

The Messenger

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE CONFERENCE
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Your prayers will encourage Christians in Congo
to keep their eyes fixed on Jesus in the midst of
their suffering (page 3)



Sing no sad songs for me?

SEAN O'Sullivan, a Catholic priest who was a former Member of Parliament and aide to former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, died of cancer as a young man.

O'Sullivan wrote, "Soon I may be summoned home. But sing no sad songs for me; for I am a Christian...To other cancer victims and their families, to Catholics and all people of goodwill, I say: Remain steadfast, keep stout hearts, and hold unwavering hope.

"Fear not, our God is still at work. However dark the coming days, he will triumph and be with us always, even until the end of time" (quoted in Reginald Bibby, *Fragmented Gods*, pp. 250-251).

At first glance, a statement as "sing no sad songs for me" might seem glib. Is it?

Each day on the calendar is the anniversary of a loved one's death. Whenever families gather, some people are missing. As families remember, there will be tears of sadness, joy, or both. Christ can seem close or far away at such moments.

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5:4). Mourning and comfort are mentioned in the same breath. That's a complex, confusing relationship.

Grief is not easy for Christians, nor should it be. This would deny our feelings. Faithful

people *can* ask questions. People *need* to sing some sad songs; there are many in Scripture itself.

Jesus wept by the grave of Lazarus (John 11:35). Paul knew that Christians at Thessalonica would grieve (1 Thess. 4:13); he said he would have "sorrow upon sorrow" if his friend Epaphroditus died (Phil. 2:27).

Paul, however, also reminded Christians that we have hope in our grief. Christ will not forget relatives who trust in Him (1 Thess. 4:14). Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, a picture of how all in Christ will live. Paul's friend Epaphroditus would live to die another day, but that was not all.

In dealing with cancer, the shortening of his service and of his life, Sean O'Sullivan spoke of his hope: "Fear not, our God is still at work."

The apostle Paul says, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). Was this glib? Over many years Paul suffered much for Christ. His words were written from a prison cell. They were carefully chosen, coming from a background of burning conviction and severe suffering.

Were there sad songs at Paul's funeral? Likely. But there was more: An awareness of how Christ touches our grief and shapes our hope.

Terry M. Smith

Calling imperfect people as pastors

MANY denominations need pastors. What are we to do?

•The EMC needs a *national* strategy. Lutheran Church Canada, an evangelical denomination, has held a "RSVP church worker recruitment initiative" since 1998; since then it has "identified almost 450 people as potential church workers" (*The Canadian Lutheran*, December 2003).

- We can highlight the need even more effectively than we have.
- Promote our flexible educational standards.
- Be fair in financial policies with pastors; avoid double standards.
- Care for the pastor's wife.
- Support pastors who struggle. That's

pastoral care!

- Honour tent-making pastors.
- Re-examine "the call to ministry"; the quiet call to Timothy shouldn't be smothered by the dramatic call of Paul.
- Steinbach Bible College could develop a ministerial student fellowship.
- Churches should notice young people who are *not* musical.
- When did your church last phone Steinbach Bible College, or another college, to ask for a student to preach on Sunday?
- Pray. Look. Encourage.

If we really want more pastors, what are we willing or prepared to do?

Terry M. Smith

The Messenger

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Terry M. Smith



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THE MESSENGER is the publication of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference. It is available to the general public. Its purpose is to inform, instruct and inspire: inform concerning events and activities in the denomination; instruct in godliness and victorious living; inspire to earnestly contend for the faith.

Letters, articles, photos and poems are welcomed. Unpublished material is not returned except by request. The views and opinions expressed by the writers are their own and do not necessarily represent the position of the Conference.

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MESSENGER SCHEDULE:

No. 04 - Feb. 25

(copy due Feb. 13)



Beth Koehler greets a translator released from prison.



Leaders discuss how to use the mother tongue scripture translation.

**“[Share others’ grief]
weep with those who weep”
Romans 12:15 (Amplified Version)**

Special Prayer Report on Democratic Republic of Congo

Wycliffe Bible Translators, with Beth Koehler

LOREN AND Beth Koehler and their three girls, from Steinbach, Man., have been working for 13 years with Congolese Bible translators of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), formerly known as Zaire.

For eight years the Koehlers’ home was a tiny village in Congo where they worked in a specific language project together with Congolese translators. Then, in 1999, due to the continuing difficulties of working in Congo during a war, their family moved to Kenya where they continue to be involved in translation work for DRC peoples.

The change in living location has allowed the Koehlers to help all the SIL language projects situated in eastern DRC. Loren provides support and training in the use of translation and linguistics related computer software. Beth helps translation projects develop workable plans and ensure that they have the resources and training necessary to meet their goals.

Living in one country and working

in another has its challenges, though. Communication with Congolese colleagues is one of them. Often getting a response to a simple question can take months.

Travel is another challenge. As with most members of the Eastern Congo Group, Loren and Beth leave their children in Kenya and travel to DRC or Uganda several times a year. There they lead training workshops for Congolese project personnel who have not only left their families in high risk areas but have had to travel through dangerous territory to get to the training sessions. Despite the stress that traveling can put on family life, the Koehlers and other SIL members persevere, fueled by the faith and commitment of



Beth and Loren Koehler—with daughters Katrina, Victoria, and Priscilla—are part of Steinbach EMC. They are currently living in Canada.

their Congolese colleagues in the face of all odds.

THE current war in the DRC (which is, in fact, several different wars) is crushing the people and threatening to destroy any hope they may have felt for their country when the long-time president, Mobutu, was deposed in 1997. Instead of finding freedom from oppression and poverty, the people have gained a new legacy of fear and death. Three million people have died as a result of the ongoing conflicts involving both foreign powers and Congolese factions.

Beth writes, "Every trip I make to the northeast corner of DRC, I find discouragement and weariness of life more firmly etched on the faces of friends and colleagues. A signed peace treaty gives momentary hope but is quickly forgotten."

The tribal conflict in the Ituri region has resulted in large-scale massacres and the destruction of entire villages. One such massacre took place in September 2002. Nyankunde, a church station that boasted one of the best hospitals in northeast Congo, a medical school for nurses, and an aviation base for missionary pilots, was destroyed in a matter of days.

Over one thousand people were massacred, including villagers, hospital personnel, patients and church workers. The hospital chaplain was one of those who were slowly tortured to death because he belonged to the wrong tribe. In another region plagued by civil war there are few young men in the villages. If they haven't been killed, they are hiding in the mountains, having become members of one of the warring factions. In one village soldiers have raped all the females over the age of 12. Young school children, embittered by their circumstances, are joining poorly disciplined armies and dying on the battlefield.

God's children in Congo need supernatural strength to face life today and possible death tomorrow. They need our prayers to sustain them and to shine brightly for Jesus. The temptations to pick up arms and

gain justice through force are great. Stealing to feed the children can suddenly seem right. Forgiving the neighbour who killed your family seems too difficult.

Yet, many are finding the supernatural strength they need in the Holy Spirit and in God's Word. They are living a faithful, sacrificial life in the context of Congo's horrors.

A Congolese translator and church leader was tortured and held captive for many months because of his position in the church. His health is poor but still he continues to preach and translate the Word. In another city lives a translator whose teenage son was slowly tortured to death by classmates. The translator's life is a miraculous testimony of forgiveness.

Another translator was forced to go into hiding after bringing food and drink to an "enemy" in prison. Others share their already insufficient food supplies with refugees who have even less.

AT the height of the Ituri tribal conflict a Congolese translator held a *Trauma and Healing* seminar for 320 students in a local high school. He writes the following about that seminar: "The students between the ages of 12 and 18 had become very violent and disrespectful and had decided to leave school to become soldiers..."

The translator writes, "As a result [of this seminar], more than three-fourths of the students asked forgiveness of their teachers. The students also found peace in their hearts, for they had previously held much bitterness toward the rebels who had burned and pillaged their homes and even killed family members or friends of theirs. The students no longer wanted to leave school and enroll in the army. May God be praised!"

Another Congolese translator and a refugee who lost his home, his possessions and many relatives and friends, has made the following declaration: "We do thank God for we are alive today. We do thank Him because He is really good. When trouble comes, He is a strong refuge..."

The war in Congo and the seeming hopelessness of the Congolese' plight has driven the Koehler family to their knees in prayer in a way that they had not experienced before. They have witnessed miraculous answers to prayer. But they have also seen friends and colleagues suffer incredibly in this war. They do not understand the *whys* of suffering among the Congolese, but continue to pray in faith for God to be glorified in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Your prayers will encourage Congolese Christians to keep their eyes fixed on Jesus in the midst of their suffering.

- Pray that the Word of God, as it is translated into various languages, will go forth with power.
- Pray for the church in DRC to be faithful to Scripture and not give up hope.
- Pray for peace and economic improvement in DRC.
- Pray for transformed lives and healing for the traumatized.
- Pray that spiritual strongholds will be broken and that ethnic groups will lay down their arms and be appalled by killing.

Update: This article was originally published by Wycliffe Bible Translators Canada in the October/November 2003 issue of *Prayer Alive*. Since that time significant steps towards peace have been taken by the groups involved in the DRC war. We can praise the Lord for these changes and continue to pray that the peace initiative will not be derailed. ■





*A Woman's
Journey of Faith*

Betty Koop
Steinbach, Manitoba

My husband Glen and I were savouring our after breakfast coffee, looking forward to our weekly “day off.” As pastoral couple at Maseru United Church in Lesotho (southern Africa) we needed this time to “let our souls catch up with us,” as David Livingston’s bearers said when he pushed forward too fast.

But the quiet was short-lived. A few weeks ago riots had rocked the capital city where we lived, and our Management Committee chairman showed up to see Glen on church business. Soon we were enjoying our coffee together.

Our MCC colleagues had lived through an attack on their home during the riots, and this was one of the first days that it was relatively calm, so we needed to touch base with them. Thankfully, the drive down was uneventful. Our friends were weary and somewhat down—most understandable after the trauma they’d been through.

Since the thugs had not done much material damage to their property, we weren’t needed to help with repairs. But we could listen as they relived the horror of facing deadly guns in the middle of the night wielded, to their sorrow, by young men they had befriended in the neighbourhood. We tried to empathize, and we prayed.

A weekly day off, a short-lived quiet

On the way home, with heavy traffic swirling around us a woman from our church stepped up to the curb and waved us down. With her were some friends who had recently suffered bereavement. They needed a ride home and she needed a ride to a home near us. To her great fortune we were passing by; naturally, we’d help! Glen managed to extricate our car from the traffic without mishap and we were on our way. It was a small thing we could do for the grieving family.

When we arrived back at our gate, there was a young man waiting to see Glen in his office, which was located in a round hut in our yard. One of the many things we admired about the African culture was the fact that *people* were much more important than *time*. As westerners, we needed to practice patience again and again, to listen, to encourage and to pray with others. Glen finally came in for lunch at 3 p.m.

Finally, we were free to relax and have a little time to ourselves! But there was a knock at the door, and another visitor entered.

When he left, a lady we had met only once before dropped by. She ran a shelter for homeless people and gave selflessly of her time and resources. From what others had told us, she took in the most destitute. She willingly bathed the open sores and filthy bodies of the sick who crawled into her hospice, fed them and tried to help them back on their feet.

But today her request was rather

unusual—to us anyway. One of her residents had died and she was in need of a coffin to bury him. I can’t quite remember how we helped her, but I think Glen put her in touch with our church’s Material Aid Committee who dispersed clothing, food and occasionally financial aid as needed.

The last line in my diary for that day reads: “There is a 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew [due to the recent riots], so no evening meetings.” Usually we ended our Tuesdays with one of our three weekly Bible studies. I must hasten to say that not all our days were this busy. Sometimes when I’d spent all day baking cinnamon rolls and *Periski* and then saw them disappear when some committee broke for refreshments, I wondered why I couldn’t just as easily do this in Canada as in Africa!

The beginning of a new year is often a time of evaluating, setting goals and even making resolutions. If one of your resolutions was to concentrate more on praying for our missionaries, the above account should give you some ideas as to what to pray for. How many “needs” can you find? As I looked it over, I saw at least eight. So you see, missionaries are very needy people. Your prayer partnership is essential to an effective ministry.

Our Conference has an excellent pamphlet entitled *Praying for EMC Missions*. It includes an invitation to join the EMC Prayer Corps.

Why not enlist today? You are needed.

Letters

Goodbye, Arden Church!

I ran an errand for my parents today, and delivered the remaining funds and documents from the Arden Church to the EM Conference office in Steinbach. I thought, *And that’s the end of the Arden Community Bible Church.*

It was a sad moment as there was comfort in knowing that the church had existed on the east side of the main road in the village of Arden. However, as I recall the people and events surrounding my childhood church, I must say, “Thank you.”

Thank you to the many pastors who journeyed to our small congregation to minister to us on Sunday mornings. A couple of names come to mind—Mr. Plett, Mr. Eidse, Mr. Thiessen, Mr. Reimer, Mr. Smith, Mr. Barkman, missionaries and others. Thank you for believing, supporting and encouraging the believers

in the Arden community.

Thank you to those who were involved with the church. I recall the family nights on Fridays, DVBS, missionary conferences and Deeper Life services. As children, we learned how to sing, pray and share. I recall that sharing time occurred each Sunday morning, and it was here where I saw adults cry as they shared challenges and life-changing events. People were real, difficulties were real, and we were a real church family.

Although Arden Church no longer exists as an institution, there are people today scattered throughout Manitoba who were spiritually trained in that small EMC church. I thank God for the great influence my childhood church had on me.

Sheila Rempel
Steinbach, Man.

The Evangelical Mennonite Conference office has a new address!

Future correspondence for EMC and for *The Messenger* should now be addressed to: 440 Main Street
Steinbach, MB
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Letters to the Editor

Letters for publication, commenting on issues raised in *The Messenger*, are welcomed. Their tone should be charitable, dealing with subjects rather than individuals. Letters may be edited for length, style and charity.

With Our Missionaries

Paraguay

Missions exposure trip to Paraguay

The theme for annual convention in 2003 was *Come See What God Has Done*. After hearing many wonderful reports, the decision was made to send a team to Paraguay to see what the Lord has done and to become aware of opportunities for future service.

On October 16, six couples and our leaders, Frank and Marge Kroeker, left for a three-week missions exposure trip to Paraguay. As a group we felt the Lord had put us together and we were all blessed with the opportunity to be part of this fantastic group. We were strangers meeting on October 15, but now we are friends for life.

In Asuncion, Dave and Judy Schmidt and Joanne Martens shared with us the challenges of church planting and introduced us to the local Paraguayan church. Dave and Judy are involved in an AIDS ministry in the form of a drop-in centre across the street from the hospital for infectious diseases.

The centre opened in September. Here people are given support with material needs and medicine. They are shown the love of Christ in tangible ways and are given hope. Educating people about the disease and teaching skills to make a living provide a setting so people can hear about Jesus.

Our next stop was the Chaco where we were introduced to the many phases of mission work in this area. We saw visible results. Our EMC missionaries no longer work here actively because the local Christians are active and are reaching out to the community.

A highlight was to see how the work



The tour included working.



The team: leaders Frank and Marge Kroeker, Ed and Betty Reimer, George and Evelyn Rodgers, Leo and Eva Reimer, Abe and Susie Rempel, Elma and Peter Reimer.

among the Lengas Indians has been blessed. About 40 years ago, Frank and Marge Kroeker started mission work here. Because the Lengas are nomadic people, the mission purchased a tract of land where they could settle down. Today there are 25 churches with 5,000 members. The Mennonite churches, with some outside help, are training national leaders and the church is doing well. While we were there Frank was able to participate in a ceremony where he gave the land title to the Indians. What a blessing to see the results of missionary work.

Radio ZP-30 has an immense ministry, reaching far beyond where missionaries could go. It has also been instrumental in bringing Mennonite communities together. The workers at the radio station shared their enthusiasm and vision for the ministry and their joy in being a part of the work.

From the Chaco we traveled to Caaguazu (with a stop at Rio Verde). Here we spent some time with Erna Plett and Doris Friesen. We did a work project at the bookstore—a new floor was installed. Some visits to Paraguayan churches proved to be a blessing and very enlightening. Though we spoke different languages, we felt oneness in Christ.

Our stay in East Paraguay gave us insight into the persecution of Christians who come out of the Mennonite Colonies. We saw how bound some people are by legalism. Many stories could be told of what people endured who came to faith in Jesus. What a blessing to see in spite of persecution, they have a glowing testimony. Here we saw these churches reaching out and doing mission work. The impact that our missionaries have had in this area is really significant.

The medical work has also been an

important part of reaching into people's lives and showing them Christ's love. Renita Rempel is a nurse at the Tres Palmas clinic and hospital. Ann Braun, a retired missionary, is now doing the chaplaincy work there.

The work at the leprosy hospital at KM 81 was very impressive. They are now an important part of the country's medical service. Most of the workers are volunteers from the churches in Paraguay. It is wonderful to see these people doing their own mission work.

The work with the Paraguayan churches continues to be a challenge. These people may not be very well off economically, but the need is not so much more money as it is spiritual encouragement and teaching and training in how to improve their farms. Ernest Funk said that he could use 100 more missionaries to work with the Paraguayans.

The Catholic Church has lost much of its hold on the people and there is a wide open door to show them the way to Jesus. Ernest Funk and Gilbert Rempel spend a lot of time training national leaders and visiting churches.

Other work that we were privileged to see included Camp Lucero, Santa Theresa Indian work, Radio Mensajero, among others. Being able to interact with local people and hear how the Lord is working was such a blessing.

I'm sure that each one that was part of the tour has been touched by the Lord—not only to pray more for the missionaries, but also to look around for opportunities to serve the Lord where we are.

Evelyn Rodgers

Evelyn Rodgers is a member of MacGregor EMC.

Paraguay

Three generations serve in Paraguay

Three generations of missionaries leave a lasting legacy in the land of Paraguay.

Frank and Marge Kroeker with their family arrived in Paraguay in 1963 and have served that country for 36 years. As we traveled from Asuncion to the Chaco and to East Paraguay, the impact that this family has had for Christ in this country is amazing, and they give all the glory to Jesus. From the Indian work and Radio ZP-30 in the Chaco, to building churches in numerous towns, to teaching school and a radio station in Tres Palmas, the work of the Lord has gone ahead.

Dr. John Schmidt, a medical doctor from Mountain Lake, Minnesota, worked closely with EMC missions in Paraguay. Together with his wife Clara, he started the leprosy hospital at Km 81 and the medical clinic at Tres Palmas.

Both Schmidts and Kroekers had children who watched their parents at work and caught a vision for the work in Paraguay. Schmidts' son David married Kroekers' daughter Judy and they have made missions and serving the Lord their calling. In Asuncion, they have planted churches among the Paraguayans and lately, have started an AIDS ministry in the form of a drop-in next to the hospital. Already they are very busy and excited as they see lives touched for the kingdom.

Chris Kroeker married Revita, a girl from East Paraguay, and they have been involved in developing Radio Mensajero. This is a vital part of the ministry in this country and they are seeing great results.

Dave and Judy Schmidt's family have now made Paraguay home and are continuing the work begun by their family. As a five-year-old boy, Anton Schmidt watched his grandfather working as a doctor and determined to follow in his footsteps. He is now an intern and in spring will complete his training as a medical doctor at University of Asuncion. He and his wife Faith (who is a nurse) plan to continue the

work his grandfather started in Tres Palmas.

Jerald Schmidt, another son of Dave and Judy, is active in helping in the church in Filadelfia.

The impact of these families is far-reaching. It should be an encouragement for others who are hearing the Lord's call to missions. Whether at home or abroad, may our lives leave such a legacy!

Evelyn Rodgers



Nurse Clara and Dr. John Schmidt were first-generation missionaries to Paraguay. Their children and their children's children have since served.



Anton Schmidt followed in his grandfather's footsteps by becoming a doctor and marrying a nurse, Faith. Their daughter is Nyah.



Chris and Revita Kroeker—with children Stefan, Cory, and Daniela—are involved in radio ministry in Paraguay.



Marge and Frank Kroeker arrived in Paraguay in 1963 and have served that country for 36 years.



Daniela and Jerald Schmidt were married on January 18, 2003, and carry on a legacy of ministry in Paraguay, along with Anton and Faith (with Nyah) Schmidt, Vaneza, Dave and Judy Schmidt, Wendy Schmidt, Heidi and Marvin Schmidt (with daughter Carla as flower girl).

With Our Churches

Changes at RFC

Rosenort (Man.) Fellowship: The summer months at Rosenort Fellowship Church are always full of events, comings and goings. The annual bridal shower, high school grad events, joint community service, and senior youth mission trip were some highlights from June through August.

Our church services started earlier; various care groups were in charge of creatively highlighting a Beautitude through drama, readings, and song, followed by a message from the pastor. We had our fourth year of VBS outreach in Oak Bluff with many children attending. Thanks to the many who helped during this time, as well as at Living Fountain Bible Camp.

We were blessed with the arrival of our new youth leader Jeremy Wolfe, whose initiation consisted of travelling with Brent and Terrilee Friesen and Randy Siemens as leaders of the youth mission trip to Denver, Colorado. The youth included Jordan Bisonet, Jon Dueck, Ashley Friesen, Chelsea Friesen, Marvin Giesbrecht, Erin Kroeker, Megan Kroeker, Melissa Moreau, Chandra Rempel, Riley Thiessen, and Kelly Zacharias. They fully enjoyed their missions exposure to the inner city.

During the first weekend in July we helped host the EMC annual convention, which focused on missions. Elizabeth Rempel from travelled to Africa for the Mennonite World Conference and enjoyed the fellowship of many believers there.

September is not only back-to-school time, but also back to AWANA and to a regular schedule of Sunday school and

church services. There are many opportunities for service in different areas of the church and community. Christian Life classes started for baptismal and membership candidates.

Carl and Lisa Loewen reported on their work in the Philippines with the Honest Hands program under Action International. On September 14 they were blessed with the early birth of their third son Samuel. They returned to the Philippines in early January.

On September 28 Jeremy Wolfe was commissioned as youth leader. Rev. Darren Plett of Pleasant Valley church spoke on *Let no man despise thy youth*, based on 2 Timothy 2:14-16, 22-26. Jeremy gave a brief testimony and shared his favourite Scripture verse. The service was followed by a fellowship lunch.

October and November were missionary focus months. Gordon Johnson of Rio Grande Bible Institute spoke on October 5. We combined our Thanksgiving service with the membership acceptance of Randy and MaryAnne Siemens and Andrea Toews; this was followed by communion.

Stephen Kehler reported on his year-long missions experience aboard the ship *Mercy* in Africa with YWAM. Many people were operated on and were witnessed to at the same time. Ron Penner reported on teaching English in Ukraine, while Rev. Ward Parkinson from Morris Fellowship Chapel spoke about prayer and evangelism in the context of persecution, prison bars, and pride. "We need to be on our knees," he said. "Only God knows the limits of what happens when His people pray."

Attending Rosenort's annual bridal shower, on June 6, were: (back) Nettie Giesbrecht, Carri Derksen, Heather Kroeker, (front) Shannon Driedger, Marla Cornelsen, and Evie Voth.



Jeremy Wolfe was installed as youth director at Rosenort Fellowship on Sept 28. Church council chairman Harry Koop led in prayer, joined by BMD chairman Darren Plett and RFC senior pastor John Driedger.

Randy Froom from Café 75 (Morris Youth for Christ) took us on a visual trip of the youth drop-in centre, and Dan Koop informed us of the work of handing out Bibles through LifeLight Ministries.

What a blessing it is to hear about our ministry opportunities both in our neighbourhoods, our country, and in far away countries as well. One ministry that we can all be involved in—whether young, older, or middle-aged—is a prayer ministry. Let's keep praying and we will see great things happen!

Sharon Friesen

Gabrielle Thiessen is the centre of attention while Pastor John Driedger and her parents Teresa and Anthony dedicate her to the Lord on July 20.



Available at Conference office

My Dad, Mr. Peter T. Kroeker as I remember him - Frank P. Kroeker, 2002, 167 pp. \$15 plus mailing (\$4.50 of each book goes to EMC radio and AIDS missions projects in Paraguay).

EMC Social Concerns Essay Contest

Topic: What is our Christian responsibility to the economic poor?
Some questions you might probe in your essay: Who are the poor? What did Jesus mean by "the poor you have always have with you" and "blessed are the poor"? What responsibility does the church have for social change? How does it relate to the government in this?

The contest is open to senior high school students. Deadline for material received is March 29, 2004. The SCC is committed to social concern/justice from a Christian perspective and entries will be judged by content and writing skills.

The essay is to be 1,200 to 1,500 words, preferably typed and double-spaced.

First prize is \$150. Two honourable mentions of \$75 each. Winning entrants hereby give permission for the material to be published in *The Messenger* at the discretion of the SCC and the editor.

Please send entries to:

Doris Penner, chair,
EMC Social Concerns Committee
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For inquiries, contact
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SCC secretary
at 204-326-6401

Sponsored by
EMC Social Concerns Committee,
under authority of
EMC Board of Ministers and Deacons



Baby dedication at Fort Frances

Fort Frances, Ont.: A baby dedication was held at Fort Frances on September 21: Pastor Jeff and Laural Ann Plett, Chris and Marilyn Rittau with their children Annalise, Caitland, and Aaron (the child dedicated);

Lindsay and Rick Strickland with Keira; Tanya and Kelly Cunningham with Andrew.

Evelyn Hicks



Anniversary at Pleasant Valley

Pleasant Valley (Rosenort, Man.): Nick and Mary Eidse held their 50th anniversary celebration at Hecla Island in July. They are in the front with Elmer and Lucille Eidse. In the middle are Danny and Florence Loewen, Clarence and Marlene

Dueck, Ernie and Mary Ann Loewen, Jim and Terri Eidse. In the back are Larry and Sandi Eidse, Rob and Laverna Eidse, Lloyd and Karen Kornelsen.

Eleanor Rempel

Blumenort takes second straight EMCup

The 19th annual EMCup hockey tournament was held in Steinbach, Man., on the weekend of November 7 to 9. Six games were played in either Mitchell or La Broquerie. A total of 20 teams, 300 players, 17 referees and hundreds of fans participated. Teams came from Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario.

About 100 people showed up for

breakfast on Saturday morning as Mike Waddell, from Hockey Ministries International, shared about his ministry with junior hockey teams from across western Canada. This year a small donation was made from each team toward HMI and the work that Mike does.

The four teams advancing to the semi-finals this year were Blumenort 1,

Ridgewood, Rosenort Fellowship and Prairie Rose. The semi-final games took place late Saturday evening and saw Blumenort defeat Prairie Rose and Ridgewood advance past Rosenort Fellowship.

The final on Sunday afternoon did not present about 200 fans with a close, exciting game they hoped to see. Blumenort outscored Ridgewood 10-2. While the game was never close, it was good to see that the teams remained friendly and appeared to still be having fun. This was Blumenort's second straight EMCup win.

Other teams participating were Fort Garry, Morweena (two teams), Blumenort 2, Rosenort EMC, St. Vital, Steinbach EFC/Portage, Fort Frances, Grande Prairie/La Crete, Kleefeld, Morris, Mount Salem, Riverton, Steinbach Bible College and Steinbach EMC.

The tournament committee would like to thank all the players, referees, timekeepers, arena staff, and fans for another successful tournament. See you next November!

Malcolm Koop



While the score in the final game of the EMCup was never close, Blumenort and Ridgewood remained friendly and had fun. Twenty teams competed in the tournament on Nov. 7-9.



Diane Reimer was baptized and accepted into membership along with her husband Rod on October 19. We've appreciated their involvement and participation in various ministries of the church—even to the point of playing the part of a pink flamingo for the Christmas program. Their children are Cameron, Abigail, and Ian.

Dedication and baptism

Anola, Man.: The Sunday school department, under the direction of Anne Daemart and Melanie Frayle, put on a musical performance of what it would have been like for all the birds and small creatures in Bethlehem at the time of Jesus' birth. All of the colorful critters (the children in costume) rejoiced in song at the gift of God in His Son Jesus.

Val Koop



On Sunday, November 23, three couples chose to dedicate their children to the Lord, and themselves to raising their children in God's way: Tony and Kathleen Grift with James, Rod and Diane Reimer with Cameron, Dan and Melissa Cosens with Damien, and Pastor John Cosens.

Programs, spiritual warfare, and young people serving

Kleefeld, Man.: Autumn always brings with it a fresh energy, and that was evident again as the programs started up after a summer's break. Sunday school, Boys Brigade, Girls Club, Junior and Senior Youth, Bible studies, Breakaway for Women and many other programs keep us all busy and growing. Thank you to all the people who so willingly (and energetically) make these programs possible.

Another highlight of the fall season was a sermon series on Spiritual Warfare. Pastor Darryl challenged and taught us as he focused on the weapons of evil forces and how they can disrupt our walk with God—weapons like lies, temptations, disruptions to our prayer life, and shame. It was a worthwhile and eye-opening topic.

Our annual Thanksgiving supper, always a highlight in our community, was well attended. Many hands prepared a delicious meal for us all to enjoy, and \$1,600 was raised for the EMC medical station in Paraguay. The evening was rounded out with a musical program presented by members of Janz Team.

Our church family had the privilege of sending out three young ladies from our congregation as missionaries this summer and fall. Becki Bergen, daughter of Abe and Kathy, left in September for an orphanage in Haiti. She'll be working there for several months, helping with the daily care of infants there.

Lorissa Thiessen left in August to spend a year teaching English in China. Her sister Jennifer spent several weeks in October working in Cuba with her third year class from SBC. Both Lorissa and Jennifer are daughters of Dennis and Sara Thiessen. How exciting to see these young women step out of their comfort zone in faith as they serve our Lord!

Iris Bartel



Phyllis and Ron Harder transferred their membership on Nov. 16.



On Sept. 28 there was a deacon installation: Pastor Darryl Klassen with deacon couples Dennis and Sara Thiessen, and Linda and Herb Wiebe.



A parent-child dedication was held on Sept. 21: (front) Jenn and Rob Reimer with Logan, and Kara and Gil Friesen with Dawson; (back) pastor Darryl Klassen, Becky and Levi McCarroll with Michael.

SBC Leadership Conference

Empowered Leadership in a Congregational Church

2004

March 19-20, 2004
Speaker Owen Burkholder
 Call SBC to register 204-326-6451 or 1-800-230-8478
 Register online: www.sbcollege.mb.ca
Pre-registration preferred



RALPH EDWARD DUECK
1934-2003

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to take our dear brother and uncle to his eternal Home on Friday, November 28, 2003, at the age of 69 years. Ralph passed away peacefully at the Boundary Trails Health Centre with family by his side.

He was born on August 31, 1934, to John and Bertha (nee Schellenberg) Dueck, and was baptized upon the confession of his faith on August 19, 1951, by Rev. Jacob B. Kroeker, and accepted as a member of the Rosenort EMC. Prayer was a very special part of Ralph's life. He would often be heard saying, "I'm praying for you." When he memorized Psalm 23, we were all pleasantly surprised. He would quote this portion of scripture to anyone.

Ralph grew up on a farm near Rosenort. There he helped his dad by operating a tractor on the field and doing numerous other chores. He bought a green Chevy pickup that took him wherever he desired to go. He worked for Levi Brandt for a while, pumping gas and hauling barrels of fuel to farmers.

He also picked up a few other jobs at Rosenort businesses which he thoroughly enjoyed. Later he moved to Winkler and worked at the Occupational Centre. He would spend the weekends with his family, and was able to attend his home church regularly. We will always remember Ralph as a faithful church-goer. During "testimony time," he was usually the first one up.

Ralph had a strong desire to someday become a missionary. Music was a major part of Ralph's life; he thrived on it. At an early age he loved singing and learned many choruses quickly. He also enjoyed singing in the church choir.

Ralph spent the last five years at Salem Home in Winkler, where he was loved and wonderfully cared for. He enjoyed many of their activities, musical groups, and of course visitors that were well greeted and much appreciated by him.

He was admitted to Boundary Trails Health Centre on Tuesday, November 25, where he stayed until he was called to his Heavenly Home. His last days were hard for him, and for those who sat with him as

well. We thank the Lord for carrying him through this difficult time. His suffering has now turned to joy, as he has laid aside this earthly burden of his body and has now entered into a new dimension of life in Christ.

We believe that when Ralph entered heaven, he was greeted with the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." We hope and pray that there have been those who have accepted Jesus as their Saviour through his trials.

We rest assured that if Ralph were able to come back from heaven for a moment to say a few words, they would be to encourage everyone to live for Jesus. We as Christians have a wonderful hope and promise of eternal life with Christ. We believe by faith in God's Word that we will see Ralph again someday, along with Christ and his saints! "Those who live in the Lord never see each other for the last time" — what a glorious hope!

Ralph will be sadly missed and lovingly remembered by his siblings and their families: brothers Johnny and Elsie, and Stan and Val; sisters Eleanor Zacharias, Helen Loewen and friend Pete, Gladys and John Thiessen, Lorraine and Lorne Loewen; and his "special step-brother" Bill Schellenberg. He was predeceased by his parents; brothers-in-law Abe Loewen and Dick Zacharias; and nephews Clark Loewen and Wesley Zacharias.

We would like to thank the Cottonwood staff at the Salem Home, and Dr. Busson and nurses at Boundary Trails Health Centre for their compassionate care for

We rest assured that if Ralph were able to come back from heaven for a moment to say a few words, they would be to encourage everyone to live for Jesus. We as Christians have a wonderful hope and promise of eternal life with Christ.

Ralph. Also, thank you to all our friends for their kindness through prayers, visits, food, flowers, and cards. Your support has strengthened us during this difficult time. If friends so desire, donations in Ralph's memory may be made to EMC Missions.

The funeral service was held on Friday, December 5, at the Rosenort Evangelical Mennonite Church, with interment in the Rosenort Cemetery. Funeral arrangements were in the care of Morris Funeral Home.

His Family

Project Macedonia 2004

Belize, An Exciting Summer Mission for July 2004

July 9 to August 2

We are looking for energetic, enthusiastic and committed young adults who are willing to give of their time and talent!

Ministry: in Spanish villages; in Blue Creek, Spanish Lookout, and Shipyard; youth ministry; work project: build a school on the colony of Shipyard.

Applicants must be 18 or a high school graduate. Each member needs to raise about \$2,000 Canadian for travel, passports, inoculations, accommodations and insurance.

Application deadline is May 15.

Project Macedonia

is a joint venture of
Evangelical Mennonite Conference
Chortitzer Mennonite Conference
Evangelical Mennonite
Mission Conference
Steinbach Bible College

Contact:

Gerald D. Reimer
Conference Youth Minister
Evangelical Mennonite Conference
emcger@mts.net
204-326-6401



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JOHNNY D. LOEWEN
SEPTEMBER 26, 1931 –
NOVEMBER 16, 2003

Johnny was called home to be with his Lord and Saviour on November 16, 2003, at the Red River Valley Lodge at the age of 72. He is survived by his wife Sarah and family—Lori and husband Rod Wolfe of Niverville and their two daughters Annika and Janae; and Bryan and wife Patty of Rosenort and their daughter Amy.

John was born to Peter J. K. and Annie Loewen of Riverside (Rosenhof), the oldest of nine children. Due to a serious back injury he suffered as a teenager, he was unable to pursue his dream of farming,

so he decided to further his education. He attended MCI in Gretna to finish his high school, attended Steinbach Bible College, and then headed off to Teacher's College. Later he finished his Bachelor of Education at the University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba.

It was while teaching in the Rosenort area that he met Sarah Hiebert of Altona, one of his fellow teachers, and they were married on July 21, 1966.

As a teenager, John committed his life to Christ and that led to a lifetime of serving God in a variety of capacities. He was a man known for his strong spiritual character and his dedication to the church. In 1972 he was elected as a minister in the Rosenort Evangelical Mennonite Church and in 1974 he left teaching and became the full-time pastor there.

He found real fulfillment in serving God and people in both careers, since both were dear to his heart. After 12 years as pastor, he returned to teaching, spending several years at St. Adolphe School. But the call of God soon led back to pastoring, this time spending several years with Low German-speaking people in Lowe Farm. All these years, John also kept his interest in farming, seeding some of his own acreage as well as being involved during harvest wherever possible.

In October of 2000, John and Sarah moved

from their country home to the apartments in Rosenort. John's love for farming never left him, and he enjoyed going for drives to inspect the growing crops, watch the farmers work in the fields, or observe the harvesting work going on.

John always had a love for sports and, although his participation was limited, he actively encouraged his children in their interests and supported them wherever possible. Other interests included politics, as well as reading and writing.

In September 2001, John suffered a stroke, which combined with his Parkinson's Disease, meant his physical abilities were severely limited. He spent the next year at home, being cared for by Sarah, until his health deteriorated to the point of needing more care than she could provide. In January of 2003 he was admitted to the Red River Valley Lodge, where he lived out his last days.

We as a family rejoice that he is no longer suffering, but is now in the glorious presence of God.

His Family

ANDREW SIEMENS
JANUARY 21, 1991 – JANUARY 23, 2003



Now I come to you, Jesus
To look for the place
Where I first gazed upon your face.
As I enter your presence
I realize your grace
And I find my rest in Your embrace.

Dear Andrew,

A year ago...I packed your lunch, gave you a hug and kiss and sent you off to school. Dad dropped you off and told you he loved you and said, "Have a good day." You knew we would be at home waiting for you when you got off the bus. We're still waiting, Andrew...We miss you so much. The ache in our hearts is unbearable. Oh, how we long to hear the sound of your voice and your laughter and to hold you one more time. Jeremy and Carly need you so much. Our home is so quiet without you. Everything we do reminds us that you're not here.

Andrew, you were an amazing kid. Thank you for all the joy you brought into our home. We are so proud of you and we are forever blessed because of you. We love you always and we long for the day when we will see you again.

Thank you, God, for the gift of Andrew.

*Love,
Mom and Dad, Jeremy and Carly*

In loving memory of a special Grandson and Nephew who passed away so suddenly a year ago. There isn't a day that goes by that we don't think of you. Our hearts ache for you. "If tears could build a stairway and memories a lane, I'd walk right up to Heaven and bring you home again."

*Lovingly remembered and forever in our hearts,
Grandma Charlotte Wiens and Uncles David and Paul*



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
SUSIE EIDSE (NEE SIEMENS)
MAY 9, 1929 – JANUARY 15, 2003

A year has gone by since Susie was laid to rest. We are sustained by the many happy memories we have of her and in the hope of seeing her again some day. Her love, her prayers, and the many tasks of caring for her family are sorely missed. These memories lighten our sorrow a bit, but we deeply grieve our loss still. We are looking forward to that wonderful time we've been expecting, when his glory shall be seen—the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13).

*Loving remembered by
Dave and family*



J.M. Klassen with current executive director Don Peters.

MCC Canada marks 40th anniversary

MCC Canada celebrated its 40th anniversary at its annual meeting in Winnipeg, Man., on Nov. 27-29, 2003. J.M. Klassen, MCC Canada's first executive director and executive director emeritus, addressed delegates. He said in part, "The actual creation of MCC Canada was not that simple, nor was it easy...The new wine could not be contained in the old wineskins...."

"MCC Canada cannot rest on its laurels. It must remain...energetic, creative and flexible. It must remain true to its calling to be engaged in the kinds of things that Jesus did and taught his disciples to do. We must simply be ready to respond to the needs and opportunities as we become aware of them.

"We must continue to allow individuals, churches, conferences and other entities to contribute their vision, their support in money, in goods-in-kind and in personnel. [We also need to] entrust these resources to a board and staff in whom the constituency has confidence. And then, 'Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus...' (Col. 3:17)."

MCC Canada

Students in Winnipeg, be on the lookout for these men!

Gerald Reimer,
Conference
Youth Minister



Mark
von Kampen,
U. of M.
Chaplain



Post-secondary events;

University of Manitoba

Prayer: Taking time to adjust your antenna

Thursday, Feb. 12, Room 224A-C,

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

University Centre

Canadian Mennonite University

Tuesday, Feb. 24, South Campus,

Noon-1:30 p.m.

Speaker: TBA

Details will be sent to churches. Check your church bulletin or contact your pastor.

Gerald can be contacted at emcger@mts.net or 204-326-6401



Archivist's
Alcove

Loren Koehler
Volunteer Archivist

Calling all Collectors!

The EMC Board of Church Ministries requests that three copies of each *Messenger* issue be preserved—one for the archives and two for the open set. If you have a good copy of any of the issues noted below and wish to donate it to the EMC Archives, please contact the Conference office. We need one to three copies of what's listed below. Thank you.

Missing Messenger Issues

Year	Volume	Number
1963	1	5,6,7,8,10,12,13,14,15,16
1964	2	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,12,13,14,15,18
1965	3	5,19
1966	4	All needed
1967	5	All needed except 13
1968	6	All needed
1969	7	All needed
1970	8	All needed
1971	9	All needed
1972	10	All needed
1973	11	All needed
1974	12	All needed
1975	13	All needed
1976	14	All needed
1977	15	All needed
1978	16	All needed
1979	17	3,4,9,10,11,12,14,15,18,19
1980	18	10,11,13,22
1981	19	All needed except 1,2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
1982	20	All needed except 15
1983	21	All needed
1984	22	All needed
1985	23	All needed
1986	24	None needed
1987	25	None needed
1988	26	2,4,24
1989	27	11,24
1990	28	8,14
1991	29	4
1992	30	None needed
1993	31	None needed
1994	32	None needed
1995	33	None needed
1996	34	3
1997	35	None needed
1998	36	7
1999	37	16
2000	38	6,16
2001	39	4,6,10,12,14
2002	40	1,3,8,10
2003	41	None needed

Shoulder Tapping

Note: Because positions are numerous, short ads will appear. Please notify *The Messenger* when ads are not needed. An ad can be removed after two insertions unless prior arrangements have been made. Thank you. – Editor

Inner City Youth Alive is an organization in the North End of Winnipeg, Man., that reaches youth and their families in the community. It seeks a **community ministry coordinator** that will work with adults from the surrounding community, and with volunteers and staff to be the hands and feet of Christ. It also is seeking a **program director** that should possess pastoral gifts and be ready to support and encourage the staff team. Phone: 204-582-8779. Email: icya@mts.net Website: www.innercityyouthalive.org

A **director** is sought for a new addictions treatment rehabilitation centre in Cuauhtemoc, Mexico. The director will work with MCC workers and a program committee. An ability to speak Low German, High German, or Spanish is an asset. Contact Mary Friesen at maryf@mennonitecc.ca or 204-261-6381.

Wymark EMC is a congregation of about 130, set in a rural, farming community in southwest Saskatchewan. We seek a **senior pastor** willing to serve the Lord by modeling and communicating an intimate relationship with God, His Word and His family. He must be able to equip and encourage local leadership, building them up so they can reach out and disciple others. For information, call Blaine Friesen at 306-627-3441; send a resume at Box 116 McMahan, SK S0N 1M0; or email blfriesen@t2.net.

People seek friendship and a better life! Open Circle, a ministry of MCC in Manitoba, invites applications from volunteers willing to serve as **visitors** to inmates in Manitoba prisons and in **supportive roles** to newly-released prisoners who request support during their resettlement into the community. Call Murray Barkman at 204-772-5317 or e-mail opencircle@mts.net.

Fish Creek Christian Fellowship (EMC) in Calgary, Alta., is looking for someone or a couple to give **ministry leadership to our youth/college and career**. This is a self-supported position. Contact Garry Kornelsen, 55 Woodford Cres. SW, Calgary, AB T2W 4C6 or phone 403-281-3747.

Action International Ministries needs a **business administrator** to serve in Manila, Philippines. This position is open immediately for someone who loves the Lord and people, is an administrator, and can trust the Lord for their support. Other ministry opportunities exist. Learning Tagalog is encouraged, but not required. You would work with about 25 missionaries and 12 Filipino staff who minister to urban poor, street children and to strengthen churches. Two years is required, four or more preferred. Check our website: www.actionph.org or email Mary Ann at maryann@actionintl.org.

Riverton MCC Thrift Store seeks a **manager** to promote MCC's objectives and manage the shop as a service to the local and global community. Needed are vision, leadership and interpersonal skills. The shop has clothing and housewares, with a new furniture location to open in 2004. Mail resume to Riverton MCC Thrift Shop, Box 623, Riverton, MB ROC 2R0.

Pelly Fellowship Chapel (EMC) is looking for a full-time **lead pastor**. Pelly is a small rural community (300 people) in east-central Saskatchewan. The congregation averages 40 on Sunday mornings and is the only evangelical church in the community.

Please forward your resume or questions to the search committee by mail at Box 70, Pelly, SK S0A 2Z0 or phone Eugene Prokott at 306-595-2287, Lewis Anfinson at 306-595-4743 or Dan Johnson at 306-594-2151, or email woodlandsigns@sasktel.net.

Morris Fellowship Chapel (EMC) seeks a **youth leader** for a half-time position to direct the youth group program. Expansion in this ministry could include post-secondary age group. Contact Pastor Ward Parkinson at Box 219, Morris, MB R0G 1K0. Call 204-746-2424.

Kola EMC, serving a small community in southwest Manitoba, seeks a **full-time youth pastor** to work primarily with a group of about 25 youth. Contact Les Martens at 204-565-2604, email leskola@mts.net, or fax 204-565-2635.

Riverton Gospel Chapel (EMC), a small rural town in Manitoba's Interlake, seeks a **half-time pastor**. This friendly and loving congregation has an average attendance of 75-100, with a high percentage of young families. The area provides other employment opportunities in various sectors, including farming and construction, and has good schools.

Contact Paul Peters, board chair, by mail: Box 356, Riverton, MB ROC 2R0, by e-mail: paul@vidir.com, or by phone: 204-378-2740 (home), 204-364-2442 (work).

Endeavour Fellowship Chapel (EMC), a warm, friendly congregation with 50 to 60 in attendance on Sunday morning, seeks a **pastor**. It is located in a small town/rural part of east-central Saskatchewan, between Yorkton and Hudson Bay.

The church is flexible both in standards for both candidate education and experience. As an evangelical church in town, it serves a wide range of people. Contact chairman of elders Neil Fenske at 306-547-4738 or Box 263, Endeavour, SK, S0A 0W0.

For information on Mennonites visit



Third Way Café
www.thirdway.com



INFORMATION EVENING
FEBRUARY 19
7:00 PM

Complete Grades 7-12!

All interested parents and students are invited to tour the school and interact with the staff. Have all your questions answered and find out all you need to know about our

Quality Education with a Christian Perspective.



Calling Intercessors for Picture Butte!

God is doing a new work in Picture Butte, Alberta. You can become involved in this work by joining a prayer team. This prayer team will spend a weekend in Picture Butte on April 23-26, 2004. You will then commit yourself to pray for this church plant for one year and seek to involve your church in praying. If you would like to be a part of this team, please contact Peter or Trudy Dueck (Directors of Canadian Church Planting) as soon as possible. Call 204-376-3490 or e-mail tpdueck@mts.net

Trudy and Peter Dueck
Directors, Canadian Church Planting

Have you got your copy?



Come See What God Has Done

\$10 plus shipping from the EMC office.



Plan to attend the 54th EMC Annual Convention



Reproducing the New Testament Church

July 2 to 4, 2004

Swan River, Man.

Speakers: Conroy Koop, Peter Dueck, Mike Plett, Cameron McKenzie

A Puzzle and an Experiment



WHAT IS something you can feel and hear, but you cannot taste it, smell it, or see it? Here is a clue: All living things, including plants and animals, need it. Can you guess what it is?

If you guessed *air*, you are right.

Air is like a blanket that surrounds the earth. Where the blanket ends, outer space begins. When an astronaut flies into outer space he must take air with him so he can breathe.

People, plants and animals need this layer of air to live. Without it they would die. People who have been lost or stranded have lived for a month without food. They could live for a week without water. But people can live only a few minutes without air.

Air is important because it gives us life. But air does more than that. The layer of air that covers the earth protects it from harmful rays from the sun. Air protects earth from meteors hitting it. When you see a shooting star, or meteor, streak across the night sky it suddenly disappears. Meteors burn up in the protective blanket of air before they hit the earth.

Sunshine makes the earth warm enough for people to live on it. The blanket of air traps or holds heat from the sun. Outer space is cold. It has no air. Astronauts wear space suits to keep warm.

Air has water in it and brings rain and snow to earth. Moisture collects in the air as clouds. When clouds are full and cannot hold any more they burst and the moisture falls to the earth. Rain is important because every living thing needs moisture.

Did you know that we need air to hear? Without air the world would be completely silent like it is on the moon. If you went for a walk on the moon you could not hear your friend talking to you, or your mother calling you. You would not hear your dog bark. A rocket would take off in silence and a spaceship would dock without a sound. For sounds to be heard they have to travel through something. The moon has no air for sounds to travel through.

Air takes up space and has weight. When you blow up a balloon the air going in pushes against the sides of the balloon. The balloon stretches; it gets bigger as air fills the space inside. The weight of air helps insects, birds and airplanes fly. Air pushes from below and it flows over their wings. This keeps them up.

Although we cannot see it, smell it, or taste it, air is as real as land and water. Without air there would be no life on earth.

What was the first breath of air the first person on earth took? Read Genesis 2:7 for the answer.



An experiment to show that air has weight

You will need:

- 2 balloons
- thread
- a pin
- a stick about 1 meter long

What to do:

- Tie a piece of thread to the middle of the stick so it is balanced.
- Blow up both balloons so they are equal in size.
- Tie each one up with thread.
- Tie a piece of thread about 45 cm. long to each balloon.
- Hang a balloon on each end of the stick so the stick remains balanced.
- Have a friend hold the stick by the thread so it is still, then burst one of the balloons with a pin and watch what happens.

The unburst balloon will swing downwards because it is heavier than the burst balloon. It is the air in it that makes it heavier than the burst balloon. This proves that air has weight. ■

Do you have a story for The Personal Touch? It must be a true account (although names may be changed, if necessary) illustrating the Christian life or character. Send your 700-word story and a photograph of yourself or suggestion for a story to the address below.