



**Mennonite  
Church  
Canada**

Resource Centre

# From our Churches

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## **Lenten 100-Word Reflections**

Lent 2010: Holding On, Letting Go

*In 2010, Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg asked 6 persons to write short, 100-word responses to the Lenten theme of the day. These reflections are, admittedly, deeply personal – and not readily or necessarily transferable to another context.*

*What these reflections do illustrate, however, is the powerful testament of short, tightly written, 100-word testimonies.*

*Perhaps it's an exercise for your own congregation during Advent, Lent or a Special Sunday series?*

### **Lent 1**

*By Annemarie Sawatzky*

“Welcome home,” everyone said. I recoiled. Hiding my horror as best I could, I smiled and said thanks. What I meant was, how dare you? How dare you take my real home from me? Twenty five years are not erased in a two-day drive with the cats sitting on the dashboard. Not in spending eighteen months in a dungeon apartment. Not even if my baby knows only this flat, boring province as her home.

We visited my home in November. It had changed, inevitably. Of course. But it hurt my heart.

Slowly I am learning that home is built, not found.

[Type text]

### **Lent 2**

*By Sarah Ens*

Cramped in this little car, edging suspiciously down Portage through the flashing lights and honking, Beth calmly yells us to be quiet, she's trying to merge here, and find the phone so we can get directions. Screaming and laughing and crying, getting lost and then finding ourselves again: a typical, treacherous trip downtown. "We make each other braver" I think as Jana laughs water through her nose and into my lap. I see myself next year, suitcase and map beside me, foreign city before me, and no one to scream, "Watch out" and no one to say, "It's alright; we're almost there."

### **Lent 3**

*By Jim Suderman*

I walked into a desert once  
Leaving a trail of my passing

When I returned, every trace of my trail  
Had been erased by the restless wind and sand.

Did my passing have any effect?  
Have the shifting sands been affected  
By my presence? My passing?

Should I hold on to the second  
And let go of the first?  
The other way about?

### **Lent 4**

*By Betty Dyck*

"The south wind is just the north wind coming back,"  
My grandfather used to say.  
Standing at the store counter  
Peering over silver-rimmed spectacles,  
He delivered the daily weather report  
Along with the grocery order.

During the Depression  
When hobos asked for handouts  
He offered a loaf of bread and  
A hunk of bologna (up to ten a day)  
But not before the rod rider split  
And piled enough wood  
To satisfy Grandfather's work ethic.

[Type text]

I held on to a feeling of heavy guilt  
At not being by his bedside when he died  
Until I finally had to let go.

**Lent 5**

*By Elsie Epp*

A career, a spouse, and a family of three – I arrive at the end of my dreams only to discover I am pregnant! This hidden life stirs and grows until I must surrender to its birth pangs. My call to pastoral ministry is born!

Surprising, disconcerting and troubling to many but a small clan of God's people dares to embrace this fragile call. I preach and teach – pray and love – I bless and baptize, marry and bury. A dozen years here, half that many there and finally eleven years more.

Again I come to the end. I am uncalled.

**Lent 6**

*By Sonya Penner*

The line is cracked, fractured, full of promise. But empty  
Trees dip their branches and write. Love letters  
To the women who left. Too early, called away.  
This maternal line is my line. My road with  
No grandmas for three generations.  
They sit in some far-off café watching TV, unable  
To diaper, drop off at school, I would like. To let go,  
Put my chips on something more solid, long-lasting.  
Sometimes, I yell. Hold on! It's the swing, the under-ducking  
That gets her squealing, her mouth a perfect O.