

"GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH PEACE,
GOODWILL TOWARD MEN!" LUKE 2:14

Vol. 61 No.4

Fall/Winter 2024

the **RECORDER**



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In English and Plautdietsch

The RECORDER is published bi-monthly by the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference. As a vehicle of communication within the Conference, it strives to keep members of the EMMC informed about congregational life within the family of churches, to inspire interest and commitment to world missions, to facilitate dialogue on relevant faith and life issues, to stimulate spiritual growth, to communicate EMMC visions, to contribute toward a sense of Christian community and fellowship within the conference, and to inform members of major events and developments within the larger Anabaptist community and the greater Christian world beyond our borders. However, opinions expressed in The Recorder are not necessarily those of the Conference as a whole.

Letters, articles and photos are welcomed but The Recorder will only publish materials considered edifying to readers and reserves editorial rights to improve communication and adjust the length of submissions. All submissions, including photos will be retained by The Recorder unless a return is specifically requested. Due to space and sizing restrictions, The Recorder no longer publishes Baby Dedication photos.

The Recorder is sent free of charge to all EMMC members who request it, as well as other persons interested in receiving it. A full version of each current issue is available in PDF on our website at www.emmc.ca.

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"Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" Luke 2:14

Photo Credit: Max Zindel

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Lil Goertzen



WHERE IS YOUR NEXT PASTOR NOW?

BY LAYTON FRIESEN, ACADEMIC DEAN, STEINBACH BIBLE COLLEGE

An era is ending. See if this agrees with what you're seeing. For the last several generations, when our churches needed a new pastor, we assumed there was a group of moveable pastors "out there" looking for a church. "Out there" were unknown pastors trained, experienced, and ready to move their family across the continent to pastor our church. These moveable pastors were deeply committed servants of God who provided excellent service across our churches. It was wonderful to bring all their previous experience into a church hoping for fresh air. But when the moveable pastor was finished, they moved on and we brought in another.

But the number of moveable pastor-families "out there" has now grown very small and it's time to give up that assumption. Fewer pastors today are willing to live that life. One reason is that many pastors' spouses now have their own careers. It's not only the pastor in the family who is called and trained by God for a vocation. Another reason is that pastors have become more cautious about what they demand of their children. Not all pastor's kids who moved across the country to multiple churches throughout their childhood thought it was great. It's also the case that today we don't have as many life-long pastors. Someone may only begin pastoring at age fifty when their family is firmly ensconced in a local community.

What does this mean for churches? Rarely can churches now find a pastor simply by posting an ad "out there" and interviewing all the moveable pastors who apply. Calling a pastor now demands more creativity. Most likely, the next pastor is living locally and needs convincing and educating to be a pastor. Often, the next pastor is someone already in the congregation or a next-door congregation who has been a lay-minister, elder or youth leader and will soon be ready for a larger role.

Every congregation should ask: have we identified and are we training our next pastors? Have we chosen anyone in our midst who has maturity and giftedness and who with the right mentoring, education, and experience could join our pastoral team in five years? How much are we spending this year on next-pastor training? Does our church have steppingstones, smaller ministry positions that provide doable apprenticeships for someday pastors? If not, what makes us think we will find a pastor when our present pastors resign? The day our pastor resigns may be five years too late to begin seeking our next pastor.

Some of the most satisfying moments in church life I have seen are occasions where a congregation commissions a pastor they themselves have raised, mentored and trained.



Bible colleges and seminaries can help with this, but they cannot conjure pastors out of thin air. They can partner with churches who are intent on calling and training people from within their midst to be pastors.

The EMMC has developed a partnership with Steinbach Bible College to help churches with this reality. Together we developed the Barnabas Bursary that can pay the tuition for people chosen by their own churches for present or future pastoral leadership. These are people who do not yet have the skills of Bible reading, shepherding, cultural engagement and leadership they need. This training can be in-person or online. It can be done part-time. Talk to Kelly Lesser, Pastor of Care and Mission about this possibility.

Some of the most satisfying moments in church life I have seen are occasions where a congregation commissions a pastor they themselves have raised, mentored and trained. It starts in the nursery Sunday School and it completes when the church has trained their next pastor.

Let's do this together.

THE SHEPHERD'S REFUGE: ANSWERING GOD'S CALL TO CARE FOR PASTORS

BY MICHAEL KRAHN

The Unexpected End - And Beginning

Have you ever asked God for direction only to have him answer more clearly than you expected?

In the summer of 2023, I took a week of "staycation." As I began that week, I recorded a short prayer in my journal: "Lord, lead me into what's next. May I work hard this week in thinking, writing, and praying. Show me the path or at least the next step." By week's end, he answered clearly—my assignment as Aylmer EMMC's Lead Pastor was ending and a new assignment was in store.

I felt rumblings in the months leading up to this, but no more than at other points in the past. During my 15 years at AEMMC, I regularly sought the Lord about my calling and every time I asked the answer was the same: "Stay." Each time I stayed, it was not a grudging or half-hearted commitment; I resolved to love the people of the church and lead them as best I could.

Privately and publicly, I consistently said that if the Lord's assignment was to stay at AEMMC until I reached 65, that would be fine with me. And if he had something else for me, that would be fine too. When I checked in with him in the summer of 2023, the answer was different for the first time—he had a new assignment for me.


Seasons of Preparation

God first called me to be a pastor in 2007, and this was a surprise—to me, not to him. He had been covertly preparing me for years. I realized in 2023 that he had been preparing me again. Younger pastors and other church leaders were reaching out to me for help and advice. This consumed more of my time and was God's way of preparing me for what was next.

I sensed God leading me into a new ministry focused less on a single, local church and more on the health of many local churches. That week of staycation was the beginning of a big new adventure that came to be called The Shepherd's Refuge.

It was a working title at first, but it soon became the permanent name as I discovered more layers of meaning behind it. I pursued the formation of this new ministry with a mix of energy and uncertainty. I always thought that if God called me to move on from AEMMC, it would be into another pastoral position, not to start a new ministry from scratch.

In October of 2023, I announced my "eventual resignation" to the congregation, and on June 30, 2024 - exactly 11



THE SHEPHERD'S REFUGE MINISTRY MODEL

Care is the front door of the ministry. I provide a listening ear, a companion in prayer, and Biblical counselling (I recently obtained a certification from the Association of Biblical Counselors).

Coaching gets to the heart of the practical challenges of church leadership; dealing with technology use and overuse, and establishing a sustaining (and sustainable) rhythm of spiritual practices that maintain a connection to Jesus as pastors shepherd the sheep.

Connection between pastors is an undervalued resource. Bringing like-minded pastors together for personal friendship, and local pastors' fellowships are one way to ensure that the mission of The Shepherd's Refuge multiplies.

Please contact me and let me know how I can be of service to your church by supporting your pastor and other leaders.

months after that pivotal week of staycation - I said goodbye to AEMMC as I began a new chapter.

Pressing Pastoral Challenges

Since God called me to undertake this new ministry, I've had the privilege of entering into the stories of many pastors and church leaders. Frequently, they are exhausted and all of them need frequent encouragement.

continued on p 4 ...

Wartime metaphors come to mind as I look at the landscape of pastoring today - words like: "battleground," "minefield," and "casualties" are often used. A Duke University study suggests that 85% of those who train for ministry will leave within five years. If this is even close to being accurate, it should alarm us. These are people pursuing ministry training intending to give their lives in service to Jesus and his church, and within five years, up to 85% of them have already given up.

Barna recently reported that 42% of current pastors have given serious consideration to quitting. Over the last few years, many have resigned - not to pastor elsewhere but to stop pastoring altogether. Barna also found that by 2030 (only six years from now) 25% of all current pastors are planning to retire.

The Evangelical church in North America is suffering a pastoral shortage already, and the worst, it seems, may be yet to come.

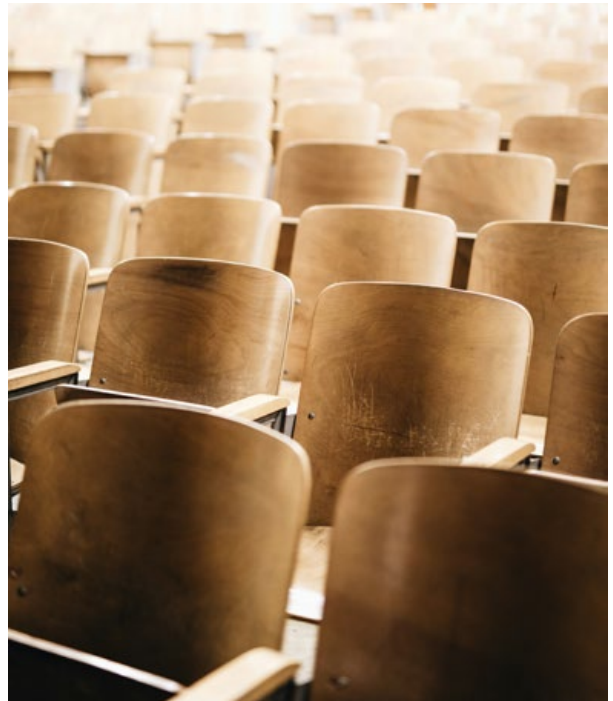
Prior to 2007, I never planned to be a local-church pastor; prior to mid-summer 2023, I never planned not to be one. And yet, today God has called me to help address these concerning trends. He has given me a new assignment that, with prayer and persistence, will offer much-needed care, coaching, and connection to pastors and other ministry leaders.

Please visit www.theshepherdsrefuge.com to learn more and join me in this vital work.



Michael Krahn

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WHAT HAPPENS WITH EDUCATION AND TRAINING DOLLARS

BY LIL GOERTZEN, EDITOR

Throughout the year, EMMC provides limited financial support to post-secondary students who apply for assistance through the Education and Training Fund.

Natalie Driedger of Austin Evangelical Fellowship, Manitoba recently graduated from Nipawin Bible College. She is currently a short-term One Hope Canada ministry worker at Valley View Bible Camp in the role of Discipleship and Events Coordinator.

Between February 1 and September 30, 2024 there were 18 students who received a total of \$12,100.

As you think of our students and graduates, pray that God will continue to guide them and provide opportunities where they can be an encouragement, wherever they are.

Visit emmc.ca/resources for the application form.

Thank you once again for all your support over the years! It is a great help to have the load of paying for school lightened.

~ Madeleine

Wow, thank you so much! I am so grateful for the financial help from this bursary!

-Laura

Thank you for this wonderful news. This scholarship will really help me this year at Providence.

- Abby



THE EMMC EXISTS TO EQUIP
AND ENCOURAGE OUR
CHURCHES FOR EFFECTIVE
MINISTRY, EMPOWERING THEM
TO PARTICIPATE IN GOD'S
WORK IN THE WORLD.

Credit: Meagan Friberg



A NEW CAMPUS FOR SBC

Steinbach Bible College, Manitoba

BY DAVE REIMER, SBC PRESIDENT

SBC President, Dave Reimer receiving the keys to the future SBC campus building, which became available through a generous donor earlier this year.



For 88 years, Steinbach Bible College has been empowering servant leaders to follow Jesus, serve the church, and engage the world. We send students back to their churches and into the world to serve there.

The world seems to be in an experiment of what life could look like without that old-fashioned God idea. It should not be a surprise that the very things we are losing are faith, hope, and love. And joy and peace. In its place are anger, wrath, and malice. The Gospel is good news, and the Church has a beautiful opportunity to proclaim it in a world that will be looking for some kind of a foundation. "Come back to Jesus!"

Two things make me passionate about the mission of SBC. One is my ongoing conversation with denominational leaders, the world I come from. The church is going to need a lot of new leaders in the next 10 years who are prepared to lead the church on missions into this troubled world. There has to be a place to train servant leaders for the strength of the church.

The other is my personal discipleship experience. My experience at SBC opened my eyes to the hugeness of what God has done for me in Christ Jesus. I understood Scripture not only for the cool things it said about God, but for the accurate way it describes the reality of life in God's world and inspires hope. It stirred in me a passion that drives me to this day. I determined that I would serve my Savior and His church and do it sacrificially. And I have seen that experience lived out in so many SBC alumni, in so many churches and ministries. I believe that

a year or three at SBC is the most significant discipleship experience available, the most significant foundational education.

For the future of the church, SBC must go on.

Five years ago, the combined board of SBC and SCS (K-12) divided the schools into two separate organizations. They agreed that when growth necessitated it, SCS would move into SBC spaces, and SBC would move out of the campus building. SCS is experiencing encouraging growth. They need to double their spaces. So, the time has come! SBC will be moving into a new building in two years, September of 2026!

Our default position was to build a new campus building on the back of the current property near our current dorms, though SBC has for many years tested the viability of moving elsewhere. But elsewhere does not exist on the map.

For the future of the church, SBC must go on.

Early this year, the former Steinbach Family Medical building became available to us through a generous donor and an owner who wanted the mission of Christ to happen in that building. Suddenly there was an elsewhere. The possibility of moving suddenly became



real. The Loewen Campus quickly and steadily became our preferred option. We have marvelled at the Lord's provision in all of this.

The location is marvelous. It allows us a distinct identity from Steinbach Christian School. It moves us out of an industrial area with complicated access on the wrong side of a busy highway, and into the heart of Steinbach with access to housing. It puts us right on the beautiful walking path into Steinbach's beautiful green spaces and parks. It puts us closer to the churches we serve and some of their spaces we can use. It puts us close to Red River College where we have a program partnership. It puts us close to a number of student service learning opportunities like Steinbach Community Outreach, Bridgepark, Bethesda personal care home and hospital. And it is near the new Southeast Event Centre.

The building is full of promise. We asked the question, "Would the building fit a college?" It ends up being perfect to fit the spaces we are currently using. The administration offices will go in the East wing. The NE corner with the 25 ft ceiling, balcony, and skylight will be our common meeting and dining area. That area is going to be beautiful. Community will happen there. The west wing will be classrooms. And a new addition on the West end will house our chapel and library.

We have contracted with Superior Projects to build the building. Student housing is our next big decision. Building two floors of dorms above the new addition is our leading option. We are expecting to make that decision in early November.

We see this as an exciting opportunity that will strengthen the mission of SBC and the churches we serve. Please consider how you can partner with SBC to build a new campus and train up servant leaders to follow Jesus, serve the church, and engage the world. We appreciate your generosity and your prayers. 🙏



(Above) Students visit the former Steinbach Family Medical building and future SBC campus.



SBC Staff members tour the new space.

NEW CERTIFICATE AVAILABLE AT SBC!

BY SHEILA GINTER, MA FACULTY ADVISING PROFESSOR FOR COUNSELLING AT SBC.

Steinbach Bible College is thrilled to offer a new certificate: The Counselling Care Certificate. This certificate has been tailored in a way that makes it relevant for people from all walks of life. There are those who are already doing some form of care ministry and would appreciate increasing their capacity, or there are those who have been pastoring long enough to know they could increase their skills in that part of congregational care. And finally, there are those who are considering a career in counselling but are unsure if they are ready to take that big step. This certificate offers a solution for all of the above. The courses included are designed to equip, challenge current skills and grow one's capacity for care ministry. Should you choose to take this certificate for the purpose of deciding on future career opportunities, it is an excellent head start to continue your education professionally. There is flexibility built into the course selection to complement your specific educational needs.

If this certificate sounds like something you would like to pursue, contact me at SBC. Let's have a conversation and decide together how you can be more equipped to care for the needs of others.

Take the Next Step and Become a Carer with Skills!

NOW AVAILABLE AT SBC
Counselling Care Certificate
- Sheila Ginter, MA

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"Become a Carer with Skills"
www.SBCCollege.ca

Moses' Final Sermon:
"How Should Free People Live?"
- Gord Penner, THM

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A Study of Deuteronomy
For Credit or Audit - Register Online
Jan 8 - Apr 16, 2025, 7pm-9:45 p.m.
Steinbach EMC

A STUDY OF DEUTERONOMY:

Moses' Final Sermon - "How Should Free People Live?"

BY GORD PENNER, THM

How should free people live? Standing on the border, about to send his people across to the promised land, Moses preached one last sermon to say it one last time. One generation earlier, their parents had failed. They too had stood at the border ready to enter but they would not trust God and so he turned them back to the desert. Would that happen again?

This new generation listened intently as Moses told them what their parents should have known. Moses gave them the keys to living a long, good life in the land. Moses' sermon was clear. Their life would show that they got what God had done in freeing them from slavery in Egypt. How they would "love the LORD with all their heart" would affect all of life, from loving their neighbours, to the way they dressed, to the food they ate. The rewards of the obedient life would be abundant, but the consequence of disobedience would be disaster.

What a relevant book for us! We have been freed by Jesus, and that should be evident in every facet of our lives. Our employers, neighbours (even the opposing sports team?) will see how God's saving work on our behalf changes everything about how we live.

*Available for credit or audit. Register to reserve your spot at www.sbcollege.ca.

Classes will be held at Steinbach EMC, January 8 – April 16, 2025.



**Steinbach
Bible College**

**Follow Jesus. Serve the church.
Engage the world.**

Dig deep into God's Word and build a strong
Biblical foundation in a Christ-centered community.

*"So that you may live a life worthy of the Lord
and please him in every way"*

-Colossians 1:9a

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**Do you have something to share with
the EMMC community?**

Submit an article for the next issue of *The Recorder*
by emailing RECORDER@EMMC.CA

The Deadline for The Recorder January February issue is January 15, 2025.



WHAT IF?

Matthew 28:16-20

MARCH 21 MINISTRY LEADER DAY

All leaders in ministries are invited!

Pastors, deacons, Sunday school teachers, youth pastors and leaders, women's ministry, Bible study leaders, children's ministry ... if you are giving direction to a ministry in your church, this day is for you!

MARCH 21
Gathering Worship Evening
Celebration & Welcome

MARCH 22
Spanish Lookout EMMC 30th
anniversary celebration (morning)
Gathering Workshops (afternoon)
Gathering Worship Evening
Celebration

MARCH 23
Gathering Worship Celebration
Lunch

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Pastor Ike Unger

Deer Run Church, Leamington ON

THEN THE ELEVEN DISCIPLES WENT TO GALILEE, TO THE MOUNTAIN WHERE JESUS HAD TOLD THEM TO GO. WHEN THEY SAW HIM, THEY WORSHIPED HIM; BUT SOME DOUBTED. THEN JESUS CAME TO THEM AND SAID, "ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME. THEREFORE GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND TEACHING THEM TO OBEY EVERYTHING I HAVE COMMANDED YOU. AND SURELY I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE VERY END OF THE AGE."

GATHERING

Spanish Lookout, Belize
March 21 to 23, 2025

MENNO OFFICE—A MINISTRY OF CONNECTION AND HOSPITALITY

Menno Office/Inter-Mennonite Chaplaincy Association

BY GLADYS TERICHOW

WINNIPEG, MB — On the University of Manitoba campus, young people from around the world enjoy Menno Office as a place to eat their lunch, study, connect with friends, play musical instruments or chat with Chaplain Mark von Kampen.

Through the activities and atmosphere in Menno Office, the Inter-Mennonite Chaplaincy Association (IMCA) provides a welcoming space for students to receive pastoral care, peer support, discipleship and other supports.

“Menno Office offers students a safe place to process their studies, their daily lives and the events of the world around us in a caring Christian context,” said Chaplain von Kampen at the association’s annual meeting in November.

“Some students visit almost daily, others spend time there weekly, still others come only occasionally but still value the office as a touchstone where they find support and connection when needed.”

Liena Klassen of Winnipeg, a second-year student, visits Menno Office about once or twice a week to connect with friends and participate in structured activities like Menno Talk.

She heard about Menno Office through her church, friends and family and visited Menno Office the first day of her university orientation last fall. “It is a nice quiet place on campus,” said Klassen. “It is a welcoming place.”

Menno Talk is a focused time for discussion, reflection and worship. This fall the Wednesday discussions focused on the “I am” statements of Jesus in John’s Gospel. Thursday talks used podcasts, videos, articles and excerpts from books to spark faith-based discussions about everyday topics of interest and concern to the students.

Menno Office is supported by IMCA, a partnership of Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference and Mennonite Church Manitoba. It also receives prayer and financial support from congregations and individuals who value the opportunity to be active partners in a ministry that nurtures Christian faith and community among students at a critical stage of their development.

Menno Office is located in room 525 University Centre. This ministry is also available to U of M staff and faculty. To become an active partner and to learn more visit mennooffice.ca.

Watch for updates about the third annual Valentine Coffee House and Charcuterie that will take place February 8, 2025 in Morrow Gospel Church, 755 St. Anne’s Rd in Winnipeg Manitoba. This event raises funds for IMCA and provides opportunity for students to share their musical skills with the community that supports them through prayer and financial support.



Chaplain Mark von Kampen and U of M student Liena Klassen at the IMCA annual meeting in November, 2024. Photo by Gladys Terichow



A STORY FOR CHRISTMAS

Author and origin unknown

Translated by Ed Zacharias

Deep in the forest, where few people passed anymore, lay a monastery. The brothers had spent many years tending the grounds to the best of their abilities. But it had been a long time since new and younger men had joined the brotherhood. Time and again they had had to bury one of their numbers, and the members remaining, each had a long white beard.

In summer they had been able to take care of their garden, and they were glad for the cabbage and turnips that they had harvested. There would be enough beans and potatoes to last them through the winter. They had also gathered roots and leaves which they used for medicine for each other.

Every day, once early in the morning and again toward evening they observed communion in their chapel, like they had learned to do it, a practice they had faithfully done year after year. They also spent many hours in silent prayer, to praise God again and again for what he had done for them, for the church and for all mankind.

Thus, they were at peace with what they had, and were happy for the place they had. At their services they would always sing, although none of them had a strong voice left. The brother who had been their song leader, had passed away the last spring, and now their singing was really not very good. But they kept up the practice of singing as well as they could, and at times there was a rumour, that the birds and the animals of the forest went into hiding when the brothers sang, because their voices were so hoarse and scratchy. They had also prayed for someone to come and help them with singing.

When December came, they had a layer of snow on their yard, and the wind was not about to stop howling. Then one day when they were coming in from their chores, they saw a young man, who was about to pass by their place. They invited him to come in, because they felt he would not be able to make it to the next village. They were able to convince him and he joined them.

The young man was suffering from a cold, and they took care of him for a number of days, till he recovered fully. They noticed that the young man would sing to himself. They were glad for that, and insisted that he was to stay and sing in their service at Christmas. They all sat quietly and enjoyed the man singing the Hallelujah and about God's great gift. That is what they had long wished for. Now they did not have to strain their voices. They were sure that God would be more pleased with this than their own singing.

When the young man had finished singing, an angel stood before their altar. The angel did not have a good message for them. "God sent me," he said, "because he did not hear you sing. He appreciates it so much when he hears you, praising him with your voices, as well as you can."

"We thought our voices were no good," said the brothers. "We asked this man to sing because we sing so poorly."

"No," said the angel. "This young man sang in order to receive your praise for himself. None of your service today has penetrated into heaven. The dear Lord is still waiting to hear you." And the angel disappeared.

The brothers were ashamed that they had so easily despised their own voices, and that their thanks had that day not gone up to God. The young man now stood aside as the brothers sang their songs. And he recognized what the angel had meant. Though it was not the sweetest singing to his ears, yet he saw the gratitude that the brothers expressed for the gift of Christmas, and how they praised God for his son, who came into the world through Mary and Joseph. And before he said his goodbyes the next day, the young man thanked the brothers for the blessing that he had received from them.



EENE JESCHICHT TO WIENACHTEN

Author unknown

Deep em Woolt, wua meist kjeena vebie jinkj, wia een Katoolschet Kloosta. De Breeda hauden aul väle Joaren dän Hoff soo goot besorcht aus see kunnen. Oba doa wieren aul lang nich mea junge Breeda biejekomen. See hauden aul eemol no daut aundre mol eenen von äare Grupp begrowen must, un dee waut äwajebälwen wieren, hauden jieda eenen langen witten Boat.

See hauden em Somma noch kunt äaren Goaden besorjen, un see freiden sikj to dän Komst un de Wrucken dän see hauden kunt nenbrinjen. Doa wudden uk jenuach Schaublen un Ieetschocken sennen, daut see sikj wada derchem Winta halpen kunnen. See hauden uk wada soone Wartlen un Bläda jefungen, dee see unja sikj fa Medizien brukten.

Jieda Dach, eemol tiedich zemorjes un eemol jääjen Owent, kjeemen see en äare Kjoakj toop un fieeden doa daut Owentmol, soo aus see daut jeliheet hauden un äwa de Joaren jefläächt hauden. Soo hauden see uk noch väl Tiet toom stell em Jebäd vebrinjen, un Gott emma wada lowen fa waut hee fa an, fa de Kjoakj, un fa aule Menschen jedonen haft.

Soo wieren see tofräd met daut waut see hauden, un freiden sikj to äare Städ. See sungen uk emma bie äare Aundacht, oba de Stemmen wieren aul nich mea stoakj. Äa Brooda dee äa Väasinja jewast wia, wia dän vääjjen Farjoa jestorwen, un nu hieed sikj äa sinjen werkjlich nich sea scheen. See hilden äa sinjen oba soogoot bie aus see kunnen. Eenjemol jinkj de Räd rom, daut de Vääjel un aundre Tieren sikj vestääkjen jinjen, wan de Breeda ieescht sungen, wiels daut soo heesch un vekrauzt wia. See hauden uk aul jebät, daut eena komen sull toom äant doamet halpen.

Aus daut Dezamba wort hauden see uk eene Schicht Schnee oppem Hoff, un de Wint wull schia nich nojäwen. Aus see dan een Dach vone Besorjen nkommen, seenen see eenen jungen Maun bie an vebie gonen. See kroagden am nenn, un meenden hee wudd daut aul nich uthoolen bat daut nääkjste Darp gonen. Hee leet sikj beräden, un kjeem bie an nenn.

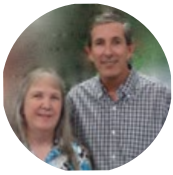
De Maun haud sikj doch aul goot vekjilt, un see flääjden am miere Doag bat hee wada jesunt wia. Dan hieeden see uk tweschenenn, daut dis junga Maun bie sikj sinjen deed. Dit freid an fuaz, un see bleewen doaropp bestonen, daut hee sull to Wienachten bie an enne Kjoakj sinjen. See sauten aul stell un freiden sikj, aus hee aum Heljeowent daut Halleluja un un von Gott siene groote Gow sunk. Soont hauden see sikj aul lang jewensch. Nu brukten see nich äare Stemmen kjwälen. See wieren sikj secha, daut däm leewen Gott, dit väl bäta jefaulen wudd.

Dan aus dee Junga jrod utjesungen haud, stunt ver däm Aultoa een Enjel. De Enjel haud oba kjeenen scheenen Gruss. "Gott schekjt mie häa," säd hee, "wiels hee junt nich jehieet haft. Hee rääkjent daut emma soo väl daut jie, soo aus jie kjennen, am lowen met june Stemmen."

"Wie dochten onse Stemm meend nuscht," säden de Breeda. "Wie hauden disem sinjen wiels ons sinjen doch mau soo prost es."

"Nä," säd de Enjel, "dis junga Maun, dee sunk, daut jie am lowen sullen. Jie sinjen emma wiels jie Gott lowen. Daut es waut Gott soorajcht jefelt. Von june Aundacht es vondoag nuscht nom Himmel derch jedrungen. De leewa Gott luat noch, daut hee junt hieren kaun." Un de Enjel veschwunk.

De Breeda schämnden sikj daut see soo leicht äare Stemmen ve-acht hauden, un daut see dän Dach nich äaren Dank Gott jebrocht hauden. De junga Maun jinkj nu tosied un horcht, aus de Breeda äare Leeda sungen. Nu sach hee waut de Enjel jemeent haud. Wan daut enne Uaren uk nich de scheensta Jesank wia, doch sach hee, woo de Breeda sikj to de Wienachtsgow freiden, un woo see Gott fa sienen Sän, dee derch Maria un Joosef to Welt kjeem, lowden. Un ea hee dän nääkjsten Dach sien Aufscheet neem, dankt hee de Breeda fa dän Säajen, dän hee von an jekjrääjen haud.



OPPORTUNITIES AND OPEN DOORS

WEC International

PETE AND CATHY DYCK

MEXICO – These past few months our ministry has taken a different pace. The end of June and beginning of July were busy with graduations at all levels, including kindergarten.

A while ago as we were praying for Corupo, God laid it on Pete’s heart to go visit a couple that we had visited a few times previously. We went that afternoon and had a good visit with Nicho, but his wife Stella did not join us. She has health problems and is quite shy, so that did not surprise us. During the conversation Nicho shared that he had tried to get a hold of us because his wife needed glasses. Then he mentioned that he knew of others in that area of Corupo that also needed glasses. So, we arranged to have a mini clinic the following week, with him making arrangements for an appropriate location. That turned out to be a real blessing.

We did the clinic at Nicho’s mother’s place and were pleasantly surprised at the welcome we received from her and other members of the family. They weren’t at all reserved like many are at the first meeting. Also, Nicho was questioning Pete about why we distribute glasses at a minimal cost, knowing that there is no financial gain for us. Nicho acknowledged that it costs us time and money to go to Corupo and he couldn’t quite grasp why we would do that. Pete was able to share a bit with him and we feel that there might be an open door to start sharing more openly with Nicho and Stella and hopefully with other members of the family.

An added blessing was that Nicho and Stella invited us to join them for lunch after the clinic, which we did. At first Stella just served the food and she stayed in the kitchen. However, after a while she decided to join us, and she started to open up about her health issues. To us that was a huge step forward, that she trusted us enough to share so openly with us. Pray that God would give us wisdom to know how to share God’s Word with them.

Part of her health issues looked to us like spiritual attacks, so we need to be careful how we share to not shut the door for further contact.

One stable factor during everything has been our relationship with our neighbors who are a pastor couple in Paracho. We continue to have weekly Bible studies at their place and very often in the evening, they invite us over to eat with them. We were blessed by the surprise they arranged for Pete’s birthday.

Family update: Josiah and ChristyAnn left Canada on October 7. Josiah will be living with us again, helping with the development and building of our property. ChristyAnn will be with us for about a month before going to Brazil.

Thanks so much for your faithful prayer and financial support! May God richly bless you.

Home church: Aylmer EMMC, Ontario

Receive weekly **email updates** from EMMC full of stories, information and events.

Sign up for our weekly newsletter, 'Praise Prayer and Pondering,' at www.emmc.ca

AWESOME KIDMIN COMMUNITY

AKC25 CONFERENCE IS MARCH 7 & 8, 2025 AT THE EASTVIEW COMMUNITY CHURCH IN WINNIPEG

Inviting those involved in Children's Ministry!

The Awesome KidMin Conference is a two-day event where we 'equip, empower and encourage' those who love Jesus and kids!

This year's keynote speaker is Melissa J. MacDonald, a seasoned veteran in the realm of ministry who has over two decades of dedicated service to the global community. She is profoundly committed to supporting ministry leaders and nurturing children's spiritual growth worldwide.

Visit www.awesomekidmin.com for ticket and conference details.

Early Bird pricing ends January 31 and special team rates are available!



PERSEVERANCE AND HOPE

Program Director, Youth With A Mission

DAVE & CHERI BARTSCH

GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA – Training up young people for the Kingdom of God brings immense joy and deep challenges. It's a privilege to witness their passion and desire to serve, yet I've seen firsthand the weight they carry – the struggles with depression, anxiety, and fear that often overshadow their potential. Despite these challenges, there is incredible hope for this generation. When they connect with the Spirit of the Lord, their lives begin to transform. I've watched as they step out in faith, willing to go anywhere for Jesus and embrace the radical lifestyle of love and service.

Through it all, I've learned the value of persevering for Jesus in the midst of hardships. This perseverance not only strengthens their faith but also helps them discover their mission and place in God's grand story. Their courage inspires me daily, reminding me that God is raising up a generation ready to shine His light in a world that desperately needs it. The journey isn't always easy, but seeing their hearts ignite with purpose is a testament to the power of God at work in them.

We're currently running a Discipleship Bible School (DBS) where we journey through the entire Bible in just 12 weeks, diving deep into God's Word in a group setting. Now in week 3, we've already seen God move in incredible ways—opening eyes to new revelations and blowing people's minds with the depth of His truth. We're also witnessing the power of this school in the confidence of the young people coming through it. It's strengthening their faith and building their boldness in sharing the Gospel and discipling others. Lives are being transformed, and hearts are ignited with a renewed passion for Jesus.

Home church: Aylmer EMMC, Ontario





NO NEED TO FEAR

Northern Canada Evangelical Mission (Member Care)

Open Arms Bible Fellowship, Nipawin SK (Pastor)

MARSDEN & MANDY GIESBRECHT

NIPAWIN SK – Fall is almost upon us once again, and through the business and excitement of working with an amazing ministry team here in Nipawin, we are also headed cautiously into the beginning of a new school year. As many of you know, our teenagers are in public school, standing for their faith daily, and reaching out to their friends and teachers who don't yet know the Lord. We are asking for your prayers day by day.

Many of us in Canada today are looking around and noticing that things are changing. We are dumbfounded at what is being accepted as truth and taught as reality. Public education, public service, and media are accepting and teaching things we could never have imagined would ever be part of our Canadian ideal. There is a "new normal" being ushered in, and it's threatening us, our children, and our churches. As believers in Christ who are dedicated to the truth of God's Word, and the leadership of His Spirit, there are some crazy temptations for us.

Among other unhealthy reactions is the temptation toward FEAR. In fear we wonder, 'How can we prepare for the future? How can we protect our families? What

can we do to make sure our churches stay safe?' Because God is with us, we are able to respond in trust in Him.

It's so good to know that though the circumstances are changing, the answer to all the questions has not changed. The answer to all the chaos, all the pain, all the evil, is still the same today as it was thousands of years ago; the answer is still Jesus. His love and sacrifice for the broken world, His resurrection, His free gift is still the power of God for us.

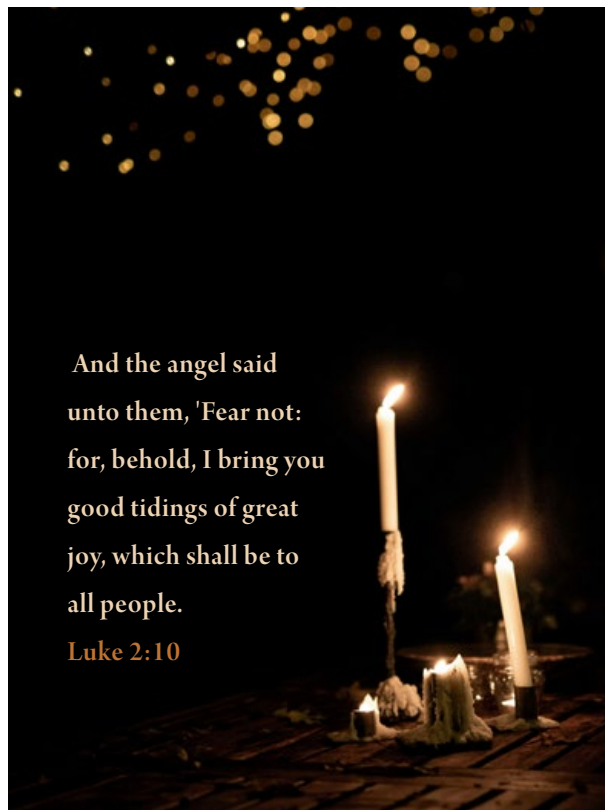
At the camp where Naomi worked this last summer, there were a lot of head lice. We know exactly how to get rid of them before she even comes in the door of the house... we have had a lot of experience! As much as the pesky little critters make her itch, I still love the object lesson that comes with them. We cannot love a world infested with issues, without being affected... but we have NO NEED to fear, because the hope we offer others, is still powerful enough for us! Praise the Lord!

Please pray for...

- Naomi and Isaac (grade 12 & 9)
- Kora (19) spending the year at home after a year at Millar College and is seeking God to lead her next steps.
- Praise for our ministry team and church are having a great time of fellowship and seeking the Lord for His plans this upcoming year.
- Children and young teens make up about half of our congregation these days; pray that they would be seen and disciplined well.
- Praise for SIX PEOPLE BAPTISED in August, including Naomi and Isaac! Pray that we would now know how God would have us move forward in discipleship with them and others.
- Our issue of space. If everyone who comes to our church were to attend on the same Sunday, we would need three buildings. Many attend sporadically, which is a problem that has become a tedious solution! Again, we need wisdom.

Thank you for praying for us, our family, and our ministry team, as we continue to reach out to Nipawin and the surrounding area with the hope of the Gospel! We continue to appreciate your partnership every day! 🙏

Home church: Sutherland Evangelical Church, Saskatoon Saskatchewan



And the angel said
unto them, 'Fear not:
for, behold, I bring you
good tidings of great
joy, which shall be to
all people.

Luke 2:10



JESUS CLEANS UP THE MESS

Gem Lake Wilderness Camp (Director) Inner City Youth Alive

GORD & BECKIE KLASSEN



WINNIPEG, MB – I thought last summer was the best, but this summer was even better. We had full camps every week and our staff team was great. We bonded together quickly and became a close family who supported each other and worked so intentionally to share our faith with the campers and make sure that they were cared for.



Our mini-church theme this summer was “Who are you?” We looked at ways that God has created us to be as his children and how the world tells us lies that try to pull us away. One of the skits was called Jesus’ Cleaning Service. It starts with a girl who is surrounded by a lot of garbage. Jesus comes in asking if he can help her clean it up, but she sends him away saying that she needs to get some things in order before she can use his help. In the end Jesus comes and cleans up, explaining that his job is literally to help clean up messes. We don’t need to have things together to relate to Jesus. He will meet us in the mess and go from there. This led to some great conversations with campers later during one-on-one times.

One camper came to camp after having missed six years. She had taken a step of faith as a youngster, but had strayed quite far from where she had been. During her week at camp, she was reminded of the truth and saw

the joy in the lives of her childhood friends who were now working as cabin leaders. She wanted to make changes in her life and talked about wanting to quit weed and vaping. One day she asked me if it was okay to throw her vape into the garbage. I assumed it was empty and she just wanted to discard it, but she told me it was still working and that she was done and didn’t want to go back to that. I suggested we do something a little more symbolic of her desire to change. I told her I had a sledgehammer. She asked, “Can we really do that?” I told her that we absolutely could. She ran off and came back with three more vapes. She had the biggest smile on her face as she smashed all four vapes. Later as we cleaned up all the broken pieces, she told me how freeing that had been, and that she never wanted to go back again.

One thing that remained consistent this summer is that God is faithful. Thanks again for the prayers, encouragement and financial support. This is very much a team effort and I’m thankful to have you on my team. Blessings on you! 🙏

Home church: Nassau Street Church, Winnipeg Manitoba

Biblical Discovery Tour 2025 - Israel & Petra
 Hosted by Pastor Dale Dueck and Pastor Vic Engbrecht
 February 21 to March 6, 2025



*For more info or to register, please contact
 Pastor Dale Dueck: dale.f.dueck@gmail.com or
 Pastor Vic Engbrecht: vengbrecht@hotmail.com*

COMMUNITY DISCIPLESHIP

Community Minister & Leadership Development, Inner City Youth Alive

ANDREW & AMIE REIMER

WINNIPEG, MB – I am excited to announce a new vision and name for the program that I lead - from our former focus on Leadership Development to our new focus on COMMUNITY DISCIPLESHIP! I have been reflecting on my own gifting, passion and sense of calling and sensed God stirring some new vision for community impact that builds on the work I have been doing and the strengths I have been developing. My team member Jenny's gifts and passion also fit well into the overall scope of this new vision.

Community Discipleship is about inviting youth and adults in our community to become and grow as disciples of Jesus. We will teach, model, and support people to get to know Jesus and themselves, living for his kingdom in the unique context of their lives.

While other ICYA programs also play a role in discipleship, this Community Discipleship initiative will put a greater emphasis and intentionality into walking with youth and adults who want to grow and go deeper in knowing God, personal and relational healing, following Jesus, and joining his mission.

In many ways I have been doing discipleship work like this all along; it has been woven into much of my ministry in the North End of Winnipeg over the years, and this new role will allow me to put more of my energy and focus in this direction. God continues to bring adults my way who are ready for and looking for ways to grow spiritually. I am trying to pay attention to what God seems to be blessing in my work and look for ways to press into this.

My role will be to direct and oversee the overall Community Discipleship ministry and programs as well as ministering directly with adults in the community. Jenny Klassen will continue to be part of my team and will lead our Youth Discipleship group (a new version of the "Apprentice Group") with teens. Jenny will be assisted by John Vasili, a staff on the Bridge Drop-In team. With Jenny and John focusing on discipleship with teens, I will be free to focus on adults in the community.



I am excited about starting some new groups with adults in response to their interests, needs and availability. Terry Melquist and I are teaming up to start a Bible study group with men who are seeking to explore and grow in faith, including some of the participants in ICYA's Step Up Construction program. I'm also hoping to meet regularly with a small group of young men who I've been mentoring for several years and are now adults.

I ask for your prayers for our Community Discipleship work:

- For the Spirit's work in the adults I am discipling and for God to bring others who are ready to take steps as followers of Jesus.
- For me and Terry and the Bible study group we are starting this fall.
- For wisdom, perseverance and spiritual insight as I seek the best ways to meet people where they are at and invite them to new steps.
- For spiritual protection, encouragement and energy for us as we press into kingdom-of-God impact in our community. 🙏

Home church: Altona EMMC, Manitoba

THANKFUL FOR SABBATICAL

International Director of Organizational Learning. Operation Mobilization

TAMI ZACHARIAS

PORT COLBORNE, ON – Thank you for praying for my sabbatical time over the months of July, August, and September. Now that it's October, I'm easing back into my normal schedule.



To be honest, I was afraid to start my sabbatical. I thought it would be hard to fill the time, so I made lists of things to do in hopes that it would be enough to keep me busy.

Even so, I decided I had no other choice. I was exhausted and running on fumes. I couldn't keep going that way. I had to pray and hope that the sabbatical would 'do its work'.

In the first couple of weeks, I struggled a lot with not being productive. I was frustrated with myself that I couldn't get more done, but I was too tired to do the things I thought I should be doing.

I spent almost a month in Manitoba with my family and friends, and it was just what I needed. I went fishing and on a mini vacation. I built wood projects, visited friends, and just hung out with my family. After about a month and a half of sabbatical, I noticed progress. I was playing with my friend's kids and could actually enjoy myself (whereas before the sabbatical, I was zoned out in tiredness). Praise God!

It was a blessing to spend dedicated time with God during a silent retreat. I can honestly say the last three months have done me good. I feel more rested and back to myself than I did when I started. Most of the things on my sabbatical 'to do' list didn't happen. I'm okay with that. I did what I needed to do and it turned out well.

What am I taking away from this sabbatical?

- Doing 'nothing' is sometimes a good thing. So is slowing down.
- The importance of being present (it's hard though!)
- Finding ways to pursue what gives me life
- Trusting the process (God is at work)

Praise: For a restful sabbatical

Praise: That my team did well while I was away

Pray: For adjusting back into 'work mode' while still finding ways to rest

Pray: For upcoming travels and work projects 📖

FOR TO US A CHILD IS BORN, TO US A SON IS GIVEN; AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER, AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.

Isaiah 9:6

REGION 2

CAMP HAS IMPACT ON CANDIDATES

Morrow Gospel Church, Winnipeg Manitoba

BY LIL GOERTZEN, EDITOR

Listening to the testimonies of baptism candidates is always insightful, as it reveals what has impacted them on their faith journey.

On October 27, two young ladies, Annika Doerksen and Charlotte Buhler, shared their faith stories in preparation for their baptism later in the service. Both spoke about the profound impact Red Rock Bible Camp had on their spiritual development. Along with the encouragement from their parents and the support of Pastor of Care, Paul Epp, they highlighted their time at Red Rock as a significant influence in their decision to follow Christ and boldly share their faith.

Their heartfelt accounts of struggles with anxiety and physical pain, discovering they are truly loved, and finding confidence and rest in Jesus were inspiring. Annika and Charlotte both recognize that their faith journey has just begun and are eager to strengthen their relationship with Jesus.



Annika Doerksen, Charlotte Buhler holding the study books they used for preparing for baptism

Pastor Paul Epp assisted Annika and Charlotte in creating a Sunday baptism celebration that reflected their choices, including the selection of songs and scripture. It was truly a time of celebration as these two young women took this important step in their faith journey. 🙏

REGION 3

ABUNDANCE AT GLENCROSS

Glencross Mennonite Church, Manitoba

BY RHONDA WIEBE

“Lord, I am overflowing with your blessings, just as You promised.” Psalm 119:65 (TLB) This verse reflects the hearts of those in attendance at the baptism service at Glencross on November 3. After Pastor Peter Redekopp gave a devotional on Completeness in Christ based on Colossians 2:1-15, nine young people shared their testimonies and were baptized.



Photo by Jenn Klassen

Some time ago Pastor Peter shared that God had placed a desire on his heart to see growth in our church numbers, and now with a huge smile he could tell the congregation that this was the largest group he had led through baptism classes in his 25+ years of ministry. Praise God for His Faithfulness!

The baptism candidates shared about their walk with God and His hand in each of their journeys. Jared Driedger, Willy Fehr, Sam Gervais, Kenton Klassen, Saralyn Klassen, Shane Krahn, Logan Lesser, Chelsea Reimer and Naomi Voth were all baptized and welcomed into the Glencross church family. As Pastor Peter so appropriately said in his devotional “A picture is worth a thousand words ... and baptism is that picture.” 🙏

REGION 4

CONGREGATION RECOGNIZES RETIREMENT

Aylmer EMMC, Ontario

BY LIL GOERTZEN, EDITOR / FILES

On October 27, Aylmer EMMC took time to honor Isaac and Lynn Harms for over 40 years of dedicated ministry. The congregation shared a breakfast to celebrate the Harms' many years of faithful service.

Isaac was ordained by the EMMC on June 13, 1982, and has served in Ontario, Belize, and Alberta. His gifting in discipleship, hospitality, and teaching has touched many lives, with Aylmer EMMC benefiting from his ministry for most of those years.



Prayer circle for Lynn, daughter Amy and Isaac Harms

During the German service, where Isaac pastored for many years, and again at the English service later in the morning, Isaac and Lynn were presented with flowers and a plaque. The plaque's inscription reads, "My presence will go with you. I'll see the journey to the end." Exodus 33:14.

Although Isaac's formal ministry has concluded, he believes his ministry is not over, and that there will be other opportunities to continue in ministry.

We join the congregation in wishing them well and praying that God will continue to use their gifts to bless others. 🙏

REGION 4

NEW PASTOR AT AEMMC

Aylmer EMMC, Ontario

FROM FILES

The Aylmer EMMC extended the invitation to join them on Sunday, October 27 to celebrate an exciting new chapter for their church family. The evening event was to commission and covenant with their new lead pastor, Dave Miller. The evening included congregational singing, a meditation led by Kelly Lesser, EMMC Pastor of Care and Mission and plenty of time for fellowship afterward, with coffee and snacks provided.

We invite your prayers for Dave and Marianne as they step into this new role and begin ministry with the congregation. We thank God for answering our prayers, and look forward to what is in store for our congregation and community. 🙏



REGION 4

AYLMER EMMC JOINS IN COMMUNITY PARADE

Aylmer EMMC, Ontario

FROM FILES

On Saturday, November 23, Aylmer EMMC had the privilege of participating in the annual Aylmer Christmas Parade, embracing this year's theme, "Away in a Manger." As a church, we saw this as a wonderful opportunity to share the joy of Christmas and the good news of Jesus Christ with our community.

The enthusiasm from our congregation was incredible! As soon as the event was announced, members eagerly stepped forward to contribute. Several families generously offered their trailers to serve as the base for our float, while others donated an abundance of candy to share with parade attendees. Volunteers helped to bring the float to life, crafting costumes and setting up decorations, and a lively group of musicians formed a band to provide live Christmas music as we traveled along the route.

Pastor Ryan Law did an excellent job overseeing and organizing the project, bringing together over 40 participants. Dressed in festive and biblical costumes, our team joyfully greeted the crowds, handed out candy, and wished everyone a Merry Christmas. The float, paired with the live music and warm smiles, was a great way for our church family to engage with our community.

We are so grateful for the opportunity to share the story of Christ's birth with our town and to be a light in our community. A huge thank-you to everyone who participated and supported this project!



Merry Christmas from all of us at Aylmer EMMC!

REGION 6

BAPTISM IN BLUE CREEK, BELIZE

Blue Creek EMMC, Belize

BY MELENIE DYCK

On September 29, 2024, our Blue Creek church celebrated the baptism of six young people. Five of these candidates took on membership as well. Joyce Dyck was baptized, and Helena Blats, Aganetha Petkau, Gerhard Andres, Gerhard Schmitt, and Susie Friesen took on baptism and membership. These candidates were baptized by Pastor Henry Janzen (far left) and Pastor Steward Dyck (far right).



CHANGING NAME IN BOLIVIA

BY LIL GOERTZEN



Projects move along quite quickly in Bolivia. Our MEM team are visionaries and are excited about moving forward with the opportunities God brings before them.

In fall 2023 EMMC shared information about the opportunities in Belice Colony and the plan to start an outreach in that area. Then because Belice Colony is located in the Tres Cruces district, we started referring to it as Tres Cruces. When a more formal ministry with outreach began in that area, and a building was on site, that ministry formally became **Amanecer**.

On January 21, 2024 the group at Amanecer celebrated the start of this new ministry. Amanecer is the Spanish word for ‘sunrise’ – a new beginning of the day and a new beginning for individuals. They celebrated with music, teaching and of course, food.

Today, we have missionaries Nancy Friesen and Ben & Bertha Kauenhofen living on site and we anticipate another building to accommodate the school and church.



We are celebrating this outreach endeavor, and pray that many will hear and respond to the message of the Gospel.

Contributions towards this ministry can be made a www.emmc.ca/donate and select MEM Amanecer.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for EMMC/MEM ministries. 🙏

COMMISSIONING FOR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BY LIL GOERTZEN, EDITOR

The EMMC General Board and General Council held meetings on November 8 and 9 at Gospel Mission Church in Morden, Manitoba. This gathering provided an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the commissioning of the new Executive Director, Henry Redekopp.

Although Henry has been in the role since September 1, 2024, it was fitting for this group to formally acknowledge and affirm his position.

The evening was filled with conversation and laughter over a wonderful dinner provided by New Style Catering. Following the meal, the focus shifted to the covenanting aspect of the event.

Darrell Dyck, Moderator, welcomed the General Council members, staff, spouses, and members of Henry and Tina’s family. Introductions were made to family members for those present, while their adult children in Vauxhall, Alberta, watched the commissioning via live video.

Neil Schmidt, a member of the search committee for the Executive Director, outlined the committee’s process.



The Search Committee invited General Council members to dedicate a month to prayer, seeking God’s direction regarding the Executive Director position. When the committee reconvened, Henry’s name stood out. After reviewing his resume, they believed Henry was an excellent fit due to his experience, heart for mission, interest in church planting, and desire to follow God’s leading.

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Kelly Lesser, Pastor of Care and Mission, welcomed Henry to the Home Office staff, affirming him as a wonderful addition and noting the smooth and encouraging transition.

Henry then shared his vision and aspirations for his new role, emphasizing the importance of developing leaders and pastors and providing opportunities for younger individuals to take on responsibility and leadership within the larger EMMC family. With God as our guide, we depend on Him to lead us as we live out the Great Commission, Matthew 28:18-20.

The evening concluded with a Prayer of Dedication, as a group gathered around Henry and Tina to recognize the responsibilities of the role and seek God's continued guidance and blessing.



GENERAL COUNCIL UPDATE

BY DARRELL DYCK, MODERATOR

On November 8 and 9 the General Board and the General Council met in Morden at the Gospel Mission Church for our Fall Bi-annual meeting. This was our first set of GB & GC meetings with Henry Redekopp in his position as Executive Director. Working with him in this role was a real pleasure and seeing how he has picked up the duties and responsibilities so quickly. What is even more encouraging is the visionary thinking that Henry has. This will be more and more evident as time goes on.

As with all our meetings, there is always some business that is the same each time. Every time we meet, we hear staff and financial reports. Did you know we have an amazing staff? God continues to be at work through them in both the mundane things like accounting and admin and in the exciting vision casting and support they give to our pastors, missionaries, and churches. The current financial report leads us to believe God will provide enough funds for this fiscal year. Thank you for giving to our shared conference work. We also reviewed and passed the proposed budget for 2025/26.

Other business included,

- Adding a new section to our By-laws to allow for internal divisions and updating the section in our By-laws re Antioch Community Ministries (Warman SK), making it an internal division of the EMMC. This will allow them to take full control of their finances and not have to run everything through our office.
- Adopting a new policy on external partnerships. This policy will allow us to quickly evaluate our relationships with various agencies and ministries to determine our participation level in them.

- Approve in principle the idea of requiring all GC members to sign a lifestyle agreement. A lifestyle agreement suitable for them will now be drafted.
- Approval to hire a new, part-time person for next-gen ministry.
- Steinbach Bible College Board update (see further information regarding SBC's plans on page 6)

Business is important; however, the conference exists not for business, but for people and ministry. We met our new rep from Hague Gospel Church, Matt Braun. Their former rep, Steve Miller will continue as the rep for Antioch Community Ministries. We also got to hear Ernie Buhler's (Bergfeld Mennonite Church, Manitoba) faith story and hear a Gospel Mission Church Morden update from Pastor Brad Driedger and their GC member Richard Klassen.

A big thanks to the GMC Morden church for hosting us. The spaces you provided were what we needed, and the welcome was top-notch. Thank you so much! Our next General Board and General Council meetings are in Spanish Lookout, Belize in March. See you then!

EMMC Staff:

- Henry Redekopp, Executive Director
- Kelly Lesser, Pastor of Care & Mission
- Lil Goertzen, Communications Coordinator
- Joyce Harnett, Bookkeeper (part-time)
- Darrell Kehler, Director of Discipleship (part-time)
- Anika Dueck, Admin Assistant (part-time) 🐦



EMMC STAFF

IN SEARCH OF ...

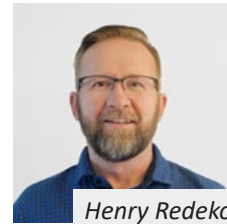
BOTHWELL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP, located in southeastern Manitoba, is a congregation of about 150 members in the Christian Mennonite (CM) Conference, is seeking a **LEAD PASTOR**. We are looking for a Christ-centered, prayerful leader who is passionate about preaching the Word, shepherding our community, and fostering spiritual growth. The ideal candidate will guide our educational ministries, provide pastoral care, and collaborate in administrative tasks to support the church's mission. Strong communication and leadership skills are essential as we seek a pastor to help deepen our faith and strengthen our relationships. Interested candidates can send their resume and cover letter to tavis@bothwellchristianfellowship.com.

GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP CHURCH (EMMC), Steinbach Manitoba is seeking a **FULL-TIME LEAD PASTOR**. We are a congregation with an average attendance of 75. GFC is a faith community in a broken world, sharing the hope of freedom in Christ. We are searching for an individual who passionately loves God and loves people, one who is able to provide vision and direction for our church, and is willing to compassionately lead our congregation with sound biblical teaching. For a full position description, please visit our website (www.gospelfellowshipchurch.ca) or contact us at applications@gospelfellowshipchurch.ca.

JUSTICE MENNONITE BRETHERN CHURCH (Manitoba) is seeking a pastor. We are a rural congregation, located a short drive from Minnedosa, Neepawa, Carberry, and Brandon, Manitoba. Please submit resumes to justicembchurch@gmail.com View our website at www.justicembchurch.wordpress.com

ST. VITAL EVANGELICAL MENNONITE CHURCH located in Winnipeg Manitoba is looking for a **LEAD PASTOR** beginning Fall of 2024. Our church has an average attendance of one hundred on a given Sunday. We are looking for a leader who is guided by the Holy Spirit and exhibits qualities as listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Our church works as a team with board together and pastor(s) setting the agenda but the big decisions are made by all the members. The Lead Pastor does most of the preaching but shares the pulpit with other leaders. The Job Ministry Descriptions are available upon request. Interested applicants are encouraged to contact Mike Hopcraft at pastoralsearch@svemc.org in addition to submitting cover letter and resume.

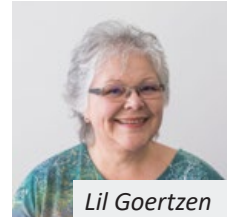
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Henry Redekopp
Executive Director



Kelly Lesser
Pastor of Care and Missions



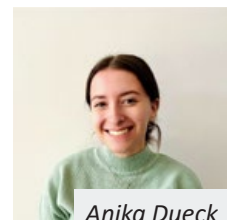
Lil Goertzen
Communications Coordinator



Joyce Harnett
Bookkeeper*



Darrell Kehler
Director of Discipleship*



Anika Dueck
Admin Assistant *

*part time

SHARE THE NEWS!

BY LIL GOERTZEN, EDITOR

The movie Best Christmas Pageant Ever hit the theatres earlier in November here in Canada. I've enjoyed that movie since it first came out in 1983. My VHS version is showing its age as the visual is getting rather crackly and the audio is a bit mumbled at times. It's still one of my favorite Christmas movies and I make time to watch it every year.

I found this brief on-line synopsis of the book turned-to-movie:

The Herdmans are six siblings who have a reputation for being the worst kids in the world. However, when they take over the local church pageant during the holidays, they just might teach a shocked community the true meaning of Christmas.

When the Herdmans take over the Christmas pageant, it's clear they have never been to church, or heard the story of the baby Jesus. They want King Herod to have a part in the pageant because they want to punish him for what he wants to do to the baby. They have no idea about the Bible. They are people who want to know more, and ask questions that some of us think, but don't actually verbalize. They come at the Nativity Story with real-life experience and emotion.

The church people responsible for the Christmas activities are not happy about the Herdmans' involvement and don't hesitate to voice their opinions, willing to share with anyone who will listen to their complaint.

I sometimes wonder if everyone around me knows the Christmas story. I am quick to share "Merry Christmas" greetings and expect a similar response. If asked, I might be able to provide a 15-second summary of the Christmas story and why I celebrate. If the event is so important to me that I think about and prepare for it weeks in advance, shouldn't I be able to provide an explanation that helps others understand or at least want to have more information?

The story of Jesus' birth is far from ordinary. In a humble stable, a king arrived unnoticed by the bustling crowds of Bethlehem. Shepherds, simple working-class men, received the news of his birth from angels. Filled with excitement, they eagerly shared what they had seen and heard with anyone who would listen. They had the best story to share when they returned to the field.

Christmas comes once a year, every year, same dates on the calendar. The story can be shared any time and all the time. To reserve this story of Jesus, the amazing gift that was given to the world and only share it once a year is keeping a piece of wonderful news from our neighbours who long to hear good news.

Share the gift of good news, the gift of the story of Jesus with the Herdmans in your life. You may be the one that is changed.

Merry Christmas!



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