



**Mennonite
Church
Canada**

Year in Review 2019

Executive Minister Doug Klassen has seen God's presence at work over the past six months:

- in each one of the nine congregations I preached in this past fall (Springstein, Vineland United Mennonite, Langham, Carman, Altona, Springridge, Lethbridge and Orodara and Bobo-Dioulasso in Burkina Faso). I experienced a genuine invitation to faith in Jesus Christ and the offer of joining the community as it lives into what God is calling it to be;
- at the Continuing Education Event and Equipping Day hosted by Mennonite Church Saskatchewan in mid-October. It was an excellent time of learning;
- at the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission partnership council meetings in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso. I brought forward several new joint-project ideas thanks to generous donors who wish to see our ministry continue;
- in Joint Council and Executive Staff Group meetings, where we are excited to see the vision emerging of who we are becoming as a nationwide church. Comprised of faithful local congregations, gathered into regional church bodies, we come together as Mennonite Church Canada to form a people of God through relationship-building, partnership and resourcing.

CommonWord

Bookstore and Resource Centre

Overall, we are grateful to report strong numbers in the first three quarters of our current fiscal year which reflect our growing ministry:

- Our sales revenue has grown by 8.2 per cent, including a significant 24 per cent increase in general book sales.
- We expect to again serve over 10,000 retail customers this year (up one per cent from last year's third quarter).
- The number of borrowers has remained the same. The quantity of items borrowed has increased by seven per cent.
- Of items borrowed by Mennonite Church Canada congregations, a record 56 per cent circulated outside Manitoba (up from 49 per cent last year), including increases in MCBC, MCA and MC Sask.

International Witness

International ministry continues in Thailand, South Korea, China and the Philippines through the work of our nine Witness workers and our ministry partners. Please remember in your prayers:

- Dann and Joji Pantoja (Philippines)
- George and Tobia Veith; Jeanette Hanson (China)
- Bock Ki Kim and Sook Kyoung Park (South Korea)
- Tom and Christine Poovong (Thailand)

International Witness updates from 2019:

- Jason Martin stepped down as director at the end of July 2019. We are thankful for his faithful service during difficult years of transition. Jeanette Hanson is currently interim director.
- Using feedback gained through the formation of the Witness Support Team (WST) model, International Witness is currently transforming WSTs into Networks of sustainable support for our Witness programs. Instead of relying on individual members, these networks will be congregationally based. More information on the Networks is forthcoming in 2020.
- Mennonite Church Canada is exploring new ministry partnerships in Bolivia, Palestine-Israel and Myanmar.

Indigenous-Settler Relations (ISR)

Highlights:

- The Treaty Walk (May 31 to June 14), co-created by the Health Sciences Association of Alberta, ISR, and Dr. Pat Makokis, was a two-week-long walk from Edmonton to Calgary to raise awareness of Treaty relationships. Folks on the walk facilitated conversation circles in a dozen churches and community centres by bringing together Indigenous people, union workers and members of faith communities in intercultural and international friendship.
- Three new video resources were created in partnership with ISR: Treaty Walk, This Fight Continues: 262 & The Declaration, and Demand 1: Adopt the Declaration.
- ISR facilitated a delegation of 15 Mennonites from across the country to participate in NAIITS: An Indigenous Learning Community's Symposium on "Land and Place" at Tyndale University College in Toronto, Ont. on June 6-8.
- In support of the Global Climate Strike on Sept. 27, ISR coordinated two interfaith prayer gatherings and helped mobilize Christian communities for participation.
- ISR issued another print run of *Unsettling the Word: Biblical Experiments in Decolonization*. Paperback editions are now available through CommonWord.

For our full report go to <https://www.commonword.ca/ResourceView/66/21909>. Blessings to your congregation this New Year!

Sincerely,

Doug Klassen
Executive Minister