



Focus on Floradale

Volume XXXIII No. 5

Floradale Mennonite Church

December, 2017



Special Music events

Nichelle Bauman organized another worship café on Sunday, Oct. 29 in the evening. The foyer was decorated with fall colours, with pumpkins, squash and beautiful mums.

Worship was led by the Praise band, involving Nichelle on the piano, Brad Shoemaker on guitar, Jeanette Towns on the bass guitar and Johnny Friesen on the drums. The theme of the evening was thankfulness.

On Dec. 2, the church hosted a concert featuring John B. Miller and Friends. The group had amazing talent with a range of instruments and vocals. A freewill offering raised more than \$1,500 for Elmira District Community Living. A generous anonymous donor covered the concert costs. The Community Living organization is working on a third building project in Elmira to provide more supervised housing for their clients.



Jeanette Towns plays the bass guitar at the Worship Café on Oct. 29.

Prayer shawl ministry

On Sunday, Dec. 3, the prayer shawl ministry was recognized with a special prayer. Nancy Mann had the knitters come and stand with the prayer shawls. She said that when the knitters make the shawls, they spend time praying for the needs of the church and the individual who might receive a shawl. The shawls go to people who have a need for comfort; the shawls can be used for warmth and for times of prayer. Thank you to the knitters for allowing the church to share these symbols of love and comfort.

Christmas traditions in Colombia

By Hannah Redekop

I've now spent Christmas in Colombia for five years. It's never been a holiday I really anticipate or prepare for, but I've learned here that Colombians take Christmas very seriously. First of all, when people talk about "Christmas" here, it encompasses all of December and half-way into January.

The first sign of Christmas came a few weeks ago. I've come to recognize *La Navidad*, a certain children's song that is played repeatedly on the radio around this time. Now, Christmas lights and Christmas trees have been going up this past week and the streets will get painted with Santa Clauses and snowmen. Schools are out already and folks have started to make *masato* (a traditional fermented rice drink) and sweets to get into the festive spirit.

Bogota, the capital city of over 8 million people, clears out as families travel to their hometowns to spend time with grand-

parents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. Colombia is a country of rural farmers, many of whom were forcibly displaced and fled to the big cities to escape violence and find work. Christmas is a time to reunite.

Much of the holidays is spent—especially here in the hot climate parts of the country—reclined in plastic-woven rocking chairs on the front porch, sharing a drink with the neighbours or cranking *vallenato* music on the sound system so loud the whole neighbourhood joins in the dance party. Often on the Sundays leading up to Christmas, large soup pots appear in the street on an open fire where families boil a traditional *sancocho* stew and will offer it to anyone walking by.

Like I said, Christmas isn't something I really look forward to, but there is one tradition here in Colombia that I really love. December 7 is the *día de las velitas*, or the "day of the candles." When I went grocery shopping last week there were bins full of



colourful candles by the check-out in preparation for the day. Originally the holiday celebrated the day of Mary's immaculate conception, but has now morphed into the marking of the beginning of Christmas.

Each family lights a row of candles or lanterns along their front porch and spends the evening in the company of friends and neighbours, gathered in the street. I love walking around our block, watching the flames flicker in the dark and the shadows play across the faces of the kids who are welcoming the holiday spirit with gumption. It gives me a sense of community and joy for the place I've called home for five Christmases.

Offering for pastor Zudu

These days when cash is supposed to be a thing of the past, the people of Floradale Mennonite Church have an amazing amount of money in their pockets. After the children's story, on Nov. 26, Leon Kehl had baskets go through the auditorium before the regular offering, asking people to make a "pocket change" collection for Pastor Zudu in Ethiopia who is studying at Meserete Kristos College.

During the children's story, Leon showed slides of the pastor's house where the door was

covered by a curtain and the window by wood because they had been smashed by people who wanted to discourage him from working in the church. Leon showed a photo of the family and commented that he was the same age when his father moved the family to seminary in order to become a pastor.

Although the regular offering that Sunday was very low, the "change" offering for Pastor Zudu brought in \$683.45!

Pastoral Candidate weekend

Church Council is recommending Jim Loepp Thiessen to the congregation as our full-time lead pastor. Jim and his wife Ingrid will visit us on the weekend of January 13 and 14. This is a brief summary of the events that are planned:

· **January 13** – Jim and Ingrid will meet with Church Council, Elders, Staff Relations, the Pastoral Search Committee, and our staff for breakfast at The Stone Crock in St. Jacobs.

· **January 14** – We will have three opportunities to experience Jim: Sunday School in the multi-purpose room, a sermon and children's story during the worship service, and a potluck lunch and presentation following the worship service.

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. We will ask everyone to complete a brief survey sharing affirmations, concerns, and general comments. Church Council will evaluate the feedback and make a decision. Jim is available to start in the lead pastor role on May 1, 2018 if called.

Search Committee recommends Jim Loepp Thiessen

When the Search Committee met Jim Loepp Thiessen, we had already seen and were quite impressed with his credentials and references. We were all very pleased with the interview and unanimously agreed to recommend him to the congregation as our lead pastor.

One of the questions we asked was why he decided to memorize the book of Jonah. He was very animated as he described why the book of Jonah has an important message about grace and God's love. He preached us a mini-sermon—it was an excellent off-the-cuff sermon that seemed natural and appropriate. He says he loves to preach, and we could understand why.

We also asked Jim what attracts him to a pastoral position at Floradale. He explained that he has felt a clear sense of call. He has always depended on prayer so that God can speak to him in deciding what to do next in his life. Before he began The Gathering church in Kitchener, several people asked him if he had ever thought about starting a church. God kept opening doors, and after a day spent in prayer, he truly felt called to do that. (Today The



Gathering is a flourishing congregation of younger people.) He also felt the call of God to accept an interim assignment at North Leamington and now he feels that God is calling him to Floradale. One of the nudges in this direction was that Nancy Mann once asked him if he had considered Floradale. He said, "I want to walk through this door, to see if it "seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us."

He also talked about listening prayer which means paying attention to the Spirit. He teaches people to listen for God speaking. He enjoys engaging people where they are at, without judging. He enjoys walking with others at times of crisis. He believes that

worship should be a place of joy, of life and growth.

While he prefers a more contemporary style of worship, he recognizes that we all have our own preferences. (His wife's preference is for traditional hymns.) He said that both contemporary and traditional worship styles have strengths and weaknesses. Traditional hymnody has stronger theology and contemporary hymns can be a bit shallow and repetitive, but he finds the Spirit of God can move in fresh ways in a less traditional style.

Jim is a very outgoing person and so full of energy that he seems much younger than he must be with grown children. He loves the church and seems to love ministering to people. He is very personable and says he "thrives on honesty." When we asked hard questions, he responded with integrity. He clearly is a person who lives in tune with the Spirit of God and feels comfortable using that language.

The search committee includes: Ashley Albrecht, Barb Draper, Char Martin, Mary M. Martin, Reg Martin, Rick Martin (chair), Yvonne Martin and our MCEC rep is David Wideman from Listowel Mennonite.

The church and its future

By *Kim Rempel*

In October, I had the privilege of attending the Mennonite Church Canada Special Delegate Assembly in Winnipeg. At this assembly, delegates were tasked with voting on a new structure for the nationwide church. Previously, I attended the assemblies in Waterloo (2011), Vancouver (2012), and Winnipeg (2014). I have always enjoyed these gatherings. Some of my favourite parts have been the keynote speakers, the workshops, and meeting interesting people from across Canada.

My involvement in the church began as a child. Growing up, I attended East Zorra Mennonite, which is near Stratford. I appreciated the many opportunities I was given there, including playing piano, song leading, leading the music for VBS, and preaching.

During my time studying at Acadia University in Nova Scotia, I attended Baptist churches. For one year, I worked as the organist and choir director in a Baptist church. I also worked in an ecumenical chapel. These experiences helped to broaden my perspective, and taught me to look at faith in a different way. I didn't always agree with everything that these communities said or did, but that was okay.

I learned that being a community of believers is not about being the same, but about coming together in spite of our differences, and embracing those things that make us unique. I learned that it is important for churches to have people with different views, and that there is often more than one right answer. God's truth is



much larger than our minds can grasp, and perhaps we all see pieces of that truth.

In Winnipeg, it was decided that the structure of MC Canada would be changed: the local congregation would become the central expression of "church," and would also become the place for mission. I believe that there are some very positive aspects of this new structure. The autonomy of the local congregation (that is, its authority to make decisions regarding things like leadership, direction, and theology) is something that the first Anabaptist churches believed was important. This allows each congregation to decide how they can best honour God and be of service in their specific context. This looks different for a church like Floradale than for a church like Toronto UMC. This model is upheld in the new structure.

However, one of the benefits of larger church organizations is that they can provide direction, and at times a word of warning, to churches that seem to be going in a direction that is not true to their beliefs and values. A nationwide church can also unite congregations and remind us that we are a part of something that is much larger than Floradale Mennonite Church.

During the open mic time, a few academics raised the question of what kind of theology leads us to believe that the local congregation is the central expression of church. Does it make sense to have a more "hands off" MC Canada? What about the many questions that were left unanswered when we closed the assembly? How will the regional churches support congregational vitality and discernment? Does it make sense for the local congregation to be the centre of mission work? What will be lost by bringing all the witness workers home this summer? Will any policy be put in place to protect MC Canada staff?

The former structure of MC Canada was no longer financially feasible because giving has decreased. People don't give to the church in the way the way they used to. This seems indicative of a larger cultural shift: people don't trust institutions in the way they used to. Many times I have heard that young people are sceptical of institutions like the church. However, I don't believe this means that young people aren't interested in church.

Today, young people face challenges like highly stressful and competitive university program, unemployment, and an epidemic of mental illness. In the midst of that, many people are looking for a genuine expression of community. And the church can be that. Our church can be that. Perhaps this new structure is an opportunity to revitalize the church as a place of community, a place of inclusion, and a place of support. The changes have already been passed; our task now is to figure out how to live into those changes here at Floradale.

Kim Rempel is our youth worker.

Changes to Mennonite Church Canada

On the weekend of October 13-14, delegates from Mennonite churches across Canada met in Winnipeg for a Special Assembly. Delegates voted 94 percent to approve the proposal for re-structuring. Our delegates were Nancy Mann and Kim Rempel.

In many ways the new structure goes back to the (Old) Mennonite Church way of doing things, where decision-making was done at the local conference level. Delegates to the wider church came from the conference, not from the congregation. Financial contributions went to the local conference and a portion of that went on to the broader church. Even with the creation of Mennonite Church Canada in 2000, MCEC has continued to be the channel for financial contributions. This was different for the Mennonite

churches in western Canada, so the new structure will be more differ-

ent for them than for us.

MC Canada will continue to look after some things such as salary guidelines, benefits and pension plans for pastors and church workers. They will also do some overseeing of international missions, pastoral training, education resources and connecting with Mennonite World Conference.

Probably the most upheaval will be in international mission work. The current Witness workers will be supported by MC Canada until June of 2018; hopefully congregations will pick up support for these international mission workers going forward. With the scaling down of the work of MC Canada, several people have been “downsized.” Willard Metzger continues as MC Canada’s executive minister.

Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support

By Barb Draper

On Nov. 12, Shelley Campagnola brought the sermon and also made a presentation during Sunday School. She told us that 65 million people are on the move today; this is more than ever before. But these days borders are clearly defined and people need permission and official documents when fleeing from their country of origin. Sometimes they make it safely into another country, but always with the threat of being deported.

This past summer, 9,000 people crossed into Quebec illegally and Montreal was bursting at the seams trying to cope with these people who fled the U.S., fearing deportation. Some of these came to Kitchener since it would take until next March for them to get a hearing in Montreal. In the meantime their documents are held by government officials and they have no access to services.

When refugees make their way to MCRS, they usually have had an eligibility hearing. They then need to fill out a very long

Basis of Claim document. A key piece of this official form is the narrative, in which they need to explain why they need refugee status in Canada. Although these stories are about the most difficult times in their lives, claimants have only 15 days to fill out this form.

For most MCRS clients, their name is on a hit list, perhaps because they were a government official, a reporter or a human rights activist in the country they fled from. After the hearing is held, (and the wait can be long), if the claimant is accepted they can get a work permit. The next stage is to get permanent residency. It is only after that step that the process to get family members together can begin. When people flee during a time of chaos, families get separated. Campagnola said that “we bring families together, and that’s when our job is done.”

In the past year, MCRS processed over 200 files dealing with more than 400 people. That was a 66 percent increase over the previous year. The second busiest year

was 1998 with new people coming every week.

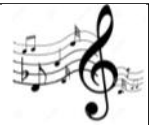
Campagnola, who attends the Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Church, insisted that what MCRS does is ministry; it is not just a service agency. “This is a God thing,” she said. “Anyone can do paperwork, but we do ministry.” In her sermon she pointed out many places where God’s people moved from place to place and the Bible commands them to also extend hospitality to strangers.

MCRS has three staff people, Campagnola who is paid for 30 hours a week and two intake workers. They also depend on volunteers, including people like Lester and Wanda and Dan and Karen who have had refugees living in their homes for a while. MCRS depends on donations and receives no government funding.

After the worship service on Nov. 12, people were invited to have a piece of baklava and make a donation to MCRS. More than \$350 was raised. There were also donations made to MCRS by individuals in the congregation.



“Heart songs” and favourite music



We asked people to reflect on their favourite music and their “heart songs” using the following questions:

1. What your favourite kind of music?
2. What role does music play in worship for you?
3. What are the songs/music you resonate with? Which hymns/songs are your “heart” songs?

Singing opens my soul

By Eileen Freeman

My favourite kind of music is classical music. Of the great classical composers, I think I like Chopin the best. I enjoy the complexity of his music. I have a large music book of Chopin piano arrangements and my goal is to some day learn all of the songs in this book.

When worshipping, singing opens my soul. If there was no music it would be hard to worship. My favourite hymn is “Will you let me be your servant.” I think the words to this song summarize my Christian walk.

I really enjoy Christmas songs. I play Christmas songs on the piano almost every night for the month of December. Singing Christmas songs at church is uplifting because of familiarity and therefore greater participation. The singing is a great part of Christmas

Music is a priority for me. I try to have a song “playing in my head” at all times.



Music is therapy

By Marj Metzger

Music is therapy to me and I’ll listen to many different styles, but classical is my favourite. It is so easy to listen to.

A big part of our worship service for me is the music, preferably hymns, but as I learn the melody of the Praise Band songs, they also have meaning as the worlds are powerful.

I have many “heart” songs and the Praising/Adoring section of the hymnal includes quite a number of them.

Christmas carols are enjoyed throughout the Advent and Christmas season, but I tire of the winter and secular songs.

I hope I never lose my hearing or my voice so that music is no longer a part of my life.



Music nurtures spirituality

By Mary M. Martin

Music is central in my life. Listening to music nurtures my spirituality, guides my mind and heart into a place of stillness and worship, soothes me when I feel stressed or sad, calms me when my mind is racing, entertains me when I want to be entertained and much more. I do not have a singing voice but I do enjoy being part of a group singing enthusiastically in four-part harmony.

I am eclectic in my choice of music, songs, hymns and bands enjoying the variety this brings. I can go from “It’s an Ordinary Day” by Great Big Sea to

“Worthy is the Lamb that was Slain” in Handel’s *Messiah*, to “I Will Come To You in the Silence” from *Sing The Story* all in one day.

On December 3 Elmira Menonite church is hosting a service for people who are living with grief due to the loss of a loved one in the past year. I’d like to honour my family members who have passed on by sharing hymns that I know they loved and that I still do, partly because these hymns bring back good memories.

Abner (1939-1976)

“They That Wait Upon The Lord” and “It Is Well With My Soul.”

My Dad (1916-2001)

“He Leadeth Me”

My Mom (1915-1999)

“Sweet Hour of Prayer.”

My sister (1943-2002)

“We are often Tossed and Driven.”

I was raised in a home where the only music I heard was through singing. One of my favorite memories is of my parents singing Sunday nights while they were doing dishes. Their voices would float up the stairs as I drifted to sleep hearing “The love of God is greater far, than tongue or pen can ever tell” and my theology was being shaped for the rest of my life.



Music can be therapeutic

By Johnny Friesen

I have always enjoyed music of all genres and styles for as long as I can remember. My Dad never let us listen to music on the radio in the car when we were young, so it was always cassette tapes (the soundtrack to “Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat” and “The Lion King” are the two I can remember).

My Mom however loved listening to the radio, with country music being her genre of choice. That certainly is my favourite genre to listen to now, and probably because it was what I grew up listening to driving around with Mom.

I really love how music can be therapeutic for me, as banging my drums can relieve a stressful day, or sitting in a chair picking my guitar can make me relax and unwind.

In worship, I have certainly developed a love and appreciation for music being a part of the service. People enjoy music being a part of the service and I am always happy to participate in worship by playing in the band. Not only does it allow me to use my gifts to glorify God, but members of the congregation always say how much they enjoy the band, and I’m happy to help them connect during the service through music as well.

I have gotten to know a few people from the church during our Sunday morning practices, and that has been a real blessing as well.



Memory lane of music

By Casey Horn

As a new parent I have spent a lot of time singing this year. There is something special about rocking your baby to sleep while singing a lullaby or bouncing them on your knee while singing a silly song. But, as I am sure every new parent discovers after singing “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” too many times, there comes a time to dig deep and recall some childhood favourites.

I found myself remembering the words and tunes to nursery rhymes I had not thought about in years like “Hickory Dickory Dock” and “Ba Ba Black Sheep.” Or rediscovering classic lullabies like “Brahms’ Lullaby” (who knew there were lyrics and not just a tune!) and “Hush Little Baby” with all its never ending verses to memorize. Or even songs from favourite children’s programs such as Fred Penner’s “The Gooney Duck Song” or Sharon, Lois and Bram’s “Skinnamarink” and “One Elephant Went Out to Play.” The list continues as one song brings to mind another. School songs, camp songs, songs with clapping games or songs with skipping games, songs from movies and shows, and of course songs from Sunday School and Bible School. Memories of singing “the B-I-B-L-E” in a loud, somewhat shouty voice come to mind, or using hand gestures to songs like “Deep and Wide” or “This Little Light of Mine,” and even songs when carefully putting coins into the offering tin like “Dropping Dropping.”

What I cannot help but notice is that each of these childhood songs brings to mind a special person or place and a whole lot of special memories. I can only hope that my daughter will have the same experience someday when she takes a walk down her musical memory lane.



Favourite song

By Mildred Martin

When it comes to music, “Just as I Am” is one of my favourites. It has a very special meaning for me. I was at a service one night a few years ago and an altar call was given. I knew I had some things to get straightened out with God. “Praise God!” he gave me the courage to step out and come, while we were singing “Just as I Am.”

I didn’t have to get all cleaned up to come, God took me just as I was. He cleaned me up and I went home happy.

I still need daily forgiveness, but Thank God, he has provided that forgiveness. Thank you God, I want to be faithful by your grace and strength and forgiveness.

We have a wonderful heavenly Father.



Extra dimension of expression

By Gary Knarr

Even though I have absolutely no ability to produce anything that could be considered music, hearing music that others provide is a very enjoyable and important part of life and worship for me.

My son Josh's first complete sentence was, "Daddy, don't sing." I asked him if he liked music. He said, "Yes." I asked if Daddy's singing is music. He said, "No."

My granddaughter Addie communicated her opinion very clearly even in her pre-verbal stage of life. When Addie was just a year old, she took the children's song book I was using to sing to her out of my hands, put it in a cupboard, and firmly shut the cupboard door!

I now sing very softly in settings where there are enough people to drown out my singing, settings like church, for example. That is one of the many ways in which the church is a blessing to me.

Having grown up in the '60s, I'm a fan of folk music by singers such as Peter, Paul and Mary, John Denver and Gordon Lightfoot. I also enjoy Celtic music, and almost all of the songs that are in our three church hymnals. I enjoy classical music, especially by Bach and Handel (or I guess that's actually called Baroque music), as well as bluegrass gospel and everything in between.

Music offers a dimension of expression for us that words spoken without music cannot offer. Music helps us reach out to God in our joy, trust, anxiety or grief.

Music can help us meditate, lament, or rejoice. Music can bring us into God's presence, and to a sense of encounter with God and of God encountering us.

A few of my favourite hymns that express God's love for us and God's call to serve his kingdom are "Great Is the Lord" (HWB 87), "You are salt for the earth" (HWB 226), "God of the Bible" (STJ 27), and "I will come to you in the silence" (STS 49).

Christine and I like to play Christmas sacred songs in the weeks before Christmas to help us enter into the celebration of Christ coming among us. It can be encouraging to hear Christmas hymns being played in stores and malls in the weeks leading up to Christmas. On the other hand, I do not appreciate the Christmas secular songs that are played in the stores from November 12 to December 24. I cannot understand how the staff who have to work in stores and malls and listen to that music week after week can maintain their sanity! It amazes me that no one has ever gone on strike over it. However, I suppose some secular Christmas songs such as "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer" does have a message of accepting others in their diversity, and of accepting our disadvantages and turning them into advantages. I suppose.



Music a big part of life

By Nicole Woeschka

Music has been a big part of my life for as long as I can remember. Some of my earliest memories include family gatherings with the red Mulls hymnal and singing a capella, singing as a family at church, in choirs at church, and as I got older learning to play the piano and guitar.

Piano lessons were a blessing and an effort for me (and my parents!) There was always the struggle to get me to practice my scales, my pieces and even flashcards and theory to learn the notes early on. Looking back, I'm glad my parents kept me on track because I still have the skills that were built so many years ago and I treasure them.

When I was a teenager I'm sure I would have said I was all about country music, but that wasn't altogether true. I grew up listening to country classics, but I also get a lot out of classic rock, Christian music, and even some head-banger stuff! I am one of those people who likes songs, not genres. I could never understand how anyone could drive with no music on at all (for example, driving anywhere with my grandparents who had no radio); I love having music playing! Even though a lot of my childhood was spent with family without radios or TV, there was often singing, therefore music around. Now as an adult, I find I have a challenging time focusing on my work if I don't have music on in the background.

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Some songs that I always come back to are by the group Casting Crowns; their lyrics help me feel good, and make me feel close to God—almost like prayer: songs like “Who Am I,” “If We are the Body,” “Here I Go Again,” “Praise You in this Storm,” “Dare You to Move” and “Voice of Truth.”

The song “Voice of Truth” is one of my favourites; it reminds me that I am not alone, God is always with me and not to listen to the voices of doubt that live inside or around you:

*...But the giant's calling out
my name and he laughs at me
Reminding me of all the times
I've tried before and failed
The giant keeps on telling me,
Time and time again, "Boy,
you'll never win!"
"You'll never win"*

*But the voice of truth tells me a
different story
And the voice of truth says,
"Do not be afraid!"
And the voice of truth says,
"This is for My glory"
Out of all the voices calling
out to me I will choose to lis-
ten and believe the voice of
truth...*

Now having a daughter of my own I get a lot of joy to see her enjoy music already at such an early age. She is quick to dance to any music she hears (like her mother, she is not partial to any specific genre!) She enjoys playing with any toys that play music or instruments she can make her own music with. Hopefully she continues this as she gets older and perhaps she and I can bond on the piano bench.

Inshallah: God Willing

By Nancy Mann

Every Tuesday at 5 p.m., I gather with about 130 others to share in an Inshallah Choir practice. Inshallah is a choir sponsored by the Kanata Centre for Worship and Global Song at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary. At Inshallah, we sing songs of faith from around the world: songs of praise and prayer; songs of joy and lament.

Through my connection with Inshallah, I have been exposed to many different styles of music, some of which are quite unfamiliar to me. Occasionally we sing short sections of our songs in their original languages—which takes a lot of practice and stretches me beyond my comfort zone!

The songs of Inshallah often remind me of the challenges that people around the world face, people in situations much more difficult than I experience in my own life.



Consider, for example, this simple Spanish Christmas Carol (author unknown):

Maria, pobre Maria

*Oh Mary, gentle poor Mary, so
destitute and so weary,
With a carpenter named Joseph,
and Jesus, Emmanuel.
As they cross the sands of Egypt,
daylight fading into evening,
Fugitives, they dare not pause;
Joseph, Mary and the Christ
child, a deep weariness enduring.*

These lyrics, which tell of Joseph, Mary and Jesus fleeing for safety into Egypt, remind us of the many refugees in our time who are fleeing for their lives from difficult situations.

The melodies and lyrics of songs from other cultures have broadened my awareness of our Christian family around the world, and helped me to feel connected to it in a new way.

Of course, I still love many of the traditional hymns and worship songs that we sing at Floradale each Sunday. I thank God for the gift of music, and the way that it carries the themes of our faith into deep places in our hearts, and allows us to lift our voices together in worship to God.

“Jesus, be the centre, be my source, be my light, Jesus” (#31 STS).

Our music repertoire

By Nichelle Bauman

At Floradale, we have a variety of preferences in music styles. I have received many comments that people would like to have a mix of both contemporary songs and hymns at each service. This requires several people to be involved in leading singing on any given Sunday, and we are very fortunate at Floradale to have a great group of volunteers in music ministry. The next time you're talking to someone who you see up at the front song leading, accompanying, doing prelude or participating in the worship team, offer them a "thank you" for their faithful service.

We have three wonderful hymnals, and a CCLI license that gives us access to a multitude of other hymns and worship songs. While this gives us a wide variety of music to choose from, it can also make it difficult to keep the number of songs we sing throughout the year down. There are several reasons for wanting to keep a smaller repertoire: 1. Songs are sung more frequently, and people are able to learn them well, and be able to sing them from memory. This can make it easier to worship through music, as people aren't getting caught up in learning their part or the words. 2. When new people start attending, it takes less time for them to feel like they know the songs that we use during worship, helping them to feel engaged.

Depending on the source, the recommended church repertoire is between 75 and 100 songs. This number can change depending on how many songs are sung during

a worship service, and how many songs are a part of the church's history and culture (an example of this would be WB#307 "Will you let me be your servant," which we sing before every foot-washing, as well as other times). Singing each song about 4 times per year seems to be the magic number in the worship leading world.

Ideally, the songs we sing would be ones we know well and can meaningfully worship through. Over time, some songs are dropped from the repertoire, and new ones are introduced. I have found at Floradale that we sing a lot of songs. So far this year, we have sung 235 different songs, 120 from the *Worship Book*, 28 from *Sing the Journey*, 13 from *Sing the Story*, and 74 from CCLI or other sources. I would imagine that total will climb by about 15-20 once we're through Christmas. Below is a list of the most-sung songs:

Worship Book

Each 4 times: #16 *God is here among us*, #307 *Will you let me be your servant*, #420 *Heart with loving heart united*, #497 *Come, ye disconsolate*
Each 3 times: #100 *Praise him, praise him!*, #226 *You are salt for the earth*, #421 *Bless'd be the tie that binds*

Sing the Story

#121 *Nothing is lost on the breath of God* (5 times) and #49 *I will come to you in the silence* (3 times)

Other Sources

Each 3 times: *How Great Thou Art*, *Lord, I Need You*, *Here I Am to Worship*, *Open the Eyes of my Heart*, *Lord*

All other songs were sung either once or twice.

During the Sunday school class that I led at the beginning of this year, I asked the class to brainstorm a list of "heart songs" for Floradale (songs that are well-known and loved). Interestingly, all of the songs listed above from the hymnals, with the exception of #497 were on the list of "heart songs." In addition to those listed above, other "heart songs" were:

From the Worship Book:

118 *Praise God from whom*
318 *Joy to the world*
12 *Come, let us all unite to sing*
36 *God of our strength*
1 *What is this place*
76 *Praise, I will praise you, Lord*
154 *This is my Father's world*
526 *In the rifted rock I'm resting*

From Sing the Journey:

13 *My soul is filled with joy*
27 *God of the Bible*
32 *If you believe and I believe*
49 *Rain Down*

From Sing the Story:

124 *My soul cries out*

I'd love to hear your input on music at Floradale, by email, phone or in person. What is meaningful for you? Do you think it is helpful to sing songs that match the scripture and theme of the service? Would you prefer a larger or smaller repertoire? Did the list of most-sung songs surprise you? What songs would you like to sing more often? Less often?

What is your favourite song? Let me know so we can sing it together during our worship service!

Nichelle Bauman
Music Ministry

Floradale's Canadian Foodgrains Bank project

By Jeff Bauman

The Floradale Community Growing Project harvested 25 acres of soybeans this fall. The field, which is located behind the Crossroad Restaurant in Elmira, yielded almost 35 tonne of soybean, working out to 51 bushels per acre.

The Floradale Community Growing Project is made up of two churches in the Floradale Community—Crystal View Mennonite and Floradale Mennonite. When we started the project back in 1998, the committee wanted it to be a Floradale community project. Hence the name. This worked out great because the farmers who did the work at the beginning were Oscar J.B. Martin from Floradale Mennonite and his brother Amsey Martin from Crystal View Mennonite. Over time, the work and

managing of the work was handed over to Randy Martin (son of Oscar) and Fred Martin (son of Amsey) whose names you will read in the next section.

The 25 acres of soybean was no-tilled into the corn field (2016 crop) by Randy Martin in the spring. Fred Martin then sprayed the field in the spring/summer. Fred Martin then came in with the combine and trucks to harvest the soybean and deliver it to Rosendale. The soybean was then delivered to the Port in Hamilton by Gerald Martin. (Just so we get the connections right. Gerald is married to Laurel who is a first cousin of Randy and Fred).

The 25 acres on Listowel Road was then no-tilled into winter wheat by Randy Martin. Just a note that the land we crop is donated by Elmira Land Development through Dennis Martin. That

is a lot of generous Martins. Blessing to all of you for your charitable work on this Project.

The Financial Statement will be available in the February Annual Report for your interest. We are already a step ahead for next year with the crop already in the field and growing.

Next year (2018) will be our 20th year of the Floradale Community Growing Project. We missed one year of cropping when no land was available, but we did send a donation to the CFGB that year (2012).

Thanks to everyone who continues to support this project in prayer and deeds.

Project Coordinator – Jeff Bauman
Project Manager – Randy Martin
Treasurer – Brenda Martin

Food and family traditions

This article missed getting into the last issue due to an oversight by the editor. Many apologies to Erma.

By Erma Wideman

While growing up on a farm, gardening and canning was a necessity for winter food. That is not the case for most of us now, as we can buy all fruits and vegetables year round. But I still like some of my own canned goods.

One of these is corn. At least that's what the family says—no corn like Grandma's corn! Yellow and green beans I put away for bean salad. The whole family likes these, even the in-laws who knew nothing about such a bean salad. I can sausage, gravy beef and chicken breasts. The latter is so convenient for chicken salad or for casseroles. While Earl was here we did a lot of peaches as that was his favourite.

Applesauce was second on his list. I still do a lot of that as it's a family treat when the grandchildren

come to my house. Yes consistency is important, as well as the amount of sugar. More tart than sweet for us!

One other thing I put away is blue Concord grapes for grape pie. This is a favourite for most of the family too. Another tradition is Monster cookies for holidays at Chesley and JamJam or Batchelor Button cookies at Christmas. We have this debate which the family likes better. One year I couldn't decide so I made both kinds to try to figure out which they prefer. Of course they couldn't agree, so now I alternate each Christmas.

Making dressing (not stuffing) was Earl's specialty. It gets done in a slow cooker. Thankfully my son, Paul, has now perfected that one.

Since Earl's passing I have found canning more difficult. It stirs up a lot of painful, but good memories. But I still do it. Why? For me there is great satisfaction seeing all those jars of canned goods in my cold storage. It feels good and right.

Mel Eby

Nov. 26, 1930 – Oct. 31, 2017

Reminiscing the life of Mel Eby who suddenly and peacefully passed away, Oct 31 at 11:15 p.m.

Mel grew up in Elmira the son of Isaiah and Veronica Eby. In his teen years he met Martha Weber from Waterloo at a youth fellowship and were married June 19th 1952.

They farmed in Elmira for a few years and Mel also worked for the John Deere Implement Shop. He decided he wanted to move to a 200-acre farm at Alma, doing custom work for farmers in that area, as he thoroughly enjoyed getting behind the wheel of a John Deere tractor.

Mel was also involved in the ministry of the Floradale Mennonite Church which he had joined with his wife. He served on many committees including Church Council, Board of Elders, and teaching Sunday School. He faithfully attended the Wednesday night prayer meetings and Sunday evening church services. He also was a longtime song leader and there was no piano, so he used a pitch pipe to determine the right note to start the song.

As time went by Mel and Martha had four children who brought great happiness to them. Then a big change came into their lives. After farming in Alma for more than 20 years, they moved to Elmira and Mel began driving a highway coach. For more than 25 years Mel and Martha worked together as Mel drove the bus and they organized tours all over Canada and the U.S. with Excel Tours.

Mel came to know the highways and the by-ways of the continent and was able to drive with confidence. They enjoyed making many new friends.

Times were changing, and their children were leaving home. Mel and Martha in their retirement years enjoyed going on a variety of vacations.

Music was important for Mel and he often sang while he worked. After he retired he enjoyed singing in the Jubilation Choir and he loved to participate in many concerts.

He appreciated his wonderful family of four children and their spouses, and 14 amazing grandchildren, which gave him 22 adorable great-grandchildren. He felt so blessed with such a loving caring family.

Mel and Martha were so thankful to have celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary this past June with their family and thankful to God to be able to enjoy so many years together.

In 2015 Mel had several health challenges which included a heart attack and a concussion. They were grateful to be able to move into Parkwood suites in Waterloo Oct 31st 2015. Mel improved over the following months and they were pleased how well things were going.

Mel passed away suddenly but peacefully of a heart attack on Oct 31st in the comfort of their apartment. This was two years to the day they had moved to Parkwood.

A funeral service was held at Floradale Mennonite Church on



Sun. Nov. 5, 2017 to celebrate the life of Mel Eby. At his funeral, his son Don sang the song, "His eye on the sparrow," in memory of his father who often sang that song. His funeral also included the song, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," the "606" version that the family sang regularly when they gathered.

Mel and Martha were blessed to have had two special years at Parkwood Suites.

The Eby family would like to extend their gratitude for the people at Floradale for their love, prayer and support during the time of Mel's passing on to heaven where he is in a wonderful place. We thank God for His faithfulness.

- the Eby family

Focus on Floradale is published five times a year.

Editor: Barb Draper

Editorial Committee:

Mary M. Martin
Nicole Woeschka

WMCEC cluster meeting

By Barb Draper

More than 60 women attended the cluster event hosted at Floradale on Sat. Oct. 21. After a light breakfast in the fellowship hall, people gathered in the auditorium where Lifted Voices, a group that includes Nancy Mann, sang several songs.

Dan Driedger, the executive-director of MennoHomes, talked about his personal journey and also brought people up to date on what has been happening with MennoHomes. Dan was born in the Leamington area; his grandparents were refugees to Canada in the 1920s. The stories of his grandparents made him aware of the need to help others.

When Dan was 13 years old, his brother died of glioblastoma, a deadly brain tumor. Nine years later his niece also died of a brain tumor which also affected him greatly. In 2000 Dan lost his mother to breast cancer and the following year his sister died of glioblastoma. He said that all these losses were like losing a limb. You never solve the grief, you only learn to live with it.

"These things have shaped me," he said. They have shaped him to have compassion and em-

pathy. How you view life is all about your perspective.

Although Dan grew up on a farm, when he married Darlene Shantz in the 1980s, farming seemed impossible. He began working at Systematics and was doing well, but as he looked at the important things in life, he decided to make some changes. For a while he worked at Mennonite Central Committee, but in 2013 he became the executive-director at MennoHomes Inc.

MennoHomes began in Kitchener in 2004 to provide housing to low-income individuals. This was rental housing, not like Habitat for Humanity. There is a community support worker who stays in contact with the residents to make sure they are coping. The first project provided duplexes; most went to single parent families. The building at Rockway Gardens was next where the majority of the tenants are women.

In 2010, larger family homes were constructed in Wellesley to provide some housing for Low German-speaking families. The following year a duplex in Elmira was built on Centre Street with the shop students at EDSS providing some of the labour. In 2012 a house was built on a double lot on



Dan Driedger talked about how he came to work at MennoHomes.

Ratz St.; actually it was an old house from Waterloo moved to the site.

Because there was so subsidized housing in Elmira suitable for those with mobility issues, a new project was started in 2016. It has been named "The Foundry" because it was built on a lot where the old foundry used to stand for 113 years. Tenants, who have an average income of \$17,652 per year, were moved in through August and September. Following the MennoHome tradition, each family received the gift of a quilt or comforter.

A recent project is the renovation of the old house beside the church at St. Jacobs Mennonite and a Syrian refugee family has recently moved in.

Shirley Redekop, president of Mennonite Women Canada, mentioned some of the projects they are involved with. This organization is helping Witness workers including Tom and Chris Poovong in Thailand, the Barkmans in the Philippines and Bock Ki Kim and his wife in South Korea. She encouraged everyone to check out the MW Canada blog and Facebook page.



Lifted Voices sang several songs at the women's cluster event on Oct. 21

Play project: Call for actors

It's been four years since Floradale Mennonite Church did a play project. The last one was "Mom, It's Time to Sell the House" performed in April 2013.

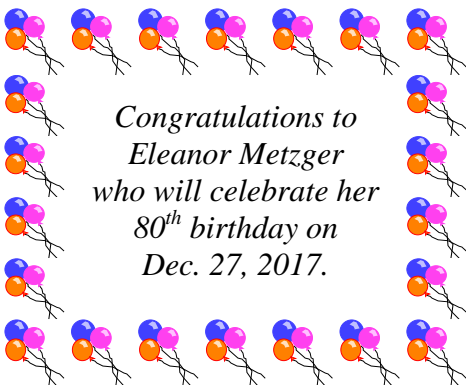
Barb Draper is presently working on writing a play about a family facing end-of-life issues with an aging parent.

We need people willing to participate in this project. The first thing we need is actors and actresses. If you have ever thought this might be fun, please contact Barb Draper or Rita Bauman.

Performances would probably be mid-April 2018 with rehearsals beginning sometime in February. People are busy, so we would do our best to have fewer intense rehearsals for those with small parts. If we don't have enough willing participants, we will need to put the project on hold.

Engagement:

Jeremy Frey and Jessica Meyer have announced their engagement and plan to be married on May 12, 2018. Jeremy is the son of Gordon and Marlene Frey who live on the 6th line of Mapleton and a sister to Char Martin. Jessica Meyer is from Smithville, Ont.



On Oct. 11, the Floradale Women's Fellowship sorted cans of food at Woolwich Community Services. Afterward, Kelly Christie, the executive-director explained to Karen Bender and others what recipients of the food bank can choose for their food basket. About ten women sorted food and others sorted clothes at the thrift shop the same evening.

Fall adult Sunday school

Among the special speakers who came to Adult Sunday School this fall were:

- Nancy and Robert Mann talked about their trip to Europe to explore the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. They showed slides and talked about the new ideas that came out of the Reformation as well as doing a biography of Martin Luther.
- Wanda Wagler-Martin, the executive-director of Shalom Counselling in Waterloo explored how stress and anxiety can be companions for most of us. Shalom counseling provides affordable and accessible counseling. Shalom has experienced 80 percent growth in 10 years.
- Palmer Becker described some of the history of the conflict be-

tween Israelis and Palestinians, using part of a resource he put together called "Pathways for Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel." He declared that it isn't a struggle between races or religion, rather it is a struggle over territory.

- Shelley Campagnola from the Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support in Kitchener described the work this little organization does to help people who have fled from their homes but do not have refugee status. In 30 years, MCRS has helped people from 45 different countries. Of those, about 80 percent have qualified for and received refugee status in Canada.

Hospice of Waterloo Region also did a presentation on Nov. 20.