

INSIDE...



Niagara United Mennonite Church

A thank you note from Operation Christmas Child.

Address:
RR#2, 1775 Niagara Stone Rd.
Niagara-on-the-Lake, On
L0S 1J0

Telephone:
(905)468-3313

Fax:
905-468-4754

e-mail:
office@redbrickchurch.ca

Website:
www.redbrickchurch.ca

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“I would like to thank the youth and your congregation for your amazing dedication and partnership to Operation Christmas Child. Through your church participating with us we have seen an incredible amount of shoeboxes being generate over the years and have been able to touch the lives of countless children.

Each shoebox gift is a Gospel opportunity for the local churches that we partner with in the countries that we are working. Beyond that one out of every 10 shoeboxes a child gives their life to Christ. These are children that are enrolled into our Mailbox club children’s curriculum through the local churches, graduate and are sharing their faith with their families, friends and the communities. Truly amazing when you think that each shoebox has that potential.

If you haven’t already seen it, check out this link

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKPO5rwWgCc>

It will tell you about a young man in Nicaragua named Juan whose life was changed through a shoebox.

Once again I thank you for partnering with us at Operation Christmas Child and I pray that you will continue to do so in the future. If you have any question or concern please feel free to give me a call or send me an email.

May God Bless you and your congregation for touching the lives of countless children for Christ.

Mark 9:37

“Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”

I would also like to invite anyone from your church that would like to be more involved with Operation Christmas Child to come out to a Network event, it is an information evening for those that would like to volunteer with us throughout the year. We have positions available in Prayer, Media, Church and Community relations. The Meeting is held at Bethel Baptist Church in St. Catharines, On April 6, 2010 at 7pm.”

Sincerely,

Jane Noble, Area Coordinator
Operation Christmas Child, St.Catharines/Niagara Falls

Sharing Corner ...

Lamenting for Bolivia

When the March 8th issue of the “Canadian Mennonite” arrived, I first looked, as I always do, for Melissa Miller’s column. This time her article was entitled “Handling each other’s pain”, which already spoke to me. But as I leafed further through the paper, I came upon another article which caught my eye, “Grant us a portion of their pain” by Rachel Bergen on page 18. This article told about a “service of lament” that was held in Winnipeg for the tragic incident that took place last year in the Manitoba Colony in Bolivia. It is alleged that more than 150 women and children, after being tranquilized, were raped. Eight men from their own community stand accused of this horrible crime. Acknowledging that we “Mennonites in North America have been slow to respond to their suffering”, Leona Dueck Penner called on God in her opening prayer to “forgive us our lack of compassion”. This sentence touched my conscience right on. Yes, I had read about this awful event last year. I had been shocked and repulsed by that story. I might have said a prayer or two, I don’t even remember. That was the end of it. The whole story was a little embarrassing for us “good Mennonites”, and I didn’t really identify with those people anyway. Just as it was, this is when I was still working. Everybody knew I was a Mennonite, but I made darn sure they knew, that I wasn’t from the horse and buggy people, I wasn’t one of the M&Ms, and I wasn’t an MB either. Shame on me! Aren’t we all brothers and sisters as Mennonites and as Christians? Or are we? And aren’t we called to look after those in need? And what about the men involved, do they not deserve our prayers? That is a real hard one for me. The Winnipeg prayer service raised \$3000 towards the building of a shelter for abused women and children in the Manitoba Colony.

And as if this article hadn’t moved me enough, right on the next page was another one by Cal Redekop “Free the mind, restore the vision.” He talks about how and why this possibly could have happen. Most Old Colony people are fine and decent people and we all know at least some of them. Redekop feels that the main cause for their problems is their isolation from the “world”. But what bothered me the most was what he said in his last sentence. “Unfortunately, Mennonites have a poor record here: We separate and condemn, rather than working out our differences in love”.

I would recommend you read both articles. Why am I writing this? It’s mainly because of my own feelings of guilt, and to remind you, as these articles did for me, not to forget our sisters in Bolivia. Their emotional pain and hurt won’t go away in one year nor in two. Some of it will never heal. Think of them with compassion and keep them in your prayers.

Lani Gade

PS. Just a reminder that the theme of the women’s enrichment day in Leamington on April 17th is: “Bolivian Mennonite Women ~A Vision for the Future.”



April at a glance...

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 9:30-11:30am Mom & Tots 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	2 10:30 am GOOD FRIDAY & COMMUNION OFFICE CLOSED	3
4 10:45 am EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE	5 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study 7:00 pm Young women's bible study	6 9:00 am Women in Mission Quilt 7:00 pm Women in Service Quilt 7:30 pm Church Council Meeting	7 6:30 pm Pioneer Clubs Award Night 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting 7:00 pm Peace Tax Information Night	8 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	9 7:00 pm Revelation Bible Study 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	10
11 10:00 am Udo Woelke 11:00 am Pastor Rudy Dirks (guest choir – Inter Mennonite Children's Choir)	12 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study 7:00 pm Young women's bible study 7:00 pm Male Choir	13 9:00 am Women in Mission Quilt 7:30 pm Women in Service Meet	14 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting 7:00 pm Missions & Service Comm. Meeting	15 9:30-11:30am Mom & Tots 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	16 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	17
18 10:45 am Pastor Rudy Dirks (followed by congregational meeting after service in the sanctuary) 2:30-6:00 pm Jr. Youth @ Peaks Rock Climbing	19 7:00 pm Young women's bible study 7:00 pm Male Choir	20 2:00 pm Women in Mission Closing 7:00 pm Spiritual Council Meeting	21 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting	22 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	23 7:00 pm Revelation Bible Study 7:30 pm Sr. Youth MCEC Annual Gathering at Club Roma	24 MCEC Annual Gathering at Club Roma
25 10:00 am Joachim Dau 11:00 am John Tiessen	26 7:00 pm Young women's bible study 7:00 pm Male Choir	27 7:00 pm Education Committee Mtg	28 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting 7:00 pm Worship Committee Mtg	29 9:30-11:30am Mom & Tots 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	30 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	



April Birthdays...

1 – Eleanore Suckau (84)
10 – Margarethe Neufeld (80)
16 – Tina Sawatzky (83)
29 – Mary Andres (87)

4 – Gerhard Friesen (81)
15 – Chip Steingart (87)
18 – Margaret Rempel (83)

Change of Address



Werner & Ulrike Wiens
RR#3, 2214 Four Mile Creek Rd.
Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0
(905) 468-0871

Other news...

Tallman Funeral Homes is having its next 8-week Bereavement Support Program that will begin Tuesday, April 6th at 7:00 pm at the Tallman Fireside Room, 3275 King St., Vineland. As well they are offering a Children's Bereavement all-day workshop for children 6-12 years of age. If you have any questions or to register please call Sandy at 905-563-5268 or June at 905-562-393.

Understanding Dementia and related loss of function - You are invited to an evening talk (with a question time following) given by Jo O'Brien from the Alzheimer's Society of Niagara. Please feel free to join us at the St. Catharines U. M. Church, 335 Linwell Road on Wednesday, April 7 at 7 p.m. This could affect each of us -- either for one of our family members or as we ourselves age.

Upcoming Fraser Lake Camp Events:

April 10th - 6 pm - Fundraising Dinner and Auction featuring guest speaker Rick Tobias from Younge Street Mission

April 17th - 6 pm - Fundraising Dinner and concert featuring musical guests 'Rouge River Connection'

Email info@fraserlakecamp.com or call 905.642.2964 today to purchase tickets or for more information.

Women's Spring Enrichment Day, April 17th at Leamington United Mennonite Church, 78 Oak St. E., Leamington, ON, 10:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Registration: 9:45 a.m. Bolivian Mennonite Women - A Vision for the Future with Liz Koop. \$22 by April 7th / \$25 after April 7. For more information: Florence Jantzi, 519-669-4356

A Mennonite and Brethren Marriage Encounter is a gentle, non-threatening, private experience that can be busy, exciting, challenging and very rewarding. Don't miss out on it! Register now for the weekend at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, June 4-6, 2010. Contact the church office for a brochure and application form.

Register now to take your choice of five-day courses for professional development or academic credit at the 2011 Canadian School of Peacebuilding to be held at Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg, MB, June 14 to July 2, 2010. Visit www.cmu.ca/csop or e-mail csop@cmu.ca

Visit the following website <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/resources/equipping/index.htm> to learn more about Mennonite Church Canada. Also visit our area conference's website, <http://mcec.ca/> to learn more about Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada.

Springfest 2010 "The 9th Annual" May 8th, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

GARDEN CENTER

Needed: 5 enthusiastic handy people to make wood garden projects such as ornaments and accessories, birdhouses, flower boxes, garden stools and chairs, little decorative fences, windmills, animals, bugs and birds. Gardeners--save your perennials and other cuttings: pussy willows, ground cover, herbs and bedding plants. **Contact: Ruth Willms 905-984-2166**



BAKE SALE



Men, Women, Boys and Girls, why not bake some cookies or squares; put together a lemon loaf or banana bread or some delicious muffins or some wonderful homemade bread, white or brown or even rye! **Contact Bake Sale & Café: AnneMarie Enns 905-468-2404**

CHILDREN'S AREA

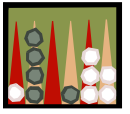
We need gently loved toys for all ages. Building blocks, action figures, dolls, cars, books, baby toys or outdoor toys. Take some time to do a toy room cleanup, you never know what you will find. No stuffed toys or car seats please. **Contact: Emily Fieguth 905-468-9788**



BOOK SALE



Don't miss checking out the great assortment of books, magazines, games and puzzles. If you have any of these items to donate, please make sure they are complete and have all the pieces. The books should be reasonably new and the magazines current within a year or two.



SILENT AUCTION

There is great opportunity for a lot of creativity in this department:



- a) Gift certificates for dining, entertainment, lodging, auto services, golf packages etc. may be purchased and donated. Please prepare a display page with lots of eye appeal, if possible.
- b) Open your home for a themed dining experience, Sunday lunch, pool party, afternoon tea etc. Please state the number of guests you can accommodate and the time frame you are offering. Again, a colorful, eye-catching 8 X 10 page will attract more attention (and bids)!
- c) Household, patio, children's, and workshop articles for the silent auction (which is different than the garage sale) must be new or considered antiques or collectibles.

* If at all possible, please bring all items to the office or Springfest room (#20) by Wed. May 5th so that we can catalogue them and display them to best advantage. No items for Silent Auction will be accepted after 7:00 pm. Friday, May 7th. Thanks, in advance! **Contact: Marlene Heidebrecht 905-682-4902**

VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED AND APPRECIATED

Watch for sign up sheets being posted soon. Why not sign up to help in some way? There are many ways to help, large and small. We thank the Lord for you all. **Contact: Linda Friesen (Henry) 905-684-2929**

SEE YOU THERE

Looking forward to seeing the whole Church Family on Saturday, May 8th, right here on the church grounds, enjoying the Barbeque, hot coffee and goodies at the Café and the wonderful live musical entertainment. It will be a grand day! Bring your appetite.

Church Office: 905-468-3313
Linda Friesen (Henry) 905-684-2929

