



# Canadian Conference

of Mennonite Brethren Churches

## November 2017 Video Update

Steve: Well, we want to greet all of you in the MB family of Canada. We're here at Northview Community Church and we're in the middle of our EQUIP 2017 conference. I don't know about you, Bruce, but I just came out of a really rich table Bible study, and our presenter Darrell Johnson was introducing for us the Beatitudes and was talking about the fact that when we say blessed, it's really God who is blessed when we enter into the Kingdom by becoming the kind of person the Beatitudes describes. We had this rich conversation about that.

It's wonderful when we can get around the Word of God together and then have a kind of transformation and even an understanding of Scripture and what that would mean for us and the way that we'd go back into our places of leadership and talk about and think about discipleship that really transforms the lives of people. I don't know how you experienced that this morning?

Bruce: What I love about these kind of events is that you hear from great speakers, but then we practice what is so important to us as an MB family of just gathering around the Word of God and gathering around tables studying Scripture together and hearing from one another and just experiencing the Spirit of God within us and the Spirit of God among us.

Steve: I think we've decided this is probably the largest gathering that we've had [as an MB conference], certainly the largest study conference. While that in itself isn't necessarily an important metric, I think it's wonderful to see across the country and even from other parts of our continent people coming because they want to lean into this conversation together. There's a real sense that God is at work, that we're seeing things that we long for, we all want. When we get in that posture and focus on Jesus instead of looking at each other and realizing that there may be things we disagree about, it really changes the spirit in the room. It's just a wonderful gathering here and we're looking forward to the ongoing benefits of a conference like this.

We started, obviously, Bruce, with a Special General Meeting yesterday and there was so much interest around some of the decisions, the discernment that was made. We really wanted to discern and give expression to that discernment in a sense of unity – not that we agreed with each other on everything, so why don't you tell us a little bit about how that meeting went yesterday?

Bruce: I think yesterday was just remarkable in lots of ways. It was the culmination of a lot of prayer, planning and challenge. The two significant motions that were passed were first of all the C2C/MB Mission merger. That's been a multi-year process that came to completion yesterday with an 85% vote, just a really strong affirmation of the direction that that is going. We also passed a really significant budget, significant in the sense that it was a huge reduction, about

60%. So, it was a day of celebration, but it was also a sobering day because of the implications of that budget and just some of the new realities that we're in and that we're working from now.

Steve: And the new reality is that we're transitioning away from a dependence on a really great gift we're had for a lot of years. We've made a decision to move that to something we call Legacy Funds Inc., and as far as the Canadian Conference of MB Churches, we really want to say to our churches: you're our owners. Our ministry and our mission together is really something that we're doing together in partnership with you. That also changes the way we think about our partnership with our churches, inviting them to engage with us in who we are and what we're about.

So, Bruce, we've got two days of this conference left. What are you looking forward to as we finish this up?

Bruce: Well, I'm a local church pastor, and my passion is discipleship and the local church. That is what this is all about. That's what our Mennonite Brethren family is about – it's about raising up leaders, multiplying churches and creating disciple-making churches and context and cultures. We're learning about that, we're experiencing that and if we can leave from here living out of that, it would be a transformational thing for our MB family.

Steve: And I'm a local church pastor, so both of us are giving national leadership, but out of the context of our desire and longing for the local church to be vital, alive and engaged in this wonderful call to be followers of Jesus and to live out the Kingdom realities in a way that is attractive and invitational to people who have not yet chosen to follow Jesus.

So we say to all of you as a family, those of you who didn't have opportunity to come and be a part of this, we trust that even this update is an encouragement to you, that it continues to invite you to lean in to this family – a vital, rich, wonderfully resourced family – and we trust that the Spirit of God will encourage you and give life to you as you serve him. God bless you! Thanks so much.