

Faith Today

To Connect, Equip and Inform Evangelical Christians in Canada

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013



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Faith Today looks
back and ahead

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Looking Back

As I write my last column for *Faith Today*, I remember God's faithfulness.

In this issue we are celebrating 30 years of *Faith Today* magazine – 30 years of providing a public gathering place for Canadian Evangelicals.

It will also be a new year and a fresh start for me. On January 1, 2013 I will be retiring as The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada's director of resourcing and publishing. So this is my last issue as managing editor for *Faith Today*. My duties here will be taken up by our other fine editors, Bill Fledderus and Karen Stiller, and they'll also be hiring a new third editor.

Twelve years ago, when I attended my first interviews for this job, I was very relaxed because I believed I was only getting "interview practice."

I had been working from home as editor of the United Church renewal magazine *Fellowship* and writing freelance articles for various secular publications. But when our three children were off to school full-time, I was ready for more.

When I saw the ad for the EFC position, I sent in my résumé and welcomed the opportunity for my first interview, expecting I would *not* get the job – in fact, I was depending on it. Our home is a considerable distance from the EFC office and, as my husband often reminded me, "Driving is not your forte." Applying for a job so far away did not make sense.

However, the idea that this was only a practice run

made me so relaxed during the interviews that I really enjoyed the process. (Our Lord did create humour, after all.)

You can imagine my shock and surprise when then-president Gary Walsh called to offer me the job as the EFC's director of communications. Though the job was very challenging, I quickly welcomed the opportunity. It was the commute that I feared.

Over the years I've learned God is truly faithful. When He calls, He also equips. My driving skills have definitely improved, but more importantly the travel time became the most precious part of my day, because I used it to pray. (More evidence of our Lord's character.) It started with me just praying for my driving, but over time it became a daily

conversation where I could hand over the desires and fears of my heart. I experienced an intimacy with God I didn't know existed.

Everyone who works in Christian ministry knows the challenges. Each of us seeks to respond to God's call – so often we are fearful and overwhelmed with the obstacles. Yet it is through these that, so often, we witness His miracles and love. **BT**

Over the years
I've learned God
is truly faithful.
When He calls,
He also equips.

ALL THE STAFF at *Faith Today* and the EFC thank Gail Reid for her outstanding contributions. We pray that God will richly bless you, Gail, in the years ahead. We will miss you!

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Offensive Gospel

Re: Why They're Leaving (Sep/Oct 2012)

It's great to see the concern about diminishing church attendance, but keeping people in the pews is not the root issue. "The very basic reason you come to church on Sunday is to say thank you to God for your salvation," says Rick Hiemstra. Let me add the primary reason young people leave the church is that they know nothing of that salvation. They haven't believed what the Bible says about the depth of personal sin, God's righteous judgement and wrath against sin, and the hope found in Jesus Christ.

Contrary to a comment in

the article, the "transmission of values" is not the important thing. Morality has no power to save. The key is passing on the trustworthy message as it has been taught: we are sinners in need of a saviour – and a Saviour has come!

The report highlights four "drivers" of church involvement ["spiritually engaged parents, experiences of God, vibrant community, and empowering teaching and beliefs"], but it would be better to understand these as the means God uses to give salvation by grace, not as ways to make church worthwhile [or attractive to youth].

Another caution is needed

around Rachel Harder's comments, which let people mix up who is doing the rejecting when a person walks away from the biblical moral standard. God does not give humans the "right to act" in ways He has described as sin. In fact, the very root of sin is our rejection of God and His Word. We should not be surprised when people reject churches where biblical morality is preached, but we should help those people understand they are the ones doing the rejecting.

True, the church has not handled this well, but the solution is not to diminish the sin of

homosexuality. The solution is to recover the biblical teaching on the wickedness of all sin, especially our own, so that we will stop acting like the unmerciful servant of Matthew 18. In love we must affirm the sinfulness of sin and point fellow sinners to the cross where we found salvation.

Harder says, "The first message we want to send to young people is that they belong," but those words send a dangerous message. We should certainly communicate that young people are welcome at our gatherings, but nobody belongs to the



Milestones

APPOINTED

James Astleford as executive director of Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Canada. He served in senior management with ADRA for 20 years, including in South Sudan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Nepal

and India. He holds a master of science in administration degree in international development and an MA from Andrews University. ADRA was established by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada soon after the Second World War. Astleford replaces Ron Kuhn.

James K. A. Smith as editor-in-chief of *Comment* magazine, a journal of opinion for Christian leaders published by the think-tank Cardus, based in Hamilton, Ont. Dr. Smith teaches philosophy at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich. A native of Embro, Ont., he is a visiting professor at Trinity College (University of Toronto), and has also taught at Regent College, Fuller Seminary, Calvin Theological Seminary and Reformed Theological Seminary.

John W. Irwin as chair of the board for The Word Guild, an association of Canadian writers, editors, speakers, publish-

ers, booksellers, librarians and other interested individuals who are Christian. Irwin is a retired book publisher (Irwin Publishing) who served on the boards of McMaster Divinity College, Toronto School of Theology, Wycliffe College, The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and other institutions. The Word Guild holds conferences for writers, including one each June in Guelph, Ont., and sponsors national awards programs. Irwin succeeds Les Lindquist.

LAUNCHED

A Master of Theological Studies – Indigenous Studies program, offered cooperatively by Tyndale University College & Seminary and the North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies. The program launches in June 2013 and accommodates participants from remote locations using intensive summer classes, online hybrid formation and wrap-around courses relating to an annual symposium. NAIITS, led by Terry LeBlanc in Evansburg, Alta., and Tyndale, led by Gary Nelson in Toronto, promise a curriculum designed and taught primarily by indigenous faculty to equip students who want to make a contribution to the indigenous world in their own ministry context.

An American counterpart for the Canadian charity **Save the Mothers**,

which promotes maternal health in the developing world through education and advocacy. Save the Mothers was founded by Dr. Jean Chamberlain-Froese of Hamilton, Ont., who lives mainly in Uganda. STM trains local professionals in Africa, thus building a network of effective leadership for social change. Save the Mothers (U.S.A.) held its inaugural board meeting in Pittsburgh in December, led by Dr. Stephen Noll, former vice-chancellor (president) of Uganda Christian University.

RESTRUCTURING

Lutheran Theological Seminary Saskatoon, a member of the Saskatoon Theological Union, declared a state of financial exigency and let go two of its five tenured professors, Jann Boyd and Christian Eberhart. Its board says these painful steps are necessary to ensure the long-term viability of the seminary, which has been preparing men and women for ministry for nearly a hundred years. Financial exigency is not bankruptcy or insolvency – institutions use it "to take extraordinary action to reduce expenditures and preserve resources," according to the Association of Theological Schools. Kevin Ogilvie is president of the seminary, which is owned by the four western synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

PHOTO: WWW.ADVENTISTMESSENGER.CA



James Astleford

Church, the body of Christ, without first repenting of his or her sin and calling on the name of Jesus.

Jeremy Postal hit the nail on the head when he listed engaging Scripture as the number one priority for ministering to young people. He says, "Young adults . . . will find the meta-story of Scripture attractive," but we must also remember the Bible teaches that the message of the gospel is offensive to sinful men and women. It is a stumbling block to them, and they suppress the truth and exchange it for a lie.

Thank God the Bible also teaches that God is seeking sinners, and He loves people who are still in opposition to Him. It teaches that He works salvation in men and women by giving them eyes to see they have been rejecting God, and ears to hear the good news that Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty.

Young people are walking away because churches have been walking away from the gospel. When churches fail to preach the truth that men and women are fundamentally sinful and rebellious against God, young people fail to be confronted with their own personal sin and fail to see their need for a Saviour. This is the root of the problem, but it was glossed over in this article.

The Church in Canada is in desperate need of clear presentations of the core truths of the Bible, and the EFC is in a position to stand up for the "offensive" message. My prayer is that the love of Christ would motivate *Faith Today* to boldly contend for the faith.

David Rennalls
Louisville, Kentucky

Letters to the editor

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Urbana Mission Conference Changes Young Lives

Ever since it began, Urbana has always had a strong Canadian touch.



Urbana, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship's (IVCF) student mission conference that takes place every three years, closed this year how it began years ago – with a strong Canadian touch. Geri Rodman, president of IVCF Canada, offered the closing address to a crowd of thousands, including more than 2,200 Canadians who travelled to St. Louis, Missouri for the conference, which took place from Dec. 27 to 31.



Ger Geri Rodman

The very first Urbana conference actually took place in Canada in 1946. The conference has grown to become the pivotal event of IVCF, an organization committed to “the transformation of youth, students and graduates, in all their ethnic diversity, into fully committed followers of Jesus Christ” (www.ivcf.ca).

“The challenge is to take the mission that they’ve heard back home,” says Rodman. “During the whole week, the challenge is to engage, and the theme is the Great Invitation. It’s an extraordinary invitation requiring an extraordinary investment.”

Although the conference is now held in the U.S., (with the next Urbana scheduled

Job’s Blues . . .

Sometimes an idea grabs hold of you and just doesn’t let go. That is what happened when R. William Muir heard a 12-part sermon series on the Book of Job at Emmanuel (Crossroads) Baptist Church in Victoria, B.C., in 1976. “I realized then,” he says, “that I wanted to do something creative” with Job’s story.

Over the years Muir, managing editor of the magazine *Canadian Menonite*, experimented with different ways to retell the story of Job and his trials. He tried writing an opera, an epic poem, a play – but the right medium eluded him.

An epiphany came in the late 1980s

PHOTOS: INTERVARSITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP/USA

in three years), Rodman points out IVCF Canada and its American partners are the co-hosts of Urbana, and always have been. "The purpose of Urbana hasn't changed in all those years. It is to really engage students and challenge them with the mission of Jesus Christ, and to engage with that mission," says Rodman.

IVCF will follow up with students who attend, with a particular focus on university students who attended the Canadian Student Leadership Track offered during the conference. "We started that back in Urbana '03. That is one of the most powerful things," says Rodman. "They get so much traction back at the campus."

"Our mission," she says, "is to launch 20,000 extraordinary student leaders in the next decade, fuelled by the *Hemorrhaging Faith* report," which IVCF helped sponsor. (The report *Hemorrhaging Faith: Why and When Young Adults Leave, Return and Stay in the Church*, is available at www.hemorrhagingfaith.com.)

"This is a very strategic Urbana, particularly for Canada, in light of that report," says Rodman.

"Urbana is the single greatest impacting conference or situation that moves people to dedicate their lives to full-time mission, whether it's missional in their vocation or going overseas. That's where Urbana continues to deliver." **FT**

—Karen Stiller

Contest to Send Canadians to Visit Missionaries

LoveGlobal, a Canadian online fundraising platform for missionaries, along with Missions Fest Vancouver, are holding a Win a Trip to Meet Your Missionary Contest, an opportunity for Canadian supporters of LoveGlobal missionaries to win a trip to visit and work alongside a missionary they support for one week.

"We are very excited about this contest," says Darian Kovacs, executive director for LoveGlobal. "Canadians have been embracing the LoveGlobal idea as an alternative model to the traditional ways funds are raised for missionaries, here and overseas. For us, this contest is just the next logical step to LoveGlobal's style of authentic storytelling, constant updates, and real interaction between missionaries and those who support them."

The contest is open to anyone who registers online at www.loveglobal.com or www.missionscontest.com, and commits to raising funds and/or awareness for a missionary registered on the LoveGlobal site. Many missionaries on the site are independent, but an increasing number, says Kovacs, are affiliated with organizations such as SIM, OMF, Youth With a Mission, Operation Mobilization and The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

Winners will be chosen in three categories: most money raised for a missionary, most creative way to raise any amount of funds, and most people signed up as LoveGlobal supporters. "We think that people will have a great time with this contest," says Kovacs. "In many ways the sky is the limit. Creativity will be rewarded along with actual dollar counts, and people power as well. It's going to be a lot of fun to watch this unfold." Winners will also receive a video camera to record their trip and later post footage on the website. The contest closes Jan. 15. **FT** —Staff



Darian Kovacs

PHOTO: ROSANNA PENG

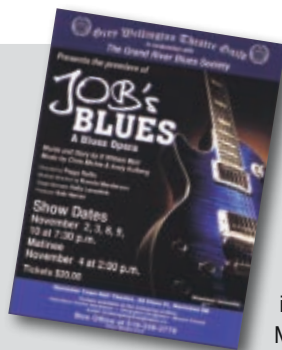
Old Story in a Brand New Format

when the writer listened in on a radio program about early 1970s blues and the people who played it. Blues artist Big Bill Broonzy's assertion that "blues is a steal from the spirituals" prompted Muir to write *Job's Blues: A Blues Opera*, a unique blend of blues and opera that tells one of the Bible's most provocative tales.

"The blues did grow out of spiritual roots," Muir says, "but it has not been known for spiritual content for a long time. I wanted to see if we could reconnect the two." Muir went on to connect online with two San Francisco Bay Area composers, Chris Michie and Andy Kulberg. The duo composed all the music for the opera's 14 songs and

one instrumental piece. The opera was scored by a Toronto musician, Doug Virgin, bass guitarist with Sanctuary Ministries' house band Red Rain.

In November 2012 delighted audiences at the Harriston Town Hall Theatre (located near Guelph, Ont.,) enjoyed the fruits of Muir's long labour at six performances of *Job's Blues*. The two-act opera is set in a modern-day blues club frequented by Job, a successful blues singer. Job's testing is narrated by the bartender, and bad news is delivered by three waitresses. His friends are club patrons. There is



no dialogue – all Job's trials and tribulations are revealed through song.

As he reflects on the realization of a 36-year project, Muir is very appreciative of the Theatre Guild for taking a chance on his new musical. He is also buoyed and encouraged by the audience's reaction to *Job's Blues*, saying, "I think we're on to something."

Apparently others agree, as a number of organizations have indicated an interest in future performances of the blues opera. This idea may not be done with R. William Muir just yet. **FT**

—Mary Lou Harrison

Honduran First Lady Visits Canadian Church Group



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Her Excellency Rosa Elena Bonilla de Lobo speaks at the annual fundraising banquet held by the Carpenteros.

A small group of missions-minded Christians from Southern Ontario has caught the attention of the Honduran first lady, Her Excellency Rosa Elena Bonilla de Lobo. Bonilla de Lobo visited Ontario in September to attend the annual fundraising banquet held by the Carpenteros – a mission group from Calvary Christian Reformed Church in Flam- borough, Ont., which has served the poor in Honduras since 2001. After carrying

English and Spanish words for “carpen- ters.” Their goal is to help Hondurans improve living conditions in impover- ished communities, in partnership with World Renew, the development, disaster response and justice arm of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada.

Their projects include microfinance co-operatives, construction projects, build- ing latrines and wells, and water projects. The group has also funded continuing

out several disaster relief missions in the Central American country, the Carpenteros wanted to shift to more long-term work based on partner- ships with the people they were helping.

Committed to inten- tionally building relation- ships with the Honduran people, and promising their continued support after their mission teams left, the group named themselves Carpenteros (www.carpenteros.ca), based on combining the

education, health and self-care training, emergency and disaster relief, and legal assistance.

“We tell our team members that the mission trip really begins when they get home,” says Ken Vanderlaan, a Carpentero leader and team member. “Our responsibil- ity is not to build a house and then leave. It is to let the Honduran people know that we are their brothers in sisters in Christ, and we will continue to help them.”

The paths of the Carpenteros and the first lady of Honduras – known for her own antipoverty activism and projects – have crossed before, but everyone was pleased when Bonilla de Lobo accepted their invita- tion to attend their annual dinner.

“Thank you for loving Honduras,” Bonilla de Lobo said at the banquet. “I am so amazed to see a room full of people who are so dedicated to helping another country. People like you are the ones the world needs. You are an example to others and you are helping to change the way of thinking in our country. Carpenteros, you are famous in Honduras!”

The Carpenteros have raised more than \$1 million in the last decade in sup- port of Honduras, and are excited to see how the ministry will continue to grow. There are already tentative plans for fu- ture connections to take place between the work of the Carpenteros and the efforts of the first lady. **FT** –*Monica deRegt*

Listening Ministry Helps Bring Healing

What do you say when a woman tells you her husband has just taken his life? Nothing, advises Murray O’Coin, a Mohawk and ministry leader on the Tyendinaga Reservation just outside Ottawa. “When you sit in silence for 15 minutes, it brings trust. It leads to them pouring out what is really on their hearts. It’s a real gift,” says O’Coin.

Recently, he patiently listened to the story of a grieving family. “That story doesn’t come out in an hour or a day. It came over four weeks of breakfast, sup- per and tea, going for walks and hunting together.”

Bringing healing through listening is at the heart of Christian listening as taught by Acorn Ministries Canada, a national or- ganization that began in 2003 and which

has headquarters in Ottawa and offices in Toronto and Vancouver.

Ray Brooke, executive director of Acorn, says being listened to without interruption is therapeutic. People often begin talking about a safe topic. When trust is built, they share deeper feelings and their thinking becomes clarified.

“A person can work out a solution to their own problem when they are listened to,” says Brooke. The listener creates a physically and emotionally safe space for this to happen. At the end of conver- sations, listeners don’t give advice, but instead ask summarizing questions that may help people take action.

Acorn’s Christian (or reflective) listen- ing principles can be applied in variety of settings including families, schools and

churches. People can book appointments with trained listeners or the teaching can be integrated into everyday life and work.

Acorn Canada gave Murray O’Coin per- mission to adapt Christian listening prin- ciples to his work on the reserve. “With so many things, they want you to take what they have designed and press play. That doesn’t work here,” says O’Coin.

Acorn’s principles are in harmony with Mohawk culture and have helped O’Coin tune in to stories even more intentionally.

“Christian Listening is slowing down and hearing, hearing God, listening to the Holy Spirit, but also listening to the person.”

Acorn offers periodic training ses- sions in Ottawa and can teach sessions for a minimum of eight participants upon request. Last year the ministry trained 120 people. **FT** –*Sandra Reimer*

Church-Run Soup Lunch Brings a Town Together

A diverse group of churches in Port Perry, Ont., have teamed up with adults with special needs to provide a free weekly community lunch held at a local downtown church. Special needs adults learn hospitality and food preparation skills while they prepare and serve lunch to attendees, and customers and hosts alike make and strengthen connections in their community. For six months a year, churches involved have a chance to interact with each other and neighbours.

It was the non-church-based parent support group that first started the idea for a collaborative community lunch. The group wanted their adult children to be more involved in their community. "The coming together, it was like heaven. The timing was amazing. Churches want to be out in the community," says Sue Bradley, spokesperson for the parent support group. Modelled on a project in a nearby town, Soups on Us is not a soup kitchen. The lunch is a drop-in, open for two hours one day a week, and is offered free of charge. Church volunteers work one-on-one with the special needs adults who prepare 50 quarts of soup, and now desserts too.

It's a considerable amount of work, but worth it all, say organizers. "The soup has to be made and then cooled down in an ice bath, according to Ministry of Health regulations," notes volunteer John Gibson from New Song Church, one of the participating con-

gregations. "A qualified person who has taken the food preparation course has to be in the kitchen at all times."

The program is funded by the six churches involved, who provide their own supplies for the soup, desserts and other sundries. "Soups on Us provides lunch and a meeting place for the community, all the way from children to lonely seniors, widows and widowers, high school students, business people and politicians. Everyone comes away from it with a real good feeling," says Gibson.

Both Gibson and Cheryl Dejong of the Hope Reformed Christian Church in Port Perry see the Soups on Us lunch as a chance to share the love of Christ with others. "It's a chance to be our brother's keeper, to serve others to raise them up," says Dejong. She says the opportunity to be part of helping special needs adults integrate into society in a natural way appeals to her and her team. "It's wonderful to work with other churches. We should be working together for the common good...." says Dejong.

Parents of the special needs adults involved have watched participants greet and befriend their children in the community. "It means so much to them to do something worthwhile," says Gibson. One of the special needs adults summed up her feelings about the program this way: "I waited all summer for this." **FT**

—Michelle Zarins

Missionary Moves From Mango Trees to Tim Horton's



Don Longworth at the Apple Blossom Trailer Park.

The Apple Blossom Trailer Park in Fredericton is a long way from Benin, West Africa. But when a 32-year-old missionary returned to this New Brunswick city from Benin, he applied what he learned as a missionary abroad to this park of approximately 150 people.

"My background is missions. I come in and try to look at the community with as unbiased a view as possible, like I would if I came into an African village. I try and study the culture – because it *is* a culture," explains Don Longworth.

He works with SIM Canada, an evangelical organization whose mission is "to glorify God by planting, strengthening, and partnering with churches around

the world" (www.sim.ca). Longworth is with SIM's Culture Connections program, designed specifically for the setting in which Longworth finds himself – Canadian, urban, and on the radar of local churches wanting to innovate programs to share God's love with their neighbours.

"I partner with churches to reach their marginalized communities more effectively," he says. "It could be lower-income Canadians, homeless people, youth cultures like skaters, punk,

Goth – all these types of cultures that these churches have a hard time bridging, or are scared to bridge."

At Apple Blossom it all began with a friendship. Longworth, who partners with two local Baptist congregations (Kingsley Baptist and Lincoln Baptist), befriended a young man who lived in the park and showed up at church one day.

"It was the building of a friendship," he says, one that led to a Bible study and then the Apple Blossom Café, a drop-in coffee house run from a vacant trailer. "It was an awesome way to connect with people. Many folks there now look at me as their community chaplain."

And Apple Blossom is a community like

any other that can sometimes use a chaplain. "I am dealing with a lot of addictions, a lot of dysfunctional family situations, and problems with knowing how to relate to and deal with things like conflict resolution," explains Longworth. "It's been a spiritual exercise of listening to God and seeing what doors are open and where I could help."

He recently walked through another open door and into a senior-run soup lunch hosted by Lincoln Baptist Church. He has a ministry there of visiting and listening.

Through all the ministry outreach in which Longworth works, whether in a trailer park or a seniors' soup lunch, there is one quintessentially Canadian constant – Tim Horton's. "In Africa, when I was learning a tribal language, I had to be around people. I went to the mango trees. They are great big shady trees, and all the guys would gather and play cards in the heat of the day. It was where people hung out."

Tim Horton's, he says, is the Canadian mango tree.

"There is no substitute for Tim Horton's. When you invite someone to Tim's, there is something disarming about it, at least here in the East. They know you are going to talk life, about things that matter more than the weather. That's what I started doing," says Longworth. "I learned when I was in Benin, in order to reach people, you have to be where they are." **FT**

—Karen Stiller



Selling Embryos? We don't buy and sell people.

Recently a fertility clinic in the United States made news for not only selling human sperm and eggs, but human embryos as well. While many responded with disdain, *National Post* columnist Marni Soupcoff questioned the validity of the objections.

Embryo donation does occur in Canada. Couples who undergo *in vitro* fertilization often have nine eggs fertilized and then have three implanted. If pregnancy does not result, the next three are implanted. A successful pregnancy often leaves “spare” embryos left over.

What to do with them is a technologically created moral dilemma. Some are then made available to other couples. And there's at least one Christian organization in Canada that, out of its respect for human life, facilitates embryo adoption.

When regulations on such areas were being shaped, the EFC argued for the importance of the sanctity of human life and our society's affirmation of the dignity of human life.

These principles underlie current laws that prevent buying and selling human eggs, sperm and embryos, and ban payment to mothers who carry someone else's child.

Commercialization of embryos might assist those wanting to be parents. But is that what we want as a society?

Protecting human life often requires extra care for the vulnerable, as our child care institutions show. For example, in fostering and adoption it's not the parental interests that are primary. We want to find homes for waiting children, not to find children for wanting parents.

Similarly Canada has long banned slavery, and recently we even strengthened our laws to protect children and youth from being trafficked. Our abhorrence of the exploitation of slavery is shared worldwide, and universal condemnation falls on all remaining places where it is still practised.

Another example is the sex trade. In Canada there is increased lobbying to decriminalize prostitution, including major cases currently before our top courts. Do we as a society accept that the bodies of others should be bought for sexual pleasure?

Decriminalizing prostitution, it's often argued, has

worked in European countries. But in fact many there are pushing to re-establish criminal laws against buying sex. Such laws have been effective in Sweden and Norway, supplemented with counselling and retraining programs.

Where human trafficking is tolerated, children are hurt. Many of the youth being recruited to prostitution, even in Canada, are kids from group homes and foster homes.

Rejecting the commodification and exploitation of a human being today is part of a centuries-old battle including Evangelicals who led the charge to abolish slavery in the late 1700s and early 1800s.

The same abolitionists also worked to prevent the exploitation of child labour. In Toronto it was seeing six-year-olds selling newspapers on the streets that motivated J. J. Kelso to establish the first Children's Aid Society in Canada.

Resisting the commercialization and commodification of human life is a critical expression of our society's respect for the dignity of the human being. This respect shapes our laws governing biotechnology, adoption and slavery.

Such principles also underlie our universal health care system, our social programs and even our employment laws – you can hire someone, but you can't buy them or rent them.

But it takes effort to maintain these principles in a society driven by markets and a consumerist and materialist ethos that reduces life to transactions.


Soupcoff asks, “How does adding money to the equation change the dynamic of adopting embryos? How might money undermine a process that is very much like an adoption?”

Our response should be this. Since we reject buying and trading infants, we must be consistent and reject buying and selling eggs, sperm and embryos, and hiring women to carry children to term.

Soupcoff concludes, “Canadian outrage over treating embryos as salable goods rather than precious lives seems particularly strange given that Canadian law currently offers embryos no protection or status whatsoever.”

I agree in part. But a key reason we don't permit trafficking in human embryos is to acknowledge a certain status, a valuation that would be undermined by affixing a price.

If we permit commercializing activities that define our humanity, if we allow some or parts of us to be commodified, we will be offering sacrifices to those commercializing forces we allow to govern so much of our lives.

Let us affirm today, alongside the abolitionists of history, respect for life and the dignity of all, created in the image of God. 



Together for influence, impact and identity

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

BRUCE J. CLEMENGER is president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Read more of his columns at www.theEFC.ca/clemenger.

End-of-Life Issue in the Supreme Court

The EFC appeared as an intervener before the Supreme Court of Canada on Dec. 10 in the case of *Cuthbertson v. Rasouli*. The case concerns an Ontario man in a coma due to complications after minor brain surgery. Machines are required to keep him alive. The doctors in charge of this man's care determined the time had come to remove him from the medical equipment keeping him alive. The family disagrees. Read more, including the EFC's written arguments, at www.theEFC.ca/Rasouli. The court decision is expected in a few months.

An Evening to End Prostitution

The EFC's policy analyst Julia Beazley is participating with Defend Dignity in a series of thought-provoking conferences in Portage la Prairie (Jan. 27), Calgary (Jan. 31, Feb. 1), Caledonia (March 1) and beyond. Defend Dignity is an initiative of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Find out more at www.DefendDignity.ca and www.theEFC.ca/ProstitutionLawReform.

Evangelicals Draft New Creation Care Document

The Lausanne Movement in collaboration with the World Evangelical Alliance, of which the EFC is a member, met recently in St. Ann, Jamaica to discuss creation care and the gospel. Read their final commitment at www.lausanne.org/CreationCare. You can add your own signature there or submit an institutional endorsement.

Why Is Assisted Suicide Requested?

In a new EFC discussion paper, *Palliative Care and End of Life Therapies*, researchers at the EFC's Centre for Faith and Public Life examine reasons why people request assisted suicide. The paper also considers two recently developed therapies which can alleviate suffering while offering dignity and hope. Download a copy at www.theEFC.ca/ResourcesOnEuthanasia.

Abortion Funding: How Provinces Decide

The EFC recently released a new report which explains how provinces and territories can determine whether or not they will fund abortions. *Provincial Decisions: Abortion Funding in Canada* corrects common misconceptions and equips readers to challenge their government's position on using tax dollars to fund abortions.

"Provincial governments determine whether and when abortions are 'medically necessary,' and as such, whether to fund them and in which circumstances," says EFC Vice-President Don Hutchinson. He points to a 2010 Angus Reid poll which found only 44 per cent of Canadians felt the "health care system should fund abortions whenever they are requested." About 39 per cent felt the

system should only pay for abortions in cases of medical emergencies, and 10 per cent said abortions should not be funded at all.

"Our review of the law and funding practices in this area," says Hutchinson, "suggests concerned Canadians are on solid ground in communicating their concerns to elected provincial representatives." Available at www.theEFC.ca/AbortionFunding.

Update on Abortion Opinion Polls

The EFC has released an updated version of *Abortion Polls in Canada: A Compilation by Topic of Opinion Polling in Canada from 2007-2012* to include the most recent opinion polling data. This resource assists pro-life activists with drafting articles, columns and blogs, as well as preparing for interviews and debates. Download a copy at www.theEFC.ca/AbortionPolls2012.

Praise and Prayer Alert for Pakistan

The EFC's Religious Liberty Commission released an alert in November when an important blasphemy case against a young Pakistani Christian teenager, accused of burning a Koran, was dismissed by Pakistan's higher court. Many in Pakistan are praying this case will be a precedent for others awaiting trial. Read more at www.theEFC.ca/alerts.


Interns Share Experiences – Apply Now

The EFC's internship testimonials page has been updated with one of last summer's students sharing his experience. You can also watch a video interview of an intern from summer 2011 as he shares his experience in Ottawa at the EFC's Centre for Faith and Public Life. New applications are welcome. Please visit www.theEFC.ca/internship to learn more.

Video Resource on Poverty

Three Christian ministries have launched a video resource to inspire the world's Christians to help end the agony of 1.4 billion people suffering extreme poverty. Christian Aid, Compassion and Micah Challenge have released the nine mini-videos which include supporting comments from world figures such as former British prime minister Tony Blair and Alpha Founder Nicky Gumbel.

Rev. Joel Edwards is the international director of Micah Challenge. "Extreme poverty is a modern-day evil," he says. "There are an estimated two billion Christians in the world, which is an unstoppable force to end the plight of the 1.4 billion people suffering extreme poverty."

Canadian Geoff Tunnicliffe, CEO of World Evangelical Alliance, says, "This unique study raises some provocative questions and asks us to reimagine how Jesus' words should inspire and motivate the Church today." For more information see www.theJesusAgenda.org. 

Q & A With John Liira

John Liira has served as lead pastor at Highway Christian Fellowship – an EFC-affiliated congregation – in Sidney, B.C. since 1999. He entered the ministry in 1981 in Calgary and has ministered in various locations, including East Africa. He and his wife Margaret have three children.

What is your greatest joy in ministry?

I experience tremendous joy in seeing the next generation passionately embracing the life and Kingdom of Jesus Christ. The manner in which the younger generation is reshaping the proclamation of the gospel while retaining the integrity of the message is so invigorating. Although the statistics point to a mass exodus of young adults from the church, it is not all bad news! There is a groundswell of young adults who are also entering a life of genuine abandonment to the cause of Jesus Christ.

What has been your greatest struggle?

In more recent times I have struggled with the current trend of some Christians disengaging from the local church. I would be one of the first to admit that the church in North America is overindulged with an inward focus, and this must be addressed with a drastic change in values and lifestyle choices. However, it pains me to see people stepping away from the local church and then attempting to look at it from the outside in with a critical eye.

What is the best theological book you've read in the last year?

This may come as a surprise to some, but I would say it is Chuck Colson's book *The Body* (Thomas Nelson, 1994). I know, it is not a current bestseller, but it certainly wields a powerful challenge that has still not been embraced.

What is your greatest concern for the Canadian Church?

That we lower the bar and settle for much less than we are called to. We are in a far more desperate state than we readily admit. The church has always been most potent in society when we embrace the cross, and my concern is that the central message of the faith is not being emphasized enough.

What book is on your nightstand right now?

My wife and I are reading *The Love and Respect Experi-*



SUPPLIED PHOTO

John and Margaret Liira

ence by Emerson Eggerichs (Thomas Nelson, 2011). It is a good book for any stage of married life!

What is your best advice for those entering ministry today?

Be yourself and don't seek your validation from the people you serve. Balance your time so that the spiritual life principle of abiding in Christ is not swallowed up by other demands. With the present emphasis on technology in ministry, it's easy to spend way too much time on that. Remember, you are a shepherd of souls. Finally, relax a bit! Ministry has so many components and we tend to try to perfect each one of them so that things operate seamlessly. There is seldom a time where things don't unravel to some degree despite our best efforts.

What are the specific challenges – and joys – you face doing ministry in Sidney, B.C.?

My wife Margaret and I have served in Sidney for almost 14 years, and this has been the best ministry experience we have had. Highway Christian Fellowship is an amazing community of Christians. Our tagline is simply "love found, love given," and this is how we try to live every day. Are there bumps and inconsistencies? At times, yes, but nothing that has derailed or distracted Body life for long. Sidney is a very idyllic seaside town that has a mix of retired people and the younger generation that are attempting to put down roots here. The needs of the two groups are very different and resourcing them can be a challenge with a limited volunteer force. We have much to grow into to show the world the essence of true biblical community. **BT**

Church as Charity

By Don Hutchinson

Will churches continue to be able to give tax receipts?

In the future will churches be able to maintain their registered charity status without a fight? I was asked this question at a recent dinner event in Ottawa. The questioner was unaware the Canada Revenue Agency had hired a well-known charities lawyer to explore that question just a few years ago.



■ Don Hutchinson

For centuries it was settled law that charities were granted their special charitable status for four purposes: relieving poverty, advancing education, advancing religion, and other purposes considered beneficial to the community. But will it always be so? Is the charitable purpose of advancing religion in jeopardy?

In Canada our constitution assigns supervision of charities to the provinces. But it is under the federal *Income Tax Act* that churches and other Christian ministries are granted registration for issuing receipts that provide a tax benefit to donors.

When the Canada Revenue Agency conducted its study, the EFC made a written presentation that summarized the current state of the law. We argued the advancement of religion as a charitable object “has a *presumed public benefit* due to the moral, theological and ethical framework it has provided to the Western world, which has informed and inspired its moorings and traditions.”

While it is generally accepted religion plays an important and largely positive role in Canadian life, the Supreme Court of Canada commented on the key charitable concept of “presumed public benefit” in the 1999 *Vancouver Society* case, noting charitable recognition would be “subject always to the general requirement of providing a benefit to the community, and

with an eye to society’s current social, moral and economic context.”

In a society that seems to increasingly regard religion as suspect and gives signs of attempting to shake free from the moorings of Christianity, it may be reasonably anticipated the Ottawa dinner table question will be posed by a growing number of Can-

adians – and governments.

The answer will require identifying the benefit provided to the community by the presence of religious organizations and houses of worship. While statistics still suggest three-quarters of Canadians base their moral and ethical behavioural framework in religion, that may not be sufficient. The matter of public benefit is now assessed more outside the walls of the Church than within. To demonstrate religious bodies provide public benefit will require more than worship services and Sunday schools.

Some parts of the Church will have to examine and return to a spiritual heritage of responding to the needs of society. Elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools; hospitals and hospices; half-way houses for those on probation; refugee services; meals for the poor and accommodations for the homeless; societies for the care of children and animals in need; residences and support for pregnant women and senior citizens – all are examples of the Church addressing societal need.

Others within the Church

will have to learn to get past their humility to find ways of regularly informing municipal, provincial and federal governments they are there, loving their neighbours in practical and necessary ways.

Recent municipal actions across the country inform us how easily the Church can be forgotten – or remembered. Two examples. Calgary opted to review its official plan after having the contribution of religious organizations and places of worship brought to their attention. The City of Montreal honoured the work of Église Nouvelle Vie (New Life Church) for meeting the needs of city residents.

In the end our motivation must be the gospel of Jesus Christ, not tax receipts. But tax receipts can help our efforts go farther. **FT**

DON HUTCHINSON is vice-president and general legal counsel with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and director of the EFC’s Centre for Faith and Public Life.

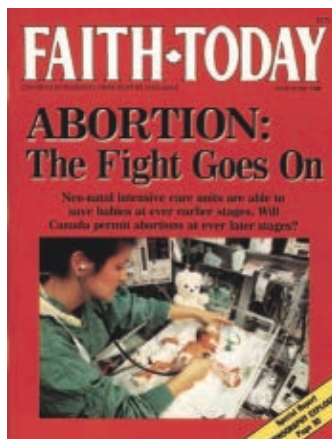
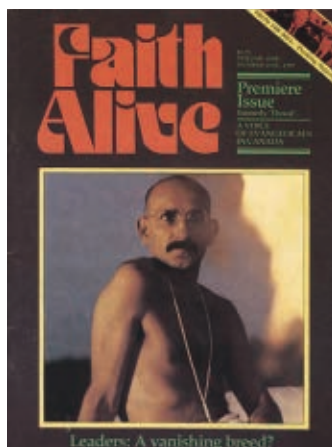
Related Resources

- An EFC submission on the federal budget addressed “Families, Compassion & Charities,” as our blog explains at www.theEFC.ca/budget2012.
- A study on churches in Calgary was released by the think tank Cardus in October 2011. Read it at www.cardus.ca/research/cities/publications.
- The EFC published *An Introductory Guide to Understanding the Religious Freedoms of Faith Groups and the Engagement Process When Facing a Zoning Challenge* in 2010. Find it at www.theEFC.ca/ZonedOut.
- EFC President Bruce J. Clemenger addressed “Evangelicalism and the Advancement of Religion” in *Church & Faith Trends* in February 2009 at www.theEFC.ca/ClemengerArticles.
- The EFC submission to the Canada Revenue Agency in October 2008 remains a key document: *Advancing Religion as a Charitable Object*. It’s at www.theEFC.ca/AdvancingReligion2008.

30 Years:

How much do you really know about the magazine you're reading?

By Bill Fledderus



Faith Today magazine is turning 30 this year, and just like all of us who have reached our third decade, it brings with it a lot of great memories to reflect on and a great deal of potential ahead.

Later this year we'll select and share 30 great articles from the past using our Facebook page and website. But let's kick off the anniversary now with a summary of what's been going on.

In the beginning: The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada was founded in Toronto in 1964 by an interdenominational group of Ontario pastors. In 1967 co-founder Harry Faight, pastor at Danforth Gospel Temple, crossed Canada with American theologian Carl F. H. Henry, holding meetings from Vancouver to Halifax and inviting individuals to join. Over the next two decades the EFC started commissions to study various issues, published a quarterly magazine called *Thrust*, sponsored preaching seminars and encouraged co-operation among evangelical denominations and individuals from mainline churches.

Brian Stiller, a Pentecostal pastor who served as national director of Youth for Christ, became the first executive director of the EFC in 1983 and quickly transformed the organization, building its individual membership to 17,000 and expanding its budget. Stiller was named editor-in-chief, and he would oversee the magazine until leaving the EFC in 1996 – 1997.

"There were a number of denominational magazines, but they seemed dowdy," Stiller wrote in the 10th anniversary issue. "There were no newspapers such as B.C.'s *Christian Info News* or *Christian Week*. We settled on a concept of a Canadian magazine, unabashedly by and for evangelicals, not a journal such as *Christianity Today* or a Christian-living magazine like *Moody*, but a news/feature publication.

"We used as a working phrase, 'Tracking the

footprints of God.' By looking across the nation and writing about the many ways in which God was using his people – by seeing his tracks – we could gain perspective on God's agenda.

"Another part of our vision was to present an attractive and readable publication. Would a person pick up our magazine if it were sitting next to *Maclean's* or *Time*?"

1983: *Faith Alive* debuted as a quarterly that summer, with a cover headline about leadership and a photo from the 1982 movie *Gandhi*. The next two issues featured cover stories on abortion and then on Billy Graham. Editor for the first three years was Lori (Mitchener) Gwynne, recruited by Stiller from Trinity Western University where she had been director of publications. The preferred name, *Faith Today*, did not become available for legal reasons until 1986.

1984: Cover stories tackled post-secondary education, homosexuality, sports and marriage. All would be addressed again on the covers of future issues, showing how important they were to readers and how a magazine delivers information, including corrections and alternative points of view, over a span of time rather than claiming to offer a final word on any given topic in a single issue. The magazine co-sponsored its first conference for writers at Ontario Bible College.

1985: Trends among Evangelicals, charitable giving, media and youth were the cover headlines. Audrey Dorsch was hired as an editorial assistant and, when Gwynne left late the following year, became managing editor. She had worked in newspapers in Western Canada and also founded *Word Alive*, the Canadian periodical of Wycliffe Bible Translators.

1986: Dorsch became editor, serving until 1995 and increasing the publication frequency to six issues per year. Her role in building a sturdy foundation for later editors, especially

Faith Today Looks Back and Ahead

in focusing on news and journalistic excellence, cannot be understated. Cover topics included the “Moral Majority,” prison life, Expo ‘86, child sexual abuse and fresh takes on previous cover topics of abortion and education.

1987: Cover stories tackled “Modern Jesus,” Christians in Parliament, Natives, the United Church, “Religion in the ‘80s” and business.

1988: A key issue tackled abortion (the third time as a cover story). The Supreme Court of Canada had struck down Canada’s abortion law (the Morgentaler decision). A proposed new law was seen as a compromise and voted down by pro-choice MPs as well as strident Evangelicals and Roman Catholics. To this day Canada has no legal protection for the unborn. Other cover topics were medical ethics, parenting, refugees, global missions and the arts. Designer Rob Robotham was hired to lay out the magazine and has served in the role ever since – its longest serving staff member.

1989: Cover topics: “Funding the Church,” “God in the City,” New Age, ethnic churches, Canadian labour, Israel.

1990: Cover topics: “The 1980s Overview,” evangelism, public education, changing family, creation/evolution, justice.

1991: Cover topics: Quebec, Reform Party, War, Native church, poverty, seeker services. The design of the magazine was refreshed, as

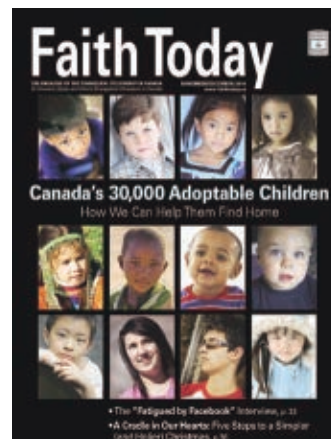
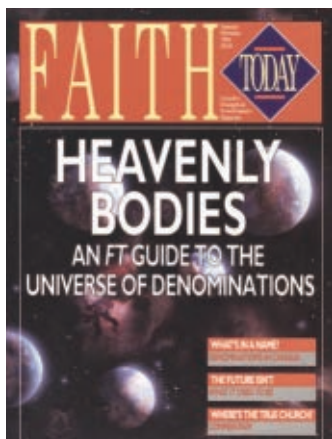
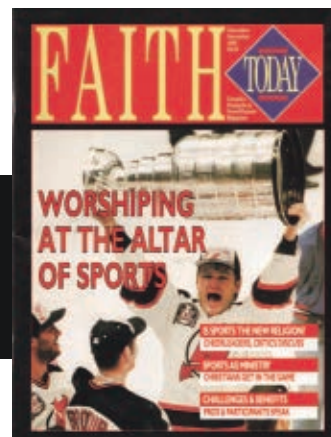
Dorsch felt it was looking outdated.

1992: Post-secondary education made the cover a second time. Other topics included: mobilizing laity, Canadian unity, ethical choices, family abuse and the Charter of Rights. The EFC hired a young Bruce Clemenger, who worked in research and national affairs and eventually rose to become EFC president in 2003.

1993: Homosexuality made the cover a second time, along with revival, aging, private faith, municipal politics and women in ministry. Several articles celebrated *Faith Today’s* 10th anniversary. Writer John Cambridge reported 20,000 copies were printed each issue, an amount that has held steady for 20 years.

1994: An issue titled “Heavenly Bodies: An FT Guide to the Universe of Denominations” became one of the most requested back issues in the years that followed. Other cover topics examined professional ethics, recession fallout, youth in church, reinventing dad, and religion by remote.

1995: A freelance writer named Gail Reid wrote a cover story on the Toronto Blessing, a charismatic revival that spread worldwide. Reid later became editor starting in 2000. Other cover topics featured “Retooling the Pastor,” the public image of evangelicalism, euthanasia (with Sue Rodriguez and Robert Latimer on the cover) and marketing the church. Sports also made the cover a second time.



1996: This year and the next saw significant changes. Marianne Meed Ward, who had been trained as a journalist, became editor after many years as a staff writer; she would stay three more years. (To fill the writing shoes she was vacating, she hired Bill Fledderus, who in 2013 is a senior editor.) An issue on sexuality raised controversy. Other covers treated end-times prophecy, social justice, new missionaries, Chinese Christians in Canada, and parachurch ministries. At the EFC then-president Stiller was on loan to help with serious financial challenges at Ontario Bible College and Seminary (now Tyndale University College & Seminary). Bruce Clemenger moved to Ottawa to help launch a new EFC office there called the Centre for Faith and Public Life.

1997: The magazine's appearance was dramatically redesigned, starting with an issue titled "The Quest for Spirituality" featuring an image of John Travolta portraying an angel. Other covers examined Promise Keepers, cell church, the arts (a second cover appearance), the Internet and attitudes to culture. At the EFC Stiller left to become president of OBC-OTS. Gary Walsh, bishop of the Free Methodist Church, became EFC president, restructuring the organization and strengthening its focus on facilitating ministry partnerships.

1998: Robert Latimer, who killed his disabled daughter Tracy, appeared on a euthanasia-related cover for a second time. Other covers examined racism, burnout, the Bible's influence, servant leadership and divorce.

1999: Larry Matthews became editor for two years, first to cover a maternity leave for Marianne Meed Ward and then to replace her when she moved on. Covers examined ethical investing, political power, science and faith, the near-future of church and religious persecution overseas. A cover on relations between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics generated some controversy.

2000: Gail Reid became managing editor of *Faith Today* and director of communications of the EFC for the next 12 years, with Bill Fledderus taking on editing duties for much of the magazine. Covers examined eroding confidence in global mission, healing, Christian teens, Native Christians (a second or third cover appear-

ance), restorative justice and church choirs.

2001: Magazines covered hockey ministries, infant baptism and dedication, marriage (a second or third cover appearance), helping the homeless, the Alpha program and children's ministries. The Word Guild, an association of writers and editors, formed to take over the writing conferences and national publishing awards *Faith Today* staff had developed.

2002: Freelancer Krysia Lear was hired to help edit several issues while Bill Fledderus was away on parental leave. Later another freelancer, Karen Stiller, joined as associate editor (yes, she's

married to Brian Stiller's nephew) and continues on the team to this day. Covers examined arctic revival, outreach to bikers, Christian relations with Muslims, reaching twenty-somethings, the dramatically increased popularity of Christian fiction, and ethics in genetics and reproduction. The magazine also refreshed its design and announced it was repositioning itself, leaving news to the many competing Christian periodicals and Internet sources and instead offering more analysis, profiles, equipping and inspiring content.

2003: Cover topics included prayer walking, Christian camps, homes for seniors, cowboys for Christ, fighting AIDS, and seizing Christmas. At the EFC Walsh left and Clemenger was named president. The EFC began intervening in a series of legal cases about extending the definition of marriage to include same-sex couples, an issue kicked off by provincial court decisions in 2002 and not resolved until 2007. The EFC also launched www.Christianity.ca, a website that made freely available a large number of articles including news reporting, most republished from a wide variety of Canadian Christian periodicals.

2004: A key cover story this year addressed Mel Gibson's movie *The Passion of the Christ*, which was shown to various ministry leaders across Canada at special advance screenings. Other covers addressed Christian radio, design or chance, prison ministry (again), persecution (again) and Canada's best Christian workplaces.

2005: An EFC-sponsored event called

Celebration 2005 was featured on a cover this year. The EFC encouraged and co-ordinated local events across the country in the three weeks after Pentecost as a way to magnify the visibility of the Church in Canada and its many local acts of public service. Similar events were held in the years that followed. Other covers addressed evangelism (again), Christian filmmaking, end-of-life issues (again), homosexuality (again) and the Narnia stories of C. S. Lewis (in conjunction with a new film, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*).

tion with a new film, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*).

2006: One of *Faith Today's* most widely read issues

ever, "Faith and Politics," was published, including articles by top Canadian leaders including Stephen Harper, Jack Layton and Paul Martin. Eight months later, another cover story that benefitted from connections built through the EFC Ottawa office looked at how some Members of Parliament connect their work with their Christian faith. Other covers looked at online dating, Olympic athletes, stand-up comedians and making congregations more intercultural. On the political front, the EFC signed a joint declaration on marriage with 40 denominational and religious leaders including Roman Catholics, intended to give guidance to parliamentarians and other Canadians as the legal definition of marriage was widened to include same-sex couples.

2007: The movie *Amazing Grace*, about William Wilberforce and other Evangelicals who helped outlaw slavery in the early 1800s, made the cover this year with reminders that international slavery still needs attention today. Other covers looked at the effects of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms after 25 years, struggles with debt and consumerism, Sabbath rest, healthy functioning of boards at churches and charities, and Ontario's new lieutenant-governor, an Evangelical named David Onley.

2008: *Faith Today* celebrated its 25th anniversary with a package of articles profiling people featured in the magazine years earlier and where they were in 2008. Other covers tackled climate change (yes, it was

We settled on a concept of a Canadian magazine, unabashedly by and for evangelicals.

controversial), Islam in Canada (ditto), the bestselling novel *The Shack* (ditto again), religious freedom in China, and spiritual formation.

2009: A cover story on fighting human trafficking earned attention beyond usual readership circles this year. Another examined doubt, while still others updated familiar topics: post-secondary education, the influence of Billy Graham, how to rise above the economic crisis, and Christian activism on abortion and euthanasia. *Faith Today* added a new technology called “digital editions” so subscribers could search and download back issues at www.FaithToday.ca/digital.


2010: A cover story on “Canada’s 30,000 Adoptable Children” dovetailed with the EFC’s increasing emphasis on such issues, leading to the 2012 launch of www.AdoptionSunday.com. Other covers looked at Filipino Christians in Canada, outreach lessons from the Vancouver Olympics, sex education (now a political issue in public schools) and the country music singer Paul Brandt. *Faith Today*

added a free mobile application for readers with Apple devices (available at www.FaithToday.ca) and a social media page at www.Facebook.com/FaithToday.

2011: The summer issue with the headline “Jesus’ Facebook Friends” was distributed exclusively as a digital edition, beginning an ongoing experiment with new technology that has since reoccurred each summer. The five print issues looked at including children in church, fighting prostitution, young women in the pro-life movement, free speech, and relations between faith and science. *Faith Today* added a free app for readers with Android devices (available at www.FaithToday.ca).

2012: Perhaps these may still be on your shelf: “Writing for Hollywood,” “Beyond our Cultural Comfort Zones,” “Marketplace Missionaries,” “Virtual Virtue” (digital only, of course), “Hemorrhaging Faith,” and “Gospel Music Making a Difference.” In May the magazine removed a paywall that had prevented non-subscribers from viewing back issues at www.FaithToday.ca/digital, thereby increasing web traffic dramatically.

2013 and looking ahead: Managing editor Gail Reid retired in January after 13 years, and the magazine looked to hire a new associate editor to work with senior editors Bill Fledderus and Karen Stiller. Plans are afoot to refresh the design of the magazine and its website late in the year. The website www.FaithToday.ca currently appears as a section of www.theEFC.ca, but a freestanding website would be simpler and more attractive for visitors – and ultimately make it easier to enlarge the readership and draw newcomers into the orbit of the EFC.

Clearly, there is much to look back on – and forward to – at *Faith Today*. Thank you for your faithfulness as a reader, and special thanks to all our advertisers whose support is so crucial to the health of the magazine. If you have ideas about what you would like to see in the future, please drop us a line at editor@faithtoday.ca or on our Facebook page anytime. 

BILL FLEDDERUS of Hamilton, Ont., is senior editor at *Faith Today*.



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When Your Child Stops Eating

A Canadian author shares her story to help others. *By Emily Wierenga*

She reminded me of myself at her age. Twelve-year-old Lisa was nothing but a pair of eyes and loose-fitting clothes. She didn't have the energy to do anything but sit and watch TV, and this had been going on since she turned seven, her mother told me. It seems to have started when her father went on a diet. But his diet ended shortly after it began, and hers went on to become anorexia nervosa – a mental illness defined by the deliberate restriction of food.

When a World Vision commercial came on showing an undernourished boy who was all distended stomach and ribs, this little girl turned to me and said, "That boy is so lucky. He doesn't have to eat."

I sat in stunned silence, wondering at a world in which Western children, their fridges full, refused to eat while the Third World died dreaming of food, on a daily basis.

Startling Stats

Singer-songwriter Karen Carpenter, who died from anorexia, brought eating disorders to public consciousness in the 1980s.

Today 65 per cent of the female population (13 million Canadians) battles a form of disordered eating, according to a survey conducted by *Self* magazine. Another 10 per cent displayed symptoms consistent with clinical eating disorders such as anorexia, bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder.

Children under 12 are the fastest growing percentage of patients hospitalized for eating disorders, according to government data in 2009, and adolescent girls accounted for 90 per cent of all admissions with eating disorders (both according to selfgrowth.com).

As author Mary Pipher states in *Hunger Pains: The Modern Woman's Tragic Quest for Thinness* (Ballantine Books, 1995), "To treat eating disorders is to treat our culture."

Defining the Disorders

According to leading experts there are three basic clinical eating disorders: anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder.

Anorexia is the refusal to eat. Often the aim is to numb feelings of anxiety, stress, abuse and conflict. Low self-esteem, genetics and poor body image play a role in the development of the illness,

but it can quickly escalate into an obsession with control.

Warning signs include obsessive exercise and counting of calories, starvation and restriction of food, the use of diet pills, laxatives or diuretics to attempt controlling weight, and a persistent concern with body image.

Bulimia often stems from the same issues, yet while anorexics starve themselves, bulimics overeat and then purge, usually by vomiting. The food serves as a narcotic to deal with everyday issues, and the purging releases the guilt of over-indulgence. Bulimia can escalate into a use of laxatives and is often partnered with anorexia.

Episodes of rapid food consumption, out-of-control eating and vomiting are warning signs. Bulimia too can involve diet plans, exercise, laxatives, diuretics, diet pills and body image concerns.

Binge eating disorder is similar to bulimia – the individual overeats to the point of being uncomfortable, but unlike bulimia, the bingeing is not followed by purging.

Bingeing is a way of keeping people away, of rebelling against societal norms of what being attractive or lovable looks like. Sufferers may feel undeserving of love and use bingeing as self-punishment.

Helen Burns, founder of Mercy Ministries Canada, first noticed her middle child Danica refusing to eat when she turned 13.

"Anorexia wasn't even on my radar," says Burns. Looking back, however, she now recalls Danica faking sickness to skip meals, shoving food about her plate, speaking poorly about her body, doing excess exercise and "eating" meals in her room.

"I began to pray and read about it," recalls the author who, together with her husband John pastors Relate Church in the Greater Vancouver Area. "I prayed before approaching Danica

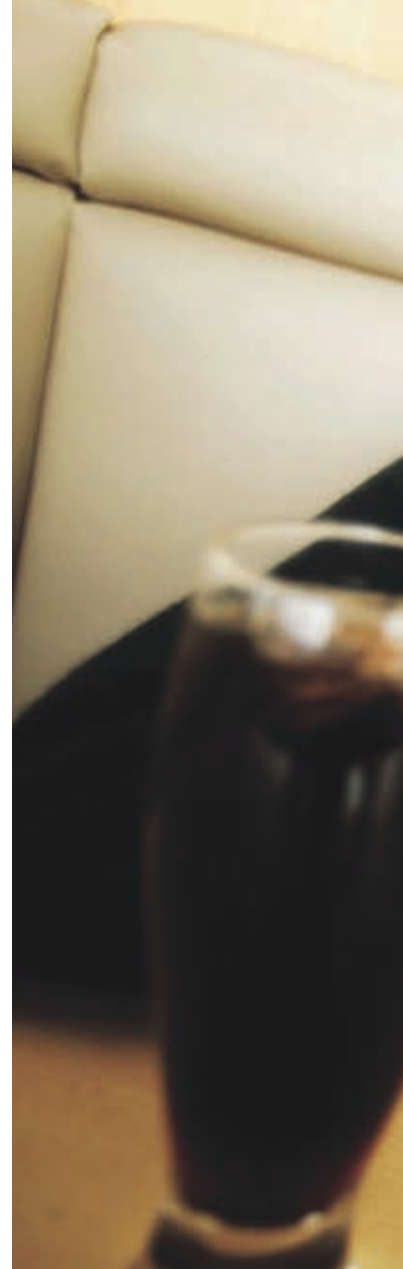




PHOTO: WWW.DESIGNPICS.COM

because I felt my heart needed to settle. I didn't want to bombard her with my thoughts."

Then one day she asked Danica if she was starving herself. And Danica replied, "Yes, I am – and I'm really, really scared."

Not every disordered eater will recognize he/she has a problem, particularly in the midst of the disease, but "God had gotten a hold of her," Burns says.

Nothing to Do With Me

You may be thinking, "This has nothing to do with me. The children in my life don't suffer from eating disorders." But let's put the official diagnoses aside for a minute and dig a little deeper.

We live in a fast-food nation that glorifies skinny bodies, particularly for women. Our culture is terribly mixed up on these issues. Don't we all have some kind of love-hate relationship with food and our bodies? For example, do you recognize yourself in any of the following 10 tendencies?

Some of us are Calorie Prisoners, terrified of gaining weight. We tend to label food as good or bad, and battle extreme guilt if we indulge in something that's off limits.

Or maybe you're a Secret Eater who sneaks junk food at home, in the car or in bed – wherever the truth won't be discovered.

You could be a Career Dieter, not knowing how to eat without a menu plan.

Some of us are Calorie Purgers, who obsess with removing unwanted calories from our diets.

Most of us use food as a means of soothing ourselves from stress or anger, or to celebrate a joyous event – at least sometimes. Are you at the point where food becomes an excuse or a preoccupation? A Food Addict?

People have also come up with medical terms for some problematic relationships to food. Orthorexia is the fixation or obsession with healthy or "righteous" eating. Pregorexia is extreme dieting and exercising while pregnant to avoid gaining the recommended weight. Anorexia athletica is an addiction to exercise. Drunkorexia is the restriction of food intake to reserve those calories for alcohol and binge drinking. And diabulimia is when individuals with Type 1 diabetes deliberately administer less insulin than necessary for the purpose of weight loss. (These last five terms come from the April 2012 issue of *Women's Health*.)

“On any given day nearly 40 per cent of women are on a diet,” writes Jenny Deam in *Women’s Health*. “The weight-worry gun is loaded early. By the time they reach age 10, 80 per cent of girls fret that they’re fat. Their main ‘thinspiration,’ according to experts? The ultra-slim starlets glorified in popular culture.”

More Than Food

In spite of the many definitions of disordered eating, experts agree it isn’t about the food. Rather, it’s about the issues *behind* the food, driving someone to use food as a narcotic or tool for self-abuse.

Spiritually speaking, power struggles over food indicate an identity crisis, says Len Thompson, one of the counsellors in my particular case when I was a child.

The Enemy provides alluring lies to the disordered eater, Thompson explains – that “control of power is the perfect solution to their perceived loss of legitimate autonomy, rather than a loving relationship of trust with Christ.”

This “control of power” manifests itself through food intake, exercise, monitoring body weight, and depending on others’ perceptions and emotions to compensate for a validated sense of identity.

While God wants us to have a healthy sense of self, a confidence rooted in love and the courage to make wise choices regarding food and body, the world breeds the opposite, encouraging a desire for *power* instead of *identity*.

To combat the world’s subtle yet persistent messages, Thompson encourages parents to adopt the parenting style of God the Father. “He always gives us choices even if He doesn’t like the choices we make. He affirms our creativity and encourages self-expression. He is always ready to hear our concerns, disappointments and pain.”

Don’t give your children a reason to desire power or control. God never tries to steal His children’s identity. In the same way, Thompson says, parents should try to allow for an honest expression of their child’s personality – as much as it might hurt them. This acceptance is what a child craves, this kind of unconditional love.

Most of us use food as a means of soothing ourselves from stress or anger, to celebrate a joyous event – at least sometimes.

Hungry for Love

As a little girl, all I wanted was for my parents to enter my bedroom and sit on my bed and ask me what was wrong. Why wasn’t I eating? Why was I measuring my wrists and weighing myself on the hour and throwing temper tantrums? Why wasn’t I happy?

We didn’t know how to communicate.

We were raised in a Christian home that believed kids should be seen and not heard (or at least pastors’ kids like us), while I desperately wanted to be heard. Not only that, but being homeschooled I was desperately lonely. Starving, in fact, for attention. Yet when my parents finally allowed me to go to school, I realized how different I was from everyone else, and my eating disorder only escalated.

Art was the only thing to slow my disorder. I vented my

A Model Problem for Women

A behind-the-scenes look at fashion – and is change on the horizon? *By Lisa Hall-Wilson*

Have you ever refused to buy a piece of clothing based solely on the size number on the label? Have you looked at models in a magazine and felt inadequate? I’m guilty. Even though we know those photos are unrealistic, we – and I’m thinking mainly of women here – still compare ourselves, don’t we?

The average Canadian woman is 5’3” and weighs 153 pounds. In the 1950s Marilyn Monroe set a remarkable standard for beauty with her curvy hourglass figure (reportedly 5’5” and around 130 pounds), but neither of those have much in common with the average North American model today, who is much taller at 5’10” and much lighter at 110 pounds. (In metric, that’s 178 cm and 50 kg for the average model, compared to 160 cm and

70 kg for the average Canadian.)

My thirteen-year-old daughter wears a women’s size zero. As a pubescent teen she has few womanly curves, yet this is the size models are wearing on the runways and in magazines. I can get my arm in the leg of her jeans, but forget about much else. She’s 13, so of course I can’t wear her clothes, but I stare at the models on television and in magazine ads, and suddenly it’s not such a ridiculous idea anymore.

There’s a significant disconnect between reality and what’s held up as an attainable ideal.

“Many of the models that women idealize are barely women at all, often much younger than one might think. Even Victoria’s Secret models have been known to start as young as 16, and many



PHOTO: JOHN SAYER

God designed me, He sets my worth and my value. I’m beautiful because I’m made in His image: Alicia Smith.

of the girls you see on billboards and in magazines are even younger,” says Alicia Smith, a Toronto area mother of two and



■ Emily Wierenga (left) at age 29 with her oldest son Aiden Grey. Anorexic Emily at 11 years old.



angst through sketching and writing poetry. But eventually even that ended, as my obsession with calorie cutting and rib counting escalated, along with my anger towards my seemingly oblivious parents.

was a sensitive, artistic soul who felt things deeply and desired some semblance of control over my life. So I stopped eating.

And I didn't really start again until I lay shivering from hypothermia on a hospital bed, four years later, at 13. The nurses

However, the truth was my parents had their own issues to deal with, and the eating disorder wasn't their fault. There were things they *could* have done to help prevent it – things like my pastor-father being home more and not always on church duty, him paying more attention to me and wanting to hang out with me, and my mother being more self-confident, complimentary and joyful. She didn't have to dish up our meals *all* the time, and she and Dad could have let us make more decisions.

But, truly, it wasn't their fault. My brother and sisters didn't have eating disorders. I

a model who's done commercial, editorial and runway work in New York and Toronto. "They want womanly content using children's bodies."

Smith is considered short at 5'9" and now maintains a size six figure, but says the ideal size can vary by market.

"In Toronto for commercial work girls are between a size four and six, and for editorials it's between two and a four. In New York you [have to] drop a size. The runway stuff for fashion week tends to be smaller in the competitive markets of Milan and Paris."

Models who can't wear the sample sizes don't get work, so the pressure faced by a 16 year old desperate for that glamorous lifestyle is immense. Add to that pressure those who insist she maintains the figure of a pubescent (Photo-shopped) 14 year old, and it's no wonder this industry is so plagued by eating disorders and other problems.

If these girl-models can't maintain this ideal, how are average-sized women supposed to? "I became a workout and nutri-

tion fanatic, working out for over an hour every single day and cut bread, dairy and sugar completely out of my diet," Smith wrote on modellingtruth.blogspot.ca.

She realized how unhealthy that attitude was, how her faith suffered as a result of her preoccupation, and got back on track. "It becomes an idol when you have to think about your body like that all day long, everything that goes into your mouth, what you do with your body."

But perhaps change is coming.

Bonnie Getty graduated from the design and fashion program at Fanshawe College in London, Ont., and says the program covered standard manufacturing sizes, but focused on working with the average person.

"Learning how to make patterns and fit garments for all shapes and sizes was part of the curriculum. In the workplace we remained professional with clients and discussed sizes factually."

Dove's Real Beauty campaign has made great strides in bringing realism back to fashion and advertising, but

change is most effective from the top down. *Vogue* magazine recently announced a ban on knowingly using girls under the age of 16 or who meet the criteria for anorexia. Israel recently announced a similar ban.

These changes are not a revolution, but at least they acknowledge that major change is needed.

"They're trying to broaden the spectrum of body type that is ideal, but it's still very far from where it should be," says Smith.

The message I've been trying to teach my daughters is one I'm trying to learn as well. Where does my value lie?

"It doesn't matter what other people think," Smith says, and reiterates on her blog and through her speaking events. "God designed me, He sets my worth and my value. I'm beautiful because I'm made in His image. That's the message I hope ultimately people will get." **FT**

LISA HALL-WILSON is a freelance writer in London, Ont.

“Religion poisons everything.”

~Christopher Hitchens

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If You See Symptoms

If you see symptoms of an eating disorder in your child, Dr. Dena Cabrera, staff psychologist at the Rosewood Institute in Arizona, recommends taking these steps:

- Learn all you can about eating disorders.
- Obtain treatment for your child only from healthcare professionals and facilities that specialize in eating disorders. Don't expect your child to acknowledge the problem or embrace your help. Participate in family therapy as recommended by treatment providers. Be patient.
- Maintain a supportive, confident, hopeful posture. Express honest affection verbally and physically. Talk with your child about personal issues other than food and weight.
- Be clear and consistent about decisions, but don't become your child's policeman. If you see a change in your child's weight or behaviour, call his counsellor or physician. Have your child replace food that was binged on and clean up messes in the bathroom or kitchen.
- Expect your child to be with the family during mealtimes, but don't demand he eat. Don't let the eating disorder dominate the family's eating schedule. Don't let the child shop or cook for the family.
- Don't waste time trying to pinpoint the cause of the eating disorder or assigning blame. Families neither cause nor cure eating disorders. Pray and trust God for the outcome. **FT** –EW

were astounded I was still alive, and my mother was telling me I was a miracle.

And this realization God had saved me twice – once on the cross, and once in that hospital room – gave me the love I needed to get better. Perfect love has no fear. And as a result of knowing God was pursuing me, and desiring me (all I'd ever wanted from my parents), I found the courage to pick up my fork and eat.

The Road to Recovery

The little girl mentioned at the beginning of this article (I changed her name for privacy) recovered physically from anorexia after attending Remuda Ranch in Arizona, but it wasn't until meeting a female pastor who kept her accountable through memorized Scripture that she began to heal mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

My own recovery began in the hospital in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. There was no eating disorder program, just a plate of food and God's voice saying I had a purpose far greater than any eating disorder could ever offer.

God definitely uses such institutions, treatment programs and therapy. He can use anything – nothing is beyond Him. But from a human point of view, the key

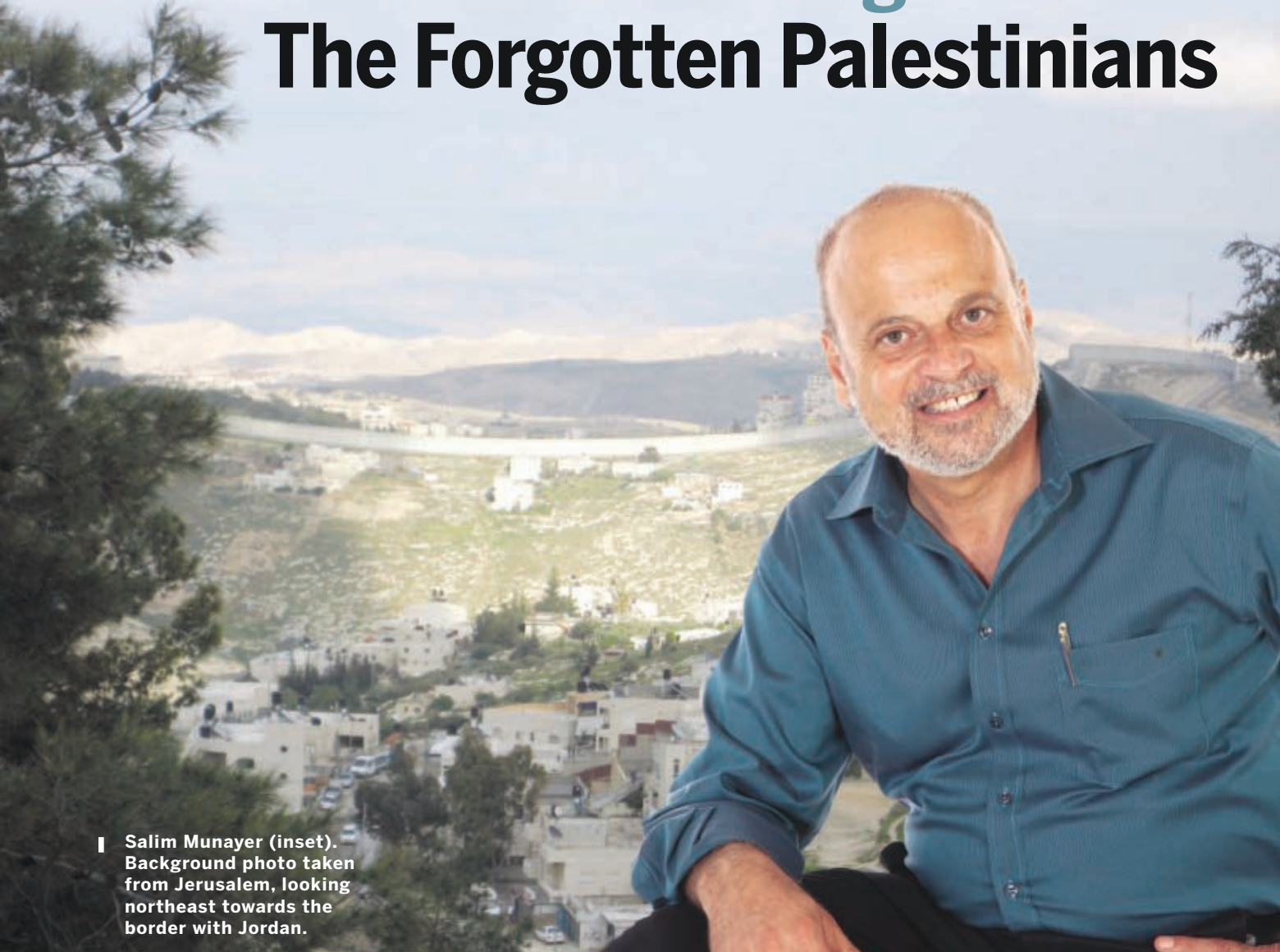
factor is the willingness of the person entering the program.

If your child or loved one has not received some sort of vision of eternal worth, as little Lisa or I did, it can be hard for any sort of recovery plan to stick. As the famous psychiatrist Elizabeth Kübler-Ross said, "People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within."

Because, again, it's not about the food. Food is just a tool. It's about the light within. It's about the eating disorder providing a substitute for identity, and until a person's sense of identity is stronger than their desire for power, he or she will be unable – or more importantly, unwilling – to recover. **FT**

EMILY WIERENGA is a wife, mother of two boys and caregiver of two more, artist, and author of *Chasing Silhouettes: How to Help a Loved One Battling an Eating Disorder* (Ampelon, 2012). Find more info at chasingilhouettes.com. Her next book will be *Mom in the Mirror: Body Image, Beauty, and Life After Pregnancy* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2013).

Dead Stones or Living Stones? The Forgotten Palestinians



Salim Munayer (inset). Background photo taken from Jerusalem, looking northeast towards the border with Jordan.

BACKGROUND PHOTO: DAVID LYON; INSET : FINESSE PHOTOGRAPHY

Salim Munayer is the founder of *Musalaha*, a Christian movement for reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians based in Jerusalem. He also teaches at Bethlehem Bible College. He visited Kingston, Ont., in October, and *Faith Today* interviewed him. **By David Lyon and Salim Munayer**

FT: Your family has lived in Palestine for a very long time – long before the State of Israel was formed. What is your family background?

SM: My family is Palestinian Christian from a Greek Orthodox background. My family has been in the land for generations. With the Habash family, the Munayers built the church above the Tomb

of St. George in Lydda. Some of the land next to Tel Aviv airport used to belong to our family. In 1948 the city of Lydda was conquered by the Israeli army which ordered the people out of the city. There was a massacre and many atrocities. My father and his brothers and sisters found refuge with 200 Christians in the church under the umbrella of the Red Cross. They were

able to remain in the city, but not allowed to go back to their homes.

That period of time, called “al-Naqba,” was traumatic for the family. [Editor’s note: The United Nations estimates 726,000 people fled or were expelled in that war, which Israel considers part of its war of independence, and which Palestinians see as the root of their current

insecurity and disenfranchisement.]

FT: When did you become aware of the Naqba?

SM: As a child on the streets of the city [now renamed Lod], I remember walking with my father past the city hall where he said, "This is where I grew up." Because my grandfather's house was big, the Israeli army made it their headquarters and then later the city hall. But my parents did not tell us the stories. It's very typical that people go through traumatic events and don't talk about it.

In Jewish high school they taught that the land was desert and the Jews came and made it green. *But wait*, I thought. *I know that my great-great-grandfather used to export the great Jaffa orange. And my parents did not leave their homes voluntarily. They were ordered out and terrible things were happening.*

The Jewish-Zionist historical narrative made me ask questions of God and my parents. "What really happened?" Then they opened up, but it was painful. My father's concern was that if we

dwell on that or if he tells us what happened, we will grow up with hatred.

FT: How do you respond to the Naqba so many years on?

SM: More and more people right now are talking about the Naqba. It was suppressed. You were not allowed to talk about it during my teenage years growing up in Israel. Right now there is a revival of interest.

A Jewish lady from England shared with me the story of her father, Josef Ben-Eliezer, who was a Holocaust survivor [from Poland and Germany]. He found refuge in Mandatory Palestine [in the 1940s]. He joined the Haganah [one of the Jewish militant groups], and he was one of the soldiers who conquered my hometown of Lydda. And what he saw and experienced in several places made him later [return to Europe] for reconciliation with the German people for what they did. In that process he became a believer in Jesus. "He is an old man," his daughter told me. "He wants to make amends for what he did in Lydda."

[When she and her father came to visit] I introduced Josef Ben-Eliezer to my father. It was a shocking experience for me because my father never talked about that. Ben-Eliezer shared his story, but my father's memory was better than his. My father asked which unit he was in and responded to the information, "Oh, your unit was positioned here exactly." So Ben-Eliezer was at the checkpoint when the people were being driven out. They were checking people for money as the Palestinian refugees were passing.

Ben-Eliezer caught the eye of a Palestinian teenager and that brought to his memory the early 1940s in Poland and Germany where he had been checked by SS soldiers and his parents had hidden money on him. That was a traumatic experience for him.

FT: What is life like for Christians in the Occupied Territories?

SM: Until 1948 the Christian community used to be 24 per cent of the population. With the formation of the State of Israel, 60 per cent of the population became refugees.



PHOTO: DAVID LYON

Palestinian Christianity became two per cent of the population. After the war, the headquarters of the Christian church was separated from the community because East Jerusalem was on the Jordanian side.

The major reason Christians left the land was economic and social pressures as a result of the political situation, not because of religious persecution. Right now Christians are increasingly finding themselves caught between two major ideological camps. One is what I call "Occupation Israel," the Zionist movement that American Christian Zionism supports. The other movement, coming as a response, is the Muslim Brotherhood.

You are marginalized increasingly and you feel like you've been caught between two huge icebergs that are coming in against each other. So right now the Christian community has a great opportunity to come with the message of the Kingdom of God, not only for the Jews and Palestinians, but also to the still-existing Palestinian Church.

FT: When Canadian Christians visit the Holy Land, do they meet Palestinian Christians?

SM: The majority come on a pilgrimage to see the holy sites. We joke about it as Palestinian Christians – they come to see the dead stones and they leave without seeing the living stones.

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So when you visit Bethlehem and the bus drives through the wall, you go to the Church of the Nativity, you go to the souvenir shop and you are out. And you don't meet with the local Christians, and it is such a pity and so hurtful too.

The people who visit and spend time with the local Christians say that meeting Messianic-Jewish believers and Palestinian Christian believers coming together in worship leaves a profound impact.

FT: How did you get involved in Musalaha? What does it stand for?

SM: When you travel from Bethlehem to Tel Aviv, it's like two worlds. One is under occupation, under curfew, people are suffering. And then there is Tel Aviv with its secularism, with its freedom.

Some Jewish people struggle with the issue of what it means to believe in Jesus. Palestinian Christians ask, "What do we do with checkpoints? What do we do with people using the Bible to claim our land?"

I didn't want to get into reconciliation. But as the First Intifada went on [from 1987 to 1993], I was invited to arrange meetings between Israeli and Palestinian leaders, and that's when we started Musalaha's reconciliation ministry. We use the word Musalaha ("reconciliation" in Arabic and the same root word as "forgiveness" in Hebrew) because it is a cultural forum in the Middle East. It is not just a word. It is a way for a third party to come between.

Musalaha says that we need to present a different model. It is my role as a follower of Jesus to bring the concept of the Kingdom of God and lordship of Jesus into the life and place of His birth, of His teaching, of His crucifixion, of His resurrection. He is Lord and His Kingdom is there. My responsibility, my challenge as a human being in this small role that I can play, is to reflect all aspects of the cross.

FT: How are Musalaha initiatives received locally?

SM: Musalaha has grown rapidly from a small start to thousands of people in both communities. Some, far from the conflict, are viciously against us, from the Christian community especially. We are accused on one side of being collaborators with the [Israeli] occupation [of Palestinian territories such as the West Bank and Gaza] and on the other that we support Replacement Theology [which suggests that the Jews no

longer have a special covenant with God because the Church has taken their role].

But just this weekend a group of 30 young men and women were at Tiberias studying what it means to cross the lake. You know the story of Jesus crossing the lake? There is a storm. Everybody is frightened, but Jesus crosses to the side of the Romans, Gentiles who eat pigs. He went with His blessing. With healing. And they didn't like it. They kicked Him out.

FT: What is your motivation? Should we be involved in reconciliation, and if so, why?

SM: To be a Christian is to be a disciple of Jesus. It's to follow Jesus. You're not following a set of manuals. You are following Jesus, and Jesus came to reconcile us to God and command us to love our enemies. So if you are Christian, you need to love your enemy.

Canadians are also involved in the conflict, as believers are taking sides and there is quite a bit of division. If you call yourself a community, you have to be engaged with others. If you call yourself a follower of

Jesus, the implication is that your love of God will be tested and your love for others will be different. The Church in Canada can be a blessing to both peoples.

In Musalaha we recognize the intractable conflict, the level of dehumanization, the stages of reconciliation. We have found that we need to take people out to the desert. [Musalaha sponsors retreats there for mixed groups of Israelis and Palestinians.] The desert is not just an exotic place. The desert is a place that means a lot, especially for Christians. In the silence of the desert you encounter yourself with God. And this is where the challenge happens.

Find more about Musalaha at www.musalaha.org. Canadians can support its work at www.hopeoutreach.ca. **FT**

SALIM MUNAYER was interviewed by **DAVID LYON**, a professor at Queen's University in Kingston, Ont., on October 20, 2012. Preliminary transcription was by Courtney Reeve.

A longer version of this interview is available at theEFC.ca/LyonMunayer.

Faith Today

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Faith Fits With Action for

Linda Lundström has found a Christian faith that includes peace-making and seeking to bless **First Nations people**.

By *Lisa Hall-Wilson*

Twenty years ago Linda Lundström was near the peak of her fame as a Canadian fashion designer. Her Inuit-inspired winter coat La Parka was the top style choice for urban and suburban women. Over three decades she produced more than a hundred fashion collections and won more than 30 awards. More recently, as she worked to counter the wrongs against aboriginal people she witnessed in her youth, a friend helped her recognize in Jesus Christ the eternal source of forgiveness and healing.

Lundström was born in 1952 in Red Lake, Ont., about seven hours northwest of Thunder Bay. She grew up in nearby Cochenour, a mostly immigrant community of 300 people attached to a nearby gold mine. Her parents were Icelandic and Swedish.

As a young girl she was fascinated by the First Nations women who attended church with their children, including some who lived on traplines during the week. These mothers saw nothing wrong with discreetly nursing their babies during the service.

At age 12 Lundström overheard her mother and the Women's Auxiliary at the church discussing how to help the "Indian" women fit in better – by teaching them how to make little rolled sandwiches and coconut balls.

"I'm at the back," she recalls, "and I stand up and say, 'Don't you think it would be a good idea to ask them what they could teach us?'" Her mother smiled, but others gave her cold glares. The meeting co-ordinator gave her a dismissive reply.

It's a memory that helps Lundström

explain why she walked away from her faith, disillusioned. Around the same age she learned the houses on the outskirts of town where some Native families lived, although they looked like her own on the outside, in fact lacked plumbing, electricity and even drywall.

Levi Beardy was born on a trapline and met Lundström when he moved to Cochenour in Grade 3. "She was very intelligent, very beautiful," Beardy said. "Always made her own clothes, had glasses, and dressed more seriously than the other kids. All of us would be playing and skating, but she never really seemed to be there. She had a stricter upbringing."

Lundström did well in school, but struggled with the injustices she witnessed. Jim Minor was her Grade 11 English teacher. "She was very conscientious and thoughtful – she challenged the status quo," he says.

Minor recalls "fairly open discrimination in the town," but doesn't remember seeing any blatant physical bullying or name calling. "It was an underlying sense of social exclusion," he says. "When I lived there in 1968–69, there still was a Native ghetto called Tomahawk Centre, and that's where most of the Native people in the town lived."

Lundström recalls boys from school getting drunk and beating up a Native man just for fun, and her guilt at the social pressure to keep the secret. Other stories filled her with shame, of a Native woman found dead in the snow, and the town's indifference. "I laughed at the jokes, they were racist jokes. I was a racist myself because of my silence."

She left home to build a career in fashion. Linda Lundström Inc. (www.lindalundstromworks.com) employed more than a hundred people, achieved over \$13 million in sales, and operated three retail stores in the Toronto area.

For a decade she repressed the bad feelings she had from growing up in Red Lake, but they came flooding back one day as she nursed her own child and remembered the Native women nursing theirs in church.

She decided to make reparations, starting with a contest for Native artists to submit artwork she would use on her La Parka coats. She chose a few of the designs, some arriving in ballpoint pen on scrap paper, and had them computerized for embroidery purposes. One of the winners was the now well-known artist Abe Kakepetum, whom she'd first met at school in Red Lake.

"When we first put Native art on La Parka, it didn't sell," Lundström shrugs. "I didn't care." She continued to solicit designs from Native artists despite the lack of sales. Five years later La Parkas with Native art were selling equally with the undecorated ones.

"Every time I used a beautiful piece of Native art on my La Parka with a beautiful hang tag telling their story, the guilt and shame that had happened one drop at a time was dealt with one drop at a time," Lundström says.

Next she lobbied the school in Red Lake to offer Native Studies. She facilitated Native language education, provided further economic opportunities, and set up the Kiishik Fund with her own money to see these efforts were financed.

In the early 1990s she replaced the faux fur in her designs with beaver fur, because she'd learned Native trappers were struggling because of falling fur prices. It was

““ Don't you think it would be a good idea to ask them what they could teach us? ””

Fashion Designer

the height of the anti-fur movement, and her decision made her an international target. She received hate mail and email, and disturbing phone calls threatening her and her family leading the RCMP to give her a protection detail.

By this time Levi Beardy had left Red Lake, spent 20 years doing top secret work in the Armed Forces and become fluent in Russian. He'd also given his life to Christ. When he heard about Lundström's struggle with the anti-fur movement, he was already retired from the army and training for a second career in ministry at Tynedale Seminary. He dropped by one of her boutiques in Toronto and left her a note.

Dear Linda, I want you to know I've been following your career, and I just want to acknowledge the respect that you're paying to our people and I applaud your humanity.

Lundström contacted Beardy and met with him and his wife. They hadn't spoken much as children because of the felt segregation, but now Lundström had the opportunity to ask Beardy's forgiveness for the racism she'd been a party to with her silence.

"I've forgiven you, I've forgiven everybody," Beardy told her one day in her office, a process he'd already worked through during his years in the military. Lundström sat at her desk and wept, the weight of guilt and shame lessening a little more.

Beardy became a confidant and often prayed for her over the phone. Lundström clung to her belief she didn't need God, though she had great respect for Beardy.

In the late 1990s Lundström's business began to struggle. Beardy continued to counsel her to turn to God. One night she finally went to her knees in desperation. "God, I'm willing to give you the benefit of the doubt. If you're there, reveal yourself to me. I need you to reveal yourself to me," she remembers saying aloud. "And He did, right then and there in my bedroom. I felt God's Spirit in that room, His presence. It just filled my whole body."

Lundström's business struggled for ten years until the economic crisis of 2008

Linda Lundström's new creative venture is a collection of luxurious fur and leather accessories and duster vests.

PHOTO: SOPHIE LUNDSTRÖM HALBERT





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Lundström's Inuit-inspired winter coat La Parka incorporated designs from Native artists in the 1990s.

proved the final straw, but her zeal for raising awareness and helping the remote communities in the North never slackened.

"I felt that God's calling for me, my ministry, was my business. In 2008 when the bank called our loan, we had already given everything we had for the operating line of credit," Lundström says, tearing up as she talks. "The outside of my life was much worse, although my internal [spiritual] prosperity was better than ever. But I couldn't put that in the bank."

She retreated to live full-time at a cottage she'd purchased 20 years earlier as a summer haven from the city. She continues to seek God's will for her life, trying to see God's plan in allowing her to lose her business..

She works now as a freelance speaker and clothing designer – and continues to help the First Nations people in the North help themselves. The Kiishik Fund initiatives continue, but Lundström is also working to build an Internet marketplace to help First Nations people in remote locations create a sustainable industry using their sewing, designing and art skills.

In May 2012 Lundström and Beardy visited Eabametoong First Nations Reserve, called Fort Hope in English, to

approach the band council about such a sewing project. Eabametoong, only accessible by plane, water and ice roads, is very remote and troubled with youth violence and suicide.

During the visit Beardy asked her about being baptized again. (Beardy today is pastor at Aboriginal Believer's Church in Toronto and president of the North American Aboriginal Bible College in Port Perry.)

“I felt God's Spirit in that room, His presence. It just filled my whole body.”

Little did he know she had come to Fort Hope ready to take that final step of acknowledging Christ as her Saviour.

"I expected her usual no," Beardy laughs, "but she said, 'Right, let's do it.'" And so Beardy baptized her in the chilly spring waters of Eabamet Lake.

In May the rivers that feed the lake reverse and go in the opposite direction. Eabametoong in the Anishinaabe language means "the reversing of the waters." Both Lundström and Beardy feel this is symbolic of the change in her life, her spiritual transformation – but also perhaps a change in the way First Nations people are perceived and treated, not just in the North, but across the country. **FT**

LISA HALL-WILSON is a freelance writer in London, Ont.



WHY AND WHEN CANADIAN YOUNG ADULTS ARE LEAVING, STAYING, AND RETURNING TO THE CHURCH

by James Penner, Rachael Harder, Erika Anderson, Bruno Désorcy, and Rick Hiemstra



HEMORRHAGING FAITH

“ We recently had James and Rachael spend some time with us in Atlantic Canada. During their three days with us they spoke at our annual Youth Pastors Summit, two regional gatherings, chapel at Acadia Divinity College, and a local church. The hundreds of people who heard them were deeply impressed by both the quality of their research and presentations, and their personal commitment to helping the Church navigate through the issues brought up in Hemorrhaging Faith.

Rev. Dale O Stairs
Director of Youth and Family Ministries, Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches

“ James gave a passionate, dynamic presentation on his research and the sobering implications for the church. Though buttressed by the requisite statistics, charts and graphs, his presentation was anything but academic and long winded. He engaged his audience, provoked questions, facilitated group work and reflection, all leading to practical application for the Canadian church, not only for today, but heading into tomorrow. His work is fresh, sharp and highly relevant. Highly recommended!

Kendall and Ralph Gilker
Workshop organizers, Mount Carmel Bible College, Edmonton



I am grateful for the Hemorrhaging Faith partners. Being committed to a specific purpose and driven by God's love for young people, we put aside agendas and worked hard to produce a helpful tool for churches in their call to serve young adults. Based on the response during presentations, the research material offers good light on a sensitive situation and seems to call a real desire to address issues.

Thank you partners and project manager Rick Hiemstra.

James Penner
pennja@telus.net
pennerandassociates.com

Lead Author and Researcher of the Hemorrhaging Faith project

download here:



<http://hgccanada.org/hemorrhagingfaith>



Choosing to

As our courts again consider calls to allow assisted suicide, a new EFC report offers insight and hope.

By Debra Fieguth

When physicians discovered in November that Scott Routley, the 39-year-old London, Ont., man who has been in a “persistent vegetative state” for 12 years, could communicate with them, the news was rightly seen as a medical and scientific breakthrough. Significantly, Routley was able to reassure the doctors he feels no pain.

And when 15-year-old Amanda Todd took her own life after years of what she felt was unbearable bullying, her tragic death caused an outpouring of compassion and increased talk of the importance of suicide prevention for teens. No 15-year-old should have to endure such severe emotional and mental anguish.

But when Gloria Taylor, a B.C. woman with ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease), lobbied for her right to have a physician assist in her death, she was seen by many as a courageous leader and advocate of an individual’s right to die when and how she chooses. Taylor died naturally of an infection in October, but her cause remains in the legal arena.

The media has treated these events as separate issues. But all of them have something in common. They have brought into sharper focus – and greater confusion – the issues surrounding the end of life and whose decision it is to determine it.

Canadians benefit from medical advances that prolong life and alleviate physical pain, but ironically there is a parallel push in society to end life sooner because of psychological and social suffering, or what many health professionals now refer to as “existential suffering.”

Contrary to popular assumptions, most dying patients do

not experience intolerable pain, says Vancouver palliative care physician Dr. Margaret Cottle. For example, “ALS patients tend to die a more peaceful death. They don’t suffocate, they don’t choke to death.”

What terminal patients experience is fear: fear of abandonment, fear of being a burden to their loved ones, fear of losing control over their bodies, fear of the *possibility* of pain at the end.

Our confusion around these issues is compounded because “We’ve medicalized suffering,” says Sister Nuala Kenny, a Halifax pediatrician and bioethicist at Dalhousie University.

It helps to consider emotional and physical pain separately. One person may be “dying and have no suffering,” while another may “have very little physical pain and have huge suffering.”

“If you have chest pain,” Kenny explains, “I’ve got stuff I can do for you. If you have heartache because your son is on the street prostituting himself for drugs in Vancouver, I should recognize the pain in your heart. But I have no prescription for that.”

Kenny’s research found “psychological distress and care needs” are by far the greatest factors for patients requesting assisted death.

New EFC Report

That research highlights a fundamental question – “Why do people request assisted suicide?” – notes Faye Sonier, legal counsel at The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) and its Centre for Faith and Public Life in Ottawa. Recently she supervised research for a new EFC discussion paper called *Palliative Care and End of Life Therapies* (free at www.theEFC.ca/ResourcesOnEuthanasia.)



End a Life

PHOTO: RON NICKEL / WWW.DESIGNPICS.COM

The EFC paper suggests if something can be done to meet the underlying needs and fears of a patient, there will be fewer requests to end life prematurely.

While patient autonomy is touted as one of the reasons for choosing the time and method of death, autonomy is difficult to measure, says Larry Worthen, a lawyer in Dartmouth, N.S., who is now executive director of the Christian Medical and Dental Society. Patients are always influenced by others such as hospital staff, family members and physicians. In the past we believed the virtuous thing was not to hasten death. “Do we want to have a society where it becomes virtuous to end your life?”

Euthanasia and other forms of physician-assisted death (PAD) are illegal in Canada. Bill C-384, a private member’s bill to legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide, was defeated 228-59 in April 2010. But in June 2012 a British Columbia Supreme Court judge ruled in the *Carter* case Canada’s law against assisted suicide was unconstitutional, and granted Gloria Taylor an exemption. In August the federal government launched appeal, to be heard in March. The EFC will participate as an intervener (details at www.theEFC.ca/carter).

While proponents of PAD insist there is no “slippery slope,” and there are enough safeguards available to prevent abuse, many Christian doctors and ethicists see it differently. Thirty years ago, notes Cottle (the Vancouver physician), people were being kept alive longer than was natural. Heroic measures were being taken to prolong life. “I actually feel it’s the other way around now, especially with older people,” she says. “We’re giving up on people sooner than we did, and sooner than we should.”

“It’s a recipe for elder abuse,” she adds. “There’s a big problem with elder abuse, and it’s growing.”

Alex Schadenberg of London, Ont., executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, agrees. He recently authored

a publication called *Exposing Vulnerable People to Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide* (available at www.epcc.ca) in which he cites numerous European, Canadian and American studies that show physicians don’t always follow the guidelines in settings where assisted suicide is legal (Belgium and the Netherlands, as well as in Washington and Oregon). Among his findings:

- Patients are being euthanized without having made an explicit request. (A study from the Flanders region of Belgium shows one-third of euthanasia deaths are without explicit request.)
- Nurses are illegally administering lethal drugs.
- Between 2003 and 2011 the number of euthanasia deaths in the Netherlands doubled.
- In one Belgian study half the euthanasia deaths went unreported.
- Older people were more likely to be victims of unreported euthanasia deaths.

The unreported cases were determined by an anonymous questionnaire sent to several thousand physicians, Schadenberg explains.

Cottle has seen the research, and is alarmed how “the guidelines are just being completely discarded.” What’s more, she says, “There have been some screw-ups in

Washington and Oregon.” People have lived for several days after a lethal injection, or vomited the pills they have swallowed. Death does not always come quickly.

Whose Life Is It?

Twenty years ago Sue Rodriguez asked the memorable question, “Whose life is it, anyway?” Rodriguez was the British Columbia woman who requested assisted suicide before the symptoms of ALS got too difficult for her to bear. Her quest for autonomy, for controlling your own destiny, has only gotten stronger in society today.

“We’ve medicalized suffering.”

(The EFC intervened in the Rodriguez case, and its arguments formed a key part of the court's decision in recognizing the value Canadians place on the "sanctity of life" in understanding the "right to life" mentioned in section seven of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.)

But Rodriguez was wrong in assuming her life was her own, says Cottle. "The Christian knows it's God's life."

Responding to the issues requires some careful approaches for Christian professionals. "Faith-based arguments are dismissed" in the public square, says Kenny, who moves in both the secular and religious worlds. The ethics and health policy advisor to the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada has always worked in secular rather than Catholic institutions. "We need to make these arguments more generally accessible," she says.

Cottle agrees. "We have to learn how to speak into our own culture in ways that they can understand. If we just say, 'The Bible says not to kill,' they don't really care."

One way is to point out the discrepancies in our society. Kenny and Cottle both mention capital punishment as an example. "We do not allow the death penalty in this country, and we're proud of this fact," says Kenny, a naturalized Canadian who came here from the United States, "partly because of the ethical underpinnings of the Canadian system."

Why then, if "we don't even allow killing of people who are hardened criminals," asks Kenny, would we want people to die because they experience emotional and psychological suffering?

"We have a very intricately balanced ecosystem of compassion and caring for one another," says Cottle. If a patient wants a physician-assisted death, that ecosystem is disrupted. A doctor has to make the death happen, "and we all have to participate in it – which is why we voted out capital punishment."

On a practical level, several things are being done to engage Canadian society in the battle against euthanasia. Larry Worthen of the Christian Medical and Dental Society is busy making presentations to educate medical students, doctors and churches, particularly in eastern Canada. Nuala Kenny continues to present her findings that most requests for physician-



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PHOTO: SUSAN SCHADENBERG



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Clockwise from top left: Margaret Cottle, Larry Worthen and Alex Schadenberg. There are still things Christians can do to ensure no one has to feel abandoned at death.

assisted deaths are due to psychological and emotional reasons rather than physical pain. Alongside the EFC's intervention in the appeal of the Carter case, the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition and the Christian Legal Fellowship are also set to intervene.

Dr. John Patrick, a retired Ottawa physician and educator, is calling for medical students and physicians to take the Hippocratic Oath seriously once again. Society is in danger of having physicians with no moral integrity, he says, and there needs to be provision for those who wish to follow the Hippocratic principles of doing no harm.

"Our society has lost its moral consensus and cannot therefore agree on the kind of medical care to provide, nor the ethical basis of medical care," he says. So Patrick set up www.hippocraticregistry.com, and he encourages physicians to join. Further, he suggests forming groups of physicians and medical students who will take the Hippocratic Oath, a practice already followed by some medical practitioners.

But while the battle is being waged in the public sphere, there are still things Christians can do to ensure no one has to feel abandoned at death.

"The biggest thing we need to do in

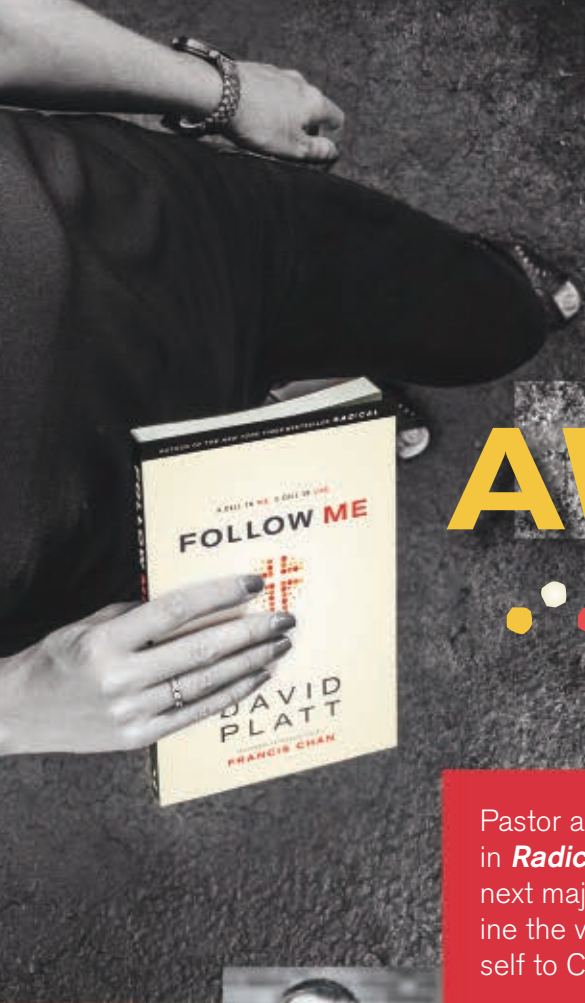
churches is get the theology of suffering figured out," says Margaret Cottle. "We live in a fallen world. Suffering is something that is going to come to us." Sometimes, she says, all we can do is to follow what Mary did at the foot of Jesus' cross. "All she did was stand there and bear witness."

"The Christian community has to realize that there's an importance of being with the 'other,'" adds Alex Schadenberg. Visiting those who are sick, especially if they are alone, is an important ministry. "If there are people who actually care about you, you are fairly more likely to say that my life does have value," he notes.

The EFC's discussion paper confirms that. "The will to live is inextricably linked with maintaining a sense of meaning and connection to one's world," it says.

However difficult it might be for Christian medical professionals as well as laypeople to navigate the dark waters of euthanasia and physician-assisted death, it is imperative they do, says Cottle. Otherwise, "As the culture gets darker, are we really shining more, or are we being swallowed up?" **FT**

DEBRA FIEGUTH of Kingston, Ont., is a senior writer at *Faith Today*.



AWAKEN TO THE CALL

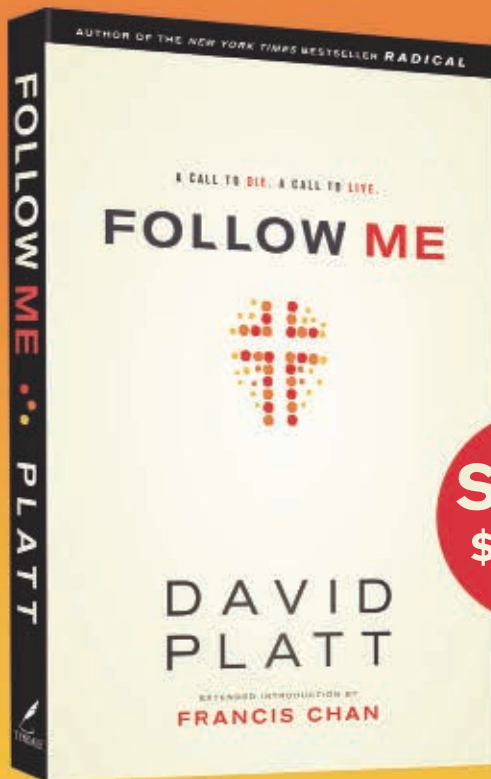
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How We Think About SCIENCE

The discovery of the so-called “**God particle**” can help us think more Christianly about science. *By Paul Teel*

When you saw this summer’s headlines proclaiming the scientific discovery of something nicknamed the “God particle,” perhaps you thought, “Here we go again. More scientists out to undermine religion.” But a closer look can reveal a different and more positive story.

The discovery was made at the Large Hadron Collider near Geneva, an underground circular particle accelerator 27 kilometres around (part in France, part in Switzerland) that speeds protons up to almost the speed of light, and then arranges for them to smash into each other. As they break apart, the smaller particles that make up protons can be detected for very small amounts of time.

Think back to the science you learned in school. Each atom was pictured as a mini solar system, with electron “planets” orbiting around a nucleus “sun” made of protons and neutrons. Very likely you were left with the impression protons, neutrons and electrons were the smallest and most basic ingredients of physical reality.

But the latest scientific understanding is far more complicated than that. In fact, there are currently thought to be about a dozen subatomic particles with wonderful and exotic names like gluon, quark, boson and neutrino.

This more complex understanding that

developed in the mid-20th century, known as the Standard Model, was very productive. It explained much of what was known about physical reality and successfully predicted many experimental results for decades.

However there was one important prediction that eluded confirmation for 50 years – the existence of the Higgs boson, a subatomic particle named after Peter Higgs, one of the physicists who made the prediction in the 1960s.

This became such a foundational challenge for physics that the \$9 billion Large

Hadron Collider was built primarily to find the Higgs boson. It took nearly five decades for experimental physicists to equip themselves to test the prediction of their theoretical colleagues.

This is why last summer’s announcement of a new particle consistent with the Higgs boson was deeply significant, bringing 83-year-old Peter Higgs himself (present at the announcement) to tears.

Unfortunately, almost exactly halfway between Peter Higgs’ proposal and the experiment that may have confirmed it, the Higgs boson acquired a nickname – the “God particle.” This came from the 1993 book by Leon Lederman entitled *The God Particle: If the Universe Is the Answer, What Is the Question?* (Mariner Books, revised edition, 2006). Lederman, who won the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1988, wrote the book to popularize particle physics and explain the

There are currently thought to be about a dozen subatomic particles with wonderful and exotic names like gluon, quark, boson and neutrino.



importance of the search for the Higgs boson.

Ironically, because the Higgs boson was notoriously difficult to find and had frustrated physicists for decades, Lederman intended to call it a far more crass name, a familiar curse that begins with “God.” His publisher wouldn’t allow it, however, and Lederman agreed to the more polite name that eventually became the title of his book.

Most physicists, I should note, are unhappy with this nickname. Not only do they feel it is disrespectful of religion, but they also dislike the scientifically inaccurate implication the Higgs boson *creates* anything or is single-handedly responsible for sustaining



PHOTO © 2006 CERN

The Large Hadron Collider near Geneva is an underground circular particle accelerator 27 kilometres around (part in France, part in Switzerland) that speeds protons up to almost the speed of light, and then arranges for them to smash into each other.

all reality. Physicists have tried to popularize other nicknames, but “God particle” stuck.

Again, this is unfortunate, because it only serves to reinforce a common mistake – the idea that as science progresses, religion retreats. Or the more we learn about the world through science, the less we need God.

This misunderstanding is sometimes called the “God of the gaps” approach, treating God as a kind of “scientific” explanation when there are gaps in science’s ability to explain things in the world.

Strident atheists like Richard Dawkins

embrace the God of the gaps approach, because it furthers their cause – the more science advances, they say, the less we need God. Without meaning to, Christians often share Dawkins’ assumption about science and God. I certainly absorbed this in my youth and can still remember how reports about scientific progress made me feel that, somehow, the Christian faith was under assault.

Even mature and well-educated Christians sometimes make this mistake. Consider Isaac Newton, the great scientist and

mathematician. By formulating the law of universal gravitation, he was responsible for great progress in our understanding of the solar system. But Newton was unable to explain certain wobbles in Saturn’s orbit, among other mysteries. He put God in that gap, claiming this was evidence of God’s helpful intervention in the world. Newton guessed that God was correcting problems in Saturn’s orbit so the solar system wouldn’t collapse.

But as science progressed and our understanding of planetary orbits grew,

we learned the wobbles were caused mainly by the gravitational pull of Uranus. Those Christians for whom the wobbles were evidence of God's presence in creation found themselves in an absurd position. God and gravity were competitors. They had a decision to make. Either find a better way to think about the relationship between God and creation, or find another gap in which to place Him. Unfortunately, many found another gap, and the pattern repeats itself today.

There are serious theological, logical and scientific problems with the God of the gaps approach.

First, theology. The historical fact is these gaps close. Or perhaps "shift" is a better word. As science progresses, old questions are answered and new questions can be asked. If God really does inhabit our gaps, then God's home is either shrinking or constantly moving. And if God is only occasionally active in the world, does that mean He is normally *inactive*? Is that consistent with our Christian idea of God who creates and sustains *all* things? Or is the God of the gaps approach more consistent with the idea of an incompetent clockmaker God who wound up the universe and left it, returning only to fix the occasional unforeseen problem? ("Oh, I'd better fix those wobbles!")

Second, logic. It is simply bad reasoning to say, "There is currently no scientific explanation for planetary wobbles. Therefore, God must be doing it." The only real conclusion to be drawn from a lack of current scientific explanation is . . . that there is a lack of current scientific explanation. We certainly can't expand from *current* ignorance to *all-time* ignorance. In fact, with nearly 400 years of modern science to guide us, we can see the pattern is one of growth in scientific understanding. *Current* ignorance almost always becomes *past* ignorance.

Third, science. We all have an interest in the continued growth of scientific understanding. Anyone who has had a loved one treated successfully by the medical community, for example, is certainly glad for this progress. Sixteen years ago our seven-month-old daughter woke from

a nap barely able to breathe. We rushed to an emergency room, holding a limp and wheezing baby girl. As it turned out this was the first sign of undiagnosed asthma. Thankfully, because of the hard work of scientists in the years before this episode, we were able to get her asthma under control. She is now a very active young woman preparing for a possible career in ballet.

The point is this. If the medical scientists of the past had made the God of the gaps assumption (current ignorance equals all-time ignorance), they would have given up – and many of our loved ones would not be flourishing today. Science *requires* a willingness to do the hard work needed to answer difficult questions, and an optimism the hard work will pay off.

As a final problem – and this cuts across the categories of theology, logic and science – there is the very real danger a God of the gaps approach leads to the position every truth seeker should avoid – a vested interest in continued ignorance. When evidence for God depends on the *failure* of science to explain, then there will inevitably be a substantial investment in continued ignorance.

There is a better way, however, found in the centuries-old Christian understanding that all truth finds its source in God. All truth is God's truth.

If this is true, if all truth is God's truth, then there is nothing to be afraid of. In fact, if all truth is God's truth, then we Christians should be seeking out all the truth we can find – including (but certainly not limited to) the truth brought to us through modern science.

Since at least the time of the Reformation, Christians have used the "Two Books" metaphor to help think this through. God has given us two books, the Book of Scripture and the Book of Creation. We read both books differently, to be sure (theology and biblical interpretation for the first, science and art for the second), and we must read them humbly, but we read them both with gratitude, for they teach us about their divine Author. Reading the two books can and should be an act of worship.

Another way to think about this is

through the idea of "mystery." I often hear Christians worry the goal of science is to remove mystery from the world, and that a world without mystery will become a world without wonder and delight, a world unaware of the glory of God.

But there are two ways to understand the mystery of creation – equate it with ignorance or with never-ending learning. I prefer the second, which is certainly what we mean when we affirm the mystery of the doctrine of the Trinity. We mean both that we will never know fully *and* will never stop learning.

Understood this way, science certainly does not undermine the world's mystery. Indeed, science is one of the ways we *experience* the world's mystery, because science is part of the never-ending learning that is our worshipful response to God's goodness.

Perhaps we can even redeem the unfortunate nickname, "God particle."

The Higgs boson does not *replace* God, of course. As we saw in the Newton example, it is absurd to think of God and a subatomic particle as competitors! But for Christians the Higgs boson can *point* to God.

Its discovery can remind us of the generosity of a God who made us to be image bearers, calling us to join in the seeing, knowing, loving, naming and delighting in God's good creation.

Because of this particle's discovery, we can now read a little bit more in God's Book of Creation. We are filled yet again with awe and wonder because of the mystery of Creation, about which we will never stop learning. This of course renews our awe and wonder for the Creator of this infinitely interesting world.

The "God particle" can remind us as the image-bearing priests of creation that we are called to offer creation back to the Creator – through science and art and poetry, through stories, through acts of love and mercy and stewardship – delighting in it and saying with God, "Good!" and "Very good!" **FT**

Paul Teel is a teacher at Pacific Christian School in Victoria, a guest lecturer on science and theology at Regent College and an affiliated scholar in philosophy of science at the University of Victoria.

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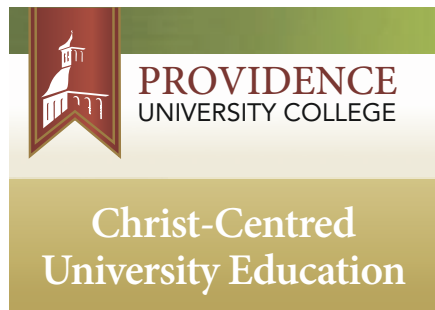
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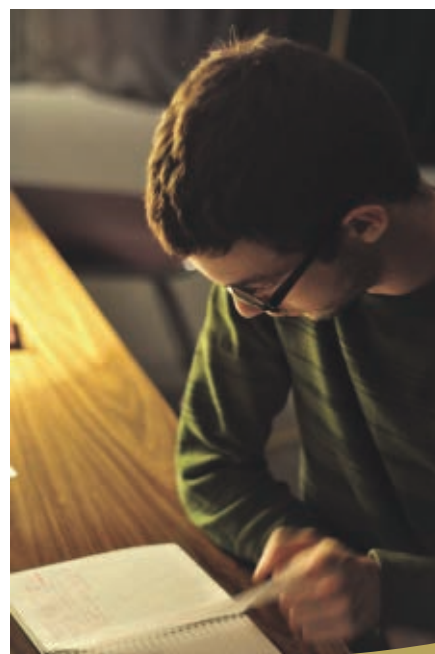


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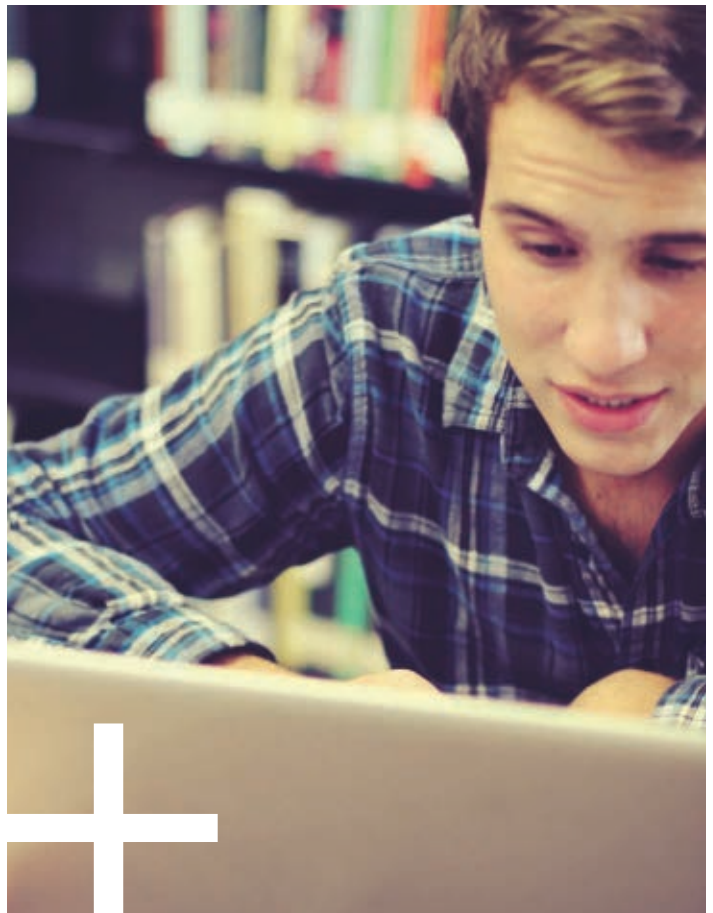
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In addition to the LLC milestone, TWU celebrated its 50th Anniversary by hosting over 7,000 people on campus during its September celebration. The three-day weekend saw many alumni return to campus to connect with old friends, faculty and students. The local community joined in as they cheered on TWU Spartans' home games, attended the outdoor praise chapel and caught the first ever TEDxTWU. The milestone event was a

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An Ethos of Spirit and Power

A reflection on the character of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

Defining the spiritual ethos of a Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada church is a daunting task. It's like trying to describe Canadian culture, hindered by the same geographic expanse and regional distinctiveness.

Perhaps it's safest to start with this: Pentecostals value the freedom to be able to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. From our beginnings in the Pentecostal awakening of the early 1900s, we have held fast to the idea that obedience to the Spirit trumps ecclesiastical rules.

This shared value doesn't always lead to a common approach on how we do church. It appears the Spirit does not lead in the same direction in every location. This should not surprise us given the church diversity pictured in the New Testament.

Our church gatherings, preaching, programs and architecture vary greatly from community to community, but there are common threads woven into the life of our PAOC churches. At least they represent who we would like to be at our best.

Earl Creps, visiting professor of leadership and spiritual renewal at Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, highlights one of these threads:

Pentecostals are not Evangelicals who speak in tongues. When our hearts are soft, our experience is about a kind of Spirit fullness that overflows into our worldview, shifting it from Christian naturalism toward Christian supernaturalism, and shifting us from maintenance to mission. Pentecostals are all about getting full of God so we can announce that His Kingdom is the only real world and that it's arriving among us (Mike Yaconelli, ed., *Stories of Emergence*, Zondervan, 2003).

This emphasis on mission is at the heart of our ethos. We want to be filled with the Spirit so we can be empowered for service. One of the original reasons for establishing our fellowship of churches was for planting churches and foreign missions.

Pentecostals long for the empowerment of the Spirit so we can fulfill the Great Commission. Spirit baptism is for us a sign of that empowerment – and tongues speaking, the initial evidence of that sign. While Pentecostals talk about wanting more of the Spirit, “what we really mean

is that He wants more of us. We must pour ourselves out. In other words, more obedience,” explains Van Johnson, dean of Master's Pentecostal Seminary (*The Journey Forward*, The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, 2006).

But the Pentecostal ethos is not just about empowered witness. There is also urgency. We have an eschatological perspective that the Holy Spirit has been poured out so we can win the world before Christ returns. This can make us impatient with procedures that delay outreach.

Let me quote United Methodist professor George Hunter about another thread in our Pentecostal ethos. It has to do with our acceptance of everybody who is empowered by the Spirit. This springs from our emphasis on Acts 2:17 where Peter quotes the prophet Joel, indicating the Spirit's empowerment is for all people regardless of gender or race.

Every interpreter of Pentecostalism is impressed by the movement's engagement and inclusion of many poor, uneducated, marginalized, disinherited, left-behind, and even outcast “losers” at the bottom of society's social ladder, and by the movement's power to convince them that they need to change, and that the Spirit can empower their change and will “gift” them for ministry and make their lives significant. The movement, on every continent, makes “losers” into “winners.” Pentecostalism seems more able to achieve interracial fellowships, and to recognize and empower women for ministry, than any other branch of Christianity” (*Radical Outreach*, Abingdon, 2003).

We still value the Spirit's calling and anointing as perhaps the most important qualification for ministry. This is not to say godly character and relevant credentials are dismissed. There is tension here in our ethos. Our Wesleyan holiness roots impress upon us the importance of godly character.

So, friends, if you catch us at our best, we will be seeking the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to reach the world for Christ with some urgency. We will be working with the Spirit to see changed lives. We will be learning from the Word of God how to live engaged, godly lives in an ungodly culture. And we will be training and releasing a diverse mix of Jesus' followers to serve in our Father's world. **FT**

DAVID WELLS is general superintendent of the PAOC, which has headquarters in Mississauga, Ont., and includes 1,100 congregations. He thanks Jim Lucas, president of Canadian Pentecostal Seminary, for some of the ideas in this article. This column features affiliates of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. For a list see www.theEFC.ca/affiliates.



Eleanor Rigby

Fighting loneliness in God's strength.

Loneliness among women is epidemic. We have many virtual friends online, but those who truly know us are few and far between.

Sadly, I have spoken with many women recently who are living this painful reality. (I'll change their names for privacy.)

Mary mourns the loss of interaction with other couples as a result of her husband's dementia. Julia feels lost after a divorce has left her too without the same connection to married friends. Amanda struggles to engage with other women as her demanding schedule leaves little time for socializing.

And that's just the start.

Jane secretly grieves a granddaughter's poor choices and finds it hard to relate to those families who seem to have it all together. Karen, a ministry leader, has difficulty finding friends who understand the unique responsibility she carries day to day. Lucy, a new believer, is eager to grow in her faith but feels intimidated by the knowledge of those who are more mature. A vibrant woman in her 50s, Janine underwent surgery followed by a long recovery period, experiencing loneliness as friends moved on with their own lives.

Disconnected and struggling with life changes, these women feel alone and forgotten.

Can you relate?

Satan loves to make us feel as though we are the only ones to experience this sad reality and shames us into silence. If he keeps us apart, he keeps us from life-giving relationships with our sisters in Christ. Women live in years of loneliness because they believe the lies of the enemy.

Dear sister, though you feel lonely, you are not alone. Our Heavenly Father is with you and sees your pain. He has not forgotten you. The sovereign Lord knows your heart, your hurts and your longings. He is with you in the awkward moments and sees the tear stains on your pillow. In Hebrews 13:5 God says, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." When you feel invisible, He sees you. Turn to Him, trusting He is working out even this lonely season for good.

Why not pray right now and ask God to show you a

godly woman in your life to approach in friendship? It's time to reach beyond our protective walls to build relationships where trust and vulnerability go hand in hand. Relationships can be risky, but they are worth it! We must be careful to not let bitterness isolate us. If you are feeling lonely, reaching out to others is one of the surest cures. It stops the pity party and cultivates compassion. Ask God what He wants to teach you in this season of loneliness. Perhaps it is His means of helping you better empathize and comfort others as you too have been comforted.

Perhaps you are also on the other side, unsure how to reach out. Our offers to help can ring hollow if a friend senses we are secretly hoping she won't follow up. At first a friend may not be able to say how she needs help – and may even insist she doesn't need it at all. Many feel uncomfortable soliciting help, not wanting to burden anyone or admit we can't do it all ourselves.

For these reasons suggesting a specific means of assistance, a certain task at a certain time, makes such offers of help much more beneficial and readily accepted. It demonstrates we aren't just paying lip service – and that we *do* understand their needs.

Offer to drive family members to regular appointments. Provide a hot meal once a week for new parents after the birth of their child. Spend an afternoon helping to clean or do laundry to lighten someone's load. These ideas are merely a start.

One woman I know greatly benefited from families who offered to help with home improvement projects her husband could no longer handle due to illness.

There are many ways we can reach out, but we need to have courage and creativity.

We need each other. God didn't intend for us to go through life lacking the support of fellow sisters. In Hebrews 10:24-25 He calls us to "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Who can you reach out to this week? **BT**

We need each other.
God didn't intend
for us to go
through life lacking
the support
of fellow sisters.

MICHELLE ARTHUR loves to help women nurture godly friendships and mentoring relationships through Women Alive, where she serves as executive director. In 2013 Women Alive celebrates 40 years of ministry to Canadian women and teen girls. Celebrate with us in Grande Prairie, Toronto and Waterloo this spring! Visit www.womenalive.org for details.

Sunnyside Church, Ottawa, Ont.

Children take part in “creative storytelling” at a summer vacation Bible school class. Families and young children now make up a large percentage of the members at Sunnyside Church.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

A focus on university students has brought much life to this established Wesleyan congregation.

Sunnyside Wesleyan Church in Ottawa (www.sunnysidechurchottawa.com) recognizes life is messy and sometimes complicated.

“However, we believe that Jesus can be found in the middle of our lives whether life is going well or not,” adds senior pastor Brent Russett. That leads to the church goal of trying to help people encounter the life-changing love of God, including a wide range of newcomers and long-time members.

Ministries to Students

“The community in which a church is located defines part of its mission,” says Russett. For Sunnyside that community includes students from nearby universities, and the congregation is rising to the challenge of reaching out to them. They all know that

students who don’t connect strongly with church during their university years won’t likely attend church after graduation.

Building relationships with students in September creates the comfort they need to invite their non-believing friends. Sunnyside becomes the second step, in collaboration with campus ministries, to encourage students to reach toward God.

After a supper for students provided by church members, a church member who works for the discipleship ministry Navigators Canada hosts discussion nights in his home.

“We do what we do for the Kingdom of God and trust that our church will benefit,” says Russett, adding that the congregation understands this principle well. Sunnyside loses about 20 per cent of its congregation annually, but retains about a third of university graduates, balancing overall growth at five per cent each year.

An example of retaining a university student is Marg, who liked a guy who attended Sunnyside. Though she had no use for God, she consented to attend church. After a while she thought God might be a “possibility” in her life. Five months later she placed her faith in Christ, was baptized, married and now serves on the Sunnyside communication team.

The student population has also affected worship locations. The congregation has been gathering for 90 years in Old Ottawa South. They welcome their community to barbecues, soccer camps that link sports and faith, a women’s shelter, community choir and exercise class.

In 2010, 50 people were commissioned to a second location downtown, meeting on the University of Ottawa campus.

Character of Christ

Three hundred regular attendees now gather in three congregations. This diverse group of university students, young fam-

ilies, professionals and seniors welcomes those taking their first steps toward a relationship with Christ.

Twenty years ago things were different. Sixty seniors and empty-nesters gathered with 30 university students that soon grew to 90. There was nothing in-between – no children, no youth, no young families. But as students married, young families grew up into the congregation, creating more generational balance.

Sunnyside’s vision is for the character of Christ to be formed in individuals as well as the church body. And Sunnysiders are encouraged to actively contribute their time and resources to ministries outside the church. Work is viewed as ministry. Many serve in government offices or as professional educators. Russett has added to his ministry to students by serving on the board of trustees for Houghton College.

The Old Ottawa Community Centre is a hub of activity from fitness to photography, from after-school care for kids to programs for seniors. Jill, a centre staff worker and member of the church board, gets to hear the needs and serve the neighbours.

In connection with Mission Ottawa, a group of church leaders that meets to pray and plan city-wide events, people from Sunnyside prayer-walk their neighbourhood at the downtown church site. They pray for people they see on the street and in the houses they pass, and that God’s loving-kindness would invade that neighbourhood and heal the hurts in families, individuals and businesses.

Engage the World

Jesus’ mission to bring Good News to the poor, freedom to captives, insight to people who can’t see and release for the oppressed is Sunnyside’s mission today. Their goal is to turn the church inside out, praying that people they encounter each day will be receptive to and changed by the life-giving movement of God in their lives.

Perhaps unique to Sunnyside, the majority of churchgoers’ friends are not yet believers. On a typical Sunday five to 10 per cent attending are making their first connection with church. The challenge is to disciple all the seekers that already walk through the doors.

Russett says he reminds himself and his congregation that “Sunnysiders live in the middle of the world,” or (to use the language of John 17:11-16) to be *in* the world, yet not *of* the world.

Sunnyside youth have ministered for two years in Chiiwetau, a Cree community in Northern Quebec. While elders gather to celebrate, Sunnyside youth host day camps for children and teens – without electricity! Young leaders notice more social challenges – anger is strongly embedded into the culture – so they focus on sharing Christ’s transformative love.

Over the last 20 years, 30 people from this congregation have been called to vocational ministry. Jenn was introduced to Christ through Sunnyside’s youth group while attending university. She and her husband served as engineers in India for several years. Jenn’s mother came to faith through her daughter, retired from a government position, and now serves with a Christian hospital association in India.

Holiness Matters

Living in a secular city that is highly educated yet indifferent to the gospel, Sunnyside’s ongoing challenge is to “speak into the culture in ways that are loving and wise, yet authentic and true,” says Russett.

The affluent often don’t see their need for Jesus. When people do recognize their *spiritual* need, the church is not usually their first choice. Suspicion of organized religion is a huge hurdle to overcome. The cause of justice and mercy must be accompanied with sharing the gospel in culturally understandable ways.

If Sunnyside’s building disappeared, perhaps no one would notice. “But if our people disappeared, the impact would be enormous,” says Russett. “Sunnyside people are involved in so many spheres of life, doing things quietly every day, living out the values of the Kingdom of God.” **FT**

CHARLENE DE HAAN is a freelance writer in Toronto, executive director of CAM International of Canada and founder of Step Up Transitions (www.stepuptransitions.ca). Sunnyside Wesleyan Church is affiliated with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Read all the profiles in this ongoing series at www.FaithToday.ca.



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When the Rock Crumbles

A man who avoids vulnerability will eventually be lost when life's worst comes his way.

No man wants to reach the end of his life looking like a turtle withdrawn into its shell. But plenty of men do spend a lifetime tucking their emotions out of sight and developing a crusty exterior to keep others at bay. Such habits can ultimately fail us.

Do you know someone who figures tears are for sissies and fears are for fools?

I think of Ron, a heavy equipment mechanic who built roads across northern Canada. Ron raised a large family in a small home. The house sprouted many additions over the years, and in his final days he was talking about widening the bathroom door to accommodate the wheelchair he now needed to get around. He loved to tinker.

Poor health-irked Ron. Being bedbound was a major inconvenience to a man who had always cut his own swath through the world and put food on the table for his family. He'd never much thought about getting old or getting cancer. He simply marched through life one day at a time. Death happened to other people.

Yet even with cancer and old age, Ron plodded along with a blinkered hope of life returning to normal.

"I'm not sure why I'm here" on this bed, he said near the end of his life. "I've always been the rock."

Alas, the rock was crumbling, and Ron seemed the last to realize it.

What does it take for any of us to get in touch with our humanity? Very often a crisis of some sort. For Ron, it was illness and old age. For others, perhaps a business failure or job loss, the death of a loved one, an accident, a personal conflict or glaring mistake of our own doing.

Eventually each of us will experience that we can't always be in control, that larger forces are always at play. No one escapes.

Especially at such times, shoving our feelings back down isn't a good idea. Failing to acknowledge them is to deny reality, to carry on like a well-dressed pedestrian pretending he didn't just puke on the sidewalk, continuing his commute as if nothing were amiss.

Ignoring feelings doesn't help in the long run. To strap on emotional armour is to insulate against growth and healing. Masking our miscues and limitations hinders our ability to relate deeply with others.

Vulnerability is the key to connection, and we are hard-wired for relationship.

Many Bible characters, including King David and Jesus, show us life can be lived openly. No masks needed.

David fought fiercely, but also prayed frequently, danced joyfully, worshipped extravagantly, wept openly, and put many of his vulnerable feelings into psalms meant for public use.

Jesus confronted oppression with determined anger, walked courageously into danger, brought wine to festive events, and shed real tears when faced with sorrow, loss and the prospect of suffering ahead.

Do some of these behaviours go against our idea of manliness today? Perhaps common notions of respectability ("real men don't cry") and dignity (keeping cool and competent) and authority ("If not in charge, at least I'm in control") are at odds with the way things really are.

Many of us cover weakness with anger and substitute presence with busyness. But in our better moments, don't we sense we mature when we reveal ourselves as we really are? Don't we realize we actually make it easier for others to draw closer to us?

The rock of Ron kept crumbling. After weeks of illness and pain (he maintained his tough exterior and resisted taking painkillers), he slowly began to adjust his thinking. He admitted he had reached "my quota" of years and occasionally mentioned friends, both younger and older, who had "already met their Waterloo."

That was it. The inevitability of death was a battle that must be lost – a defeat.

It was too little, too late. Other than a determined desire to get back to his house, Ron didn't know what to hope for. His insides were shrinking to nothing, yet the outer crust remained intact. Visits with family skimmed the surface matters of a life rapidly disappearing. He died with regrets undeclared and relationships unresolved.

Ron's rough ending hints at what happens when we are too proud to reveal ourselves to our loved ones. It's a cautionary tale about forgiveness withheld, of love unspoken and tears unshed.

The house of Ron lapsed into disrepair, without ever truly becoming a home. **FT**

DOUG KOOP is a Winnipeg-based writer and spiritual care provider. He's posted more words and pictures, including some with motorcycles, at www.dougkoop.ca.



An Evangelical Visits the Vatican

It's not every day I receive an invitation from the Vatican to accompany the Pope on a pilgrimage, so when one came last year, I accepted.

Francis of Assisi (1181 to 1226) was the founder of the Franciscans, an order devoted to helping the poor. The current Pope Benedict XVI invited Christian and other religious leaders to join him for a pilgrimage to Assisi, the place where the Franciscans were founded.

It was a gracious invitation to pray together for peace. A bus picked us up at our hotel and, following wailing police sirens, we made our way quickly through the maze of Rome's traffic to a waiting train in the Vatican. The speedy train travelled north through picturesque Italian countryside, slowing down through villages as crowds gathered on station platforms to offer their best wishes, ending at the spectacular hillside of Assisi.

Three hundred of us gathered, first at the Basilica of the Angel of St. Mary for speeches. A lunch was served by the Franciscans, followed by a time of personal prayer. We then walked up the hillside to a service of singing and praise on the plaza of the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi.

Designed by the Vatican to focus on peace, the event reminded us of our role as peacemakers.

Should we – as global evangelical leaders – have even attended?

Let me answer in context: worldwide there are some 2.2 billion Christians. Over one billion claim allegiance to the Roman Catholic church, 500 million are in churches linked to the World Council of Churches (including the Orthodox), and 600 million are evangelical, repre-

sented by the World Evangelical Alliance.

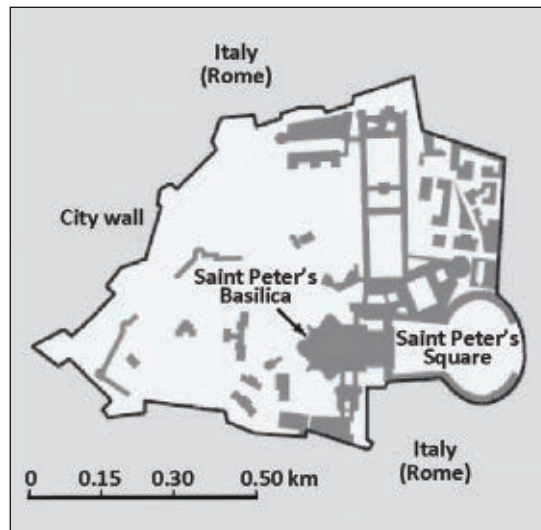
The globalization of our world means what happens in one part of the world ripples its way to another. A Muslim and Christian mob scene in Nigeria touches the lives of Christians and Muslims in other countries. If we are not present, our voice is not heard. If we are not heard, we have no right to complain if our concerns, ideas or initiatives are ignored. And if we are absent, the gospel (as we Evangelicals affirm it) may be shunted to the side.

Christian and other religious leaders need to know who the other players are. When problems arise, it is important we know where we can go for help to find solutions.

We should be there. We have a heritage of intellectual and spiritual understanding. Absent, our contribution would be overlooked, forgotten or ignored. There is also a practical reason. WEA as the official worldwide representative of Evangelicals has business to do on behalf of its members, with its national alliances in 129 countries.

Christian and other religious leaders need to know who the other players are. When problems arise, it is important we know where we can go for help to find solutions. It isn't just missionaries in other parts of the world who have to deal with religious differences. We need to find solutions to conflicts that come with migration, and we will need to increase our activity in diffusing problems that too often end in hostilities.

We also have much to learn. While the formal events were valuable, as usual, it was over meals, walking the corridors of churches and the streets of Rome and Assisi I learned the most. Here's a snapshot



of my lessons from Rome:

The event honoured Evangelicals, and gave a special place to Baptists and Pentecostals. While other religious leaders were respected and given time at the podium, there was never a doubt we gathered under the Trinitarian vision of God, the deity of Jesus and the life and work of the Spirit.

Everything changed when the Pope entered the room. All eyes were on him. What I found amazing was other faiths (I should note Muslims were not represented by their senior leaders) would put themselves under the canopy of Rome, an acknowledgement that in the world of religion, Rome is senior.

The quality of evangelical pastors in Rome is remarkable. I left with no worries that our message and presence is in any danger of compromise.

In this time of enormous change I'm anchored by the Apostle Paul who noted that as King David led, he "served his generation." Today leads into tomorrow. As we carefully work to get it right today, it will be the foundation on which our next generation will make lead. So when in Rome, listen and learn. **FT**

BRIAN C. STILLER of Newmarket, Ont., is the global ambassador for The World Evangelical Alliance.



Warring Over the Spirit

We need deeper discernment around charismatic controversies.

Did you hear the one about the religious leader banned from entering the United Kingdom last August? No, contrary to what you might expect, the person is not a Muslim radical but controversial Canadian Pentecostal revivalist Todd Bentley. Bentley became famous and notorious in 2008 when tens of thousands of Christians flocked to the Florida Outpouring, a revival he was leading in Lakeland.

The meetings started in April and by mid-June millions were watching nightly on God TV. As I wrote at the time, Bentley was scorned for his wild antics in worship by some Pentecostal and charismatic leaders but was endorsed by most. Tragically the Outpouring came to a crashing halt when it was revealed his marriage was falling apart and he was in an extramarital relationship. He withdrew from public life, remarried and went through a period of restoration.

As of 2010 Bentley was back in ministry, travelling the world – but not the United Kingdom. The British home secretary refused him a visa, claiming the government stops entry to those “who might seek to undermine our society.” Bentley blamed the ban on religious discrimination, and his followers expressed outrage. Even though some of his tactics are disturbing, the idea he could or would undermine British society is laughable.

The whole saga is indicative of the diametrically opposed reactions to many elements in the Pentecostal and charismatic worlds. It is yes or no, true or false, divine or demonic, good or evil. No hesitation or qualification or ambiguity. The famous Toronto renewal of 1994 is a blessing or a curse. Benny Hinn is either phenomenal or a fraud. Tongues are for everyone or no one. Healings happen all the time or never.

While nuance is sometimes a curse, the Spirit wars deserve a bit of a cooling off and deeper discernment on opposing sides. To that end let me offer ten principles for engaging the controversial issues, leaders and movements as we move into this new year.

“Test the spirits,” as the Apostle John urges in 1 John 4:1. Critics are right to test in all areas. Pro-charismatics need to stop being so defensive about the necessary probing of healing claims, wild revelations and strange manifestations that are part of contemporary revivalism.

Have courage. It takes a strong will and bold heart to stand against falsehoods and lies dominant in our own

theological or denominational camps. Careless prophecies circulate widely among some charismatics, while a careless reading of motives often make the rounds among non-charismatics.

Recognize God’s sovereignty and power. Charismatics are right in principle that God can do miracles and “His ways are not our ways.” The key issue is not whether miracles *can* happen but whether they actually *do* happen.

Resist superficiality. Assessing spiritual integrity is not helped by shallow judgments. Owning or leasing a private jet might make economic sense in various ministries. Speaking in a southern accent is no proof of hypocrisy. Not having gold dust on your clothes is no sign of sin.

Pray for discernment and dig deep. Various Internet sites claim Rodney Howard-Browne’s faith healing led to his daughter Kelly’s death. Not even remotely true. I met Kelly several times before her death from cystic fibrosis in 2002. Her parents prayed for healing, but also got her great medical care throughout her life.

Recognize weaknesses in great movements and leaders. Granted, Southern Baptists have wonderful focus on central Christian truths. Have they gone too far on the anti-charismatic bandwagon? Granted, charismatics exercise great faith. Have they gone too far over gold dust and jewels from heaven?

Respect the Pentecostal and charismatic traditions. The growth of these two movements is one of the astounding stories of modern Christianity. Millions have come to Jesus through these traditions, regardless of their negatives. Of course, respect in general still allows critique of major weaknesses.

Remember “the main things are the plain things” (as Norman Geisler puts it). Stick to the major teachings of Scripture on the Holy Spirit and you won’t go wrong.

Don’t turn the unusual into the normal. Let’s say for the sake of argument that God leads an individual Christian to “roar like a lion” in a meeting. Well, that’s one thing. Turning that into a worldwide spiritual fad is quite another.

Avoid false dichotomies. Many issues are not settled by binary choices. Heidi Baker’s great love and care for orphans in Mozambique is not to be cast aside simply because she seems naïve about certain apostles and prophets. John MacArthur’s great sermons are not to be cast aside simply because he’s sometimes too hard on charismatics.

Let’s once again humble ourselves and ask God to lead us into the new year with His Spirit. **FT**

JAMES BEVERLEY is professor of Christian thought and ethics at Tyndale Seminary in Toronto. He has written frequently on charismatic issues.

Missional God, Missional Church: Hope for Re-evangelizing the West

Author: Ross Hastings
InterVarsity, 2012.
346 pages. \$25.99



This book by Regent College's associate professor of pastoral theology is a clarion call for churches to rediscover their missional identity in the missional God. Hastings writes compellingly and passionately, engaging the reader with the concept of mission as "participation of the church and its members in the missional God."

Complementing the work of other missiologists, Hastings presents a Trinitarian theology of the Church and its mission that is both deep and wide. Such an approach allows for "openness to the world and integrity of the church, cultural relevance and confessional rootedness in the grand narrative of the Christian tradition and historic orthodoxy, openness to the surprising new works of the Spirit and a catholicity that reflects the depth of a liturgical and sacramental tradition."

The burden of *Missional God, Missional Church* is an incisive exposition of John 20:19-23, which depicts the factors that transformed the early Church. Hastings focuses on the Church discovering and disseminating shalom. He offers a fivefold perspective on how to break the fear and despair surrounding mission and bring shalom to the senders and the sent – the presence and influence of the risen Jesus, the redemptive na-

ture of the once-crucified One, the Trinitarian and participatory nature of the commission, the impartation of the Spirit, and the privileged task of pronouncing forgiveness.

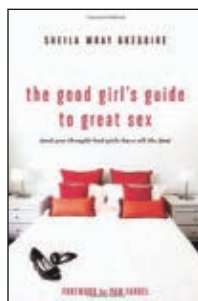
Hastings is full of "hope for re-evangelizing the West." Indeed, he says, the Church's "deep and wide missional identity is the only hope."

Missional God, Missional Church will resonate with all those who care about the role and mission of the Church in the 21st century.

–Burton K. Janes

The Good Girl's Guide to Great Sex (And You Thought Bad Girls Have All the Fun)

Author: Sheila Wray Gregoire
Zondervan, 2012.
224 pages. \$16.49



It was awkward when my 12-year-old son discovered *The Good Girl's Guide to Great Sex* on my bedside table – and asked me why I was reading it. But I recovered quickly and told him I was reviewing it for *Faith Today*, and that it was mostly aimed at unmarried young women. That solved an uncomfortable moment, but it's not quite true.

Sheila Wray Gregoire's latest boundary-busting book can inform, equip, and shatter stereotypes for a woman of any age and length of marriage. And I dare say there's a lot here for a man to learn too.

Gregoire, a prolific Christian author and speaker based

in Belleville, Ont., spends just the right amount of time unpacking the term "good girl." There's no assumption here all "good girls" have always been that way, but lots of straight talk about how life – and sex – get better, faster, if married couples don't have a lot of baggage they are piling onto the foot of their bed.

Gregoire reclaims the word "fun" for sex between husband and wife, and one of the great strengths of this book (besides all the clear information about topics like oral sex, anatomy, sex toys, porn, orgasms and boundaries) is Gregoire's shame-free perspective on making love with your spouse.

With chapter titles like "From Fizzle to Sizzle for Her," Gregoire gives advice and direc-

tion as if talking to her slightly younger best friend, and the entire book gives permission to Christian women to relax, loosen up and enjoy the amazing possibilities of a healthy – and fun! – sex life with your husband.

–Karen Stiller

Alert to Glory

Author: Sally Ito
Turnstone Press, 2011.
92 pages. \$17

The title of this poetry collection says much about the way Sally Ito looks at the world. She is *Alert to Glory*, alert to the way God shows Himself in our world. She sees Him in the sparrows on her back fence that "bear the burden / of the cold, light as the cross / of their hollow bones." She sees His handiwork in the clouds: "Who

knew the sky contained so much of Him?"

Hers is an incarnational approach to faith – an approach Luci Shaw once explained by saying: "I am learning to recognize pointers to transcendent realities in almost anything I see." (Shaw, born in 1928, is a well-known writer-in-residence at Regent College.)

Ito, born in 1964, is writer-in-residence at the University of Manitoba's Centre for Creative Writing and Oral Culture, and this is her third poetry collection. It received an award of merit at the Canadian Christian Writing Awards in June, yet deserves much more attention. It demonstrates how we Christians can be more aware of God in our world.

For example, as she attends to the gradual ripening of green tomatoes on her windowsill, she (and we) are reminded of God's waiting for transformation within those He's created.

She also invites us into other parts of her life, such as the experiences of a mother with small children. In the poem "Wild Blueberries" her "toddler's hands pick and fumble / to bring [the fruits'] sweetness into her mouth." Her observation of the affectionate touch of a married couple's hands in church, imagined through the eyes "of the one without," to her is "Like a hawk, / hungry for God, lonely for His touch."

The book also includes a brief series of Advent poems and another group about spiritual gifts. This book consistently invites us to look with her at our world, and to see God there.



–D. S. Martin

Heron River: A Novel

Author: Hugh Cook
Mosaic Press, 2012.
280 pages. \$22.95

Animals and vulnerable people are at the heart of the fourth book of fiction from Hamilton, Ont., author Hugh Cook. They inspire reflection on compassion, innocence and evil in a narrative woven around a handful of characters in the town of Caithness, a fictionalized version of Caledonia, Ont.

Caithness is a semi-rural area adjacent to the Six Nations Indian Reserve on the banks of the Grand River, about 100 km southwest of Toronto – not far from Hamilton.

(Full disclosure: I took courses from Cook as a student at Redeemer University College and now teach his third-year creative writing course.)

Heron River's protagonist is Madeline, who in 1994 is a middle-aged high school teacher coping with multiple sclerosis as well as guilt from an accident that caused brain damage in her son Adam 20 years before. Madeline regularly visits her aged father in a medical facility – he suffers from dementia and doesn't seem to understand most communication.

Adam in 1994 is an adult who occasionally visits her from a nearby group home.

The novel also focuses

on Jacob, a good-hearted paperboy who gets his thrills slipping into the homes of customers on vacation; Tara, a policewoman hurt while intervening in a domestic dispute; and Orrin, a troubled young man from a dysfunctional family.

Cook develops psychologically insightful portraits of these characters, with each seeking justice and healing. Examined together they explore vulnerability, especially the awkwardness of needing to accept help from others and the risk of making friends.

How each character treats



animals is significant, an idea underlined by Keller, a Native character who befriends Adam and shares Native creation stories that highlight the fragility of the world.

The novel's Christian elements are mostly implicit rather than explicit, and characters occasionally use foul language. Like many literary novels it's big on character and description and sometimes dark in mood, but it sticks to everyday language and includes suspense and hopeful elements. A great choice for a reading group.

–Bill Fledderus

Recent Publications of Note

- *Christ Our Reconciler: Gospel, Church, World*, edited by Julia E. M. Cameron (InterVarsity, 2012). A compilation of the addresses from the historic Cape Town 2010 Lausanne Congress, one of the most representative gatherings of the global Church in the history of Christianity.
- *Genius Born of Anguish: The Life and Legacy of Henri Nouwen* by Michael Higgins and Kevin Burns (Novalis, 2012). An illuminating biography of the Dutch-born psychologist and Roman Catholic priest (1932-1996) who wrote 39 books and after 1985 made his home in Richmond Hill, Ont., at Daybreak, a L'Arche community for people with intellectual disabilities.
- *A Guide to Governing Charities: Success in the Boardroom Starts With Asking the Right Questions* by Ted Hull (Word Alive, 2011). The author, chair of Missionfest Manitoba, draws on 25 years of work with churches and charities to tackle 16 questions board members need to answer.
- *Kingdom Beyond Borders: Finding Hope Along the Refugee Highway* by Helena Smrcek (WestBow, 2011). True educational and inspirational stories about refugees connected with the Helping Hands Ministry in Athens, Greece. The author, a former refugee, lives in Ontario.
- *Theology in Aisle Seven*, an e-book by Carolyn Arends (Christianity Today International, 2012). Twenty-five refreshing and insightful musings by an award-winning writer and musician from British Columbia.
- *Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry* by Hans Boersma (Eerdmans, 2011). A theologian at Regent College draws on Christian thinkers throughout history to encourage Evangelicals and other Christians to retrieve a sacramental worldview, and cultivate a greater awareness of our participation in eternal mysteries beyond the here and now.
- *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place Today* by Craig G. Bartholomew (Baker Academic, 2011). Surveys biblical ideas and then addresses urban planning, pilgrimage, community, the environment and more. By a professor of philosophy and theology at Redeemer University College in Hamilton, Ont.
- *The Swedish Atheist, the Scuba Diver and Other Apologetic Rabbit Trails* by Randal Rauser (InterVarsity, 2012). An extended hypothetical conversation between a Christian and a nonbeliever, modelling conversational apologetics and highlighting the importance of the narrative journey in such conversations. Rauser is an associate professor of historical theology at Taylor Seminary in Edmonton.
- *Tenacious: Inspiration and Encouragement From Those Who Persevere*, produced and published by The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (2011). A cross section of authors share stories of how God, by His Spirit, has worked through them in a number of contexts of ministry to see fruitfulness and lasting impact.
- *Metaphors We Teach By: How Metaphors Shape What We Do in Classrooms*, edited by Ken Badley and Harro Van Brummelen (Wipf & Stock, 2012). Reflective and thought-provoking essays by Christian educators from Trinity Western University, Tyndale University College and elsewhere.
- *Baptists and Public Life in Canada*, edited by Gordon L. Heath and Paul R. Wilson (Pickwick/ Wipf & Stock, 2012). Explores the connections between Baptist faith and Baptist activity in the public domain. Produced by the Canadian Baptist Historical Society.

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“Legal” Doesn’t Mean “Approved”

Some of us need to adjust our thinking.

One of the most important stupid things that smart people have been saying in Canada lately is that because something is legal, it is therefore good. The mere fact something is explicitly allowed by law is construed to mean it has the full endorsement of the State and of all right-thinking people.

Same-sex marriage is an obvious example. Consider this analysis by University of Western Ontario law professor Bradley Miller (from a recent article in *Public Discourse*):

The formal effect of the judicial decisions (and subsequent legislation) establishing same-sex civil marriage in Canada was simply that persons of the same sex could now have the government recognize their relationships as marriages. But the legal and cultural effect was much broader. What transpired was the adoption of a new orthodoxy: that same-sex relationships are, in every way, the equivalent of traditional marriage, and that same-sex marriage must therefore be treated identically to traditional marriage in law and public life.

A corollary is that anyone who rejects the new orthodoxy must be acting on the basis of bigotry and animus toward gays and lesbians.

Michael Harris, the Canadian author of a new young adult novel called *Homo* (Lorimer, 2012), writes in *The Walrus* along exactly the same lines. He begins by making the basic mistake of confusing legalizing same-sex marriage by the Federal Government with “the country” actually “endorsing” gay marriage. We must ask: Would he equate every piece of legislation enacted since then by the Federal Government to be something “the country” has “endorsed”? I dare say he would not.

Harris refers to the James Chamberlain court case in Surrey, B.C., in which a kindergarten teacher felt strongly children ought to be reading Dr. Seuss-like books portraying same-sex relationships as perfectly normal. Harris explains the rationale: “Given that the country endorsed gay relationships, [same-sex relationships] would have to be discussed in a positive manner in schools – even in kindergarten classrooms.”

Harris concludes, in language that would be startling to any historian, political scientist or jurist, that human rights include “the right to be celebrated.”

This is not just a position with which I disagree. This

is thinking that is so bad, it doesn't even have the right issue in focus.

Lying is legal – in all but certain situations such as contracts and slander. So are we to introduce books into the public school curriculum endorsing dishonesty as just another lifestyle choice? Perhaps *Black Lies*, *White Lies*, *Everybody Lies* and *Lies*?

Or let's pick three quick examples from the beginning of the alphabet. Adultery is legal, but poll after poll show that decades of legality have not made most Canadians condone it, much less endorse it. Alcoholism is legal, but it's hardly a commendable life choice. Abortion is legal, but no one seriously suggests “the country” has “endorsed” the idea of aborting a baby for just any reason at any moment in a pregnancy. Even those in favour of easy abortion hesitate to agree that a mother, finding her labour too painful and wishing to end it by any means possible, should be permitted to ask for and receive an abortion.

Forgive my bluntness, but it's plainly stupid to say that what law *tolerates* an entire country *endorses*, much less to believe what one particular government has managed to enact in this or that piece of legislation reflects a broad cultural consensus.

So why would evidently intelligent people say such dumb things?

Because something else is going on. Revenge? Maybe. Preventing opponents from mounting a counterattack? Likely. Self-righteousness? Evidently.

We have to keep pointing out both this fundamental mistake of calling good what is only legal, and also this hypocrisy of calling only some things good just *because* they're legal. This willful confusion is just the latest move in the long game of cultural authority, the struggle over whose values will dominate Canadian life.

Any parent, teacher or boss – pretty much any *adult* – knows that sometimes you can allow what you do not affirm.

It's time to push back, firmly and constantly, against this adolescent insistence that everyone approve of me and my choices. What is now legal behaviour should be clear to all Canadians. But as we tolerate such behaviour, as we avoid and prevent unfair discrimination against those who engage in such behaviour, we in no way need to agree with it – and we in turn are legally entitled to so disagree, freely and openly.

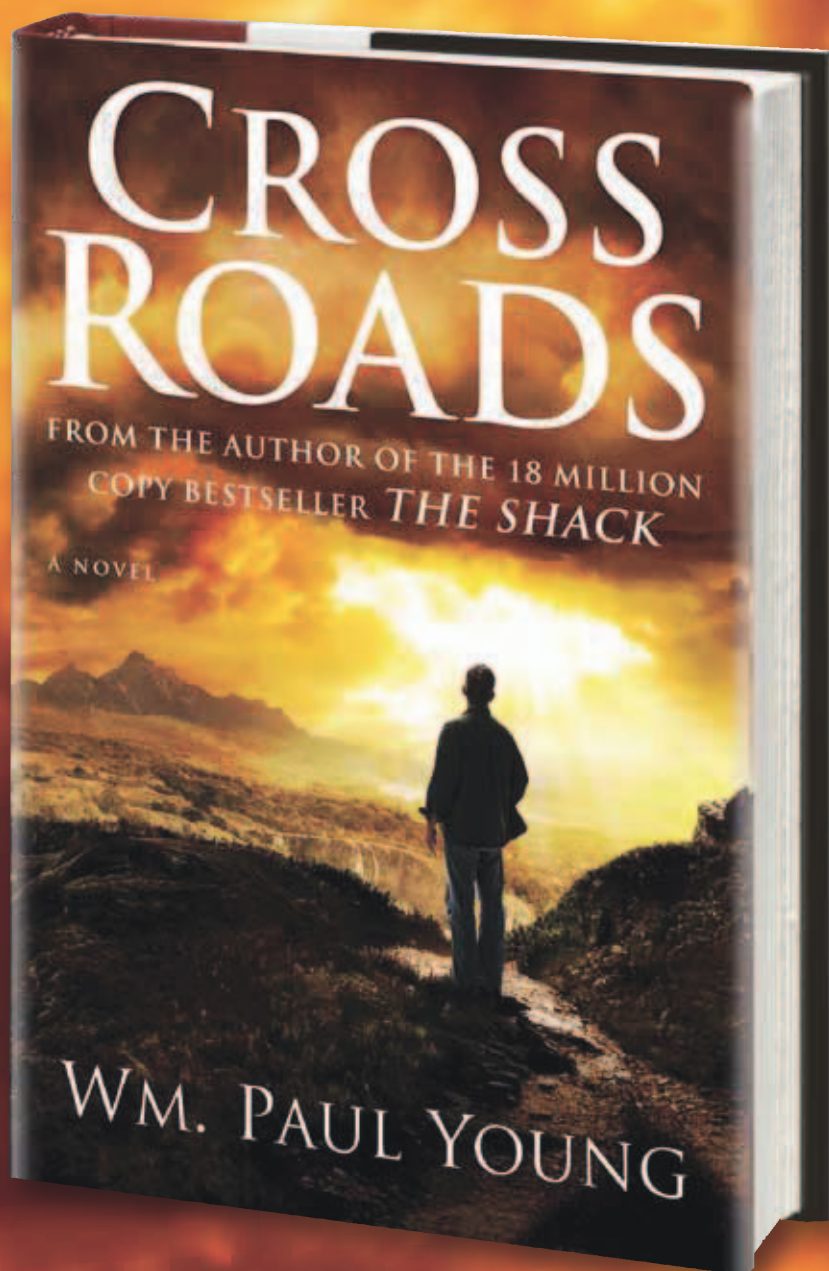
That's what it means to be a grown-up, Dr. Seuss-ish propaganda notwithstanding. **BT**

John Stackhouse teaches theology and culture at Regent College in Vancouver. He is the author of *Making the Best of It: Following Christ in the Real World* (Oxford, 2011) and tweets as @jgsphd.

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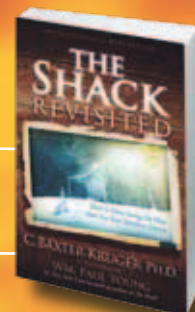
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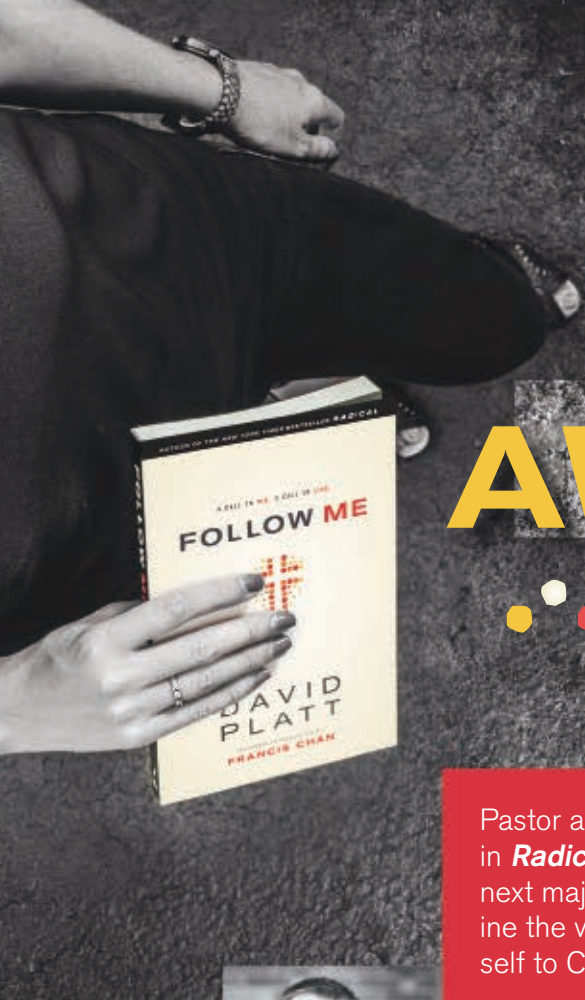
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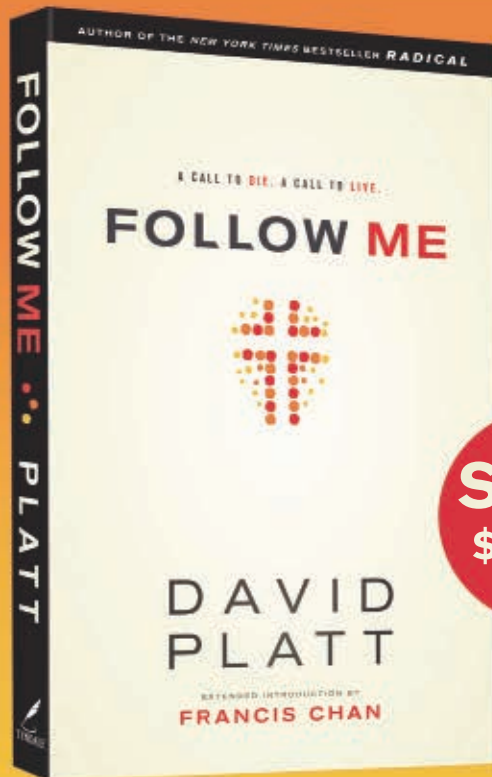
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