



He is Risen...

HE IS RISEN INDEED!!!

With this salutation, the early church greeted one another at the time of the Lord's Resurrection. We are once again in the time of celebrating our Lord's Resurrection, and we greet you, dear friends of Bethlehem, with this salutation as well.

At this time in the spiritual realm, we are entering a season of "new life". The Lord is igniting the hearts of his people---knitting together the generations in unity so that His Kingdom can move forward in this earth. How does the Lord knit his people together? Several speakers at BAF have been reminding us that it is not by following certain programs, but by taking time to listen to the heart of the Lord, and following His lead. For a year now at BAF we have been practicing this, following the lead of our Chief Shepherd. It has been an amazing time. Two women have released prophetic dreams to us at BAF. Both dreams confirmed each other that the Lord is about to release His Presence in greater measure in the inner city community around BAF. His Presence will firstly impact the children of the area. At BAF we long to see the Kingdom of God advancing.

Are we having an easy time at BAF? We have experienced many difficulties but God has brought us through, and in the midst of it all, we continued to minister to the community around us. In John 16:33 we read "In this world you will have many troubles, but take heart, I have overcome the world". On Feb. 10 we experienced a minor "flood" in the basement, as we entered the church to have our Sunday Service. A knock came at the door, and the second person to arrive was a woman who hadn't been at BAF for many months. She came in and said (very shyly), "As I was coming to BAF today, the Lord said to me" tell the lady at BAF that I know they have been having many troubles, but I am restoring and repairing everything". What an encouragement once again from the Lord that He is with us. We moved our service upstairs to another room and were able to worship the Lord with all our hearts. Meanwhile several of the men were down the basement cleaning up the water and mess, calling the city to turn off the water, and taking charge. The next day, the city came and dug up the yard, and found the broken pipe. Praise God, the pipe was on the city's property, and thus the cost for the damage was not ours (it would have been about \$30,000).

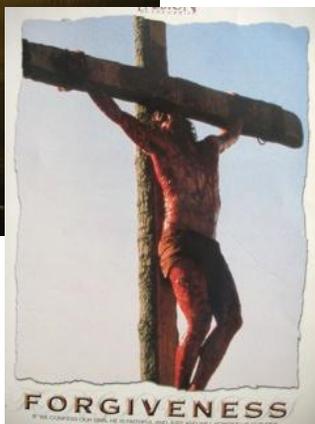
So we first of all thank the Lord for His promises to us and that He is with us. Secondly we thank all of you our friends for praying for us and for your financial support. You are an integral part of this ministry.

- by Jo-Ann Swenson on behalf of the Board

HOPE

by Susan Bukta

What is hope? We say, "I hope it doesn't rain." Or we might say, "I sure hope my team wins." Both have about a fifty-fifty chance of happening. I believe that our Heavenly Father wants much more for us. The Biblical definition of hope is, "The confident expectation of God's goodness towards us." When He tells us to put our hope in Him, He is saying that He wants us to expect marvelous and miraculous things to happen. At the very least we are to expect things to work out. He wants that hope to be so sure that it eliminates all worry and stress. He wants our hope to cause us to trust every aspect of our lives to His goodness. Jesus paid a huge price for us to be able to hope in Him. We at Bethlehem are learning to put our HOPE in Him. Thank you, Jesus.



FOOD BANK

by Marcy Matheson and Jo-Ann Swenson (Food Bank Co-ordinators)

We are experiencing the joy of great team-work in our ten volunteers for the food bank. A few weeks ago we were handicapped by a minor "flood" in the church the weekend before food bank was due to run. Outside the city had dug up the sidewalk and part of the yard to fix the water main break, and inside the water in the building was shut off. Still the faithful volunteers showed up, unloaded the truck, and served 48 families with Winnipeg Harvest food. I never heard any complaining about the extra problems. They just rolled up their sleeves and got to work, helping each other. I believe the Lord gives us the strength, the grace and the joy as we study the Word together before the food bank starts, and as we pray for the afternoon. We have wonderful food bank volunteers and would like to thank them all for the great work they do.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Vacation Bible School: This year Bethlehem Aboriginal will be partnering with Floodgates Church under the leadership of Soar Heartland to offer a V.B.S. for children in our neighborhood. We will be offering a week long Spring break program of activities and creative bible study followed up by a family B.B.Q.

S.E.R.V.E. During the first part of July, a large number of youth between the ages of 12 and 18 from CBWC churches across Western Canada will be coming to Winnipeg to offer their services in the North End. They will be doing programs for children and participating in work projects and outreach opportunities. They have chosen Bethlehem as one of their locations to offer their services and we are looking to having them.

Men's Group

by Clint Toews

The weekly BAF men's group started a few months ago and is open to any of the men in the community who would like to come. Our numbers have been increasing and Lyle, who is a former pastor and attends BAF has been asked to do some of the teaching. He is gifted and passionate about leading men in following Jesus. We are having strengthening times together as we study the Word and share one another's burdens.



The main reason for initiating a men's group at BAF is the need for maturity of faith and character to provide stability of relationships and confident leadership in the church community. There are areas in which women are better suited for leadership roles and others in which men should take the lead. The men's group is designed to address the issue of men taking the initiative to take on leadership roles rather than be passive. This is a crucial area in most men's lives. We are getting to know one another and enjoying our time together.

Infinity Youth Church

by Shaunna Goode, WorkForce, Youth for Christ staff, Infinity Youth Church Leader



When you walk through the doors of Infinity Youth Church, what will you find? My answer to this is that you will find community; a place where you can experience love and acceptance no matter who you are. This sense of community is something that we, the leaders of Infinity, try to establish for the youth because we understand that most, if not all of them, come to us broken, hurting, questioning and confused; simply longing to be loved, imperfections and all. This is a hard task at times but since this community is founded upon Christ's love, we keep at it. We know that His love never fails and that He will help us to love these youth even when we don't know how to.

What has made a great impact on me this year (my first with Infinity) is the comments I have heard from the youth that show that this community plays a significant role in their lives. Comments such as "What am I supposed to do with my Sunday nights while you are on break?" or "I keep telling my friends that they should come" or "Every time I come here it makes me think".

These youth are looking for people who are willing to invest in them, and that's what they find at Infinity. Whether we are sitting down to eat together, laughing and playing games with each other or talking about serious matters with one another, we want the youth to know that we are there and that we care.

We want the youth to experience Christ's love and to come to know Him better. And we are grateful to see how God is moving in this community and look forward expectantly to see how God will continue to move.

Muffin Ministry

by Jo-Ann Swenson, "the Muffin Lady"

It's always a joy to report on the muffin ministry. We give out muffins every Thursday morning in the community around Bethlehem. Kildonan House continues to give us four dozen muffins to give out and what a blessing that is. We have made many connections in the neighborhood over the five years we have walked the streets and handed out muffins with God's Love.

There's Angel, an amazing woman who has a 24/7 daycare in the area. She takes in children at any time of the day or night if they need care. When we deliver muffins to her, the children run to the door yelling, "The muffin lady is here, the muffin lady is here!!" It is fun to see their sweet faces. Pray for strength for Angel as she gives so much of herself. Then there's Kenny and Marcella, a beautiful couple who have a houseful of their own children and grandchildren. Pray for them. Ann is a prayer warrior who constantly helps and prays for others and struggles with a lack of provisions herself. Pray for provision, healing and strength for her.



Opa is the owner of a little grocery store in the area. He is a very kind man who often saves up change to give to Bethlehem as a donation. Bless him, his store and his family that they may prosper. Stan, one of our faithful volunteers is always interested in praying for others. Gary too is a faithful volunteer who is also an enormous help in making sure BAF's garbage is placed out for pick up. Pray for new hope and encouragement for him. There are several sex trade workers whose eyes light up when we stop and give them muffins and pray for them.

Please continue to pray for the muffin gang as we continue to pour out God's Love through the muffins.

North End Learning Center** by Mary Mitchell

It's been clear for some time that the Aboriginal Christian community in Winnipeg's North End has needed its own mini-Bible School, where people can gather to learn Bible and theology within the context of their own historical and present day native culture. In 2007, God called me to move from Toronto to Winnipeg to find a way to get such a school established, but the time wasn't right. Now, in His own perfect timing, the Lord is moving. Last fall, we ran a "Pilot program" class to survey the books of Moses. Now, in our first winter semester, a second class is meeting on Saturday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30, to survey the History books of the Old Testament. We sit around my dining room table, read, discuss, and think about what those wonderful stories have to teach us: how they all fit together to show the beginnings of God's plan for his people. When 11:30 comes, not everyone hurries off to other Saturday duties. Some stay to ask questions, share their understandings, and drink Mac Coffee. (One of the first things everyone learned was that Mac Coffee is much better than the kind I make, and now they bring their own!) There is a growing excitement about God's Word and even students with full-time jobs and responsibilities with home and families are making time to do their "close reading" and prep through the week.

We've just begun a North End Learning Centre Newsletter (published occasionally), so if you want to learn how the Lord continues to work as He shows us the next steps to take, please send your request and e-mail address to marysmaggiepie@aol.com. We'll be glad to add you to our list. But most important of all, please pray that we'll all grow and develop in "Shema" (Deuteronomy 6:4-9) as we learn together.

*** Editor's Note: The North End Learning Center is not an undertaking of BAF. However since Mary and some of the students belong to our congregation we applaud their efforts and strive to support them in different ways.*