



Formation

February 2004, *Equipping*



Justina Heese with the Advent stocking for her grandchildren – to encourage them to share with others, especially during the Christmas season.

The banners have come down and the Advent clock has been put away or recycled! A group from Texas prepared the Advent worship resources named “*Be Alert! God is on the move!*” Many Canadian congregations used these Advent worship resources. It felt good to compare the way the Winnipeg congregation where I worship incorporated the suggestions from this resource, and the way in which a congregation near Toronto where my daughter worships used the same materials. For me, making this comparison highlighted the purpose for creating these resources for Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. Providing a theme, Scripture selections, suggested songs, and additional resources guided congregations toward meaningful Advent worship. At the same time, these resources sparked the imagination of local planners and resulted in a rich variety of worship experiences.

The Advent and Lent resources are widely used. They are currently featured in issues of *Leader, Equipping the Missional Congregation*, a magazine published by Faith and Life Resources, the congregational resources division of Mennonite Publishing Network. In addition to accessing these resources through *Leader* magazine, statistics show over two thousand “hits” during November and December, on the website featuring *Be Alert! God is on the Move!*

I want to draw your attention to another resource made available for congregational use. *Prayer: in the Peace of Christ* was written by Melissa Miller and is formatted as a five-session worship, prayer and study guide. For many years, Mennonite Church Canada has commissioned writers to prepare materials that invite the congregation to prayer. This year the materials encourage prayers for peace. This study is suitable for traditional prayer week services, for sermon ideas, for study groups, Sunday school and for individual prayer and meditation. If you are not currently making use of this study guide, take another look and imagine ways in which prayers for peace can enhance the ministry of your congregation.

Perhaps you have creative, innovative individuals in your congregation. Please consider sharing the resources created by your local worship planners with other congregations. The Resource Centre welcomes your contributions and is available for further questions and consultation. Call 1-866-888-6785 (toll free) and talk to Sharon Brown or Arlyn Friesen Epp.

May God continue to bless you in your witness, prayer, worship and study!

Justina M. Heese
Executive Secretary, Formation

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