

January 2015, *Equipping* #152

Grace on the path to peace

Grace Wan is a single mom on welfare who is growing in her capacity as a leader in Macau Mennonite Church. After leading a seminar on reconciliation in the church, church planters George and Tobia Veith noticed that she began to focus her shared prayers toward reconciliation. She also gently encouraged reconciliation among her family members and others.

“You know, every church has a gift that they bring to the larger body of Christ,” Grace told the Veiths. “Some churches are very good in leading worship. Others do well with loving people. Our church brings peace to the table. That is our strength. I feel a call to be a reconciler.”

George and Tobia Veith recently returned to Canada after spending more than a decade as Mennonite Church Canada workers, nurturing leaders in Macau Mennonite Church.



Grace Wan and her sister, Hing.

Peace Assemblies Network

In October, Darnell and Christina Barkman of PeaceChurch Philippines hosted an event at Asian Theological Seminary to officially launch the Peace Assemblies Network (PAN). The Mennonite Church Canada workers say that PAN is intended to help individuals, churches and faith-based communities enrich their understanding of Peace Theology and actively work towards peace and a transformed society. Jon Soriano, pastor, theologian and PeaceChurch member, is the network's National Coordinator. The launch was attended by Bishop Efraim Tendero, National Director of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, and Dann Pantoja, Mennonite Church Canada worker who leads Peacebuilders Community Inc. The two speakers shared practical stories of applying the Gospel of Peace to life in the Philippines.



Jon Soriano (second from right), PAN's National Coordinator, facilitates a small group discussion at the PAN launch.

Mennonite Church Canada invites you to share with your congregation these Celebration Snapshots. They should take no more than 2 minutes to read aloud. You might also consider sharing them through your church newsletter, bulletin board, website or other communication avenue.

“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 3:11

January 2015, *Equipping* #152

Church planting begins with relationships

Jennifer Otto and Gregory Rabus, Mennonite Church Canada workers, are engaged in a church planting ministry in partnership with the Verband Deutscher Mennonitengemeinden in Mannheim Germany. Gregory says that “We resonate with the bit in Isaiah 43: ‘See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?’ We hope that life springs forth from our seed!”

Jennifer and Gregory are growing a church one relationship at a time. They are getting to know people over coffee or lunch, getting acquainted with local peace groups, and strike up conversations on the playground with help from their young son, Alex. Jennifer and Gregory are planting seeds for a strong and vibrant faith-based community in Mannheim.



Jennifer Otto (C) and Gregory Rabus (L), Mennonite Church Canada workers in Germany, with their son Alex.

Extending a healing hand to Gaza

Less than three weeks after a ceasefire was negotiated between Israel and Gaza, Palmer Becker (Waterloo North MC, Ont.) was invited by Bethlehem Bible College (BBC) to teach Pastoral Care and Counselling in the Palestinian Christian Community of Gaza. His students are now responding to the aftermath of 50 days of violent conflict, helping traumatized people heal their spirits.

In 2 intensive one-week sessions at BBC’s Gaza study centre, Becker provided 11 students with step-by-step instruction for extending care to those suffering from grief, depression, abuse and conflict. Between sessions in Gaza, he taught classes on preaching and led sessions on forgiveness at BBC. He also connected with the Muslim and Jewish communities in Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

Following Becker’s Sept. 12 - Oct. 20, assignment, BBC reported that “Palmer provided much needed encouragement and support to the Christian community in Gaza, which at only 1300 people is a tiny minority.”



Palmer Becker presents a mother of 7 children with a quilt made by his wife, Ardys, and other members of Waterloo North Mennonite Church, Ont. Photo by Faiza Ayyad.

Mennonite Church Canada invites you to share with your congregation these Celebration Snapshots. They should take no more than 2 minutes to read aloud. You might also consider sharing them through your church newsletter, bulletin board, website or other communication avenue.

“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.” 1 Cor. 3:11