

A PUBLICATION OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCHES



Fellowship Focus

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125 years of GROWTH and change

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President's Challenge

Blaine Donaldson, President, Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches

I am not a Mennonite, but I wish I was.

I do not mean to be pandering by this title. In this article, I would like to share about Menno Simons' theology and the historical role it plays in the FEBC. Our Mennonite (Anabaptist) foundation is what still makes us distinct from many other denominations or fellowships.

With the rise of fundamentalism in the 1930s, there were many evangelical churches formed, leaving the liberalism that had crept into mainline denominations. Evangelical originally meant that a church looked at the Scriptures as being the final basis for faith and practice. However, many evangelical churches today have departed from the authority and mission of the Scriptures. While there have been many changes in the FEBC, I believe that we are still true to the principles of the Anabaptist movement as revealed in the theology of Menno Simons.

What drove the Anabaptist movement was a desire that church life and practice be governed primarily by the Scriptures and not the traditions of the church.

What drove the Anabaptist movement was a desire for church life and practice to be governed primarily by the Scriptures and not by the traditions of the church. Current trends in evangelical Christianity lead the church away from this thinking. Many Bible colleges are not producing students who know, understand and truly respect what God has said in the Bible. It is shocking how many pastoral applications we see that do not reflect a solid understanding of the Bible or proper theology.

Menno Simons believed in ...

Believer's baptism: This means that a person must have exercised personal faith in Jesus for eternal life to be saved. Baptism was an outward sign signifying that a person of faith belongs in the church of God. Personal faith in Christ is the foundation of church membership for us today.

Separation of church and state and pacifism: During Menno Simon's life, wars were fought in the name of Christian religion. The church and the state were one. He believed that the Bible did not teach that the church should become a state that wars with others. The state was a worldly thing and should not be able to propagate war in the name of the Christianity — often against other Christians. The activities of the state should not be accomplished by the

church, nor should the state dictate policy in the church. He believed that Christians should not participate in wars done in the name of Christianity. The FEBC does not desire to control the state. We do respect the state in civil matters (see Romans 13:1-7), but our faith and practice are governed by the Scriptures.

Church discipline: Menno Simons believed that Christians are expected to live lives of holiness. He believed that the church should discipline members who are not living up to the Bible's standards. Sins would not be covered up for the powerful. We also practice church discipline, but always with the intent of the restoration of stumbling believers with God and the church.

Rejection of asceticism: While Menno Simons believed that Christians should live holy lives, he did not believe that they should be completely separate from the world through social withdrawal, mortification or self-denial. While this would take some time to unpack, the FEBC lives out this truth by being in the world, but not of the world.

There are other distinctives of Mennonite faith, but these previously listed are very present in the FEBC. This is not all that we believe, but the foundation of the authority of the Scriptures was central both to Menno Simons and to us. ■



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.

Comment

By Sharon Berg, Editor



Change: It goes without saying that it is one of the constants of life. Of course, sometimes change occurs quickly and sometimes it happens over time. And this year, as we're celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches, we're also taking advantage of new ways to reach out and inform about the ministries connected with this historic organization. Recently, the Commission on Missions and the Commission on Women's Ministries created Facebook pages. You can find out more on pages 5 and 7, and if you're a Facebook user, please be sure to check them out.

More change: FEBC Administrator Paul Boeker is retiring at the end of August (see page 4). Paul has served the Fellowship since 1999. I came on board as editor of *Fellowship Focus* in 2003 and have greatly benefitted from his depth of knowledge of the history, people and workings of the Fellowship. Paul always extended such patience and graciousness as he answered my numerous questions and solved challenges connected with producing the *Focus* six times a year, offered story ideas and contributed articles. His sharp eye for catching errors is unmatched, and I'm thankful for his offer to continue on as proofreader.

Change has affected the FEBC office in another way, too. Cathy Burns, whose friendly voice you heard when calling, is no longer working as secretary and bookkeeper. The restructuring of responsibilities has eliminated the position. Cathy's cheerful helpfulness will be missed.

And yet another change: My colleague, Connie Yates, who joined the *Focus* as art director and columnist the same time I did, has stepped down from her position. Connie has given me permission to share that she is facing some health challenges. At the same time, God has blessed her with three wonderful grandchildren in recent years, and she wants to have more time to lavish her love on them. Who wouldn't? If you've met Connie, you know what a vibrant person she is; loving and genuine, with a great sense of humor and zest for living (and all things Italian). Through her column "Is It Just Me?" she shared the spiritual lessons she learned in everyday life with candor and wit, and readers gave us much positive feedback on the column through the years. Although Connie and I didn't see each other regularly — we've worked on the *Focus* from our homes across the city — we would communicate via e-mail and the phone, and I am already missing that contact.

With all of these changes, I'll share one more: A warm welcome to our new art director, Nikki Krause. Nikki began designing and laying out the *Focus* with the last issue. We attend the same church, Community Bible in Omaha. She and her husband, Justin, are parents to Destiny and Sarah. We're thankful that Nikki will share her creative talent with us in future issues.

Blessings,

Sharon

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RELEASING
God's Power
through Prayer
120th FEBC CONVENTION 2014

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

<http://www.fellowshipforward.org>



Fellowship Views

FEBC Publications

For more than 30 years, the FEBC International Office has provided a service to our churches by selling books and curriculum at a discount. In light of changing marketing conditions, high international postal rates and a need to focus Fellowship resources on other priorities, we have decided to discontinue sales. As of July 1, the office will no longer accept orders for merchandise. Churches have been informed of this decision.

This change also means the loss of **Cathy Burns**, who has managed sales for the past five years. We deeply appreciate her work and her knowledge of our churches. She has been the voice you heard when calling the Fellowship office.

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. Above all, please ask the Father to give the Fellowship the leaders and workers it needs.

Personnel Changes

The FEBC secretary/bookkeeper, **Cathy Burns**, has handled sales and many other tasks for the Fellowship for the past five years. She has faithfully carried out her work with great enthusiasm and willingness to learn. Because the Fellowship has discontinued sales and is restructuring, they have reluctantly released Cathy. Her position will eventually be replaced by a Communications Director who will focus on website development, the *Fellowship Focus* and other communication venues.

Administrator Paul Boeker is retiring effective Aug. 31. He has been employed by the Fellowship since 1999 and has been the Administrator since 2001. For 27 years he has been on a commission or on the FEBC Executive Committee.

His "hats" have included office management, financial management, coordinating the work of the commissions, serving as managing editor and contributor of the *Fellowship Focus*, corporate agent for four corporations, CEO of FEBC Canada, promoting planned giving, publishing Fellowship reports, constitutions, manuals, etc., and serving as archivist. He plans to continue to work part-time in some ministry position.

The Fellowship is looking for two part-time replacements for this position: an Administrator (28 hrs. /wk.), and a Financial Secretary (10-12) hrs./wk.). A third part-time person will be hired to be the Communications Director.

In Gratitude

An anonymous donor gave \$10,000 to the Fellowship in May! This was an "Apostle's Feet" gift (see Acts 4:32-36), to be used as needed for the ministries of the Fellowship. This was indeed an answer to our prayers and came at a crucial time to allow the Fellowship to continue its ministries.

Churches Seeking Pastors

Please ask God to provide pastors for churches without a shepherd. If you know of someone who might be a good fit for these rural/small-town churches, please pass this information on to them.

- **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 59201.
- **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.
- **Hodgson Bible Church of Hodgson, Man.** is searching for a pastor who can bring God's word to a small town, rural setting. For more information, contact Ted Hartog at tchartog@lakenet.ca (phone 204-372-6990) or contact John Plett at john50@mymts.net (phone 204-372-6700).
- **Vita Bible Church of Vita, Man.**, is seeking a full-time pastor, someone who has spiritual and character maturity with pastoral experience and is able to connect with rural people in a small farming community. Contact Jake Funk, chairman of Vita Bible Church at (204) 427-2875 or send résumé to Vita Bible Church, PO Box 306, Vita, MB R0A 2K0. ■

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



Proclaiming Christ around the World

By Marilyn Lester
Commission on Missions

Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples!" (1 Chronicles 16:8 NKJV).

That verse was posted on the new Facebook page for the FEBC Commission on Missions. It expresses our desire as we launch this new avenue of communication regarding the missions of the FEBC. You can find us under the name "FEBCMissions." This page seeks to inspire and inform about what the Lord is doing to touch lives with the Gospel through FEBC missionaries worldwide. On this page we will give updates from our missionaries and information regarding upcoming FEBC short-term mission opportunities, provide links to mission organizations that may be of interest to our FEBC body, and post recipes and pictures submitted by our missionaries.

You may see world news relating to our missionaries. Just recently I received a letter from a Ukrainian friend who described how the events there affect him and his family. The situation is desperate for people in both eastern and western Ukraine. People in the east are fleeing a bad situation, while in the west they are accepting these refugees and caring for them as well as they are able. On the Facebook page, I just asked for prayer for the Ukrainians. **Greg and Patti Wilton**

(Grace Evangelical Bible Church, Abbotsford, B.C.) have ministered in Ukraine with SEND International, and **Darrel and Susan Heide** (Cornerstone Bible Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.) have led teacher-training sessions there through Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ). I would like to use this page to bring urgent prayer requests before you that can't wait until the next issue of *Fellowship Focus*.

Another post covered a block party that a local outreach ministry hosted in the inner city of Omaha. Abide Ministries' vision is "no more inner city one neighborhood at a time." They are working toward that end by partnering with area churches to help build up the neighborhoods physically with the hope that together we can minister to the people spiritually. The block party is just one event hosted to bring the entire North Omaha area together. Event organizers were expecting a potential of 2,000 people or more. Abide connects people they are helping with Bridge Church, where people hear about the love of God. Hundreds of volunteers wore t-shirts saying "We are *Better Together*". Community Bible Church of Omaha (CBC) helped Abide Ministries acquire an abandoned house in a neighborhood the church has adopted. CBC sent teams to gut the house to prepare it for total renovation. The church also helped with door-to-door campaigns to reach out to the people in that neighborhood just to get acquainted and invite them to area events such as the block party or a previous Easter egg hunt. This is a great outreach opportunity to do mission in our "Jerusalem."

We would also like to post things that are happening through mission organizations around the world as they relate to FEBC missionaries. On the page you'll find a status shared from Operation World Facebook commenting on the Scripture translation work in Ghana. In 1965 only five languages "had the Bible ... now the majority of Ghanaians have at least the New Testament in their mother tongue." **Lee and Michelle Sonius** (Community Bible Church, Omaha)

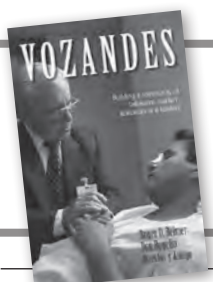
are serving in Ghana with Reach Beyond (formerly HCJB) through the radio ministry.

An item of concern from SAT-7 was shared. They requested prayer for that ministry: "Arab Spring' Aftermath — Where disappointment with early hopes for mid-east progress have faded, ask the Holy Spirit to use these feelings to open hearts and minds to His word." **Dennis and Cindy Wiens** (Community Bible Church, Omaha) are serving with SAT-7.

Our missionaries will be asked from time to time to also contribute to the page. They will have the opportunity to comment on things that are on their hearts as it pertains to missions. **Roger Reimer** (Evangelical Bible Church, Omaha) with Reach Beyond (formerly HCJB) in Ecuador shared an article written by a colleague and friend regarding a recent pastors' conference in which Roger participated in Riobamba, Ecuador. Visit the website link on that post to see pictures of Roger in action and hear what he is trying to accomplish at these conferences. Also on this site are listed other opportunities that people can be involved in. We hope to share more stories like this from our many missionaries.

The new Facebook page for the Commission on Missions is a place where our missionaries can share their news and we can share with you what is happening globally that may affect them and their ministries.

FEBCMissions is a place where we will be able to be more current and effective with our prayers. "Like" our page, and you will get the updates on your own Facebook page as soon as they occur. If you have suggestions of items to include, please contact Marilyn Lester at marilynngl@gmail.com. Please note that the outside contributions to this page are limited so as to be sensitive to our missionaries in special areas. ■



FEBC missionaries Roger and Lois Reimer helped to develop and modernize HCJB Vozandes Hospital during their 37 years in Quito, Ecuador. Roger has told the story of the hospital in his new book *Vozandes*. The book is available from www.friesenpress.com/bookstore. Just search for "Vozandes."

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

A Door Closes

At one time, our Fellowship had a number of missionaries in mainland China. The following poignant news was extracted from a letter from the Missions Chairman to one of our missionaries, written on Dec. 21, 1948. All missionaries to China eventually returned to North America except Rev. L.H. Bartel. Because he was a Chinese citizen (born to missionaries in China), he stayed in China, separated from his family, until his death in 1971.

On December 2-4, the Mission Board had its semi-annual meeting in Omaha; many problems were discussed. According to reports, China is closed for us for mission work, due to the activities of the communists. From Rev. L.H. Bartel we have no report since about September 20 when Mrs. Bartel had her last letter from him. According to a report coming in from China, Aganetha Regier and Mary Quiring are shut off from our communication, and cannot get to the coast for evacuation. The Max Eisenbraums had to leave their field and plan to come to the U.S. if God opens the door for them. It's hard for us when we think of our loved ones on the field.



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This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.		A. N. WILLIAMS PRESIDENT		DL=Day Letter NL=Night Letter LC=Deferred Cable NLT=Cable Night Letter Ship Radiogram	
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If you have not paid that Walter #Korbut account please remit one thousand five hundred dollars for A M Kiehn account Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, seventy two Wall St. New York City as he has paid it here wire reply care Intl & Shanghai-					
Loyal Bartel, 1120AM.					
MC.					
THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE					

Missionary Footprints, a pictorial directory and prayer guide (circa 1952), reports the following missionaries who served in China:

- Rev. and Mrs. John Schmidt
Arrival on Field—1911 (left 1923)
- Miss Mary Schmidt
Arrival on Field—1911
- Mr. and Mrs. Gerhardt T. Thiessen
Arrival on Field—1921 (two terms)
- Mr. and Mrs. Loyal Bartel (five children)
Arrival on Field—1927
- Mr. and Mrs. Max Eisenbraum
Arrival on Field—1926/1927
- Miss Mary Quiring
Arrival on Field—1939
- Miss Aganetha Regier
Arrival on Field—1924





Sharing the Sunshine

By Sharon MacConnell

"There is sunshine in my soul today. I am happy, oh, so happy."

Can you sing this today? There are times when it is hard for me to sing the lyrics of this old hymn.

Think about the fourth day of creation when God made the sun (Genesis 1:14-19). Have you ever thought about how the sun came up every day, followed by the moon, and then the sun again? We know that there was sin on the earth during this time, but the sun still came up every day until the flood. I imagine that it was difficult to understand the darkness on the ark and the darkness of the storm until God completed the task He had intended. The sun did not shine, the rain continued, the water came up from the springs below, the dark storm clouds covered the sky and the wind blew.

Think of the wonder of Noah as it rained 40 days and 40 nights (Genesis 7:4), and the daily darkness he and those on the ark experienced. There is reference to the window in the ark, "Make an opening around the top of the boat that is 18 inches high from the edge of the roof down" (Genesis 6:16). God told Noah when he should open the window, and "Noah opened the window he had made in the boat" (Genesis 8:6). There were additional days they spent on the ark after the rain stopped, around 370 days, (and some people think it was just 40 days and 40 nights). Was there sunshine yet? Did he close that window again so it was again dark?

Noah entered the ark when he was 600 years old on the seventeenth day of the second month (Genesis 7:11). He was 601 years old when they left the ark on the twenty-seventh day of the second month (Genesis 8:13-15). I am not sure when exactly the sun began to shine again — possibly when Noah removed the covering of the boat (vs.13) — but I do know that it did shine again.

Have I painted a picture of how our lives can be sometimes? It is darkness every day while we continue on in sin or if it's unconfessed. It is also darkness when we allow the troubles of the day or the overburdens to weigh us down. Isn't it wonderful when the sun begins to shine again? God shows us that often in our lives, our tears (rain) can be the result of our conviction of the sin we are struggling with or the result of our heartfelt emotions for others either trapped in sin or struggling with consequences of our sin nature.

Sometimes we need someone to help us out — to lift us up out of the troubled times. That someone is usually sent from God. What if we didn't heed the prompting of the Holy Spirit to give encouragement to someone? We would just miss out on the blessing. God will send someone who will go. Will it be you?

I am thankful for my position on the FEBC women's commission as "The Sunshine Girl." I have committed to write a personal note to all of the ladies in ministry

in the FEBC. I hope I don't miss anyone. The last notes will be sent July 1. I am hoping to have covered all the ladies in leadership with their husbands in the Fellowship churches before this summer's annual convention. I want to spread sunshine and be an encourager.

I want to live my life sharing the love of Christ. It is a joy to serve the Lord in ministry, and a blessing to serve with the ladies on the commission; they are great encouragers. If you would like to join the commission, I can tell you it will be a great experience to serve the Lord. We meet online through GoToMeeting®. We look forward to seeing and praying for each other. These meetings are not all business, as you may have experienced before, but a blessing as we serve a great big wonderful God!

Sharon has served on the Commission on Women's Ministries for four years. Her husband Ben pastors Paradise Valley Church in Natoma, Kan.

Scriptures taken from New Century Version

What are YOU up to?

We would like to highlight on the Women's Ministries page what you remarkable women of the Fellowship are doing. How are you reaching women for the Lord? Let's encourage one another to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24). Let's share what is on our hearts and what God is doing through the women of the FEBC to further His kingdom.

If you would like to be a part of this, please contact us. Put together in 150 words what is happening in your neck of the woods and send it to us. So many ways, so many ideas, so many possibilities! If God has given you an idea that works, why not share it with the rest of us! Message us on our Facebook page at W Com Connections or e-mail at bjfast36@ymail.com. Looking forward to hearing from you soon!

Beth Fast

Proposed addition to the Fellowship Articles of Faith

Creation

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





Focus on the Word

Our Divine Intercessor

By Harvey Schultz

No, I'm not referring to Christ our High Priest who intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father. There is another divine intercessor whose ministry is just as important and precious for us.

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will" (Romans 8:26-27).

I must admit that until recently, I misunderstood this passage. I had always understood it to mean that as I prayed for others, the Spirit helped me. Because I didn't know their needs, the indwelling Holy Spirit, knowing my intent, assisted me in some mysterious way so that my ignorant prayers for others became meaningful to God who would then answer according to the needs of the person I was praying for.

But that's not what this verse says. It does not say that the Spirit helps me intercede for others. It declares that the Spirit intercedes for me.

God doesn't want to waste any event, any experience in our lives, painful as it may be.

The unifying thread that runs through verses 18-30 is suffering; the suffering we experience because we live in a sin-cursed world. Paul uses expressions like: "sufferings" (v.18), "subjected to frustration" (v.20), "bondage to decay" (v.21), "groaning" (v.22), "as in the pains of childbirth" (v.22), "groan" (v.23), "weakness" (v.26). He concludes these verses by assuring us that as believers, God uses all these things for our "good" (v.28). He uses these unpleasant experiences to conform us "to the likeness of his Son" (v.29).

An important aspect of this conforming process is the intercession of the Holy Spirit.

As we go through these painful experiences, "we do not know what we ought to pray for" (v.26). At this point the Spirit intervenes. He knows our hearts. He also knows what God is seeking to accomplish in us when He allows a trial to come into our lives. And so He intercedes for us accordingly. I may know the general intent of God's working in my life. But I don't know exactly what a particular trial is to accomplish in my life. As a result, I don't really know how to pray for myself as I walk through a trial. But the Holy Spirit, my heaven-sent Guide and Comforter, comes to my rescue. Knowing my particular bent and what God is seeking to accomplish, He intercedes for me.

With that in mind Paul, is able to say with confidence in verse 29: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" God doesn't want to waste any event, any experience in our lives, painful as it may be. In all things He is seeking the growth which will bring us into conformity to the image of His Son.

The next time you walk through a painful experience, remember Romans 8:26-27 and be encouraged.

Scripture quotations taken from NIV

Legacy Giving

If you are an average Christian, you give to the Lord from your income. You note how much you have earned, and you give a portion of that to your church, to missions and to the needy. That annual income represents about nine percent of all of your wealth. Your cars, household furnishings, investments and real estate hold the other 91 percent of your wealth. How will you use that 91 percent to glorify God?

In recent months, the Fellowship has received two bequests, one in Canada and one in the United States. **Clarence Thiessen** was a member of the **Dalmeny Bible Church**. From that 91 percent of his wealth, he left a small sum to each of 22 missionaries and charities and a large sum to each of three

major charities. His own church was also a beneficiary. Each entity that Mr. Thiessen selected will impact many other people with the Gospel. In the coming years, many thousands of people will hear the Gospel and begin to grow as believers because of Mr. Thiessen's planning.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Rempel served as missionaries in the Congo (Zaire) in the 1950s and 60s. Mr. Rempel built many churches, schools and clinics in the Congo at a time when our Fellowship had several dozen missionaries there. The Congolese rebellion forced the Rempels to return to the States, but they never forgot that people from our Fellowship had given sacrificially and supported them with prayer so they

could take the Gospel to the Congolese. They determined to give 40 percent of their estate to Christian charities. Our Fellowship was one of four recipients of their generosity.

What a blessing it is to receive bequests from people like these who strategized how they could use that 91 percent portion of their wealth to glorify God! In the past such gifts have been used to plant churches, advance missions, encourage students preparing for Christian ministries, and nurture our pastors and churches. These gifts will also be used to build the kingdom of God through a variety of people and programs.

To find out how you can begin to plan how your estate will be used, go to www.febclegacy.org.

FOCUS on our CHURCHES

NORTHEAST BIBLE CHURCH

Calgary Alta.

John Fehr, Pastor

At our Annual Ladies Retreat in April, we enjoyed our time together at a hotel in Airdrie and also at the home of one of our members, **Tracy Bonyai**. There, after coffee and pastries, Tracy shared her testimony of how God had faithfully loved and protected her heart through the abuse and resulting pain and confusion of her early years. We were encouraged and challenged to trust completely in our wonderful God who had transformed Tracy's life and blessed her abundantly, and who was now using her to bless her family and the many people in her life.



God has blessed our church with many small children, and it takes a small army of workers to give them care. In May we recognized and thanked all of the Sunday School teachers and their many helpers during the morning service. We thanked them for their dedication and prayed that God would bless them with His love, wisdom and understanding as they work with the children and also in their personal lives at home, at work, in school, with their friends and in their communities.

At our Annual Garage Sale in May, our focus is to be a blessing to the people in the community around the church. Lots of folks came out to shop, and we thank God for the good connections that were made. We had an awesome turnout of church members, including the youth group, who had a great time working together, sharing in the fun and eating a pizza lunch.



Julie Ann Simpson, Correspondent

CORNERSTONE BIBLE CHURCH

Mountain Lake, Minn.

Nathan Janzen, Pastor

Dogs In The Park: We have started a new ministry at Cornerstone; an outreach to the youth of Mountain Lake. One evening a week a group of guys from the church go out to the park, fire up the grill and throw on a bunch of hot dogs. On any given night you will find a gathering of teens at the park hanging out or playing ball. They are invited to come over to grab a hot dog (or two or three) and to hang

out and talk. There is also interaction on the courts as the adults join in the games. We pray that relationships with these kids and their families are established and they will be reached for Christ.

Weird Animals: Cornerstone once again teamed up with a few other local churches to put on this year's Vacation Bible School in June. The crazy and fun theme was "Weird Animals."

We covet your prayers as we try and reach out to our community. Pray that God will work in mighty ways in the Mountain Lake community.

Becky Schultz, Correspondent

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

Prince Albert, Sask.

James Fast, Pastor

Our city is a "great mosaic of people" from many nations. Our church celebrated this on Pentecost Sunday, June 8. We have 10 different language groups represented in our fellowship, and each one participated by praying a paragraph in their own language in a joint-prayer time. Following this, the youth served small samplings of foods from each of these different nations represented. The kids were thrilled to be able to "eat" in church and sing with their mouths full! It was a wonderful time of challenge to each one about reaching out to this "mosaic" with the Gospel.

The Junior Youth, "Tn'T", have been busy. We had a wild game of Bible Smugglers at the ranch. It was cold and dark, but the youth had so much fun they didn't want to stop! There too, we used some border guards using different languages to try and capture them in the dark! A few weeks later we had a giant sling shot event, hurtling a variety of old vegetables and water balloons into the south pasture. The neighbors are beginning to wonder about us!

Our annual ministry meeting in June went well. We are encouraged about the direction the church is moving, and the unity we sense growing among the people.

Beth Fast, Correspondent

HEARTLAND BIBLE CHURCH

Lincoln, Neb.

Scott Hecht, Pastor

We took a special offering in May to purchase Bible Sticks for our armed forces. These 75 MP3 players have the entire New Testament for easy access and are provided for chaplains who then give them away to men and women in every branch of our services.

Carol Bejjani spoke at our annual women's brunch in May. Carol and her husband served in Jordan and Lebanon until they were ousted from there. They are now located in Lincoln and have an ongoing ministry with Arab-speaking immigrants, helping them get settled, witnessing to them and holding a house church in their home. Carol is an aunt of our pastor's wife, Melody.

FEBC President Blaine Donaldson brought the message on May 27.

Trudy Reimer, Correspondent

Focus on our Churches continued on Page 10

FOCUS on our CHURCHES

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

Omaha, Neb.

Charles Tschetter, Senior Pastor

CBC joined Abide Lighthouse Ministry in North Omaha. So far, we've participated in a neighborhood Valentine and cookie distribution, an Easter egg hunt, a yard clean-up, a block party and the demolition and clean-up of the Lighthouse. We enjoy strong participation from CBC youth and SMASH, our ministry to married couples.

In June we officially launched our church extension, Fellowship Bible Church. The group meets across the street from CBC, and is studying 1 Timothy, led by a team of elders, teachers and potential pastoral candidates.

At Youth Sunday in May, many of our students led music, read Scripture and ushered. We also honored our graduating seniors.

At this writing, we anticipate hosting 150-200 children during June's Vacation Bible School, "SonTreasure Island."

Sharon Berg, Correspondent

CORNERSTONE BIBLE CHURCH

Steinbach, Man.

Jared Hiebert, Pastor

Janice Rempel is once again leading the summer kids' ministry through a "Discover 4 Yourself Inductive Bible Study for Kids" by Kay Arthur and Janna Arndt. Kids in grades 1-6 are having lots of fun studying "God's Amazing Creation" in a creative archaeology theme.

Cornerstone Family Ministries hosted a "Variety Night" in May. It was a great evening enjoying each other and the gifts God has blessed us with to bring Him glory.

Cornerstone celebrated Easter with a Maundy Thursday service in place of our usual Good Friday service. Changing things up sometimes gives new perspective, which is what we experienced in this service emphasizing communion.

Marsella Wiebe, Correspondent

COUNTRYSIDE BIBLE CHURCH

Meade, Kan.

Six of our youth attended the Precepts camp in Tennessee in June. **Chris Hardaway** and **Abigail Spare** attended Discipleship Training in Gulf Shores, Ala., in June and July.

"Spy Academy" Vacation Bible School was held at the Emmanuel Church in June.

High school graduation was held May 18 for our four graduates, with a graduation worship service. Our council members gave a charge to each student. A combined reception in the church hall followed graduation.

We celebrated one baptism.

Mary Friesen, Correspondent

RICHER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Richer, Man.

Simon Cheung, Pastor



April ended with a youth party, and Pastor Simon gave the Easter message of the cross. It was a year of mixed emotions for youth leaders, as behavioural challenges met us every week. A patient God taught us when we needed to show tough love by disciplining or when

we needed to just stop and listen. Teaching life lessons about the consequences of drug abuse and what it means to be courageous from God's viewpoint presented many opportunities to talk to the kids about God's limitless love and His power over the enemy who comes to "steal, kill and destroy" (John 10:10). Our prayer for the Richer youth this summer is that the good seed we tried to plant all year would take root, and no matter what happens they would remember that Jesus is a Friend who never leaves.

In May, testimonies were given and four people were received into membership. Although all the stories were different, it amazed us yet again to see how the life-changing work of the Holy Spirit can live and move in each heart, turning them into a new creation in Christ!

Michelle Driedger, Correspondent



JANSEN BIBLE CHURCH

Jansen, Neb.

Paul Carpenter, Pastor

Missionary **Vic Flaming** and Elder **Charles Bright** officiated in ministering the Word during the pastor's vacation. In June, **Brian Berrier** of Christian Heritage presented the opportunity to reach needy children in our state through foster care.

Informal question-and-answer Bible studies continue during the summer on Wednesday evenings.

The Awana closing program in April was an excellent opportunity to introduce the children and their parents to "Arrow Island" Vacation Bible School, held in June. As of mid-June, 55 kids were registered to attend.

Tena Dick, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Omaha, Neb.

Dr. Don Pahl, Senior Pastor

We are continuing our planning for our multi-site church plant. **Pastor Gary and Christi Krehbiel** have been designated as our multi-site pastoral couple. We also have a team working with them to plan and identify the ministries of the new site and to make those recommendations to the Board of Elders.

Pastor Greg Koehn has written a book, *Attack Evangelism: Being on the Offense Without Being Defensive*. He also has a blog: <http://attaquevangelism101.blog.com/>

We have started the renovations to our facility. Our new parking lot has been leveled and poured and, though not completely finished, is now providing us with needed additional parking on Sundays and for other church activities.

We welcomed four new members.

Sherrie Lindsey, Correspondent

SALEM CHURCH

Waldheim, Sask.

Darrell Derksen, Senior Pastor

Summer Sundays and long summer evenings bring an opportunity to be re-energized. Along with this break in routine, we are busy strengthening our spiritual and physical foundations.

"Real Life Discipleship," our first small group with a focus on preparing people to lead, began in June. It is sharpening our focus and will provide a strengthened foundation on which to build. Matthew 4:19 shows us that disciples are followers of Jesus. Disciples are being changed by Jesus and are committed to the mission of Jesus. Building on this foundation will equip and prepare us to be united and intentional in the area of fulfilling Jesus' call to make disciples. It is our desire to equip small group leaders and prepare new leaders through providing a model of discipleship that can be applied within Salem.

We also look forward to the day that we will be able to lay the physical foundation for our new Christian Education Wing and Multi-Purpose Room. Our Property and Finance Committee and Building Committee are presently waiting for quotes to come in, enabling the preparation of a suitable financial plan. Waiting is not easy, but it also brings us to God's planned day for beginning.

As some at Salem wait to dig into the ground to start that foundation, others are planning to climb to the top of mountains this summer. A Salem team is joining others from the area at the Freedom Climb USA. Their plan is to summit seven mountains, all over 14,000 feet, in four days. The purpose of the Freedom Climb is to stand up and be a voice for women and children around the world who are enslaved, exploited and trafficked. The event is a symbolic gesture of the climb to freedom for these women and children. There will also be an active prayer team at the base of the mountain. Our team members are **Denise Heppner, Heather Langelaar, Karissa Cuvala, Cora Redekopp** and prayer team members **Annette Neufeld and Kerri Schultz**. Operation Mobilization is involved in planning the Freedom Climbs. Through their fund-raising activities they are increasing awareness and contributing funds for the building of Tabitha House in Zambia. **Larissa Wiens** (from our church) is the team leader of Tabitha House, where the goal is to equip, empower and train 100 women per year.

DALMENY BIBLE CHURCH

Dalmeny, Sask.

Dennis Friesen, Pastor

We hosted the seminar "Finding Freedom through Forgiveness" with **Boyd Hopkins** as speaker.

About 180 ladies attended the Annual Salad Fiesta. **Denise Heppner** spoke on "Embracing your Challenges." **Dorothy Thompson** had an excellent display of quilts and a story for each one.

Martin Harder of Compassion International challenged us one Sunday on the importance of children. Fourteen children in need were sponsored that morning.

Camp Kadesh held their Annual Variety Night/Cake Auction at our church. They also had a presentation and fund-raising dinner one Sunday. We also had the opportunity to support the camp through a Saturday work day and a bike/walk-a-thon.

Fifty men and boys attended the Annual 'Get Hooked' fishing weekend at Nemeiben Lake at the end of May with **Harold Stephan** as guest speaker.

Our Kid's Club ended in April with a closing program and then ice cream. We trust that the seed that was planted throughout the year will grow.

We celebrated the baptism and membership of one of our youth.

Marilyn Harder, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHERN CHURCH

Lustre, Mont.

John Skillman, Pastor

EMB youth and area young people are continuing their ministry in Poplar, Mont., this summer. In addition to their usual responsibilities of helping to serve a meal and aiding during Bible lessons, they are providing the food for sack lunches for these underprivileged children. This summer the kids will also be raising money for the food provided.

Darrin Clinton of the Glendive Dinosaur and Fossil Museum, spoke during Lustre Christian High School's spiritual emphasis week and at our church in March. The museum is the largest in the United States to present its fossils in the context of biblical creation. Mr. Clinton will also be our Harvest Festival speaker in October.

The ladies Bible study on Genesis concluded for the season, and now the gals are turning their attention to helping the elderly and those with debilitating illness with various household chores.

Sharon Skillman, Correspondent

Focus on our Churches continued on Page 12

FOCUS on our CHURCHES

Continued from Page 11

VITA BIBLE CHURCH

Vita, Man.

Teen Challenge visited us in May and shared inspiring testimonies of how God has transformed the lives of the men within its program. When we are brought low and realize just how much we have been forgiven, we can have so much appreciation for what God has done for us.



The "winners" from one of our games from the Mother Daughter tea in Vita. Each one was caught with a mystery gift and told to put on whatever the present may contain.

As parents we pass many things on to our children, both good and bad. The most precious thing of all, however, is when we can pass on our love for the Lord. On May 24, together with the ladies from the **Stuartburn Gospel Chapel**, we celebrated the mother-daughter relationship with a wonderful tea. We sang songs, played games and enjoyed hearing from our guest speakers, **Mrs. Kathy Friesen** and her daughter **Mrs. Jennifer Funk**. The duo spoke on the theme of "Passing it On" and the importance of taking the time to teach our children even when there are so many other things we could be doing. Raising godly children is one of the most important jobs there is.

We enjoyed hearing from **FEBC President Blaine Donaldson** on May 25. He encouraged us to choose three people who need the Lord and to pray for them, listening to their interests, and sharing the Lord with them.

Tiffany Tuurenhout, Correspondent

PARADISE VALLEY CHURCH

Natoma, Kan.

Ben MacConnell, Pastor

We have hosted an activity each month, hoping for more community awareness and outreach. In January we enjoyed a bowling party, followed by our annual Valentine's Day banquet, a game night with a pie social in March, and the Community Good Friday services followed by a luncheon in April. It was great to have so many helpers at the Vacation Bible School in May. Eighteen children participated, providing many good opportunities to meet mothers of the children. July will bring an annual Bible conference followed by the trip to Canada for the FEBC convention.

People have stepped up, and the church is doing well. All the attendees were previously and presently going to Bible studies either led by Pastor Ben or Sharon, which adds up to healthy people seeking to know the Lord more and follow His teachings. We are studying the "Bad Girls of the Bible" at Thursdays' Bible study. On Tuesday and Wednesday nights, Pastor Ben is leading a Bible study on the characters of the Bible.

Sharon MacConnell, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Dallas, Ore.

Jerry Franz, Pastor

Our Annual May Festival, which has always been a wonderful outreach to our community, was a huge success. The decoration theme was "A Rustic Garden Picnic," and we saw everything from a rustic garden that you could imagine. Attendance was high; all tickets were sold! Speaker **Charissa Lamb** of EBC, shared the challenges she faces and how God has helped her through difficult times as a pastor's wife with a newly developing church in their home.

At the Women's Ministry's Titus Tea in April, **Crystal Hauge**, a Women's Ministry team member, shared the struggles she has gone through and how God has helped her.

The healthcare committee sponsored a "Grief Support" workshop, something we plan to offer occasionally. It was well attended. Our local hospital has been very impressed with the work done here, and they are offering our pamphlets to families grieving from the loss of a loved one.

Every month we hold a Christian Endeavor program that encourages members of our congregation to share their testimonies, musical talent and stories. The committee has worked hard to encourage member participation.

It was EBC's turn to host "Soul Food" at the local high school in May. Once a month Dallas churches take turns providing food during the lunch hour. Kids are invited to come for lunch, as we attempt to build relationships and to share Christ with them.

The missions committee helped send **Rachel K.** to Mozambique this summer. She helped missionary **Janice Peters** in the field, leading Vacation Bible School during the SIM Spiritual Life Conference and teaching English to kids at a Christian school. We also helped to send Allie G. to Peru. Allie will serve with long-time friends in Arequipa, in the settlement of Alto Cayma. She will work in the orphanage, a food bank and at the Youth Center there, with the focus being the spiritual needs of the people, developing relationships and sharing Christ with them.

Milestones: Long-time member **Anna Funk** turned 100 years old on April 19. We added one new member to our congregation.

Vicki Kibbey, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

Marion, S. D.

Randy Maass, Pastor

Lee Larson of our congregation shared from Matthew in March, with some challenging thoughts of "Is it Right or Is it Wrong?" **Jesse Walhof** filled our pulpit in June. Jesse is a Sioux Falls Seminary student as well as being employed by the Volunteers of America in its outreach to the homeless in Sioux Falls.

As a prayer reminder, the church bulletin continues to list our church youth and young couples as they launch into the world. It also lists those within the community who have health issues. The prayer chain is a connecting link for the church members as we continue to pray for special needs.

A member of the local Gideons shared their work of placing Bibles and New Testaments and reported how God's word is still powerful. Several in our congregation are a part of the Gideon camp.

A group of ladies from church walked in the local cancer walk to support those from church with positive reports.

On a given Sunday of each month, we celebrate those with birthdays by having coffee and a surprise treat after the morning service. Smile for the picture! The fellowship is enjoyed and visitors feel welcome.

The second Sunday in June has become our traditional "old car Sunday." Several members bring historical cars. Remembering the progress God has given us enlightens our minds and hearts.

Lois Regehr, Correspondent

EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Langham, Sask.

Greg Guarnett, Senior Pastor

Thank you for your prayers as our church continues to prepare for hosting the FEBC convention in July. We look forward to seeing many of you here in Langham!

God faithfully provides opportunities for us to reach our community for Him and to show Jesus' love through our actions and care. We were privileged to host the funeral service for a young girl and minister to her family. This also allowed the community and schools some insight into the relationships we seek to build with the youth here. The community preschool needed space to operate, so we have been able to provide this as well. Children bring much activity and cheer to the facilities three mornings a week!

Our annual Ladies Salad Supper with **Barb deHaan** as speaker was well attended. The women were encouraged as Barb shared her story, struggles and presented the Gospel in a loving, clear manner.

Much of the ministry focus of **Pastor Justin Epp** (our associate pastor) is with the youth of our church and community. They attended Youth Quake at Briercrest College and also hosted a churchwide Crokinole Tournament. Great fun and relationships were built as young and old faced off in games of "Knipsbrat"!

Marilyn Friesen, Correspondent



Langham EBC celebrated a baptism and membership service recently.

GRACE EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Abbotsford, B.C.

Ryan Peixoto, Pastor



Three couples from Grace Church traveled to Paraguay in April to encourage our missionaries in the field there and help where they could. One week they visited **Benny and Esther Goertzen** who serve with the Evangelical Mennonite Conference. The team worked on a community project where their church is involved with children's and women's ministry. The men finished the community kitchen facility while the women painted, cleaned, played with the children, cooked and baked with the women of the community. The second week the team spent with **René and Anja (Goertzen) Gaona** of Action Canada. They helped at two children's homes building, cleaning, cooking, gardening, with sports programs and interacting with the children and adults.

Our youth traveled to "Acquire the Fire" in Everett, Wash., in May. They shared testimonies of how God was working in their lives. It is so great to see our youth on fire for God.

One Sunday in May we invited anyone in the church to walk around Mill Lake, a manmade lake in the middle of Abbotsford. More than 40 adults and kids of all ages participated. It was a fun way to get to know each other.

Saint Matthews Church has rented our facility for a few years now, and we are looking forward to having a joint barbecue in June to get to know each other better.

While we are enjoying many events together and growing as a church, we continue to pray for the needs in our church and in our community. God is providing and answering our prayers.

Three people shared their testimonies in May and were welcomed as members.

*Diana Dyck,
Correspondent*



*Grace EBC's
Paraguay
missions team*

Focus on our Churches continued on Page 14

Video Library



Unlocking the Mysteries of Genesis

<http://www.unlockingthemysteriesofgenesis.org>

<http://www.icr.org/article/unlocking-mysteries-genesis>

Salvation's story begins in Genesis. From there the mystery of God's great plan of redemption continues to unfold throughout Scripture. Yet many people struggle with understanding Genesis, hoping perhaps to pick up the story later in the Bible where it appears to be more in line with history. But the first book of the Bible is real history — the history of beginnings.

"Unlocking the Mysteries of Genesis" is a groundbreaking 12-episode DVD series that explores scientific evidence that confirms the biblical account of creation.

Perfect for Sunday and evening classes and small groups, each 22-minute episode takes viewers of all ages on a memorable journey through some of the most fascinating topics in creation science.

This faith-affirming series includes a viewer guide that makes it easy for non-scientists, including pastors, youth leaders, parents, homeschoolers, and others, to facilitate an informed discussion about creation science and equip viewers with defensible answers to some of the most provocative and controversial questions of faith and science.

Twelve 22-minute sessions

Available for loan for your church or Bible study group from orders@febcministries.org. ■

FOCUS on our CHURCHES

Continued from Page 13

GRUNTHAL EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH

Grunthal, Man.

Russ Reimer, Pastor

The church hosted a farewell potluck lunch and fund raiser for **Nathan and Annie Driediger** and family in April. They were ministering with Mission Aviation Fellowship in northern Canada but will now be training in Three Hills, Alta., with SEND International. Their goal is to minister in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, when their training has been completed in about a year's time.

A potluck lunch and fund raiser was held for **Natanaela Ralaimiarison**, a young man from Madagascar who has been attending our fellowship. He has just finished his flight training in Steinbach, with hopes of being a missionary pilot someday. Please pray for him as he works in another town for the summer.

Doreen Penner spoke on "The Treasure Within" at our Ladies Spring Tea in May.

Our church youth meet regularly throughout the school year for Bible studies, but in May they met along with the College and Career group for an "Amazing Race" event.

Marilyn D. Thiessen, Correspondent

FAITH EVANGELICAL BIBLE CHURCH

Henderson, Neb.

Michael Fink, Pastor

Our church facility was transformed into a jungle in June as our Vacation Bible School staff prepared for a week of enthusiastic Bible teaching with a jungle safari theme. Beginning with the foundational truth of God's creation, we learned that God is our Creator, Provider, Protector, Savior and King.

A special "Missions Sunday" in April was planned by our missions committee honoring **Steve and Mikki Schmidt**. We were privileged to hear about their ministry in Niger during the Sunday school hour, and Steve gave the message at our worship service. An Italian-themed potluck was held in their honor at noon. Money was also raised to help purchase computers for the Student Evangelistic Center in Niger. We have been blessed to have Steve and Mikki home base in Henderson during the past year. It has been an encouragement to have them participate in various church ministries as they had opportunity.

We celebrated the baptism of one of our youth.

Alice Decker, Correspondent



THE RECORD

Births & Adoptions

Community Bible Church, Omaha, Neb.

- ☛ Tristan Thomas to Tom and Sarah Baltzer, April 21
- ☛ Charlie D to Shawn and Anneliese Kliewer; grandparents are Jeff and Karen Brayfield; great-grandparents are Dean and Pat Thompson
- ☛ Gideon Allen to Jon and Amber Wright, June 9
- ☛ Charlotte Ann to Tyler and Laree Lindburg, May 21

Cornerstone Bible Church, Steinbach, Man.

- ☛ Timothy John to Shane and Sandra Reimer, May 8

Countryside Bible Church, Meade, Kan.

- ☛ Kylin Ella to Kasey and Brandon Friesen, April 30; grandparents are Jerome and Anita Wiens and Lyle and Peggy Friesen; great grandparents are Rolly and Marge Wiens and Al and Mary Friesen
- ☛ Adriana adopted by Tiffany and Doug Ritter, April 28, 2012; grandparents are Doug and Sue Ritter

Evangelical Bible Church, Dallas, Ore.

- ☛ Elias Lincoln to Daniel and Aubrie Stent, May 30; grandparents are Rodney and Rosalee Stent

Evangelical Bible Church, Langham, Sask.

- ☛ Logan Tyrell to Monica and Lyndon Ledoux, March 1; grandparents are Henry and Elaine Friesen

Faith Evangelical Bible Church, Henderson, Neb.

- ☛ Jonah adopted by Jeremy and Amy Janzen, April 3; grandparents are Ken and Brenda Janzen

Grunthal Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church, Grunthal, Man.

- ☛ Bennett David, to Rick and Charlotte Durksen, March 31; grandparents are Ed and Anne Durksen

Heartland Bible Church, Lincoln, Neb.

- ☛ Keera Cole to Xerxes Jude, May 18; grandmother is Ginny Cole

Northeast Bible Church, Calgary, Alta.

- ☛ Shekinah Osarume to Henry and Sandrine Ogbomo, Feb 18
- ☛ Chidalu Pazel to Paschal Mbadugha and Ify Isitua, March 5
- ☛ Zara Marysosa Peters to Esosa Osagiede and Maryjane Ogbomo, May 14

Vita Bible Church, Vita, Man.

- ☛ Hannah Faith to Jurgen and Kim Penner, June 2

Salem Church, Waldheim, Sask.

- ☛ Kolby Zane to Justin and Laura Friesen, April 16; grandparents are George and Carol Bueckert
- ☛ Brahm David to Willie and Tanya Curtis, May 20; grandparents are Gerald and Kathy Fehr; great-grandparents are John and Alice Fehr and Harvey and Agnes Thiessen

Marriages



Cornerstone Bible Church, Steinbach, Man.

- ☺ Kathryn Melbourne to Joshua Giesbrecht, son of Quintin and Beth Giesbrecht, May 3
- ☺ Joleen Strait to Colton Bercier, son of Dick and Carol Bercier, May 3

Grace Evangelical Bible Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

- ☺ Lauren Revell to Norlin Shaver, son of Floyd and Dianna Shaver, April 19

Heartland Bible Church, Lincoln, Neb.

- ☺ Carissa Hecht, daughter of Pastor Scott and Melody Hecht, to John Brunk, April 26
- ☺ Taylor Scharper to Jesse Schulz, grandson of Pastor Ray and Trudy Reimer, May 17

Deaths

Christian Fellowship Church of Rhineland, Wymark, Sask.

- † Helen Friesen (94), April 11

Evangelical Bible Church, Dallas, Ore.

- † Hilda Friesen (90), April 11
- † Marie Reimer (94), April 11
- † Mariellen Shenk (72), April 13
- † Elnora Krocker Schlaak (87) April 25
- † LaVaughn Penner (85), April 30

Evangelical Bible Church, Langham, Sask.

- † Rose Wall (79), Feb. 14

Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Church, Lustre, Mont.

- † Amanda Wall (89), May 16

Salem Church, Waldheim, Sask.

- † Arthur Heppner (93), May 18

Catch the Vision



I came across an interesting blog by Thomas Rainer from Lifeway Christian Resources titled, “Seven Habits of Outwardly Focused Churches” (May 28, 2014). Below is a summary of several behaviors that are often present in a church that is outwardly focused. These are things that you might see or hear if you walked into such a church.

- 1) **The church takes time during each worship service to pray for the community.** It is proper to think of the church as a house of prayer. Public prayer for the community creates care for the community in the congregation. It also shows the community present at the church on a given week that we care about them.
- 2) **A volunteer or staff person is accountable for the outreach ministry of the church.** When everyone is responsible to do something, often no one does it. The church needs someone to be the face of outreach so that we can be reminded of and inspired to our role in outreach.
- 3) **A regular report is provided to church members about outreach and ministry efforts in the community.** Church people are inspired to do outreach when they hear the stories of what others are doing. If outreach is important, it is worth the service time.
- 4) **Churches have regular “mystery” guests come to the worship services.** These are “new” people specially invited to attend church while making notes of their experiences. They will share those experiences with the congregation at a later date. This allows the congregation to start to understand what newcomers feel when they attend church for the first time.

“Outwardly Focused Churches”

By Blaine Donaldson, FEBC President

- 5) **The church gives obsessive attention to their websites.** Websites are the new front door to the church. When people move to the community, they typically go to the web long before they enter the doors of the church.
- 6) **The churches are intentional about scheduling ministries, events and activities for reaching the community.** This takes a lot of work, and planning is essential. The church’s annual calendar should include several outreach events through the year. Holidays can be great occasions for this.
- 7) **Churches are intentional about connecting with their communities through social media.** Participating in local community social media connections and having a church social media presence can and will attract people to your website, then to your church. I believe that this is even important in rural communities.

Should every FEBC church be doing all of these things? I am not sure. For most, I wonder, “Why not?” I present these to you as food for thought. May we all participate in the Great Commission and become outreach people and outreach churches. ■

