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Freedom and Sacrifice

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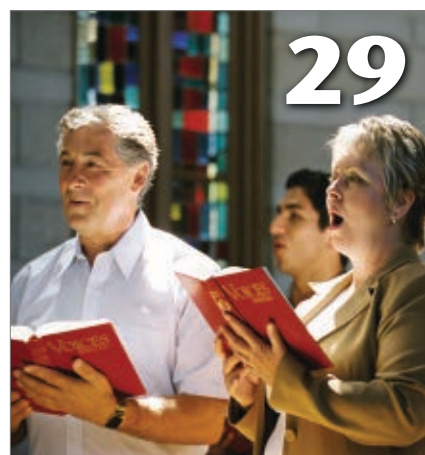


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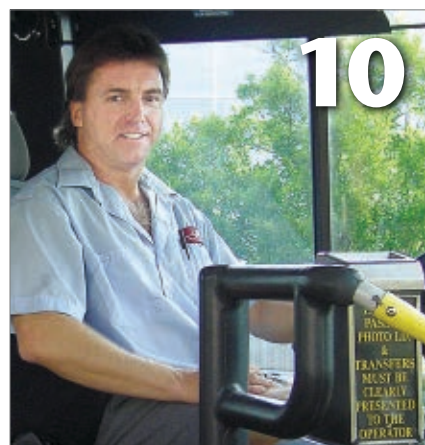


PHOTO: THERESA FARKAS



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Bright Hope Glimmers

By Gail Reid

Despite real challenges, some doors are open for Christians in China



As I watched the 2008 Olympic events, one family was always on my mind: a Chinese couple with a little girl who gave up many things here in Canada to become missionaries in China. Occasionally I hear from them – that they are safe and sharing their faith as they are given opportunity. But persecution is always possible and their mail must go through a careful protective screening process. I pray for them and admire their courage.

Our new cover story on China, “Freedom and Sacrifice,” gives an insightful look into both the persecution and the possibilities of sharing faith in a country that has tried to control the Christian Church. You will read about the limits on Bibles, restraints to the Olympic chaplaincy program and persecution of parts of the 45-million-member house church movement.

Yet other doors have been opened. Author Jeff Dewsbury tells of a university program studying Christ as a model of leadership. He also reports that workers at some factories in China (Motorola and others) have been allowed to worship and pray together. This paradox gives hope. While there is evidence of continued persecution, God is working in unexpected ways.

You may also be surprised to read the stories in “School Principals Can Be Agents of Hope” by Sheila Wray Gregoire. Although Canadian public schools can face serious problems, careful teaching of Christian values is often welcomed as part of the solution. Many principals find character education an effective way to promote the virtues high-

lighted in Scripture. Other opportunities are clearly available to discuss and promote justice and mercy in schools.

Another encouraging article, “Who Is My Neighbour?” by Darryl Dash, tells of a new resource, the *Community Research Guide*, that can help churches better understand their communities. The guide lays out options for collecting neighbourhood data and interpreting it. Such research used to be focused on growing a church, but this article highlights the new emphasis on caring for the neighbourhood and praying in an informed way for its needs.

Even if your congregation worships with contemporary music, you may enjoy our feature on “Canadian Hymns: Tracking a Musical Tradition.” Hymns are woven into our heritage, though few of us know where they began. Because there is often a personal epiphany of God at their core, hymns can remain fresh and compelling even hundreds of years after they were written. Do visit the online cyber hymnals listed in this feature. You may find a hymn, as I did, not heard for decades but fondly remembered.

P.S. Don't forget *Faith Today* is still celebrating its 25th anniversary. You can join in by submitting a “Where Are They Now” story (there's a new one about former editor Krysia Lear online) or a testimonial describing why you read *Faith Today*. Or fill out our reader survey at www.faithtoday.ca and receive a free gift subscription. ■

Gail Reid is managing editor of Faith Today and director of communications for The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

Excellent and Perceptive

Re: Money and the Incarnation (Jul/Aug 2008)

Thank you very much for the interview with Victor Shepherd. It is excellent and perceptive – nothing to be added.

BILL WRIGHT
Brampton, Ont.

Staying Binational

Re: God at Work in Denominations (Jul/Aug 2008)

Your article “A Cross-Border Church” resonated with me because my denomination, the Evangelical Missionary Church (then the Missionary Church), faced the same issues and chose to separate [into two national bodies].

The reasons you give for maintaining one body are biblical and realistic. We do gain from the American drive and commitment and they gain from our sensitivity to the needs of smaller nations and dissimilar peoples. With combined resources we are better able to address the missionary imperative. It takes Christian grace, forgiveness and understanding for both groups to work well together, but it can be done.

Most importantly, cross-border denominations give testimony to the oneness all believers have in Christ, a oneness that should transcend national commitment and pride. It is Christ who prayed that God would help us to be one. In Christ we can be!

The reasons given for splitting are essentially nationalism and anti-Americanism, realities that are hardly biblical and Christian.

May I, as one who has gone through a split, encourage the Christian Reformed Church to continue as a multinational denomination, giving a powerful testimony and effective witness to the world.

EDWARD OKE
Olds, Alta.

The U.S. side of the Christian Reformed Church was very instrumental in devel-

oping the Canadian churches and helping us get settled as post-war immigrants in Canada, although few of us are aware of this anymore.



Developments in the Netherlands between the mid-1800s (when many immigrated to the United States) and the 1950s (when many immigrated to Canada) have shaped the Canadian and American parts of the denomination so that we are not always in tune with each other and probably never

will be. The benefit is that we can sharpen each other and learn to allow each other to be ourselves.

We will continue to work together as a cross-border church, but the time has come for Canadians to start handling our own affairs and making our own decisions without living in the shadow of our big brother.

We wish Bruce Adema well with wisdom and insight in navigating our church on this side of the border

EVERT WASSINK
Forest, Ont.

Spiritual Formation

Re: Hungry for God (May/Jun 2008)

I was greatly distressed by Dayna E. Mazzuca’s article. Contemplative spirituality has no basis in Scripture. *Lectio divina* is an ancient mystical practice of early paganism, Hinduism, Buddhism and present-day New Age (as has been pointed out by Ray Yungen, a former New Age guide).

What is to be the sole guide and resource for spiritual vitality? The Word of God alone, which instructs us to pray, fast, sing, fellowship, study and examine ourselves in light of its absolute truth. All theology and spiritual habits outside of the Scriptures are unrighteous, Paul says (2 Timothy 3:13-17).

PAUL HOLDEN
Hanover, Ont.

J. I. Packer Interview

Re: Standing on Solid Ground (May/Jun 2008)

I find it ironic that some churches have decided to split over same-sex marriages. Jesus actually says nothing about the subject yet we have huge discussions. Meanwhile we live in a country that is actively at war. The Ten Commandments and Jesus condemn war in many places yet we have no discussion about it at all. Could it be we are more concerned with maintaining our lifestyle than we are about following the gospel?

GLEN EAGLE
Churchill, Ont.

Hell and Heaven

Re: Ask a Theologian (Jan/Feb 2008)

Heather Kendall correctly says (“Letters,” Mar/Apr 2008) we are spiritually dead at birth, adding that eternal punishment in hell is the consequence. This assumes we have an immortal soul. The Bible abounds with the words “soul” and “spirit” yet nowhere have I read that these are immortal.

The immortal soul is a Grecian concept. The New Testament word for death is “sleep.” Paul says believers who have died are “asleep in Christ.” According to John 14:3, it will take the coming of Jesus for [dead believers] to meet Him.

I agree (as an annihilationist) with a famous Canadian theologian who said: “Hell is eternal punishment, not eternal punishing.” If it were eternal punishing, evil would always be present and Christ would not be “all and in all.”

BERNARD CAMPER
Kelowna, B.C.

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the Lord says the rich man “lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom.” We are not told Lazarus saw the rich man. Randal Rauser points to this one-way mirror as a possible part of the answer. It seems to me to be a side issue, but I am sure the Holy Spirit does not mislead us here or

elsewhere, even in “the small print.”

Another point: if we grieve at loved ones who have chosen to reject the gospel, how much more does God! And yet His righteousness is such that He turned His face away from Jesus when He took our sin on Himself on Calvary’s cross. There is something of a vast cosmic and spiritual dimension going on here that we find hard to grasp.

In Revelation the saints and elders, their eyes of faith further enlightened in eternity, praise God for the righteousness of His judgments. David and Abraham also express confidence in God’s righteous judgments. Is it not possible that, when “we shall be made like unto Him as He is,” we will then see all sin in all its horror and actually rejoice somehow in the rightness of God’s judgment? He has, after all, done all He could do to avert it.

IAIN CLAYRE
Edmonton, Alta.

Climate Change

Re: A Primer on Climate Change (Jan/Feb 2008)

I am troubled by our naiveté of the global warming issue and the new political realities it’s helping to create.

There may actually be global warming. There is evidence to the contrary but, for the moment, let us assume it does exist. Are the main causes necessarily human activities?

The Earth and its atmosphere are very adaptable to huge changes. During two weeks of April 1815, for example, there were volcanic eruptions in the Dutch

East Indies (modern-day Indonesia). These ejected immense amounts of dust into the upper atmosphere. The results: the summer of 1816 was called “the year without a summer” and temperatures in the Northern Hemisphere dropped at least one degree. Estimates suggest 200,000 people died from the resulting crop failures. Here in Quebec people were digging up the potatoes they had planted, they were that desperate.

Imagine, one massive eruption caused a worldwide drop of one degree for almost a decade! The global warming that is supposedly human-made is also a one-degree drop over the past 150 years!

So before we disrupt every economy in the world and cause who knows what political instability, we must think through this potential problem. Our “solutions” may be worse than the problem. We can’t grow the economy and make the investments we need to get clean energy if we disrupt the present system too quickly.

The church needs to lead this discussion and be like “the men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do” (1 Chronicles 12:32).

DANIEL FONTAINE
Sherbrooke, Que.

Wood and Strong’s assessment of climate change, in typical David Suzuki fashion, stresses the anthropogenic argument to the detriment of other renowned scientists who disagree. Only lip service is given to any opposing viewpoint.

As Christians we should be aware of all the scientific evidence and not rely solely on an American politician (Al Gore) and a highly secular international body (the United Nations) to be the only sources of facts in this important debate.

I encourage those who are interested to examine Lawrence Solomon’s book *The Deniers* (Richard Vigilante Books, 2008) and the related series at <http://network.nationalpost.com/np/blogs/posted/pages/climate-change-the-deniers.aspx>.

GRIFFITH SPEERS
Stouffville, Ont.

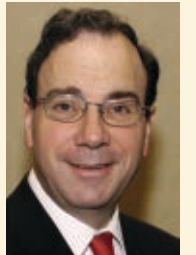


Bill Taylor

Elected: Bill Taylor as head of the Evangelical Free Church of Canada. The position has been renamed executive director rather than president. He succeeds Ron Unruh. The church, which includes about 140 congregations, has also adopted a revised statement of faith that rejects “open theology” and removes premillennialism as an essential doctrine.

Renamed: Canadian National Baptist Convention is the new name for the denomination of 250 churches formerly known as the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists. Implementation of the new name, confirmed with an 86 per cent vote, will be gradual, says Gerry Taillon, CNBC national ministry leader.

Renamed: The Evangelical Christian Church in Canada is the new name for the denomination formerly known as Canadian Evangelical Christian Churches. David Lavigne is general superintendent of its 27 congregations in Canada.



Robert Bugbee

Elected: Robert Bugbee as president of Lutheran Church–Canada, the second largest Lutheran denomination in Canada. A pastor in Kitchener, Ont., he succeeds Ralph Mayan, who served four terms as head of the 325 Canadian congregations with roots in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

Elected: Cheol Soon Park as Moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, a denomination of 1,000 congregations. Park has been minister of Toronto Korean Presbyterian Church since 1991. He was born in Korea, the son of a Presbyterian minister, and moved to Canada in 1983.

Appointed: Bill Mollard as president of Union Gospel Mission, a ministry to hungry, homeless and hurting people at 12 locations in and around Vancouver. He succeeds Maurice McElrea, who has retired after 29 years but continues as president emeritus. Mollard has served as CEO for the B.C. Division of The Salvation Army, worked in Newfoundland and Saskatoon and pastored two B.C. churches.

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Youth Find Meaning in Art

While society paints a troubling picture of today's youth, artist Melissa Bothwell sees them as masterpieces in the making.

"Many do not feel understood so they need ways to express themselves," explains Bothwell, the 27-year-old coordinator for FreeStyle Arts Studio in Peterborough, Ont.

"The studio allows them to come and explore both the arts and themselves. We've built a safe place. Youth can express themselves here without judgment, which is an amazing dynamic to be part of."

Initiated in 2001 by The Bridge and Youth Unlimited, the studio provides a place for creators between the ages of 13 and 25 to drop in and work with various kinds of art.

"So many come and share with us their stories of abuse, neglect and heartache," says Bothwell. "I've seen people find community, explore abilities they didn't think they had, be prayed for and make real relationships."

Robyn, a frequent visitor to the studio, says, "I don't really have many friends but I feel surrounded by them here."

Rhonda, another young artist, agrees: "I come here to get away from it all."

Bothwell relates. "Working at the centre has helped shape my faith since I've had to learn how to share it relevantly," she says. "God has opened my eyes to see His grace reaching out to a sinner like me."

Her goal as artistic director is to guide creative dialogue toward the ultimate Creator. "Sometimes I will ask [the youth] to create an artistic response to what faith, hope or love means to them. We'll go around the circle and share our thoughts, and I'll be able to share how my hope comes from knowing Christ," says Bothwell.

"My vision for this studio is that it would be a freeing space, one that allows youth to come and feel free to express themselves, their joys and pains, and find freedom in turning to Christ."

As a result of this vision, masterpieces are being made.

"Art points to the Creator in so many ways," says Bothwell. "The simple redeeming of scrap material to make something unique can always be a reflection of God's redeeming work in us." ■ —EMILY WIERENGA

Bus Driver Sees God



PHOTO: THERESA FARKAS

"Do you know God is riding our bus today?" TTC bus driver Brad Farkas is always glad to engage passengers in discussions about faith.

In his youth Brad Farkas never dreamed of becoming a bus driver, but it has been his career for 18 years. He continues to be amazed at the ways God shows up during his work with the Toronto Transit Commission.

Farkas is the kind of driver who leaves his Bible open on the dashboard as a conversation stimulator. That's what he used to do operating Wheel-Trans vehicles.

Or he engages passengers in conversation, using local or world events to trigger discussions about faith.

"Do you think we need revival from all the tension in the city?" he asked a passenger one day after a funeral was marred by a drive-by shooting.

Farkas believes God gives him words to speak to passengers because God cares about their destiny.

Recently, Farkas noticed an advertisement from Bus Stop Bible Studies on his vehicle. Using the interior intercom, he asked passengers: "Do you know God is riding our bus today? Look at the Bus Stop Bible Studies ad. Do you think our city needs this?"

All this is a far cry from the Farkas's younger self, who struggled for two years before he was willing to drive a church bus through Regent Park, one of the city's poorer neighbourhoods. The turning point came when a Wheel-Trans driver challenged him to apply to the TTC.

at Work



Farkas recalls the TTC interviewer asking him why he wanted to drive a bus and glibly responding, “Because Wheel-Trans drivers love it so much – it’s a career.” Today the words seem prophetic.

In 1998 at Broadview station, Farkas even met an angel on the job. A woman on his bus realized she had left her bag on a streetcar, containing money, passport and “everything I own!” and asked him for help. Farkas was running late with a full load at rush hour but the Bible story of the unjust judge flashed across his mind. So he left the bus – with passengers yelling at the delay – and tried to help.

In the station Farkas explained the crisis to the TTC collector, asking her to call the streetcar driver. Suddenly a young

Winnipeg Bookstore Focuses on Conversations Not Conversions

The Dusty Cover is a new, second-hand bookstore in Winnipeg’s historic west end, but it’s not designed to ever be a profit-making enterprise. It’s the newest ministry of Youth With A Mission Urban Ministries Winnipeg, and it’s a ministry designed to lead to conversations *not* conversions.

The Dusty Cover is intended first and foremost to be a place of community, learning and connecting. “Our primary goal is to build relationships and serve the neighbourhood in any way we can,” says Jamie Arpin-Ricci, co-director of YWAM Winnipeg and one of the founders of the bookstore.

“In our neighbourhood, there were not a lot of places where people could connect socially and build relationships with their neighbours without high pressure to buy a product,” explains Arpin-Ricci. “We wanted to create a neutral but welcoming space where those kinds of connections could occur.”

Opened in February 2008, the store is located at 528 Sergeant Avenue, a street Arpin-Ricci describes as perhaps “the most multicultural street in Manitoba.” It provides a refreshing, needed alternative, he says, for a neighbourhood in which “community centres are usually under-resourced and overwhelmed, and bars and strip joints are not a positive thing.”

The walls around the perimeter of the store are lined with bookshelves, but Arpin-Ricci and his team deliberately left a lot of open space for leather couches and coffee tables to encourage informal gatherings and conversation. Patrons are welcome to purchase a cup of free-trade coffee and linger over a good book or a good conversation.

One-quarter of the store is dedicated to children’s books, and there is space for kids to gather, do crafts and participate in twice-weekly programs run by Urban Potential (www.urbanpotential.ca). And the children are coming. Anywhere from one to a dozen arrive daily to while away their school lunch hours or spend time after school when no one waits for them at home.

Others are coming too: students, couples and grandparents with grandchildren in tow.

The store carries an eclectic selection of books – from the Left Behind series to Harry Potter – all of which have been donated and reflect the desire to keep the space “neutral enough to at least engage people in the sharing of ideas.”

“When we enter into the rhythm of life in this community, we’re not coming with all the answers,” explains Arpin-Ricci. “We want to live lives according to the words we’re called to preach and hope that will give our words authority when the time comes to share them.” ■

—PATRICIA PADDEY



Designed for conversation: students relax and chat at The Dusty Cover.

man appeared beside them. A bag appeared on the ground. The man asked “Is this your bag?” and then disappeared. The woman dropped to her knees, cried out, grabbed her bag and ran off.

Farkas’s body felt numb, warm and wonderful. The TTC collector and Farkas stared at each other. Farkas con-

cluded “We just saw an angel.”

Amazingly, the waiting passengers said nothing. Farkas expected a fistful of complaints in his file the next day but there were none on this incident.

Instead, after 18 years, Farkas’s file is thick with commendations. ■

—CHARLENE DE HAAN

LAUNCH Helps Young Leaders Reach Kingdom Dreams

“**N**o dream too big, no dream too small.” This motto is at the core of LAUNCH, a program designed to help young Canadian Christian leaders act on what God is calling them to do with their lives.

LAUNCH is the creation of its director, Carl Nash, and a program of Youth Unlimited (Toronto Youth for Christ). Through his work as a youth pastor, Nash came to recognize that coaching and mentoring youth were where he came most alive in ministry. He saw the fit between his own gifts and a need to encourage and equip young Christian leaders.

LAUNCH matches teachable participants ages 14 to 22 called “launchees,” who possess a God-given dream or idea, with trained volunteer coaches whose job is to inspire and mentor the next generation of leaders as they develop their dreams over a period of up to 12 months.

Interested youth complete a detailed application and a personal profile assessment that helps them to evaluate their current leadership strengths and areas for growth.

According to Nash “the primary investment of LAUNCH is into the growth of the young leader” and the intent is



Jillian Cameron (right) and her coach, Monica Kay. In May, Cameron realized her dream of organizing a fundraising concert to benefit Invisible Children, an organization that works to improve the lives of war-affected children in Uganda.

that participants will be involved in “effective kingdom leadership” one year after leaving the program.

Jillian Cameron, a 17-year-old student at Earl Haig Secondary School in Toronto, is a recent LAUNCH graduate. In May of 2008 she realized her dream

of organizing a fundraising concert to benefit Invisible Children, an organization that works to improve the lives of war-affected children in Uganda.

While Cameron’s concert plans were already in progress when she became a launchee, she is unequivocal about the

Executives on a Mission

Canadian executives, eager to respond to global needs and ready for rewarding adventures, are leaving their desks and spending vacations working on overseas projects. The Salvation Army in Canada has launched Executives on a Mission to build on this philanthropic trend. “We want to harness the talents and abilities of everyday Canadians who are looking to do something meaningful with their free time,” says Brian Burditt, director of world missions for The Salvation Army in Canada.

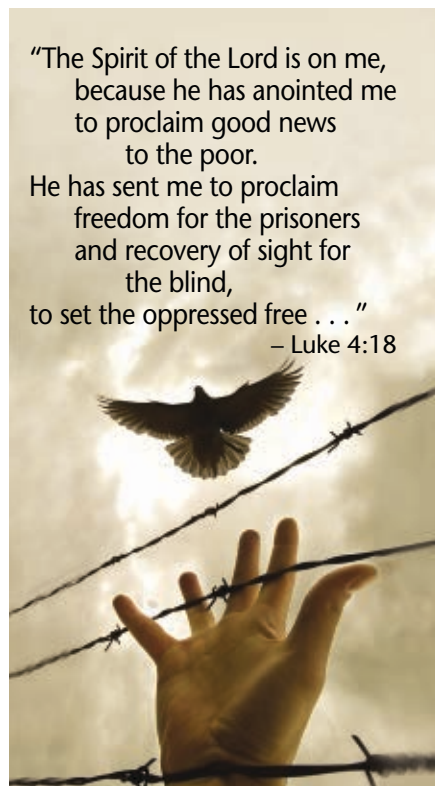
Participants in Executive on a Mission will use their skills to contribute to programs already established by The Salvation Army in Tanzania, Malawi and Kenya. Projects include things like outreach to HIV/AIDS orphans and vulnerable children, community gardening and women’s literacy that would benefit from input by experienced Canadian business people.

Aine Curran, president and founder of Curran Events Media, a public relations firm based in Toronto, became the program’s first volunteer last February. Accompanied by a member of the Salvation Army’s missions department, Curran spent three

value of the relationship with her coach, Monica Kay. “She provided stability and structure and helped me reflect on how I am as a leader,” says Cameron. “And it was cool to see how God was working in her life as well.”

Cameron describes the concert itself: “Unbelievable! Over 500 people attended. Everything came together and the club owners said it was the most organized event. Our event raised over \$10,000.” Cameron says she would recommend LAUNCH to other up-and-coming Christian leaders. “Just do it. Just go for it. Don’t hesitate.” Visit www.321launch.ca. ☒

—MARY LOU HARRISON



“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news
to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim
freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for
the blind,
to set the oppressed free . . .”
— Luke 4:18

Green Project Brings Grace to Community



PHOTO: WAYNE J. COX

A “green” building in Haliburton County, Ont., has become a tourist attraction, a food distribution centre for local people in need and a thrift shop.

A “green” building made from straw bales, clay and other renewable resources – clearly designed to have a low environmental impact – is having a big spiritual and social impact in Haliburton County, Ont. The innovative building houses a food bank and a thrift store run by a local Christian group.

The building itself, designed with energy and resource efficiency as priorities, was constructed in 2006 for \$130,000 through the co-operation of the municipality, a local art school and a group called the Community Christian Concern Centre (4Cs) comprised of local churches.

With hot-water heating on the roof to provide radiant floor heating and rain barrels collecting water for the gardens, the building has become a tourist attraction as visitors and builders are fascinated with the green concept.

But it is what happens inside the structure that really excites the members of the 4Cs. One-third of the building is used for food distribution to people in need in the community and the remainder is a thrift store called The Lily Ann. The thrift store and food bank are run by a volunteer board of directors from six local churches and helped by a group of 40 dedicated volunteers who sort donations and stock the shelves. “This is the only store I know of that has merchandise arriving daily – even two or three times a day!” remarked one enthusiastic customer recently.

Money raised from the sales in The Lily Ann enables the 4Cs to fund community projects, including school snack programs, but also things like medical and dental emergencies for those who frequent the shop. Recently, the 4Cs paid for a community member who couldn’t otherwise afford to visit a local optometrist. Claire Sylvan is a local citizen who has watched the impact of the 4Cs grow: “I am so grateful to live in this caring, compassionate community, and the 4Cs is a huge part of that caring.” ☒

—JAN COX

weeks in Tanzania where she used her communication skills to make a documentary film about Executive on a Mission that will be shown to Canadian corporations.

Maj. Gillian Brown is the primary facilitator for Executive on a Mission. “We can expose upper management to global issues and help them make connections with the developing world,” explains Brown. From her office at Salvation Army headquarters in Toronto, Brown assists participants with travel plans and links them with career missionaries overseas. It takes eight to 12 months to transfer a business person from a desk

in Canada to an overseas site.

For little more than the cost of a week at a resort, volunteers will spend several weeks donating their skills in poor countries. For now, participants cover their own expenses. As the program develops, Brown foresees corporate sponsors funding travel expenses and contributing to projects. Asked if she would do it again, Curran said: “Yes. I believe this is a meaningful way to be hands on rather than sitting on the sidelines and hoping someone else will do the work. This is the privilege of a lifetime.” ☒

—ROSE MCCORMICK BRANDON

China and the Church

By Bruce J. Clemenger



Let's vow to continue praying for China after the Olympics, especially for its government leaders and its Christians

The images of China broadcast during the recent Olympic Games were not the familiar ones. Gone were images of congested and often dirty markets teeming with people on bicycles and wearing drab grey clothing. These were replaced by state-of-the-art facilities, modern highways, pageantry, creativity and hospitality. We see Chinese tourists in fashionable clothes strolling peacefully through Tiananmen Square in Beijing.

What we were witnessing was a coming-out party of the world's most populous nation. China is flexing its economic potential and showing the world it can compete, not only in the Games of the West but also in all the areas the West deems important. One glaring exception is China's record on religious freedom.

China is a country where the church is dynamic and growing rapidly. While the registered churches claim between 10 million and 15 million members, the unregistered house church movement has an estimated 60 million members (estimates range widely from 45 million to 80 million). By these estimates, Christians comprise around seven per cent of the population, and much of this growth has taken place in the past 40 years. Communist Chinese authorities who see religion as a threat are deeply concerned.

But is the growing church a threat to the government? Chinese churches insist they are not. The government-approved Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement (self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating – a movement that emerged in the early 1950s and aims to be independent from foreign influence) and the Catholic Patriotic Association make it clear by their very names that they are not a threat to the authorities. Still, these registered churches face restrictions on what can be taught, and their pastors must be approved by the government.

The unregistered house church movement has attempted to confirm that it is not politically reactionary. In one state-

ment, house church leaders expressed their support for the constitution of the People's Republic of China and for the unity of the nation and its peoples. Their members are not political dissidents, nor are they a cult. They seek to assure the government they are not a threat.

House church leaders are advocates for religious freedom. Their refusal to register is for religious reasons. They believe the regulations imposed by the government on registered churches are contrary to the principles of Scripture. They do not believe it is for the state to determine the location, the pastor and the district in which a church can function. Contrary to government policy, they do not believe the state should determine appropriate doctrine. And they believe they should be permitted to preach to those under 18, pray for the sick, heal, cast out demons and be in fellowship with believers overseas.

These believers plead for the government to understand the nature and purpose of their faith, to affirm religious freedom and to stop the persecution. They have reminded the governing authorities that, wherever there are more believers, societies are more stable and peaceful.

They also affirm, and call on the government to recognize, the power of God and the ultimate authority of God's will in the lives of people and in the life of a nation. This was the message of Jesus to Pilate. Governments have no authority apart from God, who alone is sovereign.

What can we do? Continue to pray that Christians in China will have courage, wisdom and discernment. Continue to press for religious freedom and the end of religious persecution in China. Continue to work out in Canada

what a healthy relationship between church and state can look like – for showing the various benefits of a thriving church and its contribution to the society in which it ministers will help China. Above all, continue to proclaim (with all believers) the sovereignty of God to governments and institutions that may claim or presume ultimate authority in our lives. ■

Recommended Reading

- *Broken Promises*, EFC Religious Liberty Commission (www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/chinareport.asp)
- *Jesus in Beijing: How Christianity Is Changing the Global Balance of Power*, David Aikman (Regnery, 2003)



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Bruce J. Clemenger is the president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Read more columns at www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/clemenger.

Aboriginal Council Responds to Government Apology

Ray Aldred, chair of the EFC's Aboriginal Ministries Council, published a reply to the government's Apology to Canada's Aboriginal Peoples. Aldred says, "The Church has been a part of the problem in the past but now it is going to continue to be a vital part of the solution." EFC president Bruce J. Clemenger also wrote a letter to the prime minister thanking him for the historic June 11 apology. Both texts are available online.

The EFC will contribute to the upcoming Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This commission will be hearing from survivors of aboriginal residential schools. Dean Shingoose, a member of the EFC Aboriginal Ministries Council, will serve on the commission's advisory roundtable.

For more on these and other stories visit www.evangelicalfellowship.ca

How Are Evangelicals Perceived?

Read new analysis about how evangelical beliefs and practices are viewed by other Canadians, an interview with religion journalist Doug Todd, an interview with theologian David Guretzki on environmentalism, and more in the latest issue of *Church & Faith Trends*, a free online publication from the EFC's Centre for Research on Canadian Evangelicalism. (Shortcut: www.churchandfaithtrends.ca.)

Christian Horizons Intervention

The EFC will be filing for intervener status in the appeal of the decision in *Heintz v Christian Horizons*. This Ontario Human Rights Tribunal decision could prevent Christian ministries that serve non-Christians from exclusively hiring Christian staff. The tribunal decision is held in abeyance while the case is being appealed.

Religious Freedom at Supreme Court

The EFC will be intervening before the Supreme Court of Canada on October 7 in a case involving the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and a Christian farm colony of Hutterian Brethren. The EFC will be presenting arguments to assist the court in defining religious freedom of a group as distinct from the freedom of an individual.

Freedom in China

On June 10 the EFC's Religious Liberty Commission released *Broken Promises: The Protestant Experience with Religious Freedom in China in Advance of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games*. The EFC also sent a letter to the minister of foreign affairs and secretary of state of foreign affairs requesting they continue to advocate for freedom of religion while in China representing the Canadian government at the opening ceremonies of the Beijing Olympics.

Morgentaler Appointment

Dr. Henry Morgentaler has been named to the Order of Canada but has not yet received the award. Those who wish to express comment are encouraged to read an EFC statement on the issue and direct their correspondence to the Governor General with copies to the prime minister and their MP. More details, including addresses and writing guidelines, are available on the EFC Social Issues webpage.

Magazine Wins

Faith Today won eight awards at this spring's Canadian Church Press Awards.

Winners included Ben Volman's "From Newsmen to Lieutenant-Governor" and Mark Buchanan's "Sabbath in the Summertime." Details at www.canadianchurchpress.com.

Faith Today's July/August issue reported on a different awards competition, held by The Word Guild, but neglected to mention additional wins there by Volman and Buchanan. Details at www.thewordguild.com.


All regular readers of *Faith Today* are invited to complete an online survey this month at www.faithtoday.ca to help us continue to serve you. As thanks, you will receive a free gift subscription to give away.

Pray for Persecuted Church

Free toolkits for the 2008 International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP) can now be ordered at www.idop.ca. On a designated Sunday each November, Canadians join Christians in more than 130 countries to stand in prayer with our suffering Christian sisters and brothers around the world. Learn more, including how you can take part, at www.idop.ca. The EFC is an international partner of IDOP.

EFC Seminars

Details at www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/EFCevents or call 905-479-5885

- **EFC Intercultural Symposiums.** An opportunity for leaders to come together in six Canadian cities to learn and share ideas on how to engage more effectively within Canada's multicultural reality. The EFC's David A. Macfarlane and B.C. pastor Rev. Dr. Sam Owusu will present solutions, point to models and share ideas. Register today. Ottawa, Sept. 16; Toronto, Sept. 17; Winnipeg, Sept. 18; Edmonton, Sept. 19; Vancouver, Sept. 22; Calgary, Sept. 25.
- **EFC Christian Leaders Connection.** New season of one-day leadership seminars on current Canadian trends, legislation and events that will affect the local congregation. Prince George, Sept. 30; Kelowna, Oct. 2; Kanata, Nov. 12; and Peterborough, Nov. 13.
- **Four presentations from last season's Christian Leaders Connection** (by EFC leaders Bruce J. Clemenger, Don Hutchinson and David A. Macfarlane) were recorded and will be available this fall on CD or DVD format. A great resource for church leaders. 



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Disaster Put Myanmar on Map

Despite causing the worst natural disaster in the history of Myanmar, this spring's Cyclone Nargis was a blessing in disguise, says Saw Winning of Thunder Bay, Ont.

Winning is a refugee who escaped Myanmar, also known as Burma, in 1988 during the pro-democratic uprising. Winning's ethnic group, one of eight indigenous groups in the country, is called the Karens.

"When the Burmese dictator didn't allow the international community to help [after the cyclone], the world realized how terrible and cruel this military dictatorship is," says Winning, who works with his wife, Naw Irene, at a hotel. "For the international community, Burma is now on the map."

Political protests by Buddhist monks in September 2007 also drew world attention and, in October, the World Evangelical Alliance called on the international community to push for an end to the war crimes and gross injustices.

Myanmar has suffered civil war for the past 50 years, but the plight of groups like the Karens is not widely known in the rest of the world. The governing military dictatorship keeps tight control on information.

Saw Winning and Naw Irene are not the only Burmese people in the Thunder Bay area. Up to 60 other Karen immigrants worship together there every Sunday.

Wah Lay Ray and his wife, Daisy, moved to Thunder Bay in 2003 through Sleeping Giant Refugee Sponsoring Group. Living under military oppression in Myanmar meant that "we spent most of life as internally displaced people," he says. "In the Karen state, life was very miserable."

Both Winning and Ray were raised in Christian homes but were unable to practise their beliefs for fear of the Buddhist regime.

Both men, whose relatives remain in Burma, were attending the Karen Bap-

tist Convention in Thailand during the cyclone May 2. Ray later visited Myanmar, witnessing the "extreme poverty, pain and calamity that the Karen people are going through."

Despite all this, they trust God. "The Karen people will not always be scattered all over the world," says Winning. "Like Israel we will get our country back." —EMILY WIERENGA

Rehearsing for Heaven Again

An evening worship event that drew more than 16,000 Christians last year in Toronto will be held again this November. Representatives "from every nation" will gather once again for a time of song and dance and Scripture in preparation for Christ's return, say organizers of Heaven's Rehearsal (www.heavensrehearsal.com).

"The vision of Heaven's Rehearsal is simply this: followers of Jesus from every nation, tribe, people and language in one place, worshipping Jesus, the King of kings and Ruler of the nations, as found in the book of Revelation 7:9," explains Kathy Mainse. She and Reynold Mainse, co-hosts of the Christian TV show *100 Huntley Street*,

envisioned the event and help organize and promote it.

Last year believers from 127 nations united in song and dance and hearing Scripture read at Toronto's Air Canada Centre. Even more are expected this year on Nov. 1 at the Rogers Centre (formerly the SkyDome).

Through such gatherings, the Mainse's hope to help Canada fulfil its role as a "healer of the nations" and to demonstrate that all nations and generations can come together as family in Jesus.

"As in heaven, there will be no preacher or featured singing group—the honour alone will be given to God," says Reynold Mainse. "We don't want people attending because they love a certain singer; we want them there because they love Jesus. That's why it was such a huge success last year. If we'd had one particular band we'd have gotten one particular kind of people but, because everyone loves Jesus, we got people from all nations and all ages there to worship the Lord. It was like a family reunion."

The Mainse's are seeking churches to pray for the event, offer financial support and help represent the nations at this year's celebration.

—EMILY WIERENGA

Christian Bookstore Chain Closes

Christian Publications is closing up shop while the going's still good. Faced with skyrocketing lease rates and a dramatically changing marketplace, the four-store retail chain has chosen to go out on a positive note. The chain, with roots in the Christian and Missionary Alliance, was headquartered in Calgary.

"We can choose to exit honourably," says general manager Larry Thiessen. "Let's celebrate three decades of good work, celebrate our staff, honour our vendors and go out saying it's been a great time rather than risk being forced to the sidelines."

In the past five years, Christian retailers across Canada have been struggling to stay afloat. Once the only provider of Christian books, music and curriculum, they are now being undercut by national bookstore chains, big-box department stores, wholesale clubs and the advent of convenient and affordable online shopping. Digital downloading also took out much of the Christian music market.

It wasn't long before the final death knell came in the fall of 2007. Once the Canadian dollar reached parity with the U.S. greenback, stores were forced to sell their older inventory for close to cost. Furthermore, churches like Willow Creek have begun providing exclusive sales for their products.

As a result, "In one fall quarter every single major church account we had evaporated," Thiessen says.

Another chain, Blessings Christian Marketplace, had to close 19 of its 23 stores across Canada to survive.

—DORIS FLECK

Freedom



As eyes around the world turned to China for the Olympics this summer, experts try to explain the bizarre mixed situation of the country's Christians By Jeff Dewsbury

You could say Cai Zhouhua worked tirelessly for the Olympic movement. The 12- to 14-hour days he once spent manufacturing sports equipment for the Summer Games in Beijing, however, do not exactly fall within the lofty parameters of fair play and ethics espoused by the Olympic charter. According to The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC), three years ago Cai – then leader of six house churches in China's capital

– was charged with illegally trafficking in Bibles that were not state manufactured. As a result, when Chinese citizens scrambled to set a stage for the world, Cai had no choice but to become part of the team.

Every four years, a different country is exposed to a litmus test of global proportions. And China, a country that takes enormous pride in its international reputation, posed no shortage of ethical dilemmas to make visiting

and Sacrifice

Chinese Christians *Thriving and Persecuted*

By Jeff Dewsbury



PHOTO COURTESY INTERCEDE INTERNATIONAL (WWW.INTERCEDENOW.CA)

A Chinese house church, assisted by Intercede International, worships God in a simple setting. Thanks to the Olympics, Christians have a strategic opportunity to focus attention on the Protestant house church movement.

democratic nations squeamish this summer. Religious freedoms topped the list for many observers. Cases like Cai's – which was documented along with a number of others by EFC's Religious Liberty Commission in its recent report *Broken Promises: The Protestant Experience with Religious Freedom in China in Advance of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games* – prove that at least some forms of Christianity feel the government's heavy hand.

“The Olympics are providing Christians with a strategic opportunity to focus attention on the Protestant house church movement,” says the EFC's Jocelyn Durston, one of the authors of the report.

Pastors in China estimate there are more than 60 million Christians in the country – 16 million members of state churches and 45 million to 48 million in underground house churches.

The house church movement began during the 1950s and China's cultural revolution. By all accounts it continues to grow despite – or perhaps because of – government persecution. The China for Christ house church, for instance, estimates it has 10 million members. To put things into perspective, this is roughly the entire population of Ontario.

Durston says the Chinese government launched a public relations campaign emphasizing personal freedoms in the lead-up to the Olympics while, at the same time, strategically targeting Christian leaders and missionaries “under the radar.”

“As much as possible we recommend dialoguing diplomatically about the religious freedom issues,” she explains on the line from Ottawa. “But we promote caution about statements from the Chinese government. Experience shows us that, despite public promises, their actions behind closed doors are often opposite.”

In bidding for the Olympics, senior officials from the Communist Party of China (CPC) made statements about using the Games as an opportunity to develop democratic principles and, in vague terms, spouted the rhetoric they hoped free nations wanted to hear. Yet, once it won the privilege of hosting the Games, China revoked the visas of Christian missionaries. Though mass arrests have decreased, China has continued to target house church leaders and those close to them in order to intimidate their congregants. There's also the spectre of Tibet on which the CPC, despite international condemnation, has refused to capitulate.

According to the EFC report, a secret document entitled *Notice on Further Strengthening Marxist Atheism Research, Propaganda and Education* was circulated in 2004. The document referred to Christianity and other religions as “superstitions” and accused them of being “the new trend of western hostile forces' attempt to westernize

and disintegrate China in the name of religion.”

Surprisingly, despite China’s fervour to polish its image to the world, even visiting nations had parameters placed on their religious freedoms during the Olympics. Athletes and their support staff were permitted to bring only one Bible per person into the country and chaplains were provided by the CPC’s state church program only. Foreign clergy were not permitted to travel as chaplains with their country’s athletes (despite this being a long-standing Olympic practice).

David Wells of Delta, B.C., has been an official Olympic chaplain at two previous Games – Athens and Torino. Although he says it is “unusual to go without the international component of the chaplaincy program,” he says it

is within the Chinese government’s prerogative to do so. “They have the freedom to do the chaplaincy program as they have . . . they are the hosts,” he told *Faith Today*. But Wells also laments that some of the finer points of the job description may have been lost in translation. “To serve the athletes effectively, sensitivity to their language and experience in the realm of international sports is important for a chaplain to have.” During the Games, chaplains from the five major world religions are traditionally called upon to help athletes, support staff, officials and volunteers with everything from bereavement to issues of emotional health.

Even though there are many documented cases of persecution, the political climate in China still makes room for forms of Christianity that fall outside the realm of the registered state church. The growth in this area has been linked by some to the over-the-top growth in the country’s economy and the need for a moral foundation to anchor the prosperity and productivity that have come by embracing capitalism.

In fact, several wealthy Chinese businessmen have become Christians and allowed their lives to be profiled openly in the *Wall Street Journal* (“In Search of . . . Something,” April 8, 2008). Zhao Xiao, a well-respected economist featured in the piece, has connections to Trinity Western University (TWU), a Christian university of 3,500 students in Langley, B.C.

Don Page, professor of leadership at TWU, travelled to China last November to meet with CEOs and business leaders as well as to speak to students at the state university in Tianjin. Page was there to do what, not long ago, seemed unthinkable. He was invited to discuss how Christ-centred lives form the strongest possible moral base for leadership and business practices.

“I spent two hours teaching students in a state university about Jesus Christ, the greatest leader of all time,” says Page. “I had the privilege of holding Him up as the greatest example we have of leadership . . . and I’m sure there would have been a party official in the audience.”

The links between business and Christianity are very strong in some corners of the mammoth country. Page refers to some 400 Motorola churches he learned about on his visit, where business people and factory workers worship and pray together. The same corporation church model is being adopted by many other companies from pharmaceutical manufacturers to makers of air conditioners.

The canyon-like gap between the way different groups of Christians are treated in China is a paradox with no clear solution. The social and political complexities make it hard to draw any general conclusions about fairness and justice.

Rev. William Wong, a member of the Toronto Chinese Evangelical Ministerial, notes that “Christians have a long history of not making trouble with the government” in

Christianity in China

A capsule history from the EFC report *Broken Promises*

Until the end of the Second Opium War in 1860, Christianity spread primarily among the coastal cities that were open to foreign trade. However, after the defeat of the Qing Dynasty, the British enforced the Treaty of Tianjin on the Chinese government, which gave foreign missionaries the right to move freely in China. As a result, Chinese culture began to generally associate Christianity with western domination.

The Boxer Rebellion at the turn of the 20th century marked a turning point in Chinese Protestant history. After the ancient regime was defeated by the “modern” nations, the Chinese government realized reform was needed if China was going to survive among the western forces. Christianity therefore enjoyed a time of proliferation as it was associated with the progressive driving force of the West. However, this growth was severely restricted by the emergence of communism in 1919.

When Mao Zedong and the Communist party gained power in 1949, foreign missionaries were expelled from the country and anti-Christian sentiments were promoted. [State-sanctioned churches arose in 1954.] The Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) churches were governed by Religious Affairs Bureaus, which imposed intensive restrictions on the religious activities of the Chinese people. These controls were further emphasized from 1966 to 1976 during the Cultural Revolution when even the TSPM churches experienced persecution.

It was at this time that the underground house church movement began. A Chinese house church is normally comprised of a small group of Christians who secretly meet in private residences or other buildings to practise their Christianity without being subject to the rule of the Communist party. The meetings are led by a spiritual leader or pastor who acts as a mentor to the church group. There are some networks of house churches that have grown to large numbers such as the China for Christ Church with an estimated 10 million members. ■

The EFC report, *Broken Promises*, is available at www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/chinareport.asp.



PHOTO COURTESY INTERCEDE INTERNATIONAL (WWW.INTERCEDENOW.CA)



PHOTO: FRANK HWANG



PHOTO COURTESY: THE VOICE OF THE MARTYRS

Washington, D.C., think-tank, and author of *Religious Freedom in the World*, recently made similar statements in the *National Post*, noting that Christianity is becoming particularly popular among Chinese intellectuals. He also noted that China is so large and complex it is difficult to get a clear measure of any one trend.

Many Chinese Christians living in China and here in Canada view the Olympics as an opportunity to affect change from within. They regard public condemnation of the government as an ineffective way to approach the issue of religious freedom.

Though the report Durston co-wrote makes some strong statements about the way Christians worshipping in house churches were treated in the lead-up to the Games, she commended ongoing dialogue. “Even though persecution has gotten worse since China’s successful Olympic bid, we don’t support a boycott,” she says. “We prefer to use the Games as a focal point.”

Clockwise from top: A house church meets for worship; the Chinese government forced house church pastor Cai Zhouhua to work 12- to 14-hour days manufacturing sports equipment for the Summer Games in Beijing; in prayer, a pastor leads two young women to accept Jesus.

China. Believers who take an interpersonal approach to evangelism and who don’t publicly offend the authorities are the most effective in today’s climate, says Wong. To underscore that conviction, the pastor – who estimates as many as 10 per cent of his church’s members travel continuously between Canada, China and Hong Kong – requested that the specific mission activities his congregants participate in not be part of this article.

“Sometimes we have to be shrewd as snakes but innocent like doves, as the Scriptures say,” Wong chuckles. “You have to play by the rules.” Wong also sees the trend of Chinese young people becoming highly educated in Canada, then returning to China as a key element in the slow shift in the foundational belief systems there.

Paul Marshall, a member of the Hudson Institute, a

many others with similar convictions) served his time for illegally trafficking in Bibles, the Bible Society (a British ministry) recently printed 50,000 Gospel booklets (Mathew, Mark, Luke and John) – all sporting the Olympic logo courtesy of the International Olympic Committee – at the Amity Printing Press in Nanjing, China. According to the society, more than 50 million Bibles have rolled off those same presses.

So in a country where Christianity is both thriving and being persecuted and where a local individual can’t distribute Bibles but a foreign organization can, the growth of Christianity is more like a marathon winding its way through unpredictable streets than a straight 100-metre dash. ■

Jeff Dewsbury is a freelance writer in Langley, B.C.

School Principals Can Be **Agents of Hope**

Many **Christians** who work in the **public school system** believe **God has called them** there and **equips them** for their job

By Sheila Wray Gregoire

When students clamour off the buses to enter Salmon Arm Secondary School, vice-principal Shane Coutlee is holding the door open to greet them.

Back when he first started this 8 a.m. ritual, students at the public school north of Kelowna, B.C., were wary. But persistence paid off and, now, two years later, students are initiating conversations with him.

“I think this is one step toward humanitarianism within the school,” he says.

Coutlee originally wanted to be a lawyer to defend other aboriginals. Later he decided education would be a better field because he could “put lawyers out of business” by influencing students before they took the wrong path.

That’s exactly what Steve Sider at Redeemer University College believes Christian principals in the public system can achieve. Sider is director of teacher education at Redeemer in Ancaster, Ont., overseeing a program that certifies

teachers to work in public and Christian schools.

In a culture that tilts toward negativity, says Sider, Christian principals can be “agents of hope.”

Hope for a Godly Culture

If you scan newspaper headlines about schools, “hope” isn’t the first word that comes to mind. God was shoved aside and replaced by a secular world view in most public school boards many years ago, it seems. Canadians often hear school-related stories about family breakdown, rising levels of learning disabilities and the negative aspects of the Internet.

It’s easy to believe today’s schools are very dark places. But when *Faith Today* interviewed Christian principals from public schools across the nation, that is not the picture they painted.

Trevor Connor, former principal of Hammond Elementary School near Abbotsford, B.C., emphatically says, “I’m not a sky-is-falling kind of person when



it comes to public schools.” Talking openly about Christ may be off limits for a principal at work, he explains, but “if you’re comfortable with what you believe, it pervades all that you do.”

Steve Sider believes Christian educational leaders in the public system have tremendous opportunities because traditional Christian principles and today’s educational goals intersect in the areas of justice and mercy.

“Anti-bullying, restorative justice, issues of inclusion – these are all educational focus areas today,” says Sider. “These are also Christian issues. Christ modelled how we interact with those on the margins. We should be leading, being proactive, not reactive.”



Beverley Muir, principal of Humberwood Downs Public School in Toronto, focuses on character education. Each month she selects a character trait to promote, such as perseverance or forgiveness. This allows her to quote from the Bible and other religious texts.

It's that idea of serving those on the margins that drew Paul Carew, principal of Legacy Public School in Markham, Ont., to the public system. In the Christian school system where he used to teach, principals can choose not to enrol students with behavioural or intellectual challenges. (Christian schools in most Canadian provinces receive partial or no government funding and operate somewhat independently.) The public system, though, must serve even the marginalized, something that appeals to Carew's Salvation Army background.

Humberwood Downs Public School

in northwestern Toronto is another school leading the charge to promote justice and mercy, with principal Beverley Muir at the helm. Named one of 40 "Schools on the Move" by the Ontario government's Ministry of Education, Humberwood has achieved three consecutive years of increasing test scores.

These achievements are largely due, Muir believes, to the changes she brought to the culture of the school. She instituted mandatory uniforms and has launched single-gender classrooms for junior high.

Since these changes, suspensions

have dropped.

Muir has also championed a focus on character education. Each month, she selects a character trait to promote, such as perseverance or forgiveness. Addressing such virtues sometimes includes quotations from religious texts including the Bible.

These character trait lessons are common among all the principals *Faith Today* interviewed.

Jill Horsman has acted as principal in two small aboriginal schools in British Columbia. At Tsi Deldel, a school of 50 students from kindergarten to Grade 10, she invited community leaders to a potluck dinner to brainstorm about what virtues they wanted her to promote to their children. Engaging the community in this way made its leaders her allies. Local businesses agreed to redeem coupons students could earn at school by displaying the virtues. The whole com-

munity was engaged in promoting the very values Jesus lived out.

Hope to Withstand Attacks

While character education can be used in these positive ways, Focus on the Family Canada has warned it can also bring with it questionable teaching

about sexuality. In 2004, Pinecrest Elementary School in rural southeastern Ontario hosted homosexual activists as part of an anti-bullying campaign. Pamphlets they carried invited students as young as 11 to a homosexual youth group, even without parental knowledge. Although everyone presumably agrees bullying should be opposed and prevented, some parents worry that such youth groups may teach sexual values they oppose.

Karl Boehmer, who served as principal in a northern British Columbia school, recalls another instance when a community health nurse conducted a sexual health workshop for students Grade 5 and above. Questions from the students became very explicit, involving issues of technique rather than health. Such incidents are becoming more common as provinces attempt to redefine family and sexuality, and envision schools leading the way.

But most of the principals *Faith Today* interviewed have no major objections. Trevor Connor in Abbotsford agrees the curriculum could be hijacked by secular teachers to argue against traditional Christian teaching on sexuality but he says nothing inherent in the curriculum demands that it be taught that way. It seems that when Christian principals lead, fears about misguided sexuality teaching haven't materialized.

Antagonism from other educational professionals occasionally becomes an issue for some. Connor relates an experience of a principal who was raising money for wells in Africa through a Christian

organization. The principal presented the project at the school district conference but the teachers union distributed a communication to its members warning against contributing to the cause because of its Christian nature.

Karl Boehmer from northern British Columbia left the public system and entered the Christian school system after enduring six years of antagonism from several staff members who wanted to remove God from the national anthem and Christmas from the calendar.

"People might think public schools are value-free" and tolerant of all faiths, but they're not, says Boehmer. He now presides over Penticton Christian School where "you are free to lead children closer to God and not just try to make them behave well."

Hope in Jesus

All the other principals *Faith Today* talked with have no desire to leave the public system. Some do find it frustrating that they can't share their faith openly, but they rejoice in the more subtle opportunities they still have to introduce Jesus. Wander the hallways at Paul Carew's school at Christmas and you'll see display cases with representations of the Nativity alongside those of Hanukkah and Ramadan.

"I would rather see them all there than none of them," says Carew.

Beverly Muir takes a similar approach. "There is nothing in the education act or in the union's collective agreements that says we aren't to honour all faiths," she states. About 86 per

Building a Fruitful Relationship with Your Child's School

- 1. Be proactive.** Before any issue arises, build a relationship with school staff. Ask what your child will be studying this year and how you can help at home. Then make sure your child completes his or her work.
- 2. Volunteer.** Help out in the classroom, the library or on the playground. Attend field trips or recruit another relative to go in your place. And be prepared to fundraise! It's a job everyone hates but, if you jump in, you'll earn the principal's gratitude.
- 3. Say thank you.** Send encouraging notes to teachers and principals whenever it's appropriate. And express gratitude at every opportunity, even if you are frequently aggravated by how the school operates.
- 4. Pray.** If the principal or teachers are Christians, tell them they are in your prayers. Trevor Connor relishes opportunities he has, even if only five or six times a year, to pray fervently with parents for the students of his school.
- 5. Respect public school mandates.** If the principal is a Christian, don't expect the impossible. Paul Carew says, "We have an obligation to consider the fact that we are a diverse community and to respect different faiths and their beliefs." Remember, it is not a Christian school even if some of the staff are Christian.
- 6. Model servanthood and love.** If you have an issue with curriculum, approach with gentleness and love. Don't try to convince the staff why they are wrong. Paul Carew has witnessed some evangelical parents berating a principal over a curriculum choice, and it left the principal with very negative attitudes toward Christians. The vast majority of principals are increasingly open to hearing from parents. Carew says principals are finding that Muslim parents are often stricter than Christians on many issues. Whatever the issue, parents will be heard best if they present themselves respectfully. —SWG





From left: Steve Sider says Christian principals can be “agents of hope”; Jill Horsman finds some of the most meaningful times to share her faith in Christ occur with parents; Shane Coutlee tries to influence students before they take the wrong path.

cent of her Toronto student body is East Indian, with the rest mostly of African heritage. Yet every year she or a student tells the stories of Christmas, Easter and Passover along with Ramadan, Diwali and Holi, the East Indian festival of spring over the public address system. “They’re all acknowledged. They’re all affirmed. They’re all included.”

Jill Horsman finds some of the most meaningful times to share her faith in Christ occur with parents. Especially when talking with parents of special-needs children, the conversations often become dominated by issues and challenges too huge to handle. If the parents feel comfortable, she offers to include their children in her prayers.

Horsman also reaches out to her staff, developing such close relationships

that she and her husband led a language instructor to become a Christian. That teacher now leads the school in an ecumenical prayer each morning. Though Horsman is not aboriginal herself, she has immersed herself in the community. And as the community has felt accepted, so they also have embraced the children’s Bible clubs that she and her husband host at their home.

Not all Christians admire these principals’ dedication to the public system. Christian colleagues have exhorted Muir to “come out” of the system because they claim it doesn’t honour God. She vehemently disagrees. “This is not a job for me, nor is it a profession – it’s a godly calling.” Just last year she was asked by a group of Muslim women to present the 10 most significant things

about the Christian faith. “Where else would I get such a wonderful opportunity?” she asks.

Muir sees herself as “a woman of hope and an educator of hope.” Steve Sider of Redeemer University College would agree. All of these principals are the bulwarks protecting students from the secularism of our age and providing an alternative message of hope. And they give Canadian Evangelicals hope that the next generation will be touched by Christ – if more follow their call into the public education sector. ■

Sheila Wray Gregoire is a parenting columnist, a conference speaker and the author of four books. You can find her at www.SheilaWrayGregoire.com.

Who Is My Neighbour?

A new research guide can assist congregations in understanding their neighbourhoods and shaping their ministries accordingly By Darryl Dash

Churches often want to understand their communities better but don't know where to begin. A new resource exists for exactly this reason: to help churches conduct and interpret community research.

The *Community Research Guide* is a "book of options," according to its author James Watson. "It helps the leaders of a church build their own process to understand their community."

The guide was produced by The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada in partnership with Outreach Canada.

"Churches are asking how to be the church in a particular community," says Watson, who works for Outreach Canada in Waterloo, Ont. "This guide will help people open their eyes. It helps give passion and compassion for a church's community."

Reasons to Research

Community research is a relatively new practice for churches. Pastors are trained to exegete Scripture but have not always

been taught how to exegete their community. As Canada has changed, community research is becoming an increasingly important skill for pastors and churches.

Lorne Hunter of Delta, B.C., is director of research for Outreach Canada, a ministry that helps to empower, equip and extend the Church in Canada. Years ago, he says, "when churches began, there were more people coming to the church. It used to be that if you built a church people would come."

Today, things have changed. "More and more people are not coming to church. For the most part, you have to make a connection with people for them to want to come to church."

Often, says Hunter, "urban areas have changed drastically. Sometimes a community has changed but the church hasn't. Many of these churches now understand the need to get to know the community."

James Watson agrees. "Our social contexts in Canada have become increasingly diverse. Learning some skills in exegeting our community has become more important. Ways of life are changing. It's much more important to be intentional. We can't assume things."

Research is important even in areas where there does not appear to have been any significant change.

It's not only for areas where new houses are being built or where there has been an influx of immigrants.

"It's easy to get into our own little group and not even realize whom the church is missing," says Watson. "There are also cross-cultural issues that are easy to miss. Community research helps churches look at the difference between who they are and who the community is."

New churches usually include community research as they plan their launch. But community research is not only a tool for new churches. "Many established churches are trying to be sensitive to what the community is like," says Watson. "They want to be relevant and make sense. They're asking how to be the church in that particular community."

Watson says the most important reason for doing research is obedience. "It's what Jesus says about loving our neighbours. Getting to know our neighbours is an important part of growing to love them. It can stir up mission initiatives within the community."

The Process

The place to begin is not with piles of information but with prayer. "Pray-



Getting the Guide

The new *Community Research Guide* is available at \$19.95 for an electronic copy (CD-ROM or download) and \$29.95 for a printed edition from The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (www.evangelicalfellowship.ca) and Outreach Canada (<http://outreach.ca>). ■



you'll do with all the information.”

Once a church has prayed and discerned the type of information needed, members can begin to collect information. Watson says there are many options to choose from. “We can learn from the social sciences and look at what other churches and parachurch organizations have done. We then have to pick the options that are right for our church.”

One tool is demographic research – finding out common ages, professions, family sizes, income levels, religious affiliations, unemployment levels and the like among the neighbourhood population. Churches can collect data from Statistics Canada (much of it for free), municipalities, school boards and community organizations. Outreach Canada also provides community profiles based on the latest census.

The *Community Research Guide* provides interpretive grids that a church can use to make sense of the data. Watson compares these to lenses that give different perspectives on the community.

While demographic information is important, it is only a start. “Demographics provide us with an aerial survey,” says Hunter. “The information is very broad, very representative. It’s at a very low resolution compared with talking to someone over coffee. Demographics point us to the stories but don’t get us very far into the story.”

A church can then use other approaches to go deeper. “We need to think of other options. We need to be able to engage people in conversation so that we fill out the details that may be lost in the statistics.”

Watson cautions against a marketing mindset. “We don’t want to turn our neighbours into targets. We want our neighbours to be neighbours. We are trying to get to know them better rather than alienating them.”

When a church has collected enough information, it can begin to reflect on

ing is the best first step,” says Watson. “Don’t make it a sociological thing; make it a God thing. Invite the Holy Spirit to guide and to make you aware of the people around you.”

After committing the process to God, churches should then take time

to decide what type of information they need. “Look at the options and be discerning. Decide what type of information you want to gather, what kinds of things you need to learn. You need to think about interpretation before collecting data. This helps you decide what

WWW.DESIGNPICS.COM

its role. "If there's enough information, members can pray about what particular piece of the puzzle God wants them to address and where they fit in." Churches do not have to respond to every need. "They can ask for help," says Watson. "There may be other churches or groups they can partner with. There are significant things they could be doing in the community. When you have enough information, it allows you to be discerning."

Hunter says: "Overall, it's not that difficult. People make it seem more difficult than it is. Take the time to collect the information. Pray over that information and ask for wisdom to be able to understand. It's not that hard."

The *Community Research Guide* also helps make sure it's "not that hard." It will help "churches and pastors sift through this stuff," says Hunter. "It gives them guidelines as to where to get infor-

mation and how to synthesize and work through the information. It's kind of a how-to tool."

The Results

Glenn Smith, director of Christian Direction in Montreal, says churches change as they begin to understand their community. "It's not a dramatic change at first. People begin to discover needs in their community they didn't even know existed. They then begin to customize their work for the communities they're in."

"What I hear most from people is 'I didn't even know that's going on in my community.' Most people experience an 'aha' moment."

Watson says this process can help churches in the process of change. "Many churches have used this process as a stepping stone for vision renewal."

Ellerslie Road Baptist Church in

Edmonton is an example of a church that is adapting to its community. In response to their research, they have planted Mandarin and Generation X congregations within the church. "We have learned from trying to pay attention that you can't do one generic service and expect everyone to come," says Ed Stuckey, former lead pastor.

"Our vision has been to declare the wonders of God in the languages of the people," says Stuckey. "Sometimes people speak English, but the languages of the heart are different. We need to be discerning what these languages are. In the past, churches continued to do what they always did, mainly for church people. Now we need to be talking to people in the area. It's not an easy thing to do." Stuckey says the church hopes to add more ministries and continue to adapt to the community.

"I think of this process as bringing light out of darkness," says Hunter. "Research brings clarity. It helps congregations understand who lives in the neighbourhood around the church. It also helps evaluate existing programs so churches can be more strategic and connect with neighbours around the church."

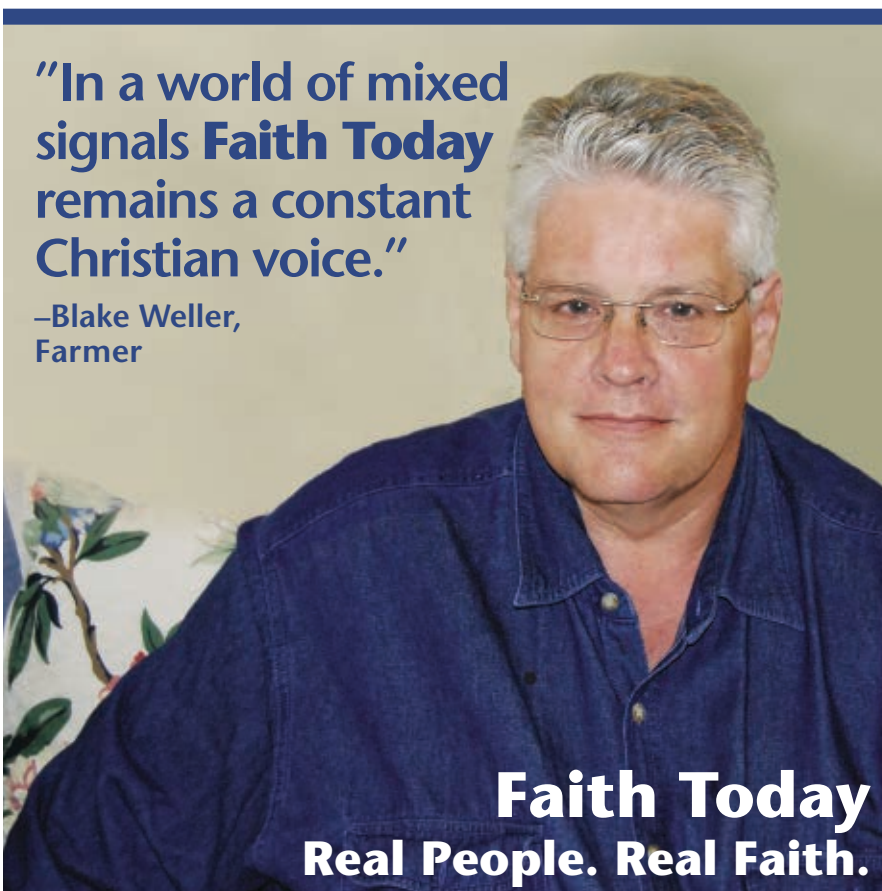
"Churches may not experience huge growth in attendance numbers but there's typically an increase in the ways churches impact the community. They usually end up having more of an outreach focus."

"I would encourage churches to do research on their community," says Hunter. "Most people don't even know who's living in the house next door to the church. It's hard to connect with people because people are so busy. For any church it's important to get to know the neighbours and figure out how we as a body can impact the community. It's not so much to bring them into the church but to love them." ■

Darryl Dash is a pastor and freelance writer in Etobicoke, Ont.

"In a world of mixed signals Faith Today remains a constant Christian voice."

**—Blake Weller,
Farmer**



Why I read *Faith Today*—send your reason and photo to ft@efc-canada.com

Canadian Hymns

Tracking a Musical Tradition



How many historic Canadian hymns are there stored in your brain or sung in your congregation's worship services?

By Margaret Leask

Canadian settlers in the 1800s often sang Christian songs while going about daily tasks such as ploughing fields, ironing, churning butter and working a bellows.

Such hymns continue to take up space in our brains – and perhaps on our iPods – today.

Let's take a quick look at some familiar, venerable Canadian songs. We'll start with some popular ones in the 1800s, in deference to those early settlers, and then skip ahead to the 1960s. To hear the tunes for these songs, you can look them up at websites such as www.cyberhymnal.org.

Do you know these words? "What

a friend we have in Jesus, / all our sins and griefs to bear. / What a privilege to carry / everything to God in prayer."

The text of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" was written around 1850 by Joseph Medlicott Scriven, an Irish immigrant to Ontario. Scriven was a teacher, a musician and a Plymouth Brethren leader who lived near Rice Lake for many years before moving to Port Hope, where he is remembered for his ministry among those who were less fortunate.

This hymn is well known thanks to



A Singing Heart Margaret Clarkson (1915-2008)

On June 3, friends and family gathered at the chapel of Tyndale University College and Seminary in Toronto to celebrate the life of Canadian hymn writer, poet, musician, educator and author Margaret Clarkson.

Donald P. Hustad, hymnal editor emeritus with Hope Publishing Company, comments in his foreword to Clarkson's hymn anthology, *A Singing Heart* (1988): "It is my conviction that

Margaret Clarkson is our one outstanding hymnist, in the classical sense of that term, both in the quantity and the quality of her writing. . . . She has been equally recognized and claimed by the evangelical community in the United States."

As a child, Margaret Clarkson would read a hymnbook during the 45-minute sermons at St. John's Presbyterian Church on Broadview Avenue in Toronto. She began writing hymns at the age of 12. While teaching in northern Ontario she wrote a devotional poem, "So Send I You" based on John 20:21, which was published in *The Evangelical Christian* in 1939. Composer John W. Peterson later set it to a tune known as TORONTO for his Singspiration series. She revised the text in 1962, adapting the poem into a congregational hymn text. In addition to Peterson's hymn tune, Kurt Kaiser composed BY GRACE MADE STRONG for the revised hymn text.

A lifelong supporter of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Clarkson was asked by C. Stacey Woods, the first general director of IVCF, to write a hymn for its inaugural conference held at the University of Toronto in the summer of 1946. "We Come, O Christ, to Thee" marked the beginning of many hymns she would write for the annual IVCF conferences.

Its first verse is commonly edited to read: "We come, O Christ, to you, / true Son of God and man, / by whom all things consist, / in whom all life began: / in you alone we live and move, / and have our being in your love."

Others, including "For Your Gift of God the Spirit" (set to the hymn tune BLAENWERN) and "Lord of the Universe" (written for Urbana 73, and set to her own tune YORK DOWNS), are also in her hymn collection.

After she retired from the classroom, Clarkson concentrated on hymn writing and also taught Christian hymnody at Regent College in Vancouver in 1979 and 1981. Her hymn text "Jesus, Life of All the World" was sung at the World Council of Churches conference in Vancouver in 1983. Clarkson's favourite tune for this hymn was LIGHT OF LIGHT composed at the age of 17 by Sir Ernest MacMillan when he was organist and choir director at Knox Presbyterian Church, her church in Toronto during her teaching career.

In addition to all these hymn texts, many Canadian hymnbooks include "Lord Jesus, We Must Know You," "Lord, We Hear Your Word With Gladness," "Now Know We Not the Meaning of Life's Sorrow," "O Living Word of God," "Our Cities Cry to You, O God" and "We Gather Here to Bid Farewell" (a gift to friends who were embarking on mission work). Many American hymnbooks carry several of her hymns.

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada recognized Margaret Clarkson's substantial contribution to Christian hymnody and worship in 1992 with the Leslie K. Tarr Award. Another honour she received was being made a Fellow of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. For many years she was a regular contributor to *The Hymn: A Journal of Congregational Song*, a publication of the society (www.thehymnsociety.org).

Clarkson's papers are held in the archives and special collections at Wheaton College in Illinois. Correspondence between Margaret Clarkson and poet Margaret Avison (1918-2007, who also won a Tarr Award, in 2005) is located in the archives of York University. ■

—ML

set it to a tune called CONVERSE (also known as FRIENDSHIP). However, the Graham crusades used a different tune, BLAENWERN, written by William Rowlands during the Welsh revivals of 1905-06. The Welsh tune was set with Scriven's hymn text in the British *Salvation Army Tune Book Supplement*.

Another famous Canadian hymn is one of the oldest: "'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime" written by Father Jean de Brébeuf, a Jesuit missionary. About 1640 he wrote a hymn in the language used in Huron communities located around Georgian Bay.

Amazingly, a version of the song can still be heard every Christmas in Canadian shopping malls and other public places. It is often sung by children's choirs: "'Twas in the moon of wintertime, when all the birds had fled, / that mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead; / before their light the stars grew dim, / and wandering hunters heard the hymn"

Hugh McKellar, a Canadian music historian, tells the story of how the Huron Carol was almost lost in the wars that erupted about 1649 in which Father Brébeuf and Father Gabriel Lalement died. But the song, transported to Quebec City with a remnant of 300 Huron people who escaped the wars, was sung from memory for more than a century until 1794 when it was transcribed into French by a Quebec notary.

Another century passed before journalist Jesse Edgar Middleton learned of the Huron Carol when he was assigned to Quebec City. After he had returned to Toronto to work as music critic and feature writer for the *Toronto Mail and Empire*, he wrote an English text loosely inspired by Brébeuf's. Middleton's choir at Centennial United Church sang it in 1926.

The haunting tune, known as JE-SOUS AHATONHIA, is derived from a 16th-century French folk song, "Une Jeune Pucelle," which would have been known to Brébeuf. The text and

Ira D. Sankey who used it often in his preaching tours across the United States and Great Britain with Dwight L. Moody. In the 1950s it was sung frequently at Billy Graham evangelistic crusades.

Curiously, when it was first published in Horace Hasting's *Social Hymns: Original and Selected* (Boston, 1865), this hymn was anonymous. American composer Charles Converse

tune have survived to become one of the most recognized Canadian songs.

BRITISH INFLUENCES

Many British hymn writers have had a strong influence on Canadian congregational song or “hymnody” – a term that describes the common body of traditional Christian music of worship and praise. Here are two examples.

William Bullock, a missionary for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, served in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, building new churches and also acting as doctor and magistrate in the outposts. In 1854 he published his *Songs of the Church* in Halifax. The collection included “We Love the Place, O God,” a hymn of dedication based on Psalm 26:8 and written for the opening of his new church at Trinity Bay. The first verse: “We love the place, O God, / wherein Thine honor dwells; / the joy of Thine abode / all earthly joy excels.”

Edwin Hatch wrote “Breathe on Me, Breath of God,” an ordination hymn published privately in 1878. Immediately following his own ordination, Hatch had emigrated from Oxford to Toronto to teach classics and church history at Trinity College. He taught high school in Quebec City from 1862 to 1867 before returning to Oxford. His hymn is associated with a Victorian hymn tune, TRENTHAM, composed by Robert Jackson.

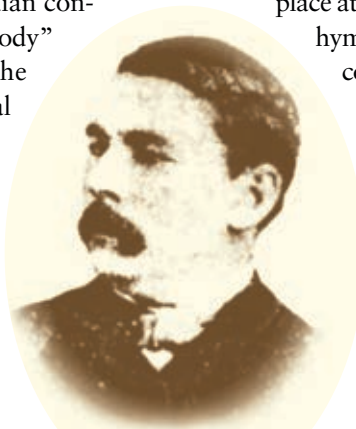
“Breathe on me, breath of God, / fill me with life anew, / that I may love what Thou dost love, / and do what Thou wouldst do.”

CANADIAN HYMN WRITERS

Canadian hymn writers appeared in growing numbers in traditional hymnbooks published during the 20th cen-

tury. Here are two quick examples.

Mary Susannah Edgar wrote “God Who Touchest Earth With Beauty” in 1925 for girls who attended summer camps at Glen Bernard near her birth-



Itinerant evangelist **Joseph Medlicott Scriven** penned the famous “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.”

place at Sundridge, Ont. The hymn won first prize in a competition sponsored by the American Camping Association in 1926. James Edmund Jones, a Toronto magistrate and editor of two editions of the Anglican *Book of Common Praise*, composed the tune GLEN BERNARD for this text.

As the clouds of war gathered over Europe and Asia in 1938, R. B. Y. Scott, professor of Old Testament studies at United Theological College in Montreal, wrote a hymn that began: “O day of God, draw nigh / in beauty and in power; / come with Thy timeless judgment now / to match our present hour. / Bring to our troubled minds, / uncertain and afraid, / the quiet of a steadfast faith, / calm of a call obeyed.”

Scott set the hymn to the familiar Genevan psalm tune ST. MICHAEL, but the American *Hymnal 1940* matched it with BELLWOODS by Canadian organist James Hopkirk. It is among the most widely published Canadian hymns.

THE HYMN EXPLOSION

The 1960s, the decade known for its social turmoil and upheaval, witnessed some startling new developments in many genres of music, and congregational song had its own set of changes.

Hymnbook publishers, denominational and non-denominational alike, issued paperback songbooks designed to fit in a shirt pocket or to be tossed into a guitar case. These were trial collections of new hymns, psalms, black

spirituals, popular folk songs, praise songs and modern service music – to be sung in churches, at coffee houses and around campfires.

New music was on the North American horizon, and worship leaders and music publishers faced many decisions. What materials would be carried over to the new books? Which hymns, psalms and spiritual songs that speak to current generations of worshippers would be included?

Several Canadian hymn writers contributed to the “hymn explosion” that happened between 1965 and 1975. Try looking some up on the Internet.

Walter Farquharson, a poet, English teacher and United Church pastor from Saskatchewan, wrote “For Beauty of Prairies” and “God Who Gives to Life Its Goodness.” Herbert O’Driscoll, an Anglican priest now living in Calgary, wrote “God Who Has Caused to Be Written Your Word for Our Learning.”

Ron Klusmeier of Vancouver Island, a composer/music leader in The United Church of Canada, has contributed many new hymns, including collaborations with Walter Farquharson in the early 1970s such as “Give to Us

More About Hymns

Here are three comprehensive websites about hymnody, hymnbooks and songbooks, worship resources and teaching workshops.

The Calvin Institute of Christian Worship at www.calvin.edu/worship recently opened www.hymnary.org. Both are produced at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich.

The Cyber Hymnal at www.cyberhymnal.org is a great reference. Search by title or keyword and listen to recordings of tunes.

The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada has a site at www.thehymnsociety.org. The Southern Ontario Chapter of the Hymn Society, at www.sochs.org, is celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2008-09. ■

—ML

Laughter,” “Teach Me, God, to Wonder,” “Walls That Divide” and a hymn that celebrates families: “Would You bless our homes and families, / Source of life who calls us here; / in our world of stress and tension / teach us love that conquers fear. / Help us learn to love each other / with a love that constant stays; / teach us when we face our troubles, / love’s expressed in many ways.”

Klusmeier also worked with British hymn writer Fred Kaan to create “To Show by Touch and Word” and “Worship the Lord.”

Perhaps the most celebrated Canadian evangelical hymn writer was Margaret Clarkson (1915-2008 – see sidebar on page 30).

NEW HYMN & WORSHIP BOOKS

One of the most influential hymnal supplements published recently in Canada

is *Songs for a Gospel People* (1987, Wood Lake Books). It introduced Gordon Light’s hymn and hymn tune celebrating Pentecost, “She Comes Sailing on the Wind,” and Peter Davison’s “The Singer and the Song” arranged by George Black. Ron Klusmeier contributed “Praise to the Lord” (his setting of Psalm 113).

Linnea Good is another West Coast singer/songwriter/arranger who is succeeding at contributing songs into our congregational memory banks. She is one of the rare musicians skilled both at writing new texts and composing tunes for them.

LIVING IN THE LIGHT is the name of a tune she composed in 1992 for an Epiphany hymn about the star that shone at Jesus’ birth. This hymn about God’s light is now sung in every season of the year. The hymn opens and closes with this refrain: “A light is gleam-

ing, / spreading its arms throughout the night, / living in the light. / Come share its gladness, / God’s radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.”

Linnea Good has also made contemporary arrangements of biblical psalms. The joy in her setting of Psalm 100 captivates singers: “Make a joyful noise all the earth! / Worship your God with gladness. / Make a joyful noise all the earth. / Come to this place with a song!”

In 2007 Wood Lake Books published *More Voices* to showcase worship music written since the mid-1990s. Living Canadian writers and composers in this new supplement include Linnea Good (www.linneagood.com), Ron Klusmeier (www.musiklus.com) and Gordon Light (www.commoncup.com). There is also a long list of traditional songs from around the world, thanks in part to two Canadian musicians: Andrew Donaldson (<http://hilariter.ca>) and Bruce Harding (www.evensong.ca).

Current Canadian hymnbooks and hymnal supplements are continuing our tradition of singing sacred songs in many styles – at congregational worship, at adult and youth programs and in personal devotion.

Admittedly, every Canadian church group has its own approach to traditional Christian music. Some have replaced hymnals and traditional hymns with contemporary rock music and lyrics projected onto a screen. Some mix age-old texts with guitar, drum and bass accompaniment. Some have never used hymns.

That said, our Christian musical heritage continues to be available for all. ■

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Margaret Leask teaches part time in religion and culture at Wilfrid Laurier University and at the University of Waterloo. She is the Canadian editor for the forthcoming Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology (Canterbury Press/Eerdmans).

The Bentley Challenge

By James Beverley



The burst bubble around Canadian evangelist Todd Bentley leaves serious questions for leaders in the charismatic side of the church

On June 23 Todd Bentley, the controversial evangelist at the heart of the Florida Outpouring, was given an apostolic blessing by some of the biggest names in the charismatic Christian world: Peter Wagner, Che Ahn, Bill Johnson, John Arnott and Rick Joyner among others. Wagner, head of the International Coalition of Apostles, decreed that Bentley's authority, favour, influence and revelation would increase.

Well, it hasn't turned out that way yet.

In mid-August the board of Bentley's Fresh Fire Ministries announced that Bentley was separating from his wife and that he had "entered into an unhealthy relationship on an emotional level with a female member of his staff." Bentley quickly stepped away from ministry and cancelled all speaking engagements. At press time in late August it was obvious the bubble had burst on the Florida Outpouring, even though a few hundred people continued to gather every evening at the Ignited Church, home base for the revival meetings that started April 2.

Two extreme views remain. On one side, critics say the revival was false, even from Satan, and that Bentley is a con artist in ministry for money, a wolf, a liar and many other uncharitable things. On the other side, fans of the revival claim it is clearly of God, that Bentley is one of the most anointed Christian leaders on Earth and that those who have doubts and raise questions are being influenced by demonic spirits.

While I prefer neither extreme, now is the time for charismatic/Pentecostal leaders to face underlying serious issues – issues that are distinct from Bentley's marital problems.

First, are leaders in the charismatic world going to curb the seeming obsession with angels, trips to heaven, gold dust, feathers from heaven, heavenly oil, heavenly gems, gold fillings and out-of-body travel?

Lee Grady, editor of *Charisma* magazine, has critiqued Bentley on these kinds of issues, especially for his incredible reports about angels and his wild stories about his regular trips to heaven. Sadly, Grady received a lot of condemnation from other leaders for his "religious spirit" in raising concerns. Somehow we need to remind each other that "gullibility is not synonymous with spirituality," as A. W. Tozer

rightly noted so long ago.

Second, are leaders in the charismatic world going to demand better truth-telling about miracles? Why is it that most church leaders remained silent as Bentley failed to give proof for the 30 or so announcements of raisings from the dead? Associated Press, *Nightline* reporters and the British evangelical magazine *Christianity* found scant evidence of miracles and resurrections.

How could Wagner and all those apostolic leaders who blessed Bentley not be outraged at blatant carelessness about the supernatural? A pastor supposedly cured of cancer dies a week later. Bentley announces that one man is cured of a double leg amputation and the man walks on stage with his

prosthetic devices still in place. Bentley even brought his wife and kids on stage as a prophetic sign that God is going to bless families.

Third, are leaders in the charismatic world going to deal with the shallow and cheap prophetic gifting that has come to dominate the movement for the past 20 years? Prophets are a dime a dozen now and there is no end of contradictory, vague, trivial, boring and weird prophetic utterances. Some charismatic prophets are especially good at announcing prophecies after the fact. Even false prophecies elicit little concern. All of this amounts to taking the Lord's name in vain. No one even blinks.

Those who anointed Bentley in June owe their constituencies an apology, or at least an explanation, for their rush to bless him without seriously engaging his personal struggles and the deeper flaws in the revival. Yes, God used the revival to bless people and to bring some who are lost to salvation. However, this does not negate the need to address the major problems in Bentley's life and ministry and in the Florida Outpouring. Hopefully, the months ahead will see true healing for Bentley and his family as well as greater discernment in the entire charismatic side of the church. ■

Yes, God
used the
revival to
bless people.
However ...

James A. Beverley is professor of Christian thought and ethics at Tyndale Seminary. His latest book The Nelson's Illustrated Guide to Religions will be released in winter 2009.

Does the Bible Allow Cremation?

By Jimmy Cobb



Cremation of human remains is an increasingly popular alternative to traditional burial in North America. In parts of Asia cremation has been common for some time – in Japan it is required by law. Nearly three-fourths of Europeans choose cremation, mostly in the cities. In Canada’s western provinces and Quebec, more than half of the funerals involve cremation. British Columbia reportedly has the highest rate of cremations in North America: 80 per cent.

What considerations are important if a Christian might be thinking of this alternative?

It’s worth examining whether the Bible approves of cremation or rejects it.

While the trend may be relatively new in North America, in some other cultures the practice dates back thousands of years before Christ. The Greeks and Romans of Jesus’ day followed it as the norm in keeping with their philosophy of soul immortality and an accompanying devaluation of the human body after death.

Jewish stress on soul embodiment involved much more respect for the body. Proper burial was important to God’s people in the Old Testament, although bodies were sometimes burned as a sign of God’s judgment. Examples include those found guilty of adultery (Leviticus 20:14), prostitution (Genesis 38:24, Leviticus 21:9) or extreme violations such as that of Achan at Ai (Joshua 7:27).

The Bible also mentions the curse on Moab for having burned the bones of the king of Edom (Amos 2:1) and Josiah’s defilement of the altar at Bethel by burning of human bones taken from tombs (2 Kings 23:20).

Yet there is no clear, categorical prohibition of cremation in the Old Testament.

Early Christians generally continued the practice of traditional burial, perhaps in part because some pagan philosophies and practices were associated with cremation. But their most significant reasons, surely, were that burial seemed more in keeping with the reality of the bodily resurrection of Jesus and with their appreciation of believers’ bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit.

Paul’s strong emphasis on resurrection of the body in 1

Corinthians 15 might suggest to some that traditional burial is the proper, biblically supportable choice.

Yet we also know that the state of the physical body at time of death is not consequential for the resurrection body planned by God.

What is clear in both the Old and New Testaments is the importance of showing proper respect and dignity for the physical body in death as well as life.

Today, Christians seek to maintain our biblical respect for the physical body while giving fair consideration to growing ecological and financial concerns.

Cremation is somewhat less expensive. Cremation results in less invasive chemicals in the soil because embalming is usually not required. One new cremation process uses liquid nitrogen to pulverize and collect the remains, thus reducing

the threat of pollution even more. Mobility and crowded cemeteries also add to the appeal of cremation.

A decision about cremation should not finally depend upon these practical aspects, as important as they are. Because the Bible has no specific injunction prohibiting the practice, it boils down to a matter of personal preference and family decision-making.

As long as proper respect is given to the memory and body of the deceased, whether to cremate or not can then simply remain something family members need to discuss and decide. The preference of the individual is key – in most areas it is required by law that an individual’s expressed preference for burial or cremation be followed.

Both cremation and traditional burial are biblically acceptable. Emotion, aesthetics, philosophical issues and personal preference may influence one way or the other but, as Martin Luther said, what the Bible does not condemn, neither should we. ■

We know that the state of the physical body at time of death is not consequential for the resurrection body planned by God

Jimmy Cobb of Cochrane, Alta., is professor of theology, ethics and history at Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary and College. Representatives of 10 seminaries affiliated with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada take turns writing this column. Please send your questions to: FTeditor@efc-canada.com or Faith Today, Ask a Theologian, M.I.P. Box 3745, Markham, ON L3R 0Y4.

Riverwood Church Community, Winnipeg

By Charlene de Haan

“Faded jeans and broken people welcome.” This is the invitation extended by Riverwood Church Community, a non-denominational group in Winnipeg that welcomes around 750 worshippers.

“We are truck drivers, technicians, business owners, unemployed, retail clerks and disadvantaged – united as people being changed by the life-transformational power of God,” declares Jon Courtney, pastor of extension ministries.

Courtney explains that the church’s “inconvenient location” – on a side street in central Winnipeg, in an old warehouse, that doesn’t look like a church – is a response to the call of God to the area in the year 2000. Volunteers pitched in to conduct their own “divine restoration” project and now they’re bursting at the seams!

Mission Statement or Bottom Line?

Around Riverwood there has been a shift from a mission statement to what the group calls “our bottom line.” Riverwood sums up its focus as “L-3 living”: Living in intimacy with God, Living in deep community, Living lives of influence.

“Riverwood isn’t a place, it’s a people,” says Courtney. “It’s not a building so much as a connected living body.”

Mirroring Neighbourhood Diversity

Pastor Courtney describes the area as “disadvantaged” with low income housing, a high Native population and lots of immigrants. Reflective of the younger neighbourhood demographic, the congregation hosts a high proportion of young adults with families.

Even the church name adds a twist of the unusual. While many community churches see themselves as an establishment *in* the community, Riverwood Church Community reverses the words to emphasize the people *are* the community from the inside out!

When they outgrow this facility, they aren’t looking to move to the suburbs. “God has called Riverwood to move closer to the needs in the neighbourhood,” Courtney says.



A team of Riverwood volunteers hits the neighbourhood streets to clean up garbage.

PHOTOS COURTESY RIVERWOOD CHURCH

Why Neighbours Know About This Church

Derek and Michelle Mitchell spotted the tagline about broken people after trying a more traditional church that accentuated their alienation. This come-as-you-are church proved to be full of surprises. When Derek lost his job, four people offered work on the spot and set up a barbecue to celebrate. The Riverwood “family” was also there for Michelle when their son, Dayton, was born with complications.

“They’ll stop their lives to help you at the drop of a dime,” Derek testifies. The Mitchells started attending the Alpha program to learn more about their faith over dinner and discussion each week. Now they encourage relatives and old friends who show interest in their “makeover” to check it out.

The Breadth and Depth of a Community Mindset

“The community knows us by the work we do,” comments Courtney. “We take our church to our community.” Block parties at the local park attract 1,000 people. The Adopt-a-Block team of 30 has been walking the streets for about five years. Teams knock on doors weekly, asking “Is there anything we can help you with?” They’ve gained entrance into 120 homes. Incredible connections are initiated doing yardwork or listening over a cup of coffee. The church also publishes a hip-looking, free community newspaper called *Neighbourhood Life*.

“We’re not interested in people coming to fill up a seat. Ev-

everyone gets involved,” says Courtney.

Community of Hope is the umbrella name for three Riverwood locations in the same neighbourhood: a church, a store and a community centre.

The Hope Store, in a leased facility, operates much like a thrift store. It aims to distribute clothing and household goods inexpensively to generate income

for other projects and to help people regain employment by hiring friends in the neighbourhood.

Hope Centre ministers from a donated building, offering a weekly drop-in program for adults, where approximately 120 enjoy a no-cost lunch. A food bank, started in 1996, assists 80 families every two weeks. Alpha @

The Centre encourages people to host a table and invite their neighbours.

The Community Garden is a new initiative. Neighbours get a section of ground to grow organic vegetables. They build relationships with each other and with volunteers from the church. Gardeners keep most of their harvest and contribute some to the food bank.

The Refuge provides a safe haven for young, high-risk moms with one church mentor pouring love, acceptance, and grace into the lives of about three moms at a time – not to judge or change them but to help them learn to make positive decisions in relationships, parenting skills, education or job searching. Forty-five moms and tots appreciate weekly small group sessions with childcare provided.

A team of 14 volunteers operates Kidz Club in an elementary school gym, influencing the lives of 60 to 65 high-needs children through games, crafts and a “God-talk” and also touching parents through family movie nights and barbecues.

The Ongoing Challenge

Although Riverwood has experienced a good measure of success extending the ministry of the church into the community, “We want to strengthen the bridge from the community to the church,” says Courtney. “It’s easy to run segregated programs. You don’t clash if each program is separate. We want to shift to a more integrated model of ministry.”

For example, the youth program has a strong influx of community teens, which adds a different dynamic to the church youth. “How do we manage this?” Courtney muses. “Understanding the tension and balance keeps us working to integrate – not segregate!” ■

Charlene de Haan is a freelance writer in Toronto. She also serves as a consultant to The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada in its Missional Church Project. Read all the profiles in this ongoing series at www.faithtoday.ca.

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Mistaken Identities

By John Kapteyn



A leader from the Reformed Church in America introduces his denomination and reflects on Christian identity.

The pace of change in our world leaves many of us feeling like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*: a bit dizzy but sure “We’re not in Kansas anymore.” It’s easy to wonder where we are and who we are. It’s easy for Canadian society to mistake and misunderstand our identities as believers and churches.

It is important that believers have a true sense of identity and purpose, not based on how others identify us but based on who God has made us to be.

There’s more to say about this but, first, let me also introduce the denominational part of my identity in keeping with the aims of this series of guest columns.

I belong to the Reformed Church in America (RCA), which has 40 organized churches in Canada. The RCA (rca.org) is the oldest continuous Protestant denomination in North America. In the small colonial town of New Amsterdam, New York, on a Sunday in 1628, about 50 people gathered around a crude table in a mill loft. Their celebration of the Lord’s Supper marks the birth date of the RCA in North America.

Our oldest congregation in Canada will celebrate its 100th anniversary next year in Monarch, Alta.

Our theology is Reformed (owing much to the 16th-century Protestant Reformation) and our style of government is Presbyterian (with congregations led by elected elders and deacons).

Those interested in Canadian history may want to know that RCA ministry in Canada goes back to the 1790s when an RCA minister named Robert McDowell ministered to Loyalist settlers. He settled about 20 miles west of Kingston and opened his first church in 1798.

When the RCA decided to stop its work in Upper Canada, McDowell decided to stay and work among Presbyterians. He became known as the father of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Today some people mistakenly confuse the RCA with the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) or other denominations with Dutch Protestant roots.

We can clarify that by going back to Canada in the 1950s when the country welcomed a large influx of Dutch immigrants. The RCA encouraged these immigrants to join The Presbyterian Church in Canada and The United Church of Canada.

However, many immigrants joined the CRC, a group that had seceded from the RCA in 1857 (the RCA was known at that time as the Reformed Dutch Church). These CRC folks were especially proactive in establishing immigrant churches in Canada.

So today, even though the CRC and RCA are of comparable size if you look at all of North America, the CRC is much larger in Canada (roughly one-fourth of the CRC’s 1,000 congregations are in Canada, whereas the RCA has 40).

What does our history suggest about our character today? Some might conclude that we are focused inward or non-evangelistic or only a Dutch church. In fact, our 40 Canadian churches are in various stages of birthing another 16 churches over the next few years. What’s more, we minister in eight languages. “We’re not in Kansas anymore.”

More important than our history or our Reformed identity is our identity as followers of Christ. In Christ we are a new creation. We are anointed to be prophets, priests and kings, as 1 Peter 2:9 reminds us: “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

All Christians were chosen to bring forth the good news of the gospel. Being a prophet means declaring God’s word. As we declare the good news of God in word and deed, we declare His praises. As priests we are to pray for our nation, for the people. And we are to offer ourselves as living sacrifices, living not for our own well-being but for God’s glory and in service to others.

We are to let God rule in our lives and to bring His rule into our land by voicing His truth, advocating for a society that upholds His word and cares for those who are poor and in need.

I thank God for my identity as a leader in my denomination, yes, but mostly because I belong to Christ and have the privilege of serving Him. May we all rejoice in our calling as His people! **✠**

John Kapteyn is executive secretary of the Regional Synod of Canada, part of the Reformed Church in America. This column continues a series by leaders of affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada listed at www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/affiliates.

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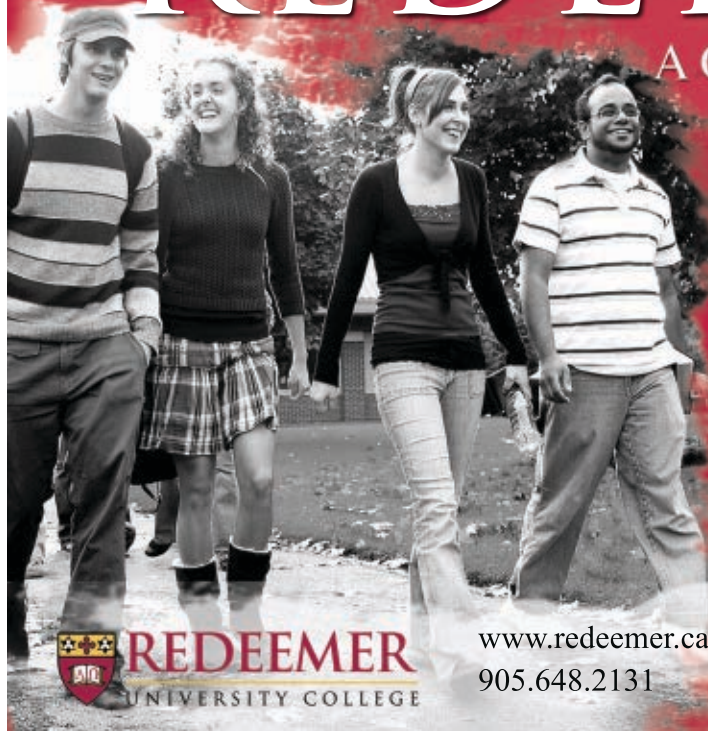
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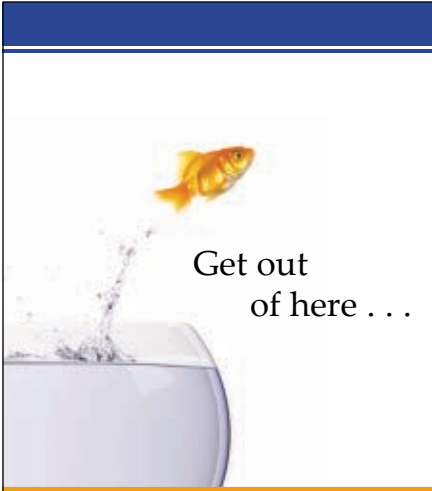
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If you would like more information about the DMin program at the Toronto School of Theology please e-mail the DMin office at dmin.office@utoronto.ca or call 416-978-4050.

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The call for the follower of Jesus is to pray for *all* people. This year, please Pray For the Persecutors. Pray specifically for the kings and leaders of persecuting countries and for all those who harass, imprison and even kill Christians throughout the world.

ROMANS 12:9-21

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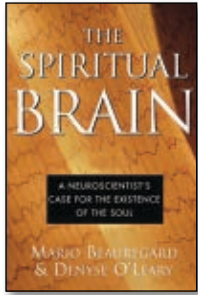
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THE SPIRITUAL BRAIN: A NEUROSCIENTIST'S CASE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL

Authors: Mario Beauregard and Denyse O'Leary

Montreal neurobiologist Mario Beauregard and Toronto journalist Denyse O'Leary have collaborated to produce a paradigm-shattering study of the "spiritual brain." They take basic but positive steps to transcend the deadlock that characterizes so much of the contemporary relationship between spiritual and material realities.



HarperOne, Harper Collins Canada. 368 pp. \$25.95 (hardcover). \$16.25 (paper available October 2008)

On the one hand, the authors challenge materialist scientists who reject God's existence because their ideologies either deny or ignore what science cannot comprehend. At the same time, Beauregard and O'Leary take issue with religious scientists who try to impose alternative methodologies to the scientific method or who seek to prove scientifically that God exists.

This book's methodology is grounded in empiricism but rejects some traditional scientific biases. "We do not believe in materialism," say Beauregard and O'Leary,

"but we do believe that a mystical reality or state of consciousness does exist." Several chapters critique atheistic scientific theories that debunk spiritual experience.

The authors propose that a human "mind" and not only a "brain" is needed to comprehend religious, spiritual and mystical experiences (they call these RSMs). Mind accesses the "experience" of a reality existing beyond the material world.

The book offers empirical evidence that a "spiritual side" of humanity exists that can complete and transform human life. They describe how mystical experience affected 15 Carmelite nuns from Quebec who participated in a study. The authors define mysticism and mystical experiences as well as what triggers them.

Their conclusion? Ultimate reality cannot be proven or disproven by science, but it is possible to study and measure how this reality can affect people.

There are limits to this study. Not every activity experienced by the "spiritual brain" is a good thing, or of equal value. A positive case for religious belief must be made on its own merit and is beyond the questions considered here.

But certainly faith and reason can better relate in mutually respectful and supportive ways as a result of studies like this one.

"There is no need to choose between science and spirituality," the authors conclude. "But there is certainly a need, as there always has been, to choose between materialism and spirituality."

—WAYNE A. HOLST

MONEY: BURDEN OR BLESSING?

Author: Donald A. Leggett

Money is a powerful force in our society and, as the title of this book suggests, it can be both a burden and a blessing. Wealth carries "peculiar temptations" and "often competes with God for our attention and energy."

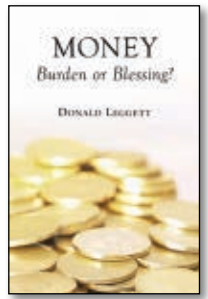
Leggett packs quite a bit into this brief 70-page study. He surveys both the Old and New Testaments for teaching on the blessings and burdens of wealth, provides a critical evaluation of the "prosperity gospel," gives particular attention to the teaching of both Jesus and Paul regarding wealth and offers helpful counsel on how Christians should approach charitable giving.

Of particular interest to readers will be Leggett's critical look at the prosperity gospel so prevalent in North American Christianity. He concludes there is scant evidence for the view that God wants everyone to prosper financially. For example, Leggett writes that "the prayer of Agur [Proverbs 30:8-9], where he pleads with God requesting neither wealth nor poverty, cannot be reconciled with the gospel of affluence."

An excellent set of study questions for each of the chapters makes this book a great choice for a small group study or adult elective in an adult Bible study class. And for those who find this book has whetted their appetite for more, Leggett provides a recommended reading list for further study.

Hopefully this little volume will find its way into the hands of many Christians who struggle with how they view money. Leggett is professor emeritus of Old Testament at Tyndale University College and Seminary in Toronto. For 25 years he also served as a pastor and elder at Village Green Baptist Church in London, Ont.

—DAVID DANIELS



Clements Publishing, 2007. 84 pages. \$9.95 (paper)

WHEN COBRAS LAUGH

Authors: Don Ranney and Ray Wiseman

In a sense this book provides the reader with a two-for-the-price-of-one experience. It tells the stories of two different missionary units (a single man and a young family) working in two different parts of the world – India and South Africa. Steve Manley, surgeon, and Andrew Heath, family man and graphic artist, strike up a friendship during their pre-departure linguistics training and remain in contact by letter during the course of their respective short missionary careers (this is in the early 1970s before the days of e-mail).

Both encounter what turns out to be a seemingly insurmountable problem: Steve does battle with the corrupt



Capstone Press, 2008. 248 pages. \$18 (paper)



MUSIC REVIEWS

I Will Go

Artist: Starfield

Sparrow Records,
\$12.99.

This record will be devoured in huge gulps by Starfield's legions of loyal fans. *I Will Go* is the third release from the Abbotsford, B.C.,

rockers, adding momentum to six years of busy touring, successful sales, radio play and awards including a Juno, an armload of Covenants and special Gospel Music Association Dove recognition for their international success.

The new CD is a collection of driving modern worship songs, like a lighter version of Hillsong United. In fact, the album's first song is a cover of Hillsong's "Hosanna," one of several strong anthems ideal for corporate worship.

Other notable tracks include "Reign in Us" and "Great in All the Earth" – singable, repetitive and suitably contagious. The vocals are excellent, with Tim and Jon Neufeld offering the same

great sibling harmony that has become their signature. The writing is good, although perhaps not as innovative as *Beauty in the Broken*, their highly successful previous release.

I really like this CD's clear focus on global missions. It's easy to feel the band's authentic desire to shake up apathetic young people, urging them to get out of their comfort zones and reach out to a broken world with compassion.

The energetic opening track sets the tone: "From every nation God is calling out His own / a saved generation that will not be overthrown // and we're not backing down, no way." The title track is equally powerful: "Let me not be blind with privilege / Give me eyes to see the pain / Let the blessing you've poured out on me / not be spent on me in vain / Let this life be used for change / I will go."

The CD was excellently recorded in both Nashville and Abbotsford by two stellar producers, Allen Salmon and Ed Cash.

Though a bit on the safe side and musically homogenized, *I Will Go* is still a strong modern worship CD. These young men shine with passion and conviction, drawing listeners into a place of humble worship while also challenging them.

—ALI MATTHEWS

Indian administrator under whom he works while Andrew faces the hypocrisy of other missionaries who have adopted the racist attitudes of white South Africans. Both struggle to do the right thing but find this only gets them in trouble with their superiors.

Both find themselves tempted with potentially damaging emotional entanglements with young women. Both end up abandoning their original intentions of long-term missionary service. But both also experience the goodness and grace of God in the midst of apparent and, sometimes, real failure.

All of this, of course, has too often been a sad but real part of Christian missions, and it is good not all missionary stories are unrealistically perfect. The authors remind us that God has sometimes accomplished his purposes *despite* rather than simply *through* the fallible agents we have sent out into the world. From this perspective, *When Cobras Laugh* is well worth reading.

Unfortunately, the quality of writing leaves much to be desired. Dialogue is at times unrealistic, character development difficult to follow, personalities overdrawn and the plots somewhat rushed and disconnected. Despite these weaknesses, once the stories began to unfold the book is difficult to put down. This is a useful warning that youthful missionary idealism can too easily be disappointed.

—TIM STABELL

THE COURAGE OF GRACE: ONE FAMILY'S JOURNEY THROUGH TEENAGE PREGNANCY

Author: David Donaldson, with Diane Donaldson and Laurel Donaldson

David and Diane Donaldson were living out their script for their lives. David was enrolled at McMaster Divinity College and played drums on the worship team at their church where

Diane was head of children's ministry. Their 16-year-old daughter, Laurel, was an honour student and leader at school and church. Their son, Matthew, was in Toronto attending college. Life was unfolding according to plan when the two words "I'm pregnant" jettisoned their script and challenged their notions about life and faith.

This book is an open, candid account of the year that changed life in the Donaldson household forever: "our journey into a new normal," as David describes it.

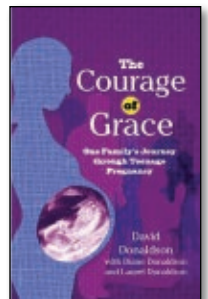
Since an event like unplanned pregnancy doesn't happen to only one individual, this story is told in true postmodern style from three perspectives: David's, Diane's and Laurel's. It is an engaging approach that keeps the story real, as each narrates his or her experiences with honesty and vulnerability.

As parents, David and Diane are frank about their struggles with facing not only the death of dreams for their daughter but also their fears about potential judgment from church and extended family as well as their struggles with surrendering their own anticipated freedom. When the expected criticism and judgment did not materialize, they were humbled by grace, recognizing some of their own uncharitable attitudes in the past.

This is a moving book about a "perfect" Christian family having to redefine itself and grow through the broken dreams of teen pregnancy to the joy of welcoming a new member to their family unit. It is a compelling, well-written story I couldn't put down until I reached the last page. It reminds us that the church is first and foremost a community and that families are not defined by perfection but by love.

Available from www.createSpace.com/3345403 and www.amazon.com (not .ca).

—MARIANNE JONES



CreateSpace,
2008. 132 pages.
\$15.00 (paper)

CAREERS

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Grace Christian Reformed Church of Scarborough, Ontario, is seeking a halftime Youth & Outreach Worker to help develop its youth group ministry and outreach ministry. Grace Church is a medium-sized, multicultural, active church. Interested candidates may contact the church for more information: gracecrc@planeteeer.com, 416-293-0373, www.gracecrc.com.

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Arab World Ministries (AWM) – Canada is inviting applications for the position of administrative assistant.

AWM is an international, evangelical and interdenominational mission expressing faith in Christ through love for Muslims. We exist to exalt Jesus Christ through word and deed, making disciples and establishing mature, multiplying churches among Muslims

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Sociology: William and Catherine Booth College seeks applications for a tenure-track faculty position in Sociology effective either January 1, 2009, or July 1, 2009. Rank is open. We seek candidates qualified to teach foundational, undergraduate courses in classical and contemporary sociological theory and upper-level courses in their area of specialization. A research and teaching ability in areas such as, but not limited to, social policy, social inequality, urban sociology, community development, criminology and the sociology of family would be considered an asset. Applicants should have a PhD in Sociology or a related discipline or be advanced ABD status at the time of appointment. An ability to contribute collaboratively to the development of a new degree program in Behavioural Science is essential. **Please submit a letter of application with curriculum vitae, a statement of research and teaching interests, and reference letters from three referees to: Sociology Search Committee, Booth College, 447 Webb Place, Winnipeg, MB R3B 2P2.**

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The ethos of the College is shaped by its commitment to the historic Christian faith. The College is owned by the Salvation Army and reflects its deep involvement in service to the community. The successful applicant must have an active Christian faith, a history of involvement in a faith community, and commitment to the integration of faith and learning in a Christian university-level setting.

For these three positions, we encourage all qualified persons to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents of Canada will be given priority. Review of applications will be ongoing until the position is filled. For more information on these positions, go to www.boothcollege.ca or contact: **David Neale, PhD, Vice President and Academic Dean, Booth College. E-mail: dneale@boothcollege.ca or Phone: 204-924 4863.**

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Classified ad deadline for November/December 2008 issue: Sept. 26

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of the Arab world wherever they reside.

The successful candidate will be responsible to the Executive Director and work in co-operation with other AWM staff. He or she will be skilled with the computer using such programs as Word, Excel and Outlook.

This position is salaried but requires fundraising. Applicants may direct their questions to or request a job description from: info@awmcanada.org or 888-624-6170.

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Arab World Ministries (AWM) – Canada is inviting applications for the position of personnel and promotions manager.

AWM is an international, evangelical and interdenominational mission expressing faith in Christ through love for Muslims. We exist to exalt Jesus Christ through word and deed, making disciples and establishing mature, multiplying churches among Muslims of the Arab world wherever they reside.

The successful candidate will be responsible to the Executive Director and work in co-operation with other AWM staff. He or she will be a leader with proven skills in management, administration, resourcing and communications.

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and our Mission; to ignite, equip and unite men across Canada to become passionate followers of Jesus Christ through the effective communication of the Seven Promises. If you are a strong leader with exceptional written and oral communications skills, are passionate about men's ministry, have a proven spiritual leadership experience, are comfortable speaking publicly at conferences and seminars with a track record in a church, parachurch or business environment, we would be interested in talking to you. Interested candidates should send a covering letter and resumé to Wally Budgell, Chair – Board of Directors via e-mail at wallyb@robertsonbright.com.

Continued on page 52

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Please review the vision and mission statements and especially the City of Hope message at the Carruthers Creek website www.carrutherscreek.ca.

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Please send a resume along with a covering letter describing why you are looking for a new position to diram@hunt.ca. If you have the qualifications and experience, you will be contacted by phone.

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Special Speakers: Dr. Freddie Sun and Mrs. Dorothy Sun, China Mission

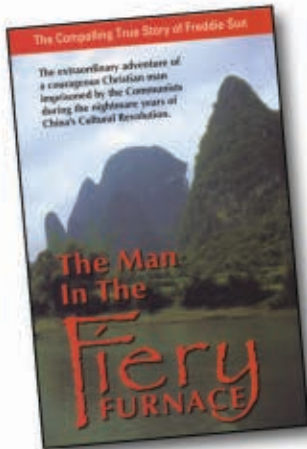
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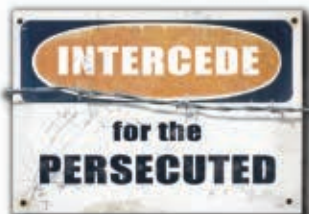
To be held in various locations across the country. For locations and to register for these events, please visit our website at: www.intercedenow.ca/missionleaders.php or contact us by phone for further information.



Dr. Freddie and Dorothy Sun are directors of the China Mission for Intercede International and Christian Aid in the U.S.A., and serve as links to the underground church in China. Come to meet in person these dynamic speakers who have suffered so much for the sake of Christ in China.

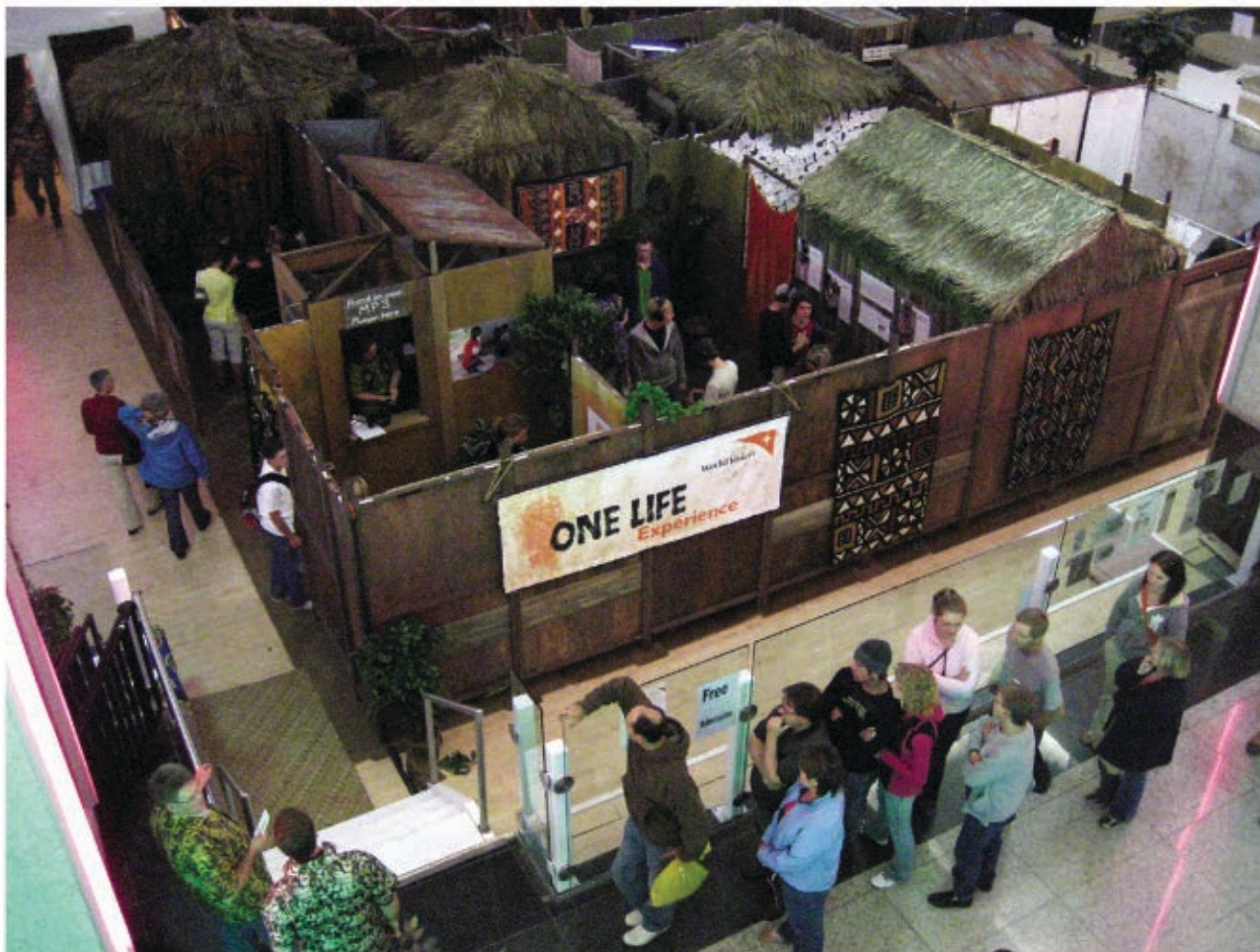
Dr. Freddie Sun is a former geologist who was sentenced to 10 years in a prison slave labour camp during China's Cultural Revolution. These years of suffering and deprivation refined him like gold in a fiery furnace, and prepared him for his later ministry. He is author of "The Man in the Fiery Furnace," which tells of his years of persecution and how God has triumphed in his life. Dorothy Sun, also born and raised in China, is the product of three generations of committed Christians. In her new book "Clay in the Potter's Hand," she describes herself as a piece of clay—broken, moulded and shaped by God. God never forced

her onto the spinning wheel, but there she has remained through all the years of heartache and accomplishment, defeat and victory.



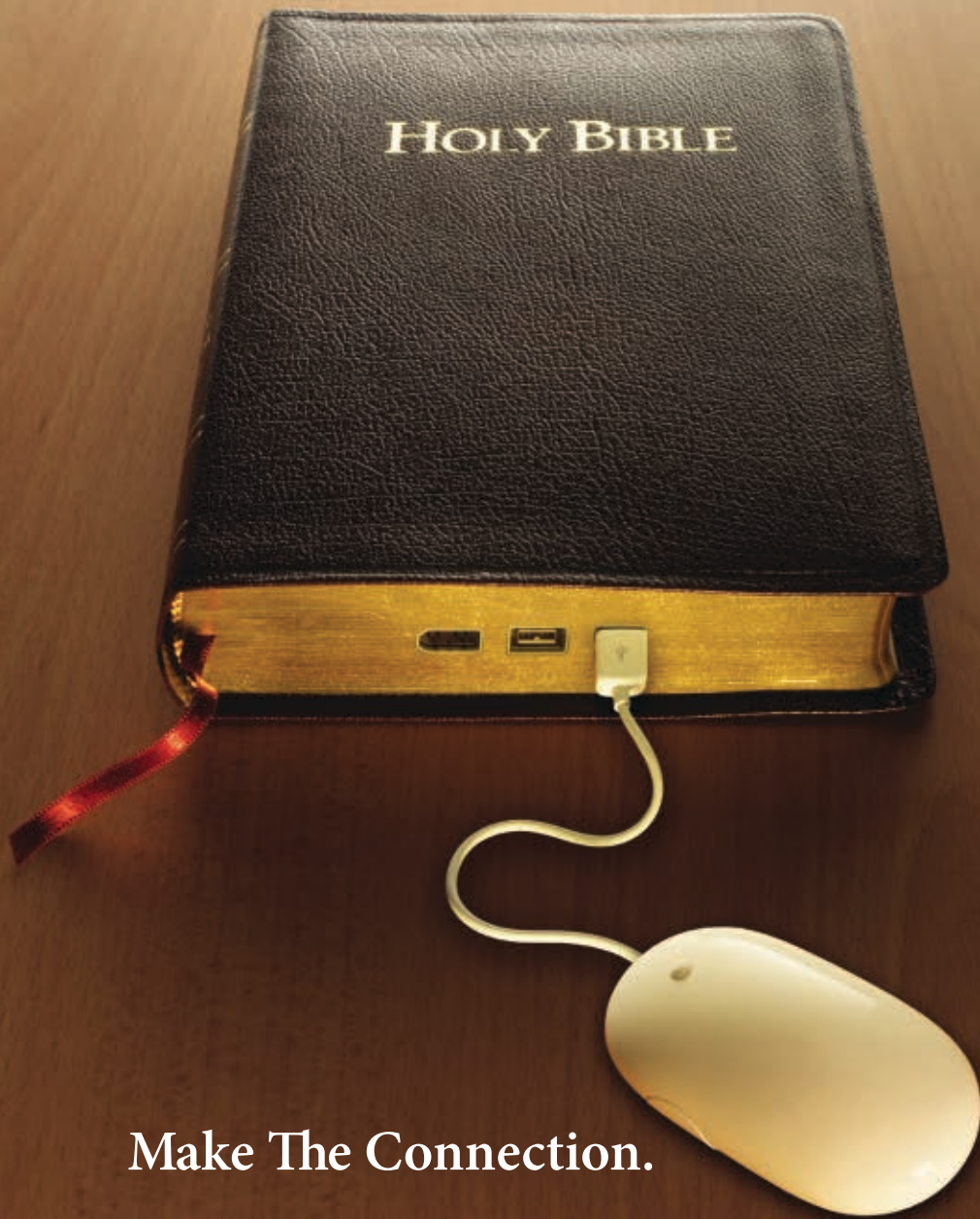
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