

**MB** **herald**  
**DIGEST**

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SEPTEMBER 2020  
MBHERALD.COM

*Sharing the life & story of  
the Mennonite Brethren  
in Canada*

# The pandemic reformation

*How COVID-19 is  
reshaping the church*

VOLUME 59, NO. 2

- MOVING MEETINGS ONLINE
- 2020 AGM REPORT
- CCMBC FINANCIAL DASHBOARD



Meet CCMBC Investments Ltd. This new organization continues the long-standing Stewardship Ministries of the Canadian MB Conference.

CCMBC Investments is open to accepting new funds from existing or new investors who should contact Capstone Asset Management (**1-855-437-7103**) to initiate the process.



1-855-437-7103

*Mennonite Brethren Herald Digest* is digitally published monthly by the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, primarily for the use of its members, to build a Canadian MB community of faith. We seek to 1) share the life and story of the church by nurturing relationships among members and engaging in dialogue and reflection; 2) teach and equip for ministry by reflecting MB theology, values, and heritage, and by sharing the good news; 3) enable communication by serving conference ministries and informing our members about the church and the world. However, the opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the church as a whole.

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ON THE COVER  
Mennonite Brethren from  
across Canada gather  
online to pray.

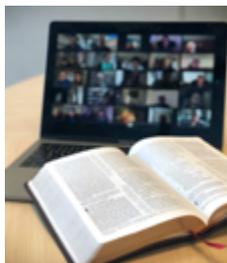


Photo: Carson Samson



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# FROM THE EDITOR

## **We are Mennonite Brethren.**

For nearly sixty years, *MB Herald* has been sharing the Mennonite Brethren's life and story in Canada. However, we've been mostly inactive and quietly discerning where we fit in today's Evangelical-Anabaptist publishing landscape for the last several months. In the process, we stopped talking, and our family conversations deteriorated because of it.

Thank you, reader, for being patient while we work through a difficult financial time. We know the 2019 decision to close the quarterly print version was not a welcomed one. The Canadian Conference of MB Churches values storytelling and desires to take small steps towards reconnecting with our constituency. You're reading the first issue of *MB Herald Digest*, a condensed version of *MB Herald* that highlights MBs' lives and work from coast to coast.

What does it mean to be an MB family these days? We are divided by a global pandemic, forced to connect at a distance. What has this done to our collective identity?

In "The Masked Christian," SKMB director of ministry, Phil Gunther, prompts us to follow Christ's example as we care for one another during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Also, in this issue, National director Elton DaSilva examines the Christian Church's condition in light of COVID-19. How will churches adapt now that they have begun opening their doors on Sundays? What does the post-pandemic Church look like?

CCMBC's monthly financial dashboard will be a regular department within *MB Herald Digest*. Look for the July 2020 report on pages 12-14. Financial reporting often

generates lively discussion. We encourage you to reach out to us at [faq@mbchurches.ca](mailto:faq@mbchurches.ca) with your questions or comments.

## **Please help**

As we embark on this new step in our journey as a publication, we look to our readers for help. You can partner with *MB Herald Digest* to ensure we share the life and story of all of Canadian MBs. First, you can encourage your friends and family to subscribe to the monthly *MB Herald Digest* e-news. There is no cost to subscribing, but the value is that we reach a broader audience and make room for more voices to contribute to the storytelling.

Second, you can submit stories to *MB Herald Digest* by emailing me at [carson.samson@mbchurches.ca](mailto:carson.samson@mbchurches.ca).

Third, the National Faith and Life Team provides a space for churches and church leaders to share their worship experiences in isolation and how they approach reopening during COVID-19. You can find a web form to submit those stories by visiting [www.mennonitebrethren.ca](http://www.mennonitebrethren.ca)

Thank you for your ongoing support of *MB Herald*. We strive to do better by you. We have a strong history as Mennonite Brethren: together, we celebrate, commiserate, debate, and, most importantly, inspire and encourage each other in Christ's mission for the Church. It's time to pick up the conversation where we left off.

So friends, what's new?



*Carson*

CARSON SAMSON

Communications director



*Thank you!*

Val and Ron Wood at a staff recognition event in February, 2020. They were presented with a gift from the Executive Board and an art print by artist Carson Samson, as a gift from CCMB staff and leadership.

PHOTO: TONY SCHELLENBERG

CCMBC recognizes Ron and Val Wood for nearly 30 years of faithful service. Ron and Val retired in February 2020 after having managed CP Printing Solutions, the provider of print services to MB Herald and many others. When Ron Wood took on the role of general manager of CP (then called Christian Press) in 1993, the print shop was far behind the curve. By 2006 CP was known as a leader in the industry, receiving a green printing award.



**MB** BIBLICAL SEMINARY

## New online MAiD course in October

Participants of Dr. Gloria Woodland's course on Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) will increase awareness of patient, family and healthcare worker perspectives and build skill for coming alongside pastorally. The understanding of Scripture, theological and denominational positions on MAiD will be considered as one develops a pastoral position for response. Of particular interest to denominational leaders and those who counsel pastoral care givers will be the lessons on Postvention Care and the information on how to support ministering individuals impacted by another's decision for MAiD. [Learn more here.](#)



## SEVENTY YEARS OF SERVICE AND SERVANTHOOD

Mennonite Disaster Services charts their seventy year history in the summer issue of *Behind the Hammer*. [Read online here.](#)

>> [Watch historical video shorts from the MDS video vault.](#)



**multiply**

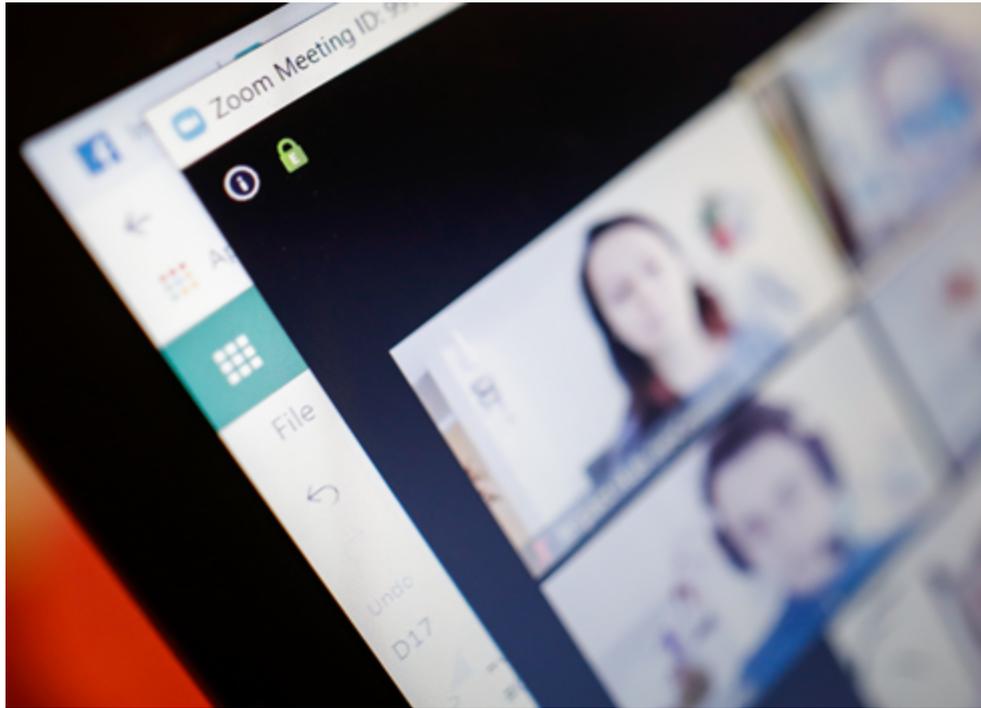
## CHURCH AT HOME

"I came to Christ in a house church," said Ingrid Reichard at a recent Town Hall meeting sponsored by the MB Churches of Canada. "I was disciplined in that setting for the first two years of my faith journey. Since I didn't grow up in the church, I didn't go to Sunday school; I thought house churches were normal."

Of course, in many settings, house churches are normal. The Book of Acts describes the Early Church as a house church movement. In fact, it was not until three hundred years after Pentecost that church buildings started to appear. Even today, in many countries around the world, house churches are the norm. [Read the full story.](#)



# Moving meetings online



**C** OVID-19 has changed everything. It's forced us to be more creative, adjust our ways of working, and learn new skills. To maintain its charitable status, CCMBC abides by specific operating procedures like holding an AGM no more than six months from the end of the fiscal year, which meant that in 2020 we had to find new ways of conducting business. If you are like us, just getting the hang of online meetings, You may not even know where to begin. Here's what we learned.

### ***Know your bylaws and governance manual***

As a not-for-profit organization, the church needs to follow specific guidelines outlined by CRA. Before planning and executing an online AGM, you need to familiarize yourself with legal requirements such as:

- Whether or not your bylaws state that you can hold an AGM online. You may need to amend your existing bylaws.
- How many weeks before the AGM date, you need to distribute notice of motions and agendas to your members.
- How many delegates are required to meet the quorum
- Registration deadline
- Inclusion of parliamentarians and ballot counters (if necessary)
- Crafting "Rules of Order" for your online gathering. Rules of order give members a process to follow and clarify expectations.

### ***Technology***

Online AGMs (or any large meeting) run well with a good tech team. When building your team, consider the following:

- Clear identification of roles and responsibilities
- One person (minimum) designated to manage online chat/Q&A.
- One contact person accessible to guests by phone.
- Separate people are managing event tech and troubleshooting as needed.
- Designate someone to oversee the documents/links to motions/on-screen material throughout the meeting.

It's not uncommon for internet connections to drop or technology to fail, usually at the least opportune time. Have back-up volunteers on stand-by and contingency plans in place in the event things go wrong.

### ***Tech Support***

Depending on your meeting size and requirements, you may want to have tech support in place for participants.

- Phone Support – [Bitrix24](#), a



toll-free number, or any tech team’s phone number are options.

- Website Help Desk – [Tidio](#) provides a live chat feature on your website, giving attendees immediate access to back-end tech support (your dedicated tech team). For more information on tech support services, [click here](#).
- If there is a glitch in the technology or the virtual meeting drops, have a plan in place that addresses how to contact attendees.

### **Voting**

If you need to count votes as part of your meeting, and you have a budget to spend on a paid solution, [QuestionPro](#) is an excellent option. Be sure to inquire about their not-for-profit rate. Zoom is a great option if purchasing additional software is not possible. For more details on how to set up virtual voting, [click here](#).

### **Registration**

Having your members register for the AGM not only gives you an early estimation of quorum, but it also gives you a line of communication to participants. [Eventbrite](#) is a solid online registration platform, and—if you are hosting an event that is free of charge to your members—it is free. For more information on how to handle registration, [click here](#).

### **Zoom**

Depending on the size of your meeting, you may need to upgrade your Zoom account to a Large Meeting. Ensure that the specific settings you need are in place before starting the meeting. For a recommended list of settings for large Zoom calls, [click here](#).

Set chat communication to one-way—from the host to the entire group—to post motions and share announcements. For more information on some basic Zoom etiquette, [click here](#).

To enhance community, it is important to set an atmosphere that feels personal. Encouraging attendees to use real names and keep their videos on during the meeting is one way to do this.

### **Training and rehearsing**

Before your virtual meeting begins, test all software and programs used and iron out any kinks. If voting is taking place, test the voting process with a group to ensure that all is working correctly, and everyone can vote.

We recommend you schedule a rehearsal the week before your event, where the tech team walks through important features and functions to aid those who are less familiar with the process. This is a great way for those who may not be as well-versed in technology to ask questions or receive step-by-step assistance.

### **Communication**

Communication is crucial when hosting a virtual event, especially if this is a new platform for attendees. Remind attendees of what they can expect, important information they will need to log in, etc.

If meeting hosts and members of the production team are located in different places, establish a way to communicate during the meeting in case something goes wrong with the technology, or other matters that need addressing. For many of us, meeting online is not our first choice. Still, technology has given us a means of gathering in community during times of isolation. May God inspire creativity and ingenuity as you navigate uncharted online territory.

CCMBC is here to help. Email us at [communications@mbchurches.ca](mailto:communications@mbchurches.ca) for more information.



KARA FRIESEN  
is Executive assistant to  
the national director.

# 2020 AGM REPORT

**"2020 has caused us to ask deep questions about what we believe",** says outgoing CCMBC moderator, Bruce Enns. Enns has scribbled the words "What do I really believe about this gospel I'm proclaiming?" onto the page of his journal.

"I have taken this downtime to reflect as I flip through the pages of my old journals," says Enns. On some pages, he has sketched the plans for an office chair, on other pages are his Yahtzee scorecards. And on a few pages, he has noted scripture verses that have shaped his views on what he believes is the call for the Church during this unprecedented time. Three vignettes surfaced as Enns reflected on his journal entries.

First, 2 Corinthians 1:8-11 reminds Enns that leaders must be at all times vulnerable: "We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters (v8)...this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God (v9)... On him we have set our hope (v10)." God is exposing our insecurities and false hopes and prompting his Church to put their faith in him. "You are adapting: Buildings are closed, but you are very much alive in this time because you have put your hope in God," says Enns.

Second, Ephesians 5: 8-13 exposes an organization's true motives. "Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light." (v11-13)

Third, Jeremiah 6:16 demands that we stop—truly stop—and pay attention to what God is doing in our world. "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. "God reveals our failings when we choose our own paths—Walk in faith and obedience."

The Friday evening service, traditionally held in a church, went online in 2020. In addition to Enns' mediation, MB Church global partners Mennonite World Conference (MWC), Mennonite Disaster Services (MDS), Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), and International Community of MB Churches (ICOMB) presented reports. The service concluded with communion and breakout prayer rooms.

### ***Naming our troubles***

Moving an annual general meeting online is not without its complexities—one of which being approving a motion to allow online voting—representing a change to the CCMBC general operating bylaws. An approved motion granted the Executive Board authority to use referenda (as described in article 5, section 4 of the bylaws) to move decision-making on subsequent bylaw revisions to 2021 provincial conventions.

In his address, national director Elton DaSilva urged a return to ancient ways. "We need to take a long, hard look at ourselves and name our troubles," says DaSilva, "only

**"GOD REVEALS OUR FAILINGS WHEN WE CHOOSE OUR OWN PATHS— WALK IN FAITH AND OBEDIENCE."**

– Bruce Enns

# "OUR CHURCHES LOST THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY AND UNDERSTAND THE POLITY OF THE MB CHURCH IN CANADA."

– Elton DaSilva

then can we rebuild. DaSilva described five phases CCMBC must undergo in returning to good health.

Phase one: shoring up is where we found ourselves over the last two years. The first phase is a time of observing, gathering data, and making adjustments. DaSilva noted that with the ending of the General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America, the Canadian Conference lost its polity. "For the last thirty years, our denomination has experienced a constant change in the area of governance. "Our churches lost the ability to identify and understand the polity of the MB Church in Canada," says DaSilva.

Phase two: demolishing involves eliminating, reducing, shifting, and exposing. The Mb family has painfully walked through the demerger of Multiply, and the end of the print version of the MB Herald during our demolition stage. DaSilva compared the scaling back of the national office—programmatically, financially, and personnel—to tearing a house down to the studs.

Phase three: designing includes cost evaluation, consulting, drafting and brainstorming. DaSilva sees this as our current phase of development. Boards, teams, and staff are determining what is essential to the denomination in anticipation of rebuilding. Currently, CCMBC receives 64% of projected provincial donations. In response, cuts are being made and reviewed every ninety days to ensure that CCMBC ends 2020 with a balanced budget. Says DaSilva, "We look at the funds we have, adapt, and design accordingly."

DaSilva forecasts that soon, the MB Church of Canada will enter phase four (building) followed by the fifth phase (living out). CCMBC has an unfortunate history of not sticking it out, Alinea Piche (Manitoba) observed. To which DaSilva

replied, "We created too many things—services, resources, and programs—it's time to identify what is important and commit to living in that space long-term."

## *Financial update*

Legacy CEO, Jim Davidson and Finance and Audit Committee Chair, Howie Wall reported a \$1.6 million deficit for CCMBC for the 2019 fiscal year. Primarily due to accounting costs associated with separating CCMBC and Legacy. "The reorganization impact as communicated at the October 2019 AGM through the Our Financial Story report exposed our stark financial reality," says Davidson.

With the Finance and Audit Committee, Legacy and CCMBC leadership continue to examine internal spending and seek opportunities to replenish \$480,000 of the accumulated deficit. DaSilva committed to ending the 2020 fiscal year with a balanced budget. Reviewing partner subsidy support, increasing CCMBC Investments margins, and the sale of two CCMBC-owned properties in Alberta are three areas that CCMBC and Legacy look to balance in the 2020 budget.

Delegates expressed that MB culture, particularly its relation to stewardship, should be proactive rather than reactionary. "Members of the MB family should see themselves as owners, not donors," says DaSilva, "Ownership is evident in participation. We need everyone to get involved."

Delegates approved motions to approve the audited financial statements for CCMBC, CCMBC Legacy Fund Inc., CCMBC Investments, and the Canadian MB Pension Plan as presented. KPMG was approved and appointed as auditor for CCMBC, CCMBC Legacy Fund Inc., and CCMBC Investments for the 2020 fiscal year.

## *For such a time as this*

"Our gratitude is an expression of our trust in God's provision," says Karen West (Ontario rep to the Executive Board) expressing thanks to outgoing board members. "For the past four years, Bruce Enns has served our family of churches in the role of assistant moderator and moderator. Bruce has led with wisdom, strength, courage, love, humility, and grace. He has worked hard to maintain unity and alignment among our

boards, staff, and agencies."

The moderator position is being passed on to Ron Penner, who God has appointed for such a time as this. "As an MB family, we have great potential and great capacity," says Penner. "Just like the church in Acts 15, we are a dynamic and complex group. Collaboration is a great goal and process. We will need to figure out how to keep communicating and tussling with one another, seeking clarity and how to hold each other accountable. We are well on our way to becoming a collaborative organization and church."

### ***Defining our mission***

"What is God calling us to?" DaSilva asks, echoing Bruce Enns' wonderings from the previous evening. "For many years, the North American church has hinged its mission on church planting. We want to shift discipleship to the forefront. Discipleship is the direction in which the National Ministry Team (NMT) is moving in."

In his report, NMT member and Multiply president Randy Friesen said the words "stop, wait and listen" have guided Multiply through a difficult season. Historically, Multiply operated at an arm's length from CCMBC. The formation of the NMT has helped bridge this gap, emphasizing shared vision, mission, and strategy. As a result, Multiply is pressing pause on developing its strategic plan until the Collaborative Model is fully operational. Multiply anticipates a \$250,000 surplus in their 2020 operating budget. However, one-time transition costs related to the demerger of approximately \$950,000 means the total anticipated deficit for the fiscal year is

closer to \$700,000. Friesen expressed his gratitude to this family of churches for their support and prayers this past year.

"We live in a mix of turmoil and uncertainty, but also a deep assurance of God's hope," says MB Seminary president Mark Wessner. "This past year has been one of both blessings and difficulty."

MB Seminary's financial struggle demands significant changes be made to areas of operations, administration, and personnel. Currently, the seminary partners with post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan (Horizon College), Manitoba (CMU), and Ontario (Tyndale). Wessner emphasized that many details around the impacts of restructuring, particularly in the province of Manitoba, are not ready to be communicated yet, as many of those conversations are ongoing.

"The mandate of MB Seminary has always been national, but realistically, it has played out regionally," says Wessner. Working strategically with the provinces will be a crucial component of MB Seminary's restructuring process. Wessner stresses that his inclusion in the NMT allows MB Seminary the opportunity to do that effectively. Elton's Defining mission video MB Seminary and Multiply videos

As The AGM concluded, Ens made a final plea to delegates: "Churches, get involved. Step forward, lean in, and extend help. Speak the truth in a posture of love. Pray for the National Ministry Team, for boards, and for Elton. Encourage those who lead."

» [Visit MBHerald.com](https://www.mbherald.com) to see a full listing of new Board members, affirmed at the 2020 AGM.



# The Masked Christian

## Doesn't loving others mean protecting them?

**F**ull disclosure. During the pandemic I wear a mask when I am asked to do so. I wear a mask when I am in situations where there are a lot of people. I wear a mask in the presence of vulnerable people. I wear a mask when singing in public like a worship service.

We live in interesting times, albeit turbulent times. Consider, for example, the simple face mask. The discourse around its wearing during a pandemic has become caustic, bitter and divisive — nearly a call to arms, either for or against. South of the border the battle lines are being drawn at a feverish pitch. In some quarters, wearing or not wearing a protective mask identifies you as a metaphorical leper. Like today, during the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic anti-mask rallies were not uncommon or less volatile. Thankfully, in Canada cooler heads have prevailed, although we have had several public rallies by those who vehemently advocate abolishing these perceived affronts to personal liberty. The good news here is that the blustering opining of these few are profoundly misguided, and Canadians know it. Hence, only a smattering of the curious attend.

Sadly, some well-intentioned Christians have failed to engage in respectful, reasonable and

well-informed dialogues. Instead, they have adopted the latest, loudest and most popular anti-mask conspiracy drivel and come out swinging. What makes such behavior all the more damaging is that they bring their newfound cause, with full bluster, to their local pastor and church, demanding unquestioning and immediate alignment. To be fair, there have been believers who have advocated for full-on mask appropriation with a similar unhealthy zeal. They too have failed to demonstrate kindness. Either approach, done without a view to the interests of others, always results in division, derision, distain and disillusionment. We need a pensive, wise, respectful and tolerant engagement of the matter.

In this milieu, the following thoughts may be helpful for a sound colloquy:

Look at our reality. We are in a pandemic. Our medical and governing authorities have highly recommended wearing masks, specifically in spaces where there are high numbers of people. COVID-19 is spread via airborne droplets. This is a pathogen whose impact on the human body is still not fully understood, but the news so far is alarming. Yes, it initially effects some to a far lesser degree, but the medical community is just beginning to discover the long-term, post-recovery health issues of the virus, even of those who had mild symptoms. And, let us not forget, people die from this virus — infants,

teenagers and adults. Therefore, it only seems reasonable and in the spirit of being civic minded to do that which protects us and others from such a virus. The overwhelming scientific evidence identifies that the wearing of a mask is a simple tool in curtailing the transmission of this contagion.

Look at Jesus. Friends, our call is to be Christlike in every facet of our life on earth, perhaps especially so during this pandemic. Jesus modelled and spoke of loving one's neighbour in the same vein as loving God (Luke 10:27). He spoke of treating our neighbour as we want to be treated (Matthew 7:12). He said that there was no greater love than laying down one's life for another (John 15:13). It seems to me that wearing a mask in order to safeguard our (and another's) health powerfully demonstrates loving one's neighbour.

As the pandemic rages on and this kerfuffle plays out in the background, wearing a mask in obedience to our benevolent government, in compliance with the erudite counsel of our health professionals and with the purpose of safeguarding our neighbour's (and our own) health, just seems wise. And remember, Scripture reminds us that love, "always protects" (1 Corinthians 13:7a).

REV. PHILIP A GUNTHER  
is director of ministry for the  
Saskatchewan Conference of  
MB Churches

# 2020 PROVINCIAL CONVENTIONS

**ONMB | FEBRUARY 21-22**  
**Cornerstone Community Church**

Pastors' and Leaders' Day, (Friday) featured speaker Danielle Strickland. Strickland guided a group of 100 pastors and leaders through reflections on bringing a holistic gospel presence in leadership, in relationships and our lives. The afternoon panel included Christie Worden, Derek Parenteau, Philp Serez and Jeff Lockyer.

ONMB's Executive Director, Ed Willms, opened Saturday's events with reflections on diversity. We gather as an extended family shaped by different circumstances, which Willms compared to a mobile: As one piece moves, all the other pieces are affected. Jesus invites us to assume the postures of humility (as we listen to and learn from each other), hospitality (as we live together) and of acceptance (as we serve one another).

ONMB welcomes two new churches into their Family: Zurich Kingsfield Mennonite Church and Maple View Mennonite Church.

» [Click here for more 2020 Convention highlights](#)



**MBCM | MARCH 6-7**  
**Westwood Community Church**

On Friday evening, Provincial Director, Cam Priebe and Director of Church Ministries, Jason Dyck expanded on the theme, Reassemble, based on Romans 12:12

Priebe recognized that the past year was one of struggle and brokenness. He also acknowledged the challenges presented by the demerger of C2C from Multiply. An address from Jason Dyck recognized the hurt and abuse that members of our community experienced.

Those in attendance on Friday night were encouraged to pin strips of cloth within a blank frame to symbolize our combined prayers.

» [Click here to read the 2020 Assembly summary \(PDF\)](#)



PHOTO: TONY SCHELLENBERG

**SKMB | MARCH 13-14**  
**West Portal Church**

Some 125 delegates and guests met as the province was deluged with COVID-19 warnings. At the time of Assembly, only one presumptive case of the virus was reported. Still, concern over the spread of the virus resulted in a cascade of cancellations of church services, university classes and organized sports events. True to SKMB's theme: Overcomers: In Christ We Are Victors, Assembly participants joined together to worship, fellowship and conduct the work of the Conference.

Keynote speakers included Jeromey Martini, president of Horizon College & Seminary (Saskatoon), Randy Friesen, president of Multiply and Darryl Balzar, president of Thrive School of Discipleship (Hepburn).

Three significant proposals were accepted:

1. A Five Year strategic Framework (2020 – 2025)
2. The contracted hire of discipleship coach, Luke Etelamaki (The Compass, Regina)
3. Creation of a Common Understandings & Common Covenant document.

» [Click here for more](#)



SASKATCHEWAN CONFERENCE  
 MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCHES



## AEFMQ | APRIL 18 Virtual

It was under unusual circumstances that delegates from the Quebec Mennonite Brethren churches met for their annual general assembly.

As many are becoming accustomed to, AEFMQ hosted its annual meeting on virtually on Zoom. Nevertheless, the meeting was productive and encouraging. The joy in getting together—event online—was palpable. Three agencies reported: Jean Martin for ETEQ, Jason Lévesque for Camp Pénitel and Daniel Genest for MCC Québec.

Jonathan Toupin was elected as a new member of the Board of Directors. A member of the Church of Sainte-Thérèse, Jonathan will sit for a two-year term alongside Véronique Beaudin, Richard Lougheed (Secretary) and Zacharie Leclair (President). The latter has also announced the mandatory end of these three two-year terms for April 2021. The AEFMQ must, therefore, recruit a new president.

The meeting also provided time for discussion on the update to Article 8 of the MB Confession of Faith. The next official meeting of the Quebec churches will take place in the fall, where churches will develop their next 5-year strategic plan.

## BCMB | MAY 1-2 Virtual

BCMB had to adapt quickly to the new reality of COVID-19 restrictions, holding their first virtual AGM. Reports from ministry partners were submitted in video format and accessible on the web. Although the delegates were not able to gather in person, they all had excellent participation.

To some degree, churches could learn from the BCMB AGM: by observing what worked and what didn't work on the technical side. The prayer time at the start, which Rob Thiessen led, was a highlight and seemed to be a meaningful time for all. BCMB welcomed a new Bible Camp Society Executive Director, Bob Kroeker.



## Alberta

Conference of Mennonite  
Brethren Churches

## AEFMQ | APRIL 18 Virtual

Three Discussion Sessions: ABMB Vision & Budget with Paul Loewen & Dave Hooge, MB Baptism & Membership with Ingrid Reichard, and MB Identity with Paul Loewen.

The Board reported three challenges faced in 2019: finances, communication and the churches health. Board members have been hard at work connecting with Alberta church boards to get a better sense of connection and soliciting feedback. Three board members completed their terms, and two more were affirmed.

The ABMB mission focus areas:

- Church health and resourcing
- Spiritual and theological health
- Leadership development
- Multiplying mission

Jaymie Anderton (Multiply) begins ministry in Alberta, working with the ABMB team, specifically in the area of Leadership Development with NextGen.

Sam Ramirez has been helping ABMB to resource and build bridges with new Canadian churches.

Collaboration with partners such as Camp Evergreen, Multiply, and MB Seminary is improving.

Due to Covid19, adjustments were made to the Budget, passed by delegates.

**Note:** This report compares actual numbers to a forecast that has been approved by the Executive Board. Due to the current expectation of reduced revenue, expenses have been adjusted to align with the forecasted revenue for 2020.

JULY 2020

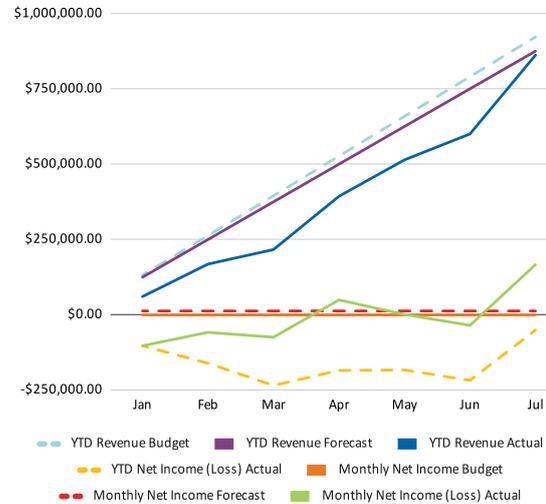
# CCMBC FINANCIAL DASHBOARD

## YEAR-TO-DATE INCOME

**1.5%**  
CCMBC is currently \$13,275 under year-to-date forecasted revenue of \$ 876,515

**Notes:**

1. One-stream funding from provincial conferences is at 80% of the year-to-date forecast. Amounts received in July have been included to reflect church contributions to the end of June.
2. Provincial Conference Support is \$117,475 below YTD forecast .
3. Other Revenue is \$104,201 above forecast and includes \$81,138 of Government Funding for Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS).

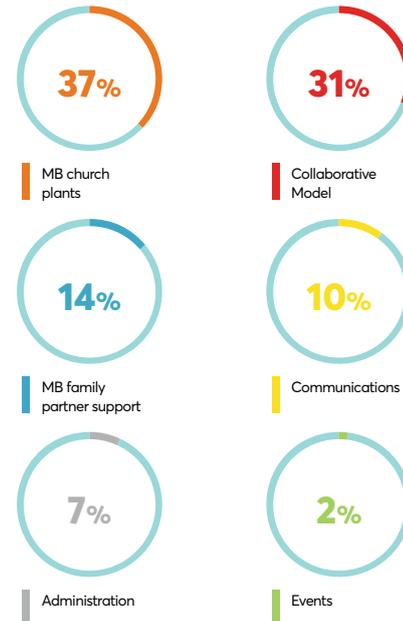


## YEAR-TO-DATE EXPENSES

**15%**  
CCMBC is currently \$136,105 above year-to-date forecasted expenses. Cuts have been made to budgeted expenses for the balance of the year.

**Notes:**

1. Collaborative Model (National Director, National Faith and Life Team, National Ministry Team, National Assembly, National Assembly Executive, and the Centre for MB Studies) Staff costs, including travel have been reduced for the balance of the year but include contract staff hired to help rewrite the bylaws.
2. MB Church Planting: Expense is reported net of \$122,336 of unbudgeted, designated donations.
3. MB Family Partner Support (ICOMB, MB Seminary, ETEQ, MB Historical Commition, and the Leadership Training Matching Grant): Reported net of \$41,096 of flow through donations.

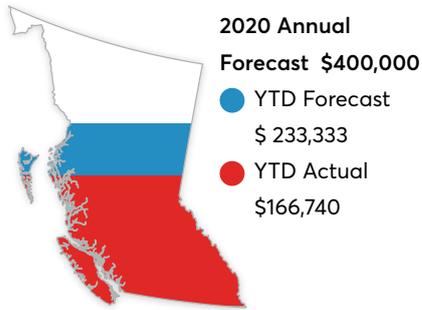


JULY 2020

# SINGLE STREAM FUNDING

## PROVINCIAL BREAKDOWN

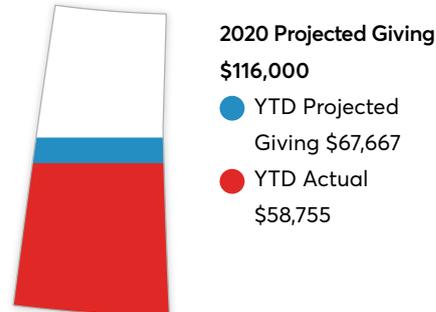
### BRITISH COLUMBIA (BCMB)



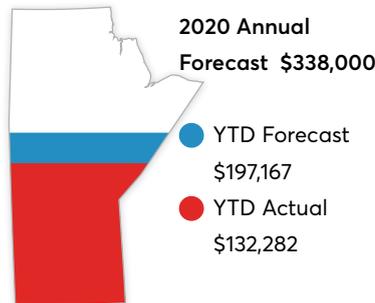
### ALBERTA (ABMB)



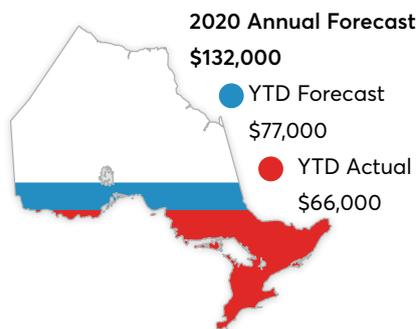
### SASKATCHEWAN (SKMB)



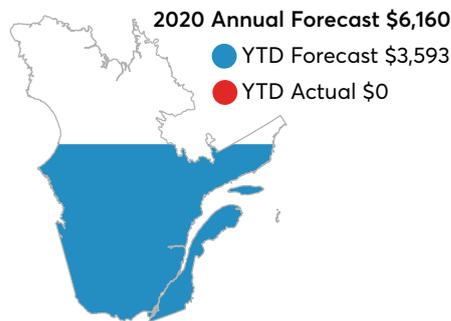
### MANITOBA (MBCM)



### ONTARIO (ONMB)



### QUEBEC (AÉFMQ)



**Note:**

Send questions and comments to [FAQ@mbchurches.ca](mailto:FAQ@mbchurches.ca).

JULY 2020

# CCMBC FINANCIAL FORECAST

	2020 ANNUAL BUDGET	2020 FORECAST	ADJUSTMENT
<b>REVENUE</b>			
<b>CMSF</b>	\$	–	\$ 7,941
CMSF - ABMB one-stream funding		80,000	59,110 (20,890)
CMSF - AÉFMQ one-stream funding		7,700	6,160 (1,540)
CMSF - BCMB one-stream funding		469,300	400,000 (69,300)
CMSF - MBCM one-stream funding		338,000	270,400 (67,600)
CMSF - ONMB one-stream funding		132,000	132,000 –
CMSF - SKMB one-stream funding		145,000	116,000 (29,000)
		1,172,000	991,611 (180,389)
Other Revenue		411,241	510,986 99,745
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>1,583,241</b>	<b>1,502,597 (80,644)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Administration		71,000	70,260 (740)
Affiliation Support		20,000	15,000 (5,000)
Collaborative Model		533,100	386,476 (146,624)
Communications		215,020	191,476 (23,544)
Events		79,400	40,744 (38,656)
MB Church planting net of unbudgeted, designated fundraising		378,885	400,106 21,221
MB Family Partner Support net of flowthrough donations		274,836	228,608 (46,228)
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>1,572,241</b>	<b>1,332,670 (239,571)</b>
<b>TRANSFERS</b>			
Transfer to Reserve		11,000	11,000 –
Net Income/(Loss)	\$	–	\$158,927 \$158,927

MB family,

As you are likely aware, USMB and CCMBC collaborated in February of this year to form a bi-national Task Force to perform an extensive review of Multiply. Consultant John Radford of Transpectives was engaged by the Task Force to provide a large-scale evaluation of the Multiply organization—utilizing multiple interviews with many stakeholders, missionaries, pastors and leaders as well as performing an extensive assessment of Multiply’s culture and leadership over the past several years. Radford’s report was delivered to the Task Force on May 25.

Since then, the Multiply Task Force has been working diligently to provide a comprehensive report, replete with recommendations. This is to inform you that the Multiply Task Force has completed their review and has submitted their report, including recommendations, to the Multiply board as well as to the USMB leadership board and CCMBC leadership board.

Over the next few months, these recommendations will be reviewed and discussed in detail in order to provide proper due diligence for making crucially important decisions concerning Multiply culture, board function and leadership. All of those involved in this lengthy process express our appreciation for the patience of our MB family as we work at this, seeking the Lord’s leading and wisdom for arriving at actionable next steps. Please join us in praying!

In Christ,  
Elton DaSilva  
Don Morris



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When was the last time you checked out what’s available through Kindred Productions? The Confession of Faith Commentary and Family Matters are valuable pieces of learning about what it means to be Mennonite Brethren.



# The Pandemic Reformation

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WHOEVER HAS EARS, LET THEM HEAR WHAT  
THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES.  
REVELATION 3:6

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**Y**ears ago, I attended a conference hosted by Zondervan Publishing. Nearly three thousand pastors gathered to hear about new and upcoming movements within the Christian Church. During a breakout, I listened to late author Phyllis Tickle describe the Western Church as a budding flower. In Tickle's interpretation, the church begins to fold into itself over time, becoming hard and encrusted. Every five hundred years or so, a new reformation takes place that breaks through this hard shell, revealing a new flower bud.

Although Tickle hitched her wagon to the wrong horse (mainly the emergent church

movement), she may have been right about a need for a new reformation.

The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century disrupted a complacent and ritualistic Church, bringing about a time of turmoil, uneasiness and uncertainty, only properly understood in hindsight. True reformation must be born out of the Holy Spirit. It is not a programmatic or engineered construct but instead, it springs out of deep discontent that leads to greater intimacy and dependence on God.

Reformations have introspective effects: requiring analysis, repentance, significant soul-searching and questioning.

# "UNTIL NOW, CHURCHES HAVE MEASURED SUCCESS BY THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN OUR PEWS, [AND] THE AMOUNT OF MONEY IN THE COLLECTION PLATE..."

A God-initiated reformation also leads the Church back to its original form and function, changing the status quo. Reformations gain momentum when driven by the younger generation. As the Spirit moves "...Old men will dream dreams and the young men will carry out vision" (Paraphrased from Joel 2:28)

Five hundred years after the Protestant Reformation, we see signs of a church — as Tickle says — folded into itself and encrusted. Are we today witnessing a pandemic-caused reformation? Through conversations with pastors from across the country, I'm made aware of how deeply affected they are by COVID-19. Has the Church ever faced a challenge as great as the global Coronavirus pandemic? Everything we felt necessary to the present Church's existence has been turned upsidetown — all programs and services are either closed or deployed online or at a distance. This season may be the perfect opportunity for us to look introspectively at what it means to be God's church today. What is the Spirit saying to the Church of 2020? It is not business as usual. God is telling us something significant.

My gut feeling is that if we listen well, the Church will be very different in the years to come. Out of my conversations with church leaders, I observe several shifts occurring. The post-pandemic Church will be:

### ***Less professionalized***

The work of the post-pandemic church will be done primarily by bi-vocational and lay leaders. This largely-volunteer base of leaders, when

mobilized, will grow the Church's presence in the world. It is vital that these emerging laypeople be mentored, equipped and supported by the current generation of church leaders.

### ***A smaller/bigger church.***

There will be fewer regular large gatherings with a strategic movement towards multiple small or home-style gatherings, less like peer support small groups, and more like fully functioning mini versions of the larger church.

### ***Centred around mission.***

The Church will need to be very clear as to why it exists. The focus will move from maintaining programs to achieving a specified mission.

### ***Driven by active disciples.***

Observers must become active participants in the life of the post-pandemic Church. As gifts, abilities, and talents emerge from the pews, equipping, and training will become priorities. Strong emerging leaders are a result of an intended discipleship path that leads people to experience God in fresh ways. These new leaders will need more than training; only a deep relationship with the living God will prepare them to lead.

### ***Value the immeasurable.***

Until now, churches have measured success by the number of people in our pews, the amount of money in the collection plate or the number of names on the volunteer list. What if instead, we measured the number of first-time conversations about Jesus? Or the number of volunteers engaged outside of the church in ways that demonstrate God's kingdom on Earth? What if churches used stories of transformation as the basis of their effectiveness?

I say all of this not to cause controversy, but to motivate us to search deeply for what God is saying to the Church during this pandemic. What if this is the beginning of a new reformation, one that prepares the Church for effective ministry in the world today?

I remain committed to listening. What is the Spirit saying?



ELTON DASILVA is the national director of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. He and Ana live in Winnipeg. They have three children.



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