

MB SEMINARY NEWSLETTER

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A Message to You



Mark Wessner

President, MB Seminary

Looking Back at Life-Giving Partnerships

As we enter 2020, I want to pause and reflect on the vital partnerships that have made 2019 memorable for MB Seminary. I'm grateful to our academic partners throughout Canada, allowing MB Seminary to teach students in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario.

Together, we are stronger. And together, we can do and be more. We are also proud to work in partnership with Multiply and ICOMB on the Missional Leadership Training program, where we equip Christian leaders to make disciples all across the globe.

Donors like you are irreplaceable for staff and students here at MB Seminary. I want to take a moment to thank everyone who has so generously donated over the past year, especially this Christmas. Your outstanding support ensures that students receive the biblical and theological training to share the rich, life-giving waters of the Gospel with a parched and thirsty world.

As we have since the beginning, **MB Seminary remains steadfastly devoted to The Great Commission** as our ever-present call to go forth and make disciples. Everyone at MB Seminary is passionate about equipping students for effective ministry, whether that's at home or abroad. And donors like you make that possible.

Expecting Growth in 2020. As we enter the new year, I look forward to all the multifaceted ways that MB Seminary will come alongside students across Canada and all across the globe and prepare them to lead in their areas of ministry.

Your generous support continues to be crucial for the long-term success of ministry students at MB Seminary. I hope you enjoy discovering how MB Seminary is supporting MB ministries around the world through the Missional Leadership Training Program.

Thank you to everyone who has given so generously!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Wessner'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'M'.

Mark Wessner
President, MB Seminary



The thirst for Biblical knowledge is rapidly growing in Malawi. Thank you for supporting our efforts to educate new church leaders!

A Missional Training Program

That's Starting to Make Waves

Created on behalf of ICOMB (International Community of Mennonite Brethren), the Missional Leadership Training program (MLT) represents a partnership between Multiply and MB Seminary in collaboration with an international ICOMB task force to train church leaders around the world to equip the church for mission. The MLT is a non-formal training program comprised of 18 modules and built around Mennonite Brethren core convictions expressed in the ICOMB Confession of Faith.

Developed with Mission in Mind

This program is specifically designed to train trainers to equip and mobilize their local churches to serve more effectively in mission. Participants include men and women who are gifted and called to serve as pastors, church leaders, evangelists, mission workers, or church planters. Each person who enrolls is affirmed by their local church.

From Malawi to the Philippines

The MLT initiative was born out of necessity in March of 2018 in response to a request from the emerging Mennonite Brethren conference in Malawi, Africa for assistance with leadership training. Our own Director of Global Training, Doug Heidebrecht, immediately began working on developing this curriculum and currently works with a design team comprised of Vic Wiens (ICOMB) and Doug Berg (former MB Seminary professor and retired Academic Dean at CBC).

The program quickly gained momentum and the first module was launched in October with 35 students in the Philippines followed by 66 participants in Malawi and another 16 Myanmar students in Thailand. MLT participants have shown a deep desire to learn and have welcomed the curriculum with open arms.

Building Momentum Means Lives Changed!

During 2019, involvement in the MLT program has grown, with 130 church leaders trained in the next two modules. The overarching outcome is an active "lived theology" that invites the Spirit of God to transform a leader's daily life, ministry, and witness in the world.

*The MLT learning outcomes emerge from
Colossians 1:3-2:7*

The focus on training trainers seeks to see leaders serving faithfully to make the gospel of Christ fully known, growing in the knowledge of God and spiritual understanding, living worthy lives that bear fruit in good works, and establishing the church in faith and maturity for mission.

Your gifts make it possible for MB Seminary to support church leaders around the world!



Doug Heidebrecht and translator, William, pictured at the Dzaleka Refugee Camp in Malawi

Serving Our Family in Malawi

Equipping Leaders in the Emerging Church

Doug Heidebrecht, Director of Global Training at MB Seminary, began teaching the Missional Leadership Training (MLT) program to Mennonite Brethren leaders in the Dzaleka Refugee Camp in the fall of 2018.

Located outside of Malawi's capital city, Lilongwe, Dzaleka Camp is home to nearly 45,000 refugees from many African nations. On average, 500 additional refugees are added to that number every month.

Within the boundaries of Dzaleka Camp, amidst the overpopulation, hunger and hopelessness, God is at work, building up the church to transform hearts and minds in Malawi and beyond. This camp is the birthplace of the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Malawi (MBCM).

What started as three or four people meeting together in the camp has grown to over 10,000 baptized believers across the country.

In Dzaleka Camp, the MBCM works closely with three other churches, forming an ecumenical network that supports working together to share the Gospel. All four groups participate together in the MLT program.

The MLT is also offered to Malawian church leaders, who speak the local Malawian language, and serve MB churches across the country. With the rapid growth of the MB church, there's a shortage of biblically trained leaders.

"...the church is growing. But the challenge is the level of maturity and the capacity of the leaders to ensure they are equipping others," says Doug.

The MTL program is a collaborative effort between MB Seminary, ICOMB and Multiply. The curriculum is grounded in Scripture that focuses on community and mission.

Leaders are called to serve the Body of Christ by training the church with what they have

"...the church is growing. But the challenge is the level of maturity and the capacity of the leaders to ensure they are equipping others."

—Doug Heidebrecht

learned in order to encourage people to be active participants in what God is doing around them.

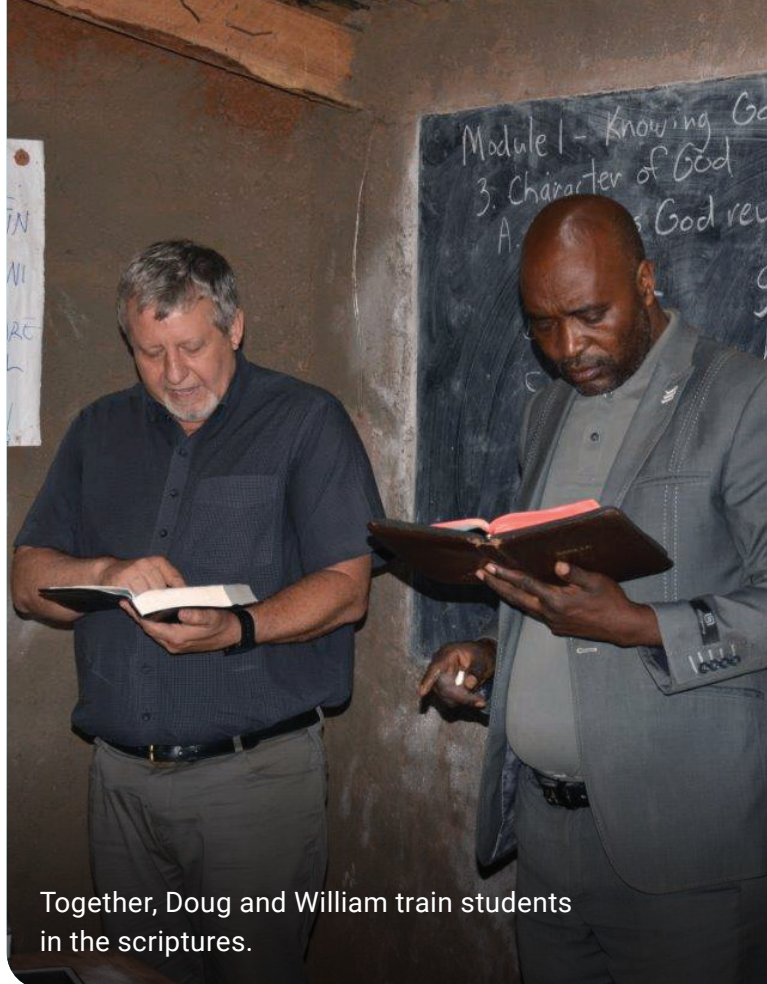
The MTL program guides leaders into what it looks like to be in the people of God who are involved in God's mission. The foundation is laid through a discipleship focus emphasizing knowing God, following Jesus, and living by the Holy Spirit.

"This training is one way that God is building up the church," says Doug. "We are so privileged to go into this context and to be able to walk alongside our global family. God is at work and we are excited to see what He's doing."

So far, Doug has led two different groups of church leaders through three modules of the MTL program. Not only has he seen tremendous growth in the lives of these leaders, but also how they taken what they have learned through MLT and used this to train people in their local churches.

"The MLT program is a way to serve the emerging MB church—it is not us leading them. It's an opportunity to encourage and support the work God is already doing," says Doug. "Our prayer and our hope is that as our family is built up and established in their faith they will be faithful witnesses to Jesus."

Thanks to your generous support, MB Seminary is excited to continue its partnership with the emerging MB conference, both in the Dzaleka Camp and among the Malawian leaders.



Together, Doug and William train students in the scriptures.



Thanks to donor support, emerging church leaders are equipped with the knowledge they need to share God's love.

Your gifts make it possible for ministry students to be educated and equipped to reach the world for Christ! You can support students by giving online at **[MBSEMINARY.CA/DONATE](https://mbseminary.ca/donate)**.

Sent with a Purpose

From Paraguay to British Columbia

Donors like you ensure that MB Seminary is there to train students who are called to ministry. One such student is Leroy Toews. He's a 33-year-old student from Asunción, Paraguay who's working towards his Master's Degree in Theological Studies, with an emphasis in the Old Testament.

Back in Paraguay, Leroy was a part-time faculty member at Instituto Biblico Asunción (IBA). He was sent to our campus to further his academic studies so he can serve students more extensively back home.

As a student at our Trinity Western campus, he's found engaging community, fruitful friendships, and stimulating mentorship. Director of Student Development Dr. Brian Cooper has become his particular mentor. Meeting over coffee, they've had the opportunity to discuss issues of faith and theology.



International student Leroy Toews studies at MB Seminary so he can return home to Paraguay and teach ministry students.

"Future students should consider attending MB Seminary because of its focus on biblical, historical, systematic and contextual theology," says Leroy. "It's useful for ministry and is taught to students by teachers who have solid academic training and extensive pastoral experience."

"Everything I'm learning can help students in Paraguay in their ministries."

—Leroy

"The Seminary has given me a greater appreciation of the theological dimension of faith and how that's important for personal spirituality and church ministry," Leroy says. "Everything I'm learning can help students in Paraguay in their ministries."

Leroy also enjoys the comfortable atmosphere of scholarship and fellowship at MB Seminary, where meaningful conversations can be had just about anywhere with other students and faculty members.

Leroy also adds, *"donors should feel good about supporting the Seminary because it is important to equip people from our faith community for work in ministry. MB Seminary has a pastoral orientation that is preparing students to serve as leaders, teachers and counsellors in God's mission."*

When he's not in school, Leroy is busy as a husband and father to two young children. He also serves as a youth pastor at South Abbotsford MB Church, and his studies are already enriching his ministry to young people.

Thank you for giving so students like Leroy can prepare for effective service in God's Kingdom!

Straight From Our Students

How MB Seminary is Creating Church Leaders



"One of the best courses I've taken was 'The Art of Preaching'. It not only helped me deliver sermons more effectively, but also helped me understand why we preach. Focusing on theology of preaching, methods of exegesis, and intentional orality helped me offer purposeful and grounded sermons."

Janessa Nayler-Giesbrecht

Youth and Young Adults Pastor at Fort Garry MB Church
Current student working towards MA in Christian Ministry, MB Seminary CMU



"Heading to Seminary after 30 years away from school was frightening, and the learning curve was humbling, but pastoral care from my professors enabled me to grow in research and writing, which has turned my world around."

After a three-month journey to Jerusalem, I was invited to be a Deacon in Christ Church Jerusalem. In an area of the world that seems overrun with hatred, I get to care for people made in God's image, in need of His love. And it all started with studying at MB Seminary, ACTS!"

Carol McLean

A Member of Ross Road MB Church, Abbotsford, BC
She graduated with a MA Christian Studies specializing in Chaplaincy in 2018



"The ACTS World Campus courses have been invaluable to my ministry and personal life. I am far more knowledgeable about God and myself because of the coursework and this has made a tangible difference in my work as a pastor. Being able to get world-class teaching from my home, on my schedule, has allowed me to pursue a degree while still working and staying connected to my young family, which would otherwise not be possible. The ACTS World Campus is a game changer for anyone looking to take a Masters level course or degree and I am incredibly grateful for it."

Dave Dixon

Pastor of Worship & Family Ministries, Discovery Community Church, Campbell River, BC
Current MB Seminary ACTS World Campus student



"Having recently entered into seminary studies for the purpose of personal growth and further development as a pastor, I have greatly appreciated the personal touch each professor offers. Through the online options with ACTS World Campus, I am able to study in community without having to travel. Without this, studies would not be an option for those of us at a distance."

Ryan van Kuik

Lead Pastor at Nechako Community Church, Vanderhoof, BC
Current MB Seminary Student, ACTS, enrolled in the MA Christian Studies

Graduation Is Almost Here!

Help Celebrate the Class of 2020

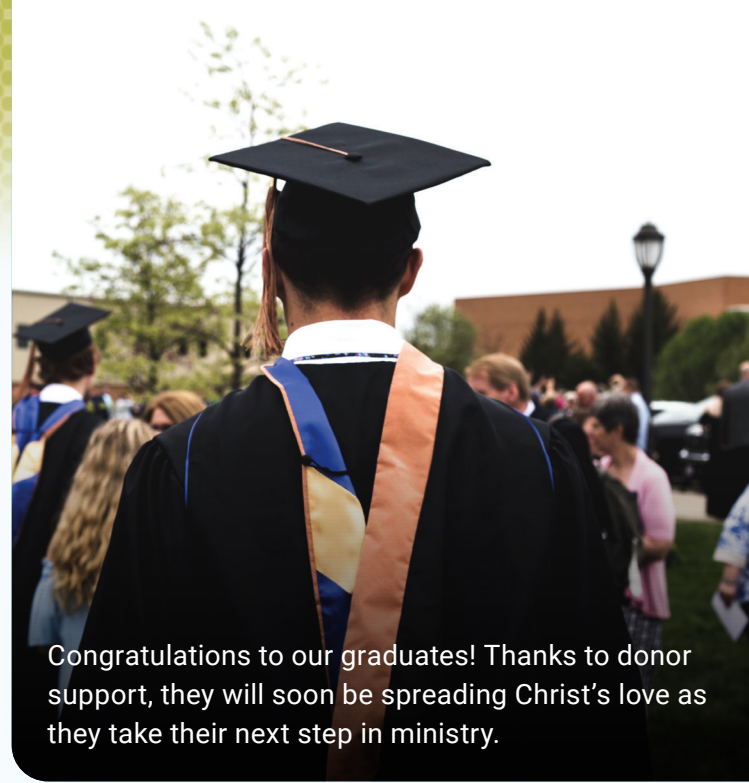
We're thrilled to announce our upcoming Graduation Campaign!

Every April, we are honoured to celebrate our graduates as they walk across the stage to receive their hard-earned degrees. And we can't wait for you to join us in applauding another amazing group of men and women who are passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

April's ceremony will present a generation of Christian leaders who are ready to share God's love with their communities in Canada and around the world. This year, seven students will graduate from our ACTS campus and another five from our CMU campus. MB Seminary is proud to send each and every one of these dedicated students on their mission to serve Christ.

This year's commencement wouldn't be possible without the generous support of donors like you. Thank you for your faithful gifts—they are truly a blessing.

Your gifts enrich Mennonite Brethren Church communities by preparing students for effective service in pastoral ministry. Thanks to your



Congratulations to our graduates! Thanks to donor support, they will soon be spreading Christ's love as they take their next step in ministry.

support, students receive robust theological instruction paired with extensive biblical training. That means our graduates have the resources to effectively encourage growth in their faith communities.

By giving, you're equipping leaders to transform the lives of countless people through the Word of God. Please consider donating today to support our students all the way to graduation day, so that they are fully equipped to pursue the next steps in ministry.

Give today to help future MB Seminary students graduate and dedicate themselves to ministry!



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