



**New York
Mennonite
Conference**

An area conference of
Mennonite Church USA

LIFE

In New York Mennonite Conference

What We're Reading

Sue Klassen

"No more copies of *Pax Avalon*?" several people asked at Delegate Assembly. Mennonite Publishing Network's first graphic novel, *Pax Avalon* has had mixed reviews, but gets high marks for pioneering in this genre.

We also sold out of the following books:

- *Changing Paradigms: Punishment and Restorative Discipline*—advocates moving away from punishment to restorative discipline
- *Reasoning Together: a Conversation on Homosexuality*—two theologians wrestle with the applying the biblical texts to the human condition
- *Simply in Season: A World Community Cookbook*—recipes and stories featuring local, seasonal, fairly traded ingredients
- *Sing the Journey CD 2*—the second CD of hymns from Sing the Journey, with diverse musical styles
- *Springs of Living Water: Christ Centered Church Renewal*—guides a team in bringing renewal to a congregation

Look for more excellent resources at Celebration this September!

Executive Board Meets in New York

Harold Miller

The executive body of our denomination wants to hear from its "owners"—people like us in NY Mennonite Conference. So when the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA met in Rochester on April 16-18, they invited six people from our conference to join them for the Friday evening meal and an hour of conversation afterwards in a big circle. The board wanted to hear us describe our conference's "center" and "growing edges," tell stories that show our churches in mission, and describe challenges we are facing and ways that our relationship with the denomination can be strengthened.

The time together was warm, open, invigorating. The chief value was not in any information we gave the board or in any counsel they gave us but in a sense of community and belonging that grew and became almost tangible. The night ended with the six of us from NY being placed in the center of the room and the board gathering around and laying hands on us in prayer and singing a song of blessing and commissioning.

Conversation with Executive Board after dinner (below)



Moderator Terry Zehr describes our vision for a missional future

The whole evening was a holy moment — helped along by the gracious hospitality of the folks of Rochester Area Mennonite Fellowship in their lovely facility!

Dinner with Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, provided by RAMF



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Photos by Jeffery Weaver

Congregational News

Edited by Kirk House

Lowville Men Join MDS in Ice-Storm Cleanup

In February, Tony Houser, Pete Denney, and Bruce Roggie spent a week in Benton, KY cleaning up downed brush and trees from catastrophic ice storms. Working with nine men from the Finger Lakes and three from the Midwest they put in a lot of chain-saw work for Mennonite Disaster Service.

Lowville Women Help Warm Those in Need

Thirteen Lowville women of the Faithful Workers Sewing Circle met in March to finish up 10 baby layettes, four 60 x 80 quilts, and two baby quilts. Members and friends also contributed five blankets, one 60 x 80 quilt, two sheets, two used comforters, four newborn kits, three knitted baby caps, and \$350.

Pleasant Valley: Ministry Team in Honduras

John Weaver of Pleasant Valley recently spent two weeks with a ministry team in Honduras. John and his co-workers poured concrete where homes and buildings had had only dirt floors until then. Other team members administered vaccinations. (Photos below.)



Photos submitted by Kirk House

Dean's List at EMU

The following students from New York Conference were named to the spring semester 2009 dean's list at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.:

Grace Hercyk, a junior justice, peace and conflict studies major, is the daughter of Darren and Lori Hercyk of Bath, N.Y. and a member of **Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church**.

Daniel Miller, a senior liberal arts major, is the son of Harold and Karen Miller of Corning, N.Y. and a member of **Community Mennonite Fellowship**.

Darrel Miller, a senior economics major, is the son of Harold and Karen Miller of Corning, N.Y. and a member of **Community Mennonite Fellowship**.

To qualify for the dean's list a student must achieve a semester grade point average of at least 3.750 or above and complete at least 12 semester hours of credit.

Eastern Mennonite University is a four-year, fully-accredited Christian liberal arts school guided by the peace principles of Mennonite Church USA.

EMU educates students to live in a global context through cross-cultural study and an interdisciplinary curriculum.

The university also offers graduate programs, seminary, and houses the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding. See more at: www.emu.edu/about

One Room School

A group of RAMF members is working towards opening a one-room school in Fall 2009 or 2010. Following are excerpts from the Vision Statement.

The One Room School offers a Christ-centered education that welcomes children of all faiths and backgrounds. We embrace the Mennonite vision of peaceful relationships in the classroom, in communities, and in the world. We provide students with a unique opportunity for service-oriented learning in a nurturing, caring community where education is preparation for life, and we base this on the following principles:

Christ-Centered:

In a Christ-centered environment, students learn discipleship through participating in worship services, service to others, and spiritual practices such as prayer, simple living, and bible study with an Anabaptist emphasis on the New Testament and following Jesus.

Education For Life:

Students receive preparation for life as they master the academic disciplines, life and relationship skills, and work and study habits.

Service Learning:

Students are given many opportunities to serve each other, their school, and the community. Older students review and reinforce their own learning as they help younger ones.

Caring Community:

Children learn respect for and caring behavior toward others. Cooperation, collaboration, and working together for a common goal are emphasized over competition and individual achievement. Students will be taught to value and include differences.

Spreading Peace:

Children learn about peace in a Christ-centered context on different levels: inner peace, peaceful relationships, peaceful community life, and peace in the world. Our aim is to educate children for leadership in society based on Anabaptist principles of nonviolent communication, conflict transformation, and servant-leadership.

Save the Dates:

- MC USA Convention ☞ June 30 - July 5, 2009, Columbus, Ohio
- Ministers' Fellowship ☞ August 10-12, Beaver Camp
- Celebration 2009 ☞ September 18-20, Beaver Camp