



CONNECTING . . .

A newsletter by and for EMMANUEL MENNONITE CHURCH

December 2020

Vol. 17

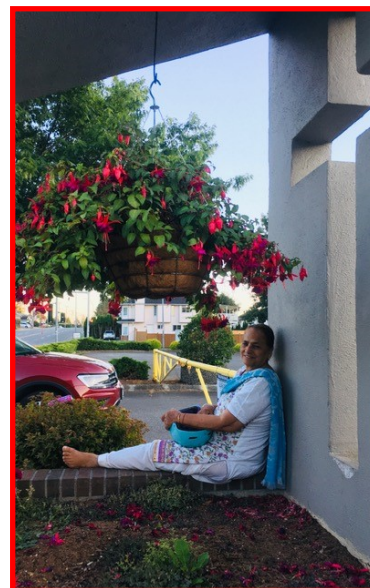
Issue 3

Calm and Connected in a COVID Summer

BY VANJ THIESSEN

Throughout our Covid summer, my Emmanuel connections were random, outdoors, and most often with Ernie (our custodian) or with Ernie (my husband). You see, both Ernies helped me with watering the hanging basket under the slanted roof by the church signage. But, sometimes, I would go by myself and meet a "stranger" from the neighbourhood there, like "Bibi", relaxing under the brilliant fuchsia while her grandchildren played on the church parking lot, racing around with abandon on their bikes. When they saw me taking a photo of their grandmother, they wanted to be on a photo too. There was something life-giving in that encounter. Christ was among us in the garden and parking lot of Emmanuel. Both of us grandmothers had found calm, safety and kindness there.

See page 2 for a glimpse into some coziness found in a COVID winter!



EMMANUEL MENNONITE CHURCH

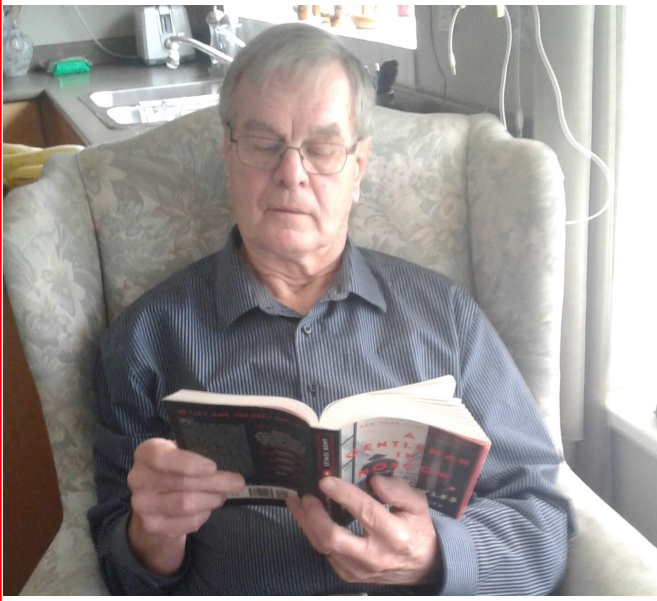
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COZINESS in a COVID WINTER

Submitted by Ed & Louise Janzen



“The Jesus Prayer”

I use this prayer morning and evening in preparation for reading Scripture, or a time of silent meditation. I thought others at Emmanuel might find it of utility in their own life. The base of the prayer is the Orthodox chant known as the "Jesus Prayer." See the Vaarlaam Monastery Chant on YouTube. The following parts are based on redemption, mission, and Kingdom of God. This structured prayer is meant to prepare one's heart for listening to the Holy Spirit.
—Walter Bergen

*Lord Jesus Christ
Son of God
have mercy on me
a sinner
lead me from the chaos of sin and darkness
into your eternal Light*

*Lord Jesus Christ
Son of God
have mercy on me
a servant
lead me from sin and disobedience
to obedience to your Son, Christ, Jesus.*

*Lord Jesus Christ
Son of God
have mercy on me
a messenger,
bless me with wisdom and boldness
in the power of Jesus the Christ
to do all that you have commanded*

*Lord Jesus Christ
Son of God
have mercy on me
an adopted brother
of the Lord Jesus Christ
the Son of God*

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

G7 Lite
LEADING SERVICE RACE 20.1

It's a frigid Christmas Eve and with a heart as cold as the freezing London winter, Ebenezer Scrooge is paid a visit from the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come, and is forced to finally confront how his actions have affected others and where they are leading him.

Adapted by EMC's own Adriel Brandt and starring the Gallery 7 Theatre staff—Ken Hildebrandt, Charlene Crawford, and Gabriel Kirkley, this is a **live-stream online performance** taking place on 2 days only: **December 18 and 19, 7:30-9pm.** Head to <http://www.gallery7theatre.com/shows-courses/a-christmas-carol> to get your tickets!

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

The Emmanuel Mennonite Newsletter would love to receive submissions from the church community! We are looking for stories, articles, poetry, art, prayers and recipes under 800 words that are encouraging and promote community. Submissions may be edited and will be published depending on space. Thank you for reading and participating!

If you have something you would like to share please e-mail Joel at office@emmanuelmennonite.com.

“MY OCTOPUS TEACHER”

It might sound like the silly title of a middle-schooler’s English essay, but it’s actually the title of a documentary you can find on Netflix. **Mennonite Creation Care Network**

Creation
Corner



describes it as a “beautiful film [that] takes place mostly underwater in a South African kelp forest. In it, the narrator describes his daily visits with an octopus. As he opens himself to learn and observe in a friendship of radical differences, his relationships with people and the earth change as well.” Watch the trailer here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3s0LTDhq5A>.

“A CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE TO EMPOWER”

Need some inspiration for your Christmas shopping? Wondering where your money will make the most positive impact on the world? Look no further! Local Christian writer and speaker SARAH BESSEY has put together “A Christmas Gift Guide to Empower,” a curated collection of gifts where every listed retailer “empowers others, lifts up the oppressed, embraces ethical and equitable business practice, inspires change, cooperates with the marginalized, or turns poverty to prosperity in some way.” From Sarah’s website:

“2020 has been a difficult year for so many of us and for our neighbours. This gift guide is meant to be one small way we can channel our energy - or grief or exhaustion or anger - into doing some good together. This annual gift guide makes your shopping easy and it also does a tremendous amount of good in the world.

Rather than aimlessly cruising the mall trying to find a random gift to buy for that one person or sadly clicking “Add to Cart” for an online retailer whose business practices would land them on the naughty list and so lining the pockets of more soulless conglomerates, we’ll step out of the system and spend our money intentionally and thoughtfully with an eye on empowerment! After all, the big box stores won’t miss our money this year but for these shops our purchases can make a world of difference, keeping them and those they employ or empower afloat.

This is our biggest Gift Guide yet - we have gifts for Christmas cheer, for being cozy at home this winter (or summer as the case may be), gifts for the hard-to-buy-for guys, for bath and beauty lovers, for the tinies in your life, foodies and home cooks, fashionistas, and more ... We have tried to find a variety of price points and options for everyone but don’t feel limited by my own pick - if you like the sound of a particular retailer, click through and you may find something else you like there for your budget or personal style or unique needs ... Now let’s get shopping and sharing, eh? Let’s do some good this Christmas with our spending.

Happy (for real!) shopping,

S.

P.S. I didn’t take any form of compensation from a single one of these shops nor am I making any affiliate money from anything you purchase.

Read more and check it out at <https://www.sarahbessey.com/christmas-2020>.



“Egg” - Joel Brandt

God the Creator, God the Destroyer, God the Redeemer of entire worlds

God the egg growing inside an average teenage girl who’s hunched over the toilet with swears, sweat and prayers, ready to hurl

And as the waters swirl, our salvation starts to unfurl

Kinda wild, I know, but that’s the way the old story goes

Right from the beginning we’ve got a God of the living who grows, relates and shows a love for what He creates and knows:

The earth and us to which it gives birth

A God who joins us in the dirt, in the dung of a stable, everyone joins round the table

There’s a baby in the cradle and I don’t think I’ll ever be able to fully describe that first cry amidst genocide on that starry night

They were terrified but love puts fear to flight; it’s gonna be alright

YOUTH UNLIMITED UPDATE — with Greg Sawatzky



Once or twice a year I try to give an update on our financial support. **Raising support is an integral part of the work we do.** It can be challenging but also so rewarding. It provides me with opportunities to regularly stay connected to many people from my past and present. It also requires me to trust more deeply in God's provision. I am truly amazed and grateful at the ongoing generosity and love we have been shown by so many friends and family! **2020 has been a year like no other.** All of us have been affected in some way by the coronavirus. We are all struggling to make sense of life and make ends meet. We have been forced to face the reality that so much of life is out of our control. We are in desperate need of God's grace and peace each and every day. As we near the end of 2020, however, I want to be upfront about where our support is at. My staff support account has been steadily decreasing and our cost of living keeps going up. I simply want to invite you to consider, if you are able, helping us achieve two goals. **Goal 1 - I would like to raise \$5000 in year end donations** and **Goal 2 - I would like to raise \$500 in new monthly partners** (10 people at \$50 or 5 at \$100 or 20 at \$25). I know these are lofty goals at the best of times and possibly even more so during a pandemic. But I do believe God will continue to provide for our family and surprise us by his provision. Thank you for considering and for continuing to show love and support towards our family in so many ways!

A couple highlights from the last month:

- We completed our four week club at Eugene Reimer with an energetic group of grade 6's. We hope to start another club soon, but it will depend on what restrictions we need to follow.
- We have frequented the driving range with a small group of boys and they have loved learning how to golf!
- We continue to visit youth at their houses which has been great. A few weeks back, we visited with a number of grade 12 boys that we have known for the last 5 years and enjoyed seeing their 'new' cars and hearing about their jobs and what they plan to do post graduation. Time flies!



Capture the Flag at our after school club!

Prayer Requests

-Pray for continued wisdom and God's leading for our West Abbotsford ministry as we navigate how to love and care for people during a pandemic.

-Pray for courage to embrace 'the smaller' in this season of ministry and to really invest in those who are most open.

-Pray for the Punjabi youth and families that we are connected to, that in this challenging time, they would be open to the love of Jesus.

-Pray for YUnite Outside, happening on December 4th, as we bring awareness to youth homelessness and raise support towards our prevention work with vulnerable youth. It is not too late to give (see left).

**I AM
SLEEPING
OUTSIDE**



On December 4
Why unite outside? Because
vulnerable youth matter.

More Info:
youthunlimited.com/yunite
#YUniteOutside

**YUNITE
OUTSIDE** |  **Youth
Unlimited™**
YFC GREATER VANCOUVER

Donations to Greg's ministry can be made by:

Mail Youth Unlimited - Greg Sawatzky

2760 Emerson Ave. Abbotsford, BC V2T 3J6

Email (finance@youthunlimited.com)

Online (www.youthunlimited.com/donate or
[click here](#))