust or riches evident in our choice of transportation was nullified in the dark. License plates to indicate identity or home base were difficult to read.

It wasn't that all these cars were stopped. No one was stuck because of an accident or construction. Each lane was speeding forward 80 mph. This was not a leisurely Sunday afternoon drive for these people. This was intense energy going in a specific direction. All were heading east with purpose. I sensed these people must be running. At 80 mph, running is the appropriate verb to use. We all looked the same, moved the same and went in the same direction.


But what were these people running toward or away from? And why was there a need for such speed? Was what we were running toward more or less important than what we were running from?

I thought of Elijah's run, escaping the danger of his queen, Jezebel. It didn't matter to him what he was running toward. He just wanted to run away. Many people say there are days when they just want to get in the car and drive. We want to get out on the open road and forget about what we are leaving behind. We want to run away from difficult marriages and children out of our control. We tend to run away from conflict, both realized and potential. We run from knowing the state of our body's

health by not going to the doctor. And we run away from taking responsibility for our health by listening only to what we want to hear. We run to avoid confronting our government when it takes an action we know is not what Jesus would do. And we run from the poor in our own communities by not even admitting they exist. We are intense runners.

And God asks us the same question he asked Elijah, "What are you doing here?" (1 Kings 19:9). After running for 40 days and 40 nights, Elijah had to be exhausted. He likely didn't want to do anything at that point. But God begins his conversation with Elijah by quizzing him about his activity. "What are you doing?" God had caught Elijah in the act of running away from what God had called him to do. The prophet had hoped to end his difficult service and just rest in God's backyard. Elijah needed to admit that he was indeed running away and couldn't run fast enough to escape God.

God's question also adds a dimension of place to Elijah's action of running. Elijah had stopped at a cave on Mount Horeb a full 250 miles from where he was supposed to be. In asking Elijah, "What are you doing here?" God was inquiring why Elijah was there at all. When we run, we move away from the place we are supposed to be in life. Therefore it is no wonder that running is such exhausting work. We tend to run to anyplace we can hide from our troubles. We pray that the thorny issues of our life won't follow us there. Elijah ran through the wilderness to a mountain to hide. But was that where God wanted him to be?

Where do you find yourself now? What are you running from? I was on Highway 401 returning to my extended family home. I knew I was running toward something and running away from something as well. And I, like everyone else on this highway of life, was going 80 mph. 

### TheMennonite

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**Then and now**

The news, especially from our church, has been concerned with the four Christian Peacemaker Teams activists in Iraq who are facing execution this day, Dec. 10, 2005. My thoughts go back hundreds of years to the period when our forebears lost their lives for what they believed. It was certainly a time of unrest and injustice brought on at least in part by politics and the national leaders of that day. Those martyrs were on the cutting edge of their faith and ours. What is taking place in Iraq—which has prompted our brave comrades in faith to do what they believe needs to be done to bring violence and injustice to the attention of the world—requires our highest thoughts. Again, it is politics and policies that foster situations that bring out the voices of people crying in the wilderness for a different approach to solving bad situations in our world. Our country and the policies in place are a part of this deplorable situation. Our country is at least partly to blame for the situation in Iraq. This situation that calls for brave, peace-loving Christians to be willing to be martyrs for their and our faith. It is our responsibility to think about the results of what has been done and what is happening. Our faith, then and now.—*Caleb Gerber, Dalton, Ohio*

**Missional meals**

When the Missional Church Team meets again (“Leadership,” Nov. 15, 2005), I hope that it will take time to reflect on Luke 10:7. It happens that this was perhaps the most mind-bending direction Jesus would give the Seventy. When Jesus began his ministry, he confronted a religious culture that

was ingrown because of rules of kosher purity. One ate only with those who shared the same understanding of what was pure in food, but also in keeping of all the law. Jesus says, in effect, pay no attention to these kosher rules: “Eat and drink whatever is set before you.”

By a single stroke, Jesus freed his followers to be open to so-called sinners, just as he was welcoming in his own eating and drinking. So mind-blowing was this that the disciples could only report back to him that even the demons submitted to them, and Jesus says he saw Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning.

It is a word our church needs to heed again today, fellowshiping with those who do not keep all the law as we may understand it, like the Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church (“Hyattsville Church a ‘Nonvoting Participant,’” Nov. 15, 2005). —*Donald R. Steelberg, Wichita, Kan.*

**Correcting the record**

One of the exciting things about mission in today’s world is the interconnectedness among congregations, conferences, agencies and even denominations—all joining together to do God’s work. Unfortunately, due to an oversight, we omitted one of those connections from the Nov. 15, 2005, story, “Known Through God.” Mark and Mary Hurst serve as resource people and pastors in Australia and with the Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand through Mennonite Mission Network and Eastern Mennonite Missions.—*Ryan Miller, news director, Mennonite Mission Network*

**Why is fundamentalism negative?**

I heard an individual make the comment—while trying to decide which church to visit—in the process of finding a church home, “I don’t want to go to that church because they are fundamental.”

I knew that denomination was solid in its adherence to the teachings of Christ. As true followers of Christ, they accept the Scriptures as being written by inspiration from God. They believe in the inerrancy of the Word of God and are therefore not considered some false religion or cult practicing heresy but rather a body of Christ trying to obey his Word as closely as they possibly can.

Why has the Christian faith allowed the term “fundamentalism” to be hijacked by non-Christians who portray it to be a negative term? Why have we not made it clear to the secular world that we do not identify with ungodly extremism just because we are fundamental in our view of the Scriptures? Why have we allowed the words “evangelism” and “born again” to become so misunderstood and used in such a derogatory way?

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite Church USA. Please keep your letters brief—one or two paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send to Letters@TheMennonite.org or mail to Readers Say, The Mennonite, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-4794. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

**IN THIS ISSUE**

**S**tewardship Sunday for Mennonite Church USA will be observed in January instead of May beginning this year. So we focus this issue on stewardship and launch a new series entitled “Holistic Stewardship.” Roy E. Bronkema kicks off the series (page 8) and says, “The concept that God is hard up for our cash has captured our society’s imagination. ... But Jesus’ concept of stewardship was much greater in scope.” Our denomination’s stewardship agency responds to a question it often receives: Is MMA moving toward becoming more of a business and away from its church roots? (page 13). “I see MMA as a church organization that uses business tools to reach our ultimate goal of helping the church, its members and institutions apply faith values when making resource decisions,” says interim president Steve L. Garboden. This issue also includes a compelling story about “seagoing cowboys”—1,000 Mennonite men who transported cattle to impoverished countries after World War II (page 14).—*Editor*

It is time to reclaim these godly terms for their original intent and use them, as did the early church of the New Testament, to help build God's Kingdom in this age.—*Carol Laser, Winchester, Va.*

**Poem anti-Semitic**

After reading the letter from Bryan Barry (Readers Say, Nov. 1, 2005), I went back to the Sept. 20 issue to look at the poem "Bar Mitzvah," and I agree with Mr. Barry entirely.

As a lifelong Mennonite who has been blessed to learn about Jewish religion and history from Jewish teachers, I find the ignorance and prejudice expressed in this poem appalling. Aside from being awful poetry, Jerome L. McElroy's work makes the terribly false assumption that Jesus' answers to the teachers in the temple (Luke 2:41-50) "shred[ded] their theologic shibboleths."

The gospel says no such thing, much less that "the unintended consequence" (unintended by whom?) of his visit was "their ultimate undoing. To accompany this bigotry with a picture of a real Jewish boy at his bar mitzvah simply adds insult to the injury.—*David Rensberger, Decatur, Ga.*

**Two swords**

While I do not doubt that Jesus was tempted to use violence to bring in the kingdom, I do not believe that in the "two swords" incident in Luke 22 Jesus was seriously advocating armed self-protection or insurrection. ("Swords of the Disciples," Oct. 4, 2005).

Is it not possible that Jesus was laying out some of the temptations he was enduring and—speaking as devil's advocate—testing his disciples and their reaction? He sets up a sharp contrast by reminding them of the time he had sent them out without sandals, money or duffel bags.

The Gospels need to be read as a whole, and one shouldn't fall prey to proof-texting a particular passage to justify the arms race or even to condemn it. One must use all four of the evangelists'

record of Jesus' words and behavior to do that.—*John A. Hertzler, Mathews, Va.*

**Teaching pacifism**

I agree with Katie Immel ("Passing on the Pacifism," Dec. 6, 2005) that it is sad to have grown up in a Mennonite church, attended Mennonite middle and high schools and gone to Mennonite church camp without learning the basis of pacifism and what it means for her life and walk with Jesus. But she does not mention attending a Mennonite college or university.

A student who attends Bluffton University, where I teach, would certainly learn the biblical and theological basis of nonviolence and its relevance to all aspects of life in courses taught by the religion department as well as in our general education offerings. Since I know the faculty at our other Mennonite schools, I know that the same is true there as well. Young people who want to develop a solid understanding of the Mennonite church's peace stance should attend a Mennonite university or college, then should make their learning visible wherever they attend church. That would go far toward solving Katie Immel's concern.—*J. Denny Weaver, Bluffton University, Bluffton, Ohio*

**The elusive monster**

Re "The Elusive Monster," *Mediaculture*, Dec. 20, 2005: The subtle influence of the consumer culture is felt not only in material issues but in our faith discourse and vocabulary and perhaps even our discernment and spiritual development, not to mention our mission.

An example is the popular claim of Jesus as "my personal Savior." Do these words not reflect consumer advertising? Do they reduce our Lord to a personal commodity, a possession? Can such expressions create a wall between the haves and the have-nots in the fashion of material commodities?—*Ruth Eitzen, Barto, Pa.*

**ONLINE POLL RESULTS**

**In terms of stewardship, the most important element to focus on is (34 votes):**

- health (14%)
- money (16%)
- relationships (38%)
- talent (11%)
- time (22%)

Check out the new poll question at [www.TheMennonite.org](http://www.TheMennonite.org)

**Pontius' Puddle**



Joel Kauffmann

## IN BRIEF



### Dick Davis named new minister of urban ministry

Dick Davis, pastor of Peace Mennonite Church in Dallas, Texas, has been named Mennonite Mission Network's new minister of urban ministry. He said the diversity of urban areas can be mixed in a tureen, stirred well and served to feed the wider church. A high-school dropout, Davis earned undergraduate and seminary degrees and held several Baptist pastorates before joining the U.S. Army as a chaplain. While in the army, he studied "The Politics of Jesus" by John Howard Yoder and an introduction to Mennonite history and ideology at Duke University. He returned to the army and applied for conscientious objector status. Eventually he resigned his commission and the army released him. He made contact with Mennonites in eastern Pennsylvania and later became pastor in Dallas. —*Mennonite Mission Network*

### Families of CPTers appeal for their release

BAGHDAD, Iraq—The families of four Christian Peacemaker Teams activists held in Iraq placed newspaper ads in Baghdad newspapers on Christmas Eve appealing for their release. Christmas passed without any word on the four hostages.

The four CPT members—Briton Norman Kember, 74, American Tom Fox, 54, and Canadians James Loney, 41, and Harmeet Singh Sooden, 32—were kidnapped Nov. 26, 2005, in Baghdad by the Swords of Righteousness Brigade, an Iraqi insurgent group.—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

### Free sample sessions of Gather 'Round online

NEWTON, Kan.—Preparations for a new denominational Sunday school curriculum are bearing fruit as trainers are being selected and sample sessions are added to the Web site. Gather 'Round: Hearing and Sharing God's Good News is a curriculum for children, youth and parents in the Church of the Brethren, Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA.

Free sample sessions of teacher and student materials are now posted online at [www.gather-round.org](http://www.gather-round.org). The Web site also includes a price list, Bible outlines and other basic information. Customers without Internet access may call 800-245-7894 for assistance. Sample kits will be avail-



### Foresingers appear on PBS documentary

Glenn Lehman's 12-voice ensemble Foresingers was juried and chosen to appear nationwide on "Destination America," airing first last October on PBS. The four-part documentary explores the economic, political, social and religious stories of immigration. The Foresingers, which specializes in early American hymns, is featured in the section "The Earth Is the Lord's." It shares the hour with 20th-century stories of Hasidic Jew immigration and Tibetan persecution. From left in the photo above are Sandi Harnish, Nancy Hess, Joel Alderfer, Dennis Kauffman, David Smucker, Gretchen Thomas, Glenn Lehman, Jessica Landes, Varden Leasa, David Sauder and filmmaker David Grubin.—*Glenn Lehman*

able for purchase in February, and congregational use will begin next fall.

In addition to quarterly teacher and student books, Gather 'Round will offer quarterly classroom packs that include such items as teaching pictures and posters. One resource, for example, is a memory verse poster with photographs of children depicting American Sign Language words to represent the memory text, Deuteronomy 6:4-9.—*Mennonite Church USA*

### Paoli Mennonite helps form urban corps

PAOLI, Ind.—In 2003, people from Paoli Mennonite and Louisville, Ky., formed Louisville Urban Corps (LUC), then placed the first group of participants in September 2004. People from Mennonite Fellowship of Bloomington (Ind.); First Mennonite and Shalom Mennonite of Indianapolis; Lockport Mennonite, Stryker, Ohio, and Carpenter Park Mennonite, Davidsville, Pa., helped remodel a former convent into a home for volunteers.

In August 2005, four young adults finished their year of service, and two of them stayed on in the city. A month later, six new young adults came for the program's second year. The LUC board includes people from Baptist, Catholic and Presbyterian congregations.—*Phil Mininger*

### GAMEO holds first editorial meetings

WINNIPEG—The editorial committees of GAMEO, a new Internet international Anabaptist history initiative, held their first meeting Dec. 1-2, 2005, to start expanding a current online resource.

GAMEO, or the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online, originated with the Canadian Mennonite Encyclopedia Online, begun by the Mennonite Historical Society of Canada in 1996. But that project has been broadened with the addition of the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee and the binational Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission as partners. A U.S. editorial committee has been formed to work with a Canadian committee under the oversight of a management board.—*Mennonite Church USA*

### MMA board names new officers

GOSHEN, Ind.—At an MMA Board of Directors meeting Dec. 21, 2005, the board chose its officers for 2006. Arlan Yoder, Hesston, Kan., was named chair, replacing Carol Suter; LaVern Yutzy, Lititz, Pa., was named vice chair, and Richard Friesen, Newton, Kan., was named secretary. All are members of Mennonite Church USA. Yoder is senior vice president and CFO at Via Christi Health System.

In other board changes, Ken Enns, Dinuba,



Kay Youngblood

### Jewish choir performs Handel's "Messiah" in Galilee

The HaKibbutzit HaKamerit and the 45-voice Galil Elyon Choir of Northern Galilee—comprised of Israeli Jews—perform Handel's "Messiah" at the Rev. Elias Chacour's new Church of the Sermon on the Mount in Ibillin, Galilee, Israel. The Jewish voices performed the story of the promised Messiah for an audience of 750 people comprised of local Palestinian Arabs (mostly Muslim), other Israeli Jews from the region and a handful of Christians, all sitting together.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Calif., and John Burkey, Milford, Neb., left the MMA board at the end of 2005 after serving 12 years, the maximum allowed. Enns is a member of the Mennonite Brethren Church and Burkey of Mennonite Church USA.—*MMA*

### Brenneman confirmed as Goshen president

GOSHEN, Ind.—The Goshen College Board of Directors has announced finalization of its appointment of educator, biblical theologian and church leader James E. Brenneman to serve as the college's 16th president, beginning July 1, for a four-year term of leadership of the 111-year-old institution. With Goshen's relationship to Mennonite Church USA through Mennonite Education Agency, the MEA Board of Directors affirmed the appointment on Nov. 28, 2005.

Brenneman, a 1977 Goshen graduate who lives with his family in South Pasadena, Calif., was introduced to the campus and community in a chapel service Nov. 18, 2005, as a final step in a leadership discernment process (see Dec. 6, 2005, issue). He fills the position vacated in September 2004 by Shirley H. Showalter.—*Goshen College*

### CMU reappoints Gerbrandt president

WINNIPEG—Gerald Gerbrandt has been reappointed president of Canadian Mennonite

University (CMU) for another five years. The new contract takes effect June 15.

CMU board chair Abe Konrad, says: "Dr. Gerbrandt's reappointment provides excellent continuity in the passionate, visionary pursuit of CMU as a Christian university of the church for the world. We are delighted with his acceptance, and we invite the prayerful support of the CMU constituency during the ongoing development of CMU."

Gerbrandt is a member of Winnipeg's Bethel Mennonite Church.—*Canadian Mennonite University*

### Roy D. Roth, third president of Hesston, dies

HESSTON, Kan.—The third president of Hesston College, Roy D. Roth, died Dec. 15, 2005, in Eugene, Ore., following a long illness. Roth, president from 1951-59, died at the age of 84.

"President Roy Roth served with a lot of dignity," says current president Howard Keim. "He did much to strengthen the academic programs of the college. And he shepherded the discussions of whether Hesston should become a four-year college and the decision to remain a two-year college. That has been a very important decision in the life and history of the college."

Other accomplishments included strengthening transfer agreements with Goshen (Ind.) College, completion of Charles Hall, the start of construction of a men's dormitory and sharing in the cost of building Hesston Mennonite Church, which was dedicated May 27, 1956.—*Hesston College*

### Zehr receives restorative justice award

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Howard Zehr, professor of restorative justice and co-director of the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University, received the first annual award, which is named in his honor, from the Restorative Justice Association of Virginia.



Howard Zehr

The organization gave Zehr the award following his plenary address at a conference the group held last fall in Charlottesville.

Zehr is considered one of the founders of the restorative justice field. While restorative justice concepts extend to addressing issues ranging from wrongdoing in church and mediating conflict in schools, Zehr has worked especially with criminal justice issues.—*Eastern Mennonite University*

—compiled by Gordon Houser

### R-rated smoking

A recent study shows that a primary reason children ages 10 to 14 try cigarettes is that they've seen people smoking in movies. The study, which found smoking in 74 percent of 532 movies surveyed, concluded that 38 percent of young smokers took up the practice because of the influence of movies.—*USA Today* (Nov. 7, 2005), quoted in *Christian Century*

### Global violence actually decreasing

According to Andrew Mack, director of the Human Security Center at the University of British Columbia and former United Nations official: "It is not surprising that most people believe global violence is increasing. However, most people, including many leading policymakers and scholars, are wrong. The reality is that, since the end of the Cold War, armed conflict and nearly all other forms of political violence have decreased. The world is far more peaceful than it was."—*Sojo Mail*

### Seminary debt

The number of Master of Divinity graduates borrowing \$20,000 or more to pay for their education increased 26 percent between 1991 and 2001, according to a report from Auburn Theological Seminary. Twenty-one percent postponed health care to pay school loans.—*Sojourners*



**Holistic Stewardship**



*The delicate  
dance of*

**steward**

## Reflecting the Father's giving heart

**O**n the drive home from church one Sunday, a family was not too happy. Dad complained that the sermon was long and boring; Mom said the organist played too loudly during the second hymn; Sis critiqued the intonation of the soloist, and Grandma said she wanted to sit closer to the front because “no one talks loud enough.” And little Todd joined in to fuss about the woman in front of them with the big hat. Then he paused, nudged his dad and added, “But Dad, you gotta admit, it was a pretty good show for a nickel.”

Ouch. Todd had it right. For many, a nickel is all they are willing to contribute to the kingdom of Christ. Many people go to church, drop their token in the heavenly toll booth and go their way—not realizing that God is after far more than just their “nickel.” But the Bible is clear that when it comes to stewardship, God’s purposes are far more encompassing than just forking over the change in our pocket on any given weekend. To coin a phrase, God has “far bigger fish to catch.”

Unfortunately, when most people think of stewardship, their minds go to just one thing: money. They picture the church collection plate or the United Way—a preacher to please or a pledge to make. The concept that God is hard up for our cash has captured our society’s imagination with a vengeance, thanks to many TV evangelists.

But Jesus’ concept of stewardship was much greater in scope than our society’s limited perception. The value of stewardship has stronger implications for our daily lives than most of us have ever realized.

**The concept that God is hard up for our cash has captured our society’s imagination with a vengeance, thanks to many TV evangelists.**

*Continued on page 10*

# stewardship

by Roy E. Bronkema

## God asks for a return on his investment in us and to us.

Continued  
from page 9

Here are some bottom-line principles I have learned that serve as the touchstones for this all-important topic.

**1. We have each been given gifts by God.** Jesus told an intriguing parable about stewardship in Matthew 25. He describes a master who was embarking on a long trip. Before he departed, the owner granted to trusted servants his assets to manage. To each servant he gave varied “talents,” some five, some two, some just one. But the point was clear: everyone got something.

Likewise, each of us has been granted gifts from our Creator. They reach far beyond finances to the whole of our lives: our families, children, time, health and talents, virtually every spiritual and physical blessing. The New Testament underscores this idea: “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the

Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows” (James 1:17 NIV). God is forever giving. This giving does not change but is as sure as the sun and the moon making an appearance (“the Father of lights”). God is the ultimate source of everything good in our lives.

**2. God asks for a return on his gifts.** He wants us to willingly and completely yield our bodies, souls and minds. He wants our gifts lavished back on himself. He is the only one in the universe truly worthy of this kind of devotion. After all, the composer has the right to listen to his own song. In seeking our hearts, God receives the truest return on investment possible—because with our hearts comes our allegiance, our time and our possessions. Our truest treasure is within us.

And why should God not expect our loyalty and devotion? He has freely granted us all things. We have been blessed with all true spiritual riches. He daily showers us with life and breath and health and abundance. Romans 12:1a gives us a reasonable expectation from God: “So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: take your everyday, dinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering” (*The Message*).

Our life choices should reflect a good stewardship of the gifts we have received from the Father—in essence, God wants our giving to mirror his generosity to us. God is not content with just one piece of our heart—buying him off with our nickel. And since God gives so much more than just money, our giving should reflect much more than that as well.

**3. The delicate interplay of the good stewardship of every area of our lives pleases God and yields us a harvest of joy.**

MMA, a stewardship solutions organization based in Goshen, Ind., labels this interplay of every area of life with a descriptive investment term: holistic stewardship. It is an apt description of the wise use of our lives and gifts and how those gifts can be best managed for a successful life in God’s eyes.

In this monthly series of articles on stewardship we will examine its relationship to life: to our





## God wants our giving to mirror his generosity to us.

health, relationships, time, talent and money. We will see how critical it is that we realize how interconnected these arenas are and how strongly they influence our lives.

An auxiliary benefit from thoughtful stewardship is that the Christ-centered practice of exercising my gifts honestly and stewarding the relationships between them wisely brings me wholeness. I experience my design and purpose for life: something many of us chase but few catch. The balance between areas may not look the same at every stage (and should not), but it should reflect our best resources at every level. When I am younger, I have more time and health; when I am middle-aged, I have more discretionary income and stronger relationships; when I am older, I have more wisdom and experience. So I must learn to manage my time, talent and treasure to maximize effectiveness at every stage of life.

This healthy integration is critical to our overall well-being. If we focus on one area (such as money) to the exclusion of all the rest, we will suffer. For example, if our health is not guarded well, we will fail to give time as we wish. If our relationships break down, it will affect how much money is available. If our time is not given to God, then our relationships with others are limited. No longer is each area of life a compartment to itself; instead all are in intricate interaction. The delicate dance of our gifts gives life a beauty all its own and makes our stewardship of each gift sustainable over the long haul, no matter what comes our way.

Finally, as the parable demonstrates, it is this wise stewardship that helps us enter into the joy of the Master.

A prominent Christian author tells the story of a quiet, withdrawn 10-year-old boy named Chad. One January day he came home and boldly announced to his mother that he wanted to make a valentine for each student in his class. Chad was shy and ignored by the other kids, and his mom

desperately wanted to save him from the disappointment of not receiving any valentines in return. Nevertheless, she purchased the paper and glue and crayons. For three weeks, night after night, Chad painstakingly made 35 valentines.

Valentine's Day dawned, and Chad was beside himself with excitement. He grabbed his carefully prepared treasures and bolted out the door.

That afternoon, when she heard the children outside, she looked out the window. Sure enough here they came, laughing. As always, there was Chad alone in the rear. She expected him to burst into sobs as soon as he walked in the door. His arms were empty, and when the door opened she could hardly keep back the tears. "Mommy has some cookies and milk for you."

But he barely heard her words. He marched right on by, his face aglow, and all he could say was, "Not a one. Not a one."

Her heart sank.

Then he added, "I didn't forget a one, not a single one."

Chad learned that day that true giving brings back untold blessing. Sacrifice in its highest form—giving our time, talents and expense without the expectation of anything in return—brings great internal satisfaction. When we learn to give like that, we will receive a commendation from God himself, "Well done, good and faithful servant." We become an accurate reflection of his giving heart.

*Roy E. Bronkema is a free-lance writer specializing in work for churches and Christian organizations. Roy and Nancy, his wife, reside in Niles, Mich. Next month's article will explore the holistic stewardship of health, maximizing the gift of strength.*

### Associated resources

MMA is a stewardship solutions organization dedicated to promoting holistic giving through its expertise in insurance, financial services, charitable-giving programs and fraternal benefits. It can help people manage their God-given gifts in a variety of ways:

- Educational resources available at <http://bookstore.mma-online.org>
- "Holistic stewardship" presentation that can be given in churches (call your MMA regional office for more information)
- Local representatives throughout the country offering insurance and financial products and services
- Local MMA Stewardship University events (look under education and resources at [MMA-online.org](http://MMA-online.org) for the latest schedule) —Roy E. Bronkema

# MMA today

## Interim president Steve L. Garboden offers updates on MMA.

by Judy Martin Godshalk

Last September, the MMA Board of Directors asked Steve L. Garboden to take over interim leadership of MMA. Skip Nagelvoort had just resigned after serving as president since Aug. 1, 2005.

Since then, church members have asked about what's happening at MMA today and where it's headed. When you ask Steve about serving as MMA's interim president, you first hear one response: "I've greatly appreciated all the support given to me by the church community. Your encouragement, prayers and well wishes show deep respect for MMA."

While interim president, Steve continues to serve in his previous role as senior vice president of health and administrative services—although he quickly notes he's receiving extra help from other staff members in juggling these roles. He came to MMA 29 years ago "because it was a chance to use my math and business skills in the church," he says.

What changes in services or goals are on the horizon? "I assume we won't make major changes because we don't need to," says Steve. "We were left a strong legacy" by former MMA president Howard Brenneman, he says. Brenneman served MMA for 14 years until July 2005.

"We have a healthy financial base, so MMA is moving forward on long-term goals established two years ago," Steve says. "For example, we're expanding our mutual fund family, we're exploring new banking services and we're developing new stewardship of health resources. We want to help more people live a faithful life with their resources."

These established long-term goals, says Steve, have kept the organization moving forward. In assessing the organization today, he adds, "people in the field and home office are carrying on business as usual everyday."

*Judy Martin Godshalk is a writer for MMA in Goshen, Ind.*



**We have a healthy financial base, so MMA is moving forward on long-term goals established two years ago.—Steve L. Garboden**



### MMA: business or church agency?

In his new role, Steve Garboden has already been asked if MMA is moving toward becoming more of a business and away from its church roots. He answers that question below:

The pull between church and business is an age-old tension for MMA but a good one. On the business side, do we treat church members and institutions as our customers? Yes. Are we constantly upgrading our professional expertise? Yes. Do we use business practices and services? Yes. So are we becoming just another business? No.

It's a matter of priorities. What's most important to MMA is our mission of Christian stewardship, not making money. For us, money is not an end but a means.

I see MMA as a church organization that uses business tools to reach our ultimate goal of helping the church, its members and institutions apply faith values when making resource decisions.

The tension between business operations and church mission at MMA can be healthy. It pushes MMA toward "becoming the best of business and the best of the church," as Howard Brenneman, former MMA president, used to say.

In my experience, MMA has been able to keep priorities straight because of feedback from our board, church leaders and the broader constituency. Fortunately, MMA has also attracted a steady stream of staff and field representatives who want to apply their faith and values to their careers—just like I did 29 years ago.—*Judy Martin Godshalk*



Raymond and Lynnette Krauss and their family went through financial difficulties after getting hit with high medical, home repair and utility bills. The Michigan family received some extra funds to help them through this tough time from their church and MMA's Sharing Fund program.

Financials		Statements of operations	
	2004	2003	2002
<b>Revenue details</b>			
Contributions	\$1,000,000	\$950,000	\$900,000
Investment income	100,000	120,000	150,000
Other revenue	50,000	60,000	70,000
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$1,150,000</b>	<b>\$1,130,000</b>	<b>\$1,020,000</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Salaries and benefits	\$600,000	\$580,000	\$560,000
Administrative expenses	200,000	190,000	180,000
Program expenses	300,000	300,000	280,000
Other expenses	50,000	60,000	80,000
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$1,150,000</b>	<b>\$1,130,000</b>	<b>\$1,020,000</b>
<b>Net income</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

### Online updates

To follow MMA's presidential transition and selection process, watch for updates in the News at MMA section of MMA-online.org or call 800-348-7468, ext. 388.

Also find out who is on the MMA Board of Directors and senior management team by visiting the organization's online What is MMA? section or by calling the phone number above.—*Judy Martin Godshalk*



Eugene Souder

# Coming of

## The Mennonite seagoing cowboys

by Peggy Reiff Miller

**T**ake a teenage Mennonite boy after World War II, put him on a cattle boat to Europe or China, stir him up with storms at sea, spice him with adventure and danger, bake him in the smoldering rubble of war, and what do you have? A recipe for the coming of age of a seagoing cowboy.

Many of today's Mennonites in their mid-70s and above are among the ranks of men and boys who delivered livestock to war-torn countries 60 years ago. These men put their faith into action to help bring healing and hope to a world torn apart. In the process, they learned much about themselves and the world in which they lived.

The call for these seagoing cowboys, as they were dubbed, came from the Brethren Service Committee of the Church of the Brethren. In 1943, the BSC birthed the ecumenical Heifer Project (today's Heifer International). The idea of sending cows rather than powdered milk to people devastated by war came to Brethren peace activist Dan West while he was serving alongside Mennonite and Quaker relief workers during the Spanish Civil War in 1938. Inspired by West's idea, Brethren farmers had hieifers ready to send by the time World War II ended in Europe in May, 1945—but they had no ships on which to send them.

**Mennonite upbringing:** Luke Bomberger cleans a cattle stall on the *S.S. Boulder Victory*, which delivered heifers to China in the spring of 1947.

**Many of today's Mennonites in their mid-70s and above are among the ranks of men and boys who delivered livestock to war-torn countries 60 years ago. These men put their faith into action to help bring healing and hope to a world torn apart.**

# age on a cattle boat



Elmer Bowers

**Nearly 1,000 Mennonite men and boys, ages 16 to 60-plus, responded over the two years of the UNRRA shipments that began July 24, 1945.**

**Doing it for service:** Cattlemen care for horses en route to Greece on the S.S. *Adrian Victory* in October 1946.

Another agency was formed in 1943 by 44 nations to help war-depleted countries get on their feet again—the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Unlike the Brethren, UNRRA had vessels available for the 200,000-plus head of livestock and other relief goods they planned to ship—but they had no hustlers to herd their horses, hiefters and mules across the ocean. The problems of both agencies were solved when BSC agreed to provide cattle attendants for UNRRA shipments and UNRRA agreed to provide shipping space for Brethren hiefters.

BSC extended an invitation to the Mennonites and other denominations to join them in this venture. Nearly 1,000 Mennonite men and boys, ages 16 to 60-plus, responded over the two years of the UNRRA shipments that began July 24, 1945. One of the first Mennonites to go was Luke Bomberger of Mount Joy, Pa. (now of Lititz).

“I arrived by train in New Orleans the day the war was over (in Japan),” says Bomberger. There he and three other Mennonites joined the nine-member cattle crew on the S.S. *Charles W. Wooster*, headed for Greece. They left Aug. 15, 1945, with a load of 335 horses. “I was 17 when I left and had registered C.O. [conscientious objector]. I turned 18 on the trip. When my draft board found out from my parents what I was doing, they

said I could keep on doing it for my service.” Bomberger made nine trips before UNRRA disbanded in 1947.

BSC sought cowboys of high moral principles who could be good ambassadors for the church. For those who fit the bill, life among the seasoned salty seamen came as quite a shock. “These men could be pretty hard characters,” says Bomberger. He credits his Mennonite upbringing for helping him cope in this environment. “My church and family had instilled in me an understanding of proper Christian behavior, which made it easier not to be intimidated.”

“The trips were an unbelievable opportunity for a small town boy,” Bomberger says. Work on his Aunt Katie’s farm and other farms and businesses in his hometown equipped him with the background he needed. The long hours of feeding and watering the livestock and shoveling manure in the stuffy, smelly ships’ holds was hard and sometimes dangerous work. “Horses could be mean,” he says. A mark on his back from the bite of an excited mare is one of his souvenirs.

Other dangers lurked in the waters. “Off Greece,” Bomberger recalls, “we could see mine sweepers blowing up mines in the water ahead of us that we could have hit.” On another trip, his ship lunged into a sharp turn. He ran to the rail

*Continued  
on page 16*

**'Couldn't believe what we were seeing':** The city of Danzig (now Gdansk), Poland, was obliterated in World War II and was still piled with rubble a year after war's end.



Charles Shenk

*Continued  
from page 15*

and saw a mine the ship had missed. "It was so close I could have spit on it," he says.

Seasickness was a malady many cowboys experienced. "Those are the times you wish you'd die, you felt so bad," says Eugene Souder of Grottoes, Va. "And you fed the fish."

The weather often created hazards. Ships ran aground or collided with other ships in dense fogs, got stuck in ice in the severe Baltic winter of 1946-47 and were tossed around like corks on angry seas. "We ran into a storm about the second day out," says Lee Jost of Harrisonburg, Va. "It was so stormy it washed some of the horses off the top deck."

It is a miracle that of the 73 UNRRA cattle ships, which made a total of 360 trips, only one was lost—and that one to a mine in the harbor of Trieste, Italy. The crew was saved, but the cargo was lost.

If the dangers were known ahead of time, it was the invincibility and naiveté of youth and the commitment of older men to the purpose of their trips that led them to sign up for the journeys. For their service they were paid one cent per month by the Merchant Marines to make them legal members of the ship's crew, plus \$150 per trip by UNRRA.

Any unpleasantness of the trips were far outweighed for most cowboys by their shore leave experiences. Don Klippenstein of Goshen, Ind., speaks for many when he says, "The entire episode broadened my view of the world." Touring the Acropolis or walking the roads Paul walked in Greece, standing atop the Great Wall of China or gliding through Venice on a gondola brought history to life.

Many Mennonite cowboys who went to Poland looked up Mennonite churches there. Al Meyer of Goshen vividly recalls being inside a demolished Mennonite church building. "On the wall you could still see a tablet in honor of the brave men who gave their lives for the German Fatherland in the First World War," he says. "It was sort of sym-

bolic to see the wreckage of the Second World War and a bombed-out Mennonite community of which there were no remaining people."

The German-speaking Mennonites had to flee Poland at the end of the war, leaving behind Bibles, hymn books and other books and records in their destroyed churches and homes. Mennonite cowboys took on the mission of retrieving books and documents from the rubble. These items can be found in many of the Mennonite historical collections around the United States.

By far the most indelible impressions made on the cowboys were those left from the aftermath of war, especially for those who went to Poland. "We just couldn't believe what we were seeing," says Charles Shenk of Harrisonburg. "A year after the war, most of the streets (in Gdansk) were still just piles of rubble. We saw almost no young men. It seemed like a generation was gone. You'd see people crawling up out of the rubble. They were living down there. I couldn't imagine what these people had been through."

The cowboys witnessed the extreme poverty created by war. Lee Jost recalls a boy coming onto his ship. "Down in the galley somebody dropped something. This kid got down and ate it off the floor; he was that hungry."

"I remember the immediate reaction of people on the pier when a horse fell," says Ron Graber of Nashville, Ind. "People rushed out from the shadows of the dock and cut it up. That was a lot of meat."

Battlefield scenes sobered the cowboys. "To us young teenagers just off the farm from very sheltered lives, it was quite an eye opener," says Earl Rosenberger of Harrisonburg. "There were skeletons in uniforms still lying around, and war materials and a lot of wreckage and damage." The most sobering experience of all, however, was had by the cowboy crews who toured the Nazi experimental research facility near Gdansk, where they saw vats of human body parts, melted human fat used

## Buy Nothing Day 2005 (Black Friday)

by Britt Kaufmann

I live the lesson of my stock:  
In the world, not of it,  
shun the material for the other life.

A child, my grandfather jumped the fence  
from Amish to Mennonite  
(still a subset yet set apart).

Now I am grown with children  
missing the four part a capella Sundays,  
but today I do my grandmas proud.

I cook the picked-clean turkey carcass  
with onions, salt, and celery,  
boil it long and slow,

crack a bone or two, so  
marrow seeps into the stock,  
passes down the rich value of blood.

Each generation of this Thanksgiving  
meal sustains family.  
I add the heart, neck, and innards too

instead of tossing them out.  
Those women never threw anything away,  
cupboards overflowing with old margarine tubs.

I feel their smiles, short  
ones that might not seem to merit praise,  
but I know they would be pleased

as I strain broth into old containers  
from take-out egg drop soup,  
preserve them for the future.

*Britt Kaufmann lives in Burnsville, N.C.*

**A lot of cowboys involved,  
if you follow their lives,  
have gone into wonderful  
mission outreach projects.**

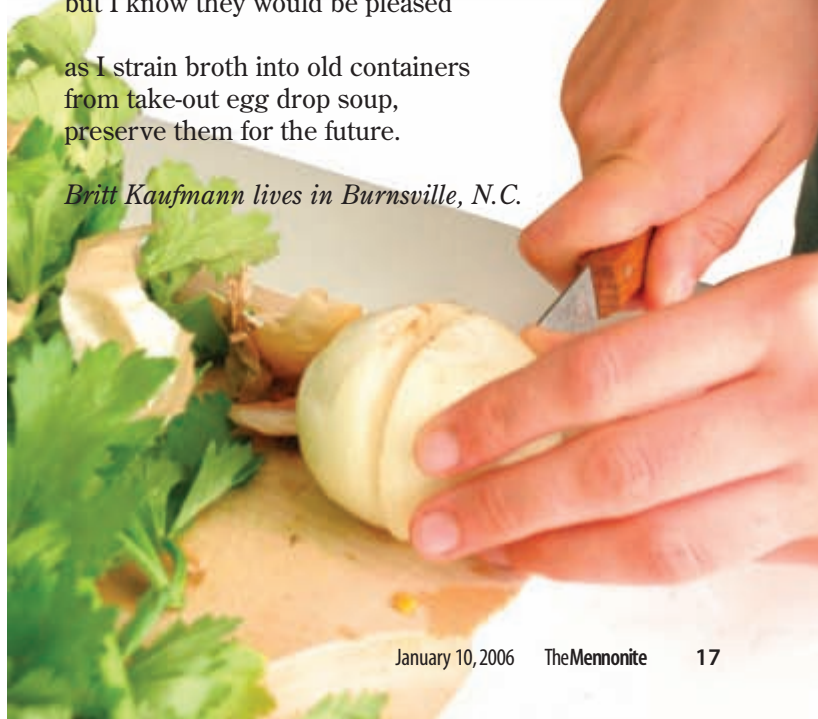
—Charles Shenk

for soap making, and dried human skin used for leather.

“The sights of Gdansk certainly made an impression on a lot of the young cowboys,” says Shenk. “These trips must have contributed to all of us in regard to wanting to be peacemakers. How grateful I am for the invitation to be involved in something that then contributed to our lives like nothing else ever could.”

“A lot of cowboys involved, if you follow their lives,” says Shenk, “have gone into wonderful mission outreach projects.” Gandhi Award winner Robert O. Epp and the late Melvin Gingrich and John Howard Yoder are just a few prominent Mennonites who served as seagoing cowboys. You may find that someone in your congregation did, too. If so, their story will be worth hearing.

*Peggy Reiff Miller is a member of the Church of the Brethren living in Milford, Ind. She has been researching the history of the seagoing cowboys for over three years and is working on a historical young adult novel and a nonfiction book on the topic.*



## The four-fold formula of ministry

I was fascinated by the newspaper headline “MDS Can’t Take All Who Want to Serve on Gulf Coast.” A subheading read, “Shortages of space, long-term workers and supplies limit hurricane response” (*Mennonite Weekly Review*, Dec. 19, 2005). I nodded. Volunteers are only as effective as the long-term workers and their resources that support them.

The Mennonite Disaster Service formula is similar to other ministries in the church. At the practical level, ministry is effective only when we have all the following: space, supplies, volunteers and long-term workers. Even in a volunteer-rich ministry like MDS, volunteers cannot minister without the other three elements. The same is true in congregations.

This principle also applies in varied proportions to schools and mission programs. Office space, storage space and living space for long-term workers are needed. Training literature and people equipped to train others are essential. Technology in computers and people who know how to operate and repair them is a necessary fixture of ministry today. And resources, all kinds of resources, are indispensable—the most basic being money, which sustains both volunteers and life-long workers.

When any part of the four-fold formula of ministry lags behind the other parts—lifelong workers; space out of which to live and operate; resources, starting with money, or volunteers—ministry is curtailed and people are not assisted or taught or


evangelized or prepared to be in ministry themselves someday.

The past year exceeded all others in memory with its extraordinary demands for special financial and material contribution. Many people volunteered. Tsunamis and hurricanes dare not be ignored and should not be soon forgotten. But we are learning some lessons, too. Our focused response to catastrophic need can produce an insidious, at first hidden, effect on our larger capacity for Christian ministry. If our response to immediate need causes us to ignore the four-fold formula for ministry—particularly the constant

need to call and retain long-term workers in pastors, educators, writers, missionaries, organizers and administrators—the result circles back to adversely affect the capacity of Christian volunteers themselves.

It is my calling to care about maintaining this balance for ministry. The reason for our giving and serving should never be focused only in areas of current need or limited to our own capacities, as impressive as those may be. Individuals and congregations sometimes believe they can minister best by themselves. Or they assume they can shift their resources quickly from one area of ministry capacity to serve another with no effect returning to them.

A holistic understanding of ministry maintains the capacity for the mundane and the dramatic. Financial contribution to ministry should be more akin to the habit of brushing our teeth than to dressing up and going to a party. We will praise God for the marathon, long-term workers and give thanks for fleet-footed volunteers who sprint from place to place. We will not leave the motivation for ministry shabbily clothed, failing to supply the need for working space and technological support. Our view of ministry and those who carry it forth will not be narrow or only temporary. It will not only be focused at home or only overseas.

We have been granted an amazing trust. We are stewards of God’s mission in Christ on earth. So remember the four-fold formula for effective ministry. Ignoring any part of it may produce salt that has lost its savor. 

**Our focused response to catastrophic need can produce an insidious, at first hidden, effect on our larger capacity for Christian ministry.**



**James Schrag** is executive director of Mennonite Church USA.

### IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **What does it mean for a preK-12 school to be Mennonite-Anabaptist?**—Gloria Y. Diener
- **God’s call for Mennonite education**—Carlos Romero
- **Making Jesus central in Mennonite education**—Gerald Biesecker-Mast

# First MWC 'mini-assembly' in California

*Pasadena is site of March 7-16 gathering for Mennonite World Conference.*

**M**embers of Mennonite World Conference councils from 55 countries will gather in Pasadena, Calif., March 7-16 to do business, mingle with the diverse Anabaptist-related community in southern California and with guests from other North American churches. In addition and for the first time, representatives of Global Church Congregations have been invited to join the meetings. GCC representatives will come from churches hosting or financially sponsoring an Anabaptist leader from Asia, Africa or Latin America whose churches cannot pay full travel costs.

During the nine-day event, MWC's General Council, Faith and Life Council and Peace Council will meet at William Carey International University, nestled at the foot of the San Gabriel mountains in north Pasadena. The WCIU campus is home to the U.S. Center for World Mission, numerous Christian ministries and nine churches. Many MWC participants will be lodged here.

**Deacon consultation:** A consultation on service—the deacon role of the church—will begin on March 7 and conclude at noon the next day. Ronald J. Sider, author, professor and lecturer from Pennsylvania, will be the featured speaker. The consultation, co-sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee and MWC, will study what it means to be in service within and outside global Anabaptist-related churches. It will explore the biblical foundation of diakonia (service), share case studies, list principles and models to be tested by MWC member churches.

**Pentecostal movement:** The 100th anniversary of the Pentecostal movement in 2006 provides the impetus for a symposium on “Global Anabaptism and Global Pentecostalism: Creating Understandings” during the week. Fuller Theological Seminary and MWC will jointly host the March 13 event at the seminary.

**Shared convictions:** The Faith and Life Council will meet on March 13 to review global responses to the MWC “Shared Convictions” statement issued in Zimbabwe in 2003 (see box) and on March 14 will continue discussions on the significance of the Pentecostal movement for Anabaptist and other churches around the world.

**Peace Council:** Paulus Widjaja and Alan and Eleanor Kreider will lead Peace Council meetings based on their book *The Culture of Peace: God's Vision for the Church*, the 2005 selection for MWC's Anabaptist Shelf of Literature. The book was released last November.

**Francophones and youth:** The Francophone Network will meet March 8 and March 16, as will AMIGOS, the five-member youth committee that

grew out of the Global Youth Summit in Zimbabwe in 2003. Activities with local youth are planned for March 11, at the Pasadena Mennonite Church.

Inviting North American churches to send representatives to these meetings is a new way of offering an opportunity to make connections at a kind of “mini-assembly.” Participants will meet Anabaptist leaders from around the world and experience the diversity in local congregations from the three host conferences: Brethren in Christ (BIC), Mennonite Church USA and the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.

The greater Los Angeles region has a large population of Asians, Africans, Latinos and new immigrants. About 90 percent of Mennonite Church USA members there are of non-European descent. On March 12, local churches will host MWC guests at their morning worship services and an afternoon worship service on the WCIU campus for all Mennonite and BIC churches in the area. Also on March 12, GCC reps will meet with North American denominational executives and MWC leaders to discuss how Mennonites and BIC congregations in North America can increase their global connections.—*Ferne Burkhardt for Mennonite World Conference*

## Shared convictions of Mennonite World Conference members

By the grace of God we seek to live and proclaim the good news of reconciliation in Jesus Christ. As part of the one body of Christ at all times and places, we hold the following to be central to our belief and practice:

1. God is known to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Creator who seeks to restore fallen humanity by calling a people to be faithful in fellowship, worship, service and witness.
2. Jesus is the Son of God who showed in his life and teaching how to be faithful, and through his cross and resurrection redeemed the world.
3. The church is a community of those whom God's Spirit calls to turn from sin, acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord, receive baptism upon confession of faith and follow Christ in life.
4. The faith community, under Holy Spirit guidance, interprets the Bible in the light of Jesus Christ to discern God's will for our obedience.
5. The Spirit of Jesus empowers us to trust God in all areas of life so we become peacemakers who renounce violence, love our enemies, seek justice and share our possessions with those in need.
6. The faith community gathers regularly to worship, to celebrate the Lord's Supper and to hear the Word of God in a spirit of mutual accountability.
7. We seek to live in the world without conforming to the powers of evil, witnessing to God's grace by serving others, caring for creation and inviting all people to know Jesus as Savior and Lord.

In these convictions we draw inspiration from Anabaptist forebears of the 16th century, who modeled radical discipleship to Jesus Christ. Walking in his name, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we confidently await Christ's return and the final fulfillment of God's kingdom.

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, Aug. 17, 2003

# Meeting in France embraces Africans

*While cars burn in the streets, Mennonites gather to strengthen partnerships.*

During a week when rhetoric from French officials toward immigrants of African descent flared as explosively as cars burning in the streets, Mennonites in the northeastern part of France welcomed delegations from Botswana, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa, Canada and the United States.

On Nov. 11, 2005, Jean-Paul Pelsy, president of the Comité de Mission Mennonite Français (French Mennonite Mission Committee), opened the week of meetings during which Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission's (AIMM) International Central Council met for the second time since the agency restructured its program two years ago. During the business sessions, the French Mennonite Mission Committee united with AIMM to become an official member of the Burkina Faso Partnership Council, joining four other agencies: the Église Évangélique Mennonite de Burkina Faso (Burkina Faso Mennonite Church), Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Church Canada Witness and the Evangelical Mennonite Conference in the United States and Canada.

AIMM personnel built fraternal relationships in 10 area Mennonite churches. They found that many of the congregations were working with African youth in their neighborhoods. Though Africans in many French cities had rioted to protest racial injustice, there was no sign of violence in the Mennonite communities.

Four national AIMM partnership councils, in various stages of organization, also met to write their mission statements. A partnership council makes countrywide decisions. Each church or agency active in a partnership council has the right to a representative on the International

Central Council that provides an accountability structure, a legal framework and services such as fund-raising and advocacy.

This work continued a reconfiguration begun in June 2004, when African Mennonite leaders and representatives of North American mission agencies met to make changes so more administrative functions would reside in Africa.

"Although AIMM's new structure still has a lot of shortcomings, I see signs indicating that African leaders are being increasingly empowered to shape their own future," says Rod Hollinger-Janzen, AIMM's executive coordinator.

The expense and difficulty of scheduling travel on the African continent contributed to AIMM's decision to convene the International Central Council in France. French Mennonites gave logistical support; they procured visas for participants, arranged accommodations and supplied transportation to and from airports.

The Burkina Faso Partnership Council, whose ministry has been primarily in villages, finalized plans for a venture into urban mission in the capital city, Ouagadougou. In addition to addressing the spiritual needs of urban non-Christians, Mennonite leaders in Burkina Faso want to reach out to their own youth who move to the cities to attend high school and university. They believe the church is losing their successors to other denominations when there is no Mennonite church near these institutions of higher learning.

By the beginning of the 2007 school year, the partnership council hopes to have a Mennonite dormitory and church in Bobo Dioulasso, the country's second largest city.

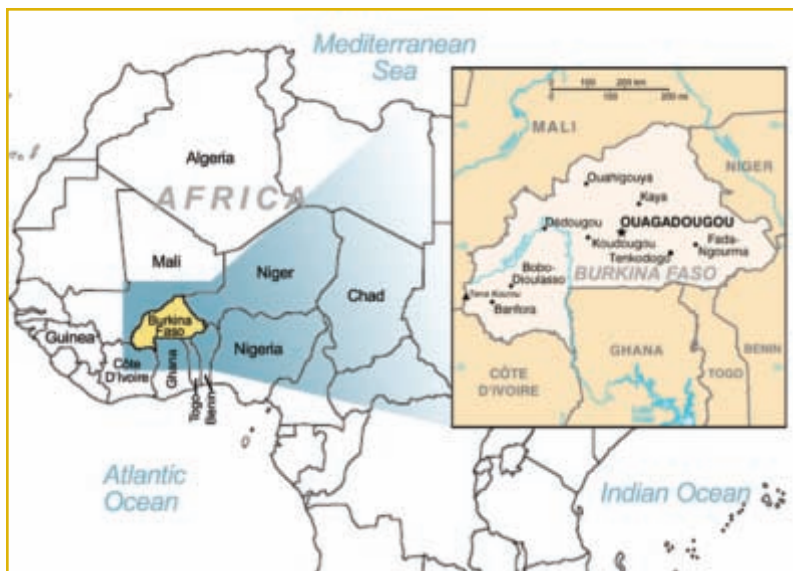
"This way of working together feels right," says Donna Entz, mission worker through AIMM, Mennonite Mission Network and Mennonite Church Canada Witness in Burkina Faso since 1978. "Mission is being developed by the church [in Burkina Faso] rather than being driven from North America. This is a first."

The Congolese partnership council, dealing with a complex situation that brings together three Mennonite denominations, worked at forging a common vision.

"We live together and we must be open and willing to share with each other," said Adolphe Komuesa, president of the Communauté Mennonite au Congo (Mennonite Community of Congo). The embryonic partnership councils of Botswana and South Africa also discussed which institutions should be invited to become members.—Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of Mennonite Mission Network

Mission is being developed by the church [in Burkina Faso] rather than being driven from North America. This is a first.

—Donna Entz



# Anabaptist leaders go to Washington

*Council of moderators and secretaries prepares for possible military draft.*

Leaders from five Anabaptist denominations met in Washington in December 2005 to address the U.S. government on several matters. The possibility of a military draft by the Selective Service System was a primary agenda.

The Council of Moderators and General Secretaries (COMS) kicked off its 2005 annual meeting at Washington City Church of the Brethren on Dec. 1. Washington was selected for the meeting so the group could talk directly with members of U.S. Congress and the Selective Service.

The council includes Church of the Brethren, Mennonite Church USA, Brethren in Christ Church, Conservative Mennonite Conference and U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. Staff from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. were also invited to attend the meeting. Staff members from Church of the Brethren's Witness/Washington Office and the Washington Office of Mennonite Central Committee coordinated the meeting.

A portion of the meeting focused on the issues of alternative service and the potential of a military draft. In other meetings, the group met with leaders of the Faith-Based Initiative for the White House, the National Association of Evangelicals and the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund.

The council also visited with staff of Rep. Charles Rangel (D-New York) in his Capitol Hill office. Rangel, who did not vote for the use of force in Iraq, proposed a draft bill in January 2003 that was voted on and almost unanimously defeated. This past year, Rangel introduced the draft bill again, this time with changes to the conscientious objector language.

Richard Flahavan and Cassandra Costley from the Selective Service System met with the group.

**"When you read the signs,"** Flahavan said, "you can see there's really no secret plan to fire up the draft. You can all be confident it's not going to happen."

However, Costley said she has had numerous meetings with various religious groups to work out guidelines for alternative service if a draft is implemented.

"We welcome any assistance from religious organizations in finding suitable employment for these conscientious objectors," she said.

But not everyone is so certain a draft will not occur.

"I think we have all the elements of a perfect storm, and all we need is a butterfly flutter," said J.E. McNeil, executive director of the Center on Conscience and War.



Church of the Brethren

McNeil said she believes President Bush might implement a draft if he thought it would pass through Congress.

"We have no choice, that's the phrase he's going to have to use to sell it," she said.

"No one in the administration is talking about a draft," said Theo Sittler, lobbyist for the center. "But people in the Pentagon are."

**That is one reason** McNeil believes it is important to continue to educate and provide alternatives for people faced with the possibility of a draft.

The COMS group discussed whether to develop a contingency plan for a military draft, led by MCC U.S. staff members Rolando Santiago and Titus Peachey. Some of the issues raised were alternative service placements under church agencies and nonchurch agencies, support for registrants, staying in relationship with soldiers, relationship of the churches to the government and Selective Service, and collaboration with other historic peace churches and the Center on Conscience and War.

Marian Franz, executive director for the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, spoke with the group about her work lobbying on the peace tax issue.

**COMS also met with Richard Cizik**, vice president for governmental affairs for the National Association of Evangelicals, who reviewed a publication outlining seven principles for Christian political engagement. In a meeting on faith-based initiatives, Jim Towey, director of the Faith-Based Initiative for the White House, explained President George W. Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative Plan.—*Marathana Prothro for Mennonite Church USA News Service*

At the White House (from left): Ben Shirk, Conservative Mennonite Conference; Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA; Chuck Buller, U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches; Ronald Beachley, Church of the Brethren; Roy Williams, Mennonite Church USA; Phil Jones, Church of the Brethren; J. Daryl Byler, Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office; Titus Peachey, MCC; Rolando L. Santiago, MCC U.S.; Steve Swartz, Conservative Mennonite Conference

Men from South Hutchinson Mennonite Church replace part of the church roof as part of a service project for the congregation's 40 Days of CommUNITY. From left: Ken King, Gary Pope, Jim Yoder and Joe Miller



## Church has 40 days of commUNITY

*Projects include fixing cars, landscaping and ministry for single parents.*

**We've done a pretty good job to go around the world and serve there. But we've got to work on the needs of people right here in our neighborhoods, too.**

—Howard Wagler

Members of South Hutchinson Mennonite Church, Hutchinson, Kan., have a newfound appreciation for what it means to live and serve as a community. The Mennonite Church USA congregation recently completed a journey of 40 days of CommUNITY based on Rick Warren's book *Better Together: What on Earth Are We Here For?* As a result of the project, the congregation welcomed 10 new small groups, filled a school bus with more than 2,000 items for 17 local charities and explored new ways to reach out to and serve people in their community.

Lead pastor Howard Wagler said though some may not readily support Rick Warren or his other book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, the congregation was able to use *Better Together* to build on Anabaptist and Mennonite themes—especially community and servanthood.

"The book fit right in with what we wanted our people to experience," Wagler says. "From the very outset, every small group was encouraged to have a mission inside the church and outside the church."

Among other things, the mission projects included a "garage no sale," a car ministry where people in need could have their automobiles checked out and, in some instances, fixed free of charge, landscaping cleanup at an emergency children's shelter and companionship for local seniors.

"We've done a pretty good job to go around the world and serve there," Wagler says. "But we've got to work on the needs of people right here in our neighborhoods, too."

Because the neighborhoods include a range of ages, the "40 Days of CommUNITY" project provided something for everyone at the church. That means adult and children's Sunday school classes focused on the same themes and verses each week; those themes and verses were also highlighted in sermons and small groups.

"There's higher impact when we're all on the same thing," Wagler says.

Children's pastor Sheri Saner says the children enjoyed and learned a lot from the process.

"Our kids did some unique things," Saner says. "They made craft projects and filled bird feeders for the seniors at Mennonite Manor. It was fun for them to see new ways they can serve people."

In addition, older children used money collected during Sunday school to make a trip to the local ALCO store to shop for items to donate and stuff the bus.

"This gave them an awareness of what other people don't have and what would be suitable and helpful for them in their daily lives," Saner says.

Mission project coordinator Ann Franz says the program wasn't without its difficulties, and there were times it looked as if certain aspects weren't going to happen.

"It was amazing because two weeks before we were supposed to have a bus to fill, I didn't have a bus for us to fill," Franz says. "But then God was like, 'OK, I'm going to take care of this,' and He did. We were able to get a bus from the Nickerson school district, and that need was met."

Things like that, she says, encouraged her to know God had a plan for the work the congregation was trying to do. The work they did—learning to reach out together, fellowshiping together, growing together, serving together and worshipping together—blessed the congregation.

Sunday morning attendance reached a new milestone during the "40 Days of CommUNITY," Wagler says, and some of the ministries developed during the process, such as a ministry for single parents, will continue.

"This showed us how easy it is to just get out and serve others, and now that we know, we can continue serving," Franz says.—*Marathana Prothro of Mennonite Church USA News Service*

# One Vietnamese leader still imprisoned

*Last of 'Mennonite Six' could be released during Tet New Year on Jan. 29.*

**M**ennonite and other agencies around the world are again seeking the release of the last of the imprisoned "Mennonite Six" Vietnam Mennonite Church leaders. Mennonite World Conference, Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA have contacted Vietnam government leaders and various diplomatic personnel.

Pham Ngoc Thach, 34, will complete his two year prison sentence in March. Supporters hope that the government might release him before the Jan. 29 Tet New Year celebration, a time when Vietnam traditionally grants amnesty to prisoners. Observers say this would be an opportunity for Vietnam to show its goodwill. They note that the government has taken concrete steps this past year permitting greater religious expression.

Thach was arrested after a March 2, 2004, incident when church personnel attempted to report undercover agents who had been harassing them. He and five others were convicted by a court of interfering with officials carrying out their duties and sentenced to varying prison times.

Thach was sentenced to two years. Pastor Nguyen Hong Quang was sentenced to three

years, but was granted amnesty in August 2005. Church leaders in Vietnam believe that the prison terms were intended to punish church leaders for some of their other activities. Quang had been documenting and publicizing police harassment of some house churches, and Thach videotaped some of these activities.

Thach has been an assistant to Quang since 1993 and served as chair of the church's evangelism committee from 2001 until his arrest. He spent significant time in the central highlands in 2001, encouraging churches of ethnic minorities. Their activities were sharply restricted after large numbers of minorities protested because they pushed off their land and because their religious freedom was curtailed.

**In December 2003**, Thach was beaten and briefly held in Ho Chi Minh City at a time when house church members were being arrested for distributing unauthorized religious literature. Afterwards, when taking Quang home on his motorcycle after a meeting with an international human rights representative, Thach was stopped by security police and severely beaten before being released.

In the March 2004 incident, the beating by police officers left Thach unconscious. He suffered additional beatings during interrogation sessions the following weeks. Thach's father was not allowed to visit his son until four months later.

After Thach's court appeal was denied in April 2005, he was moved to various prisons. His father, Pham Van Khanh, visited him most recently on Dec. 17, 2005. Thach is assigned to farm work, cutting grass, hoeing and harvesting manioc and corn. He was experiencing back strain from carrying heavy loads. Letters and Christmas greetings he wrote to church friends were confiscated by the prison authorities in violation of the government's penal code.

**Five people already released** from prison have ongoing health problems, some of which are related to their incarceration. The brothers Nhan and Nghia, released last December, are only able to do light work. Phuong, released in March, is dealing with a fibroid tumor on his head. The mental health of Ms. Lien has improved significantly, and she is again able to smile.

Pastor Quang, who had health problems before this latest imprisonment, is seeking medical treatment. He again gives leadership to the house church in his home in Ho Chi Minh City, and he has traveled to central Vietnam to encourage the churches.—*Mennonite World Conference for Vietnamese Ministries*

**Five people already released from prison have ongoing health problems, some of which are related to their incarceration.**



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**CALENDAR**

**Mennonite Central Committee, *Voices Around the Table: Faith, Food and U.S. Farm Policy***, March 5-7, Washington D.C. office. Seminar includes biblical reflection, advocacy training, a panel on farm subsidies from across the political spectrum and workshops on everything from free trade agreements to genetically modified crops to hunger in the United States. Early registration of \$65 is due by Feb. 6. Visit [www.mcc.org/us/washington/brochure.pdf](http://www.mcc.org/us/washington/brochure.pdf) for a brochure and registration.

**WORKERS**

**Beidler, Ken**, was ordained Nov. 6, 2005, at First Mennonite Church, Iowa City, Iowa.

**Martin, Brian**, was licensed Sept. 7, 2005, as pastor to serve Line Lexington (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

**Martin, Cheryl**, was licensed Sept. 7, 2005, as pastor to serve Line Lexington (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

**Miller, Daniel Z.**, ended Nov. 30, 2005, as interim pastor at Marion Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind.

**Prey-Harbaugh, Julie**, was licensed Oct. 19, 2005, to serve as chaplain at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (Pa.).

**BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS**

**Blough, Timothy Douglas**, Dec. 3, 2005, to Chris and Angela Troyer Blough, Middlebury, Ind.

**Dean, Mason Matthew**, Nov. 14, 2005, to Michael and Tonya Brubaker Dean, Fisher, Ill.

**Durso, Karigan Grace**, Oct. 10, 2005, to Anthony and Kristi Schultz Durso, Westfield, Ind.

**Fisher, Lincoln Joel**, Oct. 28, 2005, to Matt and Amy Stuckey Fisher, Goshen, Ind.

**Frey, Megan Diane**, Nov. 18, 2005, to Fritz and Delila Miller Frey, Middlebury, Ind.

**Friesen, Madison**, Dec. 13, 2005, to Dave and Mary Friesen, Altona, Man.

**Fultz, Nicholas Gene**, Sept. 22, 2005, to Matthew and Malinda Cameron Fultz, Indianapolis.

**Gingerich, Andrew Jacob**, Dec. 5, 2005, to Peter and Kris Yoder Gingerich, Granger, Ind.

**Gingerich, Emily Jo**, Oct. 24, 2005, to Merlin and Rhoda Mullet Gingerich, Millersburg, Ohio.

**Hixon, Brynne Lanae**, Dec. 12, 2005, to Bill and Karena Miller Hixon, Goshen, Ind.

**Kliewer, Vivian Rose**, Dec. 11, 2005, to Chris and Cara Eshelman Kliewer, Wichita, Kan.

**Larimer, Emma Marie**, Nov. 3, 2005, to Mark and Trixy Carr Larimer, Fort Wayne, Ind.

**Leinbach Kreider, Jessie Daniel**, Dec. 13, 2005, to Jonathan and Greta Leinbach Kreider, Harrisonburg, Va.

**Lutz, Madgalyn Grace and Mary Catherine** (twins), Nov. 21, 2005, to Doug and Cher Moyer Lutz, Sellersville, Pa.

**Mavis, Brayden Isaiah**, Nov. 5, 2005, to Jason and Darla Mavis, Goshen, Ind.

**Mbuu, Lillian Campbell Mumbi**, Nov. 17, 2005, to Brian and Joela Campbell Mbuu, Harrisburg, Pa.

**McLaughlin, Colin James**, Dec. 7, 2005, to Sean and Julie Wagler McLaughlin, North Canton, Ohio.

**Michael, Raven Presley**, Nov. 28, 2005, to Jeremiah and Sara Martin Michael, Wheat Ridge, Colo.

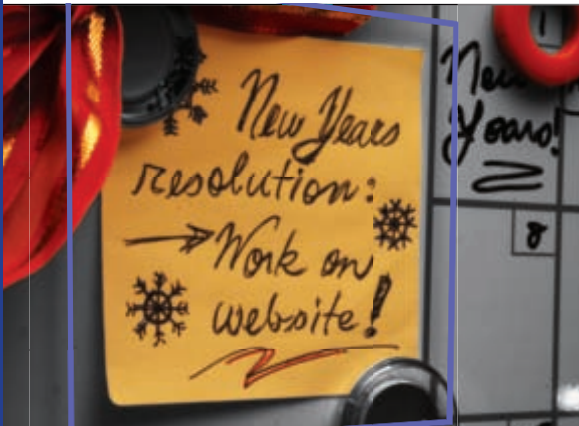
**Moser, Ava Marie**, Nov. 4, 2005, to Joshua and Lisa Akin Moser, Carthage, N.Y.

**Nyveltdt, Briana Shae**, Nov. 1, 2005, to Al and Sheila Miller Nyveltdt, Bainbridge, Pa.

**Parker-Harley, Lucia Grace**, Nov. 30, 2005, to Michael and Jennifer Parker-Harley, Columbus, Ohio.

**Renner, Austin James**, Dec. 5, 2005, to Christopher and Heather Renner, Sellersville, Pa.

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**Rice, Landon Charles**, Dec. 4, 2005, to Shawn and Susan Grau Rice, Lowville, N.Y.

**Rush, Carley Grace**, Oct. 5, 2005, to Ken T. and Tricia Tufton Rush, Sellersville, Pa.

**Schrag, Eden Olivia**, Nov. 17, 2005, to Steve and Meghan Frankenfield Schrag, Sellersville, Pa.

**Showalter, Lexi Grace**, Sept. 11, 2005, to Brian and Michele Showalter, Olathe, Kan.

**Souder, Adam Zachary**, Nov. 24, 2005, to Jeff and Carrie Kipps Souder, Massanutten, Va.

**Springer, Katherine Lynn**, Dec. 9, 2005, to Douglas and Mary Siegrist Springer, Hopedale, Ill.

**Todaro, Lauren Elyse**, Nov. 30, 2005, to Jim and Alice Todaro, Wilmot, Ohio.

**Troyer, Brooke Erin**, Dec. 12, 2005, to Brian and Jessilyn Blocher Troyer, Sturgis, Mich.

**Weaver, Aliyah Dianna**, Sept. 24, 2005, to Daniel and Krystal Whiman Weaver, Walnut Creek, Ohio.

**Wenger, Faith Elizabeth**, Nov. 10, 2005, to Tony and Melinda Shoemaker Wenger, Manheim, Pa.

**Witmer, Nathan Luke**, Sept. 7, 2005, to Philip and Terry Phibbs Witmer, Dayton, Va.

**Yoder, Alex Michael**, Nov. 20, 2005, to Kenneth and Marci Litwiller Yoder, Hopedale, Ill.

MARRIAGES

**Douple/Eby**: Kent Douple, Ephrata, Pa., and Sarah Eby, Ephrata, Nov. 26, 2005, at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

**Hershberger/Preston**: Abby Hershberger, Mogadore, Ohio, and Nahum Preston, St. Louis, Mo., Nov. 26, 2005, at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

**Jones/Shannon**: Robert Jones, Fort Wayne, Ind., and Linda Shannon, Fort Wayne, Oct. 15, 2005, at Faith Baptist Church, Fort Wayne.

**Miller/Miller**: Irma Miller, Winesburg, Ohio, and John Henry Miller, Mt. Eaton, Ohio, Nov. 26, 2005, at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

DEATHS

**Correction**: In the Dec. 20, 2005, issue, Harley Stucky was incorrectly listed as Harold Stucky.

**Beckler, Neomi Schweitzer**, 80, Wood River, Neb., died Nov. 28, 2005. Spouse: Raymond Beckler (deceased). Parents: John and Matilda Stutzman Schweitzer. Children: Candace Schweitzer, Ed, Randy, Ellen Sebulsky; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 3 at Wood River Mennonite Church.

**Bontrager, Roman M.**, 90, Beach City, Ohio, died Nov. 28, 2005. Spouse: Fannie Miller Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Moses E. and Mattie Miller Bontrager. Children: Ella Nafziger, Mary, Roy, Andy, Ron; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 2 at Longenecker Mennonite Church, Winesburg, Ohio.

**Brydge, Katherine Lucille**, 96, Staunton, Va., died Nov. 20, 2005. Spouse: Paul R. Brydge (deceased). Parents: Grover C. and Emma Goldie Neff Bell. Children: Barbara Lee Tomlin, Judy Via, Patty Lafferty, Wilda Mae Morris (deceased). Memorial service: Nov. 22 at Lynside Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst, Va.

**Detweiler, Alvin F.**, 76, Boyertown, Pa., died Dec. 3, 2005. Spouse: Katherine Kass Yoder Detweiler. Parents: Mahlon and Hannah Freed Detweiler. Children: Twila Nazario, Philip, Leona Kolb, Steven, Douglas, Suzi Weiss, Kenton, Aleta Kulp, Carol Smith, Marc, Karla Moonsamy, Krista; 33 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 9 at Boyertown Mennonite Church.

**Detweiler, Mary Jane Rudy**, 79, Lansdale, Pa., died Dec. 1, 2005. Spouse: Richard Clemmer Detweiler (deceased). Parents: James and Alma Rudy Groff. Children: Donna Louise, John Richard, Ann Elizabeth; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 4 at Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Homes.

**Dueck, Mary**, 93, Altona, Man., died Dec. 7, 2005. Spouse: Jacob B. Dueck (deceased). Parents: Jacob J. and Helena Peters Fehr. Children: Henry, Jake, Brian, Leona; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 12 at Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Altona.

**Ediger, Eleanor Voth**, 92, Inman, Kan., died Dec. 10, 2005. Spouse: Ben Ediger (deceased). Parents: Cornelius H. and Elizabeth Sperling Voth. Children: Warren, Donovan, Donna Smith; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 14 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

**Hackman, Vandala F.**, 88, Souderton, Pa., died Dec. 9, 2005. Parents: Morris and Maggie Freed Hackman. Funeral: Dec. 13 at Souderton Mennonite Homes Chapel.

**Hilty, Paul**, 88, Dalton, Ohio, died Nov. 28, 2005. Spouse: Edna Nussbaum Hilty. Parents: Benjamin and Edith Snaveley Hilty. Children: Kenneth, Emma Jean Yoder, Christine Welfley, Alice Metcalf, Leon; 17 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 1 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

**Histand, Esther D.**, 87, Souderton, Pa., died Sept. 30, 2005. Spouse: David L. Histand (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Ellen Brunner Detweiler. Children: D. Merrill, Joanne Marie D. Histand Hackman, Dennis; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 5 at Rockhill Mennonite Church, Telford, Pa.

“For The Record” lists obituaries for those who died during the past three months. Additional information about the deceased may be submitted to *The Mennonite* at [www.TheMennonite.org](http://www.TheMennonite.org). We will forward all information to MennObits, the research Web site sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA. To receive the obituary form as an MS Word document, email [Editor@themennonite.org](mailto:Editor@themennonite.org). To receive a paper copy of the obituary form, call 574-535-6053.


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**Kehler, Henry**, 96, Altona, Man., died Dec. 3, 2005. Spouse: Hilda Kehler. Parents: John and Katharina Kehler. Children: Myron, Arlene Jardine, Ingrid Heide, Bernice Heinrichs; 14 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 8 at Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Altona.

**Klippenstein, Laura**, 71, Altona, Man., died Nov. 29, 2005. Spouse: Alfred Klippenstein. Parents: Henry J. and Helena Kroeker Braun. Children: Michael, Deborah Fehr, Terry, Nelson, Jim; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 3 at Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Altona.

**Martin, Gladys Good**, 77, St. Jacobs, Ont., died Dec. 6, 2005. Spouse: Lloyd S. Martin. Parents: Abner and Mary Ann Randall Good. Children: Ron, Darrel, Sharon; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 9 at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

**Martin, Lydia G.**, 81, Ephrata, Pa., died Nov. 28, 2005. Spouse: Allen Martin (deceased). Parents: Phares G. and Susie Gehman Martin. Children: Lawrence, Larry, Linda Woodhouse, Twila; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 1 at Hammer Creek Mennonite Church, Lititz, Pa.

**Mast, Alma Schmucker**, 90, Creston, Ohio, died Sept. 29, 2005. Parents: Peter and Druscilla Kurtz Schmucker. Children: Earl, Paul, Clara Swartzentruber; 15 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 3 at Longenecker Mennonite Church, Winesburg, Ohio.

**Mayer, Doris**, 79, Sarasota, Fla., died Nov. 24, 2005, of cancer. Children: Sandra Miller, Bonnie Kurtz, Michael; 16 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 28 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

**Miller, Leander Lee**, 85, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 3, 2005. Spouse: Etta Frye Yoder Miller. Parents: Nathaniel and Mary Miller. Stepchildren: Rosemary Newton, Treva Yoder, Danette; eight step-grandchildren; six step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 6 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

**Neuhouser, Merle W.**, 89, Leo, Ind., died Nov. 27, 2005. Spouse: Mary Gardner Neuhouser. Parents: Levi and Katie Liechty Neuhouser. Children: Lynne Kurtz, Sue Pownall, Donald, Kathy Brown; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 2 at North Leo Mennonite Church.

**Sauder, Floyd H.**, 95, Archbold, Ohio, died Dec. 13, 2005. Spouse: Huldah Baer Sauder (deceased). Parents: Albert and Ida Weaver Sauder. Children: David, James, Sandra; nine grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 16 at Fairlawn Chapel, Archbold.

**Showalter, Kenneth L.**, 80, Wilmot, Ohio, died Nov. 28, 2005. Spouse: Joan Weaver Showalter. Parents: Luke and Lydia Showalter Kauffman. Children: Eileen Yoder, Eli; six grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 30 at Longenecker Mennonite Church, Winesburg, Ohio.

**Smoker, Simon**, 93, Lititz, Pa., died Nov. 13, 2005. Parents: John and Emma Zook Smoker. Children: Mervin, Carol; four grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 18 in Lancaster, Pa.

**Stutzman, Lela M.**, 94, Hesston, Kan., died Dec. 2, 2005. Spouse: Perry Stutzman (deceased). Parents: Wesley C. and Emma Yoder Stutzman. Children: Delores Headings, Marva Blough; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 5 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

**Weirich, Eli S.**, 75, Shipshewana, Ind., died Oct. 25, 2005. Spouse: Ruth Ellen Weirich (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Millie Bontrager Weirich. Children: James, David, Robert; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 29 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

**Wenger, Linden M.**, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died Dec. 18, 2005. Spouse: Esther Huber Wenger (deceased). Parents: Oscar E. and Bessie P. Heatwole Wenger. Children: Harold C., J. Lowell, Linda Kay; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 22 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

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—Dr. Howard Keim  
Hesston College President

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dean before accepting the call to lead  
Hesston College as president at  
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# Hesston College

START HERE, GO EVERYWHERE

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies of Mennonite Church USA. Cost for one-time classified placement is \$1.15 per word, minimum of \$30. Display space is also available.

To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Kristene Miller, or email Advertising@TheMennonite.org.

**Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary** seeks **four event pastors**, two male and two female, for !Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth. The position is full-time for one of two sessions: June 12-July 19 or July 6-Aug. 3. These pastors will accompany the high school !Explore participants for their intensive 18-day group experience. Qualifications include experience as a congregational pastor and working with youth; ability to nurture youth through times of spiritual, intellectual and emotional growth; creativity in styles of worship, prayer and spiritual disciplines; knowledge of and commitment to the Anabaptist-Mennonite faith and an undergraduate degree, with additional seminary education preferred. Responsibilities include assisting in preparations, leading and directing worship and discussions, and being present with youth during this experience. To apply, send resumé and letter of application by Jan. 31 to Andy Brubacher Kaethler, !Explore Director, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, andybk@ambs.edu. A complete job description is available on the AMBS Web site: [www.ambs.edu/!Explore](http://www.ambs.edu/!Explore).

**Eastern Mennonite University** announces **full-time, continuing faculty position in chemistry** beginning Fall 2006. Ph.D., teaching and research experience required. Courses include introductory, general, physical or analytical chemistry and/or courses in the General Education program.

Applications accepted until position filled. Applicants are asked to respond to questions specific to EMU's mission. (Provided after initial inquiry). Send letter of application, curriculum vita, graduate transcripts (unofficial acceptable), statement of teaching philosophy, statement of research interests and names of three references to Dr. Marie S. Morris, Vice President and Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; [www.emu.edu](http://www.emu.edu). Review begins immediately. EMU reserves the right to fill the position at any time or keep the position open. Applications will be acknowledged by letter. AAEO employer. We seek applicants who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity.

**Hinkletown Mennonite School** is seeking a **visionary administrator** to lead the school into a new era of providing a Christian education to students in northeastern Lancaster County, Pa. HMS is a K-8 school that offers a quality academic education within the context of an Anabaptist interpretation of the Christian faith. Interested people are invited to contact Kristine Sauder by Feb. 1, 2006. Please address communications to 464 E. Maple Grove Road, Narvon, PA 17555. Phone 717-445-9215 or email [ksauder@frontiernet.net](mailto:ksauder@frontiernet.net).

**Hesston College** seeks a **chief academic officer** to replace Dr. Marc Yoder, who is retiring. Qualifications include commitment to Anabaptist distinctives, understanding of and commitment to the mission of Hesston College as the two-year college of Mennonite Church USA with both transfer and professional programs, completed doctorate and demonstrated ability to lead collaboratively with faculty and other areas of campus. Beginning date: July 1, 2006. Review of applications and interviews begins Feb. 1 and continues until position is filled. Send letter of application, vita and original transcripts to President's Office, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. For more information, email [cindy@hesston.edu](mailto:cindy@hesston.edu). Hesston College is an equal opportunity employer.

**Holly Grove Mennonite and Rehoboth Presbyterian Churches**, Westover, Md., seek candidates for the position of **full-time youth pastor**. These two churches have been jointly supporting one youth pastor for the past six years and desire to continue that relationship. The youth pastor will facilitate and oversee the continuation of an established community youth ministry to high school students. Candidates should have a growing passion for their Christian faith, respect for working in an ecumenical environment, love of youth and the ability to work in a team ministry. Salary package in keeping with Mennonite Church USA guidelines. Experience in youth ministry preferred. Interested people should send resumé and cover letter to Verle Brubaker, 7333 Mennonite Church Road, Westover, MD 21871.

**Eastern Mennonite University** is seeking qualified applicants for the position of **director of marketing services**. Responsibilities include preparing and implementing an integrated marketing communications plan for the university, including Web-based media, branding, news dissemination, crisis communications management, budget planning, scheduling of work, assurance of quality control, long-range planning and staff supervision. Bachelor's degree in marketing, communication or equivalent experience required. At least five years in one or more of the following fields is required: Web expertise, mass media communications, marketing, publishing, graphic design, public relations or related areas. For more information visit our Web site at [www.emu.edu](http://www.emu.edu). Send letter of application, resumé and three references to Human Resources Office, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802 or email [hr@emu.edu](mailto:hr@emu.edu). The search committee will begin reviewing applications immediately. The search will continue until the position is filled.

**Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership** is inviting applications for the full-time position of **director of the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee**. The director will provide overall coordination and direction to the heritage and history work of the Historical Committee and develop program and vision that will enhance the life and spirit of Mennonite Church USA.

Responsibilities include interpreting and telling the church's story, initiating and coordinating history and heritage programs, fund raising, supervising staff and archives operations in Goshen, Ind., and in North Newton, Kan., managing a budget, networking with regional heritage organizations and overseeing/editing the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*.

Qualifications: commitment to Mennonite Church USA and its mission; passion for the church's stories; visionary; storytelling ability; strong communication skills in person and through writing; management and supervisory skills; fund-raising experience/ability or willingness to learn; ability to inspire and motivate; equally at home with the various heritage streams and ethnic/racial groups of Mennonite Church USA.

Send resumé with references to Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee and Archives, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen IN 46526.

Interviews will begin Feb. 1, 2006, until the position is filled.

**Managing editor for Leader**, a quarterly magazine published by Mennonite Publishing Network for pastoral and lay leaders in Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. The managing editor would be expected to work with the senior editor and the editorial committee in choosing themes for each issue, solicit and edit articles for each issue and manage issues through to production, including working with a copy editor, proofreader and designer. The managing editor would also be expected to work within the budget and be available as a resource for the promotion of *Leader*. Candidates for this position should have both editorial experience and congregational leadership experience (lay or pastoral), some awareness of Mennonite Church Canada or Mennonite Church USA or both, and should be an active member in good standing of a Mennonite congregation in one of these two constituencies. To apply, send a letter of application, with a resume and writing and/or editing samples, by Feb. 3, 2006, to Eleanor Snyder, director, Faith & Life Resources, Mennonite Publishing Network, 490 Dutton Drive, Unit C7, Waterloo, ON N2L 6H7 or [esnyder@mph.org](mailto:esnyder@mph.org). The letter of application should include a statement about why this position is of interest and relevant gifts, skills and experiences one brings to it, as well as three references (with addresses, phone numbers and email address of references).

**Tabor College** seeks **full-time faculty** starting August 2006 for positions in psychology, Bible, secondary teacher education, athletic training program director and sociology/social work. Doctorates preferred. Passion for mentoring and advising undergraduate majors. Must affirm Tabor distinctives as an Anabaptist Evangelical Christian college and articulate personal Christian commitment. Complete position listings at [www.tabor.edu](http://www.tabor.edu). Send a letter of interest to Dr. Lawrence Ressler, VP of Academics, Tabor College, 400 S. Jefferson, Hillsboro, KS 67063.

**Celtic Treasure: Daily Scriptures and Prayer** by J. Philip Newell (Eerdmans, 2005, \$20) provides a retelling of a Scripture passage and original prayers inspired by the Celtic tradition for each day of the week. Over seven weeks, it covers the arc of Scripture, from the stories of creation and Israel through the life of Jesus and the New Testament letters.

**Probity Jones and the Fear Not Angel** by Walter Wangerin Jr. and illustrated by Tim Ladwig (Paraclete Press, 2005, \$16.95) is a Christmas tale that reads contemporary but feels a part of the old story of Bethlehem.

**Does God Ever Sleep?** by John Sauro (SkyLight Paths, 2005, \$8.99) answers one of the many questions children ask about God. It addresses children ages 3-6.

**Praying With Our Feet** by Lisa D. Weaver (Herald Press, 2005, \$12.99) is told from the point of view of a young girl who takes part in a walk for peace, along with her parents and members of her church. It includes a score of a song by the author and an afterword for adults by Tonya Ramer Wenger.

**Moving with Compassion** is a 10-minute video or DVD from Mennonite Central

Committee that explores the work of MCC and its partners in Uganda, Saskatchewan, Brazil, Chad and the United States. It is available for free loan from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-500. Also available on video or DVD for free loan is **Gifts to Share**, which looks at school kits, relief kits, health kits, newborn kits, AIDS care kits and comforters.

**Becoming Anabaptist: The Origin and Significance of Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism** by J. Denny Weaver (Herald Press, 2005, \$15.99) is a second edition of the book that first appeared in 1987. It was the first major study to incorporate the new history of multiple beginnings and a diverse Anabaptism into a synthesis of meanings for the late 20th century.

**Echoes of the Word: Theological Ethics as Rhetorical Practice** by Harry J. Huebner (Pandora Press, 2005, \$25) helps the Christian community reflect with greater clarity on its theological and ethical agenda. It is part of the Anabaptist and Mennonite Studies Series.

**Purpose, Evolution and the Meaning of Life: Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Goshen Conference on Religion and**

**Science** by John F. Haught, edited by Carl S. Helrich (Pandora Press, 2005, \$15.50), includes Haught's lectures on cosmic purpose and evolution plus questions and comments from the audience.

**The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate Concerning the Supernatural** by John Milbank (Eerdmans, 2005, \$20) defends de Lubac's claim that all human beings are naturally oriented toward the supernatural.

**The Nazareth Jesus Knew** by J. Philip Newell (Nazareth Village, 2005, \$16.95 or \$29.95 plus shipping and handling) explores through photos and text what Nazareth looked like during the three decades Jesus lived there and illuminates how this setting inspired and shaped Jesus' life-changing stories of love, mercy and compassion. Ordering information is available at [NehemiahGr@aol.com](mailto:NehemiahGr@aol.com).

**A Culture of Peace: God's Vision for the Church** by Alan Kreider, Eleanor Kreider and Paulus Widjaja (Good Books, 2005, \$9.99) suggests how to develop "peacemaking reflexes," how churches "can learn to handle conflict well" and how to cultivate vulnerability and humility.



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—Margaret Haire, Evansville, Ind.,  
mother of GC sophomore David Haire

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## What's in a name?

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name.*—Ephesians 3:14,15



**Sara Wenger Shenk** is an author and serves as associate dean and associate professor of Christian education at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

**H**ow are we named? In what sense are all families named by God? Is it because we owe our existence to God? Is it because in some mysterious way, all families in the cosmos reside within the reign of God?

I write about families not because I'm an expert in family studies but because I'm a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother, a practical theologian who wants theology to connect with everyday realities. I'm also a lay ethnographer who loves to watch people in the complexity of their relationships, within the web of forces that name them—their walls, loves, enemies, celebrations and work, trying to understand how it is that we take our name from God.

I like using the metaphor of bread for describing families. There are many kinds of bread, many varieties of ingredients, many shapes, colors and textures. Yet there is something consistent about good bread. It is full of flavor, chewy, nourishing and satisfies one's hunger. And it is all named bread.

Our cultural wars, however, include huge debates about what we name as family. Is our definition of family descriptive of what is? Or is it ideological—what should be? Is our definition biblical? If so, what in the world does a “biblical” family look like? Like Abraham or Moses' families? Like David, Esther or Hosea's families? Like Paul or Mary Magdalene's family?

How do we regard diversity of family forms? Is the diversity a merciful provision of God or evidence of everyone doing what is right in their own eyes? Can we hold up ideal family dynamics while showing grace and hospitality to other ways of being family? On what basis do we make judgments about what is healthy in family relationships? Do we begin with the Bible and make authoritative statements based on revealed truth? Do we begin with societal indicators of basic mental health or economic security? Do we begin with reality on the ground and work pragmatically to make the best of what is?

The answers are not simple, but they work themselves out in real life—with trial and error, abundant grace, new beginnings, a socially embod-

ied experiment in faithful living—generation after generation, in real families named by God.


Here's a real family I know well, somewhat fictionalized: Charles was the youngest son of an evangelist and college administrator—an innovator in his day. Susanna was the daughter of urban business entrepreneurs. She was conceived out of wedlock. When the pregnancy was discovered, the couple was asked to make a public confession.

Charles and Susanna shared their first kiss on their engagement after a three-year courtship. They were married one Sunday morning in 1944 at a city church, with no pomp or circumstance. They raised a family of eight children. Life together included Bible stories, garden work, camping trips, regular participation in church, much love

and song. Raising teenagers in the 1960s and '70s was tough, and many prayers emerged from Mom and Dad's room right before the reassuring snores, reliable as clockwork.

One daughter married a farm-grown Mennonite, immediately moved to a major city and partnered in the formation of a house church. Another daughter

married a divorced veteran, becoming a Quaker and a vegetarian by conviction. Another married a Conservative Mennonite and devoted her life to mission work. Another married and immediately joined her husband in seminary studies and teaching. One son married the daughter of a bishop, worked in education and business and, though affirming faith, rarely attended church. Another son, abruptly expelled from the church because of his homosexuality, formed an enduring male partnership, becoming a business entrepreneur and civic leader. Another married a fellow Master of Divinity student with whom he became a co-pastor. Another served with Mennonite Central Committee and married a Japanese woman from a Buddhist family.

This family resembles many Mennonite families who've experienced increased diversity amid tremendous strain. Yet a consistent goodness has endured—full of flavor and profoundly nourishing—a goodness that is grounded in tenacious faith and resilient love, a goodness that intentionally roots itself in the saving mercy of God. In what respect does this family, and every family, take its name from God? “For this reason I bow my knees.” 

### Can we hold up ideal family dynamics while showing grace and hospitality to other ways of being family?

**Real Families** is a new column that will appear monthly.



Pete Prunes, Mereoda Babilonia and their children Bianca, Jacob, Sierra, and Isabel Prunes on a family outing at the Philadelphia Art Museum.

## Building up the church — by tearing down walls

It starts with embracing diversity – not only within the congregation, but also in how that congregation defines community. Take Oxford Circle Mennonite Church in northeast Philadelphia, where Pete Prunes and his wife, Nereida, have found their home. Neither comes from a traditional Mennonite background. And both are now actively involved in this diverse congregation.

Like many other Mennonite Church USA congregations, Oxford Circle is joyfully following Jesus into the world. They know it's "not just about Sunday." It is about love that comes from faithfully following Jesus. And about supporting each other every day, serving the community, opening doors to a new relationship with God. Today's Mennonite Church USA congregations are dynamic. And they are inviting new families – no matter where they come from or how they were raised – to see and serve the world from a uniquely Christian Anabaptist perspective.

Joyfully following Jesus

*We*

are Mennonite Church USA

[www.MennoniteUSA.org](http://www.MennoniteUSA.org)



Everett J.  
Thomas

**Mennonite Church USA will need to make changes to receive more support from racial-ethnic members and people under 40.**

## Stewardship surprises

**P**atterns of giving in the Mennonite church are changing rapidly. These patterns threaten the ability of Mennonite Church USA agencies to partner with congregations and area conferences.

Significant changes could occur in the next month as churchwide boards begin their new fiscal year on Feb. 1. Executive Leadership, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Publishing Network and Mennonite Education Agency are facing scenarios that include cutting both staff and programs (see “MC USA Is Facing Major Budget Shortfalls,” Dec. 20, 2005).

The cause of the budget shortfalls is attributed in part to a shift in donor giving to disaster relief instead of to “nonemergency organizations,” says Marty Lehman, director of financial development for Mennonite Church USA.

But there are other factors as well. A research project called “Research Study of Denominational Giving” and released on April 9, 2005, revealed important patterns among people under 40 and among racial-ethnic members. The finding: These Mennonites contribute a smaller portion of their total giving to denominational programs than does the average Mennonite Church USA member.

But the study had some surprises about the most generous givers in our church. It showed that while 60 percent of average members give 10 percent or more of their income, more than 88 percent of racial-ethnic members give 10 percent or more. In other words, racial-ethnic members are more generous than church members in general—a point Mennonite Church USA moderator Roy Williams says most people miss. He says there is a perception that racial-ethnic people are not giving, don’t have money, are not generous and need to be helped by white congregations and individuals. The research shows that perception is incorrect.

The study also showed a troubling pattern: Only 41 percent of racial-ethnic members designate the majority of their giving to denominational ministries, compared with 66 percent for average church members.

A similar pattern emerged for members under 40. While the younger generations are surprisingly generous, only “48 percent say they give a majori-

ty of giving to a ministry of Mennonite Church USA,” says the report.

The good news is that the part of our church growing the fastest is very generous. In addition, the youngest part of our church is generous, and “as respondents move toward 40, their propensity to give and at higher levels increases,” says the report. The bad news is that both groups are less committed to Mennonite Church USA ministries when measured by where their money goes.

Jan. 15 is designated Stewardship Sunday this year. We start the new year pondering what these stewardship surprises mean for Mennonite Church USA and what changes are needed to tap into the surprising generosity of these two groups. One obvious answer: Mennonite Church USA and its agencies will need to make some changes to receive more support from them.—*ejt*

### Fellowship with the poor

Members of the New Testament church pooled their wealth so no church member would be impoverished (Acts 4:32-37). It was a powerful witness in their Ancient Near Eastern world. Such sharing today among Mennonite World Conference sisters and brothers would be a similar witness in our world.

In the most recent issue of *Courier*, MWC executive secretary Larry Miller titles his back-page column with an exclamation and a question: “Eradicate poverty! Even in the church?”

“[We must] overcome the disaster of poverty in the church,” Miller says, then describes the “enormous disparity in the MWC family of churches. The 72 percent of our membership who live in Africa, Asia and Latin America control less than 5 percent of our estimated wealth.”

Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday is Jan. 22. But genuine, New Testament fellowship will not happen until we who are wealthy share our resources with Anabaptist and Mennonite brothers and sisters who are poor.—*ejt*