

Christian Education Update

June 2006

Sunday school seminars

Want to know a steady topic of discussion at Board of Church Ministries meetings? Its Education Committee is willing to work with churches and regions to provide **training seminars** in Sunday school teaching and other areas. EMC involvement happened in Region 1. Region 2 has expressed an interest. Coordination is a joint effort of national office and region with costs to be covered by the region. Should regions or churches be curious about or interested in seminars in your area, please be in contact with me or conference youth minister Gerald D. Reimer. My new e-mail address is emcterry@mts.net.

The EMC Social Concerns Committee is also willing to make **Sunday school presentations** on various topics (social justice, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and more). Contact Chair Wally Doerksen (Good News Community Church, Steinbach) at 204-326-9444.

Sunday school curricula

Churches are again reminded that the Education Committee of the Board of Church Ministries **encourages using Anabaptist materials** or, at least, the supplementing of interdenominational materials. Anabaptist materials are available through Mennonite Publishing Network, Kindred Press (check the *Word Wise* and *Luminaire Studies* produced by the Mennonite Brethren), and Steinbach Bible College (five sets of study and leader's guides are available from the college). SBC's titles are *Radical Discipleship*, *Come Let Us Worship*, *The Last Trumpet*, *Minor Prophets*, and *Living Truth*.

Check out the **brochure** on *Gather 'Round*, a curriculum for children, youth and adults, put out by Mennonite Church Canada, Mennonite Church USA, and Church of the Brethren (www.gatherround.org).

Discussing Anabaptist theology

The Evangelical Anabaptist Committee will **present some findings** in July 2006, with likely further information to come in December. The committee serves under authority of the BCM and the Board of Leadership and Outreach. Pastor Kenton Penner (Treesbank) is the committee's chairperson (204-824-2268).

Follow Me sample

BCM's Education Committee, with the support of the Social Concerns Committee (Board of Leadership and Outreach), has published a 13-lesson discussion guide. **A sample is included to each EMC church** (a few have been distributed already). The booklet will serve our congregations through study by cell groups, senior youth groups, older teen/adult Sunday school classes, as a pastoral preaching aid, and in other ways. While there is no leader's guide, discussion questions are scattered within the lessons and there is a list of resources in the back.

The booklet's **cost is subsidized** to keep it at \$2.50 for EMCers. For non-EMCers it is \$4.50. Shipping is extra. There were 16 writers, 15 with EMC connections. The Board of Church Ministries strongly encourages *all* EMC churches to use this resource.



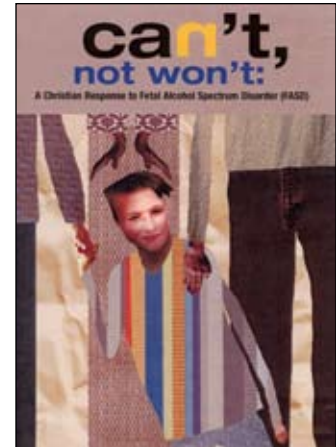
While our conference is too small to develop a Sunday school curriculum yearly for a range of ages, we can produce occasional, helpful materials. By using what we have, it's more likely that others will be produced.

Worship/Music Committee

The BCM is interested in looking at the music and worship within our churches. If you can think of people who might be helpful on such a committee, please contact Gerald Reimer or me.

New DVDs at national office

- *Can't, Not Won't: A Christian Response to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder*, MCC, 45 minutes, discussion guide (DVD and VHS).
- *Shadow Voices: Finding Hope in Mental Illness (A documentary on stigma, recovery, and hope)* Mennonite Media, 58 minutes, discussion guide (DVD).



MCC Canada has, sadly, closed its national Mental Health and Disabilities Program (where EMCer Irma Janzen was staff person). Some provincial MCCs continue with their programs. Issues surrounding mental health and disabilities often fade into the background, and MCC Canada's move doesn't help to reverse this. Pastors and other educators are **encouraged to continue to respond** to these issues within our faith communities. (For two years I served with MCC Manitoba as a resource person in the area of physical disabilities.)

Theodidaktos: Journal for EMC theology and education

Editor Darryl Klassen, senior pastor at Kleefeld EMC, continues to work to see the journal move ahead. It is now named *Theodidaktos* means *learning from God*. Members and ministers are welcome to **submit articles** and book reviews to him at kemc@mts.net. The proposed publication date is late fall. He can be contacted at 204-277-7443.

If Sunday school was outlawed...

- How do you educate children in the regular service?
- Do you **intentionally explain** parts of the service?
- When people pray publicly, do they use "we" or "I" language?
- Is systematic public reading of Scripture emphasized?
- Do sermon illustrations catch the attention of children and teens?

Opportunities for discussion

Both Gerald Reimer and I are available for Sunday School discussions. As staff members who serve the Board of Church Ministries, we have responsibilities in areas of Christian education (Gerald also works with the Board of Missions). If you have **suggestions**, concerns, or program ideas about Christian Education in our conference, let us know.

Blessings on your churches!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Terry M. Smith".

Terry M. Smith
Executive Secretary
Board of Church Ministries