



STAYING CONNECTED

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR OUR MCIVOR CHURCH FAMILY

March 8, 2026

OUR STORIES: UNEXPECTED BLESSING IN MEXICO – KEVIN SCHROEDER

My name is Kevin Schroeder, and I recently went on a mission trip to a Christian run orphanage called Children of Hope in San Carlos Mexico. Pastor Sherryl wanted me to share a little about what I had experienced.

The reason for going was because the Mexican government mandated that the orphanage required an 8-foot fence that ran around the perimeter of their property. So our mission for the trip was to build a fence made entirely from concrete blocks that covered the front of their property line spanning a little over 1000ft. On the day we arrived, we immediately had our orientation and went out to the orphanage for the evening to see what we were dealing with and to eat supper.

Looking at the scope of work, it was a pretty easy assumption that we would not finish, for multiple reasons. The sand to mix our mortar with was far too coarse; we had a crew of 5 bricklayers and 8 laborers, none of which really knew each other. None of the laborers had any masonry experience, and 8000 blocks was far too much for 5 bricklayers to lay in 6 days. But nonetheless, we were all fired up and ready to work.

After the walk around we were invited to eat supper with the staff and kids. Meals and events took place in a large gazebo, and as we were making our way over to it, we could hear loud music playing. Nearly all the kids were dancing and singing and gave us the warmest welcome! Despite their circumstances, they all had so much joy. My heart was full that evening.

Most days consisted of about the same: an early start, great local food for lunch, and a long workday.

We would always end up back at the orphanage after getting cleaned up, and that was probably the driving reason why everyone was so motivated to work so hard everyday.

By this point I had gotten to know a lot of the people that came along on this trip. Most are construction workers, only a few with a faith background. But people slowly started opening up and sharing their testimonies, some even in front of the whole orphanage.

I realized that a lot of these guys came quite broken. We prayed for one another, sometimes cried together, but ultimately grew closer to each other...I blame the kids for that. Kids have a way of pulling on your heart strings, and mostly everyone on this trip had at least one kid who was stuck to them at the hip. They wanted to play games, dance, and pressure us to eat all the spicy food.

This trip was ultimately for the kids, but through the kids, the people on this trip—myself included—grew and saw God working. I came into this trip with a good relationship with Jesus, so I don't know how much spiritual growth I had compared to some of the other guys. I believe the Lord used me in speaking to some of the men in our group. I left very encouraged, realizing how much I get caught up in the little things. These kids had everything taken from them and yet they are finding such joy in the little things.

And so concluded our trip. We, by some miracle, finished the last of the wall on the last day. Many people left in tears and with many gifts from the children, and I got to see someone in my group invite Jesus into his life. He now does a weekly bible study with another guy from the trip. The Lord can use us to bless people, to work really hard, grueling days and do something that otherwise seems impossible. But then He may also use the unexpected, in this case little children, to do His work.

CONGRATULATIONS PASTOR JON AND LYNETTE

Congratulations to Pastor Jon, Lynette and their boys, Andrew and Bennett as they welcomed Juniper, a healthy baby girl, into their family Sunday, March 1 at 4 a.m. Both Juniper and Lynette are healthy and resting at home.



MEET DR. PIERRE GILBERT, INTERIM TEACHING PASTOR

First and foremost, I want to express my deep gratitude for the privilege of serving Mclvor Church as your Interim Teaching Pastor over the next three months.

For those who may not know me, I have served in the Mennonite Brethren Conference for nearly 40 years. In addition to teaching Bible and theology at Canadian Mennonite University for 24 years, I have also taught at what was then l'Institut biblique Laval (our MB Bible college in Montreal) and at the MB Biblical Seminary in Fresno.

I have contributed extensively to Mennonite Brethren publications, writing regularly for the MB Herald and the Direction Journal, and I have authored two books: one on spiritual warfare (2007) and another addressing the problem of evil (2020). I am currently working on a new book exploring God's judgments in the Old Testament, including His involvement in warfare.

One of my primary interests in retirement is to underscore the profound importance of the Old Testament—especially the creation account—for younger generations. When asked what single book he would recommend every university student read, the American author, mathematician, and

philosopher David Berlinski replied: "The Old Testament." He went on to say, "The Old Testament is the greatest repository of human knowledge and wisdom in the history of civilization, in any culture, any time, any place."

Additionally, of course, the Old Testament provides the backstory for God's supreme act of love toward humanity: the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world.

On a personal note, I am married to Monika and we have three adult children—Pierre James, Rachel, and Stephen—all of whom also call Winnipeg home.

I'm looking forward to getting to know you all better.

God bless you richly.

Pierre



Pierre Gilbert

GIVING

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