

Board of Directors Report

Michelle Knowles, Board Chair

I give thanks to my God for every remembrance of you, always praying with joy for all of you in my every prayer, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:3-6)

I write with much anticipation for all God has in store, as we prepare to gather very soon for our ONMB Conference Week 2025! What a gift it is to walk together by faith, in the mission to which God has called us as a family of churches in Ontario.

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

This year's Conference Week introduces some new rhythms to our annual gathering. We want to deepen our connection to Jesus and to one another, to encourage and strengthen one another, for the flourishing of all our churches altogether, to the praise and glory of God.

The final event of Conference Week is our 2025 AGM. A healthy vine and branches need a well-constructed trellis to be fruitful. Our AGM is critical to our 'trellis work'. Thank you for taking the time to prepare for this - as we work together and prayerfully listen, to steward resources, identify leaders, and make decisions, we ensure that we have a strong structure to support the work that only God can do in and through us by His Spirit.



The stories and reports that follow in this year-book reflect the beautiful array of vine and trellis work among our provincial and national church family throughout the year. I am grateful for the faithful service of our staff, committees & ministry teams, partners & agencies – we are on mission together and Jesus continues to transform lives and communities as we serve together, praise God! As I serve with our ONMB team, as well as with our national MB family, I am deeply encouraged by the renewal God is bearing among us.

I want to express my thanks to our Board and committee members, for your gifted and passionate service to ONMB. I am grateful for the dedication of our Board; the time and energy you give generously as leaders and servants.

ONMB Board of Directors 2024-2025



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As a board, we want to express our deep appreciation for our staff, Trevor, Kristi & Ryan. It's been a joy to watch you form as a dynamic team of gifted, dedicated and passionate leaders and servants. Continue to bring this team before God in your prayers.

Lastly, thank YOU ONMB church members, pastors, and leaders – we love you and pray for you with much gladness and hope. Our Board is so thankful for your prayers, generosity, and grace. Please feel welcome to connect with me anytime. It is a joy to serve our ONMB family.



Executive Director Report

Trevor Seath



It's been a great privilege to begin my journey as ONMB Executive Director over this past year. Each church in our family gives me powerful reasons to praise God. No matter where I look, I see examples of humility, perseverance, wisdom, and creativity as we all seek to joyfully join Jesus in His mission in the distinct stories unfolding within each of our churches. Praise God!

On top of all that, working with Kristi Lee and Ryan Jantzi on our ONMB staff team has been a joy. Kristi is incredibly knowledgeable, proficient, thoughtful, and creative as she serves as our Operations & Communications Manager. Ryan brings joy, wisdom, curiosity, and deep passion to his work as Ministry Director. Of course, we're more than just a set of individual members. What's most encouraging has been how the Holy Spirit has been unifying and directing us. To get a sense of the dynamic we're experiencing, check out the Jesus' Stories podcast episode, "Anticipation & Gratitude" from January 13th.

It's important for you to know how outstanding our ONMB Board, Provincial Faith & Life Team (PFLT), Missional Expressions Team (MET), and Nominating Committee are. Ryan shares in his report about the work of our PFLT and MET. I want to highlight that the ONMB Board not only provides governance oversight as a whole team but also lead and serve on teams focused on Personnel, Organizational Health, and Finance where they diligently steward the people, resources, and processes of our conference. Additionally, please join me in thanking God for the energetic way that sisters and brothers from our ONMB family are sacrificially engaged nationally participating on the CCMBC Executive Board and our National Faith & Life Team. It's a significant amount of effort offered with joy, energy, and humility.

Can I go on? I need to, because it's important to celebrate how a dynamic story of Spirit-dependent collaboration is unfolding between our ONMB Team and our Multiply partners in the province. All of us are keenly interested in uncovering every way in which we can function in unity under a single God-given purpose to continue catalyzing and supporting a dynamic and fruitful expression of God's kingdom alongside all of you.

Also, I'm inspired by the ways God is working so dynamically in the ministry of Camp Crossroads. And it was a joy to witness the launch of a new expression of partnership between MB Seminary and Ontario as WMB in Kitchener Waterloo became the school's latest Teaching Church location.





Jesus has led us by His Spirit in 2024. We've heard four invitations from the Lord that have been affirmed in both formal and informal conversations among our leaders. God is calling us to pray first, move together, join in globally, and make disciples.

A simple phrase connected to each has been helpful in providing more clarity:

- **Pray First** – entrusting the future to God's power, not our own.
- **Move Together** – collaborating in mission regionally for Jesus' glory.
- **Join in Globally** – learning with and from the global Church.
- **Make Disciples** – inviting people to follow Jesus no matter what.



A new chapter in our shared life of prayer was sparked at our 2024 Pastors & Leaders Retreat at Camp Crossroads May 5-7. Derek Parenteau shared a plea from God for ONMB from John 21:1-14 where we read about Jesus instructing his disciples to “cast (their) net on the right side of the boat” (v.6). God gave us a picture in that story of the choice we all have – we can work in our own strength and see nothing of the harvest God has for us or we can humbly, even foolishly, trust His leadership and experience what only He can do for us.



A primary response following this time of hearing from God has been to cultivate a growing response of faith-filled prayer for a move of the Holy Spirit to bring in a God-sized kingdom harvest in our land. You can hear some of the early processing of this response on the Jesus Stories podcast episode “A Plea for Ontario” that was published May 27, 2024.

We moved forward in prayer as leaders and members from our churches gathered on September 10th at Mountain Park Church in Niagara Falls for a day-long Prayer Summit. Since then, two 4-week Online Prayer Ministry Training cohorts have gathered to learn and pray. Alongside these responses, several of us representing each of the regions where MB churches are ministering have been discerning how we can work together as a team of prayer catalyzers for Ontario.



Ontario is a big place, and our Mennonite Brethren family is sprinkled across the province. While we're spread out, we know that God has brought us together into a shared kingdom story. Part of growing into all that God has for us depends on practically figuring out how to serve together in unity. Thankfully, the opportunity is right in front of us since we are not randomly dispersed but form into 6 regional clusters.

Here's a list of those regions and the churches & ministries within them:

- **Essex** – Southpoint Community Church and Meadowbrook Community Church
- **Central West** – Kingsfield Zurich Mennonite Church, Maple View Mennonite Church, Evergreen Heights Christian Fellowship, Glencairn Church, and WMB Church, Belmont Village Church
- **Niagara** – St. Ann's Community Church, Grantham Mennonite Brethren Church, Northend Church, Scott Street Church, Cornerstone Community Church, and Mountain Park Church
- **Georgian Bay** – Christian Fellowship Chapel, Rugged Tree, and Camp Crossroads
- **GTA** – Behta Darya Community Church, New Life Christian Church, Life Point Fellowship, Restoration Place, Jesus Network, and Kyla Sinclair-Peters' mission.
- **Ottawa** – Manotick Community Church, The Gathering, Bytown Community Church, Southeast City Church, and Darren Milley's Power Serve mission.



We believe that next steps of mission through disciple making, church planting, and church reignitions will be best discerned and supported as churches and ministries in these regions come together in practical collaboration with support from our ONMB staff team. We are praying for new leaders and fresh vision to rise up in each of these six regions and for the leaders, churches, and ministry partners in those places to discover ways to collectively support the new things God invites them to do.

There are different opportunities and challenges in each of our regions. We should not expect that the next steps of collaboration in God's mission will be the same across these different contexts. Instead, the exciting opportunity is for churches to build trust, listening well to one another and to God and to stand ready in expectation that King Jesus has a plan for multiplied kingdom impact that is waiting to be uncovered.





While the Church in North America is often perceived as a source of resourcing and support for our brothers and sisters around the world, many here are both convicted and encouraged by a growing appreciation for how much we need to learn from the global Church.

We are heavy-laden with resources in Canada. Our minds, browsers, and bookshelves are crowded with strategies and models. Just about every conceivable ministry and mission concept already has numerous resources standing by to support it. Meanwhile, the church is thriving outside the west where Christians face many challenges without most of the resources to which we're accustomed.

Dynamic kingdom partnerships between our churches and churches globally is the goal. To get there, though, it's urgent for us to embrace our role as learners, listeners, and apprentices. We have so much to learn about sacrifice, suffering, Holy Spirit dependence, prayer, faith, and bold witness (to name a few) from our sisters and brothers in the global Church.

We're taking an important step forward in this as a small team of us from Ontario including ONMB board members and staff together with Derek Parenteau from Multiply will visit in Brazil in April. We're keen to learn from MB church and mission leaders there and discern how God's dynamic work in that part of our global MB family can inform and strengthen our vision for how He can work in Ontario.

No call from Jesus is more laden with potential than His commission to reach the nations by making more disciples. None of us would be here today unless generations of Christians had stepped into the adventure of teaching others to trust and obey Jesus. And yet, so many of us in all kinds of roles and positions throughout the Church feel inadequate and anxious about walking alongside another person so that they can come to know and trust Christ.

Along with our whole national family, we're convinced that God wants us to, "cultivate a community and culture of healthy disciple-making churches and ministries, faithfully joining Jesus in his mission." That's our mission as the MB Church in Canada. And so, as we journey, our board and staff are committed wholeheartedly to celebrating, strengthening, and supporting our disciple making capacity so that we grow in this way of living as Jesus' people.



Please let me be a bit blunt as I end: sacrificial unity is the only path into all that God can do with a family of churches like ours. That's why I'm so encouraged by every evidence of deeper unity and shared purpose among us.

An essential part of a part of the Mennonite Brethren story in Canada is embracing, whether individually and as churches, that it's God who has brought us together. Our life together as a diverse collection of churches is a gift Jesus is fashioning as He's building His Church. Pursuing unity and shared sacrifice in God's mission is non-negotiable if we're going to grow up into all we can become by God's grace.

We need each part of our Ontario MB family engaged in this story. Let's dig deep joyfully! Let's step forward boldly, relying on the goodness, faithfulness, and power of God. Let's invest our time, our abilities, and our resources into this shared ONMB story for Jesus' glory!

Ministry Director Report

Ryan Jantzi



It is clear to me that God was leading ONMB forward through 2024. The Holy Spirit was revealing our path forward in a way that felt unforced and patiently directed by him. As our new Executive Director, Trevor Seath, led through various conversations, God would weave together a few more threads or reveal a new window to what was next. I can confidently say that God, by His Spirit, is with us and blessing us. May it be toward the end of multiplying disciples together!

Settling in with Trevor this year has been a joy. I feel that we work well together with complementary gifts, passions and perspectives. He, Kristi Lee and I have settled into a good team dynamic. The opportunity to pass the baton to him and to grow in trust with his leadership has been a blessing. I believe the vision God is revealing through Trevor and our Board at this time is in continuation with the work He's been doing with ONMB the last few years.

The following are my primary areas of responsibility as a Ministry Director:

Faith & Life

Jacob Nuh was hired as the new Lead Pastor with New Life Christian Church (NLCC) in Scarborough. This follows one year of excellent ministry by Jacob Birch as a transitional pastor. Jacob Nuh previously pastored New Living Church, an ONMB church planted in 2009 in North York. New Living Church has closed, and the people have joined him at NLCC. We now have zero Lead Pastor openings across ONMB. Praise God!

Sadly, I walked with The Well in Dartmouth, NS as they processed the resignation of planting

pastor Adam Greeley, and discerned God was leading them to close the church after 13 years of ministry. This work was on behalf of CCMBC National Director, Cam Stuart.

Please see the Provincial Faith & Life Team report by Karen West for an account of this team's activity. This includes reference to the National Faith and Life Team on which I also serve.

I am pleased to report the successful completion of a one-day Healthy Leaders Training workshop by our credentialed leaders in February 2024. This training will be a core requirement for credentialed pastors every five years. The initiation of the Taylor Johnson Temperament Analysis (TJTA) included in the credentialing of all Lead Pastors was also completed. This is a tool for helping us hire emotionally healthy leaders and direct our leaders on a path toward health. We've also developed a pathway for Pastoral Leadership Transitions in our churches. I'm excited to walk with our churches through this critical time in a clear, mapped-out way. In 2024 I completed the Basic Ministry Training offering with the Transitional Leaders Network to better assist churches in this realm.

Join us in Winnipeg this fall for EQUIP as MBs a cross Canada seek to grow together. Our theme is The Gospel, Peacemaking and the Kingdom.



Commissioning of Jacob Nuh, NLCC

Leadership Development

The May 2024 Pastors Retreat at Camp Crossroads was a success with over seventy participants. 'Walking in the Spirit' was our theme, with Derek Parenteau calling on us to rely on the power of God, rather than our own strength.

The Jesus Stories Podcast continues to grow and be a source of inspiration for people across and beyond ONMB. Check it out at: <https://onmb.org/onmb-podcast/>.

Favourite episodes include '[A Plea for ONMB](#)' with Derek Parenteau, '[What is an Acts 6:4 Assembly?](#)' with Nasser al 'Qahtani and '[Prayer Ministry for Everyone](#)' with Doris Falkenburger and Wilf Janzen.

Leadership Development is the area I work most closely with Trevor and I think he's done a great job of investing in our pastors, primarily through a call to deeper prayer across ONMB culture, as seen in our fall Prayer Summit.

In early 2025 I received Ordination as a pastor from ONMB and Maple View Church, following a discernment process. Ordination is a practice that MBs across Canada have been encouraged to re-engage as means of discerning, blessing, anointing and laying hands on emerging pastoral leaders. Would your church consider this empowering practice for pastors in your context?



My greatest joy in this role is connecting with our excellent group of pastors and leaders to listen, encourage and pray together, spurring them along in faithful and fruitful ministry.

God has blessed ONMB with many great disciple makers who love God and others deeply. I'm excited to see what 2025 holds for ONMB.

I believe that 2024, with Trevor at the helm was a good first step with God into the future he's inviting us toward.

Submitted with love and hope,
Ryan Jantzi
Ministry Director

