



# Focus on Floradale

Volume XXXVI, No. 4

Floradale Mennonite Church

October, 2020

## Floradale Mennonite Church reopened Sept. 13, 2020

During the summer when the number of cases of COVID-19 decreased, Church Council surveyed the congregation about reopening. While many people were not comfortable coming to church, a significant number said they would come.



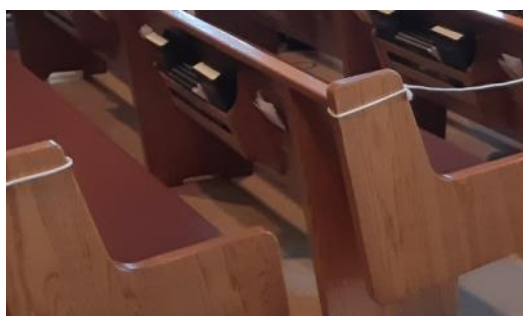
Leon Kehl, our

local technological wizard, set up the equipment to allow for livestreaming. This means that people at home can watch the service as it is happening, although there is a few-second delay. It is a challenge for the tech crew to send out the signal almost immediately, as Leon is juggling the camera, advancing the PowerPoint slides and getting the slides inset.

Our first Sunday of reopening was Sept. 13, 2020 with just under 40 people attending. In subsequent weeks we have had closer to 50. The first week was not a good experience for those trying to participate through livestreaming because the church internet was down. Leon tried to use his phone as a hotspot, but it was not a positive experience for those trying to watch from home. Since then things have gone better.

The auditorium looks different with people so scattered. It can also be a challenge to recognize people when their faces are covered with masks.

As plans were made to reopen the church, the pastors decided to discontinue the daily devotionals. The final one was distributed on Aug. 10, 2020, number 135. Thank you to Jim and Anita for your dedication in providing those daily devotionals for so many months.



*Every other row of pews is roped off to spread out the seating. While families sit together, only one or two sit in each pew. Leon has his hands full providing livestreaming.*



# Update on Elders and Pastoral Care

*By Anita Schroeder Kipfer*

This fall the elders have been discussing ways to strengthen congregational connections in times of need and/or crisis including illness, death, the birth of a baby or in times of particular challenge and difficulty. We care about you! One tangible way to offer support is by bringing a meal which is always a wonderful gift. While many of you already do this spontaneously and on your own initiative, the elders act on behalf of the church and together with the pastors try to ensure that people are not overlooked.

One of our elders, Karen Bender, together with Susan Martin have graciously agreed to coordinate meals. If you're interested in being on a contact list to make a meal, please reach out to either Karen or Susan. Another

option is Bonnie-Lou's restaurant which is a great place to pick up an individually portioned or family-sized meal that could be delivered immediately or frozen for a later time. Food can also be prepared ahead, clearly labelled and dated, and dropped off at the church on Tuesdays and Thursdays during office hours. These meals or baked goods will be stored in the main kitchen freezer to be used by elders or pastors as needed or in times of emergency. We already have one meal on hand! Thanks in advance to everyone who is willing to help with this important initiative.

Another significant role of elders is to offer ongoing pastoral care to people at Floradale Mennonite Church. One way to help streamline this is by dividing the congregation alphabetically into four lists, one for each

of the elders. Of course they certainly aren't limited to these lists. As needs arise, the elders will respond and offer support to those on their list. Likewise, in addition to the pastors, people can reach out to their elder for care and support anytime. The elders will be reaching out to personally connect with those on their list in the coming weeks.

Please let the pastors or elders know if you have any questions or concerns about these initiatives. We welcome your prayers for the Elders' Ministry at FMC. Blessings to all of you this Thanksgiving!

In Christ,  
*Anita Schroeder Kipfer*, on behalf of the elders

*Steve O. Bauman*, Chair  
*Mary Martin*  
*Derrick Burkhart*  
*Karen Bender*



*Jay Bauman knots a comforter for MCC.*

Floradale's Youth/Junior Youth is a small group; they participated in some events with St. Jacobs in the past year. In January they helped to knot comforters for the MCC Winter Warm-up at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.



*Kate Bauman (right, above) and a friend enjoy being together while helping with MCC's Great Winter Warm-Up in January.*

*Jack Diehl (left) makes sure his yarn is the right length.*

## Youth/ Junior Youth



# MCC fundraising garden walk

*By Barb Draper*

MCC is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, but the COVID-19 pandemic brought a significant reduction in income. This is the first time in more than 50 years that Floradale Mennonite Church did not have a tea ball fundraiser at the MCC relief sale in New Hamburg.

In an effort to raise some funds for MCC, but also to allow interaction with people from the congregation who had not seen each other for a while, a garden walk was organized for July 4, 2020. The prime movers and organizers were Karen Bender, Norma Bauman and Marilyn Weber.

People were invited to visit the gardens, enjoy the flowers and make a donation. The tour included the following gardens:  
Karen and Dan Bender  
Cheryl and Jerrod Leis of Hawkesville;  
Rita and Merle Shantz,  
Gloria and Howie Bauman,  
Rosie and Ron Martin,  
Donna and Rick Freeman  
Marilyn and Mark Weber of Elmira;  
Norma and Richard Bauman of Floradale.

The gardens were open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The gardens were beautiful and inspiring. Between 40 and 50 people came out to enjoy the flowers on a hot July 4. The organizers reported that \$6,540 was raised for MCC that day. Thank you to all the garden hosts.

*Donna and Rick have a happy face on their front lawn. The garden plot in the middle photo is designed like a quilt patch. They also have a village with a replica of Floradale Feed Mill.*





# Giving thanks for things that grow

*Traditionally Thanksgiving has been a time to give thanks for produce from the fields and gardens. For our grandparents and other ancestors who were subsistence farmers, their only source of food was what they harvested and stored. For this issue we asked people to say what grew well in their fields and gardens this summer, whether they stored any for the winter, whether they had any new adventures and if there is anything in particular they give thanks for.*

## Storing food brings satisfaction

*By Norma Bauman*

This was another year of carrying many cans of water to my tomatoes and flowers. With the extra love and water, my flowers bloomed well and we enjoyed them all summer.

Thanks to my daughter Lisa for watering them when we were gone several times discovering what the fuss is about camping. Maybe I should say “glamping” in our case as we have a travel trailer that brings along most of the comforts of home. For two weeks in September we looked at rocks, waterfalls and the changing leaves in the area around northern Lake Superior. Seeing God's handiwork in nature was an amazing experience and we are looking forward to more camping next summer.

Back to gardening, some of my tomatoes end up in salsa (Susan Martin's recipe) that Lisa and I devour. The rest are either canned or eaten as cauliflower-stuffed tomatoes, turkey bacon and tomato sandwiches or baked veggie casseroles. Too bad tomato season only lasts a few months.

We also have one full-size and two dwarf Cortland apple trees. The yield this year was only about half the usual 12 to 15 bushels. Five to six bushels usually end up as applesauce with the entire family pitching in to help. At the end of about five hours of work it is such a pleasure to see all of the large bowls of ap-

plesauce waiting to be frozen for the coming winter.

I don't freeze or can many types of food anymore, but there is a real satisfaction in seeing the food all looked after and ready to enjoy in the coming months.



## A good wheat crop

*By Dave Metzger*

This year we had an excellent wheat crop with a very good yield in spite of the dry weather. I rent out half my farm and this year grew wheat. Our garden and flowerbeds did well also, but I hauled a lot of water!

Our lives didn't change too much due to the COVID pandemic. We could not attend events but as far as our daily routine goes, nothing much has changed.



*Marilyn Weber with her garden in the background.*

## My garden

*By Marilyn Weber*

As the weather cools and fall is here, it is time to finish harvesting what is left in my tiny vegetable garden. I only plant a few basics like tomatoes, onions, carrots, beans and of course a row of zinnias. Each year I compete with many rabbits to save what I plant! This year they took care of all my beans before they were covered, but I did manage to cover my row of carrots before they had a feast.

Our grandchildren always like to check out the garden to see if there is something they could pick. This year Ty, our youngest grandson, discovered that carrots grow in the ground! In Ty's words, he could hardly wait till it was time to “pick” them. I enjoy seeing them take an interest in gardening.

What I enjoy more than my vegetable garden is my flower gardens. I love ♥ to cut flowers for bouquets and bring them indoors to enjoy.

As I look over this past unusual year, I am especially thankful for our spacious yard making isolation easier and for technology to

keep connected with friends and family.

## Our family enjoys food

By Eileen Freeman

Our life is focused on food. Willis and his son, Blair, grow corn, alfalfa, soya beans and wheat on their farms near Chatsworth. Some of these agricultural products are fed to our son's dairy cattle. My daughter and I garden. We grow and process garden produce. My daughter, Julia, and I are also focused on the visual appeal and the nutrient density of food. Our family enjoys food!

The men were particularly pleased with the yield in the fields this year. For the last two years they have been trying to improve the crop yields. Drainage of the fields has been helpful. They also have tried to use optimal tillage, fertilizers and nutrients such as adding more nitrogen to maximize the crop yields. It has worked.

This year we also found enjoyment in planting blueberries. Because blueberries require an acidic soil we have been working at acidification of the soil. This project has required a team effort. Our son provides the advice on the acidification of the soil.

Blueberries are a favourite food of our granddaughter. Our granddaughter had the opportunity to see the developing blueberries. She can hardly wait to eat a handful of blueberries.

We had a bumper crop of tomatoes this year. Julia started tomato and pepper plants in her St. Clements home which we planted in our gardens. These plants resulted in bushels of tomatoes which we processed into generous amounts of steamed tomatoes and tomato juice. Homemade tomato juice is heavenly. The lingering tomatoes and peppers made a wonderful nutrient-packed ciacciatore sauce for chicken and beef.

Herb preservation was another delightful project. We dried

herbs like rosemary, thyme and parsley. Next year we would like to do more. Pesto, using Jane's Hesselink's recipe has been a favourite way to preserve basil.

There are still many items to bake/cook—pumpkin spice cookies, roasted root vegetables etc. We tried making bagels. Our son and his family, as well as our daughter, reported that they were delicious.

We have found enjoyment in food during this pandemic. As Bon Jovi sings, "If you can't do what you do [want], you do what you can"

Thanks for the opportunity to give thanks for the wonders of food. Bon Appetit!



*Making bagels was something new. The family reported that they were delicious!*

## Giving thanks for community

By Mary Frey-Martin

As I think about harvest and Thanksgiving, I would like to say something about the Elmira Farmers' market. I really enjoy walking up there in the summer and fall and seeing the bountiful

displays of fresh produce from local farmers. Now one does not go to the Elmira market for a bargain, but we do know we are buying fresh produce from local farmers, which is something one sometimes questions at larger markets. My biggest challenge is to not buy more than we need, as sometimes everything looks so good, but then it's a struggle to get it used up in time.

It is also fun to stop at various local roadside stands to pick up fresh produce throughout the season. Sadly, I simply never picked up the love of gardening myself from my mother, but I still love the fresh produce, and just resign myself to opening my wallet to pay for others' labours, whilst keeping my own fingernails clean.

I also want to take this opportunity to say how very thankful I am for the love and sense of community Orval and I are feeling during my journey with cancer. In spite of COVID-19 and not meeting at church, I am so grateful for every card, phone call, email, text, offers of food and rides I have received from people at Floradale. Our freezer is full! So are our hearts. It really helps to know that people care; it is God's love in action.

I will be receiving treatments at the cancer centre until next July, but just have two more to go of the heavy-duty chemotherapy. After 35 years of being a registered nurse, I am learning firsthand now just how awful a person can feel some days. I never quite understood that before and realize now how I lacked compassion at times in my career. But thankfully those days do pass, and I do also have good days.

Wishing everyone at Floradale a blessed autumn season!





## Gardening is different every year

By Shirley Shoemaker

Vegetable and flower gardening have been a big part of my summer life for 45 years. This year the reins were handed over to the next generation and the education starts all over again.

Each year is different, depending on the weather mostly, and lots of trials and errors. I've planted a large amount of gladiolus for many years. This year they had a special presence at the farm gate stand along with exotic tulips, perennials and peonies to come in a year or two. Vegetables were sold here too. We are going to grow more next year. The sweet corn was a great success, but our tomatoes were not.

With a new shed put up on our farm, we incorporated a large cold storage room to store vegetables for the winter. It will also be cooler storage for flowers in the future.

Because of health issues and new baby granddaughter we had an extremely busy summer. We are truly thankful for help from friends and advice from others. Staying home didn't bother us as much as some people but we certainly miss getting together with family and friends as much as we'd like too.

We are thankful for such a good summer and going to try to stay healthy with our food we have preserved from the garden. Happy Thanksgiving to all.



## Thanks for a great-grandchild

By Pauline Martin

It didn't take me very long to think about what I could give thanks for.



What a special time in my life to be a great-grandma and spend very wonderful times with Stanley Allen. When he gets tired and cries, I can give him to Mamma Erika or Grandma Tammy. I'm also thankful for Martha Brubacher who walks with me most days and we enjoy our chats and walks so much. It helps to keep me from getting bored.

## Jane Josephine Clemmer (Jan. 22, 1950 – Sept. 23, 2020)

Jane Schlueter was married to Oscar Clemmer on Jan. 22, 1972, on Jane's 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. For most of their 48 married years they lived in the village of Floradale and attended Floradale Mennonite Church.

Jane had five children: Richard (Theresa), Tinus (Sheri), Dean (Heather), Fern and Oscar Jr. (Shelley) and well as grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Scheduled for cancer surgery, Jane suffered a stroke on Tuesday, Sept. 22 and passed away the following day, Sept. 23, 2020. She was 70 years old.

Because of the need for social distancing due to the COVID pandemic, a drive-past viewing was scheduled from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sun., Sept. 27, 2020. Friends and relatives could express their condolences in person from their cars as the family was stationed under the portico at the church.



A private family service was held at Floradale Mennonite Church at 4:30 p.m. with the service available for livestreaming so others could watch the service while it was happening. Nichelle Bauman, a long-time neighbour in Floradale, sang several songs accompanying herself on the piano. Pastor Anita Schroeder Kipfer read a passage from Matthew 6 where Jesus talks about how much God cares for the birds of the air and the flowers of the field.

In his sermon, pastor Jim Loepp Thiessen talked about God's grace, that is about forgiving and being forgiven. Jesus said he came to bring freedom, as we let go of the cares and hurts that can burden us. He reminded us that when death is sudden, we can sometimes be left with things left undone, but Jesus can give us peace about the things in our lives that are not tidily wrapped up. He invited all the listeners to enter God's grace.

Jim also reminded us that death is not the final word—God provides hope. When we grieve, we are sorrowful, but another day is coming when everything will be made new.

# Mildred Irlene Martin

(July 27, 1931 - June 30, 2020)

*By Polly Burkhart and her sister*

Mildred Steckle grew up in Stanley Township, Huron County, the second in a family of five children. For primary education she walked to near-by one-room schoolhouse with her cousins and siblings. As a young teen she went to many different homes to help the moms when they had their babies.

Mildred attended the Ontario Mennonite Bible School at First Mennonite Church in Kitchener in 1952 and 1953. She boarded with two Steckle cousins on Mill Street and said these were the best years of her young adult life. Mom was homesick, but these two cousins made life so fun, that she didn't want to go home.

When asked how she met Dad (Aden B. Martin), she said that he and Uncle Aden and Aunt Ida took her and a friend to Vineland to pick peaches. It was not long after that Dad asked to take her home from church and that was when the courting began.

As a family, we did not have many trips, but we do remember a trip to visit the Burkholder family in Bancroft. Away we went in our car with all six of us, and of course no seat belts. When we were almost there, the car overheated because the fan belt had broken. Dad walked to a garage to get us a new one and away we went again. We remember this trip as a very happy family time with Dad whistling and singing "When the roll is called up yonder" while he drove—his very favourite song.

We have many memories of fun times spent with our Heintz and Martin cousins on the 6<sup>th</sup> Line of Wallace Township. Mom and Aunt Eileen would work together to can peaches, make applesauce and butcher chickens. In the fall they would pick apples to sell from



our farm. Mom always planted a big vegetable garden with rows and rows of peas.

Mom loved summer Bible school with the children at our church in Moorefield. She taught for many years. When Sharon Cober (Cressman) and I finished being students, we also taught Bible school. Sharon would come stay with us during those two weeks. Mom thought of Sharon as another daughter. The three of us spent many hours sitting at the kitchen table playing Dutch Blitz and Scrabble.

As the years continued, most of my visits with Mom would include a scrabble game—and most times she would win. Mom was sharp with words and she enjoyed writing poetry. For various social events, such as a church shower, she would be asked to write a few lines of poetry.

Mom loved to cook and bake. Boy did she love this! There was always cake, cookies, pies, coffee cakes sitting on our cupboard on the farm. She loved hosting and always was inviting people to come into our home. One year our youth group was storm-stayed at the farm. Mom asked them what they wanted to eat. Someone jokingly said they would like chicken, pork chops, steak and ham. And guess what—she made it all!

When we moved from into Listowel in 1983 this love of cooking helped her find a new career. She successfully completed the food safety training course and got

a job at Maitland Terrace. She worked there for 14 years and was sad to retire when she turned 65.

When Velma Shantz asked Mom to help her cater to events, Mom was happy to join her. They catered many events in Listowel. This was a happy time in mom's life!

In 2002 Mom married Amsey Martin and she moved to Elmira. Mom was happy to attend Floradale Church with Amsey and made many more friends. Mom loved music, singing and playing the piano. Her love of music continued through her life. She enjoyed playing for the group at Woodside Evergreens and at services held at the local nursing homes.

Mom loved games. She especially enjoyed spending time with friends and playing games. She looked forward to her Thursday evenings when her church friends would come to play games and have snacks.

Mom's health began to decline over the past three-and-a-half years. In August of 2019 she moved to Heritage House nursing home in St Jacobs where she was able to spend time with her sister Elizabeth.

The last few months were especially difficult when we were not able to go into the nursing home to visit. Fortunately, we had some outside visits in the last two weeks.

Mildred was the mother of Carol and Dale Cressman of Zurich, the late Keith (2016) and Barb Martin of New Dundee, Delphine and Derrick Burkhart of Elmira. Cherished grandma of 10 and great-grandma of 11. She was predeceased by her husband Amsey B. Martin (2016), her first husband Aden B. Martin (1974), son Kevin Martin (1985) and son Keith Martin (2016).

After a private family service at Floradale Mennonite Church held July 4, 2020 she was buried at Bethesda Cemetery.



# Sylvan B. Martin

(Feb. 14, 1939 - Aug. 15, 2020)

*By his daughters, Charlene Leis,  
Judy Coulas, Gloria Bauman,  
Bonnie Martin and Donna Martin*

Dad was born and raised on a farm outside of Floradale. One month before his 20th birthday his father didn't come home from doing chores at their other barn. There was a snowstorm that day and the laneway was full of snow; the tractor was stuck and his dad decided to walk in the lane, only to suffer a heart attack that took his life. Dad found him and he never forgot that feeling. He then had the responsibility of farming without his father's guidance. He spoke often of his tender loving mother and how good she was to all her family!

There are lots of stories of his teenage years, with spiffed up cars, slicked-back Elvis hair, pushed-over outhouses and other pranks.

Dad and Mom were blessed with five daughters to keep them in line. We have lots of ice-cream memories with trips to Dairy Queen. Dad always got the large chocolate Blizzard. When we finished public school each year, we were allowed any treat of our choice there. When we had our babies, Dad would come to visit us at the hospital and bring us a blizzard for our hard work!

At Christmas he loved to go shopping with Mom to buy our gifts at the Hi-way Market. Dad was a big kid; he loved buying presents. Every year he would buy a family gift and wrap it up; it was usually a boy-related toy like a racetrack, remote airplane, truck or pinball machine.

We had many Sunday drives with the Big Brown Buick Boat, usually with a grandma or two in the back seat. The week-long summer cottage rental at Chesley Lake Camp was always a highlight.

There are many memories of enjoyment of food. He knew the



best bakeries around. When he delivered parts for Stoltz Farm Equipment, he would try out different places and sneak treats! Over those years, we had many jokes and debates over which colour was the best—red or green!

When Dad was confined to bed, food was his comfort. He had lots of last food requests. One year ago in August he was told at Hamilton Hospital that there was nothing further the doctors could do for him. Everyone was quiet in the vehicle afterward, but as we pulled out of the parking lot, Dad piped up “I know a really good bakery around the hospital here somewhere!”

Dad was known for his pristine manicured lawns and flowerbeds. People would walk by and comment or ask advice on how to keep such a thick green lawn. We were not allowed to touch the lawnmower—that was his toy. He would spend many evenings out in the yard after a long day at work. He always offered his skills to our properties too.

He spent many years managing Tri-Vest Feeders pig operation. He also worked at Bingeman Park and Conrad Grebel College as a custodian. He was known for his sparkling halls and rooms; he had a cleaning solution for everything.

The students enjoyed Dad and his humour and he was a mentor to many. At his retirement party, many students, staff and the girls in the kitchen shared stories of appreciation.

Dad was a committed member of Floradale Mennonite Church. He served on many committees, and was involved in ministries including Jane/Finch, Hamilton Rescue Mission, Guelph Correctional Prison Ministry and Canadian Foodgrains Bank. A favourite memory was his mission trip to Guatemala. Dad had a deep faith and love for God. He wouldn't always express it in words, but you would know through his actions.

Dad loved music and his favourite tapes of country gospel were soothing the last months he spent in bed. In his early years, he had an electric Hawaiian guitar that he taught himself to play. He would bring out his harmonica, often when the grandchildren came and he would play for them as they danced around.

He loved his grandchildren and always took an interest in them, talking to them and providing treats. He was also blessed with eight great-grandchildren.

Dad loved humour and making people smile. He used to have a saying, “Hi I am Syl from over the hill; if you won't, I will

We thank you Mom and Dad for the love you have shown each other right to the final days. Mom, your testimony of care and love has been shown over and over, to him and others. Thank you both for your strong faith and values you have passed on to your family.

Sylvan was the beloved husband of Vera Martin for 60 years. Loving father of Charlene (Paul) Leis, Judy (Kevin) Coulas, Gloria (Jeff) Bauman, Bonnie (Randy) Martin, and Donna (Jason) Martin. Dearest grandfather of 14 and great-grandfather of 8. He was predeceased by his parents Henry and Minerva Martin. A private funeral service by invitation was held on August 18, 2020 at Floradale Mennonite Church with livestreaming available.



# Floradale's Foodgrains growing project

By Jeff Bauman

This year our Canadian Foodgrains Bank growing project yielded 34.3 tonne of soybeans grown on the 23 acres behind the former Crossroads restaurant. This is approximately 55 bushels an acre. It was sold at \$485 a tonne which grossed us \$16,650 to support CFGB. After the soybeans were harvested, winter wheat was planted in that field.

Thank you to Randy Martin and the rest of the crew who provide the equipment and do the work.



## Canadian Foodgrains Bank update

By Henry Reinders,

Dear Foodgrains supporters and church members:

As the new Ontario/Quebec Regional Representative for Canadian Foodgrains Bank, I want to say thank you for your ongoing support of our efforts to feed hungry people around the world as the events of 2020 have impacted world hunger.

COVID-19 continues to grow quickly in many parts of the world. Emergency food assistance programs have seen some changes, including support for the purchase of personal protective equipment, so things can be done in a COVID-19 sensitive way. Development programs are

providing more support remotely (radio, phone, text message) to farmers.

Many humanitarian organizations are warning that COVID-19 is leading to a hunger pandemic. A recent United Nations news report stated that the number of malnourished people has been steadily climbing in step with the global population for the last five years with conflict and severe weather events brought on by climate change as the largest drivers in this increase. This pandemic has added a whole new level of complexity.

In early March I returned from a ten-day Foodgrains learning tour to India. We met migrant workers from other parts of the country who were working in brickyards to have an income to feed their families. Their children were attending brickyard schools organized by Foodgrains partners as their only source of education while they lived away from home for part of the year. We were delighted to hear them sing to us and recite some of their learnings.

With the advent of COVID-19, the day jobs for millions of workers such as those in the brickyards have disappeared. Families without a source of income, without any savings or safety nets are suddenly facing a very severe hunger situation. The

World Food Programme says the number of people on the edge of starvation will double to 270 million this year.

Since our return from India, we learned that huge convoys of people were walking back to their homes because there was no longer any work for them. Our partners were supplying them with water and food along the way as they had no resources and there were no places to buy food. The desperation of the situation is hard to imagine and my heart breaks for the children we met on this trip.

I know this year has been difficult for all congregations. The fundraising activities that have been a part of many growing projects have been almost nonexistent. And yet the need for help is greater than ever. The United Nations estimates it will need \$5 billion to meet the coming needs. If there is any way you can help, please do so. You can visit our website at

[www.foodgrainsbank.ca](http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca) to make a donation or send a cheque to: Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Box 767, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2L4

We remain truly grateful for the support you have provided, and we stand with you in prayer as we all work to recover from this pandemic. May God continue to bless you in all you do.



*Henry Reinders, the Ont./Que. Regional Representative for CFGB visited a brickfield school in India in March, 2020.*

# New hymnal project: Worshipping in contemporary styles

By Anneli Loepp Thiessen

Early on in the process of creating *Voices Together*, the Mennonite Worship and Song Committee knew that four-part traditional hymnody from Europe and European-influenced North America would be a major portion of the collection, but that attention needed to be given to additional musical styles.

The Popular Idioms subcommittee was formed to research and assess contemporary musical forms. Our early meetings were spent trying to define what a popular idiom is, and we quickly discovered there isn't a simple answer. It is a large genre that includes many styles of music, and the lines around it are not clear.

The Popular Idioms subcommittee evaluated songs from a wide range of contexts:

- Favorite Mennonite camp songs
- Material from Anabaptist songwriters
- Interviews and surveys with Mennonite congregations
- Top 100 lists from Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI)
- Visits to non-English Mennonite congregations
- Contemporary worship music in African-American and Spanish-speaking communities

The 1969 *Mennonite Hymnal* includes a gospel section: music that at the time was newer to many Mennonite congregations. While some people believed these songs were not appropriate for a Mennonite hymnal, the songs in this gospel section quickly became beloved. This includes anthems such as “Blessed Assurance,” “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less” and “How Great Thou Art.” While today we con-

sider these hymns to be traditional, at the time they represented a new musical idiom.

The 1992 *Hymnal: A Worship Book* also captured popular idioms, such as Michael W. Smith and Deborah D. Smith's song “Great Is The Lord,” and Karen Lafferty's “Seek Ye First.”

*Voices Together* will feature songs in popular idioms that are known and loved by Mennonites: contemporary gospel and folk, contemporary worship music, camp music, and jazz influences. Some music comes from previous denominational collections, some will be new to many churches, and many songs are already known and loved by Mennonites. Examples include “10,000 Reasons” by Jonas Myrin and Matt Redman, and “Here By the Water” by Steve Bell.

Many Mennonite congregations worship in this musical idiom every week. An informal survey I conducted on 78 MC Canada and MC USA congregations in the fall of 2019 indicated that 86% of them had an account with Christian Copyright Licensing International, the primary licensing company for contemporary worship music.

Songs in popular idioms offer opportunities for different instrumentation: keyboards, drums, and guitars. Expansive, repetitive refrains offer an embodied, spirited encounter. They are best learned orally rather than from a page, using a different kind of brain function. Although they can be led successfully by one leader, they are designed to be led by an ensemble.

The accompaniment edition for *Voices Together* features keyboard accompaniments that will assist congregations in implementing popular idioms if they

are unfamiliar with the styles, or may provide new ideas to congregations who have long been worshipping in that way. Percussion rhythms, guitar strum patterns, and guidelines on improvising will all help worship teams and individuals lead contemporary music effectively. The pew edition of *Voices Together* uses chord symbols in most songs. The projection edition of *Voices Together* allows congregations to learn contemporary worship music orally, the way it is most accurately taught and authentically experienced.

Our hope is that those who hold *Voices Together* in their hands, whether every Sunday or at conference gatherings and events, will see themselves represented on the pages. By including popular idioms, we are empowering congregations already worshipping with contemporary styles, providing solid resources for communities that blend a range of musical idioms, and encouraging congregations unfamiliar with this music to venture towards something new.

*Anneli Loepp Thiessen is the daughter of Jim and Ingrid and is an active song leader, classical musician, and music educator. She is completing her PhD in Interdisciplinary Music Research at the University of Ottawa, where she studies women in contemporary worship music.*





# Generosity Fund assists children

By Mary M. Martin



*Arafat is 12 years old and one of six children taken care of by his mother. The father left and does not support the family. Arafat's mother brought him to the clinic suffering from osteomyelitis due to multiple drainage sites from an infected tibia.*

At the annual meeting in the spring we approved a donation of \$3,500 from the Generosity Fund for a program called One4Another. This charity, founded in 2012, serves children with surgical needs in Uganda.

I worked with Glenn Pascoe, one of the charity's founders, and learned to appreciate the work One4Another was doing for children whose lives would have been very dismal without surgery. I knew Glenn to be an honest and caring man devoted to this work, so I suggested One4Another to be a recipient of the Generosity fund.

Surgery made a very positive impact on these boys. They do not have the medical resources in their villages nor can families pay for the surgery. The help is accepted with gratitude.

Several of the children who received life-changing surgery made posters to show their deep



*Derrick, age 16, came to the clinic with severe pain due to bone infection in the shoulder joint. He had stopped going to school because of the pain which had been ongoing since 2016. He continues to need wound dressings and antibiotics.*

appreciation for the donation from the congregation. Thank you to those who made the decision to donate to One4Another.

## Hopping Thursday report

By Veg Weber

As Merri-Lee, Jane, Chris and I were sitting by a small pond this summer, brainstorming what we could do for our Hopping Thursday kids, a frog appeared at the edge of the pond and sat there the whole time we were visiting. It soon became clear to us that Hopper the Frog would be used as our theme for the kids as the acronym FROG means Fully Rely on God.



*This month the Hopping Thursday kit included material for making a Thanksgiving centerpiece.*

We felt this was relevant for this time in the lives of the kids especially with all the uncertainty that is happening with COVID we need to rely on God.

We decided to assemble kits once a month until Christmas for the children who were registered last year. Our first kit included a frog beanie that the kids could stuff and put eyes on, as well as make a FROG bracelet. The second kit included a small pumpkin to be used for a centerpiece along with ribbon and letters to spell "Give Thanks." We also provided FROG letters they could cut out and put up in their bedroom. Of course, each kit includes a snack!

The feedback has been positive as the children look forward to receiving their kits. There are 26 kits being delivered.

Anita Schroeder Kipfer is also helping with this project.

*Lena Kate Schroeder Kipfer shows off her FROG letters.*



# Introducing Nicole Woeschka

By Nicole Woeschka

Most of the congregation knows me as I was raised as a member of Floradale Mennonite Church, but here is a bit of background for those who don't know me as well.

I was born into the congregation to Ron and Rosie Martin in 1988 and have been a member ever since. I was baptized as an official member of the church when I was 14 years old. I loved my years in Girls and Boys Club, Junior Youth and then later MYF. Some of the friends I made during my years in these groups are still dear friends to me now, some 15-20 years later!

I met my husband Tyler Woeschka in high school, and we started dating in 2007. We were married October 1, 2011 and we lived in Drayton for six years before settling in our home on Westview Court in Floradale in 2017. We love the small-town life with lots of fields around us and tractors for the kids to watch!

We have two children, Everly is four and just started

JK at Floradale Public School—which she is loving—and Liam is two and loves watching or riding anything with wheels and a motor! We are excited to welcome another member to our family in the spring; Everly is very eager and excited to be a big sister again and Liam likes to follow her lead.

Tyler is a Truck and Coach Technician and manages the Marvara Truck Service shop outside of Drayton. Liam comes by his love of fixing and driving things very honestly!

After graduating from high school, I worked at Home Hardware at the main distribution centre in St. Jacobs for 11 years. I hope to use some of the skills I learned over these years in this new position! I resigned in November 2019 to spend more time at home with my kids before beginning at the church in September 2020.

It has been a month-and-a-half and I am finally feeling like I belong in this position and in the seat I've been entrusted with! For the first several weeks I felt like I was trespassing on Veg's office; I know it's silly as she hasn't been in the office in several years, but it was her office for my entire childhood. I am thoroughly enjoying learning the position and appreciate the grace everyone has shown me!



*Tyler and Nicole Woeschka  
with Liam and Everly*

## Births:

Congratulations to Jenn and Cal Shantz on the birth of their second child, Hudson David born July 20, 2020, a brother for Brielle.

Congratulations to Kaleigh and Eddie Bauman on the birth of their third child, Sawyer Thomas, born Aug. 21, 2020. A brother for Sadie and Riley.

## Marriage:

Taylor Holst and Jeff Martin were married at an outdoor service on the Martin farm on July 11, 2020. Congratulations!

## Other News

Congratulations to James and Susan Martin on the birth of two new granddaughters. Kennedy Elizabeth was born July 5 to Luke and Orisha Martin and Mae Allen Martin was born July 31 to Tom and Steph.

Congratulations to Dan and Karen Bender on the birth of their first grandchild. Grayson Daniel Bender was born July 24 to Garrett and Bender.

Congratulations to Willis and Eileen Freeman who welcomed a new grandson, Jeffery Aaron Martin on July 30. He is the first child for Julia and Nathan Martin.

Congratulations to Merle and Rita Shantz on the birth of another grandson. Casen Daniel was born Aug. 31, 2020 to Daniel and Sherry Bowman.

On Sun. Oct. 11, a children's **Shine Bible** was presented Reuben Bauman. Our other six-year-old, Clara Wilson, will also receive a children's Bible. Jack Diehl, who is in grade 7, will receive a student Bible from the congregation.

On Sunday morning, Oct. 11, 2020, people were invited to bring donations to the **food bank**. There was a nice collection of food items, but with low attendance at church these days the pile was a small fraction of previous years.