

I grew up on a farm. This has shaped my understanding of God. For me, God is in the quiet of nature, reminding me that He, or Love, is everywhere, that God is around us, moving us, drawing us to Him, and to each other. God is in the peaceful mornings in the barn with my parents, with the warmth and quiet sounds of the animals stirring. When life is unsettling or confusing, there is the gentle reminder that Love is there, there is so much more than we know or understand, and All is Well.

Our family attended the United Church every Sunday. I tried to get the spot in the car by my Gramma so I could cuddle up to her fur coat and her comforting voice. We sang Praise God from whom at the beginning of every service. Rituals are comforting, and remind me that God is with us. My parents were quiet and intentional people. They didn't talk much, and I didn't hear any discussion about others' faults. I believe through their behaviour, I learned to be fairly accepting and nonjudgemental. My parents were hard working, and quietly relished their day to day life. I realize that this role modelling has influenced me to appreciate daily tasks and be humbly grateful.

I have a wonderful career as a nurse. It keeps me actively interested in other's stories, and mindful that my attitudes and responses matter. I also know that I really don't have much wisdom or talent, but God/Love will show up and carry the moment, if I remember to keep my self quiet.

My 'go to' message in the Bible is the mustard seed metaphor. I remember this encouragement for myself, when I feel overwhelmed or lost. I at times, pull this encouragement out, at work, when it seems appropriate to offer, as the gentle support from God-as-we-understand Him, or 'the universe', that even with no clear evidence for holding on to Hope, that we only need to have the tiniest bit of faith in order to hold on and trust, that life will unfold, and we can be restored.

My family life has reminded me to stay humble and hold on to courage- that I am weak, but Love is not. I am focused, and calmed when I remember "Life is full of twists and turns". I believe that our lives are amazing gifts, for amazing adventures with Nature, loved ones, strangers, sorrow and joy, and the best gift is the sharing of this adventure.

I asked my mom after one of her medical crises, what her thoughts were about death. She has told us in the past that she was ready to die, if that happened soon, but also that she was quite happy to stay living as she had life to live still. When I asked her what she thought death would be, she just shrugged and said 'ashes to ashes'. I have taken that to mean, that she trusts and embraces whatever is in store for her. This is a good message for me about life, and about faith. Mom is one of my heroes. She has displayed the courage and wisdom of paying attention to church life and learnings, and to embrace all encompassing Love, without restrictions- the message on the walls at St Paul's hospital. Love each other, and act in love. I have found this church family to be consistently kind, welcoming and actively focused on learning and serving. Thankyou for this! It is a place for me to grow in faith.

Joan Stephens

I won't go through a chronological report of my journey of faith, but I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge significant influences in my life, starting with my family – my parents, siblings, extended family, who modelled love. Had I grown up in a loving Jewish, Islamic, or Buddhist family, I imagine I may well have embraced a different faith.

Beginning with childhood, the church was significant in my life. First Mennonite Church here in Saskatoon, Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, Grace Mennonite Church in Regina, the Mennonite Fellowship of Rosthern, and Nutana Park Mennonite Church have all, in different ways, been formative.

Mennonite educational institutions have also been important. Rosthern Junior College, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, and Conrad Grebel College all have helped to challenge and shape me.

Music. Music. Music.

As I mature, my understandings evolve and change. My beliefs are significantly different from my childhood, adolescence, and earlier adulthood. And I expect that they will be different in the years to come. I think I am less dogmatic than I have been in the past – while I believe that creeds have their place (especially the *Credo* in Bach's *Mass in B minor*), I am more concerned with how what I, and we, believe informs how I, and we, live.

That said, I have some core beliefs that I think are biblical, and that I don't think will change, although they might. They are somewhat random – it might seem a little like stream of consciousness – but I think they are also connected. I believe that many Nutana Park Mennonite folks share some, or even many, of my beliefs, and I would like to formally join this community in our personal and corporate journey. So, for today, this is my statement of faith.

Life is good.

Nobody know the trouble I've seen; nobody knows but Jesus.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. Matt. 22:35-40; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 10:25-28

Do to others as you would have them do to you. Luke 6:31. Also found in Confucianism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism


What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

Eat honey, my son, for it is good. Proverbs 24:13

The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof. Psalm 24:1

**Goodness is stronger than evil, love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness, life is stronger than death.
Victory is ours through God who loves us. – Desmond Tutu**

God is love. 1 John 4:8

Duff 

Nutana Mennonite membership speech

I have a Russian Mennonite background as many of you. Both my parents were born in Russia and were quite young when their families emigrated to Canada in the 1920's. My dad's family owned a ~~large~~ brick factory in Rosenthal and my mother's family (Friesens) owned a large estate farm in the Barstow-Schlahtin colony about 100 kms northeast of Chortitza.

I have two younger sisters and we grew up on a farm near the town of Rosemary in southern Alberta. I attended the University of Alberta in Edmonton, specializing in Genetics and Economics in the field of agriculture. After spending some time overseas, including 6 months with MCC in Yugoslavia, I ended up in California gaining experience in the agriculture seed business.


In 1984 I started my own seed company, specializing in developing vegetable varieties for Middle East agriculture. I sold that company about 10 years ago and returned to retire in Canada. My wife Lillian and I belonged to Foothills Mennonite church in Calgary and decided recently to move to Saskatoon to be closer to family.

We attended several churches here in Saskatoon and decided that we felt most comfortable here at Nutana. We already knew a few people here; the congregation seemed like a diverse and tolerant group.

I consider the spiritual side of life very important, in fact it pretty well permeates everything we think and do - including the environment we live in.

Being trained in the biological sciences, I find it spiritually instructive to be curious about the creation we are a part of. My concept of a supreme spiritual being is very much tied up with what we can observe in that creation. I'm a staunch believer in the Anabaptist tradition and how that relates to our responsibilities to each other and the environment we live in.

You as a congregation have expressed through your board and pastor, a willingness to accept me as a member of your body. I am grateful for that and look forward to an active participation as we move forward together.

 Richard Penno

I am here today as a new member of Nutana Park church, by way of transfer from Foothills Mennonite Calgary. I was a member there for 21 years. New to most of you, some I know from my childhood or my teens, some are friends I have yet to meet.

I have good memories of my childhood at Aberdeen, of family growing up on a farm, of school and always there was church. Sunday school was where we heard the stories of the Bible. There were daily devotions and prayer in our home.

Church was in German and difficult to understand. We had Loving parents who provided us with Christian education at RJC. Coming from a one room school, this was a teenage girl's dream .

During my time at RJC I was in the Choral^{cell} for 3 years, a time that I cherish and have sung in choirs until a few years ago. While in Rosthern I was baptized on confession of my faith by Rev JC Schmidt.

After high school and a short work experience I left for Winnipeg and graduated from St Boniface school of nursing as a reg nurse. I have had a wonderful career, there have been the usual work experience and then the adventure of travel nursing.

Somewhat like MDS, I have been privileged to plan and work on 5 medical missions in 3rd world countries... Our sleeping area in Thailand was a 5* veranda in the jungle. That become relevant when I heard that several of the medics had walked for 4 days to hear us. Some situations teach you to pray hard and fast ..

These were life changing for me and I highly recommend it.

service trips

I worked in northern Canada off and on for several years ,going to remote areas to provide relief for local staff.

No matter where- or the denomination I attended church, Catholic, Anglican, United, Methodist. I am very thankful for our freedom and our beautiful country.

I have a daughter and son, both have families whom I love dearly

So church as a community of support in my faith life is important to me. I value trusted leadership, good stewardship, Fellowship and music..

