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CANADA'S CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2015

FAITH TODAY

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WHAT IS IT? AND HOW DO WE FIGHT IT?

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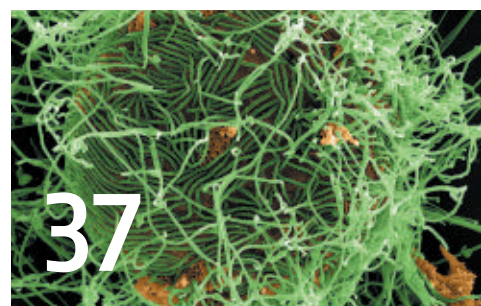
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Years of Operation

Number of On-site Reviews to Date

675

186

Number of Certified Charities

Number of Indicators Examined for Certification

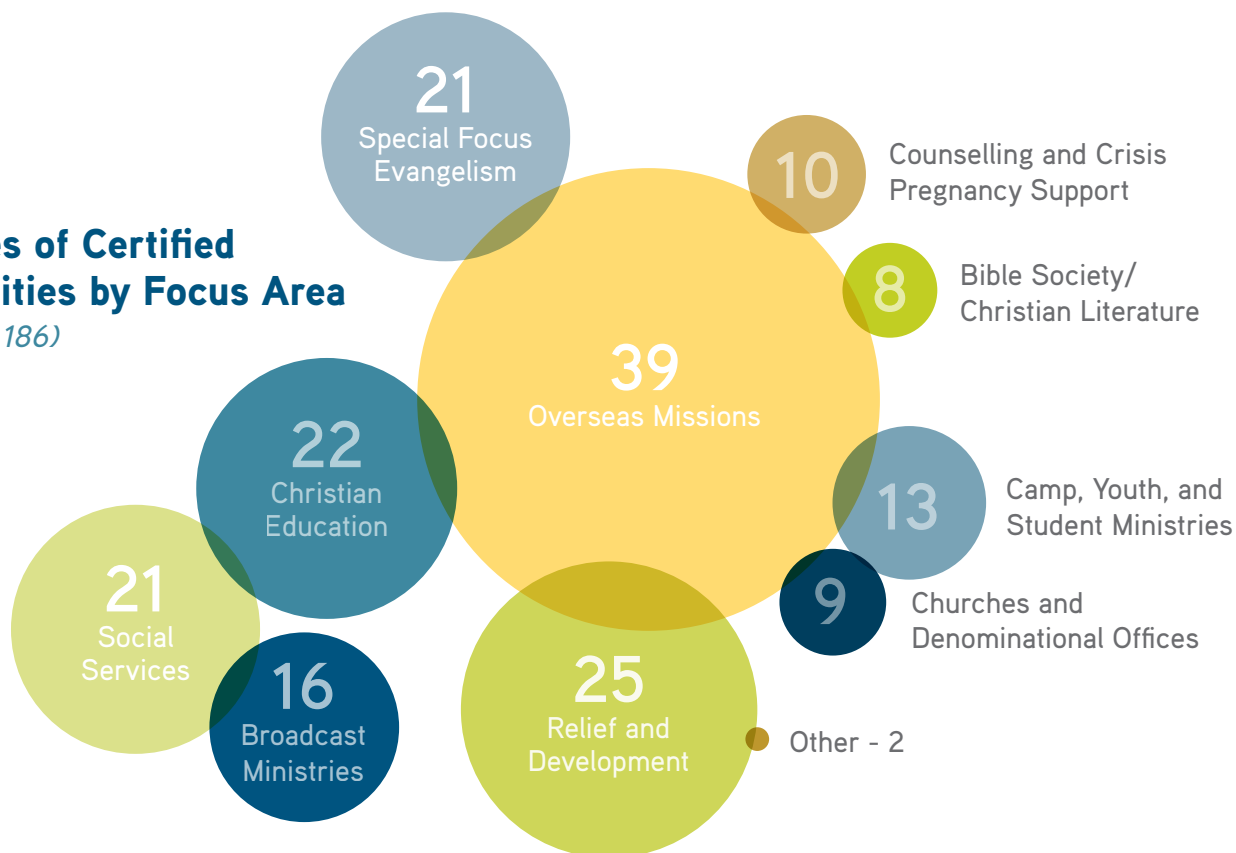
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Number of Separate Compliance Reviews Each Member has in 5-year Period

Types of Certified Charities by Focus Area

(Total: 186)



What Can I Expect From a Charity that Displays the Seal of Accountability?

Accountability

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The Urbana issue

The world's largest student missions conference is coming up

Going to Urbana, the world's largest student missions conference held every three years in St. Louis, Missouri, is a Stiller family tradition (the Fledderus family is still working on it).

It's a coming of age experience as kids reach age 17 or Grade 12 (whichever comes first). They climb into the family van between Christmas and New Year's and make the snowy drive States-side to an investment in their lives as mission-living Christians.

Urbana is awesome and surprisingly Canadian. Although it's in the States, it was founded and remains cohosted by Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) Canada. Since 1946 it has challenged nearly 300,000 participants with the privilege of global mission.

So we're paying it a lot of attention in this issue, including a Q & A with Geri Rodman, president of IVCF Canada, and a more in-depth FT Interview with Steve Colby, IVCF's director of missions and a keynote speaker at this year's conference.

What will Colby say to the 16,000 delegates? He told us, "It will be a strong call to listen to Jesus and go with Him into His mission, into this partnership. To be learners who are shaped by Him and His mission, that we would continue in partnership with the people and places He is connecting us to.


"To see this global family exercising every joint and ligament together is awesome. That will be my message."

You can also read some of our country's unique contributions to Urbana 2015 in our "A Canadian's Guide to Urbana 15." And if you follow our Facebook and Twitter feeds, watch for live reports from Jeanie Qiu of Calgary, who won our Send a Student to Urbana contest (www.faithtoday.ca/jeanie). She will be the eyes and ears into this life-changing event for all of us!

There are even more reasons to get excited about the faith development of our youth. In this issue you'll find new research on youth rallies and youth groups in our feature "Youth on the Mountaintop" and on our By the Numbers page.

And in our upcoming Jan/Feb issue – wow! After two years of publishing digital-only versions of the youth magazine *Love in Action*, we'll start giving free printed copies with *Faith Today*. Check out past issues at www.faithtoday.ca/LIA.

Whatever stage of life you are in – even if our features on helping the poor, how to be an advocate, refugees or James Bond are more your thing – we're sure you'll remember being young and join us in celebrating and praying for the youth of today. /FT

 Karen Stiller of Port Perry, Ont., and Bill Fledderus of Hamilton, Ont., are senior editors of *Faith Today*.

"To see this global family exercising every joint and ligament together is awesome."

—Steve Colby

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EVEN BEFORE the editor phoned me, I had been hearing whispers of God’s call. He beckons His children to stand down from their places of privilege and stand up for the powerless. I’d written about beautiful food and posh restaurants. Now could I pick my way through what felt (and smelled) like piles of garbage to find strands of redemption? –from “Writer Julia Cheung Takes Us Behind the Scenes With Vancouver Story”

WHEN YOU DATE in mid-life and post-divorce, you aren’t just starting over from scratch. You’re renovating — building on top of something that already has a foundation, is very rooted and runs very deep. And as any contractor will tell you, renovating is always more time consuming, costly and challenging than building new. –from “Community and Dating Again” by Alex Newman

FAR MORE of what our pastors do is invisible to the average churchgoer. Pastors often have to juggle competing demands on their time, many of which are unpredictable (like funerals and hospitalizations). If we can support them to get regular Sabbath rest and opportunities for refreshment and recreation, they will enjoy their ministry more, and in turn be better enabled to minister to us. –from “Digging Deeper Into Ministry Wellness Project” by Wanda Malcolm

WITH A PATHETIC kind of high-school mentality, we feel obliged to know what is the new new thing...as if we’ll be scorned for not knowing about the latest smartphone app or



cult TV hit. Instead, we need to broaden our knowledge, and deepen our understanding, of those matters that matter to us and to those God calls us to

serve. In short, we need to become really good at our callings, rather than trying to be cool. –from “Why John G. Stackhouse Jr. Wants Us to Think Differently”

HAVE YOU EVER had a conversation that started out innocently – as in not intended to be a fight – but quickly derailed and became a train wreck? I know I have. And it seems the closer the relationship (spouse, parent, child, close coworker), the greater the risk of a fiery conversation crash. –from “When a Conversation Turns Crucial” by Karen Stiller

Corrections

A STORY in Sep/Oct was wrong in stating “Shoal Lake 40 First Nation” is also referred to as “Iskatewizaagegan.” In fact that is the name of a neighbouring First Nation. A story in Jul/Aug misspelled the name of the new Réseau des Évangéliques du Québec. *Faith Today* regrets these errors.

Grace in Islam

Re: *Christ & Culture in Canada* (Sep/Oct 2015)

I AM SURPRISED John Stackhouse so quickly sees in Islam a spirit of grace because God is said to be “the Compassionate, the Merciful.” In my experience of working with Muslims and discussing salvation and forgiveness with them, these words rarely come up.

What I do hear are [surahs such as 13:22–23 about how good works ward off evil deeds, thus enabling entrance into “the Gardens of Eden,” and surahs such as 33:35 about re-

MILESTONES

APPOINTED



Guy Smagge as director of Presbyterian World Service & Development, where he has served for the past 18 years, most recently as senior

program co-ordinator. He replaces Ken Kim, who left in March for a position at World Renew, an agency of the Christian Reformed Church.

Steve Long as president of the board at Catch the Fire Toronto, the congregation where international charismatic revival began in 1994. He succeeds John Arnott, who remains president of Partners in Harvest, its

international family of churches and ministries, and president of the board of Catch the Fire Canada, its church planting movement. Duncan Smith, director of Catch the Fire USA, also



recently succeeded Arnott as president of the board of Catch the Fire World, a related global network of revival churches, missions and ministries.

Kelvin Beckstead as president of Prayer Canada, a network encouraging weekly prayer meetings for all levels of government and Canadian social issues. It is headquartered in Brockville, Ont. Rev. Beckstead is a former farmer and

church planter. Arne Bryan, who founded the organization in 1977, passed the leadership to Beckstead in 2013 and is now retiring.

Mike Stone as executive director of Vision Ministries Canada, a collaborative church network with a strong emphasis on planting new churches, effective in January. He succeeds Gord Martin. Stone has been the lead pastor of ForestView Church in Oakville, Ont., for 19 years.

RENAMED

ShareWord Global is the new moniker for The Gideons International in Canada, a nondenominational organization focused on personal evangelism and Scripture distribution. It began in Canada in 1911 and is headquartered in Guelph, Ont.

wards for fasting. And other works-based teachings such as surahs 7:204, 3:129 and 23:102-103].

To write that this is “folk Islam” is inaccurate. Dr. Ismail Furuqi of Temple University summed up Islamic teaching well. “Human beings are no more ‘fallen’ than they are ‘saved.’ Because they are not ‘fallen,’ they have no need of a savior. But because they are not ‘saved’ either, they need to do good works – which alone will earn them the desired salvation.”

The sense of grace in Islam is a far cry from what the Bible teaches.

Walter Mohr, Hamilton, Ont.

Timely articles

Re: Christian Radio Thriving (Mar/Apr 2015)

THE ARTICLE ON Christian radio was interesting and good to see. Thanks for a good magazine with good timely articles!

Barbara Dowling, Kitchener, Ont.

Appreciation

Re: It's Time to Think (Sep/Oct 2015)

I DO A LOT of reading, including several Christian newspapers and magazines, and *Faith Today* is the one I look forward to the most. I read it almost cover to cover every time and end up pointing

people to several articles. In the latest issue I especially enjoyed your articles on Cambodia, Scientology, Vancouver poverty, Omar Khadr, the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission, Dave Wells, Sam Reimer and the cover story by John Stackhouse.

Jeff Adams, Calgary, Alta.

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 discussions sparked by letters to the editor and more.

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NOMINATED



Winnipeg musician **Steve Bell** has a leading nine nominations in this year's Covenant Awards from Canada's Gospel Music Association.

The awards will be presented Nov. 5 in Edmonton. Other multiple nominees include Tim Neufeld (7), Chelsea Amber (6), Dan Bremnes (5), Fresh I.E. (5), Matt Maher (4) and Trevor Dick (3). Details at www.gmacanada.ca. Canadian artists were also nominated in the CCMA (High Valley won for group of the year) and the Dove Awards (Matt Maher won songwriter and worship song of the year).

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Training Champions for Christ

KINGDOM MATTERS

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



Geekdom House's Finding God in *Firefly* Bible study night at Sam's Place in Winnipeg; Refuge 31 Films filmed the evening; organizer Kyle Rudge.

Geeks shall inherit the earth

Canadian ministry reaches out to fans of sci-fi and fantasy

WHEN IT COMES to science fiction television shows, fantasy books, video games and tabletop adventures, Kyle Rudge is in his element. But he also noticed a distinct line was drawn between his passion for geek culture and his love for Jesus.

"When I went to church, I had to take my 'geek hat' off, and when I went to a video game night, I had to take my 'Christian hat' off," says Rudge, a Christian radio morning show host and owner of Ignite the Hype Media Services in Winnipeg.

This didn't sit right with him, especially when he noticed some of the most meaningful conversations he and his wife had about God, faith

and morality occurred when talking about the latest episode of *Firefly* or *Battlestar Galactica* or *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

So began the idea for Geekdom House, a ministry geared toward faith and fandom, hosting youth events, attending conventions and publishing a magazine called *Area of Effect*. Geekdom House officially began in September 2014. A year later marked the launch of their first monthly Bible study night, an event Rudge has been dreaming about for several years.

The night involved watching an episode of *Firefly*, having a few "experts" discuss it in light of a Bible passage at the front of the room, and

then separating into small groups.

"There's intimacy, there's vulnerability, there's camaraderie. All of that happens in that space around discussing the holiness of God. It just so happens that our language is using geek culture to do that," says Rudge.

About 45 people attended. "A woman sought me out at the end, grabbed my hand and told me 'thank you' over and over, saying she had never been able to reconcile the geek culture that she loved with the God that she loved, and that she would be here next month," Rudge says. "I've put I don't know how many years of planning and money into this event, this ministry. And if that's all that ever comes of it, it was all worth it."

"I absolutely hope there's more, but I can tell you right now it was worth it." —**ALLISON BARRON**

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF JASON DUECK / GEEKDOM HOUSE

Christians serve at frosh events in Toronto

Collaborative approach helps students and event organizers



WHEN 5,000 first-year students turned up to enjoy Frosh Friday at the University of Toronto's downtown campus in September, they were greeted by 80 Christians from Serve Toronto offering them water, freezies, candies, coffee and a place to cool off. (Water and sugar help reduce illness after binge drinking.) After a late-night club event, the volunteers also walked some students back to their dorms.

Serve Toronto is a group of volunteers from various churches and Christian campus groups who help students enjoy the frosh events safely.

The Salvation Army provided two water trucks and trained student volunteers how to operate the water backpacks. Another group, Jesus in the City, loaned canopies for shelter. Wycliffe College, an evangelical Anglican school at the University of Toronto, provided storage space for all the goodies.

Project co-ordinator Marion Karasiuk, a deacon at Christ the King Anglican Church in Toronto, said she was "thrilled to see so many campus groups and denominations pulling together in service."

Campus organizations included Power to Change, Chinese Christian Fellow-

ship (part of Ambassadors for Christ), Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship and Athletes in Action.

Fiona Jack, Inter-Varsity's GTA team leader, ran the cool down station outside the club. She said, "We need to treat people with dignity even if they are drunk or sick, holding back their hair when they vomit." Volunteers were taught it was to be "all about others, not us" and "listening rather than talking." If anyone asked a question that led to a spiritual conversation, fine, but nothing was to be forced.

Christina, herself the survivor of a sexual assault, volunteered to accompany students back to their dorms, even though "It's not glamorous work. Students can be drunk and rowdy and throwing up."

Four years ago the student union was skeptical about Serve Toronto's initial offer of help. The union leaders stipulated no tracts or flyers could be distributed. But as one leader texted Karasiuk this year, "Thank you all for being such fantastic volunteers. We couldn't do these events without you."

—SUE CARELESS

Inspiring ideas



A break from the Christmas bustle

Rather than hosting a nativity at Christmas time, Ottawa's Cedarview Alliance Church opens their doors to the community for an afternoon full of family events. Children are greeted with candy canes and storytelling in the lobby, families can have their picture taken for free by a professional photographer, then they are treated to a musical play about the meaning of Christmas. After the show they can enjoy hot chocolate, coffee, and goodies while they walk through a live nativity with real livestock in the gym. www.cedarview.ca



Live from Glasgow

Glasgow Cathedral's choral evensong service is broadcast around the world through their website. The church decided to begin broadcasting in response to the significant number of tourists visiting their church each year. Canadian-born Glen Collie, the elder responsible for airing the service, says the broadcast has reached more than 17,000 viewers. www.glasgowcathedral.org.uk



Understanding Third World challenges

Working with their counterparts in the U.S., Compassion Canada has launched an engaging curriculum to help small groups and families better understand life in the Third World. The Step Into My Shoes kit brings participants into the life of Ugandan pastor Tom and his family, showing how they overcome challenges and offering numerous activities to help participants explore the topic of poverty. www.stepintomyshoes.org

—CRAIG MACARTNEY



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

Moncton church creates park in memory of fallen officers

Tragedy becomes catalyst for community offering

GLAD TIDINGS PENTECOSTAL CHURCH, in Moncton, N.B., has dedicated a community park in honour of three RCMP officers killed in that city in June 2014.

"Any kind of significant life change really comes through crisis," says Paul Pattison, lead pastor. "That's really the catalyst for people considering the weightier issues of life."

A youth meeting was happening at the church when news spread of the shooter Justin Bourque – who was targeting RCMP officers nearby. The youth were required to stay in lockdown at the church for several hours, and the ensuing 30-hour manhunt included officers who were also church members.

The church had already been developing the land behind the building for the enjoyment of their fast-growing community. They installed a basketball court and with the help of biking enthusiasts, sculpted a professional quality BMX pump track. But after the shooting, when the city expressed a need for a north-end park, Glad Tidings created a designated spot adjacent to the bike track.

One year later it was named Honour Park and includes a 10-foot custom wrought-iron sculpture depicting constables Douglas Larche, Fabrice Gevaudan and Dave Ross, killed in the attack.

"We're still working on the park," says Pattison. "The grass fields are meant for people who want to let their dogs run around or for the kids to play Frisbee or football. And of course, the walking trail. We have a good number of seniors who come down during the day, sit down and read a book. As the trees mature it will become a nice little area that you can enjoy while your kids are playing."

Pattison believes the \$60,000 investment in the property has given credibility to the gospel in Moncton, and the church a stronger pastoral presence in the community.

"Just the conversations and friendships you strike up when kids are out there shooting basketball or parents bringing their kids down with their bikes," he says. "But I've found that even in the workplace of church members, people mention it. 'Oh, you go to that church that did the park.'" —**RHONDA BULMER**



YWAM and Quebec First Nation build lasting relationship

YOUTH WITH A MISSION (YWAM) in Lanaudière, Quebec, is seeing major success in building relationships with a nearby reserve.

It all started with the suggestion of a local hockey coach to create a student exchange between the local primary school and the Manawan reserve. The first exchange was organized in 2006 by Laurent Gerber, leader of the Lanaudière branch of YWAM.

Manawan, home to some 2,000 Atikamekw people, has since fostered an ongoing relationship with YWAM Lanaudière, allowing Gerber's team to lead yearly King's Kids summer camps on the reserve.

In every YWAM Lanaudière initiative with the Atikamekw, Gerber says he envisions creating a presence of prayer. "I don't want them to think of me as the white missionary any more than I want for them to become Europeanized Christians," says Gerber. "This was the destructive message that colonialism incarnated for so many years. The day they become healed and whole within the revelation of God is the day that they will become a great force for Quebec."

The YWAM team will have more meetings with the band council to explore the possibility of opening a permanent counselling centre on the reserve.

"They are our hosts, we are the guests. I want for my children to know that every human being is beautifully created and therefore worthy of dignity," says Gerber. "And as for the Atikamekw, my desire is to accompany them in their love of God, in the Atikamekw way, and I hope they will rejoice in the presence of other cultures." —**JENNA SMITH**

3

NUMBER OF RCMP OFFICERS KILLED IN MONCTON IN JUNE 2014 WHO ARE COMMEMORATED IN HONOUR PARK



GARNER SQUARE

AN ECUMENICAL MINISTRY CAMPUS



Architect's concept may be subject to change

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Located next to Toronto in the heart of the Golden Horseshoe, Garner Square is a proposed ecumenical ministry campus covering 22 acres of prime development land in Hamilton, Ontario. The land is currently owned by Ancaster Christian Reformed Church, and is intended to become a centre of Christian innovation and collaboration. With preliminary planning completed, the organizing committee is now soliciting expressions of interest from organizations willing to locate or invest in this unique development.

The development of Garner Square will offer Christian organizations of all sizes and types an enriching environment that enables them to collaborate constructively, share resources, and to grow together in the unity that Jesus prayed for in his church.

DESIGN CONCEPT

Designed as a village around two common quadrangles, Garner Square will be made up of office buildings, a conference centre, a new church auditorium, a three-storey hotel, a daycare, a recreation centre, and athletic facilities. Connecting each building will be walking paths with benches and lush greenery. Community and collaboration are the primary goals of this design concept.

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www.hopeinaction.ca

NOTE WORTHY

HELP FROM UNEXPECTED PLACES

Iraq's prime minister has assembled a task force to address the escalating persecution of Christians in the region. Even in parts of Iraq where the Islamic State has not established a stronghold, Christians and other minorities are being relentlessly persecuted. Experts estimate Iraq's Christian population has dropped by more than 90 per cent in the past 12 years.
www.foxnews.com



▶▶ The site at Gath (Tel Tzafit) in southern Israel where Dr. Haskel Greenfield and his colleagues have made significant discoveries.

ARCHEOLOGIST MAKES A GOLIATH DISCOVERY

Canadian archeologist Haskel Greenfield is part of a team that recently unearthed the gates of the biblical Philistine city of Gath. Greenfield says the find is not only significant archeologically, but also serves to "reinforce the tie that ancient peoples, such as Jews, have to the Land of Israel."
www.christianweek.org

SATANISTS CLAIM ABORTION RIGHTS

The Satanic Temple has filed a lawsuit against the State of Missouri claiming the state's "informed consent" abortion laws violate their religious beliefs. The state requires every woman seeking an abortion be given literature about the pregnancy and abortion at least three days before the

PHOTO: HASKEL J. GREENFIELD



POWER TO CHANGE

Giving options from inner city sports camp to emergency response range from \$120, \$240 or donor's choice.

www.p2c.com/christmas



THE SALVATION ARMY

Gifts range from \$12 for a mosquito net to \$100 for an eco-cooker. www.salvationarmy.ca/giftsofhope



SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Gifts range from \$6 to give Bible study curriculum and a New Testament to a child to \$12,000 for a filtration system to provide safe water to 3,000 people. www.samaritanpurse.ca/catalog



WORLD RELIEF CANADA

Gifts range from \$5 for a book for a student to \$490 to fill a stable for a family. www.worldrelief.ca



WORLD VISION

Gifts range from \$25 for Canadian Assistance Fund to \$2,500 for a share of a well. www.catalogue.worldvision.ca



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three directions

Since 1893 SIM (Serving In Mission) sent missionaries **FROM** Canada to Africa.

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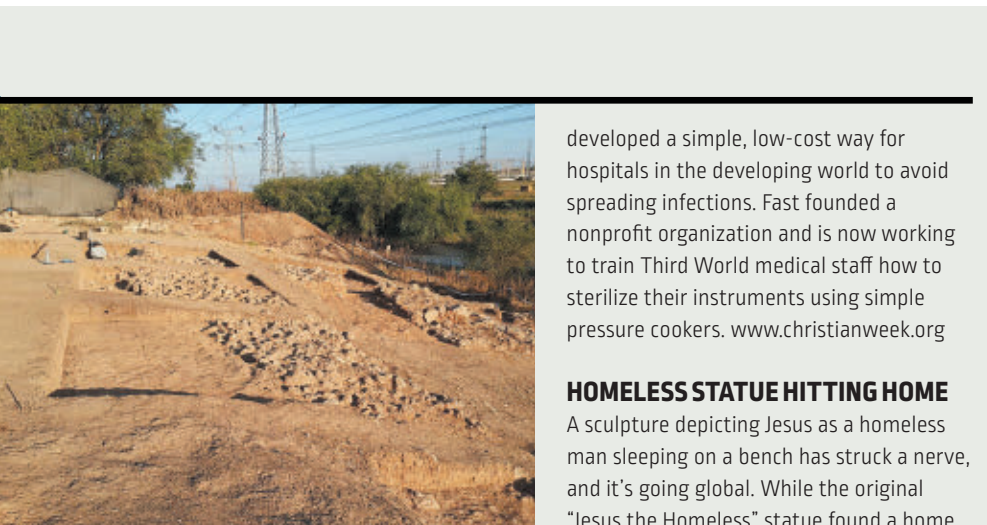


mission
from Canada
to Canada
in Canada

SIM

Serving In Mission

taking the Gospel to the world



developed a simple, low-cost way for hospitals in the developing world to avoid spreading infections. Fast founded a nonprofit organization and is now working to train Third World medical staff how to sterilize their instruments using simple pressure cookers. www.christianweek.org

HOMELESS STATUE HITTING HOME

A sculpture depicting Jesus as a homeless man sleeping on a bench has struck a nerve, and it's going global. While the original "Jesus the Homeless" statue found a home at Regis College, Toronto, a replica has been blessed by the Pope and installed at the Vatican, while another has created a media buzz in Washington, D.C. The St. Jacobs, Ont. artist behind the statue says he is even getting calls from Catholic and Protestant groups working together to have a replica installed in the historically divided city of Belfast. www.cbc.ca —**CRAIG MACARTNEY**

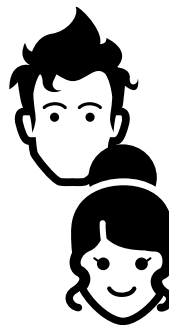
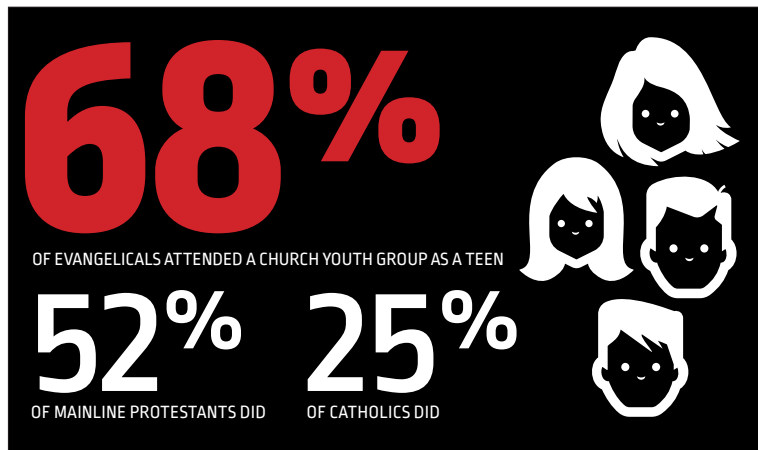
surgery. According to the lawsuit, getting an abortion is an expression of Satanist beliefs. www.lifesitenews.com

CLEANING UNDER PRESSURE

Profoundly impacted by a medical mission trip in which she participated, Christina Fast, a sterile process technician from Calgary,

Youth and young adult groups

Research confirms these groups are extra important to Evangelicals



ATTENDED A CHURCH YOUNG ADULTS GROUP?

EVANGELICAL
70% OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED A CHURCH TEEN GROUP PLUS **11%** OF THOSE WHO DIDN'T

MAINLINE PROTESTANT
41% OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED A CHURCH TEEN GROUP PLUS **4%** OF THOSE WHO DIDN'T

ROMAN CATHOLIC
40% OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED A CHURCH TEEN GROUP PLUS **4%** OF THOSE WHO DIDN'T



IF YOU ATTENDED COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY, WERE YOU INVOLVED IN A CHRISTIAN CLUB THERE?

EVANGELICAL
25% OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED A CHURCH TEEN GROUP PLUS **4%** OF THOSE WHO DIDN'T

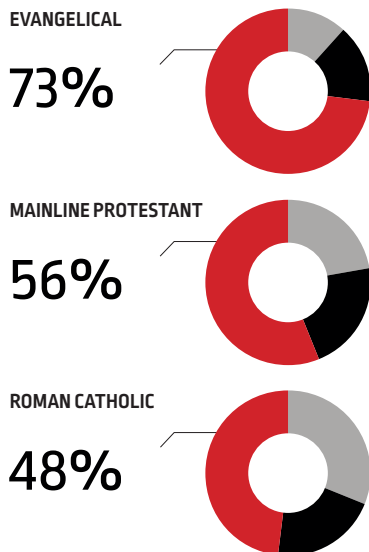
MAINLINE PROTESTANT
9% OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED A CHURCH TEEN GROUP PLUS **2%** OF THOSE WHO DIDN'T

ROMAN CATHOLIC
12% OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED A CHURCH TEEN GROUP PLUS **1%** OF THOSE WHO DIDN'T

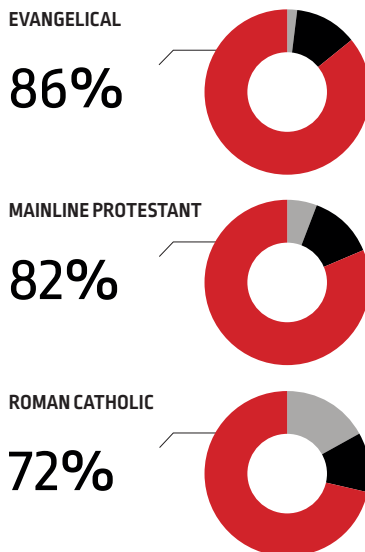


PERCENTAGE OF EVANGELICALS WHO SAY THEIR PARENT(S)' CHURCH ATTENDANCE DECLINED SIGNIFICANTLY OR CEASED ALTOGETHER WHILE THEY WERE LIVING AT HOME

DID YOUR CHURCH YOUTH LEADERS DO A GREAT JOB OF MODELING CHRISTIANITY FOR YOU?



DID YOU FEEL ACCEPTED BY YOUR PEERS IN THE CHURCH YOUNG ADULT GROUP YOU ATTENDED?



73

PERCENTAGE OF EVANGELICAL YOUTH GROUP ATTENDEES WHO ALSO WENT TO SUMMER CAMP

28

PERCENTAGE OF EVANGELICALS WHO DID NOT ATTEND A YOUTH GROUP BUT DID GO TO SUMMER CAMP

■ YES ■ NO ■ DON'T RECALL



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CANADIAN COUNCIL of CHRISTIAN CHARITIES
ADVANCING MINISTRY TOGETHER



Dealing with religious differences

How can we talk about reasonable accommodation for religious symbols in Canadian society?

During the 1993 election, then prime minister Kim Campbell said, “An election is no time to discuss serious issues.” Her point was that an election is too short to address substantive changes to social policies.

So now that the election is over, let’s talk about some of the issues that surfaced in it.

The debate about the face-covering niqab is the tip of the iceberg of the broader issue of reasonable accommodation and tolerance.

How much difference in the expression of custom, belief and practice is compatible with the social cohesion necessary to sustain the

kind of free and democratic society Canadians want?

The debate is particularly important because the norms and principles that frame it are themselves in flux.

The *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* contains phrases such as “freedom of conscience and religion,” “equality,” “life, liberty and security of the person” as well as “principles of fundamental justice,” but nowhere are these concepts defined.

Who should shape the meaning of these phrases but society itself?

Of course, it’s a difficult slog to create social consensus, and until we do this hard work our courts are

left to fill that vacuum. Even among judges there is no consensus – witness the number of split decisions by our Supreme Court.

The federal parties and the Quebec government have also staked out positions, although mainly on narrow aspects of the issue, such as the appropriateness of wearing a niqab while giving or receiving government services.

Accommodation is an important issue for many Canadians, according to various polls. The EFC’s own polling suggests Evangelicals are more accepting than other Canadians of religious symbols being worn by public officials.

It’s a difficult slog to create social consensus, and until we do this hard work our courts are left to fill that vacuum

News FROM THE EFC

Equipping for political participation

The EFC published an election kit in advance of the recent federal election, including fact sheets on key issues, questions to ask candidates and advice on church involvement in elections. The kit, which also serves as a primer for ongoing communication with MPs, is available in both French and English.

It covers issues including abortion, children and youth in government care, the environment, euthanasia, family, indigenous peoples, palliative care, poverty, prostitution, refugees, religious freedom and reproductive technologies.

EFC President Bruce J. Clemenger appeared on an election episode of *Context With Lorna Dueck* and also addressed election issues in

the EFC’s September webinar. All these materials are available at www.theEFC.ca/election.

Submission on physician-assisted death

The EFC made a submission this fall to a national advisory group on physician-assisted death.

The EFC’s 31-page stakeholder submission was sent to the Canadian Provincial-Territorial Expert Advisory Group, which helps develop laws, policies, practices and safeguards in advance of physician-assisted death becoming legal in Canada. Available at www.theEFC.ca/ResourcesOnEuthanasia.

Euthanasia Declaration

A “Declaration on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide” signed by

Christian, Jewish and Muslim religious leaders was released in October. It responds to the Supreme Court decision that decriminalized assisted suicide, affirms the sanctity of human life and calls for the protection of the vulnerable and for compassion and care for those near death. It was originally developed by the EFC and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. See full text at www.euthanasiadeclaration.ca/declaration.

Quebeckers launch leaders network

Leaders of 15 evangelical denominations in Quebec officially launched a new network, the Réseau des Évangéliques du Québec, on Oct. 1 in Fabreville, Que. The network, which began to form in June 2013 in

Montreal, also includes the EFC as a special nondenominational member. The RÉQ exists to foster relationships of trust, provide a discussion platform to reflect on the Church in Quebec and find common projects that require collaboration, explains the EFC’s Quebec director Pierre Bergeron.

Resources to pray for the persecuted

Will your church join others around the world to pray for persecuted Christians on Sunday, Nov. 8, or at another time this fall? A Canadian group including the EFC produces new, free resources each year for this event, including bulletin inserts, Bible readings, a digital slide presentation, suggested music and more. Get your resources free now at www.idop.ca.

This is significant because Evangelicals do not as a rule believe their faith requires specific attire or symbols. Some wear crosses, but it is of personal significance and not a religious requirement.

Yet we are respectful and supportive of those who have a requirement such as a head scarf, turban or cap. We take our faith seriously and have empathy for others who do likewise.

When we engage in arguments about whether the Muslim hijab, the Sikh dastar, the Jewish kippah or some other practice is cultural rather than religious, we should also remember the Supreme Court has ruled it inappropriate for the State to determine whether a religious practice is legitimate.

A branch of the government should not be deciding matters of religious doctrine or practice. Would you want it deciding what

the doctrinal statement of your church should contain or omit?

The Court did say it can decide on whether a practice is sincerely held – that is a matter of evidence.

Another concern is the attitude that an infrequent or brief infringement might not be a serious violation. This argument, heard occasionally even in court, proposes that a little pork in the soup on occasion is not a serious violation of Jewish or Muslim beliefs, nor requiring a religious niqab-wearing woman to show her face in public only for a minute.


As people of deep religious conviction, we must clearly articulate that the duration of the violation does not mitigate the harm. Who would want lawyers to violate their oaths or doctors to compromise their care with the excuse they did so infrequently?

No right or freedom is absolute – it can be limited if doing so is justifiable to preserve a free and democratic society.

These debates are important opportunities to talk about religious freedom. Remember that under the Charter, no right or freedom is absolute – it can be limited if doing so is justifiable to preserve a free and democratic society.

All dialogue on reasonable accommodation must be done respectfully and with openness to being challenged at the same time as one challenges others. Empathy is important, as is the sense of being heard.

On these issues we must go beyond emotions that arise from specific practices to argue from principle. Let's have the dialogue. And let's ensure we conduct ourselves with the respect such a significant discussion requires. /FT

 Bruce J. Clemenger is president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Please pray for our work. You can follow us on Twitter @theEFC and support us financially at www.theEFC.ca/donate or toll-free 1-866-302-3362.

VP branches out

Aileen Van Ginkel, EFC vice-president, ministry services, has moved to a part-time position with the EFC. She will continue to co-ordinate various resourcing projects for EFC affiliate groups while taking a part-time role with a consulting group (www.thefieldcollaborative.com), where she will offer services in communal discernment and partnership development.

Ready to welcome refugees: open letter

The EFC sent an open letter to the leaders of Canada's federal political parties in September, in response to the ongoing crisis in Syria and elsewhere. "Evangelicals stand ready to not only welcome, but also to sponsor refugees," it says, highlighting in

particular the EFC denominations that signed a statement of intent to demonstrate openness "to sponsoring anyone in need, regardless of the refugee's religious beliefs or affiliation." Details at www.theEFC.ca/RefugeesLetter2015.

Is your congregation an EFC affiliate?

Congregations that formally affiliate with the EFC take a public stand for religious freedom, collaboration for ministry effectiveness, and the importance of bringing biblical principles to issues of Canadian law and public policy. Join hundreds of other congregations from more than 40 denominations at work "uniting Evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus" by visiting

www.theEFC.ca/affiliate or calling toll-free 1-866-302-3362.

Fall calendar

International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, worldwide, Nov. 8

G1 Prayer Summit: National House of Prayer, Ottawa, Nov. 12–14

Top 10 Must Dos for a Dynamic Kids Ministry, Kitchener, Nov. 14

Celebration of Hope With Will Graham, Fort McMurray, Nov. 14–15

Entrepreneurial Leaders Conference, Toronto, Nov. 18

Leading a Multi-Site Movement, Kitchener, Nov. 18

International Adoption Course, Calgary, Nov. 21

Cross-Cultural Church Planting in Canada, Toronto, Nov. 27–28

Diaspora Church Planting in Canada, Toronto, Dec. 4–5


Urbana Missions Conference, St. Louis, Missouri, Dec. 27–31



Visit www.theEFC.ca/calendar to find out what else is new or to publicize your own event.



The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

 Find out about news stories like these and more at www.theEFC.ca/socialissues.

 Learn how to take action on the issues you care about at www.theEFC.ca/takeaction.

  Visit the EFC on Facebook and Twitter for breaking news, great links and lively discussion.

Helping young people engage



Gerri Rodman is president of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of Canada, an organization “committed to the transformation of youth, students and graduates, in all their ethnic diversity, into fully committed followers of Jesus Christ.”

■ *What is the mission at the heart of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship?*

There are 8 million young people in Canada. We long for them to meet Jesus and become His followers. We host more than 90 groups in high schools, colleges and universities across Canada, and we own nine camps, Pioneer and Circle Square. In both our camp and campus ministries, we help young people engage thoughtfully with faith and equip them as leaders.

■ *What is Inter-Varsity’s role within the Canadian Church?*

Recent research, including the EFC’s *Hemorrhaging Faith* report,

highlights the alarming reality of young people leaving our churches. For more than 86 years, God has given us connecting points with young people beyond church walls. We talk about faith, encourage them to follow Jesus and help them grow as disciples. They aren’t with us forever – they graduate and move on. We launch young leaders who will shape the Canadian Church for years to come.

■ *What is your hope for Canadian students at Urbana, Inter-Varsity’s student missions conference in December?*

Since the first Toronto conference in 1946, God has used Urbana to call

more than 250,000 students to mission. This year’s theme is “Find Your Life.” We want students to find their lives in Christ. That will help them sort out other questions about identity, purpose and calling. Four hundred Canadian students will participate in our Student Leaders Track, applying what they are learning at Urbana back at home. We want them to be missionaries now!

■ *How do you care for yourself as a leader?*

After university, as a newly re-committed Christian, I worked with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students in Colombia. There I began developing spiritual practices like daily personal prayer and Scripture study. I also met regularly with a spiritual director who still speaks into my life. I have trusted friends who listen, ask questions and pray for me. I love to have fun and I make time for that!.

■ *Top leadership advice?*

Know who you are in Jesus – please Him first. Don’t be afraid to make change. God calls us to growth, so our organizations should be growing too. Make development of the people you supervise your top priority. Take time to be restored.

■ *Who are your heroes?*

Charles Simeon revolutionized 18th-century England, calling people back to faith. He motivated hundreds of young people to follow Christ. In the 1950s Henrietta Mears led a young adult group in Hollywood, California that produced hundreds of Christian leaders, including Bill Bright (Campus Crusade) and Billy Graham. Cathie Nicholl, one of our own staff, influenced thousands of young people for Christ. /FT

9,400+

NUMBER OF CAMPERS ATTENDING INTER-VARSITY’S NINE SUMMER CAMPS ACROSS CANADA

88+

NUMBER OF INTER-VARSITY GROUPS IN HIGH SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES ACROSS CANADA

IVCF (www.ivcf.ca) is an affiliate of the EFC (www.theEFC.ca/Affiliates). Find more Q&As at www.faithtoday.ca/QandA.



MESSY FAITH

SHEILA WRAY GREGOIRE

Is your thinking holding you back?

Change your thinking. Change your marriage.

I married my one true love. After a childhood full of rejection and teenage years filled with embarrassing relationships, I found someone who “got” me. We laughed together. We led a youth group together. We were kindred spirits. I was certain he would be the one who would make me happy for the rest of my life.

Then we walked down the aisle. Suddenly this man who had understood me and completed me and loved me had actual expectations and demands – expectations that clashed with my reality.

Most of our problems were with sex. The more Keith wanted it, the more I felt he only loved me for what I could do for him. So I would pray, “God, please help him see how much he’s hurting me. Help him just to love me again.”

I did everything I felt the Church told me to do. I prayed. I cast my cares on God. I drew close to the Lord. Yet my prayers didn’t work. Keith still got grumpy when I would respond negatively to his friskiness.

After I had prayed for two exhausting years that Keith would start caring about me, God put a thought into my head. *Do you believe the only one who can fix this relationship is Keith? Don’t you have something to do with it?* I vehemently argued with myself – and with God – about why changing was impossible. Even if we only considered sex, how was I supposed to enjoy something so awkward?

Then another thought hit me even harder. *If God says sex is good, and the whole world says sex is good, maybe you should start figuring out how to make sex good.*

I was stunned. If that thought

was right, then the responsibility fell on me to do something about my struggle. I had to stop thinking sex was distasteful and start thinking, *Sex is great – I just don’t have it all figured out yet.* The problem may have started in the bedroom, but it wasn’t a problem with sex. It was a problem with how I was thinking.

For the last ten years I’ve been heavily involved in marriage ministry, speaking at marriage conferences, managing a huge marriage blog, and writing marriage books. And the more I talk to couples, the

Most faulty thinking in marriage has one thing in common – change seems to be up to God or up to your spouse.



more I find that most problems start with faulty thinking.

Here’s one you’ll recognize. “Jesus doesn’t want us taking offence. So if your spouse does something that annoys you, let it go. Forgive as God forgave you!” We think conflict is bad, and so we become peacekeepers, trying to keep the lid on any simmering bad feelings.

But what if God called us to be peacemakers rather than peace-

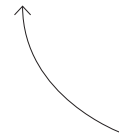
keepers? What if the route to peace sometimes runs through conflict as we deal openly with our issues?

Or if you think the most important marriage lesson in Scripture is “God hates divorce,” then you might think it’s more important to God that you not rock the boat. But what if God wants us to “spur each other on to love and good deeds,” even if that means confronting sin rather than doing nothing and enabling it?

In my new book *9 Thoughts That Can Change Your Marriage: Because a Great Relationship Doesn’t Happen by Accident* (WaterBrook Press, 2015), I look at some specific thought patterns that can stop us from having the intimate, thriving marriages God wants from us. Most faulty thinking in marriage has one thing in common – it leaves the person stuck because change seems to be up to God or up to your spouse. I believed my marriage couldn’t get better until Keith changed, but I had no control over that.

But maybe what’s holding you back from real intimacy isn’t a problem with your spouse. It’s a problem with what you believe about marriage, about God or about conflict.

The Church hasn’t always given the best marriage advice. Too often we’ve focused on avoiding conflict or preserving gender roles rather than pursuing authenticity and holiness before God. There aren’t shortcuts to truth. And there aren’t shortcuts to a good marriage either. But when we change our thinking, we can start to change everything else too. /FT



Sheila Wray Gregoire is an author, blogger and inspirational speaker. Read more of these columns at www.faithtoday.ca/MessyFaith.



Pier 21

Canadian evangelicalism is an immigrant faith

On the Halifax waterfront, just down the street from the farmers' market, sits Pier 21. Over the decades, this former stop for ocean liners has been a bridge to a new life in the New World for hundreds of thousands of new Canadians.

Through several great immigration booms – including the mass influx of European immigrants leaving behind the ruins of the Second World War and the more recent arrival of people from Asia and Africa – Pier 21 was Canada's front door. This past summer the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 celebrated its grand reopening after a \$30 million expansion.

Immigration and Christian faith are closely tied in Canadian history. Long before there was a Pier 21, the first Christians to stand on our shores were foreign explorers and settlers sent by France and England. They brought their particular forms of Christianity with them, as subsequent immigrants have done for the past 400 years. To be sure, many of Canada's indigenous peoples (themselves descended from much earlier immigrants) also embraced Jesus Christ and became His followers. But since those early years of first contact, most Christians in this part of the world have been either newcomers or their descendants.

Just as Canada is a country built on immigration, so too Canada's evangelical churches were built on immigration from other lands. In the 19th century the churches that benefitted the most from immigration were the Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists.



At the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax, people can trace the journeys of immigrants to Canada.

Many English immigrants were Anglicans or Methodists already when they arrived. Scottish and Irish immigrants to Canada tended to be staunch Presbyterians. The large numbers of American immigrants who came to Canada in those years were most often snatched up by entrepreneurial Methodist and Baptist churches which sent evangelists on horseback to far-flung farms and villages.

Already in those years we see that the churches that benefitted from immigration were either churches with which the immigrants already identified or those that took bold steps to share the Good News with newcomers.

This pattern repeated itself in the 20th century. In the wake of the First World War the Salvation Army helped settle more than 200,000 British immigrants in Canada. After the Second World War the Lutheran and Christian Reformed churches grew through immigration from particular countries (Germany and the Netherlands respectively). Other churches, such as the Christian & Missionary Alliance and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, grew by reaching out to immigrants from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Immigration continues to be a major source of growth and vitality for Canadian Christianity. Between

Churches that benefitted from immigration were either churches the immigrants already identified with or those that took bold steps to share the Good News

48

PERCENTAGE OF IMMIGRANTS ARRIVING BETWEEN 2006–2011 WHO IDENTIFIED AS CHRISTIAN

2006 and 2011 (the latest Statistics Canada data) 48 per cent – nearly half – of immigrants to Canada identified as Christians. The next biggest group was those claiming “no religion,” at 20 per cent. Only 17 per cent of immigrants in this period were Muslims, 7 per cent Hindu and 5 per cent Sikh. There were nearly three Christian immigrants to Canada for every one Muslim immigrant.

During those five years more than half a million people identifying as Christians came to Canada. Close to half are Protestants, including, for example, 21,250 Baptists and 25,555 Pentecostals. Many of them join small but rapidly growing denominations that are not well known. Rick Hiemstra, director of research at The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, has found that at least one African-based evangelical denomination, the Redeemed Christian Church of God, has over 50 congregations in Canada.

Today's immigration is potentially an enormous boost to Canadian Christianity. Most newcomers are much more religious than the Canadian born. In 2011, 43 per cent of foreign-born Canadians attended religious services once a month, compared to just 22 per cent of those born in Canada. Due to immigration, over the 1990s religious attendance rates increased in some of Canada's largest cities, such as Toronto and Vancouver, while it fell in the rest of the country.

Immigration also brings the unreached world to our doorstep. More than half of recent immigrants come from the “10-40 window,” a region of Africa and Asia with relatively few believers. This is a tremendous gospel opportunity. Will today's Evangelicals, like those of previous eras, answer the call? **/FT**



Kevin Flatt is associate professor of history and director of research at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ont.



FAITH GROWING IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH is growing in one of the most restricted regions of the world, the Arabian Peninsula, according to an article in *Christianity Today*. “Why Christianity Is Surging in the Heart of Islam,” by Jayson Casper, says the number of Christians in that area is now between 2.3 million (Pew Research) and 3.5 million (Gulf Christian Fellowship).

“We don’t really face persecution, we face misunderstanding,” says Anglican priest Bill Schwartz working in Qatar. The article says some religious restrictions are easing, for example, with legal distribution of Bibles and other Christian literature.

But the numbers can be misleading, as many believers are expatriates (noncitizens) who have more freedom than locals, notes Henriette Kats of Open Doors International.

People who convert from Islam to Christianity are still under the threat of the death penalty in United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Yemen and Saudi Arabia, even if it is not always enforced. Christians in Bahrain and Kuwait have somewhat more freedom.

Expatriates also have restrictions. They are forbidden to evangelize. Saudi Arabia and Yemen do not allow churches to be built.

Migrant workers from Africa and Asia are generally treated badly, says Kats, and even more so if they are Christians. —**WORLD WATCH MONITOR, CHRISTIANITY TODAY**

WEA TAPS CANADIANS TO ADDRESS REFUGEE CRISIS, BUSINESS

THE WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE (WEA) has established two new initiatives with significant Canadian participation.

In response to the refugee crisis in Europe and the Middle East, WEA has established a special refugee task force, headed by its director of public engagement, Canadian Christine MacMillan, to strengthen the



South African youth hold a trust exercise as part of a leadership development program for Sunday school teachers in Vryheid, KwaZulu-Natal (supported by African Enterprise Canada, www.AfricanEnterprise.ca).

collaboration between independent evangelical alliances in various countries, along with agencies and churches that serve the needs of refugees.

The other initiative, a new WEA Business Coalition, aims to leverage evangelical impact on business as well as discern how to make an evangelical contribution to major institutions such as the World Economic Forum, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The coalition includes evangelical business leaders and theologians from many countries including Canada. —**WWW.WORLDEA.ORG**

CROSSES REMOVED IN CHINA

CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION against Christians in China are somewhat misrepresented in some areas, according to Xiao Yun, China country co-ordinator for Open Doors International. By example he points to Zhejiang, an eastern state with a large Christian presence, where in the past two years 1,200 crosses have been pulled down from churches and several church buildings demolished.

Xiao says in most cases Zhejiang authorities targeted increasing illegal constructions. In one case a church was built five times larger than its leaders had permission for. When authorities initially asked the church only to remove the cross, they refused, so the government tore down the entire 100,000 square foot building.

In May 2015 the State put new restrictions on churches, limiting the size and placement of crosses. A spate of cross removal ensued, with officials sometimes going ahead with the destruction before getting court approval.

The tussle in Zhejiang state is not evidence of increased discrimination at the national level, says Xiao, who believes the current Christian population is around 85 million, more than members of the Communist Party. Restrictions and enforcements in China depend largely on local and regional governments, and are not a result of a crackdown by the central government. —**WORLD WATCH MONITOR**

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

“Promote prayer. Pray for the needs of the displaced. Pray for governments in all their different efforts. Pray for peace in the war-torn countries. Pray, pray, pray.”

—**Thomas Bucher, general secretary of the European Evangelical Alliance, in response to the refugee crisis**



To death and back

Can near-death experiences tell us anything about heaven?

On the eve of finishing my 15th book, I am still waiting for a bestseller. Sure, a few of mine have sold around 10,000 copies, but that's minor in the big leagues. *The Da Vinci Code* used to sell that many copies per day.

I do know one way for almost certain bestseller status – I don't really want to go this route, but it is at least interesting to think about. Here it is in four steps:

1. Die
2. Go to heaven
3. Come back to Earth
4. Write a book about your time in heaven.

I'm not ready to try this route because I don't want to die yet, or more particularly follow gruesome paths that lead to death. Also, there's no certainty coming back would be an option.

But what about all the first-person books about people's journeys to heaven and back?

Eben Alexander III, a neurosurgeon, had a near death experience (NDE) in 2008 and claimed he went to heaven. His book *Proof of Heaven* has earned him enormous wealth and worldwide acclaim.

I noted the case of Todd Burpo in this column a year ago. His book about his NDE in 2003 has sold over 10 million copies.

90 Minutes in Heaven tells the story of Don Piper's NDE from a horrific car accident in 1989. His book was on *The New York Times* bestseller list more than five years.

Howard Storm's 2000 book *My Descent Into Death* is another case of an amazing story followed by spectacular sales.

There is enormous debate about



whether these books are accurate. What there is no debate about is that people worldwide are interested in the subject of heaven.

Personally, I have thought more about heaven in the last year than any other time in my life. This has nothing to do with book sales but with facing death close-up, personal and tragic. A year ago my wife Gloria and I experienced the worst moment in our lives. Gloria's sister called to tell us the heart-wrenching news that Jennifer, our beautiful, caring, smart, wonderful niece, had died in the night. Totally unexpected. She was 21. The news of her death, attending her funeral, and coping with the loss has been at times unbearable.

Now, my mother died when I was 20, and of course I've thought often about heaven. Five years ago I lost four close friends and two close relatives. I preached at my Aunt Marg's funeral that year from John 14:2, "I go to prepare a place for you." Jennifer's death has made that wonderful text more important and the

There's a better way for confidence about heaven – the testimony of Jesus about heaven and all the great reasons to trust His word

promise of heaven more comforting.

In the face of death, it's no wonder books about heaven sell so well. However, there are complications in the to-heaven-and-back genre. First, a few NDE accounts have turned out to be bogus. Alex Malarkey's book *The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven* was withdrawn from circulation earlier this year after he went public that his NDE accounts were lies. Second, the NDE books contain contradictory views of the afterlife, God and the way of salvation. While these two points do not demand total disbelief in NDE stories, we do need caution.


There's a better way for confidence about heaven – the testimony of Jesus about heaven and all the great reasons to trust His word and the word of those who knew Him.

"I go to prepare a place for you," and "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43), and many more.

Life's pain and evil drain many of their trust. Why do I still believe in God and heaven?

First, logically, if God can give life this first time round, then He can do it again. Second, historically, the evidence that Jesus robbed death at Easter is superb. On this, read Michael Licona's incredible work *The Resurrection of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach* (IVP Academic, 2010). Third, ethically, I trust the moral and spiritual integrity of Jesus of Nazareth and His claims about a heavenly home.

I dedicated my recent book to Jennifer. I wrote: "Memories of fun times, your loving spirit, your amazing creativity and your fabulous smile will hold us until we meet in that place where God will wipe away all tears from our eyes (Revelation 21:4)." /FT

 James A. Beverley is professor of Christian thought and ethics at Tyndale Seminary in Toronto. Find more of these columns at www.faithtoday.ca/ReligionWatch.



THE EFC ENSURES YOUR VOICE IS HEARD IN OTTAWA



Bruce Clemenger, President of the EFC, with lawyer Geoffrey Trotter, at the Supreme Court of Canada for the *Carter* case on euthanasia and assisted suicide.



EFC lawyer Albertos Polizogopoulos with Bruce Clemenger at the Supreme Court for the *Saguenay* case on whether there is a place for religious observance in state-sponsored events.

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STEVE COLBY is director of missions for Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) Canada. In his role, he organizes and escorts teams of young people from Canadian universities on short-term mission trips around the world. He has done this for years. But he calls them global partnerships.

This year at Urbana 2015 Steve Colby is a keynote speaker. During North America's largest student missions conference, Colby will call youth to mission in an age when the value of mission trips is sometimes questioned.

Faith Today spoke with Colby about his passion for mission, the things that still can go wrong, and why it's so worth it.

Faith Today: You are actively encouraging young people to go on short-term mission trips. Yet there seems to be a growing feeling out there that these trips may do more harm than good. Tell us about that.

Steve Colby: We see these trips as an opportunity to turbo-disciple university students and youth, and see them catalyzed in their faith. A short-term experience is primarily a discipleship experience for the goer. We realize that. But what we are looking for is an ongoing partnership with our hosts. We prefer the term global partnership to short-term mission. It's the ongoing relationship we want to develop. We want to see youth and university students see they have a part to play with developing the relationship with the global Church. And we've seen so much fruit.

FT: Why do you prefer the term global partnership?

SC: We are now in, and have been for awhile, a season where mission is changing. The global Church, the Majority World Church, is rapidly growing and in many

cases is advancing the gospel on their own. Missionaries are being sent from Brazil, from Africa. The mission is not solely a North American enterprise. We have the opportunity to go as learners. The word partnership shows we are going as collaborators, to learn from and with our Majority World partners.

FT: But does unleashing Western youth in the Majority World make for a good mission trip?

SC: There has been, and still are, short-term missions that are well intentioned, but may fall short of being that helpful. And may not be in great partnership with local Christians. The classic for me is one time a team before us went to build a dry composting toilet, only to learn over time the locals had no desire for a dry composting toilet. The next team came and unbuilt it.

The invitation we are getting from the global Church is, "We'd like you to come and have relationship with us."

I'm personally keen because no one





should have me come and build anything. What I'm really hearing is the desire for friendship. The Church in Jordan wants the West to know there is a Church in Jordan. Sierra Leone wants to know we're going to stay friends. To throw the baby out with the bathwater would be missing out on our participation in the global Body of Christ.

FT: *How do we figure out what is really helpful, building on your unbuilding of the dry composting toilet example?*

SC: We have a tendency and history of focusing on doing rather than being with people. How well are we listening? Sometimes to even indirect communication? Are our partners feeling free to be direct? This is where learning in relationship and building trust comes in. I have to believe over time there is going to be more facility to say, "That thing you built two years ago, we didn't really need that." Then we can say, "Let's not repeat that. What would be helpful?"

FT: *How does a Canadian church go about finding a "good" trip to go on, and building a strong partnership?*

SC: I would spend a lot of time talking on the phone or Skype, or even visiting the local Christians, the local church and the local organization, to get to know them. To celebrate what God is already doing in them. To find what I can learn from them and be keen about that being part of it. That should be there from the beginning, that we are learners coming and wanting also to bring something. It's usually something less than what my pride would hope for.

We all have a pride-ometer that needs to be adjusted about what is actually helpful. We tend to feel we have a lot to contribute, which we do, but coming with a huge amount and dumping on people may not be helpful. Out of that first experience, then doing follow-up really well, and saying that prayerfully we want to see this relationship continue.

FT: *We've talked about going as learners. What happens on a short-term mission trip, or during global partnership, that is so powerful in the spiritual lives of people?*

SC: I think that the miracle that happens is we're actually called, invited by Jesus

into this leaving home. We are dislocating and relocating as a part of our faith journey. He's in it. That kind of dislocation brings up all kinds of stuff.

We feel out of control. The food is strange. We get sick. We're kind of helpless. How are we blessing anyone? We struggle with the pride of the fact that we are in a place where we can't express our faith directly. In the midst of that we have to go to a deeper place of trust, that Jesus is making us salt and light even in this situation. He makes Himself apparent through weak and vulnerable lives. That's not easy, but there's a power to that kind of witness.

FT: *Do you still see people out in the field carrying out mission in not the best way?*

SC: I'm trying to do my research from my global partners. They will tell me yes, that there are some things that happen locally that aren't great. We have to keep learning and growing because the global Church keeps changing and changing. We need to

keep coming back to the relationship, listening to our partners to find what will bring a mutual blessing. I feel I'm a matchmaker between the host country chapter and a university chapter of IVCF doing a global partnership. I ask what would be helpful and galvanizing to both.

What are we doing expertise-wise that is making a huge difference? I don't know. At the end of the day, did they really need me? At the end of the day, the Sierra Leone team turns to me and says, "Brother Steve will share the gospel." Well, they could do that better than I can. But they want us to pick up the shovel. It's taking ownership that we are related in the Body of Christ. We are participating.

FT: *Some people love going on mission trips. And some people are bothered by that. Can you explore that?*

SC: Some will say that's just tourism. I think it's something else. Global partnership is actually being the Body of Christ. There are

people who are writing lots and lots about this. It's living in that and rejoicing. I have spiritual homes in so many places because of this interconnection we have. It's such a blessing to me. And that it's a blessing to us is a blessing to them. It's a blessing to Sierra Leone to know that Canada cares. God is the author of all this – all these relationships, all these connections.

FT: *We're a bit skeptical of the argument that we should just send the money we would spend going to the Majority World instead of actually going there. We're skeptical someone would send the \$3,000.*

SC: That's exactly right. Yeah, okay, maybe there's the rare person that does that. The way we move into care and out of apathy is through relationship. The relationship is what changes us. We get blown away by this connection.

It moves us so deeply, it actually affects our wallet. I don't know if what I'm hearing is the global Church wants money. I

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hear the global Church asking for friendship. Friendship can and probably will mean some resource sharing. If we're just all about throwing money over, I don't think that's helpful in the end. If it's just about money, then I feel that we may be doing something different than the purpose of what mission is.

I like the idea of being pilgrims. I got that from James Plueddemann in his book *Leading Across Cultures: Effective Ministry and Mission in the Global Church* (IVP Academic, 2009). He's articulating that we are in a time where the mission is from everywhere to everywhere. Our involvement in mission needs to be seen as a lifelong pilgrimage and not a one-off experience. It's about partnership over a lifetime.

FT: *In the Hemorrhaging Faith report, in which both IVCF and the EFC played important roles, we saw that mission trips and camp can have a powerful impact on a youth staying in church.*

Our involvement in mission needs to be seen as a lifelong pilgrimage and not a one-off experience.”

Why do you think that is?

SC: The two desires from the report was a desire for community. They want to be known and have a place. And a sense of purpose. Community in mission scratches such an itch for this generation. Millennials want to go. They want to be involved, to have a chance to step in and serve and have a global perspective. We seem to have a great opportunity for this generation. I see it in my kids. They've grown up this way. I love how they've been shaped, their values and perspectives by the experience they've had in Sierra Leone and other places we've gone. To see a whole generation of Canadians raised up with a global perspective, to realize you have a part to play. It's a relational piece. It's a call to prayer, to give of your resources and your

life. To see that come alive in young people is awesome and it keeps me going.

FT: *What will be at the heart of your message at Urbana this year?*

SC: They've asked me to speak about how global partnerships have totally shaped our family and our ministry in Canada. I've been on staff for 28 years with IVCF, the last 13 in Canada. It will be a strong call to listen to Jesus and go with Him into His mission, into this partnership. To be learners who are shaped by Him and His mission, that we would continue in partnership with the people and places He is connecting us to. To see this global family exercising every joint and ligament together is awesome. That will be my message.

FT: *Thank you, Steve. /FT*

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POVERTY

WHAT IS IT? AND HOW DO WE FIGHT IT?

By Alex Newman

Deuteronomy 15:4 says,
“There need be no poor among you.”
How do we make that happen?



WHY DOES POVERTY HAPPEN?

Poverty can't be explained away by either weak character or an uncaring society. In fact, it is better understood within a biblical framework. Speaker and author Brian Fikkert views poverty as the sin of broken relationships – with God, self, others and with creation.

He refers to author Bryant Myers, who says in *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development* (Orbis Books, 2011) that these relationships can be broken for a variety of reasons – individual sin, oppressive systems and even demonic forces.

The solution is biblical, says Fikkert, keynote speaker at the recent Food for the Hungry conference in Calgary and co-author of *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Yourself* (Moody Publishing, 2009).

He sees poverty alleviation as a ministry of relational reconciliation, “so that people can fulfil their callings of glorifying God by working and supporting themselves and their families with the fruit of that work.” Bad things happen when our relationships are broken, especially when that triggers a chain of events that can lead to greater poverty. We can all probably think of a friend or family member who has struggled with poverty because of relationships that have gone wrong. Perhaps it's a single parent left on their own because of a broken relationship. Or hundreds of years of social oppression that puts people in poverty from the moment they're born.

Or, maybe it's an entire social system – because “in a connected global economy, actions in one part of the world ripple down to impact people in other parts of the world. Sometimes the effects are positive and sometimes they are negative,” Fikkert says.

POOR AND CANADIAN

Closer to home, Canada has its own growing poverty population. These aren't primarily the generationally poor anymore, but educated new immigrants who spent their savings to come to Canada, then found no work once they got here, says Angela Draskovic, director of Toronto's Yonge Street Mission. Today's job landscape is radically different from the one that met immigrants in the 1950s and '60s, when trade and manufacturing jobs were plentiful, she adds.

The percentage of poor is also increasing as the gap between rich and poor widens. Currently, over half a million Torontonians (20 per cent of the city's population) live under the poverty line – nationwide the number is 4 million (about 11.4 per cent).

Other major cities also have rates of poverty worse than the national average – in Vancouver 20 per cent, in Montreal 26.4 per cent.

Those numbers are set to grow, predicts the former CEO of Yonge Street Mission, Rick Tobias, who's been working with low income people since the '70s. With the working poor already living close to the edge, “there is no margin for them to fall lower. And when they do fall, which they will if nothing is done, we will have a poverty problem we cannot deal with.”

That reality led to the development of Christians Against Poverty (CAP), a debt relief organization which works through local churches, training Christian volunteers to help people get out of debt and be self-sustaining.

“These are not people who lived it up and went crazy with credit cards,” says Dave Knox, CAP's communications manager in Hamilton, Ont. “They lost a job, were unemployed for six months, tried to make ends meet and feed the kids, often skipping meals themselves. Many

Recently on the way to a dinner party, I stopped to pick up a hostess gift. Outside the store was a man in his 60s, sitting on his haunches, upturned baseball cap in hand. Usually I breeze by, eyes averted. This time, however, there was the shock of recognition – he'd renovated my bathroom several years before.

Here was a middle-class guy, someone I once knew. Someone who had been in my home. Now he sat outside begging. I did not acknowledge him. And I was ashamed at my reaction.

Having researched this article – in fact, it was pretty much written – I had developed an intellectual posture on poverty, but this chance encounter jolted me from abstraction into a more deeply felt response.

He appeared to have a drinking problem. Some might say he was the author of his own destiny. Others might say he was a victim of easily available alcohol or the depression following the divorce he had gone through.

But the truth is more complex.

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A four-year-old baby is starving to death. South Sudan is just a four-year-old baby, as a nation.

It has some of the richest soil on earth, yet there is widespread starvation.

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THE THREE APPROACHES TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION



Brian Fikkert, founder of the Chalmers Center for Economic Development in Georgia, outlines three levels of poverty alleviation:

1. RELIEF

Freely giving material support or other forms of assistance is appropriate when individuals or communities are incapable of helping themselves, such as the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami or Hurricane Katrina.

2. REHABILITATION

Once the crisis is over, rehabilitation is more appropriate because the aim is always to restore people and their communities to pre-crisis conditions. A key feature to this approach is that people participate in their own recovery.

3. DEVELOPMENT

This is a more lasting response, one that is ongoing and moves everyone – helped and helper – closer to being in right relationship with God, self, others and the rest of creation, according to Fikkert.

Angela Draskovic [director of Toronto's Yonge Street Mission], incidentally, has a problem with the term poverty alleviation – she prefers the more radical notion of poverty elimination. “Alleviation makes it sound more doable. We seem afraid to say we want to end poverty, because that sounds unrealistic. But we really have to ask ourselves, regardless of our faith tradition, if a family member was struggling in poverty, would we aim to alleviate them, make them a little bit better off? Or would we seek to eliminate the source of that poverty?”

—ALEX NEWMAN

20%

PERCENTAGE OF TORONTONIANS THAT LIVE UNDER THE POVERTY LINE

11.4%

PERCENTAGE OF CANADIANS THAT LIVE UNDER THE POVERTY LINE

are depressed or anxious, and a full 30 per cent are suicidal.”

The emotional side of poverty is something Fikkert has documented as well. “They typically talk in terms of shame, inferiority, powerlessness, humiliation, fear, hopelessness, depression, social isolation and voicelessness... [There is] a mismatch between outsiders’ perceptions and poor people themselves. It can have devastating consequences for poverty alleviation efforts.”

WHY CHURCH INVOLVEMENT IS CRITICAL

Sinking into poverty can happen as a result of bad decisions, but it doesn’t have to end badly, as one Vancouver single mom discovered. It took 12 years, but she eventually got on her feet with the support of Grandview Calvary Baptist Church.

It wouldn’t have been possible on her own, says pastor Tim Dickau. “So many surrounded her, helping with child care, getting her into shared housing with Christians who picked up the financial slack until she was able to. Being poor is a fearful existence, but you feel more secure with others around.”

Because people in poverty tend to isolate themselves – and isolation keeps them in poverty – a caring community makes a difference. As good as professional social workers are, they can’t match what the church has – a steady supply of volunteers, willingness to be patient, commitment to relational living, and an understanding of each person as unique and made in the image of God.

That’s why CAP started in local churches in the U. K. 19 years ago – so many Christians willing to help others get out and stay out of debt, and thus away from poverty’s edge. In 2013, in response to Canadian church leaders who saw the

need for debt counselling, CAP came to Canada.

Recognizing the church’s vast resources to fight poverty was also the spark for the Helping Without Hurting Conference that Fikkert spoke at in Calgary, one of a series hosted by Food for the Hungry Canada and the Chalmers Center for Economic Development.

The first step to fighting poverty, says Melissa Giles, training manager at Food for the Hungry Canada, is to educate Christians about “who the poor are, why and how poverty exists, and even the biblical recommendation for an effective response.” The organization brings speakers with poverty expertise – like Fikkert – to the conference because they’re committed to educating “the Church in understanding how it can be effective in responding, both locally and globally, to the most vulnerable.”

EVANGELICAL BUY-IN

Evangelicals historically played a major role in ministering to the physical and spiritual needs of the poor, Fikkert says. But that changed around the turn of the 20th century when Evangelicals started to battle theological liberalism, often distancing themselves from “social gospel” humanitarian efforts – so much so that historians referred to the period 1900–1930 as the Great Reversal.

Many evangelical traditions ended up emphasizing salvation and the spiritual life at the expense of the physical. It’s the kind of thinking that fails to introduce the poor to precisely the One who can reconcile the brokenness underlying their poverty, says Fikkert.

That goes for everyone involved – helper and helped, he adds. “We’re all profoundly broken, and Jesus comes in and changes us from brokenness to fulfilment.”

More recently, however, Evangelicals have begun to recapture

what Tobias calls “the compassion mandate. There are hurting people out there we want to help, whether it’s food runs or clothing drives, or educating our congregations.”

The problem is we may not all know how to do it well.

When confronted with a begging person, alcoholic or not, we tend to look away and move on – at least I do – but not because we don’t care. We do care, deeply, but we wrongly believe the only response is a kind of all or nothing, 24/7 kind of commitment.

That’s where being part of a Christian community comes in –

That’s where being part of a Christian community comes in – there’s safety in numbers and when you’re burnt out, someone else can step in.

there’s safety in numbers, and when you’re burnt out someone else can step in. It’s a radical step, though, and one that functions best when a congregation embraces it together.

Some churches have taken that step. In Kelowna, B.C., the city with the highest homeless population for its size in Canada, Metro Community Church made a commitment to move into the downtown core and live and worship with the street community. Every Sunday the 300 members – 60 per cent street connected and 40 per cent middle class – sit down together for breakfast.

Laurence East, who became pastor nine years ago, says it’s the only way of doing church his kids know. Once when the family worshipped elsewhere, one of his children piped up, “Where’s the food? Where are the street people?” East’s wife replied that not everyone feels comfortable in a church,

but he pressed on. “Can it be a church if everyone doesn’t feel comfortable?”

In addition to Sunday breakfast the church becomes a drop-in for about 200 people every day (roughly a thousand meals a week). It also operates employment assistance programs including a coffee shop, laundry and moving company.

Local social agencies and non-governmental organizations have been so swept up with this ecclesiastical beehive of activity, that they’ve asked to move with the church when it relocates after their lease expires. East finds this “aston-

ishing – that local practitioners including the city’s busiest health clinic want us playing a central role, even though we profess Jesus, baptize people and encourage a new life in Christ.”

East also says he’s “never worked so hard to present the gospel intellectually and truthfully as I do to the street. Feeding and clothing... these are vehicles that introduce Jesus.”

It’s true not all of us can be like Dorothy Day – the socialist journalist who became a Christian in the 1920s, and chose to live and work among the poor of New York’s Lower East Side until her death in 1980.

Not all of us are good on the front lines.

“I’m not,” Fikkert admits. “But I can write and I can speak. You can support existing ministries in other ways.” /FT



Alex Newman of Toronto is a senior writer at *Faith Today*



Mission Services in London, Ont., operates the Men’s Mission & Rehabilitation Centre on York Street.

SHELTERS FROM THE STORM

Gordon Russell, director of shelters at Mission Services in London, Ont., knows emergency shelter “doesn’t eliminate the cycle of poverty, unless there’s some radical change in their economic viability, their ability to work, or in having some kind of income assistance that helps them move on.”

But his church continues to operate the shelter because people need emergency help. The difference is the help they get to acquire better housing, better budgeting skills and access to neighbourhood resources including education, to keep them out of the shelter in future.

Mission Services has a program that steers needy families into alternative housing instead of the shelter. “Shelters are hard on families – psychologically and emotionally – especially when children must change schools,” Russell says.

It’s not easy on volunteers either, he adds. “The work is often not attractive, won’t necessarily make you feel good, and you sometimes take abuse.”

But it does have its rewards. Tim Arnold, outreach pastor of Southridge Community Church in St. Catharines, Ont., says the homeless shelter they run has “literally transformed us, from hearing our faith to being the hands and feet of Christ.”

The church didn’t intend to open a shelter when they moved from a beautiful rural setting into the city to be open to the needy around them. But when the mayor asked if they’d be willing to start one, they agreed to try it for six months. Within ten days 60 people were living in their church, Arnold says. Since then over 7,000 people have found temporary shelter, and a quarter million meals have been served.

Like Russell, Arnold realizes emergency shelters don’t solve long-term problems, but the 20–30 days spent there aren’t wasted, since church volunteers help people create a plan for employment, sustainable housing and access to community supports. There’s no quick fix, Arnold says, because it took time for someone to get to this point, and when mental health or addiction issues are involved, recovery can be even slower. —ALEX NEWMAN



HOW YOUR CHURCH CAN GO DEEPER

THERE'S PROBABLY NOT a church that hasn't fielded requests for financial help. The natural inclination is to give money. That's fine once in an emergency, Fikkert says, but if someone is routinely showing up at the door asking for help, there needs to be some discernment.

Simply giving money usually does more harm than good. The better way, though more costly in terms of time, would be to develop a relationship with the person, and be willing to walk with them to help them use their own gifts to avoid this situation in future, Fikkert says.

If your church feels called to this ministry in a comprehensive way, he recommends doing a neighbourhood assessment to determine whether people need relief, rehabilitation or development. Then look at the existing services and ministries in your community to see if your congregation could support those or find ways to fill the gaps. (See www.theEFC.ca/CommunityResearchGuide for help with this research.)

Typically what you will find is that most poor people in your neighbourhood need development, Fikkert says, but most of the existing services focus on relief. If so, your church might want to strengthen the more development-focused ministries or start a new one. And then work with the poor in an asset-based manner, looking at what assets the person already has and supplementing those so they are able to be "stewards of their own gifts and resources . . . so the solutions can come from within."

Grandview Calvary Baptist Church has put this approach into practice in Vancouver. They started a community housing program that pairs church members with more vulnerable people. Tim Dickau and his family have invited 44 people to live with them over the past 23 years. Recently they built housing over the church parking lot, with 20 units for vulnerable people and six other units for people in the church community.

"Living together is a great leveller – you start to see each other differently"

As Dickau has personally discovered, "Living together is a great leveller – you start to see each other differently, and the lines become blurred between those who have and those who have not. The aim is not to make them over into middle-class citizens, but to help them to flourish, to share life in a deeper way."

The church started some social enterprises – pottery, catering, construction and landscaping – which in the past year have made work for 30 people and generated wages of about \$250,000.

However, the only way this amount of involvement can work, says Dickau, is having a community to share the load. "Individuals burn out – we all have times we need to step aside, and with a church community there's usually someone else to fill your place."

—ALEX NEWMAN

THE EBOLA CRISIS

THE BATTLE,
THE AFTERMATH
AND WHERE
WE ARE NOW



B. C. doctor and others reflect. BY ALEX NEWMAN

W

When news of the Ebola crisis in West Africa finally broke on the world stage in the summer of 2014, NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) had already been on the front lines for months battling the deadly disease.

Now the crisis is gone from the limelight, but those same NGOs, still faithfully working in the affected countries, are reflecting on the experience.

Although Ebola outbreaks occur every few years, the most recent was among the most severe. First diagnosis of the current outbreak occurred in March 2014 in Guinea by Médecins Sans Frontières – Doctors Without Borders (MSF), World Health Organization (WHO), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

It spread to Liberia and Sierra Leone from there and by summer was a full-blown epidemic in all three countries. By fall a thousand new cases were being reported each week.

Dr. Azaria Marthyman, a B.C.-based medical internist volunteering with Samaritan's Purse Canada, first went to Liberia in July. He reports feeling “overwhelmed. It was an enormous, daunting task, a huge mountain that I felt we could not accomplish on our own. We did what we could.”

Dr. Azaria Marthyman, a B.C.-based medical internist, was one of the many medical personnel who volunteered with Samaritan's Purse Canada treating Ebola patients in Liberia – in July, September and October 2014.

“All that logistical support throughout the Ebola crisis – the masks, goggles, gloves, IV fluids, a helicopter – would not have been there without the support of Christians.”

350

NUMBER OF LIBERIAN DOCTORS AND NURSES WHO DIED DURING THE EPIDEMIC (OUT OF 800)

3,700

NUMBER OF CHILDREN ORPHANED BECAUSE OF THE EBOLA OUTBREAK

He and other Samaritan's Purse medical volunteers used protocols implemented by MSF. It was a gruelling task, and “Human resources were pushed to the breaking point,” Marthyman says.

Thanks to being a presence already in Liberia for 13 years – since before the UN-imposed ceasefire in 2003 – Samaritan's Purse was able to jump in immediately. They had 400–500 national Liberian staff workers in the country. And they had global volunteers, like Marthyman, who responded quickly.

NOT EVERY DOCTOR CAN RESPOND

This was Marthyman's second time with Samaritan's Purse. The first was in 2010 for the Haiti cholera outbreak. Not every doctor can respond, he says, because of work or family restraints. But he had the blessing of his wife, children and colleagues. And he was an ideal candidate for the Ebola crisis, thanks to his specific skills in search and rescue, tropical medicine, orthopedics, emergency medicine, and trauma.

His guiding scripture is Proverbs 3:27 – “Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,” as long as it is in direct response to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Marthyman has never doubted God's involvement in this, or any other crisis. “I can't answer why someone survives and someone else doesn't, because that's within God's sovereignty. What I can do though is respond, and since God has touched me personally in this situation I know He's involved, and

therefore also in the lives of the people who survive and those who don't.”

Brittany Taylor, international medical volunteer co-ordinator at Samaritan's Purse, feels the same way. She remembers how frightening the Ebola situation was, “with the number of cases growing and no help on the way.” It wasn't until two of Samaritan's Purse's own, Nancy Writebol and Dr. Kent Brantly, contracted Ebola in the summer that the international community took notice and started sending help.

Although the Samaritan's Purse team was devastated by the news of their colleagues, she says in retrospect they saw “that it was necessary to prompt the international community to get involved.”

Situations like Ebola are fertile Kingdom opportunities, Marthyman believes. “Christians are becoming relevant like never before. The world has such a spiritual void and each of us has something ... that reflects back who God is.”

And because many Christian organizations are already at work in volatile or unstable locations, and have developed relationships and local networks, they're in an ideal position for disaster relief. Thanks to its long presence in Liberia, Samaritan's Purse, for example, had a network of pastors who could quickly mobilize as team leaders. The “ripple effect in education and public awareness was remarkable and so much more effective in areas where Samaritan's Purse had been,” Marthyman says.

The doctor also said Samaritan's Purse's approach was the right one as the crisis

worsened. Instead of “fighting fires,” they tackled it on several fronts – treating the sick, but also educating villages, providing kits and chlorine buckets for washing stations, and increasing local capacity by training nationals and creating community care centres.

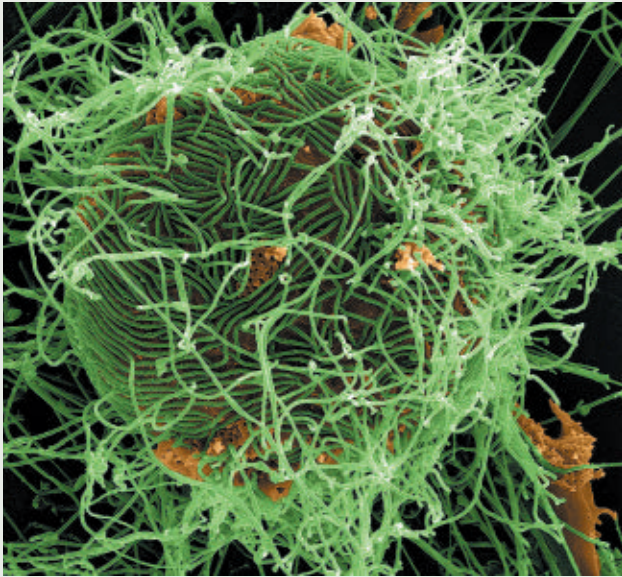
One program was geared to training family members to nurse the sick at home, trying to contain the virus' spread. “Each Ebola patient was infecting two to three others, and even reducing that to one would slow down the disease significantly,” Marthyman says.

A PAINFUL WITNESS

Known for being calm under fire, Marthyman was nonetheless affected deeply by what he saw. “It was so painful to witness the dehumanization. It degrades people. A person in prime health can decline within days, lying in a fetal position, surrounded by excrement and vomit,” he says. “No family around to help and console because of the contagion. The natural response to that cry for help is to hold and console, but you can't. I used my voice, but there's a language barrier. I could hold their hand, but only through three layers of rubber gloves, which were bleached afterward to avoid germ transfer.”

The disease affects far more than its immediate victims. With schools closed for several months, education gains were interrupted. Over 16,000 children lost a primary caregiver and while most now live with extended family, UNICEF reports 3 per cent – or about 3,700 children – have been orphaned.

The health care system has



Why does Ebola spread so quickly?

Ebola has flourished partly because of political unrest, especially in the three countries of the latest outbreak. Liberia's two civil wars, 1989–1996 and 1999–2003, resulted in over 200,000 dead; Sierra Leone's civil war from 1991–2002 left 50,000 dead. Both countries were in shambles with roads and communications networks destroyed, a health care system decimated and overcrowding in cities.

Although there were Ebola outbreaks in the 1960s, the virus was first identified in 1976 after an outbreak in Sudan and then Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo, when microbiologists were able to isolate the virus. Ebola used to be containable because travel between villages was so limited. With greater movement between countries, and much higher urban densities, the recent outbreak was "the worst outbreak to date," says Marthyman. —ALEX NEWMAN

been decimated and desperately needs money and resources to resurrect clinics. Of the 800 doctors and nurses who had served Liberia's 3 million people, more than 350 died from the epidemic. Because all hospitals were turned into Ebola treatment centres, people with other conditions, such as malaria, typhoid or obstructed labour, were turned away and many died.

The economic impact as well can't be underestimated, especially for a country that

was already at a low point economically.

Recovery – and prevention of future outbreaks – can only happen, Marthyman says, if programs are put in place. "Under current conditions expect to see more of these outbreaks."

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Samaritan's Purse will remain in Liberia and is currently discussing what recovery programs they will add to their regular programming.

One challenge in Africa is that the family cares for the body when someone dies. "It's their way to say goodbye. Kissing and touching the body is closure," Marthyman says. "Most don't understand germs or why you need to refrain from touching the body. And they're mistrustful of any government information because of corruption."

Taylor says Samaritan's Purse's main goal is to "provide training and personnel for sustainability programs [and to] increase the capacity of the nationals so they can care for themselves. But it takes money."

Governments are one source, but much more significant is the global Christian community. Marthyman knows firsthand how critical that is. "All that logistical support throughout the Ebola crisis – the masks, goggles, gloves, IV fluids, a helicopter – would not have been there without the support of Christians."

Things seem to be changing, albeit glacially, thanks to the recent international assistance particularly in education. "The prevalence of Ebola has come down, especially in Liberia," Marthyman says. "But we're not at zero, and the worry is that, as the international community pulls back and redirects its efforts to other situations, these countries will be on their own, and will give the situation less vigilance than necessary."

Ebola vaccine trials currently underway will certainly help, but Marthyman says more critical is the ability to respond and act fast. "That's one thing we learned from this – how to respond." /FT



Alex Newman of Toronto is a senior writer at *Faith Today*

Many EFC affiliates have been battling the Ebola crisis

Since the Ebola crisis struck Sierra Leone, **INTERCEDE INTERNATIONAL**'s partner ministry in that country has helped many Ebola orphans by building a children's home. This crisis has been a reminder that it is children who are often the most impacted by the fallout from such situations.

www.intercedenow.ca

SIM's hospital in Monrovia, Liberia was at the centre of the Ebola crisis. The ELWA hospital (Eternal Love Winning Africa) was inundated with cases. A SIM missionary serving in the hospital – Nancy Writebol – contracted and survived the disease as have a number of other workers. Currently SIM Canada has two Canadians serving at ELWA.

www.sim.ca

Where **WORLD RELIEF CANADA** works in these regions, they distributed sanitation equipment and provided information sessions. The main focus was in Zota District, Bong County, Liberia, where they worked with 16 communities and people from 30 churches and mosques, six health centres and 16 community centres.

www.worldrelief.ca

Find more examples by visiting www.theEFC.ca/AffiliateSearch and entering the search term "Ebola."



A Syrian refugee girl carries water at Suleymansah refugee camp in Akcakale, Turkey. Canadians are able to sponsor refugees from camps like these.

How to help a refugee family

BY DEBRA FIEGUTH

Since that day in early September when the image of a tiny boy's body washed up on a Turkish shore began circulating in the media, thousands of compassionate Canadians have been wondering what they can do to rescue families fleeing conflict.

Refugee sponsorship is a serious undertaking with many challenges and demands, but it can be one of the most rewarding experiences you'll ever have.

Here are some points to consider for church groups thinking about sponsorship.



First, educate yourself about the crisis. The situation in Syria is complex and frightening. It has been going on for almost five years, since the Arab Spring of 2011, and has been compounded by the presence of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). There are now some 4 million Syrians outside their own country, and another 8 million who are internally displaced. They are both Christians and Muslims. Half of them are children.

You can sponsor Syrians who have fled to Lebanon or Jordan or Turkey, but you cannot currently sponsor them from European countries, which are considered "safe third countries." Nor can you sponsor people directly from Syria. Here's what you can do.



Find out if your denomination is a Sponsorship Agreement Holder (SAH) with the Federal Government, which will make the process smoother because of the experienced leadership you are demonstrating you have. For a list of denominations and other organizations affiliated with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada that are helping refugees, see www.theEFC.ca/MiddleEastRefugees.



Form a support group (called a Constituent Group), either within your church if it is a large one, or together with people from like-minded churches in your community.



Decide whether you want to sponsor a family already identified by the Federal Government, or one you have learned about through acquaintances in your community. A prescreened family (called Blended Visa Office Referred) will be able to travel to Canada sooner. And the reason it's called "blended" is that the Federal Government provides six months of financial support through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) for the one-year commitment you will be making.

You can sponsor Syrians who have fled to Lebanon or Jordan or Turkey, but you cannot currently sponsor them from European countries, which are considered "safe third countries."

If you know someone with a family member or acquaintance overseas needing help, then you could do a full private sponsorship. In these cases the family would not have been interviewed at a visa office yet, so the process takes longer. The advantage for you is that it gives you a longer time to fundraise. (Donations to your church or denomination for refugee support are tax receiptable.) But be prepared to wait. Although Syrian refugees are arriving more quickly than many others

now, I have been involved in cases where the wait was up to five years.



Determine how large a family you can handle.

If you are just starting out, you might want to begin this work with a smaller family.

A lot of people worry about the money, but that is often one of the easier pieces of sponsorship (along with gathering clothing and furniture). People are moved – they want to help and so they give.

The real work begins once the family has landed. Your responsibilities range from welcoming them at the airport to getting them into English classes, registering the children in school, finding a doctor, taking them shopping, showing them the community, setting up an

A lot of people worry about the money, but that is often one of the easier pieces of sponsorship. ... The real work begins once the family has landed.

apartment for them, and just spending time with them, becoming friends.

Some families are easier than others. A year ago the small refugee committee I belong to decided we were ready to bring another family to Canada. We chose a young husband and wife, along with their three-year-old daughter, living in Kuala Lumpur. The parents were of two different persecuted minorities in Burma, met in Malaysia, and were screened by a Canadian visa office there.

We submitted our undertaking to sponsor in November, and the family arrived in the middle of December – just in time for Christmas. They spoke next to no English then, but today they are thriving. The little one loves junior kindergarten, the parents are becoming

quite good at English, and are more independent each week. They are a joy to be with. (Not all families are as easy as this, and understandably so. They have fled war and persecution, have sometimes been tortured and have serious medical and psychological needs.)

Apart from the satisfaction of knowing you have helped save a family, the relationships and friendships you make can last a lifetime. I'm still very close to a Congolese widow who came with five children 11 years ago. I can't imagine my life without them.

There are many more detailed resources available. Check the EFC website (above) for several faith-based guides to sponsorship. /FT



Debra Fieguth is a senior writer for *Faith Today*, and refugee co-ordinator for the Anglican Diocese of Ontario.



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THE CANADIAN'S GUIDE TO URBANA 15

Urbana is the largest student missions conference in the world, co-hosted by Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship Canada, along with InterVarsity USA and Quebec's Groupes Bibliques Universitaires et Collégiaux du Canada. More than 2,500 Canadian students are expected at this year's conference held in St. Louis, Missouri. *Faith Today* is happy to present this guide to help inspire students to attend this life-changing event, and help navigate Urbana, Canadian-style, once you arrive. BY KAREN STILLER, LYNDA MACGIBBON AND JANICE VAN ECK



Be sure to check out!

The Canadian student leaders track

400 Canadian students will participate in this track designed to help them apply what they are learning at Urbana to their high schools, colleges and universities back in Canada. This track helps them think of themselves as missionaries leaving Urbana as a cohort of young people unified in their desire to reach their schools, neighbourhoods and friends for Christ.

Learn more at www.ivcf.ca/urbana/cslt

Inter-Varsity Canada's booth

Located in the centre of the exhibit hall, this is a welcome place for delegates to sit and rest as well as talk through their Urbana experience with Inter-Varsity Canada staff who can help delegates discern next steps toward a life of mission.

Canadian mission organizations

Interested in speaking with a particular mission group? Besides all the international organizations, there are a host of Canadian ones as well. Meet them in the exhibit hall.

Pastor and church leaders track

This track is co-led by **Glenn Smith**, executive director of Christian Direction in Montreal, Que.

Plenary speakers

Inter-Varsity Canada missions director **Steve Colby** will deliver the final plenary session on Dec. 31, 2015.





Quick deets

WHEN: December 27 to 31, 2015

WHERE: St. Louis, Missouri, USA

VENUE: America's Center, downtown St. Louis

Where to stay?

Downtown St. Louis hotels range from US\$91–115 (+ tax) per night, per room. Book early for best selection.

Exhibitors...

200+ universities, colleges, international mission organizations, NGOs, relief organizations

How to get there?

By car (hear: road trip!), air or bus (connect: some groups are organizing charters)

Who should go?

Target age: college and university students, 17 to 29 years old

Why go to Urbana?

Urbana is a chance to share five days with a diverse group of 16,000+ high school, university and college students who think carefully about their Christian faith and want to make the world a better place. Every three years when Urbana is held, busloads of Canadians make their way to the conference knowing they will return with new direction, new ideas and new purpose.



Faith Today is sending a student to Urbana.

Jeanie Qiu of Calgary, winner of our Urbana contest, will be sharing her experience through social media @FaithtodayEFC



Pick a seminar track

- ➔ Hack4Missions
- ➔ Business
- ➔ International students
- ➔ Pastors and church leaders
- ➔ Poverty

THE CANADIAN'S GUIDE TO URBANA 15



...some seminars are led by Canadians:

Introduction to Native Christians: Culture, Worldview and Values
Dr. Cheryl Bear Barnettson, Foursquare Gospel Church of Canada

High Schoolers @ Urbana Seminar
Ken Heidman and Vera Ivakina, high school campus-ministers with Inter-Varsity Canada

Global Missions Trends; The State of the World: The Task That Remains
Jason Mandryk, author and researcher with Operation World and OM

French-Speaking Culture Ministry in Québec
Ruben Nicolas, general secretary, Groupes Bibliques Universitaires et Collégiaux du Canada

Exceptional People With Disabilities for Missions
Nicole Saleh, former China Partners missionary and current grad student in counselling at University of British Columbia

Discerning Vocation: Asking the Right Questions
Prayer and the Kingdom: Learning to Pray "In the Spirit"
Good Work: Christian Theological Vision for Engagement With the World
Gordon Smith, president, Ambrose University

Global Missions as a Canadian or Global Missions in the Canadian Context
T.V. Thomas, chair, Inter-Varsity Canada board of directors and director of Centre of Evangelism & World Mission



5 days of...

- prayer
- Scripture
- seminars + tracks
- worship

"Urbana provides a phenomenal platform for thinking soundly, theologically and biblically, but in a way that has the potential for global impact. I love that they invite me, a theologian, into the business track. I'll be empowering young business students to think about the global implications of their vocation. Urbana takes the Canadian voice seriously."

—GORDON SMITH, president, Ambrose University

SPECIAL OFFER

Faith Today has a special subscription offer for the Urbana family (those who are going and those who have been). Visit www.faithtoday.ca/urbana to find out more by Jan.31.

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▲ YOUTH ON THE MOUNTAIN TOP

Can we improve our youth rallies for stronger impact?

BY KEVIN FLATT AND DAVID HASKELL

The lights dim. A guy on stage grabs the mic and asks, “Are you really ready for what God has for you today?” The crowd claps and cheers. The band jumps into action with a lively rendition of the popular praise song “Everlasting God.”

It’s loud – eardrum splitting, gut vibrating, concert loud.

These are the first few minutes of a day at Freshwind, a Christian youth rally in Mississauga, Ont. – where organizers hoped youth would take up the challenge to deepen their faith. After it was over, youth said things like:

“I feel that my faith is stronger. I feel that whenever God will call me that I’ll be able to answer right away.”

“Now I just want to go back home and start this big huge fire in everybody’s hearts, try to get my family and my school involved.”

Quotes like these – real statements young people made to us, researchers on a quest to understand the impact of youth rallies – are cause for celebration, particularly given recent troubling news about the spiritual health of Chris-

tian young people in Canada. The 2012 study *Hemorrhaging Faith: Why and When Canadian Young Adults are Leaving, Staying and Returning to Church* carried out by James Penner and other researchers (and published by the EFC) found that only about half the kids raised attending evangelical churches weekly still do so as young adults.

Still, the large numbers of evangelical kids who aren’t ending up as spiritually engaged adults is a serious problem. How can youth rallies like this one help?

▲ **Everyday life is most important. And youth rallies help too**

Researchers who study the faith of young people have consistently found that what happens at home and at church in their everyday lives is the most important factor in leading youth to a strong adult faith. Children from families where parents pray, read the Bible, and discuss their beliefs have the greatest chance of continuing their own faith into adulthood. Likewise, research shows that teens who consistently attend youth groups that reinforce biblical beliefs and practices, and where they can develop

relationships with mature Christian adult mentors, have a greater likelihood of staying faithful as adults.

Youth events, no matter how powerful, are no substitute for this daily rhythm of raising children “in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). But they do have a role to play.

▲ **Peak experiences can change lives**

People who study faith and youth agree that the peak experiences that occur at youth rallies, retreats, camps and similar venues can change lives by making God’s presence, love and power real to young people. The testimonies of the youth at Freshwind show that.

But what makes for an effective youth event? What factors can help youth experience God?

With these questions in mind, we picked up our clipboards and headed out to observe two very different youth events in Southern Ontario. We attended the evangelical rally Freshwind as well as the Swell, a mainline Protestant event in London.

The contrasts between the two? Startling. Their outcomes? Very different. The full results of our research (including a third, Catholic rally) are being published in two academic journals (see sidebar). For each event we spoke with organizers, observed the actual events and interviewed the youth themselves.

Here’s what we learned.

▲ **Bells and whistles**

Organizers of youth events know their audience respond well to music, movement and having their

THE MISSING KIDS

ALTHOUGH THE FOCUS OF THIS ARTICLE IS ON BUILDING THE FAITH OF YOUTH FROM CHURCH BACKGROUNDS, THERE ARE MANY YOUNG PEOPLE IN CANADA WHO DON’T FALL INTO THAT CATEGORY. IN A 2005 SURVEY, STATISTICS CANADA FOUND THAT ONE-THIRD (33 PER CENT) OF CANADIANS AGED 15 TO 24 HAD NEVER ENTERED A CHURCH. GIVEN OTHER TRENDS IN CANADIAN RELIGION, THAT NUMBER HAS PROBABLY INCREASED SINCE 2005. ALONGSIDE WORKING TO BUILD A STRONG FAITH IN YOUR OWN YOUTH, WHAT CAN YOUR CHURCH BE DOING TO REACH THE YOUTH WHO HAVE NEVER BEEN IN ONE?

senses engaged. Both events did a solid job of this. Skilled musicians played emotionally powerful, memorable music. Both events used sophisticated sound and light technology. Young people raised their hands, danced and clapped. The organizers of both events cared deeply about the youth they were trying to reach and had thought carefully about what they wanted to do.

But bells and whistles only take you so far.

▲ **Expectations matter**

At Freshwind the organizers were very clear they wanted youth to experience God's power. One organizer told us, "What we want for them, when they come into the presence of God," is to realize "the power of the day of Pentecost that came down in the upper rooms is a power that is reachable...We want these kids to experience that." The speakers, songs, testimonies and prayers at the event repeatedly and unequivocally reinforced the reality of God's presence and power. Those leading acted as spiritual "translators," calling upon their own experiences to explain to the uninitiated what an encounter with God feels like.

Experiencing God was not promoted as an end in itself. Leaders at the event challenged the youth to let their divine encounter serve as inspiration for other behaviours, such as deeper commitment to Jesus (Jesus was mentioned a lot), being bolder in sharing their faith and changing the world for the better.

Organizers of the Swell had the more modest goal of creating a

worship service that would be welcoming and culturally relevant to mainline Protestant teens. While they were open to youth experiencing "the sacred or divine," the organizers did not talk about expecting most attendees to have life-changing encounters with God. Their priority was creating a worship environment that would feel safe and familiar.

It was clear the event organizers did not want to impose any particular beliefs or faith commitments on the attendees. Youth of "no faith at all" were welcomed to take part in Communion. The main challenge given to youth was to come up with a "word cloud" of phrases that represented their own personal beliefs, which might differ from those of the speaker.

▲ **What's the difference?**

How did youth respond to these two very different events? The enthusiasm of the youth at the end of Freshwind seemed off the charts. All the young people we spoke to there said they were inspired to give their lives more fully to God and make a difference for Him in the world. Many of them spoke of having experienced God's presence or feeling like their lives had been changed.

The Swell also succeeded in its primary objective. The youth we spoke to found the service safe and welcoming. The large majority couldn't point to any effect the event had on their faith. They liked the music and seeing their friends, but few took away any sort of religious message. In the case of two youth who did, it was that belief in God is not rationally defensible.

To be fair, the mainline event was working with a much tougher crowd. Most of the youth were

churched but had low levels of religious commitment. Also, although this was the largest, most substantial mainline Protestant youth event we were able to find in Southern Ontario, Freshwind was larger and much longer in duration, lasting over two days, while Swell was smaller and took place in a single evening. Nevertheless, even the young people we talked to who had been attending Swell for years remained unsure about their faith commitment.

What we saw was different goals producing different results – a pattern observed many times by religion researchers. Where one event aimed to challenge youth to strengthen their commitment to Jesus, the other aimed to make low-commitment or skeptical youth feel welcome and included. They both achieved their goals.

▲ **Next steps**

It would be easy for evangelical youth leaders and pastors to assume their own events must surely produce the same kind of results as Freshwind seemed to produce. This would be a mistake. In our experience, some evangelical youth events more closely resemble the mainline one described here.

Good planning, music and intentions are not enough to have a life-changing impact. Our research shows that youth need to hear what you hope they will gain from the event and how they might meet those expectations. They need to hear they can personally encounter God at the event. And when it comes to experiencing God, you need to call upon your own experiences to serve as a guide for others. "This is a life changer," said one youth after Freshwind. "I don't really plan on living the same." /FT

INTERESTED IN THE MORE SCHOLARLY APPROACH?

THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY APPEAR IN "WHEN YOUTH EXPERIENCE GOD: THE REPORTED IMPACT OF A MAINLINE PROTESTANT YOUTH RALLY AND A CHARISMATIC-EVANGELICAL YOUTH RALLY ON ATTENDEES' RELIGIOUS FAITH" IN *JOURNAL OF YOUTH MINISTRY* 13 NO. 2 (SPRING 2015) AND "PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES AT A CHARISMATIC CATHOLIC YOUTH RALLY: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PARTICIPANT SOCIALIZATION AND ORGANIZER INTENTIONS DON'T MATCH?" IN *RELIGIOUS EDUCATION* IN 2016 OR 2017.



Kevin Flatt is professor of church history at Redeemer University College in Hamilton. David Haskell is associate professor, digital media and journalism/religion and culture at Wilfrid Laurier University, Brantford, Ont.

HOW TO BE AN ADVOCATE

Move from feeling strongly to acting wisely. **BY DOUG BLACKBURN**

When I do advocacy training with churches, I usually wind up telling the story of Amahd. I tell it as much for myself as for the participants. It reminds me why we take on big causes, and it gives me hope.

Amahd is a farmer in rural Pakistan. He is also a health advocate. When a beloved aunt and her child died during childbirth, Amahd vowed to do everything in his power to get birthing support in his village so other women and children would not suffer the same plight. For ten years he pleaded with officials, but there was no change. Women risked the long journey to the nearest hospital, or risked an unattended birth at home.

World Vision arrived in the region and began training community members on how to work with government to get the delivery of basic services. Amahd and his friends used their training to advocate for a birthing centre. At first the answer was the same – no –

but they persisted, and with their new skills created a positive dialogue with the local health authorities. Finally, the government agreed. A labour room was established at the local health clinic. Today, between 20 and 25 babies are delivered at the clinic each month. Death rates have significantly declined.

Amahd's persistence inspires me. He did not lose sight of the prize. Concrete transformation resulted from the advocacy. Where once there was suffering and death, there is now joy and life.

Advocacy is a ministry of influence, a way that Christians and others can address underlying causes and get to deep and lasting change. For many groups in the helping professions, advocacy is increasingly core to their mission. Advocacy complements direct service work. It is a way to help more people, both now and for generations to come.

Here are some of the lessons we've learned about advocacy and how to do it well.

◆ Advocacy and prayer are inseparable

Much of our prayer is advocacy. Every time we intercede for someone's health or for blessing in a difficult situation, we advocate for that person. Many of us pray into social causes, taking our concerns for people and creation to God. We may even pray for politicians whose daily decisions affect the lives of many.

But what if we took it a step further? What if we prayed with an image of *ourselves as advocates* in our minds? What if we saw ourselves in the long line of fierce Christian activists – from Jesus' public support for the outcast and the marginalized (and harsh condemnation of those who would abuse the weak for their own ends), to more recent Christian advocates like Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King or Canada's own Tommy Douglas? Praying with that posture is empowering, and we just might be surprised by the answers we get to our prayers.

◆ Advocacy is authentic and opportunistic

We don't go looking for things to advocate for. But as we engage in ministry and wrestle with why a particular issue persists, we discover what needs to change to create sustained progress. We scan the political and social horizons to determine if the right conditions are in place to get to that change.

This approach led a number of Canadian organizations to focus on advocating for child and maternal health in recent years. The organizations were painfully aware of the great need for stronger health systems in poor countries. At the same time, we knew the interest of the current government was in targeted interventions with measurable results. We worked to encourage and influence interventions that

ADVOCACY RESOURCES



FAITH-ROOTED ORGANIZING: MOBILIZING THE CHURCH IN SERVICE TO THE WORLD
BY ALEXIA SALVATIERRA AND PETER HELTZEL (INTERVARSITY PRESS, 2014)



HOW TO WIN CAMPAIGNS: 100 STEPS TO SUCCESS
BY CHRIS ROSE (EARTHSCAN PUBLISHERS, 2005)



CHOOSE JUSTICE: A DAILY LIFESTYLE
BY SHANE CLAIBORNE AND TONY CAMPOLO. DVD AND GUIDE AVAILABLE AT WWW.CHURCHES.WORLDDIVISION.CA

would ensure health care is for all, particularly the most vulnerable women and children.

◆ Keep it simple

One of my favourite advocacy quotes is from Chris Rose, a long-time U.K. campaigner. “All issues are complex, but your campaign must not be.” This does not mean dumbing down your advocacy messaging, but it does mean making it accessible and actionable. Rose points out that the goal of a successful campaign is not to communicate your issue. It is to get just three things across – the problem, the solution and the action needed now.

◆ Keep it constructive

Advocacy is all about relationships and constructive dialogue. We wouldn't expect to have a productive church meeting if we were simply protesting and complaining. We must bring respect and a solutions-oriented approach to our conversations with decision makers, even when we don't agree with them. Our message to those in power is the same as to those without power. We want you to be all that God created you to be.

Mike Hogeterp, with the Christian Reformed Centre for Public Dialogue (www2.crcna.org), emphasizes the need to build relationships. “When citizens demonstrate a deep commitment to an issue, they are that much more likely to receive the ear of a parliamentarian. Be positive and persistent. Don't just sign off on the petition, but follow it up with a letter or a phone call to the constituency office.”

◆ Go with your strengths

Once you know who you need to influence, you may be surprised by the gifts you can leverage in your own congregation. Sometimes it is personal connections, as in a congregational member who knows

someone who can get you a key meeting. Other times it is a physical asset, like a building that can be used to host conversations.

Your greatest strength is something the Church has in spades – community. You likely have creative people with a knack for getting attention. Put those talents to good use. You have a church communications network that can be mobilized quickly, and each member has their own personal networks. And if you have youth, they are both a source of creative energy and, quite often, a demographic whose attention decision makers often seek.

◆ Advocacy is a force for good

Citizen advocacy is a healthy part of a functioning society. When Canadian Christians advocated for the cancellation of debts in the poorest countries through the Jubilee 2000 campaign, the minister of finance at the time encouraged us to keep the pressure up, saying that public support was needed to get a breakthrough. We did. Debts were cancelled, and millions of children continue to access schools and health care as a result.

In Amahd's case the local government officials were, in the end, quite supportive of the mobilization effort. After all, they too wanted to see health results improved and lives saved.

◆ Advocacy – it's in us to do

Advocacy might be underused because it seems foreign to our experience of church. Yet it is very real for us as individual Christians. If we've ever stood up for a child or a sibling, or gone to bat for a friend or a parent, we've been an advocate. And we have all benefited from the advocacy of others, not to mention that of the Father, the greatest advocate of all (1 John 2:1). /FT



Doug Blackburn is the church advocacy manager for World Vision Canada.



7 TIPS for online advocacy

1

USE LISTS

Like “3 things you can do now to promote X” or “5 things you may not know about Y.”

2

USE COMPELLING IMAGES

Use photos or graphics that immediately illustrate your issue. Aim for an emotional reaction (happiness and empathy are good targets).

3

HAVE A CLEAR CALL TO ACTION

Always include an action that furthers your cause, even if it is just “like,” “comment” or “share.” Tell readers what you want them to do.

4

CREATE A CURIOSITY GAP

You have a second to tease the reader's curiosity. Be creative in generating the urge to know more. In World Vision's child labour campaign, any teaser about chocolate tends to increase our click-through rates.

5

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

What kind of online content do they like? Ask yourself, *Would I open that?*

6

THINK NEW AUDIENCES

Websites and social media feeds are seen outside your immediate community. Your church engaged in advocacy on a current issue could be of interest to people who are new to your church.

7

BALANCE URGENCY WITH HOPE

People need to hear a sense of urgency, that their action is needed now. But they also need hope – success stories, pictures of your church in action, inspiration tied to their faith understanding.

THE WORLD IS NOT

THE WORLD IS NOT LESSONS ON MISSION FROM JAMES BOND AND JESUS CHRIST

BY JOHN G. STACKHOUSE JR.



James Bond, the archetypal secret agent. Jesus Christ, Saviour of the world. Many of us would probably deny their influence, but in unavoidable ways these two ideals compete today for our allegiance – especially the allegiance of men.

Ideals of course inspire us precisely because they are radical and bring to mind a clear set of values and goals. We expect our ideals to remain beyond reach, but when we make a choice, even a small one, they nudge us this way or that. So it's worth considering what they stand for. What sort of people do they promise to make of us if we follow their lead?

At first glance, they may seem far apart. But consider what they have in common:

- They are both single, free to do as they please.
- What they please is to devote themselves to their respective missions, delivered to them from a higher authority whose orders they willingly follow.
- Their mission: to save the world from catastrophic evil. Each is willing to do whatever it takes, including risking his own life.

ENOUGH

- Nobody does it better. Each is superbly suited for his work and completely successful at it.
- And both agree on the Bond family motto *Orbis non sufficit* – “The world is not enough.” (More on that in a moment.)

They also diverge, however, and widely so, in at least four ways.

MISSION, DEFEAT, DEATH, LOYALTY

James Bond's mission is to save the world from evil, so it can keep on as it was before he intervened.

Bond never improves the world. He never questions the structures of power, let alone attempt to offer a creative alternative to the ways of the world that keep generating evil geniuses, huge crimes and massive threats to the innocent. He focuses exclusively on the tactical question of how a particular problem might be ruthlessly solved.

Jesus Christ's mission is also to save the world from evil. But His work concentrates on what is fundamentally wrong with the world, which is, to paraphrase G. K. Chesterton, the world itself.

Jesus does not want merely to topple the latest and worst form of evil in our world. He wants to transform and perfect it entirely.

Indeed, Jesus Christ founds a radically alternative organization, one with a completely different outlook than the intelligence agencies and archvillains who challenge James Bond. Jesus' organization spreads an alternative ethic that has reshaped every culture and institution it has touched with the promise that history will eventually reach a global regime of peace and prosperity.

Bond never even dreams of such a utopia. He takes this life for granted and simply does his best in it.

Jesus is all about alternative realities – the Kingdom of God and eternal life. Nothing could be greater or more worthwhile.

James Bond is never quite defeated. He makes one miraculous escape after another, yanking victory once more out of the jaws of certain defeat.

Yet Bond is never finally victorious either. The evil organization SPECTRE lasts for a while, but ultimately is destroyed, succeeded by this maniacal dictator and that drug lord, this mad scientist and that crazy media mogul – until the moviemakers “reload” the series and yes, bring SPECTRE back.

Every film ends in exactly the same way – “James Bond will be back” – because evil ever sprouts anew.

How attractive! A hero who is sometimes down, but never out. A hero who always gets the last laugh

normal lifespan with wife and kids and a quiet retirement. No, He comes back as the Lord of Life, vindicated by the hand of God Almighty, and ascended to heaven as the Conqueror of All Evil and Ruler of the World.

His story also includes the promise that “Jesus Christ will be back.” But not to do battle again and again with a never-ending series of enemies. No, He will return once, for all, to finish off evil and establish a new and everlasting order of goodness – and with power and efficacy far beyond any gadgets Q Branch can think up.

James Bond is never quite dead, although often badly wounded. (He appears to have died in the opening sequences of both *From Russia With Love* and *You Only Live Twice*.) In fact, in the weird way of movie franchises, Agent 007 is ever rejuvenated, actor by actor, as more movies are made – a cinematic form of reincarnation!

Jesus Christ by contrast was quite dead. The Roman soldiers stationed on Golgotha were trained in the brutal arts of torture and execution, and were so impressed by Jesus' obvious demise that they didn't bother to break his legs – the way to guarantee the asphyxiation of a crucifixion victim.

Yet Jesus, as a model for the rest of us, underwent a single dramatic resurrection – a transformation of His former body into one capable of enjoying the eternal existence of the age to come.

Bond cheats death.

Jesus overcomes and defeats it.

James Bond serves with unquestioned loyalty his “queen and country.” (This sarcastic phrase is spoken by the renegade agent 006 Alec Trevelyan in *Goldeneye*.) Such loyalty might seem absurd to those who see the British royal family as an odd and wasteful relic of the past, and Britain as the seat of a

“THERE IS A WAY THAT APPEARS TO BE RIGHT, BUT IN THE END IT LEADS TO DEATH.” –PROVERBS 14:12

– and usually a painful pun – at the expense of his enemies. It's easy to want to be That Guy.

Jesus Christ, however, seems totally defeated. Not an attractive role model at all.

There is no more abject sight than a man on a cross, pathetically jerking himself up and down to breathe, while gasping and moaning at the pain wracking every part of His body. And then He dies and is laid in a stone tomb. What person has ever seemed more like a victim and less like a victor?

Yet Christianity affirms Jesus is totally triumphant. Not just a little triumphant, like perhaps coming back from the dead to enjoy a

wound-up empire, a nation of mediocre and shrinking influence.

Why such loyalty, Canadians might ask. We celebrate our national loyalty every July 1, but few of us like paying taxes, let alone aspire to dying as a government agent.

Yet there is also something attractive, even compelling, about Bond being such a loyalist, a rugged, determined defender of what he sees to be right and true, even if the institutions that stand for it are badly compromised.

Jesus Christ, for His part, serves an entirely uncompromised “king and country.” The king here is the God of the Universe and the country is the Kingdom of God, the expanding sphere of God’s influence in the world that will eventually bring global flourishing. Loyalty to such a cause makes far more sense than Bond’s dogged allegiance.

APPEARANCES, LICENCES, FRIENDS

James Bond and Jesus Christ go about their work very differently as well.

James Bond is played by handsome actors sporting elegant clothes and accessories. Jesus Christ, by tremendous contrast, is so nondescript that Judas has to pick out Jesus from all the other Galileans with a kiss.

Jesus today, instead of calling us to enjoy great worldly comforts, might very well call us to a task in which looking ordinary (or even awful) is required – and cool gear would be an encumbrance. He might even call us to suffer.

James Bond is credentialled as a “double-o” agent, which means he has a “license to kill” granted by the Queen. This makes him a kind of privateer entitled to remove any obstacle in the way of his mission.

There are days of course when such freedom to just go for it is deeply compelling.

Jesus Christ instead has a “li-

cense to die.” This makes Him a saviour, the Saviour who loves other people and prefers to die in their place to remove whatever obstacles stand in the way of their eternal benefit. Only as our hearts are enlarged to love others as much, or even more, than we love ourselves, can Jesus’ way look at all attractive.

Bond does indeed see people as obstacles, or at least as objects to be manipulated for his own purposes.

**“I AM THE WAY AND THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE.”
—JOHN 14:6**

He borders on the sociopathic, flitting from one sexual partner – or murder victim – to another, without anything more than a flicker of emotion and perhaps a clever riposte.

In *Goldeneye*, his ladylove Natalya Simonova chides him for his emotional encapsulation. He responds, “That’s how I stay alive.”

“No,” she replies. “That’s how you stay alone.”

Indeed, as the most recent film *Skyfall* ends, Bond says a pained goodbye to M, who has become a mother figure to him. Yet he meets a new boss in the last scene, and we all know the previous M will join the long line of associates, friends and lovers – even a wife – in the rearview mirror of the speeding Aston Martin that is Bond’s consciousness.

Jesus Christ, by the strongest of contrasts, offers each individual His full attention – and forever. He offers each of us the greatest social connection and status possible – adoption into the worldwide family of God.

And He calls us to the starkest possible alternative to the ethic of exploitation – “Love your neighbour as you love yourself.”

WHO WILL WE FOLLOW?

So will we follow the likes of James Bond or Jesus Christ?

Although the success of the James Bond movie franchises makes him a role model for millions, he doesn’t tell us how to succeed in the actual world. His world is the world of adolescent male fantasy, a long-running exercise in escapism.

Jesus Christ stands at the heart of what has become *in fact* the most successful movement of social transformation in world history. The Christian story and the theology that expounds it have become the most successful intellectual explanation ever offered to anyone, anywhere.

Here’s the real deal. You want to change the world and do it even with very small, laughably unpromising start-up resources?

Study Jesus Christ and the Christian Church. Now *there* are change agents with a proven track record.


FAMILY MOTTO

James Bond’s family motto “The world is not enough” implies a dedication to saving the world. But what more is there for him? Yes he rolls back evil in each movie, but only to have a new evil appear in the next.

Meanwhile Jesus Christ says in John 10:10, “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” – in this era and in eternity.

So sure, if you have to wear a tuxedo sometime, there are worse places to get your fashion tips than from James Bond.

But if you truly want to help save the world and want to enjoy more than this world has to offer, get your mission from Jesus Christ. **/FT**

 John Stackhouse is the Samuel J. Mikolaski professor of religious studies at Crandall University in Moncton. His most recent book is *Partners in Christ: A Conservative Case for Egalitarianism* (IVP Academic, 2015).

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REVIEWS



Nonviolent Action: What Christian Ethics Demands But Most Christians Have Never Really Tried
By Ronald J. Sider
Baker Publishing,
2015. 208 pages.

\$17 [e-book \$9.99]

RON SIDER, the Canadian-born founder of Evangelicals for Social Action, has challenged Evangelicals in the past on wealth and now tackles attitudes toward violence.

He introduces *Nonviolent Action* by stating the book is not only for pacifists, but also for just war advocates, who usually agree military action takes place only after nonviolent means have been exhausted.

The book is divided into a series of stories of how nonviolent action has been able to overcome violent and unjust regimes. Some of these stories include Gandhi, Martin Luther King, the Solidarity movement in Poland, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the women's movement in Liberia and the Arab Spring.

Sider does an excellent job sharing these stories, bringing the reader into the moments when it seemed nonviolence was not going to work. He is not afraid to talk about the mistakes and failures of these movements, but still demonstrates nonviolence can work.

Although the subtitle suggests

Christian ethics is a major theme, it really is not. A number of the stories have nothing to do with Christianity. The subtitle also claims Christian ethics demand nonviolence without fleshing that out. There are moments in the book where the just war readers may feel as if pacifism is assumed as the proper Christian ethic.

The truth is *Nonviolent Action* is an apologetic aimed at those who believe military intervention is the only way to solve the world's conflicts. Sider demonstrates that people have tried nonviolent action, and it has been effective in producing real change. The message is one that will challenge many assumptions. —STEPHEN BEDARD



Leading Me: Eight Practices for a Christian Leader's Most Important Assignment
By Steve A. Brown
Castle Quay Books,
2015. 176 pages.

\$17.95 [e-book \$9.99]

STEVE BROWN has directed the Arrow Leadership Program in North America for over a decade, and now he serves as president. His new book focuses on offering yourself holistically to God, believing “We are not called to be ornaments. Instead, we are to be

instruments set apart for God.”

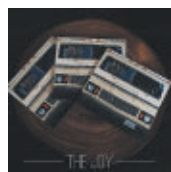
Dr. Brown devotes 13 pithy chapters to unfolding what “leading me” means. From the start he clarifies that the book is about personal leadership – being led by God in your own life as the absolute foundation for effective public leadership. This will involve humility, dependence and trust (Psalm 70:5).

He goes on to outline four gauges for measuring vitality – “spiritual intimacy, godly and healthy character, vibrant relationships in community and significant service for God’s glory.”

The rest of the book creatively presents eight key practices – “Growing Your Vision” (ch. 3), “Unhooking Bungee Cords” (things that hold the leader back, ch. 4), “Keeping Connected” (in the Christian community, ch. 5), “Taking Care of Me” (on personal care for health, exercise and diet (chs. 6–7), “Stewardship and Shalom” (ch. 8), “Leveraging Your Impact” (ch. 9), “Managing Your Time” (ch. 10), “Dealing with Dandelions” (competing commitments, ch. 11) and “Finding Traction Through Training” (ch. 12). The concluding chapter appropriately deals with “Running with Perseverance” (based on Hebrews 12:1–3).

This is a practical, helpful, realistic treatment of Christian leadership in terms that will bless, challenge and search the earnest

Sider does an excellent job bringing the reader into the moments when it seemed nonviolence was not going to work



The Joy
By Tim Neufeld and The Glory Boys
Independent, 2014.
timneufeldmusic.com. \$25 [digital download \$8.99]

TIM NEUFELD has been busy exploring new creative territory. On hiatus from his successful Christian band Starfield, he is continuing to dig up a more “rootsy,” organic flavour of worship music.

First in 2013 he released *Trees*, a Juno-winning acoustic-driven collection of favourite worship songs. Now he has teamed up with a band of bearded bluegrass musicians, his “Glory boys,” for a sweet new project.

This music is a high-energy, youthful celebration of what it means to delight in the freedom of God’s kingdom. Armed with banjos, guitars, a tambourine (and maybe a washboard) along with some fabulous voices, this is what happens when rockers unplug and hit the back porch with fresh, upbeat, happy songs.

It’s more foot stomping than toe tapping. It’s contemporary old time religion with a focus on the Church’s need to celebrate

God’s gifts, so beautifully expressed in the song “Our Church”: *This is our church, our family of faith / On this holy ground we’re all the same / And we are the joy of God on display / Whenever we meet in Jesus’ name.*

The popular radio single “I’m Free” as well as “The River” and “Sunshine” all come back to the same point – “Nothing’s going to take my joy away” – “What good’s the good life if we’re still miserable? Why live half empty

when we can live half full?”

Neufeld continues to display outstanding songwriting skills and a beautifully humble heart, evident in the tender song “I Will Bless You Lord”: *This is my gift, my offering / My life laid out, my everything / for you oh Lord are worthy of it all.*

Churches across Canada are embracing the band’s nationwide “Joyride Tour,” which invites congregations into joyous worship.

—ALI MATTHEWS

person sincerely interested in seeking, in the author's own words, "to be led more by, to lead more like and to lead more to Jesus each and every day." —ALLISON A. TRITES



**The New Parish:
How Neighborhood
Churches Are
Transforming
Mission, Discipleship
and Community**
By Paul Sparks,
Tim Soerens

and Dwight J. Friesen
InterVarsity Press, 2014. 224 pages.
\$21 (e-book \$9.99)

THIS BOOK introduces a way of understanding the local church grounded in appreciation for where and when God has placed it. The book proposes that each local expression of the Body of Christ is gifted with a unique ministry calling, which can only be discerned in relation to its local neighbourhood – or “parish” – context.

Where are we? and What time is it? are key questions to ask when seeking to discern a church's calling.

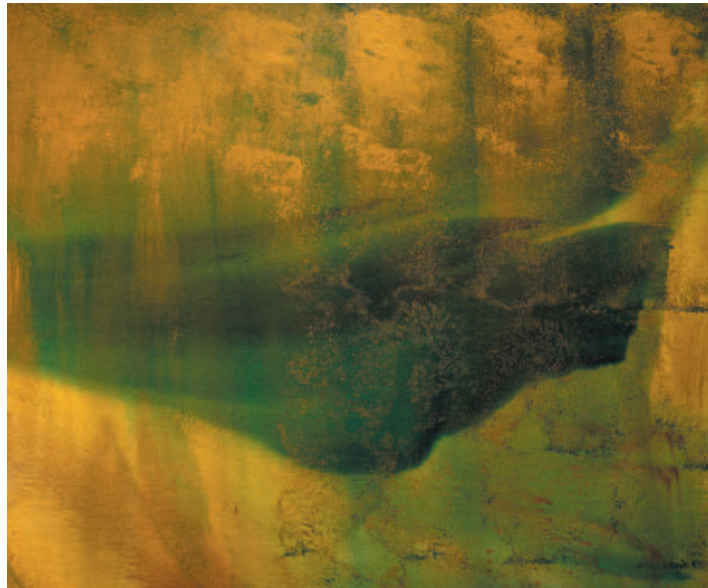
The New Parish also focuses on three other important questions: Why? (in which the authors make the case for their approach), What? (in which they illustrate in greater detail what the “parish” approach is all about), and How?

The answers to this last question reveal that the starting point for a parish-based understanding of a church's vocation is to understand and trust God is leading us in our local church ministries.

It's not about panicking in response to the “adapt or die” voices we hear or about copying others when we try to respond to those voices. Instead it means “learning to truly listen and trust the Spirit's movement in our context.”

Church leaders who get that they need to learn to see and listen first

Canadian creatives



Abstract #1266 (acrylic and oil on canvas) by Christian Worthington
www.christianworthington.com

“I am preoccupied with ideas of beauty in painting, historically and especially today when our culture struggles so much with beauty. We are estranged by it, become insecure by its presence; it makes us doubt our narrative of progress. How could former cultures be so driven by beauty, be desperate for it, while today, we rush to defame it, invent new words to insult it?”

of all – to God and to their parish context – will cultivate practices of discernment for themselves and the communities they lead. In this way they will “spark the communal

imagination toward Spirit-led action in the parish” and – as the stories in the book demonstrate – plant seeds for ministry that will bear much fruit. —AILEEN VAN GINKEL

Reading THE BESTSELLERS



The Girl on the Train
By Paula Hawkins
Doubleday, 2014. 320 pages.
\$22 (e-book \$13.99)

THIS HUGELY POPULAR novel follows Rachel, a depressed alcoholic lamenting the loss of a marriage, a job and a stable life. Intense emotion bleeds through the pages as she spends her lonely days riding the train, back and forth, watching the same couple from the window, imagining their perfect lives and longing for the life she once knew.

One day on her daily commute, Rachel sees something shocking and is plunged into an investigation for a missing woman, the same woman she has been watching from the train.

Hawkins' novel is a fast-paced psychological thriller that keeps readers guessing until the

last few pages. Riveting and saturated with the raw emotion that comes from both divorce and addiction, this novel provides unusual depth for a thriller. However, there is some harsh language and strong themes of infidelity and adultery throughout which may be offensive and distracting to some readers.

If you can get past those aspects, Hawkins' novel is not only dripping with suspense, but also speaks of human depravity. We all long for something more. Those of us rooted in Christ can find satisfaction, but for others that longing can lead to consequential actions.

All the characters in Hawkins' novel are desperate for something more, but in the end it is not enough. Though this novel is not written from an evangelical perspective, it speaks of our fallen nature and desperate need for Christ to fill those holes in our lives. Nothing else will satisfy.

—CHRISSE DENNIS

A LIVING FAITH

Reaching out and digging deep

CAL BOMBAY MINISTRIES

Feeding a starving baby

A four-year-old baby is starving to death.

South Sudan is just a four-year-old baby, as a nation.

It has some of the richest soil on earth, yet there is widespread starvation.

Why starvation?

Finally emerging from over 50 years of violence, genocide and war, this young nation still suffers domestic political havoc, tribal conflict and economic chaos. Millions are without homes. They are starving.

Right now, every day 2,250 are dying from starvation, and have been for many months.

This will continue through Christmas.

Think of it – 2,250 dying *every day*.*

Ninety-five percent of food consumed in South Sudan is imported, most from international sources in the West. According to USAID, the cost of importing food is more than USD\$6,700 per tonne.**

The only answer that makes sense is for *Christians* to introduce and finance local mass farming for long-term, self-sustaining food production within the country. And, against all kinds of odds, it is being done successfully by only one agency – Cal Bombay Ministries Inc.

Please look at the centre-spread of this edition of *Faith Today*.

www.calbombayministries.org
www.harvestsudan.com
www.facebook.com/calbombayministries
www.facebook.com/harvestsudan

* Latest reports state that current fatalities are approximately 50% lower than the 4,500 projected earlier this year.

** Published Apr. 27, 2015.

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

Connecting donors with charities

The Canadian Council of Christian Charities (CCCC) helps donors connect with trustworthy charities. Our Seal of Accountability program identifies charities that demonstrate ongoing compliance with high standards of financial and organizational integrity.

Charities that display the Seal of Accountability have successfully passed a rigorous voluntary audit and continue to demonstrate accountability through annual reviews. These charities have taken an extra step of disclosure to earn donor trust and to honour the good name of Christ.

There are a few things you can expect from a charity that displays the Seal of Accountability:



1. **Accountability.** Certified charities hold themselves accountable to Christ, to governing authorities, to CCCC, to donors and to the public.
2. **Transparency.** Certified charities agree to provide a copy of their most recent audited financial statements to anyone who requests them.
3. **Excellence.** Certified charities follow a commitment to excellence in resource management, donor relationships, program evaluation, and governance.
4. **Respect.** Certified charities recognize that their donors are people. They commit to respecting the interests and dignity of the donor in every interaction.
5. **Responsiveness.** Certified charities will welcome your questions, respect your complaints and provide prompt answers.

Next time you donate, look for the Seal of Accountability.

www.giveconfidently.ca

FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY

Practical gifts that help end poverty

One simple way to join in the pursuit of a poverty-free world is to give families in developing communities practical tools so they can improve their daily lives and build a brighter future.

By giving gifts from the Food for the Hungry (FH) *Gifts for Change Gift Guide*, Canadians can directly impact the lives of those living in poverty.

And giving FH Canada gifts is fun for the giver, too. Imagine the joy on the face of your friend or family member who opens a card to discover that you dedicated a *Girl Power!* or a *Cooking Class* in his or her name that is going to change the life of someone in need.

FH Canada is a Christian non-profit whose purpose is to end poverty – one community at a time. Along with generous Canadians, FH walks with vulnerable communities as they strive toward sustainability. Committed to an integrated, holistic approach to development, FH priorities include agriculture, education, health and livelihoods. FH Canada even promises to graduate communities from poverty in 10 years. Join FH in keeping that promise this holiday season.

Contact us at www.fhcanada.org/gifts,
 email: info@fhcanada.org or phone:
 800-667-0605

GOSPEL FOR ASIA

Changing lives

Gospel for Asia is about changing lives – both for this life and for eternity. The mission of Gospel for Asia is to share the Good News of Jesus with those who have never heard His name. We train and send national missionaries to reach out into areas where the Good News of Jesus Christ has not yet been heard.

Join thousands of believers around the world in encouraging one another to change lives for eternity.

Gospel for Asia's "Forgotten Christmas" program (www.forgottenchristmas.org) will remind believers of the most important gift of Christmas: the birth of our Saviour. We are committed as a family of believers to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with men, women and children throughout South Asia who have still not heard His precious name.

We join our hearts to be the hands and feet of Jesus for such a time as this. Together, by His Spirit, we can reach this generation.

"Not by might - nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the LORD of hosts." – Zechariah 4:6

Order a free copy of the book *Revolution in World Missions*, in which K.P. Yohannan shares how God brought him from his remote Indian village to become the founder of Gospel for Asia.

Go to www.gfa.ca/resource

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Getting their attention

In 1928 a small group of university students in England sent one of their peers to Canada. Howard Guinness spent a year criss-crossing our country, urging students to see their schools as places where God might capture the attention, even the very lives, of their friends.

His strategy included summer camps where young adults could learn to be leaders, helping children and teens discover God's love and become life-long followers of Jesus. Howard's risky obedience birthed Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Today, through camp and campus ministries, we still position ourselves at the front lines of youth culture, inviting young people to give their lives to the world-changing way of Jesus. They are still saying yes.

Our staff help students and faculty form Christ-centred communities in more than 70 Canadian high schools, colleges and universities. Every summer, 9,400 children, teens and young adults spend a week or more at our Pioneer Camps and Circle Square Ranches. We welcome another 20,000 during our retreat and rental season.

This December, we will co-host the Urbana Student Missions Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. Young people are not lost to the call of Jesus. Someone just needs to get their attention. Will you come with us?

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OM

Responding to the Syrian refugee crisis

Reports of Syrian refugees arriving in Europe – thousands of people crowding into a Hungarian train station or crawling through Macedonian and Serbian processing points – may be disturbing to some, but Operation Mobilization sees the crisis as an opportunity to demonstrate God's mercy.

OM teams in Hungary, Macedonia and Montenegro have responded immediately, while a developing project, OM's Safe Passage program, focuses on meeting refugees, providing information, water, food and essentials. Other OM workers in Europe pursue long-term initiatives among refugees and asylum seekers. In the Near East OM channels funds and support into churches that minister to the needy, including practical aid distribution, income-generating projects, education and teams dedicated to loving and discipling Syrians. Inside Syria, OM offers training and funds to equip trusted local partners to serve their neighbours.

"Like us, these displaced people are created in the image of God," said OM International Director Lawrence Tong. "As Christians, we have a spiritual and moral obligation to help. Their issues are our issues. I urge you to pray for them, and act with extraordinary courage and generosity to help them settle into their new lives."

**Further information from www.om.org
or by calling OM Canada at
1-877-487-7777**

PIONEERS CANADA

Disciple Making Movements

Eighty million Bhojpuri people live in northern India. About 30 years ago, there were about 1,000 believers and few churches.

At that point a strategy for making disciples was implemented: "Disciple Making Movements" (DMM). There was no fruit for the first two years. In the next year, however, eight churches were started, followed by 48 churches, and then 148. After 13 years they could count well over two million new baptized believers and 40,000 new churches.*

In North America a worker in North Carolina started a Disciple Making Movements outreach in 2010. Within 12 months almost 40 groups had been started, most of the members nonbelievers or unchurched.**

In Canada Missions-ICM (a ministry of Pioneers Canada) is offering training to lay people and leaders and church planters in the principles of DMM. Canada currently has historic opportunities for witness as it welcomes immigrants from the least-reached nations. DMM is now bearing fruit both in the US and Canada.

See our Disciple Making Movements

advertisement in this magazine for training opportunities.

This is only one of the strategies that In Canada Missions workers use in their ministries.

www.leastreached.ca

* *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, 2009

**Steve Smith and Ying Kai, *T4T: A Discipleship Revolution*. Monument CO: WIGTake Resources, 2011.

WATOTO

Providing holistic care

Watoto is a holistic care program initiated in response to the overwhelming number of abandoned babies, orphaned children and vulnerable women in Uganda.

Watoto has rescued over 1,000 abandoned babies from dire circumstances, caring for them until they are old enough to graduate to one of our Children's Villages, where almost 3,000 orphaned children are cared for. Watoto villages provide each child with a safe, loving family and an environment that promotes personal spiritual growth, brings physical and psychological healing, and develops academic and practical skills. Children in Watoto's care are able to complete a full education and move on to live as contributing members of society.

Watoto recognizes that caring for the vulnerable women of Uganda is also a critical step in rebuilding the nation. The Living Hope program is restoring dignity to the lives of thousands of women who have been abused and left with no resources. These women are now caring for their own children, are running successful businesses and have become pillars of hope in their community.

Want to learn more about Watoto, find out about our travelling Children's Choir or sign up to sponsor a child?

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WORLD VISION

Hatching a plan for success

In 2009, Francisco Chavarria dreamed of owning a small business. Thanks to chickens donated through the World Vision Gift Catalogue, hard work and commitment, Pollos Renacer is a successful venture.

"I'm proud to be the owner of a business that sells and markets our own product in our own community," he says.

Francisco started four years ago with 300 chicks. He and ten other community members formed a local association to sell eggs. But the market for eggs took a hit and prices dipped, so Francisco started selling meat instead. Since then, their business has grown remarkably, producing hundreds of chickens every month. Together they have sold more than 35,000.

Today, their processing plant employs 14 women and a business manager. For most,

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this is their first job. Their profits are invested in their children's education.

Francisco and his partners plan to expand. They have already bought new land to build a bigger chicken shed.

World Vision gifts help change the lives of children in need.

To learn more, visit worldvision.ca/gifts

YOUTH FOR CHRIST

Helping hurting youth

She sat in our family room telling us about growing up as a foster kid. Her mom had died when she was 12. Her siblings had grown up in different foster homes. Her dad had no interest in her. She was almost 18, and the foster system was ending for her. The only options seemed to be the drug or sex trade.

As I listened to her story, God gave me an epiphany. What if she was wrong in the perception of her Father and her options? What if her Father really did love her and wanted a relationship with her, and it was up to me to make the introduction?

That is the calling of Youth for Christ (YFC) – loving today's hurting youth who have no idea of their loving heavenly Father and His personal interest in them. In our YFC drop-in centres, teen-mom programs, sports programs, summer camps and so many other relationship-building platforms, we are there, sent by God to make this introduction.

Come and join us at Youth for Christ/Youth Unlimited ... as a volunteer, as a prayer partner, as a financial partner. Whatever God has entrusted you with, come and use it to help us help hurting youth in Jesus' name.

www.yfccanada.org

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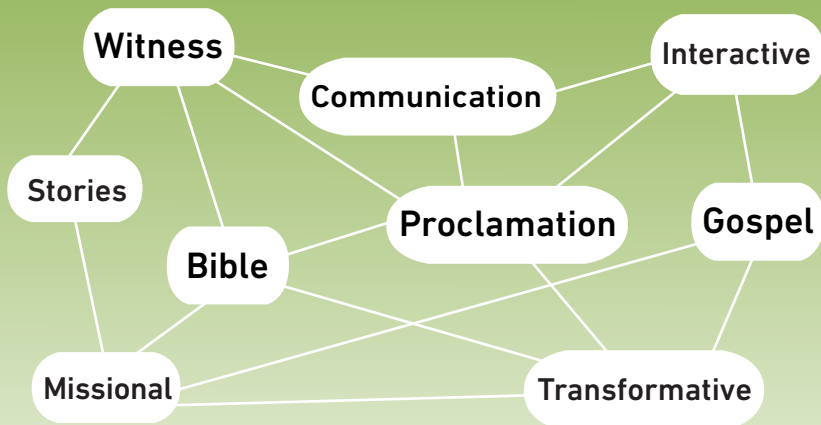


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PUE, Brenda Susan

August 29, 1955 – August 12, 2015

A spunky, fun-loving leader of leaders, Brenda Susan Pue made a lasting impact through her work with Arrow Leadership, where she mentored and encouraged leaders from around the world to “Lead More Like Jesus”.

On August 12, Brenda passed over the threshold peacefully while at home. She was 59 years of age. Surrounded by her loving family, and after courageously living with cancer for 588 days, she quietly “slipped into heaven.”

Throughout her life, and especially as she faced cancer, Brenda was a woman of courage and faith. Writing authentically about her journey, she impacted many readers who followed her blog (www.caringbridge.org/visit/brendapue). A charismatic woman, Brenda was known for her contagious laughter and winsome smile. Just being around this remarkable Vancouver resident made God seem closer at hand and easier to know and trust.

She will be lovingly remembered by Carson, her husband of 38 years, their three boys, Jason (Kristin Paterson) Jeremy (Shari Boileau) Jonathan (Kirstie White) as well as their five beloved grandchildren; Landon, Liam, Mac, Ellie & Georgia.

An inspiring Celebration of Life and Hope was held on Saturday, August 22, 2015 at Christian Life Assembly in Langley, B.C. The service was also broadcast across Canada and can viewed on line at <https://vimeo.com/user43063162/brendapue>

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The Vice President for Academic Affairs is the chief Academic Officer of the university and is responsible to lead, direct and manage the Academic Affairs of Crandall University. Crandall University is located in Moncton, New Brunswick. *For a full position description, and how to apply, please email Janet Williston at janet.williston@crandallu.ca. To learn more about Crandall, visit: www.crandallu.ca*

TEACHING PASTOR

Westside King's Church, located in South West Calgary, has an immediate need for a NEW TEACHING PASTOR. As our community enters its 21st year with a strong and diverse congregation of 1000 plus people and an engaging board, we are well established and positioned for growth and continuous development. *For details please visit wkc.org/careers/ or contact Jana Rust at jrust@wkc.org or call her at 403 777 0800 ext. 5235.*

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We've got a problem

Christians have an image problem – but it's not hopeless yet

Why don't our neighbours in Canada want to listen to the Word of Life? We can think it's simply because they are wicked, "dead in trespasses and sins."

However that should be our last conclusion, not our first. Let's look at some other factors.

First, let's remember most Canadians – more than 60 per cent – say they are Christians already. And most of the remaining population are ex-Christians, sort-of-Christians, atheists or agnostics shaped by Christian ethics, and the like.

These statistics mean most of the evil done in Canada has been done by people who identified themselves as Christians. Understandably, many of our neighbours want nothing more to do with the sort of people who have cheated them (or cheated on them), lied to them, abused them or hurt them in some other way.

Furthermore, most Canadians think they already know all they need to about Christianity.

That serious Christians hate gays. (Observant Christians typically do still see homosexuality as a problem, not simply an alternative – a view that in the current polarized environment is identified immediately as bigotry.)

That serious Christians discriminate against women. (Many of our churches still don't allow women to preach. Even among Protestant groups that ordain women, we see very few as senior pastors.)

That serious Christians fight against abortion while ignoring the needs of poor mothers who elect to keep their children. (This impression is largely mistaken, given the rise of adoption agencies, assistance to



We need to address stereotypical views of Christianity with grace and truth

single mothers and so on. But the association of evangelical Christianity with right-wing policies that discriminate against the poor has harmed our image deeply.)

That serious Christians are anti-science (because anti-evolution), anti-intellectual (because fearful of universities and cultural life in general) and basically fanatical (because repressive of internal dissent within churches and uninterested in alternative views from without). Alas, our critics aren't entirely wrong, are they?

And serious Christians don't care about the environment, but focus on otherworldly salvation. (As long as we keep preaching that "This world is not my home," we'll keep reinforcing this impression.)

There are of course more such stereotypes in Canada today. Christians want to shove their religion down other people's throats. Christians fear and hate sex. Christians keep clinging to their outdated cultural privileges.

So our neighbours in fact might have a number of plausible reasons to dismiss Christianity and Christians out of hand. And if our neighbours don't respect us, we will not even be allowed zoning for our

churches, membership for our campus clubs, voices in the mainstream media, and influence in political and cultural centres.

(You have doubtless noted all these trends are upon us.)


If we misdiagnose the problem, and simply declare the rest of Canada sinful and deluded, stubbornly resistant to our wonderful message and indeed our own wonderfulness, we will respond badly to what are in fact understandable prejudices against us.

We have a massive public relations problem that has bloomed darkly in a very short time – really, in less than half a century. We need public relations solutions with clear-eyed and creative attention to image, symbol, gesture and brand.

Of course, it's easy to mock such a suggestion. "Jesus didn't need an ad agency!" But Jesus knew how to connect with His audiences, to subvert their preconceptions, even to reverse their expectations so they would give Him a hearing. Teaching using parables, carefully chosen demonstrations of power, shrewd attention to public events and spaces, and rhetoric nicely matched to each audience – all of these marked His wise public ministry.

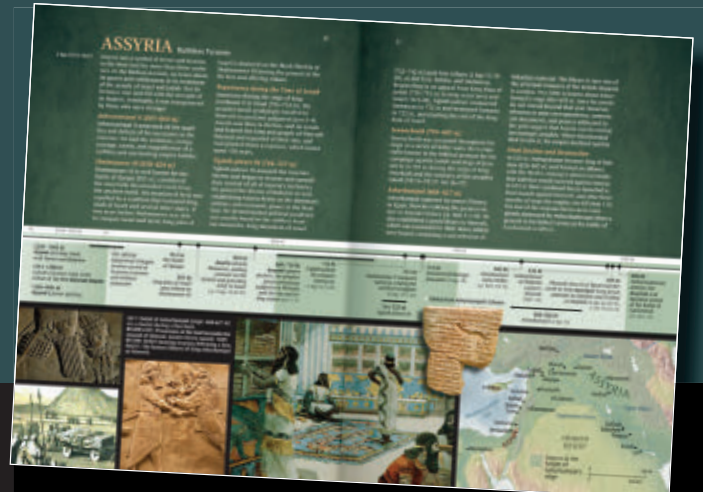
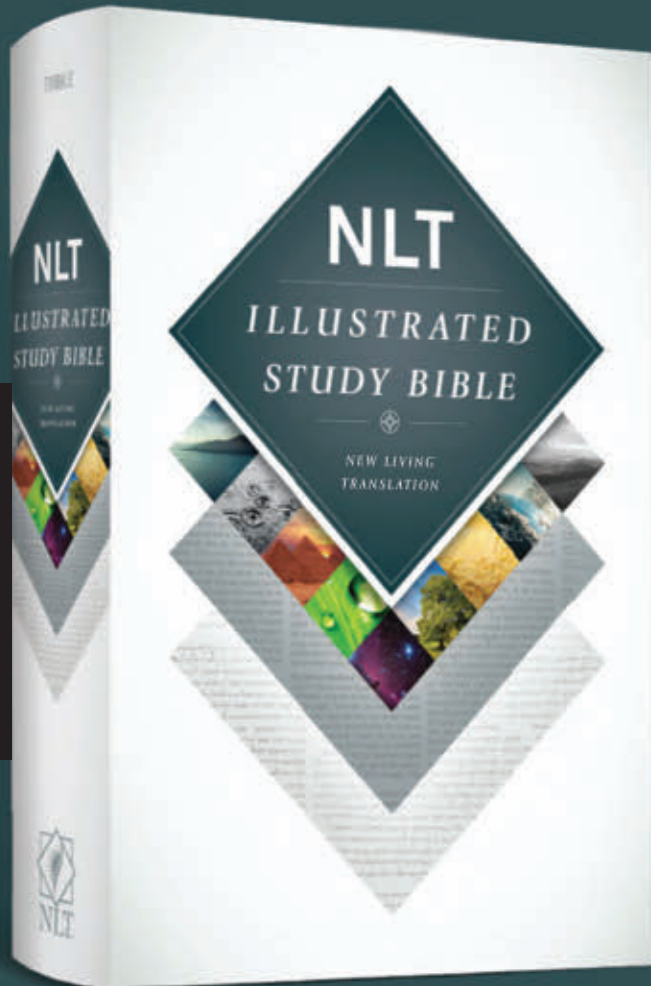
Other groups have refused to despair over their bad press and instead taken positive action to get across their messages. As individuals and organizations we need to address these stereotypes with grace and truth, with charity and clarity, with word and deed.

Instead of merely resenting or fearing our neighbours – which nicely lets us off the hook and locates the problem entirely on their heads – what can we do, or do better, to help them hear us at all, and then accurately, today? **/FT**

 John Stackhouse teaches at Crandall University in Moncton. He is the author of *Humble Apologetics: Defending the Faith Today* (Oxford University Press, 2002). Find more of these columns at www.faithtoday.ca/ChristAndCulture.

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WORDS FROM THE EDITOR



Live fearlessly in freedom

I find that there's a very big gap between how we sometimes tend to live our lives versus how we should be living our lives. It's undeniably difficult to grow up in a world that sells its sin in a very appealing manner that makes us want to attain temporary gratification rather than eternal joy, peace, and life. As young Christians, are we living our lives for Christ fearlessly, or should we fear less the way we should be living, the things we should say and do, or the way we should express ourselves for God?

It's patently challenging to constantly live a life that, to the world, seems imposing, unrealistic, dull, and imaginary. If there's one thing I hope to say that may encourage you is this: what helps you live a bold, free, and fulfilling life in this world is when you step out into the world in confidence and faith knowing that every word written in the Bible about God's love and promises towards you are true. Hebrews 11:6 distinctly states that, "without faith, it is impossible to please God." You have to believe with all of you that He will deliver and that He will reward you when you live a life that's pleasing to Him and not the world.

It can be very easy to get caught up in the cycles and systems of the world. People who publicly live their life in sin knowingly or unknowingly, appear on the outside to have it all going for them. The truth of the matter is, Satan is creative and has very good strategies on how to hook people to his schemes, only to eventually kill them spiritually, physically, and emotionally. Jesus told us it wasn't going to be easy. The ground was cursed the moment Adam and Eve sinned, however, don't forget that it is also stated that we were not created for this world, your rewards are in heaven, where eternity awaits for you with grace, mercy, and joy.

Go. Go live your life fearlessly knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience, perseverance, and endurance (James 1:3). When you humble yourself before God and you resist the devil, it is promised that he will flee from you (James 4:7).

Live fearless for Him.

Crileidy Liriano
Senior Editor; LIA Magazine

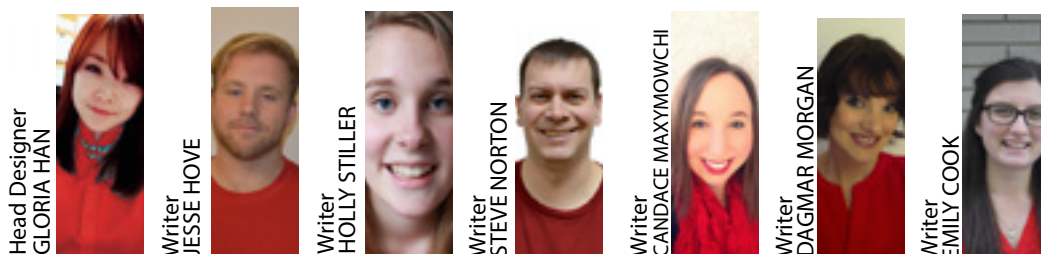
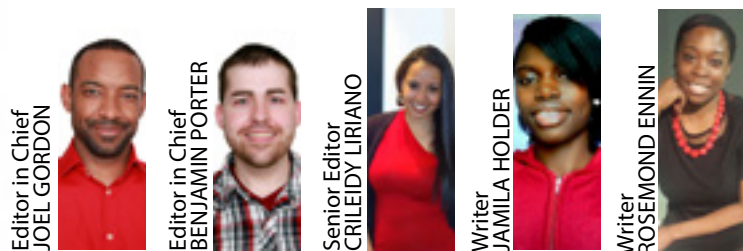
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TAKING BACK OUR BRAVE

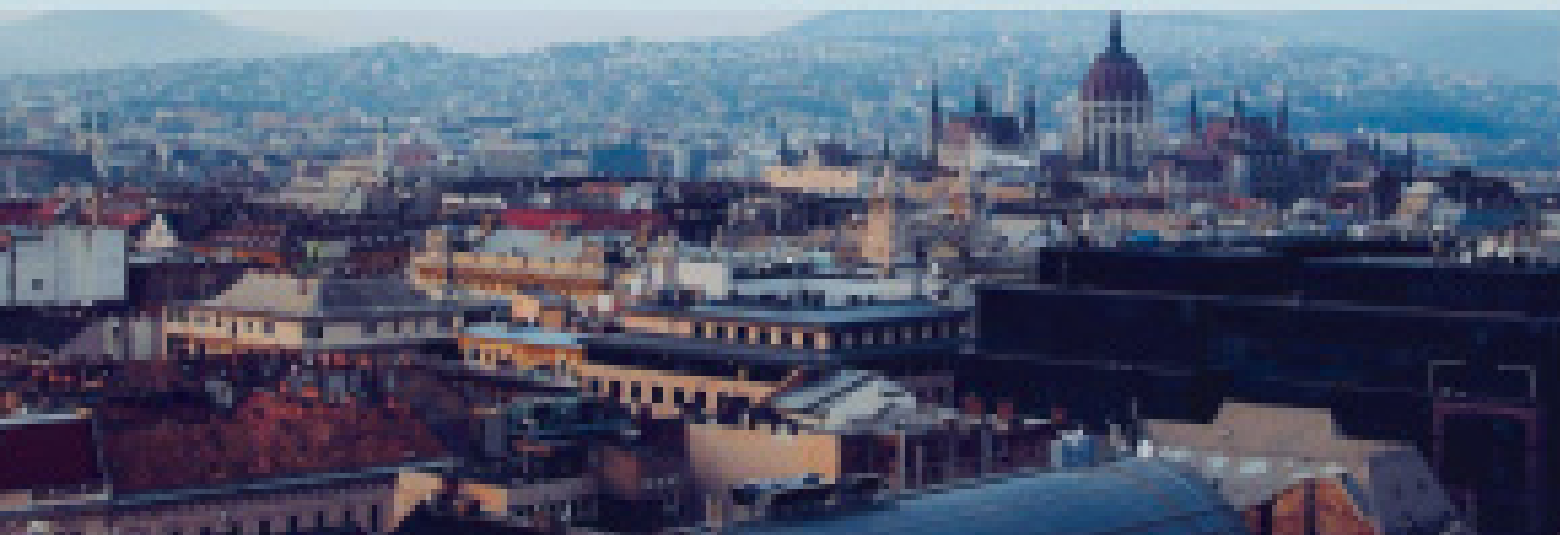
By: Candace Maxymowich

I have always lived in fear of something. I am not afraid of being attacked in the same way a soldier must feel on a battlefield. I am not afraid of falling off a cliff, although I would be if I did not avoid heights. I am not afraid of being struck by lightning because well, I'm just not. My fears stem from painful experiences as a child and traumatizing experiences as an adult. I have been fearful of the dark and of being alone. I am often fearful of going out by myself. I have lived in fear of being in the presence of my offenders and of men. I have lived in fear of sharing my story. Finding the courage to give voice to my story and admit what has happened in my past has felt impossible - too exposing, too shameful, too painful, too taboo.

I wish I could say I'm free from this bondage, and the wounds of being sexually violated are completely healed, but I am still raw and tender. Memories of my experiences return without warning. Sometimes these flashbacks will be so vivid that I feel as if I'm reliving them. I know that these flashbacks represent a response, which, like nightmares, will decrease, as issues are resolved and the healing process progresses. All forms of sexual violation involve a wrestling of power and I would even say a robbery of the spirit and soul. I'm still on a journey of finding freedom and reclaiming the land that was stolen.

Women who have experienced the pain of abuse or assault typically experience this as a traumatic event, and a common reaction to this kind of trauma is fear. If you've been violated, you may hide or keep people at extreme distances, afraid of being hurt again. Maybe you remain numb through adulthood. You may feel damaged, see yourself as a sex object, flaunt your sexuality, or descend into promiscuity. You might respond to being violated with anxiety, depression, self-loathing, self-harming behaviours, perfectionism, a need to control, eating disorders, or addictions.

The enemy doesn't care how we react to the sinfulness of being violated as long as we don't turn to Jesus. The enemy knows when we find our identity, security, and dignity in Christ, we can live in victory. By taking back our brave, having the courage to be seen and face the day, and by giving voice to our story we can inch closer and closer in our walk towards freedom.



FIRE STARTER

BY ..DAGMAR MORGAN

God said Let there be Light,
and there was light.

And God saw that it was good.

I tried to hold the glow of His words in the prism
of my body,
but I had consumed too many shadows.

I thought that if I wanted light I would have to
make it myself
so I began setting fires.

At first under the bushes in the neighbour's yard,
then in the cemetery behind my house,
burnt souls recognize each other by the smell of
burnt
sacrament.

I was an ember looking for heat
so I set fire to my clothes

Each thread a burning bridge.
Each button undone, a sacrifice
until my closet was a mountain of ash.

Every word I spoke
a smoke signal to boys attracted to things that
burn.

And then he appeared
offering to put out my fire.

His lips were shaped like hunger,
but I did not notice his starvation
that he would crack me open like the spine of a
book,
un-roll my paper thin skin,
and cover me in the taste of guilt.

Every night looking for the same ending
not knowing he was reading the wrong
text
that, my body was not the Bible.

How long would I sacrifice
before he would worship at my altar?
Everybody wants to come to the party
but no one wants to stick around for
the mess.

Too many have chanted my name
in effigy.
All heat and no light.
All ash and no fire of resurrection
so if I am ash,
then leave me unstirred
until I begin to form clay.
Let me go back to the Genesis-
shapeless, ready to be made new

Hand me to the Potter.
Let Him pour his water back into my
skin and
spin me until I am dizzy from His love.
Mould me, then leave me to dry in the
Son
till I am hard like the rock of His foun-
dation
so that when He strikes Himself upon
me,
Then I will catch fire.

SUBVERTING HUMAN IDOLATRY IN THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

By. Jesse Hove

If you're like me and have been paying attention to Canadian politics over this last little while, you might be feeling a little trapped and a little bit caught between worlds. I would argue this is a good thing. You see, as Christians, our ultimate political leader is Jesus Christ and His call in our lives doesn't really fit any one set of political ideals. So how then as Christians do we decide whom to vote for?

One of the biggest things to keep in mind that we have often missed when deciding our vote is that, as Christians, we believe Jesus Christ holds all political decisions in His hands. In fact, all earthly and universal destinies are ultimately in God's control. This runs directly counter to the way political parties think. Political parties ultimately base their policies on what you want, what you think you need, and what you think is important. Governments may certainly try to and socially engineer what you think you want or need, but ultimately we the people are left with the decision.

This is the difficult part of being Christians in a democracy. As Christians, we don't get to decide what we think we need or want based purely on our own thoughts and decisions. We are called within the boundaries of Scripture and submitting to Christ as the beginning, end, and middle of it all. So when we are feeling particularly fearful of terrorists, we don't get to go with our gut and call for increased military spending and unfair security policies. Because Christ has already told us what we are supposed to do when faced with violence. We are called to take up our Cross, we are called to turn the other cheek (Matthew 5:39; 16:24). When we are faced with an earnest desire to be inclusive and welcoming to everyone (because Scripture calls us to it in Galatians 3:28), we have to do that without abrogating Jesus' declaration of marriage, or generally trying to sidestep God's providence for our lives (Matthew 19; Mark 10; Ephesians 5). When the economy takes a downturn and we're all afraid of losing our jobs, we cannot let that fear keep us from our call to be caretakers of all creation, a blessing to the nations, and friends of the marginalized and suffering in our world (Genesis 1:28,12:2; James 1:27).

The popular atheist and anti-religion columnist Bill Marr nailed it on the head a few years back in his monologue on Jesus' teaching. Marr declares that, "Martin Luther King gets to call himself a Christian because he actually practised loving his enemies...but if you rejoice in revenge, torture, and war, you cannot say you are a follower of the guy who explicitly said you are to 'love your enemies' and 'do good to those who hate you...you're supposed to look at Jesus on the Cross and think, *How can a man suffer like that and forgive?* You are not supposed to look at it and wonder how to improve upon Roman torture techniques.

Ultimately, being a Christian in a liberal democracy will not lead us to any easy answers when deciding whom to vote for. If our personal bias is more conservative, we'll have to wrestle with Jesus' teaching on violence and wealth distribution, if our personal bias is more liberal, you will try to and abstract Christian teachings on mercy and equality over and above specific directives on how to live life under God's divine authority. In the midst of this, though, I would encourage all of us to name our bias, and remember in the end God is in control.

THE FEAR OF JUDGMENT

By: Brittany Pettinger

I remember times in my life when I was scared to express my opinion. Not because I thought my opinion was stupid, but because I was a Christian, sharing my thoughts with people who weren't believers. Back then, I was not a true follower of Christ. I wasn't willing to give up everything to follow Jesus. I was afraid of the consequences. God later showed me that I should not fear a life with Him, I should fear a life without Him, and I haven't turned back since.

Through my time working at a Bible camp and ministering with Youth With A Mission (YWAM), I have seen Christians not fully commit to being a follower because they were afraid of what others would think of them. Did the fear of judgment stop the Apostle Paul from preaching the gospel? Of course not. He was willing to do anything for Christ, even die, because he was a follower. As Christians, we are always going to be judged for what we believe. But God will always love us, and He wants the best for us. He wants us to embrace life, and finish what He started.

God wants us to be a part of His army, but if we fear judgment, how are we ever going to accomplish anything? I'd guess that half of the members of the Conservative Party of Canada are born-again Christians, they do not support abortion, nor do they support same-sex marriage. Same-sex marriage was legalized in Canada in 2005 under the Liberal government. In 2006, Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper won the federal election. Since then, he has refused to reopen the abortion debate, receiving a lot of criticism from pro-life activists. If he were to reopen the debate, it would most likely be problematic for him and the Conservative Party. So, ultimately, it is a fear of judgment.

As Christians, we need to show the world that we do not fear their judgment. We need to stand together, against everyone who hates us, and fight for what we believe in. We need to vote for the political party that we see fit to run our country. Being able to vote gives us a voice, and one voice can do so much. I am using my voice right now, and I am begging you to not fear! Fear is such a small thing, and with the power of prayer we can defeat it. The judgment of other people did not stop the twelve disciples from preaching the gospel. They used their voices, and they used them without fear.

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." John 16:33

YOUNG PEOPLE AND CHRISTIANITY.

We sometimes can tend to keep to ourselves the love of God, His supernatural grace and ceaseless goodness—and by ourselves I mean you and I personally and within the church. When thinking of ways to change the world, I automatically give the responsibility to others and expect them to bring to their platform the hope and voice to call down from Jesus what the world needs, as I sit there insulting God through my silence and stillness. I realize however, that my silence and stillness are not merely by choice, but rather by elements of the world that have influenced the way I communicate and segregate myself with and from reality.

There are, thankfully, people who act on God's instructions publicly, boldly, loudly, and fearlessly, especially in Hollywood, a part of the world and our society that has so much power in determining our behaviour. I came across Andrew (Andy) Erwin, a director alongside his brother, Jon Erwin, who collaboratively directed the compelling movie *Woodlawn* this fall, 2015. Before watching the film, the film watchers had the opportunity to hear Andy briefly deliver a few words in reflection to the journey and purpose of *Woodlawn*. I was instantaneously attracted to the spirit of boldness he carries with him and the love of God that is portrayed through not only his creative ideas, but also his words and enthusiasm for the kingdom of God. His obedience captivated my attention. I caught up with Andy and we discussed young people and Christianity. As I listened to Andy speak, the very first few words that came out of his mouth as he stated why *Woodlawn* was created, were that there was certainly the fear of creating such a film and the response he would receive from his peers. Nonetheless, they kept one thing in mind...this movie is about the Jesus Movement, a spiritual awakening, and the Jesus Movement was bold- and that's exactly how they were going to continue to go forth with in. Fearless.

Andy and I not only discussed *Woodlawn*, we got to the bottom of some crucial questions that are lingering around and demand answers. I asked Andy the daring question, "Why aren't young people praying?" Let's face it. There's a large portion of the young generations coming up that don't seem to be too keen on praying. Andy briskly responded by stating that, there is so much noise all around and it's distracting. And by noise he wasn't necessarily referring to sound as much as he was visual noise—the Internet. Encouraging enough, the advantage of having a movie like *Woodlawn* created is that there is hope for a revival, and usually after a revival, a great deal of prayer occurs.

On the other side of feeling like young people aren't praying as much, I asked Andy for those that do believe in God and have a relationship with Christ, are they afraid to proclaim the name of Jesus on social media, or to friends and family? Andy specified that he himself has struggled with fear and being bold. He continues with, Christians have felt like the minority with no voice for so long, but now there are these opportunities through film that are arising in an area that brings together both mainstream and Christianity, which gives Christians the opportunity to be bold about Jesus and lose that fear because we do have something to say, and we can say it well.

Fear seems like a never-ending ordeal that we live in. When asked about the Fear Of Missing Out (see the previous LIA issue on FOMO) and the way the Internet has transformed generations, Andy gave a very compelling perspective. He considered that FOMO doesn't have to be something negative. He expressed when we hear of a buzz online—a good buzz like sports news, or inspiring humanitarian stories—there's an excitement and we want to immediately be in the know

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH IT?

By: Crileidy Liriano

and find out what it's all about. He encourages us to continue to post and re-post positive, godly posts and our testimonies, because it makes people curious and want to be a part of what's going on.

Knowing that walking with God isn't by any means easy, I then asked Andy what were some of the things he struggled with growing up in his walk with Christ? Andy answered honorably and said that he got to a point where he realized it's not about the relationship his parents have with God, it's about his own personal relationship with Jesus. It had to come to a point where he had to decide to put his complete faith and trust in Jesus. It was then that God opened the door for film to be used to bring glory to His name and for people's lives to be transformed through entertainment like never before- an area that connects and affects so many around the world.

As our conversation wrapped up, I asked Andy if he and Jon had any strategies moving forward after *Woodlawn*. Andy quickly responded and affirmed that they absolutely do, and it is to continue to make highly entertaining films about stories of redemption and the love of God. They want to continue to make films that people aren't going to be ashamed of buying a ticket to go watch.

And now I say this to you, rise up and go live from this moment on reminded to, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12 (NKJV). The world needs another revival and Jesus movement - and it all starts with you. The salt of the earth!



THY KINGDOM COME · FEARLESS IN THE FACE OF GLORY ·

By: Conor Sweetman

This past summer, I worked as an intern at a bioethics research institute — a heavy title for a 3rd year English student! At social gatherings, when both elders and peers inevitably inquired about my summer and where I worked, I usually summed it up as, “I studied topics related to abortion, euthanasia and assisted-suicide on a deep level.” Within the first few seconds, I could always tell that I’d either opened up a conversation of deep importance to the individual, or one that just didn’t matter because it was either too controversial or abstract.

With the many people I converse on such topics, I find that most have little desire to engage with these issues, seeing them as heavily political and culturally charged. They fear meddling in such controversial affairs. To be honest, I don’t blame them.

As I delved into the intricacies of the current state of the law and cultural opinion on both abortion and euthanasia, I uncovered a great amount of discouraging information that had the potential to overwhelm. It was easy to immediately adopt a defeatist mindset; it seemed that no matter how much information on the complications of abortion was published, or no matter how many people write to their MPs concerning euthanasia laws, the rushing waves of the political storm would wash the hard work away and we’d be left representing a side of the conversation that had lost its voice in the torrent of the crash.

I don’t mean to say that culture is in a state of chaos any more than it has been in the past — humanity’s fallen nature merely manifests itself in different ways. However, the fear that all good effort and work is for naught in the context of a post-Christian society, whether it is on the educational, political or scientific level, is all too easy to embrace.

Although the fear of failure may creep into the Christian’s work — especially in the public square — God has given us the hope of glory and redemption of all things thought and by His Son to empower us to live with authority rather than fear. Through my work at the bioethics research institute, and in my own life — such as a small gesture of sparing some change for a street involved person — I’ve begun to see that each good deed, done out of love for Christ, is a moment where we implement heavenly principles into earthly reality. Whether it is shown through constructing a school in an impoverished African village, or writing a chapter on the complications of abortion, or having a conversation with a homeless man, we play a role in bringing the kingdom of God to earth. Therefore, we don’t have to fear that there is no point to doing good work for the glory of God, even when it feels menial or unproductive. We can have faith that the light will never be overcome by darkness, no matter how bleak circumstances may seem. A life of action lived for the sake of Christ is a spark of “His marvelous light” that will be revealed in full on the day of glory.

EVERY FEARLESS STUDENT REWRITES THE SCRIPT!

By: Rosemond Ennin

It's interesting that in a society that praises success, many students have a fear of success. Although every student generally desires to do well, the reality of it can be filled with fear, anxiety, and stress. Many students would rather sabotage their own success by procrastinating and settling for a low grade than having to know what their best effort could have gotten them.

Truth of the matter is, as Christians, when it comes to success we should be fearless! Who are you NOT to be successful?! No one else has been promised by the Creator of heaven and earth that He would equip them like He has promised His sons and daughters (Deut. 31:6,8; Josh 1:5). His promises are words you can bank on and rely on because the bottom won't fall out! He desires for you to have great success (Ps. 1:3, Ps.35:27). God hasn't given you a spirit of fear, what He has really given you is the ingredients for success: power, love, and a sound (disciplined) mind.

Here are 3 ways to take what God HAS given you to be fearless:

1. Rewrite the script

The most important story ever told is the story YOU tell yourself. Even what Jesus says about you waits on you to agree with it first before it can manifest and change your life. You cannot be fearless if you keep taking the role as your own worst critic who causes you to take yourself out of an opportunity before it even begins. It's time to rewrite the script to be your best cheerleader. Sometimes we rely so heavily on others to cheer us on, but what about if they are not there in the most critical moments? What about if their words actually don't help? David encouraged himself in the Lord (1 Sam. 30:6), and sometimes you have to be your best encourager to make the goals you desire actually happen even when obstacle stare right at you!

2. Respecting yourself

"Respect" can be broken down into two parts: "spect"- which usually is related to 'seeing' and the prefix "re"- associated with 'again'. So, respect can be thought of as looking at something again with a different perspective, with a perspective that is honourable. Being fearful is not an honourable perspective of yourself, in fact, fear distorts and destroys how you see yourself. Respecting yourself is seeing your abilities in a favourable perspective that causes you to win.

3. Rest and Reset: Prayer and the Word of God

Praying and reading the Word daily is truly the bread and butter to being fearless. Without praying and reading God's word, there is no definitive or transformative power to produce lasting change. Praying allows you to be in the state of rest, because fear makes us anxious. You kill fear off when you give the issue to God and rest in Him. You reset your mind on what to focus on when you read the Word of God.

Be fearless as a student. Through the Holy Spirit you have been empowered to rewrite the script. Stop casting yourself as the timid student afraid of success. Instead, play your true role as the bold student who dares to achieve and dream as big as God is. If there is no limit to what God can do, then Christ in you is also limitless.

The stage is ready, the spotlight is on, this is your time-- go!



Trinity Fashion

By. Crileidy Liriano

The Internet has the potential to save non-creative people like myself from fashion epic fails. Thankfully, life changing sites like Pinterest exist. Not sure if there's anyone out there who dislikes Pinterest. What's there not to love? You can search just about anything, especially for someone like me who is clueless about what goes with what. I mean...they've got absolutely everything you could possibly need, and the best part of it all... they have pictures and directions to go along with most things!

Pinterest saves my day everyday. I search simple things like, "blue skirt outfit", "fall outfits", "curly hair styles", and instantly get millions of ideas. I immediately rush to my closet and try to match it. Oh, and not only that, but I get to experience millions of advice on how to manage and treat my curly, out of control, hair.

What do you use Pinterest for?

Tell us what you use Pinterest for, for a chance to be featured in the next Issue of LIA Magazine!

Re-captured

By: Dagmar Morgan

There are books that come to us and after we've read them we put them aside and move on. Then, there are books that come and stay. Books that bless you, books that you just have to lend to a friend but never forget to ask for it back because you've lined the pages with notes, dog eared sections to return to, and worked the spine in just right. It may travel from bookshelf to bookshelf and life-to-life, but it is one that you always bring back home. The treasure that with each new read deepens your understanding and your walk with God. This book for me is *Captivating* by Stasi and John Eldredge.

Now, I know this is not a new book. In fact, it wasn't even a new release when a gorgeous woman of God named Laura gifted it to me a few years ago. It was such a kind gift, and well needed, although at the time I didn't know it. It was not entirely the kind of book I was used to reading and if left up to me, I would have passed it over entirely. It didn't have that academic feel to it that I look for in books so; I let it sit on the shelf for a while before I opened it. Then, after a heart wrenching break-up, I was hungry for God and seeking any wisdom to steer me through, I decided to give it a go. And it turns out that "academic" doesn't always apply to the heart, which is the whole point of the book! It's about getting to your heart, understanding what really, really makes you tick as a young woman of God; nonetheless, any age woman could and should read it.

Captivating names things and feelings that I had, but didn't know how to name or identify correctly. It takes you back to the little girl inside, all the feelings and hopes and dreams she had before the world came in and changed her. It is the field guide to a woman's heart. Delving into our desires to be romanced, to be part of an adventure story, to embrace how we are built, and not to see our vulnerability or insecurities as defeats or faults, but as celebrations. There are so many lessons in *Captivating* that it is hard to pinpoint or highlight a few, so instead let me get a little personal with you to show you just how powerful this book can be.

In my early twenties, I had this deep longing, which, if I could give it a voice it would say, "I need a husband, I need to be connected to someone. I need to be cherished, to belong. I have this feeling inside that I can't fill, so if I find someone maybe they can fill it." At times, it was so deep and unending it felt like a void, a big cavern, so long and empty I could not stand it. I think a lot of young women feel that way. We want our fairy tale and we are just waiting around for it to happen. We long for our husbands to ride into our life story and sweep us off our feet, to fill that feeling inside. As young women, we think that "the void" will be filled with that partner connection. But then our relationships fall short, we are human, we struggle, or worse yet, they are great but we still have that longing. Why is it still there? I have all these things I thought I wanted but still feel like there's more I need. We begin to think about satisfying that need with fantasies, distractions, money, stuff, activities, and social media. We need something more but can't find it, or even really name it and nothing makes it stop.

But, I have good news.

That longing is meant to be there, your husband/boyfriend, job, material things will not be able to fill it, nor will attempting to achieve it in the world. It doesn't seem fair does it? You are doing everything right, but it still feels like it's not enough. But what if I told you that God created that longing in you. Not so that you would suffer, but so that you will continue to long for Him and be driven to seek Him; it's a spiritual longing that only He can fill. We are built to worship and connect with Him. He created us with a special place that only He can have. Isn't that just mind blowing?!

I had been running around the world looking for a man, or my job, or my belongings to give me all of that. No wonder they all fell short; no man can take the place of God! I almost feel foolish as I re-read it, but yet so many of us feel that longing and try to fill it with dating or being focused on getting married to get rid of it. Embrace it. It is part of your DNA. You are built to seek and be sought after and called back to God's side all the days of your life. How amazing!

Once I realized the longing was a gift to keep me connected with God and not a curse to be forever dissatisfied, I was changed. It made me understand that there is so much mystery to the way I am created, and the key is connecting with God to find out more about who I am. Captivated by His beauty.

Captivating is the crash course for women and how we tick. It's a celebration of all those feelings we have inside because we all know there are a lot of feelings in there, feelings that we judge very harshly, try to shove down, avoid, or destroy. If you need some clarity about relationships, your emotions, or just a good read, grab *Captivating*; it will help. Which reminds me, I am due for a *Captivating* re-read, but I will have to wait to get it back from my friend.

YOU CAN'T BE THE LIGHT IF YOU DON'T STEP INTO DARKNESS

AN INTERVIEW WITH CALEB CASTILLE

By: Crileidy Liriano

Let's just say I didn't leave that theatre the same. I thought it was going to be a...well, cheesy Christian film: low quality, lame acting, and typical football movie. But, oh boy was I spiritually slapped in the face.

I had planned to attend the movie screening in Mississauga, Ontario with a friend when suddenly she couldn't make it. I typically wouldn't have gone alone to the "movies", but something kept tugging my heart telling me to just go. I, fearing what immediately seemed to be God's voice, plunked myself in my car and made my way on the archetypal busy highway. I managed to miraculously make it across cities with more than enough time to mentally prepare myself for mediocrity.

I entered the desolate, Wednesday night theatre in hopes to settle down before the film started. I watched as slowly people of all ages and colour entered with such enthusiasm and spirit of unity. It didn't really change my mentality in reference to a faith film, but it did convict me to change my heart.

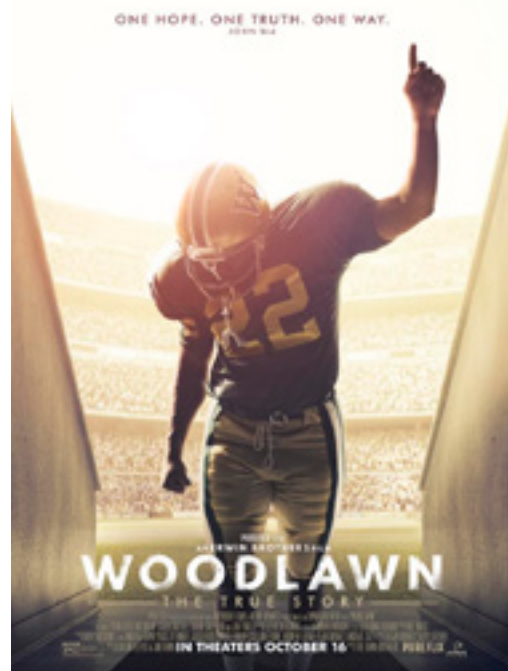
Woodlawn is a real life story of, "love and unity in a school torn by racism and hate in the 1970s." Straight from Birmingham, Alabama, *Woodlawn* the movie depicts the story of retired NFL player, Tony Nathan, while in high school; although above all, it discloses the story of how God transformed and saved a diverse multitude of young people in a time that looked and seemed hopeless and impossible. It is a faith film that inarguably left me speechless with words, but flooded with unending dry gulps as I tried to hold back the tears. It was everything I didn't expect from a faith film. The way the story was told was carefully crafted to necessarily show that God was operating every mind, device, and step along the way. What left me stunned was the fact that the name of Jesus Christ was proclaimed loud and clear in a way that His love, grace, and mercies can assuredly lead many to Him and those that know Him closer to Him, because His love was alluring and fulfilling.

Woodlawn timely reveals that God is All-Powerful and Mighty. His love was able to impact, change, and move a generation that was segregated and broken, divided and lost- similar affairs we are seeing today in Baltimore and Ferguson, U.S.A. It reminded me that Jesus is rightly the only Truth, Way, and Life.

No, it wasn't cheesy. No, it wasn't predictable. It was life changing and encouraging. I left the theatre committed to seeking God more and living my life out loud for His kingdom.

Go watch it! *Woodlawn* came out October 16, 2015 across Canada and the U.S.A. For more information visit: www.woodlawnmovie.com

The highly favoured, talented, inspiring young man, and lead actor of *Woodlawn*, Caleb Castille is one of six children born in a Christian home. He describes himself as a born-again believer whom is passionate about his walk with Christ and his acting career. He acknowledges the responsibility of the influential platform God has given him to make His name known. What I admire most about this valiant young man is his humility and sincerity. Caleb recounts that although he was brought up in a Christian home, he always seemed to be doing his own thing up until age 22, when he got serious about his faith. As an individual who has taken the steps to strengthen his relationship with God, Caleb has admitted to declining some roles, something that sure isn't easy to do when it's your job to be an actor, for the simple fact of setting boundaries around his career, but most importantly around his walk with Christ.



"CALEB REASSURES THAT HE IS CONFIDENT IN DOING SECULAR MOVIES BECAUSE THIS IS HIS PLATFORM AND MINISTRY."

When asked what he would like to see happen through this driven story and character he plays in Woodlawn, Caleb earnestly suggested that as young Christians, we need to stop creating big movements and rebelling in the wrong areas, and be bold for Christ. He declares that young people need to take advantage of the voice we have, and be brave about God just as others are forward about their sexuality, or political views. If we were to stand up and be bold about the things of God, then it will catch other's attention.

Caleb describes this generation of young people as the Microwave Generation. He illustrated that we want things done quickly, if not instantly. By God working in His own timing, it collides with our ideology of fast living. He continued to express that one of the major things that stops young people from living boldly for God is fear. In his case, what has given him strength to do what he does and go all out with it is that he knows whom he is in Christ. He firmly stated if you try to live your life as someone you weren't created to be, you will fail.

It's undeniably difficult to live in a world that is against everything you are and everything you believe in. The world perceives Christians as haters and hypocrites, and Caleb understands that as a young individual, it's not comforting to be bold about God in such an unappealing environment.



Through it all, we must maintain a balance with learning to love people, but hate the sin, and in the midst of it all, remaining humble and plugged in to the Word of God. It is important to remember that just because you are a Christian, it doesn't mean it should confine you from stepping into the world and being the light you need to be regardless of the situation or environment. Caleb prompts us to know it's impossible to be the light of the world if we don't step out into the world in faith.

Caleb reassures that he is confident in doing secular movies because this is his platform and ministry. He will continue to carry himself humbly as long as he remains true to whom he is, a child of God, the salt of his ministry. He ends by encouraging getting to know God for yourself. He will blow you away.



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