

E-MANUAL

Special EMC 20th Anniversary Edition

The Newsletter of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, MN

February 2017

Vol. 64

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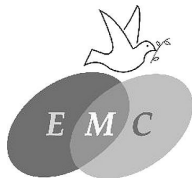
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**Emmanuel
Mennonite
Church**

Reflections of Our Beginning

By Ernie Miller

My comments relate to the humble beginnings of this congregation.

After a long, contentious decade plus it became undeniably evident that there were in fact two congregations meeting at Faith Mennonite Church. In September 1997 Council called for a vote to provide some basis for moving forward. The result of the vote was a shocking revelation to one-third of the membership. I placed an announcement in the bulletin for the following Sunday inviting interested members to come to our home the next Sunday to discuss the vote and how we might respond. We moved the dining table off to the side, set up chairs for some 20 adults, put the youngsters in the adjoining room with legos, puzzles, games, and began our

discussion. The initial disappointment and, yes, some anger, soon gave way to more positive sentiments. It was decided that this meeting would mark the official end of feelings of negativity for our part. But what next?

Jim Neufeld asked if the group could meet for a worship service the next Sunday again at our home. Since Faith had just acquired the new (blue) Mennonite Hymnal, we approached Faith about borrowing the no longer used (red) hymnal; Faith graciously consented. It quickly became apparent in our group that there was no hint of going back. Those of us who were officers at Faith submitted our resignations.

We were determined to chart our own course. Easier said than done. We needed a place to meet, to elect leadership, to incorporate, to open a bank account, to secure IRS and MN accreditation as a tax exempt entity, to inform both the Northern District and the Iowa-Nebraska District that we intended to establish a new congregation, etc., etc. Fortunately for us the General Conference Mennonite Church (our Northern District connection) was the only religious group ever given a blanket IRS tax exempt certification, so our giving was deductible.

But where would we meet? After a Sunday or two of hauling our hymnbooks across the Augsburg campus, Warren Fuller recommended a former elementary school in Roseville that we could probably rent. We moved in, but had to set up and take down every time we met. Necessity being the mother of inventions, Marilyn created our ubiquitous "Job Schedule." I had to produce a bulletin every week and printed it at Kinkos on our way to church. We needed speakers for our Sunday gatherings, so members volunteered to bring the morning message. I bought books of sermons at the Luther Seminary bookstore.

Unbeknownst to the authors, a number of those sermons were read to the group—a Lutheran pastor from MN, the Archbishop of Canterbury to name just a few. Luther Seminary was the source of speakers as well as retired former pastors in the community. Sunday School for the children?—we all pitched in. We needed a guiding statement as to who we were; Lily Schroeder helped us work diligently through the education hour to produce our current statement.

By December 15 of the same year Emmanuel Mennonite Church had its Charter Service officiated at by both Conference Ministers. Marilyn, the Nussbaums and the Boers created our Cross banner at Thanksgiving for this event. We were now members of our own church.

**Emmanuel Mennonite Church
20th Anniversary
by Velma & Jim Neufeld**

The following are a few of our memories about the beginning of Emmanuel Mennonite Church.

Thanks to Ernie and Marilyn Miller for inviting a group of former Faith members to meet and explore the idea of beginning a new Mennonite congregation in the Twin Cities. For some of us who had been friends and long-time members at Faith, we felt a desire to continue some sort of fellowship together.

After we began meeting, and when trying to decide upon a name for the church, “Emmanuel Mennonite Church” was suggested, however with the initials EMC, Ernie Miller was concerned that some might call it “Ernie Miller’s Church.”

Prior to calling Mathew Swora as our first pastor, we would often be served by Elmer Suderman, a retired educator and minister, as well as Frank Vininga and Larry Wahlin, also retired ministers. We also had some of our own people lead the services.

As a group, we decided that we would not seek any loans or financial help but that we would build up our treasury before being able to support a minister. Since the beginning Emmanuel has

been a self-supporting congregation. We’re also happy that as a congregation, we have not owned our worship space, giving us the opportunity to be able to give financial support outside of our own congregation.

Charter Membership

**Those who signed the original Covenant Charter,
December 15, 1996**

“We covenant together to establish Emmanuel Mennonite Church. This involvement includes use of our time, talents, participation and prayers.”

James Poppelt	Marilyn Miller
S. Ernest Miller	Jim Neufeld
Steve Nussbaum	Deirdre L. Smeltzer
Sherwyn J. Smeltzer	Betty Loewen
Ken Loewen	Nancy Boer
Justin Boer	Jan William Boer
Filmona Gebreab	Andom Habteselassie
Temnit Gebreyesus	Warren Fuller
Margaret Janzen	Jack Janzen
Greta Cender-Poppelt	Laura Harder
Velma Neufeld	Jon Harder
Lily Schroeder	Carl Schroeder
Selamawit E. Adeda	Gedion E. Adeda
Vel Teichroew	Kimberly Loewen
Kay Nussbaum	

Children who signed

Hanna Nussbaum	Alicia Cender Poppelt
Kate Nussbaum	Meg Smeltzer
Brandon Boer	Sean Boer
Kebra Gebreab	Ruth Gebreab
Peter Gebreab	Tselote H. Abebe
Bete H. Abebe	

Membership also transferred from Faith Mennonite Church on June 2, 1997 along with those listed above were Art & Lois Kennel.

Initial Board of Directors

Selamawit E. Adeda	S. Ernest Miller
Jan Willem Boer	Greta Cender-Poppelt
Jon Harder	Sherwyn Smeltzer

A Note from the Editor

by Karen Schrock

In looking back over the past 20 years and doing a little research, I found that the E-Manual's first edition was published in June 2000. It has served as a way to communicate more in-depth with each other and as a platform to share thoughts, ideas and gifts. I took over as the editor with the fourth edition in March 2001.

This appeared in the first edition:

"IS SOMETHING MISSING?"

You, your Sunday School class, your family and your committee are invited to submit letters, essays, poems, artwork, etc. to each and every E-Manual. The next issue comes out in the middle of September, 2000. Submissions for future issues may be given directly to the editors, Mathew Swora and Claire Mayo.*

Thanks to Margaret Janzen, for the suggested title of Emmanuel's newsletter, and to the youth and middle school-ers who voted and chose E-Manual from among all the submitted titles."

*now Claire DeBerg

Over the years poetry, artwork, recipes, book reviews, reflections, and reports on conventions and conferences have been shared. We've met new members and learned a little more about each other.

While I thought this edition of the *E-Manual* would be all looking back and sharing stories, I received the following submission responding to an article by Philip Friesen appearing in the last edition of the newsletter. This is the perfect example of how we communicate through this medium and spark dialog with each other. I have tried to differentiate between Kristie's comments and Philip's responses by using different fonts.

Thank you to all who have participated with submissions over the years and for letting me put it all together for you!



E-Manual Response

to the article "Postscript On Male Leadership" by Philip Friesen in the November 2016 issue

by Kristie Mandel with responses by Philip Friesen

For the November issue of *E-Manual*, Philip Friesen submitted an article he entitled "Postscript on Male Leadership from 1 Timothy 2:11-15." After reading it, I felt strongly that I would like to offer a rebuttal. My seminary education and the busyness of the holidays has prevented me from giving this project the attention it deserves, but my hope is that by offering even a weak counterpoint, others will be encouraged to read the article through a more critical lens.

I do want to acknowledge that I appreciate Philip's heart, even if I disagree with his assessments. It's very refreshing that in an article advocating patriarchy, Philip still makes room for affirming the few atypical women called by God to positions of leadership. The following are points I would like to make about the article^[1]:

- "Perfect balance only guarantees perpetual conflict in a sinful world. That is why patriarchy was necessary." I recoil when I read this. Besides undermining the ideal of equality in Christ, this statement rubs salt into the wounds of the oppressed through the ages. Dictionary.com offers the following definition of patriarchy (1 of 4 definitions): "a social system in which power is held by men, through cultural norms and customs that favor men and withhold opportunity from women"

Kristie, I apologize for hurt I have caused. I welcome your response and consider your sending it to me a true act of friendship and respect. I do not advocate patriarchy. Please check out some clarifications and responses to your challenges that I have attached, and I will certainly welcome anything more you care to say. Please do poke as many holes in my position as you can find.

- With regard to the statement above that makes you recoil, please note that I said "was necessary," not is necessary. In Christ the old accommodating structures of patriarchy/ monarchy were made obsolete for us who believe. Before Christ, surely

God would not have permitted patriarchy had there been another way. (My definition of an accommodating structure as presented in my other published writing that of a social arrangement God did not intend, but which God permits when unbelief prevents our appropriating God best for ourselves and the community.)

- This past summer I communicated with Erica Littlewolf (of MCC) for help with my Independent Study regarding Native Americans. One of the tools she shared with me was a graphic called “The Oppression Tree.” The social factors noted in the tree's branches are visibly connected to factors in the tree trunk, and ultimately sustained by the tree's roots. The four roots of the tree are labeled as white supremacy, colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy. For anyone familiar with this graphic and/or the mentality behind it, calling patriarchy necessary is quite hurtful.
- The social factors Erica describes are true and her diagram is useful. But really, I do know patriarchy better than most of my American contemporaries including you. I married into patriarchy full blown and have seen it in action quite intimately. I have also studied patriarchy and written about it (Chapter 3 in *Old Testament Roots of Nonviolence*). The patriarchy you Americans know is a paltry, emasculated form compared with the real thing we read about in Genesis and which parts of the world still practice.
- I believe that the gospel of Jesus is the principle factor that has brought down these two accommodating structures, patriarchy and monarchy. Jesus' yeast in the loaf parable is highly revealing in this regard. I won't take the time to chronicle the history of how monarchy and patriarchy began to disintegrate after Jesus was here, but I'm convinced that feminism and egalitarianism could never have been spawned without a couple millenniums of gospel yeast softening up the old system.
- But that does not make the autonomous individualism of egalitarianism any more godly. Egalitarianism cannot provide the necessary social cohesion for a just and orderly world. It is still based upon the Darwinian principle of competition and survival of the fittest, and in the end the most

powerful groups will define equality in terms of their own self interest. As in George Orwell's novel, *Animal Farm*, some animals will be more equal than others. I fear the current epidemic of rape in our universities may be already a warning of further chaos ahead. In the past patriarchy reigned because of unbelief, and today persistent unbelief, if not repented of, will bring it back or (more likely) something even worse.

- The commentary of this passage as posted on biblegateway.com is very helpful in understanding the ambiguity of its relevance for the church today. Are Paul's words universal instructions to all women at all times, or were they specifically aimed at a particular group for a particular reason? Indeed, Paul's statement that women will be saved through childbearing has troubled me (as I myself am a woman who has been unable to bear any children) for a long time. Some take this statement to be a reference to Christ being born of a woman—you can read the commentary for more info on that. Paul's general teaching elsewhere in the Scriptures seem to advocate a more inclusive stance toward women in the church. If one takes his words (that women will be saved by child-bearing) literally, their juxtaposition to Paul's instructions in 1 Corinthians 7 raise some questions. “Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I do (verse 8; NIV).” “An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband (verse 34).” If women's salvation is somehow entwined with their ability to bring forth offspring, wouldn't it seem counter-productive for Paul to encourage women who were childless to remain in such a state?
- I pretty much agree with this commentary. The duty of giving birth to a savior was fulfilled with the birth of Jesus, and womankind was set free of that burden. I suspect that Paul's application of “being saved in childbirth” may have been intended as an encouragement to the women of

his time whose role was principally that of raising children—an encouragement that what they did was dignified and worthwhile. I wish I had been more clear about that. In my recent published article (in *The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory*) I insist that the integrity and dignity of marriage is in no way dependent upon having children. I'LL BE HAPPY TO GIVE A FREE COPY TO ANYONE INTERESTED.

- “There is hierarchy in the Godhead, an asymmetrical relationship, if you please.” What’s important to recognize in relation to this statement is that there is a difference between ontological and economic subordination. [See <https://www.gotquestions.org/subordination-Trinity.html>] Basically all three persons of the Trinity are equal, but relationally they submit to each other. I don’t think this necessarily refutes the point Philip goes on to make, but I feel it’s an important distinction to make theologically.
- There isn’t anything here I would disagree with either. But let me ask you, if economic subordination is appropriate for the Godhead, why is not economic subordination appropriate for his Image on earth between man and woman in marriage? Complementarians argue for economic subordination (if I understand them), but they tend to drag in all kinds of culturally conditioned ideas on male/female roles that I don’t accept at all.
- “Men have been first in exploration, invention, and building of civilization... Men were the explorers, the builders, the conquerors, and the managers. They took the number one position because they were number one at creation.” If you think women didn’t actively engage in things like exploring, inventing, conquering, or managing, I encourage you to take some time to do a google search or two. I get plenty of results but don’t have the time to comb through all of them. I struggle with understanding the statement that men are number one at creation. What does that even mean? When I think of creation I think of creativity... and in that vein who can deny the feminine creative spirit? From songs, to paintings, to fashion, to food—women surely rival their male counterparts in such arenas.

- You’ve got a point, and I can’t say I disagree with it. Still I did not say that “women didn’t actively engage in things like exploring, inventing, conquering, or managing.” I tried to say that men typically initiated these activities, after which women also participated, and I should have mentioned that once engaged, women frequently outdid the men. But did I really deny the creative spirit in women? What did I say to that effect?
- I am just trying to make some sense out of what Paul wrote. Can we just ignore “the man was first” and pretend Paul didn’t say it? Here is the principle of hermeneutics behind my exegesis:
 1. When Paul makes an application, it is generally related to his culture in some way that may or may not transfer directly to us.
 2. However, when Paul gives a theological foundation for his application based on the Old Testament, then we do need to respect his theology, even if we don’t directly adopt his application. As an apostle, Paul represents the authority of Jesus in this.“The man was first,” does mean something theologically for our Biblical anthropology. What do you think it means? Just because Paul’s application may be uniquely for his culture and not for ours doesn’t justify negating the theology from which he builds.
- In 1953 Ashley Montagu wrote, *The Natural Superiority of Women*, and I heard him interviewed on MN Public Radio sometime around 1980. Then in ’96 I heard on CNN a report of a study that compared men and women on seven administrative leadership skills. Men excelled in two of the seven skills. The skills were 1. personal self promotion and 2. problem solving. Women excelled at everything else. The women won 5 to 2. If, in fact, women are biological and socially superior to men as Montagu suggests, then wouldn’t it make sense that a God who makes the last first and the first last might give to the inferior males the top spot.
- I suspect that overall women do make for better administrators. When CPMC met in St. Paul for conference, you were the shining star, and I was, well, more like the drone. I still thank God for you and how you managed such a barrage of complexities. The CNN report rings true, at least

with me, when I look at the average household. The woman manages 1000 details on the house the man never even thought of, but when there is a problem, like the dishwasher conking out, hubby is expected to fix it, and in most cases he is honored by the request, as problem solving is apparently what men do best (except for yours truly—to the chagrin of my wife). Of course, this norm may change with time, who knows?

- “Typically women, when given the chance in some way, have wished to be the mother of the hero.” I’m very curious as to how Philip landed on this—anecdotal evidence or academic studies? I can tell you, anecdotally, that it kind of makes me laugh. Tell this to Queen Esther, to Joan of Arc, to Judith (of the Apocrypha), to Clara Barton, to Corrie ten Boom, or to Rosa Parks. It’s certainly understandable that humble mothers would wish for fame and honor to come to their children (sons), but that doesn’t negate the heroic qualities hidden within the hearts of many women.
- I am suspicious of all hero dreams whether in a man’s head or a woman’s. But please, where did I negate the heroism of women? As to where I “landed on this,” it started with reading the history of Chinese monarchy and then going back to the Bible, especially the patriarchal stories. Also knowing my in-laws who grew up in REAL patriarchy, and observing mother/son relationships in full blown patriarchal settings, I suspect that many mothers transferred their unfulfilled ambitions to their sons. Read the story of Sarah and Hagar in Genesis for a stark example of what I describe.
- “If women do not readily step up to leadership as we want them to do in egalitarian society, it is not merely because they were not socialized to do so. God designed the men to lead...” Again, I would be interested to know the back story of this remark. Where are women not stepping up to leadership in egalitarian society? Statistics show women are actively involved in pursuing their betterment. Two years ago a Forbes article noted that colleges across the U.S. have 31% more female students than male.^[2] “There are generally more women than men in every

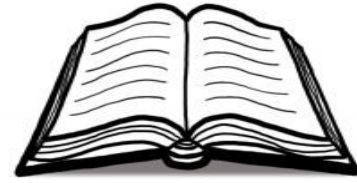
type of church, in every part of the world, according to church growth experts like Patrick Johnstone, author of *Operation World*.”^[3]

- My anecdotal observances are that when men fail to step into leadership roles, women are often ready to fill the positions. Another Forbes article details myriad reasons why more women are not in management positions (things like women have more family responsibilities than men, masculine corporate culture, and stereotypes against women)^[4]—I’d suggest that factors such as these may be *at least as valid* in explaining why women are in the minority of senior level positions as that they just aren’t designed for it.
- You put your finger on a weak point. I really overstated the case. I meant to say that one factor in women not taking leadership roles may have something to do with how God made us. All the other reasons detailed in Forbes are probably also true. The CNN report I referenced earlier revealed that men excelled in self promotion. Were men designed for self promotion more readily than women, or are men perhaps just more sinful than women? Today the glass ceiling for women is largely at the very top. One study of how the early church grew revealed that definitive, sustainable growth of the early church took place through the activity of cultural leaders at the second tier of social status, but not from rulers or high cultural elites (James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World*). Perhaps for most Christians, the most effective place for service to our Lord will remain below the glass ceiling, whether women or men.
- By the way, I heard this complaint all my early life, especially in church: “Why don’t the men step up,” and I determined I would be a man who did. In more recent decades, since the rise of feminism I hear the opposite, “Why don’t men be nice and step down.” I hope I can also do that in the way Jesus did.
- THANKS FOR BEING MY FRIEND.

Ultimately, I worry that articles such as the one that Philip wrote tend to discourage women from pursuing the vocations and callings the Lord has placed on them. (May God forbid, but I urge anyone

with the urge for self promotion to be sure the inner drive is from the Holy Spirit and not a burdensome duty imposed by society's latest notions.) I don't believe that was Philip's intent, but it may be the collateral damage. I spent many years of my life embracing a complementarian ideology, and strongly believe the Lord, in His grace, taught me a better way. Reading Kenneth E. Bailey's *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes* (a book Philip lent to me before I purchased my own copy) radically shifted my understanding of how Jesus related to and affirmed women. I find in Paul's words to the Philippians a fitting way to end this rebuttal: "And

if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you." (3:15b) And may God direct the process as we work at sharpening each other.



[1]Please forgive my structure of bullet points over crafting a cohesive response. My time is incredibly limited.

[2]<http://www.forbes.com/sites/ccap/2014/12/29/the-disappearing-male-on-college-campuses/#7cof381a1546>

[3]Holly Pivec in "The Feminization of the Church: Why Its Music, Messages and Ministries Are Driving Men Away," <http://magazine.biola.edu/article/06-spring/the-feminization-of-the-church/>.

[4]Jacob Morgan in "Why the Future of Our Organizations Depends on Having More Women in Management," <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jacobmorgan/2015/02/18/why-the-future-of-our-organizations-depends-on-having-more-women-in-management/#364acf1a66a8>.



Order Your Cinnamon Rolls Today!

Ah, the scent of warm butter, spicy cinnamon, gooey icing... have we got your attention? To finance their trip to Orlando this July, on Sunday, March 12, EMC Youth will be selling homemade cinnamon buns!

These fresh rolls will be baked by the youth and made available in 8x8 pans. Rolls will also be sold individually at Fellowship on March 12 along with silent auction items.

Freeze some, and enjoy for your Easter breakfast! Perfect to take to that brunch you're attending! Practice cinnamony hospitality by sharing one with your neighbor over a cup of tea!

Please sign up for the number of pans you'll need so we can plan: Look for the sign-up sheet downstairs this week (Feb. 26) and next (Mar. 5).

The small print: All calories to be offset by the contented feeling of knowing you've helped the youth experience MC USA in Orlando. ☐ ☐

MCC Material Resource needs

The Workroom at the MCC Material Resource Center in North Newton is a busy place! So busy, that we are running very low on the following items:

- men's deodorant (minimum size 2.25 oz)
- men's briefs (white), size L or XL only
- men's crew neck undershirts (white), size L or XL only
- lotion (max. size 2 oz)
- bath towels (medium weight, dark colors)
- fingernail clippers
- shampoo (13-24 oz)

You are welcome to shop Amazon Smile (https://www.amazon.com/registry/wishlist/17TB7GOT33OVJ/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_ep_ws_70dwybJSDP1DX) for easy shopping and the ability to ship it directly to MCC in North Newton, plus a small portion of your purchase is donated back to MCC by Amazon. Items can be brought to MCC at 121 E. 30th in North Newton, KS 67117 and left in the After Hours Donation Drop Off at anytime. Thank you for your continued generous support!