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## Mennonite Church Canada Ministry Highlights for 2010

It's all about relationships. Every ministry in which Mennonite Church Canada engages begins with you, our Congregations and Area Churches, and extends to local and global communities. With 220 congregations across the country, we're a large and diverse family composed of many age groups, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and about 18 worship languages. Together, we reflect the incredible diversity of God's Creation. Together, by sharing our gifts and resources, we can help to change lives and build God's church.

Each issue of *Equipping* includes ministry notes and prayer requests concerning the ministries we invite you to support. Many congregations regularly share these messages in their Sunday bulletins. Thank you for that! By sharing your precious bulletin space with us, you help us to find the prayer and financial support that enables us to build God's church together.

At the start of a new year, it seems fitting to celebrate some of the ministry highlights of 2010. We encourage you to use excerpts from these highlights to report on the ministries of Mennonite Church Canada at your annual congregational meeting in 2011.

As you'll see below, your prayers and awareness-building have been at work. Thank you for your invaluable contributions to Mennonite Church Canada's ministries in 2010!

1. One of Mennonite Church Canada's top three priorities is to form a people of God. Your support enables us as your National Church to develop leadership within the church and to provide uniquely Anabaptist educational/informational materials for people of all ages and backgrounds.
  - Christian Formation ministries devote staff time and resources to helping our congregations find meaningful ways to integrate children, youth and adults of all ages in the ministry of the local congregation. See the congregational study guide,

*Young Adults and Seniors Serving the Health of the Same Church, Together*, that was developed from an Assembly 2010 seminar of the same name by going to [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1438](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1438)

- Thank you for supporting Mennonite Church Canada's Multicultural Ministry and helping us to support our congregations in a variety of languages. God's people come from a wide spectrum of cultural and ethnic diversity that is increasingly reflected in Mennonite Church Canada congregations. We have so much to learn from and share with each other!
- Mennonite Church Canada congregations currently worship in about 17 languages other than English. Your gifts helped the Resource Centre to grow its capacity to offer support materials in a variety of languages. For a list of resources available in a selection of languages, scroll to the bottom of [www.mennonitechurch.ca/resourcecentre/Home](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/resourcecentre/Home)
- In 2010, Mennonite Church Canada developed downloadable worship resources for Education Sunday, Advent, Lent, and other seasons of the church year. Find these and other worship materials at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/482](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/482)
- Mennonite Church Canada's Strategic Task Force for Pastoral Leadership Development, which includes representation from our post secondary schools and the Area Churches, is mapping out a plan to provide sufficient and qualified pastors and congregational leadership for the next two decades. Your giving makes it possible to plan for the future leadership needs of the church.
- If you've ever gone through the process of searching for a pastor, you've probably used some of the materials Mennonite Church Canada generates and provides on-line – like Ministerial Leadership Information (MLI) forms that help

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- churches and pastors assess their experience and gifts relative to congregational expectations. We also offer Pastor Salary Guidelines, updated yearly at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1453](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1453) Your support helps us help you!
- We're excited about the new possibilities arising from the merger of our publishing ministry, Mennonite Publishing Network, with Third Way Media, an electronic media ministry. Thank you for helping us to create Anabaptist-oriented materials in a variety of media to shape and support our teachers, leaders, children and families.
2. Over the past year, Mennonite Church Canada's Resource Centre has used a variety of approaches to increase the amount of material available for you to borrow, purchase or download. The result has been increased circulation.
    - Your generosity has resulted in the addition of hundreds of new book titles, 125 new DVDs and over 200 new electronic files. Thank you!
    - The Resource Centre is part of a new Anabaptist Resource Consortium, creating an online inter-system loan service together with Columbia Bible College Library (B.C.), Mennonite Church Eastern Canada Library (Ont.) and Mennonite & Brethren in Christ Resource Centre (Ont.). Thank you for supporting the Resource Centre and contributing to the multiplication effect of shared resources! See [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1369](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1369)
    - CMU Bookstore is also beginning to offer their books for sale through the Resource Centre's online catalogue. See [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1451](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1451)
    - In a new partnership with CMU Bookstore, the Resource Centre has co-sponsored a monthly "48-Hour Contest." Online subscribers to the Resource Update are eligible to win a free book if they submit an answer to our monthly question within 48 hours.
  3. In 2010, you helped the Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives and Gallery provide a regular witness to Christ's love and a challenge to how we should live.
    - For the past four years, the Resource Centre has tracked usage of electronic services. Since 2007, downloading has almost quadrupled and during the same time, book and DVD loan circulation has increased by 32%.
    - More loaned items were circulated through the Resource Centre in 2010 than in any other previous year. Over 500 borrowers accounted for 32 "Cheaper by the Dozen" orders and 28 congregational and Area Church displays of resource materials. For more information about Cheaper by the Dozen, see [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1113](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1113) For information about hosting a display, see [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1157](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1157)
    - Because of your support, Mennonite Heritage Centre staff members (Alf Redekopp, Connie Wiebe, and Conrad Stoesz) are able to help 200 people a month find answers to important questions about genealogies, radio programs, TV documentaries, legalities, academic research, books, magazine articles, brochures, school essays and more.
    - Conrad Stoesz, archivist at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, is invited to speak to schools, churches, and educators about the role of Canada's conscientious objectors and why their story is important. Thank you for supporting Mennonite Church Canada and the Mennonite Heritage Centre so that stories of our past can be shared to help us shape a future of peace.
    - The Mennonite Heritage Centre was able to upgrade to a new microfilm scanner that will allow staff to respond more efficiently to inquiries and allow visitors better access to historical records. We couldn't have made this purchase without you!

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- Thank you for helping us to share art as a form of mission! In 2010 Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery curator, Ray Dirks, gave presentations/workshops in about 20 schools, some multiple times, and about 10 presentation/workshops in three centres that teach English as a second language (EAL). Through art, participants are often able to express perspectives and experiences in a non-threatening manner. Approximately 200 adult EAL students and 1,200 regular school students, primarily newcomers to Canada, participated.
  - In 2010, your generosity enabled the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery to hold six exhibits sharing perspectives of human rights issues and faith. The latest exhibit, “JUST FOOD – The Right to Food from a Faith Perspective” will be on display until January 15/11. Thank you for your role in bringing issues like this one to a public forum.
4. Our connection with the global church is a powerful way to expand our understanding of the depth and diversity of Christian faith around the world and to encourage each other in our walk with Christ. We are deeply grateful for the enthusiasm and support you bring to the global church!
- In July 2010, Mennonites accepted a Lutheran World Federation apology for the historical persecution of Anabaptists and began a new chapter in our relationship. To help us grow in our life-giving relationship with each other, Mennonite Church Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada are jointly developing a Study Guide ([www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1438](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1438)) about this forgiveness process for Congregations. We are grateful for support that makes such initiatives possible. With your partnership, our denominations can learn and grow together as members of God’s family.
  - In 2010, a five-year partnership covenant was made between Trinity Mennonite Church in Calgary and the Korea Anabaptist Center in Seoul, South Korea. Thank you for sharing your energy and resources in this way.
  - With your support, Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers Phil and Julie Bender and Jeanette Hanson were joined by a group of Chinese pastors for a winter conference of our partner ministry, Mennonite Partners in China (MPC). Thank you for helping us to build relationships with and among Chinese pastors!
  - Mennonite Church Canada Learning Tours give you a window into our International Ministry programs. In 2010, Learning Tours brought people to Philippines, China, Israel-Palestine and to the Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park at Siksika First Nation in Alberta. The Learning Tour to Burkina Faso scheduled for February 2011 is full, with two people on a waiting list. Your enthusiasm and support for Learning Tours inspires planning for more!
  - Your support of Mennonite Church Canada ministries has nurtured flourishing relationships with sister churches in Chile – and those relationships played an important role in establishing relief aid following the earthquakes that struck in February, 2010. Working under Special Assignment with Mennonite Church Canada, Titus Guenther introduced Mennonite Central Committee reps to Anabaptist church leadership so that together, they could determine appropriate responses. Thank you for helping to build and serve the global church.
  - Nhien Pham is serving as a Special Assignment worker in Vietnam with Mennonite Church Canada, sharing wisdom and resources with Mennonite Church Vietnam leaders. Thank you for your support of Nhien’s ministry and these important connections with the Mennonite Church in Vietnam.
  - With your encouragement and support, Mennonite Church Canada relates to Mennonite churches in Brazil, who are celebrating God’s faithfulness as they mark 80 years since the first Russian-Germanic Mennonites immigrated to Brazil.

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- IMPaCT 2010, co-hosted by Mennonite Church British Columbia (MCBC) and Mennonite Church Canada, took place Sept. 23-Oct. 7. Pastors from MCBC were paired with four pastors from Asia; one each from Macau and China, and two from the Philippines. With fun and camaraderie, pastors focussed on the theme “the church as prophetic voice” as they developed friendships and enriched each other’s ministry in BC and in East Asia. Thank you for your support of this important relationship ministry!
- 5. At the Mennonite Church Canada Assembly 2010, delegates passed a resolution seeking “... renewed opportunities to walk with Aboriginal people of Canada...” in response to residential schools survivors. Your support of Mennonite Church Canada encourages relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and congregations. Thank you for the prayers, encouragement and gifts that facilitate the search for truth, healing and reconciliation.
  - Mennonite Church Canada Witness and Native Mennonite Ministries (U.S.) held Native Assembly 2010, “I Am the Potter; You are the Clay,” on the Northern Cheyenne reservation in Montana. Thank you for supporting this vital, relationship building ministry!
  - With your help, Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministry and two Latin American guests came to the Northern Cheyenne reservation in Ashland, Montana for Native Assembly 2010. Thank you for supporting connections among indigenous peoples.
  - We are grateful for your growing interest in Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministry Partnership Circles. These groups gather twice yearly to bring together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal partner congregations for a time of learning and fellowship.
- Intotemak is a quarterly news letter featuring news about and for Canada’s indigenous people who relate to Mennonite Church Canada. About 1,400 subscribers – including each congregation – received this periodical in 2010. See [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/66](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/66)
- 6. The annual assembly is the largest annual faith formation opportunity Mennonite Church Canada offers to congregations. Your continued support of and participation in these gatherings contributes to fellowship and ministry and the future health of the church.
  - In 2010, 5000 school kits assembled by participants of Mennonite Church Canada’s 2009 Youth Assembly were distributed in Cuba. The donation and distribution of these kits, facilitated by Mennonite Central Committee, had a big impact for school children in areas affected by the 2008 hurricane as well as for educational staff who worked with church representatives from each region. A group of churches also benefited and appreciated this gesture of love and generosity from donors. Thank you for your donations to this valuable effort!
  - To ensure we hear the voices of our youth, Youth Ambassadors were invited to attend Mennonite Church Canada Assembly 2010. Thank you for encouraging high school students in your congregation to participate.
  - We are grateful for the energy and enthusiasm of you, our volunteers and delegates, who helped to make Assembly 2010, “Reclaim the Name,” a spiritually enriching affair!
- 7. Jeanette and Todd Hanson, Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers in China, describe the joy of your support in a way that reflects the heart of Mennonite Church Canada Witness. By sending them to China you are supportive of the mission to build the Kingdom of God across national, ethnic, and cultural boundaries. “It means that you partner with us to see where God is at work and to participate in that work in the world.” We are grateful for the

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many ways you help us to walk with others!

- Thanks to your support, Palmer Becker, Mennonite Church Canada Special Assignment worker, was able to participate in the ordination and training sessions for 26 new Mennonite pastors in the Mennonite Church in Vietnam.
  - Mennonite Church Canada Witness is seeking short term assignment possibilities in Israel/Palestine. We couldn't do it without you!
  - Mission Seminar took place in Rochester, Indiana, July 16-22. This yearly event, hosted alternatively by Canada and the US, is a rich time of sharing and encouragement for our transitioning Mennonite Witness and Mennonite Mission Network (US) workers and families. Thank you for the prayers, encouragement and financial support that sustain this important gathering.
  - After a number of years nurturing Macau Mennonite Church, Witness workers George and Tobia Veith have stepped into new roles to allow local people to assume leadership. The Veiths now concentrate on providing the church with Anabaptist resources and will facilitate networking among Mennonite churches in that region. We are grateful for your support of ministries like this one that grow and evolve to meet changing community needs.
  - Your support of special projects has helped Mennonite Church Canada meet specific needs of the communities in which we serve – from inviting donations of Anabaptist books and other resource materials to build a peace library in South Africa, to raising funds for the purchase of a vehicle to assist long-distance ministry outreach in Thailand. Thank you for the powerful way your resources benefit the global church. To find other ways to give to Mennonite Church Canada, see [www.mennonitechurch.ca/give/index.php](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/give/index.php)
  - Your support makes it possible for young adults to participate in Radical Journey, a Mennonite Church Canada/Mennonite Mission Network program providing young adults with cross-cultural, faith-forming experiences. Thank you for helping to making this ministry possible!
8. In a world where technology undergoes continual change, Mennonite Church Canada uses a variety of tools to keep you up-to-date with the ministries you support.
- In 2010, 200,000 unique visitors perused our primary website, [www.mennonitechurch.ca](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca), viewing an average of about 10 pages per visitor.
  - Other Mennonite Church Canada websites, [www.alternativeservice.ca](http://www.alternativeservice.ca), [www.churchpandemicresources.ca](http://www.churchpandemicresources.ca) and [www.liveforpeace.ca](http://www.liveforpeace.ca) saw 9,000, 3,700, and 4,600 unique visitors respectively.
  - Your support of ministries like [www.alternativeservice.ca](http://www.alternativeservice.ca), a website about Conscientious Objectors in World War II, is making a difference in the lives of our youth! A Grade 12 student responded to the site with a “thank-you” message, and wrote that learning about the faith and determination of COs inspired her to re-examine her own faith commitment.
  - Approximately every two weeks, Mennonite Church Canada brings you stories of the ministries and people you support. Thank you for helping us to share information and inspiring stories about and for God's people! Check out [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/891](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/891) for the latest additions. You can receive regular updates by subscribing to our News Service at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/news/releases/subscribe/](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/news/releases/subscribe/) We are grateful for your readership!
  - With over 10,000 downloads of Mennonite Church Canada's podcast, Church Matters, we know you are listening! Each Church Matters episode features a guest interview on current issues facing the church. Thank you for tuning in via iTunes or at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/206](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/206)
  - In 2010, videos on Mennonite Church Canada's YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/mennonitechurch.ca](http://www.youtube.com/mennonitechurch.ca) were

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- viewed more than 23,000 times.
9. Mennonite Church Canada actively participates in the global church beyond our own denomination. We are grateful for your support of opportunities that allow us to share our Anabaptist perspective with the world.
    - We lament violence and injustice. You have helped us to participate in a variety of peace and justice initiatives beyond our denomination. Mennonite Church Canada Witness wrote to the federal government in support of KAIROS, an ecumenical peace and justice organization which lost government funding in 2010. See this letter at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1231](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1231)
    - Mennonite Church Canada is among those who support advocacy for a Canadian Department of Peace, and a “Peace Tax” ([www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/413](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/413)) giving tax-payers the option of directing military taxes toward peacebuilding. In 2010, we promoted this option through an Equipping letter to congregations and on [www.liveforpeace.ca](http://www.liveforpeace.ca)
    - Robert J. Suderman, former Mennonite Church Canada General Secretary, was one of about 80 high-profile religious leaders from a diverse array of world faith groups who participated in the 2010 World Religions Summit in Winnipeg last June. Suderman played an active role in garnering unanimous support for a statement supporting the G8 Nations’ Millennium Development Goals, and a reference to faith and violence. “We condemn religiously motivated terrorism and extremism and commit to stop the teaching and justification of the use of violence between and among our faith communities.” Read the entire statement at <http://tinyurl.com/ykvjvdh>
    - Mennonite Church Canada was present for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s first national event, held in Winnipeg last June. The event gave survivors of Indian Residential Schools an opportunity to make their stories public in an effort to move toward healing. “God was indeed present, honouring tears and embracing those who were raised in the absence of love,” wrote Janet Plenert, Executive Secretary, Witness, of the event.