

Provincial Director Report

Welcome to MBCM Assembly 2022! Our theme this year is *Deep Faith – Extravagant Grace*. What a year 2021 was, adjustments to ongoing gathering restrictions, dealing with pandemic realities and attempting to find our way forward. We are excited to have the option of meeting together and look forward to being in the presence of one another. For those joining online, we will do our best to help you feel part of the gathering and to create connections.

I'm incredibly grateful for the generosity of our churches in 2021. Thank you for being responsible stewards with your funds and supporting the conference's activities. Your gifts allow us to support and work together with our partner organizations, resource churches through transition moments, and support search teams, preaching, and crisis management. Your support also helps us provide ways of connecting and strengthening our relationships together.

Staff and Board Update

Our MBCM staff team has experienced some transition in the past year. Bomba completed his time with MBCM in November, as he began a pastoral role with his church. We are grateful for

Bomba's contribution to our churches and his gifts to our team. I also want to thank George Klassen, who has been managing the Henderson property for us over the past years. George has done a tremendous job of looking after the building and caring for the groups that rented space in the building. I'm thankful for his faithful service with us.

We are excited to welcome Holly Hannigan to the team. She began in the communications role on Feb. 22. Please take a moment to welcome Holly and introduce yourself. Amanda has done a tremendous job of maintaining the team presence, providing leadership to our safe place policies, managing the various tasks that she is responsible for, and delivering incredible support to the office staff and our churches. You will hear from Jason in his report, but I want to add how grateful I am for his faithful commitment to loving and serving our conference leaders.

Thank you to board members Ruth Schellenberg and Harold Froese, who have both been long-time board members with MBCM while also carrying a variety of other roles in representing us on CCMBC boards. The Saturday of the Assembly will have their board



participation come to an end (at least for this time around.) I am thankful to both of them for their energy and wisdom spent on behalf of our churches. They have both pointed us toward Jesus, encouraged us to work together as churches and church leaders, and have demonstrated patience and compassionate listening as we seek to be on this journey of discipleship together. May God bless you as your MBCM board role comes to an end.

Every May, a highlight for many MBCM pastors has been the annual Pastors Retreat at Hecla Resort. Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions over the past couple of years, we have not been able to host this event. With restrictions just being lifted, and budget limits of both conference and churches, we have postponed this gathering again.

Strategic Priority Areas

As we look towards the 2022 year, we anticipate and pray for the opportunity to meet more in person and gather to worship, pray and minister. I am confident that we have much to learn together. We will focus our attention on the mission that is before us.

As we continue to work together with the other provinces as part of the collaborative unified strategic plan, the first step is to establish teams in the four priority areas. The faith and life team is

already a great example of this. In the area of Organizational Health, we have a couple of teams that have been working together. The constitution review team and the safe place policy team are working to listen to needs and incorporate plans to create resources that address those specific needs. In the area of Missions, we have benefited already from the partnership with the Multiply central Canada office team, and it certainly gives us great partners to work with. These teams will collectively work towards achieving the mission of the MB Church in Canada. That mission is: *'To foster a community and culture of healthy disciple-making churches and ministries, faithfully joining Jesus in his mission'*.

Leadership Development

Leadership Development Team - How can we equip, resource, and inspire congregations to be intentional about leadership development? Many of our churches are doing excellent work regarding leadership development and we recognize the need for leaders in all areas of church life. I look forward to hosting conversations among us that can determine how we could best meet church leadership training and development needs. We are currently working on gathering a team of people that would be willing to work together to hear from our churches, and begin putting together some ways forward.



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We are planning on holding a Nuts and Bolts event which will focus on Leadership Development. We want pastors to share what is working well, what the needs are, and how we can pray and work toward intentional leadership development opportunities. We look forward to learning together, being inspired and becoming equipped to take steps forward in this priority area.

We also look forward to promoting the Pastors Credentialing Orientation. This experience is an important opportunity for pastors that are new to us, or new to pastoring, to meet each other and our leaders, as well as discover more of our DNA as a conference. PCO is as much about building relational ties as it is learning more about who we are and how we do life and ministry together. This event is held in collaboration with the National Faith and Life Team.

In our ongoing desire to have both formal and informal leadership development opportunities, we continue to seek out ways of resourcing leaders in spiritual formation. I anticipate the leadership team to be able to help shape the academic and non-academic requirements for the Mennonite Brethren track through our affiliation with CMU's Graduate School of Theology and Ministry. We desire to continue building our awareness of our MB history and convictions; our understanding of spiritual formation and Christian

character; and our knowledge and skill for studying the Bible together in community.

Organizational Health

As appointed by our MBCM board, the constitution review team has been doing great work in putting together the revisions presented at Assembly. This team will continue to meet over this next year to continue this work as further revisions and review are needed to complete the process.

A team, led by Amanda, has been working to provide reviews and revisions to our Safe Place Policy. Safe Place meeting aims to further equip, resource, and inspire people to create safe places for people to experience the love and grace of Jesus. Materials will provide churches with training for their volunteers.

In the year ahead we have been planning towards the MBCM board reviewing and approving some important policies. These include Church staff salary and compensation draft, MBCM Pastoral Staff Employment policy, and a New Adult Abuse Response and Prevention Policy.

Missions

Multiply Missions Training Modules: MBCM, together with Multiply, is providing mission equipping modules both online and in-person at several Manitoba church locations this



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winter/spring of 2022. The missional content has been developed for our family of churches to explore how to effectively proclaim and practice the Gospel of Jesus locally and globally. More details to come in regards to schedules.

1. Heart Shift: An understanding of First Nations and reconciliation. This module will be hosted by The Meeting Place in the urban center of Winnipeg, with guest elders from First Nations communities of Manitoba, British Columbia and Ontario.

2. Our Global Context: Reaching out to newcomers. An exploration of major world religions and how the Gospel of Jesus intersects as Good News for all people. Fort Garry MB will be hosting with Multiply's Arabic ministries leader Nassar.

3. Disciple-Making Movements: Small is bigger. Exploring an adaptable model of disciple-making that stands the test of time and cultures and is accessible to all regardless of Biblical training, age, and even literacy. The model can be adapted as your small group ministry.

We will be sharing more about this mission training opportunity at the upcoming Nuts and Bolts, Council of Representatives meeting, e-news, as well as information on our website.

Indigenous Relationships and Reconciliation: This past year has been a challenging one, as story after story was told of the unmarked graves at residential

schools. It is our intention to share in a learning opportunity called the blanket exercise, that we might hear and understand more of our past, and learn from our Indigenous brothers and sisters what they would have us hear. We will need to prayerfully discern what the appropriate next steps are together, but our first efforts are to seek to understand. We are grateful for the leadership of the Living Word Temple pastors (Paul Winter and team) to lead us in this learning experience.

Simonhouse Bible Camp: As Simonhouse Bible Camp continues to be a significant missions opportunity to love and serve the people in northern communities, we as MBCM can support this missions project by continuing to pray, providing ongoing partnership resources, and sending workers (camp staff, project volunteer staff, etc.).

Spiritual Health and Theology

PostureShift: After a two-year journey of attempting to host the Posture Shift conference, it actually happened on Sept. 28 & 29. There were 164 total registrations and approximately 75 people met in person. Early feedback seems to indicate that this was a positive resourcing event. We will have a follow-up conversation with our pastors at our upcoming Nuts and Bolts event on October 20.



The National Faith and Life team is working on resources that will further equip our pastors in conversations as they navigate the tangible next steps of implementing the learnings from the PostureShift conference. We look forward to the work ahead of seeking to live out our calling as churches, and faithfully loving and serving our churches in establishing vision and clarity around healthy discipleship practices.

As we meet together this weekend, may we continue to grow in our faith and experience the extravagant grace of Jesus.

*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.
(Ephesians 3:17-19)*

Cam Priebe