



Robert J. Suderman,
General Secretary,
Mennonite Church Canada

Denominations: moving into the New Year...more reflections...

January 2010, *Equipping* #102

Denominations: I have been reflecting on their positive potential during the last two Equipping issues. Let me start the New Year with a reminder that denominations have an important contribution to make. Maybe we can understand their potential better if we understand their origins.

Denominations did not exist before the Protestant Reformation. Before then, alternative expressions of church were either incorporated into the dominant Roman and Orthodox traditions, or declared to be heretical.

In the early 17th century the different expressions of the church that were springing to life in Anglican England were said to be “denominated” expressions. The hope was that multiple expressions of the same church could invigorate the life of the church. This hope was based on several assumptions:

- a) The model for new church expressions should reflect more closely the patterns developed by the Apostles;
- b) The unity of the church should be practiced in the midst of diverse expressions;
- c) These “denominated” variations would provide freedom for diverse expressions;
- d) The ecclesial status quo should not necessarily be binding for the future;
- e) The existence of diverse expressions within the same church would guard against sectarian and schismatic tendencies, given that these tendencies are characterized by separating from the church rather than committing themselves to providing alternative expressions within the church;
- f) These denominated expressions did not deny the legitimacy of other expressions, but rather understood them to be complementary and “denominating” the diversity of God’s presence in the church.

In summary, the origin of “denominations” was linked to important qualities such as:

- Freedom to express worship in different ways
- Finding unity in diversity
- Expressing diversity within unity
- Taking biblical authority more seriously
- Addressing changing contexts
- Avoiding sectarian tendencies
- Affirming God’s grace expressed in multiple ways and patterns

In our day “denomination” has, for some, come to mean the opposite of these intended qualities, such as:

- Opposing diversity within the denomination
- Opposing unity among denominations
- Stifling freedom to express worship differently
- Unable to adapt to changing contexts and times
- Suspicion of God’s grace that is experienced in unfamiliar ways.

It is important to lay claim again to the original intentions of dealing with diversity within unity. Denominations were designed as a positive “third way” between unbridled sectarianism and oppressive institutionalism. It is ironic that today, denominations are often viewed as oppressive institutions. It seems that we still need to work more on the “third way” in our world, in our society, and in our church today.

I wish you all a Happy New Year: a Year in which we continue to learn about the fullness that God has in mind for the world and for the church. I also trust and pray that this learning will be a source of joy, peace, and grace for us all.



**Mennonite
Church
Canada**

Equipping Prayers Notes News

A resource packet for equipping Mennonite Church Canada pastors and leaders

600 Shaftesbury Blvd
Winnipeg MB R3P 0M4
Toll free 1-866-888-6785
P: 204-888-6781
F: 204-831-5675
E: office@mennonitechurch.ca
www.mennonitechurch.ca

Please insert these prayer requests and notes into your bulletin.
Remember, you can also find these at www.mennonitechurch.ca/equipping for easy "cut and paste" insertion.

Jan 2010, Equipping #102

Sunday dates	Prayers: Please pray for and with the Church	Ministry Notes: This is how your financial support of Mennonite Church Canada is ministering...from across the street to around the world	News/Announcements: Stay in tune with the wider church
All Jauary	God, we are grateful for the many ways you have expressed your love for us and the continual renewal you offer us through Christ. We pray that you will show us how to carry out your will on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.	Your encouragement and support have enabled us to create a new website that promotes non-violent approaches to peace building. See www.liveforpeace.org to learn more. Praise God for revealing new ways to share God's message of healing and hope!	TEXTILE/FABRIC ARTISTS are invited to participate in Acts of Peace/Art for Peace, an exhibition at the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in Calgary, June 29-July 3, 2010. Contact Ray Dirks at rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca for submission information. Or, go to www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/gallery .
Jan 3/10	Please pray that God will bless the peace building efforts of MC Canada Witness workers to the Philippines, Daniel and Joji Pantoja. Through Peacebuilders Community, the Pantojas are education people from all sides of conflicts in non-violent approaches to building peace.	Thank you for your prayers and financial support in making the MC Canada Youth Assembly 2009 a great experience! Please pray for planners as they prepare for the 2011 Youth Assembly, in Waterloo Ont. Thanks for your continued support!	
Jan 10/10	The K-9 students of Menno Simons Christian School in Calgary are taking part in Mennonite Church Canada's "1,000 Acts of Peace" initiative. From sharing ideas for peace in chapel time to participating a variety of service projects and recording three acts of peace each day in their journals, they are making the exploration of peace their school mission. Pray that God will bless these students in their efforts – and that those efforts will be contagious!	With your support, Mennonite Church Canada is engaged in a ministry partnership with the Union of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Chile (UBACH). This sister church relationship has contributed to the development of CERCAPAZ – the Anabaptist Christian Resource Centre for Peace – allowing UBACH, the national Baptist denomination, which is seeking to recover their Anabaptist roots, to resource their congregations and other interested churches and bring non-violent conflict transformation to a society where violence is far too common. Thank you for helping us to share Anabaptist principles with our Chilean brothers and sisters!	We are grateful to all our congregations for the prayers and encouragement we have received in 2009. We especially thank God for the providence and guidance that allows the work of the kingdom to continue. May we all participate with Joy.
Jan 17/10 Stewardship Sunday	On this Sunday as we focus on faithfully managing all of God's gifts to us, including material benefits, pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal to each of us how we might best share those gifts to build God's Kingdom.	Thank you for your prayers and financial support in making the MC Canada Youth Assembly 2009 a great experience! Please pray for planners as they prepare for the 2011 Youth Assembly, in Waterloo Ont. Thanks for your continued support!	Mennonite Church Canada's Peace in the Public Square Campaign – Live for Peace – got a great launch in Calgary. For stories and more check out www.liveforpeace.org .
Jan 24/10 Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday	Please pray that Karen and Andrew Suderman, MC Canada Witness workers to South Africa, will continue to be open to new experiences and people, and pick up helpful Zulu language skills. (WoW Prayer Directory, pg. 53, 54)	Thank you for sharing your congregational resources with the Resource Centre! To view the resources that numerous Mennonite Church Canada pastors and lay people have contributed – or to share something of your own – see www.Mennonitechurch.Ca/Tiny/479 .	January 17, 24, 31: Got a Peace in the Public Square story to tell? Inspire the rest of Mennonite Church Canada and share it at the 1,000 Acts of Peace forum topic on www.liveforpeace.org .
Jan 31/10	Hun and Sunny Lee, formerly members of and leaders in Trinity Mennonite Church of Calgary, have been commissioned for service as Mennonite Church Canada Mission Associates to South Korea. Pray that God will bless the Lees as they engage in new leadership roles with the Onnuri Community Church in Seoul.	We are grateful to all our congregations for the prayers and encouragement we have received in 2009. We especially thank God for the providence and guidance that allows the work of the kingdom to continue. May we all participate with Joy.	

CALLING ALL FABRIC/TEXTILE ARTISTS

National Exhibition at Mennonite Church Canada Assembly in Calgary



June 29-July 3, 2010
Ambrose University College, Calgary

¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3: 15-17

Inspired by Assembly 2009's promotion of "1,000 Acts of Peace," mindful of Assembly 2010's focus on Colossians 3: 15-17, textile artists are invited to consider participating in *Acts of Peace/Art for Peace*. This exhibition will take place during the Mennonite Church Canada assembly in Calgary.

Artists, how do you define peace? How do you interpret peace in your art? What is Peace in the Public Square? We welcome your submissions on any aspect of the word "peace" that moves you to create.

Submitting artworks for consideration

Up to five works per artist will be considered. All artworks are to be textile/fabric based. *** Artworks do not need to be newly created but must be original designs.** A maximum number of pieces per artist, likely fewer than the five allowed for consideration, will be included in the exhibition. Numbers will be set according to space limitations and the number of artists submitting pieces for consideration. If exhibition space allows, all submitting artists will have at least one piece accepted.

Submissions can be **digital images or mailed photographs or slides — no original artworks.** Images must be good quality. Send high resolution jpeg images to Ray Dirks at rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca. Mail photographs or slides to Assembly Exhibition, MHC Gallery, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

Each image of an artwork should be accompanied by the name of the artist, the title, dimensions and medium. Images should be submitted no later than May 10, 2010. Artists will be notified with regards to accepted artworks by May 21, 2010. Accepted artworks, ready to be hung or with simple hanging instructions, must arrive in Calgary no later than June 25, 2010. The exhibition will run from June 29-July 3, 2010. Reasonable shipping costs will be reimbursed — check with Ray Dirks prior to shipping regarding the amount allowed for reimbursement. Return shipping will be no charge to the artists.

Ray Dirks and Bev Patkau will review the submissions.

For more details, e-mail Ray Dirks at rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca or Bev Patkau at lpatkau@shaw.ca. Or, visit <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/gallery>.

**In following years other forms of art will be included. This exhibition is intended to be the first annual.*



Norm Dyck
Director of Congregational
Partnerships

January 2010, *Equipping* #102

December 15, 2009

Dear Pastors, Congregational Chairpersons and Treasurers,

Greetings in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord, whom we celebrate and proclaim in this Christmas season.

Thank you for the ongoing support and encouragement you are to the ministry and witness of Mennonite Church Canada through your gifts of time, volunteer resources and financial support.

In this issue of *Equipping* you will find two copies of your congregation's invitation to support God's Mega Project. This invitation takes the place of the gift sampler which has been included in the *Canadian Mennonite* over the past few years and was aimed primarily at individual givers.

While a selected list of individuals will also receive this invitation, I invite your congregation as a whole to consider this request in your budgeting decisions for 2010 as well as in any decisions you may be making regarding the disbursement of funds at your fiscal year end.

If you have any questions about this or any other ministry or project of Mennonite Church Canada, please contact me at your earliest convenience. I am available and would be delighted to respond.

May the peace of Emmanuel encourage, comfort and strengthen the witness of your congregation, as we do together what we cannot do alone.

Shalom,



Norm Dyck

Director of Congregational Partnerships

Encl.

January 2010, *Equipping* #102



Broadcasting faith in Burkina Faso

Worship in Burkina Faso is a highly oral experience. There are no bulletins, no overhead projectors. Songbooks are a rarity. Those who can read may have brought a Bible or their own personal song book – if they are fortunate enough to have one – but most sit and listen attentively.

During one worship service, a parade of women enter the back of the sanctuary, singing and swaying in time to the balifone – a traditional marimba like instrument – and drum music. In their hands, each one clutches a field hoe. The women swipe at imaginary weeds in time to the music. The hoe is a symbol of work and working together in this culture. The presentation is a call to all Christians to gather together to work for the Kingdom of God.

The children, who have had to clear out to make room at the front, peer in through glassless windows, standing on tip toes.

Pastor Coulibaly Abdias of the Orodara Mennonite Church dreams of expanding a radio broadcast ministry in this culture where oral communication is a highly valued tradition. In rural areas especially, few Burkinabe people read or write; indeed, having their own language in written form is a recent development.

In response to this communications need, Mennonite Church Canada Witness has assigned Norm Nicolson to work in a recording studio as a Vernacular Media Technician and Instructor. Nicolson continues language study in preparation for his duties.

Radio broadcasting is relatively inexpensive. Most people, even in rural areas, have a radio receiver. Although a broadcast ministry can be a complex endeavour in a country with over 60 languages, plans are to begin with Jula, the language of commerce, and then add Samogho, a local indigenous language.

Abdias says that the Mennonite Church brings the work of peacemaking to the whole evangelical community in Burkina Faso. He highlights several prayer needs: the holistic development of the church, its material and spiritual growth, and political and social stability in Burkina Faso and the surrounding region. “This whole region is very acquainted with civil wars and political turmoil,” he says, adding, “Pray for the churches to grow strong.”

Then he shares a final request that mirrors the concerns of many Mennonites in Canada. “I pray that God will help the new generation to have a strong faith and keep the ways of communion and communication with God so that they can know a better life in the future.”

We invite you to share with your congregation the following story from Burkina Faso, where Witness Workers Norm and Lillian Nicolson engage in literacy and communications projects. The story should take no more than 2 minutes to read aloud. You might also wish to include it in your church newsletter.

“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 3:11

Mennonite Church Canada Ministry Highlights for 2009

January 2010, *Equipping* #102

Mahatma Gandhi said; “there are people in the world so hungry, that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread.”

As long as there are those in the world who hunger in any way – for spiritual or physical food, for economic, social or political justice – God’s all-encompassing peace, *shalom*, will elude us. Mennonite Church Canada is working to meet the fundamental needs of those within its ever-widening circle of influence, constructing a foundation for true and lasting peace through a variety of ministries at home and abroad.

Each issue of *Equipping* includes Ministry Notes and Prayer Requests about the ministries that congregations are invited to support. Many congregations print these bite sized messages regularly in their Sunday bulletins. For that we are very grateful. By sharing your precious bulletin space with us, you are helping us to prayer and find finances for building God’s church. In fact, you may wish to use this document as a handy way of reporting on the work of Mennonite Church Canada at your annual congregational meetings in 2010.

Below is a summary of some of the ways your prayers and awareness-building have been at work. Thank you for your invaluable contributions to Mennonite Church Canada’s ministries of transformation in 2009!

1. In 2009, Mennonite Church Canada is working to form a people of God by finding several ways to share the message that God’s all-encompassing *shalom* is attainable without violence:
 - At Assembly 2009, delegates affirmed a proposal for *Peace in the Public Square* that would see concepts of non-violent peace building promoted across the country on bus boards, transit shelters and billboards.
- Mennonite Church Alberta responded to this proposal with a campaign of roadside billboards and posters that ran from Nov. 23 to Dec 23. Pray that this campaign will have positive residual effects throughout Calgary, and that other MC Canada congregations will actively engage in similar projects.
 - The K-9 students of Menno Simons Christian School in Calgary are taking part in “1,000 Acts of Peace,” one aspect of Mennonite Church Canada’s *Peace in the Public Square* initiative. From sharing ideas for peace in chapel time to participating a variety of service projects and recording three acts of peace each day in their journals, these students have made the exploration of peace a school mission.
 - On September 30th, a Private Members Bill proposing a federal Department of Peace was tabled in Parliament. Mennonite Church Canada has had a strong influence in shaping this bill together with the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative. Please pray that public resolve to support this idea will gather momentum throughout the long process ahead. For more information, see www.departmentofpeace.ca.
 - The October 2009 episode of *Church Matters*, Mennonite Church Canada’s monthly pod cast, features Pastor Gordon Allaby sharing the story of how his congregation creatively incarnates Jesus’ peace in the public square in Osler, Sask. Tune in via www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1178 or iTunes.
 - On Oct. 17, Robert J. Suderman, General Secretary of Mennonite Church Canada with Bruce Adema, Director of Canadian Ministries for the bi-national Christian Reformed Church (CRC) and current president of the Canadian Council of

- Churches (CCC), hosted a Symposium on War and Peace together with the CRC of Canada at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.
- In November, Mennonite Church Canada launched the website www.liveforpeace.org; a forum for sharing and discussing peace initiatives. Thank you for the prayers and encouragement that have made this development possible.
 - With your support, MC Canada Witness workers Daniel and Joji Pantoja continue to share concepts of non-violent peace building through Peacebuilders Community Inc. (PBCI). Using various education programs and by responding to the needs they see around them – such as helping those who were displaced by typhoon related flooding in late September 2009 – the Pantojas are sowing seeds of shalom.
 - Through its membership in the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), Mennonite Church Canada has added its voice to approximately 100 other religious groups who are holding G8 leaders to their 9 year old pledges to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The goals – to be achieved by 2015 – seek to enhance conditions for peace by addressing the root causes of conflict such as poverty, illiteracy, disease, gender inequality, child mortality, and unsustainable environmental practices.
2. Your support of Mennonite Church Canada ministries is helping to grow leaders for the church by encouraging youth and young adults:
 - Caronport Sask. hosted Mennonite Church Canada's Youth Assembly from July 6-10, 2009. More than 200 youth and youth sponsors engaged in faith and relationship-building worship, prayer, workshops and service projects and responded to their experiences with enthusiasm in a report on the event. You can find the report at <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1221>
 - Radical Journey, a young adult service program of Mennonite Church Canada Witness with Mennonite Mission Network, gave seven Canadian young adults the opportunity to serve in 2009. Scott Bergen, Dorothea Toews, and Rebecca Willms were in South America to help with preparations for the Mennonite World Conference Assembly which took place in July. **Kyle Berg**, Tim Wenger and **Gabriella Wiebe are currently in South Africa, while Ruth Weber** is serving in Paraguay. Thank you for helping these young people gain cross-cultural experiences that will help to shape them for a lifetime of service to God's church.
 3. Mennonite Church Canada Witness is helping us become a more global church by sending several people abroad on special, short-term assignments that allowed us to share Anabaptist perspectives with others in 2009.
 - Palmer and Ardys served at Bethlehem Bible College in Palestine/Israel. Bethlehem is fifty miles from war-torn Gaza.
 - Pieter and Susie Niemeyer and their family (Markham, Ont.) spent over three months in Philipstown, South Africa. During their stay, Pieter taught basic theology from an Anabaptist perspective at Grace Community Churches, while Susie worked with those churches on women's issues.
 - During a period of sabbatical from their employment positions, Richard Thiessen and Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen (Abbotsford, B.C.), served as a Librarian Consultant at Meserete Kristos College library and at a local orphanage, respectively. The Thiessens were accompanied by their three sons.
 - Titus Guenther, Associate Professor, Theology and Missions at Canadian Mennonite University, interacted with the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Chile and our other Anabaptist partners.

4. Throughout 2009, Mennonite Church Canada Witness found a number of ways to become a more global church at home and around the world by building relationships between congregations:
 - Now in its fourth year, Mennonite Church Canada's program, International Pastors Coming Together (IMPACT) brought five international pastors from Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Philippines together in Saskatchewan with an equal number of local pastors for a time of engagement, prayer, and worship. Praise God for this significant opportunity and the relationships that were sparked!
 - With your support, MC Canada Witness has a presence in Israel/Palestine. Hinke Loewen-Rudgers, a long-term Witness worker, is exploring ways to build relationships with churches in Galilee and the West Bank.
 - Jim Loepp Thiessen from the Gathering Church (Kitchener, Ont.) and Barb and Wilmer Froese, co-pastors of Rosthern MC (Sask.) explored the work of Mennonite Church Canada Witness in urban and rural areas of China with Witness worker Jeanette Hanson as their guide.
 - Following the Mennonite World Conference Assembly in July, Mennonite Church Canada Witness helped to organize an Indigenous Learning Tour that brought together aboriginal peoples from across North and South America. Thank you for supporting the development of these important connections!
 - During their fall meetings in Abbotsford B.C., members of MC Canada's Witness Council had the opportunity to hear the stories of various First Nations people, council members and learn about the lingering effects of Residential School on individuals, families and communities. We are grateful for opportunities to share stories that break down stereotypes and invite healing through understanding.
 - On March 29, 2009, Trinity Mennonite Church in Calgary signed a five-year covenant to partner with the Korea Anabaptist Center in Seoul, South Korea.
 - A new Mennonite Church has been born in Cuba! MC Canada has been walking with the church in Cuba for about 20 years, sharing Anabaptist theology through existing churches in a country already rich with denominational diversity. Recently, Iglesia Menonita en Cuba grew out of the desire of local leaders to adopt a theology which offers a radical Anabaptist alternative in their society.
5. Praise God for the new and growing church leaders whom Mennonite Church Canada has celebrated in 2009!
 - Aboriginal elder, Barb Daniels, was commissioned as a leader in the Riverton Fellowship Circle (Manitoba). This Aboriginal congregation is partnered with four Winnipeg Mennonite churches, Bethel, Douglas, Home Street, and Sargent Avenue, through MC Canada Native Ministry's Partnership Circles.
 - Treasure Chow, a local Chinese leader was ordained at Macau Mennonite Church as the lead pastor. Treasure and her husband, Bailey, are part of a ministry team in Macau that includes Witness workers Tim and Cindy Buhler, and George and Tobia Veith.
 - Hun and Sunny Lee, formerly members of and leaders in Trinity Mennonite Church of Calgary, have been commissioned for service as Mennonite Church Canada Mission Associates to South Korea.
6. Your gifts enable Mennonite Church Canada Formation to form a people of God by developing resources that meet the needs of individuals and congregations across Canada:

- A number of Mennonite Church Canada pastors and lay people have willingly shared their congregational resources with the MC Canada Community through the Resource Centre. To peruse these resources, see www.Mennonitechurch.ca/Tiny/479
- Currently, 45 of MC Canada's some 225 congregations are from backgrounds other than Russian or Swiss Mennonite traditions and worship services are offered in more than a dozen languages. Your support of MC Canada Multi-cultural Ministries facilitates the translation of resources to meet the needs of our growing, multi-cultural church.
- As the official repository of archival records for many Mennonite organizations, the Mennonite Heritage Centre is able to provide genealogical evidence that help Mennonites from Mexico legally enter Canada. Thank you for supporting this important ministry!
- In the next 5-15 years almost 1/3 of Canadians will retire. Thanks to the generous giving of our congregations, leaders like Elsie Rempel, Jack Suderman and Dave Bergen are offering time and resources to a church population looking for ways to enrich their retirement years with spiritual growth that strengthens the ministry of the whole church.
- Church Matters, Mennonite Church Canada's monthly podcast, produced 12 new episodes in 2009. Among them is an interview with Robert (Jack) Suderman, General Secretary of Mennonite Church Canada, on the topic of being a faithful church in times of challenge and tumult. Tune in via www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/206 or iTunes.
- Mennonite Church Canada created a website of resources designed to help churches around the world respond faithfully to a pandemic or other wide-spread emergency. Help your congregation prepare for emergencies by visiting www.churchpandemicresources.ca
- 7. Janet Plenert, executive secretary of Mennonite Church Canada Witness, was elected to a six-year term as vice-president of Mennonite World Conference (MWC) at its assembly in Asunción, Paraguay, in July, enhancing Mennonite Church Canada's pursuit of a global church by playing a significant role in MWC's global ministry.
- 8. Mennonite Church Canada General Secretary, Robert J. Suderman, announced his intention to retire no later than August 31, 2010. During his term, Suderman has been deeply involved in the international church, and has been an important voice in ecumenical circles through MC Canada's membership in the Canadian Council of Churches and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Your support has enabled the nurture of these important relationships.

January 2010, *Equipping* #102

January is often a time of reflection



Louis Sawatzky
Interim Executive Secretary,
Support Services

This includes reflections on the year past and on the year to come.

For me personally, this has been a significant year, having accepted the position of Interim Executive Secretary of Support Services on a half time basis.

It has been gratifying to experience the energy and passion of the MC Canada staff team from an objective point of view. Often this is difficult to see or appreciate from the pew. When I accepted this position, I was open to surprises and some ambiguities that go with it. Besides coping with basement office flooding during the heavy rainfalls, hot water tank leakages and so on, I have received energy and a new appreciation for the work of the church by participating in and supporting the ministry we do together as Area Churches, congregations, and individual members.

The church is being challenged by many issues that include standing up for peace when our country is at war, witnessing our faith to those of other faiths in a pluralistic world, or those without a faith. We are challenged to walk with individuals and families struggling with gender identification and acceptance. We are challenged to respond to those suffering injustice and poverty in our own country and abroad in often forgotten places. We are called to respond to those looking for leadership and assistance as they struggle to establish Anabaptist communities of faith in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the former Soviet Union.

All of us, in the pews, and in the community of faith are part of this calling. Mennonite Church Canada is an organization that helps us all to participate efficiently and effectively. For this I am grateful. Through the grace of God, we can be true to our calling. It is the highest calling imaginable!

This New Year again promises to be challenging as Mennonite Church Canada begins its search for a new General Secretary, and a new Executive Secretary for Support Services. We will also do some internal restructuring to strengthen and improve our contact and relationships with congregations and individuals via a new Church Relations function. Watch for the employment postings; quite possibly, you or someone you know might be the person with the combination of gifts, skills, and inspiration to excel in one of these leadership positions.

We are grateful to God for continued guidance and the opportunity to work with you in the kingdom. May this year bring peace and reconciliation in a troubled world.

RESOURCE UPDATE

BORROW ... PURCHASE ... DOWNLOAD ... LINK

600 Shaftesbury Blvd. Winnipeg MB R3P 0M4; 1-866-888-6785 (toll free); resources@mennonitechurch.ca; www.mennonitechurch.ca/resourcecentre


WORSHIP CALENDAR


New Year's Day
www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/489
Jan 17 – Stewardship Sunday
www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1165
Jan 24 – World Fellowship Sunday
www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1166
Feb 7 – Church Education Sunday
www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1168
Feb 17 – Ash Wednesday
www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/491
March 28 – Palm Sunday
www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/160
April 1 – Maundy Thursday
www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/161
April 2 – Good Friday
www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/162
April 4 – Easter
www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/163


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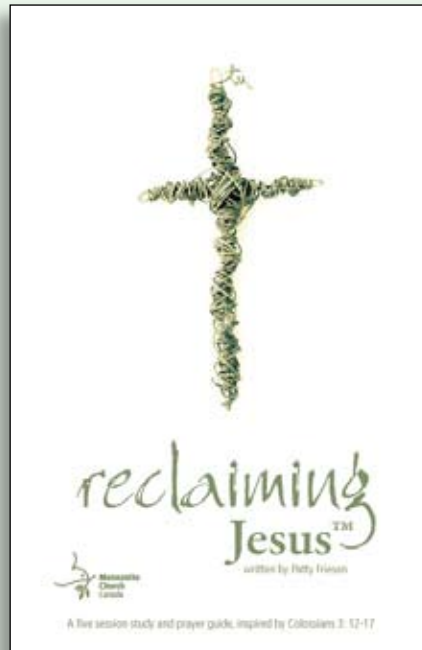
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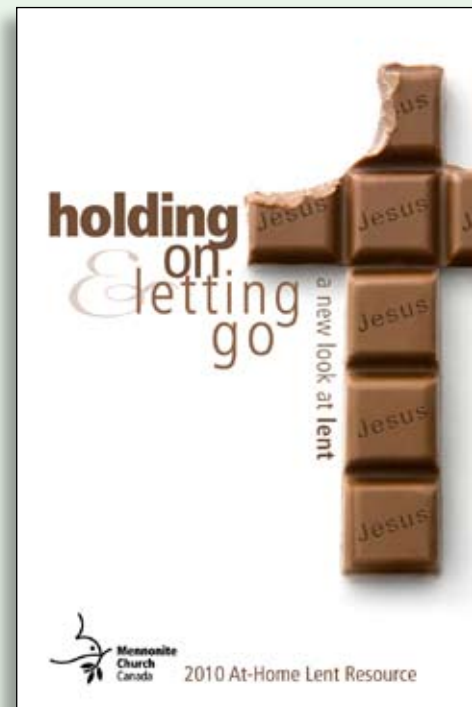
2010 Season of Prayer Guide: Reclaiming Jesus

By Patty Friesen

Use the 5 sessions as:

- Worship themes
- Week of prayer study
- Adult Sunday school

Download free copy at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1144



2010 At-Home Lent Guide

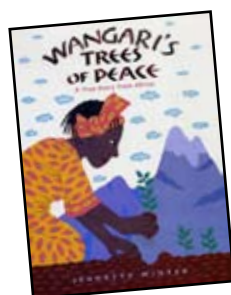
By Elsie Rempel

Use this devotional guide at home to connect with congregational worship themes. Also includes Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday and Easter resources.

A sample copy is included in this month's *Equipping* package. Download a free copy at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1208

Children's Corner

Resources for the library, home, Sunday School or Sunday morning storyteller



Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa

by Jeanette Winter, Harcourt, 2008.

As a young girl growing up in Kenya, Wangari was surrounded by trees. But years later when she returns home, she is shocked to see whole forests being cut down, and she knows that soon all the trees will be destroyed. So Wangari decides to plant nine seedlings in her own backyard. And as they grow, so do her plans ... This true story of Wangari Maathai, environmentalist and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, is a shining example of how one woman's passion, vision, and determination inspired great change.

For additional children's books, see www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/168

Website Window

Links worth noting

Our catalogue links you to many websites
– here are some recent additions:

www.liveforpeace.org



– Launched in mid-November, this new website is in response to the *Peace in the Public Square* resolution at Assembly 2009 in Saskatoon - www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1185. Join the campaign and engage the conversation.

Symposium on War and Peace

sponsored by MC Canada and the Christian Reformed Church. On October 17, 2009, we met with the CRC denomination to discuss each other's perspectives on peace, pacifism, and just war. Read the papers presented by Herman Keiser, retired military chaplain and Pentagon advisor (CRC) and Helmut Harder (MC Canada)

Sample Litanies for Occasions in the Church



from the Western District Mennonite Church in Kansas. Litanies for pastoral transition, installation, ordination, and more.

Lifelong Faith



Lifelong Faith

Practices, articles, activities and resources for all stages of faith development.

✉ Do you have any sites to recommend?

From our Churches

Original materials from our constituency

Walk a Mile in my Dad's Boots

by Ruth Jantzi, Erb Street Mennonite, 2009.

From attic to Heritage Centre to Canadian War Museum. Ruth's story of a recently discovered pair of work boots (worn by her father Elmon Lichti in the 1940s as a Conscientious Objector) that will make its way to a Peace Exhibit in Ottawa. Its discovery - and accompanying interest - has helped share the story of conscientious objection during World War II. This is Ruth's presentation from this past Peace Sunday.

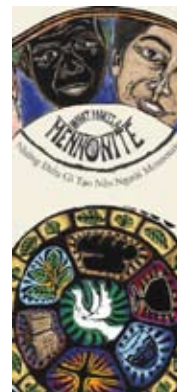
✉ Share your church's original material
at resources@mennonitechurch.ca

From Mennonite Church Canada

What Makes a Mennonite – Vietnamese translation

Hot off the press! Our popular 8-panel brochure is now available in Vietnamese! Ideal for people new to the Mennonite Church or visiting a Mennonite congregation for the first time. Dispels some common myths about Mennonites, explains core beliefs in accessible language, and provides an overview of Mennonite history.

- Watch for Karen and Laotian translations coming soon.
- Also currently available in English and Chinese.
- Purchase these in any quantity.



2010 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The World Council of Church's annual worship and study materials are now available for the week of January 18-25. An ecumenical celebration! Download www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1222 or borrow from the Resource Centre - www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1225.

Also see: 2010 Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday – January 24. A worship celebration of our Anabaptist history and world-wide communion. Download at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1166.

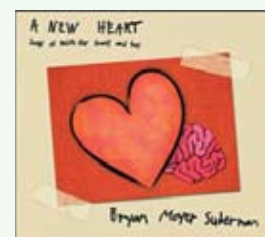
and stewardship Sunday (Jan 17) www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1165

From our Partners

Small Tall Music



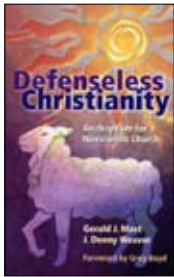
New CD – A New Heart, 2009. In "A New Heart," Bryan Moyer Suderman again combines biblical wisdom with original songs that are evocative and simple - without being simplistic. This is Bryan's most ambitious release to date - both musically and theologically - singing from Genesis to the Gospels, Esther to Ephesians with a top-flight crew of backing musicians in styles ranging from folk and bluegrass to zydeco, bossa nova and New Orleans jazz.



Free Downloads – Need that something "extra" for your worship service? Check Bryan's audio files with lyric sheets, activity ideas and musical notation available online.

Membership links you with a network of people who support the creation, testing, and sharing of new "songs of faith for small and tall." Members receive electronic deliveries of these songs 3 times/year.

From our Press



Defenseless Christianity: Anabaptism for a Nonviolent Church
by Gerald Mast and J. Denny Weaver,
Herald Press, 2009.

Although some first-generation Anabaptists were not pacifist, the authors contend that an Anabaptism defined as defenseless Christianity should be seen as a nonviolent Christian movement with a world-reconciling theology. They describe an Anabaptism shaped within the story and life of Jesus Christ.



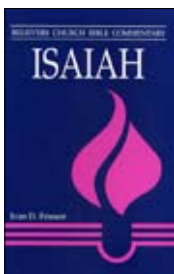
Power and Practices: Engaging the Work of John Howard Yoder
by Jeremy Bergen, Anthony Siegrist, ed.,
Herald Press, 2009.

A new generation engages the theology of John Howard Yoder. These essays wrestle with questions of power and its implications for social practices including policing, nonviolence, sexism, governmentality, dialogue, political critique, theological construction, and the work of "inheriting" a theological tradition.



A Silk Road Pilgrimage: Discovering the Church of the East
by Richard and Jewel Showalter,
Herald Press, 2009.

The silk road is a loose network of ancient trade routes from China to Bulgaria. In 2007, the Showalters traveled this ancient highway and visited with people from the Church of the East, an expression of Christianity little known to the West. In this book they share glimpses of their journey across Asia.



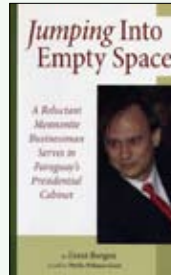
Isaiah: Believers' Church Bible Commentary
by Ivan Friesen, Herald Press, 2009.

Friesen explores how the interpretation of the book of Isaiah is lived out today in faith communities where the Bible is the bedrock of life. Such an interpretation combines the concerns of pastoral care with the distress and uncertainty of prophetic action.

New Resources

We average 3 new resources daily.

Check www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/480 for a complete listing



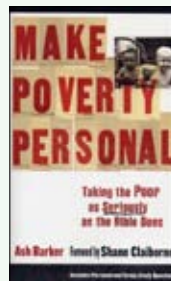
Jumping into Empty Space: A Reluctant Mennonite Businessman Serves in Paraguay's Presidential Cabinet
by Ernst Bergen, Good Books, 2008.
Subject: [Church and State](#)

Visit the backstage of the highest levels of government, and also inside the heart of an impatient, but conscientious, business entrepreneur.



Learning from the Stranger: Christian Faith and Cultural Diversity
by David I. Smith, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009.
Subject: [Christianity and Culture](#)

Built around biblical passages, this book offers an excellent guide to living and learning in our culturally interconnected world.



Make Poverty Personal: Taking the Poor as Seriously as the Bible Does
by Ash Barker, Baker Publishing Group, 2009.
Subject: [Small Group Studies](#)

Barker reflects on biblical passages related to God's concern for the poor. These studies are interlaced with personal reflections - firsthand accounts from fifteen years of ministry among the poor.



Making the Good News Good Again: Recovering the Wonder of the Gospel
by Judson Edwards, Smyth and Helwys, 2009.
Subject: [Church Renewal](#)

Wonder is the fuel that keeps Christians going, the element that makes our faith contagious and alive - and it is the greatest need in our churches today. This book will help readers hear with new ears the sweet, undistilled melody of the gospel.



Nightwatch: Alone on the Prairie with the Hutterites
by Robert Rhodes, Good Books, 2009.
Subject: [Hutterites](#)

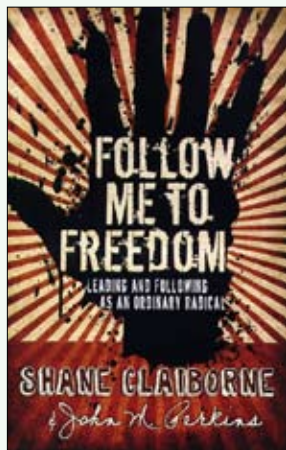
What would compel a daily newspaper journalist, raised in an affluent family in the southern USA, to abandon his career and embark on a spiritual odyssey that would take him, his wife, and young daughter to live among the Plain people of the prairies, the Hutterian Brethren?

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We have a great selection of theology books from a variety of publishers and authors.

For special orders contact

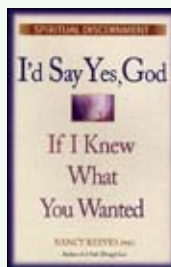
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Call 204.487.3300 | ext. 339
or toll-free 877.231.4570
www.cmu.ca



Follow Me to Freedom: Leading and Following as an Ordinary Radical

by Shane Claiborne; John M. Perkins, Regal Books, 2009.
Subject: [Discipleship](#)

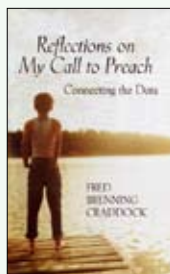
In a world hungry for radical hope, the author's stories and wisdom will inspire us to be the hands, feet and heart of real change.



I'd Say Yes, God If I Knew What You Wanted: Spiritual Discernment

by Nancy Reeves, Wood Lake Books, 2006.
Subject: [Gift Discernment](#)

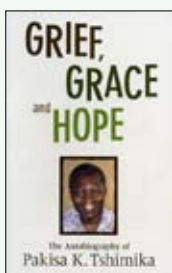
Real-life stories from 75 men and women open up a world of spiritual discernment practices inviting you to find one that works for you.



Reflections on My Call to Preach: Connecting the Dots

by Fred B. Craddock, Chalice Press, 2009.
Subject: [Preaching](#)

Travel with revered preacher and author Fred Craddock through his early years as he considers what made him take to the pulpit.



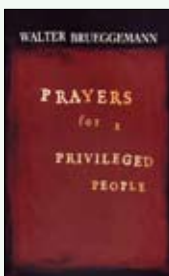
Grief, Grace and Hope:

The Autobiography of Pakisa K. Tshimika

Good Books 2009.

Subject: [Mennonite Biography](#)

From his birth and childhood in Congo to his new life in the United States and abroad, Pakisa Tshimika, Mennonite World Conference worker, continues to be an inspiration to all who encounter him. Though his story is filled with grief and tragedy, it is suffused with an unfailing grace and hope.



Prayers for a Privileged People

by Walter Brueggemann, Abingdon Press, 2008.
Subject: [Prayer Collections](#)

Offers prayers on behalf of those who are people of privilege and entitlement—the haves—at an urgent moment in our society.



Affluenza Interrupted:

Stories of Hope from the Suburbs

by Doreen Neufeld; Hugo Neufeld, Millrise Publishing, 2009. Subject: [Story Collections](#)

A collection of personal suburban stories gleaned from the authors' experiences and learnings in the suburbs of Canadian cities.

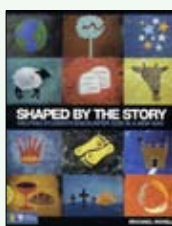


Walking Alongside:

The Essence of Parish Nursing

by Barbara Caiger, Trafford, 2006.
Subject: [Parish Nursing](#)

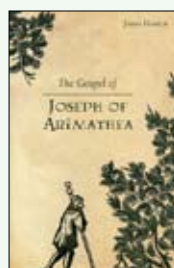
A uniquely Canadian, uniquely nursing, experiential perspective on parish nursing and the practice of a healing ministry in a faith community.



Shaped by the Story: Helping Students Encounter God in a New Way

by Michael Novelli, Zondervan, 2008.
Subject: [Storytelling](#)

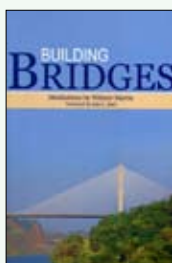
Learn the art of "storying," a sequential telling of Bible stories followed by a time of creative retelling and in-depth dialogue. Includes sample narratives and an interactive training DVD.



The Gospel of Joseph of Arimathea

by James Harpur, Wildgoose Publications, 2007.
Subject: [Adult Bible Stories](#)

Through the creative paradigm of Joseph of Arimathea, one of the most enigmatic characters of the gospels, the author uses both prose and poetry to create a parallel narrative to the gospels, amplifying the events they describe.



Building Bridges: Meditations

by Wilmer Martin, Masthof Press, 2009.
Subject: [Devotional Reading](#)

As leader of TourMagination, Martin travels the world and relates these rich experiences in devotionals that are both interesting and inspirational.



Going Home Another Way: Daily Readings and Resources for Christmaside

by Neil Paynter, Wildgoose Publications, 2008.
Subject: [Advent Devotional Reading](#)

Bible readings, reflections and worship resources from Iona Community members and associates to help you hear God's Word through the commercialism of the season; and to glimpse the sacred in the secular.