

# CROSS WALK



## LIGHTING Our Way - PATRICK PREHEIM

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#### Resurrection Sightings

“An old rabbi was once asked why so few people were finding God. He wisely replied that people are not willing to look that low” (quoted by Harvey and Lois Seifert in *A Guide to Prayer*, p.181). Jesus was born in a stable. In Matthew 28 two Marys meet the risen Christ in a graveyard. In writing about the cross in 1st Corinthians Paul explains that God has chosen what seems foolish in this world to magnify the power of God. An animal trough, a cemetery, the cross—not the most appealing points of focus and yet the very places the New Testament gospels direct us to meet our saviour. I doubt this is news to any of us. The problem is an emotional one, not a cognitive one. We know where to find Christ and God; we just don’t want to go there. Animal shelters are filthy and chaotic; cemeteries are filled with broken dreams; the crucifixion of false images is so painful. Who really wants this?? Not many, which is why so few people are finding God. Experiencing resurrection entails a goodly amount of reflective internal work. This is, I believe, one reason people do not really want to find God.

In the absence of internal reflection, external stimuli can sometimes provide us a different platform on which to meet the risen Christ. The two women of Matthew 28, after all, are told to report their Christ sighting to the other disciples and encourage them toward Galilee where Jesus would meet them. Sometimes we need to hear resurrection news from others or shift our locality to better sense the risen Christ. The stories I have heard of Jenn Regier and Stephanie Siemens in Burkina Faso, of RJC students during service week, of the Schroeders in their MDS assignments confirm that resurrection comes into focus as we hear a testimony or break routine. Here again, we are often sceptical of testimonies and fear of the unknown keeps us close to the familiar. We want to find God, but we really don’t want to visit either the graveyard or Galilee. Christ of the Breadlines is one of Quaker Fritz Eichenberg’s most famous woodcarvings. It is an image which captures the idea that the risen Christ is found in one of those places we frequent less often.

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# BOARD Report

- BOB SAWATZKY



## Cross Walk

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Mennonite Church**

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*Our goal is to keep you informed and connected with one another. We would appreciate contact from you regarding any news items you may have about the joys and concerns of our church family.*

**Articles for the next Cross Walk are due on May 29th**

The NPMC Board of Deacons met on April 18, 2011. Following are some of the highlights of our discussions:

**Patrick** opened the meeting with a poem written by David Waltner-Toews entitled "Tante Tina's Lament". It focused on generational differences, and how faces change as time moves on. We are grateful to our ancestors for their dedication and wisdom. We see these changes within our congregation and respect the differences. The work of God continues.

**Brandee Borne and Jake Ens**, members of the Shekinah Retreat planning committee, addressed the Board, with their considerations and projected costs for the Shekinah weekend this fall. The Board requested they return with a reasonable flat fee proposal, which will be supplemented, as required.

**Ross Borne** presented the financial statements to the end of March, indicating that we are slightly behind budget, but he thinks we will catch up by the end of April.

The **pastoral team** reported on their many activities during the month of March. They are certainly active in a variety of ways within our church and within our community, and I think it worth repeating, that we are blessed to have such a dedicated team serving the needs of our congregation.

**The deacons** reported that their respective departments are operating smoothly, without any major hitches, and with a number of innovative ideas. Thanks to the deacons, to the many coordinators and other volunteers, who help make NPMC a healthy and vibrant congregational community.

**Carl Wiens** reported that preliminary preparation work on the front foyer renovations will begin on May 2. We look forward to getting this project under way, following a lot of effort, fund raising and planning.

The **pastoral reviews** have now been completed by the MC Sask. committee and the results will be discussed with each individual pastor in early May, and shared with the congregation at the semi-annual meeting on June 5.

**Tammy Forrester** organized a cleanup and "purge" crew, which was very busy this past week. They tidied up the closet space in the education wing, and did some major organizing and cleanup in the basement. This project was overdue, and our thanks to Tammy for taking it on.

**Hillary Fast** was awarded the Women's Missionary Society Youth Services Bursary. We wish her well in her future endeavors.

**Anita** closed the meeting in prayer.

## CHURCH Family News

### Congratulations To

**Julia Brown**, granddaughter of **Betty Brown & Delmar Rempel**, who will be convocating in July with Honors from the Queen's Medical College in Nottingham University

**Sara Bartel** as she won in the category of Best Female Solo at the Sask. Valley Music Festival

### Our Condolences to

**Dave & Marlene Froese, Bonnie & Mitch Dahl, Tammy & Cam Forrester** on the death of their brother-in-law and uncle, Harold Krause



On April 12, twenty members attended the Ruth Mission Society Meeting. Our guest speaker was Lydia Schroeder. Lydia and Peter are members of Nutana Park Mennonite Church. With the use of pictures on the computer, Lydia told us about their two months in Lyles, Tennessee, where they worked with MDS. Lyles is about one hour south-west of Nashville. The MDS volunteers were housed at a camp owned by the United Methodist Church who provided the facility rent free. MDS was responsible for the utilities. The accommodation at the camp was very comfortable.

The two counties of Perry and Hickman, that Peter and Lydia worked in together with MDS, were known as the poorest counties in the United States. About a year ago, the area was severely damaged by floods due to heavy rains and tornadoes. Some people had no insurance and others did not receive enough insurance to pay for the repairs. The costs, for those that did not have enough insurance, were subsidized by the Red Cross. The costs, for those with no insurance, were paid for by the Red Cross if they qualified.

MDS worked with the Red Cross, which was the Long Term Recovery Team for that area. The Red Cross did the casework to determine who qualified for financial help to pay for the materials. The volunteers then did the repairs or built new homes. During the months of January and February, when Lydia and Peter were there, they helped repair twenty homes and started building two new ones. The new homes were finished by the end of March by a new team of volunteers.

The MDS volunteers have a sense of accomplishment when they complete a renovation or build a new home. Their reward is the joy that they see in the eyes of the people they have helped. People who were very discouraged are now filled with a sense of hope. This is the sixth year that Lydia and Peter have worked with MDS on similar projects. Nature causes extreme destruction and there is always work for MDS.

The presentation was very informative and was enjoyed by the members of the Ruth Mission Society.

## LIGHTING Our Way - continued from page 1

In this Easter season I join with Psalm 139 in believing that God can find us anyplace. I think it is also true, however, that there are some neighborhoods where the glow of the risen Christ will

be unmistakable: in the backwater of Galilee, in the marginalized of society, and also in the personal cemeteries of our loss. Christ is alive and waiting to be seen. Will we go?

# RUTH MISSION Society

- MARG KRAUSE

# FAITH, Film & Fiction

- PATTY FRIESEN

**Clara and Mr. Tiffany** by Susan Vreeland was another of her artist novels about the stained glass artist Claude Tiffany. I also enjoyed **The Forest Lover** about Emily Carr.

**Skipping a Beat** by Sarah Pekkanen looks fluffy initially but grows into a beautiful renewal of a marriage.

**Babies**, a documentary is a fascinating and fun look into the births and development of four babies from different cultures.

**Secretariat** was a delightful, Disneyish movie about a racehorse and a family. Good viewing for horse-lovers and families.

# RJC Alternate Learning Service Opportunity

Calgary, AB  
With MCC  
March 28th to April 1st, 2011  
By Parker Olfert



Eleven other RJC students and I got the opportunity to do our ALSO (Alternative Learning and Service Opportunities) week in Calgary Alberta with MCC. We drove out on Monday morning with Joel Driedger as our teacher and bus driver. We arrived at Dalhousie Community Church where we were to stay for the week. The next day we met our guides and headed off to the Salvation Army. We took public transit everywhere. For some of us, it was the first time we have ever been on a C-Train. We got to the Salvation Army facility and then split up into 2 groups. One group got to help make lunch and the other cleaned the laundry facility. After a morning of work, we got to sit and eat lunch with people who are currently experiencing homelessness. Then we headed off to clean a trailer that was turned into a youth drop-in centre for the homeless. We took public transit back to Dalhousie Community Church for the night.

On Wednesday we went to a place called Inn From the Cold. It is the only shelter that allowed whole families experiencing homelessness to stay in. We got a tour, an informative lecture and got to play a game which related directly to homelessness. After eating lunch in a park, we went to a place called Alphahouse. What they do is take in homeless people who are intoxicated or feeling the effects of drugs and give them a place to stay for a night. They also give everyone a sandwich for energy. We made 704 of these sandwiches while we were there in a little over an hour. After that we enjoyed some down time and went out for

supper as a group. That evening, we went back to the Alphahouse to go on a "night tour". We were split into small groups and each given a tour guide who is or has previously experienced homelessness. It was by far the highlight of my trip. Our guide was named Reg. He walked us around downtown Calgary and to the drop in centre telling his story and what can happen on the streets. It was an eye-opening experience to see the different way of life that I have never thought to experience before. They have their own language and ways of staying alive. It was really something to not only see but experience as well.

The next day we headed back to the Salvation Army and split into 2 groups again-- one in the kitchen and one to do random cleaning jobs around the building. We got to eat lunch and talk to the people experiencing homelessness again. We headed over to MCC to make survival kits for the disaster in Haiti. After that, we had a powerful presentation on HIV/ AIDS. We watched a very touching movie and then discussed it. To finish off the trip, we talked about what happened during the week and shared our stories of high and lowlights. We headed back to the church for one last night before leaving Friday morning.

This was a great experience for me and I am so glad I was able to be on this trip. It was amazingly powerful hearing about the homeless' stories and see the world from their point of view. It has drastically changed my view on people experiencing homelessness and will stick with me for the rest of my life!





# RJC Alternate Learning Service Opportunity

Mississippi, USA  
By Macaila Funk

**Far Left:** Luke and Adam using their carpentry skills

**Left:** Peter, Emily, Macaila and Wally in front of the building project

**Below:** Sara using her physical strength

On Thursday, March 24 at 2:30 a.m. we waited sleepy-eyed in the RJC lobby for the bus, which was late. We finally got on the road after waiting a long time for our bus to arrive, most of us asleep even before we left Rosthern. For the majority of us, the 40 hour bus ride is a blur: sleeping for a few hours, then stopping at a buffet for food, then sleeping again, then waking up and not having any sense of time, then stopping at a gas station to brush our teeth, then sleeping, then eating, then stopping at a hotel, then waking up early just to get on the bus once again, and so on.

On our way down, we took a couple pit stops and visited Graceland in Memphis where we had the privilege of signing Elvis' wall, and visiting the French Quarter in New Orleans where we got to listen to music, watch shows on the street and experience a variety of new foods, such as spicy Cajun food, alligator and Beignet's. After meeting the rest of the chaperones in New Orleans, who did not join us on the bus ride down, we drove to Bay St. Louis that evening where we stayed the night. The next morning, once again we all loaded our bags onto the bus and headed down to Pass Christian, where we attended a church service at Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church. This is the church that Billy Morgan attends, who is an owner of a house that RJC helped build the first time they did service work in Mississippi. We all enjoyed the enthusiastic music that was put into the service by the church choir, and even got to sing our own song to the rest of the congregation. Although our song was not as full of "Hallelujah's and "Praise the Lord's as theirs was, the people still told us we sounded like angels. After the service, we quickly grabbed lunch on the way and headed to our Swamp Tour. We enjoyed the warm breeze as we glided down the water on our tour

boats, and were intrigued by the many sights of alligators and other wild animals we saw along the way. That evening we finally got to our destination and settled into the all-boys boarding school where we stayed all week during our work. After our orientation that night, we were all exhausted from a long day, and had a good night's rest for our work early the next morning.

From Monday to Friday, we worked bright and early each morning until around 4 p.m. and then spent the evenings at the dorms we were staying in. Everybody from the group was willing to work their hardest and put in their greatest effort. Some ways in which we helped were: putting up siding, cocking, painting and for many hours - hammering nails. Our group worked so well together that we ended up doing way more than we were expected to.

On Monday afternoon, we helped by unloading approximately 700 chairs and plenty tables into the brand new Community Center that was just finished in Bay St. Louis. After ripping endless amounts of plastic and carrying great amounts of cardboard, we were rewarded by the Mayor with a fire permit to have a bonfire on the beach with all of the leftover wooden pallets from the chairs. That evening we enjoyed the roaring fire that was 2 or 3 times as tall as us, while dipping in the ocean when we wanted to. The heat from the fire scared away the gnats that had been bothering

us before. We did something new after every workday. One evening, we drove to the Gulfport outlet mall and power-shopped for an hour, and another night we went to a local cafe for supper, where there were two things on the menu: burgers and live music. We listened to the singer 'Wes Lee' while we ate our hamburgers, and after a while, ended up dancing to the music. One work day, while on our lunch break, we had the privilege of listening to the stories of some hurricane

Katrina survivors, who had received a house built by Habitat for Humanity. This was truly inspiring in listening to how the people had lost everything, but because of volunteer's like us, they could start their lives again, and be able to raise their families, and enjoy their lives again.

There are many reasons that this service trip to Mississippi influenced us as students. We learnt really how much we were helping these people after doing a mere 5 days of service work. This showed us how much a little act of kindness can help in a much bigger picture. The trip made us very grateful for our living situations, which are much better than many people that have

survived hurricane Katrina. Most of us also learnt how to do something new, like using power tools, or maybe even using a hammer! Every person you ask about our service trip will have a different outlook on how it has influenced them, but I can tell you that every single person that came along came back to Saskatchewan with a different outlook on one thing or another.



# RJC Alternate Learning Service Opportunity

Guatemala – El Salvador  
By Geraldine Balzer

**Right:** New friends in Tonina

**Below:** Hillary painting the Cooperativa



## Who Is Your Neighbour?

As the RJC students prepared for the trip to Guatemala, Jim Epp asked them to consider this question: "Who is your neighbour?" As we thought about our responses and wondered how our experiences would help us understand this question, we had no idea that we would be participating in a 21st century version of a parable. "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when he was attacked by robbers." Translate that as a group was travelling from Guatemala City to El Salvador when they were attacked by robbers. However, just as the parable of the Good Samaritan does not end with the robbery, neither does our story. While those two minutes were perhaps the most terrifying of my life, all that was lost was money. In the process we gained an insight into the daily lives of Guatemalans and were the recipients of great kindness.

We arrived in El Salvador two days later than planned and were welcomed with open hearts into the community of La Línea. La Línea is an orderly collection of sheet metal homes built between a ravine and a highway on both sides of an abandoned rail line. This is a squatters community, a suburb of several hundred families living in temporary homes for the last thirty years. Refugees from the civil war fled to this area in 1980. In 2001 a mudslide destroyed many of the homes. We walked through the community and saw small homes with multigenerational families, gutters with wastewater running alongside the street, the remnants of homes that had slid into the ravine and a beautiful church perched on the edge of the precipice. This was a place I could



never imagine living. Poverty, gangs, violence, and yet there was hope.

Rather than accept MCC money for rebuilding after the mudslide, the members of the Baptist church asked that the money be saved for the purchase of land for a permanent community, La Tierra Promitida - the promised land. We toured the new land, enough space for 150 families on an abandoned coffee plantation with orange, mango, and guava trees. There will be space for fields of corn and beans, forest to serve as the lungs of the community, water, and safety. As we walked over the land, we also saw pride of ownership and dreams of the future. Since we have returned to Canada, the land deal has been finalized and the land distribution can begin.

Our visit to La Línea concluded with a soccer tournament complete with trophies and opening speeches by a representative of the mayor's office and an evening of fellowship with the youth group. The warmth of El Salvador's climate was eclipsed by the warmth of its residents, people who wanted nothing more than to have their stories heard and understood. We were fortunate to have Silvia and Israel, two youth from the community travel with us for the remainder of our trip, a trip which took us to La Línea in northwestern Guatemala. This time, however, we weren't on the rail line, but on the border with Mexico.

The Cooperative Agrícola de La Línea is several hundred metres from the Mexican border and belongs to people of three communities, Tonina, Jalu, and Las Maravillas. Only Tonina is accessible by road, a 12.5 km trip that took 90 minutes in the back of a

pickup. Spanish colonialism forced Mayan people off the fertile lowlands in order to create large plantations of sugar cane and bananas. As a result, they now inhabit the rugged mountain sides.

While in Tonina, we were given a tour of their thriving floral industry, their food security gardens, and their new irrigation system. Water is abundant in this area and the proximity to Mexico creates an ideal market for fresh flowers. The Cooperativa will be a retail centre for the purchase of agricultural supplies as well as a collection point for flowers. Currently each farmer carries his cut flowers to Mexico for sale. The dream is to collect flowers at the Cooperativa and have people in charge of distribution. This will allow individual farmers to focus on their production. As their gardens progress, they hope to market extra produce as well. The lower prices in Guatemala will attract Mexican buyers.

These communities are on the side of Tacmun, the second highest peak in Central America. During December and January, 20-150 hikers pass by daily. The dream is to develop this tourist market and have a canteen selling food and water. Our task while we were there was to paint the two buildings, build a retaining wall, and reconstruct the outhouse. We were able to pause often to enjoy the amazing views, the great food, and the warmth of our hosts.

Who is my neighbour? What began as a moment of fear was soon eclipsed by the many positive experiences and relationships of the two weeks. I continue to be awed by the hope Central Americans have for rebuilding their lives after thirty years of civil war, 500 years of colonialism, and continued exploitation by governments and multinational corporations. I'm impressed by their sense of community as they work together, always considering the collective rather than the individual. We have much to learn from them. I can hardly wait for my next trip to visit my neighbours.



# LIFE IN Germany

- JAMES, SUSAN, COLIN & ELLA FUNK

**Far Left:** Each room has the seal of the city in some form on the walls, doors or floor  
**Left:** Brass, wood, stone. The only damage from the war is the loss of the stained glass window

While we were in Hamburg, we tried to balance out things for the kids to do and things for the adults to do. Because Colin enjoys history and Ella likes pretty things, we can usually find something we will all enjoy. In Hamburg we chose a tour of the Hamburg Rathaus. Hamburg has been a wealthy port city for many centuries and the Rathaus, as a major political seat of power, reflects the wealth and stature of its community. The building is magnificent and incredibly was not harmed during World War II.

**Below Left:** Lending a helping hand  
**Below:** Koala at Noosa National Park



# WORLD Adventure

-ARNOLD, VICKY, JAKE & SARAH NEUFELD

Byron Bay, Australia looked very different from when Vicky was there 20 years ago, however, it was even more beautiful than she remembered. We hiked around the lighthouse and observed the dolphins and turtles in the ocean. Jake and Arn took some long board surf lessons at Flat Rock and had a blast.

Sea, sand, surf, forest and koalas are just a few of the beautiful things to see at Noosa National Park. We enjoyed hiking around and exploring the beauty that nature had for us.



# Asian ADVENTURE

- LYDIA & CARL WIENS



**Above:** Angkor Wat in Cambodia

Oliver's gaze was fixed on Tim and Carl's fishing boat as it grew smaller, until it threatened to disappear altogether into the calm blue of the horizon. To say that Oliver's two-year-old attention span had a lot to focus on would be an understatement. There were mysteries to be uncovered on this beach in the Philippines, sand to be played in, castles to build. But since Tim and Carl had set off towards sea in search of adventure, Oliver abandoned his other pursuits. He was quite determined that Grandpa and Dad had forgotten him and he would have to go meet them before they started to miss him. His mother, my daughter, Larisa calmly told him that we would have to wait for them to return to us as we couldn't walk on water. "Well," said Oliver, squinting into the surf. "Maybe we should try."

Had you told me that as I entered the sixtieth year of life I would be zip-lining in mountains of Thailand, eating at street vendors in Chiang Mai, and going down the Li on a suspicious looking bamboo raft, I would have advised you to spend a little less time in the sun. But family has a way of taking you to places you never dreamt of seeing. So when our daughter, Larisa, and her family moved to Macau, China, my husband Carl and I found ourselves booking two tickets to Asia. Macau is a relatively small city of 500 000 directly across the bay from Hong Kong. It is the most densely populated area in the world. That, together with mostly smoggy skies, makes any patch of blue sky a rare treat. The warmth and excitement of being with our children and their international friends more than made up for that rarity.

Larisa booked us into a locally owned resort in the Philippines, on a small island in the southern province of Bohol. I was excited to have a break from the city. I grew up on a farm in rural Manitoba so I feel com-

fortable in quieter settings. I fell asleep listening to the sounds of the wind tickling the leaves of the trees. The trees slept fitfully that night. To me, rest came easily. That is until 4:30 a.m. when I was awakened by a sound from my childhood, blissfully forgotten, the crow of a rooster. As our feathered friend encouraged his buddies to join in the symphony, Carl and I decided to go for a walk. To my surprise, the roads of the tiny island were already yawning to life. Bikes laden with food pedaled in the supplies for the day. Locals greeted us, eager to practice their English. Most people we spoke to had one or several family members working abroad. The money sent home by the foreign worker sustains the Filipino economy. Many of the mothers are leaving their children to work as nannies and housekeepers in countries around the world. Philippines is often called "the motherless country."

Our days were spent fishing, snorkeling, crab-hunting and playing with Oliver. We took a tour of some of the other islands in the area with one of the local fishermen. One of the islands was a remote fishing village with small shacks. It had no school or electricity. Only a few children attended school at a neighboring island. It did sport a very nice looking church - the only painted building on the island - and a photo voltaic panel which powered a large screen TV for the benefit of the island.

After the Philippines Carl and I ventured out on our own and flew to Cambodia. Thank goodness we already had some experience with Asian auto travel. White lines, faded from the sun, had long since given up suggesting a route for Phnom Penh's city traffic of autos, tuk tuks, tractors, mopeds, and bicycles. The traffic flowed through the city in a cloud of exhaust making up the rules as it went along. I don't know how we didn't see more accidents.



We visited the Tuol Sleng Museum which was used as the torture and death chamber during the Khmer Rouge Revolution in the 1970's. About one quarter of Cambodia's people died during the Pol Pot Purge. The professional and middle class was virtually wiped out. Rows and rows of pictures silently showcased the masses of the massacred. This violence was incomprehensible and any attempt to rectify it sent my brain on a tangent of clichés that did nothing to help me understand why life's journey takes some in such unfair directions. At times like these, there are no words. There is nothing but feeling. There is nothing but tears. My tears were a prayer for Cambodia to continue rising from the ashes of this dark time. MCC is there to be part of this rebirthing. They work very closely with other NGO's. They only get involved in projects that are embraced by the Cambodian people. Education that moves from rote learning to creative and critical thinking is crucial to continued freedom of speech and expression in Cambodia. The history of the Khmer Rouge is finally going to be included in the school curriculum. Much of the Cambodian population that was born prior to 1975 lives with post-traumatic stress. Little by way of support or understanding is available for these people. According to Bud and Sharri, the MCC country reps, much of this pain is being lived out in very high incidences of domestic violence. The need for peace education and interventions is obvious and they have a vision for addressing these needs but lack the funding as the recent recession has also reduced money for MCC.

After Phnom Penh we traveled to Seam Reap to visit the temples that were built from the 8th to the 13th century by Hindus and Buddhists amongst many conflicts between the two groups to have control. They are the pride of Cambodians as they struggle to rebuild their lives after years of terror and

trauma. Angkor Wat is the world's largest religious building and is often called the eighth wonder of the world. The architecture and stone art set amid towering trees and undisturbed landscape inspire awe at their extravagant beauty. The stone carvings of the gods at the pinnacle of each temple closely resemble the king in charge at the time of construction.

We left Cambodia to enjoy Bangkok at a more relaxing and delicious pace. Walking around the city we gladly took our breaks at the many street vendors offering everything from the classic Pad Thai, to fruit smoothies, to deep-fried crickets. On our way to the BMK Shopping Mall, Carl and I happened upon an art gallery. The building itself was worth the visit, a ten story completely round structure. The exhibits done by Thai, Chinese and European artists depicted the power of consumerism to deaden soul and spirit. After three well spent hours, Carl and I dragged our feet towards our original destination. We spent five minutes in the mall, looked at each other and said, "Let's get out of here." We proceeded to the sanctuary of the nearest park.

Minus forty welcomed us home with open, if somewhat frigid arms. We look at our pictures and smile at fond memories of spending time with our family. I also continue to ponder how to live with integrity in the realities of the global community. Hanging clothes rather than using the dryer as well as cooking more vegetarian, the staple of the Asian Cuisine, are small gestures that I offer. Financial support for MCC seems a given. After spending time in three countries that do not enjoy the democratic freedoms of Canada, there is very little that would keep me from voting in the upcoming election. Democracy is a gift to be cherished and nourished if it is to flourish.



**Above:** Carl and Lydia  
**Below:** Oliver at the beach in the Philippines.





### The Young Prophets

I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;  
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
your old men shall dream dreams,  
and your young men shall see visions.  
Even on the male and female slaves,  
in those days, I will pour out my spirit.  
Joel 2:28-29

Our youth are busy; school, sports, music, dance, art, friends, church, work. Many things compete for time. Where do we put our priorities?

In the last number of weeks, I have been privileged to see several sports games and musical events in which some of our youth are involved. They are gifted. They are also developing multiple skills for the life of discipleship, and for engagement with the broader world.

I have seen several of our youth display leadership abilities within their sports teams. This may or may not include being named captain of the team. However, these displays of leadership, teamwork, and good sportsmanship (sportspeopleship?) are heartening to see. An example of this is helping up a member of the opposite team in a basketball game, or cheering for the other team when they are far behind and make strides to catch up. Another example is not going for dirty shots at other players in hockey. There is a respect for self, other, and the game, when trying to win by giving one's best, instead of trying to win at all costs.

In team games, one learns not only individual skills, but also how to work with a team. There is drive that is necessary to push oneself when the game or skills being practiced is not "fun" at that particular time. There is the learning that comes with losing;

even giving one's best does not always mean that one achieves one's desires. Losing is humbling. It is not a fun experience, but a good losing experience. There is also the joy of winning, the adrenaline and exultation of hard work paying off.

All of these can help us understand a life of discipleship, of following after Christ. It takes dedication, and work, and it doesn't always feel "fun." But it's worth it.

Listening to some of the musical performances our youth are involved in is also a joy. Listening to the Saskatoon Children's Choir sing about peace, and giving voice to the silenced, is powerful. These children and youth are our prophets, if we will listen.

This past month we had the generous support of you, the congregation, for raising funds for the youth, especially attending Youth Assembly in Waterloo. Here, we will worship together, as well as serve together. There are designated times for service in the community. The Saskatoon Children's Choir will be bringing school kits and sharing with other children and youth in South Africa. In the MCC Giving Catalogue, you will find the hockey team of one of our youth, and their service ideas. We will be helping collect canned goods for the food bank, as well as helping at the MCC sale in June. All in all, our youth have a desire to serve, to show and live our faith in tangible ways. It may not be what we expect, or necessarily how things have been done in the past, but let us, together, engage our imaginations for what it means to serve in our contexts. How might we use our gifts, our experiences, to share the good news of peace and justice, salvation and reconciliation for all? Perhaps we should listen to the voices of our prophets, speaking loudly in words and deeds, in the concert hall, in the arena, on the field, or on the court.

# YWalk

- REECE RETZLAFF

Tuesdays  
Bible Study  
Jr. High: 7:00-8:30 pm  
Sr. High: 8:30-10:00



# Venture CLUB

- KATHY OLFERT



**Above:** Sewing class models their finished garments

**Left:** Woodworking class displays their wares

**Below:** Checking out a handmade pump at the MCC office.



On March 15th, the Venture Club went to visit the MCC office to learn more about water. We had three MCC Staff tell us the story of water in God's Creation and how easily we as Canadians can access clean, healthy water just by turning a tap, while people from other countries often spend hours retrieving water that isn't so healthy, clean or accessible. We also played a water relay game with make-shift pumps that MCC sometimes offers to undeveloped countries until they can get good wells and cisterns. Finally, our club voted to give their \$100.00 in donated coins to a water project in Vietnam.

On March 29th, we completed our year of Venture Club with a Closing program where our members recited their pledge, sang their theme song "Come and See", as well as a new song that they learned this year- "What Color is God's Skin?". Each skill group had a presentation by their leaders talking about the things they made and the skills they learned during the year. The tables were full of their projects and the sewing group had a fashion show of their sewing outfits. Certainly, all this was not possible without the dedication of the volunteer leaders. The children completing Venture Club were all invited personally to attend Youth Group next year by Reece and the youth group.

We invite all children who wish to join next year to look for our September registration date in the bulletin.



# Upcoming Events & IMPORTANT NOTES



May 6

## Three Saskatoon Seminaries Joint Convocation

7:00 pm

Third Avenue United Church  
**Vern Ratzlaff** will receive  
Honourary Doctorate of  
Divinity

May 5

**Youth Farm Complex  
May Day Tea & Cake Walk**  
2:00-4:00 pm  
Mennonite Nursing Home  
Auditorium

May 6

**Living With Mental Illness  
Workshop**  
Travelodge Hotel  
Poster on Ed. Wing Bulletin Bd.

April 30

## Enrichment Day

Mennonite Church Sask  
Women & Friends  
10:30 am-3:30 pm  
Tiefengrund Mennonite Church

May 24-26

**Missional Preaching with  
Rudy Froese**  
MCSask workshop  
Wildwood Mennonite Church  
To register ph: 249-4844  
Or email: [mcsask@mcsask.ca](mailto:mcsask@mcsask.ca)

May 5

## Caregivers Forum

McClure United Church  
To register  
Ph: 652-4411

June 10 & 11

**MCC Relief Sale & Auction**  
Prairieland Park

