

# Connections

Virginia Mennonite  
Conference &  
Board of Missions

August 2004  
Vol. 14, No. 10

## A baby dedication to remember

Often the exercise of dedicating a child is included somewhere in the course of a church's worship service almost as an afterthought.

While it is an important part of the faith community, churches seldom give more than five to eight minutes to follow a prescribed litany, offer a congregational prayer in unison, and move on to the meatier aspects of "real" worship.

At Asheville (N.C.) Mennonite Church, we recently dedicated two children, Ava Violet Rupp, daughter of David and Beth Rupp, and Anna Jo Veurink, daughter of Lynn and Mary Jo Veurink. We had a litany, an affirmation of the parents, and a unison congregational prayer—and more.

We established first that while we were dedicating two children and affirming four parents, we were gathered to worship God. With that understanding, we planned a service which, we hope, will be one these two children will more fully appreciate and enjoy years from now.

Many of us were dedicated as children or perhaps baptized as infants and have no recollection of that day. So a child dedication service is much more a parent affirmation and encouragement service, and we wanted to acknowledge that and do it.

The congregation was informed of the date of the dedication service and encouraged to be prepared to speak words of optimism, blessing, insight, and wisdom to the parents.

But we also wanted to offer these children words of encouragement, counsel, love, and delight. We wanted the girls to know what was on the hearts of those gathered with them on this special day, and the words of love and hope each of the four parents spoke to them as they held them in their arms. How do you do that for a child who will have no way of remembering the event the next day, let alone for a lifetime?



Ceramic vases from Vietnam became time capsules during a worship service in which Lynn and Mary Jo Veurink of Mills River, N.C., and Beth and David Rupp of Asheville, N.C., dedicated their daughters, Anna Veurink and Ava Rupp.

A time capsule. It sounded strange when the thought was planted in my brain, but it makes sense. A time capsule is a means by which these girls will know the uniqueness of this day in their lives, in the lives of their families, and in the life of this church.

We announced for a couple of weeks that during one portion of the service we would be filling one time capsule for Ava and one for Anna, and the congregation was invited to bring written notes or small symbols of faith to place in the capsules.

The church purchased two tall lidded ceramic vases from Vietnam at our Ten Thousand Villages store to use as time capsules. These were placed on the communion table, and when the time came for people to bring their notes and place them inside, there was a sense of joy and excitement.

In the days that followed, the vases were sealed by the parents. They will become part of the homes' décor and part of the families' stories until the day the children are baptized. Then the vases will be opened and the girls, then able to understand, will know the hearts of those gathered with them for worship years earlier.

• Pastor Pat McFarren  
Asheville (N.C.) Mennonite Church

# Laying foundations

I've had a few down days in my life. Grumpy occasionally. There have been times when I read James, "Count it all joy," and I couldn't count very far. Today isn't one of them. With a little help I assembled a list of recent or envisioned church plants relating to Virginia Conference. I was surprised when we came up with 13. That's a baker's dozen. That's 20% of the congregations in Virginia Conference. That is pretty amazing!



**Loren Horst**  
President of VMBM

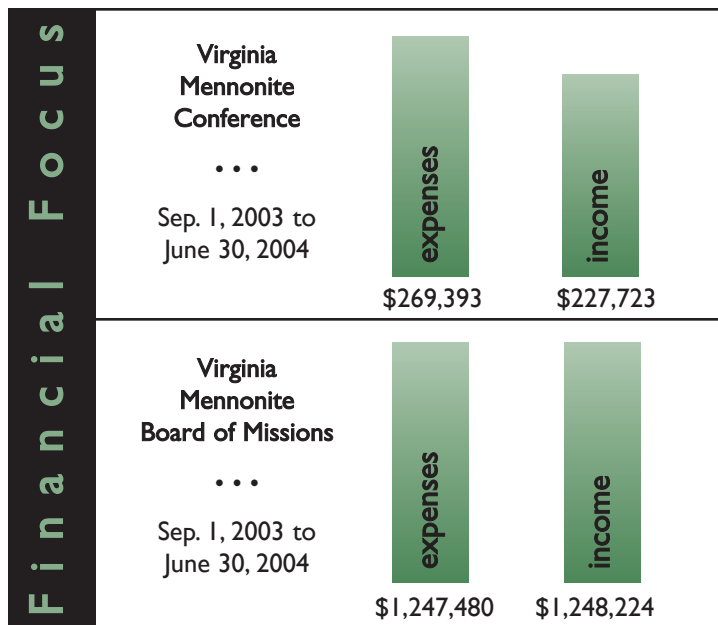
In the last few years in Virginia Conference, we've kind of grown accustomed to seeing problems rather than opportunities, decline rather than growth, and long faces rather than joy. The integration of the two Mennonite denominations didn't do us any favors, at least in the short run. Then we got entangled in various difficult issues and found energies sapped. The obligations of pastoring, leading, and maintaining an increasingly diverse flock have taken their toll. We lost more than a dozen churches.

Now we are starting new ones! I'm excited! We are laying foundations for the present and for the future. Let me illustrate. I grew up in a not-so-large congregation in Ohio. From its birth this congregation shared a passion for mission and outreach. Over the years, two other congregations began out of this church, both in Ohio. That is not the end of the story. In 1969 this congregation released their pastor to start another church in

North Carolina. Frank and Evelyn Nice were founding pastors of the Durham Mennonite Church. Then in 1986, the Durham church commissioned and blessed John and Marilyn Bender as they led a group to start Raleigh Mennonite Church. In 2001, Raleigh commissioned those who began Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship. In the meantime, Frank and Evelyn moved to Baltimore to start the North Baltimore Mennonite Church and more recently were the overseers of the founding of the Peace Fellowship Church in Fairfax, Virginia. Eight congregations with roots connected to a small movement of faithful believers in the rolling farmland of northeastern Ohio 50 years ago. And that doesn't even begin to exhaust the story!

A harbinger of the future? An omen of good fortune? I believe rather, that we are seeing the refreshing breeze of the Spirit. We are laying foundations. God is pleased with the assembling of his people and I enjoy watching God at work. Today has been a good day!

*Loren Horst*



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**Editor**

Gloria Lehman

**Assistant Editor**

Jon Trotter

**Circulation manager**

Beth Brunk

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**Phone** 540-434-9727

1-800-707-5535

**E-mail** [info@vmbm.org](mailto:info@vmbm.org)

[info@vmconf.org](mailto:info@vmconf.org)

**Web** [www.vmbm.org](http://www.vmbm.org)

[www.vmconf.org](http://www.vmconf.org)

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## Wednesday nights NOT at Asheville Mennonite

The parable found in Matthew 25:14-30 is a story about investment. This particular account tells of three servants, each of whom was given a different amount of money to invest during their master's absence. We are told that the two who invested their money for the master's benefit saw an increase in that investment. One, however, played it safe and merely set aside what he was given, realizing no increase whatsoever. He seemed to feel optimistic because at least he hadn't lost anything.

Upon the master's return, the first two servants acknowledged that they had been entrusted with something of value and had tried to use it well. The third servant, first claimed to know the master's heart, then admitted that he did nothing with what he was given. It seems that the first two servants actually knew the master's heart better.

My good friend, singer and songwriter Walkin' Jim Stoltz, has a lyric in one of his songs that says, "It's not just what you're given, it's what you do with what you got." These three servants would have had a special insight into the truth of that line, wouldn't they?

Going on the assumption that this parable has application beyond the financial arena, sermons have been preached regarding how it may apply to skills, talents, gifts, and experiences. And we can easily see how it can be applied to our time.

The Wednesday night planning team at Asheville Mennonite Church decided to do something very different during the summer months. *Not* gathering at the meetinghouse on Wednesday night? Whoa!

Instead we are encouraging each other to reach out and to go beyond the walls on Wednesday evenings. We can invite neighbors, co-workers, strangers, vacationers, doctor's office personnel, grocery clerks, barbers, police officers, teachers, whoever.

Invite them? Where, if we aren't meeting at the church? To our homes, out onto the trail, to a wiener roast, to a baseball game, for coffee, bowling, a walk downtown, to visit shut-ins, to sing at an extended care facility, to talk to the homeless, the unconnected, the lonely.

We aren't talking about a sum of money. We are talking about a summer's worth of Wednesday nights. We have invited our people to make the investment. Do we know the Master's heart?

• Pastor Pat McFarren  
Asheville (N.C.) Mennonite Church

## Weavers' Bible school: mission accomplished

There was a flurry of activity on Sunday, June 20, as teachers and helpers arrived at Weavers Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, preparing for

a full week of Vacation Bible School. On Sunday morning there was a special dedication of all the people involved in VBS for the week, from superintendent to nursery workers, teachers, helpers, recreation leaders, music leaders, activity leaders, snack leaders and all of the children as well. By 6:20 p.m., we were scrambling at the registration line; there were more children yet to register and place in classes, an increase from the last several years. There was excitement in the air. By 6:30 p.m., the children began filing into the pews to take their seats for the gathering of the community.

Our VBS theme was "Jesus Christ: Mission Accomplished" from Mennonite Publishing Network. I have appreciated their material because each one zeroes in on a Bible character or era and gives a chronological sequence for 5 lessons. We take the theme and lessons and tailor it to our own needs at Weavers. Each evening the drama team presented us with a skit surrounding the last week of Jesus' life. To help the children understand "mission accomplished," superintendent Julianne Burkholder gave each of the children a "mission" to accomplish each evening, suitable for each age group. Prizes were given at the end of Bible School for those who had accomplished their missions.

On Friday evening all staff met early for a delicious Middle Eastern meal. There was a program open for everyone, followed by an ice cream party, providing time to fellowship and learn to know new families and friends. It had been a wonderful week of many hands working together.

The children came, learning and experiencing the stories of Jesus. Our children are important. What a wonderful opportunity to impact their lives for eternity.

• Janet Blosser  
Children's Ministries at  
Weavers Mennonite Church



The number of children who participated in Bible school at Weavers Mennonite Church this summer was higher than usual.

## Professor finishes 35-year translation project

In 1969, the Bible Society of India appointed Anil D. Solanki to begin a new translation of the Bible into his native language, Gujarati. Now, 35 years later, that project is completed and the Bible is published.

Dr. Solanki, a part-time professor of Old Testament at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, was doing graduate studies in Old Testament in Bangalore, India, at a seminary, when he was asked to create a team to work on a new translation. At the time, Solanki was the leading Hebrew scholar among those who speak his native language of Gujarati. He invited three colleagues of various denominations to work with him.

“We had two primary goals in our translation work,” Solanki recalled. “The first was to be faithful to the original Greek and Hebrew texts, and the second was to make the translation communicate readi-

ly to readers. The earlier translation was so outdated that it couldn’t be used as a source,” he said.

Sixty million people around the world speak Gujarati. Most live in the state of Gujarat in India. The last Bible translation in the language was done 181 years ago. Over the years the language has changed significantly. Solanki and his colleagues wanted a translation that could be comprehended by people with a high school education.

“We wanted a language of the people,” said Solanki, “rather than highly literary language. It is somewhat similar to the Good News Bible.”

At the outset, all four translators lived in India. Today, only one still remains in Gujarat state. Neither Solanki nor any of his colleagues were full time-translators; each had other professions. Jayant Christian was working in the state secretariate, Rev. Navin Oliver taught in a regional seminary and Rev. Ashish Chriopal was a seminary student at the time. In India, Solanki was a seminary professor and academic dean.

Solanki moved to Harrisonburg, Va., in 1988, intending to stay for a year. An American Bible Society consultant came to check their translation and encouraged former Eastern Mennonite Seminary dean George R. Brunk III to let him stay

longer and continue work on his project. “The dean, the faculty and the whole seminary community were supportive of the project,” Solanki noted.

Since moving to the U.S., Solanki has worked on the translation without remuneration.

While living in Virginia, two of Solanki’s colleagues came for extended visits to work on the translation. “I am told that when I used to translate the whole seminary knew because I would tell anyone I met what I was discovering in the Word of God,” Solanki said.

This project became a family affair. Solanki’s wife, Shaila, noted that their children grew with the project. When it began, their son Madhur was a toddler. He and Shaila have two other children, Elizabeth and Susmita (“Missy”). Shaila provided hospitality and proofreading skills for the group of translators as well as handwriting some final manuscripts that were sent to the printer.

In 1976, the New Testament portion was completed and distributed. Work on the Old Testament began before that.

“There are people who speak our language who have migrated to Australia, New Zealand, England and other places,” said Shaila. “Some of them have come from other religions and when they saw our New Testament they were very excited because they could understand everything they read, so they were waiting for the whole Bible.” Less than one percent of those who speak Gujarati are Christian.

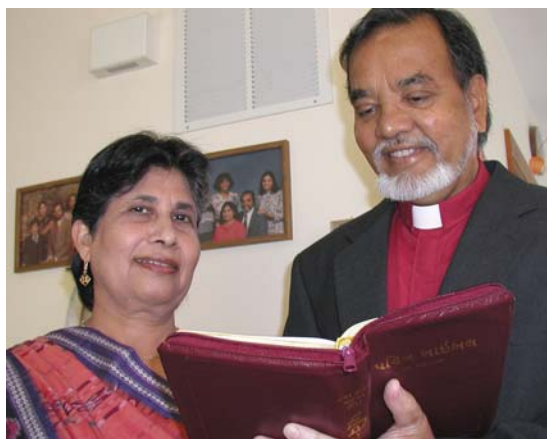
Solanki has found translation work rewarding. “There is so much depth in the word of God,” he said. “When you struggle with it and try to understand and try to put it in your mother-tongue, it is a process. We believe that in our translation work we were inspired like the original authors of the books of the Bible.”

The translation manuscript was completely done by hand, then put into type by professionals after being sent to the printers in 1995. It was proofread and corrected seven times. Solanki is currently working through the first printing to correct any more mistakes that might surface.

“I am reading from the beginning, and if I find a mistake here and there or a printing error, then I want to correct that,” Solanki said. The first printing of 3,000 copies was an experimental run for feedback and correction. The next printing will likely be around 20,000 copies.

“It is a great privilege to work on the Word of God,” said Solanki, “It was a lot of hard work, but it was a joyful experience.”

• Laura Lehman Amstutz  
Eastern Mennonite Seminary



Anil and Shaila Solanki celebrate the completion of the Gujarati Bible, a project more than three decades in the making.

# “Sign and wonders” in Belize

Through a network of Mennonite connections, Nancy Marshall, a deaf educator from First Deaf Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., is teaching sign language and Bible studies to children and youth in Orange Walk Town, Belize, for seven weeks this summer. Her family, VMBM, and Anabaptist Disabilities Network support Nancy in this short-term mission.

Prior to going on her mission assignment, Nancy met with Basil and Diane Marin of Harrisonburg, Va., for several hours of orientation to the Belizian country and culture. It was a blessing for a VMBM board member to share in this experience; the Marins provided a lot of helpful information and led a prayer of blessing for her.

Nancy has been relating closely with deaf children in the families that she meets and is teaching signs that connect with both English and Spanish speakers. Her biggest joy is sharing the love of Jesus with the people she meets, and one young girl accepted Christ not long ago.

Nancy writes, “My ‘sign language summer school’ is going well. I have an average of 24 students every day. They are a varied group—some parents, some young hearing siblings ages 4 and 5, some deaf kids ages 6 to 14, and some hearing kids from the community with no relationship to deaf kids but just want to learn to sign. All of those people have different needs. I am dividing them into



VMBM Board member Basil Marin explains Belizian culture to Nancy Marshall, a deaf educator.

groups and giving them similar but different things to do: picture activities, flashcards with words on them for the older hearing kids who read, and typed word lists for parents. It’s going well and they seem to think it is fun.

“Last week God intervened in my lesson planning and we had a really fun day. I had not planned to teach animal signs since I was more focused on ‘practical vocabulary,’ but someone gave us a lot of animal crackers for a snack; then [a friend] showed me her book of signs that has a fabulous section of animal pictures and corresponding signs. So I thought, ‘Maybe I need to teach about animals tomorrow.’ I did and it was a great lesson and came together so well. God is good!”

Pray for Nancy and the many lives that she is touching through this summer school experience. God is doing “signs and wonders” in a small town in Belize!

• Gloria Lehman  
Director of Public Relations

## *Mennonite Women of Virginia Retreat 2004*

September 24-26 in Fairfax, VA

**“Family, Friends & Chocolate:  
More Joy for the Journey!”**

Speaker: Rebecca Sommers

Rebecca, who lives in Sarasota, FL, is a quilter, storyteller, friend, and mentor. She has accumulated a lifetime of experiences with lots of successes, failures, bumps, bruises and second chances. With gratitude, Rebecca believes the deepest pains and greatest joys of her life have brought her the healing necessary to serve God and God’s people with a bit of humbleness and a lot of joy. She will use storytelling and examples of her quilts to thread her way through the various stages of life.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

I am planning on staying:  one night  two nights

Registration fee is \$50 (\$25 for full-time college students). Make checks payable to Mennonite Women of Virginia. Mail this form with your payment to Barb Byer, 4465 Mt. Clinton Pike, Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

Reserve your hotel room by calling the Holiday Inn Fair Oaks at 703-352-2525. Indicate that you are with Mennonite Women of Virginia. Rooms are \$72 per night (1-4 persons).

Questions? Contact Robin Zook 540-433-1637 or Barb Byer 540-867-5015.

**Deadline for registration is August 27.**



Kenneth Eshleman, Ruth Schrock, and J. Robert Eshleman joined in the celebration of the ministry of their parents, Harold and Arlene Eshleman.

## Eshlemans honored for their ministry

Harold Eshleman, and his widow, Arlene, were hailed by 120 guests at a Celebration of Ministry banquet held in their honor at the Bridgewater Retirement Community on June 26. Harold died in February 1998 at age 87. Arlene, now 94, lives in Goshen, Ind., and couldn't be present.

It was a fun evening of song and remembrance paying tribute to this remarkable couple. The event was organized by Virginia Mennonite Conference (VMC) and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM) in cooperation with the Eshleman's three children, J. Robert, Ruth Schrock, and Kenneth.

Their father was a man of many talents. He was a firm but loving elementary school teacher in Rockingham County for 43 years. He pastored two Mennonite churches—Chicago Ave. (now Harrisonburg) and Park View—and later served as an overseer. Harold helped start two Mennonite churches, Mt. Vernon and Northern Virginia. He worked tirelessly for 23 years as secretary, vice president and executive committee member of VMBM, once traveling to Italy to encourage the fledgling Mennonite church there.

Arlene helped by taking minutes and typing and also served as a clerical volunteer with the Auto and Property Aid Plans. In his spare time, Harold refinished furniture, and together they ministered to Laotian and Palestinian immigrants and many others.

Harold and Arlene's grandson, Lee Eshleman, of the comedy duo Ted and Lee, emceed the evening. As a symbol of his grandparent's call to the ministry, Lee used a long, funny-sounding horn which his grandmother had used to summon her husband when she was bed-ridden for a time.

A video interview between Ruth and her mom, Arlene, produced by grandson Brett Sherman, was shown to the gathered guests and proved to be a highlight of the evening. Brett and his wife, Mira Grieser, also provided instrumental music before and during a delicious meal. Jacob Heatwole and John Horst gathered a men's a cappella octet especially for the evening.

We heard testimonies from family members along with Dwight Hartman (Chicago Ave.), Eugene Souder (Mt. Vernon), Ellen Heatwole (Northern Va.), Harold Lehman (Park View) and Donna Suter (Harold's student at Dale Enterprise Middle School). Nany Keopanya gave testimony of their influence in her life and the lives of others in the Laotian community. An open microphone time rounded out the evening as many recounted fond memories of Harold and Arlene.

The banquet was generously sponsored by Dwight and Ellen Hartman and Mark and Ellen Heatwole. Those gathered, along with many who sent gifts in Harold and Arlene's honor, contributed more than \$8,000 split evenly between VMC's missional church initiatives and VMBM's leadership development in Italy. What a joy it was to obey the admonition of 1 Timothy 5:17: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor." Well done, thou good and faithful servants—Harold and Arlene Eshleman.

• Steve Carpenter  
Conference Coordinator

Approximately 1400 gathered for worship on Sunday, July 11, at the conclusion of the Virginia Mennonite Conference Assembly. John Powell of Mennonite Mission Network spoke on "Spirit led... sent!"

Watch for a full report on Assembly in the September issue of Connections.



# August 2004 Prayer Calendar

## Sunday

**1** Pray for Janine and Phil Kanagy, pastor of Trissels Menn. Church, as they return from vacation. Pray for Conf. Coordinator Steve Carpenter as he meets the Trissels congregation and brings the morning message.

**8** Clewiston McLean is a student at the Jamaica Bible College. He and his wife, Dattene, are promising leaders in the St. Elizabeth Mennonite churches. Pray for them as they follow the call of God to serve the church.

**15** Thank God for the VBS events in VMC congregations this summer. This outreach provides the fertile soil for planting good seeds of the Gospel. May they grow and flourish!

**22** Pray for retiring overseers Truman Brunk (Harrisonburg), Frank Nice (Ohio) and Wayne North (Chaplains). Thank God for their ministry of encouragement to our pastors. Pray for grace as they adjust to new life circumstances.

**29** At least one youth is now preparing for baptism at Centro Koinonia in Bari, Italy, in September. Pray that others will join her in this commitment.

## Monday

**2** Nate Yoder and Richard Rhodes and their families are involved with helping to teach Vacation Bible School at the Charleville and Diego Martin congregations in Trinidad. Let us support them with our prayers.

**9** A team of four youth from the Italian Menn. Church are serving in the villages near Lushnje, Albania, for 2 weeks. Pray for them as they assist the missionaries with a youth retreat and with two Bible schools for kids.

**16** Lee, Peg, Maria, and Curtis Martin have interacted with the members of the Mennonite Church of Chaguanas in Trinidad since late June. Pray for God's blessing for the Martin family as they return to their home in Virginia tomorrow.

**23** Pray for VMC's end of the year finances. They were running a \$45K deficit at the end of June. Pray that God might open the floodgates of His grace and shower His blessings on the churches, staff and ministry of VMC.

**30** Richard and Margaret Keeler are preparing for their teaching responsibilities to begin in Sept. Thank God for the opportunity to take a course in England earlier this month. May God strengthen them for the tasks they face.

## Tuesday

**3** Tomorrow a PIM team of 15 from Huntington Menn. will travel to San Jose, Costa Rica. They will work with Pura Vida (Pure Life), a program that assists the Mennonite Churches of Costa Rica. They welcome your prayer support.

**10** Damion Hines and Aleph Wood traveled from Jamaica to Trinidad to attend the Youth Weekend with the Mennonite Church of Trinidad and Tobago. Thank God for this and pray that all will be blessed by this connection.

**17** Praise God for answering your prayers for the Bible/music day camp for kids in Bari, Italy. A spirit of joy, enthusiasm and harmony blessed everyone. The team from Sicily did a fantastic job. Rejoice!

**24** Paul and Esther Kniss warmly welcome guests into their home and share Christ's love with everyone. Pray for God's strength and wisdom to empower them each day.

**31** Remember Willard and Melba Heatwole as they serve in agricultural development in the villages near Lushnje, Albania, and seek to encourage the believers there.

## Wednesday

**4** Pray for the members of a Partners in Mission team, led by Basil Marin, who are in Belize until August 10. One of the team's projects is to construct a bathroom.

**11** During June, a Partners in Mission team was in Albania, led by Melba Heatwole. They spent part of the time in Lura, an isolated village that has much need. Pray that there will be on-going fruit from the efforts of the team.

**18** Pray for one of Dr. Omar Beiler's patients who is studying the Bible. He is a bright young Jamaican man with sickle-cell anemia. May God's Word convince him of its truth and spur him to serious commitment to Christ.

**25** VMBM continues to look for candidates for mission service. Immediate needs and openings exist in Jamaica, Albania, and Trinidad. Pray that God will continue to call out persons to serve in these locations.

This month's prayer calendar is sponsored by Richard and Wanda Good in celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary on August 25. Their lives of service for Christ and the church has impacted many at home and abroad.

## Thursday

**5** Thank God for the many individuals and congregations who contribute financially to the ongoing work of VMC and VMBM. Pray that all of the ministry needs will be fully met by August 31, which is the end of this fiscal year.

**12** Pray for Jon Trotter, who was hired in mid-July to succeed Rachel Smith as VMC and VMBM's Communications Associate. Jon is a recent EMU graduate. Pray that he will make the transition well and grow into his responsibilities.

**19** Pray that Heather, Alicia and Jyrell Hess in Albania will interact closely with friends both at church and the community. May their commitment to Christ shine brightly to all they meet.

**26** Mary Hess reaches out in creative ways to the women in Goricaj, Albania where the Hess family lives. Pray that she will have inspired ideas and the energy to carry them out. These activities open doors for witnessing about Christ.

If you would like to sponsor one or more months of the prayer calendar, contact Gloria Lehman at [gloria.lehman@vmbm.org](mailto:gloria.lehman@vmbm.org) or 540-434-9727 or 1-800-707-5535.

## Friday

**6** Each Friday evening, a Bible Study is held in Lushnje, Albania. Let us remember Andon, Willard Heatwole's associate, as he leads these studies.

**13** The Church of Trinidad and Tobago is holding their Annual General Meeting this weekend. Sunday morning is a joint service for the four congregations. Pray for the Holy Spirit to empower them for spreading the Good News.

**20** Pray for the teachers and administrators of schools sponsored by our conference congregations as they prepare for the new school year: Calvary Academy, EMHS, Mt. Pleasant, and Warwick River.

**27** Eastern Carolina district hosts a Mission and Ministry Festival at Durham Mennonite Church tomorrow. Doug and Jude Krehbiel are providing music and Loren Horst is the speaker.

## Saturday

**7** Pray for Conference Minister Owen Burkholder as he preaches at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church tomorrow. Pastor Beryl Jantzi is on sabbatical leave this summer.

**14** Thank God for Philip Rhodes' service at Maranatha School for the Deaf and Ridge Menn. Fellowship in Jamaica. Philip returned to Dayton, Va., last month and will continue his studies at Bridgewater College.

**21** Remember the Phil Lehman family as they must move this month into a different apartment. In Italy, this involves dismantling everything. Thank God for providing a suitable place in Capurso (near Bari)!

**28** Chestnut Ridge Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio, is honoring Frank Nice as he retires from his service as overseer for the past several years. Pray for God's blessing on Frank and his wife, Evelyn.

**"...it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."**

Philippians 2:13 (NIV)

## Announcements

Youth and young adults are invited to attend **September Blast** at Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center (WCRC) on September 25, 2:30-6:30 p.m. This special event will include a concert with Mark Cable, entertainment by Jep Hostetler, activities, fellowship, and pizza. There is no charge for the event. The registration deadline is September 15. For more information contact WCRC at 757-566-2256 or [wrcr@wrcr.info](mailto:wrcr@wrcr.info).

**Stephens City (Va.) Mennonite Church** will celebrate its 50th anniversary on Sept. 11-12. On Saturday, 4-8:00 p.m., join us for a fellowship meal, singing and a time of reminiscing. Bring stories and photos related to SCMC's history, as well as food for the fellowship meal. On Sunday, share breakfast at 9:30 a.m. and worship at 10:30 a.m. For more information, call 540-869-5037, e-mail [scmc@visuallink.com](mailto:scmc@visuallink.com) or visit [client.visuallink.com/~scmc](http://client.visuallink.com/~scmc).

**Warwick River Christian School**, sponsored by Warwick River, Huntington, and Providence congregations, is seeking qualified applicants to replace present Administrator/Director of Development, Gordon Zook, who plans to retire next summer. With enrollment expanding to 350 students in K3 thru G8, we are seeking one or two persons for the positions of Administrator and/or Director of Development. Applicants must have a vision for Christ-centered education in harmony with the Mennonite Church, along with relevant experience in education, administration, and/or development. Convey personal interest or suggestions of candidates to Search Committee Chair: Danni Clark, 252 Lucas Creek Rd., Newport News, VA 23602 or [clarkdd@juno.com](mailto:clarkdd@juno.com).

Harrisonburg/Rockingham County area Mennonites are especially invited to the public premiere of **Fierce Goodbye: Living in the Shadow of Suicide** at Court Square Theater in Harrisonburg on Sunday, August 8 at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. The program is a groundbreaking look at faith perspectives on suicide and how families

find hope and healing. The 44-minute documentary presentation will be followed by a "talkback session" with producers and some of the participants in the program. The program features local (or formerly local) participants Jonas and Barbara Borntreger, Sheri Smucker, Ann Yoder, Fred and Gail Fox, Father John Grace, David Brubaker, and Roger Steffy. The showing is free and seating is limited to a first-come, first-served basis. There will be opportunity to contribute toward production and promotion expenses. **Fierce Goodbye** will air on Hallmark Channel (Adelphia Channel 40) on Sunday, August 22, noon ET and is produced by Mennonite Media with Faith & Values Media.

**Pastor Steven H. Francisco**, 45, was called to his Heavenly Home on Tuesday, July 6, 2004. He was a wonderful son, beloved husband, devoted father, loyal brother, and founding pastor of Calvary Community Church West, Isle of Wight County.



Born on March 12, 1959, in Newport News, Va., he was the son of the late Bishop Leslie W. Francisco II and Naomi R. Taylor. He was ordained as a minister in 1990 and served as Associate Pastor of Calvary Community Church under the leadership of his brother, Bishop L.W. Francisco III. He remained active in the ministry until he and his wife, Karla, established Calvary Community Church West on December 31, 2003.

He dedicated his life to serving God faithfully and was an inspiring and compassionate pastor who will always be remembered for his zestful life and the legacy he left behind. He left an indelible mark upon the hearts of many. His greatest pride and joy was his family. As a devoted husband and father, his admiration and appreciation for his wife and children (Tiffany, Steven II and Taylor) were evident.

Cards in memory of Pastor Francisco may be directed to Calvary Community Church West, 14170 Carrollton Rd., Carrollton, VA 23314.

