

There was a time when chaplains were asked, "Why did you leave pastoral ministry?" Most of us would say, "We never left." We were still pastors providing pastoral care but in a different settings. For some it is a recognition of being "gifted" for this specialized ministry.

Current membership of the Mennonite Chaplains Association is 74. Of that number, 58 are providing pastoral care in hospitals, retirement communities, mental health facilities and prisons.

Mennonite Chaplains Association has found a home with Mennonite Health Assembly but for the most part, chaplains aren't sure where they fit in conference structures. There have been some attempts to work out accountability and oversight but no uniform patterns have emerged across the church. Perhaps that is something that will come together in the new Mennonite Church.

Because chaplaincy is one of the options for AMBS students it seemed appropriate to hear stories and concerns from some alumni who are chaplains.

— Richard W. Yoder
Member at Large
Alumni Association
Executive Committee

Chaplaincy: *Standing in a critical position*

AMBS Alumni News asked Ron Ropp (BD 1962) to reflect on the role of the chaplain. He served with Mennonite Hospital and with its successor, Bro-Menn Health Systems, in Normal, Ill., where he helped to build closer relationships among the hospital staff and local pastors, building on the belief that spirituality must be a part of the healing process. Currently his ministry is working with churches to encourage them to see that they are health centers in their own way.

Ron is a past president of the College of Chaplains, and has helped to articulate the important partnership between religious and medical professions. In 1989, he addressed the Brethren and Mennonite chaplains at an annual Mennonite Health Association gathering in St. Louis, Mo. Here are some excerpts from this address:

For me personally and for me as a Mennonite pastor, the ordination of the church is part and parcel of my identity as a pastor and that ordination means that I claim the church as the basis and foundation out of which my call to ministry and function as pastoral care giver arises. Conversely, it also means, as with any pastors in the congregation, that the church has an obligation to validate and nurture that identity. It makes no more sense to me to ordain someone to the ministry and send them out into the mission field never to be heard of or affirmed again than it does to ordain a chaplain to chaplaincy and have no way of maintaining a nurturing, validating, supportive contact.

Much needs to be done by way of developing ethical guidelines and systems for helping people in the hellish distress of making life-and-
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Mary E. Klassen

On September 25, AMBS faculty, students and staff created the open shape of a cross with 6,800 stakes to represent the lives lost in the September 11 terrorist attacks. The seminary community gathered for prayer and to make a renewed commitment to work for healing of the nations. See more at www.ambs.edu/September25.htm.





Karl Shelly, AMBS student as well as pastor, lawyer and mediator, and Carolyn Schrock-Shenk, Goshen College professor, led the first of five conflict transformation workshops scheduled for this year. The Peace and Justice Collaborative of AMBS, Goshen College and Andrews University is coordinating the series. See www.ambs.edu/conflicttransform.htm

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death decisions. . . . The chaplain stands in the unique position of being able to communicate with credibility both within the health care system as well as within the local church. He or she also stands in an often critical position of helping families within the health care system to make these Godlike decisions. Broadening the base upon which these decisions are made and including the ethical and moral values of the local church can be an invaluable contribution to this enormous problem.

The religion and medicine dialogue represents another agenda item for the chaplain. These and other professionals representing medicine and science are coming to the fast realization of a spiritual dimension to healing that cannot be denied and must be incorporated into the process of health and the health care system. They need our help to reinforce that reality. . . with an attitude of openness that will help to explore the deeper dimensions of spiritual and medical insight. Chaplains stand at a critical position between the health care and the religious communities. They cannot carry this message of the importance of the spiritual dimension to healing by themselves. They need the full support and partnership of the leadership of the church.

Ministry with gifts and challenges

Dee Swartz, MDiv 1982, chaplain, Greencroft, Goshen, Ind.

Two years ago I changed jobs, moving from congregational ministry into a position as a chaplain at a residential retirement community. While I expected to experience a variety of differences in the two settings, I didn't anticipate some of the gifts and opportunities as well as the challenges that ministry at Greencroft affords me.

I have been given the generous gift of witnessing God's abiding presence and grace in the lives of folks who have traversed the "valley of the shadow," weathered life's storms and still say with gratitude and wonder, "I have been so fortunate and blessed." With the writer of Lamentations they continue to affirm that "the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning." These wise "seniors" become for me role models of perseverance, of courage and of grace-filled living.

Within a congregation, ministry includes all of the life stages, from birth to death, whereas ministry at Greencroft is often more sharply focused on "later life" issues, i.e., vulnerability and meaning, loss and dependence, pain and ultimately death, all of which our culture would avoid at any cost. Through the insights of writers such as Stephen Sapp, I have come to realize how we within the faith community have adopted many of our culture's attitudes and fears, tending oftentimes to place a higher value on independence, economic productivity and self-reliance, none of which are Gospel values. While Christ challenges us to depend totally on him and to bear one another's burdens, we value and teach independence, self-sufficiency and autonomy, fearing the day when we might become a burden on another, even our own family members. No wonder aging in our society is difficult and demands amazing courage and fortitude.

Ministry at Greencroft forces me to look more closely at my own attitudes and fears and to seek for God's greater vision and dream for all of creation. It is an opportunity that requires reflection and inner work, but a challenge not to be missed.

God is present in the compassion

Dawn Nelson, MDiv 1979, chaplain, Indian Creek Foundation, Harleysville, Pa.

I am pastor of an agency which provides housing and jobs for adults with developmental disabilities—cerebral palsy, Downs Syndrome, autism, brain injury, etc. This ministry has been an important way for me to return to America after 12 years as a mission/peace workers in Ireland. The folks I work with in this agency value relationships the way Irish people do, they don't carry datebooks or have complicated schedules. A cup of coffee at MacDonald's with a friend always takes top priority. So I have found many Gospel values lived out here: simplicity, poverty, joy.

I also have found many theological challenges in this job, as well as spiritual
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Alumni news

Douglas (MDiv 96) and **Wanda Ruth Amstutz** (MDiv 96) are co-pastors at Grace Mennonite Church in St Catharines, Ontario. They have three daughters; Amani and Abigail, 3 ½ years old, and Sophia, 2 years old.

Bassam Bannoura (MDiv 89) was elected as the secretary of The Evangelical Local Council of Churches in the Holy Land. The aim of the council is to open and develop an understanding and cooperation with churches of the world.

Ken Beidler (MDiv 00) was installed as pastor of First Mennonite Church Iowa City, Iowa, on Sept. 9, 2001.

Diane Zaerr Brenneman (MDiv 92,

God is present (cont.)

challenges. How can God be present in the midst of such suffering, I wondered when I first started. Exactly where is God present here? How can I relate my seminary and pastoral counseling training, which assumed verbal communication and highly cognitive functioning, to this situation of ministry? I just don't do many "50-minute hours" here (the standard pastoral counseling time-frame). In response to these challenges, my ministry has grown much more nonverbal, touch- and presence-oriented, and my teaching style has been stripped down to the essentials.

I have found, like Francis of Assisi (who was afraid of lepers until he began getting closer to them), that I am less horrified by the suffering as I get closer in. I have come to know each person, and learned that there are different reasons for each person's disability: genetic reasons, reasons of abuse, accident. Disabilities happen in life and God is present in the compassion I feel for the person with disabilities who is in front of me.

Support from the wider church is important to me. I have been ordained by Franconia Conference. Chaplains in Franconia Conference have their own conference minister and meet together every other month. My pastor has joined one of the committees at my place of ministry, so she is learning more about my work.

administration 1998-2001) works half time for the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries ministerial leadership office from rural Wellman, Iowa. She married Doug Brenneman March 10, 2001, and they have two children, Maureen (8) and Brent (5).

Fernando Enns has earned a doctorate in theology from Heidelberg University, Germany. He continues to teach systematic theology at Heidelberg University and serves as director of studies of the Ecumenical Institute.

Del Glick (MDiv 80) completed a 10-month interim lead pastor assignment at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church in Sarasota, Fla., the end of June 2001.

David Greiser (1977-79) has served on the pastoral team of Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Church since April 1996. He also has taught preaching as an adjunct faculty member at Eastern Baptist Seminary in Philadelphia and several conference-based programs. He is currently coediting a book on preaching in Anabaptist perspective with Michael King.

Mary and **Gene Herr** (MDiv 76) will relocate to Newton, Kan., in Decem-

ber 2001. Mary and Gene cofounded and co-directed The Hermitage, west of Three Rivers, Mich., for 16 years. They write, "We are deeply grateful to God and the hundreds of pastoring persons who have been a part of this ministry." David and Naomi Wenger were appointed co-directors and will start in December.

Ruth Heinrichs (MAPS 75) is assistant director of the English as a Second Language Center at the University of Regina. She is completing her master's of education and enjoys working with students from many cultures.

Jean (MAPS 92) and **Richard Hirschler** will start a one-year assignment with Mennonite Mission Network in Nepal. They are placed at the United Mission Hospital in Tansen where Jean will be in support services and Richard a general practitioner.

Anita Yoder Kehr (MDiv 98) was ordained at Berkey Avenue Fellowship, Goshen, Ind., August 19, 2001.

Esther Lanting was ordained at Hudson Lake Mennonite Church, New Carlisle, Ind., September 16, 2001.

In Memoriam:

Jacob J. Enz

Jacob J. Enz, professor emeritus of Old Testament and Hebrew at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, died Sunday, Sept. 9, at the age of 82.

Jake taught at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Chicago, Ill., beginning in 1954, and continued teaching at AMBS in Elkhart until 1984.



"Jacob Enz's deep commitment to the direct study of the biblical text in both the vernacular and Hebrew, his insistence that the study of the Old Testament is essential to under-

standing the New Testament gospel, and his emphasis that the Bible needs to be interpreted against its Near Eastern context made a profound impression on many of his students," Erland Waltner, president emeritus of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, reflected. "Enz took a warm personal interest in his students. He was a devout and compassionate follower of Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace and a faithful teacher in the church, leaving a legacy of integrity and caring."

Enz earned a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in 1960 and did postgraduate work at Hebrew Union College, Harvard Divinity School and the University of Notre Dame. His publications include the book, *The Christian and Warfare: The Roots of Pacifism in the Old Testament* (Herald Press, 1972); and articles in *Journal of Biblical Literature*, *Biblical Research*, and *Essays in Biblical Interpretation in Anabaptist-Mennonite Perspective*.

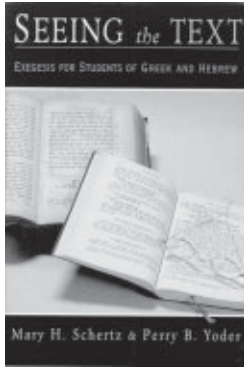
Textbook on exegesis intended for pastors and students

Seeing the Test: Exegesis for Students of Greek and Hebrew, by AMBS professors Mary H. Schertz and Perry B. Yoder, has recently been released by Abingdon Press.

This book will enhance pastors' use of biblical languages, especially when they use it together with computer software for Bible study, Mary explains.

Ben Ollenburger, AMBS professor, writes in his comments on the back cover that this book "equips pastors and teachers to bring the biblical text to bear on their weekly sermon and lesson preparation."

"The presentation can serve



either as a class textbook on exegesis, or be effectively utilized on an individual basis," writes George M. Landes of Union Theological Seminary, New York.

Mary gives credit to AMBS students she and Perry have taught: "Many students have been involved in this project and have helped us write this book," she says.

Third volume of Vision available

The third volume of *Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology* focuses on the theme of transformation. Issue editor is Daniel Schipani, and writers include AMBS professors Art McPhee, Rebecca Slough, Marlene Kropf, Erick Sawatzky and June Alliman Yoder. Brenda Sawatzky Paetkau (MDiv 1996), Keith Graber Miller (MDiv 1988) and current student Rachel Nafziger Hartzler are also featured. Contact visionsubscribe@ambs.edu or call AMBS: 219 296-6274.

Alumni notes (cont.)

Brenda Martin Hurst (MDiv 86) has begun a new part-time position in fall 2001 as assistant professor of practical theology at Eastern Mennonite Seminary. She continues to work on her doctoral dissertation, "The Articulation of Mennonite Beliefs About Sexuality Between 1890 and 1930." **Ray Martin Hurst** (MDiv 86) continues as co-pastor of Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Ernie (MDiv 72) and **Edith Martin** have opened a retreat center on the Saugeen River near Durham, Ont.

Sherri Martin (MDiv 98) began as associate pastor assignment at Tavistock (Ont.) Mennonite Church on July 15, 2001. Sherri is a member of the AMBS Board of Directors.

Deaths:

Donald Nester (BD 1964) died March 16, 2001. He was a chaplain at Bro-Menn Health Center, Normal Ill. A memorial gift was designated for the AMBS library and has been used to purchase books on pastoral ministry and pastoral care.



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