



THE CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY
ALLIANCE IN CANADA

December, 2013

SENT TO ALL OFFICIAL WORKERS VIA E-MAIL

Dear Official Worker,

One of the commitments I am seeking to honor is to invigorate a strong spirit of reconciliation within our Alliance Church family. Where there are unresolved matters within our church family, the Scriptures provide a framework for us to deal with these situations and we want to follow the Spirit's leading in moving forward.

One such situation that came to my attention within the first few months of taking office was in regards to the resignation of Dr. Charles Nienkirchen from the faculty of Canadian Bible College/Canadian Theological Seminary in the late 1980's. After careful examination of the facts it became apparent to me that during this time, Charles' teaching, writing and retreat ministry was being challenged and rejected by some in the Alliance leadership. However, he was never given an opportunity to provide feedback or offer a formal rebuttal to those challenges. The process was deeply flawed and it left Charles without any recourse to defend his scholarship, retreat ministry and reputation. This created a very difficult situation for him in his role as a licensed worker and tenured professor at CBC/CTS and the result was that Charles felt he had no choice but to resign and leave his position.

We believe that Charles brings a deeply valued perspective on our Alliance history and ethos which is being embraced by a growing number of Alliance leaders across Canada and around the world. Charles is a respected tenured professor at Ambrose and his development of the government award-winning "Down Ancient Paths" learning track has made a significant impact on many lives. We recognize that this journey of reconciliation with the C&MA in Canada has been a long and painful journey for Charles and his family. It is time to bring this to a conclusion in a way that honours God and allows Charles and his family to move on. Therefore, on behalf of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada I would like to extend the following apology to Charles and his family:

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*O God, with all our hearts we long to be:
a movement of churches
transformed by Christ,
transforming Canada and the world.*

“From 1981-1990, Dr. Charles Nienkirchen served effectively on the faculties of Canadian Bible College/Canadian Theological Seminary in Regina, Saskatchewan as a tenured professor. He was a valuable voice within our denomination, who through his teaching, research and writing and retreat ministry called us to reconsider forgotten and neglected aspects of our spiritual heritage. During this time in our C&MA history, he was effectually censured by some leaders of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. We sincerely regret such an action and its subsequent negative consequences. We are deeply apologetic and revoke a process that did not allow him rebuttal. We ask his forgiveness. Today Dr. Nienkirchen serves as a valued senior faculty member at Ambrose University College in Calgary, Alberta, and we commend him to you.”

Charles has accepted this apology and extends forgiveness to the Christian and Missionary Alliance. We love Charles and his family and are looking forward to serving together with them in these days ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Hearn', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rev. David Hearn
President of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada