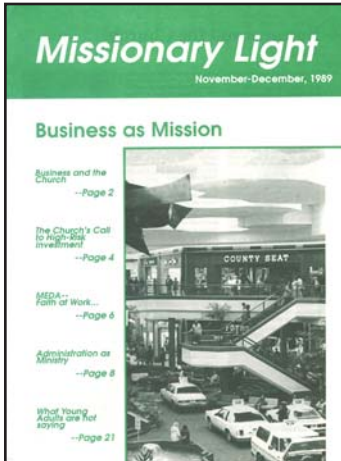


Connections

Vol. 20, No. 2 December 2009



1989



1991



1992



2002

Connections newsletter turns 20

By **JON TROTTER**
Connections Assistant Editor

The November 2009 issue of *Connections* (Vol. 20, No. 1) marked the 20th anniversary of this publication. Along the way, the newsletter went through a number of format and content changes. Within two years, the idea and implementation of a joint publication of the Conference and what was then Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions had supplanted a long-time VMBM newsletter, *Missionary Light*.

Missionary Light was an “informational, inspirational voice of VMBM” for an astonishing 50 years. Begun in 1941 as a quarterly publication, it increased in pages from four to 24 and in frequency to every other month by the late 1970s.

In the late eighties, *Connections* was proposed for several reasons. According to Richard Good, who was editor during the transition, “The new publication was pretty much Sam Weaver’s idea. He felt that *Missionary Light* did not appeal to the younger generation. The younger [people] wanted a ‘quick read,’ something they could breeze through and still get church news. Sam thought it should also feature other conference activities.”

In 1990 and 1991, in addition to *Missionary Light*, *Connections* was a one-page newsletter and monthly prayer calendar. “Then we thought it would be better to combine everything into one publication and change to a different format.”

A back page column by Clarence R. Bauman on the July 1992 issue entitled, ‘*Connections* in the making’ noted that “this magazine provides articles and ideas that illustrate ways that Virginia Conference Mennonites are involved in missions. *Connections* attempts to encourage your congregation and you personally with the printed contents.”

In 1992, this format became the standard size that *Connections* remains today, though there have been redesigns since, most notably in 2002 when it began being printed in full color, and in 2007, which brought the current design. There have also been several editors who have invested their talents into this publication, believing in the mission of Virginia Mennonites and the value of sharing stories of God’s work among us and others we connect with, near and far. We thank them for their work and you, our readers.



On October 23, the Stephens City Korean Community Church held a banquet in the Lindale Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall to benefit their congregation’s on-going programs and outreach.

The buffet table was laden with delicious Korean foods prepared by Barbara Kim, Sunhee Kim and Sharon Rhee. Jim Musser, co-pastor of Stephens City Mennonite Church, welcomed everyone. Sam Weaver gave a brief history of this congregation in formation and James Rhee, pastor, showed pictures of the church’s development. Members of the church came to the front and Loren Horst led a prayer of blessing on them. An offering was brought forward by table hosts. Aldine Musser closed the event with prayer.

Advent chemotherapy - perspectives on gratitude

An update: My brother-in-law, Paul Gingerich, (subject of the article in the October issue of *Connections*) has received interim good news. The cancer in his brain has been completely eradicated and the expressions in his lungs and skeletal system have been reduced or resolved! He will receive his sixth chemotherapy treatment early in December. So, as of this writing, he is just past the fourth treatment.

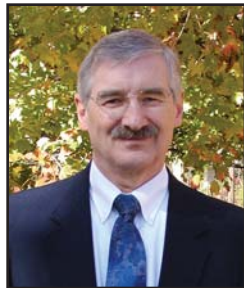
It is the time of weariness - aggravated by chemically-induced sleeplessness. And Paul's response? Gratitude. Gratitude?

Paul sees clearly now what it is that makes life meaningful.

Family: the tender journey with his wife (words lose their ability to convey this companionship); the fierce protectiveness of his young adult children.

Significant work: he is in his 30th year of teaching at Central Christian, Kidron, Ohio. (He is taking this quarter off, and he misses his work!)

Congregational care: giving and



Owen Burkholder
Conference Minister

now receiving the blessings of two congregations with whom they have journeyed.

Spiritual sustenance: he has recalled those intangible, yet formative experiences that minister a deeply personal sense of Presence.

For these, Paul is

grateful.

And I have been moved and changed. When Ruth Ann and I were trying to think of which movies we could send for Paul to watch, we were chagrined by how frivolous some of our collection appears. And how bizarre are those TV shows where marital faithfulness isn't even on the radar? In the light and shadow of a deeply spiritual journey, these virtual indulgences come up empty.

This is focusing the advent journey for me. Getting in touch with weariness, darkness, and emptiness brings confession and deep longing for the presence of Jesus. Walking through these challenging times and realizing that one has been sustained through the depths of the journey brings - gratitude!

"I never saw that before!"

By **LEON ZIMMERMAN**

RMM missionary working in Albania

A small group of men gather monthly in both Lezhe and Tirana, Albania, to explore issues related to maturity and leadership. Each group consists of five to six men, including current leaders along with others who have leadership potential. We purposefully use discussion-based interaction rather than formal teaching.

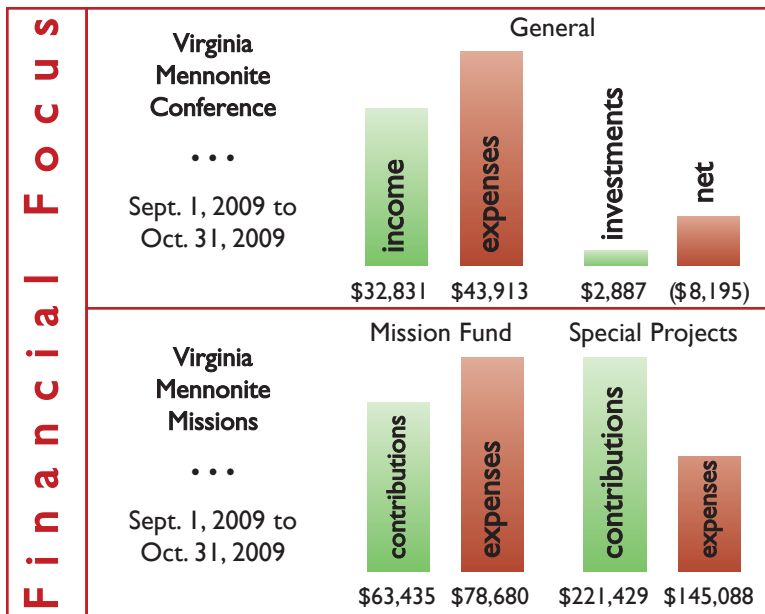
Let me describe a recent meeting as an example. As we gather, there is spontaneous small talk: What do you think of the recent election? Did you hear that the new road is open? Have you traveled it yet?

As the meeting begins, someone in the group shares a problem. He is facing a challenging situation at his church and asks advice from the others. Each shares some thoughts about how to handle the situation in a godly way.

Next I have each one turn to a passage in Luke 11, asking them to read it silently with one question in mind: what is the sign of Jonah in these verses? After about half a minute the first answer emerges. "The sign of Jonah is the death and resurrection of Jesus." I simply repeat the original question and wait. Another participant squirms a bit, groans, and soon utters a few disconnected thoughts. I repeat the question once again, this time emphasizing, in this passage.

During the next minutes a full-blown discussion ensues. Together we study the passage again, placing emphasis on various phrases. As the interaction is in full swing, I write a short phrase on the whiteboard and explain it briefly. Smiles begin to appear as we catch a new understanding of the passage. One of the group, a

"I never saw" continued on page 4



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Heeding God's Call on gun violence

By **NICHOLAS DETWEILER-STODDARD**
 VMC Peace Committee

POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

In our broken world where many small efforts towards a peaceable kingdom seem entirely ineffective, it is crucial to celebrate even those small glimpses of God at work through God's people! In January 2009, churches in Philadelphia took increased action against the devastation of gun violence in their communities. With over 400 homicides a year, most committed with handguns, churches were angered by the local shop from which significant numbers of the guns originated. Colosimo's Gun Center is ranked as one of the five worst shops in the US for the number of guns sold that are later recovered from crimes.

Incensed church leaders in the campaign *Heeding God's Call* staged ongoing events calling for the owner of this notori-

ous gun shop, Mr. James Colosimo, to sign a 10-point Gun Dealer's Code of Conduct. He repeatedly refused to sign. During the week of January 12, a dozen pastors and leaders were arrested for their attempts to block the doors and obstruct sales at Colosimo's. And still no signature.

The code Colosimo and other shop owners were asked to sign was intended to limit the flow of weapons to violent criminals by reducing bulk "straw buying" (by persons paid to purchase guns for those who cannot legally do so). On Good Friday, 300 mourners gathered outside Colosimo's for a worship vigil lamenting and praying for those killed as well as for Mr. Colosimo. Still no signature.

As 2009 passed, *Heeding God's Call* vigorously enlisted communities of faith,

knowing involvement by many was necessary to restrain gun trafficking and save hundreds of lives annually. But, still no signature from Colosimo. Miraculously, following yet another prayer vigil on September 21, the US Attorney's Office filed charges against the gun shop for knowingly selling to buyers making purchases for criminals. The store's firearm license was also revoked. The next day, Colosimo announced his shop would be closing!

After a long year of desperate praying, repeated advocacy and demonstrations, cause for celebration has come. As followers of Jesus Prince of Peace let us rejoice with our neighbors in Pennsylvania and New Jersey for God's hand of justice at work in our world!

Following in the way of peace

By **TERESA AESCHLIMAN**
 Asheville Mennonite Church

"We are called to be disciples of Jesus in the way of peace," Dr. Myron Augsburger told a group of 18 gathered for a peace workshop recently at Asheville Mennonite Church, N.C. "Peace and justice are not just tacked on to the Gospel. Peace is the way we understand Jesus."

The workshop, entitled, "Why Should Christians Care about Peace?" was held Oct. 24.

During the morning session Dr. Augsburger said the Bible is not to be read as a "flat" book. Although the Old Testament contains revelations of God, Jesus is the full revelation of God and the Bible must be read "in and through" Christ. "In the Old Testament we have a theocracy which is no longer God's pattern of relation to any state. As such, war in the Old Testament was God meeting people in their idolatry and making it clear that Jehovah is sovereign. Later in the Old Testament, God promised a new covenant and a kingdom of peace."

He warned that Romans 13, the passage used most often to justify compliance with governing powers, needs to be looked at in context. It is seven verses sandwiched between passages of peace with and love of enemies. "God is still above the powers. Power does not get a blank check. The early church did not serve and they died because they would not fight," Augsburger said.

Addressing the Just War Theory, Augsburger said, "(This) was drawn up to prevent war. But Americans use it to justify war." We are to be bridge builders, letting people know we love and respect them. This is a radically different approach than society, he explained. "As Martin Luther King said, 'We not only must avoid violence of deed, but violence of spirit.'"

The afternoon session, led by artist Esther Augsburger, was the power-point presentation, "A View of Art on War and Peace." Using images of her own sculptures and works by various artists, she explained art as another language—a visual language—in which an artist can be a witness to faith. She said that many times

Myron Augsburger, (below) speaks on "Why Should Christians Care About Peace?" (bottom) Esther Augsburger enjoys a meal before her afternoon session on "A View of Art on War and Peace."



she focuses on ideas of shalom, wholeness and wellbeing, in her art. "Peace often comes through struggle," she said.

The workshop was sponsored by Asheville Peace Builders.

Beans and prayers to grasp heaven

By RUTH

Working in South Asia

Recently, I visited my friend, Sonya, and found out the sad news that her mother just died. She is one of the people I visit weekly. She has expressed interest in Jesus and wants me to tell her more stories about Him. She has a Bible, given to her by an old friend, but it's in English, so she cannot understand it. I told her that there are Bibles in Urdu, and she said "give me one."

In Sonya's house there was another woman, sitting on the bed with a huge bowl of uncooked beans. As I watched her, she was holding each one and saying something under her breath. I asked what she was doing and was told she was saying prayers for Sonya's mother's soul. For each bean, she was repeating "There is no God but God..." I asked how many beans were there. "125,000," they answered. They had counted them all out, and were now saying 125,000 prayers for her soul to go to heaven.

Back home again, I was praying and the lyrics of this song stood out to me: "I know that God saved the day, and I know that His Word never fails and I know that God made a way for me. Salvation is here! Salvation is here and it lives in me..." My heart is struck as I see my Muslim friends grasping for salvation. After living her whole life striving to follow all the regulations, and then after death, still trying to grasp it. My heart longs for them to experience God's mercy and grace with His gift of salvation. Please pray for this.



Women from the city where Michael and Ruth live.

Photo courtesy of Ruth



Mara and Dino Colonna (left) and Andrea and Sheila Crocivera. Photo courtesy of Willard and Eva Eberly.

First international tranSenders prepare for mission service

By EVA EBERLY

VMM Mediterranean Regional Assistant

Centro Agape (Palermo, Sicily), the "mother congregation" of the Italian Mennonite Church, provided a hospitable and appropriate setting for the orientation of Italy's first couples to serve with *tranSend*. Ken Horst, director of the program, and Willard Eberly coordinated and taught in the intense 2-day seminar, dealing with many basic, practical components of ministry in a mission context. Most importantly, five Italian leaders gave major presentations with impressive insight and clarity, fostering a strong sense of partnership between "mission" and "church." Animated interaction punctuated the pauses between each session in characteristic Italian fashion!

Participants, Dino and Mara Colonna, began serving in September at Centro Koinonia (Bari), a city church in formation. They are helping develop children/youth

ministries, assist in worship and evangelism, and plan to lead an Italian missions team. Mara's skills in graphic design are a great asset as well. Andrea and Sheila Crocivera will begin their assignment in 2010 to establish a youth center in Palermo city with "Youth for Christ." Giovanni and Fiorella Greco participated as students, as well as input speakers. Their church planting/discipleship ministry in central Italy, in collaboration with Italian Mennonites, recently became an "Approved Ministry" of VMM.

In evaluating the orientation, one participant commented, "This time of preparation was valuable and encouraging for us; having a variety of speakers who presented different perspectives was especially good." Another said, "These two days of orientation created a good foundation for our ministry!"

"I never saw" cont'd from page 2

church leader from another church, says, "I always thought I knew the correct interpretation of these vers-

es, but actually I didn't. I never saw that before! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!"

Coins from a restaurant fountain benefit Penny Power

By **BEN RISSER**

Pastor, Ridgeway Mennonite Church

One day I received word that Dragon Palace Chinese Restaurant in our church's neighborhood had drained and cleaned their fish pools. The coins thrown into the pools were put into buckets and the managers looked for a place to donate the coins.

My wife, Kathy, and I went to the restaurant and met the manager. I explained that I was the pastor of the Ridgeway Mennonite Church, just up on the hill, and that I had been told they had some coins to donate. I shared with her about the Penny Power campaign in which we were participating and the children around the world that would be the recipients of the donations.

She showed me the two 5-gallon buckets, each about 2/3 full of coins. She said she was glad to give them to me; I thanked her and lugged them to the car.

Coins that have been sharing the same water as fish for any length of time

become corroded and very dirty, given that fish residue sinks to the bottom.

It took 12 people over two hours to clean and sort the coins one afternoon. The foot-washing tubs were used for a vinegar and soda solution to clean the coins, restoring some of the shine. Coins with holes needed to be set aside. Pennies were corroded the worst. Nickels, dimes, and quarters, while tarnished, escaped the corrosive effects. The wet coins were laid on towels and dried with hair dryers.

The usable coins counted at the Virginia Relief Sale totaled \$511. We are amazed at how God orchestrates connecting strangers, some hard-working



volunteers and corroded coins for Kingdom purposes. We give a great big thank-you to the Dragon Palace Restaurant for their generosity. The coins that people tossed into the "wishing well" fountain, will now make some other children's wishes come true in other parts of the world. Thanks be to God.



Stephens City shares faith tradition with students

By **ALDINE MUSSER**

Co-Pastor of Stephens City Mennonite Church

James Musser, co-pastor of Stephens City Mennonite Church, sits on the sofa at the Global Cafe at Shenandoah University where SCMC was asked to share their faith tradition with a group of students. Mike and Pat Spory, members of SCMC, are on the right of the photo.

Marvelous change in lives of new believers

By **RICHARD KEELER**

VMM worker in Trinidad

Pastor of Sangre Grande Mennonite Church

Clearly, the most meaningful experience of September was the baptism of six individuals—one man, two women and three girls. One of the six, in giving her testimony the morning before she was baptized, said she had come to the end of herself and was seriously thinking of killing her two children and then committing suicide. About that time she met a woman who was also having very serious marital problems, but observed she was handling it with calmness and peace. As they talked, her friend told her that Jesus had made a new person out of her, and had enabled her to deal with her difficulties without anger or a desire for revenge. Through the witness of that one lady, this other woman came to faith in Christ. Now she has no thoughts or desire to destroy

her two lovely children, nor to harm herself. She is so happy for what Jesus has done in her life.

We have started something new following the baptism of these six individuals—a Bible class for these young believers and others considering becoming believers, or believers considering baptism, to join us. Too many here feel that once they are baptized, they don't need to learn much more about the Christian life, and many fall back into their old ways of living. We hope to change that by having ongoing training and opportunities for these young believers to share experiences, struggles, joys, etc. as part of their sessions together.

We thank God for the marvelous change He can make in the lives of those who commit their way to Him. It is our desire to see these young believers grow and become mature in Christ, reflecting the very nature of Christ in daily living.



Weatherbug takes off at WRCS

interactive training session on how best to use WeatherBug in the classroom, courtesy of Middle School science teacher LaShanda Disla. Using WeatherBug's interactive software program, teachers are creating customized learning activities based on current and historical weather conditions from the station to enhance lessons in math, science, geography, and other subjects for our 21st century learners.

Students have also taken to using WeatherBug. They log on to achieve.weatherbug.com to get information tailored to their grade level, or check

the monitoring station set up in the first floor hallway. Students in each classroom then take turns serving as the meteorologist of the day to report the weather each morning to their peers. Classes also used www.wordle.net to generate word charts illustrating their use of WeatherBug.

Teachers plan to hold a contest in the near future to see which class will have the highest percentage of students bringing in weather-related headlines from the newspaper.

Many thanks to the generous donors and installers who made this wonderful resource a reality!

Warwick River Christian School in Newport News is pleased to announce the installation of a new, state-of-the-art WeatherBug Tracking Station on campus.

WRCS teachers enjoyed a fun and

WCRC building Youth Cabin Village

Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center began building its Youth Cabin Village earlier this year. The complex of five cabins and one commons building should be finished by Spring 2010. Each two-room cabin will sleep 12 and have two full baths. The two room design allows the cabins to serve summer camp, retreat groups and families as well. Space for larger meetings and dining will be in the commons.

"We are moving along really well," said Bob Briscoe, Executive Director of WCRC. "Our greatest needs right now are for additional funding and volunteer labor."

Beginning in January, volunteers will be needed to paint and lay carpet squares.

Also, anyone with tile-laying experience or interior trimming skills would be welcomed. Interested persons should contact Larry McLaughlin at (757) 566-2256 or at maintenance@wcrc.info.

"Getting volunteers is very crucial right now," added Bob. "The more donated time we can receive from the community, the more we can contain the overall costs."

This new facility will primarily be used by Kaleidoscope Camp, WCRC's summer youth program, but will also be available for guest groups the remainder of the year. To see photos and video of the construction's progress, visit www.wcrc.info



Congregational Resource Center

WHAT DO YOU NEED for the Advent and Christmas season in your congregation?

Help in sermon planning? THE CRC HAS

Leader Magazine, more than a dozen books with segments on the lectionary scripture, and Believer's Church commentaries.

Help in making worship shine? THE CRC HAS

drama resources, short thematic video clips, prayers, litanies, children's stories and more.

Help in planning Christmas programs?

THE CRC HAS kits and books on Hanging of the

Greens services, "A Night in Bethlehem" learning stations, creative children's, family and cross-generational events.

Help with alternatives to commercial

Christmases? THE CRC HAS "Have yourself a happy little Christmas," "Whose Birthday is it Anyway?" and additional ideas for generating your own joy.

Stop in to browse and be energized by the resources we have to make your ministry easier. You don't have to dig it all up "from the dust of the earth!" Whether you are on the

pastoral team, Christian educator, youth worker, Sunday School teacher, or member of a planning team, **THE CRC IS WORTH A VISIT THIS FALL!**

Located in Eastern Mennonite Seminary building, 1181 Smith Avenue, Harrisonburg.

Call (540) 432-4219 for director Linda Alley.

Open every weekday 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. and at other times by appointment.

Email: crc@emu.edu

Website and Online Catalog:

www.emu.edu/seminary/crc

DECEMBER 2009

Connections

Prayer Calendar

Sunday

This month's prayer calendar is sponsored by:

Richard & Wanda Good
in honor of the

Gift & Thrift, Inc. volunteers who donate time weekly for international outreach.
Your involvement is deeply appreciated.

Monday

6 Chris & Melody Riddle and sons Micah, Adam and Isaiah are preparing for Buon Natale in Italy. May Christ's presence be experienced as they meet with friends from school and church during the holiday season.

7 Haley Kirschnick, PIM volunteer at Maranatha School for the Deaf, is in the last week of her service assignment. Pray for her as she says "good-bye" to the many relationships she has formed there and plans for further education.

13 Today the Maranatha School for the Deaf in Jamaica is celebrating Christmas by presenting a program for parents and community friends. The students receive gifts from their US sponsors. Ask God to bless these activities.

14 Levi, Isaac, and Moriah Nice have the privilege of their grandparents visiting with them in Jamaica this week. Thank God for this good time of sharing that occurs in this setting.

20 Jesus' Deaf Church celebrates Christmas today with songs, skits, Scripture and a message by Nancy Marshall. Thank God for her faithful witness and ask God to bless the deaf children and adults who worship together.

21 Remember the missionaries, especially singles, who'll miss being with family over Christmas. May their joy be in Jesus' presence and in their spiritual family where they serve.

27 Richard Keeler leads the worship service at Sangre Grande MC in Trinidad. May God anoint him with a sermon that prepares hearts for the coming of the new year, with all its opportunities and unknown challenges.

28 Pray for Alicia Horst as she serves as the new Executive Director of the NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center in Harrisonburg. May God give her the grace and compassion needed for every client.

Tuesday

1 Tonight, Karen Michener from the US Center for World Mission is teaching "Pioneer Church Planting" in the Perspectives-H'burg class. The class learns about "de-westernizing" the Gospel. Pray for God's message to come through clearly.

8 The *Perspectives-H'burg* class concludes this evening with David Shenk, instructor on "World Christian Partnership." The students are urged to integrate God's global purpose to their lives and to be a 'go-er,' 'pray-er' or 'send-er.'

15 This month believers all over Italy distribute page-a-day Scripture calendars to friends, family, and neighbors who don't know the Lord personally. In Bari, they're given in the marketplace. Pray!

22 Ganesh & Risha Kalloo lead the Mennonite Church of Chaguanas in Trinidad in sharing with the neighbors of the church as they sing, share Scripture, and give gifts of food. Pray a blessing on this time of sharing.

29 Steve & Betsy Dintaman are gearing up for a new semester at Lithuania Christian College where they relate closely with students from various countries. Ask God to give them wisdom and patience for each interaction.

Wednesday

2 Pray for the foundational discipleship courses that Willard Eberly teaches each week in his home in Bari, Italy. May the Spirit form solid Christian character in each student's life as they study together.

9 Pray for Ervin Stutzman, Dean of Eastern Mennonite Seminary, as he completes his work there and prepares for his new job as Executive Director of MC USA.

16 Pray for Richard and Barbara Gehring as they bring the classes they teach at West Indies Theological College to a close for the semester this week. Thank God for the relationships formed in these classes.

23 Christmas time offers special opportunity for sharing the Gospel in places where there are few believers. Pray that Jesus is lifted up in their celebrations and He draws people to Himself.

30 Each week a prayer/worship/Bible study is held in homes in the Bari area that's enjoyed by all participating. Pray that those who haven't experienced new life in Jesus will be drawn to Him.

Thursday

3 Roxy and Olivia Gehring build friendships as they visit in their friends' homes in Trinidad, giving them the opportunity to learn about other ethnicities. Ask God to bless these bonds.

10 VMC's four elected officers and two senior staff will meet today in preparation for January's Conference Council meeting. Pray for wisdom in their deliberations.

17 At the Joshua Center in Albania, Norma Teles and her assistants are teaching the children the true story of Christmas and giving them gifts from their sponsors. Ask God to bless this interaction.

24 Share the light of love with someone today who needs a ray of hope and joy.

31 Tomorrow a new calendar year begins. Pray for all who have lost a loved one or a job in this past year. Pray they may sense hope for the coming year as they look to Jesus.

Friday

4 Margaret Keeler's phone counseling ministry with Trinidadian women meets the needs of persons who face obstacles in their families. Ask God to shower her with grace and wisdom for each contact.

11 The Jewish festival of lights, Hanukkah, begins today. Pray for our Jewish cousins, that they too may have the joy of knowing Jesus as Messiah.

18 In Nazareth Village, Israel, Shirley Roth directs daily activities. Thousands of visitors learn about Jesus in this first-century setting. May they understand the true meaning of Christmas and embrace Jesus' way.

25 Who is this who lives with the lowly, sharing their sorrows, knowing their hunger? This is Christ, revealed to the world in the eyes of a child, a child of the poor.
Sing the Story # 26

Christmas

Saturday

5 Mara Colonna, *transliterated* participant in Bari, Italy, may need surgery for a minor health problem. Pray for her and the physicians caring for her medical need.

12 Allen Umble welcomes guests into his home and offers a simple meal. The fellowship around the table provides a place for questions and answers. Pray for Allen as he follows Christ daily and as others observe him.

19 At Carlsen Field MC in Trinidad, the youth are gathering for fun and worship, this time with a Christmas theme. Pray for Avi Jaimani, youth leader, as he guides the youths that are hearing the Gospel for the first time.

26 As we give material gifts to our loved ones, may we also remember the greatest gift of all—our salvation through Jesus.

"God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding. He says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth,' and to the rain shower, 'Be a mighty downpour.'"

Job 37:5-6 (NIV)



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

Announcements

CrossRoads Candlelight Dinners

Journey back into the mid-1800s and experience the Christmas season and an old-fashioned meal in the Burkholder-Myers House at the CrossRoads Heritage Center, 1921 Heritage Center Way, Harrisonburg, on December 11 and 12, 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$45 per person, with pre-registration and payment due by Dec. 7. Seating is limited, so register early by calling (540) 438-1275, or send email to info@vbmhc.org. www.vbmhc.org

Robin and Linda Williams and Their Fine Group

will appear in concert at Eastern Mennonite School located at 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA on December 12 at 7:30 pm. Tickets are available by calling the music office at Eastern Mennonite School 540-236-6014. Advance tickets are \$15 adult, \$12 students, and senior (62 and over). \$18 and \$15 at the door. All seats are general admission. The concert is sponsored by the music department at Eastern Mennonite.

A special new collector's CD from Third Way Media

includes recordings of three archival **Mennonite Hour** radio programs by B. Charles Hostetter and David Augsburg and was compiled by John Horst, host of the weekly "Mostly Mennonite, Mostly A Cappella" radio program on the Eastern Mennonite University related station, WEMC. The CD, *Invitation: Classic Hymns of Revival and Mission*, features 25 musical recordings from the original Mennonite Hour a cappella singers. More information is available at (800) 999-3534 or store.ThirdWayMedia.org.

Mennonite Health Assembly will be held March 4-7, 2010, in Norfolk, Virginia, with the theme *Navigating in a Sea of Change*. Keynote speaker Leonard Sweet will describe cultural changes that challenge people of faith. Dave Brubaker from Eastern Mennonite University will help us explore our responses to these challenges. Tammy Alexander, from Mennonite Central Committee's Washington Office, will give an up-to-the-minute report on health-care reform. Worship leaders will be Natalie Francisco and Don Oswald.

Download a registration booklet and register online at www.mhsonline.org. For a discount, register by Jan. 22.

Looking for a **Christmas project for your family or church group**? Here are some suggestions for contributions:

- building the new church/community center in L'Aquila, Italy, that was destroyed by an earthquake earlier this year
- placing Bible and Christian literature for marketplace distribution in Italy
- providing books for the church library at Centro Koinonia, Bari
- helping families attend the annual retreat planned for the Italian Mennonite Church
- sponsoring a Gypsy child at the Joshua Center, Albania, or a Deaf child at Maranatha School for the Deaf, Jamaica

Send these gifts to Virginia Mennonite Missions, 901 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802 with a clear designation for its purpose. Thank you!

