



2021/2022

Annual Impact Report

**ONTARIO**





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MCEC - Mennonite Church Eastern Canada  
MB - Mennonite Brethren  
BIC - Be in Christ Church of Canada  
CG - Conrad Grebel University College

## THANK YOU FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I'm pleased to report another remarkable year in which there was so much evidence of God's faithfulness and provision despite great uncertainty.

The pandemic continued to impact our work in Ontario and globally; this required perseverance and the need to be flexible and adapt to ever-changing circumstances. Thrift shops were closed or had limited capacity, travel restrictions delayed refugees coming to Canada, material resource shipments were delayed and isolation weighed heavily on staff and those we serve.

Internationally, the needs were significant with crises in many places around the world. Conflict in Ethiopia, war in Ukraine, economic and political instability in Lebanon and the impact of climate continue to create food insecurity in many places. These are some of the challenges MCC responded to with your support.

In spite of multiple challenges, those who help make the ministry of MCC possible gave generously of their time and resources to collectively bring hope and healing to those most deeply affected. To our volunteers, donors, supporting churches and dedicated staff, we are grateful for your generosity and compassion that is making a difference in the lives of those who struggle with accessing everyday necessities.

As you read stories of impact and other results in the following pages, I hope you are inspired knowing that despite so much conflict and need, God is at work restoring hope and healing. Know that you are a vital part of MCC.

Joyfully in Christ,



**JOHN HEAD**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MCC ONTARIO  
JOHNHEAD@MCCONTARIO.CA



*“And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”*

— HEBREWS 13:16 NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV)

# ABOUT MCC ONTARIO

In addition to more than 600 projects worldwide, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is actively engaged in making a difference in Ontario. We walk towards reconciliation with Indigenous Neighbours and alongside newcomers building a new life in Canada. We support those impacted by crime or facing the realities of poverty and homelessness. We work to build stronger and safer communities.

Our work includes:

- A network of thrift shops committed to supporting local and international relief, development and peace projects and a sustainable way to preserve finite resources
- Resettlement of refugees made possible by church and community sponsorship groups
- Facilitating reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples through relationship, art, advocacy and emergency assistance
- Responding to the needs of communities and individuals who have been impacted by crime through restorative justice, trauma healing and peacebuilding initiatives
- Networking and liaising with providers and agencies in delivering culturally appropriate services for Low German-speaking newcomers
- Walking alongside and supporting people in our community facing the realities of homelessness and poverty
- Collecting and shipping desperately needed aid materials all over the world

## LEADERSHIP TEAM



**John Head**  
Executive Director



**Kim Lester**  
Associate Executive  
Director



**Wendy Adema**  
Program Director



**Michelle Brenneman**  
Director of Human  
Resources

## MCC ONTARIO WORKS ON TREATED LAND

MCC Ontario acknowledges and honours the Original People from all the Nations represented in this land we now call Ontario. We acknowledge the impact of colonialism on the land, language, culture and knowledge of all Indigenous Peoples. We also recognize the contributions that Indigenous Peoples have made to shaping and strengthening communities across Ontario.

We are grateful for the opportunity to reaffirm our collective commitment to make the promise and the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in our lives and in our work.

*“Thank you....  
Your support  
through prayer  
and kindness sure  
does help!”*

**Ed Sackaney,**  
Fort Albany First Nation

# INDIGENOUS NEIGHBOURS



Every Child Matters pin, beaded at the Stitching and Stories Niska event  
MCC photo/Clara Wheaton

**Thank you for partnering with MCC Ontario to provide emergency supplies, support food sovereignty and respond to the Calls to Action put forward by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.**



*“The pins created during this workshop are not only [a] symbol of solidarity but — because they hold the story of a group, brought together by art, who shared in moments of learning, hearing, seeing and healing — they are also a symbol of hope and reconciliation.”*

Stitching and Stories participant

6

Northern Indigenous communities received emergency aid.

16

Indigenous communities increased their access to culturally appropriate, nutritious and affordable food through Community Gardening kits.

737

individuals expanded their knowledge of colonial impacts on Indigenous Peoples.

15

Indigenous artisans educated patrons about the unique cultures in Ontario's Far North through the Niska Artisans program.

## Stories of community

MCC's Niska Artisans program held an online event called Stitching and Stories. Over three weeks, Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants came together to listen, learn and share. Participants learned how to bead an Every Child Matters pin while connecting through creativity.

Participants shared in the richness of each other's stories, vulnerability and honesty. At the end of the workshop, it was evident that participants hadn't just created pins — together, they had created a community.



## MATERIAL RESOURCES

Joey Weber packs kits with others from the Shantz Mennonite Church youth group. MCC photo/ Ken Ogasawara

**Thank you for providing immediate relief to people in need. Your gift provides essential material resources to families living amid conflict, disaster and poverty. The impacts of your generosity are far-reaching!**

*Throughout COVID-19-related shutdowns, the Material Resources team continued to ship emergency supplies to families experiencing conflict and disaster, reminding them that their needs are not forgotten.*

**2,030**

relief kits provided valuable supplies to families whose lives have been disrupted by war or disaster.

**11,600**

hygiene kits helped families remain healthy after fleeing their homes.

**5,500**

school kits became treasures for families who struggle to afford basic school supplies for their children.

**3,704**

comforters provided a tangible message to people in places like Ukraine that their needs are not forgotten.

## Stories of hope

In June of 2021, MCC relocated its central material resources warehouse from Plum Coulee, Manitoba to New Hamburg, Ontario.

By reducing the number of Canadian shipping sites and locating the central warehouse closer to an international port, critical relief supplies — such as comforters, canned meat and relief kits

— reach those who need them faster than ever before.

MCC's New Hamburg warehouse ships much-needed relief supplies the moment disaster strikes.

# MIGRATION & RESETTLEMENT



JP in his new bedroom in Canada, a place of safety and comfort, thanks to your generosity  
MCC photo/Duncan Todd



**When people flee their homes, your gift helps with programs that facilitate sponsorship, advocate for fair legislation and provide settlement and integration support.**

*When JP finally got the news that he'd soon become a new Canadian, he was filled with excitement, joy and relief.*

136

active sponsoring groups were supported as they navigated development and COVID-19-related setback in the refugee sponsorship process.

569

refugees from all over the world are being assisted in starting a new life in Canada.

345

service providers gained a deeper understanding of how to engage with members of the Low German-speaking community.



## Stories of hope

JP lost his parents to a militia attack when he was just a boy. Orphaned and alone, he was forced to flee his home in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Eventually, JP settled in South Africa. Sadly, however, xenophobic views caused upheaval in the community. Immigrants and refugees were

blamed for taking jobs away from the locals. JP was targeted by a violent mob and badly beaten.

JP fled to Kenya and obtained refugee status, but he desperately wanted to find a safe and permanent home. MCC assisted JP's sponsorship group to bring JP to Canada.





## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The Dismas Photo Club allows members to learn photography techniques, spend time in nature and build relationships with fellow members  
Photo/Ian Campbell

**Your MCC partnership helps reduce risk and improve community reintegration outcomes by empowering individuals to build a culture of peace.**

*The Dismas Photo Club is an art project that was created and led by folks reintegrating into community after serving a sentence and by the volunteers who support them.*

45

individuals convicted of sex offences were supported and held to account as they maintained crime-free lives.

11

individuals participated in Training Active Bystander train-the-trainer opportunities.

3

new peace-training partnerships were started to change our communities for the better.

61

recently released individuals were supported in finding communities that would address their individual spiritual needs.

## Stories of peace

It is impossible to ignore the escalating tensions between nations, political parties and cultural groups. Instead of finding common ground, it seems that issues of class, race, gender, health policies and climate change are becoming ever more polarized.

In response to these escalating tensions, MCC continues to build peace in our communities. This

year, 460 people were trained to become active bystanders. These individuals now actively create cultures of peace in their communities!

In the face of hatred and ignorance, knowledge, understanding and empathy are often the best way forward. As we recognize our responsibility for the well-being of others, we are changing our communities for the better.

# POVERTY



Alexis Lopez cooks up a batch of delicious soup for The Raw Carrot, a social enterprise that provides meaningful employment for those on long-term disability. Alexis is a student intern with MCC  
MCC photo/Ken Ogasawara



**Your MCC partnership helps foster connection, create meaningful employment and advocate for vulnerable people. The impacts of your generosity are far-reaching!**

*The Raw Carrot staff are paid a living wage and the soups are sold through MCC Thrift Shops and a number of local grocery stores.*

6

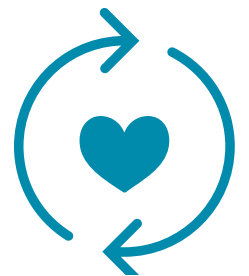
individuals with disabilities secured meaningful employment through the Raw Carrot Soup Enterprise.

15

People's Action Group members continued to advocate for affordable housing and provided invaluable input on developing a new shelter.

48

Circle of Friends participants benefitted from meaningful activities and personal connections.



## Stories of community

MCC's Circle of Friends (CoF) program continued to meet throughout the year with online and hybrid meetings. CoF supports individuals and families transitioning from homelessness and shelter-living back into the Kitchener-Waterloo community.

MCC staff developed the art of facilitating online meetings and taught vital digital literacy skills to

Circle of Friends participants.

Pandemic-related stressors continue to put many vulnerable participants at risk of mental health and/or addiction complications; however, participants continue to benefit from meaningful activities and personal connections through Circle of Friends programming.



## MCC THRIFT

WHERE EVERY PURCHASE IS A GIFT TO THE WORLD

Sarene Grubb sorts clothing at the expanded New Hamburg Thrift Centre warehouse at 65 Heritage Drive in New Hamburg  
MCC photo/Ken Ogasawara

**Despite COVID-19-related closures and restrictions, MCC Thrift Shops continued to be an important part of our communities.**

*Sarene is one of 15 staff and nearly 300 volunteers who process, sort, recycle and give new homes for thousands of items moving through New Hamburg Thrift Centre every day.*

### \$114,919

MCC Thrift and Gift in Elmira celebrated their highest month of sales ever in November 2021, reaching \$114,919.99.

### 1,463

volunteers supported the worldwide work of MCC through Thrift here in Ontario.

### \$51,546

The cash registers at MCC Thrift on Kent in Kitchener showed a record-breaking week from October 25-30, 2021 of \$51,465.60.

### \$15,775

MCC New Hamburg Thrift Centre experienced their highest sale day ever on October 29, 2021 reaching \$15,775!

## Stories of development

When COVID-19 restrictions were lifted in the summer of 2021, MCC New Hamburg Thrift Centre (NHTC) was finally able to take full advantage of their expansion which was completed in November 2020.

NHTC, Ontario's largest MCC Thrift shop, moved donation processing tasks next door to 65

Heritage Drive, allowing the retail store to add 4,200 square feet for a total of 12,000 square feet of prime retail space. The new flexible space has given the NHTC team the ease to continually adapt floor space to maximize sales per square foot.

# COVID-19 RESPONSE

Some of the 50,000  
pounds of food and water  
en route to northern  
communities affected by  
forest fires  
Photo/Air Creebec



**Your support creates  
opportunities to  
respectfully support  
Indigenous-led  
initiatives.**

*“I want to thank everyone  
who stepped up to help  
with the emergency  
airlift of supplies to  
help the people of  
Kashechewan and Fort  
Albany...in the face of  
a massive COVID-19  
crisis and huge  
humanitarian problems,  
ordinary Canadians  
stepped up to help. This  
airlift of supplies has  
made a huge difference.”*

**Charlie Angus, MP  
Timmins James Bay**

## **JAMES BAY CRISIS**

In June and July 2021, COVID-19 swept through James Bay communities, taking hold in Fort Albany, Kashechewan and Attawapiskat First Nations. All of this transpired while forest fires raged. At one point in the summer of 2021, over 180 significant forest fires were burning across Northern Ontario!

Then, in late 2021 and early 2022, the Omicron wave of COVID-19 caused an unprecedented spike in cases across northern communities.

The chronic housing shortage on the James Bay Coast means there are often 15 people crowded into one small house, which made isolating almost impossible.

Even in the best of times, food insecurity is a severe problem in the communities of James Bay because of the high cost of food. In these situations, lack of food quickly became a crisis as supplies dwindled and families were not able to leave their homes.

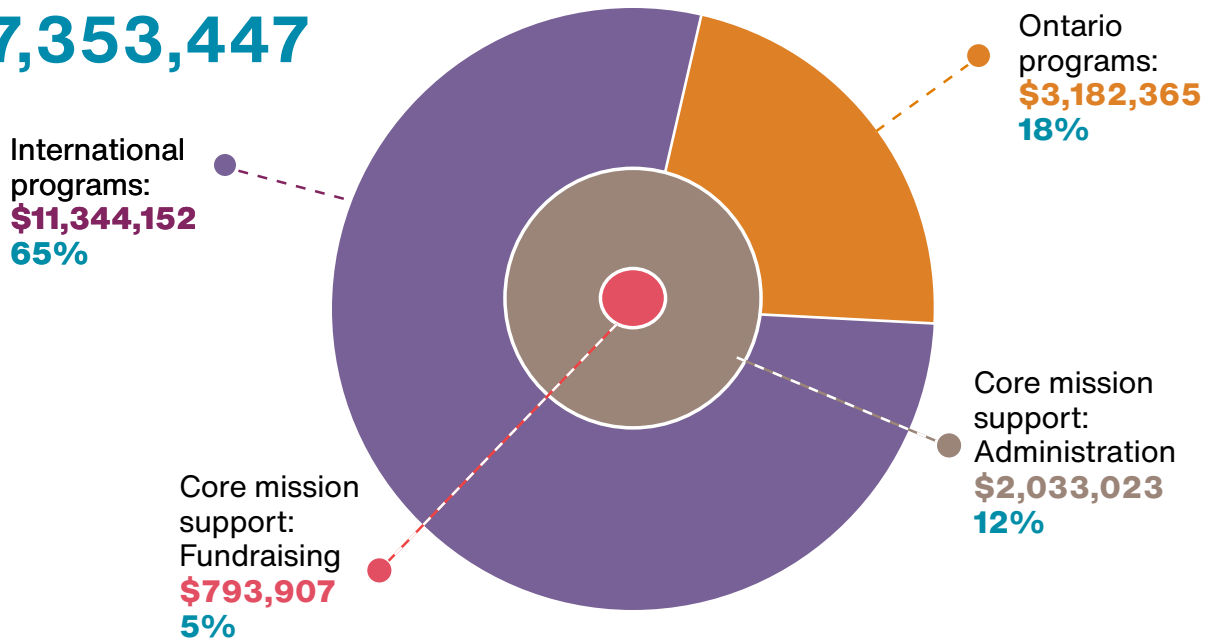
Because of your support, MCC was able to provide necessities to 618 families to allow them to shelter in place.

**Over 50,000 lbs of food, 220 comforters, 700 hygiene kits and 100 school kits were delivered safely to Fort Albany, Kashechewan and Attawapiskat First Nations. We could not have done this without you!**

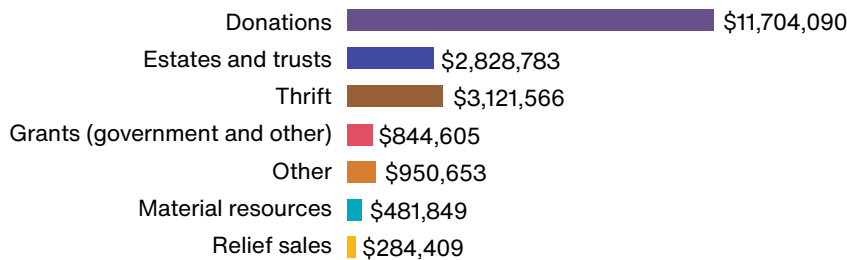
# Financial highlights

The financial information on this page represents the operations of MCC Ontario for the year ending March 31, 2022 and has been prepared from the audited financial statements. Complete audited financial statements are available upon request or at [MCC Ontario.ca/annual-report](https://mccontario.ca/annual-report).

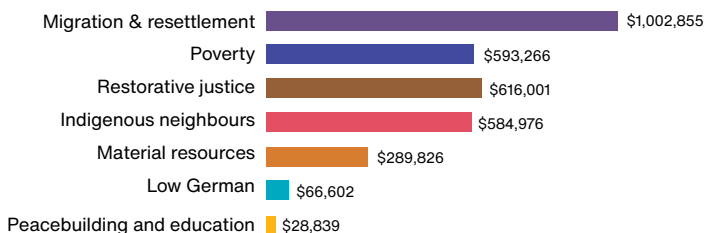
## MCC ONTARIO DOLLARS AT WORK: \$17,353,447



## MCC ONTARIO FUNDING SOURCES: \$20,215,955



## MCC ONTARIO PROGRAM DOLLARS AT WORK: \$3,182,365



## MCC ONTARIO PROGRAM DOLLARS BY THEME: \$3,182,365

