

Perspectives class highlights history, strategy of mission

Photo by Gloria Lehman

By STEVE CARPENTER
Conference Coordinator

As we consider the angel's (evangel-God's messengers) amazing announcement on that first Christmas day, their words continue to resonate, "...I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be for all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10b-11, KJV)

My wife and I recently completed a class called *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, which is designed to equip and encourage persons to amplify the angel's proclamation and declare "Jesus is Lord" to the ends of the earth.

The Perspectives study program was begun by the late Dr. Ralph D. Winter, then a professor at the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary in California as an outgrowth of the Urbana '73 student missions conference in Urbana, Ill. It has grown into a 15-week course which can be taken for undergraduate or graduate credit or simply audited. Writer, educator and missiologist Steven C. Hawthorne developed the curriculum and study guide and, along with Dr. Winter, edited the 761 page reader. The books, which draw heavily from Fuller Seminary professors and other noted evangelical missiologists, are now in their fourth edition.

Although I took *Perspectives* for credit as a seminary elective, it would be more accurate to call it, not a class but a movement seeking to call Christians to join in God's purposes by spreading the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ to every corner of the globe. Virginia Mennonite Missions (VMM) sponsored the course I attended on the campus of Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va. The interest in, and buzz about



Perspectives participants enjoyed an international meal and presentations halfway through the semester.

God's concern for missions didn't start with Jesus' Great Commission. Rather it was present long before, as recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Perspectives has created quite a stir in the community. The first time VMM offered it, more than 70 students pressed into a classroom designed for 60. This year another 41 people took the course.

We enjoyed a different professor, with broad experience in some aspect of missions, for each of the 15 weeks. The readings are short and thought provoking and are broken into four sections: biblical, historical, cultural and strategic.

In the biblical section we learned God's concern for missions didn't start with Jesus' Great Commission. Rather it was present long before, as recorded in the Hebrew scriptures, when God promis-

es to bless Abraham so he would be a blessing to the nations. We later learned the word interpreted here as "nations" doesn't refer to modern geo-political nations but rather culturally distinct people groups.

The historical section outlines the three great mission eras and the people behind them, while the cultural section provides insights into the many layers of culture (behavior, values, beliefs and worldview.)

In the strategic section we explored Christian Community Development and pioneer church planting, including a concept new to me called "the spontaneous multiplication of churches." The course ends with an encouragement to consider your gifts and calling in regard to going, welcoming, sending or mobilizing others to fulfill God's missional purposes.

My biggest criticism of *Perspectives* is that it tries to cover too much material. It

Perspectives continued on page 3

This particular winter...

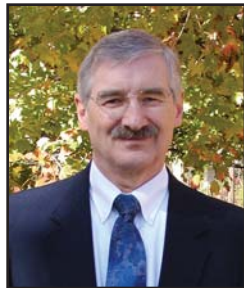
“I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.” (Isaiah 46:4 NRS)

We live in this particular winter. While it is whimsical to compare, I'm very glad this is not another winter - like the winters of pre-Noah days. Then, even God was discouraged. (Genesis 6:6) So, thanks be to God for this winter!

From complicated, pain-filled lives comes the plaintive cry, “Why me?!” The other day Ruth Ann was in conversation with a woman and her daughter from another country. She asked, “Would you like to go back some day?” The response was an immediate, “NO!” Only in our genetic memories can we grasp such pain...

It was to people in exile from their homes that God through the prophet Isaiah spoke the words noted above. In this whimsical exercise, YAWEH is personalizing the contrast with the gods of Babylon—Bel and son Nebo (Isaiah 46:1). While their images can be seen, they get carried around on the backs of camels and donkeys, sometimes swaying, sometimes left behind.

YAHWEH assures the remnant, “Listen to me, O house of Jacob, all the



Owen Burkholder
Conference Minister

remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne by me from your birth, carried from the womb; even to your old age I am he, even when you turn gray I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.” (Is. 46:3, 4) From one who turned 60 this past year, did you see that part about

“even when you turn gray?”

The point is, other gods were created by cultures and circumstances. YAHWEH claims to be the creator. And, having created a people, God will bear, carry, and save that people.

In our particular winter, let us not make the mistake of making a god out of complicated circumstances. Let us reach through the mysteries toward the God who made us. The signs are more plentiful for us—the birth, life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus present to us now through the Holy Spirit—who could have created such a thing?

Our response begins with worship, praise and thanksgiving. It then includes lament and intercession. That's how we get through winter.



VMRC's Winterfest in January 2009.
Photo courtesy of Norma Burkholder

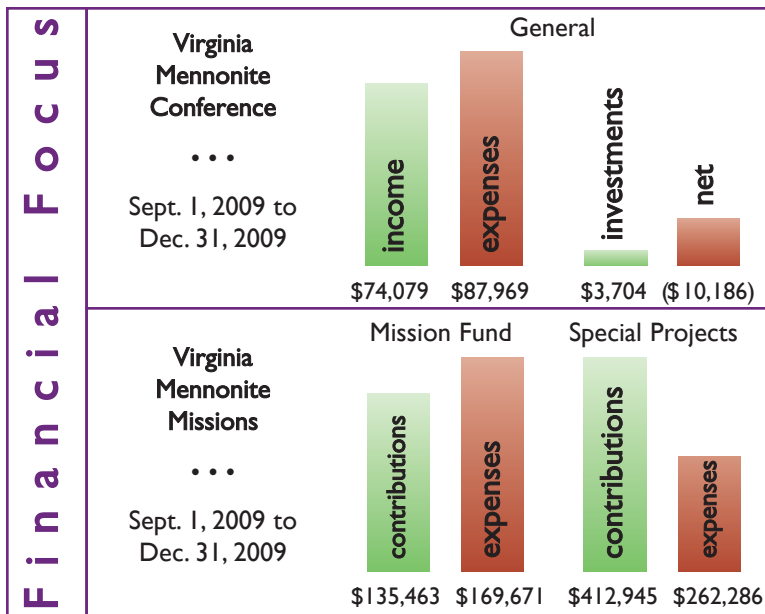
SpringFest at VMRC to be held March 13

By **PEARL LANTZ**
President, VMRC Auxiliary

SpringFest at VMRC will be held Saturday, March 13 from 7:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Events for all ages are planned, including: breakfast, silent auction, sale items, a la carte lunch, Ted & Company TheaterWorks, balloon twisting, magic tricks, musicians and more.

SpringFest is sponsored by the VMRC Auxiliary to benefit the Good Samaritan Annual Fund, a program of the VMRC Foundation which fills the gap for residents with financial need in Oak Lea Nursing Home.

Mark your calendars and enjoy a day of food, fun and entertainment with community friends of all ages! More details will follow in the March *Connections*, or you may check www.vmmc.org, or call Sandra Rush, Event Coordinator, at (540) 478-7602.



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Creativity required

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

Responding to threat with violent force feels natural. Instincts to fight kick in if we have not prepared ourselves otherwise. Since human history offers so many examples of violence and so few alternatives, choosing a non-violent response requires dramatic creativity and discipline.

This fall, the Harrisonburg, Virginia community heard of such creativity from Leymah Gbowee. Her story centers on the African nation of Liberia where nearly a quarter million were killed and more than a third of the population displaced in the upheaval of Charles Taylor's rule in the 1990's. Gbowee's non-violent creativity helped end a decades-long civil war. In the face of military terror using child soldiers, murder, slavery and widespread rape, thousands of Christian and Muslim women, in Gbowee's words, "overlooked their differences and worked together to promote the need for peace." The acclaimed documentary, "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" tells of Gbowee and thousands of courageous women of Liberian

Mass Action for Peace who surrounded President Taylor's palace and sat for months to pressure for peace talks. Many even refused to sleep with their husbands until peace was reached.

When conflicting leaders finally agreed to talk, the women maintained pressure. When talks stalled and leaders tried to

leave, the women blocked the exits and vehicles. Threatened with forceful removal, Gbowee and the other women creatively countered, threatening to remove their clothes (an act that would greatly shame the men present) if talks did not continue. With this pressure from Liberian mothers, talks continued, a peace accord was reached and disarmament began. The creativity and discipline of these women of faith shine as an amazing non-violent response to violation. Leymah Gbowee journeyed from the despair of homelessness and unemployment and the terror of rape and murder to become an internationally respected practitioner of peace.

In a chapel service at Eastern Mennonite University Gbowee noted, "I haven't reached this place where I am today on my own. It is by the grace and mercy of God. I don't see how it's possible to be an effective peacebuilder in any setting without a strong faith. That is my message to others: take that first step of faith and ask God to order your steps."



Leymah Gbowee

Perspectives continued from cover

also seems impossible to meet the needs of everyone who attends from those with high school educations to graduate students. Additionally, the lesson reviews and other assignments, which are required for student taking the class for credit, felt like

Photo by Gloria Lehman



Carol and Skip Tobin (r) present a skit on relating across cultures.

busy work or Sunday school lessons. Nonetheless, it is an exciting and challenging class and was time well spent.

Bill Bright, the late founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, stated, "*Perspectives* gives people an opportunity to be exposed to the faith stretching challenge of world missions from the first-hand experience of those God is using on the field." Another ringing endorsement comes from Scott Wesley Brown, a recording artist and founder of I CARE Ministries who noted, "For many Christians, Christianity is like a puzzle spilled out on the floor. *Perspectives* puts it all together by showing us the box top and helps us under-

stand how missions is at the very heart of God. It not only changed my music and my ministry, but the very way I live."

More than 80,000 North Americans have participated in *Perspectives* with another 30,000 students from 10 countries worldwide. In addition to English, the study materials are available in Spanish, Chinese and Korean. About 200 courses are taught each year. If you are interested in exploring, or better understanding, missions, I recommend checking out a class near you. Visit www.perspectives.org for more information.

Note from Gloria Lehman, coordinator of Perspectives-Harrisonburg class: I welcome any questions about this course which makes a deep impact on those who take it. For information about the class offered in Fall 2010, contact Gloria Lehman: gloria.lehman@vmmissions.org or call (800) 707-5535 or (540) 434-9727.

Mennonite Women enjoy refreshing retreat

By EDITH SHENK KUHNS and
ALDINE MUSSER

Over one hundred women from across Virginia Conference gathered in Richmond for a refreshing week-end in November 2009. We sang, ate and listened to Mary Thiessen Nation, adjunct professor at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, on the theme "Hope: Anchored but Unseen." Mary shared experiences from her years living in inner city Los Angeles. Her inputs fostered table conversations. We shared communion and anointing. Various women led interest groups on Saturday. The challenge to us was to anchor our hope in the God of our salvation, not in any other possibility.

Mark your calendars:

Annual Missions Day is on Saturday, May 8, at Zion Mennonite Church (celebrating the 125th anniversary). Virginia Mennonite Conference is celebrating their 175th anniversary. The theme & scripture is *Jesus Christ: the same yesterday, today and forever* from the Psalm 117:2 passage, "The faithfulness of the Lord endures forever." Twila K. Yoder, East Coast representative for the MC USA Mennonite Women, is our speaker focusing on the future and vision of Mennonite Women. Stories from the past MWV will also be included in the day.

The **Annual Prayer breakfast** will be held Saturday, June 26 at NC State University, Raleigh, N.C., as part of Conference Assembly. Carol Tobin, our speaker, served in S. E. Asia with Virginia Mennonite Missions and Eastern Mennonite Missions.

Sister-Care II will be coming in 2011.

A girl who attends Hope Mennonite Church.
File photo.



Young girl shares her faith in Trinidad

By RICHARD KEELER
VMM worker in Trinidad

It is a joy to tell you about Tasha*, nine-years-old, who accepted Christ around Easter and was baptized later that year in September 2009. Tasha has two older sisters, two older brothers and one younger brother. She is a bright young girl and gifted in poetry. She also enjoys memorizing Scripture.

We were visiting in her mother's new home where Tasha, her twelve-year-old sister and mother were present. During our discussion Tasha asked what a missionary was. Margaret told her what she had learned many years ago: "Is a missionary one who crosses the sea?" "No, it is one who sees the cross."

Tasha spoke about some of her experiences at school, where several

other girls join her at lunch to talk about the Bible and ask her a lot of questions. Even though she has been a believer for less than a year and comes from a non-Christian background (but her mother and sisters have also become believers), she usually has answers for her friends. She has invited them to come to church with her, and some have indicated that they will.

We see a lot of potential in this pre-teen believer who is not ashamed to share her faith and has become a leader by default among her close friends in her own school.

Only God knows how He will use her for His Kingdom's sake in the years ahead. We are blessed to have such a committed young believer in our congregation.

* Name has been changed

Esther Stenson, poet and author of "Miracle Temple," holds reading

By ANNA MARIA JOHNSON
Community Mennonite Church
Photo courtesy of Esther Stenson

On Saturday, November 7, poet Esther Yoder Stenson, member of Community Mennonite Church, treated an audience of nearly fifty people to a reading of several of her poems recently published in her first book, "Miracle Temple." Guests gathered in the Dean House, downtown



Harrisonburg, to enjoy refreshments and Esther's voice as she recounted her Amish Aunt Amelia's earthy life stories in poetic form: bees, broken heart, broken arm, conversion and seeds.

The author grew up in an Amish home in Virginia, then traveled to El Salvador, China, and finally back to Harrisonburg,



Virginia, where she teaches literature and composition at James Madison University. Stenson's book is available for purchase through Cascadia

Publishing House at
www.CascadiaPublishingHouse.com.

Grace Mennonite hosts fourth annual Thanksgiving Dinner

By **KAY KIBLER**

Member of Grace Mennonite Fellowship

Grace Mennonite Fellowship hosted their annual Thanksgiving Dinner again this year. Members of Grace and folks from the community donated food to feed the multitude. Turkeys, sweet potatoes, green beans, mashed potatoes, dressing, macaroni and cheese, desserts, appetizers and other wonderful dishes were on the menu for this most delicious homemade meal. Many people from the church and in the community came out to help in making this special for everyone that was able to attend.

After hurricane Katrina hit the US, members of Grace went to the Gulf Coast to help with the devastation. After coming home, they wanted to find some way to



help the people in their own community. The following year at Thanksgiving, Karin King and Kay Kibler, two of the ladies that went to Mississippi after Katrina,

organized the first Thanksgiving dinner for the community. Approximately 75 people attended that year. This year, over 200 people fellowshiped on Thanksgiving Day.

The dinner is open to anyone in the community especially those that have no family to spend the day with. God willing, we will do it again!

Karin King, organizer, Kay Early, Jenny Arbogast and other members of Grace Mennonite Fellowship serve a delicious meal to the community.

Photo courtesy of Kay Kibler

Patchwork Pantry ministers to body and soul



By **JIM BISHOP** (adapted)

Sheri Hartzler, Patchwork Pantry director, and volunteers Carmen Wyse, Marsha Kanagy and Lara Gautsche bag apples to distribute to clients. Photo by Jim Bishop

Patchwork Pantry, located at Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, was Sheri Hartzler's brain-child, started in 1992 after she and husband Jay spent a year in Voluntary Service in Indianapolis, Ind., where a food pantry program operated.

The program has been an ecumenical effort from the start, today supported by six local churches and business persons

and administered by a nine-member board of directors.

Currently, Patchwork distributes approximately one thousand pounds of food to local people every week. Much of the food comes from the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank in Verona, supplemented by donated items from congregations and individuals.

Sheri offered some rather impressive statistics on the program: From May through September 2009, 452 volunteers worked 865 hours to give food to 1,132 households. Of the 4,286 individuals who received food, 182 were over age 65 and 1,979 were children under 18 years of age. The average number of households coming to the pantry each week was 56; the highest number in one evening was 71, the lowest, 33. Weather is a factor in the turnout, Sheri noted.

"More food pantries have opened in the central Valley area, which makes some assume that has lowered the number of individuals and families we serve," Sheri noted. "But, that's not the case. What continues to surprise me is that roughly half the people who show up at Patchwork Pantry have no income, period," she said.

"Patchwork Pantry has done a great job keeping up with the increased demand for food in this difficult economy," she said, adding: "It gives me great joy to know that at the end of every Wednesday I've been able to help someone in a real, immediate and lasting way. Our mission is to help people in the community who have a basic need, to listen to them if they want to talk and to show the love of Christ."

“To Knot or Not to Knot?” Seminar set for Valentine’s Day

By **HARVEY YODER**
Family Life Resource Center

The Family Life Resource Center, with EMU’s Campus Ministries, is offering a three-hour “To Knot or Not to Knot?” seminar for steadily dating couples at 2 pm Sunday, February 14.

This annual program raises compatibility issues needing to be addressed well before premarital counseling, and preferably before engagement. It is free for EMU students, \$10 for other couples.

Meeting in Room 212 of EMU’s University Commons, the session

features a panel of an older married couple, a pair of newlyweds, and a divorcee, each sharing candidly from their own experiences. This is followed by male attendees meeting for further conversation with the men on the panel, and the females with the women panelists. Individual couples then do a discussion exercise based on items from a premarital inventory.

This is one of the ways FLRC seeks to help build stronger marriages, along with

offering premarital and marital counseling, intensive programs for couples in distress, regular marriage enrichment classes, annual trainings for marriage mentor couples, and by actively promoting the area’s Community Marriage Policy.

Contact (540) 432-4132 or byron.peachey@emu.edu to register for the Valentines Day event, and services@flrc.org or (540) 434-8450 for other FLRC programs.

International MCC worker serving for a year at Gift & Thrift



Phuthehi William Masilo

Courtesy of Deb King

By **DEB KING**
Director of Gift & Thrift, Inc.

Meet Phuthehi William Masilo, a participant in Mennonite Central Committee’s International Volunteer Exchange Program (IVEP), who is fulfilling a one-year service commitment with Harrisonburg Gift & Thrift. IVEP seeks to place young people between the ages of eighteen and thirty in roles that will correspond with their interests and training in order to provide experiences that will better equip them for life in their home countries.

After reading an advertisement for IVEP, Phuthehi approached an MCC worker in Lesotho, expressed interest in the program and applied. More than a year later, Phuthehi found himself on a flight headed for the United States. He has been

working here at Gift and Thrift since mid-August, learning nearly all facets of the organization—from sorting and listing books online to cashiering for Artisans’ Hope and the thrift shop to entering data onto financial spreadsheets.

Although life has been difficult for this capable young man, he has seen God at work through recent experiences. Phuthehi studied at the Center for Accounting Studies in Lesotho and received certification as a technician accountant, making him a perfect match for our organization. His training, along with his gentle spirit and broad smile, has endeared him to our staff and volunteers. We wish him the best as he completes his time here and returns home in July.



Called and Sent!
Positions now available:

Honduras

- English teachers needed for two bilingual schools

Nicaragua

- English teacher needed

Nazareth, Israel

- Participant in Biblical Lands Educational Seminars and Service (BLESS) through Eastern Mennonite Seminary (and with *tranSend*) for a Nazareth Village assignment

Contact Ken Horst

- (540) 434-9727
- (800) 707-5535
- ken.horst@vmmissions.org

FEBRUARY 2010

Connections

Prayer Calendar

Sunday

7 As the NFL Superbowl is played today, pray the message of God's saving grace, displayed in Jesus Christ, might be proclaimed and celebrated with the same level of enthusiasm.

Monday

1 Pastor Chaiya Hadasunern was ordained yesterday. Pray for him and his wife, Aranya, as they serve the Hickory (N.C.) Hmong MC which he founded. They have three sons: Joel, Benjamin and Elijah.

Tuesday

2 In January, Rafael & Solange Tartari, a young Brazilian couple, arrived in Albania to serve as missionaries in partnership with VMM. Thank God for them and their venture of faith!

Wednesday

3 Richard Gehring is teaching "Homiletics" at West Indies Theological College, Trinidad. Thank God for his expertise in this area of church life and pray that he and his students will learn together during this semester.

Thursday

4 Kent Kauffman has assumed responsibilities as Executive Director for Highland Retreat in Bergton, Va. Pray that he and the staff will know God's wisdom as they plan for the 2010 camping season.

Friday

5 Today the Board of VMMissions is meeting at the Williamsburg Retreat Center. Ask God to bless and guide the discussions so that His work in the world will be accomplished.

Saturday

6 This weekend, the annual VMC ministers' retreat is being held at Williamsburg Retreat Center with Phil Kniss speaking on "Every Church an Organic Church." Ask the Holy Spirit's presence and insight for this gathering.

Sunday

14 Thus says the Lord: I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you [Jer.31:3]. May we have that kind of love for others!

Monday

8 At Centro Koinonia, Bari, Italy, several believers are studying music in order to assist in worship. Pray for them as they prepare for this important ministry in the Body of Christ.

Tuesday

9 In Bari, Italy, Chris and Melody Riddle are involved almost continually in friendship evangelism in many forms. Pray for wisdom and empowerment.

Wednesday

10 Pray for Chapel Hill (N.C.) Mennonite Fellowship as they minister to inmates at the Orange County Correctional Facility. Ask that God will sustain the faith of those inmates who have accepted Christ as Savior and Lord.

Thursday

11 Due to the depressed economic situation, some of the members of the Hickory Hmong congregation have lost a job. Ask God to make a way for them to gain employment and the financial means their families need.

Friday

12 Ask God for strength and inspiration for Nancy Marshall in Orange Walk, Belize, who has completed a week of teaching 11 deaf students. Tomorrow she will prepare the service for Jesus' Deaf Church.

Saturday

13 Pray for OUTLET 10.27, Graham, N.C. as they seek to find creative ways to share the Gospel with people who have been hurt by, or have given up on, the Church.

Sunday

21 Pray in Jesus' name against the prevailing religious strongholds in the Italian culture that blind people's hearts to who Jesus really is and why He came to earth [I Cor.4:4].

Monday

22 Pray for Pastor Donovan Smith and Assistant Pastor Steven Hayle who give leadership to Calvary Mennonite Church near Ocho Rios, Jamaica. May this congregation grow in unity and vision.

Tuesday

23 A Celebration of Missions event is held this evening at Providence MC, Newport News. If you have pre-registered, come and see what God is doing around the world through VMM workers.

Wednesday

24 Barbara Gehring teaches "Theory and Practice of Social Work II" at West Indies Theological College on Wednesday evenings. Thank God for the qualities that she brings to this role, and pray that the students will learn well.

Thursday

25 A Celebration of Missions event is held this evening at Greenmonte Menn. Fellowship, Stuarts Draft. If you have pre-registered, come and hear stories of God's movement in the world through VMM workers.

Friday

26 Jacob & Hosanna and two children have returned to their place of service in Asia. Hold them in your prayers as they walk along with believers there.

Saturday

27 The Nazareth Village Festival is held this evening in the EMHS dining hall. If you have pre-registered, come and learn how a wide variety of people are hearing stories of Jesus in a realistic setting. Pray for Shirley Roth as she directs this ministry.

28 Praise God for answering your prayers for Rosanna, Pastor Pino Arena's wife in Sicily. She is being restored to health and ministry!

This prayer calendar is sponsored by:
Galen & Gloria Lehman
in honor of Paul & Evelyn Kratz's ministry in Trinidad, 2007-2009.

If you would like to sponsor the prayer calendar, please contact Gloria Lehman at (540) 434-9727 or (800) 505-7735

"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Galatians 3:26-28 (NIV)



Connections (USPS 007-205)
 Virginia Mennonite Missions
 Virginia Mennonite Conference
 901 Parkwood Drive
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Announcements

The CrossRoads (Valley Brethren-Mennonite) Heritage Center will hold its **annual dinner and meeting** on Friday evening, February 5, at 6:30 p.m., at the Lindale Mennonite Church, 625 Jesse Bennett Way, Linville, Va. Tickets are \$20 per person. To register, call (540) 438-1275 by Monday, February 1, and mail your deposit to CrossRoads, P.O. Box 1563, Harrisonburg, VA 22803. A picture show will highlight activities for 2009 and CrossRoads President Robert Alley will share a vision for the remainder of 2010. Snow date is February 12 (info@vbmhc.org, www.vbmhc.org).



Drama and songs about love and relationships will abound on Valentine's weekend, Feb. 12-13 in the Eastern Mennonite School

Auditorium, Harrisonburg. Events include a 7:30 Friday evening performance of the drama **Excellent Trouble** by Ted Swartz and Ingrid De Sanctis, featuring live music by Brad Yoder; Saturday afternoon music concerts (beginning at 3 p.m.) by Trent Wagler & The Steel Wheels; Andru Bemis; Heather Kropf; Rachel Ries and Brad Yoder; and an 8 p.m. Sat. evening concert with musicians, comedy sketches and hosting by Ted and Ingrid. Friday night tickets at the door for \$10; all Sat. afternoon concerts and evening program are pay-what-you-will. For more information, call (540) 574-4877 or visit www.mennofolk.org/harrisonburg.

The annual **Nazareth Village Festival** will be held on Saturday, February 27, 6:00 p.m. in the dining hall of Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisonburg. This is a fundraising event in support of Shirley Roth, director of Nazareth Village under appointment of Mennonite Mission Network and Virginia Mennonite Missions. The speaker is Dr. Nakhle Bishara, founding board member of Nazareth Village. A ninth-generation Nazarene, it was his vision for what is today "one of the most inspiring biblical sites in the Holy Land." Shirley will also be sharing up-to-date details of the challenges and wonderful opportunities of presenting the story of Jesus in this first-century setting. Give your reservation to Diane Bowman at (540) 434-9727, or diane.bowman@vmmissions.org



"The Gospel of John: Seven Signs and Seven Sayings" is the theme of this year's Adult Winter Bible School. Pastor and Bible teacher Duane

Yoder will lead it over four Sunday nights beginning February 21 through March 14. Please join us at 6:30 p.m. at the EMHS auditorium for this highly informative and engaging series. Child care will be provided and an offering will be received.

Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center and Mennonite Men of Virginia are hosting **Men's Retreat**, March 5-7. Ervin Stutzman, recently appointed Executive Director of Mennonite Church USA, will be the guest speaker. The weekend will be filled with meaningful worship, inspired teaching and great fellowship. For more information check www.wcrc.info or contact the office at (757) 566-2256.

Shaping Families, a new 15-minute radio program produced by Third Way Media, is now airing on WBTX-AM, 1470 on your dial – on Sunday mornings at 9:15 a.m. If you're on your way or in church by then, you can download the program at www.shapingfamilies.com. February programs cover topics of aging, forgiveness, and mental illness. The "My Turn" segment of the program includes Steve Carpenter (Virginia Conference coordinator), Harvey Yoder (counselor, Family Life Resource Center), Natalie Francisco (copastor, Calvary Mennonite), and Sam Heatwole reading from Jim Fairfield's new book, Frog Hollow Journal among others.

2010 MCC Turkey Canning Project

The Annual Meat Canning is scheduled for March 1-5 at the Hinton Mennonite Relief Center, Hinton, VA. Virginia Mennonite Conference is responsible to provide help on Tuesday, March 2. Help is needed from 5 AM until 11 PM each day. Friday, March 5 is scheduled as a community day and help is needed especially in the early morning. Anyone is welcome to come and help on any day!

Funds are needed to purchase turkey for processing and for the ongoing operation of the Relief Center. If you would like to contribute to this project, donations may be sent to: Hinton Mennonite Relief Center, PO Box 519, Dayton, VA 22821.

If you have any questions pertaining to this project, contact Leon Rhodes at (540) 867-9751 or Gerald Knicely at (540) 879-2077. Thanks for your participation in this effort to feed the less fortunate in the world.