

The Mennonite

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August 9, 2005



Speak to government?

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Let's do ethics at the dinner table

I have learned something about "the poor." There is no such thing. I am not denying the reality of poverty in the richest nation on the planet. I witness its effects every day. Far too many people live in poverty or too close to it for comfort. It is a sin for which I fear we will be held accountable.

I am learning, though, that the label is not helpful. Like other labels, it is convenient. It also objectifies, makes it possible for us to speak of millions of human beings as if the only thing that defines them is what they lack. Individual names and faces, hopes and dreams, gifts and needs are melted together into a mass called "the poor." Meanwhile, we continue to stand a few steps apart. We care, and rightly so. But we remain a few steps removed.

As an inner-city pastor, I am learning about the lives of my neighbors. Many of them live near or below the poverty line. Some have college educations. Some are high-school dropouts. Some struggle with addictions or emotional problems. Some are single, some married. Some are both, raising children single-handedly in the absence of a spouse, who has run off or landed in prison. Some are optimistic, even hopeful. Others are cynical and suspicious. Some are Republicans, some are Democrats. Some are Christians, and others claim no faith. Some are pitiable, others heroic.

Many of them are my acquaintances, and some are my friends. The diversity of their personalities, needs, preferences and dreams challenge me to put away the label "poor." They are my neighbors.

Sometimes I question the value of doing ethics anywhere other than the kitchen. I wonder if it is ultimately beneficial to make ethical claims in a vacuum. I wonder if we help anyone when we stake out positions on issues in the abstract. Rather than develop a theology or ethics that says how God feels about the poor or how we ought to treat the poor, maybe we ought to sit down and have dinner with our neighbors and go from there.

In my short tenure as a Mennonite pastor, I have read multiple statements on issues affecting us as conferences and as a denomination. Statements on abortion and the war in Iraq. All theologically sound. All well-intended. All containing the wisdom and insight of the community of faith. Most at least one step removed from the living, breathing neighbors we wish to serve.


Suppose instead of making broad statements about broad topics we were to do our ethics at the dinner table? Rather than make a statement about God's solidarity with the poor, let's invite our neighbors to eat with us and together try to make sense of what God is doing in our lives.

Rather than make a statement on homosexuality, let's invite our gay neighbors to dinner and together try to make sense of what God is doing in our lives. Let's invite a pregnant teenager to dinner and have a similar conversation. Or someone lacking health care or struggling with an addiction.

Changing the means may not change the ends of our ethical thinking. We may still conclude that homosexual behavior is sinful. We may still argue for God's preferential option for the poor.

But I think we must risk the purity of our position for the sake of those we may otherwise leave lying by the side of the road (Luke 10: 25-37). When we eat with our hungry neighbor, walk alongside our gay neighbor, help our young neighbor raise her baby, we may discover God in places we never expected. Rooted in relationship, we and our ethics will be transformed in the process.

In doing ethics face to face, we'll more quickly dispose of labels. We'll no longer be so objective. Instead we'll do ethics with those whose needs it is meant to address. Such practice will humanize what can be a sterile exercise, whose primary purpose is to give us a place to stand.

What we really need is a place to sit. Right across the table from our neighbors. 



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TheMennonite

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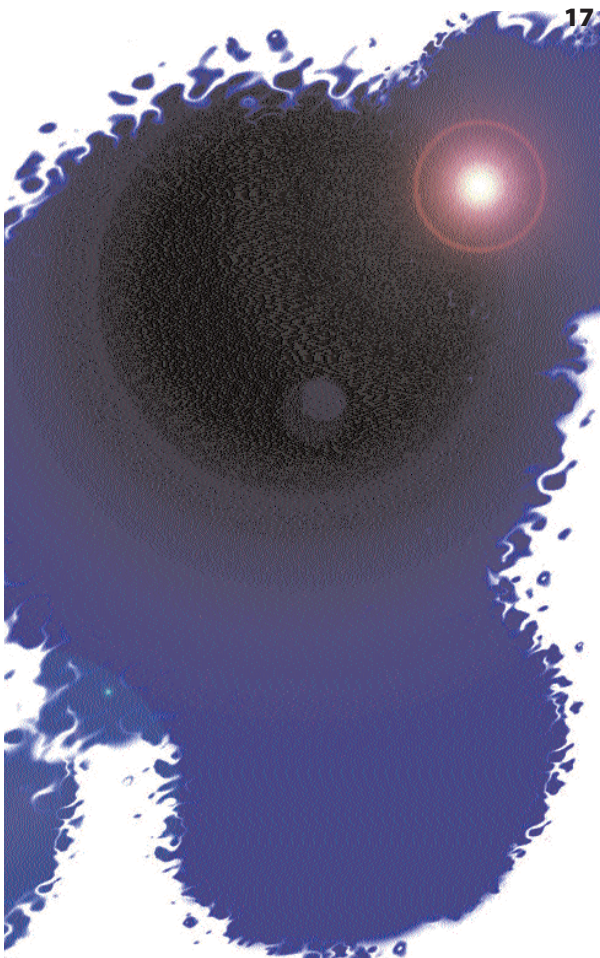
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Light in the darkness

I want to express my appreciation for the June 21 issue of *The Mennonite*. Your articles on depression were timely and beneficial. I especially appreciated the article by Janae Yoder. Her openness and skillful writing were evident. Our Sunday school class recently finished seven sessions on depression and mental illness. The response was unbelievable. Attendance was up over 30 percent, and the long-term effects are exciting. I encourage you to continue to have articles on this most important subject.—*Joseph Hackman, Emmaus, Pa.*

Thanks for including the much-needed articles on depression in your June 21 issue. In 2003, I was diagnosed with severe depression and continue to be in therapy. I shared in a worship service at the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference about my journey and how it has changed Burr Oak Mennonite Church, where I pastor. That was a huge step for me, but the outpouring of loving responses was surprising and healing at the same time.—*Philip D. Leichty, Rensselaer, Ind.*

The church need not be afraid to support those who are suffering from mental illnesses, addictions or any other type of disease. But the church and individuals within the church need to realize where their own strengths and weaknesses lie. There is a difference between trying to fulfill the obligation of service to another and walking alongside someone in pain out of love.

I understand what it is like to try to support someone who suffers from a mental illness and will not receive the support offered. It is like trying to

pet an abused and frightened animal: You will be bitten. However, I also understand what it is like to walk in the deep and heavy darkness of depression. I have been there, and if it had not been for the support group I joined and the people who committed to walk with me, I probably wouldn't be where I am today. Finally, I want to share one of the lessons I have learned in my healing and helping processes: You cannot make someone change; they have to do it on their own. So offer up what you can and be at peace if it doesn't turn out the way you hoped.—*Jessica Walter, Mechanicsburg, Pa.*

Resolution on the war in Iraq

As a first-time delegate to Charlotte 2005, I was most affected by the work to adopt the statement on the war in Iraq. As good as it is, however, the statement falls short of the obligation of a faith community that truly believes we "can't keep quiet." In addition to the statement, we must, as an entire faith community, speak humbly yet with conviction and authority to the leaders of our nation about ending the war.—*John Jay Boyce, Indianapolis*

I was not at the Charlotte convention, but my wife was and brought back the resolution on Bush's war in Iraq. While the content of the statement pleased me, it seems like the timing of it renders it ineffectual. Why could not the same statement have been made in 2003? Our denomination wishes to be known as missional, evangelical and peace loving. The time to demonstrate these tendencies is before a war starts, even if this means going against conventional wisdom. In early 2003, public support for invading Iraq was around 70 percent in favor. Public support has now reversed itself, and a majority of people concede that Bush's war in Iraq was a bad idea. A more cynical observer would ascribe the timing of the recent resolution to a wish not to espouse unpopular ideas—such as the connection between peace and evangelism—during a season of bogus patriotic ardor.—*Paul R. Schlitz Jr., Baltimore*

The unconvention

The June 21 "Now Speak with Boldness" ad for the "unconvention" in Charlotte was overtly anti-Semitic. The tiny disclaimer at the bottom did not in any way justify its publication. I believe *The Mennonite* owes its readers an explanation at the very least, if not an apology. Do you have a policy that requires you to accept every ad that is offered and paid for? Would you accept an ad that called Martin Luther King Jr. a communist or called the pope antichrist? Would you accept an ad that called President Bush a liar or said the United States was Satan?—*David Rensberger, Decatur, Ga.*

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

Mennonite Church USA delegates at both Atlanta 2003 and Charlotte 2005 debated whether and how Mennonites should "speak to government." Those debates also revealed an uncomfortable inconsistency: We often speak to government about peace and justice matters, but a 2003 resolution on abortion did not want to use legislation "to force others to comply with our Christian standards." Charlotte 2005 delegates adopted a resolution that addresses the lack of health-care access for millions of U.S. citizens, but the resolution calls for few specific government actions. Behind this year's debate was another cross-current: deep political divisions within the church that John Roth says (page 10) were exposed by last year's U.S. presidential election. But delegates also heard J. Daryl Byler list some compelling and historical reasons why Mennonite Church USA should speak to government (page 8). Our designer, Dee Birkey, weighs in on the subject with her cover design and asks, "Is the spirit of Menno Simons being veiled by a preoccupation with matters of the state?"—*Editors*

Re Ingrid Zundel being a speaker at the Charlotte “unconvention”: She has a story to tell that should be heard. I have read the whole episode in the book that was published about the sordid affair. Her husband, Ernst, was treated like a criminal and taken into Canada without proper legal procedure and later back to Germany. I am not anti-Semitic, but I am anti-Israeli government and army. If anyone keeps up with what Christian Peacemaker Teams observe and witness, how could they be otherwise? We give Israel more foreign aid than any other country. We supply the bulldozers that demolish the Palestinian homes and olive orchards.—*Jack Stauffer, Newton, Kan.*

Developmental disabilities and mental health

Thanks to Paul D. Leichty for his insightful and sensitive article, “Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health” (July 5). Paul provides a vital service in helping us understand distinctions so we will in turn use appropriate language in speaking about these matters. Many times I have observed people who felt hurt and marginalized by incorrect, unjust labels and attitudes.—*Kathryn Hunsberger Seitz, Beirut, Lebanon*

Mennonites slow to share faith

Jerry Kennell made important points that should be taken seriously by every Mennonite (“Mennonite Because We Say So,” July 5). While every other church seems to be discovering the Anabaptist understandings of following Christ, Mennonites are slow to recognize what others find compelling about Anabaptism. We seem to be reluctant to share our faith with our peers in business and the professions and in the places where we live and work.—*Richard K. MacMaster, Gainesville, Fla.*

The beauty of a frosty morning

Re the July 5 Grace and Truth column by Anne Stuckey (“Sun on the World”): Thank you, God. Thank you for *The Mennonite* and thank you for the gift of Anne Stuckey’s writing. I remember the beauty of that frosty morning. After following the thought pattern of Stuckey’s article, I began to be in awe of our God of beauty and gifts and the awful truth of my use of weapons.—*Marilyn Yoder, Archbold, Ohio*

Grieve Cornelia Lehn’s death

Cornelia Lehn died on July 2 (see page 6). In the Mennonite church and around the world, Cornelia Lehn blessed the lives of countless children and Christian educators in her position as director of children’s ministries for the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church in the 1970s and 1980s. She was a superb

storyteller, an exemplary teacher, an inspiring leader in congregational resourcing and a creative editor and writer of Sunday school curriculum and books. She was one of the main driving forces for the Foundation Series, an Anabaptist children’s church school curriculum. Cornelia was also a strong advocate for world peace, making a witness by withholding the war tax portion of her federal taxes. As a church body, we grieve Nellie’s death and celebrate her rich life and ministry.—*Rosella Wiens Regier, Newton, Kan.*

Rules help discernment

I was troubled by Everett J. Thomas’ editorial “Rules Help Discernment” (June 21). I am reminded of the quote “Dissension is a patriotic act.” I worry that our Mennonite church is promoting a way to “quiet” minority dissension among us in our orderly way of disciplining “wayward members.” There are many incidents in history when churches in general quieted dissension—including major issues of civil rights, lay leadership, the rule of women and children in the church. I recommend that you allow the minority to have a voice in *The Mennonite* as well. I know they do not feel everything was done “decently and in order.”—*Grace Dickerson, Washington*

In response to the June 21 editorial: Isn’t it ironic that almost 500 years ago Menno Simons (and others) severed his relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. Didn’t that church also believe it had the ultimate authority to determine what was right and wrong? Did Brother Menno just flip over in his grave?—*Gladys E. Keener, State College, Pa.*

Everett J. Thomas’ June 21 editorial stands history on its head in a breathtaking manner. The 1995 Confession of Faith, standing in a long Mennonite tradition, was never intended to be a legal code. It has become such (selectively) as a denominational majority has worked to silence a minority through the influence of outside conservative cultural forces in the United States. It is no surprise the Mennonite church is not as “roiled” in 2005, since legal precedent on narrow matters of sexuality has been carefully built brick by brick. I firmly believe the Mennonite church in 2080 will look back in shame at our current lack of grace in the use of the confession of faith and denominational documents on sexuality.—*Sam Steiner, Waterloo, Ont.*

Re “Rules Help Discernment”: It is puzzling that Everett J. Thomas picks and chooses the rules he thinks the church as a discernment community should keep without recalling the rule promised at Saskatoon in 1986 and Purdue, Ind., in 1987 that

ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Regarding the issue of “speaking to government,” Mennonite Church USA should:

- do more (55%)
- do less (13%)
- it depends on the issue (26%)
- not sure (6%)

Check out the new poll question at www.TheMennonite.org



Continued on page 23

IN BRIEF



Keim begins as Hesston's eighth president

Howard Keim took office June 20 as the eighth president of Hesston College. He said gearing up for the upcoming school year is a top priority. "That includes finding out what's expected of me on campus, planning my travel schedule through December and helping other areas refine their goals for the year," he said. Classes begin Aug. 22.—*Hesston College*

Former coach at Bluffton shoots hole-in-one at golf benefit

Kenny Mast, Crystal River, Fla., 79, who coached track, football, basketball and golf from 1951 to 1967 at Bluffton (Ohio) University, shot a hole in one at Bluffton's eighth annual alumni and friends golf scramble to benefit the university athletics program July 16-17. "It always is a surprise when it happens," said Mast. "I got pretty lucky."—*Bluffton University*

Mennonite workers in London call for hope

LONDON—In the aftermath of the July 7 bombings of London's public-transport system, Mennonite Mission Network personnel in the city say they'll strive to be a loving and prayerful influence.

Some of the workers were out of the country at the time of the attack. Those who were present were unharmed. No one connected with Mission Network was reported injured. Now the challenge is to help others react to and respond to the pain.

"I think it should be clear that in faith we are a people of hope, not to be ruled by fear," said Charletta Erb, Bridge Builders trainer and mediator at the London Mennonite Centre (LMC). "Perfect love drives out fear. In the midst of fear, we are called to live out the new order of creativity, hope and love."

According to Erb, people at the center didn't realize anything had happened at first. Participants who were signed up for a Congregational Conflict Consulting course arrived a little late that morning, complaining about the slowness of the public transport system. No one knew why.

There are no immediate plans to alter any of LMC's regularly scheduled events. The workers in London ask for continuing prayers as they resume their ordinary tasks.—*Mennonite Mission Network*

Iraqis fear Iraqi police more than U.S. military

BAGHDAD, Iraq—"Most Iraqis dislike the police and Iraqi National Guard, whom they regard as thugs with guns, writes Greg Rollins, a Christian Peacemaker Teams worker in Iraq.

"The other day I watched a police convoy pass," Rollins writes. "I could hear the shooting from several blocks away. All the cars pulled over and waited for the convoy to pass. The first truck sped by



Bethel on track with sports complex

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., has received \$550,000 from the J.E. and L.E. Mabree Foundation of Tulsa, Okla., for the school's new sports complex (above). The gift completes the challenge grant the foundation awarded last July. To receive the grant, Bethel had one year to raise an additional \$2.1 million. Alumni, friends, foundations and corporations helped Bethel meet the challenge. The 2,500-seat sports complex, due to be completed this month, will be dedicated at Bethel's annual Fall Festival on Oct. 1.—*Bethel College*

with a gunman hanging out the window holding his Kalashnikov in one hand while he yelled. ... The shooting came from the last vehicle in the convoy. The policeman hanging out the back kept shooting into the air despite the fact that all the cars were out of the way."

While the police and ING are not the only convoys that drive this way, the people are more disturbed by them than by the U.S. convoys.

In Fallujah, people told CPT that the police and ING are worse than the U.S. army. "I would rather be arrested by the U.S. than the Iraqis," one man said. "At least they would treat us better."

Fallujans told CPT that whenever a car bomb goes off, the police and ING shoot first and ask questions later. Even though the Fallujah curfew starts at 10 p.m., people are usually home shortly after 8 because the police and ING will harass them if they are not.

"Fear of the Iraqi Special Forces has arisen," Rollins writes. "They are U.S. trained and work closely with the U.S. military, carrying out house raids, sweeps and major operations. People say they are brutal and that one of their brigades is made up of anti-Saddam Iranians from a militia called the Badr Brigade. An official from the Interior Ministry told CPT that approval for the ISF's violent behavior goes all the way up to the U.S. Embassy.



Josiah Garber

Guest dons burqa at Global Fair

Gloria Hess, a mission worker who has served in Central Asia, helps a guest catch a glimpse from inside a burqa at a Global Fair June 25 during Eastern Mennonite Missions' annual Celebration of Mission weekend in Lancaster, Pa.—*Eastern Mennonite Missions*



PMHS graduates continue strong tradition

The 2005 Philadelphia Mennonite High School graduates celebrate continuing the six-year tradition of 100-percent college acceptance in the senior class. Principal Barbara Moses, assistant principal Joseph Dugan and board chair Mark Garis awarded diplomas. PMHS, which opened in 1998, is the only Mennonite high school in a major metropolitan city. Enrollment increased last year from 80 to 100 students in grades 9-12.—*Philadelphia Mennonite High School*

One family told CPT their three brothers were arrested by the ISF's Wolf Brigade one night, and the next evening they saw the brothers on TV looking beaten and confessing to crimes they did not commit.—*CPT*

Oswald, Sharp resign MC USA positions

NEWTON, Kan.—Laurie L. Oswald, news service director for Mennonite Church USA, has resigned effective Oct. 26. She will become editor of *Timbrel*, the magazine of Mennonite Women, on Nov. 1.



Laurie L. Oswald

She began as news service director in January 2002. Earlier she was on staff as a writer for *Mennonite Weekly Review*.

John Sharp, director of Mennonite Church USA's historical committee and historical archives in Goshen, Ind., resigned effective July 31. He began Aug. 1 at Hesston (Kan.) College, where he will write a centennial history of the school, which will celebrate its first 100 years in the 2009-10 school year. He will also teach history at Hesston.



John Sharp

Sharp began as director of the historical committee and historical archives in 1995.—*Gordon Houser*

Mennonite Men signs new donors at Charlotte

CHARLOTTE, N.C.—More than 200 men attended Mennonite Men's biennial dinner at Charlotte 2005 July 7. The binational organization raised \$2,550 and signed up 26 new members for its JoinHands church-building program, which provides financial assistance to new congregations as they seek to buy or build their first meetinghouse.

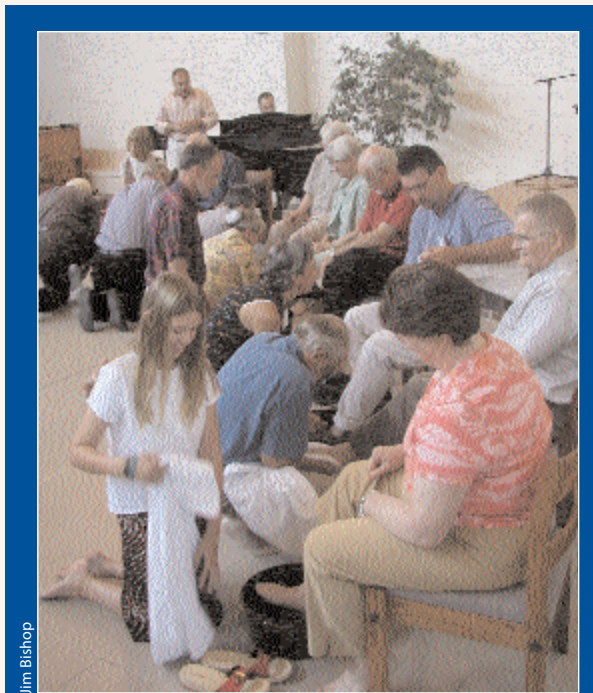
Chuck Goertz highlighted the evening with his account of how Church of God Prince of Peace, a poor Haitian congregation in Miami, came to purchase a meetinghouse.

Goertz, pastor of Homestead (Fla.) Mennonite Church and urban minister for Southeast Mennonite Conference, told how an abandoned Pizza Hut building became available. The owner wanted more than \$200,000. After much effort, the congregation was only able to raise less than half that amount.

The owner rejected their offer, saying he had a buyer willing to pay the full amount. However, six area ministers walked around the building and prayed. That night, around 11:30, the owner called Hilaire Louis Jean, pastor of Church of God Prince of Peace, to say he couldn't sleep and asked for prayer. The next day he called again to say he would take a second mortgage and loan the church the remainder it needed to buy the building.

JoinHands has committed \$35,000 to the Church of God Prince of Peace.—*Mennonite Men*

—*compiled by Gordon Houser*



Jim Bishop

Mennonites and Catholics share towel and basin

Mennonites and Catholics wash each other's feet in a closing worship ceremony July 24. Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., hosted the Bridgefolk Conference, an annual dialogue between Mennonites and Catholics that began in 1999 to build friendship. About 65 participants, mostly lay church members, took part in activities that included attending Mennonite and Catholic church services together in Harrisonburg. The informal, grass-roots Bridgefolk parallels a series of high-level ecumenical discussions that Bridgefolk organizers hope will spread to local churches.—*Chris Edwards*

IN BRIEF

Hotel Rwanda script wins Humanitas prize

The script of *Hotel Rwanda* won a Humanitas prize June 29 for being a spiritually driven Hollywood screenplay. Based on the heroics of a hotel manager during the 1994 Rwandan genocide, the script brought a \$25,000 prize to screenwriters Keir Pearson and Terry George.

—*Christian Century*



David Bartel wins science award

David Bartel, a 1982 graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College, has been honored by the National Academy of Sciences with the 2005 Award in Molecular Biology, the French Academy of Sciences with the 2005 Louis D. Award and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute as a bio-medical investigator. The NAS award is accompanied by a \$25,000 prize and has been presented "for a recent notable discovery in molecular biology by a young scientist" since 1962. Bartel, who teaches at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is exploring how RNA molecules can act as catalysts and regulate gene expression in plant and animal cells.—*Goshen College*

Our primary form of public witness is our public practice. We cannot expect the nations to act in ways the church fails to act.

Given the controversy that it seems to spark, why should Mennonite Church USA even bother to witness to government? Our Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective assumes we will. It speaks about two ways that we witness to governing authorities.

First, “by being that ‘city on a hill’ which demonstrates the way of Christ” (Article 23). That is to say, our primary form of public witness is our public practice. We cannot expect the nations to act in ways the church fails to act. So we witness by being a new creation

in Christ that

- seeks the interests of others, not simply self-interest;
- shares rather than hoards;
- trusts God for its protection—not weapons of war;
- welcomes all people on equal footing, regardless of their race, ethnicity, economic status or gender.

Second, our confession says we “witness by being ambassadors for Christ, calling the nations ... to move toward justice, peace and compassion for all people” (Article 23). Just as with evangelism, our example alone is not enough. Words are also necessary.

Let me offer four additional reasons we as Christians do well to speak to government.

Why Mennonite Church USA should speak to government

by J. Daryl Byler

If we believe Jesus is Lord of all, then his teaching and example are God's standard for human relationships and for the social order.

1. Because it's biblical. The Bible is filled with stories about people of faith who resisted unjust laws and called rulers to act more justly.

- Shiphrah and Puah, Hebrew midwives, risked their lives when they refused Pharaoh's order to kill all the Hebrew baby boys (Exodus 1:15-22).
- Moses challenged Pharaoh to let the enslaved Hebrew people go into the desert to worship God (Exodus 4-12).
- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused King Nebuchadnezzar's order to bow down and worship his 90-foot golden statue (Daniel 3).
- Daniel continued to pray to God when King Darius ordered his subjects to pray only to the king (Daniel 6).
- Esther risked her life to plead the case of the Jewish people before the king (Esther 4-9).
- When the governing authorities demanded that the apostles relinquish their religious free speech, Peter responded, "We must obey God rather than any human authority" (Acts 5:29).

2. Because it's part of our Anabaptist theology and practice. Anabaptists begin with Jesus. Paul describes Jesus as both "head of the body, the church" (Colossians 1:18) and "head of every ruler and authority" (Colossians 2:10). If we believe Jesus is Lord of all, then his teaching and example are God's standard for human relationships and for the social order. Governing authorities may not acknowledge Christ, but this does not mean they are exempt from God's ways as revealed most fully in Jesus. And while we recognize the ordering role of government, Romans 13 is not a blanket license for governing authorities to do whatever they please or to use unlimited force. Rather, the "punish the wrongdoer" language of Romans 13 seems to envision a role for policing and judicial processes. It is hardly an endorsement for governments to go to war.

Menno Simons made this point. He supported the role of government in restraining evil but called for leaders to do so without shedding blood:

"Your task is to do justice between a man and his neighbor, to deliver the oppressed out of the hand of the oppressor; also to restrain by reasonable means, that is, without tyranny and bloodshed. ... In this way, in all love, without force, violence and blood, you may enlarge, help and protect the kingdom of God with gracious consent and permission, with wise counsel and a pious, unblamable life" (*The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, p. 193).

In practice, North American Anabaptists have for many years spoken to government officials about issues such as military conscription that directly

impact our congregations. So speaking to government is nothing new.

3. Because our global sisters and brothers are asking us to. If we are committed to loving neighbor as self, it's hard to explain why we would speak to government about issues that affect us (such as the draft) but would not speak to the government about issues that affect our global sisters and brothers.

Several years ago, Colombian Mennonites issued an urgent appeal to U.S. Mennonites, pleading as Mordecai pleaded with Esther, to intervene with governing authorities about a matter of life and death—in this case, U.S. military aid to Colombia:

"We plead with you, just as Esther did, to call together all believers and to fast and pray for the Holy Spirit to change the mind of your governors and to give strength and wisdom to members of Colombian churches so that we might console, offer hope and continue to take a message of life and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ to this people and this suffering church."

We are Christians living amid the world's lone economic and military superpower. And we live in a democracy where we have the opportunity to make our voice known. These two realities create a special responsibility for us.

4. Because church has prophetic imagination. People of faith see possibilities others cannot. Indeed, why would Christians want a public policy devoid of a moral voice? Paul says God's wisdom is made known to the rulers and authorities through the church (Ephesians 3:10). Congressional staffers have told me Mennonite workers coming back from international settings help them "think outside the box" and see alternative possibilities.

Is speaking to government our primary task as the church? Certainly not. Is it hard work agreeing what to say about which issues? You bet.

But is speaking to government an important part of our faithful witness to the Lordship of Christ? And a necessary part of our calling to love neighbor as self? I think the biblical answer is yes. And for that reason we dare not keep quiet.

May God's Spirit empower us to be that city on a hill that by its example offers compelling witness to the way of Christ. And may we be humble enough to listen to and learn from one another so that we may also find a more united voice in calling the nations to act justly and with compassion for all people.

J. Daryl Byler is director of the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office.

A paper presented to Mennonite Church USA's delegate assembly at Charlotte 2005 on speaking to government

Our apparent inability to distinguish our political witness from the entrenched divisions in the larger culture is an embarrassment to the church.

A deep past

by John D. Roth

I appreciate Daryl Byler's comments and hope you consider my brief reflections less as a "rebuttal" to Daryl's reflections than as an expression of a deep pastoral concern for the health and unity of our church. I offer three observations or theses on speaking to government that have taken shape in my mind over the past year or two as I have traveled in many Mennonite congregations speaking on topics related to Christian pacifism and the gospel of peace. I invite you to test these observations with what you have experienced in your communities and what you sense the Spirit is saying to the church.

1. The presidential election campaign of 2004 revealed a deep division within the Mennonite church that should be named, analyzed and openly addressed.

As I traveled in many different Mennonite settings during the months leading up to the presidential election last November—saw the bumper stickers in church parking lots, listened to encounters around coffee in the foyer and engaged in dozens of direct conversations—I was troubled by how much the partisan Red-Blue political chasm that has divided our nation as a whole is also evident within our congregations. I don't assume that Mennonites have ever been (or even should be) of one mind on political issues, but to an alarming degree our conversations about faith and politics—on both the Right and Left—are increasingly being co-opted by the polarized rhetoric of radio talk show hosts, direct mail campaigns, polemical ads and Web site bloggers. Our growing readiness to identify ourselves

as Republicans or Democrats—as passionate supporters (or antagonists) of Bush or Kerry—and our apparent inability to distinguish our political witness from the entrenched divisions in the larger culture is an embarrassment to the church, threatening to make us simply one more lobbying group or political action committee shouting to be heard in the public square ... often at cross-purposes with each other.



oral concern

2. Mennonite political activists on both the Left and Right are in danger of expecting far too much from government and far too little from the church.

At the heart of our understanding of Christian faith is conviction that the church is made up of believers who have voluntarily chosen to accept God's gracious love and commit themselves to follow the path of Jesus. The decision to follow Christ means that our primary allegiance, and the main focus of our engagement with the world, is the body of Christ, the church, a church that is made visible to the world by its distinctive practices of service, mutual aid, love and compassion for all human beings, including our enemies. Our tradition has long taught that we should respect and pray for those in government—indeed, the state has a divinely ordained role of preserving order (“punishing the evildoer and protecting the good”); it might even, tragically, use violence to do this. But the primary concern of Christians is not to redeem the state or take control of government or insist it live up to the standards of the New Testament.

To say our primary focus is the church rather than the state is not a romantic appeal to some separatist “purity” or a retreat into the safety of ethnic enclaves—just the opposite. Christ calls us to engage the messiness of a broken world, but we are to do this sacrificially and sacramentally—in a language and a method consistent with the gospel we proclaim. In a spirit of love and compassion rather than the politics of antagonism and fear.

3. My final point is a proposal or suggestion that may help us move forward in a more positive way:

At the initiative of local congregations, ministers and conferences, Mennonites in the United States should commit themselves to a five-year sabbatical from affiliations with any political party. That is, we should publicly resolve to sit out the next presidential election and consciously abstain from all literature, Web sites, organizations and lobbying efforts supported by groups partisan to the Democrats or the Republicans. Choosing to withdraw from party-driven, partisan politics for the next five years has several clear advantages:

a. It offers both sides a conscious cooling-off period in which we symbolically acknowledge that our identity as brothers and sisters in the church matters more than our identity as supporters of a particular set of government policies.

b. It offers an occasion for a serious, sustained churchwide conversation about the nature of

Christian witness in the public square;

c. It may allow us to develop a shared language for political witness that is rooted clearly and unmistakably within the framework of the church and our prior and primal allegiance to Jesus and the gospel. I don't assume the result of all this will be complete agreement, but we will be making a public witness for ourselves and to the world that the church—not the Democratic or Republican party—is our most fundamental point of reference.

What might we focus on during that five-year sabbatical? Local congregations would need to decide, but I suggest we start by cultivating spiritual practices that will keep our political witness rooted in Christ. Before Jesus began his intense, politically charged ministry he retreated to the wilder-

Mennonites in the United States should commit themselves to a five-year sabbatical from affiliations with any political party.

ness for 40 days of testing. We would do well to begin with a disciplined period of spiritual retreat in which, as political activists on both the Left and the Right, we examine our motives, goals and methods.

If together we choose to be politically active during that five-year period, then I encourage us to focus on initiatives clearly rooted in the life of the church. For example, provide a safe house for young pregnant women in your community so that they know that they and their unborn child have the security of a loving and supportive community; develop partnership with sister congregations in Colombia or India or Indonesia; cultivate a global awareness through the lens provided by Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite World Conference and Mennonite Mission Network rather than by NPR or FOX.

And along the way, consciously nurture the fruits of the Spirit in your midst so that our shared witness to the world cannot help but reflect the love and compassion we bear for each other as brothers and sisters in the church. Above all, do not retreat from the pain and suffering of the world but let the healing of the world begin with the hard, joyful work of reconciliation in our congregations and in our church.

John D. Roth is professor of history at Goshen (Ind.) College.

A second paper presented to Mennonite Church USA's delegate assembly at Charlotte 2005 on speaking to government

Correction: The title of the poem “On Keeping Up the Place” (July 5, page 11) should not have been the first line of the poem. *The Mennonite* regrets this error.

A peace witness

by Victor J. Hinojosa

When did you last witness publicly for peace? In the run-up to the current war in Iraq, my wife and I were members of a Mennonite congregation in Indiana where we prayed, sang and marched. The war came anyway. In Colombia, the country I study as a political science professor, Christian Peacemaker Teams and other peace folks have regular public witnesses against the war, yet the war continues to take thousands of lives each year.

What do we do when we fail? What do we do when the war comes despite our protests? Does the witness of the peace church end when war begins? I want to suggest that there is a peace witness to be made in a time of war, and I offer these reflections from Colombia and the United States to suggest what that might look like.

First, a consistent peace witness calls us to speak prophetically against violence and warfare wherever it is. In the United States, this allows us to avoid the false dichotomies of the Bush administration: “You are with us or you are with the terrorists.” The church must speak prophetically against nonstate terrorists, internal state violence and war.

A consistent peace witness is all the more critical in Colombia, where atrocities are committed by leftist guerrillas, right-wing paramilitary groups, narcotics traffickers and the Colombian state. The peace church must clearly and consistently condemn the violence of all sides. This allows the church to be a mediator in the conflict (a role the Catholic Church has played at various points).

It also is keeping people alive. The sanctuaries-of-peace movement involves entire communities declaring that they want no part of the armed conflict and that no armed actors (state or nonstate) are welcome in their towns. In a conflict in which each side kills anyone even suspected of being a sympathizer of the other side, this may be the only way to preserve neutrality—and preserve life. Reports I’ve seen suggest that this movement is dramatically reducing deaths and disappearances in these communities.

A second way the church can be distinctive is in working with the victims of violence. Here we do well. Whether it is sending relief kits to refugees in Afghanistan or Iraq or working with internally displaced peoples in Colombia, the peace church is doing great work with the victims of armed conflict. We must continue to feed and clothe the victims of violence. We must also take care of their long-term spiritual and psychological needs. The victims must not be left to deal with the emotional and psychological scars of war alone. We must also work to rebuild devastated societies. This work will be for the long-haul, but it is critical that infrastructure is rebuilt so that people are able to live better once the violence ends.

The church must speak prophetically against nonstate terrorists, internal state violence and war.

Correction: The name Little Bear Busenitz in “Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly” (July 26, page 13) should be Keshia Littlebear Busenitz. *The Mennonite* regrets this error.

in a time of war

Reflections from Colombia and the United States

Finally, and perhaps most distinctively, the peace church must work with the perpetrators of the violence. Both the war in Iraq and the internal conflict in Colombia will end, and the soldiers will come home. And they will have done horrible things. They will have committed, participated in and witnessed atrocities that you and I cannot imagine. A couple of examples: Colombian paramilitaries have been known to dismember people with chainsaws and then throw dance parties on the town soccer field after the massacre. The guerrillas have been known to lob homemade canister bombs into a church filled with refugees—women and children fleeing the combat zone. U.S. soldiers in Iraq have seen similar death and destruction.

When they return—scarred and laden with guilt—the peace church should offer something different from what others offer. The peace church won't say, "You were fighting for a good cause" or, "War is hell, but you did what you had to do." The peace church will not offer the justifications or rationalizations sure to ring hollow to one who has slaughtered innocent women and children.

Instead the peace church should offer something far better: a grace that redeems. A grace that says violence is never justified but is never the final word. A grace that says God is at work, even in the life of someone who has done great evil. A grace that requires honesty that evil must be confronted and named. Evil cannot be justified away, but there is a grace that redeems evil.

In northern Indiana, a group of local churches is beginning to work with veterans returning from Iraq. They are listening to personal stories and building relationships. Perhaps the networks of therapists, counselors and conflict specialists in our churches can begin ministering to the young men and women returning to our communities traumatized by the horror of war.

We must pray for these young men and women and for those reaching out to them. We must support this work in any way that we can. And we must pray that someday soon the church in Colombia will have a similar opportunity to work with former combatants.

We do not witness for peace believing that we will succeed. Sometimes nonviolence works, and we can celebrate those times. But far more often, the war comes anyway, and people continue to die. In late February, eight members of a peace com-

munity in Colombia, including several women and children, were tortured and murdered (allegedly by agents of the state). We of all people should expect this. For we know that faithful discipleship leads to the cross.

Yet we also know that sin and death do not have the final word. It is the reality of the resurrection that gives us the hope and the courage to witness faithfully even in such a time as this. May we find ways to join those in the United States and Colombia who are doing just that.

Victor J. Hinojosa teaches political science at Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

It is the reality of the resurrection that gives us the hope and the courage to witness faithfully even in such a time as this.



Hope-filled

Believing both that God's kingdom is here and is to come can affect our lives.

by Carole Ricketts Walker

John the Baptist proclaimed, “The kingdom of God is at hand.” Since then scholars and church officials have debated the theological significance of this statement. Is the kingdom temporal or special? Is it already here? Are we living in a “realized eschatology” or is it something to hope for—something bigger and beyond us in time and space—a “reserved eschatology”? I want to ask why it has to be one or the other. Can't both be theologically significant? Yes, I believe they can be. Both beliefs provide us and those around us with hope—and that is exactly why we should think and work out of both frameworks.

God's earthbound kingdom: I have some reservations believing the kingdom is fully realized here, but I believe it can help us in our Christian living, for if we base our actions around this idea, our lives will reflect it. The idea of God's kingdom on earth moves us, almost imperatively, to speak out when we see injustice, devastation and brokenness. Sometimes liberation theology is criticized for being too “earthbound.” Liberation theologians tend to think more about the oppressive actions governments, races and individuals impose on others and how it ripples outward over time. They are committed to bring change on social levels and to each person. This earth-boundedness can benefit them because it has such an impact on their actions and decision making. They are empowered to bring change here and now and not simply believe things will get better in time or in the next life.

We, too, need to be empowered. The world is in need, and we can't sit back and watch anymore. Changes need to be made. Why not let it start with you and me? The world is broken and hurting. Countries are fighting wars, parts of the world are destroyed from the tsunami disaster and there are other heart-wrenching situations that make us want to place it all in God's capable hands and cry out, “Fix it, Lord.” However, we need to own up to our responsibilities and be movers and shakers. Each person will have his or her own spheres of influence. Some people can influence a wider range of people, while others have their smaller circle of friends. Both are important. The latter group may be discouraged and ask, What good am I doing? We do not know how our words and lives will impact other people or institutions, so need not be discouraged but continue to have an impact on our corner of the world.

We do not know how our words and lives will impact other people or institutions, so need not be discouraged but continue to have an impact on our corner of the world.

eschatologies

How can our belief about God's kingdom, our eschatological framework, affect the world? When our convictions are above and beyond or completely opposite to what the world expects from us, we are giving the world a taste of God's kingdom. We can offer them samples from the rich banquet of God's order when we practice reconciliation, nonresistance and forgiveness. This is far from an exhaustive list. But these are three practices that make us different from the world around us.

When those outside our tradition and faith experience our outward statement of faith, they taste a bit of the kingdom. We hope it will make them hunger for more. The whole world is hungry. People need a healthy portion of God's grace and love. We can be agents in the world through our examples. We can only pray that the recipient of this grace extends this behavior and ideas to the next person and it continues outward. When we are moved to act as if the kingdom was here today, we offer hope for a better life for the people around us and beyond. Jesus is that hope.

The kingdom come: Certainly our eternal hope lies with our Creator. We believe Jesus has gone and prepared a room for us and we will someday go to be with him. I have to hold this to be true, with fevered hope. Some days this hope is what gets me through the day. I battle a chronic illness, a type of rheumatoid arthritis. On the days when my joints are crying out for relief as much as my spirit is, I remember that it won't always be like this. There will come a day when my pain will be taken away, my joints will find relief and I won't have to take so much medicine. I am reminded of Revelation 21:4: "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." God's creation is in disorder. This disorder was not part of God's intended "shalom." When we visualize and look forward to God's eternal land of goodness, it is easier sometimes to battle our daily demons.

Thinking about another dimension of God's kingdom, rather than just here on earth, helps us when we are dealing with a situation in which we are severely limited in our changing. We need to carefully discern things we can change and things we cannot. I can change my involvement with vio-

When we visualize and look forward to God's eternal land of goodness, it is easier sometimes to battle our daily demons.

lence when it comes to any war, but I cannot change my chronic illness. I can help make it better by taking care of my body, regularly seeing my specialist and taking an active role in my health. But I cannot change my circumstances, I cannot cure myself. That action and time is reserved for God.

Realized eschatology and reserved eschatology don't have to be mutually exclusive. They can be held in tension with one another. They can be partners to help our individual Christian formation. Let our actions be guided by revealing God's kingdom here and now, offering hope to those who need it. Also, within ourselves and our congregations we can hold out that our room is reserved, and we are waiting to go there. Yes, we then are given the hope of better days to come.

Carole Ricketts Walker graduated in May from Goshen (Ind.) College in youth ministry. She will attend Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., this fall. She works at Topeka (Ind.) Mennonite Church with the junior and senior high school youth.

The Rapture Exposed: The Message of Hope in the Book of Revelation by Barbara R. Rossing (Westview Press, 2004, \$24) pulls no punches in its critique of the many books promoting a rapture theology. She calls it "a racket ... that distorts God's vision for the world." A New Testament scholar and ordained Lutheran minister, Rossing spends the first half of this readable book dismantling the idea of a rapture made popular by Hal Lindsey and the Left Behind series of novels as unbiblical and heretical. She shows its history, its weaknesses in interpreting Scripture and its destructive consequences in the Middle East. The second half of the book offers an interpretation of the Book of Revelation that takes seriously its historical setting and how it can be applied to faith today. "Revelation," she writes, "is not about an inevitable doomsday for the earth" but "about seeing the Lamb beside you in every moment of your life." In an epilogue she looks at the major passages used to support a rapture theory and debunks that interpretation. She has done her homework. It's too bad more people won't read her book than already read the Left Behind fictions.—Gordon Houser

Breaking and entering

by Michael Martin

You have heard,
and verily I say unto you now—
Is it not written that Christ will come
as a thief in the night?
I tell you again, truly he will come
as a thief,
jimmying the lock on your back door
under cover of night,
tiptoeing on cats-feet to the living room,
lifting your artwork from the walls,
rifling the best of your CD collection
and pinching your stereo
as his angel buddies giggle in the
dark of the driveway—
hot-wiring your car.
Surely he will take your treasures,
but fear not—
for if you call upon his name,
will he not return again
in the brightness of morning,
wearing different clothes,
to see if your heart too
has left with the loot?

*Michael Martin lives
in Greencastle, Pa.*





Finding pulse

by Earl Martin

to Pat

**Remember how you placed your lips
upon her lips to blow the soul
back in her pulseless little frame?
But the random bullet took its toll.
Or when your gentle fingers closed
the eyelids of the mountain man
who'd been choppered down from hillside home
and left to die amid his broken clan?
On other nights you'd press your lips
to mine in passion full ablaze.
Your pulsing fingers touched me where
my members danced as in a craze.
Sometimes the heart declares belief
that hope will trump the deepest grief.**

*Earl Martin, who with Pat, his wife, served with
Mennonite Central Committee in Vietnam, attends
Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Harrisonburg, Va.*

Why we enlist in the military

Imagine you're trapped in a dead-end, low-wage job with no prospect for promotion. A man comes along and says that in exchange for a few years of your life he will give you steady employment, up to \$15,000 as a signing bonus, an excellent item to place on your resumé, competitive job training and help paying for higher education. If you're like me, you'll take the recruiter up on his offer and enlist in the military—in my case, the Army.

While some enlist in the military to serve their country, many of my buddies and I enlisted for one or more of the following reasons: to get money for college or graduate school, to pay off college loans, to get job training.

We're not told that, according to the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, two-thirds of all recruits never get money for college, and only 15 percent graduate with a four-year degree. Neither are we told that we contribute \$100 a month for our first year in service (you learn this once you sign the contract) or that the current help is \$1,004 a month for full-time students for up to 36 months, according to www.military.com.

Some people enlist to pay off college loans. In April 2002, NBC2 reported on the death of Army Ranger Marc Anderson, who had joined the military as an enlisted man rather than an officer to repay \$45,000 in college loans. Anderson left \$12,000 to a former student so she would not have to do the same thing.

Some people join the military for job training. According to www.todaysmilitary.com, "Every year, the Armed Services hire a combined 365,000 people in more than 4,100 different job paths. Many of these jobs are similar to those found in the civilian world. That means military servicepeople [sic] often enter the private sector as highly experienced and sought-after candidates."


That sounds tempting until you learn that a military certification is not always valid in the civilian world and that you may have to get training all over again. And the military is not required to keep you full-time in the job you're trained in or to keep you in said job during your enlistment.

Not surprisingly, the fact that we're going to be trained killers doesn't come up in the sales pitch.

Or that we're going to be required to chant a cadence similar to, "What is the spirit of the bayonet? To kill, kill, kill without mercy. What makes the green grass grow? Blood, blood makes the green grass grow. What makes the green grass green? Guts, guts make the green grass green. Who carries the bayonet? The quick and the dead. Who are we? The quick. Who are they? The dead."

It is not uncommon for individuals to have second thoughts once they've started serving. In 2003, the GI Rights Hotline received nearly 29,000 calls from soldiers wanting to leave their posts. Some realize they are opposed to all war because they are revolted by the cadences, which include lines like, "My buddy's in a foxhole, bullet through his head, the medic said he's wounded, but I know that he's dead. Airborne Rangers! Shoot the son of a, shoot the son of a, shoot the son of a, whoo!" Some of us simply can't adapt to giving up our rights and being ordered around. Some simply decide they cannot in good conscience follow certain orders.

Unfortunately, once you have reported for training, it is extremely difficult to get discharged from the military. When I was in the Army, one individual shot himself in the foot to get out, which resulted in a criminal charge of destruction of government property. Some commit suicide. Some desert; the Pentagon reports that 5,500 service members have deserted since the beginning of the Iraq War. Some become conscientious objectors; the number has skyrocketed since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Some get sick or injured, many of whom had preexisting conditions they were pressured by the recruiter to forget about.

Many people, myself included, do not complete their entire enlistment. Some of us come out questioning our service, feeling guilty about not finishing our term or about what we did while in the Army (for example, I was ordered to look the other way when some threats were made against soldiers with attitude problems who were getting all of us in trouble; I obeyed out of fear I was next if something happened). Some of us are proud to have served, though not proud of everything we did. All we ask is for understanding. Some of us feel we were conned; some of us don't. Many of us are just ordinary people trying to get ahead in life, and while we may not understand Mennonites' commitment to nonviolence, we do understand compassion. 



Becky Oberg attends First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Play is not the opposite of work**—Lynn Miller
- **Bearing fruit in old age**—Martha Kolb-Wyckoff

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for The Mennonite, Inc., or Mennonite Church USA.

Mennonites pray for Zimbabweans

Government-sponsored 'cleanup' destroys thousands of homes, businesses.

Hundreds of thousands of people in Zimbabwe have lost their homes after a government "cleanup" operation. Many are sleeping in the open in what is the coldest time of the year. Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, was the site of the Mennonite World Conference assembly in 2003.

In response to the suffering in Zimbabwe, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is providing funds for 5,000 blankets to shelter homeless families, and Mennonite World Conference called Anabaptist and MWC-related congregations across the globe to a July 24 day of prayer for Zimbabwe's current situation and an impending drought and economic hardship.

Conservative estimates indicate that 250,000 people have been displaced since late May, when Zimbabwe police and army personnel began Operation Murambatsvina ("Restore Order/Clean Up"), according to Action by Churches Together (ACT).

The government has stated the campaign targeted illegal and informal businesses, purportedly illegal structures and houses, street children, homeless people, street traders and foreign-currency dealers. Government officials have promised to address the housing crisis. The demolition of shelters and market stalls and the removal of informal traders began in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital, and spread to major cities like Bulawayo and across the nation. Even before demolitions began, Zimbabwe was facing a drought, almost no harvest and a collapsed economy. According to ACT, demolitions destroyed the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people at a time when Zimbabwe's unemployment rate is estimated at 70 percent.

"In Bulawayo as in all the other towns, many of us watched helplessly as the vendors fled while their stalls were destroyed and their wares confiscated," report MCC Zimbabwe representatives Doris and Jethro Dube.

"The nights are very cold. Some of the people sleep in the open. We just need to do something as soon as possible," reports Bishop Danisa Ndlovu, Brethren in Christ Church of Zimbabwe and MWC vice president. "These people have many needs, as some lost everything, including clothes."

MCC is providing some \$60,000 to purchase and distribute the blankets to people being assisted by churches in Bulawayo. The blankets will be purchased in Zimbabwe.

MCC and Bishop Ndlovu worked together with churches in Bulawayo to develop the project, which will be carried out in July and August by a Christian task force that was set up to respond to the needs of the displaced people.

The Brethren in Christ Church in the United States has provided \$5,000 to the Brethren in



Everett J. Thomas

During Mennonite World Conference's Assembly Gathered in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, in August 2003, dozens of local Brethren in Christ women prepared food in cooking pots outside for thousands of participants.

Christ Church in Zimbabwe for emergency relief, and MWC officials report a number of inquiries from people who want to respond to needs in Zimbabwe.

MWC asked Anabaptist congregations across the globe to join Zimbabwe churches in prayer on July 24 for the nation and those who have been displaced.

"Prayer changes things. In the midst of the many challenges that this our nation is going through we pray that God will demonstrate that he is God ... show us the great and mighty things which we do not know. ... God's will, will always be the best for us," Ndlovu says.

Ndlovu notes he was moved that a late June interdenominational prayer meeting at Bulawayo Central Brethren in Christ Church brought Catholics, Baptists, Lutherans, Evangelicals and Pentecostals together to pray for the country and displaced people.—*Mark Beach of MCC*



Ndlovu

Boyertown Mennonite Church responds

Mennonite Church USA declared July 24 a day of prayer for the persecuted people of Zimbabwe, so we at Boyertown (Pa.) Mennonite Church shared this with the congregation. June Shenk introduced the needs of the country by leading us in a time of guided prayer that related to several different needs in Zimbabwe. Following the prayer she invited everyone to drop their change in a basket at the back of the sanctuary as they exited. Much to our surprise and joy, we received \$373.54 from the 92 people in attendance. Praise God for his willing servants.—*Nelson Shenk*

Accidents kill two mission workers

Shenk with EMM and MCC in East Africa, Hertzler with EMM in Thailand

Joe Shenk, a longtime Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker in East Africa, died July 21 in Nairobi General Hospital in Kenya. He was 67 years old. Shenk, who was serving as principal of Mennonite Theological College of East Africa in Musoma, Tanzania, died almost two weeks after being struck by a large charcoal truck near Musoma on July 9. Shenk, an avid runner who was out for a morning jog when he was hit, was airlifted from Tanzania to Nairobi, where he died of complications from his injuries.

“Joe’s ministry has spanned six decades of the Mennonite churches in Tanzania and Kenya,” says Clair Good, EMM representative to Africa. “Born and raised in Tanzania as the second son of pioneer Mennonite missionaries Clyde and Alta Shenk, he returned as a young adult to help train leaders in the church his parents had helped plant. During this last term of service he has worked as a peer alongside many of his former students, now the leaders in the church and community.”

Shenk’s wife, Edith, served with him in a joint leadership training position of EMM and MCC. Shenk wrote two books on the Tanzanian Mennonite Church and mission history. He served with EMM in Tanzania and Kenya from 1962 until 1982, also holding a position as MCC East Africa country



Shenk

representative in Nairobi, Kenya, in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

John Hertzler, 36, an EMM missionary to Thailand, died July 24 in a traffic accident while traveling by motorcycle from his home in Det Udom to the monthly joint meeting of the Thai house churches in Palanchai. Glenn Kauffman, EMM representative to Asia, traveled to Thailand July 25 to join John’s wife, Janelle (Shantz), and 1-year-old son, Micah, and the Thai mission team and church for the memorial service there.



Hertzler

“We are praying for Janelle and Micah, the Hertzler and Shantz families and the Thai mission team and churches as we together grieve this unanticipated departure of a beloved brother,” says Richard Showalter, EMM president.

“John has given exemplary service in supporting the development of an emerging circle of house churches among the Isaan people of Thailand in counsel, encouragement and intercessory prayer.”

Hertzler began service with EMM in 1987 as a member of a Youth Evangelism Service team to Belize and in 1990 with YES in Costa Rica. From 1993-98 he served with EMM in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, teaching at Pine Grove Academy. In 1999 he led a YES team to Thailand. He was a member of Hopewell Christian Fellowship of Elverson, Pa., and the son of Truman and Virginia Hertzler.—*from MCC and EMM*

Cornelia Lehn: editor, author, storyteller

Helped create and promote Foundation Series Sunday school curriculum



Lehn

Cornelia (Nellie) Lehn, former editor for the Commission on Education of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), died July 2 in Clearbrook, B.C.

Lehn attended Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, and Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. She earned a master’s degree in journalism at the University of Iowa.

As director of children’s ministries for GC, Lehn worked out of the former denomination’s Newton, Kan., office and was instrumental in the nurture of children in her work as editor of the Foundation Series Sunday school material. She traveled extensively in North America, South America and Germany to promote the material.

Lehn was not only a writer but a gifted storyteller. During her time in Newton she was also commissioned to write several books, some of

which have been translated into other languages: *God Keeps His Promise; Peace Be With You; I Heard Good News Today* and *The Sun and the Wind*. Lehn also wrote *The Homemade Brass Plate*, the biography of Mary Jackson, a pioneer doctor from northern Alberta. Lehn’s last work involved considerable research and resulted in *Frontier Challenge: the Story of the Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia* (now Mennonite Church BC).

Lehn was born Dec. 15, 1920, in Leonadawka, Ukraine, the youngest of five daughters of Gerhard Lehn and Sara, nee Ens. Her parents and their four daughters immigrated to Hanley, Sask., in 1926. In 1941, the family moved to British Columbia, where Lehn became a member of Greendale Mennonite Church.—*First Mennonite Church of Greendale, B.C.*

A tsunami of contributions for MCC

Dec. 26, 2004, tragedy in Indian Ocean sparked record for single event.

The Dec. 26, 2004, tsunami that ravaged much of southern Asia and the east coast of Africa was never far from the center of discussions at the annual general meeting of Mennonite Central Committee in June. That event was pivotal in shaping MCC's year and the meeting agenda.

Don Peters, MCC Canada executive director, said the three weeks following the tsunami "were the most intense days we've experienced. People were lined up to make donations. Volunteers were needed and came because staff couldn't meet the demands."

MCC received the largest influx of money for any single event in its history. "We sensed more deeply the great degree of responsibility and accountability that comes with this support," Peters said.

MCC's history of involvement in the area gave integrity to its responses. "No one was confusing MCC aid with political involvement or interference," said Erin Morash, MCC board member.

MCC will be using tsunami relief funds over the next three to five years to help with the rebuilding program in the region affected. A large percentage of the donations were from first-time MCC support-

ers and nontraditional supporters, said Ron Loeppky, MCC Manitoba executive director.

"This raises questions of what will happen to the larger support base," Loeppky said, "and are we still going to remain the same MCC we've always been?"

While it was clear that the tsunami did bring the work of MCC to new levels, one longtime MCC supporter and observer expressed the hope that this would not overshadow MCC's responses to needs elsewhere in the world, including MCC's 60 years of involvement in Israel-Palestine. Typically, MCC's involvement has been with displaced people—Palestinians—but discussion included the possibility of partnering with others, including Israeli peace groups.

"We agreed that the conflict situation is not being resolved in this region, and that is a real concern," Vernon Jantzi said. "We need alternative ways to address this issue."

Interfaith bridge-building also stirred lively discussion. Increasingly, MCC's work brings it alongside organizations and agencies from other faiths.

"There is a concern for respecting other faiths and differences but also wanting to come with a strong desire to bear witness to our faith," said Laura Schmidt Roberts. "We serve as a result of our faith. It is a genuine starting point—an unapologetic ownership of our faith."

One workshop reviewed the 50 years of the Mennonite church work in Vietnam and how the current political situation has created new complexities and suffering for the Mennonite churches in that country.

Following a report from Mennonite World Conference, new guidelines for MCC's partnership with this organization were outlined. MWC's David Wiebe expressed appreciation for the new partnership.

"The ties will help keep MCC close to the church and will be an integral part of our experience," he said.

The MCC board also looked at a new memorandum of understanding in its relationship with Ten Thousand Villages, which is looking to take advantage of the booming \$6 billion gift market in the United States and the need to supply the rising middle classes in such countries as India and Vietnam.

In closing comments, J.M. Klassen, first executive secretary of MCC Canada, said: "MCC operates on a high level of trust. That level of trust is a precious capital that MCC has to guard with transparency, integrity and compassion. MCC receives a passing grade on all counts."—*Evelyn Rempel Petkau for Meetinghouse*

This raises questions of what will happen to the larger support base, and are we still going to remain the same MCC we've always been?—Ron Loeppky

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Vietnamese church gets mixed messages

Government actions cause confusion, create tensions for Mennonite leaders.

Recent reports from Vietnam give some hope of lowering tensions between government authorities and Mennonite churches at various levels, while at the same time hostile actions continue elsewhere. Church leaders interpret the signs of the times differently as well, and tensions over these issues continue within the church.

A pastor on the central Vietnam coast was called in to the local security police office in June and told that city and provincial officials do not want to hinder their house churches' worship, which has long gone on illegally. Officials now stand ready to respond in positive ways to lessen the difficulties the churches have faced.

Pastor Nguyen Quang Trung reports that in July the Ho Chi Minh City Office of Religious Affairs told him his long-standing application for national legal status for the denomination has progressed to a new stage. Trung has submitted a constitution as the next step toward recognition, to be followed by an official organizing conference. The same notification has been extended to three other groups: Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist and World Evangelization Crusade.

On July 19, a building in District 2 of Ho Chi Minh City that has served as a place of worship and an office for the Vietnam Mennonite Church was partially demolished by local authorities (see box). City officials have long maintained a portion of it was built illegally. Mrs. Le Thi Phu Dung, wife of imprisoned church leader Nguyen Hong Quang, lives on the second floor with her three children.

A baptistry at the rear of the building now lies in ruins, and a large hole gapes in the back corner of the structure. The leaders of this house church are distraught at this evidence of ongoing hostility toward the Mennonite church.

Vietnam has been under international scrutiny

over its intrusive monitoring of religious groups. Since November 2004, the government has proclaimed several national-level changes intended to lessen criticism of its heavy hand in "managing" organized religion. Conversations with officials indicate that a major concern of the government is political insecurity over rapid growth in the number of evangelical believers among ethnic minority groups, who have long been at the margins of Vietnamese culture. A majority of the Mennonites in Vietnam are ethnic minority peoples.

Strong public advocacy for the plight of minority groups and minority Christians by pastor Nguyen Hong Quang and several other Mennonite leaders in recent years may be a major underlying factor in government hostility toward some Mennonite churches. Of the six Mennonite leaders and church workers arrested in 2004, two remain in prison: pastor Quang and evangelist Nguyen Ngoc Thach. Four have been released, some after serving their full sentences. An amnesty in April 2005 resulted in the release of Miss Nguyen Thi Lien, whose prison experiences led to serious mental illness. She has experienced a return to health, for which her family and church are grateful to God.—*Mennonite World Conference*

A major concern of the government is political insecurity over rapid growth in the number of evangelical believers among ethnic minority groups.

Vietnamese church building destroyed

On July 19, Ho Chi Minh City officials demolished an eight- by five-meter portion of the 1999 two-story home of the Rev. Nguyen Hong Quang family, including four meters of the room where the Mennonite Church of Vietnam holds weekly worship services. In an interview later that day, Le Thi Phu Dung, Quang's wife, said the local authorities entered the house, read the order, then forced students living there to go to the street. They took her and the two youngest children to the loft to observe their demolition plans. Those doing the demolition said, "Please sympathize with us; we are only hired hands doing this because we need food on our tables. We don't want to destroy the church and we will be very careful not to destroy the church's property."

Quang, general secretary of Vietnam Mennonite Church, was arrested in June 2004 following a March incident and charged with interfering with people carrying out official duties. He and five others were convicted last November, and Quang was sentenced to three years imprisonment. He is now in a prison in Dak Lak province. When Pastor Quang was arrested, local authorities ordered that all activities at the center cease.—*MWC*



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the discerning community would continue to dialogue on the subject of homosexuality. For some time now *The Mennonite* has permitted no dialogue in its pages. How can you have discernment without dialogue?—*Donald and Elsie Steelberg, Wichita, Kan.*

I appreciated Everett J. Thomas' editorial ("Rules Help Discernment," June 21), in which he upholds the necessary role of rules and procedures. No community can exist without them. The observation that Mennonite Church USA is dealing with difficult discernment issues much better than in the recent past is also useful. We can rightfully celebrate such progress. What I'd like Thomas to do now is address the necessary role of dissent.

For any community to be healthy, space must be provided for challenge and dissent. Without such structures, a community stagnates, and we limit the ways the Spirit of God can create something new. A community such as ours that began because we perceived God calling people to new visions of faithfulness, not the maintenance of the status quo, can surely do more than rely on rules and procedures—good as these might be. Together we must do the equally arduous work of making open spaces for the Spirit's ongoing work of creating something new.—*Marlene Kropp, Elkhart, Ind.*

The June 21 editorial begs for a word from the past. "But all things should be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40) was often appealed to by bishops and bishop boards of the old church to justify the rules and regulations that kept women modest and submissive. Women in ministry, musical instruments, wedding bands, insurance and such were ruled out as indecent and disorderly by a dysfunctional system of governance. When renewed, the old Mennonite church slowly learned respect for its fringe churches and allowed their innovative discernment to benefit the mainstream.

The editor turned the spotlight on a few recent restrictions imposed by two conferences and a corporation. These examples of governance were interpreted as a strength, but to me they are a return to the old era of weakness and ungrace. I question the value of the tradition that considers rules necessary. A centuries-long trail of broken relationships caused by the use of rules to keep things done decently and in order should be a warning, not a model.—*Martin W. Lehman, Sarasota, Fla.*

In "Rules Help Discernment," I am willing to accept the three documents Thomas cites (Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, Mennonite Church USA's membership guidelines, and *A Polity for Mennonite Leadership*) as guidelines but not as

rules. Thomas cites the Mennonite confession of faith as "the bedrock upon which our discernment begins." I claim the Word of God, as communicated in the Bible and in Jesus, as the bedrock upon which our discernment begins. That discernment is always in process and never complete in this life, because as humans we "see as through a glass dimly." I remember vividly how the writing of a new confession of faith was met with concern that it be used as a creed or litmus test. Let us not use it that way.—*Cynthia Neufeld Smith, Topeka, Kan.*

Thomas' editorial "Rules Help Discernment" praises Mennonite Church USA for providing us with the documents that now fame our sexuality discussions and actions. But the very documents Thomas cites have made it more difficult for us to be faithful to Jesus Christ and his teachings. One of the situations Thomas describes is that of our congregation, Hyattsville Mennonite Church, that has been "judged by its conference to be inconsistent with Mennonite Church USA guidelines" in its acceptance into membership of some individuals who are committed to same-sex relationships.

The effort to follow a guideline of Mennonite Church USA has revealed how impossible a burden it is for us to follow these guidelines as stated. The guideline in question states that marriage is reserved for "one man and one woman," and that this relationship is "for life." Any congregation now accepting divorcees is also "inconsistent" with the teaching of the church. Is it really a sign of greater strength in the church to draw up statements that are subsequently used selectively and inconsistently for purposes of disciplining congregations?—*Melvin D. Schmidt, Hyattsville, Md.*

Our confession of faith "is now the bedrock upon which our discernment begins" ("Rules Help Discernment" June 21)? Even the New Testament writers don't claim that label for their inspired work. I'm reminded of Menno Simons' much-quoted favorite text: "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ." If Jesus is our foundation, our most recent confession of faith can't be the bedrock below him. I read the concluding paragraph to discover that our faith tradition has "believed for nearly 500 years that the church is the discernment community—and has ultimate authority to determine what is right and wrong." It seems to me that our early Anabaptist forebears rose up in protest against just such arrogant claims by the church as they knew it, saying unequivocally that their allegiance and obedience could legitimately be given to no one other than God.—*Linda Nafziger-Meiser, Boise, Idaho*

Continued from page 5

Note: Due to space limitations, we can print only portions of some of the letters we received in response to the June 21 editorial. Generally, letters were selected for publication by the order they arrived and if they offered a point not made by other letter-writers.—*Editor*

CALENDAR

Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 21st Annual Quilt Auction, Sept. 10 at the Redeemer Lutheran Church Center, 345 S. Kenilworth Rd., Elmhurst, IL. All proceeds to benefit Chicago Mennonite Learning Center. For more information call 773-735-9304 or visit www.chicagoquilts.com.

Illinois Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society announces the **MCC Quilts Exhibit** will be on display at the Illinois Heritage Center Aug. 12-14 and Aug. 19-21. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fri. and Sat. and 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sun. The exhibit accompanies a new book entitled *Passing on the Comfort: The War, the Quilts, and the Women Who Made a Difference*. For more information about the exhibit, contact Lori Graber at 309-244-8490 or email mlgraber@dtnspeed.net.

Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, "Here I Stand: Leading Change Through Self-Differentiation", Aug. 23-25, Lombard, Ill. Registration brochures and discount coupons are available at our Web site www.LMPeaceCenter.org or by phoning our office 630-627-0507.

Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, "Healthy Congregations", Sept. 23-24, Deerfield, Ill. Registration brochures and discount coupons are available at our Web site www.LMPeaceCenter.org or by phoning our office 630-627-0507.

Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, "Healthy Congregations Facilitator Training", Sept. 26-28, Lombard, Ill. Registration brochures and discount coupons are available at our Web site www.LMPeaceCenter.org or by phoning our office 630-627-0507.

MARP-sponsored sixth annual **"Aging with Spirit Retreat"**, Oct. 2-4, 2005 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mt. Pleasant, Pa. J. Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and others will speak to the themes of health and fitness, physical and spiritual. Plan now to attend this fall gathering of "spirited" older adults. Call Laurelville at 800-839-1021 for more information and to register for this event.

Second Crossroads Address, Sunrise Church of the Brethren, 1496 S. Main St., Harrisonburg, VA, Aug. 27, 7:30 p.m. Local historian Nancy Bondurant Jones will share insights on the life of Roberta Webb and her contributions to church and community life. An offering will be received in support of the Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center.

Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center (CrossRoads), summer vesper services, through August. Enjoy the serenity of Sunday evenings in a shady woodland setting with music and meditations that will inspire you. At the top of the CrossRoads hill, follow the 100-foot trail down a gently sloping hillside to the amphitheater. Bring a chair to sit on. Services begin at 7 p.m. In case of rain, meet in the restored Whitmer Schoolhouse nearby.

Values-Based Leadership Program, two-session event, **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center**, Mt. Pleasant, Pa. First session "Leading from the Inside" takes place Sept. 19-21, 2005. Second session, "Leading and Empowering Others," is scheduled for Feb. 15-17, 2006. Sponsored by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, Mennonite Economic Development Associates, MHS Alliance, MMA and Schmucker Training and Consulting. For more information call 800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056, email IAL@Laurelville.org or visit the Web site www.laurelville.org/IAL.

WORKERS

Harms, Lianne, was ordained June 12 as youth pastor at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Hartzler, Bob, ended June 1 as interim pastor at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

Martin, Gary, ended June 30 as interim pastor at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Yoder, Helen, was ordained June 26 as associate pastor at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Zimmerman, John, began July 1 as pastor at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Alderfer, Jonathan Andrew, April 21, to Andrew and Laura Leatherman Alderfer, Telford, Pa.

Beck, Jaret Levi and Leah Renee (twins), to Reggie and April King Beck, Wauseon, Ohio.

Carr, Justin Boyd, June 20, to Noah and Stephanie Holsopple Carr, Mt. Jackson, Va.

Davis, Jett Logan, July 6, to Kip and Carrie Davis, Normal, Ill.

Detweiler, Justin Samuel, July 2, to Marc and Jody Sensenig Detweiler, Harleysville, Pa.

Eicher-Miller, Amelia Giselle, May 3, to Kirk and Heather Eicher-Miller, Lafayette, Ind.

Elizarraraz, Emilio Sebastian, May 31, to Roberto and Janet Trevino Elizarraraz, San Antonio, Texas.

Entz, Camryn Elizabeth, June 9, to Alan and Joan Siebert Entz, Newton, Kan.

Epp, Kennedy Katherine, June 6, to Matthew and Jennifer Kline Epp, Papillion, Neb.

Meet AAI team member
J. Daniel Hess, associate

Communication has been Dan's life-long interest. A professor at Goshen College for more than 30 years, Dan now consults in communication issues and supports the AAI staff in other contracts. He holds a PhD from Syracuse University.

Other AAI team members: Jerry Kennell, Rich Gerig, Pat Swartzendruber, Michael Wiese and Becky Drumm.



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Fecho, Laura Eve and Maya Rose (twins), June 25, to Robert and Rachel Wilson Fecho, Norristown, Pa.

Fickert, Nathan Christopher, June 2, to Michael and Kelly McDonough Fickert, Souderton, Pa.

Friesen, Jacob Aspen Zook, May 17, to Phil Friesen and Brenda Zook, Baltimore, Md.

Fruits, Taya Louise, July 1, to Scott and Carey Delagrange Fruits, Grabill, Ind.

Gerlach, Jakob Chase, July 11, to Jason and Wendy Houser Gerlach, Harrisonburg, Va.

Godshall, Kayla Marie, Aug. 23, 2004, received for adoption June 17 by Troy and Sabrina Derstine Godshall, Harleysville, Pa.

Godshall, Trevor Konstantin, June 10, 2003, received for adoption June 17 by Troy and Sabrina Derstine Godshall, Harleysville, Pa.

Greve, Landon Andrew, June 13, to Bret and Kathryn Graber Greve, Lake Park, Iowa.

Grieser, Ryan Nathaniel, June 16, to Matthew and Anna Rhodes Grieser, New Castle, Ind.

Holland, Colton Avery, July 20, to Jeremy and Sherra Whetzel Holland, Harrisonburg, Va.

Hostetler, Isabelle Marie, March 10, to Jason and Brenda Smucker Hostetler, Orrville, Ohio.

Janzen, Jude Ruth, June 27, to Jeremy and Jennifer Ruth Janzen, Olepolos, Nairobi.

Landis, Trinity Evonne, July 15, to Eric and Tracy Landis, Quakertown, Pa.

Lefever, Kate Likai, Sept. 5, 2004, received for adoption June 26 by Rodney and Lauri Hooper Lefever, Lancaster, Pa.

Lehman, Noah Levi, June 2, to Nathan and Michelle Nicoletti Lehman, Boswell, Pa.

Martin, Hannah Ruth, June 10, to Timothy and Dawn Tomczak Martin, Reinholds, Pa.

Mast, Mattie Anna, June 24, to Joseph and Marie Johnston Mast, Millersburg, Ohio.

Mattson, Mackenzie, April 23, to Joel Strauss and Trisha Mattson, Boyertown, Pa.

Miller, Corban Azariah, June 8, to Patrick and Emily Miller, Millersburg, Ohio.

Miller, Grant Jackson, July 13, to Bill and Raquel Miller, Millersburg, Ohio.

Miller, Tyler Douglas, June 18, to Douglas and Amber Verheyen Miller, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Nafziger, Vivian Therese, June 8, to Jeff and Kate Nafziger, Chicago, Ill.

Neufeld, Mikayla Christina Shantz, July 3, to John and Andrea Neufeld Shantz, Kitchener, Ont.

Penner, Addison Elizabeth, May 18, to Bryan and Karri Krehbiel Penner, Newton, Kan.

Reimer, Ella Mae, May 27, to Gregory and Amy Estrada Reimer, Newton, Kan.

Reimer, Henry David, July 15, to Philip Lund and Julia Reimer, St. Paul, Minn.

Riegsecker, Kailey Nicole, July 11, to Jason and Erika McSorley Riegsecker, Bristol, Ind.

Sawatzky, Moses Joseph Liechty, May 26, to Joseph and Anna Liechty Sawatzky, Goshen, Ind.

Schmidt, Eric Michael, June 10, to Phil and Marla Schmidt, Baltimore, Md.

Stutzman, Wesley Michael, May 20, to Travis and Misty Ferrell Stutzman, Newton, Kan.

Waltner, Samuel Haney, June 25, to Kyle and Polly Graber Waltner, Freeman, S.D.

Waltner, Sierra Ruth, July 1, to Ryan and Sarah Rensink Waltner, Tea, S.D.

Weaver, Elsa Ruth, June 21, to Kevin and Letitia Lefever Weaver, Reinholds, Pa.

Zerger, Brock Ryan, July 12, to Neil and Ginny Stohs Zerger, Wichita, Kan.

MARRIAGES

Alhman/Niebuhr: Kyle Alhman, Wayland, Iowa, and Megan Niebuhr, Perry, Iowa, June 11 in Perry.

Baer/Perez: Tiffany Marie Baer, Fort Hill, Pa., and J.R. Perez, Friendsville, M.D., May 14 at Springs (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Beachy/Schlabach: Megan Beachy, Hartville, Ohio, and Joel Schlabach, Hartville, June 10 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Berry/Switzer: Bonnie Berry, Dalton, Ohio, and Andy Switzer, Charlottesville, Va., July 2 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Birky/Welborn: Matthew Birky, Foosland, Ill., and Ashley Welborn, Dewey, Ill., June 18 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Bottger/Kramer: Joan Bottger, Hubbard, Neb., and Jarrod Kramer, Freeman, S.D., July 2 in Hubbard.

Cox/Miller: Sarah Cox, Germantown, Ohio, and Ethan Miller, Millersburg, Ohio, June 18 at Cherry Street United Methodist Church, Germantown.

Dunster/Weaver: Cole Dunster, Kidron, Ohio, and Jennifer Weaver, Kidron, June 25 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Gehman/Haltman: Chad M. Gehman, Hatfield, Pa., and Monica J. Haltman, Harleysville, Pa., June 25 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Goings/Lehman: Tyson Goings and Andrea Lehman, Bluffton, Ohio, June 25 at Trinity United Methodist Church, Lima, Ohio.

Goldcamp/Scheetz: Michael Goldcamp, Schwenksville, Pa., and Amanda Scheetz, Harleysville, Pa., June 25 at Alderfer Homestead, Harleysville.

Graber/Lee: Holly Graber, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, and Adam Lee, Wayland, Iowa, June 4 at Wayland Mennonite Church.

Grieser/Osterland: Lisa Grieser, Archbold, Ohio, and Ben Osterland, Ohio, June 11 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Hall/Whiteman: Andy Hall, Texarkana, Texas, and Beth Whiteman, Houston, Texas, June 4 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Hoover/Kulp: Jonathan Hoover, Schwenksville, Pa., and Karrie Kulp, Flourtown, Pa., March 19 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Horst/King: Stephanie Horst, Lancaster, Pa., and Kenneth King, New Holland, Pa., June 4 at James Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Kennell/Miller: Keith Kennell, Lowpoint, Ill., and Kelly Miller, Washington, Ill., June 11 at Grace Bible Church, Washington.

Kratzer/Wenger: Hannah Kratzer, Kidron, Ohio, and Darrell Wenger, Chesapeake, Va., June 18 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron.

Kooker/Wittmer: Zachary Kooker, Hesston, Kan., and Mary Wittmer, Hartville, Ohio, June 25 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Lauck/Powell: Christy Lauck, Findlay, Ohio, and Kurt Powell, Findlay, May 29.

Martin/Reinford: Hanna Martin, Peachtree City, Ga., and Joshua Reinford, Wooster, Ohio, June 18 at Chambersburg (Pa.) Brethren in Christ.

Meyer/Reid: Tim Meyer, Wayland, Iowa, and Michelle Reid, Wayland, June 25 at Swedesburg (Iowa) Lutheran Church.

Miller/Rohrer: Ellen Miller, Millersburg, Ohio, and Steve Rohrer, Wadsworth, Ohio, July 9 at Martins Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg.

Miller/Sines: Carrie Miller, Springs, Pa., and Riley Sines, Springs, June 11 at Springs Mennonite Church.

Miller/Yoder: Zackary Miller, Millersburg, Ohio, and Rachel Yoder, Baltic, Ohio, June 4 at Martins Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg.

Moser/Zehr: Lyle Jacob (Jake) Moser, Croghan, N.Y., and Cassandra Zehr, Lowville, N.Y., June 4, at Croghan Mennonite Church.

Moyer/Moyer: Jonathan A. Moyer, Sellersville, Pa., and Stephanie Moyer, Telford, Pa., July 2 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Overholt/Zehr: Dorcas Overholt, Blounstown, Fla., and Matthew Zehr, Sarasota, Fla., May 28 on the beach in Sarasota.

Perez/Unrau: Martin Perez and Paula Unrau, June 11.

DEATHS

Baum, Wayne H. Jr., 85, Akron, Pa., died June 21. Spouse: Dorothy K. Shuman Baum (deceased). Parents: Wayne S. and Martha Hess Baum. Children: Dorothy S. Eshleman, Kathryn S. Groff, Wayne S. Baum III; eight grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 25 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Beck, Harold G., 74, Hesston, Kan., died June 5. Spouse: Ruth Krehbiel Zerger Beck. Parents: Lester and Mary Grove Beck. Children: Len, Kennis; step-children: Scott Zerger, Mick Zerger, Dan Zerger, Sue Hagen; one grandchild; eight step-grandchildren; three step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 9 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Bosley, Robert H., 69, Lititz, Pa., died May 20. Parents: John A. and Anna V. Parker Bosley. Funeral: May 25 at Landis Homes West Bethany Chapel, Lititz.

Boslow, Helen King, 93, Grantsville, Md., died June 23. Spouse: Harold Boslow (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Mary Holliday King. Funeral: June 26 in Grantsville.

Brainard, Margaret Easton, 78, Harrisonburg, Va., died May 23 in an auto accident. Spouse: Addison Brainard. Parents: Dean and Esther Easton. Children: Esther Ann Schnur, Kate Brainard-Lee; three grandchildren. Funeral: June 18 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Buller, Lenora Koehn, 92, North Newton, Kan., died July 2. Spouse: (1st) David Androes (deceased), (2nd) John Buller (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Lea Johnson Koehn. Children: Norman Koehn, Romiella Wilmore, Loretta Nightingale, Karen True, Barbara Wedel; 20 grandchildren; 37 great-grandchildren; nine great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 6 at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Burkey, Harry, 95, Arcadia, Fla., died June 27. Spouse: Clarice A. Mann Burkey (deceased). Parents: William H. and Mary Hunsberger Burkey. Children: Lucile Grandstaff, Retha Owen, Irene Hargrove, Karen Mishler, Wilma Kessens, Lester, Earl, Dale, Philip, Ralph (deceased), Harold (deceased); 46 grandchildren, 94 great-grandchildren; 22 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 6 at Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Burkhalter, Grace, 84, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died June 20. Spouse: Lester Burkhalter (deceased). Parents: David and Bertha Huff. Children: Terry, Sheldon, Renee Krabbe; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Brandeberry, John R., 92, Middlebury, Ind., died May 23. Spouse: Leona Yoder Brandeberry (deceased). Parents: Jess C. and Della Mishler Brandeberry. Children: Julia Weaver, J. Robert, Jacqueline Wilson; two grandchildren; two step-grandchildren. Funeral: May 29 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Eck, Viola Goertz, 86, Newton, Kan., died June 9. Spouse: Detrick Eck. Parents: Jacob and Marie Schroeder Goertz. Children: Barbara Cooper, Gary; two grandchildren. Funeral: June 9 at First Mennonite Church, Newton.

Epp, Amelia Becker, 77, Henderson, Neb., died June 7 of cancer. Spouse: Robert O. Epp. Parents: Daniel and Anna T. Becker. Children: Lora Jost, Heidi Schmidt; six grandchildren. Funeral: June 10 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Eshelman, Stanley, 66, Sellersville, Pa., died June 21. Spouse: Eileen Johnson Eshelman. Parents: Henry and Florence Garis Eshelman. Children: Grace Keller, Stephanie McConaghy; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 28 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Flaming, Hilda Brandt, 87, Reedley, Calif., died May 31. Spouse: H. Waldo Flaming. Children: Gracie Rogalsky, Jerry, Barbara, Stan; nine grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 6 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Geiser, Idella Mae Lehman, 84, Kidron, Ohio, died May 20. Parents: Silas Lehman and Bertha Nussbaum. Children: Dee Neuenschwander, Sharon Steffen, Gordon, Harry, Harlan; 15 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 23 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron.

Geist, Edward, 87, Moundridge, Kan., died June 9. Spouse: Ruth Geist. Parents: Thomas and Pearl Geist. Funeral: June 20 at First Mennonite Church, Halstead, Kan.

Gerber, Selma, Dalton, Ohio, died June 22. Spouse: Willis Gerber (deceased). Parents: Dan and Dinah Sommer. Children: Harold, Donald, Joanne, Robert. Funeral: June 27 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Goering, Dorothy Mae Krehbiel, 75, McPherson, Kan., died June 29 of leukemia. Spouse: Kenneth W. Goering. Parents: Herb J. and Esther V. Goering Krehbiel. Children: Alan, Barton, Timothy; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: July 2 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson.

Good, Nelson W., 61, Washington, D.C., died July 13. Spouse: Betty Wenger Good. Parents: Ira and Ruth Good. Children: Ryan, Deborah, Jason. Funeral: July 18 at Capital Christian Fellowship, Lanham, Md.

Hensley, Martha Ellen, 57, Mt. Crawford, Va., died June 26. Spouse: Donald Ray Hensley. Parents: Ralph Benjamin and Irene Mae Conrad Shaffer. Children: Gary Lee, Jason Ray. Burial: June 29 at Pike Mennonite Cemetery, Harrisonburg, Va.

Hershberger, Edwin S., 77, Goshen, Ind., died June 13. Spouse: E. Arlene Hoover Hershberger. Parents: Josiah and Rosa Swartzentruber Hershberger. Children: June Tricka, Sharon Zepeda, Rita Bontrager, Jay, David, Daryl; 24 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at Benton (Ind.) Mennonite Church.

Hiebert, Erma, 87, Newton, Kan., died March 27. Spouse: Frank Hiebert (deceased). Parents: Dietrich and Katharina Kornelsen Hiebert. Child: Galen (deceased); five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan.

Hilty, Ann, 67, Bluffton, Ohio, died June 9. Parents: Herman and Celia Sprunger Hilty. Funeral: June 18 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Himes, Mabel, 79, Kidron, Ohio, died May 23. Spouse: Harley Himes. Parents: William and Clara Geiser. Funeral: May 26 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Hockman, Gertrude Frederick, 86, Perkasio, Pa., died June 20. Spouse: Harold S. Hockman. Parents: Abraham and Stella Lapp Frederick. Children: Timothy, Stella Cummings; six grandchildren. Funeral: June 24 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hofstetter, Willis, 93, Dalton, Ohio, died May 17. Spouse: Della Hofstetter. Parents: David and Lavina Hofstetter. Children: Marlene, Howard, Starla Woodruff; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 20 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Hood, Maryann Cavender, 74, died July 19 of pancreatic cancer. Spouse: Curtis Leroy Hood. Parents: Joseph Jefferson and Lesta Rollins Cavender. Children: Rebecca Jane Hood Rungasang, Alisa Carolyn Rungasang, Jennifer Lynn, Melanie Elaine, Daniel Matthew, Anna Kristens Nichols, Luke Cavender Nichols, Thomas James, John Leslie. Funeral: July 21 at Pinetucky Baptist Church, Cleburne, Ala.

Hostetler, Mabel, 98, Goshen, Ind., died June 27. Spouse: William Hostetler (deceased). Parents: Edward and Edna Yoder Hostetler. Children: Roberta Fisher, Ruth Clouse, Richard; 15 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 1 at Yoder-Culp Funeral Home, Goshen.

Juhnke, Anna Kreider, 65, North Newton, Kan., died June 17. Spouse: James C. Juhnke. Parents: Leonard and Rachel Weaver Kreider. Children: Karl, Joanne; two grandchildren. Funeral: July 2 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Kline, Helen Dovel, 88, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 9. Spouse: Virgil "Jake" Kline (deceased). Parents: Fredrick and Hillara Louderback Dovel. Child: Peggy K. Whetzel; three grandchildren; two step-great-grandchildren. Burial: July 12 at Woodbine Cemetery, Harrisonburg.

Leatherman, Earl D., 72, Perkasio, Pa., died June 20. Spouse: Marilyn Bechtel Leatherman. Parents: John and Mary Derstine Leatherman. Children: Patty Osterdahl, Marcia Wilson, Scott; seven grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasio.

Lehman, Dennis, 85, Kidron, Ohio, died May 31. Spouse: Grace Lehman. Parents: Noah and Mary Lehman. Child: Delbert; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 3 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Lehn, Cornelia, 84, Chiliwack, B.C., died July 2. Funeral: July 6 at Greendale (B.C.) First Mennonite Church

Linder, Leonard, 82, Louisville, Ohio, died June 18. Spouse: Elsie Linder. Parents: Eli and Lizzie Schmucker Linder. Children: Barbara Engelhand, Brenda Smith; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 21 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville, Ohio.

Litwiller, Esther Mae, 16, Lewistown, Pa., died May 28 in an automobile accident. Parents: Kenneth E. and Laura Litwiller. Sibling: Marta. Funeral: June 2 at Calvary Bible Church, Lewistown.

Martin, Elizabeth Brubacher, 100, St. Jacobs, Ont., died June 26. Spouse: Enoch Martin (deceased). Parents: Menno and Almata Good Brubacher. Children: Ruth Bauman, Lorraine Bauman; six grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: June 29 at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

Miller, Mary C. Wenger, 90, Middlebury, Ind., died July 8. Spouse: William C. Miller (deceased). Parents: David and Eva Loucks Wenger. Children: Melba Ferrec, Jerry; six grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 14 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Miller, Nelson E., 82, Middlebury, Ind., died July 7. Spouse: Mable Detweiler Miller. Parents: Elmer and Barbara Yoder Miller. Children: Gary, Rhonda Brubaker; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 11 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Miller, Ray Lee, 69, Orrville, Ohio, died June 7. Spouse: Arlene M. Lehman Miller. Parents: Eli L. and Lucy Hochstetler Miller. Children: Bonnie, Louella Becker, Russell, Amy Bugaj, Allan "Dale", Nancy Speicher; 15 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 11 at Wooster (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Mueller, Edna Ruth, 86, Halstead, Kan., died May 36. Parents: Rudolf and Selma Mueller. Funeral: May 31 at First Mennonite Church, Halstead.

Nace, Willard, 89, Colmar, Pa., died June 24. Spouse: Lena Marinucci Nace (deceased). Parents: William and Lizzie Kulp Nace. Children: Shirley Williams, Charles K. Funeral: June 27 at Scanlin Funeral Home, Chalfont, Pa.

Pankratz, Gustav, 94, Newton, Kan., died May 30. Spouse: Anna Auernheimer Pankratz (deceased). Parents: George and Anna Frey Pankratz. Children: Dulane, Donna Becker; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 3 at First Mennonite Church, Newton.

Peachey, Erin N., 17, Reedsville, Pa., died May 28 in an automobile accident. Parents: Emerson and Sandra Peachey. Sibling: Brittany. Funeral: June 1 at Allensville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Peifer, Willis E., 93, Lititz, Pa., died July 3. Spouse: Grace L. Peifer. Parents: Clayton and Alice Erb Peifer. Children: Blanch R. Myer, Verna (deceased), Nancy J. Forrey; step-children: Lee Landis, Kenneth Landis; five grandchildren; four step-grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; seven step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 10 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Plett, Robert A., 63, Inola, Okla., died June 10 of a heart attack. Spouse: Claudia Johnson Plett. Parents: Mike and Mae Loewen Plett. Children: Alan, J. Patrick, Chester Payne, Michael Payne; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 14 at United Methodist Church, Inola.

Regier, Susie A. Wiens, 84, Inman, Kan., died June 12. Children: Darlene Ann Regier Stucky, Gilbert Wade; seven grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 17 at Inman Mennonite Church.

Ropp, Anna R. Kropf, 100, Garden City, Mo., died June 9. Spouse: Peter A. Ropp (deceased). Parents: David D. and Catherine Mayer Kropf. Children: Allen E., Ronald D., Paul S.; nine grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 14 at Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.).

Roupp, Rosalena Ruth, 80, Goshen, Ind., died June 15. Spouse: S. Milford Roupp. Parents: Abraham and Anna Isaacs Willems. Children: Valerie Helser, Sherry Jordan, Janelle Diller, Patrice Dunbar; seven grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan.

Schmidt, Ted, 90, Reedley, Calif., died June 2. Spouse: Bertha Friesen Schmidt (deceased). Parents: John W. and Mary Pankratz Schmidt. Children: Myrna Villanueva, Ron,Carolynn Thomas, Cheryl Nicholson; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 7 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Schmitt, Etta Bartel, 76, Hesston, Kan., died June 7. Spouse: Peter Schmitt (deceased). Parents: Edwin and Sarah Friesen Bartel. Children: Ken, Jan Oprin; five grandchildren. Funeral: June 19 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Schrock, Mary Crossgrove, 91, Archbold, Ohio, died July 20. Spouse: Waldo Schrock (deceased). Parents: Charles and Mary Wyse Crossgrove. Children: Weston, Thurman, Mary Ida Kinkle; 10 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 23 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Schwarztraub, Caroline, 93, Morton, Ill., June 23. Parents: Joseph V. and Johannah Kennel Schwarztraub. Funeral: June 27 in Morton.

Smucker, Francis W., 88, Orrville, Ohio, died June 22. Spouse: May Rohrer Smucker. Parents: Simon and Lydia Wenger Smucker. Children: Patti MacGregor, Jane Beyeler, Eber, Vera Shenk; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: June 25 at Smithville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Suderman, Anna, 100, North Newton, Kan., died July 10. Parents: Jacob and Anna Regier Suderman. Funeral: July 13 at Kidron Bethel Menno Hall, North Newton.

Suter, Eldon LeRoy, 78, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 21. Spouse: Kathryn Landes Suter. Parents: Jacob C. and Mary Shank Suter. Children: Donna Clayton, Diana Berkshire, Joy Halterman, Eldon "Eldie", Jewel Knicely; nine grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Burial: June 23 at Weavers Mennonite Cemetery, Harrisonburg.

Troyer, Amy Lorraine Hertzler, 77, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 12. Spouse: John Mast Troyer. Parents: Asa and Rebecca Shenk Hertzler. Children: Rose Marie, John Terry, Herbert N., John Mark; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: June 15 in Harrisonburg, Va.

Weaver, Dr. Galen F., 48, died June 11. Spouse: Deborah M. Jones. Parents: Dr. Floyd E. and Edna Mae Stalter Weaver. Children: Daniel, Bradley, Christopher, Evan, Rachel. Memorial service: Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.).

Weaver, Leon P., 74, Ephrata, Pa., died June 22. Spouse: Lorraine Martin Weaver. Parents: Elmer and Minnie Sauder Weaver. Children: Marlin R., Joyce E. Fox, Janice E. Brotzman, Carolyn F. Frederick, Sharon L. Weaver; 10 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 27 at Lititz (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Witmer, Edna Gerig, 81, Leo, Ind., died July 1. Spouse: Henry (Hank) Witmer. Parents: David and Mattie Gerig. Children: Clifford, Cletus, Clarence; five grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: July 4 at North Leo (Ind.) Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Sadie Miller, 92, Goshen, Ind., died May 21. Spouse: C. Harold Yoder (deceased). Parents: Edwin D. and Lydia Egli Miller. Children: Carolyn Leichty, Marilyn Zellinger, Donald, S. Glenn; nine grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 26 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Yoder, Sylvia S., 93, Bradenton, Fla., died June 22 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Clark Yoder (deceased). Parents: Joel and Helen Sommer. Children: Donna Brunk, Kathryn Weyh, Joyce Anders; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 26 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla.

Zehr, John Russell, 71, Foolsland, Ill., died June 6. Parents: Silas and Mabel Zehr. Funeral: June 9 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Zook, Daniel P., 80, Allensville, Pa., died July 6. Parents: Stephen W. and Mary E. Peachey Zook. Children: Mary Bates, Thomas, Virginia Bohn, Helen Benner, Dorothy; nine grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 10 at Valley View Amish Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

To submit event information to *The Mennonite*, log on at www.TheMennonite.org and use the "For the Record" button to access our on-line forms. You can also submit by email, fax or mail:

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Mennonite Mission Network seeks a **director of information technology** to provide the vision, hands-on leadership, planning and management for the development, acquisition, implementation and support of information technology in a multiorganization, multicultural environment. The director will partner with other Mennonite Church USA organizations to align with strategic direction and build and develop the IT functions and procedures to support organizational objectives. The director plans, directs and manages to ensure the development and implementation of cost-effective systems and efficient computer operations to meet current and future decision-making requirements. This person must be a collaborative leader who balances strategic thinking and teamwork with technical expertise. Strong communication skills, ability and willingness to travel are important. Required qualifications also include experience in a similar leadership position and a bachelor's degree in IT or an equivalent field. For more information, see Staff Opportunities at www.MennoniteMission.net.

Head women's basketball coach—Eastern Mennonite University seeks applications for the position of head women's basketball coach. This is a full-time coaching staff appointment (.75 FTE) for 2005-06 with high potential for an ongoing appointment and additional university assignment. Coaching responsibilities include year-round recruiting, operating and managing all aspects of a quality basketball program in the highly competitive Old Dominion Athletic Conference at the NCAA Division III level. Bachelor's degree required, master's or higher degree preferred in physical education or related field. Experience coaching at the college level preferred, or successful head coaching experience of at least three years at the high school level or equivalent required. Send letter of application, resumé, three references and responses to the four questions in the following 'GOTO Application Materials' link, www.mu.edu/humanresources/vacancy/coachwomenbball2.htm. Send information to Dave King, Athletic Director, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, david.king@emu.edu, 540-432-4646. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply.

The Newton, Kan., Et Cetera Shop is seeking a **full-time general manager** to supervise 200 volunteers and up to 10 staff. Must be computer-savvy, a self-starter, have solid math and strong communication skills, ability to prioritize. Must be able to lift, bend and be on your feet much of the day. Must work independently or in a group. Occasional evenings or weekends. Excellent public relations skills and a bachelor's degree or equivalent experience required. Knowledge of Spanish a plus. For information, contact Deb Goering at 316-284-2982. Applications closed on Aug. 26 or until position is filled.

Half-time pastor needed at **Light of Life Mennonite Church**, Farmington, N.M., in a cross-cultural congregation of two-thirds Native American and one-third Caucasian. Small congregation located near mountains and desert canyons. Contact conference ministers, Ed and Katherine Rempel, 303-347-9266, or committee chair, Arnold Miller, 505-564-3266.

Head baseball coach—Eastern Mennonite University seeks applications for the position of head baseball coach. This is a part-time coaching appointment for 2005-06 with high potential full-time and an ongoing appointment with additional university responsibilities. Coaching responsibilities include year-round recruiting, operating and managing all aspects of a quality baseball program in the highly competitive Old Dominion Athletic Conference at the NCAA Division III level. Bachelor's degree required, master's or higher degree preferred in physical education or related field. Experience coaching at the college level preferred, or successful head coaching experience of at least three years at the high school level or equivalent required. Send letter of application, resumé, three references and responses to the four questions in the following 'GOTO Application Materials' link, www.emu.edu/humanresources/vacancy/coach-baseball.htm. Send information to Dave King, Athletic Director, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, david.king@emu.edu, 540-432-4646. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply.




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Retail sales: Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, a nonprofit, educational corporation, has an immediate opening for a retail sales manager: new books, used books and museum shop crafts and gifts. Understanding of Anabaptist perspectives necessary. Previous retail experience and computer skills required. Send resumé to LMHS-Personnel, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602-1499.

Goshen College seeks a **full-time graphic designer**. For more details and to apply, visit the specific position announcement on the Goshen College Web page www.goshen.edu/employment.

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Holy Rood Mennonite Church, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, is seeking a **full-time senior pastor and possibly a half-time associate pastor**. Consideration will also be given to hiring a pastor couple where the spouse would serve as the associate pastor. Tentative starting date is Jan. 1, 2006. We are members of Mennonite Church Alberta and Mennonite Church Canada. Average attendance is 80-100 in a congregation diverse in cultures, ages and walks in life. See www.holyroodmennonite.ca for further information about the congregation. Interested applicants please contact our Alberta Conference minister, Jim Shantz, at 780-485-2518 and Guenther Toews, Chair of Pastoral Search Committee at 780-458-9358.

Part-time conference minister for NY Mennonite Conference beginning October 2006. Conference profile available: <http://nymennon.bfn.org/>. MLI required. Contact Philip Martin amcpastor@highstream.net, 716-937-0412. Applications accepted through October 2005.

Mennonite Central Committee is recruiting for the position of **MCC liaison to the United Nations in New York**. This is a three-year, full-time, salaried position. The liaison's assignment is to foster a Christian pacifist vision in the conduct of international affairs at the UN, interpret MCC to the UN and advocate relevant policies on behalf of MCC.

Significant experience outside North America and Europe or other highly industrialized areas of the world is important. Training in international relations, law or theology is preferred. Self-motivation and skill in cross-cultural communication are required. Relating to UN diplomats, hosting MCC workers, overseeing the work of office interns and maintaining regular contact with MCC offices defines the routine work of the MCC UN Liaison Office in New York. Candidates of a gender or ethnic group typically under-represented in this type of MCC assignment are encouraged to apply.

Contact Prem Dick for a copy of the job description and send a letter of intent and a resumé by email to psd@mcc.org or by fax at 717-859-2171 by Sept. 1, 2005. The position is scheduled to begin Dec. 1, 2005.

Mennonite Central Committee is seeking applicants for the following service worker assignments. Contact your nearest MCC office or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151 or gpk@mcc.org, for an application. Job descriptions are on MCC's Web site: www.mcc.org/serve.

Muslim/Christian exchange participants in a three-year assignment for a couple in Iran. Interest in studying Islam is essential; degree in religious studies, including Anabaptist theology and history, is preferred.

Accountant for a three-year assignment in Indonesia to provide service for MCC's country program and tsunami response. Training in accounting and three years of experience is required.

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Killing or letting die?



Joseph Kotva

This monthly column, called ACHE (for Anabaptist Center for Health-care Ethics), looks at issues of health-care ethics. If you have issues you want to see addressed, write Joseph Kotva, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517-1999, or jkotva@ambs.edu. Also go to www.anabaptistethics.org.

To say that 65-year-old Thelma was in bad shape is an understatement. Her breathing depended on a ventilator, and she had a large, growing, inoperable tumor in her face and sinus cavity. Thelma also had a bleak medical history that included a blood clot in her lung (a “pulmonary embolism”), heart disease, asthma, lupus and diabetes. Aware of her situation, Thelma requested the ventilator be removed.

Many of us would make the same request, but Thelma and her loving family were devout Catholics, and her family strongly resisted the idea. They knew that Thelma could not survive without the respirator, and they worried that removing it amounted to suicide (Thelma killing herself) or euthanasia (the family and doctors killing her). Thelma’s family feared that such a death would leave her rejected by God and by her church.

Father William O’Brien helped Thelma and her family resolve this situation by helping them move toward a more accurate understanding of their shared Catholic faith. By clarifying the distinction between “killing” and “letting die,” O’Brien helped them see that from a Catholic perspective Thelma was neither committing suicide nor asking for euthanasia. Thelma was instead asking to be allowed to die. Once relieved of their fears about killing, the family’s energy was easily directed toward caring for and assuring each other. (This story is taken loosely from: William J. O’Brien III., “Dialogue Between Faith and Science: The Role of the Hospital Chaplain,” *The Journal of Clinical Ethics* 6, no. 3 [Fall 1995].)

While the line between killing and letting die is often difficult to discern, the distinction is vital to Christians. Christians, especially Anabaptists, have traditionally opposed directly aiming at death to end an unattractive or undesirable life. This opposition is grounded in many Christian convictions, including the example of Jesus himself, the belief that our lives do not belong to us but to God, the realization that faithfulness sometimes entails suffering. From a Christian perspective, our position as finite creatures created to love and serve God places real limits on our control of our lives and our authority over the lives of others. To kill, to aim at death—whether our own through suicide or someone else’s through euthanasia—is to usurp God’s

place by acting as if our lives belonged to us.

This realization that our lives belong to Another is also why letting die is often appropriate. When we use medical technology to fight death at every turn we are again acting as if our lives belong to us; acting as if we, rather than God, should determine the length of our days. By contrast, letting die is often a sign of trust in God, a symbol of submission to God’s providential care and a testimony to belief in the resurrection.

Medical technology can be a wonderful gift, serving as the means by which God brings physical comfort and healing. Unfortunately, our use of such technology—including ventilators, dialysis, feeding

tubes and bypass surgeries—too often reflects our true (though unstated) conviction that our technology, not God, is our real Savior. Strangely parallel to killing, refusing to let die usurps God’s place by acting as if our lives belonged to us.

The difference between killing and letting die is often difficult to discern in practice because the same outward, physical action can be either killing or letting die. For example, a physician giving morphine may mean to be making the patient more comfortable or it may mean to be accelerating the patient’s death. The former is

compatible with letting die but the latter is an act of killing.

While the outward, physical action may be the same, what matters is the difference between our intention (what we aim at) and what we foresee (what we recognize may happen). Recognizing (foreseeing) that someone may die because we are giving morphine or removing a respirator or feeding tube is not the same thing as aiming at their death. Thelma’s family can recognize the likely consequences of removing the respirator without intending (aiming at, having their hearts set on) her death. They may instead be intending to honor Thelma’s wishes or to accept human limitations and finitude.

These distinctions between killing and letting die, between intention and foreseeing, can seem like splitting hairs and can be difficult to determine in practice. Still, such distinctions help us think about whether we believe our lives belong to us or to God. And to Christians the question of to whom we belong matters a great deal.

From a Christian perspective, our position as finite creatures created to love and serve God places real limits on our control of our lives and our authority over the lives of others.

Our annual report profiles some of the stories and a few of the statistics that describe MCC's ministry of demonstrating God's love in action, moving with compassion.



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Everett J.
Thomas

Join the party

Mennonites in the United States should commit themselves to a five-year sabbatical from affiliation with any political party,” Goshen (Ind.) College professor John D. Roth said to Mennonite Church USA delegates at Charlotte 2005. Roth’s proposal was part of his address (page 10) that kicked off a delegate assembly discussion about “speaking to government.”

Jim Wallis, author of *God’s Politics*, proposes something different: Evangelical Christians with a social conscience should abandon current political parties and start a new one. Wallis calls it a “fourth option” to conservative, liberal and libertarian partisanship (*Sojourners*, February 2005).

Here’s another proposal: Mennonites should get even more involved in the political parties of their choice and change them. To do so, we would advocate a whole-life ethic that views all of human life as sacred. That would translate into candidates and platforms that are opposed to abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia and war. We would use our skills at community-building and conflict transformation as antidotes to the polarization each party exploits for self-interest. Such involvement would also demonstrate that the kingdom of God transcends issues about which we “agree to disagree.”

One way I have begun such involvement is to have a conversation with another Mennonite who is

committed to a different political party. That happened recently by coincidence.

Our congregation, College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., has three members who also hold elected office: two Democrat city councilmen and one Republican state senator. As one of the councilmen, I was invited by a Sunday school class to put together a month-long series called “Mennonites and Political Power.”

Marvin Riegsecker, longtime state senator for the Indiana Republican party, joined the panel discussions one morning. We explained how we attempt to integrate our faith into the responsibilities of elected office. Marvin revealed the hardships he faces in the Republican party during times of war. He also said that whenever he votes against capital punishment, the “back-benchers” accuse him of being soft on crime.

Although we are members of the same congregation, Marvin and I had never talked about the sanctity of life values we share—whether it be in opposition to war or opposition to capital punishment. Given his long tenure and the leadership responsibilities accruing to him, Marvin’s stand on these issues influences his Republican colleagues.

Marvin and I worship together, hear the same sermons and sing out of the same hymnal. We want to be faithful to the same teachings of Mennonite Church USA. But we experience two different worlds when we enter the machinations of our respective political parties. Instead of withdrawing from opportunities to influence these powerful institutions, we and other Mennonites called to such involvement can bring our values and convictions to those arenas, just like we are expected to do in other vocations.

Until recently, I kept the Democratic party at arm’s length. I resisted involvement for two reasons: the party’s hardline prochoice stance and its complicity in polarizing every possible issue in Indiana and national public policy discussions. Recently, however, I have found a way to work for change within the organization. A group of us formed a state chapter of the national pro-life group Democrats for Life of America. By working within the party’s structure, we hope to influence platforms and candidates to help reduce abortions by 95 percent in the next 10 years—the goal of legislation being introduced by several DFLA members in the U.S. Congress.

Mennonites should get even more involved in the political parties of their choice and change them.

Although God is not a Republican ... or a Democrat (as Wallis said often last year), the major political parties are entrenched as our national institutions, and they need transformation. For some of us, being faithful may mean distancing ourselves from political party involvement with a sabbatical. But God can also use those called to work within those powerful organizations. Such participation is another way for God’s healing and hope to flow through us to the world.—*ejt*

