



**Mennonite
Mission
Network**

The mission agency of
Mennonite Church USA

FEBRUARY 2011

Beyond OURSELVES

PROPHETIC PURSUIT

Wire car races in Philipstown, South Africa, provide opportunities to break down 400-year-old barriers to peace and friendship [PAGE 6]

PLUS

Chinese pastors find new vision [PAGE 10]

Answering phones for the Lord [PAGE 14]

Kingdom seeds

Sowing today to reap tomorrow

By Andrew Clouse

“Then Jesus said, ‘God’s kingdom is like seed thrown on a field by a farmer who then goes to bed and forgets about it. The seed sprouts and grows—he has no idea how it happens. The earth does it all without his help: first, a green stem of grass, then a bud, then the ripened grain. When the grain is fully formed, he reaps—harvest time!’”

—Mark 4:26–29

Often the kingdom of God blooms while we’re busy with other things.

When the first Mennonite teachers arrived in China 30 years ago, they had no idea their ministry of teaching English would later become an important support network for the exploding Chinese Christian church. Now, thanks to their work in bringing individual pastors together, these Chinese churches are learning the best ways to reach out to their communities (page 10).

Today, a small group of South African Christians are working to raze the walls of racism left behind by apartheid through a toy car derby (page 6).

Will this event make a difference? Who can know the mind of God?

What seeds are we planting today that might grow into mighty oaks tomorrow? It is exciting and humbling to know that God may be using even us to bring God’s kingdom to earth.

Often our toil feels meaningless; our pleas sometimes seem to fall on deaf ears. Paul’s assurance in 1 Corinthians 15:58 gives us hope: “Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

Let’s plant today so tomorrow’s harvest may be plentiful.

The Good Samaritan

Bible study for youth groups about immigration, hospitality and healing

By Michele Hershberger

Session goal: To encourage youth who may be unfamiliar with the issues surrounding immigration to practice loving their neighbors by first accepting everyone as their neighbors.

Materials needed:

- Bibles for each youth.
- Newspaper articles on Arizona’s immigration law and other similar immigration laws that may be passed in other states.
- For a background resource, download Mennonite Mission Network’s *Missio Dei* booklet, *Immigration and the Bible*.

BeyondOurselves.MennoniteMission.net

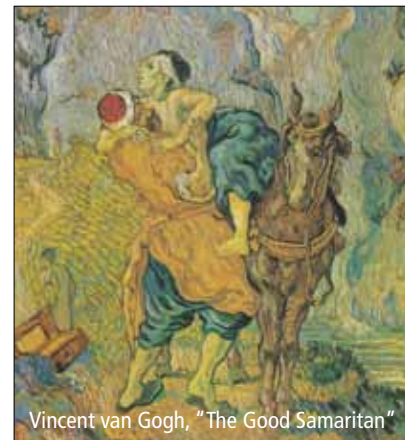
Explore the Bible story (20–25 minutes)

Ask the youth to turn to Luke 10:25–37. Read the story out loud and then ask them how this story connects to hospitality. Give some cultural and historical background on Samaritans. Make these points:

Samaritans came into existence when Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom, Israel, in 722 BCE. The Assyrians exiled 50 percent of the people and imported 50 percent foreigners. The foreigners intermarried with the Israelites and their children became known as Samaritans.

The Jews in first-century Palestine hated Gentiles (anyone who wasn’t ethnically Jewish). But they hated Samaritans even more because they were “half-breeds.” Jews would walk miles out of the way to avoid walking through Samaria, and would refuse to touch or speak to Samaritans.

Ask them, “If Jesus were telling this story today, who would be the Samaritan? How would the story be different?” Break up the youth into groups of four to five people, and direct them to come up with a contemporary Good Samaritan story.



Vincent van Gogh, “The Good Samaritan”

Apply (10–15 minutes)

Have the youth read their contemporary parables or act them out in a dramatic skit. Then let the discussion flow. Talk about who we treat as Samaritans today. You can name the issues surrounding immigration and talk about the national discussion currently taking place, using the newspaper articles as a resource. Ask the youth about the stereotypes they encounter when they hear about “illegal immigrants.” Also ask if any youth have ever felt like a Samaritan.

Respond (5–10 minutes)

Ask, “So, what are we going to do?” Be prepared for a wide range of emotions and reactions from both the youth and maybe even from yourself. Help the youth to see that loving the stranger involves both physical care, like the Samaritan gave the dying man, and letting God heal the attitudes we have toward the other. Jesus didn’t choose to make a hated Samaritan the hero of the story by accident.

End in silent prayer, giving the youth time to confess their attitudes to God and to ask for healing.

Michele Hershberger is a Bible professor at Hesston (Kan.) College and an author.

Feedback

▶ Let us know what you think of this issue. What inspires you? Engages you? Infuriates you? BeyondOurselves@MennoniteMission.net



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Cover: Bossies Olifant races his wire car through Philipstown commercial center in South Africa. Photo by Monique van der Walt.



Faithful testimony

In a host of venues this year, the historic Edinburgh 1910 Mission Conference was commemorated. That conference brought urgency to the task of sharing the gospel around the world. This year's commemorative gatherings celebrated the remarkable advance of the gospel and growth of the church. The 1910 gathering in Edinburgh was primarily a north-Atlantic convocation. More than 90 percent of the participants were from the U.K, Europe and North America. There were no Latin Americans, no Africans, and only four Asian participants. Last October, I attended the third Lausanne Congress in Cape Town (Cape Town 2010), which was one of the four major commemorative events. There, 4,200 Christian leaders gathered from 198 countries. Sixty-eight percent of the participants were from Asia, Africa and Latin America—a testimony to the amazing spread of the gospel during the 20th century.

At Cape Town 2010, there were many rousing and inspired presentations. As I took them in, I observed a peculiar phenomenon. Those who called from the podium for a vigorous defense of the gospel and a reaffirmation of propositional truths that establish the supremacy of God's word were met with occasional "amens" and affirmation. However, whenever speakers told stories about the faithful testimony of ordinary, unsung witnesses to the gospel, they were met with sustained applause. It seemed as if the audience knew instinctively that it is not in debate or through disputes that the gospel makes its most effective advance. Rather, the gospel's true advance is to be found in the stories of ordinary women and men seeking to bear faithful and creative witness through incarnating the good news of Jesus in word and deed.

In this issue of *Beyond Ourselves*, we share two of these creative, faithful stories of witness from our partners. These stories are not intended to suggest that as partners we replicate their approach to mission, but I can think of three things we can learn from

The true advance of the gospel is to be found in the stories of ordinary women and men seeking to bear faithful and creative witness through incarnating the good news of Jesus in word and deed.

these stories: First, these stories might inspire us to take seriously the call to a gospel-engagement with our culture and the neighbors around us. Apart from this engagement, how will God's healing and hope flow through us to the world? We may become reservoirs or dams of God's goodness, which will do no good to those who need it. Second, we might understand that God's purposes require ordinary believers (all of us) to respond to God's call to witness to the good

news. While it is true that extraordinary individuals have done some remarkable things (e.g., Mother Teresa), when the story of God's mission in the 20th century is fully recorded, it will be just as likely that in the unnoticed, unheralded witness of an

unlettered woman who led a house-church in China, the church grew and the gospel made its advance. North America's neighborhoods await women and men like you and me to reach out in acts of hospitality, welcome and witness. Finally, we might learn the importance of imaginative contextualization. What worked in one generation will not necessarily work in the next. Similarly, what works in one context cannot be reflexively adopted in another. Appropriate and effective contextualization will require careful discernment and a good dose of creativity.

What a blessing to live at a time when we can both give and receive, share and learn. In this new era of mission ushered in by the 21st century, I celebrate the partners God has given us. I am thrilled for these stories of faithful, creative witness through which we can find inspiration and encouragement in our own witness. Thank you for being a partner in making possible these stories that will be the foundation of the advance of the gospel in this new century!

Stanley W. Green

Stanley W. Green
Executive Director



Dave and Karen Mast travel across the United States to serve.

Photo by DeVonna R. Allison

Service nomads

Couple travels the U.S. to volunteer

One year ago, Dave and Karen Mast traded their 2,600-square-foot home in Ephrata, Pa., for a 35-foot travel trailer.

Dave, 51, and Karen, 48, now travel across the eastern United States working as volunteers for SOOP, a Mennonite Mission Network volunteer opportunity throughout the United States and Canada for adults and families, which celebrated its 20th anniversary this year.

Having logged more than 3,500 miles, they've worked at Woodcrest Retreat Center

in Ephrata; The Hermitage in Three Rivers, Mich.; Unique World Gifts in Hickory, N.C.; Lakewood Christian Retreat Center in Brooksville, Fla.; and Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center in Toano, Va. They are currently serving at Camp Friedenswald in Cassopolis, Mich.

What motivated this couple to forego the comfort and structure of their traditional lifestyle for this nomadic existence? Primarily, they see their choice as a calling.

"Through prayer, conversations with spiritual mentors, and recognizing a desire of our hearts, we pursued [volunteer] ministry,"

Karen Mast said, and after reading about the SOOP program online, they knew they'd found a perfect fit for ministry.

While full-time voluntary service is often seen as something to fill gap years between high school and college or college and a career, Del Hershberger, Mission Network Christian Service director, says people are finding ways of weaving service into their lives.

"We are excited to see more and more people at various points in their lives who are exploring opportunities for service outside their own communities," Hershberger said.

Mennonite Voluntary Service participant Chloe Weaver killed

Weaver dedicated life to service

Chloe Weaver, a 20-year-old Mennonite Voluntary Service participant, was killed Oct. 24 in Alamosa, Colo., when an automobile struck her while she was riding her bicycle.

Weaver had been serving with the La Jara unit of Mennonite Voluntary Service, a Mennonite Mission Network short-term service program, since August.

Weaver worked with children and in a community gardening project at *La Puente*, an Alamosa organization that provides emer-

gency shelter, food assistance, transitional housing, self-sufficiency services, homeless prevention, community outreach services, and



Provided by Herm Weaver

Chloe Weaver

job training for the homeless and other community members in crisis. Weaver also previously worked in Denver in the summer of 2009 with the DOOR program, a joint short-term service program of Mennonite Mission Network and Presbyterian Church USA.

Weaver, from Nederland, Colo., is the daughter of Cindy and Herm Weaver, conference minister for the Mountain States Mennonite Conference. She is survived by her parents; a sister, Hope; and a brother, Dillon.

Summit in the city

Urban Mennonites discuss concerns

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—In an effort to better serve urban congregations, Mennonite Church USA denominational ministry and Mennonite Mission Network commissioned an eight-month listening tour. From January to September 2010, Hugo Saucedo, Mennonite Voluntary Service director; Glenn Balzer, director for DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection); and Marie Voth, DOOR assistant; visited pastors and urban leaders in 18 locations across the country, culminating Nov. 17–19 in an Urban Leaders Summit in Kansas City.

They found that urban congregations are very diverse and face a similar set of realities uniquely divergent from more “traditional”



Nicole Francisco and her father, Bishop Leslie Francisco, speak at the Urban Leaders Summit in Kansas City, Mo.

Photo by James Krabill

Mennonite culture. For example, many urban pastors are bi-vocational and often not available for midweek church events or meetings because of another job. Urban Mennonites are often on the front lines of social issues the church inevitably faces: intercultural communication, women in leadership, sexual orientation, immigrant concerns, high cost of living, and racism.

“Over and over, we hear that people like the theology, the simple living, the commitment to peace,” Balzer said. “People don’t join the

Mennonite Church for the institution; they join for the theology.”

One of the results of the listening tour was a 10-page report that included a set of recommendations for Mennonite Church USA: developing a listening team to further strengthen relationships, creating opportunities to help urban Mennonite leaders better network, developing a clear path for urban congregations and affiliate groups to enter the denomination, and providing communication resources that do not assume each congregation will use the name Mennonite.

Weekly news

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A Senegal story

Christians meet to tell of God’s love

In a dusty Senegalese village courtyard, a group of Christian women gathered in the shade, happy for the rare opportunity to meet with other believers. And though there was excited chatter among the women, this was no mere social gathering. Many of them traveled for hours over rough roads in crowded buses so they could learn to tell the stories of the Bible through “story-ing.”

The local Council of Women, along with Mennonite Mission Network worker Margaret de Jong, came up with the idea for the two-day seminar in response to the challenges faced by Christians in a country

where only 40 percent of the population can read. Storytelling is a highly esteemed tradition in the Senegalese culture, and seemed a natural way for believers to share God’s message with their neighbors and families.

The stories they learned that day are familiar to many Christians: Zacchaeus climbing the tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus, the battle between David and Goliath, examples of King Solomon’s wisdom. But some of the women were hearing these stories for the first time and were being asked to memorize them.

“My prayer is that the passion these women had when meeting together will continue when they are back in their own families and communities,” de Jong said.



Photo by Stan Farnwald

com

Martin Venter (left) and Anchel Gustav (second from left) with 14 other wire car racers receive last-minute instructions at the starting line of the first annual Philipstown Wire Car Grand Prix.

Racing to monground

Only one finished first, but all who work to break down racial walls in Philipstown, South Africa, celebrated.

Story by Lynda Hollinger-Janzen, Mennonite Mission Network
Photos by Monique van der Walt, Philipstown, South Africa



South African sunlight played along thin metal artfully crafted into *draadkars* emblazoned with Audi, Ford and Mazda at the starting line of the inaugural Philipstown Wire Car Grand Prix on Oct. 2. Drivers nervously fiddled with last-minute adjustments. But this racing event was not organized to demonstrate speed, nor was it primarily about competition. This row of gleaming wire cars and excitedly bouncing drivers bore testimony to unprecedented cooperation in Philipstown, and brought together racial communities that rarely celebrate together.

The eight members of the Philipstown Community Health Evangelism (CHE) committee planned the wire car rally to start dismantling the 400-year-old walls between black, *coloured* and white people, and to begin laying a foundation that builds upon their common humanity. (Coloured in South African terms designates a person with ancestors from both Africa and Europe.)

The draadkar, a well-known toy on the African continent, is a wire car crafted from found items rejected as scraps. Running children provide the propulsion, maneuvering their cars via a long steering mechanism. At the Philipstown Grand Prix, the 16 cars sported performance-enhancing components, such as tomato paste cans, bottle caps, small oranges, and tennis balls.

As a police car escort moved into position to lead the way, yellow-shirted drivers stretched their muscles

and strained to hear the starter, CHE member Amos Reed, give final instructions about the 1.8 kilometer route that would wind through black, coloured and white neighborhoods. At Reed's command, the wire-car racers surged forward in pursuit of the police car.

Fanie Bauman's car crossed the finish line first, arriving into a gala atmosphere of pulsing Christian music and heavenly aromas wafting up from grills.

"This event means something to the community," said Bauman, a young man from the coloured community.

"What happened was not cute, but a prophetic act. The wire car rally is nothing short of a sign of the kingdom of God breaking into Philipstown." —Phil Lindell Detweiler



From left to right: Slinger Nel, Petrus Goliath, Jaybeyn Jansen, Ayanda Skibane, Kenneth Van Rooi and Anchel Gustav inspect one another's wire cars before stepping up to the starting line of the Philipstown Grand Prix.

Andries Fourie, a white farmer and one of the rally organizers, agreed with Bauman's assessment in less reserved terms.

"I can proudly say this is the first and only town in the world to have a wire car grand prix," Fourie said.

Like many communities in South Africa, residents in the areas around Philipstown desire to move beyond the barriers created by apartheid laws. One of the ways they have chosen to work toward this is through the CHE program that Christine and Phil Lindell

Detweiler of Mennonite Mission Network helped to introduce in 2008. CHE attempts to flesh out the good news of Jesus by living it out practically in the community.

Two people of color and six people from the white community work side-by-side on the CHE committee, determined to overcome fear with positive demonstrations of solidarity, and to begin the slow process of healing wounds of division.

"We are going to be together in heaven, so we should get used to it now," said Ursela Malherbe, a white woman whose husband is the pastor of Body of Christ, a multiracial church in neighboring Petrusville.

Although the word painting of heaven in the seventh chapter of The Revelation of John describes all peoples singing around God's throne, the blending of skin tones at Body of Christ is a dangerous act of faith that makes church members targets on a South African white secessionist organization's hate list.

Most, if not all, of those involved in organizing the wire car rally committed to the long hours, hard work and risk because of their belief that all races are part of the one family of God. They hope that the Draadkar Grand Prix will become a yearly occasion for making Jesus known.

"We are getting all the [nearby] towns to pray together. We are repenting of our sins," Malherbe said.

In addition to sharing God's love and bringing the community together to have fun, Malherbe said that making the wire cars encouraged creativity and recycling.

Although only 16 participants showed up on race day, CHE organizers reminded each other that one of the biggest challenges to overcome is skepticism that communities can change. Everyone agreed that the day should be celebrated as a major success, that more kids would participate in the 2011 rally, and that transformation comes about through small increments.

"The Grand Prix is going to be an annual event," said Kay Fourie, CHE committee member and wife of Andries. "The fight against poverty and social problems will not be won by a single rally. Programs are needed on a regular basis. We've got to get the message through: 'We are spending time together because we love each other.'"



Below: Fanie Bauman, winner of the Philipstown Draadkar Grand Prix, receives his award from Doy Ferreira. Philipstown Community Health Evangelism member and race starter, Amos Reed, stands to the left.

Above: Petrus Goliath, Kenneth Van Rooi, Jaybeyn Jansen and Ayanda Skibane jockey for position.

At the finish line, the now motionless wire cars still gleamed, having proved their road-worthiness—or not. Their drivers, in contrast, relaxed under trees and relived, with joyous animation, the rigors of the race, slaking their thirst with flavored ices and enjoying Rose Witbooi’s very fresh bread. Witbooi, who, along with Amos Reed, represents people of color on the CHE committee, began baking at two o’clock in the morning. She wanted to make sure that race participants would not be eating day-old bread.

“The rally kept the children occupied [for today], but we can do more,” Witbooi said when asked for her opinion of the day’s success.

Racers and spectators alike enjoyed *braai* (barbecue) and *potjiekos* (a stew prepared outdoors in a cast-iron, three-legged pot) made from donated lamb. Funding for the rally came from area businesses, farmers and individuals.

Phil Lindell Detweiler said observers from outside the community might be tempted to see the event as cute or picturesque.

“What happened was not cute, but a prophetic act. The wire car rally is nothing short of a sign of the kingdom of God breaking into Philipstown as more and more times of common work and celebration between different racial groups become the norm, rather than the exception,” Lindell Detweiler said.



Okhanya Cengcani (hat), Curdley Hoffman and Valdo Stoffels playfully compete for flavored ice to quench their thirst at the post-race gala.

Share wire car fun with children

Wire cars, called *draadkars* in South Africa and *galimotos* in the Chichewa language of Malawi, are featured in Karen Williams’ book, *Galimoto*. For links to this book, discussion aids, building instructions and more, see our website: BeyondOurselves.MennoniteMission.net



Clear vision

For 30 years, Mennonite Partners in China has sent North Americans to China—not to evangelize, but to teach English. What began as a ministry of presence has also become a ministry of support for China Vision, a network of pastors representing 300,000 Chinese Christians.

By Jeanette Hanson

It was 1995, and pastor Timothy Zhang felt in over his head.

A 31-year-old seminary graduate, he suddenly found himself pastoring a 2,000-member church in Anjing, China, and overseeing several large urban congregations and hundreds of small rural churches, many of which met in farmhouses or apartments.

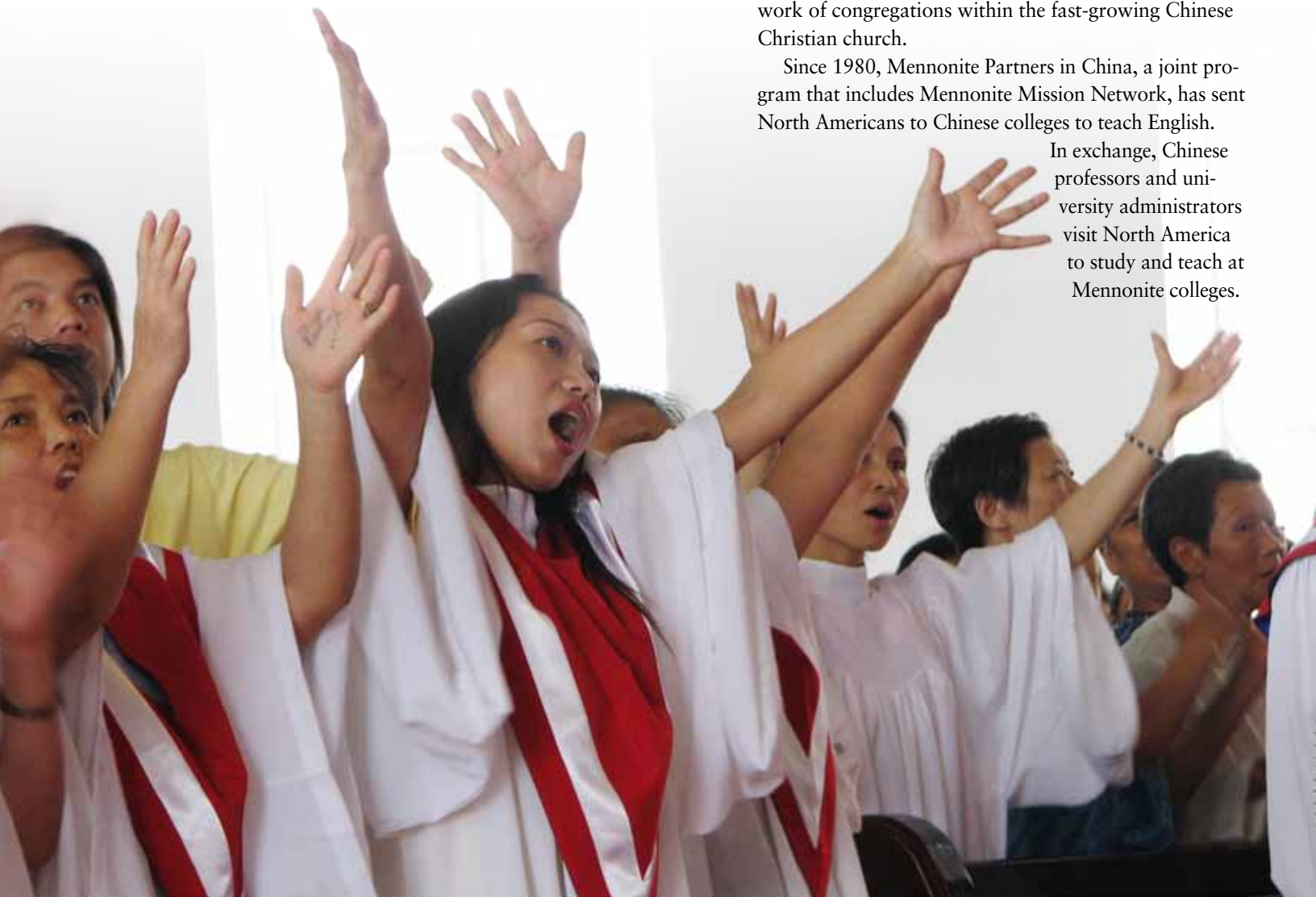
As a pastor in the under-resourced Anhui province, where most congregants are subsistence farmers, he worked in nearly complete isolation from other church communities and pastors. “When you are all alone, it is difficult to make decisions and to see things in a wider perspective,” he said.

It was the Mennonite mission workers who taught English at a local college who became Zhang’s source of personal support.

These teachers, who served through Mennonite Partners in China (MPC), planted the seeds that would eventually grow into China Vision, a supportive network of congregations within the fast-growing Chinese Christian church.

Since 1980, Mennonite Partners in China, a joint program that includes Mennonite Mission Network, has sent North Americans to Chinese colleges to teach English.

In exchange, Chinese professors and university administrators visit North America to study and teach at Mennonite colleges.





Tour Asia

Explore mission and culture in China and Mongolia, July 25–August 8. If interested, contact CindyM@MennoniteMission.net

Other participating agencies include Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Central Committee, and Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

Over the years, as North American teachers informally worked with local congregations, these congregations formed a partnership that eventually became China Vision, a network of churches all over China working to build up and support each other. Since its founding three years ago, this web of connections has grown to include hundreds of churches, representing more than 300,000 Christians.

Michelle and James Stabler-Havener are Mennonite Mission Network workers who have played an important role in bringing various Chinese church partners together by spending time with them, learning about their situations, and inviting them to meet with other pastors for mutual support and learning. Michelle Stabler-Havener says the initial meeting with various Chinese ministers bore more fruit than she ever expected.

“When we first invited our Chinese pastoral partners to share their ministerial work with MPCers, we had no idea how beneficial such a meeting would be as a networking opportunity for the Chinese pastors themselves,” she said. “Truly, God accomplished far more than we asked or could imagine at that conference!”

In addition to encouraging networking, MPC financially supports Yin Hangtao, a pastor who studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., to help lead the growing group.

Prior to China Vision, most pastors simply worked to develop their own congregations. Now, with a support network in place, these congregations have begun the important work of reaching out to the community.

Zhang said this group has made his ministry more people-centered.

“Before my connection with China Vision, I was focused on building the church here in Anjing in terms of material resources,” he said. The China Vision pastors helped him to see that the congregation could sell off real estate that was providing very little income, and use

the money to support training and outreach.

“They helped me to see that investing in people, in leadership development, in training, was more important,” he recalled. “We were able to sell off some of the property that we weren’t using, and we used the funds to buy an apartment building next to the church and to renovate it into a training center. We will now have training for lay leaders about six months of the year.”

Pastor Song Xingfu, one of the founding leaders of China Vision and senior pastor of a large network of congregations, said China Vision has helped churches develop into active, living congregations that embody a holistic gospel. His own congregation has developed projects to serve the elderly, children, and the handicapped.

Xingfu says that while a personal relationship with Christ is important, it needs to be accompanied by outreach.

“We have spent so much energy and many resources getting people into the church, but we were only telling them half of the story,” he said. “Most don’t even know why they are there! We need to work together to build the kingdom of God.”



When you are all alone, it is difficult to make decisions and to see things in a wider perspective.
—Timothy Zhang

Unlike before, Zhang said, he is not alone. “We are many churches united.”

While MMN workers have walked alongside China Vision, and though several church leaders draw inspiration from the Anabaptist vision, few call themselves Anabaptist or Mennonite. But even though they don’t have an Anabaptist name on their church doors, they are drawn to Anabaptist/Mennonite ideals of

servant leadership, community, and Christian discipleship and ethics.

“The support of China Vision pastors has been instrumental in building up our congregation at a time when the problems and needs seemed insurmountable,” Zhang said. “I see much hope. I see our congregation able to reach out into its community and to bless the people around us. They brought us together.”

Jeanette Hanson serves with Mennonite Church Canada as China church partnership coordinator for Mennonite Partners in China.

He Xiaole (center) and her choir praise God through song in Chengdu, China.

New workers begin service

Mennonite Voluntary Service

Daniel Adams, Lancaster, Pa., is an immigration legal services intern with World Relief in Chicago.

Katherine Alison, Hesston, Kan., is a case aide with Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Inc. in San Antonio.

Kendra Alison, Hesston, Kan., is an administrative assistant with Project PLASE Inc. in Baltimore.

Sarah Althaus, Wheaton, Ill., is a protection counselor with Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Washington, D.C.

Brent Beachy, Baltic, Ohio, is an IT consul-

tant with Danenet in Madison, Wis.

Jared Beachy, Shaker Heights, Ohio, is a community organizer with Adams State College Community Partnerships in La Jara, Colo.

Jodi Birkey, Des Moines, Iowa, is an administrative assistant with Mary's Center Even Start in Washington, D.C.

Jasmine Brubaker, Lancaster, Pa., is a program staff volunteer with Boulder Shelter for the Homeless in Boulder, Colo.

Annika Buechner, Quedlinburg, Germany, is an instructor with United Cerebral Palsy of Central California in Fresno, Calif.

Katrina Campbell, Cochranville, Pa., is a paralegal with ProBAR in Harlingen, Texas.

Peter Claassen, McPherson, Kan., is a legal worker with Refugee Aid Project in San Antonio.

Viktor Epp, Bad Oeynhausen, Germany, is a housing repair technician with Interfaith Housing Services Inc. in Hutchinson, Kan.

Daniel Foxvog, Tiskilwa, Ill., is a program coordinator/mediator with Center for Conflict Studies and Peacemaking in Fresno, Calif.

Joseph Friesen, Goshen, Ind., is a volunteer coordinator in communications/outreach with Madison Audubon Society/Renew Wisconsin in Madison, Wis.

Melissa Gingerich, Goshen, Ind., is a project associate for social media with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service in Baltimore.

Mary Caitlin Helmuth, Harrisonburg, Va., is a barista with Guadalupe Street Coffee in San Antonio.

Laura Hoerner, Backnang, Germany, is a child care assistant with Lutheran Social Services, Refugee and Immigration Programs in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Mikaila Holt, Seattle, is a public health nurse with Saguache County Public Health in La Jara, Colo.

Sarah Jadrich, Kentwood, Mich., is an advocacy counselor with Project PLASE Inc. in Baltimore.

Jill Kauffman, Goshen, Ind., is a resident intern with Magik Theatre in San Antonio.

Michelle Kennel, Jonesboro, Ga., is an intake/outreach coordinator with Urban Justice Center in New York City.

Joanna Landis, Akron, Pa., is a peace worker with St. Louis Mennonite Peace Center in St. Louis.

Ana Loucks, Hesston, Kan., is a migration and refugee services volunteer with Catholic Social Services in Tucson, Ariz.

Daniel Martin, Salem, Ore., is a home repair worker with Community Home Repair Program of Arizona in Tucson, Ariz.

Laurel Mast, Wayland, Iowa, is a nurse with Oak Orchard Community Health Center in Rochester, N.Y.

Naomi McNamara, Rochester, N.Y., is an elementary school community assistant with Mission Graduates in San Francisco.

Daniel Miller, Broadway, Va., is a head company coach (part-time) with Acts4Youth in Baltimore.

Evan Miller, Wooster, Ohio, is a home delivery and volunteer coordinator with University District Food Bank in Seattle.

Gordon Miller, Orrville, Ohio, is a maintenance and repair assistant with La Puente Home Inc. in La Jara, Colo.

Hannah Miller, Seattle, is a food access and outreach assistant with Northeast Organic Farming Association in Rochester, N.Y.

Rachel Miller, Seattle, is a volunteer with Global Exchange in San Francisco.

Susan Miller, Orrville, Ohio, is a program outreach and office assistant with La Puente Home Inc. in La Jara, Colo.

Grace Moroney, Canton, Ohio, is an immigration paralegal

with Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid in Harlingen, Texas.

Elizabeth Nafziger, Goshen, Ind., is a medical clinic coordinator with Bread for the City in Washington, D.C.

Jonathan Nathan, McPherson, Kan., is a youth counselor intern with Larkin Street Youth Services in San Francisco.

Alyssa Penner, Wichita, Kan., is an education success program coordinator with Treehouse in Seattle.

Lia Pries, Luegde, Germany, is a vision leader with Boys and Girls Club of Hutchinson in Hutchinson, Kan.

Dietrich Reimer, Reedley, Calif., is a volunteer with The Westlake in Seattle.

Shannon Richmond, Oregon City, Ore., is a program assistant with Gandhi Institute in Rochester, N.Y.

Luke Roeschley, Chicago, is a marketing and sales coordinator with Church Community Services in Elkhart, Ind.

Karissa Sauder, Smoketown, Pa., is a restorative practices program assistant with Partners in Restorative Initiatives, Inc. in Rochester, N.Y.

Natalie Schmucker, Holland, Ohio, is a case manager aide with Catholic Charities in Kansas City, Kan.

Charles Schrag, Freeman, S.D., is a community support coordinator with Ozanam House in Seattle.

Kristen Schrag, Moundridge, Kan., is an elementary teacher with Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmvi, Ariz.



Service Adventure participant Ranita Shenk measures the blood pressure of unit leader Heidi McHugh in Philippi, W.Va.

Photo by Susan Nisly



Mennonite Voluntary Service participants gathered in San Antonio for orientation to their upcoming service terms.

Andrew Shenk, Goshen, Ind., is a gleaners specialist with Community Action Coalition in Madison, Wis.

Landon Short, Archbold, Ohio, is a computer consultant/social service volunteer with Community IT Innovators (CITI) in Washington, D.C.

Joel Stalter, Goshen, Ind., is an assistant store manager with marketing and outreach focus with Ten Thousand Villages in Seattle.

Matthew Stucky, Moundridge, Kan., is a paralegal for the eviction unit with Legal Action Center in Seattle.

Naomi Tice, Salisbury, Pa., is a recreation and leisure coordinators' assistant with Out & About in Boulder, Colo.

Danielle VanderEnde, Surrey, B.C., is a volunteer and event planning intern with Partnership for the Homeless in New York City.

John VanderHeide, Holland, Mich., is a farm assistant with Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture in Kansas City, Kan.

Candace Wilkinson, Delevan, N.Y., is a volunteer with Food Lifeline in Seattle.

Rebecca Yoder, Wellman, Iowa, is an elementary teacher with Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Radical Journey

Bethany Beier, Cherokee, Iowa, serving in England

Leigh Finnegan, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., serving in England

Karsten Hess, Goshen, Ind., serving in Bolivia

Nathanael Kelly, New Haven, Ind., serving in Argentina

JD Nafziger, Goshen, Ind., serving in Bolivia

Jacob Putnam, Chicago, serving in Bolivia

Nathan Schlabach, Winesburg, Ohio, serving in China

Gloria Showalter, Waynesboro, Pa., serving in Bolivia

Isaac Shue, Harper, Kan., serving in Bolivia

Marie Unruh, Peabody, Kan., serving in England

Elisabeth Wiebe, Winnipeg, Manitoba, serving in China

Mark Wiebe, Winnipeg, Manitoba, serving in China

Service Adventure

Tara Corey, Dewey, Ill., began a term in Philippi, W.Va.

Samuel Foxvog, Tiskilwa, Ill., began a term in Albany, Ore.

Timothy Gautsche, Goshen, Ind., began a term in Raleigh, N.C.

Nicholas Gehman, Houston, began a term in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Alex Goering, Newton, Kan., began a term in Raleigh, N.C.

Monica Heacock, Warrington, Pa., began a term in Albuquerque, N.M.

Amanda Hunsberger, Shipshewana, Ind., began a term in Johnstown, Pa.

Melanie Kahlen, Ahnatal, Germany, began a term in Albuquerque, N.M.

Rachel Kennell, Roanoke, Ill., began a term in Johnstown, Pa.

Morgan Kratz, Souderton, Pa., began a term in Albany, Ore.

Benjamin Kreider, North Newton, Kan., began a term in Albuquerque, N.M.

Khalicia Leichthy, Albany, Ore., began a term in Raleigh, N.C.

Andrea Mast, Willow Street, Pa., began a term in Albany, Ore.

Brian Plank, Wauseon, Ohio, began a term in Anchorage, Alaska.

Alexander Pletcher, Goshen, Ind., began a term in Anchorage, Alaska.

Debora Sanchez, Neuquen, Argentina, began a term in Raleigh, N.C.

Ranita Shenk, Waynesboro, Va., began a term in Philippi, W.Va.

Alan Smith, Lodi, N.Y., began a term in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Janae Speigle, Boswell, Pa., began a term in Albuquerque, N.M.

Angela Stoltzfus, Lancaster, Pa., began a term in Anchorage, Alaska.

Hannah Stoltzfus, Harrisonburg, Va., began a term in Johnstown, Pa.

Elizabeth Thomas, Boswell, Pa., began a term in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Sandra Tornow, Oranienburg, Germany, began a term in Johnstown, Pa.

Svenja Trapp, Hessen, Germany, began a term in Albany, Ore.

Christina Weaver, Bath, N.Y., began a term in Philippi, W.Va.

SOOP

Lowell C. Detweiler, Akron, Pa., served more than three months in Elkhart, Ind.

Thomas Grogan, Bath, Ohio, served one month in Americus, Ga.

Jean Grosbach, Sheffield, Vt., served more than one month in Waco, Texas.

Betty and Ron Handrich, Fairview, Mich., served six months in Macon, Miss.

Gerlof and Roelie Homan, Normal, Ill.,

served more than one month in Elkhart, Ind.

Eric Litwiller, Aurora, Ill., served one week in Waco, Texas.

Dave and Karen Mast, Ephrata, Pa., served two months in Toano, Va.

Alethea Putnam, Seattle, served three weeks in Glendale, Ariz.

Dulce Romero, San Antonio, served more than two months in San Antonio.

Fannie and Wilbur Schlabach, Middlebury, Ind., served one month in Macon, Miss.

Marilyn and Norman Stauffer, Waxhaw, N.C., served one month in Glendale, Ariz.

Joyce Zuercher, Hesston, Kan., served one week in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

International workers

Joseph Duerksen, Shawnee Mission, Kan., served for two weeks as a consultant and short-term surgeon/trainer in Christian hospitals in India.

Erica Hartman, Carmel, Ind., began a nine-month service assignment with the Quito Mennonite Church in Ecuador supporting congregational life and youth work.

Kelsey Hartman, Carmel, Ind., began a nine-month service assignment with the Quito Mennonite Church in Ecuador supporting

congregational life and youth work.

Jacqueline Hoover, Morgantown, Pa., began a three-year teaching assignment based out of England.

Peter and Jenna Liechty Martin, Goshen and Berne, Ind., began a two-year term with Edgehill Theological College Reconciliation and Integration Partnership Project in Northern Ireland.

Sheldon and Marietta Sawatzky, North Newton, Kan., began a two-year term in Taiwan, developing a theological education program and supporting the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan.

David Shenk, Harrisonburg, Va., began two years of service with the Quito Mennonite Church in Ecuador supporting its local ministries.

Erwin and Marian Wiens, Calgary, Ontario, began a two-year term in Seoul, South Korea, supporting the work of Jesus Village Church.

Martin Wiens, Perkiomenville, Pa., began an eight-month term in Philipstown, South Africa, partnering with the Grace Community Church in its ministry to farm workers.

Philip and Therese Witmer, Dayton, Va., began two years of service with the Mennonite church and *Colegio Americano Menno* in La Mesa, Colombia, ministering to needs within the community.



Desert growth

Learning to trust in God and in myself

By Janae Speigle



In only a few months of Service Adventure, I have learned many things I will never forget. First lesson: Before coming to Albuquerque, N.M., it never really sunk in that I would not know anyone in Albuquerque. So I began to freak out a little bit. But then a song popped into my head called *Me and God* by Josh Turner, and it dawned on me that I would know at least one person in Albuquerque, and that was a huge comfort.

The second thing I learned is that God is always there for me in whatever he throws at me. I came to Albuquerque expecting to work with customers in the Habitat for Humanity Restore, but God had something different for me. I was told that instead of working in the retail part, I would be in the office. I've never liked office work, so this was a stretch ... and answering phones—no thanks! But for a little bit I was the only one up front, so I had to get over my fear. I remember praying to God and saying, “This is all you, God; I hate answering phones, so help me out.” And he did.

With each phone call it got a little easier. But then I had to start making calls, too! For each call I was given only a little bit of information and I had no idea what I was supposed to say. I would just pray, “Please let these people know what I'm talking about and help them not to ask questions.” It turns out they all were nice and knew what I was talking about. Thank you, Jesus! But the next time I had to call people, I got even less instruction, so I was a little angry. As I was walking back to my desk, I remember griping and complaining to God. But when I got to my desk, I thought of Colossians 3:23: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not men.” I said to myself, “Janae, this is ridiculous. This is your job and you may not like it at the moment, but you are going to have a positive attitude and you are going to do your best.” So I put on a smile and called those people. When I got home that day, there was a card in the mail for me. When I opened

it, it was from my third-grade teacher and it had Colossians 3:23 printed inside! Then I said, “All right, God, I get the message.”

I have two placements. One is the Greater Albuquerque Habitat for Humanity, and the other is Animal Humane New Mexico. At Animal Humane, I clean out the kennels and help with pet adoptions. I will also be helping walk the dogs. At Habitat, I am part of the Family Services Department, so I answer phones, make phone calls, help work with Habitat homeowners, do paperwork and other office duties. It has been an awesome experience to work at Habitat.

I have had the opportunity to help in the 2010 selection process for six families to be chosen for homes. When I first arrived, I helped score applications, then later I created bios for the selected families for the board to approve. I was blessed to be present when the six

families were told they would be receiving a Habitat home. The most memorable was a single mother who began to cry and hyperventilate at the news of her getting a home. She spoke only Spanish, so I understood only part of what she said, but I didn't need to know Spanish to understand how much this meant to her. The next day, she called back to ask what else was said during the conversation; she was just so excited she couldn't remember.

Some other things I have learned: how to patch a bicycle tire, which I have done at least six or seven times; how to make jewelry; how to fashion rice bags; worm composting; how to make soap; and much more.

I've also hiked in the Sandia Mountains; camped in the Jemez Mountains; checked out the alien museum in Roswell, the UFO capital of the United States; and visited Carlsbad Caverns. We have gone sledding and jumping off the dunes at White Sands, where I wiped out (I still have sand in my ear). I also visited the Isleta Pueblo for a Governors' Feast with my boss and her family, so I got to experience some traditional American Indian dances.

So far, Service Adventure has been an awesome experience that I am very thankful for.

Janae Speigle is a Service Adventure participant in Albuquerque, N.M., and lives in Boswell, Pa., where she attends Thomas Mennonite Church.

**“All right, God,
I get the message.”**

Raising leaders

Creating space for leaders to emerge is worth the risk

By Glenn Balzer



I like hearing testimonies of how individuals experience the call to ministry. Recently, I had the opportunity to listen to a round-table discussion that included three pastors sharing about their journey into full-time ministry. The sheer variety of ways that people experience the call tends to make these stories engaging, sad and funny all at the same time.

It always amazes me how the call comes so uniquely to each person. For me, this has always been an affirmation of how God respects and honors our individuality. It is good to know that God is not in the “cookie cutter” call to ministry business.

It came as a mild surprise when a common call theme emerged. Each one of these people talked about other, more mature leaders who created a space for them to exercise their talents and gifts. They also recognized that it was risky—in some cases, even dangerous—to let young potential leaders lead. But in all cases, it was the willingness of the established leaders to create a space for young positional leaders to lead that became the moment when the call to ministry was solidified.

It is easy to talk about raising the next generation of leaders. It is quite another thing to actually do this. It requires risk. It means that things will not always work out perfectly and some things will go horribly wrong.

Isn't this what Jesus did? He found 12 folks willing to be his disciples. He risked everything on them. They certainly weren't perfect at the beginning. They argued about who was the best. They wanted to call down fire on people who didn't agree with them. They ditched Jesus in his hour of need and one even betrayed him to death.

But Jesus was willing to create a space for them to become leaders. Eventually, they rose to the task (read Acts).

Maybe church leadership isn't as much about perfect worship and impeccable preaching as it is about creating spaces for emerging leaders to test their call to leadership.

Glenn Balzer is the national director for DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection).

Investing in hope

Advancing the purpose and priorities of God's church

By Ervin Stutzman



The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit. —Nelson Henderson

I've always liked the name of this mission journal, which reminds us of God's call to reach “beyond ourselves.” In the same way, the foregoing quotation by Nelson Henderson captures the essence of the faithful church in mission. God calls us to think beyond our own life times in order to bring God's healing and hope to others in the future.

Ever since the 2001 merger of two denominations into Mennonite Church USA, we have focused on ways to become one as a church. We have invested heavily in the transformation of structure and polity. Now is the time to focus on people beyond ourselves, concentrating on the mission to which God has called us. Therefore, we are initiating a prayerful planning process entitled *Investing in Hope*. We chose this name because it speaks of a mature approach by which we choose to deliberately share our resources so that others may benefit in the long term. It takes an active, loving approach to a world often gripped by despair. It points toward the future.

In its simplest form, prayerful planning is the effort to supply the right resources to the right people to work on the right tasks in order to advance the purpose and priorities of God's church. It is an effort to align our actions with our theological commitments. We live most faithfully when our daily practices reflect a consistency between Spirit-led purpose, philosophy, principles and priorities.

Investing in Hope is a call for every member of Mennonite Church USA to move beyond their own comfort zone to bring friendship and God's hopeful presence to others. These may well be people from a different ethnic group, religious tradition, political viewpoint, or economic class.

Much of the effort we invest in the lives of others may not bring immediate fruit. Yet, God calls us to invest our time, talents and finances in the kingdom of God, trusting that others will reap the fruit of our labor. Let's “plant trees” for the kingdom of God!

Ervin Stutzman is executive director of Mennonite Church USA.

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Children from Immanuel Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Va., receive their new mission banks. Photograph by Jerry L. Holsopple.



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