

The BAF Board Report

We send warm greetings to you all from the Board at Bethlehem. We pray that you are all well and enjoying the inheritance of the Saints. We would like to begin by thanking all of you who have been remembering us in prayers and blessing us financially. As usual, God has been our provision in good times and bad, often through the faithfulness of the broader church. Thank you and bless you.

We have a few people to say farewell to and want to recognize their valuable input to our church. Jodi Friesen our Board Chair, has left us due to new full time employment responsibilities. Her input was invaluable during our time of crisis. Katie Cameron, our office manager held the office together and running with her amazing skills but now feels it is time to move on. Peter Boothroyd our worship leader for years, who weekly ushered us into the presence of the Lord, will finally join his wife in worship at her church. Many thanks to each of these people who have sacrificed in the name of the Lord for BAF. We wish them the best.

Our church services have been vibrant since our last newsletter. We have been visited by a number of pastors who continue to bring messages of encouragement and hope from the Lord. The word we received from the Lord, "I have opened a door that no man can shut," has been echoed and confirmed to us through nine different sources; some through these pastors and some from other sources across Canada. We are encouraged and strengthened. The Lord has also supplied praise and worship music each week from a variety of places and each time we have enjoyed the presence of the Lord. Thank you, thank you, thank you to all of you.

Recently ten members of Bethlehem attended a Celebration of Ministry Dinner put on by the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada. We felt the strength of our denomination as our brothers and sisters shared the world wide outreach of their ministries. We also felt the strength of belonging to the Western Conference. We are not alone! Our brothers and sisters know of us and pray for us regularly. This fact alone has impacted us in ways that are unmeasurable and brought some of us to tears.



Christian, one of our congregants heard a word from the Lord to, "blanket the neighbourhood with the Word", and has been distributing Bibles and left over bread from the food bank in the area. The Lord has impressed on us that we are to follow in the footsteps of Christian and take Jesus out to the people of our area. This confirms a dream one of our members had of a number of the congregants sitting sleepily on the pew, when Jesus jumped on one end of that pew. The people were flung off the pew and landed on their feet. We are not going to look for recruits to fill the church, but to bless the people and pray for them right at their doors. We plan to head out on March 4th.

We at Bethlehem continue to look to Jesus and strive to hear Him and follow His lead in all we do. May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He make His face to shine on you until we meet again in the next newsletter!

Some friendly faces from Bethlehem!



A Final Note from Dietrich and Edith Desmarias

Serving at Bethlehem these past 17 years has been nothing short of an amazing experience and tremendously fulfilling. We have been privileged to see a lot of fruit of our labour and are thankful to God for this wonderful path He has led us on. When we started at Bethlehem Chapel in 1995, our children were so young and now they have grown up and have matured to adults. Being part of the community at Bethlehem has helped them to get grounded securely in their faith.

Just as we felt God call us to this ministry, we now are sensing His will for us to complete this chapter and step aside to allow new growth and for something new to happen at BAF. Our prayers are for new leadership to come and bring the church to a new level. It is with much mixed emotions that we have decided to leave BAF. These 17 years have been full of challenging experiences that has required much effort to keep the church maintained and so partly due to the accumulated stress, Dietrich has had some health issues that required him to take time off work. During that time we decided that his work is done and it is time to move on. As of the end of January, we moved to Calgary and Dietrich will work at his business that we established 3 years ago called Emotional Wealth Management Inc. (EWMI). Dietrich has a passion to help individuals get “unstuck” in areas of their life in which they struggle and loves to teach God’s Word through Neuroscience and understanding how the brain works and incorporating prayer. Over the years he has learned several helpful tools which have helped set people free in certain areas of their life. He also will do teaching seminars, one on one Emotional Wellness Coaching and Consulting. Edith will help with the administrative side of things and plans to look for a part time nursing job. Brandon has moved to Edmonton and Nicole will come to Calgary with us.

We want to sincerely thank you for supporting us and the ministry at BAF over the past 17 years. As financial and prayer supporters, you have all been part of the ministry. We pray that you would consider continuing your support to BAF as they will be looking for a new leader and because of the general economic status of the church body; it is very difficult for them to support a pastor on their own. Bethlehem is a vital part of the North End community, and besides the Sunday service, there is still lots of ministry happening during the week. Please remember to pray for the leadership in the church and give them wisdom and assurance that God will provide all the needs and guide them through this transition.

God Bless you all with His Love and Strength. Jeremiah 29:11-13 has been important to us during this transition.

Love Dietrich and Edith



Work Force Job Studio by Jocelyn Chan



Since starting with Work Force in August, my time with the Job Studio has been amazing! Job Studio is a 12 week employment training program for youth ages 16-20 from the area. It is held at BAF. From September to December, twice a week, I, along with 5 volunteers, gathered with anywhere from 8-14 youth, and while eventually we did write cover letters and resumes, practice interviews, and fill out application forms; a lot of the time was spent teaching and discussing things that I was surprised to learn the youth didn't already know. Things like interests and values, settings goals, stress, time management, all of these lessons were so new to the youth. One thing I found particularly inspiring was how much they enjoyed setting goals once they learned how. One girl would excitedly tell me everyday how she was working on her goals, and when she expected to complete them.

Above all, the greatest thing to have come out of the first session is the relationships that have been built. I have had the chance to take most of the youth out on one-on-ones, to get to know them better, encourage, and even pray with some of them. Sometimes it is really hard to hear all the hurtful things they are going through in life, but I know that God has the power to heal all their pain.

The 9 youth to graduate all have resumes now and are beginning their job hunt. They are more hopeful of their chances of securing employment, and in turn, have more hope for their future. Praise the Lord!

