

# ***Saskatchewan Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches***

## ***2009 Pre-Convention Reports to the Churches***

### **Executive Report**

I wish to extend greetings to you on behalf of the Conference Executive. We as Conference Leadership wish to provide you with an update on the work that has been done in 2009 on your behalf. We also wish to communicate to you our current financial status and a draft copy of the proposed 2010 budget that will be presented to the convention delegates in March of 2010.

First the upcoming Convention scheduled for March 12 & 13, 2010. Shortly after the 2009 convention, the leadership of Northwest Community Church in Meadow Lake approached the Conference expressing desire to host the 2010 convention. The leadership and convention planning team of Northwest is very excited about being the host church, and is working very diligently in planning what will be a convention worth attending. We look forward to an exciting weekend as we explore and celebrate what God is doing in Saskatchewan. It is our prayer that you join us in Meadow Lake for a time of celebration and business as we continue to share and discern together our roles in developing and becoming the missional church and people that God has called us to be.

As many of you know, we did not hold a Leadership Forum this November. We felt that we wanted to encourage as many of you to attend the national BFL's Study Conference in Saskatoon in October. I trust that for those that attended, it was a time of spiritual refreshment and challenge.

Much work has been done over the past months by all the boards. I encourage you to read the reports from Board of Faith and Life, Harvest Saskatchewan, and Board of Management. At the Executive level, the addition of Dwayne Barkman to staff as Harvest Saskatchewan Director has prompted us to do some additional or should I say, major revisions to our Policy and Procedures Manual. Much work has been done to outline policies that empower and yet set defined guidelines for our staff that allow them to work together and fulfill their individual roles and responsibilities with efficiency and harmony. More work is required in the upcoming years as we further document and define our individual board relationships.

As Moderator of the Conference, when I strategically look down the road two to five years, I see a conference that has a clear vision. I see us as a group of churches gaining more understanding and a desire to be a missional church, truly modeling our corporate, church and individual lives to be a 21<sup>st</sup> century church with a 1<sup>st</sup> century missional mindset, comparable to the church we see in Acts. I see a revival in our churches with people excited about reaching the lost for Christ, not only with valuable programs, but with personal testament, boldly showing through words and life actions, that we are children of the true God, and that His love and salvation is for each of our friends, co-workers, and neighbours.

This exciting future is also intertwined with a significant concern: I see a reluctance by the Saskatchewan MB constituency to step up to the task of leadership, both in the local church, and at the conference level. This year we still have a number of vacancies, on the BFL and Board of Management. While we have filled some positions with people excited about what God is doing in our province, there is still a need. I believe we are at a crucial time in our conference life. The time for sitting back and enjoying being served by the local church, provincial, and national leadership is gone. If we truly value the denominational distinctive and teachings that seem dear to all when theological questions or issues arise, we also need to call on God in discernment to determine our individual role in service. This may seem a strong statement, but I firmly believe that should we as the Saskatchewan MB constituency, fail to fully participate at the Conference leadership level, our continuance as a healthy provincial body of faith will in the near future be in jeopardy. If we truly want to be effective ambassadors for Christ, we need a team of godly men and women, willing to lead us collectively towards that end. I would like to call on pastors, elders, and moderators to exercise due diligence in discerning and calling out people from their local church to serve at the Conference level.

In closing, I would like to encourage each of you to prayerfully consider your involvement in our Conference. If you have an interest in serving, I guarantee that we can find a place where your service can be personally rewarding and spiritually challenging. I wish to again invite you to consider attending the upcoming convention in Meadow Lake. And last but not least, I thank you for your prayers and support of your local pastors and church leadership. Through your prayers and support, God continues to give them wisdom and strength to serve in these challenging times.

Respectfully submitted and in His service

Ron Dyck – Provincial Moderator

## **Board of Faith and Life and Director of Church Ministries**

### **A. Board of Faith and Life:**

1. The board has restructured and divided the responsibilities into teams. Several additional board members need to be recruited and then 2010 will be a year of working out details to get the 5 teams working efficiently. Some of the work done by these teams will be mentioned in points 2 – 6. All of these teams will work together with the Director of Church Ministries at a variety of levels.
2. Credentialing – This team will do a more thorough examination of potential pastors prior to candidating in a specific church. Input will still be received from the entire board, but there will be greater in depth examination done by the team.
3. Event Planning – this team will help plan the Annual Pastoral Retreat. The team will also look at putting back into place and plan for an Annual Day of Prayer.
4. Conflict and Issue – This team will deal with conflict situations and issues. This team will also decide as to when or if the issue needs to be brought to the entire board.
5. Reading and Research – This team will keep alert to current books and will do research and writing. They will be alerted to doctrinal concerns that arise within the churches, not acting as “gatekeepers” but providing research and insight in a proactive manner.
6. Procedure and Policy – This team will keep present policy current and will write new policy as directed by the board. The team has been directed to work on a new policy giving guidance for churches and pastors in planning for a sabbatical.

### **B. Director of Church Ministries:**

1. In 2010 more time and energy will be given to work with the above mentioned teams so that the work can be done more efficiently and effectively.
2. As our pastors stay long term, more time needs to be given to careful sabbatical planning. The exit and re-entry times are very critical for the Pastor and the Church. The Director of Church Ministries will be giving more effort this year in helping pastors and churches to benefit the most from sabbaticals.
3. More specific focus on giving care to the pastors and to church leadership teams.
4. Work closely with the Director of Harvest Saskatchewan (Dwayne Barkman) to ensure that the ministries of the Board of Faith and Life and Harvest Saskatchewan Team complement each other rather than compete with each other. As both of these ministries grow, more time will be needed to ensure that duplication does not happen.
5. Will continue to be visible in the churches for pastoral recognitions, ordinations, commissionings and will be present when possible at church anniversaries and other special events.
6. With some of the emphasis in the above areas, and due to the fact that the Director of Harvest Saskatchewan will be a visible presence in many churches, the Director of Church Ministries might become less visible in the corporate congregational setting.

Joyfully in Christ,

Ralph Gliege

## **Director of Harvest Saskatchewan**

The heart of the Harvest Saskatchewan vision is to help Saskatchewan churches to make missional disciples, raise missional leaders, and to shape and create missional churches and initiatives. We feel our calling is not to do these three things for the church, but to inspire, empower and support them as they move forward in each area

We are engaging three initiatives in helping **inspire churches to make missional disciples**. **First**, to invite Senior pastors and moderators to participate in the November 17-20 Congress on evangelism and church planting in Calgary. Sixteen will be going. **Second**, to send our first listening prayer team to join with a church that is doing a Refocusing retreat. This team is preparing to train and send out other teams as well. **Third**, Brian Wiens will be guiding a POD of leaders from across Saskatchewan in exploring the book THE TANGIBLE KINGDOM by Hugh Halter focusing on what is shifting in how we make disciples in a Post Modern era. Project Reach Your World is continuing to encourage churches to take on smaller missional initiatives in their communities.

To **support churches in developing missional leaders**, we are seeking to develop two PODS. In the first one, Howie Wall and Wayne Harms will be drawing together a number of moderators to listen to their hearts, hear needs and walk alongside them as they work through the role of moderator in a missional church. In the second POD, Marilyn Muller will invite younger, emerging leaders to process dynamics and steps in moving forward in church leadership.

To **help shape and create missional churches and initiatives** we are calling on all initiatives to find a home church from which to begin and maintain accountability. We have walked alongside the Pierceland church as they have made a shift to a new church start, and the Borden church as they are transplanting into the village of Borden. We anticipate that the November 17-20 Congress on evangelism and church planting in Calgary will give pastors and moderators new ideas of what significant missional initiatives might look like. We anticipate that not only will we be inspired to see what new initiatives might look like, but, what we need to do to become truly missional in our attitudes, postures and values. The Refocusing process in which we are partnering with the Canadian Conference is also meant to help guide churches to discover a missional vision. At this point Hope Fellowship has completed the process. Meadow Lake and Forest Grove will start this fall, and we are engaged with three other churches to work through timing.

As a team we are making plans to spread the Saskatchewan Conference vision through transportable displays, power points and web site additions. Shane Peters, our chairperson in training is shaping this area. Although we are living in a time of mega transition for our churches and in our culture, we are excited with how God is positioning us for the harvest and eagerly look forward to the fruit that is already coming in.

On behalf of the Harvest Saskatchewan Team

Dwayne Barkman