

Mennonite Church Manitoba - Year in Review 2022

Thirty-nine congregations across Manitoba covenant together to be Mennonite Church Manitoba, coming together for mutual support and shared ministry. Five regional churches, including MCM, covenant together to be Mennonite Church Canada, likewise coming together for mutual support and shared ministry. We are grateful to God for these relationships built on trust and respect and care.

2022 was a year of tentative steps into an unknown future for MCM, with all the surprises and opportunities this brings. The easing of pandemic protections but with the pandemic still present, along with political, social, and economic uncertainties among us and around us, have prompted congregations to ask identity and mission questions afresh. Who is God calling us to be and what is God calling us to do in these days?

One result of this reflection has been a greater desire to engage in God's mission for the church. Our new Director of Mission Engagement, Melanie Neufeld, has walked with congregations as they explore possibilities. Many congregations, some with the assistance of a Local Mission Grant from MCM, have stepped out in faith and love to sponsor refugees, open food banks, establish community centres or resource hubs, and more. Congregations have also looked to wider missional involvement through our regional working groups such as the Mennonite Coalition for Indigenous Solidarity, the Climate Action Working Group, and the Palestine-Israel Network, or through partnering with International Witness workers or ministries.

Our Camps with Meaning summer program was back in full swing, led by Director Dorothy



Fontaine and our full-time Camp staff. Supported by 109 volunteers, leaders in training, and summer staff, Camp Assiniboia and Camp Koinonia welcomed 523 campers this summer, including our Adults with Disabilities programs. MCM also supported five young adults to attend the Global Youth Summit as part of the Mennonite World Conference Assembly in Indonesia, and we supported youth and leader participants from MCM in the Young Leaders Experience at MC Canada's Gathering in Edmonton.

A key aspect of our mutual support as MCM is our care for pastors and congregations. Rick Neufeld retired in March as Director of Leadership Ministries, and in August Karen Schel-

lenberg and Jeff Friesen stepped into this role as Co-Directors. Together they have walked with our 50+ pastors and other spiritual leaders through challenging

times in 2022, and encouraged 5 people toward licensing or ordination. Kathy Giesbrecht has now had a full year as Director of Congregational Ministries, and she has walked with congregations seeking support in congregational care and faith formation. We are grateful also for the return of in-person church visits and concerts by our Faith and Life Choirs, an important aspect of our congregational ministries.

Who is God calling us to be and what is God calling us to do in these days? This is a question not just for congregations but for us as a regional church. "These days" are indeed filled with uncertainties; the future is very much unknown. Yet as we walk together in these days, we do not walk alone. Jesus is with us each step of the way. Let us draw strength and hope from this promise.



Faith and Life Choirs, Christmas 2022

"Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:20