

Minutes of Assembly 2013

Worship Service

Friday, March 1, 2013, 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Steinbach MB Church

Welcome

Walter Fast, Pastor of Steinbach MB Church

Introductions and Prayer

Elton DaSilva, Executive Director of MB Church of Manitoba

Worship

Led by CMU Wholly Jazz

Sweet, Sweet Spirit – Wholly Jazz

Col. 1:3-6 and Prayer – Cheryl Pauls, CMU President

Singing Together:

Holy is the Lord

Come, O Fount of Every Blessing

The Lord's my Shepherd – Wholly Jazz

2 Cor. 5:17-21 – Andrew Dyck, MBBS Assistant Professor

His Eye is on the Sparrow – CMU Wholly Jazz

Witnesses – Amy Beckwith, David Thiessen, CMU students

Singing Together:

There is a Redeemer

Open the Eyes of my Heart, Lord

Message: The Ultimate Good Samaritan

Victor Neufeld, Pastor of North Kildonan MB Church

Summary: Luke 10:30-37: The Good News is often relegated to dedicated evangelistic sermons, or perhaps a brief mention at the end of the standard sermon, just in case there might be some unbelievers listening in. The Good News should in fact be the explicit foundation of every sermon. Ethical preaching that isn't grounded in the specific proclamation of the Gospel is anything but Good News, which makes it something else entirely.

Prayer for New Pastors

Keith Poysti, Conference Pastor

New Pastors in 2012/2013:

Geoff (Kelly) Unrau – Boissevain MB Church; Steve Buhler – Boissevain MB Church; Ricardo (Rosa) Martinez – Richmond Park MB Church, Brandon; Brian (Charla) Cox – Richmond Park MB Church, Brandon; Jedidiah (Deanna) Carpentier – Friends Community Church, Carman; David (April) Gibson – Lakeview Community Church, Killarney; Arisnel (Syvelie) Mesidor – Eglise Communautaire de la

Riviere Rouge; Sieg (Teenie) Wall – Elmwood MB Church; Julie (Paul) Doerksen – Fort Garry MB Church; Les (Marilyn) Riediger – Mclvor Avenue MB Church; Linda (Steven) Boschmann – Mclvor Avenue MB Church; Berhe Haile (Regeat Kefle) – Philadelphia Eritrean Church; George (Carla) Toews – Portage Avenue Church; Andy Rapko – Salem Community Bible Church.

The Lord's Table

Keith Poysti

Walter Fast

Worship

Led by CMU Wholly Jazz:

Eat this Bread

Bless the Lord

Rock of Ages

O Healing River

Jesus, Remember Me

Closing Announcements

Elton DaSilva

Benediction

Walter Fast

Assembly 2013 Session

Saturday, March 2, 2013, 9:00 am – 3:30 pm

Steinbach MB Church

Welcome

9:00 am Harold Froese, Conference Moderator, welcomed delegates and guests to Assembly 2013. He thanked the Steinbach MB Church for hosting this Assembly and opened with prayer.

Worship in song

Led by the Steinbach MB Church worship team

Bless the Lord, oh my soul.

A mighty fortress is our God. A sacred refuge is your name.

Elton DaSilva, Conference Executive Director, introduced speaker Brian Cooper, Associate Dean and Assistant Professor of Theology at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary Canada, and led in prayer.

Living for the Least, the Last, and the Lost

Brian Cooper, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

Summary: The Gospel is meant to bring transformation, not merely information. The transformative nature of the Gospel is evident in the way the church reaches into the community it is seeking to change. We are challenged to exegete our communities and engage needs in order to build relationships that lead to gospel transformation.

Panel discussion: The Gospel in your Context

Led by David Balzer

Roger Thiessen, Pastor of **FaithWorks**, shared that his church has helped a Sudanese refugee family living in Uganda with food, housing, and medical costs. Recently the church partnered with MCC's Global Family Program to provide education for these children. Another story focused on a child at FaithWorks who told the Christmas story of Jesus to students at school who, in turn, shared it at home. This led to one couple coming to FaithWorks to read and discuss the Bible in a small group.

Ruth Schellenberg, Children's Ministries Pastor at **Fort Garry MB Church**, affirmed that children are our future and also our present. Children are fully human and still developing. For children to grow in faith and to be transformed by the gospel, they need to experience it as their own story. The church provides spaces for children to wonder together and ask questions.

Phillip Vallely, Pastor of **Winkler MB Church**, noted that sharing the gospel should flow naturally from our heart and lead us into relationships with people. The church took initiative to discern what broken people look like in Winkler and then developed a Central Station Community Center

to reach them. Here the gospel is communicated through many services, including a food program with a Christian dietician. Their mission is to reveal options and ultimately to bring people to Jesus.

Dave Ens, **Eastview Community Church** Pastor at 188 Princess Street, explained that people who come out of prison really struggle to begin a new life. They have been through many programs. The real necessity is community, to connect with friends in a healthy gospel-centered community.

Discussion:

Comment: A delegate shared that there is brokenness in people's lives. He told the story of a woman who experienced a deep overwhelming sense of God's love. We need to balance our deserving to die because of sin with the fact that we are loved as forgiven people. We need to hear that we are beloved children of God.

A: Brian Cooper: Yes, I agree. A need for community is very important. People want a personal touch. We are all deserving of punishment, but God has shown us love. People are often astounded when they see believers go out of their way, all because of God's love.

Q: David Balzer: Is this question theological as well as practical? Do we need to articulate the depravity of the human condition as a fundamental proclamation in our gospel living?

A: Phillip Vallely: In God's eyes, I am righteous. He uses me exactly how he intends me to be. This changes how I live my life. Broken people have overwhelming needs. The challenge is for people to recognize their righteousness and to live in righteousness.

Q: David Balzer: What is the difference between giving children information about faith and nurturing a living faith with children?

A: Ruth Schellenberg: Our small group leaders say that we don't have all the answers. Adults are also wondering and engaging with the story. We are all on this journey of faith. Children have their own wisdom and time for God to speak into their lives. They need to engage in the story.

A: Brian Cooper: The gospel message takes different nuances for different people. It comforts the afflicted and afflicts the comfortable. Some people need to feel the love of God. For people who are complacent and self-righteous, the gospel addresses them. The gospel meets children at their level. Faith isn't one size fits all.

A: Dave Ens: The system keeps people in a cycle of poverty and dependence. We need to come alongside people and value them as people loved by God. This is very significant practically and theologically.

10:30 am Coffee break

11:00 am Workshops

12:00 pm Lunch

Leadership Board

1:00 pm Harold Froese, Conference Moderator, welcomed delegates to the afternoon session and presented recommendations 1-7 on Assembly process.

RECOMMENDATIONS 1-7:

1. Status of Printed Reports: We recommend that the printed reports be accepted as presented.
2. Status of Recommendations: We recommend that all printed recommendations be considered moved and seconded.
3. Recording Secretaries: We recommend that Pam Heide (Westside) be appointed recording secretary and Dorothea Schalm (staff) assistant secretary.
4. Minute Review Committee: We recommend that Kathi Fast (Crossroads), Irene Froese (Steinbach), Pam Heide (Westside), and Dorothea Schalm (staff) be authorized to review and prepare the minutes for publication in consultation with the Executive Committee.
5. Ballot Committee: We recommend that the Steinbach MB Church nominees for the ballot committee be appointed as presented: Gerry Neufeld, Wilf Kaethler, Josef Reich, Benjamin Fast.
6. Ballots: We recommend that all ballots be destroyed at the close of the Assembly.
7. Parliamentarian: We recommend that John Unger (Fort Garry) serve as parliamentarian for this Assembly.

Vote by show of hands.

Recommendations 1-7 M/S/CARRIED.

Church Planting Proposal

Harold Froese, Conference Moderator, reported that the Leadership Board met with Gord Fleming two years ago to consider a potential partnership with the C2C network. This direction was also discussed at the Council of Representatives meeting in November 2012. The board heard the following response: 1) Everyone is in favour of planting churches. 2) There is affirmation for the good programs of the former Missions and Church Extension (MCE). We want to build on our church planting programs. 3) We want Manitoba leaders to have the decision-making authority about church planting in Manitoba.

Harold presented the church planting proposal of the leadership board. A partnership with C2C will allow for good synergy. The C2C Manitoba leadership team and the MBCM leadership board will have decision-making authority and be able to draw on the resources of the national C2C team.

Elton DaSilva, Conference Executive Director, focused on details of the church planting proposal to partner with the national C2C network. The C2C Manitoba Leadership Team will be composed of local leaders and pastors as well as representatives of the C2C work team. C2C staff will train and resource church planters.

Gord Fleming, Director of the C2C network, explained that the name C2C comes from Psalm 72:8 etched on the Parliament building in Ottawa, "And He shall have dominion from sea to sea." C2C is gospel centered, Spirit led, and mission focused. C2C is all about making Jesus known in Canada. C2C is our home missions program. C2C will also come alongside existing churches to help them reach their neighbourhoods. Gord introduced the C2C Manitoba work team: Chris Douglas (BC), Blair Allen (Saskatchewan), Johnny Thiessen (Alberta), and Ewald Unruh (C2C Associate Director). We want to work inter-provincially for the Kingdom.

Elton DaSilva introduced Phillip Vallely and Delbert Enns as members of the C2C Manitoba leadership team.

Discussion:

Q: The C2C systems are all focused on the church planter. Do you have systems for existing churches to develop new ministries and churches?

A: Gord Fleming: It's a different structure when you have an existing church. The Canadian Conference missiologist, Bill Hogg, works with existing churches to multiply and be outreach-focused. The upcoming Multiply Conference will resource pastors of existing churches to explore models to multiply. The C2C systems are to discern and equip the right church planters to succeed. The success rate of MB church plants is 78%.

Q: A delegate affirmed the last sentence of the ministry focus of the MB Church of Manitoba (page 7). How will C2C help the MB Church of Manitoba implement the two parts of this ministry focus: 1) "We hear God calling us to compassionately minister with and among people who are poor, and 2) to initiate the emergence of new Christ-centered faith communities"? Both parts are important. Separating them into two statements creates a dualistic possibility. My hope is that the two parts could be brought together.

A: Elton DaSilva: This focus is still prevalent. Walls of Freedom is a new church plant in the core area that is doing incredible work with new immigrant and First Nations communities. Ministry among poor people is part of our DNA. C2C can help us develop more church planters who minister among the poor. C2C will enhance our ministry.

A: Gord Fleming: My ecclesiology, my understanding of church structure, comes from an evangelical-Anabaptist Mennonite Brethren perspective. My understanding is that structurally the highest point of the pyramid is the local church. Denominational staff members serve the local church. It is the church's role to serve. This is a question of discipleship. We are all called to be the hands and feet of Jesus among the poor. This is not the role of the MB conference. It's our role as individuals. Our life is about living among lost people. Evangelical-Anabaptists are imitators of Jesus. Our new churches are passionate about making disciples. And as disciples of Jesus, we will work with poor people.

Q: A pastor affirmed this direction. How do we as local churches effectively connect into C2C? Who is our primary point of contact for a local church with the C2C systems? How do we move forward? What's our next step?

A: Elton DaSilva: You may talk to any member of the C2C Manitoba Leadership Team: Delbert Enns, Phillip Vallely, or myself.

A: Gord Fleming: In the absence of a C2C Manitoba church planting director, Elton has asked me to stand in as the lead member of the C2C work team. If you call me, I will deploy the assets and get things moving.

A: Harold Froese: Your primary contact is the local C2C Manitoba leadership team. C2C staff members will resource that leadership team. The leadership team, in turn, will bring recommendations to the MBCM leadership board that ultimately makes the decisions.

Q: There are only men on the C2C teams. Were any women considered for the C2C leadership team?

A: Harold Froese: The nominating committee works hard to have gender, demographic, and cultural balance on committees. The leadership board has good gender balance. Gender balance is a valid point that we want to consider for this C2C team and other committees. This is a point well taken. Thank you.

Q: The church planting proposal refers to the hiring of a Manitoba church planting director. Is the hiring of a Manitoba church planting director part of this church planting proposal? What salary would the new director receive? Is the salary of new church planting director already part of the budget for 2013?

A: Elton DaSilva: The hiring of a regional church planting director is not part of this recommendation. The job description of a new director is included in the proposal to outline his role in the church planting process. We are not proposing to hire a new church planting director at this time. We will come back to you at a later time if that is the case.

A: Harold Froese: There is no provision in the budget for the hiring of a church planting director at this time, but we are moving in that direction. This partnership with C2C is a work in progress.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

We affirm the direction of this church planting proposal.

Vote by show of hands.

Recommendation 8 M/S/CARRIED.

Executive Director's Report

Elton DaSilva

We want to thank the Steinbach MB Church for their hospitality and generosity at this Assembly. I also thank the pastors and leaders who are engaging with the Manitoba conference. If you have questions or concerns about the work of the conference, please call me.

I am not a Mennonite Brethren by birth. I am a Mennonite Brethren by choice. The Mennonite Brethren theology resonates with me. We are evangelical Anabaptists. We want to proclaim Christ. We also have a sense of responsibility for those who are broken, because we are broken and hurting ourselves. We want peace and justice.

What I struggle with is that I see this beauty within our churches, but I also see a great divide. Some of us are far to one side, and others are far to the other side. Let's bring these two pieces together. If your church is only a proclamation church, there's something wrong with your gospel. If your church is only a social justice church, then there's something wrong with your gospel. We need both. We need a gospel that will challenge us to be at the feet of Jesus and also to work for Jesus. It is my prayer that the tension between proclamation and incarnation will be present all the time. I live with that tension. We should be sharpening each other.

The goal of the conference office is to equip, resource, and inspire. Roger Friesen, the Director of Congregational Services, has worked on administrative templates to be used and customized by churches. We are working to see new churches planted in Manitoba and across Canada. We had good attendance at the two Leaders2Learners resourcing events for pastors. We will continue to resource pastors in the areas of preaching and giftedness, and to build community.

We are developing two process tools to help churches: 1) 10 things every church can do to be outward-focused; 2) helping churches analyze their mission, ministry, gifts, resources, and systems. Several churches have invited us to work with their leadership teams to help them analyze. Daniel Beutler from Alberta is available to help Manitoba churches do an analysis of their church and plan for the future. We have advisory teams for each conference ministry. There is the C2C leadership team for church planting in Manitoba. Keith Poysti works with the Faith and Life Committee to discern direction. People from our churches are involved in decision-making.

But we are struggling in some areas. Here I need your help. First, how do we relate to single ethnic churches coming into our denomination? In the last week I had calls from three single ethnic churches who want to be part of our denomination. If we invite them into the family, we want them to be part of the family. How do we engage with them well? How do we involve them? Let me know if you have some ideas.

Secondly, how do we renew a relationship with our national conference? We had some misunderstandings. We are working hard at building relationship. I want to thank Willy Reimer for being available for conversation. We want to work together as brothers across this country. We want to pray for Willy and work alongside him.

Our assemblies have followed the theme of the church. Last year we focused on the church at prayer. This year it's the church and the gospel. Next year we will explore the church and the making of disciples. I welcome your suggestions for a speaker for next year's assembly. Whom should we invite? Who is equipping churches to make disciples well? I have heard that people used to come to Sunday School and programs like "Christianity 101", but many are no longer coming these programs. What are the discipleship tools for churches today?

One goal of the conference office is to equip, resource, and inspire through more consistent and accessible communication. In November we unveiled a new logo and byline. Today we are pleased to introduce our new website. This website is a tool to raise the profile of what God is doing through more intentional storytelling, event registration, and providing resources. The website address is mbm.ca. Events and training are a vital way of building relationships between leaders and churches. Registration and information are on the website. We are excited to invite pastors to our upcoming pastors retreat with Andrew Dyck and Steve Bell May 26-28 at the Lakeview Resort in Gimli.

A second area of the website is resources. Pastors and administrators can register on the site for access to password protected documents that provide organizational templates and policy frameworks. Registering on the site allows you to post some great ministry ideas in the public idea bank. For example, the Steinbach church could showcase its beautiful quilted artwork and make it available to other churches. Pastors who have a great sermon series on Easter can post it on the website for other churches.

In closing, how do we engage single ethnic churches who are coming into our denomination? Are there any practical ideas or churches working with ethnic groups?

Discussion:

Ben Kramer, Pastor of **Richmond Park MB Church** in Brandon, encouraged churches to pray and to be willing to take risks. He told the story of a small Spanish house church that started renting space in their church building. Richmond Park MB Church and the conference together hired a full-time Spanish pastor to lead Spanish services on Saturday. This Spanish group has become integrated with the Richmond Park congregation. They work together in youth and care ministries and are becoming a multi-ethnic church. Sometimes the two congregations worship and share meals together. Other programs are done best separately. They have to be comfortable with ambiguity, with being out of control, and taking risks. Ben thanked Elton DaSilva, Keith Poysti, and the conference for their guidance and funding. He encouraged churches to just say "yes" to ethnic groups and let God work out the details.

John Unger, Pastor of **Fort Garry MB Church**, shared about his church's experience with the Chinese MB Church and an African group using their building for free. The Chinese church has worship services and music lessons for children on Saturdays. The African group has prayer and worship services on Fridays and Sunday afternoons. The Fort Garry congregation has simply made

this space available to other groups without charging rent. The interaction between these three groups is excellent. Some people from the ethnic groups also attend the English worship services. Every year at Thanksgiving all three congregations gather for a multi-cultural, multi-lingual service and meal with different ethnic food. People from all groups were also invited to a Christmas Day brunch and a short service. The church is finding ways to bless each other.

Prayer for Willy Reimer in his ministry as Executive Director of the Canadian Conference by Elton DaSilva.

Ewald Unruh, Associate Director of C2C, invited pastors to a training event with Alan Hirsch on March 12.

Financial Reports

Glyn Allen, Conference Treasurer, referred to the Conference Support Fund on page 45. He thanked all churches for giving sacrificially and supporting the conference.

Conference Support Fund (CSF) Formula

- a) Total receiptable revenue
- b) Minus flow-throughs to Canadian registered charities
- c) Minus designated contributions to major capital projects (land/buildings)
- d) Multiply result by CSF Rate (currently 8%)

Thank you, churches, for your CSF contributions.

Manitoba Conference 2012 Operating Results

Page 51-52	Budget	Actual
Revenue	\$559,360	\$556,799
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 3,154	\$ (29)

Glyn explained that the Statement of Net Assets (page 54) is composed of capital assets, restricted designated funds, internally restricted reserve funds, and unrestricted net assets which total \$1,999,739. The consolidated Statement of Operations (page 51) includes two emerging churches and shows a surplus of \$18,079.

Church Planting Manitoba 2012 Operating Results

Page 53	Budget	Actual
Revenue	\$111,500	\$103,898
Expenses	-\$202,000	-\$154,004
Fund Transfer	<u>\$ 90,500</u>	<u>\$ 49,700</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$0	\$ (406)

Glyn outlined the operating results of Church Planting Manitoba (page 53). The actual revenue for 2012 was \$103,898 with \$154,004 in expenses. Additional income comes from a transfer of \$49,700 from the designated Dream Manitoba church planting fund. This statement includes two

emerging churches (Bethel Evangelical Christian Assembly and Philadelphia Eritrean Church) which do not have their own charitable status. Therefore we have consolidated their statements in the conference financial statements. From a reporting perspective, these two churches are not part of the operational statement of Church Planting Manitoba. So, if we skip the budgets of these two churches, the deficit is \$406.

Manitoba Conference 2012 Consolidated Operating Results

Actual

MBCM Operating Surplus/(Deficit) (page 52)	(\$ 29)
CPM Operating Surplus/(Deficit) (page 53)	<u>(\$406)</u>
Total Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$435)

Glyn reported that the MBCM operating statement on page 52 shows an operating deficit of \$29. Page 53 shows a Church Planting Manitoba deficit of \$406. So the total operating deficit is \$435. Yet page 51 shows a surplus of \$18,079. This difference is due to the two emerging churches (Bethel Evangelical Christian Assembly and Philadelphia Eritrean Church). When we add their budgets into the conference statement, we have a surplus of \$18,079. Page 51 is the fully consolidated statement including the two churches.

Discussion:

Comment: A delegate mentioned that he cannot find the amount of \$406 in the statement.

A: Glyn Allen: The amount of \$406 is not reported in the statement. We need to take the two churches (Bethel Evangelical Christian Assembly and the Philadelphia Eritrean Church) on page 53 out of the equation. If we subtract the total sum of the two churches of \$18,514 from the consolidated church planting surplus of \$18,108, we have a deficit of \$406.

RECOMMENDATION 9:

Financial reports: We recommend that the financial reports for 2012 be accepted as presented.

Vote by show of hands.

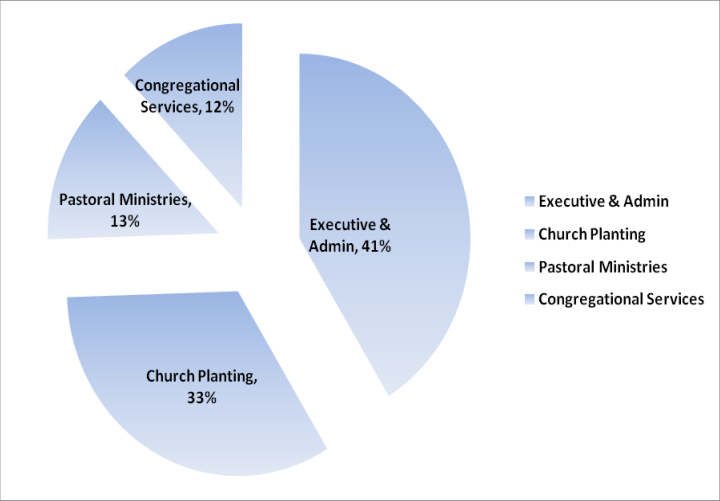
Recommendation 9 M/S/CARRIED.

MB Church of Manitoba 2013 Operating Budget

CSF Revenue (page 52)	\$479,785
Other Revenue (page 52)	<u>\$ 96,350</u>
Total	\$576,135
Expenses	\$576,135
Surplus (Deficit)	\$0

Glyn Allen presented the 2013 budget (page 52). The Conference Support Fund of \$479,785 for 2013 is down from \$510,978 from 2012. The difference is that \$35,000 from the CSF revenue has been added to the Church Planting Manitoba budget for 2013. This amount was not put into the

Church Planting Manitoba budget last year. If we add the \$35,000 back into revenue, it would be virtually the same revenue amount. Other revenue of \$96,350 includes interest earned of \$36,000, assembly registration of \$5,500, pastoral ministries revenue of \$19,850, and transfers from internally restricted funds of \$35,000. Our expenses will mirror the total revenue of \$576,135, so we are calling for a balanced operating budget.



Glyn explained that the chart shows the budget according to various departments within MBCM. The executive and administration at 41% is a large percentage, but it's not totally overhead. It includes staff work with the churches, so the overhead number is considerably smaller. Congregational services at 12% is involved with governance, insurance, human resources, and operational systems. Pastoral ministries at 13% is concerned with pastoral care, ethical and theological integrity, credentialing, and conflict resolution. Church planting at 33% is resourcing new church plants. Glyn noted that churches will receive a letter with this chart from Elton DaSilva.

Church Planting 2013 Budget

Revenue General Donations (page 53)	\$110,000
Revenue other	<u>\$ 88,000</u>
Total	\$198,000
Expenses	
Camp Ministry Grant	\$ 33,000
Church Planting Grants	<u>\$165,000</u>
Total	\$198,000
Surplus (Deficit)	\$0

Glyn presented the Church Planting budget. Revenue includes general donations of \$110,000 and other revenue of \$88,000 (\$1,500 from honoraria and \$86,500 through a transfer from the designated Dream Manitoba fund). Expenses include a grant of \$33,000 to Simonhouse Bible Camp and \$165,000 for several emerging church plants.

Discussion:

Q: A delegate asked for clarification about the internal funds (page 52). Are we balancing the budget by transferring from internally restricted funds? It seems we're operating at a loss, but balancing the budget by transferring money. How can we balance the budget with internally restricted funds?

A: Glyn Allen: The internally restricted funds have been restricted in their use for reasons that seem appropriate to the administration. We are not operating at a deficit in the sense that we're using funds that are not ours. We are using our own funds that we have internally restricted for capital budgets for churches or operating expenses for church planting.

A: Elton DaSilva: There is a restricted fund for new capital projects. When churches are buying their first building, they may request a grant from the conference. Funds for capital projects flow in and out of the operating budget. Grants are transferred from the capital fund into the operating budget and then given out to churches. Internally restricted funds were set up for specific purposes. The Dream Manitoba fund is for church planting purposes.

RECOMMENDATION 10:

Budget: We recommend the acceptance of the 2013 MBCM budget as presented, including the rate of 8% of receiptable revenue towards the Conference Support Fund.

Vote by show of hands.

Recommendation 10 M/S/CARRIED.

RECOMMENDATION 11:

Financial Review: We recommend the appointment of BDO Dunwoody accounting firm for the year 2013.

Vote by show of hands.

Recommendation 11 M/S/CARRIED.

New Faces

Gerald Dyck, Conference Assistant Moderator, welcomed three new educational leaders: Fred Pauls, MBCI Principal; Cheryl Pauls, President of Canadian Mennonite University; and Andrew Dyck, MBBS Professor at CMU.

Fred Pauls, **MBCI** principal, explained that he's not new to MBCI, but new to the position of principal. He thanked delegates for their prayers for MBCI staff and students from grades 6-12. He thanked churches for their financial support and for pastors who come to speak at MBCI. Fred introduced Mary Unruh as the church relations director who continues to develop relationships with churches.

Cheryl Pauls, President of **Canadian Mennonite University**, thanked supporters for sharing in the mission entrusted to CMU. This mission is a gift and a responsibility that comes from God and from particular people from the Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba, Mennonite Church Canada, and from a broader ecumenical community of students. CMU is looking for more tangible ways to discern and work together in this mission. Cheryl is thankful for the prayers and for ongoing dialogue with people who speak into the work of CMU.

Andrew Dyck, **Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary** Assistant Professor at CMU, noted that two formative influences in his life were through mentoring at MBBC and during two internships at Westwood Community Church. MBBS is working in partnership with CMU in a new graduate program with 50 seminary students. Andrew is providing practical training for pastoral ministry. He is completing his doctoral dissertation on the spiritual formation of Mennonite Brethren pastors and missionaries. He thanked people for their prayers.

Prayer for Fred Pauls, Cheryl Pauls, and Andrew Dyck by Keith Poysti, Conference Pastor.

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary Canada

Video clip of MBBS Canada

Bruce Guenther, President of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, thanked Elton DaSilva and the MB Church of Manitoba for an equal financial partnership with MBBS in the appointment of Andrew Dyck. MBBS Canada is a start-up venture of the Canadian Conference which is laying the foundation for the future. The MBBS board decided not to build a campus, but rather to negotiate partnerships with other denominations. MBBS has an affiliation with Trinity Western University in the ACTS consortium and also with Canadian Mennonite University in the new graduate School of Theology. The seminary is developing a new financial model, building a faculty team across the country, recruiting students, and resourcing denominational events.

Bruce announced that MBBS is launching an online curriculum in fall 2013 with eight courses in biblical theology, Mennonite Brethren history, church planting, and evangelism. In November 2012 MBBS approached the BC government to obtain a degree granting charter. The first reading of the bill will be received in the BC legislature on Monday, March 4, with a second reading on March 13. Bruce asked for prayer for the completion of this process.

Prayer for Bruce Guenther by Gerald Dyck, Conference Assistant Moderator.

Canadian Conference of MB Churches

Willy Reimer, Executive Director of the Canadian Conference, introduced the national team: Ron Toews, Leadership Development Director; Gord Fleming, Church Planting Director; Laura Kalmar, Interim Communications Director; and Norbert Barga, Human Resources Director. He invited pastors and leaders to attend the study conference on Human Sexuality in October 2013. There's also a Pastors Credentialing Orientation at CMU in June.

Ron Toews, Leadership Development Director of the Canadian Conference, affirmed that God is calling Mennonite Brethren to increase in faith, obedience, engagement, influence, and risk. Everyone wins when a leader grows. Ron began his new role in September 2012 in a collaborative effort between the national and provincial conferences. He has talked to many people and heard four themes: 1) church on mission, 2) the importance of equippers to be catalyzing the life of the church, 3) grace-motivated holiness, and 4) life-long learning.

Ron reported that he is hearing from pastors on the following questions: What are you doing to be spiritually renewed? How are you engaging in spiritual discovery and growth? How are you building leadership capacity? He is consulting with Elton DaSilva and Keith Poysti to provide leadership development and to develop an online highway for pastors to join a small group for coaching, mentoring, praying, and resourcing.

Willy Reimer announced that John Wiebe, Chief Financial Officer of the Canadian Conference, is retiring this summer. He expressed appreciation for the good partnership with Elton DaSilva and also with Harold Froese who serves on the national board.

Elections

Gerald Dyck, Conference Assistant Moderator, referred to the election slate and added Jeremy Penner, Portage Avenue Church, as a nominee for the Leadership Board.

RECOMMENDATION 12:

Elections: We recommend the acclamation of the nominees on the Election Slate.

Vote by show of hands.

Recommendation 12 M/S/CARRIED.

Closing

Gerald Dyck thanked Elton DaSilva and the staff team of Keith Poysti, Roger Friesen, Dorothea Schalm, and Stella Labossiere for their good work. He expressed special appreciation to Russ Toews for his seven-year service as church planting director. Russ and Sharon have served the conference with integrity, passion, and diligence.

3:30 pm Gerald closed with prayer. Assembly adjourned.

Minute Review Committee

The Minute Review Committee has reviewed the Minutes of the 2013 Provincial Assembly of the Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba and has declared approval.

Kathi Fast, Irene Froese, Pam Heide, Dorothea Schalm

August 2013