



Canadian Conference
of Mennonite Brethren Churches

Video Update – July 2017

Steve Berg, CCMBC Interim Executive Director
Bruce Enns, CCMBC Executive Board Moderator

Sensing a growing spirit of partnership, over 50 Canadian MB leaders were invited by CCMBC to a Leaders Summit June 21–22, 2017, in Cedar Springs, Wash. The participants included Provincial Conference Ministers, some members of the BFL and Executive Board, as well as selected staff from educational institutes, MB Mission and CCMBC (includes L2L and C2C). It was a wide cross-section from across Canada. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ways that our MB organizations could collaborate to achieve “One Mission: local, national, global”. The discussions revealed a number of areas where our organizations get stuck, but also identified ways of moving forward together. A task force is being formed to continue these conversations about collaborating on mission.

Steve: Bruce, we’ve just spent two days of very rich prayer, conversation and dialogue together with many of our MB leaders from across Canada – 50 plus people that were together. The whole purpose of being together is because we collectively have a sense that the Spirit of God is moving in such a powerful way in Canada and for Canada, around the proclamation of the gospel in so many different ways. We needed to be together as leaders, so we could think again about what it is that God has given to us as an MB family in ministry. And so we talked a lot about collaboration and “How do we do this better together?”

What was the most impactful part of this couple of days for you, Bruce?

Bruce: I think the big thing for me was just the spirit in the room of the humility that these leaders come with. Everybody came with a very open hand; in fact, we talked very much about that. So, there was a lot of conversation about what we’re willing to lay down on one mission together. As we were talking about that, we were talking about – as the entire MB family, all of our ministries, provincial, and national and all the connected ministries – how do we actually do this one mission together? And the idea of submission and a willingness to lay everything down in order to do this better was, I think for me, one of the big highlights that I was just astounded by. I’m just so thankful for how the Spirit of God was at work in our midst. There was confession, repentance, all kinds of expressions of unity and such a deep passion and desire for collaboration. It was really moving.

Steve: Out of these meetings, we have invited a group of people who are a part of this to form a task force that will be accountable to CCMBC executive board. And we want to be able to move this another step down

the road and really be able to come to our churches and to our provincial constituencies and invite them into the conversation of what we believe God is calling us to do in the days ahead.

Bruce: One of the things we heard over and over again from the group was “We need to go back to the churches and listen to the churches now.” As leaders, we always kind of play this dance of, we need to lead and step out in front and yet not get so far ahead that we’re moving ahead of where the people are at. This was a time for leaders to engage and pray and discern. And now, in the months ahead, we plan to engage back with the churches and the provincial conferences and say, “Okay, we’re testing this with you.” And we’re going to do that in a variety of ways: that taskforce, and probably a national survey in fall will be a part of that.

How else do you see that we’ll do some of that in terms of connecting to the churches?

Steve: Well, I think that when we come together in November, we want to be able to update the delegates that gather for our EQUIP conference and be able to talk in some very concrete ways about what the steps are ahead. And certainly, our goal is that in Gathering 2018 we’ll have a very concrete expression of “What does the collaborative ministry of the Mennonite Brethren church of Canada look like, and how is that actually going to play itself out?”

Bruce: Steve, you mentioned that at the EQUIP conference on November 1st that we’ll bring an update about this. And as people know, we’ll have the vote on the C2C and MB Mission merger, or “the grafting” as we’ve been talking about it too. That’ll happen at that event too, as people know that. But also, this update will be about these meetings, which were much more than that. It was bigger than that: it’s about the whole MB family. So, we’ll bring an update to that at EQUIP as a part of that is the MB Mission/C2C piece that we’ll be voting on as well.

Steve: We just are delighted to be the servants of the church here in Canada. And our whole reason for having these kinds of conversations is so that we can be really clear about this: that we all want to be on the mission that God has called us to, so that this country and the people of it – those who do not follow Jesus, do not have personal faith in Christ, do not see the transformation of their lives because of a relationship to Christ – will hear that good news, and they will engage in believing and following Christ. So, we really want what every church in this country wants, and that’s to be a part of that mission. And if we’re going to serve the churches, then we need to be able to agree together how we’ll partner with that across the country.

So, we want to just thank you again for your faithful response to the call of Christ in the place that you live and work and serve, and that you are a part of this mission of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.

God bless you and thank you.