

Mennonite Church Manitoba Annual Report for 2024



Forty congregations have covenanted together to be Mennonite Church Manitoba, and we are grateful to God for these relationships of common identity, mutual support, and shared ministry. This includes one new congregation which joined MCM at our 2024 Gathering at Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Winkler, where delegates reflected together on what it would mean for us to be an intercultural church..

2024 saw the launch of two new initiatives among us. Hope and Courage is a two-year visioning process for MCM, prompting us as congregations and as a regional church to explore who God is calling us to be and what God is calling us to do at this time. This process includes focus groups, surveys of constituents, and our upcoming 2025 Gathering exploring one aspect of our core identity as Anabaptist Mennonites.

We also launched Light the Fire, a once-a-generation, multi-year, grassroots-based capital campaign to upgrade our facilities at Camps Assiniboia and Koinonia. In 2024 we celebrated 75 years of camping ministry with a wonderful weekend of singing, reflections, and activities; with Light the Fire we are looking to extend our camping and retreat ministries for another 75 years. Our summer camps this year saw 520 campers attend, including 178 adults with disabilities, led by 83 summer staff with 14 leadership staff. In 2024, Camps Assiniboia and Koinonia hosted over 180 guest groups representing nearly 8500 people.

Our Leadership Ministries Co-Directors, Jeff Friesen and Karen Schellenberg, supported our pastors through all the transitions of life and ministry during 2024. This year saw one pastor ordained, while four pastors received other forms of credentialing. Nine new pastors were installed in congregational ministry, while two retired from ministry. There were six pastors new to MCM in 2024.

Our shared Mission Ministries as a regional and nationwide church continued strong through this past year. International Witness currently works with partners in 16 countries around the world, and congregations across Canada share in this work through mission networks. Closer to home, Director of Mission Engagement Melanie Neufeld worked with elder David Scott of Swan Lake First Nation, along with members of our Mennonite Coalition for Indigenous Solidarity, to tell David's story of a "Secret Treaty" between early Mennonite settlers and the Ojibwe people. Reception of this story has been overwhelmingly positive in encouraging reconciliation with our Indigenous neighbours in Manitoba.

This past year saw the retirement of a much-loved staff member, Kathy Giesbrecht. She served for many years as Associate Director of Leadership Ministries, and for the past two years as Director of Congregational Ministries. We are grateful for her work in supporting our pastors and congregations over the years. Her work carries on in a scaled-back capacity, shared among other MCM staff.

We are looking forward to Gathering 2025, when we will come together for worship, information, and inspiration around the theme, "Looking to Jesus," based on Hebrews 12:1-2. Join us as we explore what it means for us to be Jesus-centered as congregations and as a regional church.

You can keep up with current MCM news by subscribing to our weekly MCM Update, which highlights prayer items and upcoming events, and our MCM Monthly, an online newsletter telling stories of our regional church. Sign up at www.mennochurch.mb.ca/contact or by emailing our office.