



Bethlehem Aboriginal Fellowship

April 2017 Newsletter



See! I am Doing a New Thing

"See I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland." Isaiah 43:19

As we enter this new season of resurrection life (in the natural with flowers and trees and grass coming back to life) we are also entering a new season in the supernatural. The Lord is calling us (Bethlehem) to a higher level of intimacy with Him, through PRAYER. Rather than us planning our "programs", we are to spend time individually and corporately in prayer listening to Him. In a book we study called "Experiencing God" by Henry Blackebey, the churches and individuals who were faced with decisions on how to proceed, brought their plans before the Lord, and then listened and watched to see where He was working so they could join Him. It is an exciting time to watch the Lord "grow" the church. In the beginning of our time without a "visible pastor", (2012) several of us spent time in prayer daily to seek the Lord about how He wanted to move forward. We were amazed at the strategies He gave us. As we listened and acted on what He said, things came into order.



We have recently had the joy of learning how to build bridges between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous in the church. This is an ongoing desire for us at BAF since we are located in the North End where there are a large percentage of Indigenous people. Two weekends in a row several of us were able to attend seminars about this. The first one was Journeying in a Good Way Feb. 24 and 25th where we heard from indigenous leaders, learned about the history of the Indigenous peoples and settlers, and prayed and learned how to walk together. The second one was First Steps on the Road to Reconciliation March 3rd and 4th, where we learned more about the history between the Indigenous and non-indigenous and how we could be part of the healing between the two groups. On Feb. 26th we were privileged to have Indigenous singer, story teller and author Cheryl Bear from B.C. come and share and sing at BAF. It was a joy to hear some of her story and she brought understanding to us of some of the aspects of the Indigenous culture. God is indeed "making a way" where there previously has seemed to be "no way".

Our hearts are open to the "new thing" the Lord is doing in our midst. We see Him building healthy relationships in the women's Bible study group on Thursdays. Many of the women say it is their "life line" as they struggle with heavy issues in their homes. We take time to listen to Him and pray for one another, and rejoice with each other as the Lord answers prayer. One of the women recently shared her testimony at BAF on "God's Amazing Grace" bringing her out of drug dealing and welfare into being a self-supporting prayerful single mom who is now our joy-filled receptionist at BAF.

We have also been studying the book of Ephesians over several months, and are finding it very foundational for our Christian walk. Ephesians 2:10 says "you are God's Masterpiece created in Christ Jesus to do good works that He planned ahead of time". So encouraging.

We will continue to seek the Lord through praying and listening to Him as we press on to "take hold of that for which He has taken hold of us." Philippians 3: 12. Will you join us in prayer so we can "grow" the way He would like us to? Thank you so much for your prayers and support from all across Canada. We are very thankful for this continuing support and the resulting "fruit" in the lives of the people to whom we minister.



Guest Singer and Author Cheryl Bear

On behalf of the Board, Jo-Ann Swenson

HOW HAS JESUS CHANGED YOUR LIFE LATELY?

Spring is beginning and change is upon us. Easter has just been celebrated with the new life it brings. We asked a number of people in our congregation how Jesus had changed their life lately.

Susan: I have such fear. When I seek Him by reading the verses on fear, I grow into Him more and the fear leaves me. I'm stronger in Him.

Jo-Ann: His presence has become so much more real to me lately through a conference I just went to. I find I'm not focusing on the circumstances but on Him and I sense His peace more.

Nancy: Through personal hardship lately I learned that Jesus tests us but He gives wisdom to know how to get through the test.

Sean: God has given me strength and endurance to keep walking with Him when I felt like giving up.

Beth: My faith grew a little stronger through a big decision I had to make lately that I didn't get direction from God as to what to do.

Jeremy: Jesus has changed my life recently through new experiences of prayer in my life.

Alan: Because of events and circumstances at work, I've realized I need God every hour. I've realized I can't do this on my own.

Bill: Being able to move forward from the hurts of the past with the healing power of Christ.

Judy: For me it is more certainty of what I am called to do.

Anonymous: I used to think that I didn't have time to do things that are important to God. For example, God put it on my heart that I should phone a friend of mine. I didn't do it partly because I didn't think I had time. My friend was killed shortly after that. Is life too busy that we don't have time to show love to people? Now I take time to love on purpose.

Compiled by Beth Wilton

You and Your Finances...



I was asked to speak and teach on money in the month of March at BAF. I have been a financial coach since 2008. I teach people how to understand and master money and reduce their debt as fast as possible. There have been several people since I spoke, who I have been able to begin working with one on one to teach them more in depth how to begin to understand their money situation better.

During the last 8 years I have studied what the Bible has to say about money. It teaches many key principles around money. Sometimes we just need fresh insight to gain a better understanding. One lesson I spoke on was Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

Two simple thoughts that I focused on:

1. We can only serve one master.

Think of it like this "*we are either master or slave of our money!*"! What are your circumstances? Do you find yourself worrying about how you are going to pay a bill? If you were to lose your job would you be in a serious situation within 3 months? Is there more month than money most of the time? If you answered yes to any of these questions then you aren't mastering your money yet! There can be many reasons we end up a slave to our money. We can learn how to do better.

2. If we are the master of our money then we have control of our financial situation.

We live within our means. We may have some debt, but we are in control and have a plan in place. We work toward financial goals. Also to be the master of our money we must prepare for rainy days. We protect our income stream; we protect our families and have an emergency fund. In other words we have a solid financial plan. One that keeps us master of money.

Understand to be the master of our money (whether we have a lot of it or not) is true freedom. If you want true freedom, you must take the time to become and stay educated on money. We must understand our money system which is debt based and designed to keep us in debt and not in control of our future.

I love to teach classes and speak on money as well as work one on one with families. If you would like more information you can reach me at jandersonwfg@gmail.com or 431-777-5990.

by Judy Anderson



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