

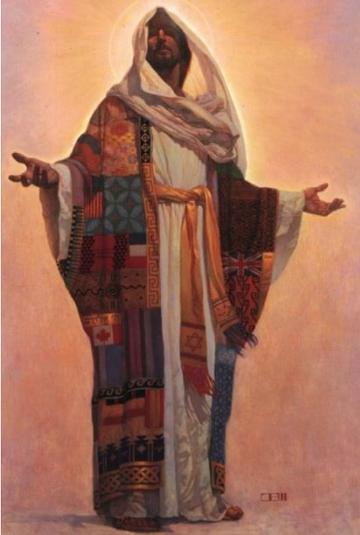


Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship

August 2014 Newsletter



SACRIFICE



Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? (Mark 8:34-36)

I am pleased to bring you greetings on behalf of the Board of Directors, as its newest member. My family first came to BAF in August, 2013 when we were invited to share during the Sunday service. We had already known that God was calling us to serve in the North End, and felt a connection here. By February, 2014, we were attending regularly, and enjoying building relationships with the people. God began asking me to examine the foundations of the church, and that led to an invitation to join the Board in March.

In Mark 8, Jesus explains to His disciples that we must turn from our own selfish ways if we are to follow Him. Basically, He is calling us to more than our own desires. When we first discussed my joining the Board, I was asked if I thought I had the time. To be honest, I didn't initially want to be part of the Board; I just wanted to help out a little with the bylaws. But God wanted more, and I had to choose to follow Him. I answered that God had called me to the Board, so He would give me the time to fulfill my responsibilities.

Sure, it feels nice to get what we want, but Jesus warns that hanging on to our desires will cost us our life. It isn't often our physical safety that is at risk, but our eternal soul and salvation. Fortunately, Jesus reassures us that His way is so much better.

God wants us to move beyond what is comfortable. He expects us to make sacrifices. He needs us to choose His plans over our own. What does He promise? Eternity in His presence. As we move into the fall season, I want to encourage you to seek those places where God is calling you to serve, and make the sacrifices necessary to answer His call. Remember that He is always there to guide and support you!

With blessings, Jayson Stoffman

Summer Work Force by Shaunna Goode

It's hard to believe that we are already midway through the summer. Things have been rather busy for us here at Summer Work Force, so the time has simply flown by.

This year we've decided to shake things up a bit and try something different. During the month of July we've followed the regular Work Force format. The youth have still been going out 3 times a week for a maximum of 2 hours per day to work in local business or for residents in the neighbourhood. However, this summer each youth in the program has a guaranteed day to work. It has been interesting to see how the various youth have responded to this change. Some, for instance, take it very seriously to the point of calling in when they can't make it; whereas, others had a very difficult time trying to remember on which day they were guaranteed work. However, the youth as a whole seem to appreciate the fact that whether or not they work at all in a given week is no longer left entirely to chance (we used to do a lottery based system to determine who would work on any given day) but is instead based on their effort to show up when scheduled. One thing I've enjoyed about this new structure is seeing how a sense of community is being developed amongst the youth who work on a given day.

Once August hits, we'll be switching gears and doing something we've never tried before at Work Force. It's something we call Projects. The plan is to have the youth do mini service projects in and for the community. The idea behind this is that we want the youth to experience what it feels like to positively contribute to their community. We want them to understand that they have something of value to offer and that they themselves are people of value. We believe that this will be a worthwhile and potentially life changing experience for the youth. Please remember to keep this in your prayers. Giving of themselves without material reward (not being paid like regular Work Force) will be a new experience for some of the youth; one that we hope they will welcome instead of resist.

We are truly looking forward to seeing God's plan unfold this summer. As each day passes the relationships we are building with the youth continue to grow. We trust that God will use these relationships to help the youth come to know Him better. This is both our hope and prayer.



Prayer Requests:

1) Because of a financial drain through added insurance costs (the result of a claim due to arson fire set on our rental house and the purchase of a new sprinkler system air compressor due to a break down) we are asking you to stand with us in prayer for provision from the Lord for Bethlehem. The Lord has said about BAF "I have opened a door no one can shut", and we believe Him. Thank you for believing with us.

2) Our rental house was burned badly through arson and needs extensive repairs. We ask you to stand with us in believing the Lord for a manager to oversee the building project and volunteers to work on the house. We have been searching for an these people and we believe the Lord will bring names to mind. Once again thank you for praying and believing!

Our God is an Awesome God! We are trusting Him to bring us through yet another trial in the journey at Bethlehem.
Thank you,
On behalf of the Board,
Jo-Ann Swenson

Baptism of Cindy Cook *submitted by Beth Wilton*



Tell us a bit about what your life was like before you came to know Jesus. Growing up my family really struggled. My mom was a single mom, life was hard and there was hardly any food. My dad was an alcoholic and I didn't and still don't really know him. I was tormented by kids because I was a big girl. I've always struggled with my weight. I had terrible nightmares even as an adult. Through it all, I always prayed although I didn't really understand what prayer was all about.

How did you begin a relationship with Jesus? When I was 18, a boyfriend started taking me to a Salvation Army Church. I got more and more involved with the church and started going to their camps. I was listening and learning. I realized my family loved me because they had to. These church people loved me because they wanted to. I already felt like I was living in hell; it couldn't get any worse so I finally said to the Lord "I'll surrender to you but I'm not going overseas or preaching on the streets." After I gave my life to the Lord the nightmares stopped. I made friends at church and I realized they wanted me to be all I could be.

How has your life changed since you began your relationship with Jesus?

I realized that Jesus is a healer. My nephew got third degree burns from scalding water. I laid hands on him and he was almost completely healed. There were no skin grafts required. I have a lot more peace now and understand that everything has a reason – there is a meaning for it. Jesus sees the big picture. I've also learned to trust him more. At 22 I wanted to go to a Jon Buller concert and begged my sister to come with me but she refused. I struggled with OCD and couldn't go to places alone. I heard a voice telling

me to go to the concert but I told God I didn't want to go alone. I had music playing in my room and each time God spoke to me the music stopped then it started again. God told me to go because I would have fun. This happened three times. I finally got mad and told God I'd go but if it didn't work out it would be the last time I listened to Him! I went, met some friends there and had an awesome time. It was a turning point in my life. Now Jesus is my best friend. When I am in need or afraid, He is there.

I had attended BAF's food bank and my friend Lori invited me to come to church one Sunday and I got hooked. People made me feel so welcome and encouraged me. I had always wanted to get baptised and I was able to do that at BAF. It was the happiest day of my life. It confirmed to me that the old part of me that I struggled with had died and now I was free. I had the Spirit shining through me. I also became a member of the church and am in process of figuring out what my gifts are and how they can be used in the church.

Work Force Job Studio* *by Jocelyn Chan*

This summer I was so excited to run Job Start again! Job Start is a program where I interview and hire 5 youths and put them in 8-week job placements for the summer. They gain work experience and are paid for up to 10 hours a week. Although this is our 4th summer running, little did I know that this would be a summer of "firsts"!

For the first time ever, word has gotten out in the community about this program and employers were actually contacting me to find out how they could become a work placement. In fact, I had to turn down a couple businesses because we were full! How's that to a good start of summer?

This summer also marks the first time I was able to hire 5 youth whom I already knew through the Job Studio (employment training program) that I run throughout the year. This was so great as I already had a friendship with these youth and could spend the summer concentrating on building deeper relationships. Our group meets weekly to discuss the challenges they are working through at their jobs, and also talk about Jesus and the truth about some common assumptions. The youth have a lot of interesting questions like "What is our purpose?" and "Why do bad things happen?" Yes, God is at work here!

The youth are working at local organizations: a nearby thrift store, a museum, an ambassador program, a community centre, and a neighbourhood print shop. We are halfway through and for the most part, their employers are giving glowing reviews! Are you ready for the last "first"? So far, two employers have told me that they are interested in hiring our youth in the fall, after Job Start is finished. Wow! Not only is this great for the youth, but it is great to see the community noticing our teens for the unique gifts and talents that they have to offer.

Please pray that that these youth would continue learning about responsibility and hard work as having a job sometimes means sacrificing time with friends, sleep, or fun.



**Infinity, Girls Club and the Work Force Job Studio are a partnership between Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship and Youth for Christ.*



Make a Donation

If you are interested in making a donation to Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship, you can donate safely online through our website, or see other options on our Giving page.

www.bethlehem.ca

Contact Us: Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship
294 Burrows Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R2W 1Z6

Phone: (204) 586-5707
Fax: (204) 589-0154
E-mail: bethaf@shaw.ca

www.bethlehem.ca