

Elders Report 2014

As elders and as an assembly, the practice of looking back year by year can provide encouragement and thankfulness. In the rush of life we might forget the good things that God has done in our assembly. For example, this past summer we saw two men express interest in Short Term Missions, with Shayne Poirier going to Indonesia and Renny Maki heading to Brazil.

The Lord has been gracious to us this past year, even as we have experienced 'home calls': our sister, Margaret McKay, who was such a dynamo with our social ministry and our brothers, Bill Russell & Les Twitney, who both served as deacons for many years and were involved in local projects like Meadowlodge and Mount Carmel. Bill Russell knew Bethel inside and out and he was always available to help with any project while Les Twitney was wonderful with spreadsheets and Microsoft Excel and served faithfully as our treasurer. Les also served the Lord and the assembly by playing the organ at the Family Bible Hour. We mourn their loss both to us and to their families, but we are also thankful for their example of service to the Lord and His people.

We have continued housing the work of the Salvation Army. In many ways, as they have stayed with us (and we have had to bend around each others needs), we have appreciated the facilities that God has given to us and have been exposed to many areas of service that we normally would never encounter. We continue to pray for the difficult (and exciting) ministry that God has given them, and for their future home. We are also thankful for all those who have stepped up to help accommodate this work – especially our deacons who have had to deal with the added strain to the facilities.

Over the past year the elders have been considering the nature of what the church is. A key Scripture in this discussion is found in the familiar passage in Acts 2:42 - *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.* In many ways the church of God is similar to a table with four legs. If any one of those four legs - teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread or prayer - are missing the table would not stand. If any single leg dominates or is under-emphasized, the table would be off balanced and less useful in serving and glorifying the Lord. Acts 2:42 also lays out the priorities for creating a healthy church. For instance: you would not have a healthy church if Biblical Teaching is not important, nor would an assembly be properly balanced if fellowship does not occur. A passage like Acts 2:42 is an immensely practical verse. Although this passage doesn't address missions and certain other church related activities, it does keeps its core focus: the preaching of the Word of God, the fellowship of the local believers, the importance of remembering the Lord Jesus, and Prayer. We all would do well to subscribe and align our views to this concept of a healthy assembly.

In light of our desire to be a healthy assembly that glorifies God, an appropriate prayer for each of us (adapted from Colossians 2:9-12) - *...we have not ceased to pray... asking that [we] may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. May [we] be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified [us] to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.*

Deacon's Report 2014

This year we tackled some big renovations that likely everyone is aware of.

The biggest project was the replacement of the sewer drainage pipes beneath the parking lot. The original pipes lived to their full life expectancy of 50+ years, and were corroding away. Replacing them all required digging up most of the parking lot. That work has now been completed. Experts have advised us to wait at least a year for the disturbed ground to fully settle before we pour any new cement or sidewalks. We have yet to decide fully what steps we will take in the back area with that regard.

The back step was demolished as part of the sewer project, so we then hired a professional to build our new handicap accessible back ramp. The entire congregation appreciates this, from the elderly using their walkers, to the toddlers who delight in running the ramp! We do plan to add a small platform on the north side to replace the initial tiny step. We'll be doing that this spring.

We were instructed by the fire marshal to replace the old wood paneling in the northwest and northeast stairwells. The paneling was no longer within code for our building. The Freeman brothers were hired to do this work. They did a terrific job at an excellent rate. The response has been positive from everyone.

There are of course several small projects to be tackled this year as we continue maintaining our building.

Each of these projects, and countless others throughout the year, represent a significant investment of time for those involved. We extend our thanks to every person who gave up a day here or a weekend there to accomplish these tasks.

Ongoing financial trends continue to challenge our duties, so we ask for your continued prayers and support, that we may perform our duties in conformance to the Lord's will for Bethel in the next year.

Submitted by the Deacons: Theryn Mills, George Bódy & John King

Bethel Social Ministry Committee – Annual Report – 2014

Romans 12:8. New Living Translation *"If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly."* Throughout the year as we plan activities for those who attend Bethel, those who visit occasionally and those who stop by for just a bite to eat, we want to ensure to follow the words in Romans to serve with ample amounts of encouragement, generosity, diligence and cheerfulness.

The loss of Marg McKay as a mainstay on the Social Committee in early 2014 was deeply felt. We know her promotion to glory was in God's hands but her commitment to hospitality at Bethel have been hard shoes to fill. Fortunately, others stepped up to fill the gap and we welcomed Sonja Idema and Nicole Poirier to the Social Committee.

In 2014 the Social Committee provided hospitality for a variety of functions including the Mount Carmel visit, Annual Toboggan Social, Annual Meeting, Spring Luncheon, Summer Missionary updates from Frank and Shayne, Harvest Ethnic luncheon, Christmas luncheon, Christmas program, monthly brown bag prayer meetings and our weekly Sunday coffee breaks.

Keeping in mind our growing number of young children, we revived some activities enjoyed in past years at Bethel. We planned a Sunday School picnic at Borden park in late September. The weather for the picnic was a little chilly but our fellowship was warm. Special thanks to the Idema girls for arranging some fabulous games and activities. In November a good group showed up a Meadowlodge on a snowy day for a sleigh ride, lunch and of course hot chocolate. We played some games and heard about Renny's time in South America. We enjoyed the participation of English Language Conversation Café folks at these activities.

We continue to share our footprint in the kitchen with the Salvation Army and appreciate everyone's willingness to manage in a smaller environment. We are sometimes searching to find the corners where we have stored supplies as the chapel is being used from top/bottom most days of the week. As usual the Elders and Deacons support us to ensure all is in order. What a blessing to know that God's work is shared by so many throughout our Norwood community.

Whether we enjoy together a bowl of soup or a complete roast beef dinner, we thank God for providing for all our needs. Thanks to all the hands that set up tables, sign up to bring food, and so willingly help us with all the small details. The sharing of your gifts and energy blesses all of us. We trust that it brings you joy just as it does us.

If you have any suggestions for future activities of our Committee, we welcome your input and feedback.

Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the Social Committee: Miriam Love, Sarah Tremblay, Sonja Idema, Nicole Poirier, Marg Ralstin – and many other faithful supporters

ESL Conversation Café

Annual report – September, 2014 – February, 2015

On behalf of the volunteers who faithfully attend and work diligently at the ESL Café...

This latest season of our ESL Conversation Café began with a fair amount of uncertainty. We were aware of the significant gap that was left in our group of volunteers with the passing of Margaret McKay. However it is a blessing to see how others have stepped in to cover much of this and we continue to do the work the Lord has placed at our doorstep.

This year we have seen a small decline in the number of students coming out regularly on Saturday mornings. The main reason for this decline has been students finding employment which often involves working on weekends. Nevertheless we do see a small core of students who do regularly attend. We are most encouraged by this group and treasure their friendships very much.

We are delighted to find that those who have returned from previous seasons have significantly improved in their use English conversation skills. In fact, some of them are most helpful as we try to build language bridges with our newer students by providing some translation abilities. Personally I continue to be awed by the courage and determination of many students to learn English as a second language.

This year we also have seen more 'beginner' students coming who know only a very little bit of English; and students from a broader range of cultures and countries. More than a few of them are Christians which makes our work as 'home missionaries' much easier when sharing our faith with our non-Christian ESL friends.

It is always a delight to hear the 'buzz' of conversations around the tables. Our table hosts are most eager to not only help the students with their English skills, but are most willing to listen and engage our students with their cares and concerns. Several times our students have engaged in questions about the Christian faith. Some have frequented our Sunday services, too. These opportunities are too important to miss! Many students have been invited to lunch and other social gatherings by our volunteers. Their desire to fit in and be a part of a larger community is part of the reward we see and it allows a certain amount of ploughing and planting of the Kingdom of God into their hearts. "One plants, one waters, yet it is God's work that produces a harvest"

While there are only about 2-1/2 months left in this season before we break for the summer, more volunteers would be most welcome. Every Saturday has an element of unpredictability with it so more volunteers would give us a lot more flexibility when new students or students with almost no English skills require special attention. We still need someone to be our greeter and welcome our students on a regular basis. New students continue to arrive almost weekly. We are fortunate at the moment to have no need for childcare, but that has been by the grace and mercy of God – we have no one available to provide childcare. Perhaps "if you find the volunteer, they will come"?

Everyone in Bethel should have the ESL Conversation Café on their prayer list. It should also be obvious that to pass up on the opportunity to get involved in the field like this is a sad mistake. Certainly not everyone has the means or the time to put some shoe-leather to their faith in this particular way. Nor is it expected that all of us should be here on Saturday mornings. But if any are willing to take the risk, put their comfort zones aside, and step out on an adventure, you are more than welcome to join us.

This year our active volunteers are: Frank & Diane Parker, Renny Mackie, Niall MacTaggart, Robert Freeman, Shayne & Nicole Poirier, Song, and Paul Fletcher.

Please consider adding your name to this list. You would be most welcome!
Respectfully: Paul Fletcher



Sunday School Report

"All your children will be taught by the LORD, and great will be their peace." Isaiah 54:13

We are often reminded by all the new children how blessed we are in our Sunday school rooms. It has been amazing watching numbers being added each year! With this growth we have added more teachers to accommodate. This year Tynan Seitz and Doris Walton along with Heidi Idema have been working in the toddler room. Rick Pitre and Kim Buitendyk work with the students in the middle class and Melanie Idema teaches the older children.

We have had a great time coming together and singing each Sunday. We have been learning some new and more complicated songs (The Lord is My Shepherd with sign language) and some classic songs that the children love (Only a Boy Named David).

This year for our Christmas performance we performed the Little Drummer boy, with our own homemade drums (pictured above). The children had a great time creating the drums and did a wonderful job playing them in time to the music. It was a performance enjoyed by all.

Some classes have been studying different themes. For example, the middle class (ages 5-7) studied the armor of God and did a really exciting object lesson with an orange with and without its peel. The older class has been focusing on missions this year and what it means to carry the Gospel with us wherever we are. They have also been learning about and praying for the persecuted church in Columbia. The youngest class, our toddler room, is certainly our biggest class and the one with the most energy. They have been learning the fundamentals of the bible such as "Who is my neighbor and how do I treat them?"

As the Sunday school class is growing so is its need for more teachers and helpers. We always welcome an extra hand in class, to read us a story, with crafts, or to help with music. We also appreciate all the support through prayer love and ask for your continued support in the following year.

Yours in Christ:

Melanie Idema

Commended Workers' Report – 2014

Since we have not made a formal report to Bethel for a few years, we thought it was time to give an update on our work.

Frank continues to be active in the preaching and teaching ministry at Bethel, as well as and in other area assemblies. Dianne visits a number of ladies for Bible study and fellowship –some involved at Bethel, some not.

In recent years we have found ourselves more-and-more concerned with ministry to seniors including visiting shut-ins and those in hospital. We have sensed the need for increased opportunities for fellowship and encouragement, especially at the inter-assembly level. Thus we have been organizing regular 'Coffee Fellowships', which seem to be meeting a real need. It has been a privilege to serve, and in turn be served by the 'older saints' in our fellowship.

Camp work, especially at Meadowlodge continues to occupy a large part of our time, both at the Board level and at summer camps. We are also involved with the English Conversation Café during the winter months. We see both of these initiatives as fruitful ground for sharing Christ with those who need to know Him.

Frank has started to volunteer with a local food cooperative in the community, which has brought him into contact with many of our neighbours, as well as staff at a local youth centre. With the Salvation Army drop-in and outreach programs using our facilities it has given us opportunity to meet many of those in the community struggling with addictions and mental health issues.

In the Spring we had the privilege of visiting Mirek & Beata Marczak in Poland, and participating in the official opening of their new church building – an initiative that Bethel has supported through the Smyth Trust. While in Europe, we took the opportunity of also visiting Barbara Congo in France, as well as talking to the Grenoble elders about her return to Canada. We also took the opportunity to see some of the new work being undertaken in the south of that country. Visiting missionaries in the field is always an encouragement – for them and for us!

It continues to be a privilege to serve as your commended workers in the Edmonton area.

Respectfully submitted by, Frank & Dianne Parker

Meadowlodge Bible Camp – 2014 (53rd year of ministry)

Statistically, Meadowlodge ran eight camps this summer, including 55+, Family, College & Careers, and five children's camps. Disappointingly, the Senior Coed Camp had to be cancelled due to a lack of staff. A total of 205 children attended the five children's camps. The average attendance per camp was 41. This compares to an average of 53 in 2008.

Once again, we rejoice at the reports of several children confessing Jesus Christ as Saviour, and many others being helped to grow in their faith. The Lord alone knows the full impact on the lives of everyone who has passed through the camp.

We continue to be amazed and grateful for the Lord's provision during 2014. This allowed us to complete some major upgrades to the windows and doors in the kitchen, complete the sidewalk projects around the washrooms, and continue with the upkeep of the camp facilities. The overall condition of the camp is largely thanks to the hard work of the managers, Keith and Gay Coss, as well the facilities committee, and the many people who have donated their time and talents.

The Board will continue to address two significant areas of concern; how we communicate and promote Meadowlodge more effectively amongst the assemblies, and how we engage and involve the younger generations in camp – as summer camp staff and also as committee members. We certainly appreciate your prayers for these activities, and we would also welcome any comments and suggestions that may help us in our endeavours.

Currently the camp has two standing committees – Staff Development/Promotion and Facilities. Each member assembly may provide the names of up to two people to serve on the various committees. In addition there are those who help in such areas as webmaster, and medical care coordinator. We are currently looking for someone to act as a dedicated 'records coordinator'.

Respectfully submitted by:

Frank Parker

Board Representative

Bethany Idema

Staff Development Committee

Bethel Gospel Chapel
Ratification and Nomination of Elders & Deacons

The qualifications for ELDERS are listed in I Timothy 3:1-7 and in Titus 1:6-9 (*see next page*). While Elders are firstly accountable to God, it is essential that they have the support and confidence of the members of the church, through their responsible and godly behaviour. The names of the currently serving Elders are listed below. Should you have any concerns about the leadership or character of any of them, you should either approach him privately to discuss the matter, or complete the attached form '*Concerns Regarding Elders or Deacons*'.

David Walton
Frank Parker
George Idema

While there is no Biblical warrant to elect Elders (rather they are appointed by the incumbent Elders), we may not be aware of all those who desire and are qualified for the position. If there are other qualified men whom you would support and suggest in this role, please list them below.

The qualifications for Deacons are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 (*see next page*). While Deacons are responsible both to God and to the Elders, it is essential that they have the support and confidence of the members of the church, through their responsible and godly behaviour. The names of the currently serving Deacons are listed below. Should you have any concerns about the leadership or character of any of them, you should either approach him privately to discuss the matter, or complete the attached form '*Concerns Regarding Elders or Deacons*'.

Theryn Mills
John King
George Bódy

If there are other qualified men whom you would support and suggest in this role, please list them below:

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS AND DEACONS

I TIMOTHY 3:1-13

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an OVERSEER, he desires a noble task. Now the OVERSEER must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to much wine, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

DEACONS, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as DEACONS. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A DEACON must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

TITUS 1:6-9

An ELDER must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an OVERSEER is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless - not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to much wine, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Name Printed