

ABMB

Executive Director, Paul J. Loewen

Cultivating a community and culture of healthy disciple-making churches and ministries

April 2024, Report for the year ending 2023.

But Christ, as the Son, is in charge of God's entire house. And we are God's house, if we keep our courage and remain confident in our hope in Christ. (Heb 3:6 NLT)

If you watch the news or follow on X (formerly Twitter), or any other social media, you have likely concluded the world is despairing, that anxiety, confusion, and chaos are running at an all-time high. But God's people live inside a different story, one that gives courage and hope, the Kingdom of Christ! Consequently, we live in confidence and in the *hope* of Christ in which we have a firm future (Heb 6:9). As a family of churches, we have much to thank God for as we live in the *hope* that he has called us into.



Celebrating Ministry in 2023!

Simply stated, the ministry of ABMB is to support churches and ministries in making disciples who make disciples. I believe we are gaining momentum through good health and intentional disciple-making practices. Many churches are reporting an increase in baptisms and attendance, with some pastors discerning how to scale their capacity—a great “problem” to solve!

We have much to celebrate!

- Many churches are reporting growth.
- There were no pastoral resignations for 2023 (one announced retirement).
- Church support for ABMB exceeded our budget by 10%.
- New churches want to join the ABMB family.
- Youth engaged in missions project and camp leadership opportunities.
- Intentional outreach initiatives reported, such as Alpha and community events.
- Churches going through pastoral transitions report enthusiasm and increased engagement.

Leadership

I am grateful how our ABMB board has provided prayerful and discerning leadership. There has been an eagerness for us to do better, to

communicate more clearly, to engage well the leaders in our churches. Special thanks for a few board members in their faithful service who, for personal reasons, are unable to continue this role: Courtney Armstrong, your visionary gift and discipling passion for our next generation of leaders will be missed. Kendal Feenstra, your skill to clearly articulate and safeguard our children has been a real asset. For the other board members, thanks for your faithful service and commitment to the health of our churches!

I'm also very thankful to those who have encouraged our ABMB family through prayer and dedicated work. For our staff, I also say a huge thanks! Rebecca Boschman, our administrative assistant, serves with eagerness and excellence. Laurence Hiebert continues to lead our Faith Team in credentialing our pastors; his service in pastoral care and preaching is a big blessing.

Our 2023 Financial Story

The ministry of ABMB is financially supported through the churches. At our convention in 2023 a decision was made by our churches to support the conference in a target range of 4 – 6 percent. Church support was 10% higher than we had budgeted! Thirty percent of church support, through our “one-stream funding” model

(\$69,000), is forwarded on to the national conference for their ministry requirements. In addition to the individual donors who support with an additional 10% of our budget, thanks so much! Further, a team of donors has supported the conference minister; without your faithfulness we could not have this level of ministry support for our churches! Also, on behalf of the Rukinisha family in their sudden loss of their father/husband in Edmonton that shocked our ABMB family, a HUGE thanks! Many people stepped up and raised over \$20,000 to help! Although some ministry expenses were higher than expected, we were able to end the year with a small surplus of about \$9,000.

Mandates and Outcomes for 2024 and beyond

As we move into 2024, we continue to build on our growing health. The following mandates continue to guide us forward in our mission to *cultivate a community and culture of healthy disciple-making churches and ministries, faithfully joining Jesus in his mission.*

Mandate #1: Grow personal relationships with and between pastors and church leaders. The outcome would be reflected in pastors and church leaders feeling connected with ABMB and desiring to participate and serve in this family.

Mandate #2: Develop conference-wide mission opportunities that build unity. We know this is happening when churches report they are sharing and collaborating in their efforts to reach out into their communities and beyond.

Mandate #3: Focus on leadership development. When there is a marked increase in emerging leaders participating in camp leadership and preparing for ministry through education and ministry internships. We will provide partnership scholarships with churches to encourage this outcome.

Mandate #4: Develop a team in each of the four primary ministry areas (Theological/Faith; Leadership Development, Mission, Organizational Health). These teams will be populated by passionate and skilled people who will support churches, plan for new ministries, and new

leaders will find mentoring and coaching resources.

For 2024 we will accentuate the support of emerging leaders, specifically those who participate in Camp Evergreen, Columbia Bible College, and MB Seminary. Increased support for our “new Canadian” congregations is needed and opportunity is extended to churches and individuals to support this growing opportunity.

To our SKMB Friends

ABMB continues to collaborate with others when beneficial. We continue to enjoy our friendship and working relationship with Saskatchewan MB conference (SKMB); we are planning a pastors retreat in Banff for the fall (October 21-24) and will continue to assist each other wherever possible such as credentialing pastors, African Leadership Congress, leadership resourcing, and attending one another’s events.

Upcoming Events:

PASTORS RETREAT



EQUIP (national event), Fall, 2025

ABMB Convention 2025, April 11-12, 2025 (TBC)

I remain hope-filled for ABMB as we rise to the challenges that surround us in our society. I trust that as we see what God has for us in this coming year and beyond, we will obediently and faithfully reach out to our neighbors to be disciplined into a new generation of believers who become agents of blessing and *hope* to fellow Albertans and beyond.

We continue to solicit your prayers.

With Hope-filled blessing!