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Dear MHSBC Members:

When I was nine years old, I came across a booklet that my mother received from the hospital when I was born. The book included pages that could be filled out by parents to chart the growth and development of their child. Near the end of the book was a five-generation ancestry chart that had yet to be filled out. I took it upon myself to visit my grandparents and ask them for the names of their parents and grandparents so that I could complete the chart. That's all it took for me to become interested in my family history, and the broader history of my Mennonite faith community. I spent countless hours sitting with my grandparents and hearing stories about idyllic childhoods in Ukraine, the turmoil of revolution and civil war, the struggles to feed children during a famine, and travelling to a new country to start one's life again. Those stories and the faith demonstrated by my grandparents grounded me and set me on my path to adulthood.

I suppose one of the reasons I am so passionate about MHSBC is that I get to see people of all ages visit our research library and delve into their own family story. Many are just beginning their journey into their family's past. It is so rewarding to interact with people making new discoveries about their family and gaining a deeper understanding of who they are. One just never knows how impactful a visit to an archive can be!

On behalf of the MHSBC Board of Directors, I want to acknowledge that we are blessed with many volunteers who assist our visitors, process archival documents, digitize photos and documents, edit our newsletter, translate documents from German and Russian into English, and so much more! No other Mennonite historical society in Canada can provide the public services that we are able to carry out, and that is due in large part to your financial support.

Please consider supporting MHSBC with your financial contributions. Your gift is an investment not only in preserving the past, but in telling our story to future generations! We have a new online donation platform that you can use to make your donation, or you can give us a call to make your donation. For those of you who would like to donate stocks from your investment portfolio to our endowment fund, this year would be a great opportunity for you to do that. Let's talk!

Finally, on behalf of the Board and Staff of MHSBC, I want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2025!

Sincerely yours,

Richard D. Thiessen
President, MHSBC