

July/August 2010

Minister's Spring Seminar

Spring Pastor's Bible Study, enjoyed on Laurelville's beautiful wooded grounds, is one of three opportunities offered annually by Leadership Commission for pastoral renewal and education in our Conference. The purpose of the week is to study a book of the Bible, alternating between Testaments. This year's study of 1st & 2nd Corinthians was combined with an analysis of conflicts that Paul was addressing in that church. Dr. Laura Brenneman from Bluffton University was the instructor for this year's session held on May 17-20.

Brenneman grew up in the Pinto congregation, where her parents continue to be active. Currently, she teaches in the Bible Department of Bluffton. Her doctoral thesis involved the study of Paul's letters, which she approached with her training in Conflict Transformation. Her conference background allowed her to speak more knowledgeably to us as she led the study.

The Corinthian church struggled with issues of Christian discipleship. There appears to be conflict surrounding allegiance to certain teachers, sexual relationships, and the ranking of spiritual gifts, to name a few. Conflict arose as a normal part of their community life, just as it does in ours. It was agreed that this is a normal part of living together. Conflict will occur as people meet and work together.

Early on, we were asked to position ourselves in relation to our tendency to either avoid or intensify the conflicts we experience. Toward the end of our week we were asked to speak about the metaphors we may use in describing conflict. What sort of pictures are in our minds? Various images were shared, for example: elephant in the room, being in a rowboat in a hurricane, bitten by a

snake, caught in the crossfire. These images can clarify the way a person will address conflict. Reconciliation had its own set of metaphors that we volunteered: healing, meeting halfway, good ending and new beginning, wrestling to a draw, win-win.

Paul had very direct and apparently stern words to say to the Corinthian church. There are questions as to how his tone may have stressed his relationship with the church, but a close reading of the material, quickly shows his deep love for them. He yearned for a restoration of their relationship with one another and himself. Though there were issues at work in the congregation that troubled him, his desire was to seek restoration. So often, our own conflicts head in the direction of separation that begins with antagonism and communication break-downs, retribution and separation from one another. Though we can easily hear Paul taking a firm stand, there is a sense that he was more eager to witness forgiveness and restoration of their close relationship rather than seek punishment for those who had erred.

Wherever people come into contact with



Above: Donna Mast and John Bender reflect on material from Corinthians.

Below: Enjoying a sweet ending to the week as Sandeep cranks homemade ice cream.



Spring Seminar (continued)



Above: Steve Sauder and Cynthia Lapp exchange ideas in the classroom.

Right: 2010 Spring Seminar participants
(row 1, l to r): Pat Cotchen, Joy Cotchen, Tricia Seigrist, Cynthia Lapp, Mary Ann Yoder.
(row 2, l to r): Steve Sauder, David Garber, Brent Seigrist, Laura Brenneman, Donna Mast, Conrad Mast.
(row 3, l to r): Dan Hertzler, John Bender, Jack Styer, Sandeep Thomas, and Lawrence Brenneman.



each other, there are likely to be conflicts. One of our missions is to be messengers of Christ's reconciliation. 2 Cor. 5:16-21 speaks of the central act of God in reconciling the world to Himself through Christ. Too often, the pain of our conflicts creates a reaction of avoidance. Rather than risk intensifying a painful situation, we walk away from each other, and reconciliation is not experienced.

Recent materials across my desk have pointed out the necessity of seeking a way to carry out these sort of discussions without tearing apart the body of Christ. Many writers come down to the bottom line that Paul shares, "seek unity through love." This is neither "agree to disagree," nor is it "go your way in peace." It is a very deliberate effort to glorify Christ in all we do, including our inevitable times of conflict. Unity is often seen in the successful reconciliation of conflicting parties.

Attendees also had opportunity to gather around the fire at night, eat together, walk, and rest. On Tuesday evening, Donna Mast had arranged to feed our group at Scottdale Menonite Church. For dessert, ice cream was hand-cranked while the pizza cooked. Just as church unity leaves a sweet after-taste, so did our meal together on this night. We reached an easy consensus that the meal we produced was the best we had experienced.

—Conrad Mast,
Scottdale

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PULSE Attracts Mennonite Young Adults to Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh Urban Leadership Service Experience (PULSE) celebrated its 15-year anniversary recently. The small Pittsburgh program rooted in the Mennonite tradition also celebrated a three-fold increase in applicants from last year and increased support from donors. Over the past 15 years, PULSE has brought over 100 college graduates to Pittsburgh and one-third of alumni still live in Pittsburgh.

According to Jessica Wilson (former board chair of PULSE), this growth comes from intentionally communicating PULSE's values and mission, which is to "cultivate a community of young servant leaders to transform Pittsburgh." "We've become more sure of who we are," Wilson says. "The values and the way we do our work draws in many young people from Mennonite backgrounds." At the same time, Wilson, who comes from a Catholic faith background, says PULSE shares values with other faith backgrounds and attracts non-Mennonites to the program. "While we aren't evangelical, PULSE allows us to share our faith and values," she says.

However, PULSE leadership is not intentionally working to become more ecumenical, Wilson says. The majority of participants come from Mennonite colleges and universities, as does a small majority of its eight-member board of directors. Additionally, director Chris Cooke praises the quality of the participants and alumni from the Mennonite colleges and universities, namely Eastern Mennonite University, Bluffton University, and Goshen College.

Emily Swora, one participant from Goshen College, works as the outreach coordinator at the Kelly Strayhorn Theater in East Liberty.

According to Swora, most of this year's participants identify as Mennonites and they have the strongest connection to Pittsburgh Mennonite Church over other churches in the city. One of the other participants, Kyle Wetherald, from Bluffton University, is a pastoral intern at PMC. Swora says she feels more rooted in "communal faith" than she felt in college. She says their house spirituality practices include discussing moral and ethical questions, singing together and talking about faith.

Swora says she has met young adults who have moved to Pittsburgh for a job and live alone, and she has experienced their desire for friends and connections. For her, PULSE offered an instant "support group," and much more. "There's accountability; it's hard to fall through the cracks," she says.

John Stahl-Wert, a current member of Pittsburgh Mennonite Church and president of the Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation, founded PULSE in 1994.

Stahl-Wert describes the three distinctive qualities of PULSE not found in Mennonite Voluntary Service programs and similar programs:

First, the seminar component—in which participants learn about the city, themselves and social issues during one afternoon per week.

Second, the placements at various non-profits in the city relate directly to the individual participants' interests and skill set. These placements include a diversity of work that includes art and radio. "[PULSE] is more about the development of the participant than a to-do list we may have for Pittsburgh," says Stahl-Wert "When we [have a to-do list], we miss a palate of creativity. I used to say to PULSE applicants, 'Your service matters but I'm interested in what will come to your mind and who you will become over time.'" Stahl-Wert says it appears that Mennonite Church USA is now thinking this way also about service and leadership development.

The third distinctive is PULSE's local funding and local board that is in support of Mennonite Church USA. Stahl-Wert describes PULSE as "spiritually connected" to Mennonite Church USA, but organizationally independent. "Local control offers sustainability," he says.

This 15-year anniversary provides a time to reflect on the past and plan for the future, as well as celebrate the overcoming of financial struggles PULSE faced about four years ago and to note PULSE's operational maturity, Wilson says.

Wilson says the board is considering a variety of growth areas: adding a new house with a similar program model, engaging a different population in a different program model and deep engagement with alumni and local supporters—all while staying true to PULSE's mission. "We're coming at opportunities in the future with operational strength," she says. "We're asking 'How can we pursue our mission even further?'"

Cooke says he hopes to see PULSE move into new areas of Pittsburgh as a mechanism for community and neighborhood development with a missional focus. "Place matters," he says, "The neighborhoods that Kingdom-minded folks help cultivate can have a profound effect on our cities."

—Anna Groff, *The Mennonite*



Top: This year's current PULSE group enjoying a day on top of Mount Washington: (l to r) Whitney Phillips, Liz Hopkins, Kyle Wetherald, Erica Weston, Charity Grimes, Emily Swora, Morgan Kraybill, and Alex Lake.

Above: The stately Victorian home (center) in the Highland Park neighborhood which is used as the PULSE residence.

ALLEGHENY MENNONITE CONFERENCE 135th ANNUAL MEETING

Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, August 6-8, 2010

Theme: *Compelled by Christ's Love*

Friday, August 6

- 3:00-6:00 Check-in and Registration
(in front of the small dining hall)
- 5:00 Light meal served
◦ (**not** included in meal packages)
-
- ORDER OF WORSHIP
- 7:00 Welcome Address and Announcements
Worship/Singing/Offering
Message: *J. Nelson Kraybill*
Closing
- 9:00 Snack
(Each family: please bring a snack item
to share either Friday or Saturday evening.)



J. Nelson Kraybill is Lead Pastor at Prairie Street Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Indiana. Previously, he served as President of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, as Programme Director at the London Mennonite Centre in England, as a pastor in Vermont, and as a high school teacher in Puerto Rico.

A frequent speaker in congregational and conference settings, Nelson has taught

widely on issues of mission, allegiance, early church, Anabaptism, and the book of Revelation. An alumnus of Goshen College (Goshen, Indiana), he received a master's degree from Princeton Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in New Testament from Union Theological Seminary in Virginia.

In addition to articles or chapters in various publications, he is author of Imperial Cult and Commerce in John's Apocalypse (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996); On the Pilgrims' Way: Conversations on Christian Discipleship During a Twelve-Day Walk Across England (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1999); and Apocalypse and Allegiance: Worship, Politics, and Devotion in the Book of Revelation (Brazos Press, 2010). He is a sailor, woodworker, and amateur astronomer; his wife Ellen is a

physical therapist and church musician. They are parents of Laura and Andrea.

Saturday, August 7

- 7:15-8:15 Open cash continental breakfast bar

Conference Session

- 8:30 Spiritual time
Moderator's address – S. David Garber
Conf. Youth Minister Report— Joy Cotchen
- 10:00 Brunch
- 11:15 Reporting
Executive Board Report
Mennonite Publishing Network: Russ Eanes
◦ Int. Conference Minister Report – Donna Mast
◦ Finance & Stewardship Comm. – Dave Mishler
- 12:45 Conference Reporting Sessions End
- 1:00-1:55 Seminars
- 2:05-3:00 Seminars
- 3:00 Free time for recreation, fellowship & relaxation
- 5:00 Dinner
- ORDER OF WORSHIP
- 7:00 Announcements
Worship/Singing/Offering
Message: *J. Nelson Kraybill*
Closing
- 9:00 Snack
- 9:15 Special entertainment

Sunday, August 8

- 8:00 Breakfast (included in meal packaging)

- ORDER OF WORSHIP
- 9:00 Prelude
Worship/Singing/Offering
Message- *J. Nelson Kraybill*
Children join for Closing Worship
- 11:30 Benediction
- 12:00 Lunch and Goodbyes

ALLEGHENY MENNONITE CONFERENCE: REGISTRATION FORM
135th ANNUAL MEETING – AUGUST 6-8, 2010

NAME: _____ CONGREGATION/AGENCY: _____
 ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____
 (NO phone reservations, please note: the conference office will close at noon Wed., Aug. 4th until after this event)

List **everyone's name (for NAMETAG purposes)** and the ages of children (*for better planning of children's activities*)

Name of those attending	Children's ages	Name of those attending	Children's ages
1.		4.	
2.		5.	
3.		6.	

YOUTH REGISTRATION (completed grade 9 - grade 12) (staying in the Lodge, remember to bring your own linens)

Name(s): _____ Phone: _____
 Total Cost \$85.00 (which includes meals, lodging, and conference fee) Total youth \$ _____

CONFERENCE FEE

Whether registering for all or any part of conference: the fee is \$6.00 per person and \$3.00 per child ages 3-11

Number of adults _____ x \$6.00 = _____
 Number of children (ages 3-11) _____ x \$3.00 = _____

Total Conference Fee \$ _____

LODGING (The rooms/sites are charged with one/two persons per room per night: *for each additional adult it will be \$10 per person per night*. Children up to age 11, lodging is free)

Rates per night are: Solarhouse/Guesthouse \$ 99 Cottage room \$75 (Linens are not provided for the cottages)

Camp Site with hookups (please designate which hookups are needed) \$25.00 (water ___/electric ___/sewer ___)

Camping site with only water or no hookups \$15.00 (water ___ no hookup ___)

Indicate lodging preference _____

Check which night/nights you will be staying: Friday _____ Saturday _____

Lodging requests will be on a first come first serve basis

Of nights _____ X rate _____ = Total Lodging \$ _____

MEALS must be PRE-REGISTERED for by JULY 16 (Children 2 and under are free)

Meal Packages (Saturday brunch through Sunday noon- **does NOT** include Friday evening)

	# of people	cost	total
3-11 years	_____ x	\$17.50	_____
12-yrs-adult	_____ x	\$35.00	_____

Total Cost of Packages \$ _____

MEALS:	<i>Individual meals</i>	
	3-11 YRS.	12-ADULTS
(not included in pkg.) Fri Supper	_____	_____
Sat. Brunch	_____	_____
Sat. Supper	_____	_____
Sun. Breakfast	_____	_____
Sun. Lunch	_____	_____

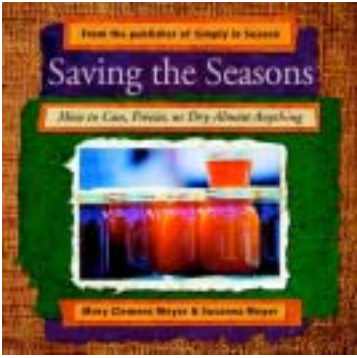
MAIL TO:
 Allegheny Mennonite Conference
 PO Box 12
 Somerset, PA 15501
 Or email as a PDF to: office@amc-mcusa.org

Individual meals are \$10.00 per adult and \$5.00 per child per meal with the exception of Sunday Breakfast which is \$7.50 per adult/\$3.75 per child
 All meals must be paid upon registration or upon check-in
ALL MEALS NEED TO BE REGISTERED BY JULY 16 with no refunds

TOTALS	Conference Fee	Youth	Lodging/ Camp Site	Meals	Grand Total	Deposit (please pay at least ¼ of total)	Balance Due

REGISTRATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED OR DATED BY JULY 16TH. Any registrations postmarked after July 16th will be charged a \$ 15 (per person) or \$30 (per family) late fee with no meals available!

Book Review: **Saving the Seasons**, co-authored by Mary Clemens Meyer and Susanna Meyer



From the book:

5 Reasons to Preserve Your Own Food:

EAT from known, local food sources - year round!

FILL your cupboards with foods free of chemical additives and preservatives.

LOCK IN peak flavors and nutrition by preserving the bounty of the season.

TASTE the full flavors of homemade; store bought brands just can't compare!

PRESERVE foods while they're plentiful, and the benefits last all year—with tastes you won't soon forget.

Not that long ago, many people knew how to preserve food. Information about canning, freezing and drying was passed down from generation to generation. But that's not the case today, say Susanna Meyer and Mary Clemens Meyer, co-authors of *Saving The Seasons: How To Can, Freeze, or Dry Almost Anything*, a new book from Herald Press.

"Many younger people today want to preserve food, but don't know how to do it," says Susanna "Maybe their grandmother canned, or their mother used to, but that generational knowledge hasn't been passed down."

"Many families no longer have a tradition of preserving food," adds Mary, who is also Susanna's mother. "They have not learned what the more rural population of a century ago knew about how to pick, prepare, and process food to keep for the future." Passing on tips and ideas for preserving food was one reason why the two decided to create *Saving the Seasons*.

"We wanted to provide a clear and easy-to-use guide for those who want to preserve their own food, but don't know how," says Susanna, who directs agricultural production at Grow Pittsburgh, a non-profit organization that produces food in the city and helps people create new gardens.

"It's especially helpful for those without a farming or gardening tradition," adds Mary, who, along with her husband, grows certified organic vegetables and fruit in Fresno, Ohio. "It tells the best way to preserve a certain food, and exactly how to do it."

The two note that the book also comes along at a time when more people are expressing an interest in eating locally grown and seasonal food. "More people care about where their food comes from," says Mary. "They want to know who grew it and under what conditions. The easiest way to get those answers is to grow food yourself, or buy directly from the grower."

"People are becoming more interested in issues

like food safety, gardening, and supporting local farmers," Susanna adds, noting that tighter household budgets also play a part in decisions to preserve food.

They both think that *Saving the Seasons* will be of particular interest to those who bought *Simply in Season*, a cook book from Herald Press that celebrates cooking and eating locally grown, seasonal food.

"One of the challenges of cooking seasonally for many in the U.S. and Canada is not having the food you need when it is out of season," Susanna says. "Preserving food while it's in season is a great way to make sure you have it later in the year."

"We include information about when produce is in season, and the best way to preserve each item," states Mary. "Learning to preserve your own food makes living seasonally a year-round possibility, not just a one-season experience."

The book also grows out of their faith, they say. "Being a Christian to me means caring for God's earth and learning from the created world," says Mary. "The process of planting, weeding, waiting, and then finally harvesting, preserving and eating helps me feel that I am a participant in God's creation, not just a bystander."

"Growing up Mennonite, I learned that I was responsible to care for my own health and the health of the environment and people around me," adds Susanna. "Growing and preserving my own food helps me live out these values."

Susanna hopes *Saving the Seasons* will "inspire people who might otherwise think they can't preserve their own food." Adds Mary: "I'm excited about sharing the how-to of preserving with a new generation of gardeners and eaters."

Saving the Seasons: How to Can, Freeze, or Dry Almost Anything is available from Mennonite Publishing Network at www.mpn.net/savingtheseasons or by calling 1-800-245-7894 x278. Lovely full-color photos throughout, priced at \$24.99 USD.

—John Longhurst, Mennonite Publishing Network

"A must-have follow-up to Simply in Season, Saving the Seasons takes eating locally and seasonally to the next step. Now one can eat locally and seasonally year round with the knowledge of how to preserve or save the seasons. With the aid of the simple steps and photos, the novice will feel quite comfortable saving the seasons, and the experienced will learn new tricks. All will have wonderful recipes to try." — author Mary Beth Lind

"What a treat to be reminded that it's not just technically possible to keep summer in your pantry all year long, but incredibly delicious. There's nothing at the supermarket that comes close to the tastes in these pages—and nothing that will help much more in the fight to build a local food system to replace the vulnerable, unhealthy, and sprawling mess that is our current lot." — author Bill McKibben

College Students ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Several students from Allegheny Conference have had the opportunity to visit other corners of the globe as part of their college studies in 2009-2010: **Alicia Bender** (Pittsburgh) is currently in Nicaragua; **Michael Spory** (First), South Africa; **Emma Stahl-Wert** (Pittsburgh) is currently in New Zealand; **Larisa Zehr** (Pittsburgh) visited the Middle East.

The following students from Allegheny Conference were named to the spring 2010 Dean's List at their respective colleges (3.75 GPA or higher):

Emily Spory was among those on the Dean's List for both Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 at Pennsylvania Highlands Community College. She is a freshman majoring in Early Childhood Education and is a member of Kaufman.

From Eastern Mennonite University:

Allison Eanes, a first-year liberal arts major with an elementary education licensure, prek-6, is the daughter of Russ and Jane Eanes of Scottdale, Pa. and a member of Scottdale Mennonite Church.

James Hall, a 2010 graduate with a BA in biochemistry, is the son of Marvin and Joyce Hall of State College, Pa. and a member of University Mennonite Church.

Michael Spory, a junior pursuing a double major in photography and art, is the son of Mel and Cathy Spory of Boswell, Pa. and a member of First Mennonite Church.

Joseph Spory, a junior with a double major in history and social science with a secondary education licensure, is the son of Ronald and Denise Spory of Johnstown, Pa. and a member of New Life Mennonite Church.

Anna Weaver, a freshman psychology major, is the daughter of Neal and Laurie Weaver of Scottdale, Pa. and a member of Scottdale Mennonite Church.

Larisa Zehr, a junior peace-building and development major, is the daughter of Dianne Zehr of Pittsburgh, Pa. and Kenton Zehr of Belton, TX and a member of Pittsburgh Mennonite Church.

From Goshen College:

Annika Miller, daughter of Merrill and Cindy Miller of Scottdale, is a sophomore studying elementary education at Goshen College. She is a 2009 graduate of Southmoreland Senior High School and attends Scottdale Mennonite Church.

From Hesston College:

Daniel Coburn, earned a place on the Honor Roll (3.50-3.89 GPA). He is a sophomore studying pastoral ministries and will be seeking a pastorate in the coming months. He is from Accident, MD and a member of Glade.

Melina Hunsberger, also was listed on this spring's Honor Roll. She is a sophomore majoring in education (heading to Goshen in the fall). She is the daughter of Dan and Mariela Hunsberger from Hollsopple, PA and is a member at Kaufman.

Leah Rittenhouse earned a place on the Dean's List (3.90-4.0 GPA). She is a freshman in the disaster management program, is the daughter of Jane Rittenhouse and is a member of Scottdale Mennonite.

The following students from Allegheny Conference earned their bachelor's degree this spring:

Eastern Mennonite University:

James Hall, a biochemistry major, is the son of Marvin and Joyce Hall of State College, PA and a member of University Mennonite Church.

Jonathan Wiens, a peace, justice, and conflict studies major, is the son of Timothy Wiens and Mary Schumacher of Silver Spring, MD and a member of Hyattsville Mennonite Church.

Goshen College:

Hannah Miller, a peace, justice and conflict studies major, is the daughter of Merrill and Cindy Miller of Scottdale, and is a member of Scottdale Mennonite. She will be a resident caregiver at the L'Arche Community in Kilkenny, Ireland during the coming year.

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Conference Calendar ▼

July 4-9

Seekers Camp, ages 12-14
Laurelville

July 11-16

Disciples Camp, ages 14-17
Laurelville

July 16-17

Tri-State Relief Sale
McHenry, MD

July 18-20

Mini Camp, ages 6-8
Laurelville

August 3

AC News deadline for
Sept./Oct. issue

August 6-8

Annual AMC Conference
Laurelville

September 10-12

Camporee at Pine Springs
Camp, Jennerstown
Ages 8-12

October 1

AC News deadline for
Nov./Dec. issue

November 6

Fall Delegate Session

Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to *Allegheny Conference News*, 1001 Arthur Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683

South Africa and the World Turned Upside Down



Above: (l to r) Mike Erb, Jason Ropp, and Michael Spory pose in front of a small host family home made of stones, plastered together with mud. They are in Malealea, a small village in Lesotho and wearing the traditional Basotho blankets called "seanamarenas."

Editor's Note: Below is an eloquent account of an EMU Cross-Cultural experience in South Africa during the past school year; remembered and written by one of our own students from Allegheny Conference.

Typically, the visual image we have in our minds of Africa is that of rolling savannahs where elephants, giraffes, and zebras slowly graze their way to the water hole: stunningly beautiful, harshly exotic. While this may be the Africa of travel brochures and Disney movies, this is not the Africa I saw as we touched down in Johannesburg after an 18 hour flight with a student group from Eastern Mennonite University, nor the Africa we would see over the following three months of our cross cultural experience.

On our journey through South Africa and Lesotho, we saw desperate poverty and unbelievable wealth side by side, tasting the generosity of both. We saw the remnants of apartheid everywhere, racism so overwhelmingly systemic that it still lingers in housing, education, the economy, and social interaction fifteen years after its political demise. We lived with families of every race, gaining African brothers and mothers and sisters and grannies along the way, catching glimpses of Jesus with every step, from the shantytowns to the mountain villages.

Our group of 24 students and three leaders began the first of our three-week home stays with black families in Soweto, the monstrous, sprawling city of four million people outside Johannesburg. From the barely-making-it environment of Soweto, we moved to the Lesotho mountain village of Malealea, a beautifully hard land of enormous skies and nights glittering with stars, yet full of the sadness that comes with AIDS and lives endured without opportunity. Our final weeks were spent in Cape Town, living with wealthier

mixed races families still feeling the growing pains from their marginalized apartheid existence.

Why does seeing more of the world make it so much harder to live in it? How can I pick up the pieces of my old life, and come back? Living in South Africa brought me face to face with injustice, with people who cooked our breakfasts but only owned one pair of shoes, with those who called me brother but might never see their country's border. How will these sights and smells and relationships fit in with this comfortable American middle-class life, with the idea of a suburban type of Jesus who sings a strong bass line and showers every day?

I cannot say we introduced Jesus to these people, because he was at work long before my feet touched that red clay, the kind that sticks to your shoes. He has been walking and moving in South Africa just as he has been present here. But catching glimpses of him in a mountain sunrise or through the bars of Nelson Mandela's prison cell has left me with more questions than answers, with an American life that no longer makes sense and a faith with more gray areas to question than truths to cling to. But I have come back with the notion that God might not be in the business of "fixing" Africa any more than he might "fix" me. So I must try and walk daily beside a Savior who sometimes seems silent, who draws in the dirt, and who can somehow be maddeningly present in both the tin-roofed shacks and in my carpeted Mennonite church sanctuary, a Savior who can simply walk beside the brokenhearted, whether they were born in the mountains of Western Pennsylvania or in the ragged townships of South Africa.

The Africa I found was where beauty and chaos visit each other like neighbors, where true faith can still share a taxi crowded with doubt, where life and death dance together around the same cooking fire.

This is the Africa I will remember.

—Michael Spory, *First Mennonite*