



2023/2024

Annual Impact Report

SASKATCHEWAN

THANK YOU

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am deeply thankful for the profound generosity and courageous peace that you – donors, volunteers, supporters, and churches – have offered in Saskatchewan and around the world through MCC’s activity this year.

2024 marks the 60th anniversary of MCC Saskatchewan. We celebrate and are grateful for six decades of engagement with churches, families and individuals who are seeking to shape their communities and the world with God’s love and compassion for all.

Thrift Shops, Grow Hope fields, plastic buckets of hygiene supplies, community learning opportunities – all of these tangible spaces also become intangible offerings of Christ’s peace into our lives and the lives of so many caught up in the chaos of natural disasters and political upheaval.

I invite you to explore and be encouraged by this year’s collection of stories of community care, relational transformation, generosity, and hope. From the Meheba Refugee Settlement Camp in Zambia to the Meadowgreen neighbourhood of Saskatoon, thank you for your love in our broken and still beautiful world.



Eileen Klassen Hamm
Executive Director, MCC Saskatchewan



“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.”

—COLOSSIANS 3:15 (NIV)

2023–2024 Local Program Highlights

97

youth were reached through Meadowgreen youth programming, a significant increase from 38 last year.

812

youth and young adults participated in various educational workshops around peace and justice topics.

250

people formed sponsorship teams to help refugee families settle in Saskatchewan.

382

people participated in KAIROS Blanket Exercises.

1,941

Individuals participated in peace and justice capacity building activities.

97

people attended the annual Peace Conference titled Peace by Peace: International and Local Peacebuilding.

“Our world is bigger than ourselves, and we have a responsibility to help others.”

A GENEROUS COUPLE WHO HAVE BEEN DONATING TO MCC FOR OVER 32 YEARS.

For this couple, who asked to remain anonymous, supporting MCC is a long standing practice of their family. The couple has worked with MCC in Paraguay and visited projects in Sudan, Palestine, South Africa, and other places.

Today, they are growing their contribution to MCC’s account of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank through their farmland. For them, the relationship with MCC is “not about earning blessings” but a **heartfelt response of thanksgiving for God’s grace, aiming to extend the table to those in need.**

Highlights:

1,342

donors responded generously to the many invitations to contribute financially to the work of MCC.

\$2.78M

was received through donations. Thanks to your generosity we are able to continue MCC’s mission here at home and across the world.

110

local churches engaged with the work of MCC, and a total of \$228,340 in financial support was received in donations.

\$92,700

was donated for MCC’s response to the situation in Gaza.

FUNDRAISING AND CHURCH ENGAGEMENT

Lakeview Free Methodist Church in Saskatoon has emerged as one of our valued new partners, thanks in part to the active involvement of at least five MCC staff members in their congregation. Since 2015, this relationship has expanded significantly, beginning with presentations on MCC’s restorative justice programs during a church learning tour.

Lakeview has also actively explored Truth and Reconciliation, collaborating with MCC’s Indigenous Neighbours program and building strong ties with the Beardy’s & Okemasis Cree Nation. The church supports MCC’s Material Resources campaigns and views relief kit bucket-filling events as a valuable intergenerational activity.

We are excited to continue this partnership, especially as Lakeview begins forming a refugee sponsorship group.

Photo: 

Members of Lakeview church packing relief kits to send to communities in need across the world. (MCC photo/ Randy Klassen).



GROWING HOPE IN SASKATCHEWAN

Celebrating the sixth season, we look back with awe at the journey of this project since 2018. Starting with two farmers planting 160 acres, this partnership with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank now unites Mennonite, Catholic, Baptist, Anglican, and Presbyterian traditions, growing over 400 acres to fight global hunger.

This year, your support surpassed our goals. **463 acres were sponsored, and together with the sale of the crop, nearly \$319,000 was raised.** Together with government-matched funds, up to \$5 million has been generated to provide emergency and other food assistance over six years. Your dedication to this project is the heartbeat of Grow Hope!

RELIEF SALE FESTIVAL 2023

This year marked a significant change from the “*Relief Sale and Auction*” to the Relief Sale “*Festival*,” signaling a shift from the live auction to a focus on gathering, celebration, and fundraising. New activities included an art show, multiple artisan booths, sales of re-purposed items by Ten Thousand Villages, international cuisine, children’s activities, and live music.

We saw an increase of about **150 plates served** and an estimated **1,000 attendees**. The traditional quilt sale became its own annual online Christmas event. **Overall, \$92,000 was raised**, with nearly \$14,000 raised through Thrift shop events across the province.

Youth engagement: SOAR Saskatchewan

This year, **130 participants, including 100 youth and young adults**, joined two enriching learning days with SOAR Saskatchewan. The first day featured an introduction to MCC, a migration and resettlement workshop, a truth and reconciliation session, and the KAIROS Blanket Exercise led by knowledge keeper Starla Bruneau and Elder Maryann Napope.

The second day offered an immersive urban plunge, including the Race for Understanding and visits to various community organizations. Participants gained valuable insights and felt a deep sense of connection and clarity throughout the program.

Caption: Youth and young adults participating in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise.



Empowering Communities Through Grants

This year, our local programs benefited from the invaluable support of various external funders.

Grants from the Community Initiatives Fund, Saskatoon Community Foundation, City of Saskatoon & Saskatchewan Lotteries, and Canada Summer Jobs enabled us to enhance community development efforts.

The Indigenous Neighbours program benefited from the SaskCulture Multicultural Initiatives Fund, while Lakeview Church played a key role in supporting Migration and Resettlement initiatives. These contributions have been vital in expanding our impact and reaching more people.

LOCAL PROGRAM

In September 2023, we launched **Transformation Tuesdays**, a monthly learning series for exploring peace and justice. Each month, community members of all ages learned from individuals with lived experiences, enriching the sessions with real-world perspectives. The gatherings fostered community and empowered the **73 participants** to build relationships of peace, truly embodying the spirit of transformation.

“Always be open to all the effects of trauma, often hidden, that people are carrying.”

TRANSFORMATION TUESDAYS WORKSHOP
PARTICIPANT

This year, the nationally coordinated **Climate Action for Peace** campaign focused on creation care, took root in Saskatchewan through 30 sessions that engaged **406 participants, including 83 youth and young adults**. This featured book clubs, screenings, and discussions across various communities. These activities sparked meaningful dialogue and inspired participants to take actionable steps toward creation care.

Top right:  Peace Conference attendees enjoyed a traditional Eritrean lunch catered by Mihret Adhanom's family. Mihret and her family are former refugees from Eritrea who resettled in Saskatoon with the help of a the our Migration and Resettlement program.



5TH ANNUAL PEACE CONFERENCE

“Peace by Peace: International and Local Peacebuilding,” attracted nearly 100 attendees, including over 30 young adults. The conference featured workshops on polarization and sessions on MCC’s peacebuilding efforts.

We explored peacebuilding history and theology and learned about conflicts in Saskatchewan, Ukraine, and the Middle East. Several local community partners also contributed to the meaningful discussions.

You can find video recordings of all the sessions on our YouTube channel!

MEADOWGREEN YOUTH PROGRAM


This year, the program grew from 38 to 97 participants, driven by stronger relationships with our partner, Servant Partners. Weekly Kid’s Club offered activities like chess, ping pong, cooking, and arts and crafts, while field trips included the pool and bowling.

Our weekly gym and soccer nights, alongside arts and crafts, fostered a greater sense of community. The Raise the Peace Camp also engaged 15 youth, aged 8-14 in recreational activities.

Soccer played a crucial role in building community, fostering teamwork, leadership and conflict resolution skills leadership.

MATERIAL RESOURCES

Thanks to your generosity, this year's Buckets of Thanks kit packing events raised \$65,000. Over 20 family and church groups participated.

Top right:  Abayisenga Eduard, resident of Meheba Refugee Settlement Camp, displays an MCC comforter he received. (MCC photo/Karla Koehn)



ABAYISENGA EDUARD'S STORY OF RESILIENCE AND SELFLESSNESS

During a learning tour, Karla Koehn, MCC Saskatchewan Donor Engagement Coordinator, visited a refugee settlement in Zambia where MCC distributes material resource kits. Among those she met was Abayisenga Eduard, who fled Rwanda and has been unable to return.

Upon arriving in Zambia, Eduard was welcomed warmly and found a new home among the local people. As a farmer, he maintains good relationships with his neighbors and community members. When Eduard received a blanket and hygiene kit from MCC, he shared how his old blanket didn't allow him to sleep well. Despite his own needs, Eduard generously shared his new blanket with his housemate, who was in the hospital during the distribution of supplies.

Material resources shipped:



400

Dignity kits



759

School kits



980

Relief kits



676

Infant care kits



1,980

Hygiene kits



2,062

Comforters



40

Sewing kits

Items distributed locally:

47

Local care kits

84

Comforters

50

Homemade toques and mittens

MCC THRIFT

\$734,552

raised for MCC programs around the world.

545

volunteers giving

62,159

hours of service.

\$31,998

donated to local charities.

Items valued at over

\$27,000

gifted to people and communities in Saskatchewan.

Top right:

The incredible staff and volunteers at Village Green stepped up as models, showcasing the stunning dresses and suits from the formal wear department.

(MCC photo/ Gabriela Silva Altarugio).



On June 9th, 2023, the Warman Thrift Store hosted a vibrant satellite Relief Sale Festival, featuring live music that added to the lively atmosphere. Staff, volunteers, and shoppers enjoyed a BBQ lunch, bake sale, and a 50% off in-store sale.

A heartfelt thanks to the Warman community for their unwavering support.



Will has been a dedicated volunteer at the Lanigan shop for about six years. His favorite department to work in is the testing corner, while he enjoys shopping in the hardware section.

What keeps Will coming back to volunteer? He finds great satisfaction in repairing things and making them useful again.



In September 2023, MCC Clothes Basket joined Rosthern's Harvest Festival Parade! The staff and volunteers waved, handed out candy and coupons, and enjoyed an exciting day with amazing sales. Thanks for supporting MCC by shopping thriftily, donating, and volunteering!

“It is awesome to see that someone can benefit from our work. We love to help someone while enjoying what we are doing.”

**HAROLD TIESZEN,
MATERIAL RESOURCES
VOLUNTEER**



“I’ve met a new group of survivors, warriors and friends. Thank you.”

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE SUPPORT
GROUP PARTICIPANT**



HAROLD AND MIRIAM TIESZEN’S LEGACY OF COMFORT

For over 20 years, Harold and Miriam Tieszen have dedicated their time and skills to making comforters for MCC. Recently, the couple spotted one of their distinctive comforters in a photo from a partner organization in Ukraine. Recognizable by their signature pattern and unique fleece backing, the Tieszens were deeply moved to see a young person wrapped in their work. Harold’s precision in cutting squares and Miriam’s expertise in sewing them together make them a remarkable team. Together, this Saskatchewan couple has crafted and sent hundreds of beautiful comforters worldwide through MCC.

TRAUMA-INFORMED SUPPORT

This year, our team focused on integrating trauma-informed learning across our program initiatives. We launched the *You Are Not Alone* 10-week peer-support group for intimate partner violence survivors and hosted the *Exhale Together Retreat*, offering trauma-informed support to 14 reconciliation and anti-racism practitioners at Shekinah Retreat Centre. Additionally, we incorporated trauma awareness into the orientation and home visit protocols for refugee sponsorship groups.

Photo:

_____ ↗
Above: Harold and Miriam Tieszen with one of their beautiful comforters. Below: recipients of Harold and Miriam’s comforter in the Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine. (Photo courtesy of Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches of Ukraine).

Financial highlights

MCC Saskatchewan is funded through the generosity of dedicated donors, grantors and thrift shops. This year, **\$2.78 million in donations** accounted for 60% of total income, significantly bolstering both local and international initiatives.

Thrift shop efforts, powered by staff, volunteers, and shoppers, raised over \$700,000 and the Relief Sale Festival raised over \$90,000, playing a vital role in sustaining our work.

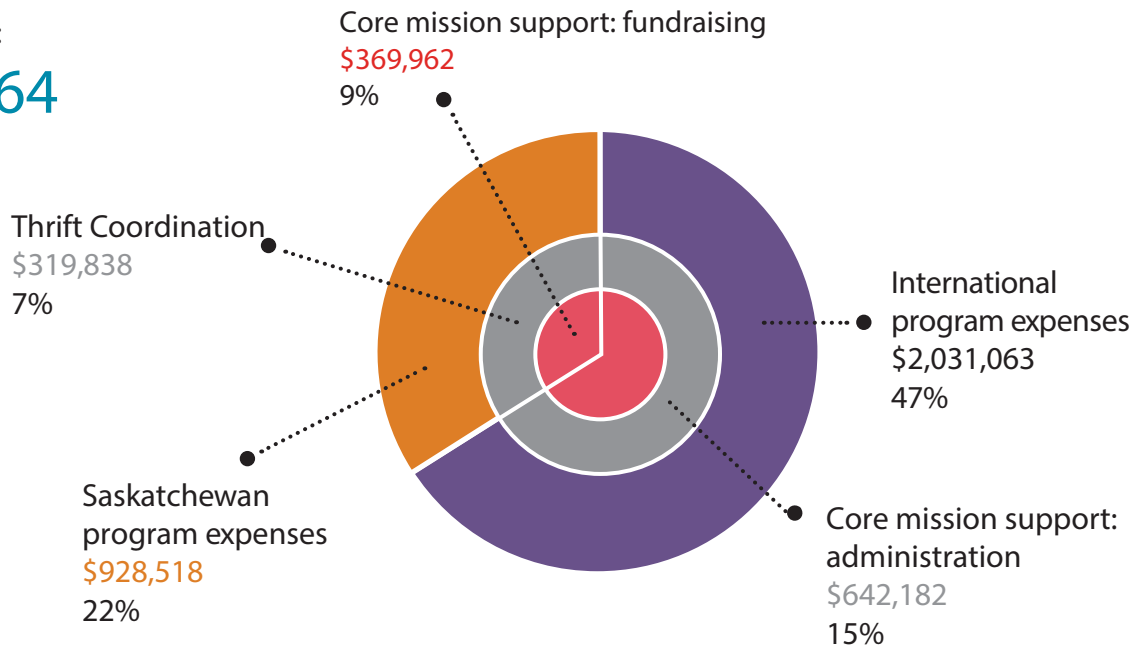
Grant funding also saw an increase, contributing \$584,250 toward our programs.

Together, these financial resources enabled us to continue our mission. Altogether, **\$4.66 million** was raised.

These funds facilitated an investment of **\$2.03 million** in international programs and **\$928,518** in local initiatives focused on justice, peacebuilding, and disaster relief.

The ongoing support from our community partners ensures we can continue our mission of relief, development, and peacebuilding across Saskatchewan and around the world.

TOTAL EXPENSES:
\$4,291,564



TOTAL REVENUE:
\$4,657,367

