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EVANGELICAL MENNONITE CONFERENCE  
VOLUME 42 NUMBER 8 APRIL 21, 2004



## Knowing God and social justice

**D**O WE teach and live out ethics and social justice in our churches?

Do we talk about tobacco in tobacco country? Do missionaries deal with controversial topics? Do pastors teach on social justice?

Yes, God's Spirit will guide, but seeing that the writers of Scripture often teach on ethics and social justice, how are we listening to what the Spirit has already said?

"You give advice to new baptismal candidates in your church. If one has been a liar, you say stop lying," Dr. John B. Toews said at convention in 1995. "If another has been a cheat, you say stop cheating. Why not also say stop killing, stop engaging in violence" (Aug. 16, 1995, p. 3).

A high school teacher asked for years, "If a dog and a person were drowning, which would you save?" Some students said the person, while others said the dog. Then the teacher asked, "What do you think of the other person's choice?" Not one person said that another's choice was wrong. That's disturbing!

A common ethic is, "What's right for you is right for you, and what's right for me is right for me." Pastors and Sunday school teachers reinforce this if they avoid discussions about ethics. Yes, such discussions could lead into concerns about

legalism or into messy biblical topics such as politics, economics, and war. These aren't enough reasons to avoid these discussions.

Robert McAfee Brown, a Presbyterian minister, reminds us that in Jeremiah 22:13-17 a king is rebuked for building a showy palace based on unjust labour practices.

Jeremiah challenges the king for both his display and violence. The king's father, by contrast, did "justice and righteousness" and "judged the cause of the poor and needy." The result of the justice of the earlier king? "Is this not to know me?" God says. Brown quotes in Spanish *Conocer a Dios es obrar la justicia*—to know God is to do justice (*Unexpected News*, pp. 63-73).

Yes, many of our churches are concerned about particular social issues and some are concerned about wider social justice. We have MCC, EFC, and our Social Concerns Committee. But are we content to simply *let them do it*, or do we integrate social justice into our congregational life and mission (just as we do evangelism)?

Evangelical Mennonites claim to know God. Do we show it in our ethics and social justice? Based on Jeremiah 22 (and other passages), it's needed in order for our claim to have greater depth.

Terry M. Smith

## Messiah and Jewish people

**S**OME Christian leaders say the Church should not expect Jewish people to follow Jesus. This is sensitive, but it either sidesteps who Jesus is or answers it differently than has the historic Church.

The New Testament answer is clear: Jesus is Messiah, the Anointed One, the healer of the world. He is to be followed by all peoples.

The apostle Paul explored the relationship of Jesus and Jewish people in Romans. He saw it as complex; nevertheless, he taught the on-going need of Jewish people for Jesus. We can do no less, even as we await the fullness of Messiah's works.

Yes, as Christians we must be careful not to hide the face of Messiah. A Christian once

stood near a Jewish synagogue in the U.S. to hand pamphlets to people who left the service. A rabbi was upset. How would we respond if we were given pamphlets as we left a Christian service?

Followers of Jesus can fail to live sensitively. Holocaust deniers shock and embarrass us. The Church's history of abusing many generations of Jewish people as Christ-killers is disturbing.

I trust that we disapprove of and protest against recent events in Montreal and Toronto: Desecration of Jewish gravesites, the torching of a school, and vandalism to homes. These events must not be!

Terry M. Smith

## The Messenger

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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.

**THE MESSENGER** is published twice a month (once a month in July and August) by the Board of Church Ministries of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, 440 Main Street, Steinbach, Manitoba.

**Subscriptions:** \$12 per year (Manitoba residents add 7% PST, total: \$12.84). Subscriptions are voluntary and optional to people within or outside of the EMC. Members and adherents pay through their church.

**THE MESSENGER** is a member of Meetinghouse and Canadian Church Press.

Second-class postage paid at Steinbach, Manitoba.

PAP Registration # 9914

Publications Mail agreement

# 40017362

Canada

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

On January 1, 2004, new federal laws began to apply to this magazine. The *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* protects individuals on how personal information is collected, used, and disclosed. The magazine and its publisher, the Board of Church Ministries, are obligated to work within the law.

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On-line edition available at

[www.emconf.ca/Messenger](http://www.emconf.ca/Messenger)

Cover: New Brunswick Tourism

**MESSENGER SCHEDULE:**

No. 08 - April 21 (copy due April 09)

Help or hurt

# Faith in the farm crisis?



Dr. Cameron Harder

**T**HIS LAST week I attended a church service held to encourage producers struggling with the BSE crisis.

One farmer shared the painful story of his struggle with shame and fear as he faced foreclosure of his farm. It was honest and very helpful. But it also reminded me that churches must be critically aware of the power of religious ideas as they try to respond to the farm crisis. The relationship between faith and the suffering in our rural communities can be quite ambivalent.

Sometimes religion really helps; other times it can really hurt.

The tension was highlighted for me by a couple of interesting encounters with rural people during a recent trip to India.

**T**he first took place in a village a few hours south of Calcutta. I got there on the back of a bicycle cart, bouncing along a narrow cobbled path that wound between neat squares of rice paddies and banana trees.

The village we entered was a cluster of airy, mud-walled homes thatched with rice-straw. Men in white shirts and pants, and women in colourful saris

greeted me with flower bouquets and green coconut milk. For an hour or so I listened to the story of their struggles with hunger and illness. For decades they had lived with virtually no food three months out of each year. Their children were victims of chronic dysentery and diarrhea. There was a high rate of miscarriage. Women were confined to their homes, lonely and illiterate.

In the last year, however, with the help of Lutheran World Service, they had taken some enormous strides toward healthy living. They had formed a village grain bank, contributing after the harvests and borrowing when the food ran out. They had drilled a well which gave potable water and no longer used the dugouts for drinking. The women had formed a self-help group, sharing ideas about child-care and driving out of town the liquor vendor who kept many of their men chronically drunk. In a short period of time they had made amazing and sustainable gains in well-being.

At one point I asked them, "How does your village priest feel about the improvements in your life?" One woman stood up and said, "Well, he used to tell us that the reason our children were sick was because of bad karma. He said it was the gods' punishment for past failures. But now we know that it was just bad hygiene. We think he told us that so we would pay him to help us please the gods."

In this case, coping with their rural crisis meant discarding religious ideas that kept the villagers in bondage to shame and closed the future to healthy alternatives.

**T**he second experience took place in the foothills of the Himalayas. A farmer had invited me to gather with him, his

family and two friends to greet the day. We sat together in a small, open-walled hut overlooking the source waters of the Ganges. As the first rays of sunshine struck the floor of the hut, the farmer lighted a bowl filled with chips of dried cow dung. Smoke filled the hut while he hummed a mantra of prayer in Hindu tradition. Then as the fire died he gathered the ashes and took them outside to be scattered on the fields.

Afterward he showed us around the farm. He said that he was no longer using chemical fertilizers—just a rich compost he created from cow manure and roadside weeds. He controlled pests with poultices and various natural means, avoiding herbicides and pesticides. Gradually land that had been damaged by heavy use of chemicals was regaining its fertility. But he was the only organic farmer in the region. So I asked him how he had come to this new way of farming. He said, “A yogi gave me a copy of the Vedas [Hindu scriptures] and I read that the land is the body of God. He taught me that I must treat the land with more respect, not polluting it, and robbing it of its vitality. The Vedas showed me the way.”

This farmer found in his religion a resource for farming that is both sustainable and profitable. The productivity of his land is gradually increasing and his (now certified) organic produce gets much better prices.

The ambivalent role religion plays in the life of these rural Hindus mirrors my own experience with Christian farmers. I’ve heard insolvent farmers speak of having been “abandoned by God.” One woman beside me on a plane told me of watching her parents attempt suicide when they couldn’t make a go of their farm. She cried, “What did we do to deserve this?”

Others, doing well, have looked out at their operation and modestly said, “We’ve been blessed by God.” Both imply that there is a direct connection between their financial success and God’s attitude toward them. A profitable operation is regarded as a blessing from God (with the hidden implication of being a reward for good behaviour or good management). Insolvency is treated as a sign that God has withdrawn the blessing, that one is cursed (probably because of misbehaviour).

### Oppressive thinking

This sort of thinking is oppressive. It locks those who are suffering into a prison of silent shame. “The wolf’s at the door, the walls are closing in, and I couldn’t talk to anyone,” is how one farmer described it. Paralysed by fear and embarrassment, rural people in financial trouble are unable to ask for the help they need to weather the crisis. Whole communities disintegrate under the weight of silence, when open conversation and careful planning might have brought new hope.

**T**he truth is, while this shame-based thinking is common in popular religion it actually flies in the face of the central Christian witness. Jesus, the Righteous One, was homeless, unemployed and ultimately executed in the most humiliating fashion for blasphemy and treason. Yet God raises him from the dead, clearly indicating that Divine approval is *not* dependent on one’s social or financial status.

I told the woman on the plane, “God loves you, and is proud of you, just the way you love your own daughter and are proud of her. That love doesn’t depend on how well you manage the farm, or how well markets and weather cooperate. You can’t lose that love or do anything to increase it. It’s yours. It’s a gift.” She began to cry and said, “I’ve gone to church all my life and have never heard that.” I suspect she’s heard it, but perhaps not directly addressed to her specific struggles.

These days farmers across Canada are struggling with fear, shame and self-doubt. Poultry producers are watching their livelihood slaughtered wholesale. Cattle producers are selling at a loss or watching their profits eaten up by cattle that should have gone to market long ago. Crop producers in Saskatchewan have watched their income devoured by drought and a plague of grasshoppers.

There is no magic solution to the economic struggles that this situation has brought. But what solutions there are will only be found by open conversation between farmers and creditors, town and country folk, between farmers and families, between church members, between communities and elected officials.

### Churches can foster conversation

Churches can foster that conversation. They can set up open forums (best held *outside* the church?) in which producers, farm workers, health care workers, bankers, town businesspeople, young people, tell their stories of how the crisis is affecting them.

They can bring together families that are struggling so they can share coping strategies. They can accompany farmers to meetings with lenders and creditors to act as a witness and ensure that they are treated with respect. They can draw people

Cameron Harder, B.A., M.Div., S.T.M., Ph.D., is associate professor of systematic theology at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon, Sask.

His research concerns focus around theological reflections on various aspects of rural ministry: rural depopulation and development, shame and honour in Canadian (especially rural) culture, the role of the church in addressing the food economy, and pastoral care for agricultural communities (taken from website). He served as pastor in Messiah Lutheran Church, Camrose, Alta., from 1985 to 1997.



together to talk about the future of their community. Even when church folks aren't sure what to say, encouragement and support is always better than avoidance. They can treat folks who are in difficulty not with pity but with honour, looking them in the eye, acknowledging that they are people of worth and capability.

Above all the church can make it clear, in songs, and preaching, in private conversation and personal practice, that "Your farm, your job do not define you. You are a good person, beloved of God, respected by us. No matter what happens to you financially and personally we will stand with you. We care about you and your family. We need you in our community." ■

### 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 from 9 a.m. to noon 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.

### 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  
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204-326-6401



A Woman's Journey of Faith

Betty Koop  
Steinbach, Manitoba

#### EVA

OUR first week in La Crete, Alberta was a memorable one. Then it got even more so, but that is a story for another day!

We arrived on Friday. The next day a hard-working group of men from the church made short work of unloading our goods. Other kind helpers provided both lunch and supper.

Sunday we attended our first service at the church that would be our home for the next seven-plus years. At a potluck wiener roast later that day it was somewhat overwhelming to try to sort out the many new names and faces. But there was no doubt that we were being welcomed warmly.

However, the next day I experienced a major low and the tears came. I have since decided that grieving is a normal reaction to moving, but at that time philosophizing wasn't much help. I just felt bad.

That first week, several kind people came to our mobile home, to help, to take us for a get-acquainted drive or simply to visit. One of the latter was Eva.

At first sight she seemed a rather shy young woman, not at all sure that she should be "invading" our home, but still determined to do her part in welcoming us. I did notice her sparkling blue eyes, which belied the apparent shyness! And she brought the most wonderful, fresh strawberry jam, which was a reminder of her caring for many breakfasts to come.

I learned more of Eva's story over the next few years. Again I marveled at how God is involved in the lives of his children, even when they are still pre-Christians.

Eva spent her early childhood in Taber, Alberta. Tragically, her mother died suddenly of a heart attack when Eva was only fourteen. Of a family of 12 children, Eva, three younger sisters, and two older brothers were still at home. Her oldest sister had married and moved to northern Alberta where many of their uncles and aunts had also settled, so this was where her mother's funeral was held.

Eva was not at all happy with all the responsibility of taking care of a home and siblings. She was in school and had never really learned to cook or do laundry. Eva laughed when she recalled some of those early meal-making adventures. "We had baked pork chops and noodles a lot," she said, "because that was easy to make!"

But the children wanted to move north, to La Crete, to be nearer to the family that had been so kind when they were grieving. Her father agreed, so at the end

of the school year, they packed up and moved. After "camping" for a short while near their sister's home, their father found a rental house where they set up housekeeping. But their father could not find appropriate work to support the family, and soon left for southern Alberta.

This left 15-year-old Eva in charge of the household, although later an older brother helped along somewhat. Her oldest sister helped with teaching her the basic housekeeping skills. The girls were all in school and Eva worked as a waitress in her spare time in order to buy clothes and extras. Their absent father took care of the rent and an account at the local grocery store.

When I asked about what life had been like, Eva responded: "I can't say I was bitter about the situation. But we wanted to have a good time," she added. "I wasn't my sisters' mother and wanted to do what other teenagers were doing."

Soon her two youngest sisters moved in with an aunt, which made things a bit easier. She mentioned that their noisy parties must have been a real nuisance to their neighbors, but added, "I'm sure they prayed for us. One of them, especially, always greeted me kindly; I felt she cared about us. I know this helped in drawing us to the Lord."

Occasionally they attended the local EMC church with school friends and gradually the partying scene didn't feel right. Then a team with Janz Team came into town to conduct revival meetings. It was there that she made her commitment to follow the Lord.

Shortly after graduation from high school, Eva started dating Raymond, the man she would marry four years later. When I asked her what it had been like to plan her wedding without a mother by her side, Eva's positive spirit again came through. "My big sisters were a great help with plans and preparations. And Raymond's parents had the reception at their home. It all worked out just fine."

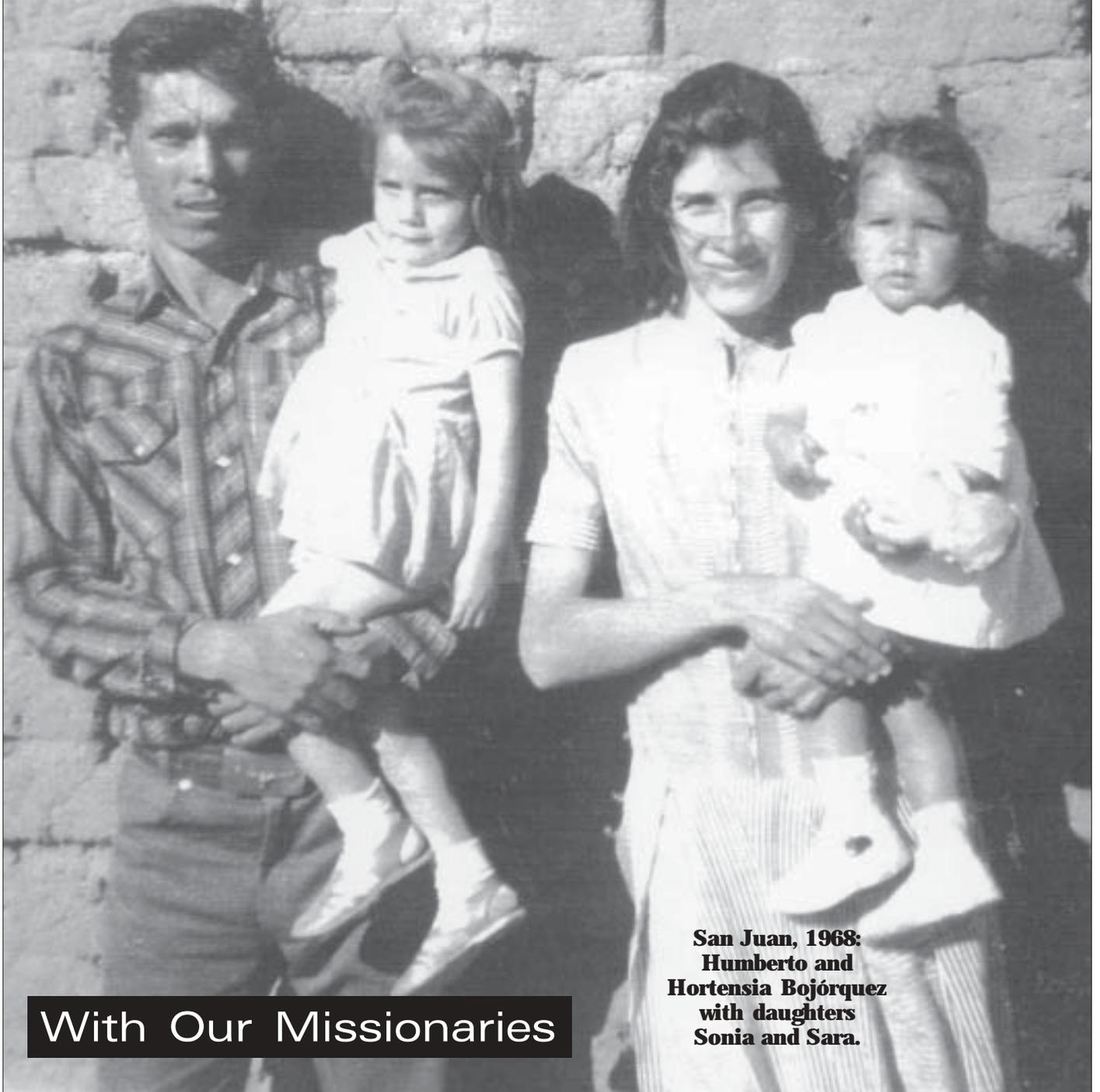
Soon after their marriage, they were baptized and received as members in La Crete EMC. Eva mentioned how her Christian life was strengthened by the friendship of people in the church, especially one woman who had also grown up in a difficult home. Attending the weekly Ladies' Bible Studies also helped in the maturing process.

Today she is happily married, with three growing children. Eva's positive outlook is a joy to behold. She seems to have used her difficult life experiences to make her better, not bitter.

Augustine said, "God loves each one of us as if there was only one of us to love." That love, put into action by so many different people during those difficult years, makes Eva state firmly, "God was definitely there!"

Mexico

# The impact of EMC missions on my family?



With Our Missionaries

San Juan, 1968:  
Humberto and  
Hortensia Bojórquez  
with daughters  
Sonia and Sara.

# In Spanish we say, Radical!

Sonia Bojórquez de Dyck

“Doña Luz, have you repented of all your sins, past and present, and do you desire to be baptized on the confession of your faith in Jesus Christ?”

“I wouldn’t be here if I hadn’t repented of my sins.”

This was how my great-grandmother responded to Pastor Manuel Barragan just before he baptized her. Since 1965 my parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents had the opportunity to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the missionaries of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference.

At first they listened with suspicion and distrust, but gradually these were overcome as the Bible was used in the teaching. My mother has shared how this gave her confidence. The missionaries had assurance in their teaching; there was support for what they taught. In contrast, my family’s beliefs had been passed down from generation to generation and they had no firm basis to explain the details of their faith.

My parents Humberto and Hortensia Bojórquez decided to follow Christ in 1968. As a result, the teaching I received in my home was influenced directly by what the Bible says. I participated in daily vacation Bible schools and Sunday school from early childhood. From that time on, our lives revolved around the church and its activities.

My family always tried to attend the conferences and the retreats that the church organized. My parents practiced hospitality when Christians came to preach or teach in San Juan, the village in which I grew up.

If you were to ask me to describe in a few words the impact that EMC missions has had in my life, I would say that the impact was radical. My life and the life of my

family changed totally, because a personal encounter with Jesus Christ radically changes a person.

The impact of living with people who have decided to leave their families, their country and all that could be meaningful to them, and come to Mexico to preach Jesus and His plan of salvation for this country and all peoples, is difficult to explain. I remember that some people asked why they would do this, what brought them here. I understand now that the love of God is so great that it motivates people to share of Him.

We are grateful that the Evangelical Mennonite Conference supported the missionary effort in small towns in the state of Chihuahua. Thank God for missionaries like Jake and Bertha Kroeker (not to minimize the importance of the others) who were the first missionaries to teach us the Word and give us examples of practical Christianity.

Mother shared how Jake would accompany my father to the fields and work with him, all the while discipling him. Bertha would spend time with the women, new Christians in the church, and in addition to biblical teaching, she would share nutrition ideas, bake bread, and sew clothes with them.

At age 15 I asked for baptism. I had accepted Jesus as my Saviour and Lord and wanted to follow Him. In 1982 I left my parents’ home to continue my high school education in Cuauhtémoc. From 1986 to 1993 I was part of the national church youth committee. Our main responsibility was to organize events such as conferences and camps to provide opportunities for our youth to receive Bible teaching and to interact with each other.

In 1985 I began to teach at Alvaro Obregon, a private Mennonite school. Here I became interested in the teaching profession, decided to complete my training, and I continue in this profession to this day. In 1998 I concluded my studies with a teaching degree in Language and Literature.

While working at the junior high level in Alvaro Obregon, I met Abraham Dyck, a professor there and the director of the school. In 1992 we were married. At present, Abraham and I are the directors of Alvaro Obregon and since we know that God has called us to serve Him in this way, we want to be obedient. Certain colony schools have been annexed to Alvaro Obregon, bringing our total enrollment to some 430 students. Gradually, we are seeing more openness to registered Spanish instruction.

We live nine kilometres from the city of Cuauhtémoc. We have two children: nine-year-old Kevin Abram and four-year-old Daphne Anali. During these last three years we have been participating in the leadership of the Spanish Sunday school in the Blumenau Mennonite Church. I am very grateful to God and to those who



Sonia Bojórquez de Dyck and Abraham Dyck, with their children, Daphne Anali and Kevin Abram, are involved in education near Cuauhtémoc, Mexico. (Come See What God Has Done)

support the missionary work in Mexico, because thanks to them I have been enabled to serve as I am doing.

During the 1990–91 school year I had the opportunity to attend Steinbach Bible College. This was an enriching experience for a variety of reasons. Removed from my family, I learned to know God and to depend on Him in a new way. The Bible instruction strengthened my faith, and life in a strange culture widened my horizons. As a result of this experience, I gained a new perspective of what it meant for missionaries to leave their country and seek to adapt to another.

**N**ot everything has been easy. It wouldn't be honest to omit things that have been the cause of much pain. For example, there was the time that my father turned his back on God. It was very difficult for the Bojórquez family to accept the fact that the one who had taught them about the Lord for some time by his lifestyle taught the opposite. Nevertheless, in his last days he rededicated his life to God.

In December 2001, my father was admitted to the hospital due to hepatic cirrhosis, staying there for six weeks. During this time we were able to converse about spiritual matters. He admitted his sin and was reconciled with God.

I had the privilege of reminding him that God loved him and was waiting for him with open arms to give him an embrace. My dad also asked the family for forgiveness. During his time in the hospital he remembered with much

love the missionaries who had taught him that to follow Jesus was the best decision he could make in life. Dad died on January 19, 2002.

It took my great-grandmother, Doña Luz, many years to decide to follow Jesus. It seemed that she understood that it was the best decision she could make, but she kept on resisting. Finally after almost 20 years of listening to the Gospel of Jesus, she accepted Him as her Saviour. I was a witness to that very sure, definite decision. That is why she answered Pastor Barragan, "I wouldn't be here if I hadn't repented of my sins." ■

Sonia Bojórquez de Dyck, the daughter of Hortensia and the late Humberto Bojórquez, grew up in San Juan, one of the Mexican villages where EMC missionaries established a church. After their conversion they became active participants in the church, and her father a leader.

Sonia graduated with a teaching degree from the university in Chihuahua City. She and her husband, Abraham Dyck, are directors of Alvaro Obregon, the private Mennonite school at Km. 11 (Blumenau), which provides elementary and junior high education. Together they oversee the education of some 430 children. They are the parents of two children, Kevin and Daphne.

This article was initially solicited for *Come See What God Has Done*, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary book of EMC missions written by Menno Hamm, former editor of this magazine (1988–1997). The article was translated by Alvira Friesen, missionary in Mexico.

## AIMM: a new chapter in EMC's history

OUR EM conference has over fifty years of shared history with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

Beginning with the acceptance of Ben and Helen Eidse as missionaries to the Congo and followed by Harvey and Avril Barkman a few years later, at least ten others have served under AIMM. As one of six partnering conferences we have executive and council representation with the mission. In the past three years we have participated in the intense and complex process of restructuring AIMM.

The new AIMM is designed draw in a wider range of partner churches or conferences. Partner agencies will choose to participate in councils in one or more specific regions of Africa. Senegal, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo and possibly a southern Africa Partnership Council will be organized.

These councils will consist of both African and North American representatives with the expectation that much of the planning, administration and decision-making will be initiated and carried out in the respective African country.

Over the past twenty years, ongoing civil strife in the Congo and the emergence of strong leadership in the national church, North American missionary presence has been greatly reduced in this country.

For EMC the focus shifted to Burkina Faso



in 1983 with the appointment of Paul and Lois Thiessen as translators to the Siamou people group. John and Charity Schellenberg as well as several short-term workers have completed terms in Burkina Faso. The primary purpose of the work has been in translation and church planting among un-evangelized people groups.

EMC plans to join the Burkina Faso Partnership Council in the new structure. Personnel requirements remain a high priority, both to fill current translation/church planting teams, as well as place new teams in the unreached people groups of the Bolon, Fulani and Northern Toussant. Ideally these teams will consist of a translator, a church planter and a literacy worker. Burkina Faso is also in need of a team coordinator to give leadership to the various translation projects.

Prospective candidates are asked to contact me to discuss training and application procedures.

The needs in Burkina Faso, as in much of

Africa, are far beyond what we can do alone. As partners in mission we have a great opportunity to make a significant contribution to people groups in Burkina Faso. We look forward to what the Lord can do through us in bringing the message of Christ to this part of the world.

*An event celebrating over 90 years of AIMM mission work as well as commissioning AIMM in its new structure is planned for Saturday, June 5, 2004, in Elkhart, Indiana. Please contact me at the Conference office for details.*

### People Movement

**Harvey Thiessen**, an associate missionary with the EMC Board of Missions, has been appointed as Operation Mobilization's Executive Director for Canada.



Thiessen, from Winkler, Man., and a graduate of Providence College, joined OM in 1984 and has served with OM ships in Europe, Asia, India, Africa and the Middle East. Harvey is married to Brenda (Wymark) and they have four children. They reside in Port Colborne, Ont.

OM

## Changes in leadership and format

**Leamington, Ont.:** We have faced many changes at Leamington EMC in the past year. In August we had a farewell to the only pastoral couple we as a church have ever known. We wish Peter and Elma Reimer much joy in their retirement and move to Manitoba.

This left the church without a lead pastoral couple until mid-October, at which time George and Betty Remple came to fill that position. We have been blessed by their willingness to leave their children in

B.C. and to follow God's leading in their lives to come and serve with us here in Leamington.

To welcome George and Betty Remple, and as a fundraiser for the youth trip to *Impact*, we shared in a family day at the church. The youth put on a Mexican lunch; it was followed in the afternoon by pinatas for children, and visiting and games for adults. We closed the evening with a praise and worship night.

The past several months there have been further changes. A Wednesday night Bible study was started for adults, as well as one for our youth on a trial basis. A Christian life class began during the Sunday school hour; it is well attended.

We have also been trying different formats for our Sunday morning worship service. We felt that the current format—Sunday school followed by a German message and an English service—was not fulfilling the purpose we had hoped it would. Therefore, we have moved to an adult German Sunday school followed by an English service.

God continues to bless us as a church body through spiritual and physical growth. We continue to look to Him for guidance in the direction that we take in this ministry at LEMC.

Marlene Froese

## Mary Veer's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday



On Sunday March 21, following the service, a potluck dinner was shared by all to honour Mary Veer on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. A decorated cake and flowers adorned her table. Seated with her were several relatives that had come from Preeceville and Warman to share in the worship service and the meal, which all helped to make the day special to her.

**Pelly, Sask.:** As you know, we have not had a resident pastor since December 1, 2003. Different local men take turns speaking, which brings out the talents and abilities that there are within our own group. Others that have filled the pulpit have been Albert Wahl, Fred Buhler, Ernie Keshane, and Kip Fullerton. We have appreciated each one.

Two men from within our small group have had heart by-pass surgery this past winter, Sam Wasalenko in late January and Lewis Anfinson in late February. We praise and thank the Lord that the healing process seems to be going well in each case. It is when we go through times like this that we realize anew how precious it is to have a loving and supportive church family.

Vivian Anfinson



Val Omenchuk from Stenen, Sask. shared with us one Sunday of her life and work in Ukraine. She expects to return to that country in August.



George and Betty Remple began serving as LEMC's pastoral couple in October 2003. They were received into membership on March 14, 2004.

## Young people join Morweena EMC

**Morweena, Man.:**



Six young people shared their testimonies and were baptized on March 7, 2004: (back) David Wiebe, James Reimer, Jason Reimer, (front) Julieanne Plett, Lonita Loewen and Jonathan Plett.

Janet Hamm

# Roseisle youth: a deeper level and fun

**Roseisle, Man.:** Greetings from the youth group at Roseisle EMC! We are a group of 25 to 30 students from grades 7 to 12. My husband Cam and I are leading the group this year, along our youth sponsor Danielle Friesen.

We also have a student leadership team, which consists of Jeri Siemens, Stacey Klassen, Jackie Friesen, and Kaylee Klassen. Our treasurer is Casey Siemens. They are all a huge help when planning events, as they have innovative ideas and activities to share with everyone else.

We will miss those of them who will be moving on next year, as well as the rest of the graduating students. This year we have eight students graduating in June: Nicole Dyck, Alyssa Harder, Kaylee Klassen, Stacey Klassen, Travis Nickel, Jeri Siemens, Steven Thiessen, and Philip Wieler.

Students come and go every year, but it does not happen very often that eight students in a group of our size leave all at the same time. Congratulations to all our graduates!

In the past, our group would regularly meet on Friday night either at someone's house or at the church. We would often play games, have a devotional, eat snacks, and leave plenty of time just to fool around.

This year we are trying something a little different. In any given month we will have two regular youth nights on Friday—a night just for Bible study and a night for going on an outing of some sort. Hopefully this type of schedule will incorporate more of our students' needs.

These are some that really desire to know God on a deeper level, while there are others who only want a fun and safe place to be. We want to be both, but have difficult time doing that with just a regular Friday night youth. Meeting the needs of all our youth on their own level is at the heart of our wanting to try something different.

In celebrating Christmas, we took the youth group to Super 8 Motel in Portage la Prairie for an overnight event. We had a blast! It's funny how even the 3 a.m. curfew was difficult to obey. Valentine's Day was another big event for our group; everyone was told to bring a "date" to celebrate the event—and creativity was encouraged. The evening was full of entertaining "love" games, and many of them involved couples or groups of the opposite sex.

On March 13 we served breakfast to the adults during our Spring Meetings weekend. We decided to put the donations that we received towards our 30-hour famine event. As a youth group we participated in the 30-hour famine on March 25–26. Many of us did not even think about being hungry because we were

kept busy with a fashion show, scavenger hunt, The Price is Right, Mad Gab, movies, and even sleeping.

Once again we will be cooking a waffle and sausage breakfast for Roseisle's annual July 1 celebration. This is our main fundraiser for the year and the community supports us in a huge way.

Pam and Cam Dyck  
Reporter: Nancy Peters

Cam and Pam Dyck have been helping with youth leadership in the Roseisle EMC

for several years. Cam studied at the University of Manitoba, graduating in 2003 with a degree in agriculture. Pam graduated the same year with a degree in Business Administration from Providence College.

The couple resides on a farm five miles south of Roseisle. Cam is farming together with his father Peter. Pam is employed at *Gislason, Targownik, Peters*, an accounting firm in Winkler.

Nancy Peters



Youth girls with their dates celebrating Valentine's Day: (back) Jackie Friesen, Casey Siemens, Stacey Klassen, Amy Harder, Alyssa Harder, (front) Kaylee Klassen, Jeri Siemens, Nicole Dyck, and Robin Siemens.



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

# Look at what the *Great I AM* is doing in La Crete!

**La Crete, Alta.:** Sometimes when things change a little at time we don't take much notice. But when you sit down to actually record the events, all you can say is "Wow!" because all the little things add up and start shining like a beacon. This is what I believe is happening at La Crete and Buffalo Head Prairie EM churches. God has extended his mighty hand and has just proven that He really is all that He is, the *Great I AM*.

On November 30, 2003, La Crete Christian Fellowship received into our membership a new family of six, Dwayne and Carolyn Wolgemuth and their children Austin, Nolan, AJ and Heidi. The Wohlgemuths started their journey from Grande Prairie to La Crete on September 8. They are serving as our youth pastor couple.

They are looking forward to working with all the youth here at La Crete. Their theme this year is *Jumping Off the Deep End!* Along with the youth leader team, they wish to encourage young people to jump full out for Jesus. They hope to do this through Bible studies, outreaches, and a lot of getting together to grow more in the



Youth pastoral couple Dwayne and Carolyn Wolgemuth, with their children Austin, Nolan, AJ and Heidi



Cora and Frank Winsor

Lord everyday.

Dwayne and Carolyn home school their four children, and Carolyn has taken on many piano students in our area. There seems to be a certain joy that exudes from her when she's at the piano or when their family has a special number. Thank you.

On November 19, 2003, Frank and Nora Winsor began serving as senior pastoral couple. Frank and Cora see La Crete and Hillside experiencing growth changes. They are delighted to be here during these exciting times. They look forward to a faithful ministry here at La Crete, and count it a real privilege to be called to be part of the ministry team.

In our annual report, Frank Winsor said, "I realize that I am only carrying on the work that others have so faithfully committed themselves to." I believe he was mostly referring to the divine work of our Heavenly Father in making seeds grow, but I feel that this might be a nice time to thank Glen and Betty Koop for their service at LCCF.

Glen and Betty Koop arrived in La Crete



Betty and Glen Koop

on July 12, 1996, and departed on September 30, 2003. I trust you, Glen and Betty, will remember the fonder happenings of La Crete, while you also faced many trials and struggles while you were here. Some of these also included the deaths of family members back home and your own health at times. Glen did state, though, that "circumstances must not keep us from our focus, which is to accept, live and serve Jesus Christ!" God bless you.

Mimi Friesen

## Joint baptismal service at HCF/LCCF



On February 22 there was a joint HCF/LCCF membership meeting with baptisms, transfers, testimonies and acceptance. Involved were Peter Janzen (Hillside pastor), Ed Friesen (transfer), Kevin Peters (baptism), Frank Dyck (baptism), John and Diana Howie (transfers), Kelvin Unruh (baptism), Michelle Wieler (baptism), Byron Peters (baptism), Laurie Teichroeb (baptism), Joyce Fehr (baptism), Martha Fehr (transfer), Liz Unruh (transfer), Ashley Goertzen (baptism), Gordon Foster (minister, La Crete), Henry and Lena Driedger (transfer).

**Buffalo Head Prairie, Alta.:** Peter and Telita Janzen are the senior pastoral couple at Hillside Christian Fellowship. The services there began in August 2003.

Attendance has been averaging around 70. It has been especially gratifying for them to have people willingly involve themselves in all aspects of church. They feel blessed and their prayers are that this congregation will be a blessing to the community.

La Crete and Hillside together had a missions conference from March 11 to 14.

The theme was *I AM has sent me to you.*

We were blessed to have Lester and Darlene Olfert (foreign secretary for EMC missions), Loren Koehler (Wycliffe, Democratic Republic of Congo), Joe and Olga Reimer (TEAM, South Africa), and Benny and Esther Goertzen (Paraguay).

Again these missionaries have helped us with our vision: To keep our eyes fixed on the things that are not seen. Thank you and God bless each of you.

Mimi Friesen



## The anger and hurt of Jesus

# Rebuilding the credibility of the Christian Church

Irene Dowan McKay died in March 2003. She was a key figure in the Dakota church at Sioux Valley, Man. During a wake held in her memory at the community centre on March 25, 2003, various people spoke, including Conference Pastor David Thiessen and Terry Smith.

This is what Terry said.

IT WAS my pleasure to get to know Irene Dowan during several visits to Sioux Valley congregation over the past few years. As a minister, I spoke several times. As an editor I interviewed her and Stan McKay for a story on the congregation, which was published in a magazine.

As I was preparing the story of the church at Sioux Valley, I was conscious of how the wider Christian Church has hurt First Nations people in the centuries of history since Europeans first came to this land. Generations of people have been terribly hurt by the history of the church's involvement in residential schools in Canada.

I wonder how the Christian Church will regain its credibility in the eyes of many people. The hurt and anger of many people needs to be heard. I dare to believe that their hurt and anger mirrors the anger and hurt of Jesus when he sees people abused.

Mark 10:13 says that when the disciples were rebuking parents with small children, Jesus got angry. I remember his anger with

leaders: "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to" (Matt. 23:13).

In my interviewing I was made aware that not all people who attended residential schools agree on how they should view it. Irene had her view. Irene seemed to not focus on the hurt that was—which was a gracious act on her part—and her involvement at Sioux Valley said much.

Sometimes I listen to stories like that of actor Gordon Tootoosis or his father John Tootoosis. Or I see a photo of small boy, seemingly sad, frightened, folding his hands in prayer because he had no other choice. And I wonder how will the Christian Church rebuild some of the relationships with people it hurt. I wonder.

But then I remember people like Irene, who have been through so much and yet carried on with Jesus.

Irene was a person who found in Jesus someone much greater than the mistakes made in his name. I remember how many years ago the people of Samaria heard from a woman about Jesus, but they had to test it for themselves. There was a history of hurt and prejudice—barriers. But they tested it. And in this one small story in history, "They said to the woman, 'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world'" (John 4:42).

I dare to believe that others can come to say this as well.

Terry M. Smith

Mildred Pashe, her daughter, comments, "One thing you should know up front is that Irene's viewpoint on residential schools is a positive one. She always stated that these schools were actually good for native people. At least for her, she said her family had a hard time raising them, with no money and no employment, and therefore a lot of hardships for big native families. She said she learned how to cook, sew, education, raise a family, and learned about God. No, Irene had only good things to say about residential schools."

Terry M. Smith is secretary of the EMC Social Concerns Committee, an EMC minister, and editor of this magazine.



## SHELLENBERG HONOURED!

On April 13 Rev. Dave K. Schellenberg received a plaque from the Archives Committee, presented by chairman Don Kroeker.

The plaque's inscription read in part, "Awarded to Rev. Dave K. Schellenberg, Archivist Emeritus, in recognition of your pivotal role in the development of the EMC Archives. Your passion and efforts through many years have helped to make it what it is today. Thank you!" Schellenberg received a double round of applause from the committee.

Rev. Schellenberg responded by saying he has enjoyed his involvement in the archives and has seen its value. He sees it becoming even more valuable "if the world stands" in 25 years.

The Archives Committee serves under the Board of Church Ministries.

Rev. Schellenberg continues, as usual, his involvement with the Archives.

(photo by editor)

### Correction:

On page 10, April 7, the top caption should read: Youth group members and youth leaders were kept busy at their fundraising lunch at *Crestview Fellowship*. My error and apology.

Terry M. Smith, editor.



**MONEY AND THE COVENANT COMMUNITY**  
 I AM increasingly troubled that my faith community finds it so difficult to share joys and sorrows around one of God's gifts to us—*money*. Yes, money. Yes, God's gift. You say, "I earned it and how I use it is no one else's business!"

Wait a minute! Is there not more to it? Who gave you the ability to earn? Or the good fortune to be blessed with a good crop, a high-paying job, success in the marketplace? Who gave you the health to work for wealth? Are we not called to be faithful in the use of *all* of God's gifts?

What does it mean to covenant together as participants in a Christian congregation? Is mutual accountability not at its core? Can we be Christ-followers as islands? Can we, with our naturally selfish tendencies, be faithful in the use of money and wealth if we keep only our own counsel? And can we truly covenant to be a supporting community if those with great wealth as well as those with great financial pressures cannot talk together and carry each other's burdens?

Money is surely one of God's gifts to us. We all use it almost daily. But we can't seem to find comfortable ways to talk about it in church, in the community where we have covenanted together to be faithful to the Giver of all good gifts. The healthy and wealthy and the bankrupt and hungry sit side by side as they worship together. Can true worship happen in such a setting?

You cannot serve God and money. Do we believe the Scripture? Jesus said to the rich young man, "Go and sell what you have and come follow me." Do we not sin when we fail to help a brother or sister whose needs we can meet? Gifts of health and wealth, like any other gifts, are meant to be shared.

Let us include in our covenant of membership a commitment to be accountable with our acquisitions, our accumulations, and our spending decisions—to be open to be challenged to use our gifts wisely as we walk side by side in good times and bad with those who sit next to us as we worship God together.

*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.*



**ELIZABETH PENNER  
 1916–2004**

Our aunt Elizabeth, whom we all called Taunte Lisa, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, February 3, 2004, at the Bethesda Hospital after a brief struggle with cancer. She was 87 years old. We want to give tribute to her, a very special person and a very special aunt. She has had a profound effect on our lives and has helped all of us, nieces and nephews, to become who we are today.

Elizabeth (Lisa) C. L. Penner was born on December 8, 1916, in Blumenort, the youngest of Rev. Cornelius and Gertrude Penner's 12 children. Before she was even born four of her older siblings had already gone to be with Jesus and, before she turned six, two more followed. That left her with three brothers and two sisters to grow up together with.

I'm sure the trials and sorrows of these years had a deep effect on her parents and inevitably on her, shaping her into the caring, understanding person she became.

Taunte Lisa gave her life to Jesus and was baptized on July 14, 1935, by Peter P. Reimer at the Blumenort EM Church. She lived out her faith in service to her Lord in many different ways. She had the gift of hospitality and was very interested in our lives and the lives of those around her. Many of us remember encouraging phone calls and visits.

She knew, loved and accepted people for who they were. She knew our names, our children's names and, yes, even most of our grandchildren's names. Our secrets and confidences were safe with her and we knew she was praying. Did she pray for each of us every day?

One of the most important jobs in her life was caring for her step-mother who reached the age of 101 under her care. She was full of energy, hardworking and thorough in all her tasks. Many will remember her as their Sunday school teacher.

She also helped in many other ways, giving generously of her time and resources to others. She had a special interest in missionary endeavours—sponsoring third-world children, baking cookies for clubs, camps and DVBS. The children at White Dog camp enjoyed decorating and eating the

special batch of cookies she made for that purpose the last few summers.

Being a farmer's daughter and, later on, a minister's daughter, gave Taunte Lisa many opportunities to practice and develop her skills in cooking, baking, gardening and organizing. Working at Granny's Poultry for about 30 years also helped her perfect her cooking skills, which is probably why so many of us have warm memories of the delicious meals she has served over the years. There was always a warm welcome in her home for everyone and fresh cookies to eat no matter when you came.

Many of us enjoyed her generous offerings of canned goods and fresh garden produce as her skill and love of gardening produced an abundant harvest. Her beautiful flower beds, especially the geraniums and petunias in summer and the amaryllis plants in winter, gave not only her, but all of us much pleasure and joy. Her skillful organizing kept the household running smoothly, efficiently and economically. Nothing went to waste with Taunte Lisa around!

By her example, Taunte Lisa instilled in us a sense of being able to carry through whatever challenges faced us. Her life was not always easy. She had said goodbye to her siblings, parents and many friends in the past years. There were other changes and disappointments, but she knew where to turn for strength. Psalm 37:5, on a plaque on her bedroom wall, was a source of comfort and guidance, "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this."

She showed perseverance and a spirit of contentment throughout her struggles and trials, especially in her most recent illness. Despite receiving the news of the serious nature of her illness on her birthday, Taunte Lisa was still able to sit up and smile for a picture. Many who visited her during these past two months were struck by her calmness, serenity and total acceptance of the situation. "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Joshua 1:5) was the verse that encouraged her in these last weeks and days.

Taunte Lisa will be missed and lovingly remembered by numerous nephews and nieces to whom she was like a mom, and by two sisters-in-law, Mary (Mrs. Peter C. L. Penner) and Martha (Mrs. Abram C. L. Penner). She was predeceased by her parents, Rev. Cornelius and Gertrude Penner, her step-mother, Sara Penner, her siblings, Margaret (Mrs. Cornelius J. Thiessen), Gertrude (Mrs. Peter D. Friesen), Peter C. L. Penner, Abram C. L. Penner, Bernard C. L. Penner, and by six siblings in early childhood.

There is one thread that runs through the years—through all time, from person to person, older and younger—and that is love. Love penetrates every barrier. Taunte Lisa had the gift of unconditional love. Through her love we were richly blessed.

*Her Family*



**ANDREW P. PLETT**  
1927-2003

Andrew was born to Henry R. and Elizabeth Koop Plett on January 28, 1927, in R.M. of Hanover, Man., the oldest of 17 children. Growing up on the yard of Plett Brothers of Blumenort provided opportunities for Dad's involvement in various trades, including building cheese boxes and working in the feedmill. Before he was of legal age he got his trucker's license and enjoyed many years hauling gravel, feed, lumber and cheese boxes.

Although sports were frowned on when Dad was young, he did enjoy playing hockey on the frozen creek in winter and, when possible, baseball in the summer. When his grandchildren took up hockey and baseball he loved nothing more than to watch their games.

At the age of 21, Dad became a Christian and was baptized by Bishop Peter Reimer in May 1948 in the Blumenort EM Church. Around this time he met the love of his life, Minna Kornelsen. Although they were ready to get married only months after meeting, it was then that they, along with many other families, took part in an exodus from Manitoba, Canada to Mexico. Due to this move, their wedding was put on hold until December 12, 1948. They were the first couple from the Kleine Gemeinde to get married in Mexico.

Making ends meet was especially tough as pioneers in this new country. Dad continued trucking, ran a chicken hatchery, and did some diversified farming. Although farming provided a wonderful lifestyle for his growing family, it became evident that this was not his first love.

In March of 1958, Dad was elected as a deacon and a year later ordained as a minister. Bishop Dave P. Reimer from Manitoba officiated. Ministry became Dad's lifelong passion and vocation. Besides being a part-time missionary, he served as a member on the field council and was a treasurer for EMC Missions, all the while pastoring a small church in Mexico.

In 1963 Dad moved his family back to Canada; first to Blumenort for one year and then to Arborg. He was a lay minister in Morweena EMC, prepared weekly radio

broadcasts *Die Heilsbotshaff* that were aired in Mexico, and was well known as a hog farmer.

In 1977 Dad and Mom moved to Seminole, Texas, where they spent 15 of their most fulfilling years. Working with Low German-speaking immigrants fuelled Dad's passion for missions, and the church he led grew to a large membership.

A private school was also started. Dad and Mom later served a year in Copeland, Kansas, and one term in Tigertown, Texas, where similar settlements had sprung up. Throughout his ministry, Dad had many opportunities to practise James 5:14-16 and God worked powerfully through him, performing many wonders and miracles.

In 1993, Dad and Mom retired from full-time ministry and moved to Steinbach, Man. This was a hard move for Dad and it was obvious that the biggest part of his heart stayed in Seminole. Going south every winter kept him going!

In June 2002, Dad and Mom moved into Oakwood Place in Blumenort. Down-sizing was hard, but in time Dad enjoyed their little apartment and the fellowship of the other residents.

Those who knew Dad well knew that he suffered from back pain. In August 1971, Dad had successful back surgery, but other problems resulted when the doctors were unable to remove all the dye put into his spine prior to surgery. Five months later the pain started and for the next 32 years Dad tried to find relief. Once the medical profession ran out of solutions, he tried every natural remedy he could find, all to no avail, except for a brief two-and-a-half months after acupuncture treatments.

Dad read countless health and medical books and became convinced he had been suffering from fibromyalgia all these years. Whether this happened as a result of the dye isn't certain. Three years ago, Dad was also afflicted with Parkinson's disease, which slowly worsened.

In the last year, his pain increased to the point where it could no longer be controlled. Morphine helped somewhat, but never provided total relief. Occasionally, he reported having a "better" day, but mostly his days became consumed with fighting an escalating, relentless pain.

On August 21 he was admitted to the Steinbach Hospital hoping to find some answers for his extreme pain. Though his condition did not improve, he was happy to go home on October 24, despite requiring 24-hour care.

On the morning of November 12 Dad fell and was re-admitted to hospital. This setback seemed to take the life out of him. A week later he was diagnosed with e-coli, and it soon became evident that his time on earth was nearing its end. On November 28 at 2:15 p.m. the angels escorted Dad to his eternal Home.

It was very hard for us as a family to watch

Dad suffer so much and to see his faith being tested so severely, but we praise God that He kept Dad to the end. Though we rejoice that he is now free forever, we will sorely miss him.

Longing to see him in his new pain-free body are: Minna, his wife of 55 years (less two weeks), five daughters, three sons, one son-in-law and their families: Harold Wolfe of Morden; Allan and Susie, Elsie and Peter Enns, Vernon and Thelma all of Steinbach; Dennis and Rose of Mitchell; Florence and Earl Penner of Kola; Doris and Wilbert Petkau of Lubbock, Texas; Marlene of Steinbach, Kathy and Ed Kornelsen of Steinbach; 27 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. He also leaves four brothers, seven sisters, one brother-in-law, one sister-in-law and their families.

Dad was predeceased by his parents, sister Naomi in infancy, brother Willie (1948), sisters Ruth and Mary and brother Levi (all in 1996), daughter Naomi (2000), great-grandson Malachi (2002), and three brothers-in-law, John, Wendelin, and Cornie Reimer.

His Family

## Births

**BRAUN** - to Isaac and Tina Braun of Leamington, Ont., a daughter, Keeya Paige, on November 17, 2003.

**SCHMITT** - to Frank and Mary Schmitt of Leamington, Ont., a daughter, Claudia Carlie, on November 20, 2003.

**THIESSEN** - to Jake and Tina Thiessen of Leamington, Ont., a daughter, Milayah Grace, on December 16, 2003.

**MORRIS** - to Gilbert and Wendy Morris of La Crete, Alta., a daughter, Laryn Elizabeth, on February 1, 2004.

**DRIEDGER** - to Bill and Melanie Driedger of La Crete, Alta., a son, Dillon Joseph, on February 11, 2004.

### 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!**

# 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 McMahon, SK S0N 1M0; or email blfriesen@t2.net.

Do you feel called to work with children? Manitoba House, located in Winnipeg's North End, has openings for **summer staff, full-time workers** and **volunteers** to form positive relationships with children aged five to twelve. The goal is to teach the gospel, instruct the children in life skills and to help them gain stronger academic skills.

Applicants need to have a strong calling for inner city missions, have good communication skills and be well-organized. It is expected that a full-time worker will be able to raise their own support with some help from the board. For information check <http://members.shaw.ca/ManitobaHouse/>

Please submit your resume to Steve Brown (204-222-0797) at [manitobahouse@shaw.ca](mailto:manitobahouse@shaw.ca)

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](mailto: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 204-565-2635, email [leskola@mts.net](mailto:leskola@mts.net), or fax 204-565-2604.

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](mailto: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 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.

Steeprock 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](mailto:ang_thiessen@hotmail.com) or Walter Oberlin at 204-734-4269.

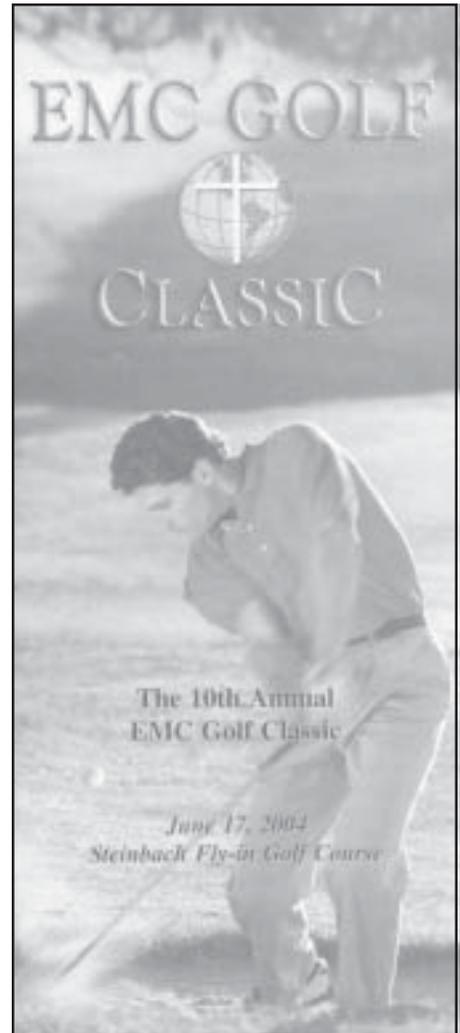
Pineridge Fellowship Chapel (EMC), Hudson Bay Sask., seeks a **full-time pastor**. The town has a population of 2,000 and serves an additional 2,000 people in the surrounding area. The warm, friendly congregation averages 75 for Sunday worship, with a cross-section of age groups and an active youth program. 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](mailto: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

# The Story of Three Trees



**M**ANY years ago three trees grew together in a forest. Each tree had a dream. The first tree wanted to be beautiful. He dreamed that one day a woodcarver would carve a great statue from its wood. People would come from far away lands to admire it and enjoy its beauty.

The second tree wanted to be strong. He dreamed that one day he would protect someone important from the wind and rain in a blustery storm.

The third tree wanted to remain as he was and grow tall and straight on a high hill. Everyone who saw it would look way up to its highest tip which pointed them to the one who had created it.

One day a wood cutter came into the forest and cut down all three trees. He turned them into lumber. Many years passed. In time, a farmer bought the wood from the first tree. With his saw he cut the planks into just the right lengths to build a rough manger. Each morning he filled the manger with fresh straw and every evening his cows filled their stomachs until they were satisfied.

A boat builder bought the wood from the second tree. With it he built a sturdy fishing boat. The boat held the fishermen and their heavy loads of fish as it sailed on the Sea of Galilee.

For a long time the lumber from the third tree lay, almost forgotten, on a pile of rough planks.

The manger from the first tree felt ordinary and unimportant, although the cows that ate from it were full and satisfied. Then one extraordinary night a tiny baby was born. The baby was wrapped and laid to sleep on the straw in the manger. The manger knew at once that it held the most precious gift in all the world.

The wood of the fishing boat grew tired of the wild waves that slapped against it as it rocked in the storm. It grew tired of the smelly, slimy fish it carried. It grew tired

planks from the third tree were formed into a cross. A man's hands and feet were nailed to the ends of the planks. The cross was raised to stand on a high hill. The man



Jesus preaching at the Sea of Galilee.

Gustave Doré

hearing the fishermen grunt as they jerked the heavy nets full of squirming fish over its sides. Then an unexpected stranger stepped into the boat. Quietly he raised his arms and commanded the storm to be still. Immediately the boat stopped rocking and bobbed calmly on the quiet water.

One day, far in the future, two rough

was left hanging there until he cried in loud voice to God. His spirit left him, and he died. A soldier who saw him said, "Surely this man was the Son of God." And everyone who saw him, the Son of God, dying on the cross, was directed toward God, the Creator. ■

## Find the Tree:

1. Adam and Eve should not eat from \_\_\_\_\_

2. Zacchaeus climbed \_\_\_\_\_

3. That sheltered Jonah from the sun \_\_\_\_\_

4. Elijah slept under \_\_\_\_\_

5. Where God saved David from the Philistines \_\_\_\_\_

6. Whose wood Noah used to build the Ark \_\_\_\_\_

7. Whose branches Jesus rode on as he entered Jerusalem \_\_\_\_\_

8. That God used to speak to Moses \_\_\_\_\_