

After lean year, MCC US donations exceed fundraising expectations

by [Linda Espenshade](#) in the [August 25, 2021](#) issue



Mennonite Central Committee supports Venezuelan refugees in Ecuador like Gilchen Michele Garrido Davalillo (second from left). (MCC photo/Annalee Giesbrecht)

Despite the economic upheaval of a global pandemic, generous donors showed their compassion for people in need around the world by contributing \$109.8 million to the US office of Mennonite Central Committee's centennial fundraising campaign.

The funds support the current and future ministry of MCC—providing humanitarian relief in times of crisis, supporting sustainable development, and strengthening peacebuilding initiatives. MCC works in 47 countries, including Canada and the United States.

The three-year campaign, New Hope in the Name of Christ, culminated with the 2020 celebration of MCC's 100-year anniversary. Giving surpassed the \$100 million

centennial goal by the end of MCC's 2020–2021 fiscal year in March.

"The outcome would be amazing even under regular circumstances," said Phil Rush, director of MCC US donor relations. "With the impacts of COVID-19 in the past year, the results are even more astounding."

Last year, MCC announced that because of the "negative economic effects of COVID-19" it would be closing its programs in South Africa, Lesotho, Eswatini, Vietnam, and China, and significantly curtailing others. Thirteen staff positions were also eliminated.

MCC US used some donations immediately to strengthen its international health work. In the United States, MCC distributed canned meat through churches to people in increased need. Extra funds were given to churches and families that faced economic difficulties in cooperation with Mennonite Disaster Service and Everence, a Mennonite credit union.

Campaign-designated gifts also are being used in the United States to help immigrants access information and legal assistance. In addition, faith-based partners and churches are giving practical support to people at risk of imprisonment, those who are incarcerated, and people who are reentering society.

"One hundred years ago, MCC grew out of people's love and compassion for people in southern Russia (present-day Ukraine) who were displaced and were experiencing extreme hunger and war," said Ann Graber Hershberger, executive director of MCC US. "Today, supporters are still living out Jesus's call to love their neighbors through MCC. We are so grateful to work together in this ministry. —Mennonite Central Committee