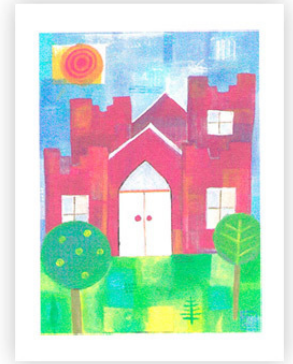


INSIDE...



Niagara United Mennonite Church

Address:
RR#2, 1775 Niagara Stone Rd.
Niagara-on-the-Lake, On
L0S 1J0
Telephone:
(905)468-3313

e-mail:
office@redbrickchurch.ca

Website:
www.redbrickchurch.ca

Individual Highlights:

It's really a peace and
justice issue
cont'd pg. 2

Calendar pg.3

MC Canada prayer
requests & ministry
notes pg. 4

Sharing Corner pg. 5

Milestones pg. 6

Other news pg. 6

It's Really a Peace and Justice Issue,

by Willard Metzger, Executive Director, Mennonite Church Canada

Climate change. It is a divisive issue.

Whether one believes climate change is happening or not, I believe it is ultimately a peace and justice issue. How the church responds to it is an important expression of worship.

God created the earth, and it was good. It is able to sustain its inhabitants. For this, we must thank God. When the earth is shielded from political or generational gluttony, it remains a context of health and wellbeing for all the children to come. For this, we must marvel at God's goodness.

How much appreciation are we showing for God's miraculous gift if we do not care for it?

Christians may disagree on whether climate change is real or not. Caring for creation is a natural and necessary expression of worship. It is an important way to honour God as Creator of the world around us and of all who live in it.

It is been almost 2 years since I attended the UN Climate Change Forum in Durban, South Africa, but what I learned there still haunts me. Humanity's insatiable appetite for more is damaging creation. It risks supplies of drinking water. It is changing the sustainability of food supplies. Extreme flooding and drought is leaving people homeless.

Food, water, and shelter shortages have been identified as leading causes of human conflict. Experts who monitor worldwide conflict are projecting a growing social instability that will lead to an increasing number of global conflicts and war.

A June 2012 report from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated that “environmental considerations are increasingly affecting the movement of refugees and IDPs [Internally Displaced Persons] in the East and Horn of Africa”. These stresses “also led to deteriorating social cohesion and the occurrence of resource-use conflicts.”

When people are left hungry, thirsty, and homeless, there is no justice and there is no peace. When we care for creation, we take fundamental steps toward peace. We do our best to ensure that land remains fertile and supports life. We do our best to protect clean water sources for this generation and those to follow. We do our best to make sure that all people have shelter.

Whether you believe in climate change or not, can humanity agree to rein in its appetite? Can we agree to treat creation with care and respect for the sake of present and future generations?

When we ignore creation care, we ignore our global neighbours.

Caring for creation is ultimately about doing the right thing. It is about creating a climate of peace and justice for all.





January at a glance ...

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 OFFICE CLOSED	2	3 12:00 pm Youth Retreat weekend	4
5 10:00 am Hans J. Wiens 11:00 am Pastor Rudy Dirks	6 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study	7 9:00 am Women in Service Quilt 7:00 pm Church Council Meeting	8 6:30 pm Pioneer Clubs 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting	9 8:00 pm Choir Practice	10 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	11 8:30am – 2:30 pm MBTI Workshop
12 11:00 am Pastor Rudy Dirks	13 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study 7:00 pm Young Women's Bible Study	14 9:00 am Women in Service Quilt	15 6:30 pm Pioneer Clubs 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting	16 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	17 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	18
19 10:00 am Hans H. Dau 11:00 am Pastor Rudy Dirks	20 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study 7:00 pm Young Women's Bible Study 7:30 pm Male Choir Practice	21 9:00 am Women in Service Quilt 7:00 pm Spiritual Council Meeting	22 6:30 pm Pioneer Clubs 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting	23 8:00 pm Choir Practice	24 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	25
26 11:00 am Stephen Cox	27 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study 7:00 pm Young Women's Bible Study 7:30 pm Male Choir Practice	28 9:00 am Women in Service Quilt 7:00 pm Annual Membership Meeting	29 6:30 pm Pioneer Clubs 7:00 pm Prayer Meeting	30 7:00 pm German Choir 8:00 pm Choir Practice	31 7:30 pm Sr. Youth	



Sunday Dates	Prayer Requests: Please pray for and with the Church	Ministry Notes: This is how your financial support of Mennonite Church Canada is ministering...from across the street to around the world!	News/Announcements: Stay in tune with the wider church
Jan. 5	Pray for Dan and Yvonne Nighswander (Jubilee Mennonite Church) as they engage in a Mennonite Church Canada teaching assignment at Union Biblical Seminary in Pune, India, during January and February.	Thank you for your heartfelt, generous responses to Mennonite Church Canada's Christmas giving projects. Your gifts are critical to building the church at home and abroad.	
Jan. 12	Pray for Palmer Becker (Waterloo North Mennonite Church) as he teaches at Bethlehem Bible College in Palestine on a Mennonite Church Canada assignment from January through March.	Your generosity to Mennonite Church Canada is helping young Mennonite churches in the Global South build capacity for their living and ministry needs through aquaponics operations and other entrepreneurial enterprises. Thank you for helping provide training that builds environmentally sound and economically sustainable futures.	The Being a Faithful Church deadline of February 15 is quickly approaching. Please share your responses to all four lessons of the study guide for BFC 5, <i>Between the Horizons: Biblical Perspectives on Human Sexuality</i> with the BFC Task Force. Email them to wmetzger@mennonitechurch.ca
Jan. 19	Stewardship Sunday Pray for Jean Mbuabua (Congo) and Arouna Sourabie (Burkina Faso) as they learn about sustainable farming at Songhai Centre in Benin with Mennonite Church Canada's help. Upon completion, they will start their own farms and train others in their home countries to counter high unemployment rates and grow self-sustainable families and church programs.	Stewardship Sunday Every week, Mennonite Church Canada's archives ministry responds to numerous requests for church documents, family & faith histories, and information on particular research topics. Thank you for supporting a vital ministry connecting individuals to their faith heritage.	Mark your calendars! Mennonite Church Canada is hosting two assemblies this year on the campus of Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. From July 3-6, the delegate assembly, <i>Wild Hope 2014: Faith for an unknown season</i> will bring people together from Area Churches across the country. From July 28-31, 2014, the first ever urban Native Assembly takes place, bringing together MC USA and Mennonite Church Canada participants.
Jan. 26	Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday Pray with Mennonite Church Canada and our church family around the world that we might exemplify unity in the body of Christ.	Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday With your support, Mennonite Church Canada is building relationships with other Mennonite churches around the world. Every gift you provide helps to build the church at home and around the world by creating vital connections of fellowship and ministry. Thank you	

Sharing Corner ...

In many developing countries, students graduating from universities face extremely high unemployment rates. Hippolyto Tshimanga, Mennonite Church Canada's Director of Africa Ministries, believes that teaching entrepreneurship and small scale, eco-friendly agriculture are key to growing self-sustainable families and church programs.

This year, two young adults are studying zero-emissions farming practices at the Songhaï Center in Porto Novo, the capital city of Benin. The Songhaï Centre is a working, model research farm that teaches ecologically sustainable farming practices in the context of an African environment. The Centre is becoming world renowned for its zero-waste technologies.

Jean Mbuabua from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Arouna Sourabie from Burkina Faso were selected for participation by their respective national Mennonite churches. Songhaï specializes in training young agricultural entrepreneurs. It equips them to embrace new sustainable economic opportunities using natural resources that are found in their own communities in Africa.

Tshimanga says, "It is a thoughtful and systematic way to fight economic and food-provision challenges in Africa by using readily available resources. While engaging our Mennonite brothers and sisters in Africa in these agricultural activities, we also help their national churches to build capacity for self support and missional growth."

At Songhaï, crops, animals and fish are raised with methods that allow the waste from each to be used as input in another. Plant waste feeds animals and fish, and provides mulch for other plants to help keep moisture in the ground. Animal and fish pond waste becomes fertilizer in plant production. Other solid and water waste is processed in a bio-digester to create energy that fuels operations in Songhaï.

At the end of their training, Mbuabua and Sourabie will return to their home countries to launch small scale farming operations. Their new skills will help them earn an income for themselves and for their church programs. They will also train others.

"This program has enormous potential for everyone involved," says Tshimanga. "One of Mennonite Church Canada's priorities is to help build the global church. The best way to do that is to equip people to meet their basic needs and the needs of their local congregations."

To learn how you can help contribute to this project, visit www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1906 (Burkina Faso) and www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1907 (Congo). A child-friendly video explaining one aspect of sustainable farming can be found at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/2192.



January Birthdays ...

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 - Eric Goerz (81) | 2 - Else Ballau (87) |
| 2 - Victor Braun (86) | 7 - Rudy Wiens (88) |
| 10 - Erna Enns (93) | 12 - Frieda Neufeld (80) |
| 17 - Hermann Gau (80) | 18 - Gunter Block (84) |
| 19 - Frank Siemens (80) | 21 - Jacob Epp (80) |
| 22 - Anna Toews (92) | 24 - Nettie Rahn (83) |
| 28 - Margarete Pauls (83) | |

Change of Address



Therese Bergen
Pleasant Manor Oakview Apts.
Box 500, 17 Elden St., OV-228
Virgil, ON L0S 1T0
(905) 468-9429

Other news...

Fathers & Kids Retreat: *January 17-19, 2014 at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp*: Skating on the lake, building snowmen and igloos in the field, following animal tracks through the woods, roasting smores over the campfire, playing board games by the fire in the dining hall and just being at camp is loads of fun, but the best part is doing it with dad! For more information and to register visit www.slmc.ca/retreats or call [519-422-3200](tel:519-422-3200)

Women's Retreat: *February 28-March 2, 2014 at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp*. Skating on the lake, relaxing in the sauna, enjoying a massage, snowshoeing through the woods, stargazing on a horse drawn sleigh ride and savouring exceptional food. Resource person Tanya Dyck Steinmann. For more information and to register visit www.slmc.ca/retreats or call [519-422-3200](tel:519-422-3200)

RSB International Study Tour: Europe / April 27 - May 11, 2014. Join the Redekop School of Business at CMU for an exciting 2-week study tour looking at business, politics and culture in Europe. Visit cmu.ca/business.php?s=studytour for more details.

Ancient Stones, Living Stones: The Holy Land in Perspective. Join CMU Professor Gordon Matties on his eighth study tour to the Holy Land (April 28-May 19, 2014). Register now; space is limited. For details, see cmu.ca/studytour

Visit the following website <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/> to learn more about Mennonite Church Canada. Also visit our area conference's website, <http://mcec.ca/> to learn more about Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada.

*If you would like to submit any photos or articles for the newsletter, please contact the office at 905-468-3313 or e-mail at office@redbrickchurch.ca. **Deadline for the February newsletter is January 28, 2014.***

