



A Mennonite presence in prison

Mennonite longevity and wide-ranging experience in prison ministry has rarely been recognized. This article, the first of three focusing on prison ministry, will highlight a portion of widespread Virginia Mennonite Conference involvement.

By **JASON GERLACH**
Conference Youth Minister

Mennonite involvement in prison ministry has been significant and life-changing. From juvenile correctional centers to re-entry facilities, from regional jails to educational media focused on prisoner's reintegration into society, Mennonites have joined with the many denominations who have responded to Matthew 25. Jesus' words, I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored – you did it to me (Matthew 25:45, The Message), has been impetus for visitation and spiritual care of people in prison.

In October 2006, Christian Century reported that "In the 1990s, the fastest growing category of housing in the United States was prison cells." Statistics suggest the staggering swell of prison cells will overwhelm ministry, but Mennonite involvement in prison ministry through the years responds to Jesus Christ's call for followers to never ignore those overlooked.

Lewis Burkholder, Powhatan Mennonite Church, has been involved in prison ministry for 40 years. At Powhatan Correctional Facility—State Farm—he currently teaches Chuck Colson's Prison Fellowship material to inmates upon the request of prison chaplains. "Involvement in prison ministry has shown me the value of each individual regardless of background. In Christ, every person has value," Burkholder mentioned. "I have seen the power of God change lives."

For some time, Frank Vaughn

declined the invitations to join with local prison ministry. "I didn't feel I had anything to say," Vaughn recalled. However, during the summer of 2005, Vaughn, a member of Powhatan Mennonite Church and Christian Motorcycle Association, heard about Bill Glass' prison ministry

Champions for Life and took a step of faith. He did have something to say, and he rapidly became involved in various types of prison ministry. "I found regular people who had a story. I became acquainted with strong Christians. I learned that declaring faith in Jesus Christ in prison is not an easy thing; that incarcerated persons are ridiculed because of their faith." Along with his wife, Debbie, Frank currently is involved at Deep Meadow Correctional Center, Beaumont Juvenile Correctional Center, and Elk Hill in Goochland County.

When Mennonite Media could no longer respond to the volume of letters they were receiving from prisoners, they passed this correspondence on to Tom Kauffman. Kauffman, a member of Lindale Mennonite Church, writes letters to incarcerated or released men on a weekly basis. In addition, he teaches a



John McDorman and Tom Kauffman chat after lunch. Tom mentors John as he readjusts to life after incarceration. Photo by Gloria Lehman.

weekly Bible Study at the Harrisonburg/Rockingham Regional Jail and regularly visits inmates. Kauffman commented, "I have a passion to see lives change, and I know by experience that it is the love and grace of God through Christ that achieves this. This is what I offer. It gives me great joy to hear [from those I meet with regularly] about the changes in their own lives and them sharing with others."

Duane Yoder, pastor of Lindale Mennonite Church, has been involved at the Harrisonburg Men's Diversion Center for over two years. Harley Good, from the same congregation, serves the Diversion Center as its first-ever volunteer chaplain. Good began his chaplaincy role three years ago by eating supper at the Diversion Center each Tuesday evening. An out-growth of his work has been a Saturday evening worship service

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We thank you, Lord

Sometimes I lean back in my comfortable chair, look around my nice living room with the pictures of family scattered around and I thank God for the wonderful life I have been given. I linger in gratitude, in spite of chronic illnesses that engage our family system; gratitude, in the face of incredible leadership challenges for the church which I serve; and gratitude, chastened by even a partial awareness of a world at risk.

Ruth Ann and I were guests in a home in another country some years ago. Our hosts took us around to visit the churches. At noon we stopped in unannounced at the home of one of the bi-vocational pastors. A simple lunch was prepared, sandwiches with some kind of spread, and as we bowed our heads for the prayer I noticed some small ants moving in the sandwich. But the prayer, the prayer of that pastor, is what moved me. It was a remarkable expression of gratitude for God's provision!



Owen Burkholder
Conference Minister

In that moment the differences in our situations in life evaporated. We were connected to the same Source of life.

Reflecting on that reminds me of the last visit I had with my Grandfather, Joe Burkholder. With roots in Alberta, where Grandpa had lived most of his life, I had raised my family in faraway Virginia. Our visits back were reasonably frequent but it was a huge shock to me on this particular trip, that when we visited Grandpa & Grandma B in the nursing home, Grandpa could not recall who I was. (Grandma B in a chiding voice, "don't you know it's Owen?" brought no

recognition). Disappointed, our family traveled north further to my parental home. While we were there the news came that Grandpa had been taken to the hospital in Edmonton. On our trip south we stopped in at the hospital to see him. Again, he had no idea who I was. I sat beside him, put my arm around him and prayed. And there we were united! Grandpa's guttural responses during that prayer indicated to me that we were spiritual kin, connected to the same source of life.

Gratitude is the recognition that God is Source. It is the appropriate response to this One who transcends place, situation in life, and family connections. Observe in the stories in this issue how this God is present in prisons. "In God we live and move and have our being." Thanks be to God!

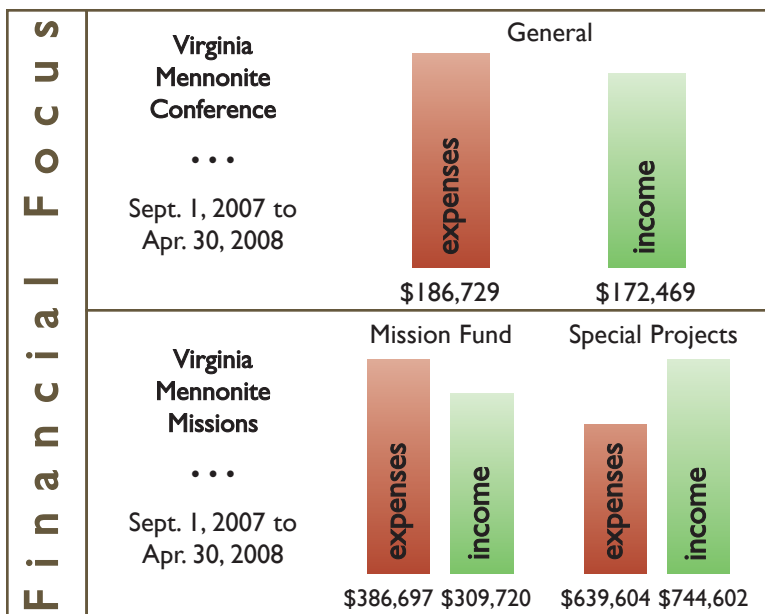
Hartzler named chair of Faith & Values Council



Sheri Hartzler, program manager at Mennonite Media, has been named chair of the Faith & Values Member Council for the remainder of 2008. By virtue of her position as chair, she has also been appointed by the National Interfaith Cable Coalition Board as an ex-officio trustee representing the Member Council.

Faith & Values Media uses the electronic media to enrich spiritual life, heal wounds by advocating religious tolerance, and build bridges of understanding among people of faith.

Today the programming services of Faith & Values Media are available on Hallmark Channel and on FaithStreams.com. The organization has provided numerous production grants to Mennonite Media since 2001.



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Editor
Gloria Lehman
Assistant Editor
Jon Trotter

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Phone (540) 434-9727
(800) 707-5535
E-mail info@vmmissions.org
info@vmconf.org
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From a fighting boy to a seeker of peace

By **KEN PETERSON**
 Pastor of Providence Mennonite Church

I accepted Christ as a young boy. But I had a quick temper and often got in fights at school. Upon graduation from high school, I joined the army. There I began reading my Bible more, and found that my temper became more controlled. Some consulted me about religion and morals. A Jewish friend suggested that I might be a minister. I loved basic training, but the bayonet course really bothered me. We were ordered to run forward, thrust our rifle's bayonet into the dummy, hate the enemy inside, and say, "kill!" I knew from my Bible that Jesus didn't want us to hate anyone. So I said to myself, "No one can make me hate inside. I might be willing to kill the enemy, but not hate them."

I enjoyed working as a chaplain's assistant, where I saw many men led to Christ. When asked about Christians killing in war, the chaplain referred to John the Baptist telling the soldiers to treat people well. He meant that fighting in war was acceptable. When put on alert to perhaps go to Korea, I thought, "I don't know these Korean men. I don't hate them. They're not my enemy. They have families. I don't know if I can kill them."

I felt God's leading to be a minister, but couldn't settle on a denomination.

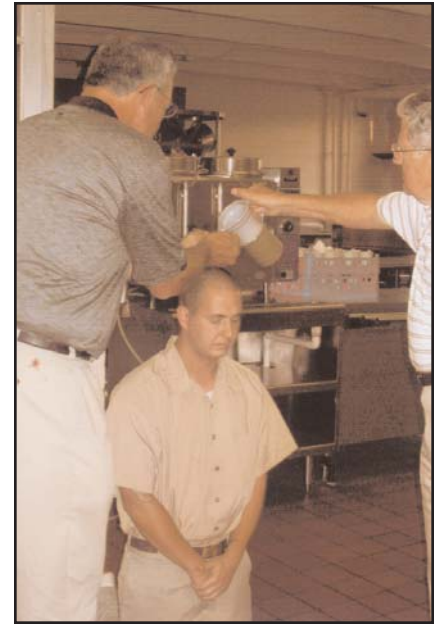
When I attended Western Evangelical Seminary, a professor, Dr. Nobel Sack, invited me to work as his assistant in pastoring a small Mennonite Church in Portland, Oregon. First I had to get over the shock that these people didn't use black buggies and wear funny clothes. Then I read in their constitution about not approving war, and that seemed way too radical for me. I attended anyway.

Even though I didn't share those beliefs at first, they didn't argue with me—just quietly shared their views of peace. As I learned the New Testament authority for the Mennonite's peace stance, it became clear to me that peace and love are the way of Christ. I changed my views to fit this understanding of following Christ. Although I don't always live it perfectly, He has become my central authority for what I believe and standard for living.

"Prison ministry" continued from cover

that is inmate-run including preaching by Yoder and Good. Recently, Good has received permission to invite inmates to Lindale Mennonite Church, and frequently inmates attend Sunday worship services. Good mentioned, "My involvement at the Diversion Center has been the most fulfilling work I have ever done." Yoder has developed a deeper compassion for persons who are incarcerated for any reason. "I see the injustice in our system. Our church has been enriched by the presence of a wide variety of persons that otherwise might not be attending Lindale."

For the past three years, Ben Risser, pastor of Ridgeway Mennonite Church, has been leading one of three Bible Studies offered to men incarcerated at the Harrisonburg/Rockingham Regional Jail. In January, Risser replaced long-serving chaplain, Aaron King, and is available at inmate request for an emergency pastor visit, and to arrange for distribution of devotional materials. Risser said, "I find this setting to be a challenging venue to read and interpret scripture with persons considered the 'least of these.' These men are sincere, read their Bibles daily, and diligently seek God in prayer. It is challenging, heart-breaking and refreshing to relate to these brothers in Christ. It is a gift to me to hear their experiences of life,



Duane Yoder (left), pastor of Lindale Mennonite Church and preacher at the Saturday evening service, with Harley Good, baptize a resident at the Diversion Center. Courtesy of Lindale Mennonite Church

scripture, faith, and following Jesus. They are embroiled in and at the mercy of a graceless system, powerless and unable to redeem themselves and thus have a unique vantage point in comprehending God's love and mercy."

As part of Clinical Pastoral Education in 2006, Jason Gerlach joined Ben Risser in leading Friday Bible Studies at the Harrisonburg/Rockingham Regional Jail. Currently, he serves as a chaplain at the jail along with Ben and is available for emergency pastoral visits.

Photos by Mim Wenger



Tami Nice



Marcia Rempel Weaver



On May 1, Mennonite Women of Springdale Mennonite Church hosted the 55th annual meeting of Mennonite Women of Virginia, attended by 120 women from around VMC.

Teapot stories were shared by several women and special project recipients described their outreach min-

istries. All the mission needs projects were funded by congregational MW groups. Tami Nice, Graham, N.C. spoke on "Women: Becoming a Place of Ministry," and Marcia Rempel Weaver, Harrisonburg, spoke on "Saving Faith." It was a day of giving and receiving blessings.

War and peace for kids



By **CHRIS RIDDLE**
Serving with VMissions in Italy

A six-year-old boy had made a toy machine gun out of Lego bricks and was playing with it. His mother asked, "Why did you make that to play with?" The boy responded, "Because I saw one on TV and it is beautiful!" The mother was shocked at this answer from her six year old! The question is, what can we as a church do to change this?

Centro Koinonia hosted a one day Bible School themed "War and Peace." The children gathered and were led in song and also discussed war and peace in the Bible. They looked at stories of the wars of Israel from the Old Testament, the hope of a Messiah in the Prophets and finally the teachings on peace from Jesus in the New Testament. Chris Riddle shared his testimony from his time in military service and now as a Mennonite pastor and was followed by several skits about peace in the family and among friends.

Each child took home a "Peace" flag made during craft time. It was the rainbow colored European Peace flag covered with the words of Christ and a cross in the middle. On the cross was the scripture from John 14:27: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives."

We hope that they take this flag and lessons home with them and are reminded that Jesus Christ came into the world as the Prince of Peace. He proclaims peace to the nations, cities, churches and families of this world. In a world where children see guns as "beautiful" things, we as a church need to take a stand and show a different way.



Hickory Mennonite, Hickory Hmong Mennonite and Mt. View Mennonite churches shared in a sunrise service, breakfast, and a traditional Easter service. Photo by Wendy Hostetter Davis.

Worshiping together as one in Hickory

By **WENDY HOSTETTER DAVIS**
Hickory Mennonite Church, Hickory, N.C.

On Easter Sunday 2008, the Mennonite churches of Hickory, NC celebrated together as one congregation! Hickory Mennonite, Hickory Hmong Mennonite, and Mt. View Mennonite churches planned a joint sunrise service, breakfast, and traditional Easter service. It was the first time the churches had all come together for a Sunday morning and the crowd of 250 nearly filled Mt. View's building to capacity. Chairs and tables had to be set up, taken down, and then set up again to accommodate two different services with a breakfast in the middle.

Throughout the morning, individuals from all three churches joined in and served together wherever needed. The drama team and worship teams were made up of representatives from each of the churches. The scripture reading was done in English and Hmong during the sunrise service and the Hmong youth group provided special music in Hmong during the traditional service. Other elements of the services as well as breakfast prep and cleanup were shared between members of all three congregations.

The Easter Sunday services were a powerful reminder of what it means to be one body in Christ. We came together as one in the same building to experience the same event; but more importantly, we grew together emotionally and spiritually as we worked to plan and pull off one of the most important Sundays of the year. Our three churches now have a committee that meets regularly to look for other ways for us to work together. There will likely be joint services in the future, and we're looking for other creative ideas for fellowshiping with our sister churches. As we continue planning we remember the words of Easter Sunday's visiting speaker, Mark Driskill. "Incidentally," he asked, "how many churches are here?" When members of the audience answered "three," he just shook his head and replied "one."





Alanah Horning (left) and Emma Helm displaying a comforter at Christiansburg Mennonite Church. Photo by Les Horning.

Comforting with comforters

By **LES HORNING**
Christiansburg Mennonite Church

It began with a simple question. “What can we do?” It’s a question many were asking following the tragedy at Virginia Tech on Monday, April 16, 2007, which resulted in thirty-three persons losing their lives and twenty-seven others being injured. As we at Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship were asking ourselves that question, the idea was raised that we could make comforters, using the Virginia Tech colors of maroon and orange, for each of the families who had lost a loved one.

Once the idea was embraced, our next step was to meet with personnel at Virginia Tech to make sure this would be an appropriate and welcome gesture. As we met with the associate dean of students, and presented our idea, he made the point that while the families of those persons killed were being showered with attention,

those persons who had been injured were feeling “left out.” We immediately agreed to change our focus and they agreed to partner with us by distributing the comforters.

We then decided to invite other congregations to enter into this project. At the 2007 Virginia Conference Assembly in Hickory, NC, an invitation was issued and the 27 comforters were quickly spoken for. Over the following months, the comforters began to arrive in a dazzling variety of styles and color schemes. (A slide show of all the comforters is available on the Virginia Conference website, www.vmcconf.org). By April 16, 2008, all 27 comforters had arrived and on Sunday, April 20, we laid out all the comforters around the perimeter of the sanctuary and dedicated them at the conclusion of the service. We prayed them on their way, confident that they will indeed bring much comfort for years to come.

Mission Fellowship Tour shows island beauty and church growth in Trinidad

By **SARAH ELLEN HISTAND**
Ridgeway Mennonite Church

Nineteen people went on a mission fellowship tour to Trinidad with leaders, Ed & Edie Bontrager, April 29-May 7.

We visited Hope, Carlsen Field, Chaguanas, Diego Martin, Charlieville, and Gospel Lighthouse Mennonite Churches. The people are delightful and gracious.

It was an exciting moment when Ed handed a \$5,000 check from Park View Mennonite Church to the president of Mennonite Church of Trinidad & Tobago, Joseph Sookram. The Hope Church will finally get their new roof!



Members of the Mission Fellowship Tour group at Hope Mennonite Church in Esperanza, Trinidad. Photo by Sarah Ellen Hestand.

Our group also visited the West Indies Theological College; Richard had taught classes there for ten years, and currently Ganesh Kalloo teaches there. We learned the history of the college and its close relationship with the Mennonites. We also saw their lush vegetable gardens and the Pharaoh quail.

We got to eat new foods. I especially liked the bake-n-shark. We were served meals by several churches. Sister Babes treated us royally. She even sent along a bag of homemade plantain chips to take home. Mine never got as far as the airport.

We saw the leatherback turtles lay their eggs on the beach. We saw birds and flora. It is truly a paradise, but I am sure now I can pray more effectively for our brothers and sisters in Trinidad, since we spent our time there.

Perspectives on the World Christian Movement
Tuesdays, September 2 to December 9, 2008
7:00-9:45 pm, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Rm. 123
Contact Philip Rhodes at (540) 434-9727 or philip.rhodes@vmmissions.org
www.perspectives.org

The Prodigal Son, retold

By **DAVE GULLMAN**
Pastor at Pleasant View, Inc.

The scene is set for the story of the Prodigal Son to unfold. John, a man with Down syndrome playing the younger son takes his place next to Mike, the forgiving father. The narrator begins to tell this familiar story as the younger son goes to his father and asks for his share of the inheritance. Shortly after this, though, the story begins to take on a life of its own. John takes what he has been given and begins to dole it out to many of the worshippers gathered that evening. He has a bottle of root beer that he begins to give to others and the narrator has to stop to let the scene unfold before him.

After a few minutes John actually leaves the room to find some of the worshippers who could not handle the excitement of a larger group.



Participants at Pleasant View retelling the story of the Prodigal Son.

When he comes back the story continues. The younger son realizes his mistakes and asks his father for forgiveness and the party begins. However, the older son is upset that his father has thrown a party for this brother of his who wasted all he had. The narrator finishes the story and proceeds to speak of the lessons found in the story. But John is not done. He sees his older brother on

the outside of the circle and he goes to him and speaks words of love and reconciliation. It is only when the older brother is restored to community that the story as demonstrated by John, is done.

As I narrated this story I felt that the scene before me was a little chaotic until I saw that John had understood the deeper reason for Jesus' telling of this story. The younger son in John's inter-

pretation of the story takes what he has learned from the father and extends that same love to the older brother.

Once again someone with a disability, when given the chance, has "preached" the message of the night.

One Friday evening a month we gather at Pleasant View for what we call Faith and Light. When we gather for worship in this way the worshippers bring the stuff of their lives to the place of worship. We hold each other up in prayer. We sing many familiar songs with exuberance. We hear the story of the evening told in ways that help us each to understand and we celebrate the joy of being together around refreshments at the end. Each time we gather I thank God for the many ways that each person who has come communicates the truth that Jesus wants us all to understand.

Congregational Resource Center

New resources for YOUR ministry or personal study/enjoyment now being catalogued for the Congregational Resource Center:

The Mennonite Handbook - A humorous but accurately helpful look at Mennonites; especially for the newly-initiated but fun for everyone.

Facing the Giants DVD - A church in Georgia produced this hit movie about a high school football team that provides inspiration for the game of life.

The Ultimate Gift DVD - A rich grandfather gives his spoiled grandson a special inheritance: twelve tasks that he calls "gifts." Includes a Bible Study Guide.

Peter and Paul DVD - This network TV mini-series won two Emmy awards for its documentation of the precarious new early Christian movement and its leaders.

A Season of Hope DVD - MCC video about the results of deforestation, climate change and population growth in southern Chad and the work of MCC to promote creative ways of sharing limited resources with neighbors.

Prayer - DVD & Study Guide for six sessions on our relationship with God; Philip Yancey, author.

ALSO REMEMBER: The CRC has three current Summer 2008 VBS kits available for checkout: "Listen Up," "Power Lab," "God's Big Backyard."

Take time to browse for the resources to enhance your ministry, or call Linda Alley, Director of the CRC, to request a special title.
540.432.4219.

Email: crc@emu.edu.

Location: Eastern Mennonite Seminary Room 110.

Visit us in person or via the online catalog to see what else is new. www.emu.edu/seminary/crc and "Search the Catalog."

The CRC Director is available to help you Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m., and by email at other times.

JUNE 2008

Connections

Prayer Calendar

Sunday

1 Pray for a missions team being organized from the Italian church to assist a church in Montenegro later this summer. May God's calling be clear to persons who will serve in this way.

8 Calvary Mennonite Church, Ocho Rios, Jamaica, welcomes the community to mid-week and Sunday services. Pray for Pastor Donovan Smith and his family as they give leadership to this congregation.

15 On this Father's Day remember the Lord's command, "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you." Exodus 20:12

Monday

2 Pray for Steve Dintaman's Moral Philosophy class of 110 students; may the principles they learned produce changes in life choices.

9 Leon and Naomi Zimmerman family, EMM workers and partners with VMM, are on home leave from Albania. Pray for them as they visit churches and family and promote mission vision this summer.

16 This summer several of the Italian Menn. churches will hold "Settimana Felice" VBS. Pray for the planning of these "happy week" events so that the lives of the children and their families will bear fruit for the Gospel.

23 Maranatha School for the Deaf, Jamaica, closes this week for the summer. Ask God to protect the students during the next 2 months, and to prepare them for the new term in September.

30 Sanford Yoder has accepted a call from Asheville (N.C.) Mennonite Church to serve as pastor beginning in August. Pray that this transition will be smooth and the congregation is blessed.

Tuesday

3 The Staunton Mennonite Church celebrated their 50th Anniversary last month. Pray for Pastor Kevin and Sonya Gasser as they take up residence in Staunton and help lead the church into the future.

10 May Adam and Micah Riddle who studied the last 2 months in an Italian school feel ready for 2nd and 4th grade. Thank God for the new friends they are making.

17 Linda Campbell, Kingston, is the Dir. of Christian Education for Jamaica Mennonite Church. Ask God to give her clear insight for planning VBS and other educational experiences for the children and youth.

24 Remember Norma Teles this week as she leads a camp for teenagers in Lezhe, Albania. Pray for the staff; also that all the relationships and activities positively impact the lives of youth who attend.

Wednesday

4 Thank God for Paul Kniss' availability to serve as acting overseer in Trinidad while Paul Kratz is in Va. His commitment to healthy church life enables him to minister in this way.

11 Pray for wisdom as VMC's elected officers, Moderator Beryl Jantz, Assistant Moderator Steve Brown, Treasurer Jeff Souder and Secretary Lois Shank, meet in executive session to plan for Assembly delegate sessions.

18 Richard & Margaret Keeler are on vacation/study leave from Trinidad, taking a course on pastoral care in England and visiting with family members. Ask God to give them a double blessing today.

25 On Wednesday evening, a prayer service is held in Gospel Lighthouse MC in Sangre Grande, Trinidad. Thank God for renewed interest in the power of prayer as people gather for this spiritual exercise.

Thursday

5 Pray for Trissels Mennonite Church as begin interim leadership. Former pastor Phil Kanagy resigned effective May 31. Phil and Janine also covet your prayers as they seek God's leading for their future ministry.

12 Steve & Betsy Dintaman are on home leave from Lithuania. Pray that their Missionary Support Team will be energetic in reaching the funding goals that are needed for their next term of service.

19 Pray for wisdom as board members for the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, and its agencies, gather June 20-21 in Columbus, Ohio, for a joint meeting to discern future relationships.

26 Pray for the eight persons preparing for service through VMM's *TransSend* program. May God work out each detail for their arrival in another setting where they will live and witness.

Friday

6 Jay & Sheri Hartzler are giving leadership to the EMHS Touring Choir as they travel through Eastern Europe, giving concerts and staying in homes. May Christ's love be seen in them as they minister in song.

13 Ardi Shabini and Emily Huffman leave their *TransSend* positions in Italy in the next weeks. As they say farewell, may God's presence grace them and the persons to whom they related.

20 Paul & Evelyn Kratz returned to Trinidad this week after home leave in Va. They are refreshed for their next year of service with the Mennonite churches in this island country. Ask God to bless them with health and wisdom.

27 On Friday evening, Ganesh & Risha Kalloo, lead the youth of Mennonite Church of Chaguanas in activities and Bible study. Thank God for the commitment of the youth to learning Christ's message.

Saturday

7 Nancy Marshall, Orange Walk, Belize, has a busy day of preparation on Saturday for Jesus' Deaf Church on Sunday. Ask God to give her a double portion of energy for the tasks she must do.

14 Conference Minister Owen Burkholder will participate in Jesse Johnson's ordination at Washington Community Fellowship in D.C. tomorrow. Pray for God's blessing on Jesse's ministry.

21 Take advantage of longer daylight hours to visit with your neighbors and invite them to a church activity with you. Spread the love of Christ with all you meet.

28 This week Aaron & Laura Kauffman and daughters returned to Va. after serving three years in La Mesa, Colombia. Pray that God will help them through this time of transition.

29 Give thanks for God's provision through the gifts of God's people. The generous financial support of individuals and congregations makes it possible for our mission workers to share the Good News in countless ways each day.

This month's prayer calendar is sponsored by
Galen and Gloria Lehman
in honor of Aaron & Laura Kauffman's ministry in La Mesa, Colombia.
The Kauffmans return to Virginia this month.

"As you do not know the path of the wind, or how the body is formed in a mother's womb, so you cannot understand the work of God, the Maker of all things."
Ecclesiastes 11:5 (NIV)

Announcements



Aradhna, an Indian fusion ensemble, will be performing June 2, at 7:00 p.m., at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church. The music of Aradhna is filled with the spontaneous energy of Indian classical improvisation. Their distinctive melding of ancient and new has captivated Indian and Western audiences alike. Aradhna has sold over 20,000 albums worldwide, and toured extensively. Aradhna continues to build true and lasting bridges of art, culture and worship between seemingly unconnected cultures worldwide. Come for an inspiring evening of cross-cultural worship and celebration. Admission is free. An offering will be taken to benefit Our Community Place, a local outreach. www.aradhnamusic.com

A Taste of Missions
Celebrating the foods of our mission fields

Menu

- Spiced channa
- Hot patties
- Baklava
- Empanadas
- Hummus & pita
- Grapes
- Ukrainian desserts: Vafli and rogaliki
- Limeade
- Chai

as part of
Virginia Mennonite Conference Assembly
July 25 at 8:30 pm

Excellent Trouble, starring Ted Swartz and Ingrid De Sanctis will debut in Harrisonburg June 26 and 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Eastern Mennonite School auditorium. The new show explores the relationships between biblical pairs such as Jacob and Leah, Abraham and Sarah, Samson and Delilah, Mary and Jesus and many more. General admission tickets are available from Community Mennonite youth, by phone or at the door. To order advance tickets call (540) 574-4877 or toll free (866) 276-2345. Advance tickets are \$10/adults; \$8/seniors and students. Tickets at the door are \$2 more. Recommended for ages 10 and up.

Tears and Ashes Bus Tour

The annual Civil War-related bus tour sponsored by the CrossRoads Heritage Center will occur on Saturday, June 28, 8-4 p.m. The tour will cover Elkton area sites and Zenda, a settlement formed after the Civil War by newly-freed slaves. It will begin and end at Mountain View Fellowship Church of the Brethren, 8601 McGaheysville Rd., McGaheysville, Va. Dave Rodes, Norman Wenger, Al Jenkins and Casey Bilheimer will serve as guides. The tour price of \$65 includes a tour booklet and a lunch at Beldor Mennonite Church. Call (540) 438-1275 by June 23 to register for the tour, which will also include the homes of families covered in

2008
Penny Power

Your spare change makes a difference!

Bring jugs of coins to:
Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale
Saturday, October 4, 2008
Rockingham County Fairgrounds
www.vareliefsale.com

the Unionists book series, and other places of historical significance. www.vbmhc.org

July and August Vesper Services at CrossRoads

A 45-minute service of music and a meditation will be held each Sunday evening during July and August in the amphitheater in the woods at CrossRoads, 1921 Heritage Center Way (off Garbers Church Rd.) The public is invited. Each service begins at 7 p.m. Bring a lawn chair. In case of rain, meet in the nearby Whitmer School. www.vbmhc.org (540) 438-1275.

Mennonite Women of Virginia Retreat,

September 26-28, at Holiday Inn Koger South, Richmond. "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" is the theme. The speaker is Martha Karam, licensed clinical psychologist with Beacon Counseling and Consulting in Williamsburg. Registration deadline: September 1.

Bike riders of all ages and abilities are invited to enjoy the scenic Shenandoah Valley

Bike Shenandoah 2008
September 20, 2008
Begins and ends at
Eastern Mennonite School
801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, Virginia

Choose one of five courses (5 - 100 miles)
To print a registration form, go to www.bikeshenandoah.org

Your ride benefits these agencies:

- Mennonite Central Committee
- Mennonite Media
- Virginia Mennonite Missions
- Harrisonburg Pregnancy Center

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



Virginia Mennonite Missions

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A conference of Mennonite Church USA