

Connections

Virginia Mennonite
Conference &
Board of Missions

June 2005
Vol. 15, No. 8

Following the Vision

MCC recognizes Community Mennonite for Peace Projects

By Tom Mitchell, *Daily News-Record*

Most of Community Mennonite Church's troupe that toured the Middle East had never heard of their national organization's Congregational Advocacy Award.

"The award was a complete surprise to me," said Tim Jost, a law professor at Washington and Lee University and a member of Community Mennonite's group that last year visited Israel and Palestine on a goodwill trip.

Community Mennonite's quest for harmony and equality in 2004 included letter-writing projects, coffee sales and a sign promoting peace, and recently earned the downtown Harrisonburg church the Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office 2005 Congregational Advocacy Award for the church's involvement in various area and global issues related to peace.

The award annually honors member churches' efforts toward peace and equality. The award is given in memory of early anti-slavery witness by Mennonites in the United States.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) functions as a relief, service, and peace agency of the North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. MCC's mission statement reflects a biblical calling, based on verses 35 and 36 from Matthew 25, to "care for the hungry and the thirsty, the stranger and the naked, the sick and those in prison."

Last year, Community Mennonite's projects for peace included the church's written support for the national "Bridges Not Walls" campaign, a response to an Israeli-built fortified wall on the West Bank. Community Mennonite's members mailed 225 letters and 25 drawings to legislators, urging government representatives to spur Israelis and Palestinians to cooperate with each other. At issue, church members said, is the wall on the West Bank that divides Israel and Palestine.



Michael Reilly, DN-R

"That wall makes life difficult for the Palestinians," said Dorothy Jean Weaver, leader of several gatherings from Community that recently visited Israel and Palestine. "Israelis say it is a security barrier to keep Palestinians from blowing themselves up [in terrorist suicide missions] in Israel. To Palestinians, this is a wall that intends to take more of their land."

Community Mennonite also backed MCC's Coffee Project, a movement that urges congregations to buy coffee bought from producers at fair prices, and publicly opposed the U.S. war in Iraq.

Pastor Ray Hurst said that his church placed a sign in the building's front yard at the start of the war in Iraq that reads "Praying for Peace, Mourning the Violence."

"This congregation responds to our government leaders with a biblical passage for justice and peace in our world," Hurst said. He added that his church members also wrote state and national lawmakers to protest the U.S. government's use of tax money for war. About 60 members joined an anti-war protest last year in Washington.

Hurst said his church's stand on such touchy subjects as war represents many Community Mennonite members' personal beliefs that, he added, ally with Scripture.

Ray Hurst, pastor of Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, says the work that earned his church MCC's 2005 Congregational Advocacy Award simply reflects Community's response to a Christian calling.

Community Mennonite Award continued on page 3

The transformative power of missional lives

Owen Burkholder



William and Viola Weaver

Aldine Weaver Musser is co-pastor with her husband Jim at Stephens City Mennonite Church. She wrote this in response to my request for stories of missional lives, about the lives of her parents, William and Viola Weaver.

Owen Burkholder

“My parents are residents of Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community and members of Mt. Vernon Mennonite Church.

Yesterday I stopped in to see how my mother was recovering from knee surgery. In her room was an EMU college student who had chosen to develop a relationship with my mother to meet a requirement for a Psychology class. I was invited to sit with them. I learned that my mother also has relationships with Art students at JMU.

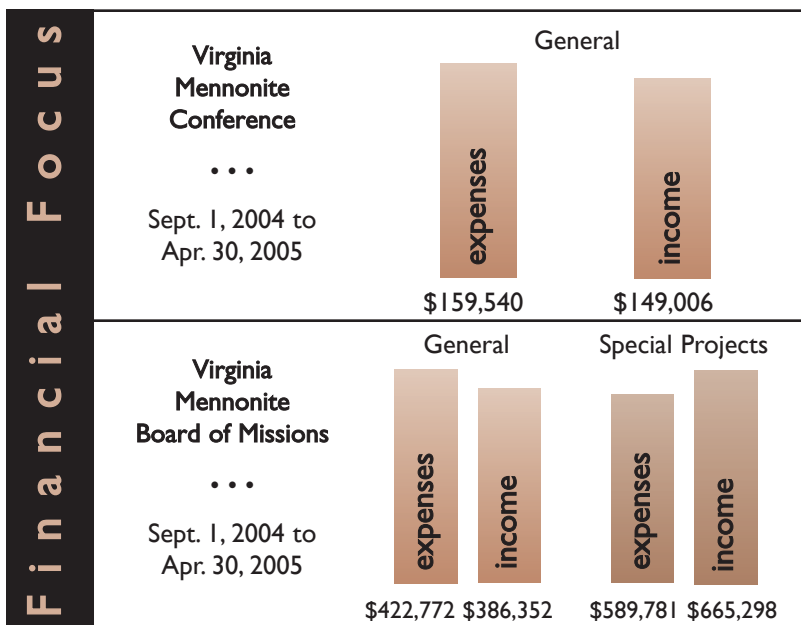
In the half hour I sat in this small room several residents stopped in to ask about plant care, activities, report about their well-being that day, and she had at least three phone calls.

It reminded me of the times she also welcomed people into ‘our home’ by phone or from across the street, especially those who were open to the transformation that God brings when we surrender and become involved in God’s mission. She was caring for five of her own children plus neighborhood children who found comfort (and maybe a snack) in our home on the second floor of a row house.

When I inquired about where Dad was yesterday, I discovered he too was building relationships by caring for people who needed a ride to the doctor, hospital, or store. Together they have made a life that reveals to me that wherever they live they are open to join in God’s activity.

Photos of some of the people they had relationships with through the years are artfully propped on the bookcase. One who struggled for years calls “Mom and Dad” by the same name we children do. An African-American woman who had an illegitimate child at 16 years of age is now a deaconess in the church. A teenage boy who wrecked my father’s only car was open to explore God’s plan and purpose for his life. Dad made arrangements for him to go to college and become a Christian lawyer. One young man is now a pastor in the Mennonite Church USA. The relationship stories include people from South Seventh Street Mennonite Church where Dad gave pastoral leadership and from Camp Hebron where they lived and worked and gave leadership to the birth of a Mennonite church.

My parents have not retired from being missional. They seem as excited about what God is doing around them and through them as I observed them to be in their younger years. They continue to nurture their own relationship with God by the reading of the Holy Scriptures and prayer. I have heard them pray for their pastors, other church leaders, their children, and many of these other relationships they have nurtured along the way.”



Connections (USPS 007-205) is published monthly by Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions and Virginia Mennonite Conference to connect congregations with each other and conference agencies.

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Connections is distributed free to each household of supporting congregations. Subscription rates: \$5 per year, 2 years for \$9. Send subscriptions to Connections Circulation Manager, 901 Parkwood Dr., Harrisonburg, VA 22802

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www.vmconf.org

POSTMASTER Send address changes to 901 Parkwood Dr., Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Periodical postage paid at Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

If you have peace stories to share, please send them to
Dave and Krista Powell at ecopow@ecolc.net

From 'worstest' enemy to buddies

Logan and Drew were good first grade buddies. They always loved playing together. They were also beginning to share a mutual dislike for another boy in their class who always wanted to pick on them. This boy, Jack, especially loved to constantly pull on Drew's coat. This really started to bother Logan, as his friend Drew was small and he felt that Jack was taking advantage of him. Drew went home and told his mother that he didn't want to wear his coat to school anymore because of Jack. Drew's mother was ready to go to the principal to complain about Jack.

One day, Drew and Logan were at Logan's house playing and decided that they wanted to pray for people they knew. Logan's mother suggested that they pray for Jack. "Oh no," they said, "we don't want to pray for our 'worstest' enemy." However, after talking about it more, they did include Jack in their prayers.

The next day Logan came home to tell his mother that Jack was not his 'worstest' enemy anymore. "What happened," his mother asked. "Well," Logan started, "Drew and I were talking on the playground and we decided that Jesus wouldn't be mean to someone like Jack, so we shouldn't be mean to him either. So we just went over to him and asked him to play with us. Jack said, "yes, I want to play with you." After that, Jack played nicely with both Logan and Drew and they became friends.

Some time later, after celebrating Jack's birthday with him, Logan turned to his mother and said, "I just can't believe that I just had ice cream with my 'worstest' enemy."

- Logan Martin, first-grade student and Paula Martin, his mother
Stuarts Draft, Va.



Update: Le Thi Hong Lien has been released from prison on April 28 in Vietnam, after serving ten months of her one-year sentence. She became mentally ill after being tortured and abused, and was eventually transferred to Bien Hoa Mental Hospital in March. She will continue to participate in her church with her family despite being ordered not to.

Community Mennonite Award continued from cover

"It's part of the way we understand the call to follow Jesus," he said. "Jesus certainly put his neck out politically [around the Romans and Jewish religious leaders.] We believe that being a follower of Jesus means that we stick our necks out and speak with passion and integrity about our convictions."

Weaver, a professor of New Testament at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, said the church's award showed that involvement for just causes counts.

"The most significant thing the award represents is that the engagement of congregational members makes a difference," Weaver said.

Jost, who helped draft his group's letter to legislators, said the importance of results pales beside the relevance of obeying the Bible.

"Jesus freed the oppressed and helped the poor," Jost said. "I see that as a mission of those who claim to be followers of Jesus."

- Tom Mitchell is a staff writer for the *Daily News-Record*,
Harrisonburg, Va.

Seeds of stewardship

"I've never heard this before!" said one participant in the sessions on Biblical stewardship principles being taught by Orval and Dorothy Shank, Ridgeway Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, in Trinidad. As the Shanks met with members of four congregations, they explained the most important principle first: we are stewards of the Gospel and we give ourselves to the Lord and others.

Class discussions shaped the principles into the Trinidad context so that the learning was very practical. The homework that was assigned asked participants to search Biblical passages related to money. As one pastor said, "the Bible is full of stewardship teaching!"

Orval and Dorothy related the story of a church member who heard the stewardship teaching regarding tithing. She decided to tithe her income and after doing so for several weeks, an uncle in New York called and asked her how soon she wants to work on home improvements; he had ordered a thousand blocks for her and her husband to use. Another relative gave a gift of money. God honored her faithfulness! Orval and Dorothy urged her to tell her congregation about this so that others may be encouraged to follow the Biblical instruction on tithing.

Orval and Dorothy experienced God's grace during their two-month teaching assignment in Trinidad. They say, "We planted the seeds and are allowing God to create the increase."

- Gloria Lehman
Caribbean Regional Assistant



Orval and Dorothy Shank display a gift from the Trinidadian church for their two months of service.

Correction: Andrew, Lisa and Jeremy Eggman, who are beginning a year of service in China, are members of Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, not Park View Mennonite as reported in the May issue.

Mennonite Men seek ways to get involved

Mennonite Men is made up of regional representatives from across Canada and the U.S. Glenn Horst, of Winchester, Virginia, is a board member representing the Virginia Mennonite Conference.

Mennonite Men has planned a men's breakfast at the Virginia Conference Assembly on Saturday morning, July 30. Richard Early, Pastor of Grace Mennonite Church, Linville, Va., will be our featured speaker. Grace received a grant from Mennonite Men of \$30,000 in 1999 to help pay for their new building.

Mennonite Men has attempted to both encourage the formation of men's groups and to provide Anabaptist study resources. The *Closer Than a Brother~Men's Series* and *Momentum* are resource materials available for men's groups. Booklets are available from Mennonite Men or Mennonite Publishing Network.

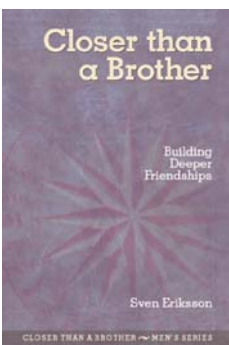
The *JoinHands Mennonite Church Building Program*, Mennonite Men's major program, provides church building grants, up to \$50,000, to young congregations acquiring their first church building. Grants of \$360,000 have been approved for nine congregations building their first meetinghouse, and five additional grant applications are currently being processed. Since the beginning of the *JoinHands* program in 1985, 42 churches in Canada, the United States and overseas have received church building grants for a total of more than \$1.1 million.

There are presently only 14 persons from Virginia that participate in the *JoinHands* program. This is an opportunity for many more persons to help support "Kingdom" work in regions beyond.

How can you be involved? (1) Volunteer your building skills to churches acquiring their first church building. (2) Become a participant in the *JoinHands Mennonite Church Building Program* by contributing \$100 twice a year.

For more information, go to www.mennonitemen.org or contact Glenn Horst, Representative to Virginia Conference, 151 Wilkins Drive, Winchester, VA 22602, (540) 542-0510 or e-mail: grh@visuallink.com. Glenn also welcomes any questions related to men's issues.

• Glenn Horst,
Mennonite Men Representative



One of the resources used by Mennonite Men to promote friendship building among men.



JoinHands Mennonite Church Building Program is the major mission program of Mennonite Men. In the last two years, they have issued six grants to congregations for their first meetinghouses, including one for Grace Mennonite Church, a member of Virginia Mennonite Conference.



Loren Horst
Earlene Horst plays with Gypsy children at the Center Halleluja preschool, a ministry to Gypsy children in Lezhe, Albania.

A place of love in Lëzhe

Loren and Earlene Horst visit Center Halleluja preschool, a ministry to Gypsy children in Albania

The happy, excited voices of the children could be heard as we walked up to the Center Halleluja preschool in Lëzhe, Albania. Fifteen pair of inquisitive eyes turned toward us as Loren and I smiled and said, "Hello!" We were interrupting their mid-morning snack time of sandwiches and juice, but children can eat, talk and grin for the camera at the same time. The digital camera brought smiles of glee when each child caught a glimpse of their bright and shining faces on the little screen.

Language was not a barrier! Loren was soon involved in playing pitch and catch with several children, who never seemed to tire of the game. I was entrusted with the responsibility of holding some baby dolls and patting their backs when they fussed. We were welcomed quite quickly into the world of the Albanian Gypsy children with their warm hugs and joyful laughter.

Norma Teles, a VMBM missionary from Brazil, has a special place in her heart for the Gypsy community of Lëzhe. This group of people is not nomadic, being forced to stay in one location while living many years under communism. Most Gypsy children do not attend school because of the discrimination they feel from the larger Albanian community. With the encouragement these children are receiving, Norma hopes that these and many more will start attending school.

Each Monday when the group of bright, creative children arrive, Norma and her two assistants, Flora and Merita, begin the morning by helping the children wash their hands and by trimming fingernails. After taking a turn in the warm, soapy water, the children are so eager to show off the results of clean hands and trimmed finger nails.

The basics of good manners are taught through lessons and example. After play time one day, Norma asked a student to put some toys away and received the answer of "No!" When Norma asked, "Why not?" the little girl responded with a quick answer, "Because you didn't say please!"

Norma and her staff share the love of Jesus with the children each Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning by teaching Bible stories and songs. They emphasize God's love for each child and the fact that each person is precious in His eyes! We watched during the play time as an energetic girl jumped on a tricycle and proceeded to ride around and around a row of chairs singing a song about the Bible, loud enough for everyone to hear.

Norma's love for the Gypsy community reaches out through visits to families of her students and Saturday children's activities. As Norma, Flora and Merita said their goodbyes and closed the gate to the school, it was plain to see that the love they give so freely is being returned to them. Parents waved, hugs were given and children ran along beside their teachers, not wanting to see them go. The fragrance of God's love, like a sweet-smelling flower, will linger in the village for a long time.

• Earlene Horst
VMBM Ministry Assistant

Reconnecting in K*sova

From February 18-March 1, my husband Ken and I traveled to K*sovo and Italy. In K*sovo we, along with Keith Blank from Eastern Mennonite Missions and missionary Jeff Linthicum, explored various locations for long-term work. Jeff arranged for us to meet with valuable resource people who gave input into determining location and the type of "business" to launch.

In Prishtina, we enjoyed a lovely home-cooked meal with the family of Halil, who is an ethnic Albanian, as are the majority of K*sovars. He, along with his family and village, was a refugee to Albania during the war with Serbia. In Albania, the respect and appreciation for Virginia Mennonites remains strong. We made arrangements to complete the remaining work needed for the building project at the school. Our hearts went out to Halil's gifted young adult children, nephews and nieces. They are typical in the high level of importance they place on getting a good education. But the 70% unemployment rate and the anticipated UN pullout bring hopelessness and uncertainty about K*sovo's future stability.



Two K*sovar girls sing worship songs during a service.

We visited three cities, praying to discern God's leading. In Pudejevo, a city near the Serbian border, the scarcity of women out and about in town was noticeable. The southern city of Prizren, second largest in K*sovo and mostly Muslim with Turkish influence is in the breadbasket area. Destruction is evident from last year's "March Madness," when K*sovars destroyed a lot of remaining Serb property. Istog, a friendly town of 40,000-50,000 people, has no Protestant witness. There are connections with the church of a missionary about a half hour away. This city held appeal for long-term work because of its openness and possibility for networking with other missionaries.

During our stay, significant contacts were made. Justine Horsfall, the director of the Association of International Missions, encouraged our involvement in teaching computer technology or other businesses. Arturo, a 27-year-old K*sovar, is leading the largest Protestant congregation of about 100 people, 60 of whom are K*sovars. He welcomes mission agencies to join in planting churches, supports the vision of business ventures to provide jobs for the local people, and desires to develop a Bible Institute for leadership and discipleship training. John, a Korean-American who formerly worked for Enron, is using his extraordinary talent for Christ in micro-financing, bringing hope to many farmers and small businesses, after Enron's fall produced a life-change in him. He was a source of valuable information and counsel.

Continue to pray for the believers in the region and for ongoing discernment for long-term work.

• Sue Horst
Ken Horst is Director of Partners in Mission and *tranSend*

The conundrum of healthcare provision



Ron Yoder
CEO, VMRC

My experiences of mutual aid in the farming community where I grew up in Pennsylvania come to mind as I reflect on providing quality care and compassion to members of our society having reached a place in life when caring for themselves, or by their family members, has become too much to bear alone. The federal government program Medicaid was designed to help when an individual or couple's financial resources no longer met the need for the level of care required. Today, in the Commonwealth of Virginia the amount paid by Medicaid for nursing care is approximately \$25,000 less than the cost to provide care to one person for one year, and the expectancy that the need for such care will grow as our population ages. The question before us is: who is responsible to cover that shortfall?

How do we continue to fund the care of those most in need and without financial resources as the burden on Medicaid funds grows under the weight of individuals divesting of their assets to meet eligibility requirements? When that happens, the responsibility to pay for health care is shifted to others if Medicaid payment is insufficient. Who is primarily responsible to makeup the difference between Medicaid funding and actual cost of care when parents pass on assets to children and make contributions to ministries in order to become eligible for Medicaid? Is it the individual's family, church, donors, health care organizations, or taxpayers? Is it ethical for children to expect health care

organizations and donors to subsidize their lifestyle up to the value of the assets they receive from their parents? Is it ethical for persons to contribute their assets to ministries and then expect health-care organizations, taxpayers, and donors to subsidize their health care?

In cases where persons divest assets to children the primary responsibility transfers to the children at least up to the value of the assets they receive, and more if the children have the financial capacity that will allow them to do more and not become impoverished and thereby shift the responsibility for their future healthcare on to others. Beyond that, it is the shared responsibility of the government, family, church, donors, and health care organization. As all of us planned for our future care the ethical decision is to first set aside, using the best financial advice available, what may be required to care for ourselves. What is left can be given to children and our favorite ministries. Not-for-profit organizations seeking financial gifts should respectfully decline a financial gift when there is clear evidence the gift will likely shift the responsibility for the prospective donor's future care on to others. These practices will encourage personal accountability and discourage shifting the burden of future healthcare onto taxpayers, donors, and healthcare organizations.

Contact Ron with responses to this article at roney@vmrc.org or 540-564-3401.

Congregational Resource Center

In the April 2005 issue of *Church Educator*, a magazine of "creative resources for church educators," Elaine M. Ward writes about making worship meaningful to youth. A minister decided to teach on a subject of the youth's choosing, every third Sunday of the month. The young people were preparing for college and what to do with their lives, and said, "Well if God's got anything to do with my life, it has to do with my vocation. How do I know the will of God?" That Sunday, the front rows of the church were filled with youth, the parents of the youth all attended church because they knew the sermon was about something meaningful to their children. Later, the pastor met with the youth and their parents to discuss the sermon and ask questions. Ward goes on to challenge churches to get their youth more involved in worship, and offers some suggestions.

- **Brainstorm** with the worship committee, youth ministry team and/or youth to discover the needs and gifts of the youth in the church. How can you change your worship to recognize everyone

as participating members? How can you maintain freshness, creativity and beauty in the traditional church rituals?

- **Explore** the possibilities of involving young people in dance, drama, scripture reading, prayer, musical talent, etc. Invite the youth to lead a worship service. (Many congregations do this once a year or on a more regular basis.)
- **Encourage** parents to encourage their youth's participation in worship and its preparation.
- **Rotate** teams of young people before they burn out if youth are involved in worship. Ask the current team to train a new team.

The Resource Center is open 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact Jill Landis at (540) 432-4219 or crc@emu.edu to make arrangements for evening use.

Visit www.emu.edu/seminary/crc to browse our catalog.



Connections Prayer Calendar June 2005

Sunday

This month's prayer calendar is sponsored by

Margot Eyring, in memory of Edward and Mary Jane Eyring, who lived their lives to serve Jesus and his kingdom. Their final words were to "leave nothing unsaid and nothing unreconciled." They followed this advice and both lived and died in shalom.

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

Monday

5 Pray for George R. Brunk, III who is in Bari, Italy this weekend, teaching a brief seminar on 'Anabaptist History and Thought' to the Centro Koinonia congregation and others.

6 Pray for the VMBM and EMM missionaries serving in the Mediterranean and Balkan regions who are gathered together this week in Montenegro for a spiritual retreat and time of overall refreshment.

7 You are the salt of the earth! Today add a touch of God's seasoning to the lives of people around you. May it bring a sweet fragrance to Him.

12 Pray for the Riverside Mennonite Church as they search for pastoral leadership in the coming months. They hope to find someone who has interest in maintaining Harman Mt. Campground, along with pastoring.

13 Pray for the Phil and Marcia Lehman family as they fly to the States for their 3-month stateside assignment. They will live in the Broadway, Va. area and will travel to many different locations to connect with family, friends and churches.

14 VMC's four elected officers and two staff executives will meet briefly tomorrow to prepare for the next Conference Council meeting on July 28. Ask for wisdom as they prepare the agenda and discern God's leading in our midst.

19 On this Father's Day remember you are loved by your heavenly Father. "Trust in the Lord and do good. Dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture." Psalm 37:3

20 The strong leadership of Pastor Ronnie Pride, Rocky Mount NC, is resulting in the growth of Fellowship of Christ Church and a growing ministry to ex-offenders. Thank God for the effectiveness of these ministries.

21 Pray for David and Lavonne Lehman as they begin to take leadership responsibilities at Gospel Hill. David is scheduled to be installed as pastor on July 3. Include the congregation in your prayers as they make the transition.

26 Pray for Bro. Pat and Sis. Dolly who have opened their home for cell group and SS class meetings in Esperanza, Trinidad. May this home be a sanctuary for worshipping God and witnessing for Christ.

27 Thank God for Robert and Lois Wenger's 12 years of pastoral leadership with the Riverside Mennonite Church, Harman, WV. Pray for them as they pursue other areas of ministry and service.

28 Pray for Stephen Hayle, the new director of the youth department in the Jamaica Mennonite Church. Pray that he will have creativity and wisdom for his role in nurturing the wide variety of youth in JMC.

Wednesday

1 Margaret Keeler is attending a retreat in "The Cove" in NC June 2-5, which is especially for missionary women. Pray that this will be a time of refreshing her after many months of intense ministry in Trinidad.

8 Pray for the Dan and Mary Hess family and for Allen Umble as they adjust to living in the USA after having served in Albania in long-term missions. Pray that they will have opportunities to share their stories from Albania.

15 Pray for safety in travel for a PIM team going to Italy and Albania, for very positive relationships with the missionary kids, and constructive relationships to be built with the Albanian youth at Lezhe.

22 Krista Swartzentruber asks us to pray that she will be a light in the Ridge community and that she will reach out and bring people to an understanding of Christ. Pray that this little spot in Jamaica will be transformed by God's power.

29 Many weddings occur in June—pray that the newlyweds will build a Christ-centered marriage, of commitment and faithfulness.

Thursday

2 Pray for the Jason and Donna Martin family this month as they work at the many details to bring closure to their missionary assignment in Bari, Italy. Pray especially for Emily as she heals from a broken right arm.

9 Pray for many persons working in development for various Mennonite organizations that will gather tomorrow, with MMA representative Joe Lapp and Conference Coordinator Steve Carpenter, to consider their work as ministry.

16 Thank God for Roy and Kathy Good and their participation and leadership at Gospel Hill Mennonite Church the last 24 years. Roy's present role as interim pastor will be concluded at the end of this month.

23 Pray for Melissa Wenger as she develops children's and youth programs for the Poarch Native American community in Amore, AL. Thank God for the commitment of Poarch Community Church and their support for Melissa.

30 Pray for the pastors and leaders of Southern District. They meet tomorrow for the first time in many years without pastor Mark Wenger serving as their Chair. Mark and his family are moving to Lancaster, PA.

Friday

3 Tomorrow many will gather in Hickory, N.C. at the Mt. View Church for a Celebration of Ministry and Culture of Call banquet honoring the legacy of Clayton and Edna Godshall. Pray that others may catch their vision for church planting.

10 NewBridges Immigrant Resource Center continues to expand the services it offers to the local immigrant community, including case management and para-legal services. Thank God for the good leadership of this ministry.

17 Pray for Willard and Eva Eberly during the coming months as they provide the primary leadership in the Centro Koinonia congregation at Bari, Italy.

24 Highland Retreat, a Conference Related Ministry, will hold their annual BBQ fundraiser at camp in Bergton, Va. tomorrow. Pray for the staff and counselors as they lead many to renew and refresh their relationship to Christ.

Saturday

4 Conference Minister Owen Burkholder will bring the message at Mt. View Mennonite Church while Conf. Coordinator Steve Carpenter will speak at Asheville Mennonite Church tomorrow. Pray for God's anointing on them.

11 Pray for wisdom for the Hmong ministry advisory group as they meet this afternoon in Hickory, as they try to support the local Hmong Mennonite Church. Thank God for the strong support from local Mennonite churches.

18 Please pray for pastor Pearl Hoover and the congregation of Northern Va. Mennonite Church. Conference Coordinator Steve Carpenter will be working with them tomorrow and bringing greetings from the Conference.

25 Pray for the final plans for the Charlotte 2005 convention of Mennonite Church USA. May the theme 'Can't Keep Quiet!' nudge us to speak and act boldly to enlarge God's kingdom.

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 (NIV)

Announcements

A **Steak Barbecue & "Cruise in" for Camp** at Highland Retreat will be held Saturday, June 25. Bring your antique or classic car to display in the afternoon after 2:00 P.M. Other activities beginning at 3:00 include a bicycle tour of the community, zipline & super swing for teens, and funyaks at the pond. The swimming pool will be open all afternoon. The barbecue begins at 5:00.

Bring a potluck salad and dessert. Donations will benefit the summer youth camping program.

A-frame cabins and campsites are available and free for families and individuals that weekend. Advance reservations are required. Contact the camp at (540) 852-3226 or info@highlandretreat.org.

The second annual **Juried Art Exhibition** will be held at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg, June 5-July 5. It is free and open to the public. For more information, call (540) 564-3400.

Penny Power 2005 is underway! The proceeds will benefit children in Italy and Bolivia. Crystal and Christopher Lehman in Italy are the missionary children of Phil and Marcia and through friendships, they are able to minister to their Italian peers. **Penny Power** will help them in that valuable ministry.

In Bolivia, PRONATS is an organization that helps working children receive an education and is a healthy environment for kids to grow. **Penny Power** will help this program of MCC succeed. Churches are encouraged to pick up a blue water jug from the Conference Center, 901 Parkwood Dr., Harrisonburg, and place it prominently in your church.



Experience the beautiful Shenandoah Valley and ride in the eighth annual **Bike Shenandoah 2005 Cycle for Service**, September 24. The proceeds will benefit four organizations: Mennonite

Media, Mennonite Central Committee, Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions, and the Harrisonburg Pregnancy Center. Register now by visiting www.bikeshenandoah.org or call Laura Moyers at (540) 434-9727.



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Across the Street

Register online at vmconf.org

Join us for the 95th annual **Conference Assembly** at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond **July 28-30, 2005**
Register now!

Experience spiritual growth, dynamic speakers, delegate sessions, children's and youth activities, evening entertainment, and more!

2005 Penny Power

Collect coins for Penny Power!




a project of MCC

This year's projects will help children from Italy to Bolivia.



a project of VMBM



Help us raise \$16,000!

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