

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 is 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*

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT

Gathering 2012 delegates communicated a number of issues that required the Executive Board's (EB) attention. We identified five key areas needing our attention: National Office Review (NOR), budget sustainability, stewardship fund review, monitoring and measuring CCMBC programs, and better communication. In addition to dealing with Gathering 2012 issues, the Executive Board has worked to clarify CCMBC's mission, purposes, strategic plan and financial transparency.

NATIONAL OFFICE REVIEW. Known popularly as the "Mochar Report," the review was commissioned by the Executive Board in fall 2011 in order to better understand the relationships and systems related to the national office. The review focused on what the national office was doing (or not doing) well in its relationships with provincial conferences and churches, and also highlighted internal challenges and obstacles (i.e., office systems and relationship structures, etc.). The following actions, based on Gathering 2012 requests, have been taken:

- a) A request from the Gathering floor "to have the Board of Faith and Life (BFL) take the lead to discern the Prophetic Word from the Mochar Report." The BFL and EB held a joint meeting to receive the BFL's response and dialogue together. A response was published in the December 2012 *MB Herald*.
- b) Gathering 2012 delegates voiced an interest in making the Review available to the churches. The Review, with a contextual summary, was sent to churches in October 2012. Also, a variety of town hall-type meetings were held to further process the NOR. Additional conversations with leaders across the country have kept the issues in focus and under appropriate scrutiny.
- c) The EB has processed many of the NOR's recommendations. The strategic recommendations have resulted in a new CCMBC mission (Sandbox), services model and structure. These key elements will be processed at Gathering 2014.

BUDGET SUSTAINABILITY. Gathering 2012 delegates requested two items of clarity – further information on budget sustainability and a better understanding and breakdown of the significant increase in the 2012–13 budget. The EB reviewed the 2012 budget details and presented a thorough financial report at the 2013 AGM. The 2015 budget will reflect the strategic alignment of resources to CCMBC's ministry priorities as determined by the EB's allocation of CCMBC resources.

STEWARDSHIP FUND REVIEW. Gathering 2012 delegates voiced a desire for a review of the stewardship fund particular to risk management, compliance and governance. The review has been completed and a new stewardship fund structure and governance will be presented to Gathering 2014. In addition, the Canada Revenue Agency completed a charity audit of CCMBC in December 2013.

MONITORING AND MEASURING CCMBC PROGRAMS. Conference delegates also expressed a need for better ways of monitoring and measuring major conference initiatives, such as leadership development, outreach initiatives and provincial partnerships. The EB is committed to ensuring that all CCMBC initiatives are conducted in accordance with our Confession of Faith, denominational values and ministry priorities. The EB has established a Measurements Committee to work with CCMBC staff to develop qualitative and quantitative indicators by which each ministry is evaluated. The EB is also establishing a Partnership Committee to better review alignment and relationship between our various partner agencies.

BETTER COMMUNICATION. A better communication plan is being developed and specific steps, including appointing an interim communications director and publishing regular post-board meeting updates in the *Herald*, have been taken. Provincial moderators are also taking action in this communication initiative by asking for provincial/regional meetings where such information can be delivered and received in a more contextual and relational manner. The EB and staff have invested increased effort and resources to better establish and build provincial-national partnerships and initiatives.

ISSUE /CONCERN	TASK	DUE DATE	STATUS
National Office Review	Prophetic Word – BFL discernment	October 2012	100%
	Distribution of Review	October 2012	100%
	Provincial "town hall" consultation meetings	May 2013	100%
	NOR recommendations – processed by EB	April 2014	100%
	NOR recommendations – implemented by staff	December 2020	20%
Budget	C2C reporting	January 2013	100%
	Budget increase breakdown	January 2013	100%
	Alignment of funds to services model and strategic plan	January 2015	75%
Stewardship Fund	Compliance	January 2013	100%
	Risk	January 2013	100%
	Governance	January 2013	100%
	New structure implemented	April 2014	10%
Monitoring and Measuring	Measurement Committee assigned	October 2012	100%
	Process and plan w/ CCMBC staff	April 2014	25%
Communication Plan	Establish regular reporting	January 2013	50%
	Distribute status updates	April 2014	75%

*Submitted by, Paul Loewen,
Moderator CCMBC Executive Board*

