



Executive director report

Two years ago, I reported that the executive board believed our family of churches was poised “to make a significant contribution for Christ at this time in history.” While there is still much work to be done, we can point to many faith stories from across Canada highlighting God’s work among us. Over the next few days of Gathering 2014, you will hear some of those stories.

At Gathering 2012, we presented “Four Messages from the Heart of God” for your encouragement and discernment. The Board of Faith and Life was asked to discern the veracity and applicability of this message, which they did. (See December 2012 *MB Herald*.)

These four messages have provided a backdrop for the ministry of CCMBC as we recognize the timeliness of the national office review, the initiatives that have subsequently been launched and the staff the Holy Spirit has brought together.

First, we acknowledge we are ministering in a “sacred moment in time” the Lord has prepared for CCMBC. It’s been exciting to watch God work among us to increase unity, to see churches and provincial partners lean into joint ministry and to witness God’s blessing as a result of these efforts. It has been such a great privilege to work with provincial boards and staff, pastors and lay leaders who are committed to maximizing ministry impact from coast to coast. The Multiply Conference brought young and old churches together to learn from each other and discover how to better apply the concept of multiplication in disciple-making ministry.

Second, we heard CCMBC leaders express a “Holy Spirit discontent” because our conference ministries weren’t facilitating the maximum ministry impact of local churches. I’m excited to report that the discontent is slowly turning into collaboration as churches and leaders tap into the resources that connect them with other Canadian leaders who have the same agenda of seeing Canada transformed by the good news of Jesus Christ. Many pastors and ministry leaders have expressed appreciation for CCMBC’s focus on meeting the needs of the local church through administrative support (payroll, benefits and mortgages) and leadership equipping (C2C cadres, annual retreats and L2L resources at www.learners2leaders.ca).

Third, we received a word saying that future generations will ask what we did to cooperate with God’s leading at this junction in history. The Hemorrhaging Faith study (sponsored by the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada) confirmed that the church needs to consistently seek guidance from the Holy Spirit in order to understand how we can help each generation develop a deep faith that understands the timeless truth of God and applied in timely, Spirit-led ways. There’s a national sense of urgency to inspire youth and young leaders to passionately follow Jesus. God is moving in the lives of young Canadians who desire to follow the Spirit’s leading into camp ministry, international missions, church planting and Christian leadership. As school presidents and camp directors gather in their networks, we see increasing collaboration to equip and deploy young leaders.

Our fourth and most difficult message was the call to “lower the flag” of the Mennonite Brethren denomination so “the flag of Jesus Christ alone” be lifted up, enabling God to work through us to be a “lighthouse” to the nation. This word caused concern in many quarters. Were we abandoning our convictions, confession or faith-forming history? No! Were we trying to strip our denomination of our identity? No! Do we believe God is calling us to partner with others who share our passion and vision to reach Canada with the good news of Jesus Christ? Yes! The joy of seeing multiple denominations gather monthly for teaching, resourcing, encouragement and prayer is humbling and inspiring.

Leaders from across Canada heard the Spirit calling us to raise Jesus higher than our denomination so all glory and honour will go to Him rather than our “brand.” We praise God for 154 years of faith-filled spiritual formation, forged through the fires of pain and persecution, which have created a global family that desires to faithfully and missionally express our evangelical Anabaptist convictions. We simply believe the time has come for us to use this

robust heritage as the springboard for greater ministry collaboration for God's glory and for the sake of Canadians who do not yet know Jesus Christ.

In an effort to align our thinking and passions, we engaged in an exercise to articulate a new mission statement for CCMBC. Our CCMBC mission statement had not been reviewed since the mid-1990s, and we felt the need for common language and an agreed upon set of priorities to guide us at this opportune time in history. This document, based on our Confession of Faith and expressed within our bylaws and governance model, is being presented in draft form for approval.

CCMBC Mission:

To multiply Christ-centred churches to see Canada transformed by the good news of Jesus Christ.

Guiding Principles:

1. We are Bible-based and Spirit-led.
 - We accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God and the authoritative guide for faith and practice.
 - We intentionally seek guidance from the Holy Spirit with the intent of ministering in obedience to God's leading. To be Spirit-led is to be open to moving in new ways. It is timely action rooted in the timeless Word of God, which leads to new and creative thinking and methodologies.
2. We are gospel-focused and kingdom-oriented.
 - We believe in the transforming power of the gospel to bring new life to Canadians.
 - We believe in humanity's need to hear, receive and respond to the gospel message.
 - We believe the in-breaking kingdom of God was initiated by Jesus Christ and will be fully realized at His return. God's in-breaking kingdom transforms lives, society, structures and communities.
 - We believe kingdom ministry is done holistically; it is the whole gospel for the whole person exhibited by "being, telling and doing" the good news of Jesus Christ.
3. We are called to resource for fruitful ministry.
 - We focus on being a multiplier for ministry. We do not do ministry for the local church; we enhance the ministry of local churches.
 - We evaluate the work we do for fruitfulness and make changes to the effectiveness of our ministries. We will identify and report on ministry benchmarks.
 - We make every effort to minister with excellence, giving our best to maximize the resources God has given us for the benefit of the church and the glory of God.
4. We are a learning community.
 - We believe the Holy Spirit continues to reveal God's heart, creativity and methods to his people. Therefore, we will pursue new ways of fulfilling God's call to develop, resource and empower ministry leaders for multiplying Christ-centred churches.
 - We believe God speaks through His people. Therefore, we will intentionally discern the leading of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God in community.
5. We are partnership-oriented.
 - We partner with churches, provincial conferences, schools, MBBS Canada, MB Mission and like-minded ministries and leaders who also desire to multiply disciple-making Christ-centred churches.

Preferred Culture:

We are a Christ-centred, transformational community.

1. Risk-taking, Spirit-led faith
 - We bathe the planning and budgeting process in prayer, so we express the Spirit's leading in all we do.
2. Sacrificial generosity
 - We serve with generosity for the benefit of our ministry partners to enhance the effectiveness of the local church and give glory to God.
3. Interdependence and cooperation
 - We work together to maximize the effectiveness of all conference ministries to multiply Christ-centred churches.
4. Speaking truth in love
 - We honour each other by speaking truth with grace and compassion in order to bring out the best in each other.
5. Prayer-permeated
 - We bathe all CCMBC ministries in prayer, raise up prayer teams and seek to develop a culture of prayer.
6. Storytelling and celebration
 - We communicate the stories of God's work across Canada to build the church, develop partnership and inspire people.

Central Ministry Focus:

Helping multiply leaders and disciple-making churches

Prayerfully submitted by

Willy Reimer

Executive Director