

When Congregations Support Congregations:

Celebrating Generosity That Sustains Ministry Across MCEC

- Anthony G. Siegrist



The last chapter of I Corinthians is easy to skip over. Before this chapter, Paul has already done

heavy theological work dealing with divisions in the church, addressing various types of moral failure and explaining spiritual gifts. But for anyone in congregational finance the opening line of this last chapter is interesting. Paul writes, "Now concerning the collection for the saints . . ." Paul had a fundraising project on the go! At least that is how we would describe it today.

Paul was facilitating financial support for believers in Jerusalem who had been impacted by famine. Paul suggested that the Corinthians collect funds and have the gift ready when he arrived for a visit. Paul says, "And when I arrive, I will send any whom you approve with letters to take your gift to Jerusalem." He wanted to be clear that he had no intention of pocketing the money and that the gift would help build a relationship between the Corinthian believers and those in Jerusalem.

These practical matters weren't the ones that stood out to me when I first read Paul's letters. And yet, for anyone who has ever been unsure

how they might pay next month's bills, this kind of coordinated generosity matters a great deal.

One of the things we've enjoyed tallying in the MCEC office recently has been the amount of money that MCEC's Mission Capital Fund has provided to congregations. This fund is the way MCEC member congregations support each other in buying or upgrading church buildings. Over 35 years the Mission Capital Fund has given \$2.4 million to help congregations. In addition, this fund has provided loans of over \$1.2 million for the same purposes. The money from these loans cycles back into the fund and is available again to congregations. This generosity between congregations within MCEC is worth celebrating. It's something that I think Paul would appreciate.

All of MCEC's finances represent a version of this inter-congregational generosity. Both the gifts and the expenses we report on in this update constitute the shared ministry of our regional church. MCEC's ministry involves elements of direct financial support to some congregations, like Paul describes in his letter to the Corinthians, as well as more general ministry support

We can accomplish far more when we work together generously. With Paul, I gladly express gratitude for the generosity of God's people.

for pastor and congregational wellbeing.

This fall, MCEC's expenditures are tracking a bit below what we had budgeted and donations from congregations and individuals are lower than anticipated. The lower than anticipated level of donations to the regional church is not a cause for alarm, though it is something we ask congregational leaders to be aware of as they make decisions.

As was true for the early church, we can accomplish far more when we work together generously than when we work alone. The Mission Capital Fund is one example of this, and MCEC's month-to-month operations are another. With Paul, I gladly express gratitude for the generosity of God's people.

2026-27 Approved Spending Plan Summary

Before we provide a closer look at the September 30, 2026 financial results, the 2026-27 Approved Spending Plan is shown here.

The projected deficit in this year's spending plan is relatively small. In fact, it is 83% lower than the deficit of two years ago. We are focused on getting MCEC to a sustainable spending plan. We gratefully welcome your participation in our shared ministry!

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2026-27 APPROVED SPENDING PLAN	
REVENUE	
Individual and Estate Donations (MCEC)	\$140,000
Individual Donations (MC Canada)	\$25,000
Church Giving	\$1,400,000
Relational Witness Giving	\$200,000
MC Canada Relational Witness - Designated	(\$200,000)
Interest	\$6,000
Core Revenue	\$1,571,000
other income	\$109,980
fund transfers	\$327,921
Additional Revenue	437,901
Total Operating Fund Revenue	\$2,008,901
EXPENSE	
includes program, partner and salary expense	
Total Operating Fund Expense	\$2,058,429
Deficit	(\$49,528)
Transfers from Faithful Legacy Fund	\$49,528
Net Operating Deficit	\$0

An Invitation for Shared Generosity

Thank you for the generosity that continues to sustain our shared ministry.

This year, MCEC has walked alongside congregations such as East Zorra Mennonite Church and Meheret Evangelical Church, as they explored new ministry opportunities and relationships. We have supported pastors in Quebec through a resourcing day focused on credentialing and what it means to serve as a pastor within

MCEC. We have also shared stories of God's faithfulness and resources across our regional church through *Sprout*, our annual magazine.

This work is life-giving and important, and it is made possible through the financial support you provide.

We invite your church to prayerfully consider how it might continue to strengthen our shared ministry through generous giving.



Donate
mcec.ca/giving

September 30, 2026 Financial Results

The September 30, 2026 financial results (actuals) are shown in comparison with what was expected (budgeted) for this time period. We can see that revenues and expenses are lower than expected for this time of year. It is important to note that while Additional Revenue is higher than expected, it will be offset by lagging expenses.

We need to pay careful attention to Individual and Church Giving which comprise almost all of our Core Revenue. This giving is essential to the ministry we share together. We are grateful to the individuals, estates and churches who come alongside MCEC with their gifts of money.

MCEC will continue to do our very best to manage expenses to the end of the year. In order to reach our approved Spending Plan targets in Individual and Church Giving, we need to raise \$671,222 by the end of January. This is \$62,578 more than we received between October and January last year.

This is a call to all of us in MCEC – individuals and churches - who can respond generously between now and January 31! Please consider how you can help provide the resources needed to fulfill the ministry commitments reflected in our approved Spending Plan.

September 30, 2026 FINANCIAL RESULTS		
	FYE27 YTD ACTUALS	FYE27 YTD BUDGET
REVENUE		
Individual and Estate Donations (MCEC)	\$56,220	\$70,950
Individual Donations (MC Canada)	\$9,375	\$16,667
Church Giving	\$828,183	\$861,011
Relational Witness Giving	\$72,280	\$133,333
	(\$72,280)	(\$133,333)
Interest	\$3,843	\$4,000
Core Revenue	\$897,621	\$952,628
other income	\$98,083	\$87,254
fund transfers	\$217,781	\$219,781
Additional Revenue	\$315,864	\$307,035
Total Revenues into Operating Fund	\$1,213,485	\$1,259,663
EXPENSE		
includes program, partner and salary expense		
Total Operating Fund Expense	\$1,332,897	\$1,381,766
Deficit	(\$119,412)	(\$122,103)
Transfers from Faithful Legacy Fund	\$33,019	\$33,019
Net Operating Deficit to date	(\$86,393)	(\$89,084)

Join Us For An
Online Financial Q&A
November 25, 2026 | 7-8 p.m.

We invite congregational leaders to join an online financial call. Hear an update on MCEC's financial position, ask questions and participate in a conversation about our shared stewardship of resources.



Register
mcec.ca/events



MCEC Receives Lyle S. Hallman Foundation Grant to Strengthen Youth and Young Adult Ministry

MCEC is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a multi-year grant from the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation to launch a new initiative to strengthen ministry with youth and young adults.

"We are deeply thankful to the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation for their partnership and investment in young people and their communities of faith," says Anthony Siegrist, Executive Minister of MCEC.

The grant will fund a half-time Regional Minister providing leadership, training, resources and support for congregations as they nurture faith and discipleship among youth and young adults across MCEC.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for MCEC," says Anthony.

"Through our conversations with congregations, youth, young adults and ministry leaders, we have heard a clear call for greater support and stronger connections. This grant enables us to take an important step in responding to that need."

The initiative reflects priorities identified through MCEC's Youth

Engagement in the Church research project, input received at Mennonite Church Canada's Gathering 2025, MCEC Annual Church Gathering and the ongoing MCEC Renew Our Vision process.

"By equipping ministry leaders, strengthening relationships across congregations and fostering intergenerational mentoring, we hope to help congregations create spaces where youth and young adults can flourish in faith and leadership," says Anthony. "We are excited about helping young people from diverse cultural

backgrounds build meaningful connections and grow as disciples and leaders within the church."

Anthony expresses gratitude to the many people who contributed their ideas, encouragement, prayers and support as this vision took shape. MCEC's engagement with the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation was a collaborative process from the very beginning.

He concludes, "We look forward to seeing how God will use this opportunity to strengthen the church and equip young leaders."

Regional Minister Youth and Young Adults



MCEC seeks a half-time Regional Minister providing leadership, training, resources and support for congregations as they nurture faith and discipleship among youth and young adults across MCEC. See mcec.ca/careers.

Celebrating Pastors Across MCEC



In Leamington...

Marilyn Rudy-Froese, Leadership Minister, prays for Lynn and Todd Schlosser at the installation service at Leamington United Mennonite Church.



In Toronto...

Marilyn Rudy-Froese, Leadership Minister, installs Maciel Arias Hernandez at Toronto Mennonite New Life Church.



In Kitchener...

Yoel Masyawong, Regional Minister, installs and credentials Liz Weber at First Mennonite Church in Kitchener.

In Quebec...

Marilyn Rudy Froese, Leadership Minister, and Jean Claude Nkundwa, Regional Minister, met with pastors in Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec, in June for a day of learning, conversation and resourcing. Topics included credentialing within Mennonite Church Canada, annual registration requirements, the Code of Conduct and the Ministry Leadership Information (MLI) process.

The day also highlighted the many ways MCEC accompanies pastors through regional gatherings, ministerial clusters, credentialing, accountability and leadership support. A similar gathering was held in Ottawa in March, providing opportunities for connection, learning and encouragement.

Quebec leaders with Marilyn and Jean Claude





Priesthood, Peace and Polyglossia: An Intercultural Becoming



MCEC churches gather every Sunday to worship in more than twenty different

languages. Together, they remind me of a beautiful quilt carefully crafted by gifted hands into a breathtakingly vibrant blanket.

Our churches are diverse people woven together by a single thread: one God, a shared Anabaptist-Mennonite identity, our heavenly citizenship and our Canadian citizenship. Despite our differences, we all direct our worship to the same God.

This same God declares: “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood... that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9, NIV).

God used similar language when speaking to the people of Israel in Exodus 19:5–6. Being God’s people is inseparable from the calling to represent God’s kingdom of shalom.

Priests carried the vocation of representing the people before God and representing God before the people.

Today, we live out this priestly calling through proclaiming the good news of Jesus who is the great High Priest for all nations. To embrace God’s declaration about the church, we must also embrace the holy responsibility of carrying before God both the joys and the burdens of the world.

At MCEC, we seek to become a strong intercultural community where the shalom of Christ is our foundation and polyglossia—many languages lifted together in worship—is our shared expression of praise. We desire to cultivate a community where diversity is honoured, belonging to Christ and to one another is embraced, and people from every nation use their gifts to strengthen the body of Christ.

To be a people of shalom and polyglossia is not merely a choice we make; it is a God-given identity we are called to embody faithfully together.

“To be a people of shalom and polyglossia... is a God-given identity we are called to embody faithfully together.”

God is calling us to put our peace theology into practice as our MCEC churches—and our country—become increasingly diverse. Linguistic, cultural, economic and social barriers make this calling urgent and necessary.

Our biblical and Anabaptist understanding of shalom goes far beyond simply opposing military solutions to the world’s problems. Shalom means living in right relationship with God, with one another and with creation.

We must actively practice Christ-centred peacebuilding: listening deeply, crossing barriers, sharing leadership and working together so that our communities become visible expressions of God’s peace in a divided world.

See Fanosie’s full article at www.mcec.ca/news.



Spiritual Lessons of Autumn

Transformed, Inspired, Called: An MCEC Weekly Devotional

www.mcec.ca/devotional

Kara Carter, Pastor, Elmira Mennonite Church

Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"

Isaiah 43:18-19

Autumn teaches us that **everything changes.**

The green leaves that seemed permanent turn orange and red. They loosen their grip and fall. The trees do not cling to what has been. They release what they have carried through the summer and enter a season of vulnerability, waiting and hidden work.

What falls to the earth becomes nourishment for what will grow again. Autumn reminds us that not everything is meant to remain; **change is part of God's good creation.**

We often resist change and cling to the familiar. We sometimes imagine that faithfulness means holding tightly to the way things have always been.

But as Anabaptist people, we understand the church is a people called to **follow Jesus together.** Following Jesus requires discernment, courage and openness to the Spirit. Sometimes faithfulness means holding firmly. At other times, it means opening our hands.

What might God be asking us to release?

Perhaps an old expectation of what church must look like. Perhaps resentment, fear or our need to control an outcome.

Letting go does not mean abandoning faithfulness. **It can be an act of faith.**

The tree does not stop being a tree when its leaves fall. Unseen roots remain at work. Congregations may experience seasons when visible growth diminishes, ministries change or disappear. These changes can bring genuine grief. Yet autumn reminds us that God may be working through what we cannot yet see.

Fallen leaves become nourishment for new growth. So too, experiences of change, grief and surrender can become places from which new compassion, courage and mission emerge.

Perhaps our spiritual practice this autumn is simple. **Release** what no longer gives life. **Discern** what remains essential to following Jesus. **Receive** the gifts emerging in a new season. **Trust** that God is present, even when the future is hidden.

So don't rush past the falling leaves. Notice them. Grieve what needs grieving, give thanks for what has been, and open our hands to what God is doing next.

The God who has been faithful in every season is still at work, making all things new.

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.



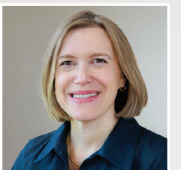
Fanosie Legesse, Intercultural Minister, leads the Congregational Ministries Team. He invites us to grow in knowing and understanding each other's cultures as we grow into an intercultural church.



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



Jean Claude Nkundwa, Pasteur régional (Ottawa & Quebec), supports pastors and leaders in church leadership, resourcing, intercultural competency and church planting.



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

Operations Team



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



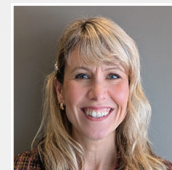
Lisa Williams, Communications Director, manages communications, crafting engaging content for diverse audiences. She advances a sense of community and shared purpose.



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



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



Christina Cox, Communications Assistant, brings to life compelling stories and digital content, leads MCEC's social media and cultivates meaningful connections across MCEC.

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES & OPERATIONS



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



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



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