

A pause for prayer at life's end

By **HARRY KRAUS**

Serving in East Africa with VMM/Africa Inland Mission

My patient was a young man with right leg swelling of several weeks' duration. He had a large abscess in his thigh that pressed on the large vein nearby, causing it to clot off. Clots of this nature are dangerous, because they can break loose and travel to the heart and lungs, which can be fatal. The patient needed anticoagulation medicine to prevent the clot from getting bigger.

But a problem intervened. He vomited blood. I looked in his stomach with a scope and found a large ulcer and evidence of recent bleeding. So now we have a dilemma. He needs blood-thinner medication to treat the leg clot, but the medicines will make it much more likely that he will have a fatal bleed from his stomach ulcer.

In the West, we immediately stop the blood thinner and place a "filter" in the large vein leading up through the body towards the heart to catch any clots on their way to the lung. I looked in our donated store and actually found a few filters. Shall I use up a rare resource? I decided to stop his blood-thinning drugs, treat the ulcer with medicine and wait until the following Monday to repeat the ultrasound study.

On Friday morning, I found myself with extra time for making rounds. When I came to my patient's bed, I took time to ask him about his relationship with Christ and whether he was ready to face eternity. He honestly admitted that he was familiar with Christianity, but was not "saved."

I was tempted to order a chaplain consult and move on, but after briefly explaining the gospel to my patient, I asked if he wanted to pray to invite Christ into his life. Again, I tried to give myself an "out." I told him I could ask the chaplains to come by and he could pray with them, but



Harry Kraus performs a patient checkup. Courtesy of author

mentioned that he could pray with us right then if he wanted. He indicated that he was ready to pray.

We paused on our rounds. I prayed in English and my patient in his native tongue, before moving on to our other patients.

The next morning, he was not in his bed. "Where is my patient?" I listened to the explanation with a growing thankfulness that we'd spent time with him the previous morning. He developed chest pain during the night. The nurse put him on oxygen, restarted his IV, and promised to check on him in a few minutes. When she returned, he was already dead. I suspect a fatal pulmonary embolism.

Was his prayer a true reflection of a repentant heart born from above with a gift of faith? Will I see my patient again in Heaven? God only knows. I can only say that the experience left me wondering about my hesitation to turn this privileged work of gospel presentation and praying to the chaplains. I am humbled, thankful, and emboldened with a sense of the urgency of eternity.

Delegates gather at WCF in Christian community

By **SARAH BIXLER**

VMC Conference Coordinator

Early Saturday morning, Feb. 4, over 100 delegates and friends of Virginia Mennonite Conference (VMC) navigated the capitol city and were warmly welcomed by Washington Community Fellowship (WCF). The group gathered around the theme "Christian Community," one of Mennonite Church USA's seven churchwide priorities.

Delegates heard several reports, including a presentation encouraging congregations to submit entries for the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (see www.gameo.org). Gifts Discernment Committee chairperson Les Horning enthusiastically affirmed that "Virginia Mennonite Conference is alive and well," a growing sense gained from the search for a secretary candidate after numerous young adults declined due to other ministry commitments. The delegates affirmed Cara Risser, member of Zion Mennonite Church, as secretary. Ervin Stutzman, executive director of MC USA, presented a summary of the denomination's Purposeful Plan.

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Global sisters enrich my life

Mennonite Women USA invited responses to this question for the November/December issue of *Timbrel*: *How do our global sisters enrich our own lives as well as enrich the life of the church?* I immediately knew that this is a question I can answer.

I have the unusual privilege to visit church sisters in the Caribbean region several times a year. Talking with the women in their settings is heart-warming, and sometimes heart-rending. Sis. Babes in Trinidad explains how to cook local foods, patiently demonstrating making roti or pelau. While cooking, she tells me about her interactions with Muslim neighbors; the light of Christ shines through her in acts of kindness. Sis. Liza, also in Trinidad, is a lay leader in a congregation there. She not only has administrative skills but is a gifted preacher too. I am enriched as I observe their consistent Christian witness to those around them and learn about the tight family bonds in the culture.

The women in Jamaica impact me with their enduring patience in a country full of complexities. Sis. Janet, a trained counselor, meets young adults and shares their concerns and joys and encourages them to use their gifts in outreach. Her spiritual depth inspires me. Sis. Lydia, a diminutive



Gloria Lehman
Connections Editor

woman in physical stature, has a spirit that is steadfast. She enters slum areas with confidence, taking food items to hungry families and inviting the children to activities at the church. Even though she has challenges of her own, she consistently serves the needs of others. She tells me that she won't be discouraged because she is following Jesus in her work.

One global sister has migrated to the US, Sis. Sydna. She earned a degree from the University of the West Indies, moved to the US, started over getting a driver's license, training for a job as a medical assistant and taking various temporary jobs until a more long-term job became available. She has told me of her challenges; she has not given up and she relies on God's strength to carry her through the tough spots.

These and many more global sisters show me that holding onto faith is imperative in this uncertain world. When I may think that my life is too demanding or too difficult, I reflect on these sisters and absorb faith and hope from them. I thank God for the global sisters in my life.

Gloria L. Lehman

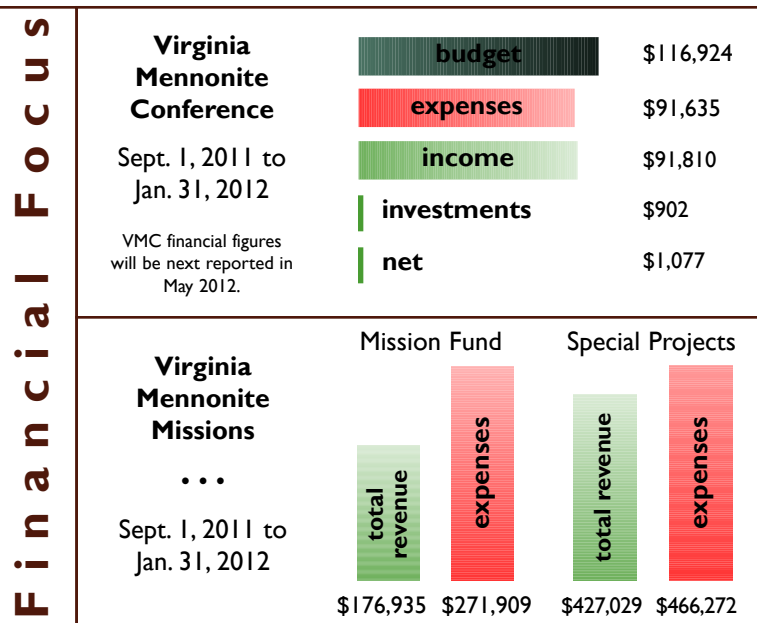
Study at sea



Travel with Paul, explore the Roman Empire, and experience the dynamics of the Early Church in the sailing seminar in Turkey and Greece, May 13-31, 2012. **The Christian Movement in the Mediterranean** is offered by Eastern Mennonite Seminary's Biblical Lands Educational Seminars and Service (BLESS) program.

You are invited to experience the context of Acts, traveling as the co-workers of Paul in this course. We will begin in Antalya, Turkey, and end in Athens, with at least one day sailing on SailingActs and another week aboard a Turkish gulet. Students will experience the Roman Empire from the sea, learn to work together in sailing, visit numerous seaports and islands of the Acts stories, and engage in intensive reading and discussion of the culture, politics, religion and economics of the first century world. In this way you will discover new features of the creative witness and social factors that contributed to the rapid growth of the early church around the Mediterranean.

There are 2 or 3 places still available for either credit or non-credit students. Costs: \$2,915—includes tuition (3 semester hours credit or audit) and ALL expenses for the three weeks in the Mediterranean. Does not include international travel, passports and visas for Turkey (\$20). Contact Linford Stutzman (stutzmal@emu.edu) director of the BLESS program for more information.



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A Bender family, Mississippi bombing and a reconciled church (Part 3)

Adapted from DON, MILDRED
AND TITUS BENDER

But less than two years later, during a February night in 1966, the rebuilt chapel was dynamited a second time. Again Mennonite churches helped rebuild. This time, a local white pastor worked to have the white community stand with the church amidst the increased dissenting voices. That summer lights were shot out at the church and a rifle was fired into the home of one of Nevin and Esther's adult children. In addition, two of the Bender family were fired from their teaching roles for their advocacy for Choctaw and African-American students in the newly desegregated schools.

Two days before Christmas 1966, it happened a third time after a youth

caroling event. The FBI, as with the Sheriff before, refused to investigate the final bombing. But this time a larger number of white community leaders campaigned to support the Nanih Waiya Mennonite Church financially and to help stop the violence and dynamiting against their Choctaw neighbors. The Benders felt the shock giving way to confidence that this was "a last gasp of hatred." The testimonies of Choctaw high school youth also clearly declared that bombings of a building did not defeat the true church. One young mother stated, "I still keep praying and going back to the church again. The last bombing, I just about quit. But I just went again, and still had courage. We can't hate because we're all Christians." Another young man avowed, "We don't know who the persons are that

are doing this, but we love them whoever they are."

The Nanih Waiya church continues the work of community reconciliation today, with no more bombings in its history. Even in the face of extreme violence, Nevin and Esther exemplified Christ's equal love for all people. They did not waver in their identification as a brother and sister to their Choctaw and white friends alike. In the path of Jesus, the Benders refused to associate with only one part of the community even in a time and place of hostile alienation. May we do likewise in our own locations of division.

The full story of Esther and Nevin Bender, Sr. is found in Without the Loss of One, available from Cascadia Publishing House: www.cascadiapublishinghouse.com

Delegates gather in Christian community (continued from cover)

Priority #2, "Christian Community," guided the rest of the session.

Members of WCF led the group in a worship experience incorporating expressions from a variety of Christian spiritual streams, drawing from their 40-week worship project as a multi-denominational congregation. Pastor Del Glick challenged congregations to "be a fellowship that embraces all peoples . . . that unites all those around us to follow Jesus."

Delegates shared in communion and gave generously to VMC with an offering of over \$1,100. Participants interacted with Pastor Glick and Margot Eyring, project director of the *Stories Alive! Narratives around the Table* worship journey at WCF.

Throughout the day, members of WCF were gracious hosts, and lunch was no exception. A soulful rendition of "Amazing Grace" called delegates to reconvene, led by Potomac District representatives Karl

Nicholas Detweiler-Stoddard interacts with presenters Del Glick, Jennifer Davis Sensenig, and Clyde Kratz. Courtesy of author



Christian Community

This priority reflects the communal, organic nature of the body of Christ. Missional congregations worship together, extend hospitality, practice scriptural discernment, cultivate Christ-centered unity, and learn to agree and disagree in love.

McKinney, Luke Schrock-Hurst and Abraham Thomas. Continuing with the Christian community theme, three pastors shared their congregations' engagement with the topic of human sexuality: Del Glick, WCF, Jennifer Davis Sensenig, Community Mennonite Church, and Clyde Kratz, Zion Mennonite Church. Attendees had opportunity to interact with the presenters and learn how discernment and educational opportunities were shaped within these contexts. After open microphone, Conference Minister Owen Burkholder closed the session with a unison reading of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective summary statement, a fitting conclusion affirming the unity of VMC congregations in Christian community.

Introducing the Anabaptist Missional Project



anabaptist missional project

By AARON KAUFFMAN

Anabaptist Missional Project leadership team

Virginia Mennonite Missions recently granted Approved Ministry status to the Anabaptist Missional Project (AMP). A VMMissions Approved Ministry is a ministry that we do not directly administrate or control but is related to, or is like, the work that we do. VMMissions lends counsel and support to such ministries, including the receipting of financial contributions. The leadership team of AMP provided the following description of the group.

Background: In the fall of 2009, a small group of friends and acquaintances (ages 25-40) gathered in Harrisonburg, Virginia, for a weekend of fellowship, discernment and discussion. We discovered a common love for the Anabaptist tradition, a call to be involved in church leadership, and a passion for God's mission. At the same time, we found that we shared deep concerns regarding the current reality and direction of the Mennonite church in its various expressions. That group decided to meet again and again in locations such as Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania, each time reaching out to others energized by the same set of commitments. Eventually

a mission and vision emerged, as well as a name.

Identity: The Anabaptist Missional Project is a network of emerging leaders who love Jesus, care about the church, and seek to be part of God's mission in the world.

Mission: As a community of thinkers and practitioners, we exist to promote a constructive vision for church renewal, convene to fellowship and grow as emerging leaders, and network to create concrete initiatives for engaging our world missionally.

Vision: We commit to pursue the following seven goals:

- Foster Anabaptist identity and witness
- Root our faith in the reconciling work of Jesus Christ
- Live out God's coming kingdom in the power of the Spirit
- Reclaim worship, prayer, scripture reading, and confession as formative practices
- Engage in holistic mission
- Mentor and empower young adults
- Encourage unity in the midst of diversity

Ministries: AMP currently engages in three areas of ministry:

1. We promote our mission and vision through electronic media (anabaptistmissionalproject.org)
2. We convene and facilitate gatherings and conferences approximately two times a year.
3. We organize and empower working groups to develop the various initiatives that emerge in our gatherings. Presently there are groups promoting young adult ministry, church planting, and missional formation through scripture.

Leadership: AMP is led by a four-person, volunteer leadership team consisting of David Stutzman, Matthew Krabill, Joel Shenk and Aaron Kauffman. The leadership team frequently consults with a diverse network of participants across North America. We invite all interested people to join in this vision for the future of Mennonite Church USA and the broader Anabaptist movement.

Much given, much required: a reflection on Belizean visit

By CAROL RHODES

Dayton Mennonite Church

Down a street in the Central American town of Orange Walk, Belize, sits a garbage can. It's painted bright yellow with flowers and the words "Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life." This is the home of Nancy Marshall, joint mission worker with VMM and EMM. She devotes her time to pastoring Jesus Deaf Church and volunteering in special education classrooms at St. Peter's School.

On the second day of my visit Nancy was busy organizing and planning a New Year's Eve party to be held in her house later that evening. She wanted to give the young people a safe place to gather to avoid the temptation to spend the evening

carousing around town. The evening was a huge success with pizza, games, lots of laughter and talking and then a drive downtown to see the fireworks.

The next day was Sunday. Nancy started her rounds to pick up people for church at 7:30. The van purchased by Penny Power, drives out one direction to pick up several people, then to another town and to another. At ten o'clock (if all goes well) a full van arrives at the Mennonite Church to begin worship. This first Sunday of the year was special. Nancy had invited 18-year-old twins to give their testimony. They testified how God had saved them



A pre-school deaf boy benefits from Nancy's one-on-one tutoring as he learns sign language while his mother observes.

from a life of gangs, drugs and prison to a joy-filled life serving God. The twins prayed for each one there. The presence

In Christ, all things new

By SIMONA LOMBARDO
translated/edited by EVA EBERLY

Along the course of my life I committed many errors, often in good faith, as I lived to fulfill my personal needs according to worldly models. I didn't realize that those errors had a specific name—SIN.

Being completely unaware of the importance of marriage in God's eyes and ignorant of His precious teachings, my marriage at a very young age soon proved to be a tragic mistake. After escaping that trap of anguish, I began pursuing what I still hadn't found: love, understanding, acceptance, security. But this feverish search only caused more suffering, as I fell into the hands of those who at first seemed the "prince charming" I longed for. But every relationship left me more and more disappointed because none could fill the emptiness that grew ever greater inside of me.

During that period, my sister was converted to Christ. Knowing how much I needed Him, she shared the wonders He could do in my life. I refused to listen, thinking that following Jesus meant renouncing the attractive things I was running after. In my blindness I thought, how could a God I couldn't see, meet my needs when none of the "real" persons I knew and could see, were able to do so? In my disillusionment, however, I saw no light, no hope; death seemed the only way

of escape. One day in my weariness I challenged God, "If you're a God of love, give me a way out of this labyrinth. I can't on my own!"

Soon thereafter, I met Emanuele. As we talked together, he shared his faith in God. This special man soon won my heart with his simplicity and awakened the desire to know the God that was constantly on his lips. I knew that God was responding to my challenge! He was opening a new chapter in which I found forgiveness for my past and new life with Emanuele, but above all, with Jesus. But this relationship full of hopes and plans didn't end as expected. Emanuele was suddenly called to be with Jesus, leaving me with greater pain than any of the past, only this time I was not alone. Jesus gave courage, strength, dignity and meaning to that painful loss. Most of all, He gave me hope beyond death, of seeing Emanuele again, of eternity in fullness of joy and peace.

God used this grief to reach the hearts of Emanuele's family. Through my witness, his mother and brothers came to faith. Together we experience comfort and radical transformation in Jesus! He re-established my life and brought Salvo across my path, my wonderful husband



Simona and Salvo Lombardo. Courtesy of Eva Eberly

with whom I share my faith and service for God. Both of us have had many obstacles to overcome, but Jesus is in the midst of every battle, healing us, opening new horizons and a fresh vision of life. It's marvelous to understand that with God on our side, we aren't victims of adverse circumstances. The most precious thing I can have is Jesus, the Eternal God who valued me more than His very life, who forgives and loves me, considers me special as the apple of His eye, a steadfast, faithful God who'll never let me down. In Him my security rests and my empty places filled.

Simona & Salvo Lombardo (also Emanuele's mother and brothers) are active members at Shalom Mennonite Church, Palermo, Sicily. They gladly share their faith at every opportunity; Salvo assists in preaching. Pino & Rosanna Arena are their pastors/mentors.

of God's Spirit was evident that morning.

Throughout the week, I was humbled and challenged. Training and counseling were given again and again. Prayers offered for the sick and sick in heart. I saw food given to needy people. The table was set for friends and new acquaintances with more plates being added for more people until we laughingly said that this should be called "Nancy's Diner."

Scripture says that to the person who has much given to them, much will be required. After being involved in this 24-7 ministry in

Belize, I reflected, "I can speak and hear. I grew up in a stable family. I have had



Young women gather for Bible study, support, prayer and fellowship on Friday evenings. Nancy guides them in making good life choices and in spiritual nurture. Photos courtesy of Carol Rhodes

Christian training, my list goes on. Am I taking every opportunity to do what Christ requires of me, to serve Him and to speak for Him?"

Carol Rhodes, a member of Dayton Mennonite Church, brought unique gift bags with her to Belize. Each bag was filled with a toothbrush, toothpaste, candy and a photograph. Each member of Jesus' Deaf Church was given a picture of one of Carol's friends who had committed to praying for them. Carol returned with photos of the Belizean recipients. God has already begun answering their prayers.

Construction begins on innovative homes for long-term care

By **LANE ROUTZAHN**
VMRC Communications Intern

The January 5 groundbreaking marked the beginning of construction of Woodland Park—the newest neighborhood at VMRC and the first long-term care community of its kind in Virginia.

"As we enter the construction phase of Woodland Park, VMRC is joining the ranks of those retirement communities around the country which have committed themselves to providing the most innovative care to elders in their areas," said Ronald Yoder, president/CEO of VMRC. Woodland Park is a distinct neighborhood of private homes offering supportive care in a residential environment. The design and care models behind Woodland Park are rooted in The GREEN HOUSE® Project - a national movement which recognizes the need to offer a social model for elders who need long-term supportive care.

The layout of Woodland Park homes includes a common living area, open

kitchen for meal preparation, dining area and private bedrooms, providing a much more familiar, private, and personal atmosphere for residents. A sun room, den, outside courtyard, and front porch allow easy access to outdoors plus space for personal visits and hobbies.

"By offering private rooms and social spaces for 8-10 elders, Woodland Park intentionally lacks any resemblance to traditional models for long-term care," said Melissa Fortner, director of VMRC's Woodland Park project and vice president of Supportive Living.

"Elders living in Woodland Park will find the environment resembles a home in which they may have lived," said Marv Nisly, vice president of Design and Construction. "The homes will look and feel like private, residential homes."

Research has shown that elders living in Green House homes are able to attain a higher quality of life over traditional nursing homes because they can establish personal routines and enjoy daily living in

warm, inviting setting. Elders receive more direct care and engagement from versatile caregivers in the Green House homes. These caregivers have core training equal to certified nursing assistants with an additional 120 hours of training in Green House training and operations, household management, food safety and culinary skills, and CPR/first aid certification. A clinical support team of nurses, social workers, therapists, dieticians, activities staff and pharmacists provide care around elders' schedules under the direction of VMRC's onsite medical director and full-time director of nursing.

Woodland Park will eventually replace the long-term nursing care currently given at Oak Lea Nursing Home. The new neighborhood is being constructed on the site of VMRC's original building, The Virginia Mennonite Home, which was later known as the Woodland building. The first three homes in Woodland Park are expected to be completed by the end of the year.



The groundbreaking ceremony for Woodland Park. Persons with shovels are Ronald Yoder, president/CEO; Sheryl Wyse, chair of VMRC Board of Directors; Charles Tibbits, resident; Martha Morris, employee; Morris Yoder, resident; Janet Dove, employee; Melissa Fortner, director of Woodland Park project; Elly Moyers, VMRC Foundation Board. Courtesy of author

MARCH 2012

Connections

Prayer Calendar

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Prayer calendar sponsored by:

If you would like to sponsor the prayer calendar, please contact

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4 The high point of the church year in Jamaica is worshiping together with members from all over the island! Thank God for the worship, fellowship and inspiration that happens today at the annual Conference gathering.

5 This week Franco & Ina Arena, pastor couple from Sicily, make fraternal visits to sister congregations in Bari and Termoli (south/central Italy). May bonds of fellowship and partnership be strengthened.

6 Ask God to create great beauty in the fellowship and creative quilts of those gathered for the Spring Quilting Retreat at Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center.

7 Today the fraternal delegates from Memnonite Church of Trinidad & Tobago who attended the Jamaica Menonite Conference return to their home. Thank God for this opportunity and pray that it will encourage them in their ministry.

11 Pray for Milt & Ann Troyer serving at the Lezha Academic Center; Albania, as they enrich the lives of the students and staff there. Thank God for their interest and energy for the roles they fill.

12 Pray for families who attended Centro Koinonia's conference on family issues at local middle school last month. May God enable positive changes, resulting from the counsel/teaching received.

13 A new semester began at the Lezha Academic Center in February. Ask God to make this a new beginning of interesting educational experiences and deep spiritual understandings for teachers and students.

14 In Southeast Asia, Grace Schrock-Hurst asks us to pray for 450 families whose houses are being demolished in the community. May aid come especially to the mothers and children; some fathers have been taken from their homes.

1 This weekend VMC pastors will deepen their Sabbath practices with Ministry Retreat speaker Marva Dawn. Pray for Sabbath wholeness and joy for these leaders.

2 UCBC, network of churches recognized by Italian government including some Menonite congregations, holds a national conference on church planting March 1-2. May each participant catch a fresh vision!

3 Today Jamaica Menonite Church delegates gather in Kingston for business sessions. Aaron Kauffman and Sarah Bixler are attending as guests from VMM and VMC. Ask God to make this a beneficial day for JMC.

9 The new group of *Fransenders* is forming for 2012. Young adults are encouraged to listen for God's voice in calling and sending them. Contact Ken Horst, Director of *Fransend* for opportunities around the world.

8 Today is "Woman's Day" in Italy. Pray for the special dinner/evening organized by Centro Koinonia ladies, for Ina Arena, the guest speaker/singer, and for un-churched family and friends who are invited.

15 In rural Jamaica, Rodney & Eve Knepp, VMC *Fransenders*, meet with the youth of Ridge Menn. Fellowship sharing Bible studies and enjoying fellowship. Ask God to draw them close to Himself through these interactions.

15 Loren & Earlene Horst and Rich & Laurel Horst are visiting Trinidad. Laurel will provide resources for SS teachers. Pray that God will make this input valuable as teachers and children learn God's principles together.

16 Thank God for the voices of VMC participants in their 20s and 30s gathered at Park View Menonite Church Sunday evening for fellowship and discussion on their visions for Church.

17 Thank God for the voices of VMC participants in their 20s and 30s gathered at Park View Menonite Church Sunday evening for fellowship and discussion on their visions for Church.

23 Church planters Randy & Lea Ann Coblentz, in James County, Va., endeavor to bring together a group of people for worship and study. Ask God to open doors for this to happen.

22 Ask for the Holy Spirit's blessing on retreat leader Kevin Clark and men of all ages during this weekend's Men's Retreat at Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center.

22 Hosanna in Southeast Asia meets with women and shares life experiences, good food and stories from God's Word. Thank God for her consistent ministry with a wide variety of people.

20 As Italy attempts to bring financial stability in recession, social/political turmoil is erupting, creating a climate of fear and despair for the future. Pray that in this crisis the Gospel will have greater appeal!

19 The Menonite Camping Assn.'s Bi-National Conference begins today and continues through March 22 at Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center. Pray for MCA staff during this time of learning and renewal.

18 Today VMM *Fransender*, Emily Gingrich, leaves the Czech Republic after serving there for a year. Ask for God to guide her in the months of transition ahead as she finds her new role for service and missions.

30 VMM/EMM workers, Michael & Ruth serving in South Asia ask us to pray that when Jamie leaves next month (she served as a nanny for the children), God will provide someone else to fill this important role.

29 This evening a Celebration of God's Mission is held at Mt. View MC, Lyndhurst. If you have reserved your space, come and enjoy dinner and the stories of mission impulses around Southern District and the world.

28 Remember Allen Umble, his faithful missionary service in Albania, his love for the people, and his hopes for the church there. May the Spirit guide and enable him for each responsibility.

27 In Trinidad, Richard & Margaret Keeler relate to a family where the father has significant health issues; he enjoys hearing God's Word and prayer. Ask God to bring him and the family to a commitment to Christ soon.

26 Everence Advocates at EMHS Tuesday night will take in the Ted & Co. show, "What's so funny about money?" Pray for new growth in our stewardship of God's resources.

25 This Lent ask for God's courage for those giving up violence of heart, tongue and fist, seeking to put into practice VMC's Peace Committee's Covenant of Christian Nonviolence.

31 Congregations are preparing for vacation Bible school experiences for children and youth. Ask God to give creativity and enthusiasm to the planners for this important part of Christian formation and identity.

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Virginia Mennonite Conference
901 Parkwood Drive
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Announcements

Help with **Mennonite Central Committee Turkey Canning at Hinton Mennonite Relief Center.** On Tuesday, Feb. 28, VMC churches are scheduled to help. Friday, March 2, is a Community Day. Help is needed from 5 a.m. until 11 p.m. each day, and help is especially needed in the early morning. Anyone is welcome to come and help on any day earlier that week!

Funds are needed to purchase turkey for processing and for the ongoing operation of the Relief Center. To contribute to this project, send a donation to the Hinton Mennonite Relief Center, PO Box 519, Dayton, Va., 22821.

If you have any questions about this project you can 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.

A **Women's Community Bible Study** is being offered at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church using Beth Moore's study: *DAVID—Seeking a Heart Like His*. This edition features brand-new video and revised member book. If you've ever experienced doubts, temptations, inconsistencies, losses, or anguish over family problems, join Beth on an exciting journey getting to know King David, the man after God's own heart. Sessions will be on Tuesdays March 6-May 22. Morning sessions will be 9-11 a.m. and evening sessions will be 6:30-8:15. You will need to order your own book. For registration details contact Lisa Gerber at (540) 434-1353.

Ridgeway Mennonite Church seeks a half-time Associate Pastor with emphasis on worship and youth. Contact the church at: ridgewaymennonitechurch@yahoo.com

Everyone is invited to a **Celebration of God's Mission** event coming to various areas of Virginia Mennonite Conference:

Providence Mennonite Church on Sunday, Feb. 26, at 5:00 p.m. Respond to C2Mericle@aol.com or (757) 888-3052.

Mt. View Mennonite Church on Thursday, March 29, at 6:30 p.m. Respond to rodney.nice@gmail.com or (540) 490-2138.

EMHS Dining Hall, Harrisonburg, on Tuesday, May 1, 6:30 p.m. Respond to diane.bowman@vmmissions.org or (540) 434-9727.

Hear about mission impulses in these communities and around the world. Families with children are welcome.

Women: join your sisters on a new date at a new place! "We are God's Beloved Daughters—Sister Care: Equipping Women for Caring Ministry" with guest speakers Rhoda Keener and Carolyn Heggen will be the theme of Mennonite Women of Virginia's Fall Retreat, Sept. 21-23, at Eagle Eyrie Baptist Conference Center in Lynchburg, Va. Watch for registration brochures in August.

WCRC Tour Retreat—Experience Hampton Roads, April 23-26. Using Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center for an idyllic anchor and lodging, board a motor coach to visit Denbigh Mennonite community, Virginia Air & Space Center, IMAX, Miss Hampton II Harbor Cruise, Peninsula Town Center, Calvary Community Church, and Jamestown Settlement. For brochure, contact Ed & Edie Bontrager, tour coordinators, at eebontrager@comcast.net or (540) 438-8304, or the WCRC program director, Jenn Hill, at programs@wcrc.info or (866) 566-4875.

Join us for **"Peru—Land of the Inca,"** May 8-15. Visit Machu Picchu, voted in 2007 as one of the New Seven Wonders of the World, and Lima, Cusco, Uruamba Valley, Sacsayhuaman, and Quenqu. Visit with Eastern Mennonite Mission workers and churches and more. Contact tour leaders Ed & Edie Bontrager at (540) 438-8304 or eebontrager@comcast.net

EMU professor featured on national radio program

Dr. Gloria Rhodes, professor in peace-building and conflict at Eastern Mennonite University, and department chair of applied social sciences, will speak on the Shaping Families radio program March 18. Locally the program airs on WSVA (550) and WBTV (1470) at 7:15 and 9:15 a.m. respectively.

Rhodes tells how she and her husband, Brad Lehman, a computer programmer, tackle the everyday conflicts of how to make fulfilling and demanding careers combine with parenting. The episode is titled, "Working Parents Juggling Act."

The program is produced by MennoMedia, an agency based in Harrisonburg serving Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada by creating faith-based print, video, radio and web resources for the general public.