



**CONGREGATIONS TOGETHER IN PURPOSE:
BRINGING MCC THRIFT TO THE DILLSBURG-MECHANICSBURG AREA**

Over the past decade or so, individuals with a heart for the mission of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) have talked, dreamed, and prayed about the possibility of bringing an MCC Thrift Shop to the Dillsburg-Mechanicsburg area. Nearby Harrisburg is already home to the Pennsylvania Relief Sale, a 2-day fundraising powerhouse event on behalf of MCC. This region also hosts one of the most successful Ten Thousand Village stores in the U.S. An MCC Thrift Shop would provide yet another opportunity for churches in south central Pennsylvania to come together in purpose on behalf of the global mission of MCC and in benefit to the local community.

Earlier this year, a Steering Committee recruited from area Brethren in Christ and Mennonite congregations was charged with moving the years of talk about an MCC Thrift shop, to action. The committee took up its assignment with enthusiasm but soon realized that they needed help.

The Steering Committee seeks the partnership of several congregations willing to invest finances and people power into creating a revenue generating enterprise with the mission of MCC as its reason for being.

As has been the pattern for MCC Thrift Shops across North America, the sponsoring churches will serve as the incorporating body for the new store, recruit its first board, and provide and/or help to raise start-up funding (estimated at \$300,000 for this region of the country). In the years to come, volunteers, donations, goodwill, and prayer provided by sponsoring churches will be crucial to the success of the store.

ABOUT MCC THRIFT

The history of MCC Thrift is inspiring, starting with the first shop in Altona, Manitoba in 1972 and growing into a network of over 85 shops in Canada and the US. Over the past 50 years, the thrift shops have generated more than \$250 million in support of MCC's relief, development, and peacemaking work worldwide. The tagline "where every purchase is a gift to the world" encapsulates the mission of MCC Thrift and the promise of the stores.

MCC Thrift is part of a thriving growth industry. Thrift shops are recession-proof, cross-generational in their appeal, and growing in popularity. Shopping thrift appeals to bargain hunters, re-sellers, and environmentalists. Thrifting is especially popular among teens and young adults, a demographic for whom the service and peacemaking emphases of MCC hold particular appeal.

An MCC Thrift Shop in the Dillsburg-Mechanicsburg area holds tremendous potential for bringing together Brethren in Christ, Mennonite, and other congregations in shared purpose, benefitting the global mission of MCC and making a positive impact locally.

COUNTING THE BENEFITS

For MCC: The financial benefit to MCC of another thrift shop in its network is obvious, as 90 percent of eventual profits will be directed to MCC. In addition, as volunteers are coached in how to share the MCC story with shoppers and donors, MCC will grow in name recommendation and appreciation within this region. Posters and other informational pieces on display in the store will also help inform about the ongoing, transformative work of MCC and its regional partners in communities and countries worldwide.

MCC will be stronger as congregants of Brethren in Christ and other churches understand and “own” MCC’s philosophy of service and peacemaking.

For Local Ministries and Nonprofits: Per the agreement with MCC Thrift, individual shops can allocate up to 10 percent of annual profits for the benefit of local ministries and nonprofits. Many MCC Thrift shops also provide vouchers to partner ministries that can be exchanged for product from the stores. In addition, MCC Thrift welcomes volunteers from all walks of life and abilities into a community of friendship and shared purpose.

Through gifts of money, product, and opportunity, MCC Thrift shops show themselves as good neighbors and places of hope.

For Sponsoring Churches: Coming together to launch an MCC Thrift Shop is an opportunity for sponsoring churches to model collaboration in ministry. The store will also create spaces in which parishioners from the sponsoring congregations to learn to know each other as they work together.

As store staff and volunteers live out MCC’s commitment to peacemaking and justice in their everyday lives, they will be forces for positive change in their neighborhoods.

The impact on volunteers who’ve not yet claimed Jesus as Lord can be profound. As on-the-ground embodiments of MCC’s mission to share “God’s love and compassion for all in the name of Christ by responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice,”

MCC Thrift shops have been doorways into faith for individuals who have none or a return to faith for those who’ve stepped away.

AN INVITATION

The Steering Committee is primed and ready to move forward with the hard work of bringing an MCC Thrift Shop to this area, but we cannot do it alone. It will require the commitment of supportive congregations who share the vision for **turning cast-offs into cash for Kingdom work**. If you are interested, want to know more, or would welcome help in making the case for why your church might get on board as a sponsor, please ask. The Steering Committee is ready to respond.