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October 2004, *Equipping*

A Moment for Celebration

We invite you to share the following story with your congregation. It takes only a few minutes to read aloud. Perhaps your church has a tradition in which your mission or outreach committee shares a story on a monthly basis, or perhaps you'd like to start one in which these impact stories can be shared. You might also wish to include the story in your church newsletter. — Kathy Fast, Executive Assistant, Mennonite Church Canada WITNESS

Macau: "I have never preached in a church that had a waterfall!"

Like many pastors of Mennonite Church Canada congregations, Tim Buhler is very much involved in the practical issues of church life. When you are the pastor of the Mennonite Church in Macau, however, some of the challenges are different from those in Canadian churches. Tim and Cindy Buhler are MC Canada Witness workers in Macau where they live with their daughters Chelsey and Kristyn. The Buhlers now lead the mission team while George and Tobia Veith and family are on North America Assignment for one year. Tim wrote about a recent Sunday morning challenge.

Jung Keung is a young seminary student from Hong Kong. He came to Macau with a small group from the Agape Mennonite Church in nearby Hong Kong to help lead our worship service. He told me this was the most challenging preaching experience he had ever had and had never preached in a church that had a waterfall!

I (Tim) arrived early to church on Sunday, August 29, during a very heavy rainstorm. The TV said it was black cloud, which meant that we would have very heavy rain throughout the day. It had already been raining quite heavy for a number of hours that morning. As I crossed the road to open the doors of the church I was expecting the worst as with heavy rain often comes flooding in the church. My fears were confirmed as most of the back room was covered in water. It had begun to seep its way in the worship area. I set out to correct the problem and within an hour, with the help of one of my Hong Kong guests and a sump pump, the flooding was under control. At least I thought it was under control.

We worshiped, prayed and praised for a half hour when Jung Keung began to preach. About ten minutes into his sermon water began to pour into the worship area out of the baptismal tank. The heavy rain had filled it to overflowing with hundreds of gallons of water. Six of us dealt with the flood for the next hour while Jung Keung continued to preach on prayer. At one point I stopped him to put his sermon into practice by praying for our situation. By the end of his sermon we had it under control and I was ready to close the sermon with a testimony time. I shared about the peace that I had experienced even in the face of the flood but that I had one regret - we had a full baptismal tank and no one to baptize! I thank the Lord for his timing since a flood when no one is in the building would be very damaging.

Please continue to pray for the Macau Mennonite church. This summer the church received notice that the rented facility where they currently meet has been sold and the church must move out. Pray for Tim and Cindy as they provide church leadership and look for a new church location that is not equipped with a waterfall!

— *A moment for celebration by Mennonite Church Canada WITNESS*