

The Quiet Miracle of Generosity

Following in the Footsteps of Mary, Joanna and Susanna

- Anthony G. Siegrist



The beginning of Luke chapter 8 mentions three women: Mary, Joanna and Susanna. These three, the gospel writer tells us, provided for Jesus "out of their own resources." We might think often about those who followed Jesus, but my guess is that we don't think much about the people who helped make his ministry possible.

I am thankful that Luke mentions these women. It shows us that Jesus' ministry, like that of our churches, is carried out in partnership with generous people who have a vision for God's healing presence in the world. Sometimes the provision Jesus received was miraculous, but most of the time it came from those who had encountered God's redemptive ministry and wanted others to be

blessed in the same way.

Henri Nouwen is one of only a small group of people who have written about the spiritual character of fundraising and generosity. Nouwen wrote, "Fundraising is a call to conversion. And this call comes to both those who seek funds and those who have funds. Whether we are asking for money or giving money we are drawn together by God, who is about to do a new thing through our collaboration." Jesus' ministry was certainly one of those new things. I hope the shared work of our church is as well.

MCEC depends on the generous financial support of churches and individuals. That's what allows our staff and volunteers to energize congregations, encourage leaders

Ministry is carried out in partnership with generous people who have a vision for God's healing presence in the world.

and embody God's reconciling ministry. This financial support also allows MCEC to share funds with partners who pursue this same mission: educational institutions, camps, emerging congregations, international witness workers, our nationwide church body and more. As Nouwen says, these relationships are calls for conversion. I can only wonder how God is forming us anew through these encounters.

Each Gift Tells A Story

Ministry Made Possible

As we look back of the first few months of this fiscal year, we have much to be grateful for.

Two congregations who generously chose to give the surplus from their annual budget to the wider church; a congregation who joined MCEC just last year sent a first gift to support our shared ministry; an envelope that arrived in the mail containing a cheque and a

simple note about a generous woman's decision to include MCEC in her will.

This kind of generosity makes possible the ordination of new pastors for our churches, support for congregations going through challenging discernment processes, provision of Anabaptist educational resources and the shared nationwide justice and peacebuilding work guided by MC Canada.

WHAT'S INSIDE:

First Quarter
Financial Results

Generation NOW Leader:
Laura Rodriguez-Reyes

Meet Planners
for MC Canada Gathering

Awesome Wonder:
An MCEC Devotional

2025-26 Approved Spending Plan Summary

Before we provide a closer look at the first quarter 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

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 support is essential for MCEC to not only meet but exceed our revenue targets this year.

Together, we can ensure that our shared ministry continues to energize congregations, encourage leaders and embody God's reconciling mission in our communities and beyond.

Will your church prayerfully commit to giving generously this year? Now is the time to invest in what God is doing through us—together in generosity.

Donate
mcec.ca/giving



First Quarter Financial Results

The first quarter financial results (actuals) are shown in comparison with what was expected (budgeted). Revenues came in higher than expected, while expenses were lower than budgeted, providing a strong start for the year.

A key highlight is church giving, which exceeded expectations by \$42,334 and is \$27,984 higher than at this time last year.

We express our sincere gratitude to all of our congregations for their gifts in this first quarter. Every act of regular, faithful giving—whether large or small—is deeply appreciated and vital to our shared ministry.

A special thank you to the congregations who went above and beyond by generously sharing budget surpluses this winter. Your additional support makes a meaningful difference.

We also thank a new congregation who made their first gift to MCEC this quarter. Thank you for walking with us in generosity and faith.

1st QUARTER FINANCIAL RESULTS		
	FYE26 YTD ACTUALS	FYE26 YTD BUDGET
REVENUE		
Individual and Estate Donations MCEC	\$22,013	\$40,000
Individual Donations (MC Canada)	\$95	\$6,250
Church Giving	\$314,996	\$272,662
Relational Witness Giving	\$37,677	\$50,000
	(\$37,677)	(\$50,000)
Interest	\$22,070	\$23,844
Core Revenue	\$359,174	\$342,756
other income	\$27,603	\$22,785
fund transfers	\$79,822	\$79,822
Additional Revenue	\$107,425	\$102,607
Total Revenues into Operating Fund	\$466,599	\$445,363
EXPENSE		
includes program, partner and salary expense		
Total Operating Fund Expense	\$559,414	\$595,884
Deficit	(\$92,815)	(\$150,521)
Transfers from Faithful Legacy Fund	\$43,938	\$43,938
Net Operating Deficit to date	(\$48,876)	\$106,582

Your Generosity at Work Stories of Ministry

The stories that follow offer glimpses into the impact of your generosity. They reveal what happens when faithful people come together in support of a shared mission. Your contributions don't just sustain programs — they enable real ministry, real leadership and real transformation in our congregations and communities.

This is what we can accomplish together. Because of your giving, leadership is strengthened, faith formation is nurtured, congregations are empowered in ministry and lives are being transformed by the love of God. Without your support, this work would not be possible.



Marilyn Rudy-Froese anoints China Kommala upon his ordination.



New Hands: New Volunteers

We are grateful for the dedicated volunteers who give their time, energy and gifts to serve on MCEC's councils, committees and working groups. These individuals represent a vital resource—bringing wisdom, leadership and many hours of service to strengthen our community of faith. We are pleased to introduce the newest volunteers joining MCEC leadership roles:

- **Paulos Berhe** – Mission Council (Rehoboth Inner Healing Church)
- **Rachelle Demosthene** – Executive Council (Église de Dieu Réparateur de Brèches)
- **Carrie Lehn** – Gift Discernment Committee (Ottawa Mennonite Church)
- **Shoua Lor** – Audit and Finance Committee (First Hmong Mennonite Church)
- **Mollee Moua** – Leadership Council (First Hmong Mennonite Church)
- **Brian Quan** – Gift Discernment Committee (Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church)
- **Tobi Thiessen** – Audit and Finance Committee (Toronto United Mennonite Church)
- **Nouphone Vongphakdy** – Investment Committee (Lao Christian Fellowship)
- **Sara Wyngaarden** – Mission Council (Elmira Mennonite Church)

Thank you to each of these individuals for saying “yes” to leadership. Your willingness to serve strengthens our shared mission and vision.

Generation NOW Leader: Laura Rodriguez-Reyes Carries MCEC to the Global Youth Summit

“It is a great opportunity to use a platform for advocacy ... to represent Latino women in the church,” said Laura Rodriguez-Reyes about her role as a delegate at the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) Global Youth Summit (GYS).

She, along with four other Canadian delegates (one from each regional church), was selected from over 20 who applied to represent Mennonite Church Canada at this gathering. Each regional church reviewed the applications submitted to MC Canada from their region. MCEC's executive staff team thoughtfully considered each MCEC applicant and recommended Laura as the MCEC representative. Not only did she represent MCEC, but she was also selected as Mennonite Church Canada's official MWC Young Anabaptists delegate.



Laura Rodriguez-Reyes, MCEC delegate to Global Youth Summit in Germany.

From May 30 - June 1, 2025, delegates from across the Mennonite world gathered in Württemberg, Germany to worship together, learn about each other's cultures and discuss approaches to their Mennonite faith.

Laura has attended First Mennonite

Church in Kitchener since 2010. In 2017 she became a more active participant. As she puts it, “[Peace and non-violence] are what drew me in because I didn't really see that in other spaces ... that is truly what it means to be a Christian, to stand by those values.”

Laura cares deeply about youth engagement in the church, a large focus of the MWC gathering. To prepare for the conference, she led the MC Canada delegates in a project to research what drives young adult engagement or disengagement from the church. It was Laura's hope that at the GYS she would hear from Mennonites in other countries about how they are engaging youth and young adults. She will explore these questions and bring her answers back to MCEC and MC Canada.

The Meeting Place: A Church for All

For over 20 years, a small group has gathered in downtown Hamilton at The Meeting Place. Some weeks only three or four individuals may come and sometimes 20 or 30. Sue Carr and Randell (Randy) Neudorf are the leaders.

It started when Sue was working as a chaplain at the Mission Services men's shelter in Hamilton in 2005 and was asked to begin a chapel service on Sundays.

"I only ever thought of it as a chapel, because if it was a church I would be a pastor, and that wasn't what I wanted as a job." Sue said, "I told the people, we can practice being a church so that you can go join a real church, but people never left!"

A few years later, Sue became the director of the 541 Eatery and Exchange, a community coffeehouse in Hamilton. This brought the church to a new home. "We have our service at 4:00 because we don't want people to have to choose between

what helps them in community." Randy said, "If someone has a morning church, or an afternoon chapel or meal program, we want them to have as many circles of community as they can have."

Randy became involved in 2022. Today he is the music director and community outreach worker for the community.

Recent growth has come from rebuilding connections around the 541 Coffeehouse with the local community.

Last year, Randy and Sue began a conversation with MCEC about supporting outreach around The Meeting Place, working with MCEC Mission Minister Norm Dyck. This coincided with the decision of another MCEC congregation, Agape Fellowship in London, to close their doors. In deciding how to use their remaining financial resources, the Agape community wanted to support urban mission work similar to the kind of work they had done

in London. They agreed to use their remaining resources to fund an outreach worker for The Meeting Place.

With this support, Randy has expanded his work to intentionally be in the coffeehouse on Thursday afternoon. Randy describes "This work has been really good, we are still building connections, but it felt like this was the right time to be in the coffeehouse more. Sometimes none of our regulars are around but I'll overhear a conversation or meet someone in crisis, and I can be in a position to offer to pray with them."

Both Sue and Randy expressed their thanks to the Agape community for providing the resources to support this ministry.

"After COVID I began to wonder if this was naturally coming to an end. But I never felt an answer of yes." Sue explained, "Sunday after Sunday I knew why I was there—and the people came!"

The Meeting Place gathers on Sunday afternoons at 541 Eatery and Exchange, where Randy is often found with his guitar—and a listening ear.



GATHERING 2025 JULY 2-5 Kitchener, ON



Whether you're representing your congregation, a youth looking to connect with peers from across Canada, or a young adult seeking inspiration, there's something for everyone at Gathering 2025!

mennonitechurch.ca/gathering2025

Gathering 2025 Planners



Steve Cox, Crosshill Mennonite Church Event Planner

"I want to be a part of planning this Gathering because

I love the church and want to invest in its ongoing success wherever possible." Steve is an ordained minister who currently serves Crosshill Mennonite Church as interim pastor. He loves the meaningful connections and community building that event planning for church organizations fosters.



Audrey Wichert, Toronto United Mennonite Church Youth Gathering Coordinator

"I believe the youth are the heartbeat of our church, and this gathering will be a powerful opportunity for them to connect deeply with each other and with God." Audrey brings over 30 years of experience working with children and youth in church settings. Her passion lies in connecting with kids, teenagers and young adults, creating inclusive spaces where

everyone can gather, support one another and thrive.



Rae Reid, Hamilton Mennonite Church

Rae holds an Honors Bachelor of Arts in English & Cultural Studies with a

Specialized Minor in Commerce and a Minor in Music from McMaster University. Rae currently writes for the *Canadian Mennonite* and works as an administrative assistant and piano teacher. Rae founded the Ontario-based young adult outreach: Menno YA and spends her free time writing stories, playing piano, backcountry camping and growing dozens of plants! She looks forward to connecting with young adults this summer at the U30 Gathering!



Beatrice Wichert, Toronto United Mennonite Church

Beatrice is a student going into her fourth year of a Social Science degree at Canadian Mennonite University, which she's loving. When not

braving the winters of Winnipeg, she lives in Toronto and enjoys biking, thunderstorms, eating fruit and petting cats. Bea is looking to pursue Occupational Therapy and is passionate about working with people of all ages, psychology and the vision of homesteading with her fiancé in the future.



Larissa Pahl, Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg

The church has been my playground! I

have taken on many roles through the years... teaching Sunday school, leading worship, organizing youth and adult events, preaching and child care. I have found God's goodness in all of these spaces. Through it all my heart remains committed to making our Mennonite church a place where young and old alike can flourish. To this end I am joyfully participating in creating a space for our U30 adults, and specifically a place to explore church leadership through our U30 Leaders Experience at Gathering 2025.

Transformed Inspired Called

An MCEC Devotional

Get inspired every week!

This uplifting devotional by Ingrid Loepp Thiessen was created for Transformed, Inspired, Called: An MCEC Devotional. Want more like it?

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Awesome Wonder

Ingrid Loepp Thiessen, MCEC Pastor and Chaplain at Sunnyside Home

Recently I found myself seated in an airplane in front of two young children and their mom. The children had never been on an airplane and were full of questions: "When will it go up?" And they squealed with delight when the airplane did go up. They chattered loudly and it was delightful. I smiled at their deep wonder and delight.

I grew up learning not to make too much of a fuss about things. Yet Jesus invites us out of the safe space of being neutral, ok, and into boldness, wonder, abundance and awe. In the resurrection accounts Jesus appears behind a locked door in John 20. The disciples are scared to death! And then Jesus speaks and breathes peace all over them, twice. Fear turned to awe!

A catch of 153 fish in John 21. We read it for the first time with wonder and utter a "Wow!" And Peter, fishing, searching for purpose, so aware of his mistakes, and then redeemed



and invited to leadership, a wondrous unexpected moment, Wow!

As followers of Jesus we are invited to more: more joy, more wonder, more sharing, more compassion, more understanding. It's an invitation to abundance. As a long-term care home chaplain, we often talk about the need for "Vitamin Awe."

We search for Awe. We ask "What is breathtaking today, what is wondrous, what makes us say Wow!" This is different than gratitude, it is basking in the awesome wonder and the goodnesses around us.

So, get some Vitamin Awe and enjoy some moments of awesome wonder. "Wow God, what amazing resilience I see in that person." Release compassion by wondering about the other, "Wow, I never thought about it that way." And at church, "Wow, what is the calling here, in this year, in this province and country, at this time?"

Like a child flying for the first time I want to see and embrace the world around me with abundant wonder and awe as Jesus invites us to.

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 & congregational leaders in church leadership, resourcing, intercultural competency & church planting.



Michel Monette, Pasteur régional (Ottawa/Quebec/New Brunswick) – Michel supports pastors and 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.

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.

CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES & OPERATIONS



Anthony Siegrist, Executive Minister – Anthony provides thoughtful leadership and guidance to the congregational ministries and the operations team. He nurtures alignment of our vision and values, fostering growth and strengthening the impact of our collective ministry.



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