

the Christian Leader

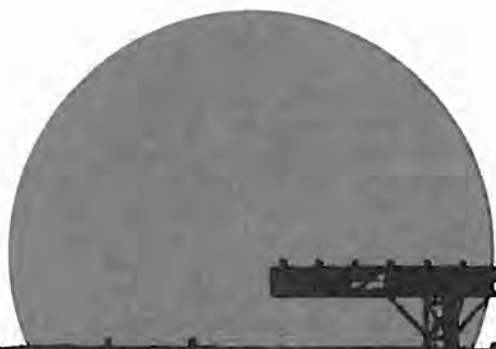
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A vision for Hispanic ministries

A challenge for Mennonite Brethren

by Juan Martinez

THE 1980s have been declared the Decade of the Hispanic, giving special recognition to the fastest-growing minority in this country. The growth is not merely the consequence of a high birth rate, but reflects what has been called the greatest mass migration in the history of the world. This great influx, added to those who have been here one or several generations, has made the United States the sixth largest Hispanic country in the world (only Mexico, Spain, Argentina, Colombia and Peru are greater).

This growth places a great challenge before the church of Jesus Christ in the United States. Within the borders of our country lies a group of people — ranging from poor, illiterate farmworkers to millionaire businessmen — that needs to be reached for Jesus Christ. The mission field that was once beyond our borders is now next door and provides an enormous opportunity for obeying the Great Commission.

The Mennonite Brethren are a small denomination, but traditionally we have done much in the area of missions (as reflected in our large Missions/Services budget). But though we are small that missions focus that is a part of our history can be the impetus to help us make disciples among our Hispanic neighbors. I would like to share a vision of the direction our denomination can take if our missions zeal is directed toward Hispanic ministries.

Clarifying the past

Past mission work among Hispanics in the United States brings many fond

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memories of great sacrifice in reaching others for Christ and seeing them follow in the faith. But it also reminds some of old problems that have not been dealt with. The racial tensions that surfaced both in Texas and California caused some to leave the denomination and left many on both sides distrustful of the other.

Other problems also need to be addressed. There are those who are hesitant to continue in Hispanic ministries because they feel that self-sufficiency has been too slow in coming (to which some Hispanics would counter that incorrect mission strategy created the problem). These and other issues leave unanswered questions and ambivalent feelings toward future Hispanic ministries.

The beginning of a vision for the future lies in being able to confront the past, dealing with and learning from the good and the bad. In so doing we will be able to press forward for the glory of God.

Seeking reconciliation

In dealing with the past we will be able to work at those areas which separate our peoples. Numerous tensions and difficulties keep Hispanics and "Anglos" from working together on an equal basis. But the Christ who broke the barrier between Jews and Gentiles will also help us find reconciliation as we recognize our past mistakes and forgive each other. By working together on an equal basis we can learn from each other and show the world that in Jesus Christ reconciliation and love between races is possible.

Beyond dependence

In the past much mission work left Hispanics dependent upon the mission board or parent agency. The key to the future is interdependence. Parent agencies may still provide strong financial support but this can be in conjunction

with Hispanics who can provide most of the work and know-how for an interdependent effort to reach Hispanics for Jesus Christ.

A wholistic approach

1. *An Anabaptist emphasis* — The Anabaptist doctrine of the interrelatedness of faith and life will be helpful to this ministry in at least two ways. First, a wholistic approach will show the people that we care about them and are not merely interested in tallying up the number of conversions. Second, a wholistic gospel presentation will speak to the heart of many Hispanics who have grown up seeing a separation, if not a complete divorce, of religion from ethical, moral and social implications.

2. *Social concern* — Mennonite Brethren will need to work actively with some of the programs that Mennonite Central Committee has developed for helping Hispanics. These and other programs can be helpful to the extent that they are not handouts, but efforts to give a hand to those who have had less opportunity for advancement in the past.

3. *Solidarity with the Hispanic* — The love of the Lord will be radiated as the dominant majority in the denomination attempts to identify with and support Hispanics in their attempt to overcome social injustice. Though it is difficult for a member of the majority culture to understand, many Hispanics live with prejudice, discrimination and social inequity. Working together we will be able to educate each other to the needs and aspirations of each group and make progress in finding solutions to some of the problems.

Most of what has been suggested up to now involves relational and background issues. There are also practical changes that need to be achieved.

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U.S. Conference changes

1. *A national Hispanic coordinator* — Such a person serving at the conference level will enable coordination of all Hispanic ministries. He would work as an advisor to the conference and its churches and would help plan and propose new projects. He would also serve as a type of district minister for existing Hispanic congregations.

2. *Hispanics in conference positions* — To help give direction to future ministry it will be important to have Hispanics elected to each of the conference boards. These cannot be unqualified "tokens," but people who can help shape the future of Hispanic outreach.

3. *Leadership training* — An indispensable part of a Hispanic emphasis will be the training of Hispanic leaders. The MB Biblical Seminary has begun a pilot program, but it should be expanded to speak to the specific issues facing Hispanics in ministry. Furthermore, it should be flexible enough to use novel approaches (such as short seminars, correspondence courses, education at the level of the student, etc.) that will be the most useful.

Church growth

1. *In existing Hispanic congregations* — Each congregation will need to evaluate its ministry and location to find the best method and the most advantageous place for building strong Hispanic churches. Some may need to make some fundamental changes, such as dealing with the "rescue mission" attitude of concentrating their efforts towards reaching the poorest of the poor or even moving the location of the church so as

to be in an area where the greatest number can be reached.

Each church must work at building a strong spiritual leadership. Moreover, each congregation must be mission oriented, constantly looking for places where new churches might be started and by providing leadership for any new Hispanic outreach. And though the majority have already done it, each church that is still financially dependent must work at cutting that tie.

2. *New churches* — Each English-speaking congregation that exists in an area where there is a large concentration of Hispanics can establish a Hispanic department with the goal of creating a sister church that would use the same facilities. This would be another opportunity for our two peoples to learn the joys and struggles of working together for the glory of God.

This type of effort can be started in each major urban center where there is a large number of Hispanics. Without forgetting smaller communities, this outreach needs to focus on the cities because, on the west coast at least, that is

where most Hispanics live. This ministry must aim at people from all points of the socioeconomic spectrum so that the goal of self-supporting congregations with capable leadership can be reached. A concentrated thrust of this sort could produce 10 to 15 new congregations and swell the number of Hispanic Mennonite Brethren to at least 2,000 within a decade.

3. *Hispanics in English-speaking congregations* — There are many Hispanics who fit or are trying to fit within the majority culture. These people can very easily become a part of an English-speaking congregation if the love of the Lord toward them is such that they know they are accepted there. Again, a concentrated effort can bring at least 1,500 Hispanics into English-speaking congregations in the next 10 years. This will be easier if there is a Hispanic sister group meeting in the same building that can serve as a cultural support to Hispanics in transition who want to be a part of the English-speaking group.

Is this a vision that will fade into the night or a reality in the making? It all depends on us. □

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Growing pains

A father's struggle to accept his mentally handicapped son

by Gerald Oosterveen

UNEXPECTEDLY the pain crashes over me again, like a treacherous wave that crests higher than others while my back is turned. But I am not at the beach, I am tiptoeing out of my son's room. Lost in deep sleep, he lies curled up like a baby with his knees almost

touching his chin. He never stirred when I tucked the covers around him and checked whether his alarm clock is set to wake him in the morning. His school bus comes early.

I lean against the door, momentarily overcome by the searing pain. There's no point in calling the doctor, though, nor even in going to the medicine cabinet for aspirin. For *this* pain a cure has not yet been discovered. It is an anguish of the soul that comes out of the depths at will; always when I am least prepared for it. There is no cure for my son, either.

Months before his birth, when he should have been safe, some destroyer touched him in his mother's womb. When he was born it was already set in stone that he should always talk like a child, think like a child, reason like a child — and never escape childish ways. Tonight, 17 years later, though his body has grown to rival mine in height, he is still a child. My son is mentally retarded.

The label was first attached to him on a Friday when he was just a year old. My wife had been to the doctor again for

the umpteenth time trying to discover why this son was not as lively as our first one, why he slept so much, why he had trouble sitting up. Always the doctors denied anything was wrong. Always they came with soothing words: "Now don't worry, Mom, he'll be all right; all children are different. Give him a bit of time, he'll outgrow this." I wasn't much help either, but kept saying, "Why don't you believe the doctors; they know their job." It was not a happy time for any of us. Finally, on that Friday, yet another doctor at last dared tell the truth: "Your son has brain damage. He will always be retarded."

Retarded is an ugly word, a scary word. We didn't know what it meant, only that it was something bad. We knew our son would not be like other children, but no one would tell us what we could expect. We had visions of children who make strange noises and drool constantly, children who sit in a corner and rock incessantly, children who never go to school. We felt all alone with this tremendous hurt of a damaged little son whom we could not fix. Just the day before we had picked up new pictures. He looked so perfect and so interested in the photographer. His sparkling eyes and broad smile had given us hope. Maybe, just maybe, our suspicions were wrong and the doctors' assurances right. But that was the day before. Now we knew better. Now we knew things would never be right. Instinctively I got up and turned the picture with the smiling little face to the wall.

If, as some people like to say, God sends exceptional children only to exceptional parents, I think he may have gotten the wrong address in our case. We were not exceptional! We were just like other families, no different from our friends. We had no special training how

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to care for a retarded child; we had never even been close to one. We had no unusually strong faith; some of our friends were much better in that respect. So why didn't it happen to them? Why to us? We had committed no unusual sins either, to make it necessary for God to send this child as a sign of his displeasure, as one "friend" felt compelled to tell us. The questions kept coming, "Why? Why us?"

Some people tried to comfort us by insisting this little son was exceptional because he was an angel God had entrusted to us for tender and temporary lodging. But, we soon asked ourselves, if it is supposed to be so good, why does it hurt so bad? Or why, if this is an angel, is he so slow? Does God really create angels with deformities? It seemed no compliment to God to call our son an angel. It didn't agree with the Bible. We couldn't recall a child in the Bible who turned out to be an angel in disguise and who was retarded besides.

What hurt most in all of this talk was that people were not taking our feelings seriously. This was *our* son, our own flesh and blood, one for whom we had high hopes. Part of *us* was defective. Instead of producing a healthy child we had created one who would always be dependent. Calling him "an angel" or a "special blessing" made a mockery out of what we felt. It made it almost impossible for us to share our deep hurt since we didn't want to seem ungrateful to God, who, supposedly, did such wonderful things for us and our son.

Almost everyone kept telling us what happened was God's will. "God makes no mistakes, you know!" I felt there had been a monstrous mistake somewhere. I was angry at God for cheating me out of a healthy son, even though I never dared voice that anger nor was totally convinced he had actually done this horrible thing. But if not God, then who did it? I began to wonder whether I could finish my seminary training and go into the ministry as planned. Perhaps I should just drop out of the church and out of seminary. Besides, even if I continued, where would I find a church close enough to a school for special education? I could see myself hamstrung all through my ministry because of my son's special needs. I was determined his needs would have priority over my ministry. That would teach God not to interfere with other seminarians!

Our son progressed, but so very, very slowly. When other children walked, he could barely sit up. When he was 27 months he made his first hesitant at-

tempts at walking. Though he never dared ride a tricycle, during a visit to a department store he spotted a Big Wheel cycle, climbed into it and began to pedal. We bought it on the spot. But by then he was almost four! His toilet training had just been finished; any time he got excited, however, he would still wet himself. He never fed himself until he was three, and even then everything had to be cut in little pieces. It was so very tedious and so terribly frustrating and so utterly wearying. While we talked to him, he only smiled. Eventually he began to make sounds that only we could identify. When he was 10 we moved. Along with his name and new address we engraved on his wrist bracelet, "Cannot Talk." Doing that hurt almost as much as if it had been tattooed on my forehead.

What made it worse was that he was always such a sweet child. He was rarely angry, always obedient, very sensitive to the feelings of others. He played with other children even when he could not talk with them. But where they roamed all around the neighborhood, he never disobeyed our rule that he could not cross any street alone. We always knew where he was. He never took a cookie when Mom's back was turned. Children were attracted to him because he was so completely dependable. He never hurt anyone but was always concerned for others. With smaller children he hovered around protectively. And he was repaid in kind; hardly ever was he teased. Many times, in fact, children tried to teach him something when he had given up hope he would ever learn. Often they succeeded. Why, we wondered, must he be so limited when he has such a marvelous personality?

And now the years have slipped past. He has learned many things we never expected. He talks but cannot read. He can barely count to 20 but not add. He does not know the value of money but will spend it only for records or tapes. Music is his great interest. He knows almost all of the selections on the more than 300 records in our home. Once, after hearing a violin solo, he insisted we had it on a record. When we got home, he found the record and even told us which side it was on. As usual, when it comes to music, he was correct. But he can't make a living listening to records. A sheltered workshop is in his future and he will always need to live in a very sheltered environment. He is still so trusting and could be such easy prey of unscrupulous persons. I fear for him, oh

how I fear for him.

That is where the agonizing pain comes from, now and then. You don't stop hurting after the crying stops. There is so much in my son for which I am grateful. And yet . . . When I think of the pain my son may suffer in the future, I hurt deeply for him. Sometimes he complains of being lonely. Other 17-year-olds don't play with him anymore; little children still do, but that won't last forever. Never will he have children. Society will always look on him as an unproductive person. Deep in my heart I fear society won't always be willing to shoulder the responsibility of caring for retarded persons. Then what will happen? When we are gone, who will look after him?

With the pain, however, I also have a sense of confidence. Though I am now convinced Satan, and not God, is the destroyer who causes physical and mental disabilities, I am also sure beyond any doubt God never allows any tragedy to come into our lives without having plans to create something productive out of it. In my case, God has helped me grow into a better and more sensitive pastor. Because of our own hurt, I accepted the challenge to be chaplain to persons with mental and physical disabilities. I speak to them of God's love. Before, I wouldn't have known or cared they existed. Many parents feel free to tell me of their frustration when often they don't dare tell others. But I've been where they are and it creates a special bond.

I thank God for leading me into this special ministry. It has given me a sense of direction and purpose. There is nothing I would rather do with my life. My disabled friends are such an inspiration, especially those with limited intelligence. It seems so easy for them to love God since they don't struggle with contradictions and doubts. They are so eager to hear the stories of Jesus. In some respect they resemble the birds and flowers Jesus talked about, because they neither scurry nor worry but simply trust that their heavenly Father — or someone representing him — will feed and clothe them.

It's almost embarrassing to admit this, but sometimes I envy my son. I am convinced that whatever may be said to him in the future, it will never be, "How little faith you have. Why do you worry? Your heavenly Father knows you need these things!"

Perhaps some day, when I've grown to trust God like a child, the pain won't come again. □

Journey into joy

A testimonial

by Waldo Hiebert



I AM BEGINNING a new journey into joy," I told my seminary class in Spiritual Formation one day. One student who knew my sometimes gloomy side responded, "You must be kidding, I can't believe it!"

But here it is! What I record here is the beginning of my "journey into joy." As Thomas Merton said, "Christians are always beginners."

I will stop at five "stations" on this journey and reflect momentarily at each one. And as the airplane attendant says to the passengers on a "milk run," "Do not get off the plane; it will only be a short stop."

Station 1 — In the airport, Fresno, Dec. 15, 1982

I was returning home from a week of meetings, and my wife Rachel met me at the gate. We walked arm in arm along the corridor, so glad to be together again. As we were chatting, Rachel gave me a

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glittering look and said, smiling, "You are my best friend!" It was a solid truth, honest, believable and intensely warm. Our relationship deepened — it usually does after a period of absence. I knew there was more to come in our companionship and our joint spiritual pilgrimage. My new journey into joy had begun.

Station 2 — Retreat — Silence and Communion for Personal Renewal, Dec. 10-11, 1982.

As a part of our seminary course in Spiritual Formation we spent two days in a cabin at Bass Lake. We committed ourselves to 24 hours of listening to God, to the Word, to nature, to ourselves, and to others. We began Friday evening with singing, prayer and orientation for the 14 hours of silence that followed.

For once I went to this retreat not intending to solve personal problems. As unusual as this was for me I took the risk of promising myself: "I am going to simply praise God for his goodness." This was a new approach for me, an experiment at which I couldn't fail.

For the group, I had prepared some

suggestions for reflection during the 14 hours of silence — together with appropriate Scriptures. Only Bibles and notebooks were allowed in camp.

For myself, I selected Psalms 138 and 139 for meditation. So I nestled down in a comfortable "lonely" corner and started to read: "I will give thanks with all my heart!" (Ps. 138:1). I said quietly, "Lord, you've got me — this I will do — no matter how much I would 'love' to work on my problems!"

As I continued to read, other words from these passages began to grab me:

- "On the day I called thou didst answer me. Thou didst make me *bold* with strength in my soul" (Ps. 138:3.) (That's what I needed — boldness and strength of soul — being soft and shy by nature.)

- "For thou didst form my inward parts; thou didst weave me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; wonderful are thy works" (Ps. 139:13-14). (Wow! How often have I complained about who I am, of what I lack in talent and capability. Sometimes I've even hated myself for who I am. But this

is what God said to me, and he is the "wonderful counselor." What therapy!)

• "Bring my soul out of prison, so that I may give thanks to thy name . . . For thou wilt deal bountifully with me" (Ps. 142:7). (Ah, yes. Lord take my soul out of prison, out of the prison of morbid, joyless Christianity, out of the clutches of dead forms and traditions, out of the prison of self-concern, out of the prison of fear of man and colleagues and students. Release my spirit — so that I may give thanks to thy name! That's why I came to this retreat, Lord, to praise you with all my heart. And in so doing, you have counseled me about my personal problems.)

And the "problems" grew smaller the more I praised God and counted my blessings. My journey into joy was becoming a reality.

Station 3 — A trip to the doctor — Dec. 18, 1982

This was a routine physical examination by the family physician. But he discovered a problem. In no time the nurse had made an appointment and had referred me to a specialist — a urologist. After a brief examination, the specialist said, "Surgery — as soon as possible. Please see the nurse for an appointment with the hospital." Then he gave me a pat on the shoulder and a gentle smile which were affirming and reassuring and much appreciated. On to the journey of joy!

During the four days in the hospital, I was not alone. There were flowers, cards, visits, long-distance phone calls from the family. And there was more — a "cloud of witnesses" offering healing prayers.

The journey into joy led me into the company of caring believers once again — as one card said, "Waldo, we really care." I was overwhelmed. Being loved, cared for — that is joy. It took a medical crisis to remind me that these people always cared.

The journey into joy is not a private affair; it leads me ever and again into the fold of the Christian community. I don't travel alone.

Station 4 — A week at home — Jan. 7-15, 1983

Mostly by doctor's orders, I had a full week of rest and relaxation. How generous God had planned this for me — so that I might have some quiet time to reflect, prioritize and check the course of my new journey into joy.

Morton Kelsey says he needs at least one hour a week, one day a month and one week a year for reflection, prayer,

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quietness and setting of life's goals.

So I began the week asking myself a hard question: Why has not my life been filled with more positivism, joy and zest for living? Why has it often been so heavy, full of worries, burdens and sheer hassle? (My wife surely would like to know!)

Part of the answer to this question is my past — a past from which I have carried useless baggage and listened to worn-out tapes. Here are some voices which have haunted me from the past.

(a) "Don't laugh too much!" And the proof text for this is an old German proverb which I learned by memory: "Nach dem Lachen kommt das Weinen." (After your laughter will come the crying.) Somehow, in various and sundry ways, laughter had to be guarded; too much was sinful. Now and again Father would take the broomstick, pound against the ceiling (we being on the second story of the house) and say: "Not so much laughing boys!"

(b) "The deacons are coming," is another voice I hear. And these deacons, I feared, would interrogate me and find out that I was not praying enough. Or they would come to discipline me or someone else in the family.

In fact, the church at that time was to me both a friend and an enemy — I loved it, but I also was afraid of it. Underneath a false facade, I felt I was not making it as a Christian. But there were redeeming factors which kept me in the church. There was that one elder-deacon who would at regular intervals seek me out after church, put his big, warm hand on my shoulder (that touch was important to me) and say, "We love you, Waldo. How is it going?" Then there was the Sunday school teacher who spent end-

less extra hours to be close to his junior high boys — and who led us to faith in Jesus Christ. And then there was the preacher who preached so earnestly, sometimes with tears, that the Word became real to me also.

(c) "For such a worm as I" comes ringing in my ears.

I know what this salvation hymn says and basically understand what the writer wants to say. But these and other religious expressions made me feel worthless. I was a worm already! This led me to a "worm theology" of man. The dreadfulness of total depravity and the sinfulness of man was clearly taught and emphasized. But grace did not come through very well. The message of the church was often more bad news than good news.

One of the first sermons I preached as a young man was in a county jail. And I preached about *sin!* (what else is there to preach about in a jail?) In the middle of my sermon, a prisoner behind the bars exploded and blurted out: "Young man, we know a lot more about sin than you do. What we want to know is how to get out of it."

I know God made worms, nice ones too. But he also made man "in our image, according to our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). We are *precious* in his sight. My journey into joy is an affirmation of the dignity of man — and his potential as a child of God.

(d) "Keep away from the world," we were told. And I did, mostly. Every unsaved person was a pagan to be shunned, I thought. I even had doubts if people who were not Mennonite could be saved — because they were people of the world.

And we avoided worldly activities, often sticking out like sore thumbs with deep embarrassment. When I shifted from parochial school to public school, I was asked to join in saluting the American flag. I had never done that before. I refused — and was kept after school. I really couldn't explain my refusal, except to say it was worldly.

Nor did we go to the high school basketball games. If we did, a church meeting was called. But the rules relaxed a bit when our hometown team won the state championship.

I highly regarded my father's warnings about becoming worldly. But, I never built "bridges" as relationships with the unsaved and the world. The world for whom Christ died was strange to me. I learned to shun it — and not to love it into the kingdom.

(e) "You can't make it." It seems that I heard it everywhere. One Monday morning my Father took my twin brother and me to the public school, as transfers from the Christian school. I was put into grade 6 and my twin was put into grade 7. I heard father and the principal have a little chat about that in the hall. I was never told why, but I have a good guess! Nevertheless, it hurt, because I "was not making it." It was important for me to "make it" with my father.

"Making it" cannot be the base of my journey into joy. You see, I don't make it with God either! And I know now that Christ came *because* I was not making it, not because I had made it! What a release from feverish striving to be accepted as you are, unconditionally.

"Making it" cannot be the base of my journey into joy. . . . Christ came because I was not making it!

"While we were *yet sinners* Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8)." Journey into joy is saturated with love and acceptance, not with achievements and honors. "By grace you have been saved . . . Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). What a release!

Now I want to bring some kind of closure to the past, especially the negative past. And I want to say with Paul: "I have not yet attained, but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind, and reaching forward to what lies ahead" (Phil. 3:13). To continue my journey into joy, I must make peace with the past. I can't blame anyone, for what good does that do me? It is what I do from here on out that counts. The past cannot be changed, but I can change my attitude toward the past. Without trying to sound pious I want to cast all regrets, disappointments, failures, unrealized ambitions — literally — into the arms of Jesus where there is total healing and forgiveness. Then I can begin again, un-

shackled by the past. "Behold I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5).

Or as Robert Schuller would say:

I closed the door on yesterday
And threw the keys away.
I have no fear for tomorrow
Because I have found today.

Station 5—"Tributaries" to my journey, Jan. 18, 1983.

I have never been the kind of person who grew spiritually through great visions, lights in the sky, dreams or by cataclysmic experiences. A few heart-rending ones, and a few "highs" I have had and they were great and helpful. But I grow through a process, the journey itself and its "station stops" excite me more than "arrivals." A motto in my study says, "Happiness is found along the way, not at the end of the road."

So my journey is enriched by an insight, a scriptural truth, an act of love, a new understanding, periods of silence and quiet hours for prayer and reflection, association with "inspired" Christians, gathered worship, reading, etc.

The journey thus far has given me some positive guidelines (underpinnings) or learnings you might say.

1. There is more to be had. That is why I embrace God's promise: "Now to him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever" (Eph. 3:20, 21). It seems to me that greater things are within immediate reach if I but trust, relax in his grace, and flow with the stream of his Spirit. My glowing moments are moments of trust and quiet commitment.

2. A positive attitude toward life. I might as well say "My cup is half full," instead of "My cup is half empty." There is a difference in how you look at it. Life, however difficult at times, is not meant to be morbid, sad and gloomy. Life does not say: "Hang on, maybe you will make it." It says: "Rejoice and be exceeding glad!" "Love God and enjoy Him forever," says the Westminster Catechism. "Real joy is not dependent on the outward events in our lives. It is possible to be in the midst of great difficulties but to still be filled with joy," says Gary Collins, in his book, *Joy of Caring*.

3. Giving affirmation, love and acceptance brings joy. One of my struggles has been to accept fully and love sincerely those with whom I disagree in beliefs or whose behavior I do not ap-

prove. I find a wall building up between my church brother and me when we do not agree. I am slowly winning that one. It is very freeing to say, "I accept you fully as my brother or sister but I do not agree with you." Then I can be objective in dialogue.

I have also spent much energy and time looking for approval, for love, for affirmation, for praise. But now I see that *giving* love and affirmation is the way to find joy and fulfillment for myself. This is a major turnabout for me.

4. More praise and thanksgiving also belongs to my journey into joy. I am quick to see the dark side. (I have even thought that was more "spiritual.") I also panic rather easily. My new journey is leading me to begin looking at my problems more positively, in calmness

Now I see that giving love and affirmation is the way to find joy and affirmation for myself.

to say to myself — "Let's look at alternatives. See what's possible, and what isn't." Wait — and wait on the Lord. Do not be in a hurry! God desires my good, not my destruction. Waiting for his time, praying and praising, calms my spirit, as Philemon 4:6-7 says.

And believe me — joy is not merely a good feeling or an emotional high. As Vernon Grounds says, "Joy is deep down *exuberance* (I like that word!) which comes from God through the Holy Spirit by faith in His Son, regardless of outward circumstances or interpersonal relationships. Joy is supernatural in its source and essence, a foretaste of the face to face communion with God that will be rapture forever."

In simple words, Jesus is a winner; so am I! And he wants me on the journey into joy. He said so: "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full" (Jn. 15:11).

Next station, Lord! Please! □

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Estes director and emcee Ed Boschman, Bakersfield, Calif., leads the convention in singing the theme song.

Recruiting for God's revolution

by Don Ratzlaff

"ESTES will be with us for the rest of our lives," one high schooler said matter-of-factly when it was all over. Anyone who attended the third national Mennonite Brethren youth conference at Estes Park, Colo., Mar. 26-29 wouldn't find it hard to believe him. "Estes '83" had all the elements of a life-impacting event.

People. About 750 high schoolers from all five U.S. districts converged on the snow-covered "YMCA of the Rockies" campground to absorb four days of fun, teaching, inspiration and the special fellowship that comes from meeting kindred souls from Mennonite Brethren churches across the land. With sponsors, guests and staff, the number of registrants soared to 1,037 — actually, about 400 fewer than attended Estes '79, but still the largest single gathering of Mennonite Brethren.

"We anticipated attendance would be down by 200 to 250 simply because youth groups are smaller now than four years ago," said Dennis Becker, Estes coordinator. "It dropped below that primarily due to the economy, especially on the West Coast."

Planning. The road to Estes '83 was paved with long hours and hard work long before it came time for departure.

Most youth groups had spent more than a year raising the money to pay their way to their one-time-only national convention. One planning committee member estimated that once travel costs were added to actual convention expenses, Estes '83 had grown into a half-million dollar event.

But finances was only one aspect of the arduous task facing the 15-member planning committee. For more than two years, they had worked through the details of finding a speaker, seminar leaders, music, facilities and myriad other tasks to guide the convention toward its five projected goals:

- To have an opportunity for young people to make commitments to Christ as savior and lord.
- To consider what God can do through believers committed to sharing their faith in Christ and living an abundant Spirit-filled life.
- To fellowship with young people from other churches and regions of the Mennonite Brethren fellowship.
- To develop spiritual growth and Christian discipleship.
- To experience a joyful time together.

"We're very pleased with the way it turned out," said Becker. "I think it's valuable for the kids to get together in this way. Certainly the commitments

that came out of here — 160 recorded commitments — we feel very good about. We feel there will be some long-term implications as far as pastoral and missionary leadership for the conference."

Program. Estes participants were inundated with activities. In addition to general sessions twice daily, there were numerous topical seminars to choose from, musical concerts, small-group "react sessions," and time for personal reflection.

The seminars, led by pastors and youth leaders from across the conference, covered a variety of topics. Five main seminars dealt with relationships with God, peers, adults, the world, and self. In addition there were 28 additional seminars on such diverse topics as Old Testament prophets, preparing for marriage, and handling depression.

And there was time set aside for recreation. The options seemed as endless as the mountaintop horizon — snow skiing, swimming, sledding, roller skating, bowling, even a class in aerobics.

Prophetic word. But nothing impacts lives in a lasting way as does the simple truth of the gospel. And nothing came to impact the weekend more than the input sessions with featured speaker Anthony Campolo. In him the planning committee had found a provocative communicator of Jesus's sometimes hard, al-



The general sessions — enthusiastic singing (left), rapt attention to the speaker (center), and the unofficial Estes uniform: "moon boots" (right).

ways compelling, call to kingdom living. With ample doses of wit, personal experiences and New Testament Scripture, Campolo riveted in the minds of his listeners the implications of the Estes theme, "No longer living for ourselves but for him."

"Jesus did not come into the world primarily to get you ready to die," said the Eastern College sociologist at the outset. "Jesus came into the world in order to transform you into people through whom he could change this world into the kind of world he wants for it to be. Jesus saved you in order that he might use you."

He described the Beatitudes in Matthew 5 as a character description of the "agents of God's revolution in the world," adding that they describe "the kind of people you're going to have to become if Jesus is going to use you to do his work in the world."

"*Blessed are the poor in spirit.*" Campolo said there were essentially two meanings to the first Beatitude. First,



Of Campolo one youth told his home congregation: "He kicked our rears all weekend long — and we deserved it."

people are blessed who know they need Jesus to give them meaning and purpose in life. "Meaning and purpose in life does not come from introspection," he said, referring to the "I gotta find myself" quest many young people undertake. "You create your identity by committing yourself to something you believe is infinitely important and worthwhile." Ultimately, he said, that means committing oneself to a life of radical service for Christ.

Second, said Campolo, Christ knew the "blessedness" of those who become poor, literally, because they have given away their material possessions to those in need. "It's pretty difficult to be a Christian and be as rich as we are," he said, noting that most young people find it easy to spend \$200 on a stereo unit, yet that same amount of money could save 50 starving children. "Don't consider yourself a follower of Jesus if you would not do what Jesus would do if he were faced with the same options," he warned his strangely quieted audience.

"*Blessed are those who mourn.*" "Don't think you can become a Christian just by believing in Jesus," Campolo said. Even Satan holds very orthodox beliefs about God. "You become a Christian when your heart is broken by the things that break the heart of Jesus. Jesus is looking for the kind of people who get the greatest thrill out of life not by getting, but by giving to those who are in desperate need."

Campolo said he had no qualms about being accused of laying "guilt trips" on his audiences. "There's nothing wrong with laying guilt trips on sinners," said Campolo. "Sinners will continue to be sinners until guilt motivates them to repentance. Jesus is calling his people to turn away from a lifestyle prescribed by the American culture to a lifestyle prescribed by the Holy Spirit — and there's a mocking discrepancy between the two."

"*Blessed are the meek.*" The call to be meek is simply a call for people to surrender themselves fully to Jesus so they can be used by him, Campolo noted. "What are you going to do with your life anyway?" he asked. "Don't you know that there isn't anything that you could do with your life that will bring you more joy, fulfillment, gratification, and aliveness than giving your life to be and do what Jesus has called you to be and do? I'm only asking that you give up what could never satisfy you in order to do something so heroic that in a million years from now it will have made a difference."

He added that Jesus's call will likely take his followers away from their comfortable surroundings and into areas of need in this country, or even more likely, beyond U.S. borders. "Most people in your town have heard the gospel over and over again on TV, radio, at church. They've heard it so many times that they have become indifferent to it. The time has come for you to become cognizant of the fact that you ought to go where you are desperately needed."

"*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.*" Citing the crumbling educational system of his home area of Philadelphia, Campolo maintained that the cities of America are falling apart because Satan has taken possession of them. "It's time the people of God rise up and send people into the city to begin to do what needs to be done among the people who are hurting."

"*Blessed are the merciful.*" Contrary to Jesus's call, church people are among the most unmerciful of people, Campolo said, particularly when it comes to dealing with personal and social misbehavior. "People of God should not be about taking other people's lives," he said, referring to religion's support of capital punishment. "You become merciful when Jesus comes into your life." Those

who can't forgive others won't be forgiven by God, he added.

"Blessed are the pure in heart." Focusing on sex and marriage, Campolo warned his listeners not to think they can walk with Jesus and carry on improper sexual relationships at the same time. "What you do physically with your boyfriend/girlfriend will destroy your capacity to have a close relationship with Jesus. Not only that," he added, "it will cheapen your own self-concept and your concept of the other person."

Noting that "God made us sexy people," Campolo added that God also created guidelines for a wholesome sexual experience. "Unless this is a very unusual group of young people," he added, "there are a good number of you that need to ask for forgiveness in this area. And the good news is that Jesus will cleanse you."

"Blessed are the peacemakers." Making peace goes beyond interpersonal relationships, he said. "We are called to do what the politicians of the world cannot do — to prevent World War 3 from blowing people off the face of the earth," Campolo said, referring to the runaway nuclear arms race. "We as Christians are called on to speak to the prin-



Between sessions Mary Utting (left), planning committee member from Newton, Kan., and Tammy Kroeker, Hillsboro, Kan., process the challenges of the weekend. Adults and sponsors played a key role in daily "react times" with the youth.

cipalities and powers and the rulers of this age to say that God's way is peace. We cannot spend a million dollars a minute on arms and still have the means to feed 500 million hungry people."

Campolo also had some words for the church. "To accomplish what God has intended for his people in the world, we're going to need the church," he said. But a church characterized by:

- *Radical commitment.* "God needs a church that is not committed to its own survival. American churches have tied

up \$400 billion in buildings to honor someone who said, 'I dwell not in temples made of hands.' Jesus is more interested in feeding the poor and clothing the naked and helping the lonely and dying than he is about putting up stained-glass windows."

- *Witnessing.* "We can't talk about changing the world unless people are first changed by the gospel. Changing people is where the revolution begins."

- *A willingness to confront the principalities and powers.* "We are doing only



Edmund Janzen, Fresno Pacific College president, led one of five main seminars, this one on "My relationships with myself."



Aerobics was only one of many recreational opportunities available during the afternoon free time. Plenty of snow made skiing a popular outlet.

half the job if we only pick up the casualties of the (unjust economic, political or social) system. We much change the system."

In his final two messages, Campolo focused on making and sustaining that personal commitment to Christ — "to be and do what Jesus would be and do if he were in our shoes." "None of us on our own has what it takes to make living for Christ a reality," he admitted. "But Christ says he will enable us through the Holy Spirit to do what we cannot do on our own."

To experience the power of the Spirit on a daily basis means first committing oneself wholly to the mission of God, then to a small group "who will keep you faithful." Jesus had such a support group — Peter, James and John — with whom he prayed and found strength and encouragement, said Campolo. "There's no way you can live a consistent spiritual life without such a group. The Holy Spirit doesn't come to us directly; he only comes through those with whom we fellowship."

Finally he challenged his audience not to think they don't have what it takes to be an agent of God's revolution. Instead they ought to think of themselves as Christ thinks of them. "Jesus thinks you're absolutely terrific," he said. "When a person says 'I'm nothing,' then I know that person isn't close to God, because the closer you get to God the better you feel about yourself."

At the same time, "What God does for you, you need to do for other people. Don't let a day go by without making someone feel as wonderful as Jesus



The "Big Bad Butler (Avenue MB Church, Fresno, Calif.) Beebop Bottlers Bellowing Blowers" render their version of *When the Saints Go Marching In* during one general session. Many other youth exercised their creative gifts during a two-hour Praise Festival on Sunday evening.

makes you feel."

That means bearing the burdens of others. "We're so busy serving Jesus that we forget that the most important thing is to bear one another's burdens — and that is done mostly by listening. The mission of God begins where people are hurting, and there are hurting people in your community."

"Do good to all men," he said in closing. "Do big things for God."

The impact of Campolo's often hard-

hitting messages was keenly visible in the numerous commitments made to Christ during the weekend — many of them to indicate their openness to full-time ministry wherever God might lead them. Campolo's call for social and economic responsibility was not the usual fare for most youth conventions, and struck some with considerable discomfort — "Too close to home," noted one Estes organizer. But the message came through. An offering designated to help Pakistani refugees through MB Missions/Services netted \$3,300.

"We thought he was right on with the kids," said Dennis Becker. "I think that was shown by their response to him as well."

Added one Kansas pastor: "If these kids catch on to what they're committing themselves to, what's going to happen to the conference when they get home? Some of the diehards in our churches are going to be left behind; they'll have to scramble to catch up."

Is such a shake-up necessary? "The fact that America is what it is today is evidence of the fact that Jesus does not have an army of committed people ready to make a difference in time and history for his sake," Campolo told these Mennonite Brethren youth. "This many people committed to Jesus would shake the very foundations of the American empire."

Perhaps, too, the Mennonite Brethren Church? That is the hope of the many among the 1,037 who left the mountain no longer living for themselves, but for Jesus. □



LEFT: "High energy" characterized the music of special guest artists Salmond and Mulder. ABOVE: By the end of the intense and activity-filled convention, though, most everyone else's energy level was somewhat more sedate.

Forum

A column of opinion and comment

Will evangelicals justify this militarism?

by Harold Jantz

EVANGELICALS in America face perhaps the most serious test they will ever have to confront. The new spirit of militarism which has gripped American life is making great inroads into evangelical ranks and threatens to sap them of their ability to proclaim truly the message of a universal Christ and a universal church.

In early March, in what was perhaps the most striking appeal ever made to the church in American history, President Reagan became the first president to attend the convention of the National Association of Evangelicals and appealed to the evangelicals to get behind his efforts to greatly increase U.S. nuclear strength.

The indications are that not only did the U.S. president have the support of the majority of the 1,600 evangelicals hearing him, but evangelicals and conservative Protestants in the U.S. have become the ones to provide moral justification for the renewed emphasis on military strength as the way to maintain the American way of life.

There was a time when Jesus was faced with a temptation which is very similar to the one facing Christians in America today. He knew that the way that God had for him was a way of suffering and death. If he was to be the salvation of humankind, he would need to accept the rejection and abuse of humankind — and ultimately death. And this is what he told his disciples too. But when he did, Peter (the one who later would pick up a sword in self-defense) remonstrated Christ. "God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you." But at those words, Jesus said "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men" (Mt. 16:22, 23). The way of Christ could not be linked with the way of the sword.

The words of Christ are still appropriate for us today. The cause of Christ cannot be advanced at the point of a gun. His disciples today seem to have

forgotten the lesson Jesus was trying to teach his first followers.

When President Reagan addressed the NAE, he described the Soviet Union as "the focus of evil in the modern world" and said that the confrontation with the world's most powerful communist nation is a "struggle between right and wrong and good and evil."

At one point he recalled a man whom he heard address a crowd in the 1950s. The man, Reagan recalled approvingly, told the crowd that although he loved his daughters, "I would rather see them die now, still believing in God, than have them grow up under communism and one day die no longer believing in God."

Those words were applauded by evangelicals who should have known from the words of Christ that they represented the beguiling seductions of the Tempter.

They seem to have forgotten that it was Christ, not some earthly potentate who said that the church will stand and the powers of hell will not overcome it. These are no idle words, even though Christians in the West forget them so easily. The church in the Soviet Union has not only survived, it has grown. The church in China has grown far beyond anything that anyone might have imagined during the past three decades. The Baptist churches in Romania are the fastest growing in Europe, a recent report claims. Have we not always maintained that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church?

And do evangelicals in America no longer have the sensitivity to see that the unbelief in the West is every bit as deadly as the unbelief in the East? Even on the official level the opposition to belief is blatant and strong. It is, after all, against the law to pray in American schools. Christian clubs have found it very difficult to meet on many campuses because of the sharp insistence on the division of church and state. The U.S. is the world's greatest arms merchant.

But more subtly, the seduction of material ease, the emphasis on self, the pursuit of pleasure, the terrible flood of pornography, the easy justification for force — are these not all destructive to faith as well? How can any believer see the struggle between the Soviet Union and America, or between a communist state and a capitalist, as a struggle between right and wrong?

Surely, we appreciate the greater freedoms of the West, and the material benefits of capitalism. But the Scriptures challenge both systems, communism and capitalism. Jesus Christ came to save the people living under both. The church living under either has no right to call the state to its side as though its security rested in the ability of the state to pro-

tect it from the other political system.

A Canadian group, calling itself the Heritage Forum and listing three former presidents of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada in its ranks, has taken virtually the same stance as U.S. evangelicals by urging the Canadian government to permit testing of the cruise missiles and denouncing opponents as "leftists."

Evangelicals like those of us within the Mennonite Brethren should seriously consider whether the events of recent months don't call for a re-thinking of their relationship to the NAE and the EFC. We are members in both organizations, but if we are linked to the justification of militarism which is now sweeping through evangelical circles, we may need to ask whether we shouldn't withdraw. The cause of Christ around the world is being hurt by the arguments for force, by the dependence upon the power of the state, which evangelicals in America are now displaying.

For those of us who want to show the love of Christ for all people, to love our lives above those of others undermines what we intend to say. For the sake of Christ and the gospel let's renounce any claim upon the arms of this world. The nations of the world will rage, but we should not be in there with them justifying their rage. □

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Harold Jantz is editor of the Mennonite Brethren Herald, published by the Canadian MB Conference.



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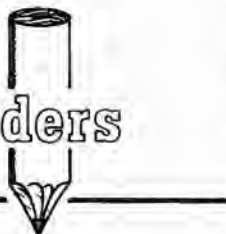
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What Readers Say



Estes — a winner

• Estes '83 was a spiritually dynamic experience. The call to radical Christian commitment was unmistakably plain. God blessed.

The United States Board of Christian Education and the Estes Planning Committee are to be commended for making the arrangements. Convention coordinator Dennis Becker of Fresno and Ed

Boschman, Estes director, along with the entire committee did a superb job. The organization and attention to planning details was first rate. The participants — more than 1,000 — and the entire conference are in their debt. — *Elmer Martens, president, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif.*

• A very special thank you to everyone who had a part in making Estes '83 a reality. God used the singing, the seminars and Tony Campolo to draw the kids from our MBY and me to himself. We all agree that we came away from Estes different people. In fact some of us died there and in a new sense are no longer living for ourselves — but for him. — *Scott Henning, youth pastor,*

Hillsboro (Kan.) Mennonite Brethren Church

Spiritual encouragement

• Thank you very much for sending me the *Christian Leader*. Here, distant from my home church and the Mennonite Brethren conference, I appreciate the news and also the spiritual encouragement.

God bless your ministry in publishing. — *Vickie Klassen, Recife, Brazil*

Bless you

• I must congratulate you on the excellent work you have done in the *Christian Leader*. I particularly enjoyed the articles in the Apr. 5 issue. Keep up the good work. God bless you. — *Otto Scholl, Minneapolis, Minn.*

Viewpoint

... by Katie Funk Wiebe

Secular clergy

THE CHRISTIAN church has long accepted that its first mandate is to proclaim the gospel. Today, however, most "professional" Christians are not employed in the task of proclamation or pastoral work, but in administration and maintaining and servicing those administrators, writes Sara Maitland in *A Map of the New Country*. Administration has gained prominence; proclamation has moved into the backseat.

Christian bureaucracies have increased in size and number since the church renewal movement of the sixties for good reason, writes Maitland. They did so intentionally to strengthen their power base in the world. She notes the large institutions developed by Catholics and Protestants and the tremendous organizational skills needed to plan the huge gatherings and programs each one sponsors.

The Mennonite constituency has not lagged in this movement to bring masses of people together within the inter-Mennonite community and within each branch of it. Some of these conferences and conventions are becoming tremendous affairs also, involving a large staff, thousands of dollars and months of organization and promotion.

Yet there is no other way, writes Maitland, if the church emphasizes lay participation and community. The church can't have these advantages without bureaucracy. They move hand in hand. The emphasis on community and lay involvement means an increase in committees, boards, commissions and programs,

as well as the need for more facilities and communication possibilities. While Christians don't like to think of themselves as members of a large business corporation, to deny this fact is folly, she writes.

The problem is not the emphasis on the institution, but functioning without a theology of an institution ordained to preach the gospel. When power lay with pastors, proclaimers and evangelists, the church felt comfortable using a "spiritual" language to discuss their work. Today, the church is left weakened because technology and institutional developments have outstripped the church and it has no language with which to discuss such matters as accountancy, office management, and microcomputers in the same way.

Another problem she sees originating in a lack of a theology of the institution is clericism, or the increase in secular authority of religious leaders through an increase in bureaucracy. When the first diaconate was established in New Testament times, the apostles dedicated themselves to prayer and teaching of the Word. Today they dedicate themselves to administration because it seems to involve more power.

One evil of clericism is that people on the lower rungs of a religious bureaucracy — the ones who type letters and wash tea cups — are not considered a part of "real Christian work." They are not regarded as ministers of the gospel. They are not expected to be as dedicated to Christ as the person at the top level because they don't get paid as much. They can be hired and fired more perfunctorily because they aren't as necessary to the task.

"Clericism undermines and corrupts the Christian understanding of service, of ministry, and of wholeness, inter-

dependence, and community. Clericism is based on a belief, seldom if ever acknowledged, that some vocations are better than others; and that the best vocation of all (if not the only recognized vocation) is being a clergyman."

She gives three solutions people use to solve the problems of the burgeoning bureaucracy in Christianity. One is to renounce it completely. Yet this action is impossible, Maitland writes, unless one wants to be a mystic or prophet in the wilderness. We cannot get out of the institutional world.

Some Christians, particularly women, renounce the bureaucracy because they find more fellowship outside the institution than in it. I see a subtle kind of rejection of bureaucracy and resultant clericism in our own midst as I watch the development of strong women's organizations. Is this a subconscious attempt to deal with one problem by setting up another bureaucracy alongside?

Maitland's second suggestion for one caught in the religious system is to ignore the dilemma as much as possible, yet stick with the system. This stance is often taken by those who are satisfied in their position, who are possibly already inside of it to some degree, or who see no evidence of clericism.

Her third option is to view the church's institutional form as an opportunity for special witness and vocation in the closing decades of the twentieth century. We cannot get along without institutions; we are creatures of them. So we need to return to the apostles the tasks of teaching, praying and breaking bread. And administrators need to organize and administer in a Spirit of Christ so that each person in the institution serves on the same level as the others. Both are in need of complete dedication to the task and to one another. □

Window on the Bible



God's triunity is a community

THE MOST puzzling doctrine of the Bible is the doctrine of the holy trinity or triunity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit being one. How can that be? How can three be one, and one be three?

Even though the Bible does not use the word trinity or triunity, the doctrine is there, nonetheless; it is a mysterious, mind-boggling doctrine at that. "Those who try to explain it," says a proverb, "lose their minds; and those who deny it, lose their souls." That is not much comfort.

But there is much more to the doctrine of the triune God than intelligible meaning or moral affirmation. This doctrine has central relevance for our lives as Christians. I like to think of the one God as a community, as a divine relationship in which each member stands towards himself (in other words, as a separate person). Think of it this way: the Father stands in relationship to himself as God; the Son stands in relationship to himself as God; the Spirit stands in relationship to himself as God. All three are, in essence, God. But how do we discover that triune community in the Bible?

The first biblical record of the triunity of God is found in Genesis 1:1-29. First, there is God the Father, creator of the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1; cf. Ps. 104:1-32). He is the everlasting God, the Lord, who gives strength to those of us who become weary and tired. His mind is suprainelligent; he knows it all (Is. 40:28-29).

Second, there is the Spirit. While God was creatively active, "the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters" (Gen. 1:2). Even today, when God sends forth his Spirit, life is being created (Ps. 104:30). That is why one of the old church creeds formulates it this way: "We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life." He is, indeed, the giver of both biological life (Gen. 2:7) and spiritual life. "My life-giving Spirit," said the Lord to the generation of Noah, "shall be patient for 120 years" (Gen. 6:3).

Third, there is the Son in the form of the Word. In each of the eight separate creative acts, God was speaking the creative Word to *let be* or to *bring forth* (Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26). By this Word of the Lord, says the psalmist, "the heavens were made" (Ps. 33:6). The

Apostle John offers a commentary on that creative Word. This Word was Jesus Christ who at the very beginning was not only with God, but was himself God (Jn. 1:1-2).

There we see God in triunity as divine community, actively creating the universe as the initial, visible dwelling place for this holy fellowship. Thereby God freely chose to expand his celestial community to embrace terrestrial humanity: "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness," said God. "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Gen. 1:26-27 NASB). It is at this point where the relevancy of the divine triunity for the first time enters most intimately into human life: community of God seeks fellowship between itself and humanity. God never willed to be alone; he willed to be in community. The divine community never willed to be by itself; it always willed to be with us. God always willed to be our God; his plan always was that we should be his people.

Community and fellowship presuppose unity and love. Both are present in God: God is one, and God is love. Without unity, there is no community; without love, there is no fellowship. Our fellowship as believers is an extension of God's fellowship within the triune being. That is why John could say that we have horizontal fellowship with one another and vertical fellowship with the Father and the Son Jesus Christ (1 Jn. 1:3).

When we are confronted with the difficult doctrine of the triunity, let's think of it in terms of the triune community reaching out to humanity. And those of us who are in Christ and in whom the Spirit dwells are in fellowship because of God's community.

— Hans Kasdorf, associate professor of world mission, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif.



M. B. Seminary

Konrad resigns seminary position

GEORGE KONRAD, a member of the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary faculty for the past 17 years, has resigned as of the end of the current school year.

He plans to concentrate on a full-time counselling ministry in Fresno, Calif.

Konrad, currently professor of Christian education and counselling joined the faculty in 1966 following completion of his doctoral studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In addition to teaching he also served stints as dean of students, academic dean and acting president.

Konrad said he thought the time was right for a change because he wanted to start "one more new ministry in my career."

John E. Toews, academic dean, called the resignation "a very big loss to the seminary." He said Konrad had been a "key player" in shaping the school's ministry and self-understanding in the 1960s. He had articulated and modelled a relational theology and pioneered the small-group movement at the seminary. Toews said Konrad also significantly enlarged the seminary's counselling ministry and developed the new pastoral counselling major which is to get underway next fall. In announcing the resignation to the seminary community Toews said "we reluctantly release you with our blessing."

Konrad will continue to teach part-time at the seminary. Other courses for the new pastoral counselling major will be handled by Larry Martens, who joined the faculty this year; Al Dueck, psychology professor at nearby Fresno Pacific College; and Irene Loewen, who is completing a doctorate in counselling at the California School of Professional Psychology. In addition, Ron Penner from the Canadian Conference Christian education office will join the seminary's Christian education program following further studies.



Konrad

Fresno Pacific College

Inventor brings video-age music to college

LAST FALL Fresno Pacific College became the first Mennonite college to own the Buchla 400, a computerized musical instrument. This semester, its inventor, Don Buchla, appeared on campus to demonstrate the device.

The Buchla 400, invented less than a year ago, consists of three computers and looks more like a video game than a concert instrument. Yet it offers "incredible capabilities in both traditional and avant-garde music," says music professor Larry Warkentin.

The instrument displays each musical composition it plays on a video screen. A panel of touch-sensitive "keys" controls the sound, enabling the user to change instrumentation, tempo and scales while listening. Musical scores are stored on cards the size of photographic slides.

The Buchla 400 can produce an infinite array of sounds, ranging from computerized "bleeps" to the warm strains of cello. Buchla had used it to play the background music for films, and says it is also slowly being welcomed into traditional orchestras.

Buchla specializes in experimental and avant-garde music. The Buchla 400 was created with the idea that "music does not have to consist of a series of

notes," Buchla says. The new musical scores have abandoned traditional notation. "We have to learn new ways of conveying musical information to the performer."

The instrument made its first formal appearance on the college campus during the recent drama production "The Crucible," as Warkentin played the music he specially composed for the play. It will also be featured during May term in an electronic music class.

Fresno Pacific purchased the Buchla 400 with a government grant. The \$10,000 instrument "cost less than a good grand piano," says Warkentin, who believes it will soon become part of music education everywhere.

ADVISORY COUNCIL STUDIES COLLEGE ISSUES

CHURCH relations, College Hour philosophy and dormitory visiting hours were issues dealt with by the Fresno Pacific College Church Advisory Council recently.

The council is made up of representatives from each Mennonite Brethren church in the Pacific District Conference, which owns the college.

The council affirmed the college's work in finding ways for students and faculty to serve in churches. It encouraged the college to give students increasing opportunities for service and to help churches understand that such students are in training and need support and encouragement. Faculty should serve churches in areas in which they have

expertise, the council said, such as seminars or special Sunday school series.

The council agreed that College Hour should serve the function of integrating faith with various issues rather than being simply a chapel or Bible study session. However, it also encouraged the college to continue including periodic Bible study or doctrinal teaching among the other issues covered in College Hour.

The issue of dorm visitation hours brought the least consensus among members of the council. Although there were various opinions about how dorm visitation should be handled, there was some agreement that the development of a student center would help to relieve some problems by providing students with an alternate place for socializing on campus.

Attendance at the meeting was low (about half of the representatives attended) but the response of those who participated was positive. "Issues were dealt with in a positive and spiritual manner," said one representative. □

Tabor College

"Rooted in Christ" is theme of youth conference

"ROOTED in Christ," will be the theme for the 1983 Youth Conference to be held Apr. 29-May 1 at Tabor College. The theme is based on Ephesians 3:17-19.

Tim Kimmel, of Generation Ministries, Phoenix, Ariz. will be the featured speaker. Kimmel has had four years experience as a youth pastor in Phoenix, and three years as a club leader for Young Life in Dallas, Tex. A graduate of Bryan College, Dayton, Tenn., and Dallas Theological Seminary, Kimmel has spoken at many conferences, retreats, high schools and colleges.

A concert by "Glad," a contemporary



Seminary is people . . .

Dave Gerbrandt grew up as a missionary kid among the Comanche Indians of Southwestern Oklahoma. Graduating from Tabor College with a B.A. degree in psychology, he spent the next eight years as a teacher in public and Christian education, followed by eight years in house construction. Married to Marilyn (Gossen), they have four teenage children. He will graduate with a master of divinity degree in May 1983.

"A senior in pastoral ministries at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, I appreciate the tools I have acquired which will facilitate continued growth and understanding of the Scriptures. The exegetical method of Bible study taught by professors Elmer Martens and John E. Toews has expanded my ability to understand and apply the Word."



For information, write:

The Registrar
Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary
4824 East Butler
Fresno, CA 93727
Telephone: (209) 251-8628

POSITION AVAILABLE

Accounting/Business Management:

Full-time teaching position with primary responsibility in accounting. Rank and salary open. MBA required; preference given to candidate with CPA and/or public accounting experience; business experience desirable. Send resume and three reference letters to Academic Dean, Tabor College, Hillsboro, KS 67063. Closing date: May 1, 1983. Starting date: August 1983. Tabor is an evangelical Christian college operated by the Mennonite Brethren Church.

gospel band, will highlight the conference.

Tabor Youth Conference is a week-end retreat with a spiritual emphasis for high school and college young people. The conference aim is to bring students to a spiritual awakening through the talents of special speakers and musicians.

ORATORIO TO HONOR PROFESSOR EMERITUS

THE Tabor College music department will honor professor emeritus Herbert C. Richert May 1 with an evening performance of "The Holy City," by A.R. Gaul. The oratorio will be presented in the Hillsboro (Kan.) Mennonite Brethren Church.

Tabor alumni will join the college choir for the performance which will be accompanied by a 30-piece orchestra.

Soloists for the performance will be Margaret Wall Juhnke, soprano; Ann Voth Ratliff, alto; Archie Kliewer, tenor; and Henry Wiebe, bass. All are former students of Richert.

BRAUN EARNS DOCTORAL IN ADMINISTRATION

JACK Braun, dean of student development at Tabor College, has earned a doctoral degree in higher education administration from Kansas State University, Manhattan. He successfully defended his doctoral dissertation in February.

A 1965 graduate of Tabor, Braun earned a master's degree in theatre and drama from Kansas University, Lawrence, in 1970. He began his career at Tabor as assistant professor of drama in September 1966. In 1975, he was named chairman of the speech and drama department.

Braun has served as dean of student development since 1977.

FORMER BIOLOGY PROFESSOR RETURNS AS VISITING SCHOLAR

CLARENCE Harms, head of the biology department at Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa., was a 1983 visiting scholar at Tabor College Apr. 25-26. Harms is a former member of the Tabor faculty.

He spoke on "Faith and learning integration: A biologist's perspective" at a morning convocation and presented lectures to the environmental biology and physiology lab classes.

Harms also made a presentation on "Evolutionary theory and Christian thought" at an evening faculty forum.

Harms is a 1955 graduate of Tabor and has held positions at Tabor of instructor, associate professor and professor of biology, as well as head of the biology department. Harms also served as acting dean of academic affairs from 1962-63. □

Joint boards meeting

Finding that elusive center

WHAT will be the glue that will unite the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches in the future? What will rally the constituency to a renewed vision for ministry at the national level? Conference leaders, summoned to the mountaintop setting of Littleton, Colo., searched intently for answers to those questions during their three-day joint boards meeting, Mar. 23-25. When they descended again, they had reached consensus. The rallying vision of the "new" U.S. Conference will be the vision that has united and motivated Mennonite Brethren throughout their history: to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus through evangelism and church planting.

Just how that vision will be implemented is something board members discussed with less unanimity and clarity, and will continue to develop in the months to come. But there was an unspoken sense of accomplishment, even relief, at the meeting's end that at least a broad call had been determined. Those present admitted that over the past few years — particularly since the eventful Deer Creek sessions of one year ago — the national conference had been struggling to find itself again. Some saw it as a period of transition. Each, though, sensed the import of their deliberations for the future of the U.S. Conference.

"This is a pivotal meeting," said one board chairman at the outset. "We have to go home with something more than maintenance."

"We can't afford another lame-duck year," echoed one Board of Church Ministries member. "We can't go to Fresno (site of October's triennial convention) without knowing who we are."

Through both plenary and individual board sessions, the group sought to find that identity. Three of the six conference boards — Church Ministries, Trustees, and Evangelism/Christian Service — met for business; the boards of Media Ministries, Christian Education, and Publications sent representatives. Together they wrestled with a two-fold agenda of addressing the more prag-

matic problems of continuing budget shortfalls and program overruns and the more heady assignment of articulating direction and purpose for a people.

That sense of purpose had been wavering, some analyzed, since 1979 when the U.S. Conference voted in special session to turn over its two four-year liberal arts colleges to the districts, thus removing the unifying cause of higher education from the national agenda. Nothing else since has quite filled the vacuum. The remaining conference ministries continued on much the same until the Deer Creek joint boards meeting last March. At that time, a growing conference deficit resulted in the Board of Church Ministries ordering significant cutbacks in staff and programs, centralized accounting procedures, and the sale of a conference-owned recording studio in Fresno, Calif., and printing press in Hillsboro, Kan.

The moves were seen as a necessary overhaul of conference structure so that the vehicle might run more smoothly and purposefully again in a positive direction. Now meeting in Littleton, leaders agreed that the car was still not running as it should. Church contributions — usually considered a leading indicator of conference health — continued at their sluggish pace. In late December, boards were asked to operate at 80 percent of their already streamlined budgets to compensate for the shortfall.

The struggling U.S. economy was partly blamed. Contributions at all conference levels is down, noted U.S. Conference treasurer Marvin Reimer. In fact, the U.S. Conference was doing comparatively as well or slightly better than its district and general conference counterparts.

Grabbing on to the automobile metaphor, others felt that the car was running properly already, but simply needed a bit more "polish" and salesmanship in order to sell it to the constituency. They felt the Board of Church Ministries had done little to promote conference causes in the churches.

Yet all agreed that what ultimately was lacking was the finely tuned "engine" or vision that would empower the vehicle into full motion. "The real issue is vision, not just money," summarized

U.S. Conference

moderator Vernon Wiebe following the opening plenary session.

John Toews, BCM member from Fresno, agreed. "Even at Deer Creek, the issue was vision. Budget simply became the medium by which the issue was addressed."

With programs either transferred to other conference levels or significantly reduced, some wondered what was left of the U.S. Conference ministry that should merit support and enthusiasm. Some in the churches wondered whether there even was a need for the U.S. Conference at all.

That latter question was settled early. "We've got to put to rest the notion of whether we need a U.S. Conference," said Wes Prieb, chairman of the Board of Publications. "We are Mennonite Brethren living in the U.S. This is the land where we need to be the church. There are challenges and opportunities unique to American Mennonite Brethren and we need to address them as a body. Let's not be so heavy hearted," he added. "We've got a land to conquer!"

Once convinced of the need to retain the U.S. Conference, the discussion shifted to the lingering questions: What role should the conference play? What is the centerpiece that would hold the churches together and rally them for ministry?

John Toews noted that the "glue" which unites Mennonite Brethren is basically three-fold: (1) a common faith, which would signify the need to retain the triennial faith and life conferences; (2) common activities, which deals with the question of mission; and (3) trusted leadership. The task facing BCM, he noted, was to define the activity, the mission, that would form the centerpiece of conference efforts.

The purpose of the U.S. Conference, suggested Phil Glanzer, Freeman, S.D., was to help the local church fulfill its mission. And that mission, added Harold Schroeder of Ferndale, Wash., is essentially the Great Commission — to go and make disciples of all people.

Evangelism and church planting soon emerged as the logical centerpiece. But how could the U.S. Conference contribute to — and not compete with — the church-planting efforts currently being carried out at the district level?

Several options were considered. One BCM member noted the districts' "zero batting average" when it comes to successful church-planting ventures in major metropolitan centers and suggested that the U.S. Conference focus on that as its mission. The conference could target one metropolitan center, or perhaps one center in each of the three major districts. Such a venture could



Meeting in the Fireside Room of the Belleview Acres Church for one plenary session, members of the boards listen to Media Ministries member Gene Lewis (left, back toward camera) give his impressions of the future of his boards' ministry.

serve also as a training center for district church planters, thus augmenting district outreach efforts.

The "metro initiative" would accomplish at least three things, noted John Toews. First, it would rally people around a cause based in Mennonite Brethren history — missions. Second, it would be meeting a current need in the U.S. Conference — a successful metropolitan church-planting model. Third, as a model or training center, it would help meet the need for resourcing the district church-planting ministries.

A metropolitan mission attracted the most interest, though other options were considered. One BCM member suggested that one way to avoid infringing on the "turf" of the various districts would be to focus on a state west of the Mississippi River that represented an entirely new field for Mennonite Brethren.

The shape of the new church-planting initiative was left largely undefined as questions of logistics, finances and personnel were raised. BCM will assume the task of fine-tuning the vision with the intent of having some options to present at the triennial convention in Fresno.

Still remaining were the immediate challenges of programming. Considerable time was spent discussing how to encourage the churches to meet the current year's operating and debt retirement obligations. In the end, BCM approved a recommendation that servicing the debt to the tune of \$50,000 a year be made a

budget priority and that the boards and ministries "live with what's left."

"We cannot go to Fresno with an increased debt," said trustees chairman Albert Reimer, Hillsboro.

"Living with the rest" carried immediate implications. Though BCM promised to try to raise the full budget by the end of the fiscal year, they told the boards to adjust their programs to run at 80 percent of the budget approved at Deer Creek last year.

Of special concern to both BCM and the trustees was the Board of Media Ministries, which was running at 111 percent of its budget to date. At Deer Creek, BMM was told to reduce its ministry to the production of the Words of the Gospel radio program at a budget of \$100,000. Two thirds through the fiscal year, BMM had already spent more than 82 percent of the full amount.

The discussion extended beyond finances to include the role media should play in the mission of the U.S. Conference. In the end, BCM approved a three-point recommendation that (1) BMM run through October 31 — which would take it past the triennial convention — at 80 percent of its proposed budget for 1983-84, or a total of just over \$29,000; (2) BCM commit itself to seek 100 percent of the 1982-83 budget through intensified fund-raising efforts; (3) in consultation with BMM, a task force be appointed to study the role of media in the U.S. Conference and present its findings to BCM prior to the Fresno convention.

Just how the BCM decision would affect Words of the Gospel was not known immediately. It was suggested that through October past programs be replayed over the airways and thus keep production costs to an absolute minimum. Even at that, Words of the Gospel director Carl Loewen said he was not sure he could continue the ministry at the stipulated budget limits.

Words of the Gospel "re-runs" were suggested in part because of BMM's announcement that radio speaker Larry Martens had previously notified the board that he would be terminating his ministry with the program following his Easter Sunday message. Martens said he wanted to concentrate more fully on his teaching assignment at the MB Biblical Seminary.

The Board of Media Ministries was not the only board affected by the 80 percent spending ceiling. Wes Prieb, publications chairman, said later that the *Christian Leader* magazine would be

forced to eliminate two issues from its publishing schedule before the end of the fiscal year. The move would be necessary even though his board was running at about 83 percent of its approved budget to date. He noted that because of budget limitations, Kindred Press, the conference's book publishing ministry, had already curtailed any publishing activity over the past year.

The remaining boards were running well below the 80 percent level, except for the Board of Trustees, which was operating at about 167 percent to date. They cited certain unavoidable fixed costs like legal fees and other expenses relating to the sale of conference property, as a cause of their overrun.

BCM approved a tentative budget of \$406,202 for the 1983-84 year, a decrease of more than \$2,500 from last year. The budget breakdown by boards is as follows:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Church Ministries Trustees (includes Ministers Retirement Trust) | \$13,000 |
| Christian Education Evangelism/Christian Service | \$26,930 |
| Media Ministries Publications | \$17,500 |
| Debt retirement | \$41,200 |
| In other business, the Board of Church Ministries: | \$110,000 |
| | \$147,572 |
| | \$50,000 |

In other business, the Board of Church Ministries:

- heard from Peace Education Task Force chairman John Toews that the revised Selective Service System regulations for alternative service contain "everything we asked for." At a previous meeting, BCM had suggested that Mennonite Brethren would support non-compliance in case of a military draft unless certain changes were made in the alternative service guidelines as they were first proposed.

- discussed plans for the triennial convention in Fresno this October. The focus of the "faith and life" gathering will be inspiration and teaching in addition to business. Elmer Martens, president of the MB Biblical Seminary, will be the featured speaker. Numerous workshops on topics of interest to attendees are being planned as well.

- voted to make the "New Pastors Seminar" an annual affair. This year's pilot effort, held just prior to the seminary's annual School for Ministry, was considered "quite successful" in orienting new pastors to the polity, procedure and positions of the Mennonite Brethren conference.

- designated the third weekend of March as the time for annual joint meetings of U.S. Conference boards. They stipulated that in the future all boards will be asked to meet during that time.

— Don Ratzlaff

200 women attend SDC annual retreat

ABOUT 200 women converged on the Fountainhead Lodge at Eufaula, Okla., Mar. 18-19, for the annual Southern District Conference Women's Missionary Service retreat.

The program following the Friday evening banquet was centered on the retreat theme, "Enter in. . ." The program included group singing as well as music from soloist Christine Becker of Collinsville, Okla., an ensemble from Fairview, Okla., and special music and devotional thoughts from Dave Neely of Newton, Kan. Betty Thomas presented a monologue titled "Mary," which depicted how the mother of Jesus must have felt as her son grew up and eventually was led to the cross.

Special speaker for the weekend was Patsy Clairmont of Brighton, Mich. Drawing from personal experience, she described the emptiness of self-centered living and how Christ can enter in to rebuild a new life of meaning and purpose. After years of making wrong choices, Clairmont said, she allowed Christ to enter in and he filled the empty places of her life. No longer did she need to depend on a marriage partner, children or other people for her ultimate happiness.

Clairmont challenged the women to "Enter in" to a life of praise to God by reordering their priorities so as to have a correct attitude of worship and adoration of Christ and his Word.

Elsie Friesen of Fairview led a communion service. During the business session that followed, the women accepted an invitation to hold next year's retreat at Dodge City, Kan., and elected the following officers: Betty Seibel, Hillsboro, Kan., chairperson; Laura Boese, Buhler, Kan., vice-chairperson; and Marcia Gerbrandt, Enid, Okla., secretary-treasurer.

— Linda Plett

PACIFIC DISTRICT WMS SPONSORS SPRING RETREATS

THREE retreats were among the activities sponsored by the Pacific District Conference Women's Missionary Service this spring.

"Faith and the Ministering Woman" was the theme of a retreat held at Hartland Christian Camp, Mar. 11 and 12, attended by 173 women. Guest speaker was Carol Boschman of the Laurelglenn Bible Church, Bakersfield, Calif. Special music was presented by Living Light, a group from the Bethany Church in

An open letter to U.S. Mennonite Brethren . . .

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I know that you will agree that the ministries of the United States Conference, though small, are significant.

The *Christian Leader* and Words of the Gospel are substantial ministries. Our young people have been served well by Estes '83. The Christian Service program is in place and working well. The boards of Christian Education, Trustees, Evangelism and Church Ministries are resources for our churches.

Last year we reduced our U.S. Conference budget to bare essentials. Because only 80 percent of the budget had come in by the end of March we are faced with cutting issues of the *Christian Leader* and radio programs of Words of the Gospel.

This should not happen.

This is an appeal to support our U.S. programs through your church offerings immediately. If you have done your part already, do a little more to make up for someone who cannot give this year.

God is good. He will see us through this crisis if we are faithful to him and work together in love.

We are one!

— Vernon R. Wiebe
Moderator

Fresno, Calif. Seminars offered included Growing and Glowing; Hobbies: Ministry, Fun and Profit; Ministry After Retirement; and Time Management.

Wanda Kroeker of the Zion MB Church, Dinuba, Calif., and president of the WMS executive committee, was the guest speaker at Redwood Christian Park, Boulder Creek, Calif., on Mar. 18 and 19. The theme of the retreat was The Ministering Woman, with 87 in attendance. Also featured were The Lincoln Glen Singers of San Jose, Calif., a chalk talk by Mary Barkman, and seminars on Whole Grain Breadmaking; Personology Doll Making; and Stitchery.

A third retreat was scheduled to be held Apr. 23 and 24 at Black Lake, Wash.

MID-KANSAS RELIEF SALE NETS RECORD RECEIPTS

IN SPITE of unfriendly weather and a chilly economy, the annual Mid-Kansas Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale netted a record \$332,000 to fuel the worldwide poverty rescue programs of MCC. The sale, held Apr. 8-9 at the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson, Kan., tripled its usual rate of growth, easily surpassing last year's receipts of \$250,000.

Amid bone-chilling showers and parking fields soggy with runoff from a heavy spring snowfall, 27,000 people came to the fairgrounds for the 15th annual sale where, in 24 hours, they transformed 350 quilts, 19 Holstein heifers, four grandfather clocks, two thoroughbred horses, 36,000 fritters (New Year's cookies), a basketball autographed by a high school state championship team, and thousands of other gifts into record proceeds for MCC.

The highest price paid for any single item at the sale was \$6,100 for a hand-crafted 82-inch high clock. The mainstay of the relief sale was once again the quilt auction, which netted \$71,179 dollars, an increase of almost 30 percent from last year.



Twenty people joined the Neighborhood MB Church of Visalia, Calif., during the Mar. 13 evening service. Pictured are (* indicates baptism), left to right, front row: *Billy Wieland, Randy Ens, Sandy Ens, *Stephanie Sellers (standing, in white), Becky Prosser, Bryan Prosser, Jodi Prosser, Linda Sear, Dan Sear, Marla Ehoff, and Larry Ehoff. Back row: pastor Vern Heidebrecht, Bob Willems, Glenna Willems, *Colleen Kilzer, Carol Colvin, Janis Rogers, Bev Peterson, Wayne Gruver, *Becky Colvin, and *Richard Colvin.

Open MCC thrift shop

TOPEKA, Kan. (Fairlawn) — The congregation joined the local General Conference Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations in marking the grand opening of their church-sponsored thrift shop, Apr. 8. Called the "Olive Branch," the store will sell Self-Help crafts and second-hand clothes and household items to generate funds for the ministry of Mennonite Central Committee and to provide a source of affordable material aid for community families. The Olive Branch is the first of what the three churches hope will be a number of urban ministries, says Jeff Wright, Fairlawn's associate pastor.

Dyck leads Holy Week services

BUHLER, Kan. — Harold Dyck, assistant professor of biblical and religious studies at Tabor College, was the featured speaker at a series of Holy Week community services Mar. 28-31. Joining as co-sponsors of the event were the Buhler Mennonite Church, Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church and the Hebron Mennonite Church. Dyck spoke on the theme of the cross in the context of the prophets, the gospel of the kingdom, the Christian life, and the church as a "cosmic visitor."

Pantry to aid needy

BETHANY, Okla. (Western Oaks) — The church's deacons have begun a "Church Pantry" to help those facing economic need. The pantry will contain mostly nonperishable food items, and also articles for families with babies.

Explore "Faith of our Fathers"

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (El Camino Bible) — To promote awareness of what God has given the church through those who went before, the congregations's worship committee arranged for four presentations of Mennonite history. The mini-series, titled "Faith of our Fathers," was held on four Sunday evenings, beginning Mar. 13. Special emphasis was placed on what motivated the various

actions and decisions and what biblical principles were considered important. Topics included "Early Anabaptists," led by Roy Derksen; "Menno Simons and the martyrs," led by Rod Suess; "Migrations," led by Delbert Franz; and "How the Mennonite Brethren began," led by Cal Ewert.

Hold school awareness week

WASCO, Calif. — The church sponsored an "awareness week" during the second week of April for the North Kern Christian School it operates. Members were encouraged to visit the campus, meet the staff, and become aware of what goes on at the school and the needs that are present. On Wednesday members were invited to a luncheon with the school staff. The school's girls' chorus performed at the Apr. 10 morning worship service to inaugurate the week's activities.

Twelve members added

HESSTON, Kan. — The church welcomed 12 people into its membership recently. They were Jim, Paula and Meaghen Doss; Wes, JoAnn, Lynette, Michelle, Melissa, and Suzanne Esau; Joe, Letha and Michelle Hebb.

Heinrichses celebrate 50th anniversary

FRESNO, Calif. (Bethany) — Ed and Marie observed their 50th wedding anniversary with a display of flowers in the sanctuary Mar. 27.

Couples attend seminar

DALLAS, Ore. — Eleven couples from the church attended a marriage enrichment seminar led by Walter Friesen Mar. 12-13 and 19-20. The couples talked about the seminar as part of the Mar. 27 evening service.

Seamans are Easter guests

McCLUSKY, N.D. (John's Lake) — Missionaries Maynard and Dorothy Seaman from Nepal were the special guests at the Easter service, which began with a 9 a.m. breakfast. In the evening, they presented a film about their work, after which a surprise fellowship



The Church of the Mennonite Brethren in Bakersfield, Calif., baptized Kathy and Ben Horn, shown above with pastor Loyal Funk (far right), and added them to the membership of the church Mar. 20.



The North Fresno (Calif.) MB Church recently baptized 10 people and added them to the membership of the church. Pictures above are, left to right, front row, Don Warkentine, Cheryl Rayburn, Teresa Martens, Robyn Outfleet, and Doug Outfleet; back row, Steve Lewis, Greg Loewen, Mike and Kathy George, and Stan Hamett.

time was held to observe Dorothy Seaman's birthday.

Churches consider thrift shop

MINOT, N.D. — The Mennonite Brethren churches of the area met Mar. 29 to make plans for starting a Mennonite Central Committee thrift shop in Minot. A good number attended the meeting, reports Mary Lushenko, and a fund to initiate the project was begun.

Member leads income tax seminar

LITTLETON, Colo. (Bellevue Acres) — Vern Classen, a member of the church and an officer at the Internal Revenue Service Appeals Office, led an income tax seminar Fri-

day, Apr. 8. He focused primarily on charitable contributions. . . . The congregation affirmed pastor Leonard Vogt for another three-year term beginning June 1. Vogt has pastored the congregation since September 1974.

Eleven join at Reedley

REEDLEY, Calif. — Eleven people were added to the membership of the church during the Mar. 5 evening service. They were Janelle Boardman, Debbie Enns, Danny and Eloise Enos, Mary Lou Hays, Greg Kusch, Tammy Morrison, Julie Rosenfeld, Mark Schmidt, Carl Spredemann, and Bruce Willems.

Singers perform at pizza restaurant

SAN JOSE, Calif. (Lincon Glen) — The Lincoln Glen Singers performed at a local Pizza & Pipes restaurant Mar. 27. The restaurant management was sponsoring an evening of Christian entertainment.

Henderson moves to fellowship groups

HENDERSON, Neb. — The church's board of deacons has recommended a plan to divide the congregation into fellowship groups for the purpose of fostering closer fellowship among members. The voluntary groups will be made up of three to four family units and will meet monthly in homes for four months, then reorganize into new groups. One Sunday

evening a month will be set aside for the groups, which are not structured necessarily for Bible study and prayer, but for visiting and interaction. . . . Eldon Brown of the "Back to the Bible" radio broadcast, brought the Mar. 27 Sunday morning message.

Burkholder leads Bible conference

HILLSBORO, Kan. (Parkview) — Harold Burkholder, former president of Grace College of the Bible and current pastor of a Mennonite congregation in Elbing, Kan., was the featured speaker at a Bible conference held Mar. 14-16. Burkholder spoke on the theme "The Bible's answers to today's problems." □

Deaths

ENTZ, DAVID, Huron, S.D., was born Nov. 22, 1902 to Jacob and Anna Entz near Bridgewater, S.D., and died Mar. 24 at the age of 80. On Jan. 9, 1926 he was married to Rose Hofer, who survives. He spent much of his working life as a self-employed salesman in Huron until they moved to Mesa, Ariz., in 1971. They returned to Huron in 1978. He was a member of the Bethesda MB Church of Huron, where he was a Sunday school teacher and served on the building committee. In addition to his wife, he is survived by four brothers, Joe and John of Reedley, Calif., Jake of Hillsboro, Kan., and Sam of Germany; two sisters, Mary Glanzer of Reedley, and Rebecca Entz of Huron. He was predeceased by a son, a sister-in-law, and a brother-in-law.

GOERTZEN, AGNES (AGANETHA) B., Henderson, Neb., was born Nov. 14, 1888 to Bernhard and Aganetha Braun Goertzen in Hamilton County, Neb., and died Apr. 6, 1983 at the age of 94. She accepted Jesus as her savior when she was a teenager, was baptized in 1905 and joined the Henderson MB Church, where she remained a faithful member. Predeceased by two brothers and two sisters, she is survived by two sisters, Mary B. Goertzen of Henderson, and Sarah B. Kornelsen of Hillsboro, Kan.; and one brother, Jacob B. Goertzen of Aurora, Neb.

GROENING, FRANK, Hillsboro, Kan., was born Nov. 2, 1897 to Abraham and Aganetha Klaassen Groening near Hillsboro and died Mar. 28, 1983 at the age of 85. He accepted Jesus at a young age, and was baptized and joined the Gnadenu Krimmer Mennonite Brethren Church at the age of 12. He later joined the Hillsboro Mennonite Brethren Church. On Oct. 21, 1920 he was married to Agnes Cornelsen, who died in 1971. Together they farmed for many years in western Marion County, Kan. They lived out their retirement years in Parkside Homes, Hillsboro. He is survived by four sons and their wives, Merlin of Hutchinson, Kan., Marvin of Hillsboro, Harvey of Lawrence, Kan., and Wilfred of

Christ came all the way from heaven for you.

Would you move to Houston for Him?



The Church Extension and Evangelism Commission is looking for a few committed Christians who are willing to relocate and take part in planting new churches. There are opportunities in Houston, Texas; Greeley, Colo.; Aurora, Colo.; and Castle Rock, Colo.

Call or write:

Sid Harms, CEEC Chairman
7819 East 4th St., Tulsa, OK 74112
(918) 838-8835

or

Dan Neufeld, Christian Service Director
39043 Sonora Ct., Fremont, CA 94538
(415) 791-7213

You are cordially invited to join with us in the praise and prayer celebration of 25 years of God's goodness and grace in the life of the Koerner Heights Church of the Mennonite Brethren, Newton, Kan., April 30 and May 1, 1983.

Activities include:

Sunday, May 1

9:30 a.m. — Service of praise and thanksgiving, Newton High School Auditorium (900 West 12th Street)

12:00 noon — Lunch, Newton High School Commons

3:00 p.m. — Musical service of praise and thanksgiving, Newton High School Auditorium

If you cannot attend, please join us in prayer that this might be a time when we truly give the glory to God for his goodness to us since May, 1958.

Detroit, Mich.; one sister, two brothers, 14 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

HEINRICH, SUSANA, Fairview, Okla., was born July 9, 1892 to Peter P. and Maria Bergthold Martens in Marion County, Kan., and died recently at the age of 90. She accepted Jesus as her savior as a young woman and was baptized and joined the Mennonite Brethren church near Fairview in 1910. She remained a faithful member of the church, teaching Sunday school, singing in the choir, and as a member of the Women's Missionary Fellowship. On May 28, 1919 she was married to John Heinrichs, who died in 1970. Predeceased by five brothers, four sisters and two sons, she is survived by one daughter, Laura and husband Lee Martin of Cleveland, Ohio; a daughter-in-law, Alvina Heinrichs of Fairview; five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

KORNELSEN, HENRY A., Reedley, Calif., was born Feb. 27, 1898 to Abraham and Helena Ediger Kornelsen in York County, Neb., and died Mar. 13, 1983 at the age of 85. He accepted Jesus as his savior as a young man, was baptized and joined the Henderson (Neb.) Mennonite Brethren Church. On Oct. 4, 1921 he was married to Florene Wiens, who died in 1980. In 1981 he was married to Tena Goosen Kliever, who survives. In 1930 the family moved to Madrid, Neb., where he farmed. They transferred their membership to the Paxton (Neb.) MB Church, where he faithfully served for many years as a trustee and ordained deacon. They retired and moved their membership to the Reedley MB Church. Surviving also are two daughters, Hulda and husband Will Fannon of San Diego, Calif., and Lillian and husband Lee Harms of Madrid; two sons, Kenneth of Vista, Calif., and Dean and wife Barbara of Denver, Colo.; nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. He was also predeceased by one daughter-in-law, Mary Ann Kornelsen.

KROEKER, JOHN H., Reedley, Calif., was born Feb. 1, 1904 to Gerhard and Margaret Hiebert Kroeker near Enid, Okla., and died Mar. 21, 1983 at the age of 79. He accepted Jesus as his savior as a young man. On Nov. 15, 1925 he was married to Sara Toews, who died in 1979. In December 1979 he was married to Mary Reiswig, who survives. He farmed for many years in the midwest and also near Dinuba, Calif. In 1950 he began a janitorial service which he continued until his retirement at age 65. In addition to his second wife, he is survived by three daughters, Verna Buller of Aurora, Neb., Vera Neufeld of Visalia, Calif., and Verona Harbart of Anacortes, Wash.; one son, Harvey of Fresno, Calif.; one sister, one brother, nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

REIMER, DAVID C., Reedley, Calif., was born Dec. 14, 1902 to Cornelius D. and Katherina Wiens Reimer at Buhler, Kan., and died Mar. 14, 1983 at the age of 80. He was baptized and joined the Mennonite Brethren church in Lodi, Calif. On June 7, 1925 he was married to Esther Seibel, who survives. They farmed together in the Reedley-Dinuba area most of their lives and joined the Reedley MB Church, where he remained a faithful member. In addition to his wife, he is survived by a daughter, Edna and husband Harvey Peters, Fresno, Calif.; a son, Roger Leo and wife Lois Reimer of Dinuba, Calif.; two brothers, one sister, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

RICHERT, MARTHA K., Reedley, Calif., was born Aug. 7, 1894 to Abraham and Helena Berg Kroeker in Weatherford, Okla., and died Mar. 19, 1983 at the age of 88. She accepted Jesus as savior as a teenager and was baptized at Corn, Okla. On June 20, 1915 she was married to John P. Richert, who died in 1970. She enjoyed sewing, particularly for missionary projects. In one summer alone she completed 43 dresses, seven skirts, 35 shirts and blouses, 20 pants for boys, three baby garments and five quilt tops, which she donated to her missionary circle. She is survived by three sons, Leo M. of Lodi, Calif., Talmon W. of Reedley, and Joel H. of Los Altos Hills; three daughters, Viola (Mrs. Harry Fast) of Dinuba, Calif., LaVerne (Mrs. Herb Richert) of Reedley, and Norma (Mrs. Roy Quiring) of Fresno, Calif.; two brothers, one sister, 20 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren. □

Miscellanea... by the Editors

- **JAY NEUFELD**, pastor of the Dinuba (Calif.) Mennonite Brethren Church for the past four years, has resigned his position to accept a call to pastor the Elmwood MB Church in Winnipeg, Man. He begins his new pastorate on Sept. 1.
- **RICHARD NICKEL**, pastor of the South Shafter (Calif.) Mennonite Brethren Church for the past nine years, recently announced his resignation, effective July 1. He has accepted a call to pastor the Bible Fellowship (MB) Church, Rapid City, S.D.
- **TWO CHANGES** have been announced in the ranks of associate pastors. **Jeff Wright**, associate at the Fairlawn MB Church of Topeka, Kan., since graduating from Tabor College in 1981, has resigned his position effective the end of July. Wright will begin studies at the MB Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif., this fall. Meanwhile, **Ron Vogt**, currently a second-year student at the seminary, has accepted a call to become associate pastor of the Kingsburg (Calif.) MB Church. Vogt is a graduate of Tabor College and comes from Fairview, Okla.
- **FRESNO PACIFIC COLLEGE** has become the first school in the history of Harvard University to have two of its graduates accepted into the Divinity School in the same year. Stephen Hanselman of Shafter, Calif., and Daryl Thiesen of San Jose, Calif., both 1983 FPC graduates, have been accepted into the master of divinity program. "No one here has ever heard of this happening," a Harvard admissions representative said. FPC is already known at Harvard, however. This year the student speaker at the Divinity School commencement exercises is Alfonso Saiz, an FPC alumnus who is working on a doctorate in theology at the Divinity School, as well as another doctorate simultaneously at Brandeis University.
- **AUSTRALIAN MENNONITE** pastor Foppe Brouwer reports a historic event in the life of the Australian Conference of Evangelical Mennonites — the continent's first Mennonite baptism. Gordon Peden, former brawler and vagabond, came to know Christ at a Luis Palau crusade and became involved with the First Mennonite Church of Hope in Fennel Bay, Australia. He was baptized in a lake near the Brouwer home.
- **"DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?"** will be the theme of *Festival Quarterly* magazine's fifth annual photo contest, the winners of which will be featured in the summer 1983 issue. Entries must be black and white photos, and should include the name, address and telephone number of the photographer, the type of film and camera used, photo title and a self-addressed stamped envelope for return. The following cash prizes will be awarded the winners: First choice — \$100; second choice — \$75; third choice — \$50; and honorable mention — \$25 each. Submissions must be made by May 31, 1983 to *Festival Quarterly* Photo Contest, 2497 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, PA 17602.
- **THE GOSPEL HERALD**, the official publication of the Mennonite Church, observed its 75th anniversary with its Apr. 5 issue. The magazine was founded on Apr. 4, 1908 as a merger of the *Gospel Witness* and the *Herald of Truth*. With its anniversary issue, the *Gospel Herald* took on a facelift of sorts too with a new typeface and overall design change. Daniel Kauffman was the *Gospel Herald* editor for its first 35 years. Since 1943, Paul Erb, John Drescher and currently Daniel Hertzler have served as editor.
- **NO WE'RE NOT LATE**, although it has been three weeks since we last published the *Christian Leader* instead of our usual two-week interval. Because of a shortfall in U.S. Conference giving, we have with this issue begun to further reduce our publishing schedule through the remainder of our conference fiscal year. At the joint boards meeting held last month (see report, pages 18-20), all boards were instructed by the Board of Church Ministries to operate at 80 percent of the budgets approved at the Deer Creek meetings in March 1982. For us, that means dropping two issues of the magazine by the end of June. To do that and still maintain as consistent a news flow as possible, we will be publishing every three weeks until June, when we will begin our usual once-a-month summertime schedule. The forthcoming issues of the *Leader* will be dated as follows: May 17, June 7, July 12, Aug. 16 and Sept. 7. We will resume our normal biweekly schedule beginning with the Sept. 7 issue. Copy intended for publication in specific issues should be received in our office no later than 18 days prior to the publication date.

Editorial Opinion

MENN RUNDSCHAU
159 HENDERSON HWY
WINNIPEG MB R2L 1L4

Nurturing the fruit of Estes

THEY CAME committed . . . they left committed.

It took commitment for the 1,035 people who came to Estes '83, the national Mennonite Brethren youth convention (see report on page 10). From the LAMB Conference and California, they drove in vans for 36 hours. They came from the Central District in five chartered buses. They flew from the west coast and the east coast. From the Southern District they came in cars, vans and buses, braving blowing snow and slick roads. Some were delayed for hours, even overnight, in Goodland, Kan., and Limon, Colo. Some searched out alternate routes. But they came because they were committed to be at Estes '83.

For months these young people and sponsors had worked — selling baked goods, washing cars, chopping wood, serving dinners, doing odd jobs and anything else that would get them up the mountain. They worked and they prayed.

Young people, sponsors, planning committees, parents and churches all prayed that God would meet us on the mountain. Those prayers were answered. God did meet us at Estes Park.

Dozens of young people committed their lives to God at Estes '83. Some commitments were to live more fully for Christ each day. Numerous youth committed their lives to Christ for full-time Christian ministry.

They came committed to Estes '83. They left more committed to Christ. Their lives will not be the same.

Or so we say. But will that really happen? Will there really be a long-term difference? The answer to those questions does not rest so much with the youth. They have made their commitment. The answer rests with the parents and the home churches.

The same people who provided so much encouragement and funds for Estes now have the opportunity to nurture these youth in their commitment and free them for ministry.

What will happen when a son or daughter comes home and says, "I've dedicated my life to God for ministry outside of the United States"? Will the parents free that son or daughter for ministry? Will they release their own flesh and blood?

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What will happen when a group of high schoolers come to the church council or pastor and say, "We want to serve. What can we do?" Will the church find opportunities to minister — both inside and outside of the church? Will we allow these youth to test their gifts for ministry in Sunday school, rest homes, Sunday morning worship?

What will we say when our youth return home and challenge our thinking on various issues with new insights? Will we search the Scriptures with them for answers?

Your daughters and sons, your granddaughters and grandsons, the young people in your church came down the mountain different than they went up. Their faith was challenged. Their commitment was stretched. Let's continue to encourage more stretching of commitment as we release this most precious resource for ministry. — *Dennis Becker*

Dennis Becker, Fresno, Calif., served as coordinator of Estes '83.

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the Christian Leader

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WALLY KROEKER / Editor
DON RATZLAFF / Managing Editor

MEMBER **epa** EVANGELICAL PRESS ASSOCIATION

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