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CANADA'S CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2015

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peace in
times like
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What's a
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to think?
P.30

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A new novel from the New York Times bestselling author Joel C. Rosenberg!

WHAT IF THE ISLAMIC STATE OBTAINS WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION?

The terrorist Islamic State, ISIS, has attacked two governments and brutally killed opponents.

When award-winning NY Times correspondent, J.B. Collins, hears rumors that ISIS has captured a supply of chemical weapons, he risks everything to locate and interview the ISIS commander. Can Collins alert the world to the danger he discovers before ISIS can unleash its apocalyptic vision?



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Where is your church?

Surprising resonance in our interview with the Vicar of Baghdad

When we interviewed Canon Andrew White, an Anglican leader known around the world as the Vicar of Baghdad, he sat on a hotel room couch, holding his laptop and prayer beads. He began the interview by asking his own questions of us: “How many children do you have?” “Where is your church?”

He was being friendly, yes, but also perhaps seeing who it was who was about to ask him his thoughts on reconciliation, on violence, on Christians fighting, on what is next in Iraq.

After all, this is a man with a \$57 million price tag on his head, recently removed for his own safety from the church he loves in Iraq.

White has been in the news and all over social media recently, sharing chilling and tragic accounts of church members – particularly children – being killed for their faith.

We didn’t ask him for those details, though. We wanted to go deeper and find out what he has learned through all this tragedy – and what we can learn.

This interview dovetails with Gord Heath’s cover story on Christian thinking about war and peace.

He reminds us how Evangelicals don’t all share the same views on war – and never have. Understanding that can equip us to handle this difficult topic more fairly and thoughtfully – a need as pressing now as it has ever been.

Whatever your position, we en-

courage you to show “where is your church” by giving generously to our global neighbours affected by armed conflict. You can always find a worthy ministry organization by visiting our publisher’s website at www.theEFC.ca/AffiliateSearch and entering a search term such as “Syria.”


In that harsh international light some of our troubles in Canada seem minor, but they are real and this country is the place where God has placed us.

“Boldly Stated,” a story on Canadian institutional codes of conduct by Ron Csillag, emerged from a lively editors’ discussion about the Trinity Western law school situation and the huge impact a couple of words can have on the life of a Christian organization. This piece sheds light and offers some direction.

Of course, there’s lots more to chew on in this *Faith Today* issue. But we want to make space here to bid a fond farewell to Rob Robotham, a skilled designer (www.robertrobotham.ca) who has worked on this magazine longer than any other *Faith Today* staff. We wish him all the best. Whether you have met him or not, you have definitely met his work over the years. Thank you, Rob! /FT

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 Bill Fledderus and Karen Stiller are senior editors of *Faith Today*.

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Congratulations

Congratulations on a great Nov/Dec magazine! It's packed with articles I'm loving! I especially enjoyed "How to Disagree Graciously" by Gordon T. Smith. The article was encouraging in how to hold a minority view with integrity while respecting the views of others.

*Belinda Burston
Bond Head, Ont.*

Reasoning questioned

Re: "Miracles? Why not?" (Sep/Oct 2014)

I always look forward to James Beverley's articles. I must however take issue with his recent piece on miracles. I accept his first and last reasons. However, the middle two leave me less than convinced.

Regarding the second, just because a natural process is

complex doesn't make it miraculous in the usual extra-natural sense. Complex natural processes eventually get explained naturally, removing the miraculous. It is possible to be wonderstruck without believing in miracles.

Regarding the third, simply being easier to believe strikes me as rather weak.

On the other hand, learning the names of his seat-mate's parents in an answer to prayer – I can't imagine any natural explanation for that.

*Sam Berg
Regina, Sask.*

New design welcomed

The new *Faith Today* format is tremendous. Very interesting and pertinent topics.

*George Epp
Chilliwack, B.C.*

New at Blog.FaithToday.ca

WE'RE ONLY losing this [fight against legalizing euthanasia] because of our own inertia. There is not some bogeyman making this happen. They're putting forward their argument, and we are buying it. Fight back. Show some guts. No one is asking you to storm the beach of Normandy. This is about being who you are and not being afraid. If people are going to desert you for being Christian, they weren't your friend in the first place. – Charles Lewis in "Stop Being So Meek About Euthanasia!"

[MIROSLAV VOLF says that] when you give without thinking about getting something back, giving radiates outward

to the benefit of all. But if you give without thinking about the recipient, then the gift is impotent because there is no relationship there. – from "Jesus Is My iPad" by Alex Newman

SOME DAYS our faith means declaring the year of the Lord's favour. Other days it means to weep with those who weep. October 22 was a day of weeping. – from "Looking for God in Ottawa Tragedy" by Craig Macartney

I WOULD hope that, with the gift of global Christian scholars [including foreign-born students] in our places of learning and in our churches, we realize that they have a lot to teach us Canadians – which will only

MILESTONES

APPOINTED

Charles Masters as the diocesan bishop of the Anglican Network in Canada, a denomination



of 71 congregations and about 4,500 worshippers. The Rt. Rev. Masters succeeds founding diocesan bishop Donald Harvey. The group is a diocese of the Anglican Church in North America,

founded in 2009 and now uniting more than 112,000 Anglicans across the continent. Most of the Canadian group were formerly part of the Anglican Church of Canada, which includes more than 2,000 congregations.

Gordon Giesbrecht as chairman of the board of governors at Providence University College and Seminary in Otterburne, Man. He has already served five years on the board. He worked 23 years as a professor of thermoregulation at

the University of Manitoba and is an expert on human physiological responses to exercise in extreme environments. He has also chaired the board at Horizon College and Seminary for one year and served three years as that college's president.

Steven Sukkau as managing editor of *ChristianWeek*, a national newspaper based in Winnipeg. He succeeds Rob Horsley, who served two years. Kelly Rempel remains as senior editor.

Marites (Tess) Sison as editor of the *Anglican Journal*, the national newspaper of the Anglican Church of Canada, published 10 times a year. She succeeds interim managing editor Archdeacon Paul Feheley. Sison has worked for the newspaper since 2003, mainly as a writer.

Ruth Tatton-Coghill as Canadian co-ordinator of Women Together, an international ministry founded and directed by Margaret Gibb in

Brantford, Ont., to help train and mentor Christian women in leadership. Tatton-Coghill, who will develop networks and organize peer mentoring retreats and other gatherings in Canada, is a Bible study writer, broadcaster, public speaker and retired teacher.

EXPANDED

100 Huntley Street, Canada's longest running daily television program, added 30 million American homes to its televised reach across North America starting in October. The Christian show, which was already broadcast on Global TV in Canada, GEB America in the U.S., and online at www.100Huntley.com and www.ChristianPost.com, highlights prominent leaders and celebrities as well as human-interest stories. It's the flagship program of the channel YES TV (formerly CTS-TV).

RESIGNED

Ted Seres as national director of the Canadian Bible Society, a position he has



make our own churches stronger. – from “What They Miss Most in Canada” by Debra Fieguth

WHERE I struggle is when Scripture appears to be twisted, or at least taken out of context, to support [particular diet plans]. I wasn't convinced my research that vegetarianism or veganism is endorsed or condemned in the Bible. – from “Does the Bible Endorse Veganism or Vegetarianism?” by Lisa Hall Wilson

f Faith Today loves to receive your letters. Even when you disagree (or we disagree with your disagreement!), your letters remind us all that we live in evangelicalism's big tent, where there is ample room for many opinions. Visit us at www.facebook.com/faithtoday to join in on discussions sparked by letters to the editor and more.

held since 2007. Nesa Gulasekharan, director of finance since 2005, now serves as interim chief operating officer. The society, which for more than 100 years has promoted Bible translation and distribution, has 50 employees in Toronto and Kitchener and beyond.

Charlene de Haan as CEO and national director of Camino Global Canada, effective when a replacement can be found. Camino Global, founded in 1890 as the Central American Mission, focuses on international ministry among Spanish speakers.

John Siebert as executive director of Project Ploughshares, effective when a replacement can be found. Ploughshares works internationally to promote peace and prevent war and violence. It's based in Waterloo, Ont., and sponsored by nine church denominations.



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KINGDOM MATTERS

The latest news, notes, ideas and analysis from the Canadian Christian community



Carrie Billings was baptized along with six others in The Manor's parking lot in August.

Ministry in strip club opens doors

Church grows in an unexpected place

THE FOCAL POINT of the platform at Guelph, Ont.'s Church at The Manor is not an altar, but a stripper's pole. Yet the protrusion poses no obstacle for Jack and Sharon Ninaber. The husband and wife ministry team simply take turns standing beside it each Sunday afternoon, to lead worship, to preach and to pray.

Mirrored walls, a wrestling ring, red and orange globe lights and a large

shower stall decorate this dimly lit sanctuary. But none of it fazes the couple, who believe that mission means going wherever there are people who need the gospel, even if it's into The Manor, a 120-year-old mansion, and home to the city's most notorious gentleman's club.

The gathering starts at 12:30 p.m. with a free buffet lunch – the time

suits people who've been up late the night before, say the Ninabers. The service begins at 1 p.m. It's church for people who would never cross the threshold of a traditional church building, says Jack, for people who aren't good at concealing their pain.

"The people here don't try to hide what they're dealing with," he says. "They're just so open and honest."

PHOTO: BRYNLEY NINABER

Many here are dealing with a lot.

Carrie Billings, 38, has tattoos down one arm, long bleached blonde hair and a broad smile. She's lived in the 32-room halfway house (formerly a motel) attached to The Manor, known as "Sue's Inn," for four years, and has been coming to the church since it held its first service on Easter Sunday, 2014.

Billings heard about the church when the Ninabers knocked on her door – and the doors of all the other residents at the inn – to invite them to come. Most of the residents now do. "I just felt drawn to it," says Billings. "I wanted to see what it was all about."

She must have liked what she saw and heard. She was baptized along with six others in The Manor's parking lot in August. Her newfound faith has given her the strength to make other life choices as well. She's soon to move into an apartment and has been told when she does so, she will regain custody of her son. Ninaber says Billings is reading her Bible "voraciously."

The message the Ninabers preach to the crowd is obviously good news – God loves you. It doesn't matter what you've done. He wants to

forgive you and change your life. He wants to be your Father.

"In this place there is freedom." Sharon delivers the words through spoken word and song, behind the keyboard of an electric piano. She is a warm extrovert who leads enthusiastic worship. And the people participate.

It took months of negotiations with city officials and the club's owner, 62-year-old Roger Cohen, to launch this church.

"Jack and Sharon came to me," he says. "And they wanted to do a church here. I gave them 101 reasons why they shouldn't. But they were so persistent that at the end of the day I said to myself, 'This is the Almighty talking to me.'"

Ninaber remembers their first meeting. "[Cohen] said, 'You're going to rehabilitate all my dancers.' And we just nodded. He said, 'Let me get this straight. You want to bring the Light into a dark place?' We said, 'Yes.'"

Ninaber says a former dancer and prostitute, and a heroin addict are among the most recent converts. The Light has clearly come.

—PATRICIA PADDEY

Did you come to faith through the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association?



IF YOU'VE EVER joined the throng of people going forward at a Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) crusade to say yes to Jesus – or if you committed your

life to Christ through any BGEA effort like a radio or TV show – the BGEA wants to hear from you. The organization estimates 19 million people around the world have responded to the invitation to faith through the BGEA ministry – and a good portion of them are bound to live in Canada. Tell Us Your Story is an online initiative to collect, share and celebrate those stories at www.BillyGraham.ca/yourstory. BGEA will receive submissions and, with permission, share some of the testimonies on their website and in *Decision* magazine. —FT STAFF

Inspiring ideas from Canadian churches



Samson Society helps men get real

Golden Baptist Church in Golden, B.C., hosts a Samson Society every Monday night. Samson Society meetings are "a fellowship of Christian men who are serious about authenticity, community, humility & recovery – serious, but not grave." Meetings offer men an opportunity for mutual discipleship around issues like sexual addiction and alcoholism, and are based on a book called *Samson and the Pirate Monks: Calling Men to Authentic Brotherhood* (Thomas Nelson, 2007) by Nate Larkin. www.goldenbaptistchurch.wordpress.com



Guelph churches hold week of prayer and fasting

A group of churches in Guelph, Ont., joined for a week of prayer and fasting for the city in late September. Volunteers signed up to pray for one-hour slots, 24 hours a day for the week. www.sevenguelph.com



Furniture ministry helps provide household goods

Hillcrest Evangelical Missionary Church in Medicine Hat, Alta., runs a furniture ministry. Each week, participants meet new people as they distribute household goods to families connected to the church. "Those who have been involved in this ministry have been incredibly blessed as they see the joy they can bring into people's lives," they say. www.hillcrestchurch.net



Going Deeper guide helps congregation grow in faith

North Park Church in London, Ont., published a guide called *Going Deeper: Opportunities to Learn and Grow* to help congregants grow in their faith. The guide describes the church's discipleship strategy and lists events, courses and ministries offered by the church. www.northpark.ca



Church creates YouTube channel for announcements

Carruthers Creek Community Church in Ajax, Ont., posts "Creative Videos" on YouTube to communicate announcements and other news to their congregation. The YouTube channel includes monthly news as well as special announcements, such as the addition of a second service. The church also has a separate page for sermon videos. www.c4church.com

—DARRYL DASH



Visit www.faithtoday.ca/inspiringideas for more. Does your church have great ideas to share? editor@faithtoday.ca

Funny and Christian at the same time

Canadian juggling champion and comedian nominated for award

BOB CATES IS a Canadian juggling champion – and a Christian. For the last 20 years he has worked as a full-time comedic performer. Cates was nominated for best variety act at the 2014 Canadian Comedy Awards. He has entertained at large events such as Break Forth, church outreaches, conference centres, busking festivals, corporate and fundraising events, and nearly every major cruise line in America including Disney.

Cates, who is based in Cambridge, Ont., describes his brand of performance as a variety act. He incorporates nonstop action, jokes, juggling, spinning plates (using the original *Ed Sullivan Show* props) and a laser light show.

“Because I’m a juggler, for lack of a better word, people think the show is going to be clowny or silly and adults won’t like it,” says Cates. “I’ll sometimes tell people I’m a magician – 10 per cent of what I do is illusion.”

Cates’ act *Comedy in Motion* (www.comedyinmotion.com) has become a family affair in the last seven years with Cate’s wife Jane joining the team and their four-year-old son Hudson appearing on stage at select shows.

“My son doesn’t come to corporate events, but he’ll come to events where there might be other kids. People love him,” says Cates. “When I’m on stage, I make sure I don’t have any empty moments of time. I jam-pack each minute between tricks with jokes or quips or interactions with the crowd. An awareness of that has helped the show.”

Cates often performs at corporate events where using off-colour humour or sexual innuendo is a liability event organizers can’t afford. He prefers the term “clean comedy” over Christian comedy. “I don’t swear in real life, so why would I do it in my show? Because of who I am in my regular life, my show is an extension of that.”

There are only a few full-time, professional, church-clean, nonmusical comedy acts in Canada, says Cates. It’s a small niche, but he is committed to staying in Canada to be close to family. Although he didn’t win at the Canadian Comedy Awards this year, he considers the nomination “a great and valuable honour.” —LISA HALL-WILSON



Church for pastors in Halifax

CHURCH FOR PASTORS may have been the working title for this informal worship service, but the name has stuck, says organizer Russ Conway, lead pastor of Rock Church in Halifax, N.S. “The name fits, so we’ve kept it,” he says.

A few years ago it occurred to Conway that pastors were alone and could be “better together.” In conversations with other Halifax pastors, he noticed a consistent theme of “being in the trenches ... it would make a big different to know someone else is there beside you.”

The service – usually on a Friday – also provides an opportunity for pastors to worship together without having to lead anything. “As pastor in Sunday service you’re always conscious of the flow, whether you’ve preached properly, so you come away from worship feeling like you’ve done your job, but you don’t necessarily feel ministered to,” says Conway.

So he mulled over the idea of holding church specifically for pastors – worship as well as a message to address specific ministry issues. In February 2013 Conway sent out invitations and to his surprise almost 70 pastors showed up. “They were from all walks of life – Catholic priests, Baptists and all across the evangelical spectrum, Salvation Army, Pentecostal.”

It obviously tapped a need. “Pastors have some pressure to present as perfect, and it’s hard to open up and be vulnerable because everything is on you to be of service.”

Held every three months, church begins at 10:30 with a 20-minute worship service, ministered by Rock Church’s worship team. That’s followed by a half-hour message, delivered by guest speakers and sometimes by Conway. A response team is available for prayer at the altar. The service is followed by lunch. People usually arrive early to mingle before the service, and often linger over lunch.

Jay Guptill, lead pastor of Hillside Wesleyan, regularly attends and finds it “one of those powerful ways to keep us united, and a time of renewal and recharging. I think everybody has found it to be beneficial. As leaders, we’re giving out, seeking out people and serving, but this is an opportunity to worship without thinking what’s next for us to do in the service.”



Jay Guptill

This past September Conway temporarily suspended the service as he sent out a survey to determine if it was “still meeting the need and whether it was worth it to continue. I was blown away by the responses, at least 50 all saying they understood if we had to stop it for our own reasons, but also wanted to let us know how much it helped them.” The service continues. —ALEX NEWMAN



An eatery, an exchange and a ministry flourish in Hamilton

FROM OUTSIDE, THE building still looks somewhat like a bank, as it was built to be over a century ago. Inside is quite another story. The open, sunlit space is redolent with the aromas of coffee, fresh-baked muffins and homemade entrees, and filled with people from all walks of life, meeting and eating together.

Welcome to 541 (www.FiveFortyOne.ca), a newly opened “eatery and exchange” that takes its name from its number on Barton St. in Hamilton, Ont. Its mission: offering healthy food at affordable prices, using the proceeds to fund initiatives that educate and invest in the surrounding neighbourhood and its people.

541 began as a social enterprise project of Compass Point Bible Church, a church with campuses in Burlington and Hamilton. The cafe was intended to be a welcoming space for the practical outworking of the gospel. As renovations neared completion earlier this year, the space also became home to a congregation known as The Meeting Place. That congregation’s pastor, Sue Carr, was soon hired as 541’s executive director.

Now, two months after 541 officially opened, Carr shares what she’s experienced here. The combined beauty of the eatery and the congregation, she says, is that “worship and the expression of hospitality is the heart of what we do.” When 541 fills with both waged and unwaged patrons – “people for whom life is a struggle, and people for whom it hasn’t been a struggle yet” – Carr sees a richly collective sense of respect and responsibility for the space and its community.

Visitors can easily recognize this too. Linger over coffee for an hour, and you’ll see frequent customers taking turns serving behind the counter or busing tables. Customers who can spare a dollar are invited to buy a button to place

NOTE WORTHY

COALITION BEGINS ANTITRAFFICKING CAMPAIGN FOR PAN AM GAMES

The “Buying Sex Is Not a Sport” coalition has begun its antitrafficking campaign in preparation for the July 2015 Pan Am Games to be held in Toronto. “Most of what we find indicates the purchase of sex goes up around major sporting events,” says Glendyne Gerrard, director of the advocacy group Defend Dignity. “We decided to use the Pan Am Games to draw attention to what is happening all the time at these sporting events.” www.christianweek.org

CHURCH WEBSITE HACKED WITH ISIS MESSAGE

Police in Barrie, Ont., are investigating after Inniswood Baptist Church’s website was hacked by someone proclaiming support for the Islamic State terror group and calling for the elimination of America. Someone posted what appears to be the ISIS logo and wrote, “I love you ISIS” on the church’s website in early November. www.ctvnews.ca

GRAVES FOUND UNDER TORONTO CHURCH PARKING LOT

Archeologists have found dozens of sets of century-old human remains under the parking lot of St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church in Toronto. The coffins and grave markers date as far back as 1866. The dig site is next to Metrolinx-owned property where work

is being done on the Union-Pearson Express train route. www.cbc.ca

MANITOBA PASTOR SUED FOR RACKING UP \$202,000 ON CHURCH CREDIT CARD

The Anglican Church of Canada and the Diocese of Brandon are suing Archdeacon Noah Njegovan, 32, for racking up more than \$202,286.42 in fraudulent expenses on a church Visa card between January 2010 and September 2012. Charges included trips to Las Vegas, massages, clothing and a Netflix subscription. The diocese was successful in obtaining a court-ordered freeze of all of Njegovan’s assets in October. www.cbc.ca

CONCERT POSTPONED DUE TO CHURCH’S SMUDGE BAN

The Mennonite Central Committee cancelled its 50th anniversary benefit concert, its largest event of the year, because the hosting church objected to a native smudging ceremony. Smudging involves burning sage or sweetgrass. It is a common indigenous practice, usually done before any sacred activity is performed. “The policies that govern the use of our facilities are not about wanting to celebrate diversity,” said Scott Bullerwell, lead pastor at Immanuel Pentecostal Church. “They are simply an affirmation of our belief system and a reflection of our statement of faith.” www.cbc.ca —DARRYL DASH

40

PERCENTAGE OF COFFEE DRINKERS WHO ENJOY THEIR JAVA AT A COFFEE SHOP
(COFFEE ASSOCIATION OF CANADA)

in the button jar, from which other customers can take to subsidize their own meals or coffees.

There are everyday challenges to ministering in a sometimes troubled neighbourhood. Carr admits she’s thankful for her chaplaincy training in such “colourful” moments, but she insists, smiling, that this is “what the Kingdom is supposed to look like.”

Could this model take root elsewhere? Absolutely, says Carr, but it “has to be born in and of the local culture” – much like local churches.

—MATTHEW FORREST LOWE

Samaritan's Purse breaks ground in northern B.C.

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PERCENTAGE OF CANADA'S ABORIGINAL POPULATION LIVING IN ONT., SASK., MAN., ALTA., AND B.C. (ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS CANADA)



Performers at the Stikine Valley Gospel Music Festival included country singer Paul Brandt, a long-time Samaritan's Purse supporter.

WHEN MANY CANADIANS think of Samaritan's Purse (www.samaritanspurse.ca), the Calgary-based Christian relief and development organization, they imagine children in developing countries receiving shoeboxes from Operation Christmas Child – not children in Northern B.C. playing foosball after school in an old restaurant.

But that's what staff at the newly opened Samaritan's Purse Ministry Centre do most weeknights in Dease Lake, a community of roughly 400 people 19 hours north of Vancouver, 250 kilometres south of the B.C.-Yukon border.

Organization president Franklin Graham visited the community in 2011. Graham stopped at a restaurant and saw the needs for youth in the community, says Larry Nanninga, general manager of the centre. The restaurant closed and

Samaritan's Purse purchased the building in the spring of 2013. Nanninga and his wife Trixie arrived a few months later.

Youth have few recreational options besides school and an outdoor hockey rink that is sometimes unusable, with winter temperatures dropping below -40°C. At the centre youth can play ping-pong or video games, make crafts, build with Lego or spend time with friends. Twenty-five youth have been attending on average.

"The one thing that has doors just opening up is in the area with the youth and with the kids," says Nanninga. Establishing a faithful presence is crucial, say the staff. Many community residents belong to the Tahltan First Nation and have had negative experiences with Christian organizations. Some survived neglect and abuse at residential schools.

Staff want to show Jesus' love in

their character and actions, says Josiah Atkins, ministry program co-ordinator for the centre. A teacher's assistant also works at the centre part-time, and that's helped establish trust with families. "If you look at the big picture, these small moments can turn into big moments," says Atkins.

Staff also help with community events such as Aboriginal Days and the Terry Fox Run. Last June they participated in the nearby Stikine Valley Gospel Music Festival. Performers included country singer Paul Brandt, a long-time Samaritan's Purse supporter. Most importantly, they're good neighbours, says Nanninga. They shovel snow. They host people for dinner. "It's not like I'm bringing the gospel," says Atkins. "The gospel is already here and Christ is already at work." —MEAGAN GILLMORE

Visit www.faithtoday.ca/KingdomMatters for more. Have a story to share? editor@faithtoday.ca

Immigrant Christians

About 20 per cent of Canadians are foreign born, more than half of them Christians. In which church traditions have these Christian immigrants settled?

HOW MUCH OF EACH CHURCH FAMILY WERE IMMIGRANTS IN 2011?



57%

ORTHODOX

13 GROUPS FROM ANTIOCHIAN TO UKRAINIAN

35.5%
CAME SINCE 1991,
21.5% EARLIER



24.2%

EVANGELICAL

32 DENOMINATIONAL GROUPS AFFILIATED WITH THE EFC OR SIMILAR, FROM ASSOCIATED GOSPEL TO WESLEYAN

14.2%
CAME SINCE 1991,
10% EARLIER



15.1%

CATHOLIC

7 GROUPS FROM ASSYRIAN CHALDEAN TO ROMAN CATHOLIC TO UKRAINIAN

6.5%
CAME SINCE 1991,
8.6% EARLIER

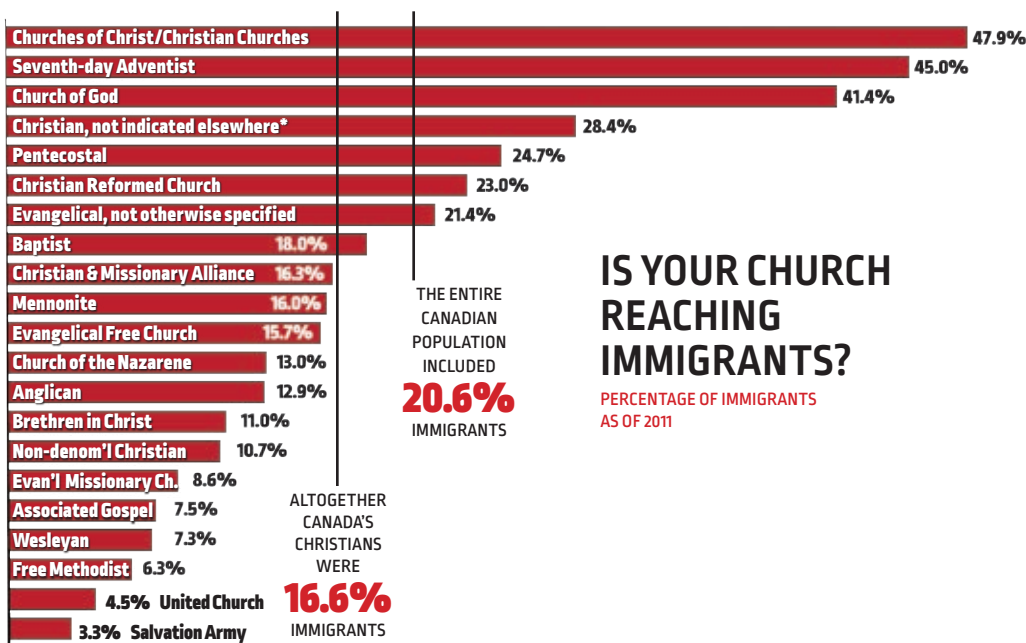


10.5%

MAINLINE

LUTHERAN, ANGLICAN, PRESBYTERIAN AND UNITED CHURCH

2.2%
CAME SINCE 1991,
8.3% EARLIER



IS YOUR CHURCH REACHING IMMIGRANTS?

PERCENTAGE OF IMMIGRANTS AS OF 2011

MOST COMMON FOREIGN BIRTHPLACES

Country	Percentage of Canadians Born in...
CHINA (NOT INCLUDING HONG KONG / MACAU)	1.78%
INDIA	1.74%
UNITED KINGDOM	1.70%
PHILIPPINES	1.53%
UNITED STATES	0.96%
ITALY	0.79%
HONG KONG	0.64%
GERMANY	0.52%
VIET NAM	0.51%
PAKISTAN	0.49%
POLAND	0.47%
PORTUGAL	0.43%
SRI LANKA	0.41%
SOUTH KOREA	0.40%
JAMAICA	0.39%
IRAN	0.38%
FRANCE	0.34%
NETHERLANDS	0.31%
GUYANA	0.27%
MEXICO	0.26%
HAITI	0.26%

*E.G., BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN, APOSTOLIC, MESSIANIC JEW, HUTTERITE



Making moral judgments

Will we all remain free to make countercultural, faith-based choices?

A recent editorial in *The Globe and Mail* began: “A physician who is predisposed by faith to make negative moral judgments about a patient is a bad doctor.”

It went on to comment on a draft policy of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario that will regulate the practices of its members.

Of course, that quoted opening line is a moral judgment about making moral judgments.

It presumes that certain moral judgments, such as those of the editorial writer, are allowable, but that judgments grounded in faith are bad.

This is the common wisdom of our day, which recognizes many moral pro-

nouncements except for faith-based ones. Instead we hear calls for those to be privatized and excluded from public venues and within professions.

This proposed medical policy assumes that we need to be protected from the truth that not all doctors can in good conscience affirm all medical treatments – that a procedure which might be legal might not be universally endorsed by all doctors.

The argument is that giving voice to such truths might cause patients to reconsider – and we should be protected from needing to do so.

The issues affected by this policy are about life and death. As the *Globe* editorial explains, the policy would apply to a doc-

tor refusing to prescribe “birth-control medication.” It would also cover procedures such as abortion, the morning-after pill and, if it becomes legalized, assisted suicide and euthanasia.

The policy would require doctors who refuse these procedures to ensure patients can get them elsewhere – making the doctor personally complicit in that which she believes is immoral.

In some cases, the policy would even require the doctor to do the procedure herself regardless of her convictions.

The *Globe* editorial suggests that doctors who cannot comply should resign from the profession.

What clearer example could there be of the moral judgment of the majority trying

News FROM THE EFC

Court date with TWU

Are people of faith allowed to express their sincere religious beliefs and practise a profession at the same time? The EFC intervened in a judicial review involving our affiliate Trinity Western University and the Nova Scotia Barristers’

Society in December. At issue is the society’s vote to place special restrictions on graduates who come to the province from TWU’s proposed law school, a decision also made by law societies in several other provinces. Find more details, including a decision on the Nova Scotia case when announced, at www.theEFC.ca/TWUlaw.

Presidential reflections

EFC President Bruce J. Clemenger published some new online commentaries recently. “Autonomy and the 6th Commandment” reflects on arguments for euthanasia put forward in October at the Supreme Court in the *Carter* case. “Protecting Minority Rights From the Majority” reflects on TWU and the Law Society of B.C. “Prayer at Government Meetings” reflects on the *Saguena*y case

on prayer and religious freedom heard at the Supreme Court in October. Read these and more at www.theEFC.ca/ClemengerArticles.

50th anniversary slideshow

Pictures are now available from some of the EFC’s 50th celebrations at www.theEFC.ca/50. Join in the festivities and see how many faces you can recognize.

Do you read the King James Version?

The King James Version is the most popular Bible according to what people tell pollsters. But it’s actually not the translation that gets read the most. Learn more in the Bible Translation Choice in Canada 2013 report (available at www.theEFC.ca/TranslationChoice). This new research paper by the

EFC’s Rick Hiemstra is the second in a series based on the Canadian Bible Engagement Study, a partnership between the EFC and the Canadian Bible Forum.

New year’s calendar



- The annual EFC prayer summit for bilingual and francophone ministry leaders is Jan. 26–28 in Granby, Que.
- Missions Fest season starts off Jan. 30–Feb. 1 in Vancouver, then Feb. 20–22 in Edmonton.
- Visit www.theEFC.ca/calendar to find out what else is new or to publicize your own event.

Evangelicals hold high-level meetings

A delegation of the World Evangelical Alliance led by Canadian Geoff Tunnicliffe met Nov. 6 with Pope Francis and



EFC
The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

-  Find out about news stories like these and more at www.theEFC.ca.
-  Learn how to take action on the issues you care about at www.theEFC.ca/takeaction.
-   Visit *Faith Today* and the EFC on Facebook and Twitter for breaking news, great links and lively discussion.

to overrule the consciences of the minority?

Of course rejecting moral judgments based on “faith” is insincere. All moral judgments are rooted in some belief system or faith – in other words, in some worldview by which a person distinguishes between right and wrong, good and bad.

The worldview might be framed in religious terms or not, but it functions in the same way. In that light, it’s clearly both discriminatory and illogical to reject faith-based moral judgments out of hand.

Is not Canada’s *Criminal Code* a moral code made up of moral judgments, based on widespread agreement about what we should not do – murder, steal, bear false witness, etc.? These are judgments affirmed by people of many different worldviews and religious traditions.

In our diverse society, it should be no surprise that reasonable people disagree on what ought to be done, on what constitutes a good life. This is a diversity we once celebrated as Canadians.

But there is now a shift toward moral conformity, which people will celebrate if it is a morality that conforms to their own judgments. It also leads to questions about the ability of faithful Canadians to be professionals and serve in the public interest.

Unfortunately, this shift is not exclusive to the medical profession. Consider the provincial law societies currently objecting to Trinity Western University’s community covenant, a document that sets out community standards for TWU students, staff and faculty.

Despite a Supreme Court of Canada ruling that having a covenant is consistent with the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, law societies are contending that since some may be offended or feel excluded by the covenant, TWU should change its moral standards.

The law societies are saying in effect that the previous Supreme Court decision which accepted the covenant was wrong. In the moral judgment of the law societies, the covenant should not be

allowed to maintain a biblical, heterosexual concept of marriage.

Moral judgments rooted in religious belief are being singled out for scrutiny. Perhaps it is because a religiously based morality is rooted in the transcendent – a morality given via revelation rather than constricted by human will. This is an offence to two major secular faith commitments – individual autonomy and human sovereignty.

Where religious freedom and freedom of conscience are cherished, there will be space for disagreement about how people and communities choose to live together while contributing positively to the public good. When we disagree, we continue to treat all with respect and dignity, and look for ways to accommodate expressions of freedom. This too is a matter of morality. /FT

 Bruce J. Clemenger is president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Find more of these columns at www.faithtoday.ca/TheGatheringPlace. Please pray for our work. You can support it financially at www.theEFC.ca/donate or toll-free 1-866-302-3362.

representatives of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. They talked about areas of common concern for both the evangelical community and the Roman Catholic Church. In his address Dr. Tunnicliffe, then CEO and secretary general of the WEA (he retired in December), outlined specific action steps for the two world church bodies.

Tunnicliffe also met in late November with the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I, in Istanbul, Turkey. They discussed responses to the increasing number of refugees in Syria and Iraq, ensuring their protection in the short term and creating ways for them to later return to their homelands.

Details on both meetings are at www.worldidea.org. /FT



John Denbok

As part of the 50th anniversary celebrations at The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, *Faith Today* is introducing members of the board of directors (listed at www.theEFC.ca/board). We continue with John Denbok of Toronto, executive director of the mission agency SIM Canada. **FT: What made you want to sit on the EFC board?**

I know of no other venue that can well represent the collective evangelical voice and so carefully articulate our Christian worldview

Meet the EFC Board: John Denbok

in the Canadian public square. The EFC mission statement of gathering Evangelicals together for impact, influence and identity in ministry and public witness was very compelling for me. It was an honour to be invited to serve on the EFC board.

What’s the most important thing the EFC is doing these days, in your opinion?

Choosing only one important thing is difficult. The EFC’s research on key issues facing the Church in Canada would be top of my list. The recent *Hemorrhaging Faith* and *Bible Engagement* papers have provided tangible evidence of issues the Church needs to understand and address. The papers have become a platform for

reflection and discussion. Ensuring the leaders of our country are informed and engaged on issues of importance to our community is also vitally important.

What’s the biggest challenge facing Canada right now?

Pluralism, individualism, consumerism – the big “isms” – have created a directionless culture where even the dignity and value of human life are not defined under an ultimate authority, but by a stance of preference and opinion. Ultimately only the Church can speak into and affect culture. My concern is that culture is influencing the Church, rather than the other way around.

FT: Thank you, John. May God bless you and your ministry. /FT

Building exceptional community

Janet Nolan is chief executive officer of Christian Horizons, a nonprofit, faith-based organization serving 1,500 people with developmental disabilities and their families in Ontario

■ *What is the mission that drives Christian Horizons?*

Christian Horizons has a vision to see people with exceptional needs belong to communities in which their God-given gifts are valued and respected. We believe that every person has intrinsic worth, created in God's image, and we encourage everyone to help break down the barriers that people with disabilities face on a daily basis, here in Canada and around the world.

■ *How do you view Christian Horizons' relationship with the Canadian Christian community?*

Christian Horizons' relationship with the Canadian Christian community is an important part of our mission to serve the person with exceptional needs. We can't do it alone. Christian Horizons sees communities of faith as a key partner – both here in Canada and around the world. Many of our projects are offered in partnership with communities of faith, including our Annual Family Retreat and economic development projects in Ethiopia.

■ *What is the single most important thing Canadian churches can do to welcome people with disabilities into their communities?*

Churches have a unique opportunity to welcome people with excep-



tional needs into community, and offer a place of belonging and involvement. People with disabilities are often excluded in so many places, including the faith community. And the single most important thing the church community can do is embrace people with disabilities and their families as equal, contributing members.

■ *Your work must be rewarding, but also challenging. How do you take care of your own spiritual and physical rejuvenation?*

For me, being able to live out my faith and passion for serving others through my career is indeed a great blessing. Staying connected with my church community, spending

time with other Christian ministry leaders, and dedicating time to personal development and spiritual maturity are critical to leadership. It is a great privilege to represent Jesus in so many different places.

■ *Who are your heroes?*

My heroes are the people I meet on a daily basis who face great challenge and adversity simply living their lives – people who overcome great obstacles and barriers in attitude, opportunity and sometimes just day-to-day life, yet remain hopeful, resilient and happy.

■ *What leadership book do you recommend most often?*

Currently, the leadership book that shows how passion and dedication in action can be a blessing in the lives of many is *No Greatness Without Goodness: How a Father's Love Changed a Company and Sparked a Movement* by Randy Lewis (Tyndale House, 2014). This book shares the story of Randy Lewis, a former Walgreens VP, who took his personal experience in raising a son with a disability and translated it into a business plan. That plan saw Walgreens become the most progressive and comprehensive employer for people with disabilities across the United States.

I've also recently read and deeply appreciated Timothy Keller's book *Walking with God Through Pain and Suffering* (Dutton, 2013).

■ *What is your top leadership advice?*

Once you find your calling, make it your laser focus. Turn your passion and dedication into action and you can be a blessing in the lives of many. /FT

650
MILLION

PEOPLE WORLDWIDE
WITH A DISABILITY
(WWW.UN.ORG)

➤ Christian Horizons (www.christianhorizons.org) is an affiliate of the EFC (www.theEFC.ca/Affiliates). Find more Q&As at www.faithtoday.ca/QandA.

Our big, big pornography problem

As Canadians access online pornography more and more – and at younger and younger ages – we need to understand the enormity of the problem to begin to find a solution

The statistics are staggering. Average age of first exposure to internet pornography: 11 years old. Number of websites devoted to pornography: 4.2 million (www.FamilySafeMedia.com).

Pornography’s accessibility – available at a click of a keyboard – and its affordability – free to those who know how to find it – adds to the enormity of the problem. So does its highly addictive nature.

Christians access online pornography to disturbing degrees. In fact, statistics show the use of pornography by regular church attenders mirrors that of the general population. Covenanteyes.com, an internet accountability and filtering system, reports 50 per cent of all Christian men and 20 per cent of all Christian women say they are addicted to pornography.

Addiction to pornography is a particularly disturbing dimension of this issue for teens, as more and more young people are exposed to online pornography at younger and younger ages. Experts point to the release of the neurotransmit-

ter dopamine in the brains of teenagers when they engage in stimulating or potentially addictive activities like viewing pornography. The brains of teenagers are particularly vulnerable to addiction and rewiring because their brains have not yet fully developed, creating a vicious cycle of addiction that could negatively impact a teen’s sexuality for life (www.DefendDignity.ca).

Exposure to pornography is associated with:

- poor concentration
- low motivation
- depression
- social anxiety
- negative self-perception
- erectile dysfunction
- decreased interest in sex with a partner
- more forgiving attitudes toward violence against women and increased comfort with the idea of rape
- increased likelihood to have an affair. /FT

(WWW.DEFENDDIGNITY.COM,
WWW.HELPHYOURTEENNOW.COM AND
WWW.PORNHARMS.COM)

11
YEARS OLD

AVERAGE AGE OF FIRST INTERNET EXPOSURE TO PORNOGRAPHY

35-49
AGE GROUP

LARGEST CONSUMER OF INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY

80%

15- TO 17-YEAR-OLDS HAVING MULTIPLE HARDCORE EXPOSURES

90%

8- TO 16-YEAR-OLDS HAVING VIEWED PORN ONLINE (MOST WHILE DOING HOMEWORK) (WWW.FAMILYSAFEMEDIA.COM)

“It’s time for us to address internet pornography for the lie that it is – a tsunami of sexualized, violent images meant to entrap our children and teens into believing that this is normal sexual behaviour. Pornography is one of the greatest negative influences in today’s culture. We need to take action by addressing this as a public health issue.”

GLENDYNE GERRARD, director of Defend Dignity (www.DefendDignity.ca)

What can you do . . .

Understand this issue. There is abundant information about pornography and its dangers online. Have honest conversations with the teens and children in your life, alerting them to the lifelong consequences of exposing themselves to online pornography.

Connect the dots between pornography and other issues like human trafficking and prostitution at www.theEFC.ca/pornography

Please pray for the public policy work of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. You can also support it financially at www.theEFC.ca/ donate or toll-free 1-866-302-3362. Read more of these columns at www.faithtoday.ca/AtIssue.



Better late than never

The churches' response to the mistreatment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War was slow to warm up – but had an impact

The faraway attacks on Pearl Harbor and Hong Kong by Japan on Dec. 7, 1941 – bringing Japan into the Second World War against Canada and the other Allied powers – had dire consequences closer to home for Canadians of Japanese descent.

Japanese immigrants had been coming to Canada since the 1870s. Most had settled on the west coast, where they encountered missionaries from the major Protestant churches. By the 1940s, over half of Japanese Canadians were involved with a Protestant church, particularly Anglican and United churches.

Despite their long history in Canada, Japanese Canadians continued to attract a great deal of racial prejudice from their fellow Canadians. When Japan entered the war in 1941, these prejudices were bolstered by fears that Japanese Canadians would side with the aggressive foreign power. Despite RCMP reports that Japanese Canadians were loyal to Canada, the William Lyon Mackenzie King government used the *War Measures Act* to impose draconian measures.

In 1942 Japanese Canadians living within 100 miles of the Pacific Coast were forced to move to internment camps in B.C.'s Interior. Their homes and businesses were confiscated and sold by the government to pay for the camps.

In 1944, the government decided to permanently remove this “threat” from British Columbia by giving Japanese Canadians a heart-wrenching choice – deportation to Japan (a country many of them had never

The Anglican and United churches in particular helped Japanese Canadians resettle in other parts of Canada.

seen) or relocation to government-approved destinations in other provinces.

How did churches respond? Stephanie Bangarth, associate professor of history at King's University College, notes that while the churches immediately spoke out against the dangers of ethnic hatred, they were at first reluctant to question the government's policy directly. Not only did they trust the government would carry out relocations justly and fairly, many of them favoured relocation in principle.

A church committee on resettlement, including representatives of the Anglican, United and Catholic churches, argued that the wide dispersal and assimilation of Japanese Canadians would make them less visible and thus reduce prejudice against them. The churches also had difficulty distinguishing between evangelization and “Canadianization.” They hoped that cultural assimilation would strengthen the connection between Japanese Canadians and the churches.

To be fair, the churches worked hard to ensure resettlement went as smoothly as possible. Researcher David Dowe has found that the Anglican and United churches in particular helped Japanese Canadians resettle in other parts of Canada. Rev. Kosaburo Shimizu of the United Church, worked to find employment for Japanese Canadians relocated to Ontario and Quebec. This kind of work by the churches could only go so far to soothe the heartache of exiled and

separated communities. It did nothing to address the violation of rights that forced relocation entailed.


The churches did take a hard stance against the government's plan to deport Canadians of Japanese origin. A Vancouver group including Anglicans, Baptists, Catholics and United Church people said it was “an act of indefensible tyranny and folly” to deport people because of their ethnic origin. A Presbyterian minister in Victoria preached a radio sermon citing Acts 17:26 to argue that all people, regardless of race or ethnicity, are part of one human family. The churches worked together to lobby prime minister Mackenzie King and other MPs, and raise funds for a legal challenge.

In the end, these and other efforts by Canadian citizens succeeded. In 1947 the government cancelled the Orders in Council that allowed deportation. It was too late for around 4,000 people who had already been deported, but never again would Japanese Canadians have to fear deportation or other kinds of government harassment. In 1950 they received some compensation for lost property, and in 1988 a full apology and financial redress from the government of Brian Mulroney.

“Better late than never” is a fitting summary of the actions of the Christian Church through the crisis. Although the churches' initial response to the mistreatment of Japanese Canadians was lukewarm, by the end of the war they were speaking boldly about the human rights of every person regardless of ethnicity – a relatively new concept rooted in a very old and very biblical idea that everyone is created in the image of God. /FT

22,000

NUMBER OF JAPANESE CANADIANS INTERNED IN CANADA

 Kevin Flatt is associate professor of history and director of research at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ont. Find more of these columns at www.faithtoday.ca/HistoryLesson.



MESSY FAITH

SHEILA WRAY GREGOIRE

Why Sunday mornings have to change

I would change almost everything, if I could change how we do church

I don't think God ever intended that His people be bored for two hours every Sunday morning as proof of their dedication.

I love church. I love the fact that my daughters have other adults who take an interest in them. I love serving. I don't always love church services.

After all, what happens on Sunday mornings in most evangelical churches around the country? A pastor talks at you for 30 or 40 minutes, a worship team sings for 20, an elder prays for 10 minutes, and there you are, sitting in the pew, hearing your mother's voice telling you to just sit still and be quiet. Meanwhile, the friends you are dying to talk to sit nearby, but you can't chat because it's imperative you sing one more chorus.

Church ends and you rush, trying to catch up with 15 different people. Your husband pulls on your arm saying, "We really need to go." Your teenager claims she's starving. And you leave the church without those heart conversations with your community.

The teaching model of services was appropriate in the Early Church and the Middle Ages – and even in some parts of the world today – when the primary need was for solid doctrine. When people hadn't grown up in faith and didn't have access to Scripture, they needed to be taught.

But that model has endured even though I believe our needs have evolved. Today, our primary need is not teaching – my Bible app has multiple commentaries at the click of a button. Information is not in



The Early Church didn't have endless services. They did life together.

short supply – community is. In our fast-paced, media-driven world, we crave authenticity and connection, two things our modern church services don't deliver.

The Early Church didn't have endless services. They did life together. Communion wasn't small cups passed around while sitting on benches. It was people eating a meal. Of course, there were still boring sermons. Paul once droned on so long that he killed poor Eutychus, who nodded off while sitting in a window and fell to his death (Acts 20:9–10) – though he was later revived. Being bored in church is nothing new.

That doesn't mean we should just accept it. Now that I'm older and my professional life has become more hectic, for the first time in my 40-odd years I've found it a challenge to get motivated to go to church. That scares me.

When I led a praise team a few years ago, one of the biggest struggles we had was ensuring those pesky announcements didn't eat up too much time and deprive us of singing opportunities. I've changed my

mind. I think we need more announcements, not less.

I want to know what's going on in people's lives far more than I want to sing another song. Two weeks ago a woman in my church spontaneously asked the pastor if she could share about a victory in her life. I don't know her well, but it was so encouraging to all of us to hear her story. Isn't fellowship part of worship too?

Here is what I would love:

More rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep on a Sunday morning.

Praying in small groups in the service for the illnesses and struggles people are facing.


A 15-minute sermon, with a discussion topic, and then a chance to talk about it in the pews.

I'd love to listen to evangelism tips from some of our members who are so effective. I'd love to hear from some of our young people as they struggle with what they want to do with their lives, so we can pray for them and encourage them. I'd love to read more Scripture as a congregation, pray more as a congregation, and hear more stories about what God is doing in individual lives. I'd love to feel like I had connected.

I don't need polished. I don't need professional music, or lovely carpets or multimedia presentations. I don't even need an excellent sermon.

I need community. And with my ridiculous schedule and my husband's ridiculous schedule, we can't get it in a regular small group. So Sunday morning at 10:30 is all I've got.

I wonder if everyone feels the same way. Maybe we're afraid to say it because it feels heretical? But I think we need to start talking about how we do church, because we're not just losing numbers, we're losing connection. And community was meant to be so much more. **/FT**

 Sheila Wray Gregoire of Belleville, Ont., is an author and speaker. Find more of these columns at www.faithtoday.ca/MessyFaith.

8 minutes
VATICAN-
RECOMMENDED
LENGTH OF SERMONS



Putting faith into action

Manitoba business student project reaches Uganda

Christians have been raising funds for worthy causes since the start of Christianity. Paul raised funds for the Jerusalem church in the 1st century. World mission societies started raising funds early in the 18th century. And the 20th century saw an explosion of church-supported aid initiatives that now span the globe.

The questions we've faced have remained remarkably constant: What should we raise funds for? How should we raise those funds? How do we get the money to the right recipients? And how do we know the money is being well-spent?

The Internet hasn't changed these questions, although it has begun to alter the answers. Finding out about worthy causes is faster and easier. We can more easily raise funds from people far away. Transferring funds is simpler, faster and more secure. And young people can become engaged with important development projects without having to spend thousands of dollars on travel.

But the Internet isn't a substitute for personal connection. It's more like a box of tools. Understanding how to use these tools wisely – and in God's service – remains the enduring challenge.

Consider a project called Fuel for the Future, which has been developed by students at Providence University College, where I teach business ethics.

The project, a crowdfunding initiative to support the production of something like charcoal in a refugee settlement in Uganda, emerged from a course in non-profit management. Let me explain.

Crowdfunding, according to enthusiasts, is a revolutionary way for



The last step in making this charcoal-like fuel involves drying it in the sun.

businesses and non-profits to get funding through the Internet. Put up a project on a site like Kickstarter or Indiegogo and ask for support, and money will roll in. The hype is overblown, but there's no doubt crowdfunding has potential. And it's certainly something non-profit leaders need to know about.

The fuel in this project is called "biochar." It's made the same way as charcoal, but instead of wood it uses materials such as plant stalks and weeds left over from farming. In the right circumstances, biochar can be a local, affordable, clean-burning and sustainable fuel.

(Right now, one-third of people worldwide cook their food using fire, often burning either dried animal dung, which is not so healthy, or charcoal made from forests that are being unsustainably harvested.)

Despite the role of the Internet in this project, it never would have worked without a personal connection with two people in Winnipeg – Daniel Lepp Friesen and Theo Muthumwa – who told my students about a small business, started by pastor Byaruhanga Godfrey, in the Kyaka II refugee settlement in Uganda making biochar.

Muthumwa came to Winnipeg in 2009 from Kyaka II and got to know Lepp Friesen through his church.

The duo have travelled twice to Uganda to help pastor Godfrey get his business on its feet.


In Kyaka II each family is given an acre or two of land to grow food. Before pastor Godfrey started his business, the 22,000 people in Kyaka II had two options for fuel: foraging for firewood or buying charcoal. Foraging for firewood means leaving the safety of the settlement. Charcoal has to be trucked in from 300 km away.

Biochar offers a third option. Residents can make it with material left over from their crops. Any they don't need for their own use, they can sell.

The biochar business is up and running, employing three people. To expand they need a building, a truck and a few office essentials. Altogether they need about \$30,000. That's too much for a microloan, but right in the sweet spot for crowdfunding.

So my students got to work. They researched, debated, reported and reworked. They ran into lots of obstacles. They overcame them all. At the end of November, FuelForTheFuture.CauseVox.com launched. Even as you read this, it's busy raising money.

Sometimes people my age decry the cynical, entitled youth of the millennial generation. I don't know where those youth are – they weren't in my class. The ones I know are committed, passionate servants of Christ. All we need to do is give them knowledge and tools – and steer them in the right direction. /FT

 Bruce Duggan is director of the Buller Centre for Business at Providence University College and Seminary in Otterburne, Man. Find more of these columns at www.faithtoday.ca/BusinessMatters.





Rebel violence swept over part of South Sudan in December 2013, forcing 15-year-old Mary Athiens to flee with her mother and little sister. The family, which used to herd cattle and grow sorghum and maize, left everything behind. Until it's safe to return, they're receiving food assistance from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Mother and daughter also earn a partial living by sweeping, washing clothes and cooking. Unlike many young women in her country, Mary had always attended school until the war interrupted. "I want to be an agriculturalist," she says. "There is nowhere in the world you can go or work without food." — From a news release by Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Nigerian churches faithful despite attacks

VIOLENCE BY THE extremist group Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria has killed thousands of church members and displaced many more.

The largest denomination in the region, Church of the Brethren in Nigeria (EYN), has suffered the deaths of more than 3,000 members and eight pastors. Before the recent chaos it had nearly a million people attending services.

Another 100,000 church members have fled, either on foot through bush to Cameroon, about 30 km away, or by making their way to the central Nigerian city of Jos.

"People are desperate — no food, no clothes," says Rebecca Dali, who narrowly escaped a bullet when terrorists attacked. Dali and her husband Samuel, president of EYN,


have been helping the displaced with emergency assistance.


Close to 300 EYN churches have been destroyed, and 200 pastors are left with no congregations because their members have fled. EYN has moved its headquarters to Jos for safety.

Churches from other denominations have also lost thousands of people.

Boko Haram is one of the most active militant groups in the world, along with the Islamic State, the Taliban and al-Qaeda. It has attacked many people over the past five years, especially schoolchildren. It recently declared the establishment of a caliphate (a form of Islamic political-religious leadership).

Despite violence and tragedy, the Church in Africa's most populous country "still has missionary zeal," writes Timothy Olonade, executive secretary and CEO of Nigeria Evangelical Missions Association, in a *Lausanne World Pulse* publication. **/FT**

 Debra Fieguth of Kingston, Ont., is a senior writer at *Faith Today*.

 Read more: search for "boko haram" at www.brethren.org or www.worldwatchmonitor.org or www.theEFC.ca/affiliatesearch.

Urban ministry flourishing

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

for Urban Missions (ISUM) is stepping up to play a key role in a reconfiguration of global evangelical networks.

Formed in 2012 in the Bangkok slums by an international group of urban mission activists, ISUM focuses on reaching out to the poor with both practical and spiritual care.

ISUM held a summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, last year under the theme of "Signs of Hope in the City," and will soon release a book with that title containing presentations from the event.

That summit was a partnership with both the Micah Network, an association for integral (word and deed) mission that includes 700 member organizations and churches at work in 88 countries, and the World Evangelical Alliance.

The Micah Network is currently merging with the Micah Challenge, a related coalition motivating governments and Christians to reduce extreme poverty.


ISUM will also be merged into the newly reconfigured Micah organization, giving ISUM "a stable organizational platform" and move it from a pioneering work to growth and sustainability, says Ash Barker, convenor and director of ISUM.

Barker is the founder of Urban Neighbours of Hope, a Christian organization whose members have chosen to move into disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Australia, Thailand and New Zealand. He has now relocated with his family to take up urban ministry in Birmingham, England, after 12 years in Thailand.

The next ISUM summit will take the form of a track within the Micah Global Consultation in September 2015 in Lima, Peru. **/FT**

In God's eyes, a developed country is not necessarily one with a high GDP, but one where relationships are healthy. By that criteria many Western nations could still be considered undeveloped.

-Dr. Michael Schluter at the general assembly of the European Evangelical Alliance

 Read more: www.newurbanworld.org, www.micahnetwork.org, www.micahchallenge.org and www.unoh.org.



Four JWs you should know

Help for the Jehovah's Witnesses who may knock at your door

When Jehovah's Witnesses knock on your door, you should keep the names of two women and two men in mind. All are former Witnesses who have dissented against the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.

Barbara Anderson was a Witness from 1954–1997, including ten years as a researcher and writer at their headquarters in Brooklyn. She left largely because she thought the Society's leaders were mishandling cases of child abuse in Witness congregations.

Candace Conti is one such case. Conti was molested by a man in her congregation in North Fremont, California, and won a multimillion-dollar settlement against him and the Witness organization in 2012.

Legalism and institutional blindness can affect any religious group, and Anderson and Conti give us the details particular among Witnesses.

Raymond Franz (1922–2010) and James Penton (b. 1932) highlight larger spiritual and intellectual failings. Both had given decades as faithful Witnesses, but slowly realized Society leaders cared more about image and loyalty than faithfulness to God.

Franz had been a Governing Body member for almost a decade, but was kicked out in 1981. His memoir *Crisis of Conscience* (Createspace, 2004 [1983]) tells the gripping story of his increasing unrest as he served at the very top of the Society.

Penton, a history professor at the University of Lethbridge, was removed the same year. He's from Saskatchewan and author of *Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of Jehovah's Witnesses* (University of

Toronto Press, 2015 [1985]).

The common thread in this four-some is the realization of the enormous price paid when institutional loyalty takes precedence over integrity.

Tragically, Jehovah's Witnesses are imprisoned by the belief they alone are Christians, and the Governing Body members (now seven men) are God's chosen leaders on earth. They're not allowed to question Society policies, past or present. Most know nothing of the errors that litter Watchtower history and shape current beliefs and practices.

What concerns should Evangelicals have regarding Canada's 120,000 Witnesses and the 8 million worldwide? Mainly that Jehovah's Witnesses have a false authority for their beliefs. They naively equate belief in God with trust in the Watchtower organization. This is the mother of all other blunders.

Second, Witnesses believe many false doctrines and theories. Contrary to clear biblical teaching, they deny Jesus is God in the flesh, died on a cross and was bodily resurrected. They accept false theories that Jesus returned to earth in 1914, heaven is restricted to 144,000 and blood transfusions are sinful. Thankfully, courts all over the world (including the Supreme Court of Canada) have intervened for Witness children who need lifesaving transfusions.

Third, Witnesses at your door need to know about their Society's record of false prophecy. Founder Charles Russell (1852–1916) was obsessed with Bible prophecy but could never get his facts right. He kept his Bible Students (the early name for Witnesses) in a constant

frenzy with his varied dates for the end of the world, based on his speculations on Scripture and (no kidding) the great pyramids of Egypt.

Over the decades Witness members pictured the world ending in 1914, 1918, 1925 and 1975. This is why Penton's book is titled *Apocalypse Delayed*.

Does all this mean there's nothing admirable about Witnesses? Of course not. Witnesses share some doctrine and ethics with Evangelicals. Most are decent, law abiding and moral. Further, citizens of many countries owe multiple freedoms to Witnesses who resisted governmental and societal discrimination.

In Canada, Witness lawyer W. Glen How argued many civil liberty cases before the Supreme Court, and we are his beneficiaries.


Keep these things in mind when Witnesses knock at your door.

Three other tips: (1) Some great Internet resources include www.watchtowerdocuments.com, www.jwfiles.com, www.watchthetower.net and www.freeminds.org. (2) A soft approach inviting Witnesses to help you deal with questions from your study is best. (3) Ask God to break the hold the Watchtower has over Witnesses by praying for the current Governing Body – Samuel Herd, Geoffrey Jackson, M. Stephen Lett, Gerrit Lösch, Anthony Morris III, David H. Splane and Mark Sanderson.

If you think God can't reach them, remember Ray Franz. /FT

We benefit from the many civil liberty cases argued before the Supreme Court of Canada by Jehovah's Witness lawyer W. Glen How.



 James Beverley is professor of Christian thought and ethics at Tyndale Seminary. His first book *Crisis of Allegiance* (Welch, 1986) was a study of James Penton's dissent. Find more of these columns at www.faithtoday.ca/ReligionWatch.

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Luke 10:2

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Andrew White is known as the Vicar of Baghdad. He has served St. George's Anglican Church in Baghdad since 1998, offering him a frontline view of one of the most troubled regions in the world. His foundation, The Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East (www.frrme.org), provides spiritual, medical and humanitarian care in Iraq, and works for reconciliation in the region.

White was removed from Iraq last year because of the increasing violence and threats against him. Much of his congregation has fled. The plight of Iraq's Christians drew the world's attention last year when reports surfaced of children being killed – including from White's congregation. He was in Canada in December and met with Faith Today to discuss the future of the Church in Iraq, why so many miracles happen there, and why eating with your enemies is a very good idea.

Faith Today: *Is the Church in danger of extinction in Iraq?*

Andrew White: Our church in Baghdad, come what may, will remain. Christianity in Iraq is at risk. It really is at risk of being literally almost nothing. We've gone from one and a half million to probably 200,000 Christians, and they are all really suffering. But, we don't give up. It's hard not to.

FT: *You obviously found it difficult to be removed when your bishop asked you to leave. I'm sure you're in constant contact with your people. But how are you feeling now about not being there?*

AW: Well, I take hope in this respect, that so many of our people are refugees in Jordan, and I'm looking after all of them. I'm still with them, I'm still providing for them. I'm still loving them. I'm still feed-

ing them. I'm still preaching to them. So, we've still got them.

FT: *Are there good things that can grow out of that experience of being a church in exile?*

AW: Well, there's the assurance of knowing that despite everything God is still with us. We start every service with the words from the Eucharist, "The Lord is here. His spirit is with us." And that is something that is so real to all of us. One of the things you discover in this situation, when you are under threat, is that denominations don't matter any longer. All that matters is that we are Christian.

FT: *What message then do you want to give to the rest of the Church?*

AW: What we pray for is protection, provision, perseverance and peace. And we have





all of that, by God's grace. We've had so many of our people killed. We have lost so many in such tragic circumstances. But despite those terrible things we can still love God and serve God, and love each other and serve each other. So, however awful the situation is, we are still fervent in our prayer and fervent in our hope. We might not have much to give to the rest of the world and give to the rest of the Church, and we are so thankful that so much of the Church remains with us, stands with us and helps us. What we have is love. And we can share that love continually.

FT: *A focus of your work is reconciliation. You've spoken about the simple act of meeting together to eat.*

AW: When we meet, we eat.

FT: *We like that motto.*

AW: We always invite people to dine with us. You want to kill us? Well, come and eat first and we will talk about it. When you are eating with someone, it is very difficult not to be their friend. When you've heard their story, when you've looked into their eyes, you become one with them.

FT: *How do you define reconciliation?*

AW: Reconciliation is the very heart of the Christian message because it is about becoming one with God. Reconciled with God and therefore reconciled [with] each other. It happens through love. Love your enemies. Love me. Love, love, love. And that is the message. My motto is simply, "Don't take care, take risks." It is risky business. Without taking risks, we can't achieve anything. We just remain safe. There is nothing worse than a safe, boring Church.

FT: *Amen.*

AW: And we need to radically give to God and radically receive from God. And we will change.

FT: *When we think of ISIS, when we talk about things like the "Muslim threat," should we be afraid?*

AW: Well, as a nation you have recently suffered serious attacks from Islam gone wrong. I think we all have a role to play in Islam going right and Islam going wrong. All my work looking after the Christian minorities in the North, providing them with food, beds, sustenance, living facilities – all



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www.missionsfellowship.org

of my work is headed by my main assistant, my director of operations, Sarah. And she is a Muslim. We love each other. But when religion goes wrong, it goes very wrong. **FT:** *And any religion can go very wrong.*

AW: Exactly, well, Christianity has plenty of experience itself of going wrong over the years. But isn't it a wonderful example that the person from our church who is heading up looking after the Christians is a Muslim? Incredible. Who would have dreamt that would have been possible? I didn't dream that would have been possible.

FT: *Occasionally, we read about young Canadians running off to join ISIS. There is something about that call to a radical life that grabs them somehow.*

AW: People are desperately looking for purpose in life. And a radical purpose in life. And that is what they are given. It's not surprising they turn to those radical things. Therefore we've got to give them radical solutions as well. It's quite inter-

esting that people write to me all the time and say they want to come and work with me. Recently a lot of Christians have written to me and said they want to join the Christian army. For one thing, there isn't a Christian army. We the Christians in Iraq do not fight. We really don't.

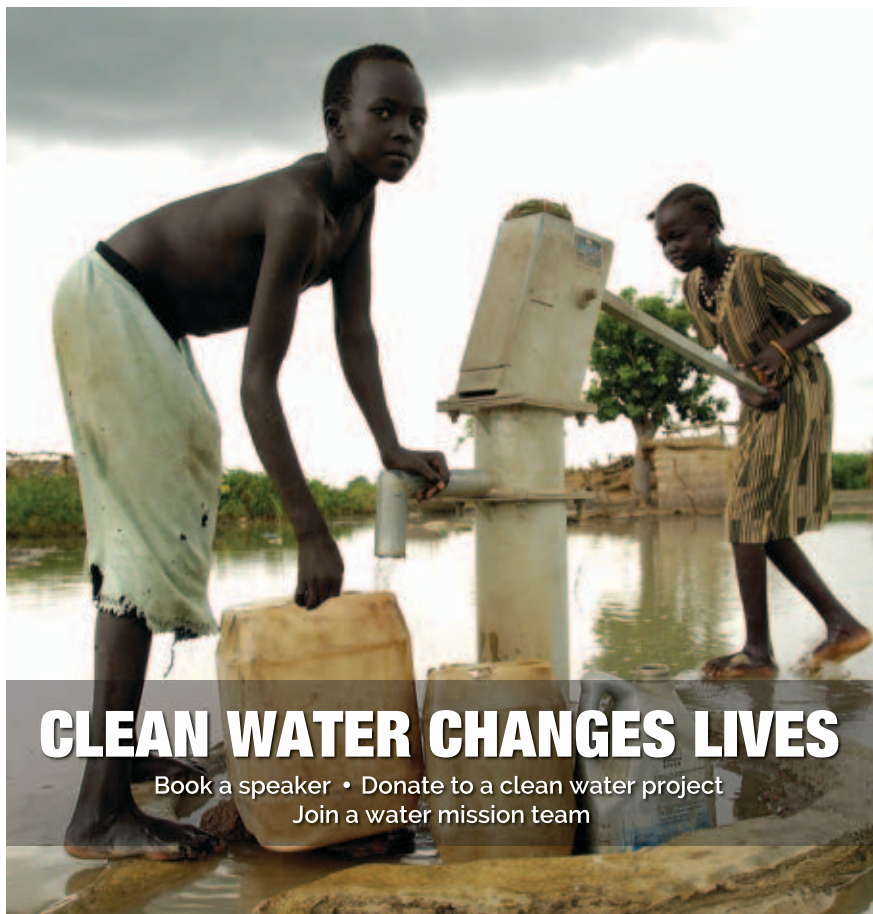
FT: *You have said that Christians aren't good fighters. Is that a good thing?*

AW: Yes, it is a good thing. Because we are called to love our enemy, and to serve and love and suffer, come what may. It is a bit worrying though when your guards are mainly Christian, like inside our church. I asked [a guard] one day, "If ISIS were coming toward you to get me, what would you do?" He said he'd take off his uniform and run.

FT: *Disconcerting.*

AW: That's our army. They are in their army gear with their huge rifles and they've said they would just run.

FT: *You've said foreign forces should come back,*



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PHOTO (PREVIOUS SPREAD): FOUNDATION FOR RELIEF AND RECONCILIATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST (FRFME)

partly because Iraqi forces aren't ready. How do we reconcile taking up weapons with our faith? Or do we?

AW: Well, generally speaking I'm against it. We do need to be protected and secure. But we will often find that protection comes from us not being aggressive but loving. We don't have a lot of people against us in Baghdad. Our relationship with the Islamic community, both Sunni and Shiite, is second to none.

FT: Why is that?

AW: Because we take it very seriously. We love them and they love us. And we give to each other. We have, despite our religion, more in common when we are working for peace together.

FT: You have said you are very aware of miracles and angels in your life in Baghdad.

AW: Absolutely.

FT: Why don't we have that here?

AW: When you've lost everything, Jesus is all you have left. We have lost everything and so the miraculous and the presence of the Almighty is so real to us. We have nothing, and yet we have everything. Nothing, but everything. The angels are very big and very strong. We see them. We are really serious about that.

FT: Help me understand.

AW: We have seen them looking like angels. We've got nothing. But we have everything.

FT: We are insulated from experience because of our wealth or material comfort or whatever it is. No wonder people want to come and work with you.

AW: But now I can't even be there.

FT: It's been said that your views on the Middle East have often put you at odds with the Church. How so?

AW: So much of them are just one sided as regards the Palestinian cause. And I love the Palestinians and the Israelis equally. I love both. The Christian Zionist position is one extreme and the Palestinian Liberation theology position is the other extreme. You can't win.

FT: You have a price on your head in Iraq. Are you scared?

AW: I'm not scared. I'm never scared.

FT: Why not?

AW: It says in the Bible perfect love casts

out fear. And we have perfect love, especially from the children. So I don't fear.

FT: What do you want the Canadian Church to understand about what is happening?

AW: The biggest thing is that we have to pray for peace and really pay for peace.

Pray for peace and pay for peace. The two go together. Our practical work of making peace among enemies and providing for friends who are broken costs us money and we need your help. That's it.

FT: Thank you so much. /FT

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WAR AND PEACE

and
the
Christian
way



By Gordon Heath

HOW SHOULD WE THINK ABOUT WAR AND PEACE IN SUCH A DIFFICULT WORLD?

Unending war and Islam's advance.

Civil unrest and horrific violence.

New weaponry and the threat of rampant disease.

Christians in Europe in the 14th century experienced it all.

Seven centuries later news reports are remarkably similar. What are we to think about the violence in Ukraine or the Middle East? How do we respond to the forced displacement of ancient Christian communities? What is a Christian response to threats such as Islamic State (IS), or Joseph Kony's kidnapping of African children for use as child soldiers?

It's easy to despair in the face of such horrors and to recoil from situations that are dark beyond

our imagination. Or, we may feel like lashing out towards those who do evil.

In a world that's so violent, what is the way forward for a disciple of the Prince of Peace?

The Christian faith has a deep well of resources from which to draw. Not only do we have Scripture, we have the works of church fathers, theologians, pastors, monks, and reformers who have been writing for almost 2,000 years about a Christian response to violence. We also have the example of countless others who have lived faithfully in times both vexing and vicious.

The two big positions – pacifism and just war

Since Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:15) his followers have sought to apply His teaching and example to living in a sin-ridden and war-torn world. The attempt has led to two main streams of thought in response to violence – just war and pacifist, each position having significant nuances within it.

What both positions share

The conviction that Jesus is Lord is central to both positions. There are political powers that should be submitted to, but ultimately a Christian's allegiance is to Christ and His Kingdom, not to a political party or even a nation. As we read in Acts 5:29, when the two loyalties collide, "We must obey God rather than human beings." The line between

these two authorities is often blurred with partisan political prattle that declares, "My country, right or wrong." No Christian can ever entertain such a claim, for as G.K. Chesterton writes, it's like saying, "My mother, drunk or sober."

Two spheres

That being the case, passages such as Romans 13 speak of the legitimate authority and responsibilities of civil government. Historically, both just war and pacifist Christians believed there were two divinely ordained spheres, the Church and the State, although how the two spheres related and functioned, as well as how Christians could participate in the State, were matters of debate.

But both Christian traditions agreed the God-ordained role of the State is to promote justice and suppress sin. They also agreed the State can use "the sword" to carry out its mandate.

Issues related to war, peace, justice and violence are primarily the prerogative of the State. In the confusion and consternation that overwhelm us today, many Christians have ignored centuries of theological reflection, and as a result have a deficient and less-than-robust view of the State.

Christians concerned with war and peace can and should advocate, organize, and act in ways that further the cause of peace and justice, modelling life in the Kingdom of Christ – and in doing so prophetically point to the future fullness of the Kingdom.

Violence by individuals is of course different. War and violence are the purview of government. Personal vengeance and violence are not options for Christians.

But what exactly does all this mean for us today?

Christians thinking seriously about their stand on war and peace

Just war

JUST WAR PROponents BELIEVE A CHRISTIAN CAN PARTICIPATE IN STATE VIOLENCE TO RESTRAIN EVIL, SUCH AS WITH POLICE FORCES AND ARMED SERVICES. PACIFISTS DO NOT EMPHASIZING THEIR DIFFERENCES IN INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION, HOWEVER, OBSCURES THE MORE IMPORTANT COMMON GROUND THEY SHARE. IN FACT, THEY HAVE MUCH MORE IN COMMON THAN MOST USUALLY THINK.

Pacifism

EARLY CHURCH PACIFISTS SUCH AS ORIGEN OR MORE MODERN ONES SUCH AS MENNO SIMONS RECOGNIZED THE STATE HAD A GOD-GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY TO USE VIOLENCE TO SUPPRESS EVIL AND CARRY OUT JUSTICE.

What's the role of civil government?

Protect and act justly in the face of aggression. It bears the sword to do just that.

Promote peace and justice and protect its people.

The positive role of a State can be seen in the many examples of failed states around the globe, and the suffering and misery they leave in their wake. Imagine what a difference it would make in those places if there was good government (a "Leviathan" as Thomas Hobbes called it).



Christians must make ethical decisions in the here and now regarding Ukraine (above), the Islamic State terrorist group, domestic terror and other events.

and the Christian way need to consider these essential points.

Shed end-times silliness

While it may sell books, such an approach to world affairs promotes fear, encourages shallow political engagement, and destroys our witness by making us look foolish and irrelevant to any meaningful political discussion.

Vanquish romantic ideas of war

Romanticizing war should also be rejected. Those who do so clearly know nothing of the horrors of war, its aftermath, and its impact on those soldiers who are fortunate enough to have survived it. As the

ancient Greek poet Pindar declared, “War is sweet to those who have no experience of it.” Christians today need to make decisions on war and peace with clear thinking regarding the scourge of war, as well as its impact on survivors and future generations.

Insist on noncombatant immunity

In the Greek and Roman world, noncombatants were considered out of bounds – women, children and the elderly were not to be targeted with violence. It was a code that was never perfectly followed. In fact, it was often ignored. But it was an ideal incorporated into later views on how wars must be fought. It’s an ideal that remains (and yet is still often ignored) to this day. Whatever you might think of participating in war, certainly this ancient moral code needs to be supported by Christians. Modern developments related to warfare, in particular terrorism and guerrilla warfare as well as weapons of mass destruction, make

the protection of innocents even more problematic and necessary.

Question almost everything

2014 was the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, and the degree to which both sides were convinced that “God was on their side” should give us pause when we are formulating our own political views. Nationalism and cultural influences relentlessly shape our perceptions, and as a result it is very difficult in any age to see things clearly. We are also naive to ignore the power of propaganda, for no war has been waged without a degree of propaganda being used to bolster support for the cause. Nevertheless, Christians must make ethical decisions in the here and now regarding Ukraine, IS, domestic terror and so on, soberly realizing “truth” is often elusive, or at best very difficult to get at.

Crusades remain history

We must be clear there should be no violence specifically associated with the Christian cause. While medieval crusaders may have been just in defending Western Europe against waves of Islamic invasions, their mistake was believing they received spiritual merit for fulfilling their vow to wage war against the infidel. Fortunately this idea has been abandoned. Killing for Christ, or waging war to gain a spiritual blessing, is simply bad theology.

What we talk about when we talk about peace

We live in a post-Fall world. At one time there was harmony with God and between humans. Sin shattered that peaceful existence. The violent world of today is a consequence of that ancient – yet ongoing – rebellion against God and His rule, as are the animosities and ambitions that fuel the fires of violence.

War, rebellion, violence, geno-

Whatever we conclude about war ...how do we promote peace?

- speak prophetically to issues of justice
- aid in the reconciliation of alienated peoples
- organize to alleviate the suffering of those afflicted by the bane of war.

cide, terror and torture are not the way it is supposed to be.

Any attempt to bring about peace on earth must be shaped by at least three conclusions related to the fallen or evil condition of human beings:

Peace is the ideal, and both peace and justice (which makes peace possible) must mark the Christian way.

Any peace can only be relative peace. For all our worthwhile and necessary efforts, the best we can get this side of the Fall is a relative peace that mitigates some of its darkest consequences.

The biblical pre-Fall vision of peace (“shalom”) will only be fully realized after Christ’s return. Visions of utopia based on conquest, scientific progress or a new social order must be dismissed. “They will beat their swords into ploughshares” (Isaiah 2:4) and the Kingdom of Christ will be fully realized, but that lasting peace will only come when Jesus returns and destroys Satan and his minions (Revelation 19).

What do depravity and dignity have to do with it?

As British theologian John Stott noted, humans are marked by both depravity and dignity. Human depravity is clearly taught in Scripture. Ample examples are available in any history book or by watching CNN or CBC. Humans do horrible things to humans. Cries that we are basically “good” ignore a basic and dangerous reality of our post-Fall world.

Yet, post-Fall humans have a dignity because they are still in the “image of God” (Genesis 1:27), and as a result should never be dehumanized. Wartime propaganda takes

What exactly were the Crusades?

A medieval conflict initiated by the European Church, waged for God and to gain spiritual merit.

Just War

The key text: Romans 13:1-7 [“...rulers do not bear the sword for no reason....”]

The key idea: Since the authorities that exist have been established by God, qualified participation in the affairs of civil government is acceptable. Christians are members of the Kingdom of God, but also citizens in earthly kingdoms – and have responsibilities in both.

Just war criteria: Over time various criteria were developed to guide Christians in their decision-making process regarding war.

Jus ad bellum – just cause: the war must be fought to correct a grave injustice (invasion of homeland), declared by a legitimate authority (government) and considered a last resort.

Jus in bello – just means: there must be no targeting of civilians, no harming of prisoners and no damage greater than if the war had not been declared.

Thinkers to consider – just war

Augustine (5th century)
Martin Luther (16th century)
Reinhold Niebuhr (20th century)

Pacifism

The key text: Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

The key idea: Jesus’ Kingdom ethic of “turning the other cheek” and “loving your enemy” is understood to rule out any violence. His example of going to the cross – without using violence to defend himself – is also seen to be a model for Christians when they face injustice.

Historic peace churches: The historic peace churches – Mennonites, Quakers and Brethren – are Christian communions which from their beginnings believed Christians could not participate in the State’s use of the sword. A leading Christian activist organization that draws on the pacifist tradition and these peace churches in Canada is Project Ploughshares (www.ploughshares.ca).

Thinkers to consider – pacifism

Tertullian (3rd century)
Menno Simons (16th century)
John Howard Yoder (20th century)



Getting it on film

- *The Mission* (1986): A just war advocate and pacifist respond to violence – who was right?
- *Tears of the Sun* (2003): The role of a soldier is to protect, but what happens if there are no good soldiers?
- *Machine Gun Preacher* (2011): What does a Christian do when there is no government that protects?

great pains to dehumanize the enemy so the cause is justified and soldiers kill freely. The Christmas Truce of 1914 (when soldiers on both sides shared gifts and sang carols in No Man’s Land) is one example of when soldiers spontaneously recognized a shared humanity – something their officers tried to ensure never happened again.

Any response to violence must hold these two convictions in tension. We need to avoid being duped by naive assumptions about

people’s goodness, but also avoid justifying atrocities against a dehumanized enemy. The State is to suppress sin and resist evil, but not to do evil by denying the inherent dignity of its enemies.

What does all this mean for us today as we read of violence, beheadings, conflict in Ukraine and even terrorism in our own capital city?

First, Christian reflection and response to these circumstances should be marked by a healthy measure of seriousness, for there is no easy an-

swer to any of these intractable and vexing domestic and international issues.

At times we will surely have to act without knowing exactly the best way forward.

Second, we need to recognize the important contributions of both just war and pacifist Christians. U.S. bishops in the 1980s were spot on when they declared, “Both find their roots in the Christian theological tradition; each contributes to the full moral vision we need in pursuit of peace. We believe the two perspectives support and complement one another, each preserving the other from distortion.”

Both positions share a great deal in common, but their points of divergence provide an important and prophetic dialectic for the Church today.

Third, Christians of both traditions should vigorously promote peace. The same U.S. bishops declared, “The Christian has no choice but to defend peace, properly understood, against aggression.

This is an inalienable obligation. It is the *how* of defending peace which offers moral options.”

Fourth, we should recognize the prerogative of the State to use the sword to suppress evil. Of course, governments do not always act justly, nor do they use the sword wisely at times. A State can even become a Leviathan that devours its citizens. Nevertheless, the abuses and dangers of government do not negate the God-ordained role of the State.

Certainly Christians have their eyes wide open and hold realistic expectations, remembering who is Lord. And when loyalties clash, Caesar must give way to Jesus.


Christians also recognize the potential of governments to propagandize and distort the truth, to romanticize war or dehumanize the “enemy.” But in cases of self-defence against an aggressive nation, or in response to acts of terrorism, just war and pacifist Christians might both agree

that the State can respond with a righteous use of the sword. Just war proponents can agree to qualified participation in that use of the sword. Pacifists will not.

Finally, we offer hope, especially for those who have suffered greatly or continue to face unimaginable horrors.

The return of Jesus and the full establishment of His Kingdom is the great hope of Christians, wherever they fit on the just war or pacifist spectrum.

That return guarantees that evil, suffering and tears will someday be gone for good. Perfect and lasting peace will be established. And the original harmony of creation will be restored. John cries out for this when he writes in Revelation 22:20, “Come, Lord Jesus.” For now, we navigate our way through war, peace and everything in-between. **/FT**

 Gordon L. Heath is associate professor of Christian history and centenary chair in world Christianity at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ont.



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Hamilton churches turn

A network of churches working together helps transform Canada's ninth largest city

By Matthew Forrest Lowe

If you look carefully enough, you can see traces of it all over Hamilton.

From an eatery where people from all walks of urban life buy a coffee for one another, to New Hope Community Bikes rebuilding relationships along with bicycles. Little snapshots of the restoration the gospel offers are everywhere in what has been known as a hard-scrabble city.

Christian efforts in the city have been magnified in recent years by TrueCity Hamilton, a multid denominational network of churches co-operating for “the good of the city.” The co-operation of TrueCity is why

Christians Against Poverty, a debt-counselling ministry recently transplanted to Canada, chose Hamilton as the base for its new work. They knew they could connect quickly and easily with many churches here.

Those watching TrueCity call it a force for change. Churches who didn't necessarily work together before are now co-ordinating their efforts to do outreach projects together, like distributing backpacks stuffed with supplies to schoolchildren every fall. One church may provide the supplies, the other the hands to place them in the bags. Same with the food

hampers delivered to people on the margins each Christmas. Together, churches help host CrossCulture, a biannual worship and service event for youth and university students.

TrueCity is a strategy as well as a movement. Participant Chris Schoon, senior pastor of First Hamilton Christian Reformed Church, explains that TrueCity “reminds us through friendship and mutual service that God's grace, mission and Kingdom are bigger than us.”

Yes, TrueCity is a network – sort of. Leaders try to avoid the language and potential baggage of calling it an organization, because TrueCity feels more

organic than that. TrueCity is churches pooling their efforts to meet the needs of their neighbours, bringing new levels of creativity and co-operation to the command to love God and love neighbour.

TrueCity just turned ten. And there is excitement in the air as leaders and participating congregations meet to celebrate, look back and plot what comes next.

Dave Witt is network partnership developer for TrueCity. “We knew it wouldn't be easy to *start* the network, but we didn't realize what it would take to *maintain* it,” says Witt. “Institutionally, collaboration



Steel City around

Christian efforts in Hamilton – such as New Hope Community Bikes which is rebuilding relationships along with bicycles – have been magnified in recent years by TrueCity Hamilton.

isn't a traditional marker of success for churches, because it's hard to see the immediate benefit for their members."

For Matt Pamplin, associate pastor of discipleship and teaching at Grindstone Church, TrueCity "gives us a broader perspective on the Body of Christ, what God's up to in other local churches. The relationship with other congregations has really helped us think about how we minister in our context," says Pamplin, "particularly how urban churches can help us as a suburban church to learn to do ministry." Part of what that's meant for Grindstone has been planting a campus down-

town, illustrating the congregational interdependence TrueCity nurtures throughout this amalgamated city area.

Witt adds it was the coming together of struggling churches, not successful ones, which actually birthed this movement. The first TrueCity churches were all struggling, says Witt, trying to reinvent themselves in response to problems that came with their own aging church buildings, urban decay, and other cultural and economic changes throughout the city. They shared the same difficult choice – "Either you make your way in new ways, facing the scary idea of collaborat-

ing with your competition, or you die out."

The original group of six churches focused, says Witt, "not on creating a centralized entity, but a shared mission – empowering not the leaders of the movement, but nourishing the life of congregations." Churches began to encourage each other in creative mission ideas – all with the ultimate goal of sharing the gospel. They were all interested, says Witt, "in missionally proclaiming the gospel."

TrueCity first focused on work already underway. The wheel did not need to be reinvented in Hamilton. They came alongside CrossCulture,

The vision of TrueCity

We envision whole congregations who have embraced their identity as a people formed for God's mission. These congregations are increasingly identifying and engaging with their neighbourhoods. They are open and welcoming to everyone, and involved in many aspects of the life of the neighbourhood. They serve others sacrificially and generously, and allow themselves to be served and shaped by the experiences and insights of others. These congregations are cultivating community around practices of Word and Sacrament and indwelling the story of God's redemptive and loving involvement in the world. Emphasizing presence over program, they are the local embodiments of God's reign and mission in this city.

Congregations throughout the city understand themselves to be integrally and essentially connected with each other as part of the one mission of God. They celebrate each other; sharing people, money, buildings, leaders, ideas and experience to promote God's loving intentions here. Congregations partner in training leaders and forming disciples who explore together ways of engaging communities with the Gospel. Congregants and leaders work together with those from other congregations in missional efforts throughout the city.

—www.truecityhamilton.ca

TrueCity leaders offer advice on how to form a movement of churches

- Determine shared theological values all interested churches can commit to, and establish some shared practices around those commitments to get started.
- Be clear about what you unite around. Start with a neutral facilitator.
- Go beyond pastors to be the leaders of the movement. Locate people who are already planted in the area who can be given the time and resources to work on the movement.
- Play with pulpit exchanges. Interested churches exchange preachers for one Sunday, so that each congregation can hear a message from a new voice.
- Begin and maintain a practice. Gather for meetings, but also for building relationships between pastors and church leaders.
- Seek partnerships between churches, but also among parachurch ministries.

the worship and service event run by Redeemer University College students. TrueCity co-ordinates and publicizes the events, enabling a few hundred youth to connect and serve with local churches and other mission organizations. TrueCity built on an already existing desire to help refugees and facilitated the creation of Micah House, a home for refugee claimants. It “flowed from the energy of churches coming together to confront the neglect of refugees,” says Witt.

One strategy that has

IT WAS THE COMING TOGETHER OF STRUGGLING CHURCHES, NOT SUCCESSFUL ONES.

emerged most consistently and effectively for TrueCity, Witt says, is the sharing of stories. Churches keep up with each other’s activities. A Baptist church started a food pantry, for example, because they saw and learned from another one in action.

TrueCity even has an annual conference for the same reason families have reunions. They hear each other’s stories and see what other TrueCity churches are doing. This is the actual face-to-face networking, to celebrate, worship and learn – a big-group recharging of batteries for the good of Hamilton.

A YouTube channel offers a reel of short videos telling stories, examples that others can learn from. TrueCity’s vision is interwoven through every story shared. As Dwayne Cline, pastor of Hughson Street Baptist Church, says in one clip, “The city expects our churches to all be individual units.... As we co-operate together, they will see us working together at unprecedented levels, and it will raise eyebrows.”

Witt sees areas where TrueCity can continue to develop, including the continued fostering of community in unexpected places – not only be-

tween churches of different denominations, but in troubled neighbourhoods as well. An even higher priority, Witt says, is to live out “what it means to share the gospel in response to questions that collaborating churches raise. We need to share answers that Hamilton’s people need to hear.”

Could something like TrueCity work in other cities?

“Yes, as long as you don’t call it TrueCity,” Witt laughs. “It has to be about *your town, your city.*” Many of those who have visited from outside the immediate area to attend the annual conference have found it, in his words, “more relevant *because* it’s particular” to Hamilton – the deliberately narrow geographical focus on Hamilton’s unique needs is part of what gives the movement such impact.

What Paul says of individual roles and gifts in the Body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12 can also apply to whole churches, says Witt. One of the most essential things a movement like TrueCity does is help congregations “to recognize that each church has a gift to share with the Body of Christ.” /FT

Growing a church on TrueCity soil

What’s it like for a new church to grow up within TrueCity’s network? As the founding pastor of Eucharist, a church that began in September 2010, Kevin Makins believes TrueCity helps to shape the identity of churches throughout Hamilton, including his own.

“TrueCity gives a strong sense of identity, what it means to be part of *the* church, not just *a* church, in Hamilton,” he says. “There’s a shared calling of what to be and do. If there’s something that another TrueCity church is doing well, the question isn’t just, ‘How do

we join in?’ Since the people there are our *friends*, it’s more like, ‘How do we join *with them* in this ministry?’”

Makins credits TrueCity with helping to cultivate an interchurch culture that celebrates congregational diversity, connecting people to Eucharist who might not have found a good fit elsewhere. That culture, he notes, can also ease pastoral transitions. When a pastoral couple stepped down from leadership at another TrueCity church, they were welcomed into Eucharist as gifted and experienced mentors.





Joy in Lament

Singing the Lord's song in a strange land

By Renée James

Wine Before Breakfast was born seven days after 9/11. Conceived by Brian Walsh, author, theologian and Christian Reformed campus minister at the University of Toronto, the early morning gathering attracted

diverse Christians from across the campus. It still does.

At that time, when almost 3,000 people were killed by a series of terrorist attacks in America, Walsh wondered, "How do you celebrate resurrection life in the face of such death? How do you

launch a new expression of Christian worship and life together in a world about to launch into a never-ending 'war on terrorism'?"

He muses on these questions in the introduction to *St. John Before Breakfast*, a recently self-published collec-

tion of prayers, homilies and reflections from those weekly gatherings.

His answer? "With eyes wide open to the devastating times in which we live. With lament."

* * * *

Ebola in West Africa. Syria. The Islamic State militants in Iraq. The murders of Canadian soldiers Nathan Cirillo and Patrice Vincent. How do we deal with all that is wrong around us?

Sam Chaise is executive director of Canadian Baptist Ministries. His response, an August 2014 blog post entitled "So Then, There's Nothing I Can Do," struck a chord. It caused a 20 per cent spike in visits to www.cbmin.org.

He wrote to suggest that avoidance, fatalism and even obsession (how many likes/dislikes about today's tragedy can one share on Facebook!) are not the active responses that faith demands in response to these problems.

"There is a better way," he wrote. "The better way is a biblical way – the way of lament."

What does it mean to lament?

"Lament is a crying out – in the midst of a world tainted by sin, sorrow, pain and confusion – to a good God who has the power to change a given situation," says Stacey Gleddiesmith, program director of worship arts at Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, B.C.

As most of the Book of Psalms demonstrates, a true lament complains loud and long to God with honesty that leaves no room for polite self-consciousness. The lamenter doesn't stop there. He asks

God to do something – and then, having named his request, closes his lament by affirming his trust in God. That affirmation of trust is as much a part of the lament as is the complaint.

Walsh believes our churches need to lament many things, including:

- the loss of so many of our youth because of our disconnected spirituality
- the ecological devastation of creation
- the cultural genocide of our First Nations neighbours
- the idolatry of Western culture’s economic worldview and exploitative practices.

Strong words, yet we cannot lament unless we see what there is to grieve. “Perhaps we’re too . . . comfortable. We’re either too secure or we’ve numbed ourselves, we have averted our gaze, we have refused to look the pain of the world (and our own pain) in the eye.”

The hard work of lament

But that type of seeing assumes we readily name our deepest disappointments. It demands our commitment to the discipline of stability in our faith communities.

Pastor Tim Dickau and his Vancouver congregation have looked the world’s pain in the eye for over 15 years. Indeed, at Grandview Calvary Baptist Church, they welcome it.

Lament as a way of worship at Grandview began when refugees were welcomed and encouraged to regularly pray out of their personal experiences of death, oppression, poverty and injustice. They did so, more often than not, in their own languages.

Congregants gifted in songwriting and writing began composing and leading the congregation in songs and liturgies of lament. (Few lament worship songs could be sourced 15 years ago.)

That welcome to lament international concerns continues today. Kinbrace, the church’s nearby housing for refugee claimants, supplies constant reminders.

Lament is also prominent at Grandview in the liturgical season of Lent, when the congregation observes the Stations of the Cross.

In fact, Grandview laments almost every week and engages in corporate confession on concerns ranging from Can-

ada’s treatment of its aboriginal peoples to nationalism.

“You can’t get at these issues if you don’t plan to stay in the community,” says Dickau.

Even so, he admits that Grandview has had to work at finding the balance between grief and joy.

Lament in worship can quickly become a spin cycle of heaviness that turns away churchgoers and seekers. Who wants to dwell on sorrow, pain, disillusionment and expressions of betrayal?

But practising biblical lament well means doing more than singing a dirge or making space to express personal or corporate grief. It refuses to shellac the desperation that marks its plea to God for justice, deliverance and healing. It also affirms – even joyfully! – the lamenter’s faith in a God of covenant, a God who has made promises to His creation and can be kept to those promises.

The persistent widow kept returning to plead her case. Jesus told her story to show His listeners how they ought to pray, asking them if the Son of Man would find such faith on earth when He returned.

Online resources

Search www.YouTube.com for:

- Grandview Calgary Baptist laments refugee bill
 - Tom Wuest worship
- (Find more music by this former Grandview Calgary Baptist songwriter at www.BrassTrumpetPublishing.com)

Search www.ReformedWorship.org for:

- anguish
 - lament
- (to find materials by Stacey Gleddiesmith, including a December 2011 service focused on Psalm 22)

Search www.EmpireRemixed.com (to find liturgies, books, prayers and blog posts on lament, curated by Brian Walsh) –RJ

Results of lament: genuine faith

Biblical lament declares that God is good, regardless of circumstances. When we don’t lament as a community, “Our faith falters when sickness or evil or pain touch our lives,” says Gleddiesmith. “Even when we don’t feel His presence, we can count on the character of God who is both powerful and good.”

Walsh agrees. He sees three things happening as churches engage in lament.

First, increasingly authentic churches become indispensable in the work of personal and systemic healing and restoration.

Second, churches begin to see where pain exists in the world.

Finally, the Bible becomes a book of new power whose divinely inspired language of pain and trust, faith and struggle inform every page.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

On biblical lament:



In the House of the Lord: Inhabiting the Psalms of Lament by Michael Jenkins [Liturgical Press, 1998]



Evoking Lament: A Theological Discussion by Eva Harasta and Brian Brock [Bloomsbury / T&T Clark, 2009]



The Living Psalms by Claus Westermann [T&T Clark, 1989]



The Prophetic Imagination by Walter Brueggemann [Fortress Press, rev. 2004 [1978]]



Prayer in the Hebrew Bible: The Drama of Divine-Human Dialogue by Samuel Balentine [Fortress Press, 2005 [1993]]



The Psalms as Christian Lament: A Historical Commentary by Bruce Waltke, James Houston and Erika Moore [Eerdmans, 2014]

Results of lament: authentic mission

“Folks broken up about ecological devastation, geopolitical enmity, genocide, slavery, economic exploitation and oppression are close to the Kingdom. They are close to the heart of God who also weeps before such brokenness,” says Walsh.

Chaise goes further. “It is critical for [Christian] mission to be authentically incarnational – embodied in and flowing out of the human experience. Otherwise it is too easy to treat people as projects and to engage brokenness as a problem to be solved.”

It takes humility to acknowledge we cannot quickly “solve” brokenness, to choose to sit or stand with people in the midst of their pain and join their cry of, “How long, Lord? How long?” – even when God’s answers don’t come quickly.

Perhaps especially then.

When we lament we choose to seed the Kingdom right where we are, advocating for justice and peace without shrill anxiety or obsession. We lament and then we “get up and creatively participate in the work of redemption that is before us,” Chaise affirms.

Results of lament: joy

Gleddiesmith believes joy blossoms in a church that laments. “That’s the fruit, the outworking of lament,” she suggests. The majority of lament in the Psalms and the books of the minor prophets assert joy – joy in the face of exile, barrenness and death.

Joy in lament. Jesus’ life story holds them both, and this is the only reason why we can hold both together within our worship and our lives.


Jesus celebrated the coming Kingdom and yet He wept over Jerusalem and in the garden. And on the cross He cried out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

Many Jews standing near the cross would have recognized Jesus’s cry as the first line of Psalm 22 and known by heart the text that followed. Jesus’ words would have led

them into David’s assertion of abandonment, desperate suffering and need for deliverance. They would have remembered David’s expression of trust in verse 24. “For He has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; He has not hidden His face from him, but has listened to his cry for help,” and recalled David’s final joyful

praise – “He has done it.”

Jesus’ death and resurrection invite us to face the world’s pain – and ours – and move toward that pain, knowing that we will never be overcome by it. On the cross, Jesus’ lament cry became ours, both its grief and its joy. It is finished. /FT

 Renée James of Toronto is the communications director for Canadian Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec.

Five ways to incorporate lament in worship

By Stacey Gleddiesmith



structure of a lament psalm to help them to identify with the issue they are praying over. Be specific. It’s a lot harder to effectively pray about injustice than about re-emerging violence between the Hutus and Tutsis of Rwanda.

If you have refugees in your congregation, ask them to tell their stories. Plan a special service to cry out with them on behalf of their country, or take some time out of the service every week to do so.

Learn what injustice, pain and poverty exist in your church’s neighborhood. Plan a service of lament for your neighborhood and invite the public to participate with you in laying their struggles before God.

When you pray for a given area of the world, try to find a work of art by an artist who lives (or lived) there that communicates some of the struggle and pain experienced by people in that area.

Contextualize the work of art for your congregation and then encourage them to pray into what they are seeing.

SOURCE: REFORMED WORSHIP, DECEMBER 2010.

Select a different international or local struggle to pray for each week. Choose people to pray who are passionate about issues such as poverty and injustice. Have them pray with compassion, but ask them not to be afraid

to call those responsible to account before God.

Break into small groups to pray over a certain issue or struggle (or many different issues and struggles). Give groups some background information and the basic

PHOTO: DARIN DUECK, THE DUECK GROUP (PHOTOGRAPHY)

One of the most prominent experts on climate change in North America is Canadian – and an Evangelical

Canada's climate change evangelist

By Alex Newman

It's 1977. It is a warm summer evening in Muskoka, Ont., and four-year-old Katharine Hayhoe lies on a blanket under a star-studded sky next to her dad Doug. He points out the Andromeda galaxy as she looks through binoculars.

Hayhoe's been scanning the sky ever since.

In one grainy early photo, she wears a birthday hat and a mischievous grin – behind her a huge telescope on a tripod. As an undergrad at the University of Toronto studying physics and astronomy, Hayhoe could usually be found in the observatory on the top floor of the McLennan building.

Today at 41, the world-renowned atmospheric scientist is still scanning the sky – and the earth – to determine scientific bases for assessing climate change impact on humans and the environment. She has authored more than a hundred papers on climate change, sits on boards and government organizations too numerous to list, and last April was named to *Time* magazine's list of the hundred most influential people in the world.

She is also an Evangelical – raised in an

evangelical family and married to a pastor and professor. Hayhoe credits her science educator father – first a teacher, then science co-ordinator for the Toronto District School Board, and now a professor at Tyndale – for the fact she has never experienced a conflict between faith and science.

“My father just loved to understand things, whether it was a verse in the Bible or a wildflower in the woods,” Hayhoe recalls. “He regarded both as an expression of God and taught us that we can learn about God through the Bible, and equally through nature and creation and the world around us.”

Not surprisingly, Hayhoe's career path has been overwhelmingly academic. After undergrad, she completed a master's – and later her PhD – in atmospheric science at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. That's also where she met her husband Andrew Farley, who was doing his PhD in applied linguistics.

The couple now lives in Lubbock, Texas, and teaches at Texas Tech University. Arriving there was a story in itself. While Farley was on sabbatical from his

teaching position at the University of Notre Dame in Chicago, and writing a textbook, a friend from Lubbock called to see if he could fill in as pastor for a local church searching for a full-time minister. The temporary move turned into a permanent job. “He wasn't even a candidate,” Hayhoe says. “But they'd fallen in love with him, and he with them.”

She, however, wasn't so keen on the move until Farley suggested they only consider it if both could secure positions at Texas Tech.

“That was a pretty big fleece to lay out,” Hayhoe says, laughing. “It's very rare for academic couples to find work together.” But the job offers did come – research professor position for her in the Geosciences department and professor in linguistics for him – so they moved south.

Within a few months of arriving, Hay-



PHOTO: ASHLEY RODGERS, TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY



hoe was invited to speak about climate change to a women's group. It was her first experience communicating climate science to a public audience in Texas, where a 2013 survey by the Yale Project on Climate Change Communication shows the majority of Texans do not believe climate is changing due to human activities. But it taught her something invaluable – the pressing questions that people outside of academia have about climate change.

Word spread quickly that a local Christian woman and scientist – who believed in God's sovereignty – was available to answer questions about climate change. And soon a growing amount of Hayhoe's time was booked speaking to community groups, seniors' homes, churches and faith groups.

On the speaking circuit, Hayhoe says

considerable time is given to questions about the straight science of climate change, as well as how to prepare for a changing climate and how to reduce the impact human activities are having on our world.

But she also addresses the social consequences – how weather, especially extreme weather, affects the poor and vulnerable. Hayhoe clearly remembers childhood friends who lived in homes constructed from cardboard Tide boxes in Colombia where her parents served as missionaries for a time. "People living on the edge without a financial, infrastructure, health or social cushion are extremely vulnerable to these events," she says. "In North America we are still quite insulated from natural disasters, so we often don't understand why climate change, which is increasing the risk of

many of these types of disasters, is such a problem for people."

Hayhoe finds this message resonates with Christians, who are always the first to open their wallets for people in need. "This story is not about the environment so much as it is about people, and loving others as Christ loved us."

At the same time Farley too was also fielding questions about climate change. He understood people with doubts – it took him two years to be convinced of Hayhoe's climate change research – and wanted to be able to direct them to good resource materials. Finding none, he suggested to Hayhoe that they co-author a book on the topic. And in 2009 *A Climate for Change: Global Warming Facts for Faith-Based Decisions* (FaithWords, 2009) was published.

While writing the book, the couple



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spent plenty of nights debating, Hayhoe recalls, and ultimately decided nothing would go in unless they both agreed to it.

After publication the book caused reactions, both positive and negative. One of the most affirming was from colleagues who suddenly started sharing that they were Christians too. “Scientists talk to one another about science,” Hayhoe says. “But we don’t talk about what the kids are doing or where we go to church on Sunday.” A large percentage of scientists, she says, embrace some form of spirituality.

In her own field Hayhoe can count four climate scientists, active in the Christian community, who were part of a group of seven asked to report on climate change to the American Association for the Advancement of Science (the world’s largest general scientific society) – Hayhoe, Marshall Shepherd, Richard Alley and Jim McCarthy.

Although the “stellar” group of postdoctoral women working with her at Texas

Tech’s Climate Science Center aren’t Christians, Hayhoe feels God at work there as well. Like her, they came to Texas with academic spouses, altering their career paths for a season – with amazing results.

“We’ve been able to accomplish things that wouldn’t have been possible on our own,” Hayhoe says. “Rather than a homogenous team of the same background, which is the usual case, I have a team of women in geography, social sciences, physical science, computer science, from all over the world. By merging all those fields of research we’ve been able to do some unique work.” The message there, she believes, is that “For all our plans, when you let God be in control, amazing things can happen.”

That work has propelled her into the centre of her specific discipline, and after starting her company ATMOS Research in 1997 she has been increasingly sought after to speak and consult. In 2007 Hayhoe was part of the team that reviewed the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change, which won the Nobel Prize in 2007.

While the accolades keep rolling in, Hayhoe remains firmly rooted in her faith. On a PBS video when she is asked, “Al Gore or Billy Graham?” her response is crisp and clear. “Billy Graham for sure. He transcends politics.”

Hayhoe is consistently open about her Christian faith. In fact PBS playfully calls her the climate change evangelist. Hayhoe is regarded in the secular world as somewhat of an anomaly. During an interview Don Cheadle, host of the TV series *Years of Living Dangerously*, admitted to being fascinated by smart people who “defy stereotype.” He was referring to Hayhoe – the whip-smart scientific consultant for the show, because she also happens to be an Evangelical.

Hayhoe says Cheadle’s confession saddened her for its commentary on the perception of Christians and their relationship to science. But she also recognizes it as an opportunity to change how non-Christians regard Evangelicals: “She’s a scientist *and* a Christian too?” /FT

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Alex Newman of Toronto is a senior writer for *Faith Today*.

Boldly Stated

Why codes of conduct and statements of faith matter to Christian organizations



Organizational codes of conduct and statements of faith can be guiding documents – and provoke controversy. Here's why *By Ron Csillag*

As statements of faith tend to be, the one at Prairie Bible Institute (PBI) in Three Hills, Alta., is unequivocal. Like many Christian belief statements, it affirms the Bible as divinely inspired. It states that Satan continues to threaten and that the physical return of Jesus is imminent. The school also understands Adam and Eve as real people, rooted in time and place.

While the postsecondary institution does allow “for some variation in theological perspective or position,” their statement says it is only where the variance “is warranted” by Scripture itself.

So there was little wiggle room last summer for Anthony Siegrist, an associate professor of Christian theology at Prairie, who believes the historical existence of Adam and Eve cannot be known for certain – and that this belief is not theologically central anyway. Because of this, Siegrist's contract

was not renewed after June 30, 2015.

“Professors have the freedom to present various views in the classroom,” PBI said in a public statement – an announcement which affirmed Siegrist's character and gifts as a professor – “but in the end they are asked to believe and teach the positions that are in line with Prairie's Statement of Faith.” That statement was approved by both Siegrist and Prairie as they worked through what it meant to part ways. Mark L. Maxwell is president of Prairie: “We hoped to demonstrate for our various communities, especially our students, how to take positions on a biblical basis as well as how to implement the ramifications (letting a professor go) in a healthy Christian way,” he says.

The Prairie Christian Academy, a five-minute walk away from PBI, made headlines last spring when it received \$7 million from Alberta's Conservative government

to modernize and expand their facilities. Opposition politicians cried foul when it was discovered that public money was being used to fund a school where teachers must agree to abstain from homosexual relations (as well as adultery).

What's a Christian organization to do?

WE LIKE TO PUT THINGS IN WRITING

Across the spectrum of Christian expression, there is a long tradition of clearly laying out standards for belief and behaviour. And often for good reason, says Bruce J. Clemenger, president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC).

“Agreed-upon statements of faith bring people together on common ground and sometimes, of course, show how people are apart in what they believe,” says Clemenger. As an umbrella organization for Christian organizations, schools, denominations and

Statement or code: What's the difference?

Many Christian organizations have both statements of faith and codes of conduct. They act as guiding documents for the organization and those who join up. But what's the difference between the two?

Statements of faith normally consist of a list of beliefs that are doctrinal in nature. They often begin with the phrase "We believe" and what follows is a list of just that. Tyndale University College & Seminary's statement of faith, for example, begins with: "[1] there is but one true and living God who exists eternally in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God alone is Creator, Preserver and

Governor of all things visible and invisible, at work in the world to redeem creation."

Community covenants (or codes of conduct) have to do with the practical living out of those beliefs. The preamble to the "Community Covenant Agreement" of Trinity Western University, for example, states, "The community covenant is a solemn pledge in which members place themselves under obligations on the part of the institution to its members, the members to the institution, and the members to one another. In making this pledge, members enter into a contractual agreement and a relational bond."

congregations in Canada, the EFC has its own statement of faith which affiliate organizations agree on – virtually identical to the one used by the World Evangelical Alliance and its affiliates worldwide.

"Statements of faith and codes of conduct, which many Christian organizations have, protect the organization and the people affiliated with them," says Clemenger. "Such communal documents say, 'This is who we are and the standards we share.' And they ask, 'Are you comfortable here? Is this where you belong?'"

Maxwell agrees: "The primary reason for statements of faith and community covenants is to establish an organization's foundation and make those positions clear to its various publics. In our case, potential students and faculty/staff members can know what to expect when they arrive on campus."

Boldly stated and prominently positioned codes of conduct, covenants and mission statements tend to be among the first things to greet visitors on many Christian websites. Sometimes they require signatures to indicate acceptance and agreement – and a pledge to live by them – as at schools, social service groups and often Christian summer camps. Sometimes these statements of faith and codes are considered an implicit part of an employment or attendance contract.

Statements of faith spell out doctrine. Codes of conduct spell out the expecta-

tions of personal behaviour that align with the values and beliefs of the organization. Both styles have drawn public ire in recent Canadian history.

Among the better-known Canadian codes of conduct is the five-page "Community Covenant Agreement" at Trinity Western University in Langley, B.C. This document,

Codes of conduct spell out the expectations of personal behaviour that align with the values and beliefs of the organization.

much in the news of late as the institution seeks nationwide acceptance for graduates of its proposed law school, commits students and staff to "voluntarily abstain" from "sexual intimacy that violates the sacredness of marriage between a man and a woman," and such activities as gossip, lying and drinking alcohol or smoking on campus.

Separately, TWU faculty and staff are required to sign, annually, a ten-point statement of faith committing them to "historic orthodox" Christian beliefs. But they have choices. They can agree with the entire statement or check a box stating they wish to clarify their understanding of one or more of the points.

TWU's proposal to establish a law school (now scheduled to open in 2016 and gradu-

ate its first class of 60 students in 2019) re-ignited a firestorm of controversy over the TWU Community Covenant that last burned high when the school was establishing its teachers college, ending with a Supreme Court ruling in 2001 in favour of TWU. The Canadian Council of Law Deans alleged that gay, lesbian or bisexual students "may be subject to disciplinary measures, including expulsion," and remind that "discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is unlawful in Canada and fundamentally at odds with the core values of all Canadian law schools." The TWU law school situation continue to evolve.

TWU's law school application received green light by the Federation of Law Societies of Canada. However, some law societies decided to conduct their own independent reviews and establish their own policies, with some outcomes still pending.

STATEMENTS FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Both sets of TWU protocols are at least 45 years old and constitute what Bob Kuhn, president of TWU, feels are the university's "foundational documents." And Kuhn argues these protocols, like similar rules elsewhere, are now required more than ever because of the need "to identify beliefs and values of a community so that it is clear what the community [bases] its fundamental existence on," he said in an interview.

Kuhn acknowledges that at a Christian institution of higher learning, or at any obviously Christian organization, identifying its Christian character was something you used to simply assume.

But that's changed.

"I think it's less so now [given] variations on definitions of 'Christian.' Really it's a form of transparency [and] honesty to admit that certain things are part of the belief system of the community that calls itself Trinity Western University," says Kuhn. And he knows of no example of these covenants clashing with academic freedom. Besides, "Academic freedom must be defined to be understood. [It's] not a freedom to say and do anything one wants. It has parameters, as any freedom."

One of the problems religious commun-

ities have always faced is the need to maintain their own beliefs and practices without fear of reprisal from the surrounding community, explains Barry Bussey, vice-president for legal affairs at the Canadian Council of Christian Charities.

When the surrounding community was similar to the religious community, “There was not much pressure to conform,” Bussey said. Historically, Canada “was perfectly fine with such codes.” But social changes, such as divorce, premarital sex and definitions of marriage, have had “profound implications” for religious communities, which face increasing pressure to conform to the majority opinion.

“This is a troubling development that will have a long-term effect on our country’s openness to religious freedom,” Bussey notes. “Time will tell, but the trajectory is not promising.” Ultimately, he reckons, it’s up to each community to determine whether these statements of faith and codes of conduct are necessary for the maintenance of their religious beliefs and practices.

Codes of conduct have been around “for a very long time,” says Janet Epp Buckingham, a TWU associate professor of political studies and history and director of the Laurentian Leadership Centre, and former general legal counsel of the EFC. Christian organizations, she explains, still employ them because they perceive the wider culture as having become “much more individualistic, and the balance between community and the individual has swung over the individual.”

In other words, codes and covenants are a way of maintaining focus on and direction of the Christian collective consciousness as society veers toward stressing personal rights. And statements of faith spell out the beliefs that stand behind them. “There may be another way of establishing that common community or common mission,” Epp Buckingham notes, “but [codes of conduct and statements of faith] have historically been one of the ways that is accomplished.”

WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

More than ever Canadian organizations are paying attention to the legal ramifications of codes of conduct. The law ap-

plies a two-part test. The statement or code must be consistently applied and must be something the organization has a consistent focus on. Secondly, it has to be actually required for the particular position the person holds.

At a Christian school, it’s easy to say that teachers must abide by a religious code because they are instilling Christian principles in the classroom. But what about the office secretary or the janitor? “There have been situations,” Epp Buckingham says, “where schools have said, ‘Look, the janitor does have a mission and outreach to the students, and it is an important part of that person’s job.’”

But sometimes even an employee’s signature on a statement of faith is no guarantee of success. In one famous case a support worker for Christian Horizons, a Toronto-based Christian group that provides services for people with developmental disabilities, signed, on her hiring, the organization’s Lifestyle and Morality Statement, which prohibited, among other things, same-sex relationships. After she came out as a lesbian, she resigned and filed a complaint with Ontario’s Human Rights Commission. In 2008 a tribunal ruled in her favour, the organization appealed, and two years later a court upheld parts of her complaint.

The ruling has “broad implications” for Christian employees who serve the public in Canada, according to Ian Moes, a lawyer who practises in charity and not-for-profit law. “Christian organizations that serve the general public must ensure that they have clearly defined their mission in a way that allows them to limit employee hiring and retention practices to those who are in sync with that mission, or risk losing their Christian distinctives,” he warned in an online post after the human rights tribunal’s finding. “Organizations must see their mission and doctrinal distinctives reflected in each job description, answering the essential question, ‘Why must this employee be a Christian, and live a Christian life, in order to work with us?’”

Bussey’s advice to religious organizations is straightforward. “First, ask if codes of conduct are important for you to




Bob Kuhn says that protocols are now required more than ever.

maintain your religious faith and practice.” If they are, seek legal advice to ensure that you craft a code that agrees with the law in the jurisdiction where you live.

When Prairie Bible Institute released Siegrist, it made a point of stating that his “commitment to the gospel, his character, and his performance are not an issue.” Siegrist himself said at the time that he was saddened by the decision, but “remain(s) thankful for my time as a member of the Prairie community.” Siegrist has now wrapped up his Prairie contract, and has headed to Minnesota to do research, family at his side. In an email to *Faith Today*, he wasn’t yet sure what would come next. “I hope to find a venue to continue my teaching and scholarship,” he wrote. “This stuff gets right to the heart of institutional identity and life in community, or at least it seems to.”

As for Prairie, they too have moved on and are sifting through a large pile of applications for the position of theology professor. “I’m aware the ‘slippery slope’ goes both ways,” says Maxwell. “We are at risk of becoming too liberal in our treatment of Scripture as well as too doctrinally dogmatic. The latter is perhaps our greater risk, so let me give you some comfort that we intend to guard against both sides of those slopes. A quote my grandfather [a former Prairie president] was famous for – and part of our Prairie heritage – was, ‘The hardest thing in the world is to keep balanced.’” /FT

 Ron Csillag is a freelance writer in Toronto.

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One of the things Sylvester has

appreciated about his Ambrose experience is being surrounded by a community of peers that is moving together toward transformation of the whole person.

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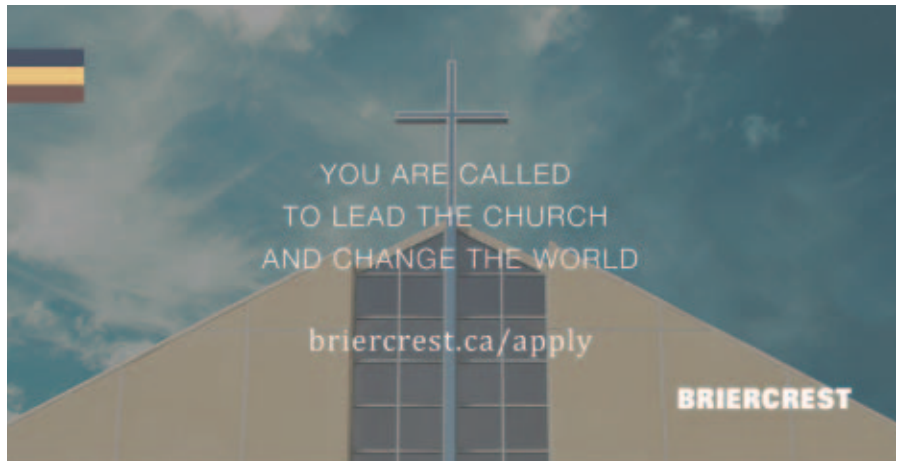
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PEOPLES CHRISTIAN ACADEMY: Christ at the Centre

In November 2012, *Maclean's* magazine presented a cover feature called "Stop Brainwashing our Kids: How Educators are Hijacking the Classroom to Push Their Own Political Agenda." The article poses this question: "Protesting pipelines, celebrating polygamy:



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is the new social justice agenda in class pushing politics at the expense of learning?" The article observes that faculties of education are quite intentionally preparing student teachers to weave social justice throughout the school curriculum – in math and science, language arts and social studies, drama and even physical education.

The unfortunate truth is that the classroom teacher's (or the government's) viewpoint, on matters of social justice, may be in conflict with that of the community at large. This attempt to integrate the values of a totally secular, anti-traditional worldview into curriculum-wide activity and practice is troubling to many parents.

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Entering a new era

Trinity Western University’s (TWU) fourth president, Bob Kuhn, JD, was inaugurated on November 6, 2014. Since spring 2013, Kuhn has been working to lead TWU into a new era of increased impact – both through the transformed lives of students and as a Christian academic voice in Canada.

TWU’s transformative education shows in the service of its students, who volunteer locally and globally in a variety of ways, from serving the homeless in Vancouver to working with children’s ministries in Guatemala. Whether students are looking for a great undergraduate experience, career advancement through graduate studies or to complete an unfinished degree while working, TWU equips them to live out the great commission – to experience and pass on Christ’s truth, reconciliation, compassion and hope.

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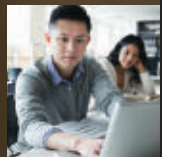
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“We are entering a time when our beliefs are often considered to be irrelevant, ignorant, and intolerant,” said Kuhn, “but this is a tremendous opportunity to have a greater ministry impact than ever before – to, as we are called in Matthew 5:16, let our “light shine before all men.”

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Through working at the Tyndale Research in Autism and Community Education (TRACE) Camp, Whitney discovered her love for autistic children. Today, Whitney works in a clinic helping improve the lives of autistic children and their families through her work and research.

Whitney Reeve [BA Psychology 2011]



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Ministry Profiles

OUR DAILY BREAD:

Adopting a new name

Our Daily Bread Ministries Canada is the new name of RBC Ministries Canada.

In 1938, Dr. M.R. DeHaan started a weekly radio program called Detroit Bible Class. Over the years, the name of the ministry was changed from Detroit Bible Class to Radio Bible Class and then to RBC Ministries. Today, however, many people do not know who RBC Ministries is or what it represents. However, once it is mentioned that RBC Ministries publishes the well-loved devotional booklet *Our Daily Bread*, most people immediately recognize the connection.

In light of this, the name has been changed to Our Daily Bread Ministries Canada. Although the name has changed, the focus remains the same: reaching out to people across Canada and around the world with the message of God's love.

This commitment is evident throughout the entire Canadian ministry and reflected around the world in the dedication of over 600 employees and

1,000 volunteers from 37 affiliated offices. The devoted team helps create and distribute more than 60 million resources to people in need in more than 150 countries.

For further information on the ministry of Our Daily Bread, please visit www.ourdailybread.ca. To read, or subscribe to the *Our Daily Bread* devotional, please visit www.odbc.ca.

WATER AMBASSADORS CANADA:

Providing clean water solutions

Water Ambassadors Canada is a faith-based, non-profit registered Canadian water charity. We take clean drinking water solutions to villages in developing countries across the globe. Teams of Canadians drill/repair wells, set up water chlorination systems, distribute water filters and teach health and hygiene.

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villages now have clean drinking water.

Clean drinking water revitalizes a village. It releases the women and children from walking up to 6 km daily to fetch water – often from a source that is not fit for human consumption and causes serious illnesses. Clean water in the village allows the children to attend school and releases the women to contribute financially to their families. Improved health and hygiene greatly reduce illnesses. Frequently small businesses start up in the village because of the benefits of clean water.

Our water chlorination systems are frequently installed in orphanages, schools, medical clinics, hospitals and churches. A smaller, portable version of the system has been used successfully in disaster-relief situations.

Providing clean water solutions to villages has been evaluated as the number one way to reduce poverty and improve the lives of people in developing countries.

For additional information visit www.waterambassadorscanada.org.

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REVIEWS

The story takes us from a quiet church in St. Catharines, Ont., to a military-type training camp in Florida to the jungles of Bolivia



Mission of Mercenary: A Novel
By C. David Donaldson
Createspace, 2014.
300 pages. \$19.95
[e-book \$4.99]

WHAT WOULD you do if your closest friend was trapped in a foreign country after a military coup? Pastor Ryan Murray faces that question when Bolivian soldiers take a Canadian missionary captive in a jungle prison. Is Murray called to do more than pray?

In this adventure novel David Donaldson tackles the dilemma of a Christian living the “safe” life who is challenged with a situation that could mean life or death if he gets involved.

The story takes us from a quiet church in St. Catharines, Ont., to a military-type training camp in Florida to the jungles of Bolivia, in

an intriguing tale involving a multinational corporation, a military dictatorship and a band of loyal friends determined to outwit them.

Descriptions of place, especially Bolivia, are superb and well researched. The story is detailed and tightly written. It explores Christian questions and dilemmas without pretending to have all the answers.

The author is an Ontario writer who leads short-term mission trips to Kenya. —MARIANNE JONES



Walking with God: Praying Through Footwork Metaphors in Scripture
By Teresa Sandhu
WestBow Press,
2014. 260 pages.
\$21.41 [e-book \$3.86]

CONCEIVED BY Toronto writer, intercessor and blogger Teresa Sandhu, *Walking with God* is a help-

ful exploration of images of feet and walking found in Scripture.

The book consists of 50 chapters on metaphors such as God’s path, arising, standing firm, foot washing, marches and processions, stumbling and wandering.

Each chapter begins with Scripture passages, then moves through three more sections – “Entering,” which summarizes a set of metaphors and prepares for their exploration; “Walking,” in which the metaphor and the passages presented are worked out through a variety of exercises; and “Following Through,” in which practical consequences of the metaphor are encouraged.

Each chapter’s exercises and reflection can take between 15 minutes to an hour.

Walking with God is essentially a devotional guide in the longstanding *lectio divina* tradition, which uses Scripture for meditation to draw near to God. The author’s tone is one of gentle encouragement.

The book would work for either individual reading or a Bible study group. —WILLIAM VAN GEEST

Reading THE BESTSELLERS



The Fault in Our Stars
By John Green
Penguin, 2012. 336 pages.
\$14.99 [e-book \$10.99]

The Fault in Our Stars is a well-written, comic-tragic story of young love that avoids manipulation and melodrama while broadening our understanding of other people. An acclaimed movie version was released in 2014. Author John Green is a highly popular American author of young adult fiction.

Hazel Grace’s thyroid cancer has metastasized into her lungs, so her oxygen tank travels everywhere with her. She’s 17. Although her cancer is incurable, an experimental drug is buying her enough time to fall in love with Gus, who has lost his right leg to osteosarcoma, but drives a car anyway, and has eyes “so blue you could almost see through them.”

Gus defies death by holding unlit cigarettes between his lips. “You put the killing thing right between your teeth, but you don’t give it the

power to do its killing.”

Christian references are scattered throughout the book. Hazel and Gus meet at the cancer support group which is held right at the centre of a church that is shaped like a cross. The leader, not a strong character, tells them they are in the heart of Jesus.

Gus’ parents fill their house with encouraging plaques and make general religious statements such as, “In the darkest days the Lord puts the best people in your life.”

However, the “god” figure who really inspires Hazel and Gus is an author. They go to extraordinary lengths to meet him, only to be devastated by the reality of who he is.

The characters are clever, unpredictable and heartbreakingly real. The story gives an insightful portrayal of how many young people today feel uncertain about Christianity and heaven, and will lead to thoughtful discussions with older teens and adults.

—BONNIE BELDAN-THOMSON



Common Ground
By Justin Trudeau
HarperCollins, 2014.
343 pages. \$24.11
[e-book \$16.76]

HIS FAMILY has had a national presence for more than 40 years. His father was the prime minister of Canada for 15. The separation and divorce of his parents was primetime news. His younger brother died in an avalanche.

When the eldest son of such a family becomes the leader of the political party his father once led, he is already enmeshed in an existing narrative. His foes use it against him. Now Justin Trudeau, 42, has a chance to adjust this nar-



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rative by writing a memoir.

His title *Common Ground* seems an attempt to connect with the Canadian people. Critics are quick to ask how a man born with a silver spoon in his mouth can lead the common people.

Yet readers of his memoir will soon gain a greater appreciation of how divorce and mental illness can strike any family, whatever their socioeconomic position, and do just as much damage.

What are Justin Trudeau's religious convictions? He writes that in his late teens he became a "lapsed Catholic." Just after his brother's death, a friend invited him to an Alpha course. In his own words the course, a common introduction to Christianity, helped him welcome God's presence into his life and reaffirm the core of his Christian beliefs.

Canadian creatives



New York 24/7 (oil on canvas) by Olaf Schneider (www.olaf.ca)

"The colours, reflections, window shopping, people watching, flashing lights, sounds of car horns, people talking, running, the variety of smells coming from the restaurants, the movement and busyness and constant hurry is what caught my attention for this painting."

The book oscillates between the genres of memoir and manifesto. It's a memoir because Trudeau recollects the major events of his life that make him the person he is today.

However it's also a manifesto. Whether he is the young Trudeau

being carried around in the arms of his father or the contemporary politician, the world of Canadian politics is at hand. He makes it no secret that he hopes to follow in his father's footsteps. But he wants to be Justin, and not Pierre Jr. **—PYE CHEW**

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Day by day . . . in the 21st century

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Oil prices recently sank to a four-year low and the International Energy Agency, a consultancy to 29 countries, predicts they will fall further in the year to come. As Canada's economy depends so much on oil production, our petrodollar is only in the "high 80s" and likely to drop further. Remember when our dollar was at par with the American, and oil prices were expected to go up and up, and Alberta's tar sands looked like a really mucky gold mine?

Who foresaw the new Russian czar risking war to annex parts of Ukraine? Who predicted ISIS' reign of terror? Who, besides some paranoid screenwriters, imagined something like Ebola making its way out into the rest of the world?

At the end of interviews on a recent event or trend, journalists customarily ask the experts on the hot seat to predict the future. This practice continues even though we all recognize that no one will remember what they said and hold it against them five years from now, so they can say what they like. And no one can infallibly predict what will happen five months or five weeks or five days from now, so now it really doesn't matter what they say.

Most of the Bible and other literature of Christian spirituality were written in precarious times. Writers and readers had a much stronger sense than perhaps most of us middle-class Canadians of how fragile life is, how quickly and drastically our situation can change, and how little we can properly predict.

Aleksandr Men was a Russian Orthodox priest who ministered in the turmoil between Khrush-

I find more meaning in the wing of a bird and in the branch of a tree than in 500 icons. God has given us two books: the Bible and Creation.

—Fr. Aleksandr Men



FR. ALEKSANDR MEN, THE SON OF JEWISH CONVERTS, WAS SECRETLY TAUGHT AND BAPTIZED IN THE COMMUNIST ERA BY MOTHER MARIYA, ABBESS OF A COVERT COMMUNITY OF NUNS. DURING GORBACHEV'S PERESTROIKA REFORMS, MEN BECAME ALMOST OVERNIGHT THE PUBLIC AUTHORITY ON THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

chev and Gorbachev. He wisely taught his reader to "live wholly in the present moment, fully joining God's will. . . . Try to complete the task at hand as well as possible, sweeping aside cares about the past and the future."

The Apostle Paul wrote to a hard-pressed church from his own prison cell, "Do not be anxious about anything" (Philippians 4:6). And to slaves – among the most vulnerable members of his society – he counselled, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart" (Colossians 3:23).

And their Lord Jesus Christ preached during tumultuous times as well, giving similar advice. "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matthew 6:34).

Many of us try to manage the future through wise investments, healthy eating, proper exercise, careful driving, prudent job training and plenty of insurance. Some of us, in fact, are so devoted to such concerns that we're called "control freaks" (although I prefer the term "control aficionado").

Aleksandr Men, however, knew the times in which he was living – which are the times in which all of us actually live. Frequently harassed by the state police, he served as he could with vigour and creativity, and was murdered with an axe when only 55 years old.

The Apostle Paul likely lived somewhat longer, but his life was fraught with frustration, mob violence and imprisonment, and it too ended violently.

The Lord Jesus died a young man, also a victim of selfish and

witless powers, only a few years after His public ministry had begun. And he knew, as no one else did, that His whole nation would be crushed only a generation later, as Titus swept in with his legions to suppress another rebellion once and for all in 70 AD.


How many of your acquaintances, once perfectly healthy, now struggle against versions of just one single disease – cancer? How many faithful workers have lost jobs even in the last few years? How many friendships have faded, partnerships dissolved and romances fallen apart? The churn is relentless.

Pundits have been telling us for a long while now to "prepare for change," that "change is the new normal." But no one can prepare all that much. After all, none of us knows what's coming.

Except God.

Those of us who profess to heed God, then, need to heed the advice of His spokespeople. God leads, but God leads day by day, hour by hour. We can count on God to provide for us whatever glimpse of the future we need to execute today's duties, endure today's trials and enjoy today's pleasures. But God rarely affords us more of a look than that. And most of today is going to be properly spent not peering out dimly into an unseeable tomorrow, but focusing clearly and faithfully on what is evidently and providentially at hand.

That, I find, is usually enough to keep me plenty busy. **/FT**

 John Stackhouse teaches at Regent College in Vancouver and is the author of *Need to Know: Vocation as the Heart of Christian Epistemology* (Oxford, 2014). Find more of these columns at www.FaithToday.ca/ChristAndCulture.

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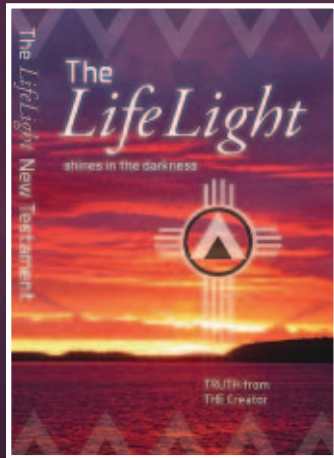
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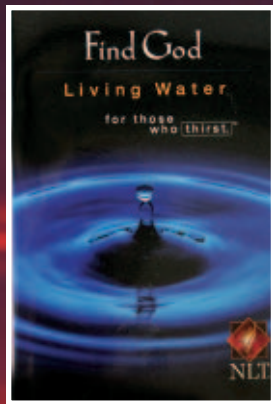
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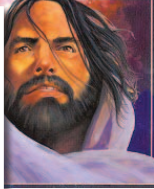
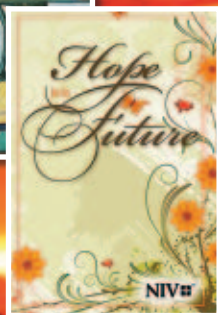
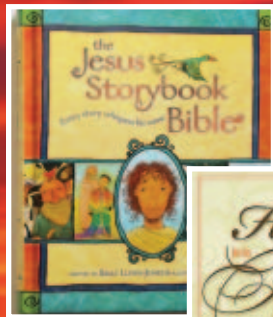
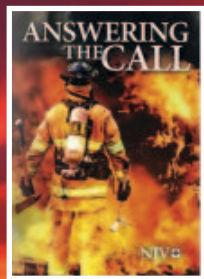
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...and we'll answer

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



New Years give us the opportunity to burn bridges in the past and build new ones. It's a time to establish new chapters in our lives, a time for new resolutions, short and long term goals and most importantly, a time to self evaluate and refocus.

Many goals, dreams and plans can be noted in the first few months of the year; however, as people seem to move forward with everyday life, some of the New Year resolutions, the goals and the plans to strengthen the individual get pushed aside as our minds get entertained with daily routines and challenges and as young people we know that homework, assignments and work can easily occupy the majority of the day.

The LIA Magazine has some New Year resolutions and goals of its own. One of our main goals is to encourage, inspire and aid the current young and rising generations in their walk with Christ. We have many new gifted and God fearing members of the LIA Magazine team that are working hard to help invigorate, challenge and educate young people through their writing and artistic gifts. The LIA Magazine has exciting new sections that will get us all thinking and seeking God on a different level. We are a team that is always looking for people who will join us in spreading the Good News and help reach and encourage young people worldwide through writing and the love movement. You can contact us directly through e-mail or Facebook. Flip through the magazine and find out what's in store for this New Year.

- Crileidy Liriano; Senior Editor of LIA Magazine

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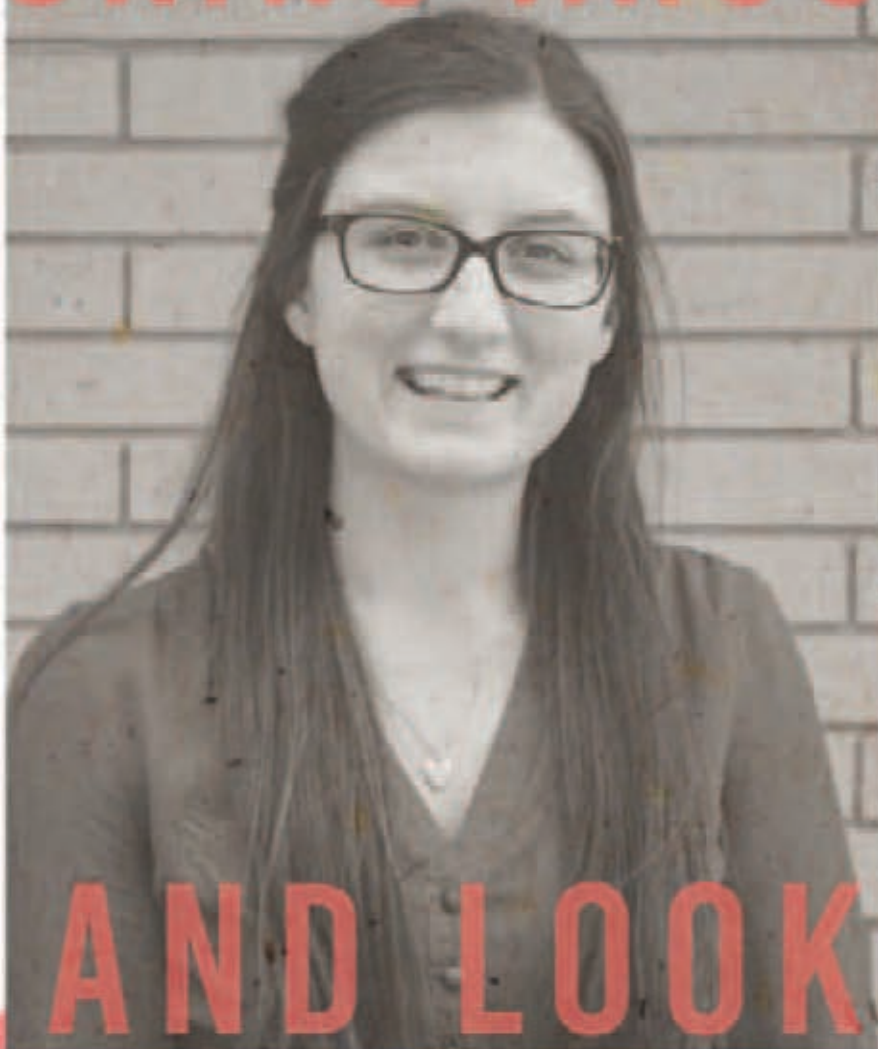


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EMILY COOK



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STOP LOOKING AROUND



AND LOOK

UP!

**HOW - TO FIND A
GOOD RELATIONSHIP
THIS NEW YEAR**

BY: EMILY COOK

There seems to be a mutual social agreement out there, that when you get to a certain age, everyone; whether friend, or acquaintance, has the right to ask you about your relationship status. That being said, what may seem like a private topic is not necessarily that private at all. Nowadays most people don't need to ask anymore. Just take a gander at your Facebook page and they'll know exactly where you stand on that front. But who's to blame them? Romance has always been a valued part of society and it seems to only be becoming more important today.

William Shakespeare wrote the play *Romeo and Juliet*, arguably one of the most iconic love stories ever written in the late 1500s. Jane Austen wrote the novel *Pride and Prejudice* in 1813 that has seen over ten remakes in movies and TV series beginning in the 1950s. Hundreds of romantic and romantic comedy movies have been made and continue to be made. Clearly, something in us loves the idea of love. Something in us desires to be wooed, cared for and ultimately, loved like in the movies.

There's nothing wrong with desiring love, but it becomes a problem when all you desire is earthly love and relationships. First John 4:8 says, "Whoever does not love, does not know God, because God is love." God is love, and we are made in His image. Of course, it makes sense that we were created to be relational beings, to love and to be loved. But the primary source of that love needs to be from God, and if that's where your heart is anchored, then any relationship will find its proper place – always second to the love of God.

At this point, you're probably wondering when the advice is going to come about finding your soul mate. This response may not be what you are looking for, but I implore you to read on. The common misinterpretation in movies and books that are so prominent in our present culture, is they emphasize that a romantic relationship will complete you, make you happy and make you whole, however, as followers of Christ that is exactly the mentality we need to stay away from. We sometimes need to be reminded that our desire and ability to love comes from so much more than our relationship statuses.

Stop looking around, and look up! Our primary concern should always be to do the will of the Father. Relationships are wonderful and it can be amazing to have someone supporting you and caring for you. But if you put all your hopes into that relationship to fulfill your need to be loved, it will cave under the pressure. On top of that, because of the romanticized nature of our world, we tend to see romance in a very selfish light, and one that's not biblical at all. We see dating as a time to discover what that person can do for us. How they can make us feel. How they can serve us when we need it. And if we're no longer enjoying ourselves, we find reasons to want out and ultimately desire to find someone new.

This isn't how relationships should be. They should be training for a partnership. Not only that, but a partnership that has at its center a desire to know and serve God better. This is the kind of relationship that we should strive for.

Of course it's hard to get through writing about love without drawing on the famous passage on love from 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Start loving those around you on those terms! Before you start imagining your male or female friends as potential spouses, start loving them as God would. Being patient, kind, humble, protecting them and yourself.

"Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will" – Romans 12:2. One of the problems with being focused on your dream of a future romance is that it pulls you from the intimate moment you are in, or should be in, with God. It hinders the way you love and sacrifice to those around you. It makes you focus on your desire to be earthly loved, rather than focusing on serving God to your fullest potential. We tend to forget that there's a God waiting for us to accept His unconditional love.

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your minds on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God" – Colossians 3:1-3. This passage goes on to say to put to death all things of the earthly nature. The world tells us romance and relationships should be our number one priority. The bible teaches us differently: to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ first.

So my advice? Stop looking. Stop looking for a person to make you feel happy, and whole. Because truthfully, the only being who can sustain that kind of responsibility and pressure, is the God who made us for the explicit purpose of loving him, and being loved by Him. Tap into THAT love, because it's the only kind that will never disappoint you, will always persevere and will never fail. I will assure you that once you develop your personal relationship with God first, everything else will follow.



Ask and we'll answer

Ask and We'll **Answer** is a brand new addition to the LIA magazine. It provides you with the opportunity to ask important questions about relationships, dating, faith, self-image, obedience, friends, social media, jobs, purpose and just about anything you can think of.

For every issue, there will be a specific theme given and you have the freedom to anonymously or not, ask the questions you or your friends have always wanted to know the answers to. We will pick three to five questions for every issue that will be featured in the magazine. When you post your questions through social media or via e-mail, your question will be entered for the chance to be chosen and answered in the magazine. Remember that the questions you may have, thousands of other young people are in all probability asking the same things you are and wanting to know answers as well. All of the A&A answers will be discussed and well explained by the LIA team to give you the best possible God-inspired and driven answers.

The theme for the next issue is "Relationships". Feel free to ask any questions you desire regarding Christian relationships. Some example are but not limited to: what the bible says about relationships, healthy or unhealthy situations, what occurs with unequally yoked partnerships or how to steer away from sexual immorality.

Let the questions begin!



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LOVE IS MOVING IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

BY: CRILEIDY LIRIANO

Imagine you are a young couple with three children all under the age of 6 and within a matter of a few months you need to leave everything behind: your home, family, friends, work and your entire comfortable life, to move to a poor province in a developing country. Possibly difficult to imagine, but that's exactly what the Paradys-Taylor family did in March, 2013.

Kenisha and Melquisedec (Mecky) Paradys are a young couple with three God fearing children: Joseph 7, Micaías, 6 and Jeremiah, 4. Kenisha, a Canadian born young woman went on a missions trip with two of her friends to Barahona, Dominican Republic in 2003 where she worked alongside the late Pastor Paulino Paradys and his organization Hogar Cristiano para niños huérfanos (HCNH), but particularly with the second project, La Montaña Community Project. Barahona also happens to be the place where she met her now husband, Mecky Paradys, whom in addition is the son of the late Pastor Paulino. With the help of the Paradys-Taylor family, La Montaña presently provides students with biblical teachings, math, craft activities and lunch.

In 2004, Kenisha and Mecky got married in Barahona and since naturally a Canadian Residence status is a process that takes time, Kenisha decided to move to the Dominican Republic to be with her husband. Soon after that in 2005, Joseph was born. Joseph's birth brought the young couple back to Canada, except they always seemed to know that their deepest desire and calling was to go back to the Dominican Republic and work with the children and community of La Montaña.

In August 2012, Pastor Paulino passed away and the young family's calling to move back to Barahona was expedited. In December 2012, Kenisha and Mecky developed the sister organization of HCNH, Christian Hope Community Association (CHCA). Their mission statement is "to present the love of Jesus Christ to the children, families and communities of the Dominican Republic through establishing programs to teach the Word of God, academics training, job skills development that will equip them to be self-sufficient and productive communities."

It all sounds highly overwhelming: a young couple, three children and the wife and kids whom do not speak Spanish. It was very overwhelming indeed, but the fears and challenges the family were to face—from language barriers to a comfortable, happy life in Canada, were not stronger than the desire to serve God and allow His will to be done through them. Their love for God, the children and community of Barahona was much greater than their fears and obstacles. They knew that as long as they were obedient and continued to serve God to the best of their ability, they were in the best hands they could possibly be in, God's hands. They knew that nothing was too complicated or big for God. All they had to do was say, "Yes, Lord".

Kenisha, Mecky and the boys are still currently living in Barahona, working and serving the three projects Pastor Paulino began back in 1984. They host short term missionary groups and individuals who want to teach the word of God and volunteer with any of the three projects Pastor Paulino started and that now the Paradys-Taylor family has continued and expanded through CHCA.



It is evident that love is moving in the Dominican Republic and that God is using the family to impact and change the lives of the people of Barahona. Since their arrival in Barahona, CHCA has hosted groups like The Bridge Youth Group From Markham, Ontario, Youth With A Mission (YWAM) San Pedro, Dominican Republic, YWAM Azua, Dominican Republic and a group of students from a small non-Christian private school in Newmarket, Ontario who were eager to volunteer abroad.

Arguably, other than language barriers, one of the most difficult things to adapt to when suddenly moving to a developing nation is the fact that many of what is easily accessible in a developed country isn't as easily accessed in the developing ones. Basic supplies such as: running, warm water, quick access to clean water to drink and constant running electricity, are greatly missed when in your new home, it's not as easy to obtain. We asked the Paradys-Taylor family some questions on their experience in the Dominican Republic, what they miss about Canada? How they adapted to the new life and living conditions? And what was the most difficult thing to adapt to for each individual? To find out their answers visit the Love Movement Facebook page.

Our goals as Christians should include extending the Love of Jesus Christ to all of the nations. As the New Year begins here for us, the reality is that a new year also begins for the developing countries as well, but there is one main thing that differentiates the two types of experiences; we have easier access to daily necessary products, tools and food that they don't have easy access to due to the high poverty rate and lack of employment opportunities. Many of these children and their families in Barahona don't have access to a Spanish bible or simple Spanish educational books. In the community of La Montanita, many also don't have access to running, clean water or enough money to purchase water from the town's Water Truck. What the Paradys-Taylor family has done and is continuing to do is be obedient to God's calling as they work within the community to assist in ensuring the children of the school and their families hear and experience God's love first hand. Love can move through you as well in the Dominican Republic. There are many ways you can get involved. If you have any questions, want to keep up with the projects, or want further information on the incredible work this family is doing, you can contact info@christianhopecommunity.com or visit www.hogarcristiano.net. Let's keep love moving in all nations.



*RE
NEW
ING*

BY: HOLLY STILLER

*FRIEND
SHIPS*

A new beginning doesn't only pertain to a New Year. Goals, attitudes and friendships are just a few added to the list. The hardest thing about a new beginning is that it usually means the end of something else. This has played out a lot in my life recently, particularly when it comes to friendships. At the beginning of high school, I made a good, new friend. She was easy to become friends with because she had a lot to say just about everything, and loved to laugh, just like I did. We got along great. Looking back however, a lot of what we did cut other people off and what I thought was a sweet friendship quickly became toxic.

I went away the following summer to work at a Christian camp, where spiritually I grew a lot and got to experience what a true, healthy friendship really looks like. As the summer ended and I came back home, hanging out with her became a source of great anxiety. She didn't accept the changes that I had experienced over the summer concerning my personal and spiritual growth, along with the fact that I wasn't really interested in gossiping with her anymore. My interests had simply just changed a lot. She made digs at how I had changed, but I shrugged it off for a while, assuming that we were both just thrown off after being apart for so long. It only got worse, though. She started getting mad when I hung out with other people, and I began hearing rumors that she had been spreading about me.

I was stuck. I wanted to move on and focus on my other, healthy friendships, but I also didn't want to lose her. For every time I didn't invite her to something, I'd hear a new rumor that she had spread about me. The last time this happened, I had just gone shopping with a few friends. She hadn't been invited, only because it was really last minute. I heard from just about every one of our mutual friends just how appalled she was that she wasn't invited. That's when I realized that in order to fix this friendship, or even to simply move on, I needed to address the situation.

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Although I was terrified, when she alluded about the shopping trip to me, I quickly hid my shaky hands so she couldn't see how nervous I was, said a quick prayer and decided to face it and talk to her. I told her that I knew what she was saying to people about me and that I would work at the friendship if we agreed to talk to each other instead of other people when there are issues. I was surprised at how well she responded. Although, our friendship may never be completely restored to the way it used to be, neither of us would have been able to start afresh in our friendship without confronting the messy stuff.

Do you have to have a new beginning with a friendship this New Year?

- 1.** Pray about it. Ask God to give you the opportunity and courage you need.
- 2.** Ask your friend for a time to have a good, honest conversation. Make sure other people aren't around.
- 3.** Make sure they feel safe. Even though you may feel hurt and angry, you don't want them to feel attacked.
- 4.** Remember what your motive is – to end a bad pattern and create new, good ones.
- 5.** Remind your friend throughout the conversation that you care about them and only want what is best for both of you. Remind yourself of that too.

Jesus tells us that in the final age of resurrected eternity we “will neither marry nor be given in marriage” for “we will be like the angels in heaven” (Mark 12:25; Luke 2:34-36). Jesus taking marriage off the table has always made me uncomfortable. On the one hand I know that ultimately Jesus is my source of strength and salvation, on the other hand for a large portion of my life I had bought into the false idea that my true happiness would come from finding my future.

As a teenager my desire to make romantic relationships my ultimate reality would cause me to date nearly every girl in my youth group, but my soul-mate never came. My early twenties were no better, every new class I took in university meant another possibility of finding “the one” yet to no avail. This constant search often led to hurt, despair, and loneliness but it never broke my resolve. I remained determined to find the girl I was made to be with, wherever she might be.

I talked to God, worshiped him, and read Scripture more than most Christian guys my age, yet they always seemed to find their dream girl. Why not me as well? Why had God not given me “the desire of my heart” so many of my friends seem to have? (Psalm 37:4). It was around this same time the superficial nature of my Christian walk began to hit me. I longed for a lover, while poverty and oppression of all kinds surrounded me. I longed for someone to hold while millions of women every year were forced to sleep with someone they would rather not.

With Christian persecution occurring all around the world, simply having a safe and affordable home started to seem more like a blessing than something to be taken for granted. The Christians in the Bible seemed to have a pretty rough go of it as well. John the Beloved Disciple, Peter, Paul, and many in the early Christian community were persecuted and martyred for their faith.

The more I read Scripture the more Jesus seemed less interested in finding me a girlfriend and more interested in teaching me what it might mean to truly suffer, and cry to God for justice and peace. The more I learned about the significance of Christ’s incarnation, his emptying of

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divine power (Philippians 2), his role as the suffering servant (Isaiah 53); the more lonely and desperate I began to feel. Does my pain even matter? Or does Christ really only care for and identify with those on the brink of starvation and death?

It was in this moment of selfish misery that Revelation 21 hit me harder than it ever had before. At the end of time as we know it Jesus Christ will come once again “to dwell among the people.” He will meet all of us down here in our pain and brokenness and “He will wipe every tear” from our eyes. “There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things” will pass away (Revelation 21:3-4).

Good Thing;

My tears matter to Jesus just as much as anyone else's. But the solution to my internal loneliness and internal meaninglessness wouldn't be finding a pretty girl, nor would it be ending world hunger. The solution is and will continue to be Jesus Christ died and raised and coming again to heal us all for good.

So what then do we do while we wait? Jesus has given us His Spirit and His Inspired Word to show us how to give and receive love while we are eagerly waiting for his return (Romans 8:22-24), and entering into Marriage is a significant role that can play (though it is certainly not the only option).

Biblical marriage can often be referenced as living metaphor for Christ's love. In the book of Hosea he is called to love and be committed to his wife Gomer no matter her potential unfaithfulness (she was a prostitute). Paul in his letter to the Ephesians calls on married couples to “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” and to love each other, “just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:21-25).

We are also called to give and receive love with those who are oppressed and marginalized in the world. Not only do passages like Isaiah 11:4 declare God will “with justice give decisions for the poor of the earth” but Jesus himself identifies with the hungry, homeless, sick, and imprisoned in Matthew 8:20 and 25:31-46. This is a relationship that is about both giving to and learning from the marginalized as Scripture declares that “Religion, which is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction” not simply to give money or resources, but to be in relationship (James 1:27).

Give and receive love in this life. Entering into a marriage is a wonderful way to do this, Jesus proclaims the goodness Marriage in both Matthew 19 and Mark 9. Forming relationships with and caring for the marginalized and oppressed in this world is also a key part of Jesus' earthly ministry and his future judgment. But always remember, it will not ultimately be you who “wipes away every tear” for your own eyes or anyone else's, but it is Jesus Christ who is making all things new, and will ultimately satisfy the completed work of the Cross in his triumphant return.

End of the World

BY: JESSE HOVE

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