



Mennonite Church Canada 2017 Special Delegate Assembly

PROCLAIMING: Activity of the Spirit

299 New earth, heavens new

ALEXANDRA 56, 56, 56 with refrain

F Gm/F F C Am

1 New earth, heav - ens new, Spir - it
2 New love, mer - cies new, Spir - it
3 New minds, wis - dom new, Spir - it
4 New earth, heav - ens new, Spir - it

Cms C F Gm/F F

Covenant New: Program Guide

Special Assembly, Oct. 13 - 15, 2017

Livestream Link

<http://home.mennonitechurch.ca/winnipeg2017Video>

Greetings and Welcome

On behalf of all the planners of this Special Assembly, welcome!
We hope our time together is comfortable and insightful.

Thank you for coming!

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Scent free policy

In recognition of individuals with asthma, allergies, and severe environmental and chemical sensitivities, we ask you to refrain from wearing fragrances and scented personal care products at Assembly. This includes perfumes, colognes, aftershave, and scented hair products. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated by those affected.

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Thank you to leadership

With deep gratitude we thank the following people who have served sacrificially in various capacities of leadership on Mennonite Church Canada Councils, Boards, and Committees in recent years and at this Special Assembly.

General Board (GB)

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Bryan Moyer Suderman, ON		Craig Neufeld, SK
Lori Reesor Guenther, ON		Artur Bergen, BC

Thank you

to volunteers, staff, venue service staff, worship team, speakers, and more...

It takes many, many people to work with thousands of interconnected details to prepare for a large gathering. Thank you to each and everyone who has helped and is helping to bring this event to fruition.



Area Church Story: MCBC

Supported by a Wide and Committed Faith Community

Connections with the wider Mennonite Church are not always visible in the work I do, but they have always been an important part of my ministry. I was a Mennonite Church Canada Witness Worker in Japan for 13 years, five of them with my wife, Rie. We are now living in Surrey where I am pastor of the Mennonite Japanese Christian Fellowship and the music coordinator for Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford.

Attending national gatherings allows me to reconnect with friends and family from across the country and reinforce the theological foundations that sustain me as a pastor. They help remind me that the small Japanese congregation I serve is part of something much larger. They give me confidence that the larger family of faith I belong to has a strong history and foundation that includes the experience of many different missionaries and people from churches across Canada and the world.

The activities of the wider church have allowed me to be part of a larger, supportive group of people who live out their faith—like being a witness for peace and non-violence while governments try to solve conflicts through military intervention. I particularly appreciated the Being a Faithful Church process because it

helped bring me into many conversations with others regarding issues related to faith, Biblical interpretation, and how the church might address issues where people interpret the Bible differently, or when there's disagreement. Being connected across Canada has often helped me focus on certain directions for my preaching as well as inspire me to work more on helping people from my congregation to connect with churches and mission workers beyond our local church community.

Some connections with the ministries of the wider church come in practical ways—like the Anabaptist/Mennonite related books and commentaries available at CommonWord. They've been helpful in shaping my ministry. So have materials that have been translated into Japanese and Korean.

Resources with a nationwide connection are important to my music ministry at Emmanuel MC too. It is very important to have access to Canadian composed Anabaptist music, like that of Bryan Moyer Suderman and Phil Campbell Enns, because so much "contemporary" Christian music lacks an Anabaptist perspective. Much of the music we hear in B.C. through Christian radio stations focuses on a "me" or "I" perspective

rather than "we," which seems to be different from many churches I've visited in the other Canadian provinces. I believe an Anabaptist perspective gives more importance to God's work in and through our faith community rather than just a "God and me" perspective.

I'm interested to see how *Resonate*, the new hymnal collection from MennoMedia, will add to our worship services across Canada and the US, and contribute to the shape of things for the future.

*Gerald Neufeld, Pastor,
Mennonite Japanese Christian Fellowship,
Surrey B.C. and Music Coordinator,
Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford
B.C. (Mennonite Church British Columbia).*



Area Church Story: MCA

Seeds from South to East to West

In February, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC) begins promoting a “Welcome Our Neighbour” sign fundraising campaign after encountering it at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) Pastor’s Week in Elkhart, Indiana earlier that month. They make 200 signs with a “welcome” slogan printed on each in French, English, and Arabic. Signs are sold and purchasers put them on display.

Members of First Mennonite Edmonton’s Service and Outreach committee hear of the sign campaign through personal Mennonite contacts. They decide they would like to promote it too, both at FMC and at the upcoming Mennonite Central Committee Sale at the end of May. Their chair, Karl Blank, asks me if I know anything about this. I put him into contact with MCEC.

Near the end of April, Karl heads to Winnipeg to pick up his son from Canadian Mennonite University. Len Rempel from Mennonite World Conference travels to Winnipeg from Ontario at the same time. He brings 50 campaign signs from MCEC that Karl takes to Alberta. The

signs are sold at FMC after church. Our family buys a sign and sets it up on our front lawn.

Little did I know what that sign would lead to! On a hot and sunny spring afternoon, a city-hired landscaping company comes around to replace a tree they removed from our yard last summer. As one worker digs the hole, I ask him how it’s going. He says, “It’s difficult, because I’m fasting. No food or drink until sundown!” He then points to the sign on our front lawn, the one that reads, in English, French, and Arabic, “No matter where you are from, we are glad you’re our neighbour.” He is from Algeria, and can read the words in all three languages. He expresses deep appreciation for the message.

We talk about what it means to welcome others, and how challenging the idea can be in our society, where division seems to be emphasized more than ever. He wonders where the signs came from, and I tell him they are an effort from my larger church to express Christ-like love and welcome for people whom

many have come to reject. It’s a quick encounter (the foreman is watching!) but a meaningful one.

Who knows what seeds were planted?

*Tim Wiebe Neufeld,
First Mennonite Church,
Edmonton, Alberta,
(Mennonite Church Alberta)*



Area Church Story: MCSASK

We are all connected

Growing up in a Mennonite church and family, I had some awareness of First Nations people. Our church had supported the Timber Bay Children's Home. In school, we studied First Nations history. On road trips as a family, we would occasionally drive through a reserve. I would see First Nations people on the streets in downtown Regina. My father taught education up in La Ronge to First Nation students, but none of these interactions told me very much, or gave me any real sense of Indigenous community or culture. They were others. Not like me, not like my people.

More recently, I have begun to have a better understanding. I see how the powerful get to write the history books. I understand that my culture has systematically tried to eradicate their culture. We stole their land, their children, their language, their way of living. I continue to see how in some subtle and not so subtle ways, we continue to sideline First Nation's people and culture.

The Ministries Commission of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan and an adhoc committee known as "Walking the Path" (a joint group made up of MC Sask constituents, representatives from MCC Sask and the Office of the Treaty Commissioner) have been working hard together to find ways to engage with each other – settler people and First Nations people.

I feel blessed to sit on both these committees. One of these ways was to organize a trip to a powwow at Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, north of Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan. I was both excited and a bit nervous for this opportunity. I have always wanted to go to a powwow, but have felt rather intimidated. Would we be welcome? How on earth could the people at this powwow, people who our ancestors and our government have systematically abused and sidelined, want us at their celebration?

A group of about 25 people travelled to Muskeg Lake, by bus and by car. We came from many of our MC Sask churches. We stopped in Blaine Lake to pick up Harry Lafond (Office of the Treaty Commissioner and previous chief of Muskeg Lake.) He travelled on the bus with us to the reserve, giving us some history and insight into what would be happening at the powwow. He told us stories and gave us a good introduction to what powwows entail.

When we arrived at Muskeg Lake, the excitement was palpable. People were gathering. Dancers were putting on their regalia. Drummers were setting up their circles and preparing their drums. We moved into the large arbor and found seats on the bleachers arranged around the outside. We were greeted with friendly faces and smiles. We enjoyed some good bannock

burgers from the food stands arrayed around the grounds.

Standing on the bleachers during the grand entry was profound for me. "Ah," I found myself thinking, as tears welled in my eyes, "this is who they are. A strong and courageous people. Full of life and energy and a creative spirit."

All the colors, the music, the dancers—I was both inspired and humbled. I could feel the drum beats resonating in my chest, much like my own heart. Their voices were raised in song to the Creator, much like my own experience with music. These gracious people welcomed me to their land, their home, inviting me to listen and learn. I was the stranger here, and yet they offered me a hand of welcome, a kind word and a glass of cool water to quench my thirst.

As we left, I could feel the echo of their songs and drums in my mind and body. I have learned something profound in this place. It is not really something I can even articulate. It is a feeling in my bones and in my blood. It is a sense that we are all connected by our common humanity and our faith in the Creator. Hai hai.

*Valerie Wiebe,
Zoar Mennonite Church,
Mennonite Church Saskatchewan*



Area Church Story: MCM

A Legacy of Community and Connection

Mennonites have a long history of involvement in Pauingassi First Nation, an isolated fly-in reserve on Lake Winnipeg in northern Manitoba.

Because of this history, a few of us from Grace Mennonite found ourselves sitting with Allan Owens, the Pauingassi pastor, at an MCM Partnership Circle in October, 2010. In an adaptation of the Good Samaritan parable, Allan said, "We look up and see planes flying by. But they don't stop."

Later, Neill von Gunten, a former MC Canada worker with what was then called Native Ministries, asked me, "Did you hear the invitation?"

I hesitated. "Uhhh... No?"

He replied, "That was your invite! To get a on a plane and visit Pauingassi!"

Seven years later, that invitation has turned into a relationship of mutual respect, trust, and reciprocity as Pauingassi and Grace Mennonite Church seek to build each other up.

We at Grace Mennonite partner with local organizations in Pauingassi to help run Pauingassi Family Camp each summer, where we swim, hike, canoe, play, laugh, and enjoy life together. In winter, we're invited to drive on the ice roads and participate in a gospel jamboree. We've hosted groups from Pauingassi at our church and gladly give them the floor to lead worship. Social media helps us connect at individual levels all year round.

Throughout the years in Pauingassi, we've been treated to moose meat, beaver, duck/goose soup, deep fried pickerel, smoked white fish, and so much bannock that we have to loosen our belt buckles! Our connections in Pauingassi have helped give us context as we advocate for improved relations between settler and Indigenous peoples.

All of these great connections, our relationships, trust, laughter, tears, and hope for the future, are based on being part of the larger Mennonite world. For that we are grateful. From the past five decades of ministry in Pauingassi and Partnership Circles facilitated by Mennonite Church

Manitoba, to the ongoing guidance and challenges we receive from MC Canada's Indigenous Relations, we are thankful and excited about the work God will continue to do in both of our communities.

*Kyle Penner,
Associate Pastor,
Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach, Man.
(Mennonite Church Manitoba)*



Area Church Story: MCEC

Relearning Community in MCEC

The lawnmower hummed in the background, sometimes quieter and other times louder as it drew closer. The lawn had needed cutting, Janel knew, and was surprised when a boy from the neighbourhood knocked on her door and asked if he could cut it for her. His offer was a pleasant surprise.

“We’ve just moved and are now in a different community,” Janel says. “Through our ReLearning Community weekends the term family on mission has stood out to me. How does your family work on mission? How do you show your community life on life?”

Janel, a part of the Listowel Mennonite Church ReLearning Community team, has just finished the two-year intentional time of retreats and teaching. The team has learned discipleship concepts, and even a new vocabulary. Unable to apply all that they have learned immediately, Janel is excited to find opportunities to interact with her new neighbours.

“An example of life on life is simply bringing people into your life or home and having a meal with them. It is showing what our family does – we pray, sit down together and we talk at a meal,” Janel explains.

Excited by the discipleship training they have received, Janel also notes that there is another side. “It’s exciting but it is also scary,” she admits. “People in my new neighbourhood have no idea who I am so there is a fear about how they might judge or view me. On the other hand, I’m excited because they do not know who I am and therefore I carry no baggage with me.”

As she and her family settle into their new surroundings, they wonder how God might lead them. “We haven’t had a chance yet to connect with many of our neighbours, but we are ready to roll with it,” she says. “God has a reason for us being here – to show God’s love to our community by showing life on life,” she says.

As the lawnmower fades into the distance and moves on to the next neighbour’s lawn, Janel heads to the kitchen to take care of that baking she promised to the one who cut her lawn. She looks forward to sharing it with him and his family.

*Lisa Williams,
Mennonite Church Eastern Canada*





Testimonial: Witness Partnership

We have so enjoyed partnering with the work of Gregory Rabus and Jennifer Otto at Friedenshaus in Germany. Through Greg and Jennifer, we have the opportunity to partner with what God is doing in an entirely different part of the world; and we get to extend our participation in providing assistance to Syrian refugees. Just as we have assisted Syrian refugees here in Canada, we get the opportunity to partner with what Friedenshaus (Peace House) has done to provide community and practical assistance to refugees in Germany. As a small church in the heart of Niagara, partnering with Witness Workers overseas gives us opportunities to participate in initiatives we may not have manpower for, and it allows us to extend the blessing of our financial gifts to even more places.

With Greg and Jennifer, we get to do even more kingdom building! We are so thankful for how this partnership allows us to help leaders like Greg and Jennifer to grow, and how it also helps us to grow as a church!

*Chris Hutton, Pastor, of The First MC, Vineland, ON
In partnership with Gregory Rabus and Jennifer Otto*

Testimonial: Nimz' Witness Partnership

[Our mission partnership with Mike and Cheryl] has helped our congregation to feel a stronger connection to the broader work of the church in the world, and an opportunity to offer tangible support. We have gained insight into the lives of other Christians beyond our community as well, giving us a glimpse of how the Spirit is moving in other places. It helps to move our focus beyond our own walls and our less diverse, middle-class community and out into the world, where we are called to be active participants in sharing God's love and concern for all people.

*Submitted by JD Kuepfer
Mission chairperson Wellesley MC, ON,
in partnership with Mike & Cheryl Nimz*

Resolutions

MVSA

Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure (MVSA) requests that MCCCanada continue to be the official holder of our MVSA Shared Funds and to provide related administrative support in the managing of our financial transactions.

Mennonite Men

Mennonite Men in Canada have been and continue to function as a partner organization with Mennonite Church Canada that seeks to a) support Mennonite men in spiritual growth from an Anabaptist perspective under the JoinMen program and b) support new Mennonite church plants with grants to help them realize their first owned worship space under our JoinHands program... we request that Mennonite Church Canada enable the continuation of the Mennonite Men in Canada ministry by committing to remain the official holder of our funds and to provide the related administrative support in the managing of our financial transactions.”

Moved by Hans Peters

Mennonite Women Canada

Whereas Mennonite Women Canada strongly affirms and aligns with Covenant New's stress on relationships and mission, and

Whereas Mennonite Women Canada deeply appreciate the possibility of conducting nationwide gatherings of women at Mennonite Church Canada's nationwide gatherings, and

Whereas the previously independent regional associations of Mennonite Women are in process of aligning with their Area/Regional Churches and therefore still need Mennonite Women Canada to fulfill several important functions for them, and

Whereas Mennonite Women has a valued and imbedded history with Mennonite Church Canada and continues to be a partner organization that promotes supportive Christian relationships and mission among women in Mennonite Church Canada, and

Whereas we are a national partner organization who depend on MC Canada to comply with CRA regulations, and

Whereas we are the stewards of the substantial Pennies and Prayer Legacy fund (\$70,000) with which we support Witness workers who include ministry with women in their work, as well as of other more current funds with which we support Mennonite Women engaged in theological studies and the production of annual Bible Study Guides in partnership with MWUSA,

Be it resolved that Mennonite Church Canada enable the continuation of MWCANADA's ministry by committing to remain the official holder of our funds, to provide the related administrative support in the managing of our financial transactions, and to welcome nation wide gatherings of Mennonite Women Canada at those of Mennonite Church Canada.

Submitted on behalf of Mennonite Women Canada's by Elsie Rempel, MWCCanada Secretary Treasurer

Approved and affirmed by:

Shirley Stauffer Redekop, MWCCanada President

Liz Koop, MWCCanada Past President

Waltrude Gortzen, Women's Ministry, MCBC

Kate Janzen, Alberta Women in Mission

Mel Harms, Saskatchewan Women's Ministry

Kathy Giesbrecht, Mennonite Church Manitoba liaison with Mennonite Women Manitoba

Carmen Brubacher, Women of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Nomination Slate



Allan Hiebert
Secretary / Treasurer

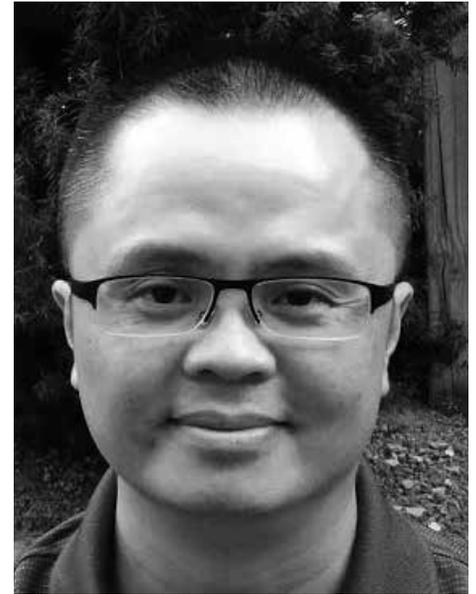
Allan holds an MBA from the University of Manitoba and a PhD in Electrical Engineering from the University of Alberta. He has experience in leading large teams in engineering software design, development, support and training and was an officer of a publicly traded company for 12 years. He has volunteered as chair, vice chair, board member, and finance trustee with numerous organizations including the Calgary MCC Thrift Shop, Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, and Foothills Mennonite Church (member since 1997).

Allan has served as Treasurer and member of the General Board of Mennonite Church Canada since July 2016.



Geraldine Balzer
Assistant Moderator

I envision a national organization that supports the work of a diverse group of congregations in Canada and works toward embracing cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and theological diversity, building on our strengths, and learning from our weaknesses. I wish to continue to support initiatives that work toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples of Canada.



Calvin Quan
Moderator

As a professional engineer, Calvin has led product and process development teams in technology companies for 20 years. A member of the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church for 30 years, he has volunteered in various leadership roles, including chair of church board, and vice chair of finance commission at MC Eastern Canada. In the past year, Calvin served as moderator of MC Canada, chair of the Interim Council, and as board treasurer of a community based preschool. Calvin holds a B.A.Sc. in mechanical engineering from the University of Toronto and lives in the city with his young family. They attend a vibrant urban church that serves the community and worships in three languages.

Assembly Schedule

Friday

4:00 Doors Open

5:00 Supper

6:30 Worship
"Spirit of Life"

- Call to worship
 - Gathering Prayer
 - Congregational Singing
 - Reflection
 - Scripture Reading
 - Congregational Singing
 - Benediction
-

7:00 Evening Session

- Opening, start of business
 - Presentation of Nomination Slate
 - Presentation and discussion of basic model and bylaws that put structure into existence
 - Discussion on the model and bylaws
-

Closing Worship

Special Offering - Friday

Tonight's offering will help support the ministry of CommonWord, the collaborative resource ministry of Canadian Mennonite University and Mennonite Church Canada. With its physical storefront and online presence, CommonWord offers a large collection of Anabaptist and related resources - more than 12,000 books and DVDs for sale and loan, in addition to thousands of free downloadable items.

Your support is crucial to ongoing operation and success. Thank you for your generosity.

Saturday Morning

8:30 Worship
"What is the Spirit writing on our hearts?"

- Invocation
 - Congregational Singing
 - A story from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
 - A prayer from Mennonite Church Alberta
 - Congregational Singing
 - Blessing
-

8:45 Session

- Presentation of last night's feedback
 - Motion to approve bylaw
 - Open discussion
 - Vote
-

10:00 Break

10:25 Worship continued...
"What is the Spirit writing on our hearts?"

- Invocation
 - Congregational Singing
 - A story from Mennonite Church Manitoba
 - A prayer from Mennonite Church British Columbia
 - Congregational Singing
 - Blessing
-

10:40 Session

- Announce Results of By-Law Vote
 - Presentation and discussion of Covenant and Operating Agreement
 - Presentation of Witness Proposal
-

11:55 Worship continued...
"What is the Spirit writing on our hearts?"

- Invocation
 - Congregational Singing
 - A story from Mennonite Church Saskatchewan
 - A prayer from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
 - Congregational Singing
-

12:10 Announcements

- Table Grace
-

12:15 Lunch

Saturday Afternoon

- 1:10** **Worship continued...**
“What is the Spirit writing on our hearts?”
- Congregational singing

- 1:15** **Session**
- Focus Group discussion
 - Brief focus group reporting
 - Plenary discussion of Witness Proposal

- 2:45** **Worship continued...**
“What is the Spirit writing on our hearts?”
- Invocation
 - Congregational Singing
 - A story from Mennonite Church Alberta
 - A prayer from Mennonite Church Manitoba
 - Congregational Singing
 - Blessing

3:00 **Break**

- 3:30** **Session**
- Reporting on Feedback on Covenant and Operating Agreement
 - Motion to commend the Covenant and Operating Agreement to Joint Council and Regional Church boards for finalization
 - Discussion on Covenant and Operating Agreement
 - Approve in Principle of Covenant and Operating Agreement

- 4:45** **Worship continued...**
“What is the Spirit writing on our hearts?”
- Invocation
 - Congregational Singing
 - A story from Mennonite Church British Columbia
 - A prayer from Mennonite Church Saskatchewan
 - Congregational Singing
 - Table Grace

5:00 **Supper**

Special Offering - Sunday

This morning's offering will help support Witness ministries internationally and in Canada. Witness ministries work with many partners to share God's healing and hope by forming communities of faith and growing leaders for the church in multiple countries. In Canada, its primary work is formed by the office of Indigenous Relations, as the

Saturday Evening

- 6:00** **Session**
- Presentation and Discussion of Financial Plan
 - Approve in principle Financial Plan
 - Report on Working Group Discussion and Witness Proposal
 - Approval in principle of Witness Proposal
 - Nomination Slate Vote

- 8:00** **Closing Ceremony and Worship**
“New birth – Hope in God”
- Call to Worship
 - Congregational Singing
 - Commissioning Litany
 - Congregational Singing
 - Benediction

Sunday Morning (at THE MET)

Please bring your nametag and lanyard for entry, seating is limited to registered Attendants and Delegates.

- 9:00** **Worship**
“The Spirit gives life. God gives competency”
- Congregational Singing
 - Call to worship & Prayer
 - Congregational Singing
 - Scripture Reading
 - Congregational Singing
 - Scripture Reading
 - Sermon
 - Prayer for the Church
 - Special Offering
 - Communion
 - Benediction
 - Congregational Singing

church strives toward reconciliation with First Nations people on this land. Your support is critical in this time of transition as considerations are discerned about how we will carry this work forward.

Thank you for your generous support.



CommonWord

Bookstore and Resource Centre

Friday Special Offering

Today's offering will be gathered to support congregations across Canada through the ministry of the CommonWord Book and Resource Centre. Below, several pastors and leaders share about the importance of CommonWord in their congregations:

Although the internet provides a lot of access to materials, I and our congregational members regularly draw on CommonWord. In addition to standard borrowing practices, we can also borrow items for enough time to examine them and discern whether we should purchase our own. This has saved us monies we would otherwise have spent on materials that turned out not to be as helpful as expected.

When pastors and parishioners of congregations of other faith traditions ask me for help in locating resources I recommend CommonWord. They always express appreciation for the openness to groups outside of our denomination.

The staff is incredibly knowledgeable and efficient in helping us to identify and access what we need for congregational life. Recently, for example, I recommended to them the purchase of a resource I assumed was not available at CommonWord, only to learn that we do indeed have it.

While many changes are happening within Mennonite Church Canada, our congregation is even more aware of the need for the assistance and ministry of CommonWord.

Ken Quiring, Pastor at Grace Mennonite Church, Brandon, MB.

Best wishes and thank you for all the support that is given to CommonWord. It supports Area Churches with the program of a box of books "Cheaper by the Dozen" and other items for use in our Churches. Our Church has been receiving these books and they are well liked by our congregation. It gives our church the opportunity to get books written by Mennonite authors or containing items or stories that are Mennonite related. We are a small congregation that would not be able to obtain or afford the variety of topics that many have enjoyed reading. Adults to children enjoy these books that are sent every six weeks to learn and keep current with recent topics. It is a great "Mennonite" resource.

Doreen Nickel, Librarian, Zoar Mennonite Church, Langham, Sk.

Using CommonWord's "Cheaper by the Dozen" program has been a wonderful addition to the reading experience in our congregation. Each shipment of books offers a taste of various themes and topics, a sampling of genres, and an informative exposure to new publications. The books are thoughtfully chosen by CommonWord staff, and the return shipping system is extremely convenient, making this the easiest way imaginable to significantly enhance and supplement a church library. Access to Anabaptist material is certainly a component that contributes to the cultivating of our self-understanding as Mennonites and the shaping of our distinctiveness as a denomination. During this season of exploring our collective future direction, CommonWord offers an integral element of centering cohesion.

Jerry Buhler, Pastor at First Mennonite Church, Kelowna, BC.

Sunday Worship

we will be gathering at THE MET,
281 Donald St. around the corner
from the Radisson

Please bring
your **nametag and lanyard**
for entry as seating is limited to
registered Attendees and Delegates.



Sunday Special Offering

Today's offering will be gathered
in support of ongoing International
Witness ministry. Below, Don Rempel
Boschman relates how important
your support is in this work.

During Don's first term in Botswana,
his salary was paid by his home
congregation, Mountainview Mennonite in
Vancouver, with money they had received
from the sale of a house which belonged
to the church. Also, an older couple from
the congregation committed themselves to
sending a book each month to help build
Don's theological library. Those are examples
of the wonderfully creative ways people
support the international work of Mennonite
Church Canada Witness. Later, Don and his
wife, Kathleen, served in Botswana from 1985
to 1996. Today, Don is a pastor at Douglas
Mennonite Church, a mid-sized congregation
in Winnipeg. This congregation continues to be
enriched by Mennonite Church Canada Witness
connections, with Douglas Mennonite Church
members George and Tobia Veith currently
serving in China, and other Douglas lay leaders
having served in Germany and China. In recent
years Douglas has also hosted indigenous
church leaders from China and Botswana,
giving the congregation inspiring, first-hand
accounts of God working around the world.
Witness workers and the congregations closest
to them are very grateful for your support.





Testimonial: Witness Worker

When Marla and Karl Langelotz saw the bulletin announcement looking for short term workers in Ludwigshafen, Germany, they felt this might be the “right” fit for them. After checking a little more into the assignment and Mennonite Church Canada’s short term ministry expectations and commitments, they felt they were willing to take a chance. A few weeks before leaving, they had a Sunday morning coffee and muffin fundraiser with their congregation at Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church (SAMC). In part, it was an opportunity for individuals to make a donation toward covering some of their costs. But, it was as much about making people aware of the ministry as it was about securing financial support. Marla and Karl wanted the church to feel involved, to feel that they were part of this ministry. To that end, Karl committed to writing a blog every week (<https://friedenshausblog.wordpress.com>).

Photo: Carl (left) and Marla (4th from left) with a group of refugees at Friedenshaus (Peace House) in Germany where they helped long term workers Gregory Rabus and Jennifer Otto and the local Mennonite congregation run programs for newcomers to help them adjust to their new home.

Marla wrote to the congregation every month sharing highlights and prayer requests with the congregation. Without ever making an official request for financial support from the congregational body, SAMC not only shared their prayerful support but also contributed financially, covering well over half of the ministry costs for the year. The Langelotzes hope that this short term ministry experience is not the last SAMC can and will benefit from.

Testimonial: Friedenshaus Guest

A year ago, I came to Germany from Syria. My name is Muna. Before, I was a math teacher. Next to a government German course, I’ve been coming to the Friedenshaus for a couple of months now. It’s been great getting to know the teachers, the class participants, and the people in the quilting group. Every day I notice how more visitors are coming. We’re all happy despite the many differences in age, nationality, etc. We learn and we talk with each other, tell stories and make jokes. Once in the quilting group, a woman from the church noted how I could sew as fast as she could talk (I liked to sew in Syria)! The atmosphere is full of humanity and tolerance. I’m sure that everyone who has visited the Friedenshaus will come back. It’s a second home, and we don’t feel at all like foreigners here. Thank you to the coordinators and volunteers at the Friedenshaus!



Photo: Muna (center) at Karl and Marla’s farewell.



Testimonial: Barkman's Witness Partnership

Our partnership with Emmanuel Mennonite Church began before we left Abbotsford for the Philippines. As our home church, Emmanuel had always been incredibly supportive and nurturing when we were discerning our ministry path with MC Canada Witness and then getting ready to move overseas with two young children. It was only natural that a formal partnership would be created with them.

We have a care team made up of individuals from Emmanuel who committed to supporting us through monthly Skype meetings and prayer. We share our struggles and joys with them and have gained perspective, wisdom and encouragement from them continuously throughout the last 5 years that we've been in Manila. We also send updates monthly to the church congregation and have preached at Emmanuel every summer when we've been home to visit and enjoy our yearly Sunday potluck where we always feel the love and support from our home congregation.

Our partnership with Emmanuel has helped us connect with many individuals and families who have also served overseas as missionaries. These relationships have helped us learn how to navigate the cross cultural difficulties and the stress of being away from familiarity. We've learned from several wise life-long missionaries that we need to be patient and wait on God, despite times where we feel we want to see fast results.

Every summer when we come home to visit we not only preach at Emmanuel but we meet with countless friends over meals, coffee or summer evening walks. We've enjoyed getting to know old and new friends every summer and learning about how our home church is connecting in the community.

Our family has only one year left in our commitment to serve in Manila so we are looking forward to moving home and transitioning to life in Abbotsford and being part of the weekly activities at Emmanuel Mennonite again. We have appreciated the partnership with Emmanuel over the last 5 years and are very thankful for the prayers, the relationships and the financial support.

*Christina Barkman
Mennonite Church Canada
Witness Worker, Manila, Philippines*



Interim Council

Mennonite Church Canada
Mennonite Church British Columbia
Mennonite Church Alberta

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan
Mennonite Church Manitoba
Mennonite Church Eastern Canada

Our Vision

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ
and by the power of the Holy Spirit
to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace
so that God's healing and hope
flow through us to the world.

Statement Of Identity And Purpose

God calls, equips and sends the church to engage the world
with the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are a community of disciples of Jesus,
a part of the Body of Christ,
covenanted together
as congregations,
area churches, and
a national church body.

Gratefully responding to God's initiatives
and empowered by the Holy Spirit,
we commit ourselves and our resources
to calling, equipping and sending the church to engage the world
with the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ.