



Vol.5
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2016 Assembly

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Shape imagination with hope: Wallace

Dan Dyck

With poetic grace and an invitational tone, Cynthia Wallace of Warman Mennonite Church (Sask.) challenged Assembly goers to dream boldly and then asked if they were ready for God's response.

Using the *God~Faith~People* theme text from Jeremiah 31, Wallace characterized the Old Testament story as filled with surprises and "tenacious hope." God's people in Jeremiah's day expected neither destruction nor a new covenant.

"God terminates what is most precious, and then gives more again as an explanation," she said about God's promise to a covenant people.

Wallace, who is Assistant Professor of English at St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan, grew up in a fundamentalist Baptist church. She chose to become Mennonite because of the gift that it had to offer the world — gifts like "thriving through loss at the edges of empire."

"We have not always made room for the discomfort of confession... heaven forbid that we lose sight of the work

that God has called us to do because we're busy focusing all our energies on our conflicts," she said.

When we confess our "... failures and fears and losses, we open space for hope, for life rising from death."



On the road with CovenantCrew2.0

The adventure begins! Thirty-seven youth from Ont., Man. and Sask. are on a bus heading for Missinipe, Sask. and a canoe trip with Churchill River Outfitters. On Friday evening, the youth will return to Saskatoon and stay at the Holiday Inn Express so they can take part in service opportunities in the city and integrate with *God~Faith~People*. The activities are organized by a team led by Krista Loewen of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan.



Assorted Announcements

Table numbers are important!

Please make sure you sit at the table that matches the numeral in the upper right hand corner of your name tag.

Special luncheons today:

Witness Workers luncheon

Theatre Lobby

12:15-1:15

Canadian Mennonite Magazine luncheon

Gallery B

12:15-1:15

Mennonite Woman and Mennonite Men Annual Meetings today

In Gallery A

10:30-12:00

Document Quick links:

Discernment Guide:
commonword.ca/go/654

Full Schedule:
commonword.ca/go/656

Report Book:
commonword.ca/go/655

Assembly Homepage:
home.mennonitechurch.ca/saskatoon2016

See the latest issues of the

the **Assembled** News



online at:

home.mennonitechurch.ca/saskatoon2016

Witness Worker 5Ws

Several long-term Witness Workers (2 years plus) and those who have or will engage in short-term ministry assignments (1 year or less) are attending *God~Faith~People*. They serve on the ground with partners such as Mennonite Partners in China (MPC), the Korean Anabaptist Centre, Mennonite Mission Network (MMC), Serve Nazareth, Bethlehem Bible College (BBC) and Meserete Kristos College (MKC.) Here's your chance to get to know them a little better.

Who: Jeanette Hanson

(Jeanette serves with her husband, Todd, who is not in attendance)

What: Long term Witness Workers developing an Anabaptist presence with the Chinese church, and connections with other churches

When: Since 1991, based in Canada since 2015

Where: Served in China from 1991-2015 and now serving from Canada with regular correspondence and visits to China

Why: Chinese pastors most recently requested Jeanette's assistance to build connections with other churches, particularly with Mennonites in North America



Who: Mike and Cheryl Nimz

What: A long term Witness Worker with Mennonite Trust, (Mike) and volunteer (Cheryl) assist the Anabaptist Network to strengthen connections between Anabaptist individuals and organizations across the U.K.

When: Since August 2013

Where: Located in Birmingham, England, serving throughout the U.K.

Why: To strengthen the witness of Anabaptists as an alternative faith perspective in a post-Christendom context



Who: Jeremiah Buhler

(Jeremiah served with his wife, Kara, who is not in attendance)

What: Short term assignment serving at Bethlehem Bible College on the campus library (Kara), driving the college van through checkpoints and assisting with English writing projects (Jeremiah)

When: September 2013 – February 2014

Where: Bethlehem, Israel/Palestine

Why: To encourage and support Christians in Israel/Palestine and the ministry of the Bethlehem Bible College as they prepare Christian leaders for service in the local church and community



Who: Greg Rabus and Jennifer Otto

with their son Alex

What: Long term Witness Workers inviting newcomers to community outreach programs involving language learning, music, sports and worship.

When: Since July 2012

Where: Ludwigshafen, Germany

Why: To establish a faith community and respond to the needs of refugees; most recently began *Friedenshaus* (Peace House) as an outreach ministry



Who: Tom and Christine Poovong

What: Long term Witness Workers providing pastoral leadership to Maliwan church, encouraging sustainable income generation projects for members and their community, developing local church leaders

When: Since June 2013

Where: Khon Kaen, Thailand

Why: To establish Christian faith communities within a network of Anabaptists across Thailand



Who: George & Tobia Veith

What: Long term Witness Workers teaching university English, resourcing, training and encouraging local church leaders

When: Since 2015 (served in Macau previously)

Where: China

Why: Invited by Chinese pastors to nurture more leaders



Who: Palmer Becker

(sometimes accompanied by his wife, Ardys, who will not attend)

What: Multiple short term assignments to teach, provide pastoral care and produce resources on what it means to follow Christ from an Anabaptist perspective

When: 2007 - 2015 (retired)

Where: In 16 countries around the world

Why: To help nurture faith communities and provide resources so they can grow as vibrant Anabaptist faith communities



Who: Marla and Karl Langelotz

What: A short term assignment to support the long term ministry of Witness workers Gregory Rabus and Jennifer Otto

When: September 2016 – June 2017

Where: Ludwigshafen, Germany

Why: To develop a lively and inviting Mennonite community centre that fosters community and brings God's love to the variety of people living there, including the large and growing refugee population.



Who: Bock Ki Kim and Sook Kyoung Park

What: Long term Witness Workers providing Korean language resources, and leadership for Korean Anabaptists

When: Since July 2013

Where: Chuncheon, South Korea

Why: To help build a sense of community, fellowship and partnership among Anabaptist congregations in South Korea



Who: Byron Rempel-Burkholder

(Byron served with his wife Melita, who is not in attendance)

What: A short term assignment with Bethlehem Bible College social services programs (Melita), and supporting the college staff in their communication and publications and driving guests through checkpoints (Byron)

When: January – April 2016

Where: Bethlehem, Israel/Palestine

Why: To support the ministry of the Bethlehem Bible College, share the faith stories of their colleagues with the North American church and express solidarity with the church in Israel and Palestine



Who: Norm Dyck (served with Fanosie Legesse, who will not attend)

What: Short term assignment leading a mission and church planting seminar for Ethiopian missionaries and a church leadership workshop with church leaders

When: March 2015

Where: Ethiopia

Why: To teach and empower church leaders and missionaries to follow Jesus' model of servant leadership



Who: Jack and Irene Suderman

What: Multiple short term assignments to provide leadership training and Bible teaching within the global church

When: 2010-2015

Where: Countries in Asia and Latin America

Why: To help nurture faith communities and provide resources so they can grow as vibrant Anabaptist faith communities



Who: Erna and Henry Funk

What: Short term assignments supporting the ministry of SERVE Nazareth as they connect Christian volunteers with local Arab churches

When: January – March in 2014 and 2016

Where: Nazareth, Israel

Why: To build relationships, encourage and gain understanding about the church in the Holy Land



Assisting our processes at Assembly 2016

Resolutions Committee



Lynell Bergen (Manitoba)



Donita Wiebe Neufeld (Alberta)



Craig Neufeld (Saskatchewan)

Listening Committee



Chris Lenshyn (B.C.)



Gladys Bender (Ontario)



Moses Falco (Manitoba)



Peter Peters (Saskatchewan)

Parliamentarian

New group discount programs for churches & individuals

Dan Dyck

The Mennonite Church Canada office has negotiated two new group buying programs.

Rental cars for travellers and congregations in need of office supplies can now take advantage of group buying discounts with National/Enterprise and Staples respectively.

The rental car program is available for

personal or leisure use to anyone who is part of a Mennonite Church Canada congregation, with discounts of 5%.

Staples Advantage is the name of the program congregations can use to receive discounts on office supplies. Congregations qualify for the same discount the Mennonite Church Canada office receives on volume

purchasing. Inserts regarding this program are in registration packets. A Staples representative will be at a display table in the exhibit area.

For account numbers and additional information regarding these group buying programs, contact office@mennonitechurch.ca.

Administration and meat pies

Nathan Dirks

As I walked between tables of Setswana food, CDs from by local musicians, and traditional crafts in the outdoor marketplace at the Main Mall in Gaborone to do some shopping, someone called my name.

I turned to see my friend, Kagiso (Peace), waving me down. We both suspended our errands and headed to a local meat pie shop to catch up over lunch.

Kagiso has been deeply involved in local church leadership for years. Our conversation eventually arrived at the topic of financial support for churches. Over our feast of chicken *peri-peri* lunch pies, he mentioned the declining financial support for churches in recent years. We both agreed that it's understandably difficult for people to tithe when some of it is directed to the less than thrilling ministry of administration. At the same time, tithing supports church work that can have very significant positive impacts on local and global communities. But it's not always easy to connect the line between individual financial support and the results those finances are supporting through church structures.

In the midst of our conversation, I received a phone call.

"Dumela Nathan, this is Walter from First Offenders Prison," the caller said joyfully. "I've been released."*

For the past three years, Walter had faithfully joined Taryn and me for our weekly fellowship sessions in prison. He assumed a quiet leadership role among the inmates, and it had been a pleasure to get to know him over the years. "I just wanted to call to say thank you," Walter continued. "Do you remember the work that Taryn did for me for my case?"

Walter had first been taken into custody in northern Botswana, and his court proceedings had been conducted in *Sekgalagadi*, a language with which he was not familiar. Everything was relayed to him through a translator, and he was sentenced to prison even though a judgement had not yet been made. He spent over a year in prison, not understanding what had been said in court, questioning whether the translations had been accurate, and trying to figure out how long he would be locked up. A few weeks before his phone call to me, Walter had walked across the prison yard with a sheaf of handwritten papers exploring the legal mess surrounding his case. He asked if we might type them out and format them so they would be legally admissible in court.

As the administrator for our office work, Taryn had taken the pages and invested time in doing just that.

Walter continued, "The paperwork that Taryn did for me finally helped the courts to see the mistakes that had been made. Please thank Taryn for me, and let her know that I'm free, I'm now starting to serve in my community, and I'm doing well."

It turned out that Walter had not been guilty of all the charges levelled against him; his prison sentence should have been shorter.

While not particularly glamorous, the administrative work that's done in church and mission organizations is a meaningful and important part of building God's kingdom at home and abroad. In Walter's case, administrative work made the



difference between an unjust sentence and freedom.

The moral of the story? Avoid obligations in favor of meat pies.

*Not his real name

Nathan and Taryn Dirks live in Gaborone, Botswana, with their young son. They serve among youth and young adults from local African Initiated Churches (AICs) with a focus is on community development and Bible teaching. Through their local partnerships they volunteer in local prisons, a school for special needs children, and coordinate development projects in urban agriculture and sports. They emphasize the local sustainability of these projects through the efforts of their young adult AIC partners.

Photo by Fify Loewen.

This article originally appeared online at <http://ntdirks.com/administrating-justice/> and has been adapted with permission.

Volunteer focus



Christy Martens-Funk

Dan Dyck

Christy is a CPA and the director of finance for a local Saskatoon non-profit organization. She is clearly happy to be volunteering for Assembly 2016. "I love the church!" she says. "I'm a geek about church stuff. When it comes to the larger church and its direction, I want to be here. And this year its right in my backyard. I'd otherwise be at work, or hanging out with my kids, but I shipped them to Alberta so I could volunteer!" Photo by Dan Dyck



Marianne Siemens,
Volunteer Coordinator

Deborah Froese

With an engaging smile, an easy-going manner and lots of connections in Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, it's no wonder that volunteer coordinator Marianne Siemens managed to recruit a large number of helping hands for Assembly 2016. "There are about 95 volunteers," she says, "but I can't give you an exact number. It keeps changing."

It keeps going up.

The role of volunteer coordinator essentially landed in her lap; as the Office and Financial Administrator for MC Sask, she organized the Area Church delegate sessions that took place last March where she put out a call for volunteers. The response was tremendous.

"We have a lot of people who are willing to help."

Marianne made sure she found a role for everyone—including delegates who offered their assistance but whose time is restricted by the session schedule. They are helping at mealtimes. Even her husband and two of their three sons are pitching in; the other son would have helped too, but he had to work.

When she isn't recruiting volunteers or working at MC Sask, Marianne is the office administrator at Mount Royal MC—or out on the golf course. "I missed it yesterday," she says, smiling, "but there was no way to fit it in."

Thank you for your dedication and hard work, Marianne! Photo by Irma Sulistyorini



Along the Road to Freedom exhibit

Originally scheduled to end before Assembly 2016, *Along the Road to Freedom*, an exhibit by Ray Dirks, Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery curator and artist, is being held over at the Diefenbaker Canada Centre in Saskatoon throughout Assembly week.

Along the Road to Freedom is a series of paintings that tell the stories of mothers, daughters, grandmothers and sisters who led their families out of persecution and suffering to lives of freedom and peace. The exhibit is touring North America and appeared last year at Mennonite World Conference in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Diefenbaker Canada Centre is located on the University of Saskatoon campus. It is open from 9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday, and from noon to 4:30 p.m. on weekends.

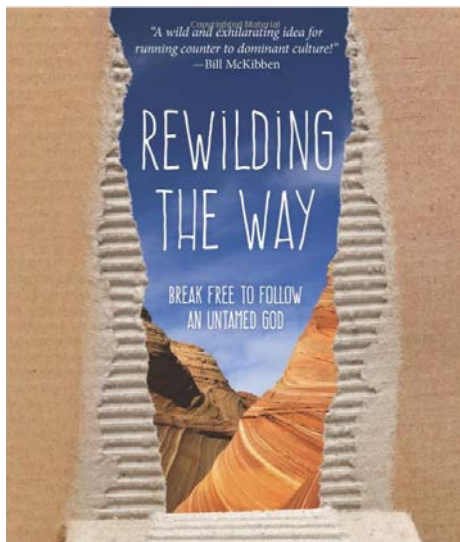
From the Archives

This Thing is in Our Blood

In 1939, Church leaders from Western Canada, Eastern Canada and the USA meet in Winkler to discuss impending war and the church's response. Although research suggests they find no consensus, they send their concerns to the Canadian government through a delegation that includes Rev. Jacob H. Janzen of Waterloo. During their negotiations with the government, Canadian Major-General L.R. LaFleche asks the delegates: "What will you do if we shoot you?" Janzen, who previously survived several desperate situations in the Soviet Union is obviously agitated. He replies: "Listen General, I want to tell you something. You can't scare us like that. I've looked down too many rifle barrels in my time to be scared in that way. This thing is in our blood for 400 years and you can't take it away from us like you'd crack a piece of kindling over your knee. I was before a firing squad twice. We believe in this."



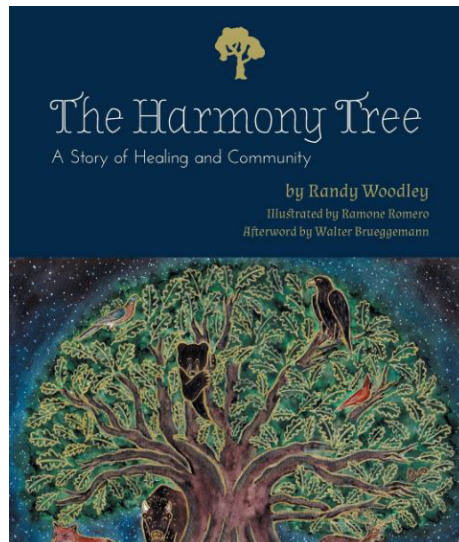
Photo courtesy Mennonite Heritage Center Archives



Tame life vs Feral life

When did we become so tame? How has “the good life” come to mean screens and status updates? Can we break free to become the joyful and prophetic people God calls us to be? Trek along with wilderness guide Todd Wynward as he “rewilds” the Jesus Way. Seek the feral foundations of Scripture and the lessons that the prophets and disciples gleaned from wilderness testing.

Available at the CommonWord resource table onsite and at www.commonword.ca/go/352.



Explain this.

Native American Randy Woodley's 50 acre farm was entirely logged – with the exception of one 300 year-old tree. Share with your child this inspiring story of Grandmother Oak brings healing and friendship to a damaged world.

Available at the CommonWord resource table onsite and at www.commonword.ca/go/596



To play or not to play?

Is your family and church life stretched thin by the demands of competitive sport? Athletic director David King and award-winning author Margot Starbuck investigate seven myths about what's best for young athletes.

Available at the CommonWord resource table onsite and at www.commonword.ca/go/557

Buy, Borrow, and Download a wide variety of resources during Assembly 2016 at **CommonWord**
Bookstore and Resource Centre

THANK YOU!!

Dan Dyck

Worshippers at the opening session of Assembly 2016 generously gave \$4148.60 to the new song collection project being led by MennoMedia.

Karen Martens Zimmerly introduced Project 606, the still widely known and beloved hymn number of the doxology *Praise God from whom all blessings flow* in what was previously known as “the red hymnal.” The hymn was renumbered to 118 in the now nearly 25-year-old *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, but never caught on among the red hymnal generation.

“Singing together draws us closer to the Spirit of God. Singing together transforms and inspires us,” said Martens Zimmerly.

The new song collection is planned for release in 2020 in both book and digital form.

**Project
606**
A gift for the next generation