

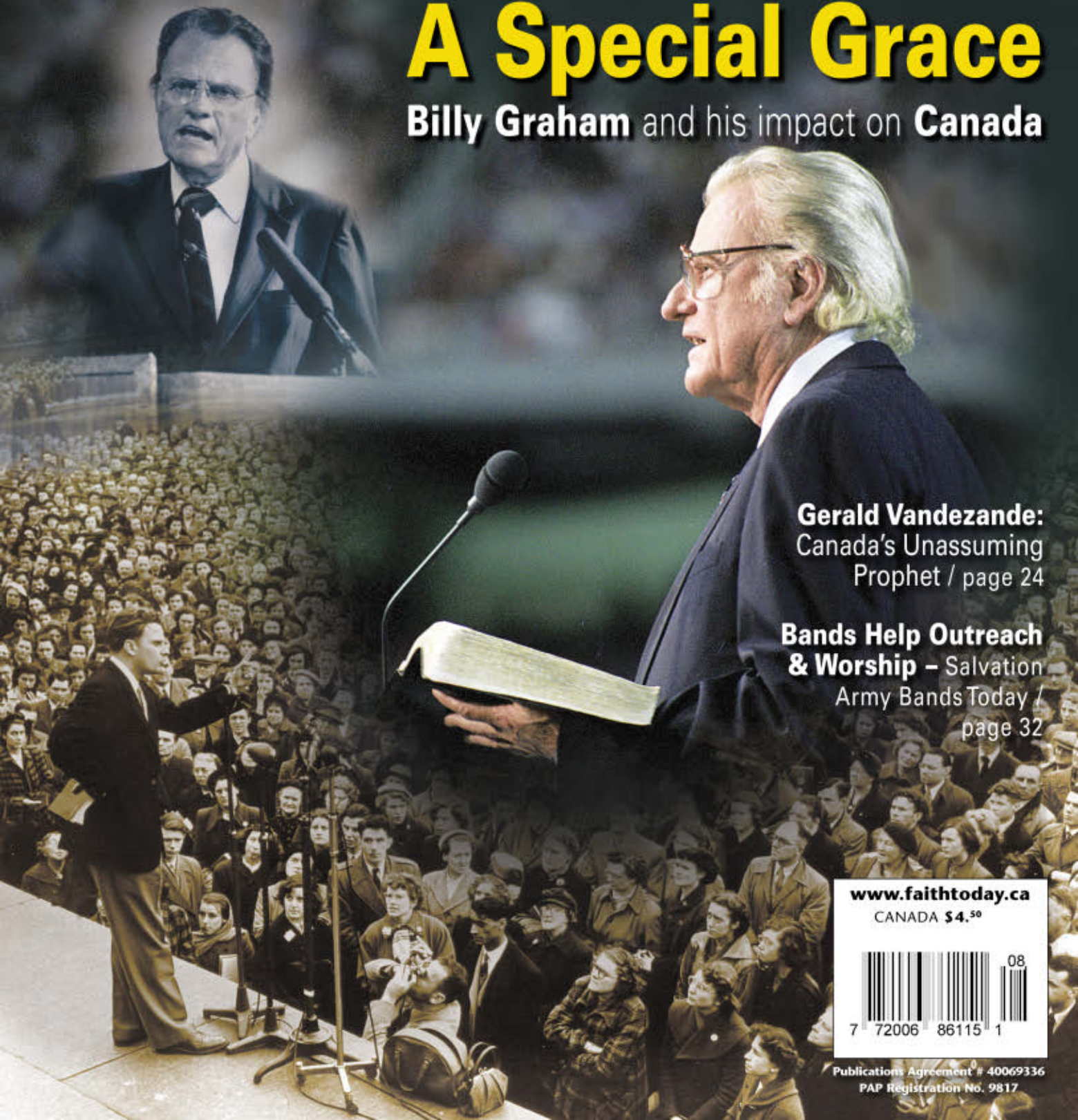
FaithToday



To Connect, Equip and Inform Evangelical Christians in Canada

A Special Grace

Billy Graham and his impact on Canada



Gerald Vandezande:
Canada's Unassuming
Prophet / page 24

**Bands Help Outreach
& Worship – Salvation
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Faith Today

To Connect, Equip and Inform Evangelical Christians in Canada

July / August 2009

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CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND OF CANADA



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A Gentle, Warm Pull

By Gail Reid

Graham crusades leave an eternal legacy



The cover story of this issue of *Faith Today* honours Billy Graham and his impact on the personal lives of Canadians and the whole movement of Christian ministries in Canada.

In "The Man Next Door," Karen Stiller interviews leaders who point to the key elements of Graham's success: his personal integrity and his insistence on denominational co-operation for each of his campaigns. (He personally led about 13 in Canada since 1955.) These also provided the seeds for many co-operative efforts in the future, including the eventual gathering to form The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada in 1964.

Even Protestants and Roman Catholics, who may not have crossed the street then to say hello, found themselves on the same planning committees. These connections around evangelistic events spun into respect and co-operation, which later became particularly important for social action interventions.

I, too, am thankful for this humble man and the sacrifices he has made in his life to follow God's call.

My memory of the first Billy Graham crusade in Toronto is more visceral than accurate. Children feel things. Everything seems stronger when they try to make sense out of these emotions.

My mother had taken us up and up to the very top of the building where we found ourselves in a wide-open space filled with thousands and thousands of people. I had never seen so many people in one place.

My best friend Eleanor, her brother Brian and I tried to sit in our seats but struggled. It was hard to concentrate. Energy seemed to swirl around us. It

pulsed, sparkled, vibrated – somehow tying us together. We couldn't miss the choir all dressed the same and filling a huge space. When they stood up to sing, it felt like a mighty army preparing for majesty to appear. But out of all this, only one man stood alone.

His voice was strong and commanding yet personal. He spoke to us as if he knew us. Oh, there were lots of things I didn't understand but I felt I could trust him, and I wasn't alone. When he asked who wanted to give their lives to Jesus Christ, I felt warm inside. It hadn't been long since I had taken that step myself at a Christian camp. I knew what it meant and was happy for having done so. Already I was feeling changes in my life. I didn't feel as afraid of things because I knew I could talk to God.

That day, Brian went forward. I think my mother was surprised. She had to leave Eleanor and me and take the long trip down to the once empty space that was already filled with people.

Eventually we lost sight of them. But inside it felt as if we were all joining hands. Eleanor and I hugged each other as we watched and waited. There was a gentle, warm pull as we heard so many repeat the words together: "I am sorry for my sins.... I believe Jesus died in my place.... I want Him to be my personal Saviour...."

Not many years later, Brian died of a brain tumour. It gives me great comfort to remember the commitment he made that day. ■

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

Be Media Friendly

Re: Christ and Culture in Canada (May/June 2009)

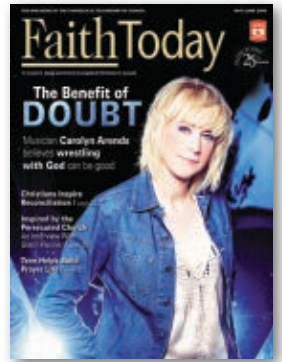
Bravo to John Stackhouse for highlighting a consistent problem with Canadian pastors. When I worked in print media, I found contacting pastors in a timely fashion to be a constant aggravation. Most pastors – or most church adminis-

trators who answer the phone – seemed utterly clueless about journalistic deadlines.

I can't tell you how often pastors blew the chance to highlight their church because they took up to a week to return my call. When a deadline was pressing, I just kept going through the list of churches in my area until I could contact enough pas-

tors for my columns. It's sad when simply being available gets you in print rather than having something interesting and articulate to say.

FRANK KING
Calgary, Alta.



Prosperity Gospel

Re: How to Rise Above the Economic Crisis (Mar/Apr 2009)

The Meeting Place reportedly teaches that Christians should live below their means so as to have money left over to give away. But you don't need to struggle to live simply and generously if you understand the laws of prosperity. The point is you can't outgive God.

Second Corinthians 9:8 says, "God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always [that means all the time] having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed."

Our experience is that you don't really experience the supernatural blessings of God until you are giving 30 to 35 per cent of your income in tithes and offerings. We have experienced that and would never go back to giving less. We have our needs and wants more than met. We drive a new car and spend winters in Florida or Texas, as good or better than if we held back on our offerings to pay for them.

It is more exciting to live in the supernatural than the natural. The kingdom of God consists of the supernatural but, sad to say, most people are living in the natural. From our experience, you give first at five or 10 per cent above your tithe as your faith develops and move up from there, and you will have enough left over for all your needs.

CHARLES RUNOLFSON
Ottawa, Ont.

Pentecostals and the Spirit

Re: Ask a Theologian (Nov/Dec 2008)

I was disappointed with Van Johnson's column. What makes Pentecostals distinct

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is the teaching that speaking in tongues is *the* initial evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit. Ministers have lost their Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada credentials by suggesting “an” may be more appropriate than “the.”

Had the question been “Do Pentecostals think that only those who have spoken in tongues are baptized/filled with the Holy Spirit?” the answer would have been an unequivocal “Yes!” Unfortunately an unclear question receives an unclear and perhaps misleading answer.

PETER ROZELUK
London, Ont.

Shack Strays Theologically

Re: Why Is a Christian Novel ... (Nov/Dec 2008)

In Romans 1:25, Paul describes how humanity has “exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator.” Truth is what should lead us into relationship but, if we create God into an image that we find palatable but not biblical, we fall into this same trap to our own peril.

In his book, Young describes the god of his own projection – a mishmash of some biblical and many non-biblical cultural influences. The depictions of God’s love and active seeking for intimacy with humanity are indeed scriptural, but to deny that there is a place of punishment as *The Shack* does

contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture. The Gospels often quote Jesus talking about a place of punishment.

Sin in the book seems only to consist of our tendency to attempt to navigate life outside of fellowship with God. This ignores the whole fact of our nature’s wilful disobedience to God’s laws, which

Retired: Brian Stiller as president of Tyndale University College and Seminary. He will continue at the school as its new chancellor. Stiller formerly directed The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada from 1983 to 1997.

Appointed: Edwin Epp as executive director of CBM Canada (formerly Christian Blind Mission). He succeeds Dave McComiskey, director since 1999, who has become a CBM regional director in Capetown, South Africa. Epp has served 23 years in international development, most recently in leadership positions with Mennonite Economic Development Associates. CBM is based in Stouffville, Ont., and each year helps 21 million people with disabilities in 100 developing countries.



Edwin Epp

Appointed: Howard Wilson as president of Ambrose University College in Calgary, effective August 1, 2009. Wilson comes from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., where he held several vice-presidential positions. He previously served as a dean at LeTourneau University and at Providence College and Seminary and pastored at Bethesda Church in Winnipeg. He has also served with many educational associations and consulted with individual institutions. He’s an ordained elder and deacon in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.

Appointed: Michael Wills as executive director of Evangelical Medical Aid Society, an organization that sends Christian health-care professionals to developing countries to provide health education, surgery and medical clinics and to address the causes of poor health. Wills has worked with Opportunity International and the World

Bank as an independent microfinance consultant. He has been a partner with Ernst & Young Management Consulting and a principal at KPMG Consulting. EMAS is based in Stouffville, Ont.

Awarded: Ray Wiseman with the Leslie K. Tarr Award for outstanding career achievement. Wiseman, 75, is an author, speaker, editor and mentor in Fergus, Ont. The award, given annually by The Word Guild in honour of a groundbreaking evangelical writer (who worked at *Faith Today*), is also held by literary authors such as Rudy Wiebe and Margaret Avison as well as popular writers such as Janette Oke.

Elected: Rev. Bruce Adema of the Christian Reformed Church and Maj. Gillian Brown of the Salvation Army as president and vice-president of the Canadian Council of Churches for 2009-2012. Both denominations are affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Other vice-presidents include Bishop Gilles Cazabon of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and Father John Jillions of the Orthodox Church in America. The council, based in Toronto, is an ecumenical body including 22 denominations from Protestant, Roman Catholic and Eastern and Oriental Orthodox traditions. Karen Hamilton remains as general secretary.

Awarded: Dr. Jean Chamberlain Froese with the Teasdale-Corti Humanitarian Award from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. She is an obstetrician at McMaster Hospital in Hamilton, Ont., and founder and executive director of Save the Mothers International, which works to reduce the number of mothers who die during pregnancy and childbirth in the developing world. She spends most of the year in Uganda and East Africa.

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is described in the Bible and is apparent around and indeed within us. Reconciliation with God in the book is depicted without repentance for wrongs committed, only a wonderful fellowship that makes no demands of our obedience or of changing our actions. While the Scriptures are clear that we can’t win God’s favour by being good, Jesus nonetheless exhorts us in Matthew 16:24, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and

take up their cross and follow me.”

God’s love for us is stunning and far-reaching but it does come with demands. The best way for us to avoid the mistake of reconstructing God from our own imagination is to bathe ourselves in the Word. When we are faced with books like *The Shack*, we will be able to ferret out the truth from the fiction.

SUE WILDER
Langley, B.C.

No One Ever Loved Me Like



Support staff at Monarch Place minister to both women and children who are fleeing violent and abusive situations.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL BAPTIST CHURCHES

Lorrie Wasyliw of Langley, B.C., never dreamed she would be the executive director of a crisis shelter for women. But once she studied

the issue and realized how vulnerable women and children are when they flee abuse, she felt she had to “step into the gap.”

In the mid-1990s, Wasyliw led women’s ministries in British Columbia and the Yukon for The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches (FEBC). As she investigated how women might impact local social justice issues, she made some appalling discoveries: one in three Canadian women experiences at least one incident of violence but only one in seven reports this to police. At least one Canadian woman is murdered by a partner or ex-partner each week.

As a pastor’s wife, Wasyliw had also known many women and friends in critical situations, and she felt God wanted her to respond by providing resources

for women, children and families.

In 1997 she established WINGS (Women in Need Gaining Strength) as a non-profit charitable society. The Baptist Foundation of British Columbia donated a house in December 1998.

The result is Monarch Place (reflecting God as our Monarch), an emergency transition house in New Westminster that serves women fleeing violence from across Canada and the United States. It has served 2,500 women, ages 16-84, from various ethnic and faith backgrounds.

Right from the beginning, Wasyliw knew the ministry would grow, adding a crisis call-in line, support groups and a second house.

“Women experiencing abuse and violence seldom have been truly loved by anyone and are often blamed rather

Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; **correct, rebuke and encourage** – with great patience and careful instruction.

–2 Timothy 4:2

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than believed. And they misunderstand how God values them,” she explains. She prays that the love of the Holy Spirit will run wild in the house, leading women to ask “Why is this house different? Will you pray for me?”

Challenges remain nonetheless. Many women choose to return to abusive relationships. One woman has sought refuge nine times in 10 years, bruises on her face giving evidence of her situation. In February 2008, another woman planning to end her abusive relationship was found in a ravine, murdered.

The work can also be rewarding, especially seeing God at

work in tangible ways. Wasyliw recalls a six-year-old boy arriving on a day when the donation closet was barely stocked – and finding the only shoes were his size. Such provision is “a God-thing day after day,” she says. Wasyliw also recalls women who rejected “spiritual things” while at the shelter later becoming Christians.

Her work “is not about women leaving a relationship in failure,” says Wasyliw. “It’s about women with courage coming for help.” One resident summed it up: “No one ever loved me like this.”

Wasyliw now serves as the first female president of the B.C./Yukon FEBC, where she is chair of the board. She and her husband attend Maple Ridge Baptist Church. ■

—CHARLENE DE HAAN

CONNECTING POVERTY AND FAMILY BREAKDOWN

Canadian governments need to give more consideration to the reality that family breakdown is a root cause of inequality and poverty, according to speakers at a conference held by the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada (IMFC).

“Family is the best welfare system we have, but Canada is failing to give it proper attention,” says Dave Quist of Ottawa, executive director of the institute, an outgrowth of the ministry Focus on the Family. IMFC (www.imfc.org) sponsors the event annually in March to discuss how family policy affects social justice.

This year’s keynote speaker was Iain Duncan Smith, former leader of the British Conservative Party. Smith addressed 100 delegates from governments, academic think-tanks, social agencies and the public. He called the gathering “timely” in “a period of deep-rooted economic instability.”

Smith, founder of the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), discussed five “pathways to poverty” identified by the group in partnership with other organizations in Britain’s poorest communities. These pathways include educational breakdown, economic dependency and worklessness, serious personal indebtedness, addiction, and family breakdown.

CSJ research suggests that British children who do not grow up in a two-parent family are 75 per cent more likely to fail in school, 70 per cent more likely to be drug addicts, 50 per cent more likely to develop an alcohol problem and 40 per cent more likely to have serious issues with personal debt.

As a result, said Smith in his conference remarks, we must “once again recognize family, in particular marriage, not as an add-on or an ideal in a healthy nation but a foundation.”

Additional research from Statistics Canada confirms that 32 per cent of single-parent families were living in poverty in 2006 compared to 7.7 per cent of two-parent families.

“We can’t gloss over the statistical evidence,” says Quist. “The idea that social justice and the family are linked is new in Canada. A correct policy response would have lasting positive effects for all Canadians.” ■

—MARY LOU HARRISON



Dave Quist

Private Schoolers Better Off: Study

Children in a private or home school are between 20 to 40 per cent less likely to use drugs, smoke, drink alcohol or feel suicidal, according to a recent study by the Christian Commitment Research Institute. Around 30 per cent more of them also reported they like doing things for others and they are very happy with their life.

For his Monograph 48, statistician Frank Jones used data from Statistics Canada referring to children in 1995, when they began school, and on the same children in 2003, at high school age.

The data also looked at separate schools, which are publically funded religious schools such as the Ontario Roman Catholic system.

Rates of smoking, teen sex and “get-

ting upset easily” were at least 10 per cent higher in separate schools than in public, but rates of parental separation/divorce and drug dealing were at least 10 per cent higher in public schools than in separate.

The data suggests private/home school children were 30 to 50 per cent more likely than average to be from a conservative Christian family, worship weekly, rarely be alone, watch an hour or less TV and videos per day, attend school without missing, be involved in a weekly club, do well in school and take weekly art lessons among others.

Public schoolers were average in most categories, although well below average in weekly worship. More details at www.ccric.ca/rcm48he.html. ■

—BILL FLEDDERUS

Mercy Rises With Manitoba Flood Waters

This spring, as the banks of the Red River swelled with rain and melting snow, the immediate response of churches across Manitoba was to help ward off what was expected to be the province's worst flood in 100 years.

Having learned from the floods of 1997, churches were quick to rise up and demonstrate the mercy of Christ to those in need.

"We go in to serve," says Bill Adams, who oversaw a response for the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) and its Disaster Response Service in both Canada and the United States.

Adams has no problem encouraging volunteers to "put down their hammers and take the time to testify to their faith" if the opportunity arises, he says, "but ultimately we go in to serve."

Jacob Kramer directs the CRWRC relief team from Burlington, Ont. He says "It's quite natural for churches to get involved. In Canada and the United States, we have 2,000 active volunteers trained in project management and rebuilding houses, so that is part of our outreach in the communities."

The Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services was also active in initiating a local fundraising campaign as well as performing recovery operations such as sandbagging, cleanup and home restoration.

"It is amazing to come together for the common good of the community and make connections with strangers over a 30-pound bag of sand," says Salvation Army cadet Melissa Mailman.

Joining the Army cadets and officers were volunteers from the Mennonite Disaster Services. Kerry Eidse, Manitoba unit director for MDS, can now look back with satisfaction. "Before the flood, there was sandbagging help. During the flood, we helped people with properties – boating them in and out, and helping them cope with problems. There has also been some cleanup help."

Some 200 houses were damaged. Thanks to the preparation exhibited by both sides of the border, says Adams, "It's nothing compared to what it could have been." ■

—EMILY WIERENGA

Love on Toronto's Spadina Ave.

For close to 70 years the Scott Mission has been a presence in downtown Toronto, ministering in the name of Christ to the needs of those who are poor, homeless, abandoned and vulnerable. Founded in 1941 by a Polish immigrant, the non-denominational mission has remained committed to its original vision.

In addition to providing hundreds of hot meals each day, running a food bank that serves more than 40,000 people each year, providing free clothing and toys, and running a men's shelter, the mission also runs a low-cost day-care program, an after-school program for at-risk youth, a summer camp north of Toronto for women and their children, and a retreat centre

in Collingwood. (The retreat overlooking Georgian Bay was donated to give clients rest and respite from the city.)

Services provided also include Sunday worship, Bible study and prayer groups in English, Spanish and Filipino, a coffee shop, bingo, drop-in centre, foot clinic, primary health care, identification clinic, shower and laundry facilities, budgeting and financial assessments, income tax clinic, housing application assistance, visitation and day trips.

The Scott Mission has served people from more than 130 ethnic backgrounds. While cultural and religious backgrounds



A family receives bags of groceries to take home.

THE SCOTT MISSION

are not barriers to receiving assistance, the mission remains unapologetically Christian in its message.

"Underlying all this, we want to make sure people see Jesus," says Peter Duraisami, director of ministries. "God is doing some amazing things in the lives of so many broken people. I've been here for 20 years. I've seen an increase in people wanting to know the Lord."

The mission (www.scottmission.com) employs 160 full-time and part-time staff and is funded mainly through donations. It is an affiliate of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. ■

—MARIANNE JONES

Church Giving Grew

In 2007 the average “religiously active” Canadian gave \$1,038 to a place of worship compared to \$887 in 2004, according to new research. That’s a 17 per cent increase compared to a Canadian average increase of nine per cent (from \$400 in 2004 to \$437 in 2007).

Statistics Canada and Canadian charities work together to produce such surveys every few years. The latest report, released in June at www.statcan.gc.ca, is *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2007 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*.

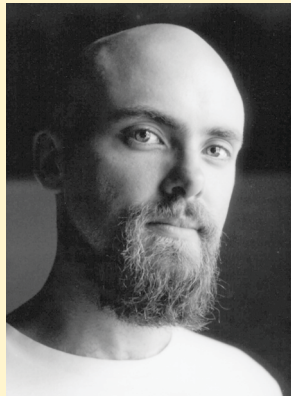
In general, the survey concludes that rates of donating, volunteering and helping are largely unchanged since 2004. About 84 per cent of Canadian adults donated money during 2007, whereas 46 per cent of the population did some volunteering.

Churches and other places of worship were the largest beneficiaries, receiving 46 per cent of all donated dollars, followed by health organizations (15 per cent) and social services organizations (10 per cent). Most of the volunteer hours went to sports and recreation, social services, education and research, and religious organizations.

The top 10 per cent of donors (those who contributed \$1,002 or more annually) accounted for 62 per cent of the total value. Most are religiously active older folks. The top 10 per cent of volunteers (those who contributed 421 hours or more in 2007) contributed 52 per cent of total hours. ■ —BILL FLEDDERUS

Drama Ministry Expresses Community

Lyf Stolte was a “green around the gills” actor when he accepted the challenge of creating a drama ministry at Sanctuary. The downtown Toronto church comprises everyone from street people to CEOs. With that type of demographic, Stolte quickly found one-off projects rather than a weekly program was the way to go.



Lyf Stolte: Without an audience, there is no play.

“If we had a project with a specific timeline, it worked well in our community,” says Stolte, who graduated from Alberta’s Rosebud School of the Arts a year before he became Sanctuary’s actor-in-residence.

When he started five years ago, his goal was to stage a full-length production by the end of a five-year period. Productions, including David Ives’s *Words, Words, Words* and two Christopher Durang plays, *An Altar Boy Talks to God* and *Entertaining Mr. Helms*, led

to last year’s *Passages of Everett Manning*. The play was both the first full-length production and the first written by a Sanctuary member: Shannon Blake, a University of Toronto English major who’s also directing this year’s *The Drawer Boy*.

“It was a true expression of our community through vignettes and some of their stories,”

explains Stolte.

Another of Sanctuary’s members, one of the actors in this year’s play, is also working on a script. “To go from not having acted in one play five years ago to trying his hand in writing a piece – we’re excited to produce it for him.”

Everyone at Sanctuary gets involved either on stage, behind the scenes or in the seats. “Without an audience, there is no play,” says Stolte. To meet its members’ needs, Sanctuary sets aside 10 free seats each performance so everyone has an opportunity to see the play.

Recommended Resources

Nelson’s Illustrated Guide to Religions: A Comprehensive Introduction to Religions of the World by James A. Beverley (Thomas Nelson, 2009). Covers more than 200 religions, sects and cults.

Hope for Wholeness: The Spiritual Path of Freedom From Depression by Sharon Fawcett (NavPress, 2008). Lessons learned from a difficult nine-year struggle.

Fresh and Re:Fresh: Church Planting and Urban Mission in Canada Post-Christendom edited by Len Hjalmarson with Brent Toderash (Baker, 2009). Stories and thoughtful reflections from 12 church planters.

Goodbye Generation by David Sawler. A church planter in Glace Bay, N.S., offers a journey into the stories, thoughts, hurts, struggles and lives of the many young adults who are leaving the church today (Ponder Publishing, 2009).

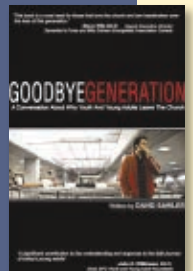
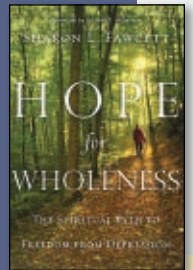
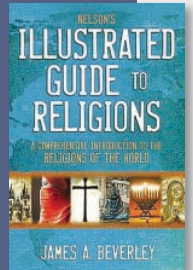
One Hen by Katie Smith Milway. Introduces the idea of microlending to children ages seven to 12 (with a pullout for younger kids) by telling the story of Kojo, a boy in Ghana who buys a hen with a few borrowed coins. Milway grew up in Vancouver and has worked in a dozen African countries (Kids Can Press, 2007).

Seeds Scattered and Sown: Studies in the History of Canadian Anglicanism, Norman Knowles, ed. (ABC, 2009). Three chapters cover the years 1578 to 1945. Six others cover missions, identity, women, First Nations, theology and liturgy, and General Synod.

“Theatre is an expression of community,” says Stolte. “Every piece plays a part. Without one of those pieces you don’t have a production.

“It’s the same as community. We’re all important. We need each other.” □

—ROBERT WHITE



The Ongoing Impact of Billy Graham

By Bruce J. Clemenger



Two of Billy Graham's greatest contributions are his integrity and the international networks he helped to found

Most Evangelicals I have spoken to have memorable Billy Graham experiences. Mine began when I volunteered as a teen counsellor for a showing of the movie *Time to Run* and later in various roles at the 1978 Toronto mission. Later still, working with Samaritan's Purse Canada, I talked one-on-one with Billy Graham as we ate hamburgers. In 1986 at the Amsterdam Training Conference for Itinerant Evangelists, I worked with Ruth Graham to distribute donated clothing to evangelists who had little. Ruth worked hard to locate a wedding dress for a poor evangelist – in his culture the groom had to provide the dress. Such personal moments gave me a glimpse into the life and ministry of someone who has come to personify evangelicalism for many.

Many accolades about Billy Graham focus on his message and character.

His fame was built on his effective presentation of the fact that we are all sinners and Christ died to forgive us of our sins and to put us in a right relationship with God. He also harnessed the power of television. But he did both in a way that transcended American culture – a rare achievement. His simple style and message enabled him to be sought out by government leaders and welcomed in cities around the world. He is the best known of the best of evangelists and is a global representative of evangelicalism. He has borne this responsibility well.

Graham's fame has also meant that he, his late wife and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association have consistently operated under close scrutiny. The character evident in the Grahams and their co-workers remains a model for others. Charles Templeton, a former close colleague who rejected the Christian faith, became a critic of evangelists and wrote a disparaging novel about an evangelist. Yet he never uttered a negative comment about Graham, even when asked.

The character evident in the Grahams and their co-workers remains a model for others

Graham's clear and forthright presentation of the gospel and his character opened many doors critical to his effectiveness. He boldly and unapologetically engaged his critics. This earned respect from Evangelicals. He had legitimacy, hence authority, among Evangelicals and he used this wisely and judiciously.

No one else but Billy Graham and his organization could have pulled off Amsterdam '86. Imagine bringing together 10,000 evangelists from 100 countries with simultaneous translation offered in 12 languages (the only common word being "hallelujah").

Another critical international initiative was The Lausanne Movement and the resulting covenants that have defined evangelicalism theologically for more than a generation. Graham saw the need for evangelical leaders from around the world to gather and come to agreement on themes such as the authority of Scripture, the lostness of all people and salvation in

Christ alone, witness in word (proclamation) and deed (social responsibility) and the necessity of evangelism.

The statements on evangelism and social responsibility flowing out of the Lausanne Covenant (1974) and the Manila Manifesto (1989) are critical in framing a more integrated and socially dynamic faith than what characterized evangelicalism at the turn of the past century.

And they are being reclaimed again in this century. What many are now calling the missional church, a church that is outward focused and reaching out into communities in word and deed, is a manifestation of the theological groundwork laid by Graham and others such as John Stott.

Now it is no longer personalities but organizations that have this global ability to convene key gatherings. Two of these organizations, the World Evangelical Alliance and The Lausanne Movement, are joining together to hold a major congress on world evangelization in South Africa in 2010. They do so on the theological framework that was forged by Graham's call. He used his influence to gather leaders who have set the agenda that defines contemporary evangelicalism. ■

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



Together for influence, impact and identity

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada is the national association of Evangelicals, gathered together for influence, impact and identity in ministry and public witness. Since 1964 the EFC has provided a national forum for Evangelicals and a constructive voice for biblical principles in life and society. Visit us at www.evangelicalfellowship.ca.

Vietnam: Still Under Communism

By Karen Stiller

In the late 1970s and 1980s American war films such as *The Deer Hunter*, *Apocalypse Now*, *Platoon*, *Full Metal Jacket*, *Good Morning Vietnam* and *Born on the Fourth of July* portrayed Vietnam in ways that have shaped our imaginations.

Today, most North Americans know Vietnam as the foreign battlefield where the United States created and fought a public relations nightmare that polarized its own population. The war touched three presidencies (Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon) and in fact killed about four million Vietnamese and 58,000 Americans.

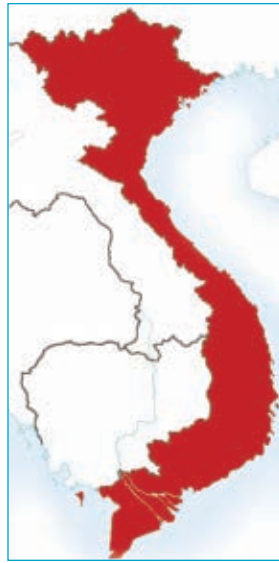
But Vietnam is also an ancient and beautiful country, not merely the backdrop for American war movies. Bordered by China, Laos, Cambodia and the South China Sea, Vietnam is home to over 86 million people.

About half of Vietnam's population is Buddhist. The Roman Catholic Church has seven million adherents. Evangelical Christians number about 1.3 million. All live and worship under a Communist government that has been quick to oppress and slow to heed international calls to establish and protect freedom of religion.

Many wars have shaped the people, culture and land, ranging as far back as 111 BC when the first Chinese dynasty began to rule. By the 19th century, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos had become French Indochina.

Communist forces in Vietnam battled for independence after the Second World War, leading to a 1954 agreement that divided the nation into North and South. The U.S.-involved Vietnam War soon followed, from 1960 to 1973. In 1975 the country reunified and the Vietnamese Communist Party has been in power ever since.

The ongoing struggle for human rights and religious freedom is evident in a 2005 report by the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA). The report to the United Nations




Commission on Human Rights highlighted Vietnam as a key country in need of drastic improvement and reform.

The Communist government has a “continuing suspicion of religion, especially Christianity, as being unpatriotic,” according to the report. “The State acts as an official arbiter of defining ‘good, legitimate religion.’ Vietnam’s leaders still do not understand the ‘freedom of religion’ its constitution proclaims.”

Recently, the Vietnamese government has issued some ordinances that seem to lighten the decades-long crackdown on religious freedom, but members of house churches are wary. Observers say that those who do register their organizations become susceptible to government surveillance and control, and those who do not remain illegal and subject to harassment.

Poverty is also an oppressive problem for 50 per cent of the population; the unemployment rate hovers at 25 per cent. In 2007 some observers, including the World Bank, speculated that Vietnam was a “new economic tiger in the making.” But Vietnam, like most developing countries, has been hit hard by the global recession.

Meanwhile, the Church continues to exist – sometimes hiding, sometimes flourishing. “Since the reunification of Vietnam under communism in 1975, the Protestant movement has grown from 160,000 to 1.3 million – over 800 per cent,” says Canadian expert Reg Reimer, specialist on Vietnam for the WEA. “It is more accurate to say that growth attracted persecution than that persecution caused the growth.” 

Karen Stiller is associate editor of Faith Today.



Just the Facts

Full name: Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Population: 88.1 million (UN, 2009)

Capital: Hanoi

Area: 331,000 sq km (128,000 sq miles)

Major languages: Vietnamese, English, French, Chinese, Khmer, Hmong

Life expectancy: 71 years

Literacy rate: 90 per cent

Average annual income: US\$620

On Our Knees

- Pray for protection for ethnic minority Christians in Vietnam still suffering for their faith.
- Pray for churches in Vietnam. Pray that Vietnam's improving but still restrictive and unclear religion laws will open up wider and truly bring freedom to this country's Christian population.
- Pray that the Vietnamese Church will continue to grow and be a light to others.
- Pray for Christians currently imprisoned in Vietnam because of their active faith in Christ.

Canadian Connections

- The Voice of the Martyrs advocates for people imprisoned for their church activities. It also helps with legal costs.
- Wycliffe Bible Translators is helping finish a New Testament translation for one of Vietnam's 100 languages.

See a more detailed version of this article, including links to annual reports on Vietnam by The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, at

www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/globalvillage

Talking About Church and Mission

What does the Church need to focus on to lay a healthy foundation for the next generation? What are the trends in Canadian church and mission that need to be addressed? To answer such questions, the EFC is hosting a series of conversations, most recently in Mississauga, Ont., and Burnaby, B.C., and more are being planned for other regions. Scripture-based, prayer-focused conversations facilitated by the EFC's Bruce Clemenger, Aileen Van Ginkel and Charlene de Haan have already involved a broad spectrum of denominational leaders, ministry executives, local pastors and emerging leaders.

Faith Today Wins Awards

Faith Today, the EFC's flagship magazine, recently won several awards from the Canadian Church Press for articles from 2008. Three were first place awards: for "How to Build a Great Church Library" (service journalism), for an interview with the author of *The Shack* and for the Letters section. Seconds were awarded for a theological reflection on "Money and the Incarnation," the guest column "Surprised by Cancer" and the news story "Video Tells of Missionary Abuse." The popular Kingdom Matters section won honourable mention for a regular "department." Subscribe today or give a gift

subscription to someone you love at www.faithtoday.ca or call 1-866-302-3362, ext. 234.

March for Life Prayer

EFC president Bruce J. Clemenger opened this year's National March for Life Rally on Parliament Hill, May 14. This annual national rally organized by Campaign Life Coalition brought together more than 12,000 Canadians to stand for life. It is the largest annual rally in Canada.

Meetings With Government

EFC leaders participated in a number of public events in Ottawa with federal politicians from all four political parties, including a lunchtime roundtable discussion on "Faith and Sustainable Economy" (May 12), a public discussion with Liberal party leader Michael Ignatieff on "What Difference Do Churches Make?" (May 13), a panel discussion on "The Theology of Public Engagement" (May 22) and the National Prayer Breakfast (May 28). Those involved included EFC president Bruce J. Clemenger and vice president Don Hutchison. Members of the EFC Aboriginal Ministries Council also met with MPs on June 10 to discuss suicide prevention and reconciliation initiatives.

Response to Documentary

The Global TV documentary *Hip 2B Holy* presented a "kinder and gentler face" of Evangelicals than is generally portrayed by the media, a face that can help remove barriers to engaging with non-Christians, according to Aileen Van Ginkel, the EFC's vice-president, ministry services. Her comments are online at www.christianity.ca (click News Webitorial).

PARTNERSHIPS

Outreach Network Meets

The Canadian Network of Ministries to Muslims (www.cnmm.ca) gathered in Calgary, May 5-7, to focus on guid-

ing principles as they continue to work toward their mission to give Muslims in Canada the opportunity to understand and respond to the good news of Jesus Christ. The network operates on the administrative and communications platform of the EFC.

Apology to Youth

The EFC's Youth and Young Adult Ministry Roundtable continues to wrestle with a strong and compelling theme that emerged at its 2008 forum.

The group, which numbered over 100 and represented a broad spectrum of ministry to Canadian youth, wrote a letter apologizing to the Canadian Church and its youth for not fully releasing and empowering youth into their God-given dreams for ministry in Canada and around the world.

The letter, available at www.evangelicalfellowship.ca, invites Canadian church leaders to respond, engage and partner with the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Roundtable to do better by and for our youth. Andy Harrington, a member of the roundtable, followed up with a full explanation of the consensus and why it matters so much.

Survey on Healthy Churches

In July, 600 pastors from five evangelical denominations will take part in the Canadian Evangelical Churches Survey, looking at worship, church demographics, community outreach, finance and mission among other topics. The EFC's Centre for Research on Canadian Evangelicalism is sponsoring the survey and will publish articles on the results in its online journal *Church & Faith Trends*.

EFC AFFILIATE NEWS

Baptists Change Name

Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec (CBOQ) is the new preferred name for the family of churches that legally remains known as the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. A similar group,

COMING EVENTS

Details at www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/events or call 1-866-302-3362

- EFC Christian Leaders Connection. New season of one-day leadership seminars on current Canadian trends, legislation and events that affect local congregations. EFC directors present on the theme "Being Evangelical in a Complex World: Stats, Facts and Trends." Visit the website for fall dates in Ontario, British Columbia and the Maritimes.
- Renov8: Transforming Neighbourhoods. A national church-planting congress. Calgary, Nov. 17-20.

the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada, has legally changed its name from the former Baptist Union of Western Canada. Other regional groupings associated with this family of Baptists include the Canadian Baptists of French Canada (Union d'Églises Baptistes Françaises au Canada) and the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada (Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches). These groups operate together as Canadian Baptist Ministries.

There are four other major Baptist denominational groups operating in Canada: the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists, the Baptist General Conference, the North American Baptist Conference and the Canadian National Baptist Convention (formerly the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists).

GLOBAL ISSUES

Report on Egypt

The EFC's Religious Liberty Commission released *Religious Freedom in Egypt: The Case of the Christian Minority* in June. The 17-page report examines the major factors contributing to limited religious freedom for Egypt's Christian citizens and was highlighted on the *National Post's Holy Post* blog.

COURTS AND GOVERNMENT

Support Housing Bill

EFC leaders have sent letters to the prime minister and other party leaders urging them to support Bill C-304, which would mandate the government to work with provincial and municipal governments and Aboriginal communities to establish a national housing strategy. The bill is likely to have its second reading in September.

Oppose Euthanasia Bill

EFC leaders wrote to all MPs and senators requesting they not give further consideration to a private members bill that proposes the legalization of physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. The EFC resource study *In the Shadow of Death: A Christian Perspective on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide* was included with each letter and is available free at www.evangelicalfellowship.ca (click Resources).

Regulation Rejected

An EFC submission to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) hearings on new media has borne fruit. The CRTC has decided not to engage in regulation of broadcast content distributed over the Internet and through mobile devices. ■

Help for Sri Lanka

The EFC and the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) are calling on Christians worldwide to help the Sri Lankan Church meet the overwhelming humanitarian crisis affecting the country. The EFC has set up a relief fund to channel donations to the National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka (one of 128 national alliances in the WEA).

The aftermath of Sri Lanka's 30-year armed conflict has displaced more than 300,000 people who are desperately in need of food, medical assistance and other basic needs.

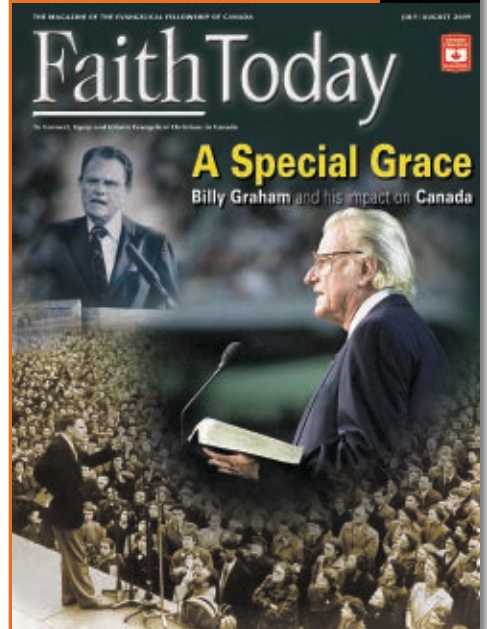
"Despite being a small minority, the Christian community is valiantly and sacrificially giving to meet these needs but urgently requires assistance," says the EFC's Geoff Tunnicliffe, who is international director of the WEA. He travelled to Sri Lanka June 1-6.

Evangelicals in Sri Lanka (www.nceasl.org) were feeding more than 10,000 people every day in June at a cost of US\$1.50 per person per day for basic food.

Any donations to the EFC (1-866-302-3362 and www.evangelicalfellowship.ca) with the memo "Sri Lanka" will be forwarded.

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The Man Next

Billy Graham preached several times in Canada in 13 cities. Always taking time to understand local cultures, he leaves a significant mark on Canadian evangelicalism *By Karen Stiller*

In October 1979, Billy Graham preached to more than 50,000 people during a five-day crusade in Halifax – including 13-year-old me. Graham preached about Zacchaeus and all the things that stand in our way of having a relationship with Jesus Christ.

I don't remember any of that.

I do remember the thrill of watching the tall man with the floppy Bible and the warm voice with the mild North Carolina lilt. I remember sensing – even then, when Donny Osmond still

gave me a thrill – that I was in the presence of someone and something very special.

And I remember the long, long walk down from the nosebleed section of the Halifax Metro Centre as the choir sang “Just as I Am,” the song that will forever be associated with the world's favourite evangelist.

Billy Graham led crusades in 13 Canadian cities from his first in Toronto in 1955 to his last Canadian appearance in Ottawa in 1998. He has preached to an estimated 100 million people worldwide and, thanks to television, radio and satellite broadcasts of his sermons, reached an estimated two billion people with a very simple message, shared time and time again: God loves you and He wants to have a relationship with you. That's what the Bible says.

At some point, the number of individuals and lives touched by Billy Graham will be beyond counting. It includes many Canadians as well as the Canadian Church culture as a whole.

Don McCarthy is 80. He has been part of the Billy Graham scene in Canada since the beginning – literally. As a lawyer in Winnipeg in



Door

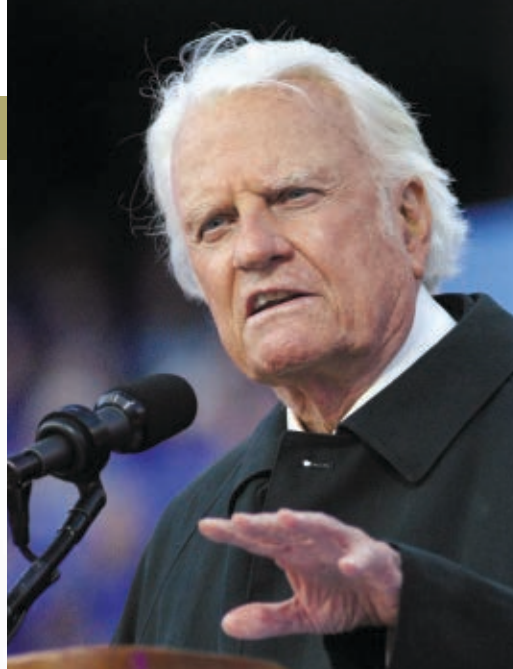
1953, he was called upon through a family connection to help the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association set up a Canadian headquarters. Donations were pouring into the American office from Canadians who listened to the radio program. Because there was no Canadian office, the association could not issue receipts.

A Graham association official came on the 7 a.m. train from Minneapolis and left 12 hours later. On that one day “we opened an office, set it up with furniture, hired the first employee and registered the charity,” remembers McCarthy. “When he left I was so exhausted I went home and went to bed.” McCarthy went on to serve on the Canadian board along with Billy Graham for years. (He’s still a member emeritus.)

“When you are with him,” says McCarthy, “you know you are with a special person. This is somebody God has touched differently from the rest of us. He has no ego.” Humility is a word that comes up again and again from those who know and have worked with Graham.

For Canadians, humility spoke volumes, especially coming from an American evangelist.

Brian Stiller was president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada when he co-chaired the committee that brought Graham to Toronto in 1995. (Stiller has recently retired as president of Tyndale University College and Seminary, be-



PHOTOS: BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION

“God loves you and He wants to have a relationship with you.” From the 1950s (left) until recent years, Billy Graham preached a very simple message.

coming its chancellor.)

“Graham practised humility: his body language, his verbal language, making sure others were speaking, not allowing them to feed his ego. He was always interested in what other people were doing and why. The other thing I found was that he was always asking me to pray for him. Frequently throughout a conversation, he’d put his hand on mine and say ‘Brian, would you pray?’”

Don McCarthy remembers being at one conference where Billy Graham staff from around the world had gathered to share ministry updates. “In the mornings Billy would sit in the audience when staff gave reports,” says McCarthy. “One time Billy got up to the microphone and said ‘One thing that bothers me is that I wish I hadn’t been convinced to call it the Billy Graham

Presidential Gopher

In the Toronto crusade in the 1970s, my dad was on the committee, and I was in university. I knew the city well and became a gopher for the committee. I would do things like pick up Leighton Ford at one location and take him to another. The Graham team stayed at one hotel. Billy stayed at another, which was always called The Location for security reasons. In those days they communicated with radios. His team was passionate, focused, generous and very professional. They had a full media team so, if the *Toronto Star* wanted a photo of Graham walking the streets of Toronto munching a hotdog, they would make that happen. I’d be asked to go to an intersection and a guy would walk up and give me a brown paper envelope. It was Graham’s sermon. I’d take that and drive it up to John Wesley White’s house for him to do a final check for the references to local culture and events, maybe a crack about the Maple Leafs [Toronto’s hockey team].

—Bruce Clemenger, president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

Shea-Graham Partnership

Recently at George Beverley Shea’s 100th birthday party in North Carolina, I saw Billy in a wheelchair. He’s very frail. About every five minutes, Billy would reach up a feeble hand and pat George on the hand. And then about five minutes later George would reach over and pat Billy on the hand. It brought tears to my eyes. They worked together for 60 years. Billy would say “I can’t preach unless George sings the presence of God into the stadium first.” That spoke volumes to me about their loyalty one to another. Billy really loved people. He loved his team members. And he trusted the Holy Spirit in the other person.

—David Mainse, veteran TV broadcaster



BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION

Billy Graham's Impact on Canada

A Hug From Just Billy

One night when the board was meeting in Fort Lauderdale, I went down for a swim. There were two chairs on the beach. Billy was with a secretary, dictating. He asked the secretary if she would mind going to get us a cold drink. I sat down. He started asking me questions all about my life, my wife and my children. I would have liked to do the reverse. So many times you would run into him and all he would want to do was find out about you. Everyone else wanted to tell me about themselves. Billy never wanted to do that. When you praise him he is embarrassed. All the praise he wants is from God. I remember walking into a hotel in Minneapolis for a funeral. You need to know that Billy is a person who likes to hug people. I walked through a revolving door with my head down and all of a sudden I was enveloped. He had me so enveloped I didn't know who it was. It was just Billy.

—Don McCarthy,
original board member of
the Billy Graham Evangelistic
Association of Canada

Kick-Start for Newspapers

During the mission in Vancouver, I sat at the press table and talked with the media who were there. There had been a reference in the sermon to Nebuchadnezzar, and a reporter asked me how to spell it. I couldn't remember. There was someone 10 feet away with a huge Bible under his arm. I borrowed it and told him how to spell it. A photographer snapped a picture of me holding this big Bible, looking as if I were counselling the religion and ethics writer from the *Vancouver Sun*. It was during that period, in 1982, when what is now *BC Christian News* started. I think it's fair to say that Billy Graham's people were closely linked to the starting of that paper. Ultimately there were a fair number of newspapers in the United States and Canada that got their start or were helped along the way by the coming of a Billy Graham mission.

—Lloyd Mackey,
veteran journalist



Billy Graham preached in several Canadian cities over the years (clockwise from above): Ottawa in 1998, his last Canadian crusade; Winnipeg in Canada's centennial year; Calgary in 1981.



PHOTOS: BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION

ministry. I keep hearing my name. For the next three days I don't want to hear my name. I want to hear the name of Jesus.”

McCarthy says he looked around and all he saw were people crossing things out on the papers they were yet to present. “Humility is an incredible part of him and, with his acclaim, it is really amazing.”

That humility went beyond Graham's personal character to the institutional level – in the way his ministry interacted with the local culture to which the ministry had been invited to preach. Any crusade Graham did (“They don't call them crusades anymore,” muses McCarthy, “they call them all kinds of funny names”), including the Canadian ones, were in response to an invitation by a carefully constructed committee that had to be representative and inclusive of the broader church culture in that city.

If it wasn't, Graham would politely decline.

Once an invitation was accepted, things really started to happen, including a Billy Graham staff person moving (often with family in tow) to

the community at least a year ahead of time. An integral part of the preparation was the creation of a briefing document to introduce and update Graham on local culture, national and municipal events and anything else Graham should know about the city and country he was preaching in.

Lloyd Mackey is an Ottawa-based journalist who helped prepare the Vancouver report for the 1984 crusade. “Graham was always very good about understanding the culture he was going to. He understood there was a difference between Canada and the United States.” Mackey was given a copy of the Edmonton report to use as a model for his own research and writing. “And it was written by Preston Manning,” remembers Mackey.

Later, listening to Graham speak, Mackey says: “You could tell as he was preaching when he was referring to [the local report]. He didn't quote it, but we knew he had read it. Not only that, he thought about it and absorbed it. That is one of the reasons why I think he tended to be accepted in all kinds of cultures. He recog-

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Billy Graham's Impact on Canada

Setting the Church Back?

Billy Graham broke down a lot of barriers between the denominations. He never compromised in any way the straight preaching of the gospel. Around the time he came on one crusade, there was an article in the *Toronto Star* or the *Globe and Mail* that quoted a liberal churchman saying Billy was setting the church back 50 years. A reporter asked Billy for a response. He said something like: "I'm disappointed. I had hoped to set it back 2,000 years." He said it with a grin.

—David Mainse, veteran TV broadcaster

Rock-Star Preacher

Clearly Billy Graham has a God-given charisma. When you listen to those old sermons, you realize this was a rock-star quality in preaching. He just had something. I can only conclude it must be the power of the Holy Spirit preaching through the Word. His trademark is this worn Bible hanging over his hand. His most oft-repeated phrase is "The Bible says." I think the Holy Spirit ignites proclamation. And that is why Billy was what he was. I was at his 90th birthday party. And I can tell you he's still a bit of a rock star.

—Lorna Dueck, TV host of Listen Up and board member for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association of Canada.

nized that Canada was more Roman Catholic than the United States. He recognized the kinds of issues that could cause tension between the United States and Canada."

Graham had credibility, and, according to Mackey, it was contagious.

"I think he helped a lot of Canadian evangelical leaders bring credibility to the gospel. And he did it in a way that was modest and self-effacing but also in a way that brought tremendous energy to evangelism projects. He could bring in all these Americans who really knew how to do it, but he could have them work in such a way that the local executive committee could weigh things and see how they fit into our cities, whatever that city was."

In 1998 that city was Ottawa. Back then Bob DuBrooy was general manager of the Christian radio station CHRI and helped organize the Ottawa crusade. "Part of the ministry of CHRI is to unite Ottawa. To have someone like Billy Graham come and give traction to that gave it great credibility. It was powerful," says DuBrooy. "It let Ottawa know Christianity was not dead, that we could fill the Corel Centre and that there were actually more people interested in faith than interested in the Ottawa Senators" hockey team.

For DuBrooy, a Roman Catholic, Graham's emphasis on Christian unity was a welcome relief. "When Graham gave instructions to prayer ministers to send people back to churches of their own

denominations to get fed there, that was huge. As a Catholic, that really speaks volumes to me. It has a healing effect for me."

Lloyd Mackey agrees. "Ottawa was a striking example, and maybe the best example to date, of co-operation between Protestants and Catholics. Among the several thousands of prayer counselors trained for the event, a good 30 to 40 per cent were Catholic."

An interdenominational ministerial named Mission Ottawa, which has roots in the Billy Graham crusade, still brings Christian leaders together for prayer and ministry to Canada's capital. This is music to Steve Wile's ears. Wile is director of ministry for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association of Canada.

"Absolutely, part of our mandate is to leave the churches in a stronger position than before we partnered with them," says Wile.

That strengthening of the Church happened on the individual level, congregation by congregation, as well as on the national scene. Carol Sollows of Ottawa has been appointed president of the Canadian Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec. Prior to attending the Billy Graham crusade in Ottawa in '98, Sollows and her husband, Wayne, were nominal at best in their Christian life.

Everything changed that night.

"We went down and rededicated our lives. Billy preached on

Graham Association Ministries in Canada Today

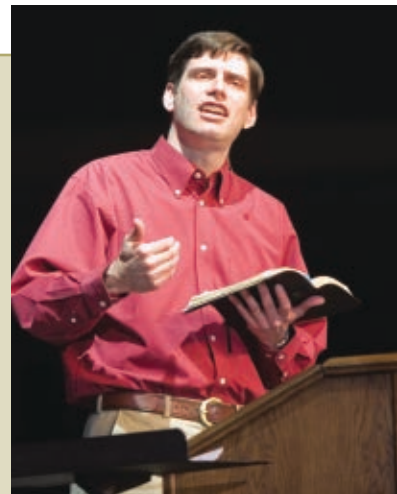
The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association of Canada (BGEAC) has its headquarters in Calgary but its programs reach across the country. Here's a quick summary:

REACHING CHILDREN

KidzFest is a children's evangelism ministry, a fun and kid-friendly program that includes a community carnival and a concert led by God Rocks! (a kids music and drama ministry team). Easterrific is an Easter ministry that individual churches help to host. Dare to Be a Daniel is a program helping "twens" grow in their faith and their ability to share it with others.

REACHING YOUTH

The year-long Epicentre evangelism ministry takes the youth of a targeted city through seven phases of faith-building and faith-sharing activities, culminating in a concert event at which Will Graham (Billy



Graham's eldest grandson) shares a gospel message and invites listeners to receive Christ as their Lord and Saviour. The latest Epicentre program in Saskatoon attracted 4,200 people of whom 474 made public commitments of faith. The Campusfire youth ministry equips and encourages young adults to exhibit spiritual leadership in their high schools and universities, mentoring others to faith.

Major Canadian Events Featuring Billy Graham

1955 - Toronto
 1965 - Vancouver
 1967 - Winnipeg
 1967 - Toronto
 1978 - Toronto
 1979 - Halifax
 1980 - Edmonton
 1981 - Calgary
 1984 - Vancouver
 1988 - Hamilton
 1990 - Montreal
 1995 - Saskatoon (mainly Franklin Graham)
 1995 - Toronto
 1998 - Ottawa

In total, over the past 50 years Graham association evangelists have preached the gospel at more than 200 crusades across Canada. Leighton Ford, John Wesley White and Ralph Bell are among many Canadians who have faithfully proclaimed God's Word. Ford held crusade events from 1962 to 1990, White 1964-1996 and Bell 1971-2003. Quite a few have featured music led by the popular Canadian-born gospel singer George Beverly Shea, who turned 100 in February. At least 20 recent events have featured the preaching of Franklin Graham (Billy's son) or Will Graham (grandson). Through all these events, tens of thousands of Canadians have heard the message of salvation and many have responded to the good news of Jesus Christ.

-Source: www.billygraham.ca/aboutus/history

the simple message of John 3:16 and to love each other. It was such a simple thing but it impacted both of our lives. He seemed like the guy next door, that really nice guy." Wayne Sollows changed careers from marketing to ministry. He's now a full-time Baptist pastor.

Graham's calling of people forward into a new life in Christ, the building up of their faith through carefully planned and executed follow-up and the encouragement that they become involved in a local church – all have strengthened the Canadian Church probably millions of times over.

On the national scene, Christian newspapers have been started as a result of Graham crusades (see Lloyd Mackey's story on page 18). Canadian evangelists have been trained, encouraged and brought into the Graham fold. City-wide ministerial associations have been created or made stronger because different churches *have* to work together before Graham would contemplate coming.

Even organizations like The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) can trace its roots back to Graham's influence. Harry Faught, pastor of Danforth Gospel Temple in Toronto in the early 1960s, was the visionary who thought churches and denominations should be working better together. "He was fired up by Graham's vision and started the EFC," explains Stiller, the group's former president.

Billy Graham's international influence has also been remarkable, says Bruce J. Clemenger, the EFC's current president. "His ability to transcend American culture enabled him to initiate movements like the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization that have promoted an understanding of the gospel that integrates evangelism and social responsibility."

Bring up Billy Graham's name in Canadian Christian circles and the stories start to flow. People remember where, when and how many times they heard him speak. It was almost a Canadian television ritual to gather around and turn the dial (manually of course) to a broadcast of the latest Billy Graham crusade.

In the personal spiritual history of many Christians in Canada, there has been a trip down a flight of stairs to the strains of "Just as I Am." It may not have been the first time they said yes to Christ. It may not even have been the last time – but it was an important time.

And they are grateful. ■

Karen Stiller is associate editor of Faith Today.



PHOTOS: BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION

REACHING ALL AGES

Soul Chat combines the power of TV and radio advertising, a website (soulchat.ca) and local churches to reach non-believers and help them into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Thousands of people each year also hear Will Graham speak during multi-night Celebration events or regional tours featuring one-night stops in several cities. The associa-

L-R: KidzFest reaches out to children through concerts, carnivals and drama; Will Graham preaches to a new generation of young people; the Rapid Response Team provides chaplains and prayer support for people who have experienced natural disasters.

tion also operates a TV telephone ministry that provides spiritual support and information to people who call a toll-free number after watching BGEA telecasts.

The Rapid Response Team ministry provides chaplains and prayer support for people who have endured natural disasters or the like. Teams have been deployed to as far west as Abbotsford, B.C., and as far east as Moncton, N.B., during the past two years.

Decision magazine, published from the United States, is continuing its faith-building blend of evangelism, discipleship and stories of God at work in people's lives. About 20,000 copies are delivered each month in Canada (plus 460,000 worldwide).

BGEAC Schools of Evangelism bring pastors, leaders and their spouses together for practical training in retreat settings to help them reach people for Christ in and through their local churches. The next school in Canada will be in Ottawa, July 27-30. -Jeff Adams/BGEAC

If It Sounds Like Bias . . .

Does bias against evangelical beliefs and practices ever slip into mainstream reporting ...or are we Evangelicals all just being over-sensitive?

David Haskell of Wilfrid Laurier University looked at this question by surveying Canadian journalists and analyzing 11 years of TV news. The results just might surprise you.

His book is *Through A Lens Darkly: How the News Media Perceive and Portray Evangelicals* (Clements, 2009). He spoke with *Faith Today* about his

research. *By Patricia Paddey*

FT: Tell us about the research that led to your new book.

DH: The book brings together several studies I've conducted over the past few years to determine how Canadian journalists feel about Evangelicals, how they report on Evangelicals, and how and when their feelings influence their reporting. The core of the research is a survey of national journalists and an analysis of 11 years of television news reports. I look at the effect of news reports about Evangelicals on viewers who aren't Evangelicals. I also include a case study that looks at national newspaper coverage of Evangelicals involved in the same-sex marriage debate.

FT: Why was it important to you to explore this issue?

DH: I'm a practising Christian and I've made my living as a professional journalist so I've got my feet in both camps. For years I've heard Evangelicals complain the media treats them unfairly. I wanted to see if their charge of media bias had any merit; but I also wanted to move beyond anecdotal examples and verify or negate the charge empirically.

FT: So are we justified in feeling unfairly treated?

DH: I take the whole second half of my book to explain the nuances of my findings, and I hope your readers will want

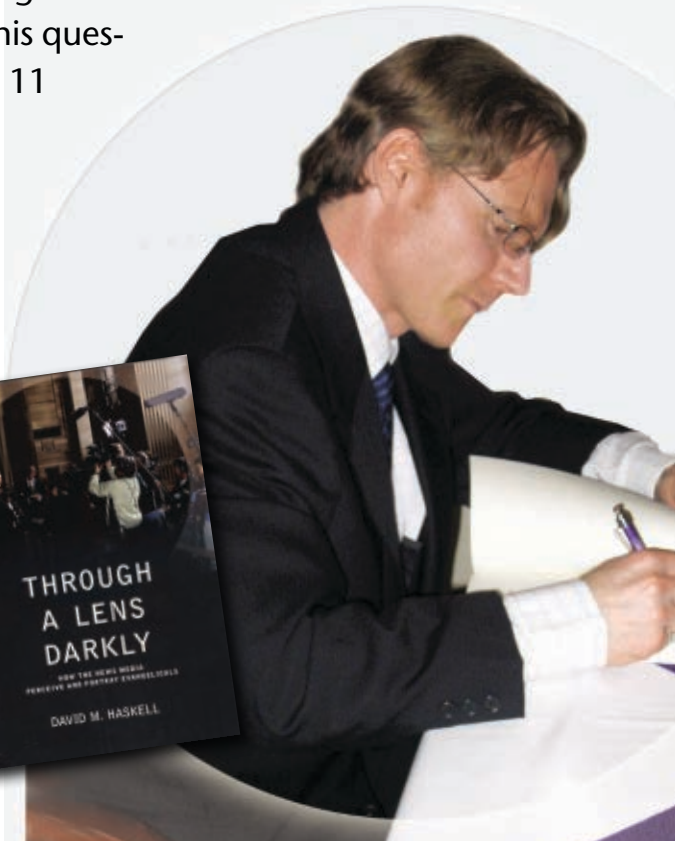
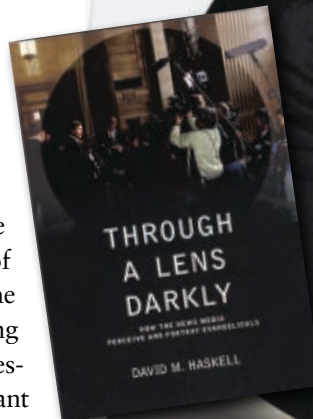
to know those details. But the evidence shows that, when the beliefs and actions of Canadian Evangelicals directly clashed with the heartfelt convictions of national journalists, the journalists were willing to abandon their professional objectivity and slant their stories against their ideological opponents.

FT: Your research also revealed that, in TV news reports, Evangelicals tend to be portrayed as "somewhat intolerant, insincere, criminally minded, politically threatening, un-Canadian and slightly unintelligent." So what's the good news?

DH: In certain cases, with persistence and the right combination of rhetorical elements, Evangelicals were able to convince journalists to cover them more neutrally and less adversarially.

FT: When you asked journalists to list the main characteristics of Evangelicals, the two traits they most strongly associated with us were haughtiness and intolerance toward homosexuals. Any insights as to why?

DH: There are a number of factors contributing to this perception. One is the



David Haskell: Don't compromise your beliefs but lead with compassion.

diametrically opposed world views of the two groups. Adding to the problem is the lack of real, personal interaction between national journalists and Evangelicals. Few of the journalists surveyed said they had close friends who are Evangelicals. Ironically, much of what they know about Evangelicals comes from watching the news. It's possible a circle of negative coverage has developed in which journalists accept Evangelical stereotypes promoted in past news stories as valid and then propagate them in current stories.

FT: Do you see any reason to hope such perceptions will change?

DH: Changing perceptions depends a

little on journalists changing their ways. That could happen if they're made aware of the findings of my book. Journalists don't want to be seen as unobjective. Their professional credibility is at stake.

However, I think Evangelicals themselves are in the best position to effect lasting perceptual change. If Evangelicals acted a lot more like Christ and lot less like "those in the world," it would be hard for the media to find an audience for negative coverage.

FT: Why should we care about how the media portray us?

DH: It's like a farmer preparing a field. The media prepare people's hearts, making it easier for some ideas to grow and other ideas to be rejected. If Evangelicals are concerned about sowing and growing the seeds of the gospel in the hearts of others, they should be concerned.

FT: You have worked as a journalist. What's the most important thing Evangelicals should know before interacting with the media?

DH: Be aware the perception is you are intolerant and arrogant. Don't be. That doesn't mean you compromise your beliefs, but you

need to lead with compassion.

FT: Anything else?

DH: It's important to use language journalists will understand. Words like "saved," "backslide," "witness" and "testimony" should be avoided. Translate them into everyday language. Also, if you're advocating for a certain position, try to give reasons beyond "the Bible says so." Give reasons even a non-Evangelical would find compelling, if not convincing. ■

Patricia Paddey of Mississauga, Ont., is a contributing writer at Faith Today. David Haskell is associate professor of journalism and contemporary studies at the Brantford, Ont., campus of Wilfrid Laurier University.

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Gerald Vandezande:

Canada's Unassuming

Evangelicals have learned some **important lessons** from the long career of this **Christian social activist**

■ By Ben Volman

On a lovely spring day in 1959, Gerald and Wynne Vandezande drove from their home in Sarnia, Ont., across the St. Clair River toward Grand Rapids, Mich. Jerry – the name he prefers – knew that Jesus had to be the centre of his life's work and Wynne, his young wife, agreed. Heading west toward Calvin College and Seminary, they felt ready to answer the call.

Vandezande had come to Canada in 1950 at age 17 from the Netherlands. With only a high school education and tireless resolve, he moved on from farm work to become a Bank of Montreal employee. At night school he learned cost accounting, and the bank sent him to Sarnia. But he met Wynne at the local Christian Reformed Church and settled down, becoming a cost accountant at Ethyl Corporation.

Vandezande had a heart for a number of causes. One of them was the struggling Christian labour union founded by immigrants from Holland. He saw the need for such an organization to speak for biblical principles and practices in the workplace.

That day in Michigan, Jerry and Wynne called on Prof. H. Evan Runner who taught philosophy at Calvin College. Vandezande knew and respected Runner who lectured widely, applying the philosophy of the late Dutch prime minister, Abraham Kuyper, to current trends. Vandezande appreciated this Kuyperian perspective, which put Christ at the centre of social life including science and politics.

Runner welcomed them warmly but,

as Jerry and Wynne spoke about preparing for pulpit ministry, Runner expressed grave doubts. Vandezande's strong convictions could lead to difficulties with seminary faculty. Besides, Runner knew Vandezande's ability in community leadership. "There are many pastors, but few people do the things you do," Runner said. And so Jerry and Wynne reluctantly turned back.

"After that," Vandezande says, "I

threw myself into Christian action with gusto." Indeed, Runner's redirection ensured that Vandezande did not miss his calling. Today he is a veteran activist internationally renowned for his work on projects from the environment to abortion to

pluralism to child poverty. He earned the Order of Canada, among other honours, which cited his "powerful and respected voice for social justice."

But to understand Vandezande's importance, just say "Jerry" to his peers. Brian Stiller of Tyndale University College in Toronto calls him "a gift to Evangelicals." John McKay, a long-serving federal politician from Toronto, says "He cast the thinking for a generation of Evangelicals engaged in public life." Rick Tobias of Yonge Street Mission says "Gerald Vandezande has done more than anyone to raise awareness and influence the church on the issues of poverty and injustice." Bob Goudzwaard of the Free University of Amsterdam regards him as an international giant in applying principles of current Reformed Christian philosophy.

Faith Today asked Vandezande and a selection of his friends and colleagues

to state some of the lessons relevant to Evangelicals today that can be drawn from his career.

Engage the Wheels of Justice

One of Vandezande's first guiding values is that Christians must live by scriptural principles, not simply quote the Bible or preach their beliefs. We must engage public institutions that are accountable for justice.

The gospel is "a radical message of grace. It comes with radical demands to us personally and communally as well as to our society," says Vandezande. He remembers his parents risking their lives during the Second World War in the underground alongside Communists and secularists to harbour Jews and resistance fighters. He was inspired by preachers who faced Nazis in the pews and motivated their people to demonstrate genuine faith in the face of oppression.

This was why he responded to the trials of the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC). Christians wanted their own union to avoid being forced into unions whose principles conflicted with their faith. Initially, the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) refused to recognize the CLAC because membership was strictly for Christians. But even when CLAC allowed non-Christian members, the OLRB would not relent. Legal advisers warned that a court challenge would not succeed.

Vandezande became CLAC's executive secretary (and first employee) in 1961, uprooting his family to Toronto and taking a 50 per cent cut in salary. The CLAC needed legal status to survive but many clergy opposed taking the

"There are many pastors, but few people do the things you do"

Prophet



Gerald and Wynne Vandezande: Jesus had to be at the centre.

government to court. Prominent lawyer (and future judge) Bert MacKinnon took the case to the Supreme Court of Ontario where he argued brilliantly, paving the way for the union's certification. Vandezande acted quickly to get similar rulings in British Columbia and Alberta. He continued to direct the union until 1972.

Engage People on All Sides

But greater issues of social justice called him. He developed a CLAC offshoot called the Committee for Justice and

Liberty, later the CJL Foundation. In the mid-1970s Vandezande was joined on staff by John Olthuis, formerly of the Institute for Christian Studies (a Toronto graduate school associated with the Free University of Amsterdam).

The two set an example of how to make inroads for social justice: begin with meaningful conversations that cross all political boundaries and develop genuine relationships with politicians from all parties. Speak from the heart and learn when to be bold and when to be discreet.

The 1970s energy crisis led the federal government to promote drilling for oil in the Beaufort Sea. Vandezande and Olthuis linked with the activists from other churches concerned about the impact on Aboriginal Peoples of a proposed Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline. They appeared before a parliamentary committee, the Berger Inquiry and the National Energy Board (NEB) to call for a 10-year moratorium on the projects. Then they joined a decisive action in the Supreme Court to stop the NEB chair, a former head of a company in the pipeline consortium, from ruling on whether the project should proceed. The 10-year moratorium became a major recommendation of the Berger report (1977) and was widely supported. Olthuis went on to be one of Canada's leading lawyers specializing in native land claims.

The CJL Foundation developed a profile of non-partisan integrity and connections across the spectrum of national politicians. As its justice agenda grew, the foundation linked with the Alberta-based Christian Action Foundation to form Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ).

CPJ became more innovative in the mid-1980s, developing its own alternative federal budget process. Vandezande insisted that budgets be seen as statements of core values related to issues of public justice. The insightful critique drew media attention, and alternative budgets are now a regular part of the political process. Vandezande's growing political connections made him a respected voice for social justice on committees and behind closed doors for all parties. He never joined a political party but all of them asked him to stand as a candidate.

Today, Vandezande still insists that the most important people to listen to are one's enemies. How else can you love them? They help you generate new ways to understand the issues.

Encourage Younger Leaders

Vandezande became effective as a speaker with a remarkable ability to

move audiences about social justice. “I have seen changes in audiences when he addresses them,” says Goudzwaard. “He speaks to the hearts of people in such a way that it changes their lives.”

One of the people Vandezande influenced was Brian Stiller, who began leading The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) in 1983. Political changes were taking place across North America along with the rise of politically focused religious conservatives. A former national president of Youth for Christ, Stiller says his world view at that time was rooted in the 1950s and ’60s. “I was in desperate need for someone to mentor me in the world of public policy and political initiative,” he says.

Vandezande had been a long-standing member of the EFC national council. Early on, the two clashed. “That forged our friendship,” says Stiller. “In time, there was little I did without consulting him.”

Out of Vandezande’s philosophy, Stiller caught a more inclusive vision of God’s sovereignty. “I had operated with a bifurcated world view of God’s will in salvation: eternity on one side and public policy on the other,” says Stiller. “He helped erase that line to understand that all of life is in Jesus Christ.”

Propose Incremental Improvements

Another key aspect of Vandezande’s counsel was to be positive. Be *for* something, not simply against change. Have a proposal to bring to the table – and an

alternative. Remain gracious and keep the conversation going, even if it’s only to get another meeting. As the EFC became more engaged politically, such advice was invaluable.

Vandezande’s experience connected him to journalists, politicians and party insiders at the highest levels. He showed Stiller the value of non-partisan networking, patiently building relationships with all leaders. He could also craft well-written documents on the issues.

“He modelled for me how to speak into the public square,” says Stiller.

In 1990 they worked together on the issue of abortion. The EFC leaders were patient and reasonable and the Mulroney government’s Bill C-43 reflected their priorities. “It wasn’t perfect but it started us down the right road, affirming life at conception,” says Stiller. The bill was passed by the House and went to the Senate.

Then strident, Christian pro-life organizations rallied national support. Insisting that the proposed law was an unacceptable compromise, they joined with pro-choice organizations to call for its rejection. Despite the EFC’s best efforts, the Senate vote was a tie and the bill was stopped. “We shared a deep sorrow,” Stiller says. “It’s the only time I cried about public policy.”

This was another important lesson. Real progress is gradual; there is no instant change.

The political failure was a devastating blow but, looking back, Stiller sees their progress. “We are light years ahead of where we were in 1990 with the number of people of faith in public service. The EFC continues to be on the forefront of public policy. We were working on the larger battle.”

Current EFC President Bruce J. Clemenger, agrees. “Jerry’s work with the EFC in multi-faith partnerships, beginning with education but moving through cases involving the definition

of spouse and marriage, is a great legacy. Jerry’s ability to bring together people of different faiths for common purpose, along with his ability to mobilize and bridge generations of leaders within

and without the EFC, have facilitated our ability to engage across faiths and to build policy-focused partnerships.”

Clemenger also values what Vandezande taught him about how to engage others with respect. “Jerry knows the issues very well, he’s very thoughtful and he reads extensively. He knows the various perspectives that are in play and then looks for common ground.”

Be Well Informed

Vandezande took part in 200 episodes of the EFC TV program *Cross Currents* hosted by Stiller. Vandezande was both a frequent on-camera guest and also a key resource. Karen Pascal, the program producer, recalls his power

Real progress is gradual; there is no instant change

What Else Can We Learn From Jerry Vandezande?

John Redekop, adjunct professor of political science at Trinity Western University in Langley, B.C., and past president of the EFC, says: “Do not hesitate to tackle issues. If you believe that you are morally right, then no issue is too daunting or too controversial for a clear Christian response. Don’t expect to win all the struggles but don’t give up too soon. Christians are required to be faithful, not successful. Fight for causes, not against people.”

Lorna Dueck, regular *Globe and Mail* columnist, president of Media Voice Generation and executive producer and host of the television program *ListenUp*, says: “Jerry was persistent, tireless, kind, diligent and wise. His message was never to forget that the

poor need your voice, the broken need your strength and the lost need your help in direction, and that evil can be systemic and needs to be corrected at many levels.”

Charles Pascal, executive director of the Atkinson Foundation, says: “We need to learn his tenacity. A phrase that describes Jerry is ‘visionary incrementalist.’ He has always had a clear vision that the future has to be safer and more just for all Canadians. But to move to that better vision requires incrementalism. How do we get to that better future? With tenacity: baby steps and giant steps. And I never saw anyone with more optimism about the human spirit. He has tenacity and optimism.” ■

—BV

to access “unreachable people” to address current issues.

Pascal saw he was not intimidated by any guest. This was another lesson Vandezande brought to life. You cannot be intimidated if you are well informed. Read and learn as much as you can on the issues of social justice in your community.

Pascal, too, was mentored and inspired by Vandezande. “He changed the course of my Christian walk. Jerry saw my potential to communicate the Christian world view and make sure it’s well represented in the media.”

In the 1990s Vandezande might have been forgiven for slowing down but, as Ontario’s Common Sense Revolution brought in severe cuts to social programs, his presence in the media actually grew as the public voice of resistance, together with CPJ and other new coalitions. Janet Somerville was the general secretary of the Canadian Council

of Churches from 1997 to 2002. As a national Roman Catholic leader speaking on behalf of mainline churches, she worked closely with Vandezande, a longtime friend and colleague.

They had first met when Somerville was on staff with the *Catholic New Times*. Vandezande introduced her to other activists, which led to new initiatives for the paper. She noticed his ability to bring people together. “Strategizing is something he does while he breathes,” says Somerville. “Jerry refuses to be stopped by conventional boundaries. He doesn’t get rude or aggressive; he simply ignores them.”

Serve More Than “Just Us”

This period when faith organizations began to link effectively demonstrates the power of Vandezande’s approach to social justice – a Christian attitude toward justice can’t be about advancing our

own individual or community agenda. Justice is not “just us.” We must learn what justice means for others to whom we are to be salt and light and leaven. We must seek out those who may be political opposites or from other faiths and learn from them. God is at work in the hearts of all people.

One of the areas where Vandezande has made little progress has been seeking public funding for independent (non-Catholic) religious schools. As Vandezande kept broadening his network to seek support on this issue, he built bridges with Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and secular communities. The court challenges have been disappointing and there have been few gains for these schools. In the late 1990s, he brought many of these groups into the EFC-led group called Ontario Multi-faith Coalition for Equality in Education (OMCEE).

However, Vandezande has cultivated

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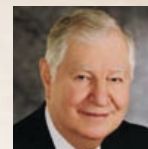
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these relationships into other projects. When he needed to assemble a broader coalition to address the Harris government's social service cuts, he drew on this network to build a larger voice. Many of these groups are now part of the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC). Vandezande also helped develop similar coalitions, such as the Campaign Against Child Poverty led by the late June Callwood.

His support of Street Level, an EFC-led coalition of groups addressing homelessness, led to a particularly satisfying moment. When the groups adopted a platform statement in 2006 called the Ottawa Manifesto, Vandezande addressed the assembly and suggested taking up a collection to have the manifesto printed in the Monday morning edition of the *Ottawa Citizen*. His idea saw the manifesto on the desk of every sitting Member of Parliament by the next day.

Stay Close to God and to Family

Where does that ability to stay on the leading edge come from? Somerville believes it comes out of a vibrant spiritual life. "He's very prayerful," she says. "He challenges us not to forget to put prayer first. The reason why he can reach across so many issues and people is because he's so sure of the lordship of Christ in all areas of life."

One person who has matched Vandezande stride for stride through his journey has been his wife of 52 years, Wynne. He often gives tribute to her faith. She raised their two daughters – Janice and Karen, now parents of their five grandchildren – and eight foster children who lived in their home for a few months each, some for two years. After their children were grown, Wynne went back to school, earned a social work degree and worked as a counsellor until her retirement.

Wynne and Jerry have been members at Grace Christian Reformed Church in Scarborough, Ont., since

1971. Simon Wolfert was Vandezande's pastor for many years.

"He was very inspirational in the church. He would speak to young people. He was very influential with many others too," says Wolfert. "I watched [Vandezande] grow – and grew because of him." Wolfert agrees with Goudzwaard that Vandezande has been an influential figure internationally in the Christian Reformed Church.

If politics is the art of the possible, then Vandezande has been one of Canada's political masters. Although he now moves carefully after a series of small strokes and quadruple bypass surgery, he keeps in touch with many of his old friends. And he looks forward to developing a relationship with Prime Minister Stephen Harper, with whom he has already had correspondence.

Be Gracious and Tenacious

One of Vandezande's esteemed admirers is Dow Marmur, senior rabbi emeritus of Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto. He wrote that Vandezande "speaks like a prophet and thinks like a politician."

When Jerry and Wynne turned back from Grand Rapids 50 years ago, he gave up a pulpit. "But I've been able to speak in mosques, temples and synagogues," he says. And he probably should add: at Parliament Hill and Queen's Park.

Goudzwaard, the Amsterdam professor, uses a metaphor to describe his friend. To grow a palm tree in the desert, a hole is made in the sand and a young tree placed into it with a stone on top. If it survives, the tree grows down until it reaches water. Then it rises, pushing away the rock. "That is Jerry. If he sees there is no way, he goes to the deepest roots of his faith. When he sees injustice, he's committed to finding a way." ■

Ben Volman of Toronto is a contributing writer at Faith Today.

Inside the World of Child Sponsorship

Many Canadians do it. But how does child sponsorship really work? And why have Canadians embraced it? *Faith Today* explores one of our favourite ways of doing charity

By Alex Newman

As children's birthday parties go, Benjamin Marsh's fifth was pretty typical – cake, ice cream, balloons and games – until his dad, David, pulled an envelope out of the small pile of presents. In it were details about another boy celebrating his fifth birthday in far away Colombia, South America.

This ritual occurs every time one of the Marsh children, from Port Robinson, Ont., turns five. It is a concerted effort by their parents to inspire a “spirit of generosity, gratitude for their privileged life here and exposure to other cultures.”

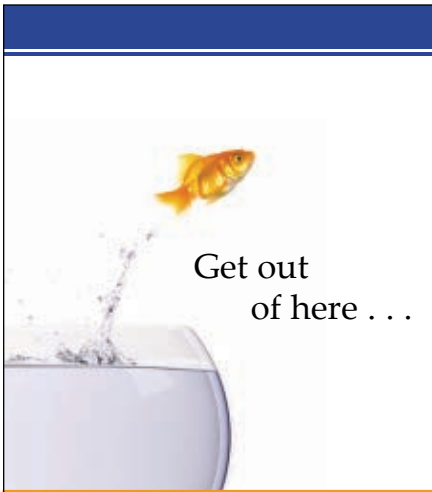
But for the kids, it's mostly fun. Eight-year-old Timothy likes the letters and pictures that pass between him and his Colombian friend Jose. And Emily, at nine, is old enough to feel sad about the poverty but glad for the chance to “do something” about it.

Beside each of their beds hangs the picture of their sponsored child (the family sponsors three, and each Marsh child has a special connection with one)whom they “try to pray for nightly. And apparently they pray for us,” says mom Anna. To enhance the connection, she incorporates incidents from her child's life into



This clean water pump in Tamale, Ghana was provided by Christian Children's Fund of Canada.

CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND OF CANADA



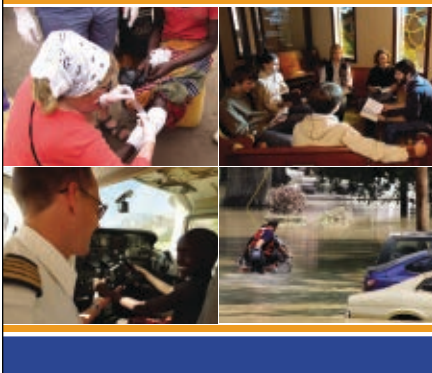
Get out
of here . . .

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prayers for the sponsored child. When Ben had stitches last year, they prayed for Gleiber in Colombia to stay healthy.

The relational cornerstone

This relationship building is the cornerstone on which hangs the success – especially financial success – of child sponsorship. While most organizations state up front that funds are pooled for the community's benefit, ultimately benefiting the individual child, they know that trying to raise funds for a project doesn't elicit the same kind of response as a child's face.

As significant as the relationship can be for the donor, it is positively life-altering for the sponsored child.

"Knowing someone else cares about you is one part of the development process," says Michael Messenger, World Vision Canada's head of public affairs. World Vision is arguably the world leader with three million children sponsored, 360,000 of them by Canadians.

On a recent trip to Indonesia he met children eager to show off gifts of pictures, stickers and letters received from their sponsors.

But the real transformation comes to children through the help the sponsorship dollars afford their communities. It's a long-term development approach that "builds increased sustainability and self-reliance," Messenger says.

It's also why David Marsh first decided, at 18, to become a sponsor. "I was thinking a lot about international poverty and concluded that child sponsorship was one of the most effective ways of dealing with it," Marsh recalls. "You can do something very directly for people without having to address a lot of the structural problems like poor governance or corruption. And the strong emphasis on sustainable development of the local economy allows for a lot of residual benefits."

Different approaches: same goal

Though most agencies work toward this sustainable development end, each goes

about it in a slightly different way. In the nine countries where it has sponsor programs, Christian Children's Fund (CCF) doesn't "set up shop" itself, says Abigail Guevara, CCF's public relations spokesperson, but involves "trusted local partners" already doing development work.

The Salvation Army relies on applications from its field missions, mostly homes for orphans or children whose parents can't afford to look after them, explains sponsorship director, Major Sylvia Burt.

World Vision employs locals to work under its umbrella. Compassion International, based in London, Ont., partners with local churches, supplying funds, curricula and programs to over a million children in 25 countries. Compassion leaves its name off materials so the churches can "do what God has called them to do," marketing spokesperson Aaron Armstrong explains.

Delivering the programs, though, is time consuming and labour intensive. Revenue Canada allows charities to spend no more than 20 per cent of revenue on administration, and most agencies involved in child sponsorship are close to that maximum.

Plus, child sponsorship can be an "administrative nightmare," says Jayme van Geest, Careforce International (based in Burlington, Ont.) director of development. "In locations where the turnover of children is high, donors can sometimes wait months to be assigned a new child," she says.

Recently, Careforce abandoned individual sponsorships in favour of direct funding of community projects. Donors still give \$40 a month to projects like Village of Hope orphanage in Africa that delivers education, food and health care to children in need. In return, they receive pictures of all the children.

Most organizations regard child sponsorship as a key fundraising tool – not to enrich themselves but to ensure delivery of sustainable community economic development.

What Child Sponsorship Provides

A typical child sponsorship package, depending on the agency, can provide things like education, health care, clean water, improved sanitation, school uniforms and supplies for children and their communities. Community-based projects can also include vocational training for youth and adults and the equipping of peer educators for things like health issues and HIV/AIDS prevention. Child sponsorship can also help provide seeds, tools and training for children's families.

Child sponsorship usually costs between \$35 and \$40 a month per sponsored child. Sponsors normally receive at least one annual update telling them how their sponsored child is doing. Most agencies encourage sponsors to write letters to their sponsored child and to build a relationship. ■

Sponsorship and the gospel

Sponsorship can be an important means to spread the gospel. Compassion's brochure, for example, is unequivocal: "in response to the Great Commission ... to be an advocate for children, to release them from their spiritual, economic, social and physical poverty and to enable them to become responsible and fulfilled Christian adults."

As Armstrong puts it: "We can't hope for lasting change other than physical ... if the children don't have the opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel in a way that's culturally appropriate and sensitive."

Likewise, materials from I.N. Network Canada (based in Collingwood, Ont.) state that "linking Christians in both the developed and the developing world in partnership to evangelize, disciple and strengthen communities is the most effective way to reach the world for Christ."

Over the past few months, I.N. has been grappling with its focus and purpose. On the one hand, a "clear gospel mission and, on the other, practical international development work – building schools, hospitals and local economies," says executive director David Marshall.

"A confusing message unless you view it holistically," he says. "Evangelism and social action express God's concern for the world. Jesus never separated the two so why should we?" Marshall cites the example of child prostitution: "Our involvement must go beyond physically freeing a child from this form of slavery. For how does a woman or young girl ever recover fully from that except through the power of God?"

This holistic approach may explain I.N.'s rapid growth – up 20 per cent from last year to a total of 3,700 Canadian sponsors. After all, many Christian donors want to know their sponsored children will be taught about Jesus. Burt agrees. She says ministry is an important consideration for the Salva-

tion Army's 1,917 Canadian sponsors.

And it's "a big deal" to the Marshes who admit they'd probably move their sponsorship dollars elsewhere if Compassion didn't have such a strong spiritual component.

"I want it all – physical and spiritual," explains Anna. "The poverty must be addressed, of course, but I want those children to have the possibility of a life transformed by Jesus."

Not every child sponsorship agency approaches the issue of sharing the gospel in the same way.

Careforce programs are run by Christian groups but administered by mostly non-Christian volunteers and designed for children across the religious spectrum. CCF says it chooses its communities "not by creed but by need."

While World Vision is "unabashedly faith-based," its policy prohibits proselytizing. "My hope is that the development work reflects the best of Christian faith," Messenger explains. "As St. Francis said, 'Preach the gospel at all times and, when necessary, use words.'"

But that policy may be due in part to World Vision's reach. It operates in nearly 100 countries, some of which are

openly hostile to the Christian faith.

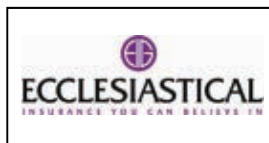
Some organizations skirt the evangelizing issue altogether by the way they function. For example, the Salvation Army operates through its own local missions so "children always come under the ministry of the gospel," says Burt. Because the Salvation Army already has a mission in place and it operates out of that mission, it's understood that learning about Jesus is part of the program.

David Marsh agrees the spiritual must come alongside the practical: "I believe there are emotional and spiritual components to the deficiencies that arise from poverty. Sponsorship offers people dignity by giving them the tools to care for themselves and lets them know others are concerned about their plight."

The spiritual tools provided by missions, adds Anna, are "just as valuable as the physical tools. They can change your life and your perspective."

But for four-year-old Philip Marsh, it's a lot simpler. To demonstrate how much he "likes" the boy he will sponsor next year, he will send him stickers. ■

Alex Newman of Toronto is a contributing writer at Faith Today.



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Bands Help Outreach and

Brass bands play a key role in The Salvation Army today and have for 125 years in Canada

By Robert White

The 1,730 members of Salvation Army brass bands across Canada today are keeping alive a musical tradition that benefits both congregational worship and the communities in which they live and perform.

Such bands started in England in 1878 when Charles Fry and his three sons formed an ensemble to accompany Army founder William Booth on some of his evangelistic campaigns. By 1882 the Army was established in Canada and, within a year, two Salvation Army bands started in Ontario.

One of the roles of the brass band was to attract people to the Army's open-air gospel services. As the decades passed, Army bands became a common sight on street corners across Canada as they played the Good News. That tradition has fallen off in recent years, thanks in part to increasing municipal regulations. But at the same time many bands have become an integral part of Salvation Army worship services.

"The bands have played a significant role in the development of Salvation Army worship and ministry," writes Kevin Metcalf, head of the Army's na-

tional Music and Gospel Arts department, in an email interview. "From about 1900 until about 1980, congregations seemed to rise or fall with the life of the band. Many local congregational leaders also happened to play in the band."

The church has almost 350 congregations in Canada and 133 brass bands. The brass band style continues to be central to much Salvation Army worship, although, as these numbers suggest, other musical forms are very common.

Metcalf says some elements of the "worship wars" – internal debates about whether or not to adopt the guitar-led



Worship

PHOTOS COURTESY: THE SALVATION ARMY

format popular in many evangelical churches – have also touched the Army, but “it’s not an issue in the Army now. Congregations seem to have settled their musical identity – some choosing guitars, some choosing brass and many choosing to blend these musical expressions. In many cases it’s a question of what musical resources are available.”

Three Ontario congregations that have maintained their brass musical identity celebrated their 125th anniversaries recently. The oldest is a brass band in Hamilton, Ont., founded in 1883 by Joe Ludgate, one of the found-

ers of The Salvation Army in Canada. This Hamilton I Band was renamed the Hamilton Temple Band and today is known as the Meadowlands Community Church Band. Another 1883 band is the London Citadel Band in London, Ont. This year the band at the Brampton Citadel, about 40 km northwest of Toronto, also reached its 125th.

“I don’t think any other musical medium anywhere is nearly as flexible as a brass band,” says Ron Heintzman, the bandmaster at Meadowlands, Hamilton.

Heintzman started playing when he was seven. Now, 30 years later, he’s also a member of the Canadian Staff Band, the country’s premier Salvation Army brass band (www.canadianstaffband.ca). He also holds down a full-time job selling funeral pre-arrangements.

The strength of brass bands, says Heintzman, is their ability to play a variety of musical styles including rock, grunge and ska – while still producing a unique sound.

“There has never been more interest in brass bands in society than today,” adds Heintzman, citing the use of brass bands by other churches that often use Salvation Army compositions and arrangements.

Some of those arrangements are brass versions of the latest contemporary worship songs – not so bands can be “relevant, but so bands will be equipped to accompany the songs worship leaders are choosing for congregations to sing,” explains Metcalf. “This is a practical necessity regarding the involvement of bands in Salvation Army worship services.”

And while street corners may be closed, other avenues of ministry have opened for Army bands.

“There are more opportunities now than ever before,” says Heintzman. The Meadowlands band, for example, has taken part in Hamilton’s Canadian International Military Tattoo for the past seven years. At the annual gather-



ing of brass, bagpipe and fife-and-drum bands, the Army band has performed hymns such as “How Great Thou Art” and “Onward Christian Soldiers” in shows attended by more than 8,000 people. Band tours, such as a trip by the London Citadel Band to Holland, Mich., for that city’s Tulip Time Festival in early May, offer opportunities for public witness.

And the future of Salvation Army bands seems secure with 1,255 members in 110 youth bands being diligently tuned up as the next generation of band members. While summer music camps help the seven- to 14-year-olds hone their playing and theory skills, they also learn through one-on-one tutoring and performing in local congregations.

Effective band programs are the result of “adult Christian musicians caring enough to spend time teaching, mentoring and nurturing their congregation’s young people,” says Metcalf. ■

Robert White is a freelance writer in Guelph, Ont. To browse through Army band recordings and music, visit <http://store.salvationarmy.ca>. To keep up with band performances, visit www.themeline.ca.

Understanding Pornography

By Diane Marshall



Internet sex addiction is changing how we look at each other. But healing from compulsive sexual behaviour is possible

God has given us the gift of family, friends and neighbours. Of community. Of relationships. Yet how often do we view people, including ourselves, as individuals loved by God and made in God's image? How often do we tarnish that image by viewing others as objects we can use?

These issues are especially relevant when we think about the issue of pornography raised in the March/April issue of *Faith Today*. Pornography at its core is about how we perceive and value and relate to others. What do we see when we look at another person? When we look at someone in a photograph, a film, on a billboard, in a magazine, on the Internet? What do we do mentally with what we see?

Webster's Dictionary defines pornography as "The depiction of erotic behaviour intended to cause sexual excitement; the depiction of acts in a sensational manner so as to arouse a quick, intense emotional reaction."

Depicting sex is problematic – so often it involves the victimization of vulnerable people, including children. But even if we temporarily put that aside, porn is problematic because of "its implicit, if not explicit, approval of and recommendation of sexual behavior that ... physically or psychologically violates the personhood of one of the participants," according to Helen Longino, an American philosopher of science.

What happens when such violations are accepted in a society? We are about to find out because cybersex is here to stay and is transforming us. It is now "the number one profit centre on the Internet" and "the number one activity for kids while they do their homework," according to Patrick Carnes, an American pioneer in sex addiction therapy.

Most pornography is downloaded between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., according to Carnes. It is a fact of life in the workplace. Researchers agree cybersex is the "crack-cocaine of sexual compulsivity," reports Carnes. People risk losing their jobs because of it. No real-life partner can compete with it.

Researchers also agree on other conclusions. Sexual addiction on the Internet can escalate quickly to behaviour that the addict has never wanted to do before. Cybersex will extend into an addict's real life, even destroying marriages that were previously sexually healthy (addicts may become sexually demanding and usually experience a drop in the ability to respond sexually to their spouses). Internet sex is one of the leading factors in relapse for recovering sex addicts.

How should we understand sexual addiction, either with or without the Internet? Many therapists define it as any sexually related, compulsive behaviour that interferes with normal living and relationships. In therapy it becomes evident that both pornography and cybersex are non-relational. They do not build intimate, personal relationships of mutuality and trust. They distort our views of other people, leading us to use other human beings as objects rather than to consider them subjects like ourselves.

Carnes has this to say: "Addiction often begins simply – reality becomes too much to bear, so we try to escape through drugs, alcohol, gambling or sex. When escaping becomes habitual, we have a mental health illness known as addiction. . . . Addiction, then, can be viewed as an *intimacy disorder*."

To recover from addiction always starts with telling oneself the truth, facing reality and learning to block the processes of denial and avoidance. Turning one's emotional energy into truth-telling is essential.

For people with sexual addictions, I have found there is often a hunger to be connected. The spiritual roots of this are varied: feelings of spiritual emptiness or being abandoned by God, loss of faith in anything spiritual, feeling disconnected from oneself and the world, emotional exhaustion or grieving the loss of a relationship, loss of self-esteem or life goals.

People trapped in sex addiction risk themselves financially and physically. They often feel hopeless, at times suicidal, and increasingly estranged from family and friends. The guilt and shame may feel overwhelming, and the failed efforts to control the addiction eventually lead the person to seek help (sometimes addicts only admit failure when they are caught).

But whenever, by God's grace, a healing process begins, the addict can start to accept responsibility for his/her behaviours and can start to desire to be a person of integrity. The concept of accountability is central and helps the addict to break through denial and admit the extent of the problem.

Only then can repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation begin. Then the recovering addict will be empowered instead to work for justice and reconciliation – "speaking the truth in love ... so that we [all] may grow" into full maturity and wholeness in Christ (Ephesians 4). ■

Diane Marshall of the Institute of Family Living in Toronto has been a couple and family therapist for 34 years.

Bad Prophecy / Good Book

By James Beverley

Columnist Jim Beverley has been writing for *Faith Today* since 1994 and has been promising a certain book for almost as long



I turned 55 in January and, three months later, my wife and I celebrated another birth. This baby, 10 years in the making, weighed in at just over three pounds. Rectangular in shape, the baby is named *Nelson's Illustrated Guide to Religions*. It is 850 pages long and deals with more than 200 groups in 19 chapters. The big world religions get their share of space but there are also separate chapters on Branch Davidians, Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Orthodoxy, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Satanism, Scientology, the Unification Church and Witchcraft.

The editors at *Faith Today* have invited me to celebrate the baby by telling you what I learned during its 10-year gestation. First, as my friends and editors know, this book proves I am no good at prophecy. Every year I predicted the book would be done by year's end. I was wrong nine times. As in the religious world, false prophecies don't help sales.

I now see more clearly that religions are not all the same. People who say this are either ignorant or deluded. Of course, there are common patterns that can be celebrated. For example, all religions oppose murder – yes, even Anton LaVey's Church of Satan. In the main, however, the various religions offer alternative understandings of reality. Buddhists do not believe in God, but most other groups do. Christians worship Jesus, but this is heresy to both Jews and Muslims. There are also big differences within the same religious family. The Latter-day Saints Mormons oppose the polygamous Mormon groups. My research even introduced me to the nine different variations of Baha'i.

Working on the book also taught me how nasty religion can be. We all saw that on 9/11. My book documents sex abuse of children in many groups, sometimes up front in the name of God (David Berg and David Koresh) and sometimes not (as in Roman Catholic and Protestant coverups). Alleged witches were tortured and killed for almost four centuries. Most religions have their own version of leaders using "spiritual" talk to bed a gullible devotee or fleece the flock of money or deprive them of their freedoms. Three simple rules in checking out a religion: guard your mind, watch your wallet and keep your clothes on.

Despite the darkness and divisions in religion, there is

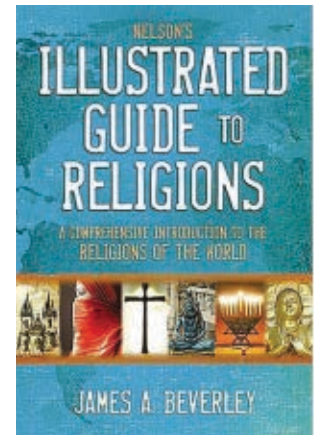
beauty as well. This is what Christians should expect to see, given God's common grace. For every Osama there are millions of Muslims who hate terrorism and violence. My wife, Gloria, and I were once protected on the coast of Kenya by Big Daddy, a Muslim security guard. The Unification Church has done great work on religious liberty, in large part because of Dan Fefferman, a courageous follower of Sun Myung Moon. Buddhist monks in

Myanmar have died to help that country know freedom. In all religions there is often basic human kindness, love and goodness. Thank God.

Years ago Hans Küng, the famous theologian, gave a lecture in Toronto on the question "Is There Just One True Religion?"

I don't agree with all his views but I loved one of his main conclusions. For him the answer to truth questions lies in Jesus Christ. I saw Küng in his home in Germany two years ago and he reiterated this fundamental trust in Jesus. My book makes the same point. Thirty years of intensive study of religions, including the past 10 on the new Beverley baby, has led me to a deeper realization of the uniqueness, greatness and beauty of Jesus. In my informed opinion, there is no one like Him. And He is who He claimed to be: Lord, Saviour, Son of God. In a world of religions, with so many different paths, there is the One who is "the Way." ■

I now see
more clearly
that religions
are not
all the same



James A. Beverley from Tyndale University College and Seminary in Toronto is on sabbatical this coming academic year. For information on his books, go to www.jimbeverley.com.

Does *Abba* Mean “Daddy”?

By David Guretzki



It is commonly said that the meaning of the word *Abba*, as spoken by Jesus to God the Father, is captured in how we use the words “Daddy” or “Papa” today. In other words, to address God as *Abba* speaks of a sense of relational intimacy, closeness and safety. But is there clear evidence this is what *Abba* means in Scripture? Simply put, no.

Unquestionably, we have the privilege of having a relationship with the Father through Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Indeed, Jesus invites us to address God as “our Father” (Matthew 6:9)! It is no surprise, then, that Christians often experience relational intimacy with God. But what if Christians do not feel such things even though they walk in faith and place their trust in Jesus? Who hasn’t had such moments? Unfortunately, by overemphasizing the notion that *Abba* is primarily about our *experience* of relational intimacy, we undermine the fact that our relationship to the Father is firm in Christ no matter what we may feel.

The idea that *Abba* is equivalent to the modern words “Daddy” or “Papa” (and their connotations) is largely due to a widespread misapplication and popularization of some of the conclusions of a famous biblical scholar named Joachim Jeremias. An expert on the ancient languages, Jeremias suggested that, like our words “Dadda” or “Momma,” the Aramaic words *Abba* and *Imma* were some of the first words learned by children. Thus Jesus’ use of *Abba* might give insight into His consciousness of an intimate relationship to God as His Father. Nevertheless, Jeremias also insisted that the word *Abba* is by no means to be understood as a childlike expression of Jesus’ familiarity with God but was, on the contrary, a sign of Jesus’ complete submission to the Father’s sovereign will.

A closer look at Mark 14:36, the only verse in the Bible where the term *Abba* comes from Jesus’ lips, confirms the conclusion that *Abba* was a term of reverent submission uttered to the Father. Jesus prays: “*Abba*, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will” (Mark 14:36). Yes, the prayer was uttered by Jesus in the hour of His deepest need of assurance of God’s love for Him, but it would be irresponsible to ignore the fact that this verse reveals Jesus giving Himself completely to the Father’s will. Indeed, had Jesus allowed a

sense of relational intimacy to dictate His actions, He may well have refused to go to the cross, assuming that no daddy would require a son to do such a thing!

Two other passages in the New Testament tell us more about a proper understanding of *Abba*. Paul instructs us that it is only by the Spirit of God who “brought about [our] adoption to sonship” that we are enabled as children of God to cry “*Abba*, Father,” (Romans 8:15). Interestingly, the Apostle tells us elsewhere it is actually the Spirit who cries “*Abba*, Father,” on our behalf (Galatians 6:4).

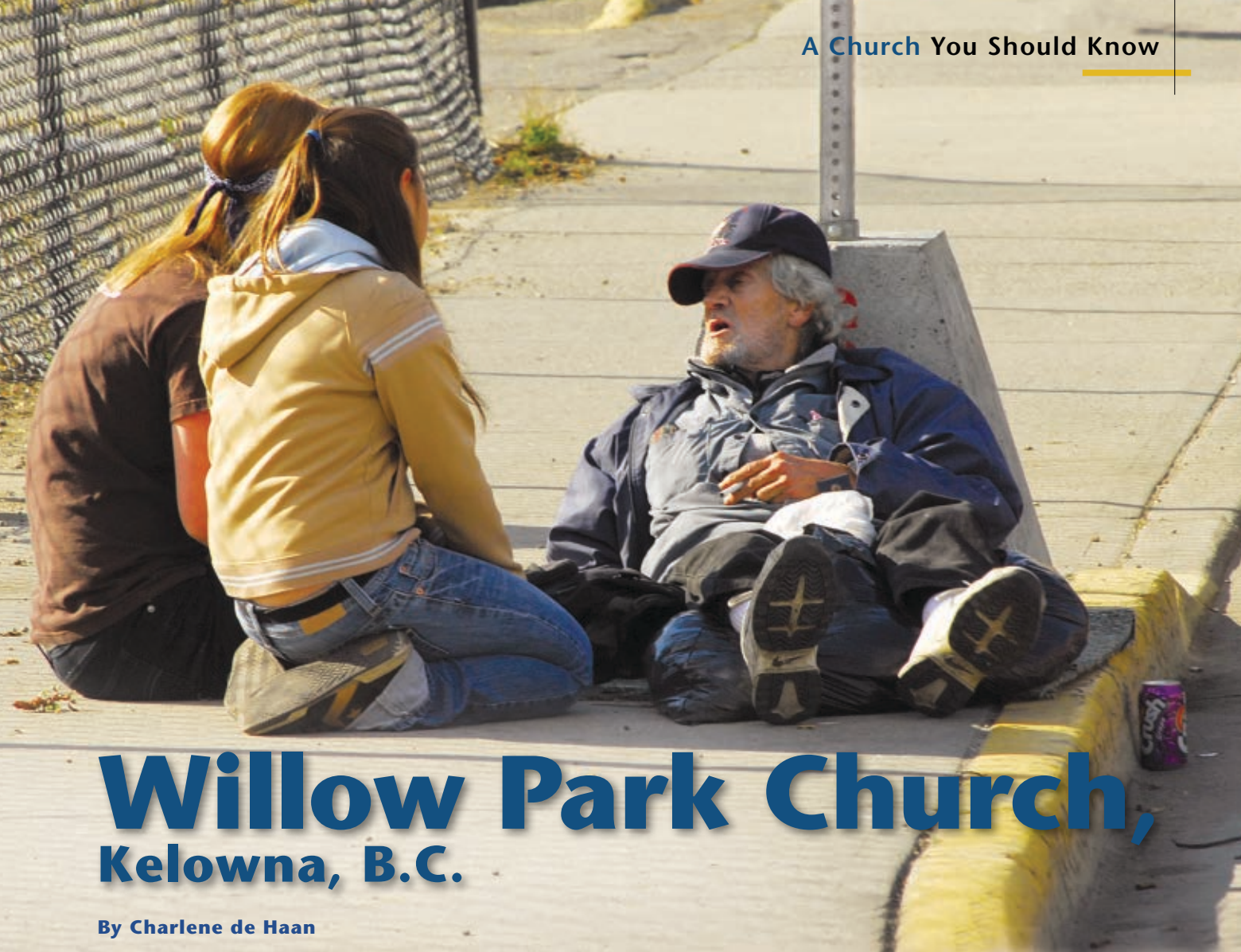
Together, these passages teach that our ability to cry “*Abba*, Father,” is itself a gift from the Holy Spirit, completely independent of what we may (or may not!) feel. As a gift, our cry “*Abba*, Father,” gives us confidence that we will receive an eternal inheritance and the resurrection of our bodies. This inheritance, though originally given by the Father to the Son, is now also guaranteed to us as spiritually adopted sons and daughters in Jesus Christ.

But let us not forget that the path to Resurrection was by way of the Cross. To share in the future promise of the resurrection is also to share in the fellowship of sufferings with Christ in His death (see Galatians 2:20 and Philippians 3:10), not to mention the need to endure the discipline of our Father in heaven who disciplines His children for their good (Hebrews 12:4-11).

So what should *Abba* mean for us? In light of the above, two things are especially important to note. First, to cry “*Abba*, Father,” is to say in reverent submission, “Here am I, Lord, send me” (see Isaiah 6:8). Second, to say “*Abba*, Father,” is to have confidence by the Holy Spirit that we will inherit eternal life along with Jesus, the firstborn from the dead (Colossians 1:18). Indeed, it is during the darkest hours when God may feel the farthest from us that the Holy Spirit still enables us to know we are truly His children in Jesus Christ! ■

What if
Christians
do not feel such
things even though
they walk in faith
and place their
trust in Jesus?

David Guretzki is an associate professor of theology at Briercrest College & Seminary, Carleton Place, Sask. Ask a Theologian, written by Representatives of 11 seminaries affiliated with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, will go on hiatus for the next year to make room for a series looking ahead to the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelism in October 2010.



Willow Park Church, Kelowna, B.C.

By Charlene de Haan

Dreaming of the day when hunger, abuse and poverty are gone and the love of Christ is known across the city: Members of Willow Park Church serve the working poor and homeless.

“Runaways. We’re all runaways,” says Mark Burch, lead pastor at Willow Park Church, a Mennonite Brethren congregation in Kelowna, B.C. “The DNA of every human is a runaway. Some are just closer on their way back home.” In response to this key idea, Burch and his church make it their job to put out the welcome mat for a homecoming party.

Walking, Talking Billboards

Burch admits the mental shifts the congregation members need to make to develop an outward focus are ongoing but he reports that already about 75 per cent can articulate their mission: learning to love people, follow Jesus and serve the world. The goal is that every follower will be speaking into other people’s lives, sometimes without words – moving congregants beyond simply “doing church” to “being church.”

Many have caught the vision of being “walking, talking, living community billboards” for the kingdom – attracting some newcomers by offering a genuine welcome into a net-

work of relationships and drawing others, especially people dissatisfied with popular secular lifestyles and beliefs, by demonstrating an appealing alternative.

Many weeks there are roses on the altar to celebrate people coming to faith. Recently four roses celebrated Alpha members choosing to follow Jesus. Celebrating such life changes is indeed a sort of homecoming party.

God’s Values in Our City?

Burch looks forward to the day when the entire Kelowna area is deeply impacted by the values of God’s kingdom reign. Four campuses (different worship sites) already seek to make God’s values more tangible in the community. Burch and his leadership team stress that God is already ruling and reigning; God’s reign is not merely a future event to wait for. So they dream of their city without hunger or abuse. They want to help ensure adequate jobs and available housing. They imagine a city void of drugs and the sex trade – because no one is buying!

Their key question is, “How can our 62-year-old church influence our city for good?” The central campus stands in the heart of Rutland, an area with 30,000 people in 10,000 homes. This campus is known for children’s programs and youth ministries. Families come because of their children. The midweek ministry attracts about 750 youth, including 50 per cent with no church background.

The Metro Community campus, organized two years ago, serves the working poor and homeless. Some could be described as dysfunctional, exhibiting striking disabilities or addictions; others are sex workers. Excitement rises in his voice when Burch shares a cool story about Christ’s transforming power in people like Rick, the “giant teddy bear.” Rick sports a prosthesis – his arm was shot off in a drug deal gone bad. Living on the street in his addiction, Rick became involved in a recovery program before being baptized and training to be a truck driver. Recently he landed a job in Alberta. Metro celebrated when Rick reconciled with his two children after more than eight years without contact.

A year ago, the Metro Community formed a night patrol that distributes sandwiches and hot chocolate. They talk and pray with people living on the edge of oblivion. It’s changing the lives of churchgoers willing to look deeply into the eyes of homeless and desperate people.

The youth adopt-a-block ministry asks neighbours “How can we help?” One person was about to be evicted if the junk in his yard was not cleaned up. When the youth hauled it all away, the elated homeowner wrote a letter thanking the church for saving his home. Neat intergenerational relationships are being formed in the community and there is a noticeable heart-shift in the youth – to service – so the name of Christ is lifted high.

A handful of people were involved with NeighbourLink, a collaborative ministry with several churches in town. People phoned in needs and were matched with skilled practitioners. Some fixed leaky roofs while others did housecleaning. In January 2006 they amalgamated with Church Serve, a partnership with the Home and Community Care program of the regional health authority. Reaching out to people with health or disability limitations is another way of extending Jesus’ hands of service in practical ways.

In Every Neighbourhood

With a voice empty of competition or pride, Burch states: “We dream of the day when there is a congregation of Willow Park Church in every neighbourhood in our city. Instead of expecting everyone to come to us at one large central facility, we are taking the church to them through a network of congregations that share the same DNA but are unique in location, target audience, style and demo-

graphic.” The foundation is being laid through four locations with eight service times.

The original Highway 33 campus, comfortably seating 500, was jammed to capacity with 1,400 people in four services. Not anxious to build, 150 people were sent off six years ago to grow a new site. Within four months they doubled in size through a combination of 30 per cent Willow Park, 30 per cent other church people and 30 per cent new community contacts. “There are no fireworks,” says Burch. “We’re really a meat and potatoes type church. It’s the power of God’s Word.”

Willow Park Lake Country launched two years ago in a separate village of 10,000 people north of Kelowna. A dozen or so families from Willow Park already lived there; others relocated to join the new launch. Now 150 people attend!

God is already ruling and reigning – God’s reign is not merely a future event to wait for

Breaking Single-Cell Mindset

Thinking about God’s kingdom, Burch drove around the southern interior – a two-hour radius surrounding the original campus, a region of 400,000 people.

He found discouraged pastors in small, struggling churches. He found rock-hard soil. When asked to describe the life of the local evangelical community, a Christian bookstore owner replied: “Welcome to the desert! The numbers don’t change; they just keep shifting like the sand.”

“Once you break a single-cell mindset into several services then multi-site is not a stretch,” declares Burch. Operating under one board with one budget (www.willowparkchurch.com), they dream of a dozen neighbourhood congregations. Jesus is still building His church. Community outreach is a forever vision. Even in this postmodern era, people are still hungry. A fifth campus launches in fall 2009.

A multi-site strategy must balance both strengths and weaknesses. The challenge is to see “one church” beyond the four sites, when some people experience only one campus. Multiple expressions of ministry make each location unique with hands joined around a common vision to love people, follow Jesus and serve the world.

Burch arrived at Willow Park 12 years ago. He came during the church’s 50th anniversary to pastor 600 people. The congregation now numbers 1,900. His personal vision jumps off the pages of Jesus’ conversation with the disciples after talking with the woman at the well. “Lift up your eyes. . . I’ve sent you to reap” (John 4:35-38). Welcome to the homecoming! ☒

Charlene de Haan is a freelance writer in Toronto. She also serves as project manager, educational services for The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Willow Park is an EFC affiliate congregation. Read all the profiles in this ongoing series at www.faithtoday.ca.

More Than a Franchise

By Keith Elford



The head of the Free Methodist Church in Canada reflects on the goal to ensure all Canadians have a healthy congregation within reach

The Free Methodist Church in Canada has a vision “to see a healthy congregation within the reach of all people in Canada and beyond.” It’s a vision we share with many other Christians. As evidence, consider the wide participation at the church planting congress coming in November (www.churchplantingcanada.ca).

Yet some among us might caution that such a vision can sound arrogant and mechanical – a type of franchising plan to flood the country with cookie-cutter congregations.

Let me reassure such critics that franchising is not the intention – I know that for sure in the Free Methodist Church. The words “within the reach” actually highlight the necessity of congregations understanding the subcultures of communities and finding appropriate ways to respond to what the Holy Spirit is doing to bring about transformation within their “cultural reaches.” (By the way, our understanding is that this will only be accomplished in partnership with the rest of the Body of Christ!)

But God sometimes complicates the task – not Satan, but God – by challenging our tidy monoethnic plans with the reality of Canada’s diversity. Consider how many congregations in your area worship in languages other than English or French. (Canadian Free Methodists now worship weekly in 14 languages.) Add in the diversity of regional cultural values, generational preferences, 24-7 work schedules and the availability of meeting spaces – it’s clear “one size” won’t fit all.

So what informs an evangelical vision – and specifically our Free Methodist vision – making us more than mechanical franchisers of religion? Jesus’ agricultural parables. He launches into his stories assuming we understand seeds are created to reproduce themselves.

But like farming, sowing the seed of the gospel and seeing a kingdom harvest have elements of risk and failure. (My view is that everything Jesus says about the planting of the seed of the gospel in individual hearts applies to the planting of congregations in neighbourhoods.)

There’s the risk of impenetrable spiritual resistance from the demonic.

“The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the kingdom and don’t understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts.”

There’s the reality of inadequate discipleship where

spiritual depth has not been cultivated.

The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. But since they don’t have deep roots, they don’t last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God’s word.

Worldliness often discourages and distracts.

The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God’s word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced.

Despite all these realities – and even though the level of response will vary from place to place – a harvest does come!

The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God’s word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!

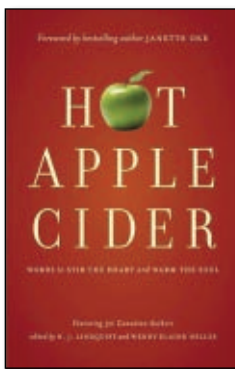
Let’s also keep in mind the “all by itself” mystery:

This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. *All by itself* the soil produces grain – first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head (Mark 4:26-28).

It is evident that, though human participation is involved to see the good news of shalom (wholeness that comes from God) planted in human hearts and neighbourhoods, the Holy Spirit is active before, during and in the culmination of the harvest.

In the Free Methodist Church, as in many other Canadian evangelical churches, we have been faithful to this vision by planting diverse kinds of churches. A 2008 study states that 72 per cent of the new Free Methodist congregations planted since 1995 are surviving. This does not mean they are thriving. We’ll know in about 25 years if they will be fruitful, enduring ministries. But as God raises up teams of disciplined, Spirit-led planters and as the resources are provided, we remain committed to the multiplication of congregations. It’s the only way to obey the vision “to see healthy churches within the reach of all people in Canada and beyond.” ■

Keith Elford is bishop of the Free Methodist Church in Canada, which is based in Mississauga, Ont., and has 150 congregations in Canada. This column continues a series by affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. For a list, see www.evangelicalfellowship.ca/affiliates.

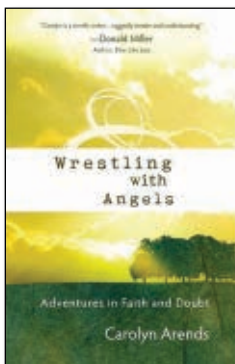
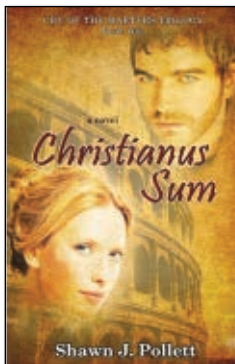


WRITING AWARDS HIGHLIGHT CANADIAN AUTHORS

A novel set during the Roman Empire and a series of articles from the anthology *Hot Apple Cider* took the most awards at The Word Guild Canadian Christian Writing Awards this year. Awards were given in 30 independently judged categories, including non-fiction books, novels, articles, columns and poems published during 2008.

The novel *Christianus Sum* (which is Latin for “I am a Christian”) won three best (historical romance and suspense) novel categories for first-time author Shawn J. Pollett of Golden Valley, Ont. (near Parry Sound). The story in manuscript had already won free publishing in last year’s Word Alive Press competition.

Two articles from the inspirational anthology *Hot Apple Cider* (That’s Life! Communications) also won awards: two went to “The Diamond Ring” by N. J. Lindquist of Markham, Ont. (inspirational and general readership categories) and one went to “It Was Then That I Carried You” by Angelina Fast-Vlaar of



St. Catharines, Ont. (personal experience category).

Other multiple winners include Toronto writers Tim

Huff for *Bent Hope: A Street Journal* (Castle Quay Books) and Greg Paul for *The Twenty Piece Shuffle: Why the Poor and Rich Need Each Other* (David C. Cook).

British Columbia winners included Carolyn Arends, author of *Wrestling With Angels: Adventures in Faith and Doubt* (Harvest House), and John H. Redekop, who was published in the *Mennonite Brethren Herald*.

Donna Dawson of St. Marys, Ont., won two awards for her suspense thriller *Vengeance* (Word Alive).

The awards were announced at a public gala June 17 in Mississauga, Ont. Each included a cash prize. The complete list of winners, selected from a record number of 237 entries from writers in eight provinces, is available at www.thewordguild.com.

The Word Guild also sponsors Canada’s largest Christian writers conference, Write! Canada (www.writecanada.org). After the gala, 250 writers, editors, agents and publishers met in Guelph, Ont., June 18-20 for professional development, networking and marketing. The conference, founded and formerly managed by *Faith Today*, is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

—BILL FLEDDERUS

VENGEANCE: A NOVEL

Author: Donna Dawson

James Kirk Benedict is an FBI agent, a Christian and the son of two die-hard *Star Trek* fans. While on a cruise ship vacation, he finds himself in the middle of a medical mystery as, one by one, passengers begin succumbing to a deadly, human-caused, flesh-eating disease. Are the victims being targeted? Is a virus running amok? Who could be behind such a twisted plan?

Meanwhile back in San Diego, Benedict’s girlfriend, psychologist Dr. Julie Holding, is supporting him from afar. She has her own challenges as she’s counselling a young victim of violence from one of James’s earlier cases.

As the case unfolds, Benedict discovers links to a criminal mastermind called Nam, who wants to exact revenge for pain he suffered as a child. As the story unfolds, two or three other plot lines twist and converge – all explorations and meditations on Dawson’s central theme, which is also the title of the book.

Who gets to exact vengeance? What is the difference between vengeance and justice? Is vengeance ever warranted? These are the questions that torment Benedict and are given thoughtful treatment by author Donna Dawson, a writing instructor at Fanshawe College in London, Ont.

Over 225 pages, Dawson crafts a story that is medita-



Word Alive, 2008. 248 pages. \$20.95 (paper)

ANOTHER JUNO FOR DOWNHERE

The Juno Awards, the Canadian equivalent of the Grammys, awarded the “alt-rock” band Downhere with its third win for contemporary Christian/gospel album of the year at a ceremony in March broadcast live on CTV.

The band’s winning album *Ending Is Beginning* (Centricity/David C. Cook) was nominated alongside work by Starfield, NewWorldSon, Article One and Life Support.

Downhere won Junos previously in 2002 and 2007. It was formed by Marc Martel and Jason Germain, former roommates at Briercrest Bible College in Caronport, Sask.



tive yet fast-paced, spiritual yet worldly wise and fanciful yet carefully researched. It's a delicate balancing act, but she pulls it off, for the most part, by keeping the plot moving right to a pleasing, page-turning end.

Fans of mystery and thriller novels will find a lot to like in this book. Readers of other genres might find the occasional use of clichéd description a bit off-putting (the “wan smile” and the voice “crackling on a speakerphone”) but it's no more than you'd find in a Clive Cussler or Sue Grafton novel. It will be interesting to see where time, Providence and a few more novels take this promising writer of Christian thrillers.

—LLOYD RANG

CANADIAN PENTECOSTALISM: TRANSITION AND TRANSFORMATION

Editor: Michael Wilkinson

Pentecostalism in its various forms became a key part of the Canadian religious landscape for most of the 20th century, and it shows no sign of waning. Indeed, it is now “the most significant reconfiguration within Christianity.”

Michael Wilkinson, professor of sociology at Trinity Western University in Langley, B.C., and author of *The Spirit Said Go: Pentecostal Immigrants in Canada* (Peter Lang, 2006), has edited the first in-depth treatment of this phenomenon in the Canadian context. These essays examine and illumine classical Pentecostalism, charismatic movements in the Roman Catholic and mainline Protestant churches and neo-Pentecostalism.

This book focuses on the origins and development of Canadian Pentecostalism from movement to denomination; aspects of the Canadian Pentecostal experience, including how it manifests itself in education, theology, missions and gender relations; and the Pentecostal response to institutionalization and globalization.

The authors, most of whom have earned doctorates from Canadian institutions, have amassed an impressive array of literature – witness the 23-page bibliography. What makes this volume so significant are the broad categories of investigation: history, sociology, cultural and religious studies, and theology. The scholars represent, among other institutions, the universities of Ottawa and Lethbridge, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary/Trinity Western University, and Providence, Wycliffe and Mount Royal colleges.

Canadian Pentecostalism is another of a McGill-Queen's series on the history of religion. With this collection of disparate yet interconnected essays, the editor has provided a useful service to both Pentecostals, as they think about their origins and prospects, and non-Pentecostals desiring



McGill-Queen's, 2009. 316 pages. \$85. (hardcover)

to understand the presence and growing influence of Pentecostals.

This book goes a long way toward helping me personally, having been raised in a classical Pentecostal parsonage, to come to grips with the dynamics at work within this unique expression of spirituality.

—BURTON JANES

THROUGH A LENS DARKLY: HOW THE NEWS MEDIA PERCEIVE AND PORTRAY EVANGELICALS

Author: David M. Haskell

This assessment of how the Canadian media perceive and portray Canadian Evangelicals contains both good news and bad news. The good: Evangelicals who have wondered if they're crazy for thinking that the media portray them negatively have not lost their minds. The reason they're not crazy is the bad: in a measurable number of instances and in a number of specific ways, Canadian media do betray a negative bias in their treatment of Evangelicals.

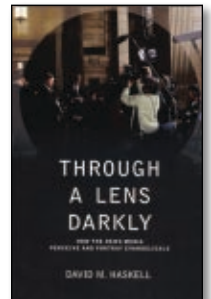
But author David Haskell includes a small slice of good news inside the bad: by comparison with how Canadian media portray American Evangelicals, Canadian Evangelicals look tolerant.

Haskell, who teaches journalism at the Brantford, Ont., campus of Wilfrid Laurier University, knows whereof he writes. And readers will readily see he has researched his subject carefully and exhaustively. At several points he gives readers a view of his raw findings. But he keeps this book accessible. It reads like a story, albeit not the happiest one you will read this year.

Readers will detect an irenic tone in *Through a Lens Darkly*. Haskell does not hold back from reporting the negative conclusions he has drawn from his research, but he consistently avoids the whiny tone that some of us might adopt in the same circumstances. In fact, throughout, he treats the journalists who have failed Evangelicals in the way Evangelicals would like to be treated.

If some readers of Haskell's book might prefer that the problem he has researched be rooted entirely in some plot on the journalists' side, those readers will come away disappointed. Late in his book, he offers some interesting advice to Evangelicals wishing to be heard. Without spoiling the reading experience by revealing his advice, I will commend the book to anyone willing to admit that culpability lies not entirely on the one side.

—KEN BADLEY



Clements Academic, 2009. 289 pages. \$24.95 (paper)

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Who Is My Neighbour?

By John G. Stackhouse Jr.



Churches can easily lead the way in educating us about the religions of our non-Christian neighbours

Quick! Tell me everything you know about Islam. Well, let's see. Muslims are Arabs from the Middle East who keep their women covered up. They were responsible for the 9/11 attacks. They also come from Pakistan and Afghanistan where our troops are fighting the Taliban, who are a kind of Muslim.

They promote suicide bombing, except for those who promote peace because Islam is "the religion of peace." They hate Israel and the Jews and they're still angry about the Crusades, so I guess they still hold a grudge against Christians too.

There are two kinds of Muslims with names that start with S, but I can't remember the exact words right now. Their religious centre is Mecca, which is in Saudi Arabia, I think, and it has a big black cube in the middle around which they walk and pray.

Plus some of them are funny: *Little Mosque on the Prairie* shows that.

* * *

If you were asked to dump out on the table everything you think you know about Islam, would you do any better? Most of us wouldn't because most of what we know about Islam comes from two sources: entertainment media and news media.

Since those media cannot be relied upon to provide Canadian citizens with a well-balanced and thorough understanding of our Muslim neighbours – or, indeed, our Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist or Jewish neighbours – and since our public school systems continue to keep religion out of the curriculum as much as possible rather than making world religions a mandatory subject as they should, then what can we Christians do?

Educate ourselves. Our network of churches is poised to deliver the education our media and school systems are not delivering. So let's do it well and lead the way in Canadian society toward a proper understanding of our cultural differences in our increasingly diverse society.

How? It's easy. Get the right books and get the right teachers.

Good books have been generated by evangelical Christians on world religions. *Faith Today* columnist James Beverley has published several introductions to religions,

including *Religions A to Z: A Guide to the 100 Most Influential Religious Movements* (Thomas Nelson). Canadian Irving Hexham, professor of religious studies at the University of Calgary, has published *The Concise Dictionary of Religion* (Regent College Publishing). And American scholar Gerald McDermott has recently published *The Baker Pocket Guide to World Religions: What Every Christian Needs to Know* (Baker). (This isn't the myth-teller Gerald McDermott, by the way, but the professor.)

More substantially, the textbook I use in my courses on world religions is Theodore Ludwig's *The Sacred Paths* (Prentice-Hall).

As for the right teachers, most universities and community colleges have someone who teaches a world religions course. Pay them to give a seminar in your church. Better still, partner with other churches and do it together on a Saturday to maximize the attendance and share the costs. (Start with Islam or with the religion most important in your community and then proceed to the other religions germane to your community. You don't have to cover them all, of course. You simply are trying to find out who your neighbours are.)

Then invite a clergyperson or other spokesperson from the religion to visit. I don't recommend you start with clergy because their business isn't to teach dispassionately but to passionately inspire. But once you have a good intellectual framework established through reading and teaching, you can then engage the other tradition intelligently and appreciatively.

Knowing about other religions won't make us all like each other, of course. Sometimes getting to know someone better makes you like the person less! There's nothing sentimental about this project.

Quite the contrary. We need to know and understand our neighbours if we have any hope of building a flourishing society with them, let alone share the gospel with them in a way they can understand and receive it. ■

Most of what we know about Islam comes from two sources: entertainment media and news media

John Stackhouse teaches world religions as the Sangwoo Youtong Chee professor of theology and culture at Regent College, Vancouver.

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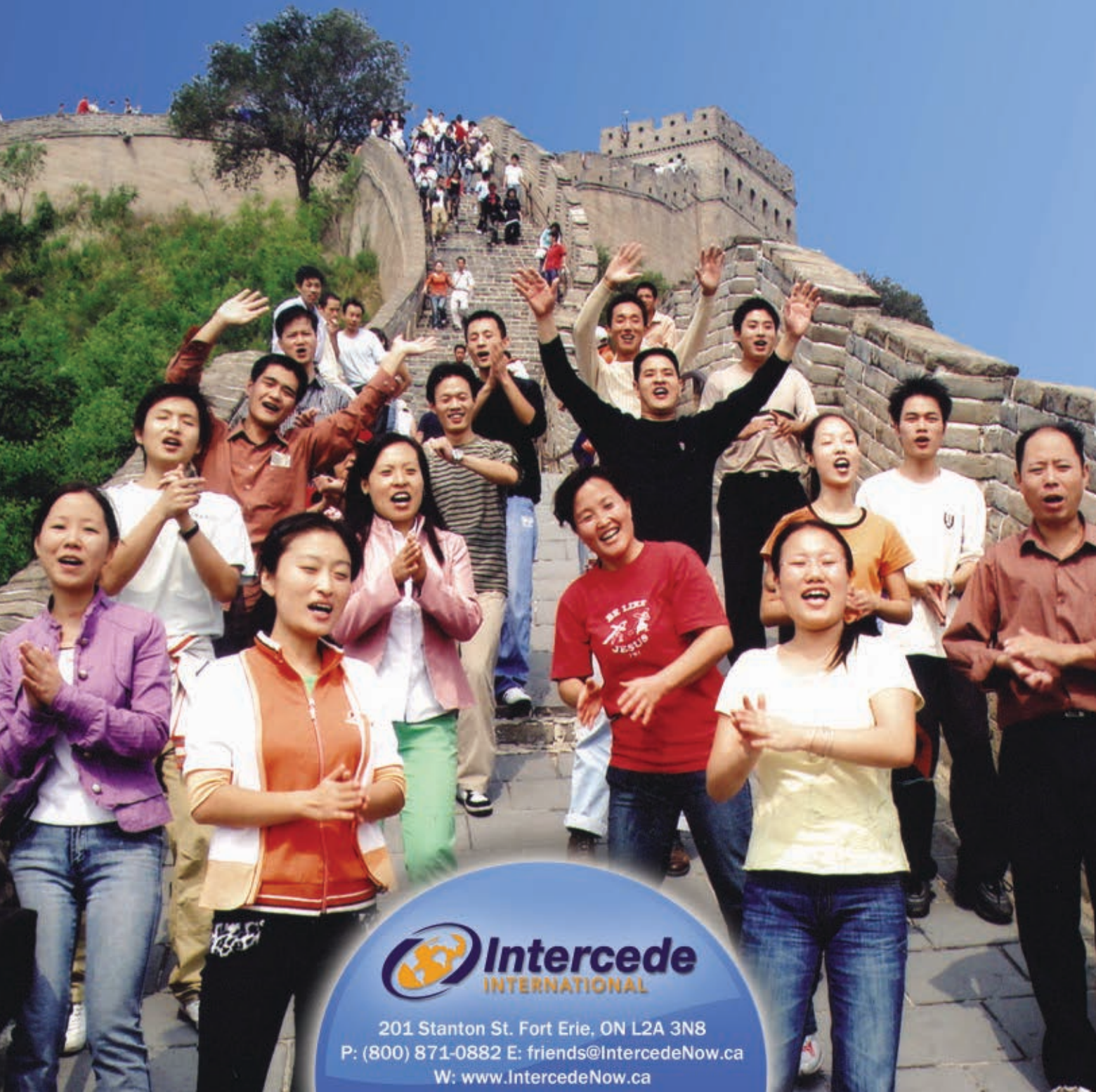
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