

Sustained by God's Provision

Strengthening Our Shared Ministry Together

- Anthony G. Siegrist



Jesus' words about worry in Matthew 6:25-34 have intrigued me for a long time. The fact that Jesus recommends nature contemplation as an antidote to anxiety is fascinating. "Look at the birds of the air . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." When we contemplate the natural world through the eyes of faith, what we see is divine provision.

God's provision is part of the traditional teaching of divine providence. As Anabaptists, we tend to emphasize human freedom more than divine providence. We want to make it clear that we all are continually called to follow Jesus. We have an ongoing invitation to respond to Jesus in every aspect of our lives, but we are not compelled. However, sometimes this emphasis on what we can do overshadows what God does. We lose sight of God's provision. Nature helps us see what God does. "If God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you?"

Like wildflowers and birds, the shared ministry of our 100+ churches, which is MCEC, is a testament to God's provision. This update, the stories of ministry as well as the financial

data, show that God is continuing to provide through the generosity of individuals and congregations. I hope that you have noticed similar provision in your own life. It's not always dramatic—Jesus draws our attention to small, fragile things after all—but it is real.

In MCEC we are well on our way to realizing the congregational giving we hoped for when this-year's spending plan was created. We do anticipate that the reduction in some fund balances, stemming from the situation at Abundance Canada, will impact us negatively. However, the hard work done in recent years to stabilize MCEC's financial situation will stand us in good stead. For example, over the past month we have been working with MCC Ontario to decrease our office footprint at 50 Kent and reduce the cost of our lease. The point, of course, is to sustain and strengthen the Anabaptist witness of our church at a time when some are tying the Christian faith ever more closely to nationalist interests.

Thanks to you and to your congregations for being a part of God's provision for MCEC. Our shared witness would not be possible without the generosity of those gladly responding to Jesus' invitation to be part of his peaceful revolution.

*"Look at the birds of the air... Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow"
Matthew 6:25-34.*

When we contemplate the natural world through the eyes of faith, what we see is divine provision.

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2025-26 Approved Spending Plan Summary

Before we provide a closer look at the September 30, 2025 financial results, the 2025-26 Approved Spending Plan is shown here.

This plan reflects organizational restructuring, deep program revisions and reduced partner allocations.

Revenues for FYE26 are conservatively projected to be \$213,762 lower than last year's actuals, while expenses have been reduced by \$432,991.

The projected deficit for 2025-26 is 42% lower than last year at \$175,753 and will be covered by a transfer from the Faithful Legacy Fund.

Revenues are conservatively projected, while expenses have been reduced.

2025-26 APPROVED SPENDING PLAN	
REVENUE	
Individual and Estate Donations MCEC	\$160,000
Individual Donations (MC Canada)	\$25,000
Church Giving	\$1,322,911
Relational Witness Giving	\$200,000
MC Canada Relational Witness - Designated	(\$200,000)
Interest	\$95,375
Core Revenue	\$1,603,286
other income	\$78,812
fund transfers	\$310,172
Additional Revenue	\$388,984
Total Operating Fund Revenue	\$1,992,270
EXPENSE	
includes program, partner and salary expense	
Total Operating Fund Expense	\$2,168,022
Deficit	(\$175,753)
Transfers from Faithful Legacy Fund	\$175,753
Net Operating Deficit	\$0

A Note on Our Investments with Abundance Canada Stewardship in Challenging Times

MCEC has been impacted by the situation at Abundance Canada.

We are still waiting on full details and expect more information later this fall. However, we do anticipate a reduction in some fund balances.

Thanks to the intentional work we've done over the past year to reduce spending and increase efficiency, MCEC is well positioned to weather the potential fiscal impact.

More information from Abundance:
abundance.ca/a-message-from-our-board-chair/



September 30, 2025 Financial Results

We are pleased to report that at this time in the year, MCEC is on track to meet both our expense and revenue targets.

Church Giving is MCEC's largest source of operating revenue and we are pleased to report that church giving to date has been healthy this year!

- The regular, faithful giving, large or small, from our churches is deeply appreciated. This kind of giving sustains the work of the regional church.
- It is important to note that we do still need to raise \$449,500 in this area to match our January 31, 2026 goal of \$1,322,911. We thank God for all of these gifts and we invite all churches to prayerfully consider how they might help MCEC exceed its revenue targets in the coming year and support our collective ministry to energize congregations, encourage leaders and embody God's reconciling ministry.

We recognize and deeply appreciate churches' efforts to support MCEC.

SEPTEMBER 30, 2025 FINANCIAL RESULTS

REVENUE

	FYE26 Sept. 30/25 ACTUALS	FYE26 Sept. 30/25 BUDGET
<i>Individual and Estate Donations MCEC</i>	\$42,521	\$106,667
<i>Individual Donations (MC Canada)</i>	\$13,010	\$16,667
<i>Church Giving</i>	\$873,411	\$720,975
<i>Relational Witness Giving</i>	\$63,943	\$133,333
	(\$63,943)	(\$133,333)
<i>Interest</i>	\$55,822	\$63,583
Core Revenue	\$984,764	\$907,892
<i>other income</i>	\$66,713	\$53,911
<i>fund transfers</i>	\$208,577	\$211,350
Additional Revenue	\$274,290	\$265,261
Total Revenues into Operating Fund	\$1,259,054	\$1,173,153

EXPENSE

includes program, partner and salary expense

Total Operating Fund Expense	\$1,391,124	\$1,468,274
Deficit	(\$132,070)	(\$295,122)
<i>Transfers from Faithful Legacy Fund</i>	\$117,169	\$117,169
Net Operating Deficit to date	(\$14,901)	(\$177,953)

Your Support Makes A Difference

We thank God for the generosity that has already been shown—and we invite every MCEC congregation to join in this vital work.

Your financial commitment is essential for MCEC to meet and exceed our goals this year. Together, we can continue to energize congregations, encourage leaders and embody

God's reconciling mission in our communities and beyond.

Now is the time to act and invest boldly in what God is doing through and in MCEC.

Join us in giving generously—so that together, we can strengthen the Church and extend God's transforming love even further.

Donate
mcec.ca/giving



MCEC Staff in Community



Left: Yoel Masyawong leads worship at the Niagara Cluster's church gathering.



Right: Marilyn Rudy-Froese encourages Bethel Mennonite Church at their closing service.



Left: Cathrin van Sintern-Dick installs Wendy Janzen and Chip Bender at Erb St. Mennoite Church.



Right: Fanosie Legesse participates in a panel discussion on intercultural church at MC Canada Gathering this summer.

MCEC Welcomes Micah Peters Unrau

MCEC is delighted to announce that Micah Peters Unrau has joined the team as Church Engagement Associate. In this temporary position, Micah helps congregations grow in awareness of one another and participate more fully in the shared ministry of the wider church.

Micah visits congregations to gather and share stories of creative ministry, foster connections between leaders and highlight how God is at work across MCEC. He is available for speaking engagements, Christian education hours and workshops on topics such as:

- The presence of youth and young adults in the church
- Pursuing right relationships with Indigenous communities
- Caring for God's creation

"I love finding compelling yet thoughtful ways to share about faith and encourage others to live into God's work together," says Micah.

Micah brings deep experience in church leadership and communication. Since age 13, he has been a regular speaker at Hillcrest Mennonite Church, where he led prayers and preached sermons. He has facilitated forums, competed in oratorical contests and even organized a film premiere. He is currently completing his Master of Divinity degree.

"We are thrilled to welcome Micah into this new role," says Anthony Siegrist, Executive Minister. "His passion, creativity and commitment to building relationships will be a tremendous asset. I'm confident



Contact Micah:
mpetersunrau@mcec.ca

his energy and vision will help our congregations grow together in faith and community."

Congregations are invited to connect with Micah for speaking engagements. Share in the opportunity to learn from and celebrate the many ways God is at work across MCEC.

MCEC Celebrates 18 Years of TiM

This past March, a group of 12 pastors gathered at Hidden Acres Mennonite Camp (HAC) to share stories and celebrate a journey of learning together. These were the final MCEC Transitioning into Ministry (TiM) equipping days. Launched in 2007, TiM supported and prepared pastors as they began their ministry journeys.

Pastors come from diverse backgrounds—some with seminary training, others transitioning from different careers, and many bi-vocational, balancing ministry with another job. New pastors often face significant challenges as they lead, support and teach in their communities. TiM was created to help pastors navigate these challenges.

"The coaching provided in the TiM program gave us a safe space to share our diverse experiences, our highs and lows, our fears and our hopes for ministry," says Zac Klassen, pastor at Boomingdale Mennonite

Church and participant in the final TiM cohort.

Marilyn Rudy-Froese was chair of MCEC's leadership council in 2007. She recalls, "We saw a lot of pastors struggling to adjust to the challenges of their role. There was an ongoing conversation about what could be done to help." Muriel Bechtel and Marianne Mellinger, both MCEC staff at the time, developed the programming for the first cohort.

Each cohort participated for three years, attending in-person equipping days at HAC twice a year. Pastors were paired with mentors and learning sessions included strategy discussions, resource exploration and group activities. Often, pastors found the informal moments just as valuable as structured programming. One pastor reflected after a late-night storytelling session, "I haven't laughed this much in decades."

For the last five years, TiM was facilitated by Marilyn Rudy-Froese,

TiM supported and prepared pastors as they began their ministry journeys.

Leadership Minister, and Cathrin van Sintern-Dick, Regional Minister. Cathrin recalls a memorable moment in 2022 when Marilyn fell ill with COVID just before an in-person session. Thrown into the deep end, she rose to the challenge, and the event was a success.

Over its history, 78 pastors participated in TiM. MCEC expresses gratitude to everyone who made the program possible, including Muriel Bechtel, Marianne Mellinger, Henry Paetkau, Megan Lennox, Becca Smoot-Enns, Marilyn Rudy-Froese, and Cathrin van Sintern-Dick.

Today, Mennonite Church Canada continues TiM nationwide, ensuring that pastors across Canada continue to learn, grow and connect.

Since 2007, over 78 pastors have participated in TiM - a space for support, mentoring and equipping pastors stepping into new ministry roles across MCEC.





MCEC Annual Church Gathering 2026

Energize Congregations in Worship, Discipleship and Mission

Join us in person at Steinmann Mennonite Church (Baden, ON) on Saturday, April 25, 2026 for our one-day Annual Church Gathering, a day designed to equip, connect and inspire our MCEC community of faith.

This year's gathering features a fresh, interactive format, bringing new energy and exciting opportunities to engage with others in meaningful ways. Together we will focus on Ephesians 2:19-22, reflecting on how we can energize congregations in worship, discipleship and mission—aligning with our MCEC collective purpose as a regional church community.

Built upon the foundation of the apostles, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone; in him the whole structure built together into a dwelling place for God...

Ephesians 2:19-22

A Day Designed for You and Your Congregation:

- **Be equipped:** Dive into practical workshops and affinity conversations for congregational leaders exploring your creative ministry, mission and congregational growth. Learn from one another and spark fresh vision to take back home.
- **Be connected:** Build meaningful relationships with others who share your joys, challenges and passions for church life.
- **Be heard:** Participate in the afternoon business meeting as we listen together for God's guidance and vision for our shared future.

This is a day to be inspired, resourced and renewed—leaving with renewed energy and encouragement for your congregation.

We can't wait to gather with you—come ready to be energized, connected and inspired.

Complementary Events:

Friday Evening, April 24 MCEC Pastors Gathering

Pastors are invited to gather for a pre-ACG event at MCEC, 50 Kent Ave, Kitchener at 7 p.m.: MCEC Pastors Gathering: A Conversation with Pablo Kim. Pablo's recent book, *Building Mennonite Belonging*, explores the interplay between ethnicity, culture, race and faith in Canada and advocates for a church that reflects and responds to the rich diversity of our society. Join us for this engaging conversation among peers.

Saturday Evening, April 25 MCEC Intercultural Worship Service

Close out a day of inspiration and encouragement at a post-ACG celebration in Kitchener at 7 p.m. for a lively and uplifting Intercultural Worship Service. Join the MCEC community of faith in a joyful celebration of God's wonderfully diverse family.

An MCEC Devotional

Get Inspired Every Week!

Receive Transformed, Inspired, Called: An MCEC Devotional straight to your inbox every Wednesday. Each week, find encouragement, reflection and inspiration to guide your faith journey.

When you subscribe to MCEC Connect, you'll also get the latest news, updates and stories from MCEC and MC Canada, all in one place.

Sign up today and be inspired every Wednesday!

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Intercultural Ecclesia: An Intentional Journey

Fanosie Legesse, MCEC Intercultural Minister



I'm often asked why we use the term intercultural to describe the church.

The word doesn't appear in Scripture and is more commonly found in academic, political or business contexts, where it describes respectful engagement across cultures. We use it because the church has always been called to cross cultural boundaries—not simply to include people from many backgrounds, but to build a shared life where those differences shape and enrich the whole.

When Jesus spoke about his church, he used the Greek word *ecclesia* in Matthew 16:18: "I will build my church." In the Greco-Roman world, *ecclesia* referred to an assembly of citizens "called out" to participate actively in public life. These were not passive gatherings; they were spaces where people shaped the direction of their communities. Jesus' *ecclesia*, however, would not serve political power—it would participate in

God's redeeming mission. His church would be multiethnic, multilingual and Spirit-filled, united by allegiance to Christ rather than nationality or heritage.

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been called to cross
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The early church embodied this vision. From Pentecost onward, people from many nations heard the Gospel in their own languages, and leaders were chosen from both Jews and Gentiles, guided by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This was a church that lived interculturally, not merely alongside others, but shaped by their interaction and shared life.

For Anabaptist/Mennonites, this vision deepens our commitments to Community, Peace and Discipleship. In today's increasingly diverse context, we are called to include and learn from believers of many cultures, promote peace across differences,

and embrace discipleship shaped by multiple cultural perspectives. The intercultural *ecclesia* does not depart from our identity—it enriches it.

Within MCEC, cultural diversity is a reality. We speak different languages, come from different continents and express faith, worship and leadership in unique ways. To be intercultural is not merely to host multiple cultures—it is to form a church shaped by their interaction, learning, transforming and growing together in Christ. Culture shapes how we pray, worship, lead and understand God.

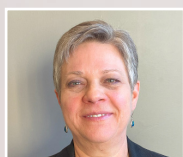
Being intercultural acknowledges that no single culture captures the fullness of God's Kingdom. It is a Gospel calling: to become a church where cultural difference is not a barrier, but a gift, and where the intercultural *ecclesia* God is calling us to be comes alive in our communities.

[Read full article at mcec.ca/news.](https://mcec.ca/news)

We're Here for You: The MCEC Team

As a regional church, we come together to energize congregations in worship, discipleship and mission; encourage leaders of hope, vision and transformation and embody God's reconciling ministry for all creation. We are here to walk alongside and support you in ministry.

Congregational Ministries Team



Marilyn Rudy-Froese, Leadership Minister, leads the Congregational Ministries Team. She nurtures leaders and pastors, walking alongside congregations through seasons of growth, transition and renewal.



Fanosie Legesse, Intercultural Minister, leads the Congregational Ministries Team. He invites us to grow in knowing and understanding each other's cultures as we grow into an intercultural church.



Yoel Masyawong - Regional Minister (Ontario East) – Yoel supports pastors and congregational leaders in church leadership, resourcing, intercultural competency and church planting.



Cathrin van Sintern-Dick, Regional Minister (Ontario West) – Cathrin supports pastors and congregational leaders in church leadership, resourcing, intercultural competency and church planting.

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES & OPERATIONS



Anthony Siegrist, Executive Minister – Anthony provides thoughtful leadership in MCEC. He nurtures our vision and values, fostering growth and strengthening the impact of ministry.



Micah Peters Unrau, Church Engagement Associate – Micah connects congregations, speaking in churches and nurturing vibrant expressions of Christian community and shared ministry.

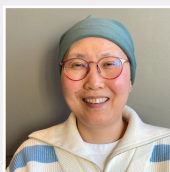
Operations Team



Laurie Castello, Operations and Finance Director – Laurie gives financial oversight, managing budgeting and operational efficiency to ensure compliance, making the most of every resource.



Lisa Williams, Communications Director – Lisa manages communications, crafting engaging content for diverse audiences. She advances a sense of community and shared purpose.



Ellen Kim, Office Administrator – Ellen keeps the office running seamlessly, providing support to the team so MCEC operates efficiently, with a welcoming touch that fosters collaboration.



Sharon Schwartzentruber, Accountant – Sharon manages financial records, ensures compliance with regulations and assists in financial reporting with precision and care.



Ben Thiessen, Communications Assistant – Ben story-tells and shares MCEC's mission and impact through meaningful content, managing social media and building genuine connections.



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