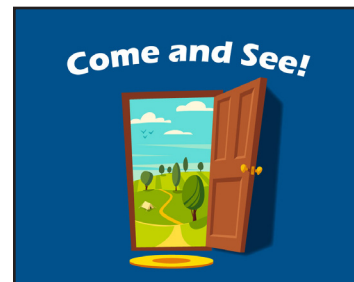


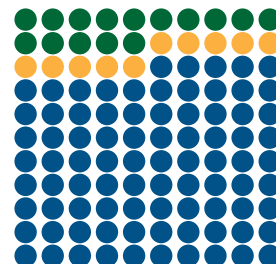
## LIVE

EMC churches participated in Come and See: A Season of Renewal, which ended in mid-2022. What a great adventure as we travelled with Jesus through the gospels.



## REACH

We are grateful for every EMC worker sent from many churches to various countries. Is it okay for us to hope for more? We think so!



## GATHER

In many places across Canada, 2022 was the year that we returned to gathering as usual. It's great to be back together!



## TEACH

Let's celebrate the cohort of Rudiments students who have been welcomed into the EMC ministerial. Praise God for the committed and godly men and women who take this course each year.



# 2022 IN REVIEW

## Come and See

The question that our churches have been asked throughout this Come and See season of spiritual renewal is—Is Christ living in our midst? Is there a living Christ standing in the middle of our congregation whom we today need to get up and follow? And the central conviction of our season has been—if you want to know what the living Christ is doing in the midst of the churches today—go and read the gospel stories.

Layton Friesen, (Former) Conference Pastor

The Come and See season was a fabulous thing. It was very well timed for the isolation of Covid even though it was planned before Covid hit. It was an opportunity, for those EMC Pastors who wanted to, to connect and walk through the season of Advent to Pentecost together. Meeting mid-week by Zoom provided great camaraderie for pastors across the conference, plus they didn't have to wonder about what to preach. The prayer time together was meaningful. It would be great to do something like this again.

Ernie Koop, Pastor, Evangelical Fellowship Church, Steinbach



Andy Woodworth



Mo Friesen



Adrienne Funk



Peter Doerksen



Emery Plett



George (& Nicoletta) Dumitrascu

## National Office Staff Transitions

For many years EMC has been stable in staffing, but that changed in 2021, so a Transition Consultant was engaged to review EMC's needs and make recommendations. Most of the hiring was done in 2022, with start dates in 2023. Pictured at left are the newest EMC staff. Andy Woodworth, Conference Pastor, Mo Friesen, Director Next Generation, a new position. Adrienne Funk, Communications Assistant, Peter Doerksen, quarter-time Western Ambassador, a new position, Emery Plett, Executive Director and George Dumitrascu, Director of Global Outreach.

## Recruitment

The staff thematic goal for 2022-2023 is to "strengthen our approach to the recruitment, training, placement and retention of missionaries, church planters and pastors." To reach that goal we are improving descriptions of the ministries in our fields and the definitions of positions that need to be filled. We've enhanced the Shoulder Tapping section in The Messenger. Better methods for maintaining connections with potential recruits have been developed and a Ministry Questionnaire on our website encourages prospective

workers to consider how they might serve. We're also planning events to encourage youth to consider full-time ministry; with one at Abundant Springs. Lastly, we've engaged a consultant to advise, assist and report on recruitment strategies. Later this year, the focus will shift to training and retention.

# REACH LOOKING BACK

## Canada

The Evangelical Mennonite Conference started with 4 churches in Manitoba in 1874. In the last 148 years, we have grown to the current **64 churches** and church plants, with another 37 that have since closed or are no longer EMC.

## Nicaragua

EMC has a rich history of reaching out in obedience to the Great Commission. Back in 1966, after a delegation returned from scouting the land, EMC sent our first missionaries, Fred and Doris Friesen, to Nicaragua.

Over the next 25-years, a total of **19 missionaries** were sent to reach the people with the Good News, planting churches and doing discipleship and leadership development. Approximately 25 churches were planted during those 25-years.

In 1991 our last missionaries left the country. In the succeeding 30 years or so, the Fraternity has passionately continued on, with an aim to plant one new church each year, resulting in another 25 churches, with a total now of **52 churches and outreaches** with approximately **500 members**.



**Nicaraguan Missionaries, 1975**  
L-R: Doris Friesen, Wilbert & Hilda Friesen & boys, Darlene & Lester Olfert & boys

The Fraternity takes seriously their desire to have each church represented at their Annual General Meetings, typically held in January each year. Not only do pastors and delegates travel to the meeting, held at Camp Maranatha, with some of them needing two days to get there by horse or burro, buses, and a select few by cars, but they require each church to have five delegates present during a rollcall in the morning, and then confirm their presence in the afternoon when voting takes place.

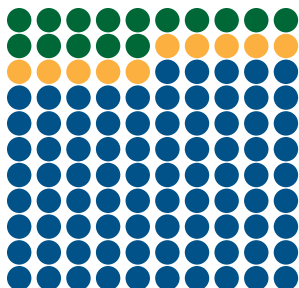
## Paraguay

EMC missionaries started working in Paraguay in 1959, and **98 missionaries** served from 1959 to 2010. Today the Confraternidad Evangelica Menonita del Paraguay (CEMP) has around **13 churches** with **250 members** and a handful of other churches can trace their roots back to EMC mission work.

## Mexico

EMC missionaries started working in Mexico in 1957, and **99 missionaries** served from 1957 to 2011. Today there are two conferences (CME and CEMM) with a total of **18 churches** with **1,400 members**.

## Global Missions

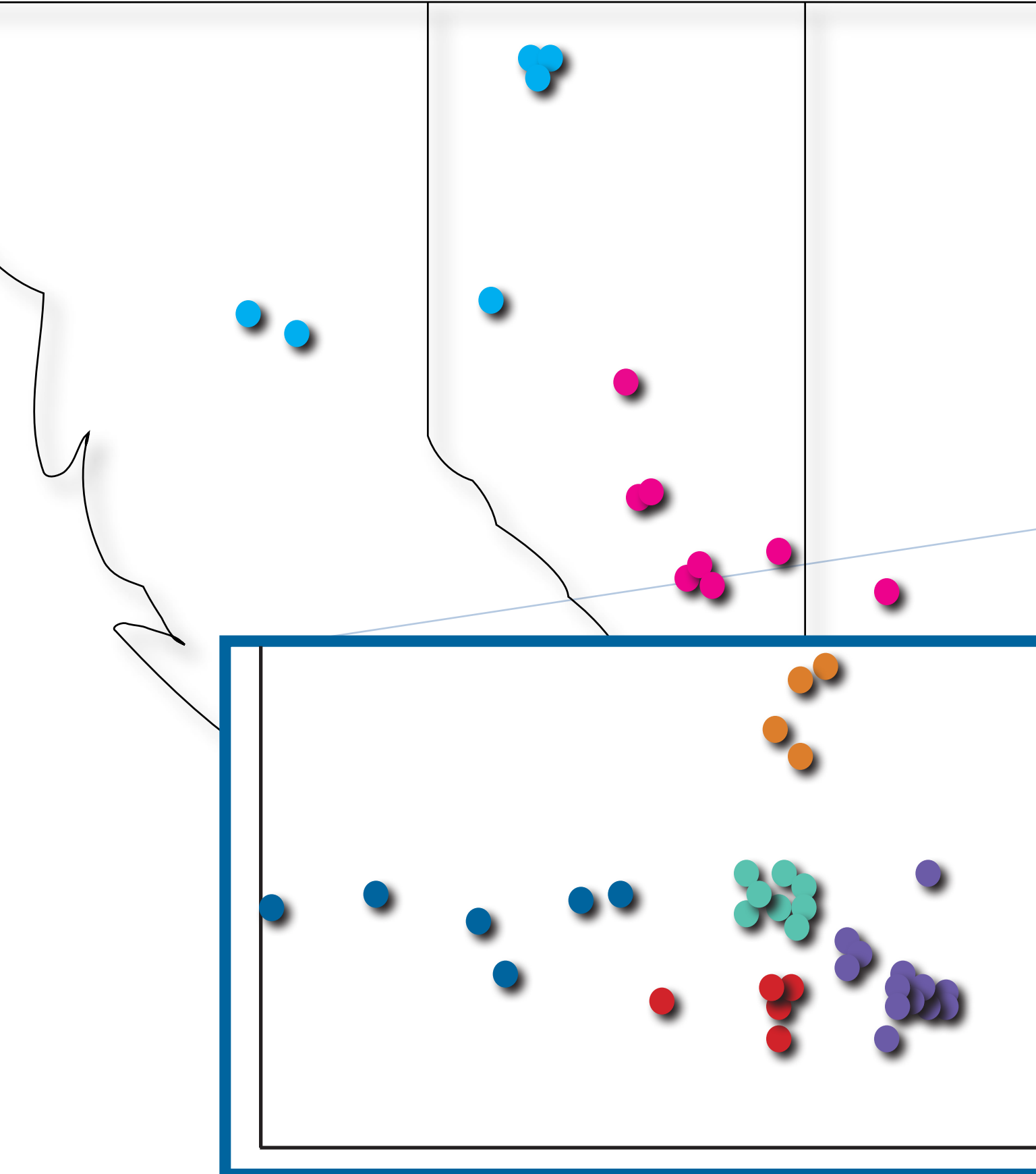


Today EMC has **110 workers** serving around the world.

**15 church planters** are working in **11** different **church plants** and outreaches in Canada

**10 missionaries** are serving in EMC's four administered fields - **Bolivia, Mexico, Paraguay and Spain**

**85 missionaries** are serving with EMC associate mission agencies in **22 countries**

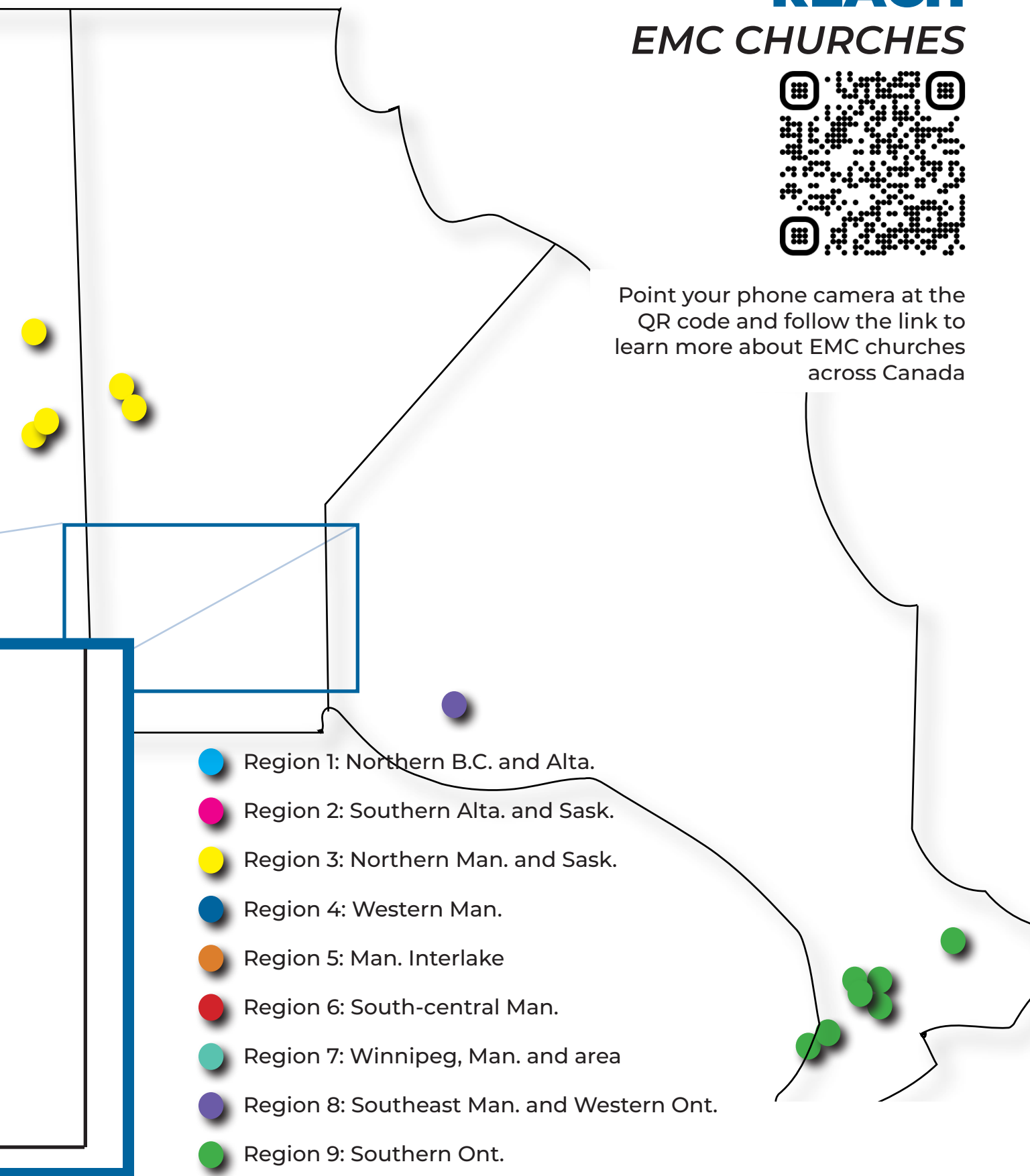


# REACH

## EMC CHURCHES



Point your phone camera at the QR code and follow the link to learn more about EMC churches across Canada



- Region 1: Northern B.C. and Alta.
- Region 2: Southern Alta. and Sask.
- Region 3: Northern Man. and Sask.
- Region 4: Western Man.
- Region 5: Man. Interlake
- Region 6: South-central Man.
- Region 7: Winnipeg, Man. and area
- Region 8: Southeast Man. and Western Ont.
- Region 9: Southern Ont.

# REACH

## EMC MISSIONS TODAY

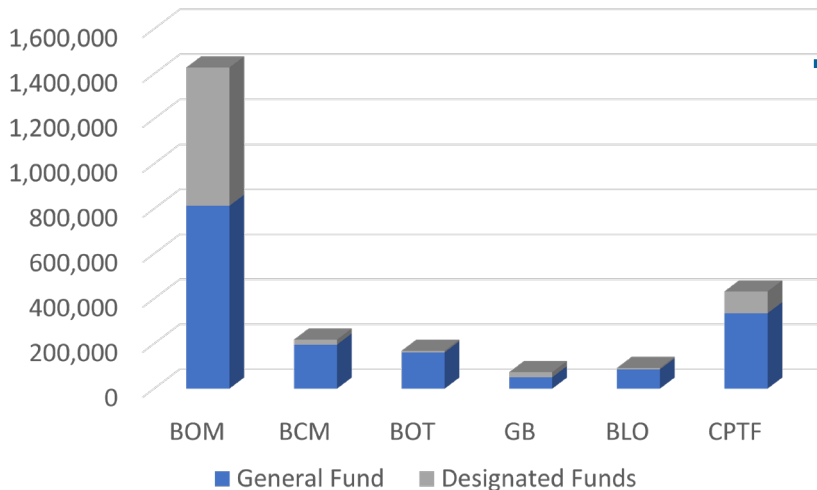
### Algeciras, Spain

An exciting new chapter in EMC Missions was started in 2022 when Antonio and Esther Pitta journeyed to Algeciras, Spain to begin ministry among Moroccan migrants in that port city. They have been building relationships with many of these migrants, and they have enhanced their language skills by spending two months in Agadir, Morocco. A great connection has been made with a local church that also desires to reach these Moroccan migrants. The long-term goal is to see groups of Jesus followers emerge from this community, not only in Algeciras, but throughout Spain and Europe. A secondary goal is to develop a discipleship training program for young people with interest in ministry.



Esther, Antonio and Jenifer Pitta

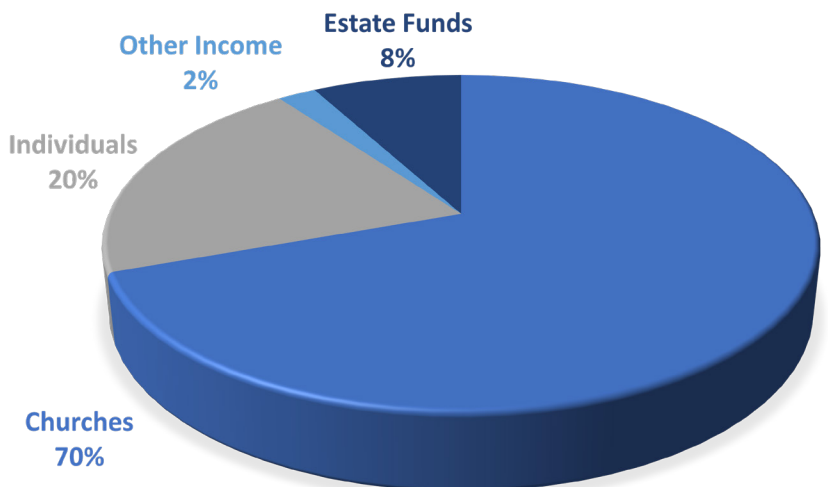
### 2022 EXPENDITURES BY BOARD



This is your reach

made possible by your sustained generosity

### 2022 GENERAL FUND REVENUE



\*Unaudited information

# REACH

## EMC MISSIONS TODAY

### Guadalajara, Mexico

It has been nearly a decade since EMC Missions began ministry in Guadalajara, Mexico. Growing the church has been slow and methodical, but progress continues. The goal is to see discipleship groups formed among the middle class in this large city, which is considered the cultural heartland of Mexico. Guadalajara is also referred to as the “Circle of Silence” because there are so few evangelical believers. Dallas and Tara Wiebe returned to Canada in 2022 with their family, leaving the young church plant in the capable hands of Angel and Blanca Infantes and national leaders. But the task is big and EMC Missions is eager to send more workers to assist in this important task.



Angel and Blanca Infantes and Family



Dallas and Tara Wiebe and Family

### Santa Cruz, Bolivia

EMC Missions partners with EMMC and other denominations in serving the Low German Mennonite people of the department of Santa Cruz in Bolivia. One exciting development is the increasing involvement of Mennonite churches from Mexico and Paraguay. A few years ago, Ester Fehr lost her husband Benny to COVID. Last year, she married Bill Kehler, a fellow MEM worker who had also been recently widowed. They both have a passion for this ministry, and continue to serve in radio ministry and outreach. Nancy Friesen has changed her focus from teaching English at the school in Villa Nueva to a ministry on the nearby colony of Belice while continuing her work in administration for MEM.



Ester and Bill Kehler and Family



Nancy Friesen



Chris and Revita Kroeker



Travis and Rosey Zacharias and Family

### East Paraguay

Aside from Northern Mexico, Paraguay is the place where EMC has served the longest. Initially, the EMC ministry was restricted to a region known as the Chaco, where many Mennonite groups were located. Years later, the effort shifted to East Paraguay, where ministry to indigenous Paraguayans also became the focus of attention. Chris and Revita Kroeker continue to counsel church members with the “Caring for the Heart” ministry, which

is targeted at strengthening marriages. Travis and Rosey Zacharias are sharing the love of Jesus in a very poor region in eastern Paraguay. We would love to send more workers to assist them.

# REACH

## CANADIAN CHURCH PLANTING

Our reach continues to expand to other cultures here in Canada. As immigrants come, Ethiopians are among those who are becoming our neighbours. Very often the husbands of these families come first, later bringing his wife and children. As they settle in, the heartstrings of their homeland draw them together where restaurants serving familiar food are established, job opportunities are shared with each other, and gatherings becomes a priority.

That's where our outreach comes into the picture. It's hard to know how many who come are believers, but for some who are, they believe God has called them to Canada to evangelize our nation, no matter what colour our skin. Currently EMC has partnered with two Amharic-speaking church plants, Ephrata Evangelical Church in Edmonton, and Glory of Christ Church in Toronto. Other cities in Canada also have growing numbers, including Winnipeg, where an estimated 15,000 Ethiopians are living. EMC would like to expand our reach to immigrants, both to support, and learn from these vibrant cultures.

### Highlights of other church plants

**Kingdom Life Church** – Pastored by Ibrahim and Phebe Zabaneh, this Arabic-speaking church meets at St. Vital EMC in Winnipeg on Sunday afternoons. They disciple believers and reach out to newcomers.

**The Forge Church** – Established in St. Thomas, Ontario just before the pandemic, this church, pastored by Bill and Beth Janzen, welcomes people who have wrestled with their faith and long to have a personal relationship with Jesus.

**Gospel Light Fellowship** – Pastored by Abe and Kara Penner, this church in Redcliff, Alberta is seeking creative ways to reach their changing community for Christ.

**Bow Island EMC** – Abe and Anna Bueckert are giving initial leadership to this 2-year-old church plant 45-minutes west of Medicine Hat, Alberta. The group is growing rapidly and hopes to install a full-time pastor soon.

**Many Rooms Church Community** – This inner-city church in Winnipeg meets in several homes, under the leadership of Jen Kornelsen, Stephanie Unger, and Dave Guenther.

**Ste. Agathe Outreach** – Scott and Debbie Dick are thankful to see a few more families respond to their ministry, which includes bible studies, youth ministry, and a Kids Zone program.

**Winnipeg Logos Church** – Enduring a season of decline through COVID, this church is seeking the Lord's direction as to what the future holds for them.



**Yemiru and Zway Tilahun**  
Ethiopian Church Planting  
Coach



**Jember and Tina Rijato**  
Glory of Christ Evangelical  
Church Planters



**Molugeta and Marta Kalisho**  
Ephrata Evangelical Church

## LOOKING FORWARD

### Would you consider serving with EMC Missions?

Each of these fields described above are understaffed and in need of workers. Would you consider serving alongside these workers in one of these fields? Go to our website to find out more about each of these fields ([www.emconference.ca/missions](http://www.emconference.ca/missions)). While you are there, take the Ministry Questionnaire to find out how you might be able to serve.





# GATHER BACK IN BUSINESS

## Abundant Springs

A big thanks to the National Youth Committee! COVID wiped out Abundant Springs 2021 and restrictions prevented a full event in 2022 so the NYC prepared and ran regional events instead, each focusing on Acts 2:25-47.

The Southern Alberta event was held at Coaldale Mennonite Church with approximately 80 students. Two main sessions included worship by Taber EMC, devotionals by Jordan Doerksen and great giveaways by SBC. The rest of the day was filled with large group games, archery tag, Dutch Blitz, basketball and more. Thank you to Kaylene Buhler and Valean Doerksen for using their skills in the kitchen!

The Manitoba event was held at Valley View Bible Camp with just under 150 youth and leaders. Travis Plett and Robyn (Kampen) Buhler hosted, Lyndol Fast spoke and a group from Riverton Gospel Chapel led worship. Students played a nearly impossible wide game and then enjoyed camp activities such as kayaking, ziplining, riflery, gaga ball, archery and wagon rides. SBC again provided giveaways.

The Ontario event, though small was memorable with 13 youth and leaders. Travis and Macey Plett and Sarah Barkman hosted the event at Crieff Hills Retreat Centre. The day started well with icebreakers, a session with Travis Plett, and some great outdoor games but as they headed for lunch a massive storm rolled through. While the heavy rain and wind only lasted for 45 minutes, power was out for the rest of the day. Despite the power outage, they enjoyed an afternoon of great indoor games, a fantastic candlelit supper, and a session with Travis.

The regional events were great and well received, but the National Youth Committee is excited to host Abundant Springs in May 2023. Please continue to pray for this event and the youth that will be attending.



# GATHER

## BACK IN BUSINESS



Beth and Bill Janzen



Not-So-Late Show



Prayer of Blessing



### Festival 2022

In 2022 we had our first convention since before COVID began. It was renamed Festival, a decision made by the 2020 planning committee and was a simplified version of what they, region 8b, had planned. Though it was pared down significantly from what they intended and from the usual festival, it was more than the “enhanced conference meetings” that we began with.

Ministerial and Conference council meetings were held as they have been for years with instructive presentations for the ministerial and discussions and decisions by both leadership groups.

The rest of the festival had a few lighter elements designed to build a sense of community. Andrew Dyck and the team from Stony Brook provided both humorous and poignant moments in the format of a talk show on Friday evening. An international market held on Saturday, allowed missionaries and guests to connect over ethnic foods in a festive, market atmosphere. The evening worship session with Island Breeze closed the Festival for 2022. There were no workshops or non-delegate events. Nor were inspirational sessions with a feature speaker held in 2022 but there was a noticeable sense of joy at being together again.



Enjoying the Market



Island Breeze



Arley and Janice Loewen



France at the Market



Kilometres for Kids Run

# TEACH

## VOCATION AND MINISTRY

### Rudiments Graduates



**Craig Cornelsen**  
Picture Butte Mennonite Church



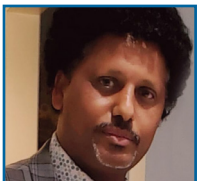
**Mo Friesen**  
Evangelical Fellowship Church (Steinbach)



**Chris Hughes**  
Abbeyle Christian Fellowship



**Ernie Koop**  
Evangelical Fellowship Church (Steinbach)



**Jember Rijato**  
Glory of Christ Evangelical Church

### Ministerial Day June 10, 2022, Steinbach Bible College (Steinbach, MB)

*Effective Congregational Planning, with Darrell Kehler (SCOPE Leadership Development)*

Every church has a life cycle, but the inevitable rise and decline is not necessarily a fixed outcome. Churches can be intentional in planning for sustained health by working cooperatively to be effective in carrying out the stated mission of the church.

Sustained health is contingent on three factors

1. The ability of the Church to clarify where it is going - Mission & Vision.
2. The ability to align their people and ministries towards the stated mission & vision.
3. The ability to mobilize the congregation towards effective ministry.



### Church life cycle



Source: theunstuckgroup.com



### Ministerial Retreat November 26-28, 2022, Wilderness Edge (Pinawa, MB)

*Singing Our Faith, with guest speaker Patrick Friesen*

The songs of the church voice the story of God in the life of the congregation. Each session took us from the celebration of creation, into the cries of the world, to the joy of salvation and brought us to the hope of eternity. It was an opportunity to consider how our worship informs our theology and works out our faith. Together we learned that: in our praise we join creation; in our lament we acknowledge pain and suffering; in our proclamation we retell the good news of Jesus; and, in our hope we invite the world to experience reconciliation.



We had 60 participants from eight of our nine regions.



## Nominations

### Vice-Moderator (1)

- Vacancy

### Board of Church Ministries (4)

- David Kruse (MacGregor)\*
- Vacancy
- Vacancy
- Vacancy

### Board of Leadership and Outreach (3)

- Abe Berg (Straffordville)\*
- Cameron McKenzie (Fort Garry)\*
- Glenn Loewen (Portage)

### Board of Missions (2)

- Gord Utz (Portage)
- Vacancy

### Board of Trustees (1)

- Frank Wall (Vanderhoof CF)

### Nominating Committee (6)

- Anna Bueckert (Bow Island)
- Sebastian Borda (Steinbach EFC)
- Darren Plett (Pleasant Valley)
- Vacancy
- Vacancy
- Vacancy

## In summary: from uncertainty to anticipation and gratitude

In 2022 we shifted from pandemic to 'post-pandemic,' where restrictions gradually lifted, and church life began to resume. Organizationally, we have become comfortable with Teams or Zoom meetings and recognize that future meetings will likely include an in-person and online hybrid element.

A year ago, we were uncertain about conference staff retirements and what the future would look like. And as new staff were hired, our uncertainty was replaced with anticipation. Anticipation of fresh faces, new ideas, new relationships and new models of working together. Uncertainty was also replaced with a profound sense of gratitude for conference leaders like Tim Dyck, who have served long and well, with humility, grace and proficiency. Gratitude for God's provision of willing servants who will lead us into the future.

Enlivened - A long tradition of 'Annual Convention' was updated with 'Festival 2022' with a renewed joy of being together again. In the absence of Abundant Springs, three regional youth celebrations fostered worship, learning and relationships. EMC Today communiques and Armchair Anabaptist podcasts illustrate fresh ways that we are facilitating information and relationships.

A new paradigm of ministry: Commissioning-Credentiaing-Ordination was the new paradigm developed for the calling, training and recognizing leadership in church, mission and conference contexts. Not only has this brought clarity and unity to our sense of developing leadership, but the rudiments course was also developed for those in the process. New international ministries and church plants illustrated well our commitment to reach others with the love of Christ.

May this creativity in our work together produce abundantly like the fruitful soil in Jesus' parable.

Abe Bergen  
EMC Moderator