

News 'n Notes



Mennoite Church Saskatchewan

From the Moderators Pen

Reflections

Henry Block, Moderator, MC Sask

The annual delegate session of MC Sask was held at Rosthern Junior College on February 25 - 26. Our theme for this year's session was "Celebrating Who We Are." The topics discussed at our worship sessions depicted who we believe we are in Christ Jesus. We are a people chosen by God. We are a people with a high calling. We are God's instruments.

To help us to be who God is calling us to be, our conference has gone through a process of envisioning. This process was under the leadership of our conference minister, Ken Bechtel. At our delegate session the process by which the covenant was developed was reviewed. This covenant is based on our understanding of scripture as stated in Our Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. The importance of scripture was illustrated by reading a paragraph from the section on scripture. Table groups discussed the application of this Covenant to various church situations. This Covenant was formally approved by our delegates. This approval was followed by a moving "Reconvenanting Service." Our Covenant reaffirms our common centre in Jesus Christ and our commitments to living faithfully together.

Our delegates accepted in principle, a vision statement called, "Vision for

2010." Our Vision 2010 is a dream that we will open ourselves to God and to one another so that our life and ministry together has the following characteristics:

- We are Christ-centred. Like our Anabaptist forbearers, we are learning that, "No one can know Christ except by following Him, and no one can follow Him except by knowing Him."
- As churches we have heard God's call to be Christ's body. This body transcends boundaries of age, race, class or gender.
- In relationships we have accepted the biblical mandate to equip and to send us into our world as ambassadors for Christ. As we follow the great commandment and the great commission we seek to grow together to maturity, to the full measure of the stature of Christ.

In the past several years we have worked well, and hard, together. We feel we are at the dawn of great things to follow. As a faith community we have covenanted to let Jesus Christ be our centre and to work together with the exciting as well as the difficult issues that may come our way. In the coming year we will be working at understanding where our covenant and our vision will take us as a regional conference.

Centennial Year Grad

Joel Thiessen

Joel Thiessen lives in Rosthern with his parents. He plans to enrol in Engineering at the University of Saskatchewan in the fall.

-Editor's note

After three years of attending Rosthern Junior College, I am about to leave the school as a member of the 100th graduating class. For three years RJC has been a big part of my life, taking part in sports, music, drama, coffee houses, guys' nights out, musicals, service projects, retreats, and when time allowed it, even school. The inclusion of almost the entire student body in all of these events, and the close relationships that are made are what this school is all about. I think those are the values that RJC was built upon.

In grade nine, my parents and I made the decision to enrol and give the school a shot. For me it wasn't as big a decision to make as it was for others, probably because I wasn't leaving home. Many of my friends were either going to go to RJC or would be close by in town. It wasn't as if the school was foreign to me anyway. Being the son of an alumnus, attending drama productions, open houses and concerts at the school had already made RJC quite a familiar place. The biggest reason why I chose to go wasn't because there was a better class selection or that there were better music, arts or sports programs. The reason I chose RJC was to meet and get to know new and exciting people. Looking back, I think I made the right decision.

Once I started attending the school I found that everyone was very welcoming of me as a new student. It didn't matter who I was, I was part of a group that included all students in all parts of school life. Everyone had their own stories and they all came from interesting backgrounds. It seemed like nothing about school life was monotonous and that every day had its new and exciting challenges. The school year starts busy and gets busier until the year is over. But that's one of the reasons RJC is so interesting and rewarding. I am only now beginning to explore what it means to be a member of not only an RJC graduating class, but of the 100th RJC graduating class. Walking through the halls looking at all the alumni, I think about all the memories that I have made in the past three years. I also think about what going to RJC has meant to so many other people over the past 100 years. I feel very privileged to be a part of a group of people from over 100 years with common values and beliefs. Being a part of the 100th year's graduating class is going to be very special. I will join my fellow classmates in celebrating the conclusion of our high school education, as well as the achievement of 100 years of an education with a plus. It will be a time of joy no other RJC graduating class will experience. Taking a look at 100 years of alumni while walking through the halls, I begin to suspect something that is special to RJC. Once you leave, you are more than just a picture on the wall. You become part of a greater community that seeks to shape the world with the same values that helped shape it. You become part of a tradition that won't soon be forgotten.

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How Deep the Father's Love for Us . . . *How Vast Beyond All Measure*



Mass Choir
at the CAMS
Concert

CAMS Choral Festival Celebrates Rosthern Junior College's Centennial

Erwin Tiessen

Six Mennonite High School Choirs from Ontario to British Columbia found their way to Rosthern Junior College on Friday, April 29, for two days of rehearsing in preparation for the Choral Festival Celebration on Sunday afternoon at Bethany Place in Hepburn. The gathering was a very intentional decision by CAMS (Canadian Association of Mennonite Schools) administrators to meet in Rosthern to celebrate RJC's Centennial. Along with RJC, participating schools included United Mennonite Educational Institute (Leamington, ON), Rockway Mennonite Collegiate (Kitchener, ON), Steinbach Christian High School (Steinbach, MB), Westgate Mennonite Collegiate (Winnipeg, MB), Mennonite Collegiate Institute (Gretna, MB) and Mennonite Educational Institute (Abbotsford, BC). Included in the weekend rehearsal schedule were a visit to Batoche National Historical Site, a social of choirs performing for each other, a jazz band concert and a wind down square dance.

The weekend highlighted the network of Church Schools across Canada that serve as reminders of the commitment of many churches to join with families in nurturing their students from Kindergarten through to seminary. As well, the weekend, and in particular the Sunday afternoon concert, profiled the

role that choral music plays in schools, churches and families in our supporting constituency. The celebration certainly found its epiphany in the concert at Bethany Place on Sunday afternoon. It was there that the decision to hold this weekend encountered its greatest affirmation, both from participants as well as attendees. Area churches welcomed the high school singers into their church and their homes. All schools led in the worship service at their host congregations Sunday morning.

John Wiebe, Edmonton, proved to be a fitting choice for guest conductor. His energy, his competency, his commitment and dedication to the rehearsals, and his youthfulness connected well with the adolescent singers. John brought to the weekend an understanding of, and appreciation for, what this was all about, which undoubtedly added to the event.

Bethany Place could have seated many more people. As the CAMS Choral Festival Concert unfolded on Sunday afternoon, those in attendance had little reason to doubt their attendance. This was a once-a-century event. Never again will Mennonite school choirs gather with RJC to celebrate the legacy of 100 years of RJC's history. Beyond the honouring of a school's story, the two hours of music proved to be a spiritual high for those moved by what they heard. Among the seven schools' varied repertoire I will long remember the passion of the singing and the

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Camp Coordinating Commission

Dan Richert, CCC chair

The CCC (Camp Coordinating Commission) is a commission under Mennonite Church Saskatchewan that exists to build strong and longlasting relationships between the three camps that MC Sask owns and operates. Each site is very different. Camp Elim is located southwest of Swift Current. It's situated around a lake and the campers are able to take part in a variety of water sports. Shekinah is located about an hour north of Saskatoon. Some of the features it has are a climbing wall and many hiking and bike trails through the valley forest. The Youth Farm Bible Camp is located 45 minutes northeast of Saskatoon. It has a number of different animals on its farm and one of the everyday activities is horseback riding.

CCC meets four times a year with representatives from each camp board.

*CAMS Choral Festival Celebrates Rosthern Junior
College's Centennial - continued from pg.2*

choreography of many of the numbers. Then the 260-voice high school choir led by John Wiebe moved everyone. The opening piece, Pentatonic Alleluia, captured us in its frenzied alleluias. Singet dem Herrn, the German equivalent of Sing to the Lord a New Song, brought a touch of nostalgia to the generation whose mother tongue was German. A significant concert highlight was the inaugural performance of the commissioned piece, Faithfulness. Adding significance were the comments made by Audrey Falk Janzen, the composer and accompanist. "How deep the Father's love for us/How vast

They discuss and plan things like joint orientations, updating camper applications, organizing joint fundraisers and any issues that the camps have. The CCC encourages consistency between the camps wherever possible and wherever it makes sense.

All of the camps receive the same curriculum for their summer program. It's exciting to see what the three camps can do when they come together. This has been seen at the joint orientations. For two days all of the staff from all the camps comes together to worship and to learn more about each other. Each year the joint orientation is held at a different camp. This means that everyone gets to see the other camp settings and how each site is breatching in its own way. The hope of the CCC is that each camp continues to build strong relationships with each other in order to serve God.

beyond all measure," the opening words of the song by the same title, confirmed for everyone what this was all about. Probably the translation of the number, Locus Iste, says it best. Its content reflects aptly upon the history of RJC, along with the other participating Mennonite schools, and just as importantly, upon the experience of the afternoon.

The translation reads, Locus iste a Deo factus est / This place was made by God, inestimabile sacramentum. / an inestimable holy place. irreprehensibilis est./It is without blame.

To that we can only say, AMEN.

"Sticky Wickets"

Jake Nickel

On Tuesday, April 5, Wildwood Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan pastors and other church leaders gathered to explore appropriate ways of dealing with issues of confidentiality and other appropriate ways of facing "Sticky Wickets."

The workshop was led by Pamela Thomas and Frederick Seller of the United Church of Canada, Saskatchewan Conference program staff. The purposes of the workshop were defined by the participants as:

- to hear questions and concerns re: pastoral boundaries.
- to explore our own boundaries in ministry.
- to seek ways of strengthening those boundaries.
- to explore confidentiality, including different kinds and uses of confidences.
- home/work boundaries (on time/off time)
- power: balancing our expectations with those of the congregation.
- how to handle friendship in congregations.
- knowing our professional limits (when to refer)

The thirty persons present worked hard exploring what this means for them in their ministry. The workshop became an opportunity to form peer liaisons and support systems in their individual ministries. They found that many of them faced similar issues and so could find among their peers help, support and encouragement in bringing the message of Christ to their relationships.