



## A Community of Friends

Hartwick Wiehler

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Dear Momma:

It has been a good summer even though the weather hasn't been the best. I have done some travelling, went camping a few times and spent many hours outdoors. How was your summer? Are you enjoying the fall?

I have found that people at the church I told you about are friendly to me when I go. They talk to me and try to understand more about me. I wonder, however, what people are like after they have attended here for many years.

I decided to go and talk to Dora Janssen. She is a lady who is always smiling and talking to people so I thought that I would ask her about her experiences. She lives with her husband, Gert, in a house in northwest Calgary from which they also run their house construction business. All their children are grown up.

Dora was a young girl when she was sponsored by MCC to come to Canada. She spent one year working in the beet fields before coming to Calgary where she worked as a nanny. When her parents went looking for a Mennonite church, they found First Mennonite Church. She was part of the church youth group where she met and made friends with a variety of people with names such as Bartel, Janssen and Bergman. She met another lady, Hildegard Boldt, who became like a sister to her. Later, after they were each married, they became busier with their own families but they still found time to visit and stay in touch.

I talked to Dora for about one hour and several things became clear during our conversation. The first thing that became obvious was that Dora values her family very highly. I think that she would do anything for her family. She regularly makes lunch for the children and grandchildren that work out of her house. She says that watching her grandchildren grow up is a gift. She sees them often on the weekend when they go riding horses on land they own north of Calgary.

Dora and I also discussed meeting new people at church. She finds that her

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## Community of Friends continued...

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husband Gert is really good at welcoming new people and talking to them. He finds out something about them and remembers these things and then they can discuss this on the way home from church. Dora feels that in order to get close to others you need to have something in common. Dora feels that the way to accept new people is to get close to them and then to invite them to her home. She feels that new people should be welcomed and that we should do what we can to make them feel welcome.

The third and biggest point that I learned about Dora is how much she values her friends and acquaintances and how she assists them in their life's journey. She appreciates all the people at church and sees them as her friends. She feels comfortable with the people at church and feels that she can turn to them for help in times of trouble. First Mennonite Church is smaller so she finds it easier to get connected to others than in a bigger church. Dora feels strongly that in a church everyone needs to find someone to connect to and the way to do this is through common interests. Having the same beliefs is one of these things that can help you get closer to someone else. She has had a chance to better get to know a group of ladies by belonging to a group of 12 of them that get together regularly for lunch.

Through a friend of her daughter Moni, Dora met Waltraut Waschmann and her husband Horst. Dora invited them to come to church with Gert and herself. Waltrout and Horst came and found that they were comfortable in attending at First Mennonite Church. After Horst passed away, Dora supported their friend and invites her often to her house. Dora has supported another friend, Christel, in the same manner when her husband passed away.

As you can see, Dora is not nervous about inviting her friends to church. She is strong in her beliefs and feels that she can invite others to come with her but it is up to them to decide if they want to accept her invitation. Church is a nice community and she has found that her friends feel at home there. The experiences you go through there brings you closer together and makes you closer as friends. Even when things are difficult at church, you get to know people more because of what you do together.

Dora also spends time visiting other people, such as ones who are alone or cannot get around easily. She regularly visits and runs errands for some cousins of hers who are in a nursing home. She mentioned that what is important for her is not what you get from people but what you can do for them.

Probably the best way to summarize how Dora feels is with the following statements. Dora loves Jesus. She also loves people. She wants her friends to feel the same peace that she does and so she invites them to church.

I am starting to understand what attracts people to a community like First Mennonite Church. I can see that friendship forms a critical foundation in this kind of organization. Friends would definitely make a difference to me on whether I kept on attending a church.

I hope that you enjoy the fall. Don't work too hard. I will see you on Thanksgiving weekend.

Love,

Your son Abel



## Pastor's Portrait

Ed Kauffman

Since this is my first time to write this column, I thought I should take the opportunity to say a bit about myself, and give you a “heads up” on some things you can and shouldn’t expect. That’s always a little dangerous, but you may as well know some things right away, for you will surely learn them sooner or later.

Some things you might or might not need or want to know:

- I’m left-handed (as is Gay)
- I drink tea, not coffee, and prefer plain black tea of some sort, not herbals (and not Earl Gray) Some people have called me a “tea snob”, but really a plain cup of Red Rose is all I ask for.
- I’m a Hoosier, which means I was born in Indiana.
- This is the fourth congregation I have pastored, as well as my last job as an area minister.
- “Pastor Ed” works just fine..
- My full name is Edward, but only my mother calls me that (and Gay sometimes!).
- I am a lover of history, and particularly church history.
- It will take me awhile to learn your names, and I may mispronounce them. Please feel free to correct me and don’t be offended if I ask.
- I don’t speak German - a little Pennsylvania Dutch, but that won’t help much. I do speak some Spanish, but am very much out of practice.
- I enjoy travel, and have been in most of the US states and Canadian provinces (except the Atlantic Provinces and the territories), most of Western Europe, and Ecuador and Colombia in South America.
- I enjoy – reading, genealogy, photography, music, and antiques, among other things.
- I have lots of experience as an electrician and also do plumbing work.
- My middle name is John. I was named after my two grandfathers.
- My undergraduate degree was in Sociology, with a minor in Philosophy.
- I own and play several kinds of ukuleles – baritone, tenor, and banjo.
- I am a collector, much to Gay’s chagrin. I have collections of mugs (stop by my office), cameras, “sparking” lamps, films and projectors, along with a few other items. I am learning to give up some things.
- I am an introvert. While I enjoy people, I also need times by myself.
- I believe in the providence of God. While I may not always like the way things are, or understand them, I do believe that God has a purpose for what happens. Thus I believe God has placed me here for a reason. What all that means we will come to see in the months ahead. For now, I am glad to be here as your pastor, and look forward to getting to know all of you better.

Ed



Good friends are like stars.....You don’t always see them,  
but you know they are always there.

# Sharing Our Stories

Keri Clason (KC)

## Getting to Know Gay Kauffman(GK)

This summer has been a time of transition, one of which has been the change in pastoral leadership here at First. Over these past few months I have had the privilege of visiting with Gay Kauffman (Pastor Ed's wife) at various times and feel blessed to have had the opportunity to learn more about her. Following are some questions and answers to help you get to know her better as well.

KC: Do you have any children? Grandchildren?

GK: We have two sons. Joel, age 31, is married to Valarie. They live in Sioux Falls, SD and have twin two year old boys, Josiah and Isaac. (Pictures are available if you like!) They are expecting another child at the end of Dec. Sean, age 28, lives in Seattle and is engaged to be married to Ashley. The tentative date for the wedding is May 1, 2011.

KC: Do you have any brothers and sisters?

GK: I had one brother who died in 1997 at the age of 48.

KC: Do you have any pets?

GK: I have a cat, Puffkin, and am known as a cat lover.

KC: Do you work? If so, what do you do?

GK: While Ed was a Conference Minister, I found that my working was not compatible with the schedule that he had, so have not worked for the last nine years. Before that, I have done a variety of jobs, including bookkeeper, secretary, mediation centre director, substitute teacher's aide, facilitator for a Juvenile Diversion Program, etc. My BA degree is in Political Science from Valparaiso University in Indiana. I also have an MA from AMBS in Peace Studies.

KC: What was the last book you read?

GK: I am currently reading The Agenda by Bob Woodward. I also enjoy mysteries and am trying to read the whole series of "The Cat Who..."

books by Lillian Jackson Braun.

KC: How do you spend your free time?

GK: What free time? When I get free time, I enjoy movies, reading, crochet, and travel.

KC: What countries have you visited?

GK: Besides the US and Canada, I have visited Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Ecuador, Colombia, England, France, The Netherlands and Germany. Honduras and El Salvador for a two week MCC Learning tour. Ecuador and Colombia for meetings of the partnership between our former conference - Central Plains Mennonite Conference - the Colombian Mennonite Church and Mennonite Mission Network. Europe for five weeks in 2006 while Ed was on sabbatical and Sean was finishing his term with Inter-Menno Exchange.

KC: Are you a morning or night person?

GK: Night person. I'm not worth much first thing in the morning.

KC: Who do you respect the most? Why?

GK: Now for the hard questions! I would have to think about this long and hard to really be able to answer it. I do respect those who stand up for their faith. I think of those who serve with Christian Peacemaker Teams as some who stand for peace in the midst of conflict.

KC: If you could try anything and know you wouldn't fail what would you do?

GK: Bring world peace. No, really! I'm not kidding!

KC: What is the kindest thing someone has ever done for you?

GK: There are so many kindnesses that have been done for me that I am very blessed. Most recently, I have been blessed by those who helped with our move. I really felt that God worked a miracle the day we loaded the truck. Our friends from church and conference

## Sharing Our Stories continued...

joined together to do what one or two could never have done in packing, cleaning, and loading the truck. Our friend, Ray, helped with loading, driving the truck and unloading. People from First Mennonite Calgary joined together to help with unloading the truck and providing some meals during our first week. It has been a wonderful blessing to have received this outpouring of compassion.

KC: Last, but definitely not least, what is your fa-

avourite Bible verse and why?

GK: It's hard to choose just one. Lately, I have been praying Psalm 23 when the stresses of moving have kept me awake at night. I especially like the New English version which reads: "The Lord is my Shepherd. I have everything I need."

I encourage you to spend some time getting to know Gay better and welcoming her to our church family.

## Tribute to Cornie Friesen

Irene Klassen

The Klassen/ Friesen relationship goes back a long way. This is not to be confused with George and Hilda Klassen who are cousins. We are not related biologically.

Cornelius Friesen was born in Friesental, Ukraine on October 19, 1914. He was 11 when, on Christmas day 1925, the family - father, mother, two brothers and two sisters - arrived in Canada. They settled first in Provost Alberta and Cornie loved to tell stories of the Mennonite families who pioneered there. After moving to several places in eastern Alberta, the Friesens settled on a farm at Tees, near Lacombe, Alberta. Some time later another brother was added to the family. George (not Gerhard) was named for King George V to whom the newly immigrated Canadian Friesen family felt they owed a debt of gratitude. (At that time Canadians, and immigrants when they became naturalized, were British Subjects)

With several older brothers it was soon discovered that Cornie had woodworking skills that were not really necessary on the farm for building barns and sheds etc. so he decided to come to the city - to Calgary, where he worked as a finishing carpenter for many years. Among his many projects, he built the Communion table for First Mennonite Church.

He came to the big city - but where to live? Somehow he had heard of a certain Mrs. Klassen who

took in boarders. And sure enough, Mrs. Klassen had room for him, and pretty soon he became just like a part of the family.

At about the same time, Mom Klassen heard about a young woman, Helen Pauls, sort of related to a relative, recently immigrated from Russia/Germany, who was looking for her relatives here. They found each other and Mother Klassen became a second mother to Helen. Helen found work in the city but spent her free time at the Klassens and she also became part of the family.

I don't know whether Cornie asked Dad Klassen for permission to court Helen, but before long Helen and Cornie were engaged and set their wedding date, August 12, 1951. The Klassens, of course, helped with the wedding in Scarboro Mennonite Church. They became Mom and Dad to both Helen and Cornie.

The young couple set up housekeeping. Their home was always spotless and soon filled with many interesting furnishings and knickknacks. Helen would see something, and would turn to Cornie, "Oh Cornie you could build me that." And, of course, he would, from plaques to hang on the wall, or handy little stools to step on, to beautiful China cabinets. Often Helen would paint designs on the articles. Their skills complemented each other.

When a daughter came along, the Klassens became

## Tribute to Cornie Friesen continued....

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Opa and Oma to Anita (Now Laura).

Helen and Cornie loved to visit and travel. At least once they took the Klassens along on a trip to BC. Until the Klassens passed away, Mother in 1978 and Dad in 1993, the Klassens and the Friesens shared many joys and sorrows, each enriching the other.

At the time of his death, Cornie had lost his father, his mother, two brothers and one sister. One sister, age 94,

was unable to attend the funeral on July 22, but brother George gave the eulogy.

For many years it was always 'Helen and Cornie' and now that partnership is broken. Cornie will be missed by all of us, but especially by Helen.

July 22, 2010



## Farewell to Pastor Alissa

Hartwick Wiehler

During the last week of August, Pastor Alissa was involved with the Planting Peace conference that was held from Sunday until Thursday morning with all the participants sleeping at the FCJ Christian Life Centre. Then, she had to prepare a sermon for Sunday. She was also involved in going away meetings and also had some personal appointments. It seems that she was extremely busy.

However, this seems easy compared to what she is planning to be up to when she leaves Calgary. Pastor Alissa is planning to leave on September 14. The belongings that she is taking with her are in her car or are being shipped in a shipping pod. She is going to take 1 ½ weeks to drive to Ontario, visiting friends along the way and attending a friend's ordination. On September 25, she is planning to arrive home in Baden, Ontario, just in time for an 8 year Conrad Grebel reunion to be held on Saturday afternoon. After the reunion, she is spending a week with her parents. She will take a trip to Hamilton, one hour from her parent's place, in order to find a home for when she starts her new pastor position on November 1.

After the week at home, Pastor Alissa will fly to Phoenix for a cousin's wedding. Following this she will fly to Sydney, Australia, stopping on the way in San Francisco in order to visit a friend. Alissa is planning to spend 3 weeks with one of her seminary roommates who has just finished her ministry in Australia. They will relax but also do some travelling.

From Sydney, Pastor Alissa is coming back to Calgary for Lisa Thiessen's wedding on October 30 where she will be a bridesmaid. On October 31, Alissa will fly back to Ontario and on November 1 she moves to Hamilton in order to start her new position.

Alissa has spent the last three years at our church. She most enjoyed getting to know the people. She found them wonderful and supportive. She appreciates them and will miss them. Being a pastor gave her the opportunity to be part of people's lives, to participate in their celebrations and struggles.

Alissa felt that at First Mennonite Church she has:

- Learned more about her gifts and the things that energize her.
- Found that she has been able to trust God and not worry about being perfect.
- Learned more about who she believes God is calling her to be as a pastor.
- Learned about how the church works in all the nitty-gritty details and how it can be different in different places.

Alissa values the experience of being at First Mennonite Church for the past 3 years. She has appreciated the people who have become important to her

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## Farewell to Pastor Alissa continued....



**Pastor Alissa and the guest clown at her farewell on September 12.**

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and the ones who have challenged and supported her. She believes that the Spirit is present at First Mennonite Church and sees possibilities of new life and of hope. For those of us who are remaining, she encourages us to keep imagining how God is calling us to be open to different needs and opportunities.

From a personal viewpoint, Betty and I did not have any children who participated in youth during Alissa's term here. However, we have appreciated her in many ways. She took the time and made the effort to connect with Jeff who was attending university in Winnipeg. We always enjoyed her sermons and

found them interesting and entertaining as well as challenging us without talking down to us.

We pray that God will bless Pastor Alissa as she moves on from here.



## The Lighter Side



You can make more friends in a month by being interested in them than in ten years by trying to get them interested in you.

*Charles Allen*

### Faithful With Much

At a Wednesday evening church meeting a very wealthy man rose to give his testimony.

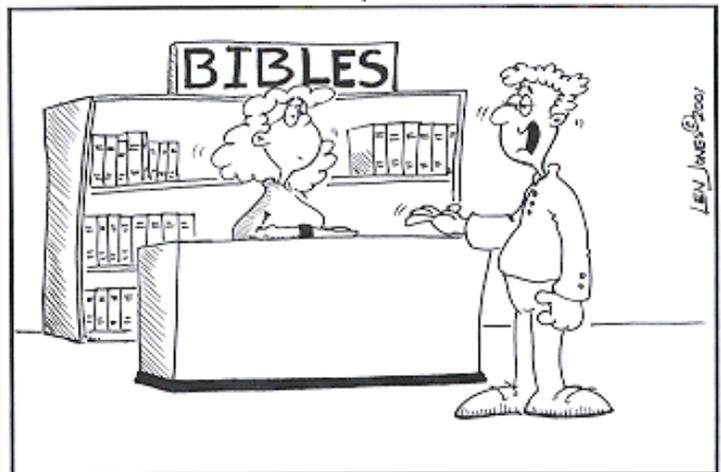
"I'm a millionaire," he said, "and I attribute it all to the rich blessings of God in my life. I can still remember the turning point in my faith, like it was yesterday:

I had just earned my first dollar and I went to a church meeting that night. The speaker was a missionary who told about his work. I knew that I only had a dollar bill and had to either give it all to God's work or nothing at all. So at that moment I decided to give my whole dollar to God. I believe that God blessed that decision, and that is why I am a rich man today."

**As he finished it was clear that everyone had been moved by this man's story. But, as he took his seat, a little old lady sitting in the same pew leaned over and said:**

**"Wonderful story! I dare you to do it again!"**

### ALTAR EGO. by Len Jones



"What I really need is a translation that won't leave me feeling guilty, convicted, or in need of making some kind of decision."

## Planting Peace

Alissa Bender

Listening is messy! That's what MCC Alberta director Abe Janzen told us as we came together to begin the three day seminar called "Planting Peace". There we were, Christian, Muslim, and Jewish peace lovers, from Nigeria, Uganda, Israel, Palestine, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Jordan, and Canada. Young adults and not-quite-so-young adults alike, we gathered in a circle in the basement of the Faithful Companions of Jesus Centre in downtown Calgary and prepared to listen to each other's stories.

And sometimes it was messy. Sometimes we didn't understand each other's contexts, occasionally we had awkward group dynamics, often we ran out of time for discussion, and there were definitely never any clear answers. It was messy. And it was beautiful.

What can be beautiful about hearing about all of these world problems and not solving them on the spot? Rosemary from Uganda speaks of girls who have been abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army and on their return are rejected by their communities. Diana shares that the many people groups in Uganda can't even always trust each other, let alone care for these girls. Colombians Daniel and Alejandra share the complex issues that keep their country in violence – drugs, governments (their own and others) seeking power, divisions, displacement, hunger.

Palestinian young men speak of the reality of living under occupation. Nicolas needs to leave himself hours just to get through the checkpoints to his school. Usama's movement is restricted even more. And Israelis like Sharon and Aylam struggle to make their people hear the cries for peace and justice, but are only deserted by their friends.

What can be beautiful in the midst of this messiness? It was reflected in the words of Sani Suleiman, who, with his colleague Gopar Tapkida, led us in our workshops drawing from their experience of peacebuilding work in Nigeria. Whether to check if we understood, or if we were still listening, every once in a while, Sani would ask: "Are we together?" Yes, we would answer. Yes, we are together.

Yes, we were together for that brief time. Israelis and Palestinians were together. Colombians and Canadians (whose government is guilty of oppressive policies) were together. Ugandans from different ar-

eas of the country were together. We were all together. Abe kept reminding us how much peace is about getting people in the same room together. So together we wrestled with many issues and asked many questions, sometimes with hope and sometimes with despair, but always with each other's supportive presence.

We talked about the stereotypes we all carry about other people, and how dangerous it is to paint people with a single brush (For a brilliant discussion of this, watch this video: [http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/chi-mamanda\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/chi-mamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html)). We talked about forgiveness, how it's a risk! There is no guarantee that the forgiven action will not be repeated. But forgiveness is a freedom for victims, because it can free them from living in the power of their offenders.

We heard stories of practical solutions that were being enacted in the face of many different areas of conflict. We brought together our passion for peacemaking, but also some real questions about how true peace can come to exist. At one point, Gopar was pushed to speak more about his commitment to peaceful transformation of conflict. He spoke almost tentatively, wanting to be sure not to be misunderstood or half-quoted. He said: "If you're looking for fast change, violence is the best way to bring it about. But you need violence to sustain it. If you want sustainable change, violence is the worst way to bring it about".

And so, we imagined how sustainable change might look, and how that transformation might come to pass. In the words of one of our morning reflections, we put ourselves into God's dream, believing that God would strengthen us in the search for genuine peace and justice.

This was a truly unique experience of sitting in the same room together. So, I wondered all summer long, why was MCC having trouble filling the spots for Canadian participants? Why weren't more Albertans racing to be able to take part in this experience? Do we not see "planting peace" as vitally relevant to our lives? Does the word "conflict" sound like something that happens to strangers far away?

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## Planting Peace continued ....

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It is truly a mystery to me, and perhaps there were many factors (like the fact that this was the first time this was run). But it is important to ask the questions anyway, as our entire world needs more and more urgently to hear and to live the Gospel of peace. So, let us continue to ask ourselves – how are we raising our children in the way of peace? How are we engaging our youth and young adults with the tough questions of what peace means in the context of the grim reality they see on the news and study at school? How are we as the Church living out God's dream for

peace within ourselves, with our neighbours, with creation, between nations, and with God's self? Are we together?

**To read more about our experiences and the international participants, visit: <http://planting-peace.blogspot.com/>**



## Workday at June's

Peter Dyck

At First Mennonite, we are encouraged to participate in Core Groups. If interested, Jim Griffith will assign you to a group.

In two years time you will be reassigned to a newly formed group to become better acquainted with some others in the church. Our first experience had been a very good one and so we were eager to do it again with a different group. The members in the new group are:

- Jinhee and Eugena Lee
- Kevin & Marlene, Rebecca & Daniel Ptyck
- Trent, Dorothy, Taylor and Joshua Stuart
- Marv Thiessen
- Erika Janz
- Margaret Fehr
- Charee Dhanyavong
- Peter & Laura Dyck

This represents an age spread - youngest to the oldest of approximately 80 years - can this possibly work? Life is made up of hopes and dreams!

At our first two get togethers we discussed and attempted to determine what our objectives as a group might be. One suggestion was to help a needy person in the community who could use a hand with some upkeep and repairs in her yard and home. Laura suggested a person who has been attending her Bible Study group at Menno Court, June Southard. June is

very arthritic and so is unable to do a lot of the work that needed doing. She is a great dog lover and takes care of two or three dogs as a hobby. Our group was of one mind; that this was a viable exercise. June found it hard to believe that a group of strangers wanted to come to her home and help with the work that she was unable to do.

Laura and I found, after assessing the work that needed to be done, that it would take the group a full day of work. The work that required doing was:

- Some painting in the kitchen
- The front step needed minor repairs and a coat of paint
- A new rear entrance (porch) had been built and it needed two coats of paint
- The back step up to the porch needed to be newly built and painted
- The fence required several new posts that had to be cemented in, and a few panels needed some help
- Several trees in the back yard needed to be trimmed
- The front flower & rock garden needed to have rocks removed and moved to the back yard

The group was committed to work at this for one whole day. In the end it took a small group the better

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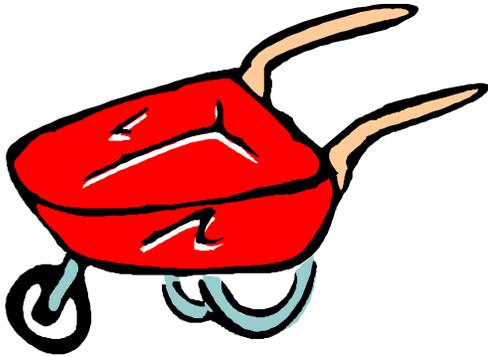
## Workday at June's continued ...

*(Continued from page 10)*

part of another day.

We geared up to do the work on a certain Saturday and when the day arrived, so did the

rain and we were rained out. We set another date and this time the weather was perfect - the sun shone all day long.



Marv volunteered to work at repairing the fence and replacing the posts, which had to be cemented in. While working with the cement, it set, and - have you ever known someone to actually break a spade by shovelling cement? He managed to do just that. The cement had set and he added a bit of water and then by shovelling with all his might, broke the spade! The posts were a foot longer than required - upon checking I heard the reciprocal saw and coming around the garage corner, I saw a piece of 4X4 - 2 feet long falling to the ground. A huge ear to ear grin on Marv's face suggested the electric saw was his thing.

Rebecca had staked out the front step as hers to do and recruited her mother as her helper. A very good job was done and we would recommend Rebecca to any of you as a painter; steps being her specialty.

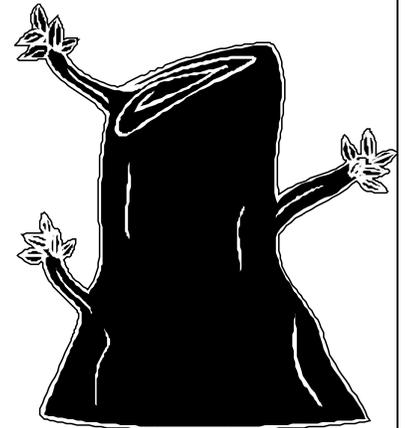
The rear entrance was the major project. Firstly much masking was required because the roof was made of corrugated translucent material which needed to be protected. Painting was done, mainly by the women, with the help of little Eugina. In the end Peter had to help as well.

Kevin came about an hour after the rest of us got started because he had to take Daniel to his soccer practice. When he got there, it was suggested that he might want to volunteer to be in charge of the rock movement project, what with his having engineered

and constructed Canada's Confederation Bridge, that this seemed to be a good fit. So his first words were, "Where's the wheelbarrow?" He got to work moving rocks from the front flowerbed to the back yard. Not knowing that June only wanted some of them moved he had pretty well moved them all when she came out and said that she only wanted some of them moved. Consequently, when this was clarified, Kevin was seen moving some rocks back to the front. We all had a good laugh.

At about this time we stopped for a picnic lunch. The children particularly enjoyed this part of the day. We ended up our lunch with a big watermelon. Then we went back to work. By this time the kids were looking for something more exciting to do and they had brought some balls, which started flying around the yard. Well, one of them landed in the top of a tree - how to get it down - Marv was up there in a flash and the kids had their ball. One of them asked "Who is that guy that climbed the tree?" In his work clothes the kids had not recognized their pastor.

The guys trimmed three or four trees in the back yard. That really tidied things up. It appeared that Marv would have been willing to assist in pruning trees, providing he could have used the reciprocal saw - not a good idea!



Jinhee worked at painting the back porch with Eugena as her helper. Marg Fehr, always upbeat and smiling, painted as well. Laura painted inside and out, but always on the look out to see if anyone needed a hand or encouragement. Marlene, after completing the front step together with Rebecca, worked at the back step with the rest of us from a scaffold to do the hard to reach spots.

The day was almost done when we heard gorgeous

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## Workday at June's continued ....

*(Continued from page 11)*

little Eugena, holding a paint brush with both hands, at the board fence and making long strokes up and down and singing her little heart out. There she was, with joy and utter happiness and not a care in the world.

I would like to thank our group from the bottom of my heart for the privilege of letting me come along for the ride. "When two or three, or however many join together in a common spirit to extend caring hands to

someone in need, miracles happen. The miracle is the bond of friendship which is developed between the participants of that particular exercise, and with, in this case, June Southard.

P.S. At about 9:00 AM the next morning June phoned and said, "When I stepped out onto my back porch, I thought that maybe I was dreaming and that during the night some angels had come and transformed my home into this heavenly spot!" ■

## Looking Back

Hartwick Wiehler

Jun 13	Sunday school promotion and teacher appreciation.
Jun 18 - Jun 19	MCC relief sale in Coaldale. The sale raised \$205,262. The cycle south bike-a-thon raised \$181,000.
Jun 20	Sunday School picnic at Camp Valaqua.
Jun 27	Final day of Pastor Marv serving as our interim pastor.
Jun 29- Jul 3	MC Canada Assembly at Ambrose College. Several members of our congregation were involved in different aspects of helping at the conference.
Jul 19 - Jul 23	Vacation Bible School was held at our church.
Aug 24	Pastor Ed Kauffman and his wife Gay arrived in Calgary. Thanks to the people who welcomed them and helped them move in.
Aug 31	Planting Peace program organized by MCC.
Sep 1	Pastor Ed Kauffman starts his term at our church. God bless him as he serves our congregation.
Sep 12	Start of Sunday School.
Sep 12	Farewell for Pastor Alissa.

## Looking Ahead

Hartwick Wiehler

Sep 14	Helping Hands Women in Mission have invited Jackie and Don Buhler as guest speakers.
Oct 17	Installation service and welcome potluck for Pastor Ed and Gay Kauffman.

## Family Life

Hartwick Wiehler

### Engagements

July 25	Erwin and Birgitt Thiessen are very pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Lisa Marie, to Nathan Burgess, son of Mr. & Mrs. Bill Burgess of Calgary. Congratulations to the couple.
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## Family Life continued ....

### Deaths

Jul 10	Harry Braun, son of Johanna Braun and brother to Gary Braun, Rick Braun and Heidi Gibson
Jul 19	Cornelius Friesen, husband of Helen Friesen
Aug 18	Helena Neufeld passed away in Three Hills
Aug 24	Walter Andres, brother to Charlotte Wiehler

### *Let us remember those facing illness and physical challenges*

- Hedy Bartel at home
- Henry Bergen in Bethany Care Centre
- John and Hilda Franz at home
- Rose Ferrara at home
- Anny Heidebrecht in Monterey Place
- Bill and Katie Hildebrand at home

- Susie Penner in Spruce Lodge
- Mary Quiring in Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning Centre
- Sonya Regehr at home
- Eldriede Wiens in Staywell Manor

## Thin Places

A "Thin Place" is a place where the spiritual and the natural world intersect. It is a place where it is possible to be touched by God.

**Please submit your "Thin Places" so that everyone can benefit from your story along with you.**

## Editorial

Hartwick Wiehler

What do you think other people think of Mennonites? I have met several people who think of MCC when they think of Mennonites. I have seen some people start talking about people dressed in old fashioned clothes with the women wearing small head coverings. Some responses have been that Mennonites are conservative people who do not drink, smoke, dance or wear makeup. Some people relate Mennonites to Hutterites or to Amish people.

Mennonite churches have also grappled with the image that they are projecting. Some churches have gone so far as to drop the Mennonite in their name and to call themselves a community church. I have also heard this suggested in our church.

## Editorial continued....

Hartwick Wiehler

I am reading a book by Stuart Murray who is an urban church planter in London, England. He does not come from an Anabaptist church, nor does he attend one, but he does describe how he sees Anabaptist people, which includes us Mennonites. The following is a direct quote from his book "The Naked Anabaptist" where he lays out the following seven core convictions that tell us what it means for many people to identify with Anabaptism.

1. Jesus is our example, teacher, friend, redeemer, and Lord. He is the source of our life, the central reference point for our faith and lifestyle, for our understanding of church, and our engagement with society. We are committed to following Jesus as well as worshipping him.
2. Jesus is the focal point of God's revelation. We are committed to a Jesus-centered approach to the Bible, and to the community of faith as the primary context in which we read the Bible and discern and apply its implications for discipleship.
3. Western culture is slowly emerging from the Christendom era, when church and state jointly presided over a society in which almost all were assumed to be Christian. Whatever its positive contributions on values and institutions, Christendom seriously distorted the gospel, marginalized Jesus, and has left churches ill equipped for mission in a post-Christendom culture. As we reflect on this, we are committed to learning from the experience and perspectives of movements such as Anabaptism that rejected standard Christendom assumptions and pursued alternative ways of thinking and behaving.
4. The frequent association of the church with status, wealth, and force is inappropriate for followers and damages our witness. We are committed to exploring ways of being good news to the poor, powerless, and persecuted, aware that such discipleship may attract opposition, resulting in suffering and sometimes ultimately martyrdom.
5. Churches are called to be committed communities of discipleship and mission, places of friendship, mutual accountability, and multivoiced worship. As we eat together, sharing bread and wine, we sustain hope as we seek God's kingdom together. We are committed to nurturing and developing such churches, in which young and old are valued, leadership is consultative, roles are related to gifts rather than gender, and baptism is for believers.
6. Spirituality and economics are interconnected. In an individualist and consumerist culture and in a world where economic injustice is rife, we are committed to finding ways of living simply, sharing generously, caring for creation, and working for justice.
7. Peace is at the heart of the gospel. As followers of Jesus in a divided and violent world, we are committed to finding nonviolent alternatives and to learning how to make peace between individuals, within and among churches, in society and between nations.

Many, if not all, of these convictions have come up in classes and in sermons at our church. I can think of people who are good examples and live out these beliefs.

Is this what I believe others see in Mennonites? Some for sure, but not everyone! It is interesting to note how someone who is not an Anabaptist sees such value in our core convictions. Perhaps by looking from Murray's point of view, I will gain more understanding on what is important in our beliefs.

