

Fellowship FOCUS



... and a little child shall lead them.

Isaiah 11:6 (NIV)

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Comment



By Sharon Berg, Editor

Christmas greetings! I am writing this column in October, but by the time you read it, the festivities and celebrations of the holiday season will be well underway.

Another kind of celebration will take place in 2012, one in which the FEBC has a significant connection. Plans are underway to mark the centennial of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM). Events are planned in the Congo in July and in various locations in North America throughout September. The Fellowship was formerly known as the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren (EMB), and 34 EMB missionaries served with AIMM over the years. In fact, their total combined time of ministry in the Congo is astonishing — nearly 500 years! That statistic came from Jim Bertsche, who represented AIMM at the FEBC annual convention in July, where he shared the story of the Fellowship's involvement in church planting in the Congo. Read excerpts of his report to delegates and related articles on pages 6 and 7.

Blessings to you as you celebrate the gift of the Savior this Christmas and in the New Year.

Sharon Berg



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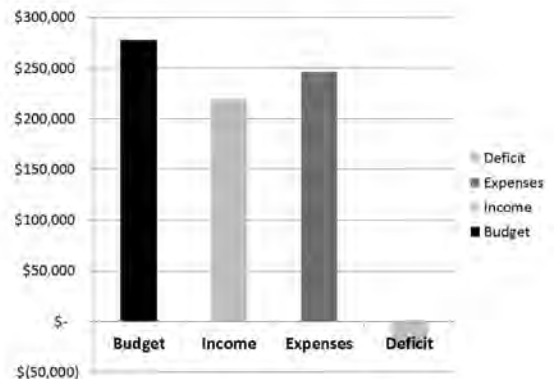
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The Fellowship Focus is available to read on-line. Check it out!
http://www.febministries.org
click on the Fellowship Focus tab



Of What am I Afraid?

The Great Commission is best understood as a combination of evangelism and discipleship both at home and overseas. Certainly, a significant part of the Great Commission is our personal proclamation of the Gospel to our non-Christian friends, family and co-workers.

However, when I think about talking about Jesus to the non-Christians closest to me, I feel a significant amount of apprehension. I feel an unnamed fear at the thought of proclaiming Jesus. What is this fear? Where does it come from?

One aspect of this fear is what I would call the fear of incompetence. I fear that I will say the wrong thing. I am concerned that what I say will be taken the wrong way, and that I might even leave the person more hardened against me and the Gospel. I remember being in Bible college 20 years ago. One of the professors challenged me by stating, "If you really care about your unsaved family, you will write an evangelistic letter to them." I wrote my sister and explained the Gospel as best I could. I think that what I said was accurate, but in hindsight, it did more to damage my relationship with her than to bring her closer to Christ.

For others, there may be a fear of not being able to explain the Gospel clearly.

We may know the truth of the Gospel, but in explaining it, it comes out badly. There may be some degree of legitimacy in this kind of fear. However, there are some key Scriptures that should be considered.

Second Timothy 1:7 says: "For God

How can we overcome our fears?

has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." The source of our fear is not Christ. Fear is an obstacle to be overcome by the grace of God.

Paul writes that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (cf. Philippians 4:19). Also, we can draw the principle of God's help in knowing what to say from Matthew 10:19-20: "... do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you."

There is also a darker form of the fear that we may feel. It can be called the fear of man. It is the desire to not look like a fool in front of our friends. I have noticed that I feel this especially when I am in a group. I do not want to

be singled out as weird or as a religious nut. This is really an expression of ungodly pride. We can be sorely tempted to want the acceptance of people, which Scripture calls the praise of men. In John 12:43, Jesus condemned Pharisees as those who "... loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." This kind of fear is one to be acknowledged as sin and repented of.

We should also bring to mind Paul's declaration in Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes ..." To love the praise of men above the praise of God is being ashamed of the Gospel.

How can we overcome our fears? We look to Jesus. We remind ourselves of His love. He loves us enough to give us the words to say. He loves our non-Christian friends, family and co-workers enough to enable them to understand us. He loves us enough that we should be content to know that His love and acceptance are far more valuable than that of any other.

"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear ..." (1 John 4:19) ■

All Scripture included in this article is taken from the New King James Version.



FELLOWSHIP VIEWS • FELLOWSHIP VIEWS • FELLOWSHIP VIEWS

New Pastors

Justin Epp has joined the staff of **Langham Evangelical Bible Church** in Saskatchewan as associate pastor. Justin and Nashly moved to Langham in October to begin their work Nov. 1. His responsibilities will be mainly in the area of youth ministries. We welcome them to our Fellowship.

FEBC Directory

The 2012 Fellowship Directory and Annual Report is now available. If you would like a copy, contact orders@febcministries.org. Copies are \$5 plus postage.

Community Bible Church

of Omaha has called **Dr. Thomas Ice** to be their associate pastor. This is part of CBC's plan to begin a daughter church in the near future. Dr. Ice was one of the general editors of the book *When the Trumpet Sounds*. This book was given to each FEBC pastor in 1996.

2012 FEBC Convention

The 118th Annual Convention will be held at **Christian Fellowship Church** of Rhineland, Sask., July 18-22, 2012. The theme and speakers have not yet been announced.



The Straight and Narrow?

By Harvey Schultz

“Enter through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it” (Matthew 7:13-14).

Several of us were looking at a painting which depicted the author’s concept of these verses: a broad, paved highway filled with people led down a valley toward a large, beautiful gate. The expression on the faces of the travelers implied that they were living it up! Nearby was a narrow, difficult path leading upward to a small gate. Only a few people with a very serious expression were making their way up toward that gate.

One of my colleagues commented: “I am afraid that we have, like that painter, presented a false image of Christianity which has repulsed rather than drawn people to Christ.”

The comment got my attention. I have never forgotten it. Only recently have I attempted to articulate what that passage teaches, and I must admit that I agree with my colleague. I believe that painting (which many of us have seen) presents a wrong interpretation of Christ’s words.

The painting seems to teach that in order to be saved we have to follow the straight and narrow, a hard road of self-denial. If we are not careful, we may lose

our footing and slip off. On the other hand, it is easy to follow the road of self-indulgence and sin. It doesn’t matter how you travel down that road.

How dare we claim that there is only one way?

But is that what Christ’s words were meant to teach? Are we saved by following the straight and narrow? Are we lost because we follow the easy path of sin? What *does* this passage teach?

Christ used a metaphor to convey an important spiritual truth. He clearly taught that:

- there are two gates open to all mankind
- one only leads to life and the other leads to destruction
- the vast majority do not choose the door that leads to life
- relatively few choose that door

Jesus does not, in this passage, identify what He meant by the narrow and the broad gates. But other passages give a pretty clear idea of what He had in mind.

In **John 10:9** He said: *I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved.* He went on to say in **John 14:6**: *I am the*

way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Peter preached: *Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).* Paul agreed with Peter for he wrote: *For there is ... one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all (1 Timothy 2:5).*

It is an exclusive message. People who adhere to this viewpoint are often labeled as narrow-minded and intolerant. Why? Because they do not believe that all roads lead to heaven, providing one is sincere and does his best. That is the way of the multitude. What arrogance to claim that the majority viewpoint is wrong! How dare we claim that there is only one way?

Relatively few are willing to humbly admit that they are sinners, that they cannot save themselves, that only Jesus can give salvation. That is a narrow-minded view of salvation. It negates all other views. It is the narrow gate and the narrow way.

What concept of salvation are we presenting to this world? A salvation obtained through rigorous, persevering self-denial or a salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and Him *alone*? ■

All Scripture included in this article is taken from the New International Version.



WORK-TEAM FOR PARAGUAY

A team of 12 is being assembled for a 10-day work team to the FEBC churches in Paraguay; dates are April 10-24, 2012. Projects will include light carpentry, painting and ministry to Spanish-speaking and Low German-speaking people. If you are interested in joining, check with your missions committee or church office for more information, or contact info@febministries.org

Book Review

Call it a refresher course, if you will, but for many in our churches, the whole picture of God's revealed plan of salvation has never been clear.

God Wins

God Wins: Heaven and Hell and Why the Good News Is Better than Love Wins. Mark Galli. (Carol Stream Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 2011). 224 pages. ISBN 978-1-4143-6666-1. List \$12.99. Available from FEBC.

In spite of the Bible's record of God's salvation work and promises that go back 6,000 years, the subject is far from closed. What does it mean to be saved? Why do we need to be saved? How does one become saved? Rob Bell approached the subject in his recent book *Love Wins*. The book drew immediate criticism for its interpretations of heaven and hell and suggestions of universalism.

God Wins is essentially a rebuttal of *Love Wins*. But in the process, author Mark Galli draws us to carefully examine our perception of God and our understanding of faith, heaven, hell, judgment and salvation. Call it a refresher course, if you will, but for many in our churches, the whole picture of God's revealed plan of salvation has never been clear. *God Wins* takes the reader to God's Word and gives a guided tour of the landscape of salvation.

This book is valuable for raising alarms about the misdirection of *Love Wins*. But for me it was even more valuable in explaining the picture of salvation so I can be better prepared to explain that to others and bring them to trust God.

God Wins is an excellent study guide for small groups wanting to study the big picture of salvation. Discussion questions on each chapter are well thought out and designed to effectively foster thought and discussion.

An appendix titled "Charitable Engagement" gives helpful

guidelines on how to meet those with whom we disagree.

Galli's long experience as editor of *Leadership Journal* and *Christianity Today* shows in the mature advice of this section. One paragraph explains the tone of this book:

In the end, it is not our job to convince others or to justify our faith to their satisfaction, let alone to defend God's honor. Our job is to witness to what we know, and what we know has been revealed to us in God's Word through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are all called to teach what has been handed down to us (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-8), and then we let the Holy Spirit manage the results. (p. 194).

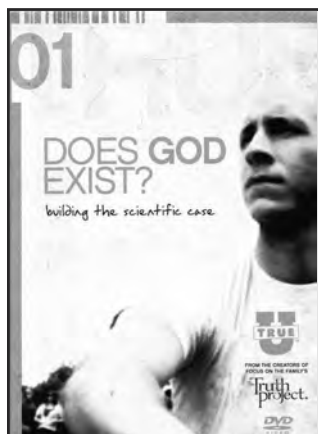
I found *God Wins* to be a thoughtful book that deals with significant issues of Christianity in a straightforward and logical way with deep dependence on Scripture.

Our Fellowship has adopted the vision:

We will be a fellowship of churches which encourages and equips one another so that the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed by every member of every church at every opportunity.

I recommend *God Wins* to each church as a study which equips members to accurately proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Reviewed by Paul Boeker, FEBC Administrator



Does God Exist?



Belief in God is often classified as "unscientific" or "superstition." Both universities and media often portray the person who still believes in God as silly or uninformed.

In *Does God Exist?* (the first in the TrueU series by Focus on the Family and Tyndale), Dr. Stephen Meyer explores four worldviews to show which one best fits the evidence we see around us. In this 10-session series, the student is confronted with the evidence and

provided tools to defend his or her faith.

However, this is not an evangelistic tool. People are not won to Christ by argument. But for young adults especially, this is a valuable series to strengthen their faith so they can better resist so-called "intellectual" attacks on their faith.

Ten 30-minute sessions available from the FEBC Video Library

Fellowship's tie to the Congo is part of its mission history and legacy



Jim Bertsche represented the Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission at the FEBC annual convention in July. His story of the FEBC involvement in church planting in the Congo gave delegates a deeper appreciation of the Fellowship's mission outreach there. Here are excerpts of his address:

The Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) had a very improbable beginning since it is historically rooted in renewal movements among two old order Amish groups in Indiana and Illinois in the mid-1800's. It was in reading and reflecting and praying over their German Bibles that they came to the conclusion that personal salvation had little to do with the cut of a coat collar or the trim of a beard, but rather had everything to do with a life-changing personal faith encounter with Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Lord.

Once they came to this understanding and experienced the certainty and joy of their salvation, they began to share their new discovery with their fellow Amish folk. It wasn't long before they both had followings.

The broad Amish communities were not pleased and soon excommunicated ... new converts. Far from being discouraged, they rather began pondering one basic question: Now that we know who Jesus is, now that we've accepted him as our Lord and Savior, what does he expect of us in our day ... here where we live?

For guidance they pondered the instructions that Jesus gave to his followers while he was here on earth ... and, especially, they examined what He himself did:

- Noting His love for children, in 1896 the Indiana group planted an "orphanage" south of Flanagan, Ill., which endures to this day as the Salem Children's Home.
- Observing His concern for widows, the two groups pooled resources in 1919 and built an "Old Folks Home" in Meadows, Ill., which thrives today as the Meadows Retirement Community.
- Jesus' concern for the sick and suffering was inescapable so, also in 1919,

the two small groups instigated a fund drive amidst the broader Mennonite community of central Illinois and built a Mennonite Hospital in Bloomington/Normal.

In search of Samaria

That was their Judea. But what about their Samaria? Maybe Chicago would do, so they began to start "City Home Missions" in that sprawling urban center (...today there are Mennonite churches in the Chicago area which date their origins back to this era of "Home Missions"). ... But there was that pesky concluding phrase of the marching orders left by Jesus to his followers: "... be my witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

It was in the midst of all of this other activity that they became aware of a place called "the Congo." When they learned that there were multiplied thousands of people there who had never once heard about Jesus, they never blinked!

In January 1912 these two groups sent representatives to a meeting in the little hamlet of Meadows, Ill., and created something called the Congo Inland Mission (CIM). Before the end of that same year, a trio of pioneer missionaries stood on the banks of the Kasai River in south central Congo, living in tents, clearing brush, dropping trees, and daring to believe that under God's guidance they were establishing a tiny beachhead from which, under God's blessing, a witness to the Gospel would fan out through the enormous area which had been allocated to them.

EMB involvement

But word about the new inter-Mennonite Mission venture in Africa was getting out into the broader Mennonite

community of North America. Candidates were beginning to appear from outside the two small founding groups. One of the earliest Mennonite conferences to show interest was the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren (EMB). It was in 1938 that the EMB Conference officially became a partner in the work of the CIM/AIMM, and participation rapidly grew.

Over time, a total of 34 EMB missionaries served with the CIM/AIMM. Their combined time in Congo totals nearly 500 years. In addition, 18 EMB men served at various times on the CIM/AIMM Board, helping to shape and direct this inter-Mennonite venture of service and witness in Africa.

The faith, the prayers, the human and material resources your EMB predecessors invested in Africa over the years were not in vain. There are today three autonomous Mennonite conferences in Congo that have grown out of the work of CIM/AIMM which total more than 225,000 members.

So here we are in the year 2011. Next year will be our centennial year. Plans are under way for celebration in the Congo in July of next year and here in North America in September of next year. It is our hope to organize celebrations in at least eight different areas We invite you now to plan to share in these occasions of celebration and praise for what the Lord has done.

It is part of your mission history; it is part of your mission legacy. ■

Editor's Note: During September 2012 AIMM centennial celebrations are planned across North America. Among the locations are Mountain Lake, Minn. (Sept. 21) and Steinbach, Man. (Sept. 28). For more information, contact AIMM at lola@aimmintl.org or call 574-535-0077.

Congo celebrates 100 years of the Gospel



“Selma Wiebe practicing with the Boys Choir (1953)”



“Allan and Selma Wiebe with national evangelist, Congo, 1953)”

The Democratic Republic of Congo is celebrating 100 years of mission activity through the Congo Inland Mission. Our Fellowship was one of the partners in this agency along with the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, General Conference of Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren and others. Our first missionary to Africa, Sarah Kroeker Anderson (from Jansen, Neb.), went to the Congo in 1912.

A wave of missionaries from our Fellowship churches went to the Congo in the 1950s, but all had to leave by 1960 because of the Congolese Rebellion. *Gospel Tidings* (now

Fellowship Focus) magazines from that era contain dramatic accounts of how the missionaries faced life-and-death hostage crises from the rebels and how they were evacuated by air.

Congo Inland Mission is now known as Africa Intermennonite Mission (AIMM). AIMM is planning a centennial tour of the DR Congo in July 16–26, 2012. If you would like more information about this trip, contact AIMM at lola@aimintl.org or call 574-535-0077.

“I am here to tell you today that the faith, the prayers, and the human and material resources your EMB predecessors invested in Africa over the years were not in vain.”

– Jim Bertsche

C.I.M. Missionaries from FEBC

Last Name	First Name	Nee	Year Began	Last Name	First Name	Nee	Year Began
Anderson	Sarah	(Kroeker)	1912	Friesen	Sara K.		1952
Enns	Frank		1926	Reimer	Amanda		1953
Unrau	Kornelia		1926	Schmidt	Donna	(Williams)	1954
Friesen	Aganetha K.		1938	Loewen	Melvin		1955
Lutke	Agnes		1946	Loewen	Elfrieda	(Regier)	1955
Reimer	Lawrence		1948	Schmidt	Loyal		1955
Rempel	Alvera	(Kassen)	1948	Reiger	Elmer		1956
Enns	Agnes	(Neufeld)	1949	Reiger	Gloria	(Bridson)	1956
Wiebe	Allan		1950	Claassen	Melvin		1957
Wiebe	Selma	(Schmidt)	1950	Claassen	Martha	(Buhler)	1957
Buller	Peter		1951	Friesen	Marg		1957
Buller	Gladys	(Klassen)	1951	Hiebert	Mary		1957
Friesen	Lena K.		1951	Schmidt	Sue		1958
Janz	Arthur		1951	Siebert	Alan		1958
Janz	Martini	(Reimer)	1951	Harms	Harold		1959
Ediger	Sam		1952	Harms	Joyce E.	(Ediger)	1959
Ediger	Honora	(Fast)	1952				

EYES ON THE WORLD

By Marilyn Lester



The Church and Missions – a Strategic Partnership

The mission of God is to glorify Himself and to reconcile the world to Himself. To accomplish this mission He has chosen to work through believers on this earth. The mission strategy can be characterized by a triangle — going, sending and mobilizing — of which the church, the body of believers, has an integral part. Ralph D. Winter, founder of Frontier Mission Fellowship, suggested, “The entire complex tapestry of the mission industry is affected by the vision and knowledge of the sending churches.”

Usually when we think of “going,” we think of individuals going to some remote or distant part of the world in some full-time role as a missionary or being involved full-time in some mission organization closer to home; but, the church can go as well. Jesus’ last words to his disciples were “... you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8 NIV). Jesus started close to home and then branched out. The “going” church is the local church looking close to home and seeing the opportunities in its own community to minister to people in need, giving the congregation opportunities to become involved in ministry in various ways inside and outside the church. Missionaries have mentioned work projects around the church, children’s ministries, prison ministries and help for the homeless as areas in which they were involved before going into full-time mission work. By being a going church, the local church is giving its congregation opportunities to be personally involved in God’s mission in the Jerusalem community.

The sending ministry of the local church is what we generally think of when we talk about the church’s involvement in missions. When Paul went on his missionary journeys, he was encouraged, commissioned and prayed for by the local church. Many of our missionaries have commented what an encouragement it was to have their home church pray for them at their commissioning service and continue to pray for them while on the field. The book, *Serving as Senders* by Neal Pirolo (available through the FEBC office), is an excellent resource for suggestions on how to care for our missionaries from the time they hear the call to missions until they retire. Many of the missionaries have been encouraged by simple things like personal letters from individuals, bulletins from the church and the many things done for them, along with opportunities to share in services when on home assignment, to more complex things like phone calls through Skype, visits from church members and short-term mission teams to assist in the work while on the field. The sending church not only sends the missionaries on their way, but also encourages and supports them while away.

The definition of mobilize, according to the *Encarta Dictionary*, is “to prepare forces for action; to organize people or resources in order to be ready for action or in order to take action.” The first step in preparing or organizing people for action is to motivate them; people must see the need and be willing to act on that need. Mission conferences, letters and visits from missionaries, organizing care packages and letter-writing campaigns, and organizing short-term mission teams all contribute to motivating the congregation toward missions. Missionaries have informed us that all these activities played a big part in motivating them to go into missions full-time. Even if most of the people in the local congregations do not go abroad as full-time missionaries, they can still be an integral part of the world mission by becoming actively involved with mobilizing the troops at home for the sake of assisting the troops abroad.

We are constantly reminded that the world is becoming within our reach as we hear such terms as global economy, global citizens and a global village. Believers today are urged to be global Christians by recognizing that God’s plan includes the unreached people halfway around the globe, the people who are openly defiant against the one true God, and the people in the countries where Protestant Christianity began but who no longer acknowledge Him, as well as the neighbor right next door. All believers have been called by Jesus Christ, Himself, to be involved in God’s mission, when He said, “Go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). The local church can become a global church and be the channel through which believers have the opportunity to partner with missions and missionaries to help promote God’s mission of glorifying Himself and reconciling the world to Him.

Winter, Ralph D. “Join the World Christian Movement.” In Winter, Ralph D., & Hawthorne, Steven C. (Eds.), (1999). *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*. (pp. 718-723). Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library.

Marilynn has served on the Commission on Missions for 1½ years, along with her husband, Doyle. She attends Community Bible Church in Omaha.



What Legacy Will You Leave?

By Darlene Toews, Commission on Women's Ministries

Have you ever stopped to reflect about the legacy you received from your ancestors, or what you will leave to your descendants?

I ponder this, as there have been moments when I thought life would have been so much better had I been born into a different family; a family that did not carry so much "baggage" was more spiritual and more amicable. As I reflect back, I am amazed how God used contradictory, contrary circumstances to bring me to where I am today.

Last summer I had an unexpected visit from a missionary couple who had been involved in discipling my parents when they were seeking the Lord. The couple, Royce and Sue, did not know my married name but they knew several facts about my life. It is amazing how those few facts given to a gas station attendant led them to my home. "We thought we would come and tell you about your Christian heritage," they said when they arrived at my door. Both of my parents had been deceased for several years, but the Lord had urged them to stop and encourage me as they passed through my community. My parents' lives had impacted Royce as a young man; he said there are still times in his ministry that he shares their story! I hope it will encourage you, as it did me, to appreciate how our majestic God has worked out details in your heritage as well as mine.

My parents both grew up in dysfunctional homes. My dad's family dynamics and conduct were evident to those all around, and I remember the remains of the so-called "Hatfield and McCoy" era. My mom had spoken highly of her dad, saying he listened to Christian radio programs. But he died when she was in her early twenties, and her mother was not a loving woman.

You might wonder how my parents ever became interested in Christianity. My mom heard that a missionary was coming to our community, and she had

always wanted to hear one speak. So my parents went to listen, their two young children in tow. Years later I recall my mom telling me that they heard the missionary say something like, "it is a small sin to take something from someone who has more than you do." That is what the Holy Spirit used to lead them to question where they were spiritually in their lives. You see, we had fewer possessions than the people in our neighbourhood, and my parents did not want us to accept such a view. They continued searching for a church that taught the truth, where they could raise their children and teach them good morals. Their search led them to start attending a Baptist church down the road.

Pastor Jake, a pastor in a neighbouring community, had prayed for outreach into the surrounding area. He faced opposition from our community when he came to visit my parents at their home. Eventually my parents made a commitment to the Lord, even in the face of that opposition and financial difficulties. Our God is sovereign!

One day, Royce observed clouds forming in the distance. Pastor Jake called him and said, "We need to see the Wilks." When they arrived at my home they discovered that my parents' small farm had been completely hailed out. Mom and Dad, who were young believers, were very discouraged about how they would survive. Royce and Pastor Jake visited and prayed with them from 6 p.m. until late into the night. After that he witnessed several people in the church bless my family by helping to meet their basic needs: selling grain and giving them the proceeds, opening their trunks and giving them produce. Each gesture not only blessed my parents but encouraged them, because this church family showed that they cared; they were living out what they professed.

When my parents decided to become members of that church, there was opposition at a church meeting. You see,

this church was foundational German; people in the congregation were almost all related and had a Christian heritage. My family could put no claim to any of those points: we were of Ukrainian descent, not related to anyone, and definitely had no Christian heritage as they knew it. The congregation seemed pleased that my parents had accepted the Lord, but didn't consider them the kind of people they wanted as members.

The pastor told the congregation that if they would not accept my parents into membership, they also did not accept his wife, and he would leave the church because his wife was of Romanian descent. So my parents became members, and that pastor saw the Lord answer his prayer about outreach.

Years later, my mom said that they would never have returned if they had known that they were not fully accepted. The Lord used for good what Satan wanted for division and rejection of faith. My parents had four children, and we have all made a personal commitment to the Lord.

As I think on my legacy, I am encouraged, and challenged by how to live my daily life in my home, community and church. Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (The Living Bible).

What legacy are you leaving? Our God is faithful, trustworthy and omnipresent in every life, no matter what the circumstances. He can and will use you where you are at this moment, if you will just let Him.

Darlene has served on the Commission on Women's Ministries for one year. She lives in Indian Head, Sask.



FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHAPEL

John Harwood, Pastor **Winnipeg, Man.**

Pastor John just wrapped up a very powerful sermon series entitled “Deeper Questions.” Members of the congregation were given slips of paper with the question printed on it, “If I could ask God one question, I would ask: ...” We were encouraged to use them in our meetings with friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc., and then encourage them to come on Sunday morning to hear the answer. Some of the questions that Pastor John tackled were: “If a child and/or disabled person dies, will he go to heaven, even if he is unable to commit himself to God?” and “Why do certain churches charge a large part of someone’s income just to believe in a certain religion?” It was an amazing series and may be revisited if more questions come in.

Dr. Michael Wodlinger of Chosen People Ministries demonstrated a Seder (Passover meal) and taught about the powerful connection between the Jewish Passover tradition and our communion celebrations. So many of the components of the Seder meal point directly to Jesus’ fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy.

Nancy Kunkel, Correspondent

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

Charles Tschetter, Senior Pastor **Omaha, Neb.**

Community Bible Church held an ordination service for **Daniel Bear** on Sept. 25. In April of this year, Daniel was examined by an ordination council and with their recommendation the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches officially recognized his ordination at its annual convention in July. Daniel and his wife, Rachel, have been active at CBC for a number of years. He joined the staff in July 2005, and currently serves as Pastor of Family Ministries, which focuses on ministry to children and to young married couples. Daniel graduated Magna Cum Laude from Grace University with a bachelor of arts in Pastoral Ministries.

Dr. Ron Allen from Dallas Theological Seminary spoke at our Fall Bible Conference in October. The theme for the weekend was *Numbers, Moses, Grace and God*. Dr. Allen shared from the Old Testament book of Numbers.

At *How Do I Look?* CBC women focused on our heart’s relationship to our outward presentation to the world. The event was a forum for us to get ideas about how to encourage modest hearts in the younger women we know.

Dr. Rich Ramsey, Christian Ministry Department Chair and Associate Professor in Christian Education and Ministry at Grace University, spoke at our first annual Children’s Ministries Cookout. The event was a “thank you” to those who serve in children ministries at CBC.

Sharon Berg, Correspondent

COMMUNITY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

Chris Wiley, Pastor **Tahlequah, Okla.**

Pastor Chris Wiley was installed as our pastor on Sept.

18. The entire day was special, beginning with a sermon delivered by our own **FEBC President Blaine Donaldson**, and ending with a special installation service by **John Flanagan**, a retired pastor and mentor of Pastor Chris.

A Series of “Firsts”: God is working in numerous ways at our church, providing us with quite a few “first” opportunities:

- Pastor Chris celebrated Father’s Day with his first baptism, done in the pool of friends of our church. The week following the baptism, CBF welcomed **Jim and Bryn Smith** as members to their congregation.
- We held a small reception for our young missionary, **Micah Walker**, who married his sweetheart, **Megan Wright**, on July 16. We are so excited to faithfully pray for them as they begin their journey as one. This was the first time CBF has enjoyed supporting a missionary in this manner.
- We were all further thrilled to host our very first wedding at CBF when two of our young members, **Erica Bonaparte** and **Matthew Dempsey**, were married Aug. 13. This was also the first wedding Pastor Chris officiated.

We continue to enjoy more of God’s abundant blessings as more people have come to worship with us.

Bryn Smith, Correspondent

CORNERSTONE BIBLE CHURCH

Jared Hiebert, Pastor **Steinbach, Man.**

More than 160 people enjoyed our Fall Kick-Off in September, beginning with our second annual hog roast. The following day, at our Sunday School Kick-Off, we presented Bibles to our first-grade students. Pastor Jared began his new sermon series as well as new Christian Development Classes, which he teaches Sunday evenings. Middle school and high school youth kick-offs took place during the following week. We are thankful that the Lord has once again provided willing servants, as we are now into full swing with all our ministries.

Cornerstone Women’s Ministry hosted a ladies retreat in November at Pinewood Lodge at Dorothy Lake, Man. The weekend was an exciting time of building friendships, relaxing, and delving deeply into God’s Word.

Marsella Wiebe, Correspondent

CORNERSTONE BIBLE CHURCH

Nathan Janzen, Pastor **Mountain Lake, Minn.**

Bryan and Pam Anderson and **Jim and Linda Brandt** shared about their trip to Romania in July. They especially ministered to needy AIDS victims.

In September we started small groups with the theme “The Hole in Our Gospel.” The study is based on the book by Richard Stearns, CEO of World Vision. The ladies started their Bible study of “The Power of a Praying Woman,” a 10-week video by Stormie Omartian.

FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

At the ladies retreat in September, **Esther Klassen** spoke on Bible women: Ruth, Mary Magdalene, and Mary and Martha.

Children's Day in August included a potluck dinner, with the children presenting the program "Hometown Nazareth."
Arlene Stoesz, Correspondent

COUNTRYSIDE BIBLE CHURCH

David Cummings, Pastor **Meade, Kan.**

Carlin Toews' work with Samaritan's Purse in Alaska has been extended to December. **Kjell Nordgren** and **Jordan Friesen** shared about their mission trip to Sweden in August.

In September our youth reported on the Precept Camp and the TLC (Teens Living for Christ) work retreat to Lives Under Construction in Missouri. Our TLC is meeting regularly to plan for their mission trip to Ecuador during spring break 2012. Meals and other projects have been scheduled by various members to raise money for their trip.

Our women's Bible studies this fall will be *Lord Heal My Hurts* by Kay Arthur and *Treasuring the Word Together* with a study and memorization of Romans 8.

FEBC President Blaine Donaldson was present for our baptismal service in September and gave a brief report.

Baptisms

Cooper, Gaitlin and Walker Clawson, Mark and Rebecca Finster, Tyler Isaac

Mary Friesen, Correspondent

DALMENY BIBLE CHURCH

Dennis Friesen, Pastor **Dalmeny, Sask.**

We had an amazing week working together with the Community Church to provide Vacation Bible School to the children of Dalmeny. It was so much fun to see volunteers and children singing, interacting and learning together the lessons about the life of Jesus in His hometown of Nazareth.

Stephanie Anderson, one of our Global Partners, returned home after her ministry with Youth With A Mission (YWAM) in Australia. Three couples from our church reported on their June trip to our sister church, the Baptist Church in Talnoe, Ukraine.

Many from our congregation spent time during the summer as campers, Leaders in Training, counselors, and cooks.
Marilyn Harder, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Dr. Don Pahl, Senior Pastor **Omaha, Neb.**

EBC hosted a Deeper Walk conference titled, "Battle for the Home —The Spirit-Filled Home" in August. The weekend was led by Dr. Marcus Warner, President of Deeper Walk International, and he focused on Surrendering to the spirit, Taking thoughts captive, Attacking the real enemy, Reclaiming surrendered ground, and Treating wives with love and husbands with respect.

In an earlier edition of *Fellowship Focus* we indicated that for quite some time now we have been experiencing increased attendance in worship and church activities. In seeking to deal positively with this blessing of more people, we have added a Saturday evening worship service (along with our two Sunday morning services). We also have renovated our sanctuary, both to allow space for more seating as well as to give it a facelift, and added classroom space. We continue to be excited about God's role for our church in our community.

This summer we continued our tradition of the Summer Farmer's Market. Congregation members are invited to bring extra produce from their gardens, which is available to others in the congregation at no cost. At the produce table, EBC's Care Team offers healthy recipes using fresh garden produce. This is a wonderful way for all of us to share bounty from Omaha gardens and to find new ways to use all of the delicious produce.

Baptisms

Richard Cooley, Debbie Cooley

New Members

Mark Collier, Richard and Debbie Cooley, Carrie Ingraham

Sherrie Lindsey, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Greg Guarnett, Senior Pastor **Langham, Sask.**

We have a number of vacant leadership positions in our church, including Christian Education chairperson and Sunday School Superintendent. Please pray that God will provide willing servants.

One of our adult classes is going through the TrueU DVD: *Does God Exist?* Excellent teaching by Dr. Stephen Meyer.

Forty children are registered for Awana Cubbie, Sparks and Pioneer Clubs Explorers, and more are signing up as the word gets around.

Marilyn Friesen, Correspondent



Evangelical Bible Church in Langham, Sask., recently welcomed Justin Epp as associate pastor. Justin is originally from Brandon, Man., and served three years in Pincher Creek, Alta., with the Mennonite Brethren. He and his wife, Nashly, were married in February.

At Millar College, Justin earned a Bachelor of Biblical Studies in 2008 and a Bachelor of Arts in Ministry in 2009.

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FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

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EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

John Skillman, Pastor

Lustre, Mont.

Norman and Tamara Teichroew have returned from their service overseas. Tamara is helping her mother, who plans to serve again on the mission field, and Norman is preparing their house here. The Teichroews are looking to the Lord for guidance as they seek new direction for their future.

Harvey Schultz, chair of the FEBC Commission on Church Planting, gave the messages at our Harvest Festival Oct. 9-11.

Some of our ambitious ladies are meeting to make various items from used denim and will sell these at Christmas bazaars. Proceeds will go to missionary projects.

Milestone

Ross and Joan Trimble celebrated their 50th anniversary on Aug. 7

Sharon Skillman, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

Randy Maass, Pastor

Marion, S.D.

Pastor Maass is preaching through the book of Ephesians during morning worship and leading a study of "What the Church Believes" during Sunday school. Both lead to very interesting discussions. He also teaches a course on Sermon Preparation every other Monday at Sioux Falls Seminary. On the other Mondays, he continues the course at Grace University in Omaha. Students at both locations are joined via video connections.

Ray Becker, Correspondent

FAITH EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Mike Comtois, Pastor

Winkler, Man.

Our youth ministry continues to grow, and we have about 35 kids attending every Thursday evening. We've started a new series from Focus on the Family addressing such questions as "Does God exist?" and "Is the Bible reliable?" It also deals with such topics as creation and how to defend and explain what we believe in.

We had the honour of hosting the FEBC ladies day this year. The topic was "Sharing the Journey." Our guest speaker, **Lori Quiring**, shared about her journey as a missionary in Peru.

In our Adult Bible Fellowship we are going through a Crown Financial Ministries series titled "Discovering God's Way of Handling Money."

Liane Thiessen, Correspondent

FAITH EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Michael Fink, Pastor

Henderson, Neb.

Larin and Pam Adams and family have been on home assignment from Thailand this past year. We enjoyed their

involvement with us at various times throughout the year. The church family had a farewell ice cream social for them as they shared their ministry with us before their return in August. **Steve and Mikki Schmidt** and **Mike and LaRae Schmidt** and families have also been home from Niger during the summer months. The Adams and both Schmidt families are leaving college students behind. We pray for the adjustments these families will make and for the young people making their way in our culture.

On Sunday mornings Pastor Mike has been teaching through the books of 1, 2 and 3 John.

During our Sunday evening Bible study Pastor Mike taught a series on the Olivet Discourse based on Matthew 24 and 25. This study is being followed up with passages of Scripture focusing on the rapture of the Church.

Alice Decker, Correspondent

GRACE EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Warren Schatz, Pastor

Abbotsford, B.C.

We are working together with Saint Matthew's Anglican Church, which recently moved to Grace EBC from their facility.

Baptism/Membership

Becky Hildebrandt; Walter Jefremow was baptized and accepted into membership.

Grace Toews, Correspondent

HEARTLAND BIBLE CHURCH

Scott Hecht, Pastor

Lincoln, Neb.

Our annual picnic to kick off the fall schedule of events was held at Roberts Park in September, with lots of food, fun and fellowship. After a busy summer, all our regular fall activities have restarted, including Senior Youth activities, the Amen Kids Klub and Junior Kids Klub.

Trudy Reimer, Correspondent

HODGSON BIBLE CHURCH

James Thiessen, Pastor

Hodgson, Man.



It was exciting to see four couples join the church on Sept. 25 — **Clint and Kelly Webb, Darcy and Mandy Plett, Robert and Natalia Wiens** and **Eric and Daphne Flett**.

Many in our congregation were involved this summer at Fisher Bay Bible Camp. We appreciated the added blessing of a dry summer, along with the opportunity of sharing the Gospel with a record number of campers.

FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

We are presently showing a DVD series for our Bible study, "Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage," by Mark Gungor.



Baptisms

Clint and Kelly Webb, Maggie Kent and Nicholas Sanderson

Sara Plett

JANSEN BIBLE CHURCH

Paul Carpenter, Pastor

Jansen, Neb.

Awana Club's opening enrollment of 57 in September has grown since then. Nearly all our Awana staff attended the Awana Conference in Papillion, Neb., in October.

Our annual Harvest Missions Festival took place Nov. 11-13.

Former New Tribes missionary **Gracia Burnham**, who was kidnapped in the Philippines in 2001, along with her late husband, Martin, is tentatively scheduled to speak on April 22, 2012 during the Sunday school hour and worship service. Gracia and Martin were held under harsh conditions for 376 days. After a firefight that wounded her and killed Martin, she was freed in 2002. Since that time she has written two books, *In the Presence of My Enemies* and *To Fly Again*. All are welcome to attend!

Tena Dick, Correspondent

NORTHEAST BIBLE CHURCH

John Fehr, Pastor

Calgary, Alta.

Our first Ladies Care & Share gathering for the season took place in October. We will meet the first and third Wednesday of each month, sharing and praying for each other during the first week, and watching a video series entitled "Free to be Real" during the third week. We also decided to compile a cookbook highlighting the multicultural flavor of our church. Proceeds from cookbook sales will benefit ministries that the ladies group has taken responsibility for. A contest is open to the whole church family to create a name for the cookbook.



Edwin and Magdaline Langat and son Jonathan

New Members

Mike Tse and Edwin and Magdaline Langat

Julie Ann Simpson, Correspondent

RICHER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Simon Cheung, Pastor

Richer, Man.

The small sign on the highway read "Daily Vacation Bible School, Aug. 8-12." The sun blazed hot in Richer. Will the children come? "Please, Lord, send us ten!"

We fanned the town to find children — up to the daycare center and around to the neighbors. What else should we do? We begged and borrowed stuffed animals to make the church a jungle. We planned games, practiced songs we thought they would like and made Grandma's cookies to lure them in!

We prayed and asked the Master, "What stories should we tell?" Loaves and fishes, Jonah and the whale, creation's story foretold the price that Jesus paid. Crafts using memory verses should help etch these truths into their minds! Now we just have to ... wait.



On Monday morning the doors burst open and seven children came. By Friday we watched little ones marching from the daycare while others were hanging off the church railing, 28 in all!

Four precious ones came up for prayer, and all the children received a New Testament.

What was their favorite song? "This little of mine ... Shine it over Richer town, I'm gonna let it shine!"

Michelle Driedger, Correspondent

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FOCUS ON OUR CHURCHES

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SALEM CHURCH

Darrell Derksen, Senior Pastor Waldheim, Sask.

Pastor Darrell and Priscilla took a well-deserved four-month sabbatical, so they were gone much of the time. Although we missed them very much, things ran smoothly as many people stepped up to the plate and took on extra duties. We appreciate each person's contribution. It was probably an eye-opener to many, as we realized just how much Pastor Darrell does behind the scenes. We were thankful to have them return in October.

At our Fall Ministries Kick-off BBQ, we had FROG treats and decorations to introduce the theme: **Fully Rely On God**. Frogs continue to appear in various places, from posters to sermon illustrations, to remind us to seek to make that saying a reality in our lives.

Another valuable resource was offered to our church and community when the "Financial Peace University" course began in September. The basics of money management are shared in this 13-week course.

VITA BIBLE CHURCH

Jurgen Penner, Pastor Vita, Man.

Our church joined with another Fellowship Church, **Stuartburn Gospel Chapel**, for a joint Sunday morning service and picnic.

Once a month throughout the summer we had Fellowship Nights that included singing, a campfire, snacks and, of course, fellowship.

Our children enjoyed the Hometown Nazareth Vacation Bible School program. They learned what it might have been like for Jesus to grow up in Nazareth.

Jane Roman, Correspondent



Legacy Giving
Today's resources for tomorrow's ministries



The Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches is pleased to announce an estate planning phone seminar in partnership with PhilanthroCorp. Although these are designed for U.S. citizens, basic principles will help anyone.

Next Seminar Dates:

Thursday, Nov. 17, 3 p.m. Central Time

Thursday, Dec. 1, 5 p.m. Central Time

Tuesday, Jan. 17, 5:30 p.m. Central Time

Please join us for a toll-free 45-minute phone seminar designed to help you understand the critical issues of providing for your family, reducing taxes and supporting ministries of your choice.

A staggering 70 percent of all Americans lack a current, up-to-date will or trust. During this phone seminar, that you are able to enjoy from the comfort and privacy of your own home, the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches and PhilanthroCorp (a Christ-centered estate planning firm) will address the key topics of stewardship and estate planning.

Registering is easy! Go to www.febclegacy.org and click on "Wills & Estates Teleconference" to submit a registration contact form.



FELLOWSHIP VIEWS • FELLOWSHIP VIEWS • FELLOWSHIP VIEWS

Church Builders Revolving Loan Fund

In 1995 the Fellowship established a fund to provide low-interest loans to church plants for their first building. As loans were paid back, other churches could use the money. Individual members of our Fellowship were encouraged to give \$5 per month to this fund. By this fall, more than \$34,500 was available in the United States and the Canadian fund held \$48,000 (but most of

this amount is currently loaned out). We deeply appreciate each person who has given to this fund. However, because commercial interest rates are so low, few churches need these loans right now. After consideration, the Executive Committee advises that we stop accepting contributions for this fund effective Dec. 31. Current funds will be maintained and will continue to grow through interest.

Boredom and the Christian

By Pastor Nathan Janzen, Vision Implementation Team

“Dad, I’m bored.” When I spoke these words as a child, I soon learned that I would be given an opportunity to do something productive. Often a task I did not desire became a requirement to complete due to my inability to find a way to occupy my time. Now as a parent, I often hear the same phrase and eagerly find a meaningful activity with which my child can fill her time. Why do we dislike boredom so much? I believe one reason is because we desire to do something meaningful and make a difference in life.

In 2004, when nine-year-old Austin Gutwein heard about orphaned kids in Africa due to the HIV epidemic, he was moved to do something about it. His love for basketball led him to shoot 2,057 free throws, one for each child who would be orphaned during his day at school. With family and friends sponsoring Austin, he raised \$3,000 for World Vision to provide hope to eight orphaned children. Little did he realize that his choice to make a difference would have a life-changing impact on thousands of others. From that year forward, thousands have joined Austin in raising money in a basketball shoot-a-thon called Hoops of Hope, together raising more than two million dollars.

The exciting challenge of this story is that we can all make a difference in the lives of others. One of the most significant ways we can impact another person’s life is by sharing with them the good news of Jesus Christ. That good news has the power to change someone’s life and eternity. This is definitely something I want to become more passionate about.

The Apostle Paul exemplified this passion. In Romans 1:15-17 Paul writes, “So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘But the righteous man shall live by faith.’” Paul possessed an eagerness to proclaim the truth of Christ because he knew sharing the Good News changes lives. Without Christ, there is an emptiness to life. In Ecclesiastes, King Solomon records his attempts to find meaning in life. But over and over he found that under the sun, apart from God, life is meaningless. Many in our prosperous society are pur-

**We were not meant to be bored.
God has designed us to be a part of the action rather
than the audience.**

suing happiness apart from God. Greater wealth, advancements in technology, the comforts of life and opportunities for pleasure have created neither a more satisfied nor a happier population. Instead, without Christ, people are living in bondage to sin. Paul expressed this frustration, stating “I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin” (Romans 7:14). People are trapped, dead in their trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1). But we have the Key to freedom and life.

The Good News of Jesus Christ has the power to save and transform. That is why Paul was so eager to preach the Gospel! Through the Gospel, God works opening blind eyes, convicting calloused hearts, delivering people once bound by Satan’s lies. The Gospel frees us from sin’s eternal penalty and earthly power. It reveals God’s righteousness, not found in ourselves and our own efforts, but in Christ. Jesus is our source for eternal life and our strength in this life. This Good News compels us to live by faith, allowing Christ to live in us, and transform us by the renewing of our minds.

The life-changing nature of the Gospel is evident across society and around the world. The Gospel can transform families, once broken by the strife and anger, bitterness and selfishness that often tears homes apart. Through the power of the Gospel, they can experience the love, joy and peace that life in the Spirit produces. The Gospel’s transforming power is seen on a global scale. In *Discipling Nations* Darrow Miller states that the lands with the least access to the Gospel are also among the neediest (p. 46). The beliefs of a people group impact behavior, and are reflected in laws and the structures of society. That is why proclaiming Christ can make such a difference.

We were not meant to be bored. As God’s workmanship, we have been created to do good and make a difference in our world. God has designed us to be a part of the action rather than the audience. As we surrender to God, His Spirit will fill us with His joy, love and a passion to proclaim the Good News. Through His power, we become the means God uses to transform lives and change eternities, whatever our age and wherever He has placed us. ■

All Scripture included in this article is taken from the New American Standard Bible.