

110 années • 1910-2020

Compassion Hospitalité Justice



Montreal City
Mission

communautaire de Montréal

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS OVER THE LAST ELEVEN DECADES

MONTREAL CITY MISSION

SINCE 1910

A United Church of Canada Community Ministry



The creative energy that set this historical review in motion comes from former board chair and long-time MCM supporter, Dr. Lynn McAlpine, emerita professor at McGill University and the University of Oxford. For over 35 years, and despite the demands of teaching, writing and lecturing around the globe, Lynn has always made herself available to MCM. Her wisdom and insights have guided us through challenging times and broadened our horizons - empowering staff and charting new waters for the organization. Most importantly, Lynn has been a faithful friend whose vision of an inclusive and compassionate society continues to play a major role at Montreal City Mission, today and into the future. Thank you Lynn!

110 années • 1910-2020

Compassion Hospitalité Justice



Montreal City

Mission

communautaire de Montréal

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS OVER THE LAST ELEVEN DECADES

MONTREAL CITY MISSION


SINCE 1910


A United Church of Canada Community Ministry




 1435 rue City Councillors
Montréal (Québec) H3A 2E4

 www.montrealcitymission.org

 [montrealcitymission](https://www.facebook.com/montrealcitymission)

 (514) 844-9128

 (514) 844-0067

1910s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

Methodist minister Bowman Tucker founded the Montreal City Mission in July 1910 and continued to lead it for the next 24 years. A board of management was created and government registers obtained.



In the area bounded by Bleury, Craig, St. Denis and Ontario, street preaching took place to largely Eastern European immigrants, as well as teaching English.

Tucker prepared a speech/paper on "the duty of the churches to the foreign population" whom he thought should be tuned into western evangelical Christianity and Canadian aims and nationhood.

Founded as a non-denominational institution, MCM had as its aim to "promote the knowledge of the Gospel among the inhabitants of Montreal, more particularly the foreigners and the poor." This was without reference to denominational distinctions, and to conduct on their behalf Evangelistic, Educational, Social and Relief work, Sunday Schools and Secular Classes, a Labor Bureau, a Bureau of Advice, Rescue Work, Free Bathrooms, Immigration Work, the Circulation of Religious Literature, and the Administration of the Ordinances of the Christian religion.

In 1912, MCM moved to a place for sale across the street with more space. In December 1913, there was a visit from the Duke of Connaught and Governor General. The Duke made two observations.

The first being that MCM's efforts were directed largely at the young population, "molding the mind of the rising generation to more Christian ideals and higher conceptions of citizenship." The second point noted was that the work was almost entirely with the "foreign" population. Two days later, generous cheques were received from the Duke and his secretary. In 1915, formal constitution and by-laws were drawn up by the board and approved at the Annual General Meeting.

In May of 1917, MCM incorporated by order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council as a "church mission for religious, educational, social and benevolent work among Montreal's underprivileged of all nationalities." In 1919, there was a need to expand and a new addition to the building was built.

Tucker did preaching tours to spread information and raise funds. Later, new housing was built on MCM's property with rentals providing part of MCM's annual income.

CANADA AND THE WORLD

World War 1, also known as the Great War, began in 1914. During the war, twin concerns prevailed for the church; traditional evangelicalism, such as prohibition and gambling alongside issues of social

christianity. With the end of the war, churches and ministers were increasingly focused on social conditions.



1920s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

In 1923, MCM was very busy with its chapel that seated 200 people; afternoon classrooms were used every day after school to hear scripture, sing hymns, etc.

MCM's aim was to evangelize, anglicize and Canadianize.

In regards to funding, Tucker drew on sales from his books, wrote letters seeking help and borrowed money. As regular contributors became known, MCM was supported entirely by voluntary methods.



Montreal City Mission, 287 Cadieux St., 1917

CANADA AND THE WORLD

In 1920, the U.S. Constitution was passed, creating the era of Prohibition. This was a nationwide ban on alcohol that lasted until 1933. Prohibition in Canada had a more irregular history, appearing in some provinces in the late 1800s. It was introduced as was a wartime measure that swept through most of the provinces and lasted through the 1920s.

In 1924, in the city of Montreal an illuminated cross was installed by the Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste on Mount Royal.



On June 10th 1925, Canada's Methodist churches, Congregational churches, and a large portion of its Presbyterian churches joined to form the United Church of Canada.



Inauguration of The United Church of Canada on June 10, 1925 at Mutual Street Arena in Toronto

1930s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

In 1934, Tucker died in England. There was much confusion about MCM's affairs as Tucker managed the finances and held the property deeds and there had been no auditing of accounts. Ultimately, the property issue was resolved (bankruptcy sale) and the MCM board got the deed. At first, two of the mission's lay preachers acted as director but it was then passed to ordained ministers, all from the United Church.

Evangelism and social services remained at the centre of MCM's work mixed with promotion of anglo-saxon values and cdn/British patriotism.

CANADA AND THE WORLD

Lydia Gruchy became the first woman ordained as a United Church of Canada minister in 1936.



The Great Depression was a severe worldwide economic crisis during the 1930's, that had effects in both rich and poor countries around the world. It was the longest and most widespread depression of the 20th century. In many countries the negative impact lasted until the beginning of World War 2.



The National Film Board is Canada's public film and digital media producer and distributor. It was founded in Ottawa by John Grierson in 1939.



1940s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

A newspaper article reported 200 adherents; girl guides, scouts, brownies, mid-week service, as well as distribution of clothes and furniture.

“as these are for the most part young people of school age, our idea is that this is our royal opportunity to put in the best of the work for the making of Canada and the maintenance of the British Empire and through that the extension of God’s kingdom on earth”

– 1940’s brochure



The German National Socialist Workers’ Party (Nazis), in power between 1933 and 1945, sought to eliminate the entire Jewish community of Europe. During what is now known as the Holocaust, 6 million Jews perished in German concentration camps.



CANADA AND THE WORLD

The Second World War began on September 1, 1939 with the invasion of Poland by Germany. This was the deadliest and most destructive conflict in human history, with over thirty countries involved. The war ended on May 8, 1945.



1950s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

Minister in Ville-Emard and part time MCM Director, AB Lovelace was largely responsible for the integration of MCM within the United Church of Canada.

In 1955, MCM asked the United Church for trained female workers. It became clear that the mission was moving towards a denomination affiliation. Much of the financial and personnel support came from the United Church and the raising of funds presented a growing burden – even with a part time director, the mission was not self-supporting. It made sense to take advantage of the United Church system of home mission grants.

Lovelace accepted a part time apartment as superintendent of the Church of All Nations, a mission begun in 1929 at 1135 Amherst Square, working mainly with the Slavic population. One full time director between them made sense and they could maintain their autonomy.



In 1957, the United Church of Canada bought MCM for a dollar and agreed to operate it as an “institutional mission, promoting a program that will include worship, Christian education, week-day activities, clubs, etc.,”

Further work of the two missions would continue in the two locations and the staff at MCM was increased so there was always someone at each mission. The advisory board would act as liaison between the two missions with the United Church Montreal Presbytery keeping congregations informed.

CANADA AND THE WORLD

The 1950s was a decade marked by the post war boom when young couples started having children after putting off marriage during the war. Societal expectations demanded that women who had been working during the war, return to their foyer and raise a family.

In 1952, CBC and Radio-Canada’s first television stations began broadcasting. The first two stations were CBFT-Montréal and CBLT-Toronto. By 1955, their television services were available to 66% of the Canadian population.



radio

1960s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

The Montreal Presbytery recommended a new building be erected to house a much larger place of institutional, social service and welfare work in downtown Montreal.

In 1967, after a strenuous funding campaign, Macdonald House (located at the corner of St Dominique & Guilbault in the Plateau neighbourhood) was inaugurated as MCM's new home (named after UCC secretary of board of home missions who had had a special interest in the project.)

Former Canadian Prime Minister John Diefenbaker was on hand for the inauguration. He is shown in the picture with MCM director Egerton Armstrong (1960-1975) and the bell from MCM's first location at 1181 de Bullion St.

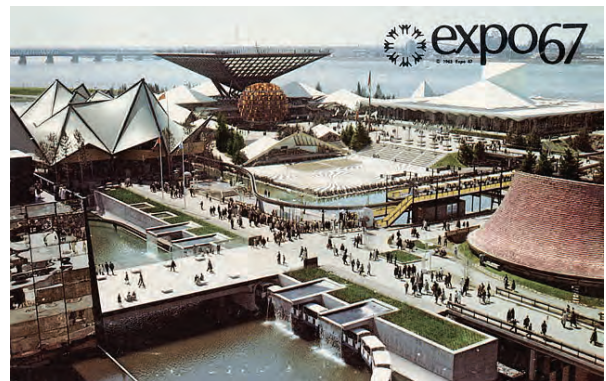


Services offered at MacDonal house included: used clothing centre, educational ministry for children and youth, worship in several languages, pastoral care, counselling, meetings for women and advocacy on behalf of individuals overlooked or mistreated in the social service system.

CANADA AND THE WORLD

The Quiet Revolution of 1960 was a period of intense socio-political and socio-cultural change in Québec.

In 1967, Expo 67 was held in Montreal. It is considered to be the most successful World's Fair of the 20th century.



1969 was the year that the Official Languages Act recognized the equality of status of both English and French in all federal institutions.



La mémoire des anges, a film produced by the National Film Board and assembled by Luc Bourdon is about life in Montreal, created by stitching together footage from the NFB's vast archives.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEU9_e8Qd7U

1970s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

A ministry of preaching, provision of meals and personal pastoral attention to needy and homeless men was continued until 1976 by the superintendents and Dorothy Russell on an upper floor of the St Lawrence market near the old mission site.



In 1975, Rev. Bill Jay became director. Bill had recently completed a Masters in Urban Studies at McGill University and set out to bring the Mission in step with the times, transforming the historical charitable model to one of social justice and empowerment.



In 1977 the board created a new mission statement:

“Christian outreach ministry in Montreal’s urban core – uses its resources to provide material, social and spiritual assistance in an atmosphere of mutual learning and respect ... serve as a catalyst rather than create dependence – so individuals can achieve full potential”

CANADA AND THE WORLD

The October Crisis occurred in October 1970 in Quebec. Members of the *Front de Libération du Québec* (FLQ) kidnapped and murdered Quebec Minister Pierre Laporte. The use of violence to gain Quebec independence gave way to electoral politics with the nationalist Parti Québécois forming the provincial government in 1976.

The 1976 Olympics were held in Montreal, Quebec. It was the first and so far only summer olympics to be held in Canada.



1980s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

In keeping with its new mandate, the clothing center was closed and MCM resolved in 1984 to partially convert MacDonald House to accommodate a church-sponsored, supportive and community oriented low-rent housing project for individuals exiting the psychiatric system. MCM moved its offices to a rental location on Mt. Royal Avenue.

A small 'intimate' drop in center - l'Entente - was set up to accommodate those residents and others living on the margins .

In the late 80s, newcomers began showing up at the drop in center requesting assistance with their refugee claimant process; MCM conducted a survey with community partners which revealed a pressing need for refugee transition housing so a pilot project was set up in the apartment across the hall from MCM offices on Mt. Royal called Project Refuge.

Throughout the 80s, MCM, together with community partners, developed several hundred affordable studios.

In 1986, MCM played a major role in the creation of a federation of permanent non profit housing corporations, FOHM: *la Fédération des osbl d'habitation de Montréal* that today manages 18,000 low rental housing units and employs a staff of 40.

Rev. Arlen Bonnar became director in 1989 and led the mission through another phase of transformation, closing the drop-in center and beginning work with refugees as well as supportive housing for individuals coping with substance abuse and AIDS. Arlen would go on to become chaplain at the Montreal General Hospital with close involvement in the AIDS clinic.



In 1987, 90% of MCM funding came from the United Church of Canada block grants.

QUÉBEC AND THE WORLD

The first Quebec Independence referendum took place in 1980 with the no vote winning the majority.

This was also the decade in which the Montreal International Jazz Festival was founded as well as Cirque du Soleil.

LE GROUPE
CIRQUE DU SOLEIL
ENTERTAINMENT GROUP



1990s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

Beginning in 1990, financial challenges due to increasing cuts from UCC block grants obliged MCM to diversify its funding sources. MCM also established links with universities to arrange student internships, e.g., social work and law.

In 1991, MCM joined the board of Chez ma cousine Evelyne and worked to develop housing for individuals coping with substance abuse and AIDS. The project served as a model for other community initiatives.

In 1992, MCM moved its operations along with Project Refuge Residents, into the Mennonite House of Friendship at 120 Dultuth St. E. in Plateau Mt. Royal, remaining there throughout the 90s.



At the same time, MCM developed a partnership with the Sisters of the Sacred Heart to establish Maison Juan Moreno for female refugee claimants and their children. MCM managed this project and its staff together with the congregation until 1995 when the project became independent.

CN engineer, Roger Snelling took early retirement to become MCM director in 1992 and remained in that position until 2000. Under Roger's leadership, a partnership was created with the Montreal Community Loan Association to raise funds for business start ups in the immigrant community.

Roger was also involved in the expansion of the Maison St-Dominique Housing Corporation and brought MCM into the computer age!



MCM began developing a corpus of policies to guide its work (Collegiality, Inter-Personal Dynamics, etc.)

QUÉBEC AND THE WORLD



The Oka Crisis was a land dispute between Kanien'kehä:ka (Mohawk) people, Quebec police, the RCMP and the Canadian Army, which began on July 11, 1990, and lasted 78 days until September 26, 1990 with one fatality. The Oka Crisis brought Native land issues into the forefront in Canada.

2000s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

In 2000, MCM community housing worker, Paula Kline, became director, overseeing the move into St. James United Church, the creation of a Seniors' Clinic and the development of a new intercultural and interfaith program. During this decade, MCM also played an important role in establishing national administrative standards for all United Church community ministries and in the subsequent accreditation process of those ministries that allowed MCM to share its policies and practices.



In response to requests from residents of Projet Refuge for assistance with their refugee claims, MCM created the Just Solutions Legal Clinic for vulnerable migrants with a precarious immigration status.

In 2002, MCM became a member of the francophone eucumenical justice and peace network ROJEP.



In 2004, MCM moved all of its operations into St. James United Church and a few years later took over an additional office as the Just Solutions Legal Clinic was expanding with full time staff and law and social work students.

CANADA AND THE WORLD

The year 2000 was also referred to as Y2K, stemming from the fear that computers and their programming would fail around the world at the stroke of midnight from 1999 to 2000. This computer



flaw or so called "Millenium Bug" caused a lot of havoc before the new decade.

The September 11 attacks, often referred to as 9/11, were a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks by the Islamist terrorist group Al-Qaeda against the United States on the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001. Not only did the attack devastate the victims' families and the general public, it also had an immediate negative effect on the US economy.

2010s



MONTREAL CITY MISSION



MCM celebrated its centennial in 2010.

The Roger Snelling Seniors' Clinic was established to respond to the needs of both migrant and Canadian born seniors.



Maa'n/Ensemble was a new initiative developed in the wake of the Syrian refugee crises in 2015-16 that aims to facilitate integration through concrete projects and intercultural partnerships. (Maa'n means together in Arabic)

In 2018, the Women Weaving their Dreams - Catering Collective - *Vers un Souffle nouveau* was established with newcomer women.

In 2018, MCM adopted the SAGE mission model to better articulate and guide its work: Service, Advocacy, Gathering, Eunoia (planting the seeds of friendship).

In 2018, the two locations of Camp Cosmos, downtown and the West Island, welcomed a total of 140 local and newcomer children.



In 2019, the Just Solutions Legal Clinic worked on 357 new cases and conducted 4679 consultations. The Roger Snelling Clinic worked on 47 cases and did 555 consultations. Project Refuge closed in 2014 after 24 years of operation.



MCM received the *Prix Québécois de la citoyenneté 2010* for intercultural rapprochement.



MCM received the Community Organization Award from the Montreal Community Cares Foundation in 2018.

CANADA AND THE WORLD

Mid 2013, was the start of the Black Lives Matter movement.

On January 17, 2017 six men were killed and many others injured during a mass shooting at the Quebec City Islamic Cultural Center. This attack left the city, province and country reeling. In 2018, MCM was one of the founding partners of Muslim Awareness Week in Montreal.

2020



MONTREAL CITY MISSION

During the challenging times of a world wide pandemic, MCM has been working hard to stay in touch with and assist its community.



Women Weaving their Dreams - Vers un souffle nouveau started sewing masks to be distributed to front line organizations and those in need (over 1000 distributed to date). School supplies and food baskets have also been delivered.

French conversation as well as exercise classes were organized in a city park (now online) and a new English conversation class began in December.



MCM intercultural activities moved online with two fall events: World Peace Day panel on the theme: *Whoever Experiences it, Knows it* and for our 4 year partnership with the Blue Metropolis Literary Festival, a panel discussion was also

organized in November with the theme: *Listen to My Story*.

McGill Ingram Nursing students presented 4 workshops on health issues to MCM networks and Beaconsfield United Women's Collective.

Two legal workshops were also presented by MCM law interns on the refugee claimant process, rights and responsibilities for newcomers and child education.

A new fundraising endeavour was launched in September: On the Move/Bougeons where we asked our supporters to bike, jog, walk, and move while raising money for our Just Solutions Legal Clinic.

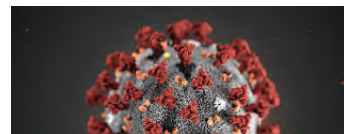
Camp Cosmos is organizing a new initiative - Cosmos After School Program - to provide online help with homework and languages classes (French & English).

Green SAGE Vert is a new joint project with St. James United whose broad aim is to live with respect in creation and from which is gleaned its mission of ecological care



CANADA AND THE WORLD

2020 has been heavily defined by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to dramatic loss of human life, global social and economic disruption, mass cancellations and postponements of events, worldwide lockdowns, and the largest economic recession since the Great Depression.



BIBLIOGRAPHY



Montreal City Mission: A 25 Year History of Empowering Ministry (vo. 3, 1978-2003), 2003, Kline, Paula; Beardmore, Sarah, 2003

Montreal City Mission History (1977-1997), October 1997, McAlpine Lynn; Kline, Paula

The Story of Montreal City Mission, Mair, Nathan, 1985

At Your Service Sir!, Tucker, W. Bowman, 1927



La version française de la chronologie de l'histoire de la McM sera disponible en janvier 2021.

To view timeline visit
www.montrealcitymission.org OR
Scan this QR code using
the camera on your phone!



📍 1435 rue City Councillors
Montréal (Québec) H3A 2E4

🌐 www.montrealcitymission.org

📘 montrealcitymission

☎ (514) 844-9128

📞 (514) 844-0067



Graphic Design by Alisha Nicole Designs