

## POINT GREY INTER-MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

web site: [www.pgimf.org](http://www.pgimf.org)

July 18th, 2010

Welcome to Point Grey Inter-Mennonite Fellowship. Our service this Sunday will be led by Rosie Perera, we will be led in song by Erna Friesen, accompanied at the piano by Ruth Enns, and Henry Neufeld is your usher. Later we will hear a message from J. Evan Kreider, who is filling in at the last minute with a message on the lectionary texts, as Janice is not able to be with us, having returned to her family to be with them at a difficult time. Please join us in the lounge after the service for coffee, and fellowship. *Parents with small children, please note that arrangements have been made for child-minding on the second and last Sundays of each month, and you are invited to contact any other parent in the service, or any member of the church board for more information.*

We pause this morning to remember Anna Stuckey Aeschliman, Janice's mother, who passed away Saturday, July 17th surrounded by her family in Archbold, Ohio at 91 years of age. As a loving wife, mother, grandmother and mother-in-law, her life demonstrated Old Mennonite values, never speaking ill of anyone, possessed of unwavering faith, and boundlessly happy whether at home in the kitchen or in church. May we long bless her memory as we stand with Janice and Evan in their loss. [text after JEK]

### PGIMF News

#### Upcoming speakers

July 25	Erna Friesen	Lectionary texts
August 1	Kevin Hiebert	Job Series I - Job is tested (Ch 1-3)
August 8	Janice Kreider	Transfiguration Sunday
August 15	Andre Pekovich	Job Series III - It's not my fault!

**Summer coffee signup.** Thank you to all the food groups who made this year's coffee and fellowship following the services such a success. Please help us carry it on informally through the summer, and see the coffee signup list at the back of the church.

#### The Wider Church

**MBMSI** A new Ndorola guesthouse, built by a church team from Willingdon Church, will be a great place for villagers to come and spend concentrated time away from the distractions of life to study the scriptures. Please pray for Blaine & Michelle Warner as they teach and encourage these new Christians.

**MCC** Take your Place - new MCC CD from Kim Thiessen and Darryl Neustaedter Barg, featuring inspiring collaboration with Maasai choirs from Kenya. A DVD is also included, just \$20 available from the MCC BC office in Abbotsford (31414 Marshall Rd.) or online at [takeyourplace.mcc.org](http://takeyourplace.mcc.org). All proceeds support MCC's Generations at Risk program.

#### **On a Happy Occasion**

Many thanks to the PGIMF congregation for their wishes, cards, greetings and flowers on our recent anniversary, or as a nephew's youngster put it: our adversity. *Henry & Tena*

#### **RECORDING THE SERVICE**

Please note that we now record the response time after the sermon. You are encouraged to share your thoughts as fully as you feel led with the proviso that no privacy can be guaranteed. The response time will not be posted to the website. You are encouraged to bring forth private issues during the time of sharing and prayer, which will continue to be not recorded.

*Moderator*—Don Teichroeb (604-221-8720); *Worship*—Henry Neufeld (604-946-3961);  
*Pastoral Care*—Erika Hannan (604-325-5065); *Music*—Ruth Enns (604-987-7430)  
*Congregational Co-ordinator (bulletins)*—Andre Pekovich (604-879-0007)

**Regent College Free Public Lectures** A trio of lectures await you this week at Regent college, and you are invited to partake of one or all. The series continues with **Susan Phillips** on *Friendship Matters: Attending to a Neglected Spiritual Discipline* on Monday, July 19<sup>th</sup> at 8:00pm. On Wednesday, you can also hear **John Hare** asking *Can We Be Good without God?* on Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup> at 8:00pm. Last but not least, on Friday July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 8:00 pm, John G. Stackhouse, Jr. presents *Beyond Bracketing: Why Accounting for the Supernatural Cannot Be Indefinitely Postponed*. All lectures are very popular, so come early for a good seat.

**Regent College** is looking for friendly Vancouverites to provide up to one week of free housing for incoming students while they search for permanent housing in August. Meals are not expected (but welcome nonetheless!). This is also a great solution for people going out of town and in need of a house-sitter. For more information, please call Cheryl at 604-221-3355, or email (*available from webmaster*). Thank you!

**MCC Penny Power:** Working together for global change! Join the annual coin drive and help raise \$50,000 for sand dam projects in Kenya. Every penny is matched 4 to 1 by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. To find out about sand dams or for more information about Penny Power call Ruth at 604-850-6639 or 1-888-622-6337 or visit [www.bc.mcc.org/pennypower](http://www.bc.mcc.org/pennypower).

## Amos 7:7-17

<sup>1</sup>This is what the Lord God showed me: he was forming locusts at the time the latter growth began to sprout (it was the latter growth after the king's mowings). <sup>2</sup>When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said,

'O Lord God, forgive, I beg you!

How can Jacob stand?

He is so small!

<sup>3</sup> The Lord relented concerning this;

'It shall not be,' said the Lord.

<sup>4</sup> This is what the Lord God showed me: the Lord God was calling for a shower of fire, and it devoured the great deep and was eating up the land. <sup>5</sup>Then I said,

'O Lord God, cease, I beg you!

How can Jacob stand?

He is so small!

<sup>6</sup> The Lord relented concerning this;

'This also shall not be,' said the Lord God.

<sup>7</sup> This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in his hand. <sup>8</sup>And the Lord said to me, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A plumb-line.' Then the Lord said,

'See, I am setting a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel;

I will never again pass them by;

<sup>9</sup> the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.'

<sup>10</sup> Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, 'Amos has conspired against you in the very centre of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. <sup>11</sup>For thus Amos has said,

"Jeroboam shall die by the sword,

and Israel must go into exile

away from his land."'

<sup>12</sup>And Amaziah said to Amos, 'O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; <sup>13</sup>but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.'

<sup>14</sup> Then Amos answered Amaziah, 'I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, <sup>15</sup>and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, "Go, prophesy to my people Israel."

<sup>16</sup> 'Now therefore hear the word of the Lord. You say, "Do not prophesy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac."

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, thus says the Lord:

"Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city,

and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword,

and your land shall be parcelled out by line;

you yourself shall die in an unclean land,

and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land."'

[NRSV]

## Colossians 1:1-14

<sup>1</sup>Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

<sup>2</sup>To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

<sup>3</sup>In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup>for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, <sup>5</sup>because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel <sup>6</sup>that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. <sup>7</sup>This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow-servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ

on your behalf, <sup>8</sup>and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

<sup>9</sup>For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup>so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup>May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully <sup>12</sup>giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. <sup>13</sup>He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. [NRSV]

## Luke 10:25-37

### *The Parable of the Good Samaritan*

<sup>25</sup>Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' <sup>26</sup>He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' <sup>27</sup>He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' <sup>28</sup>And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'

<sup>29</sup>But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' <sup>30</sup>Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup>Now by chance a priest was going down

that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup>So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup>But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. <sup>34</sup>He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup>The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, "Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend." <sup>36</sup>Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' <sup>37</sup>He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

[NRSV]

## Psalm 82

*A Psalm of Asaph.*

<sup>1</sup> God has taken his place in the divine council;  
in the midst of the gods he holds judgement:  
<sup>2</sup> ‘How long will you judge unjustly  
and show partiality to the wicked?’

***Selah***

<sup>3</sup> Give justice to the weak and the orphan;  
maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.  
<sup>4</sup> Rescue the weak and the needy;  
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.’

<sup>5</sup> They have neither knowledge nor  
understanding,  
they walk around in darkness;  
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

<sup>6</sup> I say, ‘You are gods,  
children of the Most High, all of you;  
<sup>7</sup> nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,  
and fall like any prince.’

<sup>8</sup> Rise up, O God, judge the earth;  
for all the nations belong to you! [NRSV]

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### From the journal of Jack Suderman, moderator of Mennonite Church Canada

*I visited the church in Cuba recently. The most influential church leader in the entire country spoke to pastors in a workshop. He passionately declared: "The church in Cuba is in a profound crisis. The only way out of the crisis is for the radical Reformation, the Anabaptist vision, to take root in Cuba. There is no other option." (Raul Suarez)*

Background: The situation of the church in Cuba is very complex. Out of the 1959 Revolution (supported by most Evangelical/Protestant churches and strongly opposed by the Catholic Church) the Cuban government, after some time and until 1992, declared the revolution to be “socialist/communist”, which meant “atheist”. Thus, the evangelical church then stood in opposition to the revolution. However, after pressure, a nation-wide debate decided “communist” did not necessarily mean “atheist”, and Communist Party membership (and thus opportunity to serve in government) became open to church members. Out of the change to a “lay” state from an “atheist” state, with religious non-discrimination receiving official and beneficial sanction, the state hoped that Christians would enter the Communist Party and participate more actively in it. Unexpectedly, Community Party members instead streamed into churches to investigate the forbidden fruit, becoming known as *militantes* (militants).

So Cuban churches are now full of highly educated and motivated people with great leadership skills, but no background in the Christian (or any) faith or religious tradition. Their instinctive reaction is to process religious experience according to the communist doctrinal paradigm as expressed in the southern hemisphere (non-European, or with overtones of race war, rather than class war). As such, this strong leadership, without strong theological/biblical foundations, makes the churches of all denominations - whether main-line or charismatic, evangelical or traditional - more Babel-like, lacking cohesion or loyalty. Out of the fragmentation that resulted has arisen a “charismatic” leadership, the form of which is admired in Cuba. This generates splits, divisions, and fragmentation throughout the church, and is increasing in intensity. It is in this light that the comment from Raul Suarez must be understood. The question the Cuban church attempts to address is: what can stop the splintering, and what can begin to unite us? The answer, according to Suarez, is a return to Anabaptist roots as a foundation of faith and church. The Anabaptist vision leads the church in two directions: toward discipleship to Jesus; and toward communities of peace; it is a common bond that all groups can sign on to. There is a sense in Cuba that the church is at the brink of invalidation: if common ground among the ‘charisms’ is not found, and the disputes are not ended, the erosion will cause the “militantes” that have come into the church to leave. Thus, the unifying potential of a common root such as the Anabaptist vision, has a great attraction to Cuban church leaders, and perhaps to government leaders as well.

[Text after J. Suderman]