



2024

IMPACT REPORT

CELEBRATING OUR PARTNERSHIP IN THE GOSPEL

I don't like it when people ask me what my favourite Bible book (or verse) is.

I love it all!

But if I had to identify a book that feels particularly powerful right now, it would likely be Revelation.

In a world that is unstable, unpredictable, and deeply challenging for disciples of Jesus, Revelation breaks in with power and completely reorients our perspective. And just when we are about to give up, the Revelation of Jesus Christ to John explodes into our experience with:

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

"Look, he is coming with the clouds," and "every eye will see him, even those who pierced him"; and all peoples on earth "will mourn because of him." So shall it be! Amen.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Wow!

Whatever issue, problem, oppression, persecution, or struggle you or your church are facing, remember that **the eternal, almighty, triune God of the universe is still in power!**

We have hope because of who God is.

At MB Seminary, whether teaching about leadership, spiritual care, mission, biblical studies, theology, or history, our heart is to draw people closer to God. And to equip others to do the same. Now more than ever, we need to have our eyes on God.

Thank you for supporting, encouraging, and partnering with MB Seminary this past year!



Mark Wessner, Ph.D. is President of MB Seminary
and Associate Professor of Biblical Studies for Leadership

SHAPING LEADERS, CHANGING LIVES

The first chapter of Philippians is a powerful text that speaks directly to our hearts.

In verses 4-5, Paul writes, "In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now."

Did you catch what Paul said causes him to pray with joy? Partnership in the gospel.

Not wealth, not success, not fame.

Partnership in the gospel.

This is the heart of our Teaching Church partnerships across the country. Through each unique ministry relationship, MB Seminary comes alongside churches and conferences to help educate and equip leaders and church families to "reach Canada and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ."

We've experienced many encouraging experiences during four years of Teaching Churches, including **launching our first partnership with WMB Church in Waterloo, Ontario, this fall.**

And as we look ahead, this June, MB Seminary and Willingdon Church will celebrate the first cohort of graduating students who will have completed their entire Masters degrees while staying in their church community and serving in their ministry contexts!

This would not be possible without your partnership in the gospel. On behalf of our students and ministry leaders, thank you for supporting MB Seminary!

-Dr. Mark Wessner



ONMB

With you, we are partnering with Ryan Jantzi, Ministry Director for the Ontario Conference (ONMB) to help equip pastors and lay people through our new Teaching Church in Ontario.



This new Teaching Church is exciting because it will impact both our pastors and our churches. "An increasing number of our pastors are beginning as a mid-career, mid-life shift. Existing life responsibilities mean most will never attend seminary in a traditional on-campus format. And yet, deep theological formation still matters! It's been exciting **to see a number of our pastors learn together, within our evangelical Anabaptist MB framework**, in ways that weren't previously accessible. I believe that the development of the Teaching Church Partnership will enable ONMB toward a more faithful and fruitful collective witness to Christ."

Further,"Many people scattered across our churches have never had the opportunity for theological formation at an academic level, for various reasons. The level of participation at the first Teaching Church Partnership offering at WMB Church indicates that there is a hunger for this. What a joy to see lay **people young and old learning alongside** some of our pastors who are studying for credit." One lifelong learning participant expressed thankfulness:

"I am so thankful to have the opportunity to take part in this workshop. Thank you for coming to Ontario. I look forward to the next one."

Your partnership in the gospel is making an impact in ONMB and churches across the country!

MB CHURCHES

With you, we are partnering with Connie Maier, Pastor of Outreach & Implementation at Glencairn MB Church in Kitchner ON, to equip her church and others across the country.

She extended the invitation because, "I am a huge fan of biblical/theological training for both staff and lay folks within our conference. I did my seminary part-time, while serving as a lay leader in the church and loved the experience. I would hope that others would see the value in this opportunity and I was happy to spread the word with our Glencairn family. Having this hosted locally was a huge bonus for our churches in Ontario."



"I really believe MB theology has a unique gift to offer the broader church. **This partnership can help not only equip our people, but help them to see themselves as part of a larger family on mission together for Jesus.**"

"Good theological training has need of a multi-pronged approach in our churches and the MB teaching church model can play a strong role in strengthening theological depth within our churches here in Ontario."

Your partnership in the gospel is helping our MB churches connect and be on mission together!

MB STUDENTS

With you, we are partnering with three new graduate students who are benefitting from having access to world-class theological training close to home.

Scott Roes, Associate Pastor at Mapleview Mennonite Church, a congregation with a 150 year history, spoke appreciatively about the fact the MB Seminary was offering a course close to home for him. "It means that I can participate in MB Seminary courses. I am a part time pastor and I also have a dairy farm and a family. It would not be possible for me to travel to be part of these courses. Also the fact that the seminary courses are brought to local churches makes it even more appealing. There is always the option of taking online courses but being able to be in the same room as the professor and the other students is much more appealing."



Brad Sherk, Pastor of Discipleship at Waterloo MB Church, was asked about a highlight from the course, "Interpreting Scripture Today" that was taught by Dr. Mark Wessner. He replied, "My highlight was the personal connections made with my professor and with the other students. Since we were all pastors, we really bonded over working through the material of the course. Mark's videos that he made to give us feedback on our assignments were meaningful and helpful." Brad also expressed appreciation of being able to study close to home, allowing him to remain connected with his church family and saving time and resources.

Michael Reimer, youth ministry director at Cornerstone Community Church, shown here baptizing one of his youth, talked about his first seminary course being a rich experience because he was able to learn alongside people from his home church. He mentioned how meaningful it was "seeing how thoughtful and careful our approach is to seeing the depth of Scripture and understanding it well to apply it in our lives today." "The course has impacted my ministry by giving helpful language, methodology, and experience in diving DEEP into Scripture to let it have all the more impact and effect on how I carry myself as someone who wants to be deeply impacted by God and His word."



-Terry Kaethler

Your partnership in the gospel is helping to train our MB pastors in their home church context!

GROWING CAPACITY

CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS THE NATION



GRADUATE HRS TAUGHT

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Jesus called his disciples to be his "witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8 NIV), levels of Kingdom investment that radiate like concentric rings. Our Jerusalem is the community of MB churches, and our Judea and Samaria are the sisters and brothers we have been training through our partnership at ACTS for over 25 years. Our graduates are serving literally to the ends of the earth.

-Dr. Brian Cooper



MB STUDENTS EQUIPPED

In every church there are gifted people with the ability to lead and the capacity to learn. Through our growing partnerships, we are equipping individuals for ministry right now, including some who are discerning and living out God's call to lead our MB churches. But we're only beginning. How might God be calling you?

-Dr. Brian Cooper

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ONLINE STUDENTS REACHED

Not every student can uproot to go to seminary, nor is every student near an MB Teaching Church. Our growing online programs help extend our seminary's reach and accelerate degree completion for our students. This year our faculty taught 19 online courses and helped equip 117 students, some even as far away as Hong Kong!

-Dr. T. Anderson

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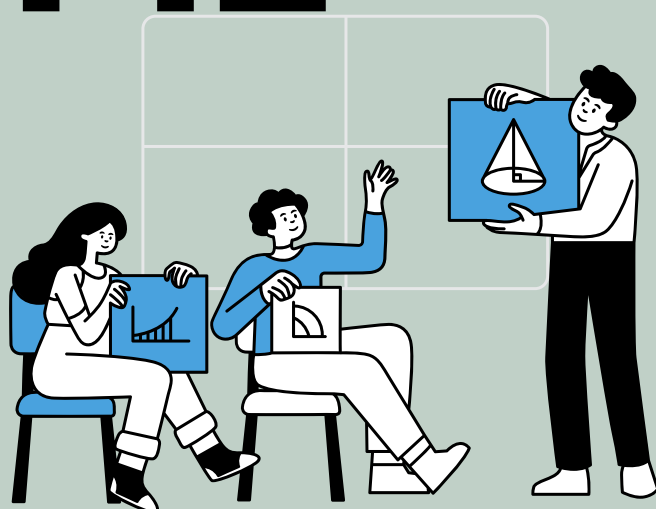


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LIFELONG LEARNERS EQUIPPED

Teaching Churches is more than knowledge seekers. This was my lesson as I met with a group from the Alberta Conference at Sunwest Church in Calgary. The group had gathered to consider how to pastorally respond to MAiD (Medical Assistance in Dying). As an Educator, I knew lifelong learning to be about gaining knowledge, skills, and experience for personal growth. My heart was blessed as I realized in that room I had lifelong learners seeking to learn and grow as faithful disciples of Jesus. No degree seekers, but definitely kingdom seekers!

-Dr. Gloria Woodland



DEVOTIONAL READERS ENCOURAGED

The author of Hebrews states that the word of God is "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb 4:12). What we read in the Bible has **life**, which makes it different from anything else ever written. One of the reasons why we produce a devotional for Advent and Easter is to encourage people to open their Bibles and hear from God through Scripture, something that over 2,500 readers did this past year. I love to direct this project because no matter how many times readers might look at the same passage, God finds ways to speak to us in new and refreshing ways!

-Keith Reed

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