

Bethel Gospel Chapel

2020 Annual Report



March 21, 2021

2020 Elders Report

As you will undoubtedly notice by reading the reports contained in this year's Annual Report, most of the forecasts and plans for the year were changed drastically as the year unfolded. It seems that everyone went from setting long term plans to surviving week to week! And yet we have seen God at work even in the unsettled nature of our weekly gatherings, and for that we are thankful! Meeting together for many may have stopped being a routine or a habit and has become a joy. Even as we experience small numbers that gather in-person, there is the sense that each one who comes, truly desires to be at the chapel. Of course, in so many ways it feels like we are two assemblies - the one that meets in-person and those who meet via Zoom.

To recap, as the pronouncement restricting public gatherings came out in March 2020, several members of our assembly cobbled together the software and equipment necessary to video record our Family Bible Hour sermon (this recording usually occurred on Saturday mornings). Soon this broadened to include a few hymns, the children's story, Sunday School content and the pre-recorded video of the Family Bible Hour, which initially was hosted on You Tube was to be watched following the Zoom meeting of our Lord's Supper.

A few months later churches were once again allowed to meet together and Bethel took advantage of this relaxation of the restrictions. The rules have altered occasionally since then, but we are thankful to still be able to meet together with reduced capacity. Some churches have not opened their doors for over a year. Some are defying the government's mandates. We choose to continue to be thankful for the limited freedom which we have. Although many are weary of Zoom Meetings, for those who otherwise would be shut-in the pandemic has paradoxically provided increased contact with the assembly.

Pandemic aside, this year has seen other notable occasions: Gordon Love passed away in January and we continue to pray for Miriam as she deals with his passing. In the fall, Frank & Dianne Parker retired from full time work after 20 years of faithful service at Bethel. Although they retired, they remain active members of our assembly and Frank has continued to serve on the Elders Board as well as representing Bethel on the Meadowlodge Camp Board.

Outside of the normal planning and administrative tasks of the elders, the work of being an elder has changed greatly in this year. Consider that it is difficult to meet individually with believers. It is difficult to connect with those who are struggling spiritually or who are ill physically. It is difficult to follow up with new people at Bethel and it is difficult to know why some believers are not even involved through Zoom. Yet we serve the Lord who knew what this past year would bring, and knows the future as well. So we continue to serve and pray that He would be glorified at Bethel and through our humble service.

Dave Walton, Frank Parker & George Idema

Deacon's Report 2020

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. With Covid hitting the world, everything changed, but as always, many of our members stepped up and filled in the gaps. Like many churches, we've moved fully into the internet era, providing our services as much as possible to those who can't attend with Zoom meetings.

We had to change from juice and real loaves of bread for our early morning services, so we moved to the sealed packages we've all become familiar with. In the early days of Covid those items like many others were in short supply, but we have managed to get enough so far, and obviously the manufacturers have ramped up production.

For several months our giving and counting procedures were disrupted, but at this point we're back in the groove. It's not considered safe to pass these as we used to do, but the collection box works well. Unfortunately with our physical attendance numbers down, our income is down as well, but that will be covered in the financial report.

We see it as God's provision that the fire department had required us in 2019 to assess the building occupancy numbers. That process took months to officially complete, but the result was the framed occupancy certificates that you may remember we posted in each room that year. Now when we were informed of the attendance restrictions, we had a foundation for proving compliance. If we'd had to apply for such details in 2020, likely it would not have happened because all such government departments are running behind on such requests. So we can see God's provision that our numbers were already in place.

News unrelated to Covid! Early in the spring we discovered a roof leak in the wall between the library and the 'youth group' room. It turned out to require some pretty extensive remediation. That wall had once been an exterior wall and the leak had been bad for some time. Fortunately we were able to address this during the period when we weren't allowed to fully meet in the building, so again, God's timing is proven gracious.

Towards the end of the year we had the lighting in the parking lot upgraded, as well as the lighting at several entrances. To paraphrase Ecclesiastes 11:7, *"light is sweet, and it pleases the eyes..."*

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

Financial Report - Bethel Gospel Chapel of Edmonton

From January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020

| SUMMARY | 2020 | <i>2019</i> | <i>2018</i> | <i>2017</i> |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total Income: | 104,142.97 | <i>116,952.88</i> | <i>111,443.20</i> | <i>112,855.19</i> |
| Total Expenses: | 106,180.62 | <i>103,336.35</i> | <i>109,231.46</i> | <i>119,410.66</i> |
| Surplus (Deficit): | (2,037.65) | <i>13,616.53</i> | <i>2,211.74</i> | <i>(6,555.47)</i> |
| INCOME | | | | |
| Offerings | 103,125.56 | <i>115,532.56</i> | <i>110,495.85</i> | |
| Bank Interest | 1,017.41 | <i>1,420.32</i> | <i>947.35</i> | |
| Total Income: | 104,142.97 | <i>116,952.88</i> | <i>111,443.20</i> | <i>112,855.19</i> |
| EXPENSES | | | | |
| Miscellaneous Expenses | | | | |
| GST | | | 393.02 | |
| Total Miscellaneous Expenses | | | 393.02 | <i>1,198.30</i> |
| Ministry Expenses | | | | |
| Bethel Social Events | - | | 200.00 | |
| Can Council of Christian Charities | 270.00 | <i>270.00</i> | <i>250.00</i> | |
| Christian Copyright Licensing Int. | 141.00 | <i>137.00</i> | <i>137.00</i> | |
| Flowers, Cards etc | 240.31 | <i>543.17</i> | <i>250.00</i> | |
| Publications | 103.17 | <i>194.94</i> | <i>180.00</i> | |
| Advertising | 1,575.50 | <i>180.00</i> | | |
| Visitation | 60.00 | <i>590.00</i> | <i>60.00</i> | |
| TOTAL Ministry Expenses | 2,389.98 | <i>1,915.11</i> | <i>1,077.00</i> | <i>3,844.94</i> |
| Operating Expenses | | | | |
| Caretaking Services (John & Elisa King) | 8,200.00 | <i>8,764.89</i> | <i>7,246.66</i> | |
| Equipment, Renovation | 1,272.90 | <i>157.98</i> | <i>1,555.71</i> | |
| Insurance, Taxes | 8,154.00 | <i>7,345.46</i> | <i>6,804.25</i> | |
| Kitchen Supplies | 377.34 | <i>nil</i> | <i>259.12</i> | |
| Maintenance | 8,012.44 | <i>578.90</i> | <i>586.50</i> | |
| Office Supplies (incl. photocopier, paper) | 1,069.47 | <i>373.41</i> | <i>595.82</i> | |
| Photocopying | | <i>nil</i> | <i>70.36</i> | |
| Other Supplies | | <i>327.56</i> | <i>305.83</i> | |
| Utilities | | | | |
| Direct Energy Reg Serv | | | 4,500.61 | |
| Epcor- Power, Water & Sewer | | | 2,834.82 | |
| Shaw Cable | | | 1,441.76 | |
| TOTAL Utilities | 7,459.91 | <i>8,423.04</i> | <i>8,777.19</i> | |
| TOTAL Operating Expenses | 34,546.06 | <i>25,971.24</i> | <i>26,201.44</i> | <i>34,692.42</i> |

| Workers & Organizations | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 | 2017 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Designated Funds: O.M. Samuel | 1,950.00 | 2,550.00 | 2,550.00 | |
| Designated Funds: Lowrie Project | 300.00 | | | |
| Guest Speakers | 2,100.00 | 3,700.00 | 3,800.00 | 3,000.00 |
| Organizations | | | | |
| Hope Mission | | - | 300.00 | |
| Meadowlodge | 10,000.00 | 10,200.00 | 7,500.00 | 10,000.00 |
| Mount Carmel | 10,000.00 | 5,000.00 | 10,000.00 | 10,000.00 |
| MSC Can. - Admin. | 1,800.00 | 1,800.00 | 1,560.00 | |
| MSC Can - Biblical Elder Resources | | - | 500.00 | |
| Donation - Edmonton Womens' Outreach | | | 750.00 | |
| Subtotal: Organizations | 21,800.00 | 17,000.00 | 20,610.00 | |
| Workers | | | | |
| Andrew & Latetia Russell | 3,600.00 | 3,600.00 | 3,600.00 | |
| Barbara Congo | 22,500.00 | 24,000.00 | 24,000.00 | |
| Janet MacDougall | | 4,800.00 | 7,200.00 | |
| Frank Parker | 13,200.00 | 19,800.00 | 19,800.00 | |
| Subtotal: Workers | 39,300.00 | 52,200.00 | 54,600.00 | |
| TOTAL Workers & Organizations | 65,450.00 | 75,450.00 | 81,560.00 | 76,675.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES: | 102,386.04 | 103,336.35 | 109,231.46 | 119,410.66 |

Social Committee Report 2020

This has been an odd year from a Social Committee perspective: there has been very little organized social activity!

In January and February, we carried on with after-church potluck lunches. The number of people who stayed varied from week to week, but there was always enough food and these times of informal fellowship were well appreciated.

In addition, we had two Soup and Prayer Sundays, one Chili Cook Off and one Men's Breakfast before the 2019 Annual Meeting.

Since then, the Social Committee has mainly focused on maintaining the Chapel's supply of individually wrapped snacks, coffee, disposable coffee cups, etc. Our goal is to continue to supply refreshment between services and as needed, while still following provincial health guidelines. We packaged about two dozen precooked meals to give out to those who come to the Chapel asking for food. They are frozen and available in the downstairs fridge freezer.

Some things we are thinking about:

1. A Baby Shower or a group baby gift for Isaac and Enomwen
2. Purchasing a commercial dishwasher so that we can continue to use our ceramic dishes and be less reliant on disposable.

We definitely look forward to when we as a Committee will be much busier planning and executing social activities at the Chapel. In the meantime, we value your prayers as we seek creative ways to maintain social connections, relationships and to support our family at Bethel. We also value your prayers for the health of our much-loved committee member, Nicole.

We thank you for the privilege of serving you at Bethel in this capacity. May God grant us all much wisdom as we seek to further His Kingdom.

Sonja Idema, Nicole Poirier, Sarah Tremblay

Sunday School Report - 2020

It has been an interesting year since the last Sunday school report. Since church moved online shortly after our last annual meeting we did not offer Sunday school for the first number of weeks. Heidi and Bethany Idema took on the task of videoing/ recording and posting an online Sunday school lesson each week for which I was extremely thankful. As in person church resumed over the summer it was decided to wait a few weeks before offering in person Sunday school. Once we felt comfortable that we could offer in person Sunday school and meet AHS and government guidelines we went ahead with a modified Sunday school program.

Our first 13 week program started in August and we followed an audio book children's version of Pilgrim's Progress. We met as one large class of children age 4-13. I found it very rewarding to teach. We also made the decision to go ahead with a simple Christmas Program. Our goal was to try and keep things as similar to a regular year as possible while still being mindful of government/ AHS regulations.

Since COVID has affected all our lives in a different capacity it has also meant that we had to say good bye to a few of our Sunday school teachers for the time being. As it stands currently we have 2 regular teachers, Doris Walton and Kirsten Idema. We are also thankful for the help of Frank and Diane Parker and Sarah Tremblay to give our teachers one Sunday off each month.

In January we started a new curriculum from Answers in Genesis. It is a series of lessons focusing on who God is, His attributes, creation and the trinity. We have also started an incentive based bible verse memorization program. It has been received with much enthusiasm and many verses learned.

As we look to the coming year I am thankful that despite all of the challenges we have faced in this last year we have been able to meet together. It is my hope and desire to continue to offer in person Sunday school. We are meant for community and not isolation. This is equally important for children as it is for us. Please pray for our children and that we can continue to meet, fellowship and learn in this capacity.

Doris Walton

Bethel I-AM 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 more encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25

During the 2020 year, the Lord was pleased to bless all the saints in the inter-assembly mission (I-AM). Despite a tumultuous year of ministry, the Lord allowed for the saints to continue the good work of ministry in very unique circumstances. Following the initial restrictions and lockdowns in early March, members of I-AM were involved in acts of service, such as creating wooden planters for brethren that were restricted to isolation for medical reasons. They were built and set up by the brethren before the spring season. Along with similar acts of service, the I-AM group continued to fellowship online via zoom and video calls throughout this time. Alongside fellowship video calls, the group was determined to remain fruitful and participated in a variety of digital conferences and speakers.

During the summer months, many of the brethren participated in gospel work in the small town of Millet. During the month of August, a summer day- camp was run for children in Millet and the surrounding area. Some of these areas involved children from the local reserves. Adhering to covid regulations and restrictions, the camp was facilitated and ran from the One Accord Centre in Millet. There were approximately 15-20 campers each day and the book studied during the week was 1 John. The camp was a tremendous success and the Lord blessed every single day with gospel conversations and opportunities for prayer and counsel.

Following the summer months, the I-AM group continued to operate in Millet dropping off gospel tracts in mailboxes and ministering to the children who continue to come for fellowship in the One Accord Centre. Despite the covid regulations, Millet has been blessed with a large gospel presence and the Lord continues to bless the little ones in the surrounding area, as well as the works of the saints present.

Prayer requests:

- That the gospel work in Millet would be fruitful and bountiful.
- Gospel tracts and evangelism.
- Millet kid’s club.
- Many of the children that attend the kid’s club and events come from non Christian homes. Pray that the Lord would use the little ones powerfully in the lives of their unbelieving families and friends (Matthew 5:14-16).
- For encouragement among the saints. Ministry work has been difficult during Covid and although the Lord continues to bless our efforts, prayers for strength and perseverance during this time would be much appreciated.

Steve Cortez

Meadowlodge Bible Camp 2020 (59th year of ministry)

Like everything else in 2020, the pandemic left its mark on Meadowlodge. Most of the camps were cancelled and others were radically altered. We were able to run an Intermediate Girls day camp, as well as hosting an athletic day camp run by Go Athletics ministry. We had planned an Intermediate Boys day camp, but due to low enrolment, the camp was canceled. On the up-side, however, that allowed the available staff to assist with a DVBS held in Millet that week. To use a pandemic colloquial, they 'pivoted'.

The cancellation of most of the camps opened up opportunities for people to help in projects such as work days, Ladies Prayer and Planting day, the construction of a Gaga Ball pit, plumbing, sewer, and electrical work, and cabin, bathroom, trail and road maintenance. MBC also hosted six Sunday evening family meetings. There were also various group and personal retreats, and a few families used the property to host family events. Mt Carmel Bible College also used the camp for their fall retreat.

On an organizational note, the Board decided this year to drop the need for standing committees, and to strike ad hoc committees as needed. I would therefore like to thank Bethany Idema who has served as Bethel's standing committee rep for many years (and will hopefully be available for future committee work in the future!). Thank you for your support for this ministry.

Respectfully submitted by,

Frank Parker

FOCUS (Grant MacEwan Student Ministry)

Our update on FOCUS is much shorter than we would have prayed for as a result of the covid pandemic. During the fall we tried to maintain a consistent Friday afternoon Zoom meeting and completed a video study called "The Holiness of God". This video group was not very well attended, but it was still a blessing to those who participated.

During the winter term the students have been meeting on Friday afternoons on a sporadic basis for fellowship and some Bible study. There is an emphasis from the student leadership to get into a book from the Bible for an exegetical study. They will be going through the book of James until the end of the year as a source of practical teaching. For many of our students this will be their last year of university. We are praying about the future of FOCUS.

Steve Cortez & Shayne Poirier

Commended Workers' Report – 2020

As we've indicated for the past several years, it was our intention to retire from full-time pastoral work at Bethel when Frank turned 70, which happened this past September. In that regard, this will be our last annual Commended Workers' Report!

Ironically, the Covid-19 pandemic has served to ease our way into retirement – visitations curtailed, camp largely cancelled, men's breakfasts and seniors' gatherings not allowed, and hospital visits almost impossible. That said, we've spent much more time communicating via phone and Zoom. Zoom, for example, has enabled the weekly men's Bible study to continue, and even expand inter-provincially!

We have both become quite involved with the Food Bank outlet now operating from our chapel (Bethel Pantry). In addition to meeting real needs within the community, it has opened up many opportunities for meaningful conversations. It has also helped us to expand connections within the community. We continue to volunteer with Wecan Food Basket Society (Frank), and Families Helping Families (Dianne).

So has 'retirement' changed anything? In some ways, not much! We are both still very much involved with the life and ministry at Bethel – pastoral work, discipleship, camp, and neighbourhood. The faithful example of those who have gone before us at Bethel, reminds us that Christians never 'retire' until the Lord calls us home; and until that time, we are each His 'full-time workers'. May the Lord continue commend each of us to His service.

Respectfully submitted by Frank & Dianne Parker

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)

New Church Plant in Edmonton

"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)

Greetings in the Lord Jesus Christ!

As many of you may already know, for the past number of years our family (the Poiriers) and Steve Cortez have been prayerfully planning and working towards establishing a new gospel work in Edmonton - specifically a new church plant. While this hasn't been discussed at

length in a public setting, many of you have approached us individually to inquire about what we are doing and why we feel called to this work. We are excited at the opportunity to share more about this in the annual report.

As long as I (Shayne) have been a believer, I have always had a consistent desire to serve the Lord in some form of vocational ministry. For many years I believed that the Lord would have me serve Him as a missionary in an overseas context - perhaps in Asia or South America. You may remember that I further explored this in 2014 when I went on a short-term missions trip to Indonesia to minister to believers in North Sumatra. Almost since the day that the Lord saved me, in the fall of 2006, I have had a deep desire to proclaim the gospel, make disciples, and work to establish biblically faithful assemblies of believers (ie. plant new churches!).

After praying about this for a number of years and discussing this with my wife, Nicole, it became apparent around 2015-2016 that cross cultural missions was not what the Lord had for us at that time. Despite this, my desire to make disciples and to plant churches had not diminished and I began praying about faithfully carrying out this work where the Lord had already placed us - here in Edmonton. After a series of events that seemed to confirm this, in the summer of 2017 I approached the Elders and expressed my desire to plant a church in Edmonton. Shortly after this, Steve Cortez joined me in this work, and he has faithfully worked alongside me ever since.

Over the past 3.5 years we have prayed, we have met with the Elders, we have shared the gospel, ministered to university students, and led other Bible studies. During this time, we have enjoyed some success, we have endured some crushing disappointments, and we still believe that it is the Lord's will that we would engage in the difficult but important (and biblical!) work of church planting.

Through a number of means, including the FOCUS student ministry, informal Bible studies, and other evangelistic work, the Lord has assembled a small group of believers that have become the nucleus of a new assembly in our city. Over the past 10 months we have been meeting regularly (outdoors, via Zoom, and most recently at Capilano Christian Assembly) for Bible study, prayer, and fellowship. This time has not been without its challenges; however, we are encouraged that the Lord has blessed our efforts and has been providing for all of our needs along the way. In many ways this church plant has also served as a providential blessing from God, as it has allowed Nicole and I weekly opportunities to enjoy in-person fellowship and Bible study with a small group of believers while we continue to sort through her health challenges during the pandemic.

Over the past number of months our group has chosen the name "Grace Fellowship Church" and we have started meeting under this name. While we would all readily acknowledge that we are still a "church plant" and not yet a church, we are hopeful that we may be able to

begin meeting as a new local church in the coming months if the Lord is willing. Our focus at this time is to continue to disciple the believers that the Lord has put before us, to boldly proclaim the gospel to our friends, co-workers, neighbours, and the communities in south-east Edmonton, and to wait on the Lord for His blessing, provision, and guidance.

There is certainly far more that we could write, but we will leave room for further conversation in the weeks and months to come. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to approach/contact us. We would be happy to discuss this further with you.

We would greatly appreciate your prayers; apart from God's enabling power we can do nothing!

Prepared by Shayne Poirier on behalf of the Grace Fellowship Church Plant

Bethel Pantry – 2020

In Spring 2020, as the first pandemic lockdowns started to ease, Edmonton City representatives started exploring the food security issues in our neighbourhood, especially among those unemployed due to Covid-19. Area churches were approached about the possibility of using kitchens and other facilities. Eventually they asked if we at Bethel would operate as a Food Bank outlet, supported by a coalition of community groups. After working out the details, Bethel Pantry began operations on October 19th.

The Bethel Pantry operates every Monday afternoon, and serves about 100 people a week. We also give out pre-packed food bundles and one-off items to individuals who connect with us during the week. In addition to non-perishable food items, we give away donated clothing items and reading materials, including Bibles, Christian literature and tracts.

As well as meeting a very real practical need in the community (including the Bethel community), the Pantry is providing valuable opportunities for meaningful conversations, and increasing our local connections. While most of the workers come from community groups, there are an increasing number of volunteers from Bethel – but we could always use more! For more information talk to Frank or Dianne Parker, or Barbara Congo.

Respectfully presented by,
Frank Parker