

## 2019 Elders Report

Pontius Pilate while questioning the Lord Jesus asked Him: “*what is truth?*” (John 18:38), and in many ways this question reflects the days in which we live and certainly would be the philosophy of many people in our country. The problem with this question, other than its underlying cynicism and sense of despair, is that, like Pilate, often the person who asks the question is not prepared to hear the response.

We seek to follow the One who is “Faithful and True” (Revelation 19:11). As we proceed further into these days we might notice that truth will not be held in high regard, or will always be doubted. At Bethel for many years we have embarked on our own truth project. We try to present the eternal Word of God in as complete a fashion as we can. For several years—with intent—we have been laying out the foundations of our faith, exposing the assembly to the entire Old and New Testaments. Our hope continues to be that each member of our assembly will grow to love and trust the Word of God more and that each person would be better equipped to handle the days to come. As part of this perspective, we have been trying to consistently take time to include a Children’s Story during the Family Bible Hour as a chance to develop the children’s love & knowledge of the Bible. On much the same thought, a recent edition of Precious Seed Magazine makes note of the following; Over 100 years ago, evangelical Anglican Bishop Handley Moule wrote of his learning that the Bible was the truth. He said “*I remember that one of my first sensations of profound relief was HE (the Lord Jesus Christ) absolutely trusted the Bible. Although there are things in it inexplicable and intricate that have puzzled me much, I am going, not in a blind sense, but reverently, to trust the Book because of HIM.*”

We want to continue to be an assembly that stands for the truth without compromise. Jesus the Lord of All believed the Bible and we should continue to as well. Hopefully all of our speakers and the Bible Studies that many of us participate in reflect that priority.

In the past year several sisters went to be with their Saviour. Margaret Bennett, a long-time member of Bethel, and a faithful supporter of the Lord’s work, went home in January. Kunjamma Samuel passed away (she and her husband, O.M. Samuel, were commended by Bethel back in the 1980’s to the work of the Lord in India). Our faithful sister Henrietta Doorenbos passed away. Janet MacDougall also went to be with the Lord; Janet had served the Lord in Chad for many years and eventually retired to Westlock. Mavis Hunter also followed her husband Robert, who died the year before; Mavis, a tireless worker her whole life, had been shut-in for many years.

During the past year we have been encouraged to see the truth of the Word continue to be presented at the FOCUS club at Grant McEwan University, as well as the Ladies’ Inter-Assembly Christmas Outreach. An exciting new initiative, the Inter-Assembly Mission, grew out of the work at Meadowlodge Bible Camp in 2019.

In the fall of 2019 the assembly commended Theo & Kim Buitendyk to the Lord’s work in Mexico. We are excited to hear how open the local people are to the Gospel. Continue to pray for the Lord’s guidance and safety for the Buitendyk family as they come back to Alberta later in the spring. In the fall of 2020, Frank and Dianne Parker plan to retire from their position as full-time workers in our assembly. They have served this assembly faithfully for around 20 years and intend to continue to be involved with us.

The Elders Board: Dave Walton, Frank Parker & George Idema

## Deacon's Report 2019

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 year we had the snow brush serviced by the company we purchased it from. We were very fortunate to have done so at the time, because right after that the company closed shop. We have found a new company to work with in the future to maintain this important piece of equipment.

Occasionally people dump their garbage on our property. This is something that happens everywhere in the city, so it's not as if we are being singled out. However, it can be very frustrating to clean up. It occurred twice this last summer, and after we bagged up all the refuse, we had a company come haul it away. This is why we posted a sign on the fence, in hopes of deterring further such incidents. Happily it has not happened again and we hope it won't.

We were forced to rekey the doors this year when a set of keys was lost outside the church and someone got into both the building and the storage container. Fortunately the financial losses weren't too extensive, as always the inconvenience of such activity is the biggest issue.

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 Report 2020

*"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." Hebrews 10:24-25*

Our primary role as the social ministry at Bethel Gospel Chapel continues to be the facilitation of opportunities for fellowship within the assembly through a variety of social events and activities. In 2019 the social committee hosted or supported a number of events including: the annual meeting luncheon, the Christmas luncheon, Spring Luncheon, Harvest Luncheon, Mothers Day and Father's Day gifts, and more. The social committee members also continue to be very active in supporting the Sunday "picnics in the chapel" and "picnics in the park" after the Family Bible Hour. These weekly lunches and formal events have created opportunities for the saints to fulfil the "one-another" commands we find in scripture, while showing hospitality to our many visitors.

We are thankful for all of the brothers and sisters in our assembly who regularly contribute 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 at each of these events. As always, we welcome your feedback and any suggestions you may have for future events.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Social Committee.

Sarah Tremblay, Sonja Idema, Nicole Poirier

## 2019 Sunday School Report

Sunday school has gone through a few changes this past year. Melanie Idema stepped down from her role as Sunday School coordinator and teacher. She did a wonderful job for many years and is missed. The elders asked if I (Doris Walton) would be willing to take over the role of Sunday school coordinator. This past fall I took over the position.

We made a few changes with regard to the classes. Heidi is still teaching our pre-school/ kindergarten age children. They are working their way through the Old Testament starting with Creation and Adam and Eve. I am teaching the grade 1/grade 2 age children. We are currently learning about the disciples of Jesus and various New Testament events in which each of the disciples played a major role. Kirsten is teaching our grade 3/ grade 4 children. They are working on the attributes of God and God's character. Kirsten also encourages bible verse memorization each week.

We happily welcomed Shayne and his boys class to join us downstairs. His class is grades 3 to grade 5. They finished their study on people of faith in Hebrews and are now doing a study on the book of Titus with a focus on becoming men of faith. Shane has also been encouraging the boys to start reading their Bible each day. I enjoyed the challenge of organizing my first Christmas Program and was extremely proud of how well the children participated in the concert, especially how loud they sang.

We as a group of teachers are also so thankful for the help of the volunteers who teach the last Sunday of the month and for the two months of summer giving us a break and opportunity to join in the Sunday Meeting.

Please keep our Sunday school children and teachers in your prayers.

Doris Walton

## 2019 - Commended Workers' Report

It is hard to believe that this is now the 20<sup>th</sup> year since I retired from the Army and started focusing full-time on the Lord's work. While most of our attention has been (and still is) focused on Bethel and our immediate neighbourhood, we have also helped at other churches and ministries (e.g. speaking, teaching, inter-assembly outreach). In broad terms, our ministry continues to be in the areas of pastoral work, discipleship, camp, neighbourhood.

**Pastoral Work** – Follow-up of visitors, enquiries, and requests for help; hospitality; counselling. Major focus on seniors and shut-ins; hosted two Inter-assembly seniors' gatherings (along with Barbara Congo); privileged to be involved with three funerals; attended 55+ Camp (as campers!).

**Discipleship** – Regular preaching at Bethel (& elsewhere); two weekly Bible studies; men's breakfast Bible studies; numerous one-on-one opportunities.

**Camp** – The ministry at Meadowlodge continues to hold a big place in our hearts. We each helped out at three camps in 2019. Frank continues as secretary of the camp board.

**Neighbourhood** – We still live here! Frank is involved with bi-weekly food co-op (WECAN); weekly community prayer; monthly neighbourhood pastors' connection.

**Retirement** – As mentioned in the Elders Report, we have indicated that we would like to retire as full-time commended workers in fall 2020. We have no idea what that will look like, as we are not planning to go anywhere! Please pray for wisdom, both for us and the Bethel leadership. We thank the Lord for your faithful love and support for us and our family over all these years.

Respectfully submitted: Frank & Dianne Parker

## 2019 FOCUS

Fellowship of Christian University Students  
MacEwan University

*“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9*

By God's amazing grace, FOCUS has now had a presence on the campus of MacEwan University for two full years. During that time, we have experienced a number of changes, but our mission at the university remains the same - to help students “know Jesus Christ, grow in his likeness, and make him known”. We seek to proclaim the excellencies of Jesus Christ by prioritizing our energy in four key areas: discipleship, outreach, community, and service.

Since our report at last year's annual meeting, we have experienced many of the joys and challenges of gospel ministry. We are excited to see a core group of students emerging within the club who love the Lord, who are hungry to know and obey his word, and who are eager to share the gospel with their peers. These students have been a tremendous blessing to us; we find ourselves continually encouraged and refreshed by their zeal for the Lord, their earnest desire to study the scriptures, and their consistency in sharing the gospel with their friends and bringing them to club events. In many ways, we find ourselves moving from the role of “leaders” to “equippers” as these students carry out the work of ministry on their respective campuses at MacEwan, U of A, and NAIT. These students often arrive early and stay late each Friday, and have coordinated a number of other gatherings throughout the week as well. We also rejoice that the Lord has blessed us with the opportunity to play some small role in his gospel mission, as we see (and hear about) students who are being engaged with the gospel and are now professing faith in Christ.

At the same time, we have encountered more pronounced challenges in this past year than in times past. Because our club attracts students from a wide range of Christian traditions (and other students who are apparent unbelievers), we have been challenged to guide the students to keep our focus on the Lord and his word during our meetings. Some students have suggested that we take a more seeker-sensitive approach in our club events, but we have done our best to instead focus on the careful study of the scriptures and the bold proclamation of the gospel. As a result of this stance, we have seen some dissensions arise, even within the student leadership. We need the Lord's help to keep the Bible and the Gospel central, while ensuring that we remain open and accessible to unbelievers and immature believers who are not acquainted with serious Bible study. We also need the Lord's help as we steward our limited time with the students - there is so much more that could (and should) be done! We often find ourselves unable to fully meet the needs of the students, as they ask us for one-on-one discipleship, evangelism and apologetics training, and more opportunities to study the Bible, pray, and have fellowship. Even in an increasingly secular age, Christ's words in Matthew 9:37 are still true - the harvest is indeed plentiful.

We are thankful to our great God for all of the saints at Bethel Gospel Chapel who have blessed and encouraged us with yours prayers, financial support, and generous contributions of food items. We ask that you would please continue to hold this ministry in your prayers. Please pray that Christ would be exalted in and through us on this campus, that students would be discipled, and that many of the other students that we see each week would come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

In Christ's service,

Steve Cortez and Shayne Poirier

### Prayer Requests:

Thanksgiving to God for this open door of ministry

Wisdom and insight to steer this ministry in a God-honouring direction

The conversion of unbelieving students

The protection and growth of new believers

Wisdom to steward our time and energy faithfully and effectively for God's glory and the good of the students

### 2019 Inter-Assembly Mission (I-AM) Report

*"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to the of their destruction , but of your salvation, and that from God." - Philippians 1:27-28.*

The Inter-assembly mission began in the summer of 2019, concluding the final camp of the season (senior boys). Upon concluding that camp, the counsellors identified the growing need for a young adult ministry within the brethren assemblies. At that time, ministries with the purpose of mission one of discipling younger adults in faithful bible teaching were scarce. With prayerful consideration, the brothers sought the Lord in prayer to determine how to fill that need and how the Lord would use them in doing so.

The Lord has been faithful with everyone involved with the ministry and has been pleased to use the brothers and sisters in the Inter-assembly mission. Oftentimes, ministries with a younger demographic in scope have given into the temptation of 'fellowship for the sake of fellowship'. This is marked by a departure from the word of God and lack of focus on discipleship/training in the Word. By the grace of God, this ministry has remained faithful and continues to glorify the Lord first and foremost in all our gatherings.

Since its founding, this mission has consistently met at least once a month with a variety of different events and activities. Routinely, the ministry will meet once with the intent to evangelize/engage in service, and then rotate to a planning a fellowship gathering. Specifically, the group has gone out to different areas around the city to engage people with the gospel in different ways. Some of the events are as follows:

- Evangelism during the holiday season at shopping malls. - Serving cookies and coffee on Whyte Ave while engaging people with the gospel. - Christmas Caroling at Mactaggart Retirement home - Door-to-door evangelism in Sherwood Park. - Inter-assembly Gospel conference in Millet - U of A evangelism group

Currently, events are well attended and there is good representation from many congregations around the city. On average, each event will garner approximately 15-20 young adults from the brethren assemblies around the city. The Lord continues to be faithful in this young ministry and the leadership continues to remain steadfast in the Word and stewardship.

We are thankful for the prayers of the congregation and support from the elders. We strive for the glory of the gospel and the Lord has been faithful to use this ministry to proclaim his name and for the sanctification of those in attendance.

Submitted by Steve Cortez

## Meadowlodge Bible Camp – 2019 (58<sup>th</sup> year of ministry)

We are privileged to report that Meadowlodge was blessed with another wonderful season of camping in 2019. Despite all the rain we received over the summer the camps went very well. There was hardly a wasp to be had this year! Reports from directors were very encouraging indicating many campers had responded to the Gospel, and many more were challenged to grow in their faith.

Meadowlodge affords an important opportunity for the believers at numerous assemblies within the greater Edmonton area to serve alongside one another. This, in turn, led to the startup of at least one new non-camp ministry – the Inter-Assembly Mission.

This past year saw a significant change to the traditional camp schedule, which worked out quite well. We will be repeating this schedule in 2020. We also initiated a new Counselor Training Program (CTP) which had a very good start. We look forward to building upon it and offering it again this coming summer. In 2019 we launched an Infrastructure Committee to review and assess the situation at Meadowlodge, making recommendations to the Board for upgrades to our facilities to meet our needs for the coming years. The Bethel rep on this committee is George Bódy.

Statistically, we ran six full children's camps, plus CTP, Family & 55+ Camps. There were a total of 460 campers, and 106 staff. There were eight staff volunteers from Bethel. Financially, we were able to meet all of our obligations, as well as being able to provide honoraria for commended workers and those who volunteered for four weeks or more.

Thank you for your prayers and support of this ministry.

Respectfully submitted by: Frank Parker and Bethany Idema