



ON THE ROAD

Newsletter
of the

**Anabaptist Association of
Australia and New Zealand Inc.**

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Plan to join us in Canberra for
The AAANZ Bi-National Conference

21-24 January 2005

"CHRISTIANITY AND VIOLENCE"

registration forms out soon

CONTENTS

- 1 PRESIDENT'S REPORT**
- 2 THE VIEW FROM EPHESIANS FOUR**
- 3 And the Walls Came Tumbling Down**
- 6 Formation of Resident Aliens**
- 10 Couple Traces The Apostle Paul**
- 11 AROUND THE NETWORK**
- 11 Conflict Transformation and Terrorism**
- 12 Justice Award**
- 13 Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute**
- 13 Longford "Declaring Peace" Art Project**
- 14 REVIEWS AND RESOURCES**
- 14 The Pathan Unarmed**
- 15 Positive Approaches To Peacebuilding**
- 16 Post-Christendom**
- 16 In God's Name**
- 17 Violence in God's Name**
- 18 Cascadia Publishing House**
- 19 Herald Press**
- 20 Peace Websites**
- 21 The Little Book of Conflict Transformation**
- 22 Anabaptist Study Guides**
- 23 On the Lighter side**
- 23 INTERNATIONAL NEWS**
- 23 Iraqi Group Extends "Thanks"**
- 23 Mission Educators Teach Peace in Asia**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ROSS COLEMAN

The year 1978 was an important one for me. I left my unfinished architecture course and through a series of incredible circumstances found myself applying to work in an inner city housing estate. I didn't get the job but agreed to volunteer with the urban mission group. It was a heady time. For the first time I realised that, not all of Sydney was like the area in which I grew up. I saw practices and behaviours that were out of my comfort zone. Kids sniffed petrol and did crime, the elderly lived in fear, and the young adults, for whom I had responsibility, were a troubled mix of transient people. In that fervour of activity, a few of us decided to rent a house and live in the area. One household grew to three. Each week we had 'family nights' which were hallowed evenings exclusively set aside to build community. Holding the Bible open at Amos we spent time reflecting on the needs of the urban poor. In response to questions from some of the youth and others, we started an evening gathering – a place to explore faith. It was dynamite!

It's now 26 years later. Where are we all at a quarter of a century later? Of the several people involved all those years ago, one person has jettisoned their faith, some have abandoned the institutional church and have not connected at all with any faith community. Some like me still struggle with many aspects of faith.

Our agenda in those years was to build God's kingdom, to be a radical voice to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our hearts were moved by the prophets, compelled by Jesus, and transformed through a range of experiences on the streets.

What occurred in the 26 years since? How did we shift from a core conviction of passionate radical discipleship to a

On The Road

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COVER SYMBOL: The lamb in the midst of briars is a traditional Anabaptist symbol. It illustrates the suffering Lamb of God, who calls the faithful to obedient service and discipleship on the road. This particular rendition is from *Hymnal A Worship Book*. Copyright 1992. Reprinted with permission of Mennonite Publishing House, Scottsdale, PA, USA.

very different place of faith? Was there a dynamic occurring that was unhealthy? Was what we were doing unsustainable? The questions are myriad.

I have had reason to reflect on these issues recently as Diane and I moved back into the same inner city housing estate. We made some great contacts, are on the verge of opening a community café, and are members of a housing tenants' forum (of which Diane is the president!). We also oversee a very unique public housing faith community. But the demands are substantial and the needs are colossal while the human resources on the ground are minuscule. What will sustain me this time? What will keep me fresh and passionate over the long term? I hope that at this point you are asking the same questions of yourself!

I recognise that my current role – community development in the inner city public housing estate as well as living amongst the people – is a huge drain on my whole being. What will sustain me so that I grow stronger and more passionate rather than just drift along and dry up? I'm not sure of all the answers but recognise there are some changes needing to be made in me.

I feel some concern for our AAANZ staff and key people as they labour tirelessly for the Anabaptist network giving much energy to resourcing and strengthening the movement in this country and beyond. Are the demands we place on them slowly eating away at the inner core of passion? Or are they adding life and vitality?

My hunch is that we need to focus on hearing the heartbeat of our fellow sojourners. Can we listen for the tired heart, the groan of disillusionment, and the anguish of the struggle to be peacemakers? Peacemaking is tough stuff; peacemakers also need nurturing.

I'm not offering many clues to the journey together – you each have your own perspective to share in your own regions. How do I keep the fires stoked? Diane and I have just returned from a two-day walk along the coast from Bundeena to Otford just south of Sydney. We walked about 30kms and while feeling quite tired, felt very much alive inside. We're already planning our next time away.

I hope you share with me a priority that as a movement we intentionally nurture the seeds of hope in each of us so that when we gather in 25 years time (or next year in Canberra) all of us will be deeper people of passion.

If you are wise therefore you will show yourself a reservoir and not a channel. For a channel pours out as fast as it takes in; but a reservoir waits till it is full before it overflows, and so communicates its surplus...We have all too few such reservoirs in the Church at present, though we have channels in plenty...they (channels) desire to pour out when they themselves are not yet in-poured; they are readier to speak than to listen, eager to teach that which they do not know, and most anxious to exercise authority on others, although they have not learnt to rule themselves...Be filled thyself then, but discreetly, mind, pour out thy fullness...Out of thy fullness help me if thou canst; and, if not, spare thyself. - Bernard Of Clairvaux, *Positive Approaches To Peacebuilding*, p. 225

THE VIEW FROM EPHESIANS FOUR

MARK AND MARY HURST

...to prepare all God's people for the work of Christian service

“We make the road by walking.” This is the title of a book of conversations between Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, both important educator-activists of the twentieth century. The book title represents Horton's philosophy. “The way to do something was to start doing it and learn from it.”

In rereading this 1990 book sub-titled “Conversations on Education and Social Change,” we were reminded about how much our own teaching philosophy came from these two educators. We just returned from teaching in an innovative peacebuilding program in the Philippines that takes Horton and Friere's advice “to think outside the conventional frameworks.” Peacebuilding today needs creative thinking.

Horton said, “To embolden people to act, the challenge has got to be a radical challenge. It can't be a little simplistic reform that reformers think will help them. It's got to be something that they know out of experience could possibly bring about a change.”

Vision is important in bringing about social change. “You start where people are...but then if you don't have some vision of what ought to be or what they can become, then you have no way of contributing anything to the process.”

One purpose of ON THE ROAD is to inspire readers to live out the vision of Jesus expressed in the Sermon on the Mount. He spoke about the kingdom of God and presented a vision of how people should live. We present articles, news, and resources in these pages to encourage readers to capture Jesus' vision and change the world around you.

Freire did not like the English word “training” that was so often used for educating people. “I prefer formation'...formation as a permanent process...getting practice...experience...and then reflecting on the experience and the practice in order to understand...what it means.”

Our hope for our readers is that as we are on the road, making the road by walking, we will be formed into the people of God, inspired by Jesus' vision of God's kingdom, and bringing about the changes needed for peace and justice in the world today.

A Pentecost Sermon: And the Walls Came Tumbling Down

TITUS PEACHEY

EAST CHESTNUT STREET MENNONITE CHURCH, LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA, USA

The year was 1989. Perhaps you, like I remember where you were when you saw the startling images. I was standing in our living room when the news broadcast showed thousands of people massed on either side of the Berlin Wall, that symbol of fear and oppression that had stood for nearly thirty years. People were sitting on top of the wall chipping away with tiny hammers, they were singing, they were praying, they were holding candles. It was as if the reality we had all known was suddenly suspended and borne on some soft enchanting wind a new day had dawned, melting away the harshness of a long, cold, and painful era.

How could this be I wondered. For like others, I had grown up with the assumption that this wall was immovable, immovable unless it's concrete and steel were attacked by the powerful blast of a U.S. tank or B-52 bomber. Yet on that day, in the face of a powerful flood of human yearning and good will, it appeared weak, harmless, and helpless. It had met a force more powerful.

In her book *Candles Behind the Wall*, Barbara von der Heydt tells the story of the spiritual power behind these movements for change in the Soviet Bloc. While her book conveniently overlooks the sins of the West, there is no doubting the faith, the courage, and the power present in the lives of thousands of Christians who resisted the tremendous pressure to conform to an ideology they could not accept.

It was in the Fall of 1989 in the cities of East Germany that thousands and thousands of people gathered in churches to pray for peace. This movement, known as *friedensgebete*, had started years earlier, and now filled the churches to overflowing so that the candlelit prayers for peace filled the streets of cities such as Leipzig, Berlin, Zwickau, Dresden, Weimar and Rostock. The East German regime was not amused. A newspaper carried the government's promise to "conclusively and effectively put an end to these counter-revolutionary actions." At the end of one such prayer gathering at the Nikolaikirche in Leipzig, police and army units assaulted the crowd with riot sticks and attack dogs.

As the weekly gathering for prayer approached again in Leipzig on October 9, the city was tense. The army passed out live ammunition to its soldiers. Helmeted police, reservists, and paramilitary groups were trucked into the city. Armoured vehicles and water cannons lined the streets near the church.

It's a fascinating story. By the end of the evening, 70,000 people had gathered to pray at the Nikolaikirche, filling the church and clogging the streets. Inside the church, Christian Furher began the evening by reading the Beatitudes.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled.

Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness for theirs is the

Kingdom of Heaven."

Shortly thereafter, Peter Zimmerman, a theologian at Leipzig University appeared with paper in hand and read a statement calling for calm and peace that had resulted from a full day of negotiations with well-known personalities in Leipzig, including several Communist Party leaders. Yet with armed soldiers waiting outside, the atmosphere was anything but peaceful.

Bishop Werner Leich, who had travelled to all four churches in Leipzig that were holding prayer services, made a compelling appeal for non-violence. These praying Christians were determined that they would not return evil for evil.

Then in the words of Frederick Magirius, a Protestant leader, an amazing thing happened:

"The spirit of peace and non-violence spread over those assembled. Everyone held his neighbour tightly and this spirit went out with the people onto the square. The power was contagious."

Pastor Christian Fuhrer remembers it this way. "The Spirit of Christ, the spirit of nonviolence and renewal fell on the masses, moved the people deeply and became a tangible force of peace. It was like the Book of Acts when the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his household. This is something quite remarkable because these people were mostly not Christians. And yet these people behaved then as if they had grown up with the Sermon on the Mount."

The night ended peacefully as 70,000 people filed through the streets shouting, "We are the people...no violence!" Not a single shot was fired. Within one month, the wall had fallen.

Pastor Furher continues: "Nonviolence is clearly the spirit of Jesus. With these people who grew up with pictures of class enemies, and whose parents grew up with the Nazis and violence and racial hatred, you can prove that it didn't come from here. It's not a question of one's upbringing. And the few Christians that there are in this unchristian country—they didn't do it either...That was the spirit of God at work. We few people couldn't have done it...God honoured us by letting us play this part in His plan."

We do not usually associate the Holy Spirit with movements for political change. I've never heard the Holy Spirit mentioned on NBC's evening news with Tom Brokaw nor found in the fine print of the New York Times. The point here is not to

suggest that the prayers of Christians and the work of the Holy Spirit are the only reasons that the Berlin Wall fell. There were many factors. Nor is it to suggest that the Holy Spirit's primary focus of work is in the arena of politics. Yet I find this story compelling because it highlights several aspects of the Spirit's work that are also present in the story from Acts.

Jesus' followers were still reeling from the tumultuous





The original artworks throughout this newsletter are from the Longford, Tasmania "Declaring Peace" Art Project. See p13.

events of the weeks before. Scattered and despairing in the aftermath of Jesus' death, they came together in joy with his resurrection. Jesus' many appearances renewed their hopes in the establishment of God's Kingdom. Indeed just before Jesus ascended into heaven, this was the question on their lips "Are you going to establish the Kingdom now?"

Jesus told them they could not know the time that it would happen and not to worry about it. Rather, they should go wait for the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, when the Holy Spirit comes you will be filled with power and be my witnesses to the ends of the earth! With that, Jesus ascended into clouds leaving them standing there dumbstruck. Finally, after a startling visit from two angels, they pulled themselves together and went back into the city of Jerusalem.

So, on the day of Pentecost there they were gathered together in one room waiting, confused. It's one thing to wait for a train, your spouse, or a green light because you know what they look like. But how do you wait for something you've never seen, for something you don't even know about? How do you convince yourself that you are not a fool?

But they waited together; they prayed together. And that's when our story happened. There was the rushing sound of wind and tongues of fire and a torrent of languages from all parts of the earth. The house in which they were gathered was filled with the sound and people outside - people from all over the Roman Empire who had come to Jerusalem for Pentecost - gathered round the windows to find out what was happening. The people were amazed because they heard these Jews from Galilee and Jerusalem speaking in all of their languages. Some went about asking, "How can this be?" While others, sceptics to the core said, "Oh...they're just drunk!"

That's when Peter stood up and spoke in a loud voice, declaring that what was happening was what the prophet Joel had spoken about when he said that in the latter days God would pour out his Spirit on all people, sons and daughters, young and old. They would see visions, dream dreams and proclaim God's message!

It was a long speech. People were moved. They repented and they were baptized. Things got totally out of hand and by the end of the day they had added 3,000 people to their group! The transformation was amazing! The small group of believers that had huddled together in a house, confused and unknown to

the rest of the world had suddenly overcome barriers of language and culture and hurtled into the public arena in spellbinding fashion.

The Spirit had brought the Word of God among them and given it life. The Spirit had made the presence of God plain in human culture through language and emotion, through connecting the present to God's movement in history. This is what Jesus did after his baptism when he went to the synagogue and read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor." After reading from Isaiah, Jesus said, "This passage of scripture has come true today."

This is what happened in Leipzig and other cities throughout East Germany. They waited together for years. They prayed together for years and suddenly they could see with their eyes and hear with their ears that God's Spirit was moving in ways far beyond what they could imagine.

The Spirit's work brings God's presence and power to life, making it plain for all to see. And when this happens, transforming power is loosed onto the world. Walls, even walls of concrete and steel, can be brought down!

Andrew Young, former US ambassador to the United Nations, offers a story from the days of the Civil Rights movement that illustrates the power and the joy of the good news of the Gospel coming to life in our own country. He notes that during those days in the South he and other African Americans were frequent targets of violence suffering beatings from baseball bats and attacks from police dogs. Then he says:

"Those things heal. If you could face dogs and if you could face being hit in the head with a baseball bat for the possibility of changing the world in which we live, it's a very small price to pay.

...Yeah, I was beaten up, but I had people reciting the 23rd Psalm as we went down there amongst the Klan. 'Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil.' A month or so later when they passed the Civil Rights Bill and we went back to those coffee shops and white people were forced by law to serve us, I remember a lady starting to pour coffee and she was nervous because all these black folk were there and she filled it too full. It was in the saucer and she tried to take it back. I said, 'No, no, no, no, leave it there because thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. Thou anointest my head with oil till my coffee cup runneth over. Hallelujah!' I mean that was a religious experience to have your cup run over after having walked through the valley of the shadow of death. So, the thing the movement did was to make the Gospel real. It wasn't just theoretical. It wasn't just Sunday morning. You know that you could trust your life on this book. Not that you'd live, but if you died you'd be raised up."

So the Spirit comes into our lives, even on a Sunday morning, and empowers us to make God's presence real in our world, a presence that all can see and touch. The Romans passage declares that the Spirit does not make us live like slaves living in fear but as people who are children of God, with a place to belong in God's family. In II Timothy Paul says it this way: "For the Spirit that God has given us does not make us timid; instead, God's Spirit fills us with power, love, and self-control." This sense of power surprised and overcame the apostles on that day in Jerusalem even as it broke down the Berlin Wall in Germany in 1989.

As we read through the New Testament, it occurs to me that one of the Spirit's primary movements throughout the New Testament is the breaking down of walls, not only walls of steel and concrete as in our beginning story, but walls of history, culture, language, race and gender that exclude and isolate people from one another and from God. This work is not always dramatic. This work is not always quick. This work is not always known. Sometimes it is quiet, slow, and painful.

Peter, who was in the middle of the dramatic events on the day of Pentecost was certainly moved and used by the Holy Spirit to link what was happening to the prophecy of Joel. And with power and boldness he had declared that God would pour out God's Spirit on all people. But as the New Testament story unfolds, we discover that even Peter didn't fully comprehend this prophecy of Joel. We discover that the Spirit had more in mind than Peter could imagine.

It is eight chapters later in Acts that we find Peter in quiet prayer on a roof top. And God's Spirit brings a vision to Peter that shocks him, a vision that he resists with all his heart and soul and mind. Of course he will not eat unclean food like the Gentiles. God's Spirit persists, but there are thousands of years of history, social norms, and racial prejudice to overcome. The vision appears again. Still Peter resists. Peter doesn't know that he is resisting God's Spirit. He is simply being true to all that he has ever known and believed. But God's Spirit moves in the life of Peter and Cornelius - Peter a Jew, and Cornelius a Gentile and Roman Army Captain. God's Spirit brings these two together with eyes wide open, hearts pounding, both wondering what would happen. They meet at Cornelius' house.

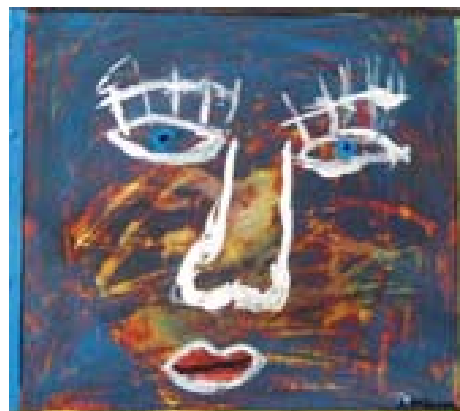
And Peter, bless his heart, goes straight to the core of the issue. "You yourselves know very well that a Jew is not allowed by his religion to visit or associate with Gentiles." As the story unfolds, the Holy Spirit descends on everyone in the house. Peter and his Jewish friends are stunned. So finally, Peter says, "Well, these people received the Holy Spirit just like we did so nobody can stop us from baptizing them!" So they were baptized and Peter and his friends stayed with Cornelius and his family for several days!

But even this careful work of the Spirit between Peter and Cornelius did not completely tear down the wall between Jews and Gentiles. In Acts chapter 15 there is the story of the Jerusalem Conference where the believers met together to talk about just how many Jewish customs and understandings Gentiles would have to adopt in order to be a part of the church. And the list could go on.



So what the Spirit began with drama and power among thousands of people in a public place on the Day of Pentecost later became the persistent even painful nudging of the Spirit in the hearts of two people, Cornelius and Peter. While the wind of the Spirit can knock down political and social walls in dramatic fashion, the Spirit is not satisfied until the walls in our hearts come down.

Today this same Spirit, the Holy Spirit, is still at work in our world, in all places among all peoples just like Peter said. And in a world so vast, we must acknowledge that at least 99.9% of the Spirit's work is unknown to us!



Because the Spirit is working everywhere all the time. What is the Spirit doing in our world? What does the Spirit want to do among us?

Two more recent stories illustrate the Spirit's movement - one far away and one close to home. Both of them are stories of God's movement among neighbours.

Chris Hedges tells the story of Rosa and Drago Sorak, A Bosnian Serb couple in the town of Gorazde in 1992. Rosa and Drago suffered greatly from the war and their isolation as a Serb family surrounded by Muslims. Their two sons were killed, they suffered death threats, and their town was repeatedly shelled. They had no electricity, gas, or water. In this desperate situation, they had a little baby girl. Food was scarce and Rosa could not breast feed. Infants were dying everywhere, and their little girl weakened.

One morning there was a knock on the door. There stood a Muslim neighbour, Fadil Fejzic with half a litre of milk for their baby. Fadil had milked his one cow the night before, doing it under cover of darkness to avoid being killed by snipers. Every morning for the next 442 days, Fadil suffered the insults and threats of his own Muslim community to take half a litre of milk to the young Serb infant. The baby lived. War finally forced Rosa and Drago to move to another community, and Fadil eventually lost his cow to the Serb forces, but they all survived the war.

Nowhere in this story does the author mention the movement of God's Spirit. We don't know from the story if either family was devout in their religious faith and commitments. But how else do you explain this man's kindness in the middle of a war? He overcame the bitterness and animosity that swirled between him and his neighbour, and at great personal risk and sacrifice repeatedly blessed his neighbours with the gift of life.

Surely in this story we see the movement of God's Spirit for our time. We live in a time of fear and danger and terror. We live in a time of violence committed in the name of religion and blessed by religious leaders. This violence is building walls, walls more massive and formidable than the concrete and steel of the Berlin Wall. These walls are walls of pain, anger and resentment in the hearts of millions and they are walls of domination, just war and holy war that are built with the bricks of religion, culture, and socialization.

In such a time as this we need the Spirit's wind, we need the Spirit's fire, and we need the kindness of Fadil Fejzic, inspired by God's Spirit among millions of neighbours around the globe. How will God's Spirit move us to take part in this movement to tear down these walls of violence between peoples and religions?

Several weeks ago Pat Heyman's new neighbours here on East Chestnut Street threw a late night party. There was noise and rowdiness. By the end of the night, Pat had a broken window. Pat was frightened and didn't know how to respond. So she did the Anabaptist thing. She brought her concern about her neighbours to her Sunday School class. The class talked and the class prayed and waited (just like in Acts) asking God for help. Slowly, the Spirit moved. One class member wondered what would happen if Pat were to take her neighbour a plate of cookies. Interesting isn't it how the Spirit would inspire Mennonites to do Mennonite things?! Another class member volunteered to make the cookies. See! God's Spirit comes alive in our human forms and cultures! And so late one night there stood Pat on her neighbour's doorstep a bit like Peter at Cornelius' house with knees shaking, heart pounding and a plate of cookies in hand wondering what was God going to do? How would her neighbours respond? She didn't know.

Pat knocked on the door and from within the house a woman's voice called "Who's there? To which Pat promptly replied "Martha Stewart!"



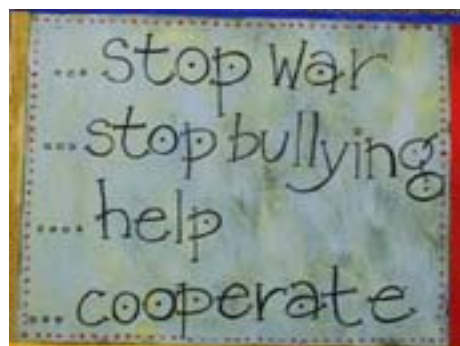
Now, I can't document this with book, chapter, and verse, but I'm sure that the Holy Spirit also has a sense of humour. Surely, the Spirit moved within the Sunday School class and between Pat and her neighbour to begin building a relationship of trust and respect. In that plate of cookies, God prepared a table in the presence of neighbours who could have become enemies.

In this story, we see that God's Spirit breaks down walls right where we are, in our neighbourhoods, our communities, our

congregation, and our hearts. Sometimes it's dramatic sometimes it is slow. Sometimes it is painful sometimes it is frightening.

The Spirit longs to enliven the Gospel message in each generation, in each community, in each congregation, in each heart. For without the movement of God's Spirit to give them life and power these are just words in a book. We need more than words. The world needs more than words. We can't live on the words that describe the movement of God's Spirit in the past. We need God's Spirit to breathe among us today.

1. How will you find space in your life to pay attention to the movement of God's Spirit?
2. Where are the walls in your life that God's Spirit longs to break down?
3. What is the Holy Spirit doing in our town, our country, and our world? How is God nudging us to be a part of it?



[Editors' Note: Following is an excerpt from a draft of a paper that has been accepted by the *Journal of Christian Education* for publication subject to some modifications. The full paper is available upon request from the AAANZ office.]

Formation of Resident Aliens: Anabaptist, Body, and Celtic Perspectives

NEIL HOLM

One of the most striking counter-cultural calls lies in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5). Jesus teaches his disciples, he speaks to his colonists. He requires such a counter-intuitive life-style that it is impossible to live it alone. A lone individual cannot live as Jesus requires in the Sermon. He requires behaviour that does not make sense to the dominant culture. This life-style requires the support, encouragement and guidance of fellow pilgrims. In the Sermon, Jesus describes a lifestyle lived by the church that allow the dominant culture to "see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt 5:16). He reinforces this theme in John 13 and 14 where, especially in verse 13:35, he issues an ethical demand for "love within and among members of the faith community", a demand that is "often dismissed as "easier" or "softer" than the ethical demand to love one's neighbour . . . or to love one's enemies" (*The New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. IX, 1995, p.733). In the context of betrayal and death in John 13, we can see that loving one another can be inconceivably difficult. Yet "in the community's embodiment and enactment of Jesus' love, the community reveals Jesus identity to the world" (*The New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. IX, p.727-8).

Christian community is not community for the sake of community. It is not togetherness as escape from loneliness. It is not an expression of solidarity based on mutual interests, or shared tastes, or common characteristics. Christian community is about mutual survival and encouragement as we collectively seek to live the Christian life in a world

dominated by values, practices, and behaviours that are alien to us. John 14:1-11 reminds us of our "particular" nature. The early church carved out a new religious home, a home grounded in the incarnation, that set them apart from their former home, Judaism. This particularism says, "This is who we are. We are the people who believe in the God who has been revealed to us decisively in Jesus Christ" (*The New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. IX, p.744). Christian community is the "way of Jesus Christ with those whom he calls to himself. It is about disciplining our wants and needs in congruence with a true story, which gives us resources to lead truthful lives. In living out the story together, togetherness happens, but only as a by-product of the main project of trying to be faithful to Jesus" (Hauerwas, Stanley and Willimon, William H. *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony*, Abingdon Press, 1989, p.78).

Formation of Resident Aliens/ Formation in Community

The confessing church / Christian community helps shape our characters. In the Christian community education or formation is relational:

*Through the teaching, support, sacrifice,
worship and commitment of the church, utterly ordinary*

people are enabled to do some rather extraordinary, even heroic, acts, not on the basis of their own gifts or abilities, but rather by having a community capable of sustaining Christian virtue. The church enables us to be better people than we could have been if left to our own devices. (Hauerwas and Willimon, p.81)

We become transformed people by offering ourselves to the Gospel story and the community formed by listening to and enacting that story in the church (Hauerwas and Willimon, p.83). Too often we read and hear the Bible as though we are isolated individuals. When we read and hear “you” we interpret that to mean “me” rather than “us”. In the same way that our worldview is that of the isolated individual, Jesus’ worldview is of the kingdom, the community, the body. In John 14:12-24 Jesus’ words “consistently point to the communal nature of union and relationship with him . . . The promises of divine presence are promises made to the community, not to the individual. All of the personal pronouns in these verses are second-person plural, not singular” (*The New Interpreter’s Bible*, Vol. IX, p.749). If we seek character development, spiritual development, intellectual development, or any other kind of development, we should immediately think in communal terms: what activities do we engage in collectively to seek certain outcomes in terms of personal and communal development? We listen and act collectively. We use what we have been given. Jesus said to the crowd by the sea, “Take heed of what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who have more will be given” (Mark 4: 24). We are given something, when we use it we are given more. Development comes from using what we have been given and using it collectively.

Despite my earlier assertion that Christian community is about mutual survival and encouragement, it is more than this. It is more that getting together with a few friends to help each other along a pretty difficult and sometimes dangerous road (Hauerwas and Willimon, p.94). Christian community allows us to see and hear as we survive together. Character development, values education, and spiritual growth are fostered by seeing and hearing others, learning from them, and then imitating them. We learn to be Christian people through a process of interacting with others, observing their behaviour, reflecting on it, and imitating it in some way. Likewise teaching someone is a process of assisting them to interact, observe, reflect and imitate. Although the “saints and sages” of the community will provide important exemplars, we are all able to learn much from those who might

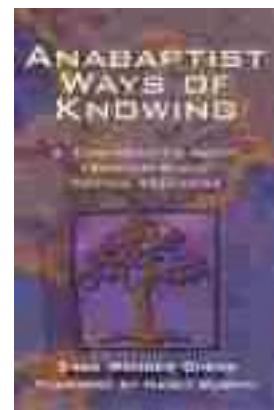
otherwise be regarded as insignificant or trivial. Jesus uses a child as an example of the “greatest in the kingdom” (Matt 18: 1-4). He used other small items like lost coins, lost sheep, and a mustard seed to make the point that the “kingdom involves the ability to see God within



those people and experiences the world regards as little or of no account, ordinary” (Hauerwas and Willimon, pp.96, 103). Jesus’ view of the kingdom or Christian community is much more radical than Paul’s view of the body. The vine metaphor in John 15 is a model for corporate life that “undercuts any celebration of individual gifts, and this, too, challenges contemporary Western understandings of personality, individualism, and self-expression. . . . The mark of a faithful community is how it loves, not who are its members” (*The New Interpreter’s Bible*, Vol. IX, p.761).

Anabaptist Tradition

Sara Wenger Shenk’s recent book, *Anabaptist Ways of Knowing* (Cascadia, 2003), provides the data for this tradition. Writing in a style that in some ways reflects Anabaptist principles of communal discernment and hospitality, Wenger Shenk conducts a table conversation with Anabaptist theologians, classical proponents of the Greek paideia, Michael Polanyi, feminist theologian Rebecca Chopp, and neo-Anabaptist theologian Nancey Murphy.



Like Hauerwas, Wenger Shenk believes that education cannot be considered without a clear understanding of the nature of the church. Like Hauerwas, she draws on Yoder for an outline of the basic features of the Anabaptist church. Historically the Anabaptist church has been separate from the dominant culture and, to some extent, has been socially revolutionary. It has resisted the “world’s seductive pressures to live on the basis of values other than those directly exemplified by Jesus” (55). It has not retreated from the world to practise private piety. It has created an alternative, challenging model of a social structure based on the “transformative purposes of the gospel of Jesus Christ” (56) that in seeking God’s will asks, “what should we do?” rather than “what should I do?”

Anabaptist Ways of Knowing ends with a chapter entitled “Weaving a Theory of Education from the Conversational Strands”. The Anabaptist purpose in education is to “know and do the will of God as . . . understood through the life and teaching of Jesus” (134-135). Knowing and doing are inseparable because the way in which we know Jesus most fully and intimately is through walking his way and following his commands and example. Possibly the Anabaptists place slightly higher value on understanding the Scriptures as the Word of God than Hauerwas. They seek to enter the world of the Scriptures and immerse themselves in the narratives, practices, and teachings (135).

Wenger Shenk concludes that the purpose of Anabaptist educational theory will be to “guide the formation of children, youth and adults by modelling personal and communal life on the way of Jesus. It will seek to enhance the communal experiences and discernment of the Scriptures as world creating and life directing. And it will promote the cultivation of a particular visible community of disciples as distinct from the world and yet for the world” (136).

In examining “how we know”, Wenger Shenk parallels Hauerwas. Given the more focused nature of her work, she has opportunity to unpack the philosophical assumptions about how we come to know. She, too, refers to an apprenticeship within a

particular tradition and suggests that this process involves transcending as well as understanding the tradition. Noting that transcendence is the key to revitalising the tradition, she reflects MacIntyre's comment noted above that there is an ultimate excellence that always eludes even the master practitioner (140).

Wenger Sherk emphasises that knowledge is "constructed by communities rather than being an abstract entity discovered outside the complexities of daily life" (141). Her discussion is similar to Hauerwas' emphasis on knowing through interacting, observing, reflecting, and imitating with guidance and other forms of formation by others in the community. Nevertheless, the Anabaptist tradition gives considerable importance to a more formative process of knowing that involves communal discernment. One of Wenger Sherk's conversation partners, Murphy, calls this process a Christian epistemic practice whereby the community collectively seeks the truth about matters of Scripture, prophecy, daily life, and innovative and traditional practices (114, 115). Likewise Polanyi expresses a similar idea when he discusses his concept of a Society of Explorers in which members exercise discipline for the sake of promoting originality (142).

Anabaptists may require this disciplined approach to the generation of communal knowledge because they also provide for a form of knowledge that results from an in-breaking of God into daily life. They make provision for knowledge stemming from the experience of transforming and revelatory moments by individuals and groups. They also give attention to the place of intuition and imagination in the process of knowing (140, 144). These wilder, freer, undisciplined, less conformist ways of knowing require the more balanced, disciplined tempering of communal discernment before they are accepted as truth within the community.

Wenger Sherk gives some attention to the bodily and tacit roots of knowledge (143). She concludes that Polanyi's concept of personal knowledge, tacit knowledge and indwelling resonate profoundly with Anabaptist tradition (92, 93). Again, she is able to penetrate more deeply into these issues than Hauerwas, although they agree that knowing and doing are inseparably intertwined (93). Wenger Sherk sees the bodily and tacit dimensions as the knowledge that is "part of our subliminal awareness and provides the roots of our creative, intuitive, and critical thinking capacities" (143). On the basis of this knowledge we are able to reach towards a more comprehensive and interconnected awareness. This knowledge forms a kind of unconscious screen through which we view all of our experiences and guides us as we respond. It is only later when we reflect that we become more aware, to some extent at least, of the basis on which we acted in that situation.

As I have noted elsewhere, my experiences as I have tried to integrate my faith and my work as a teacher and administrator have had a more significant effect on my Christian formation than my experiences within any purely church settings. (Holm, Neil, *Teaching on the Verandah*, Think Piece, No. 6, Nov. 2003, Macquarie Christian Studies Institute. http://www.mcsi.edu.au/content/News_Think_Nov03.pdf)

Wenger Sherk notes, "it is in practicing the gospel that we are capacitated to properly interpret it" (147). As we ground various practices in our bodies we build various forms of knowing that we later call on as we encounter new experiences. These bodily practices include images, rituals, habits, cycles, routines and daily rhythms (147).

Wenger Sherk commences her book by noting the ways Anabaptists "live religion". She examines generational change in a range of faith-related practices that are based in family and church life. She lists nineteen family-based practices such as hospitality to others and sixteen church-based practices such as foot washing (29-31). In the concluding chapter, she considers the primary educational settings for Anabaptists: the church, the family, and the school (147-151).

Celtic Tradition

Aspects of Celtic Christianity influence the Wellspring Community. It provides a contrast to the Anabaptist tradition (although they have much in common). Like Bodily tradition, this contemporary expression of the Celtic Christian tradition gives serious attention to concepts like incarnation and pilgrimage.

Celtic Christianity flourished in the British Isles from about 400AD to 1000AD, although after the Synod of Whitby in 664AD, Celtic Christianity gradually gave way to the Roman tradition. It is better to refer to Celtic Christian communities than to a Celtic



Wellspring Community logo

Christian church. These communities lacked organisation and any form of institutionalism. It was "much more of a loose confederation of virtually autonomous communities" (Bradley, Ian, *The Celtic Way*, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1993, p.29). Celtic Christianity was based around monasteries rather than dioceses or parishes. The monasteries were great centres of "extreme asceticism, fervent prayer and devotion and highly refined culture and scholarship" (14). Celtic Christianity places great emphasis on evangelism combined with pilgrimage. "Belonging to a scattered rural world and with a long tradition of migration, the Celts naturally thought of the Church in terms of loosely structured monastic communities. They saw bishops and priests much more as wandering evangelists than as settled ministers exercising pastoral and administrative functions within a fixed area" (23-24). Celtic Christianity spread rapidly throughout the British Isles because the evangelists were able to connect the truth of the Christian faith with the everyday lives of the people they met. They presented Christianity in a way that connected with the needs and norms of the contemporary rural and tribal society. They did not ignore the "dominant" culture nor did they collude with it. They were involved in the cultural life of the people but it was a critical involvement (76).

Although the significance of evangelism within the Celtic Christian communities could suggest a conversionist church, they are better described in terms of a confessing church. Although evangelism was important it was accompanied by several other features that are much more consistent with a confessing church.

First, the Celtic Christian communities celebrated the presence and protection of God. Rather than a transcendental God who is omnipresent and somewhat removed from the world, these Celtic Christians celebrated an immanent God. They were

God-intoxicated people whose lives were embraced on all sides by the divine Being (32). They celebrated the doctrine of Incarnation. They understood that Jesus, the Christ, Immanuel, is God with us, within us, around us in the form of other people and all of creation. God's presence and protection was celebrated in Celtic prayers, liturgies and rituals. These Celtic Christian attitudes express a panentheism rather than pantheism: "God is to be found both within creation and outside it. There is no blurring of distinction between Creator and created, no worship of nature for its own sake but rather a wonderful sense that the whole cosmos is a theophany—a marvellous revelation of the goodness, the wonder and creativity of God" (35).

Second, Celtic Christians took a positive view of the world and the human condition. They saw the world not so much tainted by original sin but as "immature and incomplete". They see Christ as "the one who perfects creation and lifts it up to God" (51). These views are based on Biblical passages such as the emphasis on goodness in Genesis 1; the emphasis on knowledge of God through nature in various psalms, including Psalm 19; the nature of man as being a little lower than the angels in Psalm 8; the emphasis on grace in the New Testament; the connection between the "least of my brethren" and "me" in Matthew 25:40; and the interpretation of the body of Christ as being more than a metaphor.

Third, Celtic Christians placed great emphasis on the power and the importance of the imagination. "They excelled at expressing their faith in symbols, metaphors and images, both visual and poetic. They had the ability to invest the ordinary and the commonplace with sacramental significance, to find glimpses of God's glory throughout creation and to paint pictures in words, signs and music that acted as icons opening windows on heaven and pathways to eternity" (84).

Finally, "Celtic Christianity was a faith hammered out at the margins" (30). These were people threatened by Vikings, Anglo-Saxons, Normans and Romans. Their economic circumstances were marginal and they often suffered homelessness, poverty, and starvation. Their land, their culture, their language and identity were threatened by the forces that surrounded. Yet throughout this marginalisation they forged a vibrant, dynamic, relevant, holistic faith that not only sustained them but allowed them to flourish.

Although not a church, the Wellspring Community in Australia is a contemporary expression of some aspects of Celtic Christian communities and various educational principles are implicit in its organisation. This community, in Hauerwas' terms, is a "disciplined and discipling community". Members of the Wellspring Community make an annual commitment to live under the Rule of the Community as fully as possible. The Rule of Wellspring Community covers three areas of discipline:

- the spiritual disciplines:
 - being open to God (through prayer, meditation, Bible reading, study, listening to people's stories, listening to creation)
- the life and work disciplines:
 - being disciples of Christ (responding to Christ's call with regard to occupation, lifestyle, action for peace and justice, service, hospitality)
- the corporate disciplines:
 - living in the Spirit (building a community life, meeting together, worship and celebration, being accountable to each other and supporting each other on our journeys).

The disciplines serve an important educational or formational role. They identify ways that the Wellspring Community believes God can work within members of the Community in order to transform them. They also provide for processes of accountability between members and processes of mutual support and encouragement. The disciplines are not discipling in the sense that a Master takes on an apprentice but instead they are recognition that members of the body of Christ, members of the Community, have different gifts and these gifts must be used in a process of mutual upbuilding of each other. The disciplines, too, are an expression of the identity of the Community. They help to define the Community, to make it visible to the world, and to express the characteristics of the Community.

The Wellspring Community is a dispersed community with members spread across all Australian states and territories, New Zealand, parts of the Pacific, and Scotland. In this sense it is a peregrinatory, confessing community that is faced with a rich range of opportunities and relationships that Hauerwas alludes to. Yet this dispersion reduces the potential for mutual encouragement, support, and accountability. The Community has a national gathering every two years and has developed several cell groups. Other meetings are organised on an ad hoc basis and the Community produces a newsletter every two months. These small opportunities for communication, community building, encouragement, and accountability are significant but they fall short of the levels of interaction required by an effective "disciplined and discipling community". In the earlier Celtic Christian communities, the dispersed always returned home after pilgrimage or evangelism. These periods at home provided opportunities for interaction, encouragements, accountability and other educational processes.

However, the dispersed nature of the Community means that it truly exists at the margins. It is marginal in another way. Many members of the Community feel marginalised in their current churches. In some activist churches and conversionist churches members feel that the church is so committed to saving society or to saving souls that too little attention is paid to spiritual formation, reflection, wonder, and imagination. The Community provides Christian formation that is not available for these members in their local churches. As a confessing community, the Wellspring Community encourages members to remain in their churches to continue a critical involvement.

Like many Christian groups the Wellspring Community has not clearly articulated why it should engage in some forms of activism. The Community has no clear educational program that encourages members to understand the difference between an activist Christian community and a confessing Christian community. Although the Community claims to be prophetic, it has no educational



processes that allow members to deepen their understanding of this term in relation to the activities of the Community. Without formal or informal means of education in these areas, members can easily drift into activist modes (or occasionally into conversionist modes) without realising that these modes may be antithetical to the overall ethos of the Community.

Conclusion

What conclusions can we draw from the education perspectives of Hauerwas, the Anabaptist tradition, the Body of Christ tradition, and the Celtic tradition?

First, we get a clearer understanding of the nature of education if we first have a clear theology of the church.

Second, the body of Christ, the Christian community, is integral to the construction and transmission of knowledge. We learn in a communal context. We learn from others. This is especially true of the deeper kinds of education or formation such as character development and education in values and ethics.

Third, education involves action. As we act, as we do something, as we seek to apply what we know, we move into new levels of knowledge and deeper levels of understanding.

Fourth, the best forms of education or formation take place at the margins, on the boundaries, or in liminal situations. In the same way that the confessing church engages the dominant culture to challenge and critique it, to critically engage with it, to reveal other ways of doing things, so the pilgrim Christian goes from the supportive formation of the body of Christ, perhaps accompanied by fellow pilgrims, to critically engage with the dominant culture in the work place, marketplace, shopping centre, or sports field. This liminal engagement is crucial to both the dominant culture and to the pilgrim. The culture has the potential to respond for the better to the critique. The pilgrim deepens his or her understanding and knowledge through the process of engagement.

Fifth, the body of Christ becomes the sounding board, the place of discernment, review and reflection following the liminal engagement. Collectively the action is reviewed and assessed. The pilgrim is strengthened, supported, encouraged, and prepared for the next pilgrimage.

After an early teaching career in one-teacher and Aboriginal schools in NSW and the NT, Neil Holm played a key role in the development of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Centre. He extended his cross-cultural education and administration skills as Director of International House (a cosmopolitan residential college within The University of Queensland) and as Administration and Development Manager at St John's Anglican Church (an inner-city church working in partnership with marginalised people in the Kings Cross/Darlinghurst area of Sydney). His long interest in the integration of faith and work has been expressed through his membership of the Australian Christian Forum on Education, editing the international Journal of Christian Education for ten years, and serving on the board of the Zadok Institute for Christianity and Society for ten years. He is a life member of the Australian College of Educators and is at present co-leader of the Wellspring Community.

[Editors' note: The Stutzmans lived in Perth in the late 1980's, working for Eastern Mennonite Missions as church planters.]

Couple Traces The Apostle Paul By Land and By Sea

JIM BISHOP

Two modern-day admirers of a First Century apostle will spend the next year following his mighty big footprints.

Linford L. and Janet M. Stutzman have embarked on a contemporary missionary journey, trying to understand, as much as humanly possible, what St. Paul experienced in his missionary travels that criss-crossed the Mediterranean region. For 15 months, they will retrace the routes of the early church leader to every site mentioned in the New Testament book of Acts.

Dr. Stutzman, who teaches two-thirds time at Eastern Mennonite Seminary and one-third time in Eastern Mennonite University's undergraduate Bible and religion department, is beginning a sabbatical year. He's been on the EMU faculty 13 years. His spouse, Janet, recently announced her resignation from the university after serving 12 1/2 years as director of alumni-parent relations.

"Our goal is to seek to understand how the geographic areas, the weather conditions and the cities and towns themselves that Paul travelled through affected his mission and vision for what the church could become," Stutzman said.

"Paul was an explorer, an experimenter who tried to understand the Roman Empire," he said. "Paul spoke often about the Kingdom of God, declaring that his citizenship was in heaven, yet he was a Roman citizen - what did that mean to him?"

"I believe that Paul was grappling with change as he met and interacted with a variety of people. He struggled with his belief in the power of the gospel with the power of pagan Rome, and that has implications for us today."

The Stutzmans have secured a 33-foot, two-mast ketch for sailing on the Mediterranean and Aegean seas from one port-of-call to another. "It's old, but seaworthy," they said of the craft that they have re-christened "SailingActs."

The couple plans to begin their itinerary on the island of Cyprus off the coast of Greece the end of May. From there, they will work their way slowly counter-clockwise around the Aegean (Turkey and Greece), ending in Corinth in October.

At each site visited, the Stutzmans will explore the geographical situation and new archaeological discoveries in an attempt to glean new insights into biblical accounts as that relates to Paul's missionary work.

They plan to interview local and regional experts of history, religion and mission along with local inhabitants in order to explore traditional and current perceptions of Paul and his legacy.

They will do cultural and social research at every location that includes interviewing local and regional experts of history, religion, and mission, and interview local inhabitants in order to explore traditional and current perceptions of Paul and his legacy.

They will also sail the same sea routes as Paul, anchor in the harbours and travel overland to the sites in ways that parallel, as closely as possible, Paul's experiences detailed in the book of Acts.

"There have been many studies of Paul and his role in the development of the early Christian church, but I'm not aware of anyone else having taken this [sailing] approach," Stutzman said.

The Stutzmans plan to spend the early winter months living aboard the boat in Israel, working on sabbatical writing and teaching projects.

“That time of year is not an ideal time to be out to sea,” Stutzman said, noting that Paul’s shipwreck on the Island of Malta - documented in the 27th chapter of the New Testament book of Acts - likely happened in November.

Stutzman is hoping to prepare two manuscripts based on



Linford and Janet Stutzman display a compass given to them by EMU students in their cross-cultural seminar group they led to the Middle East the spring semester of 2004. They will use the device in navigating their sailing vessel in retracing the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul. Photo by Jim Bishop

their research – a reflective travelogue in popular style on what Paul’s travels meant to him and in turn interpret those meanings for contemporary society and a missiology piece that applies these learnings to the globalization process, the way nations relate to each other today.

The couple will return to the U.S. for about three weeks over Christmas, then return to the boat for the rest of the winter to complete their writing projects.

Next summer, they plan to sail from Ceasarea in Israel along the route of Paul’s final journey to Rome. In May, 2005, they will interrupt their travel to lead a study seminar of 12 EMU students in the Aegean, then resume in June toward Rome, arriving there mid- to late-July.

Janet Stutzman said she expects to assist with navigating and other sailing duties and buying supplies, doing some cooking on the ship and assisting her spouse with chronicling their adventures.

“I thoroughly enjoy meeting and offering hospitality to people, and I expect to be doing a lot of that in this cross-cultural setting,” she said.

The couple will return to Harrisonburg this Christmas to screen and orient a group of EMU students for a cross-cultural seminar they will lead to the Middle East the spring of 2006.

Armed with a laptop computer, the Stutzmans will make regular journal entries on their travels and post them on a special web site at: www.emu.edu/sailingacts.

AROUND THE NETWORK

Conflict Transformation and Terrorism: Implications for Democracy

The title above was the name given a workshop held in Sydney 16 March. The featured speaker was Professor Johan Galtung, renowned peace studies scholar and consultant to several United Nations agencies. Professor Johan Galtung, Director of Transcend, a Peace and Development Network (<http://www.transcend.org/>), is widely known as a founder of the academic discipline of peace research. He has taught in universities around the world and is the author of several books on peace and conflict resolution.

The workshop was sponsored by Soka Gakkai International – Australia, a Buddhist organisation, and the Conflict Resolution Desk at the University of Sydney’s Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (<http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/centres/cpacs/>).

The same week, Galtung was a guest on Philip Adam’s Radio National programme, *Late Night Live*. (Monday 15 March 2004, “**Terrorism, Iraq & Conflict Resolution**,” <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/lnl/default.htm>) Galtung talked about the “abysmal” level of knowledge about Islam in Australia. His view is that the attack on the Trade Center Towers on 9/11 was an Islamic attack on the symbols of “materialistic consumption commercialism” of the West. The attackers saw these symbols as an insult to Islam.

What is needed in the West is for us “to come within speaking distance with Islam”. For Galtung, “democracy is dialogue” and the point of dialogue is “a re-examination of your own position.” He works under the philosophy of “know your enemy/ know yourself.”

The Transcend method has three steps of dealing with conflict: 1. Have a reasonably good idea of what the conflicting parties want. 2. Are the goals of the parties legitimate or illegitimate? 3. Transform the situation into all having legitimate goals.

Part of the problem with the U.S. and its coalition involved in the war on terrorism is that they do not know what the other side wants or why the other side acts the way it does. Galtung argues “only by understanding terrorism can you remove the causes.” We must ask the right questions and truly listen to what the other side says. “There is a history of 1,400 years” motivating Islamic fundamentalists.

When Osama Bin Laden gave his reasons for the 11 September attack, he talked about events that happened 80 years before. Galtung said the problem with many Western leaders is that they do not know their history where their opponents live with their history everyday.

The events Bin Laden was probably referring to were the 1916 *Sykes-Picot Agreement* and the 1917 *Balfour Declaration*. Britain and France signed the *Sykes-Picot Agreement*, which divided the Arab region into zones of influence. Lebanon and Syria were assigned to France, Jordan and Iraq to Britain and Palestine was to be internationalized.

The British government issued the *Balfour Declaration* on 2 November 1917, in the form of a letter to a British Zionist leader from the foreign secretary Arthur J. Balfour: “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish

people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

Galtung looks at history and sees not only Islamic terrorism but also “state terrorism.” The British when they were an empire led over 200 “punishment expeditions” against groups it wanted to bring into line. The Americans have had over 240 interventions into other countries. This behaviour becomes “habit forming”.

What happened on 11 September 2001 was that one of these groups on the receiving end of state terrorism struck back on a major scale.

Galtung questioned U.S. State Department officials and asked, “What is it you want?” “Free trade” was the answer. They want a world that is safe for American business interests. He then asked Muslim activists what they wanted. “Respect for us and our faith.” They want U.S. troops off their soil. They are offended by western hedonistic values and resent having these brought to their lands by foreign soldiers and business people.

Knowing what each side wants is the beginning of the peace process. The U.S. could remove troops from Islamic lands. Agreements on cultural and religious issues can be negotiated. At this point, many in the Islamic world believe that violence is the only language the West understands.

Galtung quotes a passage from the Koran that says something like “If your enemy inclines toward peace, you should

do the same.” The West has not picked up on this as a strategy. It comes from not knowing the other side.

As a regular visitor to Australia, Galtung spoke quite freely about the political and cultural scene here. He had nothing good to say about the current government and complained that the opposition has no alternatives to offer to the war on terrorism. This was a criticism he had about the peace movement too. It is not enough to just say “No” to war. We need alternatives.

“Politicians are afraid of a ‘Plan B’ that is better than theirs.” What the peace movement needs are more “Plan B’s.” Think through alternatives to current government policies. Even in slogans we use to organise people we need something that offers a different way. In the workshop, we tried to come up with slogans to use in a hypothetical demonstration outside the foreign office in Canberra. “U.S. Out – UN In” was Galtung’s favourite.

Galtung has travelled and taught widely and says this about Australia. “This is the only country in the world that has made hedonism a major pillar of society.” He sees this as a positive aspect of Australian culture but says we should be aware of how others see this. In Bali, the Islamic bombers were resentful of the Australian hedonistic lifestyle and the affect it had on their land. The hedonistic extreme of “Australian paedophiles operating in Bali” was particularly distasteful and offensive to them.

“Know yourself and know your enemy.” Good advice from Johan Galtung. More is “Conflict is conflict – what is limited is our imagination.” - MSH



Justice Award

Dr Chris Marshall won an International Community Justice Award for his work in developing and promoting community-based justice alternatives. The awards are sponsored by the British Home Office and conferred once every four years. Nominations were received from 39 countries. The winners were decided by a panel of six international dignitaries who met over three days in October last year.

The International Community Justice Awards are “designed to bring international recognition for those actions taken by individuals and organisations to reduce crime that have made a difference to their communities”. The awards are for

individual, organisational, and pioneering merit. Chris won an individual award as “the Outstanding Campaigner”, in recognition of “his life-long campaign in the cause of justice for all and for his work in developing restorative justice in New Zealand”. He was the only person from the voluntary sector to win an award.

The awards were presented in London by Princess Anne on January 28 in a special ceremony held during an international probation conference in London. Chris attended the conference as a guest of the National Probation Service for England and Wales.

Chris is chair of the Waitakere Restorative Justice Community Group, which serves the Court-Referred Restorative Justice Pilot. Later in the year he moves to Wellington to take up a new post in Religious Studies at Victoria University.

Marshall says the award is for the New Zealand restorative justice movement as a whole. “It’s a recognition of what many people are doing.” He hopes that international recognition for his work will help to raise the profile of restorative justice in New Zealand.

“The public mood out there is increasingly punitive. Personally I ascribe that largely to media sensationalism which creates a climate of fear. When people are afraid they want to hit back harder.”

Restorative justice is still a relatively new idea, having been developed over the last 20 to 30 years. Marshall believes that restorative justice principles are very similar to biblical ideas, such as accountability, repentance, restitution, and forgiveness.



Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute

Since 2000, Catholic Relief Services, the Mennonite Central Committee, and the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development have joined efforts and resources to bring together peacebuilders and practitioners from over twenty countries for the Mindanao

Peacebuilding Institute (MPI) in Davao City, Mindanao, Philippines.

Over 650 peacebuilders have participated in MPI's intensive in-depth training courses. The MPI vision is to create "peaceful and just communities in the Asia Pacific." Courses offered include: Introduction to Conflict Transformation, Fundamentals of Peacebuilding, Introduction to Peace Education, Conflict Resolution Skills, Religion: Source of Conflict/ Resource for Peace, Arts Approaches to Peacebuilding, Understanding Traumatized Communities, and Gender Conflict and Peacebuilding.

The Institute runs for three weeks each year with classes the first two weeks being held at the Medical School complex in Davao. The third week most students go on Peacebuilding Field Exposure trips throughout Mindanao, an island that has numerous ongoing conflicts.

This year Mary and I taught two classes from 17 – 28 May. The first one was the *Theology of Peacebuilding* where we had twenty-four students from the Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh, India, and Australia. We broke the class into three working groups – Muslim, Catholic, and Evangelical Christian – to explore the values, traditions, and ethics from these different traditions that support peacebuilding. Using the Appreciative Inquiry approach each group sought to discover the best from their faith traditions and then dream about the future and design peacebuilding approaches growing out of their faith.

[Editors' Note: Below is a report from AAANZ member and Tasmanian artist Christina Booth about a peace project she carried out in a local primary school.]

Longford "Declaring Peace" Art Project

I went to the school just after I dropped Mark and Mary Hurst off at the Launceston airport and we discussed the idea of a project entitled "Declaring Peace." The school was very excited about it so for the four final weeks of term I worked with about six groups of six kids, mostly boys for a boys education grant as well as the more 'unsettled' kids with some behavioural challenges. We successfully brainstormed the idea of declaring peace and what that meant to us as individuals. The kids were great, they



One student said at the end of the course, "I came to learn more about peace and in the process found God." A Roman Catholic woman student said, "I learned more about my faith tradition and want to study the Bible more now." Another student said, "This class has encouraged me to do a degree in pastoral studies."

The second week we taught a course on *Active Nonviolence*. Fifteen students looked with us at nonviolence as a way of life. We examined the lives of Jesus, Gandhi, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Howard Thurman, Martin Luther King, Jr. and others as well as the nonviolent movements they led.

MPI is part of a worldwide network of peacebuilding institutes offering intensive courses at the grassroots level. Fifteen leaders of regional peacebuilding groups gathered for the first time during the Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University. Their May 30 - June 4 conference launched a network between existing institutes in Zambia, Ghana, the Philippines and the United States and groups planning peacebuilding institutes in the South Pacific, South Asia and Jamaica.

We also teach a course on the *Practice of Reconciliation* in the Pacific Peacebuilding Initiatives (PPI) program held in Sydney from 4 October to 19 November 2004. For more information on PPI go to their website at: www.ct.gs/ppi.

- MSH



Sign we saw in an animal park in the Philippines.

decided that it was not just about world war etc. but about communities, families, classrooms, playgrounds and themselves.

They decided that peace started with us, and that we should not wait for others to be peace makers but we should start either in our opinions about the world situation or in a bullying situation at school. Cool stuff for a bunch of primary school kids eh?!

They ended up creating self portraits to remind ourselves that we are peace makers and that peace starts with us. They wrote down "We can..." statements about peace which we incorporated into the work.

It was a very busy four weeks but an excellent outcome that was already having effect in the playground whilst I was there. The school now has a permanent sculpture called "Peace Pillars" which the kids can rearrange and constantly refer to as a reminder and inspiration.

I am wrapped with the outcome.

Church Website

The Community Church of St. Mark is a congregation that seeks to apply the symbols and resources of Christianity in a current context. The style of worship is open and welcoming, with an experimental tradition in liturgy, teaching, and conscious reflection. <http://senseinternet.com.au/ccsm/resources.htm>

PRAYER FROM THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF ST. MARK RESOURCE PAGE:

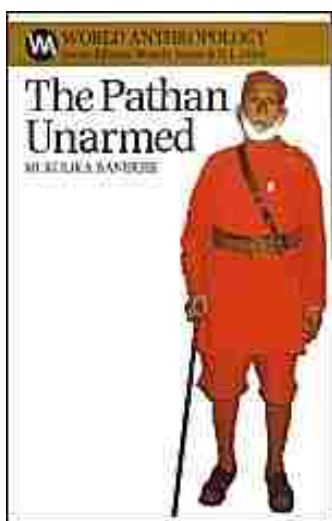
Visit us with the wisdom and love we need to grow and not stagnate;

Visit us with the gentle rain or the storm which ushers in change and growth;

Be the fire which cracks open the seed, the recollection which takes our breath away.

Be our tree of reconciliation – shade us with your love. Amen

REVIEWS AND RESOURCES



The Pathan Unarmed

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2000

When we teach about active nonviolence, we use a number of examples from the twentieth century like Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. Recently we have added a key Muslim peacemaker, Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan, also known as Badshah Khan, was an ally of Mahatma

Gandhi. He led a struggle for freedom and the rights of his people in what is now Pakistan. For almost eighty years, he fought for justice without ever wielding a weapon.

As a young man, he began organizing schools to educate for reform. He toured the villages of the North-West Frontier Province of India, calling people to help one another and get ready for independence from Great Britain.

Khan organized history's first professional nonviolent army called Servants of God, or Khudai Khidmatger (KK).

The KK eventually grew to include 100,000 nonviolent soldiers. Each member of the KK took the following oath:

"In the name of God who is Present and Evident, I am a KK.

I will serve the nation without any self-interest.

I will not take revenge and my actions will not be a burden for anyone. My actions will be nonviolent.

I will make every sacrifice required of me to stay on this path.

I will serve people without regard to their religion or faith.

I shall use nation-made goods.

I shall not be tempted by any office."

Another version of the oath includes the following:

"...I promise to forgive those who oppress me or treat me with cruelty. I promise to refrain from taking part in feuds and quarrels...I promise to live a simple life, to practice virtue and

to refrain from evil. I promise to practice good manners and good behaviour and not to lead a life of idleness. I promise to

devote at least two hours a day to social work."

Badshah Khan's people, the Pathans, were historically a warrior people. Feuds and infighting were common. It was

a great accomplishment to get these formerly violent people to cooperate in a long nonviolent campaign against the British.

Mukulika Banerjee has written an excellent book describing Badshah Khan and the KK movement entitled *The Pathan Unarmed* (Oxford University Press, 2000). She interviewed elderly members of the KK to get firsthand accounts of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his work.

Khan started with reforming his people. "I realised that revolution could not be done in a hurry and that it was no easy task...it needed sensible and intelligent people...people needed to be politically educated and needed a certain dedication." (51)

Badshah Khan said the people needed to start by cleaning their villages...the need to uplift the social standards of Pathan society through improved sanitation and education was a constant in Badshah Khan's political activities...By involving villagers in building and supporting schools he aimed to help them gain a sense of empowerment over their lives. (53)

The British put him in prison and "it was there that he first encountered radical nonviolent protest methods." (53)

He drew an unfavourable comparison between the values of his Christian schoolmasters and those of his fellow Pathans, who, he argued, valued generosity but not selfless service: "The Wigram brothers served people with indescribable love and good intentions. I learnt humanity, helping one's fellow brothers, pride in one's nation and the service of God's creation from Mr. Wigram. We Pashtuns not only failed to serve our fellow beings, we fought with them instead..." (56)

Again and again Badshah Khan told the people that the British could be removed without any violence if the Pathans could only unite...He urged them to talk disagreements over peacefully, through informal discussion. (61)

The nationalist project envisaged by Badshah Khan required significant changes in traditional patterns of Pathan thought, behaviour and social interaction, and in order to bring these about Badshah Khan designed and utilised a thorough regime of training and instruction. (75)

The fact that Badshah Khan, a respected *khan*, was willing to do dirty work himself made a great impact and contributed towards generating an improved civic sense. (77)

From the modern perspective such tasks as digging a latrine trench also look like classic team-building exercises which could help reduce fractiousness and improve unity. (78)

Badshah Khan constantly drew on examples from the Prophet's [Mohammed] life in discussing patience and restraint...emphasising that patience and faith had been the weapon of the Prophet...Our only weapon is patience. (80)

He hoped to encourage people to internalise the principles of nonviolence, forbearance and forgiveness, incorporating them into their everyday behaviour and manners. (80)

All the training in service and non-violence would come to nought if it was not accompanied in practice by the cessation of internal violence among the Pathans...people would have to settle their feuds before they were allowed to join the movement. (81)

When I read this part of the story, I thought about Jesus' words "to leave your gift at the altar and first be reconciled." I long for the day when Christians will put aside their petty differences for the sake of God's kingdom. Khan was able to do this with the Pathans to reach the goal of freedom from the British.

He was in a fairly literal sense seeking to rehabilitate the Pathans through the same principles of army-like discipline, obedience, cleanliness and service favoured by the Salvation Army. (86)

The Pathans' refusal to fight threatened the British with the collapse of their own carefully constructed ideals of masculinity, denying them the opportunity to be violent and thereby threatening an associated loss of potency and power. (212)

In appealing to the civilised and humane face of their enemy, rather than to its brutal one, the KK made a statement about their own value and that of their cause, and about their right to equality. (102)

While Badshah Khan drew on Islam and Christian teachings for his overall vision, he also worked with the Hindu Gandhi. He agreed with what Gandhi told the Indian people in 1921. "Noncooperation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with good."

"Gandhi used to tell his followers that *swaraj*, home-rule for India, would come only when every Indian exercised *swaraj*, self-rule, in his or her own life. The dependence of India upon the British, he said, was the sum of the dependence of each Indian upon British cloth, British thought, British custom, British overnment...Gandhi was able to bring about a nonviolent freedom struggle insofar as people were able to see the truth in this insight of his: The imposition of British rule was made possible by Indian cooperation, and could be ended by noncooperation. Indians had to learn to respect themselves, to throw off the limitations of untouchability and of their own reverse racism; Indians had to learn to govern their own desires for wealth and property; Indians had to refuse to surrender to their centuries of conditioning to caste divisions so that they could work together for freedom." (- Shelley Douglas, "The Power of Noncooperation", *The Universe Bends Toward Justice*, 236-237)

Badshah Khan taught these same ideas to the Pashtuns of the North West Province. He helped a people free themselves first from cycles of vengeance and violence they were trapped in among themselves and then to find freedom from Great Britain. Muslim examples like Abdul Ghaffar Khan are important for us today living in an atmosphere of distrust between Muslims and Christians. Not all Muslims are violent terrorists. In fact, most are not violent at all. Abdul Ghaffar Khan demonstrated the best of his Muslim tradition and gave the world another example of active nonviolence.

MSH

Positive Approaches To Peacebuilding

EDITED BY CYNTHIA SAMPSON, ET.AL.,
PACT PUBLICATIONS, WASHINGTON, D.C., 2003

A thinking process called "appreciative inquiry"(AI) has spawned a movement that has notched up success stories around the globe. It has transformed the mental atmosphere of American corporations, non-profit groups, and poor rural villages. A core belief of the discipline: *Instead of looking at what's wrong, people succeed most when they look for what's right.*

"We have become so burdened in a deficit consciousness," says David Cooperrider, an organizational behaviourist at Case Western Reserve University (USA) and father of appreciative inquiry. "The root metaphor is that our world is a problem to be solved as opposed to the opposite metaphor ... that our world is home to infinite capacity." Appreciative inquiry taps infinite possibility.

Cooperrider had a moment of clarity in Hiroshima, Japan, as he listened to stories of survivors of the atomic bomb. "It was almost like an atomic bomb went off inside of me," he remembers. "The feeling that came over me was the preciousness of life on this planet. The question that was being born in me was: What was there in human relations that would be as positive in our lives as the atomic bomb was negative?"

It would take another eleven years before that inspiration turned into a doctoral dissertation. By 1992, Cooperrider was eager to find success stories for his theories. Imagine Chicago – a programme that used poor youth to interview top community and corporate leaders about what was good in their community - piqued his interest and he began to publicize it.

Appreciative inquiry began to draw more attention in the mid-1990s because of some high-profile turnarounds. When Avon Corporation of Mexico heard about a particular appreciative-inquiry programme, it started its own massive effort. The company let 100 of its employees get training in appreciative-inquiry interviewing. They interviewed some 300 co-workers and trained others to interview. The effort mushroomed. Workers began sharing their success stories of cross-gender collaboration. As a result, Avon began asking men and women to co-chair teams and task forces, the executive committee admitted its first woman, and in 1997, a working-women's issues group called *Catalyst* named Avon Mexico the nation's best place for women to work.

Proponents began to carry the idea into settings beyond corporations. "If you look for problems, you find more problems," one AI practioner says. "If you look for success, you create more success - and that's the breakthrough." Focusing on strengths is more effective than focusing on problems. Peacebuilders started applying AI in conflict situations. *Positive Approaches To Peacebuilding* explains the theory and explores how it is being applied.

**You can tell whether a man is
clever by his answers.
You can tell whether he is wise
by his questions.**

- Naguib Nahfouz, *Positive Approaches To
Peacebuilding*, p. 237

Thirty-three contributors give us what the sub-title says, "A Resource For Innovators". This volume is a must for people in the peacebuilding field. It moves us from the often negative aspect of peacebuilding that just looks at the negatives, the problems. The book encourages us to seek positive alternatives.

Part 1 of the book deals with AI theory and how it can be applied in peacebuilding. Part 2 explores creating "cultures of peace." Part 3 looks at social transformation, Part 4, conflict resolution, Part 5, healing and reconciliation, while Part 6 is about designing organisations for peacebuilding.

Case studies from a number of countries illustrate how AI works. The book also includes a CD by Herm Weaver and John Paul Lederach that has the song "A Dream of the Light" and the story "How a High School Changed the World." In a chapter called "The 'Wow Factor' and a Non-theory of Change," Lederach explains how the CD was created as a response to September 11, 2001.

Chapter 7, "Creative Coexistence in Muslim Spain as a Model of Positive Peace," contains a helpful story from history. The chapter illustrates how "negative memory can be fought with positive memory." (136) Scholars are working creatively in a project looking at a period of Islamic history extending from the eighth to the fifteenth centuries C.E., when Christians, Jews, and Muslims "created a level of civilisation in Spain that was the envy of Europe and compared favourably to Constantinople and Baghdad." (137) They believe "Andalusia offers a template for today based on its tolerance, cooperation, and coexistence." (139) They are working to make this period of history part of the common knowledge of all in the Middle East today.

The conflict transformer's mission in AI "is to help the parties identify potential avenues for change that accommodate the interests and needs of all the parties." (15) One underlying premise is, "For there to be any chance of long-term success in any peacebuilding process, it must be open to everyone who has a serious stake in it." (26) Who are the people who need to get to know one another, person to person? Who are the people who haven't felt safe to share their stories, hopes, and dreams and really give voice to them? Find these people and involve them in an AI process.

One comprehensive description of AI is:

"The cooperative search for the best in people, their organisations, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives a system 'life' when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to heighten positive potential..." (28)

The questions raised in a conflict are important. "The seeds of change are embedded in the questions we ask." (60) In the "problem-solving" mode, one might ask, "What problems do we face? What conditions cause these problems? What causes these conditions?" Then you address the root causes.

In a "possibility" mode, one might ask, "What dreams do you have? How can you make this happen? What will you do?"

AI builds on positive possibilities in a "4-D Cycle" that includes Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny (or Delivery). These four take one through stages of *appreciating* what gives life, *envisioning* what might be, *constructing* what we want to be, and *sustaining* what will be.

Positive Approaches To Peacebuilding with its exploration of appreciative inquiry gives today's peacebuilders some new tools for the old task of peacemaking.

[Some material in this review came from "Look for what's right", Laurent Belsie, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 09/13/2001]



Post-Christendom: Church and mission in a strange new world

STUART MURRAY,
PATERNOSTER, 2004

Rather than defend "Christendom" ideas such as prayers in Parliament, the place

of Christianity in the EU constitution and Christianity in religious education, the church needs to rethink the way that it relates to the world around it. That is the message of a new and radical book by Stuart Murray.

The book entitled *Post-Christendom: Church and mission in a strange new world* looks at the context within which the church in western culture now operates.

For most of its history, since the conversion of the emperor Constantine in the fourth century, the church in Europe has been a central, powerful, and dominant institution. This position has profoundly affected how the church has interpreted the Bible, engaged in mission, and understood itself.

But the gradual demise of Christendom resulted in the decline of the church and its marginalisation in western culture. In the secular and religiously plural world of the twenty-first century, Christians can no longer operate with Christendom values, assumptions, methods, or attitudes. A church on the margins, if it is to flourish or even survive, must learn to read the Bible, engage in mission and understand itself in fresh ways.

Post-Christendom explores this strange new world and urges creative and courageous engagement with the challenges of post-Christendom. Drawing on insights from the early Christians, dissident movements and the world church, it analyses the Christendom era and its troublesome legacy, challenges conventional ways of thinking, offers resources for Christians who will dare to imagine new ways of following Jesus on the margins, and telling his story in a world they can no longer control.

"The understandable reaction of the church to a secular and religiously plural culture is to try and protect and recover elements of Christendom," said Stuart Murray, the book's author.

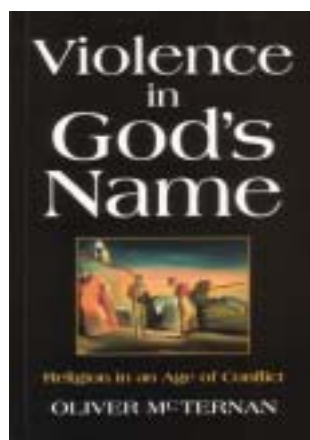
"Christians devote a lot of time, energy, and money into working and campaigning to recover or defend Christendom. But in a Post-Christendom context the church has opportunities to engage in new and radical ways with the world around it, that it hasn't had for hundreds of years. Rather than seeking to recover Christendom, the church should seize these opportunities with both hands and rethink the way it undertakes its mission."

A course and 90 page study guide entitled *After Christendom: Following Jesus on the Margins* has also been produced by the Anabaptist Network, and an online discussion forum has been set up on the Anabaptist Network web site to explore the issues that the book raises.

Stuart Murray spent 12 years as an urban church planter in Tower Hamlets (East London) and has continued to be involved in church planting since then as a trainer, mentor, writer, strategist, and consultant. For 9 years he was Oasis Director of Church Planting and Evangelism at Spurgeon's College, London and he remains an Associate Lecturer of the college. He is chair of the UK Anabaptist Network and the editor of *Anabaptism Today*.

He has written several books on church planting, urban mission, the challenge of post-Christendom and the contribution of the Anabaptist tradition to contemporary missiology.

Since September 2001, he has been working under the auspices of the Anabaptist Network as a trainer and consultant, with particular interest in emerging forms of church. He is also overseeing Urban Expression, a pioneering urban church planting agency, and working part time as Tutor in Community Learning at Regent's Park College, Oxford, from where he directs the DELTA training programme that is run by three Baptist colleges. - **From Ekklesia think tank in the UK**



Violence in God's Name Religion in an Age of Conflict

BY OLIVER MCTERNAN
DARTON, LONGMAN AND
TODD, 2003

Oliver McTernan was recently interviewed on Radio National's *The Spirit of Things* program.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/relig/spirit/stories/s1120606.htm>

Their summary of the interview was, "A former Jesuit priest, Oliver McTernan urges us to face the violent trends in religion and not merely accept political or economic explanations." That is a good summary of his book too.

Oliver McTernan has been involved in conflict resolution in Russia, Northern Ireland, the Balkans and the Horn of Africa for more than thirty years. He has just finished three years as a Fellow of Harvard University's Centre for International Affairs, and is a regular broadcaster for the BBC.

McTernan is concerned that modern secularists have no place for religion in their view of world conflicts. But his research shows that "out of 115 armed conflicts listed since 1989 religion has been a relevant factor in at least twenty-nine, and over half of the current conflicts have a significant religious component." (xiii)

"In 1980 the US Department of State's roster on international terrorist groups included scarcely a single religious group. By 1998 it was estimated that at least half of the thirty most dangerous groups in the world were religious." (xiii)

In his examination of religion and conflict he finds that ... "all the main faith traditions have a violent and bloody record that needs to be acknowledged and addressed to avoid the risk of repetition." (21)

Looking at religious terrorists he found... "today's faith-inspired terrorists hold in common the belief that their scriptural

In God's Name

The events of 9/11 drove home to a sceptical West the power of faith to motivate people to extremes. What were once dismissed as ancient hatreds no longer central to the modern world, came to be seen in a new light as posing a pressing challenge to the peace and stability of the world.

Adherents of all the major world faiths can be found to this day defending acts of violence on the grounds that their cause is religiously justified: from the Balkans to Sri Lanka, Indonesia to Northern Ireland, the Middle East to Kashmir, India to Nigeria.

Mark Duff examines how religiously-inspired militants justify their violence, how they differ from those fighting for other causes, and what ways there are to bring peace into religiously-motivated conflict situations.

http://www0.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/specials/1143_in_gods_name/index.shtml

or foundational texts were dictated verbatim by a divine authority and as such are beyond interpretation." (22)

"Mark Juergensmeyer's research provides a profile of the religiously motivated terrorist as a young, jobless, unmarried male who sees no way of escaping the conditions that rob him of all sense of honour and respectability...Religion provides them with a sense of honour, personal pride, kinship and identity. Violence gives them a sense of empowerment. The combination of religion and violence provides the 'antidotes to humiliation'." (35)

"Poverty and inequality act both as trigger and fuel for the fervour of the religious terrorist and need therefore to be addressed if the growth of a terrorism that seeks divine authority to justify its atrocities is to be curtailed." (127)

Herein lay some clues to "fighting" terrorism. Dealing with poverty, education, and political oppression will go a long way toward removing the fertile soil of discontent that produces willing terrorists.

"Religion is rarely the sole cause but it is central to the meaning of too many conflicts to be ignored or to be regarded as irrelevant in the analysis and search for solutions." (41)

"In each faith tradition one can find sufficient ambiguity in its founding texts and stories to justify killing for the glory of God. Each tradition has also its heroes who saw themselves as acting on divine authority as they plotted the destruction of those whom they perceived to be enemies of God. Today's religious extremists can find their rationale for inflicting terror in the name of God in the ambivalence towards violence that is to be found in each faith tradition." (76)

This is why peace theology is so important. Telling the right stories and expounding texts with an eye toward peace and justice will lead away from a rigid fundamentalism and a warrior god. "The challenge...is to return to the sources of faith and to listen afresh, to find 'in that word, as it speaks to us now, a narrative of hope' that will enable [us] to deal with extremism within [our] own faith." (141)

"By focusing on those parts of their traditions that at least implicitly acknowledge the right of others to believe and to act differently, [religious leaders] will be challenging the fears and prejudices that have driven relationships between the diverse traditions for several centuries." (156)

McTernan thinks “sustainable peace has to be rooted in a willingness at a local level to find ways to co-exist in a manner that will allow trust to develop over time between the warring parties.” (158)

“A peace process that fails to take time to engage local communities and to build bridges both within and between them, religious and secular, is unlikely to survive the tensions festering below the surface in either community.” (159)

Little if anything, in McTernan’s opinion, is accomplished in meetings of top religious leaders. A medical doctor in Sri Lanka “compared such meetings of the religious hierarchy in his country to a ten-storey building where on the top floor leaders were discussing peace while the ground floor was on fire.” (160)

“There is a clear and urgent need to strengthen the local peace-building capacity at a street level in parallel with the initiation of political talks at the top leadership level.” (159)

McTernan sees the need for religious leaders who can handle “adaptive challenges” – leaders who can think outside the box and who will not just support the institution’s party line. “Religious leaders need to encourage their adherents to rediscover their true origins...ignorance, however benign, cannot be allowed to go unchallenged in an age that is capable of inflicting destruction on a catastrophic scale.” (161) - **MSH**



Cascadia Publishing House

is pleased to present the following new titles:

• *A Mind Patient and Untamed: Assessing John Howard Yoder’s Contributions to Theology, Ethics, and Peacemaking*, edited by Ben C. Ollenburger and Gayle Gerber Koontz

This book assesses the work of John Howard Yoder, author of *The Politics of Jesus* and the many other noted writings within which he engaged in principled, patient, nonfoundationalist, and unsystematic conversation with the Bible, with his Anabaptist tradition, and with such thinkers as the Niebuhrs and Hauerwas.

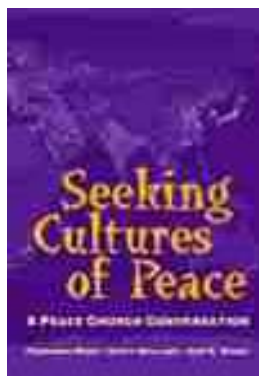
The book also places Yoder in new discussions—such as with Derrida and Said—and extends the conversation to the insightful Yoder scholars writing in this volume

“This book does exactly what John Howard Yoder did in person and in his writings by alerting us to how often we do violence by the way we read—so careful to control the history of our own minds! Let this book challenge the way you think, especially about what really matters for Christians. You probably won’t agree with everything in these writers’ critiques of Yoder’s vast and vastly divergent work, but then, if you read as Yoder taught us, you won’t agree any longer with your former self either.” —Marva J. Dawn, Theologian, Author, Educator with Christians Equipped for Ministry; Teaching Fellow in Spiritual Theology, Regent College, Vancouver, BC

“Yoder cannot be understood without the background of the faithful witness of his Anabaptist forebears. It is, therefore, appropriate that these essays representing the beginning of the hard work of receiving Yoder are by ‘his people.’ Hopefully,

however, these chapters are only the beginning of the many we will need to help us understand the what and how Yoder has to teach us. Only a beginning—but what a wonderful one.” — Stanley Hauerwas, Duke University, in the Introduction

The book is copublished with Herald Press and has been developed in association with Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Explore it in depth at: www.CascadiaPublishingHouse.com/amp/amp.htm.



• *Seeking Cultures of Peace: A Peace Church Conversation*, edited by Fernando Enns, Scott Holland, Ann K. Riggs

This book shares some of the new conversation between members of the Historic Peace Churches (Mennonites, Quakers, and Brethren) as they reflect on their theology in light of the World Council of Churches’ current Decade to Overcome Violence. It includes updated presentations rooted in a

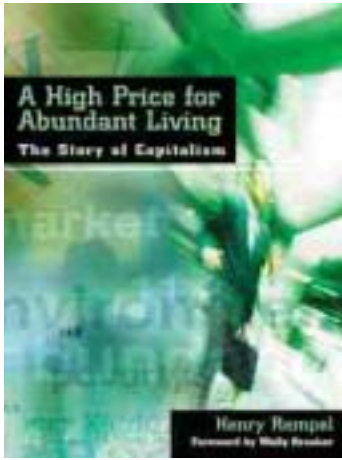
historic gathering of theologians of these three traditions, in Switzerland in 2001, at the beginning of the Decade. Offered are fresh readings of biblical and theological concepts as well as reflection on contemporary challenges and opportunities.

These 16 chapters plus other materials examine theological understandings in the light of current world realities. This includes reflection on the reality of globalized culture and structures of power, and on the role of national histories. Chapters also reflect on identity and context and how these shape understandings of peace. Authors look at biblical models of peacemaking but also explore the way concepts of land and place, in Christian and in other faith traditions, contribute to peace. Reflection from a variety of contexts, including Nigeria, Korea, Colombia, Paraguay, the British Isles and North America, adds richness to the collection.

“In these essays the Historic Peace Churches rise magnificently to the challenges of globalization. With historical nuance and political sophistication, these authors make a compelling case for effective nonviolent action. The message shines through that all Christians must make peace-building their first priority. It can and must change the face of global society.”—Lisa Sowle Cahill, Monan Professor of Theology, Boston College

“Dialogue among Historic Peace Churches since the 1950s has not kept up with developments worldwide and within the ecumenical movement. Meanwhile, justice, peace, and nonviolence have become top agenda for churches, faith communities, and movements. As this book documents, the resuming conversation among Quakers, Church of the Brethren, and Mennonites—and their joint consultation with the ecumenical movement—is an essential contribution to ‘seeking reconciliation and peace’ within the framework of the Decade to Overcome Violence.” —Hansulrich Gerber, Coordinator, Decade to Overcome Violence, World Council of Churches

The book is copublished with Herald Press as well as with Oikumene World Council of Churches Publications and has been developed in association with Mennonite Central Committee. Explore it in depth at www.CascadiaPublishingHouse.com/scp/scp.htm



Herald Press

- ***A High Price for Abundant Living: The Story of Capitalism***, Henry Rempel, Herald Press, 2003.

To what extent do we understand our economic system, even though we are important factors in driving it? Identifying especially with the North American business community, Henry Rempel notes the price we pay for a system that constantly expands its reach to global dimensions.

This book is a guide to our present economic system: how it came to be and how it works today. It seeks to contrast Adam Smith's ideal, and the recent realities of immense corporations and the fragile natural environment. This gentle critique of the current economic system recognizes the powerful impact the system has in generating a high material standard of living with considerable human freedom. Yet it dares to believe that we can aspire to an even better system that is more responsive to changing social and environmental realities—a system where the creative and enterprising spirit is encouraged to seek a better life for the entire global community.

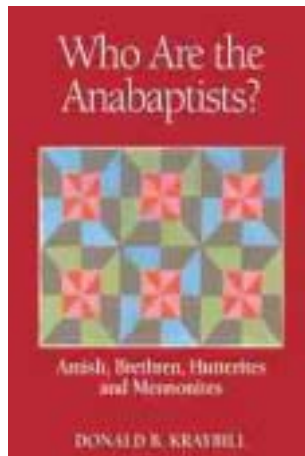
Henry Rempel, a Senior Scholar in the Department of Economics at the University of Manitoba, served as a professor in that department for over three decades. In addition to teaching economic development, he has led more than twenty missions abroad to evaluate projects for various agencies, including Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

- ***Who Are the Anabaptists? Amish, Brethren, Hutterites, and Mennonites***, by Donald B. Kraybill, Herald Press, 2003.

The Anabaptists of North America sport an amazing spectrum of religious and cultural diversity—from communal Hutterites to urban Mennonites, from low-tech Amish to acculturated Brethren. New members with Asian, African, and Hispanic cultural roots add spice and colour to traditional Anabaptist ways. Counting more than 6,000 congregations and 100 different groups, the Anabaptists are known for their strong commitments to peacemaking, service, and community. In this concise text, a leading scholar of Anabaptist communities provides a sweeping overview of their beliefs and practices as well as their similarities and differences.

Some Interesting Facts on the Four Church Families:

The Hutterites. Hutterite life rests on three core values: sharing material goods, surrendering self-will for communal harmony, and separating from an evil world. Communal property, the hallmark of Hutterite culture, distinguishes them from other Anabaptist groups.



The Mennonites. Mennonites are the largest and most complicated family in the Anabaptist world. Historical, religious, and cultural factors have produced more than 60 different Mennonite groups in North America.

The Amish. Amish parents typically raise about seven children, but ten or more is not uncommon. More than half of the population is under 18 years of age. An Amish person will often have 75 or more first cousins.

The Brethren. Except for some 3,000 Brethren in Christ, there are no other Brethren groups in Canada. The Brethren family blends together the legacies of both Anabaptism and Pietism.

Donald B. Kraybill is Distinguished College Professor and a Senior Fellow in the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College (Pennsylvania.). He is the author of numerous books on Anabaptist communities.

- ***Finding Our Way Home: Addictions and Divine Love***, K. Killian Noe

“Noe’s words are powerful—emboldened by an awesome capacity to ‘walk the talk.’ With an integrity formed from the crucible of living out the gospel through Samaritan Inns, *Finding Our Way Home* gives us a fresh taste of transforming grace.” - N. Gordon Cosby, The Church of the Saviour, Washington, D.C.

These stories describe the radical journey of creating a life with purpose, hope, and belonging. In ***Finding Our Way Home*** Noe draws from her experience as co-founder and program director at Samaritan Inns, an organization serving addicted and homeless men and women. Reading these stories can lead you to awareness of your own addictions and divine love, a journey that can lead you home.

“Noe challenges and inspires all of us to break our addictions. I highly commend her thoughtful insights.” - Jim Wallis, Sojourners

“Books on spirituality are too often ungrounded from any real practice or commitment. This book is a wonderful and mature exception. Noe has found a way to be real, concrete, inspiring, and profound at the same time.” - Richard Rohr, Center for Action and Contemplation

Killian Noe, along with David Erickson, founded Samaritan Inns in 1985. A comprehensive response to homelessness and addictions, Samaritan Inns is located in Washington, D.C.

- ***Soul Care: How to Plan and Guide Inspirational Retreats***, edited by Rose Mary Stutzman

“This user-friendly volume is a treasure chest of retreat formats and carefully chosen programming resources for all kinds of people in all kinds of life circumstances. ***Soul Care*** is a book which pastors and church leaders will rely on year after year.” - Holly Whitcomb, author of ***Practicing Your Path: A Book of Retreats for an Intentional Life***



The retreats featured here have been gathered from spiritual mentors with years of experience. The retreats are richly varied, covering topics from prayer and leadership to finances and marriage and are geared for families, small groups, and individual solitude.

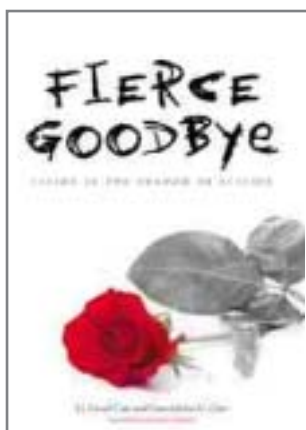
“A good retreat is more than ‘getting away from it all.’ And that is the purpose of the thoughtfully designed retreats in this guidebook. Offering a well-rounded approach to retreat activities as well as careful integration around a central theme, these designs introduce practices which, if pursued, will continue to form and transform people in their journey to mature faith.”

- Marlene Kropf, from the Foreword

Rose Mary Stutzman is an educator, writer, and editor. She is currently living in Nairobi, Kenya, where she and her husband Mervin are completing a three-year Mennonite Central Committee service assignment.

• **Fierce Goodbye: Living in the Shadow of Suicide**, G. Lloyd Carr and Gwendolyn C. Carr

What does the Bible say on the topic of suicide? What does it not say? G. Lloyd Carr, now professor emeritus of biblical and theological studies at Gordon College, Massachusetts, began to ask these questions after a daughter-in-law died by suicide. He embarked on a thorough canvassing of the scriptures and church history on this topic, which helped him on his grief journey. His poet wife, Gwendolyn C. Carr, found solace in writing out her responses and thoughts in moving, sensitive poetry. Their combined efforts meld the pain and poignancy of the devastating experience of a family member's suicide.



Fierce Goodbye is first and foremost a penetrating account of a family dealing with suicide, and offers solid guidance for those who worry about the eternal fate of a loved one. It also provides a reliable and readable summary of Christian thinking about suicide, useful for pastors, counsellors, students, and teachers.

This special documentary edition was published in cooperation with Mennonite Media and Mennonite Mission Network. A website for the documentary offers follow-up resources for persons dealing with the aftermath of suicide, www.fiercegoodbye.com, where you can also find information on purchasing copies of the documentary on video or DVD.

“While there are many resources aimed at preventing suicide, there are far fewer resources for survivors of suicide. These survivors face a shattered world of anger, guilt, and grief. *Fierce Goodbye* lifts up the plight of those living in the shadow of death.” - Burton Buller in the Foreword

• **God and Violence: Biblical resources for living in a small world** by Patricia M. McDonald

“Throughout *God and Violence*, Patricia McDonald never forsakes the particulars of the text. This marks one of the book's strong qualities, for it is Scripture that properly forms our thinking and speaking of God, and it is Scripture that routinely

troubles our thought, speech, and action. At the same time, McDonald does not lose sight of the pressing questions that contemporary readers may have about, or may pose to, the Bible—especially those readers devoted to peace and peacemaking.”

- Ben C. Ollenburger, from the Foreword

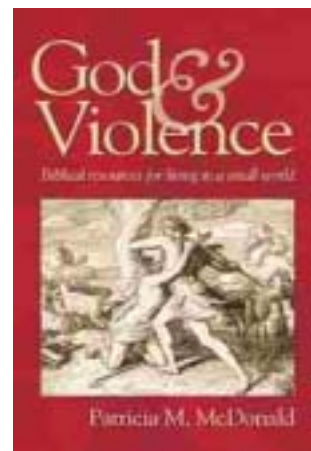
From the medieval crusades to the latest violence in the Middle East, warriors have long claimed the Bible's support for their battles. Patricia

McDonald argues that many biblical stories, read as part of a canon from Genesis to Revelation, contain resources for turning violence to service of God and humanity. As varied and complex as life itself, these narratives can provide us with imaginative possibilities and steady motivation to move beyond the narrow defensiveness and self-interest that are becoming ever more problematic in an increasingly interconnected world.

“McDonald denies nothing of the violence present in the Bible, however, by careful, canonical reading she shows the ways in which violence in the Bible is characteristically overstated. This book is an act of courage that invites a wide and thoughtful reading.”

- Walter Brueggemann, Columbia Theological Seminary

Patricia M. McDonald is a lecturer in New Testament at Ushaw College, Durham, England. She taught in the theology department at Mount Saint Mary's College for 12 years. A native of Scarborough, Yorkshire, McDonald belongs to the Society of the Holy Child Jesus.



Peace Websites

The Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research

“TFF is an independent think-tank and a website. Our mission is peace - learning to handle conflicts with ever less violence. Our tools are new ideas, listening, research, mitigation, education and advocacy.”

www.transnational.org/

The Religion and Peacemaking Initiative helps facilitate the resolution of international disputes through aiding the efforts of faith-based organizations. The program also expands knowledge about the actual and potential roles of religious organizations in international peacemaking. The principal goal is to aid American faith-based organizations in their international peacemaking work, which they usually undertake in partnership with communities of faith abroad.

www.usip.org/religionpeace/index.html

The International Movement for a Just World (JUST)

It is because of our commitment to a just world that we have decided to establish a society which will seek, in a modest way, to develop global awareness of the injustices within the existing system with the aim of evolving an alternative international order which will enhance human dignity and social justice. More specifically, our primary goal is to establish a spiritual and intellectual foundation for a just world.

<http://www.just-international.org/index.cfm>

Mennonite Publishers in North America

Mennonite Publishing Network

Herald Press
hp@mph.org
Faith and Life Resources
flr@mph.org
www.mph.org/hp

Pandora Press

Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
panpress@golden.net
www.pandorapress.com

CMBC Publications

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
mfranz@cmu.ca
www.cmu.ca/publications

Kindred Productions

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
kindred@mbconf.ca
www.kindredproductions.com

Good Books

Intercourse, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.
custserv@goodbks.com
www.goodbks.com

Cascadia Publishing House

Telford, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.
contact@cascadiapublishinghouse.com
www.cascadiapublishinghouse.com

The Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR)

FOR seeks to replace violence, war, racism, and economic injustice with nonviolence, peace, and justice. We are an interfaith organization committed to active nonviolence as a transforming way of life and as a means of radical change. We educate, train, build coalitions, and engage in nonviolent and compassionate actions locally, nationally, and globally.

<http://www.forusa.org/>

FOR Religious Fellowships: Baptist Peace Fellowship /Buddhist Peace Fellowship/Catholic Peace Fellowship /Episcopal Peace Fellowship / Jewish Peace Fellowship /Lutheran Peace Fellowship Muslim Peace Fellowship /Orthodox Peace Fellowship /Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

The War Resisters League affirms that all war is a crime against humanity. We therefore are determined not to support any kind of war, international or civil, and to strive nonviolently for the removal of all causes of war. www.warresisters.org/

The Albert Einstein Institution is a nonprofit organization advancing the study and use of strategic nonviolent action in conflicts throughout the world. www.aeinstein.org/

Center for Religious Freedom is a self-sustaining division of Freedom House. Founded in 1941 by Eleanor Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie to oppose Naziism and Communism in Europe, Freedom House is America's oldest human rights group. Its Center for Religious Freedom defends against religious persecution of all groups throughout the world. It insists that U.S. foreign policy defend Christians and Jews, Muslim dissidents and minorities, and other religious minorities in countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Iran and Sudan. It is fighting the imposition of harsh Islamic law in the new Iraq and Afghanistan and opposes blasphemy laws in Muslim countries that suppress more tolerant and pro-American Muslim thought. www.freedomhouse.org/religion/

Transcend; a Network for Peace and Development of cooperating individuals concerned with peace by peaceful means, development by developmental means and environment by environmental means. www.transcend.org/

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) offers an organized, nonviolent alternative to war and other forms of lethal inter-group conflict. CPT provides organizational support to persons committed to faith-based nonviolent alternatives in situations where lethal conflict is an immediate reality or is supported by public policy. <http://www.cpt.org>

Peace & Justice Support Network The mission of Peace and Justice Support Network of Mennonite Church USA is to proclaim and promote God's desire for justice ([Micah 6:8](#)), Christ's call to peacemaking ([Matthew 5:9](#)), and the Spirit's reconciling work ([Ephesians 2:11-22](#)). peace.mennolink.org/

The Institute for Peace and Justice (IPJ) is an independent, interfaith, not-for-profit organization that creates resources, provides learning experiences, and advocates publicly for alternatives to violence and injustice at the individual, family, community, institutional and global levels. www.ipj-ppj.org/

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is a relief, service, and peace agency of the North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. MCC reflects the biblical call to care for the hungry and thirsty, the stranger, the sick and those in prison. www.mcc.org/

The World Conference of Religions for Peace is the largest international coalition of representatives from the world's great religions who are dedicated to achieving peace. www.wcrp.org/

Nonviolence.Org is an entirely virtual new media organization. It was started by one person— Martin Kelley—in 1995. Almost eight years later, it's won accolades and attention from the mainstream media but has remained largely invisible to progressive foundations and much of the old peace movement. www.nonviolence.org/

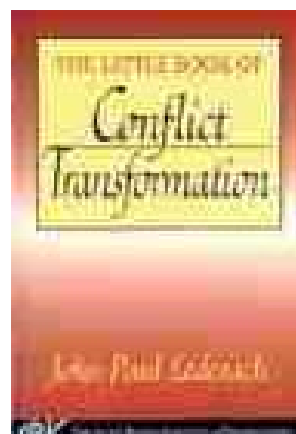
When Jesus said, "Love your enemies," I think he probably meant don't kill them.

Bumper sticker available at:

www.brethren.org/oepa/LoveYourEnemies.html

The Little Book of Conflict Transformation JOHN PAUL LEDERACH, Good Books, 2003.

Crammed into this diminutive book is the summation of John Paul Lederach's 20-plus years of work in the field of conflict. While it is not as technically explicit as some of his other writings, it does reflect the increasing depth/breadth in his approach to conflict transformation. I must confess that, given his sociological background, I often struggle to grasp his approach and models. It is a book to read over and over due to the complicated nature of the subject.



The Little Book takes the reader on a journey of discovering conflict as normal human phenomena and opportunity for growth. Seeing conflict transformation as a body, the journey takes the reader from the head to the heart, through the hands, legs and feet as a metaphor of definition. Lederach uses this imagery to explore the content, context and structure of relationships in a conflict. He rounds out the understanding of conflict transformation by comparing resolution and transformation language. Through accepting change, mapping of conflict, and using the ‘new science’ term of process-structures, Lederach presents a framework that allows us to develop capacities and see transformation of relationships as the goal of conflict.

The Little Book of Conflict Transformation is just one of a series of books published by Good Books in conjunction with the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University. Howard Zehr has contributed another Little Book entitled *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*. Other forthcoming Little Book titles include topics on negotiation, circle process, Biblical justice, and peacebuilding.

BOOK REVIEWER: JON RUDY, MCC ASIA PEACE RESOURCE



<http://peace.mennolink.org/>

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

A flyer from our local Toyota dealer came with the following address. Mark is thinking of adding this new title to his CV.



Anabaptist Study Guides

Following are some study guides available to individuals and groups to learn more about Anabaptism:

The Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana, USA has developed a distance course for “pastors, lay leaders and others interested in ministry.” In North America, the course is done in conjunction with an instructor but AAANZ has gotten permission to make the “Anabaptist History and Thought” unit available for individuals and groups in Australia and New Zealand. Below is an overview of the unit:

Pastoral Studies Distance Education: Leading God’s People

Unit Three: *Anabaptist History and Thought*

This is a U.S. college-level [Uni] course which introduces the student to Anabaptist history and thought. It is designed to help students discover their Mennonite rootedness in Anabaptism. The spiritual forebears of Mennonites have been variously called “Radical Reformers,” “Believers Church,” and “The Third Way.” By whatever name, the emphasis is on being a voluntary, disciplined community of adult believers following the

example of Jesus. We shall see “the Anabaptist Vision” as a line of faith that reached back to the earliest decades of the church, was put into practice in the 16th. century, and in the Mennonite church in succeeding years. We shall discern how we might make “the Anabaptist Vision” relevant to the life and work of the church today.

The first five lessons deal with Anabaptist history, the last five with theology. The goal of the latter is to help students learn how to think theologically using Anabaptist categories and understandings, and apply them in practical situations

For more information about the unit go to:

<http://www.ambs.edu/PSDEUnit3/index.htm>

If you are interested in receiving the Workbook contact AAANZ at AAANZ@iprimus.com.au .

Cost for the Workbook is approx. \$50 (Australian)

Study Packs Available From the British Anabaptist Network:

Becoming a Peace Church: The Study Guide

The study guide on the New Ground booklet, *Becoming a Peace Church* by Alan & Eleanor Kreider

After Christendom: Following Jesus on the Margins

An Anabaptist Network Study Course

Taking Jesus Seriously

An Anabaptist Network Study Course

<http://www.anabaptistnetwork.com/book/view/88>

Second Mile is a peace curriculum that invites congregations and small groups to enter a journey of worship, study, action and reflection that will help them become active signs of Christ’s peace in a broken world. <http://www.gosecondmile.org/>

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Iraqi Group Extends “Thanks” to Eastern Mennonite University

HARRISONBURG, Virginia, USA - Reformation church leader Martin Luther reportedly said, “Even if I knew my life would end tomorrow, I would still plant a tree.”

A Southern magnolia was planted in front of the Hillside Suites residence at Eastern Mennonite University May 27 as a living symbol of hope for peace in Iraq, a country devastated by war and destruction in the wake of the U.S. invasion.

Six Iraqi citizens who spent several weeks attending programs at EMU aimed at training persons to do peacebuilding, mediation work and trauma healing in areas of protracted conflict gave the tree to the university as an expression of thanks for their experiences.

The group, three men and three women, attended a weeklong “STAR” (Seminars on Trauma Awareness and Recovery), a program co-sponsored by EMU’s Conflict Transformation Program and Church World Service. STAR provides intensive training programs for religious leaders and caregivers to assist persons in areas affected by traumatic events.

They then participated in the first two sessions of the annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI), an annual CTP-sponsored event that offers intensive seven-day courses on conflict transformation, strategic nonviolence, trauma awareness and reconciliation, restorative justice and related themes.

“The workshops we attended were extremely valuable to our work in Iraq,” said one participant, speaking on behalf of his colleagues. “The mediation training will help us in resolving local and community conflicts, hopefully reaching out to a



Photo by Jim Bishop Some faces blurred for safety reasons.

broader base and with more formal applications to human rights situations.

“Coming here (to EMU) gave us a new sense of hope,” he said. “The public media isn’t showing the progress being made in trying to bring stability and improved economic life. Violence will only lead to more violence. We want to take back and apply the values to help build up peace in our country.”

The delegation was sponsored by Church World Service and Mennonite Central Committee.



[Editors’ Note: The Kreiders will be in Australia in 2005. Watch OTR for details of their visit.]

Mission Educators Teach Peace Identity in Asian Cultures

(Mennonite Mission Network) – When mission educators Alan and Eleanor Kreider visited three East Asian countries recently on behalf of Mennonite Mission Network, the peace-church identity they emphasized had very different meanings depending on the culture in which it was presented. From April 7 through May 3, the Kreiders travelled to Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan for a schedule packed with prayer meetings, sermons, teaching sessions, speeches and one televised appearance.

“The perceived need, as is usual in inviting Mennonite foreign guest lecturers, was to have further teaching on Anabaptist/Mennonite-related themes, since the Asian churches continue to struggle with what it means to be Mennonite in their contexts,” said Sheldon Sawatzky, the Mission Network’s director for East Asia.

In Taiwan, where the Kreiders spent the first 10 days of their trip, the church is doing well. However, the Taiwanese people struggle with a history of oppression by outside groups, and war is an ever-present threat. For this reason, Sawatzky wanted the Kreiders to stress the importance of being a peace church.

“In this setting, two things seemed especially to interest our hearers: the breadth of our peace-church teaching, and the fact that Taiwanese Mennonite life grew out of the commitment of young North American Mennonites to conscientious objection to military service,” Kreider said.

The church in Hong Kong, where the Kreiders spent the next eight days, is also very vital, enjoying an abundance of teenagers who bring tremendous energy and verve to the church, the Kreiders said.

However, the Kreiders cautioned, Mennonites in Hong Kong are very isolated from the larger Mennonite family,



Everywhere Alan and Kreider appeared on their recent tour in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan, they were well-received and brought new insights to the participants. Photographer: Sheldon Sawatzky
Copyright: 2004 Mennonite Mission Network

because they lack the wider connections to the denomination through seminaries and other networks.

“There’s a lot of fizz, but are they still going to be Mennonite in 20 years?” Alan Kreider mused.

While the Mennonite Church in these two countries is influenced primarily by factors existing within their own cultures, the picture the Kreiders encountered in Japan was very different. There, world events have played a far more significant role in shaping non-Christians’ perceptions of the church.

“Everywhere we went in Japan, people wanted us to talk about Iraq,” Alan said, explaining that escalating violence

between the United States and Iraq has created serious credibility problems for Christians in some parts of the world.

“I think the problem is a widespread one,” he said. “On this trip we met it primarily in Japan, on the part of Mennonites who are seeking to share their faith. But I have heard this from Christians active in other parts of the world, especially the Islamic world.”

The concern, Kreider said, is that the U.S. government describes itself as Christian; George Bush prays before committing the United States to battle; and U.S. foreign policy appears frightening to others with its unilateralism and trust in violence.

“Therefore (the logical conclusion would be that) Christianity is the sort of religion that fosters violent behaviour,” Kreider said. “It makes it that much harder to be a Christian in Japan. It’s hard enough without that. Japanese people already perceive Christianity as a violent religion. ... The material culture is very powerful there (in Japan), and every church, every religion is struggling.”

According to Sawatzky, now that the Kreiders’ visit has piqued interest in the peace identity, follow-up in the Taiwan and Hong Kong churches will be at the local level. “The Kreider lectures achieved the goal of bringing new insights on the themes presented and encouraging the local churches in their identity as Mennonites,” he said.

Veterans of more than a quarter-century of mission, Alan and Eleanor Kreider serve as mission educators with Mennonite Mission Network, providing congregations and groups with seminars on themes ranging from the early church and Anabaptism to life as a peace church or worship and mission.

TO MAKE ONLINE DONATIONS TO AAANZ’ S WORK CONTACT THE AAANZ OFFICE FOR DETAILS

The Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand Inc.

The purposes of the Association are:

- To nurture and support the Christian faith of individuals and groups in Australia and New Zealand who identify with the Anabaptist tradition.
- To network and link individuals, churches and groups of Christians who share a common Anabaptist understanding of the Christian faith.
- To provide religious services including teaching, training, pastoral care, mediation, and counsel to its members and others interested in the Anabaptist tradition.
- To provide resources and materials relating to the tradition, perspectives, and teaching of Anabaptists to both the Christian and general public.
- To convene conferences and gatherings which provide opportunity for worship, teaching, training, consultation, celebration, and prayer in the Anabaptist tradition.
- To extend the awareness of Anabaptism in Australia and New Zealand assisting individuals, churches and groups discover and express their links with the Anabaptist tradition.
- To provide an opportunity for affiliation for churches and groups who wish to be known in Australia and New Zealand as Anabaptists.

What is Anabaptism?

Anabaptism is a radical Christian renewal movement that emerged in Europe during the sixteenth-century Reformation. Whilst Anabaptism was a grassroots movement with diverse expressions in its early development, its enduring legacy usually has included the following:

- Baptism upon profession of faith
- A view of the church in which membership is voluntary and members are accountable to the Bible and to each other
- A commitment to the way of peace and other teachings of Jesus as a rule for life
- Separation of church and state
- Worshipping congregations which create authentic community and reach out through vision and service

AAANZ
 c/o Mark and Mary Hurst
 P.O.Box 367 Sutherland NSW 1499
 Australia
 02 9545 0301
 AAANZ@iprimus.com.au
AAANZ Homepage on the internet
<http://www.anabaptist.asn.au>