



**Mennonite
Church**
Canada



Minute Book

Winkler 2004

Mennonite Church Canada Assembly,
July 7-11, 2004

Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church
Winkler, Manitoba

Mennonite Church Canada **Minute Book 2004**
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Abbreviations

AMBS	Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
ATS	Association of Theological Schools
CBC	.....	Columbia Bible College
CCC	.....	Canadian Council of Churches
CFC	.....	Christian Formation Council
CGUC	.....	Conrad Grebel University College
CMBC	.....	Canadian Mennonite Bible College
CMC	.....	Conference of Mennonites in Canada
CMPS	.....	Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service
CMU	.....	Canadian Mennonite University
CPT	.....	Christian Peacemaker Teams
CWC	.....	Christian Witness Council
EFC	.....	Evangelical Fellowship of Canada
FTE	.....	Full Time Equivalent
FYE	.....	Fiscal Year Ending
GB	.....	General Board
GCMC	.....	General Conference Mennonite Church
JEC	.....	Joint Executive Committee
MC	.....	Mennonite Church
MC Canada	.....	Mennonite Church Canada
MC Sask	.....	Mennonite Church Saskatchewan
MC USA	.....	Mennonite Church USA
MCA	.....	Mennonite Church Alberta
MCBC	.....	Mennonite Church British Columbia
MCC	.....	Mennonite Central Committee
MCC Canada	.....	Mennonite Central Committee Canada
MCEC	.....	Mennonite Church Eastern Canada
MCM	.....	Mennonite Church Manitoba
MEDA	.....	Mennonite Economic Development Associates
MFC	.....	Mennonite Foundation of Canada
MVN	.....	Mennonite Mission Network
MPN	.....	Mennonite Publishing Network
MVSA	.....	Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure
MWC	.....	Mennonite World Conference
PAO	.....	Provincially Active Only
SSC	.....	Support Services Council

Slate of Nominees

Moderator

Henry Krause (2006)
 Langley Mennonite
 Fellowship, BC

Assistant Moderator

Esther Peters (2006)
 Bethel Mennonite
 Church, MB

Christian Formation Council

Tracy Brown Ewert (2007)
 Bergthal Mennonite Church, AB

Pauline Steinmann (2007)*
 Wildwood Mennonite
 Church, SK

Christian Witness Council

Willard Metzger (2007)*
 Community Mennonite
 Fellowship, ON

Support Services Council

Brice Balmer (2007)*
 KW House Churches, ON

Joanne Peters (2007)*
 Bergthal Mennonite Church, AB

Nominating Committee

Clare Neufeld (2007)
 First Mennonite Church, BC

Ken H. Loewen (2007)
 Emmanuel Mennonite
 Church, MB

* position being renewed

Introduction

—Henry Krause, Moderator

Enough for all! This certainly was the case at the fifth annual Mennonite Church Canada Delegate Assembly in Winkler. A sense of gratitude pervaded the assembly as our church came together in Southern Manitoba. It was a time graced with worship, fellowship, renewing old acquaintances and building new ones as we shared the rich diversity of our national church.

The generosity of our hosts from the churches in the area and the use of the facilities at Winkler Berghaler Mennonite Church provided a rich environment in which to work and worship together. There was more than enough food, accommodation, laughter and space in which we could be the church together. Many said that even the announcements were a delight!

Tom Yoder Neufeld challenged and encouraged us with his exposition on Jesus' feeding of the 5,000 calling us to trust that there truly is enough in God's economy for all. His words and the other times of worship created a rich feast for our souls. The use of bread loaves to symbolize the abundance of our gifts was very helpful.

Our time together around tables in which delegates spent time in discernment on a number of the 'big issues' facing the church was well received. The time together also provided a good opportunity to share thoughts and concerns in a way that allowed much good and fruitful conversation and discernment. This information was gathered and will be the basis for future recommendations that delegates will be able to work on.

The children's program provided more than enough opportunities for children to experience creative and thoughtful presentations and hands on activities which helped them also to have a 'good conference experience'.

Information from the Finance department celebrated that there were enough funds to do what we had said we would do for the previous year but also encouraged delegates to trust that there was 'enough' to continue to strengthen the work of Mennonite Church Canada for the coming year. There was also a challenge to envision what might be possible if there was enough money to dream about what still needed to be done.

There was good reporting from our councils about the work that they are doing 'across the street and around the world. A video clip of one of the congregations in Cuba at worship was especially moving for many delegates. It gave an opportunity to see and hear our brothers and sisters in their setting offering their gift of joy and celebration to us.

The delegates' decision to join both the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and the Canadian Council of Churches was an affirmation of our ongoing opportunity as a national church to continue to be in relationship with our sister denominations across the country.

Finally, the 'Festival in the Park' was a special treat. Although there had been fears of rain spoiling the event, the day was sunny and warm. The park was filled with a wide variety of foods from various cultures and exhibits of crafts and culture from many of the churches that we have witness workers in around the globe. The day ended with a worship service and concert in the evening which both entertained and enriched the audience.

"Enough for all" was a theme that summed up both the events of the assembly as well as the way God is working in our churches and through Mennonite Church Canada.



MINUTES - Winkler 2004

ASSEMBLY 2004
Mennonite Church Canada
Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church
Winkler, MB
July 7-11, 2004

Wednesday, July 7, 2004

1. Evening Worship

Many people from the local host congregations shared their gifts to lead us in much joyful singing, prayer, and reading of the scriptures, this evening and throughout the assembly.

Worship included a dramatic presentation of theme text for this assembly, illustrating the feeding of five thousand with a small boy's loaves and fishes as recorded in John 6: 1-15.

Tom Yoder Neufeld, New Testament Professor at Conrad Grebel University College, tied this text from John together with the passage from Exodus 16: 1-18 in his message titled "Enough for all: Manna in the desert". Yoder Neufeld noted that the story of God taking care of hungry desert wanderers in the Sinai by supplying them with the manna is interwoven with the story of the feeding of the five thousand. By ourselves, we will never have enough. The miracle is that Jesus would take what we have, however pathetic in relation to the needs around us, and turn it into manna. Yoder Neufeld challenged us to bring what we have, grateful to participate with God, grateful that Jesus chooses to use what we have and what we bring.

Thursday, July 8, 2004

Henry Krause chaired the next items following a gathering hymn.

2. Opening

Henry Krause, Moderator of Mennonite Church Canada (MC Canada), welcomed delegates and declared the 5th annual session of the MC Canada assembly open. Floor privileges were extended to guests at the assembly sessions, and delegates were encouraged to fully participate in all aspects of the assembly.

3. Round Table 1: Mission and Priorities

Henry Krause invited all attendees to participate in the round table discussions, noting that delegates were assigned table groups, and guests were invited to

gather at tables set aside for non-delegates. Henry noted that each table should have a facilitator and a recorder, and then encouraged the groups to spend a few minutes getting acquainted.

Andrew Reesor-McDowell, member of the General Board (GB), introduced this first round table discussion on mission and priorities as one part of a broad structural review of MC Canada currently in progress. Andrew then called on Aldred Neufeldt, the independent facilitator appointed by GB for the review process, to lead this round table discussion period. The table groups discussed and commented on the three sample statements provided, noting what they liked and what they felt was missing. Tables were selected at random to share with the plenary group, and all table groups were asked to submit the summary notes of their table discussion to the GB for further review and discernment.

Loaf Symbol The time of discernment was offered to the Lord. Representatives from the round tables brought forward loaves and placed them in a basket as the delegates sang the prayer “*Take our hands*”.

4. Morning Worship

A worship team that at various times included Pam Driedger, Marilyn Houser Hamm, Brian Moyer Suderman, Helmut Harder, Ben Pauls and James Friesen led us in much joyful singing throughout the assembly.

Charleswood Mennonite Church (Winnipeg, MB) led us in our morning worship.

5. Introductory Matters

5.1 Welcome from Host Congregation

Peter Penner welcomed the delegates and guests to the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church. Pastor Penner acknowledged the many volunteers who have and are working to make this assembly a success.

5.2 Delegate Information

Henry Krause referred to the discernment guide in the *Report Book*, noting the instructions on how to participate in the open microphone time as well as the process for bringing forward resolutions and the spirit of love by which we invite participation.

5.3 Agenda Overview

Henry Krause referred to the detailed agenda that was included with the registration packet.

5.4 Introductions

Henry Krause made the following introductions:

- i) MC Canada Executive Committee: Joy Kroeger (Assistant Moderator), Dan Nighswander (General Secretary), Esther Peters (member-at-large), Marlene Janzen (Secretary), and noted that Clare Schlegel (Treasurer) was not able to attend.
- ii) Parliamentarian: Sam Steiner.

- iii) Assistant Recording Secretary: Audrey Mierau Bechtel.
- iv) Resolutions Committee: Marguerite Jack (Chairperson), Barb Draper, and Armin Krahn.
- v) Listening Committee: Kathy Koop, Billy Chiew, and Scott Brubacher Zehr, Claire Ewert Fisher
- vi) Guests: Keith Harder (MC USA), Dr. Louis Melo (Catholic Archdiocese of Winnipeg), and Bernhard Thiessen (Conferencia Menonita de Mexico).

6. Delegate Registration

Dan Nighswander reported that 35 out of a possible 41 delegates from area conferences and 377 delegates from constituent congregations were registered. The requirements for a quorum as outlined in MC Canada's by-laws have been met and the delegates may proceed with business matters.

7. Minutes of 2003 Assembly

Marlene Janzen reported that the complete minutes of the 2003 Assembly were published in the *Minute Book 2003* and referred to the summary of actions taken at last year's assembly included in the *Report Book*.

MOTION 1

The delegate assembly adopts the minutes of the 4th annual session of Mennonite Church Canada as recorded and published in the *Minute Book 2003* issued by Mennonite Church Canada.

Marlene Janzen/Albert Durksen. Carried.

8. Nomination Committee Presentation of Slate

Tim Wiebe-Neufeld reported on the process used by the Nominating Committee to select the nominees. He presented the slate as listed in the *Report Book*. Wiebe-Neufeld outlined the process to be used by delegates to submit nominations from the floor. Nomination process requires the signatures from five MC Canada members, agreement of the nominee, a reference from the nominee's pastor or other church leader, and must be presented to a member of the Nominating Committee before 11:00 am on Friday.

9. Greetings

9.1 Mennonite World Conference (MWC)

Naomi Unger, one of three MC Canada representatives on the MWC General Council, brought greetings from MWC. She quoted the MWC vision statement "*Mennonite World Conference is called to be a communion (Koinonia) of Anabaptist-related churches linked to one another in a worldwide community of faith for fellowship, worship, service, and witness.*" and encouraged us to think of the worldwide concepts the statement brings to mind. Unger

concluded the report by reading two letters of greeting, one from Larry Miller, Executive Secretary of MWC and another from Danisa Ndlovu, Bishop of the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe and newly elected vice president of MWC.

9.2 Conferencia Menonita de Mexico

Pastor Bernhard Thiessen brought greetings from Steinreich, his local congregation and from the Conferencia Menonita de Mexico. He expressed gratitude for a partnership where they can share their gifts and their struggles.

10. Reporting

Henry Krause noted that we were ahead of schedule so a number of reports were being moved ahead in the agenda.

10.1 Columbia Bible College (CBC)

Ron Penner, Vice President of Academics and Administration, brought greetings from CBC. He referred to the CBC report in the *Report Book*, introduced the faculty members present at assembly, and highlighted a number of staff changes. Penner reported that CBC is excited about the expansion of the cafeteria/student center, looking forward to achieving the goal of being able to serve 800-1000 students. Approximately half of the current 500 students come specifically for the ministry major and the remaining students come looking for grounding and growth. Penner encouraged people to visit the CBC website and to drop by the display at the assembly.

10.2 General Board Report

Henry Krause presented the GB report using a PowerPoint presentation. Beginning with our vision statement, Krause gave an update on what the GB is doing to implement this vision. We organize to facilitate God's mission in the world through Mennonite Church Canada. We add impact to our vision through touching people with real needs in ways God's leads us. We look together at improving our responses to what some congregations are already doing, and what other congregations want to do.

Assistant Moderator Joy Kroeger reported that the GB held a consultation meeting with representatives from our Mennonite schools in November 2003. The concept of assigning responsibility for education matters to a staff person rather than creating an education agency received widespread support. Therefore, the Executive Secretary of Christian Formation will devote approximately 25% of their time to implementing MC Canada's education vision, including developing relationships with each of the schools, promoting educational concerns within MC Canada, promoting and facilitating cooperation between individual schools and programs, and encouraging and supporting programs for training pastoral leaders. The GB is excited about the potential for this new direction and looks forward to improved collaboration between MC Canada and the schools.

Henry Krause asked that delegates use the open mike time in the afternoon to respond to these reports.

11. Book Launch: A History of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada

Dr. Karl Koop, Chair of Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) Press Committee and Associate Professor of Historical Theology at CMU introduced the book and invited Alf Redekop from the Mennonite Heritage Centre to comment. Alf Redekop reminded us that the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) had endorsed the project of documenting our denomination's history a number of years ago. Redekop expressed thanks to those who collected and preserved our history, to the author and to CMU Press. The author, Adolf Ens expressed appreciation for his readers group that help him find a balance between the stories of the people and the conference record. His hope is that this book will help us understand the past and be inspired for the future.

Presentation copies of the books were given to Adolf Ens, Alf Redekop and Henry Krause.

We recessed for lunch.

Joy Kroeger chaired the next items.

12. Reporting Cont'd

12.1 MC Canada Review Committee

Andrew Reesor-McDowell, a GB member on the review committee, reminded delegates that the decision to form MC Canada at St. Louis '99 included a stipulation for a review of the organization in five years, and that decisions at more recent assemblies have merged into this review process. Striving for thoroughness and critical assessment, the GB sought the assistance of an independent facilitator for the review process. Andrew introduced the facilitator, Aldred Neufeldt of First Mennonite Calgary and invited Aldred to report on the review process.

Aldred Neufeldt presented the Review Committee progress report using a PowerPoint presentation, noting that a hardcopy of this report was also distributed to delegates that morning. The councils and staff identified issues and areas that need clarity and the review committee took this input and grouped it into four main categories to structure the review process. The report included a chart that showed the initiatives underway to address the four main categories: vision and mission, structure and governance, resource allocation, and partnerships. Neufeldt concluded the report by inviting delegates to respond and give input to the review process through email or by otherwise contacting a member of the review committee.

12.2 Joint Executive Committee (JEC)

Marlene Janzen referred to the JEC report in the *Report Book* and reported that the executive committee of MC Canada and executive of MC USA met

twice in the past year to work on joint initiatives. Janzen noted that detailed reporting from Mennonite Publishing Network and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary would follow later in the assembly, and highlighted the decision that will have MC Canada and MC USA meet together in Charlotte, North Carolina in 2005.

Henry Krause chaired the next items.

13. Delegate Response and Resolutions

Henry Krause provided opportunity for questions and discussion, but there were no comments or questions.

Marguerite Jack, chair of the Resolutions Committee, reported on the change in process this year, which provided the opportunity for individuals or groups to submit resolutions in advance of the assembly. Jack then invited representatives from a group of retired pastors in British Columbia to present their resolution.

13.1 Resolution 1

As Christians and Mennonites, we believe the Bible must be our authority for faith and conduct. We, the delegates at Assembly 2004, ask the General Board to choose an appropriate scripture motto for Mennonite Church Canada to be brought to the assembly in 2006. We further recommend that serious consideration be given to 1 Corinthians 3:11, the guiding principle of Menno Simons.

Dietrich & Dorothy Rempel/Abe Buhler

Discussion:

- The passage from 1 Corinthians 3:11 was read
- In favour of the motion and supportive of the verse chosen
- Not sure why we have to wait 2 years, thought we could choose it today.

Amendment:

We the delegates at Assembly 2004, choose and affirm 1 Corinthians 3:11 as the scripture motto for MC Canada.

Russel Sawatsky/Dietrich Rempel

Discussion on the amendment:

- Not sure why we would have to hurry that much. It might be good for the GB to contemplate the scripture. Also have questions about how this would be used (i.e., on letters?). Against the amendment.
- In favour of the amendment. Didn't like the wording of the GB choosing, would like the delegates to choose.

- Against the amendment for the reasons already expressed, but also would like the delegates to be the ones to select the text. Looking for a process that gets input from the delegates.

Amendment was defeated.

Discussion of motion cont'd:

- This passage from 1 Corinthians was the motto for CMC. When did we lose this as our scriptural passage? RESPONSE: Dan Nighswander agreed that it was widely used but not sure that it was inherited from CMC.
- Ask that the GB consult with the constituency with regards to selecting a motto.
- Which version of the scripture are we using?

Motion carried unanimously.

Marguerite Jack invited representatives of Rosemary Mennonite Church, AB to present the resolution submitted by the congregation.

13.2 Resolution 2

Whereas, as the church we are called to be salt and light to the world and that, as like-minded churches, we want Mennonite Church Canada to be clear that it speaks to the world as salt and light and does not take its lead from the world; and

Whereas unity, while it does not mean agreement in all things, is required to act effectively as a body; and

Whereas, Mennonite Church Canada apparently lacks the boldness to speak to certain issues in a timely fashion as they arise in the world and in our area conferences; and

Whereas, this lack of boldness and slowness of action is causing frustration and weakening our collective ministry and contributing to disunity,

Be it resolved that Mennonite Church Canada boldly present the gospel of repentance and salvation by grace through the supreme sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ to the world, and base its ministries and actions on biblical teachings as expressed in the scriptures and understood through the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. Further, to make it a priority and act decisively to bring forward a statement and inform all conferences and member churches of the clear standards and expectations of how conferences should deal with churches who are at variance with the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and the stated beliefs of Mennonite Church Canada, before next assembly.

Peter Braul/Roy Hewko

Discussion:

- Pastor Roy Hewko provided background information on the development of the resolution and the interaction with the resolutions committee. Hewko asked people to see the first part of the resolution as the foundation and the second part as the follow-up response that is required.
- Speaking against the motion. Shared an example of how resources used by a congregation to prepare individuals for membership could be considered “at variance” with the *Confession*. My understanding is that this resolution would be divisive.
- Speaking against the motion. Grateful for how MC Canada has spoken boldly (e.g., letters objecting to the missile defense and harassment of church leaders in Columbia) and also appreciated the timely discussion on sexuality.
- Against the motion although there are parts – the first “whereas” and first half of the resolution - that I like. Share the concerns of others with respect to the other “whereas” comments.
- Sense that there are stories and issues and concerns behind the resolution. Also affirm parts of the resolution and struggle with other parts. Would prefer a methodology of discussion rather than a win-lose vote.

Motion to table the resolution.

John Klassen/Ray Friesen **Carried with opposition.**

Dan Nighswander responded to the decision reminding delegates that we have guidelines that set forth the relationship between area conferences and MC Canada as well as a membership policy. The discussion and conversations will continue.

Joy Kroeger chaired the next items.

14. Reporting Cont'd

14.1 Christian Formation Council (CFC)

Sue Steiner, chair of CFC, opened the report by asking: “How can one council with limited resources provide enough for all?” Justina Heese executive secretary, and members of the council, Naomi Unger and Don Rempel Boschman, joined Steiner and they proceeded to answer the question with their PowerPoint presentation. The report highlighted the many resources available from the four program areas of CFC: Congregational and Ministerial Leadership, Publishing and Resources, Christian education and nurture, and Youth Ministries.

The report celebrated the contributions of Justina Heese, who is retiring from her role as the first Executive Secretary of Christian Formation. Steiner, referring to her as a gracious host, presented Heese with a tablecloth in appreciation for her gift of “setting the table well” beginning with an initial vision when the council was first started, discerning and reshaping the

council after the downsizing last year, and redeveloping a vision on a smaller budget. Justina Heese responded with thanks for the opportunity and privilege of serving the church, noting that God's grace and faithfulness has always been present.

Steiner then introduced David Bergen, the incoming executive secretary of Christian Formation. Bergen responded with the insight that the act of sharing, which is one aspect of the miracle of loaves and fishes, is the transforming work of CFC.

14.2 Support Services Council (SSC)

Louie Sawatzky, chair of SSC, and executive secretary Pam Peters-Pries shared some highlights of Support Services' ministry. They hope that the work done by volunteers and staff to prepare for this event will have been enough to make the Winkler assembly experience meaningful and rich for all. The report went on to highlight how SSC supports the ministries of Witness, Formation and General Board with communications, human resource, resource development, and information technology services and serves the entire MC Canada constituency by providing a pension plan for church and agency employees, and by planning the annual Assembly.

14.3 Christian Witness Council (CWC)

The CWC report began with a short video message of thanks from pastoral leaders of the church in Cuba to MC Canada. A PowerPoint presentation was used to report on the CWC priorities of establishing, nurturing, and mobilizing missional communities that align with God's work of reconciliation and restoration. Janet Plenert director of International ministries, Samson Lo director of Multi-cultural ministry, and Jack Suderman executive secretary shared some stories about how these priorities are being lived out, from across the street to around the world. The international mission workers attending assembly were introduced, including Helen & Rudy Baergen, Kathy and Rod Suderman, Ann Garber Kompaore, Rad & Pat Houmphan, and Karen & Tim Froese.

Suderman concluded the report by referring to a handout "*Issues and Challenges*" distributed at the meeting that sought input from assembly participants about identifying priorities, the missional identity and addressing new opportunities. Suderman noted that research indicates 95% of donated dollars received by MC Canada congregations is used within Canada.

Discussion:

- Saddened by the report. The integration process has resulted in a division of the assets. The prayer directory has shrunk. Wondering if we can combine the prayer book [with MC USA] to keep a sense of family in terms of total assets in personnel. RESPONSE: Jack Suderman noted that each worker that works for or is jointly sponsored by MC Canada is included in the

directory and identified in terms of the sponsoring agency and sending agency. This is to show the cooperation between the agencies.

- Appreciated the reporting this afternoon. Affirmed the use of email for quick response with PrayerNet and WOW. Like to hear about the prayer requests. Puzzled about the networking. Mission money is going in all kinds of directions. Seeking assurance that Winnipeg honours specific designated donations. RESPONSE: Al Rempel assured delegates that designated monies are placed in the individual funds as requested. If a particular fund is topped up then donors are contacted for further direction.
- Does all of the 5% (of donations reported to Revenue Canada by congregations and conferences of MC Canada as oversees funding) noted go to CWC? This allows us to do as much as was reported? RESPONSE: Jack Suderman affirmed that it is amazing what we can do when loaves and fishes are put together. CWC receives almost 50% of the funds donated to MC Canada, and over 80% of the funds received by CWC are used for oversees projects. Cannot know whether congregations are supporting international programs that are beyond MC Canada.
- Wonder what a 1% increase in congregational giving would mean, what kind of requests and possibilities would that create for MC Canada? RESPONSE: Al Rempel noted that based on 2001 figures, a 1% increase from each congregation's total budget would translated to \$425,000. Janet Plenert shared the dream that we could then respond to request from Pat and Rad to plant 10 churches in 10 years. It would allow us to strengthen ministries of peace and justice. That 1% would mean more people planting churches and doing leadership training. MC Canada is sending out 6 interns this fall, something we can only do because they are providing their own funds for this short-term commitment. Want to be able to send long-term workers but need sustainable resources. The prayer directory is thinner because the funds have not been coming in. Would like to respond to the requests that are coming in a variety of ways.
- Are there more people wanting to go but there are not enough funds, or is there also a shortage of people? RESPONSE: Jack Suderman responded that we have not actively been recruiting people, only replacing people as needed through high level recruiting. We think there are others who would be willing to serve, but they are not volunteering because we don't have the funds to send them.

Jack Suderman also shared that he recently received a request from the church in Columbia to help with their peace dialogue. Two documents arrived on Tuesday, and they would like feedback on them by August 1st. Jack invited interested persons to join him for a time of dialogue early on Saturday morning.

Al Rempel, Janet Plenert and Kathy Fast concluded the CWC report with the announcement of a World of Witness contest to win a free trip, courtesy of

Bonaventure Travel, to an International Ministry location in one of 39 countries around the world!

15. Financial & Auditors Report

Lloyd Plett and Ingrid Peters-Fransen reported on behalf of the Financial Policy and Audit Committee (FPAC). Peters-Fransen referred to the FPAC report in the *Report Book* noting the significant financial updates, and then directed delegates to turn to the auditors report at the back of the *Report Book*.

Plett reported on the year ended Jan-04. The fiscal year can be characterized as: planning, stability, controlling, holding back, delivering bad news, and keeping motivated. Ended up with balanced books at year end by making adjustments. Significant reduction in assets and corresponding liabilities reflects the transfer of endowments and internally restricted funds to CMU. Plett noted that we have a high debt-to-equity ratio, but explained that it is limited to the loans issued to MPN and CMU.

Peters-Fransen reported on the statement of operations. The expenses were less than budget because program delivery was limited to ensure a balanced budget.

Discussion:

- Have we thanked Paul Klassen for being our treasurer during a very difficult financial period? RESPONSE: Lloyd reported that he had planned to do so at the end of his report. Delegates showed their appreciation with a round of applause.
- Heard [in the Witness Council Report] that churches spend 95% in Canada, and that 80% of the funds allocated to Witness goes overseas. Can't make the numbers work out. RESPONSE: Plett noted it was difficult to reconcile all the numbers that churches receipt. Jack Suderman clarified that according to the amounts receipted by congregations and reported to the Canada Revenue Agency, MC Canada congregations spend 95% of their revenue in Canada.
- Looking for more information regarding the financial stability of MPN. RESPONSE: Joy Kruger noted that MPN would be presenting a detailed report tomorrow. Ron Rempel, Executive Director of MPN responded, noting that the Barn Raising Campaign fell short by one million dollars, which has caused some additional refinancing, and it is also true that operations did not generate the targets last year. There is a business plan that projects there will be revenue to pay the mortgage for the remaining debt. It is also true that MPN will need to continue fund raising, but it will be for new initiatives like the new Sunday school curriculum rather than for past debts. Payments on principle and interest are on schedule.

Lloyd Plett concluded the financial report by acknowledging the 14 years of service that Paul Klassen has given to MC Canada, with special appreciation for the past 4 years when Klassen served as Director of Finance. Plett also thanked the finance staff for their service.

Joy Kruger noted the extensive work done by FPAC and on behalf of the GB thanked the committee for their diligence.

Loaf Symbol The reporting and discernment time was offered to the Lord. Representatives of the councils and agencies brought forward loaves and placed them in a basket as delegates sang the prayer “*Take our hands*”.

We then recessed until Friday morning.

16. Evening Worship

The worship team and individuals from the host congregations led the evening worship time. Scripture texts for the evening worship included Deuteronomy 8: 1-18, Matthew 4: 1-11 and John 5:6-16, 66-69. Tom Yoder Neufeld brought these texts together in his message titled “Too much for some: Tested in the desert”. Do you know me? If you know me “work the works”. Do you love me? If you do, feed my sheep even if they number in the thousands. If you love me, give what you have. If you love me, give me your life!

Friday, July 9, 2004

Henry Krause chaired the next items.

17. Round Table 2: Leading the Church in Discerning Theology, Ethics, Polity and Practice

Sven Eriksson introduced the discussion topic, referring to the background information included in the *Report Book*. Groups discussed the role of the national church, identified the kinds of issues the denomination should address and suggested how we might go about addressing them. Opportunity was given for tables to share their insights with the plenary group, and there was general affirmation for the development of a forum where issues could be worked at. All table groups were asked to submit their notes to the GB for further review and discernment.

18. Round Table 3: Homosexuality

Andrew Reesor- McDowell introduced the discussion topic, referring to the background information included in the *Report Book*. Participants at the table groups were invited to share what their church is doing to address the chal-

lenges and tension associated with ministering to gay and lesbian persons, and identify how MC Canada could offer helpful support. All table groups were asked to submit their notes to the GB for further review and discernment.

Loaf Symbol The discernment time was offered to the Lord. Representatives from the round tables brought forward loaves and placed them in a basket as the delegates sang the prayer "Take our hands".

19. Morning Worship

The Manigotagan Community Chapel (Manigotagan, MB) led us in our morning worship.

Joy Kroeger chaired the next items.

20. Nominations and Appointments

Tim Wiebe-Neufeld reviewed the slate of nominees and reported that there were no additional nominations.

MOTION 2

That nominations cease and the slate be approved as presented.

Tim Wiebe-Neufeld/Alan Funk. Carried.

MOTION 3

The delegate assembly affirms the member-at-large appointments to GB as presented.

Florence Driedger/Glenn Zehr Carried.

21. Greetings from MC USA

Executive Secretary Jim Schrag extended greetings from MC USA and specifically from Duane Oswald, Moderator of MC USA. Schrag gave thanks to God for relationships between MC USA and MC Canada, naming a few like the common confession of faith, the seminary and publishing network. He concluded the report expressing joy that MC USA and MC Canada will meet jointly in Charlotte in 2005.

22. Reporting Cont'd

22.1 Report from Mennonite Publishing Network (MPN)

Ron Rempel, Executive Director and Laverne Brubacher, Vice-Chair of the MPN Board presented the MPN report. Brubacher reported that the entire board was present for the meeting in May where they heard reports from executive staff and reviewed the audited financial report. MPN is moving from recovery to a new generation. Thank you to the individuals and congrega-

tions that support the debt reduction campaign. Loan payments are on track and the plan in place to retire the debt in eight years. Brubacher referred to the budget included in the *Report Book*. MPN is not in the business of owning property or buildings so they are developing a transition plan to vacate the Scottsdale facility. There is an urgent need to upgrade/improve a number of stores, but that will have to be delayed until additional funding is available.

Ron Rempel presented his report in the format of an interview:

How are you doing? I'm inspired, blessed and challenged.

What is new? There are new books "In Tune with God", "Tent Meeting", the "With" magazine has been re-done, working on a new song book and new cookbook "Simply in Season", and the new Sunday School curriculum is the largest new initiative.

Why change from MPH to MPN? The barn raising campaign worked, but it was a smaller organization and it had changed so we needed to shift from being a house/barn to being a network so we can consult with each other.

What about the near collapse? The goal was to pay off half the debt. The amount raised was \$1,300,000 and a lot of this was from internal revenue.

Does that mean you won't be asking for money anymore? MPN will continue to need help on debt retirement and supporting new material. The new expectation is to tighten the business reigns, adjust business according to demands, and ask for donations when the church requests new initiatives. Now is the time for congregations to give and support the current initiative of developing new Sunday School materials.

Should I be worried? Yes. Worried enough to be informed, involved and supportive.

22.2 Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) Governance Report

CMU President Gerald Gerbrandt reported that in 1998 the delegates of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada directed CMBC to join the federation, and we followed with approval of the capital development plan in 1999. Much has happened to implement those plans. Gerbrandt was pleased to report that CMU ended the 4th consecutive year in the black. There are many things that they believe CMU is called to do. The master campus plan included a residence and they feel it is time to do that now. Plan to construct residence with 101 beds in two styles - apartments and residence. CMU is pleased that the GB is working to clarify the status of the property at 600 Shaftsbury, and facilitating CMU financing to build the new residence. Brochures with details on the new residence are available at the CMU display table.

23. Property Development at 600 Shaftsbury

Joy Kroeger reported that on Wednesday, the GB gave approval to CMU to proceed with the new residence at CMU. Dan Nighswander referred to the background material and recommendation in the *Report Book*.

MOTION 4

a) The delegate assembly recognizes that the property and buildings at 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., with the exception of the MC Canada/MC Manitoba office building and the Heritage Centre and Gallery, were purchased and built for the purpose of providing a Christian education experience for the youth of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

General Board/Craig Friesen Carried.

b) The delegate assembly recognizes that CMU is the successor to CMBC in fulfilling this mandate.

General Board/Kerry Enns Carried.

c) The delegate assembly authorizes the General Board to take such actions as are needed to assign the property and buildings at 600 Shaftesbury Blvd. appropriately for the fulfillment of this mandate, provided that the following conditions are met, namely

- i. That adequate assurance be provided that in the event of the closing of CMU the investment of MC Canada and its members be recovered as fully as possible, and
- ii. That the interest of MC Canada in retaining the office building, the Heritage Centre and any other portions of the property that might be anticipated to be needed for the continued work of the Church outside of education be upheld, and
- iii. That the interests of MC Manitoba in the office building as described in the long-term lease agreement be protected.

General Board/Norm Dyck

Discussion:

- Questioning the transfer of documents that pre-dated the transformation. For example, has MC Canada accepted the Confession of Faith (another document that preceded the formation of MC Canada)? This raises questions about actions that were taken by CMC and how they apply to MC Canada now. RESPONSE: Dan Nighswander responded noting that the previous decisions with respect to participation in federation stood up through the transformation. Some of the transfers of property and equipment have happened in the last year so those are MC Canada actions.
- Just confused about whether we are still the same people and churches from a legal perspective. RESPONSE: Nighswander noted that there are churches that are part of the MC Canada area conferences that were not part of CMC.
- Noted the word “appropriately”. Assumed part of the property is being sold for a nominal amount, but this sounds like the whole property is being transferred. RESPONSE: Nighswander clarified that how the transfer might occur has not

been finalized (e.g., split title, lease, etc.). Whichever option we choose should not affect MC Canada but should free CMU to do its work.

- Who makes the decision? RESPONSE: Nighswander referred to the motion that gives the GB the authority to make this decision. Delegates can amend the motion to change that if they desire.
- In favour of the motion. Looking for a brief description of the MC Manitoba long-term lease. RESPONSE: Edgar Rempel responded noting that in 1989 MC Manitoba entered into a 99 year lease with MC Canada in exchange for putting up 40% of the equity for the office building. MC Manitoba would seek to preserve that interest. A secondary issue, similar to the current CMU situation, MC Manitoba would like to be able to use this equity to secure credit at the bank if needed.
- How does our partner fit into this? RESPONSE: Gerald Gerbrandt noted that the Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba contributed \$1,100,000 as part of their contribution from the sale of Concord College.
- There are quite a number of assurances and issues around the property. Is there an assurance that goes the other way, namely that this property will be used by CMU primarily for Christian education, which is the original mandate? There is some history with other institutions where they have moved away from their focus on Christian education. RESPONSE: Nighswander noted that MC Canada appoints CMU board members so we have input into the governance and program. Gerbrandt indicated that personally he is not over-enthused about this motion. He is committed to having CMU integral to MC Canada. This kind of motion however is necessary to clarify things for financial institutions and for partnerships. It is hard for the other partners to contribute to building on property that MC Canada owns.

Motion carried with opposition.

Loaf Symbol The discernment time and decisions were offered to the Lord. Representatives from the reporting agencies brought forward loaves and placed them in a basket as the delegates sang the prayer “*Take our hands*”.

24. Listening Committee Report

Kathy Koop reminded delegates that at the beginning of the assembly the committee was introduced as listening ears and they now want to report on what they have heard, seen and felt.

The theme “Enough for All” has given the assembly relief and comfort, and being in Winkler has added to that feeling. Sense that the mood is encouraging and uplifting. Saw delegates gathering around tables and discuss challenging topics with much openness. The round tables have allowed us to listen to each other and grow in understanding with respect. Have heard that Mennonites are open to international and ecumenical relations. We believe love of God makes friends of strangers, so we can overcome barriers.

Sense a spirit of optimism, and that delegates are ready to move forward. This has been evident in how we have dealt with resolutions. We want to be faithful within our diversity, so let's talk about community rather than unity because community allows for diversity. In the discussions, it became evident that we want to continue dialogue, don't want to quickly act on resolutions. As we continue, remember to respect diversity and context.

We have a lot in common and one of the areas we value highly is mission. Heard that we have a desire to spread the love of God across the street and around the world. We take pride in our history, as seen in the book launch. We struggle with what degree this history shapes us.

Hope that all of us will work together, challenge each other and appreciate the diversity that allows God to move in different ways.

We then recessed until Saturday morning.

25. Festival in the Park and Evening Worship

Faith, family and friendship were celebrated at the festival in the park with a variety of activities and stations featuring several MC Canada ministries. The focus on international ministries continued as MC Canada Witness workers shared stories from around the world at the outdoor evening worship service. Proceeds from the festival and the evening worship will be used to support churches under political pressure.

Saturday, July 10, 2004

Henry Krause chaired the next items.

26. Round Table 4: Joining EFC/CCC

Dan Nighswander introduced the discussion topic, referring to the background information included in the *Report Book*. Groups were encouraged to review and discuss the background material and identify any further questions they might have, and these were then answered in the plenary session. Groups were then asked to determine and record whether they were prepared to act on this decision the next day. All table groups were asked to submit their notes to the Resolutions Committee for further review and discernment.

27. Round Table 5: Frequency of Assembly

Joy Kroeger introduced the discussion topic, referring to the background information included in the *Report Book*. Table groups were then given time to discuss the merits of annual and bi-annual assemblies and determine how the two options might be compared. Table groups were then invited to share their thoughts with the plenary group before compiling a final statement of response that was submitted to the GB for further processing.

Loaf Symbol The discernment time was offered to the Lord. Representatives from the round tables brought forward loaves and placed them in a basket as the delegates sang the prayer “*Take our hands*”.

28. Morning Worship

The Iglesia Jesus es el Camino (Winnipeg, MB) led us in our morning worship.

Joy Kroeger chaired the next items.

29. Affirmation of Area Conference Appointees to Nominating Committee

Joy Kroeger clarified that the area conferences identify a nominee for the committee and that the delegate body approves the appointments. The delegate assembly with a show of hands, affirmed the area conference appointments to the Nominating Committee as presented.

30. Approval of Financial Report

Joy Kroeger noted that the financial report was presented, but not approved yesterday.

MOTION 5

The delegate assembly approves the audited financial statements for Mennonite Church Canada for the year ended January 31, 2004.

Esther Peters/Barry Lesser Carried.

31. Budget 2004-05

Lloyd Plett referred to the updated budget handed out at the assembly, and he noted the changes from the one printed in the report book. Lloyd Plett and Henry Krause used a PowerPoint presentation to show and explain the proposed budget. Plett noted that our giving this year is approximately \$100k (10%) behind last year and expenses are roughly on budget. The report also included a long-term (3 year) budget projection.

Discussion

- Affirmed the challenge approach to encourage giving. Heard in the CWC report, an analysis of the distribution of congregational giving (only 5% to international ministries). Does this inform on where the challenge income will be directed? If so, this is in contradiction with the two priorities (replenishing reserves and program ministries). RESPONSE. Dan Nighswander noted that the challenge giving was general budget income, not restricted to CWC.
- Is the 10% revenue shortfall accounted for by individual and corporate giving? Where is the disparity? RESPONSE: Al Rempel clarified that at this point in time

the individual/corporate giving is approximately \$100,000 behind. Know that it is a matter of timing for some gifts, but looking at a projected shortfall of 10% based on congregational feedback.

- Noted that Youth ministry is only 0.5% of our total budget. Would encourage us to walk alongside our youth and young adults as we look into the future.
- Liked the net/gross budget presentation. This is a very flat budget from one year to the next. Where do the monies for new initiatives come from? Where do they fit in? Could the 3-year budget set aside monies for those things? RESPONSE: Nighswander reminded delegates that fiscal responsibility means we don't spend money that isn't coming in. We think people have passion for various things that we are not doing so working at a resource development strategy that allows people to participate in that. Cautious about projecting growth when donation revenue is declining.
- The picture is bittersweet. Appreciate the ongoing support from CWC, however noted that outreach and church planting is at \$0 for this year. It hurts so much to see that funds are not there for native ministry and youth ministry. Encouraged us to look for other ways to meet those needs. Are the area conferences picking up some of the gap? RESPONSE: Nighswander noted that, for example in native ministries, the Manitoba conference and congregations are pursuing it. The shift in youth ministry from national to area conference and congregations is evident as well. In some cases, there is loss in this shift.

MOTION 6

The delegate assembly approves the budget presented for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2005.

Henry Funk/Victor Dyck **Carried.**

32. Auditor 2004-05

Lloyd Plett referred to the recommendation in the *Report Book*.

MOTION 7

The delegate assembly appoints KPMG as the auditor for Mennonite Church Canada for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2005.

Albert Durksen/Florence Driedger **Carried.**

Lloyd Plett wrapped up the financial reporting by introducing Randy Wiebe, the incoming Director of Finance.



Henry Krause chaired the next items.

33. Delegate Response and Resolutions Cont'd

Marguerite Jack invited representatives from Niverville to present the resolution submitted by the congregation.

33.1 Resolution 3

We the delegates at assembly 2004, direct the General Board to negotiate with the area conferences and the Canadian Mennonite Publishing Services Board to change the *Canadian Mennonite* from an independent news magazine to a church-owned news magazine and that negotiations be completed by December 31, 2004.

Randy Zacharias/Mark Sawatsky

Discussion

- Mark Sawatsky shared with the assembly some additional information to respond to questions that they have been hearing. Sawatsky noted that they did not think the funding formula would need to change (still following the 60/40 split). Also, with respect to the timeline, they would not expect the legal things to be completed, but looking for the negotiations to be essentially completed by the end of the year. Sawatsky thanked the resolutions committee for their help.
- The *Canadian Mennonite* is not independent of MC Canada, MC Canada is one of 7 partners. The others are the 5 area conferences and Canadian Mennonite Publishing Services.
- Fear this is not about ownership it is about censorship.
- Wondering if someone from the *Canadian Mennonite* could comment on the editorial policy? RESPONSE: Tim Dyck, newly appointed editor of the *Canadian Mennonite* is planning to travel and meet the constituency. We are in the process of forming an editorial advisory board, and would ask for time to develop this within the partnership.
- Appreciated the clarification of partnership versus ownership. The difficulty for a partnership is influence. With a national conference and numerous area conferences, it is very difficult to speak with one voice. Speaking against the motion as is but would encourage consideration of MC Canada being the sole partner with CMPS.
- (delegate from Niverville Mennonite Church) Speaking in favour of the motion. We have a wealth of Christian literature (magazines, academic journals, etc.) which are all supported by the institutions where they come from. Always valued and read from cover to cover the articles in the *Canadian Mennonite* because it provides valuable information but also because it

speaks to the world about our denomination. In an ideal situation, Niverville would respect an arms-length editorial policy, but believe that those who are recipients and financially supporting the paper see a need for more clarity and direction. Asking the delegates to support and test the resolution and to give input. Saying yes to the resolution means asking the GB to meet with MPS and its directors. Very positive about the discussions currently taking place and simply suggesting that supporting the resolution brings ownership into this discussion.

- Speaking against the motion but would hope the GB would seriously consider this resolution and feedback to ensure that the different voices are heard when the publishing policies are shaped. Seeking representative to advisory boards generally means looking for people who are involved in publishing, however there are also considerations for getting the diverse opinions present at the table.

Motion was defeated by a show of hands.

33.2 Resolution 4

Be it resolved the Mennonite Church Canada affirm the efforts of Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure (MVSA) as they support current MVSA units, and explore new models of Christian service which embody the principle of Christian service in the life of the Church.

Ernie Engbrecht/Bill Bryson

Discussion

- Ernie Engbrecht noted that this resolution came out of the workshop yesterday, where participants identified the need to make a deliberate effort for voluntary service.

The motion carried with several votes in opposition.

Loaf Symbol The discernment time was offered to the Lord. Representatives from the round tables brought forward loaves and placed them in a basket as the delegates sang the prayer “*Take our hands*”.

We then recessed for lunch and seminars.

Joy Kroeger chaired the next items.

34. Joining Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) and Canadian Council of Churches (CCC)

MOTION 8

The delegate assembly approves that MC Canada apply to become an affiliate of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and a member of the Canadian Council of Churches, on the understanding that we forward to both bodies the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* as the framework for our participation.

General Board / Clare Neufeld

Discussion:

Amendment:

Motion to deal with the resolution in two parts. The delegate assembly approves that MC Canada:

a) Apply to become an affiliate of the Evangelical Fellowship of on the understanding that we forward the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective as the framework for our participation.

b) Apply to become a member of the Canadian Council of Churches, on the understanding that we forward the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective as the framework for our participation.

Vern Retzlaff/Peter Peters

Discussion of the amendment:

- Speaking against the amendment, feel we need to express our involvement and be a part of both.
- Speaking against the amendment. A weakness of the Christian church is this division into two camps. It is important to stand up against the “evangelical” camp and the “liberal” camp and we do this by contributing to both sides.
- Do not see being a part of both organizations as polarizing, it is just that we don’t share much with groups by simply recognizing some differences.
- In favour of the amendment. Admittedly, don’t know much about these organizations, not familiar with how they invite discussion and so have some discomfort. The EFC has changed its structure; we only have 3 years of experience in how this works out so would be inclined to wait.
- Sam Steiner, Parliamentarian, clarified that the amendment is a request to separate the vote into two parts. Discussion at this time should be directed to the division of the motion into two parts.
- Against the motion to divide. Able to vote on the original resolution knowing I represent my congregation, it is difficult to vote on them in parts. Either join both or decline both.

Amended to divide the motion into two parts was defeated.

No further discussion on the original motion.

Motion carried with several votes in opposition.

35. Reporting Cont'd

35.1 Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS)

Harold Hildebrandt Schegel reported that he is passionate about solid biblical training and expressed gratitude for the training received at AMBS. Now he is back at school as a development associate. Hildebrandt Schegel noted that people could take courses from AMBS in a number of ways (e.g., distance learning, short courses).

Jewel Gingrich Longenecker followed with a report on the non-degree programs of AMBS. Partnering with congregations for leadership training of youth (Explore) includes an intern session with home congregation followed by short course. AMBS is working to translate the curriculum into Korean. AMBS also offers a sabbatical program for pastors.

Ron Ringenberg, VP Finance/Admin, shared that they are making history, 50 years ago was the first session of the AMBS. They still see themselves as the seminary for both MC Canada and MC USA so it is fitting to keep the "associated" label. Ringenberg thanked the church for the past 50 years of support in developing pastoral leadership, and encouraged us to continue with financial support and by motivating persons to attend. Keep AMBS in your prayers.

35.2 Conrad Grebel University College (CGUC)

President Henry Paetkau started by thanking the planning committee for scheduling the assembly the way they did (so he was free to celebrate his anniversary). CGUC was established in 1953 by the three conferences that now make up MCEC. Patkau used a PowerPoint presentation to report on attendance, the music program, peace and conflict studies, arts, and master of theological studies. CGUC offers innovation in music, peace and justice thinking, digs deep into tradition knowing that creative learning is inspired by historical thinking.

35.3 Canadian Mennonite University (CMU)

President Gerald Gerbrandt reported there were many highlights this year. He recalled the evening of Friday, September 26 when they held a 50th year homecoming dinner for graduates of CMBC and Concordia Bible College. Hearing the stories of where these grads have gone and what they have done was inspiring. The challenge for CMU is to continue developing people, to prepare people to make a difference. Gerbrandt noted the change in governance is something they are also getting used to.

The GB appointed Ruth Friesen to the CMU board. Friesen reported that she serves with joy as she is serving two entities for which she cares for deeply. Noted that we are in conversation on how to maintain communication and relationships so we serve one another to our fullest abilities. The plan to build a new residence is exciting.

Kerry Enns shared about how residence life influences the students and the life of CMU. Have been working hard to put together a structure that will serve them well, and now they want to get down to work, want to change lives. Enns concluded by noting that they endeavor to do education in a caring Christian community at CMU.

Gerbrandt concluded the report, noting that enrollment for this fall looks good. CMU will celebrate the 15th anniversary of Menno Simons College this fall, and they are planning to increase the number of sites for “Outatown”.

35.4 Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC)

General Manager Bob Veitch referred to the report in the *Report Book*. MFC is now one of the ten largest public foundations in Canada, it is an organization that others turn to for leadership and information. Veitch reported that the numbers tell one story, but there are many stories that are behind the scenes. MFC has creative and skilled staff, and a lot of satisfied clients. MFC gives more than \$3 million annually to charities. Look for a new stewardship study series this winter. MFC is opening a Calgary office that they hope to have up and running in October, and they have opened an office in Saskatoon as well (not staffed, for storage of materials and meetings). MFC accepted the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada as a member this spring. Veitch concluded the MFC report noting that they have taken care to comply with the Privacy Act, and it was nice that they didn't have to change their procedures/policies. Thank you to the constituency.

35.5 Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service (CMPS)/Canadian Mennonite

Henry Neufeld, chair of the CMPS board shared that Margaret Loewen-Reimer was instrumental in the change from a newspaper to the *Canadian Mennonite*. She has strong editorial and writing skills, and received an award for best editorial. A collection of her stories was published in the book “One quilt, many pieces”. Neufeld thanked Loewen-Reimer for her serving the church, God and the community through her work at the *Canadian Mennonite*.

Margaret Loewen-Reimer responded, noting that she started as an assistant in 1973. One highlight for her was the birth of the *Canadian Mennonite*. People didn't think a newspaper could be transform into a magazine. Loewen-Reimer also enjoyed meeting other editors of Christian publications, and recalled an intense debate about letters to the editor. This is the place for monitoring the conversations between diverse voices in the church. Loewen-Reimer noted that responding to disgruntled readers has helped her realize the value of the publication, and she hopes people support the new editor.

Neufeld then introduced Tim Dyck, the new editor of the *Canadian Mennonite*. Dyck responded saying it was a privilege to take a vehicle like the *Canadian Mennonite* and get more people involved in seeing and learning about God's work in the world. Dyck believes the *Canadian Mennonite* exists to build and

strengthen MC Canada. Thank you for the passion and care, prayer and encouragement, feedback and donations.

35.6 Mennonite Central Committee of Canada (MCC)

Don Peters, executive director, reported that he was enjoying the spirit of active engagement at MC Canada. "Listening with our hearts" is the theme for MCC this year. Peters reported that there are many faces and voices behind the work that MCC does. Some of the voices are of our partners in other parts of the world. MCC responded with food aid and locally purchased product, but the crisis calls us to do much more. MCC owes its health, sustenance and existence to the Mennonite Church and Mennonite Brethren congregations. Thank you on behalf of all MCC, for the opportunity to partner together.

Henry Krause chaired the next items.

36. Listening Committee

Claire Ewert Fisher reported that she and Kathy Koop and Billy Chiew have been listening carefully. There is a sense we are not satisfied with the status quo, that we want a more energetic program that calls us to service. The Listening Committee heard that we would like to have more stories and worship at assembly. There is a strong sense that this was a well-planned and executed assembly. The round table discussion gave everyone a chance to be heard. The loaves of bread were a powerful reminder that we are grains of wheat and God forms us into loaves. Just as bread feeds the hungry, we share good news with the spiritually hungry. There is enough for all.

37. Delegate Response and Resolutions Cont'd

37.1 Resolution 5

Be it resolved that we thank Joy Kroeger as she has served on the general board over the last six years:

- ***For her time and commitment.***
- ***For her service internationally on the Joint Executive Committee.***
- ***For her due diligence and her care and attention on the executive.***

Affirmed with applause.

37.2 Resolution 6

At Winkler 2004 we have been challenged, inspired and nourished: be it resolved that we thank everyone who has worked so hard to put this assembly together. Thank You!

- *Thank you to the staff of Mennonite Church Canada and the committees for their excellent planning.
Thank You!*

- *The round table discussions were a very positive experience*

- *Thank you to the many volunteers who made everything seem effortless.*

Thank You!

- *Thank you to those who provided and prepared the food so efficiently.*

Thank You!

- *Thank you to Tom Yoder Neufeld for the fresh interpretation of the biblical story.*

Thank You!

- *And a special thank you to the Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church and the other Mennonite churches of the area for their warm hospitality!*

Thank You!

Affirmed with applause.

38. Mennonite Church Assembly in 2005

Pam Peters-Pries and Anna Rehan presented a preview of what delegates might expect at the "Can't Keep Quiet" assembly July 4-9, 2005 in Charlotte, North Carolina. They noted that all assembly events, including worship, workshops, concerts and the entire youth assembly would be held jointly with MC USA. Registration will be essential and it will be much earlier than we are used to. Adults and children register through MC Canada office and the youth register through MC USA office.

Loaf Symbol The reporting and discernment time was offered to the Lord. Representatives brought forward loaves and placed them in a basket as the delegates sang the prayer "Take our hands".



39. Commissioning Service

Denominational Minister Sven Eriksson led in a commissioning service.

40. Adjournment

41. Evening Worship

Saturday evening worship began with a slideshow of the children's assembly while the children brought forward their offering of "fishes" and singing. The message entitled "More than enough: you are what you eat" by Tom Yoder Neufeld was based on John 6: 35-58 and Isaiah 25: 6-9. Yoder-Neufeld highlighted how John's record shifts our attention from the relationship of communion to Jesus' death to the relationship between communion and Jesus' life. Taste the loving, life giving and transforming manna God offers us in Jesus; drink deeply of the juice of life, and be filled with an unstinting resolve to "work the works". There is way more than "enough for all".

Denominational Minister Sven Eriksson led a communion service.

42. Sunday Morning Worship

Delegates and visitors scattered to attend morning worship at one of the local congregations.

Meetings of Mennonite Church Canada

Planning meetings for the first Canadian conference sessions in 1903 were held in 1902 at Tiefengrund, SK. Delegate sessions for Conference of Mennonites in Canada have been held annually since then. (For information on meetings from 1903-1999, see the 1999 Minute Book of Conference of Mennonites in Canada.)

The Lethbridge 2000 Assembly marked the inaugural annual session for Mennonite Church Canada.

Year	Place	Moderator	Asst. Moderator	Secretary	General Secretary
2000	Lethbridge AB	Ron Sawatsky	Jake F. Pauls	Joy Kroeger	Dan Nighswander
2001	Abbotsford BC	Ron Sawatsky	Joy Kroeger	Sam Steiner	Dan Nighswander
2002	Saskatoon SK	Ron Sawatsky	Joy Kroeger	Sam Steiner	Dan Nighswander
2003	St. Catharines ON	Henry Krause	Joy Kroeger	Sam Steiner	Dan Nighswander
2004	Winkler MB	Henry Krause	Joy Kroeger	Marlene Janzen	Dan Nighswander

Appointments and Committees - 2004

Hosting Committee - Winkler

Chair - George Ens
Vice Chair – Bill Braun

Facilities – Peter L. Suderman and Jake Olfert

Guest Services – Jake Peters
Registration/Lodging – Abe Hiebert
Hospitality – Alfred Klassen
Food Services – Eileen Dyck
Transportation – Armin Ens
Tours and Activities – Al Ens
Treasurer – Jake Dyck
Adult Activities – Aaron Kropf
Kid's Assembly – Viola Enns Woelke

Hosting Congregations

Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church
Lowe Farm Bergthaler Mennonite
Church
Altona Mennonite Church
Morden Mennonite Church
Blumenort Mennonite Church
Plum Coulee Bergthaler Mennonite
Church
Covenant Mennonite Church Rosenfeld
Bergthaler Mennonite Church
Emmanuel Mennonite Church
Seeds of Life Community Church
Grace Mennonite Church
Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church
Gretna Bergthaler Mennonite Church

Assistant Secretary

Audrey Mierau Bechtel – Saskatoon,
SK

Parliamentarian

Sam Steiner – Waterloo, ON

Nominating Committee

Arny Froese – Abbotsford, BC
Tim Wiebe-Neufeld – Edmonton, AB
Wendy Harder – Saskatoon, SK
Henry Loewen – Winnipeg, MB
Glenn Zehr – Millbank, ON

Program Committee

Craig Friesen, Rosthern SK
Mildred Roth, New Hamburg ON
Karen Schellenberg, Portage la Prairie
MB

Resolutions Committee

Marguerite Jack – Calgary, AB
Armin Krahn – Stranraer, SK
Barb Draper – Elmira, ON

Listening Committee

Kathy Koop – Winnipeg, MB
Scott Brubaker-Zehr – Kitchener, ON
Billy Chiew – Abbotsford, BC
Claire Ewert Fisher – Fiske, SK



Appendix I

Round table discussion results: Summary Winkler 2005

Delegates at this year's annual assembly gathered around tables for an hour and a half each day and discussed a total of five questions. Each table group – fifty tables of delegates and a varying number of non-delegates – submitted summary statements for each of the topics.

The results provide indicators of how delegates representing the wider church community have responded to these issues and questions. Indicators are only suggestive of patterns and are not scientifically accurate reflections of how the community as a whole might feel or think. The challenge will be to offer meaningful responses to the varying ways delegates answered the questions.

A vigorous discussion of the purpose of the national church body pointed to a preference for one of three proposed purpose statements that was presented. But delegates also called for substantial revision. Further steps will be taken and a final recommendation will be presented at the next assembly.

On the national church's role in determining questions of theology, ethics, polity and practice, delegates responded with a strong preference (almost half of the table groups) for the denomination to provide pro-active guidance, direction, resources for congregations. About one in eight table groups voiced a preference for "a strong voice, including authority to close discussion and settle disputes." A large number of responses favoured other possibilities: over one-third wanted help in facilitating discussions; a quarter of the groups said the national church should "not mandate or dictate," while others said that listening to congregations and area conferences was important. The General Board is preparing a recommendation for next year's assembly that will implement the delegates' counsel.

On the question of "homosexuality and your church," what is happening in the congregations represented by your table group? almost half of the congregations represented reported that they were addressing the issue, while one quarter said their congregations were doing "nothing obvious" in addressing the question. Slightly less than one out of five respondents indicated their churches were "Leaning toward condemnation of homosexual practice." Less than one in ten expressed a desire to walk with homosexuals in their congregation who declare themselves.

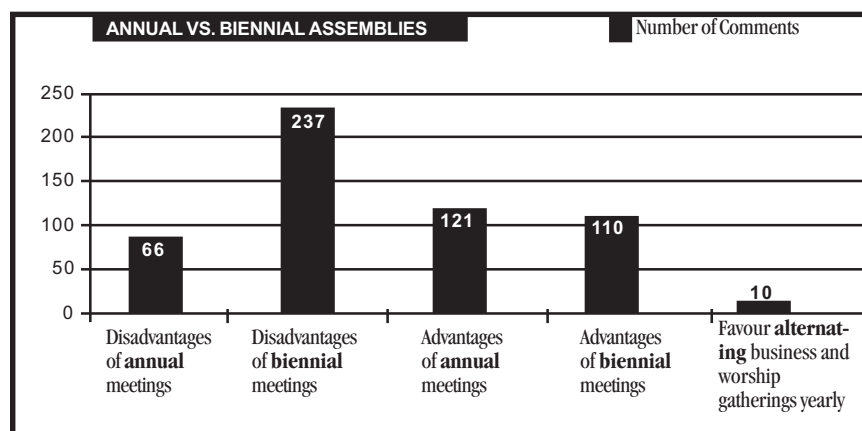
A strong preference for proactive guidance was again revealed when delegates responded to the question: How could MC Canada (delegates, board, staff, others) be helpful to your congregations on the homosexual issue? More than one third were in favour of the national church providing resources and teaching, and almost as many were in favour of the denomination facilitating dialogue. On the other hand,

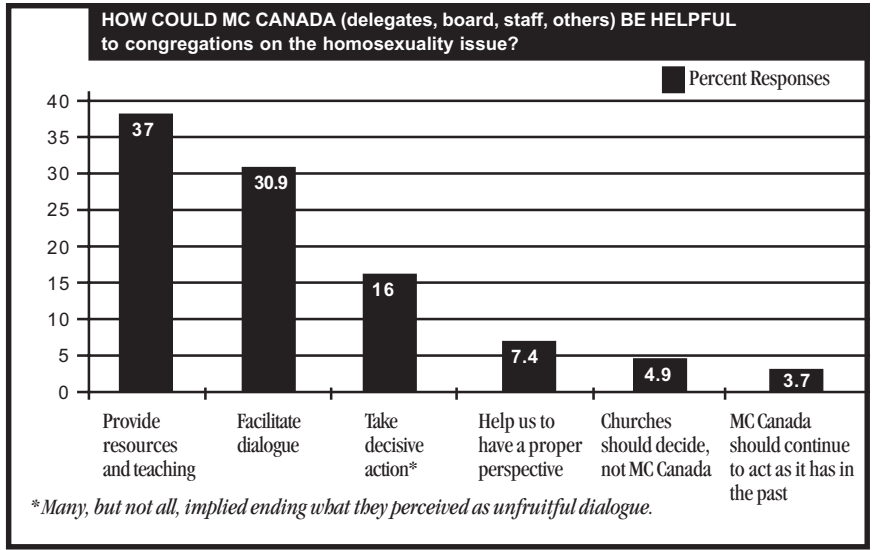
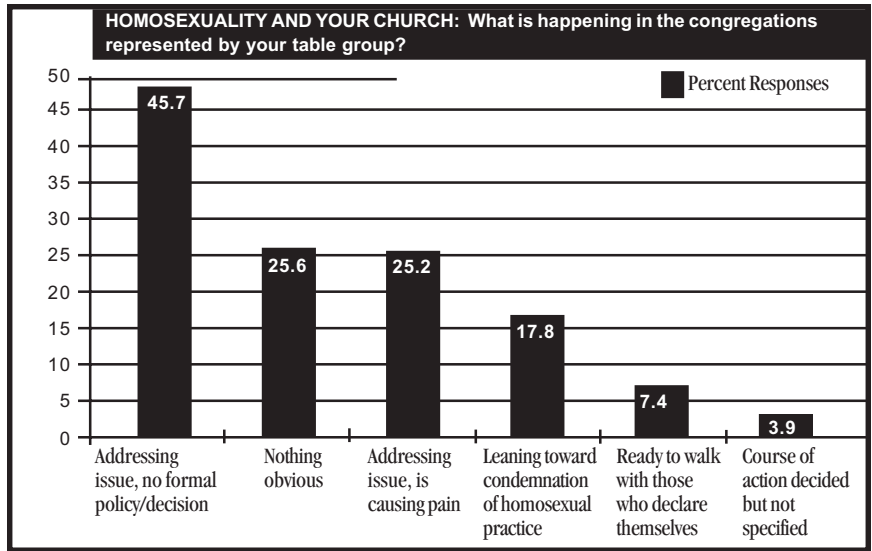
almost one in five wanted MC Canada to 'Take decisive action,' with many of those calling for an end to what they perceived as unfruitful dialogue.

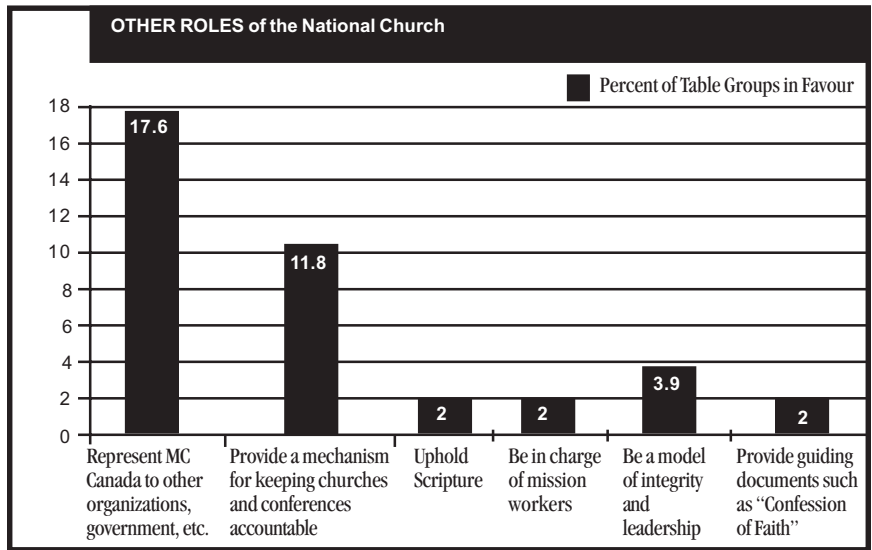
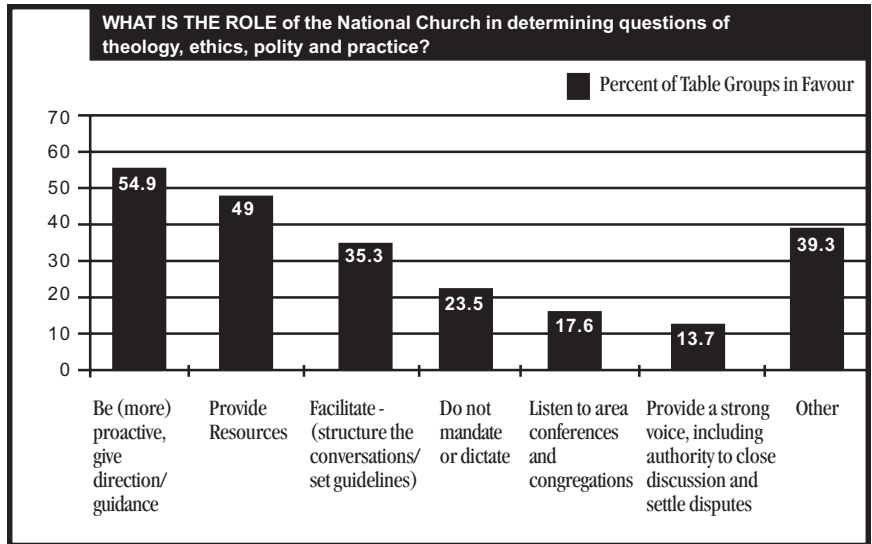
When table groups discussed whether Mennonite Church Canada should hold annual or biennial assemblies, there was a strong preference for annual gatherings. The reports include 237 comments about the disadvantages of biennial assemblies, and 121 about the advantages of annual assemblies. On the other side (and often from the same tables), there were 110 comments about the advantages of biennial assemblies and 66 about the disadvantages of annual assemblies. Based on this response, the Support Services Council has recommended to the General Board that MC Canada continue with the pattern of holding annual assemblies.

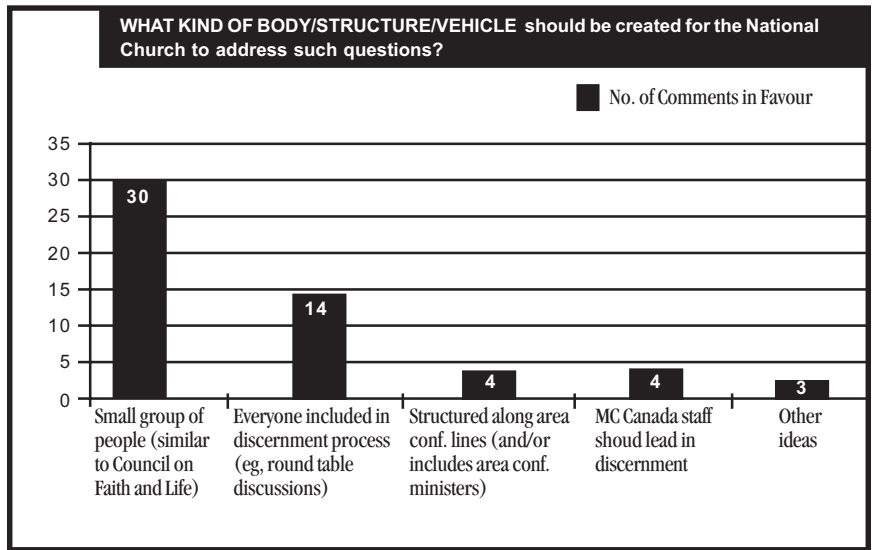
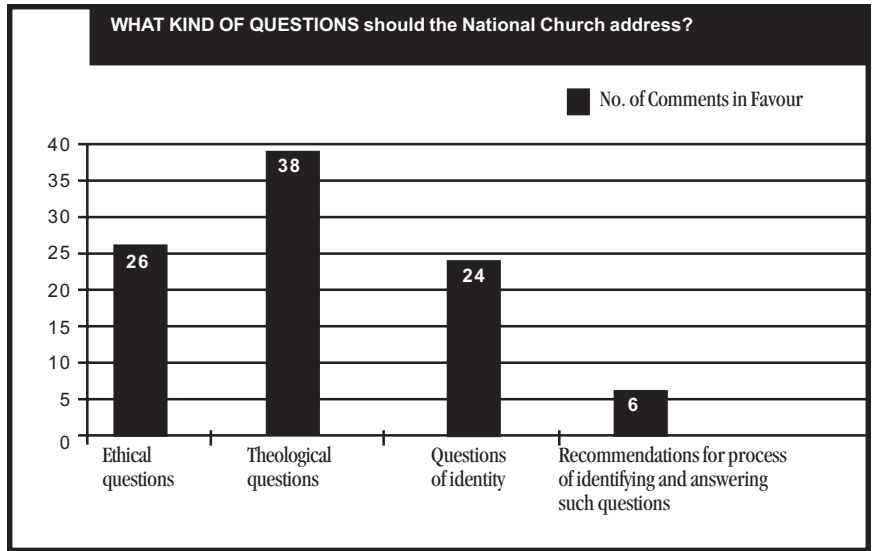
While the delegates did vote on (and passed) a resolution to join both the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) and the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), the feedback from table groups prior to the motion is insightful. The comments identify what concerns and anxieties people have, and these are being brought forward in the subsequent conversations with CCC and EFC leaders.

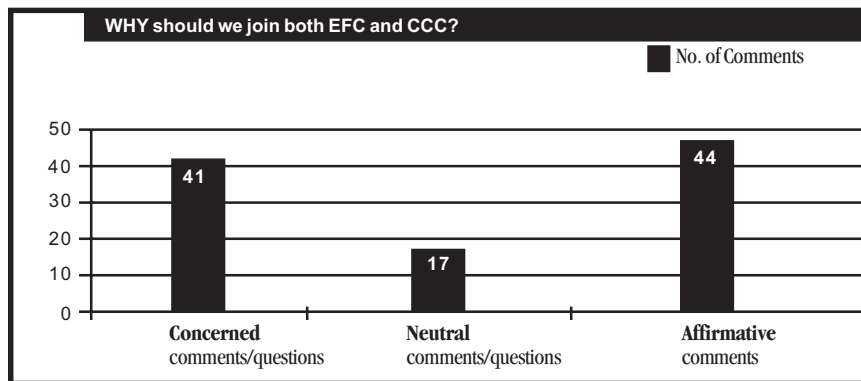
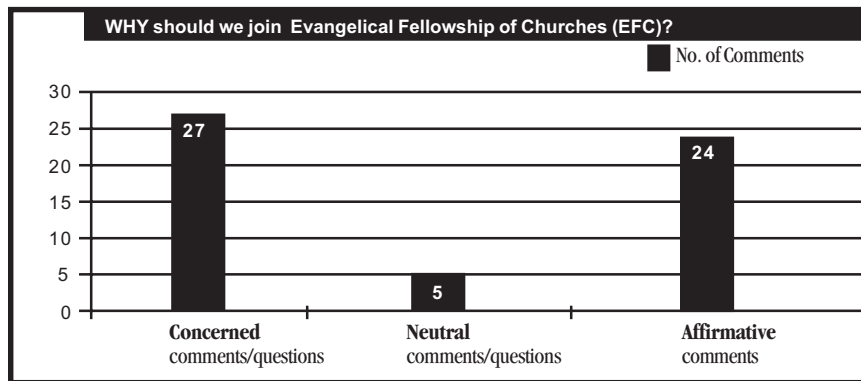
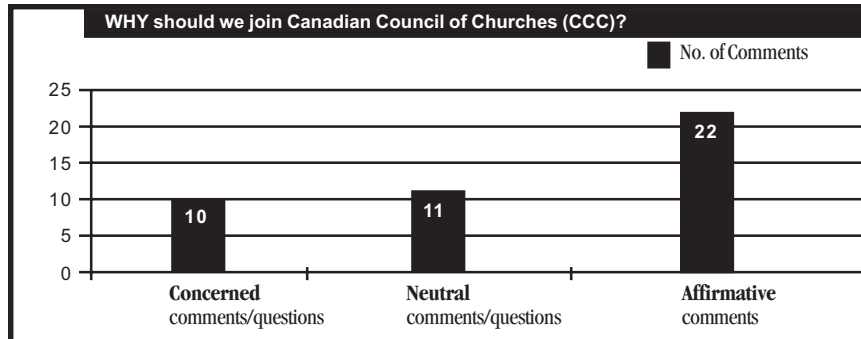
Please note that table groups may have chosen not to respond to some questions, or responded with more than one answer. Hence the totals do not add up to 100%.











Note: On the CCC/EFC issue, the category “Concerned Comments/Question” includes both concerns about joining and concerns about not joining. In several cases of each of the three questions, it is impossible to interpret whether the concern lies with joining or with not joining. Example: The comment “Board structure (self perpetuating)” can neither be interpreted as an affirming concern nor a dissenting concern. “Neutral Comments/Questions” were categorized in the context of seeking more information.

Purpose Statement Discussion

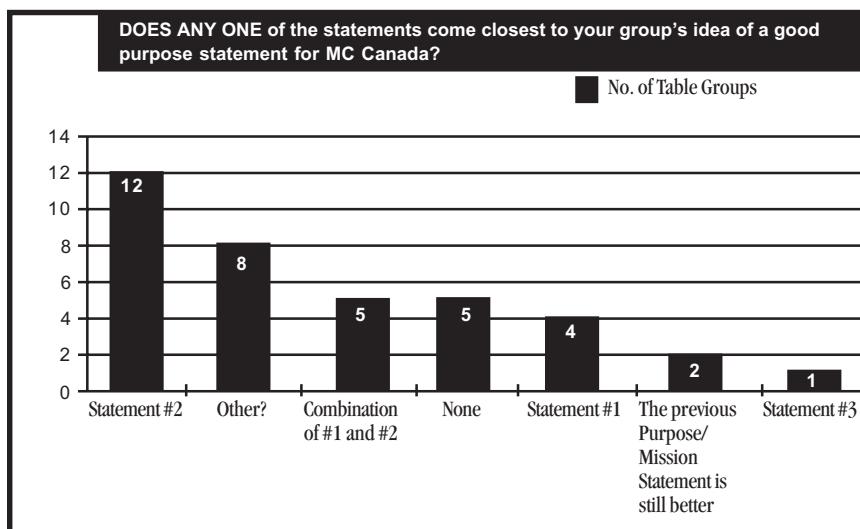
Current Mission Statement

As communities of Christian faith, uniting and united under the name, Mennonite Church Canada, we desire to express our biblical understanding of faith and life in Jesus Christ within the Canadian context and beyond by extending the invitation to all peoples of our multi-cultured society to follow Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, that together as the people of God, we may worship one Lord in truth and in holiness, minister together through education, evangelism and service, care for God's creation by making peace and practicing stewardship, and provide leadership and resources to facilitate God's mission in the world, so that all people may find healing and hope in all circumstances of life.

Purpose Statements for discussion

(discerning how God wants the national body of Mennonite Church Canada to contribute toward the attainment of the vision—replacing our former "Mission Statement")

- 1. to invite, inform, inspire and involve** all parts of the church in God's mission of healing and hope in Christ.
- 2. to participate with the Holy Spirit** in the calling, equipping and sending of the church for God's mission of healing and hope in Christ.
- 3. to bring people together around God's mission** to build the unity and voice of our church and to connect needs with resources across the street and around the world.







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