



# alumni news

A M B S

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The poem below by George Herbert fits the theme of this newsletter. In prosperous times we feel self-sufficient. In times of loss we begin to appreciate many of the things we had taken for granted, and we begin to see hard times in a more positive light. This is the predicament of the prosperous—which includes many of us.

— Darrell Fast, President,  
AMBS Alumni Association

### *The Pulley*

When God at first made man,  
Having a glass of blessings  
standing by;  
Let us [said he] pour on him all  
we can:  
Let the world's riches, which  
dispersed lie,  
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way;  
Then beauty flow'd, then wis-  
dom, honor, pleasure:  
When almost all was out, God  
made a stay,  
Perceiving that alone of all his  
treasure  
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should [said he]  
Bestow this jewel also on my  
creature,  
He would adore my gifts instead  
of me,  
And rest in Nature, not the God  
of Nature:  
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,  
But keep them with repining  
restlessness:  
Let him be rich and weary, that  
at least,  
If goodness lead him not, yet  
weariness  
May toss him to my breast.

## Sara Wenger Shenk named president of AMBS

**S**ara Wenger Shenk, Ed.D., associate dean of Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., has been named president of AMBS. She will begin the new assignment no

tial search committee and new chair of the AMBS board, said, “Dr. Wenger Shenk represents a unique combination of gifts and experiences, including teaching and administra-

tion in theological education, cross-cultural ministry, church planting and writing for both scholarly and popular audiences. Perhaps more importantly, Dr. Wenger Shenk is grounded in Jesus, deeply respectful of the church, and passionate about Anabaptist theological education.”

Her scholarship and commitment to the

church are evident in the wide range of her writings. They include *Thank You for Asking: Conversing with Young Adults about the Future Church* (Herald Press, 2005) and *Anabaptist Ways of Knowing: A Conversation about Tradition-Based Critical Education* (Casca-

dia, 2003). Her dissertation is *Toward An Anabaptist Educational Theory*, presented to the faculty of Union Theological Seminary and The Presbyterian School of Christian Education in August 1998.

Sara believes that worship, our “primary theology,” sustains and grounds all aspects of theological education. One evidence of this is the leadership she and Gerald Shenk, her husband, have given over the last three years to The Table, an emerging Mennonite congregation in Harrisonburg, Va.

Sara will join the other members of the AMBS administrative cabinet: Rebecca Slough, dean; Jeffrey L. Miller, chief financial officer; Ron Ringenberg, vice president; and Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, associate dean.

George R. Brunk III currently is serving as interim president.

For a complete story about the appointment of Sara Wenger Shenk, visit the AMBS Web site: [www.ams.edu](http://www.ams.edu), and select the link on the home page. ●



Mary E. Klassen

later than October 1, 2010.

Sara has been a member of the faculty and administration of EMS since 1995. In addition to serving as associate dean, she also is associate professor of Christian practices.

Randall Jacobs, Goshen, Ind., chair of the presiden-

# Pastoring in tough economic times

**Melanie Neufeld**  
**MDiv 2005**  
**Seattle (Wash.) Mennonite Church**

**A**s God's call to ministry has sent me to journey alongside folks on the margins, Seattle Mennonite Church has provided me with a pastoral ministry position that brings together my interest in Christian community development, peace and justice orientation, and organizing in the local neighborhood. The church, at the center of a neighborhood, offers respite to the most vulnerable in the community as well as being the catalyst calling for change and working together. We hold the keys to a great resource in the community, paying attention to the challenge by neighbors living outside to "open the doors" as we draw in business, government, law enforcement, social service, residents and other faith communities in collaborat-

ing efforts.

We work to minimize the control that we as privileged folk have over resources and find ways to work together to end homelessness in our neighborhood. Opening up permanent supportive housing, creating job opportunities, offering radical hospitality, fundraising and being engaged in larger neighborhood/city advocacy have been some of the non-typical pastoral roles I have taken in the midst of imbalance of resources. The work is urgently waiting while I carve out places to find rest in the arms of God.

**Eldon Epp**  
**MDiv 1981**  
**Ransom (Kan.) Mennonite Church**

**O**ne situation in our church is a conundrum, for which I don't have an answer. The middle-aged husband of a woman who is part of our church had a

cerebral hemorrhage of some kind. He has been a progressive—perhaps aggressive—farmer, with a good-sized operation.

Since the hemorrhage, the husband (who doesn't attend church) has been different. The family had been told that a personality change could happen because of the stroke. The husband has lost his ambition. He is not getting the farm work done, so land lies idle. Neighbors help some, but the farm work still lags behind where it should be.

The neighbors are frustrated. The wife is frustrated and has gone back to work herself to make ends meet. The man himself seems OK—he carries on a normal conversation. But the oomph isn't there.

How does one minister in this situation? How can one be pastoral to someone who through no fault of his own has lost his drive? I'd welcome any response! ●

## Increase in alumni donors

**T**he number of alumni who donated and amount of alumni gifts for the annual fund increased 30 percent last year, Leroy Saner, director of development, reported.

From July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2009, 573 alumni contributed, giving \$161,848. In the previous year, 413 alumni donors gave slightly more than \$124,000.

Current students Kathy Nofziger and Anna Ruth Hershberger are calling alumni to encourage giving again this year.

The goal for the annual fund has been reduced to \$1.32 million, but even this will be a challenge, Leroy noted, because of the current economic situation.

"When alumni give to the seminary, it is a signal that the work we are doing is significant to them and to the church," Leroy said. "Even if gifts are small, it is very important to us to receive gifts from as many alumni as possible." ●

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*AMBS Alumni News is published three times a year by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. It is intended to keep alumni informed about each other and AMBS. Please send suggestions for articles or information about alumni activities, honors, publications, to: Mary E. Klassen, editor 574 296-6229 mklassen@ambs.edu*

*Alumni Director: Ron Ringenberg*

*Alumni Association Executive Committee:*

*Darrell Fast, president*

*Mandy Yoder, vice president*

*Myron Schrag*

*Neil Amstutz*

*At-large-member to be named*

## Keep in touch

**A**MBS has launched a site on **iTunes U** where recordings of chapel services, fora and lectureships are posted. Visit the site by going first to **www.ambs.edu** and selecting the link to **iTunes U** in the lower right corner. That page gives instructions for how to download recordings as well as how to set up a feed so you are notified when something new is posted.

**AMBS's Facebook page** continues to garner new fans. Check out the AMBS page to see both information about AMBS and to find other alumni you may want to contact.

**The AMBS YouTube site** hosts a video from the Call Wall. "Who do you think would make a good pastor?" and "What qualities does a good pastor need to have?" are questions participants responded to

as they affirmed young people who have gifts for ministry. The effort was sponsored by AMBS's !Explore program on behalf of Mennonite Church USA at the convention last summer in Columbus, Ohio. ●

## Alumni News

**Jerry Holsopple** (MDiv 1987) is a Fulbright Scholar, teaching at LCC International University in Klaipeda, Lithuania, for the 2009–2010 year. He is professor of visual and communication arts at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

**Sally Schreiner Youngquist** (MDiv 1987) concluded her service as founding pastor of Living Water Community Church, Chicago, Ill., and began as community leader of Reba Place Fellowship.

**Glenn Musselman** (MDiv 1969) and Lois, his wife, will travel to Caruarú, Pernambuco, Brazil, where their daughter Sonia lives, for a family reunion with their five daughters. They will live in there until the end of March, helping to start a Mennonite church.

**Eric Buller** (MDiv 1997) is pastor of Inman Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan., since September 2008. He had been pastor at First Mennonite Church in Ransom, Kan., for 11 years.

**David R. Jennys** (MDiv 2000) is serving as pastor of Wolcott United Methodist Church, Wolcott, Ind., since May 1. Susan, his wife, pastors the United Methodist churches of Francesville and Medaryville.

**Paul Heidebrecht** (MATS 2000) is director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada's Ottawa (Ont.) office. He earned a Ph.D. in religious studies from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisc. He and **Carmen Brubacher** (MDiv 2000) and their children are living in Ottawa.

**Steven Schmidt** (MDiv 1993) is lead pastor at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan.

**Barbara K. Cross** (MACF 2007), pastor for South Milford (Ind.) United Methodist Church, was recognized by *Cambridge Who's Who* for

showing dedication, leadership and excellence in all aspects of spiritual services.

**David L. Myers** (MDiv 1991) is serving as director of the Center for Faith-Based Community Initiatives for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Prior to this, David was executive director of Teen Living Programs in Chicago, Ill. In his current role, he is responsible for engaging religious and community groups in preparedness, relief, recovery and response, and sustainable risk management.

**Thomas Meylan** (MDiv 1982) released his second book, *Facing Challenges Whether You Chose Them or Not*, designed specifically for people dealing with the effects of the current economic crisis.

**D. Richard Miller** (ThB 1955) is a volunteer chaplain with hospice at Goshen (Ind.) General Hospital.

### Ordinations

**Joel Miller** (MDiv 2006) was ordained February 1 at Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship.

**Stephen Thomas August** (MDiv 2003) was ordained on August 30 at Lafayette (Ind.) Church of the Brethren.

**Kay Bontrager-Singer** (student) was ordained at Faith Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on June 14.

**Melissa Miller** (MDiv 2006) was ordained at Springstein (Man.) Mennonite Church, on October 18.

### Births

Anna Kate Baumgartner Ewy was born Feb. 28, 2009, to **Beverly Baumgartner** (MDiv 2000) and **Joel Ewy** (staff 1997–2000).

William (Liam) was born Aug. 28, 2009 to **Paula** (MDiv 2005) and **Darrin Snyder Be-**

**lousek** (former student).

Joah Marcos Newcomer Miller was born to **Jeffrey** and **Monica Newcomer Miller** (MATS 2006 and admissions counselor) on Aug. 31.

### Deaths

**Ruth Liechty** (former staff) died March 23, in Goshen, Ind. At AMBS she served as administrative secretary for the Institute of Mennonite Studies and central services.

**George C. Schmidt** (BD 1968, MDiv 1996, board member 1996–2001) died Feb. 9, in Abbotsford, B.C. He had a long-time involvement with Kinghaven, a treatment centre for alcoholics and addicts.

**Ilene Hershberger** (former staff) died Feb. 25. She served as secretary for deans H.S. Bender and Ross Bender.

### Marriages

**Brent Koehn** (MDiv 1987 and library staff) and **Sylvie Guden** (student) were married August 22.



**Jeremy Shue**, manager of the Mennonite Cooperative Bookstore and an AMBS student, encourages alumni to continue having a bookstore membership. For \$18 a year or \$10 a semester, alumni can get the 10 percent member discounts on almost everything in the store ... and they will help the bookstore continue to serve the seminary community. Behind Jeremy (center) and Jeffrey Newcomer Miller (MATS 2006 and admissions counselor) is a display of AMBS T-shirts and sweatshirts, available for purchase. To see them in color, visit the bookstore Web page: [www.ambs.edu/bookstore](http://www.ambs.edu/bookstore). Contact Jeremy at [bookstore@ambs.edu](mailto:bookstore@ambs.edu).

## Call for nominations

The AMBS Alumni Association Executive Committee invites all alumni to nominate graduates for the annual Alumni Ministry and Service Award. The purpose of the award is to recognize and celebrate outstanding ministry and service by graduates.

The enclosed nomination form gives detailed criteria. The executive committee is asking for nominations of both women and men.

Send in your nominations by January 1. Awards will be announced in May.

Recipients receive \$500 toward registration fees for AMBS courses or continuing education events.



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Mark Gingrich

**Humphrey Akogyeram, (MATS 2000), professor at Good News Theological College and Seminary near Accra, Ghana, was a featured speaker at the Shenk Mission Lectureship at AMBS, October 30–31. Currently he is a student at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pa., pursuing a master's in sacred theology. His project is "Peace and conflict management in African-Initiated Churches: Theological implications, dynamics and results."**



Mary E. Klassen

**Wilma and David A. Shank (BD 1952) were honored by the Association of Anabaptist Missiologists at the Shenk Mission Lectureship, October 30–31. James Krabill (MDiv 1978), who serves with Mennonite Mission Network, presented to David a framed, enlarged cover image of an upcoming book, *Mission from the Margins: Selected writings from the life and ministry of David A. Shank*. The book, edited by James and published by the Institute of Mennonite Studies, will be available early in 2010.**

## Mission conference highlights work of Mennonites with African-Initiated Churches

**F**ifty years ago Mennonites began working with African-Initiated Churches (AICs) in Nigeria, and these efforts—past and present—were the focus of the Shenk Mission Lectureship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, October 30 and 31.

The conference, sponsored by the Mission Studies Center of AMBS, involved many AMBS alumni who have worked in Africa. Among the presenters were **Humphrey Akogyeram (MATS 2000)**, from Accra, Ghana, and mission agency represen-

## When and how do you want to join in alumni reunions?

**H**ow long has it been since you saw your seminary classmates? Do you keep in touch and know what ministries your classmates are involved in?

Reunions in May of 2008 and 2009 brought together alumni who graduated in specific years. After those two initial reunions, it's time to find out what kind of reunions alumni want to join in. For example: What grouping of graduation years should be included in a reunion? Is another time of the year better than AMBS commencement weekend? What day of the week will suit best for a gathering?

These questions are part of a very brief online survey to which we invite all alumni to respond. It should take only a few

minutes to open the survey and answer the questions. Your responses will help the seminary plan future reunions to accommodate your schedules and preferences.

To open the survey, go first to the AMBS Web site: **www.ambs.edu**. On the home page, select *Alumni* in the left column. At the top of that page is a link to the survey.

The survey will remain open until December 9.

Ron Ringenberg, AMBS vice president, set up the survey with counsel from the Alumni Executive Committee (see members on page 2). They will review responses and plan future reunions based on what you and others have said. ●

tatives **Rod Hollinger Janzen (MDiv 1990)**, **James Krabill (MDiv 1978)**, **Steve Wiebe Johnson (MDiv 1993)**, **Bruce Yoder (MDiv 1999)** and **Donna Entz** (former student). Other presenters were Bryan Born, James Bertsche, James Juhnke and Stan Nussbaum.

For a full story on the conference, visit the AMBS Web site, **www.ambs.edu**, and select the link on the home page for Shenk Mission Lectureship. ●