

the Assembled News

94% of delegates vote in favour of new structure



Delegates voted 94% in favour of a new structure for MC Canada

- Dan Dyck

Delegates voted 94% in favour of taking Mennonite Church Canada's existing structures off of life support equipment designed for a society and church culture from a prior century.

In setting up the delegate conversation on Friday night, Peter Rempel, moderator of Mennonite Church Manitoba, noted that the new structure "provides a platform, not a straightjacket, for accepting proposals presented at this assembly in principle," referring to the several recommendations being presented for affirmation rather than a vote. These included the Covenant and Operating Agreement between Regional Churches, a proposal on International Witness, and a financial plan. The new bylaw, said Rempel, was guided by decisions made at the assembly in Saskatoon in 2016.

The favourable vote means that congregations will no longer be members of a national body, but will speak to national agenda and programming through their regional church bodies at regular regional gatherings. The new structures make room for periodic national study conferences with direct congregational involvement. A new Joint Council replaces the General Board. It will be comprised of regional church moderators and other representatives appointed by Regional Churches.

Congregations will now channel funding for nationwide priorities through their Regional Churches. Delegate concerns focused on such things as the lack of churchly language in the new bylaw, the danger of creating congregational silos, power imbalances among Regional Churches and small and large congregations, how to maintain a Mennonite identity in the new structure, and the underlying vision for the change. They also worried that Regional Churches do not have the fundraising muscle to meet their new financial commitments. The Covenant and Operating Agreement among the five Regional Churches describes a first fruits model that requires them to meet funding commitments to the Nationwide Church for a given year even if their own funding needs are not met. The \$1,922,000 financial plan proposed for MC Canada is built on past patterns of congregational funding only and but does not include individual and corporate giving, which in the past has approached the high side of six figures.

Proposed amendments to the bylaw which legalizes the new structure were several. Three were carried. The first carried amendment sought to add assurance that Regional Churches take seriously the health of their congregations and that Regional Churches will carry forward national concerns to the new Joint Council. The second advised revisions to allow for

the use of technology to attend any future Special Assemblies. The third called for the inclusion of a reference to the Shared Convictions of Mennonite World Conference.

Other counsel from delegates was referred to the new Joint Council for follow-up, such as scheduled reviews of structures to allow for course changes instead of waiting for crises to develop, determining how leadership development will receive adequate attention, and the continuance of activities shared with MC USA such as the ministerial information database.

With the new emphasis on congregations as foundational to the Nationwide Church, about 100 people found themselves at a break-out group discussion – the largest break out group – on congregational vitality. Numerous voices expressed excitement and creative ways to tap into resources across congregations, and to support from Regional Churches to connect them to and curate resources compatible with Anabaptist values, even if those resources are from beyond the Mennonite realm.

Time will tell if the new structures require ongoing intensive care or whether they will lead to discharge from hospital.



Delegates Affirm Covenant and Operating Agreement

- Dan Dyck

A Covenant and Operating Agreement describing intents of both the spirit and function of the new relationships among five Regional Churches comprising MC Canada was affirmed in principle after robust discussion by delegates.

Lee Dyck, moderator of Mennonite Church BC (MCBC), introduced the documents noting that they reaffirm the 20 year old Vision Healing and Hope Statement. “We’re promising to be together for the long haul,” she said.

Delegates discussed what would be lost from current activities and programs, and expressed excitement about new possibilities and opportunities with a better equipped Regional Church that is closer to congregations.

Willard Metzger, Executive Director, acknowledged that there would be reductions in work as well as shifting of some responsibility to Regional Churches. “There will be substantially less activity than in the past in International Witness, communications, leadership development, and with the executive team,” he said, noting that, “the financial plan gives Regional Churches the financial capacity to do some of these things.”

Palmer Becker Waterloo North MC said, “We need to go home and do some creative thinking in our Regional Churches. Will we need to add staff to make up for lost staff at national level? This opens up new range of possibilities at the regional level.”

Gerry Grunau, Treasurer of MCBC expressed anxiety over the agreement that commits Regional Churches to meet projected funding commitments to Nationwide Church priorities even if its own income falls short. “This pushes us into fundraising when we have no staff for that,” he said. Metzger responded that the financial plan will be re-negotiated with each Regional Church each year based on the prior year’s income. Additionally, the amount forwarded to MC Canada would be expressed as a dollar amount that could vary from year to year, not a set percentage over a period of years.

Ken Warkentin, moderator of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, said he and Ryan Siemens, Area Church Minister, have already reached out to almost every congregation asking that they channel MC Canada funding through their Regional Church, with good success.

Regional Church moderators signed the Covenant and Operating Agreement that form the newly structured Mennonite Church Canada on Sunday, Oct. 15, in Wpg. l-r: Ken Warkentin, MC Sask; Paul Wideman, MCEC; Lee Dyck, MCBC; Paul Neufeldt, MCA, Peter Rempel, MCM. MC Canada moderator Calvin Quan, standing.
Photo by Coreena Stewart

Step Chandler Burns, of Bloomingdale MC affirmed the covenant, but worried that the documents assume power is equal across the board when we know it is not equal in gender composition, nor across Regional Church size; she’d like to see the documents address the differing power dynamics.

Ben Cassels, Waterloo-Kitchener MC asked the new Joint Council to bake into the documents regular reviews of structures to enable recipe adjustments before crisis casseroles are served up to constituents.

Concern was also noted about the role of Mennonite schools and their importance in shaping our identity as Mennonites. This conversation is ongoing, and will need continued conversation with schools and the new Joint Council.

What is the Spirit Writing on Our Hearts?

Worship at Special Assembly 2017

by Deborah Froese

“We don’t all see things through the same lenses. We don’t all agree on every little or big thing, but we are loved by you, and we love,” said Vernelle Enns Penner.

That prayerful acknowledgement of our diversity and unity as God’s community opened Mennonite Church Canada’s Special Assembly 2017 on the evening of Friday, Oct. 13 at the Radisson Hotel in Winnipeg, Man.

Throughout the weekend of Oct. 13-15, segments of worship integrated with business discussions, nudging participants to consider what the Spirit is writing on their hearts (2 Corinthians 3:1-6).

With structural changes on the table as a result of the multi-year Future Directions process, it could have been a contentious gathering, but the worshipful atmosphere and the sentiment of Enns Penner’s words carried a respectful tone into discussions. A specially produced [video](#) encouraged the church to dream, to remember all there is to celebrate, and to thank God for these good things. It acknowledged that not all hopes for Mennonite Church Canada materialized as we dreamed and time is required for lament and healing, the church is comprised of people in relationship and community, not buildings, programs or structures.

Remembering that is key to implementing new organizational principles for Mennonite Church Canada: Covenant New.

Song, prayer and reflection wove between business sessions that discussed bylaws, covenant and operating agreements, International Witness, and finances. These pauses for worship offered continual, gentle reminders that we are diverse, we are loved by God in that diversity, and we are gathered to do God’s work through that diversity.

A new song, *May Your Spirit Give Life* was written specifically for the event by Phil Campbell Enns, a member of the worship committee and pastor of Bethel MC in Winnipeg.

Walter Wiebe of Morden MC thought the approach to worship helped create a positive experience. “There’s a lot of energy from the worship leaders and the singing has been marvelous, and I really appreciate that. So I think that sets the tone for business discussions as well. We sing together, then we can talk together better too.”



“We wanted it to feel like we were gathering to discern but also to worship together, to sing together, to be together,” said Moses Falco, a member of the worship planning team.

[Covenant New](#), the theme of Special Assembly 2017, emphasizes the importance of growing congregational ability to nurture and equip faith, engage in worship, and become stronger centers of mission. To illustrate examples of Covenant New, each Area Church shared a story depicting how congregations are living into the new reality while exploring the question, “What is the Spirit writing on our hearts?” After each telling, a representative from another Area Church prayed for the storyteller’s region.

“I really love the stories followed by prayers that we’ve had because I think they embody the change that we’re doing here,” said Lydia Crutwell, the pastor of First United Mennonite Church in Vancouver and one of the storytellers. “It allows us to see what it looks like to support one another.”

Wiebe concurred. “One of the things that has really added to it [worship] has been the stories. We really need more of that kind of thing.”

The final worship service on Sunday, Oct. 15 took place at the Metropolitan Theatre in Winnipeg with the same spirit of earlier worship and included a

sermon by Willard Metzger, Executive Director. He delved into the text of 2 Corinthians 3:1-6, stressing the importance of trusting God to guide us and to intervene should we go astray. He introduced 6 youth attending the assembly, and each of them offered a glimpse of their dreams for the future.

Ken Warkentin, Mennonite Church Manitoba Executive Director, offered a prayer for the Nationwide Church before communion was served to those gathered.

The worship committee for Special Assembly 2017 was comprised of Phil Campbell Enns (Bethel MC, Winnipeg, Man.), Moses Falco (Sterling MC, Winnipeg, Man.), Anneli Loepf Thiessen (from MCEC and a member of Emerging Voices Initiative, Winnipeg), Vernelle Enns Penner (Douglas MC, Winnipeg), and Johise (pronounced “Joyce”) Namwira (Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg). Together with Alfred Penner, Enns Penner’s husband, the worship committee also comprised the worship band.



One of the last meetings of the current General Board just prior the start of Special Assembly 2017 – photo by Dan Dyck



Who's in charge now?

- Dan Dyck

In the new structure approved by 94% of delegates, congregations will no longer directly be members of MC Canada. So who's in charge of MC Canada in the new system?

Indirectly, members of congregations, via their delegates, continue to have a say in the big picture of MC Canada – though now they will channel their counsel through Regional Church representatives appointed to a new Joint Council. Regional Church gatherings will become the forum for discussing and discerning nationwide priorities instead of Nationwide Church gatherings.

The Joint Council is made up of two people from each Regional Church – the Moderator and one other person appointed by

the Regional Church, who is not a member of the Regional Church Board – and three officers elected by delegates at a Delegate Gathering. An Executive Committee of the Joint Council deals with emergency matters, tests recommendations prior to presentation to the Joint Council, and deals with other matters requiring confidentiality.

The Joint Council “provides supervision of the Executive Staff and is responsible for the good functioning of MC Canada.”

As indicated throughout advance documents and during delegate discussion, the Joint Council will have a very full plate of deferred questions, decisions, and systems to work out under the new structure.

When you're a small regional church

- Virginia A. Hostetler,
Canadian Mennonite

Ruth Friesen of First Mennonite Church, Edmonton, Alta., says her congregation has always had a strong connection to the national church office and the worship and education resources that came from there. Individuals from the congregation were involved in the larger national efforts, and they kept members informed about what was happening beyond their doors.

Friesen has given much time and energy to faith formation, both in her congregation and on behalf of the larger Mennonite church. She served on the Resources Commission of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, which later became the Mennonite Church Canada Formation Council. Part of that time she served as the council chair.

She remembers some of the downsizing that happened during the transition between the two groups, and that painful experience stays with her. She's concerned about the effects of yet another transition.

Friesen also served on the board of Canadian Mennonite University for nine years, watching CMU grow into its mandate to provide pastoral training for leaders in the church. She hopes the school can continue to strengthen its relationship to the churches.

She has concerns about what the new structure will mean for (MCA), the smallest of the Regional Churches. “We have amazing ministries, but our capacity to take on more [work] is extremely limited.”

MCA has 15 congregations, with a total membership of about 1,400 and limited area church staffing. Friesen says that people are committed to the work of the church, but “we only have a limited number of bodies” to do the work. In the new structure, how will they be able to do what is asked of them?

She feels that the areas of faith formation and higher education has not gotten the attention they deserved in the restructuring considerations. “I'm not seeing recognition of that in the new documents. But I'm going to remain hopeful,” she says.

The leftovers...

-Dan Dyck

Like the leftovers from that church potluck, the new Joint Council has pledged to pay attention to the leftovers from the Future Directions process and Special Assembly 2017.

Many of the matters that will require continued and new attention have already been referenced in the new Bylaw, Covenant, Operating Agreement, and Financial Plan. Delegates added their own Tupperware container of items over the course of the assembly.

For those not in attendance, or who tired of reading through the reams of documents leading up to assembly, we highlight two particular items that were distributed in a [Supplement to the Discernment Guide](#) during the week just before our gathering:

- Anabaptist Mennonite Seminary (AMBS) and Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) will continue conversations with the new Joint Council over jurisdictional matters and understandings. The two key questions are: Will CMU continue as a national or regional school? Will AMBS continue as a bi-national seminary?

- Diversity: For many years now there have been expressed desires that the leadership of our Regional and Nationwide Church bodies reflect congregational diversity. Transition Coordinator Keith Regehr stated that the leadership wants to develop an “eco-system” that supports diversity rather than a “check-off list” that meets some arbitrary criteria. To work more intentionally at this, the General Board has retained a diversity consultant to work with the new Joint Council and staff at the Nationwide and Regional Church levels, and transfer these learnings to congregations over time.



Madeleine Wichert was one of the many volunteers who helped the Special Assembly run smoothly. Photo by Aaron Epp

Volunteering a unique way to experience Special Assembly

- Aaron Epp, Young Voices Editor, *Canadian Mennonite*

When she missed the deadline to register for MC Canada's Special Assembly, Madeleine Wichert found another way to get in the doors: by volunteering.

"I was originally a little disappointed that I wasn't going to be a delegate... but I'm really enjoying being a volunteer," the 23-year-old said on Saturday evening as she helped usher assembly attendees through the supper line.

Originally from Toronto, where she attends Toronto United Mennonite Church, Wichert currently lives in Winnipeg and worships at Hope Mennonite Church.

Over the past few years, she has become increasingly involved in both congregations. She is also a member of the Emerging Voices Initiative.

As such, she wanted to be at the Special Assembly.

"It's the first Assembly I've actually been to," she said. "Engagement has been fairly respectful. Sometimes it feels like there needs to be a little more conversation around certain things, and there have been times where there have been some tensions, but overall, it seems to be a fairly positive atmosphere."

Wichert added that volunteering was a unique way to witness the proceedings.

"You get to hear the themes people are talking about, and the questions and concerns they're raising," she said. "It has a different kind of value because you're getting snapshots of what people are saying, rather than an in-depth conversation, but then it provides with you with a bigger picture. That's what I've really enjoyed."

The majority of the volunteers at the Special Assembly were middle-aged or older, Wichert noted. She encourages young people to get involved as volunteers at future gatherings of the Nationwide Church.

"It's a different kind of engagement," she said, "which might be more conducive to a younger audience."



Communicating priorities

Special Assembly delegates discuss communication needs in restructured denomination

- Donna Schulz
Canadian Mennonite

Mennonite Church Canada is changing and the need for communication has never been greater. This seemed to be the consensus at the Communications Focus Group discussion held during MC Canada's Special Assembly.

How will the Nationwide Church communicate with its regional member churches? And how will Regional Churches, in turn, communicate with congregations? What role does *Canadian Mennonite* play in this important work? These were some of the questions participants asked and responded to during the course of the discussion.

"Geography makes [communication] difficult for us," said Lydia Cartwell of Vancouver United Mennonite. "We get the print edition of *Canadian Mennonite* two weeks later than the rest of the country."

While digital communication may seem the obvious solution to the problem of communicating over vast distances, it doesn't work for everyone. Several participants spoke of members in their churches who don't have access to the Internet. "By not communicating through print, we are by proxy leaving people out of discussion," said Craig Neufeld, of Rosthern (Sask.) Mennonite.

Some participants spoke of confusion in their congregations over the role of *Canadian Mennonite*. There are readers who understand the magazine to be the voice of MC Canada. Neufeld said this would be like saying that the Canadian

Broadcasting Corporation is the voice of the Canadian government. Even though it receives funding from the government, it does not speak for the government, he said. In the same way, the publication receives funding from MC Canada, but is not the voice of the denominational body.

Some argued that, if MC Canada is going to communicate effectively with its constituency, it must have complete editorial control over what is published. Others felt that *Canadian Mennonite* continues to play a crucial role in communication and relationship building.

Communication doesn't happen without funding, and some advocated for increased spending in this area. Elmer Hildebrand, a *Canadian Mennonite* board member, said it's important for the church to spend more on communications during the upcoming transition period. He added that repetition is also critical during this period, as it will take time for people to learn about the new church structure and understand how it works.

The responsibility for communication doesn't only rest with MC Canada, participants suggested, but also with congregations. Andrea de Avila, of Sargent Avenue Mennonite in Winnipeg, said, "It's the responsibility of congregational leaders and members to keep themselves informed." Marianne Siemens agreed. As office administrator at Mount Royal Mennonite in Saskatoon, Siemens includes MC Canada announcements in the church bulletin, but the congregation has to take some ownership for reading them, she said.

Litany of Thanks for Faithful Leaders and Committed Staff

- Calvin Quan and Aldred Neufeldt

Friends – Sisters and Brothers in Christ – this weekend we have resolved to change how we work together on God’s mission for this time in history. That is worth celebrating.

To borrow words from our brother in Christ, Pope Francis: “Christian doctrine is not a closed system . . . It has a face that is not rigid, it has a body that moves and grows, it has soft flesh: it is called Jesus Christ . . .

So we invite you to join in a Litany of Thanks in two parts – the first for Faithful Leaders, the second for Committed Staff. In the first part, please join in the dark print.

Litany of thanks for faithful leaders

We give thanks to God for the many leaders we have in our church, for their countless hours of prayer, reflection, debate and work in discerning how we can reimagine what it means to be followers of Jesus Christ in our time.

WE GIVE THANKS, O GOD

We give thanks for the faithfulness, care and love put into their tasks by our national board and councils as listed in the Program Guide, and those not listed such as the Faith and Life Committee, our area church boards and committees, the Interim Council; the more

than 80 who served on Working Groups, those in the Emerging Voices Initiative, and the many other leaders.

WE GIVE THANKS, O GOD

God has wondrously gifted each one of us here, and those joining from afar – diverse gifts that enrich and challenge our understanding of what it means to be a witness in the image of Jesus at this time.

WE GIVE THANKS, O GOD

We know our work has just begun – that new muscles and habits have to develop – to root ourselves in Christ anew – to be a body that moves and grows in

new ways – to respond to guidance by the Spirit with genius and creativity.

We remind ourselves that:

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. AMEN**

Litany of Thanks for Committed Staff

We also give thanks for committed staff. While many of us celebrate the change and renewed vision, there is a shadow side to our actions.

For most of us, in coming to a decision, we made a contribution - our ideas, experiences and prayers – but we’re not immediately affected. We return to our regular lives, resolving to support our new approach in the best way we can.

For our Staff, particularly staff of Mennonite Church Canada, including our International Witness Workers, it’s a commitment with direct implication for their lives and families. Their jobs became vulnerable.

We all know that. Our **staff lived** with that.

These past several years have not been easy, particularly once the writing was on the wall that significant change was in the offing. Living with uncertainty has been stressful. Most of us can identify what that from personal experience.

For some staff, God opened other doors and called them in different directions. Some others were committed to continuing in their roles, and yet were asked to leave because of failing finances. It’s gut-wrenching to consider layoffs – particularly in a church organization; and, yet, sometimes it can’t be avoided.

To our former staff in both these categories, and their families, we say thank you – thank you on behalf of all of us – thank you for the many contributions you made and continue to make to our work as a church community in pursuing God’s mission.

And then there are the staff who continue in their roles to this day – those who have continued to live with uncertainty – carrying out their duties and responsibilities even as our organizational foundations were shaking – going the extra mile to ensure needed work was done, open to taking on new tasks and roles – all of this despite the prospect of job loss or change.

To you in particular we say, on behalf of all of us – **thank you for** your integrity in keeping the mission you’ve been assigned in the forefront – **thank you for** your commitment – **thank you for** your flexibility. You have been on a noble quest, even as you knew your position could well come to an end.

We want to recognize you individually, so as we read your name please stand and remain standing:

(Names and positions of 19 personnel were read as photos appeared on the screen.)

Instructions: “Please remain standing as we move into a prayer of thanks.”

And, in a spirit of appreciation, solidarity and support, I’d invite delegates to gather around our staff where they stand.

Prayer:

We thank you, God, for all the gifts made available to your church through our sisters and brothers who have served as staff – **for** their time and dedication to our common mission in the name of Christ - **for** energy and passion brought to your work **even though** uncertainty and change was a present reality. We ask forgiveness for times we may have forgotten this.

Lord, we ask you to walk alongside and bless those staff who have already transitioned to new roles, and especially those who will be. May Your ever-loving Spirit surround each with strength, comfort and hope in the future to which you are calling them.

And as we move forward together, may you unite us and remind us of your presence within and with us.

With the Saints who have gone before, we place our trust in you, O God.

In Jesus name,

AMEN

A proposal for Witness International

- Dan Dyck

To say that the ins and outs of Witness International ministry are complex would be an understatement.

It could take an entire study conference to explore a theology of mission as it relates to congregations, Regional Churches and the Nationwide Church as a united body.

Then there are the functional logistics of administering workers in multiple foreign countries. They may or may not have children in international schools. Housing and language training arrangements must be considered, particularly if the workers are North American, as well as the unique visa requirements of each country, compliance with Canada Revenue Agency rules, managing agreements with partners in North America and abroad, insurance and health benefits plans, the safety of workers in unstable countries, transferring funds, receipting donations, and more.

Little wonder then that the Working Group assigned to this task had trouble reaching a consensus on how to sustain it in the new structure passed at Special Assembly 2017. As a result and in consultation with the Witness International Working Group, the General Board submitted an International Witness Structure proposal containing key principles ([Appendix 6, Discernment Guide](#))

The proposal, affirmed by delegates, is a blended model of funding. This model combines relational funding – where congregations and individuals pledge to financially support a ministry or worker with workers participating directly in fundraising – and a proposed 40% contribution from the coffers of MC Canada, conditional on sufficient funding via Regional Churches.



The continuance of Witness International ministry will require closer relationships with and support from congregations – and more than a 5 times yearly publication on its work.

Designed by Ryan Roth Bartel (pictured)

Kyle Penner of Grace Mennonite Church in Steinbach, Man., provided a welcome example in a lively exchange with Willard Metzger, Executive Director, on the delegate floor. Grace MC has a direct support partnership with Witness workers Michael Nimz and his wife, volunteer worker Cheryl, in the United Kingdom. In the past, Grace has sent \$25,000 to Mennonite Church Canada, \$25,000 to Mennonite Church Manitoba (MCM), and an additional \$5,000 to support the Nimzes (fictional figures). In the new structure, Grace will combine the two larger amounts and send \$50,000 to MCM, which will channel a portion to MC Canada – but Grace will be asked to continue designating an additional \$5,000 to support the ministry of the Nimzes.

Congregations are encouraged to continue their financial support of Witness workers they are currently partnered with through designated funding over and above amounts expected from Regional Churches – especially until June, 2018, when all Witness workers will be recalled. In the interim, Regional Churches will be testing an evaluation grid and congregational support for continuance of Witness International into the future.

All congregations will be invited to begin a partnership with an international partner ministry, even before June, 2018. A cluster of congregations from a Regional Church or from across Canada could band together to fund an overseas worker to reduce the financial pressure on the 60 or so congregations out of more than 200 already partnering with overseas ministry. (See also, “Is it a financial plan or a budget?” elsewhere in this publication.)



Willing volunteers helped Special Assembly run smoothly.

Thirty-one of them, most from Winnipeg, served in a variety of roles. On the left is Mary Penner, from Sergeant Ave. Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, collecting name tags at the end of the event. She also helped with ushering, handing out leaflets, and taking the mic to discussion participants on the floor. Rebecca Slough, from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary and member of College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., collected ballots, cleared tables and found answers to questions of Assembly participants. They’re pictured here chatting with delegate Carrie Martens, from Stirling Ave. Mennonite Church, Kitchener. (Photo by Virginia A. Hostetler)

Is it a financial plan or a budget?

- Dan Dyck

The terms “financial plan” and “budget” were used somewhat interchangeably in reference to a spreadsheet on pages 8 and 9 in the [Discernment Guide Supplement](#) outlining how MC Canada will be funded in a new structure where only Regional Churches, not congregations, will be members of the Nationwide Church.

Ken Warkentin, moderator of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, drew the short straw on who would present the financial plan to delegates at Special Assembly 2017.

Perhaps that was intentional. Warkentin, together with Area Church Minister Ryan Siemens, have advance visited most if not all of their congregations to describe the new model, hence they were very practised at providing explanations and answering questions.

The primary shift is that MC Canada will no longer be directly funded by congregations, since they are no longer the official members of the Nationwide Church. Instead, congregations are being asked to add together budget lines currently set aside for Nationwide and Regional Church, and forward that total amount to their Regional Church. The Regional Church will forward an agreed upon portion of that amount to MC Canada. However, there is one exception: congregations are asked that designated giving, for example to CommonWord, International or Canada Witness, become over and above the combined budget lines for MC Canada and the Regional Church.

The idea behind the changed flow of donations is that Regional Churches are geographically and relationally closer to their congregations. On the flip side, it means Regional Church staff will need to become more aware and better equipped to inform and inspire congregations to give to regional priorities such as camps, and nationwide priorities as agreed upon by their respective Regional Churches.

The financial plan proposes a total income expectation of \$1,922,000 – a reduction of \$2,529,000 from the current year’s total income projection of \$4,451,000. The actual income figure for the current fiscal year will be available when the books close and are audited, sometime after Jan. 31, 2018.

Of the total \$1,922,000, \$1,507,000 is anticipated to come via transfers from Regional Churches – which is a portion based on current congregational giving across the board, and expected to come entirely from congregations – plus \$300,000 in designated giving from congregations and individuals, and \$115,000 in self-generated income.

The plan was repeatedly described as conservative and based on current giving patterns. Some delegates questioned the wisdom of an income projection based on current giving patterns when donation income has been declining for years.

“You have to start somewhere,” said Executive Director Willard Metzger, adding that the first year will be a test and the plan is open to revision based on the response to appeals in the Regional Churches. Subsequent income projections are expected to align with income from the previous year.

MC Canada Expenditures and Income

This chart is updated to reflect the change on contribution from MCBC and to correct the addition error for MCEC. Line 17 has been adjusted upward to compensate for the reduction in the MCBC contribution. Even with the change the amount in Line 17 is a conservative estimate. Some of the expenses numbers have been adjusted to reflect change in expected costs.

	FYE 2019 Proposed	
1	International Witness Staff, program oversight, project funding	\$710,000
2	Executive Office Staff, travel, ecumenical participation, MWC, Joint Council	\$360,000
3	Anabaptist Resources Staff, program, CommonWord, Archives	\$238,000
4	Support Services Staff, pension/benefits admin, events, building, supplies, etc.	\$230,000
5	Communications Staff, program, Canadian Mennonite	\$212,000
6	Canadian Witness Staff, program	\$152,000
7	Leadership Dev. Ministerial Leadership Inventory database, other	\$20,000
8		1,922,000
9		
10	Transfers from Regional Churches and Other Income	
11	MCEC	\$787,000
12	MCM	\$440,000
13	MCSK	\$127,000
14	MCA	\$109,500
15	MCBC	\$43,500
16	Witness Designated	\$300,000
17	Self-Generated	\$115,000
18		1,922,000

Financial Plan Update

Revised Projections of Regional Church Income and Expenditures for Calculating Transfers to MC Canada
This chart corrects some items from the equivalent in the Discernment Guide

- For MCBC the expenses used to calculate the number in line 8 were incomplete.
- The MCBC payment to Columbia Bible College is now listed separately for consistency across all Regional Churches. In addition, this is now corrected.
- For clarity, Line 5, Income From Individuals, has been broken out from the other income in Line 6.
- Line 17 for MCEC has been changed to correct a calculation error.

	MCBC	MCA	MCS	MCM	MCEC	
1						
2						
3	Income from Congregations	293,000	369,000	467,000	1,032,000	2,055,000
5	Income From Individuals	193,000	101,000	54,000	108,000	136,000
6	All Other Income	165,000	57,000	89,000	196,000	474,000
7	Total INC	651,000	527,000	610,000	1,336,000	2,665,000
8	2017 expenses from Annual Reports	425,000	232,000	359,000	570,000	1,337,000
9	Added for Executive Minister and communications		40,000			
10	Camps		94,000		126,000	37,000
11	AMBS					61,000
12	CMU/Grebel/CBC	125,000	25,000	50,000	100,000	154,000
13	Other					186,000
14	Indigenous ***	Included above				25,000
15	Church Engagement	50,000	20,000	67,000	90,000	90,000
	National Delegates	7,500	6,500	7,000	10,000	13,000
16	Total expenses	607,500	417,500	483,000	896,000	1,878,000
17	Net for MC Canada	43,500	109,500	127,000	440,000	787,000
18	Total to MC Canada	1,507,000				

*** Note that this plan is retaining the national role for Indigenous Settler Relations to full time. There are ongoing discussions about how this role supports Indigenous Settler Relations work at the Regional Church level. If the proposal is accepted, this will be taken up by Joint Council after the conclusion of Assembly.

Commentary: What's in a name? New structures, new terms

Level of Difficulty: Depends on your heart's desire...



- Dan Dyck

Advice from Working Groups and functional necessity are driving some changes in language used to describe various levels of church.

The following words are inspired by the humorous and energetic sarcasm evident in the Twitter feed under the hashtag #mcassembly2017 during the event, and are sweetened by the words of Kyle Penner, Associate Pastor of Grace Mennonite Church in Steinbach, who tweeted, “Thanks for everyone at @mennochurch for everything. We’re a quirky bunch. But we’re God’s people. And my people.”

- Nationwide Study Conference: This is where y’all get to travel to some regional Mennonite Mecca, like Eyebrow/Gretna/Langley/St. Jacobs/Didsbury – a location chosen for the best splash pad/playground for the kids you’ll abandon while you’re stuck inside a large and stuffy meeting room in mid-summer talking about important stuff like covenants, the Great Commission, a theology of mission, what it means to be Mennonite, Mennonite World Conference’s Shared Convictions, the role of schools in shaping our identity, the difference between national or nationwide, whether a Regional or Nationwide Church is really a church, discern what discernment means, or dozens of other curious suggestions that remained silent voices inside the heads of those gathered for Special Assembly 2017. Apparently, these could happen every four years, or more, or less often. There may be a Study Conference required to discern the frequency of study conferences, ‘cuz that’s what we do.
- The National church becomes the Nationwide Church because of theology or politics – or both – depending who you ask (again I refer you to the relevant WG Report).
- Area Churches (Mennonite Churches BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Eastern Canada) morph into Regional Churches because... well, read the relevant Working Group report.
- Delegate Gatherings are now what used to be called Assemblies but with a bunch fewer people, because, well, restructuring.
- The Executive Director of MC Canada becomes Executive Minister, again, because theology.
- Covenant – a promise that Regional Churches will hang together as MC Canada through thick and thin, kinda’ sorta’ like they’re married now, though some wanted a study conference to figure what “covenant” really means. Terms of any potential divorce are laid out in the bylaw.

There’s more on terminology, but it’s all in Section 1 of the new bylaw, beginning on page 11 [here](#); keepers – have at it.

[Kyle, I hope you got back to Steinbach safely and in time on Saturday night to make those scalloped potatoes for your church’s potluck the next day. And a friendly reminder that someone at the office will be watching for that \$55k cheque from Grace Mennonite Church. ;-)]

Youth Speak

- Deborah Froese

At the final worship service for Special Assembly 2017, MC Canada Executive Director Willard Metzger invited six of the 13 attending youth to share their dreams for the church. Their heartfelt words were met with a healthy round of applause. Thanks for sharing!

Ben from Toronto United MC dreams of using technology to extend gatherings to a wider audience. In addition to live-streaming as we currently do, he says, “I think that there are many technologies we could use and we should publicize the technologies that we do use to share things like this with even more people than we already do.”

Madison from Warman MC dreams of greater youth participation in worship and other church activities.

Zoe from the Commons Church is keen on relationships, and the possibility of congregations learning from each other and building strong relationships with other churches both locally and nationally.

Grace from LUMC in Leamington said, “Sometimes the things we focus on in the church and the way that we approach things can seem a bit overwhelming or too complex, especially for the youth. So my dream for the church is to create a less intimidating environment and make things more welcoming.”



Aiden from St. Jacobs MC says his church is good at engaging youth, but “I would invite all churches to work a bit harder to encourage different perspectives in youth through teaching in different settings.”

Micah from Stirling Avenue MC values interfaith dialogue. “It’s important that we learn from our neighbours, even if our beliefs and ideals differ. We as a people need to realize that we share a lot in common with other religions, and that respectful conversation can help develop our knowledge of the religions of our friends and neighbours of other beliefs, and help comprehend God in a deeper global view and the different ways that people understand God.”

Listen to youth speak in the Sunday Worship (9:00 AM) video on Mennonite Church Canada’s Special Assembly 2017 [streaming page](#). They appear at approximately the 49 minute mark.

Stories from the Regions



MCEC: Norm Dyck, Listowel MC pastor

“If you grow disciples, you always get the church. If you start with the church, you don’t always get disciples,” Dyck said. Those words are the premise behind ReLearning Community, a trial program launched three years ago to make discipleship an intentional pursuit. Listowel was one of several other churches taking part. “For me,” Dyck said, “it required that I recognized as a pastor that I can fill my schedule up with all sorts of things that keep me occupied with the life of my church so that I never get to know my neighbours.” For others, like Janel Hiemstra, also of Listowel, it meant taking active steps to meet neighbours. Last year around Christmas, Janel and her husband built a rink on their front lawn, and neighbours came to play. “We blessed our neighbourhood and it was almost more of a blessing to us to have that happen.”

A prayer for MCEC from MCA

Chad Miller, Associate Pastor at Foothills MC in Calgary expressed MCA’s gratitude for the deep roots of faith founded in MCEC, and acknowledged the burden MCEC may feel moving forward as the largest regional church. He prayed for God’s “sustaining grace for MCEC, for the leaders and staff, for the churches,” and asked that God “enable the whole of MCEC to move forward in peace, in hope, in the quiet trust that you are with them and that we are with them too.”

See the MCEC story on the Saturday Morning 1 (8:30 AM) video on Mennonite Church Canada’s Special Assembly 2017 [streaming page](#) at 12:50.



MCM: Bryce Miller, Jubilee MC pastor

“It would seem that Jubilee’s task is bridging gaps,” said Miller. The congregation has been blessed by intentionally reaching out to their neighbours, many of whom live in nearby public housing units. Together, they often have opportunity to celebrate achievements from first jobs to new jobs, to steps along the road to addiction recovery. He noted that God’s pen is writing about others on Jubilee’s heart, but at the same time, editing their own story about what it means to be the church. “That’s the work of God. Bringing all peoples together across miles and barriers.” It’s the work of reconciliation through the spirit of God in us, through us and even in spite of us.”

A prayer for MCM from MCBC

Joon Park of MCBC prayed that his brothers and sisters in Manitoba would see God’s face and “regard the current situation, however difficult or uncomfortable it seems, as a way to enlarge your faith and grow ever greater the patience of each one of you toward one another . . . May the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another and for all people, just as we also do for you.”

See the MCM story on the Saturday Morning 2 (10:25 AM) video on Mennonite Church Canada’s Special Assembly 2017 [streaming page](#) at 13:00.

Thanks...

Is it every possible to be to be grateful enough? I don’t think so. Is it possible to forget to thank someone? Yes, and for those I’ve overlooked, I’m sorry.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my MC Canada team of Deborah Froese, gifted writer, editor, and Director of News Services; Grant Klassen, web servant (he prefers that title) and all around tech guru for audio, web, and video content; Ryan Roth Bartel, lead (and I add “expert”) graphic designer whose work you see in this news sheet, documents for assembly, our web sites, social media, and

who served as assembly gopher; our friend and colleague Darryl Neustaedter Barg of Mennonite Church Manitoba who provided immense help with audio and live streaming for Special Assembly 2017; colleague Coreena Stewart, head of Assembly Planning among many other roles, who takes such good care of people and should get an honorary PhD – Philosophy of Hospitality Doctorate; Arlyn Friesen Epp who tried to anticipate and shortlist what you would like to see out of CommonWord’s 12,000 resources and made them available for you

at Assembly; and, whether back at the office or at assembly, all my colleagues who helped in many other ways behind the scenes, to the best of their ability, in unusual circumstances, and in addition to their regular workloads.

The Worship Team and worship visual artists, all volunteers with their own busy jobs as pastors, lay leaders, or who are otherwise employed, and students – and their congregations – for your support to them. You are all fantastic.



MC Sask: Margaret Ewen Peters, pastor of Herschel Ebenfeld MC and Fiske MC

Barn roof-raising may sound familiar to many Mennonites – but bar roof-raising? Ewen Peters says engaging in that activity has made a big impact on at least two lives in the small communities of Fiske and Herschel Saskatchewan. When a Herschel widow became ill with cancer and her bar needed roof repairs, her son, who was in prison on drug-related charges, sought assistance for her. The Mennonite church in each community got to work. With the surrounding community, they raised money to fix the roof. A local contractor donated time and expertise, the women of Fiske organized food, and together, they held a bar roof-raising. Since then, the Herschel congregation formed a circle of support around the son. They’ve gone to court with him, assisted with childcare, and helped with work opportunities. “I believe he now feels he is part of our community,” Ewen Peters says. “So we thank God that when we opened ourselves up to the Spirit’s nudging, when we made ourselves available and vulnerable to do something that seemed very un-churchlike – like repairing a bar roof – friendships were made, reconciliation and community happened.”

A prayer for MC Sask from MCEC

“Lord, we thank you for your movement in our Mennonite Church in Saskatchewan,” prayed Laura Bruno of Ottawa MC. “Guide them in wisdom, love and understanding. May you empower the local churches to be your hands and feet so that we can share your love and grace.”

See the MC Sask story on the Saturday Morning 2 (10:25 AM) video on Mennonite Church Canada’s Special Assembly 2017 [streaming page](#) at 1:28

MCA: Joanie Neufeld, member of Lethbridge MC

What happens when a small Mennonite congregation in Alberta asks what God is calling them to do? If it happens to be Lethbridge MC, they mobilize themselves, the surrounding community and eight other congregations across the denominational spectrum to bring 30 Syrian refugees to town. Neufeld says their efforts brought attention from media across the province and from CNN. When Ryan Dueck, the pastor of Lethbridge MC recently met with his new neighbours, they shared photos of their homes and churches in Syria, and told them about the icons of saints displayed throughout their homes. “Mennonites are a little different,” he said. “They don’t have any saints or icons or elaborate buildings.” One young woman responded, “That doesn’t matter. Same Jesus. We are family.” “I give thanks for the ways that the spirit is writing love for the stranger upon our hearts,” said Neufeld.

A prayer for MC Sask from MCEC

Wes Goertzen of MCM praised God for the work accomplished through MCA. “We ask that you bless your people where they are partnering with you, that you nudge them where fear or inattentiveness is derailing. We ask that you cement MCM and all of us in Canada to the church in Alberta . . . Hold them together and put them in our attention . . .”

See the MCA story on the Saturday Afternoon 1 (1:10 PM) video on Mennonite Church Canada’s Special Assembly 2017 [streaming page](#) at 1:49.

All our volunteers in green vests and not: There is no way we could have pulled together Special Assembly 2017 without you. Thank you for being flexible, following instructions even if they didn’t make sense in the moment, and maybe even being asked to undo something you had just done, and being on the alert and looking for things that needed doing.

Ginny Hostetler, Aaron Epp, Donna Schultz, and Nicolien Klassen-Wiebe of Canadian Mennonite, whose primary coverage of this Assembly is still some days away. Thanks for gathering stories and sharing your gifts.

Delegates, guests, youth: As late as the end of August there were concerns we had booked too large a venue for the number registered. In the end more than 400 of you came, sang, asked good questions, and offered encouraging words. Thanks so much for coming.

Leaders come in many flavours and make the gathering table a taste sensation. You have served and sacrificed on boards, councils, committees, working groups, reference groups, listening groups, and more. You are a huge part of what makes the church go round. I commend you.

Thank you to the tech and hospitality staff at our venues, the Radisson Hotel and the Metropolitan Theatre, who served us and our sometimes quirky, out of the box needs and requests. We acknowledge that we are not your typical guests.

Finally, thank you to the spouses and families of all of the above for sharing a part of you with this particular expression of the church. You give as well, and are often overlooked.

Always be grateful. Thanks be to God.

-Dan Dyck,
Director, Church Engagement - Communications

Stories from the Regions cont.



MCBC: Lydia Cruttwell, Vancouver First United MC pastor

The neighbourhood surrounding Vancouver First United MC isn't the same community of German Mennonite refugees that lived in the area in the 1950s and 1960s. "If you walk down Fraser Street in south Vancouver today, you are more likely to hear Punjabi, Tagalog, or Cantonese than German or English," said Cruttwell. Just as the dwindling congregation was about to "throw in the towel," they began to wonder if God had other plans. They began to notice the signs of life around them, and recognized a strong commitment to sharing their space. Three other congregations now share their church facilities – a Spanish Mennonite church, a Cantonese Baptist church, and a Punjabi Pentecostal Church. They offer English classes and support refugees, among other things. They are now preparing to hire a pastor who will focus on revitalization. It's a risk, Cruttwell admits, but "But the Spirit is writing on our hearts a willingness to try for the sake of Christ who calls us into the unknown, so that his work may be done in the world. Whatever happens, my prayer is that God's glory may be incarnated among us and in our neighbourhood."

A prayer for MCBC from MC Sask

Madison Harms of Warman MC prayed for wisdom and faith for MCBC. "As once said by the Apostle Paul, may the God of hope fill you with all the joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."

See the MCBC story on the Saturday Afternoon 2 (3:30 PM) video on Mennonite Church Canada's Special Assembly 2017 [streaming page](#) at 1:09.



Author and assembly volunteer Dan Nighswander signs a copy of his new commentary on I Corinthians at the pop-up CommonWord Bookstore and Resource Centre. -photo by Dan Dyck

Craig Neufeld and Nancy Epp
Rosthern Mennonite Church,
Rosthern, Sask.



Over a Tim Horton's breakfast Craig Neufeld and Nancy Epp consider the restructuring and the ministry of Mennonite Church Canada. Neufeld is pastor of Rosthern (Sask.) Mennonite Church. Epp is a delegate from the congregation.

For Neufeld, the proposed changes represent a "diagonal shift," not a brand new thing. It was a surprise to see that the proposal didn't call for a total re-writing of the bylaws. "Learning that this is not as immense a shift makes it easier to trust," he says.

He contrasts two possible postures we can take to the changes before the church. Grasping tightly a sandwich wrapper, he demonstrates the first posture—a tight holding on to the ways of the past. Posture two is open hands, palms to the ceiling. That demonstrates a "trust that this is God's church and that God is good [to the church]."

About international witness work he feels that sometimes it's hard for people in Canada to connect with a vision for "something out there." His own eyes were opened when he took part in a learning tour to China. That experience helped him understand and connect with the Witness work and partners there.

Epp reported that the Friday evening conversation at Table 27 was "all over the map" in terms of topics. One concern had to do with the revitalizing of congregations envisioned by the Future Directions proposal. She considered her own congregation's future. There aren't many youth and children within the church. But she's happy that many local children participate in the church programs—an important connection to the local community and an ongoing opportunity for ministry.

Photo by Virginia A. Hostetler

Serving Mennonite Church Canada

Workers from each area church reflect on their experiences

- Donna Schulz
Canadian Mennonite

While some delegates at MC Canada's Special Assembly looked forward to the Covenant New restructuring process, others mourned the loss of what has been an important part of their church life.

At this juncture in MC Canada's history, it seems appropriate to reflect on the church's work and the impact that work has had on the lives of MC Canada's people.



In his role as Executive Minister for Christian Formation, Dave Bergen, of Bethel Mennonite in Winnipeg, was responsible for a broad range of activities and programs. As he reflects on his time working for MC Canada, two projects stand out for him. One was the development of a framework for understanding pastoral competencies. Pastors and congregations seeking to hire pastors can use the six categories of this framework to see where their strengths lie and to discern areas that may need improvement. "This is what we use to guide the

formation of our leaders," he says.

Another project was the development of a repository of materials, both print and digital, as well as people that could serve as a resource for congregations across MC Canada. Known today as CommonWord, that repository has also come to be a way for congregations to connect with one another as they share resource materials they have developed with other churches.



April Yamasaki of Emmanuel Mennonite in Abbotsford, B. C. most recently served MC Canada as a member of the Future Directions Task Force. "It was challenging work given the scope of the task, but also a real gift to me to be involved with those discussions and with task force members," she says.

Over the years, Yamasaki has also appreciated the opportunity to represent her congregation as a delegate at annual assemblies. "For me the significance is partly the decisions [made at assembly], but even more the relationships that

are built over table discussions, meals, and workshops."

Yamasaki values being part of the larger church body. "For all of our diversity, in discussion I hear common concerns," she says. "We may have different ideas about how to work at those concerns, but it reminds me that congregations aren't alone. That's part of the value I've sensed."



For over a decade, Eric Olfert served as Missional Formation and Partnerships Facilitator for MC Canada in Saskatchewan. Olfert, who is a member of Mount Royal Mennonite in Saskatoon, says that at one time each Area Church had someone in this position. His job involved speaking to congregations and to missions committees, and trying to help them understand what it means to be missional. "My job was about encouraging congregations to become mission partners, and to think missionally, to think about being sent," he says.

Olfert's job with MC Canada was deliberately linked to MC Sask's Ministries Commission. By the time he retired in 2013, his job description had shifted somewhat into the realm of fundraising. Even though he no longer holds the position, Olfert continues to serve on the MC Sask Ministries Commission and to think missionally.



Lisa Carr-Pries of Wellesley Mennonite Church in Ontario has served on Christian Formation for the past ten years. As committee chair, she has also served as a member of the General Board. Over the years Carr-Pries has worked with schools, camp ministries, youth and young adults, and has had many conversations about leadership and about being in relationship with the larger church.

"When you get to know people and are invested in them, you have a deeper sense of where God shows up and where he's calling us to be," she says.

During her years of service, Carr-Pries says she has "come to be reminded of how we are all connected because we are all imprinted with the peace of God."



A member of Calgary's First Mennonite Church, Marguerite Jack served on MC Canada's General Board through her role as moderator for MCA. She also served on MC Canada's Nominations Committee and on the Women's Task Force.

"I'm here because I love the church," she says. "MC Canada has given us direction, good teachings and stability. It has also given me a place for growing my faith and meeting so many faithful, wonderful, gifted people across Canada." Jack believes this is something one has to experience in order to understand.

Though in a sense these stories represent the end of an era, they may also serve as a model of faithful service. Whether as paid employees or as volunteers, these workers have enriched MC Canada, and their examples will continue to inspire those who love the church well into the Covenant New years.



It's All About Trust

- Deborah Froese

“What are the dreams that have been placed in us? What has God whispered in our ears? How has God invaded our thoughts?” asked Willard Metzger, MC Canada Executive Director. Thus began his final address on Oct. 15 to those who gathered for Special Assembly 2017.

Those questions arose from Special Assembly 2017 theme text, 2 Corinthians 3:1-6. They were pondered throughout worship sessions on Oct. 13 and 14. During the final worship service Metzger took the text further and explored the bold confidence displayed by the Apostle Paul in the face of challenge.

“The Apostle Paul was facing a pretty serious threat,” Metzger said. “False teachers had infiltrated the congregation and gone out of their way to discredit Paul.” The called him a false teacher. But Paul’s response offered an unconventional understanding of how God works, by displaying a “bold, crisp ,shameless confidence” against their accusations. Paul had greater confidence in the testimony of the Corinthian congregation than anything his accusers offered against him.

Paul’s confidence came not from his wisdom or capacity as a teacher. His confidence came from the transforming power of Christ at work in God’s people.

To be in fearful anxiety of getting it right is actually doubt in God, Metzger said. He relayed an experience from his own life. As a young man, he was fearful about making a wrong decision regarding two ministry options. Although he prayed and waited, no clarity came. He grew anxious about making the wrong decision. A friend offered this counsel: “I think you have sought God, so now you make a choice and trust that God is leading you.”

“But how do I know if I am getting it right?” Metzger countered.

“Trust that God will stop you if you’re getting it wrong.”

Discernment is not as much about the ability to get it right as it is about trusting God’s ability to direct us. Metzger pointed to Prov. 3:5-6; “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge God and God will direct your paths.”

In the midst of a changing environment, shifting structures, and theological differences, Metzger invited the church to embrace the confidence that is ours as the people of God. “God’s yearning for redemption and restoration will prevail when the people of God humble themselves and seek God in worship, and prayer; God will respond. That’s our confidence,” he said. “This is about the ability of the spirit of Christ to bring to life the words that have been inscribed in our hearts.”

Listen to Willard Metzger’s sermon in the Sunday Worship (9:00 AM) video on Mennonite Church Canada’s Special Assembly 2017 [streaming page](#). It begins at approximately the 28 minute mark.

Thank you for your gifts...

The Friday evening offering in support of the CommonWord Bookstore and Resource Centre resulted in \$1,730 which will allow the purchase of new, curated, Anabaptist resources for congregations to use.

The Sunday morning offering for MC Canada Witness totalled \$5,465. These funds will be used to support International and Canadian Witness ministry for those most in need of healing and hope at home and around the world.

Thank you to each and every giver, for each and every gift.