



Focus on Floradale

Volume XXXI No. 6

Floradale Mennonite Church

December, 2015

MYF serves at Operation Christmas Child

By Danielle Kehl

On Friday night, Dec. 4 for our youth event we went to volunteer at Samaritan's Purse "Operation Christmas Child." This is an organization where shoe boxes are filled with school supplies, toys and/or hygiene items. These boxes are then sent overseas to countries where children who are in need.

Our job as volunteers was to inspect these boxes. We made sure that there were no food items or dangerous toys in these boxes. We then would send them to a



Also participating in the shoebox inspection were Danielle Kehl (left), Alina Kehl and Tinus Clemmer.



Floradale MYF volunteered at Operation Christmas Child on Fri., Dec. 4. Katie Gerber (left), Jocelyn Martin, Taylor Clemmer, Carmen Read (across the table), and Katelyn Taylor double check the contents of each shoebox.

taper, who took the boxes and taped them shut to keep them safe for the long journey ahead of them. The boxes were lastly put on a conveyor belt and sent down the long line. There were so many boxes coming down the belts, I would say about twenty boxes every minute.

There were so many different work stations as well. There were probably around forty-five, and there were six people at every station. The location we went to in Waterloo was open for twelve hours, where volunteers would work away every day! There seemed to be a never-ending supply of boxes to be sent, which I thought was just amazing!

Thinking of all of the kids who will be so happy to receive the gifts made all of the work we did on Friday totally worth it. I am glad we are able to help all of these children and let them know that God truly loves them. I think the children will feel his love and all of our love as those boxes are sent away on a journey that will change these children's lives.

Foodgrains Project Update

By Randy Martin

This year we grew winter wheat on 18 acres of land west of Crossroads restaurant. There was also 7 acres of hay that a couple of local farmers bought from us. For the 2016 crop year, we are planning to plant both fields into corn. This is just the second year we have had this land and hope to have it for many years to come before they plant houses onto it!

This 25 acres doesn't sound like it would help much, but when most of the input costs and field work are donated, we usually have more than \$15,000 to give to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Then the government



matches it 4-to-1 and this turns into more than \$60,000, which can go a long way to relieve hunger around the world.

The Canadian Foodgrains Bank is owned by 15 Canadian churches, or church-based agencies. In 2014-2015, CFGB helped 1.1 million people in 39 countries, working through the member agencies. Mennonite Central Committee is one of these agencies. For more information, go to the website at foodgrainsbank.ca.



Community choir and carol sing

The sixth annual Elmira Community Choir and Carol Sing was held at Elmira Mennonite Church on Dec. 6 with six choirs from local churches participating. The choir from Floradale sang "What a Wonderful Child," conducted by Angela Ishaka and accompanied by Casey Cressman.

Other choirs were from Gale Presbyterian, Trinity United, Woodside Bible Fellowship, St. James Lutheran and Elmira Mennonite. Andy Martin from Elmira conducted the mass choir as it sang "Emmanuel," arranged by Larry Nickel. An offering provided support for the Woolwich Counselling Centre.

Because the mass choir had about 140 voices, the choirs were seated in the basement so there would be room for an audience. Sound and video was projected on a large screen in the basement, and the signal was also sent to the nearby retirement home. The choirs took turns singing in the auditorium with Christmas carols interspersed so that the choirs could move off and on stage.

It was a fun evening with lots of singing. It's a great community event that brings at least the church choirs together. Thank you to Angela for teaching us a challenging piece.



Hidden meanings in the Twelve Days of Christmas song

Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly from 1558 until 1829. During that time, the Christmas carol "The Twelve Days of Christmas" was written as a catechism for young Catholics so they could remember religious teachings.

The "true love" mentioned refers to God. The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Christ is symbolically presented as a mother partridge which feigns injury, or even sacrifices its life, to decoy predators and protect its young. The two turtle doves are symbols of the Old and New Testaments. The three French hens are Faith, Hope and Charity, the theologi-

cal virtues. Four calling birds represent the four gospels and five golden rings are the first five books of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch.

Six geese a-laying are symbolic of the six days of creation, seven swans a-swimming are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit or the seven sacraments, while eight maids a-milking are the eight beatitudes. Nine ladies dancing represent the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit, ten lords a-leaping are the ten commandments, eleven pipers piping are the eleven faithful apostles and the twelve drummers drumming represent the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostle's Creed.

Eddie Bauman

“*Ve Gates!*”* I grew up on a farm on Posey line as the oldest of a rather large family with four sisters (Laurene, Naomi, Elsie and Ester) and three brothers (Walter, Howard and Marvin) and my parents, Oscar and Edna.

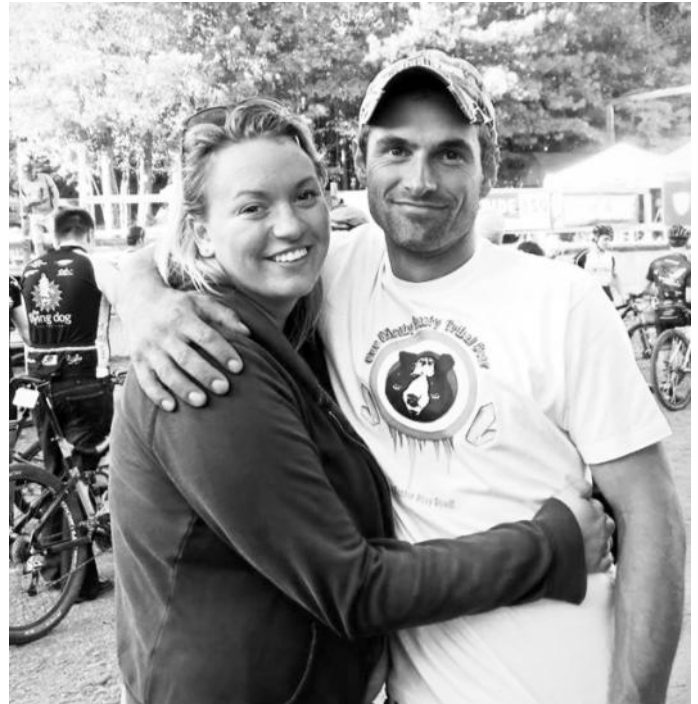
My two youngest siblings, Ester and Marvin still attend Redhill parochial school where I was a student for eight years. As a kid, school was only a short bike ride down a gravel road where I developed many fond memories.\

When I was finished school I started *shrining* (carpentry work) with my dad, doing lots of renovations and changing house roofs. It was a great experience where I learned a lot.

Later on I worked for Abram Bearer for a few more years in construction. After that, I began working for Orval W. Martin

Construction Inc, where I still do *shrina* work today.

During the summer months as a kid I would go back into the woods and clean trails throughout the bush and ride along on my bike, dodging trees and riding up and over rocks and logs. I guess that is where my love of biking rocky hilly trails all started. Now, I competitively mountain bike across Ontario and I'm always happy at the chance to do some road biking on a nice day. I have explored across Ontario on my bike; I have gone as far as the eastern coast of



Kaleigh Phillips

Let's start at my roots. I grew up in Kitchener and New Hamburg, daughter to Paul Phillips and Ingrid Hutter, in a close-knit and supportive family, with two brothers who are my best friends. Wes is 25 and Kieran is 16.

I attended school in Kitchener my entire childhood in French immersion as an outdoorsy, animal-loving, "doodler." My mom used to always call me that, because majority of the time I was drawing, painting or doing crafts, which is still my number one hobby to date!

We never lived on a farm, but I think my dad and I still both dream about it... but I have always wanted to. Hopefully some-

day Eddie and I can achieve that dream together.

My love for farms and animals has drawn me to work at horse stables in the past. My animal-loving side led me to the University of Guelph for a program titled a Bachelor of Bio-Resource Management, majoring in Equine Management. Essentially, that mouthful means that I am studying the environment, business, agriculture, the horse industry and animal biology all in one go. Which has not been a path without bumps, but I am continuing towards graduation at a slow and steady pace.

I currently work at the City of Waterloo as a jack of all trades,

Canada and I am determined to keep on keepin' on.

Editor's note:

**Ve Gates* is a Pennsylvania German expression that literally translated means "How is it going?"

In High German Eddie's occupation would be spelled "Schreiner."

I would say. Primarily I work as Waterloo's parks garbage lady, driving the smelliest of trucks and still I'm not immune to the stench. I also work as special event support staff, setting up for the Buskers' carnival, parades, and picnic throughout the city. Finally, I am an occasional care taker for the animals at Waterloo Park (pigs, miniature donkeys and horses, goats, sheep, turkeys, peacocks, alpacas and llamas).

Growing up in Kitchener, I never dreamed that I would be learning Pennsylvania Dutch from a Mennonite *shrina*...That I was going to marry, none the less!

Freedom Bound: A reflection on our Advent theme

By Nancy Mann

(“Advent- Epiphany 2015 – 2016 Worship Resources,” Fall2015, *Leader*, MennoMedia, compiled by Ken Beidler)

I like to receive a worship theme selected by others, to hold it in my mind for a few weeks, and reflect upon it for daily living. This year our Advent Theme, “Freedom Bound,” has me reflecting on these questions: In what ways are we free? In what ways are we bound?

My mind has turned to a short passage in 1 Corinthians 10: 23-24, where Paul addresses the church at Corinth. In this passage, Paul is writing to a church that is struggling, as churches often struggle, over a particular issue which is creating disagreement within the congregation.

“Everything is permissible,” Paul writes. Wow! For the Christian, everything is permissible! “Everything is permissible—but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible—but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek only their own good, but the good of others.” This is what Paul writes.

We are free! As Christians, we are free to follow our own consciences to do what seems right to us.

But always, we are to be looking to our left and our right, to see how our actions affect those around us. We cannot pursue our own good without considering the impact of our choices on others. In this way, we are free, but we are also bound. As we continue to remove the “chains” from our advent display this year, we are also challenged to consider—how will we use this freedom in Christ with which we have been blessed? How will we continue to sensitize ourselves to the needs of others around us?

As I reflect on these questions and draw them into my own life, I am praying for the sensitivity to be a better listener, especially when I am speaking with someone with whom I don’t entirely agree. What does this person see that I cannot see? How can I freely enter into their world, and try to understand from their point of view? What new insight or understanding will I receive when I stretch myself to listen deeply to the other?

May I have the freedom to listen openly and reverently to new ideas and trust that God will keep me grounded in gospel wisdom. May you also find a spiritual quest for your own journey in this advent season as we shake off the chains that bind us and live boldly into our freedom in Christ!

Floradale hosts MCEC-sponsored conference

By Barb Draper

On the weekend of Nov. 20-22, Floradale hosted the Re-Learning Community conference sponsored by Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC). About 80-90 people participated. Leon Kehl was involved, although Floradale did not have a delegation from the congregation.

On Sunday morning, Hanne Dalsgaard from 3DM Ministries did a presentation to the adult Sunday School classes. Hanne is from Denmark and a resource person for 3DM Ministries, a worldwide organization, based on the idea that the Christian life, following Jesus, requires three dimensions: time spent with God; time

spent with other disciples; and time reaching out to the crowds around us. They frequently use the word “disciple,” and ask, “What is God saying to you?” and “What are you going to do about it?” She emphasized that a disciple doesn’t have an easy road, but has his/her feet turned toward Jesus and is taking one step at a time.

She is a pastor’s wife and works in music ministry in her church. They have been inspired by the ideas of 3DM to work at having a discipleship culture and encourage lay people to take leadership when they feel that God is calling them to try something new. They began with a year of prayer in the congregation and

encouraged the congregation to be a blessing in their town.

God touched the heart of an older man in the congregation who asked others to assist him in providing handyman help to the single mothers in the town. A few families began a Christmas eve event which has grown over the years. A once-a-month Friday fellowship has also grown over the years and has helped people feel part of the congregation.

Hanne emphasized that what they do is encourage people to live differently, not to organize new programs. The journey is difficult; it’s one step at a time, but a Christian’s responsibility is to listen when God reveals himself.

Laura Bauman

January 7, 1938 – November 11, 2015

Laura Bauman passed away peacefully with her family by her side into the presence of her Lord on Wed., Nov. 11, 2015 at Grand River Hospital at the age of 77 years. Laura was the beloved wife of 37 years of Phares of Elmira.

Dear mother of Richard and Norma of Floradale, Don, Rodney and Gloria all of Elmira. She will be lovingly remembered by her grandchildren, Scott and Lisa; Ryan and Kyle; Alana and Carly. Sister of Harold Martin of Nairn, Willard and Karen of Elmira, Bruce and Kathy of



Cambridge. Laura will be fondly remembered by her extended family and many friends.

She was predeceased by her parents, Manasseh and Minerva (Gingrich) Martin and by her brothers Paul and Earl.

Laura enjoyed her time spent at the MCC Thrift Store in Elmira, making many quilts to be sold for MCC Relief Sales in New Hamburg and Washington State, and cooking for her family.

At the funeral many people commented on her sewing and cooking skills and her generosity.

A tribute to Laura

By Mary M. Martin

There have been many people who have come into my life and in doing so, have impacted me in some way and often I have learned from them. Laura Bauman's rather unexpected death, and then hearing how other people remembered her, reminded me of how Laura had earned my deep respect due to her commitment to detail and excellence.

I don't know how many years it was that Laura would prepare and cook the Christmas dinner for the addiction program where I worked. I know she gave up doing this the year she had first received her cancer diagnoses.

Laura would prepare a traditional Christmas dinner, much of it at her home and then spend the day at the church, cooking the turkeys, supervising the male volunteers peeling the potatoes etc. How Laura packed everything into her car without messing the

meringue on lemon pies still amazes me! I remember the look on the face of the person who was helping me carry the food from Laura's car into the church. There were at least 4 slow cookers of dressing (sometimes known as stuffing), lemon pies, graham wafer pies (which were an unknown pie), chocolate pies, cherry cream cheese desserts and some other stuff all packed in her car trunk and everything was still in good shape. If what House of Friendship could provide wasn't of the quality she believed she needed to make her dessert perfect she would provide it on her own.

She remembered that there was someone who had really liked the lemon pie and she made one for him again the following year. This man had never had someone care enough about him to remember that he liked something and when I told him that yes, Laura made him one he burst into tears.

I knew Laura could cook; I had worked with her at the Stone Crock, but it was how she cooked these dinners that earned my respect. She paid as much attention to quality, detail and presentation of this dinner as she would have had if she were preparing it for a MCC board or an event for MCEC leaders. This was clearly felt and appreciated by the participants and the staff of the 174 King Street Addiction program. Laura was known and loved as the "dessert lady."

I think the point I want to make is that the recipients of our giving can sense/feel if we are truly sharing/helping or if we are doing so because it is our Christian duty. I believe Laura felt that it was her responsibility to share because she was blessed with much. However, I also witnessed that she shared in a way that the receiver felt truly cared about.



Christmas favourites and not-so-favourites

Compiled by Nicole Woeschka

This issue of the *Focus on Flora-dale* is all about Christmas; more specifically, what is your favourite and least favourite part of Christmas. We have asked some people to answer these seemingly easy questions and have received a variety of different answers.

I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season, and I pray God surrounds those who mourn or struggle with his loving embrace. God bless; Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

What is your favourite part of Christmas?

Nicole Woeschka: I absolutely love that Christmas gives us an excuse to get together with friends and family – this is the part of Christmas I always look forward to most. The food, too... I am a Mennonite girl, after all! Opening gifts at Christmas is always a thrill; I look forward to giving gifts to my friends and family. I love pampering my loved ones.

Rosie Martin: Love the family, friends and food. Christmas trees, family traditions.

Ron Martin: I enjoy eating and getting together with friends.

Casey Cressman: My favourite part of Christmas is spending time with friends and family with cozy decorations, magical lights and yummy treats.

Bryan Horn: The general cheer and positive environment that comes from family and friends.

Kaitlyn Martin: My favourite part of Christmas is spending

time with family, the lights and the snow.

Carson Towns: “My favourite part is decorating the tree and house and putting the star on top of the tree. I like opening my presents too!”

Mike Towns: Eating good food and treats!

Jeanette Towns: Spending time with family and friends and watching my boys enjoy the Wonder of Christmas.

Spencer Towns: “I like the Christmas tree!”

Mahlon Martin: My favourite part of Christmas is celebrating the birth of Jesus and His life with us.

Nancy Mann: I love the Christmas Eve service, when, as the world stills from commercial activity, “the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.” (Phillips Brooks, Oh little town of Bethlehem, 1868)



What is your least favourite part of Christmas?

Nicole Woeschka: My least favourite part of Christmas is Santa Claus. It seems everyone is focused on what they want Santa to leave them under their tree, and forgetting what the real reason for Christmas is. Lists of wants and ‘needs’ are everywhere; toys, trinkets, knick-knacks. How many of us really need something for Christmas? The only thing worse than all the lists, is being asked to provide a list to the person who drew your name for

Christmas! Such stress... I’d rather make a turkey dinner...

Rosie Martin: I don’t like when people feel stress and guilt over not “getting everything done,” whatever that may be. Christmas trees, family traditions are great, however they can cause stress because they’ve got to get done! I also feel sad especially at Christmas for relationships that are strained and loved ones that are missed. There is a certain expectation of joy and happiness that not everyone feels for various reasons.

Ron Martin: I don’t like the gift business at all because everybody I know has everything they need.

Casey Cressman: My least favourite part is how busy the lead-up to Christmas can be.

Bryan Horn: My least favourite part is the politics. Just say “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Hanukkah.” The sentiments are the same.

Kaitlyn Martin: My least favourite part of Christmas is the stress of gifts, the cold of winter and driving in the slush and snow.

Carson Towns: “I don’t like not getting on the good list!”

Mike Towns: The business of this time of year.

Jeanette Towns: The commercialism of Christmas.

Mahlon Martin: My least favourite part of Christmas is all the presents, when most of us already have so much. I would rather see the money being used to help those in need.

Nancy Mann: When my schedule gets too busy and the pace seems a bit too frantic. Still learning when to say, “I’d really like to do that, but.....”

Getting into the spirit of Christmas

By Pauline Martin

Thinking about Christmas and the work of planning so everything is just right is the worst! Once I see others putting up lights and decorations, then I also get into the spirit of Christmas.

I don't do nearly as much as I once did and feel good about it. Once my tree is up and I start adding some family gifts, then it starts to feel like Christmas.

I really enjoy Christmas Eve services at church, which reminds me of the true and real meaning of Christmas—Christ's birth!

I still enjoy having my Mom join us for most Christmases, but need to share her at times with other siblings. As our family has grown larger with four grandchildren now, and Erika's boyfriend, we seem to even have more fun.

What I don't like and try hard to avoid is last-minute shopping, thinking about possible snowstorms or bad weather and so many ads and commercials about Santa.

I love Christmas carolers who give of their time to sing for many who maybe can't get out over the holidays. I can even set my clock, which chimes on the hour, to Christmas carols.

Christmas is coming. I certainly would not want to miss it! I'm glad it's only once a year, and by Jan. 5, I try to get my house back to normal and put lights, tree and decorations away for another year!



Christmas is warmth, happiness and light

By Gloria H. Bauman

When I was about 7 or 8, my sister Dorene and her boyfriend (husband now), took my sisters and I down to the ritzy part of Kitchener to see the Christmas lights. This was the first time I had ever seen such a display of lights, and have loved it ever since. I like the warmth and cheer that they give off—reminding us how Mary may have felt holding her newborn son, the Light of The World.

The warmth, happiness and light He gave to her and to the rest of the world through all these centuries, is what Christmas is all about. I enjoy sitting in my chair with the Christmas music playing, something hot to drink, and snow falling outside, enjoying the glow of the lights, inside and out. This to me is very relaxing.

And music. What would Christmas be without music! Come the end of November, the Christmas CD's go in the player, in the house and in the car. I always enjoyed singing in the choir, but as those days are over for me, I now sit and enjoy while others sing.

A few years back I went with Norma Bauman to hear the *Messiah*. Wow, what an enjoyable evening that was! So, let us keep on singing, as the angels did that first Christmas night, and I am sure still do in Heaven.

Getting together with family and friends over the Christmas season, has always been a part of my life and is important to me. I feel very blessed to have immediate and extended family close by



and that we enjoy each other's company, spending time playing games, eating, or just sitting around spending quality time together. To have people in our lives to enjoy Christmas with is a gift.

As for gifts, let us be thankful that we are able to give and receive gifts. It is fun to see the anticipation on the faces of the children as they open their gifts. It is a joy to be able to give a gift but also to receive one that someone has thoughtfully chosen for you. May we not lose sight of the true gift of Christ we were given that first Christmas.

And snow, Christmas just seems more complete if there is snow. It turns the world into a winter wonderland, all clean looking and quiet.

What I don't like about Christmas is the fact that to some it is a very hard time of year, for whatever reason. If they have no one to spend it with, as it is a time of gatherings, parties with friends and family, it can be a very lonely time. Just knowing that the suicide rate is high over this time of year is very sad. Let us try to remember to smile at those we pass on the street, maybe say "Hi." It just might brighten their day.

Also the way Christmas has become so commercialized, and it is just about more, more, more. It just doesn't seem right to be so stressed out over Christmas when He came to give us peace.

Christmas reflections

by Fred Redekop

I begin the Christmas season today by playing Bruce Cockburn's Christmas album. It happens soon after American Thanksgiving. It is the season for celebrating when Bruce begins to sing.

I distinctly remember when I had just turned 12 (in November, 1970) that Christmas, for me, lost its innocence. Before this, I looked forward to Christmas with much excitement, but something happened that year.

Growing up in Niagara-on-the-Lake, I liked chocolate coconut cookies, the Christmas carols playing downtown, the "Christmas store," going to my aunt's place for Boxing Day supper, and opening presents on Christmas morning.

In church, I liked doing something in the kid's Christmas program. As I got older, I went to the Catholic Mass at midnight at

St. Vincent de Paul Church in Niagara. The worship space was so different than what I was used to in our church. There was holy water, incense, the wafers, the statues, the kneeling and the standing, the short sermon, and the greeting of offering peace to everyone. I really love it. There was also lasagna at 2:00 a.m. at my best friend's house.

I love nativity scenes from around the world. It is my favourite decoration of the season. I think every culture sees the scene differently, so they have different likenesses of Mary and Joseph and the barn and the animals that might have been there.



For many years our family here went out to cut a tree at Benjamin's Tree Farm. The best memory around this is the tree fell off the top of the van on the expressway. No damage done to the tree or other vehicles.

I do not like the pressures nor the hustle and bustle, but I add to it myself, so I guess I have to live with it.

I really loved Christmas morning services. I grew up with it at my home church, Bethany Mennonite. We had New Year's Day service as well. We were meeting all the time, even on New Year's Eve. But, I really love the Christmas Eve service as well. We seldom meet to worship at night, so it makes it special to be worshiping together in the dark.

I wish you a great celebration of welcoming the Baby into this world. No words, or songs or smells are needed to welcome the Child into our hearts and lives.



Paul and Andrew talk about Christmas

I met with Paul Quenneville and Andrew Martin to hear their thoughts about what they like and don't like about Christmas. Both agreed that,

as a child, their favourite part was getting toys and Andrew grinned when he said he still likes toys but now he likes them electronic. Both said they liked Christmas music and when I asked if they would still like it 25 days from now they assured me they would.

Andrew likes Christmas parades, he likes that he gets a Christmas hamper and he likes family dinners. Paul likes to open presents, he likes a Christmas party like the seniors dinner last Saturday. Paul loves his "sweets" and he, like many others, will allow himself to eat them at Christmas and "behave" later. He loves rocky road bars and could accurately describe them to Andrew who didn't know what they were. Paul also

talked about the pie his mother used to make at Christmas; a corn flake pie crust filled with a butter scotch pudding. Very Good!

Both do not like icy, slippery sidewalks or snow storms. Andrew quietly added that he didn't like when someone didn't like the card he gave them and when I asked if that hurt he sighed and said it did. Paul does not like that he won't be going to his sister for Christmas and he is trying hard to convince himself that staying home is safer than getting caught travelling in a snow storm.

The importance of time spend with family was evident as Andrew and Paul talked and Andrew's face almost shone as he thought about his family dinner. I asked him about his family and noted that he had a big family. Paul's face was the exact opposite of Andrew's when he softly said, "my family was bigger and now it is getting smaller."

We ended our conversation by reflecting about changes and we agreed that thinking about changes can sometimes be almost harder than doing the change.

MCC Ontario: At peace and unafraid

By Darrell Jantzi

The theme for the MCC fall meeting, held at Bethany Community Church, St. Catharines, on Nov 14 was “At peace and unafraid.” This theme was tested on a day when many in our world woke up to a world in turmoil.

A large pile of donated blankets and comforters in front of colourful MCC banners provided a good stage backdrop for our worship and all that would be spoken and experienced. The Bethany family welcomed about 400 representatives and friends of MCC from across Ontario, but the mood was somber in their spacious facility as the meeting opened.

The music group from Scott Street Mennonite Brethren had prepared for joyful and celebrative opening worship, then the Paris bombings happened the day before, and the news of 130 violent deaths was just breaking. They urged us to make this time of worship, first and foremost, about God. We were encouraged to engage with each other briefly and then bow in a prayer for France, praying for more than the absence of violence. The mostly unfamiliar songs, while reflecting the MCC theme, lacked traction and our enthusiastic participation. It was a quieting moment I won't easily forget.

A SALT* leader and Rick Cober Bauman began by reflecting on what had just happened. Rick opened a large piece of folded cloth and together they tore it down through the middle to illustrate how violence is tearing communities apart, while peace

builds and brings things together. It was powerful imagery. Rick called for a moment of silence, then quoted Micah 4:4

“...everyone shall sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the Lord Almighty has spoken” and led in opening prayer. A skit followed with two IVEPer youth showing a cell phone being slapped out of his hands. In shock he stooped to pick it up, saying “Because I want to hate you, I choose not to.”

MCC has had an active role working at peacebuilding before and after many conflicts. They often work with local partners on the ground. Our work in the name of Christ is needed and respected.

Abisseck Samuel, a one-year IVEPer from India, shared his testimony of faith and the peace building program in India. Peace is everybody's job. We need to start with ourselves, our attitudes, and our openness to be like Jesus, and then move on to building peace in my family, my church, and my community. Let the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:9, guide you in seeing the world and satisfying someone's need by choosing the path of nonviolence, humility and righteousness, with Jesus as our source and model.

The Lebanese guest speaker, Rami Shamma, an international partner with MCC and a Program Manager with DPNA, told his story as a trainer on conflict transformation, active citizenship, communication, and youth engagement in public life. We can make a difference.

“It takes a thousand stories to tell a single story,” said another

speaker. “Peace is CORE to our MCC mission, and we are each challenged to see our role.” Live out your faith; challenge your boundaries; walk a new path; and become part of an IVEP team.

The well-planned event displayed the many ways in which MCC is working to bring RELIEF, DEVELOPMENT and PEACE in the name of Christ through its workers, partners and countless volunteers across Ontario and around the world. The 13 Seminars that were offered provided a chance to see, hear and experience first-hand how MCC is changing lives and communities through peacebuilding. Each of us participants in the Conference had an opportunity to choose two. I attended “Faithfully Managing MCC Finances” and “Beading a Tapestry of Respect, Trust and Peace.” Florence chose “Stories of Impact” and “Innovative Peacebuilding Practice.”

In our time of closing worship, the blue cloth ripped in two at the beginning of the Conference, was returned to the podium by several creative women as a beautifully designed and knotted comforter. Our peacemaking efforts are making a difference.

SALT – Serving and Learning Together (North Americans serve in other parts of the world).

IVEP – International Visitor Exchange Program (Non-North Americans serve in Canada and the U.S.)

DPNA – Development for People and Nature Association (Organization in Lebanon working with refugees)

The Old Orders are spreading and growing

By Barb Draper

In the last 50 years there has been remarkable growth in the number of Old Order Mennonite meetinghouses and they have been spreading throughout the province, especially in the last 20 years. Amsey Martin, an Old Order deacon and schoolteacher, and Clare Frey, a minister from the Markham-Waterloo Mennonite group, talked about this growth at a meeting of the Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario, held at Floradale Mennonite Church on Oct. 24.

Amsey put together a chart showing that between 1901 and 1955 there were no new meetinghouses built. Until the 1970s, they were all in Woolwich and Peel Townships. Since the '70s there have been five meetinghouses built in the Mount Forest area and several more in Waterloo-Wellington area, extending westward into Perth County. Since 1998 several other new settlements at further distances brought many more meetinghouses.

Clare reflected that growth and spread is not unique to Ontario, it's also happening in the U.S. He also said Mennonites were spreading to new areas in the mid-1800s but many of the out-lying Mennonite churches didn't thrive. He also talked about a group who moved to Iowa in the 1880s, zealous about having a plain, traditional and "pure" Mennonite Church. The settlement collapsed in less than 20 years. Descendants of the Iowa migration who returned to Waterloo County were very negative about new settlements.

When the Old Order Mennonites split from the mainstream Mennonite Church in 1889 they had 15 places of meeting: four in Waterloo County; four in the Markham area;

two in Vineland; two in Cayuga; two in the Zurich area; and one in New York state. In the next 50 years, most of those meeting places became extinct.

The first half of the twentieth century was a time of contraction for the Ontario Old Order Mennonites. Both Clare and Amsey pointed to the people leaving to form the David Martins or to join the Hawkesville Chapel, other local Mennonite churches the new Markham-Waterloo group in 1939.

Amsey also reflected on why the Old Order church was expanding by the 1950s and '60s with fewer families choosing to leave the church. Amsey believes that the leaders in the latter part of the twentieth century were better able to articulate a sense of what it means to be Mennonite/Anabaptist and the rationale for being plain and separate from the world. By the 1960s, leaders were clearly teaching New Testament principles, explaining salvation and encouraging scripture reading.

In 1964, Pathway Publishers began printing magazines from an Old Order perspective and Amsey believes this had an impact on the broader Old Order community as they were influenced by the articles explaining the need for separation from the world and the stories showing people living simply and biblically.

Both the Markham-Waterloo and Old Order Mennonites began building new meetinghouses in the 1950s. The Markham-Waterloo Mennonites built the Montrose (West Montrose) meetinghouse in 1950 and Goshen (Centre sideroad, Peel) in 1955. By the 1970s they were building again with Brotherton (north of Listowel) in 1974 (rebuilt in 1993), and Fairhaven

(Millbank) in 1975. The community has spread to the north with new congregations at Mapleview (Alma), Meadowside (Conn), and Minto Grove (northwest of Harrison). This group does not have as many outlying settlements, but Beachburg in the Ottawa valley began in 1980 and in the New Liskeard area in 2009.

The Old Orders built Olivet in 1955 (4th Line, Peel), Linwood in 1962, Winterbourne in 1965 and Weaverland in 1976 (Dorking). Today they have five meetinghouses in the Mount Forest area and spreading toward Perth County.

Since 1998 new congregations have been developed in new communities. New settlements in the Chesley area and Kinloss Township began in 1998 and near Lindsay in 2009. At an even greater distance are communities in Massey (begun 2009), west of Sudbury, and Matheson, east of Timmins (begun 2014).

Both Clare and Amsey indicated that new settlements are started by lay people. Church leaders get involved when enough families have settled in an area to organize a congregation. For both groups, many meetinghouses serve two congregations as the territory around the meetinghouse is divided into two geographical units and they become two congregations sharing one meetinghouse, meeting on alternate weeks.

To close his presentation, Amsey said, "If the Old Order Mennonites are going to remain a farming community, if our farms are going to be affordable and viable, if they are going to be small, family farms, if we are going to retain a measure of separation from the world, then we need new communities. We need to spread out."

Darrell Jantzi attends Meserete Kristos Church General Assembly in Ethiopia

On September 16-19, the Meserete Kristos College, Ethiopia, hosted the annual meeting of the Meserete Kristos Church General Assembly. The MK Church Executive committee met all day Wednesday and their General Assembly of 180 church leaders representing 30 Regions met all day Thursday. A two-day Spiritual Life Teaching and Fellowship Conference followed the Assembly with over 800 persons attending.

Reports to the General Assembly indicated continued growth. This year the Church added over 16,000 baptized members and 70 new congregations. Total statistics reported 274,357 baptized members, 46,816 under instruction, 170,151 not-yet-baptized children, in a total faith community of 491,357 gathering in 892 congregations and 1,032 church planting centres.

International guests, Hippolyto Tshimanga and Darrell Jantzi, representing Mennonite Church Canada Witness, were impressed with the strong leadership throughout and the worshipful spirit in which they gathered to hear from the Lord and from each other, and to process the concerns

of the church, to elect persons to serve in various capacities and to choose a new Chairperson for MK Church. Each meeting began with a time of extended prayer desiring to hear from God for correction, cleansing, encouragement and the Holy Spirit's guidance.

To accommodate the large crowd attending the Spiritual Life Conference, the venue was moved to the local



Leaders of the Women's Ministry

(SIM) Retreat Centre complex on the banks of the beautiful volcanic Kuriftu Lake. This meeting was geared toward fellowship, teach-



Delegates give rapt attention to the presentations.

ing, and encouragement. The mood of the event was worshipful and celebratory with inspiring messages, sharing challenges and victories, and encouraging words from Fraternal Guest leaders of other evangelical churches. There was much affirmation for the MK Church and its College where some of their pastors have received training.

Hippolyto presented MKC General Secretary, Tewodros Beyene, a Mennonite Church Canada peace candle in a ceremony recognizing the formation of our Church-to-Church relationship and strong support for the College.

— *Photos and report*
by Darrell Jantzi



Darrell Jantzi, Aklilu Yilma, Hippo Tshimanga, Kana Dula, and Tweodros Beyene.



Eight hundred prayers ascending as delegates pray.

Special Anniversary:

Zenas and Eleanor Buehler will celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary on Dec. 31, 2015. Congratulations!



Engagement:



Eddie Bauman and Kaleigh Phillips have announced their engagement. They plan to be married May 21, 2016.

Birthday:

Ermina Martin will celebrate her 90th birthday on Dec. 23, 2015. She lives at the Chartwell Retirement home in Elmira.



New Website is under construction

Dan Bender announced on Dec. 6 that Floradale is actively working at a new website. We are very thankful to Leon Kehl for the basic website we have had for the last number of years. It has provided good information, including having our services taped and available online.

The plan for the new website is to have it provide the same information, but to make it more user-friendly for people outside the congregation who want to know who we are and what we are about.

No more Foodland tapes

- Foodland is no longer giving money in exchange for cash register tapes collected by charities.
- Thank you to everyone who has been contributing and to those who added up the tapes in exchange for credit. We will no longer be collecting Foodland tapes.

Recipes

Chocolate Billionaires

- 1 pkg. (14 oz) caramels
- 3 Tablespoons water
- 1 ¼ cup coarsely chopped pecans
- 1 cup Rice Krispies
- 18 oz. Merken's melting chocolate

In a double boiler over simmering water, melt caramels with water. Remove from heat and stir in pecans and cereal. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto lightly greased wax paper. Chill until firm. Melt Merken's chocolate in a heavy saucepan over low heat. Dip candies in coating and place on wax paper. Chill until set. Store in airtight container. Makes about 4 dozen candies.

-both recipes submitted by Gloria H. Bauman



Melting Snowmen Cookie Balls

- 1 pkg. (250 g) light Cream Cheese, softened
- 1 pkg. (350 g) Oatmeal Peanut Butter Cookies (Pirate brand), finely crushed
- 2 pkg. (170 g each) White Chocolate (Baker's brand)
- 42 Mini Oreo Cookies (3/4 of a 225g pkg)
- Decorating icings

Mix cream cheese and cookie crumbs until well blended. Shape into 42 1-inch balls. Refrigerate 30 minutes. Melt chocolate as directed on package. Dip balls in chocolate; place on parchment or waxed paper-covered baking sheet, allowing excess chocolate to pool at the bottom of each ball. Decorate with remaining ingredients as shown in photo. Refrigerate 1 hour or until firm.



Tip: To coat cookie balls with melted chocolate, roll cookie balls in batches in a bowl of melted chocolate.