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Blessed are the  
Peacemakers  
for they shall be called  
Children of God  
Matthew 5:9



Nov. Dec. 2017 VOLUME 4 EDITION 5

# LIFE WITH US

At Niagara United Mennonite Church

## All Are Welcome

Let us build a house where love can dwell  
and all can safely live,  
a place where saints and children tell  
how hearts learn to forgive.  
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,  
rock of faith and vault of grace;  
here the love of Christ shall end divisions.  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak,  
and words are strong and true,  
where all God's children dare to seek  
to dream God's reign anew.  
Here the cross shall stand as witness  
and as symbol of God's grace;  
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus.  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where love is found  
in water, wine and wheat:  
a banquet hall on holy ground  
where peace and justice meet.

Here the love of God, through Jesus,  
is revealed in time and space;  
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us.  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where hands will reach  
beyond the wood and stone  
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,  
and live the Word they've known.  
Here the outcast and the stranger  
bear the image of God's face;  
let us bring an end to fear and danger.  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where all are named,  
their songs and visions heard  
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed  
as words within the Word.  
Built of tears and cries and laughter,  
prayers of faith and songs of grace,  
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter.  
All are welcome, all are welcome,  
all are welcome in this place.

*(hymn to be included in new hymnal, 2020)*

~ Marty Haugen

# Russian Mennonite Timeline

## 1500s

The Reformation, a period of religious renewal movements, sweeps across much of Europe. The Anabaptist movement starts in Northern Europe when believers refuse to recognize a church and governmental system that forces people into a particular religion. They believe true faith is voluntary.



## 1525

First adult baptisms take place in Zurich, Switzerland, with Conrad Grebel rebaptizing George Blaurock. In 1530 Melchior Hoffman baptizes about 300 adults in Emden, Netherlands.

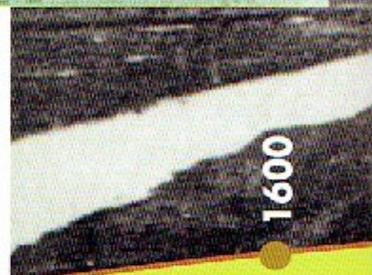


Danzig Mennonite Church and tin offering cup



## 1530s

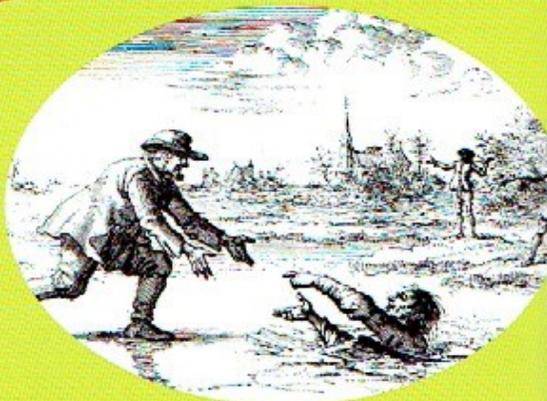
Facing persecution in the Netherlands because they would not join the state churches, some Dutch Anabaptists flee, moving across Northern Germany and settling as far east as Prussia in the area of Danzig and the Vistula River delta (in what is now Poland).



1500

## 1536

Menna Simons abandons the priesthood and preaches among the scattered Dutch Anabaptist communities. The people he visits become known as Mennonites.



## 1569

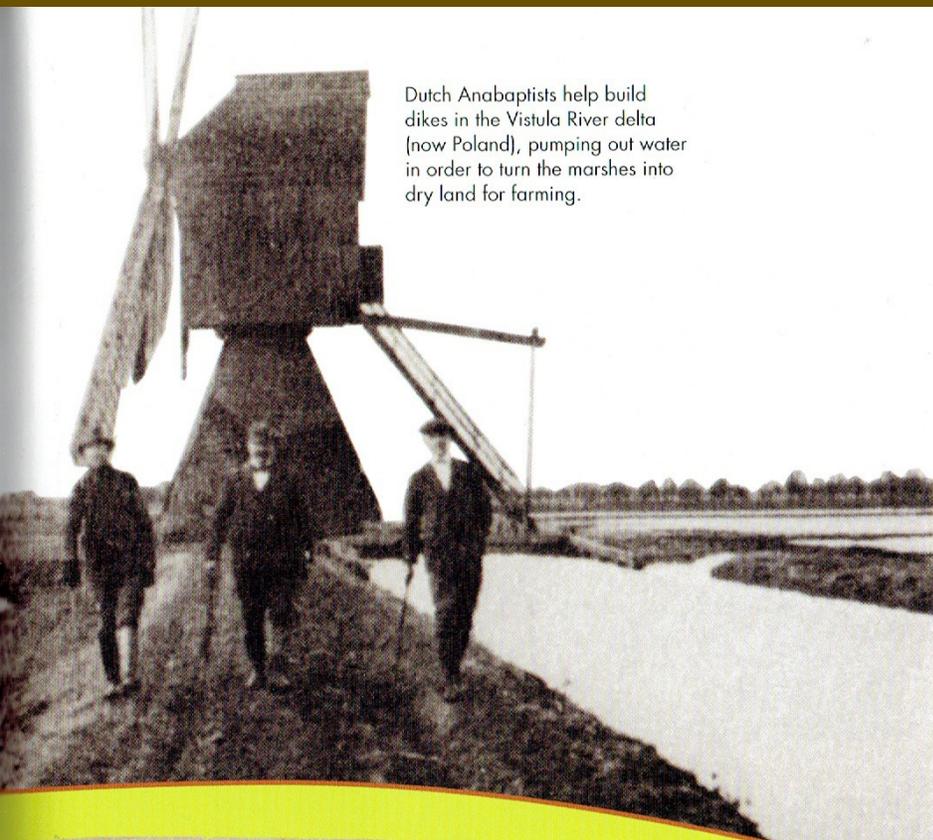
Anabaptist Dirk Willems is fleeing capture when he turns back to rescue his pursuer who had broken through the thin ice of the frozen river. Dirk is then arrested and burned at the stake.

## Martin Luther and the Anabaptists

2017 is the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther posting 95 theses on the doors of the churches in the city of Wittenberg, Germany, including the All Saints Church. What Luther intended as a debate over how to reform abuses in the Roman Catholic Church resulted in the break up of the Roman Catholic church and the start of the Protestant Reformation.

Why should Anabaptist Mennonites care about Martin Luther, a young university professor, and his reform.

The principal reason why Mennonites should care about Luther's reform is that Luther is the reason why there was an Anabaptist Mennonite reform movement at all. Luther's reforms, and the conflicts they spawned between Catholics and Protestants, created space for the Anabaptist movement to take root. These new believers sprang up in German states, northern Switzerland, Moravia and the Netherlands. Without Luther, and the other reformers who followed his lead, there would have been no Anabaptist movement.

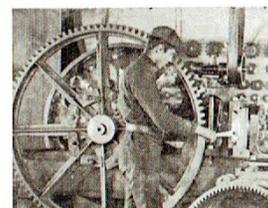


Dutch Anabaptists help build dikes in the Vistula River delta (now Poland), pumping out water in order to turn the marshes into dry land for farming.

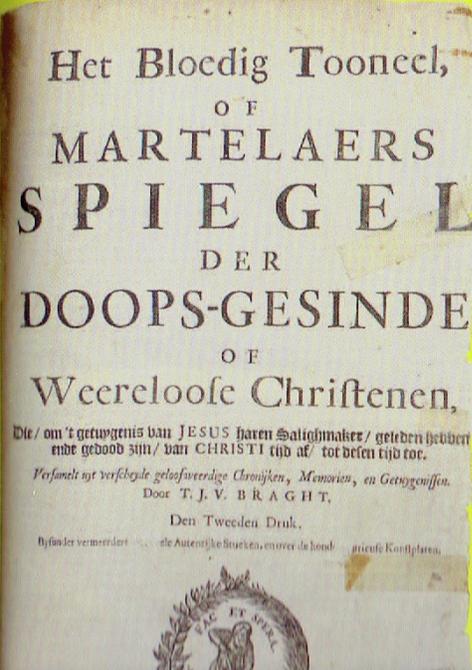


### 1700s

The Kroeger family begins clock-making in Prussia. Throughout the 1800s and early 1900s in southern Russia, they continue to make clocks in the village of Rosenthal.

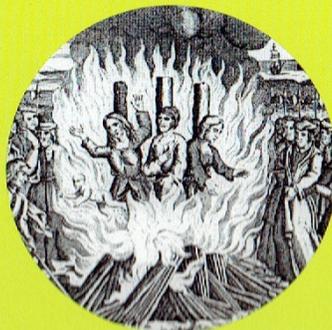
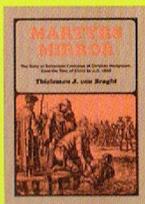


1700



### 1660

*Martyrs Mirror* is published, documenting the persecution and killing of hundreds of Anabaptists from 1550–1625.



### 1725

Dutch Mennonites establish an emergency relief organization to aid Mennonites in need throughout Europe.

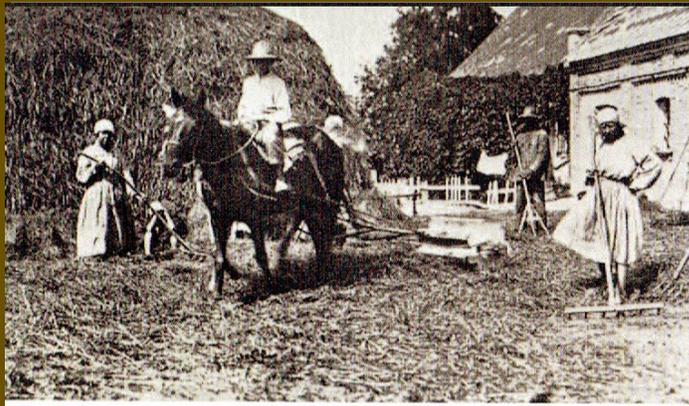
Mennonites should also care about Luther's reform because the early Anabaptist leaders were inspired by Luther's key ideas. Luther's reform began as a critique of the Catholic church's practice of selling indulgences. In response, Luther formulated his central view that salvation is by grace, that is, a gift from God, and not by works.

Following this claim, Luther decided to make the Bible available to the masses by translating it into the German language. The newly invented moveable type printing presses made widespread distribution possible. Access to the Bible allowed people to read Scripture for themselves, and to implement reforms that they believed were consistent with Scripture.

When Luther opted for the state-church model, placing the Lutheran church under the authority of the state and leading to persecution of minority churches, Anabaptists believed that Luther had betrayed the teachings of the Bible.

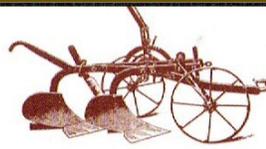
This commitment to a believers church allowed Anabaptists to reshape basic Christian beliefs and practices. Anabaptists emphasized baptism on the basis of adult confessions of faith, instead of infant baptism.

~John J. Friesen is professor emeritus, Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg



## 1789

The first 228 Mennonite families arrive in Russia and establish the Chortitza colony on the banks of the Dnieper River under primitive conditions.



In addition to growing wheat, Mennonite farmers introduce the potato to their former homeland to Russia. They also bring the iron plow and the four-wheeled wagon.



## 1870s

One third of the Mennonites of Russia (18,000) decide to leave when their freedom from military service and their separate education system are threatened. They settle primarily in the prairies of southern Manitoba and the plains of Kansas, Nebraska and Minnesota. Turkey red wheat seed is brought for planting.



## 1780s

Frederick William II begins to impose harsh restrictions on Mennonites in Prussia including limiting the purchase of additional land and limiting previous exemptions from military service. Some 10,000 Mennonites accept Catherine the Great's invitation to settle in southern Russia (the area now known as Ukraine). They are granted religious freedom and exemption from military service.



## 1800



## 1803-04

More families arrive in Russia and start a second settlement, Molotschna, on the rich black soil next to the Molotschna River. Later generations form daughter colonies in Ukraine, Crimea, Caucasus, south central Asia and Siberia. Some leave the village communities and set up their own farming estates.

## 1776

United States declares independence.

## 1860

Mennonite Brethren Church begins within the Molotschna colony in Russia.

## 1867

Dominion of Canada is formed.



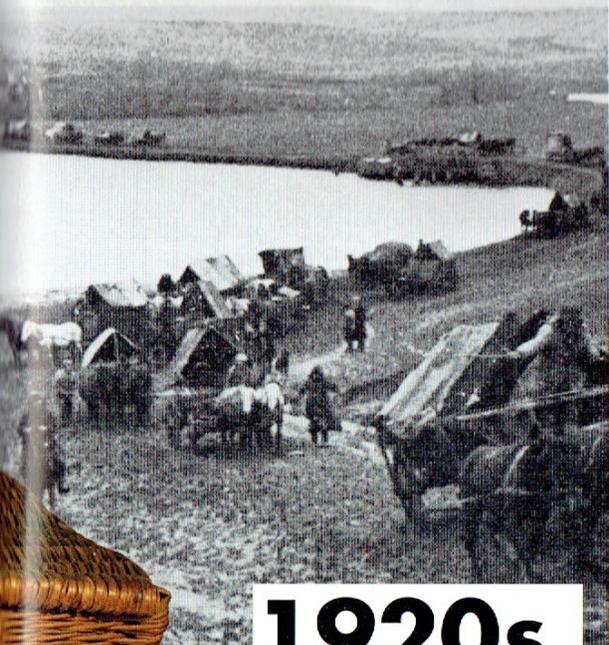
**Many words are used when discussing the use of the sword and the practice of nonviolence.**

**NONVIOLENCE** is the refusal to use violence.

**NONRESISTANCE** is a principle based on a translation of Matt. 5:39 in which Jesus says to "resist not evil". Some people understand this command to mean "make no response". They would refuse to participate in the military but may also be hesitant to join a public protest. Instead they allow their everyday practices to be a witness to the nonviolence of Jesus.

**NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE** is action-focused but uses only nonviolent methods to witness, or to bring about change. Recent advocates of peace and nonviolence use the passage beginning in Matt. 5:39 to suggest that "do not resist an evildoer" means "do not mirror evil" but instead use creative means to change the situation.

**PACIFISM** is a commitment to nonviolence. Specifically, it is a refusal to be part of the military. The term is especially relevant when describing times when governments require universal military service. Many pacifists are CO's (conscientious objectors) who complete voluntary service assignments instead of serving military terms.



# 1940s

Mennonites who did not emigrate earlier try to escape the turmoil of World War II. Some 12,000 start a difficult trek to the Netherlands or Germany, eventually making it to Canada or South America. Many more perish inside Russia or are exiled to labor camps in Siberia.



# 1920s

Some 23,000 Mennonites flee civil war, food shortages, roving bandits and Soviet Communism—leaving their villages in Ukraine and settling mostly in Canada, Brazil and Paraguay. Others go to Mexico and the United States. Some 46,000 remain in Ukraine.

1900



## 1881

Young men from Mennonite villages in Russia serve in the Forestry Service in exchange for not entering the military. In World War I, they serve as ambulance and first aid workers, rangers and loggers.

## 1885

The Canadian Pacific Railway is completed.



## 1920

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is organized in North America to respond to requests for aid from famine-ravaged Mennonites in Russia. Food and tractors are sent.



## 1917-20

Russian Revolution and civil war

## 1914-18

World War I

## 1940s

As an alternative to fighting in World War II, Mennonite men in Canada serve in the British Columbia Forest Service. In the United States, conscientious objectors work in mental health hospitals and volunteer with MCC overseas.



## 1939-45

World War II



## 1970s

Many of the Aussiedler (Mennonites who survived World War II in Russia) begin to migrate to Germany.

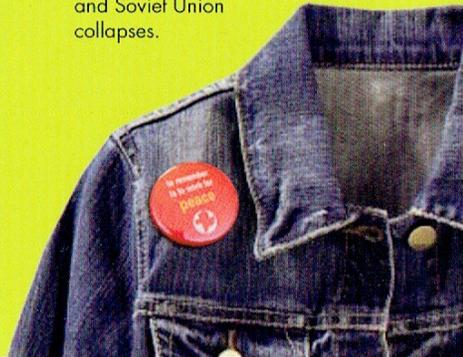
2000

## Today

Today, significant numbers of individuals with Russian Mennonite heritage live in Germany, Canada, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay, as well as in other countries around the world.

## 1989

Berlin Wall falls and Soviet Union collapses.



Source of Timeline: On the Zwieback Trail—Weaver, Kauffman, Rempel Smucker

Both newcomers and long-time heritage holders are keepers of the faith. Stories from the past can act as a rudder that keeps us pointed in a peace direction. We live in the present, bearing witness to the world of God's reign on earth. Newcomers, and in particular youth, have an opportunity to bring a fresh burst of enthusiasm and a glimpse of what is to come. **As sisters and brothers in a global Anabaptist community, we are all responsible for exploring the past, acting in the present, and shaping the future.**

~ quote from Living the Anabaptist Story

To view wall-sized Anabaptist Timeline, visit downstairs Hall of Art.

## Living the Anabaptist Story—Pacifism

Mennonites, Brethren, and Quakers are the historic peace churches. Amish and Hutterites also embrace pacifism. Early sixteenth century Anabaptists held a wide range of views regarding the use of violence. People like Balthasar Hubmaier and Bernhard Rothmann along with some other leaders defended the use of the sword, but it is sixteenth century Anabaptist understanding of pacifism that was carried forward to the present time. The principle of nonviolence was included in the *Schleitheim Articles* of 1527, a defining text for Swiss Anabaptists. Menno Simons, Conrad Grebel and others completely rejected the use of the sword.

Anabaptists consider themselves disciples of Jesus and look at how Jesus acted, spoke, and lived, and try to follow that example. The gospels give us a clear picture of how Jesus lived His life. He crossed social, political, and economic boundaries to relate to people – talking to the Samaritan woman, healing on the Sabbath, eating with a tax collector. In the Sermon on the Mount He urges His followers to be a light on a hill and to let their lives display characteristics of God’s Kingdom. The Beatitudes are found in the Sermon on the Mount:



It is relatively easy to be a pacifist in times of peace, but during times of conflict when patriotism and nationalism are running high, political and social pressures as well as the threat of physical violence, have caused some groups of Anabaptists to discard the principle of pacifism. Others have found alternate ways to serve.

The following section bears witness to the many people who refused to participate in armed struggles. Whereas these stories are specific to North America, we know that similar events took place in many parts of the world at many different periods. Many of us grew up hearing about family members and relatives suffering as conscientious objectors in stone quarries and Siberian forests in the Soviet Union.

During the American Revolution, hostility was expressed by patriots towards Mennonites. In June of 1778, ten Mennonite families were brought to court in Pennsylvania because the men had refused to support the revolution through military participation. These families were exiled and all their belongings confiscated. During the American Civil War, some Mennonites and Brethren were imprisoned for refusing to bear arms.

During World War I, conscientious objectors (COs) experienced a variety of reactions from community members and local governments. Some received rough treatment at the hands of local authorities, vigilante groups, or officials in charge of military camps. Historian James Juhnke tells the story of Bernhard Harder, in Kansas. “A mob arrived at Harder’s farm, intent upon harm. Harder turned aside the angry men by suggesting that they all sing ‘America’ together. Harder led off in a loud and vigorous voice. Though the others were able to join in on the first verse, Harder alone knew the words to verses two, three, and four, and so finished the patriotic hymn himself. Shortly thereafter, the crowd dispersed.”

A particularly tragic story is that of Joseph, Michael, and David Hofer (brothers) and their brother-in-law Jacob Wipf, of a Hutterite community in South Dakota in 1918. The four held fast to their religious beliefs about nonviolence and refused to participate in military exercises or wear uniforms at a military camp in Lewis, Washington. They were thrown into a prison cell for two months and then received their sentence: 37 years on the island of Alcatraz. Over the next several months, they were beaten, received little food and water, and were forced to stand for long periods of time with their hands chained to a steel post over their heads. Joseph and Michael died and David and Jacob were released in 1919.

Alcatraz prison in the early 1900s.

### 66 Living the Anabaptist Story

By World War II, the position of conscientious objector (CO) was recognized, at least, in North America, and many COs performed civil service work – mental hospital workers, forest fire smoke jumpers (an activity in which they apparently excelled), and park and trail restoration. On Vancouver Island seventeen million trees were planted in two years. Over 3000 COs worked in mental hospitals in the US, where they were instrumental in bringing the deplorable conditions and the inhumane treatment of patients into the open.

During the Vietnam War era many COs took assignments with MCC overseas. The tasks involved teaching in schools, health care in refugee camps, and agricultural and water development projects.

Today, many COs are involved in Christian Peacemaker Teams. Tasks vary from walking Palestinian children to school past Israeli checkpoints, being present in Bagdad during the American bombing in 2003, or being present among Kurds in northern Iraq. The aim is to work alongside communities who are experiencing lethal conflicts.

Globally, there are many Anabaptist congregations who heed Christ’s call to be peacemakers. Members of the Japan Mennonite Obihiro Christian Church read the following confession of faith every Sunday:

*-Jesus Christ is the Word of God the Father, and is revealed by the Holy Spirit.*

*-The church is a community of believers, which learns from the Bible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.*

*-Believers listen to the Lord Jesus Christ, serve each other, and love their neighbours.*

*-Believers care for creation; build peace and justice, which came from Christ; and participate in the work of the kingdom of God.*

*-Following Jesus’ nonviolent way of life, we as believers do not participate in war.*

*~submitted by John Rempel*

*Resource ~ Living the Anabaptist Story – Lisa D. Weaver & J Denny Weaver*

## WHY AM I A MENNONITE?

The first question that comes to mind is: "Why am I a Christian?" While it goes without saying that Christ comes first, which church do we join through which to serve Christ?

Now to the question: "Why am I a Mennonite?"

On first thought, I have to say that I became a Mennonite because my parents, my environment, and acquaintances were Mennonite. I became a Mennonite after I accepted Christ and was baptized in the faith. I automatically embraced the faith I knew, because at that time I had not learned any other direction.

After we as a family, for certain reasons, left the Mennonite community for a short period of time and attended other churches, the question came to us: "Why are we Mennonites?" We felt the need to pursue this question. A German poet, Goethe wrote, "Was du ererbt von deinen Vaetern hast, erwirb es um es zu besitzen." (The principles that you have inherited from your forefathers, acquire them, that they become your own.) This should drive us all to search for and learn to understand the true worth of our forefathers, their spiritual heritage, and in that search we find wonderful values that make it worthwhile to be a part of the Mennonite community.

Firstly, there is our peace ideal. I have lived through a war, and have had to acknowledge that a war can never be God's will. With all the pain, hardship and sorrow that a war brings, we can never bring war into line with God's truths and teachings. We respect our forefathers for their acknowledgement of their faith with which they put aside all violence. They practised the peace ideal not only in war, but in their treatment of others.

Secondly, is the swearing of an oath. They let themselves be taught by the Word of God. Matthew 5:v.34-37 reads that no oath should be necessary. Yes should be yes, and no should be no. This has been greatly emphasized by the Mennonite Church.

The third factor that has been important to us Mennonites from the beginning, and I believe still is today, is the Priesthood of all Believers. Our church was formed 400 years ago by certain beliefs, and that every person must carry a responsibility. So we believe it should be today. And when, at the annual church meeting, we go over the reports and lists of church workers, we have respect for them.

And in these values and beliefs that we as Mennonites have, so today I can say that not only have I embraced a heritage, but that I am a Mennonite from the heart.

-Jacob Reimer (from the Fall of 1992 as submitted by Harold Neufeld)

- on the  
lighter  
side!

### An American's Impression of Mennonites A PUBLIC LETTER TO THE PRESS

Dakota Territory  
May 9, 1875

Dear Editor:

1. Dakota will be the home of many thousands of Mennonites according to their leaders who are now in the country. It will therefore be good for the citizens of this territory to learn the characteristics of their soon to be neighbours.
2. We get this statement from respectable and reliable authority: they are quiet, pleasant, hard-working and honest people. They seem to have no other worldly ambition than to EARN AN HONEST LIVING.
3. In all their faces, of both men and women, a mean face cannot be found. They look awkward and the women are ugly. This ugliness might be because of their painful plainness of dress. The ladies make no show of jewelry, silks, fine bonnets, elegant head dresses, or high-heeled shoes. They work in the kitchen, and, for amusement, they join their men in the field, with the plow and hoe. They have no use for Harper's Bazaar, or a Chickering.
4. The men have no political ambition. They have a strong aversion to military operations and honors. They are against being involved in both military and civil law, and no officer of any kind can be a member of their community. They have their own local government. They settle all disputes by arbitration. They are non-combative and do not want to rely on the civil courts for protection. Because of this, there is danger that when they buy worthwhile property they could be robbed and plundered by people who have no morals. None of the Mennonites have, as yet, gotten naturalization papers. Most of them are against naturalization. Probably their needs will force them into citizenship.

Yours respectfully,  
James Adams

(Source: Adapted from The Dakotan Press Newspaper, as printed in: Hiebert, Clarence. Brothers in Deed to Brothers in Need. Faith & Life Press, Newton, Kansas, 1974, p. 237.)

~ submitted by Kathy Rempel

## Mennonites bring Breadbasket from Ukraine to Kansas

Kansas has long been known as the “Breadbasket of America” due to the great quantities of wheat produced by its farmers. What many do not know is that if it were not for Mennonite immigrants from South Russia, the strain of winter wheat, Turkey Red, that made the Great Plains the



world’s leading producer of wheat may have never been brought to North America. Interestingly enough, the seed for the species of tumbleweed that rolls down the dusty road of many a western movie was *also* brought by Mennonites as a stow away in their wheat seed.

Mennonites from Russia began arriving in Kansas in great numbers in 1874, some of them transplanting entire communities from Russia. One such example was the community of Alexanderwohl. The Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church near Goessel, Kansas, stands as a landmark on a thoroughfare through an area known as *Mennonite Mecca*, just north of Newton. The large, white, columned structure has stood at this location since 1874, though the congrega-

tion traces its origins to 16<sup>th</sup>-century Holland, having migrated as a cohesive unit from Holland to Prussia to Russia to Kansas. The German heritage of these immigrants lives today, with names of towns and churches like Hoffnungsau, Ebenfeld, Gnadenau, and Johannesthal in the area.



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My family, however, did not interact much with these groups. The parents of my great great grandparents Friesen settled in the town of Jansen, Nebraska, in a community intended to house solely the Kleine Gemeinde. To their dismay, Jansen was soon populated with the General Conference and Mennonite Brethren, which prompted their move to the very remote areas of Meade County, Kansas. Their dreams of a Kleine Gemeinde utopia were never fulfilled and the resulting challenges, which ranged from theological disagreements to differences in *Plautdietsch* dialects, resulted in the dissolution of the Kleine Gemeinde and large cohorts leaving for the Manitoba Colony in Mexico, Oregon, and Manitoba. While the church I grew up in has remained independent of any conference since the 1940’s due to disagreements on mode of baptism, there remain very close ties to the Mennonite Brethren.

During the 1920's & 30's life was often very difficult in western Kansas. Drought and resulting heavy dust storms led to the Dust Bowl of Kansas. On Sunday, April 14, 1935, called Black Sunday, a massive front moved across the Great Plains from the northwest. Winds of 60 miles per hour picked up the loose topsoil and mounded it into billowing clouds of dust hundreds of feet high. The dust and darkness halted all forms of transportation and people were forced to stay in their houses to wait out the storm.



- dust storm blowing on our farm during the Dust Bowl



My great grandfather Ben Z. Friesen was the oldest brother. The youngest is at the base of the windmill tower. I was privileged to know all but one. Some may be interested to know that my uncle John Z. about midway up was MCC Bevollmächtigter for the effort to move Mennonites from Russia to China over a frozen River and then to Paraguay.

Beginning in the 1980's, thousands of Low German speaking Mennonites began arriving from Mexico, and one can find large communities of these conservative groups in a number of areas. Their traditional dress seems almost commonplace, and in Garden City where I live, one can hardly go to the grocery store without overhearing several families conversing in *Plautdietsch*.



Utje & John—two of my very close *Plautdietsch* friends

As far as pacifism among MC USA congregations, peace-making and nonviolent theology are very much a part of worship and lifestyle. Among the Mennonite Brethren and other evangelical-type congregations, that aspect has been abandoned.

During WWI, many Mennonites fled to Canada because of violence against those who refused to enlist. My great great uncle, Peter A. Classen, was imprisoned and beaten and even castrated. There are many documented cases of Mennonites and Mennonite pastors being beaten and tarred and feathered for their German language and peace theology.

Now, as we approach 150 years of Mennonites in Kansas, varieties of wheat descending from the Turkey Red Wheat brought in 1874 still wave in the fields and feed multitudes of people across the globe... and sometimes it seems just as many tumbleweeds go rolling across the prairie in the winter wind. Sometimes, all anyone thinks of at the mention of my home state is *The Wizard of Oz*, but there's much more to this corner of the world than often meets the eye.



~ submitted by Will Friesen

## Reflections after a Heart Transplant

I did not pray for a new heart, but I am profoundly grateful for it and for the life extension it has given me. October 31 is my eighth anniversary, and in December I will turn 76.

I know many people pray for such a miracle and I would pray with them; but I was okay with impending death.

Two reasons: First, three people very close and dear to me had died in the span of 18 months through 1998-9. In the course of grieving, one night my feeling about what being dead is like shifted from everlasting blackness to light and beauty. Since then I am not fearful about death. Second, I knew that my new life depended on someone else's death; that made me feel bad and even vaguely guilty. But once I was able to acknowledge fully that it's not my decision but the Lord's, I was at peace with "If it is meant to be it will happen."

I did not expect complications during surgery but we must all know that life is both very tough and very fragile; there are no guarantees. During the first night, due to a collapsed lung I felt unable to breathe. In my desperate struggle, I prayed, "Lord, help me! I don't think you gave me this new heart only to let me die this way!" A few minutes later a man appeared with a special mask to make me breathe against opposite pressure. He said, "You have to work at it!" I took that as God's answer. The man helped me by counting 30 hard breaths and telling me he would come back for 30 more. It got me through the crisis.

Since then, I have sometimes prayed for guidance in what I am to do with this extra life I have been granted. The answers did not suggest anything grandiose; rather, it seemed that I was to do the best I can day by day. Same as most of us?

So I continue part time work and volunteering with my organization which includes a farm. I am an active part of the "PCVC", the local volunteer group which helps people in temporary illness and had looked after me during my recovery. I continue my church participation on the board, the worship design team, and with service projects. I am managing the community gardens, the "Edible Landscape" (fruit trees, berries, vines, grapevines, nuts – all free for people to harvest), and the fruit orchard on our farm. I have been able to travel again; one trip took me to Vietnam where our tour group experienced the dire need for a house church to move to higher ground to avoid annual flooding; I mobilized our group to raise the funds for that – 4 years later their first floor of the new building is complete! Most recently, when the refugee situation became so dire, I started and am leading a diverse group that helps a Congolese refugee family become established here. This has become a source of great blessing for all involved.

My physical abilities are declining, and this is something I believe important though not always easy to come to terms with. After all, my health has not been restored to pre-heart disease.

I have received a wonderful reprieve from extreme illness and death, but I have also traded one set of medical dependencies for another. Any transplantee may die in a week without rejection meds. And those drugs, like cancer meds and more, have serious adverse effects on other organs. Furthermore, aging happens – it's a natural process.

Most years since my heart transplant I have attended a "candle lighting" ceremony at Loyola Health Center to honor the organ donors and their families. Several recipients tell their story and where possible, that of their donors. I was a speaker after my first anniversary, and I was able to have the widow of my donor there with me. (Big cheers from the audience!) The first time we met, when we hugged she took great comfort from hearing her husband's heart beat again. That was precious to me as well.

At this annual ceremony, all the speakers have been inspiring with their message, grateful for their new organs and improved lives, and eager to make good use of their gift. The variety of experiences has been humbling and encouraging for me. I have come to recognize that no specific life is necessarily more "important" or "worthy" than another, whether young or old, rich or poor, or whatever color or gender or mental ability. I believe that anyone who is glad to be alive and willing to make a contribution is most welcome in God's world.



~ submitted by Linda Wiens (bio follows)

## Bio of Linda Wiens

I am Gerlinde (Linda) Wiens, sister to Hans-Jürgen (John) Wiens and Dorothea Enns.

For over 25 years I lived and worked in Northwestern Ontario, 100 miles west of Thunder Bay. Then, retiring from there, I took a job near Chicago, in a small “conservation community” which I had helped design as a consultant in my previous job.

*We've harvested our first pawpaws ever from one of our pawpaw trees here in our community orchard that Linda Wiens (pictured here) initiated the planting of. This native American fruit grew widely east of the Mississippi River and was even a big part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition's diet in the last week of their trip back to Saint Louis. The taste is a mix of banana, mango, avocado, and custard. It's a delicious part of Americana - six states have a town called Paw Paw - that is being rediscovered.*

*~ copied from Facebook page of Liberty Prairie Foundation*



I have lived here for 15 years now. I am actually closer to my family and visit them more often than when I lived in Ontario. I maintained my membership in NUMC until I found a new congregation here in Libertyville. We are called North Suburban Mennonite Church and we are too small a group to have our own church. But we are a lively, active group.

Two years ago we began “reimagining” our worship life. That included brainstorming and then selecting several new, challenging service projects. I am involved in two of these. One is an “Anabaptist Blog” where we try to express our Anabaptist faith in opinions and experiences of real-life issues. Different congregation members write so we can have a fairly regular column on our web site.

The other is co-sponsorship of a Congolese refugee family. For that we have formed a local volunteer group, some church-affiliated, some not. It's different here than in Canada: there is not a well-developed model, the distance between the family and the sponsors is often significant, and the refugee family's neighborhood is often undesirable (as is the case with ours). It gives me a new appreciation for the work of Christian Peacemaker Teams! It is also proving a great blessing for all involved, due to our spontaneous teamwork and the developing friendship with “our” family.

## BOOK CORNER by Debbie Fast

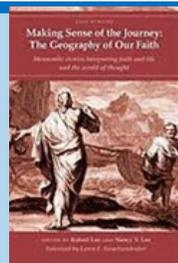
### Making Sense of the Journey: The Geography of Our Faith

By Robert Lee & Nancy V Lee

“Mennonite stories integrating faith & life & the world of thought. Mennonites who made a difference.

These compelling memoirs trace the effects of a tumultuous century on mainly rural Mennonites. Depression-era babies whose youth & adulthood were bracketed by World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam & the Cold War, they also saw the emergence of a new global world.

These remarkable accounts reflect the experiences & stories similar to those of hundreds of Mennonites whose lives were changed during this disruptive era. By confronting their own beliefs & faith practices, they gradually transformed the Mennonite church. No more could Mennonites be *Die Stillen im Lande*.”

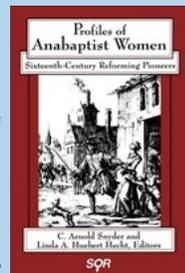


### Profiles of Anabaptist Women

By C Arnold Snyder & Linda A Huebert Hecht

“During the upheavals of Reformation, one of the most significant of the radical Protestant movements emerged – that of the Anabaptist movement. Profile of Anabaptist Women provides lively, well-researched portraits of the courageous women who chose to risk persecution & martyrdom to pursue the unsanctioned religion – a religion that, unlike the established religions of the day, initially offered them opportunity & encouragement to proselytize & take on leadership roles.

These personal stories of courage, faith, commitment & resourcefulness interweave women's lives into the greater milieu, relating them to the dominant male context & the socio-political background of the 16<sup>th</sup> century reformation. Taken together, these sketches will give readers an appreciation for the central role played by Anabaptist women in the emergence & persistence of this radical branch of Protestantism.”

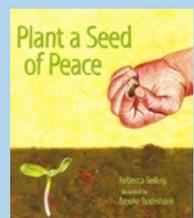


### Plant a Seed of Peace

By Rebecca Seilling

Illustrated by Brooke Rothshank

“Forth-three delightfully illustrated stories of peacemakers from today & the past will capture the imagination of children of all ages. They tell of people whose lives point to something beyond themselves – a transforming faith in God. Readers learn how to put their faith into action so they too can grow a better world.”





## Christmas Memories of my little Oma

My father died when I was nine years old and my mother, younger brother and I moved in with mother's parents, who were already "old" but took us in because in 1955 there was limited assistance for widows with young children. There were no organized support groups and no re-training programs.



My Oma, Lidia Stobbe, was the anchor of the family and she orchestrated most family celebrations. Every Christmas Eve we had to go to church because it was especially geared as a children's program. I was usually involved with a poem or a skit. My mother drove the car, a VW Bug, my grandfather rode beside her and my grandmother, young brother and I were squashed in the back seat.



Without fail, every Christmas Eve my grandmother lost her memory and we had to wait in the car for her.

The excuses were so silly: she had forgotten her hat, or forgotten to turn off a light or to lock the back door. I remember being very annoyed with her, but we waited patiently in the car - which took forever to warm up anyway !

When we got home from church and lit the tree, it was like a miracle. There were presents, a new book and a Bunte Teller. It was the time when you only got to "feast" on what you got - an orange, a bit of marzipan, some nuts and cookies (which had disappeared weeks before) .

I never suspected or asked but just got caught up in the mystery, magic and wonder of it being Christmas. After a few years and many sneaky questions I realized that my little Oma had not really been so very forgetful after all.



Now, even after 50 years, I cherish the memory of the love and care which went into creating the wonder and magic for us on Christmas Eve.

It was pure. It was simple. It was wonderful.

*~ written and published in 2002 as a special to The St. Catharines Standard  
re-submitted in 2017 to Life With Us at Niagara U.M by Ingrid Regier in loving thankful memory of my little Oma.*



### **The Humble Heart**

**A heart that is broken  
For God and for others,  
Reaches beyond  
Its own little world.**

**It touches the hurting,  
Sharing their sorrow,  
Binds up the wounded,  
Quenching their thirst.**

**While the world crushes onward  
Oft' heartless, uncaring,  
Leaving streams of destruction  
Behind in its wake---**

**God's children come, humbly,  
Gather the broken,  
Weaving a shelter  
Of healing and love.**

**Cradling, encircling  
With care and compassion,  
Piecing together  
The hearts - now made whole.**

*- Mary L. Pries*

## On my dad's 80th birthday

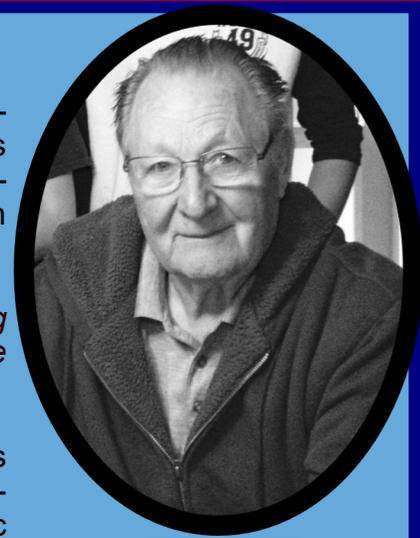
This coming December 16<sup>th</sup> marks my dad's 80th birthday. This is a big milestone to reach and is worthy of recognition, for to be part of life's journey for this long is worth celebrating. What I celebrate is not my dad getting "this old", however - I celebrate my dad's 80 years of living young. As the poet Samuel Ullman says:

*Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. We grow old by deserting our ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.*

When I think of my own childhood with my dad, I immediately think about his patience, his inquisitive nature and generosity. With five kids, our home was always a busy one with rarely a dull moment! Yet even during the most chaotic times, he always seemed to approach situations calmly and with some laughter. Sometimes the odd German saying would be thrown in as encouragement. One of my favourites is: "Immer mit der Ruhe und die Gute Zigarre." It's a saying that comes to mind even now, whenever I feel overwhelmed and reminds me that it's all good. It's one of the bits of wisdom that I am most grateful for!

Something else I learned from my dad, which I recognize shapes his outlook on life, is to always remain curious. His sense of wonder about how things work, and his interest in so many different topics, have fostered a love of making and learning in all of his kids - and grandkids! Our house was always filled with books and magazines such as National Geographic and Popular Mechanics to keep us up to date with the world around us. We also had (and still have!) a garage filled with tools where many projects were conceived, experimented with and executed. I've always considered it one of the greatest gifts to have a father that could more or less fix anything. Even the grandchildren learned from an early age - if something wasn't working, no problem - Opa will fix it! Fortunately for all of us, my dad always makes time to help us, without question and without complaint. His generosity is deep and is a real testimony to how much he cares for his family and friends. As we mark his 80th year, I appreciate having such a great example to live by, and I hope that I will be able to carry the same kind of curiosity, enthusiasm and generosity with me throughout my life.

~ submitted by Marion Griese



## December Birthdays

### November Birthdays

Justina Bartel: 92 (11/2/25)  
Gerhard Hummel: 83 (11/7/34)  
Irene Penner: 82 (11/16/35)  
Nettie Goerz: 91 (11/23/26)  
Siegfried Wiens: 84 (11/24/33)  
Susanne Janzen: 91 (11/27/26)  
Gunnar Doerwald: 83  
(11/28/34)

Elizabeth Janzen: 86 (12/1/31)  
Jake Wiens: 89 (12/6/28)  
Marg Goerz (Eric): 82 (12/6/35)  
Egon Epp: 88 (12/9/29)  
Adine Enns: 81 (12/9/36)  
Irma Epp: 86 (12/12/31)  
Henry Schroeder: 84 (12/14/33)  
Henry W. Epp: 80 (12/15/37)  
Werner Griese: 80 (12/16/37)  
Marlene Fast: 81 (12/18/36)  
Henry Martens: 81 (12/27/36)  
Therese Bergen: 86 (12/30/31)

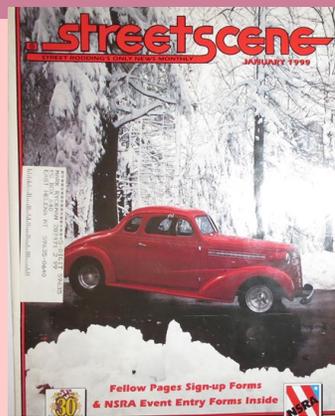


Remember this '37 Chevy which began its rebuilding journey in 1974 in the hands of Henry Friesen? After several trips to Alaska, Henry & Linda sold it to Chris Hicks in 1979. But what happened to this car over the years? Henry & Linda had to put their best sleuthing skills to work to locate their former car. Read on to follow the continuing saga of the '37 Chevy.

## OUR 1937 CHEVY COUPE HOT ROD "THE REST OF THE STORY"

### The Search:

Over the years I wondered what had happened to our '37 Chevy coupe. I knew Chris had converted it to pro-street with a 402 big block, quick change rear end w/4:56 gears, Saginaw 4-speed, tubbed the rear end with 14" slicks, painted the car black, re-did some of the interior with a new rug and re-upholstered door panels, installed centerline wheels with 4" front tires and added fiberglass running boards. Through the years, I would run in to him at the Barrie Automotive Flea Market, where we vended and knew he had sold the coupe in 1984. So in 1997, 18 years after selling the car, I had this overwhelming urge to try to find our coupe again. Little did I realize it would take another 18 yrs to locate it! I began a search for the coupe by obtaining the seller's package from Service Ontario to see who the current owner was. Only Chris and I were listed as the previous owners. Shortly thereafter, I met Chris at the Barrie Automotive Flea Market and asked him about the car. He said he had sold it to a guy from Pennsauken, New Jersey, but could not recall his name. That explained why only Chris and I were listed on the sellers package as previous owners, it had gone to the United States. He thought he might have a name at home in his paperwork, but no luck. I had come to a dead end. So I started attending the large car shows in the United States: Columbus, Syracuse hoping to come across the car, but again no luck. Then in 2011 we were invited to a friend's Christmas party in Lewiston, NY. I got talking to one of the guests, who was a body repair man and into classic cars, about my search for the '37 Chevy coupe. He commented that he had some connections and could help me locate the car. I gave him the VIN number of the coupe which I always carried with me. Sure enough, two weeks later just after New Years, he called with an owner's name. The VIN had been registered to John and Arlene O'Keefe of Pennsauken, NJ but said the plates had been surrendered. I only had their address, so I put a package of pictures, story about the build and the Alaska Trip together and sent it to them. No sooner did John receive my package, he called to say that he really enjoyed my story, but no longer owned the coupe. They sold it to Tom Phillips of Concorde Auto Body in Concordeville, PA around 1986. He shared with me what he remembered of the car. When he saw the coupe for sale he just had to have it. So he and a friend came up to Ontario, bought the coupe and he drove it home. He had sheared a rear axle at the weld shortly after acquiring the car replacing it with a narrowed 9" Ford rear end w/4:56 gears, installed a Mustang II front end, 350 Turbo automatic transmission and new steering column. He said Tom Phillips had painted the coupe Porsche Red, louvered the hood, frenched in '59 Caddy taillights and that I would recognize the car because it was the only one with chromed door hinges. He also mentioned that the coupe had been featured in a number of car magazines, on the cover of National Street Rod Association's Streetscene Magazine and that he had seen it at a car show sporting Connecticut plates.



I then called Tom Phillips only to find out that he had sold the coupe to Harry Kitabjian of Speedway Radiator in Upper Darby, PA in 1987. So I called Harry, only to find out he had sold the coupe in Sept 1989 to a young couple who were waiting by his car at a show and just had to have this car. They actually remortgaged their house to buy the coupe, but he couldn't remember their names. Once more, I was at a dead end. Additional information I got from Harry was that the only changes he had done to the coupe were to paint the grille red and add "Bad Boy" on the lower right hand side of the trunk lid. This came about when he and his son were driving in the coupe and Harry would do some burn outs. His son would shake a finger at him and say "Bad Boy." I could not understand why the VIN search did not register these owners. I requested another search but again only the O'Keefe's name came up, so I called Tom and Harry again to see if the VIN# had been changed but they said that as far as they knew, it had not. I continued to attend the Columbus and Syracuse car shows in hopes of finding the coupe but to no avail. Being at a loss, I decided to join the National Street Rod Association and place an ad in the wanted section of their Streetscene Magazine asking for information about the whereabouts of the '37 Chevy coupe. After placing my ad, I remembered that John O'Keefe had mentioned the car had been featured on the cover of Streetscene Magazine. Searching on the Internet, I came across a site called "Back Issues.com" and they carried Streetscene Magazine showing pictures of the front covers. I cancelled my ad, and looked through all the issues from 1990 and found a red '38 Chevy coupe featured on the cover of the Jan 1999 issue, which I immediately ordered. When I received the magazine I knew it was the '37 Chevy coupe, with the '38 front end, I was looking for - it had chromed door hinges and frenched in '59 Caddy taillights. Inside the front cover, they gave credit for the cover photo and indicated the coupe belonged to John and Dina Harding of West Suffield, Connecticut. Now having a name, I did a search on the Internet, coming up with another Streetscene cover feature on the April 2008 issue. I also ordered this copy and credit again was given to John and Dina Harding but now of Mapleton, Maine. I located Dina and her e-mail on LinkedIn and e-mailed her 09 Mar 2015 asking if they still owned or had owned the '37 Chevy coupe. About five days later I received an e-mail from John saying that they still owned the coupe and had always wondered about the history of the car and its original builder, (little did we know why but were soon to find out). He called me that same day and we had a wonderful discussion about the car. It is still basically the same as when they bought it in 1989. I put together a photo album with copies of receipts, pictures of the build, pictures and story of our Alaska trip, the coupe's documented history as I had recorded it and sent it to them. I also mentioned that we would love to see the coupe again, hopefully in the summer.

**So after an 18 year search I finally found it!**

## The Visit:

Having located the coupe we now had to see it. Since we were in Kingston, Ontario for a wedding on Saturday the 8<sup>th</sup>, we arranged a 1 ½ hr visit (they had a very busy schedule) at 4:30 on Monday 10 August 2015. From Kingston we continued on to Mapleton, Maine to see the coupe. We arrived at the Harding's



at 4:30 and received a warm welcome from John, Dina and their two children Colton and Courtney. What was supposed to be a 1 ½ hr visit ended up being 4 hrs! We were still in the living room sharing stories after 1 ½ hrs and had yet to see the coupe. They cancelled some of their evening plans to accommodate our visit. They wanted to know everything about the coupe and had some of their own stories to share. They asked me to start at the beginning from when I bought the coupe. So I explained to them that I bought the coupe in 1974 at which time I was attending the University of Waterloo enrolled in Mechanical Engineering, taking a machine shop night course, was a member of the Waterloo County Rod & Custom Club, played friendly hockey during the winter plus worked on the car all hours of the night on weekends for two years. I would pick Lin up from work on Friday night and head to Niagara to work on the car until 3 in the morning, up early Saturday and again work until the wee hours of the morning. Lin went patiently with me every weekend and visited with her parents while I worked on the coupe. Then we'd head back to Waterloo Sunday night, where my school buddies were waiting for me to help them with their assignments. During the week I would also clean and paint small parts for the coupe and store them under our bed. When Lin commented to the Harding's that I was basically burning the candle at both ends, Dina looked at me and said "no WONDER we're always SO tired when we drive that car." "Wow," I said, "that's very interesting because I did put my heart and SOUL into that car!" She looked over at her husband John and said "I think we can tell them the rest of our stories!" She then turned to me and asked "In the spring of 1991 were you near death or very sick." I said that in 1990 I came down with the Epstein-Barr Syndrome and was very depressed, fatigued, couldn't eat and lost 15 pounds. I was off work for 3 weeks, which was unusual for me since I had not had a sick day off in the previous 14 years I worked at John Deere, I had to take two Gravol pills every morning to get rid of the morning sickness to be able to function. Then in the spring of 1991 I woke up one morning and felt great, threw the Gravol pills away and have never needed them again. It was like night and day.

Dina then related the story, where in 1991 John was working under the car, got out from under the car on the passenger side, walked around the front of the car and he had this strange feeling that someone was looking at him. He looked through the windshield of the car and saw a guy in a red checked shirt, long white beard and round glasses (he points at my glasses and says

"just like those") sitting in the driver's seat looking at him. He quickly rushed into the house screaming Dina's name. When she asked him



what the matter was, he explained what he had just seen. She asked him who he thought it might be and he replied "A previous owner!" They thought the worst of what might have happened to the owner. Interesting that the timing when John saw this image and when I threw the Gravol pills away more or less coincide.



Now fast forward to March 2015 when I contacted them by email and sent them some pictures which included me in my red checked shirt sitting in the coupe at the Yukon Border crossing-sign in 1976 and also the picture of Lin and me from our 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

When he opened the picture of Lin and me he could not believe it. He yelled out for Dina to come right away. From his tone she feared he was having a heart attack and ran to the room. When she got there, he was pointing to the computer screen with a trembling finger, "That's the guy I saw! He's alive!" Interesting, how his vision of me was both a futuristic and historical version with a full white beard (approx. 2008), round glasses (2014) and a red checked shirt (1976).

Realizing we believed their story and were not shocked, they shared another experience they had had with the coupe. When they lived in Pennsylvania they did not have a garage at their house, so they had one built by the Amish. When it was complete, John brought the coupe out of storage into their new garage. As he got out of the car, he couldn't believe what he was seeing. Was the car black, dark blue or dark green? He rushed into the house to get Dina to come have a look and asked her "What colour IS this car?" She replied "Dark Green!"



This was the colour I had painted the coupe in 1976. At this point the car was actually Porsche Red. We were fascinated by these stories and still wonder today what they mean. Finally after sharing our stories, we went to the barn to see the coupe. Here we spent another 2 ½ hrs reminiscing, looking at and sitting in the coupe, taking pictures and answering questions about the original build and trip to Alaska.



Dina had to have a picture of me sitting in the driver's seat of the coupe re-enacting the scene as John saw it in 1991 (less red checked shirt).

The coupe now has 79,000+ miles on the odometer. I sold it with approximately 17,000 miles. The instrument cluster was still the original wood insert with Stewart Warner gauges I had installed 40 yrs ago.



The transmission cross member and the engine mounts were still the ones I had fabricated and John believes the body work is still mostly from what I had done in the 70's. It still had the original vacuum wipers, all the rubber weather stripping and glass was what I had originally installed. We also found out, that to register a street rod in Pennsylvania and have it insured a new VIN must be issued because it no longer is an original production car. That's why my search with the original VIN did not locate the owners in Pennsylvania. John said he would have loved to have kept the coupe registered with the original VIN# plate, because it indicated it was built in Oshawa, Canada. He still had the original



VIN# plate in the glove box. The original 1973 Corvette dark green metallic paint I had painted the car was still visible where the plate had been removed.



It was a real pleasure to see and sit in the coupe again and reminisce about all the good times we had with this car. May it live on for many more years bringing pleasure to the owners! This was their first Street Rod and John and Dina's daughter Courtney says it will be hers some day.

~ submitted by Henry & Linda Friesen  
[hl.friesen@yahoo.com](mailto:hl.friesen@yahoo.com)



It has been my pleasure to attend the MCEC (Mennonite Church Eastern Canada) and Mennonite Church Canada (National Church) Conference this past year and a half. I enjoy the learning opportunities, business activities, and fellowship with Mennonites from the larger church body.

I wish everyone could experience the powerful movement of the Holy Spirit when so many people are worshipping together in song, prayer, and intentional discernment. When over 400 people in Winnipeg were singing ‘Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow’ (the old pg. 606), I got goosebumps!

There is a lot of value to hear stories from across Canada, and to understand that other churches also experience the challenges our church faces. We are not alone, and it is of great value to listen to God beyond our own immediate circumstances. There is strength, discernment, and resources when we share our gifts on a larger scale.

The reality is that the world is changing and church attendance along with financial giving is potentially shifting. It is important to listen to what God is directing us to do through the changes. Just as our church is experiencing a season of change, the larger church body is as well.

Around each assigned table, there were people from BC to New Brunswick, and everywhere in between. Through discussions we all gained insight and a better understanding of the different perspectives on the decisions we were making. I do not want to see this part of the process change, as there is a lot of strength in all of us coming together. The experiences of each Regional Church are a bit different from each other. There was sensitivity to the fact that these changes would have a ripple effect, with some people losing their jobs, and this would also affect programming support that churches have benefited from. Discussions and then the subsequent items voted on included “the Covenant and Operating Agreement between Regional Churches, a proposal on International Witness, and a financial plan” (pg.1 Assembled News).

**Motion 1: Implementing Bylaw**  
*Whereas* the Delegate Body at Assembly 2016 approved in principle the FDTF Final Report and Addendum;  
**Be it resolved** that we approve the new structure (see Discernment Guide Appendix 1, page 10)  
**Be it resolved** that the MC Canada Delegates rescind the current bylaw and approve the following bylaw in its place (begins on page 11 of the report book)

Future Directions: **Covenant New**

The restructuring vote was passed by 94% in favor of the changes. The National Church will make changes in order to function through a bottom up approach. The local congregations (such as our own church) will discern and impact the Regional Church (MCEC). MCEC will then be part of the national new Joint Council, with representatives from each Regional Church to oversee/direct MC Canada. Individual churches will no longer be direct members of MC Canada. The

**Motion 2c: Covenant and Operating agreement**  
*Therefore*, the MC Canada Delegates accept the draft Covenant in principle and invites the Regional Churches working together in Joint Council to finalize the Covenant, making changes within the spirit of collaboration, if needed to clarify the relationships.  
*and Therefore*, the MC Canada Delegates support the draft Operating Agreement in principle and invite the Regional Churches working together in Joint Council to finalize the Operating Agreement, making changes within the spirit of the covenant, if needed to further clarify how the Regional Churches will work together.

Future Directions: **Covenant New**

intention is to have stronger local voices for regional direction, which will impact the National Church (MC Canada) initiatives. NUMC (our church) will have this responsibility to speak to the National agenda through MCEC. Our financial giving will likely continue to be the same, however the money will all flow through MCEC, towards the national projects, programs and services (including International Witness, Common Word printed resources etc.) is a continued need for a *national voice* to speak with international partners. “The new structures make room for periodic national study conferences with direct congregational involvement” (pg.1 Assembled News).



Changes are ongoing, and through a season of change, there is not always a full clear picture of what is ahead. In being open to the change, God can do great things. Prov. 3:5-6; “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge God and God will direct your paths” (pg.14 Assembled News).

Ellery Rauwerda, and I will be sharing more about the Assembly at NUMC on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Additional information can be found on the MC Canada website, including this summary: <http://news.mennonitechurch.ca/sites/news.mennonitechurch.ca/files/2017%20Assembled%20News.pdf>

## Walk a Mile in Her Shoes Fundraiser for Gillian's Place



Hello my name is Logan Fieguth. I am 14 years old and attend Laura Secord Secondary School. For the past five years I have been participating in Walk a Mile in HER Shoes, a fundraiser for Gillian's Place, a shelter for abused women and children. I originally started walking because my Mom was helping with the walk and I had to go along with her because my Dad was at hockey with my brother.

At that first walk which I attended in 2013 there was a woman telling her story and why she went to Gillian's Place. After hearing her story I knew there were women and children who needed help, so I have continued to come back each year to give them support and to help raise funds for Gillian's Place.

2017 was my 5<sup>th</sup> year walking and I wanted to do something special. I love music, and playing guitar, piano and drums. I wanted to organize an event where we could enjoy some fantastic music together so I reached out to some musicians we know and with support from them, my family and the owner of Mahtay Café, I put together an afternoon of music. This year I raised \$1,613.25. Most of this money came from the big music event I organized at Mahtay Café. I am hoping to beat this total next year with more help from friends and family.

This year, Walk a Mile in HER Shoes raised \$110,000 for Gillian's Place.



*Big brother Braeden makes a good walking buddy, esp. in heels!*



*When your guitar teacher supports you by coming out to play with you, that's really awesome! We enjoyed your concert & your passion for this cause.. Keep up the good work Logan!*

*It's always nice to have Mom along for cheerleader & support—even on the bass guitar. Good job Logan & Mom! We are so proud of you!*



*Logan is now also sharing his guitar skills with our Lighthouse kids at NUMC on Sunday mornings. Thanks Logan!*

## For the Love of Horses

Hello my name is Braeden Fieguth. I am 16 years old and live in Niagara-on-the-Lake. I love to play hockey, video games and hang out with my friends. What most people don't know about me, is that I love riding horses, roping cattle and riding bulls. My love of horses started when I was 10 years old on a family vacation to Bandera, Texas.



In November 2012, my family took a one week vacation to Texas. We stayed at Rancho Cortez located in the hill country just outside of Bandera, Texas - the cowboy capital of the world. We arrived at the ranch where we were greeted by the owner, Cowboy Larry Cortez. Cowboy Larry introduced us to the horses and the ranch hands working at the ranch. As guests, we were invited to help out with the horses. I immediately fell in love with the horses and with the cowboy life. I spent every second I could helping the ranch hands and learning all about the horses and how to feed, tack and care for them.



When we left the ranch I was so sad, I just wanted to be with the horses. My parents thought it was a phase. Little did they

know it would become my passion.



In February of the following year, as my birthday approached, I thought the family was getting ready to go to an out-of-town hockey tournament. My hockey team knew we were not going along, instead my parents woke us up really early and told us we were flying to Texas for a surprise birthday trip to Rancho Cortez. I only saw my parents at meal time and bed time, the rest of the time I was on a horse.



That summer I went to my first week-long cowboy camp at the ranch. Every summer since, I have returned to attend the camp. On the last night of camp, the campers put on a rodeo for their parents to show off their skills at horse riding, roping and steer riding. In 2015 I was given the "All 'Round Cowboy" award for my hard work, dedication and help with the younger campers. In 2016, when camp was

over, our family stayed a couple of extra days so I could enter the Twin Oaks Ranch Rodeo. At the rodeo I rode a 1,500 lb. bull for 3.7 seconds. Not a bad time for my first time on a bull.

Here in Ontario, I have been fortunate to find a woman in Niagara-on-the-Lake who operates a horse rescue farm. For the past three years she has been teaching me about the horses and how to care for them. I earned all my high school volunteer hours there.



When we are at our cottage in Bancroft, Ontario, I help out at a nearby ranch. Mountain Creek Ranch allows me to help out around the ranch with the horses and performing ranch hand duties. In return I earn riding hours. I love riding up Buck Hill and through the forests around Bancroft.



2017 was my final year of Cowboy Camp in Texas. Next year I will go to Rancho Cortez as a camp counsellor and hopefully pass my love of horses on to some young cowboys. One day I hope to own my own horse and horse ranch.

*Happy Trails Braeden!*

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BOARDS BY EMILY

## LIFE WITH US NEWSLETTER

Newsletter Team of Editors

Lani Gade 905-468-2316 [wgade@bell.net](mailto:wgade@bell.net) Kathy Rempel 905-516-3829 [jrempel6@icloud.com](mailto:jrempel6@icloud.com)

Niagara U. M. Church 1775 Niagara Stone Road NOTL 905-468-3313