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# 'We want peace just as we think you want peace'

by Janet Plenert

'War is easy. It can happen right now. All it takes is a six-peso [15-cent] phone call to say 'start fighting.'"

That's the way General Ferrer of the 6th division of the Philippine army described the tense situation between his troops and rebel groups in Mindanao.

With 5,000 troops and 6,000 paramilitary personnel under his command, General Ferrer's remarks were humbling to me and to the others of the Mennonite World Conference and Mennonite Church Canada delegation meeting with him. Ferrer went on to make it clear that despite his readiness, he does not want war. "What we want is the peace process to resume," he said.

Two days before our visit on August 7, the Philippine Supreme Court had blocked the signing of an ancestral domain agreement between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a key rebel force in the Philippines. The agreement could have

paved the way for the peace process to continue, potentially ending more than four decades of conflict in the south Philippines. But its delay only served to fuel tension.

We asked how the General, as a graduate of the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute, put his peace training into practice. The Institute was supported until recently by MCC and is now part of the ministry of Mennonite Church Canada through the work of Daniel and Joji Pantoja.

"I learned to listen and not just hear," he said. "I also send my men to train there and it has given them other ways to think about conflict.

"I can only send three or four of my men to Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute a year," he continued, "but I wish I could send more."

When asked how his soldiers respond to the training, Ferrer indicated that they were often hesitant. "They wonder how a warrior could also be a peace



photo by Markus Rediger

builder. It has created a bit of conflict within them."

General Ferrer confirmed reports that at 10 a.m. that morning, the government had given rebels 24 hours to end skirmishes in the region or face intervention from government forces. He was clearly frustrated by local petitions which had delayed the signing of an ancestral domain agreement. Ferrer also expressed uncertainty about what immediate effect the government order would have on regional conflict.

Just three hours before meeting with General Ferrer, we sat with leaders of the MILF, who are members of the Mindanao Alliance for Peace, as they determined strategic reactions to the stalled agreement.

MILF leaders clearly expressed their appreciation for our visit, saying, "We heard you were coming, and we wanted

Following a meeting of the Mennonite World Conference Executive Committee in Manila and Lumban, Philippines, last August, eight representatives from MWC and Mennonite Church Canada traveled to Mindanao in the southern Philippines, an area of the country where conflicts between rebel groups and government troops have been on the increase.

MWC's representatives included Executive Committee members Naomi Unger from North America; Peter Stucky, past-president of the Mennonite Church of Colombia; and Markus Rediger, moderator of the Mennonite Church of Switzerland. Mennonite Church Canada representatives were

Robert J. Suderman, general secretary, and his wife, Irene; and Janet Plenert, executive secretary of Mennonite Church Canada Witness and chair of the new MWC Mission Commission (see page 6).

Pages 2-4 of this issue contain reflections from three participants in the visit to Mindanao:

- Janet Plenert, who led the delegation, describes the visit with General Ferrer of the Philippine army;

- Markus Rediger reports on a project that promotes peace through drinking coffee; and

- Peter Stucky reflects on the similarities between Mindanao and what he experiences in Colombia.

Cover: Indigenous women and children at Yalve Sanga, Chaco, watch the MWC tree-planting ceremonies during the Executive Committee meetings in Paraguay in 2007. More on the Mennonites of Paraguay on pages 10-12.

Photo by J. Lorne Peachey



to meet you because we want peace just as we think you want peace. We need your help to give this conflict more awareness internationally.”

MILF Vice Chair Gazali Jaafar had intended to meet with us as well, but, because of the crisis, he was in the field “calming soldiers and explaining the situation.” He phoned us to ask our forgiveness for his absence and to express his appreciation for our visit.

*Opposite page: MWC Executive Committee member Markus Rediger shakes hands with General Ferrer. Left: the General with Janet Plenert, leader of the Mennonite delegation to Mindanao.*

As our group talked about our visit afterwards, Robert J. Suderman noted that both sides of the conflict had similar responses. “They both expressed genuine desire for the peace talks to resume. They both want a negotiated political rather than a military solution. They both are frustrated by the Supreme Court Temporary Restraining Order, which caused the signing to be called off. They both have a measure of confidence in the leadership of the opposing group. They both acknowledge that those ignoring the cease fire and causing skirmishes are renegades acting outside of the authority of their groups. They both want peace.”

During our visit, I had asked General Ferrer, “If you could already write tomorrow morning’s newspaper headlines, what would you write?”

His response was heart-wrenching: “General Ferrer ready for war.”

When asked to clarify his comment, he explained that the headline would let renegade MILF members know the army is serious, ready and organized, potentially halting further rebel assaults and reinstating peace talks.

But Ferrer’s headline didn’t make it into the paper the next day, and he did not have to make the six-peso telephone call to launch war. The MILF, at least for the time being, had begun to pull back its troops.

*Update: Since the Mennonite delegation visit with General Ferrer on August 7, peace talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) have stalled. Serious fighting has resulted, and as many as 160,000 people have fled their homes and villages for safety. Peacebuilders Community, with support from Mennonite Church Canada Witness, is working to provide food for some of these displaced families.*

## Coffee paves the way for peace

Coffee for Peace is a project which grows quality coffee in the Philippines to sell both at home and abroad. In doing so, it attempts to help bring peace to the Mindanao region of south Philippines.

Daniel and Joji Pantoja, Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers, are in charge. Daniel explains how it got started:

“We began in a conflict region in the countryside by offering coffee to the commanders of both warring parties. We noticed that if the commanders drank coffee together and spoke to one another in the morning, there was no battle throughout that day!

“One participant said: ‘This is peace coffee—coffee for peace.’ Joji overheard this and we had our name!”

The project’s slogan became, “For the farmers, for the environment, for peace.” Says Daniel: “We have recently opened a coffee shop in Davao, the capital city of Mindanao. We hope to open similar coffee shops in other cities and countries.”

Twenty-five percent of the income from the coffee business is invested in the peace process. Small farmers grow high quality Arabic coffee under trees, Daniel explains. That means the forest does not have to be cleared, which is good for the environment because it reduces the risk of soil erosion.

“We pay the farmers more for their product, which we designate as ‘fair trade,’” Daniel says. “So the farmers prefer to do business with us.”

All participants of this coffee project—farmers, distributors, investors—are required to attend a course in the peace seminar to qualify for participation.

—Markus Rediger



*The MWC and Mennonite Church Canada delegation with Coffee for Peace staff in front of the shop in Davao, capital city of Mindanao.*

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From Mindanao to Colombia:

# *The church must live above the fray*

by Peter Stucky

**W**hat do Nokia, Chevy, Dell, and the church have in common? That was the question I wrestled with during the MWC and Mennonite Church Canada delegation to Mindanao last August.

Mindanao is the most troubled region of the Philippines. Three guerrilla groups are active: the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front), the NPA (New People's Army), and Abu Sayyaf, a small group with alleged al-Qaida ties.

Because of an official cease fire partially in effect for two years, our group was able to travel into the region where MILF activity has been strong. We talked with MILF leaders, and then our delegation went with two of them to greet Philippine army general Ferrer (see previous pages).

During all these conversations, I was reminded of what takes place in my home country, Colombia. There too several guerrilla groups are active. There too paramilitary groups have grown up in response to guerrilla violence. There too arguments pro and con for the different positions are made. There too we work for peace. And there too it takes constant discernment and biblical reflection for the church to keep from being drawn in on one side or the other.

I reflected that Nokia, Chevy, and Dell don't let themselves be drawn into the conflict. That's because both sides of the conflict use their cell phones (Nokia), buy their SUVs (Chevy), or write their press releases on their laptops (Dell).

So, if Nokia, Chevy, and Dell can live above the fray, doesn't the same hold true for the church?

Don't we have a message of God's reign that calls all sides of the conflicts to a new way of living, to God's shalom, to repentance and God's alternative? Shouldn't we be able to say to them, without triumphalism and self-righteousness: "You are both wrong, both in your methods and your goals. God has something better to offer."

But the church is also different from Nokia, Chevy, and Dell. These companies may not care about what is happening as long as they are making money.

But the church does care. We care about the issues that affect people's lives, issues that have to do with food and hunger, poverty, land tenure, educational opportunities, self-determination and decision making.

So how do we stay above the fray—aware that the human and socio-political causes are not wholly our causes, on the one hand; but, on the other hand, taking the side of God's justice and wellbeing for all victims of the conflict?

The truth is, I don't know, for sure. I can only make a few suggestions that we have found useful in Colombia, where the situation is extremely complex as well:

**1. Have a live, active, and committed church community.** The church is God's alternative to the world's programs and projects. We have the privilege of showing that it is possible to live under God's reign, that this reign really does provide an important alternative.

In Colombia, we have visible, concrete, committed faith communities that are growing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. These communities have broken people who have been

restored, disenchanted fighters for a new society, people from both sides of the conflict. All are made one by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who breaks down the barriers between enemies.

If we don't have a local church community, then we don't have the experimental laboratory to show God's alternative to the world and to keep us centered.

## **2. Constantly reflect and discern about what is happening around us.**

This includes community discernment of Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, all subject to the Lordship and example of Jesus. Since the social situations are constantly shifting, we must also constantly examine our positions and options.

## **3. Be very clear about nonviolence as a nonnegotiable position.**

I am convinced that as we have navigated in the very treacherous waters of the Colombian conflict, where thousands of people have been killed—and often accused of taking sides in the conflict—one of the factors that has protected us in the Colombian Mennonite Church and has helped us keep centered is our uncompromising position on nonviolence.

In our visits with guerrilla groups, the paramilitaries, and the military forces, we have been clear that, although there may be aspects of their struggle that we can agree with, as long as they use violence to achieve their goals, they can't count on us for support of their cause. Then we invite them to abandon their arms and take up nonviolence as the way to achieve the goal of a better society.

It is in this way that we can live above the fray.

*During the visit to Mindanao, Peter Stucky tries on the local costume (right). Peter is pastor of the Teusaquillo Mennonite Church in Bogotá and past-president of the Colombia Mennonite Church.*



photo by Markus Rediger



Members of the MWC Executive Committee in deliberation about new commissions during their 2008 meeting in the Philippines (from left): Matiku Thomas Nyitambe, Tanzania; Thijn Thijink-van der Vlugt, Netherlands; Peter Stucky, Colombia; Markus Rediger, Switzerland; Joshua Okello

Ouma, Kenya; Paul Quiring (treasurer), USA; Naomi Unger, Canada; David Wiebe, Canada; Joren Basumata, India; and Eddy Sutjipto, Indonesia. Not pictured are Nancy Heisey (president), USA; Danisa Ndlovu (vice-president), Zimbabwe; Elizabeth Vado, Nicaragua; Larry Miller (general secretary).

## New commissions for MWC:

# *More than 'family reunions'*

by Rainer W. Burkart

**M**ennonite World Conference is changing. This is the result of mutual acceptance and trust that have been growing in the past decades within the membership as well as between member churches and MWC.

During the past several decades, different areas of work have emerged as this trust has grown. Strengthening the peace witness, developing common core convictions, fellowshipping around missions and mutual support, and global sharing of gifts have become important parts of the work of MWC.

For a number of years, these issues have been addressed by setting up specialized councils within the MWC General Council, for example, a Peace Council and a Faith and Life Council. These specialized councils, composed of General Council members and other representatives of member churches, met in conjunction with the General Council to prepare issues and documents which the General Council then discussed and approved for further action. [next paragraph deleted]

Later, a Global Mission Fellowship developed, which held meetings on its own as well as in connection with the General Council. GMF's purpose was to discuss issues of world missions and to strengthen global mission interaction, understanding, and cooperation.

During this same period, Global Gift Sharing activities also became a part of the MWC agenda. None of these activities were part of MWC at its beginning, even if relief for Russian German Mennonites was on the agenda in 1925. MWC in former generations was geared more to organizing "family reunions" every six or more years with very little activity taking place between those reunions.

**B**ut as the MWC constituency grew and changed, expectations also grew, especially from the churches in the global South. The role of MWC became more and more important as a platform—and later as a communion of churches in the Anabaptist tradition—for developing mutual accountability, strengthening identity, and acting on behalf of member churches where appropriate, as, for example, those under pressure, such as the churches in Vietnam.

In considering all the changes taking place for MWC, and the requests from the member churches, the MWC General Council agreed that it is time to reorganize MWC, including establishing standing commissions. This reorganization has as its goal strengthening the work already begun and making it more effective.

The new General Council, in its meeting in 2009 in Paraguay, will have as one of its tasks to approve member-

ship of four new commissions to carry out its work:

- a Faith and Life Commission,
- a Peace Commission,
- a Deacons Commission, and
- a Mission Commission.

Each of these commissions will have up to 10 persons appointed from the General Council membership. As many as five additional persons with expertise in areas being considered by a commission may also be appointed.

This means that each commission will have 10 to 15 members from different parts of the world and with different gifts.

At the meeting of the Executive Committee in the Philippines this past August, the chairs and secretaries of these four new commissions were appointed to lead in the implementation of the new structure (see next page).

The main task of the commissions will be to draw up proposals in their area of work for consideration by the General Council. Each commission will have specific tasks to help the communion of churches in MWC fulfill their responsibilities for the health and ministry of the whole body.

A major challenge for the commissions will be to avoid compartmentalization—the tendency for each commission to work at its own agenda without consultation with the others. During the Philippine meeting of the

Executive Committee, the chairs and secretaries of the new commissions met as a task force and outlined how they plan to work together to keep compartmentalization from happening.

In a presentation to the Executive Committee, the task force used as its imagery the four chambers of the heart to describe the work of the commissions and their cooperation with the General Council. While limited, this image has a two-fold meaning:

(a) The work of the commissions is situated in the very “heart” of MWC. The commissions are not just side

effects or even a playground for specialists to pursue their hobbies. The commissions deal with the core tasks of the church to help member churches strengthen their identity and witness, pursue their ministry, and show solidarity in difficult situations.

They will involve more people who can invest more time than ever before, the task force noted.

(b) The four commissions are individual parts, like the four chambers of the heart, yet they are one, undivided, an integrated entity. As such the commissions will work together closely and

find ways to cooperate and inform each other regularly and fully about all their activities.

The “Statement of Shared Convictions,” prepared by the former Faith and Life Council and adopted by the General Council in 2006, will provide the common understanding for the work of each commission. These convictions will be applied widely and can serve as a starting point for all MWC activities.

Alfred Neufeld, chair of the Faith and Life Commission, reminded the

Leadership for the new commissions:

## *Introducing the chairs of Faith and Life,*



**Alfred Neufeld**

*Faith and Life Commission*

Alfred has written extensively on Anabaptist theology as well as on the witness and involvement of the Mennonite church in Paraguay. He is dean of the Facultad de Teología de la Universidad Evangélica del Paraguay and teaches at the Instituto Bíblico Asunción. Alfred is also an ordained

minister in the Concordia Mennonite Brethren congregation in Asunción. Currently, he chairs the National Coordinating Council for Mennonite World Conference Assembly 15.

In 2007, Alfred and his wife Wilma completed the book, *What We Believe Together*, a study guide of the seven “Shared Convictions” agreed upon by the global Anabaptist church. The book explores the themes, historical and theological backgrounds, and practical implications of the shared convictions.

Alfred and Wilma live in Asunción. They have four adult children.

*Rainer W. Burkart of Neuwied, Germany, has been named secretary of the Faith and Life Commission.*

**Cynthia Peacock**

*Deacon Commission*

Cynthia, from Calcutta, India, spent 38 years working for Menonite Central Committee in local and family programs. She was project coordinator for women’s empowerment programs and worked with SALT (Serving and Learning Together), a youth program, and the International Visitor Exchange Program for young adults.

Cynthia has travelled extensively in Asia, the Philippines, Canada, and the United States, where she volunteered with Ten Thousand Villages. Relating to Anabaptist churches around the world has been a wonderful opportunity, she says.

Back in India and retired, her years as a single mother raising two children behind her, she prayed that God would open a new door. She soon received invitations from India’s Mennonite church to help organize conferences: one on peace, a second on women’s issues. Later MCC asked her to join its “Appreciative Inquiry” task force.

Then MWC asked her to chair its fledgling Deacon Commission, a six-year commitment. Her pastor, an MWC Executive Committee member, encouraged her to accept the position. It’s a big responsibility, said Cynthia, but she is excited about the task.

Cynthia’s adult son is in the United Kingdom and her daughter lives in India.

*Working as secretary of the Deacon Commission will be Pakisa Tshimika, Fresno, California, USA.*



commissions and the Executive Committee of the two integral traditions of the people of God according to the Bible: wisdom and prophesy. Both are needed in the future work of MWC—wisdom through the counsel from the worldwide community and prophesy through the guidance of God’s Spirit.

With the new commissions, MWC’s goal is to offer member churches around the world assistance and resources to strengthen their work and to broaden their horizons. This will happen as they take advantage of the experience and knowledge of other

churches in the global community.

All member churches can access the work of the commissions, and they can suggest areas of discussions that they find necessary and worthwhile for their work as well as for the work of the global community. The General Council, as the governing body of MWC, can make suggestions as well. The commissions will try to bring together resources and insights from member churches around the world and provide material to be used by these churches.

Already at the August 2008 meet-

ings in the Philippines, the leadership of the four commissions built solid relationships as they began to work together at their tasks. They are eager to work with the full commissions, beginning during Assembly 15 in Asunción, Paraguay, in July 2009.

*Rainer W. Burkart served previously as secretary of the Faith and Life Council and will continue as secretary of the Faith and Life Commission for MWC. Rainer also serves as lead pastor of the Evangelical Mennonite Congregation in Neuwied, Germany.*

## Deacon, Peace, and Mission



**Mulugeta Zewdie**  
*Peace Commission*

**M**ulugeta Zewdie, who lives in Addis Ababa, has held numerous church leadership positions in Ethiopia. He served as the executive secretary of the Meserete Kristos Church (MKC) in Ethiopia for eight years and currently is Advocacy and Peace Building director with the

Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia (ECFC).

MKC is one of nine denominations that founded ECFC in 1976 to coordinate activities of member churches. It now draws members from 28 denominations with more than 15 million believers in 40,000 local churches as well as from 49 para-church organizations within Ethiopia. Peace, justice, and unity are among its core values.

Mulugeta was elected a member of MWC’s General Council in 1997. He participated in the MWC delegation to the Catholic Church in Rome last year, and, in October 2008, was an MWC representative at the World Evangelical Association Peace Consultation in Thailand.

Mulugeta studied peace at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana, USA, for two years. He and his wife have two young adult children, a son studying in India and a daughter in Ethiopia.

*Paulus Widjaja, Jogjakarta, Indonesia, will serve as secretary of the Peace Commission.*

**Janet Plenert**  
*Mission Commission*

**J**anet Plenert has lived in four Canadian provinces and 12 years in Africa, Brazil and the USA. Today she makes her home in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, where she is executive secretary for Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

Janet is a member of Springstein Mennonite Church, a small, rural congregation where her husband Steve is associate pastor.

Janet studied theology and mission and pastoral leadership at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana, USA. She has been the North American representative to the Global Mission Fellowship (GMF) since 2003 and its chair since 2006.

She was the MWC representative to the World Council of Churches Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in 2005, where she articulated a peace church vision of mission. In 2006, she helped organize the GMF Planning Committee gathering in Kazakhstan.

Two of Janet and Steve’s three daughters were born in Congo. One is now married, one is a university student, and a third is in high school.

*Confirmation of the secretary of the Mission Commission is still in process.*





Paraguay  
2009

## Canadian youth committed to attend MWC Assembly 15

*Kitchener, Ontario, Canada*—Thirty-five youth and their leaders from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC) have made their flight deposit. That commits them to attend MWC's Assembly 15 in Asunción, Paraguay, in July 2009.

For the 21 girls, 14 boys, and their 10 leaders, it's a big financial commitment—\$1,500 Cdn. each, plus helping to raise the additional \$90,000 group budget to cover the total \$3,500 per-person cost. And they will give up three weeks of summer camp or work. In fact, cutting out three weeks in the middle of summer may mean they won't get a job at all. But joining youth from around the world is a once in a lifetime opportunity, well worth the sacrifice, these youth believe.

Two of the group leaders will be Tobin Reimer from Toronto and Mike Turman from Stouffville, both of whom attended Assembly 14 in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, in 2003 and want to help other youth have a similar experience in Paraguay in 2009. Working with them is Anne Champion, former youth ministries director of Mennonite Church Canada and an MCEC youth group leader for Assembly 14.

**All applicants accepted.** The planning team created application forms for participants aged 14 to 19, posted them on the MCEC website, and sent a poster and letter to every MCEC congregation inviting youth to apply. Responses came from rural, small town, and large city congregations across southwestern Ontario. All 35 youth who applied were accepted. With a limit of 10, several potential leaders had to be turned away.

Applicants were required to tell their “up-to-now” life story and to articulate their reasons for wanting to go to



Paraguay. Most had had little or no international experience but expressed a keen sense of wanting to learn from and understand people from around the world.

Facing the group is the task of raising \$90,000 for the trip—in addition to each individual's \$1,500 cost. The youth plan to sell a cookbook, including some Paraguayan recipes, and they hope to raise \$50,000 by selling a million dollars worth of “gift cards” from a major food store chain.

Already a lunch of Paraguayan food at one church raised \$2,200. An evening of Latin American music featuring members of the team who will lead music at Assembly 15, followed by dessert and a pie auction, is being planned for March. A letter will go out to all congregations inviting them to contribute to the “group pot” to finance the trip.

The entire MCEC group, who arrive in Paraguay on July 9, 2009, will spend the first five days learning and serving at Km 81 Hospital Mennonita, an internationally known facility for the treatment of leprosy. The group will do kitchen chores, painting, and laundry—but, more importantly, also connect with people. That will be a challenge,

since only two participants speak any Spanish and a few some German.

On Sunday, July 12, they will join a small “lively” Spanish-speaking congregation for worship and from July 14 to 19 they will participate in Assembly Gathered. They will attend special youth worship services but also join adults for mass worship, Bible study, inter-generational activities and a minimum of two seminars of their choice.

After Assembly Gathered, the entire group will board a bus with a guide enroute to Brazil. They will stop at Iguazu Falls and some Mennonite-related sites yet to be determined and then fly home from Rio de Janeiro.

**Follow-up gatherings.** The group will meet again in August or September for a de-briefing session, to share photos and journals, and to discuss possibly making a video. All the youth participants will also be encouraged to share their Paraguay experience with their congregations.

Anne Champion is confident that this trip will provide space for youth to ask significant faith questions. She believes they will return home having



photo by Anne Campion



The 35 youth and 10 leaders who have already made their flight arrangements for Assembly 15 gather for another planning session for their trip. MCEC congregations who are sending their youth include Bethany, Community Mennonite, Elmira, First Mennonite, Hagerman, Hawkesville, Jane Finch Ministries, Leamington UM, North Leamington, Rockway, Rouge Valley, soulspace, Steinmann, Toronto UM, Valleyview, Waterloo-Kitchener UM, and Wideman.

learned more about God, each other, and the global church.

Jeff Steckley, MCEC Congregational Ministries Minister, who also worked with the planning team, says: "I'm very encouraged by the commitment of MCEC congregations to provide this opportunity for our youth. My hope is that the youth might appreciate that they are indeed the church of today and part of the global Anabaptist family.

"I'll be curious to discover what seeds of faith, community, understanding, and perspective will be planted and how these seeds might take root and grow in each youth, their congregations, and the wider church."

## Young people can participate in Assembly 15 in three ways

MWC's Assembly 15 will have several ways that youth and young adults can make new friends, exchange stories, and work and worship together. This will happen through three program tracks:

### Track 1: Global Youth Summit (GYS)

Prior to Assembly Gathered, from July 10-12, 2009, young people from around the world will be able to take part in a Global Youth Summit (GYS) in one of two ways:

*a. As a delegate.* MWC is inviting each member conference to appoint one delegate to GYS. This delegate will need to survey the youth of their conference and write an essay about their views on service. After meeting and discussing the issues gathered from different churches and continents, GYS delegates will write a statement and present it to Assembly Gathered.

*b. As a participant.* Participants are any young persons between ages 18 and 27 who wish to be a part of the GYS event. Participants are welcome to observe delegate discussions and choose from a variety of activities, such as community service, sports, workshops, and sightseeing. All activities will be cross-cultural.

GYS planners are expecting more than 800 for the three-day summit (see page 10 for more information). GYS participants will also need to pay a registration fee in addition to the one required for attending Assembly Gathered.

### Track 2: Service opportunities

Service opportunities especially for youth ages 12-17 will be available both before and after Assembly Gathered. The length of the projects will vary; some will span a few days and others only one.

Among those being planned are:

1. *Kilometer 81:* A hospital for leprosy patients outside Asunción where youth will help with building, painting, laundry and cooking.

2. *Ganar:* An organization working with abused or abandoned girls and boys in Asunción. Youth attending Paraguay 2009 will have the opportunity to work with children in the community garden, to help out in the bakery and kitchen, and to participate in recreational activities with the children.

3. *Children's camp:* Located in a poor area outside Asunción, a children's camp will provide volunteer young people the opportunity to assist with various activities.

Renate Franz, Youth Program Coordinator for Assembly 15, encourages young people to consider these opportunities. "This is a good way to see and experience more than only the tourist face of Paraguay," she says. "Direct contact with the people from here will change the life of the volunteers."

Franz notes these opportunities are best for smaller groups (10 to 25 people) but larger groups (up to 40 maximum) are also welcome.

### Track 3: Assembly Gathered youth activities

During the Assembly Gathered itself, scheduled for July 14-19, young people will have several activities geared especially for them.

Following morning Bible studies, they will meet in small groups for discussion. In the afternoons there will be recreation and service projects. The evenings have music and worship.

Youth will also participate in inter-generational activities, including Assembly Gathered worship services.

For more information, visit [www.mwc-cmm.org](http://www.mwc-cmm.org) or email [RenateFranz@mwc-cmm.org](mailto:RenateFranz@mwc-cmm.org).



Paraguay  
2009

## GYS will be an exciting, multicultural event

Singapore—AMIGOS, the MWC youth organization in charge of planning for the Global Youth Summit (GYS) 2009 in Asunción, Paraguay, reports the event is drawing strong interest from all over the world.

As of the end of October, GYS planners had received nominations for 52 delegates from 35 countries. This is twice the number of the first GYS in Zimbabwe, 2003, according to Elina Ciptadi-Perkins, AMIGOS chair.

Elina also reports representatives are being named by churches in countries previously not part of this global event, such as Ukraine and Nepal.

As of November 1, 2008, GYS planners had received word that a group of young adults from the United States is planning a six-month bicycle trip from Harrisonburg, Virginia, USA, to Asunción. Churches in the Netherlands will be sending a group of 30 young people to Assembly 15. Several Asian conferences have expressed interest in self-funding more participants to GYS despite high travel costs.

GYS is expecting 800 young people to attend its three-day summit. Young people from local churches in and around Paraguay will also be invited to attend GYS evening worship services, scheduled to be held in an auditorium that can hold thousands.

“Many young people may not have experienced corporate worship in any ways other than what their home church has shown them,” says Elina. “Experiencing multicultural worship at GYS, led by delegates of different continents, will enrich our understanding of worship without the need for wordy explanation. It will encourage young people to express their love for God in new ways,” she says.

GYS will also offer intercontinental discussions on faith and life issues relevant to young people, opportunities for community service, and countless occasions for intercultural interaction. During Assembly Gathered, GYS delegates and the AMIGOS committee will host two workshops each day on topics relevant to young people.

Excitement is high, especially in Paraguay, where the youth from different Anabaptist conferences have never gathered together for one event, according to Arnold Voth, National Planning Coordinator for GYS. “We hope GYS creates a momentum for stronger unity and cooperation among the Anabaptist churches in Paraguay,” he says.

Barbara Kärcher, AMIGOS committee member and participant in GYS 2003, says, “During GYS 2003, I started to recognize that there is so much that binds us together although we come from many different parts of the world. It was encouraging to see young people from all over the world in relationship with God. As we shared the challenges in our lives, we found many of them are similar.”

Interactive information is available from:

- [www.mwc-cmm.org](http://www.mwc-cmm.org)
- [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com); type: “Mennonite World Conference” for three videos about Assembly Gathered and GYS 2009
- [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com); search for the group, “I’m going to the Global Youth Summit in Paraguay!”
- Email: [amigos@mwc-cmm.org](mailto:amigos@mwc-cmm.org)

# The mosaic

by Gerhard Ratzlaff

*In preparation for Paraguay 2009, Courier-Correo-Courier is publishing a series on the Anabaptist churches of the Southern Cone. This issue we feature an overview of churches in the host country, Paraguay. Next issue we will carry more information about each of the eight groups hosting Assembly 15.*

Paraguay, a small, landlocked country in the heart of South America, has a relatively strong and very diverse Mennonite population. Out of a total of some six million inhabitants, more than 30,000 are baptized members of Mennonite churches. If you include children and persons who attend Mennonite services, this number could be doubled.

That means about one percent of the Paraguayan population is Mennonite. This may be the highest percentage of any country in the world.

According to MWC statistics, Mennonites in Paraguay belong to 21 different church groups. For the most part, these groups or conferences fall within one of three categories:

### 1. Immigrant Mennonites

About half of all Mennonites in Paraguay either immigrated to this country or are descendants of immigrants. Most of these live in 19 colonies dispersed over all of Paraguay as well as in the city of Asunción. According to recent studies, 51 percent have their origin in Canada, 25 percent in Russia, 22 percent in Mexico, and two percent in the United States.

All the immigrant Mennonites—except for those from the United States—speak German as their first language

# *of Mennonites in Paraguay*

and function with their own schools and administration in their colonies, according to Paraguayan law. They all share the same basic Mennonite beliefs: the Bible as supreme authority, baptism upon confession of faith, the church as a community of believers, discipleship, and the values of peace and reconciliation.

In practice, however, they are quite different. The meaning of separation from the world, for example, has a very different application among the different immigrant Mennonite groups.

Some are quite economically progressive, missionary-minded, and open to higher education. To this group belong all the Russian Mennonites in various colonies, the Canadian Mennonites in the Menno and Tres Palmas colonies, and the Canadian Mennonites living in Asunción.

The Sommerfeld colony has also started moving in this direction.

These Mennonites belong to four different conferences: the Mennonite Church, Mennonite Brethren, Evangelical Mennonite Brethren, and the Evangelical Mennonite Church (EMC).

The more traditional immigrant Mennonites wear uniform clothing and have a unique schooling system that uses the German language and educates students only up to age 14. There is a strong emphasis on separation from all things outside of their settlement—"the world." To this group belong some Canadian Mennonite colonies and all Mexican Mennonites.

Still another group distinguishes itself from other Mennonites by using

the name, Conservative American Mennonites. The colony structure is not part of their system, but biblical conservatism is. They cultivate an intensive personal religious life which corresponds more nearly to the Swiss-German origins of Anabaptism.

## **2. Indigenous Mennonites**

When the immigrant Mennonites came to Paraguay, they soon began missionary work among the native peoples already living in the country. The earliest work began in 1935. Today there are more than 25,000 Indigenous Mennonites in Paraguay, most of whom live in the Chaco close to the major Mennonite settlements of Menno, Fernheim, and Neuland.

Indigenous Mennonites, however, are not one cohesive group. They belong to many different ethnic groups: Enlhet (also known as Lengua), and Nivaclé (also known as Chulupi), Toba, Sanapaná, and Guaraní. Even though they all share the basic Mennonite beliefs as those of the

immigrant Mennonites, the Indigenous did not identify themselves as Mennonites until recently. This was because they saw being Mennonite as belonging to another ethnic group, mainly German.

Instead, these groups called themselves Evangelicals—in contrast to the Catholic Church of the country. However, lately, especially through participating in Mennonite World Conference—and seeing and meeting believers from Africa—identification with the Mennonite church, which they had previously seen as all-white, has become a positive option. Today more and more Indigenous churches adopt the name Mennonite.

The Indigenous Mennonites, perhaps more than any other group, look forward enthusiastically to MWC's Assembly 15 in July 2009.

## **3. Spanish-speaking Mennonites**

More than 100 Mennonite churches in Paraguay, with a membership of over 6,000, identify themselves with the

*A worship team leads music at La Roca Mennonite Church, one of the Spanish-speaking congregations in Asunción hosting visitors during Assembly 15.*



photo by Ray Brubacher



*Paraguay*  
2009

group that uses Spanish or Guaraní as its primary language. Many of these churches have a small membership, several are located in the city of Asunción, and most members are from the working class.

The earliest of these churches began in 1955 in Asunción as an outreach of the Mennonite Brethren in this city. Today they share the basic beliefs in the

authority of the Scriptures, believers baptism, and the values of community, peace, and reconciliation.

#### **Cooperative outreach**

Even though these three groups of Mennonites in Paraguay have different origins, they have come to work together in various ways.

These groups cooperate in a volun-

tary service program that is active in many areas: occupational therapy with handicapped people, homes for street children, work with older adults, and much more.

Another joint venture is the Universidad Evangélica del Paraguay. This school is not only for Spanish- and German-speaking Mennonites but also includes other evangelical denominations, such as the Baptists, Anglicans, and Disciples of Christ.

Mennonites also operate two seminaries, one by the Mennonite Church and the other by the Mennonite Brethren. Together they have close to 200 students.

Mennonites also cooperate in operating a number of radio stations; one in Asunción is on the air 24 hours a day.

While the Leper Hospital Km 81 was started by German-speaking Mennonites in 1951, today the other groups of Mennonites are also becoming involved in this nationally known work. In addition to working with victims of leprosy, which has not been completely eradicated in Paraguay, the Km 81 Hospital has also expanded to work with persons suffering from tuberculosis.

Mennonites have become well known throughout the country for their contribution to the economy of Paraguay. Today they are also becoming known more and more for their missionary, charitable, and educational impact.

The Mennonites of Paraguay believe that MWC's Assembly 15 in Asunción in July 2009 will do much to enhance the understanding of who Mennonites are in this country. It also provides an opportunity for the various groups that make up the Paraguayan Mennonite mosaic to work together, some for the first time.

*Gerhard Ratzlaff is director of the Mennonite Historical Archives in Asunción and the author of several books on the Mennonites in Paraguay.*

Worship at Assembly 15:

## **Come together in the way of Jesus Christ**

*Daily themes, texts, and speakers*  
*Assembly Gathered, Asunción, Paraguay*  
*July 14-19, 2009*

### **Tuesday, July 14**

Opening ceremony using assembly theme,  
"Come together in the way of Jesus Christ"  
Keynote address by outgoing MWC president, **Nancy Heisey** (USA)

### **Wednesday, July 15**

Sub-theme: "The way of Jesus Christ"  
Morning text: Philippians 2:1-11 ... **Elfriede Verón** (Paraguay)  
Evening text: Micah 6:1-8 ... **Nzuzi Mukawa** (Congo)

### **Thursday, July 16**

Sub-theme: "Uniting in Christ"  
Morning text: John 17: 16-26 ... **Antonio Gonzales** (Spain)  
Evening text: Acts 2:46-47 ... **Ditrich Pana** (Paraguay)

### **Friday, July 17**

Sub-theme: "Serving like Christ"  
Morning text: Isaiah 58:1-10 ... **Jenny Neme** (Colombia)  
Evening text: Mark 10:35-45 ... **Elizabeth Soto** (Puerto Rico / USA)

### **Saturday, July 18**

Sub-theme: "Go together in the way of Jesus Christ"  
Morning text: Ephesians 4:1-6 ... **Chris Marshall** (New Zealand)  
Evening text: Philippians 2:1-11 ... **Danisa Ndlovu**, incoming  
MWC president (Zimbabwe)

### **Sunday, July 19**

Sub-theme: "On the way together; first stop—Asunción"  
Morning outdoor service planned by National Coordinating Council  
Closing address by **Alfred Neufeld** (Paraguay)



Mennonite Church USA photo

**Motorcycles for Congo.** A Mennonite Church USA delegation to the Congo in 2007 learned that one of the church's greatest needs in that country was a way for leaders to visit their people in the outlying areas. "Our churches have the potential to reach out to people in other areas, Benjamin Mubenga, president of the Evangelical Mennonite Church in Congo (CEM) told the delegation. "But the problem is reaching them." Rut-filled and washed-out roads made transportation difficult, presenting a major obstacle to church growth, other CEM leaders said. In response Mennonite Church USA congregations and members raised more than \$20,000 US, which was given to the CEM church to purchase motorcycles. Above, Mubenga (back on left) uses one of the cycles for a trip to visit a rural church.

## Dutch church and MWC leader remembered for life of service

Strasbourg, France—Carl Friedrich Brüsewitz, who served the MWC Executive Board as vice-president for Europe from 1978 until 1984, died on October 2, 2008, at the age of 89.

Besides his international work with MWC, Brüsewitz played an important role in the Mennonite church in the Netherlands for several decades.

Born and raised in The Hague, Brüsewitz studied theology and from 1943 till 1946 he served the Dutch congregation of Balk (Friesland) followed by the church at Utrecht (1946-1965). He then worked as the head of all Protestant prison chaplains in the Netherlands till his retirement in 1986. In this capacity he often negotiated with the Minister of Justice about the legitimate place of the churches in prison work.

From 1971 until 1979 Brüsewitz chaired the Board of the Mennonite Church in the Netherlands (ADS). He also chaired the Dutch Mennonite Historical Society and the Doopsgezinde Vredesgroep (peace group), in which his wife, the late Barbara Brüsewitz-Meihuizen, was also active.

During World War II, Brüsewitz became involved in the resistance movement, and he was imprisoned in one of the most cruel Nazi concentration camps in the Netherlands for several months. After the war, he translated *The Anabaptist Vision* by Harold S. Bender into the Dutch language.

Brüsewitz was a wise and faithful defender of the tradition of mutual tolerance which has characterized Dutch Mennonites for centuries. He had a good sense of humour, was an active lover of classical music and a man of principle.

On the Sunday after Franklin Roosevelt died (April 12, 1945), during the



Carl Brüsewitz

final, dangerous weeks of World War II, he preached in his Balk congregation about the death of Moses who had not been allowed to enter the promised land. All who heard him that morning understood perfectly the hidden meaning of his sermon.

During the last years of his life, Brüsewitz was a pastor in Zwolle, his hometown. Two of his four sons became Mennonite pastors.

—Alle G. Hoekema

## Latin American Anabaptist women make plans to hold first-ever gathering during Assembly 15 in Paraguay

Asunción, Paraguay—Plans are being made for the first-ever gathering of Anabaptist women theologians from the entire Latin American region to take place here during the week of Assembly Gathered in July 2009.

In addition, women from Africa as well as women theologians of color from North America are being invited to the gathering.

The purpose of the gathering is to facilitate reflection and discussion for a better use of gifts God has given to women. Planners hope to develop relationships of mutual support and collaboration among women theologians and students of theology, and to explore an

approach to women's roles in churches that will be useful in various areas.

Impetus for this gathering came from a similar meeting arranged by African women theologians during Assembly 14 in Zimbabwe in 2003.

The 2009 meeting "will allow us to learn about the challenges our sisters face within their countries," says Gladys Siemens of Brazil, one of the planners. "It will also help us to support each other, creating bonds of communion and intercession."

Another of the planners, Olga Piedrasanta of Guatemala, says: "This will be a time to make friends—wherever we are in our jour-

neys—and to be of mutual encouragement to pursue our projects."

At the Asunción gathering, the women will study the Bible, focusing on texts that can help them understand God's will for women and their families. They will reflect on how churches can use the teachings of Jesus in violence prevention and victim support.

Planners also hope that a heightened awareness of the gifts of women as well as an increased acceptance of women who have pastoral and leadership roles in Latin American churches will motivate more women to get theological training.—Milka Rindzinski



An 80-voice choir of leaders, pastors, and evangelists sing a "Hallelujah Medley" at the first official general assembly cele-

brating the recognition of the 6,123-member Vietnam Mennonite Church by the Vietnamese government.

## Vietnam Mennonite Church receives legal recognition from government's National Religious Affairs Committee

*Ho Chi Minh City*—Upon fulfillment of all requirements for full legal status, the Vietnam National Religious Affairs Committee approved the request of the Vietnam Mennonite Church to organize its first official general assembly.

The church held the assembly on November 15-17, 2008, at a guest house and conference complex in Binh Thanh District, Ho Chi Minh City.

With full legal status, the Vietnam Mennonite Church can now hold corporate title to real estate property, establish a Bible institute for training pastors and leaders, forge relationships with other denominations to sponsor joint projects, and serve as an official partner with organizations such as Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in relief and community development work. The church can also extend and accept invitations for international conferences.

MWC's general secretary, Larry Miller, and six members of an MWC Koinonia Delegation to Vietnam were present at the historic event.

Members of the Koinonia

Delegation were Felix Curbelo Valle, Cuba; Betsy Headrick McCrae, USA; Michel Ummel, Switzerland; Felicia Sibanda, Zimbabwe; Yoshihira Inamine, Japan; and Elina Ciptadi-Perkins, Singapore.

The three-day assembly included times of worship, preaching, and business. A hallmark of the worship included singing, choirs, and liturgical dances from both Vietnamese and ethnic minority churches using contemporary and traditional styles.

Persons attending the assembly came from six districts in 24 provinces and represented more than 6,100 Mennonite believers throughout Vietnam.

### Building the church.

During the ceremony, Pastor Nguyen Quang Trung presented a brief history of the Mennonite church in Vietnam and a summary of the work of both Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) and in Vietnam. He led in a prayer thanking God that the national Religious Affairs Committee of Vietnam had given permission for this

general assembly to be organized.

Nguyen Thanh Xuan, Deputy Director of the National Religious Affairs Committee, noted the long-term involvement of Mennonites in Vietnam and expressed appreciation for the uniqueness of the Mennonite contribution to the country with its emphasis on both religious and social concerns.

Larry Miller introduced the MWC Koinonia Delegation saying, "These are the most important gifts we bring to you, ourselves as an incarnation of communion with you in the global body of Jesus Christ."

MWC koinonia delegates shared messages and gifts from their respective continent. Many attending expressed appreciation for the MWC delegation, saying they considered it unique among internationals visiting churches in Vietnam.

Also giving congratulations and words of encouragement to the assembly were Derek Hostetler representing MCC Vietnam; Keith Weaver, moderator of Lancaster Mennonite

Conference, USA; Richard Showalter, EMM president; and Gerry Keener of EMM Vietnam. Donald Sensenig, retired EMM missionary to Vietnam, read a letter of support and encouragement from all the EMM missionaries who had served in Vietnam from 1957 to 1975.

### New constitution.

Business sessions included ratification of the church's constitution and election of officers who will serve the church from 2008 to 2012.

Pastor Nguyen Quang Trung was elected president; Pastor Nguyen Hong An, 1st vice-president; Pastor Huynh Dinh Nghia, 2nd vice-president; Pastor Nguyen Minh Sang, general secretary; and Apprentice Pastor Nguyen Van Khoa, general treasurer.

Assembly delegates confirmed the church's purpose as "to worship the triune God and love all people according to the Word of the Lord in the Holy Bible, live the gospel, serve God, serve the country and the people."

—from a joint release by Gerry Keener for MWC and the Vietnam Mennonite Church

# ‘Being with Mennonites is like being with family’

by Betsy Headrick McCrae

**W**e came from all corners of the globe—Cuba, Zimbabwe, Switzerland, Japan, Singapore, USA, France. Though individual people, we were living symbols of the worldwide communion that is MWC.

As we gathered in Ho Chi Minh City, for three days we watched and listened,

prayed and sang, worshiped and wondered. We felt the newness of what was happening and basked in the fellowship that was being so obviously enjoyed.

During the Vietnam Mennonite Church’s general assembly, we didn’t have a big role to play, but we were present—and very much appreciated. The church saw us as a true representation of the fact that our Mennonite-Brethren in Christ community is indeed a global one.

We were told there have been foreigners present when other denominations received official recognition in Vietnam, but they have been mostly from the USA. Our international group was something completely different.

Those who were present during the official recognition ceremony couldn’t miss the fact that the world was present as the Vietnam Mennonite Church came into being. It was clear that the Anabaptist church is not defined by any one culture or nationality and that the Vietnam Mennonite Church has a place in this global communion.

Our MWC delegation invited the new church to come to Paraguay 2009. With the help of other internationals, who were present, we also gave them a taste of what it is like to participate in an MWC assembly by singing what became the “theme song” from Assembly 2003: “Hakuna.” Then we asked the Vietnamese to join us in singing and dancing the testimony that “there is none like Jesus.” What joy it was to see everyone up and

moving and laughing at the Spirit-filled chaos of it all! Such is a worldwide communion!

Following the assembly, Pastor Nguyen Quang Trung, newly elected president of the Vietnam Mennonite Church, and several members of the new denominational administrative council, took us on a tour of four small Mennonite churches within driving distance of Ho Chi Minh City.

**A**s we spent time with these brothers and sisters riding in the bus, eating in simple roadside restaurants, walking through rice fields, asking questions, and hearing stories, our sense of connection grew. We came to know each other as individuals who represented the church, our church.

At each place, we heard stories of great joy in knowing the Lord Jesus and of how this relationship had changed lives. We also heard stories of difficulties and setbacks as these small groups of believers gathered and worshiped in settings which did not always tolerate their presence. Sometimes they were ordered to close down. Sometimes they were harassed by local government

officials. Sometimes they were arrested or detained.

But still the good news of Jesus bubbled up inside them; they could not keep silent. Their calling is clear: Share what they have received until all around come to know the Lord.

We rejoiced together that now that the Vietnam Mennonite Church has been granted permission to operate, each of these small congregations can let their light shine without fear of repercussion. A new day has dawned.

“Pray for us,” they said. “And we will pray for you.” None of us knows fully what the future may bring.

As we lingered over a meal one afternoon, I asked Pastor Nguyen Hong An what he thought about having our international MWC delegation present with them during this time of official recognition. He sat back and smiled. “It is a great encouragement,” he said. “Being with the Mennonites is like being with family. You stay with us and eat with us.”

He paused and then continued. “On the dollar bill it says, ‘In God We Trust.’ But,” he continued as he reached out and put his arm across my shoulders, “this is so much better.”



MWC, EMM, and Lancaster Mennonite Conference representatives sing, “There is none like Jesus”—from left: Betsy Headrick McCrae, Keith Weaver, Yoshihira Inamine, Michel Ummel, Felicia Sibanda, Richard Showalter, Elina Ciptadi, Felix Curbelo Valle, Larry Miller, Gerry Keener, Don Sensenig.

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# Humility and unity will carry us to victory

by Elfriede Verón

*This is the first in a series introducing the morning Bible studies scheduled for Assembly 15. These introductions, written by those who will lead these studies, are intended not only to prepare those who will attend the assembly in Asunción but also to unite the global church in a common study of the Scriptures.—Editor*

One of Satan's very effective weapons to hinder the advance of the gospel on earth is to sow disunity among believers. This is true both inside a church and between denominations.

Satan has been using this weapon from ancient times and continues to use it with great success in the 21st century. Christ's work is held back when churches manifest the works of the flesh—jealousies, rivalry, and selfishness—with the resulting lack of harmony, understanding and unity.

Philippians 2:1-11, which talks about unity, is closely related to the previous verses in Philippians, where Paul urged the brothers and sisters to stand firm in one spirit against the enemy.

The way to unity and harmony is humility. Humility and unity carry us to victory in the Christian life, in our interpersonal relationships, and for the

expansion of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For the believers, Christ is and should always be our supreme example. We want to follow his footprints.

Now what kind of example does Jesus Christ give to us? Primarily, his example is one of self-denial and humility. To take as a model for life a self-denying person—who did not try to be the center of attention and fame; who did not seek to acquire wealth or power here on earth; who instead was willing to suffer and to die for the good of others—appears to be an absurdity.

In this world, we are used to looking at and admiring people of influence, fame, and economic "success." However, the way to unity and victory is the way of Jesus Christ: a life of renunciation, service, humility, and unconditional obedience to God.

In Anabaptist history, unity and solidarity have been important pillars which have helped the church to survive in very difficult and adverse circumstances. Certainly the Anabaptist family has multiplied, and today it is made up of people of different races, cultures, and social classes. However, we are one in Christ Jesus.

Unity is not a matter of dressing

alike, or speaking the same language, or worshipping in the same style. Unity is not something superficial or external. It goes much deeper. Unity is based on our common faith and mind and on a life submitted to Jesus Christ.

Because humility is an important ingredient of unity, we can demonstrate both by respecting and sincerely recognizing other people's worth, no matter their different ways of doing things. By doing so we break barriers of prejudice, envy, jealousy, and rivalry.

## *Questions for reflection:*

1. How do we show in our relationships that we are "one in spirit and purpose" with our brothers and sisters?
2. How do we reveal humility in our interpersonal relationships?
3. In what areas of our lives do we need to grow so that "our attitude may be the same as that of Christ Jesus"?

*Elfriede Verón teaches Bible and theology at the Instituto Bíblico Asunción. She will lead the Wednesday, July 15, Bible study at Assembly Gathered.*



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