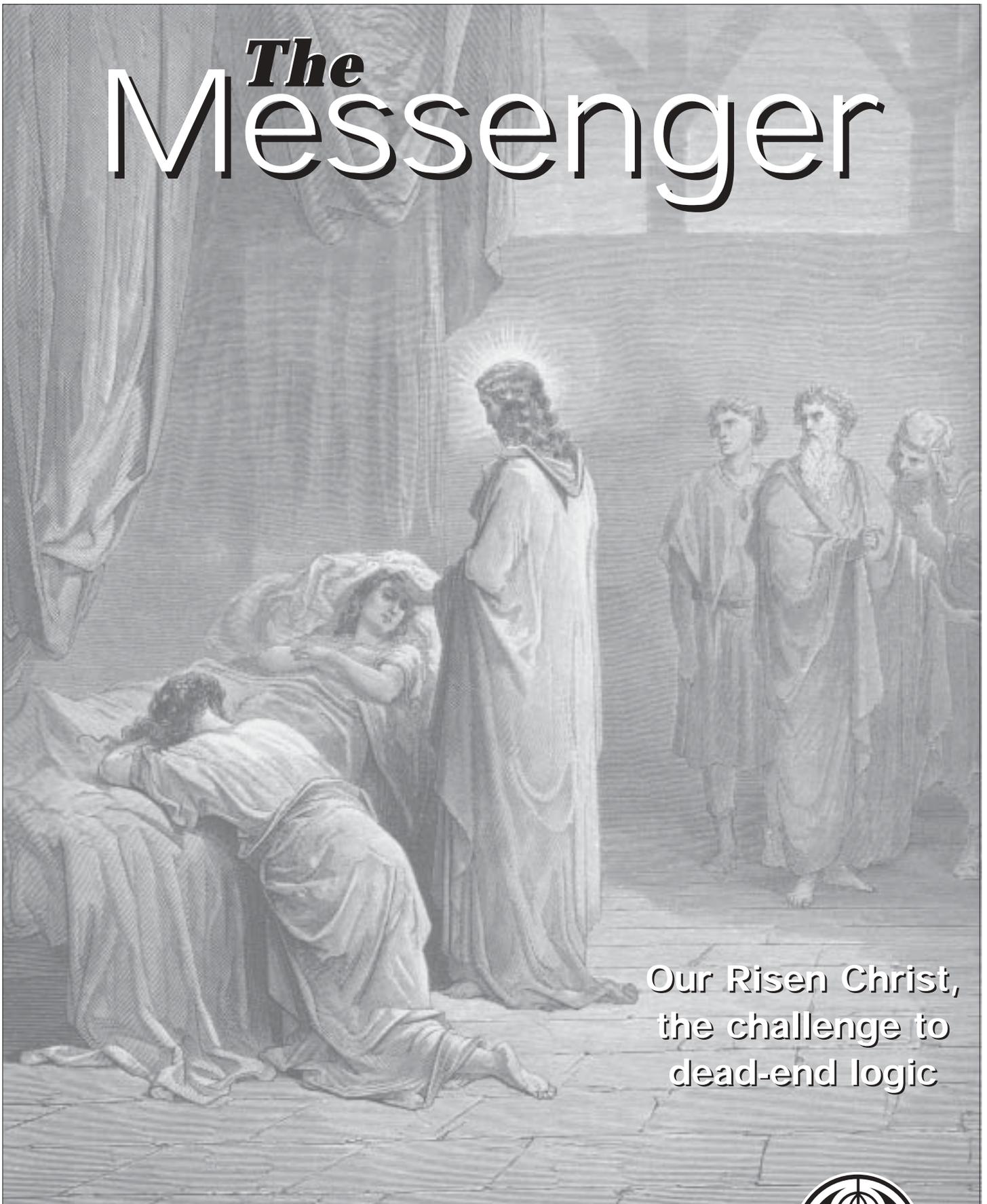


# *The* Messenger



Jesus raising up the daughter of Jairus—Gustave Doré

Our Risen Christ,  
the challenge to  
dead-end logic

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE CONFERENCE  
VOLUME 42 NUMBER 6 MARCH 24, 2004



## More foster parents are needed

“RELIGION that God accepts as pure and faultless,” says James, is “to look after orphans and widows in their distress” (1:27). If orphans are children who need parents, we have many orphans in Canada.

In Ontario, the number of children in foster care has risen by 70 percent since 1995. A shortage of beds in foster and group homes is putting a growing number of children at risk. Other provinces also struggle to place children; some children stay in hotels because there is no suitable place for them. When a child is scared and confused, a hotel doesn't provide the security and comfort a family would.

Many children in foster care have special needs, and are struggling with issues beyond their years—abuse, fear, despair, insecurity, and a sense of being unwanted and unloved. More people are needed to step forward and make the love of Christ known to these hurting children.

Some people might say, “These children are already in custody, and they have parents. Why should I be concerned?” The sad reality, however, is that some biological parents are unable or unfit to care for their children. The foster care system is overloaded, with more children needing care than people willing to provide it. This is where caring Christians can step in.

There are various reasons people fear to take in foster children.

I grew up with foster children in our home. People said to my parents, “What you're doing is so great, but I could never do that.” They were afraid of becoming emotionally attached and having to let go. Some people perhaps thought my parents were unfeeling. It takes courage to care despite the pain of separation. I know my parents hurt when a child left their home.

Part of life is letting go. At a certain point, you have to let go of people and trust God to take care of them. Sometimes that time comes sooner than one would wish.

For people, however, who want something more lasting, there are opportunities to give long-term care as well as short-term. Some children are without family that can care for them and need a permanent placement. On the flip side, people who are uncomfortable with long-term care could volunteer to give emergency care—a brief stop-over for children on their

way to more long-term care.

Another fear people can have, if they have children in the home, is that their children will be corrupted. Yes, that is a risk. Often children in foster care don't know how to receive love. They are hurting and can respond in harmful ways. While no one can promise the rewards will outweigh the risks, caring for hurt children can teach us how to love unconditionally as Christ loves. He loves us even when we reject him and his ways.

Modeling this kind of love for your children could be one of the best things you can do for them.

People uncomfortable having a child in their home full-time could consider being a friend, or big brother or sister, to a child who comes from a broken home. To develop into healthy adults, children need good role models. There are programs seeking to provide this, such as mentoring programs in schools and the Big Brother and Big Sister program. Perhaps you know of a child from a single parent home who could benefit from joining your family for supper or a special outing.

Another option could be providing respite for someone who is a foster parent. Caring for children with special needs, whether those needs are physical, emotional or mental, is exhausting work and people who provide this care need support. By taking their children for a couple of hours, a day, or a weekend, you are giving them a much-needed and well-deserved break.

Opening our homes to children who need a family, whether part-time or full-time, is something Christ calls us to do. When families are breaking down, it is not enough to look at our immediate family and say, “Everything's okay here.” Like Isaiah, we are sent “to bind up the brokenhearted” and to “comfort those who mourn” (61:1-2). In Christ, we are to be part of this mission in our world. Foster parenting is one way of doing this.

You want to be a missionary, but aren't ready to go overseas? Bring the mission field to you. Start with taking one needy child into your home and into your life. Many Christians are already involved in this ministry; you are to be commended. To those who are not involved, there is room for more to be done.

Becky Buhler  
Assistant Editor

### 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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(copy due April 09)

# Our Risen Christ, the challenge to dead-end logic

*Terry M. Smith*

**A**T EASTER we celebrate that Jesus Christ our Saviour was raised. Because of Him those who give him their trust also live. Because Christ was raised death is no longer the same.

But when Paul writes to the Church at Corinth, he isn't writing to Jewish people with a lengthy history with a rich background in faith in God, Scripture as the Word of God, and trust in a future resurrection. This group of first-generation Greek Christians reflects the skepticism they are raised with. Perhaps it's a skepticism that some of us can identify with!

The upper class in Greece was known for philosophy, the love of wisdom. They argued that the body is unimportant and the human soul is immortal; at death the soul is freed to return to the eternal. But that thinking hadn't trickled

down to rank-and-file Greeks. For the common person death is the end. William Barclay writes of a grave inscription: *I was not—I was born. I was—now I am not. That is the sum. If any man says otherwise, he lies. I shall not be* (p. 356, *The Plain Man Looks at the Apostles' Creed*).

The apostle Paul speaks to such emptiness. He reminds people of the sure hope that stems from the heart of our faith, Jesus Christ.

### **The heart of our faith is Christ**

Paul puts as central that Christ died for sins, was buried, raised, and appeared (1 Cor. 15:1–7). Our Lord came to earth to deliver us. He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, paying our price on the cross (Isaiah 53:4–6; Mark 10:45). He was buried, then raised on the third day, again according to the plan of God. He appeared on Easter Sunday.

### **The historical basis of our faith**

The apostle's writing to the church at Corinth is challenging, inviting and reassuring for its faith, logic, and strength. Here there is early historical evidence for Christ's resurrection (1 Cor. 15:5–8). Christ died in 30 A.D. Paul wrote this letter about 25 years later, yet the evidence within it goes back much earlier.

This passage contains a list of people that Jesus appeared to: Peter, the Twelve, five hundred brethren, James, the apostles, and Paul. Through this list Paul reminds the church of the historical evidence for Christ's resurrection.

Mentioned is James (v. 7), the half-brother of Jesus. Scripture is brutally honest in saying that Jesus' family sought to get Him away from the crowds; they thought he was out of his mind (Mark 3:21). But after His death, Christ appeared to James. James became a leader in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 12:17) and his turn-around is evidence that Christ is alive.

Paul puts himself on the list, though he says he doesn't deserve to be. As a rabbi he had thought Christians taught dangerous nonsense. He arrested Christians, but then he got arrested himself, stopped on the way to Damascus when Jesus appeared to him (Gal. 1:11–16).

Changed, Paul proclaimed the risen Christ for decades in unity with the other apostles (Gal. 1:18–19). A skeptic convinced became an apostle beheaded in Rome in 64 A.D. Paul knew Christ was alive; the evidence is in his conversion and efforts.

Think of how the disciples changed. Though Jesus tried to prepare them for his death and resurrection, they didn't understand. When He died they feared the Romans would kill them. But women and men found the tomb empty and the Lord appeared to them (1 Cor. 15:5, 7).

The apostles became messengers to the nations, fearless, willing to die violent deaths—which all but one did—because they knew Christ was alive. They could say with Paul, "The life



Jesus and the disciples going to Emmaus (see Luke 24:13-31)  
Gustave Doré

I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

Paul lists others to whom Jesus appeared—among them, the five hundred. A. M. Hunter says the letter to the Corinthians “goes back to a time when there were literally hundreds still living who, with their own eyes, had seen the risen Christ, so that Paul can say, in effect, ‘If you don’t take my word for it, ask them’” (*Preaching the New Testament*, p. 70).

### **Logic in over-drive**

But some people at Corinth said there is no resurrection from the dead. Paul responds, “If you’re saying that, think a bit more!” He argues in 15:12–19, if the dead aren’t raised, Christ isn’t raised. If Christ isn’t raised, “our preaching is useless and so is our faith.” We are false witnesses about God and Christ. “Your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.” Those who have “fallen asleep in Christ are lost.”

This logic brings horrible results and it gets worse. If “only in this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.” Christians sacrifice and serve for what purpose? If Christ is dead, he can’t help us; we are pitiful people who have squandered what time we have.

Paul is saying, “You want me to act like a skeptic? Here’s more to think about!” He became as a Greek to Greeks that he might save some (1 Cor. 9:20–22). Paul was a Roman citizen, a well-trained rabbi who could stand on Mars Hill in Athens and debate with Greeks, quoting from their philosophers (Acts 17:16–34).

His advantage is that he knows how wrong logic can mislead. On the road to Damascus, he believed that Christians were lying or deceived and that Jesus was a blasphemer whose body was hidden somewhere. Then he ran into the glorious, risen Christ (Acts 9:1–9). He had been so wrong about Jesus!

### **Our Lord revealed**

Jesus was a teacher, a prophet, and more. We say “Amen” at the end of our prayer; He used it at the start because his words are true and of absolute authority (Matt. 5:18, 26). Jesus spoke of

God as his Father in a closeness of *Abba* (Mark 14:36). He was the Son sent after prophets were rejected (Matt. 21:37). Our Lord forgave sins (Mark 2:5). He said he would return on clouds of glory (Mark 14:62).

He said he was the judge at the end of human history (Matt. 7:21–22) and that people would be judged on the basis of how they responded to Him (Matt. 5:11; 10:32–33; Luke 12:8–9).

Soldiers, religious leaders, and crowds mocked him. Yet condemned to die, Jesus did not stay dead. He was declared to be “the Son of God with power” by the resurrection (Rom. 1:4)—revealed to be exactly who He showed and said He was.

### **A response expected**

“Christ has indeed been raised from the dead” (1 Cor. 15:20). Paul calls Jesus “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.” As a gardener or a farmer looks to the harvest, we can look ahead. Because of Jesus there are more resurrections to come!

Paul rejoices in Jesus’ triumph. “Death has been swallowed up in victory” (v. 54). What keeps us from God? The barrier of sin. But there is Good News: “But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 57). Christ’s grace is available to all of us, if we will only hear and turn to Him.

The apostle says to the church, “Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm” in the Good News of Jesus. “Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain” (v. 58).

### **Christ has been raised!**

Paul has challenged the Corinthians to consider their dead-end logic. Then he returns to the positive: “But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead” (15:20). Dead-end logic is shattered by the resurrection of Jesus.

**B**ecause Christ is raised, we are assured there is a resurrection from the dead. Our preaching is useful and so is our faith. We are true witnesses about God. Our faith is most worthwhile. We are no longer in our sins, but forgiven in Christ. To die in Christ is to fall asleep and not to perish. We have hope in this life and in the life beyond. We are not people to be pitied.

As the apostle Peter said, “We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty” (2 Peter 1:16). And as Paul has said: “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord!’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved... ‘Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame’” (Rom. 10:9–11).

Thanks be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ! ■

Terry M. Smith is an ordained EMC minister who holds BRS degrees from Steinbach Bible College and Mennonite Brethren Bible College and a diploma in journalism from SAIT. He interned in Thompson, Man., and Calgary, Alta., before serving as pastor of Northern Fellowship Chapel (EMC) in Creighton, Sask., for 11 years. He has served in the EMC national office as executive secretary and editor since July 1997.



## The Passover Lamb

Jesus prayed  
Judas betrayed  
The darkest hour  
For Satan's power

Peter's denial  
The mockery Trial  
A murderer pardoned  
Hearts have hardened

People Cry,  
Crucify  
Our Atonement need  
Has been decreed

Broken bread  
For us instead  
Poured out wine  
The appointed time

The Passover Lamb  
The Redemption of man  
No bones broken  
For God has spoken

Darkness Fell  
Jesus Yelled  
The curtain rends  
His agony ends

Faces of gloom  
The empty tomb  
Angels appeared  
The Women feared

God be Praised!  
Jesus Raised!  
His plan completed  
Death defeated

Brigitte Toews



A Woman's  
Journey of Faith  
Betty Koop  
Steinbach, Manitoba

### BETSY

THE CHURCH platform was beautiful in the sparkling glow of a small forest of evergreens covered with tiny lights. All around us, people were settling into the pews on this first day of 2004.

It was the annual joint New Year's Day service shared by the Blumenort and Ridgewood (Manitoba) EMC churches. Joyous, hearty singing, meaningful Bible readings, several testimonies and a devotional made up the program.

Later, we greeted Betsy, one of the young women who had shared a testimony. She had spoken very honestly of her journey through pain as her little son struggled with a serious illness.

I will use some of her own words to tell her story:

"Morley [her son] was four years old when he began to cough uncontrollably at night. Possibly, we thought, he was allergic to his feather pillow...Then he started waking up with puffy eyes."

Betsy did not realize that Morley's symptoms were signs of possible kidney disease and so was not particularly worried. However, when she noticed that he seemed unusually tired, she took him to see a doctor. The doctor acted swiftly. Morley's kidneys were failing. They must take him to Children's Hospital in Winnipeg immediately.

This was the beginning of countless blood tests, finger pokes, blood pressure checks, IVs, biopsies, and much more.

At first they were assured that there was a good chance that Morley's kidneys could be saved. His life was not threatened, so they felt at peace.

Betsy continued, "It took three biopsies before Morley's disease was diagnosed. I will never forget that dark and cold evening...when one of the doctors broke the news. He explained the disease, the type of treatment they were going to try with huge doses of IV Prednisone and all the dreaded side effects of this drug.

"I was numbed! It hit like a bombshell that this was no ten-day prescription. The doctor had been talking years and still there was *no* guarantee Morley's kidneys would function normally. I wanted some sort of guarantee! I had nowhere else to run except into God's eternal arms and hide there. I found myself helplessly clinging to Him and putting my trust in Him for whatever the bleak future would bring. Steve and I couldn't keep going in our own strength. We desperately needed supernatural strength."

When Morley did not respond to the Prednisone, dialysis was inevitable and a future transplant was discussed as well.

His condition deteriorated rapidly and he was hooked up to a dialysis machine. This would be his buddy for the next two years.

"My dreams of becoming a nurse were being fulfilled in ways that I had never imagined," Betsy continued. "After Christmas my training began. I learned how to do dialysis, insert feeding tubes, give needles, do blood pressure checks and all about the meds. I often felt very overwhelmed by it all but the Lord renewed my strength one hour at a time."

However, the summer before the transplant was memorable. Even with his disease, Morley did very well and carried on a near normal lifestyle. They often went swimming, and Morley loved tooling around on his battery-operated 4-wheeler.

Steve, his father, was found to be the best match for a kidney transplant. Although he was somewhat apprehensive, they all looked forward to the time when Morley would be able to run and play and eat normally again.

Everything seemed fine after the transplant surgery, but one week later complications set in. After Morley had emergency surgery to try to correct the difficulties, Betsy was allowed to see him in the Intensive Care Unit. Death seemed to be hanging in the air. But Betsy sat beside him, held his hand, read to him and prayed out loud.

She said, "God picked us both up in His strong arms and carried us. I felt completely enveloped in His love! Many times during this stretch of three weeks in ICU, I felt as though God had allowed my oldest child and me to come with Him on a long journey. I felt special!"

But the malfunctioning kidney had to be removed. Before he was wheeled into the operating room again (for the third time in three weeks), Betsy knelt beside him and prayed. She wanted him to know that Jesus would go with him wherever he went.

Morley was discharged from hospital just on time for Christmas. For the next six months they tried to make life as normal as possible, in spite of Morley's continued suffering. Betsy felt drained, both emotionally and physically.

In June he was again rushed to the hospital. Several more diseases were diagnosed. A few months later, his dialysis failed.

Betsy's quiet, pain-filled voice continued, "On September 12, 1995, Morley let go of our hands and took hold of Jesus' hand and they crossed the finish line together. Morley died peacefully while rocking in my arms."

She concluded, "With Morley cheering me on from the grandstands of heaven, I will run with perseverance the race marked out for me. I will keep my eyes fixed on Jesus, my Shepherd. I don't know what obstacles lie in my path in the year 2004...But the Lord says, 'Fear not...I will be with you...For I am the Lord, your God'" (Isaiah 43:1-3).

## Letters

### THANKS, GORD!

Really enjoyed the recent article on worship by Gord Penner [*Got Religion? Not Enough!* Jan. 14, 2004]. Great stuff, Gord! Thanks.

Martha Doerksen  
Oasis, Chihuahua State, Mexico

A servant's heart

## Attendance light at Providence post-secondary meeting

Chris Eidse first appeared on Providence College and Seminary's campus at Otterburne, Man., as a drunken teenager at *Youth Encounter*. Years later his first night on campus as a student included sitting in the back of a police car in Winnipeg. When he decided to become involved with Inner City Youth Alive, Chris found some people expressing surprise that he was entering a ministry.

Yet Chris Eidse was now back on campus, after years of successful ministry at ICYA, to tell students, "If God can use someone like me, God can use anybody."

Chris spoke on February 26 at a post-secondary meeting held at *The Well* (a lounge) behind the bookstore. Raised in Morris Fellowship Chapel (EMC), Eidse explained that he had worshipped "the god of fun," but when he stopped enjoying it, he became a Christian.

He decided to attend college when he found that "half of my class" was "going to Prov." At college he was on academic probation for the first year, but went on to finish a degree.

He told students that God can help us to overcome fears and to develop a servant's heart in ministry.

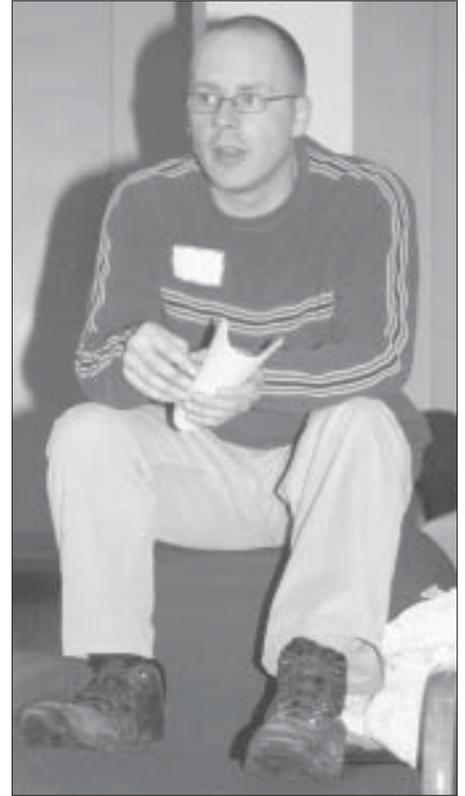
Inner City Youth Alive is an outreach ministry in the North End of Winnipeg, Man. Eidse explained that ICYA has a work education program, workshops, a private school, a church plant, a summer camping program, and more. Chris, a husband and a father, is an associate missionary under the EMC Board of Missions.

Attendance by EMC students was light at the event; they were outnumbered by welcome students from other backgrounds. Two faculty members with EMC connections, two ICYA staff members, and two national office staff members also attended the gathering.

The gathering was coordinated by Gerald Reimer, Conference Youth Minister. Reimer works with the Board of Church Ministries, sponsor of the event. Notices were placed on campus, sent to pastors, and to churches as bulletin information. It was also published in *The Messenger*.

Such events are held on campuses in Manitoba and wider. Pastors are encouraged to forward lists of students attending post-secondary institutions. In recent years forwarding of the lists has been poor, according to Reimer.

Terry M. Smith



Chris Eidse spoke to students on February 26. His history on the campus of Providence revealed a spiritual journey drawing upon the grace of Christ. (editor)

## Valentine's celebrated at Rest Haven



Nelli Holstein of Steinbach Regional Secondary School serves Mary and Peter Barkman at the Valentine's Luncheon at Rest Haven Nursing Home in Steinbach. (photo by Karly Kehler)

On February 14, seven couples and guests attended the Valentine's Luncheon held at Rest Haven Nursing Home in Steinbach, Man.

"For years couples have enjoyed celebrating Valentine's together," said Karly Kehler, coordinator of recreation services. "This luncheon simply allows them to continue this."

For five years Mr. Laurie MacIntosh and the Steinbach Regional Secondary School culinary food services department have provided and served the lunch. This year the meal consisted of German potato bisque soup, salad, chicken pot pie, and black forest torte.

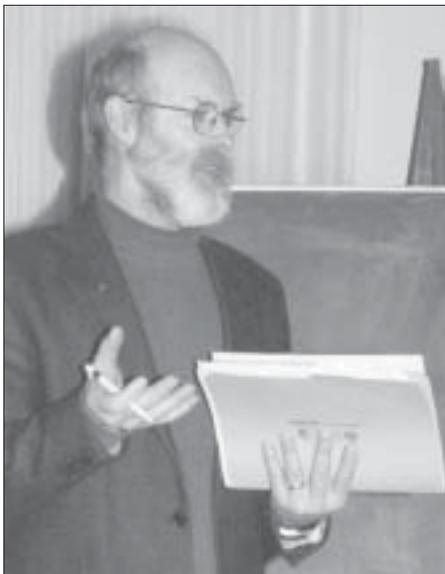
"We could see by the smiles of residents that they appreciated the food and the contact with teenagers willing to serve them. We appreciate the care that Mr. MacIntosh and his students show to Rest Haven residents. Thank you, SRSS!" said Karly. "And we appreciate the couples' families and the guests who assisted us."

Rest Haven Nursing Home serves 60 residents from various church and cultural backgrounds. In cooperation with the provincial government, it is operated by local churches connected with the EMC.

Rest Haven



Moderator Don Thiessen



Gary Martens



Together board members and staff envisioned EMC in the future.

(photos by editor)

## All boards meeting

# The Reproducing Church: Setting our sights on 2010

*Looking ahead to 2010, what is God inviting us as a conference to be and to do?* That question was faced by members of the conference's five national boards and national office staff who gathered at Ridgewood EMC near Giroux, Man., on February 28 for an *EMC All Boards Visioning Day*.

The day was led by Edwin Friesen (Prairie Rose) and Gary Martens (Kleefeld).

### Devotional

Moderator Don Thiessen spoke from Matthew 5:13-16 and Acts 1:7-8. He said that the church's role centres on "to be." The passages say "you are" light and salt and "you are" witnesses. "It's in our character," he said. Salt seasons, disinfects, and preserves. "How do we affect society?" he asked. And darkness cannot stand against light.

But there is a problem: Salt can lose its saltiness and light can be covered. The church needs to beware of "historical drift," the tendency of Christian structures to lose their focus after 100 years. With the EMC's new focus (missions) now being 50 years old, Thiessen expressed concern about where the denomination will be in another 50 years. He asked, what do we need to do to be what we need to be?

### Overview

General Secretary Len Barkman explained that the day was a further follow-up to the EMC conference assessment that happened in 1993.

Edwin Friesen shared statistics. In 1957 the EMC had 10 churches and 2,100 members; by 2003 it had 50 churches and 7,100 members. (The number of churches has fluctuated around 50 since 1989.) In 1994, EMC per member giving was \$248, while in 2003 it was \$299.

### Vision Statements

Each board was asked to present a vision statement, which was read in detail at the meeting. Some highlights are:

The *Board of Ministers and Deacons* focused on a new emphasis on work in Canada. It said we need to work at a stronger theological unity within the conference and "to get serious about amalgamating with the EMMC."

The *Board of Church Ministries* wants each region to plant one church every three years. It said we "need to treat our ministers better so that others are not turned away from such ministry" and to distinguish more between faith and culture. "Churches need to take or have a little more 'pride' in being EMC."

The *Board of Missions* is to assist Latin

American churches toward maturity, to focus more on unreached people groups, and to involve local churches more in recruitment and gift discernment. In Canada the church must shift from "going to church" to "becoming the church," and churches in "saturated" areas should consider "training and sending teams to the next city or beyond to Quebec and the Maritimes and overseas."

The *Board of Trustees* will work to "ensure timely and adequate flow of finances to meet the obligations of the budget approved by the Conference Council" and envisioned "a more substantial Building Loan Fund" and "establishing a Building Grant Fund."

The *General Board*, which convened the meeting, did not present a vision statement.

### Format

The meeting focused on small and large group discussions. Groups made lists, refined priorities, and discussed strategies. Edwin Friesen passed around a card that read: *A vision without action is only a dream. Action without vision is only a chore. A vision with action can change the world.*

By 2010, people envisioned an increase in missionaries (175, now 145), churches (65, now 52), members (8916, now 7100), and budget (\$2 million, compared to \$1,560,717).

In votes cast for priorities, more votes were cast in favour of church planting (42), nurturing leadership (34) and theological/spiritual nurture (33). Missions (20); financial (18); other, including mediation for churches in conflict and social justice (17), and EMC/EMMC merger (10) got lower votes. Edwin Friesen said that the lower missions vote does not reflect as much of a shift in priorities as raw numbers indicate.

The day's events were closed with a communion service conducted by John Reimer, pastor of Community Bible Fellowship (Swan River).

### Follow-up

More reporting on this day will follow. Edwin Friesen and Gary Martens have prepared a report. Boards and staff people will respond further. While the meeting did not have a legislative function, it was an attempt to envision and to give leadership. The General Board, which convened the event, is composed of the moderator, vice-moderator, board chairs and regional representatives; regional representation is also sought for the other four national boards.

Terry M. Smith



Window  
on Missions

Len Barkman  
General Secretary

## Younger leaders, the future is yours!



Len and Faye Barkman, Lionel and Thor (Prairie Rose), have left for Belize where they will be involved in teaching at King's College.

(August 17, 1979, The Messenger)

THOSE OF us moving into the older generation often have nostalgic moments when we remember the energy, idealism and sometimes even a passionate naivete that consumed every aspect of our more youthful days.

When my wife Faye and I first went out as missionaries in teaching and administration (Bahamas, 1973-78; Belize, 1979-82) we were enthralled with the great things we hoped to accomplish in the work of the Lord. Few challenges were too big to tackle. No doubt this has been the experience for many of the over 500 missionaries who have gone out under EMC missions in the past 50 years.

In recent years our conference has seen a dramatic transition of leadership in our churches. A quick review would show that the majority of our senior pastors are in the 30- to 45-year-old range, a drop from a generation ago. Many younger people are moving into assistant and youth pastor roles. Young people are responding to the desperately needy spiritual and social conditions in the world around and beyond us.

Youthfulness is a treasure to be celebrated. It is a resource to be nurtured and encouraged in our conference. Youthful presence brings with it a dynamic for renewal, for change and new vitality for our future.

At our February 2004 conference's envisioning meeting, I was excited to see the emerging generation of committed men and women deeply engaged in

developing direction for the future of EMC. Here are reflections on my hope and confidence in this youthful generation.

First, *our younger generation is cross-culturally equipped.* Many have grown up in culturally diverse schools and church communities and have participated in cross-cultural or mission-related exposure trips. These experiences can only help to bring about a greater openness to cross-cultural ministry.

Second, *this generation has a heart and desire for community and relational involvement.* The task-driven mentality of traditional North American society has

often had difficulty connecting with relationally-driven cultures. What an open door for this generation to be instrumental in bridging the communication gap with aboriginal people and recently arrived ethnic groups, as well as those in foreign cultures.

Third, *I am confident that this generation of leaders and workers will hold strongly to servanthood as modeled by Jesus Christ.* We have many current examples of this attitude as we look at those of our members who have gone to the inner city, to remote and sometimes desolate communities throughout the world.

Fourth, *globalization has affected every area of life.* Adapting to new economic, political and religious realities requires strong resilience and an attitude of openness to new strategies and methodologies in how we communicate the gospel. A youthful spirit welcomes change. This, combined with wise mentoring, can open creative ways to revitalize the church as it seeks to communicate the love of Christ.

Finally, *a youthful generation brings with it an explosion of energy and enthusiasm.* At a time when doors of opportunity are open wide for church planting and evangelism we need all the resources and exuberance this generation can muster. Younger leaders, the future is yours! Embrace it with confidence and joy for the remarkable things God will do through you. And may we as a community of believers affirm and mentor their passion for service.



**Take TESOL at SBC**  
April 26 - June 4, 2004



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204-326-6451 • 800-230-8478 or [admissions@sbcollege.mb.ca](mailto:admissions@sbcollege.mb.ca)  
[www.sbcollege.mb.ca](http://www.sbcollege.mb.ca)

# Why camping in Paraguay?

Camping ministry is a term that in most circles at home in Canada would be well understood. It immediately brings to mind certain images: roughing it in the bush, cooking over a fire, mosquitoes, smelling like smoke. Here in Paraguay people respond with a question in their eyes when I talk about taking young people camping. The Spanish word here in Paraguay for *camping* is *camping* (just add a Spanish accent), which shows that it is not a common practice.

In Canada camping is called recreation and we are willing to pay significant money for it. In Paraguay roughing it in the bush is done because men are trying to hack a living out of it. You would hardly think to give this outdoor living a name and refer to it as recreation, never mind pay any money for it!

So why would it occur to me to take guys on camping trips here in the Paraguayan context? I give the guys three reasons: to have fun, to build good friendships, and to take a fresh look at your faith and relationship with God.

We had lots of fun! We learned to set up a tent, drop a fishing line and hook into a pond and wait for that little tug. We pulled out the guitars and sang. We savagely tore meat off from a bone using our hands and teeth (yes, we did barbecue it first), wrestled in the water, and floated down river on tire tubes for a couple of hours. Judging from the guys' response, objective number one was definitely achieved.

Building good friendships: Most of the guys know each other better than I know them. It was nice being able to get to know them on a more personal level. Floating down the river, we were two people per tire tube. My partner was shy, but by the

end of the trip he was asking me real life questions, which is always a joy for me.

Objective number three was to take a fresh look at our relationship with God. Forget the church lingo that is taken on so quickly. Let's talk in real terms and call things by their real name! The topic for all three groups was sexual purity. The responses varied as it would in any group.

Some averted eye contact throughout the discussion while others clearly connected with the topic and wanted to go deeper in their relationships with God. I trust the results of this final and most important objective will be ongoing.

A big thank you to youth at Abundant Springs 2003 for the generous offering that you gave. The money has and is being used to buy camping equipment and to subsidize some camping expenses. I let each camping group know where some of the funds come from.

Gil Rempel



Gil Rempel (Prairie Grove) is involved in youth and leadership training in Paraguay. His wife Renita is a nurse.



A group shot before heading home.



Starting the two-hour journey down the river on tire tubes.



Enjoying a time of singing and sharing around the fire.



▲ Arnaldo making the best of his free time.



Who said Paraguayan guys can't cook?



Enjoying a warm evening sharing tereré, jokes, and friendship.

# With Our Churches

## 10 years of ministry with Hans and Luella

### Steinbach EMC:

On February 29 we had a celebration of 10 years of ministry for Hans and Luella Rahn. The program consisted of tributes, a gift and a prayer of blessing.

### Tributes to Hans and Luella Rahn:

Hans helped me to get out of my comfort zone.

Character Building was Hans' favorite expression.

Hans had a real knack for shoulder tapping.

Craig Brandt

Had the privilege with working with Hans and Luella the last ten years.

His leadership in Christian Education has been greatly appreciated.

Valrae Epp

You were an encourager  
You were there for others  
You have demonstrated strong  
organizational skill

Thanks, Luella, for your part in the ministry

Anna Plett

You were sensitive and honest

You have inspired me

Luella, you impressed me with your  
hospitality

Appreciated Jessica, Mandy and Sydney

Camden Rempel



Ben Friesen led in prayer for Pastor Hans and Luella Rahn, who are leaving pastoral involvement at Steinbach EMC after a decade of service. Rob Hildebrand, pastor of youth ministries, stands at the far left.

Henry Nickel, church council chairman, presented Rahns with a gift. Ben Friesen offered the prayer of blessing: *I thank you, dear Lord, for Hans... Bless Hans for his sacrificial commitment. We also thank*

*you for Luella...*

At the close, both Hans and Luella had opportunity to share their feelings with the congregation.

Dave K. Schellenberg



Cornie and Irene Bergen left us in early March to enter a period of voluntary service under MCC in the SOOP (Service Opportunities for Older People) program in the San Antonio, Texas, area.



February 15 saw six young ladies baptized in our church: Nicole Funk, Kim Reimer, Michelle Kroeker, Katrina Kohler, Amy Hildebrand and Erica Nickel. Performing the baptisms were our pastor of discipleship ministries Hans Rahn assisted by pastor of youth ministries Rob Hildebrand (not pictured).



# Time to plan your giving?

Churches that consistently ask their members to plan their giving have greater success in meeting their financial goals.

spending to congregational vision and mission.

For stewardship education and services, contact your nearest Mennonite Foundation of Canada office: Abbotsford – Dave Kroeker, 1-888-212-8608; Niagara – Darren Pries-Klassen, 1-888-212-8731; Kitchener – Mike Strathdee, 1-888-212-7759; Winnipeg – Edwin Friesen, 1-800-772-3257.

SPRING is a time of planning for many of us. What to plant in the garden, where we hope to go on summer vacation? How to spend this year's tax refund if one is coming?

Is planning your giving for the coming year on your *to do* list? If you are in leadership, are you encouraging members of your congregation or supporters of your ministry to estimate their giving for the seasons ahead?

People who plan their giving donate significantly more to charity than people who don't plan their donations, a recent poll of more than 2,000 Canadians found. Respondents to the Decima Research survey who planned their giving in advance donate an average of \$756 a year, compared with an average \$270 a year among those who wait until they are asked to give. Close to half of respondents claimed charitable gifts on their previous year's tax return. Just under one in three Canadians plan their donations, survey results show.

For Christians, giving regularly out of our first and best or *first-fruits*, rather than leftovers, is a matter of obedience to Scripture and an act of worship of our God. It's also an expression of trust. Recently I heard a businessman talk about the fact that since his income is irregular and can be uncertain, he struggled with giving a set amount on a regular basis. But he didn't agonize over putting business expenses on a line of credit and then paying that off once he got paid. Now he gives regularly and happily.

Mennonite Foundation of Canada stewardship consultants are available to work with your congregation in developing covenants or pledges around giving. We can also help you rethink congregational finance, telling your budget story through Narrative Spending Plans that link



Conroy Koop



Peter Dueck



Mike Plett



Cameron McKenzie



## Plan to attend the 54<sup>th</sup> 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

### Convention Registration

Pre-registration is encouraged for the EMC convention in Swan River. Registration forms will be sent to churches and available at the EMC website ([www.emconf.ca](http://www.emconf.ca)).

People attending are encouraged to make lodging arrangements well in advance; space in Swan River itself is limited. For information, contact the national office at 204-326-6401.

**See you at convention!**

### Spring Intensives Evangelical Anabaptist Seminary program Winnipeg, Man.

*Old Testament theology* (3 cr.)  
Pierre Gilbert, Ph.D.  
April 19–23, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*Preaching the Sermon  
on the Mount* (2-3 cr.)  
Herb Kopp, M.A.  
April 26–30, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

*The Book of Revelation* (2-3 cr.)  
Loren Johns, Ph.D.  
April 30 (6 to 9 a.m.),  
May 1 (9 a.m. to 4 p.m.),  
May 3–7 (9 a.m. to noon)

All courses are held at Canadian Mennonite University

Credit students (3 units): \$460  
Auditors: \$125

For information, contact:  
Pierre Gilbert, coordinator.

Office: 204-487-3300  
E-mail: [pgilbert@cmu.ca](mailto:pgilbert@cmu.ca)

### Project Macedonia 2004

Belize, An Exciting Summer  
Mission for July 2004

July 9 to August 2

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.**

**Contact:**  
Gerald D. Reimer  
Conference Youth Minister  
Evangelical Mennonite Conference  
[emcger@mts.net](mailto:emcger@mts.net)  
204-326-6401

# North Americans seek their place in a new global mission context

A NEW era has begun in Mennonite mission work, and North Americans are trying to figure out how they fit into it.

Churches around the world that once received missionaries now are sending them. International relationships of equality are emerging, creating a desire for cooperation and ending the exclusive leadership of North Americans.

Seeking to adapt to these changes, leaders of North American Mennonite mission agencies Jan. 30–31 made plans to form a regional mission fellowship that will take its place alongside similar bodies being formed in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

Each region is a subgroup of the Global Mission Fellowship, created last August at the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Zimbabwe. About 50 conferences and agencies around the world have joined the GMF, whose purpose is to strengthen international cooperation in mission work.

North America already has an inter-Mennonite mission forum, the Council of International Anabaptist Ministries. But the members of CIM, whose annual meeting in Chicago drew about 70 participants, decided the North American part of the GMF needed a fresh start.

So they appointed Janet Plenert, executive director of international ministries for Mennonite Church Canada Witness, to lead the formation of a North American regional mission fellowship.

"I thank God for God's moving among us," Plenert said after accepting the assignment. "I'm both grateful and overwhelmed by the task ahead."

Plenert said creating a regional fellowship might help people see mission work in a new way. "It breaks down the image that we've always had that mission happens only out there," she said. "It challenges us to see North America as one of the global mission frontiers."

At the meeting of representatives from 20 agencies, conferences and institutions, the mission leaders often spoke of the changes brought by the globalization of mission work.

"We [North Americans] have seen ourselves as central to the global Christian mission movement," said Richard Showalter, president of Eastern Mennonite Missions. "That day, however, is over. We are, in many respects, running to catch up." What North Americans are catching up to is a growing web of mission efforts crisscrossing the globe.

"I feel uncomfortable now sitting in an area committee [of CIM] and deciding how missions in Africa should be done," said Harold Ens, general director of MBMS International, the Mennonite Brethren

mission agency. "Because I know the Brazilians are sending missionaries to Africa, too."

Ens also cited the examples of German Mennonites doing mission work in Brazil and Paraguay, Colombians evangelizing in Peru, Mexico and Panama, and Japanese in Thailand. "We're in a totally different world in terms of international mission," he said. "It's very complex."

North America, too, is an international mission field. Indonesian and Honduran Mennonites have planted churches in North America. Representing the Honduran church at the CIM meeting was Javier Soler, who chairs the GMF planning committee. Soler is president of Amor Viviente, or Living Love, a group of churches in Honduras that grew out of work by Eastern Mennonite Missions, the Lancaster Mennonite Conference mission agency.

Amor Viviente, founded in 1974, planted a church in New Orleans in 1983 and now has 12 established congregations in North America and two more in formation.

"We're just a small part of this movement of God," Soler said. "Our work here in the U.S. is a good example of how a mission, EMM, relates to a church that sends missionaries."

Participants called attention to how North American Mennonites' growing ethnic diversity strengthens the church. Samson Lo, a Chinese pastor and director of cross-cultural ministries for MC Canada Witness, said 40 congregations in British Columbia represent cultures and ethnic backgrounds that are new to MC Canada.

Agency leaders at the CIM meeting said they were taking just the first steps toward

greater changes to come. A regional mission fellowship in North America might eventually replace CIM, Plenert said.

The most important thing will be to respond to God's leading in a new day for fulfilling the Great Commission. "For us in North America, the challenge is how to partner effectively with the evangelistic vision that has emerged in churches around the world," said Len Barkman, representing the Evangelical Mennonite Conference.

"It is good to see the doors open to a greater level of cooperation in international mission."

Paul Schrag, Meetinghouse

**The members of the Council of International Anabaptist Ministries**  
Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Brethren in Christ World Mission, China Educational Exchange, Eastern Mennonite Missions, Eastern Mennonite University, Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, Fellowship of Evangelical Churches, Franconia Mennonite Conference, Global Disciples Network, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, MBMS International, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Church Canada, Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Mennonite Medical Association, Mennonite Mission Network, Rosedale Mennonite Missions, Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions.



Janet Plenert of Mennonite Church Canada Witness listens as Javier Soler of the Amor Viviente church in Honduras speaks during the Council of International Anabaptist Ministries meeting. Plenert has been assigned to lead the formation of a North American regional mission fellowship within the new Global Mission Fellowship, of which EMC is a partner.



Focus On . . .

Len Barkman  
General Secretary

# Gifts from Africa

already begun. Today many Western countries are also mission fields. We are ready and willing to go to these countries as missionaries as well.

often we don't realize what we are capable of doing. We underestimate ourselves when we think that we can't really do very much.

God is concerned with the quality of our contribution, not the quantity. God's evaluation is not based on the size of the investment but rather upon faithfulness, whether with little or with much.

Note how the Scriptures put it:  
Some give freely, yet grow all the richer;  
Others withhold what is due, and only suffer want.

A generous person will be enriched,  
And one who give water will get water.  
Proverbs 11:24-25

God calls us to give what we have. We are to give our all, as God's instruments, so that the world may know God's peace."

Part of this article is excerpted from a sermon Siaka Traore preached on Africa Day, August 16, 2003, during Mennonite World Conference's Assembly Gathered in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The sermon first appeared in *The Courier* (2004 Quarter 1).

SIAKA Traoré is a key leader in the emerging Mennonite church in Burkina Faso, West Africa. He converted from Islam through the witness of AIMM missionaries and serves as Vice President of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso.

His administrative gifts and commitment to Christ have also prepared him for his role as coordinator of the MCC peace program in West Africa. AIMM frequently seeks his council in matters relating to ministry in Burkina Faso. Siaka was one of the plenary speakers at Mennonite World Conference. He closed his message with an expression of appreciation for the gifts we share within the global Anabaptist Family.

1. "We have the gift of gratitude to all those who gave their lives for the salvation of the people of Africa. In reading the history of mission work in Africa, we cannot be unmoved by the determination of the early missionaries who died in Africa—from diseases or from violent acts committed by some of our people. God alone knows how many of them are buried on the African continent. They loved God, as they showed by giving their lives for us. There is no greater love than to give one's life for one's friends.

2. We have the gift of commitment to cross-cultural mission among those of our peoples who have not yet been reached by the gospel. This will complete the task

3. We have the gift of our cultural heritage—songs, rhythms, dances—that can be used to the celebration and praise of God. For us as Africans, faith in God is a unified whole. We cannot separate our spiritual life, our relationship with God, from our professional, social, or emotional lives. God is there at the center of everything, and we want to share this dimension of our faith with our brothers and sisters.

4. We have the gift of hospitality. As Africans we believe in the sacredness of human beings. One way we show this is through hospitality, something that is highly valued in our cultures. To receive and welcome guests is an honor for the hosts and a valued part of the African tradition.

5. We have the gift of being a joyful people. Even in suffering, we know how to rejoice. In difficulties and shortages, we have learned to hope—even to hope against all hope. This joy is often lacking among people who appear to have everything. We want to share our joy with others.

6. We have the gift of natural resources. As Africans, God has endowed us with the gift of natural resources, not for our own use, but for us to share with the rest of the human family. We have resources, others have technology, so let us sit and discuss together how all can benefit and not be exploited from these.

Together we have much to give. Too

## Global Gift Sharing Program meeting

On Friday, May 7, EM Conference representatives plan to meet with Pakisa Tshimika and Tim Lind of the Mennonite World Conference, Global Gift Sharing Program. Discussion will focus on the potential of inter-church and conference global networks.

If you are interested in participating in these discussions please call Len Barkman at 204-326-6401.



Pakisa Tshimika



Siaka Traoré (right) was one of the plenary speakers at Mennonite World Conference.

# Low German Mennonite colonies open drug treatment centre in Mexico

ceremonies were over two hours long, and most of the people who came sat outside. They showed a real desire for this program.”

MCC

Nearly 3,000 people gathered on Manitoba Colony, Chihuahua state, Mexico, on Feb. 15 for the grand opening of the 7,000 square foot Centro de Rehabilitacion, a drug and alcohol treatment centre for men.

The new facility, designed to accommodate up to 60 men at a time, is nestled in a picturesque Mexican rural hillside overlooking several Mennonite villages located approximately 20 kilometres northwest of the city of Cuauhtemoc. Once fully operational, the centre will employ two directors and a compliment of paid and volunteer workers including counselling, medical, maintenance, and kitchen staff.

The numbers at the opening exceeded all our expectations, said MCC worker John Janzen in a written report. “It was an

centre, facilitating job training programs for local staff, assisting in the development of prevention programs, and writing job descriptions.

The treatment centre is a collaborative effort, says Mary Friesen, director of the MCC Low German Program. “Leaders in the different churches, including the Old Colony church, are working together for the first time in addressing a common goal,” she says.

Mexican treatment centres have always been available for those suffering from addictions, but Low German Mennonites have made only limited use of their services. Differences in historical background, faith, and language have been difficult to overcome, says Friesen.

Staff at the new treatment centre in Manitoba colony will treat clients in their own tongue. Most Low German Mennonite men speak Spanish, but most women don’t.

“Addiction is a problem that affects the whole family, and that means the healing process must include the women as well,” says Friesen.

Funding for the treatment centre will be provided by the local communities, churches, and individual donors. The mayor of the city of Cuauhtemoc made a one million peso (\$100,000 US) presentation at the opening ceremonies and praised local leaders for their initiative.

The mayor commended the Mennonite community for taking a bold step and for providing a Christian centre of healing and rehabilitation, said Friesen. “I sensed a relationship of support and respect for the work the Low

German Mennonites are about to start,” she says.

Low German Mennonite communities have always made a significant contribution to the local economy, resulting in good relations with the government.

The centre will begin accepting clients within the next few months. The administration has already received inquiries from several individuals willing to begin the long journey of recovery. Friesen expects others may want to transfer to be closer to home.

“I commend them for their community spirit, and I was overwhelmed by their support” says Friesen. “The opening



**NORMAN JAMES CHRISTMAS**

**1935–2003**

Norman James Christmas, beloved husband of Joan Christmas of Calgary, Alta., passed away peacefully on October 31, 2003, at the age of 67.

He was born December 5, 1935, in Hamilton, Ont., and moved to Calgary in 1980.

Norm was a man who lived a life of love and joy. He suffered a knee injury as a young man that severely curtailed many activities. A blind date with Joan led to a fun-filled, wonderful 40-year marriage. He was devoted to his family and took great delight in his daughter, Cheryl and then later in his grandchildren, Megan and Henry.

He worked as a courier until increased disability due to his earlier knee injury led to his retirement. He also managed various apartment buildings.

In 2000 Norm and Joan began attending Abbeydale Christian Fellowship where he enjoyed meeting various people. It was through this church that he found God and was encouraged in his Christian walk. Norm became a member of the congregation in January 2001. He dealt uncomplainingly with diabetes and joyfully ministered to many of us. He liked to tell the story of belonging to the Langdon Odd Fellows #40, saying he was an odd fellow with a weird sense of humour.

He is missed and fondly remembered by his wife Joan, daughter Cheryl, grandchildren Megan and Henry, his brother Kenneth (Pat), sister-in-law Vera, five nieces and nephews, as well as by his countless friends. He was predeceased by his parents and his brother Robert.

His Family



A 60-voice Old Colony youth choir sang songs of hope and deliverance at the opening of the Centro de Rehabilitacion, located in Manitoba Colony, 20 kilometres northwest of Cuauhtemoc. The drug and alcohol treatment centre for men is a cooperative effort of the Low German Mennonite communities and churches in Mexico.

(photo by Bram Siemens)

incredible experience to see and feel the high level of support and interest in this new work within the [local] communities,” he said. Only 900 people got to sit inside. Others had to sit and listen to the program from the courtyard.

Community discussions for the construction of a treatment centre began in 2000. Nearing the completion of the building process, people within the community requested management support from MCC.

In September 2003, Janzen, a retired school superintendent from Manitoba, Canada, and his wife, Ruth, agreed to a two-year MCC term. They offered support in establishing guiding principles for the

# 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**

Anola Fellowship Chapel is looking for a **full-time pastor** starting as soon as June 1, 2004. We are a rural congregation with an attendance of about 125 people in a newer building. We are an EMC church comprised of people from assorted backgrounds. We have great potential for outreach. Please contact Art Koop at 204-355-4243 or David Wiebe at 204-866-3245.

Reserve Fellowship Chapel (EMC), located in Sioux Valley, Man., seeks a **part-time senior pastor**. The smaller 47-year-old congregation is part of the Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, a community that has a Christian history going back to 1879. The church serves people of various church backgrounds and experiences. Currently there exist ministries through a small Sunday service, Sunday school, Bible study and a summer VBS program. The congregation is located about 45 minutes from Brandon and Virden, where a variety of work opportunities exist. For information about this opportunity, please contact the EM Conference office at 204-326-6401.

Roseisle EMC, a warm, friendly congregation serving a diverse community, seeks a **full-time pastor**. Roseisle is a small rural town in south-central Manitoba. The church's average Sunday morning attendance is 85.

The applicant should be familiar with the Mennonite perspective and willing to be guided by the EMC Statement of Faith. Previous pastoral experience is an asset. Please submit resume and cover letter to Peter Dyck, Box 4, Roseisle, MB R0G 1V0, phone 204-435-2068; or Frank Peters, Box 94, Roseisle, MB R0G 1V0, phone 204-828-3571.

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.

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.

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.

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 R0C 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.

Pine Ridge Bible Camp (NCEM), located at Beauval in northern Sask., seeks **volunteers** to build a three-bedroom house for a missionary residence and seasonal camp staff housing. Date needed: for month of May. Contact Bill Martens at 204-320-9515 or Peter Salmond, camp coordinator, at 306-763-2035. The camp serves about 45 campers for each of five weeks. It is about 30 years old. Lodging and food are provided, but transportation isn't. Beauval is three and a half hours north of Prince Alberta. The route has paved roads, except for final 20 minutes.

Steepprock Bay Bible Camp, near Birch River, Man., seeks **counsellors, handyman, cooks and speakers**. Camp runs five weeks starting June 27. Some wages are available for counselors, lifeguards, and speakers. The handyman, who could start in June, receives free room and board. The camp is geared toward First Nations people. Contact Ang Thiessen at 204-238-4244 or ang\_thiessen@hotmail.com or Walter Oberlin at 204-734-4269.

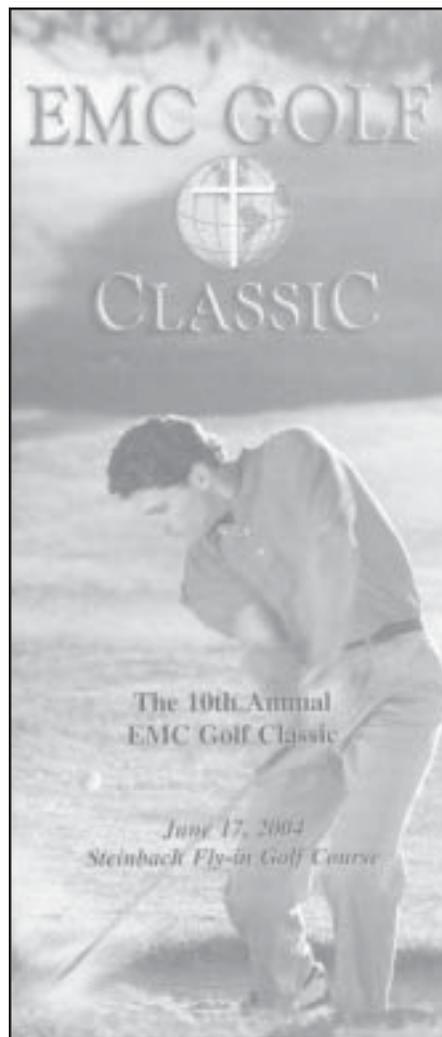
Pineridge Fellowship Chapel (EMC), Hudson Bay Sask., seeks a **full-time pastor**. The town has a population of 2,000 and serves an additional 2,000 people in the surrounding area. The warm, friendly congregation averages 75 for Sunday worship, with a cross-section of age groups and an active youth program. Our church family is from diverse church backgrounds and we are very much a community church. We offer a good remuneration package that includes a manse with heat and lights included.

Contact David Sparling, chair of the search committee, 306-865-2235 or e-mail d.sparling@sasktel.net.



**Reporters,  
keep the news  
coming!**

**Fetal Alcohol  
Syndrome Presentation  
(one hour)  
May 16  
Pleasant Valley EMC  
Rosenort, Man.  
Phone: 204-746-2008  
or 204-261-6381 (MCC)**



For information phone:  
204-255-8062  
204-746-8200  
204-378-5224

Please send registrations by  
**May 20** to Ruth Penner,  
48 Newcombe Cres.,  
Winnipeg, MB R2J 3T6

For information on Mennonites visit



**Third Way Café**  
www.thirdway.com



# Days of the Snowman

**M**ARCH is the month of spring. Each day the sun rises higher and daylight is longer. You are almost too warm in your winter jacket, hat and mitts. And each day the snowman in your yard changes a little.

In the cold days of winter the snowman stands tall and firm. He smiles at you and waves each time you look. But something happens as the temperatures rise.

In a few days the snowman seems shorter. His carrot nose droops and points to the snow below. The sun's strong rays beat down. Again the snowman shrinks. The apple halves that are his eyes slip. His nose falls. Then his eyes drop out.

After several weeks of warmer days the snowman is less than half his original size. He is now a short shapeless mound with a slippery conical bump for a head. His hat slides sideways. Still he holds one arm up. A red mitt is stuck on its end.

By now all of the snow around the snowman has melted. Each day the snowman sinks lower and lower. But his arm is still up and each day he waves his red mitt one more time.

Then one day as you step outside, the snowman has disappeared. He is nowhere to be found. In his place, lying on the wet ground, are the only clues that he was there, his hat and one red mitt. Where has the snowman gone? As long as it is cold, the snowman, made of millions of tiny ice crystals, or snowflakes, keeps its shape. As the sun shines warmer, the ice crystals melt. The snowman turns into water.

Like the melted snow, the snowman disappears into the ground. It sinks way down to an underground river, called ground water. The underground river runs toward lakes and rivers carrying the liquid snowman with it.

As the sun beats down, it warms the surface of the lakes and rivers. Some of the surface water evaporates and changes into water vapour that rises high in the air like the steam from a kettle. As it rises it cools. The water droplets get bigger. They cling to each other. When they are too big they fall to earth as rain.

Some of the rain is the melted snowman falling as water droplets. No raindrops are new. They are used again and again and they are never used up. So, you can say, the snowman doesn't really disappear, he just changes shape.

Water, like air, is one of the most important substances on earth. Every living thing needs it. It is everywhere; it fills the oceans, rivers and lakes. It is in the ice and snow. It's in

the ground and in the air we breathe. Without it there would be no life.

In John 4:14 Jesus says the same thing, that water gives life. The water we drink each day keeps our bodies alive. Jesus says listening to his words brings peace, freedom and strength to do what he wants us to do. And it gives us life forever. Read John 8:31.

## Spring Mobile

You need:

3 paper egg cartons

6 twist ties

a one-hole hole-punch

scissors

tempera paints

different colors of tissue paper

glue

household string

### What to do:

Cut the lid off each paper egg carton; discard it. Punch one hole in the outside of the four end cups of each carton. You will have four holes in each carton. Use the twist ties to tie together the three egg cartons at the holes. You will have a three-sided form. Paint the form with bright colors. Let it dry.

Cut strips of different colors of tissue paper 40 cm in length. Glue the strips onto the egg cartons so they hang down as streamers of differing lengths.

Cut three lengths of string, each 8 cm long. Tie the strings to the egg carton form at the three twist ties at the top. Tie the three strings together to hang.

Hang the egg carton mobile from a tree branch in a slight breeze.

**The paper egg carton mobile is *not* rainproof. Take it in if you want to save it to enjoy another sunny day.**

Answers to **An Acrostic**, Feb. 25, 2004

Pipit

Emperor

Nest

Gull

Underw a t e r

Ice cap

Neck

*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.*