




2022/2023

Annual Impact Report

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**



We hope you know how thankful we are that you are part of the MCC community. Together we have been able to do some amazing work. Take some time to read these stories and see the important work that's made possible because of your support.

## **See your gifts at work in British Columbia.**

This year we watched prices rise around us, and we all had to make choices about how to adjust. We couldn't be more grateful that through it all you made the choice to keep giving so generously.

Your generosity is bringing more peace and restorative justice programs to families and local communities. It is providing a warm welcome to newcomers seeking a safe place to call home. It is working toward reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

We see the fruit of this work every day, and are so grateful for your support.

**Thank you.**

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BRITISH COLUMBIA  
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# THANK YOU

## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year we are marking the 100th anniversary of an epic journey. In the summer of 1923, thousands of Mennonites living in Ukraine were caught in the middle of a violent conflict and famine. My grandfather was among them. Having lost both parents and an older brother during the conflict, he and his siblings began to flee, moving from one village to another as battle lines shifted. They were among the thousands who were helped by MCC and came to Canada in the 1920's.

Little did they know that the organization created to assist them, MCC, would become a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches. And little did they know that when they came to Canada, they would be displacing indigenous people, that 100 years later there would be another war in Ukraine, and that conflict and drought in many countries would be contributing to a global refugee crisis displacing over 100 million and a global food crisis impacting over 800 million. These people are also on an epic journey, in search of hope.

Today MCC is providing relief, development and peace in 45 countries, assisting thousands of people facing conflict and poverty. And here at home we are caring for those who live homeless, supporting those who experience domestic violence, responding to child poverty, working toward reconciliation with indigenous people and assisting refugees from around the world. Thanks to your support, MCC is making a difference for thousands of people who are on a journey, searching for hope.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne Bremner', written over a white background.

**WAYNE BREMNER**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
MCC BRITISH COLUMBIA



*“The Lord watches over the sojourners;  
he upholds the widow and the fatherless ...”*

—PSALM 146:9 ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION (ESV)



Troy "Slick" and Jane Njogu – pictured at the Meals & Friendship event – have now known each other for over 9 years. Troy says, "This has been an influential program for me – especially the community and the prayer." (MCC Photo/Monet Lamphere-Ma)

## BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE



Your support is providing hope to those facing homelessness.

Each Thursday evening, a remarkable transformation takes place in the parking lot of MCC BC's office building. Familiar faces – some just steps away from their tents, others driving their temporary home – gather for the Meals & Friendship barbeque.

These meals have become a catalyst for change, providing critical resources and a sense of belonging for our neighbours facing homelessness. Because of your support, we can offer food, clothing, showers and other resource referrals – making a tangible difference.

But it's the power of community that truly uplifts when people are at their lowest. At a time when many doors are shut, it's a place of welcome and hope for second chances.

Rick, a long-standing volunteer and member of our community, found relationships at this weekly dinner that have helped him through the hard times: "When I lost my two grandkids – kids who loved people experiencing homelessness – these people were here for me. They want you to know you're not alone."

Thank you for giving people like Rick hope to persevere.

### Homelessness Prevention & Outreach Program highlights:

**840**

people at risk of homelessness assisted with housing

**1,200**

meals served at weekly community barbecues

**503**

showers provided through MCC partner Refresh Mobile Shower Ministry

*"I don't think it's a mistake that God placed MCC BC here. This is a program that meets people in their pain. It transforms them and it transforms us."*

**Jane Njogu,**  
**HPOP Coordinator**

## SPONSORING REFUGEES



Arriving at the Vancouver airport, a family from South Sudan receives a warm welcome from Sardis Community Church. (Photo courtesy of Sardis Community Church)

## Migration & Resettlement Program highlights

325

refugees and their sponsorship groups received support

70

refugees arrived in BC thanks to MCC sponsoring groups

9

trainings equipped BC groups to care for uprooted people

81

Ukrainians who had fled to BC received ongoing one-on-one support

## STABILIZING THE UPROOTED



Because of your generosity, Marko and Anna's family have a safe place to call home.

*"We left that night with just the clothes we could carry on our back..."*

Marko, a recently resettled Ukrainian in British Columbia



Marko, Anna, and their two sons had recently fled and resettled in Abbotsford, BC. MCC BC continues to collaborate with local partners to help fleeing Ukrainians access affordable housing, essential supplies, and a church community that speaks their language. (MCC photo/Monet Lamphere-Ma)

## SUPPORTING UKRAINIANS IN BC

This year, your gifts extended a helping hand to 81 individuals fleeing from Ukraine to British Columbia. Many of those families – like Marko and Anna's\* family – had to leave in the middle of the night, crossing rivers and borders with only what they could carry on their backs. They prayed God would help them survive that night.

Arriving with limited English and few personal belongings, Marko and Anna felt overwhelmed as they were forced to start over. What would their life look like in Canada without the rest of their family? They needed to find housing and transportation, but did not have the social network and language needed to navigate Canadian systems.

Thankfully, they reached out to MCC BC. Ukrainian Settlement Assistant, Stacy Dantsey, helped them set up their new home and connected them with community resources.

Marko shares their heartfelt appreciation:

*"I am thankful that God, through your organization, helped many Ukrainians like me— people in need of support during this initial phase. It's truly significant, even touching, that you accepted us, drove with us, and provided us with answers to our questions.*

*Most importantly, you offered us a free place to live when we had no idea how we would afford it initially. This assistance is monumental for Ukrainians. May God bless you abundantly, enabling you to continue helping many more individuals like us."*

With your help, Marko and his family are receiving the guidance, support and community they need to resettle and regain hope.

\*The names of people pictured have been adapted for their security.



One night after a heated argument, Jeff\* threw Sara\* out of the house and called the police. But when the police arrived and assessed the situation, they took Jeff to jail overnight instead and set up a no-contact order.

A Crown Counsel lawyer then referred the couple to MCC BC's End Abuse men's and women's support groups.

After over a year and a half in End Abuse groups, Jeff and Sara saw breakthroughs in their marriage of over 35 years.

Before joining, each time Sara had dressed up to go out, Jeff would mock her, "It looks like you are going on a hot date. Who are you going to meet?"

On the final night of the women's support group, Jeff commented as she was leaving, "You look beautiful."

Without your help, couples like Sara and Jeff couldn't access the support groups they need to heal and learn how to build a healthy relationship.

\*The names of participants have been adapted to protect their privacy.

## End Abuse Program highlights:

**364**

participants helped through End Abuse

**120**

individuals dealing with domestic violence received 1-on-1 support

**35**

facilitators trained to run End Abuse women's support groups

**54**

men attended accountability groups

Because of your love, Sara and Jeff could learn to grow in respect for each other.

*"To believe in oneself again feels uplifting, enlightening and refreshing.*

*It encourages us forward with faith."*

Sara, End Abuse program participant

Photo

Metis artist Bryan Stephenson created artwork as gift and presented it to MCC at a traditional Stolo gifting ceremony. This event brought together Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to recognize the importance of reconciliation and relationship. (MCC photo/Monet Lamphere-Ma)



Among the most highly-valued fruit of MCC’s Indigenous Neighbours Program are the relationships with local Indigenous leaders that continue to influence our reconciliation journey, for both our staff and our community. Over the years of dialogue and connection, we are learning and growing together.

At one point in that journey, MCC BC wrote an apology to our local First Nations in response to the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and presented it at our 2017 AGM. Hearing the apology, Métis artist Bryan Stephenson was moved to create an extraordinary gift of art in response. His masterpiece, infused with cultural symbolism, represents Mennonite history and the work of MCC in BC and around the world.

To acknowledge and receive his gift, a traditional Stó:lō gifting ceremony was recently held in our atrium, bringing together attendees from Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. The event served as a powerful reminder of the importance of our commitment to grow in reconciliation together and to open our hearts to listen to others.

As we reflect on our progress, we humbly acknowledge the need for further growth in both learning from Indigenous communities and also in amplifying their voices to create lasting change. Thank you for joining us on this journey toward a more just and reconciled world.

## Indigenous Neighbours Program highlights

1237

people engaged in learning about Indigenous peoples’ history, culture and current issues

100

youth engaged in learning about Indigenous peoples’ history, culture and current issues

13

interactive KAIROS Blanket Exercise events in partnership with Indigenous facilitators

12

peacebuilding events to advocate for respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people



# MATERIAL RESOURCES



**27 churches** partnering with MCC BC to send critical supplies to disaster zones.

*“Serving God’s Kingdom [by volunteering] is simpler than you’d expect. Even coming once a week. It’s what we’re called to do.”*

**Tori Klapstein, Material Resources Volunteer**



Volunteers from Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship Church in Coquitlam, BC load 102 relief kits to be sent to people facing crisis. (Photo courtesy of Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship Church)



Relief kits packed at Cedar Valley Church in Mission, BC. (Photo courtesy of Cedar Valley Church)

Again this year, BC churches stepped up to send essential supplies to those in need around the world. Churches across the province are changing lives – from Vancouver Island to the Okanagan, from Northern BC to the Lower Mainland.

These churches are great examples of the power of faith in action. When an individual is facing disaster or conflict, the practical gift of a hand-packed bucket or a hand-stitched blanket shows that someone still cares.



Comforter-making at a Great Winter Warm Up event at United Mennonite Church in Black Creek, BC. (Photo courtesy of United Mennonite Church)

## Material resources shipped from BC in 2022-23:



**2,491**

Comforters



**700**

Relief kits



**792**

School kits



**600**

Hygiene kits



**400**

Infant care kits

# THRIFT SHOPS



Let's change more lives – locally and globally.

*“I had to learn over time, I can't just point my finger at them. I need to respect them and assume the best. We all need each other.”*

**Ursula, MCC Thrift Volunteer in Surrey, BC**



Ursula, long-time volunteer, at the MCC Thrift Shop in Surrey, British Columbia. (MCC Photo/Monet Lamphere-Ma)

## **Thrift Shops in BC had a record-breaking year! \$2,888,142 in net sales is changing even more lives here in BC and around the world!**

MCC Thrift Shops are celebrating 50 years of supporting life-changing projects around the world, providing food, water, education and more. And we couldn't have done it without the passion and commitment of thrift staff and volunteers.

Ursula is one of the thrift volunteers making this work possible. A volunteer for over 15 years, she initially hesitated to enter a secondhand store, but has since dedicated herself to various roles, including bookkeeping. Located in Surrey's high-need Whalley neighbourhood, the shop she provides a safe space for those facing homelessness, addiction, and mental health challenges. Ursula has learned to replace judgment with respect towards customers in difficult situations. Her faith has grown through serving in this shop, feeling God's protection and love.

We are grateful for each of the remarkable volunteers, staff and donors across British Columbia who support MCC's impactful work, funding life-changing projects globally and locally. Their compassion transforms lives within their communities and beyond, providing vital resources such as meals in places with starvation, clean water where no well has existed, and classrooms where kids would otherwise drop out of school. They are making an immeasurable difference – we are deeply thankful for their faithful commitment to this important work.

## HAVING FUN RAISING FUNDS

**3 communities**  
receiving clean  
water thanks to  
Norm's no-shave  
fundraiser

*“Water is life  
and we take  
it for granted.  
So I decided  
I would use  
my beard to  
raise money  
for clean water  
and wells.”*

**Norm Neufeld**



Norm Neufeld before and after shaving for the fundraiser.  
(Photo courtesy of Norm Neufeld)

### **CLEAN WATER FOR A CLEAN SHAVE**

What started as a simple idea – growing a beard – became a life-changing endeavor. Meet enthusiastic MCC supporter, Norm (Norbert) Neufeld, who embarked on creating a "Clean Water for a Clean Shave" fundraiser.

Norm had set a goal of \$10,400 for 2 communities to have clean water. He was amazed by God's faithfulness in raising over \$17,381 – enough for 3 communities!

After two years of beard growth, an idea sparked: why not leverage this unique journey to raise funds for clean water and wells? The goal was set, and the journey began as he continued to grow his beard a third year.

Despite initial reservations, Norm saw an outpouring of support from family, friends and even unexpected donors. Halfway through the campaign a surge of donations brought tears of joy, reaffirming the importance of clean water in the lives of many.

“A challenging part was having the beard while still sometimes wearing my police uniform,” he shares, as his facial hair did not meet regulations for uniformed officers. “Having said that, the Vancouver Police Executives were very supportive of the cause of clean water.”

To those considering a fundraiser, the no-longer-bearded Norm advises: “Be creative and have fun. Do something that people will talk about... keep others engaged in the purpose. And most importantly, trust God.”

# Financial highlights

We are immensely thankful for the generosity of MCC supporters this year and their commitment to meeting basic needs in the name of Christ.

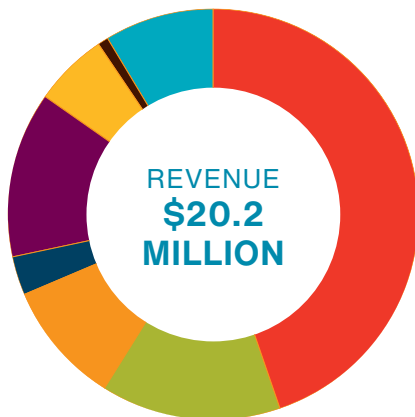
As events returned to pre-pandemic normalcy, we were pleased to have return to strong revenues from the Festival for World Relief and Thrift. We are also grateful for the generosity of MCC donors, including \$2 million from bequests and \$1.9 million for the crisis in Ukrainian and earthquake in Syria.

One very unusual donation this year was a \$229 million “legacy gift” of property that is now being managed by HyLand Properties (formerly known as MCC Legacy Trust). This donation is similar to an endowment, with the goal of maintaining the value while also making annual donations to support the work of MCC. This type of donation is one more way to address the overwhelming needs around the world.

Your generosity enables MCC to share God's love and compassion for uprooted and vulnerable within our local communities and across more than 45 countries worldwide. Thank you.

## TOTAL REVENUE:

# \$20,193,787

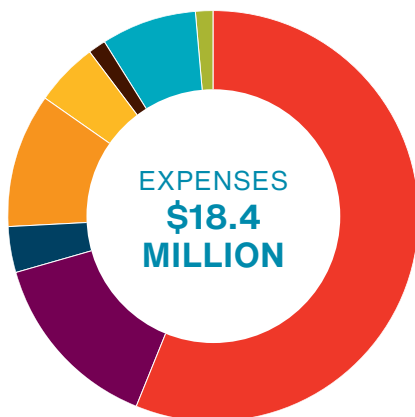


<span style="color: red;">■</span> <b>Contributions</b> \$9,045,612	<span style="color: purple;">■</span> <b>Local Program</b> \$2,658,888
<span style="color: green;">■</span> <b>Thrift Stores (Net)</b> \$2,888,142	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> <b>Relief Festivals (Gross)</b> \$1,150,999
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> <b>Contributions (Disasters)</b> \$1,962,583	<span style="color: brown;">■</span> <b>Material Resources</b> \$172,028
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> <b>Ten Thousand Villages/ Common Place Cafe</b> \$607,895	<span style="color: cyan;">■</span> <b>Other</b> \$1,707,640

Note: In addition to the amounts shown in the visual above, MCC B.C. also received a \$229 million donation of revenue generating properties that will be managed by HyLand Properties, similar to an endowment.

## TOTAL EXPENSES:

# \$18,427,377



<span style="color: red;">■</span> <b>International Program</b> \$ 10,350,582	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> <b>Fundraising &amp; Communications</b> \$929,262
<span style="color: purple;">■</span> <b>Local Program</b> \$2,640,373	<span style="color: brown;">■</span> <b>Material Resources</b> \$258,515
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> <b>Ten Thousand Villages/ Common Place Cafe</b> \$680,421	<span style="color: cyan;">■</span> <b>Finance &amp; Administration</b> \$1,395,089
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> <b>International Disasters</b> \$1,962,583	<span style="color: green;">■</span> <b>Local Disasters</b> \$210,552