

THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

by Conrad Showalter

On Friday evening, as part of Rosedale Bible College's conference presentation, Dr. Tim Erdel (or Brother Tim, as he's more familiarly known at Bethel College, Mishawaka, Indiana) addressed the gathered assembly on the topic "The Challenge of Change." Erdel noted that the more successful a church is in relation to evangelism and reaching out, the more change that church will face. Yet no matter how little change is intended, change is inevitable—the Amish being a good example.

Speaking out of his own context of the Missionary Church, he shared examples of how some changes took place very quickly, often with unanticipated results. He noted the move from a "peace church" to a patriotic evangelical church in the era of World War II, as well as a move toward a more restrictive perspective regarding women in ministry.

Erdel observed four points about change:

- ❖ We will inevitably change
- ❖ We fail to realize how much we have changed



Dr. Tim Erdel

- ❖ Intended changes are often more difficult to accomplish than we assume
- ❖ Changes often bring unintended consequences

Brother Tim concluded with a strong reminder that our hope in the midst of change is hope in the God revealed in Jesus, in the work of his Spirit, and in the church, the community of believers. We should also find hope in seeing God at work in providence, the reality that God works through our feeble attempts. Such a vision of ordinary life is a gift to be treasured. Remember, "God knows what he is doing, even when we hardly know what we are doing." **BB**



JOSEPH: THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

During Saturday's main sessions, an artist was busy painting. Having generously agreed to donate his time and exceptional talent to this cause, Mark Gingerich was perched on a stage far above the crowd, developing a masterpiece 24"x30" oil on canvas. The painting shows a peaceful Joseph not yet understanding the significance of his surroundings—the shocks of grain, the cattle, and the rainbow.

Mark was born near the city of Hamburg in Germany where he grew up as a son of CMC missionary parents, Lloyd and Mary. Mark comes from a long line of Amish Mennonite farmers and craftsmen and traces his lineage from both parents to the region of Hessen near the village of Waldeck, Germany. He attended the German public school until the age of nine when his family moved back to the United States.

Mark's artistic gift began to surface while a teenager living in Madison County, Ohio. He won prizes in national competitions for high school in the early 1980's. He went on to paint large scale murals as part of his room and board in several homes in the mid 1980's while working in the construction field.



In 1996, Mark entered his work into an art gallery in Florida, and has since been represented in galleries in Ohio and Kentucky.

A few years ago, Mark was one of six artists to paint in the Ohio bicentennial project, Paint Ohio in 2003. He and the other five artists ventured into Ohio's eighty-eight counties to explore their histories and unique places in order to capture selective images on canvas. The paintings were then exhibited at the Ohio Historical Society as well as other venues around the state. A commemorative book was also published entitled *The Land We Call Ohio*.

Mark and his wife Shana (Yutzy) have been married for twenty-two years and have five children. They are active members of Shiloh Mennonite Church, a member of the Conservative Mennonite Conference.

At the end of Saturday's evening session, the crowd cheered as Glendon Bender auctioned and buyers bid. Dale Keffer donated \$5,700 to CMC and went home with the painting, *Joseph: The Providence of God*.

More information can be found on his website at www.markgingerich.com. **BB**