

EMMC Year-End Report 2022-2023

*EMMC exists to **EQUIP** and **ENCOURAGE** our churches for effective ministry, **EMPOWERING** them to participate in God's work in the world.*

We entered 2022 with a hope, a wide-eyed optimism that our world experiences of 2020 and 2021 would be a memory, not realizing there would be remnants of those experiences challenging us. As 2022 rolled on we leaned on God's guidance and saw Him orchestrate challenges and obstacles into opportunities. Throughout the year we have seen God at work, and we have seen lives changed! On behalf of the people touched by these ministries we thank you for your gifts, prayers, support and time! We praise God for your partnership. Your church budget funds, combined with other gifts, donations, and partnerships all contribute to our joint budget. God is at work, and your partnership matters! As we are completing our Year End for 2022, we would like to share a few highlights now for your Annual Report Books, with a more detailed Year in Review publication to follow later in February.

Our Aim

For the past few years we have sought to be obedient to Jesus' exhortation found in Matthew 28:18-20 to make disciples who make disciples. Our prayer in 2022 has been that the **EMMC would be known to be on mission, mobilized and multiplying**. Our staff travelled extensively in 2022 to churches and ministries, often seeing them needing to adjust to a world that has changed. Churches and individuals have been challenged to expand their understanding of what it means to be a relevant church within this new normal. Challenges are being seen as new opportunities, and God's guidance is orchestrating ministry in new and surprising ways!

Leadership Development and Education

Providing resources and support to our churches are some of the ways we look to *equip, encourage* and *empower* our churches. Our prayer is for leadership development and discipleship to be part of our DNA.

- **Education and Training Fund:**
 - Together, you helped us assist **30 students** with education bursaries for a total of **\$18,350**.
- **Leadership Workshops:**
 - When the EMMC contracted Darrell Kehler and Scope Leadership Development a few years back, we had hopes that our EMMC churches would take part, but we also had a vision that other denominations and ministries would also utilize the training.
 - In 2022 another 200 plus leaders from our EMMC churches participated in Leadership assessments through Leading with Vision or other workshops. We are nearing 1500 leaders in the EMMC having participated since 2017.
 - In 2022 Darrell Kehler (through Scope Leadership) provided leadership training to more than 1000 leaders in our partnering churches and ministries! This includes Steinbach Bible College, YFC, Reinlander, EMC, Kleingemeinde and non-denominational churches.
 - The EMMC recognizes that we are a smaller denomination and desire enabling partners to carry out the ministries God has entrusted to us. These connections with our leadership resources have strengthened and opened a path to new ways of partnering within Canada, Belize, Mexico and Bolivia.
 - In 2023 we anticipate more of our EMMC churches to take advantage of our Ministry Evaluations, assessing the health of the Churches' ministries.
- **EQUIP: A Discipleship Pathway:**
 - Developed in 2020 and rolled out to churches in 2021. It has been designed for our churches to "Disciple in Community."
 - The demand for this pathway grew by 60% in 2022! 641 discipleship study books were distributed to churches in Canada.
 - In addition to our EMMC churches, we now distribute this discipleship material to churches from BC to Ontario, ranging from Reinlander churches in Alberta to Chinese Mennonite congregations

- in Ontario. What a blessing to see God’s Word studied and to hear how it transforms lives!
- We are the Canadian distributor for SEAN International (EQUIP) and are authorized to distribute the material in English, Low German and Spanish.
- In 2022 we developed a partnership with Steinreich Bible School (SBS) as a distribution hub for Mexico and have new translators for the material in Belize and Mexico.
 - SBS has been busy distributing into the CMM and CME Churches. They are also utilizing some of the material in the Bible School as well.

Missions

In 2022 a number of our ministries thrived and grew, and we also saw our churches reach into their communities, being relevant but in new less “traditional” ways.

Our Churches

In 2022, many churches were asking themselves what it means to BE Church in our communities today. Our rural communities (not just the cities) are becoming more multi-cultural. With the unrest in many countries around the world, refugees seek the safety of our cities and our towns. We are also seeing a number of our churches presented with opportunities to serve and minister with our Indigenous neighbours in Canada. EMMC leaders have had the opportunity to walk alongside churches as they envision their church reaching into new ministries, providing networking support, clarity, regain strength and hope. Here are a few examples:

- **Deer Run Church, Leamington, Ontario** – Received an MDS grant that they will use to help families struggling financially to pay for rent and groceries. The church will also use the grant to support snack and breakfast programs at local schools.
- **Open Arms Bible Fellowship, Nipawin, Saskatchewan** – Became part of the EMMC Family of Churches in 2022. Under the leadership of Associate Missionaries Marsden and Mandy Giesbrecht, this church has the opportunity to minister to the community of Nipawin and its surrounding Indigenous communities. What a blessing we have to welcome them to the family!
- **Antioch Community Ministries, Warman, Saskatchewan** – EMMC and Region 1 Churches have a front row seat as they provide leadership and support to this ministry under the guidance of Ryan and Lindi Davidson. The ministry is focused on the skate board community in Warman, rents the facility to a Filipino church and is now providing counselling and spiritual direction to women of the community. God is putting things in place for an \$800,000 indoor skatepark to be a reality in 2023!
- **Vauxhall Mennonite Gospel Church, Alberta** – Focused on discipleship; we’ve had opportunity to work out ministry plans that will see this church multiply into surrounding communities in Southern Alberta in 2023 and 2025.
- **Some of our churches have initiatives to reach Ukrainian refugees, others have partnered to assist Afghan refugees.**
- **Belize Region 6, Deer Run and Bergfeld congregations** – have all found ways to help out Belize Camping Experience and the people of Belize after the recent hurricane that hit the country. In word and in deed, the Love of Jesus is shared.
- **Niverville Community Fellowship, Manitoba** – Together with the EMMC is looking towards supporting a potential Nigerian church planter with a multicultural focus.
- These are just a few of the ways our churches are mobilizing and multiplying. All of these connections are priceless as we endeavor to *Equip, Encourage and Empower* our churches for effective ministry, as they participate in God’s work around the world.

Associate Missionaries:

- The Monthly Missionary Moment is a compilation of updates received from our missionaries. Our Associate Missionaries serve all over the world on nearly every continent. We have a total of 27 associate missionaries and provide partial funding for 23 missionaries / families from the EMMC Budget. We have another 2 waiting for funding, and 2 more associate missionaries who don’t require funding.

MEM Bolivia:

- 2022 was a year of growth and transitions for the MEM ministry and the team.
 - **Transitions**
 - Abe and Margaretha Harder became the new Field Directors of the MEM Bolivia Ministry.

- Bill Kehler and Ester Fehr got married in October. Bill moved from being field director to concentrate on the growing Radio ministry in Bolivia together with Ester.
- Ben and Bertha Kauenhofen from Aylmer Ontario were sent to Bolivia and are tasked with planting a new faith community in the Belice Colony.
- Benni and Lorina Dueck became the first local pastors of the Villa Nueva Church! Abe and Margaretha continue to mentor as this church is now entirely lead by local people.
- Hacienda Verde is also transitioning from Willy and Margaret Enns as pastors of this congregation to Jacobo and Aganetha Wiebe.
- **The Reach is growing.**
 - There are over 140,000 Low German speaking people in Bolivia, many of them are without a relationship with Jesus. New radio towers give MEM the ability to reach over 70% of the Low German speakers and thousands more Spanish speakers with Christian programming. Radio: “The invisible missionary.”
 - Our missionaries will be making intentional trips into the colonies to follow up on these radio programs.
 - Ben and Bertha along with local leaders of Villa Nueva are reaching out to the Belice colony, meeting in a former medical clinic on the colony.
 - The Villa Nueva School expects to have over 250 students for 2023, Hacienda Verde will have approximately 120 students. In total the Villa Nueva school has a total of 6 sub-centers (including Hacienda Verde) which accounts for over 600 students receiving a high-quality Christian education!
 - Both churches are using the EQUIP/SEAN discipleship material to develop new local leaders. The fruit is seen as local leaders take leadership of the church, and are reaching out to these new outreaches.
- **Partnerships**
 - The MEM team and MEM Board see the growth and opportunities in ministry so they organized a partnership meeting - the first of its kind, inviting leaders from MEM (EBMC/EMMC) as well as associate partners from Canada (EMC, CMC) Mexico (CME) and Paraguay (4 denominations representing 32 churches).
 - 62 people traveled to San Jose, Bolivia for these meetings where the vision and history of MEM was discussed. The ministry was shown, and partnering was explored.
 - These enabling partnerships are needed for these ministries to thrive.

LIEAB:

- We thank God for the 4-decade long partnership with our sister conference LIEAB.
- For the past couple of years, we partnered with LIEAB on Project Timothy “Proyecto Timoteo” a leadership training program. In April 2022 Kelly Lesser, Darrell Kehler and Lyn Dyck observed the graduation of 18 of these leaders. After graduation, these leaders would now begin an apprenticeship in churches and church plants. A beautiful example of discipleship.
- La Fortaleza Church in Santa Cruz had their 40th anniversary in 2022, with a celebration taking place in 2023.
- Many of the churches and leaders were hit hard by COVID. EMMC started a LIEAB Emergency COVID relief fund, specifically to help their pastors who were dealing with mounting hospital bills.
- EMMC and LIEAB executive meet regularly via ZOOM to share and support each other in ministry.
- In January 2023 the EMMC sponsored leadership workshops for pastors and leaders of the LIEAB churches. Darrell Kehler facilitated. More opportunities to support and partner are on the horizon.
- Abe Harder, MEM Field Director is working on networking opportunities between LIEAB and MEM churches and leaders.

Connections and Events

The last couple of years have shown the importance of connection. EMMC staff travelled extensively in 2022, and looking forward to 2023, it will be a busy year of events and opportunities to connect.

Ministry Leaders Forums:

- In 2022, our pastors connected in regions as well as by ZOOM to provide support.
- A Spring 2023 Leaders Forum is planned.
- On June 9, 2023 a Ministry Leaders Day is planned to be held at Gospel Mission Church in Winkler, Manitoba.

Pastors and leaders are invited. Guest speaker will be Dr. Tim Geddert.

- June 11-13 will be a Pastors and Spouses Retreat. It will be a time of fellowship and rest with Dr. Geddert guiding us to the foundations of having healthy dialogue.

Gathering 2023 “The Great Exchange” June 9-11 at Gospel Mission Church, Winkler, Manitoba

- We are looking forward to meeting in person for Gathering 2023.
- We have learned to embrace technology during the past couple of years. Many will be able to attend in-person and on-line, allowing people to “attend” from around the world!

KidMin Connections:

- In February 2022 EMMC Plugged-In Kidmin had their first virtual get together. They started a Facebook group with the purpose of creating opportunities for EMMC Children’s Ministry leaders to connect, support and encourage each other.
- We look forward to seeing this grow in 2023.

Treasured Foundation 2023

- Planning is underway for TF 2023 in Steinbach, Manitoba in December 2023. Having been postponed for 2022, we look forward to this EMMC Youth conference being a life changing event.

Communications

Throughout the year we share of the happenings of the EMMC, its churches and ministries. We are continually looking for ways to share as effectively as possible with the Praise, Prayer and Pondering weekly email, Social Media, The Recorder which is now available in paper and on-line, making it even easier to access.

- In 2022, we ran the EMMC Art Contest with 54 submissions.
- A journal style book using select art pieces from the contest was created. The journal is available through Home Office to assist churches as a fund-raising tool for Treasured Foundation 2023.
- The EMMC website continues to provide access to additional resources and videos on YouTube

Staffing

2022 was a stabilizing time for our staff. In 2023 we will see changes in our bookkeeping as Andrew Harder will be selling his business and we will need to look for a new person or firm to assist us in our financial oversight. We also see the growth of things like EQUIP and may need to staff accordingly.

Conclusion

God is at work and we want to be ready to join in His work. The EMMC General Council approved a budget for 2023-2024 of \$916,000, a slight decrease from 2022-23. We’ve been careful and we have shown slight surpluses and deficits for the past few years. We continue to look to our congregations and individuals to assist us with supporting these ministries through generous gifts. It is because of your contributions that we are able to reach others with the Good News of Jesus.

Submitted by

Lyn Dyck

EMMC Executive Director

Glossary:

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| CMC | Christian Mennonite Conference |
| CME | Conferencia Misionera Evangelica |
| CMM | Conference of Mennonites in Mexico |
| EBMC | Evangelical Bergthaler Mennonite Churches, Alberta |
| EMC | Evangelical Mennonite Conference |
| EMMC | Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference |
| LIEAB | La Iglesia Evangélica Anabautista en Bolivia |
| MDS | Mennonite Disaster Service |
| MEM | Misión Evangélica Menonita |
| SBC | Steinbach Bible College, Manitoba |
| SBS | Steinreich Bible School, Mexico |