

## Mennonite Church USA

### Is Mennonite Church USA really real?



I hope you were able to attend Charlotte 2005 and the experience was helpful in capturing the emerging identity and mission of Mennonite Church USA.

I have observed that two years previous, at Atlanta 2003, delegates came asking “if this new church is really real.” They went home believing the new church is something new, in formation and that it held promise.

I then predicted that delegates would come to Charlotte 2005 asking “if this new church could do anything important.” The response so far is that people saw and experienced that we are able to focus our mission, speak to each other with love, purpose and determination, and, yes, the new church not only has designs to follow Jesus into the world, we are doing so.

Looking ahead to San Jose 2007, my feeling is that delegates will ask there “who is included in this new church.” Racial ethnic people may ask the question the most pointedly, but there are other groups who will have this question in mind too.

For the present, I am grateful for the delegate body, the leadership of many, many people and the hopes and prayers of many people that made Charlotte 2005 another major stepping stone as we follow Jesus into the world.

*Jim Schrag is Executive Director of Mennonite Church USA*

**Iraq statement:** The War in Iraq—where do we stand? Read the enclosed copy of the Mennonite Church USA’s Delegate Assembly Statement on the War in Iraq.

**God’s calling.** A compilation of *The Mennonite* series “Communities Pursuing Christ’s Purpose” by Laurie Oswald, news service director for Mennonite Church USA, is included as a missional church resource. The series features the stories of individuals and congregations who have joined God’s work in the world. For additional copies, call 800-790-2498 or email [Rebecca@TheMennonite.org](mailto:Rebecca@TheMennonite.org).

**OneSource scrolling.** The new *OneSource* mousepad is a convenient reminder of *OneSource*, an online resource network for congregations and church leaders. To request additional mousepads, contact Mennonite Church USA Communications at 866-866-2872 or [Communications@Mennonite.org](mailto:Communications@Mennonite.org).

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### Here’s some of what you’ll find inside this issue:

- Racial/Ethnic Conference
- Understand the Lectionary
- Urban Leaders Network

USA.org. For more information on *OneSource*, visit [www.mennoniteusa.org/resources](http://www.mennoniteusa.org/resources).

**New resources on OneSource [www.MennoniteUSA.org/resources](http://www.MennoniteUSA.org/resources).** *With the Spirit's Daring: An Interchurch Relations Guide for Local Settings* includes stories and worship resources, as well as discernment and action steps for congregations who want to strengthen their ties with churches of other denominations in their communities (free as a download).

*Good Citizenship Guide for Peace-Seeking Christians* offers suggestions for being a good citizen of the United States and for maintaining our primary allegiance to Jesus Christ (copies for purchase).

*Vecina, Vecino: Welcoming Latino/Hispanic Neighbors* is a six-session study guide for congregational groups who want to follow up on the Mennonite Church USA immigration statement in 2003. The study will help participants be better neighbors with Latinos in their communities and will encourage them to be more welcoming of immigrants (free as a download).

*Healing Healthcare: A Study and Action Guide on Healthcare Access* is a six-session study guide to help congregations discuss key issues of access to health care. This study guide was introduced at Charlotte 2005, and delegates committed themselves to use it in their congregations (copies for purchase).

*Guidelines for Scripture Readers in Worship* is a best practices selection on the *OneSource* Web site. Created by Toledo (Ohio) Mennonite Church, the guide helps congregational members prepare for reading scripture on Sunday morning (free as a download).

### Charlotte 2005

Work of the Delegate Assembly

- Listened to youth and young adults talk about their dreams for the church
- Approved Mountain States Mennonite Conference as a new area conference of Mennonite Church USA
- Reaffirmed The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and Vision: Healing & Hope as foundational documents for MC USA
- Discussed future relationships with Mennonite Church Canada
- Reviewed our goal to become an antiracist church
- Shared prayers with our brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe who are experiencing hardship
- Approved a statement affirming equitable access to appropriate health care for all Mennonite Church USA members and our neighbors, and agreed to promote the use of the *Healing Healthcare* study booklet in our congregations
- Affirmed Sharon Waltner as moderator-elect of Mennonite Church USA, as well as other board candidates for the Executive Board and churchwide agencies
- Approved a statement on the war in Iraq that calls for the support of efforts that can help bring peace and asks national leaders to end U.S. military involvement in Iraq
- Discussed when and how Mennonite Church USA should speak to government
- Affirmed exploring membership in a new interchurch organization called Christian Churches Together



**What's new on the Web?** Go to [www.mennoniteusa.org](http://www.mennoniteusa.org) for recent postings, including the Statement on the War in Iraq, thoughts on Speaking to Government presented to delegates at Charlotte 2005 and the Mennonite Church USA Powerpoint for Congregations under New Items. The site also now includes a revised version of the "Creating a Culture of Call" packet, which can be accessed through the Other Resources link on the Mennonite Church USA home page.

### Racial/Ethnic Conference, August 3 to 6, 2006

Children, youth and adults are coming together from every tribe and nation for fellowship, relationship building, networking, affirming identity as Racial/Ethnic people and identity as part of Mennonite Church USA (MC USA), establishing unity and strengthening congregations. The African American Mennonite Association (AAMA), Iglesia Menonita Hispana (IMH), Native Mennonite Ministries (NMM) and MC USA Intercultural Relations will host this exciting conference Aug. 3 to 6, 2006, in Dallas, Texas. We will have spirit-filled praise and worship services and workshops and fun-filled, interactive workshops, activities and entertainment for children and youth.

More information and registration brochures will be available at the end of the year. Information also will be available at [www.mennoniteusa.org](http://www.mennoniteusa.org).

## Worship, spirituality and stewardship

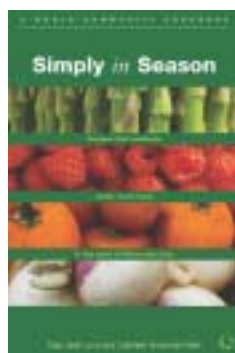
**Want to Understand the Lectionary?** Although the Mennonite Church doesn't promote the Revised Common Lectionary as the only suitable scripture calendar for worship and preaching, we recognize the importance of this ecumenical calendar and encourage leaders to be aware of lectionary-related resources. Share the enclosed one-page handout with your worship committee, elders or deacons, and others who want to understand the lectionary better. A larger print version is available online at [www.mennoniteusa.org/executive/cml/resources/c\\_l.htm](http://www.mennoniteusa.org/executive/cml/resources/c_l.htm). File: Lectionary handout.doc

**Surveying Pastoral Life:** Have you returned your survey yet? Which one, you might ask. The one sent out in August with the chocolate bar included! Mennonite Church USA's Executive Leadership, with support from Bluffton University, is surveying all women pastors and an equal number of randomly chosen male pastors, to record a snapshot of life as a Mennonite pastor. The results are being tabulated by Bluffton University students as part of a vocations grant and analyzed by

social scientists there. If you have questions or lost your copy, contact Diane Zaerr Brenneman, [dianezb@mennoniteusa.org](mailto:dianezb@mennoniteusa.org) or 319-656-5636.

### **Simply in Season**

"Our family's cooking has predominantly come from the *More-with-Less Cookbook*, *Extending the Table*, and another vegetarian cookbook. *Simply in Season* is a welcome addition. Its design is sharp and very helpful. Brightly color-coded sections demark each season,



the names of fruits and vegetables used in each page's recipe(s) are bolded in the margins, healthy eating tips are interspersed throughout the book and the fruit and vegetable guide at the beginning of the book makes branching out and trying new foods easy. The only season I've sampled so far has been summer, but it's been quite a treat. Having a cookbook that zeroes in on what's in season makes it easier to buy locally. *Simply in Season* has an

impressive selection of recipes and an important focus, and our family will be using this cookbook for many summers to come."—*Peter Eash-Scott*  
Paper, 336 pages, 0-8361-9296-6: \$13.99; in Canada \$17.49; Spiral, 336 pages, 0-8361-9297-4: \$19.99; in Canada \$24.99.

### **Getting in the Way: Stories from Christian Peacemaker Teams**

"These are realistic accounts indicating the compromises which one needs to make, the need to live with ambiguities, the difficulties of having one's work and motivation understood. There is an emphasis on the role of prayer, of fasting, of the use of liturgy, especially in a moving chapter by Bob Holmes, a Roman Catholic priest active in the Catholic Worker movement who reflects upon CPT's work in Colombia. CPT is open to those who identify themselves as Christian and is not limited to Mennonite, Brethren and Quakers.



There are some photos which put a human face on both the CPTers and those with whom they work.”

—*Rene Wadlow*

Paper, 160 pages, 0-8361-9248-6:  
\$17.99; in Canada \$22.49.

*Herald Press books are available  
for purchase on the Web at  
[www.mph.org/resources](http://www.mph.org/resources) or call  
800-245-7894.*



# Equipping

September 2005

## Pastors and leaders

**Urban Leaders.** Joint Conference Ministers/Mission Leaders meeting: Sept. 24 to 25, 2005.

The binational joint meeting will be Sept. 24 to 25 at Wilderness Edge Retreat and Conference Centre in Pinawa, Manitoba. The theme of the joint meeting is "Becoming a Compelling Missional Church in a Changing World: Leadership and Organizational Implications for Area Conferences." The speakers are Phil Bergey, consultant for building capacity among conferences for Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership team, and Jack Suderman, executive secretary for Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

The separate Mission Leaders Meeting on Sept. 26 will reflect on the input received during the joint meeting, "We Came ... We Heard ... So What?" For information or registration (Sept. 10) contact Becky Tyson at Mennonite Mission Network: [BeckyT@MennoniteMission.net](mailto:BeckyT@MennoniteMission.net) or call toll-free 866-866-2872.

### **Urban Leaders Network 2005 meeting Nov. 15 to 16 Indianapolis**

The annual Urban Leaders Network meeting will host the first of a two-part conversation about education

for urban, racial and ethnic groups, from preschool to adult leadership within Mennonite Church USA. Participants will help identify the highest priority needs for these groups and attempt to develop an educational model that builds off of strengths of current efforts and involves agencies, educational institutions, conferences, congregations and other church leaders.

Registration and information are at [www.MennoniteMission.net](http://www.MennoniteMission.net). (Select the Event Registration link in the Features section or from the Quick Links drop-down menu.) Register by Sept. 30 for the best price, final deadline is Oct. 16.

Mennonite Education Agency, Mennonite Church USA Intercultural Relations and Mennonite Mission Network will sponsor the two-part sessions. The second session will be Feb. 19-21, 2006, in Los Angeles.

See the enclosed bookmark describing the Urban Leaders Network. Share with other interested pastors, church planters and lay leaders engaged in urban ministry in Mennonite Church USA.

For additional bookmarks, information, or to be added to the ULN mailing list, contact Becky Tyson at Mennonite Mission Network: [BeckyT@MennoniteMission.net](mailto:BeckyT@MennoniteMission.net) or call toll-free 866-866-2872.

### **Pastors Week at AMBS:**

See the enclosed brochure for details about Pastors Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary on the theme "Enacting Our Faith: Rites of Celebration and Commitment in Community." Speakers and participants will explore how to breathe new life into congregational experiences of baptism, funerals, communion and weddings. Leadership Clinics will be on Monday of Pastors Week this year; two are described on the back page of the brochure. See also the AMBS Web site: [www.ambs.edu](http://www.ambs.edu); select Church Leadership Center, then Pastors Week.

### **Interterm at AMBS:**

A study tour to India and four courses on the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary campus are part of January offerings announced in the enclosed Interterm 2006 brochure. See other courses in Kansas and Winnipeg, offered by AMBS extension sites. The information also is on the AMBS Web site: [www.ambs.edu](http://www.ambs.edu); select Academic Information, then Courses, then Interterm 2006.

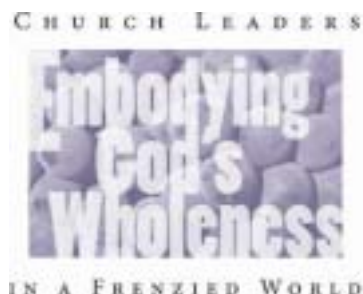
**Worship planner workshop for Advent:** Learn more about Advent worship resources from Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada at a day-long workshop Oct. 4 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Marlene Kropf and Karmen Krahn will explore and expand on worship resources in *Leader*. For information, see the AMBS Web site: [www.ams.edu](http://www.ams.edu); select Church Leadership Center, then Continuing Education, then Advent Planner.

**Two new events in Pastoral Care Continuing Education series:**

Pastoring in the Context of Addictions is the next event in the Extreme Cases in the Congregation series on pastoral care issues, offered by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. This workshop on Sept. 30 is described in the enclosed flier.

Another upcoming event in the series is Transitions: The Congregation as Ecology of Care, offered Jan. 23, 2006, at the beginning of Pastors Week. For more information, see the AMBS Web site: [www.ams.edu](http://www.ams.edu); select Church Leadership Center, then Continuing Education, then specific event titles.

**Register Now for School for Leadership Training at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, January 16 to 19, 2006**



Eastern Mennonite Seminary invites pastors and church leaders to step out of your usual frenzied schedule and attend to your own wholeness at School for Leadership Training 2006. Keynote speaker Duane Beck will lead us in reflecting on the difference between being busy and being fruitful. Using texts from the gospel of John, Beck will offer reflections on Jesus' three invitations to fruitfulness — abide in me, abide in my word, abide in my love.

Again this year, we offer 16 relevant and informative mini-courses to nurture your ministries. See the informative SLT brochure and registration materials included in this *Equipping* mailing for all the details. Also visit our Web site at [www.emu.edu/seminary/slt](http://www.emu.edu/seminary/slt).

Registration will be available online after Sept. 1. You are strongly encouraged to register early to ensure getting into the classes you prefer.

Additional features at this year's SLT are: 1) a pre-SLT workshop on "Health and Wholeness in a Frenzied World" led by Ingrid Friesen Moser, Stewardship and Health Manager for Mennonite Mutual Aid in Goshen; 2) Monday evening sermon by guest preacher Rev. Dr. Cheryl Sanders, Third St. Church of God, Washington, D.C.; and 3) a recreation night offering a variety of options on Tuesday evening. Come and be renewed.

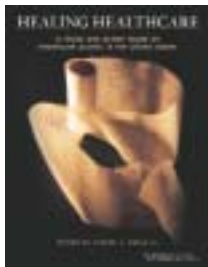
## Christian education, community and life together

### Order Advent bulletins by

**October 5:** The Advent 2005 bulletins feature themes and scriptures coordinating with the Advent resources contained in Leader magazine. To order this special series of six bulletins, call 800-245-7894 by October 5.

### New for congregational study:

*Healing Healthcare: A Study and Action Guide on Healthcare Access in the United States* is a six-session study guide



for congregations surrounding key issues of healthcare access. It explores what the Bible and Christian faith have to say, and helps us respond to current needs through creative and faithful action.

### Guide youth through Advent:

*Sacred Search: Encountering God During Advent* helps youth to know God, themselves and others in deeper ways during the Advent and Christmas season. This leader resource outlines four Advent sessions and an extender session for Christmas. Youth take a deeper look at the impact of the coming of the

Christ child on Mary, Joseph and others in the familiar story and are invited to make connections to their own lives.



teachers, leaders and pastors. First of a three-part series. Watch for more information.

**CD coming:** A CD to help acquaint congregational leaders and members with *Sing the Journey: Hymnal Supplement I* will be available in coming months. Watch for more information.

### Take a peace journey:

*Walking Through the Valley*, from the four-part *Second Mile: A Peace Journey for Congregations* series, includes sessions on: All God's People: Confronting Racism; In the Image of God: Confronting Sexism; Restorative Justice: Responding to Crime; Lives of Service. Use *Second Mile's* short, accessible sessions to teach Christ's way of peace to all members, including young adults. Find more information at [www.gosecondmile.org](http://www.gosecondmile.org).

**Bible skits available soon:** *Fun Bible Skits: Ready-to-go Scripts & Activities for Kids and Congregations* will bring Bible stories to life for all ages. Twenty-four ready-to-go reproducible scripts, accompanied by tips for discussion and activities, will provide flexible options for children's clubs, midweek, retreats, camp, Sunday school, worship or other church settings. This mix of Old and New Testament stories will be a welcome resource for

**Submit for publication!** You are invited to send submissions of new music and worship resources for the second hymnal supplement, *Sing the Story*, to project editor Randall Spaulding, 3342 Glouster St., Sarasota, FL 34235 by Dec. 1, 2005. Email [randy118@comcast.net](mailto:randy118@comcast.net). Include all publisher/copyright information. Please alert local writers and composers to the opportunity to contribute to this key resource.

**Jubilee Donation opportunities:** MCC Zambia is interested in receiving used Jubilee Sunday school materials for use in their Brethren in Christ churches. For information about how to donate, email [mcc@zamnet.zm](mailto:mcc@zamnet.zm). An alternate contact is Eagles Nest Ministries. For information, check their Web site at [www.lovepackages.org](http://www.lovepackages.org).



**Gather 'Round Readers**

**Needed:** *Gather 'Round: Hearing & Sharing God's Good News*, the new curriculum to begin Fall 2006, continues to need qualified readers. For information, please contact project manager Amy Gingerich at [agingerich\\_gb@brethren.org](mailto:agingerich_gb@brethren.org).



# Equipping

September 2005

## Mission, evangelism and peacemaking

### Mission directory online

Mennonite Mission Network has created an online mission directory to complement the print version, Mission Mosaic.

The directory highlights the detail of workers' assignments as well as illuminating the larger picture of God's mission to all of creation through the Mission Network. Links to worker news and service opportunities are also available at [www.mennonitemission.net/Work/International](http://www.mennonitemission.net/Work/International).

### Partnership Options

Mennonite Mission Network's Church Relations and Partnership Formation department is offering five partnership options for congregations seeking mission engagement:

- Short-term special projects
- One-to-one relationships with mission workers for personal support and encouragement
- Ongoing cross-cultural sister-church type relationships
- Partnerships designed to support particular ministries by carrying out mission education and fund raising along with personal support of workers
- Ministry partnerships in which groups of Mennonite Church USA congregations participate in decision-making and direction-setting around shared mission vision

Contact [Partnership@MennoniteMission.net](mailto:Partnership@MennoniteMission.net) or call Dean Heisey at 866-866-2872 for information on any of these options.

### Mission Resources Brochure

Mennonite Mission Network works in partnership with you to imagine, initiate and innovate mission across the street and around the world. By providing consultation, training, assessment, logistical support and ministry resources, we can help make your vision for mission a reality. See the enclosed brochure for specifics and contact information.



# Equipping

September 2005

## Mennonite education, colleges and schools



### **Business as a Calling 2005, Whistler, British Columbia**

Christians in business from across North America come together every year to celebrate their calling at MEDA's annual convention. This year's convention will be Nov. 3 to 6, 2005, in beautiful Whistler, British Columbia, on the theme "Create a better world."

Visit [www.businessasacalling.org](http://www.businessasacalling.org) to learn more or contact Carol Eby-Good at 800-665-7026 or [ceby-good@meda.org](mailto:ceby-good@meda.org).

**Target 3,000 Households** around your church or new housing developments with the full-color NEIGHBORS and get four days of free consultation on-site by the publisher, Dick Benner. He will take a look at all your promotion efforts, including your in-house communication, your Web site, your relationship to the local media and help you identify people in the congregation who can serve as an ongoing communication team. It's \$2,000 of expert advice FREE if you will spend some money in distributing a quarterly newspaper that keeps your community in touch with you. See details in the enclosed insert.