

The Spirit



Bethel

November 2009

Sherwood Park, Alberta

Sharing the love of Jesus with a hurting world



Taking it to the Street

Pastor James

In the last chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus tells His disciples to “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20a) We rejoice that our God is an active God in His creation. The same God that created the entire universe is the God who sends us out with the assurance that “I will be with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20b). While we read the promise of God to be with us, we are also confronted with the question of what it means to go.

Often, when we think about bringing the gospel to the nations, we think of distant lands, but what about the local mission field? Every day of our lives we go different places – to work, to school, to church, to the grocery store, to the sporting arena – and as we go, we do so with an ever-present, ever-active God with us. Where are the places that God has sent you with His Gospel? The concept of bringing the gospel to people in our communities raises many interesting questions and challenges. This is something that the college and careers group at Bethel has been talking about. We have tried to imagine what

bringing the Gospel to people in the greater Edmonton area might look like.

On Sunday November 8, we are going to meet at Bethel, prepare some snacks and hot beverages, and then go to worship with the people on the streets of downtown Edmonton. Whether it is on a street corner, or in the tunnel of an LRT station, we are going to seek people who need to hear the gospel through our praise songs, scripture reading and prayers. If you feel drawn to this type of street side ministry, we would like for you to join us. Above all, though, we ask for your prayers and support as we venture forth from Bethel to bring the Gospel to a hurting world.



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The Spirit at Bethel is the monthly newsletter of Bethel Lutheran Church, Sherwood Park, Alberta. Laila Klaszus and Kris Buchholtz are co-editors. We welcome submissions relevant to Bethel and the church. You can leave your submission in our mail slots at church or email them to lailaklaszus@gmail.com or bucbunch@telus.net. The deadline for the December/January issue is November 23.



The largest equipping and renewal conference in North America is coming soon! Join many of us from Bethel who will be attending Break Forth Canada 2010 on January 29th - 31st in Edmonton, Alberta.

Some of the best known Christian authors, speakers, worship leaders and artists will be there. See and hear Anne Graham Lotz ('Just Give Me Jesus'), Lee Strobel ('The Case for Christ'), Frank Peretti ('This Present Darkness'), Joel Rosenburg ('Epicenter'), Francis Chan ('Crazy Love'), Shannon Ethridge ('Every Man's Battle'), Fred Stoeker ('Every Man's Battle'), Dr. Neil Anderson ('The Bondage Breaker'), William Paul Young ('The Shack'), Dr Leonard Sweet ('Soul Tsunami'), Tim Kimmel ('Grace-Based Parenting'), Duffy Robbins ('This Way to Youth Ministry'), Sean McDowell ('Evidence for the Resurrection'), and many more!

Be led in worship by Robin Mark (writer of 'Days of Elijah'), Keith & Kristyn Getty (writer of 'In Christ Alone'), Brenton Brown (writer of 'Everlasting God'), Matt Maher ('Your Grace is Enough') and more!

Take in concerts by Michael W Smith (The top contemporary Christian artist of all time), Newsboys ('Shine'), Lincoln Brewster ('Today Is The Day') and more! Enjoy Late Night Festivals (Comedy, Film, Music) and more!

Catch over 150 classes in the following tracks: Discipleship, Evangelism, Family, Spiritual Freedom, Leadership, Children's Ministry, Communication, Creative Arts, Drama, Missional Church, Gospel Music, Instrument Clinics, Men's Ministry, Marginalized, Praise Band, Healing, Prayer, Relationships, Small Group Ministry, Songwriting, Tech Team, Vocal, Worship Café, Worship Leadership, Youth Ministry and More.

There are even "conferences within the conference" for young adults ages 18 -30 ("the Edge") and teens ages 14 - 18 ("infuzion"). Great Speakers! Great Music!

On Friday, January 29, there are 25 Intensive Learning Workshops. These are full-day, highly interactive learning experiences with some of the top teachers in the world. There is something at Break Forth Canada for virtually everyone in the church!

Break Forth Canada sells out year after year. Don't miss out! Pick up a registration form from the office today.

*(If you would like to be a part of Bethel's Super Early Bird **Group Rate** of \$99.00 (+GST), please submit your registration to Ann at the office by November 1, and you will be invoiced after everything has been entered.)*

**SUPER EARLY BIRD DATE DEADLINE
IS NOVEMBER 10!**



My Eyes Are Dry

Normay Wiebe

This past Sunday a song was sung in church called "My Eyes are Dry" by Keith Green. It coincided with Marv's message from Ezekiel about God taking our hearts of stone and changing them to hearts of flesh.

*My eyes are dry, my faith is old
My heart is hard, my prayers are cold.
But I know how I ought to be
Alive to You and dead to me.*

*O what can be done for an old heart like mine.
Soften it up with oil and wine.
The oil is You, Your spirit of love.
Please wash me anew in the wine of Your
blood.*

Written by Keith Green © 1978 Ears to Hear, BMG Songs, Birdwing Music. Words reprinted permission CCLI license

Those are words I've often prayed in my life at times when my heart feels cold and far from God. Oh, how I pray that I will be alive to God and dead to me! It is my heart's cry for myself lately as well. I have been going through a season of drought in my own spiritual walk.

As I was speaking with a worship leader at our church, they asked me if I've noticed that the congregation at Bethel seems less engaged as we worship. There seems to be less people singing, less joy, and less participation than there used to be. So I've been trying to pay special attention to this and praying about it for wisdom as well. I assume since we as individuals have spiritual seasons, the same thing would be true for a church since we're just a bunch of individuals put together. It also reflects one of the things that I love most about Bethel - the freedom to be ourselves, not to have to put on the perfect Christian façade. But - I guess the question remains - have we lost some of our joy?

I'm part of the Wednesday Women's Bible Study. We are going through a Beth Moore study called *Believing God: Experiencing a*

Fresh Expression of Faith. The chapter I'm on is about praying the Scriptures.

For example, one of my concerns is sibling rivalry in the family. I'm not alone; right, parents? The Bible verse I chose to pray for them is Proverbs 19:11. This verse popped out at me as I heard the beginnings of a squabble breaking out upstairs:

'A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.'

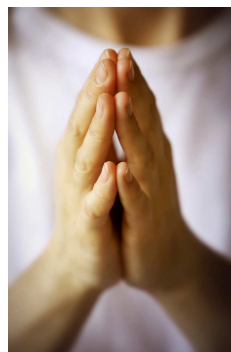
My prayer from that verse is "God, give my children wisdom beyond their years, patience for one another, and the ability to overlook offenses."

Just then it felt like a bolt of lightning hit me. God was asking me to pray scriptures for our church. Eleven of them came to mind, but I'll just share one of them right now. Maybe I'll share some more in future newsletters.

One of them is Psalm 92:4 - *"For you make me glad by your deeds, O Lord. I sing for joy at the works of your hands."*

"Dear God, as we hear the stories of Your deeds, as we experience Your goodness, as we see the works of Your hands, fill us with gladness. Help us sing for joy—not just put-on smiles, but sincere hearts of gratitude exploding out of our hearts through worship for all You've done."

These are Bible verses for the wonderful, God-loved people that we sit next to every week. Whether we know them or not, we have been brought together by God as the body of Christ.



Will you join me in praying the Scriptures for our church?





Grace Land/Quest 56 Update

Deloyce Elle

The children of Grace Land and Quest 56 have been busy each Sunday as they read and learn God's Word.

The Grace Land kids (K – 4) have already completed an 'alien' study of the book of Daniel. Just as Daniel was an alien, or foreigner, in Babylon, we are also aliens here on earth because as children of God, our citizenship is in heaven. The kids are now moving on to a series called "Good Kings – Bad Kings." It will be an interesting time as they meet different kings from 2 Chronicles.

The Quest 56 group (grades 5 & 6) spent the first five weeks with Zoro the Magnificent as she guided them through a series called "Sharpening Your Sword." They learned all about the Bible: its purpose, when it was written, who wrote it, and how it helps us in our lives.

The Grades 3 – 6 children are now taking a break from their traditional Grace Land and Quest 56 classes to begin a new adventure together. This journey is an 8-weeks series entitled "My Bible" which will take the kids through the entire Bible. They will learn about the different sections of the Bible, important people, and identify at least one key verse from each book. Parents, as the primary teachers in your children's lives, you are invited to join us (9:45 – 10:45) and learn together as a family.

It is important for families to come together around God's Word everyday. It doesn't need to be anything lengthy or elaborate. Simply take 10 – 15 minutes before bedtime to go through the "Faith 5":

1. Share highs and lows of the day;
2. Read a Scripture verse or passage;
3. Talk about what the verse means to you;
4. Pray together;
5. Bless one another. (For example: "Child of God, may you know the amazing love and grace of Jesus.")

The "Faith 5" provides a wonderful way to gather together at the end of a busy day as you quiet your hearts and minds before the Lord.



B.U.G. Beach Party

Kris Buchholtz

On Monday, October 19, some 40 Beautiful Unique Girls aged 12-17 met at the church dressed in shorts and flip-flops for some food, fun and fellowship at the B.U.G. Beach Party. The evening began with a limbo contest, which was won by Kaytlin Buchholtz and Taylore Theroux. Their prize was getting to eat first!

The girls who gathered were able to partake of a variety of activities, including pizza, smoothies, and M&Ms (the chocolate kind!!!), as well as nail-painting, a Bible story, music, friendship tips, and some great sessions that emphasized that they **don't** have to look like everyone else...that each of them is beautiful and unique just the way God made her. Everyone even went home with their own Beautiful Unique Girl CD! Linnea Salte and her team ably led the evening as she shared both her music and her own life experiences.

The evening even offered a shopping opportunity, as participants were able to peruse (and purchase) CDs, shirts, jewelry, and even her very own B.U.G. bug!



Perspectives on Kenya

*One perspective about working
and doing business in Kenya*

Mike Williams



In my opinion, this article can be broken into two parts; the first part would be in a global sense pertaining to the Kenyan economy, and the second

part might be called “main street” impressions....eye-to-eye dealings in everyday life. We tried to not push our values onto anyone and to see where their hearts were.... and they are a happy people with faith and hope.

Macro view: Foreigners have exploited Kenya for 500 years, starting with the Arab nations along the coast, and then with European countries in the last 125 years. This leaves the average Kenyan unsure of his place in the world. Since 1964 Kenya has been a republic. Jomo Kenyatta ruled for ten years but has struggled since 1974. Until the elections of 2002, the nation had been ruled by a one-party state. Perhaps since the elections of 2007-08, there will be more of a democracy.

The banking system is more stable than ever, with 46 different banks in the country. I am not sure what the average Kenyan would do with a bank. They have 40% unemployment and very little money and little property. (The average rural Kenyan has a daily income of \$1.11) With that said, there is a growing middle class. There is a stable stock exchange that is small with only 60 listings. We heard and saw that the government is trying to get the 42 different tribes native to Kenya to think of themselves as Kenyans first and of their tribal links second. This would go a long way to harmonizing many functions of society for the black African. Jomo Kenyatta introduced the term “harambee” to Kenyans in 1963; it means “pulling together”. Obviously, things don’t move quickly in Kenya.

Education and worship both appear to be

thriving, as we saw hundreds of schools and churches. How effective the schooling is leaves some doubts, but it ranks very high in the Kenyan mind. He knows it is a key to a better life.

Agriculture, including wheat, tea, sugar, and coffee is the backbone of the economy, employing 75% of working Kenyans and accounting for over 20% of its GDP. Manufacturing accounts for 13% of GDP. There is very little mining, no oil or gas reserves, but one refiner, one pipeline, and one railway, as well as a poor highway system, some geo thermal power and some hydro power. The infrastructure may benefit from a just announced stimulus package for many billions of Ksh. There are three vehicle assembly plants, but 70% of cars are imported used from Saudi Arabia or Japan. There is a solid tourism industry that attracts one million tourists a year.

Very early in our adventure to move a container of goods into Kenya, we found that having a global shipping company that will contract to take the container from door to door is the way to prevent being held up for more money as the trip progresses. Trying to involve more than the necessary agents or companies will end up costing more and confusing everyone. The average Kenyan would love to help do anything, and that is a trait we found with everyone. Each person we met or talked to seemed to be in a position to help. Unfortunately, it seems that many are not; they just think that it is a way to a means.

We found out that not every customs broker has the wherewithal to import a container. There are brokers who deal with small parcels and letters better than the post office, and they are known as “briefcase brokers”. They, like most Kenyans, will not say they don’t do this or that, and will soon get in over their heads and disappear. It isn’t that they are dishonest; it is that they don’t want to say no and only want to try to help. Just after we shipped our container, there was an auction at the Mombasa dock for unclaimed containers, some marked “for humanitarian needs” that had been sitting waiting for customs clearances for anywhere from several

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months to several years . Some good causes had just given up on their container because the dock fees had become more than the goods were worth. We heard of stories that \$50,000 or more having been owed before the release of a container.

When we spoke with the Emmanuel Foundation here in Sherwood Park, they gave us the name of a woman in Edmonton who had employed a woman named Wangari Ndegwa in Mombasa, Kenya to broker their container.

Clearly this was a tremendous find for us and we are all grateful for a good Christian woman to take our container under her wing and coax it through. Her company, Norene Limited, does not make any money brokering humanitarian containers into Kenya, but she is a woman of faith who knows the good that some organizations are doing for the underprivileged in her country. Wangari taught us: “Don’t think you are going to change the process time that Kenyans feel is necessary to take a task from start to finish.” Many meetings can be fruitless unless you know the African ways and follow up accordingly and show just the right amount of pleasure and pressure with the right person. The government officials are very nervous about having more than one person in a meeting, since they are always afraid of a trap. On the other hand, having one person in the meeting will allow them to ask for favors. Many people have seen various government agencies rely on graft to have a task move to the next step, and as a result many believe that this game is one that should be used. It would be reasonable to think that the white man has more money and therefore can pay more.

Kenyans are similar to other cultures in that they love to know they are dealing with a director or other person of stature. Something that carries over from colonization is the inferiority complex of the Kenyan, since they are poor and undereducated and feel that education makes people smarter and should make them more honest.. I’m sure they think we are more important than we are, but maybe we are in a position to help with

one of the primary goals of most third world people: getting a chance at emigration.

Many European, Asian and American companies have taken full advantage of a climate that has little capital, and so they infuse the local economy with a network; whether it is Vinci, the French Road builder, Coca-Cola, Shell Oil or Toyota, very few of the jobs of decision-makers are local Africans. Big business seems to work at another level far away from the average Kenyan. This leads to profits leaving the country and very few local companies that can advance the middle class. For a person to rise up and be able to take a chance and benefit from entrepreneurial risk is not likely. The black African gets the poor paying jobs.



Street view: Kenyan people have few needs and fewer wants. Local business is very local and the quality and choice were poor...we were forced to purchase shovels and rakes that we would have thrown away here. They did not last and were being imported and dumped in a country that can ill-afford paying for substandard products.

Many Kenyans don’t understand the concept of the future as we know it. Saving money would not likely be for more than the simplest needs. Corrupt governments have Kenyans believing that the system does not work for the good of the common man. Indeed, with sporadic electricity, poor water and no sanitation to speak of, the government takes and doesn’t seem to give back where it is needed most. The social safety net that should be there is not. This again is a carry-over from being a colony; there is too much central power and not enough decisions being made at the local level.

The character of the average person we dealt with is one who has great faith in God. Indeed, they are happy with what has been given them, and although it isn’t as much as we have, they do with what they have and seem not to ponder more. They see the Muzunga as a person with

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endless amounts of money, and since they have so little, they are under the impression that money must be able to fix anything. I found it very enjoyable dealing with the Kenyan knowing that they wanted to work with you and had an introverted way about speaking to you. Not guarded, but one of not being used to going one-on-one with a foreigner. One of the members of the Springs of Life Church was sure he was the guy to arrange a rental backhoe for our use in the compound. He didn't have one but was putting himself forward to orchestrate a rental and make some money for his family. Unfortunately many Africans don't trust one another (to be paid) and expect payment up front, and the guy with the machine wants to do the work directly with the people who can pay.

We saw a driver in every truck on the road, but also another person in the other seat. When we asked why, it was simply stated that the owner put the second man in the cab to keep the first guy honest and to be sure the goods got delivered or picked up with no stories. When we arranged for the rental of a tractor backhoe, it came with two men. Now these two men were good young guys, and when it came time to break for lunch, they told us that they had no money for food; if we preferred, they could work right through lunch and we could pay a reduced rate for the machine... "just don't tell the owner, and pay us cash." I think the plight of the average African is the same: to feed his family. They have a tough time when jobs are so scarce, the economy fragile and the drought always in front of them. Women seem to be doing the brunt of the family work, the men seem to need to be chasing a steady job and some purpose that is not achievable, and yet their hope remains. Women in Kenya know the day-to-day struggles and keep the family unit together as best as they can.

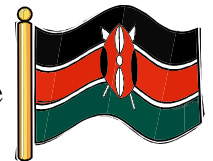
The socioeconomics of the slum is no different. People see a need and respond by starting a business. Whether it is selling pop or fish or shoes, they need to be where buyers will be. Those in the slums are living in an area that is really no different than where they used to live, only closer to a lot more people and that opens up

opportunity that will give some money and meaning to their life. It really isn't any different in a first world country.

The young men that hung around the church and helped us to complete the work on the property, really wanted to belong to something; the money seemed very secondary. It was more important to be working than doing nothing. The government should see that the quality and quantity of labor is before them, and that could make a difference to the standard of living for Kenyans.

When we went to the small town of Suswa and saw how hopeless the environment is for those that live there, you get an idea why people are moving to the cities. Since Bethel's last mission trip to Kenya when the church was built, the feedlot and auction have moved away from that town and it appears to have devastated the town. The drought has made grazing land barren, so crops for livestock have become expensive and no water leaves the Kenyans no choice but to move or to sell their cattle.

In summary, the trip was a very rewarding experience that afforded a good feeling of being able to help in a way that leaves a mark on those that we worked with, and as I suspected, left us marked as well. Kenya is a beautiful country that needs to have a strong honest leadership. Only then will the differences be set aside and progress will take on a different look in Kenya.



Editor's Note: For a more comprehensive understanding of the situation in Africa, Mike recommends the book [Challenge For Africa](#) by Wangari Maathai.



“Opapa and Me”

Be sure to check out the “Bonus Reads” section (pages 160-182) of the November issue of *Reader's Digest Magazine*! Ernst Klaszus' grandson Jeremy has written a compelling account of Ernst's wartime experiences in Germany during World War II.



THE ROCK
LUTHERAN
INNER CITY SOCIETY
9606 - 110 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T5H 1H5
Phone (780) 426-1122
Fax: (780) 426-1141



Dear Friends in Christ

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for helping to make our "2009 Thanksgiving Bag Appeal such a success." By that I mean we now have maple syrup, pancake flour, rolled oats, peanut butter, jam and coffee on the shelves plus margarine in our freezers again. Whew! Just in time too as our cupboard was bare.

I don't have to tell you how so many are out of work now and what with the economy and loss of overtime, part time work and the like, that so many just can't make ends meet. More and more we are seeing the working poor. There are those who come into the "ROCK Breakfast Club with tool belts, hard hats and steel toed boots just waiting to be called out for a day's work. \$10.00 per hour is the going rate and they have to pay for their own lunches too. After rent there just isn't much left to go around.

We have gone from serving 250-300 per day to 350-450 breakfasts per day and often we just make it through the mornings as we run low on toast and porridge plus pancakes. Treats such as cookies and pastries are usually out of the question. So it is a wonderful blessing that you are reaching out by supporting the ROCK as we continue to serve the homeless and poor.

I cannot over emphasize how much we need your help to keep this ship on even keel. As we sail along we expect some rough weather, and at times the swells seem to almost overwhelm us but thanks be to God that we have your prayerful support and that we can always know we are not alone as we too have the Lord. Then too, we have strong brothers and sisters such as you to lean on.

May our God of peace continue to bless you as together we march on into the future.

In His love and grace,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Barrie Reeder". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Barrie Reeder,
Chairman, The Rock Lutheran Inner City Society.

ps: please read this letter to your congregation as we want to thank each congregation corporately.



“Bethel Has Talent!”

Christel Laboucane



This year Bethel’s Oktoberfest showcased some of the BEST talent Bethel has! [*Editor’s note: Oh, I surely hope not!*] After a filling meal of traditional sauerkraut and sausages, guests were entertained by various

members of Bethel’s community. First we were treated to a song before Scottish dancers, compliments of Jim and Heather Higgs, continued the festivities with a wonderful display of synchronized dancing!

Then after a brief introduction and a welcome to our new Pastor James, the fun began with the inaugural episode of “Bethel Has Talent”! Pastor Marv served as our host/emcee, and Pastor Matt and Pastor James were our illustrious (!) judges. First up were the Bethel Beatles! All four are still wondering how it was possible to pick a Beatles’ song that everyone knew the chorus to, but not the melody. In true Bethel fashion, though, they (we) rose to the challenge and entertained guests with the worst rendering – ever – of “*She Loves Me*”.



Next up were Samson and Delilah portrayed by two of Bethel’s own. On this occasion it appeared Delilah really did have MORE hair than Samson! Delivered uncensored, some of us began to wonder where the evening would take us next!! Not to be disappointed, the audience was asked to participate as cheerleaders for four people giving us examples of how NOT to follow directions given by Pastor Marv. Finally a group of actual cheerleaders (pom-poms and all) was recruited to lead us in a Bethel cheer. All said, there was much laughter throughout the evening, in addition to time for fellowship and dancing.

A very special thank you to Das Komitee who organized and executed yet another successful Oktoberfest at Bethel and to all those who lent their “talents” for everyone’s entertainment, espe-

cially the orchestra that regaled us out in the foyer prior to dinner. Rah, rah rah! Goooooo, Bethel!!!



Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn



Connie Bromley

What do these three composers have in common? 2009 marks an anniversary for each one. For George Frederick Handel, a composer from the Baroque period of history, we mark the 250th Anniversary of his death. Franz Joseph Haydn, who composed during the Classical period, died 200 years ago, and Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, a Romantic composer, was born the same year that Haydn died. Each of these men enriched the music of the Christian church as well as that of Western civilization. For this reason, we will praise God for their gifts and contributions, and their devotion to the Gospel message in their music by holding a Hymn Festival here at Bethel.

The festival will be on November 22 at 3 p.m. The service will include the singing of some of their hymns, as well as Bible readings and a bit of information about each man and the period of history in which they lived.

If you are free on the afternoon of November 22, please plan to join us.

