

# 2018-19 Annual Report



DIACONAL MINISTRIES  
CANADA

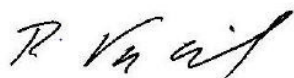
# Greetings from Diaconal Ministries Canada!

This past year a few of our staff and partners came together to compile the top leadership tasks of the deacon. Looking at the Deacon's Mandate, we came up with eight (8) tasks. Doesn't sound like much, right? Here they are, in no particular order:

- Equip & Mobilize Congregations
- Lead as Equals with Elders & Pastors
- Develop as Leaders in God's Kingdom
- Promote & Partner with Classical and Denominational Ministries
- Model & Encourage Community Engagement
- Inspire Faithful Stewardship
- Promote Mercy & Justice
- Facilitate Care In & Outside of the Church

Phew! That's a tall order. The GOOD NEWS is that we are here to serve! Diaconal Ministries Canada exists to inspire, empower, and equip deacons as they animate their churches to join in God's transforming work in their communities.

This report is a small glimpse of how Diaconal Ministries continues to provide up-to-date, relevant, and practical support to deacons and churches across Canada so we can build God's Kingdom together!



ron vanden brink  
National Director

## OUR PARTNERS IN MINISTRY



Disability  
Concerns

OSJ

Office of Social Justice



Christian Reformed  
Centre for Public Dialogue

Resonate™  
GLOBAL MISSION

WorldRenew™  
LIVING JUSTICE • LOVING MERCY • SERVING CHRIST

CHRISTIAN  
Stewardship  
SERVICES

*May the Lord fill your hearts with God's love and may Christ give you the strength to go on.  
-2 Thess. 3:5-*





# WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!

*A Reflection by Regional Ministry Developer, Rachel Vroege*

This year marks my 6th year working with Diaconal Ministries Canada. My position is a mouthful – Western Canada Regional Ministry Developer (RMD) – but can be summed up in one word: **Champion**. When I started on May 1st in 2013, I had very big shoes to fill. Henry Bosch, my predecessor, was known as “the deacon guy” in Edmonton where I grew up. Henry was one of the founders of Diaconal Ministries Canada and was also working as the first RMD in Western Canada. Upon his retirement, I was hired to fill role. I discovered very quickly that the best part of my work would be meeting and coaching deacon teams and those with a diaconal heart in the 100+ Christian Reformed Churches in Western Canada. This is where the word champion comes in.



**Together with Aboriginal Education Assistant, Mrs. Emily Michelanko, Rachel Vroege (left) co-facilitates the Blanket Exercise in the Chilliwack Public School district.**

**To champion means to support the cause of, defend, advocate, and stand up for.**

At Diaconal Ministries, we defend the cause of justice and mercy through our Youth Justice Initiative and our NewGround program (formerly Operation Manna) that provides support for many community ministry projects. I have also had the privilege to witness and be a part of some incredible movements – the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada and the Faith and Justice Project. I also participated as Synod adopted the Diakonia Remixed Report and moved to change the Church Order to reflect the calling of deacons as champions of justice, mercy, and reconciliation ministries in the CRCNA.

Through our coaching initiatives, I have worked with and been inspired by fellow champions in organizations addressing homelessness, refugees, sex trafficking, creation care, and restorative justice. My Diaconal Ministries’ colleagues and our Diaconal Coach network (aka Diaconal Ministry Developers) also show tireless commitment as they champion their local diaconates and churches and their ministry efforts to care for the vulnerable. In these past six years, I have witnessed the many gifts God has given His people – gifts of leadership, compassion, and faith. Each day I am inspired by the call to the deacons – to serve in imitation of Christ’s mercy, summoning the church to help relieve victims of injustice, equip the church for ministries of reconciliation and peacemaking, and seek opportunities for advocacy. In other words – **to be co-champions in Christ!**



# QUICK STATS



4

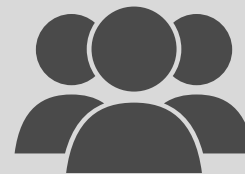
DIACONAL MINISTRIES CANADA

50+

## Workshops & Training Events

Over **350** deacons from more than **130** churches attended a workshop or deacon training event held by a Diaconal Coach or one of our Field Staff.

These included Deacon 101 Trainings, Benevolence Workshops, 'Helping Without Harming' Workshops, Refugee Round Tables, Prayer & Share gatherings and Restorative Practices Workshops.



203

## Churches Contacted

Our network of experienced Diaconal Coaches is spread out across the country. Toolkits and other resources have been developed to assist deacons in the areas of Community Engagement, Stewardship, Mercy & Justice, Leadership Development, and General Administration. This past year our Coaches reached out to over **90%** of the Christian Reformed churches in Canada to offer training and support.



5259

## Average Monthly Website Users

Our online presence has seen significant increases over the last number of years. Of the monthly visitors to our website, over **80%** are brand new visitors and approximately **45%** are from the United States!

Because of this increased "traffic", we revamped our entire website and launched it in July 2019. We're excited to see how deacons are engaging with our website and its resources in the coming year.



288

## Posts on our Blog

The E-Quip Diaconal Blog features stories and events highlighting how deacons are transforming communities across Canada. It also shines a spotlight on where our Diaconal Coaches and staff are working and aims to inspire deacons in the work that they do.

Each month our e-newsletter goes out to **over 500** subscribers. It features blog posts as well as upcoming events and brand new resources.



ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19





## What happened to Operation Manna?

This past year saw some BIG changes to the Operation Manna Program that Diaconal Ministries Canada has been running for over 35 years. After several years of discussion, prayer, and consultation, it was decided that the time had finally arrived to help clarify the purpose of this important program and breathe new life into it!

- **What's changed?** Besides a brand new name and logo, we've also expanded the program to include a **Youth Justice Initiative** and **Deacon Scholarships**.
- **What hasn't changed?** Our desire and commitment to see churches be agents of change in their local context and beyond.

## Community Opportunity Scans

13

Churches inquired or received materials about conducting a Community Opportunity Scan.

2

Churches completed a Community Opportunity Scan and are moving forward with new ministries.

7

Churches were contacted to offer support and/or coaching on a previous Community Opportunity Scan.



## Community Ministry Grants & Support

8

Current NewGround Partners spread across the country receiving grant money, coaching and support. Our partners include a refugee welcome centre, a youth drop-in program, and a summer day camp.

14

Churches inquired about NewGround to see if their community ministry would be a good fit for the program.



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## Where are the rest of the stats?

Anytime a well-known program is revamped, it takes some time to get the word out. This past year Diaconal Ministries has worked hard to promote the Youth Justice Project and the Deacon Scholarship program to churches, groups, and individuals in each Classis across Canada.

We are excited to see the ways in which God uses these funds to inspire not only current deacons, but also the next generation of justice-seekers who truly believe that Christ's love can transform lives and communities. Stay tuned for more exciting stories about these brand new initiatives.

# A MINISTRY OF PRESENCE

*Diaconal Coach Lucinda Klapwyk Hosts Monthly Coffee Chats*



While many people believe a smile or song is the universal language, Lucinda Klapwyk believes it might in fact be coffee. On top of visiting Deacons formally at meetings and workshops, for the last 4+ years, Lucinda, the Diaconal Coach for Classis AB North, has 'set up shop' on the 2nd and 3rd Thursday of the month at a local cafe in Edmonton. The 1st Thursday of every month is held in the morning at the Carrot Cafe, a local, volunteer-run art gallery/community coffee shop. The following Thursday evening she is at a local Second Cup coffee shop.

"I've had the privilege of connecting with Deacons informally over a coffee, to share what's going on in their churches, communities or their own lives and journeys. It's a great way to also gather information and network with deacons from a variety of churches," Lucinda shares.

Some of her coffee chats have included Jesse Edgington from the Northern Alberta Diaconal Conference (NADC), guests from World Renew Disaster Relief, local pastors and church planters, members of the Edmonton Interfaith Housing group, Christian Labour Assoc. of Canada reps, and others. "It's a great time to hear how God is at work in an amazing diversity of ways," Lucinda reflects.

**So what's so great about these 'coffee chats'?** Not only does this support two local businesses, it also gets deacons outside of their church walls and into their community. Other benefits include collaboration and cross pollination between organizations and churches, interactions between deacons and pastors, and the accessibility to working and retired deacons.

One cool story Lucinda shared was her introduction of a local church planter and

another local pastor who are now partnering in ministry together!

Overall, Lucinda has found that establishing a fixed date on the calendar has helped maintain and grow these coffee shop gatherings; and it has also built trust and rapport between her and the churches she serves. When Lucinda began her work as a Diaconal Coach over 9 years ago, she was used to contacting each church in her region to offer support and training. "Now almost all of the churches I serve reach out to *me* with their questions and to seek help!" she muses. Lucinda is already planning for future coffee chats, hoping to keep things fresh and to find new ways to engage deacons. One idea she has for the evening coffee chat is to incorporate field trips! "We could visit a place like the Edmonton Native Healing Centre to see what they do, how can we help/partner, etc," Lucinda remarks, with excitement. "It has been wonderful to see the diaconates of the Edmonton churches grow and blossom." We celebrate this along with Lucinda and know that because of Diaconal Coaches like her, who are ready and willing to serve, diaconates all over Canada are flourishing!

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Diaconal Ministries Canada has approximately 1 Diaconal Coach per Classis across Canada. Through their experience in diaconal work and their love for God and His people, they are making a difference in countless ways as they encourage and equip deacons and churches.





# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Cities and neighbourhoods should be blessed by the churches that exist there.



## COLLABORATION AT WORK

Engaging with your surrounding community is no simple task. It requires years of building trust, getting to know your neighbourhood, and assessing your community's unique assets and needs. It can be overwhelming at first, but deacons and churches don't need to go it alone.

Diaconal Ministries Canada not only preaches "collaboration" - we practice it! The resource shown here was put together with our friends at World Renew using the teachings and resources from The Lupton Center. These 5 principles are essential for churches who initiate a Community Opportunity Scan, a tried and tested tool offered by Diaconal Ministries Canada.

## From "Identity Crisis" to Identity in Christ

This past year, Providence CRC in Beamsville, ON, went through a Community Opportunity Scan (COS). Their church desired to realign their 'compass' to point them towards local mission opportunities.

**"Going through the COS process helped Providence pave the way for building significant community partnerships and identify the potential to transform neighbourhoods and areas within our own church. The church grew in its understanding of how God's Kingdom was forming outside its doors."**

-Pastor Mike Collins, Providence CRC, Beamsville, ON

Read the full story on our e-Quip Diaconal Blog!

# LIVING STEWARDLY

Stewardship involves understanding that everything we have is a gift from God and faithfully using what we have in ways that please Him and bring Him glory.

Over the years as our Diaconal Coaches and other staff have met with deacons and churches, the hottest topic has consistently been **Stewardship**, which also includes benevolence. Deacons are eager to get their hands on anything that will equip their churches to wisely use the resources God has given them *and* to show Christ's love to those inside and outside of their church walls with honour and respect.

One way diaconates are being equipped is through a **Benevolence Workshop** offered by Anja Attema, a former Financial Consultant. Anje has developed a training ministry for churches founded on the belief that a solid, well thought-out benevolence ministry presents opportunities for showing Christ's love in meaningful ways. In this workshop, Deacons are learning a systematized approach to benevolence by using helpful tools and resources which are also available on our website.

More recently, Diaconal Ministries Canada began dreaming and planning out what it would look like to design and test a **Stewardship** model that is cost-effective, has measurable goals, is relatively easy to deliver, and would be transferable to churches of all sizes. We are pleased to share that in collaboration with Christian Stewardship Services and the Canadian Ministries Team of the CRCNA, a Stewardship Pilot Project has been developed. It was decided that a Coordinator would be hired to oversee the pilot project for up to 3 years, or until it was deemed sufficient.

While a grant has been received to cover most of the expenses connected to running this project, Diaconal Ministries hopes to raise additional funds in order to cover additional costs associated with the program and to ensure the project is able to fulfill its robust mandate and reach its goals.

## "Helping Without Harming at Christmas" Webinar

On Wednesday, December 5, 2018, Wendy Hammond of World Renew (US), Andy Ryskamp of the CRCNA Diaconal Ministry Initiative (US) and Ron Vanden Brink of Diaconal Ministries Canada hosted this timely (and timeless!) webinar. Together they looked at the difference between needs-based and asset-based community engagement and the difference between development and temporary 'relief'.

**"This webinar was a good reminder to work WITH people rather than FOR them if we truly want to see lasting change."** -online participant

Read the full story on our e-Quip Diaconal Blog!

# PURSUING MERCY & JUSTICE

Through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, we see that we serve a God who is both just *and* merciful.

As the Christian Reformed Church moves into its 41st year of involvement in Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees program, we give thanks for God's faithfulness, and for the incredible commitment and support of so many churches across Canada to welcome refugees.

When a few churches from Abbotsford contacted me with some questions they had about the sponsorships they were undertaking, I was grateful for their commitment to healthy support. As I considered their questions, I realized there was a broader theme than simply refugees. **I had collaborated with Rachel Vroege, our local Regional Ministry Developer, in the past and felt that these churches would be best equipped by a partnership between her and I.** We have the same goals - wanting to see flourishing people in flourishing communities, animated by God's love and empowered by the Holy Spirit - and the practical resources we could both offer compliment each other well.

While Diaconal Ministries' resources are aimed towards the long-term goals and outcomes for people and communities, mine specifically address the situations that refugees and those sponsoring them encounter. This includes, for example, planning for "Month 13", the transition month when the year-long sponsorship period ends and the church moves towards a different kind of commitment in what's often called the post-sponsorship period. This can be a challenging transition time for all involved, and we hope that offering churches a broad array of supports will be of benefit to all involved and that churches will be empowered for a strong and sustainable welcome.

We also give thanks for what we continue to learn about what it means to walk alongside those who have arrived as refugees in ways that restore dignity and agency and lead to transformation for all involved.

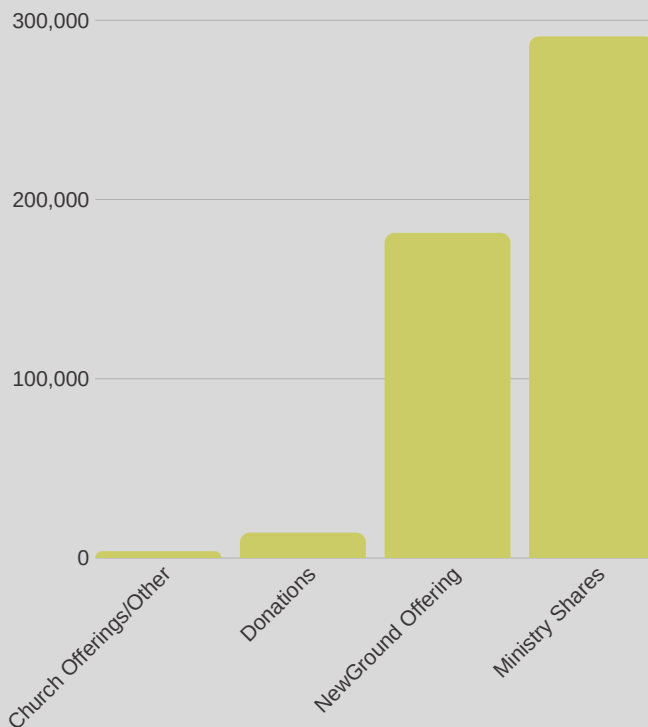
**--Dena Nicolai, Chaplain & Refugee Support Mobilizer**

## "Refugee Round Table" Gathering

On February 12, 2019, three churches gathered in Abbotsford, BC, to discuss the challenges of supporting refugee families past the one-year sponsorship mark and to find ways to bridge the transition from the Sponsorship Team to their church's deacons. Each refugee family had unique concerns - but commonalities were affordable housing, health, employment, and language learning. These are tough issues for churches and diaconates to navigate as they find helpful and sustainable ways to support their refugee family into "Month 13", and beyond. Diaconal Ministries Canada was grateful to facilitate this learning event.



# FINANCIALS 2018-19



## TOTAL REVENUE: \$489,412

We are grateful for and humbled by the ongoing support we receive, primarily through the annual Ministry Shares (aka "dues") we collect.

We also celebrate the way churches have continued to support our NewGround Program (formerly known as Operation Manna). Witnessing the body of Christ working together in this way continues to inspire us and our partners.

## EXPENSE ITEM

## AMOUNT

Programs & Services	\$244,640
Operations & Management	\$155,536
Fundraising	\$23,255
Grants to NG Partners	\$41,660
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$465,091</b>

## SUMMARY

We believe this financial snapshot reflects the mission and vision of Diaconal Ministries Canada: *to inspire, empower, and equip deacons as they animate their congregations to engage with communities, live stewardly, and promote mercy & justice.* Through our Diaconal Coach network and regional staff, we are available to every diaconate across Canada - to provide encouragement and coaching, up-to-date resources, and relevant workshops.

We also celebrate the way churches have supported our NewGround Program (formerly Operation Manna) over the years. While this was a year of transition, we are excited to see this program grow and extend its reach as churches participate in the Youth Justice Initiative and utilize the Deacon Scholarships.

## MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH

We celebrate the ways God has provided for Diaconal Ministries Canada in His good and perfect timing over the years. At the same time, it has become apparent that as the cost of maintaining our ministry increases, and we continue to feel led to expand our national impact, we can no longer count exclusively on our Ministry Share system to provide all of our financial resources.

For the upcoming fiscal year 2019-20, we hope to raise \$50,000 from sources outside of regular ministry shares (dues) in order to continue to break new ground and expand our reach. To do this we will be putting more efforts into raising funds from churches, businesses, individuals, and/or foundations.





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### FIELD STAFF & SUPPORT STAFF

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*\*This position is funded by CRC Canadian Ministries, Diaconal Ministries Canada, World Renew, and the Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue*

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