Key leaders have retired. In Spring we honoured the work of John Rempel and celebrated with him on his retirement as TMTC Director. John served for three years, and made significant connections with faculty members and students at the Toronto School of Theology (TST). He was the driving force behind a key TST-wide event examining whether the Reformation ought to be commemorated with celebration or mourning. He instituted a fellows program which includes visiting (sabbatical), research, and postdoctoral fellows. This past academic year marked the conclusion of Lydia Neufeld Harder’s work in a formal faculty role; she served as co-director of the successfully defended doctoral dissertation of Sarah Freeman on a Mennonite homiletic of justice, peace, and reconciliation. Lydia has been involved with TMTC since its beginning in 1990, as a doctoral student, faculty member in the area of feminist biblical hermeneutics, and director committed to creating a community of learning. We mourned the death of the tireless founding director of TMTC, A. James Reimer, in 2010.

The second major shift in our context is the introduction of a new Ph.D. program in Theological Studies at TST. This degree is conjoint with an individual college and the University of Toronto. Closer integration with U of T means that students admitted will be guaranteed a minimum level of funding. Such a guarantee also places limits on the number that may be admitted. The TST department structure has been dismantled and replaced by an integrated council. Students who may be studying Old Testament, theology, or Reformation history will take common courses in methods and research.

These developments are exciting and will enhance the academic profile of TST. But they also bring questions. One key question is whether there will be decreased interest in the specialized courses that TMTC has offered in the past. If so, what does that mean for the kind of faculty and administrative presence TMTC should offer?

At the September 2015 Welcome Supper, 15 students, fellows, and faculty members had a brief discussion on the mandate of TMTC. The group strongly affirmed the three main areas of TMTC work:

1) Teaching doctoral courses from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective and advising students at TST
2) Fostering the community of Mennonite students at TST, especially in terms of developing connections between church and academy
3) Networking among a wider Mennonite scholarly community. (The biennial Mennonite Graduate Student conferences and the annual Mennonite Scholars and Friends forums and receptions at the AAR/SBL are examples of the latter)

In times of transition, there may also be new directions to explore. Might TMTC’s teaching mandate be best fulfilled through closer affiliation with one TST College? Might TMTC become a centre for a network of advanced research in theology? Might TMTC have a role in fostering global connections and resourcing Anabaptist-Mennonite communities and institutions beyond North America? I welcome comments and responses as we think about this future.

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**News**

**Jessica Reesor** Rempel completed the requirements for her Master of Divinity degree, Emmanuel College, and will graduate May 2016.

**Jeremy Bergen**, Interim Director of TMTC, Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Theology at Conrad Grebel University College, is currently a member of two dissertation committees at TMTC.

**John Rempel**, retired TMTC Director and current Senior Fellow of TMTC, remains a member of three dissertation committees and a co-director of one dissertation.
Symposium: “Engaging Women’s Voices on the Church, Theology, and Mission: A Task for the Church and the Academy”

By Kim Penner, TMTC Coordinator

On May 9, 2015, the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre partnered with Mennonite Church Eastern Canada to host a one-day forum for academics, professionals in the field, ministers, and graduate students to engage, explore, and listen to various women’s perspectives on the church, theology, and mission. In the first session, participants worked at naming the diverse and complicated meanings of mission. That initial session was followed by paper presentations from Abigail Lofte, Ph.D. student St. Michael’s College, “Rethinking Humanity’s Relationship with Earth and its Implications for the Church’s Mission in Light of the Resurrection,” Ajeng Chrissaningrum, Th.M. student Wycliffe College, “Hard Pressed but Not Crushed: The Suffering of Javanese Christian Women in Indonesia,” and Susanne Guenther Loewen, Th.D. Candidate, Emmanuel College, “Can the Cross Be ‘Good News’ for Women?” For an excellent article that explores the symposium’s aims and content more deeply, see Muriel Bechtel’s article, “Engaging Women’s Voices: Symposium Challenges Views on the Church, Theology, and Mission,” Canadian Mennonite, June 30, 2015.

Allison Murray, 2015 Winner of A. James Reimer Award

By Kim Penner, TMTC Coordinator

TMTC is pleased to announce that Allison Murray is the 2015 winner of the A. James Reimer Award. Allison is a PhD student currently in her third year of studies at Emmanuel College at the Toronto School of Theology, studying in the area of Christian History. Allison’s research looks in particular at the history of Christian responses to the women’s movement in the twentieth-century and the development of the theology behind notions of gender known as complementarianism.

In addition to her formal studies Allison is very much a part of the TMTC community. She co-chaired the planning committee for the 2015 symposium “Engaging Women’s Voices on the Church, Theology, and Mission: A Task for the Church and the Academy” and is on the planning committee for the 2016 TMTC Mennonite Graduate Student Conference to be held at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. For Allison, the TMTC community is an important part of her success at the Toronto School of Theology because it provides important points of connection with other graduate students and with TMTC alumni who are active in ministry.

Thanks to the financial support of the A. James Reimer award, Allison will be able to pursue her passion for academia and focus primarily on her studies rather than on seeking additional employment to help fund her degree. This opportunity for focus will make it possible for Allison to progress more quickly through her degree and to participate in the extra-curricular programs, such as TMTC Scholar’s Forums and Emmanuel College’s Teaching for Ministry Fellowship, which enrich the graduate school experience.

The A. James Reimer award is awarded annually to a student completing an advanced degree program at the Toronto School of Theology. Other criteria include academic excellence, active involvement in TMTC, and demonstrated commitment to the life of the Mennonite Church and its institutions. The award was established to recognize the work of A. James Reimer in establishing the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre.

Publications

Contributions from John Rempel and TMTC Associate Andrew C. Martin were published in a book edited by Mary Ann Loewen, Sons and Mothers: Stories from Mennonite Men (University of Regina Press, 2015).

Susanne Guenther Loewen’s article, “Is God a Pacifist? The J. Denny Weaver and A. James Reimer Debate in Contemporary Mennonite Peace Theology” is being published in the Fall 2015 issue of The Conrad Grebel Review. She previously presented this paper at several TMTC events and it is also connected to her dissertation, which brings J. Denny Weaver and Dorothee Soelle into conversation on peace, the cross, and redemption from a Mennonite-feminist perspective.

Kyle Gingerich Hiebert, TMTC Fellow, co-authored God After Christendom? (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2015) with Brian Haymes (available via Amazon) and his article, “Beauty and its Violences,” was published in Political Theology (online 2 July 2015 and forthcoming in issue 17.4 in July 2016).
About Melanie Kampen, New TMTC Affiliate
By Kim Penner, TMTC Coordinator

**Hometown:** Treaty 1 Territory, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

**Master’s Degree:** Master of Theological Studies, Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo. Thesis: "Unsettling Theology: Decolonizing Western Interpretations of Original Sin." This project traces the development of the doctrine of original sin in Christianity, how it rose to dominance, how it was used as a primary theological concept in the conversion of the Indigenous peoples of Canada and the United States through residential/boarding schools, and then turns to Indigenous theologians to consider very different, non-dominant understandings of sin and brokenness.

**Current Program:** PhD Theology, Emmanuel College, University of Toronto.

Why did you choose to study at the Toronto School of Theology and how does your research intersect with Mennonite theologies? I wanted to pursue my doctoral studies here because it was in the Canadian context, at a college with a faith tradition that is focused on social justice, and because I wanted to work with Dr. Marilyn Legge who has done a lot of work at the intersection of Christian theology and colonialism. My main interest in my PhD is to look at Mennonite involvement in Indian residential and day schools in Canada. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is officially over now, but the Mennonite church has not submitted any kind of report to the Commission (as many other denominations have). From what I understand, a significant number of Conscientious Objectors during the Second World War were either deployed or chose to work as teachers at residential and day schools as alternative service. What that illustrates is a theology of non-violence to an extent, but one that did not recognize the violence of assimilation of Indigenous peoples, or saw it as secondary. I’m interested in understanding what was at work here theologically to make that possible, to tell the truth about Mennonite involvement, and then to work towards reconciliation in part by rethinking and/or decolonizing our theologies. I think this is imperative if Mennonite theologies and religious practices are to have any integrity. I hope that the Mennonite church, including its academics, can be leaders in social justice and liberating theologies and ways of being in the world.

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**Students Currently Associating with TMTC:**

- **Michael Buttrey**
  Christian Ethics, Proposal
  Stage – Regis College

- **Isaac Friesen**
  Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, Coursework
  Stage – University of Toronto

- **Layton Friesen**
  Theology, Dissertation
  Stage – Wycliffe College
  (living in Winnipeg)

- **Susie Guenther Loewen**
  Theology, Dissertation
  Stage – Emmanuel College
  (living in Winnipeg)

- **Susan Kennel Harrison**
  Theology, Dissertation
  Stage – Emmanuel College

- **Ryan Klassen**
  Theology, Dissertation
  Stage – Wycliffe College

- **Andy Martin**
  Theology, Dissertation
  Stage – Regis College

- **Allison Murray**
  Church History, Comprehensive Exam
  Stage – Emmanuel College

- **Kim Penner**
  Christian Ethics, Proposal
  Stage – Emmanuel College

- **Darrell Winger**
  Theology, Dissertation
  Stage – Wycliffe College

- **Trent Voth**
  New Testament, Coursework Stage – Emmanuel College

- **Melanie Kampen**
  Theology, Coursework
  Stage – Emmanuel College

- **Matt Eaton**
  Theology, Philosophy, and Ecology, Dissertation
  Stage – St. Michael’s College

**TMTC Fellows**

- **John Rempel**, Senior Fellow
- **Lydia Neufeld Harder**, Senior Fellow
- **Kyle Gingerich Hiebert**, Postdoctoral Fellow

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**Seventh Biennial TMTC Mennonite Graduate Student Conference**

This conference will take place in June 2-4 2016 at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary focusing on the theme of power from the diverse perspectives of Anabaptist-Mennonite graduate students. The primary purpose of the conference is to provide Mennonite graduate students an opportunity to present their academic research with other graduate students in an interdisciplinary context and interact with each other as colleagues. For more information, including the call for papers due January 15, 2016, visit our website: www.uwaterloo.ca/toronto-mennonite-theological-centre/

**Mennonite Scholars and Friends forum and reception at the American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature meetings, Atlanta.**

The forum is on Friday, November 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Room A701 (Atrium Level), Marriott Marquis, on the 2015 theme: “Human Being and/as Creation: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Perspectives” and the reception Friday, November 20, 8:30-10 p.m. Room A704 (Atrium Level), Marriott Marquis. These events are coordinated by the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre and are open to any who wish to attend.
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
- Scholars’ Forum (for local and visiting students and faculty to present research and receive feedback)
- A. James Reimer Award (an annual doctoral scholarship)

AND ACROSS NORTH AMERICA:
- Graduate student conferences
- Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network
- AAR/SBL academic forums
- Conferences and consultations
- Sabbatical residence for visiting faculty

TMTC is a graduate teaching and research affiliate of the Toronto School of Theology (TST) administered by Conrad Grebel University College with oversight from an Advisory Council made up of representatives from Mennonite educational and denominational institutions in Canada and the United States.

TMTC was established in 1990. It participates in the life of TST, its ecumenical spirit, its teaching and research, its engagement with culture. It promotes Mennonite scholarship in the academy in conversation with the broader Christian tradition as well as with other religious and secular traditions. It nurtures the development of committed and well trained leadership for the church. It is the only Mennonite venture in doctoral level education in North America and as such is a key resource in nurturing the next generation of scholars and professors for the Mennonite Church and its universities, colleges and seminaries.

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.

To make a donation to TMTC, please make cheques payable to Conrad Grebel University College, specifying ‘TMTC’ in the memo line.

Interested donors may contact Fred W. Martin at fwmartin@uwaterloo.ca or 519-885-0220 x24381

Advisory Council

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Eastern Mennonite Seminary
Mennonite Church Canada
Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
Mennonite Education Agency (Mennonite Church USA)

TMTC Administered by:
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