

ANNUAL REPORT

»»»»»»»»»» 2017 ««««««««««



emc

evangelical
mennonite
conference

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»»» Moderator's Message

IN APRIL 2016, I went to Straffordville, Ont., and met with pastor Abe Berg. The Straffordville church had sold their rural church building and purchased a lot in town. As we walked through town to see the building site, Pastor Abe talked about the church's vision to connect with their neighbours and minister in the community. They want to have impact for Christ.

2015–16 were years of the Syrian refugee crisis. Driven out by war and uncertainty, refugees flooded neighbouring countries and applied to move to other parts of the world. The Canadian government fast-tracked refugee claims and brought 25,000 to Canada. MCC was prepared to assist churches and other groups with sponsoring a refugee family. Kleefeld EMC with members of the community and another community church sponsored a young family. That year many kilometres were driven for English classes, medical appointments, shopping trips, and orienting the family to life in Canada. Although a small effect in the global crisis, it is making a profound impact on this family and their prospects for their future.

Impact is usually preceded by vision and preparedness, and preparedness involves countless hours of careful work behind the scenes before any impact can be observed or felt. Every year since our vision statement was approved, concrete projects have been identified that put legs to our vision, all so that EMC churches can partner together and increase their impact for Christ in society and around the world. Changes in Conference Council interactivity, Messenger frequency and online format, church planting support, Statement of Faith revision, grappling with TRC Recommendations, retreats for young adults, celebrating a 50-year legacy of missions in Nicaragua, Kevin Wiebe's *Pov.ology* project, and a renewed engagement in prayer are signs and fruit of fresh thinking. May we with grace, insight and wisdom cast vision and prepare the way for maximum impact in Christ's kingdom.

For Christ's Church,



Abe G. Bergen



DARING TO LIVE OUR LIVES
WITH JESUS CHRIST AS LORD

We pray for:

- *The people in our congregation who are on difficult health journeys of cancer, brain tumour, aging, among others.*
- *The people whose children are not walking with the Lord, who have aging parents, who have suffered the loss of loved ones, and more.*
- *A youth/associate pastor to join our pastoral team.*

– Vanderhoof Christian Fellowship

Our fall sermon series, "Project Hazmat," focused on a number of different social issues that we get to address as a faith community, i.e., singleness, divorce, racial reconciliation, same-sex attractions, and more. The discussions that have been generated through the series have been invigorating.

– St. Vital EMC

Along with our in-house ministries, our church has been a part of The

Family Central project in Aylmer and we are excited about the second phase of ministry. The Family Central Apartments consists of program participants who want some assistance to attain goals around employment, education and life skills in order to increase their standard of living and quality of life. Visit the website at: www.familycentralapartments.com.

– Mount Salem EMC

A new venture in October was hosting a Teachers' Appreciation Supper for two local schools. We tried to make the teachers feel welcome and comfortable. We had a good turnout and the teachers seemed to appreciate our efforts.

– High Level Christian Fellowship



Community involvement is a common theme at IGF.

- *With a large gymnasium, IGF is the gathering place for many community events, weddings and funerals.*
- *A men's group that meets weekly for Saturday morning breakfast also provides many pickup loads of firewood for people in need (about 150 this past year).*
- *Divorce Care and Alpha programs meet at the church and have brought some new families into the church.*

– Island Gospel Fellowship



Sharing our stories

To reach more EMCers, Conference Council members decided in July 2016 to provide print/online and website editions of *The Messenger*. These are all free to EMCers. In 2017, there are six print issues and six website-format editions.

The Messenger is available in an enhanced electronic version at <https://issuu.com/emcmessenger>. On Android or IOS, download the free Issuu app and search for “The EMC Messenger.”

Check out *The Messenger’s* new website at www.emcmessenger.ca. Content is made available weekly (editorials, lead articles, church news, missions news, job listings, and more). The website works with desktop, mobile and tablet viewing, and is integrated with the EMC’s social media. To subscribe online click the blue follow button.

About 3,000 print copies of *The Messenger* are mailed. Digital readership is new and increasing.

Struggle: This past year we have been affected by the downturn in the Alberta economy. While our attendance numbers have increased, our financial numbers have decreased, so the budget for 2017 will be a challenge.

Opportunity: As a church we are actively seeking how we can better connect within and outside of the walls of our church. One of the opportunities we have is: how to use the blessing of connectedness of Mennonite families while avoiding limiting it to only those who were born Mennonite. Mennonites bring a rich heritage of family that new people coming in long to be connected to. A Cheers theme song from years ago said it best, “We all long for a place where everyone knows our name.”

– Westpointe Community Church

One cool thing God is doing is giving us a unique opportunity to be his hands and feet in our rented facility. We walk side by side with numerous tenants and staff from the company that owns the facility. We are getting to know many of them well and they are seeking us out for advice and prayer even though they would admit to having little interest in organized religion. As a church family, we are seeking creative ways to serve them well, showing them that Jesus is real and relevant to where they are.

– Cornerstone Fellowship Church

We have just started a weekly program in our local motel called Freedom Road. This is for those in our community who are struggling with being lost, confused, and stuck in their lives. Although this program has just begun, we are seeing some very broken people come who are struggling with all kinds of addictions. What a thrill to be able to meet in the restaurant right across from the bar that many of them like to visit. Pray for breakthrough so that individuals are set free.

– Community Bible Fellowship

The Young At Heart ministry has impacted the community and other churches in practical ways. From “love packages” to college students, to a quilt for a newborn child, their practical ministry speaks of the person of Christ living within them, and the cause of Christ being shared with those in need.

– The Church of Living Water

REACH: TAKING RISKS TO REACH MANY PEOPLE GROUPS

EMC Missions

105 Long-term workers

23 Short-term workers

3 Interns

EMC Church Planting

6 Church planters

4 Church plant pastor couples

2 Ministry project couples

The church body seems to be solidifying somewhat. We have had a number of new families showing up this past half year, causing pretty well a doubling of our attendance a year ago. Some of these people are actually working on moving into Redcliff/Medicine Hat because of the church being here. That is exciting! Our intent is to move ahead with the more formal organization of the church, including getting under the subsidy program.

– Abe Bueckert,
Gospel Light Fellowship

»»» A Continental Tale

In the first half of the twentieth century, an interest in missions was felt throughout Canada's north. Several mission agencies trace their beginnings to this time—having a burden to preach the gospel in logging camps and communities with no church presence. Over the years the focus of Continental Mission (named with grand visions of impacting all of North America) morphed to emphasis on First Nation ministry, as machines replaced men and logging camps were depopulated.

In 1954, two Bible camps were founded. Midway Bible Camp was established north of Thompson, half way between two mission stations and Berge Lake Bible Camp on an idyllic sand peninsula.

In the 1980s, Bible camp, travelling discipleship, soup kitchen, and hospital ministry had become the primary emphasis. This was partly due to having less staff with a passion to live in remote communities.

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» The partnership between Fort Garry EMC (FGEMC) and Winnipeg Logos Church (WLC) is a mutually beneficial blessing. The WLC leaders need ongoing encouragement to keep on going. At the same time, the evangelistic zeal of WLC is a great example for FGEMC. There are cultural differences which require sensitivity and discussion, but things are going well. For example, at WLC, communion participants must be baptized

to partake. At FGEMC, even children are allowed to be communion participants. In our kitchen, we have forks, spoons and knives, but no chop sticks!

– Len Harms, Fort Garry EMC

Note: The Winnipeg Logos Church has applied for membership in the EMC. This will be presented in June at the EMC Convention.

» Difficulty attracting qualified leadership forced Continental to consider closure and in May 2010, a motion was made to close unless something changed before fall.

What changed was a memorandum of understanding between Continental Mission and three supporting conferences. This brought in new ideas, funding and board members with a goal to revitalize the organization. An interim general manager and project coordinator were hired and an extensive re-visioning process began. Focus was refined and Continental was re-branded as Mid-Way Christian Leadership (MCL), an organization dedicated to “Growing Christian Leaders in the North.” While the Bible Camp ministry remained an integral component, it was paired with an even greater burden to disciple young leaders, particularly those from northern Manitoba.

Excitement for the new vision attracted young staff members and supporters, but MCL continued to face the pressure of administrative overload, regulatory burdens and the challenge of staff care. Once again they required special wisdom from God.

A chance conversation led to a deeper conversation between MCL and InterAct Ministries (IM) based in Crossfield, Alberta. They shared a vision for discipleship and had similar organizational cultures. IM saw great value in the team ministry and enthusiastic young staff of MCL. MCL saw the staff training, emotional and technical support, and administrative capacity at IM.

The outcome was full merger. IM accepted MCL staff and provided them with ministry training that had been dreamed about for years. The Mid-Way Team, under the leadership of Camp Director Cohle Bergen, will function as a local team within the larger IM family.

Though it is painful to let go of what is familiar, this has been “win-win”—both organizations gained more than they lost and the work of God is moving forward.

Sincere appreciation is expressed to EMC, EMMC and CMC, as well as churches and individuals that

offered loyal support in prayers, people, ideas and finances.

Ferlin Abrahamson
Midway Christian Leadership Board Member



“Ralph Smith sold his farm in 1944 and joined Louis Larson and John Goodrich in Carrot River, Saskatchewan. These three men, with a total of \$30, ‘knelt in prayer for guidance as the Lord opened the way to purchase a combination rooming house and store front in Carrot River. The transaction was made and evangelistic meetings were begun.’ This rooming house had a questionable reputation. The buildings transformation of purpose is a picture of the transformation in peoples’ lives when they met the Saviour inside”

– from *God’s Faithfulness: 50 Years of Continental Mission*, compiled by Betty Syverson

>>> Nicaragua: 50th Anniversary of EMC Missions

In 2017 EMC Missions and the FIEMN national church conference celebrate 50 years of ministry.

Nicaragua is a beautiful Central American country that EMC Missions first entered in 1966. The first EMC missionaries to Nicaragua were Fred and Doris Friesen.

Doris writes, “Can it be that it was 50 years ago that Fred and I did that long trek to Nicaragua, over 5,000 miles by land in our white camper truck, with our two little girls, to a land unknown with only a map and the Holy Spirit as our guide!”

There was “no one at the other end to meet us!” she says. “We were either courageous or fools! But we are never fools when we obey the Lord. And how the Lord blessed us so richly in spite of many difficulties!”

Nicaragua continues to be one of the poorest countries in the Americas; and it continually faces the threat of natural disasters such

as earthquakes, hurricanes, and volcanic eruptions.

Between 1966 and 1992 a number of EMC missionaries served in Nicaragua. With church planting as its central ministry, outreaches began in Managua and then spread to smaller towns such as La Paz and Granada.

In 1978 and 1979 missionaries were evacuated because of civil war, and national leaders took greater responsibility for the church. In 1992 the church conference which had formed (FIEMN) continued ministry without direct EMC missionary assistance. It now consists of twenty-one churches. An additional twelve church outreaches are at various levels of growth in communities where evangelical churches are still needed.

The EMC continues to be involved with the FIEMN by contributing financial assistance to its annual budget and approved special projects.

The financial assistance by EMC Missions is, however, slowly being reduced each year as the FIEMN grows in maturity and its numbers increase. In my position as the BOM Foreign Secretary, this has been one of the more difficult strategic decisions to recommend to the Board of Missions.

During these years the FIEMN has been blessed with many new believers who have grown in their spiritual commitment to Christ by attending Bible Institute training. These men and women now direct the FIEMN’s Christian education, Bible Institute, ladies, youth and evangelism committees. Churches are pastored by those who are gifted and who are elected by their congregations.

With 2017 marking the 50th anniversary of EMC ministry in Nicaragua, we thank our Lord for the godly leadership and wisdom present in the FIEMN. The Lord has blessed!

Ken Zacharias, EMC Foreign Secretary



Reaching new cultures

In the past two years about half of our EMC churches have been involved in supporting a refugee family. Many families arrived having experienced trauma (some as a result of being captured or having family members killed).

Some were fast-tracked for medical reasons and arrived with disabilities or injuries requiring extra medical attention. Some have experienced additional family trauma since arriving above the challenges of adjusting to Canadian culture and weather.

Through all this, sponsorship teams are rising to the challenge! Even now, some churches are ready to reach out again. We haven't resolved major issues of conflict or made much headway towards world peace, but this is us modelling Jesus right now in a torn-up world and turbulent culture.



“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’”

– Matthew 25:34–36, NLT



25 of 51 EMC churches who responded to our survey are involved in sponsoring a family or are working towards sponsorship (15 families have already arrived).

2/3 of EMC churches either have programs to support recent immigrants or have members of their congregation involved in immigrant support.

Number of Syrian refugees who have arrived in Canada since November 2015:

Government of Canada 40,081

9/10 of refugees are hosted in the global South, led by Turkey, Pakistan and Lebanon. Half are children.

11 EMC supported foreign workers work with refugees.



65.3

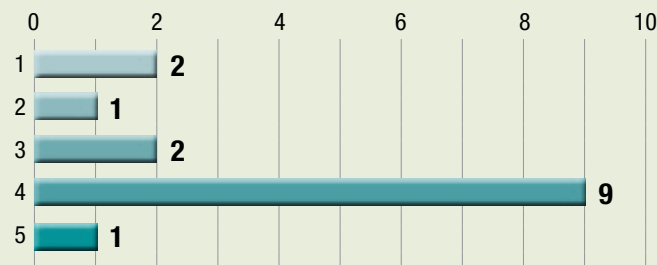
million people were displaced in 2015 due to conflict and persecution—the highest levels ever recorded. **UNHCR**

7 In EMC churches almost every adult has arrived in Canada from another country.

How do you think your sponsored family would rate their experience?

1 = It has been extremely difficult for them

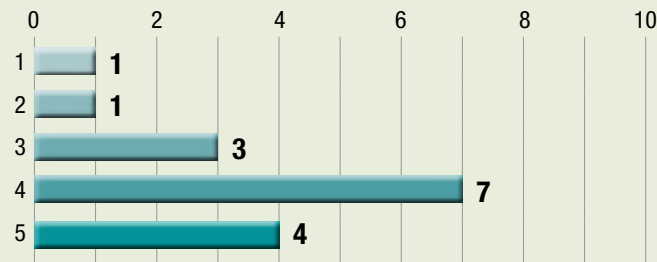
5 = They are positive and seem to be adjusting quickly



How would you describe your experience?

1 = Very difficult—would not easily do this again

5 = Very rewarding experience





»»» Refugees in Lesvos

This past year we have spent more than 12 weeks on Lesvos helping in the refugee crisis on Europe's doorstep. We have been involved in helping water-soaked refugees out of boats, giving them dry clothes, giving them water (many have not had anything to drink for a day or more), giving them something to eat even if it is a package of crackers or cookies.

We have been involved in transporting the refugees from the shoreline to the bus stop



camp where Greek authorities picked them up to bring them to the main camp near the capital of the island, Mytilini. Beach cleanup of the rubber dinghies and many, many life jackets was also part of the work this past year. We have spent many hours leading many different teams and GEMers in helping refugees by housing them in tents, fixing their tents, cleaning bathrooms or buildings when they are new arrivals to the island. We have spent a lot of time distributing clothes, shoes and hygiene supplies to the

refugees, even going out to the town to purchase supplies from donations made to help the refugees physically.

Throughout our service we pray and strive to make friendships with the refugees, share our life stories with them and ask them about

their life stories. It is during this time that we seek to share the love of Christ with them and who He means to us. I have managed to disciple a few of the refugees on my "extra" time when not serving them with clothes, housing, etc.

What can future volunteers expect to do on Lesvos? There still are new arrivals coming to Lesvos every week. So housing the new arrivals, giving them dry clothes, water, and hygiene supplies still need to be done. Being friends with the many different nationalities that arrive and have arrived continues to be a key component to serving on Lesvos. As many as 60-70 volunteers are needed for the camp to run smoothly with the distributions and housing. The volunteers are with the refugees 24/7 and are needed to serve some simple, basic living needs, from repairing their sleeping quarters, housing them, clothing them or just befriending them.

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» Many politicians and media have said that refugees from the Middle East will have a negative effect on their country and want to make it difficult for them immigrate. More often than not the Muslim refugees are being blamed for increased terrorism. It seems that the word *refugee* is a negative word with all sorts of fear and political baggage.

Who are the refugees?

Ashraf* is a refugee who had to leave Afghanistan because he was an English teacher. His life was threatened by the Taliban and so was his family. He is very talented and is waiting for asylum papers for Greece. Raheem, an Iraqi who found Jesus on Lesbos, had to flee because his father was part of the military fighting against ISIS. Betin, a Kurd from northern Iraq who found Jesus on Lesbos, is living in Germany and sharing his new found faith with fellow refugees. Jamali worked with the US military as a translator in the stronghold of ISIS and fled Iraq to not be killed. Omar has never been in his homeland in Palestine. He is 23 years old and has grown up in camps. He found Jesus in Greece. Zaid and Farrah

lost their whole family and all their belongings in Iraq while they were at school one day. These are but a few we know from leading the refugee work for Greater Europe Mission on Lesbos these past two years.

The world sees them as refugees, as terrorists, but we see them as brothers and sisters and dear friends.

In Matthew 25:31–46 Jesus is talking about a judgement. Sheep are being received into the Kingdom while the righteous goats are not.

Jesus' view of refugees is not that of the politicians and the media, as being negative to society. Jesus sees the refugees as people in need, people that need food, drink, clothing, visitation and need to be welcomed. Notice in Matthew 25:34–36 (page 8) how many times Jesus said "I was..." "For I was hungry... I was thirsty... I was a stranger... I was



naked... I was sick... I was in prison." Serving the refugees is serving Jesus himself!

What an opportunity!

If you would like to serve Jesus on Lesbos please let Tim Dyck know about your interest and he will get us in touch. Special challenge to young, middle aged and older men to serve Jesus on Lesbos!

Blessings, Ernie and Suzy

**all names have been changed*



»»» Migrants in Europe

About 1.5 million refugees flooded into Europe in 2015. The 2nd highest number of refugees were from Afghanistan. Many Afghan migrants are becoming “Christians,” often with little understanding of Christian faith. When asked why or how they came to faith, they answer:

- *It's a free religion (a lot say something like this).*
- *Islam has so many restrictions.*
- *I compared Mohammad to Jesus.*
- *I see the kindness of Christians.*
- *Christianity is democratic.*

Need for teaching

In winter 2017 several Pamir Production teams held Afghan gatherings in 15 different cities in Germany and Switzerland. We also spent time with individuals and families in counselling, encouragement and teaching. In short:

- German churches are baptizing “converts” and issuing certificates too easily and soon. The German court system is aware of this and apparently is insisting that if Muslims “convert” they must indeed *experience* the Christian faith! It is ironic that the government is insisting that believers be true disciples!
- Often a magical communication occurs when Afghans meet real Afghan

Christians and hear and see that their own people love the Messiah as Afghans.

- There is a tremendous need for “in language and in culture” resources and teaching.
- There are huge needs to help with husband-wife relationships. The restrictive honour-shame cultures no longer help to sustain marriage relationships.
- When Afghans attend church, other Muslims in the refugee camps frequently harass them. The German police do little to stop this out of fear they will be accused of being considered anti-immigrant and Nazi.

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» **A Nicodemus among the sheikhs?**

About 30 devout Muslims joined the Afghan conference for seekers and believers, including an Afghan sheikh who had studied Islamic theology and is well-known among the Shiite community.

After several Afghans gave their testimony of becoming followers of Christ, this man began to explain Islam. Some believers objected and began to harass him. Tension built up, as the two sides polarized. Some of the young Christians felt now was their chance to “get back” at Muslims who have harassed and persecuted them. Voices got louder, as each group insulted the other. It could have easily erupted into something ugly.

The Pamir team took hold of the situation: “We are not here to debate, insult others or put them down. We need to listen to what the sheikh says and learn to respect others’ views. Let him finish his speech. As followers of Jesus, we don’t preach against other religions, but our call is to preach the good news of Jesus and share how God has worked

in our lives.”

At the end of the conference some of the Muslim and Christian Afghans embraced each other—something we have never, ever witnessed before.

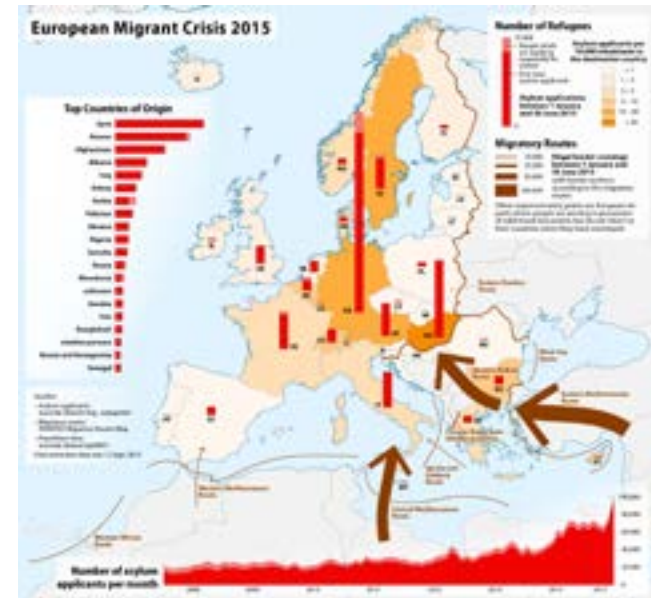
The next day the sheikh came privately to talk with us. After a lunch together, we went for a walk and had a deep and gracious discussion. At the end he said, “It makes me wonder why my friends’ behaviour changes for the good after they become Christian.”

This sheikh is reading the Word and wants to remain in touch with us.

Arley Loewen

Pamir Productions is partnering with European ministries to provide healthy discipleship for these Afghan migrants.

See www.pamirmedia.org and www.hope4Afghans.com.



»»» Resettlement: The trauma of separation and isolation

Our Refugee Sponsorship Committee was community driven. Two local churches became involved because there were members from one of the churches on the committee and the church also had a suite for the family. Other very active members in the community had no ties to either church.

When the family arrived they had already been displaced for about five years, living in Lebanon, then Turkey and even separated during the escape from Syria. The father and two sons barely made it to Turkey. There are still two older adult children and small grandchildren living in Syria and one son living in another country. Separation from family is extremely difficult.

When they arrived here, there were no other Syrians and no other recent refugees, though there were a few Arabic speakers in our community. Language was a huge barrier. Even though Mennonite Central Committee was wonderful in support, there was no one

nearby and the nearest large centre was a long way for day-to-day help.

Our community was generous in donating for the needs of this family, supplying them with all the furniture and household items they needed. They also generously gave their financial support and their time in arranging activities for the family.

Our literacy director, along with community volunteers, and our Adult Learning Centre were amazing and worked hard to give English lessons. The challenges in learning a new language were significant, but the family worked hard at learning. Once school started the sons had an advantage in language learning.

In addition to the steep learning curve they had in learning English, they also had challenges with cultural differences, the worry of finding work in Canada, and dealing with the trauma from leaving a war zone—especially with family left behind still living

in it. Over time one family member came to need significant help with a medical issue which was difficult to deal with in the north. They asked if we could help them with a move to Winnipeg where they could access better medical care.

So after five months in our community and with assistance from MCC Manitoba, community volunteers, our church families, and the committee we were able to help them get resettled in Winnipeg. While we in the north continue with their financial support, MCC has arranged a support worker in Winnipeg who helps with daily challenges.

Janice Imrie, Sandra Schroeder, Judy Schmidt
Northern Fellowship Chapel

Note: We were curious about why the family chose Canada. The son with the best English said he was interested in history and chose Canada because we did not have a history of colonizing or invading other countries.



»»» Resettlement: Fast-tracking into Canadian life

On February 28, 2016 our church family (Many Rooms Church Community) gathered at the Winnipeg airport to meet the Syrian refugee couple that we had sponsored through MCC. Though we had not met before, our church family had spent much time praying about, preparing for and anticipating this day. In this way, we felt like we already knew each other.

I will never forget the frightened look on the wife's face as she tried to be brave and put a smile on her travel-weary face. I remember feeling struck by her fear and thinking how afraid I would feel, if in her situation.

There were tears of gratitude and words of thanks shared.

Fast forward one year and it's hard to believe that this successful, confident couple once showed any signs of uncertainty. Jamal and Waad have taken every opportunity to fast

track themselves into productive Canadian life: volunteering, getting a job at the local halal butcher shop, studying English, navigating the driver's licensing process, and, most recently, purchasing their own home. Their success can only be attributed to their own motivation and willingness to act on the small opportunities that we were able to provide them due to the generosity and openness of our church family.

Now, after a process of prayer and discernment, our church family has decided to move forward with sponsoring Waad's immediate family to join us in Canada. Three more churches have graciously accepted our invitation to partner in this larger sponsorship venture of six people. I await the day of Waad's family's arrival with great anticipation, knowing that my joy will not come close to that of Jamal and Waad, who will be reunited with their family in a place of security and hope for the future.



But the joy extends to us, too, as we are blessed to include Jamal and Waad in our own family.

To God be all the glory! Amen.

Katie Froese
Many Rooms Church Community

»»» Resettlement in Canada: EMC survey responses

In a few words, what was your biggest surprise or greatest challenge in sponsoring a refugee family?

Lovely family, requires very committed team. We are delighted at how much fun we can have together despite the language barrier. We have been taken off guard a few times at the vastness of the cultural divide when communicating.

Understanding the culture.

The biggest surprise—the willingness to come to church and openness to talking about Christianity

Greatest challenge has been in navigating some differing views and opinions of people involved in the process on our side. Some of the harder questions have been around cultural sensitivity, how to best help the family, limited resources available where we are in a rural location.

The greatest challenge was to get a family here.

I think that the language barrier has been our greatest challenge although are working hard and progressing in English.

Our greatest challenge was the domestic abuse and government agency involvement.

Communication.

The amount of time/people needed for adequate support.

We are still waiting for our family even though our application was accepted a year ago.

We were surprised by how well this couple is adjusting and how open they are to friendship. The language barrier presents a challenge at times.

That more people didn't get involved.

A huge challenge was mental health issues related to the stress of their refugee experience, including bombing deaths of family members. Trying to help a family who has experienced trauma and separation from family members and we do not have the language nor an interpreter with lots of time or connection.

So many unknowns in regards to the situation we entered. Pleasantly surprised by our government worker being a Christian!

Knowing when we have done enough!

The cost of living in Canada.

**identifying details have been removed.*



»»» Resettlement in Canada: A steep learning curve

Our refugee family arrived on December 7, 2016. As a team, we arrived at the airport with excitement, expectations and some trepidation. We had prepared well, we thought. We had contacted MCC and had their refugee coordinator speak to us. Our congregation pledged to help financially and physically. The Christian Reformed Church offered the use of their manse rent free for the first year and we received many donations in furniture and household items. As a team we were less prepared for the emotional and spiritual challenges.

When the eight members of our family walked out of the arrival doors at the Toronto airport we descended on them with happy welcomes and tried to make ourselves understood. They seemed confused and very tired. The family told us later that they had very little information about what would happen after they arrived. They didn't know there would be someone to meet them at the airport. Janette Wall had some previous experience working with immigrants and

coordinated nearly everything, but even with her expertise, our learning curve was very steep. The family came with many questions about how they would survive and why we were involved with them.

After less than one week of knowing the family we realized there was violence in the home. We tried to address this by getting them help from Arabic speaking professionals. However, Child and Family became involved and the family was removed from the home. Finally, we were able to move the violent family member to London, where they could get help, and settled the family back into the home we first acquired for them. The courts are working to reunite the family and it seems to be successful.

The family also began attending our church, which we were so surprised at. They profess to be Muslim, but it seemed that they enjoyed coming to our church. After several months, some friends came to visit the family and the mother no longer attended.

Our walk with the family has taught us a few things. We've learned some Arabic. We've learned about Halal food. We've gained new friends. We know more about the Canadian legal system. We also learned that as a team we had different expectations of this process. We had to learn to understand each other better and to work together in highly stressful situations. There were times we felt as though things would "come apart at the seams," but we came through it, by God's grace.

More than a year has passed and we have seen the family grow in so many areas. We look forward to seeing what their future in Canada will be like. We hope they will be an asset to Canadian culture. Most of all we hope and pray that they will become Jesus followers. We have seen that every human being is precious and needs to be loved, especially by those of us who have received God's love.

Gloria Fehr
Grace Community Church



»»» Resettlement in Canada: New friends

This morning I was sitting in the coffee room at English Class (SEELS), where I volunteer as our refugee family's language helper, thinking how very privileged I am. Who would ever have imagined, when I joined the Refugee committee in Blumenort last Spring, that my life would be so blessed by these friendships? When I walked into the room, six Muslim women were sitting on the couches, jabbering in Arabic.

In the class, the teacher is known to say, "Speak English, please," but here, in their coffee room, I often say, "Speak Arabic, please." I love listening to their chatter, even though I can't understand. I know how hard they work to learn English, how much they have to concentrate every morning to understand and speak this new language. They need this 15-minute break where they can speak freely. Yet so often they break out of their fluent Arabic into faltering English, just to make sure I am included.

Alima and her mother Nawal* are the most outgoing, fun-loving of the group. They have also been in Canada longest. I forget sometimes that they are still in the beginning stages of language learning until they ask me how to say something in English. One day I told them I would not be at class for a week and Alima said, "Oh no! I need you here. I will miss you."

On the last day of classes before the Christmas break, Alima invited the teacher and me, and the other refugee women, for lunch at her house during the break. That was some lunch! Wow! Eight women around the table: four Syrians, one Somalian and three Canadians. We had such a wonderful time; we feasted on Syrian food, laughed at attempted English, compared various traditions, and sang "O Canada" into Nawal's phone so they could all learn the words.

Rasha and Talibah are much more reserved. They don't say much in a group, but they seem

to soak up the camaraderie and the English. These two young women seem to be kindred spirits and wish they lived closer together. (I am looking forward to watching their friendship blossom now that their husbands both have driver's licences and they can go visit independently of their sponsors.)

The two newest women in the group are young mothers, but I think they are from different religious groups than the rest. I will need to make a point of including them when we meet for the next social event, which they say must be at my house.

I do so love this group of women, can't say how much; I am so privileged to be counted as their friend.

Irma Plett
Blumenort EMC

**names have been changed to protect identity*

»»» Refugees in Sudan: Long-term results

I was 20 years old and fresh out of Bible College when I first stepped into a Sudanese refugee camp. They had been forced to flee when the government began bombing raids and sent soldiers to attack their villages. I heard stories of immense suffering, but I also saw healing begin.

UNHCR had set up refugee camps in Ethiopia, providing food, shelter and medical help. They invited other organizations to provide vocational training and education. Rolf and I served with SIM, an overtly Christian organization, training teachers in mother tongue literacy and English, always with discipleship and biblical training as our focus.



Bible study for non-literate women

We were able to train hundreds of Sudanese teachers allowing more than 10,000 children to receive an education. We also had an open door to disciple these teachers (many from Muslim background), provide biblical education for non-literate church leaders, and run a small Bible school.

We spent hours visiting in makeshift villages, and celebrated Christian and Muslim holidays in our homes. Over steaming cups of coffee and tea and platters of food, we built bridges, read the Scriptures, and dialogued about faith, hope and freedom in Jesus Christ. Here they had a safe place to search for truth and many responded to the gospel.

Dawud* arrived in the refugee camp disillusioned with Islam and searching for truth. He asked us to teach his family the Bible. When he and his wife came to faith, they experienced persecution, but were filled with passion and boldness to share about Christ. This last week, we were surprised to receive an email from Dawud, for we had lost

contact when he returned to Sudan. He is currently planting churches in and around his community.

Abdul* was translating the Bible into his language when we last saw him, and had written over 200 Scripture songs. Since being resettled to Canada, he has posted them on the Internet and is dialoguing with his “unreached” people now scattered all over the world through resettlement.

Little did we know that men and women who spent over two decades as refugees would be among the most qualified English speakers of South Sudan. They would hold government positions, become translators, health workers, teachers, preachers and evangelists. The small Bible school that trained a dozen would result in men passionately and sacrificially planting churches upon their return to war-torn South Sudan.

Angela Kruse

**names changed for security reasons*

»»» Relating to Refugees: An interview

You say that discipleship and biblical training were always your main focus? Were you also involved with physical care?

Angela: When we served in refugee camps, UNHCR, and WFP (World Food Program) provided food and health care. We helped only in emergency situations.

In Gesses we were the only organization so were heavily involved in helping with community projects such as well drilling and medical care (first aid and “ambulance” trips) and provided opportunities for income during times of hunger.

We always attempted to balance physical and spiritual ministry and they ended up being completely intertwined. Jesus has modelled this best. Jesus went through the towns and cities, “preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Matthew 9:35).

How did you invite people to hear the gospel when they were so traumatized?

Angela: I have only served in refugee camps after their immediate physical needs were met. Refugees deeply desired to tell their story and this begins a relationship and in our case, we called this discipleship.

Someone recently asked me, how many cups of coffee do you share before you start sharing the gospel?

Sharing coffee in many cultures is an invitation to friendship. As a disciple of Jesus, I have a passion to share and this usually starts by asking a question, sharing a biblical story or something that I am learning from God’s word during my very first “coffee time.”

People of other religions are as curious about Christianity as we are about their religion. At the same time, we had to be wise in overtly spiritual discussions in public settings unless we were invited to share or given permission.

In refugee camps, people are hungry for relationship and truth because their lives have just been turned upside-down and most of them are struggling with incredible loss.

Do you have thoughts for churches on sharing your faith with refugees?

Angela: We have had the honour of sharing in numerous evangelical churches and have heard of the thriving compassion ministries to immigrants. While churches seem eager to hear of our compassion ministry and even how people are coming to faith in Ethiopia and Sudan, some have responded with hesitation or even opposition about whether we, in Canada, should be actively sharing the gospel, building bridges to Christ and discipling immigrants.

Our greatest ministry was not the education we provided nor the endless physical help we provided, but introducing men and women to Jesus Christ—many who are now passionately serving Christ in war-torn South Sudan. This is lasting fruit.

Rolf and Angela served for 12 years in Sudanese refugee camps. They spent the past five years living among the Gumuz people in Northwest Ethiopia.

»»» Relating to Muslims: Your new neighbour

What do I do now? My neighbourhood has changed and I have Muslims living on my street! How can I possibly share my faith with them? These are good questions to ask and ones that more and more people here in Canada are asking. I have lived most of my adult life among Muslims and will relate some thoughts and experiences of how easy it can be to share your faith with your new neighbours.

Don't hide your faith. Speak freely about your own faith and love for God without preaching at them. Muslims find it very easy to talk about their faith and God, so do not be alarmed or startled by this. Listen to them and be free to share Bible stories and your own life stories. They expect and assume you will talk about your faith.

Open your home. Become a genuine friend to them and welcome them into your home. Being hospitable is very important to



Muslims. They will easily welcome you into their home and their hope is that you will do the same. Their trust in you will expand as you enter one another's homes.

Tell stories. We tend to use a direct approach of repentance, forgiveness and a way to heaven (e.g., The Four Spiritual Laws) while Muslims are much more relational and are more easily moved by stories or illustrations. People from an honour/shame background are not direct when they approach people but rather like Nathan when he confronted David. He used a story to speak indirectly to David but it spoke loudly. (Jesus used many stories and parables to reach His own honour/shame society.) The parable of the Prodigal Son is a good story to share.

Pray with them. Prayer is something that Muslims expect in a spiritual person so feel free to pray. Ask them what they need prayer

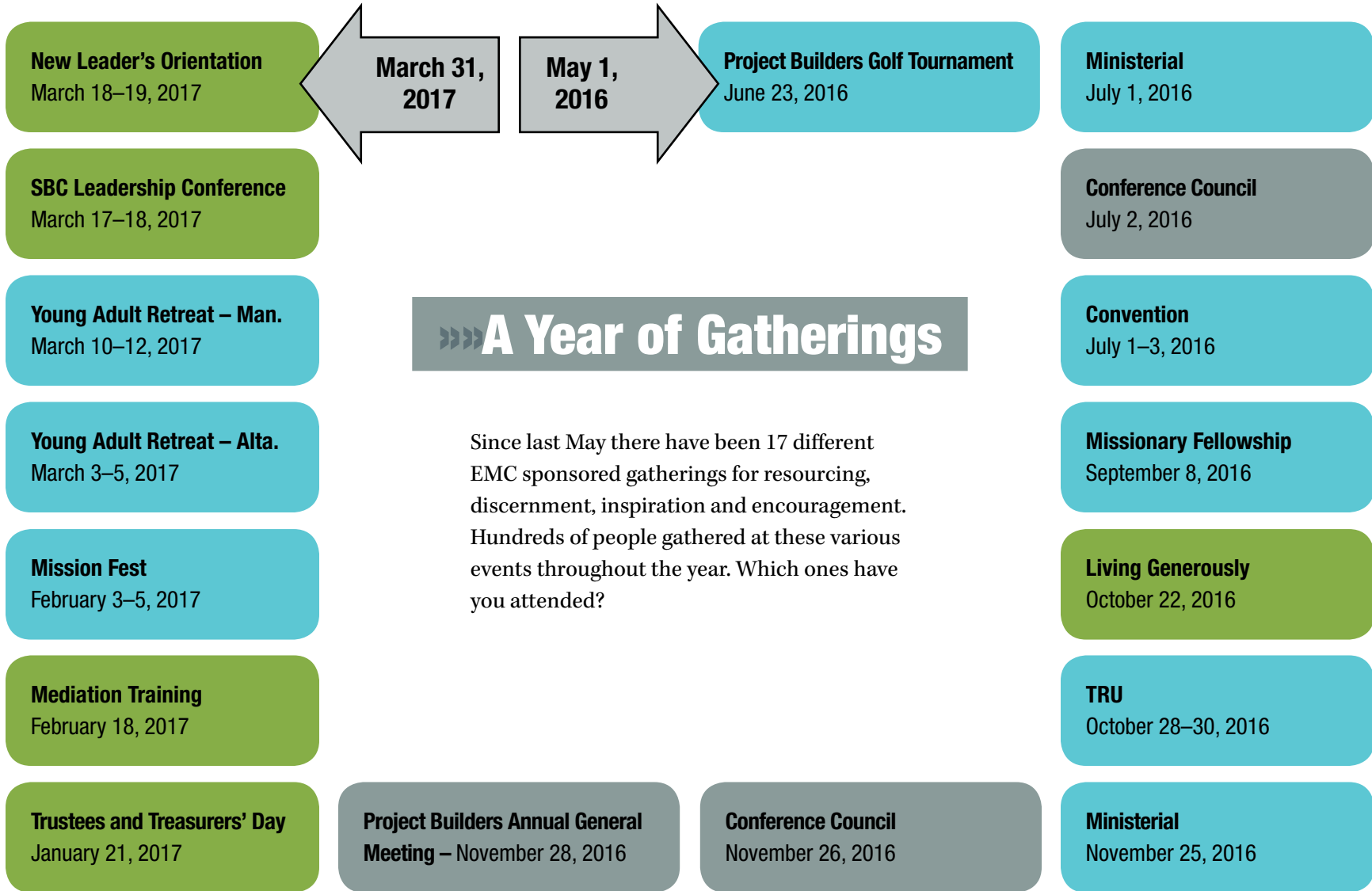
for. Don't be surprised if they pray with their eyes open and their hands lifted palm ward. Share answers to prayer.

Read with them. They believe in the Books of Moses, the Psalms (the Book of David) and the Gospels although they do not read them. They may argue that these books have been changed but do not let this become an argument; rather, invite them to read through one of the Gospels with you.

So, draw your Muslim friends into your home and into a trusting friendship. Learn to listen without arguing and learn how to respond or challenge in a more indirect way by using stories and object lessons. Do not hesitate to speak of your own faith and your own walk with the Lord and pray with your friends often. When that friendship has been well established then challenge them to read one of the Gospels, or better still, read it with them.

Janice Loewen
Blumenort EMC

GATHER LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCES WHEN WE GATHER



»»» A Year of Gatherings

Since last May there have been 17 different EMC sponsored gatherings for resourcing, discernment, inspiration and encouragement. Hundreds of people gathered at these various events throughout the year. Which ones have you attended?

Trustees and Treasurers' Day – January 21, 2017

Church Trustees and Treasurers have an important role in the administration of the church. To support their ministry, the Board of Trustees brought together workshop presenters to encourage and support these ministry workers. There were three workshops, a lunch break, and a time of answering questions at the St. Vital EMC.

Mediation Training – February 18, 2017

Faithful peacemaking requires a big God and conflict is normal are just two of the things we learned in a biblical approach to mediation in the church setting. This one-day seminar, was offered onsite or via webinar and was open to anyone in EMC. Training was provided by Stan Hamm, seminary academic dean at Providence Theological Seminary and member of Ridgewood Church. The need for a follow-up course was suggested but no plans for that are in place at this time.

»»» Gathering for Resourcing

Each of us can benefit from training related to our areas of ministry. The EMC gatherings for resourcing provide a wide array of training experiences. Timely and targeted training assists our churches in being proactive and effective in ministry, rather than responding to crisis situations.

New Leaders' Orientation – March 18–19, 2017

Eleven new EMC leaders gathered at Pinawa, Man., to receive an orientation into EMC's history, its church culture and how it functions administratively. It was also an opportunity to consider together what the future of the Conference could be and a chance to get to know other new leaders and conference leadership.

SBC Leadership Conference

March 17–18, 2017

EMC is one of four church conferences that sponsors this annual SBC event. In 2017 Dr. Ed Neufeld, of Kleefeld, Man., spoke on the topic of *Losing to Gain: Lives Worthy of the Gospel*.



Living Generously – October 22, 2016

One aspect of EMC Project Builders is to provide resources to members and to the general public on topics relevant to promoting practical aspects of mission activity. Project Builders hosted the seminar "Living Generously" at Heartland Community Church. Abundance Canada staff brought presentations on "Investing in the Treasurers of My Heart" and "Maximizing My Charitable Giving—tips and tools to utilize CRA regulations and MFC services."



Project Builders AGM – November 28, 2016

Project Builders exists to support missions by raising funds for projects related to EMC ministries. Each year, a list of projects is prepared by the PB Executive, and presented to the membership at the Annual General Meeting. This year projects included education for refugees in South Sudan and development of a counselling centre in Paraguay. For only \$250 per year, you too can join Project Builders and participate in the mission of the church by supporting these wonderful projects.

Ministerial – July 1, 2016

The day was spent in break-out groups discussing the proposed revisions of each Statement of Faith article.

Conference Council

July 2, 2016

- Anabaptist track being developed by Providence Theological Seminary
- Exploring the connection between churches and mission
- Best option for *The Messenger*
- Ward Parkinson resigned as Conference Pastor and search is underway for replacement
- Accounts of abuse and healing in Bolivia – John Froese
- How to respond to the Calls to Action that came out of the TRC report.

»»» Gathering for Discernment

Much of our impact in the world is through the ministry that we do together, whether it is international missions or church planting in Canada. We gather to hear about our mutual work and to contribute to wise and thoughtful decisions so that our impact can be multiplied.

Conference Council – November 26, 2016

- *The Messenger* moving to mixed print/digital format beginning in January
- Newly released video study series on Povology (www.povology.com)
- BCM has restarted the worship committee to serve our churches
- New options at SBC: online BA, Marketplace Ministry BA, Activate Discipleship School
- Survey will be sent to churches on role of women in leadership

Ministerial – November 25, 2016

Ministerial met to vote on Statement of Faith revisions in the morning. The afternoon was spent hearing a presentation on the Theology of Suffering with David Funk, followed by small group discussions on suffering and care-giving.

TRU – October 28–30, 2016

For more than 30 years EMC youth leaders have come together every other year to spend time in Training, Refreshment, and Uniting our hearts with one another and the Lord. This year around 70 leaders gathered together at Camp Cedarwood, Man., to be inspired by God’s Word from speaker Chris Marchand, as well as from numerous workshop speakers addressing various aspects of youth ministry.

Mission Fest – February 3–5, 2017

For many years EMC Missions staff have had the privilege of joining hundreds of other mission agencies in sharing many stories of God at work around the world. We spend the weekend at Church of the Rock in Winnipeg thanking people for their support, listening, and seeking to inspire many to consider cross-cultural ministry. We are blessed to see many EMC members attending this weekend as they demonstrate their continued passionate support of missions.

Young Adult Retreat – Alta.
March 3–5, 2017

With Patrick Friesen (SBC) speaking on spiritual disciplines (prayer, fasting, bible reading, etc.).



Young Adult Retreat – Man.
March 10–12, 2017

With Pastor Barry Plett speaking on the topic *Full of Grace and Truth*.

»»» Gathering for Encouragement

We enjoy getting together in a variety of settings so that we can encourage one another and be more unified as the body of Christ. Many of our gatherings have this sense of encouragement as a focus. We love to see God at work in each other, and these are gatherings that provide us with this opportunity!

Convention – July 1–3, 2016

Speakers Garry Koop, Darryl Klassen and Dylan Barkman spoke on the theme: *Those who have ears to hear... God’s Vision for the EMC*. They addressed what it means to advance Christ’s kingdom culture, particularly as we teach and gather. Attendance Sunday Morning was 550. A change in 2016 was to drop the Sunday afternoon session.

Missionary Fellowship – September 8, 2016

Every year, retired and active EMC missionaries gather for prayer, learning, encouragement and celebration. This year we gathered at Blumenort EMC to celebrate the retirement of long serving missionaries; Fred and Stella Neff and Verna Doerksen.

Project Builders Golf Classic – June 23, 2016

Golfers from around Manitoba gathered to enjoy a friendly – and sometimes competitive – game of golf. More importantly, the EMC Golf Classic raises funds for projects that advance the growth of the church, both in Canada and internationally. This past year, more than \$35,000 was raised for Project Builders projects.

We are very grateful to the Statement of Faith team for the excellence and diligence demonstrated during this project. We witness a lot of really great work on the content and forms of communication. You have served our Conference extremely well in this complex undertaking. Thank you.

– Steinbach EMC

We are very grateful for the time and energy the Statement of Faith Review Committee and the BLO has put into this process. We think they did a good job. We also believe the whole process was a healthy one for our church and the conference. We are in favour of the final draft the Review Committee has recently submitted.

– Morweena EMC

The proposed Statement of Faith is a strengthened and clarified statement of our core beliefs, and we are grateful to the Review Team for all their prayer and hard work on our behalf.

– Fort Garry EMC

We want to say thank you to the Statement of Faith committee that has worked diligently over the last two years, guiding us in a thorough review of our Statement of Faith. We believe the outcome has produced a better document, firming up and clarifying what it is we see as core/central doctrines in the EMC.

– Prairie Rose EMC

»»» Building Trust and Unity

When we identified **teaching** as one of our four Vision Statements, a specific aim was to build trust and unity in the EMC. If we can agree on essential truths we believe, we can work together and give each other freedom in non-essentials. In November 2016, the Ministerial voted on Statement of Faith revisions. We're not quite done, but feedback suggests we have achieved that goal to a remarkable degree.



Steinbach Bible College

- ▶ **EMC student numbers are higher in the past three years.**
- ▶ **SBC alumni are serving—this is the goal**
 - 82% are volunteering in a church ministry or community organization
 - 95% are practicing charitable giving
- ▶ **Alumni surveys are positive**
 - 93% rating for growth in faith and discipleship
 - 89% rating that students are equipped for church ministry
 - 94% rating that Instructors consider the Bible foundational for learning
- ▶ **SBC is working on new opportunities: Online BA, Marketplace ministry and Activate discipleship school.**



PROVIDENCE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY — EST. 1972 —

- ▶ **PTS/EMC Agreement includes the following three points.**
 - PTS will offer an overview course on Anabaptist history, theology and polity
 - i. *Radical Reformation: History, Thought and Practice*
 - PTS will develop an Anabaptist Studies track within the Master of Divinity program (open to all graduate students). It will include the overview and:
 - i. *Evangelicalism and the Anabaptists*
 - ii. *Contemporary Anabaptism: Theology and Theologians*
 - iii. *Global Anabaptism: Origins, Development and Challenges*
 - iv. *Incarnation and Ministry: Anabaptist Perspectives on Community, Social Justice, Pacifism, and the State*
 - EMC will promote and publicize the Anabaptist track and encourage students from EMC churches to take these courses.



Graduate School of Theology and Ministry

- ▶ **EMC is one of five denominations supporting the GSTM.**
- ▶ **GSTM has many part-time students who are working.**
- ▶ **A variety of ministry is being done by students, and this enriches discussions.**
- ▶ **The GSTM offers these programs to equip students for pastoral ministry, leadership and service:**
 - Master of Arts, with concentrations in Christian Ministry or Theological Studies
 - Graduate Certificate in Christian Studies

>>> The BCM's Mandate in a Word: Teach

All EMC churches benefit from what the Board of Church Ministries does: Teach.

The Messenger is a key tool for education and unity.

All churches receive Theodidaktos, the Memo Calendar, the Christian Education Update, the Key Beliefs bookmark. They come from the BCM and its Education Committee.

A chaplain serves students on the University of Manitoba campus. The BCM provides financial support.

Your conference's and church's faith stories are being preserved. The Archives Committee assists with this.

Do your teens come back enthused from Abundant Springs and youth leaders from TRU? That's the National Youth Committee at work.

Worship educates and education strengthens worship. Our Worship Committee is dedicated to assisting you.

Our staff members visit your churches: Terry Smith, executive secretary, and Gerald Reimer, conference youth minister and Missions Mobilizer. They preach and teach, meet with leaders, serve where asked. Andrew Walker aids them as the BCM's administrative assistant and assistant editor.

Four committees are linked to the BCM: Archives, Education, National Youth and Worship. Each is involved in education in some form. Each wants to serve the churches of this conference, and all churches benefit from them. What resources do you need? What do you want? What will you use? Let us know how we can serve you better.

Ministerial Examination Committee interviews between May 1, 2016, and March 31, 2017:

Ministers:

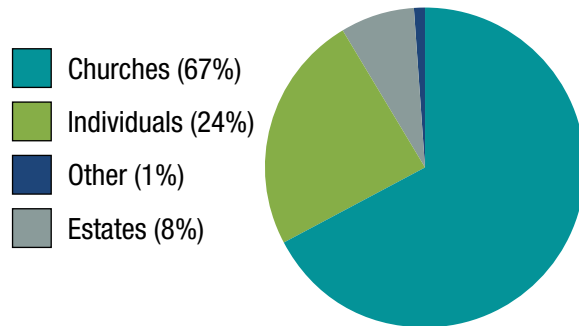
- Larry and Heather Nutbrown - Abbeydale
- Tim and Brenda Dyck - EFC/EMC
- Hyoungjin (Frankie) and Minju Kim - Pelly
- Phil and Lydia Hamm - Leamington
- Jeremy Zehr - Aberdeen/ICYA
- Norman and Candace Bueckert - High Level
- Jason and Paige Heide - Steinbach EMC
- Garth and Angela Vion - Westpointe
- Paul and Amy Little - Wymark
- Patrick and Juanita Stanat - Mount Salem
- Susie and Pete Krahn - Mount Salem
- Benny and Ester Fehr - Mount Salem

Deacons:

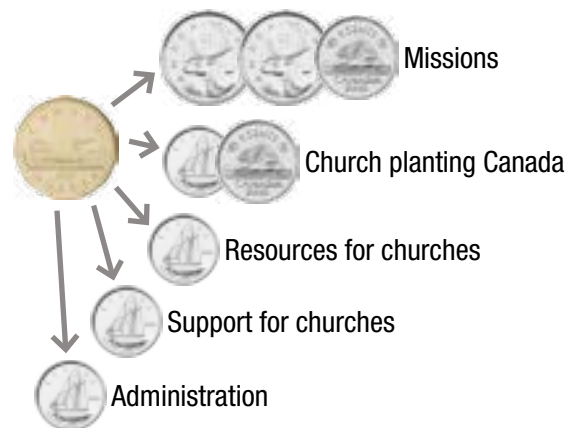
- Bill and Martha Hiebert - La Crete
- Benjamin and Matilda Friesen - La Crete
- Darin and Tonia Janzen - La Crete
- Gordie and Becky Banman - La Crete
- Darryl and Trudy Friesen - La Crete
- Vik and Martha Sawatzky - Kleefeld
- Marvin Allan - Wymark

FINANCIAL REPORT 2016

Where does the money come from for the EMC budget?



How is EMC budget money spent?



STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES December 31, 2016

	2016 Actual Bud- get Fund	2016 Budget	2016 Actual All Other Funds	2016 Total All Funds	2015 Total All Funds
REVENUES					
Donations	1,789,686	1,690,000	787,849	2,577,535	2,287,893
Interest Income	11,180	20,000	36,810	47,990	63,024
Other Receipts	7,230	6,000	67,386	74,616	202,166
	<u>1,808,096</u>	<u>1,716,000</u>	<u>892,045</u>	<u>2,700,141</u>	<u>2,553,083</u>
DISBURSEMENTS					
Amortization			4,118	4,118	4,748
Board of Missions	1,009,684	1,023,000	411,775	1,421,459	1,371,342
Board of Church Ministries	177,059	181,000	36,043	213,102	317,944
Board of Trustees	203,096	200,000	9,186	212,282	205,679
General Board	38,685	37,000	13,082	51,767	61,214
Board of Leadership and Outreach	428,426	427,000	98,089	526,515	516,085
	<u>1,856,950</u>	<u>1,868,000</u>	<u>572,293</u>	<u>2,429,243</u>	<u>2,477,012</u>
Foreign exchange gain	-5,354		-2,057	-7,411	27,342
Excess of receipts over disbursements	-48,854		319,752	270,898	76,071
Transfers	145,419	144,000	-145,419	0	0
Fund Balances, beginning of year	-2,772		2,717,850	2,715,078	2,927,167
Fund Balances, end of year	<u>88,439</u>		<u>2,890,126</u>	<u>2,978,565</u>	<u>3,030,580</u>

FINANCIAL REPORT 2016

I thank my God every time I remember you. This is how Paul begins his letter to the church in Philippi. He repeats it later when he is acknowledging how the Philippian church has provided funds for his ministry: "I rejoice greatly in the Lord." Perhaps you find it odd that Paul thanks God for the gifts given by the church, rather than offering his thanks to the church directly. Yet this is Paul's clear pattern and it underscores his complete dependence on the Lord to provide all that is needed for him to carry out the ministry.

After a financially challenging year in 2015, funds to support the ministry of EMC have been strong in 2016, resulting in a surplus of approximately \$88,000. We thank God for His faithfulness as we acknowledge the gifts that were provided by the churches and individuals of the EMC. This is the ministry that we are accomplishing together, as a movement of people advancing Christ's kingdom culture as we live, reach, gather and teach.

The Board of Trustees added two new members last year eliminating all vacancies. Thanks to financial support from Project Builders, the BOT was able to install a new phone system that will operate with lower monthly costs. The BOT continues to investigate benefit plans that can be offered to Conference and Church staff. In January, a Trustees and Treasurers' Day was offered at St. Vital EMC. The workshop was well attended and was deemed beneficial by many participants. The videos of the workshops are available on the EMC website.

The 2016 finances have been audited by ONBusiness Chartered Professional Accountants Inc., and an excerpt of the financial statements is included in this report. Copies of the full financial statements are available for those interested.

Thanks be to God for His provision!

Board of Trustees

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION December 31, 2016

	-----2016-----		2015	
	Budget Fund	All Other Funds	Total All Funds	Total All Funds
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Cash	-6,113	2,305,853	2,299,740	1,706,640
Donations Receivable	156,622	31,411	188,033	166,811
Accounts Receivable	10,575	8,700	19,275	4,053
Prepaid Expenses	4,224	0	4,224	5,200
Investments				
Term Deposits	94,156	533,550	627,706	626,964
Vehicle Loans		26,584	26,584	59,166
Building Loans		0	0	419,041
Capital Assets				
		8,123	8,123	10,838
	259,464	2,914,221	3,173,685	2,998,713
LIABILITIES				
Accounts Payable	64,958	9,595	74,553	132,623
Relocation Fund	106,067		106,067	136,512
Loans Payable		14,500	14,500	14,500
Total Liabilities	171,025	24,095	195,120	283,635
FUND BALANCES				
Invested in Capital Assets		33,408	33,408	10,838
Externally Restricted		2,177,150	2,177,150	1,980,100
Internally Restricted		679,568	679,568	726,912
Unrestricted Budget Reserve	326,667	0	326,667	311,333
Unrestricted	-238,228	0	-238,228	-314,105
Total Fund Balances	88,439	2,890,126	2,978,565	2,715,078
	259,464	2,914,221	3,173,685	2,998,713

EMC BOARD NOMINATIONS

»»» General Board

Staff

Tim Dyck, General Secretary

Erica Fehr, Administrative Assistant

Board Members

Abe Bergen, Moderator, Kleefeld (2017)

Darren Plett, Vice-Moderator, Pleasant Valley (2017)

Regional Representatives

#1 Peter Janzen, Hillside

#2 Chris Hughes, Abbeydale

#3 vacant

#4 Glenn Loewen, Portage

#5 Henry Friesen, The ConneXion

#6 Brian McGuffin, Rosenort Fellowship

#7 Troy Selley, Oak Bluff

#8 Barry Plett, Blumenort

#9 Lowell Froese, Leamington

Board Chairs

Jessica Wichers, EFC Steinbach (BCM)

Peter Doerksen, Vanderhoof (BLO)

Fred Buhler, Pineridge (BOM)

Gordon Reimer, Heartland (BOT)

Responsibilities of the General Board

- Initiate and recommend Conference goals and policies
- Prepare the agenda for Conference Council meetings
- Oversee the implementation of decisions
- Receive reports from the Boards and coordinate relationships between the Boards
- Initiate the formation of regions and the restructuring of existing ones when necessary
- Prepare the annual slate of Nominating Committee candidates
- Act on behalf of the Conference between Council meetings
- Serve as legal representative of the Conference
- Fill vacancies on Conference Boards which occur between Council sessions
- Deal with matters that do not come under the direction of any other Conference Board

- Maintain a Conference Administrative Handbook
- Appoint committees and task forces to work on specific projects and programs as required
- Appoint representatives to Conference-affiliated agencies and receive reports from them

Moderator to be elected

No nominations currently

Vice-Moderator to be elected

Ward Parkinson, Box 701, Morris, MB R0G 1K0, 204-746-2461 (Rosenort EMC)

Ward has served the EMC in a number of capacities for many years as a board chair, as the Church Planting Coordinator and then Conference Pastor. He is currently Pastor at Rosenort EMC. Ward has an MDiv. from Providence Theological Seminary.

EMC BOARD NOMINATIONS

»»» Board of Church Ministries

Staff

Terry M. Smith, Executive Secretary/Editor
Gerald D. Reimer, Conference Youth Minister
Andrew Walker, Administrative Assistant/
Assistant Editor

Board Members

Heidi Dirks, Braeside (2019)
Kyle Dueck, Morweena (2019)
Kimberly Muehling, Fort Garry (2018)
Russell Doerksen, Fort Garry (2017)
Cyndy Warkentin, Saturday Night (2017)
Jessica Wichers, Anola (2017)
Kevin Wiebe, New Life (2017)
Paul Walker (MAL), Roseisle (2017)

Responsibilities of the Board of Church Ministries

- Provide resources and services to help congregations with Christian education, family-life teaching, music ministries and youth work
- Minister to post-high school students and make arrangements for Conference youth events

- Produce Conference publications and periodicals
- Promote the writing and publication of Christian literature
- Administer the Conference Archives

4 to be elected

Russell Doerksen, 10 College Crescent, Otterburne, MB R0A 1G0 (Fort Garry EMC)

Russell is part of the Fort Garry congregation. He completed his MDiv. at Providence in April 2013 and now works at Providence in Student Finance and serves as the Managerial Editor of the Seminary's Academic Journal, *Didaskalia*. Russell is currently serving on the BCM and would continue to bring his training and experience, enthusiasm for further learning, his inquisitive mind and solid research skills to the work of the BCM.

Cyndy Warkentin, Box 93, Landmark, MB R0A 0X0, 204-355-4289 (Saturday Night Church)

Cyndy has been a singing teacher for the past 25 years and has had involvement in the arts community of Southeastern Manitoba. She has worked as a Sunday School Superintendent, adult

Sunday School teacher, music committee chair and song leader. Cyndy currently serves as the pastor of Saturday Night Church in Landmark while continuing some vocal teaching.

Jessica Wichers, 312-360 Elmdale St.

Steinbach, Manitoba, R5G 0N2, jessicawichers@gmail.com (EFC Steinbach)

Jessica was home-schooled through primary and secondary school and then took classes at SBC from 2007 to 2009. She has leadership and administrative ability and has worked as a youth leader, in music, and in short-term mission trip planning at Anola Fellowship Chapel. She has recently begun attending EFC in Steinbach.

Kevin Wiebe, PO Box 1354, 3 Pearl St., Tilbury, ON N0P 2L0, 519-437-5428 (New Life Christian Fellowship)

Kevin has a BA in Communications and Media and worked in Christian radio ministry for five years. He has experience working in print, design, photography, and publications. Kevin currently serves as Senior Pastor at New Life Christian Fellowship in Stevenson, Ontario. He is currently serving his first term on the BCM.

EMC BOARD NOMINATIONS

»»» Board of Leadership and Outreach

Staff

Ralph Unger, Interim Conference Pastor
Charles Koop, Canadian Church Planting
Coordinator
Erica Fehr, Administrative Assistant

Board Members

Carlos Hernandez, Iglesia Emanuel (2019)
Keith Hillier, Steinbach EMC (2019)
Bryon Bezanson, Cornerstone (2018)
Albert Loewen, Mount Salem (2018)
Ralph Unger (on leave), St. Vital (2018)
Peter Doerksen, Vanderhoof (2017)
Alvin B. Plett, Heartland (MAL)

Responsibilities of Board of Leadership and Outreach

- Serve as executive for the Conference Ministerial
- Arrange for the examination of ministerial candidates
- Identify and respond to theological issues
- Identify and respond to spiritual and social concerns

- Arrange ministerial activities
- Foster pastoral fellowship
- Promote recruitment, orientation and training of ministers
- Cooperate with local congregations or regions in Canadian evangelism and church planting

2 to be elected *Four EMC Ministerial members must be on the BLO at all times.*

Richard Klassen, Box 29, Kola, MB R0M 1B0, 204-556-2712, richkat2014@gmail.com (Kola EMC)

Richard and Kathy have three children and five grandchildren. Richard has served as pastor for 39 years in EMC churches, and also on the EMC General Board as Conference Moderator, and in the SBC Cabinet. He has had a lifelong affiliation and interest in the EMC and in the well-being of our pastors.

Ed Peters, Box 1232, 515 9th Ave, Burns Lake, BC V0J 1E0 (Island Gospel Fellowship)

Ed has been an EMC pastor for many years and is currently the Lead Pastor at Island Gospel Fellowship in

Burns Lake, where he has been for the past five years. He has also served EMC as part of the Statement of Faith Review Team, on the Board of Leadership and Outreach and on the General Board. Ed holds an MA in Christian Education from Providence Theological Seminary.

EMC BOARD NOMINATIONS

»»» Board of Missions

Staff

Tim Dyck, General Secretary
Ken Zacharias, Foreign Secretary
Gerald Reimer, Missions Mobilizer
Diana Peters, Administrative Assistant

Board Members

John Bueckert, Westpointe (2019)
Beth Koehler, Steinbach EMC (2019)
Len Barkman, Heartland (2018)
Fred Buhler, Pineridge (2018)
Brad Brandt, Blumenort (2018)
Alvira Friesen, Rosenort EMC (2017)
Abe E. Klassen, Taber (2017)
Tricia Reimer, Prairie Grove (MAL)

Responsibilities of the Board of Missions

- Promote missions according to the scriptures and the directives of the Conference Council
- Receive counsel from the Conference Ministerial in theological matters
- Inform the Conference of the Board's activities
- Establish goals of the mission programs,

formulate basic policies, and enter new fields under the authority of the Conference Council

- **Note: The Board meets at least five times a year for all-day meetings.**

2 to be elected

Phil Hamm, 1539 Willow Dr, Box 429, Ruthven, ON, NOP 2G0 519-800-5624, phil.lydia.hamm@gmail.com (Leamington EMC)

Phil and Lydia have served as missionary couple in Japan for ten years under the Mennonite Brethren, and Phil has also served as pastor. Phil and Lydia currently serve as a lay minister couple at LEMC. They have a keen interest in the EMC

Tricia Reimer, 184 Settler's Trail, Lorette, MB, ROA 0Y0, 204-878-9461, btreimer@mymts.net, (Prairie Grove Fellowship Chapel)

Tricia currently serves on the Board of Missions as a Member-at-Large. She has a Bachelor of Church Music from Steinbach Bible College and a TESOL Certificate from Providence Seminary. She has

served as a missionary in Lesotho, Africa, working with indigenous church leaders (1992-1997) and on several short term mission trips. Tricia is involved in local church outreach, music, teaching and leadership ministries. She also serves the local school and community through music.

EMC BOARD NOMINATIONS

»»» Board of Trustees

Staff

Tim Dyck, General Secretary

Wannetta Fast, Accountant

Diana Peters, Administrative Assistant

Board Members

Ruth Penner, Aberdeen (2019)

Kurt Friesen, Kleefeld (2019)

Jake Elias, La Crete (2018)

Harold Reimer, Morweena (2017)

Gordon Reimer, Heartland (2017)

Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

- Prepare the annual budget
- Raise funds and manage all Conference money
- Manage the Conference Office
- Administer the Church Building Loan Fund
- Promote stewardship and estate planning
- Prepare and present an annual audited financial statement to the Conference Council

2 to be elected

Gordon Reimer, Box 2 Group 2 RR1 Landmark MB R0A 0X0, 204-355-4420, gordon@merittransport.ca (Heartland Community Church)

Gordon has been a business owner at Merit Transport for many years. He has participated in and continues to serve on the Heartland business committee. He has served previously on the Board of Trustees in his church and currently serves as chair of the EMC Board of Trustees.

Harold Reimer, Box 858, Arborg, MB R0C 0A0, 204-364-2346, haroldr@reimermovers.com (Morweena EMC)

Harold has owned and operated his house moving business (Reimer Building Movers) along with his partners for many years. Harold is well respected in our church and in the surrounding area. Harold has served the local school for many years as the chairman of the board. He has served as a care group leader, Sunday school committee member, EMC delegate and Morweena EMC nominating board member.

EMC BOARD NOMINATIONS

»»» Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee Members

Jake Dick, Leamington (2019)

Peter Enns, Wymark EMC (2019)

Alvin B. Plett, Heartland (2019)

John Bueckert, Westpointe (2018)

Kathy Klassen, Kola (2018)

Hilda Koop, Heartland (2018)

Antonio Pitta, Iglesia Emanuel (2018)

Sid Reimer, Fort Garry (2018)

Waldon Plett, Riverton (2017)

Responsibilities of the Nominating Committee

- Select enough candidates for all elected offices of the Conference, other than the Nominating Committee
- Conduct annual elections

3 to be elected

Alvira Friesen, Box 700, Morris, MB R0G 1K0,
(Rosenort EMC)

Alvira worked as a church planter in Mexico for 25 years. Since retirement she has taught at EdenB, a Spanish Bible School in Manitoba, served on the EMC Board of Missions and been a leader in an outreach project (and potential church plant) in Southern Manitoba. She is currently part of the Rosenort EMC Missions Committee.

Dave Kroeker, 125 Harvest Dr, Steinbach, MB,
R5G 2C7, 50dandak53@gmail.com 204-642-2542
(Steinbach EMC)

Dave has served on the Conference Nominating Committee, Mission Board and General Board. He served as Membership Chairman in the Menville Church for a number of years and also as a deacon. Dave, and his wife Agnes recently moved to Steinbach and are currently attending Steinbach EMC.

»»» **Join us at EMC Convention 2017!**

EMC Convention 2017

Inviting Healthy Change

speaker **Gord Penner**

June 9–11, 2017

Morweena EMC, MB

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