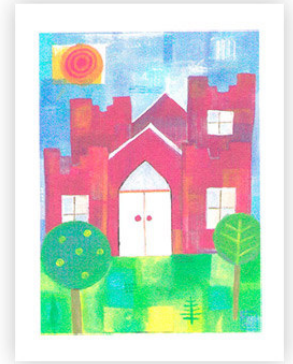


May 2010

Volume 4, Issue 5

INSIDE...



Niagara United Mennonite Church

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Fair Trade at Ten Thousand Villages ...

Ten Thousand Villages encourage you to shop where your purchase makes a difference. Customers can find jewelry, personal accessories, home décor, furniture, musical instruments, cards, garden accessories and food product that are all FAIR TRADE.

Fair Trade is a trading partnership based on dialogue, transparency, and respect which seeks greater equity in international trade. Fair Trade is based on the principle that trade should have a conscience and proves that greater justice in world trade IS possible.

Consider serving Fair Trade Coffee. Coffee is one of the most heavily traded commodities, yet much of the world's coffee is grown by small farmers struggling just to make a simple living. Most of the farmers live in isolated communities in some of the poorest countries in the world and sell their coffee to middlemen who offer the lowest price possible. They never know how much they'll get for their crops. The producers of a rich crop are trapped in poverty. Our coffee company 'Level Ground Trading' guarantees a fair price per pound to farmers, which reflects the true value of farm labour, including a guaranteed minimum when market prices are low. Farmers have more control of the trade process and profits from the sale of their crops. Access to credit and continuity of purchases, which are key fair trade principles, also allow farmers to dream and plan a better future.

So join us May 8th at the store after Springfest and try some Fair Trade coffee and food samples. Some local musicians will provide music between 12-2pm. Hope to see you there, 109 Queen St., NOTL.

Please read the articles about Fair Trade in our latest Canadian Mennonite April 19th edition.

Written by Anne Litke,
Store Manager

Sharing Corner ...



A cheque was presented in support for a Habitat for Humanity home building project in St. Catharines. The donation was made under the umbrella of the Mission's & Service committee. Pictured below are Peter Janzen and Bill Devolin from NUMC along with Alastair Davis, Habitat Niagara CEO and John Sherk, construction teacher with District School Board of Niagara. Habitat for Humanity's mission is to build affordable housing and promote homeownership as a means to break the cycle of poverty for low-income families. To date Habitat has built over 300,000 homes around the world. The St Catharines project was completed in February 2010.

Post conference thoughts ...

On April 10th, some of our members attending a one-day conference at The Peoples Church in Toronto called The Evolving Church: Kingdom Economy. Here are some of thoughts they would like to share with us:

The conference was on the evolving Kingdom Economy. About 12 – 13 people from our church attended, from young adults all the way up to seniors. There were nine speakers who talked on anything from the latest global financial crisis to how does the movie Avatar relate to our faith. Each of the speakers presented their viewpoint on how they see the kingdom affecting different aspects of our lives. These speakers were all engaging as well as speaking at a level that forced you to think. As always you walked away with questions. Each speaker appeared to be following the motto presented by one of them which is, it is not our job to tell you the answer. Our job is to make you question so hard that you are forced into the scriptures in order to deal with the pain of not knowing. There were also workshops that were hosted by the various speakers so that they could deal with their topic in more depth than their 25 minutes on stage allowed. In this, the problem is which workshop to choose over all the others. For myself, perhaps the most compelling speaker was the minister from a church in Houston, who talked about how they were interacting with the people in their community in order to meet their needs. This forces me to ask the same question. We have spent much time trying to discern how to deal with the needs of the members of NUMC. This is a good thing. But I believe we are being called to look beyond our four walls, in how we can present the gospel to the community. So for me, the conference was an eye opener and a good time of worship with other Christians.

John Tiessen





May at a glance...

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 10:00 am Hans H. Dau 10:45 am Rev. Hyacinth Edwards (CWOP) (guest choir – Toronto Mass Choir)	3 7:00 pm Young women’s bible study 7:00 pm Male Choir	4 7:30 pm Church Council Meeting	5 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting 7:00 pm Education Committee Meeting	6 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	7 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	8 10am-2pm 9th ANNUAL SPRINGFEST
9 10:45 am Mother’s Day Pastor Rudy Dirks	10 7:00 pm Young women’s bible study	11 7:00 pm Spiritual Council Meeting	12 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting 7:30 pm Missions & Service Comm. Meeting	13 9:30-11:30am Mom & Tots 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	14 7:00 pm Revelation Bible Study 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	15
16 10:00 am Udo Woelke 11:00 am John Tiessen - testimonies / baptisms 4:00 pm Jr. Youth – Queenston Heights	17 7:00 pm Young women’s bible study	18	19 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting	20 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	21 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	22
23 10:00 am Ramona Neufeld 11:00 am Pastor Rudy Dirks - testimonies / baptisms	24 OFFICE CLOSED 7:00 pm Young women’s bible study	25	26 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting	27 9:30-11:30am Mom & Tots 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	28 7:00 pm Revelation Bible Study 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	29
30 10:45 am Pentecost/Baptisms /Communion Pastor Rudy Dirks	31 7:00 pm Young women’s bible study					



Mennonite Church Canada – Prayer, Notes & News

Sunday Dates	Prayer:	Ministry Notes:	News:
May 2 Many Peoples Sunday	Please pray for and with the Church As we celebrate the diversity of God’s church on Many Peoples Sunday, please pray that God’s people around the globe will be inspired to seek new ways of connecting with each other, and for expressing Christ’s peace and justice wherever they may be.	Ministry Notes: This is how your financial support of Mennonite Church Canada is ministering...from across the street to around the world! Thank you for supporting Mennonite Church Canada’s Multi-Cultural ministry and helping us to connect with those of other languages and cultures. God’s people come from a wide spectrum of cultural and ethnic diversity that is increasingly reflected in Mennonite Church Canada congregations. We have so much to learn from and share with each other!	News: Stay in tune with the wider church Can people of different faiths work together for a common good? Find out in Episode 38 of the Church Matters podcast at mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1302
May 9	Please pray that God will provide healing for Mennonite Church Canada Witness worker in Macau, Tim Buhler , who recently injured both arms in a serious fall. Both arms are in slings. Also, pray that despite the distance, Tim’s wife Cindy will find ways to connect with her sister in Canada who was recently diagnosed with cancer.	The Mennonite Church Canada Assembly is the biggest annual faith formation opportunity offered to congregations. Register for this year’s assembly - Reclaiming Jesus; Gladly Wear the Name - online at mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1300 or download the Registration Booklet here: mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1303 . Your continued support of and participation in these gatherings contributes to the fellowship and ministry of Mennonite Church Canada.	Truth and Reconciliation, Treaty and Covenant. Tune in to a two part Church Matters series (Episode 39* and 40*) for a biblical and churchly perspective on promises, treaties, and covenants in the context of Aboriginal land claims in Canada. mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/206
May 16	The search for a new General Secretary for Mennonite Church Canada is ongoing. Please pray that God’s wisdom and understanding will guide each member of the search committee, and that the right candidate will sense God’s leading to this important role.	Mennonite Church Canada has introduced a Youth Ambassador option for Assembly 2010, Reclaiming Jesus; Gladly Wear the Name . For more information, see the registration booklet at mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1303 . Thank you for encouraging youth in your congregation to participate in the wider church – and for supporting them in their efforts!	100 new DVDs have recently been purchased at the Resource Centre – great for home viewing and small group study. Your support of Mennonite Church Canada allows our library to offer these and many more thousands of specialized resources for loan, sale or download.
May 23	Today is Pentecost! As we celebrate the birth of Christ’s Church, pray that the power of the Holy Spirit will anoint God’s people in new ways to meet the spiritual hunger of the world around them.	Thank you for supporting Mennonite Church Canada Learning Tours , which allow participants to more intimately experience the ministries we engage in together. In 2010, Learning Tours brought people to Philippines, China, and Israel-Palestine. An Aboriginal Learning tour to the Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park at Siksika First Nation is planned for Assembly 2010.	

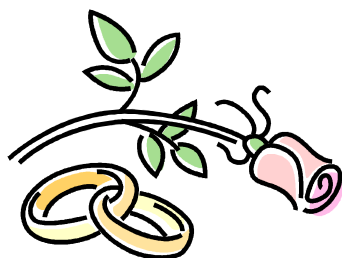


May Birthdays...

2 – Katie Wiens (82)
7 – Henry Pauls (Emilie) (83)
23 – Aran Kopp (80)

3 – Julianna Neuhof (86)
19 – Kaethe Esau (84)
26 – Emilie Pauls (84)

Happy 25th Wedding Anniversary



Helmut & Lucy Friesen
(March 9)

Happy 50th Wedding Anniversary



Alex & Olga Neufeld
(May 21)

Change of Address



Kevin & Stephanie Niessen
37 Prince Philip Dr.
St. Catharines, ON
L2N 3H9
(905) 397-5380

Change of Address



Helga Wiens
529 Woodbine Ave.
Toronto, ON M4E 2H7
647-886-5954

Change of Address



Karin Wiens
62 Harry Douglas Dr.
Stittsville, ON K2S 1Z4
416-938-8872



Reading from the International Scene

by Greta Wiens

Investigative journalism is not for the faint-hearted, and in Colombia, it is almost impossible because of the dangers involved. During the past ten years or so, more than 30 Colombian reporters have been assassinated for doing their jobs in areas of conflict. To the guerrillas and paramilitary groups vying for control of various parts of the country, public opinion is important and they don't want the true perpetrators of acts of violence to be named.

Foreign journalists are less at risk because their stories are aimed at an overseas audience rather than the Colombian population affected by the violence in the first place. However, international reporters for mainstream media tend to stay in the capital, Bogota, and their travel to outlying areas, arranged by Colombian and US government officials, often results in news coverage that present the views of government, military, and big business interests while ignoring the social and economic realities facing rural peasants.

In this context, Garry Leech, an independent journalist and author who also lectures in Political Science at Nova Scotia's Cape Breton University, feels that foreign correspondents actually have a special responsibility to cover the stories that their Colombian colleagues avoid.

During the course of a research expedition he made to Colombia in 2006, he experienced a one-day detention by guerrillas that caused him to reflect on the work he does and his motivation for it, not to mention the consequences it could have for his family.

In his subsequent book, Beyond Bogota: Diary of a Drug War Journalist in Colombia*, he uses the 11 hours of his captivity as a framework to explain the historical and political situation of Colombia, the involvement of the US government, and North Americans' complicity in the ongoing displacement of civilians whether through an unsuccessful war on drugs or the extraction of natural resources.

This is a book for adults and one that I recommend for those who seek to understand why there is an ongoing movement of refugees from Colombia to Canada.

One quotation that struck me was this one, attributed to a major in the Colombian army:

“Colombia’s problem is not poverty; Ecuador and Peru are poorer than Colombia and they don’t have [the violent conflict we do]. Nor is narco-trafficking Colombia’s problem; Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru also have narco-trafficking. The problem is authority. We haven’t had real leadership until now ...”

In a country where independent armed groups claim control of individual villages under the guise of providing security, the question remains how and when this issue will be resolved.

Meanwhile, Justapaz, a peace and justice ministry of the Colombian Mennonite Church, works with partner agencies to document incidents of kidnapping, threats, and murder affecting the Protestant and evangelical churches in Colombia. Here are some sample cases:

- A pastor was murdered by alleged ELN guerrillas “for conducting worship services in guerrilla territory. They waited for him outside a Sunday service and shot him nine times in front of about fifty people,



including his wife and three children.” In July 2007, his wife and children were displaced – forced to move – after their son said that he had seen his father’s killers.

- Joel (not his real name), a 19-year-old student and member of a Mennonite church, had already been displaced several times with his family. “One day as he was leaving the university a pair of alleged paramilitaries followed him for several blocks, keeping him in sight. When he got on a bus, the pair caught up to him and got on the same bus. Fearful, Joel changed buses and the pair did the same. Other family members saw the same men, who followed him home and waited on the corner, watching and talking on a cell phone for about fifteen minutes.” After this, Joel and his family again had to relocate, and he decided to live separately from them.
- “Hugo”, a married pastor and father of seven, used his savings to buy a farm in the province of Antioquia. Besides ranching, farming, and tourism, the basis of the local economy includes mining for gold, quartz, and marble. The family found a small amount of gold on their farm, but as it wasn’t sufficiently profitable they decided to discontinue mining. Nevertheless, FARC guerrillas demanded to receive either the gold or a “protection fee”. Continued threats by the guerrillas make the pastor fear for his life and that of his children, one of whom has already fled to another part of the country.
- In Barranquilla, paramilitaries asked a woman to sew uniforms for them and made death threats against her after she reported this. Even though she and her family moved elsewhere, the death threats continued.

115 other such stories are recorded in the publication [A Prophetic Call, Edition No. 3: Colombian Protestant churches document their suffering and their hope.](#)** Altogether, they reveal a culture of fear and intimidation that, in our society, we can hardly imagine. The closest comparison might be to the criminal underworld of gang warfare, protection rackets and so on – the difference being that, for the most part, we can trust our local police services, municipal authorities, and government in general to act against it.

In Colombia, collusion between the army (ostensibly under government control) and the paramilitaries, for example, makes it difficult for people to be sure that they will be protected and obtain justice.

At Niagara United Mennonite Church, we support the work of Justapaz through our donations to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). We can also support its workers and clientele by praying for their safety and for peace in their country.

This year, interested members of our congregation are once again invited to join a team that will explore sponsorship of refugees from abroad. So far, we have helped two families from Colombia resettle in Canada, but that does not necessarily mean we will focus on Colombia next time, in spite of the information presented above. Please speak to Kathy Rempel, chair of the Missions and Service Committee, or Greta Wiens, if you have comments, suggestions, or would otherwise like to participate.

*1 – available for perusal either at the Welcome Centre or by speaking to Greta Wiens

*2 – Garry Leech’s book, [Beyond Bogota](#), is available at the Grantham Library in St. Catharines, but can also be borrowed in Niagara-on-the-Lake via interlibrary loan.

P.S. Also recommended: Until death do us part: my struggle to reclaim Colombia, by Ingrid Betancourt. This book was published in 2002 and is available in St. Catharines as well as the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library. Ingrid Betancourt was running for the presidency of Colombia in 2002 when she was kidnapped by FARC guerrillas. She was freed in a remarkable rescue operation in 2009 and now lives in France.

Note: Comments by Major Edgar Ortega quoted from page 178, *Beyond Bogota: Diary of a Drug War Journalist in Colombia*, by Garry Leech. Published by Beacon Press, Boston, 2009.

Healing Relationships ...

This year's focus for our church is "Healing Relationships". If you have poem, or a letter, or would like to write something that is meaningful to you to share on this matter, please submit it to the office. Here are this month's submission (s):

"The Carpenter", *author unknown, submitted by Laurene Nickel*

Once upon a time, two brothers who lived on adjoining farms fell into conflict. It was the first serious rift in 40 years of farming side-by-side, sharing machinery, and trading labour and goods as needed, without a hitch. Then the long collaboration fell apart.

It began with a small misunderstanding, and it grew into a major difference, and finally, it exploded into an exchange of bitter words, followed by weeks of silence. One morning, there was a knock on John's door. He opened it to find a man with a carpenter's toolbox. "I'm looking for a few days' work," he said. "Perhaps you would have a few small jobs here and there I could help with? Could I help you?"

"Yes", said the older brother. "I do have a job for you. Look across the creek at that farm. That's my neighbour. In fact, it's my younger brother! Last week, there was a meadow between us. He recently took his bulldozer to the river levee, and now there is a creek between us. Well, he may have done this to spite me, but I'll do him one better. See that pile of lumber by the barn? I want you to build me a fence. An 8-foot fence, so I won't need to see his place, or his face, anymore." The carpenter said, "I think I understand the situation. Show me the nails, and the post-hole digger, and I'll be able to do a job that pleases you."

The older brother had to go to town, so he helped the carpenter get the materials ready and then he was off for the day. The carpenter worked hard all that day – measuring, sawing, and nailing. About sunset, when the farmer returned, the carpenter had just finished his job. The farmer's eyes opened wide, his jaw dropped. There was no fence there at all. It was a bridge ... a bridge that stretched from one side of the creek to the other! A fine piece of work, with handrails, and all! And, the neighbour, his younger brother, was coming toward them, his hand outstretched ... "You are quite a fellow to build this bridge, after all I've said and done."

The two brothers stood at each end of the bridge, and then they met in the middle, taking each other's hand. They turned to see the carpenter hoist his toolbox onto his shoulder. "No wait! Stay a few days. I've a lot of other projects for you," said the older brother. "I'd love to stay on," the carpenter said, "but I have many more bridges to build. Just remember this ..."

Other news...

Ten Thousand Villages will be hosting a World Fair Trade Day celebration on Saturday, May 8th 2010 from 10am – 5pm at our Niagara-on-the-Lake location, 109 Queen Street. It will feature fair trade food tastings, giveaways and entertainment by Penner MacKay, Steve Goldberger, Doug Miller & friends. Come and celebrate with us!

2nd Annual Paddle the Grand fundraiser for Silver Lake Mennonite Camp on Saturday May 15, 2010 from 12 noon (West Montrose) – 3 pm (Kaufman Flats). Come and enjoy a great, leisurely paddle down the grand river while supporting the important children's ministry of Silver Lake. Potluck dinner to follow. For more information, including pledge sheets and registration forms please visit www.slmc.on.ca or contact Dave Erb – silverlake@slmc.on.ca or 519-422-1401.

The Canadian Bible Society (CBS) is attempting to raise awareness of its work, its resources, and invite participation in its mission: The CBS Vision is to reach every person with the life-giving Word of God and to encourage its use. The Society's work is funded through donations, through the sale of Christian literature, and through its annual walkathon. Look for more information on the community bulletin board at the back of the church – note particularly the poster announcing this year's 41st Annual Walkathon Saturday May 15th, 2010. Proceeds to go for earth-quake struck Haiti and Chile, plus Canadian Native Translations. Any questions may be directed to Werner Fast, 905 468-7493.

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

Epiphaneia Network presents "Eighth Letter" on October 1-2, 2010 at St. Paul's Bloor Street in Toronto. The premise: in Revelation, John wrote 7 letters to the churches. In Toronto, we're giving you 15 minutes to communicate your most pressing message to the Church in North America. Cost: \$75 today. \$150 at the door. You can already purchase tickets. There will be many more details released in the near future but for now, mark it down - October 1-2, 2010. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us either by email at info@epiphaneia.ca or call us at 416 994 8960.

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: Anne Marie 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.

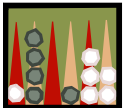


No stuffed toys or car seats please. **Contact: Emily Fieguth 905-468-9788**

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

