

# Connections

Virginia Mennonite  
Conference &  
Board of Missions

December 2006  
Vol. 17, No. 2

## Junior high youth experience God and nature at 2006 Retreat

As junior high youth groups navigated the mountainous roads to Wirtz, Virginia, the clouds over Smith Mountain Lake cleared to reveal the bright sun in the blue expanse of sky. The warm weather and shimmering waters beckoned youth to canoe, scale the climbing wall and play basketball, football, tennis and miniature golf. Later Saturday evening the youth returned to the outdoors again, the sky now dark, cloudy and threatening rain, to compete in an active game of Chaos v. Control.

Youth had opportunities to interact through play, worship and food. One hundred forty participants came from Community, Concord, Durham, Harrisonburg, Lindale, Mt. Clinton, Ridgeway, Trissels, Warwick River, Waynesboro, Weavers and Zion Mennonite churches. They learned interesting facts about each other through a Get-to-Know-You Bingo game—finding persons who have had a rabies shot, were born in another country, have been baptized and can name the books of the Bible.

A 2006 Eastern Mennonite Seminary graduate, Matt Schwartz, challenged the youth to recognize themselves as children of God—and then live out that calling. Matt shared examples both from the Bible and his own life of times where persons are prideful and let that affect their attitudes toward others. Outlining God's faithfulness to the Israelites through the Old Testament, Matt emphasized the culmination of God's love for all people in the person of Jesus Christ. He invited participants to respond and consider how God has reached out



Photos courtesy of  
Sarah Bixler



to them in a personal way. On Sunday morning, youth were reminded of the Fruits of the Spirit and considered examples of each, including ways they can demonstrate them in their own lives. Music leaders Matt Garber and Nate Yoder led the group in worship songs throughout each session, integrating the music selections with each session's theme.

The junior high retreat continues to be an opportunity for youth to experience nature, sample different types of recreation, learn to know other youth within the conference, and most importantly, meet God. As one youth put it, "I had a great time! I can't wait to come back!"

• Sarah Bixler  
Conference Youth Minister

# Living and dying well

Within a period of six weeks recently, Earlene and I lost exactly one-half of our four parents. For all our prayers, medical advances and the money spent accordingly, our human efforts to save life proved fruitless. The fundamental equation of life was not altered. Every person who lives eventually dies. Once in a while, human care, effort, and financial expense seem to alter the timetable a bit, although we might be deceived on that too.

Reflections that begin on this rather melancholy note are not intended to be depressing. The thought of mortality has not been dark and morbid for Earlene and me. Oh yes, we've been incredibly sad about those whom we have loved and lost. One person described the sense of being orphaned; another—of losing our memory. The experience is one of incredible loss and emptiness. That isn't the predominant emotion though, and is not the feeling or experience that is sticking with us.

At Mom's funeral, we were told repeatedly that "she died well," referring to her sudden, quick, and peaceful departure. Our reply was that "she lived well" too. Living and dying well has actually been a comforting contemplation and an encouraging inspiration. Edith Horst and Earl Yutzy epitomized both.

In the days and weeks following death we instinctively shared our memories. I suppose we tended to gloss over faults a bit, but not very much. Mostly we remembered two lives lived much the way we do, with human weakness, some success, a good dose of



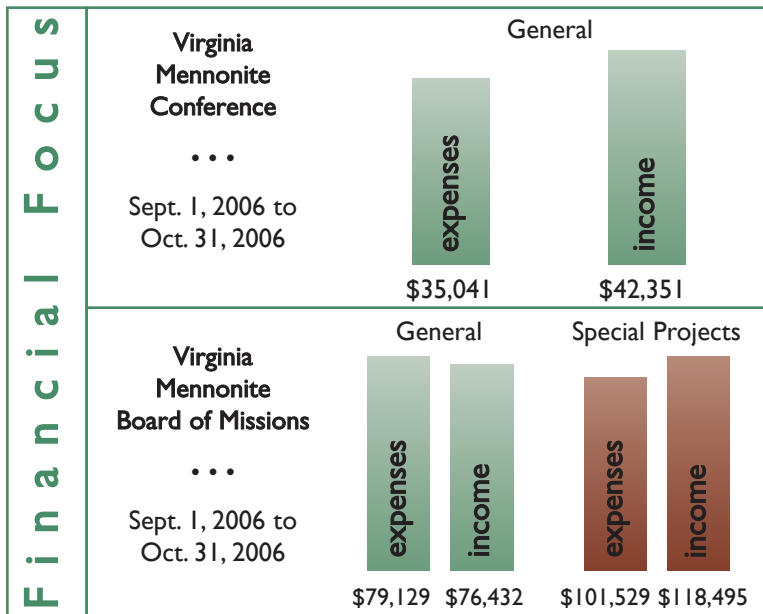
**Loren Horst**  
President of VMBM

humility, and an unswerving faith in God. That faith bore fruit in good old-fashioned living that was intended to bring faith and works into harmony. We saw what we got and we got what we saw. Neither parent had many mysteries, even at the end. We were helped with this thought: if, by the grace of God, two human and humble individuals can live so well, there is hope for us too. That was helpful.

They also died well. Only part of that comment refers to the manner of their physical death. More, it refers to how we witnessed two persons face their own impending death with quiet confidence and trust in the Lord who would receive them unto himself. Probably at no other time am I so reminded of that most fundamental truth of the gospel, the truth of resurrection. We witnessed two persons face the ultimate human defeat (death) with supreme human confidence (resurrection). That was hopeful.

So, witnessing two persons live and die well actually became, for us, an experience of help and hope. In a sense, it was almost a revival experience. Now, the mantle is being given to us. The torch is being passed. As ill-equipped as we feel, the God who walked with our parents gives us courage too.

*Loren Horst*



**Connections** (USPS 007-205) is published monthly by Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions and Virginia Mennonite Conference to connect congregations with each other and conference agencies.

**Editor**

Gloria Lehman

**Assistant Editor**

Jon Trotter

**Circulation manager**

Beth Brunk

*Connections* is distributed free to each household of supporting congregations. Subscription rates: \$5 per year, 2 years for \$9. Send subscriptions to *Connections* Circulation Manager, 901 Parkwood Dr., Harrisonburg, VA 22802

**Phone** 540-434-9727

1-800-707-5535

**E-mail** info@vmbm.org

info@vmconf.org

**Web** www.vmbm.org

www.vmconf.org

**POSTMASTER** Send address changes to 901 Parkwood Dr., Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Periodical postage paid at Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

## Harrisonburg hosts 2nd annual *Menno* folk

### Mending a murder



Taisuke Sumiyoshi, Fred Bahnsen, Meredith Stewart, and Daniel Felts stand near the Anathoth Garden barn as Sumiyoshi waters a compost pile.

The murder in 2004 of a rural North Carolina shopkeeper in an interracial marriage stirred racial tensions in the farming community. Some wanted revenge, but the Cedar Grove United Methodist Church sought a way to rebuild the community, and started with a prayer vigil.

Out of later discussions came the idea of a community garden where neighbors could grow food together and ease tensions. A nearby two-acre plot was offered for that purpose, and Fred and Elizabeth Bahnsen, he a graduate and she a student at Duke Divinity School, have led the development of Anathoth Garden.

The Bahnsens, both active members of the Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship and avid gardeners, raise much of their own food on their small farm. When Cedar Grove UMC sought leadership for the garden project, Fred Bahnsen was offered the job, and took it to express his Christian values and his love of gardening.

Bahnsen soon promoted Anathoth volunteerism to the Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship, some of whom have spent many Saturday hours there. Cedar Grove UMC also sends people, and others come on community service assignments. Daniel Felts, shown in the photo, is spending the summer there on a practical theology assignment from Duke Divinity School.

In a rural, racially-mixed environment the Garden gives the poor a chance to raise some of their own food and to reduce wide economic disparities. One longtime resident said, "I've been waiting to see something like this for 30 years. If a church is doing a community garden where blacks and whites and Latinos grow food together, I want to be involved."

**Anathoth Garden continued on page 4**

Wendy Chappell-Dick returned to Harrisonburg over the weekend of Oct 13 and 14, 2006 to help with the music festival by emceeing one of the three stages on the campus of Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) where more than 15 performers strummed their tunes and poured out their hearts in song.

The two-day event, which began with six performers in three downtown venues on Friday night, continued on Saturday at EMU from 4 until 9 pm. These musicians and their performances, part of EMU's Homecoming activities, culminated with a rousing show in Lehman Auditorium by Over the Rhine, a Cincinnati-based duo comprised of Lindford Detweiler and Karin Bergquist. Their music has been heard on T.V. shows such as *Bones*, *Third Watch* and *Felicity*. They have recorded with *Cowboy Junkies* and opened for *Bob Dylan*. The audience of 350 loved their music and responded with a standing ovation. Detweiler was so impressed with the quality of the MennoFolk artists in the songwriter's circle, which opened for his band that he invited Trent Wagler, Andru Bemis and Rachel Ries to open for them at a show in Dayton, Ohio, in November.

This year's MennoFolk performers included: Chuck Neufeld, Tim Shue, the Katie Grove Band, Daphne Creek and many more. Although the focus was on folk, bluegrass and acoustic music, jazz musician Ryan Kaufman performed and Alex Albrecht brought his unique style of Appalachian Blues to life on stage. The planning committee included Dave Nealon, Jerry Holsopple, Kirk Shank Zehr and others.

MennoFolk Harrisonburg is supported by Virginia Mennonite Conference as an outreach ministry of the Nurture Commission. Look for MennoFolk's Harrisonburg festival again in Fall 2007.



Andru Bemis (top) and Rachel Ries (above left) perform at MennoFolk over the weekend of October 13. This was the second annual MennoFolk festival in Harrisonburg. Photos: Jerry Holsopple

• Steve Carpenter

Virginia Mennonite Conference Coordinator

## Offering hope at the Joshua Center



The dirty unpaved street reminds us that we are in the poorer section of Lezhe, mostly inhabited by Gypsy families, forced into residential living under communism. A pig cleans up the garbage from an overflowing garbage bin. The unfinished three-story concrete homes are evidence of the remaining structures of a communist state.

From the nearby Joshua Center (a one story modern building) comes the voice of Norma Teles, speaking in fluent Albanian to the group of Gypsy children sitting around her on the floor. “Let’s do some exercises, move your legs quickly, like peddling a bicycle. Now, all together, let’s sing and clap to Jesus.” Obviously the children are distracted by visitors, finding it challenging to keep time with Norma’s rhythm. Most of these children would have been playing on the filthy streets and perhaps rummaging through the garbage if Norma and her Albanian helpers had not come to teach them the basics of health, education, discipline, and stories about God’s love.

Norma explains that this is a totally new group of kids. Those from last year now attend first grade in the Albanian public school. Her face glows as she tells how several first grade teachers came to her saying, “Norma, what have you done to these kids? Some are the best in the class! They come to school clean and combed, are disciplined and know how to read and write,” an achievement unheard of before! “Gypsy mothers stop me on the street and proudly show their kids homework to me,” continues Norma. “Even some Albanian parents beg me to enroll their children in my pre-school program, but of course I need to explain that this school is only for Gypsy kids who have no other options for training and education.” With a bit of sarcasm she challenges them, “Why would you want to send your kid to a Gypsy school anyway? Most Albanians don’t like Gypsies!” But they object, “No, no, that’s ok, with you they will be fine and learn.”

Deeply touched, we silently leave the room where the children now sit quietly around a table to have their mid-morning snack. They close their

**A gift of \$15** will sponsor one child for a month at the Joshua Center.

**A gift of \$50** will contribute towards Norma's support in our partnership with the Brazilian Mennonite Church.

(Through Norma's budget, VMBM pays \$150 a month to help rent the Joshua Center facility. With 10 people giving a monthly gift of \$15, 10 sponsors will cover that portion of her budget. Presently Norma has 10 children in the school but she is wanting to include 6 more if she can receive adequate help for the remainder of the school year.)

## Anathoth Garden continued from page 3

The Garden has a well, and food grows in raised beds of carefully enriched soil. After harvest, a bed is planted with a new crop. Volunteers garden with familiar hand tools; there is no mechanized equipment other than a water pump and a solar-powered electric fence to keep deer out.

Much of the food goes without cost to needy residents of the surrounding area, as many as 150 people in the garden’s first season. Some are migrant workers with no other access to land. Anathoth members work regularly in the garden and also have access to its food.

Bahnson welcomes invitations to speak to churches. Contact him at: [fred@anathothgarden.org](mailto:fred@anathothgarden.org)

• Thomas Lehman  
Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship

eyes and repeat a prayer of thanks to the Jesus that Norma loves. More young lives are given hope at Joshua Center.

• Willard Eberly  
Mediterranean Regional Director, VMBM



Paulo Campos (l) with Willard Eberly and Norma Teles.

Paulo Campos (Oversees Director of *Junta Menonita de Missões Internacionais* (JMMI), Willard Eberly and Norma Teles met to confer together regarding Norma's ministry and the ongoing partnership between the Brazilian Mennonite Mission Committee and VMBM. This was the first time that a representative from the Brazilian Mennonite Mission Committee had been able to visit Albania, even though they have partnered with VMBM for seven years. Paulo was deeply touched by the need and opportunity of missions in Albania and felt that the cultural fit was excellent for personnel from Brazil. The JMMI is giving prayerful consideration to increasing their involvement in Albania which will likely also include the sending of additional missionaries in partnership with VMBM.

• Willard Eberly  
Mediterranean Regional Director, VMBM

# Enlarging God's Kingdom in small places

In July, several workers with Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions returned from their places of service. They had gone to small islands and demonstrated God's great love.

Roy and Joanne Hunsberger, returned from five months in Chaguanas, Trinidad. Leading a Bible study in a Hindu village, Carlsen Field, attending cell groups and Sunday morning worship services with the Mennonite Church of Chaguanas, assist-



Roy and Joanne Hunsberger, with a basket of fruit that represents the different facets of their ministry in Trinidad.

ing with a women's retreat, and helping with Vacation Bible School filled their days with opportunities to meet and serve others. A highlight was organizing a work team from Hickory, N.C.

that repaired a church member's house. The Hunsbergers

express gratitude to their home congregation, Asheville Mennonite Church, N.C. for all the support that they received while in Trinidad.

Robert and Lois Wenger, Harrisonburg, Va., returned from six months of assisting at the



Robert and Lois Wenger, with a basket of fruit representing their ministry in Jamaica.

Maranatha School for the Deaf, St. Elizabeth, Jamaica. Their days and nights were filled with teaching cooking and woodworking, making costumes and building props for the Christmas program, encouraging the

Mennonite churches nearby, repairing lots of shoes, and nurturing the students and the school.

Monica Unzicker, Apple Creek, Ohio, and Harrisonburg, Va., returned after serving two years at the Maranatha School for the Deaf in Jamaica. Teaching math and computer skills, visiting community members, singing with voice and



Monica Unzicker receives a certificate of recognition for her two years of service from Galen Lehman, Caribbean Regional Director.

signs, and providing fun experiences for the students and community children gave Monica both challenges and rewards.

She survived two hurricanes, a bush fire, and a robbery at her house. Monica says of her experience, "Most of all [the students and community members] taught me how to give back what they gave me...I'll forever hold these lessons [in my heart]."

Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions is grateful for the response to God's call from Monica, Roy, Joanne, Robert, and Lois. Their work enlarged God's Kingdom in small places in His world.

• Gloria Lehman  
Director of Public Relations, VMBM



Williamsburg Mennonite Church celebrated its 30th anniversary on Sept. 17. The congregation gathered under the tent for worship and for fellowship around a noon meal. Ernie Godshall, overseer, gave encouragement for the congregation and led a prayer of blessing. Randy Coblentz is the pastor of WMC.



Curt and Jackie Hartman of Hartman Motor Sales gave a 2006 Dodge Stratus to Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions to be used by the Director of Development and Church Relations. Loren Horst (r), VMBM president, thanked Curt and Jackie for this gift that demonstrates a solid and generous commitment to the mission of the church.

# Sacrificial giving at Eastern Mennonite School



Photo courtesy of Ben Bixler

Eastern Mennonite High School and Middle School students learned something of sacrificial giving this fall, helping to raise money for the New Life Home orphanage in Kenya. The journey began when Phys Ed teacher and varsity boys soccer coach Kendal Bauman began thinking about his annual fundraiser for the soccer team. Each year, Bauman's team participates in a service project related to the school's Global Education theme, which is "Mission and Service in Africa" this year. Bauman went to English teacher John Leonard about a worthy organization in Africa; Leonard's immediate response was "How about New Life Home? They are the place that gave both our daughters life." Leonard and his wife Glenda, who teaches sixth grade in the middle school, adopted two girls, Anisa and Karen, while living in Kenya.

So Bauman and his soccer players rode bikes 15 miles in lieu of practice one day, celebrating the personal sacrifice each player made to donate \$30 of their own money. John Leonard also rode with the team, accepting sponsors for the bike ride, and together they raised nearly \$8,000 for New Life Home.

But Bauman had bigger dreams. With the support of the student council, Bauman and Leonard presented New Life Home's ministry to the entire

student body during chapel and again challenged students with sacrificial giving. "I thought that it was important for the kids to realize that they sometimes have to give up something to help other people. They can choose not to buy a CD or a pair of jeans and make a contribution, or can work for someone and donate their earnings," Bauman said.

The student body responded, pushing the total school donation to \$12,050. Students who participated received New Life Home T-shirts and some also participated in a celebratory walk during Homecoming Weekend. But the bigger reward was a new understanding about giving, as junior Nathan Hershberger relates, "I had some money in the bank account and it seemed foolish not to spend it on someone else."

• Ben Bixler, Eastern Mennonite School

## Congregational Resource Center

**Need a menorah or shofar** for a lesson on Jewish customs or a service illustrating Hanukkah? Would a special nativity set fit into your Sunday School lessons during December?

In addition to new written Advent materials, items such as those mentioned above are also available for checkout through the Congregational Resource Center, Eastern Mennonite Seminary building.

### **New Items from "Alternatives for Simple Living":**

**What Does Jesus Want for Christmas?** is the title of an intergenerational Christmas pageant/event. Brief scenes are mixed with carols. This is easy to produce and flexible in length. Gives a strong element of social justice to the traditional pageant. Includes script and CD.

**Carols with Justice** is a songbook and CD set. Seventeen traditional Christmas hymns and carols are presented, many with

additional new verses that may be substituted. For example, the second verse of "Angels from the Realms of Glory" is: "Fill your hearts with simple pleasures. Let the Savior's joy and peace / Be your only sought-for treasures. See your trust and faith increase."

**Whose Birthday Is It, Anyway?** This CD for 2006 includes ideas for a Christ-centered holiday and may be used by individuals, families and churches. Sample contents include Advent wreath creation, an Advent candle lighting hymn (Hope Is A Candle), and activities on reducing Christmas chaos.

Contact Director Linda Alley at [alleyl@emu.edu](mailto:alleyl@emu.edu) or 540.432.4219. You may browse the online catalog at [www.emu.edu/seminary/sit/](http://www.emu.edu/seminary/sit/) and then "Search Catalog".

The Resource Center is open 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Monday through Friday.

# Connections Prayer Calendar December 2006

**Sunday**

**31** Pray for Chris and Melody Riddle family as they adjust to life in Italy as missionaries. May they trust God to make “the rough places plain” in the path ahead.

**Monday**

This month's prayer calendar is sponsored by

**Marvin and Carolyn Slabaugh in loving memory of their parents, Moses and Mary Slabaugh and Lester and Naomi Campbell**

**Tuesday**

**4** Pray for wisdom as Eric Kauffman mentor young adults through the Service Adventure program in Raleigh, N.C. They, and the young people, attend Raleigh Mennonite Church.

**5** Tomorrow several pastors new to VMC will gather in Harrisonburg for a time of orientation and fellowship guided by VMC's staff. Pray that God may bless these pastors in their ministries.

**Wednesday**

**“She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”**  
— Matthew 1:21 (NIV)

**6** Luke Hoover finds ways to be useful in Nazareth Village. He serves as shepherd and carpenter when groups go through the Village. He has helped with replacing the roof over the olive press. He invites your prayers.

**7** The annual conference of the Italian Mennonite Church will be held this weekend. Pray that the Lord will visit and guide them as they meet and worship together in fellowship.

**Thursday**

**1** Tim & Tama Shoemaker, *travSewd* participants, are distributing Christmas calendars and leaflets around their community in Donegal, Ireland. Pray that God will open hearts & minds to the true meaning of Christmas.

**8** Pray for military members, who are working with the Military Counseling Network in Germany, to establish their status as conscientious objectors. They face potential imprisonment for this decision.

**Friday**

**2** Willard Eberly returned last month from an exploratory trip to Montenegro to ground-work for sending missionaries there. May the Spirit ignite this vision in many hearts and churches.

**9** Today the Charleville Mennonite Church in Trinidad is holding their Christmas program. Join them in praying for good attendance and a positive response to the Gospel as the Christmas story is dramatized.

**10** Pray for the Congregational Resource Center Advisory Committee as it meets tomorrow to review the center's operations. The CRC is a joint program of Eastern Mennonite Seminary and VMC.

**11** Linda Alley is the Congregational Resource Center's new director. Pray for her work as she directs church workers and seminary students to the practical resources they need for ministry.

**12** Dan Hoopert, *travSewd* participant in Kiev, Ukraine, has opportunities to share God's Word with a variety of people. Pray that the Holy Spirit will empower him especially during the Advent season.

**13** Pray for the more than 1,000 recipients of “Sip of Scripture,” a daily e-mail written from a mission Anabaptist perspective and sent by Mennonite Media's Third Way Café staff in Harrisonburg, Va.

**14** The students and staff at the Maranatha School for the Deaf, Jamaica, are celebrating Christmas today. Thank God for the student sponsors who sent gifts, and pray that Christ will be born in each heart this year.

**17** Jesus' Deaf Church holds their Christmas celebration in Orange Walk Town, Belize, today. As members of JDC dramatize the Christmas story, may the incarnation of God and its meaning become real for them and those who watch.

**18** Pray for God's leading for Phil and Marcia Lehman as they consider starting a Bible study group in a town about 45 minutes north of Bari, Italy.

**19** Skip and Carol Tobin have received word that their colleagues received permission to teach English in a country nearby. They are grateful for this significant breakthrough. They welcome our prayers as they carry out their many responsibilities.

**20** Hope Mennonite Church, Esparanza, Trinidad, needs funds for their church building project. Pray that money will be raised from generous people. Also thank God that work teams are being organized for early 2007.

**21** Today Aaron, Laura, and Abigail Kauffman, Mission Network and VMBM workers in La Mesa, Colombia, are visiting with the VMBM staff. Thank God that they have the opportunity to return to the US for a short visit.

**22** Sara Ulrich, *travSewd* participant, relates to a variety of Young Life and WyldLife participants in Hertford, England. May God help her to demonstrate the true meaning of Christmas during this season.

**23** During the Christmas season people are more open to consider spiritual things. Pray that all of us will have wisdom in knowing how to share the wonderful message of Jesus—“God With Us” in human form!

**24** Each Sunday afternoon, a Mennonite congregation in Trinidad takes a turn to hold worship services in Carlsen Field where there is a building, but no church leadership. Pray for them and thank God for this outreach.

**25** “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ‘The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel!’—which means, “God with us.”

**Christmas**  
Matthew 1:22-23

**26** Choose someone to visit today who may be alone during the holiday season. Ask God to help you be the kind of presence that He desires. Follow up with prayer and further contacts.

**27** Remember the missionaries who miss being with family over the holidays—that the Lord will give them special reasons to rejoice in what He's doing through them.

**28** Before New Year, Centro Koinonia, as well as other churches in Italy, distribute page-a-day Scripture calendars to friends and neighbors. Pray that these “seeds” would bear fruit in many hearts.

**29** Pray for Ganes and Risha Kalloo who have returned to Trinidad after a year-and-a-half in Harrisonburg. Taking on the roles and responsibilities of church leadership again will be both challenging and gratifying.

**30** James Rhee and family are learning to know the Korean community in and around Stephens City, Va. Pray that God will open doors for them so that His Light shines on many lives.

**Saturday**

## Announcements

**Books Abroad** continues to have requests for books. Remember Books Abroad when you give away books. Postage money is also a needed gift and a good project for classes or groups.

**Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions** is pleased to announce that Janet M. Stutzman has



accepted the position of Director of Development, beginning in December. Janet shares a passion for mission and for the church. She and husband

Linford have served as mission workers for 12 years in Germany and Australia; she has worked in development and alumni and parent relations at EMU.

**Treat yourself and your family** this Christmas season to a presentation of the Christmas play, *DoveTale*, by Ted & Lee & Ingrid. Show dates are December 19 & 20 at 7:30 p.m. at the Eastern Mennonite School auditorium, Harrisonburg. Tickets available at the door or reserve by calling 540-564-0210. Ticket prices are \$10/adult, \$8/students and seniors. All seats are general seating.

## Pastoral Transitions

**Ross Erb** was ordained on August 20 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

**Kevin Gasser** was ordained on October 22, at Staunton Mennonite Church, Staunton, Va.

**Chris Riddle** was licensed for ministry on Sept. 24, at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church. The Riddle family will be serving in Italy with VMBM.

**Carolyn Peachy Rudy** was licensed for pastoral care and spiritual direction in Southeast Asia on July 23. She and her family are serving with MCC.

**Isaac Villegas** was licensed on September 24 at Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship, N.C.



**Mark your calendar:** The Hunt Family Fiddlers will perform on Sunday, February 4, 4:00 p.m. in the Eastern Mennonite School auditorium, Harrisonburg. Offering will benefit Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions' ministries.

**Eastern Mennonite University** would like to invite you to come see for yourself why EMU is an exceptional Christian university! Visit dates are Feb. 22-23 and March 17, 2007. Set up your visit by calling EMU at 800-368-2665 to visit our website to register at [www.emu.edu](http://www.emu.edu).

## Notes of Thanks

**Liston and Juline Aiken**, Kingston, Jamaica, express their thanks for the gift of money that was given to them for Avia's medical expenses while they were in Harrisonburg for the Virginia Mennonite Conference assembly, July 2006. Avia is enjoying good health now.

**The organizers of BeachFest** in September 2006 express thanks to all who baked cookies for the prayer ministry in Long Beach, MS. These homemade goodies opened doors of hearts and homes.

Connections (USPS 007-205)  
Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions  
Virginia Mennonite Conference  
901 Parkwood Drive  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802-2498



Virginia  
Mennonite  
Conference  
A conference of  
Mennonite Church USA

Periodical  
postage  
PAID  
Harrisonburg, VA  
22801