



SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2015, VOLUME 2 EDITION 8

# *Life With Us*

At Niagara United Mennonite Church

*"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.*

*"Serve the Lord with gladness:  
come before his presence with singing.*

*"Know ye that the Lord he is God:  
it is he that hath made us,  
and not we ourselves; we are his people,  
and the sheep of his pasture.*

*"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,  
and into his courts with praise:  
be thankful unto him, and bless his name.*

*"For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting;  
and his truth endureth to all generations.*

*Psalm 100*



*Trust in the Lord  
with all your heart  
lean not on your  
own understanding*



Over the course of my life, I've felt God's direction leading me where to go. God's voice is usually quiet for me, like a very gentle nudge showing me where to go. In the last few years though, I've felt God's direction more strongly, like a firm hand on my back clearly guiding my direction. I thought it may be an experience worth sharing...

The whole experience has to do with my career and how it has evolved in the last few years. As far back as I can remember, I pictured myself as a teacher. After high school, I started putting this dream into motion by going to university and studying Music Education, and then completing a Masters Degree in the Science of Elementary Education.

The next part of my story I've re-written many times. It's difficult to adequately communicate my feelings once I started teaching. In short, I did not enjoy it.

Some issues were directly connected to supply teaching (rather than contract teaching) but the behavioural issues were more than I ever expected, with students pushing the boundaries of acceptable behaviour on a regular basis. I also felt ill-prepared to deal with the large spectrum of students with special needs. I'll never forget the day a student with autism was having trouble coping with a new teacher (me!) in the classroom. The student flopped on the ground screaming as loud as possible, violently scribbling markers on the floor, and pulling out clumps of hair in frustration. If I tried to near the child, the student would scream even louder and pull out more hair. I felt powerless and incredibly ineffective. That day I went home and cried. This was not what I thought teaching would be.

Aside from the behavioural issues, I found early morning calls so draining, especially as a person who thrives on routine and consistency. As an introvert, working at new schools was an exhausting day, with new staff members, and new students at every turn. There are aspects of teaching (not related to supplying) that also made me realize that I was not cut out to be a teacher, but I won't dive into those reasons now, for the sake of space.

It was after three months of supplying that I realized teaching was not the career I had pictured, and it was definitely not the right path for me. It was a very scary realization since Dave and I had taken out large student loans, investing in the future I no longer wanted.

I asked God over and over what I was supposed to do. The rest of that school year was incredibly difficult.

I continued supply teaching, but I felt more and more drained with each passing day. I was applying to jobs in office administration (about fifteen jobs over the course of a year and a half) but never received any interviews.

What did God want from me? Every door seemed to be closing. The rest of that first school year was a huge test of my faith. Somehow I had landed myself in a career I strongly disliked, and I had no idea what to do. Over and over I prayed that I would be able to trust God. There was a reason for this, there had to be.

The year was a series of ups and downs. What on earth do you do with a teaching degree when you don't want to be a teacher? Then God would whisper to me, and let me know that I could give him my disappointment. How were Dave and I ever going to pay off the masses of student debt I had accumulated by attending an American university? God whispered that I could trust him. How could I deal with the guilt of putting Dave and I in such a poor financial situation at the very start of our marriage? God told me not to worry, and gave me a husband who was nothing but supportive. What were the chances even of finding a job in our tiny town? Never in my life had I struggled with so many questions, and so many unknowns. I had never felt so mentally, emotionally, and spiritually unstable. My resolve could be shattered at the drop of a hat, but I tried as best as I could to keep coming to God, over and over and over. Even though I did find comfort in trusting God, I was surprised at how negative I had become. I felt worn down. This wasn't me.

The summer after my first year of teaching I finally had a break. I had two months to gather myself before having to go back to work. I was trying to figure out what to do, and I thought maybe piano teaching was something I could take more seriously, and maybe even get a few more students.

I was not used to praying for specific things. (Instead of praying that I would get the job I was applying to, I'd pray that God would open the right doors.) For some reason, I decided to pray differently this time. I was desperate to reduce my teaching hours, so one day towards the end of the summer, I prayed that God would give me one new piano student. Later that day the phone rang, and I talked to a mom who wanted to start her child in piano lessons. I thanked God, and prayed, "God, I don't know if I should be praying so directly for things, but that was really cool.

Was that a coincidence, or was that you? ...Can I have another student?" The next day I got an email from another parent! The next day I prayed, "God, this is weirdly perfect timing... can I have another student?" And He gave me another. This went on for a few weeks, and within the course of about a month, I went from 5 piano students, to over 20! I filled up my evening piano teaching schedule completely. It was unreal.

I really enjoy working with kids one-on-one, so it was neat to have a job that was in the field of music education, without being a classroom teacher. Since I was teaching piano more regularly, I was able to reduce my supply teaching regions to just Niagara-on-the-Lake. This way I wouldn't get calls for Beamsville one day, and Fort Erie the next. I was able to just teach at Crossroads School in Virgil, where I knew many of the kids, and teachers. This was a huge relief for me, and I was able to begin enjoying supply teaching which was great. I felt like I was getting back on track, bit by bit.

My second year of supply teaching (at Crossroads only, and teaching piano in the evenings) was a huge improvement, and I was so relieved. Although I still didn't want to stay in teaching for the long term, having piano students reduced the pressure (I put on myself) to find another job. By the spring, I was still enjoying teaching piano, but since it only provided 10 hours per week of work, I had to continue supply teaching. I wondered if it would be possible to reduce my supply teaching hours even more for the coming year...

One day in April (just a few months ago) I was talking to God, and feeling a little down on myself for not being more consistent in my trust of him. I was always trusting, doubting, and trusting again. I feared that one day I would find the 'dream job' but not have solved the issue of how I could maintain trust in God, and all of this struggle would be for nothing.

All the sudden it hit me: trusting God wasn't something that I would 'achieve' and then maintain. It would be unrealistic for one to always *feel* like trusting God. I realized that the important thing was that I kept coming back to him every time I doubted. Continually. Over and over. I was *already* successful in trusting God. It wasn't something to be achieved but a continual process, over the course of my whole entire life. I felt relief like I had never felt before. For the first time in a long time, I realized how close I had drawn myself to God in the last few years.

**It was a beautiful moment of clarity and introspection: I felt free.**

### Offertory Instrumental Ensemble - The Hale Family +

Ashleen Hale is 10 years old, in grade 5 at Crossroads P.S., and just learned to play the violin the week before this performance. She has also just learned how to play the ukulele.

Lexi is 14 and in Gr. 9 at Laura Secord High School. She is the pianist.

Markus is 15 and in Gr. 10 at Laura Secord. He plays the guitar.

Joyce Friesen is the daughter of Jeff and Anita Friesen. She is in Gr. 6 at Crossroads and has taken violin lessons for 2.5 years.

The other violinist is Lolita Hale, the mom of all the other Hales.

I would truly love to get a separate recorder group started and would enjoy having instruments of any kind join our little group. I was hoping the focus would be kids, but we'll take kids of any age ☺

~ submitted by Lolita Hale

(Thank-you for your willing contribution to our worship service.)

The next day, (the very next day) I was at home making dinner. I saw the newspaper get dropped off on the driveway and I felt like I needed to go get it right away. I brought the paper inside, and felt compelled to go directly to the classifieds. (In the past I would glance at the classifieds in the Advance every once in awhile, but far from consistently.)

I opened it up, and the first thing that caught my eye was a job posting for Music Niagara. That sounded pretty neat... They were looking for an administrative coordinator (the exact kind of job I had hoped for once I started looking outside teaching) who was proficient in using Mac-based operating systems, (my preferred type of computer for the last 10 years) had a background in music, (my whole degree was in music) and could work part-time (ideal for piano teaching) in Niagara-on-the-Lake (biking distance from my house.) The only thing missing was my name, flashing in lights above the posting. I asked God if this was the job for me, and I had an overwhelming feeling to apply. A few days later I went to the interview and an hour after I got home, I was offered the position. I was elated.

It was so clear to me that God wanted to let me know that I had done well by continually trusting him. And his reassurance came right before things were about to change for the better, so I could spiritually move forward.

Now, my heart is at peace. This fall, I'll be attempting to juggle 3 part-time jobs, (so we'll see how long the peace lasts, heehee!) but the pressure is completely off supply teaching as my main source of income which is a huge relief. I may continue teaching in schools, or I may not. All I know is that God knew all along where I was going to end up. When I was most frustrated, I picture him saying **"Hang in there, Rach! There's something amazing coming, and it's even better than you can imagine ..."**

~

submitted by  
Rachael Peters



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## “I Belong to a Global Family”

Ellery Rauwerda (Penner)

**F**or the past number of Mennonite World Conferences, a Global Youth Summit (GYS) has been held a few days before the main conference. This gathering of approximately 600 youth from around the world is a time devoted to building relationships, community, and the global church within and between the young adults around the world. Through MCEC, I had the privilege of taking a diverse group of young adults to the GYS in Pennsylvania. Below are some of my reflections on our truly incredible experience.

At this moment, I am right in the middle of the Mennonite World Conference's Global Youth Summit, taking place at Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, PA. I'm between a workshop on *Exploring the Ethical Challenges of Peace Work* and dinner, where, if the pattern continues as it has gone this past day and a half, the table I share will be filled with youth from at least three other countries. I arrived on Thursday afternoon, and it is only Saturday, but the richness of the last 48 hours makes it feel as though I've been immersed in this experience for much longer.

This is the second Global Youth Summit I've attended. I had the privilege of being at the GYS and MWC in Paraguay in 2009. It was there that my view of what makes a *Mennonite* was flipped on its head. In Paraguay, I came to discover that you do not have to eat zwieback to be Mennonite! I realized that the vast majority of Mennonites are actually from Africa, not North America. My mind was opened and my soul received the incredible blessing of a community that is far more diverse and multicultural than I ever knew it to be.

On Thursday, July 16th, I drove up to Kitchener at the crack of dawn to meet three other youth who would travel to Pennsylvania for the 2015 Global Youth Summit. In the parking lot of 50 Kent (the Kitchener hub of all things Mennonite), as I waited for our group to arrive,

a car pulled up and out came a familiar face. It was a young man from the Ukraine, who I had met and last saw at the conference in 2009. *What were the odds that I would find this young man from the Ukraine, in the parking lot of 50 Kent, at the exact moment that I would be here?* I'm beginning to realize that, in this community, those odds are actually pretty high. You see, while my last great revelation was that the Mennonite community is incredibly diverse, my great revelation at this conference is that I belong to a global family. I don't just belong

to a faith identity or a church organization. I belong to a living, breathing *global family*.

What does this look like? Over the past day and a half, my global family looks like discovering that my roommate, born and raised in South Korea (now in the USA), knows not just one but two of my friends – one a Korean himself, who I met in school; the other a Canadian who I met in my hometown. My global family looks like glancing around the lunch table and realizing that I am sharing this meal with youth from Mexico, Malawi, Paraguay, the USA, and Canada. My global family looks like a pickup game of Frisbee with IVEPers from Indonesia, where I served on SALT, and an opportunity to speak Bahasa Indonesia with both them and an American SALTER who just returned from Indonesia herself. It looks like meeting someone who grew up in the very same colony that my grandmother grew up in before she fled the Ukraine during World War II; and it looks like talking about that through the help of a translator, a camera, hand gestures, and lots of laughs. My global family looks like over 100 youth breaking out into pitch-perfect 4-part harmony at an International Hymn Sing Night, all familiar with the same songs even if not in the same language. It looks like a conversation with 20 youth from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, and North America, about the gifts God has given us and the way we can use them to bless others. It looks like learning that one member of this global family has made a living as a clown because he believes that laughter opens the soul and enables us to be receptive to hearing about God. It looks like deep conversations about faith, peace, justice, hope, culture, hardships, challenges, and community, within only a few moments of meeting. It looks like giving and receiving smiles to and from every person I pass in the hallways. It looks like a sense of belonging, no matter what our backgrounds. My global family looks like every skin colour, body type, language, and ability being not just tolerated but celebrated, because *this* is who God's people are.

The theme of this Global Youth Summit is ***Called to Share: My Gifts, Our Gifts***. We have had many opportunities over the last few days to talk about the gifts we have been given, and the ways that we can use these gifts to be a blessing and to glorify the God who gave them to us. I believe wholeheartedly that one of the greatest gifts God gives us is family. Whether biological or not, it is an enormous blessing to find a place to belong, and I feel overwhelmed by the gift of my global family.

IVEP stands for International Volunteer Exchange Program. It is a year-long MCC-run program that opens opportunities for young adults from outside of North America, to serve and learn within North America. SALT—Serving and Learning Together. It is a yearlong MCC-run program that opens opportunities for young adults from within North America, to serve and learn in countries outside of North America.





Last month, Becca Willms and I traveled to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, to join over 7,500 Anabaptists from across the world, representing six continents, some 65 countries, and a wide variety of Mennonite and Brethren congregations at Mennonite World Conference (MWC). The theme was “Walking with God and each other”, which was exemplified through the speakers’ messages, the music, service projects, and fellowship. MWC meets once every six years, this being the first time since 1978 that the global event was hosted by U.S. churches.



Each day of the conference highlighted a number of speakers, including a special focus on the Young Anabaptists of MWC during the morning sessions. As well, we heard from leaders of various Anabaptist groups and congregations from around the world. Some memorable quotes include:

**Kevin Ressler**, the son of a Tanzanian mother and an American father, described himself as a “Suba-Luo-Swiss-German-Tanzanian-American-Anabaptist-Mennonite” during a critique of the prevalence of the term “Ethnic Mennonite” among Mennonites of European descent, saying, “Yet I am ethnically Mennonite on both sides. As one who considers Anabaptism his core identity, I am unicultural. . . . We are all ethnically Anabaptist, for we carry that version of Christ with us wherever we go.”

“The church will test our faith. After all, you and I are in it, but the church is also God’s gift of us walking together.” – **Tom Yoder Neufeld**, Canada

“We are a peace church because we are first and foremost a Jesus church.” **Bruxy Cavey**, Canada

On speaking of befriending a military commander of the radical Islamist group Hizbullah: “We live among 150 million Muslims, and they don’t want to read the gospel, so we must help them read the gospel in our lives.” - **Paulus Hartono**, Indonesia

On speaking of the common Dutch view as a place for hypocrites: “Sometimes the people who come in are very different from us, but we open up still. When people knock on the door and think maybe this is a place to ask spiritual questions, I always say, ‘Yes, come in.’ ” – **Henk Leegte**, The Netherlands

On speaking of being casualty of church conflict as a teen: “God must weep when the very children who worship him cannot walk together in peace. . . . It is time for God’s people to be the children of light who build each other up in world.” – **Remilyn Mendez**, The Philippines

Interspersed throughout each gathering were congregational singing and special music numbers, with each day of the conference focusing on the music of a specific region of the global Anabaptist community. We worshiped in the traditions of Latin American, Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America led by a group of musicians assembled from every continent represented at the conference, with songs ranging from African choruses to Bach chorales. We also enjoyed special music ensembles, from the Lancaster Mennonite Children’s Choir to an Asian bell ensemble to Zulu choirs from Africa. Unfortunately, the struggle many experienced in securing visas was all too evident when 5 members of a choir from Kenya stood on stage while the 25 remaining members were forced to stay home due to rejected visas. A powerful moment was shared by the entire assembly as 7,500 people stood in silence in solidarity with the many people who were forced to stay home due to visa difficulties.

Each afternoon of the conference also afforded many options for service, fellowship, and tours of the area. MDS built a house in the parking lot to be moved off, MCC canned thousands of cans of green beans in their mobile cannery, and other groups traveled to nearby locations for a variety of other jobs. One part of the conference that I particularly enjoyed was spending time with friends of mine from Mexico and back home in Kansas as well as meeting lots of new friends from just down the road in Vineland to the other side of the world.

I am grateful for the opportunity to attend MWC this year. I think it’s time to start saving my pennies for MWC Indonesia



Tony from Mexico



Becca  
from NUMC



Claudio from Paraguay

Ben from Sask.



## "Wind, Water, Waves, Wilderness"



Kayak and canoe building have been a dream of mine ever since Sharon and I went canoe-camping in Algonquin when we were first married. After a few decades of camping with our children and living in different places, it has only been in the last few years of settling into our own home and, most importantly, having a garage and tools, that I have been able to realize that dream.

My attraction to learning how to build first a kayak and then canoes can be expressed by the same four words that draw me into the part of creation where I can use these watercraft: simplicity, beauty, spirituality, and risk.

I love the simplicity of camping as basically as possible; counting the exact amount of food for making basic meals; taking only the necessary clothes for warmth, dryness, and protection; and engaging the elements of wind, waves, and water with only what I can fit into a kayak or canoe, and using only the strength of my body for power.

Similarly, I love the simplicity of the curves of a hull and the basic design of the craft; the smell and feel of wood as I cut it, sand it, shape it on the forms, and fiberglass it for strength; the simple repetition of gluing strip after strip. I love the simplicity of calculating every ounce of weight to create the lightest craft possible without losing the necessary strength. In a complex world of pastoring and people-care, simplicity is a balm to my soul.

I am attracted to the beauty of the wilderness – any wilderness, actually, but in this case it is the wilderness of water – places like Georgian Bay, French River, and Algonquin lakes. I love the way the face of a body of water changes its personality depending on whether it's warm, calm, and blue-skied; grey, cloudy, windy, and white-capped; or wet, rainy, and drenching.



Similarly, the beauty of working with wood is a delight to me. The way details of texture and grain jump out when epoxied. I am awed that something that looks so beautiful in its final form is so strong and practical in its use. More than once people have commented as I'm pulling my cedar-strip canoe, or okoume-panelled kayak off the car, "How can you put that piece of furniture into the water?" Beauty draws me beyond practicality into a world of gratitude.

I find the wilderness to be a place of profound spirituality – God is evident to all five senses and, in a unique way, to my spirit. When I spend time in the wilderness I feel grounded in God, and in myself. I find the voices, demands, and pressures of my life gradually fall away as I have time and energy to listen, reflect, and soak in the presence of God revealed in trees, water, and earth.



Building is also a spiritual exercise for me. There is lots of routine, repetitive work in making and hand-planing eighty 16-foot strips and gluing them carefully together. It takes a lot of patience. And the mistakes – oh the mistakes! Every time I get something wrong I have to figure out how to get out of it. Sometimes it seems hopeless and I think the whole project is destroyed. But then a way out appears. Sometimes the mistakes can be corrected; other times I have to live with a visible testimony to my error. Even if others don't notice, I always know exactly where those pieces didn't quite fit. I'm always surprised and relieved when I discover that mistakes that seemed to ruin things, turn out to be simply one part of something bigger and more beautiful – not in spite of, but even including the imperfections.

Part of the energy and excitement of the wilderness lies in the fact that there is risk involved. I have to become informed about the dangers of my environment – whether animals like snakes and bears; or weather like storms and wind and cold on the open water. I don't purposely take unnecessary risks, but I do like the challenge of learning the dangers, taking appropriate precautions, trusting in God, and then moving out of my comfort zone into places I haven't been before.

Similarly building always involves risk. I have to pay for all the materials long before I see the end result. Each time I build (at least so far) I have changed certain techniques – for efficiency, to reduce weight, or to enhance beauty. Each time I risk losing something else important, like strength, or shape. Risk produces anxiety in the moment, but is the only way to make progress in skills and on my journey.





## Never, never, ever give up

Recently I was asked if I would pen a piece for this publication. Maybe the request came as a result of my new “status”. On Feb. 07, 2015 I became a widow. There are about 59 of us at NUMC: from the young Petra and Ruth to little Anna Toews in a broda chair at Heritage Place. Each situation is different, but the sadness, the sudden welling up without notice, the single entry into a silent house, the initial fear of being social again may be common to us all. Will I ever again have a great dancing partner? Does anyone notice or care? Will I live long enough to feel unbroken? I remember how I felt after my husband survived lung cancer and in a few years I will have different memories about now, but as I write this, these are my reflections:

Oddly enough it is my mother who is my greatest comfort and guide. She died at age 90 on Jan 15, 2015, at Heritage Place, in full dementia, three weeks before my husband. She was widowed for 60 years. Her entry into widowhood was brutal – married for only 12 years, in Canada for 7 years, limited language skills, two young children, no drivers licence. My father’s funeral was not allowed at NUMC because he had committed suicide. Mental health was most certainly not then in the forefront. Mother plugged along maybe under the “hilf dir selbst so hilft dir Gott” mantra. With the initial help of her aging parents she managed to maintain an almost content lifestyle until her move to Pleasant Manor in 2003, and finally her entry/escape into the cloudy world of dementia.

My own situation is much different and in many ways much easier, but the words “stupid frustration” come to my mind quite often. Yes I still live in the country, in the house we built on a bit of land. My husband was the ultimate fixer-upper of all household, electrical, etc maintenance. For 44 years I did not concern myself with most of it. But now, oh weh, which screwdriver should I use for what? Phillips, Robertson and was not the squarehead a slang name for a German person, not a screwdriver? How did I know that the Kubota tractor had a belt (which wore out) and which of the two red gas canisters are for which mower? My children insisted I get Alarmforce – I’ve only set it off twice!

How did the toilet seat get so wobbly, are the coyotes coming ever closer to the yard, why are there so many ladders in the garage, should the sensor lights not be coming on, I think someone hit the mailbox, how do I get an extra leaf in to extend the dining room table by myself, were jars always so tightly sealed and hard to open, what do I cook or maybe just go to dine for \$14.99 but that’s for two is it not? Oh yes – ongoing stupid frustration. Mostly I notice that it still is a “couple” world.

However, all those wee frustrations are outweighed by the blessings. I just have to quietly look for them, be still and take time for what is truly important.

I have been blessed with healthy caring children and grandchildren. I have encountered the most wonderful manner of support from unusual and unexpected sources. Even Churchill recognized how important it was to never, never, ever give up.

I would encourage all of you who are still married to cherish that relationship, but ladies do try and get involved in the daily household maintenance, or find and hopefully implement Plan B.

*Thankfully submitted by Ingrid Regier*



*Ladies' choir*



## Summer Music



*Pick-up choir*



## Camino de Santiago June 2015

The **Camino de Santiago** or sometimes known as “The Way of St. James” (or in German Jacob’s Weg) is a Pilgrimage that started after the death of the Apostle James. There are many trails, (all marked by yellow arrows or a scallop shell) of varying lengths throughout Europe, all ending in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, at the Cathedral, where it is said that the remains of the Apostle James are buried.



This last June, Ery, Sigrid and I (Esther) had the privilege to be able to walk part of the way, on one of the trails through Portugal. In truth, our “Camino” started before we ever left Canada. It started many months before, as we prepared for our trek by reading about other people’s adventures and their advice about the Camino, looking up maps, and training! We walked many kilometers, getting used to our walking poles, trying to figure out which shoes to wear, and the last month we were seen walking around town with our backpacks on. Often people would stop us to inquire about our poles, or to ask us what we were training for.

Our plan was to start in the city of Porto, Portugal and take the coastal route towards Spain. We left our extra suitcases in storage at the airport.

is here, when out of curiosity we weighed our backpacks that we figured out that instead of being 15-17lbs (that we had trained with), our packs weighed 22-24lbs each! Everything we packed seemed to be essential! Not being able to think of what we could still leave behind, we hopped on the Metro to get back to the city centre, to the Cathedral to get our first stamp in our Pilgrims passport and start walking. The Pilgrims passport or Credential is a book you have stamped at least twice a day, in albergues, (hostels for pilgrims, run mostly by volunteers) restaurants, churches or even shops. It is the proof of the route you traveled, and gives you access to albergues that are for the exclusive use of pilgrims.



Once we had our first stamp, we headed down to the river Douro and followed it to the Atlantic Ocean, there heading, north. Many of the reports we had read said that the way markers were not always easy to find, but we thought as long as we keep the ocean to our left we can’t get too lost. As it turned out the way was marked much better than what we had expected and with three of us keeping an eye open, our spirits were regularly uplifted by sight of the yellow arrows and the knowledge that we were on the right path.

The local people were very friendly, helpful and would often yell “Bom Caminho!” (even from a car as they sped off to work in the morning), the traditional greeting of encouragement spoken between all who walk or bike the way. It means have a good walk.

After we reached the ocean, we walked mostly on boardwalks over sand dunes along beautiful deserted beaches, stopping for our picnic lunch on an outcropping of stones, soaking out feet in the surf of an incoming tide. Other days we found ourselves walking over cobblestone streets, through small fishing villages, looking over stone walls into people’s gardens that were planted with vegetables like kale, onions, tomatoes, and always very colorful flowers. Amazing clumps of birds of paradise and many other flowers that back home in Canada we would only see indoors.

Later we walked through an area with many greenhouses and small farms, again lots of onions, cabbage and kale. We came across an old toothless man sitting beside the road with a box full of big ripe tomatoes, looking as if he was waiting for a ride, we stopped offered him some change, pointing at the tomatoes. He nodded holding out his hand and we picked out a nice tomato that we shared, eating it like an apple! Very thirst quenching! Soon after as we walked through a eucalyptus forest, we found a couple of sweet onions on the road, they must have fallen off of a farmer’s wagon. We tucked one into

our backpack to be enjoyed later with our lunch. Leaving the other onion for the next pilgrim that may come this way.





The path at times took us a little farther from the ocean, into the hills, and we were thrilled as we realized the path we were following was in reality old Roman Roads!! It was totally mind boggling that these had been built over 2000 years ago. Roads that were used to spread the gospel of Jesus into the world. All through our walk history was around us, the Cathedrals we were able to enter, the walls that surrounded fields and houses, the bridges we walked over, and the villages that we walked through that had been standing here much, much, longer than the existence of Canada!

This coastal route is not used as often as others, so we did not have a published guide book to follow that told us exactly where we were or where the next albergue might be. We had to rely on whatever suggestions other pilgrims had recommended in our research, which did not always work out, as the information we had in some cases was from last year or even longer. Requiring us to ask the locals for help in finding our way, fortunately most Portuguese people were able to speak some English.



We traveled with no firm destination or reservations which can be stressful – however things just seemed to work out. This is defiantly a Camino and life lesson. The first two nights we stayed in inns, but soon figured out how interesting it was to stay in the albergues because here it was that we were able to meet other pilgrims from all over the world. The albergues usually consist of dormitories with bunk beds, bathrooms, and some have a kitchen where you can

At one Convent, we were welcomed by a lady who spoke perfect English –small wonder, she had lived in Toronto for 20 years, even knew Niagara on the Lake. We lucked out that night, since we had arrived late, they opened up another room, which we then had to ourselves, enabling us to spread our stuff out on the extra beds. After our first night in an albergue we often found ourselves in the company of other pilgrims, sharing a meal, stories and experiences. This we found very rewarding.

Since everyone walks at more or less the same pace, say 20-30km per day, one would continually bump into the same people along the way. “Where are the Germans? Where are the Swedes? What about the Frenchies? Anyone see Sue Ellen today?” And I’m sure others asked “are the Canadians ahead of us or behind us?” These questions were heard daily along the way. More often than not, we’d end up at supper with the same people sharing our experiences of the days walk, sharing our aches and pains, and plans for tomorrow.

In Portugal bakeries and pastry shops were abundant! We soon got into the rhythm of getting an early start, as it was warm, and as we headed out of town, we’d look for a small shop (no Tim Horton’s) to drop in and buy something for breakfast, a coffee, a roll or a pastry, maybe something for lunch and look for quiet place to enjoy it. For dinner we would try to find restaurants where the locals eat. The small family run restaurants would have a charcoal barbeque set up outside on the sidewalk where fresh seafood and meat was grilled. The aromas alone would make you hungry!



Canadians, Germans & SueEllen  
— new friends — last evening!

Soon our time on the Camino was over; it was with some regret at not being able to continue on to the end, as we needed to get back to the airport to catch our flight on to Germany where our cousins were expecting us. We had walked approximately 110 km, felt stronger every day, gotten blisters on our toes, found out that it is OK not to have everything planned out, not to worry about where we would be eating or sleeping. We learned to live in the moment and say yes to experiences and opportunities as they arose, not to put them off for another day, because the next day always brought new adventures and new opportunities. The moments that we had passed up on and said "maybe tomorrow" never seemed to come again.

We saw many beautiful places and made some new friends whom we learned to cherish, each one special in their own unique way.

This is not where our story ends though.....because we plan on returning to where we left off in Portugal and continue our walk into Spain and to the Cathedral in Santiago.

*My mom, who did not like to be in the spotlight at any time in her life would have been mortified to realize that she had been featured in the last two newsletters, and now reappears in this present newsletter. But I, her only daughter, would like to write one more tribute to a mother whose life is reflected in so many of our past & present Mennonite women, to honour each one of them for their lives of service to God and humankind. I will begin with a translation of my mom's own life story as I found it in her secret treasure box.*

### **Life story of Anna Neustaedter**

I, Anna Neustaedter was born on June 18, 1922 in Karatal, Siberia to Heinrich and Katharina, nee Thun, Sawatzky. I was the second oldest child, after brother Peter, and before Justina and Agnes. Since I did not enjoy school, I was allowed to stay home and soon became my mom's right hand, which I really enjoyed. I truly cherished my childhood years, at least as long as my father was still around.



Because of the increasing frequency of banishments of Mennonites to Siberia by the government, our family moved around frequently. In 1927 we moved to the Amur; then in 1929, we joined many others in Moscow to try to immigrate to America, but by the time we got there, the doors had been closed, and we had to return to Siberia. This was not a problem for me, because now I was returning to all my aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. However, for my parents, difficult times began – churches were closed, all properties were confiscated, and they had to work on the Collective for no pay or bread. This continued until 1936, when our father heard that his name was on the list for banishment, and so we quickly moved overnight to Ukraine. All was left behind – house, cow and chickens, and we travelled empty-handed to a new region, but with the same government. My childhood was over! I turned 14, and was suddenly grown up, going to work every day with all the adults. Two years later, in February 1938, our father was banished to Siberia, never to be heard from again. We found out in 1989 that he had been shot two years after his arrest. Our family would have starved to death if our God had not continued to look after us. Praise be to Him!

And so a new chapter began. On October 27, 1940 I married Abram Neustaedter, but the joy was short-lived. Six months after the wedding, my husband was arrested and banned to Siberia, never to be seen by us again. On August 22, 1941 our son, John was born. These were difficult times, and as I celebrated that first Christmas without my husband, alone with my 5 month-old son, I felt so lonely and abandoned. Then it seemed to me as if a light filled my heart, and I could feel God's presence. It was as if He spoke to me and promised to be with me always.

In October, 1943, my mother, two sisters and I with my 2 year-old son, were again forced to flee from our home. We left everything behind again – house, cow, chickens – and boarded a train for Germany. We ended up in a refugee camp Kornwestheim near Braunschweig. Here I was invited to join a group of 50 baptismal candidates to attend weekly catechism classes in a church in Heubuden. On the last Sunday of classes, we all recited our Confession of Faith together, then went to our refugee camp for baptism by Ältester (Bishop) Ewert. Praise God!

Soon, we were sent to Poland to work for a farmer, but only until January, 1945 when we again had to flee. This was an extremely difficult trip, trudging along on foot, while the bombs exploded around us. But God was with us, and like a miracle we arrived in Wittmund where things were much calmer, and we could again find work and go about a fairly normal life. In June, 1947, my daughter Kathy was born. This was a difficult time for me, but I am thankful to my heavenly Father for His forgiveness of my transgressions as Jesus says in John 8:11 "Neither do I condemn you".

His mercy and blessing continued to accompany us on our journey to Canada in October, 1948, first to Vineland and then to Virgil where we were able to buy our own home, together with my mother, two sisters and my own two children. This was our home now, and I experienced many blessings here. God gave me good health and I was able to work hard at many different jobs. I also found a home in the Niagara United Mennonite Church and enjoyed many hours of service there with my Frauenverein, serving at weddings, sewing blankets and planning programs. It was a wonderful time of fellowship.

I also thank God for my wonderful family of two children with their spouses, four grandchildren with their spouses, and seven great-grandchildren. That is my wealth, and I thank my God from the bottom of my heart for all of you. I pray that you will all someday follow me to my Saviour!

*Mom wrote her life story about 10 years ago when she was still in great health. But about 5 years later, after my brother John's struggle with dementia, and subsequent untimely death, Mom's health began to deteriorate, both physically and mentally. Gradually, her memory began failing her, and she displayed signs of dementia to the point where it became dangerous for her to live alone in her apartment. Her strong independence was taken from her by having to give up her car, and moving to a wellness suite where she could be monitored more easily. These were very difficult times for Mom, because now she was unable to perform all those tasks that were part of her nature – no more cooking or baking or sewing for others, and no more driving herself and others to appointments or shopping. She lost her purpose in life, and this caused her much frustration and confusion.*



*Finally, we had to make the difficult decision to move her to Heritage Place! As it turned out, this was a much more positive move than we had expected. Mom began to feel more comfortable here, and accepted Heritage Place as her new home. The staff and residents became her new family, and she could again do some of the things that were important to her – help others. She pushed people around in wheel chairs, shared her food with others, greeted familiar faces, and even showed some residents how to carry their babies (doll). The staff was wonderful, and she loved them all, exchanging regular smiles and hugs with them. They loved her too, and would say to us, “she is so cute”! Slowly, however, this happy phase ended, and Mom refused to eat, and was unable to walk by herself anymore. She seemed to have made the decision that it was time to make the last move to her eternal rest with her heavenly Father. Very quickly, Mom’s body began shutting down, and on Sunday, August 2, with Debbie and me, Kathy, by her side, her spirit slipped away! Her face became calm and peaceful, and a hint of a smile let us know that she was finally at rest! What a gift for us to be able to share this holy moment!*

Thank-you Lord for your immeasurable love and grace!

Anna Neustaedter is the dear mother of Kathy & John Rempel, and was predeceased by son John. She is lovingly remembered by grandchildren Betti-ann & Rob Whitehead, Debbie & Kevin Krause, John & Joanna Neustaedter, Chris & Gina Rempel, great-grandchildren Amanda, Jordan, Noah, Katelyn, Madison, Ella, and Nicolas.  
Also, survived by sisters Justina Bartel and Agnes Sawatzky.

## Birthday Celebration

*"Summer is the perfect time for a birthday celebration at the beach! Rain made for a more intimate setting but did not dampen the spirits of the guests enjoying a delicious BarBQ and scrumptious desserts. Music by Vox Violins and a loving tribute from her grandchildren provided entertainment.*



**Happy 80th Birthday,  
Annemarie Enns!"**



## Ladies' Breakfast in Annemarie Enns' beautiful backyard



## From Our Archives

~ by Harold Neufeld

An interesting milestone in the life of one of our pastors and indeed, of our Church, occurred on Sunday September 23, 1979: "A Service of Praise and Thanksgiving to God for His grace granted to Rev. C.K. Neufeld for 50 years in the Christian Ministry" took place. The service included the familiar hymn "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow", and a message entitled "Avenues of Divine Grace" from Rev. Peter Falk. John Harder gave a "Recognition from the Congregation", and a Fellowship And Sharing time followed in the auditorium. The bulletin for that service included this short excerpt from the life and ministry of Rev. & byMrs. C.K. Neufeld: "Rev. Neufeld was baptized and became a member of the Rudnerweide Church, Ukraine, in 1925. He loved his Lord and was deeply concerned about the Church, both during the years while residing in Russia and later at Vineland after having immigrated to Canada... Rev. & Mrs. Neufeld moved to the Niagara district in February 1938 and were among the founders of the Niagara United Mennonite Church. Rev. Neufeld has served the congregation as minister from its founding to the present and served as leading minister from 1944 to 1947 and from 1959 to 1960.... Praise the Lord for the grace granted to him and his wife for fifty years of service in the Christian ministry and for his faithful and devoted ministry."

And from the October 21, 1979 Bulletin: "Ordination: Jacob Reimer has accepted the congregation's call to the Christian ministry, extended to him during the membership meeting on Oct. 14. The ordination service is to take place on Nov. 4. Let us remember the Reimers in prayer."

# Milestones

*Join us as we celebrate one another's special milestones!*

## September Birthdays

Arno Enns: 88 (born Sept. 3, 1927)  
Martha Bartel: 83 (born Sept. 8, 1932)  
Mary Steingart: 88 (born Sept. 9, 1927)  
Marie Harder: 82 (born Sept. 13, 1933)  
Henry Rahn: 81 (born Sept. 15, 1934)  
Sinaida Enns: 91 (born Sept. 18, 1924)  
Hans Funk: 90 (born Sept. 19, 1925)  
George Riss: 87 (born Sept. 20, 1928)  
Agnes Sawatzky: 81 (born Sept. 23, 1934)  
Mary Willms: 80 (born Sept. 29, 1935)

## October Birthdays

Elenore Funk: 88 (born Oct. 3, 1927)  
Kaethe Fieguth: 86 (born Oct. 6, 1925)  
Jakob Goerz: 81 (born Oct. 6, 1934)  
Hans Juergen Wiens: 81 (born Oct. 7, 1934)  
Maria Neufeld: 81 (born Oct. 12, 1934)  
Peter P. Dirks: 97 (born Oct. 15, 1918)  
Elly Kopp: 83 (born Oct. 15, 1932)  
Annie Falk: 88 (born Oct. 19, 1927)  
Katharina Siemens: 85 (born Oct. 19, 1930)  
Hans Hermann Dau: 80 (born Oct. 21, 1935)  
Elfrieda Braun: 82 (born Oct. 27, 1933)



## Address Update:

Don & Addie Willms  
Box 5, 114 Loretta Dr.  
Virgil, ON L0S1T0

Willi & Linda Pankratz  
Box 41, 1652 Four Mile Creek Rd.  
#108 Enns Lane  
Virgil, ON L0S1T0  
(289) 868-8697  
pankratz57@gmail.com

Gerald & Sinaida Enns  
Box 600, 1 Pleasant Lane, CV110  
Virgil, ON  
(905) 468-7516

Walter & Betty Andres  
(905) 271-0400



## New Babies

**Abbygale Grace** (Jul. 11)

Kevin Schmidt & Dawn Bishop

**Sophia Mary Grace** (Aug. 27)

Adrian Lowden & Angela Borzychowski

**Norah Esther** (Aug. 7)

Robert Borzychowski & Claudia Perez

## Child Dedications

Malakai Dirks (July 26)

Evangeline Janzen (August 23)

## Weddings

Paul Taylor & Stephanie Teichgraf (August 1<sup>st</sup>)

Michael Rekrut & Lydia Klaassen (August 8<sup>th</sup>)



## VANTAGE POINT ' EIGHTY"

**In** Algonquin Park there is, among a number of hiking trails, one called "Look Out Trail".

It is neither a long trail nor is it particularly difficult. There are tall trees, there is young growth, there are stumps of trees that grew there years ago. There are also rocks and roots one has to watch in order not to stumble; and at the top there is a cliff with a beautiful view, a bench on which to sit, relax, and reflect on God's creation.

I like to think of my eightieth birthday somewhat like this. Life is a trail, a road if you will. To stay on a trail you have to follow a map. To walk through life you need guidelines.

As a Christian this is, of course, the word of God, but then also all the people that have

helped me along the way. Like the tall trees along the hiking trail these were my parents and family. There were always brothers and sisters in the church to help and guide.

Like the young growth along the trail there were the youth years. I am thankful for always having had good friends with whom to be - our Church Youth Group in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Like the stumps of trees from years ago, I think of family and loved ones that have gone before and are with the Lord. I have fond memories of many of them, particularly my Dad.

Here is one such treasure: When I was 17, leaving home to seek my future in the city, my Dad said to me: "There may be a time when you do not know the way forward.

But remember, you always have a home to come to". Thank God.

Well, vantage point "80", at the same time married for 55 years to my dear wife Ingrid, also almost 50 years of living here in Canada and being part of this church, the blessing of 4 children and 7 grandchildren + 1 (Lydia's husband) . I always say 8 grandchildren (Ingrid).

Where does one begin and or end to thank the Lord for it all? It goes on every day, and at the side of our Lord Jesus, it will end on top of the "Look Out Trail" when and where we see God.

**"For mountains may depart and hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you."** Isaiah 54:10 (The Bibleverse for our wedding)      - submitted by Hans & Ingrid Dau

## Celebrating 25 Years

To celebrate our 25 years of putting up with each other (aka marriage), we decided to do a self-guided tour through Italy to see places we had only ever seen in pictures. Driving in Italy is not for the faint of heart, but Kenton had a blast on the narrow and crazy roads. We began our trip in Rome by attending a canonization service at the Vatican, presided over by Pope Francis. While at the Vatican, we also got the chance to tour the Sistine Chapel and marvelled at ceiling painted by Michelangelo.



The next highlight was visiting Pompeii, along with hiking up Mount Vesuvius, which had erupted in 92 AD and buried the city in ash. Along the way, we stopped at a WWII cemetery in the town of Cassino, where Sheryl's great uncle is buried. It was a very emotional Sheryl, since her mother has never been able to visit the site.

One location in particular that we wanted to visit was the town of Assisi. This is where Saint Francis grew up in a very affluent family during the 1300s, but became very disillusioned with hedonism and motivated him to focus on the simplicity of life. One of his famous prayers is the familiar "Make me a Channel of your Peace".

Other highlights included:

Climbing up the Duomo in Florence

Taking silly pictures in front of the Leaning Tower of Pisa

Spending 3 nights in a Bed & Breakfast in the hills of Tuscany

Seeing the birth place and Museum of Leonardo in the town of Vinci

Driving the windy roads in the Alps and Amalfi Coast

Staying a night in an authentic castle

Touring the watery streets of Venice

It was interesting to see how Italy has influenced the evolution of the Christian church. We always enjoy traveling together, and this trip helped us reaffirm our commitment to God and to each other.



~ submitted by Sheryl & Kenton Janzen

## Memories of a Seven Year - Old

I am from Simonsdorf, a town that already existed in 1400. I am 7 years younger than my brother Gerhard. I had no play matter, other than my cats, and Gerhard was away at boarding school all week. Gerhard had a ram as a pet named Max. He had built a 2-wheel cart for him and the ram pulled both of us, or he put the sheep in front of a wagon and Max pulled all of my cousins and Gerhard and me around and around the farmyard. We were 9 of us on the wagon with rubber tires, but then he went back to school and I was alone again. Then my other cousins came to Simonsdorf for summer holidays to my grandparents Paul and Johanna Foth near us and I was able to play with them. They lived in Oliva near Danzig.

At age seven in the Fall of 1944, I started school. I had quite a way to walk, and usually one of our maids would walk with me. We had 2 maids in the summer and only one for the winter. They were Polish sisters Anna & Leocadia.

Then on Jan. 23, 1945 we had to leave our home because the Russians were coming closer. We had a hay wagon covered with carpet, and left on a very cold and snowy day. My grandmother Foth was along behind us in her coach. My grandfather Paul Foth was the mayor of Simonsdorf, and he stayed behind looking after the trek. We were held up in my Oma Reimer's brother's place. But his house was full so we stayed in the barn, sleeping on the straw. Through the barn cracks we saw how Danzig was being bombed; the lightning bombs lighting up the city. Then we kept going and we spent another night in an empty Forester house. Those people had left already. Boy, did that girl have a lot of nice dolls! In the evening I saw a lot of tanks drive into this forest. I stood at the road and waved to them. That night some people came from the village and told us we had to leave. "But do not turn on any lights because the forest is full of Russian tanks." Wow, and I had waved to them the night before! In the mean time, my mother had gone home yet and killed a pig and brought more smoked ham and potatoes and such.

We tried to cross the Weichsel (Wistula) River but the bridges had been bombed. It was like driving up to cross our canal. We tried to turn the horse and wagon around to drive down again. Some people's wagons tipped and lost all their belongings.

We were then transported to Hela, a port, where we later boarded a small boat that took us to the large ship that had already left the harbor. We crawled up the rope ladder on the open sea. Imagine me, a 7 year-old girl, climbing a rope ladder up to a huge ship with high waves. Gerhard and all the other people were on this boat too. My mother was not well so she was lifted with a loading net.

Once on this ship, we found out it was full of wounded soldiers bandaged and moaning and groaning down in the ship. We stayed on the top deck because it smelled awful below deck. I don't know how many days we were on this ship with only salt water to drink. We landed in Denmark, and a Danish soldier carried me off the ship and they gave us a bun with butter and honey. That was so special, I have not forgotten it. In Denmark we were put up in a school, with many people in a room. We were allowed to walk about the town as we wanted.

My grandmother Johanna Foth was with us. She went into a diabetic coma, and the medics came and wrapped her in a blanket and carried her to a car. In the car they checked her – oh, she was dead! They took her out of the car again and took her away. She was the first person to die there. Later we found all her insulin, but in all the confusion she must have forgotten.

Once the war ended we were put into a much larger camp of at least 2000 refugees with barbed wire 2 m high, 2 m wide and barbed wire rolled between the fences. My father found us through the Red Cross, and we came back to Germany to Schleswig-Holstein, after being in Denmark for 2 years.

Many ships were sunk leaving Danzig, Hela or Gotenhafen, and many people lost their lives. They don't know exactly how many people lost their lives, because refugees boarded these ships on the open sea. Some of my relatives died there too. This was the only way out by sea because the Russians had surrounded Danzig.

*~ submitted by Helga (Reimer) Froese—Rahn*





This aerial view was taken by Werner Foth, a pilot in WW2. The farm in the middle of the picture belonged to Opa Foth. The house in the lower, middle was the place where Helga was born. The top treeline was the main highway between Danzig & Berlin.



1943 – 1944 Gerhard put his pet ram in front of this wagon to pull all of us.

***Everyone sees the unseen in proportion to the clarity of his heart, and that depends upon how much he has polished it. Whoever has polished it more sees more — more unseen forms become manifest to him. -- Rumi***

Having grown up in Niagara, I have always found solace and connectedness with my rural surroundings. I have wondered about what may have been here before and how the geography has shifted. The natural form of plants and the marks that time has inscribed on the land and architecture have long influenced me and are what I find the most beautiful and inspiring. I especially find that by looking closely and reflecting, I suddenly go beyond just seeing and discover an extraordinary beauty in the most ordinary scene or object.

Growing up and immersed in such a rich landscape has left an indelible mark on my sense of self much like a stone that has been marked by a river. I want all my artwork, whether it be jewellery or paintings, to reveal how I see the world through my personal experiences and insights.



~ Marion Griese



Marion Griese is a painter, jewellery artist and art teacher. She works from her home studio and finds inspiration every day through nature, music and, mostly, her children.

[Visit Marion's Art Display in the lower church hallway.](#)

## Among the Amish

**O**n June 9, five of us women from NUMC boarded a coach to take a trip to Sugarcreek, Ohio, also known as Little Switzerland, because the town was settled by immigrants from Switzerland and there is evidence of Swiss architecture on houses and other buildings.

The trip took us through beautiful countryside with rolling hills where we could see homesteads and farm buildings nestled in the valleys. This is Amish and Mennonite country. The Amish still use horse and buggy for travelling, as well as bicycles, and have their special mode of dress. They believe in a simple way of life, have no electricity in their homes, and plough the fields and do their harvesting with horses rather than use tractors.

The 4-day tour was packed with places to visit with interesting presentations, historical information, excellent meals and good accommodation, as well as fun and entertainment. Included in our itinerary were two theatre productions (a) Half-stitched, the Musical, presented by professional performers of the Ohio State Theatre, and (b) a family variety show and comedy at the Amish Country Theatre.

Another tour is being planned for May 31 to June 3, 2016. People are already registering for it. If you are interested, please call me.

*~ Submitted by Martha Bartel*



### Comments about Trip to the Amish

**Elsa Schmidt:** The trip was very informative, the landscape was beautiful and the local guide whose father was Amish and his mother Mennonite was excellent.

**Liz Schachowskoj:** I enjoyed the trip very much. It was very informative about Mennonite and Amish culture. We saw things we normally don't see and we had an excellent guide of mixed background, Amish and Mennonite.

**Helga Froese:** ...we had a Mennonite guide who has no TV but he drives a car. He has no electricity in the home, but he has a cell phone. At the Mennonite Heritage Center we saw the Mennonite history painted on a mural 265 ft. long and 10 ft. high, a cyclorama. It took the artist 14 years to paint. He even had the Mennonites in West Prussia on there. I told him that that was where I was born. I also noticed that they spoke about the German heritage and not the Dutch, as they do in Pennsylvania.

**Marlies Boldt:** It was an excellent trip with new things to see and do. Ohio was much less commercialized than Lancaster which was good. Having read books about Sugarcreek recently, it was good to be there and see for myself what there is of interest. I would recommend going there for others who have been to Lancaster, just for the difference in the tourism. Seeing the giant cuckoo clock and the trim on buildings, was a reminder of the houses we saw in Switzerland a few years ago. The food in the many restaurants we visited was excellent and the people were very friendly.



## Our New Career

As most of you now know Anita and I have been Custodians/Caretakers of your Church since June 1st. This opportunity has been such a blessing to us in so many ways. We Thank God so much that we are able to work in His house, serving Him and our fellow Church Members. We prayed everyday for a opportunity to work for God and be able to work together as a couple and family. Our prayers have been truly answered. When this job came up we prayed that if God meant us to do this it would be His will. So, I retired from General Motors after almost 32 years of shift work. I am grateful to God that He provided us with steady employment there. It was time to move on! We wanted so much to do something else in our lives, together.

It is so nice waking up (not at 5am) anymore, and riding our bikes here to our new job. Meeting and interacting with so many of you that we see daily is such a blessing! We hope to meet many more of you that we don't know yet! We hope that we are meeting everyone's expectations. We are still learning as we go, such as waxing and hope to do the best job we can do! Any suggestions are always welcomed, they may help us to do our job easier! One of the great pleasures that we have is that we are able to work with our children, Chris and Joyce. Their enthusiasm is such a joy! We would like to Thank the Church Council for hiring us for our Dream Job and for all of you, for your support, words of encouragement and smiles! We are Truly Grateful for all of that! We Thank our Lord Daily for His Gift of letting us work here!

Blessings,  
Jeff and Anita Friesen



*vacuuming*



*dusting*



*shiny floors*



### Prayer of Confession (for World Food Day, Oct. 16)

You asked for my hands that you might use them for your purposes.  
I gave them for a moment then withdrew them for the work was hard.

You asked for my mouth to speak out against injustice.  
I gave you a whisper that I might not be accused.

You asked for my eyes to see the pain of poverty.  
I closed them for I did not want to see.

You asked for my life that you might work through me.  
I gave you a small part that I might not get "too involved."

Lord, forgive me for calculated efforts to serve you  
only when it is convenient for me to do so,  
and only in those places where it is safe to do so,  
and only with those who make it easy to do so.

Lord, forgive me, renew me, send me out as a usable instrument,  
that I may take seriously the meaning of your cross.

~ written by Joe Sereman, South Africa

## Heritage Concert

*The last Sunday in October is marked as Heritage Day on the Mennonite Church Canada Calendar. In connection with this, John & Kathy are planning a second annual choir concert for Nov. 1, 2015 in St. Catharines U.M Church. The choir is open to anyone, and will practise four Tuesday evenings starting on Oct. 6 at St. Catharines UM Church. The focus of the music chosen will be songs from our heritage – choral & congregational, following the church year. Below, you will see hymns or choral anthems that are special to people in our congregation. Maybe they will bring back memories for you too.*

### Survey Responses

My family moved to the Niagara area in March 1940 and we attended the NUMC (the little white church) when the church had very few members. In the 1940's many other families migrated to this area from Western Canada, northern Ontario, and then from Europe after the war. I can recall, that every time new members were welcomed into the church, the entire congregation would stand to sing, "Solange Jesus bleibt der Herr". That song is part of the history of NUMC and part of our Mennonite heritage.

~ Martha Bartel

I'm not Mennonite background, but a lot of our songs overlap. My father used to sing "Fairest Lord Jesus" to me at night when I was scared or having trouble falling asleep. Every time I hear the song I remember him laying down on the floor beside my bed, holding my hand and singing to me.

~ Jolien Koole

A favourite anthem that comes to mind easily is "Dank sei dir Herr" like we used to sing at Thanksgiving. Also the hymns "How great thou art" and "Grosser Gott wir loben Dich" are wonderful in both languages.

~ Marlene Heidebrecht

"Nun ist sie erschienen die himmlische Sonne" was a favorite Christmas song at my home church, on of the few that was still sung in German as well as in English. It was also always a part of our family Christmas gatherings!

~ Will Friesen

I would suggest: "Now thank we all our God" - either language or both. ~ Udo Woelke

Here is a list of songs special to me. As I listed each one, a poignant memory or two came with it instantly. What a wealth we have in our heritage of music! ~ Mary Pries

(These are only a few of the 15 songs Mary listed as being her favourites. Ask her to tell you the rest.)

Nimm Zeit dir zur Andacht  
Die Zeit ist kurz, o Mensch sei weise  
Wehrlos und verlassen  
Wenn der Heiland, wenn der Heiland  
Weisst du wieviel Sternlein stehen.....

Make a  
*joyful noise*  
to the LORD  
Psalm 100:1





## Rollkuchen

What would a summer be for Mennonites from Russia without Rollkuchen and watermelon (or Arbuse as some of us call it)? And if my eyes don't fool me, even some other people really appreciate them. Rollkuchen and watermelon on family gatherings, on picnics, in the park or camping, or at the relief sales. They are **good** anywhere and any time. You can eat Rollkuchen in the morning with syrup, for lunch with watermelon and in the evening with Borsch or any other combination. Some like them crisp, others prefer them soft. Some like 'em with honey, some with jam, some with milk, some with tea or coffee. You name another food that is so versatile! And it has been a favoured for generations. Many years ago, when our daughter was in Germany, she met up with Ruth Willms and some other students there, and what did they do? They made Rollkuchen. Can you believe it?!



What makes those Rollkuchen so famous? Because they are good, that's why! My question is: where did they originate? I couldn't really find out. I searched high and low in every Mennonite cookbook I could find, and you can find them in every Mennonite cookbook and on line too. But I could not find out their origin. I asked people from Prussia, and they have Raderkuchen which seem to have originated in East-Prussia, but they are a bit different and sweet. The Poles have something similar called Favorki and the Russians have Hvorost. They add some alcohol to their recipe, that apparently stops the faworki from absorbing fat during frying. The Ukrainians have Khrustyky and when I mentioned Rollkuchen to a cashier of Italian background at Valu-mart, where I was buying a watermelon, she said to me: "Oh, we

Italians have those too. We call them "Chiachiere". Well in Kenya they have something similar they call "Mandazi" That's when I stopped looking for the origin of Rollkuchen. It seems they are all over the world. Some call them Angelwings. Well, I don't want to go any further. But I think the combination of Rollkuchen and watermelon is of Mennonite origin!

~ submitted by Lani Gade



**Large watermelon grown in Virgil, by Waldemar Bartel & weighing 60 lbs.!**

**These pictures are from my mother's 83rd birthday party.**

~submitted by Ruth Willms



My dad made Fleisch Perischky and Rollkuchen and watermelon for supper.



There were 18 of Mom's kids and grand kids at the celebration in the courtyard at Heritage Place.

## Peach Fest 2015



Where do those lovely labels come from?



The labels come from none other than Henry Dirks—father to our own Rudy Dirks. Henry runs a high tech printing studio in Virgil where he prints thousands of labels for local entrepreneurs, and church missions committees, as well as prescription forms for doctors and many books. He has been doing this for many years, both here in Canada and also in Congo. Thanks Henry!

**Net profits from this year's peach salsa were \$2000.00**

## Young Adults Barbecue



### LIFE WITH US NEWSLETTER

If you would like to submit any photos or articles for the newsletter, please contact any of the Newsletter Team of Editors:

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