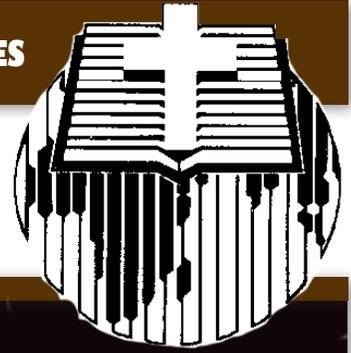


A PUBLICATION OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCHES

Fellowship Focus

Volume 54 • No. 3 • May/June 2014



*In the beginning God created
the heavens and the earth.*

~ Genesis 1:1

CREATION



Convention delegates to
consider Creation statement



July 17-20
Langham Evangelical Bible Church,
Langham, Sask.

RELEASING

*God's Power
through Prayer*

120th FEBC CONVENTION 2014



President's Challenge

Blaine Donaldson, President, Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches

Is it Time for a Social Gospel?



“Social gospel” is a particularly loaded term. It often conjures up images of helping people’s physical needs without ministering to their spiritual needs. I would categorically reject this notion. However, like a pendulum, many in the conservative evangelical camp have swung to ministry of spiritual needs while ignoring the physical needs of the individual.

Traditionally many FEBC churches have been involved in ministry to the physical needs of people through Mennonite Central Committee or similar ministries. This involvement has been a good thing, but a problem with these ministries is that they do not connect our personal witness with the acts of benevolence that they do. It should also be noted that many individual believers have often been very generous to help their non-Christian neighbors in times of crisis, and this often does connect generosity with testimony.

Gospel proclamation is directly mandated in the Scriptures. Social development is not. There are many biblical imperatives to minister to the weak, but most of the calls to benevolence in the Bible are focused on giving to believers who are facing hardship. We are commanded to do good to all, but especially to those of the household of faith. Biblical social support is primarily focused on the Christian community. The biblical mandate to non-Christians is to proclaim the Gospel to them.

It is a dereliction of duty to minister to a non-Christian’s physical or emotional needs without seeking to use this ministry

to proclaim Jesus. However, ministering to the physical and emotional needs of a non-Christian often provides opportunities to proclaim Jesus.

Showing that you care about people in a social ministry context builds a bridge to helping non-Christians believe that Jesus really cares for them – and a great opportunity to share Jesus with them.

Is it time for a social gospel? I think that it is time that we see social ministry as an opportunity to proclaim Jesus. “Feeding the poor for the sake of feeding the poor” falls short of the Christian’s calling. However, if we feed the poor for the sake of seeking an opportunity to share Jesus, we do well.

There are two reasons to consider intentionally adding a social ministry context to some of our Gospel proclamation. First, there are many untapped opportunities in our local communities. There are ways to serve at our local schools, libraries, secular charities, hospitals, etc. In every one of these areas of social service, you will spend time with non-Christians that you would have no other means of reaching. Showing that you care about people in a social ministry context builds a bridge to helping non-Christians believe that Jesus really cares for them — and this is a great opportunity to share Jesus with them.

A second reason to help is the reputation of your church. Most non-Christians have a negative and inaccurate view of what the church is. They see the church as being full of hypocrisy and condemnation. They do not see the church as caring and loving. They do not believe that the church is doing much good for anyone. If most people in your church volunteered in your community, it would not take long for the community to notice. The important component in social ministry is Gospel proclamation, but the winsome component is serving the needs of people.

Is social ministry with gospel proclamation a bait and switch? No. Most non-Christians do not know that their greatest need is the forgiveness of sins. They do know things like loneliness, poverty and broken relationships. We know that these are often symptoms of their greatest needs which are spiritual. So in the midst of meeting social needs, we are always seeking opportunities to minister to spiritual needs. ■

Traveling Schedule:

May 24-June 1	Manitoba/Ontario Ministry trip
June 13-22	Saskatchewan Ministry trip
July 11-22	Convention trip

Comment



By Sharon Berg, Editor

Summer draws near, and so does the annual FEBC Convention in July. And each year we make known a way that you can help a ministry through giving to the Convention Project. This year, the Fellowship will assist Quest, a camping ministry in Santa Catarina, Brazil. Read more about how your gift will help this project, directed by FEBC missionaries **Scott and Patsy Buhler**, on page 5.

Convention delegates will also consider including a statement on Creation in the FEBC Articles of Faith. Administrator **Paul Boeker** shares why that is important in his thought-provoking article "The Road to Resurrection" on page 8.

With the Fellowship celebrating our 125th anniversary this year, I hope you'll enjoy reading some of the historical highlights we'll include. In this issue we feature a letter sent 75 years ago to President Franklin D. Roosevelt that came out of the FEBC's (then known as the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren) 1939 convention concerning thoughts on war and peace. Find it on page 6.

Blessings,

FELLOWSHIP FOCUS (ISSN: 1537-4203, USPS# 223-620)

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to FELLOWSHIP FOCUS, 11605 W Dodge RD STE 3, Omaha NE 68154-2566

Periodicals Postage paid at Omaha, Nebraska and at additional mailing offices. Printed in the U.S.A.

The FELLOWSHIP FOCUS is published bi-monthly by the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches, 11605 W Dodge RD STE 3, Omaha NE 68154-2566

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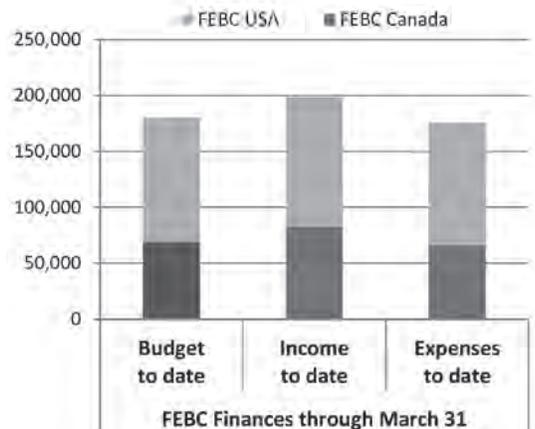
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The *Fellowship Focus* is available to read online. Check it out!

<http://www.fellowshipforward.org>



Proclaiming Christ *around* the World

**By Marilyn Lester
Commission on Missions**

“In the midst of a fallen world, we are so thankful that God gives us the privilege of witnessing and rubbing shoulders with servants of His whose lives are a shining example of walking by faith. Glimpses into their lives serve to boost and encourage us in our own walk with the Lord. Praise the Lord for the Body of Christ of which we are a part!” This is a statement made by Deb Dick. Deb and her husband, Sam, are missionaries for Avant Ministries in Spain.

Sam and Deb Dick recently attended a “Renewal of Vows” ceremony for a couple who had been together for 50 years. It was “refreshing to see a couple who has been faithful to each other for all these years and to hear them giving God the credit.” Also, the Dicks recently organized and attended a retreat for Avant missionary leaders from across Europe. As they witnessed stories of difficulties and victories in these leaders’ lives and ministries, they were encouraged by their dedication and challenged to pray more faithfully for them.

Kirk and Dannel Blackwell (Avant Ministries) are involved in planting new churches in Slovenia, Poland, and in India. In Slovenia, the work is still in the beginning stages, meeting with small groups such as an English Club for children that is using “Heroes of the Bible”; a parents’ group stemming from the kids’ club to encourage biblical values in raising their kids; and a Bible study on Hebrews and Ephesians. The Blackwells ask for prayer that “God will do His work and establish a healthy, reproducing church in Koper.” The Blackwells are also excited to see the growth that is happening with the Word Zone

church in Poznan. Originally a church plant, this church has now started three new groups and is planning for more. They have taken what they were taught and are passing it on to others. “Please pray that these new church plants will be firmly established and that God will continue to work in the lives of Poles that are coming to Him!”

Kirk and Avant’s European Regional Director made a trip to India to help a young church develop the criteria for a healthy church. They were also looking at a couple of other opportunities for partnership in that country. “Pray that God blesses the believers there and calls people to Himself.”

Dan and Carrie Ritzman (REACH) report that they have reached a major milestone in the life of the Iranian church in Brussels. On Feb. 16, this group had its first membership meeting during which leadership was confirmed, finances accepted and vision of service teams was launched. This church now has 28 members, with an attendance average of 44. The Ritzmans announced to the church that they would be leaving for a year, and they ask for prayer “that the leaders and members would courageously take on responsibilities during this year.”

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Fellowship Views

Face to Monitor

For the past 75 years or so, Fellowship leadership and commission members have met face to face twice a year to coordinate planning and take care of business. If 35 people travel an average of 600 miles round-trip to attend a meeting, the cumulative cost of the meeting could approach \$21,000. This expense has been borne by churches or commission members. Now, through video conferencing, Fellowship leaders and commission members can meet face to monitor in their own homes. And rather than meeting twice a year, they are able to meet monthly from their homes. Through technology, the Fellowship is saving money and enabling our volunteers to be more productive.

A Few Good Men and Women

Our Fellowship runs on volunteers. At this summer’s convention, 57 positions will be open! All terms of interim directors are up, so it is imperative that your church nominates new directors. All commissions are also in need of new people. If you are interested in serving on the Fellowship level, please talk to your church board. Local churches must nominate workers for the Fellowship. Consider serving on the Commission on Churches, Church Planting, Education, Missions or Outreach, or on the Board of Directors or Doctrinal Council. Above all, please ask the Father to give the Fellowship the leaders and workers it needs.

Summer Missionaries

Financial aid is available for students who will be on a short-term cross-cultural mission assignment this summer. Students serving at least six weeks may receive a grant of \$300. Students serving four months or more may be eligible for up to \$750. Contact orders@febministries.org for details and application forms.

Studying for Christian Ministry?

Students who are preparing for Christian ministry (youth worker, missionary, etc.) may apply to the Fellowship for a \$1,000 scholarship. Request an application packet from orders@febministries.org. Individuals currently in career ministry (pastors, missionaries, etc.) who are taking graduate-level classes can apply for a Continuing Education Scholarship. Applications for both scholarships must be received by May 31.

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2014 Convention Project



Each year, our Fellowship collects gifts to build the Kingdom of God. These convention projects help a ministry which is outside of our Fellowship but related to our missionaries. This year, the directors have chosen to assist Quest, a camping ministry in Santa Catarina, Brazil. **Scott and Patsy Buhler**, who direct this ministry, are FEBC missionaries sent out by **Dalmeny Bible Church** (see *Fellowship Focus*, Volume 53 • No. 6 • November/December 2013).

Half of the 2014 Convention Project is to construct an entry way into the campground. At this time the rugged terrain and narrow road into the camp do not allow access for trucks and construction equipment. Further development of the camp cannot proceed until the landscaping and drainage system for the entrance to Quest Brazil's camp property is completed. Quest is operational (see www.questbr.com/new/en), but further development must wait for the completion of the entry.

Scott Buhler explains, "This project indirectly impacts every future ministry that will happen at Quest's Camp because it is the key to allowing any development happen on our property. [The entry and future development will provide] the opportunity to minister through camps, retreats, day camps, leadership development, training courses and other events at our own facilities, instead of us burning ourselves out in an itinerant ministry."



Total cost for the project is about \$47,500 in Canadian dollars. More than \$17,000 is already on hand. Our goal is to provide \$10,000 toward a needed \$30,000 to complete the entry. We encourage each church and individual in our Fellowship to give toward this crucial step in Quest's development. If you are a contractor or engineer and would like to see the detailed plans and drawings of the project, request them from info@febministries.org.

The other half of the Convention Project is to resupply the FEBC Ministries (general) fund of our Fellowship. Our general fund is running on empty — in fact, it is in a hole. The Fellowship has no general cash reserves, and often does not have enough cash flow to pay all bills. This year will see temporarily increased expenses as we prepare to replace the retiring Administrator. For several months, salaries will be over budget as additional personnel are brought on board and trained to replace the Administrator. So, for our 125th Anniversary, the Directors have designated one-half of the Convention Project for FEBC Ministries.

Total goal for the 2014 Convention Project is \$20,000 with \$10,000 going to Quest and \$10,000 going to FEBC Ministries. Begin discussing with your family how much you will give to this project. Most of our FEBC churches will take an offering for this project in early summer.

Paul Boeker, Administrator

Continued from Page 4

Churches Seeking Pastors

Please ask God to provide pastors for churches without a shepherd.

- **Fairview Bible Church** of Swift Current, Sask., is seeking a part-time senior pastor. Most attendees are mature believers who appreciate traditional music and Bible preaching. Direct enquiries to fairviewbiblechurch@hotmail.ca.
- **Community Bible Church** of Wolf Point, Mont., is seeking a pastor. For additional information, contact: Mr. Richard Desch at desch5@yahoo.com or phone (406) 653-2974 or (406) 471-3030 (cell). Résumés may also be mailed to 330 Dawson St., Wolf Point, MT 5920

Pastor changes

Several pastors will be leaving their churches this summer. We deeply appreciated the ministry of these servants.

- **Pastor James Thiessen** (*Hodgson Bible Church, Hodgson, Man.*) will retire in August. James and Julianne have ministered at Hodgson for 33 years!
- **Pastor Simon Cheung** (*Richer Fellowship Church, Richer, Man.*) has resigned after serving for over 12 years.
- **Pastor James Sprague** (*Butterfield Community Bible Church, Butterfield, Minn.*) will retire this summer. He has served since 2005.
- **Pastor Jurgen Penner** (*Vita Bible Church, Vita, Man.*) has resigned to make a career change after serving three years.



HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Seventy-five Years Ago

Editor's note: In September 1939, Germany invaded Poland, initiating World War II in Europe. The United States did not enter the war until December 1941, after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. The Fellowship helped conscientious objectors pursue alternate service, but it also supported young people who chose to enter military service. The Fellowship's position on conflict can be found at <http://www.fellowshipforward.org/ordinances-and-practices.html>.



Image Credit: War History Online

From the minutes of the EMB Convention of 1939:

Tuesday morning, October 3, 1939

... The first question of the morning was "War and Non-resistance." Rev. Barkman presented a letter which was addressed to proper government officials, stating our attitude concerning war. The following letter has been sent to the President of the United States, Washington, D.C.:

Mountain Lake, Minn.,
October 1, 1939
President Franklin D. Roosevelt
Washington, D. C.

Greetings! We, the Conference delegates of the E.M.B. Conference of North America, in session assembled at our annual conference at Mountain Lake, Minnesota, being aware of the present world crisis, are appreciative of every effort expended by our government to arrive at a peaceful solution of national and international problems.

We wish you divine guidance during these tense days. We feel confident that the principles of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, if applied in both national and international affairs, will assist in peaceful settlement of perplexing situations.

We pledge anew our faithfulness in prayer in your behalf that wisdom and courage may attend you in the promotion of peace. As a denomination of Christian faith, we continue our allegiance to our government in promoting the principles of our faith: righteousness, honesty, justice, industry, and the up building of every good work.

Inasmuch as one of the distinctive convictions of our forefathers for nearly 400 years has been, that the taking of human life is contrary to divine providence, and destructive to the progressive welfare of human kind, to which we still adhere, we join with those of like conviction in soliciting the same considerate recognition to those of our faith, as the rulers in the past have granted in accord with the constitution provisions for religious freedom, to our forefathers.

Since we appreciate the complications involved in such recognition, we offer ourselves for mutual helpfulness and dedicate ourselves anew to the principles of peace.

Humbly yours,
E.M.B Conference

Motion made and seconded that a copy of the above letter presented by Rev. G. P. Schultz be sent to the U.S. President and Minnesota State Senator. — Carried. — The Conference agrees to pay the \$10 expenses.

Letters received from officials:

Congress of the United States,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.
November 6, 1939

Mr. D. G. Fast,
Business Secretary, Conference of the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren
Mountain Lake, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Fast:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of October 20, and I am grateful for the forceful expression of the principles of Christianity as they are opposed to the taking of human life in war.

You may be assured that the views of the conference of the delegates of the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren have received my very careful consideration in connection with the recent debate on the question of the arms embargo. My vote was cast in support of retention of the embargo. It is my view that this embargo was the best safeguard toward our remaining strictly neutral in the fact of the European conflict.

Sincerely yours,

Elmer J. Ryan



The White House,
Washington,
October 23, 1939

My Dear Mr. Fast:

Permit me, please, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of October twentieth, on behalf of the delegates of the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Conference, which will be brought to the President's attention. Meanwhile I want to assure you that he will be most grateful for your prayers.

Very sincerely yours,
Stephen Early,

Secretary to the President

Legacy Giving Find Help on Estate Planning

Estate planning is a very important task, yet one that is easy to procrastinate on. If you do not have an estate plan in place that will ensure provision for your family while protecting your estate from unnecessary taxation; or if your estate plan is out of date, we urge you to take action to remedy this situation.



For Christians, there is an added dimension to estate planning – recognizing that God is the owner of our estate places us in a responsible position as a steward. It is important that we use our estate assets to their fullest potential during our lifetimes for us personally, for our family, business and for His glory. As a steward, we must also arrange for the most efficient and effective transfer of our assets at death to individuals or ministries who will continue to use them to reflect biblical values.

While almost all of the reasons for procrastinating are understandable, none will serve to lessen the reality that the absence of an estate plan can have devastating impact on family members and on an estate. A proper estate plan should accomplish the following:

- Express God's plan of stewardship
- Provide for financial and guardianship needs for all dependents
- Transfer the assets God has entrusted to you to individual and ministry beneficiaries.
- Transfer your estate in a tax efficient manner with the least possible amount of heartache, cost or delay.

To learn more about this ministry, please visit www.febclegacy.org/pg. We do hope that you will find this ministry a blessing to you and your family. ■



Focus on the Word

The Road to Resurrection

By Paul Boeker, Administrator

Years ago, bored travelers would play a silly game called “Bury Your Horses.”

Players, usually children, would count horses as they rode along past farms. The first to see the horses could claim them. But the first of them to spot a cemetery would shout “Bury your horses!” Then everyone’s count had to go back to zero except for the one who first spotted the cemetery. That game doesn’t work too well anymore, due to the dearth of horses and the four-lane highways that bypass cemeteries.

If we deny the literal truthfulness of the first chapters of Genesis, we have no rational basis to wish for resurrection.

Unfortunately, most of us can’t bypass cemeteries. Death comes — for our parents, for our friends, for our children, and yes, even for us. Death is a terrible invader. It breaks up families; throws people into depression; creates poverty. My own brother died when I was four and he seven. His death left a permanent wound in our family.

Because of death, our hearts cry out for resurrection. We want someone to conquer death — to roll back the sorrow and pain in a burst of new life. How do we experience new life? What is the road to resurrection?

Resurrection begins with life. We have to live before we can be resurrected. Life itself is a great mystery. It is like a fire that can be blown out, but cannot be lit again. It is like a motor that can be switched off, but cannot be switched on again. Life has consciousness and processes and movement and reproduction. Life is made up of intricate proteins and systems. The body is a mass

of chemical factories and waste disposal facilities and energy supply systems. Where did life come from? Once it stops, who could start it again? Who would know the intricate plans needed to restore a person to life when the body has returned to dust?

Not only are the challenges of physical reconstruction insurmountable, but issues of personality and memory and ability are even more impossible. Even a relatively simple head injury or stroke can erase one’s memory; turn an enthusiastic person into a couch potato; or twist a gentle person into a violent one. Death does far worse damage as it dissolves a person. Who can really renew a person?

Only someone with the power to create life would have the skills to restore a person to life. Who could that be? Apostle Paul said that Abraham believed in the God “who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.”¹ How does God do that?

Jesus raised the dead — not with the glorious bodies believers will receive (1 Corinthians 15), but to the same or better condition than before death. How did He do that? To the dead son of the widow of Nain, He gave a gentle command: “Young man, I say to you, arise.”² Jesus lifted the cold hand of Jairus’ dead daughter and said “Child, arise.”³ At the tomb of dead Lazarus, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth.”⁴ Jesus just spoke, and in a flash, the body was restored, the spirit returned and the dead lived again!

By calling the dead to life, Jesus demonstrated that He was the creator God. The Old Testament presents a God who creates, who gives laws, who judges sin, who causes death, who offers salvation, who provides resurrection. And it all begins with Genesis 1.



This summer our Fellowship will consider including an article on Creation in our *Articles of Faith*. The Commission on Churches has developed a simple paragraph to affirm the factual nature of Genesis:

Chapters 1-11 of Genesis are rightly understood as accurate, literal history as Jesus and the New Testament affirm (Matthew 19:4; Matthew 24:37-39; Romans 5:12-14). God created the universe and all that is in it through direct, immediate activity without macro-evolutionary process (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11; Hebrews 11:3).

The road to resurrection begins in Genesis 1 with a God who can speak things into existence — with a God who can command life. If we deny the literal truthfulness of the first chapters of Genesis, we have no rational basis to wish for resurrection. But because we do have a creator God, we can anticipate that we will live again in a glorious body and in a renewed world. ■

¹Romans 4:17 (ESV) ²Luke 7:14 (ESV)

³Luke 8:53 (ESV) ⁴John 11:43 (ESV)



The Fellowship exists to provide a framework which enables member churches to stimulate and encourage each other to be more effective in building the Church of Jesus Christ through interaction, joint service projects, mutual assistance, accountability and fellowship.



Women's Ministries

What's In Your Basket?

By Jennifer Funk

Who came first? I'm not talking about the chicken or the egg. I'm talking about the characters in the Bible. Who came first? Samson or Samuel? Recently, Recently, my husband, Mark, did a Bible study with the youth and asked them 12 similar questions. Did they know the answers? Did they even know all the common characters? Do today's youth know their Bibles? Do we, as adults?

Well, this is not all about trivia, but about what the Bible can do to you. 2014 is the year of reading our Bibles in our church. We have been challenged as a congregation to collectively read 3,000 books of the Bible this year. The ultimate goal is transformation in the lives of the people.

First we read, read, and read some more. Joshua 1:8 says, "Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do." Reading whole books in a short time helps you get an overall view of the book. It helps with context and a look at the big picture. We may not remember all the details, but it gives us a better understanding of what God is saying. It is equally important to dig into verses more deeply in a more methodical study.

The Word of God is a very useful. "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do

what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). How would I know what is right and how to correct myself if I didn't read it for myself in the Bible? Should I only take the preacher's word for it? The Bereans listened, and then checked it out for themselves.

The Word of God also has the power to transform lives. Hebrews 4:12a says, "For the Word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword." God's Word truly is alive and can change us.

Do today's youth know their Bibles? Do we, as adults?

I am reminded of a little story that goes something like this: A young boy was given an old basket and was asked to bring home water from the creek. He went to fill up his basket, but by the time he got home the basket was empty. He quickly returned and filled the basket again and hurried home a little faster hoping there would still be some water left, but again, the basket was empty. He tried again and again, hurrying as fast as he could, but to no avail. Out of complete frustration, he began to complain to his grandfather that he just couldn't do it. It was impossible. His grandfather then pointed to the inside of the basket and asked him what he saw. The boy then saw that in the process of carrying the water, the basket had become very clean.

In my mind, reading the Bible is a lot like that. It's not how much information I can retain, but how the Word changes and cleanses me as I interact with it daily. Let us continue to read, read, and read our Bibles some more.

(So — *who did come first?* Belteshazzar or Mephibosheth? Rahab or Ruth? Abigail or Hannah? Naomi or Naaman?)

Scripture verses taken from the New Living Translation

Jennifer Funk has served on the Commission on Women's Ministries for two years and serves with her husband, Pastor Mark Funk, at Stuartburn Gospel Chapel in Manitoba.

Continued from Page 5

The Ritzmans also reported several other milestones in their personal life: Carrie has now been in Belgium for 30 years; they have lived in their house now for eight years — the longest they have lived anywhere in their married lives; and both children will head to college in the States this fall, leaving the Ritzmans as empty nesters when they return to Belgium. Pray for the boys as they make the transition to college life in America and for Dan and Carrie as they embark on a new stage in their lives, and for their busy schedule during Home Assignment this following year.

Jim and Olya Wiens (Avant Ministries) are involved in a new church ministry to international students in Volgograd, Russia, called *Koinania*. Jim preaches on Sunday, leads a Bible Study on Monday and leads the prayer meeting on Wednesday. Most of the group is from Africa, with a few from other countries. Jim was able to take on this responsibility since more Russians are able to teach at the Volgograd Bible College.

Jim will teach at the Bible college three Saturdays this year in a one-year preacher training program meeting one Saturday a month. Olya continues to lead the adult and children's choirs at Transfiguration Church. Jim has also joined together with other men from Transfiguration Church to remodel a house for a missionary family from that church. This missionary family ministers to Otradnya and the northern villages of the Oblast of Volgograd. Jim also built kitchen cabinets and counters for a camp in the village of Marinofka. The camp started meeting there even before the construction was done, and now a church and Sunday school are meeting in those facilities. Pray for the Wienses as they provide spiritual leadership and physical labor to further the Kingdom in Volgograd.

From personal experience, I know that growing up in a home where missionaries were frequent guests and hearing about what they were doing around the world was encouraging and uplifting as well as motivating to interest in missions today. Our lives are blessed as we rub shoulders with our missionaries and witness what God is doing in the lives and ministries of each one. ■



The Commission on Women's Ministries is excited to host a round table discussion on "The Changing Face of Women's Ministry" at this summer's FEBC convention. Participants will explore the changes occurring in women's ministries and reasons for those changes, and whether there is a right or wrong way to "do" women's ministry. The Women's Commission hopes that these discussions will result in the ministries in our local churches having a stronger, wider and more effective impact.



Visit *W Com Connections* on Facebook

FOCUS on our CHURCHES

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

Grunthal, Man.

Russ Reimer, Pastor

Our annual Valentine's Day banquet is designed as an outreach to our community, and many of our church members took up the challenge and brought unsaved neighbors and friends. A group of talented young people and staff from Briercrest Bible College and Seminary came to act, entertain and minister to us, with "Greece" as this year's theme. We pray that this will open the door to more ministry opportunities with them.



The movie "The End of the Spear," a true story, was shown at our church in February. After **Jim Elliot**, **Nate Saint** and three other missionaries were killed by a native tribe in Ecuador, **Elizabeth Elliot** returned to the tribe to share the love of Christ with them, as did a sister of Nate Saint. Nate's five-year-old son had many questions about his father's death as he grew up, and as an adult he returned to the tribe to speak with the men who murdered his father. This is a story of sacrifice, forgiveness and redemption that speaks volumes.

Marilyn D. Thiessen, Correspondent

RICHER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Richer, Man.

Simon Cheung, Pastor



On Valentine's Day we gave up cuddling with our sweethearts to host a Fisher Bay Bible Camp kitchen fundraiser. Our guest speakers told us how God is changing lives on the reserve, shared funny stories about camp life and led campfire songs such as "Shine Jesus Shine." Thirty people with big hearts gave \$950 towards the new camp kitchen and, as usual, God did all things well.

Although numbers were down, Awana wrapped up with another exciting Grand Prix in March. Awana missionary **Len Friesen**, talked about "only one way to Jesus," and one child really got the message of what it means to "love your neighbour" when she said, "I've got enough trophies; I hope someone else wins."

Our beloved Pastor Simon handed in his resignation on what was a very emotional Sunday morning a few weeks ago. For almost 12 years he has served his God by serving us and the community of Richer. We will miss him dearly, as August will mark the date he and his wife, Sue, will be leaving Richer. To help prepare us for this change and to keep our team grounded in the work we have begun here, Pastor Simon encouraged us to attend his weekly Bible Study, "The Simple Church," an affirmation of Colossians 1.

Change is never easy, and Simon's shoes will be hard to fill. When we told the youth that their pastor was leaving, they asked, "Where are we going to find another Chinese pastor?" We wish Simon and Sue every spiritual blessing as we wait with earnest expectation to see how God will lead and guide the next pastor who is to be the shepherd of Richer Fellowship Church.

Michelle Driedger, Correspondent

HEARTLAND BIBLE CHURCH

Lincoln, Neb.

Scott Hecht, Pastor

Two new resources were made available for the congregation to use. First, there is the "Discipleship Journal Bible Reading Plan" for systematically reading through the Bible in a year. Second, there are the "424 Prayer Journals." These were developed as one means of fulfilling our 20/20 Vision.

We enjoyed a soup dinner on March 23 after church to help us get more acquainted with new people who have been coming to church. With our new round tables in the fellowship hall, it was a great time of eating, playing some games and just visiting with new folks. In the evening, **Mark Budka**, a member of our congregation, presented a Lenten concert of piano and vocal music celebrating our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Pastor Scott had an appropriate message concerning "Christ Died for Our Sins."

Trudy Reimer, Correspondent

NORTHEAST BIBLE CHURCH

Calgary, Alta.

John Fehr, Pastor

Our congregation is made up of people from many different counties. The majority are from Nigeria, where at present there is much unrest with horrendous crimes being committed against the Christian population, including murder and kidnappings. Right now three families are waiting for their husbands and fathers to be able to join them here in Canada.

We pray for their continued safety and for God's favour in the processing of their immigration applications. We also pray for the peace and safety of the many loved ones for whom Africa is home. Thank you for praying with us.

Julie Ann Simpson, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Dallas, Ore.

Jerry Franz, Senior Pastor

As part of our mission conference last year, the Healthcare Committee set up a weekly walk to “visit” each of our EBC missionaries. Participants logged the miles that they walked, ran, biked or swam, with the cumulative total showing our weekly progress. We reached our final destination by walking more than 10,000 miles to visit Mozambique. Fortunately for us, our missionary to that country, **Janice Peters** (SIM), was home on leave. A luncheon was prepared to celebrate our long journey, serving ethnic food from Africa, China, Pakistan and South America. Janice and former missionaries from Pakistan and Bolivia shared some of their experiences.

We said goodbye as Janice returned to Lichinga, Mozambique. It was also a joy to have home for several months **Ian and Linda McFarland** (HCJB) from Ecuador. Just before leaving Ecuador they moved from Quito to Shell, so upon returning they were still getting settled there.

Our missions committee has been busy promoting two specific short-term mission opportunities for this year. One is to help teach English in Mozambique, and the second is to visit Ecuador later this year with a group called “Extreme Response.” We are promoting these to assist people in organizing their trips, possibly help with fundraisers, and obtain scholarships through our committee.

In February, Women’s Ministry hosted a Ladies’ Night Out bunko party. Plans have begun for our May Festival, a very big outreach to our community. Three women’s Bible study groups are going, a new one just begun on Malachi. MOPs (Mothers of Preschoolers) just completed a Bible study with 15 attending, up from five last year.

Youth groups are going strong, with plans underway for a High School Breakaway Retreat next month. Plans are also in the works for a summer mission trip to California.

In the past couple of months we have celebrated five baptisms and six new members.

Vicki Kibby, Correspondent

FAITH EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Henderson, Neb.

Michael Fink, Pastor

Our Sunday evening Bible study group, led by Pastor Mike, is learning Bible study methods in a course titled “The Joy of Discovery,” by Oletta Wald. Three adult classes are being offered this quarter during the Sunday school hour: “Walking Wisely in a Foolish World” is a study in Proverbs; “Hindsight is 20/20” starts in Genesis and looks at history to prepare for eternity; and “The Plan of Redemption through Christ” will be taught using selected scriptures.

Six people gave their testimonies and were welcomed as church members on March 30.

An appreciation dinner was served by our Christian Education Committee on April 6. All individuals who have served in various teaching ministries, as well as their families, were invited to a special dinner served in the fellowship hall. Future plans for our Christian education ministry were also discussed.

Alice Decker, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

Marion, S. D.

Randy Maass, Pastor

We have been blessed as Pastor Randy shared from the book of Matthew and the timeline to Jesus’ death on the Cross. The pastor also continues to share as one of the pastors in our local newspaper’s Pastors’ Corner.

A highlight for our church in April was the 50th anniversary of the dedication of our (then) new building on April 26, 1964. Praise the Lord! He continues to be faithful.

Doyle Dick was again able to give almost three weeks of his winter to help at Lives Under Construction Ranch, a boys’ ranch, in Lampe, Mo. **Ken and Sheila Ortman**, associate members of EMB Church, continue to manage the ranch.

Stefan Becker, son of **Kent and Sonja**, missionaries in France, is attending college in Cheyenne, Wyo. He was able to spend all of his spring break in Freeman, S. D. with his grandmother. While here, he was able to take in his first Schmeckfest (an ethnic festival) activities. Stefan plans to attend Grace University next year, and informed us that his sister, Hannah, has been accepted at Houghton College in New York where she will continue her music education.

We celebrated Easter Sunday morning with a fellowship brunch followed by our worship service.

Lois Regehr, Correspondent

CORNERSTONE BIBLE CHURCH

Steinbach, Man.

Jared Hiebert, Pastor

Spring in the Canadian prairies is finally upon us, and we rejoice for the refreshment that it brings! In March, our women’s ministry hosted a tea that was born out of a Bible study that our ladies recently completed, “Attending the Bride of Christ,” by Martha Lawley. This study showed how Jesus is our groom and the church is His chosen bride.

Also in March, our missions committee hosted a simulcast of the movie “Veil of Tears,” which focused on the oppression many women face in India and how the hope of the Gospel is being shared through Bridges of Hope, a Gospel for Asia ministry.

Cornerstone once again hosted the annual Fisher Bay Bible Camp Banquet on April 11. The fundraiser was very successful, as 211 tickets were sold. Although the final numbers are not in, more than \$18,500 was raised.

Cornerstone has been richly blessed with Jared Hiebert as our lead pastor. He is now in his seventh year of ministry here, at which point our Elders, in turn, desire to bless our pastors with a sabbatical leave. With joy (and sadness since they will be missed) our church family sends Pastor Jared and family off on sabbatical from May through August. We pray they will find rest, refreshment and a renewed joy for their ministry.

We celebrated the recent baptisms of three people.

Marsella Wiebe, Correspondent

Focus on our Churches continued on Page 12

FOCUS on our CHURCHES

Continued from Page 11

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

Omaha, Neb.

Charles Tschetter, Senior Pastor

The Elders have approved a plan to begin searching for a pastor/teacher-church planter for our church extension. A core group of the church plant is now meeting regularly to get to know each other and discuss key issues about the plant.

Our annual father-daughter event gave our junior and senior high school girls and their dads the chance to share an adventure in Omaha and enjoy dinner together.

Boomer Roland of the National Center for Biblical Parenting spoke at an April workshop geared for teachers and managing a classroom. Boomer shared steps to giving instruction and teaching children how to receive it. Much of this carried over to parenting as well.

At "Treasured Clay" in April, CBC women gathered to enjoy brunch, worship music and the testimonies of **Heather Heffernan** and **Barbara Entz**.

Avi Snyder, European Director of Jews for Jesus, gave a passionate sermon titled "Not Ashamed," as he spoke on Romans 1:15-16.

Sharon Berg, Correspondent

DALMENY BIBLE CHURCH

Dalmeny, Sask.

Dennis Friesen, Pastor

We welcomed **Melissa Buhler**, who was hired April 1 to be our Interim Children's Coordinator while **Kristen Cowman** is on maternity leave.

Two of our youth, along with Pastor Dave, attended YouthQuake at Briercreech in February. The youth sponsored a pasta lunch to raise money for their snowboarding trip to Jasper in April.

The church staff hosted a Legacy Luncheon in February for all seniors over the age of 65. They sang hymns and enjoyed time to get to know one another.

Guest speakers have been **Greg Benson** of Ranger Lake Bible Camp, and **Harold and Diane Stephan** of Battle River Ranch Camp.

Marilyn Harder, Correspondent

VITA BIBLE CHURCH

Vita, Man.

Sadly, **Pastor Juergen Penner's** last Sunday was April 13. We dreaded that day since he announced his resignation in February. For his last day, we shared a potluck after the service and then played family games in the afternoon.

"Sing praise to the LORD; tell the wonderful things He has done" (1 Chronicles 16:9 Good News Translation). That verse was the theme for our Women's Ministry event on March 20. Together with the ladies from **Stuartburn Gospel Chapel** we sang praises to God, shared and prayed for various requests.

Easter weekend was a time to remember with thanksgiving as well as a time to celebrate what Christ did for us on the Cross for us. We shared in a communion service on Good Friday and enjoyed a breakfast together on Easter Sunday.

Tiffany Tuurenhout, Correspondent

JANSEN BIBLE CHURCH

Jansen, Neb.

Paul Carpenter, Pastor

Several members of the youth group raised funds for a return trip to Mexicali, Mexico, in April, where they taught Vacation Bible School, evangelized children and performed community service.

The Community Center in Plymouth, Neb., was the setting for an evening question-and-answer Bible study in March, with several new faces in attendance. A men's breakfast Bible study on Tuesdays at 6 a.m. also meets there.

This year's Spring Bible Conference in March was a prophetic study of the end time, with **Dr. Thomas Ice** of the Pre-Trib Research Center. He also presented the importance of literal interpretation of the Bible, showing where the allegorical concept in "spiritualizing" Scripture found its way into the early church.

We look forward to Vacation Bible School, June 9-13, with the theme of "Arrow Island, Making Life Choices."

Tena Dick, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Omaha, Neb.

Dr. Don Pahl, Senior Pastor

Since EBC's first mission trip to Guatemala several years ago, a number of individuals at our church have felt the call to collect wheelchairs to ship to that country. Bethel Ministries International then distributes the wheelchairs to those of all ages there who are greatly in need of this kind of mobility. The collection of wheelchairs was a challenging undertaking, but eventually our wheelchairs were moved to Iowa to join hundreds of others bound for Guatemala. Those who have been on our mission teams know firsthand the joy that a wheelchair brings, and Bethel Ministries uses each chair as an opportunity to share the Gospel.

Some of our youth are preparing to go to the Summit Student Conference in Colorado this summer. Every other summer (during the years that we do not offer a youth mission trip), our youth have the opportunity to go to this 12-day intensive conference designed to equip young adults to resolutely champion a Christian worldview. Many of our youth who have attended in the past have been greatly impacted by their Summit experience, especially as they have begun life in college.

We recently celebrated a baptism.

In March, **Pastor Marvin Wall** passed away after struggling with health issues for a number of months. We so appreciate his years of service as our Pastor of Member Care, calling on our senior members and making hundreds of hospital calls.

Sherrie Lindsey, Correspondent

GRACE EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Abbotsford, B.C.

Ryan Peixoto, Pastor



We welcomed **Josh and Amy Hoock** as our new youth pastor on Nov. 10. Josh grew up in North Delta, B.C. After high school he planned to attend Columbia Bible College for a year before pursuing a career in architecture. During his year at Columbia Josh felt called to work with youth, which led him to complete a bachelor's degree there with a major in youth work. Josh will also work with our young adults ministry.

Several other churches joined us on Feb. 15 as our own **David and Melissa McVety** of Doing Family Right led a marriage course called "Fusion 2:1."

Pastor Ryan gave the church a challenge in March called the "Hospitality Challenge" to help us "Get Connected." We were to open up our homes to regular attendees for any reason, and be ready to spontaneously invite a new person over. We look forward to hearing how this challenge impacted those in our church.

A fundraiser for a mission trip to Romania hosted by the Grace Church ladies in January was a great success. They enjoyed a line dancing demonstration by **Kathi Torio** of Capstone Ministries. To find out more about Kathi and Capstone Ministries, visit their website at www.capstonemissionsociety.com.

We welcomed several new members in February, and enjoyed a fellowship breakfast on Palm Sunday, as well as our first ever "Testimony Service" in April.

It is an exciting time at Grace Church!

Diana Dyck, Correspondent

COUNTRYSIDE BIBLE CHURCH

Meade, Kan.

Chuck Finster, Pastor

All men and high school boys were invited to attend a video event hosted by the TLC male leaders on March 30 and April 6. Subjects covered were "Defining Manhood," "Living Courageously," "Building a Life of Faith" and "Stepping Up to Lead."

Four of our young people will serve the Lord elsewhere during the summer: **Chris Cummings** in Alaska, **Mark Finster** in Ecuador, **Rebekah Harshberger** in Bolivia and **Georgia Piteo** in Germany. **Tyler and Tiff Ediger** reported on their mission trip to Uganda in January.

While Pastor Chuck and his family were on vacation, **Kenneth Harshberger** brought the morning message on "Unity," and **Jerome Wiens** spoke about "Pride and Humility." We held our annual CBC Family Work Day in March.

Milestone

Jake Z. Friesen celebrated his 101st birthday on March 27 with an open house at the Lone Tree Nursing Home.

Mary Friesen, Correspondent

STUARTBURN GOSPEL CHAPEL

Stuartburn, Man.

Mark Funk, Pastor

In March, Pastor Mark reported on the mission trip to Myanmar [formerly Burma]. We were delighted to see some video clips of the church there praying and praising God with great enthusiasm and fervor. We saw pictures of orphans being cared for in a way that would not happen without the Church. We learned about Bible students who study at all hours and are preparing to become missionaries. As Pastor Mark spoke of the culture and conditions in Myanmar, he showed us how worship services could take place anywhere, from a state-approved church building to a room in someone's home or a field in the open. The congregations attending these services do so eagerly and willingly, realizing that it is a privilege and a joy. No one there is attending church out of a sense of duty or tradition. What lessons we can learn from them! And we were reminded that we need to pray for indigenous churches everywhere.

We held our annual meeting in February and filled all necessary positions. There are many who are excited about our Bible reading challenge, and we can see by the initials on our posted books of the Bible that there is someone reading in every book. It is an encouragement to all of us to know that the Word of God is being intentionally consumed.

We have also enjoyed fun events such as the Awana Grand Prix, a Valentine's Day dinner and movie, an evening with "Facedown" from Nipawin Bible College, and a soup and pie fundraising luncheon by the Women's Ministries.

And as we prayed and watched world events and serious calamities unfold, we prepared for Good Friday with the certain knowledge that Easter will follow.

Sue Hoy, Correspondent

Focus on our Churches continued on Page 14

We are a Fellowship of Churches

We associate together voluntarily as interdependent churches. We share common beliefs and mission.

24 in Canada (Western Ontario to British Columbia)

19 in the United States (Northwest Michigan to Oregon and Oklahoma north to the Canadian border)

1 in Paraguay, South America



By Harvey Schultz



Jearim Woodall's official installation as pastor of **Community Bible Church** of Indian Head, Sask., took place on April 13. For Jearim, the challenges of this ministry have begun in earnest: getting to know individuals, the church, the community and adapting to ministry life. Pray for good will in the church and open doors in the community. Wedding bells are poised to ring in August for the new pastor.

Simon Cheung is moving on. After 10 years of ministry at **Richer Fellowship Church** of Richer, Man., he is convinced God is leading him to move on. We are grateful to God for his faithful ministry. He leaves behind a much stronger church. Pray for the Steering Committee as they work with the local church in search of God's man to replace Simon.

April marks nine years since **Paradise Valley Church** began in Natoma, Kan. Although the normal plan for church plants is to reduce subsidies to zero by the end of seven years, the Commission on Church Planting and Heartland Extension continued to assist Paradise Valley for another two years, with support ending this

coming fall. New people have been reached but a viable core group has not emerged. Ben and Sharon MacConnell are convinced they should carry on. Ben has found part-time employment, and the attendees have made a new commitment to support the church. Ask God to provide strength, wisdom, courage and the financial supply of all their needs. Heartland Extension continues to provide a Steering Committee.

Wilbur, Neb., may be the next site of a new church planting venture by Heartland Extension. A potential lead church planting couple has been identified. Several visits have been made to survey the community. A Bible study group has begun. Pray for the people involved, God's guidance and the confirmation of His leading to this site.

Evangelical Bible Church of Omaha has had to push back the target date for the startup date for its second "campus" which will likely be located in the Bennington, Neb., area. However, its vision still is strong. Presently the church is actively seeking a new youth pastor in order to free up Gary (Kristi) Krehbiel to be the campus pastor of this new venture. Pray that God will lead the church to a new youth pastor. Pray also for

sensitivity to God's leading and timing for the kick off of this ministry.

Meanwhile, **Community Bible Church** of Omaha has also had to postpone its new church planting venture but the vision is by no means dead. A core group has met the last several months to develop a common vision for the new work. Beginning the first Sunday in June, this group of about 25-30 will begin meeting offsite on Sunday mornings. A pastoral search committee has been formed to begin the work of looking for a pastor-teacher. Pray that God would manifest His leading by bringing the core group together with a church planter who can lead them.

In **Saskatchewan** future plans are not clear apart from the general site: the fast-growing city area of **Saskatoon**. The city (and indeed the whole province) is one of the leading growth areas of Canada and North America. People are flooding in, and the need is great.

Lakeland Extension in **Manitoba** may have to put its church planting plans on hold for the near future due to other needs that have surfaced. Pray that they, too, will discern God's leading.

FOCUS on our CHURCHES

Continued from Page 13

SALEM CHURCH

Waldheim, Sask.
Darrell Derksen, Senior Pastor

Fundraisers are fun: For months, the kids of Salem have worked at filling a water jug with change to help with our building project — the "water jug" being an 18.9 liter/5 US gallon jug. It was not easy to fill. Just when we thought they were reaching the top, the coins would shake down, making room for another week. The job is done and the final facts are in:

Weight: 84.8 kg or 187 lbs.

Number of coins: 29,805

Value: \$1,798.23

All of this was made public at an evening full of smiles, laughs and great food: our Fourth Annual Cake and Silent Auction Fundraiser was a success!

We are moving closer to replacing our existing Christian education space with one that will more adequately meet our current needs, with a

possible early summer start date for this project. It was very encouraging and spiritually uplifting to so many who call Salem home to come to our church-wide prayer meeting in March. Prayer is not icing on the cake, it is the chocolate that gives the cake its punch. As a church we are learning to humbly and faithfully obey God in the area of prayer.

We hosted the Teen Challenge Saskatchewan Choir. Through the evening we heard bold words of testimony from ex-addicts who are today building their lives upon the truth of Jesus Christ. This event was made very exciting by hearing a Waldheim man share his story from bondage to freedom. We celebrated this miracle with the many who came out to support and encourage him.

There continue to be a variety of places for people to learn God's ways. Women of Waldheim (WOW) are hosting weekday and evening learning opportunities. Since this is a joint effort with our neighbouring church, they are being hosted in a variety of locations around Waldheim. Our adult Sunday classes are providing two options, with one group breezing through years of church history, while a second group is applying the teachings of the book of Romans. Our Christian Education leadership launched Children's Church, to be offered every second Sunday. We realize that this was a much-needed support to our families, and we celebrate its beginning!

Births/Adoptions

Christian Fellowship Church of Rhineland

- ☛ Cole Jacob to Pastor Tim and Heather Knelsen, Feb. 14; grandparents are Roy and Leona Knelsen

Community Bible Church, Omaha, Neb.

- ☛ Martin Thomas to Caleb and Hanna White, Feb. 28; grandparents are Steve and Becky White; great-grandparents are Dr. Russ and Ruth Jones
- ☛ Simeon Knox to Jud and Kim Mackrill, March 11; grandparents are Rick and Paula Bragg
- ☛ Liam Olson to Jesse and Aly Moon, April 5
- ☛ Sammi to Alan and Thera Lin, April 7

Cornerstone Bible Church, Steinbach, Man.

- ☛ Lincoln James to Dave and Amanda Winters, Dec. 4
- ☛ Ewan Beorn to Mark and Amanda Peters, Jan. 16

Countryside Bible Church, Meade, Kan.

- ☛ Levi Ryan to Matt and Tricia Jaeger, March 19

Dalmeny Bible Church, Dalmeny, Sask.

- ☛ Truett Jaxon to Ben and Kristen Cowman, March 1

Evangelical Bible Church, Omaha, Neb.

- ☛ Henry Eugene to Drew and Rachel Glanzer, Feb. 6
- ☛ Titus Irvin and Renee Ruth to Ryan and Debbie Friesen, March 6; grandparents are Darrell and Carol Lind
- ☛ Elianna Grace to Blaine and Autumn Donaldson, March 8
- ☛ Gracelyn Ruth to Keith and Aimee Hoffman, March 23

Evangelical Bible Church, Dallas, Ore.

- ☛ Nolan Levi to Aron and Mandie Flaming; grandparents are Randy and Sharon Flaming

Faith Evangelical Bible Church, Henderson, Neb.

- ☛ Landon Wayne to Steve and Molly Thieszen, Feb. 11
- ☛ Kenan Bennett to Robbie and Allison Petersen, March 21

Stuartburn Gospel Chapel

- ☛ Malachi Benjamin to Jason and Elisha Ginter, March 20; grandparents are Dick and Bonnie Wiebe



Salem Church, Waldheim, Sask.

- ☛ Yoav Clement to Brian and Rachel Schultz, Feb. 9; grandparents are Harvey and Anna Louise Schultz
- ☛ Kezia Belle to James and Malinda Hack, Feb. 19
- ☛ Eva Elizabeth to Darren and Chantal Harder, March 3; grandparents are Art and Mary Ann Harder
- ☛ Isla Rose to Richard and Melanie Loewen, March 9; grandparents are Vic and Sherrylyn Loewen



Marriages

Christian Fellowship Church of Rhineland

- ☞ Shania Banman to Dustin Tschetter, son of Clarence and Brenda Tschetter, Jan. 4

Community Bible Church, Omaha, Neb.

- ☞ Veronica Hackman to Seth Ham, March 29

Deaths

Cornerstone Bible Church, Steinbach, Man.

- † Peter Giesbrecht (94), Jan. 18
- † George Bruce (72), Jan. 24
- † Agatha Giesbrecht (90), March 6

Evangelical Bible Church, Omaha, Neb.

- † Marvin Wall (77), March 11

Grace Evangelical Bible Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

- † Dorothy Heinrichs (72), March 13
- † Tina Coers (77), March 22

The Fellowship Focus is published by the
Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches
11605 W Dodge RD STE 3, Omaha Nebraska 68154-2566

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Catch the Vision

coffee for Our Neighbors

By Ruth Richert Jones

When Ellen asked me and three other friends if we'd like to host evangelistic coffees in our homes, we were all interested. We all lived in different neighborhoods, and each of us would host a coffee in her home and invite those who lived around them.

Tricia volunteered to bake rolls and make coffee for all of the events. The rest of us would take turns presenting a demonstration of some activity that would interest our guests, like arranging flowers. Last of all, one of us would share with our guests how she became a believer, and then tell them how they could accept Christ.

By the time it was my turn to host a coffee, we had already held several coffees. But I was still nervous. After we served the coffee and rolls and visited with our guests for a while, Angie demonstrated how to make shadow pictures.

Then Ellen gave her testimony, after which we handed a blank 3x5 card to each of our guests. Ellen then asked the guests to write three things on their cards:

1. Her name and address
2. A comment on the talk: Was it helpful? Could it be improved?
3. Put an "x" by her name if she had prayed today for the first time to invite Jesus Christ into her life.

Ellen asked them to fold the cards and give them to one of the hostesses as they came by.

We offered them more coffee, and the committee members made their way around the room, visiting with the guests.

When all of the guests had left, the committee members opened the cards and read them. One guest had indicated she had prayed to receive Christ for the first time.

That person was my neighbor from across the street.

Ruth Richert Jones attends Community Bible Church in Omaha. Six of her books and more than 100 of her articles have been published. Her recorded books are available free of charge for the visually and physically impaired from Talking Book and Braille Service.

