

THE CHRISTIAN Leader

A PUBLICATION OF THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MENNONITE BROTHERS CHURCHES

JUNE 18, 1991

FAITH MATTERS

Results of
our Estes '91
youth survey



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BUILDING
ON THE
ROCK

Having been a counselor at a number of camps, an organizer of several junior high retreats, and a reporter at the last four national Mennonite Brethren youth conventions, I wasn't surprised by the response of our Estes '91 youth when they were asked to identify the time they felt closest to God. By far the most frequent answer was when they were at a camp, retreat or youth convention (page 10).

Something special happens when adolescents are shepherded into one place for several days to talk about and experience spirituality. I've witnessed it many times. Call it "hormone-ic convergence" if you will, but God seems to delight in doing his work in this kind of setting.

Skeptics say that too often these events exploit the emotions of young people, that "mountaintop experiences" don't make a lasting difference in young lives. But I say that adolescence is the domain of emotions. The intellect is not unengaged, only underpowered in comparison. Within reason, an occasional emotional boost may be the best thing we can provide for our kids during the roller coaster transition from childhood to adulthood.

For all my involvement in staffing and planning such events, I only attended two camps as a participant. Both were important events in my spiritual development.

I was in junior high when I first went to camp. That was a long time ago, but I still remember the name of the place (Camp Roman Nose), the speaker (Johnny Nance), and my counselor (Butch Gerbrandt). But what I remember most is the lesson I learned there: profound humility. One of the girls' cabins challenged ours to a softball game. We boys jumped at the chance to demonstrate our physical prowess. In a magnanimous gesture of gentility, we even offered to bat off-handed so as not to make a rout of it.

We were set up, of course. One of those frail little girls was a fast-pitch phenom named Mary Siebert. She struck out our whole lineup. Several times. As I remember it, the girls were hardly mag-

nanimous in victory.

Then, when I was a high school sophomore, I was part of an experiment in our district called travel camp. This space is too limited to relate all that happened to me in those days. Suffice it to say that as we traveled from place to place having good times and presenting programs, I was transformed from a shy and sincere church boy into someone who had tasted the intoxicating presence of Christ and discovered the

joy of serving others in his name. I trace my ongoing commitment to church service back to those four days in a Winfield bus.

Camps, retreats and youth conventions are costly extravagances we provide for our youth each year. And they're well worth it.

DR

THE CHRISTIAN Leader

18 JUNE 1991
Vol. 54, No. 11

FEATURES

4 Faith matters: Our high school youth tell it like it is

From spirituality to sexuality, more than 700 Estes '91 participants share their opinions about the challenge to be faithful Christians in this day and age.



DEPARTMENTS

Sidetract	2
Overseas	12
Education	14
Viewpoint	15
He taught others to walk	
Bible	16
Mark, last in a series	
Church and conference	18
Report on domestic violence	
Miscellanea	27
Editorial	28

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THE CHRISTIAN LEADER (ISSN 0009-5149), organ of the United States Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, is published biweekly except for the first issue of January, June, July and August by the U.S. Mennonite Brethren Board of Communications, 135 North Main Street, Hillsboro, Kansas, Phone: (316) 947-5543. Printed by Multi Business Press, Hillsboro, Kansas. The views expressed within the magazine do not necessarily represent the position or the endorsement of the Board of Communications or the Mennonite Brethren Church. All copy may be edited, condensed or refused for publication; anonymous contributions will not be published. Second class postage paid at Hillsboro, Kansas. All correspondence should be addressed to Christian Leader, Box L, Hillsboro, Kansas 67063. Member of the Evangelical Press Association. **SUBSCRIPTION PRICES:** \$19 per year (\$23 in Canada), \$33 for two years, \$45 for three years, \$1.00 per copy. **ADDRESS CHANGES** should be sent to Circulation Secretary, Box L, Hillsboro, Kansas, 67063. Give both the old and new address. Allow up to six weeks for transition. **POSTMASTER:** Send Form 3579 to Christian Leader, Hillsboro, Kansas 67063.

COVER: Staff design; photos by Orley Friesen and Skjold Photographs.

FAITH MATTERS

Our high school
youth tell it
like it is

The struggle of Mennonite Brethren youth to live out their Christian faith amid the pressures of secular society is not just a current phenomenon. It is, however, new to those who experience it. *The Christian Leader*, eager to find out what this generation of Mennonite Brethren youth in the United States has to say about Christianity and contemporary issues, recently surveyed several hundred high school youth.

The survey, taken two months ago during our national quadrennial youth convention in Estes Park, Colo., revealed some data worth noting. Among other things, our youth are highly committed to the essentials of the Christian faith. Of those responding, 99 percent said they believed in God, 98 percent said they believed in Jesus as savior, and 97 indicated they believed in the Holy Spirit. Interest in spiritual growth, expressed in Bible reading, prayer and church involvement, is high (more than three out of four affirmed the importance of these things in their lives).

In addition, an eye-catching 93 percent said they were "proud to be Christians" and 75 percent said they were "proud to be Mennonite Brethren" (as opposed to 2 percent who said they weren't!). While these and other figures represent strong Christian commitment, such responses should be looked at in the context of developmental realities. In other words, young people need to belong to a peer group that supports their own beliefs.

We don't pretend that our survey was scientific. Readers should keep in mind that the results are slanted toward

youth who, for the most part, are active in their local churches and are willing and able to participate in an event like Estes '91. Also, the survey was administered during a general session of the convention, so respondents did not have the luxury of complete privacy as they responded to the questions.

We are indebted to *The American Baptist* magazine for the survey instrument, a form of which they used among their own youth in 1989. We adapted their survey to get the opinions of our young people regarding contemporary issues in society (such as abortion) and the Mennonite Brethren Church (such as women in ministry, baptism and communion, and peace), as well as their personal experience in three areas of negative peer pressure (alcohol, illegal drugs and premarital sex).

Of the 849 high school youth who attended Estes '91, 767 filled out and returned the survey. As you read through the results, the percentage of all respondents appears on



FAITH MATTERS

the left-hand side; in parentheses is the percentage breakdown of *females* (in italics) and **males** (in bold). In most instances, the percentages are remarkably similar; variances on certain issues raise some interesting questions for you to consider. Except in a few instances where the response was one half or less than 1 percent, the totals were rounded to the nearest percentage point.

In addition to the 35 questions listed below, our youth were asked to respond to six open-ended questions. We tallied their most common responses and are passing on some representative comments, both positive and negative.

We commend these survey results and comments for your study and stimulation. We encourage parents, young people and youth leaders to use the results as a conversation starter for mutual insight and growth.

WHO ARE YOU? (Respondents were asked to check the *one* answer which was most true for them).

1. I live in the following district:
 - 20% Central (IL, MN, MT, NE, ND, SD)
 - 3% Latin America (South TX)
 - 1% North Carolina (NC)
 - 27% Pacific (AZ, CA, OR, WA)
 - 48% Southern (AR, CO, KS, OK)
 - 1% None of the above
2. I am:
 - 51% *female*
 - 49% **male**
3. My high school class is:
 - 28% freshman (31, 26)
 - 28% sophomore (28, 29)
 - 23% junior (22, 24)
 - 20% senior (19, 23)
4. I have been a Christian:
 - 2% less than a year (1, 2)
 - 5% 1 to 3 years (5, 5)
 - 10% 3 to 5 years (8, 12)
 - 35% 5 to 10 years (35, 36)
 - 45% more than 10 years (48, 44)
 - 2% I am not a Christian (2, 1)
5. I go to Sunday morning services
 - 60% every Sunday (64, 58)
 - 33% almost every Sunday (32, 35)
 - 2% at least once a month (2, 2)
 - 2% a few times a year (1, 2)
 - 2% hardly ever (2, 2)

6. If my parents didn't pressure me, I would go to Sunday services
 - 30% every Sunday (34, 26)
 - 48% almost every Sunday (45, 51)
 - 6% at least once a month (5, 8)
 - 2% a few times a year (2, 1)
 - 1% hardly ever (0.5, 2)
 - 15% my parents don't pressure me (15, 16)
7. Not counting saying grace at meals, I pray
 - 55% every day (61, 49)
 - 32% several times during the week (29, 36)
 - 9% only in Sunday school, church or youth group (9, 9)
 - 4% hardly ever (3, 6)
8. I read the Bible
 - 16% every day (18, 14)
 - 33% several times during the week (32, 34)
 - 41% only in Sunday school, church or youth group (42, 41)
 - 11% hardly ever (9, 12)
9. Aside from church, my family has a devotional time
 - 14% daily (12, 16)
 - 15% a few times a week (16, 14)
 - 11% a few times a year (11, 12)
 - 25% hardly ever (24, 26)
 - 35% never (37, 33)

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION? (Respondents were asked to check the *one* answer that was most true for them.)

10. Going to church on Sundays helps me to be a better Christian during the week.
 - 70% Agree (70, 72)
 - 6% Disagree (5, 6)
 - 22% Unsure (23, 21)
11. My church understands youth and issues that are important to youth.
 - 64% Agree (64, 65)
 - 13% Disagree (14, 13)
 - 23% Unsure (23, 23)
12. I feel accepted, needed and cared for by my church family.
 - 80% Agree (79, 83)
 - 6% Disagree (7, 6)
 - 14% Unsure (15, 12)

- 13.** I'm proud to be a Christian
 93% Agree (94, 93)
 0.4% Disagree (0, 1)
 4% Unsure (2, 5)
 2% I am not a Christian (2, 1)
- 14.** I'm proud to be a Mennonite Brethren
 75% Agree (80, 73)
 2% Disagree (2, 3)
 12% Unsure (10, 14)
 10% I am not a Mennonite Brethren (9, 10)
- 15.** The one person who has *most* influenced my faith is
 20% my mother (21, 20)
 13% my father (11, 16)
 5% another relative (5, 5)
 2% my pastor (1, 3)
 18% my youth group (and/or youth pastor) (17, 19)
 13% a friend (17, 10)
 35% no one particular person (36, 33)
- 16.** I am open to being a pastor if I sense God is calling me to it
 36% Agree (31, 40)
 16% Disagree (21, 11)
 48% Unsure (49, 48)
- 17.** I would not date someone who isn't a Christian
 25% Agree (26, 25)
 39% Disagree (37, 42)
 35% Unsure (37, 34)
- 18.** I would not marry someone who isn't a Christian
 67% Agree (75, 60)
 15% Disagree (13, 18)
 18% Unsure (15, 22)
- 19.** If I have children, I will
 92% try to raise them to become Christians (95, 90)
 6% make sure they attend church (4, 8)
 2% not do anything to influence their faith (2, 2)
- 20.** I'll probably go to church more often when I have kids
 45% Agree (43, 48)
 20% Disagree (21, 19)
 33% Unsure (34, 33)
- 21.** Which *one* of the following best expresses your opinion?
 57% My faith is more important to me now than ever (62, 52)



SEJOLD PHOTOGRAPHS

- 30% My faith will mean more to me when I'm older (25, 35)
 2% My faith meant more to me when I was a child (3, 2)
 0.7% Religion has never meant much to me and probably never will (1, 0.5)
 10% I'm not sure how I feel about faith and religion (10, 10)
- 22.** When I'm confused about relationships, my faith helps me decide how to act
 68% Agree (73, 64)
 5% Disagree (4, 6)
 27% Unsure (23, 32)
- 23.** It is appropriate to baptize people
 4% as infants (4, 3)
 72% after they become Christians (71, 73)
 20% whenever they want to be (20, 21)
 5% unsure (6, 4)
- 24.** It is appropriate for people to participate in the Lord's Supper
 6% whenever they want to (4, 7)
 57% any time after accepting Jesus as Savior (60, 54)
 25% after they have been baptized as believers and become church members (24, 28)
 13% unsure (13, 13)

FAITH MATTERS

25. If I died tomorrow, I believe I'd go to heaven

- 87% Agree (88, 86)
- 2% Disagree (2, 2)
- 11% Unsure (11, 12)

(Respondents were asked to check *all* responses with which they agreed.)

26. I believe in

- 99% God (99, 99)
- 98% Jesus as my savior (98, 98)
- 97% the Holy Spirit (97, 97)
- 98% heaven (98, 98)
- 91% hell (91, 92)
- 96% angels (96, 96)
- 91% the devil (91, 92)
- 85% the second coming of Christ (94, 76)

27. I believe God

- 98% loves me no matter what I do (99, 98)
- 5% loves me only when I am good (4, 6)
- 82% will someday punish those who reject him (80, 84)



ALAN CLIBURN

- 81% is in control of national and world situations (83, 80)
- 7% set the world into motion but is uninvolved in it today (4, 9)
- 93% knows and understands what I'm going through (95, 91)
- 2% is unfair to ask us to obey his will (0.5, 3)

28. The following are important in my life

- 88% praying (91, 85)
- 89% going to church (91, 87)
- 78% reading the Bible (82, 74)
- 77% going to Sunday school (81, 74)
- 82% going to Sunday worship (83, 81)
- 67% being a member of my church (69, 64)
- 73% taking the Lord's Supper (73, 73)
- 89% helping others in need (94, 85)
- 75% sharing my faith with others (78, 72)
- 88% participating in youth group activities (89, 87)

29. Based on my understanding of Scripture, I believe women are free to do the following in church:

- 90% teach children in Sunday school and midweek programs (91, 90)
- 77% teach adult men and women in Sunday school and midweek programs (79, 75)
- 63% serve as elders/council members (64, 62)
- 54% serve as deacons (52, 58)
- 49% preach a Sunday morning sermon (47, 51)
- 48% be assistant pastors (47, 51)
- 40% be senior pastors (39, 43)
- 30% I don't know what the Bible says about this subject (25, 35)

30. I believe the following:

- 75% it's OK for Christians to participate in social dancing (73, 78)
- 18% it's OK for Christians to smoke (17, 20)
- 37% it's OK for Christians to drink alcohol moderately (36, 38)
- 2% it's OK for a Christian to become drunk (1, 3)
- 2% it's OK for Christians to use illegal drugs (0.5, 3)
- 90% sexual intercourse belongs only in marriage (90, 89)
- 84% homosexual activity is a sin (84, 83)
- 97% all persons, regardless of color, are equal in God's eyes (98, 96)
- 30% the development and use of nuclear weapons is a sin (33, 27)

73% Christians have an obligation to care for the poor (83, 63)

81% Christians have an obligation to care for the earth (81, 82)

31. I believe abortion is

51% wrong under any circumstance (52, 49)

47% OK if the pregnancy endangers the mother's life (46, 49)

39% OK in cases of rape or incest (37, 42)

15% OK if early tests indicate the fetus is "abnormal" (14, 16)

2% OK if the pregnancy interferes with the mother's personal, educational or career plans (1, 3)

4% OK if the father refuses to take personal and financial responsibility for the expected child (2, 5)

2% OK as a method of birth control (1, 3)

32. As a Christian, I could in good conscience participate in the armed services of our country

45% for career/personal training during peacetime (41, 48)

46% if I could choose an assignment that did not include personally using weapons (like medical corps) (46, 46)

31% to fight whenever our country is at war (21, 42)

45% to fight if our country were attacked by an enemy nation (31, 59)

14% under no circumstances; it is not God's will (16, 12)

WHAT IS YOUR REALITY? (Respondents were asked to check the answers which best represented their experience)

33. My experience with beverage alcohol is:

46% I've never used it (48, 43)

33% I've tried it, but don't use it now (28, 38)

9% I use it, but less than once a month and in moderation (11, 7)

4% I use it more than once a month and in moderation (5, 4)

8% I have been drunk before, but won't anymore (9, 7)

6% I become drunk occasionally (6, 7)

2% I have wondered whether I am an alcoholic (1, 2)

34. My experience with illegal drug use is:

92% I've never used any (94, 90)

5% I've tried it, but don't use any now (5, 6)

0.5% I use illegal drugs, but less than once a month (0, 1)

1% I use illegal drugs more than once a month (0.5, 1)

0.1% I have wondered whether I am addicted to illegal drugs (0.3, 0)

1% I have sold or given illegal drugs to others (0.3, 2)

35. My experience with premarital sexual intercourse is:

88% I have never done it (87, 89)

5% I have done it in the past, but won't again until marriage (5, 4)

4% I have done it several times with one partner (4, 5)

3% I have had several partners (2, 3)

0.5% I have had a "sexual experience" with someone of the same gender (1, 0.3)

1% GIRLS: I have become pregnant

0% GIRLS: I have had an abortion

1% BOYS: I have made a girl pregnant

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY? (Respondents were asked to complete the following sentences. We tallied the most frequent responses, which are followed by representative comments.)

The thing I like best about my church is...

- Close, caring, supportive, understanding atmosphere (323)
- Youth group activities, youth leaders (223)
- Pastor, church leaders (35)
- Biblical teaching (28)
- Being with Christian friends (27)
- Small size of congregation (22)
- Music and worship (22)
- Everyone is accepted and welcomed (11)
- Sunday school and teachers (8)
- Church facilities (5)

"You can feel comfortable and not have to put up any false fronts." — *Rachelle Detweiler, Newton, Kan.*

"The church helps the youth group go to retreats like Estes. The people buy things for the fund-raisers." — *Craig Quiring, Henderson, Neb.*

FAITH MATTERS



ALAN CLIBURN

"I can go to the people in my church with a problem and they will help me." — *Brian Isbell, Lenoir, N.C.*

"I learn from the sermons and the love our pastor feels toward us." — *Amy Bloemhof, Shafter, Calif.*

"You know you have friends, and there are people who care about you all week, not just on Sunday." — *Amy Tubbs, Bakersfield, Calif.*

"I enjoy the way my church worships. People in my church are not afraid to say 'Amen' or 'Hallelujah' when they feel the Spirit. I enjoy the way my preacher actually preaches the Word. He doesn't just report the words written in the Bible." — *Brandy McQueen, Boone, N.C.*

"I like Sunday school. We have an awesome teacher." — *Shelley Bartell, Ferndale, Wash.*

If I could change one thing about my church, it would be...

- More excitement, expression, contemporary music in worship (78)
- Eliminate fighting, judgmental attitudes; more forgiveness and unity (56)

- Size and activities of youth group (39)
- Pastor/youth leader, other leaders in church (23)
- Eliminate hypocrisy (22)
- More open-mindedness toward change (22)
- Make sermons shorter and more interesting (20)
- Wouldn't change anything (20)
- Increase size of church (17)
- Approval of dancing (14)
- The way women and youth are treated in the church (14)
- Eliminate gossiping (14)
- Add new or improve church facilities (13)

"I would like more interaction between the youth and the older members of the church. Both groups are willing and vibrant, but they are never placed together." — *Wendy Drummond, Bakersfield, Calif.*

"I would like the people of my church to think it is OK to dance. It is not the dancing, anyway, it is the way you dance. I can understand why some dancing is not acceptable." — *Cheryl Hadley, Buhler, Kan.*

"I would change the carpet. That is the only thing I can think of that I'd change." — *Sheri Weaver, Littleton, Colo.*

"I would like to see women have more rights and individuality in the body of the church." — *Jessie Coopriider, Inman, Kan.*

"I would get rid of cliques in the church." — *Robert Stoltenberg, Morgan Hill, Calif.*

"I would like more songs for the youth during or before the church service. When you really get into the songs and enjoy it, you are more prepared for the sermon." — *Karri Unrau, Lustre, Mont.*

"I would like more open sharing." — *Julie Peters, Fresno, Calif.*

"I would like my church to be less segregated by race, as well as young and old, rich and poor." — *Darin Jensen, Weatherford, Okla.*

"I would like to change some attitudes about worship and traditions. These things really have no biblical foundation." — *Matt Poppen, Bakersfield, Calif.*

"I would like fewer cliques. I would like to see my church welcome visitors warmly and have everyone feel like they belong." — *Sara Chambless, Bakersfield, Calif.*

The best thing about being a Christian is...

- Heaven, eternal life, salvation (239)
- Having a personal relationship with God (74)
- God's love, presence, care, protection (168)
- Christians friends, fellowship (62)
- God's help with problems, strength for living (46)
- Knowing and loving God/Jesus (39)
- Witnessing, sharing Christ with others (24)
- God's control, security and hope for the future (23)
- Forgiveness, freedom from guilt (16)
- Inner peace (14)
- Feelings of happiness, joy, Christian "high" (10)

"The feeling of being high on Christ." — *Querubin Guerra III, Garciasville, Tex.*

"Living an exciting life with the Lord and seeing other people become Christians." — *Laura Nachtigall, Fresno, Calif.*

"I can feel so clean without any regrets." — *Pauline Wirshe, La Joya, Tex.*

"I love the feeling God gives me. He has filled my life and helped me forgive and start over with many people." — *Denise Byeman, Bellingham, Wash.*

"I know God is always there for me no matter what happens. I can talk to him. I know where I am going when I die." — *Tracy Traluck, Owasso, Okla.*

"I have a definite purpose for my life. Everything I do has a point. Even when I am confused about things, there are things that don't change. I don't have to be confused about why I'm here, because God has given me a purpose." — *Sarah Flaming, Newton, Kan.*

If I were asked to give a sermon in my church next Sunday, I would want to talk about...

- Youth and the pressures they face (57)
- Second coming, end times (37)
- Loving, accepting, encouraging others (32)
- Witnessing, evangelism (31)
- True Christian lifestyle, commitment (30)
- Drugs, alcohol, sex (16)
- God's love and plan for us (16)

- War, peace, military service, patriotism (16)
- My Estes '91 experience (15)
- What God, Jesus have done for us (13)
- Making the Christian life vibrant, exciting (12)
- How God has been at work in my life (11)
- Friends, friendship (11)
- Equality, prejudice (10)

"God has commanded us to love our neighbor, friends, and even total strangers." — *Patrick Steelman, Corn, Okla.*

"Missions is the most important aspect of Christianity. As long as we are in the world, we have the responsibility to get the word out. Learning how to be better Christians is important, but I think saving a soul is infinitely more valuable." — *Scott Hardaway, Hillsboro, Kan.*

"I would speak about the unimportance of money." — *Jeffrey Vogt, Fresno, Calif.*

"Don't provoke your children to wrath." — *Tom Lovaro, Buhler, Kan.*



ROBERT MAUST

FAITH MATTERS

"It is hard to grow up and be a Christian teenager in a secular high school in the '90s." — *Dionne Seibel, Littleton, Colo.*

"It is important to live for God now!" — *Heath Klassen, Bingham Lake, Minn.*

"Tell people how to witness to an unbeliever or a person of a different religion." — *Jennie Warkentin, San Jose, Calif.*

"Temptation and how it can affect your life." — *Jenny Keaton, Ulysses, Kan.*

"I would encourage Christians to allow God to shine through our faces. The Christian faith is wonderful, exciting, and not boring." — *Rachel Clark, Hillsboro, Kan.*

"Good Christian friends are important." — *Melissa Boone, Clinton, Okla.*

"Teach Christians to love others. Many of us are so critical of each other, and that makes us hypocrites." — *Beth Vogt, Fresno, Calif.*

The time I felt closest to God was when...

- Attending youth camp, conference or retreat (137)
- When I became a Christian (61)
- Death or illness of friend or family member (48)
- While praying, reading the Word, worshiping (52)
- Amid personal and family problems (38)
- Missions trip, service opportunities (28)
- When I was baptized (22)
- Amid personal injury, illness, brush with death (21)
- Enjoying creation, nature (18)
- When I recommitted my life to God (15)
- At church or a church event (12)
- Sharing faith with others, seeing people come to Christ (10)
- While lonely, depressed, emotional low (11)
- After an obvious answer to prayer (9)

"When I pray with my family." — *Luke Simonich, Denver, Colo.*

"When I was going through my hardest time." — *Daniel Kerr, Weatherford, Okla.*

"When I was leading a friend to Christ." — *Matt Gallagher, Inman, Kan.*

"I felt close to God during the recent Gulf War crisis." — *Christy Burma, Wessington Springs, S.D.*

"Each time I pitch in a baseball game, I feel close to God." — *Jonathan Faber, Olathe, Kan.*

"When I helped a person accept the Lord Jesus as savior." — *Ginger Ohnick, Garden City, Kan.*

"When I am outdoors, close to nature." — *Brenda Jantz, Wichita, Kan.*

"When I was told I had a brain tumor." — *Kristie Santos, Ferndale, Wash.*

"When my best friend accepted Jesus." — *Tony Flores, Grulla, Tex.*

"I feel closest to God when I am in bed at night, afraid of Satan. I pray to God and feel his presence next to me, protecting me." — *Christa Ortman, Overland Park, Kan.*

"When my family had an accident. God really helped us and gave us strength to deal with it." — *Diana Saenz, Grulla, Tex.*

"I had several problems at once and I did not know how to cope. I talked and listened to God. He helped me out. The



ALAN CLIBURN

situation didn't come out perfectly, but I know that I wouldn't have made it without God's help." — *Kim Overton, San Jose, Calif.*

As I look to the future, the thing I fear most is . . .

- Not finding or having a successful career/life (68)
- Backsliding, falling away from God, peer pressure (64)
- The future generally, growing up, pressures of adulthood (63)
- Dying (56)
- Friends, family members or others dying without Christ (53)
- Second coming (too soon), tribulation, Armageddon (34)
- War (33)
- Moral deterioration of world, country, society, church (30)
- Finding (right) mate, marriage (22)
- Finding or messing up God's will for my life (19)
- College (funding, choice) (18)
- Environmental crises (16)
- Failing as a parent, children who reject Christ (13)

"The changing of the world for the worst." — *Jason Martens, Fairview, Okla.*

"As long as I stay with God, I have nothing to fear." — *Nathanael Fast, Fresno, Calif.*

"I fear nuclear war." — *Chris Sperling, Bridgewater, S.D.*

"I am concerned about raising my children to become good Christians." — *Donnovan Karber, Ulysses, Kan.*

"I am worried about my financial future." — *Scott Perkins, Cimmarron, Kan.*

"I am concerned about doing what God wants me to do. What if I don't like his idea?" — *Lisa Friesen, Wichita, Kan.*

"I am worried about our country and the corrupted people in it." — *Emily Walton, Wichita, Kan.*

"I am concerned about my future job and finding the man God wants me to marry." — *Jenny Nachtigall, Fresno, Calif.*

"I fear the death of the church, due to old beliefs and tedious customs." — *Dan Suderman, Hillsboro, Kan.*



ALAN CLIBURN

"I am concerned about facing the big world on my own and setting my own guidelines instead of having parents set them for me." — *Keith Machette, Rapid City, S.D.*

"I fear that the next generation of youth will lose interest in Christianity." — *Kristin King, Olathe, Kan.*

"I am worried that my children will not want to become Christians." — *Nora Martinez, Mission, Tex.*

"I am afraid a big war may begin." — *Angie Reddig, Lustre, Mont.*

"I fear raising my children in the kind of world we have. I think the world is becoming more sinful. People are accepting this as OK" — *Krista Martens, Fairview, Okla.*

"I worry about what will happen to my non-Christian friends if they were to die tomorrow." — *Shauna Gross, Huron, S.D.*

"I am concerned about finding a good husband, a man with whom I can really share all of my life." — *Kaila Warner, Denver, Colo.*

"I fear failing God and failing my dreams. I may not be able to hear what God wants me to do." — *Heather Brandt, Reedley, Calif.*

"I am concerned about the world's view of Christians. People despise Christians now, who knows what life will be like in 10 years." — *Carolyn Doerksen, Reedley, Calif.* ■

THAILAND, LITHUANIA, VENEZUELA

MBM/S board accepts new projects

The Board of MB Missions/Services accepted a series of new projects at its semi-annual meeting in Winnipeg, Man., April 28 – May 1. Approval was given to a new venture in Thailand; cooperation in a project in Lithuania; and participation in a church-planting initiative in Venezuela.

In Thailand, MBM/S will initiate a three-year ministry project in Bangkok. An opening was approved to place workers who will have a ministry among Bangkok's university students. At the same time they will develop a network with other agencies working in Bangkok, and facilitate contact between North American Khmu Christians and Khmu churches in northern Thailand. Since Bangkok serves as a doorway to much of southeast Asia, the three-year project will also give MBM/S an opportunity to explore long-term ministry opportunities

in the region.

The board also expressed support for the new efforts which several Mennonite Brethren have made in Lithuania. Evangelistic projects have resulted in a number of new Christians; at the same time, a receptive group of Lithuanian officials has allowed the formation of a new Christian college. MBM/S will be a partner in the movement of Mennonite Brethren work in Lithuania, with the possibility of a Mennonite Brethren church eventually forming there.

In Venezuela, several Mennonite Brethren churches have been started through the initiative of individual Mennonite Brethren congregations in North America (see accompanying article). The board agreed that MBM/S will cooperate with these existing churches in further evangelism among the Chinese and Spanish-speaking people.

In response to requests, MBM/S will assume administrative support for the work effective June 1. An advisory committee will be formed to help shape the relationship between MBM/S, the supporting churches in North America, and the emerging churches in Venezuela. The board acknowledged with gratitude the work and support of the parent churches in these efforts.

Several personnel appointments were approved by the board. Chris and Patty Hyslop and Lori Kliever were approved as Good News Interns. Miller and Isabella Zhuang were approved as missionaries for Venezuela. The board approved other workers, but they must be ratified by partner agencies before they become official. All appointments require successful completion of the Mission Training Institute before final confirmation is given to the assignment.

Local initiatives result in new churches in Venezuela

Four Mennonite Brethren congregations have developed through church-planting efforts in Venezuela. Two of the groups are Spanish-speaking, two Chinese.

The first of the Spanish churches was formally organized in May 1990 with 10 members. The second became Mennonite Brethren on January 28, 1991. The first of the Chinese congregations was founded in Puerto la Cruz on Mar. 10, 1991 with 19 members. A second Chinese group is emerging in Caracas.

The new churches grew out of initiatives by local congregations in the United States and Canada. The Chinese work was started when the Pacific Grace Chinese Church in Vancouver discovered that a Chinese congregation in Venezuela needed leadership. Miller and Isabella Zhuang were commissioned by Pacific Grace as missionaries to pastor the congregation in mid-1989.

The Zhuangs also worked hard to pursue contacts in other Chinese centers, and soon made contact with a small group

of Christians in Puerto la Cruz. This group grew until it decided to officially become The Cross Mennonite Brethren Church with more than 40 attenders.

When the original congregation in Caracas decided that it would prefer to remain independent rather than join the Mennonite Brethren, the Zhuangs resigned from the pastorate. Since then they have continued outreach work in Caracas, forming a new Chinese fellowship group.

The Spanish work started when Emilio and Vilma Zabala returned to Maracaibo, Venezuela, from California to wait for their immigration visas to be processed. Emilio had pastored Iglesia Hermanos Menonitas while they were in Parlier, Calif., and soon began outreach efforts in Maracaibo.

Later the Zabalas made contact with a small congregation in the nearby city of Cabimas. The group, led by pastor Alfredo Sandoval, had no formal affiliation, and expressed an interest in becoming Mennonite Brethren. Emilio

Zabala continued to work with the group, and Vilma Zabal used her expertise as a lawyer to acquire an official Mennonite Brethren charter. This gave official status to the group in Maracaibo, and the other churches were added to the charter later.

On Jan. 28, 12 new members were baptized into the new El Shaddai Mennonite Brethren Church of Cabimas. After the baptism, church leaders met with MBM/S board member Nick Dyck and Latin America secretary Harold Ens. They formally requested to identify with the international Mennonite Brethren Church, outlined plans for further outreach, and asked MBM/S to join as partners in the project.

On May 1 the board of MB Missions/Services met and agreed to work as partners in both of these church-planting projects. An advisory committee will be formed to help shape the relationship between MBM/S, the supporting churches in North America, and the emerging churches in Venezuela. — Don Loewen

The board also accepted the resignations and retirement of several current workers. Paul and Cathy Bottom (Kajiji, Zaire, six years), Al and Sue Enns (Asbach-Germischied, Germany, three years), Peter and Maria Friesen (Traunreut, Germany, three years), Betty Funk (Kinshasa, Zaire, 20 years), Joyce Martens (Kajiji, Zaire, eight years), Louise Oppel (Kinshasa, Zaire, 10 years), Alden and Katrina Poetker (Sao Paulo, Brazil, three years) will conclude their work with MBM/S when their current terms expire. The retirements of Helen Toews (Kajiji, Zaire, effective Oct. 15 after 33 years), and Joe and Jan Walter (Guadalajara, Mexico, effective January 1992 after 32 years) were also accepted. The board expressed its appreciation for the contributions of these workers.

Also concluding their terms this summer are short-term workers David and Olga Ediger (Sullana, Peru) and Fred and Esther Leonard (Bogota, Colombia).

The board approved a 1991-92 budget of \$5,702,000. Board members noted that projected income following present patterns would not be adequate to meet the '91-92 budget. This reflects a dropoff in giving in the past several months. The board instructed staff to inform churches about the potential shortfall, and to limit projected spending according to actual income.

In other matters, the board:

- approved the timetable of the U.S. office relocation from Hillsboro, Kan., to Fresno, Calif. The move will take place between May 1 and June 1, 1992.

- approved a new MBM/S administrative structure, to take effect June 1, 1992;

- decided to take immediate steps to find a replacement for Don Loewen, outgoing secretary for communications and media. The new position will have a starting date of Sept. 1.

- relocated Laurence and Selma Warrentin to Dresden in eastern Germany, where they will begin a new church-planting effort;

- decided to send the MBM/S bi-monthly magazine *Witness* as an insert in the U.S. Mennonite Brethren conference publication the *Christian Leader*

for an initial trial period. If successful, this distribution method may also be adopted in Canada.

- authorized the hiring of an interim secretary for Latin America while Harold Ens is on leave to prepare for his appointment as general secretary (see following article). — *Don Loewen*

Hiebert named interim secretary

The board of MB Missions/Services has announced the appointment of Clarence Hiebert as interim Latin America secretary from August 1991 to April 1992. He will direct the work while Harold Ens, MBM/S general secretary-elect, takes a nine-month leave to prepare for his new assignment.

Hiebert has a strong background in Mennonite Brethren mission work. He served 12 years on the Board of Welfare and Public Relations, and then another 12 years on the Board of Missions/Services when the Boards of Welfare and Missions merged.

Hiebert's interests have taken him to most of the countries where MBM/S is involved. He has taught in Paraguay, led numerous college groups to Mexico and Panama, and visited other mission programs in Latin America. He has also traveled and taught in Europe, the U.S.S.R. and Asia.

In 1990 Hiebert retired from his teaching assignment at Tabor College, where he taught missiology, religion, religious history and biblical studies. He is currently coordinator for international programs at Tabor.

"I hope to keep the momentum going in directions that have been set — I'd like to be an encouragement to the church leaders and missionaries in their work," says Hiebert. — *Don Loewen*



Hiebert

Iraqi refugees pour into Iran

While international attention has focused on Iraqi refugees at the Turkish border, the refugee situation on the Iran/Iraq border is also very serious, reports Ed Martin.

Martin, MCC secretary for Middle East and South Asia programs, visited Iran April 30 to May 7. He visited two refugee camps at Urmieh on the border some 400 miles (640 kilometers) northwest of Tehran.

Red Crescent Society officials report that 1.1 million refugees live in 75 camps in the five Iranian provinces bordering Iraq, says Martin. Originally 100,000 refugees a day arrived in Iran. That has now slowed to 5,000 to 10,000 per day. Few have returned to Iraq, Martin says.

Martin visited the camps of Ziveh and Nassr, which holds 60,000 and 30,000 refugees respectively. At both camps people appeared to have adequate food, he says. But health workers were in short supply. At Ziveh refugees described medicine shortages and dysentery due to bad water. Nassr had only one Iranian doctor for the camp, Martin says. Potable water was in short supply and he saw graves of children and elderly people.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society has been able to provide full relief services to about 600,000 of the refugees on the border, Martin reports. The other 500,000 still did not have shelter and were receiving minimal food assistance at the time of his visit, he says. "The most immediate need is to provide shelter for the rest of the refugees," says Martin.

Unlike in northern Iraq, few refugees have begun returning home. "Refugees I talked with seemed very wary of heading back," Martin notes.

MCC workers Ann and Bruce Huntwork of Portland, Ore., left for Iran May 22. Huntworks will work with the Red Crescent Society in Ghalicheh Refugee Camp near Bakhtaran, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) east of the Iraq border. Ann will work as a medical social worker and Bruce as a physician. ■

PRIEB TO DIRECT EFFORTS

Seminary retools for recruitment

The 1970s were a period of growth for most seminaries in North America but the 1980s brought a plateau or decrease in enrollments. This pattern also held true for MB Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif.

In response to current trends, MBBS has made some important changes in its recruitment strategy, including the appointment of a full-time director of recruitment.



Prieb

At the 1987 General Conference convention, the seminary challenged pastors and denominational leaders to commit themselves to the process of calling people into ministry. The challenge captivated the imaginations of many people and a significant number indicated their intent to be involved in this process. Hiring a full-time recruiter is not a withdrawal of that challenge, according to Larry Martens, MBBS president. "Any recruitment strategy must be churchly in character and involve a congregational process of calling people into full-time ministry," Martens says.

In conformity with this conviction, a primary task of the director of recruitment will be to encourage pastors, missionaries and denominational leaders to work actively in leadership development. He will work with congregations to encourage the discernment and calling of those in their midst who aspire to full-time ministry service. He will also encourage individuals applying to the seminary to work closely with their sending congregations in the process of ministry discernment and guidance. "While we are concerned with seminary enrollment, our primary concern is to work with congregations in calling people into ministry," Martens says.

At its spring meeting, the MBBS Board of Directors approved the appointment of Arnie Prieb as the seminary's first director of recruitment. Prieb has a long history of service to the Mennonite Brethren denomination, including multiple terms

of service in Zaire with MB Mission/Services; service in the U.S. with MBM/S; two years as assistant director and director at Hartland Christian Camp in California; and most recently as head custodian at the seminary. "I feel like the Lord has prepared me for this position with my work at Hartland Christian Camp and with MBM/S," Prieb says. "I believe very strongly in the ministry of the seminary. Wherever we have served the Lord, it has been because we believe strongly in missions. The ministry of MBBS is also missions," he says.

Prieb believes strongly in church-based leadership development and hopes to be a resource person for pastors and congregations. "The role of the church in seminary recruitment should be in calling out those who show gifts for church ministry, theological education or mission. I hope that the churches will be involved in the discerning process as one of their members considers ministry training. The idea of being a part of that process excites me," Prieb says.

"Many of our churches have a need to learn how to call out leaders," he adds, noting that part of the recruitment process is to educate those interested in "calling out" future leaders. "We often say that we want to call out people into ministry but I'm not sure that many of us know what this involves. We're all learning. I would encourage pastors to study more in the area of leadership development and, in the future, I would like to be a resource person for the pastors in the calling process."

In the past the seminary has relied heavily on faculty in the recruitment process. They were expected to make contacts with prospective students as they lectured throughout North America. This is another area that won't change according to Prieb. "One of my roles here at the seminary is to direct the recruitment effort," he says. "The faculty members are not supposed to drop their efforts in recruitment. I expect the faculty to continue their work with prospective students and churches. As they contact people on the road at church and conferences they will now funnel those names back to me."

In addition to his duties as director of recruitment, Prieb will also assist the president in fund raising. — Craig Hallman

Bystrom appointed to MBBS faculty

Raymond Bystrom has been appointed assistant professor of pastoral ministries at MB Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., beginning this fall. He will also serve as director of field education. Recently Bystrom has been pastor of Cedar Park MB Church, Delta, B.C.



Bystrom

"Ray brings solid biblical preparation, good urban pastoral experience and teaching experience to the faculty position," says John E. Toews, academic dean.

As assistant professor of pastoral ministries, Bystrom will teach the beginning and advanced preaching classes and the pastoral care course (with Delores Friesen). As director of field education, he will work with students as they gain practicum ministry experience in Fresno-area churches and Christian agencies.

Bystrom will be replacing Arlee Johnson, who recently resigned from the MBBS faculty. Johnson, who joined the faculty in 1987, began serving as pastor of Sardis Community Church, Sardis, B.C.

In the past 10 years, Bystrom has served as assistant pastor, interim pastor, copastor and senior pastor. He comes to the seminary with formal ministry training from several institutions, including degrees from Vancouver Bible College, Seattle Pacific University and Regent College. During the 1970s Bystrom also taught at various institutions. He is working on a doctor of ministry degree from Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif. ■

He taught others to walk

We buried Bill Utting today. Most readers probably never heard of him. Bill never preached a sermon from behind a pulpit, never wrote a treatise on some important theological subject, or led an important conference committee. But from his grave he spoke eloquent words. In the words of his daughter Billie Jean, he who had walked with great difficulty in recent years taught others to walk.

Bill Utting, a former Hillsboro businessman, and husband of Grace, a former Tabor colleague, was not a recent retiree in the true sense of the word, but had dropped out of the work force about 17 years ago because of major physical disabilities.

His handicaps often limited his contacts with church and community people. But at the funeral service, I saw Bill teaching others to walk by the testimony of his life.

Bill was one of those persons who, on being introduced, caused steeped-in-borscht Mennonites to ask, "That's not a Mennonite name, is it?" "Or what did you say your name was?" Utting didn't rhyme with any name that had come from South Russia. And for them it was important to place him.

Early in his illness he underwent hip replacement surgery. He stated then: "I don't ask to be healed, but I would like to walk." And he did walk for many years. I recall him shuffling along in over-sized athletic shoes to accommodate his painful feet.

He taught others by his gentle attitude toward life. Life was always a gift. He was keenly interested in people and what they were doing even if he couldn't participate. He maintained unwavering faith in God.

I doubt that he ever gave God three rousing cheers for granting him the experience of difficult years of pain and suffering, but he never questioned God or complained either. It was just that his human frame was out of kilter. Bill was still OK. He didn't bang his head hopelessly against the shut door of a healthy body.

I came home from the funeral to locate a clipping I had filed away in the

God is also most visible in the afterglow of the lives of those who have faced the suffering of sickness... and purposed to live on a higher plane.

early 1970s. It begins: "God is at his most visible in the afterglow — in the lives of those who have seen wars, and cancers, and vowed their end. In the outstretched hands of all those near the suffering, in body, or in thoughts. In the dedicated work to eradicate, or at least to reduce, humanity's dark side — and to ease the suffering, whether it be through laryngectomy or through a cure for heartache."

The writer, Stuart Aubrey, former editor of *The Hutchinson News*, who was facing cancer when he wrote the words, left out someone. God is also most visible in the afterglow of the lives of those who have faced the suffering of sickness, with its enforced isolation, and temptation to bitterness and purposed to live on a higher plane. They have not yielded to groveling in the darkness. Aubrey was one such person. I subscribed to his newspaper primarily to read his editorials because they were about life rather than about the quarrels of politics, boards of education, and such stuff. When he died, I discontinued the paper.

I also brought out a book by an older woman, Myrtie Elmer, whom I turn to when I wonder about suffering and loneliness. She began a devotional journal in her 78th year and continued until she was 85. She also had a disabling arthritis and faced blindness. In her book *Conversations with God*, she discusses frankly those topics people isolated by illness surely think about.

Pain: She writes people may visualize pain as a red-eyed demon, frightfully

ugly, with contorted arms and legs, who viciously and gleefully stabs our mortal bodies. She is convinced that is only one view to take. Pain is "a timely and friendly reminder," she writes, that certain laws regarding our physical and spiritual natures have been violated.

Life: She quotes Howard Thurman: "Old age, sickness, fading of the powers, is fought inch by inch all the way to the grave."

Fear of death: "Am I afraid to die? Shall I be when the time comes?" she asks. "I think no thoughtful human being can face the experience of death without an overwhelming sense of awe at what it will mean to each individual. Even if it meant complete extinction, could we then meet it without fear? I think not."

Prayer: "Prayer no longer means to me entirely the receiving of the answer for which I ask but is a communing with God, knowing that He is God, and, through the teachings of Jesus Christ, knowing that He loves His children and is responding to their needs."

God: "It seems as though at times God is more real and closer even than those whom I see and have fellowship with on earth." She died shortly thereafter.

The Utting family will mourn Bill's passing. And mourn they should. But when we mourn is it for the one who has gone on to a better life or for ourselves at the loss of one who meant much to us and whose influence we don't really understand until we see the afterglow? ■



Katie Funk Wiebe is an author and speaker from Hillsboro, Kan.

Straight questions, elusive answers

The disciples' question:

"Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to be fulfilled?" (Mk. 13:4-5)

Question: Why do we ask questions?
Answer: To get answers!

Over and over in Mark's Gospel, Jesus is asked questions. They are posed by demons and the demon possessed, Jewish religious leaders, politicians, crowds, individuals, and often the disciples. How often do you think Jesus *directly* answers the questions? And what does he do with the rest? Here's my count of the various ways Jesus responds:

Indirect responses. Four times Jesus comes quite close to answering, but remains indirect enough to challenge his questioners. The disciples' question in 10:27 ("Who then can be saved?") is a good example. Jesus responds by focusing both on the miracle of salvation and the self-sacrifice required of God's people if they wish to gain "eternal life." He does not directly answer the question. In effect, he is asking the disciples: Are you willing to accept the answer and follow through on the implications? You can find the answer to your question, but there is a price to pay.

No response. Six times Jesus gives no response at all. Either he is silent (as before Pilate in 15:5) or he sharply rebukes his questioners (as he does the demons in 1:25 and the Pharisees in 8:12). The question is inappropriate, or is asked by the wrong people. The question will not be answered.

Responding with questions. Often Jesus responds not with an answer, but with a question of his own. For instance, when he was asked, "Why do your disciples fast?" he answers with, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast?" (2:19). Or when he is asked, "Don't you care if we drown?" he responds, "Why are you so afraid?" (4:38). I can find at least 14 more examples of this in Mark!

Enigmatic responses. Four times Jesus answers a question with an enigma or a proverb. For example, he responds to "Why do you eat with sinners?" with "It is not the healthy who need a doctor



THEMES FROM THE GOSPEL OF

MARK

LAST IN A SERIES

but the sick" (2:17). What kind of answer is that? It is as though Jesus was saying, "Yes, the answer is available, but if you want to know what it is, figure it out yourself!"

Direct answers. So how many times does Jesus directly answer questions? According to my count, when we read Mark carefully and supply no more than the original language actually includes, Jesus responds to a question with a clear and specific answer only twice! It happens when Jesus is asked about God's will, and it happens when he is asked about his identity.

In Mark 12:28 Jesus is asked by a scribe, "Of all the commandments, which

is the most important?" Jesus responds, "Love the Lord your God and your neighbor as yourself." If people want to know how best to please God, then Jesus gives straight answers!

In Mark 14:61, Jesus is asked by the high priest, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Living God?" Jesus confesses, "I am" — and is sentenced to death! If people want to know about Jesus's identity, he gives straight answers.

I've deliberately omitted one text in Mark, the one quoted at the beginning of this article. Does Jesus answer the (double) question that opens the eschatological discourse in Mark 13? Here's how I read the text.

Mark 13 opens with a focus on the temple and a prediction of its destruction. It closes with a focus on the second coming and an indication that its timing is unknown. Between is a long discourse that is somehow about *both* the temple's destruction and the end of the age. How these two are linked and which verses refer to which event has been the subject of endless debate.

Jesus's discourse is an immediate response to a double question by the disciples: *When?* and *What will be the sign?* The chapter is introduced with a question by the disciples; surely we can assume that what follows must be Jesus's "answer." Really?

When I first noticed how seldom Jesus actually directly answers questions in Mark, and that he *never* does it for the disciples, I start questioning that assumption. What if Mark 13 is an attempt to tell the disciples something *other than* the answer to their questions?

If Jesus is answering a question about the temple's destruction, why does the word "temple" never appear in Jesus's so-called answer? If the question is really referring to the second coming, why does an answer to the "when?" question not help us know when? And why does Jesus predict a whole series of events, but (in Mark 13) *never calls any of them "signs"*? And why does the word "sign" appear in Jesus's "answer" *only* when Jesus warns against the deception of those who point to signs?

Could it be because Mark 13 was never intended as a direct answer to the disciples' questions? I think so! But what then is its point? If it does not say when, and does not point to signs, what is its concern?

The first and last word of Jesus's discourse is "watch." In Greek these are two different words. Neither is a call to observe signs or calculate timetables. The first one (*blepete*) really means "be discerning, especially when there are deceivers around."

The other Greek word for watch (*gregoreite*) really means, "Be faithful, especially when knowledge is withheld." Disciples are not to watch in order to know when; they are to watch because they do not know when.

We cannot know when! Even sign-seeking will not help us know when. Our responsibility is to be alert against deceivers (vv. 5-6), courageous in turbulent times (vv. 7-9), and faithful witnesses amid persecution (vv. 12-13), desecration (v. 14), temptation (vv. 15-17), hardship (vv. 18-20) and falsehood (vv. 21-23). We can and do know that the Son of Man is "at the door" (13:29). We cannot and need not know when he will step through!

After publishing a 350-page book on this chapter, I still have lots of unanswered questions. But so did the disciples after Jesus spoke this discourse. The two opening questions were left unanswered — purposely!

When will these things happen? It's not for us to know. What will be the sign? It is not sign-seeking, but discernment and faithfulness that Jesus wants from us.

But when he returns with "great power and glory" (13:26) all questions will be answered! "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know when!" ■

Tim Geddert is currently on an extended leave of absence from his position as assistant professor of New Testament at the MB Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif. He, Gertrude, and the children are living in Germany, where they will be engaged in a pastoral, teaching and writing ministry for three years.

Urgent Medical Need in Zaire

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WINNIPEG STUDY EXPLORES THE PROBLEM

Domestic abuse: Our silent scourge

Mennonite church members in Winnipeg, Man., are experiencing domestic abuse but they are not turning to their pastors for help, according to a just-completed study.

The study of Isaac Block, professor of contemporary ministries at MB Bible College, calls on Mennonites to put the same amount of energy into dealing with abuse in the churches as they do into service to disadvantaged people around the world.

The study was sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada. It is believed to be the first time a Canadian denomination has conducted a study of this kind on itself.

Based on a random sample of 187 adults from Winnipeg Mennonite church telephone directories, the study shows that there were 65 incidents of physical abuse in a 12-month period. The same group recalled 1,295 incidents of abuse against them by their parents or guardians in their childhood years.

Physical abuse in the study is defined as throwing things, pushing, slapping, hitting with an object, beating up, kicking or using a knife or gun.

Block also asked the respondents to report the incidence of emotional abuse they had experienced — things such as sulking, stomping out, insulting, threatening to hit or threatening with a knife or gun. The 187 respondents reported 189 incidents of emotional abuse in the 12 month period, leading Block to conclude that “this observation raises the possibility that [while] Mennonites have taken seriously the doctrine of nonviolence, in practice they have tended to apply this to physical rather than emotional violence.”

Sexual abuse is also a problem among Mennonites, Block found, with around 20 percent of respondents reporting a violation within the 12-month period. Sexual abuse in the survey was defined as fondling of breasts or genitals, propositioning, flirting, inappropriate holding or kissing, forced sex and oral sex. Twenty-five percent of females reported sexual abuse, compared to only seven percent of males, leading Block to conclude that “females continue to be more



Block calls on Mennonites to examine the biblical concept of submission, which he says “has been corrupted into a theology of dominance.”

ER WALLMUTH

vulnerable than males.”

When asked to identify their abusers, respondents named strangers, brothers, friends and relatives. “The frequency with which brothers, relatives and friends are abusers is disappointing,” says Block. “This category of trusted people represents the most frequent sexual violators.”

A separate study of 72 students studying at two Mennonite Bible colleges in

Winnipeg also showed a high incidence of physical and sexual abuse from childhood to present.

While a 1990 study of Mennonite pastors showed that they were willing to deal with the issue of domestic abuse, this study shows that only a small percentage of victims turned to the church for help. One reason for this, Block suggests, is because “most victims are females victimized by males and all salaried pastors at the time of the interviews were males.”

Ways the church could be more helpful, he says include avoiding theological formulas and pat answers from the Bible; by trying to understand the dynamics of forgiveness from the point of view of the victim; and by helping victims to be set free from any guilt.

Block also calls on Mennonites to examine the biblical concept of submission, which he says “has been corrupted into a theology of dominance.” He also suggests that scriptural sayings which call on believers to rejoice in suffering are inappropriate for victims of abuse. “Jesus voluntarily placed himself in a situation that involved suffering,” he says. “Victims of domestic abuse do not.”

The high view of the marriage agreement held by Mennonite pastors should also be examined when counseling victims of abuse, he says. Citing the previous study of pastors which showed that they would only counsel wives to leave their husbands if physical abuse was severe, he asks: “Are the values of permanence in marriage and the experience of personal safety and well-being of equal value or should they be ranked? If they should be ranked, should personal safety rank higher than marriage if the marriage is abusive?”

Block also suggests that pastors should work with other professionals to ensure adequate counselling for victims of abuse.

He goes on to say that Mennonite churches should devote more time and personnel to offer services to victims of abuse, and recommends the creation of a Christian shelter in Winnipeg. Programs which offer care to abusers should also be created, he says. — *John Longhurst*

Abuse in our own homes and how we can stop it

Isaac Block's provocative study on domestic violence in Mennonite homes raised questions for us: Do his findings represent a geographic phenomenon unique to the Winnipeg area? To what extent is domestic violence a problem in our U.S. Mennonite Brethren congregations and what can be done about it? For insight, we went to Irene Loewen, who taught pastoral counseling



Loewen

for several years at the MB Biblical Seminary, and now has a private practice in Fresno, Calif. She has done significant work in the area of domestic violence and is familiar with the U.S. Mennonite Brethren scene. Our interview with her was equally provocative—and enlightening for pastors, leaders and all who seek to be caregivers in the church.

LEADER: From your experience within our constituency, how relevant is Block's study to our situation?

LOEWEN: The study is very applicable to the U.S. Physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse—it's all there among Mennonite Brethren. I'm sure there would be no difference. Emotional abuse, in particular, is incredibly widespread and very under-rated.

LEADER: How can that be? Why aren't we more aware of the problem?

LOEWEN: Physical abuse, for example, it is often explained away as simply boorishness, selfishness or thoughtlessness—by both the abuser and the victim. So people very often become accustomed to horrendous behavior.

Also, people who abuse rarely realize that what they do is as offensive and destructive as it is. For example, I have

a Mennonite Brethren client who was watching television about abuse with her husband. As he was watching, he said: "That's terrible. People like that should be put away." And she said, "You do that." He was taken aback. "I do not," he replied. "I may shake you up a little here or there, but I would never do that." He had no concept of how abusive he was.

LEADER: How can that happen?

LOEWEN: It's a problem of modeling. Often an abuser comes out of a home that had a very authoritarian father who abused his wife and children. So the behavior of the second-generation abuser doesn't seem that different to him.

LEADER: Even in Christian families?

LOEWEN: In the U.S., an estimated 1.8 million people are abused in their homes yearly; 95 percent of physical abuse is by men toward women. Christians do not have a better rating in either sexual or physical abuse. In fact, when it comes to child sexual abuse, Christians tend to rate very badly.

LEADER: How do you account for that?

LOEWEN: I think it has to do with not understanding sexuality. So when we talk about remedies for domestic violence, we need to begin by teaching respect and to be more comfortable with

Abuse often occurs in families you would least expect it. They are often leaders in the church.

our own sexuality so that there is no question as to what is right or wrong.

LEADER: So what are signs of abuse? What should we be looking for in our congregations?

LOEWEN: Abuse is hard to read, especially in the Christian community. I would say first and foremost that abuse often occurs in families you would least suspect. Abusers are often leaders in the church. They can be pastors, deacons, or persons highly rated in the community. There is no class distinction. So the first thing I would say: look everywhere.

Don't expect to see much physical evidence of abuse. Very often victims become very adept at making sure no signs are visible. One indicator of abuse is people, especially women, who are overly compensatory. They are very friendly, they cover for their husbands, they lie about what happened to them.

Another sign is the light going out of people's eyes or a dampened spirit. One of the biggest problems of abuse is not so much the physical harm, but that it destroys the spirit.

LEADER: If we suspect a case of abuse in our congregation, what should we do?

LOEWEN: First, talk to the person you think is being abused; usually it is the woman. I would encourage those who are doing the tracking—and it shouldn't just be pastors, but all caregivers within the church—to say, "We know that in the most unlikely homes, things aren't always as they seem. Things don't seem real well with you. Is there anything happening that is not as it should be?"

Caregivers have to promise confidentiality, at least initially. It's important to assure them that nothing will be said to anyone without their permission. Abused women are usually terrified—for all kinds of reasons, including the threat of more abuse. Be prepared that people may lie, especially if the trust isn't there. Amazingly, women are not anxious to turn in their husbands for abuse. They're embarrassed about it. They have

begun to believe that it is their fault.

LEADER: What if the victim admits to abuse, but insists that you say nothing about it to anyone?

LOEWEN: Continue your counsel, explore the nature of her fear, and find out what program the church has to ensure that people are protected. Keep working with the person, building her confidence, encouraging her to get therapy so that the husband can be confronted. It is a false assumption that abused people always want to get out of the relationship. They don't. They want their family.

LEADER: Block's study suggests that abused women are hesitant to go to pastors for help. Why?

LOEWEN: They don't go to their pastors because often they fear they will not be believed. Frequently the abusive husband has a high profile and clearly has the male identification with the pastor. He is often very articulate, and can easily explain away what happened. The wife is afraid she will not be believed and so will be left worse off than if she had never brought it up.

In general, the majority of people within the church who are domestic abusers are violent nowhere else. That's what makes it so hard to believe.

LEADER: If a victim is hesitant to go to the pastor, should the caregiver encourage the victim to seek a professional counselor?

LOEWEN: Finding professional help is a next step, but a therapist can work with the victim *and* the pastor. I frequently work with the pastor in these situations. But the caregiver needs to find out whether the pastor is likely to believe that physical and emotional abuse is as bad as it is, or whether he will minimize it and therefore victimize the wife even further.

LEADER: Block suggests several ways the church can be helpful to abuse victims. How do you respond to his suggestions, and do you have any others?

LOEWEN: I would agree with his responses, but I would add that pastors, caregivers and congregations need to be educated about abuse. Also, premar-

itally, we have all kinds of indicators about who is likely to abuse. So when we think the potential for abuse is prevalent, we can ask specific questions before the marriage even takes place. Our churches need to know what leads to abuse, what the abuse cycle is, and we need to say emphatically that it is totally unacceptable.

I would also encourage more teaching about anger and voicing feelings. The primary thing the literature is telling us is that men who abuse are typically quite articulate but unable to rationally discuss their feelings. Very often you find that their primary feel-

We need to help abusers understand they are not evil, horrible, people, but that there is a reason for the way they are and it can be cured.

ing is anger. That is the most common predictor of who will be physically violent.

Another thing we need to understand is that an abusive person has that abuse rooted in pain and rooted in their own childhood.

LEADER: So how do we deal with the abuser when, as you suggest, he himself may be a victim of abuse?

LOEWEN: That requires some counseling in terms of understanding how he came to be that way. But that fact should keep any of us from thinking that we're better than the abuser. We have to recognize that to be human is to have the potential to be abusive. We need to help abusers understand they are not evil, horrible, people, but that

there is a reason for the way they behave and it can be cured. Reconciliation and healing are possible because of Christ and the help of counseling and teaching.

LEADER: Block asks whether the values of permanence in marriage and the experience of personal safety and well-being are of equal value or whether they should be ranked. How do you respond to that question?

LOEWEN: To my mind, it's a very curious and conventional way to ask the question because I don't think it takes seriously that abuse destroys the essence of a Christian marriage. Abuse doesn't destroy a legal marriage, but it certainly destroys a Christian marriage. If there is abuse, the fruits of the Spirit are not present, the qualities of Christ are not present.

Abuse represents the denial of all things that are valuable in marriage. Therefore, when we ask, "Should the woman be permitted to leave?," we're asking the wrong question. We should be asking, "Who been unbiblical here? Should the abuser be permitted to stay and destroy the spirit and body of a person who has committed herself to a Christian marriage of love and trust?"

Marriage is like our relationship to God; we can't become abusive and call that relationship good.

LEADER: Block encourages churches to designate more resources to help abuse victims. How can the average Mennonite Brethren church establish the kind of environment that enables victims to seek help?

LOEWEN: The safest and least intrusive way is for a church to sponsor workshops on the topic, to invite resource people who have healing as their basis, that grace, forgiveness, empathy and redemption are possible. I have yet to lead a workshop on either incest or battery without having several people come to me and say, "I've never told anyone this before, but. . . ." When pastors encourage these kinds of workshops, they are already stating that they recognize the problem and that the church is putting its support behind efforts to correct it.

CWC creates national groups

A binational committee that grew from a task force nearly two decades ago entered a new phase this month when the group divided into Canadian and U.S. sections. The Committee on Women's Concerns (CWC), a program of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), met in Hesston, Kan., May 11 to conduct business and plan for the future as separate entities.

U.S. coordinator Tina Mast Burnett, Akron, Pa., reflected on some of the group's accomplishments. "Publications have been very important in our work. The bimonthly *Women's Concerns* publication, 'Report' and the domestic violence resource packets have been unique in the Mennonite church."

The move for the committee to operate separately came as a result of MCC's tightening budgets; meeting as separate committees will reduce travel costs. "We all know the expression, 'divide and conquer,' but let's try not to let that happen," said Fran Hiebert, Highland Park, Ill., who said she feared fragmentation could weaken the group.

Some U.S. women characterized Canadians as setting new agenda. "From the Mennonite Brethren perspective, it is sad the group is no longer binational. The Canadian Mennonite Brethren are ahead of U.S. Mennonite Brethren on dealing with some aspects of women's concerns, and it was good to have a push from the Canadian side," Hiebert said.

CWC began in 1973 as a task force of MCC Peace Section. The task force grew to include Canadian women in 1975. In 1982 the task force graduated to the status of a joint standing committee of the U.S. Peace Section and the Canadian Peace and Social Concerns Committee.

Leader feted by EPA judges

The *Christian Leader* received the top award for denominational magazines at the Evangelical Press Association's annual convention held May 6-8 in Chicago, Ill. It marked the first time the periodical has won the organization's "Award of Excellence." Since 1977, the *Leader* had received an honorable mention "Award of Merit" three times, including last year.

Magazines in eight categories were judged according to writing, content and graphics based on three consecutive issues. Receiving an "Award of Merit" in the denominational category this year were *The Church Herald* of the Reformed Church in America, *Pentecostal Evangel* of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and *Messenger* of the Presbyterian Church in America.

In addition to the "Award of Excellence," the *Leader* received two awards in the organization's Higher Goals competition, in which all magazines compete in specific performance categories. Philip Wiebe won first place in the Humorous Article category for "A modern (look straight into the eyes) witnessing primer" (Sept. 25, 1990). The *Leader* placed third in Reporting for its coverage of Assembly 12 of Mennonite World Conference (Aug. 28, 1990).

Judge Martha Bolton, a staff writer for Bob Hope, wrote of Wiebe's article: "The author not only made us laugh, but he truly made us think as well. This article should come with the warning, 'Don't read at night.' I read it at 1 a.m. and woke the entire household up with laughter! (A few of my neighbor's lights even came on!)"

Wiebe, a member of the Kingwood



The Pine Acres MB Church, Weatherford, Okla., celebrated two baptisms in May. LEFT: On Sunday evening, May 12, nine people were received into membership following a morning baptismal service. Pictured above are (back row, left to right) Amber Uplinger and Eric Flaming; (second row) interim pastor Leonard Vogt, Matthew Fast, Amanda Flaming and Tisha Penner; (front row) Kathy Sawatzky, Colby Miller, Kyler Penner and Marcie Thiessen. RIGHT: A week later, 11 young people were baptized and received as new members. Pictured above are (back row) Orval and Elsie Sawatzky, Derwin and Sharon Mahan, Robert Nikkel, and Barry and Jaylene Balzer; (second row) Brian Wilson, Darin Jensen, Dustin Harms and Vogt; (third row) Jennifer Shaffer, Jessica Felder, Kristi Balzer, Kevin Penner and Derric Penner; (front) Roxi Camden, Amber Sawatzky and Landon Harms.

Bible Church, Salem, Ore., also placed fifth in the Humorous Article category for a piece published in the *Christian Herald*.

Judge Bruce Bursma, business reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*, wrote of the *Leader's* Mennonite World Conference coverage: "This is a remarkable piece of work considering the usual nature of church assemblies. The editing is excellent on the main piece; the sidebars are good and the reporting is refreshingly candid for such an 'event' story."

"Our primary purpose is not to win awards, but certainly the affirmation of the judges is gratifying," says Don Ratzlaff, editor. "We still have a lot of room for improvement. If anything, I hope the Award of Excellence will encourage more of our readers and writers to contribute their skills and insights to the cause."

The *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, the publication of the Canadian MB Conference, received a fifth-place award in the Critical Review category.



Chester and Elfreda Penner Fast will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary July 7 with a short program and open house at the Hillsboro (Kan.) MB Church. The celebration will be hosted by their children. The Fasts were married June 1, 1941, in the Mennonite Brethren church in Ingalls, Kan. They served in the pastoral ministry for about 40 years, serving churches in Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Oklahoma and North Dakota before retiring in 1983.

Church notes

NEWTON, Kan. (Koerner Heights) — Eight people were baptized and received as members of the church May 19. They were Stefanie Balzer, Annie Moses, Shanna Person, Kara Regier, Chris Conrade, Zach Fisher, Justin Loewen and Eric Martens. Also joining the church were Delton Klassen, Denice Klassen, Eva Lena Suderman, Rod Regier and Alvin Suderman.

SALEM, Ore. (Kingwood Bible) — Richard Earle was received as a new member of the church Apr. 7. . . . Henry Schmidt, director of the Center for Training in Mission/Evangelism, Fresno, Calif., was the guest speaker May 5.

BRIDGEWATER, S.D. (Salem) — MB Missions/Services worker Elizabeth Tieszen was the featured speaker during the May 19 morning service. She talked about her work in Colombia. . . . Darius and Marie Hofer observed their 50th wedding anniversary May 18.

HILLSBORO, Kan. (Ebenfeld) — Randy Stepanek has accepted a call to be youth pastor of the church. He and his wife, Kerry, will begin the half-time assignment this summer.

SAN JOSE, Calif. (Lincoln Glen) — Remnant, a "rock and roll outreach band" with roots in the congregation, had a three-concert ministry the first weekend of May. On May 4 they performed at Preston School of Industry, a maximum security facility for felons between the ages of 18 and 25. Prior to the concert, the facility was in the news for riots and related problems. That evening, they traveled to Pine Grove Youth Camp, a minimum security California Youth Authority. On Sunday evening, May 6, the band performed at a church in Ceres, a town in the Sierra Foothills. Drummer Mike Wood reported the band felt the Holy Spirit with them during the weekend, prompting exceptional response to their message. . . . Larry Hart, co-pastor of the Grace Community Church (MB), Capitola, Calif., led a four-week series on enhancing relationships. Titled "How to get along with almost anyone and like it," the series of Sunday evening sessions began May 5.

HESSTON, Kan. — May was family month at the church. On May 5, Phil Osborne, faculty member at Hesston College, presented trends and statistics regarding the family. The following Sunday, the congregation focused on Mother's Day and May 19 featured graduates. The May 26 service was designated "Memorial Sunday," during which members who had lost loved ones during the past year were remembered. Families were encouraged to bring a plant or flowers to help decorate the church in memory of their family member.

NEW HOPE, Minn. — The Edina Chorale, a nonaudition community choir, presented the Apr. 21 service. The 60-voice chorale performs



Herb and Linda Schroeder celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary May 5 at the Zoar MB Church, Inman, Kan. The celebration included a praise service and reception. The event was sponsored by their children.

two concerts a year in area churches to capacity crowds. The chorale also serves the community by singing at nursing homes and hospitals. . . . John Janzen was received as member of the church May 1.

LITTLETON, Colo. (Bellevue Acres) — Glenn Balzer has accepted a unanimous call to serve the church as associate pastor in the area of youth ministries. He and his wife, Rita, hope to begin their ministry sometime this summer. They and church leaders are negotiating with the government for a visa for Rita, who is a Canadian citizen.

DENVER, Colo. (Garden Park) — The congregation sponsored a Pioneer Clubs night May 8 for community kids and parents on the topic, "Choices: Sex before marriage?" Some 21 young women (between the third and eighth grade) and 11 adults attended the event. Planners considered this a very good turnout. The speaker for the evening was Kathy Buschman, an expert on the sexual choices young people make and their consequences. She frequently conducts workshops and speaks in public high schools.

COLLINSVILLE, Okla. (Westport) — Brian Harris has resigned as youth pastor of the church, effective June 30. He will return to Ohio to pursue several ministry opportunities. . . . Mark Parris began a summer internship with the congregation May 19. He will be concentrating his energies on various youth programs.

MADERA, Calif. (Madera Ave.) — A farewell service was held Sunday evening, May 26, for Greg, Carolyn and Jennifer Bright. Greg had been serving the church as youth pastor. The congregation collected a "love offering" for the family.

Educational opportunities are limited in the West Bank so Mennonite Central Committee started Hope School in 1962. Today the school is governed by Palestinians and MCC helps by supporting students and providing teachers such as Erlis Miller from Partridge, Kan.

■
Samia Issa Abu-Dayyeh studies at Hope Secondary School in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.



! be
more
than a
spectator

Be more than a spectator. Support a student at Hope School or another school through MCC's Global Family Program. Support MCC teachers in any of 28 countries.



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Church and conference, cont'd

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (Heritage Bible) — An Overcomers Outreach group began meeting in the church library June 6 and will continue every Thursday. Overcomers Outreach is a 12-step support program with a focus on Christian spirituality for those struggling with problems of addictions, compulsion and their affected families, coworkers and friends. . . . Associate pastor Phil Strangland and his wife, Tanya, led a "Christian Marriage Communication" weekend for interested couples May 31 through June 2 in Fresno, Calif.

WICHITA, Kan. (First) — Seven new members were welcomed into the church family May 5. They were Andy and Rita Wintze, Daniel and Ruth King, Marilyn Kopper, and Danny and Tambrey Glamser.

CORN, Okla. — Evangelist Larry Lundstrom was the featured speaker at the June 2 morning and evening services. His wife, Gloria, teenage son Lee Donovan and singers Rob and Lana Ranahan also participated in the programs. Members were encouraged to invite friends, neighbors and relatives who did not know Christ.

CLOVIS, Calif. (College Community) — Members Rhonda and Kevin Dueck have accepted a summer ministry assignment at Pine Summit, a camp outside San Bernardino, Calif. They will be counselors to the staff of the camp.

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (Laurelglen Bible) — Dick Innes, founder and director of ACTS International, was the guest speaker for adults attending the church's annual S.P.L.A.S.H. (Summer Program of Learning, Activities and Stuff that's Holy), June 16-19. S.P.L.A.S.H. is the congregation's vacation Bible school program for the whole family. Roger Royster was the speaker for children and junior high youth.

TULSA, Okla. (Parkside) — Don and Marilu Evans, missionaries in South America for 15



Neighborhood Church, Visalia, Calif., accepted 13 new members in April. Pictured above are (left to right, back row) pastor Bruce Porter, Leonard Wiebe, Cary Gholson, Laurie Gholson, Stacy Vehrs, Robert Vehrs; (middle row) Jeff Taylor, Marguerite Wiebe, Debbie Grigsby and Sandy Nelson; (front row) Anne Taylor, Steven Frederick, Nicolas Figallo and Megan Ruby. Of these, the following were baptized: Sandy Nelson, Steven Frederick, Nicolas Figallo, Laurie Gholson and Megan Ruby.

years with Central American Missions, were featured during a Missions Emphasis Weekend held June 8-9. On Saturday, Don spoke at a men's breakfast and Marilu spoke at a luncheon for women; on Sunday, Don preached the morning message.

FRESNO, Calif. (Butler Avenue) — Myron Augsburg, president of the Christian College Coalition, Washington, D.C., was the guest speaker at the May 6 morning service.

INMAN, Kan. (Zoar) — Jake and Agatha Kroeker celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary June 2 with an afternoon praise service in the sanctuary. A reception followed.

HILLSBORO, Kan. — The congregation dedicated its new elevator during the May 26 morning service. The addition of the elevator, at a cost of \$55,300, will make all four floors of the facility accessible to people with disabilities.

DALLAS, Ore. — Basem Harmarneh, a Jordanian Orthodox Christian, was featured during the May 6 morning service. He shared about

his life as an educational engineer and a member of the Orthodox Education Society.

TOPEKA, Kan. (Fairlawn) — Growing attendance has prompted the congregation to make some preliminary facility decisions to enlarge meeting space. At their semi-annual business meeting May 19, the congregation voted to remove the pews from the sanctuary and purchase 100 chairs in order to maximize the space. Also, by a majority vote, the congregation directed its Stewardship Commission to bid on additional land located just north of their present property.

PHOENIX, Ariz. (Palm Glen) — Jacob Froese presided over his last service as pastor of the church May 26. He based his final message, titled "We Will Serve the Lord," on passages from Joshua. Following the service, the congregation met for a noon potluck. Rodney and Sheila Henne assumed the role of pastoral couple June 1. Their installation service is planned for June 23.

CORRECTION — In our Apr. 23 issue we reported that Alfred Miller was received Mar. 3 as a new member of the Bible MB Church, Cordell, Okla. The person who joined the church was Darleen Whitener. We regret the error.

Deaths

BULLER, DAN F., Reedley, Calif., was born Sept. 25, 1906, to Peter and Justina Wiens Buller near Henderson, Neb., and died May 19, 1991, at the age of 84. On Apr. 9, 1928, he was married to Anna Goertzen, who predeceased him 1986. At the age of 21, he was baptized upon confession of faith and joined the Mennonite Brethren country church northwest of Henderson. During the Depression, he and his family moved to California, where he worked in the fruit industry. While living in San Jose, he and his wife were charter members of the Lincoln Glen Church. In 1942 they moved back



Six people were baptized May 19 and received as members of the Zoar MB Church, Inman, Kan. Pictured above are (left to right) pastor Gary Janzen, Dale Schmidt, Jonathan Goering, Eddie Schrag, Amy Oard, Cynthia Rice and Michelle Prieb.

POSITION AVAILABLE

NEIGHBORHOOD CHURCH (MB) has a half-time salaried position for an associate pastor of evangelism and discipleship. Work with a dynamic team including senior, worship and youth pastors. Please send resume to 2800 Walnut Ave., Visalia, CA 93277 or call (209) 732-9107.

FAMILY PHYSICIAN for Henderson, Neb. — Progressive young FP, hospital jointly recruiting second FP for small community, large Mennonite populace. Practice easygoing. Hospital is strongly supported by community, excellent setting for broad-spectrum medical practice. Unique church/school environment especially favorable for Mennonite or other Christian with compatible goals for practice/service. Henderson Physician Search Committee, P.O. Box 465, Henderson, NE 68371; (402) 723-4475, (402) 723-4839.

MENNONITE MUTUAL AID is seeking an assistant investment manager to manage stock and bond portfolio, do equity research, and work at client contact. Sales skills and limited travel required. Five years or more of investment management experience and completion of at least one CFA examination required. If interested, please send resume or contact Personnel Department, MMA, 1110 North Main Street, Goshen, IN 46526, (219) 533-9511.

MENNONITE FOUNDATION is seeking a field representative to promote the Foundation's programs and services. Candidates should have a commitment to promoting biblical stewardship and have an understanding of estate planning concepts and charitable giving programs. Professional degrees or designations helpful. Fund raising or development experience beneficial. Strong interpersonal and communication skills required. Position is based in Goshen, Ind., with limited travel in four-state area. If interested, please send resume to Personnel Department, MMA, 1110 North Main Street, Goshen, IN 46526, (219) 533-9511.

ADMINISTRATOR for a Mennonite Health Services-sponsored residential facility for children and young adults with developmental disabilities. Sixteen-bed children's home and five group homes serving a total of 36 residents in Plain City, Ohio, 15 miles northwest of Columbus. Requires one year experience in management, care, supervision or training of person with developmental disabilities. Send resume to John Rohrer, Gilead Community Services, 5123 Converse Huff, Plain City, OH 43064; (614) 873-5522.

RESOURCES

FREE: Peacemaking resource for teens. Special issue of *With* magazine asks, "Does nonviolence work?" Mercenary-turned-pacifist Mike Waddell tells his story. Ron Sider outlines "A Bold Vision for Peacemaking." "Wheelchairs vs. Tanks" dramatically recounts the Philippine revolution. Much more. For your free copy call 1-800-743-2484.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CHRISTIAN LEADER and Editor Don Ratzlaff

for winning the top award
for denominational magazines
by the Evangelical Press Association.

Thank you to our editor and contributors
for making *The Christian Leader* a maga-
zine which is widely recognized for its ex-
cellence in the evangelical publishing
world.

Joyce Warkentin, Chair
U.S. Board of Communications

to Nebraska to farm. In 1964 they moved to Reedley, where they became members of the Reedley MB Church. He is survived by a daughter, Erma and husband Herman W. Goertzen of Hampton, Neb.; a son, LaVern and wife Loretta of Fairfield, Calif.; two brothers, one sister and six grandchildren.

DIRKS, FRED A. FREWALL SCHMIDT, Corn, Okla., was born Jan. 28, 1905, to Edward and Augusta Krewall near Corn and died Mar. 4, 1991, at the age of 86. At the age of 15, she received Jesus as her savior, was baptized, and joined the Corn MB Church. Later she joined what became the Bible MB Church in Cordell, Okla., where she remained a member until her death. On Oct. 15, 1923, she was married to Adolph R. Schmidt, who predeceased her in 1966. In 1972 she was married to David Dirks, who predeceased her in 1983. She worked on the farm for most of her adult life and supported her husband David Dirks' ministry as a National Guard chaplain for several years. She lived in California for several years before moving to a nursing home in Corn in 1988. She is survived by three sons: Edwin Schmidt and wife Frances of Mariposa, Calif., A.B.P. Schmidt and wife Bernice of Corn, and Manfred Schmidt and wife Frances of Okeene, Okla.; two daughters-in-law, Clara Schmidt of Clinton, Okla., and Rubena Schmidt Trotter of Selma, Calif.; two stepsons, Mervin Dirks and Paul Dirks; a stepdaughter, Carolyn Morse; five sisters, 15 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren.

ENNS, GORDON WAYNE, Dinuba, Calif., was born May 19, 1942, to Edwin and Dorothy Enns in the Dinuba area and died Mar. 22, 1991, at the age of 48. At an early age he accepted Jesus as his savior, was baptized in 1954 and joined the Reedley (Calif.) MB Church. On Aug. 20, 1963, he was married to Marilyn Enns, who survives. He farmed in the area and for many years served as farm manager of a fruit-packing company. In 1964 he became a member of the Dinuba MB Church, where he served for many years with children and youth and as a member of the choir, church council and mission board. He attended and worked in the Bible Study Fellowship organization for 10 years. In addition to his wife, he is survived by two daughters, Karen of Fresno, Calif., and Stephanie, of the home; a son, Philip, of the home; his parents, three brothers, and a sister.

KARBER, WARREN JAY, San Jose, Calif., was born Mar. 24, 1942, to Abe and Adaline Karber in Bakersfield, Calif., and died Apr. 17, 1991, at the age of 49. On Aug. 24, 1962, he was married to Eileen Klierer, who survives. He worked in the meat-processing industry until 1985, when he started his own wood-working business. As a child, he accepted Jesus as his savior and became a member of the Lincoln Glen Church in 1951. Through the

years he served the church as organist for the male chorus, timpani player in the orchestra, Sunday school teacher, youth sponsor, deacon and photographer. In addition to his wife, he is survived by a daughter, Tanya of San Jose, his parents, and a sister.

NYSTROM, CLARENCE LEROY, San Jose, Calif., was born Feb. 5, 1898, to John Gustaf and Sleina Frantiska Jasansky at Racine, Wis., and died Apr. 17, 1991, at the age of 93. As a young man he accepted Jesus as his savior; in his later years he enjoyed the fellowship of the Lincoln Glen Church and the Lincoln Glen Manor in San Jose. On Aug. 12, 1927, he was married to Gertrude Hill. He enjoyed a long and distinguished career in Christian higher education; he taught at Taylor University in Indiana, was president of Spring Arbor College in Michigan, and taught for more than 30 years at Wheaton College in Illinois, retiring in 1973. After retirement, he worked for four years in public relations for Medical Assistance Programs, an agency furnishing medicines and supplies to missions. He has a daughter, Christine and husband Darrell Floyd; a son, Joseph and wife Koral; two foster daughters in Jamaica and India; and five grandchildren.

VOGT, EUGENE, Gunnison, Colo., was born Mar. 4, 1936, to J.W. and Martha Vogt in Hillsboro, Kan., and died May 9, 1991, at the age of 55. He was baptized as a youth upon his confession of faith in Corn, Okla. On July 28, 1963, he was married to May Elizabeth Boyles, who survives. From 1966 to 1979 he was the head of the laboratory and X-ray department of a hospital in Gunnison, Colo. For the past several years he was self-employed as a relief laboratory and X-ray technologist in various hospitals in Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska. He was an active member of the Community Church in Gunnison. In addition to his wife, he is survived by a daughter, Tawnya of Colorado Springs, Colo.; a son, Eric, of Gunnison; and three brothers.

WOLLMAN, DAVID M., Bridgewater, S.D., was born Aug. 17, 1922, to Jacob D. and Anna Hofer Wollman near Freeman, S.D., and died May 18, 1991, at the age of 68. In 1941 he received Jesus as his savior, was baptized and received into the Salem MB Church near Bridgewater. On Sept. 22, 1946, he was married to Celia Wollman, who survives. He farmed in the area and served for eight years as athletic director at Freeman Academy and Junior College. Until three years ago he was a field judge at numerous regional and state track meets. In addition to his wife, he is survived by a son, Charles; his parents-in-law, Mike and Ida Wollman, and a sister-in-law, Marilyn Duerksen.

CORRECTION: The obituary of Charlie F. Faul (May 7) failed to include Gideon Faul and his wife, Vera, of Martin, N.D., as survivors. We regret the oversight. ■

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Philhaven Hospital Board of Directors invites nominations and applications for the position of Executive Director. Philhaven, located near Mt. Gretna, PA, and owned and operated by the Lancaster Conference of the Mennonite Church, is founded upon and committed to a Christian philosophy and value system. Philhaven is a nonprofit, fully accredited and licensed, 106-bed, full-service mental health provider offering inpatient, outpatient, partial hospitalization and residential services.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director is responsible for overall hospital operation. The Executive Director should be results-oriented, effective in planning and skilled in the stewardship of human and fiscal resources.

Additional qualifications include:

- master's degree in healthcare administration, business administration or other closely related discipline
- approximately 7 - 10 years of progressively more responsible managerial experience, including at least 5 years of high-level administration in a healthcare organization
- advanced interpersonal and analytical skills
- exemplify a life of loyalty to the Word of God and be an active member of an anabaptist affiliated congregation

Deadline for application is September 1, 1991. Application should include a current resume, a letter describing the applicant's suitability in terms of the above criteria, and five references. Nominations and applications should be sent to the Chairman of the Search Committee:

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Deborah Penner has been appointed editorial assistant of the *Leader*. She began her half-time assignment June 3. For three years she worked as a staff writer for the public relations office at Tabor College and most recently was administrative secretary for the school's department of business administration. As editorial assistant, she will assume both journalistic and clerical responsibilities. A member of the Parkview MB Church, Hillsboro, Kan., she and her husband, Paul, have three children.



Penner: On staff.

Rodney and Sheila Henne, Paso Robles, Calif., have accepted a call to be the pastoral couple of the Palm Glen MB Church,

Phoenix, Ariz. They began their ministry June 1. Rodney is a 1988 graduate of the MB Biblical Seminary and had been the youth pastor at First Mennonite Church, Paso Robles.

Delores Friesen, assistant professor of pastoral counseling at the MB Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., was part of a three-person

team sent to Liberia to offer grief and trauma counseling in that war-torn West African country. Appointed by the Mennonite Board of Missions, Friesen left May 29 and was scheduled to return June 18. The trio was to train schoolteachers and others prior to the reopening of schools in rural Liberia in July. (*MBM*)

Doctors with surgical skills are urgently needed at the Mennonite Brethren hospital in Kajiji, Zaire. MB Missions/Services continues to look for a doctor who can fill the position for a longer term; in the meantime, MBM/S is trying to provide a rotating team of doctors who can each donate four to eight weeks of service. Candidates should have experience with various emergency conditions and elective procedures. Participants will be needed as early as September; the program will continue through December 1992. Interested doctors should contact MBM/S headquarters in Winnipeg, Man. (*MBM/S*)

Merv Boschman has been named interim executive secretary of evangelism for the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference, effective Sept. 1, 1991, through June 30, 1992. A past director of admissions and recruitment at Fresno Pacific College, Boschman has been associate pastor of the Forest Grove Community Church, Saskatoon, Sask., for the past four years. For the past two years he has been chair of the Canadian Board of Evangelism, which oversees the work of the executive

Paper chase

Concerned to be better stewards of the environment and the world's natural resources, we have been looking to print the *Leader* on recycled paper that would give comparable production quality at an affordable cost. We believe we have found a source for such a paper and have committed ourselves to "test" it with this issue of the magazine and the next (July 16). We invite your comments regarding production quality. — DR



secretary. Boschman will remain in Saskatoon during the period of his appointment. (*MB Herald*)

Tabor College received some backhanded notoriety in the Campus Comedy department of the June issue of *Reader's Digest*. **Lori L. Lohrenz**, a 1980 graduate, received \$400 from the magazine for the following anecdote:

"I was reluctant to answer my six-year-old daughter when she asked how I met her father. Actually, it was a late-afternoon lecture at Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kan., when I took the seat next to his. As the professor droned on, we both fell asleep and awakened only when class was dismissed. I turned to my future husband with a slightly embarrassed smile, and he said, 'Don't worry. Even though we've just slept together, I still respect you.'

"For now, I'm just telling her we met in college."

Year-end report on conference giving

May 31 marked the end of the conference fiscal year. How well did our U.S. churches fund their conference ministries? **Dale Regier**, treasurer, reports the U.S. Conference ended its year in the black. The boards spent only \$340,589 of their approved budget of \$404,312. Churches contributed \$255,397 toward those expenses; the remainder of the funds came from individual gifts through the Mission USA and Evangelism Partners programs.

Similarly, Mission USA gifts and deposit earnings from the former MB Stewardship Ministries supplemented the \$219,551 from the churches to enable the U.S. Conference to complete its guaranteed subsidy

of \$298,253 to the MB Biblical Seminary.

Meanwhile, the boards of the General Conference finished the year with a deficit of \$8,665. Total expenses were \$123,743, or 102 percent of budget. However, that amount reflects a deficit accumulated by the past operation of Kindred Press, which the new Board of Resource Ministries is working to correct. Because this was the first year of the new triennium, the deficit will simply be carried over into the new fiscal year, according to Regier.

Overall, he adds, giving from the churches to national and binational conferences increased from a year ago.

Behold, the image of Christ

“**O**pen my eyes, Lord, I want to see Jesus. . . .” The words to that popular worship chorus continue to take on new meaning for the faithful. Through the years the image of Christ has miraculously appeared — in the eyes of some beholders, at least — in places as diverse as a tortilla, a soybean oil storage tank, and a shower.

You may have heard about the recent claims that the image of Jesus can be seen in the sauce featured in a Pizza Hut ad in Georgia. When I saw the ad, I admit it stirred deep feelings at the core of my being. But none that a five-minute Personal Pan Supreme couldn't satisfy.

Now I read where the image of Christ has put in an appearance on the wallpaper of a Catholic church in Wisconsin. Some see the image as a divine sign. Some see it as dirty wallpaper. Others don't see it all.

Worshippers have been traveling to the church since the image was first noticed during a charismatic healing service. Some see Jesus, some see other things: angels, the Virgin Mary, Jesus in the Garden, or the entire last Supper. Some see only a large head, while others see the outline of a person with long hair and flowing robes.

John Richetta, pastor of the church, sees the image but takes a balanced approach. “Our faith doesn't depend on this, but it has a good purpose if it brings people to prayer,” he told a Minneapolis newspaper reporter.

Why are so many people quick to seek visible proof of the invisible God? Phil Bunton, editorial director of Globe Communications, a supermarket tabloid publisher, thinks he knows. Responding to the Pizza Hut ad tizzy, he waxed transcendent: “The world is very boring. The recession is horrendous. Everyone is sort of miserable. And suddenly you see a face in a spaghetti-sauce ad and you think, ‘Hey, maybe there's something more out there.’”

You're on the right track, Phil. Something — rather, Someone — more *is* out there. And the image of that Someone is intended to be plainly visible to all. Not in tortillas, storage tanks, showers, meat sauce or wallpaper, but in and through the church. And not simply the face of Christ, but also his hands, his feet, his heart.

Perhaps the image of the church, including the Mennonite Brethren Church, would be clearer — and more compelling — in our society if it were more concerned about mirroring the image of Christ than the image of success and sanctimony. Or put another way, that we would be convinced to emulate the biblical Jesus, not the cultural

Jesus of our own fancy.

The cultural Jesus, as Tony Campolo describes him, is essentially a white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant Republican. He blesses the wealth and power that protects our personal comfort and is pleased with religion that asks people to be nicer and better but not to change. This Jesus gives much and asks little in return. The cultural Jesus is seldom seen among the poor, the homeless, the fringe of our society; he's much more at home leading victory parades in the nation's capital.

The biblical Jesus, the true image of Christ, is visible wherever his followers take seriously what he taught and modeled. He says to us, quite simply, “Come learn of me. And then be like me.” Paul put it this way: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” To reflect the image of the biblical Christ is to do what he would do in our circumstances. Believing the right stuff isn't enough; Jesus asks us to live the right stuff.

That image of Christ is less appealing to most of us. It is radical, even dangerous. It doesn't always register highly on the logic scale. It means letting go of the world's strategies for success and pursuing Jesus's strategy: loving servanthood. It is a strategy of giving ourselves, of caring, of loving, of redeeming, not destroying.

To reflect the true image of Christ is to be committed to the way of Christ, to imitate him in life. The 1982 Mennonite Brethren Church Membership Profile found that only 38 percent of U.S. Mennonite Brethren agreed with the premise that “Jesus expects us to follow his example.”

And we wonder why the world looks to pizza sauce for the countenance of Christ. Make no mistake: our faith, our future, *does* depend on the visibility of Christ's image in our midst. Meanwhile, the world is looking on.

DR

“To reflect the true image of Christ is to be committed to the way of Christ, to imitate him in life.”