



AMBS window

A new generation of church leaders

A new generation of leaders for the church is being formed for ministry at AMBS.

One of the ways AMBS seeks to make it possible for people with gifts for ministry to prepare for church leadership is by providing full-tuition scholarships.

Each year AMBS offers the Church Leadership Award to one or two incoming students who have gifts for leadership in the church.

The people featured in this issue of *AMBS Window* are all recipients of the AMBS Church Leadership Award.

What blessing or surprise have I received during my first four years in ministry? There are so many more than one:

- God's grace is sufficient.
- It is a profound privilege to participate in the lives of the people of the congregation.
- Preaching is a mystery: I can never anticipate how a sermon will be received.
- I serve a wonderful congregation, one with diversity and wisdom and spontaneity.
- There is not enough laughter at ministers' meetings.
- Teaching has gotten easier.
- I kind of enjoy being called "Rev" (not "Reverend")
- God's grace is sufficient.

thankful for all I learned at AMBS and for the experience I gained as an intern working with the people of Hively Avenue Mennonite Church. These experiences left me well prepared for meeting the challenges of this sometimes difficult, but usually wonderful vocation.

Todd Lehman, pastor, Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.; he anticipates receiving a Master of Divinity in May 2003.

I have been blessed since leaving AMBS last fall. Being pastor at Zion Mennonite Church in Hubbard, Oregon, feels like arriving home for me. But this wasn't really a surprise. I sensed a spirit of warmth and caring from the very beginning here. The surprise has been how quickly I adapted to the role of being pastor. I am quite

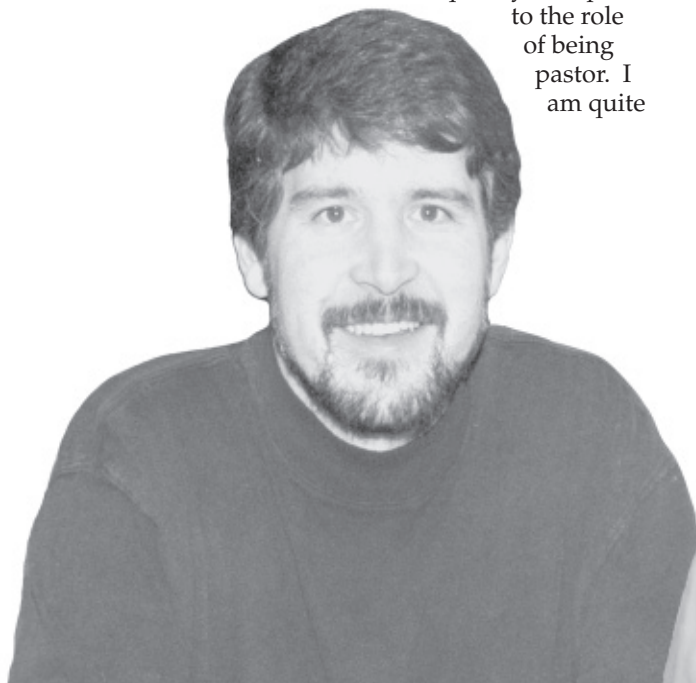
Anita Yoder Kehr, Master of Divinity 1998, pastor, Berkey Avenue Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

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Supporting gifted students

Church Leadership Award helps people prepare for ministry

Encouraging gifted people to answer the call to ministry requires not only shoulder-tapping and affirmation. It also means supporting them financially as they prepare for church leadership.

The AMBS Church Leadership Award is a full-tuition scholarship for students who have strong

gifts for ministry. Randall C. Miller, director of admissions and financial aid, says the people who apply are people who “care about and have a vision for the church. They have a strong faith to build on and are willing to think in new images for what the church might be.”

Because AMBS is able currently to offer no more

than two new Church Leadership Awards each year, Randy says deciding who receives the award is “the most excruciating and enjoyable decision that I’m a part of each year.”

In the near future, AMBS will seek additional funds to offer more of these full-tuition scholarships. ●

A new generation of church leaders *(cont.)*

I started my first pastorate just a few months ago. My congregation has begun our relationship by giving me an incredible blessing: the gift of time. My primary assignment for my first six months is to spend time with people, learn to know their names and hear their faith stories and growing edges. Though I attend

committee meetings and have some specific tasks, mostly I’m freed for long, leisurely conversations with folks about their faith longings for themselves and for the congregation. Not tied to major worship responsibilities, I can spend Sunday mornings building friendships with the children and youth. I can’t imagine a better way to become a pastor.

Rachel Miller Jacobs,
Master of Divinity 2000,
pastor of Christian
formation, Kern Road
Mennonite Church,
South Bend, Ind.

One of the biggest surprises about teaching religion at a church college has been how “pastoral” it requires me to be. Regularly, in the process of in-depth study of the Bible, students discover that the Bible doesn’t always say what they assumed it said. In those moments, the nearest outlet for their surprise and frustration is frequently the teacher—me. Yet it is also those moments (sacred ones, I am sure) that repeatedly challenge and bless me, as I strive to affirm for them (and myself!), that God is alive and new, even in our day.

Brad Schantz,
Master of Arts:
Theological Studies
2000, Bible instructor,
Bluffton, College,
Bluffton, Ohio.

It was a Friday night at the Inloophuis. A dozen teenagers and a handful of adults were painting banners in protest of U.S. threats of war. Two of our neighbors, originally from Iraq, created a banner in Arabic, which proclaimed in a graceful, sloping hand: “No War Against Iraq.” As I stood surrounded by these messages of peace carefully lettered in Dutch, English and Arabic, I felt something akin to Pentecost: many tongues but one spirit; many gifts but one body; many cultures but one wish—for peace which passes understanding.

The next day we went to Amsterdam and held our banners high.

Jackie Wyse, Master of Divinity 2002, serving under Mennonite Mission Network in the Netherlands. The Inloophuis is a drop-in center in Almere where Jackie has spent much of her time for the past half-year. ●



Mary E. Klassen, Steve Echols



Mary E. Klassen

Heidi Siemens-Rhodes is a student assistant for the admissions department, working with Randall C. Miller, director (pictured with her), and Denise McOwen, administrative assistant. Heidi is originally from Kalona, Iowa.

Passing the affirmation on to others

When Heidi Siemens-Rhodes learned she had been chosen to receive the Church Leadership Award, she wrote to AMBS: "In October 2000 my husband, Mitch, and I visited the Goshen area, after having returned from three years in Japan. As Goshen College students we had attended Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, and while in Goshen that October, we visited Berkey. It was wonderful to see Anita Yoder Kehr, who had been a student at AMBS when we left Berkey, actively participating in church leadership."

Heidi wrote that just after that visit, she learned that Anita had affirmed her as someone with gifts for ministry and recommended that AMBS contact her. "This affirmation sparked in me the beginning of a desire to see where such a path would lead me." Thus Anita, who was the first recipient of the Church Leadership Award (see page 1), played a part in Heidi considering seminary and God's call to ministry.

There are easy ways to tell AMBS about someone's gifts for ministry. Send the information to the AMBS admissions department, admissions@ambs.edu or 1 + 800 964-2627. Or send it through the web site: www.ambs.edu, following links to *Friends* and *Recommend a Student*. ●



Mary E. Klassen

Bryce Miller, a second-year student from Orrville, Ohio, is in the Master of Divinity program. A recipient of the Church Leadership Award, Bryce is currently a pastoral intern at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church in Elkhart. At a recent Sunday carry-in meal, he and the Hively deacons, including Deb Byler (MDiv 1999, at left) met with people wishing to join the congregation. Mick Sommers (MDiv 1988) is pastor of the congregation where Todd Lehman and Jackie Wyse also were pastoral interns.

Church Leadership Award recipients What they're doing now

Anita Yoder Kehr, MDiv 1998, pastor, Berkey Avenue Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Rachel Miller Jacobs, MDiv 2000, pastor of Christian formation, Kern Road Mennonite Church South Bend, Ind.

Brad Schantz, MATS 2000, Bible instructor, Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio

Valerie Smith, MDiv 2000, serving with Mennonite Central Committee in Bosnia

Todd Friesen, MDiv 2000, pastor, Lombard Mennonite Church, Lombard, Ill.

Jeff Williams, MDiv 2002, associate pastor, Nappanee Brethren in Christ Church, Nappanee, Ind.

Jackie Wyse, MDiv 2002, serving in the Netherlands under Mennonite Mission Network

Elizabeth Landis, completing a MAPS degree, bullying prevention coordinator, Octorara Area School District, Chester County, Pa.

Todd Lehman, will receive an MDiv in May 2003, pastor, Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Bob Brenneman, director of CASAS (Central American Study and Service) in Guatemala City, Guatemala; plans to return to studies this fall

Bryce Miller, AMBS student (MDiv)

Heidi Siemens-Rhodes, AMBS student (MDiv)

Zachary Walton, AMBS student (MATS)

Key to degrees:

MDiv: Master of Divinity

MAPS: Master of Arts: Peace Studies

MATS: Master of Arts: Theological Studies ●

Study Tour

Africa 2003: Mission and Peace

July 30–August 16

Explore issues of mission and peace with Mennonites in Ethiopia and Congo and with Brethren in Christ in Zimbabwe.

Tour leaders:

Walter Sawatsky and Ted Koontz, AMBS professors.

See www.ambs.edu and enter *Africa tour* in the search box.

Or check the Menno Travel Service site: <http://www.mtstravel.com/mwc/mwctourAMBS.html>.

Registration deadline: April 30.

President's Window

Thank God that Mennonites can talk positively about leadership again. For a generation or more, many churches in North America were in such reaction against the real or perceived authoritarianism of our forbears that we did not allow congregational leaders to lead. Gifted people who felt called to leadership tended to avoid church office. The church suffered. I am grateful now to see pastors and denominational leaders claim authority and use power.

Jesus' last instructions were about authority, power and mission: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples ..." (Matt. 28:18). "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses ... to



the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Without responsible use of authority and without power grounded in relationship to Jesus, the church cannot be missional and will not be strong.

Responsible leaders do not try to solve all the group's problems themselves or single-handedly shape group vision. Instead, they draw in a wide circle of participants and give them tools and guidance to face important challenges and opportunities. Effective leaders steer decision-making processes, state clearly where they stand and maintain communica-

tion with all parts of the group (especially when there is conflict).

Jesus was both assertive in leadership and secure enough to share surprising authority with others (e.g., Matthew 18:18). Jesus is the way—not only for right relationship with God, but also for the effective use of authority and power that the church so urgently needs.

"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus," Paul said of Jesus' servant leadership (Phil. 2:5). At AMBS we do everything possible to see that students with gifts for leadership receive training in relationship to the assertive and self-emptying Christ—and we urge a new generation of leaders to claim authority for the mission of the church.

—J. Nelson Kraybill

Alumni News

Bev Baumgartner, Master of Divinity 2000, was ordained on March 2 at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan. She is chaplain at Schowalter Villa in Hesston.

Anna Janzen, Master of Divinity 1989, earned a Ph.D. from St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, in 2001. She teaches theology and communication and does pastoral work in Munich, Germany.

Ryan Ahlgrim, Master of Divinity 1983, published a book, *Not as the Scribes: Jesus as a Model for Prophetic Preaching* (Herald Press 2001). One of his sermons is in a collection due out this spring, *Keeping the Faith: Indiana's Best Sermons Since 2000* (Guild Press).

Lenea Reimer Geiser, Master of Divinity 1985, has published a book of poetry, *Caught in the Light* (1stBooks Library), reflections on family, nature, self and God.

Panorama

Online courses

In fall 2003, AMBS will offer online the course, **Mission and Peace, The Church's Ministry in the World**. Art McPhee is the instructor. This course is required in all AMBS degree programs. Watch for details on the AMBS web site.

The spring 2004 online courses will be **Corinthian Correspondence**, taught by Jacob Elias; and **Biblical Foundations of Peace and Justice**, taught by Mary Schertz and Perry Yoder.

2004 Lectureship

Miroslav Volf will present the Theological Lectureship at AMBS, Feb. 19–20, 2004. He is professor of systematic theology at Yale Divinity School, New

Continuing Education events

Two Continuing Education events are scheduled for summer:

- **Worship Planner; Unlocking the Mysteries of Ordinary Time**, Tuesday, June 10, with Marlene Kropf and Karmen Krahn Fehr.
- **Vision, Identity, and Task: Studies in Ephesians**, August 1–2, with Tom Yoder Neufeld.

For information, see www.amsb.edu, and enter "continuing education" (with quotation marks) in the search box.

Pastors Week 2004

The theme of Pastors Week, January 26–30, 2004, will be "The Heart of the Matter: Effective Ministerial Leadership."

Nelson Kraybill, AMBS president, will present a session on "Power, Authority and the Pastoral Vocation." Arthur Paul Boers, AMBS assistant professor of pastoral theology, and two other speakers still to be confirmed will explore how the pastor acts as spiritual guide, as institutional leader and as community developer.

The AMBS web site will share details as they become available.

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The purpose of *AMBS Window* is to invite readers to call people to leadership ministries, and to provide ways for readers to become involved with AMBS through financial support, prayer support and student recruiting.

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