



STORIES THAT CONNECT US

The Free Methodist Church in Canada

MOSAIC 2023



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EDITORIAL

As digital media continues to dominate the world of publishing, it's rare to see a magazine make the transition from online back to print. I have told myself that the decision to do this is a brave and bold choice (smile). The MOSAIC, formerly The Free Methodist Herald, began publishing in 1922, with a little more than 100 years of history, I was reluctant to let it slip away quietly. As you can imagine, the Herald/MOSAIC has gone through several iterations since its conception and this latest edition signals a new adaptation for this season. The MOSAIC will now be produced annually with an updated mandate: to bridge the geographical divide that separates our local congregations across this vast and beautiful country. Through storytelling, we aim to highlight the unique ways Free Methodist congregations and individuals make a difference in their congregations and communities. We believe sharing these stories from different regions across Canada can spark ideas in your own neighbourhoods. Hence the title of this first annual edition of the MOSAIC, **"Stories That Connect Us."** We have purposefully not included the dates of specific upcoming events so as not to stale-date the magazine. We hope you will take your time reading the stories and ministry highlights.

May I share with you some other ways in which we can stay connected? Sign up to receive Bishop Cliff's weekly email newsletter and other FMCIC news (info@fmcic.ca), and follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/FMCIC), Instagram (instagram.com/fm_canada) and Twitter (twitter.com/fmcic).

A new section has been included on the fmcic.ca website: **What it means to be Free Methodist**. A great six-part video series (one to two minutes long) which explains our historical roots and what that means for us in today's context. You will also find a brief history of the formation of the Free Methodist Church in North America. Did you know that embedded in the roots of Free Methodism is the recognition that women are equal partners in the ministry of the Church? I invite you to visit this page to learn more: fmcic.ca/whats-a-free-methodist.

I hope you are as encouraged as I was in reading through this issue of the MOSAIC. My prayer is that it ignites something in each of us that draws us closer to Jesus and each other.

Lisa Howden
Communications Director

FREE METHODISTS WANT TO INTRODUCE
PEOPLE TO JESUS, SAVE THE WORLD ONE
PERSON AT A TIME AND ALLEVIATE SUFFERING.



BISHOP'S DESK

IN PURSUIT OF HOLY INDUSTRY

My heart is full! Not just my heart, but Karlene's, as well as Pastors Adam and Paul. This was the Ghana Team 2023. We arrived on a Sunday night (*after our flight was cancelled on Friday.*) Superintendent Ahmed arrived at the hotel Monday morning at 6:00 am. For the next three days we would travel to three churches daily in the north of Ghana. Each church was hours away from the last one we visited. Each church family welcomed us warmly. The thatched-roof village church families, the farming communities, those church families with a building, and those with a roof only (*which went up during COVID with money sent from The Free Methodist Church in Canada.*)

Most of the northern churches are in Muslim communities. They told us there is no persecution, as Christians and Muslims have learned to live peacefully. However, when a Muslim converts, the new follower of Jesus is mistreated (*or worse*) by his/her own family. These church families tell us that evangelism in a Muslim community is an exercise in prayer, friendship development, practical care and Godly patience. Sounds like evangelism in Canada!

Our Ghanaian church family is developing a very practical approach to friendship development and practical care. Poverty is a (*if not "the"*) significant issue in Ghana.



Bishop Cliff and team visit a “Gari Factory.” Gari is a milled cassava, which is a very common food staple.

CHURCH IS SO MUCH MORE THAN A SUNDAY MORNING EVENT AND A PRAYER MEETING EACH WEDNESDAY. IT CAN BE THE PLACE OF INDUSTRY THAT IS PARTICULARLY AIMED AT YOUR COMMUNITY'S NEEDS AND RESOURCES.

Evangelism must obviously deal with personal poverty, or at least, where the person or family's next meal will come from. Feeding the hungry must happen if we hope for them to hear about the love of Christ.

We visited a "piggery." A Free Methodist Church runs a pig farm which employs church families and will pay for church expenses. Their community is impressed with this type of church! We also visited a "Gari Factory" which employs at least 25 church family members! Gari is a milled cassava, which is a very common food staple.

We were given the gift of beautiful shirts woven by another church family which employs several church family members

in their business. Another church family has a vision to farm the cashew trees on their property. We have spoken with Tearfund about helping church families in northern farming communities with sustainable farming. Many of our churches have started schools.

Inspiring! Church families who, out of a desire to "evangelize" but live in poverty, have been given sanctified imaginations to create industry. These industries offer the dignity of work, friendship development in the community and an opportunity to tell others about Jesus.

Why am I mentioning all this here? To inspire us to take a lead from our Ghanaian brothers and sisters. Church is so much more than a Sunday morning event and a prayer meeting each Wednesday. It can be a place of industry that is particularly aimed at your community's needs and resources. It should be the place of light in a community, a shining body of believers who are eager to play a significant role in their community. Not just to survive as a church, but to impact the community they are entrusted with.

In this new season, the FMCIC must distinguish herself as a people of peace who disciple, PRAY and pursue holy industry.

Written by Bishop Cliff Fletcher





Thank You!

Through Tearfund, you're saving lives.

Thanks to generous support from the Bishop's Relief Fund, and FMCiC churches across Canada, thousands of people received life-saving food, water, and shelter in the aftermath of the Syria-Türkiye earthquake.

Learn more about how you can partner with the local church around the world to end extreme poverty and bring holistic transformation by calling [Don Miller](tel:6133716246) at (613) 371-6246.

tearfund

Following Jesus where the need is greatest

CHURCH HEALTH & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

FINDING HOPE-FILLED STORIES AROUND US

It seems like lots of talk around the church these days is full of doom and gloom. To be honest, the church does face some very real challenges as it enters this next chapter of the story. But so often when there are challenges, we can forget that God is at work among us. There are good things happening too and that should give us hope as we continue to work through whatever challenges there may be. So, let me briefly remind you of some good news that we hope will help bring **The Good News**.



1 No church has to face this next chapter alone. Besides the National Leadership Team, every church has a Regional Coach who is available to help them as they ask questions, look forward and pursue church health. Don't know who your Coach is? Check out the FMCIC website, find them, pray for them and engage them through your pastor or church board.

2 No pastor has to face this next chapter alone. There are networks available for a pastor to meet with, learn with, pray with and process with. And there are other aids available too. Just ask.

3 The Women in Leadership team is up and running. They are going to help us celebrate, teach and live out our theology. They are going to share stories to inspire and they are going to offer practical help to all leaders. It's going to be good stuff. They have already hosted a couple of online gatherings, interacted with MEGAP and SCOD, developed and sent out a survey and started work on a mentoring strategy. We need to celebrate that.

4 The Leadership Team has been hard at work looking for ways to encourage leadership health. They have renewed the focus of Pastors' Conference so that it is helpful, practical and encouraging to pastors. And they are working on resources that will help pastors and leaders pursue spiritual, vocational and personal health. This team also oversees the handing out of scholarship money (in partnership with the Lorne Park foundation literally thousands of dollars are given out to students pursuing ministry and pastors expanding their education) and internships (usually three to four a year as funding is available) as we continue to develop our leaders. Yes, leaders are still getting help as they develop in our system. We need to celebrate that.





Finding Hope-Filled Stories Around Us continued ...

The Ministerial Education Guidance and Placement Committee is auditing its process so that it is helping those who are tracking step fully into what God has planned for them while making sure the questions it asks, materials it requires and growth areas it assigns help to develop the kind of leadership the church and Canada need for this next chapter. There is an emphasis in helping those tracking while also ensuring there is an understanding of our FMCIC ethos. And they are doing this all while conducting their regular work. Regular interviews for those individuals tracking for ministry, contact and follow up with candidates and

foundational courses all still happen. Yes, there are still people tracking for ministry in the FMCIC. We need to celebrate that.

There is good stuff we need to celebrate and be thankful for. We don't ignore whatever challenges lay ahead but we are grateful that God still calls and equips people to lead His church. Celebrate with us as we do our best to help people fully step into all that God has called them to. This is good news

Written by Marc McAlister, Director of Church Health and Leadership Development for The Free Methodist Church in Canada.



REGIONAL C)OACHES

Regional coaches come alongside pastors, boards and churches to equip and encourage them.

fmcic.ca/regional-coaches



CHURCH HEALTH CHECKLIST

Helping to aid pastors, boards, and ministry leaders as they discuss and evaluate the health and ministry life of their church.

fmcic.ca/church-health-checklist



PASTORAL HEALTH

Healthy churches require healthy pastoral leadership.

fmcic.ca/pastoral-health



Imagine

Just imagine the difference you can make in the future of your church and camp and ministries around the world.

But you need a plan to make this happen.

We have made it free for you to create an estate plan with our partners **Advisors with Purpose**. Completely confidential and with no obligation—Just the impact you make.

Free Methodists want to introduce people to Jesus,
Change the world one person at a time,
And alleviate suffering.



**FREE
METHODIST
CHURCH
IN CANADA**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
FMCIC.CA/AWP**



FEATURE

CALLED TO SERVE

When we think of our Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) we often think of the soldiers, sailors and airman we see in history lessons, on the news and for some as family and friends. On November 11th each year we stop and remember the countless sacrifices made throughout history in the name of peace and Canadian values. Did you know that the Free Methodist Church

in Canada has ordained members who serve in the Royal Canadian Chaplain Service (RCChS)? The RCChS website describes the CAF Chaplaincy this way: The Royal Canadian Chaplain Service (RCChS) contributes to the operational effectiveness of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) by supporting the moral and spiritual wellbeing of military personnel

and their families – domestically and internationally. CAF chaplains attend to the needs of all members of the CAF and their families, whether they identify with a particular Faith Tradition, have no specific spiritual/faith practice, belief or custom, or are spiritually curious. We were privileged to be able to interview one of our FMCIC Chaplains, Major Robert Lay, who shared with us about his role, responsibilities and opportunities as a member of the CAF.

WHAT WAS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND YOU JOINING THE CAF CHAPLAINCY?

“I had spent 25 years in FMCIC congregations, and I enjoyed my work with members of the church and the broader community. When I realized that the CAF puts you in touch with people outside of established Christian tradition and that there was a need and openness the people had towards chaplains I felt called to serve there. I’ve been in the regular forces since 2010 and came in as a reservist in 2008. Reserve chaplaincy allows a person to continue with their civilian employment as a FM pastor or health care chaplain.”

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES?

“Chaplains are there to care for all the people, it’s important to keep your door open to any type of person and all people that make up the CAF and their families. It is necessary to listen well to people and attempt to be able to understand their issues and concerns, providing support for them in any way you can. When called on we provide religious services and support for members when memorial activities

are required. We meet with families when a member dies, we work with their faith community for the type of service they would like. At times you may officiate and other times you will work with their community faith leaders. You are there as a supportive presence. We do have chapels on bases and if it’s your tradition you would lead a general Protestant service with a Free Methodist distinction. There is an opportunity to lead Christians in worship services (for example on a ship that is deployed) but it is not the main role. We get to be alongside the sailors, airmen and soldiers in their daily lives and help them as well as be an advisor to their leaders. You are on call every day and night to be of service. For example, there was a new member who was nervous about basic training. I spent 45 minutes talking with them and at the end they said they felt better having talked to the chaplain. Chaplains from Christian tradition need to approach their ministry with an incarnational perspective like Jesus did when he dwelled among common people. Understanding what their lives are like, what their experiences are and Chaplains need to know how to live and work in a military context. You will have a Chain of Command and how to work within that. In your training it’s important to learn how to listen to and advise different supervisors and Chains of Command. One of the roles we have in relationship to our supervisors is to help understand the morale of the people we are serving. As a chaplain it is important to learn how to work cooperatively with chaplains from other Christian denominations and faith transitions. The CAF is attempting to change its culture; we are attempting to learn from past mistakes and find a better way to create a safe and accepting culture for all members of the CAF to work in.”

AS A CAF MEMBER YOU ARE TRAINED IN THE FIELD AND DEPLOY ALONGSIDE THOSE YOU ARE SERVING. WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR EXPERIENCES AS A CHAPLAIN WHO HAS DEPLOYED?

"I have been able to go to Norway, the Philippines and Latvia as well as participate in training in the USA army in South Carolina with a yearlong program for Clinical pastoral education with the USA Navy in Norfolk Virginia. In 2015 I was part of the DISASTER ASSISTANCE RESPONSE TEAM who went to the Philippines. I was working amongst the deployed members. The only space we had was a large gym with cots that we slept on. Everyone knew where the chaplain's cot was and they would find me there or, I would go out to the medic clinic or the engineers and talk with people in an army truck. We attempt to meet with other faith community leaders. In the Philippines it is 89% Roman Catholic. We attempt to research and understand the people there and advise our leaders on the religious and cultural context.

WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE THROUGH YOUR FAITH LENS IN THE PHILIPPINES ABOUT WORKING WITH OTHERS WHO HAVE DIFFERENT BELIEFS?

"When I listened to the people they said: It's not our place to question God, the bible tells us to be generous and help those in need. I was touched by the significance of their faith and how they found ways to help. They were exceptionally grateful that Canadians came to help them. It's humbling and makes us proud to be



Major Bob Lay receives the Special Service Medal - Expedition Bar.

Canadian. We go around the world to share the abundance we have. I have had the opportunity to work alongside Chaplains from other nations. As Canadians we have a tradition of working with a good deal of comradere and we do our best to prepare them for what they will be facing."

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVOURITE THINGS ABOUT BEING A CAF CHAPLAIN?

"It's an honour to serve the people of the CAF. My relationships with the people that I connect with is something that is incredibly important for me. Secondly, the opportunity to travel where they are going to serve. For example, we had done training in Norway for a month with the CAF members, watching them practice their skills; and then going to the Philippines struck by natural disaster and see our soldiers at work. They provided clean water to the people when they operated reverse osmosis and turned dirty water into exceptionally clean water. The locals were so happy and appreciative to have clean water. Walking alongside a young Canadian wanting to serve his country and

provide clean water was incredible. Being in Latvia, I was able to support members as they received really good training before they deploy and work and live in Eastern Europe in a difficult time. To live daily life with our CAF members as they go through training and then live out that training in their work is an honour.”

HOW DO CAF CHAPLAINS STAY CONNECTED TO THE FMCIC?

“Where there is a local church within proximity, and our schedule allows, we will try to go there. When there is not, we attempt to stay connected by reading Cliffs Notes, and following FMCIC social media. We have a Free Methodist Chaplain network that meets together when possible, and we attend General Conference and Regional Gatherings, and we also try to attend events virtually.”

WHAT IS IT LIKE FOR CHAPLAIN FAMILIES?

“Like all CAF families they have to learn how to deal with times of separation and change. Each family has to find its own way of adjusting to each new context it is in. We had been in Church Ministry for 25 years. When we moved to our first posting I was suddenly gone. It was a big adjustment for us both. A military spouse has to learn how to come into a new rhythm of doing life. It can be harder when there are children involved as you are also navigating and supporting the changes they are facing. There is a relationship enrichment program that I have been able to lead on weekends and my wife Jennifer has been able to be part of that. When you’re doing relationship work and leading couples on a weekend it is a wonderful opportunity to see couples who want to learn how to

strengthen skills in communication and conflict resolution.”

IS THERE A PARTICULAR BIBLE VERSE OR PRAYER THAT HELPS YOU THROUGH THE DIFFICULT TIMES?

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. – 2 Corinthians 12:9 “This verse is important because there are times you are working and living in hostile conditions. You are in the field with them. You learn to live and work in a variety of conditions and to be alongside them in all they are experiencing. You need to take your turn to serve so you are not a burden.”

HOW CAN YOUR FMCIC FAMILY PRAY FOR OUR CHAPLAINS?

“Pray for them to have caring hearts, and the ability to listen carefully and effectively to each person they come in contact with. This is the best way to show the love of God that has been shed abroad in our hearts.”

We are grateful for your service Major Robert Lay and thank you for taking the time to share a bit about your valuable role in the CAF.

If you would like to learn more about the Royal Canadian Chaplain Service please visit their website at: www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/programs/royal-canadian-chaplain.

Written by Padre Bob Lay, a Major in the Canadian Armed Forces, currently stationed at CFB Meaford.

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FM Camp or FM Ministry





NATIONAL PRAYER TEAM LEARNING TO PRAY

WHY IS PRAYER SOMETHING INTO WHICH YOU INVEST YOUR TIME?

Ken: Why I am personally involved is because over the years, since I was a kid, the Lord has given me this heart for prayer. I see it as part of the way God has shaped me. Prayer is the key that unlocks the power of God in our lives personally and in the church, even Jesus understood that. We give lip service to prayer. We intellectually believe in prayer, but it's the doing of it where we fall short. Paul says

that he plants and Apollos waters but it is God that gives the increase. As pastors and Christians we get caught up in the planting and watering, but how do we get the increase of God happening? I believe that it's prayer. The apostles said they needed to give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. They knew that those two things go together.

Linda: Prayer has been something that God has put on my heart. I had a desire to pray and also have a strong work ethic so I work very hard. The thing that can happen is, the harder you work the less

time there is for prayer. I think there is a reason for that. We don't fight against flesh and blood or principalities and power. Power comes through prayer. As we seek and stay close to God the power is there. The farther away we drift or when we are prayerless or minimize prayer, we make it much more difficult for ourselves in terms of ministry. I discovered that en route as I processed the call of God on my life pastorally as well as being a disciple of Christ. I came to a place where I saw it clearly, that we need more prayer across our denomination and the thought occurred to me that if not me, who? If not now, when? It was the Holy Spirit working because those two questions stood out in stark contrast to everything else. I realized that now I must, whereas I had a desire to pray but there was the pressure of demands on every side of ministry keeping me busy and the other side was, I saw this and had a desire to pray. On one of our first prayer Zoom calls David Green said "You go from desire to discipline to delight." I had the desire, prayer is the discipline and I started growing in delight, or as I call it joy.

WAS PRAYER SOMETHING THAT EVEN FROM A YOUNG AGE YOU FELT DRAWN TO? WAS IT SOMETHING THAT WAS INSTILLED IN YOU AS A CHILD OR TEEN THAT YOU CARRIED INTO YOUR ADULT YEARS?

Linda: I did not come from a Free Methodist background. We eventually became a family that went to church regularly but we did not hear the gospel preached, although it was implicit in the information that we got. I remember a time when I got up very early one morning as a small child, (not in school yet), it was bitter cold and my father had just left for work. The car stalled at the end of the driveway and wouldn't

start. We didn't have much money and I remember him talking to my mother in frustration and I felt prompted to pray about it. My dad went back out and was able to get it started. It was impressed upon me that God hears prayer and answers. A simple prayer like that and He answered. The weight of that distress lifted off my parents. I was just an observer in that situation my parents were experiencing, but that impressed me strongly. There were times and occasions throughout my childhood and young years that God answered prayers. However, I didn't answer the call to prayer until later in my life. I came to the Lord when I was 30. From there I started to see how glorious the call to prayer was.

Ken: There was something for both Linda and me that God was stirring up as young people and it's the gift from God, I understand that. The gift of prayer — meaning intercessors. Sometimes prayer might come a little easier for us than others because of that, but that doesn't mean we do the praying and others do the work. It's like the gift of evangelism. When God gives a person the gift of evangelism, that doesn't mean they are the only ones to do it. They are to inspire the rest of us to evangelize. I remember being taught prayers by my mom, like the Lord's prayer, and started asking what the prayers meant. I remember praying the Lord's prayer regularly and putting my heart into it even into my adult years, though I was not a Christian yet. When I did become a Christian, I began to understand more deeply how to pray and exercise this prayer muscle. Until it affected everywhere I went in my churches, prayer became a high priority. When I think about my mission in life it is to be one with Jesus in relationship and in mission. Prayer is not only a way to get the mission done, it's also the way to get close to Jesus.

Note: The gift of prayer meaning intercessors.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

Romans 8:26

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO YOUNGER GENERATIONS ABOUT PRAYER AND WHY IT MATTERS? WHY DOES IT MATTER FOR PASTORS AND MINISTRY LEADERS LIKE YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S PASTORS TO PRAY?

Linda: Anytime I have heard a child pray it has been so incredibly pure and beautiful. It goes straight to your heart and captures it. I had an incident when I was studying for seminary. We were financially very tight, with all the pressure of final exams and figuring out where God wanted us, there was a lot of stress. I was calling out to God, and no one but Glen and I knew what was going on. We were attending Wesley Chapel one Sunday morning and I bumped into someone I knew and her four-year-old daughter. I scrunched down to talk to the little girl and the mom asked her to share the song she learned in Sunday school. The little girl sang the song My God is so Big. As she sang the line "there is nothing my God cannot do for you" she reached out and pointed at me. This powerful message came from this tiny little girl that God was bigger than my distress. The peace of God that surpasses all understanding began to settle my heart and wash my fears away. It took a little child to lead me. Throughout my years I have so enjoyed hearing children pray. Intergenerational prayer is a gift for us and I am there!

Ken: The simple answer is you have not because you ask not. This is a principle of the Kingdom, to recognize that all good things come from God. We are dependent on Him. Adam and Eve thought they could live independently from God and have a good life without God. Over the centuries God has been teaching us that apart from Him we can do nothing, but with Him, we can do everything. Prayer is a major link between God, His power and grace and the needs of the world. It's an invisible thing, we don't see it and that's why it's hard. Prayer is an effort but we have to determine we are going to learn how to pray. It's like anything in life that is worth having. It's an effort. God teaches us through needing physical things, then we ask for those. Then we begin to ask for bigger-picture needs until we are asking for things of the kingdom. The younger generations will get there by praying. One of the big keys is that there are some young people who pray big prayers of maturity, but they have learned how to pray. You need your own personal prayer life, but you also need to be around people who pray. Go to a prayer meeting, pray with others. The younger generation can learn how to pray by being around others who know how to pray.

Linda and Ken: Exposing children to people who know how to pray is important. Are the children seeing prayer in church services? Start off with prayer when the children are in the service. Have prayer point people invited into Sunday school times to show the kids how to pray. Children get to see and experience prayer

with adults and each other. Having prayer alter times where children are welcome is a beautiful thing. Children will get it by watching. By making prayer a vital part of your ministry at the alter and invite the children up to be a part of it, is so helpful for children to see that prayer is an important part of faith. When pastors, ministry leaders and the church pray with children amazing things happen.

HOW CAN WE AS THE FMCIC AND INDIVIDUALS PRAY?

Linda: We are so grateful that the Bishop is behind us as a National Prayer Team and participates in prayer with us. He has given us a vision for prayer. We are so grateful for Ken's leadership when the ground was dry hard. His faithful, steadfast perseverance in prayer has led the way for the rest of the team. The Lord has blessed that.

Prayer point people in churches are vitally important. We have resources and training for churches for prayer. We have a monthly prayer meeting and also have been doing a daily noon prayer Monday to Saturday's that anyone can participate in. Participate, join in and pray with us. These are ways to get associated and stirred up in prayer. We pray into the FMCIC and the nation. We can impact our nation for a healthy church within the reach of every Canadian and beyond, and that starts with prayer. We have a statement of what a house of prayer looks like which can be used as a resource.

Ken: We need to aim for the Kingdom of God in our prayers. If you want to see people come to Jesus prayer is so



important. The disciples went to Jesus asking to be taught how to pray. They looked to Jesus, and saw He was a man of prayer and it motivated them to learn how to pray. Get around people who know how and have a heart for prayer. Attend meetings, read books, go to seminars on prayer. We have resources that can assist in learning how to pray. We need to keep praying with a fervency. If you want it you have to pursue it. Prayer can refresh and renew us as well and God does that when we pray.

There is always a revival of prayer before there is a revival of power. We are lighting a fire and inviting people to come a get warmed up by it and take it back and warm up their churches.

If you would like to learn more about prayer visit our website at: www.fmcic.ca/prayer

Written by Starla Klinger, Communications Content Developer for The Free Methodist Church in Canada



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CONNECTING OUR RETIRED MINISTERS

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- Plan for the surviving spouse
- and more....





WHAT'S
YOUR
STORY?

GENEROSITY + STEWARDSHIP

CHOOSING TO LIVE GENEROUSLY

Generosity is the overflow of a grateful heart. It helps deepen our relationship with God and others, clears the way so we can focus on the right thing and ends the fight to hold onto everything. Generosity allows us to release everything to His purpose, which bears fruit and brings joy in all circumstances.

WHAT WE DISCOVERED IS HOW MUCH THE GOSPEL IS WRITTEN OVER OUR GENEROSITY.

There is a reason why stories of generosity grab your attention. Generosity stories are sticky, inspirational, and contagious. This is probably why the Bible is filled with them.

- Abraham spontaneously giving 10% out of an overflow of gratitude for what God had done for him. **Genesis 14:20, Hebrews 7:6**
- God's people bringing more than enough to meet the need that Moses tells them to stop! **Exodus 36:1-7**
- The Good Samaritan looking after a stranger that was left for dead. **Luke 10:25-37**
- A Widow giving out of poverty all she had. **Luke 21:1-4**
- A collector of money transformed into a generous giver. **Luke 19**
- A church from the depths of their extreme poverty generously give out of extreme Joy. **1 Corinthians 8:1-2**
- Jesus, although he was very rich, became very poor so that through his poverty, we might become rich. **2 Corinthians 8:9**

The theme running through all these stories is sacrificial, faithful generosity out of gratitude which creates great joy.

During a Generosity Listening Tour of twenty-one FM churches, we heard stories of generosity in our local churches. We made a few of them into short videos so that others could hear them.

- A pastor's story about learning to give – even when there wasn't enough
- A treasurer's story about giving 30% of the budget away
- A church story about tithing on their building fund to help others build
- And more

What we discovered is how much the Gospel is written over our generosity.

What we started to ask ourselves is 'How am I going to live generously today?' In one of the Generosity Listening Tours, a pastor said, "There is something connected with generosity in our hearts... My tip with generosity is this: to not be generous is like closing yourself off from a generous God. And that is scary to me."

We were so moved by these generosity stories, we wanted to hear more. We would love to hear about your generosity story – about your church's generosity, about the impact it made in someone's life, about the joy that came because of it.

If you have a generosity story to share go to: fmcic.ca/the-generous-life.

Can't wait to hear about it!

Written by Sandy Crozier, Director of Generosity + Stewardship for The Free Methodist Church in Canada.



VISIT THE GENEROSTY + STEWARDSHIP
SITE TO LEARN MORE
fmcic.ca/stewardship



INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT MISSIONARIES HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE!

We are here to help congregations discern and discover intercultural missions here at home and around the world. We want to help the church grow in empathy through the power of the Holy Spirit. We want to help educate those humble enough to learn from (and not just about) another culture. And we want to help equip faithful followers of Jesus to move and be mobilized to meet the needs others.

Intercultural missions are alive and well across the Free Methodist Church in Canada. We're all called to be missionaries right where we are, so the term "intercultural" is important because it emphasizes our responsibility to listen, learn and build bridges across cultural borders and boundaries in the name of Jesus!

Here in Canada, more and more Free Methodists are discerning and discovering the opportunities we have to welcome newcomers and minister to international students. Many are also experiencing a powerful work of the Spirit, as they grow in relationship to their Indigenous neighbours, and take responsibility for truth and reconciliation.

Internationally, we continue to learn from

and support our Free Methodist brothers and sisters in Ghana and Sri Lanka, as they do the work of missionaries in their own culture and context. Recently, Bishop Cliff led a team to Ghana where we visited Superintendent Ahmed, and the whole Provisional Annual Conference and heard many inspiring stories from pastors and church planters, including Pastor Boakye and Blessings Society Free Methodist Church Plant, in the town of Busunu. Pastor Boakye is a highly respected businessman in his community and he is ministering in a predominantly Muslim town. Recently, Blessings Society was bequeathed a large portion of land, and now the congregation is praying for the fulfillment of an inspiring vision to build a school and a hospital on this land, which will change and transform the lives of their neighbours in the name of Jesus!



Large portion of land bequeathed to Blessings Society.



Pastor Daniel oversees church plants outside the city of Techiman.

Or the story of Pastor Daniel, who oversees three different church plants outside the city of Techiman. He is raising up young leaders in three different communities, and even though his motorcycle recently broke down, he is persistent and faithful. Spending hours each week riding his bicycle to the surrounding villages (sort of like a Circuit Rider), to teach and encourage each congregation and their leadership.

Or the story of Pastor Emmanuel, who was gifted a motorcycle thanks to Canadian support, so that he can commute to the village of Wuraso several times a week. In this village the Faith Society Free Methodist Church Plant gathers for worship. And even though their meeting house does not yet have

four walls, and several neighbours cause disruption trying to discredit their worship space, Pastor Emmanuel and this young congregation persevere and strive to show the love of Jesus Christ indiscriminately!

Once again, intercultural missions are alive and well across Canada and around the world. If your church would like to hear more inspiring stories, and learn how you can take responsibility for being a missionary right where you are, then please contact Pastor Adam and the Intercultural Engagement Team: adam.kline@fmcic.ca

Written by Adam Kline, Intercultural Engagement Team Leader with The Free Methodist Church in Canada.



Faith Society is a young church plant showing the love of Christ in their community.

VISIT THE WEBSITE FOR INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT RESOURCES LIKE:



INDIGENOUS MINISTRIES

We pray that congregations across Canada will reach out in friendship to their Indigenous neighbours and begin to take responsibility for reconciliation

fmcic.ca/indigenous



INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT TEAM

The Intercultural Engagement Team is here to help your congregation discern and discover intercultural missions at home and around the world.

fmcic.ca/intercultural-engagement-team



NEW TO CANADA

It is our hope and prayer that congregations across Canada will grow in love for their neighbours by practicing radical hospitality in the name of Jesus.

fmcic.ca/new-to-canada



LGBTQ2S+ TASK FORCE

DISCOVERING THE VALUE OF ACTIVE LISTENING

It is a challenge when you've been called to listen — it's tough to discern when it's your time to speak.

When the LGBTQ2S+ task force was invited, one by one (representing a variety of personal perspectives on the matter) to serve the Free Methodist Church in Canada by facilitating the current conversation on behalf of the Board of Administration, I doubt that any of those who agreed to do so were naive enough to presume the road ahead would be easy and fun.

Denominations all around us were having similar conversations and none of their work appeared to be easy or fun either. Nevertheless, the task force moved forward into its collective vocation with hope, knowing Free Methodists had historically engaged in discourse together over a variety of matters of theology, faith and conviction—it was part of the ethos. The work has been and continues to be challenging, but the LGBTQ2S+ task force

believes in the value of the conversation and the work that must be done in order to listen well to the variety of voices, and to hear from those who do not typically ring in with their own perspectives on particular issues.

Setbacks have made some of the benchmarks on the originally agreed-upon timeline unattainable. However, creative approaches to listening such as focus groups and personal phone calls continue to emerge as the task force presses onward. As long as there is a strong sense that a rather large portion of the FMCIC Conference has yet to share, the task force will continue to be committed to creatively listening well.

There have been some difficult times together because, as noted earlier, a variety of perspectives are represented within the group. There have been calls when everyone has shared how they are doing with the conversation- physically, emotionally and spiritually- and there has been weeping, frustration and all kinds of honesty. Such meetings have been cathartic and unifying, not only in listening, but also in finally speaking, even if just to each other. By listening to one another, unity is fostered; this is the desire

for the FMCIC movement as a whole. As James Calvin Davis attests, "... to be invested in the unity of the church does not require that we ignore our differences or strive for an artificial (if impossible) theological uniformity. The unity of the church has never depended on singular agreement."

After sharing, the group goes to prayer. They pray for one another and for each other's families, especially for those whose loved ones self-identify as LGBTQ2S+. Then, in the strength of the healing that comes from actively participating in intercession for one another, they pray for the Free Methodist Church in Canada and the important conversation that is being undertaken. They pray for the Bishop and the National Leadership Team. They pray for the leaders and the churches who are earnestly navigating these issues and seeking clarity around them. They pray for you. In this process, the time for prayer is the time for the listeners to speak.





Written by Darryl Dozlaw, the Pastor of Riversdale Neighbours, a church plant in Saskatoon, SK, who sits on the Board of Administration and the LGBTQ2S+ Task Force.



**VISIT THE TASK TEAM
PAGE TO LEARN MORE**

fmcic.ca/task-forces/lgbtq2s

There you will find
information like:

-  Why is there an LGBTQ2S+ Team?
-  Read through the Mandate and discover what the Team has been asked to do.
-  Watch "An FMCIC view on Biblical Sexuality"
-  Other helpful resources



RETIRED MINISTERS THE NEXT CHAPTER

Retirees are members of the General Conference and have gifts and experience that can serve the church. We value our seniors and want to encourage local churches to offer retirees the opportunity to use their gifts when and where they can.

Good news! The Free Methodist Church in Canada, and its pre-retirees, along with its retired ministers and spouses, share a desire to more effectively connect – each learning from, sharing with and encouraging the other. For its part, the denomination has established the Retired Ministers Team (RMT) with a stirring mandate to:

- 1 Holistically care for our retirees as well as offer support to ministers and spouses within ten years of being eligible to retire;
- 2 Encourage and facilitate the continuing productive service of our retirees; and
- 3 Advocate for and support pastors and spouses going through the retirement process.

The Team began its work in April 2021 and in early 2022 the RMT moved to conduct surveys, focus groups and key stakeholder interviews among the Team's constituency. Not surprisingly, "*Connections Matter*" emerged as the most common theme of respondents.

This and other important feedback were critical inputs in formulating RMT's comprehensive Three-year Strategic Plan: **"Connecting and Empowering Ministerial Retirees Initiative."** The Plan sets out a suite of defined "*Next Chapter*" strategies designed to enable and strengthen meaningful connections and information-sharing among retirees and pre-retirees. These strategies have been inspiring and guiding RMT into a range of interesting activities that got underway in 2022 and are continuing across 2023.

Among the key activities, RMT held three

JEFF'S TALK ENCOURAGED THE 30 PARTICIPANTS TO THINK OF RETIREMENT AS A TIME TO LAY DOWN THEIR PAST WORK AND IDENTITIES AND ENTER A NEW PERIOD OF REST, INTERNAL RENEWAL AND THEN ENGAGEMENT IN OPPORTUNITIES WHICH GOD OPENS TO THEM AS RETIREES.

in-person "*Next Chapter Gatherings*" of retirees in 2022 in eastern and western Ontario, and Saskatchewan. Please watch for announcements from RMT about similar Gatherings now being planned for the summer of 2023, including one in Quebec as well.

In late 2022 RMT released (by email and in a Christmas package) the first issue of a bi-monthly Newsletter to connect its entire constituency – with eight pages of news, stories and opportunities. The second issue of the informative and encouraging Newsletter already has reached the constituency.

Early in 2023 RMT was proud to sponsor a series of weekly half-hour "*Let's Talk*" virtual get-togethers during lunch hour in Ontario but attended by participants across Canada. The sessions afforded a time of meet-and-greet, followed by a short video by Dave Van Oppen with tips on navigating and living well in retirement, and leading into group

RETIRED MINISTERS TEAM



Colleen Zavrel



Stephen Bond



Lorie Buffam



Debbie Hogeboom



Vic Stonehouse



Grant Sigsworth



Brenda Tursa

discussion. The Team was excited to have so many attend! The topics included *"Retiring Well, It Is All About the Cash Flow,"* i.e. "Will I have enough when I retire?" Then *"Fraud, Keeping your Money During Retirement"* and why are older adults more vulnerable? "Credit" was the third video topic; then *"The Kids and Retirement,"* i.e. being aware of your needs and theirs and communicating your retirement plan to them. The five-week session ended with looking at *"The Surviving Spouse."*

Also to date in 2023 a nationwide Virtual Gathering took place. The guest presenter was Jeff Haanen, author of *"An Uncommon Guide to Retirement: Finding*

God's Purpose for the Next Season of Life". (All retirees received a complimentary copy of this book in RMT's Christmas package.) Jeff's talk encouraged the 30 participants to think of retirement as a time to lay down their past work and identities and enter a new period of rest, internal renewal and then engagement in opportunities which God opens to them as retirees. For those who were not able to join the sessions, the video is being posted on the FMCIC website under the Retired Ministers tab.

Do join the Retired Ministers Team in praying for God's wisdom and blessing on efforts to help meet the needs of each (pre-)retiree and spouse in our constituency.

Don't hesitate to reach out to the RMT via email to rmt@fmcic.ca.

Written by Colleen Zavrel, Retired Ministers Team Lead.



VISIT THE TASK TEAM PAGE TO LEARN MORE

fmcic.ca/retired-ministers-group/

On the site you will find:

- Upcoming RMT Events
- Video Resources
- The RMT's Mandate
- Strategic Plan
- Other helpful resources

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FEATURE

WESTON'S JOURNEY: A CHURCH FINDS WAYS TO SHOW ITS LOVE

Suffering and grief of its members is something all churches face. It's part of a fallen humanity, one that can hit anyone at any time. How do we as a church support people when it happens? Because it will happen. How do we walk alongside the suffering when we ourselves are struggling?

Our son Weston was born with a rare

disease called Zellweger Syndrome. This rare disease gave him a life expectancy of six months to a year. While pregnant with him the doctors had no idea that this is what he had. All of the testing and ultrasounds came back negative for the countless conditions in our Canadian prenatal testing. We were told at most he would be a smaller boy with clubbed feet which could be fixed at a young

OUR CHURCH FAMILY CAME TOGETHER TO SUPPORT US IN WAYS THAT HAD AN IMMEDIATE AND ALSO LASTING IMPACT ON OUR LIVES.

age. You can imagine our surprise when the nurse and doctor rushed him away when he was born. This began our month-long stay at the children's hospital and five months going between home and the children's hospice.

It's hard to put into words what we went through those days. The knowledge that our boy would not grow up left us heartbroken. The gratitude that we got to hold him, love him and share his story comforted us in our pain and grief. The grief began the moment we got the diagnosis because our future with him was taken away from us.

Looking back on our Weston journey we know that our church played a major role in how we got through it. The outpouring of generous care and support we received from our pastors and fellow congregation members

showed us the love of God in our suffering. Knowing God was there every step of the journey gave us hope and assurance that when Weston was called home he would be pain-free in the arms of the Heavenly Father.

What did our church do for us that made such a huge impact? It starts with our pastors. They continually checked in on us and came to see us. They prayed with us, cried with us and held our hands as Weston had his 57th seizure that day. They did not abandon us or push us off on someone else because it was uncomfortable. They baptized Weston, held him and thanked the Lord for him being part of our church. They answered question after question when people were struggling with a child being terminally ill. Their love and compassion for our family was evident in how they cared for us and how they held one amazing celebration of life for Weston which included bowties, french-fries and this little light of mine.

You might be wondering how French-fries became part of Weston's service as it seems an uncommon choice of food for the circumstances. A family in our church blessed us with a gift card for Five Guys Burgers and Fries. It was the closest restaurant to the children's hospice. One evening

our nurse encouraged us to go out just the two of us expressing it was important to have some time together away from the hospital. We had never left Weston before but she reassured us she would call us if anything changed and that she would personally hold him the entire time we were away. Reluctantly we went to Five Guys. That night was the first time since Weston was born

EACH MEMBER OF OUR CHURCH PLAYED A ROLE IN HOW WE WENT THROUGH THE JOURNEY. THE PRAYERS, MEALS, MESSAGES OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND GIFT CARDS IMPACTED US. WE FELT SUPPORTED, LOVED AND THAT OUR SON MATTERED.

that we felt like we could breathe. We made some big decisions that night and decided that once a week when we were at the hospice we would go to Five Guys. When

Weston passed away and we emailed the store manager asking if they would let us order a large amount of fries their reply was overwhelming. They had heard of our story and our time at the restaurant and wanted to bless us by donating the fries for his celebration of life.

Our church family came together to support us in ways that had an immediate and also lasting impact on our lives. While in the hospital we found ourselves not having the time or energy to really take care of our needs the way we normally would. I still remember the day, and the couple, that brought us fresh veggies and fruit to eat which started an ever-flowing meal train that sustained us through the exhausting days. We were so very grateful for home cooked and nutritious meals. When our bodies were properly nourished we were able to think more clearly and have the energy we needed to get us through the emotional days.

For anyone who has been in a hospital for a prolonged period of time you know how expensive parking can be. We received a parking gift card from members of our church that covered the month-long duration we were there. This was no



MINISTRY CAN
BE HARD,
EMOTIONALLY
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WALK ALONG
SIDE AND SEEK
WAYS YOU CAN
SUPPORT AND
ASSIST THOSE IN
NEED.

small amount but wow did it ever help us out. To have that financial burden lifted from us meant we could use our limited resources elsewhere, like covering the cost of oxygen and medication. I still get goosebumps thinking of the overwhelming generosity of our church family.

We were getting so many calls, emails, and messages asking for updates that we decided to start a website about Weston and our journey with him. We would try to update it daily and when we didn't our pastors would get a call asking them why it hasn't been and if they have an update. People from around the world, and across Canada, had fallen in love with Weston and were following our website for

CAN YOU WALK THEIR DOG, DO A LOAD OF LAUNDRY OR HOLD THEIR HAND WHILE THEY POUR OUT THEIR TEARS TO GOD? AS A CHURCH WILL YOU BE THERE TO REMIND THEM OF GOD'S LOVE?

information on Zellweger Syndrome. God used his little life in a big way. We had grandparents from India reading our website because their grandchild was recently diagnosed. We had messages from people encouraging us in our walk with the Lord and others pouring out their grief stories. This website was also the place we announced to the world that Weston had gone home to be with Jesus.

When we walked into the sanctuary for Weston's service the entire place was packed with people. Not just our family but people who followed our story and came to support us even though they did not know us personally. People travelled to be there from other cities and provinces. Our church had to suddenly accommodate a lot more people than expected but they did it with joyful hearts. We didn't have to worry about a thing that day and to me that is one of the biggest gifts our church gave us.

In lieu of flowers we asked people to donate to the children's hospice. We received an email from the hospice stating that the donations in Weston's honour were enough to buy some much needed equipment equalling thousands

of dollars. Again, we were so moved by people's generosity and how it would have a lasting impact for years to come! Each member of our church played a role in how we went through the journey. The prayers, meals, messages of encouragement and gift cards impacted us. We felt supported, loved and that our son mattered. Our pastors walked along side us even though it was difficult. Our church family accommodated us when we could be there on a Sunday and served the Lord through hosting Weston's celebration of life. Making the coffee, doing up the service cards, cleaning up after were all ways in which they contributed and supported us.

When people are facing difficult situations like suffering and grief your church can have an impact. Pray and seek ways to support and encourage. Ministry can be hard, emotionally draining and difficult but it is also life changing, hope giving and what we are called to do. Walk along side and seek ways you can support and assist those in need. Pray with and for them. Can you make a meal, buy a gift card or offer to drive someone to an appointment? Can you walk their dog, do a load of laundry or hold their hand while they pour out their tears to God? As a church will you be there to remind them of God's love? Will you stand by them even if their suffering is long? Will you hold steadfastly to the truth of God's Word? In my experience the church is a place of worship, spiritual growth and support when I need it. I too am called to serve when there is a need and for me that is part of being in the family of Christ.

**Written by Weston's Mom: Starla Klinger,
Communications Content Developer for The
Free Methodist Church in Canada**



ANNIVERSARIES

RECOGNIZING OUR ORDAINED MINISTERS

We want to celebrate, affirm and honour our Pastors by recognizing their ordination anniversary dates. As we have not done this in some time, this year we are acknowledging everyone! Thank you for the work you do and for the many sacrifices that only Jesus sees. You are making a difference in the lives of your congregations and communities. The following is a list of all our Ordained Ministers in order of the longest-serving members.

69 years

Bastian, Donald
Burton, Kenneth

68 years

Kenny, Roy

67 years

Rensberry,
Merlyn

64 years

Taylor, Keith

63 years

Johnston, Paul

62 years

Dyer, David

59 years

Hyndman, Allan

58 years

Bull, Carl

57 years

Stonehouse,
Victor

56 years

Ashton,
David

55 years

Lohnes,
Keith

53 years

DeMille, Vernon

52 years

Camplin, Dennis

51 years

Carlson, Sheldon
Panton, David

50 years

Ashton, Ron

49 years

Vannest,
Maurice

47 years

Cooper, Sterling

46 years

Howick, David

45 years

Roth, Kenneth
Valentin, Jose

44 years

Eyre, Lloyd
Hanna, Stanley
Robb, Neale

43 years

Charles, Edigh
Frudd, Vernon
Legault, Georges
Moore, David

42 years

Langille, Gregory
Wightman,
Douglas

41 years

Griffin, Douglas
Hogeboom,
Deborah
Kesselring,
James
Larson,
Lawrence

40 years

Baker, John
Gifford, David
Gurnick, Thomas
Hartman,
Raymond
Merriman, Stephen

38 years

Stonehouse,
Catherine

37 years

Hogeboom, Michael
Munshaw, Vernon

36 years

Coates, Glen
Lay, Robert
Vinkle, Dale

35 years

Clyne, Terry
Dawson, Douglas
Fleming, George

The elders who
lead well are to
be considered
worthy of
double honor,
especially those
who work hard
at preaching
and teaching.

1 Timothy 5:17

35 years continued ...

Gibson, Terry
Hobden, Ronald
Kay, Kevin
Korstanje, Andre
Shaw, Paul

34 years

Hobden, Elaine
Schaefer, Joseph

33 years

Babcock, Dean
Em, Sok
Feather, Steven
Mowat, Terry
Noel, Jean-Robert
Sheffield, Daniel

32 years

MacPherson, David
Mullin, Ron
Tursa, Peter

31 years

Smith, Barry
Tursa, Brenda

30 years

Adams, Alan

29 years

Allen, Michael
Buffam, Lorraine
McAlister, Marcel

28 years

Barbour,
Jacqueline
Fletcher, Clifford
Landers, Gary

27 years

Taylor, Barry
Bandy, Kenton
Bond, Stephen
Mowchenko, Jay

26 years

Jordan, Sabrina
MacDonald, Randy
Miller, Donald
Pulham, Gregory
Wolfe, Mary-Elsie

25 years

Dixon, Glenn
Dixon, Linda

24 years

Keller, William
Peterson, Rodney

23 years

Massey, Daniel

21 years

Peetoom, Jim

20 years

Cornfield, Bruce
Jeyarajah, Sritharan
Munshaw, Robert
Stonehouse, Joan
Umazekabiri, Nathan

19 years

Graham, Daniel
Natividad, Elisabeth

18 years

Atton, David
Clifford, Diane
Jansen, Daniel
Siebert, Jared
Tompkins, Kevin

17 years

Ali, Ousman
Elford, Gregory
Haggett, Brenda
Henderson, Kim
Tesema, Michael
Wagar, Jennifer

16 years

Aavasalmi, Hilikka
DeWitt, Mary Lee
Gibney, Michael
Jean-Charles, Raynal
MacKay, Andrew
McEwen, Matthew
Millar, Paul
Sanambe, Pierre
Wolfe, Grant
Yonas, Abraham

15 years

An, Stephen
Mehari, Samson
Ogbogu, Keitha
Shillington,
Brandon

14 years

Greene, David
Payk, Christopher
Peterson, Barbara
Stephenson, David
Stephenson,
Katherina
Wiley, Matthew
Zak, Gerald

13 years

Bartolo, Ronald
Clermy, Edrice
Earle, Mark
Merritt, Frederick
Swanson, Trevor

12 years

Coulombe,
Germain
Crowe, Judith
Dryden, Kenneth
Ghosh,
Shonu
Kellar, Bruce
Niyonzima, Edwin
Trivers, Jane

11 years

Eng, Thomas
Harris, Dale
Lang, John

Ten years

Dozlaw, Darryl
Jobin, Joseph
Klinger, Andrew
Lindsay, Darrin
Mouland, Dyan
Reichenbach,
Philippe
Richards, Timothy
Tripp, Jason

Nine years

Bell, Brian
Collins, Adrian
Haggett, Luke
Montgomery,
Cameron

Eight years

Raymond, Holly
Spears, Benjamin
Stenhouse, Kevin

Seven years

Freeman, Seth
Grant, Jonathan
Schellenberg,
Dustin
Schuchardt, David

Six years

Ball, Dennis
Cockram,
John-Mark
Garst, Evan
Isaak, Ian
Kay, Beverly
Morris, Michael
Perry, Patty
Peters, Craig
Stewart (Mayer),
Elizabeth

Five years

Borgelin, Andre
Getchell, Cathleen
Hornibrook, Brian
Mills, Jason
Moriarity, David
Walls, Christopher
Zidor, Pierre

Four years

Anderson, Curtis
Griggs, David
Innocent, Louis
Kingston,
Ross
Kline, Adam
Ndoumai, Pierre
Park, James
(Wooram)
Pedlar, James
Powell, Dorian
Russett, Brent

Three years

Birtch, Aaron
Bruce, Leonard
Smith, Carol
Smith, Douglas
Stelmach, Todd
Utz, Shelley

Remembering without ceasing
your work of faith, and labor
of love, and patience of hope
in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the
sight of God and our Father.

1 Thessalonians 1:3

HEAVENLY FATHER, WE
THANK YOU FOR THE
MEN AND WOMEN YOU
HAVE APPOINTED AS OUR
PASTORS. THANK YOU FOR
BLESSING OUR PASTORS
WITH THEIR LEADERSHIP
AND WISDOM. THANK YOU
FOR LEADING, DIRECTING,
AND PROTECTING THEIR
FAMILIES.

Two years

Boutin, Wilder
Casement,
Kathleen
Found, Blake
Isaak, Jessica
Lane, Tyler
Lauber, Alyson
Mills, Erika
Platz, Benjamin
Solomon, Milton

One year

McGale, Bernard
Prakash, Nathaniel



CHURCH PLANTING

MAKING TIME TO LISTEN

It feels like all of Canada is currently in a time of change and adaptation. The past few years have moved us through a socially traumatic experience. I get a sense that many people are tired of hearing about the pandemic and simply want to move forward and get on with their lives. I get it, I feel that way too sometimes. However, I believe we do harm by ignoring the impact of the pandemic and its ripple effects on us, personally and socially. We have wounds, some of which have not yet healed. All of us will carry scars from this experience throughout the remainder of our lifetime. Just as people need rehabilitation after a major physical injury, I believe we need spiritual rehabilitation after our

experience through a life-altering, global pandemic.

The reality is, things have shifted, whether by our hand or not, and we are no longer the same. This goes for us personally, our churches, and our denomination. Big changes occurred at National Office. At the end of 2022, a restructuring was announced. Many departments and people are impacted by this shift, including the Church Planting department. It will take time to figure out how these changes will be implemented, but the goal is to provide improved support to our churches. Another change – another adaptation.

As we move through continued changes and adaptations, my prayer for our denomination is for healing. I hope you will make time to listen to God and see how He is calling us to heal. The future of the church in Canada is in God's hands. Yet we are told that we are Jesus' hands and feet. Therefore, Christ is embodied in us: in the hearts, minds, and bodies of each believer. In order to participate in and lead healthy churches and church plants, we ourselves need to be healthy: healthy in our hearts, minds and bodies. I don't know exactly what that looks like for you, but I challenge you to ask God about it. He'll show you. And I am confident that, if we are willing to see, God will show us the best path forward.

Jessica Isaak, is Co-Pastor at Hampton Free Methodist Church in Saskatoon, SK and the Administrative Assistant, for the FMCIC Department of Church Planting



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INTERGENERATIONAL MINISTRY

TRAIN UP A CHILD IN **THE WAY**

Scholar Christine Ross writes that intergenerational Ministry occurs when faith communities purposefully bring the “generations together in mutual serving, sharing, or learning within the core activities of the church in order to live out being the body of Christ to each other and the greater community.”

In his sermon “On Family Religion”, John Wesley preached that families should “endeavor to instruct your children, early, frequently and patiently” for “truth may

then begin to shine upon the mind, far earlier than we are apt to suppose.” As believers, we know that Scripture consistently commands us to pass on

THE DIFFERENT GENERATIONS CAN FIND A LEVEL OF INTERACTION TOGETHER THAT HELPS THEM ALL IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD, OTHERS AND THEMSELVES.

the truth of God and His love to the next generation. We also know that for many of our churches and families, the past three years have presented many unique challenges to ministering to our children and youth.

As the Intergenerational Ministry Task Force we are covenanting with each other and with you to CONNECT, CARE, and CULTIVATE the faith of the next generation together in 2023 and beyond. We want to hear your stories, encourage you in prayer, share resources and develop strong networks of support. We believe that the best resource any church has in serving their children and youth is an entire congregation working in tandem to teach, intercede for, mentor and equip their young.

Here is why intergenerational ministry matters to our team members: "Intergenerational ministry is important for spiritual formation and develops a community, where regardless of age, each one has a place to care for and minister to others. I was recently reminded of this as our church hosted a prayer experience at the beginning of Advent. It was encouraging to see families setting aside time to pray together in preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth. One of the prayer prompts was to pray for someone in our church family who

could use some extra encouragement and then write them a note. One of the six-year-olds chose to pray for a man in our congregation who is terminally ill. I recently heard from his mom that he continues to pray for that man every night before bed." – Holly Raymond, Peterborough FMC

"Intergenerational ministry matters to me because I think it is so important to instill the love of Christ into children from a young age. As an early childhood educator, I am very passionate about working with children. I feel that all teachers leave a lasting impact on a child.

I think that intergenerational ministry is important because it allows all age groups in our congregation to build a Christ-centered relationship together and to grow in faith together." – Tatum Philip, Surrey FMC

"This theme of connect is valued and important for the Family of God, for the denomination of the FMCIC, and for intergenerational ministry. The different generations can find a level of interaction together that helps them all in their understanding of God, others and themselves. God works through connection so strongly that we long for it and experience joy when we find it." – Natasha Frentz, Northview Community Church

If you would like to talk with us further or would be interested in joining our team to encourage connection, care and cultivation of faith in our youngest members, please email Joy McEwen at intergen.fmcic@gmail.com.

Written by Joy McEwen, a member of Holt Free Methodist Church and the lead for the Intergenerational Task Force.

WHAT IT
MEANS TO BE



FREE
METHODIST

FREE METHODISM THEN/NOW

REDISCOVERING FREE METHODIST VALUES

We believe justice, discipleship, innovation, inclusion are values that represent some of the convictions that we have held from the very beginning. If you are interested in learning more there are a series of short videos that cover each topic. You can find the Freedom Video Series here: fmcic.ca/whats-a-free-methodist/.

JUSTICE Free Methodists were supporters of the anti-slavery movement and believed in equality for all, regardless of ethnic background. Today, we continue to pursue diversity and call out systemic and racial injustice.

DISCIPLESHIP Early Free Methodists renewed John Wesley's teaching that all Christians could be free from sin ruling their lives. Today, we want to support each other in our choices, attitudes and behaviours and continue to point each other towards God.

INNOVATION Early Free Methodists moved away from strict formality and encouraged Spirit-led freedom in their services. Today, we welcome a wide variety of worship and church ideas, in whatever shape, size, or creative expression God is revealing.

INCLUSION Methodists rented seats in their churches, but Free Methodists saw this as disenfranchising the poor and stopped the practice of renting out pews. Today, we continue to serve and advocate for the vulnerable, oppressed and marginalized.

JESUS Early Free Methodists wanted all their members to be free from secret societies that often divided their loyalties. Today, we still believe that our first priority and pledge is to Jesus.

HERE ARE SOME VIDEOS THAT HELP EXPLAIN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FREE METHODIST:

Early history of the Free Methodist Church

This video lays out some of the historical roots of the formation of Free Methodism in North America.

A Historical look at Women in Leadership in the Free Methodist Tradition

Embedded in the roots of Free Methodism is the recognition that women are equal partners in the ministry of the Church.

A Unique Path Through the Cultural Landscape

A historical framework to explain Methodist thinking.

fmcic.ca/whats-a-free-methodist/

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