



# March Gathering

## and Annual Delegate Sessions

Lethbridge Mennonite Church  
March 13 - 15, 2026

*Storytelling:*

**A Bridge to  
Healing and  
Hope**

**Jesus said, "Tell them how much the Lord has done for you and what mercy he has shown you."**

**Mark 5: 19b NRSV**

**Our vision is to be a community of Anabaptist-Mennonite congregations worshipping the one holy and loving God. Joined together in Jesus Christ, we are guided by the Holy Spirit and scripture as we seek to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace.  
Together we seek to embody Jesus Christ in the world.  
(MCA Constitution, 2021)**

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#### **MENNONITE CHURCH ALBERTA STAFF**

Tim Wiebe-Neufeld	<i>Executive Minister</i>
Linda Dickinson	<i>Interim Communications Coordinator</i>
Suzanne Gross	<i>Bridge Building Facilitator</i>
Derek & Darcie Janzen	<i>Managers, Camp Valaqua</i>
Char Lauzier	<i>Program Director, Camp Valaqua</i>
Jon Olfert	<i>Director, Camp Valaqua</i>
Wayne Janz/Austin Janz	<i>Contract Treasurers</i>

#### **MCA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Keith Retzlaff	<i>Moderator</i>
Marguerite Jack	<i>Vice Moderator</i>
Rachel Siemens	<i>Finance Chair</i>
Coreen Froese	<i>Secretary</i>
Tim Wiebe-Neufeld	<i>Executive Minister</i>

#### **MCA GENERAL COUNCIL**

Jan Wilhelm	<i>Nominating</i>
Doug Wiebe	<i>Personnel</i>
Liam Kachkar	<i>Camp Valaqua</i>
Adela Wedler	<i>Community Building &amp; Program</i>
Joyce Baergen	<i>Mission &amp; Service</i>
Tany Warkentin	<i>Congregational Leadership</i>
Mat Wiens	<i>Regional Church Rep to Joint Council</i>

#### **MC CANADA JOINT COUNCIL**

Keith Retzlaff	<i>Moderator</i>
Mat Wiens	<i>Regional Church Rep to Joint Council</i>



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A huge thank you to Mennonite Mutual Insurance for providing beverages for the 97<sup>th</sup> Annual March Gathering and Annual Delegate Sessions - because of MMI, we are fueled and hydrated!

*Storytelling:* A Bridge to Healing and Hope





## MCA is...

- a community of 1,200 participants in 10 congregations, worshipping in 3 languages
- ministries that support congregations, nurture connections, and celebrate faith in action
- part of MC Canada, a nationwide faith community of 200 congregations in 5 regions

## MCA Summary Report: 2025 In a Nutshell

### 2025 was a year of blessings

- 21 Pastors Council** members including pastors, chaplains, and other faith leaders served MCA congregations, ministries, and others beyond the MCA faith community
- over 100 members of the MCA family gathered at Foothills in March for Annual Delegate Sessions celebrating 500 years of Anabaptism and **“The Courage to Love”**



- Over 400 children, youth, staff, and volunteers experienced God in creation at **Camp Valaqua**. While campers are the core of summer camp, it is amazing to see faith and leadership grow in young people as they learn and experience God through this significant ministry!

- more than 20 people from MCA congregations joined over 400 others for MC Canada’s Gathering in Kitchener, Ontario, where the theme, **“Each Gift,”** encouraged intercultural connection as we recognize being the body of Christ together.

- MCA ministries continued to support congregations by assisting in **pastoral searches** at Bergthal, First Calgary, and Trinity; encouraging intercultural connections and relationships through Bridge Building; and financially supporting the Edmonton South Sudanese and Bethel congregations.

### 2025 was a year of transitions

- In April MCA leadership was saddened to receive a letter from the Calgary Chin Christian Church in Calgary requesting that their membership in MCA be withdrawn. A follow-up meeting with their church leadership allowed for greater understanding and a departure with words of blessing.

- After 5 years, as Communications Coordinator, **Ruth Bergen Braun** **retired** in November. In her place, Linda Dickinson from Foothills was hired as Interim Communication Coordinator. In the coming months, further discernment will take place to decide how to meet MCA’s communication needs.



- In November MCA received the request to begin conversations about **membership** with a fledgling Mennonite Chin church in Lethbridge. This young congregation is connected with Chin who are part of the Mennonite church in Ontario and are looking for new connections through their Alberta Mennonite family. We look forward to exploring our relationship with this **new congregation**.





## MCA is...

- a community of 1,200 participants in 10 congregations, worshipping in 3 languages
- ministries that support congregations, nurture connections, and celebrate faith in action
- part of MC Canada, a nationwide faith community of 200 congregations in 5 regions



**2025 was a challenging year financially.** Inflationary pressures led to significantly higher costs for the ministry at Camp Valaqua, while donations from individuals did not meet the budgeted goals. This led to a significant deficit for 2025 and the need for program and support adjustments in 2026. While these results were disappointing, the MCA faith family continues to have a tremendous impact through the ministries we share. The financial support of the MCA community strengthens our ministry as congregations, as a regional church, and as a nationwide community of faith.

**Thank you to congregations** for your faithful giving and meeting the commitments made in 2025, and for the **many individuals** who helped supplement that support.

### As we look to 2026

Over the last year and a half MCA leadership led an engagement process that identified **3 key priorities** for MCA ministry focus. The following will guide MCA ministries in the coming years:

- 1. Witnessing to Jesus' healing and hope.** *Some ways to do this include loving our neighbours, sharing our hope, and living the "Jesus way". Our witness includes both actions and telling stories of encounters with Jesus.*
- 2. Building mutual relationships between congregations.** *Aspects include seeking ways to connect as congregational members and leaders, becoming stronger as an MCA community, and building our Christ-centred identity as part of the Mennonite church.*
- 3. Calling, developing, and nurturing leaders.** *This includes encouraging all to use their gifts and skills in Christ's service, providing opportunities for training and mentoring, and "cultivating a culture of call."*

May God continue to bless the ministries we share as the MCA community of faith,

*prepared by Tim Wiebe-Neufeld, Executive Minister*

This report was distributed to congregations in January 2026

***We are grateful for the ongoing commitment we share  
as congregations, pastors, and leaders  
walking with each other in our service to Jesus Christ!***



mcab.ca

### Robert's Rules of Order

Mennonite Church Alberta (MCA) follows Robert's Rules of Order to maintain courteous and orderly discussion and to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak.

1. All motions will be moved and seconded, followed by discussion.
2. The mover has the first privilege of speaking, followed by the seconder. It is preferable that those speaking in opposition to the motion will alternate with those speaking for the motion.
3. Each speaker to a motion will be limited to two (2) minutes. Speakers may speak a second time, but only after everyone has had an opportunity to speak once.
4. If no one wishes to speak against a motion, the Moderator will call for the vote.
5. Amendments require a mover and seconder. An amendment can be amended after it has been approved. Only one amendment or motion may be considered at a time.
6. The order of presentation of the resolutions will be decided by the MCA Executive.
7. Delegates may refer to the Moderator on points of privilege or information.
8. It is the privilege of any delegate to move the previous question if they consider that the discussion has been prolonged. However, a delegate will not be allowed to move the previous question while speaking to a motion, thus in effect ending the discussion.
9. Officials will be given time to make necessary explanations.
10. Guests have the privilege of the floor, but do not have voting privileges.
11. Ordinary resolutions require a 50% plus one of the majority of votes cast by eligible delegates. Special resolutions require 75% of those entitled to vote and present in person.



**Mennonite Church Alberta**  
**March 13-15, 2026, March Gathering Agenda** (subject to change)  
 Lethbridge Mennonite Church

*Jesus said, " Tell them how much the Lord has done for you  
 and what mercy he has shown you." Mark 5:19b NRSV*

**Friday, March 13**

1:00 – 4:30 pm Pastors' Council with guest Arlyn Friesen Epp.

5:00 pm Supper for Pastors' Council and invited guests

6:30 pm Registration table open

7:30 pm **Evening Worship**

- ❖ Prelude - MCA Milestones/Year in Review
- ❖ Opening and Welcome
- ❖ Sharing from Host church – Lethbridge Mennonite Church
- ❖ Stories from MCA
- ❖ Offering - MCA
- ❖ Scripture
- ❖ Guest Speaker – robert peters “breadcrumbs through cancer”
- ❖ Announcements
- ❖ Closing Prayer

**Saturday, March 14**

8:00 am Registration table open

9:00 am **Morning Worship**

- ❖ Prelude - MCA Milestones/Year in Review Singing– Strangers No More and theme song?
- ❖ Scripture
- ❖ Guest Speaker – Gary Garrison “Way better than Mere PR”
- ❖ Prayer



9:45 am **General Session**

- ❖ Sharing from MCA - Keith Retzlaff
- ❖ Sharing From MC Canada - Arlyn Friesen Epp
- ❖ Introduction of Guests/Greetings
- ❖ Announcements

10:45 am **Coffee Break**

11:15 am **ADS Sessions**

- ❖ Presentation of Nominees
- ❖ Minutes of 2025
- ❖ Financial statements
- ❖ Presentation of Budget

**Workshops**

1. "Can I ask ChatGPT to pray for me?"- Jen Otto. projector
2. "Stories of grief and sacred bundles that help us stay connected to the Kingdom of God story plot". – Suzanne Gross

12:15 pm **Lunch**

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1:30 pm **ADS Sessions**

- ❖ Budget Discussion
- ❖ Budget Vote (voting privileges for delegates only)
- ❖ Calgary Chin Church Membership

**Workshop**

1. Creation Care Working Group with guest Sandy Plett from MC Canada

2:00 pm **General Session**

- ❖ Camp Valaqua Presentation/Discussion (voting privileges for delegates only)

2:30 pm **Afternoon worship**

- ❖ Scripture
- ❖ Speaker – Joani Neufeldt "Where do you walk with God?"
- ❖ Offering – Camp Valaqua
- ❖ Announcements
- ❖ Prayer



3:15 pm **Coffee Break**

3:45 pm **Workshops**

- ❖ • Can I ask ChatGPT to pray for me - Jen Otto. projector
- ❖ • Do we worship/believe in God or “values”? - Ryan Dueck.
- ❖ • Creation Care Working Group with guest Sandy Plett from MCCanada.
- ❖ • Stories of grief and sacred bundles that help us stay connected to the Kingdom of God story plot. – Suzanne Gross

5:00 pm **Worship**

- ❖ Commissioning of Volunteers
- ❖ Bridge Building Recognition
- ❖ Announcements

5:30 pm **Visiting**

6:00 pm **Supper**

7:30 pm **Worship**

- ❖ Opening and Prayer
- ❖ **Spirit Acts** A Monologue Based on Acts 1-12 by Arlyn Friesen Epp

This biblical retelling explores several key “Spirit moments” in the first half of the book of Acts. It traces the apostle Peter’s journey as he slowly comes to understand what the church is becoming from Jesus going up to heaven, through the different Pentecost moments (for Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles), to the mixed, multicultural church in Antioch.

At the same time, it asks us a question: Are we aware of how the Spirit is still working in powerful, timely ways in the middle of our everyday lives?

***Music provided by LMC Tone Chimes***

- ❖ Questions/Comments/Discussion
- ❖ Closing

**Sunday, March 15. 10:30 am Worship**

- ❖ Prelude
- ❖ Opening Comments
- ❖ Call to Worship



- ❖ Welcome from MCA
- ❖ Prayer
- ❖ Children's Time
- ❖ Scripture
- ❖ Message Salvation Stories - Ryan
- ❖ Offering
- ❖ Communion
- ❖ Closing
- ❖ Announcements
- ❖ Benediction

12:00 pm **Lunch** (registered guests only)

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1:00 pm **Farewell**

**Notes:**

- ❖ Music throughout the weekend provided by the LMC Worship Team
- ❖ Musicians for Sunday include Ruth Dueck and Heather Klassen



Once again, a huge thank you to Mennonite Mutual Insurance for providing beverages at the 97<sup>th</sup> Annual March Gathering and Annual Delegate Sessions - because of MMI, we are fueled and hydrated!

*Storytelling.* A Bridge to Healing and Hope

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*Thank you to the following...*

Lethbridge Mennonite Church  
Staff, Planning Committee, and  
Congregation

Speakers and Presenters  
Arlyn Friesen Epp "Spirit Acts"  
Lethbridge Tone Chimes  
Holiday Inn Express Southeast  
Mennonite Mutual Insurance

*....for your support of the  
97<sup>th</sup> Annual March Gathering  
and Annual Delegate Sessions.*



**MCA Annual Delegate Sessions Mar. 14-16, 2025 Minutes**  
**Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary**

Forty-eight delegates present

**Friday, March 14, 2025, 7:30-9:00**

- Opening Aiden Scherzinger and Keith Retzlaff
- Hymn 761
- Sharing from Host church – Foothills
- Recounting of Anabaptism 500 events around the world and description of weekend theme – Adela Wedler
- Theme verse: Psalm 31:24b “Be strong and let your heart take courage”
- Hymn 434
- Guest Speaker – Allan Rudy-Froese: Courage to Love...in the stories we tell \*Replaced by Tim Wiebe-Neufeld, Caleb Kowalko, Reuben Tut and Doug Klassen
- MCA Year in Review
- Offering Hymn 581
- MCA Milestones
- Announcements
- Closing

**Saturday March 15, 2025**

8:00 Registration

9:00 a.m. Opening Worship: Courage to Love...in the ways we confess \* Replaced by Suzanne Gross

Hymn 30

Scripture: Revelation 3:14-23

9:45 a.m. General Session

Introduction of Guests/Greetings:

Ryan Siemens – MCCA

Reynold Friesen – CMU

Alex Thiessen – RJC

Doug Amstutz – AMBS

Sharing from MCA and MC Canada

Marilyn Rudy-Froese – MCEC

Keith Retzlaff – MCA

Doug Klassen – MC Canada

**Presentation of Nominees – Joani Neufeldt**

MCA positions are for 2 years, with a maximum of 3 consecutive terms.

Committees are as follows:

*Storytelling.* A Bridge to Healing and Hope



- those taking an additional term (blue)
- slate of new nominees (red)
- those in term (black)

**Executive Committee** (four positions plus Executive Minister: Tim Wiebe Neufeld)

- Moderator Keith Retzlaff (1st term) Foothills 2026
- **Vice Moderator Marguerite Jack First-Calg 2027**
- Secretary Coreen Froese (1st term) Bergthal 2026
- Finance Chair Rachel Siemens (1st term) First-Edm. 2026

**Personnel** (one position)

- Doug Wiebe (3rd term) Lethbridge 2026

**Finance Committee** (two positions)

- Rachel Siemens (1st term) First-Edm. 2026
- **Karl Blank (2nd term) Lethbridge 2027**

**Congregational Leadership Committee** (three positions plus Executive Minister)

- **Tany Warkentin (1st term) Springridge 2027**
- Caleb Kowalko (2nd term) First-Calg. 2026
- **Tim Burkholder (2nd term) First-Edm. 2027**

**Community Building and Program Committee** (three positions)

- Rachel Hunsberger (1st term) Trinity 2026
- Charlotte Wiens (2nd term) Foothills 2026
- **Adela Wedler (2nd term) First-Edm. 2027**

**Missions & Service Committee** (four positions)

- Mezgebu Tucho (1st term) Bethel Oromo 2026
- Joyce Baergen (1st term) Holyrood 2026
- **John Woollard (1st term) First-Edm. 2027**
- \_\_\_\_\_ (1st term) \_\_\_\_\_ 2027

**Camp Valaqua Committee** (five positions)

- Kathryn Friesen (3rd term) First-Edm. 2026
- **Jenn Ratzlaff (1st term) First-Calg. 2027**



- Darrel Heidebrecht (3rd term) Foothills 2027
- Liam Kachkar (2nd term) First-Edm. 2027
- Noah Thiessen (1st term) First-Edm./Foothills 2026

#### **Nominations Committee (two positions)**

- Jan Wilhelm (2nd term) First-Edm. 2026
- \_\_\_\_\_ (1st term) \_\_\_\_\_ 2027

#### **Canadian Mennonite Representative**

- Art Koop (3rd term) Foothills 2026

#### **Joint Council Representative**

- Mathew Wiens (1st term) First-Edm. 2027

#### **Palestine Israel Network of Mennonite Church Canada (Rep.)**

- Suzanne Gross (3rd term) First-Edm./Holyrood 2027

#### **MC Canada Nominating Committee**

- Joani Neufeldt

#### **CMU Board: Prairie Regions Representative (3 year term)**

- Reece Zablocki (2nd term) Foothills 2027

#### **RJC Board:**

- Ashley Gusztak (2nd term) Foothills 2026? (Oct.)

There are still vacancies in Missions & Service, Nominations Committee

Thank you to Linden Willms, Anna Lisa Salo, Marie Moyer, Tracy Brown Ewert, Christine Hansplant, Joani Neufeldt, and Margaret Kruger-Harder, and Anna-Lisa Salo, who are finishing/stepping down.

Your service to MCA is deeply appreciated.

- Thank you to those who have agreed to accept a new nomination or continue to serve for another term.
- Thank you to those who prayerfully considered accepting our request to let their name stand on a committee and could not do so at this time.

#### **Announcements**

10:30 a.m. Coffee Break

11:00 a.m. Breakout Sessions

11:00 a.m. Breakout Sessions

1. Business for Delegates

a. Resolutions:

*Storytelling.* A Bridge to Healing and Hope



i. Minutes of 2024

2. **Resolution #1 Be it resolved, that MCA approve the minutes from the March 15-16, 2024 Annual Delegate Sessions as presented in the Report Book (Moved by Coreen Froese, Bergthal and seconded by Linden Willms, Springridge; Carried)**
3. ii. Financial Review of 2024
4. **Resolution #2 Be it resolved, that MCA adopt the 2024 financial review as presented. (Moved by Rachel Siemens, First Mennonite Edmonton, Seconded by Karl Blank, Lethbridge; Carried)**
5. b. Presentation of 2025 Budget

a. Keith highlighted the generous donations from congregations

2) Bible Study

3) Meditative Drawing

11:45 a.m. Breakout Sessions

1) Camp Valaqua

2) Mennonite Church Canada

3) Global Youth Summit

4) Indigenous Relations

12:30 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Breakout sessions

1) Camp Valaqua

2) Mennonite Church Canada

3) Global Youth Summit

4) Indigenous Relations

2:15 p.m. Afternoon Worship: Courage to Love...in the decision to reconcile \* replaced by Ryan Dueck

- Hymn #389, 809 and 434

- 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

3:00 p.m. Coffee Break

3:20 p.m. Breakout sessions

1) Business for Delegates

2) Report Book Q & A

3) Round Table Discussions

4) Resolutions:

i. 2025 Budget

**Resolution #3 Be it resolved, that MCA adopt the 2025 budget as presented. (Moved by Rachel Siemens, First Mennonite Edmonton and seconded by Karl Blank, Lethbridge Mennonite; Carried)**



**Resolution #4 Be it resolved that MCA appoint Aperture Chartered Professional Accountants for 2025 review. (Moved by Rachel Siemens, First Mennonite Edmonton and seconded by Karl Blank, Lethbridge Mennonite; Carried)**

ii. Nominations

**Resolution #5 Be it resolved, that MCA approve the Nominations as presented. (Joani Neufeldt, Lethbridge Mennonite; Coreen Froese Bergthal Mennonite; carried)**

2) Bible Study

3) Meditative Drawing

4:00 p.m. General Session (to include the following)

- Commissioning of Volunteers
- Hymn #778
- Prayer



## 2026 MCA RESOLUTIONS

1. Be it resolved, that MCA approves the minutes from the March 14-15, 2025 Annual Delegate Sessions as presented in the Report Book.
2. Be it resolved, that MCA adopt the 2025 financial review as presented.
3. Be it resolved that MCA release the Calgary Chin Church as per their request and the requirements of the bylaws.
4. Be it resolved, that MCA adopts the 2026 budget as presented.
5. Be it resolved that MCA adopt the Camp Valaqua Site Development plan as presented.
6. Be it resolved, that MCA approve the Nominations as presented.



# **March Gathering And Annual Delegate Sessions**

## **Report Book**

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### ***Leadership and Staff***

**Moderator**

**Executive Minister**

**Interim Communications Coordinator**

**Bridge Building Facilitator**



**Moderator Report**  
**Keith Retzlaff**

*“Whatever you do, whether in speech or action, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus and give thanks to God the Father through him.” Colossians 3:17*



As I look back over the past year I am thankful for all the work the staff and volunteers with MCA have done. There are countless hours put in throughout the year to allow MCA to function. Jon and Tim both had well deserved sabbaticals which increased the workload for volunteers and staff. Both Caleb Kowalko and Charlene Lauzier stepped up to cover important aspects of Tim and Jon’s roles while they were away and deserve special recognition. Finally, a shout out to Ruth Bergen Braun who retired in November after serving as our communications coordinator. We were able to recognize Ruth at our All Committee meeting in November.

Overall the year was one of mixed emotions. While a lot of great things were going on in our committees and at camp we also faced a few challenges.

Shortly after the last March Gathering, the executive received a letter from the Calgary Chin Church requesting release from MCA. Tim, Caleb and myself were able to meet with them to discuss their concerns and honor our shared history. As part of this year’s business meeting we will spend some time acknowledging the congregation and officially releasing them from membership.

The other challenge was financial. I want to acknowledge that each of our congregations met their commitments to MCA for 2025 and this allowed us to meet our needs. At the same time, donations from individuals did not match what was hoped for in the 2025 budget. Many of these donations come in at the end of the year and provide us reserves for the coming year. As the year came to an end, we found ourselves looking towards 2026 and facing a significant shortfall. Much time and prayer was devoted to how we approached the 2026 budget. Details and next steps are contained in the financial report.

On a positive note, we also accomplished much in 2025. Many of the details can be found in the committee’s individual reports and I encourage you to review these. From the executive, I want to highlight two major accomplishments; discerning and approving our priorities, and updating our policy manual. Time was dedicated at last year’s gathering, our all-committee meetings, general council, and at the Executive to discern our priorities going forward. The updated priorities were approved and have been highlighted in the Communique several times and are prominently displayed on our website. These priorities offer the lens through which each of our committees and ministries view the work of MCA.



These priorities were also used as we reviewed the Policy Manual. Over the last year each of our committees have reviewed their terms of reference. Many of these had not been formally reviewed in a number of years and referenced past practices and roles that no longer existed. The policy manual will be a living document that we review annually, and it will be posted to the website in early March.

It was also encouraging to see the Youth Leadership Team gain new momentum and provide connections outside of camp, such as the event in Calgary and an upcoming event in Edmonton.

I was able to attend worship with several congregations over the year including Springridge, Edmonton South Sudanese, Holyrood, Edmonton First Mennonite and of course my home congregation of Foothills. It is a privilege to share this time and see and hear what is going on in each of our congregations. I hope to continue this in 2026. One last highlight for 2025 was the MC Canada Gathering in July. Over 400 attendees from across Canada gathered to worship, discuss and pray. From this Gathering has come 4 initiatives for MC Canada to pursue until the next national Gathering. These mirror our own priorities in many ways and I was struck by how God is guiding these processes.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Lethbridge in March and look to God to guide our discussions during that time.



*Keith Retzlaff*, Moderator



**Executive Minister Report**  
**Tim Wiebe-Neufeld**



MCA's vision is to be a community of Anabaptist-Mennonite congregations seeking to embody Jesus Christ in the world (<https://mcab.ca/about-us>). It is such a privilege to serve MCA in the role of Executive Minister as together we seek to live into this vision. I am reminded of the promise of the words from I Corinthians 15:58, which reads, *"Therefore, my beloved brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain."*

As I reflect on the ministries of MCA and our fellowship together, I am inspired by the many ways in which Christ has been at work in the congregations, regional ministries, and nationwide partnerships that make up the MCA faith family. Here are just a few of the many examples and stories that could be told:

- The celebrations marking the 500th anniversary of Anabaptism. One of these was MCA's March Gathering at Foothills. The weekend featured several pastors and nationwide leaders reflecting on the theme, "The Courage to Love". The weekend culminated in Sunday worship and communion served by MCA pastors.
- The leadership development of young adults such as Liam Kachkar, who is currently chair of the Camp Committee. Liam represented MCA at the 500th Anniversary Celebrations in Zurich, Switzerland, and the Mennonite World Conference Global Youth Summit that followed. Liam will continue his involvement in the broader church as the North American representative on the 6-member MWC Young Anabaptist committee, whose role is to look for ways to address the needs of young people in the church.
- The inspiring faithfulness of congregations as they weather headwinds of aging leadership, size, and pastoral transitions. MCA's support of Holyrood in 2022-23 continues to bear much fruit as they regain stability, move forward with intercultural leadership, ride the excitement of young people as they interact at camp, and connect with other MCA congregations. Congregations like Bergthal, First Calgary, and Trinity continue to live into being Christ's body even as they face challenges of pastor transitions. They are truly living into Jesus' words that wherever people of faith gather, Christ is present with them.
- Connections with the church around the world, whether through MC Canada Witness or through global relationships in the South Sudanese and Bethel congregations. MCA has sponsored two students from the South Sudanese church in Gambella to receive pastoral



training at the Meserete Kristos Seminary in Ethiopia, and is excited that Khan Gatkuoth Isaac will be graduating in May of this year.

- Connections with congregations seeking a relationship with MCA. This includes a Chin group in Lethbridge that reached out to MCA near the end of 2025. They have Mennonite roots as a church plant of a Chin congregation in Kitchener that is part of Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada.

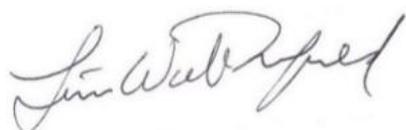
Christ has also been present during challenging times. Moderator Keith Retzlaff has outlined some of these in his report. Among others, global conflicts hit home through our international relationships, notably among the South Sudanese whose homeland continues to experience civil war, and the Chin in Myanmar where civilians are being killed by government forces. Prayers shared across MC Canada has been deeply meaningful to these communities. Pastors Council continued to provide a forum for sharing, discussion, and prayerful support as we celebrated both the challenges and joys of faithful living in the world today.

It is so meaningful for me to walk with the MCA community as we journey in faith together. In the fall I deeply appreciated the opportunity for a 3-month sabbatical. This time of spiritual reflection and restoration has given me a renewed sense of God's presence as together we live into God's calling to be God's people.

A major project for 2025 was finalizing 3 priorities for MCA's ministries and programs:

1. Witnessing to Jesus' healing and Hope.
2. Building mutual relationships between congregations.
3. Calling, developing, and nurturing leaders.

As we live into these priorities, I am excited to see where God leads in 2026 and beyond!



*Tim Wiebe-Neufeld*, Executive Minister

*Storytelling:* A Bridge to Healing and Hope



## Interim Communications Coordinator Report

Linda Dickinson



It has been a whirlwind since beginning my position as the Interim Communications Coordinator November 1, 2025. The learning curve has been huge, it's an incredibly busy time of year, but the people I've had the chance to meet have been wonderful and I've enjoyed my time.

I was hired as a bridge between Ruth Bergen Braun, who's enjoying a well-deserved retirement, and the MCA Executive's decision of how to move forward with Communications beyond the end of April.

I work from home Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. My tasks include compiling items for and asking people to contribute to the Communiqué; asking people to contribute to it; formatting and sending out bulletin announcements; researching, collating and sending out information from Mennonite Church Canada and related partner organizations; staying in touch with Camp Valaqua and other various Working Groups; distributing information from Keith and Tim as required; learning to use the website; and other tasks I'm sure I'm forgetting.

Planning and supporting other staff and committees for the March Gathering and Annual Delegate Sessions have also been part of my tasks since January. This will be my first time at these meetings and I'm looking forward to the experience.

Tim and I meet weekly to chat about where he's been and what is coming up in the life of Mennonite Church Alberta and its churches. I appreciate his willingness to answer questions, as I've got a lot of them! We've also talked about inclusion and diversity in life, in church, in hockey, in camp, and in our families. I look forward to those meetings.

I also meet bi-weekly with the other provincial Communications Coordinators. I value the deep well of knowledge from this group and draw from it regularly. One of the things I've appreciated is having people from different Mennonite Church programs visit these meetings to talk about what they do and how Communications can lift that work.

I've also enjoyed getting to know the other MCA staff. It's been a gift to work with this group of wonderful humans.

While working with the website has been challenging, the struggle has been greatly outweighed by discovering new skills and talents I didn't know I had. I've had the opportunity to do more writing, which has filled my heart in a way I didn't know needed filling. I've been able to express creativity in new ways. Another bonus has been discovering new worship resources and carefully choosing ones to share with the broader MCA community, and I've been enriched every week by the Menno Minute/Priority Pondering writer.

*Storytelling:* A Bridge to Healing and Hope



In my introduction to MCA (Menno Minute - Nov. 19 - [Who is Linda](#)) I wrote that my goal was to visit all ten Mennonite Church Alberta churches by the end of April. As of February 22, 2026, I've visited seven of the ten, and the Sunday morning service at Lethbridge Mennonite will bring that total up to eight.

I have been so enriched by these visits. I've left each service with a full heart and a greater appreciation of each congregation's diversity, and culture. I have been welcomed by each congregation, and made to feel as if I belonged. Thank you to each congregation I've visited and, I'll see you soon, Lethbridge Mennonite, Springridge and Bethel International Oromo Church.

Many thanks for allowing me to serve in this way.

*Storytelling:* A Bridge to Healing and Hope

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**Bridge Building Report**  
**Suzanne Gross**



I praise God for the many opportunities that came my way through the last year to build bridges of friendship, understanding, and deeper appreciation for the diverse ways that come together under the lordship of Christ. God is good, all the time, and all the time, God is good!

As I moved into my 1/4 time position as Bridgebuilding Facilitator on behalf of MCA, I was tasked with focusing on connecting directly with the churches on topics related to Inter-cultural and Inter-faith relations building. I developed two sermons, one on God's heart of hospitality, and the other on inter-culturalism. I was able to share time and learn together on these foundational themes for our inter-cultural, ecumenical, and inter-faith work for good relations with four MCA congregations:

- Springridge Mennonite Church
- Holyrood Mennonite Church
- First Mennonite Church, Calgary
- Lethbridge Mennonite Church

As well, I contributed to two panel discussions at our Mennonite Church Canada Gathering in Kitchener Waterloo in early July. Out of this experience came a few opportunities to contribute to the Canadian Mennonite with stories of Inter-cultural learning and blessing.

In Edmonton, the Anglicans, Muslims and Mennonites teamed up to organize two dialogues under our umbrella group "A Common Word Alberta". One dialogue explored the character of Mary or Mariam, mother of Jesus. She is a beloved figure in the Quran, who has a whole chapter dedicated to her. In October, we organized a dialogue on the story of Abraham and his hospitality toward the three strangers. These dialogues are times of joyful reunion for those who have joined before, but also a time of welcoming for those curious enough to show up for the first time.

Also in Edmonton, I was part of planning our Inter-cultural Inter-Mennonite Good Friday service that centered on the crosses being carried by Christians in Ethiopia and South Sudan -- faithful brothers and sisters longing for peace in protracted war-torn circumstances.

I have been dedicating time to convening and imagining together Indigenous Relations and Creation Care work for church members in our province. Activities include working with Jon Olfert from Camp Valaqua to connect with local Indigenous elders with whom we can merge our journeys on the Treaty 7 land we call Camp Valaqua. As well, we, as settlers, have our own work to do, and to that end, I, along with others, put together a book/Bible study series that we have begun to unpack together over seven sessions. Topics we will cover include grief, our cultural tools for healing, confessing when we get off track or "forget" God's story plot, Biblical lessons of "land Sabbaths", understanding resilience, and committing to meaningful repairs for past wrongs. All of this will culminate in an Indigenous Relations/Creation Care retreat in early June of this year at Camp Valaqua. Stay tuned!



# March Gathering and Annual Delegate Sessions

## Report Book

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### *Finance and Treasurer Reports*



**MCA Financial Reports**  
**Rachel Siemens (Chair), Karl Blank, Wayne Janz (Treasurer)**

**2025**

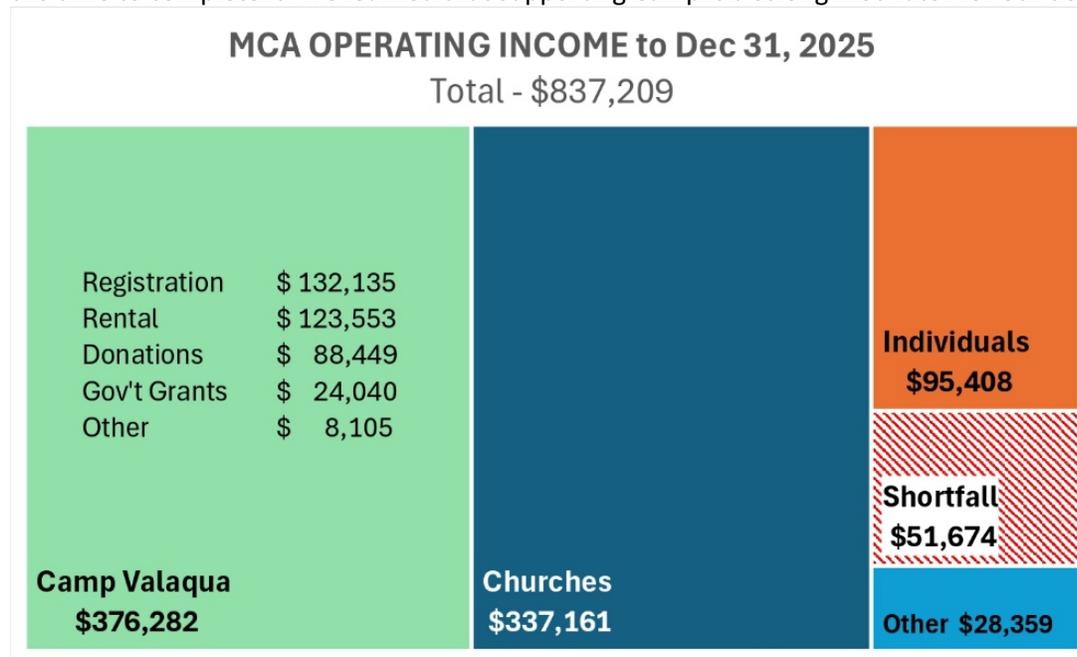
This past year was a concerning one for MCA financially, setting us up for a challenging budget in 2026. Our total income for 2025 was \$837,209, over \$58,000 under budget. Our expenses were slightly under budget at \$888,883. The result was a deficit of \$51,674 instead of the projected surplus of \$4,200.

MCA receives income from our ten congregations and many faithful individual donors. Our largest ministry, Camp Valaqua, also receives income from registrations, rentals, and grants. The chart below shows our different sources of income:

We are grateful to our congregations and individual donors! Although we did not meet our income goals, the generosity of our supporters, combined with our reserves from previous years, enabled us to live out our shared vision and mission, and carry out our 2025 ministries and programs. You will find their successes recorded throughout the pages of this report book. **Thank you!**

Individual donations were \$22,000 lower in 2025 than we had budgeted and \$14,000 lower than 2024. Mennonite Church Canada Relational Witness donations were almost \$26,000 under budget, as well.

Wanting to learn more about our donors, their reasons for giving to MCA ministries, including Camp, and their needs, the Finance Committee created a donor survey in late 2025. Thank you to all who took the time to complete it. We learned that supporting Camp is a strong motivator for our donors.



We encourage you to complete the survey, which you can access online at [Mennonite Church Alberta Donor Survey – Fill out form](#)

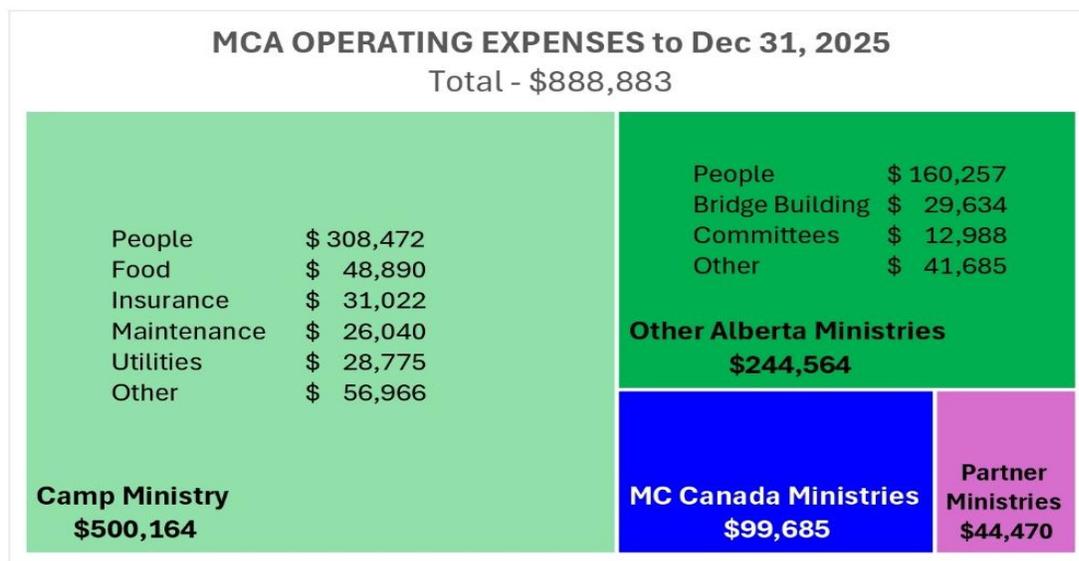


Our generosity is not limited to financial support.

- Over 2,000 cookies were baked for Camp Valaqua last summer.
- Volunteer hours at Camp in 2025 was close to 2,250 -
  - 1,150 in the kitchen,
  - 480 for work days,
  - 200 Camp Committee meetings,
  - 120 summer maintenance,
  - 280 Camp chaplains
- Volunteer hours at MCA March Gathering 2025 in Calgary: 154 (at least!)

Plus, the many hours of service by all of our committee members. **Thank you!**

The chart below shows our expenditures in support of our Camp Valaqua ministry, local congregations, provincial programs, and nationwide church ministries which includes International Witness. We were slightly underbudget on overall expenses, however, Valaqua had some unexpected costs that resulted in Camp spending ending the year over budget by \$36,064. This was offset by the \$26,000 reduction in payment to Relational Witness (since Relational Witness is a flow-through income/expense).



*(Detailed financial reports are on page 28.)*

One area of concern is our current cash flow position. Like many churches, MCA receives a significant amount of our donations in November and December. However, our greatest expenses happen in the



summer as we support our Camp ministry – think food for campers. We encourage our annual donors to consider making your contribution in April or May or give monthly. Many of our congregations have already done this, for which we are grateful.

Our financial records and processes are professionally audited in the odd numbered years. The auditor's report for 2025 will be updated and available at the Delegate Sessions. Thank you to Aperture Professional Corporation for their work.

## **2026 Budget**

Forecasting income that relies on donations is difficult. Given that our donations in 2025 were below projections and that our cash reserves are shrinking, we are conservative in planning our 2026 budget. We are also attentive to our cash flow needs in order to manage our peak outflows during the summer months. With all this in mind, we made the tough decision to bring the Bridge Building Program to an end in April 2026 and to considerably reduce our financial support to Canadian Mennonite University and RJC High School.

Our 2026 operating budget projects a \$38,000 surplus, which will be used to replenish our cash reserves. The Finance Committee's hope is to build up and maintain cash reserves around \$150,000, which is the equivalent of our average three-month spending. Reserves help us manage cash flow, fund unexpected needs (e.g. supporting a congregation with a pastor illness or providing mediation to help resolve a conflict), and provide a cushion for emergencies or shortfalls. Strong cash reserves will give us the breathing room to operate from a place of security/trust and not scarcity. The full budget is found on page 31. Here is the summary:

2026 budgeted income	\$863,200
2026 budgeted expenses	<u>\$824,800</u>
2026 budgeted surplus	\$ 38,400

The March Gathering weekend in Lethbridge will provide two opportunities to give:

- Friday evening's offering will go to the general ministries of MCA
- Saturday's offering will go to Camp Valaqua.

The Camp Valaqua Support Fund (CVSF) spending is separate from the operating budget. This fund is an internally restricted fund used primarily for maintenance and camp improvement projects, including the 2026 Site Development Plan that will be shared at the March Gathering. The projects planned and approved for this year total \$32,500. The balance remaining in this fund at the end of 2026 is projected to be \$158,000.



<b>Mennonite Church Alberta</b>		
<b>Balance Sheet</b>		
<b>2025-12-31</b>		
<b>Current Year Amortization, Unaudited</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>Current as of</b>	<b>Previous Year as of</b>
	<b>2025-12-31</b>	<b>2024-12-31</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
<b>Cash and Cash Equivalent</b>		
01-1005 Cash-on-hand	5.25	45.00
01-1010 Royal Bank - Operating	124,538.49	222,663.82
01-1011 Royal Bank - Restricted Funds	11,194.91	1,439.29
<b>Total 01-1010 Royal Bank - Operating</b>	<b>\$ 135,733.40</b>	<b>\$ 224,103.11</b>
01-1020 Royal Bank - Camp Valaqua	8,395.01	-144.50
01-1030 Telpay Clearing	0.00	0.00
01-1040 Donated Expense Account	0.00	0.00
01-1050 Undeposited Funds	15,699.17	11,730.50
<b>Total Cash and Cash Equivalent</b>	<b>\$ 159,832.83</b>	<b>\$ 235,734.11</b>
<b>Accounts Receivable (A/R)</b>		
01-1100 Accounts Receivable	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Accounts Receivable (A/R)</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
01-1102 GST Rebate Receivable	4,651.84	2,078.24
01-1103 Interest Receivable	332.36	1,370.00
01-1105 Miscellaneous Accounts Receivable	0.00	0.00
01-1106 Loan to Holyrood (max \$90,000)	87,823.53	87,823.53
<b>01-1200 Investments</b>		
01-1205 RBC GIC 030	0.00	12,493.25
01-1206 RBC GIC 034	131,062.50	131,062.50
01-1209 RBC GIC 036	0.00	25,000.00
01-1210 RBC GIC 037	10,000.00	
<b>Total 01-1200 Investments</b>	<b>\$ 141,062.50</b>	<b>\$ 168,555.75</b>
01-1220 Interfund Accounts Receivable	0.00	0.00
01-1225 Prepaid Expenses	2,933.00	28,155.05
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 396,636.06</b>	<b>\$ 523,716.68</b>
<b>Non-current Assets</b>		
<b>Property, plant and equipment</b>		
<b>Total Property, plant and equipment</b>	<b>\$ 657,768.08</b>	<b>\$ 653,918.07</b>
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>	<b>\$ 657,768.08</b>	<b>\$ 653,918.07</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,054,404.14</b>	<b>\$ 1,177,634.75</b>



<b>Mennonite Church Alberta</b>		
<b>Balance Sheet (cont.)</b>		
<b>2025-12-31</b>		
<b>Current Year Amortization, Unaudited</b>		
<b>Liabilities and Equity</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
<b>Accounts Payable (A/P)</b>		
01-2000 *Accounts Payable	18,493.80	41,043.42
<b>Total Credit Card</b>	5,488.79	3,483.03
01-2210 GST/HST Payable	-152.24	-18.55
01-2221 MC Canada Payable	2,128.62	2,295.88
01-2223 WCB Payable	0.00	0.00
01-2510 Customs & Revenue Payable	4,350.60	5,292.88
<b>Total Payroll Liabilities</b>	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 30,309.57</b>	<b>\$ 52,096.66</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 30,309.57</b>	<b>\$ 52,096.66</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
01-3000 Opening Bal Equity	0.00	0.00
01-3010 Unrestricted Funds Equity	264,534.54	268,384.55
01-3015 Operating Fund Equity	0.00	0.00
01-3020 Camp Operating Fund Equity	188.54	9,944.16
01-3200 Externally Restricted Funds		
01-3212 Facility Upgrade Fund Equity	10,355.76	600.14
01-3213 Leadership Memorial Fund Equity	839.15	839.15
<b>Total 01-3200 Externally Restricted Funds</b>	<b>\$ 11,194.91</b>	<b>\$ 1,439.29</b>
01-3300 Other Restricted Funds Equity		
01-3310 Camp Capital Fund Equity	657,768.08	653,918.07
<b>Total 01-3300 Other Restricted Funds Equity</b>	<b>\$ 657,768.08</b>	<b>\$ 653,918.07</b>
<b>Net Transfer</b>	0.00	0.00
<b>Retained Earnings</b>	191,852.02	264,379.79
<b>Profit for the year</b>	-101,443.52	-72,527.77
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$ 1,024,094.57</b>	<b>\$ 1,125,538.09</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>	<b>\$ 1,054,404.14</b>	<b>\$ 1,177,634.75</b>



Restricted Fund Balances	Starting Balance	Closing Balance
	2025-01-01	2025-12-31
Leadership Memorial Fund	\$ 839.15	\$ 839.15
Camp Valaqua Support Fund	\$ 247,327.00	\$ 191,583.48
Camp Valaqua Facility Upgrade	\$ 600.14	\$ 10,355.76
Total	\$ 248,766.29	\$ 202,778.39



<b>Mennonite Church Alberta</b>					
<b>2025 Year End Summary Statement and 2026 Proposed Budget</b>					
No Amortization, Unaudited	2024	2025		2026	
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget	% Budget
INCOME (Operating)	2024-12-31	2025-12-31	2025-12-31	Requested	Change
01-4100 Church Donations Income					
01-4102 Calgary Chin Christian Donation Inc	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 0.00	-100.0%
01-4104 Calgary First Donation Inc	25,000.00	26,000.00	26,000.00	42,000.00	61.5%
01-4106 Calgary Foothills Donation Inc	100,000.00	103,000.00	103,000.00	103,000.00	0.0%
01-4108 Calgary Trinity Donation Inc	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.0%
01-4110 Didsbury Bergthl Donation Inc	6,500.00	6,500.00	6,500.00	6,500.00	0.0%
01-4111 Edmonton Bethel Int'l Donation Inc	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	n/a
01-4114 Edmonton First Donation Inc	108,100.00	110,600.04	110,300.00	110,300.00	0.0%
01-4116 Edmonton Holyrood Donation Inc	5,475.00	5,475.00	5,500.00	5,500.00	0.0%
01-4118 Edmonton South Sudanese Donation Inc	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	n/a
01-4120 Lethbridge Donation Inc	42,000.00	43,200.00	43,300.00	44,500.00	2.8%
01-4122 Pincher Creek Springridge Donation Inc	18,305.00	17,386.00	13,000.00	13,000.00	0.0%
01-4200 Individual Donations Income	100,035.58	85,357.64	107,500.00	87,500.00	-18.6%
01-4230 MC Canada Relational Witness Donation Inc	30,724.75	10,050.00	36,000.00	10,000.00	-72.2%
01-4270 Program Designated Inc					
01-4271 YLT Snow Camp Registration Inc	3,605.00	2,080.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.0%
01-4272 YLT Event Registration Inc	1,505.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.0%
01-4275 Bridge Building Ministry Donation Inc	17,275.73	3,439.83	10,000.00	0.00	-100.0%
01-4300 Other Income	13,992.39	7,883.67	7,400.00	2,600.00	-64.9%
03-4000 Community Building Committee Inc	5,585.00	6,625.00	6,000.00	7,200.00	20.0%
05-4000 Congregational Leadership Committee Inc	2,845.00	3,330.00	3,000.00	3,300.00	10.0%
07-4000 Missions & Service Committee Income	3,500.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,400.00	8.0%
11-4000 Camp Valaqua Income					
11-4110 Camp General Donations Inc	60,631.64	69,608.67	63,000.00	72,000.00	14.3%
11-4115 Camp Campership Donation Inc	2,463.65	2,300.00	2,500.00	4,000.00	60.0%
11-4210 Camp Registration Inc	127,742.50	132,135.00	138,200.00	141,000.00	2.0%
11-4212 Camp Facilities Rental Inc	99,769.00	91,588.00	104,500.00	100,000.00	-4.3%
11-4214 Camp School Programs Inc	14,686.00	14,615.00	14,000.00	20,000.00	42.9%
11-4216 Camp Resident Rental Inc	10,200.00	17,350.00	20,400.00	20,400.00	0.0%
11-4218 Camp Apparel and Merch Sales Inc	6,648.83	7,795.35	7,000.00	8,000.00	14.3%
11-4220 Camp Other Inc	0.00	310.14	0.00	0.00	n/a
11-4310 Camp Hike-A-Thon Donation Inc	16,678.77	11,690.00	18,000.00	15,000.00	-16.7%
11-4312 Camp Other Fundraising Inc	2,849.75	4,850.00	2,500.00	5,000.00	100.0%
11-4410 Camp Fed Govt Funding Inc	15,360.00	23,040.00	15,000.00	24,000.00	60.0%
11-4412 Camp Prov Govt Funding Inc	0.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	n/a
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ 854,978.59</b>	<b>\$ 837,209.34</b>	<b>\$ 895,600.00</b>	<b>\$ 863,200.00</b>	<b>-3.6%</b>
11-4900 Camp Nonbudgeted Inc		9,755.62			



Mennonite Church Alberta					
2025 Year End Summary Statement and 2026 Proposed Budget (cont.)					
No Amortization, Unaudited	2024	2025		2026	
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget	% Budget
EXPENSES (Operating)	2024-12-31	2025-12-31	2025-12-31	Requested	Change
01-5100 MC Canada Exp					
01-5105 MC Canada Assembly Registration Exp	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,835.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 0.00	-100.0%
01-5110 MC Canada Operations Exp	88,440.93	87,800.00	87,800.00	86,200.00	-1.8%
01-5115 MC Canada Relational Witness Exp	30,724.75	10,050.00	36,000.00	10,000.00	-72.2%
01-5120 MC Canada Other Donations Exp	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	n/a
01-5200 Partner Ministries Exp					
01-5205 Canadian Mennonite Magazine Exp	8,979.00	8,917.52	9,000.00	9,000.00	0.0%
01-5210 Canadian Mennonite University Exp	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	5,000.00	-75.0%
01-5215 Mennonite Historical Society Exp	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.0%
01-5220 Mennonite World Conference Exp	0.00	2,552.73	0.00	1,000.00	n/a
01-5225 Rosthern Junior College Exp	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	3,000.00	-75.0%
01-5270 Youth Leadership Team Exp	1,855.62	818.16	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.0%
01-5300 Exec Committee Exp					
01-5305 Bethel Support Exp	6,000.00	6,000.00	4,000.00	0.00	-100.0%
01-5306 Bridge Building Exp	66.32	0.00	500.00	200.00	-60.0%
01-5315 Communications Expenses	1,060.81	413.94	2,000.00	1,000.00	-50.0%
01-5325 Executive Minister Exp	8,614.12	8,165.95	7,500.00	7,500.00	0.0%
01-5330 Liability Insurance Exp	2,895.00	2,895.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.0%
01-5335 MCA Fundraising Exp	350.15	553.04	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.0%
01-5350 Nuer Support Exp	2,400.00	2,400.00	2,400.00	2,400.00	0.0%
01-5355 Office Rent Exp	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.0%
01-5360 Office Staff Prof Development Exp	2,091.83	886.78	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.0%
01-5370 Office Staff Salaries and Benefits Exp	171,341.96	168,980.75	166,300.00	141,300.00	-15.0%
01-5380 Office Supplies Exp	1,212.77	409.39	1,200.00	1,000.00	-16.7%
01-5390 Professional Services Exp	24,362.98	30,590.98	35,400.00	24,700.00	-30.2%
01-5397 Software Subscriptions Exp	1,183.50	1,827.16	1,700.00	2,500.00	47.1%
01-5399 Exec Committee Travel & Other Exp	250.00	3,762.89	3,500.00	2,500.00	-28.6%
01-5400 Finance Committee Exp	2,844.83	1,864.03	2,400.00	2,000.00	-16.7%
01-5490 Nominating Committee Other Exp	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.0%
01-5495 Personnel Committee Other Exp	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.0%
01-5500 Miscellaneous Exp	3,787.66	807.44	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.0%
03-5000 Community Building Expense	5,417.16	5,149.46	9,800.00	9,500.00	-3.1%
05-5000 Congregational Leadership Exp	2,642.19	3,900.00	3,400.00	3,900.00	14.7%
07-5000 Missions & Service Committee Exp	4,594.42	3,938.79	7,500.00	8,900.00	18.7%
11-5000 Camp Valaqua Operating Exp	445,723.25	500,164.01	464,100.00	489,800.00	5.5%
Total Expenses	\$ 851,039.25	\$ 888,883.02	\$ 891,400.00	\$ 824,800.00	-7.5%
Operating Budget Surplus/Loss		-51,673.68	4,200.00	38,400.00	
11-5500 Camp Nonbudgeted Exp		13,068.00			



### **MCA Treasurers 2026 Report** **Wayne Janz and Austin Janz**

Most of our day-to-day activities have become well entrenched in our two and a half years filling the treasurer role. Austin focuses on making bank deposits, recording expenses, paying utility bills, and recording credit card transactions. Wayne focuses on recording receipts, payment processing, payroll, month end, and reporting.



We made a backend change in our payment processing in 2025. We continue to use Telpay to pay most of our expenditures, but we migrated from Telpay Desktop to Telpay Online. This means all our financial systems are now cloud-based services. This gives us more flexibility in how we access them and stronger security and data backup.

Late in 2024, we switched our website credit card processing service from Stripe to Square, making 2025 our first full year using Square. As our comfort level and knowledge of Square increased, we began taking advantage of some of its features to make payments more convenient for our donors, campers, and facility renters. We also purchased a handheld point of sale system for easier processing of in-person credit/debit card payments. It will mostly be used at Camp Valaqua.

The year 2025 is an MCA audit year. We have been working with Aperture Chartered Professional Accountants to provide them with all the records, reports, and explanations they need to complete the audit in time for our March Gathering.

We completed the migration of our donor and supporting information into the Barefoot DRM (Donor Relationship Management) system up to the end of June 2025. This has required some lengthy manual data cleanup and process testing. We expect to have the remainder of the data migrated before we gather in March.

While the last two and a half years have involved some significant financial system changes, we expect that 2026 will be a steady state year.



# March Gathering And Annual Delegate Sessions

## Report Book

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### *Camp Valaqua Reports*

Committee  
Director  
Site Development Plan



## Camp Valaqua Committee Report

**Liam Kachkar, Darrel Heidebrecht, Kathryn Friesen, Jennifer Ratzlaff, Noah Thiessen, Rachel Siemens**

2025 was a milestone year for Camp Valaqua and the Committee: for leadership staff, for our next 10-year Site Development Plan and for infrastructure maintenance.

**Leadership Staff:** In February 2025, we welcomed Derek & Darcie Janzen into the Site Manager role, which is a shared 1 FTE position. Derek & Darcie have been a gift to Camp, along with their four kids (from oldest to youngest): Annelise, Archer, Aspen, & Ansel. Derek & Darcie have been described to me as people with “timely attention to detail”. Whenever we Committee members are on site, we’ve noted their array of skills, their enthusiasm and the way they welcome guests at camp. Between June and August 2025, Jon was on sabbatical. During that time away, Charlene Lauzier jumped in as the Interim Executive Director for the summer staff team. She did an excellent job, working with the Camp Committee, summer staff, and other MCA staff to keep camp running smoothly. In September 2025, Charlene Lauzier transitioned into a 0.5 FTE Program Director position. This role was established in response to feedback we have received from rental groups, such as schools, for year-round weekday programming. In this role, Charlene has also made substantial strides in promoting Alberta-wide youth engagement by partnering with and championing the MCA Youth Leadership Team (YLT). This half-time role is proposed to be carried forward into 2026.

**Camp Site Development Plan:** You may recall a long-form survey and engagement session with MCA stakeholders between 2023 and 2024. In 2025, Camp Committee and Camp staff had the chance to envision what comes next. Through summer and fall 2025, we had important conversations to create a Site Development Plan, which is part of this year’s ADS business items. Through the next 10-year plan, there are three driving factors: leaning on feedback from MCA constituents, acknowledging existing programming gaps and generating more income for Camp Valaqua’s ministry. The Camp Committee is seeking approval to move ahead with this 10-year plan at the ADS, working with staff to advance additional infrastructure and new programming as outlined. This work will ensure Camp continues to be an important, well-looked-after and relevant ministry in the years to come.

**Infrastructure Maintenance:** Since the 2025 ADS, strides were made for several significant projects at Camp Valaqua. Between August and September 2025, we replaced all 80 mattresses in the cabins. In fall 2025, Derek & Darcie completed renovations to the white house near the entrance to camp, which allows for additional living space. In January-February 2026, we completed work to insulate the storage Quonset on site. Looking at the proposed Site Development Plan, we plan to use the insulated Quonset as the new shop, replacing the existing shop by the main parking. We look forward to having a larger shop space, which can also be kept warm throughout the year. Between 2026 and 2027, this move will also allow us to convert the current shop in the parking lot into a larger staff office. We’ve been blessed by four volunteers from our Calgary congregations (coordinated by Darrel Heidebrecht). These four volunteers have graciously offered their expertise, equipment and time to help staff with this project. Thank you to the MCA community for your ongoing support of Camp’s ministry. We look forward to sharing what we accomplish in 2026 and hope to see you at Camp under the tall, tall trees.

- Liam Kachkar



**Camp Valaqua Director's Report**  
**Jon Olfert**



Our 2025 summer season was a huge success! Our camper numbers continue to grow, with a 6% year-over-year increase. Our rental program kept us busy all winter with groups booked almost every weekend, and we hosted schools and retreats in the spaces between.

### ***Campers***

Our final number of campers for 2025 was 388, up 6% from 2024 and continuing our post-COVID growth. We continue to work toward pre-COVID numbers, and we are encouraged by consistent year-over-year growth. Our Family Camps continue to be popular as well as our teen camp (Breakaway) and our PIT Crew programs.

We gave out over \$7,251 in campership aid to help 21 kids get to camp. It was a significant year for our Campership Program. This often lines up with economics, and it has been a challenging year for many families. Thank you to all the amazing donors that helped to support this program. We are so grateful to be able to remove this barrier for so many campers.

### ***Out-trips***

We ran two Canoe Camps, one Backpack Trip, and one Adventure Training Camp. The trips ran safely and made a lot of happy campers! The Out-trip program continues to be a feeder for our CIT and staff programs and an effective bridge between our teen camp and staff roles. The Out-trip program is also an alternative connection to camp for kids who aren't as engaged in the classic sleepaway camp model.

### ***Site Development***

A big focus of the Camp Committee and permanent staff in 2025 was the Site Development Plan. We are excited to share this with you, and it sets us up for future growth! A lot of careful thought went into this plan, and we are excited to share how you can engage with the future of Valaqua.

We have Wednesdays dedicated to Site Development Plan work. If you have a Wednesday free and would like to help, reach out! There are lots of low and high-skilled jobs to complete. **Also, watch the MCA Communiqué and your church bulletin for Pizza Days!** On the first Wednesday of most months, we will be looking for help with a larger piece of a project. Lunch is provided... guess what we're having?

### ***New Faces***

It has been such a blessing to add Derek and Darcie Janzen to the staff team. Derek is extremely capable when it comes to fixing and building, and Darcie brings administrative competencies to our office. They have officially been in the job a year now, and we are so grateful!

We have also added a half-time Program Director in Charlene Lauzier. Charlene has been working with the Youth Leadership Team in planning and leading provincial youth events. She is also working on growing our school program. Charlene graduated with an education degree at the University of Calgary last spring and has been a long-time seasonal staffer with us. She will be the Program Director in our summer program, and then continue part-time in the fall. Char has been working with the Youth Leadership Team of MCA to support



several new province-wide events as well as our traditional Snowcamp weekend. Char will also be involved in seasonal staff hiring and lots of summer camp planning!

### ***Youth Leadership Team***

Valaqua continues to be involved with mentoring the Youth Leadership Team. We will be hosting Snowcamp (AKA Slushcamp) on March 27-29. This date shift is temporary for 2026; we will be back to a February weekend in 2027.

### ***Valaqua the rest of the year***

Camp continues to be busy the rest of the year. A stream of Scout Groups, Family Reunions, and Church Groups utilize the facility through the rest of the year! We are excited to welcome back many groups that have enjoyed the facilities for many years as well as a few that are coming for the first time.

### ***Executive Director Sabbatical***

Our Executive Director, Jon Olfert, was on a sabbatical this year. Jon took some time to learn, recharge, and spend time with the members of his family who were not working at camp. Highlights included a course series on crisis communications and traveling to watch his son Jonah compete at the Canadian National Track Championships and Canada Summer Games. Jon returns refreshed and excited to get to work on implementing our new Site Development Plan.

### ***Seasonal Staff***

Our summer staff continues to be our major strength at Valaqua. These folks did amazing work welcoming a diverse group of campers to our place under the tall, tall trees. If you recognize any of these names, say thanks next time you see them!

### ***Camp Valaqua Staff 2025***

#### **Leadership Support Staff**

**Interim Director:** Charlene Lauzier

**Program Director:** Devlin Patrick

**CIT Director:** Kyle Wiebe

**Office Manager:** Lena Wiebe

**PIT Crew Boss:** Liesel Retzlaff

**Camp Gardener:** Ainsley Dunn

**Out Trip Director:** Ben OlfertWiens

**Out Trip Assistant:** Jade Janssen

**Head Cook:** Lousia Adria

**Assistant Cook:** Isabella Morel

**Program Assistant:** Margo Ratzlaff

#### **Male Counsellors:**

Alexander Adrian

Jake Martell

Jordan Wiens

Kenai Warkentin

Sam OlfertWiens

Yohannes Abera

#### **Male CITs:**

Ben Belletrutti

Fin Lee-Epp

Jonah OlfertWiens

Kenny Sabourin

Sam Nielsen



**Female Counsellors:**

Claire Donais  
 Danika Hickling  
 Helena Chockpelleh  
 Josephine Koop  
 Kienna Krahn  
 Koharu Hogaboam  
 Mikka Kostenicki  
 Sarah Giesbrecht

**Female CITs:**

Aria Spanbauer  
 Bella Tanzola  
 Eleanor Heintz  
 Emma Couldwell  
 Hope Tomlinson  
 Rachel Giesbrecht  
 Ruby Loewen  
 Venissa Tumbay

**Summer 2025 Chaplains:**

Family Camp I - **Cassidy Brown** - Bergthal Mennonite Church  
 Breakaway – **rob peters** – Foothills Mennonite Church  
 Explorer I – **Lillian Nicholson**  
 Adventurer I - **Reg Wiebe** - First Mennonite Church Edmonton  
 Family Camp II – **Liesel Retzlaff** - Foothills Mennonite Church  
 Discovery – **Tany Warkentin** - Springridge Mennonite Church  
 Explorer II – **Debbie Bledsoe** - First Mennonite Church Edmonton  
 Adventurer II - **Aiden Scherzinger** - Foothills Mennonite Church

We continue to encourage our Conference Churches to support your pastors, youth pastors, and other leaders in faith to come and serve with us here at Valaqua. It is a great opportunity to see the summer program in action, and it's fun too!

**Conclusion**

Valaqua is in a place that holds both stability and potential. We are excited to welcome campers back to our programs in summer and so thankful for the amazing young folks who step up to lead and teach in our programs. It is exciting and energizing to look forward and plan for the future. Derek, Darcie, and Char have stepped into big shoes and have done so with grace and enthusiasm.

We are so thankful for all the support you have shown our camp ministry. Valaqua could not operate without the incredible contributions of time, prayer, and resources that you all provide.



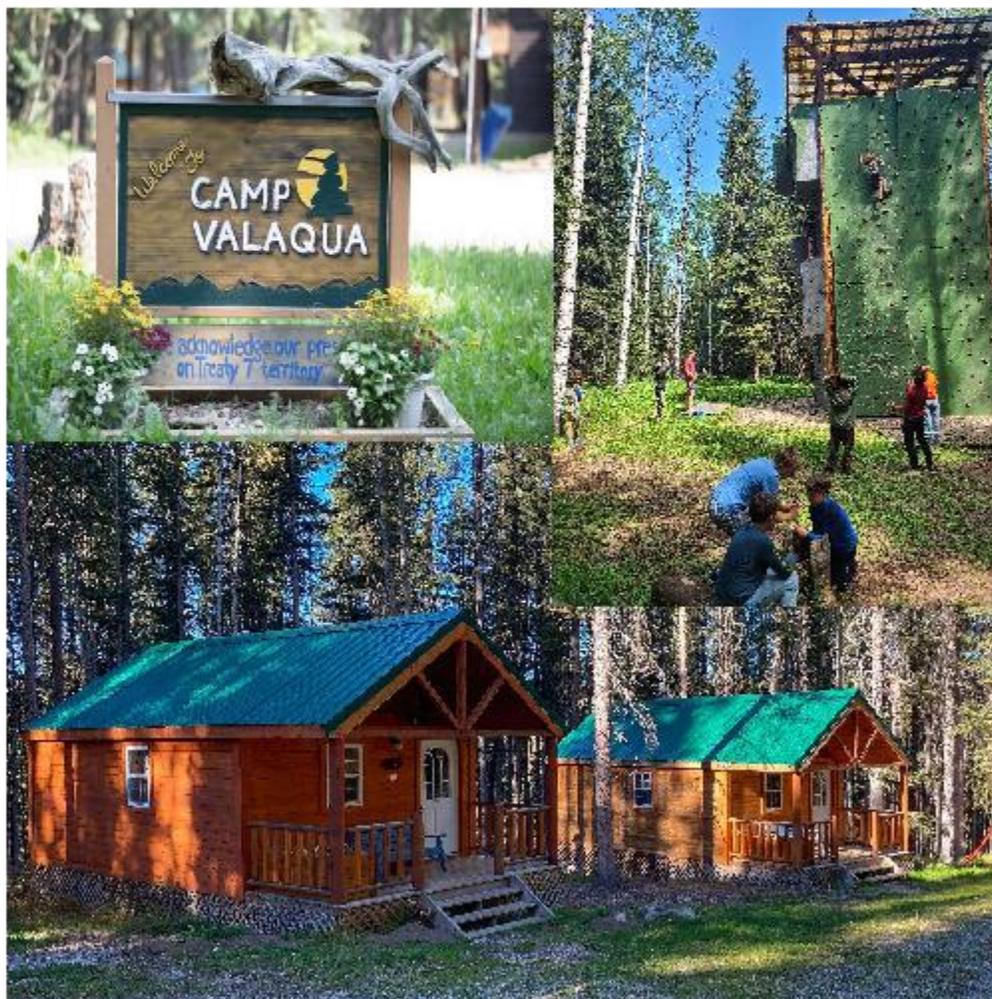
# Camp Valaqua Site Development Plan

A vision for spaces that nurture faith, community, and creation.

Prepared by: Mennonite Church Alberta - Camp Committee

For: Mennonite Church Alberta

Date: February 2026



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## Camp Valaqua Site Development Plan — Structure

### 1. Introduction

This Site Development Plan outlines the physical development priorities for Camp Valaqua over the next decade. It identifies major and minor infrastructure projects that support Camp Valaqua's mission and programs, ensuring facilities remain welcoming, functional, and aligned with the values of Mennonite Church Alberta (MCA).

The plan draws from the *What We Heard* report prepared by Objective Research and Evaluation (November 2024), Camp Valaqua staff input, and consultations with the MCA Camp Committee in October 2025. It is designed as a 10-year vision with a 5-year action framework, grounded in Valaqua's role as a place where faith, community, and creation meet.

### 2. Context and Vision

Nestled in the foothills near Water Valley, Alberta, Camp Valaqua is a ministry of Mennonite Church Alberta—a place where faith, community, and creation meet. Since 1959, generations have gathered here to discover friendship, leadership, and God's presence in the beauty of nature.

Like the campfire that draws people together, Camp Valaqua stands at the center of MCA's shared life, an enduring source of warmth, story, and renewal. Its lodge, cabins, and trails support both summer programs and year-round retreats, extending hospitality to all who seek rest, growth, and connection.

As we look to the future, Camp Valaqua is committed to stewardship: renewing our facilities, expanding accessibility, and deepening our ministry in ways that reflect care for people and creation alike.

- Summary of key findings from the *What We Heard* report (November 2024):
  - Strengths: community, nature, spiritual growth
  - Challenges: aging infrastructure, accessibility, limited year-round use
- Purpose of Camp Valaqua
  - *Camp Valaqua is a Christian ministry of Mennonite Church Alberta. It extends the ministries and congregational life of the supporting churches by providing facilities and Christian programs in a unique setting close to creation. Camp Valaqua also serves as a ministry outreach to the larger community by inviting others to participate in the use of its facilities and Christian ministry.*

**Camp Valaqua is dedicated to proclaiming the Good News that God is the Creator, we are God's people, and the earth is placed in our hands as a gift and a trust. We strive to be a safe place where participants can grow in relationship with God, each other, and themselves, and to have a lot of fun.**

-Adopted in 1998, updated 2024



### 3. Planning Process

- How input was gathered
  - Stakeholder engagement (surveys, interviews, focus groups)
  - Staff identification of operational priorities
  - Committee discussions and site walkthroughs
- Guiding principles: sustainability, inclusivity, financial viability, and mission alignment

### 4. Current Site Assessment

- **Main Lodge:** The hub of camp life, housing the kitchen, dining hall, lounges, and staff offices. The building is well-loved but crowded—office space is limited and sleeping spaces are overdue for flooring, lighting, and paint. The west side “apartment” space could be put to better use, as the kitchen area is underutilized.
- **Jackpine Building:** A multipurpose structure used for programming and rentals. It is aging and in need of significant renovation or replacement to improve insulation, comfort, and usability through all seasons. The Jackpine currently requires annual engineering inspections and repairs.
- **Little Brown House:** A long-serving staff residence now requiring major updates to become a safe, efficient, year-round home. Renovation or replacement will improve both staff housing capacity and rental group flexibility.
- **Staff Housing:** Existing housing for year-round staff (including Managers house and Director's house) need investment—expansion to accommodate family needs, roof repairs, and modernization for energy efficiency. Additional staff and seasonal housing are needed to support summer and rental operations.
- **Program and Outdoor Spaces:** The camp's trails, fire circles, and riverfront are central to its identity but require improved signage, maintenance, and infrastructure (such as covered outdoor spaces and expanded waterfront access).

### 5. Development Priorities and Recommendations

Organized by theme, linking staff priorities with the 2024 What We Heard Report Priorities.

#### 5.1 Facility Improvement and Enhancement

- Renovate **Jack Pine** and **Little Brown House** (both identified in staff and stakeholder input)
- Address **staff housing** needs (expansion, renovation, roof replacement)
- Accessibility improvements (paths, ramps, signage)



- Infrastructure upgrades (septic and water systems, and sustainability measures such as solar or geothermal)
- Create small group and breakout spaces for rentals

### 5.2 Accommodation Expansion

- Develop **four-season rental spaces** with small-group capacity (<30 people)
- Improve **summer staff and PIT crew lounges** with separate dedicated spaces
- Expand **yurt-style or cabin rentals** for off-season guests

### 5.3 Program Development

- Introduce **new adventure elements** (high ropes course, climbing wall)
- Re-establish **winter/snow camps** and **educational partnerships** with schools
- Develop **professional and leadership retreats** for adults and organizations
- Add **non-physical or off-site programs** (e.g., church-based camp experiences)

### 5.4 Community and Mission Integration

- Strengthen MCA and intergenerational connections through retreats and events
- Create inclusive, welcoming spaces that reflect Camp Valaqua's spiritual and environmental values
- Integrate **sustainability education** into programming

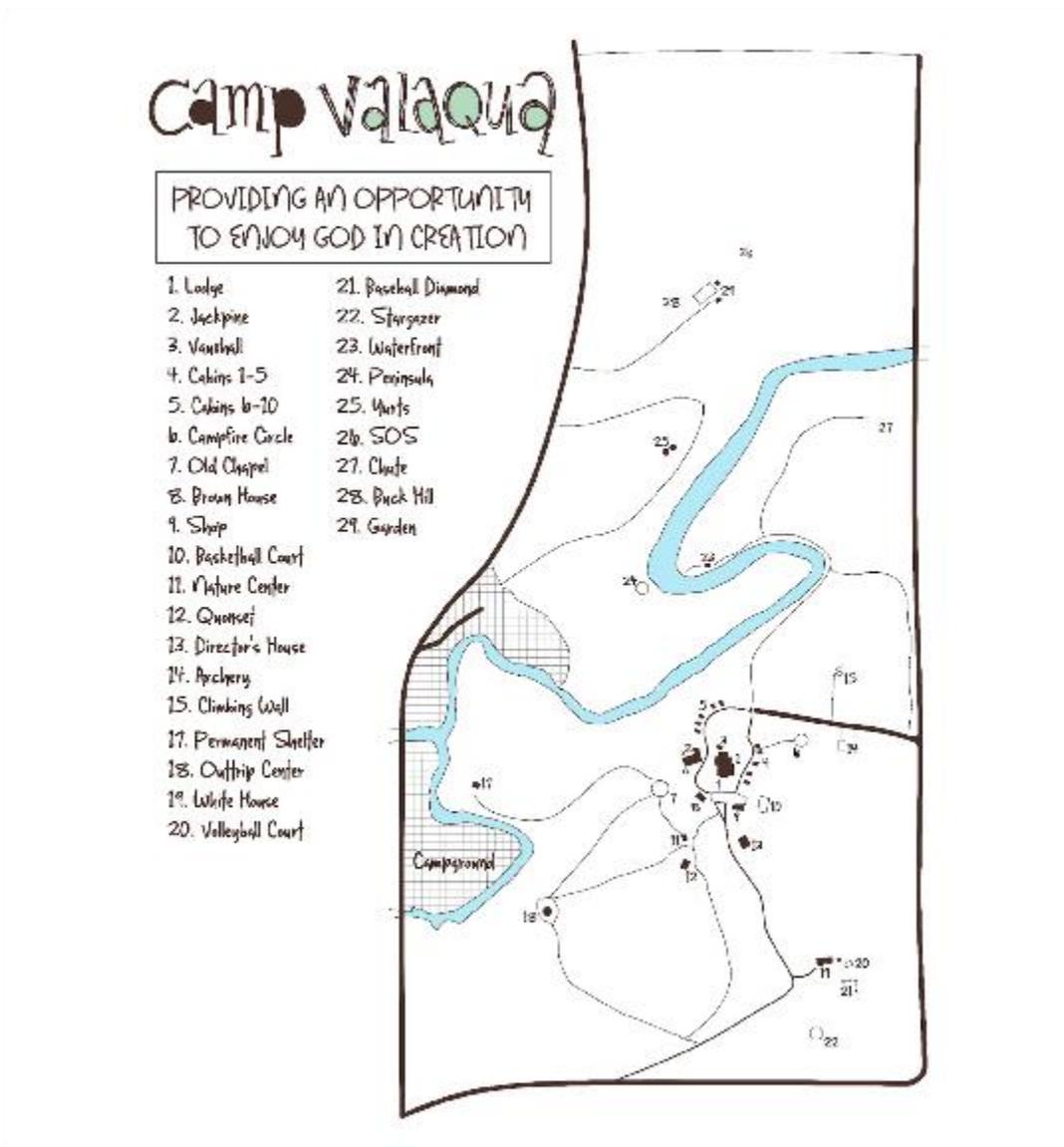
### 5.5 Revenue and Operational Sustainability

- Enhance rental market appeal: upgraded kitchen/dining, flexible spaces
  - Develop packages for weddings, retreats, and community events
  - Form partnerships with caterers, schools, and local organizations
  - Explore pricing models and cost recovery options
- 



6. Site Concept Plan

Site Map



Major Projects – Synchronous	
Quonset Insulation and Heat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insulate the walls and ceiling of the Shop and add vapour barrier</li> <li>Add heater to the Quonset</li> <li>Add lean-to for equipment storage</li> <li>Move shop equipment to the Quonset</li> </ul>
Shop Conversion to office space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create office space for Manager and Director</li> <li>Create workspace for seasonal staff</li> <li>Create a meeting space</li> </ul>
Lodge Sleeping spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convert Lodge apartment kitchen to sleeping space</li> <li>Absorb balcony space in Lodge to create lounge spaces</li> <li>Improve bed comfort in Lodge sleeping spaces</li> <li>Update flooring, lighting, and paint in Lodge sleeping spaces</li> <li>Insulate floor (carpet underlay or ceiling insulation) for noise reduction</li> <li>Create accessible gender-neutral shower space</li> <li>Repurpose current office to Lodge entry</li> </ul>
Covered Outdoor Gym	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create sheltered outdoor space for rainy summer days</li> <li>Create a space to make an ice rink for winter rentals</li> </ul>
Jackpine Renovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create multi-purpose space capable of holding 150 people</li> <li>Create two classroom spaces</li> <li>Create space of reflection (balcony or covered deck)</li> <li>Create sheltered indoor space for smoky summer days</li> </ul>

Major Projects – Asynchronous	
Manager's Residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renovate interior space to create additional bedrooms</li> <li>Add mudroom and additional entrance</li> </ul>
Director's Residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace roof with Tin roof</li> </ul>
Little Brown House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace flooring</li> <li>Update Kitchen</li> <li>Remove Stub wall</li> <li>Paint</li> </ul>
Seasonal Staff Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue camper trailers for the interim</li> <li>Explore accommodation possibilities in the longer term</li> </ul>
Four-Season Rental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a four-season space for small groups (less than 30) that can be booked separately from the main camp</li> </ul>
Fire Smart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore and implement wildfire prevention and protection strategies</li> </ul>



Program Projects – Asynchronous	
Three-Sided Shelters	At Out-trip Centre: Build 2 three-sided shelters to support onsite out-trip Look into refurbishing the well Install a wood stove in the picnic shelter
Golf Cart	Purchase golf cart to help facilitate main site accessibility
Low Ropes	Develop low ropes course
Celebration Trail	Develop celebration trail at the SE corner of the property
Loose Parts Playground	Develop loose parts playground by treehouse
Primitive skills	Develop axe throwing and Atlatl throwing program
Waterfront development	Replace dock Upgrade canoes and kayaks Replace PFDs as needed Improve signage Improve accessibility
Archery Improvements	Create covered shooting positions Repair Archery Shed Replace equipment as necessary
Climbing Wall	Create indoor bouldering/climbing area
Zipline/Luge	Add high thrill activity
Trail Development	Upgrade camp trails Improve signage Create maps for guest use
Portable Merch Shop	Create a portable Merchandise Shop Provide storage for sale items
Group Challenge Course	Create a series of group challenges to facilitate teambuilding
Vault Outhouses	Install up to 4x Vault Outhouses: - Playing Field / Celebration Trail - Waterfront - Archery / Climbing Wall - North Quarter (near Garden)



## 7. Implementation and Phasing

### Phase 1 (Years 1-2, 2026-2027):

#### Year 1

1. Quonset Insulation - Winter 2026
2. Pursuit of Trailers to accommodate summer staff - Winter 2026
3. Replace Waterfront Docks (Donation) - Winter 2026
4. Tackle two program projects
  - Project 1: Initiative Task Development - Spring 2026
5. Shop Demolition - Spring 2026
6. Director's House Roof Replacement - Spring 2026
7. Tackle two program projects
  - Project 2: Start Work on Three-Sided Shelters - Fall 2026
8. Planning for 2027 Site Development

#### Year 2

9. Renovate Shop to Office Space
10. Renovate Lodge Entrance Space
11. Planning for Lodge Sleeping Spaces
  - Fundraising role out with plan and target
12. Tackle Program Projects
  - Complete Three-Sided Shelters
  - Project 3: Archery Improvements

### Phase 2 (Years 3-5, 2028-2030):

13. Renovate Lodge Sleeping Spaces
14. Renovate Little Brown House
15. Build covered Gym space
16. Plan for Jackpine Renovations
  - Fundraising rollout with plan and target
17. Convert existing office to Lodge Entry
18. Tackle two program projects



### Phase 3 (Years 6-10, 2031-2035):

19. Renovate Jackpine
  20. Four-season rental accommodations
    - Develop plan and target
  21. Tackle two program projects
- 

## 8. Monitoring and Review

- The Camp Committee will revisit this document annually as part of the budgeting process to:
    - Identify pressing needs
    - Adjust priorities
    - Confirm budget implications
- 



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## Appendices

- A. Identified Priorities

### Identified Priorities

The following priorities were identified by our Camp Valaqua Staff.

#### Rental Capacity Expansion

We have been challenged to expand our rentals. We are currently very close to capacity in our main lodge and expanding our rentals would mean expanding our rentable spaces. Small group spaces (for groups smaller than 30) would be a useful addition. Four Season accommodations with kitchen space would also be desirable.

#### Staff Accommodation (seasonal and year-round)

Our year-round staff accommodation is old and aging. Derek and Darcie's house needs expansion to accommodate their family. Jon's house needs a roof. The Little Brown House needs renovation to be a full-time livable space. The use of these spaces by year-round staff means we struggle to provide accommodation to our non-counselling seasonal staff (cooks, leadership staff, etc.)

#### Program Expansion

We decommissioned our Sky Swing in 2020 and have not had a significant addition to our programming in many years. We would like to expand our programming options for both summer and school groups.

#### Office Space Expansion

Our current office situation includes two shared spaces, each with at least four staffers accessing the space. This is amazing for collaboration but makes a very challenging environment to accomplish high focus tasks and leaves very little space for sensitive conversations with campers or staff.

#### Summer Program Accommodations

##### PIT Program Accommodation

The PIT Crew requires space to meet and relax. We have accessed the lounge on the east side of the lodge for this, but it impacts our volunteers as many of them stay in those rooms. Conflicts in terms of hours (kitchen volunteers to bed early and up early... PIT not so much) mean the PIT crew ends up in the foyer of the lodge and are just kind of in the middle of everything. A lounge/meeting space separate from the Lodge for PIT would be ideal.

##### Summer Staff Lounge

The summer staff team accesses the lounge on the West side of the Lodge as a lounge and meeting space. The space is very small for our entire staff team, and we end up doing a lot of our meetings out of doors. Similar issues in terms of noise conflicts arise, but to a lesser extent than with our PIT Crew.



# March Gathering And Annual Delegate Sessions

## Report Book

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### *Committees*

Personnel

Missions & Service

Indigenous Relations Working Group

Creation Care

Congregational Leadership

Community Building Committee

Nominations

MCA Representative to Joint Council

MWC/Global Youth Summit

Palestine Israel Network

MCA Representative to Canadian Mennonite



**Personnel Committee Report**  
**Doug Wiebe**

A strength of MCA is all the people who, in both paid and volunteer capacities, are committed to the health and growth of the body of Christ that is MCA.

Significant happenings with regard to personnel in the past 12 months include:

- Ruth Bergen Braun retired from the MCA Communications Coordinator role. Keith Retzlaff and Tim Wiebe Neufeld led the process in the summer of 2025 that led to the successful hiring of Linda Dickinson to serve Mennonite Church Alberta in this important role.

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to have served Mennonite Church Alberta on the Personnel Committee for the past six years. I offer my best wishes and whatever support I can give to the next chair of the MCA Personnel Committee.



**Mission and Service Committee report**  
**Joyce Baergen, Mezgebu Tucho and John Wollard**

The Mission and Service Committee thanked Marie Moyer and Tracy Brown for their service on this committee. Joyce Baergen and Mezgebu Tucho continued on this committee with John Woolard joining us after the Delegate session in March. Our committee started with only three members. Kari and Marcus joined us in May, but unfortunately, they had to withdraw from our committee in June.

The main work of our committee was working on revising the Terms of Reference. It seemed a daunting task, but Tim Wiebe-Neufeld was a very big help to us, rewriting, editing these terms to reflect what we wanted this committee to achieve.

The other work we were involved in was with Isaac and Simon, our South Sudanese seminary students in Ethiopia attending Miserete Kristos Seminary. Both students completed last year's work. Isaac will graduate in May 2026 and Simon will graduate in May. 2027. The South Sudanese Church Edmonton has begun sending money to support Isaac and Simon via donations via individual donations to this project over the year and will continue in 2026.

Our Committee continues to look at ways we can promote Mission and Service opportunities for all churches in Alberta.



## Indigenous Relations Working Group (IRWG) REPORT

Ruth Bergen Braun, Suzanne Gross, Coreen Froese

During the MC Canada retreat in Pinawa, Manitoba in October 2024, we were cautioned that the work of reconciliation is slow and steady and that it will not be completed in our lifetime. Thus, we have tried to be patient with ourselves and others as time unfolds and so what follows is our work since our workshop at the 2025 MCA Gathering.

Our group is now smaller. Although he plans to continue supporting IRWG through the Foothills Buffalo Shout group, Bill Christieson made the decision in January to withdraw from active IRWG leadership. We are open to a replacement! Coreen Froese continues to support the IRWG as she can.

Our dream for a joint retreat at Camp Valaqua with CCWG, continues to be a focus. To begin this process by meeting with elders before the planning begins rather than later as an add-on, Jon and Ruth met Elders Ollie and Virgil on November 3. Jon had met Ollie previously but Virgil, a hereditary pipe keeper, was new to both of them. The focus of the meeting was relationship building. Virgil often shared both his Christian faith as well as his traditional knowledge. They seemed open to contributing to our retreat but also had a request from Camp/MCA — that we would consider partnering with them to enable them to get a grant to host a language learning event, likely in a teepee set up on the north quarter of Camp's property. Both Jon and Ruth were excited about this possible partnership and promised a future meeting.

This future meeting was held at Camp, with the addition of Bill Christieson, Char Lauzier, and for a bit of time, Derek Janzen. Quote from Elder Ollie "If we're going to build something, we have to know each other." And we are beginning to become friends.

We continue to encourage MCA congregants to:

- Join book studies — currently Biblical texts for Decolonization through Unforgetting: Lessons from "BECOMING KIN". See the IRWG web page for details
- Listen to webinars hosted both by MC Canada (for example, a webinar with Sarah Augustine on Building communities of repair),
- Read Indigenous authors (for example, see the book review on the IRWG webpage of 21 Things you May not know about the Indian Act)
- And join activities in our own communities as allies. For example, the initiatives by Buffalo Shout at Foothills partnering with Sober Crew.

And finally, consider participating in our June 5-6 retreat. We will bring together themes of Creation Care and Indigenous Relations. Stay tuned for registration information coming soon.



**Creation Care Working Group (CCWG) Report**  
**Charlene Lauzier, Liesel Retzlaff, Aiden Scherzinger**

We had a wonderful year as the Creation Care Working Group (CCWG). Liesel Retzlaff and I both spent the start of 2025 finishing up our time in BC and transitioning our work to Valaqua for the spring and summer. In the fall we found ourselves back in Alberta with the capacity to gain traction again in the CCWG.

**Highlights From our Year:**

- I (Charlene) spent my spring at A Rocha Canada, an environmental stewardship organization in Surrey BC. This opportunity allowed me to live and learn in a place whose mission is to care for the land and creation. I learned about watersheds, farming, salmon spawning, eating in season, and so much more. Since returning, I have taken time to learn more about how I can share this knowledge through the lens of our CCWG.
- I (Liesel) made a move this fall to Edmonton to study Environmental Science at The Kings University. After spending time with local congregations and at Camp Valaqua it became clear that I had a passion for caring for the earth. Moving to Edmonton was a step in furthering my education and gaining knowledge to share within these circles.
- We welcomed Aiden Scherzinger into our team and have been blessed by his creative ideas and contributions to the CCWG. Aiden brought a new eagerness to our work and his connection with Foothills has been a wonderful addition.
- A milestone of the year is that three MCA churches now have or are in the process of adding solar panels to their church buildings! We thank the individuals who took time to spearhead these projects and make an active step in caring for creation.
- Camp Valaqua was able to grow a variety of vegetables that allowed staff and campers to eat fresh fruits and veggies at meal times. PIT crew campers learned about where their food actually came from. At the end of the summer we blessed camp families and congregation members with the abundant leftovers!
- We had the opportunity to gather in Pinawa Manitoba last October with Indigenous Relations and Climate Action groups across Canada. This weekend called us to action, share stories, new and old relationships, and to have important conversations.



## Ongoing Work

Bi-monthly, we meet with Creation Care groups from across the province, sharing resources, our work, joys, concerns, and support for one another. This resource has been life-giving for our work here in Alberta and continues to give us hope in the work we are doing within MCA.

Our year ahead is filled with many exciting and new opportunities. We are looking forward to the joint IR & CCWG gathering at Valaqua in May. We also look forward to building a sustainability list created alongside congregational members, hearing their voices in our work.

We want to thank Jesse Brandt and Jeremy Wiens for all of their contributions and support over the last two years. We are grateful for their dedication, support, and deep care for the creation care work we are doing. As the CCWG transitions, their footprints lay in the foundation of our work.

*Storytelling:* A Bridge to Healing and Hope

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## Congregational Leadership Committee Report 2026

*Brothers and sisters, we ask you to respect those who are working with you, leading you, and instructing you. Think of them highly with love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.*

*1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 CEB*

The Congregational Leadership committee (CLC) understands:

- that the wellbeing of MCA resides in its people/congregations.
- To remain healthy requires good leadership of the people/congregations.
- It is CLC's responsibility to know the condition of MCA's people/congregations and to give special attention to the those in their leadership.

The members of the CLC for 2025 consisted of Timothy Burkholder, Caleb Kowalko (through December), Tany Warkentin and Tim Wiebe-Neufeld. Tany took on the role of chair following Caleb's departure. Timothy agreed to be CLC's representative on the General Council and in the All-Committee meetings and continues as secretary. CLC met eleven times throughout the year including an exit interview. All but one meeting was held via Zoom.

In its primary purpose of equipping congregational leaders for their task and working with and supporting the Executive Minister, the members of CLC were engaged in fulfilling the various duties associated with their role within MCA.

1. CLC assisted member congregations when larger regional church support was seen as beneficial. When walking alongside congregations facing difficult decisions or issues, CLC respects confidentiality. CLC processes all issues along with the Executive Minister as he connects with and supports the congregations. CLC is committed to responding prayerfully with wisdom and discernment in each case and to treat each situation with compassion and care.
  - CLC assisted Bethel Oromo, Bergthal MC, Calgary First, Holyrood MC, and Trinity MC in their respective ongoing processes of visioning, discernment and/or pastoral transitions.
2. CLC assisted congregations and pastors with the process of pastoral call, ordination, evaluation, transfer, termination, credentialing, and de-credentialing. We are grateful for all who have responded to God's call to pastoral ministry and to serve with such dedication and passion.
  - We recognize Amanuel Abdisa who joined the leadership at Bethel Oromo and in 2025 began the initial steps of the MCA credentialing process, Sena Mosisa who joined Bethel for a period of 6 months, and Nathaniel Bimba, who joined the pastoral staff at Holyrood in July of 2025.
    - Exit interviews were conducted with Caleb Kowalko (Calgary First) in December 2025 and Terry Fach (Interim at Trinity) in February 2026.
  - Credentialing for Tom and Christine Poovong (Witness workers with MC Canada) is pending.
3. CLC planned and promoted a number of events to support, train, and connect MCA pastors and congregational lay leaders.
  - The Pastors Council met 4 times in-person.
  - CLC promoted and offered financial support for pastors attending CMU's ReNew conference (February 10-11).

- CLC promoted Pastor's Week (February 17-20) at AMBS.
  - CLC switched the timing of the Faith Studies event and the Pastors Retreat. The Pastor's Retreat is now held in spring to provide a respite from the busy Lent/Easter season. This year it was held April 29-May 1 at Mt. Saint Francis Retreat Centre.
  - The Faith Studies event was held November 25-26 at Camp Valaqua with Jon Coutts as the resource person.
4. CLC reviews applications of congregations wishing to become MCA members or wishing to discontinue their membership in MCA.
    - CLC/Executive responded to the Calgary Chin Christian Church choosing to withdraw from MCA. We are delighted that a new Chin Group in Lethbridge is exploring a relationship with MCA and will be in attendance at the MCA Annual General Meeting. This congregation of 30 includes a core group who came from Ontario, where they were part of the Kitchener Chin Christian Church of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC).
  5. Three MCA pastors participated in boundary training sessions, a general expectation for licensed and ordained personnel every 3 years.
  6. Under MC Canada's new "Guiding Ministerial Leadership in the Church," we have appointed three people as support people in MCA who may be called on to follow up in misconduct situations that may arise.

As we reflected upon the past year, we noticed several things:

- The ways in which pastors emerge to give leadership to the church are changing. While in the past many young people would enter ministry as a career choice, today pastors come to ministry at a variety of ages and through various pathways, including coming from other denominations. The pastor role is also evolving, with fewer full-time pastors, more bi-vocational pastors, and the emergence of pastoral leaders who provide leadership in worship and pastoral care in less traditional ways.
- Changing dynamics in congregations. Some of MCA's congregations are struggling with questions about their future in the face of declining numbers and ageing members. Some struggle with the need for leadership or developing common vision. Some have buildings they find difficult to maintain, or struggle with the administration needed to remain organised.
- The need to lean into our intercultural relationships. We have seen tremendous value in the contributions of groups like the Chin, South Sudanese, Oromo, and other African groups at Holyrood to our faith family.

Looking to the year ahead, CLC is continuing to work to find ways to have our Terms of Reference (TOR) match our work as we organize the priorities of our committee including our role in support of the clergy, the congregations and the conference to whom we minister.



## Community Building Committee Report

**Adela Wedler, Charlotte Wiens, Marguerite Jack, Rachel Hunsberger**

*“Christ is just like the human body—a body is a unit and has many parts; and all the parts of the body are one body, even though there are many. We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body, whether Jew or Greek, or slave or free, and we all were given one Spirit to drink.  
Certainly the body isn’t one part but many.”*

1 Corinthians 12:12-14, Common English Bible

The first two priority statements of Mennonite Church Alberta are:

- 1. Witnessing to Jesus’ healing and hope - loving our neighbours, sharing our hope, living the “Jesus Way”; telling stories of encounters with Jesus.*
- 2. Building mutual relationships between congregations - building and strengthening our Christ-Centred identity as a Mennonite Church and community.*

The purpose of the Community Building Committee (formerly the Community Building and Program Committee) fits well with these two statements. The committee plans events that build relationships among the churches of Mennonite Church Alberta. This includes planning the Annual Delegate Sessions (ADS).

In 2025 our committee planned the March Gathering that took place at Foothills Mennonite Church, March 14-16. This event was in celebration of 500 years of Anabaptism with the theme of “Courage to Love.” The weekend combined community building events, such as the “Tastes and Talents of MCA”, workshops for non-delegates, and worshipping together across the province on Sunday morning. We are thankful to the many people across the province who stepped in at short notice when our keynote speaker had to cancel due to illness.

The weekend was so successful that the March Gathering for 2026, to be held at Lethbridge Mennonite Church, March 13-15 will use a similar format. The theme is “Storytelling: A Bridge to Healing and Hope.” There will be worship, workshops, Annual Delegate Sessions, and the special presentation of Arlyn Friesen Epp’s “Spirit Acts.” Everyone is welcome to attend!

The Community Building Committee provides yearly bursaries for Alberta Mennonite Youth/Young Adults attending Mennonite Universities and Colleges. For the 2025/26 school year, bursaries were awarded to two Canadian Mennonite University students: Asher Warkentin (Springridge Mennonite) and Kyle Wiebe (Trinity Mennonite). Although the bursaries are part of the committee’s budget, direct donations to the bursary fund are always welcome. Please encourage Youth and Young Adults from your congregation to apply!

A new event in the fall of 2026 is a “congregational exchange,” in which congregations will be paired to send small groups to each other’s worship services. Watch for more details coming soon.

*Storytelling:* A Bridge to Healing and Hope

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**Nominations Report**  
**Jan Wilhelm, Margaret Kruger-Harder, Coreen Froese**

A Nominating Committee is given the task of gift discernment. We work throughout the year responding as vacancies remain or arise after the Annual Delegate Sessions.

MCA positions are for 2 years, with a maximum of 3 consecutive terms.

Committees are as follows:

- those taking an additional term (blue)
- slate of new nominees (red)
- those in term (black)

**Executive Committee** (four positions plus Executive Minister: Tim Wiebe Neufeld)

Moderator	Keith Retzlaff (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	Foothills	2028
Vice Moderator	Marguerite Jack (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	First-Calgary	2027
Secretary	Coreen Froese (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	Bergthal	2028
Finance Chair	Rachel Siemens (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	First-Edm.	2028

**Personnel** (one position)

Ernie Engbrecht (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	Lethbridge	2028
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**Finance Committee** (two positions)

Rachel Siemens (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	First-Edm.	2028
Karl Blank (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	Lethbridge	2027

**Congregational Leadership Committee** (three positions plus Executive Minister)

Tany Warkentin (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	Springridge	2027
Tim Burkholder (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	First-Edm.	2027
Bill Christieson (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	Foothills	2028

**Community Building and Program Committee** (three positions)

Karen Janz (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	First-Calg.	2028
Breanne Giesbrecht (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	First-Calg.	2028
Adela Wedler (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	First-Edm.	2027

**Missions & Service Committee** (four positions)

Jeanette Thiessen (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	Foothills	2028
John Woollard (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	First-Edm.	2027
Margo Ratzlaff (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	First-Calg.	2027
(one year to start, to stagger terms; filling vacancy from 2025)		
William Tut (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	South Sudanese	2028

**Camp Valaqua Committee** (five positions)

Jenn Ratzlaff (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	First-Calg.	2027
Darrel Heidebrecht (3 <sup>rd</sup> term)	Foothills	2027
Liam Kachkar (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	First-Edm.	2027
Noah Thiessen (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	Foothills	2028
Barry Andres (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	First-Edm.	2028
Kienna Krahn (1 <sup>st</sup> term; ex officio)	Foothills	2028

**Nominations Committee (two positions plus Executive Secretary)**

Paul Bergen (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	First-Edm.	2028
Margaret Kruger-Harder (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	Foothills	2027

**Canadian Mennonite Representative**

Jenn Otto (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	Lethbridge	2028
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**Joint Council Representative**

Mathew Wiens (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	First-Edm.	2027
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**Palestine Israel Network of Mennonite Church Canada (Rep.)**

Suzanne Gross (3 <sup>rd</sup> term)	First-Edm./Holyrood	2027
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**MC Canada Nominating Committee**

Margaret Kruger-Harder (1 <sup>st</sup> term)	Foothills	2027
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**CMU Board: Prairie Regions Representative (3 year term)**

Reece Zablocki (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	Foothills	2027
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**RJC Board:**

Ashley Gusztak (2 <sup>nd</sup> term)	Foothills	2026 (Oct.)
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**Working Groups**

Creation Care: Charlene Lauzier and Liesel Retzlaff

Indigenous Relations: Ruth Bergen Braun, Coreen Froese, Suzanne Gross

Thank you to Joyce Baergen, Kathryn Friesen, Rachel Hunsberger, Art Koop, Caleb Kowalko, Mezgebu Tucho, Doug Wiebe, Charlotte Wiens, and Jan Wilhelm who are finishing/stepping down. Your service to MCA is deeply appreciated.

Thank you to those who have agreed to accept a new nomination or continue to serve for another term.

Thank you to those who prayerfully considered accepting our request to let their name stand on a committee and could not do so at this time.

## MCA Representative on MC Canada Joint Council

Mathew Wiens

This past year I stepped into the role of Mennonite Church Alberta's Representative on Mennonite Church Canada Joint Council. This has meant a lot of work to get up to speed and understand the structure and process of the Joint Council. It has been a great pleasure to meet, pray, and work with Joint Council members from all of Mennonite Church Canada's constituent regional churches.

As I settle into my role on the Joint Council, I hope to bring Mennonite Church Alberta's voice to the national body and to continue to encourage our congregations to participate in the wider church community.

In the past year Joint Council has explored MC Canada's ongoing relationship with Menno Media and is in the process of developing its own communications strategy. Conversations with the In This Together group around Article 19 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective are ongoing. These conversations are being held with a care and sensitivity that reflects a deliberate approach. Joint Council has developed a People and Culture Policy that will move us away from a Human Resources language to one that focuses on people and culture. This policy is available at CommonWord. In addition, Joint Council continues to steward the financial resources of Mennonite Church Canada.

Lastly, I would like to reflect on the Mennonite Church Canada Gathering 2025 that took place in Kitchener last July. The nationwide Gathering was well attended with a higher than anticipated level of participation. It was a wonderful time of worship, community building and exploring faith. After the Gathering we collated and analyzed over 600 pages of handwritten notes from the discussion tables. These notes were distilled into themes that we have developed into four key initiatives. The initiatives are:

1. Centering on Jesus through theological renewal.
2. Becoming a vibrant intercultural church.
3. Discovering, calling and equipping leaders.
4. Embodying peace as a witness and a bridge.

On a personal level, it was a pleasure to bump into several people I have not seen in over 20 years and to make new connections to the wider Mennonite Church. The speakers and the worship services were marvelous, and I found Doug Klassen's closing message especially inspirational. Minutes from Joint Council meetings are available for review on the CommonWord website: [Approved Joint Council Minutes: Mennonite Church Canada](#)

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## **Anabaptism at 500 (May-June 2025) – Global Youth Summit Report**

**Liam Kachkar**

I am writing to you to briefly reflect on my experience with Mennonite World Conference (MWC) in Europe and share news about my upcoming work with our global conference.

This past year, I was selected by MCA to be one of five young adults representing Mennonite Church Canada at the MWC 'Global Youth Summit' in Europe. As part of the 'Anabaptism at 500' celebrations, MWC organized a youth / young adult gathering near Zurich. The Global Youth Summit was intended to be a time for young people to come together, to learn more about what makes our Anabaptist faith unique and how we are imperfectly leaning into that faith all around the world. We shared meals, worshipped together, reflected with small groups, participated in learning sessions and more. In preparation for this time, I had the chance to connect with young adults from First Edmonton, First Calgary and Foothills Mennonite.

Together, these groups helped shed light on the current successes and opportunities with our young adult programming in Alberta.

One particular takeaway for me is related to the European young adult attendees and their experience of church. At the Global Youth Summit, there were 195 participants, with 51% from Europe. Among these European participants, there was a collective astonishment to learn how many Anabaptist young people there were around the world. What I learned from many European young Anabaptists was that they often had 2-5 youth per major City. Even in cities as large as Hamburg, Amsterdam and Paris. It was only at province-wide or nationwide youth gatherings that they connected with larger groups of Anabaptists during a typical year. Hence, the impact on them of seeing two hundred young people who shared their Anabaptist history and beliefs. This has left me with more gratitude and admiration for the presence of young people throughout MCA. Throughout the province, I see local congregations, MCA staff and MCA committees finding ways to continue engaging youth. And from what I heard from young adults in 2025, these efforts do matter.

In 2026, I will continue my involvement with MWC and Global Youth Summits. Earlier this year, I was accepted as the new North America Representative for MWC's Young Anabaptist Network. In this new role, I will assist in planning for future Global Youth Summits, an annual youth

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fellowship week in June and provide input to broader MWC work. While you are at the Lethbridge ADS, I will be in the Philippines at in-person meetings with other MWC staff and board members. I'm still learning what all is involved with this new role. However, it's clear that MCA's belief in young people like me has played a key role.

Thank you for the chance to represent MCA in Europe last summer. I look forward to sharing more about this new MWC role and my time abroad in the months ahead. Please reach out to me if you'd like to learn more about the feedback I spoke of earlier in this report. I'd be happy to share the final MC Canada report or details about the engagement we hosted.



## **Mennonite World Conference**

A Community of Anabaptist  
related Churches

### **Alberta Palestine Israel Network (PIN) Report**

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## Suzanne Gross

Our Alberta Palestine Israel Network has continued finding ways to keep the stories of suffering of the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank in our consciousness as the current leadership in the state of Israel continues its genocidal agenda of erasure of the Palestinian people.

We organized a group viewing of the Oscar-winning film "No Other Land."

We organized a Mennonite presence to join the protest of the orchestrated starvation of Gazans during August Heritage Days in Edmonton.

We invited Asher Kirchner, Suzanne Gross' husband, to share his recent experience in the South Hebron Hills in the First Mennonite Church Communicator.

We have shared prayer requests through updates on Sunday mornings in our respective church communities.

We continue to invite MCA members, leaders, and church communities to speak out for a just peace for all peoples on the land that we currently call Israel/Palestine. We remind all of us to live into our 2016 Mennonite Church Canada resolution to hold our Canadian government accountable to our commitment to human rights and international law. And we invite all to amplify the call for Canada to cease from playing a role in perpetuating, if not escalating the ongoing genocide in Gaza, and the violence, displacement and dispossession in the West Bank, happening in our name as Canadians, in this part of the world.



**Mennonite Church Alberta Representative Report**  
**Canadian Mennonite Publishing Society board**  
**Art Koop**

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Reflecting on coming to the end of my third consecutive, and constitutionally last, term on the Board of Directors for the Canadian Mennonite Publishing Society, it has been quite the time of change.

Canadian Mennonite is now as much an online periodical as it is print. The media landscape, both generally in the secular realm and within the realm of church publications, has changed dramatically. Social media has become a major means of communication as well. Canadian Mennonite has shifted along with these changes, in order to keep pace, and to meet readers where they are.

Shifts and divisions have emerged and intensified within our society, as well. These have, to say the least, not left the church untouched.

Recently, our issue on the theme of “Help my Unbelief” – about God, faith, and questioning, has elicited a significant amount of engagement. People do feel a yearning for a grounding in faith, despite feeling shaken by recent developments in our political and societal landscape. In the summer of 2025, I had the opportunity to preach at Trinity Mennonite in Calgary, where they had chosen a theme of “The Questions of Jesus.” There are no simple answers, but our faith is in a God who is strong enough to withstand questioning, and does not turn us away.

Our current theme is “Abide”. That resonates for me as well. My family and I lived in Edson, Alberta, for 3 years, somewhat geographically isolated from a nearby Mennonite Church Canada-affiliated congregation. There, my regular prayer – along with prayerful breathing – contained the sentences “My Provider, thank You for your strength. I abide in You.” I had to recognize that the strength that sustained me was not of my own making but came from the extent to which I relied on our Creator.

As I step away from CMPS for a time, I look forward to seeing what happens next with Canadian Mennonite, and who will step forward to be a part of the mission of THE national forum for exploring & discussing events & issues relevant to faith, from Mennonite perspectives, in Canada.



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# **March Gathering And Annual Delegate Sessions**

**Report Book**

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***Our Nationwide Family***

**Mennonite Church Canada  
Mennonite Church Eastern Canada  
Mennonite Church Manitoba  
Mennonite Church Saskatchewan  
Mennonite Church British Columbia**

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# Mennonite Church Canada: Moving Forward Together



## Year in Review 2025

Every three years, our nationwide church gathers to celebrate, worship, and discern where God is calling us. This past summer, we met in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, and from that gathering, **four Key Initiatives emerged:**

- **Centring on Jesus Through Theological Renewal**
- **Becoming a Vibrant Intercultural Church**
- **Discovering, Calling, and Equipping Leaders**
- **Embodying Peace as a Witness and a Bridge**

To deepen this discernment, we invited further input through a survey sent to congregations and registrants. With 102 responses, we heard strong calls for embodied spiritual practices rooted in Anabaptist identity, deeper intercultural inclusion, and shared leadership models. Respondents highlighted priorities such as empowering youth, fostering peace witness tied to justice and creation care, and equipping congregations to resist division and violence. Together, these insights point to a church seeking clarity, depth, and connection as we take faithful next steps. For more reflection, see Doug Klassen's article in Canadian Mennonite. (<https://canadianmennonite.org/confessing-christ-in-the-face-of-apocalypse/>)

**CommonWord**  
Bookstore and Resource Centre

## Celebrating 10 Years of CommonWord

In 2024, CommonWord marked its tenth anniversary and over 50 years of ministry as a trusted source for books, worship resources, and digital materials. In its first decade, CommonWord circulated 30,000 loan items, served nearly 93,000 retail customers, and partnered with initiatives like Together in Worship and MennoMedia to provide high-quality resources. Despite challenges such as declining textbook sales and the pandemic, retail sales have rebounded, Indigenous-authored books and crafts have grown significantly, and public events like book launches continue to expand CommonWord's reach. We invite you to explore our resources and join us in shaping Christian formation for the next generation.

# Our Shared Work

## Strengthening Partnerships Leadership Ministries

The Church Leadership Ministers (CLM) team meets monthly to support congregations and credentialed leaders in a changing ministry landscape. With fewer candidates entering traditional pastoral training and many positions now part-time, CLM is responding through resource development, partnerships with educational institutions, and the Leadership Day at Gathering 2025. Recent initiatives include a revised Transition into Ministry (TiM) program with AMBS and the new Guiding Ministerial Leadership in Mennonite Church Canada (GMLC) policy, which strengthens ethical standards and ongoing training.

## Walking the Path of Reconciliation Indigenous Relations

Our relationship with Indigenous communities encompasses generations of history and continues to be shaped by God's call to be reconciling neighbours on the land. The Regional Indigenous Relations working groups of MC Canada through their congregations, are building kinship through collaboration with Indigenous-led movements, acknowledging Indigenous concerns in our worship and preaching, and making financial commitments to Indigenous-led projects. Together, we seek to grow beyond barriers that divide and live more into Jesus' call to healing, restoration and justice.

## Building Global Relationships International Witness

International Witness cultivates partnerships that allow the global church to share God's gifts with one another. From Myanmar's courageous witness amid civil war to China's commitment to resourcing pastors, and from South Africa's call for solidarity to Burkina Faso's leadership in peacebuilding, we see God's fingerprints in diverse contexts. Through scholarships, leadership training, and collaborative networks, these relationships nurture hope and equip future leaders to embody Christ's peace. Congregations are invited to join Witness Support Networks, by sharing resources, prayer, and presence as we respond to God's call for justice and reconciliation.



## Caring for Creation Climate Action

Since 2022, Climate Action Ministry has supported Regional Working Groups to engage with the climate crisis through education, reflection and action. Initiatives include workshops, book studies, youth engagement, and partnerships with organizations like Mennonite World Conference and A Rocha. Over \$60,000 in Emissions Reduction Grants have supported 23 congregations. Gathering 2025 included a Resource Day co-led with Indigenous Relations, focussing on Scripture's call to "love mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with our God," grounding this peace-building work in community, centered on Jesus. We invite congregations and individuals to join us in shaping faithful, hope-filled responses to the climate crisis.

# Resources

## International Witness

IW Reflection by Janet Plenert: <https://www.commonword.ca/go/4306>.

Palestine and Israel Network: <https://www.mennonitechurch.ca/pin>

Additional Resources: <https://www.commonword.ca/Browse/1026>

## Climate Action

Highlight of work being done across the regions:

<https://www.commonword.ca/go/4256>

Emissions Reductions Grant: <https://www.mennonitechurch.ca/article/45818-emissions-reduction-grants-2025>

Additional Resources: <https://www.commonword.ca/Browse/10317>

## Indigenous Relations

Opening of Clan Mothers Healing Village and Knowledge Centre:

<https://www.mennonitechurch.ca/article/45649-opening-of-clan-mothers-healing-village-and-knowledge-centre>

Land, Identity, and Faith online conversations:

<https://www.commonword.ca/go/4179>

Additional Resources: <https://www.commonword.ca/Browse/868>

## Leadership Ministries:

Reflection on Youth Gatherings: <https://www.mennonitechurch.ca/article/45426-reflections-on-youth-gatherings-paul-peters>

Additional Resources: <https://www.commonword.ca/Browse/756>



Pastor Thong Sol and Kitchener  
Emmanuel Church celebrated his  
ordination this past year.

# GROWING INTO THE FUTURE

2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

## Nurturing Vibrant Communities

MCEC comes alongside pastors and congregations to help them nurture spiritually alive, mission-engaged Anabaptist congregations. Through leadership development, practical resourcing, intercultural learning and church-revitalization conversations, we strengthen leaders for faithful ministry. As we grow into the future together we trust God's Spirit to guide and sustain our shared ministry.

## Identity & Purpose

### Identity Statement

Mennonite Church Eastern Canada is a diverse community  
Transformed by the love of God  
Inspired by the hope we find in Jesus  
Called to action by the power of the Holy Spirit

### Purpose Statement

We come together as a regional church to:  
Energize congregations in worship, discipleship and mission  
Encourage leaders of hope, vision and transformation  
Embody God's reconciling ministry for all creation.

“I am grateful for MCEC's ongoing support of congregational leaders, including the financial assistance to congregations supporting sabbatical leaves, through the Leadership Formation Fund.”

—Brandon Leis  
Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church

## At A Glance...

106

Across MCEC's 106 congregations, more than 100 worship services happen every week!

166

MCEC gives thanks for 166 pastors who have answered God's call to serve in ministry.

142

Congregational Ministries Team personally met with 142 pastors to encourage and support their ministry leadership.

128

MCEC staff engaged congregations through 128 worship services, trainings, consultations and events.

73

Nearly three-quarters of our congregations, 73%, took part in MCEC events held across the year.

## Ministry Highlights

1

**Strengthened Safe Church Practices**  
MCEC resourced congregations with workshops, equipping them to create safer faith communities.

2

**Fostered Intercultural Friendships**  
Worship, workshops and volleyball tournaments celebrated the beloved-ness of our community.

3

**Celebrated Congregational Growth**  
Embraced growth in five congregations in transition: three provisional and two full member congregations.

4

**Companioned Congregations and Leaders**  
MCEC walked with congregations and pastors through discernment processes and meaningful conversations.

5

**Welcomed Nationwide Family of Faith**  
Hosted MC Canada Gathering, welcoming participants from across the country to worship together.



Communion in community - Anthony Siegrist, MCEC Executive Minister, serves the gathered church at the MC Canada Gathering in Kitchener, ON, July 2025.

## Priorities

**NAVIGATING CHANGE** - fostering a culture of learning, innovation and adaptability.

**DEVELOPING LEADERS** - equipping individuals to pursue their ministerial and leadership calling

**INTERGENERATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP** - collaborating in support of discipleship and faith formation

**EMBRACING DIVERSITY** - inviting the church to explore the variety and richness of God's people

**SEEKING PEACE AND JUSTICE** - supporting and resourcing congregations in peace and justice issues, grounded in Anabaptist-Mennonite theology.

## Gifts To MCEC In Action



# Mennonite Church Manitoba Annual Report for 2025

Delegates from the 40 congregations of Mennonite Church Manitoba gathered at Grace Mennonite Church in Steinbach for our **2025 Gathering** February 28-March 1. Together we explored what it means to be a “Jesus-centred church,” based on Hebrews 12:1-2: “looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” John D. Roth, professor emeritus of history at Goshen College and project director of MennoMedia’s Anabaptism at 500 initiative, was the plenary speaker.



Our regional **church visioning process**, Hope and Courage, continued through this year. Members of MCM’s board and staff met with focus groups from across our community of congregations, sifted through responses from online surveys, and examined leadership reports from congregational report books, all to address this question: what is God calling us to as a church at this time? The board has produced a report on the process and has offered a draft of a new Vision and Mission Statement for MCM for feedback this fall. A revised draft will come to congregational delegates for consideration at our 2026 Gathering, March 6-7, at Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Light the Fire, our **Camps with Meaning capital campaign**, continued in 2025 after a good start last year. Phase One of the campaign is complete, and we have nearly reached our goal in donations and pledges for Phase Two. Some facilities upgrades in this phase are anticipated to be completed in the coming year. We continue to invite people to invest in the faith formation, community outreach, leadership development, and hospitality Camps with Meaning provides, as we look ahead to the final two phases.

Our **summer camps** this year saw 533 children, youth, and adults with disabilities attend as campers. These camps were led by 90 summer staff and supported by nearly 70 volunteers. In 2025, Camps Assiniboia and Koinonia hosted over 170 guest groups representing over 7500 people.

Karen Schellenberg retired as Co-Director of Leadership Ministries early in the year, and Jeff Friesen stepped fully into the **Leadership Ministries** role. This year saw one pastor ordained, while three pastors received other forms of credentialing. Nine new pastors were installed in congregational ministry, while three retired from ministry. There were two pastors new to MCM in 2025.

A significant aspect of our shared **Mission Ministries** as a regional church is the connection between our northern communities and our southern congregations, and Director of Mission Engagement Melanie Neufeld has made this a priority. While some planned activities could not happen in 2025 due to northern wildfires, connections continue with Matheson Island, Cross Lake, Pauingassi, and Manigotagan. Another significant aspect of our Mission Ministries is helping to create and sustain connections between MCM congregations and our MC Canada International Witness companions around the world. Seventeen MCM congregations relate to companions in eight countries.

We launched a new program in 2025 called **Companion Congregations**, encouraging relationships across congregations by pairing up two MCM congregations, or an MCM and MC USA congregation, for mutual encouragement, prayer, and sharing. Eleven MCM congregations have signed up for this program: eight participating in the MCM option, and three in the international option.

There’s much more going on in Mennonite Church Manitoba! See [www.mennochurch.mb.ca](http://www.mennochurch.mb.ca) for more info and sign up for our weekly updates and monthly newsletter by emailing [office@mennochurch.mb.ca](mailto:office@mennochurch.mb.ca).



## Mennonite Church Saskatchewan 2025 Annual Report

Mennonite Church Saskatchewan (MC Sask) is a family of 20 congregations, united in our commitment to being Christ-centered and sent into the world. Together, we prayerfully support one another, collaborating in ministry with Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite World Conference, trusting that God's healing and hope flow through us to all the world.

Our Annual Delegate Session was held in March at RJC High School and was jointly hosted by RJC and Rosthern Mennonite Church. The theme "Differences for the Common Good" focused on how we build up the church and God's kingdom together even when we have differences. Our guest speaker was Fanosie Legesse, MCEC Intercultural Minister. We were challenged and inspired as he spoke from his experience and passion for the church and God's people.

*"Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." – 1 Cor. 12:4-7*

The year 2025 marked the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Anabaptism and we commemorated this in several ways throughout the year including an afternoon included music and storytelling in Rosthern sponsored by MC Sask and the Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan.

**Youth:** The youth, under the leadership of Evan Bueckert, had many opportunities to get together over the year but a highlight was their trip to Waterloo, Ontario for the MC Canada Gathering 2025! MC Sask was well represented by the 24 youth and sponsors who attended. We are grateful for all of Evan's work in the planning of this trip and in his role as Interim Youth Minister. He ended his time in this role at the end of July.

**Transitions:** Looking back at 2025, we reflect on the transitions within our congregations. We thank God for all who have served and those who are called to new ministries, using their various gifts for God's kingdom through MC Sask.

Two pastors retired during the year: Paul Matheson (First) and Patty Friesen (Osler). We had 3 installation services: Calvary deJong (First), Don Froese (Nutana Park), and Brad Schroeder (Osler). Also, Peter Lippmann (Wildwood) was licensed for specific ministry and Lisa Martens Bartel (North Star) was ordained.

Throughout the year, we have been witnesses to God's work among us. We are thankful to be participants in this kingdom work. We also look forward to where God is inviting us in the new year. May we all continue to seek God's guidance and the leading of God's spirit as we live out our mission that God's healing and hope may flow through us to the world.

*Len Rempel and Marianne Siemens (MC Sask Staff)*



# MCBC Annual Report 2025

**Greetings MCBC and MC Canada brothers, sisters, kin in Christ!**

A reminder: I have two jobs for MCBC: Executive Minister/Director (EM) and Church Leadership Minister (CLM).

This past year had a bit of a slower pace as I leaned into: (1) Centring on Jesus as our Lord and source of unity (Centre-Set), (2) Encouraging churches to work at renewal/revitalization, (3) Continuing to support and develop our leaders (pastoral and otherwise), and (4) Planning for financial stability, sustainability, and alignment around shared vision.

One of the major works of my role has been developing more clarity around our regional staff team, as a team. I have instituted regular staff meetings, annual reviews for feedback, growth, and adjustment. I, with help from the moderator, am in the process of updating role descriptions (building on the existing ones). We also reduced our staffing by one position (~0.25 FTE). If you are unaware of how we work and resource our churches, there is a summary of roles and responsibilities in the extended report.

In 2025, Valley Road Church, a developing congregation, continues to impact Kelowna. We also became aware of some potential new opportunities to explore, one being an Ethiopian plant in the Surrey/NewWest/Burnaby area. Your church received a letter from me regarding this. Also, possibilities in Vancouver are percolating.

As I am becoming increasingly acquainted with MCBC at the ground level/grassroots, my sense is that our structure could use more simplification around support and shared leadership for those items that impact all our churches. A leaner, more focused regional office around these areas and to support new congregations/fresh expressions together is vital for a better future.

Finally, a huge thank you to our ministry and task group leaders and staff team. And of course, to Gerry Grunau for his years of service as our MCBC moderator. I am personally thankful for his work onboarding me into my role. He has served MCBC above and beyond what should be required of a volunteer. His love for our congregations and his desire to help hold a big-tent Anabaptist network together are commendable. I am sure we will still be seeing him around in various capacities. Wisely, he also recognizes there is a time to step down and to ensure good hand-offs.

In Christ who holds it all together,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shelby Boese", written over a horizontal line.

Shelby Boese

PS: I am available to meet with your church governance board to share more deeply and conversationally about vision and shared ministries.

# **March Gathering And Annual Delegate Sessions**

## **Report Book**

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### ***Our Extended Family***

**Canadian Mennonite  
Canadian Mennonite University  
Rosthern Junior College  
Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary  
Mennonite Disaster Service  
Mennonite Central Committee Alberta**





In 2025, *Canadian Mennonite* continued the refreshed format introduced last year. Now a monthly publication with expanded feature sections, the magazine offers thoughtful reporting on complex issues facing the church today, while continuing to carry news from across the regional churches through correspondents in western and eastern Canada. More than a full year of monthly publishing behind us, Faith Story, Deeper Communion and Life in the '80s columns have contributed deeper reflection, broader perspectives and a wider range of voices. We've heard from diaspora leaders, looked back on 500 years of denominational history, envisioned what the future could hold for our churches, considered how our faith determines our relationship to power and technology and highlighted the diverse ways we express our faith in local congregations.

MennoCreative, our residency program for emerging creative communicators, entered its second active year. Three projects wrapped up in 2025. Melody Steinman wrote profiles of people with disabilities, Nolan Kehler produced a five-part podcast about a Brooklyn opera company's production of an opera set in a Mennonite colony (launched October 1)

and Elizabeth Millar wrote 10 stories based on interviews with newcomer/diaspora church leaders within Mennonite Church Canada (*CM* February 2026). Five new MennoCreative projects have begun.

Our work continues to be guided by a desire to strengthen our Anabaptist community, to represent the breadth of the church and to encourage gracious listening—especially when we differ. In the spirit of Hebrews 10:24, we hope to spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Through it all, we are grateful to donors for their support in 2025, sustaining this ministry of connection and conversation across the church.

We invite you to stay connected: visit our website, sign up for *CM* This Week and subscribe to the monthly magazine. Through the Every Home Plan, members of Mennonite Church Canada congregations receive the magazine at half the regular subscription cost, with fees paid collectively; contact your congregation for more information.

Whether you read on paper or a device, browse the website, follow on social media or discuss articles in your congregation, thank you for participating in this national conversation.



Story idea? Email Jolene Latimer at [cmwest@canadianmennonite.org](mailto:cmwest@canadianmennonite.org)

[canadianmennonite.org](http://canadianmennonite.org)

1-800-378-2524 [canadian.mennonite](https://www.facebook.com/canadian.mennonite) [canadianmennonite](https://www.instagram.com/canadianmennonite)

# 2026 Report to MCCanada Churches



## Undergraduate Degrees:

CMU offered six undergraduate degrees—Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Social Work, Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Music, and the only Bachelor of Music Therapy program in the prairies.

## 20 Bachelor Majors:

Including Biblical and theological studies, psychology, environmental studies, communications and media, peace and conflict transformation, arts and science, English, history, and more.



## Fall 2025 Enrolment:

**697** students on main campus, undergraduate and graduate (**632** full-time equivalent)

Of first-year students, **17%** are Indigenous and **26%** are first generation university students in their families

**106** full-time equivalent students in Menno Simons College programs (CMU courses in UofW degree programs)



## Faith Representation:

30% from Mennonite/Anabaptist traditions  
40% from other Christian traditions  
5% from other faith traditions  
25% no faith disclosed

## Geographical Representation:

75% from Manitoba  
25% International (30 countries) and from other Canadian provinces



## Exciting News from CMU:

- Celebrated 25 years of CMU ([cmu.ca/25](http://cmu.ca/25))
- Announced an Education Degree program beginning in Fall 2026
- Launched CMU's new brand and visual identity
- Offering Free Dorm for first year students beginning in Fall 2026
- Renewed our primary dormitory, Poettcker Hall
- Created a new Mennonite High School Student Award (\$1,000 award for graduates of Mennonite high schools)

NEW!



[cmu.ca](http://cmu.ca)

Expect more. **CMU**

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT FOR CHURCHES

## RJC BY THE NUMBERS:

### 2025-2026

(as of Sept. 1/25)

- 120 Total Students
- 21 Grade 9
- 29 Grade 10
- 28 Grade 11
- 42 Grade 12
- 78 Day Students  
(7 Shuttle Students)
- 42 Dormitory Students
- 106 Saskatchewan Students
- 3 Out-of-province
- 11 International
- Percentage of total students:  
21% Students of Alumni
- 48% Indicated a Church Affiliation
- 18% Mennonite Affiliation

We are happy to celebrate another exciting year at Rosthern Junior College High School. We cannot fulfill our mission without support from our churches and alumni. Thank you for your prayers, encouragement and financial support. In the fall of 2025 we successfully launched a new grade 9 program with 21 students. This is the first time we have offered grade 9 at RJC since 1969, and we hope to continue for many years to come.

We started the school year with 120 students, which was a twenty-year high for us in terms of enrollment. Our classrooms and hallways are full, and that feels good and brings lots of energy and adventure to each and every day. Each student represents an opportunity to change the world and to have an impact in our community. We hope that students' time with us encourages them to continue in a life of love, community and learning.

To prepare for our school's future and to respond to some immediate needs, work continues on our RENEW capital upgrade campaign. We are hoping to raise \$10M to retrofit and renovate the critical infrastructure of our school and dormitory. Work in the summer of 2025 included asbestos abatement in our dormitory buildings, which has allowed us to continue with our dorm room upgrades. This safety measure was important for students and staff alike. Thank you to all the churches and individuals who have contributed to the RJC RENEW project, or are considering supporting in the future. This support means so much to us, and helps us move these much needed projects forward. Thank you!

Some highlights from 2025 in terms of faith formation and Mennonite Church connections included visiting churches with our choirs and hosting the MC Sask ADS (March 7/8) at RJC. We also hosted our annual Pastors Day this fall with 15 different pastors present. This was a helpful time to discuss and resource ideas about youth engagement in our churches and communities. Our service week continues to be a highlight of the school year and saw our students return to Appalachia and many different prairie locations to engage in acts of service. The Faith and Life Committee also hosted our 2nd annual Dine and Donate event for Christmas hampers for the Good Neighbours Food Centre, raising over \$5,700. These programs, along with our Christian Ethics classes, faith exploration sessions and chapel times help students develop a faith foundation to help them for their lives.

Thank you again for partnering with us as we continue to encourage students to engage with their faith as we prepare a new generation of leaders for our church and world.

Peace,



2025-2026 STUDENT BODY

Thank you for praying for us!



Ryan Wood  
President, RJC High School

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GROW. IMAGINE. THRIVE. EXPLORE.  
BELONG.

## Report to Mennonite Church Alberta

AMBS serves the church as a learning community with an Anabaptist vision, educating followers of Jesus Christ to be leaders for God's reconciling mission in the world.

Our programs integrate academics, spiritual formation and practice. Join us — in person or at a distance, full time or part time — and deepen your understanding of Scripture, faith and Anabaptist theology!

### Degrees and programs

(\* = distance-friendly program)

- Master of Divinity\*
- Master of Arts in Christian Formation
- Master of Arts: Theology and Global Anabaptism\*
- Master of Arts: Theology and Peace Studies
- Doctor of Ministry in Leadership\*
- Graduate Certificate in Ecotheology\*
- Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Direction\*
- Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies\*  
(choose your own courses)
- Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies (Spanish)\*
- Journey Missional Leadership Development Program\*  
(undergraduate-level certificate)

[ambs.ca/degrees-and-programs](https://ambs.ca/degrees-and-programs)

We offer generous need-based financial aid, scholarships and matching grants for both full- and part-time graduate students. See also benefits for Canadian students!

[ambs.ca/canadian-students](https://ambs.ca/canadian-students)

### Leadership and enrichment

Grow your ministry skills and gain Anabaptist approaches to today's leadership challenges through our nondegree offerings. (\* = distance-friendly program)

- Practical Leadership Training modules\*
- Online Short Courses\*: four to six weeks, discussion-based, noncredit (no grades, no papers!)
- Invite AMBS\*: request a speaker (in person or online)
- Pastors & Leaders conference\*: Feb. 22–25, 2027

(Offerings of one to two years)

- Transition to Leadership\*: program for new pastors
- Ministry Reflection Circles\*: reflect on current ministry challenges with the support of a group
- Spiritual Direction Seminars\*

[ambs.ca/leadership-and-enrichment](https://ambs.ca/leadership-and-enrichment)

AMBS · Rooted in the Word, Growing in Christ · 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517 · 574.215.3726 · [ambs.ca](https://ambs.ca) · 2026-03



### AMBS connections

- Board member: Paul Bergen (First-Edmonton)

### AMBS statistics

- (above) In May 2025, 15 women and 18 men from eight countries — Canada, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Thailand and the U.S. — graduated from AMBS. Nineteen completed part or all of their studies at a distance.
- In 2025–26, 162 graduate students are enrolled at AMBS: 86 from the U.S., seven from Canada and 69 international students. Fifteen students are pursuing the Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies (Spanish). The Journey program has 38 participants in Canada, Nigeria, the Philippines, Southeast Asia, Uganda and the U.S.
- In 2024–25, 624 people participated in lifelong learning offerings of the Church Leadership Center.

### Want to try out seminary?

- Sign up for an Online Short Course:
  - Exploring Peace and Justice in the Bible
  - Exploring Anabaptist History and Theology
  - Understanding Anabaptist Approaches to Scripture
  - Transforming Congregational Conflict and Communication
  - Challenging Christian Nationalism

[ambs.ca/online-short-courses](https://ambs.ca/online-short-courses)
- Take a graduate-level course — online or on campus. Nonadmitted students get 50% off tuition for their first two courses! [ambs.ca/upcoming-courses](https://ambs.ca/upcoming-courses)
- Schedule a virtual or in-person visit and learn about what AMBS has to offer! [ambs.ca/visit](https://ambs.ca/visit)
- Stay connected: [ambs.ca/subscribe](https://ambs.ca/subscribe) Facebook; follow AMBS Instagram: [ambs\\_seminary](https://www.instagram.com/ambs_seminary); YouTube: [ambsedu](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiJeh); TikTok: [@anabaptistseminary](https://www.tiktok.com/@anabaptistseminary)

# REPORT

2025

## **“I never thought there were so many kind people in the world”**

That’s what retiree Sylvia Starr said after volunteers from the MDS Manitoba Unit built her, and her husband, Jeff, a new home in Libau, Man. They needed a new place to live after the roof of their previous home collapsed following a large snowfall in 2022.



*The Starrs in front of their new home in Libau, Man.*

After their former home was rendered unlivable, the Starrs received limited help from the provincial government. But it wasn’t enough to replace their home, which was uninsured. They didn’t know what to do.

That’s when MDS became involved. The Starrs were exactly the kind of people MDS wants to help—they were seniors, both have disabilities, the house was uninsured, and they had no means to replace their home.

“It didn’t take long to decide we would help,” said Denis Sabourin, chair of the MDS Manitoba Unit and project director for the Libau build.

“When we had to move out, we didn’t know what to do next,” said Jeff. “There are no words to explain what it means to us.” “We are so thankful,” said Sylvia.

The MDS project in Libau was one of eight in Canada in 2025. A total of 1,072 volunteers served in B.C., Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia. This included 748 in

Winnipeg, where volunteers helped at a reception centre set up to assist wildfire evacuees from the northern part of the province.

As well as serving in Canada, 316 Canadians served with MDS in the U.S. between November 2024 and October 2025.

In other news, 2025 saw the appointment of Reynold Friesen as the new Executive Director of MDS Canada. He will replace Ross Penner, who has been serving in that role since 2015. Reynold, the Director of Alumni, Church, and Donor Relations at Canadian Mennonite University, will begin his new role with MDS in February 2026.

Donations continued to be strong in 2025, with a total of \$1,282,000 donated in the 2024-25 fiscal year, compared to \$1,161,000 the previous year.

Thank you for your ongoing support of MDS as we seek to be the hands and feet of Jesus to disaster survivors together with you and your church. May God bless you this new year.



Last year people from Mennonite Church Alberta volunteered and prayed. You gave where needed most to help families cope with crisis, build peaceful futures, and attend school. Your donations provide food and school kits. THANK YOU!

Each week, MCC AB announcements are emailed to churches. These are in point form with links to more information. Anyone can be on the list, just contact the office at 403-275-6935 or <office@mccab.ca>

**Highlights from the 2024-2025 fiscal year:** <https://mcc.org/media/document/146024>

**In Alberta:**



49

**Refugees settled** from South Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Syria



**MCC THRIFT**

350 volunteers

**\$3, 538,608** in Thrift revenue, to support local and international projects

- **GO!100:** You biked, sewed, and ran, raising \$103,794.00 with the help of a Flaman Foundation \$50,000 match!
- **Grow Hope:** You sponsored 344 acres. Our generous farmers gave their land, and skills and sold the crops for \$253,569.00! This was matched up to 4-1 by the Canadian government for food projects around the world.
- **Events:** The Relief Sale at the Bergthal Event Centre, pastor gatherings, inter-church summer worship service in Edmonton, Rosemary’s Soup and Pie fundraiser, and In-Tune event, all built community while supporting our mission together.

**From Alberta to the world:**

**Material resources shipped last year with your support to Zambia, Malawi and Ukraine:**



640

School Kits



1350

Comforters



2101

Hygiene Kits



75

Relief Kits



71

Infant care kit

- \$2,784,085.00 was forwarded to MCC Canada for International Programs.

**Did You Know?** MCC Alberta offers speakers and workshops for churches? Call us to discuss hosting a speaker or event on themes like migration and resettlement, kit packing, indigenous relations, peace-making, and more! We have a variety of speakers, workshops, and even films to share to build the church and work together to be the hands of Christ in the world.

Ryan Siemens

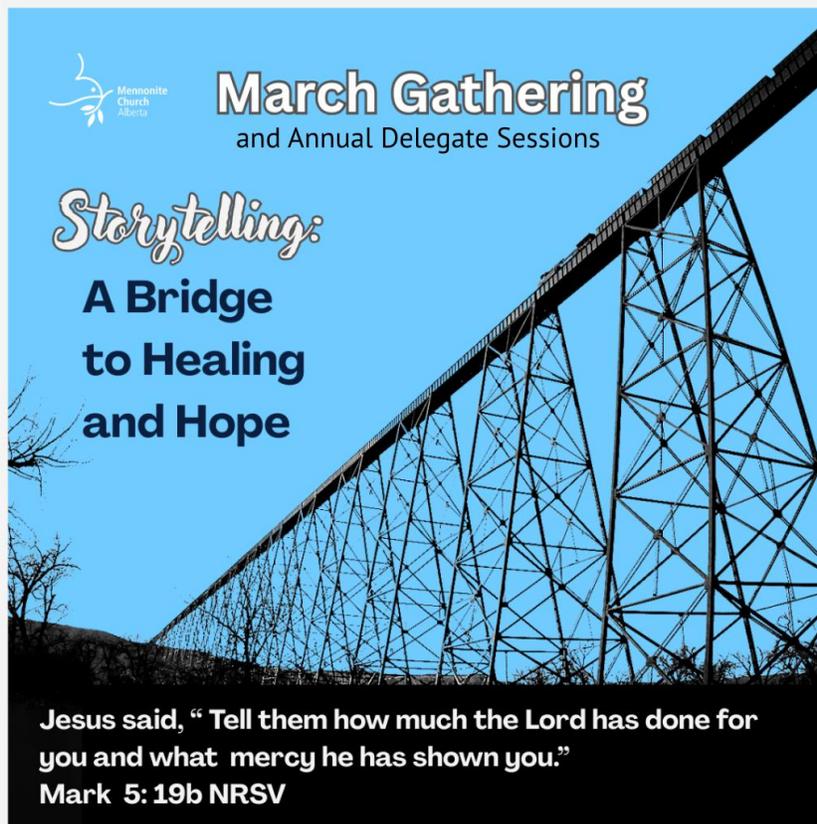
Executive Director

Donita Wiebe-Neufeld

Edmonton Representative



*Thank you for your support of MCA  
and the ministries we share!*

The poster features a background image of a tall, steel truss bridge structure against a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

 **March Gathering**  
and Annual Delegate Sessions

*Storytelling:*  
**A Bridge  
to Healing  
and Hope**

**Jesus said, "Tell them how much the Lord has done for  
you and what mercy he has shown you."  
Mark 5: 19b NRSV**

*May 2026 be a year of new stories of  
Christ's healing and hope!*