

2017 Elders Report

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

We have an incredible Saviour; He who has thought of everything and has planned, not just for today, but also for our future! What a hope we share! What a citizenship we have been granted!

This past year has been an encouragement to the elders. The spiritual growth of our children and their enthusiasm for Sunday School has been wonderful to see. The beginning of Picnic-in-the-Park & Fellowship Lunch times have connected different individuals in our assembly with each other and deepened our sense of community. Our monthly Lunch & Prayer times have continued and have been fairly-well attended and happily even our summer prayer times have continued. Several Bible Studies following a variety of topics have been initiated, and we are thankful for the participation of each person involved as well as the study leaders. Even sad events such as the home-call of our stalwart & faithful brother Tom Robertson, were marked with thanksgiving and praise (and we were grateful to Capilano Assembly for all their help with his funeral).

After eight-and-a-half years the Conversation Café ESL ministry wrapped up at the end of the Spring semester. We are thankful to the Lord for the large number of people that we were able to connect with –and are still connected with. We are grateful to Paul Fletcher who gave leadership to the ministry over the past few years.

Meadowlodge Bible Camp continues as a major area of ministry for us. We were especially grateful to see our sister Melanie Idema take on the task of director of Junior Girls, and several others working at other camps.

Our speakers and the sermons that they prepare are a point for thanksgiving as well. Many of the speakers report that their sermons typically take between 10-18 hours to prepare for a 35-45 minute sermon. We hope that the assembly is thankful that our men willingly take this time away from other interests and responsibilities to delve into God's Word at a deeper level, and that this might serve as a reminder of just how vital it is that we pray regularly for our speakers that the Holy Spirit would move their hearts and minds as they prepare.

Although we no longer have any formally commended workers serving overseas, we have none-the-less maintained our connection with missions, both through financial support, and hosting visiting missionaries: Jon & Evelyn Siebert (NCEM); David & Sue Verway (Japan Mission); Ken & Eunice Russell (Uruguay); and Al Lowrie (outreach to Muslims). On a more informal basis, we have been happy to lend support to the Buitendyk family as they support the local work in Guaymas Mexico.

As well, we saw our brother Pascal Gisenya, on his own initiative, return to the Democratic Republic of Congo to continue development of a promising anti-malaria medication as well as initiating the cultivation of plants to aid in a herbal treatment of malaria. Continue to pray that our Lord will keep him safe in a tumultuous region of the world.

Looking further ahead, the elders realize that we will need to prepare our direction forward as Dianne and Frank Parker plan to retire from full-time ministry in our assembly in the next few years. Pray for the elders as we look to the Lord regarding this.

Others in the assembly are considering the Lord's leading in their lives, as they seek to honour and serve Him. The elders and the deacons will need to carefully and prayerfully consider the larger work of the Lord as, even in these last days, we look for His soon return, knowing that He still wonderfully offers eternal citizenship to all those who request it.

Humbly submitted by Frank Parker, David Walton & George Idema

Deacon's Report 2017

Each year we as deacons aim to provide a steady undisturbed environment for the Bethel family. Our goal is to make sure all the necessities are covered for the various activities and ministries of our membership.

This last year we rekeyed of all the doors in the building. Everyone has been issued a coded key that should open every door. Thank you incidentally to the Idema girls for stamping those codes on the keys for us.

We also replaced our sound system. It had served us well for about four decades. We now have a fully digital professional sound board and speaker system, which we hope will serve our needs and more for many years to come. Paul Fletcher also built us a nice new workstation for it, reclaiming wood from a broken pew.

Every year the fire inspection requires us to make changes to various details of the building, to try to maintain the evolving fire codes. Last year that meant reinstalling hoses in the old water fire prevention systems, as well as maintaining the many fire extinguishers we have on premises.

We thank you all for your prayers and support. Please remember that there are many duties required in our church family, and any help you give is greatly appreciated!

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

Social Committee

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teachings and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer,... They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.” Acts 2:42,46

The aim of the social ministry is to enhance the fellowship of the assembly through social events. In 2017, the social committee provided hospitality for a variety of functions including the toboggan social, annual meeting, spring luncheon, harvest luncheon, spring and fall picnics, and the Christmas luncheon. The social committee also hosted two missionary lunches and a baby shower for Leah (and Louis) Suba. The social committee provided regular assistance with the soup and prayer ministry and the weekly [Sunday](#) coffee fellowship. In addition, the social committee has also provided informal assistance at the weekly fellowship lunches after each Family Bible Hour.

We are thankful for all of our brothers and sisters who regularly contributed dishes and snack items for the coffee fellowship and the various lunches throughout the year; we are also grateful for all of the volunteers who help to serve, set-up, and clean-up at each of these events - these events would not be possible without your contributions to this ministry. As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions for any future events.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Social Committee.

Sarah Tremblay, Sonja Idema, Marg Ralstin, Nicole Poirier- and many other faithful supporters.

Sunday School Report

“But Jesus said, ‘Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’”



Another year has gone by quickly down in the Sunday school classes. We are loving every busy Sunday spending time with the children and teaching them God's truth. Currently, Heidi Idema is teaching the toddler class, Doris Walton is teaching the preschool/early elementary class, Kirstin Idema is teaching the children from ages 6-8, and Melanie Idema is teaching the children ages 9-12.

At Christmas, the children performed the “Story of the Candy Cane.” The Walton family also performed Silent Night on handbells. The performance was enjoyable for both the children and the congregation.

The Sunday School classes have used the resources “Instant Bible Lessons,” and “Bible Orientation,” this year. Each class has focused on a different area. The toddler class has been looking at lessons, such as not stealing, built around stories in the bible. The preschool/early elementary class has gone through well known Old Testament figures such as Naaman and Elisha. In Kirstin's class, the children have been going through Old Testament stories. In Melanie's class, the students have been learning about the history of the Old Testament (chronologically) and of Israel.

The teachers have begun taking a one week break each month at the end of the month. This begun occurring in March. Thank you to Theresa and the volunteers she organized to help make this happen!

Thank you for all your prayers and to all those who have helped the Sunday school in other ways throughout the past year. We are continually amazed at the depth of knowledge that the children posses. We pray that God will grant us hearts of wisdom to teach these children what they need to know. We pray that God will continue to use us as instruments in shaping the faith of the children in our classrooms again in the following year.

Yours in Christ,

Melanie Idema

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, *looking to Jesus*, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2

In late 2017 I (Shayne Poirier) became increasingly aware of the need for intentional gospel outreach and discipleship amongst students at Edmonton’s MacEwan University. After discussing this need with our elders in [January 2018](#), a door for ministry opened, which resulted in the establishment of an informal ministry on campus. In January and February of 2018 I met with Christian students on campus who were eager to study the Bible and grow in their faith, and it became apparent that there were no other groups who were making significant efforts to reach students with the gospel. As a result, I, along with a new believer from my workplace, and a Christian friend on campus, launched a discipleship and outreach group at the MacEwan University downtown campus. This group, which became known as “FOCUS” (Fellowship of Christian University Students) began meeting on Friday afternoons in [February 2018](#).

Since February, our group has held weekly Bible studies each [Friday](#) from 4:30pm to 6:30pm. During this time we enjoy fellowship and snacks, we study the Bible, and we pray together. During each weekly Bible study, we typically see 8-10 students attend, including some who have joined us from the University of Alberta. At these weekly events we have studied topics such as justification, the new birth, and the Christian life. In recent weeks we have begun a study through Philippians. Many of the students have shared that this is the first time that they have ever studied the Bible in a group setting. Some students have remarked that they now understand the gospel and why Jesus Christ had to die for sinners.

In the absence of any other notable Christian groups on campus, we hope, if the Lord is willing, to get official club status on campus so that we can be more actively engaged in outreach efforts on campus during the coming school year. We are also hoping to continue to explain the gospel and disciple the students that currently meet with us on Fridays. We ask that you would please pray for us and the students - that Christ would be exalted in and through us, and that many university students would come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Shayne Poirier

Meadowlodge Bible Camp - 2017 (56th year of ministry)

Meadowlodge ran nine camps during the summer, including Plus 55, Family Camp, College & Careers and six children's camps. As in previous years, several of the camps were not full due to a shortage of staff. All reports however, indicate that the summer was successful, in both the quality of the camps and in that the good news of the gospel was clearly proclaimed. We once again saw the Lord of the Harvest work to save souls and to strengthen believers. Several individuals from Bethel volunteered at camp again this summer, including Melanie Idema who directed Junior Girls. Please continue to pray for those who accepted the Lord, and for those who were challenged by the messages they heard. The work continues long after the camp season has ended.

After 31 years as camp managers, Keith and Gay Coss retired at the end of September. The major task of finding suitable replacements was successfully completed with the appointment of Josh and Sarah Krikke early in the year. During the camp season, the two couples worked together to ensure a smooth transition. The Krikkes are now fully engaged in the ministry, including living on site.

Camp facilities are generally in good shape, which allowed the Board to focus its time and energy on the manager transition, and not embarking on any major projects or initiatives.

The Lord once again provided for all of our financial needs for the year, including supporting two managers for six months. A copy of the annual financial statement is posted on the camp bulletin board.

We continue to be humbled by the privilege of serving the Lord at Meadowlodge. We continue to covet your prayers on behalf of this work.

Respectfully submitted by:

Frank Parker

Board Representative

Bethany Idema

Committee Representative