

Connections

Virginia Mennonite
Conference &
Board of Missions

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Washington and Baltimore conclude “City on a Hill” recognition

by Steve Carpenter, Conference Coordinator

What does it take to bring together a dozen churches from five different conferences? It seems that a missional vision and some grant money will do it.

In 2001, a committee of four, representing eleven churches in the Baltimore/Washington area, applied for and received the distinction of being named the Mennonite Mission Network’s (MMN) “City on a Hill” for 2002. With that title came a grant of \$21,000 from MMN. Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM) contributed an additional \$8,000 while Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) added \$3,000 for a total of \$32,000.

Two church planting efforts in Baltimore, Md., and Alexandria, Va., will receive more than half of the funds, dividing \$18,000 evenly between them. The \$9,000 in seed money for the Baltimore church plant is being held until the first of several groups interested in this effort is ready to begin in earnest. By contrast, the Alexandria church plant is moving along quickly under the leadership of pastor Kirk Hanger.

Kirk and Marilyn Hanger are experienced church planters on assignment with MMN in Mexico City since 1993. They are pastoring the second church begun under their care but will complete the transition to indigenous leadership and return to the U.S. this summer.

Marty Shupack is part of the Alexandria church planting team. He describes Kirk and Marilyn as “skilled church planters with the gift of evangelism,” adding that “their ministry has been very fruitful.” Marty and his wife, Diana, met Kirk and Marilyn while serving with Mennonite Central Committee in Mexico City.

There are 12 people in the core church planting group. They include Kirk’s wife, Marilyn, a gifted worship leader and guitar player, his brother, Ted, and nine people from Washington Community Fellowship, a congregation of 200 in D.C. Although six members of the church planting team speak Spanish fluently, when services begin sometime in

the fall of 2003 they will be in English.

According to Marty, “We hope to have close relationships with the non-English-speaking Mennonite congregations in Northern Virginia.”

Franconia Conference will provide encouragement, coaching, and accountability for the Hangers and their work.

One of the priorities for the new church is a “contemporary worship style open to the moving and leading of the Holy Spirit with practical biblically based teaching.” Pastor Hanger wants the church to be self-supporting from the beginning. He will seek part-time employment, and Marilyn expects to work as an elementary school teacher to further support their family of two pre-teen boys.

The remainder of the City on a Hill, VMBM, and ACC money, totaling \$14,000, was divided among the remaining nine churches in \$1,500 blocks. One receiving church, Northern Virginia Mennonite, used \$300 of their grant to host a baby shower for a woman experiencing an unplanned pregnancy. The child was reportedly going to be born with severe disabilities. However, the parents chose to carry the pregnancy to completion and were blessed with a beautiful daughter. In a letter of thanks the baby’s mother said, “We will never forget what you all have done for us. When [our daughter] is older we will tell her all about the day when our family became a part of your family through Jesus Christ because of her birth. Thank you all for being a part of our journey.”

[continued on back page](#)



courtesy of Melody Althouse

The church planting group in Alexandria, Va., expects to begin worship services in the fall of 2003. *Front row:* Melody Althouse, Pat Ruble. *Middle row:* Mark Kline, Belaine Lehman, Diana Shupack, Marty Shupack, Kirk Hanger. *Back row:* Tim Althouse, Ted Hanger.

The last shopping cart and the presence of the Spirit

It was an ominous sign—the last lonely shopping cart waiting for us. It could only portend aisles full of shoppers and rapidly disappearing selections.

While my family members did the looking, I hovered nearby and watched the hubbub. I began to pray for those who were enjoying the moments and also for those who were in obvious distress as the tensions built. I offered my smile to whomever would look at me.

We made the specific purchases we came for (this time refraining from the spontaneous extras) and we went on our way.

Now, of course, my reflections begin. In an ominous time, what does it mean to be a Spirit-filled shopper? Television-watcher? Teacher? Plumber? Parent? Student? Retiree? Athlete? Pastor? Farmer? Surgeon? Hunter?

As we moved through the Advent and Christmas season, we reflected on the wonder of God stretching out arms of love to us. Having established that connection through our confession and commitment, do we now feel the possibility of partnership with Jesus through the winter season? The presence of the Holy



Owen Burkholder
Conference Minister

Spirit provides power to enable our side of the partnership.

Will you join me this year in offering each day to God—inviting the presence of Jesus into each interaction, responding to the promptings to pray for those in our sphere of influence, and inviting God's kingdom to come and God's will to be done on earth?

And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love (I Cor. 13:13 NRSV). I think a reason love is listed as the greatest is that acts of love can build faith and restore hope. Here is full partnership with God—to love as we have been loved.

No matter how ominous the times, the possibility of walking with God holds the promise of deepening meaning and a responding joy.



Festival of Praise



Galen Lehman

On November 17, forty-eight men's voices joined in a "Festival of Praise" at the Park View Mennonite Church. In addition to harmonious sounds, this special event raised \$1,532 for the music ministries of Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions in Sicily and Trinidad. Because of the success of this event, it will be held again on November 9, 2003. Plan now to attend!

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Editor

Gloria Lehman

Assistant Editor

Rachel Smith

Copy Editor

Megan Hartman

Circulation manager

Beth Brunk

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Phone 540-434-9727

1-800-707-5535

E-mail info@vmbm.org

info@vmconf.org

Web www.vmbm.org

www.vmconf.org

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Christiansburg celebrates 20 years

Christiansburg (Va.) Mennonite Fellowship (CMF) recognized its twenty years of ministry with a two-day celebrative event on October 26-27, 2002. Many persons returned to enjoy a time of fellowship, food, and fun. Reminiscing and worship filled the schedule for the formal gatherings on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. The attendance for these services more than tripled the normal group size.

The theme “CMF..On a Journey” was well chosen and experienced as many former and present members and attendees told their stories of how God had touched their lives during their time with the congregation. Since the congregation is located within five miles of Virginia Tech at Blacksburg, many of the returnees were former students and professors. Although the size of the congregation has not greatly increased over the years, the spiritual contribution it has made in people’s lives is immeasurable. It was noted that during the years over 200 persons have been a part of the CMF congregational family.

Denton Yoder, Chair of the CMF Administrative Council, prepared a pictorial, computerized presentation that traced the beginning of the congregation as a church plant in a showroom of a vacant store on main street in Christiansburg to an impressive building that faces a four-lane highway and is surrounded with a shopping mall. A CD of the presentation was given to each family attending as a take-home gift.



Glenn Horst

Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship celebrated 20 years of ministry in October.



The different stages in the development of the church building were recognized as an act of God’s providence and blessing. Today the building also provides space for the Cedarwood Pre-school, a program that provides a ministry to the community with an enrollment of nineteen children. Velma Horst is the Director.

The three former pastors were given time for sharing remembrances and encouragements. Glendon and Dorothy Blosser were the original church planters, followed by Addona and Mary Nissley and Mark and Margie Akers. Glenn and Velma Horst are presently serving as the pastoral couple.

The Sunday morning worship time was climaxed with a re-commissioning of the regular group of attendees for a future of growth and service. The celebration ended with much appreciation for those who worked hard to have such a well-planned event.

• Glendon Blosser



Linda Overholt

In September, as the children of Mt. Pleasant Mennonite Church, Chesapeake, Va., began a new school year, they were reminded that many children in other nations do not have basic school supplies. They “dug deep,” increased their giving, and assembled 40 school kits to send to Mennonite Central Committee.

In November, the children assisted in assembling 18 health kits for MCC after hearing of the urgent relief effort in Iraq. The contents for these kits were purchased with Sunday School offerings given during the past year. The children were reminded of Jesus’ command to love, pray for, and bless our enemies. Eight more kits were donated by other members of the congregation.

• Linda Overholt
Mt. Pleasant Mennonite Church

A celebration of God's redemption in Wales

Joe and Cheryl Hollinger and their sons, Chris, Jordan, and Jacob, are serving in Pontypridd, Wales, as co-missionaries with Gateway Evangelistic Ministries and Eastern Mennonite Missions. The Hollingers, who are members of Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va., are recognized by VMBM as Colleagues in Mission. The following article was printed in the December issue of their newsletter.



Jacob, Jordan, Cheryl, Chris, and Joe Hollinger

Dale D. Gehman / EMM

Life is a pilgrimage, so when we have a success story to tell, it is that brief moment in time which sort of smacks of miracle and lightens the heart. Tim and Cathie's wedding on November 16 was one such moment.

"Remember when you walked me around and around the Common and described what my life could be like one day?" Cathie queried as she sat down beside Cheryl during the reception. "I had a hard time believing you. Now look at me. I am so happy."

When Cathie gave birth to Calum nearly three years ago, she had come through two disastrous relationships and was fumbling in the beginning steps of walking with God. Depression and the past kept stalking her, but she floundered on with the help of Christian friends, her parents, and the church family.

Tim, a university student from England, found God and a church family while studying in Pontypridd. Both Tim and Cathie began to take active roles in the church last year, and when they both ended up working with the Thursday night youth club, the chemistry between them ignited.

Sharing the joy of Tim and Cathie's wedding was like proclaiming a huge victory over Satan. Two lives he aspired to wreck have been redeemed and united in Christian marriage by the grace of God. Hallelujah! Now that's something to celebrate!

New VMBM endowment funds announced

VMBM gratefully acknowledges the establishment of several new endowments for the cause of missions in the future. These provisions bear witness to the commitment of the founders to Christ's work of reconciling the world to Himself. For public announcement at this time are:

- **The Robert and Sarah Histand Mission Endowment** to develop and sustain international long-term service providers in community development that includes persons from many nations working together in the name of Christ for human betterment.
- **The Robert W. and Esther M. Mast Mission Endowment** to support whatever mission endeavor needs it most.

An additional endowment (name not to be announced) provides for ministries to children and families. Several other endowments are under negotiation. Persons interested in assisting future generations in missions are encouraged to consider founding an endowment as an appropriate expression of their call to service. Endowments can be funded with cash, equities, real estate, or other types of assets.

For more information, contact: President's Office, Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions, 901 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA, 22802.

Missional Church Team



Kenyetta Aduma and David Evans of the Missional Church Team

Joe Bontrager

The first meeting of the Missional Church Team, including members from Washington D.C., North Carolina, southeast Virginia, and Harrisonburg, met November 17-18 at Calvary Community Church in Hampton, Va. The meeting included inspirational discussion on how the church can be faithful and effective in our engagement with the world as well as looking at our task as a Missional Church Team. During the next few months, efforts will be made to build awareness in our constituency and to listen for stories of missional vision among our Conference churches, commissions, and agencies.

• Joe Bontrager
Missional Church Team

Challenges, rewards, and prayer in Jamaica

Karen Brunk serves as clinic nurse in St. Elizabeth, Jamaica. Her responsibilities are varied, including filling prescriptions that Dr. Omar Beiler writes, explaining the use of these medications, and scheduling return appointments. On Thursdays, she goes into the mountainous areas and visits patients that cannot get to the clinic. For these trips, her trusted Land Rover named “Silas” makes it possible for her to navigate the rocky paths that lead to the people who need her services.

Daily living in rural Jamaica has its challenges—finding a scorpion in the house or clinic, fording high water on the roads after the hurricanes, coping with power outages, hunting for household items in the markets and stores, and seeing pain and suffering in the persons who struggle to get medical attention. But daily living in rural Jamaica also has its rewards—the view of the valley from the mountain, the flavors of pumpkin soup and callaloo, the prayers of two blind women who thank God for His many blessings, and the jubilant songs in Sunday morning worship.

Karen’s gift of nurturing souls as well as bodies is evident when she visits people like an elderly couple she saw recently. The man is paralyzed on one side due to stroke damage, has one leg amputated, and cannot speak, although he is alert and understands conversation. When Karen asked them if they know Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior, they both answered “Yes!” and their faces lit up with the joy of the Lord. They sang with Karen and joined hands in praying for each other.

Will you join Karen in praying for this couple and the other persons she sees who need physical and spiritual health?



Dolores Beiler

Karen Brunk ministers to a variety of individuals with physical and spiritual needs in rural Jamaica.

• Gloria Lehman
Caribbean Regional Assistant



Paolo Ribbaudo

Mennonites in Italy hold annual conference

In November, members of congregations in the Italian Mennonite Church gathered together in Palermo for the fifteenth Annual Conference.

A seacoast town near Palermo, Sicily, was the setting of the fifteenth Annual Conference of the Italian Mennonite Church, held Nov. 1-3, 2002.

If you’d been an observer there, you would have understood that for the Italian believers this event is a celebration! I asked some of them what this conference means in their lives.

“It’s a time of sharing with those we seldom see, of hearing what’s happening in other congregations, and of strengthening our common identity as Mennonites.”

“I enjoy the fellowship immensely. This time together is so encouraging and helps me grow in my faith.”

A new believer said, “At this conference I feel absolutely enveloped by love. It’s marvelous!”

A missionary from Bari said, “It was good to learn to know our Sicilian brothers and sisters better!”

“It’s refreshing to hear messages from speakers we don’t usually hear from.”

Giovanni Greco, a Brethren minister of Sicilian origin, kept everyone wide awake in every session—youth and adults alike. His vivid human interest illustrations coupled with wit and warmth punctuated the poignant truth he preached with such conviction. The theme “Co-Laborers Together with God” created a fitting backdrop for Francesco Picone’s presentation of the vision for sending an Italian couple as missionaries to Salerno. The presence of eight believers from the Salerno church reminded us of the needs and outreach opportunities in that city.

• Eva Eberly
Mediterranean Regional Assistant

Becoming good stewards



Dick Towner taught the Good Sense Budget Course at Stewardship University (photo is from 2001).

Beautiful fall weather greeted the 163 persons attending the second annual Stewardship University at Park View Mennonite Church on November 9, 2002. A morning worship service led by Philip Kniss, lead pastor at Park View, challenged all of us to give confidently of our gifts and talents while walking in the grace and strength of a covenant relationship with Jesus Christ. Sacred Sounds, a women's quartet from Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, provided worship and special music.

Beginning at 9:30 a.m. a total of eleven presenters who taught a total of 14 topics began the morning sessions. Presenters and topics were as follows:

David Augsburg

- Forgiving and Not Forgiving
- Mediating Reconciliation
- Making Peace with Enduring Injuries

Cecil Bradfield

- Biblical Perspectives on Whole Life Stewardship

Glen and Carol Hakey

- Massage Therapy and Exercise for Healthy Aging

Leo Heatwole

- Get a Grip on Retirement Planning

Paula Hochstedler

- Find God's Call for Your Life

Lynn Miller

- Life Planning

Gerald Shenk

Stewardship Bible Studies:

- Good News in a Land of Plenty
- Reflections on a Culture of Giving
- What If We Tithed?

Dick Towner

- Good Sense Budget Course

Mark Vincent

- Youth and Money
- Strategic Planning for Churches

Sessions were scheduled during the morning and afternoon with a catered lunch and afternoon break provided at 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. The Park View Mennonite Church youth group provided childcare.

Stewardship University focused on "helping you manage what life throws your way." Sessions were designed to help attendees "take charge of and responsibly manage the gifts God has given you: your family, your spirituality, your finances, your health—and more." Sessions were diverse and well received. Special thanks and appreciation go to First Financial Services Group, Inc., and Layman, Diener & Borntrager Insurance Agency, Inc., for co-sponsoring this year's Stewardship University event.

More information on Stewardship University can be found at www.StewardshipUniversity.org.

• Sue Guengerich
Mennonite Mutual Aid

Congregational Resource Center

The Center will have a display of the new **Vacation Bible School** kits from Augsburg, Group, Standard, and Mennonite Publishing House from January 15 to February 12. This is a good opportunity to look through the materials, listen to the music, and see the videos to find what fits best for your church's needs. We also have VBS kits from other years available.

What does it mean to be a **missional church**? Here are some resources that work on that question from different angles:

- **Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches** by Christian A. Schwarz
- **An Anabaptist Look at Natural Church Development**
- **The Purpose Driven Church** by Rick Warren
- **Purpose Driven Youth Ministry** by Doug Fields
- **Mission-Focused Congregations: A Bible Study**

- **Does Your Church 'Smell' Like Mission? Reflections on Becoming a Missional Church** by James R. Krabill
- **Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America** edited by Darrell L. Guder
- **Write the Vision: The Church Renewed** by Wilbert R. Shenk
- **When the Saints Go Marching Out!** by Art Beals
- **The Essence of the Church** by Craig Van Gelder
- **Confident Witness—Changing World** by Craig Van Gelder

The Resource Center is located at Eastern Mennonite Seminary and is open 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. A key is available at the EMU Information Office for use after hours.

Visit our website at www.emu.edu/mcrc to browse our catalog. Contact us at 540-432-4219 or wengerkw@emu.edu.

January 2003 Prayer Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>This month's prayer calendar is sponsored by Bettie Wilson in loving memory of her husband, Hal, whose birthday was January 17. Intercession is a gift they have given to the body of Christ.</p> <p><i>If you would like to sponsor one or more months of the prayer calendar, contact Gloria Lehman at 540-434-9727 or 1-800-707-5535.</i></p>	<p>6 Dr. Omar Beiler treats both young and old people at the Joyland Mennonite Church clinic. May the Great Physician give him wisdom and patience for each one.</p>	<p>7 Thank God for the new contacts in the church planting work in Bari Sud, Italy. The group is becoming too large to meet in homes, so pray that God would provide a suitable place to hold public worship services.</p>	<p>8 Pray for the staff of Virginia Mennonite Conference as they prepare for the upcoming meetings of the Faith and Life Commission, Conference Council, and Delegate Assembly.</p>	<p>9 Karen Brunk asks us to pray for the people she meets who do not have enough food or medical help. Thank God for Karen's service in Jamaica, and ask Him to strengthen her for the difficult things she sees.</p>	<p>3 Jesse Bergey recently gave the devotions at the Ridge Mennonite Fellowship, the new church held at the Maranatha School for the Deaf in Jamaica. Pray for the growth of this congregation.</p>	<p>4 Pray for the numerous congregations in Virginia Conference that are searching for pastors. Pray also for Central District which is searching for an overseer. Pray that individuals would be faithful in responding to God's call.</p>
<p>5 Tomorrow is Steve Carpenter's first day in the office as VMC Conference Coordinator; working in partnership with Conference Minister Owen Burkholder. Pray for each of the staff during this time of transition.</p>	<p>13 The Northern District Council of Virginia Conference meets this evening. Pray that ties of fellowship will be strengthened and leaders will be encouraged through the meeting.</p>	<p>14 Second semester classes have begun at the West Indies Theological College in Trinidad where Richard Keeler will teach the New Testament class. Pray for him and his students as they delve into God's Word together.</p>	<p>15 Ken and Stephanie Stoner request prayer for wisdom as they seek to balance the many duties of their work at the Maranatha School in Jamaica and spend time with their three children—Andrew, Leesha, and Danielle.</p>	<p>16 The Eastern Carolina District project advisory group for church development will meet in Durham, N.C., tomorrow. Pray as the group develops goals for the present churches and projects new church plants in other cities.</p>	<p>10 Pray for Kathy Weaver Wenger, Director of the Mennonite Congregational Resource Center, and Ervin Stutzman, Dean of Eastern Mennonite Seminary, as they plan for the future of the Resource Center.</p>	<p>11 Pray for guidance for Pearl Hoover and Northern Virginia Mennonite Church as Pearl ends her service as pastor for the congregation tomorrow.</p>
<p>12 Warwick District's Alternatives to Military Service Committee meets tomorrow to discuss options to offer drama, worship, and teaching resources on peace. EMU has offered a number of proposals.</p>	<p>20 School for Leadership Training will be held today through Thursday at Eastern Mennonite Seminary. Pray that God would strengthen the many pastors and other church leaders who are attending this event.</p>	<p>21 This week Dr. John Hsu from Northern Virginia Mennonite Church in Fairfax is in Haiti doing dentistry work. Pray for safety as he travels and as he goes about his ministry there.</p>	<p>22 The Virginia Conference Faith and Life Commission meets tomorrow and Friday. Pray for Elroy Miller as he chairs this meeting. Pray for wisdom as these overseers, bishops, and other members make important decisions.</p>	<p>17 Pray for all who will be attending the youth workers retreat in Williamsburg this weekend. Pray for safe travels and that the speaker will speak God's words of encouragement into each person's heart.</p>	<p>24 The VMC Conference Council meets this evening and tomorrow morning in Harrisonburg. Pray for Moderator Joe Longacher as he guides this meeting in preparation for the delegate session next weekend.</p>	<p>18 Owen Burkholder, VMC Conference Minister, will be preaching at Northern Virginia Mennonite Church in Fairfax tomorrow morning. Pray for the congregation as they are involved in the pastoral search process.</p>
<p>19 Pray for the cluster of Mennonite Church USA conferences working at a "Culture of Call" as they meet in a planning session tomorrow under the guidance of Del Glick.</p>	<p>27 Pray for the Virginia Mennonite Conference staff and their local assistants as they make preparations for the VMC Assembly to be held at James Madison University in Harrisonburg in June.</p>	<p>28 Danielle Stoner (almost 7) tells imaginative stories to Anna Edwards, the first member of the newest Mennonite church in Jamaica. Thank God for Danielle's creativity and Anna's listening ears.</p>	<p>23 The Nurture Commission will meet at Springdale Mennonite Church this evening. Pray for the members of this commission as they assist congregations in nurturing and developing leadership skills.</p>	<p>25 Tomorrow is Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday. Pray for Conference Minister Owen Burkholder as he preaches at Crossroads Mennonite Church in Broadway, Va., tomorrow.</p>	<p>31 Pray for the delegates from across Virginia Mennonite Conference as they gather tomorrow for the delegate session at Springdale Mennonite Church in Waynesboro, Va. Pray that God's Spirit would be present and evident.</p>	<p>26 Pray for new pastors and their congregations as they begin to work together. Pray that God would grant them patience and understanding as they get to know each other.</p>
<p>26 Pray for new pastors and their congregations as they begin to work together. Pray that God would grant them patience and understanding as they get to know each other.</p>	<p>29 Steve Campbell of Crossroads Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va., is under appointment by VMBM for one year of ministry in Lushnje, Albania. Pray for him as he prepares to leave in August 2003.</p>	<p>30 Leslie Francisco and Paul Godshall will attend the Urban Leaders Network meeting in Miami this weekend. This event resources Urban Ministry Directors and is sponsored by Mennonite Mission Network.</p>	<p>31 Pray for the delegates from across Virginia Mennonite Conference as they gather tomorrow for the delegate session at Springdale Mennonite Church in Waynesboro, Va. Pray that God's Spirit would be present and evident.</p>	<p>He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Revelation 21:5a (NIV)</p>		

Announcements

“Hospitality and Spirituality: Creating a More Caring Church and Society Following Sept. 11,” a one-day New Life Ministries workshop, will be held at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church on May 16 and at Huntington Mennonite Church on May 17. The event is sponsored by VMBM USA Ministries and the VMC Nurture Commission. Watch for more information.

Washington Community Fellowship, a multi-denominational congregation affiliated with Virginia Mennonite Conference, is looking for an experienced pastor with strengths in the areas of preaching, teaching, worship, administration, and pastoral care. Send resume by January 15th to Washington Community Fellowship, 907 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20002 or e-mail it to pastoralsearch@wcfchurch.org.

Plowing Outback, a folk opera of local oral histories of change and community, will be performed at the Yoder Barn in Newport News, Va., on weekends between February 21 and March 9. Contact the box office at 757-249-4187 or yoderbarntickets@aol.com.

Leadership Updates

Randy Coblentz was ordained as pastor of Williamsburg Mennonite Church, December 1.

Partners in Mission

short-term service opportunities

Zimbabwe

work team to help prior to
Mennonite World Conference
attend MWC
August 2003
6-8 people

Flushing Meadows, N.Y.

prayer and
evangelism team
July 2003
5-7 people

Harrisburg, Pa.

maintenance work
June 16-22, 2003
6 people

Contact **Ken Horst, Director of Partners in Mission**

540-434-9727 ♦ 1-800-707-5535

pim@vmbm.org ♦ www.vmbm.org

“City on a Hill” continued from pg. 1

Iglesia Del Evangelio Completo applied their \$1,500 grant toward evangelism training. Vietnamese Christian Fellowship sponsored several people who attended MMA's Stewardship University and youth programs. Christian Conquest Fellowship and Northern Virginia each gave \$1,800 to Conquest House where, according to director Louis Jones, it will be used “to further our efforts and outreach to a long-forgotten population within D.C.—ex-offenders.” The money went specifically to help renovate a four-bedroom apartment needed to ease their re-entry into society.

Many other programs were aided with these funds; however, one seed still lies dormant waiting for the warmth of the sun to call it forth. For many years, pastor Mel Schmidt of Hyattsville Mennonite Church has held the dream of seeing an Anabaptist Peace Center established in Washington, D.C. His church applied their entire

\$1,500 toward furthering that aim. These funds will help nourish that seed and prepare it to bloom in due season. Thank you for your partnership with VMBM and MMN which made Baltimore/Washington City on a Hill possible.



Louis Jones

Conquest House reaches out to ex-offenders in Washington, D.C.

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