

ANABAPTIST-MENNONITE SCHOLARS NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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Teaching Bible in Church and Academy

By Ryan Schellenberg, editor

The decision of the Society of Biblical Literature and the American Academy of Religion to end the long-standing conjunction of their annual meetings has now been reversed; still, for 2008 and 2009 the Mennonite Scholars and Friends Forum will be split in two. This is disappointing, since the Forum has been the one annual opportunity for Mennonite scholars from across North America, from a variety of denominational and institutional affiliations, and from a range of religion-related disciplines, to interact face-to-face. A newsletter like this one can hardly substitute for such in-person dialogue, but I do hope that by keeping us abreast of events, publications, and research projects within the world of Mennonite scholarship, the A-MSN newsletter promotes a sense of collegiality among us.

The essays in this edition of the newsletter derive from the SBL wing of the Mennonite Scholars and Friends Forum which took place last November. The theme this year was "Teaching Bible: Setting, Method, Agenda." Hopefully you are able to get a sense for the flavour of the conversation.

Jon Isaak's article, which I somewhat provocatively have titled "Teaching Bible at a (Post)-Anabaptist Seminary" (p. 4), presents his reflections on teaching New Testament in a Mennonite seminary (MBBS Fresno) where less than a fourth of students identify themselves as Mennonite. The backdrop here will be familiar: though some denominations are more affected than others, all are witnessing a decline in institutional loyalty. Thus Isaak's thoughts are suggestive of what a renegotiation of Anabaptist identity might mean in a post-denominational world. For Isaak, the theological hospitality of Anabaptism facilitates "hyphenated identities" for students from a variety of church backgrounds who are exposed to a Mennonite perspective. Though Isaak does not explicitly

make the connection, there is an interesting parallel between his conception of the role the church plays in the world—"giving witness to a new humanity in small but perceptible ways"—and his conception of the role the Anabaptist tradition plays vis-à-vis the church as a whole.

Wes Bergen's essay (p. 2) was sparked by a question asked at the Forum regarding what the *church* can do to increase biblical literacy. Bergen makes a somewhat surprising suggestion: he advocates limiting or eliminating the use of the New Common Lectionary. For Bergen, the lectionary facilitates our domestication of scripture: by skipping troubling texts and focusing on harmonious passages, we end up with a "White Bread Bible." Perhaps not all will accept Bergen's diagnosis, but this is a certainly a challenge to take seriously. (Coincidentally, Bergen's essay came across my desk while I was preparing a sermon on Ps 139 ["You knit me together in my mother's womb"]; predictably, the lectionary reading did not include v. 19f. ["O that you would kill the wicked, O God"]. I must admit that I took the easy route and preached the lectionary this time around.)

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The Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network is a project of the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, Conrad Grebel University College. The Institute of Mennonite Studies is a co-sponsor.

Biblical Literacy in Churches: One Small Step Forward

By Wes Bergen

At the recent Society of Biblical Literature meeting in Boston, the Anabaptist Scholars and Friends Forum had a panel titled "Teaching Bible: Setting, Method, Agenda." Toward the end of the discussion, after some general moaning about the state of biblical literacy among students today, someone asked the question about what the church can do to increase biblical literacy. As one of the panelists, I could not immediately come up with an answer. After further consideration, I would like to present my answer at greater length.

In attempting to increase biblical literacy in the church, one of the most potentially effective steps would be to limit the use of the New Common Lectionary (hereafter NCL). I think of the lectionary as the White Bread Bible (with no crusts). Using the lectionary, the Bible is fed to the congregation in small, easily-digested bits. These bits fit nicely together into an uncomplicated sandwich, with little or no chewing necessary. Yes, sometimes the pastor does need to do some chewing to bring the various pas-

sages together, but by the time the sermon is ready, the congregation is treated to soft, pre-digested, easily palatable theology.

Let me give an example. In the readings for the first Sunday of Advent this year, the passages were Isa 64:1-9, Ps 80, 1 Cor 1:3-9 and Mark 13:24-37. Here we have four relatively harmonious passages about apocalyptic themes, placed together (I suppose) to demonstrate the prophetic nature of apocalypticism and the harmonious nature of the tradition that underlies it. What would happen, I wonder, if the lectionary had instead chosen wisdom passages that speak of God's ongoing care for the world, thus obviating the need for the radical inbreak of God? Or maybe, taking a cue from Isaiah's theme that Israel sinned *because* they were abandoned by God, Isa 64 was set in contrast with passages that state that Israel's sin was the *cause* of God's abandonment?

These sorts of passages could have led to sermons that invite the congregation into dialogue with scripture, rather than simply being told by scripture (via the pastor) what the truth really is. I realize that the pastor is free to do this on her own, but the lectionary generally militates against these types of sermons.

Another thing the NCL regularly does is break up passages. When I see this, I make it a point to check the verses omitted. Almost invariably, these verses are troublesome. They express "unacceptable" attitudes or contradict the themes of the main text. For example, this year on Ash Wednesday the Old Testament reading is Joel 2:1-2, 12-17. The omitted verses contain a description of a lot of really nasty things that God's army is going to do to the earth and the people on it. This passage might raise a lot of questions about God's love or about why God never seems to actually do these things, or whether current wars are a fulfillment of the prophecy. Jumping from v. 2 to v. 12 allows us to avoid troubling issues. This use of the Bible also allows the layperson to experience the Bible as speaking with a single voice. No dissonance is allowed to disrupt the harmony of the worshipper and his domesticated scripture. The discordant note is not played, even when it is written in the score.

The result of this use of the NCL is that the congregation is given little reason to wrestle with the text on their own. Even if they read the Bible for themselves, their training in worship informs them that all parts fit together nicely. Readers looking for a harmonious Bible usually find one. And laypersons expecting to find a harmonious Bible have little reason to read it at all. The singular truth is delivered to them weekly via sermon. What is the point of further study?

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Membership dues

1 year: \$25
3 years: \$65

Dues for graduate students have been waived thanks to a grant from the Faculty Calling Project of the Mennonite Education Agency.

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The other result is that, should laypeople choose to read the Bible on their own, they have few resources for dealing with the more troubling aspects of the Bible's story. They have likely never witnessed someone rejecting a text, or deciding to privilege one voice over another. They don't have the tools that direct them to sit with a text for weeks, waiting for the voice of God to speak through a particularly troublesome story. They have not learned to use these tools because they have never seen them in action.

Pastors may complain that their congregants are not really interested in significant wrestling with the text, nor do they want to see the Bible as at all problematic. Leaving aside the larger question of honesty in pastoral work, I find that I can best cover my back by continuing to refer to the Bible itself: The problem is not me; it's the Bible. My regular refrain in these situations is "I didn't write this." People can argue with the Bible if they choose to, but they can't blame me for its contents.

If the NCL is part of the reason for biblical illiteracy, what should the seminaries be teaching about the use of the Bible in sermons? I would prefer that students be given a variety of models to use. Pastors should be taught how to work their way through a whole book, giving the congregation a broader perspective on a letter of Paul or a major section in one of the prophets, or some of the stories in the Hebrew Bible.

Pastors could also be taught how to write sermons that compare various biblical responses to particular themes. Rather than a simple "the Bible says..." answer to a difficult question, a pastor could talk about how Jesus' answer in Matthew is different from Jesus' answer in John, which is different from Paul's response to the church in Galatians. This sort of contrast may spur lay people to dig more deeply into the Bible.

The synoptic gospels provide another clear model for sermon preparation. I regularly find that most people in the pews have no idea that all four gospels do not contain exactly the same story of Jesus' birth, with the wise men meeting the shepherds at the manger. This sort of obvious ignorance is easily dispelled in a sermon or short series of sermons (well before Advent, so we can still use the nicely packaged themes for quick-and-easy sermons in a busy time of year). These sermons can be either challenging (so why don't Luke's and Matthew's account fit together?) or uplifting (note all the significant themes in each story), but in either case, the sermon may lead to further study by some part of the congregation.

The use of scripture to challenge people's preconceptions about the content and themes of scripture would also be more likely to appeal to the youth, especially those in rebellion mode. Young people who are used to falling asleep or daydreaming during sermons might actu-

ally come awake if they hear their parents arguing with the preacher after church is over. They are likely to be surprised to learn that the Bible can be a significant resource in their battle against the mind-numbing piety of much of contemporary Christian discourse. A tour through Paul's troubled churches or Elihu's rants against self-righteous elders might spark some interest for a person looking for the raspy voice of counter-culture in an otherwise stodgy institution.

The NCL can remain a fallback when time does not allow for a more significant encounter with scripture. Yet even this last sentence illustrates the problem. Pastors have no need for a serious encounter with the Bible when they use the NCL. Passages are assigned, themes are usually fairly obvious, and hundreds of printed and online resources (with helpful and pious illustrations) are readily available. You can even sign up for complete sermons, delivered weekly to your email address. Even the pastor no longer needs to read the lectionary passages before the service, never mind all the trouble of actually thinking through a difficult section of Deuteronomy or 1 Timothy.

It is certainly important to give pastors a significant alternative to the old pattern of preaching over and over from the passages that best reflect their favorite three or four themes. But it is hardly surprising that students come to our classrooms with little or no understanding of the complexity or diversity (or even the basic narratives) of the Bible when the NCL, their pastors' main resource, allows no such knowledge to develop. How does the lectionary teach that David lived after Abraham? This is fairly easy to explain in a sermon series on the stories of Israel's encounters with God, but does not fit into the theological themes of the lectionary. Not all will remember it, but how can they know unless they are taught?

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Transitions

George R. Brunk III, currently professor of New Testament at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, will serve as Interim President of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary effective July 2009.

Eastern Mennonite University has appointed Fred Kniss as Provost effective July 2009.

Teaching Bible at a (Post)-Anabaptist Seminary

By Jon Isaak

On Saturday morning, November 22, 2008, the Mennonite Scholars and Friends Forum at the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting in Boston discussed the topic of Bible teaching. The title for the discussion was “Teaching Bible: Setting, Method, Agenda.” Tom Yoder Neufeld (Conrad Grebel University College) served as moderator. I was asked to contribute to the conversation from the perspective of teaching Bible at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary (Fresno, CA). What follows approximates some of what I shared in response to the questions that Tom posed.

Who are the students attending MB Biblical Seminary and how does that matter for your teaching of Bible?

It is difficult to profile a typical MBBS student. The MBBS Fresno campus is the only “brick and mortar” seminary in the San Joaquin valley of California. This means we are the convenient or only campus for students seeking accredited ministry and counseling formation in the San Joaquin valley. It also means that we work with students from a wide range of denominations: Baptist, Presbyterian, Evangelical Free, Seventh Day Adventist, Pentecostal, Catholic, Anglican, Episcopalian, and others. Mennonite students make up about 23% of our student population. Each year we also have a handful of international students from places like Japan, South America, Africa, and Europe. These students are preparing to be professors and ministers, leading pastors in their home countries. All of these dynamics, together with a large age spread and almost even gender ratio, make for a healthy diversity.

This diverse student population is certainly an asset: it brings richness, perspective, and insight to classroom interaction. Even though the population is diverse, our students generally share several ideals. They are serious about their Christian faith, confident in their call to leadership, and committed to God’s mission in the church and the world. Our students are focused; they see their graduate degree as a “means to an end,” usually some vocational calling to pastoral ministries, educational leadership, family counseling, or missionary work.

However, the diversity does have a bearing on the character of classroom interaction in my Bible courses. I can think of two aspects that have become more pronounced over the ten years that I have taught Bible at MBBS.

First, because students are increasingly part-time and local, I find that the seminary plays less the role of primary community for my students than it once did. Students arrive just at class time and hurry off to their many commitments when the session ends. Opportunities for extended theological discussions or follow-up explorations of various ideas from a class discussion are limited. Even if students want to give undivided, primary attention to their studies, this is not possible for most given the competing demands on their time and resources. I have needed to make adjustments to my expectations and my teaching style, and I still wonder about how to plan better for learning given these emerging realities.

Second, as convenience and proximity move higher up on the taxonomy of values voiced by my students, I also find those without Mennonite background are more willing to attend an Anabaptist seminary. Increasingly, I find myself reminding students that there is usually quite a spectrum of views on most any topic of biblical studies and that they do not have to adopt the evangelical-Anabaptist perspective that I present. However, I believe they need to be able to make a case for their view, stay connected to others, and defer ultimate judgment on these matters to God.

My sense is that students are generally surprised by the expansive and hospitable horizon that an Anabaptist perspective on biblical interpretation and theology provides; they find the space needed to develop their own views in conversation with theirs and other traditions.

How do faith and critical methodologies intersect pedagogically in your Bible teaching?

I usually like to differentiate two issues when it comes to processing critical methodologies in biblical studies. For some, the question is: How can a faithful person have critical questions or use critical methods? Their assumption is that it cannot be done. As one who teaches in a confessional setting, I try to move the question in a different direction: How can a faithful person probe historical issues and critical methodologies in a life-giving and truthful way?

When I begin my exegetical courses, I introduce students to the traditional grammatical-historical exegetical approach to reading the Bible, but point out that there are other strategies being used today (ones they learn about in our advanced exegetical courses)—rhetorical criticism, literary criticism, sociological criticism, and historical criticism, to name some. I like to affirm aspects of the emerging, post-modern framework (primacy of local knowledge, high value on relational factors, suspicion of power, strong self-awareness), while at the same time challenge the post-modern meaning-making enterprise with the scriptural witness to God’s character, reign, and mission.

Typically, I do not have much difficulty negotiating the critical methodologies, because they are never given first place, as ends in themselves. Rather, they are tools to hear more clearly the voice of scripture, giving witness to God’s Word. I work hard to get students to try to articulate the theological voice driving the text under discussion. This is the voice, I believe, that needs appropriation in contemporary forms.

I remind students that as seminarians, their job is to be able to sketch the spectrum of views on any topic—what are the positions? what is at stake? what are the losses and gains associated with the various views? But then their job is also to choose one view (even if provisional or interim) and advocate its merits, listing areas where they remain unsure and open to revision.

Working in an inter-denominational setting as I do, I encourage students to be self-differentiated but connected, and to defer finalizing assessments.

Is there an "Anabaptist agenda" in your teaching the Bible, and, if so, does it or should it have an impact on pedagogy?

I doubt if there would be agreement on what it means to be Anabaptist, as it is understood differently among us. However, I do tend to emphasize themes like discipleship, peacemaking, and community discernment, in addition to the standard evangelical values. Our new seminary logo says that we are "anabaptist and evangelical."

My experience is that students appreciate and expect me to come from a perspective, whether or not they share it. They have grown up in a post-modern, post-denominational world and they expect me to be clear about my views; but they certainly do not expect me to force them to adopt my (or any) view. Sometimes this becomes a problem when seminary donors or owners ask, "So, what do you teach?" I typically answer such questions at several levels. I tell them that I teach Bible and that I affirm the MB statement of faith as my confession. I also remind them that my task as a teacher in the classroom is to help students test and explore, challenge, and affirm their confessions in relation to the Bible.

Probably the Anabaptist agenda that informs my Bible teaching most revolves around two themes, christology and ecclesiology. For me, christology affirms Jesus as both anthropological norm and as theological norm. Jesus helps us to see both humanity and divinity as intended by God from the start. Such affirmations are loaded with all sorts of challenges for contemporary Christianity.

Related to the christological issues are the ecclesiological ramifications that follow. I see the church less about transforming society "one official at a time" and more about inviting all

people to live into the new center that is taking shape around Jesus. Less as a player on the main stage and more as an out-post, giving witness to a new humanity that is emerging in small but perceptible ways. Again, such affirmations generate lots of discussion about the kind of church we are making in our world today.

I am convinced that an Anabaptist agenda does impact pedagogy. The theological hospitality of Anabaptism makes it possible for many traditions to gather at the table and have their voices heard, affirmed, and challenged. From my own missionary experience, I know that it was precisely this reality that caused the *African Indigenous Churches* in Lesotho to bypass the main Protestant missions and invite Mennonite Bible teachers to resource their communities. The same phenomenon occurs in America. I do not think it is accidental that students from so many denominations find an evangelical-Anabaptist seminary a good place to study.

Many students comment after their time with us that they have adopted a hyphenated identity, tacking on aspects of Anabaptism to their own church traditions. I feel encouraged by this. In fact, I suspect that the very Anabaptist agenda makes it possible for these diverse ministry candidates to feel safe in exploring their traditions and to extend them in some new ways. Conceptualizing theological training as hospitality is one reality of an Anabaptist agenda that I am not embarrassed to affirm.

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Call for Papers

Searching for the Center and Defining Boundaries: Mennonite Brethren Experience as Anabaptists and Evangelicals

A conference exploring the past 150 years of the Mennonite Brethren Church will be held in **July 2010**, immediately preceding the bi-national gatherings of the United States and the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conferences being held in British Columbia.

In 1860 the Mennonite Brethren Church emerged within the context of religious and social ferment in the Ukraine. During the first few decades of its existence, the movement struggled with integrating Anabaptist, Pietist, and Baptist influences into a distinctive identity within the larger Mennonite church body. Subsequent emigrations moved the center of the church from its birthplace to North and South America while mission efforts expanded ethnic boundaries. Mennonite Brethren continue to wrestle with their identity amidst the push and pull of various religious movements and within their diverse regional and cultural contexts.

Please send us a one-page summary of the theme of a paper you wish to explore. The general theme may be addressed from theological, sociological, historical or related disciplines. Deadline for submissions is **May 15, 2009**.

Please send your submission to:
Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission,
1310 Taylor Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3M 3Z6
or email: kreddig@mbconf.ca or ajdueck@mbconf.ca

Research Notes

I am doing a comparative study of the fundamentalism of Protestant churches in China, Japan, and Korea, and will present the result (in the form of paper) at a symposium of church history in Northeastern Asia, attended by Chinese and Korean scholars in Wuhan, China, August 2009.

Kevin Yao
China Graduate School of Theology
xiyiyao@hotmail.com

The doctrine of the communion of saints was purified and affirmed in some Reformation thought but never developed. I am working on a Mennonite / Free Church approach to the communion of saints as a theological and pastoral issue. I would welcome communication with other scholars who share this interest.

John Rempel
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Faculty Positions

President, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN.

Nominations and/or letters of application with CV or résumé may be submitted to Randall Jacobs, Chair of the Search Committee, in any of these ways:

- * By e-mail: AMBSsearch@mennoniteeducation.org
- * Via the Mennonite Education Agency Web site: www.mennoniteeducation.org/AMBSfeedback
- * Through postal mail to AMBS Presidential Search Committee, Mennonite Education Agency, 63846 County Road 35 Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46528-9621.

See www.ambs.edu/news-and-publications/search for more information.

Director of Nursing, Bethel College, North Newton, KS.

The Director provides educational and administrative leadership to the Department of Nursing. Duties include managing: class schedules and teaching assignments, departmental budgets, curriculum development and revision, and student recruitment and admission. Ph.D. prepared applicants desired, M.S.N. required. See www.bethelks.edu/bc/careers/openings.php for complete application details. AA/EOE

Bethel College invites applications for two Cabinet-level positions:

The **Vice President for Admissions** manages the Admissions department responsible for recruitment of students. The **Vice President for Student Life** manages the Student Life Department responsible for student services on the largely residential campus. Both positions work collaboratively with other areas on campus to maximize the recruitment of students and to assure an excellent student experience. The VP for Admissions position is open immediately and will be filled by July 1. The VP for Student Life position will begin July 1. See www.bethelks.edu/bc/careers/openings.php for complete application details. AA/EOE

Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA.

The Center for Justice and Peacemaking invites applications for a full-time faculty position in a graduate program in **Conflict Transformation** with a specialization in Development and Restorative Justice. Position begins August 2009. Application review begins immediately. See www.emu.edu/humanresources/vacancy/fac-CJP.html for further details.

Eastern Mennonite University invites applications for a full-time faculty position in **Theater**. Position begins August 2009. Application review begins immediately. See www.emu.edu/humanresources/vacancy/fac-theatre.htm for further details.

Bluffton University invites applications for a full time, tenure-track faculty position in **Social Work** beginning fall 2009. MSW degree from an accredited social work program and minimum of two years of practice experience is required. PhD or ABD preferred. Should demonstrate effective teaching skills and experience. Teach a range of courses including human behavior in the social environment, macro practice, social welfare and children and family services. Ability to teach courses in geriatrics and/or criminal justice is a plus. Responsibilities of all faculty include student advising and teaching courses in the general education curriculum, which emphasizes an integrated, interdisciplinary approach to the liberal arts and sciences. Scholarship is supported and service activities with community/church are encouraged. Review of applications continues until an appointment is made. Compensation is commensurate with education and experience within the university pay scale. Send letter of interest, curriculum vita or resume, three letters of reference (submitted directly from referee or if necessary from placement office), and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Academic Affairs, 1 University Drive, Bluffton, Ohio, 45817-2104. www.bluffton.edu/about/employment/fac-swk. Bluffton University welcomes applications from all academically qualified persons who respect the Anabaptist/Mennonite peace church tradition and endorse Christian higher education in a liberal arts environment. Members of underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply. EOE.

Events

“Mennonite Music across Borders”

June 4 - 8, 2009, Conrad Grebel University College

Sound in the Lands 09 is a festival with multiple concerts, performances, workshops, and an academic conference with papers and presentations that address issues of Mennonite-rooted peoples and their local and global music making. This event will feature music from every corner of the world, across musical genres from Afrobeat to choral singing, gospel to alternative, improvisational to classical. Check out the performer list, the schedule, and find registration information at www.grebel.uwaterloo.ca/soundinthelands. Register before May 4 for the early bird price!

“Anabaptist Convictions after Marpeck”

June 26-28, 2009, Bluffton University

An interdisciplinary conference that explores historical and contemporary Anabaptist convictions with particular attention to Marpeck and the Marpeck circle. Keynote speakers are Neal Blough, John Rempel, Martin Rothkegel, and Heidi Miller Yoder. Registration and further are available at marpeck.com.

All students from Mennonite colleges and seminaries are eligible for a travel and registration bursary through the Marpeck Fund.

Book Notes

Marlene Epp, *Mennonite Women in Canada: A History*. University of Manitoba Press, 2008.

Gish, Arthur G. *At-Tuwani Journal: Hope and Non-violent Action in a Palestinian Village*. Herald, 2008.

Jon Isaak, ed., *The Old Testament in the Life of God's People: Essays in Honor of Elmer A. Martens*. Eisenbrauns, 2009.

Schipani, Daniel S. and Bueckert, Leah Dawn, eds., *Interfaith Spiritual Care: Understandings and Practices*. Pandora, 2009.

Schweitzer, Steven, ed., *In Celebration of Wisdom: Life and Meaning in Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes*. IMS and Herald Press, 2009.

Tripp York, *Anesthesia: A Brief Reflection on Contemporary Aesthetics*. Seaburn, 2008.

Tripp York, *Living on Hope while Living in Babylon: The Christian Anarchists of the 20th Century*. Cascade, 2009.

Journals

Conrad Grebel Review 27.1 (Winter 2009) features Alfred Neufeld's 2008 Bechtel Lectures, entitled, "The Mennonite Experience in Paraguay." Note also that book reviews are posted on the *CGR* website and remain online indefinitely. See www.grebel.uwaterloo.ca/academic/cgreview/reviews.shtml

Direction: A Mennonite Brethren Forum 37.2 (Fall 2008) is entitled "Can the Soul be Saved?" It features reflections on contemporary scientists' and theologians' abandonment of the concept of the soul.

Mennonite Quarterly Review 82.3 (July 2008) features essays emerging from a conference on "The Amish in America" sponsored by the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College.

Journal of Mennonite Studies 26 (2008) contains articles on the theme "Family and Sexuality in Mennonite History."

Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology 10.1 (Spring 2009), entitled "Preaching," contains practical and theological reflections on preaching as well as model sermons.

Other News and Notes

Chad M. Bauman has recently received two academic awards. His book, *Christian Identity and Dalit Religion in Hindu India, 1868-1947* (Eerdmans, 2008) won the award for Best Book in Hindu-Christian Studies, 2006-2008, from the Society for Hindu-Christian Studies; and an article he submitted to the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* won the Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza New Scholars Award for 2008.

The Office of Justice and Peacebuilding at Mennonite Central Committee U.S has just released the 5th edition of a manual on mediation and facilitation, entitled: *Conflict Transformation and Restorative Justice Manual: Foundation and Skills for Mediation and Facilitation*.

Canadian Mennonite University has launched a new graduate-level program called the Master of Arts in Christian Ministry. (www.cmu.ca/news/machristianmin.html)