



# Prostitution in Canada

How Evangelicals Are Working to Break the Chains

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- Leadership 2020: Preparing for Leadership Shifts in Canada, p. 25
- The Joys of Private Adoption, p. 30



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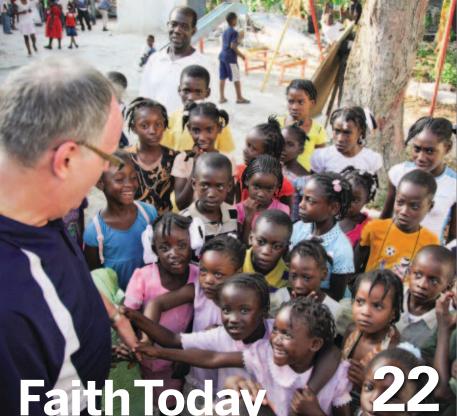
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REYNOLD MAINSE

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- Haiti: One Year Later by Lisa Hall-Wilson 22 and Marcy Kennedy / Canadians involved in Christian relief and development work describe the ongoing challenges in the country levelled by a January 2010 earthquake.
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# **Praying Through Change**

Serving with God in His mission can mean facing ugly realities

ur cover story, "Can We Help to Break the Chains?" by Karen Stiller, helps us understand some of the horror of prostitution in Canada, unfolded through the eyes of one woman who felt she had no choice but "turning tricks" to meet her family's financial need.

Her story is not unique. Others become entrapped even earlier, as young as 13, often after having been abused by people in positions of trust. Because of their environment and the action of others, such women see no other choice but prostitution. No undamaged, unpressured, fully informed woman would willingly choose this life of degradation and fear, this daily violation of her body and humiliation of her spirit.

Thankfully, Christian ministries are ministering to these women and treating them with the dignity they lack.

It's easy to feel ashamed of the men who choose to use these women and treat them as objects to gratify their own desires. And yet, these men too need our prayers for the darkness growing in their souls – a darkness that draws them further from God's intent for their lives.

Both victims and perpetrators need our prayers. And God's intervention is obvious in the stories of the Christian ministries which reach out to these women, extending value and sanctuary.

But to bring more systemic change, they say, requires action in our courts. The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, along with others, is calling Canada to rewrite the laws following the example of Nordic countries to criminalize the buyers instead of the sellers, and to offer more protection and help to those who are vulnerable. (To find out more, visit the EFC. ca/prostitution).

**FaithToday** 

Another need for our prayers is evident in "Haiti One Year Later." In this article, Lisa Hall-Wilson and Marcy Kennedy provide an update since the country was levelled by an earthquake. Those in the know report serious and ongoing challenges which would be all the more discouraging if we did not have prayer.

Canada's children continue to need our prayers as well, as you will see in "The Joys of Private Adoption" by Jeff Dewsbury, the second of three features we are publishing this year about different types of adoption. An article on international adoption will appear in a future issue.

As I look ahead, there's something else I'd like to invite you to pray about. *Faith Today* is planning a special summer issue – it will be a digital-only issue available to anyone on the Internet. The idea is to allow all of us to share it with nextdoor neighbours as well as loved ones and friends around the world. It will allow advertisers to showcase their ministries using video, and frankly allow us to trim our spending of donor dollars in this year of budgetary restraint. Would you pray that this idea would find favour with God and with readers – and if we don't already have your email address, send it in?

> GAIL REID is managing editor of Faith Today and director of publishing and resourcing for The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

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#### **Including Children**

*Re: Children in the Church (Jan/ Feb 2011)* 

What a delight to see the interest in and commitment to children as part of the worshiping family of God. I advocate this cause in my work for Mennonite Church Canada, but in recent years, it has become a lonely role as peers from regional church bodies and other denominations have had to reduce ministry to children in tough economic times.

However, Spirit-led winds

#### Letters to the editor

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of change are calling the church to reconsider the child Jesus places in our midst, and your Jan/Feb issue is a good indicator of that welcome change. How will our churches respond to the challenges you articulated so well? I hope our churches will listen carefully to the new generation of articulate advocates for children that is maturing into leadership, as illustrated by your fine feature article by David M. Csinos.

> *Elsie Rempel* Winnipeg, Man.

Great cover articles! I kept resonating with the biblical, theological, liturgical and political points of the various authors. The United Church of Canada explored the same subject in much the same way in the 1980s, and came to many of the same conclusions, so it was like a trip down memory lane for someone who was actively involved in that effort.

The final report, proposing a much more inclusive approach to children and youth (ministry *with* children, not *to* them), came to a national meeting of the church in 1990.

To my knowledge few if any carried through with a recommendation of the final report, A Place for You: Toward the Integration of Children Into the Life of the Church. to include children and youth in the administration of the church. The practical difficulties. combined with the reluctance of many adults to see children as being equal members of the family of God, keep bumping this response to Jesus' radical love down the priority list of congregational things to do.

So thank you for the wonderful reminder to remain open to the presence of the Spirit in people of all ages and stages.

> *Robin Wardlaw* Newmarket, Ont.

#### **Dangerously Vague**

*Re: Can Evangelicals Welcome the Community of Christ? (Jan/ Feb* 2011)

I came into a personal, saving relationship with Jesus Christ, and upon discovering that my pastor held to a modalistic understanding of the Trinity as well as to a denial of the deity of Christ, I left the Community of Christ (CoC).

Upon further investigation and through several unsuccessful attempts to correspond with the headquarters for qualification of church doctrine, I came to realize the language used by the CoC in their doctrinal statement is intentionally vague to sound orthodox, while the essential doctrines of traditional Christianity are not necessarily assumed in actuality.

I think it would behoove us to carefully examine the language being used, and to compel the CoC to clearly define the terms used in their doctrinal statements before we think about building fellowship with a cult.

> Desley Mendoza Thunder Bay, Ont.

#### Good in Its Proper Place

*Re: Faith Forum (Jan/Feb 2011)* The letter entitled "Sex is Good" needs a response – hopefully many.

The writer condones sex outside of marriage, and says it is healthy in relationships. He even implicates Jesus as one who never spoke against it. In fact, Jesus said that if we even look at the opposite sex lustfully, we have already committed adultery in our hearts. The whole New Testament condemns such relationships as "fornication" and totally unacceptable to a new person in Christ.

Sex is indeed good. It is precious, and that is why it must be safeguarded for that binding lifetime relationship. The Bible plainly teaches that "the two shall become one flesh" – the two, not the several or the many. This standard of holy living was given to protect us and not to harm us. God loves us and does not want people to be hurt or harmed.

God's way cannot be violated without harming others and ourselves. It comes from God who is love, and because He loves us He guards our wellbeing by disallowing only the things that are harmful.

The letter giving approval to sex outside of marriage shows how far society in general, and even some who call themselves Christians, have moved away from biblical and Christian standards.

*Bill Wright* Brampton, Ont.

Brethren Churches.

He has served as the

its director of leader-

group's moderator and

ship development, and

Are we reading the same Bible?

My Bible calls extramarital sex *fornication*, illicit sex (Matthew 15:19). The Apostle Paul counts *fornicators* among those who will not inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

> Roland Gebauer Kelowna, B.C.

I was shocked and grieved to read Glen Eagle's letter. Is this what today's Christians are believing and practising? The Ten Commandments and Christ's teaching make it 100 per cent clear that sex outside of marriage is not acceptable and will not go unpunished.

*Catherine Good* Beamsville, Ont.

#### Editor's Note:

Though Faith Today's editors disagree with Glen Eagle's position, we printed his original letter to encourage discussion.

#### Jesus Not on Facebook

*Re: The Fatigued by Facebook* Interview (Nov/Dec 2010) Jesus was all about being "the real thing"! Thank you for the interview you published with Jennie McLaurin. I have a cousin who left Facebook because he felt too pseudoconnected with people he didn't actually know. Looking at how you can keep people at arm's length while "friending" them, I have to say I don't think Jesus would be on it. Facebook is at best okay for catching up, but seeing \*hugz\* on your computer screen doesn't even come close to the real thing.

> *Laurel Giesbrecht* Portage la Prairie, Man.

#### APPOINTED

**Bruce Guenther** as interim president and developer of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary Canada. His mandate is to provide oversight to MBBS programs at ACTS Seminaries in Langley, B.C., and at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, Man., while also leading the board to chart a future in keeping with the graduate theological educational and leadership needs in the Canadian MB landscape. This comes partly in response to the recent absorption in the United States of MBBS-Fresno into Fresno Pacific University.

Harro Van Brummelen as executive director of Christian Studies International, which helps sponsor four Canadian professors and 36 others to teach at universities overseas, exposing students to a Christian worldview and equipping them for leadership. Dr. Van Brummelen, who recently retired from Trinity Western University, succeeds Henk Van Andel.

**Sam Chaise** as general secretary of Canadian Baptist Ministries for a five-year term, effective last October. Rev. Chaise now acts as



in setting the strategic direction for the organization, which links regional Baptist groups representing a total of 1,000 churches. Chaise grew up in Sudbury,

chief executive officer,

overseeing operations and providing leadership

Sam Chaise

Ont., has pastored in western Canada and recently directed the Carey Institute in Vancouver. He succeeds Gary Nelson, now president of Tyndale University College and Seminary.

**Bob and Penny Armstrong** as executive directors of Oasis Retreats Canada, a soul care ministry associated with Power to Change. Oasis has served almost 700 pastors, missionaries and Christian leaders in the past 11 years in Abbotsford, B.C. The Armstrongs, who each hold an MA degree in counselling, have published several books on marriage. They succeed founding directors Pete and Shirley Unrau.

**Willy Reimer** of Calgary as executive director of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite



continues to pastor at SunWest Christian Fellowship. He succeeds Dave Wiebe, now executive secretary of

the International Community of Mennonite Brethren, a fellowship of leaders from 19 nations.

#### LAUNCHED

**Willy Reimer** 

The Centre for the Study of Religion and Peace at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont., will focus on research, dialogue and public education, rooted in the college's Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage, but will explore the peace potential inherent in all religious traditions. Nathan Funk, associate professor in peace and conflict studies, is the centre's



lead researcher.

#### RESTRUCTURING Arrow Leadership International Ministries is transitioning Carson Pue, who has served 12 years as president looking after both Canada and the

Carson Pue

United States, to become CEO. New presidents for each country will soon be hired and office locations in Surrey, B.C., and Blaine, Wash., re-examined.

**Christian Info Society,** publisher of the pioneering free newspaper *B. C. Christian News* in Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley, has announced it is folding that venerable periodical. The society will continue with its website CanadianChristianity.com and with *Converge Magazine*.

#### ELECTED

**Scott Boughner** of Toronto as chair of the board of directors of Fellowship Publications, a renewal outreach ministry celebrating the historic Christian faith of The United Church of Canada. He succeeds Jack Scott. Fellowship is sponsoring a conference on April 5-7, 2011 in Burlington, Ont., to bring together a new generation of United Church of Canada leaders (www.cruxifusion.ca).

# Picturing the World a Better Place

n December 800 street people from Vancouver's downtown eastside experienced love through the lens of 30 gifted photographers.

Help Portrait (HP) is an international coalition of photographers desiring to "picture the world a better place." Such one-day shooting sessions take place in over 543 locations and 42 countries.

"Seeing so many photographers come together and give their time and skill has changed me," says HP founder Jeremy Cowart of Brentwood, Tenn.

Vancouver was one of 20 Canadian cities that participated in 2010. While the main event unfolded at Union Gospel Mission (UGM), organizer Steph Forster of the Nehemiah Arts Foundation erected a circus tent alongside four smaller tents outside the mission. This allowed for a hot chocolate station, outdoor studios, live music by Artisan Church, a comedy act and an illusionist show, face painting, as well as an information booth on UGM's rehab programs.

"The most devastating kind of poverty is not food or shelter, but rather a poverty of relationship," says Artisan Church Pastor Nelson Boschman. "This kind of event builds new bridges between people and helps bring hope that old ones can be maintained and rebuilt."

For Forster, a 27-year-old artist who

travels internationally advocating for the underprivileged, HP's beauty is in its selflessness. "The only motive is to give, like Jesus," she says, explaining that for photographers and artists, a portfolio is invaluable. "We don't keep records of the photos we take with Help Portrait. We literally just give – of time and services, materials and expertise."

After having their hair and makeup done by 16 makeup artists, walk-in clients' portraits were taken and printed. They were then given two 4" by 6" prints and offered envelopes and stamps to mail the photos to family or friends.

Forster has a heart for

HP in part because she herself grew up with eight siblings in a broken home in Manitoba. "I've been there. I know what it's like to be one of those families, and your mother is trying to hold the house together and throwing you in the car and taking you to daycare so she can go to school and work," she says. "We would have totally gone to something like this."

Derek Weiss, public relations specialist for UGM, says that for some of their clients, this is the only chance they have to receive a family portrait, let alone a Leigh Culpin, Help Portrait Vancouver core team member. Inset: Steph Forster, Help Portrait Vancouver Community coordinator/PR/organizer and Ian Sheh, lead photographer.

compliment. "A lot of the people we serve are beat up spiritually if not physically," he says. "So for them to come in and have people pay attention to them, it's huge." I —*Emily Wierenga* 

approached Heidi Ram in a parking lot. Shook up with visions of drug addicts living in motels, begging for money, Ram began to sense God calling her to "go to the motels and pray." One June night at 11:30 p.m. the call was powerful to go *now* 

and pray. "Fine, God, I'm going!" she shouted. Driving to five motels, Ram stopped in each parking lot, saying, "God, I don't know why I'm here."

From her car, she saw a wall of closed doors and shifted her prayers. "Jesus, I pray that as you stand at each door, You would knock so loudly, they will hear you and let you in. You promised that if anyone hears and opens the door You will come in and eat with him."

Two motels in particular were busy with kids playing, angry women on cell phones, tired construction workers.

By summer's end Ram had grown to recognize one family in



Following God's leading one step at a time has dramatic-

ministry at motels. It all started in March 2006, when a couple

ally changed an Ontario woman's life and led to a flourishing new



#### **Christian College Offers Video Conference Education**



orking as an emergency social worker in a remote First Nations community on the shore of Hudson Bay, Cameron Donaldson is more than 2,000 kilometres away from Providence College and Seminary in Otterburne, Man.

But that hasn't stopped him from attending classes there. Since September Donaldson, 21, has been interacting with his class on career youth ministry through eProv, one of the first fully interactive video conferencing education systems at a Christian college in Canada.

The best part about eProv, says Donaldson, is that it enables him to continue his ministry in Waskaganish, Que., and progress with his education at the same time. His classmates also benefit when he brings his specific ministry examples and issues into class discussions.

Built on the Nefsis technology platform, eProv is a highdefinition, two-way video conference enabling students with a computer and Internet connection to participate in a class from anywhere in the world.

Using one of two Hub rooms in the college, professors and students at Providence are joined with eProv students in one room on one screen. eProv students can see and hear what is going on in the classroom, as well as speak to the class. Other visuals, such as Powerpoint, are also visible. Although many post-secondary institutions are pursuing such technology, Providence's is already in full use, with students enrolled from British Columbia to Quebec and from Canada's North.

Bruce Duggan, associate professor of management, was one of the pioneers of eProv, starting three years ago. Now Providence is at the cutting edge of this kind of technology, thanks to a \$557,000 grant from the Canadian government's Knowledge Infrastructure Program and support from the Buller Foundation.

"We're spending a lot of time this year ramping up, showing off what this can do, and building the market," says Duggan. "It's not the only mode of distance education we're using, but we think it will fulfill an important niche."

"When I think of Cameron, there are hundreds of people in the same situation all across the

North," says Duggan. "Instead of coming out to school, they can learn while they're there. eProv enables us to make distance education personal, the way it was always meant to be."

Live classroom discussion is particularly important for advanced courses, says Duggan, where class time is no longer about transmitting information from prof to student but about wrestling together with the subject and the ideas – a difficult task using traditional distance education methods.

Gus Konkel is the school's president. "The technology of eProv is a way of reducing our footprint and extending our reach. Students can be in the class without the cost of commuting, and we can provide education to more students. It is a way to extend the mission of the institution."

Each eProv student is also partnered with a student at Providence. If students are working together on a group project, they can meet outside class time using eProv. They can share their project materials and work on them all at the same time, without having to send emails back and forth.

Eight eProv classes were offered in the fall semester, and five more are running in the current semester.

-Marc-Nicholas Paulichenko/ Providence College and Seminary

particular. Stifling an urge to buy school backpacks for the boys, she thought, "No, I've never talked to them." In the quietness that evening she read, "for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."

Laden with backpacks the following weekend, Ram found the parking lot empty. For the first time she stepped out of her car. Suddenly, a skateboard rushed up behind her. As the mother walked up and smiled, Ram offered the backpacks.

"Oh, my God!" the mom exclaimed, revealing other "strange things happening." An envelope on the seat of a bus, addressed "For You," contained a Bible. God was indeed making Himself known!

During these months Ram confided in two encouraging women at her church, CompassPoint Bible Church in Burlington, Ont. Eventually what God birthed has become a congregational outreach known as the Motel Ministry. Four couples joined Ram, serving chili dinner in a motel parking lot, on a simple mission to "offer the unconditional love of Jesus."

Four years later, seven churches from a variety of denominations provide volunteers. Other outcomes include a drop-in centre at a motel, furniture distribution, a small group using the Alpha program (introducing Christianity), a Spanish immigrant ministry and 10 motel kids sponsored to Camp Mini-Yo-We.

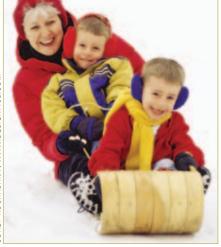
Ram also recently left her high-paying corporate job in Toronto to work with the Salvation Army's homeless shelter program. She is astounded at what God has done. She obeyed only what she understood in each moment. Her prayer remains "that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the Lord has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it" (Isaiah 41:20).

#### **Recommended Resources**

- Beyond Stereotypes: Christians and Sexuality by the Evangelical Alliance Working Group on Human Sexuality (Evangelical Alliance Australia, 2009). What is God's "take" on sexual behaviour? What is it about the Christian faith that makes it good news for people outside the heterosexual mainstream? A hundred-page booklet with discussion questions. www.ea.org.au/ Resources/ResourceShop.aspx
- Ecclesiastes (Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms) by Craig G. Bartholomew (Baker, 2009). An exegetical reading with theological insights. An accessible commentary for readers of various levels. Bartholomew teaches at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ont.
- The Spirituality of Narnia: The Deeper Magic of C. S. Lewis by John P. Bowen (Regent College Publishing, 2007). Introduces how the popular Narnia stories for children mirror Lewis's own wrestling with his spiritual longings. Bowen teaches about evangelism at Wycliffe College in Toronto.

"Unless you **change** and become like **little children**, you will never enter the **kingdom of heaven.**"

-Matthew 18:3 TNIV





One of four new Villages of Hope in Kenya, constructed by Marvin Srigley.

Arines, Ont., doing an unusual sort of fundraising work. The rest of the year, you could just as easily find him in Guatemala building a church, in Kenya constructing a children's home, or erecting a school in Peru.

In 2006 Srigley retired from General Motors and decided to use his roofing and handyman skills for a good cause. He let it be known that he would redirect part of his roofing income to missions projects, or if customers preferred, they could give directly to the organization he recommends to receive an income tax receipt. Six roofs in 2009 became twelve roofs in 2010.

The funds he raises in Canada are sometimes sent ahead to purchase materials in readiness for an overseas mission project he will be involved in. Small supplies or hardto-get tools may be carried from Canada. When Srigley travels with teams, each person packs personal effects into a backpack and checks two hockey bags of clothes or shoes to distribute in the destination country. Presenting the gospel through local outreach is part of the team strategy.

Many of Srigley's mission trips are in partnership with Missionary Ventures Canada. After six trips so far to Guatemala, he has helped complete a church (over three years) and build a school (over two years). But the greater vision is to equip pastors.

Srigley helped raise funds to sponsor Marco Antonio Ramírez to attend the Central American Seminary in Guatemala City.

#### **Mobile Meat Canner Fills Need**

his spring more than 50,000 cans of meat will be filled by church volunteers in southwestern Ontario seeking to feed the hungry.

Originally founded in 1946 to send food to the Ukraine, the Mennonite Central Committee's meat canning initiative has since expanded to 34 American cities and three Canadian.

Former MCC executive Dave Worth introduced the mobile meat canner – a canning facility built into the back of a semi-truck – to Ontario in 1997. Two years later the operation was approved by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Today, it stops in Winkler, Man., each October, and is scheduled for Learnington, Ont., April 19-22, and Elmira, Ont., April 25-28.

"Meat protein is a very important nutrient for people who do not have enough to eat, and canning the meat is the most effective and efficient way of processing it so it can be transported During six years of part-time studies, his ministry expanded to three new areas as he trained 13 others. Srigley was overjoyed to attend Ramírez's graduation in October 2010. Srigley sees needs in underdeveloped countries and invites his roofing customers to participate. On the other side of the world, he is privileged to meet missionary families, seeing how God is changing lives.

Alongside this work, he also serves as

chair of the board with CAM International of Canada.

"Retirement on the roof is worth all the aches and pains," Srigley says.

-Charlene de Haan

#### Hamilton Congregations Greening

here can an evangelical church turn for practical help in reducing its negative impact on the environment and in safeguarding the resources of God's creation for future generations?

In Hamilton, Ont., about a hundred faith groups have connected with a particular national program called Greening Sacred Spaces, which assists faith communities with the buildings they use for worship and, if desired, with individual members' homes as well, in the context of their faith (greeningsacredspaces.net). The Greening Sacred Spaces program was developed by a national network called Faith and the Common Good, and in Hamilton it's delivered in partnership with Environment Hamilton, a community group.

One evangelical church that is involved is Hughson St. Baptist. Having outgrown their church building, they are designing a new sustainable space in an existing structure not far from the old one.

The emphasis "is primarily about the biblical idea of stewardship, in terms of both its fiscal and ecological applications," says Sean Botham, a member at Hughson St. Baptist.

The financial benefits of an energy-efficient structure, with its reduced operating expenses, is more cost-effective than a conventional build, he says.

"If being a good steward is about not wasting, and about taking care of what we've been entrusted with, then building this way will be an example of both financial and environmental stewardship," Botham says.

Many Hamilton churches co-operate in a movement called True City (TrueCity.ca), committed to working together for the good of the city and its "quality of life." Greg Reader of Bethany Gospel is a spokesperson.

"Quality of life is very much in tune with the gospel of Jesus, and brings environmental concern into the overall

conversation of what is best and healthy for our city."

A Christian vision for one's city, says Reader, should also be informed by the last chapter of Revelation, "a picture of healthy human community in



harmonious relationship with the rest of creation."

"If we follow the path of Jesus, we will put others first. We will be concerned about the quality of air they breathe, the beauty of the neighbourhoods we share with them, the diversity of life flourishing around us. We will push for vibrant local agriculture in and surrounding our cities."

This is exactly the kind of thinking that has lead Emma Cubitt and husband Graham of New City Church to start a community garden on an underused city park property, bringing together local churches and other groups dedicated to that renewal.

"As a Christian, the core of my faith is the belief that Jesus came to renew the world and our relationship with God," Cubitt says. "One of my callings is to renew the urban environment and people's relationship to the land."

Sharing with new gardeners about resource stewardship, ecological practices and appreciation for the environment, Cubitt maintains that this sort of stewardship is part of the essential message of the Bible, "putting into practice the hope we have that is inspired by this faith. Positive change is hard work, but our faith motivation has been key to us overcoming the many challenges in starting this community garden. And we are already seeing the effects of people being transformed by the gardening experience." -Beatrice Ekwa Ekoko

easily," says Elmira chair Ryan Martin, who oversees a committee of 12.

When the mobile mechanism, as well as the four men who run it. arrives in Elmira, 400 volunteers will package 18,143 kilograms of purchased turkey meat (or 27,000 cans).

"Our process involves grinding the turkey, putting the turkey in cans, cooking in pressure cookers, cleaning the cans, inspecting every can, labelling, and then packaging," says Martin.

In Elmira the volunteers are pre-

dominantly Mennonite. The 650 volunteers in Learnington stem from a variety of denominations including Baptist, Catholic, Latter Day Saints, Lutheran, Mennonite, United, as well as a number of Christian and public schools.

"Our main concern is to feed the hungry," says former Learnington chair Marlene Schmidtgall.

Once the cans have been filled and packaged, they are then shipped to MCC's warehouse in Plum Coulee, Man. "From there the MCC decides where

the meat gets shipped to and for what purpose," says Martin.

Last year 31,750 kilograms were sent to Haiti. "It is sent to areas with chronic malnutrition, but more targeted towards certain things like hospitals, refugee camps, orphanages, as well as to food programs," Martin explains.

Yet more than the meat, says Schmidtgall, is the hope which each can brings. "They know there is someone out there that cares." 🗉

-Emily Wierenga



### **Commercialization and Its Limits**

When confronting the commodification of humans, true progress means affirming the dignity of all and limiting what can be bought and sold.

> S lavery is universally condemned, yet its modern form (human trafficking) is still a reality today. Our world's rejection of slavery arises from a rejection

of treating humans as commodities to be bought and sold. As Christians we affirm the dignity of all because we are created in the image of God – we are subjects and not simply objects to be manipulated.

Recently the Supreme Court of Canada examined laws governing assisted human reproduction including the issue of paid surrogacy, a case in which the EFC intervened. Should women in Canada be able to be paid to be surrogate mothers? According to Canadian law the answer is no, and this was affirmed in December by the Supreme Court. In the case Quebec was joined by other provinces in challenging the ability of the Federal Government to regulate some

activities related to assisted reproduction. In a deeply divided decision the Court affirmed that some practices, including offering financial incentives for surrogacy, should remain illegal in all parts of Canada.

This ruling upholds the norm that commercializing human reproduction would, as concluded by the Baird Report (from the 1989 Royal Commission) and since affirmed by Parliament and the Supreme Court, "undermine the respect for life and dignity and lead to the commodification of women and children."

At the same time another court in Ontario was moving

EFC The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

#### 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 the EFC.ca.

Progress is having laws that protect and liberate the vulnerable from abuse by setting limits on what can be bought in a highly commercialized society.

in the opposite direction by overturning laws intended to restrict prostitution. In the wake of that court's decision, some argue that progress means we should, as an expression of our autonomy, reject the old moralities and instead accept prostitution and try to make it as physically safe as possible for the prostitutes and their "clients."

Is this moral "progress"? Looking at the trajectory from the elimination of slavery and the universal condemnation of human trafficking, is not the next step to reject other practices that entail the commercialization and commodification of women, children and men?

Some European countries have already made it illegal to pay for sex. This criminalizes the activity of the "john," who is typically male, seeking sexual gratification by purchas-

> ing or renting the body of another, who is typically a woman, a girl or a boy. It does not make criminals of the victims.

Consider those trapped in prostitution. They are often youth who have run away from neglectful or abusive environments. Or they are children who "aged out" of government care and have been left with nowhere to call home.

According to the Adoption Council of Canada, 41 per cent of children in British Columbia who "aged out" (after the government failed to find a home for them) ended up in the criminal justice system within five years – with many of the girls turning to prostitution to survive. And these children

are disproportionately aboriginal.

We cannot stand idly by. We must make children, especially vulnerable ones, our top priority.

What is progressive in the 21st century is not eliminating the barriers to the commercialization of that which fills the sensual desires of some. Rather, progress is having laws that protect and liberate the vulnerable from abuse by setting limits on what can be bought in a highly commercialized society. It also means opening our lives to those who need homes and supporting those who are caring for vulnerable persons.

In the affirmation of the dignity of all we find freedom from oppression. This societal norm is undergirded by the teachings of the Scriptures and is the cornerstone of a free and just society. It is something we affirm. And it is also something we must live out.

**BRUCE J. CLEMENGER** is president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Read more of his columns at the EFC.ca/clemenger.



#### Genetic Regulation: Government Action Needed

anadian media turned to The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) for its response to an important Supreme Court decision in December. The EFC's Don Hutchinson was quoted in the *Toronto Star*, the *Ottawa Sun* and elsewhere, including an appearance on *Global National*.

The EFC expressed disappointment with the mixed decision that found certain provisions of the *Assisted Human Reproduction Act* unconstitutional.

"Maintaining the integrity of the Act would have ensured a strong and consistent national standard across the country," laments Hutchinson. "We will now have to wait and see how each province and territory will respond. Will they or won't they regulate in these areas as Quebec has started to do?"

In the interim, Hutchinson says the court has created confusion and a virtual open season on certain aspects of human-animal genome experimentation and embryo importing, exporting, research and destruction.

The EFC has encouraged Parliament to move quickly on the absolute prohibition of these activities, and then to again engage in national consultation with the provinces and territories to ensure a consistent national standard for treatment of the artificial creation of human life.

The EFC and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) jointly intervened in the case, which was sparked by a constitutional challenge from the Government of Quebec, which argued the federal legislation intruded unnecessarily on a health matter that should remain a provincial jurisdiction under the *Constitution Act* of 1867.

The EFC/CCCB intervention argued the uniqueness and dignity of human life established a foundation of public interest requiring a single Canadian standard for regulating artificial creation of human life.

For more information visit the EFC.ca/genetic.

#### Learn About Ministry Partnering

The EFC, together with International Partnering Associates (IPA), is co-hosting a training conference focused on principles and practices related to ministry partnerships. Three partnership types will be addressed: among congregations (e.g., local church networks); agencies and organizations; and congregations and agencies/organizations. Guelph, Ont., April 11-15, 2011. Details at the EFC.ca/partnershiptraining.

#### **Sharing Your Faith Today**

*Faith Today* is planning a great opportunity for sharing your faith today – and your *Faith Today* – with a special issue. This year's Jul/Aug issue will be available free online to anyone, no password needed. In fact, there won't even be a print edition mailed, since anyone will be able to print off pages, articles or the entire Jul/Aug issue.

It's a perfect introduction for neighbours and friends to

the evangelical churches of Canada and our heart for the good of the country. (It's also a special chance for ministries to highlight their services and products using slideshows or video advertisements!)

You'll be able to share your complete copy of the magazine anywhere around the world, simply by sending an email message inviting someone to check out a free summer issue of a favourite magazine by visiting www.faithtoday. ca/digitalsample.

Don't miss this special issue! If you are a subscriber but have not been receiving emails about our digital editions, contact us at info@faithtoday.ca – we need your current email address!

#### Alerts on Egypt and Sudan

The EFC's Religious Liberty Commission published urgent prayer alerts recently, first in January as the citizens of Southern Sudan went to the polls in a referendum that determined the South will seek independence from the North. A second alert in February addressed the tense political situation in Egypt, and included an update to the commission's 2009 *Report on Religious Freedom in Egypt*.

Concern remains that Sudan's referendum's results could push the country to the brink of civil war and undo the fragile peace agreement signed five years ago. The EFC offers a video explanation by Anita Levesque, plus a report titled *Religious Freedom in Sudan: Referendum on the North/South Divide.* 

The challenge to the leadership of Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak was uncertain at press time.

All related information is available at the EFC.ca/alerts.

#### **School Boards and Parental Rights**

The EFC's Faye Sonier sent an open letter to all Ontario school boards noting existing law and policies which allow parents to withdraw their children from classes the parents find are inconsistent with their beliefs. Sonier urged the school board members to ensure, with the implementation of Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, that the rights of religious parents and students are recognized and accommodated. Read the letter at the EFC.ca/letters2011.

#### The EFC Hires New Vice President

Michael Parenteau has joined the EFC leadership team as vice president, development and communications. He is now responsible for development, marketing and affiliate relations activities.

Parenteau has worked in business development and marketing positions with Magna International. He has also worked in product marketing, advertising and sales operations with two different auto manufacturers, as well as senior marketing roles in the manufacturing and non-profit sectors.

He also holds Bachelor of Theology degree from Tyndale University College and Seminary and is the father of three married children and five grandchildren.



### **Effective Ministry Considers Context**

By Glen Smith

Welcome to the New Hinge Page Look here over the next few issues of Faith Today for introductions to some of the key concepts discussed at the Hinge Conference on Church and Mission, held in November 2010 and facilitated by The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC). This Hinge page will highlight the central themes each of the keynote speakers addressed and suggest related resources.

Glenn Smith, executive director of Direction Chrétienne/Christian Direction in Montreal, addressed the important question of why context matters for Christians who are engaged in God's mission to reconcile the world to Himself in Jesus Christ. An additional resource from Dr. Smith, "Key Indicators of a Transformed City: The Church in Dialogue With Its Context - Observations From Montréal," is available at www.direction.ca.

Another helpful resource related to this topic is The Community Research Guide for Church Leaders, a handbook on how you can learn about your neighbourhood. This was produced by the EFC's Centre for Research on Canadian Evangelicalism in partnership with Outreach Canada. You can find it and links to other related resources at theEFC.ca/churchandmission.

#### The mission of God may be timeless, but it's important to consider its nuances in a particular place and time

n 1983 I worked at a ministry to university students. One day, as I was looking out the window from the sixth floor of our office. I asked myself a question that initiated a reflection that continues to this very day. "I wonder what is being done in my city to reach people who work in the downtown core from Monday at 8 a.m. until Friday at 5 p.m.?"

I investigated and, much to my chagrin, I learned that very little was happening. I began to read about ministry with people in the marketplace and saw the relationship to the needs of urban ministry.

At that same time, I was reading in Jeremiah. Having been raised in a family that placed a high priority on the Bible and the church, I am not sure

how many times I had read that particular book or skimmed this particular chapter. But in that cold winter of 1983, the words of chapter 29:4-7 took on a new meaning.

As God Almighty had called those 10,000 exiles to seek the shalom of the foreign city, I began to see that the spiritual needs of downtown Montreal could not go by me easily.

My personal context - beginning to think about urban ministry - shaped how I listened to the Bible. I understood that Jeremiah passage in a new way and felt called to join with others to pursue a contextualized action and reflection.

It was a defining moment in my life. It led me to switch from university ministry to Direction Chrétienne, an urban ministry in Montreal that I have been with ever since.

Along the way, I learned that one single Bible text should never inform all that is the mission of God in the city. Harvey Conn taught me well when he said, "Picking one biblical text to sum up my view of urban ministry is an assignment too awesome and dangerous for me. Too awesome because wherever I turn in my Bible it shouts 'urban' to me. Too dangerous because the text I select could leave out a piece of the picture too crucial in another text and distort the whole. We need a hermeneutic serious enough to link Genesis to Revelation in the unending story of Jesus as an urban lover and the church as God's copycat."

I realized that I needed to keep studying the text. and I still do.

#### What the Church Looks Like Now

It is in vogue today to ask, "Where is the church?" and then rush to critique her lack of significant involvement in the complexities of the Canadian



city. I would rather ask, "What will the church look like?" in the midst of the cultural diversity and the competing worldviews of this time and place.

This question is not as easy to wrestle with as it appears to be at first glance, for social context is complicated. Many people do geographical and demographic studies and wrestle with notions of place. On a different

**Glen Smith** 

track, many ministry practitioners try to get their heads around the philosophies that make up the personality of our cities (sometimes referred to as a worldview or a social imaginary).

We begin to see that place is space with historical meanings, different identities and varied societal preoccupations. Thus we need to help urban ministry practitioners put these two approaches together so that in examining the city as a place we are also learning to look very closely at the worldviews that are reflected in the urban context.

To pursuing the mission of God in a place and time, we need to understand both the sociocultural characteristics of our specific population and also the worldviews and thinking. The unending biblical narrative that we find ourselves in always needs to be woven into the fabric of place a little differently.

The complexity of the Canadian city means we must constantly ask foundational questions. How do we know a context when we see one? How big is a context? How long does it last? Who is in it and is out of it, and how do we know?

To discern answers to such questions requires that we regularly relate to a broad forum of Christian ministry practitioners. 🖭

**GLENN SMITH** is the director of Direction Chrétienne, a ministry in Montreal.



# Why Activate?

By Don Hutchinson

elcome to *Faith Today's* new Activate page! In this and future editions we hope to inspire and inform you about the issues of the day that invite us – you and me – to tangible interactions that have an impact in the "public square." The public square is that place, outside the walls of home or church, where Christ calls us to be witnesses to His heart for His world since "the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1).

Sometimes the public square is the place where we offer care or a hand up to vulnerable people in the world around us – whether poor, prostituted or otherwise displaced and marginalized. Other times the public square is the place where we address politicians, judges and other leaders, knowing that "kings take pleasure in honest lips; they value persons who speak what is right" (Proverbs 16:13).

Faith is not a private matter. Christians have the *euangelion* (the "evangel" in words like "evangelical"), that is the Good News to be shared with the hearts of our neighbours – and in the halls of power, just as Jesus did, and Paul after Him, and then generations of those who have shared the love and truth of Christ with fellow citizens and the institutions of our government.

This Activate page is an extension of the [ACTIVATE] series of resources being developed by staff at the EFC's Centre for Faith and Public Life (CFPL). Many of these are in print and video form, including a Twitter feed and a regular law and public policy blog, both named ActivateCFPL.

Law and public policy are important to Canadian evangelical Christians in part because of the importance of religious freedom: the freedom to believe, worship, teach, share and live out our beliefs without hindrance or reprisal. Such freedoms are guaranteed to us both in Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and also in federal, provincial and territorial human rights legislation.

#### **Marriage Commissioners' Case**

The EFC has appeared in the courts many times to protect the religious freedom of all Canadians, most recently in Saskatchewan where we were arguing before the Court of Appeal



media in the lobby of the Supreme Court of Canada, Ottawa.

(SKCA) for the right of "marriage commissioners" to decline requests to officiate at weddings where performing such a ceremony would violate their personal religious beliefs. Marriage commissioners are not clergy, but they are licensed by government to perform marriage ceremonies. Clergy have already been granted this right of refusal as a result of our arguments before the Supreme Court of Canada in 2004.

The SKCA heard arguments in the marriage commissioners' reference case in May 2010 and rendered its decision in January 2011.

Individuals seeking to marry (in compliance with the legal requirements to do so) are entitled to a civil marriage ceremony. However, there is an important distinction between the right to be married and the right to be married by a particular person. The first is a legal right; the second is not.

The duty to ensure access to marriage rests with the government and, the EFC argued, not with each individual marriage commissioner. The duty of government is also to accommodate the religious freedom of its staff and representatives.

For example, the government could filter requests and divert same-sex couples applying for marriage away from commissioners whose conscience does not permit it, toward other commissioners.

The SKCA did not endorse the government's proposed legislative remedy, but did recommend another course of action that would protect marriage commissioners' religious freedom – a course that, at press time, the Government of Saskatchewan has stated it will not follow. Ultimately these decisions are likely to affect others working under similar circumstances in other provinces, and so people of faith and organizations such as the EFC will need to remain vigilant and engaged.

DON HUTCHINSON is vice-president, general legal counsel, and director of the Centre for Faith and Public Life at The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

#### What Can I Do?

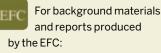
(How can I activate myself to be a world changer?)

For current news reports and updates on issues of interest to Canadian evangelicals: http://twitter.com/ActivateCFPL



For our blog of current commentary on matters of law and public policy:

www.theEFC.ca/activateCFPL



www.theEFC.ca/socialissues

For helpful tips on praying, contacting your MP, petitions and more:

www.theEFC.ca/takeaction

For more detailed statistics and EFC research: www.churchandfaithtrends.ca

3 For tips on useful statistics and EFC research:

http://twitter.com/EFCresearch

For informative EFC videos on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/user/ theEFCca

For informative EFC videos on Vimeo:

http://vimeo.com/user969491/ videos/sort:date

# Can We Help to

The crisis over Canada's prostitution laws means now is the time to bring urgently needed improvements in law – and in our attitudes and ministries as individuals and as Christian institutions.

#### By Karen Stiller

very time something really bad would happen to Katarina MacLeod, 38, she would get a tattoo. The Toronto-area woman is covered from head to toe.

"I thought if I covered myself, clients would be scared," she says. One tattoo reads "D.T.A.," which stands for "Don't Trust Anyone." Another is a black rose, dripping with blood. It says, "Love is Suicide."

Her clients included "lawyers, judges, construction workers, police, guys who want things done that they obviously can't do with their better half, and regular guys who come in and want some comfort."

MacLeod entered the "sex trade" by working in massage parlours at age 21. She had a few more years of life behind her than most girls do when they are first trapped, but what led up to it is agonizingly typical. "I was in an abusive relationship. I had been abused most of my life," she explains. "My father didn't have much to do with us. We grew up in the system."

MacLeod endured violent relationships with one bad boyfriend after another. She lived through abuse better called torture. If her life were a movie, you would want to look away, horrified by what was unfolding on the screen in front of you.

"I think what happened was because I was an abuse victim for so long – these kinds of people prey on the weak. You end up in this whirlwind of wanting to be accepted and wanting to be loved," she says.

A month after she had her fourth child, her 14-year-old eldest daughter told her she was being raped by Mac-Leod's current boyfriend – the father of MacLeod's new baby. "I needed a lawyer, so I started turning tricks. How was I going to pay the bills? I have these four kids, I need to pay rent. I need to make money. I have no education," she says. "I didn't know any other way."

She estimates 10,000 men bought her for sex during her years as a prostituted woman. Sometimes she would

turn 10 tricks a night and work seven days a week.

MacLeod has been free of prostitution for two years now, and free of drugs for almost that long. "In selling my body I became a drug addict, popping pills. Every girl I've ever met in this industry has been abused," she says. "Girls as young as 14, with moms that were drug addicts. Not one girl I met was stable. All of us did drugs; every single one was high. If you have a soul, you can't do this and feel no shame or not dirty. Feeling like that for so long, if you don't numb it, you're going to kill yourself."

Two years out is not a long time.

But MacLeod has turned her former life inside out trying to make sense of it. "I have gone through every emotion out there," she says. When asked the painful question – if she felt, with the vantage point of time, she could have made a different choice so many years ago – her answer is unequivocal. "No. I don't believe there was a choice. I had no one offering me help. I didn't have people close to me. I didn't know if there were resources. It didn't even cross my mind. What I knew how to do was sell my body. And that's what I did."

#### **An Un-free Choice**

Derek Parenteau helps run STAND (Street Alternatives and New Directions) out of Yonge St. Mission in Toronto. STAND helps prostituted girls who are ready to begin the slow, painful climb off the streets and out of the massage parlours. "No one is in it because they like it," says Parenteau. "They've been forced into it, either directly by a pimp or indirectly by financial need."

After years of working in this ministry, Parenteau has reached a conclusion, one he says is shared by "anyone who has credibility and is doing good work, whether Christian or otherwise." His conclusion: "That people working in the sex trade are the victims. The others are sexual exploiters, the predators. If you really know what you are doing and you are really involved, nothing else makes sense."

# **Break the Chains?**

"Prostitution," says Danielle Strickland, pastor of a Salvation Army church in the inner city of Edmonton, smack dab in the prostitution stroll area, "is something that happens to you, not because of you."

And it happens to Canadian girls when they are very young.

"The vast majority of women engaged in sex work get into it when they are still minors," says Greg Paul, director of Sanctuary, an inner-city ministry in downtown Toronto. "The median age is 15 or 16. If we say it is their choice, then we are saying that at 15, the majority of people who will be sex workers are making a clear, adult, non-pressured decision and saying, "That's what I'd really like to do, is have men pay me for sex.' There's something drastically wrong with that picture."

John Cassells is managing director of Light Patrol, a mobile street program of Youth Unlimited in Toronto. The program has a focused effort called SafeLight "especially for young women whose lives have been affected by sexual exploitation." SafeLight works with two groups of women who are prostituted: high track and low track.

Cassells explains: "We go to build friendships with the high-track girls. Those are the girls who are usually not dealing with mental health issues. It is an opportunity for them to be with someone who treats them with dignity, who knows about their life at street level. The low track girls are literally homeless, usually drug addicted and often have mental health disorders."

What the two groups have in common – besides almost always being fatherless – is "that they are victims of violence. When you look at, not just the dangers, but the harm that comes to girls in prostitution, you can only conclude that it is a very violent and harmful environment," says Cassells.

> Julia Beazley is a policy analyst with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC). Its Centre for Faith and Public Life in Ottawa has published the discussion paper *Selling Ourselves: Prostitution in Canada, Where Are We Headed?* (available at www.theEFC.ca/prostitution). Beazley says Cassells is right about the violence. "Their stories are all the same once they're in. Stories of degradation, dehumanization, violence and abuse.

It's horrific. The majority have no say, no choice. How can we call 'choice' a decision made out of desperation, for survival, or for utter lack of good, healthy choices?"

#### **Prostitution Goes to Court**

Last fall it was almost impossible to look away as Terri-Jean Bedford, a dominatrix clad in leather, stood in front of media cameras and declared it "emancipation day" as three key provisions in Canada's anti-prostitution laws



Katarina MacLeod: "I had no one offering me help. I didn't have people close to me. I didn't know if there were resources."

#### were struck down by an Ontario court.

Bedford and her two fellow constitutional challengers presented prostitution as a business and themselves as entrepreneurs of the erotic. They argued what is called, almost always with a knowing smile, the world's oldest profession can be made safer for women by dismantling the legal restrictions against living off the avails of prostitution, keeping a bawdy house and communicating for the purposes of prostitution.

But striking down those prohibitions – a legal decision that, it is safe to say, came out of left field for most Canadians – is "giving a gift to traffickers and abusers. That is the worst thing they can do," says MacLeod.

During the Ontario case Robert Pickton's name came up. It was argued the serial killer who preyed on prostituted women in Vancouver's east end, brutally murdering at least 26 of them on his farm of horrors, would not have had access to the women he killed if they had been safely tucked away in a legal brothel.

Michelle Miller runs REED (Resist Exploitation, Embrace Dignity), a Vancouver-based group that journeys with women who are being sexually exploited. "Don't you dare bring up Robert Pickton," says Miller, "there's nothing that rattles my cage more than that."

Miller says the women Pickton killed – plucked out of the neighbourhood where Miller spends most of her time – would never have been employed by a brothel in the first place; they would not have been classified as clean of drugs or disease. They teetered on the lowest rung of the slippery, desperate ladder that leads women so quickly into the ugly pit of prostitution – and makes it so incredibly difficult to climb out of.

There is not much that, in Canada today, could have kept them safe.

As shocking as it was for the Ontario court to strike down the prostitution laws, advocates fighting for the safety and rights of women who are prostituted view this moment as an opportunity.

Now we have a chance to reshape Canada's laws to reflect the unpalatable reality of prostitution: the girls, boys and women trapped in its snare are victims – and something more has to be done about the pimps who own them and the johns who buy them.

#### Hard Questions Can Create Good Laws

"It's time we start asking ourselves – as individuals, as churches, and as a nation – some hard questions about prostitution," says Beazley. "We have all heard it said over and over that it's the world's oldest profession, but

#### What's Happening Now

he Federal Government, along with the Government of Ontario, has begun the process of appealing the ruling by Ontario Superior Court Justice Susan Himel that would have struck down the Criminal Code prohibitions on operating a brothel, communicating for the purposes of prostitution and living off the avails of prostitution in Ontario. Justice Marc Rosenberg of the Ontario Court of Appeal has decided to stay Justice Himel's decision, meaning the Criminal Code prohibitions will remain in effect until such time as the Court of Appeal hears the full appeal and makes a determination otherwise. Justice Rosenberg set a time limit on the stay, giving the governments until April 29, 2011 to finalize their documentation and get before the courts or the law will fail. In the meantime, the laws remain in effect.

In British Columbia, laws are also



Clockwise from above: John Cassells and co-worker Rosalie Sioui during outreach ministry on the streets; Dion Oxford, chair of Street Level, the EFC's roundtable on poverty and homelessness, and director of The Salvation Army Gateway in downtown Toronto; and Julia Beazley, policy analyst at The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

we know that in reality, as others have said before, it's the world's oldest *oppression*. And to what other injustice has our response been to tolerate or condone it simply because 'that's the way it's always been'? Or worse, to legitimize or legalize it? None. While we may not always immediately recognize an injustice for what it is – once we do, we fight it. This is a fight whose time has come."

The Canadian government has appealed the Ontario court decision (see "What's happening now" sidebar). Meanwhile the EFC, along with other individuals and concerned groups, is advocating an alternative legal framework known as the Nordic Model, based on Sweden's success in almost completely dismantling prostitution.

"The Nordic model," explains Beazley, "is the best model out there right now." Implemented in 1999, Sweden's *Law on the Prohibition of Purchase of Sexual Services* establishes prostitution as a form of abuse. It criminalizes the buyers, not the sellers. Pimps and johns are arrested and charged, while prostituted women are offered a strong exit network of support.

Within one year the number of prostitutes in Sweden decreased by 50 per cent.

"I totally believe in that Nordic model," says Mac-Leod. "If you criminalize the johns and decriminalize the women, I think men will think twice."

If Christians believe there won't be men sitting beside them on the pews on Sundays who need to think twice, think again.

"They are married men with kids," says Danielle Strickland, of the johns who cruise through her neigh-

being challenged, with the Downtown Eastside Sex Workers Against Violence given the green light to challenge B.C.'s own laws against prostitution in light of the Ontario decision.

The EFC, along with other advocacy groups promoting the Nordic model, are meeting with MPs from all parties, says Julia Beazley, EFC policy analyst, and trying to find allies across the political spectrum willing to carry this issue forward.

"We will be encouraging Parliament to act. The laws have been found flawed by one court, and Justice Himel's ruling could withstand an appeal. This process could take several years. In the interim, we believe Parliament should begin to craft better, more effective laws to deal with prostitution. It is a controversial issue, but we are hopeful that there will be MPs who will have the courage to push for something like the Nordic model."

-KS

#### What You Can Do

- Get educated. Tap into the resources of organizations like REED (www.embracedignity.org), Walk With Me (www.wix. com/timea77/walk-with-me) and the EFC (www.theEFC. ca/prostitution), especially for understanding the Nordic model. Visit http://activatecfpl.theEFC.ca for the latest commentaries on the issue.
- Write and call your MP requesting the Nordic model be implemented in Canada. The EFC offers template letters on this issue at www.theEFC.ca/prostitution.
- Give this article to your minister, and then ask him or her to preach more often and openly on topics like pornography, prostitution and injustice.
- If you have children in your home, create an open speaking environment about topics like sex, marriage, pornography and how we view women who are prostituted. Discuss how pornography and prostitution are signs of God's good gifts gone awry.
- Stop viewing pornography. Get help from an experienced Christian counsellor or specialized ministry such as xxxchurch.com. More links available at www.theEFC.ca/ pornography (and click Resources).
- Financially and prayerfully support organizations on the front lines of helping women who are prostituted, like the organizations mentioned in this article.
- Pray for the victims of prostitution, and for the men who buy them, that they would all be freed. –KS

bourhood. "They are your dads. The busiest time in our neighbourhood is before work."

#### Johns in the Pews

Michelle Miller in Vancouver concurs: "We see men driving through our alleyways at 7:30 in the morning. They have car seats in the back, and sometimes there's a little fish sticker on the back of the van."

John Cassells of Light Patrol says, "Probably most of the readers will actually be going to church currently with someone who visits prostitutes. They're really the average guy. They cross those boundaries to think that they can obtain a position of power to go and choose who they will be intimate with. The position of the john is much more about seeking power and control than seeking a good and fulfilling sexual experience."

Dion Oxford is chair of Street Level, the EFC's roundtable on poverty and homelessness, and director of The Salvation Army Gateway in downtown Toronto: "When I was working out there more hands-on, there would certainly be men driving around in minivans with baby seats in the back. These are married, middle-aged men, some of whom were picking up boys; church men who are gay and married."

If it's shocking to think the johns come from your neighbourhood, remember, it might be the girl who lives next door they are purchasing. "Where do these girls come from? They come from our neighbourhoods," says Cassells. "They are going to school with our kids. It is the kid who you don't let your child go to their house, and you don't let your child invite them to yours, because you know there is trouble. That is the kid who is likely to get involved in prostitution."

So, what is the Church to do?

A lot more, and quite a bit differently.

"We like to have a G-rated church, but as soon as you open the Bible, you realize Christianity is not always rated G," says Cassells. "The Church needs to engage in this issue, and become aware that out of the many prostitutes and the many, many buyers, we all know people personally involved in prostitution at some level."

The church indeed welcomes the broken and attempts to usher in healing, while at the same time facing injustice that would be easier to ignore – and opposing it. Prostitution is clearly such an injustice, where vulnerable women (and children and some men) are abused to meet the unrestrained appetites of people with whom we cross paths daily.

#### **A Question of Justice**

Evangelicals who work on this issue are calling the Church to shift its thinking from prostitution as an issue of morality – or of a perceived lack of it *in* the women who are prostitutes – and shift the conversation to one about justice – or the actual absence of it *for* the women who are prostituted.

"Like many of these kinds of issues it is important to fight it on the political level, but if we believe it is exploitation, then we have a big job to do as a church," says STAND's Derek Parenteau. "We need to give opportunity for people to get out. The average person I work with has a Grade 8 education; there are going to be barriers. If they have a kid at home and have known nothing else for the last 12 years, they're going to need lots of help."

Just as the Church is reaching out, it needs to look in, says Michelle Miller. "When I speak at churches, the first thing I do is make the connection with online pornography, which is just enormous in our culture. And as followers of Christ, we are called to go four or five steps further and look at the systems of power and abuse that make prostitution possible in the first place.

"One question that burns me," says Miller, "is: Why is it that people who are so ready to care for and be passionate about fighting for justice for a kid who is being trafficked in Costa Rica will blame the aboriginal woman on the street corner in their own town?"

That is a good question.

For all the waking up and soul-searching the Church as a whole might need to do, the Church as community can, and does, provide a healing, restorative – if imperfect – place for women escaping prostitution. "People involved in sex work think that Christians are really inclined to condemn them. I think that's been the truth, but not nearly as true as people think," says Greg Paul. "There is also a great deal of compassion historically by people of faith to women trapped in prostitution."

And, says Dion Oxford, "God *is* bigger than prostitution. But just because you've accepted Jesus into your heart doesn't mean it will all go away."

Katarina MacLeod knows that better than anyone.

"I realize that who I am now is who I should have been all those years," she says. "I want the Church to realize that we are victims, and just welcome us like they would welcome anyone else. I'm someone's daughter, and that's the way I want to be treated – like I am precious."

Her real name, by the way, is not Katarina. "My old name I associate with violence and abuse and I am in the process of legally changing it," she explains. MacLeod went to sleep one night, a little while after a friend supported her financially and emotionally deep enough and long enough to enable her to leave prostitution – and after years of her oldest daughter, a committed Christian, telling her over and over again God loved her. She heard the name Katarina in her mind. "I woke up and thought, "That is what I want people to call me.' I knew that it had something to do with God telling me I was beautiful and pure."

She looked it up and the name Katarina means "pure."

Today MacLeod works with an organization called Walk With Me that helps victims of human trafficking. She speaks in Toronto-area schools, sharing her story in vivid, hard-core detail to wake up the students to the potential dangers they are in.

MacLeod had 58 tattoos before she got her final one, a little different from the rest. "My last tattoo, on the left side of my neck, says, 'Grace.' I didn't have a word for what I received until my daughter said, 'Mom, it's grace!' " And Katarina said to her daughter, "That's it!"

> KAREN STILLER of Port Perry, Ont., is a freelance writer and also associate editor of Faith Today.

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# **Haiti** One Year Later

Canadians involved in Christian relief and development work describe the ongoing challenges in the country levelled by a January 2010 earthquake.

#### By Lisa Hall-Wilson and Marcy Kennedy

he only reason I know about Haiti was because of the earthquake, but Haiti needed us long before the earthquake ever came," says Stacey Brown, a nurse from London, Ont. Between Brown and her colleague, Joany McDougall, a nurse from nearby Ingersoll, Ont., they've volunteered in Haiti six times since the earthquake. Both women have Pentecostal ties and felt that, as Christians, they shouldn't just sit at home if there was a need for their specific skills and training to help those suffering in Haiti.

"Nothing is easy in Haiti. Nothing happens fast," says McDougall. "By all appearances very little has changed. The homeless are still living in tent cities with little or no access to clean water or sanitation facilities. There's no management in place for garbage and less than 10 per cent of the rubble has been removed."

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) reacted quickly to the 7.0 earthquake in Haiti on January 12, 2010, their first focus being keeping people alive and healthy and then restoring their everyday lives to some degree of normal.

Making a dire situation worse, a cholera epidemic broke out in late October and Hurricane Tomas swept through on November 5, flooding the tent communities of Port-au-Prince and thus giving free reign to the water-borne disease. Haiti has reported over 181,000 cases of cholera and 3,759 deaths.

And so, a year later, NGOs face more obstacles than before.

"The biggest obstacle," says Barry Slauenwhite, head of Compassion Canada, "is the government itself. After the earthquake the government mandated, along with the UN, that you couldn't build any permanent structures

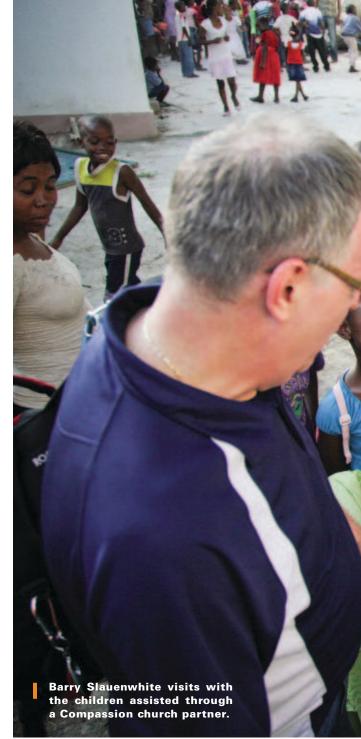


PHOTO: REYNOLD MAINSE

until they had a better building code. With the election of a new government in Haiti, all of that building code work got postponed. We've gotten around it by building sturdy temporary shelters." Unfortunately riots and protests surrounding the elections have increased instability, delays and risk to aid workers.

In the meantime ministries like Compassion, World Vision and Samaritan's Purse, along with denominational agencies such as Canadian Baptist Ministries, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC), and the Pentecostal ministry Emergency Relief and Development Overseas, have constructed semi-permanent wood-frame and tarpaulin structures.

Other Christian NGOs such as the Evangelical Med-



ical Aid Society (EMAS) and Mennonite Central Committee have also sent engineers and architects to assess the structural integrity of existing buildings and draft plans for stronger ones.

No one wants to rebuild Haiti the way it was, but a number of challenges slow construction efforts. "They have no way of removing the rubble to begin to rebuild," says Martin Silbernagel of Samaritan's Purse.

Mike Weickert of World Vision Canada explains an additional crisis related to land ownership and the unavailability of land. "People have set up informal settlements on private land, and they have to leave that land eventually. There've been huge problems finding places for people to live." Half a million people have left the camps, but a million more remain without homes, according to the CRWRC.

In rebuilding, some hope to combat Haiti's 70 per cent unemployment rate. John McEwan of Salvation Army Canada says, "There are considerable opportunities for employment of Haitian people as part of any rebuilding strategy." World Vision, EMAS and others are hiring Haitians in work-for-food and work-for-cash programs.

Haiti, like most Third World countries, lacks many basic infrastructure systems, hampering aid delivery. Silbernagel explains, "There weren't a lot of hospitals to begin with, and people didn't have access to medical care. Clean water and sewer systems didn't exist in Haiti before, and they're definitely challenges that we, and every other NGO there, run up against."

NGOs like International Child Care have supplied hundreds of thousands of water purification tablets and filters and have sent water trucks to communities, but these interim solutions aren't sustainable.

A reliable water system is required to stem Haiti's ongoing struggle with water-borne disease. Weickert estimates the death toll from cholera could reach 4,000 to 8,000 – all preventable deaths. Although sanitation isn't part of World Vision's mandate, they've stepped in to manage the overwhelmed landfill serving Port-au-Prince's tent cities, and to ensure sewage from pit latrines is safely disposed of and trucks carrying the raw sewage are cleaned.

Many NGOs in Haiti see educating leaders and the public about cholera as a priority. Kristen van de Wetering of the



CRWRC says they've been running cholera workshops that include "proper handwashing techniques, water purification methods and the preparation of oral rehydration solutions." In addition, CRWRC and other NGOs hand out kits containing purification materials, rehydration recipes, soap and educational pamphlets. Others, like Compassion Canada, employ creative strategies to reach the poorest using flannelgraphs, pictures and megaphones.

Unfortunately, experts believe cholera will remain in Haiti for years.

Faith-based Canadian NGOs are united



in their motivation to extend Christian compassion, but at times duplicate each other's services. "There's 10,000 NGOs working in Haiti. It's been called the wild west of NGOs, but there's no other way to operate in Haiti," explains

Dr. Pierre Plourde, director for EMAS. "You add up 10,000 drops and fill up your bucket, and at the end of the day you end up doing a lot of good." Some staff at faith-based NGOs also end up sharing the gospel with the people they are helping and their coworkers, as they respond to questions about why they are risking so much to help.

Help, especially long-term help, is still needed in Haiti. Plourde asks, "How will we manage the intense pride and independence of the Haitian psyche with the fact that the most educated citizens have left Haiti? There's a huge void of required skills and infrastructure to get anything done and deeply rooted corruption in the system. They don't want to be fully dependent, but there's no way to be fully independent either."

Slauenwhite offers some ideas about what can we do to help Haiti: "Prayers for a stable government, for curtailment of the cholera outbreak so that rebuilding can get back on track, and for long-term sustainability are essential." The best way to help Haiti is to pray, stay informed and donate or volunteer with NGOs that have experience in Haiti and financial accountability.

Weickert adds, "It's important to emphasize patience with Haiti. If you're going to engage with Haiti, you have to have a longer-term perspective on progress."

Despite Haiti's difficulties, Slauenwhite encourages Canadians to persevere. "It would be devastating for Christians to give up on Haiti. God is doing something there. Never before in history has Haiti had so many people praying for it; never before has the world given it so much attention; and it's a golden opportunity to see God at work."

LISA HALL-WILSON and MARCY KENNEDY are freelance writers in London and Wallaceburg, Ont.

# Leadership 2020

How Organizations Can Prepare Now for Upcoming Leadership Shifts in Canada

By Dwayne K. Buhler

The founding leaders of many Canadian mission organizations are nearing the end of their official careers. This is a defining moment for these organizations – how many will survive?

he man was at the end of his rope. As the elderly leader of a Canadian mission agency dedicated to bringing the gospel message to one of the leastevangelized regions of the world, he was dealing with his own mortality.

The organization he founded was on life support. "We just don't have someone to take up the torch," he admitted sadly. "By the time we began to look for a younger leader, it was too late." The merger of his organization with another mission agency became a mere formality and he stepped down from his position.

The realities of the demographics of an aging baby boomer generation are no respecter of persons or organizations. Christian mission agencies and other organizations will face the same challenges their secular counterparts face as they move from being founder-led organizations to second-generation charities led by a successor. They will navigate this transition while their stable, but aging, donor base moves out of the workforce and concentrates on retirement.

As the director of a large mission conference, I relate

to the leaders of many Canadian mission organizations. I decided to ask our conference participants 10 questions about their leadership succession plan. I discovered most of the participating organizations will go through significant leadership changes by the year 2020. Some said their organization would not be prepared for the unexpected death of their founder. Others indicated joining forces with another agency to remain viable was an option. One leader admitted their agency would probably cease to exist.

The implications of the aging demographic of baby boomers will affect charitable organizations and mission agencies.

How can these organizations prepare for the upcoming leadership succession?

#### From founder to flounder

Frances Hesselbein is the former chief executive officer of the Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management based in New York (now named the Leader to Leader Institute). She identifies the transition from a founder to his or her successor as one of the most important phases in an organization's history.

"Few events in the life of an organization are as critical, as visible or as stressful as when the leader leaves the organization. Effective leaders plan an exit that is as positive and graceful as their entrance was," says Hesselbein.

The business world has borrowed a phrase from the academic and arts communities to describe the transition from founder to second-generation leadership. It is the "sophomore syndrome." This refers to a jinx that is cast upon a successor who often does not live up to the standards or expectations of an organization or founder. Sophomore syndrome is often seen in the transfer of leadership in smaller family-owned businesses, where it is estimated only one out of three transitions are successful. Local churches and mission organizations are also susceptible to this founder to flounder syndrome.

The added factor of differences between leadership styles between the generations only complicates the situation.

Camille Bishop, author of *We're in This Boat Together: Leadership Succession Between the Generations* (Credo Communications, 2008), acknowledges the transfer of power within an organization is rarely easy.

"As diversity in the workplace increases, evidence

indicates there are differences in leadership behaviour between the generations. And those dissimilarities create turbulence in the workplace like that found in whitewater rapids," explains Bishop.

"But there is a way to navigate through them, and diversity does not have to mean disaster. In fact, appreciating diversity and learning the skills necessary to dialogue

> with one another can bring the generations together, allowing for tremendous unity and strength to tackle the whitewater of leadership succession."

#### Into the choppy water

When I asked my survey respondents to describe positive transitions, leaders of Canadian mission organizations responded leadership succession should be intentional, prayerful and discerning.

Yet it seems many organizations are actually not prepared. Some are thrust into an emergency situation when their leader is diagnosed with an illness or suffers from

something like a sudden heart attack. Few have a longterm plan for mentoring and bringing leaders up through the organization, and 60 per cent of those I informally surveyed indicated they do not have a plan for leadership transitions.

One respondent described his organization's leadership succession plan as: "In case of emergency, break glass."

Bishop, who has taught at Youth with a Mission's University of the Nations for over 20 years, offers four questions a board of directors needs to consider before a crisis hits: Does the organization have a well-defined vision statement? Has a leadership succession plan been established? Who are the people who will be affected in the process? And what are the generational differences that will affect your mission?

Taking time to answer these four questions can help an organization better prepare for a leadership transition.

#### **Growing leaders from within**

Both secular and religious leadership gurus agree an organization is best served by someone who grows into a leadership position from within an organization, rather than having a person imported from the outside. A transfer of responsibility can follow family lines, and there is certainly no shortage of examples of this type of leadership transition. However, not every organization has this option, and the gift of leadership does not always follow genetic lines. Finding the right person to follow a founder is a task that takes both time and discernment of the board of directors.

Mark Wiebe is vice-president for communications of TeachBeyond, a Winnipeg-based mission agency that has



The transfer of power within an organization is rarely easy: Camille Bishop.



Organizations that value generational continuity identify and mentor younger leaders, and give them significant roles within the organization.

not only gone through leadership transitions, but also rebranded and renamed their organization, formerly the Janz Team.

He agrees it is important for organizations to be proactive, but warns they must still act as faith-based and

God-honouring people in their transitions. "There is a critical balance needed in Christian organizations to trust God to do what is only divinely possible, while also working hard to do what is humanly possible when it comes to anything at all relating to leadership," says Wiebe. "Too many 'wannabe-cutting-edge' Christian organizations seem quicker to cut and paste from Wall Street models of leader-

ship succession than to call for an organization-wide weekend of prayer and fasting."

This goes beyond an emergency prayer meeting in a crisis situation, and implies one of the most important roles of current leaders is to follow the biblical examples of Moses with Joshua, and Barnabas with Paul: walking with younger leaders, teaching the nuts and bolts of servant leadership and modelling a consistent Christ-like life.

#### **Mentors wanted**

Organizations that value generational continuity identify and mentor younger leaders, and give them significant roles within the organization. This takes understanding, trust and adaptability on the part of older leaders.

The younger generation today tends to be hands-on and

he aging demographic of baby boomers will affect charitable organizations and mission agencies.

relational, and responds to a co-operative leadership style. They are connected through social media and technology, yet often disconnected in real-time relationships, especially to those who offer years of wisdom and experience.

They want mentors. But a good mentor can be hard to find.

Susan Cockburn conducted a think tank between younger and older leaders in March 2010 when she formerly worked with Alpha Ministries of Canada. "A mentor needs to take into consideration the gifting and experience of the younger leader," she says. "Give them responsibilities and opportunities that will stretch and develop them. But

opportunity or experience alone is not enough. Younger leaders need respect, encouragement, honest feedback and grace in the face of mistakes."

Cockburn says younger leaders identified several characteristics that made mentoring unpleasant for them. These were non-negotiables for the younger generation: dismissive attitudes on the part of the senior leader; not being taken seriously; lack of trust; inconsistent or unsupported mentoring; lack of opportunity and a stifling of new ideas.

Despite the challenges of building a positive mentoring experience, Cockburn says simple words of encouragement were one of the most important factors that led younger leaders into a leadership position. "Almost every emerging leader became involved or interested in leadership because they had been asked or invited into leadership by someone who recognized a leadership gift in them," says Cockburn.

The relational nature of younger leaders requires a different approach than older generations might be used to. A 30-minute face-to-face discussion about a project over a cup of coffee can be more productive than pages of suggestions or reports. Opening a board meeting with a meal and giving members an opportunity to interact on a personal basis recognizes the value of relationships. Giving younger leaders the opportunity to be heard and included in significant responsibilities allows them to prove their reliability, test their ideas and build ownership of the organization.

Mentorship of younger leaders needs to begin at all levels within an organization. The development of intergenerational teams among staff, volunteers and on the board of directors allows an organization to have an engaged pool of future leaders to choose from.

A simple look at the age of the board of directors can tell you a great deal about

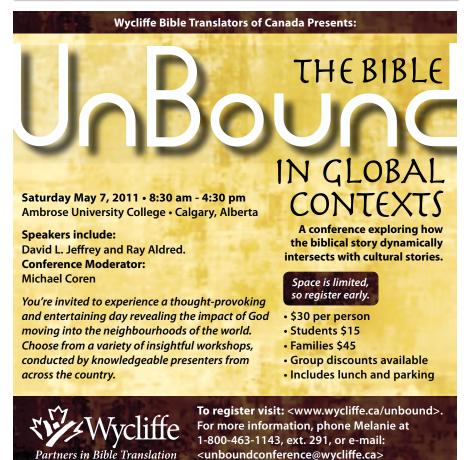
the probability of an organization's survivability when the coming wave of retiring baby boomers steps down from positions of service.

Susan Cockburn sums up her findings with two probing questions for churches and mission organizations: "Have you considered the aspect of where you are going to

find younger leadership? Are you building for the next generation, or have you overlooked this crucial component of your mission?"

#### **Courage required**

It takes courage to go through a change of leadership, and sometimes the transi-



tion is deferred or delayed because of an inability or unwillingness of a founder or a board of directors to release the vision

to others. For some, he development the best option may be the enactment of of intergenerational the "for such a time as teams among staff, this" clause. celebratvolunteers and on the ing the life and accomboard of directors plishments of a person allows an organization or ministry, and then gracefully closing its to have an engaged doors. pool of future leaders to choose from.

But that need not be the case.

It is possible for an

organization to survive and thrive with a generational shift in leadership on the horizon. The survival rate is highest for boards that are proactive and prepared. Over two-thirds of respondents to my informal survey expressed generational continuity of the mission and vision of their organization was a value. They felt leadership transfer is possible but it must be deliberate.

A succession plan needs to go beyond an appeal for prayer and fasting. Unfortunately, less than half of those who responded to the survey indicated their organization had a well-defined leadership succession plan.

There is a need for further discussion and study of the dynamics of leadership transition. This needs to take place between agency leaders, their boards and facilitating bodies such as The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada or the Canadian Council of Christian Charities.

An organization or local church that prayerfully and carefully considers the issues of leadership succession, sooner rather than later, is less likely to find itself reacting to a crisis.

It will be equipped to not only survive the transitions expected before the year 2020, but to thrive as it provides relevant ministry in Canada and around the world. 🗉

> DWAYNE K. BUHLER is the second-generation director of Missions Fest Vancouver.



### **Finishing With a Twist**

When God calls us to something new, even as we approach retirement age, it can be a surprising and wonderful experience.

> am a "finisher" with a twist. Finisher is the term being used in mission circles for people who finish their careers and decide against just kicking back. Instead they immerse themselves, their life lessons, their skill set and their expertise into some sort of ministry.

> In my case I'm moving from leadership in one ministry to entry level in another. I served with Emmanuel International for over 30 years. Emmanuel is a faith-based humanitarian aid organization. Its specialty is giving churches overseas a helping hand to assist their communities in all aspects of life.

> With Emmanuel my one-year trial as a development worker progressed into leading the organization. That journey began with living in a tent in the hills of Haiti for three years, submerged in the daily life of the community, and ended up here in Canada at headquarters, absorbed in budgets, fundraising, boards, policies, politics and the like.

> Five years ago the Lord began to tug at my conscience and heart. One of those "what if" dreams begin to quietly take shape in my prayers and on my journal pages. Was it truly possible to step away from the administration, logistics, urgency and busyness of doing relief and development? Could I actually become enmeshed in my heart's desire: instilling in others that rare mix of deep biblical knowledge with practical community relevance?

> My ministry journey has covered many miles in airspace and on highways, dusty bush roads, muddy footpaths – and I've even hacked my own trail a few times. I've come to believe leadership development is the most important endeavour in breaking the cycle of poverty worldwide. Done properly, the impact is both immediate and generational, not to mention eternal.

> In my time I've seen tremendous strides taken in the marriage of evangelism and social justice. Most evangelical organizations and churches give verbal assent to the union between the two, and quite a few put those words into action, although usually landing more on one side than the other. But in the rush to deliver programs – whether growing a church or plunking wells into African villages or getting tents and tarps to Haiti – we seldom take time to truly tackle the leadership aspect of it.

The missing ingredient is preparing the next generation

to understand and lead. There's a balance and integration needed to complete the menu like Jesus did: preaching, teaching, healing, feeding and engaging demonic forces.

Taking a 15-month executive leadership course at Arrow Leadership helped me name the desire God was growing in me. I had to come up with a mission statement for the rest of my life. Mine ended up being: "Mentoring indigenous [African] leaders in holistic ministry."

A year ago I began to get serious about seeing where God was taking this crazy idea.

It was difficult to find a ministry dedicated to all sides of the equation: deep biblical wisdom and emphasis on breaking the cycle of poverty plus a focus on discipling leaders. There certainly didn't seem to be any job postings, so we took the route of introducing ourselves to various organizations and missions, seeing if they had any use for "finishers" like us.

Fourteen possibilities made our list. Much to our surprise an old evangelism-only group popped up: The Navigators. Many years ago I'd been a part of a Navigators' campus ministry in California. The Navigators were instrumental in bringing me back into God's Kingdom as a rebellious youth. But back in the 1970s the Navigators weren't active where my heart lay, a place I called "compassion ministry."

In the ensuing years while I was busy elsewhere, The Navigators added a number of facets to their solid core of evangelism and discipleship using Scripture memorization and Bible studies. They even moved beyond their roots as a campus and military ministry into broader community involvement and even "whole-life discipleship." Who knew?

We've been invited onto their Discipling for Development team as potential international mentors. Based in Colorado Springs, this team trains, coaches and mentors African community and church leaders in partnership with 11 of the 23 Navigators Africa countries. As part of Navigators Canada we are in a 12-month apprentice program learning the ropes of this exciting Navigators ministry branch.

So here I am feeling like a rookie after 30-plus years in ministry. There's been culture shock, inevitable and valid moving into a new organizational culture: hearing unfamiliar corporate language, seeking permission for basic decisions, feeling unsure why certain things are mistakes, finding our own way without directions from a busy, busy group. In balance, there's also the excitement of a faith journey into a new endeavour, watching how God unfolds each step of the way. Is it all worth it to follow a God-given heart's desire and don the label "finisher"? I'd give it a clear thumbs up!

**ANDY ATKINS** of Prince Albert, Ont., now serves with the Discipling for Development team at Navigators.

# The Joys of

Adoptions in Canada come in three main forms: public (introduced in our Nov/Dec 2010 cover story), private and international. Many of the Christian ministries that facilitate private adoptions also do important work helping women who face crisis pregnancies.

**By Jeff Dewsbury** 

manda Smith vividly remembers the moment she cut her son's umbilical cord – one simple action that became a marker signifying both the end of one long journey and the beginning of another. Though she wasn't the one physically giving birth that day, she was becoming a mother. The long paper trail that leads to a private adoption was finally falling behind her. The filing cabinet drawers were closing and the baby stroller was beckoning.

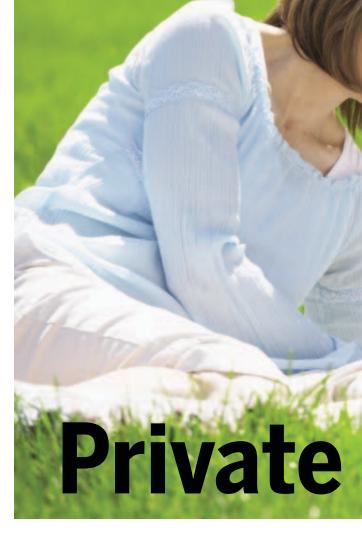
"Being there when Micah was born was one of those amazing unexpected blessings along the way," she says like she still can't believe it. "I got to be there for his Apgar test and everything."

The Apgar, designed to assess a newborn's immediate physical needs, is the first test a doctor gives when a child enters the world. Yet one of Micah's biggest needs – parents who were ready to start his life with him – was already being met.

Like many parents who adopt, Smith (name changed for privacy) and her husband Troy were chosen by their son's birth mother to become his parents. While the couple didn't know if they would be there for the exact moment he took his first breath, they knew he would enter their family right from the beginning.

#### **Kinds of adoption**

Private adoptions in Canada by definition involve children who are not in government care and the adoption



is arranged by a licensed private agency that charges fees for its services. All adoptions in Canada involve intensive pre-screening, and since December 2007 require anyone wanting to adopt (domestic or international) to take a parenting skills/adoption orientation course which is offered by private or public agencies.

Private adoption can occur with children of any age, although the most common kind is something like the Smiths experienced, in which a mother undergoing a crisis pregnancy decides to place her child for adoption soon after the birth.

Canada has a number of Christian agencies that offer help both to women experiencing crisis pregnancies as



PHOTO: SW PRODUCTIONS / WWW.DESIGNPICS.COM

well as to couples wanting to adopt.

Lola French of Red Deer, Alta., is CEO of the Canadian Association of Pregnancy Support Services (CAPSS), which includes 71 pregnancy support centres across the country under its umbrella.

Pregnancy support centres offer holistic care and do not exclusively facilitate adoptions. Most offer pre- and post-adoption counselling to birth mothers and adoptive parents, as well as parental support to women who ultimately may decide to raise their child.

One of the key roles of such centres is dispelling fears. French believes there are many birth mothers choosing to terminate their pregnancies because they mistakenly believe the long road of placing their child for adoption will be more difficult than having a quick abortion.

"To carry to term and 'give my baby away' sounds too painful to a lot of women. Everything is kind of quick and instant in our society," says French. "Once you're dealing with an unplanned pregnancy, there is no decision that is going to be pain free. However there are some that will give you pain with a real positive outcome instead of regret or shame. That's what we focus on."

All CAPSS pregnancy support centres have trained counsellors who are "empowering birth mothers with the knowledge that could mean life or death," says French. "We believe women going through unplanned pregnancies need to see [adoption] as a strong choice and a loving choice."

Given the current cultural climate, pregnancy support centres face an uphill climb. Statistics in Ontario indicate only two per cent of crisis pregnancies result in the birth mother choosing adoption.

#### **Changing views**

Helping Canadians begin to see adoption as a positive choice is also one of the goals of a new campaign by Life Canada, a Christian pro-life group headquartered in Ottawa and focused on public education.

The group started the campaign "I wanted my baby to have a mom and dad" – which includes public service

announcements, billboards, direct mailers and the website www.adoptionincanada.ca – to encourage women who are pregnant and in crisis to consider what it would mean to give their unborn child a family. In the case of

Private adoption can occur with children of any age, although the most common kind is a mother undergoing a crisis pregnancy who decides to place her child for adoption soon after the birth.

each regional campaign, the cost is picked up by a local donor, usually an individual or church.

"I can't tell you the number of people who, when you bring up adoption, have been touched in some way," says director Anastasia Bowles, who believes the ads underscore the idea adoption should not be approached as a "third choice" for birth mothers. "It's not 'giving up.' The woman will always have that child as part of her life. It's life changing."

Life Canada has also produced a pamphlet for counsellors at pregnancy support centres. It encourages women to consider adoption as a positive and preferential option.

#### **Statistics**

The need for public education about adoption is great, but the resources are

few. Statistics on adoptions in Canada are few and outdated. There is basically "no data on domestic adoption in this country," as Sandra Scarth, president of the Adoption Council of Canada, pointed out recently to a par-



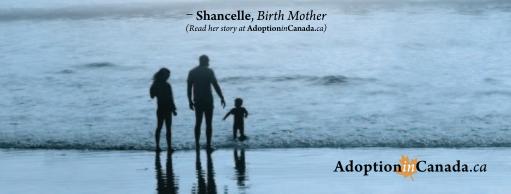
liamentary standing committee discussing how the Federal Government can support domestic adoption.

According to Scarth, the best guess for the category of private adoptions is about 700 per year in Canada.

Some believe that number is not growing as Canada's population grows, but is actually shrinking.

"For about a decade we've seen a decline in private adoptions," reports Margo Semple, director of Jewels for Jesus, an agency in Mississauga, Ont. "Abortions are routinely done and easy to arrange, and there is a stronger climate of accept-

# "I WANTED MY BABY TO HAVE A MOM AND A DAD."



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ance for single parenting, which is no longer as difficult to do or frowned upon."

Jewels for Jesus started as a summer camp ministry

to neglected children 63 years ago, but eventually built on its mandate to support families in the area of adoption. It has now been a licensed adoption agency for



more than two decades.

Jewels for Jesus builds families in a number of ways and supports women through

counselling and practical needs, whether they decide to place a child for adoption or not.

"Counselling with birth parents is one of the hallmarks of what we do. We provide a safe and accepting environment for them to explore all of their options. The Christian community needs to understand the role we have to provide life options to people. A lot of the counselling we do

doesn't end up in adoption," says Semple, who is an adoptive parent herself.

Although Jewels completes a dozen adoptions in a typical year, last year was down to seven. Right now Jewels has 45 sets of prospective parents waiting to adopt a child, which is typical for many agencies.

#### **Open adoption**

Adoption in Canada today involves some degree of information sharing between biological parents and adoptive parents. The degree of openness may be particular to each adoption, as Kim and Stephane Sabourin found in their private adoption.

"I always knew from the time I was little that I was going to adopt," says Kim, the

Adoption in Canada today involves some degree of information sharing between biological parents and adoptive parents. "generations pastor" at Life Centre, a church in Ottawa affiliated with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. "My grandmother was a foster parent, so adoption has always been a part of my family culture."

When she married Stephane, he already had two children – thus she was ushered into the world of parenting from the beginning of their marriage. However, it was during a

mission trip to the Dominican Republic 10 years later she learned in a special way about the next addition to their family.

"I heard the Lord say He had someone for us," she recalls. When the couple returned home, they had a message regarding a mother who was looking for a family to adopt her newborn baby. "Out of the blue, I heard the Lord say, 'That's your child.' "

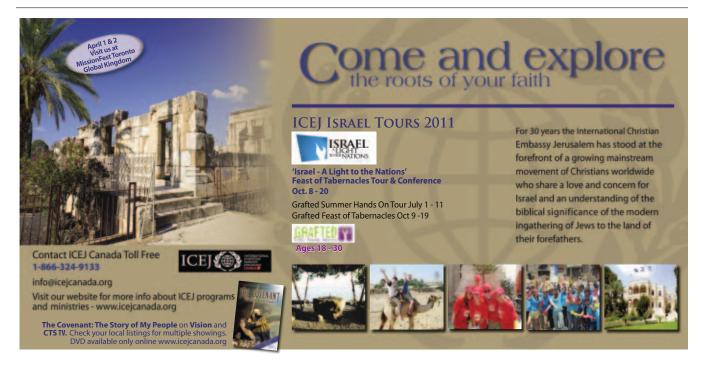
Because every adoption is also a legal proceeding – whether international, public or private – the Sabourins worked together with a lawyer and the birth mother to come up with an open adoption in the best interest of this particular child.

Grace, or Gracie as she is affectionately known, sees her birth mother a few times a year, often during special occasions, and also has contact with her biologically connected maternal grandparents.

Prospective parents can often be nervous at first of the spectre of maintaining contact with their child's birth mother (and, in rare cases, father). Yet once they see beyond preconceived ideas and begin to understand how it can work, many quickly embrace an open adoption scenario that includes contact between child and birth parent(s).

The range of openness in adoptions today is wide. Sometimes a birth parent simply wants the door left open to future contact, or would like a school picture sent to them every year. Other times the adoptive family and birth mother form a closer relationship over time, in some cases even adopting another child from the birth mother.

This is all done with the understanding of the foundational principle on which any future relationships are built – the adoptive parents are the child's parents. They alone make up the totality of what it means to be a parent. Although the arrangement may be for the birth mother to



remain in the child's life in some form, she cannot, for instance, make any decisions – large or small – for the child.

#### **Getting involved**

A big part of the adoption journey today is about getting beyond the myths that hinder couples and families from adopting. Perhaps the best starting place for interested

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parents is the Adoption Council of Canada. Its website, www.adoption.ca, offers links to government and private agencies across Canada. They also have knowledgeable staff on hand to answer questions. Those interested in becoming adoption advocates will want to check out Life Canada's website, www.lifecanada.org.

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gospel through adoption, Semple sees the big picture at Jewels for Jesus, witnessing the lasting results of children who have melted into the arms of overjoyed parents and grown up in loving homes. Yes, grief counselling (both pre- and post-adoption) are important parts of her work. "But I am here, despite the crazy days and trying moments, because I have seen God build families. And the opportunities to see

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God use lives and change and heal lives [have] been endless," she says. "Adoption is one of the ways He works. These little people are so important, and so are their parents."

JEFF DEWSBURY of Langley, B. C., is a senior writer at Faith Today. CAPSS and the Life Centre are both affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.



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## Carruthers Creek Community Church, Ajax, Ont.

A group from Carruthers Creek Community Church prepares a meal for a local soup kitchen.

PHOTO: DAVID TEBBUTT

Living out the Christian faith is not a choice between word *or* deed – it's both, says Pastor Jon Thompson. "As we serve in deed *and* word, we introduce people to Jesus."

embers at Carruthers Creek Community Church, an Associated Gospel congregation in a suburb east of Toronto, are being challenged to both proclaim the good news of salvation and to meet the practical needs of people in their community.

The church's latest initiative, dubbed City of Hope, emerged after its leaders studied Acts 2:42-47 and asked themselves, "How can a suburban church be involved in giving to people in need?"

The idea behind City of Hope is to keep a balance between worship and social justice. This balance is evident in the way the church describes fully devoted followers: those who engage in *celebration*, intentionally commit to *community*, have *compassion* on those far from Jesus and give and receive care within the congregation.

These four Cs are easy to remember because the church name starts with four Cs. In fact members often affectionately refer to the church itself as "C4."

The outreach and social justice side of the church's mission is evident in ministries such as TheCommon.org, Feet on the Street and a Community Counselling Centre (see next page). They help members to more intentionally get up off their pews to extend their influence into many neighbourhoods throughout the wider Durham Region.

"Not all people can come to our campus," points out Joanna la Fleur, currently serving as full-time city care pastor. (Her role was established in 2007 with Angela Mason, now on maternity leave.)

Her point is that deploying the congregation, rather than financial offerings, instils a ministry of presence in the community.

#### TheCommon.org

TheCommon.org is an online community network similar to craigslist or kijiji, designed to match people who have time or skills with people in need. Through it they learn together how to love and live as the Body of Christ.

Lead pastor Jon Thompson says the pattern came from the Early Church when "all the believers were together and had everything in common. They gave to *anyone* as he had need."

One person struggled with illness, but when a friend posted the need on The Common, 10 people rallied to prepare meals. Another individual needed help mowing the lawn after he broke his leg. A blind lady required rides to appointments. When migrant workers were without winter coats, so many coats were donated the church had to say "Stop!"

The Common builds community. It's great for introverts who quietly go online to choose real practical needs they can help to meet.

A neighbour posted the need for a wheelchair for a young father with three children. When she delivered the free electric wheelchair, the father swooped around the living room and out the door as if he'd just received a brand new Ferrari! The kids climbed up on his lap, shouting with joy. The whole family benefited.

#### Feet on the Street

Feet on the Street encourages congregants to volunteer with existing local agencies in Durham Region. Some members partner with St. Vincent's Soup Kitchen, serving a four-course meal once a month to needy families. Several work with local food banks, while others serve refugees and immigrants in a variety of ways. Eating Well Ministries distributes food and ministers spiritually. Gate 3:16 is a drop-in centre for homeless adults. Project Next Step encourages volunteers to meet with families facing housing needs. High schoolers visit the Refuge Outreach Centre for atrisk and street youth, walking the streets to gain a sense of reality. Young Adults pour out practical love by helping a Christian mushroom farm owner to minister to his migrant workers.

Congregational members are also transformed. A volunteer serving at the

soup kitchen became discouraged. Was she making a difference? A particularly negative client consistently arrived with matted hair and dirty clothes. As the volunteer contemplated quitting, the client arrived with fresh clothes, hair brushed – even her posture was more upright. It turned out another church member had

taken her shopping and to a hairdresser, which the needy woman had enthused was the first time she had ridden in a car in recent memory. The discouraged volunteer was revived as she realized the transformation of even one life makes it worthwhile.

#### Community Counselling Centre

"Families destroyed by affluence, experiencing unspoken emotional poverty, is the AIDS issue of the suburbs," states Thompson. And so the church has partnered with Dr. Lin & Associates to operate The City of Hope Counselling Centre, where volunteers introduce clients to the Healer who can meet emotional and spiritual needs.

Some clients can afford counselling; others are subsidized. Some are from churches in the region while others come from the community with no church background. The counselling is a blessing to all, strengthening churches and the broader community.

#### A New Move of God

C4 leaders describe their approach as *both* invitational and missional. Thompson en-



www.ecclesiastical.ca

courages members to live out their faith both in the building where they meet for worship, and on the street where they live and work and engage with neighbours. It's a "both/and" approach rather than the "either/or" approach Christians sometimes fall into.

In this commuting suburb, people

"Families destroyed by affluence, experiencing unspoken emotional poverty, is the AIDS issue of the suburbs." drive up to 25 minutes to church. C4 attracts attendees from all ages and stages of life, different ethnicities, diverse church backgrounds and socio-economic statuses. They seek to maintain the unity of the Spirit and allow each other to express diversity for the common good of all.

What also unites this diversity is their common

pulse of need. That need is what makes it human. Sharing it is what makes it church.

It's not word *or* deed, Thompson emphasizes. "We're passionately trying to do both. As we serve in deed *and* word we introduce people to Jesus."

C4 is moving from a safe church to an incarnational congregation; it is altering its balance to include more outward focus on neighbours. This year it is launching Alpha in the Pub, taking the well-known program on the basics of Christianity to a non-church location.

Thompson admits it's a challenge to alter the DNA of a church. And unexpected challenges have arisen with community and para-church organizations hesitant to partner. Some would rather the congregation "just give money," but C4's goal is to love people to Jesus as they practise holistic ministry.

La Fleur says, "As we meet practical needs in the name of Jesus, people will seek their place in God's community."

**CHARLENE DE HAAN** is a freelance writer in Toronto. She is also the executive director of CAM International of Canada and founder of stepUPtransitions.ca. Carruthers Creek Community Church (www.carrutherscreek.ca) is affiliated with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Read all the profiles in this ongoing series at www.faithtoday.ca.



## Happy Birthday, KJV 1611

A Bible translation that changed the world.

here are few books as significant as the King James Version of the Bible, published in 1611. Millions of people have heard God's Word through this enduring, powerful English translation.

Without the KJV there would have been no *Paradise Lost*, no *Pilgrim's Progress*, no Handel's *Messiah*, no Negro spirituals and no Gettysburg Address, according to Alister McGrath, who wrote *In the Beginning: The Story of the KJV* (Anchor Books, 2002) to document its incredible influence.

As we look back exactly 400 years to the first KJV, we also have an opportunity to address issues of biblical translation and authority today.

Sadly, the last five centuries have seen erosion in confidence about the Bible. There are now many questions that can have a withering impact on faith in God's Word, especially for the uninformed. Why are there so many translations? Is the KJV the only reliable translation? Why did the Gnostic Gospels get left out of the Bible? What about the Gospel of Judas? Did the Emperor Constantine tell the Church to make up a new Bible? How do we know we have the true gospel of Jesus?

Some of these questions owe their recent power to Dan Brown's potboiler *The Da Vinci Code*, the best-selling novel (Doubleday, 2003) that claimed factual base for its religious and artistic theories and became a popular movie starring Tom Hanks in 2006. Devoid of scholarship, Brown wrote breathlessly about sex magic in the Early Church, secret societies preserving the true Gospels, and the romance of Jesus and Mary Magdalene, who were "really" pagan witches. Millions swallowed Brown's lies about the Priory of Sion, Leonardo's "Last Supper" and the alleged corruption of the Bible.

Around the same time Bart Ehrman's *Misquoting Jesus* (HarperOne, 2005) attacked the Bible using overblown points about differences in Bible translations.

King James would not be impressed. In fact Christians today still have every reason for confidence in the collection of books in the Bible.

Take the New Testament. All 27 books were written in the first century, and almost all were accepted early on by Christian leaders. There are thousands of manuscripts of the New Testament in Greek, and the entire text can be reconstructed by quotes from second-century writers such as Clement and Justin Martyr. Christian scholars have done outstanding work on the text and canon of Scripture. Think of Daniel Wallace (Dallas), Peter Head (Cambridge), Larry Hurtado (Edinburgh), the recently deceased Bruce Metzger (Princeton), and here in Canada of Stanley Porter (McMaster), Peter Flint (Trinity Western), Tyler Williams (The King's University College) and Craig Evans (Acadia). They tackle media-driven conspiracy theories about the Bible with calm, courtesy and erudition.

What about Bible translations? Again there is clear reason for confidence. Granted, there are a lot of translations. Further, and most depressing, squabbles over translation have been deadly. For example, a Puritan backlash against the KJV led to the execution of KJV proponent William Laud (former archbishop of Canterbury) in 1645.

In our day the vitriol that remains surrounding translations is startling. Last fall KJV defenders picketed Eugene Peterson's presence here at Tyndale and threatened hellfire because of his Bible paraphrase *The Message*. Perhaps they missed the KJV passages on love.

It is perfectly understandable that some Christians prefer the KJV. What is tragic is how some KJV defenders argue all other translations are corrupt. G. A. Riplinger plants wild conspiracy theories about New Age connections with modern Bibles. Peter Ruckman, the wildest apologist, even states the KJV is more inspired than the original Hebrew and Greek texts. The "KJV only" position harms the work of fundamentalist Christians like David Cloud, leads to bitter and unnecessary divisions and is almost always based on shallow research. The evidence for the need to move beyond "KJV only" is crystal clear in research from D. A. Carson and Daniel Wallace.

Thankfully the varied translations of Scripture contain the same gospel message, whether it be the Geneva Bible (the Puritan choice), Revised Standard Version, New International Version, New American Standard, Net Bible (at www.bible.org with more than 62,000 notes), the venerable KJV or others.

Given the resources available in 1611, the KJV is an amazing work of research and dedication. Its literary power is actually an accidental by-product of Christian scholars who were mainly concerned with reliability in translation. Like William Tyndale, they wanted God's Word to be known in the language of the common person. McGrath writes "ordinary people were to be given a pathway into the text, which its translators believe to be the doorway to salvation, and the only hope and consolation for the world."

JAMES A. BEVERLEY is professor of Christian thought and ethics at Tyndale Seminary in Toronto.



## **100 Years on the Rock**

The superintendent of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland and Labrador introduces another EFC-affiliated church denomination.

> iss Alice Belle Garrigus (1858-1949) began the Pentecostal movement in Newfoundland and Labrador. In obedience to God's call, she moved up from Bridgeport, Conn., on December 1, 1910. Affectionately known as the "Lady Who Came," she later became known as the "Lady Who Stayed."

On Easter Sunday, April 16, 1911, the first service was held at Bethesda mission at 193 New Gower Street, downtown St. John's. So now we are celebrating our 100th anniversary!

Later the full gospel would spread to Clarke's Beach, North Harbour, Humber Mouth (Corner Brook East) and eventually all over Newfoundland and Labrador.

Today there are 124 assemblies and more than 400 credentialed pastors. Missionaries are serving in Senegal, Thailand, Kenya, Tanzania, Honduras, Mozambique and Hong Kong – with international ministries also happening provincially. Pentecostals comprise about seven per cent of the provincial population.

The traditional beliefs and preaching of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland and Labrador (PAONL) have focused on Jesus – our Saviour, Healer, Baptizer and Coming King. The preaching of the Word has produced signs pointing to the glory of God.

The mission of the PAONL through the enablement of the Holy Spirit is to glorify God by proclaiming the full gospel of Christ to all individuals, and by making disciples through evangelism, instruction, fellowship, worship and ministry.

The PAONL desires to be on the cutting edge and to be a missional church in the days ahead awaiting the return of the Lord. Last fall we began to re-emphasize our core values based on our core beliefs. The five core values refocused are:

1. We value God: His Word, His Creation, His redemptive purposes in His Son, His presence through the Holy Spirit and the imminent return of Christ.

2. We value "the lost" to whom we owe the compassion of Christ, an opportunity to receive the gospel and entrance into Christian fellowship.

- 3. We value believers, their commitment to personal discipleship, their baptism in the Holy Spirit, their Christian family life and their Christ-like example and witness.
- 4. We value the local assembly marked by sound doctrine, anointed proclamation, fervent prayer, divine healing, Spirit-led worship, authentic relationships, every-member ministry, Holy Spirit-empowered evangelism and practical expression of Christian faith in the world.
- 5. We value a co-operative fellowship that enhances the

church's ability to fulfill its missional mandate through servant leadership, a shared vision, positive communication, relevant ministry and strategic mobilization of its resources.

The PAONL is challenged as all Evangelicals to understand our times and to know the best course for us to take for the future. Out-migration from the province and an aging population in the local churches are very evident, but we are optimistic as we see the church working towards becoming more missional and living out Christ in our communities.

After a century our desire is to continue our confidence in the gospel of Christ, to continually realize the power of the gospel,

proclaim it with authority and passion and live it practically in the community on a daily basis. Our desire is to impact our culture with a redemptive message of a loving Saviour. As we resist the temptation to become "consumeristic believers," we desire to demonstrate "unselfishness and servanthood." We advocate authentic community, the making of disciples, courageous leadership and a faith walk that lives with joyful anticipation of the return of Jesus Christ!

The faithful God of the past is the One who inspires faith in us for the future!

**H. PAUL FOSTER** is general superintendent of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland and Labrador. This column continues a series by affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. For a list, see the EFC.ca/affiliates.

Out-migration from the province and an aging population in the local churches are very evident, but we are optimistic as we see the church working towards becoming more missional.

## **Brazil: Poverty and Pentecostals**

he annual March for Jesus that brings parts of the city of São Paulo in Brazil pretty much to a standstill will never have the numbers, the flash, the feathers – nor presumably the free condom distribution provided by the government – that Brazil's most famous parade, Carnaval, does.

Yet the annual March for Jesus is growing every year, with estimates of attendance ranging anywhere from one to five million people in 2010. In typically boisterous Brazilian style, the march lasted 12 hours.

It is a larger-than-life prayer parade through the largest city in South America's largest country, home to the largest Catholic population in the world.

In an interesting religious twist, and one with profound sociological implications, Brazil is now also home to an estimated 24 million Pentecostals. Yes, that would be the largest concentration in the world. Statistics show that the Catholic Church is actually losing numbers, even as Pentecostalism and other evangelical expressions of the faith grow, especially in the densely populated urban slums, of which Brazil has no shortage.

Observers say the evangelical church finds fertile ground in the slums by offering a unique and practical hope – one that actually changes lives. Addictions are conquered, marriages restored, domestic violence reduced, and kids find something healthy to do in poor neighbourhoods on a Wednesday night.

In a 2008 article titled "How Brazil Benefits from Being World's Most Pentecostal Country," Brazilian social psychologist Marco Fernandes states: "Anyone living in the urban peripheries of today's Brazil, where I have



lived for years, can confirm that this is an important phenomenon. Many participants in the Homeless Workers' Movement are also members of the local Pentecostal church. We cannot forget that religion played an important role in the formation of our [political] left."

Left or right, it's not unusual for Brazilian Evangelicals to become activists in their communities and even active players in the national political scene. It's not that Evangelicals invented changing lives and organizing people to work for the improvement of Brazil. Parts of the Catholic Church have always deeply identified with the poor in Brazil and worked tirelessly to make life better. Students of the Church in Latin America know about the Ecclesiastic Base Communities of the 1960s, for example – small groups of committed Christians who read liberation theologians, lived, worked and prayed their way to making life better for the poorest of the poor.

But these days, the evangelical church in Brazil seems to be offering a fresh kind of hope and a renewed kind of encounter with a living God – a God who makes a difference in the day-to-day life of some of Brazil's most vulnerable people. And the people are grabbing on tight.



#### **Brazil at a Glance**

Full Name: Federative Republic of Brazil

**Population:** 195.4 million (UN2010) **Capital:** Brasilia

Area: 8.5 million km<sup>2</sup> (3.3 million sq. mi.)

Major Language: Portuguese

Major Religion: Christianity Life Expectancy: 70 years (men),

77 years (women) (UN)

Literacy Rate: 89%

Main Exports: Manufactured goods, iron ore, coffee, oranges, other agricultural produce

**GNI per Capita:** US \$8,040 (World Bank, 2009)

Average Annual Income: US \$3460 (World Vision)

(Sources: BBC News, World Vision)

#### **On Our Knees**

- Pray for those who live in injustice in Brazil – the poor, the underprivilegeds and the indigenous population. Pray for God's justice to be restored, and for the Church, in whatever expression, to live out its high calling to help that happen.
- Pray for the Church to offer hope, truth and healthy alternatives to Brazil's youth.
- Pray for the environmental concerns of diminishing rainforest that impact the Earth, but more deeply, indigenous populations that have been exploited through the years.
- Pray for the growth of a healthy economy, and the sharing of resources in a country known for the deep divide between the poor and the wealthy.

#### **Canadian Connections**

- Mennonite Brethren Mission and Service International partners to help outreach to underprivileged children, emerging daughter churches and leadership training in the Brazil Mennonite Brethren Church. A camping ministry for youth, children, couples and families is being developed near São Paulo. ww.mbmsi.org
- The Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada ministers in Brazil in the area of pastoral and leadership training in partnership with our sister denomination, the United Missionary Church of Brazil. www.emcc.ca

Read more about how EFC affiliates are working in Brazil at the EFC.ca/globalvillage

### **Canadian Play Gets Ovations**



*The Glory Man*, by Toronto scriptwriter Dennis Hassell, has been running at Lamb's Players Theatre in San Diego, California. (L-R, Deborah Gilmour Smyth and Adrian Blount.)

play about the birth of Habitat for Humanity in the southern United States by Toronto scriptwriter Dennis Hassell has been getting standing ovations in California.

Lamb's Players Theatre of San Diego, one of the 50 largest theatres in the USA, ran Hassell's ensemble drama *The Glory Man* for seven weeks on their mainstage and then extended it into January (www. lambsplayers.org).

The production features a cast of 18 and the raw gospel music of the rural south. The ensemble acts as a kind of Greek chorus, observing the action and singing a cappella in the transitions.

The story focuses on Clarence Jordan, an agriculturalist and biblical scholar, who founded an interracial commune named "Koinonia" (New Testament Greek for "love community"). The community lived relatively peacefully with its white neighbours until the civil rights movement sparked a social backlash.

In two years they experienced 23 incidents of shooting, bombing, beating and burning. A boycott meant they could neither buy supplies nor sell their crops, so they stopped farming. And they began to give the land away and help the rural poor build and own their own homes.

Millard Fuller, who founded Habitat For Humanity seven years later in a chicken house at the farm (a few miles from President Jimmy Carter's homestead), credited Jordan as "the spiritual father" of the worldwide organization, which has housed more than one million people in dozens of countries.

Later in life Jordan wrote *The Cottonpatch Gospel*, a contemporized version of the New Testament which became a successful off-Broadway show in the late 1970s, with music by Harry Chapin.

Hassell, the founding artistic director of Brookstone Theatre Toronto (1988-2005), is currently working with a national organization on a youth musical, *The Other Side of the River*, and developing a Canadiana folk musical, *Northern Light*, with singer-songwriter Jeanine Noyes and actor-singer Arthur Wachnik. He still keeps a hand in producing *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* annually at Christmas at the Walmer Centre Theatre (www.LionWW.com) in Toronto.

-Dennis Hassell Productions

#### BOOK REVIEWS Contemplative Vision: A Guide to Christian Art and Prayer

Author: Juliet Benner InterVarsity Press, 2011. 182 pages. \$17

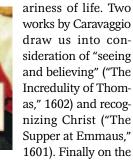
he connection between

prayer and image is longstanding, whether we consider icons or the role of image in the Church during pre-Reformation times. And art as something to be contemplated has

been very much a part of the Western art tradition. However some in the Christian community, particularly Protestants, have resisted this resource for the journey of faith. This new book by a former lecturer at an art gallery in Hamilton, Ont., provides a rich and insightful work that may well help us begin to recover the value of image for the faith journey, and specifically for the practice of contemplative prayer.

The book is about cultivating an intimate relationship with God – and not a book of art criticism. But the works of well-known artists serve as the vital means for this spiritual discipline. There are three sections in the book - Transformed Awareness, Transformed Vision and Transformed Living - indicating clearly essential steps for the spiritual journey. The author has much to say about "seeing" or the "gaze of faith," a theme common in biblical stories. Each chapter is a thoughtful weaving together of Scripture and image calling the readers to "pay attention."

"Census at Bethlehem" by Bruegel the Elder is an image from 1566 that calls us to think of the rush of life and consider what we may easily overlook. A reflection on Rembrandt's "Christ in the Storm on the Lake of Galilee" (1633) is the occasion to reflect on the theme of "God with us" in the ordin-



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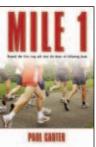
theme of transformed living, the images include "The Visitation" by contemporary artist He Qi and also Rubens' "Descent from the Cross" (1614).

This is a book for all who value the call to attentiveness and the practice of the presence of God. It is wonderful to have a work like this that draws upon the rich heritage of the visual arts to open to us a fresh route into deeper contemplation of Scripture and more intimate relationship with God. This is not a book for specialists – it is for everyone. *–John Franklin* 

#### Mile 1: Beyond the **First Step and Into** the Heart of Following Jesus

#### Author: Paul Carter Word Alive, 2010. 392 pages. \$21

aul Carter finds the first mile of each jogging session the most difficult. So it is too with the Christian life. Carter grew up with a strange "240 pages. \$19 mixture of imperial measure-



ments and the metric system. Hence for him there are 1.600 metres in a mile. In this book he gives us his impressions of the first 1.600 metres of the Christian

life: 16 things for a new believer to do to get through the first mile of their spiritual journey.

Being a pastor who has received many new believers into his congregation, Carter has test driven many of the ideas he shares in this book. There's a surprisingly wide range of questions here.

Carter tells us this book is written for either a small group or a one-to-one mentoring format. and indeed it would be rather laborious to read at one personal sitting. There is a lack of a literary flow; instead there are many profound insights strung together with the metaphor of the 1,600-metre mile.

The 16 topics are each given an introductory summary after which there is a Bible study. Each chapter then ends with a set of questions and answers. A pastor could go through the book week by week with a new believer or a group of them. It will take perseverance to finish it. But it will fully equip that new disciple for the marathon that follows mile one.

-Pye Chew

#### One Thousand Gifts: A Dare to Live **Fully Right Where** You Are

#### Author: Ann Voskamp Zondervan. 2011.

hey say mem-

ory jolts awake with trauma's electricity. That would be the year I turned four. The year when blood pooled and my sister died and I, all of

us, snapped shut to grace."

In this early paragraph from One Thousand Gifts, Ann Voskamp relates her first memory - a tragic accident that overshadowed much of her life. Then she whisks us forward to her adult self, the wife of an Ontario farmer, a mother of six and a fearful woman on a quest to understand and trust a God who would allow a baby to be snatched from her family.

Through vignettes from her life she takes us with her on the journey. It begins when she discovers the Greek word eucharisteo which embodies "giving thanks," "grace," and "joy." At about the same time a friend challenges her to list one thousand things for which she is thankful. She begins keeping a gratitude journal.

Along the way we rush to the ER with her and her son the day he mangles his hand, overhear her dealing with a hurting child, and feel her toe-clenching fear as hog prices plummet. Intertwined through these and other stories is what she learns about God and trust, fear, beauty, humility, service and more.

Voskamp's openness and vulnerability are moving. She buttresses her vivid storytelling and poetic prose with quotes from sources as varied as St. Augustine and John Piper. The rich text begs to be read slowly and savoured.

One Thousand Gifts is a

powerful and convincing apologetic for thankfulness. It illustrates how the practice of gratitude can morph from a mere exercise of accumulating items on a list to a trusting, joyful

lifestyle.

Voskamp also writes a blog at www.aholyexperience.com. -Violet Nesdoly

#### The Bloodlight **Chronicles:** Reconciliation Author: Steve Stanton ECW Press. 2010. 240 pages. \$16

ne of science fiction's popular sub-genres is "cyberpunk" - stories about humans living either in virtual space or highly technological worlds. William Gibson, Tad Williams and Neal Stephenson are some of the best-known cyberpunk authors. Into that well-established tradition steps Ontario author Steve Stanton.

In his new novel certain members of the human race have become infected with an alien virus that grants them immortality. However, the virus affects people seemingly randomly. Nor is it communicable or genetically transferred. One couple, Zachariah and Mia, have both become immortal, but their son is not. Faced with

the prospect of watching him grow old and die, they attempt to find the source of the virus to infect him. Along the way, they travel in cyberspace to get answers.

The book is a taut thriller, veering as it does between the real and the virtual, propelled by a central mystery: What is the source of the infection, and why do only a select few have it?

The spiritual themes (parents wanting eternal life for their son and going to The Source to obtain it) are subtle. In fact, the book has been misunderstood

as a cyberpunk/ vampire hybrid (Tron meets *Twilight*) rather than what it really is - a book that bears some similarity to both C. S. Lewis's sci-fi



apologetic Out of the Silent Planet and Tad Williams's Otherland series.

Stanton gets a lot of things right with this book. It's spiritually thoughtful without being pedantic. It moves along very well. He has a great ear for dialogue. However, he chooses to start the book with a barrage of technobabble and overwrought description. It's like being given a lecture on warp drive technology by the chief engineer of the USS Enterprise. However, once you get through the first 25 pages, the effects disappear.

Other reviewers have remarked the book's characters lack development, but given the genre and the action-thriller vibe the author is reaching for, that's acceptable. And, since this is the first in a series, there's a good chance he will develop his characters still further. -Lloyd Rang

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It's time to give again.

anadian Christians are still holding on to our cash, and that's understandable after two-plus years of significant financial restraint (don't you love these euphemisms for what has in fact been widespread financial disaster, fear, confusion and crime?). There's no wisdom in spending recklessly when we still don't have any confidence things have gotten better and will stay that way.

Canadian Christian institutions, as a result, have suffered – from congregations to denominations, from Bible schools to universities, and from local missions to international societies. Most of them, from coast to coast to coast, have had a very, very difficult two or three years.

Exceptions exist to be sure. Dr. John Pellowe of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities tells me that some churches and other organizations have seen an actual increase in giving, while others have reported no great drop-off.

But most have found it difficult, especially some of our larger organiza-

tions that depend in part on donors with significant investment income.

In certain ways the suffering has been redemptive. Some badly directed organizations have shut down. (Let me be clear: I don't mean every one that shut down recently was bad; only some.) And some mediocre ones have been exposed as such. Tough times bring problems to the surface, and we are all better off seeing whatever ugly reality had previously been obscured by a layer of cash.

Furthermore, good organizations have heeded the slogan of the day: "Don't waste a good crisis." They have made tough, wise decisions: laying off personnel who needed to go; revamping outmoded administrative structures; dumping publicity programs that didn't work well; catching up on information technologies they have ignored in their busy times; reconnecting with any donors they have neglected – and praying, praying, praying that

God would give them a fresh vision for what they should do and how they should do it.

Having been hard-pressed, they are now reshaped and repositioned. And rarin' to go, ready to engage in ministry better than ever.

So let's get out of our fear mode and into our faith mode. Let's not just resume our old patterns of giving, but spread out our chequebooks, credit card statements, RRSPs, mortgages, student loans, insurance policies and piggy banks before the Lord and say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." What does the Lord of heaven and earth, who never, ever runs out of wealth, want us to do with ours?

If we are not deeply impressed with a particular charity, school, congregation or mission, why aren't we? Per-

> haps it's not that institution's fault. Perhaps we haven't gotten to know it well, and so it's time to pay it a visit, read more about it or talk to a representative. Then we can make a better-informed judgement as to whether it's doing what we want to support.

> Or perhaps we do know it well, and it just isn't impressive. Still, we just kinda feel we should keep sending them some money because, well, you know, we always have, and it wouldn't be nice to stop giving.... And so the mediocre institutions hang on, unpruned, and drain vital support from the institutions that could really get God's work done.

Let's not waste a good crisis. If an organization isn't spending God's resources wisely, why are we spending God's resources on it? If an organization doesn't rev us up, let's find some that will. And then let's get going, giving.

JOHN STACKHOUSE is Sangwoo Youtong Chee professor of theology and culture at Regent College, Vancouver.

Tough times bring problems to the surface, and we are all better off seeing whatever ugly reality had previously been obscured by a layer of cash.

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# A Beginner's Journey Into the Jesus Prayer

By Jan Woltmann

om," cried the panicked voice of my 20-year old daughter on the other end of the cell-phone, "there's been a terrible accident!" Her words froze my mind to the moment as I struggled to remain calm. Between her sobs and sentence fragments. I discovered that

her sobs and sentence fragments, I discovered that she had sustained minor injuries in a horrific highway collision and that the other driver had been taken by ambulance to hospital. There was little time for more details before a paramedic hijacked our conversation with words of reassurance and a request to come quickly.

The address he provided put her on the opposite side of the city from where I had been enjoying a leisurely lunch with a friend. He warned me to avoid the quickest route, as traffic was backed-up for miles because of the accident. It was going to take at least 30 minutes to reach her, I thought. My heart began a slow descent. Inaudibly, I began pleading to Jesus for mercy – for my terrified daughter – for the others involved, and for the unknown that this moment would forever define.

A cloudy summer sky threatened rain, as I steadily made my way through the city. I contacted my husband at work, and though he left immediately, I knew that he was at least a 40-minute drive away. Nevertheless, we agreed to bridge the distance by cell phone at regular intervals. Sometime later, however, it was not his reassuring voice that greeted me in the smothering silence, but the voice of the constable who was detaining our daughter for further questioning at the scene. His tone was even and professional as he cautioned me to avoid the site of the accident. "Park nearby," he advised,



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"and I'll call you when we're finished."

"Lord, have mercy," I whispered, as a feeling of immense dread threatened to dissolve what was left of my ability to navigate the quickest route.

By some miracle, my husband called soon after to say that he had arrived at the scene and had our daughter in his sights.

"Thank you, Jesus." I breathed, relieved that his presence would provide her with much needed comfort. I was within close range now. However, as I neared the final turnoff, a police barricade detoured my hopes of an imminent reunion. When I identified myself to the officer, he refused to defy his orders, despite my protests.

And so I waited in the awful silence of a nearby street on the edge of the city. Summer sounds of crickets and birds collided with the noise of a hovering helicopter and the sight of news crews gathering in the distance. The gravity of the moment collected around me like the dampness of early winter. From this place of helpless vigil, the Jesus Prayer that I had uttered repeatedly over the past few weeks, reverberated in my consciousness like a fortress against the rising tide of anxiety: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me – have mercy on us all.* 

As an evangelical Christian in the Anabaptist tradition, I had heard little about the Jesus Prayer in my circles. In retrospect, it was a desire to practise one

new spiritual discipline as the summer began that led me to choose it from among the many other ancient prayer pathways. I was impressed with the simplicity of its practice – one that had been used for centuries to draw men and women into greater intimacy with the living God.

Quite innocently, I began to make room for this prayer in my morning devotions, saying it thoughtfully and reverently for short periods of time. However, it took on new intensity and meaning after the

accident. In those uncertain days, when the memory of the crash ravaged our daughter's emotional well-being, and its reality suspended an 18-year-old boy between life and death, I prayed if often and I prayed it with tears. Its remembrance became a gift to me, offering strength and reassurance through the sturdiness of its well-worn words.

What's more, it also became an avenue of intercession for an unknown family connected to us only by the tragedy of a moment. When concern for this boy's condition and the thought of his parents' pain became overwhelming to me, I could breathe: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on each one." Leaving them with Jesus in this way brought a significant measure of relief. Irma Zaleski, author of *Living the Jesus Prayer: The Soul's Road Home* (Continuum, 2003), explains this relief: "By praying the Holy Name over them, by embracing them in our thoughts and hearts, we surrender each one of these to God's mercy and love and trust that he will do what is best for them."

It was the experience of the Jesus Prayer at this crucial juncture in my life that prompted me to delve further into its history. What I have discovered has added depth and dimension to its words and has strengthened my resolve to practice it regularly.

#### THE JESUS PRAYER IN HISTORY

The cry for mercy is a common theme throughout Scripture. The Old Testament, particularly the Psalms, finds the people of God earnestly pleading for Yahweh's relentless loving-kindness to meet them in their time of need. However, the Jesus Prayer is deeply rooted in the gospel narratives of the New Testament. It was the cry of blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10:47, shouting, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." It was a Canaanite mother's plea on behalf her demon possessed daughter in Matthew 15:22 – "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me." And it was also on the lips of

> the tax collector in Luke 18:13 as he beat his breast in the corner of the temple saying, "God, have mercy on me a sinner."

> The fuller form of the prayer, as it has evolved throughout Church history, is a composite of all of these. It is simply: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.*

> This prayer has been at the very center of Eastern Christian Spirituality from the earliest centuries of the Church, as a way to practise the

Apostle Paul's injunction to "pray without ceasing." It has been prayed by the Fathers and Mothers of the Egyptian Desert, by nuns and monks in ancient monasteries, and by ordinary men and women of the Orthodox Church since that time. The prayer spread to the West through the publication of a little book called *The Way of the Pilgrim*, in which its anonymous author traces the journey of a 19th-century peasant as he wanders across Russia recording his practice and experience of the Jesus prayer.

The primary aim of the prayer, as many theologians have noted, is to awaken the heart to the presence of Christ and to be enlivened by His love. The thoughtful repetition of these few simple words can usher the heart into the very stillness of God, wherein it is possible to wait and listen and be embraced by His love, despite the bustle of external activity. Such stillness rivals our inborn restlessness. So the Jesus Prayer provides a proven pathway to grow our attentiveness – to turn our gaze from our flighty selves to the person of Christ, and there to encounter his steadfast, loving gaze.

In Greek, the word for mercy, *eleos*, is translated "compassion," particularly divine or human compassion that expresses itself in action. In Hebrew, the word for "mercy" is *hesed*, referring to the inexhaustible loving-kindness that flows from God to His people.

Surrounded by the comforts of 21st century liv-

As an Evangelical Christian in the Anabaptist Tradition, I had heard little about the Jesus Prayer in my circles. ing, however, we Westerners are often unaware of our neediness – of our daily dependence on God's mercy. The problemis that "we keep lapsing into ideas of self-sufficiency, or get impressed with our niceness, and so we lose our humility. Asking for mercy reminds us that we are still poor and needy, and fall short of the glory of God," as Frederica Mathewes-Green writes in *The Illumined Heart* (Paraclete Press, 2001).

The Prayer of Jesus is "a prayer of sinners, not the virtuous," as Irma Zaleski notes in her book. It is a prayer of repentance – of turning away from the sin of self-preoccupation to the person of Christ. The Jesus Prayer invites us to face again that we are fundamentally broken and in need of healing from the inside-out.

In the end, proponents of the Jesus Prayer remind us that it is not a talisman or magic formula and caution against the mindless repetition of the words. They recognize that it is one prayer among many others, and as such is not the prayer or even the best prayer but one that is initiated in us by the Holy Spirit. In my case, it was a prayer that I "stumbled" upon on the eve of a life-defining

Faith Today

moment. It became a gift to me in that desolate season.

Reflecting on that time, I recognize how God's mercy found us and formed us in ways too wonderful for words. Our daughter discovered the divine strength to move through her traumatic circumstances without experiencing the emotional injury feared at the outset. And the young man involved in the accident experienced full recovery to his body and brain. For this I'm extremely grateful. Suffice it to say that there is much mystery in the ways in which we experience God's mercy in times of trial and distress.

Through my experience with the Jesus Prayer and with the aid of my later studies of it, I have been nudged to look anew at the beauty of Christ. Perhaps you too may be nudged to journey into the Prayer, and along the way, be captured by the wonderment of the divine gaze that has always been upon your life.

> JAN WOLTMANN is a freelance writer in Winnipeg.

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