

Fellowship FOCUS



So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:26-28 (NIV)

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By Sharon Berg, Editor

"I thank God that I had the sense to listen to His voice, and I know I will never again be the same."

Those are the powerful words of the **Rev. Peter J. Fast**, recently ordained with the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches, as he reflected on how God protected him during a bombing in Jerusalem last spring. Peter, son of **Pastor Jim and Beth Fast** of Community Bible Church in Prince Albert, Sask., and his wife, Deanna, serve with Bridges for Peace in Israel. His story on page 8 is an intriguing reminder of the reality of God's guidance and governance over every detail of the believer's life. I'm grateful for Peter's willingness to share with us.

In the May/June issue of *Fellowship Focus*, **FEBC Administrator Paul Boeker** announced that our Fellowship office moved after 10 years at the same location. When corresponding with us, don't forget the new address: 11605 W. Dodge Road, Suite 3, Omaha, Neb. 68154-2566.

As I write this, the 117th FEBC Convention is almost here. Look for the news and highlights coming out of this annual event in the September/October issue of the Focus.

Blessings,

Sharon Berg

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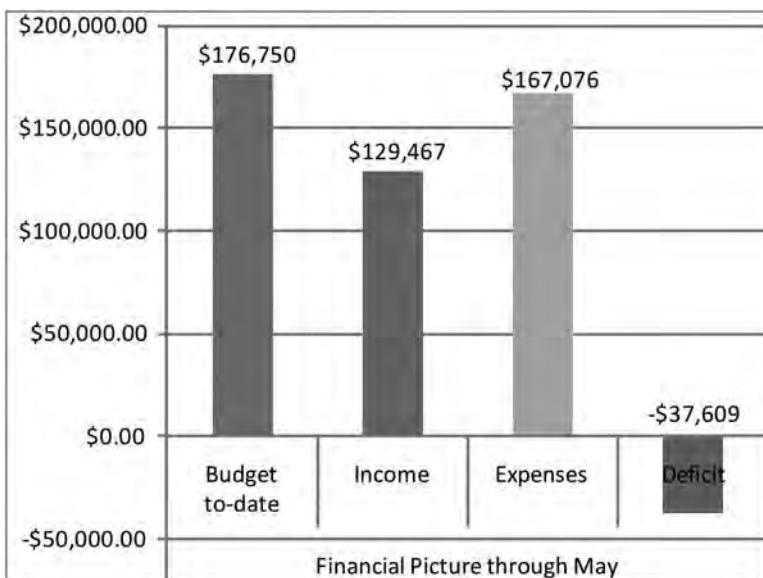
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click on the *Fellowship Focus* tab



Prayer and the Vision

"Thank you for praying for me." Have you ever heard that and felt yourself inwardly cringing because you knew that you had not prayed? I hate it when that happens.

Much of my job as president is to help churches implement the FEBC 20/20 Vision. We believe that all of us, every believer in each of our churches, are called by God to proclaim the Gospel. We are not doing that very effectively, and we want change to happen — both in our churches and in the lives of individuals within our churches. We are making plans. We are implementing those plans to the best of our ability.

The task of our vision is daunting. We want to be a proclaiming people; yet for most of us, this is not our habit. Implementing the vision personally will be a profound change in the way that we live out our Christianity. This is a spiritual change. While we are busy making plans and striving to implement this vision, we realize that these plans alone will fail. Great works of God are only accomplished through much prayer.

There are three levels at which we would ask you to pray:

Pray for the Fellowship leadership: Pray for wisdom and insight as we try to come alongside of our individual church leaderships to help them lead their churches to accomplish the vision. Pray that we would be effective at providing tools and expertise to help our churches.

Pray that we will have sufficient financial resources to keep leading on this vision.

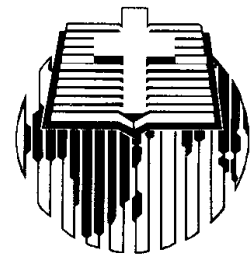
Pray for your leaders: These are the people who serve in leadership in your church. Lack of Gospel proclamation is a problem that has existed for decades or more, and most churches have not overcome. Pray that the leaders would be bold to attack this problem for a sustained length of time. Pray that they would not be discouraged if the work goes slowly.

Pray for yourself and your fellow church members: Pray for your non-Christian relationships, that they will be redemptive relationships. Pray that you would be intentional about speaking to them about Jesus. Pray that you will be bold when the Lord wants you to be bold.

This article is not meant as a guilt trip. Rather, it is meant to be an encouragement. In the midst of our planning and implementation, we have an assumption that you will be praying. Without it, we are wasting our time and money.

Can we say, "Thank you for praying"? If you have not been praying about this vision, we ask you to. We need you, and most of all, we need the Lord to do a great work. This is such an exciting opportunity. You can play a vital role in what the Lord wants to do in the lives of many thousands of people. In advance, thank you for praying.

Implementing the vision personally will be a profound change in the way that we live out our Christianity.



FEBC 20/20 Vision Statement

"We will be a Fellowship of Churches that equips and inspire each other so that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed by every member of every church at every opportunity."



Is Your Will Current?

Seventy percent of Americans do not have a current will. Yours could be out-of-date, too, if tax laws have changed, you have moved to a different state, the size of your estate has changed markedly, your charitable interests have changed, or if your children's needs or marital status have changed. Need help? Visit our website at www.febclegacy.org/epo to complete the Estate Plan Organizer.



Homegoing



Marie Olfert Dahlenburg, the first FEBC missionary to Japan, passed away on June 2. Marie arrived in Japan in December 1950, and served there for 33 years. Far Eastern Gospel Crusade (now SEND International) had only been in Japan for three years, so Marie was truly a pioneer missionary. She and

Bertha Neufeld Kliewer worked together in church development. For eight years they served at Japan Missionary Language Institute helping new missionaries learn the Japanese language and culture.

Marie recounted an interesting experience in 1960:

“Excitement and surprise also came into our schedule. After receiving word that a friend had passed away, we made a seventeen-hour trip by train to be present at the funeral. To our surprise, the supposedly dead was at the station to meet us. Can you imagine our dumbfoundedness? A falsely worded telegram caused all this confusion, but in it we saw the guiding hand of the Lord in that we were able to witness once more of Christ and His mercy to our friend who is still walking far from the Lord.”

Before she returned to Japan from home service in 1962, she purchased some household goods to be shipped to Japan for her next four years of service. These included 24-6 oz. jars of Hills Bros. Instant Coffee (\$33.62) and 72 bars of Dial pink soap (\$8.61).

Ministry Funds

Our Fellowship oversees several ministry funds. For example, the **Scholarship Fund** provides scholarships for young people preparing for Christian ministry and for missionaries and pastors who need additional training. Since 1991, 174 students have received more than \$135,000 in scholarships from the income generated by the Scholarship Fund.

The **Shepherd Renewal Fund** provides counseling for pastors and wives who are experiencing burnout or other problems. Since this fund began in 2001, eight pastoral couples have received assistance.

The **Anna Hamm Mission Fund** began through a bequest from a retired missionary. Directed by the Commission on Missions, it has funded special projects for FEBC missionaries and assisted college students on short-term mission assignments. A few years ago, this fund provided matching grants to ten pastors who went on short-term assignments to work with FEBC missionaries.

The **Church Planters Revolving Loan Fund** provides low-interest loans for a new church’s first building. The Community Bible Church in Indian Head, Sask. is the first church to benefit from this fund. Loans are paid back to be reloaned to another church.

All these funds are the result of gifts and bequests from generous people within our Fellowship.

Papyrus Project Update

Our Fellowship provided \$12,500 last summer to Source of Light

Ministries to develop Papyrus® solar audio players (like mp3 players) with Bible lessons for people in Ethiopia who cannot read. Ben Watson, Director of Alternative Media for Source of Light reports on the progress of the Papyrus Project:



“As we near the anniversary of the project the churches of the FEBC funded last year, I thought you would like to know what’s happening:

- Recording of English and Amharic courses continues as volunteers are available to record
- The first 100 players were received Dec. 15.
- Discussions have begun with the Bible Society of Ethiopia concerning putting together as complete a player as possible with SLM’s courses, Amharic language dramatized New Testament, songs and stories and other Gospel-related audio.

But while these positive things continue, we are faced with a battle. As of this date, I feel like a girl who has promised to marry but so far has neither ring nor wedding date. There is a good reason for this and that reason elicits a call to prayer. The reason the Papyrus Project has been placed on hold in Ethiopia concerns the building of a facility to be used as a school.

In Ethiopia the government owns all land and leases it to whomever they wish. Our lease is for 99 years. They have asked Source of Light Ethiopia to use that land to build a school and medical clinic. As usual, the progress on the building is slower than anyone would like to see because of funding.

Then, to add to the difficulties, we’ve learned that Source of Light Ethiopia is being sued by a man in Ethiopia who is sponsored by a liberal church in the United States. This group previously had the land on which we are now building but didn’t even start any building, so the land was given to Source of Light Ethiopia. I think you can see why our project is on hold. Our director has to place his priorities on land and building. Please pray with us for God’s will to be accomplished in the building situation and for Satan to be defeated where there is satanic opposition.”

Pastor Search

At this time, two churches in our Fellowship are seeking pastors.

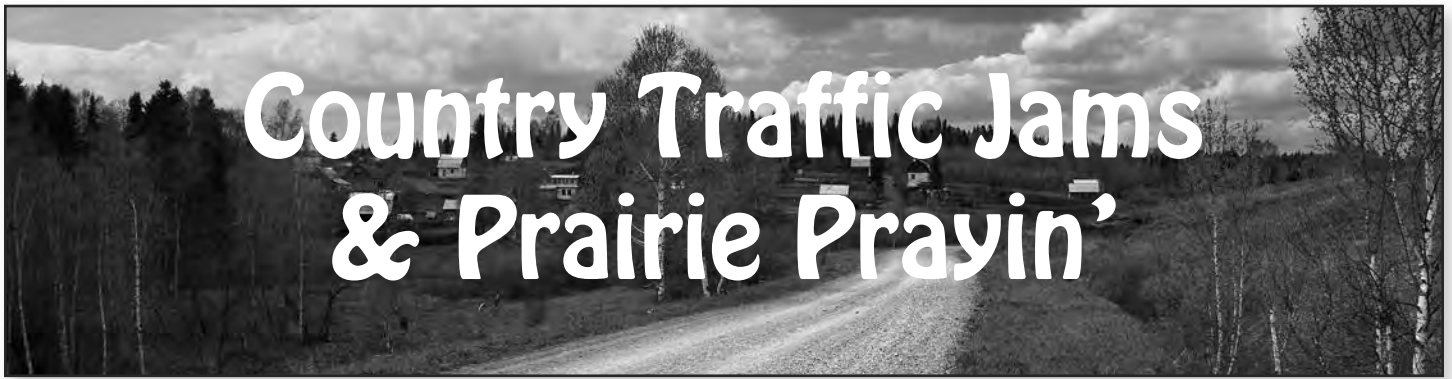
■ **Evangelical Bible Church of Langham, Sask.**, is searching for an associate pastor of youth and worship. Community Bible Church in Omaha is seeking an associate pastor: For more information go to:

www.febcministries.org/opportunities/pastoral_openings.

■ **Community Bible Church of Omaha** is growing. The people coming have a deep appreciation for expository preaching, which Pastor Chuck Tschetter does well. We are looking to hire another Pastor-Teacher/Church Planter to come alongside him, with the vision to hive off a significant group as a church plant in Omaha. Please pass the word to potential candidates. Full information and the application are on the church web site:

<http://cbcomaha.org/pastor-teacher-church-planter-application/>

To request an FEBC Application for Ministry, e-mail info@febcministries.org



By Sharon Skillman

Traffic jams are unique in our community of Lustre, Mont. I've slowed for a herd of cattle, a group of 50 antelope and pheasant chicks taking their time to cross the road, but never for a jam of cars. When I travel the sparsely populated 35 prairie miles to the closest town of Wolf Point to shop, I may only meet one car and three pickups.

Wolf Point boasts one grocery store, which would *not* be classed as a Super Mart. Other shopping is limited since the recent closing of our variety store. Online buying is one answer to my purchasing problem, but as any gal would know, once in a while the urge hits to feel the fabric, smell the scent of a candle or to taste a burger we do not have to fry! The only solution is to head to the closest Wal-Mart, a road trip of 120 miles, or check out a mall in Billings, 300 miles.

My pastor husband and I do a substantial amount of country driving in our high-mileage Honda in order to make hospital visits, go to various appointments and to hug the grandkids (who seem like light years away). Using the travel time wisely is a challenge. Fortunately we have similar interests in books so when the passenger reads to the designated driver the miles do appear to shorten. Listening to a CD is pleasurable for awhile, also tuning in to an interesting radio station when and *if* one can be located.

My prayer list is long so it seemed like a worthy goal to cover it on road trips. A noble aspiration, but woe! Being a very visual person, I am easily distracted by the slightest change in

scenery or prairie chicken that crosses the road.

After too many unsuccessful attempts, I decided to save my list until home and let the view direct my prayers. A white Ford pickup approached. White trucks have been my cue to pray for my son who drives a company vehicle. So why not look for other cues? Rocks led me to pray for my daughters-in-law who will soon rock new babies. Cows signaled me to call upon God and ask that a friend would *moo*'ve past the milk of the Word and into the meat of the Word. He would even use a Black Angus bovine, as silly as it might seem, to speak to me, "Be (Angus) anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" Phil. 4:6 NKJV. An antelope's pronghorns encourage me to trust in God's strength and to look for victory in my present challenge.

I am finding that most objects may be used as a prayer cue. Samples below:

- *Telephone poles and lines* – Hear me, Lord!
- *Power lines* – Thank you for your powerful Spirit and giving us an open line to You.
- *Sage Brush* – Praise You, Lord; You are my Sage, full of wisdom, good judgment and knowledge.
- *Rearview mirrors* – I need to look back and count my blessings!
- *Speed Limit 65 mph* – I am speeding toward age 65, and I need courage to face those higher birthday numbers.
- *Reflectors* – May I always reflect Christ.

- *Dailey Rd.* – Thank you for your reminder to finish my daily Bible reading plan.
- *Coyotes* – They have a fearful howl. May I not "howl" but gently correct those who need admonishment.
- *Grain Bins* – Remind me to store up your Word in my heart.
- *Porcupine Valley* – Give me forbearance with that prickly person in my life.
- *Headlights* – Light up the way for me in this situation.
- *Railroad crossings* – I've been cross; forgive me.
- *Hell Creek* – Grant me more concern for lost souls.
- *Medicine Lake* – May cancer drugs be effective for those who suffer with this disease.
- *Pavement Ends* – Ten miles of gravel road lies ahead before I arrive home. Smooth out the conflict I face.
- *Traffic jams* – I've found myself in a jam, Father. I need guidance to get me out.
- *Caution sign* – Drivers sometimes need to give full attention to the road and pray later!

The rest of my journey and many after have become moving experiences in more ways than one when I use this "view-cue" method of communicating with our Lord. I recommend it whether you walk, jog, or fly and whether your views are urban, suburban or rural.

Sharon Skillman serves on the Commission on Women's Ministries, and alongside her husband, John, who pastors Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church in Lustre, Mont.

2011
Convention
Project



You are invited to partner with our Fellowship church plants to provide the tools they need to grow strong and reach their communities for Christ.

- ▶ **Community Outreach tool (Financial Peace University)**
 - ▷ *for Community Bible Church of Tisdale, Sask.* \$300
 - ▶ **Evangelism training (TERM Seminar)**
 - ▷ *for Paradise Valley Church of Natoma, KS* \$1,200
 - ▶ **Highway signs**
 - ▷ *for Community Bible Church of Indian Head, Sask.* \$1,100
 - ▷ *for Richer Fellowship Church of Richer, Man.* \$2,000
 - ▶ **Sound equipment**
 - ▷ *for Community Bible Church of Tisdale, Sask.* \$3,000
 - ▶ **Website development**
 - ▷ *for Richer Fellowship Church of Richer, Man.* \$200
 - ▶ **Church Plant start-up costs**
 - ▷ *for future church plants* \$10,000
-
-
- ▶ **Total Need** \$17,800



EYES ON THE WORLD

By Fayth Boeker, Commission on Missions



Most FEBC churches support missionaries through their annual budget. Many, but not all of these missionaries, are “FEBC approved.” In order to be approved by the Fellowship, the church must recommend these individuals to the Commission on Missions. The missionary must also submit an application to the commission. Benefits to approved missionaries include one-time financial support and periodic gifts and projects from the Commission on Women’s Ministries. Approved missionaries are usually welcomed into other FEBC churches. An important benefit is the prayer offered up on behalf of these missionaries as we read about them in the *Fellowship Focus*, mention them in our church bulletins and support them as needs are made known Fellowship-wide.

Evangelical Bible Church in Dallas, Ore., has a special interest in Village Missions (www.village-missions.org). As a result, they support two couples involved with this organization. **Doug and LeAnne Clark** and their four sons live in Nisland, S.D. (north of Sturgis, close to Wyoming). The Clarks describe their work as “a typical pastor as well as missionary to the community.” One outreach to the community is the Awana program. A personal project of theirs is to build a “getaway” in the Black Hills for friends in ministry. This year they complete 20 years with Village Missions.

David and Drenda Duff is another missionary couple from the Dallas EBC working with Village Missions. Nearly 40 years ago they helped launch the Ecola Bible School of training in Canon Beach, Ore., and they have been there since. Village Missions is a ministry partner with Ecola Bible School. Today the Duffs’ assignment is to serve as Director of Ecola Bible School (www.ecola.org), reaching out to college men and women from all parts of the United States. David is involved in all aspects of administration: hiring, scheduling, teaching, training, leading mission teams, advertising and developing new programs.

Roger and Terry Wall from *EMB, Lustre, Mont.*, have served with American Missionary Fellowship (www.americanmissionary.org) since 1974. Today they are planting churches in southeast Oregon (Jordan Valley). They work with two small

churches about 30 miles apart. They also minister to the local communities by being a friend and participating in community activities. Release Time Bible classes during the school year and VBSs in the summer keep them busy.

Mike and Verna Walrod (*Grace Church in Abbotsford, B.C.*) joined Wycliffe Bible Translators in 1969. For 20 years they served the Ga’dang people of the Philippines, doing Bible translation, literacy, medical work and community development. They praise God for the spiritual revolution God brought to that area, with 20 churches now in existence. For the past two decades Mike has served as Director/President of the Canada Institute of Linguistics (www.canil.ca). In 2012 the Walrods hope to return to the Ga’dang community for a few months to help construct a residence/office for future work in that area.

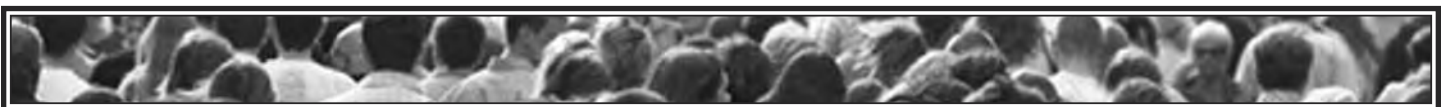
Please note the above missionaries have served in missions for many years! Remember these missionaries.

Pray for the **Clark Family** as they travel to Oregon this summer. They also request prayer for safety in cutting and peeling logs to be used in the new ministry bunkhouse. Also pray for new families, especially young families, to attend their church.

The Duffs request prayer for funds, manpower and safety as the school remodels cabins for use by the school’s instructors. These need to be completed by fall. Also pray for a full fall enrollment into the Ecola program.

The Walls request prayer for the Jordan VBS to be held July 18-21; pray that these young lives will move beyond just Bible knowledge and clearly understand the Gospel and make a personal decision for Jesus as Savior.

In July and August **the Walrods** will be extremely busy helping to give leadership to the summer session at CanIL. Pray for the 90 students who will be on campus. Many will continue on for more training for translation work. Pray for strength and health as these students pursue the goal of serving God in foreign lands through linguistics and translation.



Bombing in Jerusalem: March 23

By Rev. Peter J. Fast

"I thank God that I had the sense to listen to His voice, and I know I will never again be the same."

Rev. Peter J. Fast was recently ordained with the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches, and serves with Bridges for Peace. He is the son of Pastor Jim and Beth Fast of Community Bible Church, Prince Albert, Sask.

My wife, Deanna, and I have been living in Jerusalem, Israel, for more than six months, where God has called us to be a part of the ministry of Bridges for Peace (BFP). This amazing chance to reach out to the Jewish people in practical ways with unconditional love has borne a unique and miraculous impact which BFP has made in the land of Israel since 1976. Having a genuine love for the Jewish people and being a supporter of the State of Israel, my wife and I answered the call on our lives to serve long term in this amazing, diverse and biblical land. Every moment has been a privilege for us as we strive to make incredible headways in the Jewish community and show them what Christians are all about, with no strings attached.

However, next to my joy and passion of serving God in the Holy Land, I also have become an avid runner the last few years. This year the city mayor and municipality of Jerusalem held the First International Jerusalem Marathon which would host 10,000 runners from more than 40 countries. My supervisor, Barry, and I decided to train as best as we could and participate in the 10-kilometer race.

The days for picking up the packets for the event were open for runners from March 22-24 at the Convention Center across from the Central Bus Station. Barry and I decided to pick up the packets on Wednesday at 3 p.m. when the Convention Center would be open. However, something else came up, as often does working for an international organization involving seven countries worldwide. The reason for the possible delay: Barry and I would be needed in a conference call.

No problem, we thought. We scheduled the call for 2 p.m., which would still give us time to head for the Convention Center. Yet I soon received an e-mail from our American counterpart who requested that we push the call to 3:15 p.m. I remember as I began to write the response at my computer, the intent being to inform him that since we would be busy at that time we would have to push the call to Monday. As I tackled this e-mail I felt a strange inner stirring as if a sentence had been planted in my head saying, *"Just do the conference call and leave for the Convention Center afterwards."* After thinking about this thought I had, I called Barry, who replied, "We will just go down at 4 p.m."

Shortly after, I was speaking with a young lady in my office when a sudden bang echoed from outside, briefly shaking the windows. We stopped chatting and looked out. I remember thinking, *"Was that a bomb?"* But I brushed off the question by telling myself, *"Don't jump to conclusions. Jerusalem hasn't had a bombing in over four years. We just finished Purim, where fireworks and noise were constant, and besides, it could have been a garbage truck dropping a container."* But I remember feeling slightly suspicious, as within minutes I heard a chorus of wailing sirens fill the air.

Barry dashed into my office and said, "There has been a bombing at the bus station!"

I ran quickly to my computer and typed in an Israeli news site as fast as I could. I stared at the first report of the bombing. The time was 3:03 p.m. I read the short article and then felt an incredible sense that the Holy Spirit had suddenly descended into the room as I have never felt before. I looked at Barry and exclaimed, "We were supposed to be there!"

Barry nodded and quickly left as all the staff in the office gathered immediately to the foyer for a time of power prayer as we cried out to God for the wounded and the act of terror which had just been committed. At this time there were no reports of anyone killed, but the numbers were high from the wounded. Throughout the prayer I kept running to my office to get updates every five minutes as the story unfolded with reports that a one or two-kilo bomb packed with shrapnel had been placed in a phone booth at the bus stop. As Bus 74 pulled up to take on passengers, the bomb had exploded, shattering windows, knocking people over, and sending fragments of jagged metal into flesh.

We prayed against further bombings, for the families of the injured and against a spirit of fear. We thanked God that none of our people had been at the site where the bomb had gone off. I just could not get it out of my mind that I had been spared. As surely as I am alive today, I know that voice in my head which planted that thought to delay the conference call was not a voice of my own, but the power of God speaking directly into my life. I thank God that I had the sense to listen to His voice, and I know I will never again be the same.

Later that night we found out that one woman had been murdered in that bombing. Her name was Mary Jane Gardner. She had been a student at Hebrew University, studying Hebrew before returning to England to further her career with Wycliffe Bible Translators. Mary Jane was a believer in Christ, which impressed upon me that although God calls us to different places in the world, it is not up to us to steer our lives. God has a purpose for us, whether it will last long or be cut off. We need to cherish every moment and give God the glory, no matter the outcome.

On the morning of March 23, just six hours before the bombing, I meditated on this passage: "Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things, hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:19-24).

For more information on Bridges for Peace go to www.bridgesforpeace.com

Or, request to get Peter and Deanna Fast's update letters to know how to pray for them, or support them by e-mailing peter.deanna.fast@gmail.com



Legacy Giving

Today's resources for tomorrow's ministries

Guaranteed Payments for Life: The Charitable Gift Annuity

The gift annuity is an arrangement through which you can contribute to Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches and receive, in turn, guaranteed payments for life. It's a way of stewarding that allows you to make a substantial gift even though you may need ongoing income from your assets.

What are the Benefits?

In addition to guaranteed payments, a charitable gift annuity provides other benefits, including:

- A portion of the payment is tax-free
- You receive a charitable deduction in the year of the gift
- Annuity rates are significantly higher than interest paid on other fixed investments
- You enjoy capital gains tax savings on appreciated assets
- You have the satisfaction of assisting the Fellowship in its mission

How Does it Work?

Most charitable gift annuities are funded with cash or listed securities. When you contribute securities, the annuity payments will probably greatly exceed the dividends you were receiving.

While donors usually name themselves as beneficiaries, a relative or friend could be named as well (perhaps to provide support to an aged parent or a sibling who needs financial assistance). Married persons typically provide for payments to be made over both of their lives. When the first spouse dies, the payments continue at the same level to the survivor.

The Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches would receive your contribution, invest and manage the proceeds and provide you with lifetime payments. At the end of your life, the remainder would be distributed to Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches for present or future work.

The amount of the annual payments depends upon the amount transferred, the ages of the beneficiary(ies) and the annuity rate schedule in effect at the time of the gift. Once the annuity is established, the payments will remain fixed, regardless of changes in the economy. The security of fixed, guaranteed payments makes the gift annuity an especially attractive option.

What About Taxes?

The most notable tax benefit of a gift annuity is the charitable deduction in the year of the gift. The amount of the deduction depends on the rates in effect and on the age(s) of the annuitant(s) at the time the annuity is established. An additional benefit occurs when appreciated securities are contributed. Capital gains tax is avoided on the part of the property that is considered a gift. The rest of the capital gain (assuming the donor is one of the beneficiaries) will be recognized over a period of years, spreading out payment of the capital gains tax.

Gift annuities are a popular vehicle, allowing people the opportunity to simultaneously make a gift and provide for their future financial security. For further information, please visit www.febclegacy.org/cga. If you would like personal assistance, you may complete a contact form and a representative will be in touch with you.



Is the Bible Reliable?

Many Christians are failing to keep their faith after they begin college or enter the workforce. Focus on the Family's *TrueU* curriculum offers an introduction to apologetics (a defense of belief in God) that aims to help reverse this trend. *TrueU* is a valuable resource for youth groups, college campus clubs, Sunday school classes, home-based small groups, home schools, and individuals who want to strengthen their faith. Visit www.trueu.org to learn more about the curriculum.

This second set in the life-changing DVD series asks, "Is the Bible reliable?" Proven facts and insights from philosophy, cosmology and biology will help you engage intellectually with professors and peers, both in and outside of the classroom. For centuries, intellectuals and critics alike have questioned inconsistencies. Dr. Meyer examines ancient

texts and archeological evidence to build a compelling case for the accuracy of Scripture — and why the Bible is trustworthy.

This DVD series contains a leader's guide and several promotional resources (included on DVD 1) that can be printed and used by churches and small groups. To access the files you must have a DVD ROM drive on your computer.

Audience: High school juniors and seniors, college students and adults.

Ten 30-minute sessions. Available on loan from the FEBC video library. This can also be purchased for your church through the FEBC (orders@febministries.org).

For other studies on loan, visit www.febministries.org/pdf/video_catalog_2011.pdf

FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

Omaha, Neb.

Charles Tschetter, Senior Pastor

Our search committee continues in the process of looking for a pastor-teacher/church planter. Several candidates have already applied.

Weekly practices continue for the “Solid Rock Café,” our K-6th grade children’s summer musical. Performances will be held in late August.

Our Vacation Bible School brought 171 children throughout the week. More than half did not attend CBC, and many had no church affiliation. Two children made first-time professions of faith, and one gained assurance of salvation.

Sharon Berg, Correspondent

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH OF RHINELAND

Wymark, Sask.

Alvin Buhler, Pastor

He has been part of this church all his life, and now we welcome **Tim Knelsen** as our Associate Pastor. We pray God’s rich blessing on both Pastor Tim and his wife, Heather, as they serve Him and seek to honor and glorify His name! (*See story on back cover.*)



Pastor Alvin Buhler recently baptized Brooklynn Tschetter, Luanne Schultz, Taylor Neufeld, Taylor Grose, Mandy Janzen and Jonathan Olney.

We have enjoyed an exciting Awana Grand Prix, a chili lunch fundraiser, a Sunday morning worship service presented by our youth, and a baptism. Baptized were **Taylor Grose, Mandy Janzen, Taylor Neufeld, Jonathan Olney, Luanne Schultz,** and **Brooklynn Tschetter.** **Heather Knelsen** joined Luanne and Brooklynn in becoming members the next Sunday.

We are looking forward to our Church Camp Weekend, and an installation service for Pastor Tim.

Verna Buhler, Correspondent

COMMUNITY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

Tahlequah, Okla.

Chris Wiley, Pastor

Times are exciting as we continue to grow. Several new members recently joined our fellowship, along with the **Kourt Family** (Brent, Jennifer, and Garon). We recently also welcomed **Matthew Dempsey, Erica Bonaparte,** and **Richard and Paula Braddy** to our family.

CHURCH PICNIC!



Additionally, we have had the pleasure of welcoming back former members who have decided to rejoin us, along with even more of their family members. This became particularly fun while we played volleyball at a CBF church picnic – another one of our annual events. In August, we will witness our first wedding at CBF.

Our most recent Missions Emphasis was on the ministry of **Robert and Karis Koehn** in Mozambique. Members **J.D. and Maye Theissen** provided a special song for our children to learn and present for the meeting, along with fabulous items they collected from their own missionary sojourn, and incredible food. We all enjoyed learning how to pray more specifically for our mission families.

Bryn Smith, Correspondent

CORNERSTONE BIBLE CHURCH

Steinbach, Man.

Jared Hiebert, Pastor

We hosted the Fisher Bay Fundraising Banquet in April. We had a record number of 225 people attend, and

\$21,000 was raised. We appreciated the generous support, and encourage prayers for the staff and kids who will attend camp this summer.

We have felt richly blessed by God’s goodness these past few months. During our two 2 baptism/membership services, we were greatly encouraged by listening to testimonies of God’s work in all the candidates’ lives. We also had the joy of affirming a new deacon couple, **Darrel and Dianne Hiebert,** as well as two new elders, **Myron Thiessen** and **Chad Wiebe.**

FEBC President Blaine Donaldson spoke to us at our annual church picnic May 29.

Baptisms:

Tim and Andrea Sawatzky, Anna Giesbrecht, Garry Toews, Jesse Bercier, Shelby Kroeker, Kyle Michaluk, Jeremy Wiebe and Zachary Wiebe

Membership:

Jim and Angie Penner, Christian Kornelsen, Isabel Fehr, Kelly Kroeker and Kara Reimer

Marsella Wiebe, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Omaha, Neb.

Dr. Don Pahl, Pastor

A group of EBC youth headed to Trinidad to work with a ministry with which our **Youth Pastor Gary Krehbiel** has established a relationship. While there, they will provide Vacation Bible School as well as do some manual labor. To prepare for the trip, the youth met every other week to plan the VBS, as well as work with our **Outreach Pastor Greg Koehn** to learn how to present the plan of salvation.

EBC is part of the Adopt-A-Block program. Pastor Greg explains: “The churches of north Omaha, an area known for its gang violence, poverty, drug use and prostitution, have formed the Omaha 360 & Empowerment Network. One of the programs sponsored by this network is known as Adopt-A-Block. We have adopted an area in north Omaha where we do prayer walks, go door-to-door, and otherwise minister to this neighborhood. In going

FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

door-to-door, we did a survey to determine needs and then present the Gospel.”

Based on the survey results and observations, the group planned work days for cleaning up the neighborhood and conducting a Vacation Bible School. “The Lord has already blessed this ministry with one family who now comes to EBC, and who were baptized in April,” Greg said. “This is only the beginning.”

Baptisms:

Nadja Anderson, Meredith Brich, Savannah Brich, Brandon Brindamour, Louis Burks, Stacy Christensen, Jonny Hansen, Trevor Lambert, Amy Smith

New Members:

Mack and Angela Taulborg, Amy Smith, Terri Smith

Sherrie Lindsey, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Dallas, Ore.

Jerry Franz, Pastor

A display has been set up for our members in the military. We remember one each week. A prayer group was started for these military personnel and their families.

Women’s Ministry had our annual

“May Festival,” planting seeds and growing together. Our own **Heidi Kessel** was the speaker. The men of our church provided the meal — what a treat! Forty-five ladies enjoyed our Women’s Retreat at the coast. We used a Beth Moore study, and it was amazing. In our small group discussions we really got to know how God is teaching each of us to “Love Well.”

Vicki Kibbey, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Langham, Sask.

Greg Guarnett, Senior Pastor

Our congregation spent two fun days together, thoroughly cleaning the church in preparation for our 100th Anniversary, July 22-24. **Sarah Schmidt** shared weekly highlights of our church’s roots, encouraging us all to see how God has led each step of the way.

Many fund raisers took place in April and May to support camp and senior home ministries that our church is directly involved with.

We celebrated as **David Gold** shared his testimony and followed the Lord in baptism.

Pray that God will provide willing people to fill Christian Education posi-

tions in our church. Our Sunday school program in particular needs direction for fall.

Marilyn Friesen, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BROTHERS CHURCH

Grunthal, Man.

Russ Reimer, Pastor

FEBC President Blaine Donaldson and his wife, Autumn, and family were living in our community during May and June. He made himself at home in one of our church offices during the week.

Our Women’s Ministry ladies made new tablecloths in time for our Ladies’ Spring Brunch. **Mrs. Wilma Hebert** from St. Pierre Youth for Christ Drop-in Center was our speaker.

Corny Wiebe, a local pastor, reported during our Sunday school hour of his time spent in Buena Vista, Bolivia, last summer. He had many opportunities to share the Gospel in that community.

Baptisms and Membership:

Daniel Bergen, Jerusha Bergen and **Cyrus Reimer** were baptized and became members. **Mrs. Jen Froese** was also accepted into membership.

Marilyn Goertzen, Correspondent

FAITH EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Winkler, Man.

Mike Comtois, Pastor



The women of our church gathered for a spring tea in May. The theme was “Celebrating Women Around the World.” Everyone was encouraged to dress in the ethnic clothing of different countries. There was a video shown from Trans World Radio about Project Hannah, as well as information about persecution that women around the world face.

Liane Thiessen, Correspondent

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FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

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EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

Lustre, Mont.

John Skillman, Pastor

"God's Compassion Demands our Participation" was the title of the message our **FEBC President Blaine Donaldson** presented on April 10. After a pizza dinner with board members and families, President Donaldson met with our church board in the evening.

To commemorate Memorial Day, we built a monument of stone on the front church platform. Church members one by one added large stones as they honored certain friends or family who fought for our freedoms. Pastor Skillman honored the Lord Jesus who fought the war against sin and gave us freedom in Christ. In the evening service, **Trevor Baker**, a country singer/songwriter, from Tuxford, Sask., who is touring the United States, presented a concert for our community fifth Sunday service.

Easter began with a sunrise service next to an open grave in our church cemetery. "Hallelujah for the Cross" was the theme of the choir number in the worship service.

Sharon Skillman, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

Marion, S.D.

Randy Maass, Pastor

Harold and Irene Becker have spent winters in Tucson, Ariz., as volunteers to Wycliffe Bible translators, returning here for the summer. This year they are detained in Arizona due to a health condition. We will miss their return.

Zak Maass is on the spring tour to Malaysia and Singapore with the Bethel Wind Symphony of Bethel University, Minneapolis.

Ray Becker, Correspondent

FAITH EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Henderson, Neb.

Michael Fink, Pastor

Jeff Nelson presented the ministry of Christian Heritage Foster Care in

May, encouraging people to consider whether God is calling them to open their hearts and homes to children in need of a family.

We were privileged to have **Ben and Sharon MacConnell** share about their ministry at Paradise Valley Church in Natoma, Kan., on May 22.



New members were received into our fellowship in April. Those joining our church were **Trevor Nunnenkamp, Clark and Fran Reinert, Ryan and Melissa Weedon, and Michael Folkerts**. A baptismal service was also held for Ryan.

Alice Decker, Correspondent

GOSEL OF GRACE CHURCH

Hooker, Okla.

Chris McFarland, Pastor

Our fellowship observed "Pray for the Persecuted Church Sunday," with materials supplied by Voice of the Martyrs at Bartlesville, Okla.

Rick and Connie Ediger and their children presented the ministry of their calling, American Missionary Fellowship. They anticipated their support to allow them to locate to Salida, Colo., by August.

Melvina Wichert, Correspondent

GRACE EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Abbotsford, B.C.

Dr. Warren Schatz, Pastor

Lead **Pastor Warren Schatz** is currently on indefinite medical leave as of June 6. The pulpit is being filled by **Associate Pastor Adam Palesch**, who is preaching two Sundays per month in addition to his other duties, and by missionaries on home assignment, as well as speakers from the community. Your prayers for Pastor Warren, his

family and our congregation are much appreciated.

Baptism/Membership

Mattea Palesch, daughter of Pastor Adam, and **Elizabeth Richardson** were baptized on Easter. Elizabeth was also welcomed into our fellowship as a member.



Grace Toews, Correspondent

HEARTLAND BIBLE CHURCH

Lincoln, Neb.

Scott Hecht, Pastor

A new feature of the morning service is called simply "Good News." At this time Pastor Scott interviews someone who has a story of witnessing, prayer or opportunities to share the Gospel in the hope that it might encourage, inspire or give others ideas as we seek open doors to share the Good News about Jesus Christ.

Missions Movie Night in May featured the DVD entitled "Forgotten but not Forsaken," the story of the Karen people, a tribe of Myanmar who live along the narrow coastline next to Thailand. The Gospel has reached them, but they are being severely persecuted by their own government.

Our Spring Brunch in May made for a delightful gathering of all the ladies and girls of our church.

Trudy Reimer, Correspondent

HEBRON BIBLE CHURCH

Hebron, Neb.

Jeff Friesen, Pastor

The women of HBC finished a two-month Bible study, which was very well

FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

attended. Our adult Sunday class is diving into the book of Hebrews.

Awana has ended for the summer. Pastor Jeff continues to energize the SLX kids. **Sam and Deb Dick** gave the message and a missionary update in May.

HBC is very busy getting ready for a fun Vacation Bible School “beach party.” Pray we will reach many with God’s Word. We continually give thanks to God and His Son for our growth and for guidance.

Linda Krueger, Correspondent

JANSEN BIBLE CHURCH

Jansen, Neb.

Paul Carpenter, Pastor

Paul and Jann VanderMey reported on God’s work in Guadalajara, Mexico, during their first year there with TEAM.

Pastor Paul is teaching a series on the Essentials of the Christian Life, a refresher for some and basic truth for new attenders.

We enjoyed our first-of-the-season “Fellowship After Church Tonight” (FACT). With longer daylight hours, one Sunday night per month we do our after-church visiting over snacks at the parsonage.

Tena Dick, Correspondent

NORTHEAST BIBLE CHURCH

Calgary, Alta.

John Fehr, Pastor



For a small church we have an awesome men’s group that God seems to have put together Himself. They were enjoying sharing and encouraging each other so much that they requested meeting weekly. Their presence is felt in many areas, as they serve wherever they see a

need. Eight or nine men regularly attend. The group made Mother’s Day very special for all the mothers and potential mothers of our church family. They each shared a short testimony about what made the day special to them, followed with a hymn and the giving of a rose to every woman and girl present.

On Good Friday we hosted a pancake breakfast, and many people came to enjoy the food and fellowship, followed by a service of worship, reflection and communion. On Easter Sunday the children in Junior Church heard the story of the cross from Peter’s perspective as he rejoiced resurrection morning because Jesus was alive, but also because he, personally, was forgiven. Each child decorated a cross as a remembrance of this special day.



The singing group Jezreel made their annual visit to us in May. Their leader, Norm, spoke about Christ’s call to take up our cross and follow Him.

Julie Ann Simpson, Correspondent

RICHER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Richer, Man.

Simon Cheung, Pastor

“... Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee” (Mark 5:19). This was the heart cry of the testimonies shared at two Sunday services in April. **Nathaniel and Lucille Plett, Paul and Carol Manning,** and **Georgina Sopko** shined for Jesus, as God’s Spirit drew each one to Himself.

Tears were shed as we heard about the trials that each came through, allowing the transforming power of the Holy Spirit to change their lives. Hymns were sung as in the early church, prayer was given, and rejoicing was heard as these five brothers and sisters were accepted into membership. May we be reminded to share our faith, encouraging others that we are all diamonds in the rough, and only through Christ can we shine.

Michelle Driedger, Correspondent

STUARTBURN GOSPEL CHAPEL

Stuartburn, Man.

Mark Funk, Pastor

FEBC President Blaine Donaldson attended a church board meeting on May 10 and gave the devotional at our membership meeting on May 27. Meeting him helps the church to feel more connected with the Fellowship.

Fred and Mary Penner (Canadian Sunday School Mission) shared God’s Word with us through Fred’s spoken message and Mary’s “chalk talk” presentation. Fred spoke about God’s Word being a light factory. God gives us enough light for the next step; are we willing to trust Him for the next one?

The highlight of the Ladies’ Spring Tea was **Deb Gerbrandt’s** thought-provoking presentation on the things that can get in the way of a closer walk with our Lord. Sometimes our spiritual lives need to be cleaned, just as there are things in our homes that need attention and cleaning. Buckets with cleaning supplies were given away as prizes during the fruit/veggie and pizza lunch that followed.

“Testimony Sunday” was May 29. **Melvin and Marilyn Thiessen** shared their testimonies. Others also shared how God is working in their lives. **Vanessa Thiessen** of Fisher Bay Bible Camp (FBBC) presented the work and needs of the camp. The FBBC banquet in April at **Cornerstone Bible Church** in Steinbach raised much-needed funds for the camp’s general fund and building fund.

Marilyn D. Thiessen, Correspondent

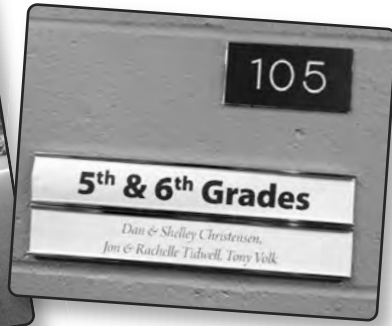
Welcoming New Pastors ... Back Page



Making Visitors Welcome



Yes, it is true that most people end up in church because they know someone there. But in our increasingly mobile society, people are always moving into our neighborhood. They may just drop by to look us over. Or we may invite a new person we have met at work or a new family in our neighborhood. But when they come, will they want to come back?



How Visitor-Friendly Is Your Church?

Try to look at your church through the eyes of a first-time guest. Walk around the building, outside and in thinking how it must look to a visitor.

- Does an easily readable sign identify your church and tell a visitor what times regular activities are held?
- Can a visitor find a parking spot easily?
- If your building has multiple entrances, can a visitor easily tell which is the main door?
- Do signs inside secondary entrances give visitors a clue of which direction to head?
- Are greeters on hand to meet and direct visitors?
- How can a visitor find the restrooms? Nursery? Sunday School classes?
- Is the church clean and attractive? Does it signal “We love God” or “We don’t care”?

Resources: <http://www.churchgreetertraining.com/blog/>

Handicapped Friendly?

Many older buildings just were not designed for easy access to anyone, much less a person with mobility limitations. It may not be possible to refit an older building to be completely accessible, but you may be able to make some improvements. Borrow a wheelchair and go through your church on Sunday (OK, on Tuesday!) and see where you can and cannot go. Can you sit with your family or do you get stuck in the back or stand out like a sore thumb in the aisle?

- Are doors wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair?
- Are some rows intentionally shorter so a wheelchair can fit in at the end without blocking the aisle?
- Are restrooms accessible to a wheelchair? Is there a spot in your church where a family restroom that is accessible could be built?

Resources: <http://www.ada.gov/>

How Visitor-Friendly Are You?

Rate yourself from 1-10 (1 = never; 10 = often)

- ___ I pray that God will let me meet a visitor and help them feel welcome in our church.
- ___ I look for new people and try to learn their names.
- ___ I try to introduce new people to members who are similar in ages or careers.
- ___ Occasionally, I intentionally look for a visitor to invite to lunch.
- ___ I move to the center of the row so others coming later can easily find a seat.
- ___ I occasionally sit by someone new so they do not have to sit alone.
- ___ I participate in workdays to clean and beautify our church.
- ___ I park away from the building so visitors can easily find a place to park.
- ___ I serve in the nursery in some way (cleaning toys, laundering sheets, providing direct care, checking-in babies, etc.).

Nursery: the Secret Growth Stimulator

- Young parents often are “churchless,” but begin to think about attending church when their first baby is born.
- Young parents put a high value of cleanliness and safety for their children.
- A well-managed nursery can often be the make-or-break factor in a family’s decision to return to a church.
- Even if a church has no babies today, it should give careful attention to upgrading and staffing the nursery.

Resources:

http://discipleshipideas.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=43&Itemid=26

Google: Church Nursery Ideas

THE RECORD

BIRTHS AND ADOPTIONS

Cornerstone Bible Church Mountain Lake, Minn.

- Galaxie Jane to Tim and Holly Penner; grandparents are Jon and Kathy Penner; great-grandmother is Salome Penner
- Evelyn Violet to Danny and Emily Erickson, April 9; grandparents are Steve and Gail (Harder) Erickson.
- Hunter Chase Rodney to Cody and Sirena Axford, May 9; grandparents are Mike and Robin Thiessen

Evangelical Bible Church Omaha, Neb.

- Gabriella Ruth to Andrew and Jessica Wehrli, May 6; grandparents are Ron and Sherry Dick
- Jacob Dale to Jim and Marcy Habegger, May 8; grandmother is Kathy Habegger

Evangelical Bible Church Langham, Sask.

- Landon Lloyd to Darin and Tanya Neudorf, April 21
- Samantha Evelyn to Joe and Angela McCrea, March 1

Gospel of Grace Church Hooker, Okla.

- Caitlyn Raine to Blake and Tawny Davis, March 10; grandparents are John and Misty Lynch; great-grandparents are Greg and Shari Lynch; great-great grandmother is Melvina Wichert
- Josuha Jr. to Josh and Cody Gilkey, April 26; grandmother is Liz Gilkey

Northeast Bible Church Calgary, Alta.

- Nicole Irish to Jojo and Sheila Valdez, Feb 25



WEDDINGS

Community Bible Church Omaha, Neb.

- Alicia Popelka, daughter of Tim and Renee Popelka, to Nic Olari, May 13
- Hanna Aakre to Caleb White, son of Steve and Becky White; grandson of Russ and Ruth Jones, June 11

Cornerstone Bible Church Mountain Lake, Minn.

- Bethany Kueger to Scott Harder, son of Perry and Sharon Harder, Jan. 1

Gospel of Grace Church Hooker, Okla.

- Elizabeth DeYoung to Ben McFarland, son of Pastor Chris and Sandy McFarland, Jan. 22



*"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."
Ephesians 5:31 (NIV)*



DEATHS

Christian Fellowship Church of Rhineland Wymark, Sask.

- Abe Ens (82), May 17
- Betty Newburgh (70), June 2

Cornerstone Bible Church Mountain Lake, Minn.

- Dorothy (John) Thiessen (79), March 28
- Eileen (David) Penner (59), March 28

Dalmeny Bible Church Dalmeny, Sask.

- Ann Appleby (95), April 11

Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church Lustre, Mont.

- David Wall (99), April 12

First Mennonite Church Butterfield, Minn.

- Marie Olfert Dahlenburg (92), June 5

Gospel of Grace Church Hooker, Okla.

- Delores Reimer (80), April 17

Grace Evangelical Bible Church Abbotsford, B.C.

- Bernice Boldt (96), April 9

<http://www.febcministries.org>

FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

VITA BIBLE CHURCH

Vita, Man.

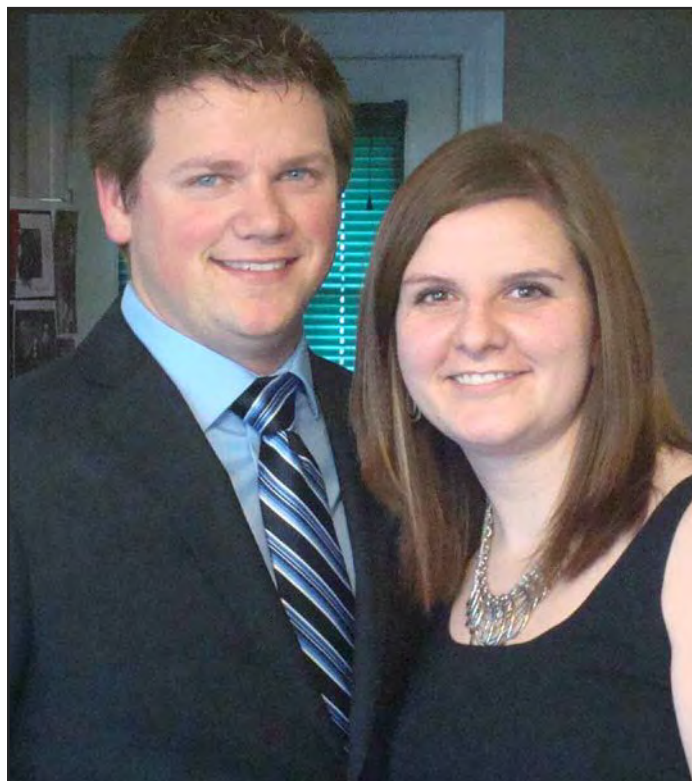
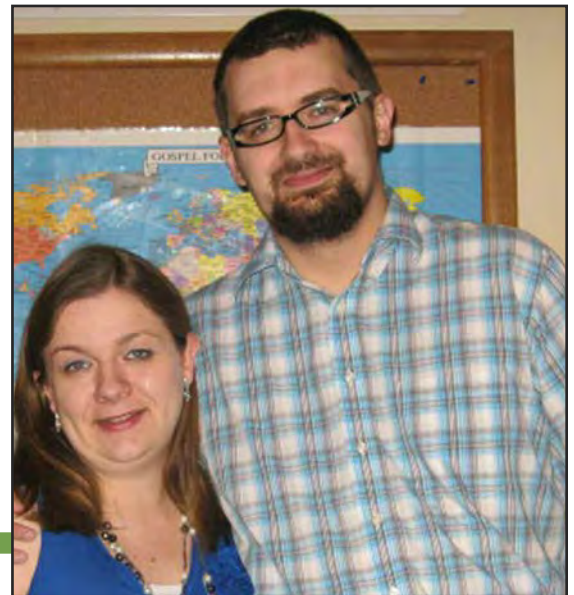
Jurgen Penner, Pastor

We welcomed our new pastor, Jurgen Penner, and his wife, Kim. Pastor Penner attended Bethany College in Hepburn, Sask., and Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif. He was an associate pastor in St. Catherines, Ont. FEBC President Blaine Donaldson spoke at his installation on May 15.

Our sister churches in the area were invited to our church for an evening seminar on ``The Emerging Church`` and ``The Charismatic Movement,`` presented by **Blaine Donaldson**.

A group for men from Teen Challenge of Winnipeg sang and shared their testimonies with us.

Jane Roman, Correspondent



Christian Fellowship Church welcomes new associate pastor

The Christian Fellowship Church of Rhineland welcomed its new **Associate Pastor Tim Knelsen** and his wife, Heather. Though he is new to the pastorate, Pastor Tim is not new to the church. His grandmother, Susie Knelsen, together with her late husband, Jake, were charter members. His grandparents, John and the late Helen Rempel, spent many years as active members. John Rempel is currently a member of Fairview Bible Church in Swift Current. Pastor Tim's parents, Roy and Leona Knelsen, grew up, courted, married and brought up their children, Kathy and Tim, in this church. All are still active members.

Pastor Tim grew up on a dairy and grain farm near McMahon, Sask., attended public school in Wymark and Swift Current, and received his Bible education at Millar College of the Bible. While a student there, he met his wife, Heather, and they were married in 2009. Heather grew up in MacGregor, Man., the second oldest of four children to Don and Colleen Wiebe.

Verna Buhler, Correspondent