

Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre

"TMTC helps form theological leadership for the church by providing and supporting graduate theological education, particularly at the doctoral level, from a Mennonite perspective in an ecumenical context."

IN TORONTO:

- graduate courses and student advising
- ecumenical conversations (e.g., Mennonite-Catholic dialogue)
- special lectures and panels
- Student Fellows Group (a forum for students to present research and receive critical feedback)
- A. James Reimer Award (an annual doctoral scholarship)

AND ACROSS NORTH AMERICA:

- graduate student conferences
- Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network
- AAR/SBL academic forums
- Muslim-Christian dialogue
- Conferences and consultations
- Sabbatical residence for visiting faculty

Founded in 1990, TMTC is now administered by Conrad Grebel University College on behalf of a bi-national Mennonite constituency represented by an Advisory Board. TMTC does not admit students, nor grant degrees. Students who affiliate with TMTC are normally registered at one of the colleges of the Toronto School of Theology, an ecumenical consortium at the University of Toronto.

To make a donation to TMTC, please make cheques payable to Conrad Grebel University College, specifying TMTC in the memo line. Interested donors from the US are asked to contact TMTC's Interim Director.



TMTC Staff:

Jeremy Bergen,
Interim
Director



A. James Reimer,
Professor &
Academic
Advisor



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Advisory Board:

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Seminary
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Eastern Mennonite University
Mennonite Church Canada
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Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre

A graduate teaching and research centre of Conrad Grebel University College
affiliated with the Toronto School of Theology

TMTC NOW

Student Profile: Anthony Siegrist

My name is Anthony Siegrist, and as I write this, I am in the course of reading some of Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics*. Having a chance to study the great Swiss theologian was one of the things that drew me from Pennsylvania to TST. After completing a master's degree in theology and ethics at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Virginia, I transitioned to Toronto and a doctor of theology program in systematics. In choosing TST, I was attracted to the advantages of a major North American university along with the important features of a small community, which I found at Wycliffe College and at TMTC. I am currently doing coursework in ecclesiology, ethics and political theology. As I enter my second year of doc-

toral work, I am learning what it means to pursue these topics unapologetically as a Christian from an Anabaptist tradition and as a scholar with one foot in the church and one foot in the academy. In a world of academic theology that values universality and the glossing over of difference, my studies are prompting me to value particularity and a localism that is both assertive and humble. Through coursework studying classical Christology, contemporary ecclesiology and the place of religion in liberal democracies, I have been reminded that my purpose here is to prepare myself for doing constructive theology that is informed by the broad Christian tradition, constrained by the biblical vision and energized by the local



community. I intend to focus my work on the doctrine and practice of believer's baptism as it relates to our late-modern North American context. The TMTC community has been an important part of my time here and one of the things I value most about my educational experience at TST.



The third TMTC Graduate Student Conference was held in June 2006, at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, in Elkart, Indiana. Participants representing a range of disciplines arrived from all over North America and Europe to read papers on the broad topic of "exclusion." Pictured are various participants engaged in conversation.

Editorial: Scholarship That Forms and Leads

By Jeremy M. Bergen, Interim Director

This fresh newsletter format is intended to communicate "snapshots" of what TMTC is and does to supporters of theological education and potential students. Though the 16-page *TMTC Newsletter* is gone and replaced with shorter stories and blurbs, TMTC is no less serious.

In fact, a glance through the recent issues of the academic journal *Conrad Grebel Review* shows that many of their articles were written for TMTC events. For example, dialogue between Mennonites and Shia Muslims (Fall 2003, Winter 2006); Mennonite forums at the American Academy of Religion annual meetings, on topics such as democracy and "radical orthodoxy" (Spring 2005); and TMTC Graduate Student Conferences (Spring 2003; Fall 2005).

Encouraging and supporting this kind of serious scholarship is one way that we "help form theological leadership for the church" as our purpose statement says. Disciplined and Anabaptist reflection about Islam, democracy or "religious texts" (one theme of the Graduate Student Conferences) may help pastors and church leaders guide their congregations in today's context. In particular, TMTC provides a forum for doctoral students to be mentored into these conversations and to articulate their own insights.

In a letter to the TMTC advisory board, doctoral student Susan Harrison writes, "Good leadership for our churches and denomination requires us to have people with higher education developed in a context where it can be integrated with our Mennonite beliefs and where they learn to communicate in a way that builds up the church." To this goal we aim.



"Inheriting John Howard Yoder: A New Generation Examines His Thought"

A symposium organized by
TMTC on the University of
Toronto campus

May 25-26, 2007

www.grebel.uwaterloo.ca/tmtc/
yoder.shtml

The purpose of the symposium is to provide a forum for emerging scholars to contribute to the ongoing assessment of John Howard Yoder's thought. Proposals dealing directly with Yoder's work from a variety of disciplines, perspectives and religious traditions are strongly encouraged. The intent of the symposium is to bring together thoughtful voices both critical and appreciative of Yoder's legacy.

In anticipation of this symposium, TMTC is hosting a bi-monthly series for all interested advanced degree students at TST-related schools to examine different aspects of the writings of John Howard Yoder.

Mohammed Farimani talks with his dissertation co-director Professor Donald Wiebe (middle) and TMTC doctoral student Jonathan Slater (left). Mohammed came to the Toronto School of Theology, specifically Regis College, in 1999, as part of an exchange program with the Khomeini Institute in Qom, Iran, sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee. In October 2006 he successfully defended his Th.D. dissertation, becoming the first Muslim in the history of the Toronto School of Theology to do so. Mohammed is now preparing to return shortly to Iran, where he will be engaged in teaching and research.

Mennonite-Catholic Dialogue at the Toronto School of Theology: A Catholic Student's Perspective *By Leah Perrault*

In the late fall of 2005, I noticed a poster at the Faculty of Theology of St. Michael's College, where I am currently taking an M.A. in Pastoral Theology. An initiative of the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, the poster was advertising for interested Roman Catholic students and lay faithful to join with interested Mennonites to explore the ecumenical dialogue document "Called Together to be Peacemakers."

Over the first four months of 2006, we met five times to share our insights on the document, with particular emphases on Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and peacemaking.

More importantly, we gathered to celebrate the faith we share and to learn from one another.

I joined the project as a Roman Catholic because I have experienced the worship and programming of several Mennonite communities as a camp counsellor and through friends. My own faith practice to this point has been greatly blessed by Mennonite influence, but in my endeavours to study theology, I have learned very little about the particulars of Mennonite theology. This project has opened my eyes and heart to the many riches of the gospel that our traditions share and challenged me to be

faithfully questioning of my own Church, in light of the many strengths of the Mennonite tradition.

As the twelve of us continue to meet in fellowship and study, I hope to continue learning about my own practice of faith and to grow deeper in communion with my Mennonite and Roman Catholic brothers and sisters in Christ. I am particularly eager to spend some time investigating more fully the peacemaking aspects of the document, as God has opened my heart to the potential for Mennonites and Catholics to continue working together on this important issue.

Recent Student Accomplishments

Faculty Appointments

Derek Suderman, tenure-track in Old Testament, Conrad Grebel University College (Derek is also finishing his Th.D. dissertation at Emmanuel College)

Graduates & Dissertation Defenses

Brian Cooper, Ph.D. (Wycliffe College)

"Human Reason or Reasonable Humanity? Balthasar Hubmaier, Pilgram Marpeck, Menno Simons, and the Catholic Natural Law Tradition" (2006)

Phil Enns, Ph.D. (Emmanuel College)

"How Can Religious Beliefs Be True?" (2006)

Irma Fast Dueck, Th.D. (Emmanuel College)

"A Critical Examination of Mennonite Worship and Ethics: A Praxis Approach" (2006)

Mohammed Farimani, Th.D. (Regis College)

"Believers and General Statements in the Academic Study of Religion" (2006)

Peter Hartman, M.A. (Philosophy)

Major Paper: "Sinn and Sententia: The Sense/Reference Distinction in Peter Abelard" (2005)

Matthew Klaassen, M.A. (Institute for Christian Studies)

"The Nature of Critical Theory and Its Fate: Adorno versus Habermas, Ltd." (2005)

2006 Awards

Jeremy Bergen:

Ontario Graduate Scholarship

Alison Hari-Singh:

North American Doctoral Fellowship (The Fund for Theological Education)

Néstor Medina:

Dissertation Fellowship (Hispanic Theological Initiative)

Allan Rudy-Froese:

A. James Reimer Award

Articles Published

Catholic Biblical Quarterly:

Derek Suderman

Conrad Grebel Review:

Jeremy Bergen, Christina Reimer, Jonathan Seiling

Mennonite Quarterly Review:

Jonathan Seiling

Scottish Journal of Theology:

Jonathan Slater

Studies in Religion/Sciences

Religieuses: Rene Baergen

Vision: A Journal for Church & Theology: Allan Rudy-Froese