

# EMMC YEAR IN REVIEW



MAKING DISCIPLES | CONNECTING CHURCHES

## 2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

As we review 2021, our world will look back on it as a year of change and challenge. For the *Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference* (EMMC) our churches and ministries have not been immune to the challenges, but 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.

We trust you will be encouraged as you read through this 2021 Annual Report and praise God for the way he works through the ministry of EMMC and this family of churches.

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*The EMMC exists to equip and encourage our churches for effective ministry, empowering them to participate in God's work in the world.*

## OUR AIM



Our goals moving into 2022 were -

“Refocusing on the **ROOTS** of our calling, to recognize the challenges and needs for support and guidance in our family of churches. Our foundation, our **ROOTS** must be strong as we seek to produce lasting fruit. Learning from each other, seeking enabling partnerships, our churches will be intentional in leadership development, equipping and discipling their people, and sending them out on a mission to multiply...” (Excerpt from EMMC’s 5-Year Strategic Plan).

God’s guidance has allowed obstacles to become opportunities. Waiting (patiently) for God’s direction has come with surprises and blessings.

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

For the past few years we have emphasized obedience to Matthew 28:18-20, focusing on Jesus’ exhortation to “make disciples”. Leadership development and discipleship is to be part of our DNA.

**“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.”**  
**Matthew 28:18-20**

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND

In 2021, EMMC assisted 27 students with education bursaries for a total of \$18,000.

As part of the application, students are requested to share their plans. Some are planning to go into full-time ministry, others plan to use their new insight as volunteers in their churches and still others see themselves as marketplace missionaries being salt and light as nurses, teachers, agronomists and more.



**Thank you for the financial help towards my college education. It is much appreciated!**

- Zach

**Thank you, this is a true blessing!**

- Hailey

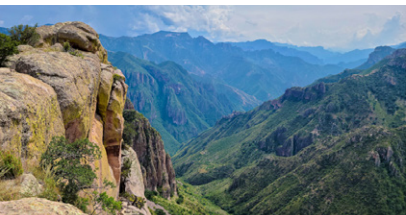
**That’s wonderful news, thanks so much!**

- Matt

**Wow! Thank-you so incredibly much! I am so blessed to have the support of my church conference as God leads me in my studies!**

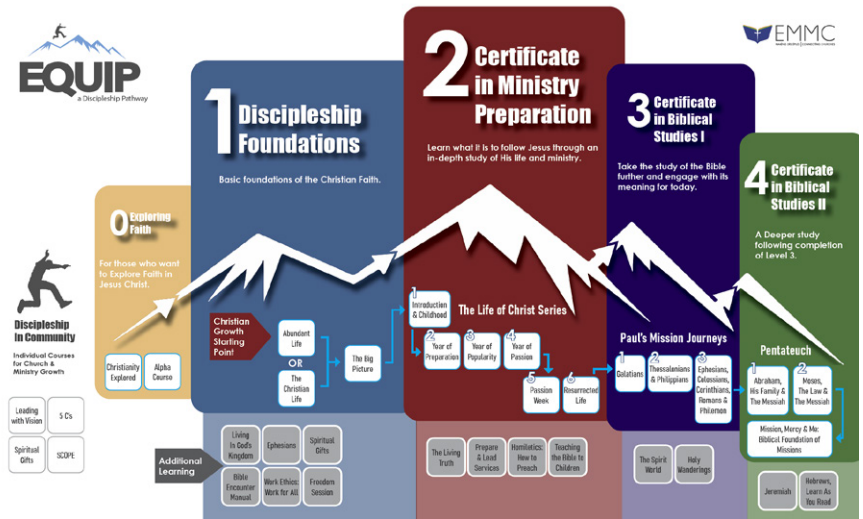
- Kiara





## LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS

- Although the first half of 2021 was hampered by travel limitations in Canada, Darrell Kehler, Director of Discipleship was able to spend significant time in Mexico and Belize.
- In Mexico over 400 leaders participated in the Leading With Vision workshops. Leaders represented 10 churches from the Conference of Mennonites in Mexico (CMM) and Conferencia Menonita Evangelica (CME), opening up new opportunities for EMMC to partner in ministry in the future.
- The later half of 2021 allowed a number of EMMC churches to do Leading with Vision reviews and workshops again. To date nearly all EMMC churches have participated in the workshop at least once and over 1100 leaders have participated since 2017! This next year 2022 is shaping up to be a busy year with Leading with Vision and 5C's workshops.
- In December 2021, Darrell Kehler lead a facilitator training course with Steinreich Bible School and four other churches in Mexico with approximately 30 leaders participating. That resulted in EMMC developing a partnership with Steinreich Bible School as a distribution hub for Mexico. New translators are coming forward to work at translating material into Low German. There is an on-going demand for Low German materials.



## EQUIP: A DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY

- This discipleship pathway was developed in 2020 and rolled out to churches in 2021. It has been designed for our churches to develop or incorporate their own discipleship pathways, creating "Discipleship in Community".
- This pathway is gaining momentum. Based on SEAN (Study by Extension for All Nations) material, we have distributed nearly 400 books in either English or Low German in 2021 and expect this number to grow exponentially.
- As the Canadian distributor for SEAN International, our EMMC office receives all Canadian requests for material. They have come from churches in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC!



## CONFERENCIA MISIONERA EVANGELICA (CME) EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY CONFERENCE (CME)

In 2007, the EMMC and the Evangelical Mennonite Conference (EMC) merged their then ministries with seven other congregations that were independent Low German-speaking churches located in the states of Chihuahua and Durango. The new conference is called the Evangelical Missionary Conference. The CME is growing, it is currently active in the ministries located in the states of Tamaulipas and Veracruz.

# MISSIONS

- In June 2021, Kelly Lesser was hired as our new Pastor of Care and Mission. His role within the Conference is to provide care and support as well as connection to our pastors, our churches and our missionaries. He has been a welcome addition to the EMMC home office team.



Kelly Lesser

## ASSOCIATE MISSIONARIES



- EMMC Mission Advisory Council recommended adding funding to the budget to allow for two more associate missionaries, bringing our total to 23 missionaries / families that are receiving partial funding from the EMMC Budget.
- Monthly Missionary Moment (M3)** email is a compilation of communication and newsletters from our ministry workers. This email is sent to those who want to keep up with the work of our various missionaries and their prayer requests.

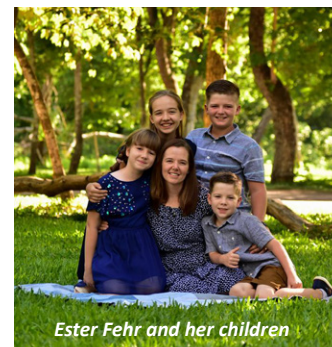


## MEM

MEM, (Misión Evangélica Menonita), is an outreach ministry of the Evangelical Bergthaler Mennonite Conference (EBMC) out of La Crete, Alberta, and EMMC. Ministries are conducted in Bolivia.



Sisters Anna (right) &amp; Helena (Left) Schlamp



Ester Fehr and her children

- The churches and schools at Hacienda Verde and Villa Nueva continue to grow.
- The school in **Hacienda Verde** had their first grade 12 graduating class in November 2021.
- Both Villa Nueva and Hacienda Verde churches are using the Low German EQUIP/SEAN discipleship material to develop new local leaders.
- There are nearly 140,000 Low German speaking people in Bolivia.
- With the help of funds raised at The Gathering 2021, **a new radio tower** has been constructed giving MEM the ability to reach over 70% of the Low German speakers and thousands more Spanish speakers with Christian programming. Radio is often referred to as the “invisible missionary”, reaching to homes and communities where our missionaries cannot go.
- All of this has developed to where the churches are looking to plant new churches in 2022. MEM is looking for 2 new outreach workers in addition to mobilizing local leaders in these opportunities. How exciting to know we may have 4 churches and schools in Bolivia by end of 2022!
- As the MEM team discerned these opportunities, they were hit with the loss of **Benny Fehr** to COVID. Benny and Ester were instrumental in the growing reach of the radio ministry. Ester continues in that important radio work.





## LIEAB

La Iglesia Evangélica Anabautista en Bolivia is EMMC's Spanish sister conference in Bolivia. LIEAB is a group of churches that are made up of Bolivian nationals. This conference of Spanish speaking Bolivian churches is active in church planting, education and leadership development, youth and young adult discipleship, and is actively discerning a further move into international missions. It is mostly an autonomous conference with a deep and continuing appreciation for EMMC and the workers that have been a part of their spiritual journey.

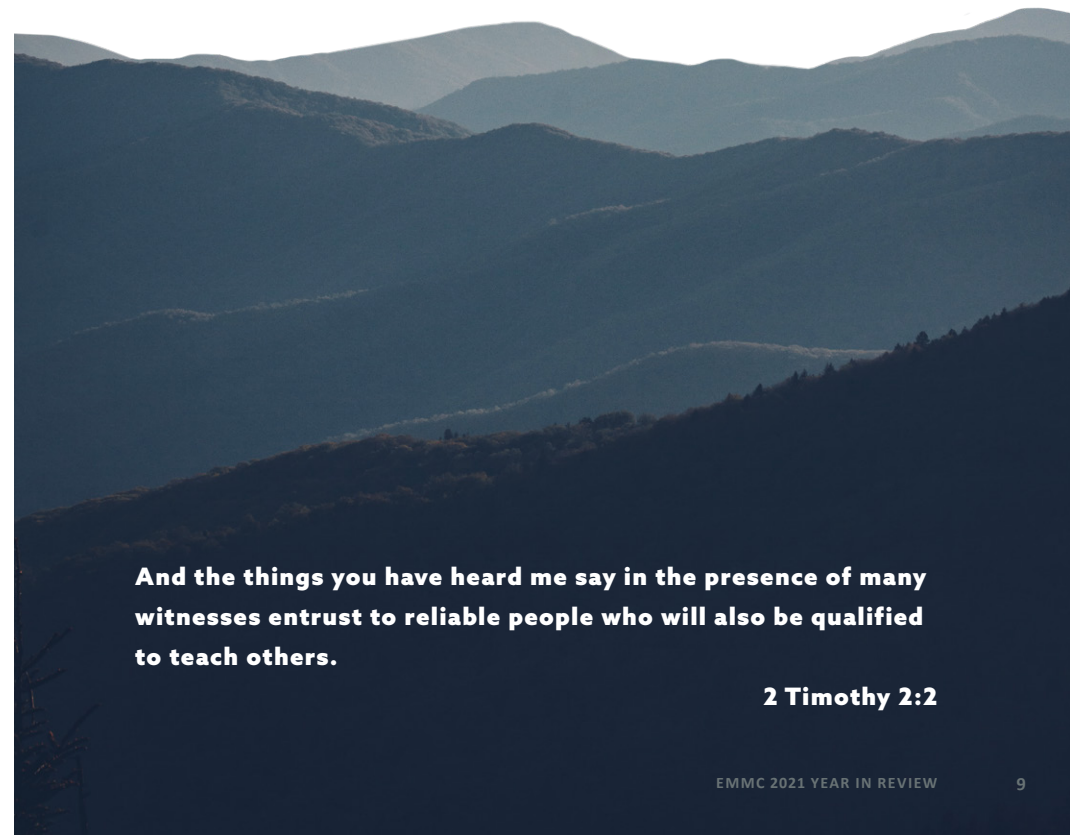
- Over five decades ago EMMC began a ministry to the Spanish speaking people of Bolivia. We thank God for the partnership with our sister conference LIEAB. Today they have grown to nearly 30 churches and church plants.
- In 2021 we partnered with LIEAB on **Project Timothy "Proyecto Timoteo"** a leadership training program based on the biblical equipping principle of 2 Timothy 2:2. The three-phase program is designed to call, equip and mobilize leaders within the Bolivian churches and ministries.
- LIEAB's church plant at Tarija** has completed phase 1 of its church building. Phase 2 is about to begin. The Deer Run Church in Leamington, Ontario has become their sister church. LIEAB would welcome other EMMC churches partnering financially and prayerfully in this way.



EMMC (Lyn Dyck, Darrell Kehler and Kelly Lesser) meet regularly with LIEAB executive via ZOOM to share and pray together.



- LIEAB also dealt with loss in 2021. Ruben Mercado, long-time pastor, missionary and evangelist passed away in June and Pastor Fredy Borda of the Camino a la Vida Church passed away in December.
- At the time of Ruben's passing the EMMC started a LIEAB Emergency COVID Relief Fund, specifically to help their pastors who were dealing with mounting hospital bills. Our LIEAB brothers and sisters are thankful for the generosity of our people and the legacy they are leaving.



**And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.**

**2 Timothy 2:2**

# CONNECTIONS

Our churches and EMMC as an organization were met with many challenges to connect and yet, the obstacles often became opportunities.

## GATHERING 2021

- Sutherland Evangelical Church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan was our host location from June 4 to 6, 2021.
- **Gathering 2021** was presented with a combination of in-person, pre-recorded and virtual presentations. This hybrid format of in-person and on-line was a first for EMMC.
- Technology (and much prayer!) allowed people from all corners of the earth to join us as we worshiped, celebrated and interacted with ministries and missionaries.
- Speakers, workshops and worship helped us explore the theme of **"Rooted: Rising to His call"**.
- Opportunity to give recognition to **Al and Anita Kehler** for their 17 years of ministry as Conference Pastor, and to introduce and commission **Kelly Lesser** as Pastor of Care and Mission
- When we consider the in-person attendance, the EMMC churches live streaming the event and individual views, **The Gathering 2021 became most well-attended Gathering in our history!**
- We see this model becoming a regular part of future Gathering celebrations.



## MINISTRY LEADERS FORUMS



- In addition to Regional and individual pastoral connections, the goal is to continue the development of **Ministry Leader Forums**.
- **June 2021:** Building on our Regional Pastor connections, the first Ministry Leaders Forum was held on-line as part of Gathering 2021
- **October 2021:** Pastors Forum. Pastors from each Region gathered in person, connecting with other Regions and the main speakers by Zoom. Pastors responded that this was a beneficial time as they shared about life, ministry and prayed together.

*April 2022 is the next planned Forum. These connections will continue to allow pastors and leaders to support, encourage and equip one another in ministry as well as to equip our conference as we discuss theology and ministry practice.*

## YOUTH AND KIDMIN CONNECTIONS



- **August 2021:** The EMMC Youth Ministry Council headed by Winkler EMMC Youth Pastor Tim Goertzen connected youth pastors and leaders together to share and pray. Plans are being developed for further connections in 2022.
- **December 2021** Carolyn Wiebe (Winkler EMMC) and Annie Bergen (Deer Run) were encouraged to develop EMMC Plugged In- KidMin with the purpose of creating opportunities for EMMC children's ministry leaders to connect, support and encourage each other. The first meeting will be in February 2022.

## CHURCHES

From time to time, EMMC leaders have had the opportunity to walk alongside churches, offering support to provide clarity, while regaining strength and hope. Here are a few examples:

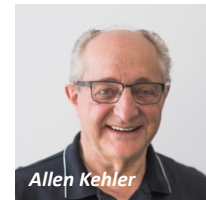


- The birth of Antioch Ministries! This ministry has a special focus on the skateboard community in Warman as well as other young people who need Christ. Ministering from the site of the former Warman Gospel Church, this outreach has the potential to have a profound impact on the community of Warman and surrounding area. EMMC and Region 1 (Alberta and Saskatchewan) churches have come along side this ministry with leadership and financial support. Pray with us as this ministry grows!
- **Blenheim EMMC** is being revitalized! EMMC and **Region 4** (Ontario) churches provide leadership and financial support. A recent Leading with Vision workshop revealed a young, hopeful church emerging. Pastor Aron Wiebe and his wife Annie are intent on mentoring and discipling this church to be a beacon of hope in the community.
- **Vauxhall Mennonite Gospel Church**, Alberta: Just over 3 years ago this church was ready to close its doors. Today under the steady leadership of Pastor Henry and Tina Redekopp, the church is growing. Using the **EQUIP Discipleship Pathway**, EMMC's workshop resources and focusing on making disciples who make disciples this church now has opportunities to multiply, reaching out into surrounding communities in Southern Alberta. Please pray as these opportunities arise.

- **Altona EMMC and Morden EMMC** in Manitoba have both received various forms of conference assistance. Today they are embarking on new biblical leadership structures and renewed vision for future ministry.
- **Belize Region 6** - Although this report is to review 2021, it should be noted that Kelly Lesser will have his first opportunity to visit the Region in February 2022.
- In addition to the tremendous opportunities for ministry growth in our Gospel Fellowship Chapel in Shipyard, the Region will be utilizing Kelly Lesser, Lyn Dyck and Darrell Kehler to the fullest!
- Ministerial retreats, men's retreats, ladies' meetings (with Elaine Kehler), men's breakfasts, Leading with Vision workshops, meetings with councils, and elders are just a few of the connections planned with our churches in Blue Creek, Spanish Lookout and Shipyard.

*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.*

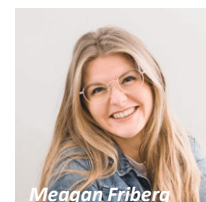
## STAFFING



Allen Kehler



Kelly Lesser



Meagan Friberg

The opportunities for these connections require a flexible and dedicated EMMC home office staff. 2021 came with a few changes:

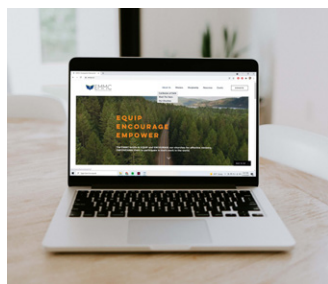
- June 1, Kelly Lesser came on staff as Pastor of Care and Mission.
- June 30, Al Kehler completed his time as Conference Pastor after 17 years of service.
- June 30, Peter Serger finished as Director of Media and Youth Ministries.
- In July, Meagan Friberg was hired on contract to do layout and graphic design for projects including The Recorder.

*These changes in staffing had impact on current staff, as some responsibilities were redistributed.*



## 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.



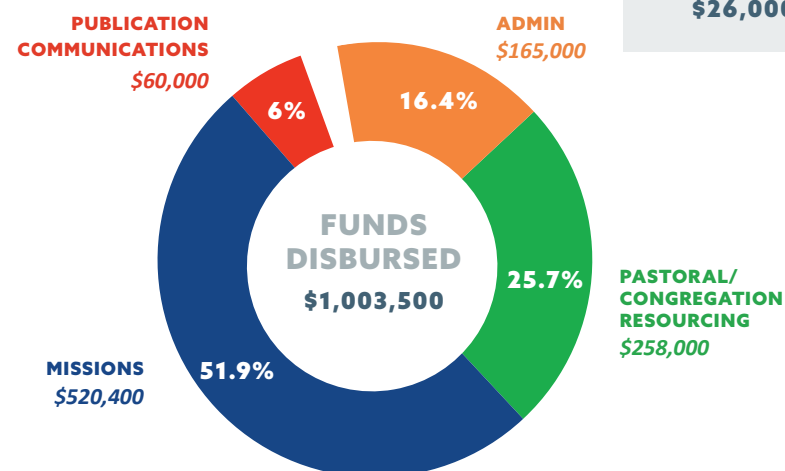
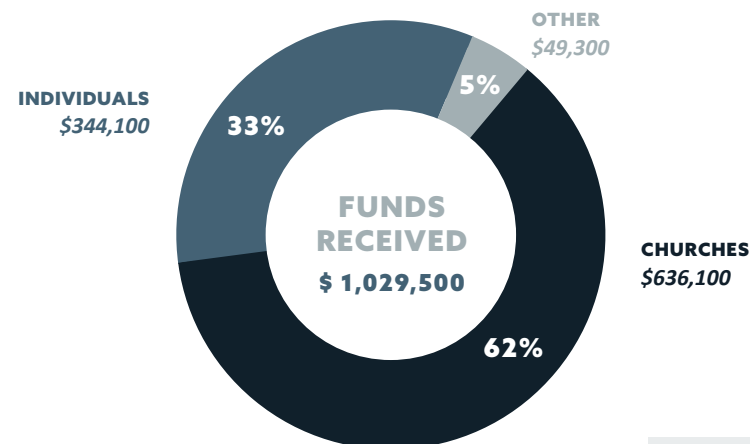
- The weekly **Praise, Prayer and Pondering** email is available to everyone, Social Media (Facebook and Instagram), The Recorder which is available in print as well as on-line, making it even easier to access.
- The **EMMC website** at [www.emmc.ca](http://www.emmc.ca) had a complete re-do at the hand of Meagan Friberg. We are excited about the site, and hope you will visit on a regular basis.
- In 2022 we anticipate being able to offer EMMC churches a website framework using WIX web development which will help congregations have a clean, easy to navigate website with easy upkeep.
- In 2022 the **EMMC Art Contest**, giving participants an outlet for their artistic abilities. We will be creating a journal-style book which will be made available through churches as a fund-raising tool for youth ministries and Treasured Foundation.
- **History** tells the story of where we came from, but also helps us vision for the future. In the 85-year history of EMMC, many beautiful ministries and God stories have unfolded. There have also been difficulties and things that we wish would have been different. We are aware that it is by God's grace and faithfulness that we can continue to move forward.
- We continue to collect **the stories of our churches** and the ministries that are carried out locally and around the world, and offer them as evidence of God's goodness and faithfulness.

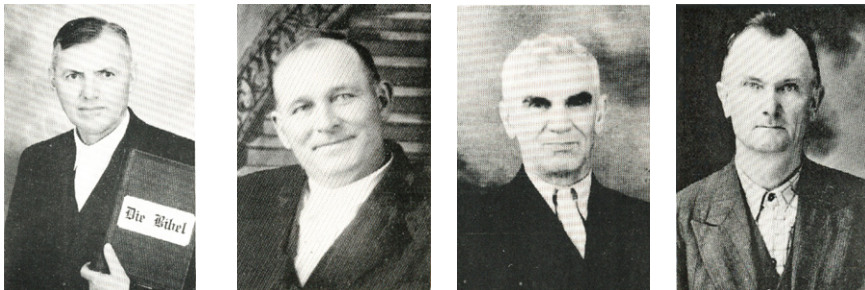
**"For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ."**

*I Corinthians 3:11*

## FINANCE

Thank you to the many churches and individuals who have generously supported EMMC ministries through their prayers and financial support. We will be reporting a surplus of \$26K, pending our audit this spring. **Detailed Audited financial statements will be available on our website in summer.** The numbers in these charts represent a summary of support for ministry we share together. These numbers equal ministries that are changing lives. **Your contributions make a huge difference!**





## CONTINUED GROWTH AFTER 85 YEARS

It was the fall of 1936. After much struggle, prayer, soul searching and dialogue, four young ministers faced a course of action that would give them a new beginning.

Each of these young ministers had an encounter with the Holy Spirit that changed their lives and ministry. Their enthusiasm and desire to make changes within the Sommerfeld Church were not well accepted. Even after much discussion and attempts to find common ground and work together with the leaders, these young men could no longer contain their new understanding and conviction of their faith. This excitement and renewal compelled them to challenge their brothers and sisters to a deeper walk with God.

Bishop Wilhelm H. Falk, Rev. Gerhard J. Froese, Rev. Isaak A. Hoepfner and Rev. Peter S. Zacharias together with 1100 members left the Sommerfelder Mennonite Church and embarked on an uncertain future. With an emphasis on missions, sharing the Gospel, and including ministry to youth and children as an integral part of their vision, they continued their bold move forward, establishing churches and stepping into opportunities before them.

In 1959, the Rudnerweider Gemeinde adopted the name change to the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference.

Today, the EMMC has grown and extended ministries to Bolivia, Belize, into various parts of Canada, United States, Mexico and has missionaries and associate ministry workers around the globe.

Reflecting on the 85 years of this organization, we can see the hand of God directing and guiding, protecting and providing. Things have not always been easy and there have been conflicts and disappointment. There were years when the income fell short of the budget. Difficult decisions were made. Changes in structure brought questions, adjustments and uncertainty. In all these things, many prayers asking for discernment and direction were answered, sometimes in unexpected ways.

We look forward to growing ministries among Low German speakers in Canada. Young people are asking about ministry opportunities – both in churches and beyond. The requests for discipleship training and resources is exciting. Seeing a renewed desire for spiritual growth is encouraging!

Ministering together in this family of churches gives room for developing connections and relationships; learning from one another and provides the opportunity to encourage and pray for one another. We are doing together what we cannot do alone. Building our faith on the foundation of Jesus Christ enables us to continue the work to which we have been called as a community of believers.

With a renewed sense of His call and vision, EMMC is committed to responding to the Great Commission and will continue to “go” wherever He leads, all the while, ‘making disciples, connecting churches’.



## CONCLUSION

We trust as you read this report that, as our family of churches, you are able to see the way God has guided and grown our EMMC ministries. God is at work and we want to be ready to join in His work.

At their November 26, 2021 meeting, the EMMC General Council approved a budget of \$920,000 for 2022. Even as ministry has grown, our budgets have changed very little. We’ve been careful and we have shown slight surpluses and deficits for the past few years. Our prayer continues to be that our tent will expand. 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, prayer and encouragement that we are able to reach others with the Good News of Jesus.



## STAFF



<b>Lyn Dyck</b>	Executive Director
<b>Kelly Lesser</b>	Pastor of Care and Mission
<b>Lil Goertzen</b>	Communications Coordinator
<b>Joyce Harnett</b>	Administrative Assistant (part-time)
<b>Darrell Kehler</b>	Director of Discipleship (part-time)
<b>Andrew Harder</b>	Bookkeeper (part-time)
<b>Meagan Friberg</b>	Designer (part-time)

## GENERAL BOARD

<b>Darrell Dyck</b>	Moderator	Gospel Fellowship Church, Steinbach, MB
<b>Henry Redekopp</b>	Vice-Moderator	Mennonite Gospel Church, Vauxhall, AB
<b>Neil Schmidt</b>	Treasurer	Winkler EMMC, MB
<b>Blaine Dueck</b>	Secretary	Spanish Lookout EMMC, Belize
<b>Michael Krahn</b>		Aylmer EMMC, ON
<b>Albert Rempel</b>		Blue Creek EMMC, Belize
<b>Steve Miller</b>		Hague Gospel Church, SK

## GENERAL COUNCIL

### REGION 1: ALBERTA / SASKATCHEWAN

<b>Dale Doerksen</b>	Sutherland Evangelical Church, Saskatoon
<b>Henry Redekopp</b>	Mennonite Gospel Church, Vauxhall, Alberta
<b>Jesse Doell</b>	Hepburn Gospel Church, Saskatchewan
<b>John Loewen</b>	Mennonite Gospel Church, Vauxhall, Alberta
<b>Steve Miller</b>	Hague Gospel Church, Saskatchewan

### REGION 2: MANITOBA CENTRAL

<b>Dan Buhler</b>	Morrow Gospel Church, Winnipeg
<b>Darrell Dyck</b>	Gospel Fellowship Church, Steinbach
<b>Dawson Reimer</b>	Nassau Street Church, Winnipeg
<b>Garrett Fehr</b>	Bagot Community Chapel

### REGION 3: MANITOBA SOUTH

<b>David Friesen</b>	Altona EMMC
<b>Ernie Buhler</b>	Bergfeld Mennonite Church
<b>Ike Klassen</b>	Glencross Mennonite Church
<b>Neil Schmidt</b>	Winkler EMMC

### REGION 4: ONTARIO

<b>Aron Wiebe</b>	Blenheim EMMC
<b>Jacob Wall</b>	Deer Run Church, Leamington
<b>Lena Wiebe</b>	Aylmer EMMC
<b>Michael Krahn</b>	Aylmer EMMC
<b>Quentin Unger</b>	Deer Run Church, Leamington

### REGION 6: BELIZE / MEXICO SOUTH

<b>Albert Reimer</b>	Spanish Lookout EMMC
<b>Albert Rempel</b>	Blue Creek EMMC
<b>Blaine Dueck</b>	Spanish Lookout EMMC
<b>John Krahn</b>	Blue Creek EMMC
<b>Ronald Rempel</b>	Gospel Fellowship Chapel, Shipyard



**So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,  
continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in  
him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and  
overflowing with thankfulness.**

**COLOSSIANS 2:6-7**



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