



w i n d o w

For people “tugged” toward God

“It was so life-giving,” Jewel Gingerich Longenecker says of her seminary study and earning a Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree in 1992. “I was so changed by seeing the Bible and theology in new ways. I want people to experience what I experienced at seminary.”

Jewel, who is associate dean for leadership educa-

tion, oversees the nontraditional programs Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary offers—the biblical and theological education opportunities that are not part of degree programs.

“Nontraditional programs open the door for people who want to grow their faith but don’t see themselves as ministers,” Jewel explains. “They may feel tugged toward God but can’t name what they’re looking for. These programs provide a nonthreatening environment to explore how AMBS can speak to their internal questions.”

The AMBS Church Leadership Center, which encompasses a variety of non-degree programs, helps AMBS serve different kinds of people:

- people who are looking for opportunities for more in-depth study of the Bible and faith;

- people who want to explore ministry but do not have college degrees and need an intermediate step before entering seminary study;

- people who have seminary degrees and want to continue to develop their skills and their understanding of the Bible, the church, pastoral care and other aspects of ministry.

Some Church Leadership Center programs are available across Canada and the U.S. For example, the Pastoral Studies Distance Education program (PSDE) is college-level study in which participants use curriculum either in print or online and work with an instructor and a mentor. Another example is the Spiritual Guidance Seminar, in which AMBS faculty travel to different regions to provide training for people who want to become spiritual directors.

“I would love to get people here to AMBS,” Jewel says, and her hope would be that they would immerse themselves in study as she did. However, she recognizes that not everyone can do this or is ready to do this. So the Church Leadership Center offers the kinds of programs in which anyone can explore the resources AMBS offers and can use those resources to enhance their faith and their participation in their congregations. ●

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Jewel Gingerich Longenecker is associate dean for leadership education, AMBS. For more about the Church Leadership Center, see the AMBS web site, www.ambs.edu; enter “Church Leadership Center” (with quotation marks) in the search box.

Reconnecting with the seminary

Pastor returns to AMBS

She's not a student, professor, staff member or guest. But she's at AMBS for three months, sitting in on classes, singing in the ensemble, meeting with professors, living on campus.

Louise Wideman is the first person to take part in the AMBS Pastor Sabbatical program. In this program pastors spend sabbatical time at AMBS, while Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, director of the Church Leadership Center, arranges ways in which AMBS can help meet their goals.

Louise came to AMBS in August with five goals:

- meet regularly with a spiritual director;
- talk with professors;
- talk with area pastors;

- visit area churches;
- attend chapel and forum and get involved in AMBS community life.

When she saw the class offerings for fall, she added one more goal: audit three classes.

During the eight years Louise was pastor at Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston, Kan., the timing was never right for a sabbatical. In exchange, the congregation agreed to extend her salary for several months after she left the congregation in May. She took some vacation time first and by August was ready to get involved in learning opportunities.

A sabbatical program fee Louise has paid covers administrative costs and sessions with a spiritual



Louise Wideman, in transition between two pastorates, is spending several months at AMBS. Living in the Frey Guesthouse at the edge of the campus gives Louise access to seminary resources and community life.

director and professors. In addition, she can take advantage of the wide array of Mennonite churches in the area and the many campus life activities.

While at AMBS Louise was called to be associate pastor of First Mennonite Church in Bluffton, Ohio, an assignment she begins in

mid-November.

For Louise, a significant dimension of this time is getting reacquainted with the seminary community she left in 1993 when she graduated with a Master of Divinity degree. "This is a wonderfully affirming and nurturing community to be part of," she said. ●

Workshops focus on worship planning

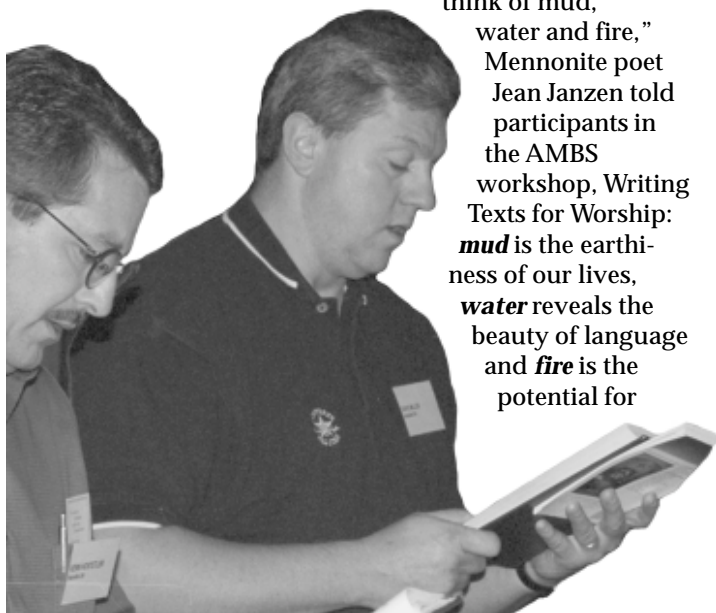
When writing material for worship, think of mud, water and fire," Mennonite poet Jean Janzen told participants in the AMBS workshop, *Writing Texts for Worship*: **mud** is the earthiness of our lives, **water** reveals the beauty of language and **fire** is the potential for

worship to transform us. Lois Wetherill of Bluffton, Ohio, found this metaphor helpful; "Jean opened up new possibilities in using language, letting fewer words speak more powerfully."

This workshop was one of several recent events that provided resources for worship planners. Another was the annual Advent Planner which drew 31 people to campus to explore Mennonite Church advent worship resources.

Participant Ron Roth, pastor of Greeley (Colo.) Mennonite Church, said, "The more I can take back to the worship committee, the more I can involve them. My own hands-on

experience is helpful; then I can turn the materials over to the committee and say, "You go from here.'" ●



David Miller and Vern Hostetler of Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Hartville, Ohio, participated in the Advent Planner workshop on October 7.



Lois Wetherill, member of the worship commission, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, participated in *Writing Texts for Worship*, October 4.

Programs for lay leaders, youth and pastors

The AMBS Church Leadership Center is an umbrella for a variety of ongoing and emerging programs. Among them anyone in the church—lay leaders, youth, pastors—can find resources for their faith and ministry.

Continuing education.

Workshops, seminars and consultations on topics important to church life. Pastors Week and other events provide resources and nurture on topics related to ministry issues.

Off-campus intensive courses.

The **Spiritual Guidance Seminar** and **AMBS Preaching Institute** offer participants in many geographic locations opportunities to strengthen their ministries. The Church Leadership Center also cosponsors the **Institute for Anabaptist Leadership** for Mennonite business and church leaders. Other cosponsors are Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Mennonite Health Services, Mennonite Mutual Aid and Laurelville Mennonite Church Center.

!Explore: A Theological Program for High School Youth.

Lilly Endowment has awarded AMBS more than \$1.8 million to develop a theological program in which select high school students will explore theological study and be encouraged to consider a vocation in ministry.

Pastoral Studies Distance Education.

PSDE provides opportunities for pastors and church members to do theological education at the undergraduate level from anywhere in the world.

Pastor sabbatical program.

Pastors may spend a sabbatical at AMBS, where they can receive spiritual direction, meet with faculty and participate in campus life. (See story on p. 2.)

A diploma program.

Sponsored by AMBS and regional conferences, this program will provide Mennonite theological education to church leaders without bachelor's degrees or Mennonite seminary background.

AMBS alumni audit.

For a reduced rate, AMBS graduates may enroll in any course open to auditors on the AMBS campus in Elkhart.

Pastor Welcome Program.

Pastors who are new to the Mennonite Church and who have not previously studied at AMBS or Eastern Mennonite Seminary may take one AMBS course free.

A welcome/resource center.

This center will provide church leaders a place at AMBS for interaction, stimulation and nurture.

A program to encourage "shoulder-tapping."

The Center will develop a seminar and resources on fostering a "culture of encouragement" and how to call leaders.

A worship and preaching web site. A web site will be developed to provide resources related to worship and preaching.



Keith Harder of the Office of Ministerial Leadership of Mennonite Church USA is one of the members of the Church Leadership Center Advisory Committee. Other members are **Jorge Vielman**, Iglesia Menonita del Buen Pastor, Goshen, Ind.; **Ron Guengerich**, Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio; **Dave Suter**, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.; **Marlene Kropf**, Office of Congregational Life for Mennonite Church USA; and **Rebecca Slough, Arthur Paul Boers** and **Nelson Kraybill** of AMBS.

To learn more about these programs and what they might offer for you, see **the AMBS web site, www.ambs.edu**, and search for "Church Leadership Center" (use quotation marks for the most efficient search). You also may contact Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, associate dean for leadership education: jglongenecker@ambs.edu

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Fall enrollment

The incoming class this fall is significant for several factors. Compare this year with last in the chart below to see the changes.

	2001	2002
Total student body	188	185
Full-time equivalency	87	94
Returning students	90	81
New students	32	46
One-course students	52	31
Off-campus students	14	27

Incoming class details

Mennonite students	18	35
Other than Mennonite students	15	11
Students 35 and over	24	12
Students under 35	9	34
Master of Divinity students	19	27
Male students	9	20
Female students	24	26
Full-time students	15	35

President's Window

Email responses came promptly when AMBS faculty released a brief statement in October opposing war with Iraq (see below). Trevor Williams, bridge builder between Catholics and Protestants at Corymeela in Northern Ireland, wrote simply, "Thank you for this clear act of witness."

Maggie Liechty of Berne, Ind., registered support but added, "Taking the way of nonviolent resistance does not assure our freedom from harm. It may mean the path of the cross."

Questions emerged about how Christian peacemakers witness most effectively. "It is easy to say we oppose government policy on war," a friend wrote, "but we also need to offer a viable alternative."

Academic Dean Loren Johns disagreed: "It is not



our responsibility to fix all international conflicts. We are not obligated to do Christian ethics on behalf of unbelievers. However, we can say we love our enemies—and that means exploring what love would mean in this case."

What love would mean in this case could vary widely. Christians in the workplace may speak for restraint and reconciliation when colleagues advocate war. Some believers may address government officials, while others will join Christian Peacemaker Teams. Youth may consider careers that build under-

standing between nations. Although forces of violence sometimes appear so overwhelming that such peacemaking efforts look naïve or unrealistic, we follow the way of peace simply because Jesus calls us to do so.

Christians in all walks of life need biblical and theological insight to live faithfully when complex issues arise. For this reason, AMBS plans educational opportunities beyond those designed just for pastors.

The AMBS Church Leadership Center, featured in this issue of *AMBS Window*, offers seminars and classes that point mind and heart of any believer toward the One who is Lord of history and who alone can make wars cease to the end of the earth.

— J. Nelson Kraybill

Alumni News

Charlene Epp, Master of Divinity 1999, was ordained on July 14. She is chaplain at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center in Portland, Ore.

Chris Marshall, Master of Arts: Peace Studies 1996, is author of *Beyond Retribution: A New Testament Vision for Justice, Crime and Punishment*, published by Eerdmans. The book, which is part of the Institute of Mennonite Studies series *Studies of Peace in Scripture*, was named one of the Top Ten Books for Parish Ministry published in 2001 by the Academy of Parish Clergy.

Lois Barrett, Master of Divinity 1983, was installed as director of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary—Great Plains Extension on September 22, in Hesston, Kan.

Gerald Studer, Master of Divinity 1971, delivered the final installment of his extensive Bible collection to the AMBS library in August.

AMBS Faculty Commit to Peacemaking

The following statement was approved by unanimous action of the AMBS faculty on October 9, 2002:

"As followers of Jesus Christ, we cannot support a war against Iraq. The sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus reconcile humans to God and to one another. God overcomes evil through suffering love, and calls Christians to love and pray for our enemies. If there is a war against Iraq, we will lament and oppose it. We commit ourselves to preach the gospel of peace, to work for justice, and to promote reconciliation between nations through the power of the Holy Spirit. We invite our brothers and sisters in Christ to join in these commitments, and welcome dialogue about these convictions."

Panorama

Leadership Clinics

In-depth clinics on January 31, 2003, explore aspects of and resources for ministry:

- Never Call Them Jerks: Healthy Responses to Difficult Behavior, with Arthur Paul Boers;
- The Introvert as Effective Pastor, with John Esau;
- Enhancing Ministry and Bible Study Using a Computer, with Perry Yoder;
- Building a Missional Church: How to Begin, with Art McPhee;
- Worship Planning for Lent 2003, with Marlene Kropf and Karmen Krahn Fehr;
- Preaching Clinic, with June Alliman Yoder.

See www.ambs.edu and enter "Leadership Clinics" (with quotation marks) in the search box.

To refer a student to AMBS

If you know someone with gifts for ministry, pass the name on to us and we will begin a conversation about the possibility of seminary study.

You may send a message to admissions@ambs.edu. You also may send the information through the web site: www.ambs.edu. Enter "Recommend a student" in the search area and follow the link to the form.

AMBS Window has been published by AMBS since the fall of 1990 without volume and issue numbers. With the redesign that began with the summer 2002 issue, we are assigning volume and issue numbers, taking into account the twelve-year continuous publication of this newsletter.

Fall 2002

Volume 13 Issue 1

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

Editor and Designer: Mary E. Klassen
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Distributed three times a year as a supplement to *Canadian Mennonite* and *The Mennonite*.



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