

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE CONFERENCE

# Annual Report 2016



emc

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# Moderator's Message

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**G**RACE AND PEACE to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Much of my reflection on 2015 is shaped by the Global Anabaptist Profile, a survey commissioned by the MWC, involving 24 Conferences from around the world, including the EMC. While it allowed us to compare our beliefs and practices with Mennonites around the globe, it also gave us a snapshot of our own commitments and convictions. Let me reflect briefly on some of the highlights.

We value relationships and Christian community. There was a strong indication (75%) that our congregations have a clear sense of mission and vision (Fig. 2), and this correlates well with the Conference's Vision and Values initiative. If our churches have a clear vision, then the conference must also articulate a strong vision for the future. People have a strong sense of commitment to their churches (Fig. 8), and an even loyalty to the conference as to the broader Christian church. I expect that people will see an increasing value in conference ministries as the EMC vision shapes our shared identity and awareness.

The survey is instructive in our practice of ministry roles within Christian community. The people in the pews have mixed views of what are appropriate ministry roles for women and the survey demonstrates a growing embrace of women in ministry (Fig. 4). As a conference, this remains an unresolved point of discussion. Perhaps, it calls us to consider how we can be united in our ministry while we vary in our conviction. This is also true

of our views of military service (Fig. 3). As we see ourselves as part of the larger Christian community and less as a distinct faith family, our commitment to a distinctive peace stance is shifting. These issues of discipleship will require further dialogue as we seek to follow Christ in faithfulness and humility.

We value the truth. We are strongly rooted in Scripture (Fig. 5) and in our experience of salvation (Fig. 1), and this is broadly shared by Mennonites around the globe. The inspired Scriptures shape our lives in belief and in how we live out our faith. And although there is some variance in how we express our view of Christ's passion, it is core to God's plan of salvation and to how we express our faith in practical ways. A high view of Scripture and a strong embrace of Christ's salvation leads us to share generously (Fig. 9), help those in need and regularly worship with faith community (Fig. 7).

We value obedience and discipleship. The survey illustrates that we grapple deeply with the issues of our day—how to understand issues surrounding homosexuality, and understanding issues around euthanasia—while retaining a clear commitment to Scripture and the example of Christ (Fig. 6).

We value people. Our desire is for all people to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. With compassion we seek to carry the good news of salvation in Christ to people near and far. The EMC family places a high value on cross cultural ministry/missions (Fig. 59) and values evangelism and social ministries to people in need. We recognize however, that we engage in evangelism less often than our statements would articulate (Fig. 10).

Influencing culture with our lives, risking to reach others, experiencing life-changing gatherings and

Scriptural teaching are all part of how we envision advancing Christ's kingdom culture. May God fill us with His Spirit as we live out this calling on our lives and minister together.

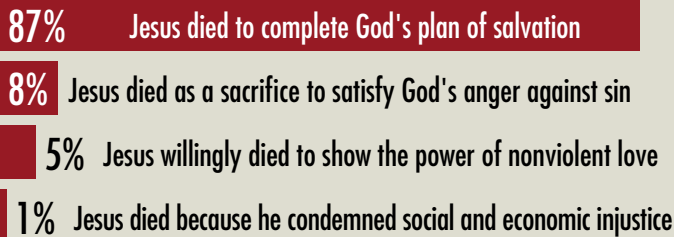
For Christ's church,  
Abe G. Bergen

For the full EMC results from the Global Anabaptist Profile, [click here](#). For some key highlights, view the following pages.

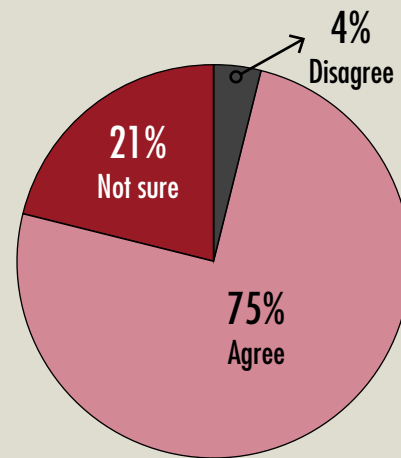


# EMC results from the Global Anabaptist Profile

**Figure 1. Beliefs about why Jesus died**



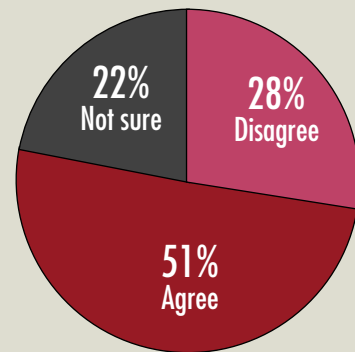
**Figure 2. My congregation has a clear sense of mission and vision**



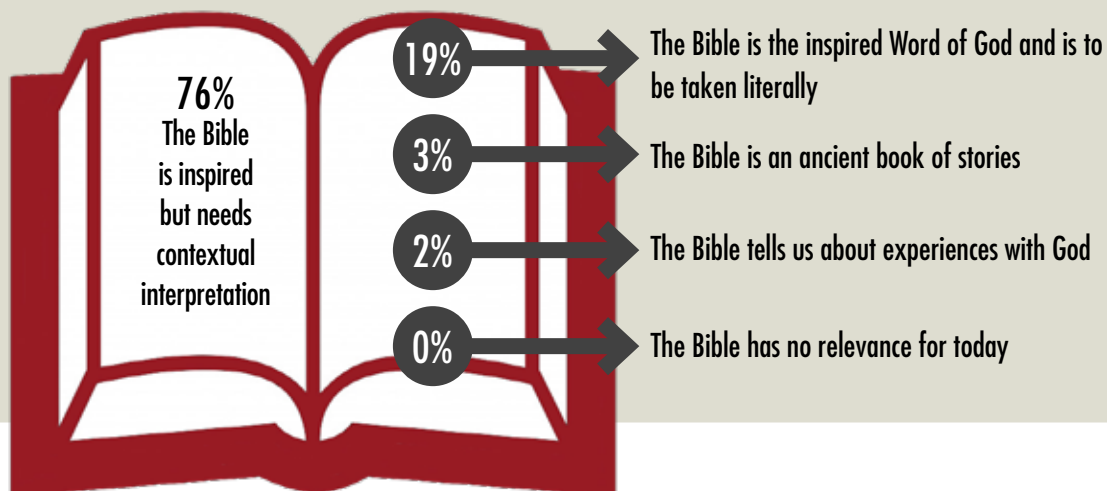
**Figure 3. If the government required military service, what would you do?**



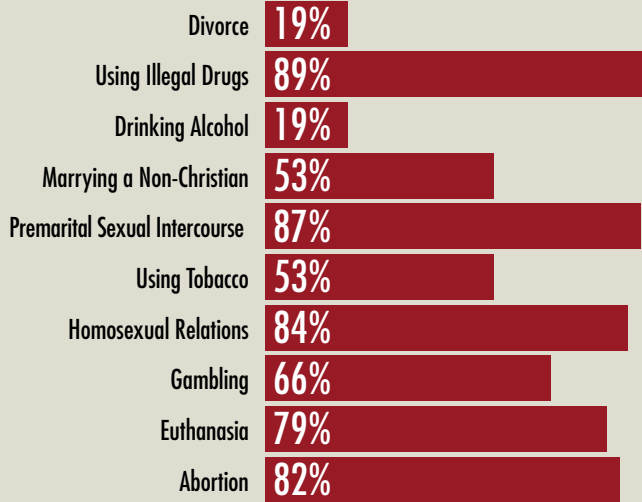
**Figure 4. My congregation allows men and women to have equal ministry roles**



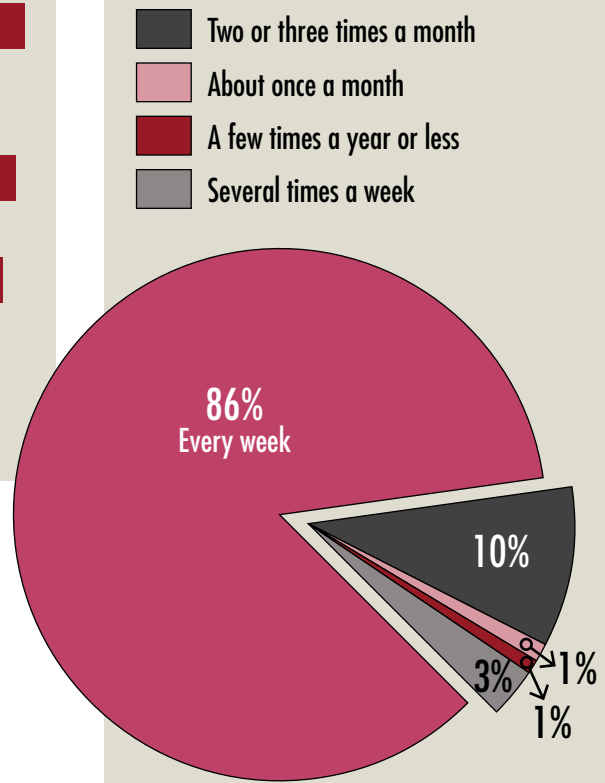
**Figure 5. Statement that best expresses belief about the Bible**



**Figure 6. Behaviour Believe it is never acceptable**



**Figure 7. Worship service attendance**



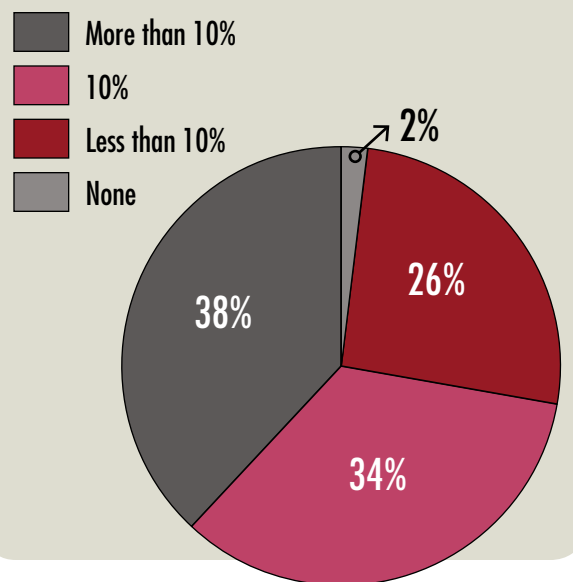
**Figure 8. Strength of commitment to the following (very strong)**



**Figure 10. Responses to questions about witness and evangelism (respondents answered "about every week")**



**Figure 9. Portion of household income given to church and charitable causes**





# LIVE DARING TO LIVE OUR LIVES WITH JESUS CHRIST AS LORD

## Living as churches

As is the case with many things in life, Saturday Night Church has seen its share of highs and lows over the past year.

Highs have included services throughout the community and lending a helping hand within the town of Landmark. Teaching that has encouraged strong, personal relationships with Christ while being aware of how He is building His kingdom here on earth as we love and share life with those around us. Celebrating the love and commitment of Milton and Gladys Fast's 60th wedding anniversary. Rejoicing with each other for prayers answered, needs met and lives changed.

We have also had our share of struggles; cancer, sickness, pain, doubt, feelings of inadequacy, personal demons and the tendency to feel that no matter how hard we try, we somehow still come up short... just to name a few.

– Saturday Night Church

This season of our church finds us with many little ones. We have been blessed to have so many young children in our midst with their laughter, play, and curiosity for life. Children add a profound richness and depth to our gatherings.

– The ConneXion

Last summer, a heavy downpour resulted in flooding in this area, calling for some extreme measures and much hard work to cope with mess. This had some side benefits as it drew the community and the church together. The church people worked hard and it appeared to enhance their reputation within the community.

– Kola EMC

## How we assist churches to live with Jesus Christ as Lord

-  Providing support through **counselling services for ministerial**.
-  Registering pastors to perform weddings.
-  Publishing and celebrating life events in *The Messenger*.
-  Connecting, learning from and encouraging each other through *The Messenger*.
-  Ministerial day in July which focused on care-giving in the local church, specifically to people with mental health issues, people who are hurting and those who are aging.
-  The Ministerial Retreat held in November focused on forgiveness and healthy relationships in the church.
-  Throughout the year, the Conference Pastor and Church Planting Coordinator have logged 112,654 km travelling to various regions to connect with pastors and church leaders face to face. Even in an electronic age, we feel these visits are important for encouragement and the building up of the church.

**Between May 1, 2015  
and April 30, 2016...**

**15**

Pastors were added to our list of clergy registered and licensed to perform marriages in their home province.

**18**

Pastors were issued temporary licenses to perform marriages in other provinces.

**The Messenger**



**approximately 3,000 homes per month  
(paper) plus 300 digital**

# REACH TAKING RISKS TO REACH MANY PEOPLE GROUPS

## EMC churches reaching out

Pray for those who are showing interest in church and the things of the Lord. It is extremely difficult for people to break with tradition.

– Abe Bueckert, Redcliff

We have had several grocery showers for single mothers in our area. One mother had just run out of food and was frantically trying to figure out how she was going to feed her two children. We showed up at the door with groceries and grocery store gift cards within a couple of hours after her food and money ran out. Another mother showed us a verse she had copied out on a piece of paper only two days prior from an Old Testament story where God provided for someone through the gifts of God's people. She was praying that the Lord would take care of her too. Then we show up, living out the story that took place a few thousand years ago. Such events have grown and shaped our faith and trust in our Lord, and we continue to seek to serve Him by serving our community.

– New Life Christian Fellowship

The Church continues to be an active part of the CMHA community in our neighborhood. We have purchased a van to pick up our friends with this particular poverty for Sunday mornings. Some of the membership and the pastor are directly involved with these friends during the week. Coffee, movies, and hockey games are some of the activities that I have attended with them.

– Grace Community Church

Children's Club concluded last spring and has resumed this October. On the first day attendance was 19; on the next Tuesday it jumped to 34 and almost overwhelmed those who made hot chocolate, handled crafts as well as the other activities. We thank God for a helper like Fe Dean who was on duty to meet children as they came, got them to hang up their coats on hangers; otherwise there would be a heap of coats and boots in the middle of the coat room. Something is going on! We really can't handle any more but thank God for the interest.

– Northern Fellowship Chapel



## Dakota Tipi: The battle and the hope

### **The ministry Portage Evangelical Church does here**

Sunday, April 17 at 2 p.m. finds us at Dakota Tipi for church again, as we have been for two years now. It's the second week at a new, more central location—the Gaming Centre—hoping it might draw a few more people. There's a much bigger battle than accessibility being fought here, though. Another hope of the believers here is that our presence, our prayers, our worship will push out the evil spirits in the same way it has at the school where we met till now! And that, as we gain ground, the “light of world” will shine into even the darkest corners and break demonic strongholds we're convinced are at the root of traumatic events such as the shootings of April 7.

### **The shooting that took place**

We know the victims—one is a daughter and the other a brother to a key member of our little church group! Both are doing miraculously well. I visited them in the hospital Friday, and both know it is a miracle they even survived the attack at all!

### **The response of the reserve, PEC**

We felt privileged to be called almost immediately that Thursday morning to go and support the families at the hospital while they wondered if the life threatening wounds could even be stabilized enough to allow moving them to Winnipeg for more specialized treatment. We felt honoured to be included in the band council meeting the next day and to be expected to contribute ideas on how to help the community deal with the trauma. The chief asked us pastors to open and close the meeting with prayer as everyone stood and bowed their heads respectfully. From that meeting, we were further invited to present alongside mental health

workers and traditional healers at a community lunch, where we introduced the church and offered our help in listening, praying, and reaching to God through Jesus for supernatural help and healing.

No one joined our worship leaders and me at the Dakota Tipi Gaming Centre this last Sunday. Our core group were all at the hospital in Winnipeg and not just because of the shootings! The chief and his family are there for a kidney transplant; so far, a very successful gift of new life from son to father! However, we did meet several more people, working or playing there, and again felt well received. Please join us in praying for spiritual breakthrough as we seek to be faithful; growing in love and building trust with the hope that many more will surrender to Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

– Les Kroeker

8

Young EMC churches and outreach ministries were in the church planting subsidy program in 2015.

3

Church planters were under salary with EMC in 2015.

1

New church plant was started in Two Hills, Alberta. The group is called Living Faith Fellowship.

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## Redcliff: John's story

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I met John when Anna and I moved to Redcliff to do a church plant. He owned a small store so I had opportunity to visit him there. I sensed he had a need, but wasn't all that open to talk about it.

John and his family were put on our prayer list but nothing much seemed to be happening. Then, one day as I was grappling with how to transport gravel to my yard, Anna suggested I forget about trying to save money and simply get it hauled in. I did, and when it arrived, it was John who delivered it! We had a good visit and he shared about his small grandson who has leukemia. Our church happened to have a thanksgiving supper that evening. He and his family attended and things started to click.

The church helped organize and host a fundraiser garage sale for his son and family. This was a very positive event. John was so excited as much-needed funds came in. Following this he and his family started to attend church regularly.

A few weeks later John and Joyce Dyck came to minister in our church. One of those evenings John and his wife came for counselling. The result

We have seen several new families coming to Emanuel. We know it is a long road of discipleship, but we are committed and glad that we have been blessed to meet new friends in 2015. The church is growing in numbers. My concern for Emanuel is to grow in maturity and become self-sustaining as the subsidy from the EMC decreases.

– Antonio Pitta

One of our goals is to help Steinbach EMC to have a growing intercultural vision. Our youth groups and Sunday morning services are gradually becoming more intercultural as we learn how to make others feel welcome.

– Carl and Lisa Loewen

was that a huge weight was taken off of John's life. He experienced forgiveness for his sins as he and his wife received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour! John experienced a freedom he so long had searched for. He told me recently that what he had been looking for was Christ.

Finally he found that he was accepted among God's people. He had decided he would give the "EMC" a chance, and if he could not find Christ there, he would go to an "English Church." We are so happy that God allowed us to be that presence where he could find Christ.

John told me recently, "I can't believe how much I've changed." I couldn't help but agree with him! Praise God!

– Submitted by Pastor Abe Bueckert  
with permission

Through the help of the community we have been able to raise funds and bring a Syrian family of seven to the Arborg community. This is still a work in progress as church and community help the family learn to live in their new environment. The process has been a life-giving endeavour to pursue—we have seen many people become part of the team working to help the family both before and after arrival.




– Matt Hardy

## Canadian church plants

Ebenezer Christian Church—Brandon  
Fort Garry University Ministry—Winnipeg  
Iglesia Cristiana Tabernacule Ebenezer—Dauphin  
Iglesia Emanuel—Calgary  
Living Faith Fellowship—Two Hills  
Many Rooms Church Community—Winnipeg  
Redcliff EMC  
Steinbach EMC—Filipino Ministry  
The ConneXion—Arborg

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### “Graduated” in 2016 from the Church Plant Subsidy Program

-  Oak Bluff Bible Church
- Grace Community Church 
-  Picture Butte Mennonite Church

## We're dreaming with...

- **Winnipeg Logos Church**—is affiliation with EMC the way forward for this church plant?
- **The Winnipeg churches**—should they start an EMC church in SE Winnipeg?
- **Picture Butte**—can they respond to the invitation of a Champion, Alta., group to minister there?
- **Emanuel church**—how can they help the Bible study group in Airdrie, Alta grow?
- **Rosenort EMC**—will the outreach in Ste. Agathe take root through the Bible study?

We continue to work with seasonal workers, but some people apply for permanent residence. We pray for more people to come to Iglesia Cristiana (Dauphin). We gather with another church close to Dauphin, and we continue to preach the Gospel.

— Oscar and Merna Hernandez

The need (to respond to the refugee crisis) became pressing half way through 2015 and many in our church were moved to respond. In Many Rooms there was a surge of momentum and willingness to contribute. Our capable committee worked hard, all necessary funds were pledged, and our Syrian refugee couple arrived February 27, 2016. We are so pleased they are welcomed into an apartment block where several church members live and minister and where there are other Arabic speakers to help ease this transition. Planning for this ministry gave a lot of our church joy. Thank God that we have a church rich in gifts of hospitality and genuine love and care for each other.

— Jen Kornelsen and Stephanie Unger

**Goal for 2015** was to investigate possibilities for church planting in London, Ont., and Oakville, Man.

- London, Ont.: Grace Community Church has worked in a London community for a number of years with street ministry, children ministry, prayer walks and more. At the end of 2015 they have largely put this ministry on the back-burner because no one was available to take leadership.
- Oakville, Man.: A group of five families were meeting in Oakville and the Portage church was considering a church plant here. However after some investigation Portage Evangelical and the Church Planting Task Force agreed that because there was no leadership in place to continue, they would not proceed.

Extending our reach and our impact together!

**124 Serving**

**102 Long-term workers**

**19 Short-term workers**

**3 Interns**

**7250 Sending**

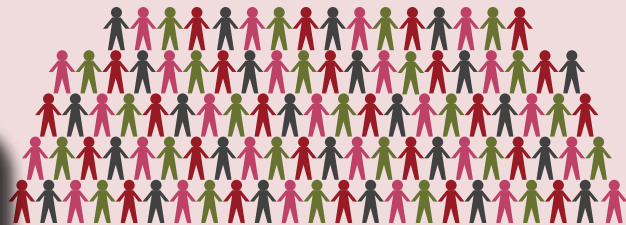
**7250 EMC church attendees**

**8 Board of Missions members**

**4 EMC missions staff (2.8 FTE)**

**Did you know that EMC Missions currently has**

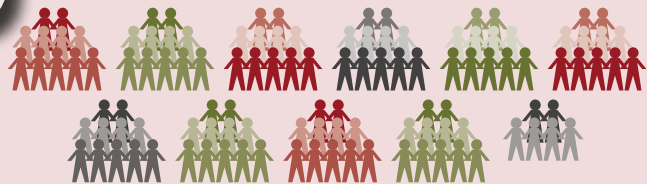
**----- 102 workers -----**



**----- in 29 countries -----**



**--- reaching 116 people groups ---**



**----- in 56 languages -----**



**3**

Ascend Interns served in Bolivia and Guadalajara.

**(May 2015 to April 2016)**

In November 2015 a prayer team of

**7**

people served in Guadalajara.

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## Ethiopia: She chooses the one true God

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As missionaries to a marginally reached people group it is a great privilege to present the Scriptures in the Gumuz language for the first time.

We could tell the people that their customs are worthless and their culture must change. Instead, we believe as we present the gospel, the Holy Spirit will speak and show them which customs bring honour to the Lord, which ones need to be adapted and which ones are harmful.

Yassi (pseudonym) is a first generation Christian who embraced the one true God. She has six daughters and two sons. Before she came to faith, she followed the Gumuz traditions and took her children to the witchdoctors when they were sick. She and her husband gave all their wealth to them: cows, goats and chickens. When two of her children died, she remembers weeping without hope.

Yassi is unusually strong in her faith and in her understanding of the Scriptures. She lives in the village of her husband and they have threatened her repeatedly for she no longer attempts to appease evil spirits or witchdoctors. All her children have survived since she came to faith. Instead of performing rituals, she prays for them and takes them to the clinic.

Two months ago, her husband was taken to court for the theft of two cows stolen many years ago.

The men demanded five cows in repayment or their eight-year-old daughter. Since their family/ clan was unwilling to help and they had no cows of their own, Yassi's husband agreed to give their daughter.

Yassi understands that her daughters have great value even though her people do not. She fought for her daughter's freedom, begging God to help and he did. Her daughter was redeemed on Easter weekend through God's mercy and the kindness of foreigners. This act of love had great impact on her husband.

In all of Yassi's troubles, God has given her a song in her heart. She puts Scripture stories and verses to song, which are then sung by women of the church and women in the villages at night. She learned early that she did not need to fear the Gumuz traditions or evil spirits because God's power is greater. She is unique as a believer because she has allowed the gospel to transform her within her culture. She no longer lives in fear but in faith.

Please pray with us that the strongholds of witchdoctors, fear, and alcoholism would be broken and that the power of the one true God would be recognized. Pray also that we will be faithful in sharing the gospel with grace and truth.

– Rolf and Angela Kruse,  
EMC Missionaries with SIM in Ethiopia





**2015 team  
(Minga Guazu, Paraguay)**

**2016 team  
(Minga Guazu, Paraguay)**

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## Paraguay: Betty's story

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The first time I met Betty almost two years ago, they had just moved to Minga Guazu. Because of her low self-esteem, she hardly looked at me but soon started to open up and trust me. When a YWAM group from Columbia came and visited her in her home, she made a decision for Christ. We had Betty and her boyfriend Pedro over for a meal and got to know them better. They were soon ready to do the marriage course, where we got to know her story.

Betty was eight years old when her mom died of cancer. Her dad was an alcoholic and didn't take responsibility for any of them. She and her siblings went to live with their oldest sister. Betty was always interested in God and kept searching to know Him more. Her family made fun of her and said religion would make her crazy. The sister who raised her, hit and abused her verbally.

In her teen years, she had many boyfriends. She was always searching for true love. At 18, she moved in with Pedro, who had a lot in common with her story and accepted her. They lived with Pedro's dad, an alcoholic, who treated her very badly. Betty fell into a deep depression and was so sick, she thought she was going to die. One night she ran with the baby in her arms onto the village street, desperately calling God for help. Pedro didn't know what to do with her. She fell and, as she lay there, felt a sound and presence on one side of her that was the devil and a soft wind and peace on the other, that was God. In front of her, she saw the feet of Jesus, who told her to go to a certain house where a lady would give her a hug (showing her God's love), and that's what happened. Slowly,

with the help of meds, she got better. She kept praying that God would send someone to help her spiritually. That's when I got to know her.

Betty has grown tremendously in her relationship with God. She often gives positive testimonies in church. Betty and I have a mother-daughter relationship and she is an encouragement to me and to many others. She is sharing her faith with others and reading God's Word and praying with her younger sister. She still struggles at times with depression, being very sensitive to problems in her family. They recently had a baby boy. Although they count themselves as belonging to the church, they'd like to get married and baptized soon.

– Revita Kroeker



For more information on EMC Missions in Paraguay, [click here](#).

## Bolivia: Living out faith with freedom

In Bolivia, EMC Missions works in partnership with the EMMC and the La Crete Berghthaler conferences in ministries legally registered under “MEM.”

Low German people live on colonies where their lives are strictly controlled by the colony system. This control includes how families provide for their daily living and how individuals practice their spiritual faith and life.

People desiring to openly express their faith in Christ while living within the colony system are often quieted and suppressed which makes living on the colony very difficult. At times, families are not permitted to buy/sell on the colony if they follow Christ outside of the colony structure.

In light of this oppression, the MEM began a land project called Hacienda Verde (Green Farm) where colony families could purchase land outside of the colony. In January 2016 the Bolivian government granted permits to clear about 1,200 acres of land on this new development. Six families initially moved onto the land and built new homesteads.

The MEM provides economic development expertise and spiritual guidance, and has provided a new school for the thirty children living with their families at Hacienda Verde. Students are being taught in both Spanish and German.

One couple became believers while living on the colony and was deeply hurt when their families rejected them. When they first moved to Hacienda Verde the husband seemed to be in a daze and did not seem to know what to do in this new environment. With the help of MEM missionaries this family has built a small house and is putting up a fence for their cattle. Within a month, this same man was walking around with his head held

high, smiling. This couple participates in Bible studies, asking questions and showing a hunger to learn more about the Lord. They

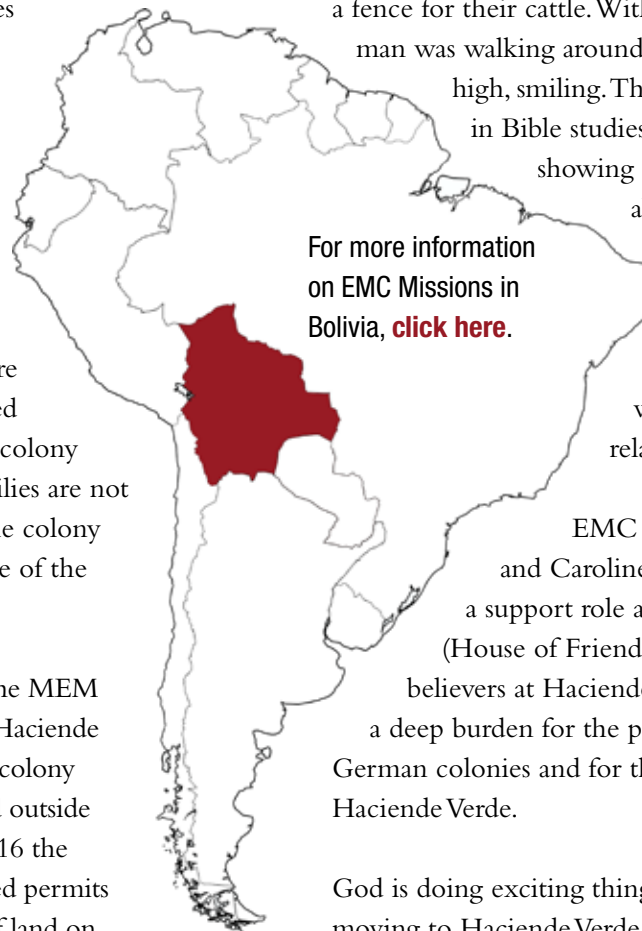
have had the courage to tell their families that they are seeking to forgive them and want to continue their relationship.

For more information on EMC Missions in Bolivia, [click here](#).

EMC missionaries Henry and Caroline Krahn are working in a support role at La Casa de Amistad (House of Friendship) to give care to believers at Hacienda Verde. The Krahns have a deep burden for the people living on the Low German colonies and for those who have moved to Hacienda Verde.

God is doing exciting things in the lives of those moving to Hacienda Verde. Believers are able to freely live out their faith and livelihood in a safe environment. Children have a chance to thrive. Pray for wisdom, courage, and energy for those working with the Hacienda Verde development, so that God will be honoured and that his kingdom will grow as a result of it.

– Brad Brandt, BOM Member



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## Oaxaca, Mexico: God speaks Zapotec!

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The kennel of dogs across the street had barely begun their regular early morning barking as we all gathered on the street. The early morning air was unusually crisp, perhaps accentuated by our nervous anticipation of the singularly special Sunday event about to unfold in the hours ahead.

Bumps and dust seem to lead the way along the logging road meandering up the mountain side. As I look down the steep embankment on my right, the sudden drop off gives way to the amazing landscape below. I imagine the trip Grace\* and Joan, two single young missionary women, made so long ago. How courageous. How crazy. How committed.

My imaginings are interrupted by the white misty clouds which seem to rise from the valley below. But in fact, it is we who have ascended above the clouds, winding our way towards the village. We make our way along the ridge, now leaving one mountain for the other, and approach the village so dear to Grace's heart, Santa Ana Yareni. The villagers have already begun to assemble in the school courtyard. The women, short, wrinkled from the weather and work, wearing various colored aprons arrive. Men with hats, others with canes, young men, and village police alike also make their way through the cobble streets, between their houses and huts, toward the awaiting festivities.

The entire village council was in attendance. Remarkable for so many reasons. As the band behind me began to play and the program got underway, I glanced over the small sea of faces in front of me. I felt like I was sitting at the shoreline of emotion, as waves rolled over me.

To view the longer version of this story, [click here](#).

It is my turn to speak, offering greetings, representing connection for Grace, SEMC, the Conference, and Canada too. Marilyn, another of Grace's translation colleagues stands at my right, translating extemporaneously as I speak, occasionally looking at my notes to ensure we are literally on the same page. Again, the waves roll. It is good to sit down.

The program now accelerates as the chairs empty, giving way to a line up on our left of villagers eager to receive their free Yareni Zapotec New Testament. God speaks Zapotec!

With the formal proceedings completed, the courtyard is quickly transformed into a banquet hall. Sitting shoulder to shoulder, gringo and villager alike, we ate our fill of homemade corn tortillas and mole (pronounced mole-eh), surprisingly, thankfully, really good.

Poses and pictures accented the ending, it was time to go, but festivals like this deserve their resonance.

Winding our way between house and hut, we found our way back to the ridge, over to the mountain on the other side, and the meandering logging road which would lead us back home. As we began our descent and the clouds lifted, the conversation turned towards the road ahead. What does the future hold for you? What will you do next?

– Garry Koop

*\*Grace Thiessen, EMC missionary with Wycliffe Bible Translators, served by translating the New Testament into Yareni Zapotec. She died two years prior to this dedication service.*

## Burkina Faso: How do you translate ‘sin’?

In April 2015 we began translating the Gospel of John, and in June a John workshop was held in Ouagadougou. At this workshop, translation teams from four different language groups from Mali and Burkina Faso learned together and made progress in translation.

One of the helpful highlights of the workshop was a discussion of how to translate the concept of “sin.” Traoré Souleymane (Solo) is an excellent Bible translator, but his translation of the word “sin” was problematic. Through discussions with the teacher and the other Bible translators we received new insights. This is a huge challenge, because the Siamou world view does not like to admit that we have done what is wrong. We are still wrestling with the best way to translate “sin” into Siamou.

A variety of people have helped us with correction and revision of John, and through this process they have heard Christ’s invitation to enter into salvation and eternal life.

In January 2016 a translation consultant at the SIL centre in Ouagadougou helped us check John chapters 1–11. Solo and I are now implementing the corrections recommended by the consultant and are preparing to use her ideas to rework chapters 12 to 21.

During the past year we have had weekly Bible studies in the village of Tin, where Solo uses our translated Scriptures to teach Bible stories. On Christmas Day 2015 and again at Easter 2016, an

encouraging number of people came to listen to the teaching of the Word of God.

The weekly Bible study group is moving forward with teaching, blessings, and prayers for all who are interested. And so Bible translation continues alongside the teaching of Old Testament Bible stories.

In these different ways the Word of God in the Siamou language is reaching many different people.

– Paul Thiessen





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## Guadalajara: Do Prayer Teams make a difference?

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Each year when a Prayer Team come to Guadalajara to pray there is this sense, “Lord teach us how to pray.”

It has been exciting to see the way God has used each team to minister in specific ways.

The first Prayer Team came and walked with us to determine in what part of the city we should start our Church Plant. We collectively discerned that the area around Parque Metropolitano was the place.

The second Team prayed for us and with us and the sense we arrived at, was that people would literally come to us asking for our involvement in their lives. We had our neighbours and acquaintances asking us to teach English to them, asking for counsel, cooking meals as they were going through health issues, and asking us to have Bible Studies with them.

The Third Prayer Team came and strongly felt that they wanted to affirm and bless us missionaries, by speaking into our lives, blessing our families and marriages. Significant decisions were made as we recognized our gift sets and opportunities.

The most recent Prayer Team, had a strong sense that God spoke through them in affirming us in the target group. The upper middle class is well

educated, career oriented, upwardly mobile, travel a lot, and are world shapers. The Prayer Team met a lot of our contacts and observed our strategies and through prayer affirmed that the audience and the approach was the right one.

The timing of the last Prayer Team coming to Guadalajara at this time was significant, as the country is feeling the uncertainties that violence brings. There are shootings, kidnappings, demonstrations and the results are an escalation of uncertainty and anxiety.

God has affirmed us. As 2 Chronicles 7:14 says, “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

The Prayer Teams coming to Guadalajara is definitely part of bring healing to the land, the journey towards renewal and revival. We have seen evidence of that.

– John Reimer

# GATHER LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCES WHEN WE GATHER

## Gathering as churches

He has shown us that if we are faithful to him and to one another by working to put differences aside and focusing on him alone our differences shrink. We have experienced God's power as we have become a truly unified church.

– High Level Christian Fellowship



**Living Faith Fellowship in Two Hills, Alberta**

We are excited to see a Young Adults group develop in our church. This group meets regularly for Bible study and other social events. This age group has been noticeably absent from our church in the past, but that is beginning to change.

– Island Gospel Fellowship

Our program committee has been busy organizing a variety of events for the church, including outdoor picnics, potlucks and recreational activities, all contributing to an atmosphere of togetherness and unity in the church. The most significant of these events was when, in August, LEMC celebrated its 25th anniversary.

– Leamington EMC

In the office we enjoy almost daily “coffee” visits by many congregants; these are always encouraging. Sunday service attendance numbers average just over 400 with fluctuations.

– La Crete Christian Fellowship

**Ebenezer Christian Church in Brandon, Manitoba**



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## Ministerial Day

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In July our ministerial members were welcomed into Ebenezer Christian Church's newly renovated facility for a day of interacting on the topic of **Caregiving in the Church**. Three presenters very capably guided our thinking: David Thiessen, Charleen Barkman, and Irma Janzen.



David focused on caring for the hurting and grieving, Charleen taught on caring for the aging, with particular focus on those dealing with dementia and Alzheimer's, and Irma talked about caring for those with mental illness.



Because these areas touch all of our lives in one way or another, this ministerial gathering generated many helpful discussions and follow up conversations.

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## Ministerial Retreat

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In November, over 75 gathered at Pinawa, Man., for our bi-annual Ministerial Retreat. Speaker David Guretzki of Briercrest Seminary focused on the theme: **Ministry of Reconciliation**, talking about the importance of forgiveness in our personal lives and the corporate life of the church. It was a meaningful and provocative topic!

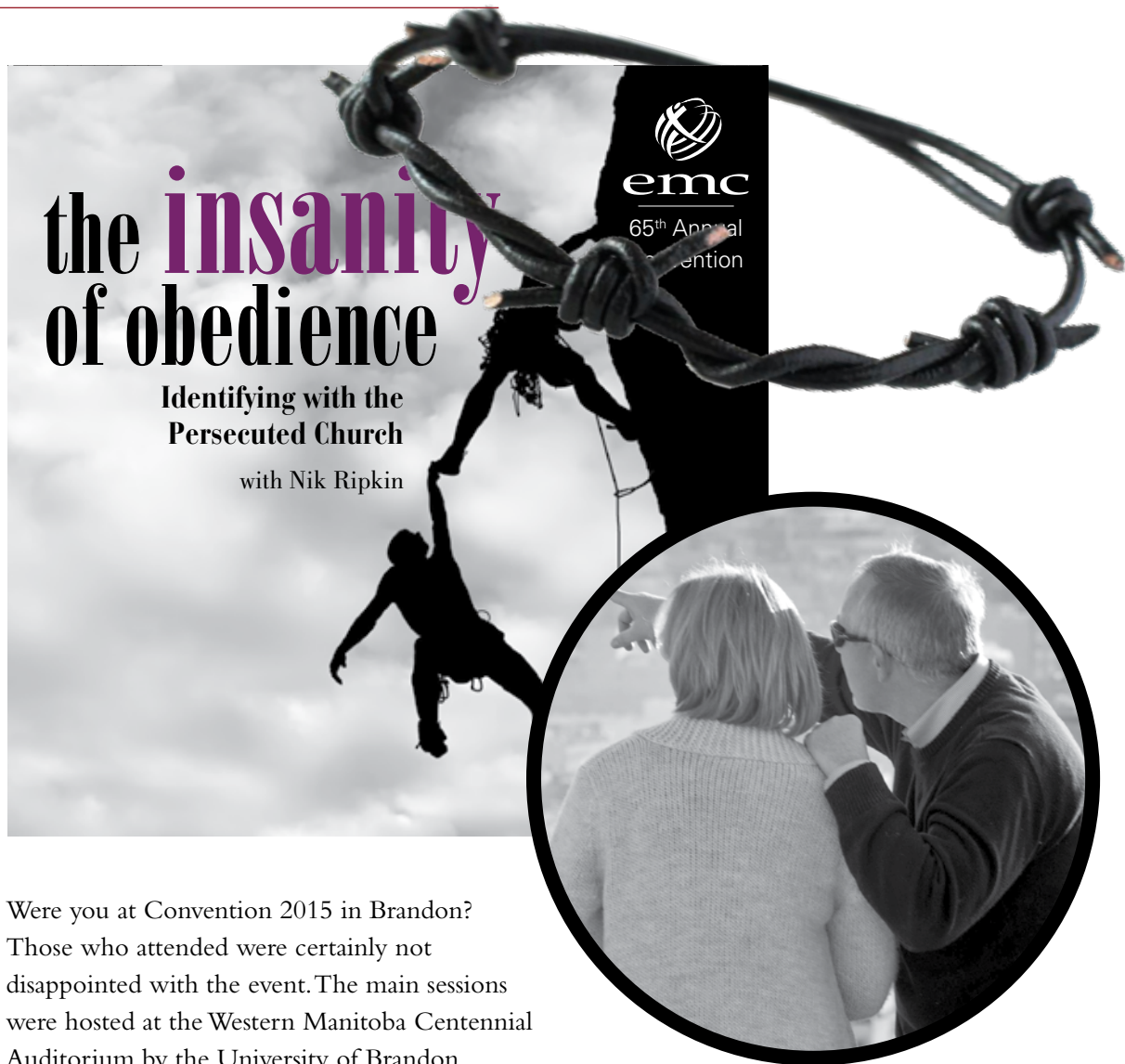


The sessions included vibrant times of worship led by Vern Knutson and Janine Parkinson, as well as a communion service led by Charles Koop.

Of course, the fellowship and interacting that happens in the retreat setting is also of vital importance to our church leaders. Wilderness Edge in Pinawa provides a beautiful setting for these connections to happen.



## Convention 2015



Were you at Convention 2015 in Brandon? Those who attended were certainly not disappointed with the event. The main sessions were hosted at the Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium by the University of Brandon.

**Nik Ripken and his wife Ruth** challenged us with his stories of how the church has responded to persecution in many different places around the world. He reminded us that according to Scripture, persecution is normal and should be expected. He also indicated that persecution increases when the church is faithfully witnessing to Jesus, and people are responding. As long as we keep silent, there is no need for

persecution. He encouraged us to align ourselves with the persecuted church by being faithful in our witness to Christ.

See more about convention on the **Convention 2015 Media** page.



## Convention 2015



“  
Convention was uplifting and seemed to have a great atmosphere of encouragement and challenges. It is always good to have our minds expanded to be made aware of the things that the other churches are dealing with. It is always good to fellowship with believers from all across the globe/country.  
”

“  
My eyes and heart have been opened to the needs of our world and the challenges that other believers have gone through and what they are still going through. Nik was a great servant of the Lord in sharing all he did.  
”





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## July Conference Council Highlights

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“

Discussion of questions from boards and the sense that the boards have a really firm finger on the pulse of what is relevant across the conference.

I appreciated that EMC gives authority to plan and implement strategies. The input from delegates is taken seriously.

Meeting people linked through Conference who share a heart for living and sharing the love of Christ.

Stories of how God is working (i.e., NTM story)

The sharing from missionaries. Phil and Ellen Koop. Glory to God!

”

[Click here](#) for the full story of the leap of faith taken by NTM Aviation.



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## Conference Council Redesign

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Our Vision statement calls for us to be renewed and challenged when we gather, and one gathering that is significant to us is our twice-annual Conference Council meetings.

The General Board commissioned a team to investigate ways to improve these meetings. The result is that Conference Council meetings have become much more interactive, with increased time allocated for discussion from delegates. The team also sought to give delegates more information ahead of the meetings, so that they can be more prepared to engage.

Another improvement is to provide delegates with a set of **take-away points** resulting from the meetings, which can be used when reporting back to the local church.

A survey circulated at the end of the Conference Council meeting indicated that delegates generally appreciated the new model of meetings.

[Click here](#) for a full report on the work of this committee.

## November Conference Council

### **Intense engagement in *The Messenger* discussion**

In 2015 *The Messenger* staff received notice that the government grant they had received was ending (and a significant amount would need to be repaid).

This prompted discussion on how to cover costs going forward which in turn raised questions about circulation. The Board of Church Ministries, who are responsible for *The Messenger* brought the issue to Conference Council in November 2015.



The BCM presented three options.

1. keep the periodical and distribution the same and cover the cost out of budget,
2. change to less expensive paper and ink but continue with home delivery, or
3. print additional copies and deliver *The Messenger* to churches in bulk.

Delegates discussed the impact of bulk distribution on readership. Would people who wanted it still receive *The Messenger*? Could we increase circulation with a different distribution method or would readership drop? Can and should churches be more involved with distribution and in engaging readers? Can we go digital? Would people read it in that form?

**Delegate decision:** the delegates chose to continue to produce *The Messenger* in the current format while the BCM considered additional, more radical options. In addition, delegates requested a strategic evaluation of the magazine.

Since the meeting, the BCM has actively worked at a review, a sub-committee has been formed to consider options, the discussion has continued at General Board, BCM and staff levels, and a survey has gone to delegates and beyond.

The BCM will present its findings in July and will hold a vote for the path *The Messenger* will take at that time. Delegates will be apprised in advance as to the nature and content of the BCM presentation.



“

Whenever I am with another EMC church group, I feel overwhelmingly supported and encouraged. Be this at TRU, Abundant Springs, the EMCup, or while attending SBC, the EMC is a unified body of believers with others in mind before self.

– Adam Friesen, SBC student

”

## EMC Young Adult Retreat 2016

### Called to Something More

On March 11–13, 2016, the third annual retreat of this kind took place at Camp Cedarwood, Manitoba. This retreat is for those in our churches who are between 18 and 25ish years old, both singles and couples. The purpose is to praise God with others who seek Him; to learn how you are “Called to Something More;” to have fun with your friends, and make some new ones; to connect with others who face similar issues to you.



Around 110 people attended and heard from main speaker Darryl Klassen at three main sessions. Guest speakers also led workshops on life in the church, our statement of faith, personality types, beliefs and priorities, spiritual disciplines, our missions fit, and finding the balance between truth and love.



The young adults of our conference need to see that not only are they an important group within our churches, but that they are a priority when it comes to being ministered to and learning from them as they take us, by God’s grace, into the middle years of this century!



[The Young Adult Retreat] was a great weekend to meet with God and learn more about him. I enjoyed meeting other young adults and spending time with friends. I am so glad I was able to go and I hope we can continue meeting every year.

– Amber Reimer



**Abundant Springs website**

On May 15-18, 2015, the 18<sup>th</sup> running of our national youth conference took place in Caronport, Sask., spanning 34 years and four decades. It is a marquee conference event that epitomizes the value of churches working together for a common purpose.

Through the years, thousands of youth across Canada have experienced a life-changing weekend at Abundant Springs, leading many towards a deeper life with Christ, a renewed commitment to discipleship, into baptism and church membership, and even several marriages!

**Discipleship**

Abundant Springs is a discipleship weekend that unapologetically focuses on providing students with loads of theological training. Sports and entertainment, as well as worship and fellowship, are all part of the weekend. But beneath the umbrella of prayers that cover the four-day event, this weekend is all about challenging students to go deeper in their walk with the Lord.

**By the Numbers**

A conservative estimate of the financial expense is around \$150,000, which includes categories such as programming, facility rental and travel. And of this total amount \$50,000 alone is just for food during the weekend. Yes, these teenagers can eat a lot.

This past year there were 405 students in attendance, and along with leaders and administration, a total of 599 people, from 28 EMC churches, came out to hear Gord Penner challenge them to live their lives for Christ.



**Abundant Springs 2015**



# TEACH TEACHING THE GOSPEL WITH A CHRIST-CENTRED APPROACH



The Interlake EMC Ministerial hosted a seminar with Cameron MacKenzie on November 7. He brought three sessions on “Discipleship in A Digital Age” related to social media and its use as Christians. Cameron encouraged and challenged the region to be diligent and proactive in our use of social media as it affects personal testimony and discipleship.

– Riverton Gospel Chapel

“

This spring we went through a four part series on “Living and Dying Well,” addressing this topic in a way that a funeral setting doesn’t allow. We talked about the fears we have of death, how thinking about our death helps us to live wisely making the most of our days right now, and giving us hope in the face of our own death and the death of those we love. We were challenged with how to minister to those dying and grieving.

– Prairie Rose

”

This past winter our Leadership team sensed strongly that God was calling us to lead our church toward a more active life of listening to God, and so we invited John Neufeld of Steinbach/Grunthal to come and speak to us on a Sunday morning and then for four mid-week sessions on the topic of “Hearing God in our Everyday Lives.”

– Pleasant Valley

David Overholt from Church on the Rock in Hamilton presented on the topics of being an effective teacher and evangelism. The teaching fit very well with our vision of Being a 1st Century Disciple in a 21st Century World.

– Mount Salem



EMC participates in sponsoring and planning the annual SBC Leadership Conference.

This March EMC leaders and anyone else interested in the topic heard from Dr. Preston Sprinkle,

author of the book *Fight*. He explored our Christian calling to live a life of non-violence in today’s world. It is important to engage in this challenging conversation.



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## What we believe! It matters.

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### **Theodidaktos** | [Download issues here](#)

The EMC possesses an apt venue for discussing the deep things of God and how they impact our world: *Theodidaktos: Journal for EMC theology and education*. Our own writers, with occasional guest writers, are encouraged to submit their essays for the benefit of all our thoughtful readers. *Theo* inspires our leaders to pursue truth.

– Dr. Darryl G. Klassen, editor

### **Living in God's Kingdom: Christian Life book rewrite** |

#### [Purchase your copy here](#)

What does it mean to follow Christ as part of his Church? *Living in God's Kingdom*, a six- or 12-lesson guide is a new ministry help for pastors and youth pastors. It is a rewrite of the Christian Life book and was launched March 2016. It is suitable for study in many settings, particularly for baptism, membership and discipleship classes.

### **Christian Education Update** | [Download yours here](#)

The Christian Education Update is published twice yearly to assist pastors, Sunday School teachers, and youth leaders in their educating within congregations. Multiple copies are sent to each congregation to point leaders to online and print resources, to give suggestions in programming and on worship practices, and to inform on licensing matters. It connects churches with resource people, institutions, and materials.

– Terry M. Smith, Executive Secretary

### **Examination committee interviews between May 1, 2015 and April 30, 2016:**

#### *Ministers:*

- Paul and Kaylee Walker
- Brian and Lisa McGuffin
- Jason Dueck
- Chris (and Diane) Loewen
- Andy and Stephanie Woodworth
- Peter and Justine Rempel
- Gavin and Judy Michaels
- Michael Vanderzwaag
- Ed and Pauline Klassen
- Ryan and Uma Rear
- Garth and Carly Koop

#### *Deacons:*

- Pete and Lisa Reddekopp
- Bernie and Cheryl Friesen
- Brad and Colleen Kornelsen
- Cam and Pam Cornelsen
- Danny and Justina Penner

**3**

EMC Ministers were ordained.

### **Statement of Faith review**

This year marks the culmination of a two-year process of reviewing and revising our conference Statement of Faith. The goal of the process is to have a confession of faith that is dearly owned by our churches and that clearly serves to inform outsiders about what we see as the essentials of the good news. The hard work of thinking through each line of the statement together is a spiritually demanding task that deepens our understanding of what it means to be us, the EMC, and thus serves to fulfill the purpose of the statement of faith.

The Statement of Faith Review Team worked diligently to compile a draft statement that will be the subject of our Ministerial Day, July 1 in Steinbach, Manitoba. Please plan on joining that discussion!

**1994** The last time the EMC statement of faith was revised.

**34** The number of pages (8.5x14, single spaced) of church responses compiled, sifted and analysed by the Review Team.

## Student support, education and internships

### 2015 2016

<b>15</b>	Students received \$20,760 towards ministry studies through the BLO Leadership Development Scholarship	Leadership Development Scholarship \$6,000 (down from \$12,000 in 2015)
<b>28</b>	SBC Students received a total of \$10,000 in student assistance from EMC through the BCM.	Student Assistance for SBC students \$4,250 (down from \$10,000 in 2015)
<b>600</b>	Students and youth leaders attended Abundant Springs	Abundant Springs and TRU \$3,000 (down from \$7,240 in 2015)
<b>50</b>	Students interacted with Conference Youth Pastor Gerald Reimer	Student Ministries \$1,500 (up from \$500 in 2015)
<b>89</b>	SBC Students went on a MissionX trip, a program supported in part by EMC.	MissionX support (SBC mission Exposure) \$10,000
<b>1</b>	University Chaplain received financial support from EMC in partnership with EMMC and MC Manitoba.	University of Manitoba Chaplaincy support \$3,675
<b>3</b>	Young adults were in EMC's Ascend internship program in 2015 for a total of 11 months served.	Ascend Internships (now part of missions budget)
<b>100</b>	Young adults gathered for the second annual YA retreat	Young Adult Retreat funded primarily by attendees with \$1,000 from EMC.

The “**Menno Office**” at the University of Manitoba, is a place of hospitality and wonder, supported by the EMC, found in Room 102E of the University Centre. It attracts students from across the street and around the world.

– Mark von Kampen, chaplain



## Steinbach Bible College

[Click here](#) to see the Steinbach Bible College Annual Report.

### Student Assistance Program

You have no idea how much this means to me.

Even though I know it's coming, because I don't know when you will show up, it's such a wonderful surprise.

Another student chimes in wishing they too were part of the EMC.

– Responses from SBC students

I trust many more of our students will continue to choose our fantastic college.

– Gerald D. Reimer,  
Conference Youth Minister



## PROVIDENCE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY — EST. 1972 —

On December 9, 2014, the EMC's General Board and Providence Theological Seminary signed a letter of understanding toward developing an Anabaptist Studies Track. The first course, on Radical Reformation: History, Thought, and Practice, was taught on May 18–22, 2015, by Layton Friesen, an EMC minister. Ten people, two of whom are EMC, studied in 2015. The course was offered again May 16–20, 2016.

EMC university, college and seminary students as well as ministers need to understand and appreciate Evangelical Anabaptism as a stream of faithfulness and core of discipleship. At Providence Theological Seminary with its Anabaptist Studies Track students will be challenged to consider these Christ-centred implications as they affect our churches.

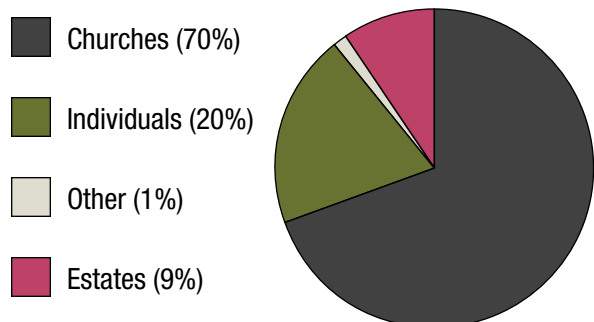
– Dr. Stan Hamm, EMC Minister  
and PTS Academic Dean



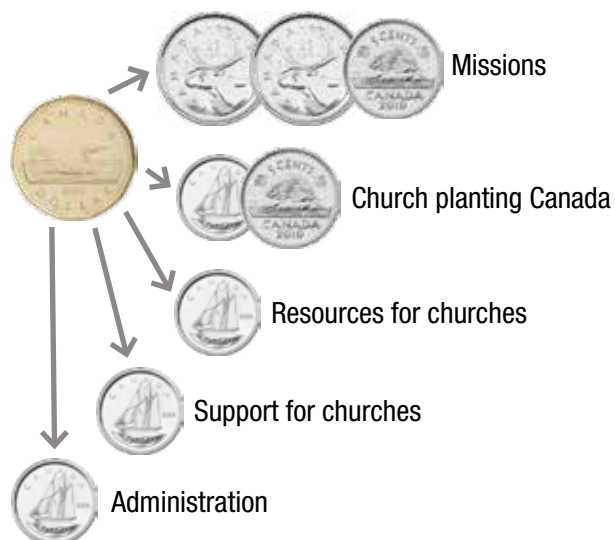
EMC has ongoing input into the direction of **Canadian Mennonite University's Graduate School of Theology and Ministry (GSTM)**. We have two representatives (Conference Pastor and one other) at the GSTM's Advisory Council which meets three times a year in Winnipeg. The GSTM has students from a wide variety of backgrounds, and offers Master of Arts degrees in both Christian Ministry and Theological Studies, as well as a Certificate in Christian Studies.

# Financial Report 2015

## Where does the money for the EMC budget come from?



## How is EMC budget money spent?



### STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES December 31, 2015

	2015 Actual Budget Fund	2015 Budget	2015 Actual All Other Funds	2015 Total All Funds	2014 Total All Funds
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Donations	1,726,731	1,890,000	561,162	2,287,893	2,347,649
Interest Income	24,040	20,000	38,984	63,024	47,089
Other Receipts	4,732	50,000	197,434	202,166	125,183
	<u>1,755,503</u>	<u>1,960,000</u>	<u>797,580</u>	<u>2,553,083</u>	<u>2,519,921</u>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>					
Amortization			4,748	4,748	4,951
Board of Missions	1,136,233	1,160,000	368,359	1,504,592	1,512,704
Board of Church Ministries	243,615	211,000	140,885	384,500	221,817
Board of Trustees	218,861	206,000	2,583	221,444	221,149
General Board	52,093	40,000	22,529	74,622	63,646
Board of Leadership and Outreach	514,950	503,000	87,658	602,608	549,006
	<u>2,165,752</u>	<u>2,120,000</u>	<u>626,762</u>	<u>2,792,514</u>	<u>2,573,273</u>
Foreign exchange gain	-17,077		44,419	27,342	15,505
Excess of receipts over disbursements	-410,249		170,818	-239,431	-53,352
Transfers	177,171	160,000	-177,171	0	0
Fund Balances, beginning of year	230,306		2,696,861	2,927,167	2,965,014
Fund Balances, end of year	<u>-19,849</u>		<u>2,734,927</u>	<u>2,715,078</u>	<u>2,927,167</u>

# Financial Report 2015

## An Honourable Trust

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul praises the congregation for their desire to give to the Lord's work. Many sermons have referred to Paul's words in chapter 9 to encourage believers to give generously, faithfully and joyfully. However, in the preceding verses, Paul talks about the responsibility that he and his coworkers sense towards those who give. He speaks about the need to treat the

financial gifts carefully and without criticism, so that everyone will see that they are honourable (2 Cor. 8:20–21).

In the same spirit, the Board of Trustees desires to carefully manage the generous gifts that are received for the ministry of the EMC. This is why the Trustees show the source of funds, how funds

are spent, and ensure that the finances are audited each year. This is also why the Trustees worked together with all boards to adjust the budget for 2016 after the shortfall in 2015. They want to give careful and considerate oversight of the all the funds received.

Churches and individual donors continue to give generously to the ministry of EMC, and the Trustees take seriously the mandate to manage the ministry within the funds that are provided. On Business has conducted the audit for 2015. If you have any questions about the year-end, the 2016 budget, or would like to have a copy of the audited financial statements, please contact the national office for more information. We want to earn and keep your trust!

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION December 31, 2015

	-----2015-----			2014
	<u>Budget Fund</u>	<u>All Other Funds</u>	<u>Total All Funds</u>	<u>Total All Funds</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash	-17,164	1,716,148	1,698,984	2,427,173
Donations Receivable	140,470	26,341	166,811	205,781
Accounts Receivable	4,053	0	4,053	3,451
Prepaid Expenses	1,446	3,754	5,200	
<b>Investments</b>				
Accrued Interest	2,371	13,437	15,808	
Term Deposits	91,673	519,482	611,155	
Vehicle Loans	0	59,166	59,166	23,174
Building Loans	0	419,041	419,041	209,117
<b>Capital Assets</b>	0	10,838	10,838	237,437
	<u>222,849</u>	<u>2,768,207</u>	<u>2,991,056</u>	<u>3,106,133</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Payables & Liabilities	106,186	18,780	124,966	5,652
Relocation Fund	136,512	0	136,512	121,813
Loans Payable	0	14,500	14,500	14,500
Pension Reserve	0	0	0	7,187
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>242,698</u>	<u>33,280</u>	<u>275,978</u>	<u>149,152</u>
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>				
Invested in Capital Assets	0	10,838	10,838	237,437
Externally Restricted	0	1,980,100	1,980,100	1,852,989
Internally Restricted	0	743,989	743,989	637,824
Unrestricted Budget Reserve	311,333	0	311,333	352,000
Unrestricted	-331,182	0	-331,182	-123,269
<b>Total Fund Balances</b>	<u>-19,849</u>	<u>2,734,927</u>	<u>2,715,078</u>	<u>2,956,981</u>
	<u>222,849</u>	<u>2,768,207</u>	<u>2,991,056</u>	<u>3,106,133</u>

# Strategically Planning for the Future

**2010**

**July 2010** – General Board approves the proposal to initiate a Strategic Planning process.

**November 2010** – A Strategic Planning Task Force is formed to give overall direction and guidance to the planning process.

Philippians 1:27 “I will know that you are standing together with one spirit and one purpose, fighting together for the faith, which is the Good News.”

Going through a strategic planning process in our Conference has been an exercise in “togetherness”. We have prayed together, planned together, discussed with each other, and agreed together on a course of action for our Conference of churches. Whether it is in determining our Core Values, or discovering God’s Vision for our preferred future, the discussions have

**2011**

**March 2011** – The Task Force hosts a meeting of all boards to kick off the Strategic Planning process. The boards provide initial response to the core values of the Conference.

**Spring and Fall 2011** – The Task Force visits churches across the country receiving input and direction into Core Values.

**November 2011** – Initial list of Core Values is presented to Conference Council for discussion and feedback.

**Fall 2011** – The Task Force analyzes the responses from churches and develops a summarized list of Core Values.

taken place in community. We have done this work together because we believe that our values and vision will guide us as we fight for the faith, and as we share the good news together, as Paul expressed in his letter to the Philippians.

The chart on this page gives a snapshot of the many activities that were a part of this strategic planning process. Our vision and values are now being translated into action, and give us overall direction for future decisions. Together, we are advancing into the future.

**2012**

**February 2012** – All Boards meet in Steinbach to pray and discern God’s direction for a Vision for our Conference.

**Spring 2012** – A visioning subcommittee is formed from the All Boards meeting in February and continues the development of the Vision Statement.

**July 2012** – An initial Vision statement is presented for discussion and response at Convention.

**Fall 2012** – The Task Force analyzes input and develops a revised Vision Statement.



## Strategically Planning for the Future

**2013**

**Spring 2013** – Churches provide valuable feedback into the revised Vision Statement.

**July 2013** – Conference Council approves both Core Values and Vision Statement at meeting in La Crete.

**November 2013** – Appreciative Inquiry model is used at Conference Council to receive input into implementation of Strategic Plan.

**2014**

**Winter 2014** – Conference staff and Task Force develop document describing initial steps towards implementation of Vision.

**Spring 2014** – A comprehensive set of projects is developed arising from the action plans identified above. The General Board will administer these projects.

**November 2014** – All boards meet in Kleefeld to plan next steps in implementation of Vision. The plan for moving from strategy to action is presented to Conference Council.

**2015**

**November 2015** – All boards modify their statements of objectives to incorporate the action plans into their yearly planning cycles.

**2016**

**November 2016** – Vision and Values are highlighted at the annual EMC Convention.

### EMC Vision Statement

The EMC is a movement of people advancing Christ's kingdom culture as we live, reach, gather and teach.

We envision...

Influencing our culture as we dare to **live** our lives with Jesus Christ as Lord.

Taking risks to **reach** many people groups in urban centres, locally and abroad.

Life-changing experiences when we **gather** as God challenges, renews and fills us with his Spirit.

**Teaching** the gospel with a Christ-centred approach to Scripture, affirming Anabaptist convictions.

# EMC Board Nominations

## General Board

### Staff

Tim Dyck, General Secretary  
Erica Fehr, Administrative Assistant

### Board Members

Abe Bergen, Moderator, Kleefeld (2015)  
Darren Plett, Vice-Moderator, Rosenort (2016)

### Regional Representatives

#1 Peter Janzen, Hillside  
#2 Chris Hughes, Abbeydale  
#3  
#4 Glenn Loewen, Portage  
#5 Henry Friesen, The ConneXion  
#6 Brian McGuffin  
#7 Troy Selley, Oak Bluff  
#8 Barry Plett, Blumenort  
#9 Lowell Froese, Leamington

### Board Chairs

Russell Doerksen, Fort Garry (BCM)  
Peter Doerksen, Vanderhoof (BLO)  
Fred Buhler, Pineridge (BOM)  
Allister Penner, Fort Garry (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

### Vice-moderator to be elected

**Darren Plett**, Box 41, Rosenort, MB R0G 1W0 (Pleasant Valley EMC)

Darren is currently serving as Vice-moderator. He has served as chair of the Church Planting Task Force and the BLO. He enjoys the blessing he receives when visiting a variety of churches in the role of speaker/teacher or mediator/consultant. He also serves as chair of the Rosenort Rec District Board and as volunteer coordinator for their local recreation trail development and construction. He is happily married to his best friend and soul-mate Pearl. They have five grown children, including one son-in-law, and have recently entered the world of grandparenting.

**Note:** *Darren Plett is committed to serving a one-year term only.*

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# Board of Church Ministries

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### Staff

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

### Board Members

Kimberly Muehling, Fort Garry (2018)  
Russell Doerksen, Fort Garry (2017)  
Cyndy Warkentin, Saturday Night (2017)  
Jessica Wichers, Anola (2017)  
Kevin Wiebe, New Life (2017)  
Henry Friesen, The ConneXion (2016)  
Wes Kroeker, EFC Steinbach (2016)

### 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

## 2 to be elected

**Heidi Dirks**, 204-797-5883, heidi\_dirks@hotmail.com (Braeside EMC)

Heidi has served in leadership at St. Vital EMC and now attends and participates at Braeside EMC. She has a Bachelor of Education degree, and has taught high school. She has also served at Abundant Springs. Heidi completed a Master of Arts degree in Counselling, and in her work as a therapist she assists youth and families. Her degrees in Education and Counselling, and her interest and concern for education and youth would be a great asset on this board. She is recommended by her church for conference involvement.

**Kyle Dueck**, 204-364-2476, kyledueck1835@gmail.com (Morweena EMC)

Kyle attends the Morweena EMC church. His involvement in the church includes preaching, chairing church services and occasionally teaching Sunday School classes. He works at Morweena Christian School as the Grade 7 and 8 teacher. His education includes a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Studies with a focus area in Bible-Theology from Steinbach Bible College.

## EMC Board Nominations

# Board of Leadership and Outreach

### Staff

Ward Parkinson, Conference Pastor  
Charles Koop, Canadian Church Planting  
Coordinator  
Erica Fehr, Administrative Assistant

### Board Members

Bryon Bezanson, Cornerstore (2018)  
Albert Loewen, Mount Salem (2018)  
Ralph Unger, St. Vital (2018)  
Peter Doerksen, Vanderhoof (2017)  
Earl Unger, Stony Brook (2017)  
Glenn Plett, Morweena (2016)  
Keith Hillier, Steinbach EMC (2016)  
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.*

**Carlos Hernandez**, 44 Silverado Skies Lane SW, Calgary, AB T2X 0K3, 403-560-8107, lcampeon75@hotmail.com (Iglesia Emanuel)

Carlos is originally from Guatemala and has been living in Canada for more than 30 years. He has always congregated in an immigrant Church. He was involved in church planting as a tent maker in Winnipeg in another denomination and understands the dynamics of church and culture as well as immigrants. He moved to Calgary several years ago and has been actively contributing in Iglesia Emanuel as a deacon and helping with preaching.

**Keith Hillier**, 10 Carillon Way, Steinbach, R5G 0W9, 204-480-9733, keith.hillier@prov.ca (Steinbach EMC)

Keith has pastored for more than ten years. His passions are outreach and leadership investment. It is this passion for investing in emerging leaders that has lead him to

his current venture. After teaching at Providence for four years and completing a doctorate in leadership, he is in the process of opening North Central College which will give the same opportunity for Christian Education to the College Student that the University student currently enjoys. In his free time he enjoys sports and spending time with his wife and three children.

**Brian McGuffin**, 56 Sunburst Cres, Rosenort, MB R0G 1W0, 204-746-3376, pastormcguffin@gmail.com (Rosenort Fellowship)

Brian has served on various church boards such as leadership, deacons and worship. He organized a two-day leadership retreat. Brian is the Pastor of the Rosenort Fellowship church. He also serves as the chair of the Region six pastor's group and is the Region six representative on the General Board.



# EMC Board Nominations

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## Board of Missions

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### Staff

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

### Board Members

Len Barkman, Heartland (2018)  
Fred Buhler, Pineridge (2018)  
Brad Brandt, Blumenort (2018)  
Alvira Friesen, Rosenort EMC (2017)  
Abe E. Klassen, Taber (2017)  
Beth Koehler, Steinbach EMC (2016)  
Sid Reimer, Fort Garry EMC (2016)  
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.**

## 3 to be elected

**John Bueckert**, 9309 - 62 Ave, Grande Prairie, AB T8W 2E7, 780-512-6514, jmbue@telus.net (Westpointe)

John is more than qualified to serve in this position—he serves faithfully within his local church. He teaches a new members class and has served as elder and as moderator

and has done an excellent job. He has also served on the Board of Missions in the past and has served both the church and the conference well in that capacity.

**Beth Koehler**, 25 Coral Cres, Steinbach, MB R5G 2C9, 204-326-4376, beth.y.koehler@gmail.com, (Steinbach EMC)

Beth Koehler has more than 20 years of experience as a member of Wycliffe Bible Translators, serving in DRC and Kenya. She has served on various ministry boards and committees, including the SIL Africa Area Training Board, Steinbach EMC missions committee and the Board of Missions.

**Tricia Reimer**, 184 Settler's Trail, Lorette, MB R0A 0Y0, 204-878-9461, btreimer@mymts.net (Prairie Grove)

Tricia currently serves as Member-at-Large on the Board of Missions. 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 many varying roles in her church including local outreach. She also serves the community as director of community piano masterclass and volunteers at local piano/music festivals and in schools.

**Luis Diez**, 11-175 Manora Place NE, Calgary, AB T2A 5P7, 403-248-0143, lj10t@yahoo.com.mx (Iglesia Emanuel)

Luis understands the Latin-American culture very well and has worked alongside people from several nations that compose Iglesia Emanuel. He was born in Mexico, and came to Canada with his family several years ago. He has experience living in two cultures. Luis has been actively involved in the formation of Iglesia Emanuel from its beginning in 2010, and has been on the board since 2012.

(continued next page)

# EMC Board Nominations

(continued from previous page)

**Sidney B. Reimer**, Lot 46 Perrault Rd, Winnipeg, MB R3V 1L5 (Fort Garry)

Sid Reimer is a founding member of an insurance brokerage in Winnipeg. He is also a founding member of FGEMC and has served on most of its boards. He has served as a delegate and is currently a member of EMC Project

Builders and the Nominating Committee. He has served as a member and chair of the Mennonite Foundation of Canada board. He has a passion for missions and most recently has become passionate about “vacationing with a purpose”(combining vacation and missions).

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## Board of Trustees

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### Staff

Tim Dyck, General Secretary  
Wannetta Fast, Accountant  
Diana Peters, Administrative Assistant

### Board Members

Jake Elias, La Crete (2018)  
Harold Reimer, Morweena (2017)  
Gordon Reimer, Heartland (2017)  
Allister Penner, Fort Garry (2016)  
Tony Hiebert, Ridgewood (2015)

### 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

**Ruth Penner**, 48 Newcombe Cres, Winnipeg, MB R2J 3T6, 204-255-8062, rrpenn@shaw.ca (Aberdeen EMC)

Ruth, along with her husband Ron, has been in church leadership for many years in the EM Conference as well as four years with Mennonite Church USA. She is involved in running a farm with Ron, where she does the books. These experiences would help her contribute well to the decisions that the Board of Trustees needs to make. She is well read, knowledgeable, and compassionate. Ruth has nine grandchildren. She is at present a member of the executive committee at Aberdeen EMC. This committee's job is to

see to the effective functioning of the church, including the finances. She participates as a worship leader in her church and is a friendly face Sunday mornings.

**Kurt Friesen**, Box 68, Kleefeld, MB R0A 0V0, 204-392-3931, gofish1997@gmail.com (Kleefeld)

Kurt has a grasp of financial skills through both his work and side-business. As a realtor he possesses the gifts to walk his clients through mortgages and related financial requirements of buying a home. Kurt's side-business, Smokin' Prairie BBQ is a catering business requiring financial acumen. Kurt is articulate and can make his ideas known to others. Kurt and his wife Denise have served Kleefeld EMC on the Nominating Committee, in teaching, and have been ready to volunteer when a need is expressed.

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## Nominating Committee

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### Nominating Committee Members

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)

Peter Enns, Wymark EMC (2016)

Pete Goertzen, New Life (2016)

Alvin B. Plett, Heartland (2016)

### Responsibilities of the Nominating Committee

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

## 4 to be elected

**Peter Enns**, Box 2, Site 2, RR 1, Wymark, SK S0N 2Y0, peterenns.ntmc@gmail.com (Wymark)

Peter has served in leadership with New Tribes Mission as well as in coordinating mobilization for many years. He also taught at Millar College of the Bible for ten years. Peter and his wife Linda have travelled extensively overseas visiting NTM fields. They minister across Canada, speaking at mission conferences, youth groups and Christian schools.

**Alvin B. Plett**, Box 37, RR 1, Landmark, MB R0A 0X0 (Heartland)

Alvin currently serves on the Board of Leadership and Outreach and serves on the Nominating Committee. He has been on the EMC Project Builders executive for many years. Alvin and his wife Katherine have spent time in Bolivia working with Old Colony Mennonites under Power to Change. He is a dairy farmer.

**Jake Dick**, 604 Mersea Rd 8, RR 5, Leamington ON N8H 3V8, 519-322-1813, jakenanc@mnsi.net (Leamington)

Jake is a member of LEMC, where he serves as a deacon and on the church council. He has a lot of experience in church leadership, and serving the church community. Jake has been part of convention numerous times as a delegate and has a deep passion for the Conference and its mission. In the Leamington Community he is active in looking out for people in need and serves very effectively in meeting many physical and spiritual needs

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Those who have ears to hear...



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