



August 2009

Dear MC Canada congregation:

More than half—54 percent—of pastors who responded to the 2007 MC Canada Pastoral Trends Survey said they are alumni of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Because of this strong link between Mennonite Church Canada and AMBS, we (the Canadian members of the AMBS board) have a request to make of you and [church name].

AMBS is jointly owned and operated by Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA, serving the church by training leaders for God's reconciling mission in the world. As a bi-national seminary, AMBS serves both denominations and relies on both for support.

However, funding for AMBS changed at the time Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA were formed. As a result, AMBS has not received financial support from MC Canada as a denomination the way it did earlier. Many people are not aware of this change, so we are writing to explain this and ask that you consider adding AMBS to your designated giving.

Since its formation as a denomination, Mennonite Church Canada's budget no longer includes an amount for AMBS from general donations sent in by congregations. MC Canada sends to AMBS only those funds that are specifically designated for the seminary. The AMBS line item listed in MC Canada financial reports reflects only funds that have been designated for AMBS by Area Churches, congregations and individuals—an amount of about \$85,000, primarily from Mennonite Church Eastern Canada and its congregations. (The attached memo provides an overview of church funding for MC Canada post-secondary schools.)

We invite you to consider adding AMBS to the list of church ministries that you as a congregation support. You can do this by sending funds designated for AMBS to MC Canada, or by sending donations directly to AMBS.

Due to the current economic climate, AMBS had to take approximately \$200,000 from estate gifts to cover annual operations at the close of the 2008–2009 year. This is money that would normally be put into endowment, but was needed instead to pay expenses for the year. Even in the short term, this is not a viable way for the seminary to operate. For future budgets, the Board has instructed AMBS administrators either to find new donors or to cut about \$300,000 from operating expenses, even though we know that reducing programming would seriously hamper the seminary's ability to offer the quality training the church expects from AMBS.

You can support the important work of AMBS by adding AMBS to the designated giving from your congregation. Your gift will be an investment in future pastors for our congregations and denomination.

Please give this request your prayerful consideration as we together seek to continue to develop leaders for God's work in the world.

Sincerely,



Ray Friesen
Chair, AMBS Board




Ron Ringenberg
AMBS Vice President



Bruce Baergen
Member, AMBS Board



Erika Friesen
Member, AMBS Board



Jorge Hoajaca
Member, AMBS Board



Kathy Koop
Member, AMBS Board