

2020 -2021

Annual Report

DIACONAL MINISTRIES CANADA



Photo by: Jolyn Bolderheij, Diaconal Coach (AB South/Sask.)

So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.

-1 Cor. 15:58 (NLT)-



DIACONAL MINISTRIES
CANADA



Photo by: Jolyn Bolderheij

Message from the National Director

Challenging. Unexpected. Interesting. Busy.

These were some of the top words used to describe this past year at our annual Ministry Networking Day; a day of learning and sharing best practices with Diaconal Ministries' NewGround partners, board members and staff. Perhaps some of these words resonate with you as well.

And yet...

Over the course of this past year, Diaconal Ministries Canada has continued to work tirelessly to equip and support deacons and churches all across the country. Deacons play an important role in bringing Christ's love to their churches and communities and for that, we are grateful. It has been our privilege to serve and equip them in this role.

So how is this possible?

When we read the passage from John 15 - a sort of theme passage for our staff this past year - the word "APART" seems to leap off the page. If there is

one thing we've learned over the past months during this ongoing pandemic, it's about doing life *apart*. We've been apart from family, friends, church members, neighbours, coworkers, fellow deacons, our hairdressers/barbers, healthcare providers, and the list goes on.

Doing life apart from some (or all) of these people can be hard. Like, really hard. Yes, we have technology in all its various forms, which can ease some of that burden, but we all know, it's not the same OR it just doesn't cut it after a while. There is something about presence - *physical presence*. Being in the same room. Smelling the same air. Drinking a coffee or a beverage together. Sharing a plate of cookies perhaps. Having a synergy amongst one another; especially during a meeting or training! With presence comes **connection** - a deeper connection than any phone call or video chat can mimic.

The same is true when it comes to our relationship with Jesus. He is pretty clear that if we remain in Him and stay connected to The Vine - a deep,

"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

meaningful and meaning-filled connection - we receive his life-giving power. His love flows through us and into our families, churches, neighbourhoods, cities and beyond!

This past July, Diaconal Ministries Canada celebrated 20 years of ministry. While we were officially constituted as a national organization in 2001, our roots go all the way back to the 1950s, as some of you may recall. Something that struck me as I looked back at old minutes and reports and ministry plans was that our mission was the same then as it is now: **to equip and encourage deacons in the areas of justice & mercy, community engagement and stewardship.** And we know that none of this was done in our own strength or power. With the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, Diaconal Ministries has remained connected to the True Vine, Jesus Christ, so that we can bear fruit - *fruit that will last!* (John 15:16)

It is our sincere hope and desire that your church has been impacted by the work that we have done over the

last 20 years and continue to do. Throughout the pages of this report, you'll read about some of the ways we've stayed connected to the deacons and churches we serve so that they can fulfill their important mandate to be the hands, feet and mouth of Jesus in a world that needs Him so desperately.

So let us also remember that while in many ways we remain physically apart in ministry, **we are still A PART of God's church;** of His family of believers; all connected to the True Vine, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. And that the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead lives in each one of us! Praise God! Each one of you is an integral part of God's Kingdom, working to bring transformation to cities and neighbourhoods across Canada and we couldn't do our work without your support - **apart yet a part!**



ron vanden brink
national director



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“As we pour Christ’s
unimaginable love
into one another,
the world will see
Jesus.”

Monica LaRose. Author

Our Mission

Relying on the Holy Spirit, Diaconal Ministries Canada exists to inspire, empower, and equip deacons as they animate their churches to join in God's transforming work in communities across Canada.

Quick Stats

46

Workshops

Since March 2020, all workshops moved online which required a lot of flexibility and creativity!

393

Deacons Trained

Deacons were grateful to gather over the past year and receive support from our coaches & staff.

13

Diaconal Coaches

Our two (2) Regional Ministry Developers worked hard to grow and strengthen our team of coaches.

"First-time deacons are usually a bit overwhelmed and Diaconal Ministries Canada has a lot of resources. I have been a deacon before so am pretty familiar with our Mandate but it was good to be reminded and read through it again. Doing workshops via Zoom has its limitations but at least we can still do these types of trainings during Covid!"

-Nova Scotia Deacon-



Our Online Presence

517

Facebook Likes

We gained 80 new Followers and our "Diakonia Sea Shanty" had 4,275 views!

83%

New Website Visitors

Our website continues to have lots of traffic, with our Deacon Devotions page receiving over 1,900 views!

Fall 2020 Survey

Diaconal Ministries' board members reached out to every diaconate to ask how the pandemic was impacting them as deacons and their broader church AND to offer support and guidance in any areas they were struggling.

One deacon shared how they had worked with their Diaconal Coach which resulted in a letter writing ministry between their seniors and children in the church!



Updated Resources

New Deacon Devotions

In January, we launched a brand new set of devotions entitled "**Overcoming Spiritual Roadblocks in Ministry**". These have been written in partnership with Rev. Martin Boardman, Prayer Mobilizer with Dunamis Fellowship Canada.

Community Engagement

In response to the deacon survey, Diaconal Ministries' staff created a new resource called "**Introduction to Community Partnerships**" to help deacons longing to connect with their neighbours during Covid.

Covid-19 Grants

Together with World Renew Canada, we offered churches in Canada funding grants to help them implement new channels of contact with their church members and local community.

In Canada, **14 congregations** received more than **\$64,000**, which impacted hundreds of families in communities all across Canada!

**Read
about one
grant on
page 5!**

2020-21 Initiatives

"Diaconal Ministries Canada has been most helpful in providing leadership and resources especially in this Pandemic time. Thank you!"

-Stewardship Bible Study participant-

Ministry Highlight

Care & Connection Brings Lasting Hope and Healing for London Ministry

By: Erin Knight & Mechele TeBrake

[Read the full story on our Blog!](#)



Sanctuary London has always at its core been about creating relationships with people experiencing oppression and exclusion. Rather than simply duplicating the numerous social services offered elsewhere throughout the city and region, Sanctuary provides people who are often excluded a sense of belonging in a healthy community. And hopefully, a place to call 'home.'

Back in 2009, with the support of Talbot Street CRC and a NewGround Community Ministry Grant from Diaconal Ministries Canada, Sanctuary began as a weekly art group, a weekly meal and a time of worship coordinated by a core group of 12 people and an extended community of 60 people. Over the last ten years, they have grown to a core group of 150 and an extended community of 800! At the request and invitation of community members, Sanctuary expanded to offer sit-down meals twice a week, provide two 3-bedroom affordable housing units to community members, run a reading group and an LGBTQ+ support group, as well as manage a Gleaning Food Forest (a community garden growing fruits and vegetables that can be gleaned by anyone who has need of them in the community). Above all, Sanctuary has been intentional about listening to and raising up those who are denied a voice elsewhere.

During Covid, Sanctuary was quickly deemed an "Essential Service" by their local health unit, which created a great

opportunity to continue their ministry, however it changed almost everything they did! Sanctuary went from being intentionally and intensely relational to a service-driven, needs-based ministry that provided meals-to-go in disposable containers.

In order to make the necessary adjustments in order to still love and connect with their community, Sanctuary applied for a Covid-19 Grant from Diaconal Ministries and World Renew Canada. Adhering to the ever-changing Health Unit requirements, dealing with the rising cost of groceries and now disposable "everything", and serving an even larger crowd than before were only possible with help of the grant. "Through it all, we knew that God was in this with us," recalls Community Outreach Worker, Mechele TeBrake. "We knew we had to find a way to continue our work, especially when so many other places had closed completely in London." Staff also learned how to get creative, knowing that isolation is one of the leading causes of people being street-involved, housing-deprived or homeless.

"We are so grateful that Diaconal Ministries has believed in and encouraged our work at Sanctuary London over the years. Through the Covid-19 Grant they also made it possible for us to continue to be community and explore ways to be home together, even in challenging times," recalls Tebrake. "Or maybe I should say, *especially* in challenging times."

Our Team

*"Our Coach is always available for any question or concern. I myself have often connected with her if I have a specific question about some issue. She was instrumental in helping us with a refugee settlement... I think most of all, it's the **connections** that are the most beneficial."*
-Calgary deacon-



Anjanette
Office Assistant



Cherelynn
Financial Coord.



Mark
Regional Ministry Developer (East)



Karla
NewGround Coord.



SOME NEW FACES AT DIACONAL MINISTRIES CANADA!

We were thrilled over this past year to welcome some new faces to our team. While the pandemic hasn't allowed us to gather in our usual ways, we truly believe we have the right people in the right positions. (To see our full team, check out the backpage OR visit our website: diaconalministries.com/our-team.)

DIACONAL COACH HIGHLIGHT

Len Bakelaar served as a Diaconal Coach in Classis Huron for 18 yrs+ until he retired in June 2020.

*"One of the areas I was passionate about was helping deacons see themselves as an equal part of the leadership of the church, with the pastor(s) and elders. As leaders, there is an opportunity to help set and carry out your church's mission. As leaders, deacons need to know their church and their community - what would make it stronger and what the gifts and abilities are. **THIS** is the church and **THIS** is God's calling on our lives."*

**Read
Len's story
on our
Blog!**

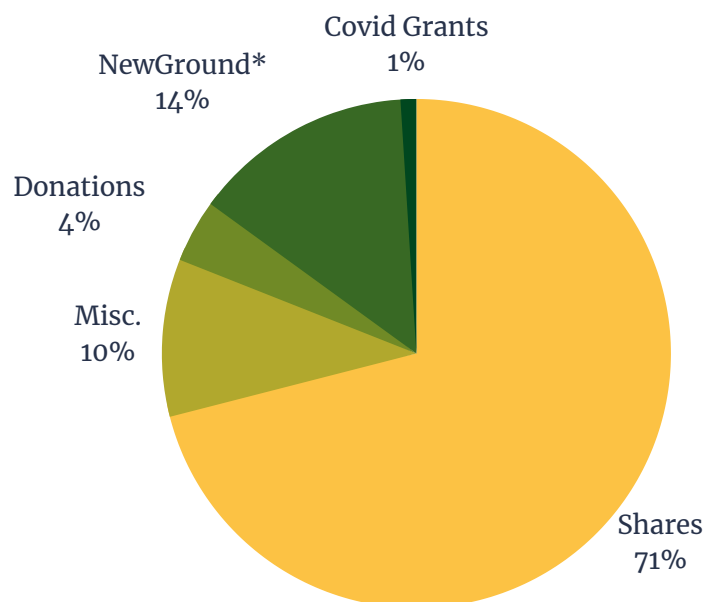


Coach Len training deacons @
Cambridge CRC, Oct. 24, 2019

Finance Report

Faithfully stewarding our financial resources

DMC Revenues 2020-21



REVENUE - \$495,660

A majority of our funding comes through our Diaconal Ministry Shares (71%). We are grateful to the churches that contribute so faithfully and see value in the work we are doing *with* them and *for* them.

We are also encouraged by a number of individuals who have donated – some even becoming monthly partners!

**Over the last two years, we've seen NewGround revenue decline significantly. You can read more about NewGround and see the financial report on pages 9–12.*

EXPENSES - \$405,053

Where We Spent Our Money...

- Coaching & Programs – 18%
- Operations & Management – 46%
- Grants & Support to partners – 33%
- Fundraising – 3%

As in previous years, over 1/3 of our budget goes to NewGround to equip churches in loving their communities!

Our amazing network of Diaconal Coaches and Field Staff continue to be our greatest asset and we've worked hard to equip and train them so they can serve local diaconates even better.

DIRECTOR'S OVERVIEW

Overall, Diaconal Ministries is in a healthy financial state, primarily due to conservative budgeting and spending less in the past year due to Covid and other ongoing restrictions (eg. travel).

Diaconal Ministries relies heavily on our Ministry Share model therefore we are extremely grateful for the support of churches/diaconates who give faithfully so that together we can impact communities with Christ's love!

Our Work

To carry out our mission, Diaconal Ministries values prayer, celebration, collaboration, servant leadership, gift-based ministry, holistic ministry and justice.



BENEVOLENCE

Deacons often seek help with **BENEVOLENCE**. While we continue to offer **benevolence workshops and other resources** for deacons, another **new partnership** has been struck with Ms. Anja Attema, a Financial Life Coach in Southern Ontario! While there is a time and place for immediate and short-term 'help', Deacons can offer a more sustainable solution to their church members AND broader community through Anja's Financial Life Coaching program. Also, as more deacons have been asking for help with either crafting or updating their Benevolence Policies, we have been ready to help!



COLLABORATION

Our partnership with World Renew Canada continues to bear fruit!

- Fall 2020 - We joined together to promote **16 Days of Activism** around **Gender-Based Violence**
- June 2021 - We acknowledged **National Indigenous History Month** to raise awareness within our staff communities. A number of learning events took place throughout the month. This led to several staff taking part in the Hearts Exchanged cohorts and some even being co-facilitators in their Classis.
- **Covid-19 Grants** - See [pages 4 & 5](#) for more information and a grant story!



STEWARDSHIP

Our **Stewardship Pilot Project** has continued to help churches learn and live out the Biblical principles of stewardship. Living stewardly is really about discipleship; therefore time was spent strengthening the project's spiritual grounding and building relationships through a **5-week book study of: "What Do I Owe?"** by Rolf Bouma. Karla, the Project's Coordinator, led a number of small groups with 26 participants from several churches across the country. On top of that, **5 more resources** have been developed and work has begun on **Toolkits** for each of the four T's; these will be available online in early 2022!

"There are lots of resources available for stewardship work. Each of the 5 sessions brought a follow-up email from Karla, each with notes of encouragement and one or two online resources we can tap into for future use. I give this workshop a 10/10!"

-Stewardship Bible Study participant (Nov 2020)-



NewGround

NewGround helps churches and individuals break new missional ground, nurturing Spirit-led ideas that bear everlasting fruit.

Community Ministry Partners

Open Homes Hamilton - Refugee Ministry

In partnership with New Hope Church, Hamilton, ON.

Norfolk Pregnancy and Family Resource Centre

In partnership with Immanuel CRC, Simcoe, ON.

Open Homes Hamilton



The Vault Youth Centre

In partnership with Mosaic House, Trinity & CentrepoinTE CRCs, Edmonton, AB.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Debt Centre

In partnership with Crosspoint CRC, Brampton, ON.



The Vault (Edmonton)

"With the financial assistance from NewGround, our church opened a Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Debt Centre several years ago. NewGround also provided coaching and connected us with another church that had a CAP program. In March, we had our first client finish paying off her debt!! As the Centre's manager, I am passionate about the opportunity to witness how God connects us to people in our community and to see Him at work in and through our church.

CAP connects us to what God is already doing in our community!"

--Nancy V, CAP Centre, Crosspoint CRC (Brampton, ON)



NewGround Partner Highlight

NewGround Partnership Helps Church Love Refugees

By: Erin Knight

[Read the full story on our Blog!](#)



The need for and lack of proper housing for refugee claimants has become a crisis in recent years in most parts of our country. Outrageous housing prices and under-funded welfare and assistance programs are only two of the reasons why. On top of the housing challenges are the negative perceptions of immigrants and refugees which only seems to be worsening.

Started in 2018, Open Homes Hamilton (OHH) is a multi-church network supporting refugee claimants by offering home-based hospitality. OHH bridges the gap between Christians with extra space in their houses (called “Hosts”) and refugee claimants (called “Guests”) in need of that space. They not only provide appropriate housing for refugees but they also break down barriers between refugee claimants and the people of Hamilton (and beyond!) through this relational ministry. OHH believes that recovering the church’s historic commitment to radical hospitality is part of the call on followers of Christ and they help churches answer that call. OHH also supports both the Hosts and Guests with a team of “Companions” – volunteers who offer friendship and practical help as refugee claimants adapt to their new home and surroundings.

“The refugee crisis desperately needs churches to show up in ways that further hope, healing, and reconciliation in the world,” Danielle Steenwyk-Rowaan, Open Homes Hamilton’s team leader, shared.

One church that showed up was New Hope Church, a CRC church plant in Hamilton, ON. In order to support the work of OHH and expand their mission and reach, **New Hope applied to NewGround for a Community Ministry Grant.** NewGround funding was used for training and support for their leadership team and volunteers, as well as practical support for refugees like bus fare, grocery cards, and rides to Toronto for refugee hearings.

Partnering with OHH has allowed New Hope to welcome refugee claimants into communities of belonging and has reminded them of the transformative power of the ancient Christian practice of hospitality. Some members of New Hope are signed on as Companions and others are occasional volunteers, willing to help wherever needed! Prayer and financial support has challenged their church to remember the plight of refugees and be directly involved in providing practical support.

Part of every NewGround partnership is also one-on-one coaching and support. NewGround staff worked with Steenwyk-Rowaan and her team to do some short and long-term strategic planning, digging deeper into their vision. They’ve also had Coaching Conversations about Board diversity/recruitment and fundraising. Steenwyk-Rowaan recently shared how she is extremely grateful for the “invaluable support” they have received from NewGround.

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY SCANS (COS)

7 churches (located in BC, Sask., Ont., & Nova Scotia) are exploring and/or pursuing COS's in their local communities. While Covid has made these initiatives a bit more challenging, churches are longing to get to know their neighbours and discover where God is already at work.



NewGround

Churches loving communities

YOUTH JUSTICE PROJECT

The Youth Justice Project encourages youth to identify an injustice in their community and share ways they hope to address it, along with their church's deacons.

Current Partner - Sarah & Sophia, Halifax, NS!

Racial Reconciliation Project - Raising awareness and creating safe spaces where voices can be heard and solutions adhered to. In partnership with Trellis Collective (CRC church plant).



MINISTRY NETWORKING DAY

Our annual Ministry Networking Day (MND) was held on June 24. This learning and networking event gathers our NewGround Partners with Diaconal Ministries' staff and Diaconal Coaches. This year's theme was "Post-traumatic Growth and the Role of Spiritual First Aid in a Pandemic", led by Ms. Alida van Dijk of the Community Counselling Centre of London (a current NewGround partner). Van Dijk's presentation showed how Spiritual First Aid involves being present, providing support and being an empathetic witness—all things we can offer in times of crisis, including a pandemic. The word cloud displayed above was formed by participants sharing how this past year of ministry has been for them. **This gathering was held virtually for the first time ever and was received well.** One partner participant thanked van Dijk, saying the session was both "amazing and soul nourishing!"

A NEWGROUND PARTNERSHIP IS SO MUCH MORE THAN GRANT MONEY...

Our staff also walk alongside churches and ministries to assist in coaching and networking. Some of this past year's **Coaching Conversations** have included troubleshooting Covid restrictions, strategic planning, help with Board recruitment and diversity as well as providing tips and resources about marketing/promotions and fundraising. **THIS** is what makes NewGround so unique and so necessary for the churches in Canada.

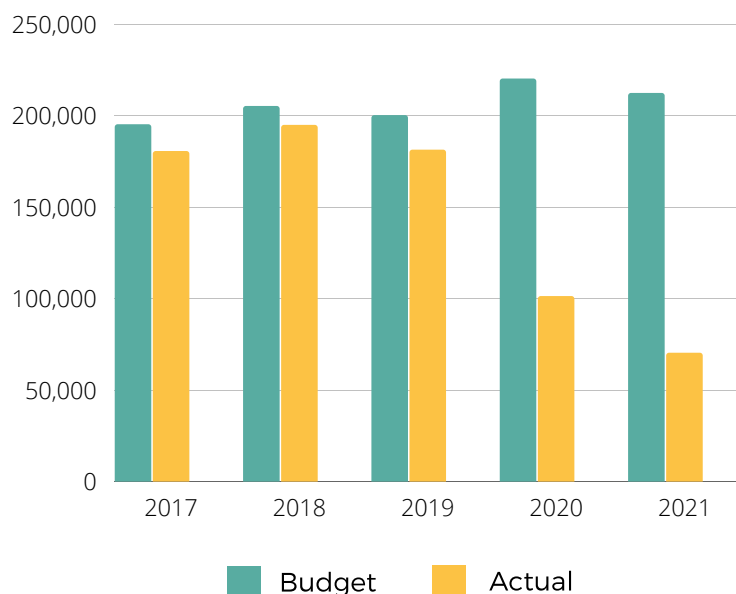


NewGround Finances



NewGround is primarily funded through an annual offering held by CRC's across Canada, typically on the first Sunday of May.

NG Revenues: Budget vs Actual 2017-2021



OVERVIEW

From its humble beginnings, NewGround (formerly Operation Manna) has always relied on the generosity of churches across Canada to fund and support this vital program.

As stated earlier, NewGround is so much more than a grant program. NewGround's four (4) key activities aim to help churches love their local community. For example, with a Community Ministry partnership, NewGround offers real time support and coaching to help churches and ministries flourish for years to come.

Unfortunately, NewGround revenue has declined significantly over the last two (2) years, mostly due churches not meeting in their usual ways since the onset of the pandemic. We've worked hard to keep this program going and unfortunately our reserve fund has been completely depleted. With the reduced revenue, this has directly impacted not only our current partners but also new applicants seeking funding and support.

We've stretched every dollar over this past year so that our partners will not feel the full brunt of this deficit. Moving forward, we will also need to adjust our budgets which will mean less support for the churches who need it most.

We (as well as our partners!) are so grateful for the generosity of churches and individuals who give faithfully so that we can impact communities with Christ's love!



"When a church has the desire to reach out, God blesses that – sometimes not in the ways we would think. NewGround can help you to put your God-driven dreams into motion and to actually be who you were called to be by God – as individuals and as a church."

-John K., Good News Church, Current NewGround Partner-



“We feel very supported by our Coach and others who provide workshops and information. It was really great to be able to see each other on Zoom and to hear how other churches in our Classis are reacting to and serving their communities during the Covid-19 pandemic. [Our gathering] was well-focused and I especially appreciated the opportunity to be part of this discussion while staying at home. I feel blessed. I am finishing my term as Deacon soon, but thought this was one of the best meetings I have been a part of....keep going!!”

-Ontario Deacon-

“Thanks again for taking time from your busy lives to share your wisdom and love of Christ in community with us this past Saturday. Those I’ve spoken with were very much impressed with how you were able to open their eyes and hearts to our impact of being in the community and the larger world. The work you do is incredibly important and we are blessed to have you do it. As our missional ministries expand, I look forward to having you return to share your gifts with others as we invite them to “walk the talk” in following Jesus.

-Past 'Helping Without Harming' Workshop Participant-

“I enjoyed the [Deacon 101] workshop and appreciated the tone and pace of it. We spent time unpacking the Deacon Mandate and the “What Do Deacons Do” brochure. While I knew about the mandate and its four areas, it inspired me and I think will encourage discussions with our deacons. Helen, our Diaconal Coach, is a very effective and affirming communicator and workshop leader. She has presented to our diaconate twice in the last while and this has been helpful in encouraging us in fulfilling our mandate.”

-Classis Hamilton Deacon-



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**This position is funded in partnership with CRC Canadian Ministries, World Renew Canada and the CRC Centre for Public Dialogue.)*

**See our list
of Diaconal
Coaches
on our
website!**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2020-21)

- Classis BCNW - **Cindy Verbeek**
- BCSE - **Liz Tolkamp**
- Alberta North - **Jesse Edgington**
- Alberta South/Sask. - **Don Miedema**
- Lake Superior - **Erica Snippe-Juurakko**
- Ontario SW - **Jeff Robinson**
- Huron - **Mechele TeBrake**
- Hamilton - **Steve Dykstra**
- Niagara - **vacant**
- Toronto - **Martin Slofstra**
- Quinte - **Rose Saller**
- Eastern Canada - **Peter VanHarmelen** (Chair)

*Thank you for your
ongoing support!*

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