



## 2017 DISTRICT CONFERENCES

# The President's Report to the District Conference

# 2017



The Christian and Missionary  
Alliance in Canada



**O God, with all our hearts,  
We long for You.  
Come, transform us to be Christ-centred,  
Spirit-empowered, Mission-focused people,  
multiplying disciples everywhere.**

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## Introduction

### ON MISSION – EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE, ALL THE TIME

*“When we come down to it in simplest form, it [revival] means the reviving of dead areas in our lives.”*

*Norman Grubb – “Continuous Revival”*

The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada (C&MA) has entered into a season where God is bringing to life the dead places of our denomination. Everywhere I go I see the rising hunger for a deeper encounter with Jesus. Recently, I was reading about the revival that hit Western Canada in the early seventies. The Sutera twins, two brothers with a powerful anointing, were ministering in British Columbia. It was under their ministry that my father, who had backslidden for two years, came back to Jesus in a powerful display of repentance and humility. These revivalists were called to Ebenezer Baptist Church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan and God broke into that small congregation with a mighty move of His Spirit. Very quickly the crowds outgrew the Baptist church facilities and ended up using the University Drive Alliance Church facilities. Walter Boldt, the senior pastor of the Alliance church, was deeply impacted by the revival and became a mighty force of renewal in the city.

A local newspaper described the revival this way: *“The department stores said, “What is going on in the city? People had stolen things from their counters, and they wanted to make it right. The police department said, “Something’s happening in our town, because nighttime crime is at an all-time low. What is going on?” ... Someone wrote a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada and said, “Sir, you better have some kind of fund ready for conscience money from Western Canadians who are going to be paying delinquent income taxes because they cheated the government.”* The newspaper article ended with these words, ***“We’ve never seen a God like this around here before! Something is happening in the best sense of the word.”***<sup>1</sup>

The Alliance district superintendent for the Midwest stated that after the revival he was not called out on one troubleshooting assignment in any church for two-and-a-half years. He noted that it was not because there were no conflicts, but the revival had taught church leaders how to solve their problems with kneepads on instead of boxing gloves. Ralph Sutera declared, ***“When the Spirit of God works in revival, He doesn’t need any help in convicting people. There is a brokenness and an openness. The truths we share in revival are: deal with sins, surrender the rights of self at the cross, be filled with the Holy Spirit, and walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.”***

God is God and He is always doing a new thing. The way God visits us next will not be the same as He visited us last, but some things will be the same: dealing with sin, confession, repentance, surrender, filling of the Holy Spirit and walking in the power of the Holy Spirit. A.B Simpson loved to preach on Jeremiah 6:16 where the prophet declares, ***“Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.”*** Could it be that the new thing we are experiencing in the Canadian Alliance is actually a reclaiming of the “ancient paths”? We are ready. Now is the time!

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from *The Canadian Revival and Concepts of Revival* by Ralph Sutera,  
[http://www.heraldofthiscoming.com/Past%20Issues/2007/December/the\\_canadian\\_revival\\_and\\_concepts\\_of\\_revival.htm](http://www.heraldofthiscoming.com/Past%20Issues/2007/December/the_canadian_revival_and_concepts_of_revival.htm)



## Five “S” Strategic Planning

The C&MA continues to be aligned with the Five “S” Strategic Plan, covering Silk, Sun, Sand, Spice and Sea to Sea regions of the world. It has four major components: Culture, Structure, Nurture and Venture. By 2024, the impact of the plan, God willing, will lead to the fulfillment of our Legacy Impact statement:

*The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada will be known as a healthy and mobilized mosaic, empowering the generations to risk all to invite the most neglected people to enjoy and be agents of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom.*

Responsibility to realize this vision rests with the Global Leadership Team (GLT) consisting mainly of regional developers, district superintendents, and the president's lead team. The GLT ensures that effective plans are developed and implementation is strategically assigned and monitored. Baselines have been established and trends are emerging that indicate where change is happening and where adjustments need to be made.

### CULTURE (RELATIONAL AND SPIRITUAL VITALITY)

*The C&MA will be known as a mosaic of people experiencing Christ in all His fullness, engaging in healthy relationships, united in diversity, and embracing our collective identity.*

Culture can be defined as the behaviours and beliefs characterizing a particular group. The vision to be Christ-centred, Spirit-empowered and Mission-focused has grabbed the hearts of Alliance people worldwide. The grave marker of A.B. Simpson displays in bold print, “Not I, but Christ!” Simpson was a leader who understood that “abiding in Christ” was the place of continual renewal. His home was very close to the mighty Hudson River, influencing some of the images of spiritual renewal he used. Simpson wrote, “*We are the channel, He flows through it. Let us receive Him into every pore and fiber of our being. Let every chord and every member be a channel for His indwelling and in-working.*” Picking up on the imagery of water, numerous streams of renewal are being engaged across Canada and among our global community. Each one of these renewal streams is raising the water level of spiritual resurgence in the Canadian C&MA.

- Church Renewal in Steinbach, Manitoba
- Paul King Ministries
- SoulFormation Ministries, directed by Morris Dirks
- Bethel Ministries in Redding California (Bethel Music is impacting our churches)
- Spiritual Renewal Ministries, directed by Kathy Klassen, Director of Relational & Spiritual Vitality in the Eastern Canadian District
- Soul Care retreats conducted by Dr. Rob Reimer and Dr. Martin Sanders
- Renewal Ministry, including Holy Spirit Encounter Retreats and Soul Care Conferences, directed by Doug Balzer, Church Planting and Leadership Development Coach in the Western Canadian district
- Alliance Pray! Team, chaired by David Chotka
- Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, by Pete Scazzero

There is a passion to see the Alliance in Canada and around the globe begin to experience continuous revival, where dead places in our lives are resurrected and a new vision for reaching the world dominates our activities. There is a clear call to go deeper in Christ and increasing evidence of leadership and lay individuals entering into the cycle of renewal and experiencing life-changing encounters with God. Our churches and congregations are



reporting healings, deliverances, and fillings of the Holy Spirit, increased unity demonstrated by reconciliation, healthier conversations and relationships, and an increase in generosity. Most importantly, there is a growing compassion among God's people for the least-reached peoples groups (LRPGs) of this world and a longing for justice for at-risk peoples. As God's people are growing in their level of peace and confidence in God's sovereignty, leaders are arising with a willingness to take greater risks for the kingdom of God and the Gospel we are entrusted with. This has led to the opening of new fields in some of the most dangerous and unreached places in the world. We are excited for the future and pray for an increase in humility and sensitivity to God and one another as He seeks to continue this work.

## STRUCTURE (ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS)

*The C&MA will be known as an environment of healthy structures, collaboration, and disciplined creativity, fortified by sustainable funding.*

Abundant funding and healthy structures are the two objectives in this area currently being addressed. God wants to provide *abundant* funding for the mission He has given us. This must first be a matter of the heart and will come about as the Spirit continues to do a deep work in all of us (see 'Culture' above). Increasing generosity must be accompanied by effective, easily accessible means of engagement. To that end, the use of the Global Advance Fund (GAF) is being studied, broad-based project funding is being investigated, and financial instruments to provide additional funding streams are being considered. In order to make giving user-friendly for every generation, new state-of-the-art means of contributing will be introduced alongside current practices.

To realize the 2024 Legacy Impact statement, the innovative initiatives of Culture, Nurture and Venture must drive the organization. Proposals to incorporate those drivers into the organizational structure are under consideration with a view to complete this process by 2020.

## NURTURE (LEADER DEVELOPMENT)

*The C&MA will develop new servant leaders for ministry who build, empower and replicate a missional movement, including apostolic leaders focused on the establishment of churches among the most neglected.*

As a resource of the C&MA, Envision Canada identifies and develops missional leaders who innovate, establish and strengthen communities of faith around the world and across Canada by designing intentional and missional opportunities through trips, internships, apprenticeships and global careers.

This past fall, the decision was made to intentionally integrate Envision Canada into the existing fabric of Global Ministries and Canadian Ministries (domestically through New Ventures). This integration has been a fantastic way to share resources, utilize the expertise of team members across departments, and position Envision as a resource to our churches. Envision Canada was launched at General Assembly 2016 and there has been a very positive response. Envision now has five international sites with ministry opportunities in 12 countries, 14 short-term mission trips scheduled, 17 internships and 17 apprenticeships. National leader development engagement is underway. Official workers, who carry the portfolio of leader development as part of their job description, from each district and Global Ministries gathered to form a National Leader Development Network (NLDN). We look forward to the future as Envision Canada further engages existing development pathways and identifies possible models of development that can be pilot-tested in select districts or regions.



## VENTURE (MULTIPLICATION AND MOBILIZATION)

*The Alliance will see an increase in new churches, kingdom multiplication engagements and constituents engaged in transformational ministry, risking it all to engage the most neglected for Christ across the Five "S" regions.*

The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada's mandate is to move into areas of the world where less than 2% of the population is Christian. As a missions movement, we are at the early pioneering stages of church planting; therefore, we are measuring and monitoring Kingdom multiplication engagements that reflect proclamation activities. The entire strategic plan rests on our ability to multiply and mobilize disciples who are Christ-centred, Spirit-empowered and Mission-focused. This involves re-examining the roles of the National Discipleship Team, the National Youth Team and the National Children's Team to ensure that local churches are being supported in multiplying and mobilizing disciples.

## Sea to Sea

### CHURCH PLANTING IN CANADA

Sea to Sea is working toward the Five "S" strategic plan goal that by 2020 there will be a 4% average annual increase in new churches in Canada, resulting in 550 churches in 2024. Could it be that your church will be the catalyst or become a partner with other churches to birth one of these new churches? Churches are encouraged to fully support the efforts of their district superintendent as we commit to being a multiplication movement.

### DISCIPLE-MAKING

The C&MA will never be a church planting movement, a missionary movement or even a deeper life movement unless we are a disciple-making movement. The number and quality of disciples that we make will have a direct bearing on everything else we do. Is your church making disciples that are Christ-centred, Spirit-empowered and Mission-focused? Are the disciples in your church on mission, everyone, everywhere, all the time? District ministry teams are there to help churches create discipleship plans unique to each church. Churches having success in raising up disciples who make disciples are invited to share their strategies with other churches. We cannot afford to fail as a disciple-making movement. Let's help one another!

### DEFEND DIGNITY

The C&MA's Defend Dignity (dD) initiative, a ministry that addresses commercial, sexual exploitation in Canada, continues to raise awareness, provide resources and training for individuals and churches, and come alongside survivors and victims. dD advocates for law and policy reform with the federal government and is currently involved in the health committee study examining the harms of pornography. Defend Dignity hopes to be part of the Justice Minister's consultations on the prostitution legislation. In conjunction with these consultations, dD will launch a national billboard campaign for public awareness around the criminality of purchasing sex. In preparation for participation in the Canadian Youth Worker Conferences, dD created a Youth Worker training video being used across Canada by youth workers and service providers. A live streamed prayer and worship event to target sexual exploitation was held in February 2017. This will become an annual event to unleash God's power over this issue.



## Global Ministries

*"Unless the Lord builds His house, those who build it labour in vain!"* Psalm 127:1

The C&MA is first and foremost clear about its core calling to bring "access to Jesus." Our core focus is to the least-reached peoples. Our core strategy is to "pioneer" efforts so that the church is birthed, grows and multiplies among all peoples without the Gospel. This is in our DNA. By God's grace this is us, the C&MA!

### NEW ENGAGEMENTS

#### Northern Iraq

These are tumultuous and uncertain days in parts of Northern Iraq. Reports suggest 500,000 to one million citizens of Mosul will become internally displaced persons (IDPs) as a result of the fighting and repatriation of the city of Mosul from the grip of ISIL/ISIS. In preparation for this diaspora, Samaritan's Purse is preparing collection sites (east and southeast of Mosul) that will become refugee camps, aiming to provide safety and basic living supplies. We believe that this will, by necessity, largely shape our ministry responses for the next significant period of time.

Global Ministries (GM) partners with C&MA Iraqi pastors, the C&MA of Lebanon (through Sami Dagher), CAMA Services USA, and Samaritan's Purse. Our major thrust is to reach the Yazidi people for Christ; however, the dynamics of this situation and our very presence in Iraq also allows impact among Arab Muslims and Kurds, all of which are least-reached people groups. The Canadian government has considered bringing Yazidi refugees into Canada, especially those who were traumatized by ISIL forces over these past two years. By 2018, GM is planning to have at least two fully-funded couples living in Iraq as well as ongoing assistance from one couple (based in Germany) who will continue to make regular trips into Northern Iraq and partner on the ground with Pastor Samir in Dohuk and Pastor Malath in Erbil.

In addition, this partnership has been able to realize a gifting of free land close to Erbil which will become property of the Iraq C&MA and, under the leadership of Samaritan's Purse, a community centre providing an assortment of ministry opportunities, chief of which will be the home of an educational arm to train up Iraqi pastoral leaders, as well as a place for English speaking expatriates to gather as an International church community. GM is being asked to provide an international church pastor couple who will work closely with Pastor Malath. The partnership will also facilitate donations for the development of the proposed community centre. This is a very timely, bold and courageous initiative.

#### Senegal

In mid-September, Gary and Sharon Howell took up residence in Senegal following their home assignment in Canada. In October, one of our district superintendents and his wife, along with the Howells' senior pastor, travelled to Senegal. As part of an integrated effort, they came alongside regional leadership to collaborate and envision the various ways the new initiative among the Wolof and Fulani peoples can be moved forward. One of our exciting partnerships in Senegal is with a Fulani man (former a practicing Muslim) who, while studying medicine in Libya, became a believer and was discipled into solid faith. He is now back in Senegal and leading a program through medicine that is impacting Fulani for Jesus. Several religious leaders from among the Fulani have recently declared their faith in Jesus. How we long for other partner churches here in Canada to join efforts to raise up international workers and send them out with GM coordination to reach these people. One further opportunity in our efforts in



Senegal exists for a pastor with a heart for missions to consider an international church right in the capital city of Dakar. This effort, established by the C&MA (USA), is in need of a pastor to provide leadership.

### **Pashtun Peoples**

In the past year, Global Ministries has been praying, posturing and monitoring engagement with Pashtun peoples in a couple of Central Asian countries as well as in diaspora contexts. The Pashtun number over 50 million worldwide and very few have access to Jesus. Two young Alliance men are presently engaging these people in separate contexts. We are in a season of prayer to determine how God is asking us to move forward in the future.

### **PERSONNEL UPDATES**

Global Ministries continues to monitor the attrition of personnel placed among least-reached people groups. While the goal is to add new personnel to strengthen existing teams and form new teams, it has been a challenge to exceed the 184 full-time equivalents reflected in the 2016 average personnel count and budget. GAF giving has not grown to a level that will responsibly allow the sending of additional personnel beyond these numbers and the sending of new personnel has largely been based on attrition through retirement and unexpected returns to Canada.

With a growing passion for increasing faith-based giving from our Canadian constituents towards mission impact among least-reached peoples, an annual initiative called the Jaffray Offering was launched in October 2016. More than \$500,000 was generously contributed by January of 2017. Our prayer is that an increasing number of churches and members will participate in subsequent years and the gift of generosity will continue to be released impacting our capacity to send a global workforce that will greatly exceed attrition and retirement. We are encouraging churches to link this annual effort to mission conferences and prayer initiatives to maximize the impact in missional education and faith-based generosity to reach the lost for Christ. In addition, we are actively encouraging a posture and commitment among our pastors and church boards to implement fresh, missional, discipleship across all age groups resulting in each church endeavouring to raise up an international worker. The prayer inspired dream in this season is to see every boy and girl, man and woman, clergy and laity “On Mission. Everyone. Everywhere. All the time!”

In 2016, GM experienced unexpected attrition of 12 personnel, as well as the expected attrition of one worker due to retirement. The current redesign of GM’s candidate development (now referred to as “GoGlobal”) is related to these personnel dynamics and also extends to our Pre-Departure Orientation and Home Mission Assignment processes in 2016/17. We are seeking to better identify, shape, release and develop our personnel during candidacy and continuously as part of their long-term development. Envision and GoGlobal are uniquely integrated to prepare and send called and gifted workers. There is excitement about the new opportunities that are emerging through the resourcing of Envision Canada for mission involvement. Many quality young candidates are pursuing involvements in these new leader development initiatives.

### **GLOBAL MINISTRIES KEY MEASURES DASHBOARD**

Global Ministries has begun to track its efforts around five key “means” measures that best reflect least-reached peoples pioneering activities and represent the necessary dynamics for multiplying indigenous church planting movements: Prayer, People (LRPGs), Presence (IW deployments), Proclamation and Partnerships. This past year, Global Ministries developed and launched its first annual Global Ministries Worker Survey, which assisted GM with identifying baselines for the five key “means” measurements.





As referenced in the Venture section of this report, the key Proclamation “means” measure is also being measured as part of the Five “S” strategic plan. International workers are ever-increasingly stretching their capacity to take bold and courageous risks in the proclamation of the Gospel.

One effort to raise the risk-taking element among our global efforts is to eliminate the use of initials to describe IWs in prayer letters which restricted effective understanding and engagement by our constituency in their global prayer efforts. In addition, excellent resources, including an increase in the stories of what God is doing throughout the Five “S” regions, are being developed by the NMC Communications Department to assist in efforts to understand, focus on, and pray for least-reached people groups. International workers are also increasing their direct engagements with C&MA churches while on home assignment in direct coordination with district leadership.

### EVERYONE ON MISSION: WHO IS A MOBILIZER?

At a recent worldwide consultation for mission mobilization in Nairobi, Kenya, a simple but powerful theme ‘*This Is Your Tribe*’ was created. The tribe they were referring to was not national or ethnic, but those people that churches all over the world are calling ‘mobilizers’ – those who have a deep sense of God’s loving heart for the lost and are passionate to ‘move people’ in their congregations towards people with little or no access to the Gospel. Fundamentally, it is an integral part of disciple-making: *Mobilizing* is happening when people are: *educating and inspiring* believers with God’s heart for the nations; *pointing to clear action steps* they can take to live out this mission (forms of prayer, giving, participating in mission); and, 3) *sharing the stories of God at work*, allowing Christ to have centre stage. Imagine a mosaic where every church, church leader, international worker, district leader and member shares the call to move people in step with the Spirit toward the lost and the least reached – all of us becoming the “Tribe”.

Through listening to churches and district leaders over the past few years, we realize there is a need for the sending ministry to be directed back to the local church. It is key that Alliance pastors, churches and international workers spend time together and cultivate their roles in creating a passionate missions culture. Global Ministries recognizes that, in the past, it assumed far too much of the work of sending international workers and is truly sorry that this has encumbered the mobilizing culture we want to inspire. Global Ministries is excited to work with churches and IWs to develop a new way forward and desires to be interconnected deeply with churches in Canada and make itself available to wash feet and discern the prophetic call of God to the lost and the least-reached together. Only by God’s Spirit can the C&MA develop this kind of culture and He is already at work!

*Churches and pastors* are formulating mission visions that include Canadian outreach initiatives and developing partnerships in their “Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and ends of the earth...” They are discerning emerging leaders called to go and are looking for ways to see them thrive! *Global Ministries* has begun to coach, equip and empower international workers as mobilizers for mission in their relationship to churches and has created an improved model of Home Assignment. *District Superintendents* and their leadership are exploring ways to raise the banner for the Five “S” mission mobilizing calling of official workers and local churches. By integrating this thinking with pastors networks, district coaching and orientation, Kairos courses, and other new practices (some of the best discovered in the church!) a missionary heart both for local and international outreach is being established.



## Seamless Link to Mobilization

One of the ways GM and our districts must 'shift' is the way in which we resource and support the church for mission. Seamless Link Advisors have been the coaches for GM in recent years. The Seamless Link tool has been successfully launched and is used regularly by churches and international workers – this will continue to be a valuable partnership practice! However, the Seamless Link Advisor role will now conclude. In response to feedback provided by churches and districts, the focus will be equipping and empowering a Five "S" missions focus within local church disciple-making ministry. This will be the work of District Mission *Mobilizers*. These mobilizers will be deeply integrated with district coaching and church resourcing, as well as linked strategically with Global Ministries. The vision to be cast, the pathways for action, and stories to be celebrated will all be Five "S" – and the partners will be international workers as well as pioneers among the lost in Canada. Whatever unique part we play, whether as pastors, church leaders or international workers, these coaches will be there to serve the common vision for the lost and the least reached.

## Justice and Compassion

### REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

The C&MA can celebrate the fact that an increasing number of churches are engaged in the Private Sponsorship of Refugees program. Since becoming a national Sponsorship Agreement Holder in 2012, the C&MA in Canada has applied to sponsor individual refugees on behalf of local churches as follows: one individual in 2013, 36 in 2014, 75 in 2015, and 340 in 2016. Our prayer is to double the 2016 number in 2017! The National Ministry Centre is also assisting three other denominations with refugee sponsorship through a partnership that cost-shares a full-time Refugee Sponsorship Program Assistant. These denominations are: Evangelical Missionary Churches, Associated Gospel Churches, and Fellowship Baptist Churches. The C&MA is in partnership with the Alliance in Mafraq, Jordan, which refers Syrian families most in need of resettlement. We need more churches to get involved to facilitate these requests.

### TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION CALLS TO ACTION LEARNING AND PRAYER GUIDE

There is a great need to reconcile relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada. Justice and Compassion (J&C) has produced a learning and prayer guide<sup>2</sup> as a resource for churches to learn about these issues and to pray for healing in our country. It is our prayer that as churches use this tool and learn about the painful past of Indigenous peoples and the implications on First Nations communities they will not only be inspired to pray but also moved to intentional actions to be agents of healing and reconciliation in their own communities.

### CREATION CARE

The outcome of consultations on creation care and the Gospel held in Cape Town in 2010 and Jamaica in 2012 by the *Lausanne Movement's Creation Care Network*<sup>3</sup> was a call to the evangelical church to consider the

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<sup>2</sup> The Truth and Reconciliation Learning and Prayer Guide is only available in electronic form: <http://www.cmacan.org/tr-prayerguide>

<sup>3</sup> Joanne Beach, Director of Justice and Compassion, attended a third consultation in Boston in July 2015 and participates on the Lausanne's Creation Care Canadian Network, along with a member of the executive team of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC).



conclusions laid out in the *Jamaica Call to Action*. This *Call* includes a conviction that creation care is a “Gospel issue within the Lordship of Christ.” One of its 10 action steps calls for a new and robust theological work. We invite you to visit the Lausanne website<sup>4</sup> to examine the summary of this consultation. Work is underway on a five-year potential outcome scenario regarding the extent of the reach of this conversation and how it will involve the C&MA specifically.

## ASSOCIATION OF ALLIANCE CHAPLAINS

The Association of Alliance Chaplains (AAC)<sup>5</sup> continues to grow with over 100 chaplains. Each district<sup>6</sup> now has a chaplain representative on the national team who is in dialogue with their district office about strengthening the chaplaincy networks and raising the profiles of this front-line ministry. The team is also considering ways to offer training on chaplaincy for those in volunteer positions.

## PARISH NURSE MINISTRIES

Parish Nursing<sup>7,8</sup> is a local church ministry of healing for those who seek to be whole in body, mind and spirit. There is a small and growing network of parish nurses across Canada who offer the compassion and care of a Christ-centered registered nurse (RN) and promote congregational health, wholeness, and well-being. These nurses provide health education, counselling and spiritual/pastoral care, referral and advocacy for people facing health challenges, while acting as a liaison between the faith community and the medical community, assisting people in navigating the health care system.

## DISABILITY MINISTRIES

Disability Ministries<sup>9,10</sup> is a growing network of leaders who seek to support and encourage the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the life and work of the church, beginning with a heart of compassion by providing creative solutions for inclusive participation in church programming. This ministry seeks to promote a greater understanding about the life challenges of those with disabilities, in particular through webinars and resources. It is our prayer that more churches will become aware of how they can support families in their communities through things like prayer, meals and housework assistance, respite programs, and support groups for parents, caregivers and siblings.

## COMPASSION GIFT CATALOGUE

We are grateful to all the churches using our Compassion Gift Catalogue<sup>11</sup>. This resource is a learning and prayer guide for Justice and Compassion ministries. The 2017-2018 issue will be available in August 2017.

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<sup>4</sup> (<https://www.lausanne.org/content/statement/creation-care-call-to-action>).

<sup>5</sup> Resources and stories can be found on the website: <http://www.cmacan.org/alliance-chaplains>.

<sup>6</sup> The current national leadership representatives from each district are: Don Neufeld (National Coordinator) (WCD), Steeve Arseneau (SLD), Gordon Whitney (ECD), Paulette McCrae (CCD), Tom McCullagh (CMD), Gerard Barabash (WCD), Kris Knutson (WCD), and Bruce Rushton (CPD).

<sup>7</sup> See website for more details: <http://www.cmacan.org/parish-nurse>.

<sup>8</sup> Janice Buck from Cobourg Alliance continues to give leadership to this network and is more than willing to assist any church across Canada interested in starting this ministry.

<sup>9</sup> The Church Network for Supporting Disabilities Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/supportingdisabilities> provides resources for churches. More information can be found at: <http://www.cmacan.org/disability-ministries>.

<sup>10</sup> Disability Ministries is coordinated by Cynthia Tam.

<sup>11</sup> For an update on 2016 projects, visit: <https://faithhopeinaction.ca/>.



## CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK

The C&MA has been a member of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB)<sup>12</sup> for over 30 years. We are grateful to the many individuals and growing projects throughout Canada that have participated. For the last 10 years, most of our equity, along with Canadian government matching funds, has been programmed in Niger<sup>13</sup>, one of the most underdeveloped countries in the world. In 2016, a three-year agricultural and livelihood program, focused on conservation farming and gardening training, improved seed inputs and cash for work projects, was completed, impacting 1,014 male and female farmers. One woman stated, *"Now I can thank God because through gardening, my children and I have found a source of feeding ourselves."* The C&MA also funded a six-month food assistance project in another area of Niger that provided maize, beans, and oil for 4,800 people. One widow testified, *"My suffering has been greatly reduced. I do not have the words to describe how much this means to me. Thank you to those who supported us."*

## DISASTER RESPONSE

Through the generous donations to emergency response in 2016, the C&MA supported the following areas as part of our Disaster Response: DR Congo, Fort McMurray, Haiti, Nepal, Northern Iraq, Philippines, Syrian Refugee Relief, Venezuela, and West Java Indonesia. Details are available on the C&MA website.

## Alliance Pray! Team

The Alliance Pray! Team (APT) exists to serve and faithfully comes alongside our movement in prayer for the work of the C&MA. Its purpose is more than praying; its goal is to equip God's people and stoke the fire of the Spirit teaching the value of prayer. The Alliance Pray! Team has been in existence since 1998 when Dr. Arnold Cook commissioned the creation of this team. APT has developed resources, led at intercessory events, mobilized and developed prayer events, and worked in partnership with the National Ministry Centre to deepen intercession across the CMA. Their most visible role has been to train and mobilize intercession during General Assembly. At Assembly 2016, 72 people were trained in discernment prayer and 31 staffed the prayer room while delegates carried out the work of Assembly. It was astonishing to observe groups of 20 or so praying in shifts throughout the day receive intercessory burdens, pray through them and watch God at work. In the fall of 2017, APT will hold two events (one in eastern and one in western Canada) to: 1) train intercessors prior to General Assembly, providing oversight to their ministry during and after Assembly; and, 2) develop a 24/7 prayer ministry for crisis moments with the NMC and IWs in restricted access countries. APT also plans to develop a prayer course as part of these two events which will help put tools in the hands of national intercessors. Working in conjunction with Global Ministries, Alliance Pray! Team plans to oversee prayer ministry teams to undergird the work of our IWs. Also, APT will be resourcing churches through one, three and seven-day events to teach intercession.

## Discernment Process

Assembly 2016 was unique in several ways. The meeting was held in a local church rather than a convention centre, a discernment model was used to decide a challenging theological issue and the Holy Spirit moved with unquestioned power among our people. The majority of feedback received was incredibly positive, although we

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<sup>12</sup> For more information on food programming, visit: <http://www.cmacan.org/end-hunger>.

<sup>13</sup> Our implementing partner is Samaritan's Purse – Niger.



recognized several areas where we needed to grow and develop. The discernment process is continuing to be used among leadership both nationally and globally. It is encouraging to see God's people deepen their ability to hear God's voice and practice the presence of God. As we move forward, our goal is for the Alliance to be a movement that passionately waits for God and then moves – a people who listen and obey. Our leaders are leaning into the practice of gathering around God's Word, being still, and listening to corporately discern God's will for their ministry.

## General Assembly 2018

Preparations for General Assembly 2018 are well underway. Following consultation with leadership and pastors regarding location and logistics for the next Assembly, the Board of Directors determined that the event will be held at First Alliance Church in Calgary from June 5-9, 2018. First Alliance was an amazing host in 2016 and made all of our delegates feel right at home. We were thrilled when they graciously invited us back for another Assembly. It was encouraging to hear from delegates that the use of a church setting for Assembly is not only acceptable, but in the minds of many, preferable for future Assemblies. The Board wishes to maintain an east/west balance of locations for Assembly going forward and therefore other locations will be sought for future Assemblies. The theme for General Assembly 2018 will be "DEEPER!" It will be a call to go "Deeper in Jesus" and "Further on Mission!"

## Position Statements

Several commissions have been formed to review the Position Statements of the C&MA, including the Statement on Human Sexuality, the Statement on Family, and the Statement on Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage. The mandate of these commissions is not to change the position of the C&MA, but to review the tone and wording of these documents to ensure that they have both a pastoral and prophetic voice, providing helpful and clear guidance for our leaders. These commissions have been meeting and are at varying stages in their process of review. The final statements will be brought to General Assembly for consideration.

## Baptism and Membership

General Assembly 2016 carried a motion that the president provide General Assembly 2018 with: 1) clear theological definition of "believer's baptism" and some kind of parameters for deciding what may or may not be regarded as such; 2) a clear rationale for why the Canadian Alliance has departed from the historical practice of the C&MA of not requiring believer's baptism as a prerequisite for membership; 3) a clear theological definition of "local church membership"; and, 4) proposed requirements for formal local church membership. A commission has been formed to address these items, and will make a report to General Assembly for its consideration.



## Conclusion

One of the significant encounters with God I experienced this year was at the Church Renewal Weekend at Southland Church in Steinbach, Manitoba. In this small community located about 60 kilometers from Winnipeg, God is doing some amazing things. For the past decade the church has been engaged in calling its people into a lifestyle of confessional living with a focus on repentance, surrender, filling of the Holy Spirit, and listening prayer. The outpouring of God's blessing has now expanded the church to over 4,000 people and is having a global impact.

One of the most impactful aspects of the Church Renewal Weekend is the prayer summit. Over 2,000 people gather together to pray and it feels like a taste of heaven. The summit is an opportunity for visitors to the church to be prayed for by church members. Those who had been to this weekend before shared with me that I needed to go to where the youth of the church were praying. All of them have been trained in listening prayer and prophetic ministries. Agnes and I ran to where the youth were located and I was thrilled to be part of a group of five young adults who were willing to pray over me. They asked what was on my heart and how they could pray for me. My immediate response was, "Please pray that God would bring fresh spiritual renewal to The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada." (These young adults had no idea about the Alliance or even my leadership role.) They laid hands on me and listened for several minutes. A young man sitting to my right began to speak. He said, "I see a vineyard in pristine condition. Everything is in perfect order, nothing is out of place. It is obvious that great care and thought have been invested in the care of the vineyard. However, there is no water, everything is completely dry. I see you on your knees with your hands raised in the air crying out for rain. In the distance I see a large storm cloud forming." I began to imagine a great downpour about to burst; however, he said, "This storm will not produce a downpour but will arrive like a mist." As soon as he said the word 'mist', I felt a cool wetness on the back of my neck. It was refreshing and exhilarating. It lasted for the next 24 hours.

I asked the Lord to explain to me the meaning of the mist. Very clearly God revealed three things. First, the mist must touch the leaders. It must revive the people of influence first. Second, mist lingers long. Storms come in quickly and leave quickly, but mist stays for a long time. Finally, mist gets into the places where the storm cannot. We can insulate ourselves from a downpour, but mist moves unhindered into the deepest spaces to saturate with moisture. The picture was powerful. The renewal God wants to bring will be deep and will linger long. It will be a habitation not just a visitation. I began to pray – "Bring the mist Lord, bring the mist!" Still today I have moments when I sense the anointing of the Holy Spirit and it feels like mist on the back of my neck. A sign perhaps of God's faithfulness to renew His people.



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