

# Transforming

Stories of making disciples in the way of Christ

Spring 2017  
VOLUME 3 • ISSUE 1



## Mission is a team effort



● God's  
worldwide team

PAGE 4



● Better  
together

PAGE 6



Virginia  
Mennonite  
Missions

*Called. Sent. Transformed.*

## The wisdom of teams

BY AARON KAUFFMAN  
PRESIDENT



**H**ave you ever tried playing baseball by yourself? Or singing four-part harmony alone? There are some things you simply can't do without the help of others. And we believe mission is one of them.

One of the guiding principles for our work at VM Missions is that **team is our preferred mode of engaging in mission**. We organize our staff into teams, we mobilize Ministry Support Teams to get behind mission workers, and we prioritize mission assignments where a healthy team is present. David Shenk and Ervin

Stutzman outline five reasons teams are essential to ministry in their book, *Creating Communities of the Kingdom*.

First, a team itself constitutes a "church" in its most basic form: a community of disciples committed to the worship, way of life, and witness of Jesus Christ. Even just two followers of Jesus can model together what life in God's kingdom looks like, and Jesus promises to be present among them (Matt. 18:20). As Shenk and Stutzman put it, "The team working together in repentance and harmony reveals to people the nature of the church which it desires to create."

Second, a team can be a place where cross-cultural differences are bridged through the gospel. Creating a team that includes both outsiders and insiders to the host culture demonstrates the reconciliation made possible through Christ (Eph. 2:14). Insiders bring expert knowledge of the host culture. Outsiders bring a new perspective that can spark change. They can challenge each other's cultural blind spots, creating a clearer picture of the kingdom life that commends and critiques aspects of all cultures.

Third, team leadership exemplifies the upside-down approach to power in God's kingdom. Rather than the top-down power of our world, team members can practice the servant leadership of Jesus. They die to self, speak truthfully in love, listen attentively, exercise patience and humility, and seek God's will together. This does not mean clear roles are not assigned. Even the early church saw the wisdom of distinguishing between ministries of the word and ministries of compassion (Acts 6:1-7). But teams harness the various strengths and gifts of each person for the common task of mission.

Fourth, a practical advantage of team ministry is that the workload is shared and thus lightened. The needs of a given community can feel overwhelming. Delegating responsibilities among teammates, and supporting one another through prayer and fellowship, can make all the difference between breakthrough and burnout. As a wise teacher once wrote, "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken" (Eccles. 4:12).

Fifth and finally, a team can have the synergistic effect of accomplishing much more than the sum of the parts. That overused buzzword, synergy, actually is quite biblical. Paul refers repeatedly in his letters to his *synergoi*, his coworkers for the kingdom of God (Col. 4:11). Shenk and Stutzman write, "As persons work together, there is a strength and creativity which cannot be matched by the efforts of persons working alone."

The next time you watch sports or hear a music ensemble, think of the church in mission. What would happen if we all adopted the wisdom of working in teams?

## Features

### 4 God's worldwide team

In Montenegro, team-based discipleship efforts are building blocks to sharing the gospel.

### 6 Better together

In Bangkok, a ministry serving migrants prays for teammates.

### 8 Partners in Mission

Teachers at a Christian Academy in Argentina operate as a team.

## Spotlight

### 9 USA Ministries

### 10 Call to prayer

### 11 Worker profile

## Financial Report

Reporting: 9/1/16 to 2/28/17

Special Projects \$667,711	Special Projects \$586,366
Mission Fund \$ 376,351	Mission Fund \$386,747
<b>Revenue</b> Total \$1,044,062	<b>Expenses</b> Total \$973,114

**Mission Fund:** undesignated giving by households and churches, **Special Projects:** giving to specific workers or ministries

## Transforming

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# ● News+Events

## Mission service

### Opportunity for service this summer in Trinidad

Do you have a passion for Christian education, discipleship, and cross-cultural ministry? Applications are being accepted for Partners in Mission teams to the beautiful island nation of Trinidad this summer. Teams will be hosted by Mennonite families in Trinidad and will assist in summer VBS through teaching classes, leading music, and building relationships in local communities.



This is a wonderful opportunity for people of all ages to get to know our Mennonite brothers and sisters in Trinidad and to engage in outreach and witness to their local communities.

Dates are mid-July through early August. For more information, contact Martin Rhodes: martin.rhodes@vmmissions.org

## Auction

### Auction to support ministry on May 20

VMissions will again host a fundraising dinner and auction on Saturday,



May 20, at Eastern Mennonite School, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, Va. Proceeds will directly benefit the workers and ministries of VMissions. A new feature this year is a silent auction in addition to the live one. The meal begins at 5:00 p.m.; live auction begins at 6:00 p.m. See back page ad for more information.



## Mission service

### Worker commissioning and Taste of Missions

You are invited to celebrate the commissioning of new mission workers at the Friday evening worship service of Virginia Mennonite Conference Assembly, held at Park View Mennonite Church, 1600 College Ave, Harrisonburg, Va., July 21. (Gathering music begins at 6:45 p.m.; the service begins at 7:00.) The 2017 class of tranSend, as well as new long-term workers and those serving with Partners in Mission, will be commissioned during the service. Afterward, join us on the lawn under the tents for a Taste of Missions, a delicious sampling of foods from around the world where VMissions workers serve.

## Convention

### Visit our Convention 2017 booth in Orlando



If you are attending Mennonite Church USA Convention in Orlando this summer, stop by the VMissions booth in the display area of the convention center. Staff will be available to connect with you and share some stories of our work. Pick up a mission activity card, complete it and you will be registered to win a t-shirt.



## Albania

### First worship service in new church building

On Easter Sunday, the Guri I Themelit church in Lezhë, Albania, held their first Sunday service in their new meeting space, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus. Afterwards they enjoyed a meal and fellowship together. Besides a worship space that is much larger than before, additional rooms include a child care area, a pastor's office, two bathrooms and a sound room.

Allen Umble, a retired VMissions worker visiting Albania, traveled with his friend Urim Koloshi from Lushnje to attend. "It certainly is a place that lends itself to spiritual life and vitality," he wrote. "The church leadership has worked hard to prepare for this special event. I am personally grateful for all who have prayed into this event as well as for all who have supported financially to help see this dream become reality."

## MST Resourcing

### Event covers donor relationship building

VMissions held a Ministry Support Team resource event on March 9, covering trends in the last two decades toward a strong preference to support specific people and causes instead of an older general donation model. MSTs were guided in ways they can cultivate relationships, invite people to donate to the vision and assignment of appointed workers, and how to communicate with and thank the donors. Another resource event is planned for this fall.

# ● God's worldwide team

Steve and Laura work with the leadership team of one of only five evangelical churches in the country of Montenegro, with a focus on discipling believers, and a vision for growth.

BY STEVE CAMPBELL



When Laura and I spent a year serving in Montenegro with tranSend, beginning in 2008, it was the culmination of a long sense of call to overseas mission work. As we discussed our future together while we were dating, it was clear that we wanted to explore the call to make disciples overseas.

Within a year of our active exploration, we began the process of applying with tranSend. In the process, we met two Montenegrin pastors. The call became clear. We had been active in domestic missions work and we were equipped to be church planters.

But instead of planting a church, our sense from the Spirit was to encourage and build the leadership in an already established church. The congregation was about 10 years old. Our tranSend assignment involved working with Pastor Vladimir, a missionary pastor from Serbia who was guiding a Brethren Assemblies church in the capital of Podgorica. As we studied the Serbian language, we became very involved in the congregation, leading Bible studies and

assisting with worship. This one-year experience was very formative in our long-term call to missions.

After we returned to the States, we took the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* course. It helped confirm many things we saw and sensed in our tranSend year. Its viewpoints also summed up how we saw our work quite well: being part of incarnational ministry, helping to plant a Balkan church rather than transplanting a Western one, equipping it to produce viable, reproducible churches, all the while making disciples with the goal of leaving the work in the hands of national believers.

As our long-term call to missions took shape, we felt the Spirit guiding us to return to Montenegro in 2012, to again work with Pastor Vladimir at the church and disciple persons in faith.

Discipleship has been our focus for our ministry here in Montenegro. As we reflected on 2 Timothy 2:2, our preference has been to “teach others who can teach others.” At present we are using the *Discovery Bible Study* method, which uses the same standard questions for the group each week. We open God’s word and read it together, asking “What is God saying to each of us?” The questions are meant to draw us closer to God and to each other. In using this method of Bible study, participants are asked to reach out to others and invite people from their circle of contacts, preferably those who are not yet believers. The original participants then become the teachers. While we don’t mind preaching, teaching, or leading groups, we prefer to train others how to do this.

Because our pastor was busy with administrative details of the work, he didn’t have the time to work on discipleship like we did. As we began the Bible studies the believers kept saying, “No one has taken the time to go through the Bible with us like this.” So we began focusing more on teaching and discipling the believers about God’s word and how to lead a Bible study. The next



The church in Podgorica that Steve and Laura relate to. A number of people pictured have been engaged in discipleship training, including Lazar (seated, holding his son Jacob) and his wife Masha (standing above Lazar, with glasses).

Photo courtesy of Steve Campbell





Laura Campbell, the author's wife, with daughter Esther, talks with Marijana Cizmanski. Serving on the church leadership team with Vladimir and Marijana, the Campbells use their gifts for discipleship ministry. Photo by Janet Blosser

step will be to invite those in the circle of contacts to the Bible studies. Currently we have three groups that are now led by nationals—one mixed and two ladies groups—and we are leading three groups, with the transition coming soon to co-lead.

Our desire is to introduce Christ and the concepts for his kingdom, and help the church sort out what that looks like in this culture. We see that our being present throughout the year in people's lives is impacting the local church in a significant way. By being present, we build trust and deepen relationships. Then folks are more willing to be taught and shown how to be and make disciples.

On the church leadership team, we talk a great deal about building a bridge instead of a wall. That means we listen and learn where each of us is working at kingdom-building. For newcomers to the church—or those not yet there—it means identifying and focusing what we agree on and building a bridge to welcome these friends into the relationship, instead of concentrating on where we disagree, making that a barrier to entry. As time goes by, we can talk about differences, but the key is inviting people to come in, building trust and reading the Bible together, so that God can do the work of convicting and correcting.

There are many strengths to relating with the leadership team, such as learning the language and culture, both national and church culture. It also gives us personal connections that can open many doors. If we start relationships with people outside the church, they may ordinarily just

see us as Americans, and the relationship has a strain on it because they are not sure about trusting us. But once they meet our national friends, and know we are connected in another way in the culture, it opens the relationship.

We continually face the challenges of language and culture. Sometimes we say things, but how it is interpreted or translated doesn't always connect, so we are constantly learning. And we realize we often filter through our own cultural lenses. So sometimes it takes more time of talking and processing to get to the meaning of what we wanted to say. We are grateful for persons in the culture who are our "cultural teachers" and help us in this process.

Our "team" in Montenegro is more than just VMMissions workers. We periodically meet with other American mission "co-workers" from various agencies to talk and process about our common goals of sharing the gospel with Montenegro. Since there are only five evangelical congregations in the country, some of these workers also attend our church. Once a year, we have a national gathering of all the believers (foreign workers and local believers) in Montenegro, which is a great encouragement to all of us.

We are so privileged to be part of God's team worldwide, to join in bringing God's kingdom to earth as it is in heaven, and in particular to Montenegro.

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*Steve serves in Podgorica, Montenegro, with his wife Laura and daughters Ruth and Esther. Their home congregation is Trissels Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va.*



# Better together

Bethany and Steve desire to enhance their evangelism and discipleship ministry among Isaan migrant workers in Bangkok, Thailand, by again bringing a team together.

BY BETHANY TOBIN

Some days we feel like we are always working and other days we feel like we are never working. It takes a lot of intentional focus to live in a state of availability to God's Spirit, and yet to not base our identity on what tasks we do (or some days, do not do).

It is no wonder then, that mission's dual foundation of absolute rest in the love of our Father and absolute commitment to the will of our Father is best maintained in community. How can we balance these things without others holding us accountable, worshipping with us, encouraging us, and making the logistics of ministry possible? How can mission be sustained unless many hands hold up many arms in turn?

That's why a team isn't just group of friends, it is gathered together for a purpose and has a goal—a goal that requires both being and doing!

Team has been our heart's hope and prayer since we started sensing a call to mission.

Steve had very positive experiences of team ministry in his previous service in Kazakhstan and Albania. There was a synergy of personalities, the ability to sustain ministry focus even in challenging situations, and all the while, team provided a foundation of rest and fun and family. Bethany on the other hand, had a taste of an effective team in

ministry, but with painful conflict and struggles being an extended 'family' together.

We both longed for the intimacy of sharing the ministry journey with others and hoped for an older couple to mentor us. We counted it as a confirmation of our call to Thailand that there was another young family soon to join us in Bangkok.

Our team was together for one challenging year and a half; then we faced the disappointment of parting ways. But we were together long enough to taste the exhilaration of deep spiritual friendship and the bonds that are forged in the midst of difficulty. We also experienced the bewilderment of disagreement, long hard conversations and the challenge of bearing with each other in our failings.

Looking back, I am so blessed by the way our teammates showed their love for us by working at having fun together. If we share the tricky conversations and the work load, we also must laugh and rest together! Their sense of humor was truly the best medicine!

Now we are "on our own" here in Bangkok and that has been hard. The first call in this journey is to give up our selfish need for self-pity and instead open our eyes to what God is providing. With eyes to see our Father's goodness we find companionship popping up in unexpected places.

We have friendship and favor with an unlikely array of Thai believers. While none of these friends are committed to the same ministry, we

Steve and Bethany's Isaan friends help with evangelism efforts to share the Good News with other Isaan people over pizza at the Horst's home in Bangkok. Photo by Steve Horst







The baptism of P Jan, with P Jaa officiating, and local partners Khun Koch (seated) and P Ehk (standing) joining in the celebration. Also pictured is the author (kneeling), her husband Steve Horst and their two children, and Jessamyn Tobin.

Photo by Lynn Suter

do find God using them to play a part in God's vision in timely, even miraculous ways.

Like the day God mobilized an all-star Isaan evangelism-prayer-hospitality team to spontaneously land on our doorstep when we were doing a pizza party to share the gospel with a neighbor.

Or the humility of Khun Koch, a Thai-Chinese academic who shows his Christ-likeness by awkwardly climbing out of his wheelchair and sitting on the floor to eat fermented fish with Isaan migrants.

There's Uncle Whit's rambunctious roughhousing with our children, and P. Terng and P. Boey's parental commiseration and gastronomic escapades.

We must admit it feels haphazard and too irregular to count on some days. Sometimes we long for the cut and dry commitments—a community held together by contract! And maybe someday we might have more of a concrete team, but in the meantime, perhaps the typical Asian dynamic of being intentionally informal and lighthearted in these relationships teaches us Westerners—so prone to self-seriousness and task-orientation—the importance of holding it lightly,

going slowly and making sure it's always filled with fun. Perhaps it also teaches us that before you can really capitalize the letter T in team, it must be undergirded by a real experience of *trust*, and not just a paper MOU.

In many ways, this mirrors the mission invitation that God holds out to us as part of God's family: To always live in the pleasure of simple relationship, while also always being available and at God's disposal to do the work of the family. Sons, not slaves.

This is where we first see the concept of team, of God's family in action, modeled. We are those little children whose Father stands with them at the sink and makes a game out of teaching them to wash dishes. We are those little children who sing with their daddy while he gives them a bath.

It is team life on this foundation that we are building within our family and want to invite others into. Anyone want to join us?

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*Bethany and Steve serve among Isaan migrant workers in Bangkok, partnering with the Life Enrichment Church. They serve in partnership with Eastern Mennonite Missions.*



## Becoming one: God's purpose for community

BY CRYSTAL LEHMAN

Missions has always played an important role in my life. I am, however, still surprised at how God often chooses us for the tasks in life that scare us or overwhelm us the most.

Teamwork was never one of my strengths as a child. In fact, I often avoided working in teams if I could. If I was alone, I could make sure every little detail was just right. Depending on others felt too risky. The more I avoided teams, the more God challenged me, putting me in situations where I needed others. God has used community time after time to help me grow through people such as boarding school staff, teaching colleagues, and a loving and supportive Waynesboro Mennonite Church family.

A year ago, God called me to embrace teamwork in ministering to the kids at Buenos Aires International Christian Academy in Argentina. I work with an international staff from Argentina, the United States, Canada, and elsewhere. These different backgrounds and personalities mix with the many cultures of students in our classrooms.

This diversity, combined with our shared goal of being Christian witnesses and teachers, reminds me of 1 Corinthians 12:18-20: "But in fact, God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts but one body."



Creative students designed medals for mock Olympic games.



Crystal Lehman (second from right) works with an international team of teachers who actively support each other to love and effectively educate the students at Buenos Aires International Christian Academy in Argentina. Photos courtesy of Crystal Lehman

This is very true of our team. We all use our gifts for the common purpose of serving and loving our students. We support each other on a daily basis, whether leading chapel worship, translating notes into Spanish, offering encouragement, or brainstorming new ideas or solutions.

At the beginning of the year, my class discussed what we wanted to be known for. We eventually decided on a mission for our time together, "Love BACK (Build Attitude, Choose Kindness)." We have worked to understand what it means to love no matter what and how we can be a peaceful and calming song to those around us instead of a clanging cymbal.

I have seen many students embrace this in little ways. Last fall, a few students asked permission to create and make medals for their classmates at our mock Olympic games. If they finish their math assignment early, students ask me if they can help others with their work. In March, they planned a surprise birthday party for me. A few girls made cakes while others used their creativity to make signs.

As the class works on this mission together, my prayer is that they will value teamwork from a young age and embody Christ's love to each other in the future as well.

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*Crystal Lehman serves with the Partners in Mission program of VMissions as a teacher at Buenos Aires International Christian Academy, Buenos Aires, Argentina.*





Jason Wagner, appointed to serve as chaplain at the Rockingham Regional Jail. Courtesy photo

## Loving our neighbors in jail

BY JASON WAGNER

I have seen firsthand the deep hunger for connection to God and loving fellowship that inmates have in the Rockingham Regional Jail. Since being appointed as a VMissions worker to serve as jail chaplain, I have been introduced to the inside, and to the lives of many men who are serving sentences there.

During communal prayer times in the weekly meetings I attend, the men often think of life outside of jail, hoping God will keep their families and loved ones in their absence. Seeing this glimpse inside has made it so I can no longer simply pass by the jail without thinking of the names and faces of the men living there. These relationships have invited me to slow down and take notice of the many spiritual and physical needs.

I hope the awareness of these needs is what the chaplaincy position can bring to churches in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, along with a desire and commitment to work together in a tangible way toward meeting these needs.

The vision for the Rockingham Regional Jail chaplaincy began with pastors Jason Gerlach, of Community Mennonite Church, and Ben Risser, of Ridgeway Mennonite Church, who have served as voluntary chaplains for more than 10 years. The two pastors were encouraged by Virginia Mennonite Conference's Harrisonburg District to contact VMissions about a possible assignment. Because of the need and the lack of state funding for a chaplain, the Rockingham Regional Jail was also very interested. Those involved in the conversations created a Jail Chaplain Reference Council and a Ministry Support Team (MST) for my assignment.



Invite Jason to share his vision for jail chaplaincy:  
[jason.wagnerrjchaplain@gmail.com](mailto:jason.wagnerrjchaplain@gmail.com)

As we raise funds for the position, we are sharing the vision of what will be involved. The half-time position will serve two broad roles, inside and outside the jail.

The first will be working with the prisoners and the many ministers and ministries that come in and out of jail. We long to see more prisoners hearing the Good News about Jesus and his life-changing love. For this to happen, I will seek to create additional Bible studies and devotional times for the prisoners to engage in, along with connecting prisoners to their local ministers and providing one-on-one pastoral care for those who request it.

Secondly, the responsibilities of the position will involve being a resource to ex-inmates re-entering the community, connecting them with churches equipped to minister to them, and connecting them with services to support them. I will seek to raise awareness in the local churches of the specific needs and challenges which prisoners face as they head back out into the community. It is our prayer that all these labors inside and outside of the jail will impact the many lives who have come through the jail.

As a member of my MST prayed at the conclusion of a recent meeting, quoting from 1 Corinthians 1:28, "We pray that God would use the things that have been brought low and despised to bring about his glory so that no one might boast in his presence." That is also my desire.

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*Jason Wagner is an appointed VMissions worker currently raising support for his jail chaplaincy assignment.*

# Call to Prayer: Praying Together

BY SARAH SHOWALTER

"The difference between success and failure is a great team." —Dave Kerpen

"Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships."  
—Michael Jordan

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." —Helen Keller

"Teamwork is the secret that makes common people achieve uncommon results." —Ifeyanyi Onuoha

"Sticks in a bundle are unbreakable."  
—Kenyan Proverb

Even in the secular world there's a high value placed on teamwork. At VMissions, we believe that team was God's design for us from the beginning.

One of our guiding principles reads, "Team is our preferred mode of engaging in mission. The Bible underscores the necessity of deep relationships for human well-being. Jesus gathered and equipped a group of disciples to model and announce God's kingdom. Similarly, the Holy Spirit set apart missionary teams to spread the gospel in the first century. Following this pattern, we primarily mobilize teams of individuals and families into mission contexts."

This should also be our model for prayer. There is definitely a place for personal prayer, but I think we also find a fuller hope when we pray together.

**We are called "to be together, gathering around a promise, affirming what is happening among us. This is what prayer is all about. Prayer is coming together around a promise."**

Henri Nouwen

My "team" for the last two and a half years has been a small prayer group made up of young adults from my congregation, Ridgeway Mennonite Church.



It began in the fall of 2014 when my husband and I joined another couple for an evening of prayer. We weren't necessarily intending to start a prayer group, but after meeting the first time, we were hooked. From then on we met every week, quickly drawing in others who were yearning to dig deeper in prayer. Our shared vision was for seeing breakthrough in our neighborhoods and church community through prayer and it was an incredible encouragement to share and seek this vision together. There's something about being in it together that spurs you on, continuing to fuel the flame after the initial spark.

My team, like most teams, has faced challenges along the way. It's in the midst of opposition, challenge, and loss that team becomes especially crucial. Like Moses in Exodus 17, who was told that Israel would be victorious as long as his hands were raised toward heaven, we need others to support us - holding up our arms when we become too weak to hold them up ourselves. I've become acutely aware that our prayer group has done this for each other through job transitions, seasons of spiritual dryness, the loss of a child, and most recently the loss of one of our original group members in a tragic car accident. We have taken turns pointing each other towards the promise of God's redemption. We need each other.

A reflection from Henri Nouwen on Christian community cuts right to the heart of why we need team.

"The whole meaning of [team] lies in offering each other a space and support to wait for what we have already seen. Christian community is the place where we keep the flame of hope alive among us and take it seriously so that it can grow and become stronger in us. In this way we can live with courage, trusting that there is a spiritual power in us when we are together that allows us to live in this world without surrendering to the powerful forces constantly seducing us toward despair. That is how we dare to say that God is a God of love even when we see hatred all around us. That is why we can claim that God is a God of life even when we see death and destruction and agony all around us. We say it together. We affirm it in each other. Waiting together, nurturing what has already begun, expecting its fulfillment - that is the meaning of marriage, friendship, community, and the Christian life."

How can we become team together in prayer? Who are the people God is asking you to join together with in seeking the fulfillment of what God has already begun?



*Sarah Showalter is a freelance writer and former VMissions staff member.*





Earlene and Loren are serving the Mennonite Church of Trinidad and Tobago (MCTT) in a series of short-term assignments at the request of the Trindadian church, guiding in leadership development and an organizational review. Photo courtesy of Loren Horst

## Worker profile: Loren and Earlene Horst

**Home:** Zion Hill Mennonite Church, Singers Glen, Va.

**Service program:** Partners in Mission

### Serve in retirement

Retirement is an opportunity for international ministry! A wealth of life and vocational experiences are great assets in international ministry assignments.

Consider a teaching assignment at Lezha Academic Center in Lezhë, Albania, beginning August 2017. Teachers are needed for: Math, Chemistry, Physics, Earth Science, Bible, and World History. All classes are taught in English. Teach, mentor youth, and participate in the worshipping life of the local Mennonite church.

Contact Martin Rhodes at [martin.rhodes@vmmissions.org](mailto:martin.rhodes@vmmissions.org) for more information.

### Assignment:

Our assignment includes encouraging pastors and spouses, developing leaders and guiding an organizational review of church structure. We serve in blocks of time of 4-10 weeks, beginning in August 2016 until September 2017.

The churches in Trinidad are led by capable and gifted leaders. We believe that with few exceptions God provides the gifts and leaders necessary for his people to fully do his work. We don't lack for things to do but more challenging for us at this stage in the life of the church is knowing what not to do. We are not taking over and not making a permanent place for ourselves. We are temporary guests. The less important we become, the better we are doing our work.

Much of our activity is in the background, meeting, praying, talking, and drinking coffee. Then we watch with joy as leaders and churches move more fully into God's leading and blessing. We sat with full hearts one Sunday morning when all the pastors led communion in

front of a lively joint service at Charleville Mennonite Church. We were proud of this church that God has called into existence. Testimonies of new-found faith in Jesus are not unusual in a church in which most members and most leaders are first generation Christians. Invitations to become disciples of Jesus are common, extended by the very persons who heard and responded to the same call not so many years ago.

### A typical day:

A typical Sunday finds us in one of the congregations. The pastors and leaders are doing most of the teaching and preaching in the congregations, so usually, Loren does not preach. Sometimes evaluations or feedback is desired.

Afternoons often find us spending extra time with leaders and other members. We also enjoy the Pastors Fellowship on some Sunday evenings, a time of food, fellowship, conversation and prayer.



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# Auction

**PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE WORKERS AND MINISTRIES  
OF VIRGINIA MENNONITE MISSIONS**

**Saturday, May 20, 2017  
Eastern Mennonite School  
801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, Va.**

Mennonite Hispanic Initiative Benefit Dinner: 5:00 p.m.  
Silent Auction: 5:00 p.m. • Live Auction: 6:00 p.m.

**Browse items at [biddingOwl.com/vmmissions](http://biddingOwl.com/vmmissions)**

Auction items will be designated by the ministries they support.  
If you have items to donate, contact [steve.leaman@vmmissions.org](mailto:steve.leaman@vmmissions.org) or (540) 434-9727.

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