



## Mennonite Disaster Service

### THREE HOUSES, TWO SITES, ONE GOAL

In May of 2016 a wildfire nicknamed “The Beast” wiped out over 2500 structures in Fort McMurray. As MDS planned our response we identified three clients who lost their homes and didn’t have the means to rebuild.

Anticipating a building boom in Fort McMurray and wondering how we would be able to get timely access to materials and necessary skilled trades, a creative solution was considered. What if we could build the houses at a different location, while preparing the foundations in Fort Mac?

Our Saskatchewan Unit took the lead in coordinating the building of 3 Ready-To-Move (RTM) homes in Hague, Saskatchewan. Zak’s Building Group partnered with us in providing materials and expertise to get the houses built and moved. Meanwhile, at the Fort McMurray worksite, foundations and basements were prepared.

Three houses, two sites and one goal. The goal is to show the love of Christ. At MDS we frequently talk about seeking to be the hands and feet of Jesus. The miracle our volunteers most frequently talk about witnessing is clients rediscover the hope. They discover it through the loving manner in which volunteers rebuild. As one of the retired widows in Fort

McMurray said, “I didn’t know there were people like you left in the world.” We trust that the real person she and others see, was Jesus – using our small gifts to reveal the immeasurable love of God.

In addition to our Fort McMurray/Hague project, MDS Canada was active in helping a BC family rebuild and a Manitoba family muck out and replace basement infrastructure. In Ontario, several houses were mucked out from flooding in different areas of the province. In the Ottawa River Valley, 2 new houses are currently being built. We did our first family project in Atlantic Canada at Camp Wildwood and also had a successful youth project in Hepburn, Saskatchewan.

In this coming year we will anticipate planning a response to the BC fires of last summer. The preparation phase is underway as we seek to identify those in need. We have been blessed by healthy giving in 2017 that allows us to make plans for the coming year.

We continue to keep our centre as a grassroots movement of people like you; people who make up the Mennonite and Anabaptist communities who want to live out their faith in practical ways. Thank you for the chance to work with you towards the one goal – sharing the love of Christ.

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