



## Come to Conestoga's Easter Sunrise Service

Sunday, April 24, at 6:00 a.m.

*Conestoga's annual Easter morning sunrise service will be held on April 24 at Pine Grove Cemetery near Elverson. Brendon Petersheim will lead the singing and Dan Mast will lead us in a meditation. After this Easter sunrise service, we will return to the church fellowship hall for a delicious breakfast hosted by Becky Yoder. Everyone is welcome!*

### **M.O.M. (Master of Multi-tasking)**

by Susan Johnson

As my title "Mom" assumes that my main job is looking after my children, I also guide them as they grow and learn—leaning on others for guidances as needed. I keep them fed and clothed, and fix broken toys and skinned knees. I also play teacher at homework time, serve as a taxi driver for activities, cheerleader, counselor, and a multitude of other tasks.

I also volunteer at Twin Valley Elementary School (where our children attend school) two mornings a week. Here

*(continued on page 3)*



*Susan Johnson volunteering at her daughter's school—oh yes, Susan's three-year-old son Cameron also helps his mother volunteer!*

Each issue of the *Conestoga Connections* features a Conestoga member "on the job" during the week. This month we are featuring a "stay-at-home" mother who also uses her gifts to volunteer to help others!



# The PASTORS CONNECTION

## CHANGE: Nasty or Nice?

*“For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.” I Cor.15:52b*

In recent years, I’ve quoted: “The older I get, the less I like change.” But what would those of us do who were achingly tired of the cold, dreary, rigid days of winter if they never changed to spring?

We have a strong core of aging members who provide a solid foundation to our Conestoga church family. It is miraculous that in recent years few have been ill and funerals have been minimal. But as I write, volunteers are cleaning up after leading the funeral of Edythe Huyett, mother of Linda Mast. In two days we host the funeral of Sarah Scott. What if our bodies aged over time but were never changed into the transformative presence of Jesus? What if we had no resurrection hope?

That lack of change would be unbearable!

Earthquakes and wars and tsunamis are shaking our world. Evidence that the end is near? Records show fewer natural disasters today than in generations past; the difference being that with radio and TV and cell phones, what happens on the other side of the globe now feels close and personal. Our grandparents would have plowed their fields

not knowing an earthquake had killed thousands in Japan; not knowing a riot killed hundreds in the Middle East. If oxen had turned acres successfully, they would have concluded it was a good day.

I read recently that no generation in recorded history has had more diseases eradicated; more millions moved from desperate poverty to middle class security; and more multitudes transformed from illiteracy to world citizens, than recent decades. They conclude our anxiety is simply how it feels in the west as we witness the demise of our culture and the shaking of American domination in the world. Those living through the disintegration of Rome; those experiencing the trauma leading to the eventual eradication of the highly sophisticated Mayan culture; those burying whole villages during Europe’s black plague, all felt the world was ending as their world crumbled.

Whichever interpretation ends up proving correct in the grand scheme of God’s design, this we know: God is not shaken. The Lamb who was slain is coming again. His kingdom of wellness and peace will push off the face of the earth all residue of pain and sin and brokenness; in His timing, not ours; with His angels fighting, not human armies; with His Word as the weapon of choice; not guided missiles and unmanned drones.

And the New Jerusalem will settle upon earth. Restored. Changed! That is change that makes worthwhile the living of HiStory joyfully for the benefit of others. 24/7!

Sure, it’s ok to resist change for the sake of change alone. And yes, aging means I’ll yearn for the familiar. But may I also be counted, may we be gifted, with eyes to see the gentle movement from the wind of the Spirit. May we yield winter places of the heart to fresh bloom of God’s spring time growth.

*Joyfully living HisStory with you, Pastor Bob*



### CONESTOGA MENNONITE CHURCH

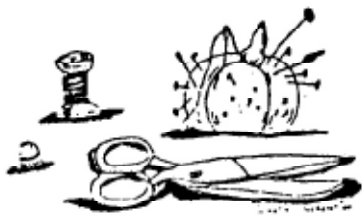
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*Bob and Cindy Petersheim sharing with Mark Petersheim at the recent New Person Center Banquet.*



## Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle met on March 2, 2011. There were 11 ladies present. We completed 26 health kits, 1 comforter, and 3 baby gowns. Fifty-five kit bags were donated.

For devotions, we sang “He Hideth My Soul.” The Scripture reading was John 14:5-11 followed by a reading, “Is Jesus Exclusive?”

We adjourned an hour early since most of the ladies needed to leave early for various reasons.

- Julia Yoder  
Acting Secretary

# NEIGHBORS caring & sharing

*Neighbors meets on Tuesday mornings during the academic school year in our church fellowship hall from 9:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  
Everyone is welcome for this time of fellowship!*

— March 29 —

**“What About the Change?”**

*with Ruthie Dunkle*

— April 5 —

**“The Mother Awards or Rewards”**

*with Nina Harnish*

— April 12 —

**A Mini-Munchie Morning With Motivating Melodies**

*Pre-registration necessary please.*



*I (Lois Ann) told Susan Johnson that I wanted to join her at the YMCA and at the Twin Valley Elementary School so that I could take some photos of her. She graciously accepted and above left, you can see her in Rosa’s school classroom receiving work for the teacher—notice Rosa looking out the window! On the right, Cameron and one of the other girls in his class at a table with Susan—the classroom is well decorated and space for the children to learn and explore! It was fun for me!!!*

*(continued from page 1):* my tasks include copying papers, putting away books, setting up crafts, laminating, and other jobs that the teacher does not have time to accomplish during the day.

Another two mornings each week are spent at the Twin Valley YMCA. Here my time is spent in the Childcare Room. My job is watch the children and keep them safe while their parents are working. Actually, building with legos, doing crafts, playing kitchen, coloring papers, and racing cards hardly seems like a job!

Of course, there are always a host of other adventures that pop up throughout the week, but being Mom is still my favorite “job!”

# Mennonite Health Assembly

March 10-13, 2011, San Antonio, TX

by Howard Moss



The Mennonite Health Service (MHS) held their annual Assembly during March in San Antonio, Texas, this year. I was given the opportunity to attend representing Tel Hai Retirement Community (MHS Alliance Member) as a member of the Board of Directors. Other attendees included Joseph Swartz (President and CEO), Sue Verdegem (Sr. Vice President of Finance and Administration), and Joanne Belson (Board Member).

History: MHS traces their roots to the 1940s, following the World War II service of conscientious objectors assigned to state mental hospitals. There, they saw conditions that shocked them. When they returned to their communities after the war, these Mennonites, Church of the Brethren, and Quakers shared their concerns and discussed constructive ideas for change. This led to the establishment of five Mennonite mental health centers and the creation of Mennonite Mental Health Services, a division of Mennonite Central Committee.

The initiative of these conscientious objectors eventually altered American attitudes and practices regarding mental health. Mennonites also developed retirement centers, acute care hospitals, and agencies serving youth and those with developmental disabilities, beginning in the late 1800s. In 1988, the mission of Mennonite Mental Health Services broadened to include all health and human service providers affiliated with our relating denominations. Since 1994 Mennonite Health Services has had relationships of accountability with Mennonite Church USA, Mennonite Brethren, and Brethren in Christ.

Mennonite Health Assembly participants were given the opportunity to attend more than 22 workshops and hear several key note speakers. The venues were geared to eleven subgroups labeled aging services, chaplains, development, developmental disabilities, governance, human resources, mental health, nursing, pastors, physicians, and students.

Every morning we began the day with morning prayers and group worship that included singing led by Caitlin Helmuth from San Antonio Voluntary Service Unit and wonderful dramas led by a variety of attendees.

The Plenary Sessions and Interest Group Discussion leaders were many but I will highlight the following:

**Isaac Villegas** - *Does our Christian faith, particularly from our Anabaptist perspective, have anything to say about why and how we listen to many voices?* Isaac Villegas believes that both Christian faith and the Anabaptist tradition of nonviolence are important in providing a spirituality and way of grace that create space for people to be who they are—the beloved of God. Isaac Villegas is pastor of Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship in North Carolina. The child of Latin American immigrants, he grew up in the Roman Catholic Church until his family joined the Pentecostal tradition. While attending Duke Divinity School, where he studied with Professor Stanley Hauerwas, he began worshipping with Chapel Hill. After completing his Master of Divinity degree four years ago, the congregation called him to be its pastor.

**Ingrid DeSanctis** - *How might we use image and story to communicate faith and values across generations?* Part of the diversity we face in our organizations and workplaces is the differences in communication between generations. Ingrid DeSanctis used humor and stories about communication in our times to help us think about how we can communicate more effectively. Ingrid also was the main speaker for the Banquet on Saturday night. She asked the following question: How do we live into the many voices and stories we hear and experience in our work of health and healing? Ingrid DeSanctis provided an evening designed to inspire and move us with stories about our work of healing and living with amazement within our work. Ingrid DeSanctis—dramatist, writer, director and professor—is drawn to theater that responds to the needs of the culture. She teaches in the theater department at Bloomsburg University in Pennsylvania and continues to work as a freelance director, actor, and playwright.

The conference was enriching and insightful and the venues many. The theme was “Many Voices, One Spirit.” The sharing of best practices, learning about trends and challenges in the industry, and connecting with Christian brothers and sisters from across the country will help us to grow together in our support to Tel Hai. It was a privilege to attend.



## Softball Season



The **opening one-pitch tournament** for this Spring is on Saturday, April 30. Contact Mike Petersheim if you are interested in playing softball and watch the bulletin for upcoming practice dates.

# MYF NEWS

April 8-9 - **Revolve Tour** (High school girls, contact Sharon Valentino ASAP.)

April 10 - **Progressive Meal** without Motors (after church). FUN!!!

April 20 - Make **Peanut Butter Eggs**

April 24 - **Easter Sunrise Service and Breakfast**



May 1 - Sunday Afternoon **Kayaking**

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## ~ Top Ten Mennonite Scriptures ~

### A Playful (But Serious) Summary

On Sunday, March 6, during our Sunday School hour, we shared with each other around tables as to what we thought were the top ten Mennonite Scriptures important to Anabaptists back in 1525 when the movement began. After sharing, Mark Wenger, Director of Eastern Mennonite Seminary office based in southeastern Pennsylvania, shared his suggestions:

1. A Christ-Centered Faith: I Corinthians 3:11
2. Faith as Following: March 8:34-35
3. Faith as New Creation and Reconciliation: II Corinthians 5:17-19
4. Faith as Contrast Community: Romans 12: 1-2
5. Faith as Disagreement and Discipline Matthew 18: 15-18
6. Faith as Bearing Good Fruit—Obedience and Service: Matthew 7:16-22
7. Faith as Disciple-Making and Baptism: Matthew 28:18-20
8. Faith as Nonviolence and Peacemaking: Matthew 26:52 and I Peter 3:11
9. Church as Resident Aliens: I Peter 2:9-17
10. Jesus' Teaching is for Living Now: Matthew 5-7

## Did You Know That . . .

. . . **Conestoga's children** are studying about Jesus in the New Testament books of Luke and Acts this Spring quarter in Sunday School? Parents are receiving a weekly page each Sunday in their church mailbox to help connect what the children are learning each Sunday. Monthly calendars are also available giving ideas and prayer concerns.

. . . someone on their own cleaned up the church flower beds and made them look so clean and well-kept? They did a fantastic job!! Thank you **John and Lisa Miller!**

. . . in Jesus' time there were more than **a million Samaritans**? In November 2007, the count was only 712!

. . . **Clyde Stoltzfus** has booked over five million miles driving truck in his lifetime, and with no chargeable accidents! Who can beat that record? God is using you and working through you, Clyde! Keep up the good work!

. . . one in 28 Pennsylvanians is under some form of **criminal justice supervision**—much higher than the national average? **New Person Center** in at Reading is helping to treat this challenging statistic!

. . . **Bob Ebert** compiled a very informative and quite interesting video of the activities leading up to the Food Pantry distribution held once a month here at Conestoga? The video was shown at the March Senior Connections.

## Next Senior Connections

Thursday, April 14, 2011

at 12:00 noon

Lunch followed by the following presentation:

### “SECRETS TO HEALTH”

by Dr. Benjamin Clyde

*Foundation for Wellness Professionals*

Learn the three secrets to a healthy life

~**nutrition**~ ~**exercise**~ ~**stress management**~

. . . including taking a stress screening test during this interactive and informative discussion.

If your car malfunctions,  
you ask a mechanic to examine it, fix it,  
and teach you how to prevent car trouble in the future.  
So, let's learn a variety of ways on how  
to prevent our body from malfunctioning!

**Join us to learn some basic fundamentals  
in living a happy and healthy life.**

## Thank You God for . . . *(the following is based on the recent weekend with Conestoga's Oversight Team)*

- . . . Conestoga's Oversight Team who visited us the weekend of March 18-20! We appreciate James & Faith and Graham.
- . . . Pastor Bob and Cindy and their willingness to continue serving as our pastor and leader encouraging us to follow Jesus.
- . . . Your vision bubbling over in the Ministry Council as they willingly use their God-given gift to direct our ministries.
- . . . the passion and energy shown in the many volunteers that share throughout Conestoga Mennonite Church!
- . . . our leaders who have chosen to follow Jesus from a New Testament view within an Anabaptist perspective.
- . . . Pastor Bob's servanthood leadership and desire to empower every member to use the spiritual gifts that God has given!
- . . . the Pastoral Team members and the trust and good relationships they share with each other as they desire to be Godly leaders.
- . . . the children and youth that are in our midst and especially for the vision of the M4:6a program every other Sunday!
- . . . the opportunities You are giving us to relate with guests who attend the monthly Food Pantry. Help us to show God's love!
- . . . the many ways to “fellowship” with each other through Fellowship Dinners, Senior Connections, quizzing, etc.
- . . . ways to celebrate life and celebrate YOU through our growing friendships with each other!
- . . . Your command to find ways to mingle more with our neighbors and community and boldly witness and invite them to church.

In March 2012, Conestoga's Oversight Team will invite all congregational members to participate since Pastor Bob's three-year contract will need reviewed.



*Planting pineapple plants on the Dole Pineapple Plantation in Hawaii.*

to spend time with Rachel and hear about her work and then enjoy dinner together. She sends greetings!

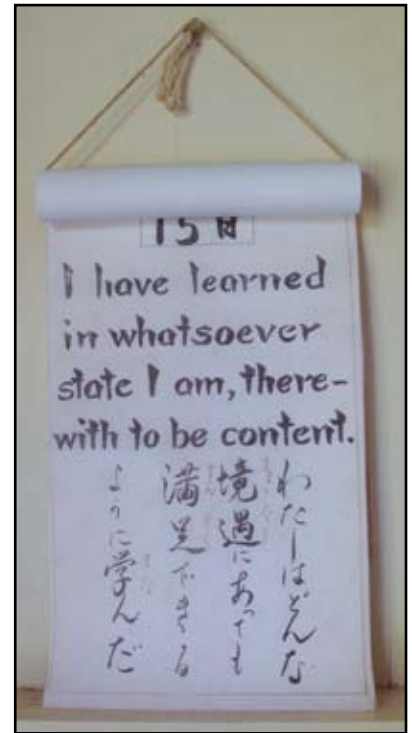
We also enjoyed driving around the coast of Oahu enjoying the beauty and warmth of the Pacific Ocean—only two weeks before the earthquake in Japan. It was informative to hear how the Dole Pineapple Plantation got started on this island and then taste pineapple ice cream—deeeelicious!

The Orchid Nursery and Macadamia Nut Farm were also highlights as we toured both. Of course, the walks along the ocean were relaxing as well.

One of our last visits was at Hawaii’s Plantation Village where we participated in a 1.5-hour walking tour providing a glimpse back in time to when the sugar planters lived and worked here. From 1852 when the first contract laborers arrived from China, to 1947 when the plantation era ended, more than 400,000 men, women, and children from China, Japan, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Korea, and the Philippines came to work the sugar cane fields. The “talk story” tour brought the old village alive with 30 faithfully-restored camp houses, Chinese and Japanese temples, and the Plantation Store.

The three full days in Hawaii were gone fast before we left on Friday morning to fly to Los Angeles where we again stayed overnight (instead of arriving home about 5:00 a.m. the next morning). It sure was good to get home Saturday evening at 7:00 p.m.—with lots of memories and the satisfaction of visiting Mary Louise and meeting her husband’s family for the first time! Her husband is now retired from working as a pilot for United Airlines.

In our sadness for all the people in Japan after the recent earthquake, we were so thankful that Hawaii was not hit



*Sign in one of the Japanese sugar cane workers’ homes in the Plantation Village.*

as hard as anticipated—there were very few barriers along the coast that would have kept the huge forceful waves from rushing inland!  
- Lemar and Lois Ann Mast



*Sugar cane growing at Hawaii’s Plantation Village.*

# Visiting Hawaii



Last year when I heard that my first cousin, Mary Louise Zook Uchida, was diagnosed with cancer, I so badly wanted to visit and give her a hug! For years, I dreamed of visiting Hawaii, but I never imagined that dream would become reality through this purpose.

After attending a weekend meeting in Baltimore (Mennonite Church USA Resource Advocates were meeting in their annual meeting), we planned to drive straight to the Philadelphia Airport to fly to Hawaii. Using frequent flyer miles (first time ever), we could not get tickets out of Baltimore, so it was on to Philadelphia.

I thought that flying to Europe and Israel was far, but oh my—Hawaii is REALLY far! We were thankful that we chose to make a hotel reservation in Los Angeles on Sunday evening and take another flight the next morning to Honolulu.

It was sooooo good to see Mary Louise and Mel who actually live on the Big Island, but needed to fly to Honolulu each time Mary Louise had her chemo and radiation treatments. She is doing fine, although weak. It was evident though that she and her family have claimed God's presence through this challenging time.

We also spent four hours with Rachel Dick who used to attend Conestoga before she moved to Hawaii five years ago. The daughter of Delbert and Susan (Mast) Dick and niece of Herb and Rhoda Mast, Rachel is a supervisor at the Castle Medical Center (actually a large hospital). It was really special

*(continued on page 7)*



Mel and Mary Louise Uchida (left) and Lois Ann and Lemar Mast (right).

Rachel Dick in front of the Castle Medical Center at Kaneohe on the eastern side of the island. She showed us our first-ever seen “blowhole” in the ocean. A “blowhole” is an underwater lava tube—very interesting to watch!

