

CSC NEWS

Celebrating God At Work

Centre Street Church • Calgary, Alberta

Fall 2019

"In him we have redemption
through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,
in accordance with the riches of God's grace
that he lavished on us." Ephesians 1:7 [NIV]



FORGIVEN

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centre street church
Christ at the Centre...

INTRODUCING PEOPLE TO JESUS AND HELPING THEM BECOME FULLY DEVOTED FOLLOWERS OF JESUS.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Senior Pastor | Dr. Henry Schorr |
| Central Campus | Saturday 6:30 pm Sunday 9:00 am, 11:00 am, 6:00 pm. Children's Ministry provided for all services except Sunday 6:00 pm. (3900-2nd Street NE, Calgary, AB T2E 9C1) Tel: 403.293.3900 Fax: 403.520.2698 Lead Pastor: Pastor Kent Priebe |
| North West Campus | Sunday 10:30 am. Bearpaw Lifestyle Centre (253220 Bearspaw Rd. NW) Lead Pastor: Dr. Lawson Brown |
| Bridgeland Campus | Sunday 10:30 am. (235 - 8A Street NE) Lead Pastor: Rev. Tim Hayes |
| South Campus | Sunday 10:30 am. St. Mary's University (14500 Bannister Road SE) Lead Pastor: Pastor Craig Murray |
| Airdrie Campus | Sunday 10:30 am. Airdrie Koinonia Christian School (77 Gateway Drive NE, Airdrie AB) Lead Pastor: Pastor Travis Wilkins |

CSC News is Published by the Communications Department of CSC

cschurch.ca

Please visit **cschurch.ca** for our current staff directory.
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CSC News welcomes comments and feedback on all editions of this newspaper. Please email: communications@cschurch.ca



Bridgeland Campus' 6th Annual Campout at Camp Harmattan was all about pursuing relationships. The weekend was not for the faint-hearted, as it rained, a lot! Fortunately, gazebos and tarps were set up, picnic tables dragged underneath, allowing for eating and fellowshiping together!

Bridgeland Campus is not one to be beaten by the weather! The cold, wet weather necessitated keeping a campfire burning, which the kids thought was wonderful! A retired scout leader passed on his skills to the new generation, teaching them how to safely and effectively light a fire and keep the fire burning safely. It was a wonderful weekend for our Bridgeland Campus to build community!



Photos by Christine Hayes

FEEDBACK

"We go because we enjoy the outdoors, and being in God's creation helps us to connect with God in a way we do not experience in the hustle and bustle of city life."

"We love bringing the body of Christ together and seeing relationships between both adults and kids go deeper."

"We were able to bless a single mom with 3 boys who have had a difficult year with the chance to get away from it all for a short time. She was very grateful and told us that this was the only time this summer that they will get away as a family together."

"Without a doubt, the Bridgeland camping trip is one of the highlights of our summer!"

"We go to connect with individuals and families that we don't regularly connect with at church. Five people from our family came."

"We got to see the generosity of others, as they helped and served other families."

Honouring Martin Bloem

BY LORI KLAUS,
Contributing Writer

Energetic, passionate, and devoted are words that Paivi Bloem uses to describe her late husband. Martin loved photography, travel, and keeping up with the latest in science and technology; but Paivi says it was his strong faith in God that truly characterized his life.

Martin, who served on CSC's Board of Governors, was diagnosed with cancer on October 5, 2018. On October 22, barely two weeks later, he went home to be with the Lord. It seemed almost incomprehensible that only the month prior he and Paivi had been travelling through their native homeland, Finland and the Netherlands, actively taking in all its sites and visiting family and friends with no inkling as to how life as they knew it was about to change. The death of someone so full of vitality (Martin had attempted to retire two years prior and it lasted only two months!) came as a shock to many; but Paivi, full of faith even in her fresh grief, knows that God ordered Martin's life.

"Martin did not make his life. God did."
She says it's clear, when she looks back, that God orchestrated every part of their history – from moving to Canada and meeting each other to the incredible story of their conversion to Christ.

1974 was a very dark chapter for the Bloems. Martin was working excessively, struggling with destructive habits and living life independently of God and his family. Paivi felt she and Martin were strangers to each other. The long days of raising young children on her own left her feeling isolated and depressed.

God stepped in one lonely night when Paivi went to bed early, and opened a book a friend had given her called *Beyond Our Selves*, by Catherine Marshall. In it, she read phrases she'd never heard before, such as 'born again' and 'Jesus in your heart.' When she read the words, "Many people know Jesus in their heads, but they are missing life by 18 inches – from the head to the heart," she began feeling an overwhelming desire to truly know Jesus.

The need for repentance was a very strange concept to her. There was much she didn't understand, but she was desperate for change in her life, so she decided to pray the prayer of repentance outlined in the book.

Completely unknown to her, at the very same time as she was upstairs giving her life to Christ, Martin was downstairs reading a little booklet called "Steps to Peace with God." Martin had known he needed to change, and he had promised Paivi that things in their family would be different; but apart from the Lord's help, life had always remained the same. That night, however, the Holy Spirit was at work in Martin, and he too prayed a prayer for salvation.

Husband and wife came to the Lord separately, and, unknown to each other, on exactly the same night!

"What now?!" was a question Martin and Paivi both asked themselves after their conversion. The Bible they had been given by the pastor who married them had sat unopened on their shelf for the past five years. They had never gone to church and had no knowledge of



Martin and Paivi Bloem Photos from the Bloem Family

what their new life with Christ was supposed to look like.

Again, God stepped in – this time in the form of an American business man and his wife. This devoted Christian couple brought Martin and Paivi into their lives and led them through a Bible study by the Navigators called "Designed for Discipleship." This was something Martin, in particular, couldn't wrap his head around at the time. This man was very successful and very busy travelling all over the country, so Martin found himself asking, "Why would he care about us? Why would he take all this time and go to all this trouble?"

As he grew in his relationship with God, Martin realized the importance of discipleship and came to understand that love was what motivated the business man and his wife to do what they did. A real heart for unbelievers and new Christians developed in him, and Martin sought to disciple others in the same way he and Paivi were discipled in those early days.

Martin loved being a facilitator in the Alpha program because it gave people with questions about faith the opportunity to explore Christianity in an open, welcoming atmosphere. He was also a sponsor for Freedom Session, a mentor in the Journey program, and was part of many men's groups over the years. Most recently, the church benefited greatly from his wisdom and experience through his involvement on the Finance committee and Board of Governors. It's clear Martin Bloem had a heart for service, and above all, a heart for God.

It can seem to us that we lost a great man all too quickly, but Paivi knows the Lord's hand was present in the end as much as it was all throughout Martin's life. As friends and family prayed over him in his hospital bed, he didn't have enough strength to say much in response, but one thing he did say in those final hours was "Amen." It was like a declaration of the truth being spoken over him – the truth that he belonged to the Lord and would soon be welcomed into his presence.

Psalms 61:5 says, "You have heard my vows, O God; You have given me the inheritance of those who fear Your name." That is a verse that comes to mind for Paivi when she thinks of Martin. Though he's missed by many here on earth, his inheritance in heaven is great.

Thank you, Martin and Paivi Bloem, for your example and for your years of faithful service!

**Martin loved photography, travel, and keeping up with the latest
in science and technology; but Paivi says it was his strong faith
in God that truly characterized his life.**

The Weaver's Plan



Ray Park and his wife, Elaine at Emerald Lake.

Photo from the Park Family

BY TESSA LITTLEJOHN,
Contributing Writer

If you have the pleasure of meeting Elaine and Ray Park on a Sunday night as they greet people entering the church, you will immediately notice their enthusiasm. And if you talk to them for a minute, you'll hear their excitement and gratitude over the things God has done and is doing in their lives.

It wasn't always this way. In fact, at one time they were both dead. When Elaine was born, the umbilical cord was wrapped around her neck and she wasn't breathing, so her Catholic parents had her baptized immediately. When Ray was about a year old, he was accidentally hit on the head with a metal pipe and doctors pronounced him dead. Like Elaine, he too proved the doctors wrong.

Elaine didn't have a happy childhood. She didn't feel loved at home, so she left. "I was looking for love in all the wrong places," she says. "After two failed marriages, I felt sure there could be no forgiveness or salvation for me."

Ray didn't have an easy childhood either. With undiagnosed dyslexia, school was torturous for him. Also, his family were strict Jehovah Witnesses, so he couldn't participate in birthdays, holidays, and singing "O Canada."

"I felt like an outsider at school," Ray says, "and I was teased constantly. I left home at around age 16 and ended up on the streets. Becoming addicted to drugs and alcohol made life even harder."

When he was twenty, Ray got married. Despite having two beautiful girls, his marriage failed, and things really began to get out of control.

"Partying and drinking became a daily routine," says Ray. "If I had stopped to admit it, my life was pointless."

In 1987 Ray and Elaine met. "He was exciting and reckless, living the biker lifestyle," Elaine recalls. "We had many wild and crazy times living totally focused on worldly things. Still something was missing that fast times could not satisfy."

Eventually the lifestyle began to catch up with Ray's health. He tried to quit drinking cold turkey and wound up with seizures. Their doctor prescribed medication to deal with the seizures; but unfortunately, due to a dosage error, Ray ended up like a puddle on the floor. Elaine came home from work and found him there.

Emergency doctors were amazed that Ray was still alive, given the amount of drug in his system. Doctors believed he would never fully recover and would have the mental capacity of a twelve-year-old. Again, Ray proved them wrong, although he did suffer some permanent damage.

After this, Ray announced one morning that he needed to deal with his spiritual life and walked out the door. Instead of heading up the hill as per usual, he felt drawn down the hill and found himself at the new Central Campus, which he never knew existed. Ray met Pastor Greg and came to realize that Jesus was the answer.

Elaine was a different story. She could see the amazing changes in Ray's life and was happy for him but felt certain that she was unforgivable. For seven years she came to church for Christmas, Easter and Ray's birthday but felt guilt and shame. For seven years Ray prayed daily for her.

One day, quite unexpectedly, Elaine lost her job working for a big oil company downtown. Looking back, she can see that she had many idols, chief among

them was her prestigious job. She spent three days crying inconsolably.

Ray, on the other hand, was thrilled about this turn of events. On the third day, Sunday, he asked her to go to church, and she agreed. He prayed hard that Pastor Greg would be there, and he was! After a long chat with Pastor Greg, Elaine gave her heart to Christ. Now she says, "If I'd have known how much fun it is to be a Christian, I would have done it a long time ago!"

She was like a sponge—volunteering, attending three Bible studies, soaking in the love of God. She no longer felt ashamed. "Although I'm not necessarily proud of some things in my past," she says, "they no longer define me. I am a new creation in Jesus!"

Elaine prayed that God would give her a job and surround her with others who love Him. She was quickly embraced by others and within a month was hired by the church.

Around this time Ray was diagnosed as having issues with his gallbladder. Like a good wife, Elaine googled it and put him on a gallbladder diet: apple cider vinegar and lots of roughage. As it turns out, the poor man had an ulcer, and the diet was most certainly not ulcer friendly! The ulcer ruptured, landing Ray back in emergency.

Even in this, God was working all things for the good of these two who loved Him. While doctors were dealing with the ulcer, they discovered Ray had a type of lymphoma which responds very well to chemo if caught in time. If you miss the window of opportunity, however, it is almost certainly fatal. If it hadn't been for the ulcer, Ray would have missed that window of opportunity. Clearly it was not yet God's time for him to go.

All during the time Ray was in hospital, both he and Elaine were joyful and at peace. They trusted God with the outcome, knowing His will is best. Many others noticed and were amazed. During that time they had many opportunities to "give an answer for the hope" that they had.

Also at this time, it was discovered Ray had Hepatitis C. Doctors told them about a new, experimental treatment, but it cost \$80,000. Totally out of reach!

They didn't worry. They just started praying and left it in God's hands. They had discovered He could be trusted. Sure enough, two days later, they found out one of the doctors had recommended them for an assistance program, and the whole cost was covered. Not only that, but the company that shipped the drug to them had a loyalty program, and the amount they received each month was the amount in increased insurance premiums they were now paying.

"God has been so faithful to more than meet all our needs," Elaine says. "The more He gives, the more humbled I feel that the Creator of the Universe chose me—despite



Ray and Elaine enjoy spending time with their friends,, Daryl & Stacey Posipil; Ray & Elaine on their 25th Anniversary renewing their wedding vows. Photos from the Park Family

scars, chips and cracks—chose me to love.”
Ray and Elaine have many more examples of God working. As Ray says, “People have suggested I should write a book.”
God is so good. Referencing the poem, “The Master Weaver’s Plan,” Elaine says, “We catch glimpses of all the things God is doing, but I feel that we are looking at the back of the tapestry and the front is more incredibly beautiful than we can possibly imagine!”

*“My life is but a weaving
Between the Lord and me;
I may not choose the colors—
He knows what they should be.*

*For He can view the pattern
Upon the upper side
While I can see it only
On this, the under side.*

*Sometimes He weaves in sorrow,
Which seems so strange to me;
But I will trust His judgment
And work on faithfully.*

*’Tis He who fills the shuttle,
And He knows what is best;
So I shall weave in earnest,
And leave to Him the rest.*

Not ’til the loom is silent

*And the shuttles cease to fly
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.*

*The dark threads are as needed
In the Weaver’s skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.”*

— Author unknown

BAPTISM

testimonies

Central Campus - May 4 & 5, 2019



NYSSA EAGLE - I have know Christ most of my life. When I was young, I always asked Him to stay with me, and He has through everything. I experienced His power at work through challenges. At one point, I decided to close myself off, thinking that was the way to go. But in the process, I unknowingly closed myself off to Him as well. Reaching the lowest I could go made me realize where I was and fear was my first thought of Him. As I prayed every night, He pulled me out with His hand again and heightened my writing to go beyond closed journals. He used my passion for horses to get me back in a church again. Then to participating in the Last Supper and reading my waiting Bible. Now I am here where He knew I would be welcomed back, and introduced me to Pastor Ashwin, so I had someone for this I would trust. All of this is a reminder and proof that all of me is in it with Him from now on. As much as my passions bring ease and a smile, it is not enough without Him in the picture.



VALERIE LUNDGREN - I have always believed in Jesus and His willingness to be the bridge that mends the gap that man created against God. He was obedient to God’s will while knowing what awaited Him. My faith in Jesus is strong, but it was not always like this. I had a difficult home life, and when I was little, I experienced abuse in the church that I went to. I resented church and stopped trusting the people there. I did not blame God, but questioned if these people followed what Jesus teaches. I remember telling myself, “Church isn’t a place to let my guard down or connect with anyone.” I have not gone to church on a consistent basis, but my sister Shirley has kept me connected in one way or another. I graduated from the Freedom Session course and through it God has helped me to let my guard down and be open with my group. The Bible verse that is meaningful to me is 2 Corinthians 10:5, “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”



JOY GREENING - I felt God speaking to my heart and what He told me was He will always be there for me and He will accept me. The life I was leading was not good. I was in and out of hospitals, almost dying, because of infections and being away from my husband for 4 to 5 years. I decided that I want Jesus in my life and that I want to follow Him for the rest of my life and be His child forever. This is my public declaration to you all that are present, that this is my decision and I am proud of it!

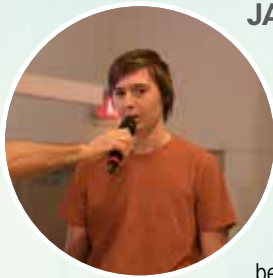
NW Campus - April 28, 2019



ROBERT WILSON - My relationship with God has been a journey. My wife helped bring me to faith. I had Christian friends and was raised in Catholic school. We moved west and went through a lot of different churches looking for the right one. We found CSC and Pastor Henry’s sermons touched us, and Lawson came into our lives. We would meet him at random places, and it had an influence on us and our lives. Our Oikos family helped build community and faith for us. We have had a lot of obstacles to overcome, but God has been with us through them all.



KATHLEEN WILSON - Thank you so much for the chance to have our whole family experience baptism together. I am grateful our Oikos family is here. They have journeyed with us the past 5 years, and have been a huge part of our growth in Christ. I was raised in the church, baptised as an infant and confirmed into the church when I was 13. After that, a close friend helped me ask Christ into my heart. I have always felt a deep closeness with God. When I became a Christian, I felt as if I received a spiritual set of glasses that let me see the world more clearly through God’s eyes as well as my own. God overwhelmed me with passion and love for teaching my own kids, as well as others. Seeing them through His eyes has helped. I truly feel like a vessel for His love and cannot believe the joy of letting His love wash over me and out to others. We have had obstacles to overcome, and it is a miracle that we were able to have these two amazing children. Looking back, we see God’s hand throughout it all. Looking ahead, we have hope in His goodness and His promises.



JAMES (JAMIE) WILSON - God has helped me a lot with hope and courage. When I was a child, I was sick, throwing-up multiple times a day. I went to the doctor a lot. They kept saying nothing was wrong, but obviously it was. I eventually was sent to a GI specialist and I was put on some drugs. Then I felt full for the first time ever, because I stopped throwing up. For the last 11 months though, I have been sick again, throwing-up multiple times a day. Now I am getting off drugs and throwing-up less often. I don’t remember when I became a Christian. I always remember being one. God is a constant in my life, and that is what I need. He is a warm presence, in the midst of being sick. It is about all the little things that make a difference, especially if you are in a time of trial. It is about knowing He is going to help you through.

Photos by Colin Brown and Brian Harris



N.O.W. musicians do an amazing job of leading music that engages the congregation in worship; Speakers Ryan Stockert (May) and Kent Priebe (June); Celebrating the baptism of Jimmy Bongily during the June N.O.W. service. Photos by Colin Brown and Tara Whittaker



Community on Mission Stepping out in Faith

BY MICHELLE BONNIER,
Contributing Writer

A community on mission. What happens when a group of people come together—people from different stages and ages, from infant to senior, with the desire to introduce people to Jesus and walk alongside them as they grow to know Him? Our missional community (MC) started over six years ago with a small group of individuals studying Alpha. We transformed into a group of around 35 regular members—a group that is passionate about seeking the Lord, building relationship, and serving our church, our city, and our community. We eat together, sing together, study God's Word together, and we step out in faith together. The invitation is open, as we have devoted our MC to be a welcoming place for anyone to come and belong, be loved and be exposed and delve into the truth of God's Living Word.

Our missional community loves to serve each other and our church. The second Saturday of each month you can find a group of us in Children's Ministry—singing, story telling, making crafts and caring for the kids that walk through our doors. Before any of that begins however, we meet for dinner in the café, further building our community and the bonds between us through laughter and sharing our lives gloriously entwined in the rhythm of serving.

Each year, our MC serves at Christmas Fest, Family Fest and at the Children's Ministries movie nights, helping with set up, take down, greeting, serving at the various stations – whatever is needed! We also serve at the Compassionate Ministries Christmas meals for people in the community. We get together and cook freezer meals for families in our community who have just had a baby, get up early on a Saturday morning to help someone move, sing Christmas carols at a seniors home, witness to or encourage strangers in Market Mall or pack shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. The opportunities are endless, developing our heart of service and worship, and never fail to be as rewarding for us to be a part of.

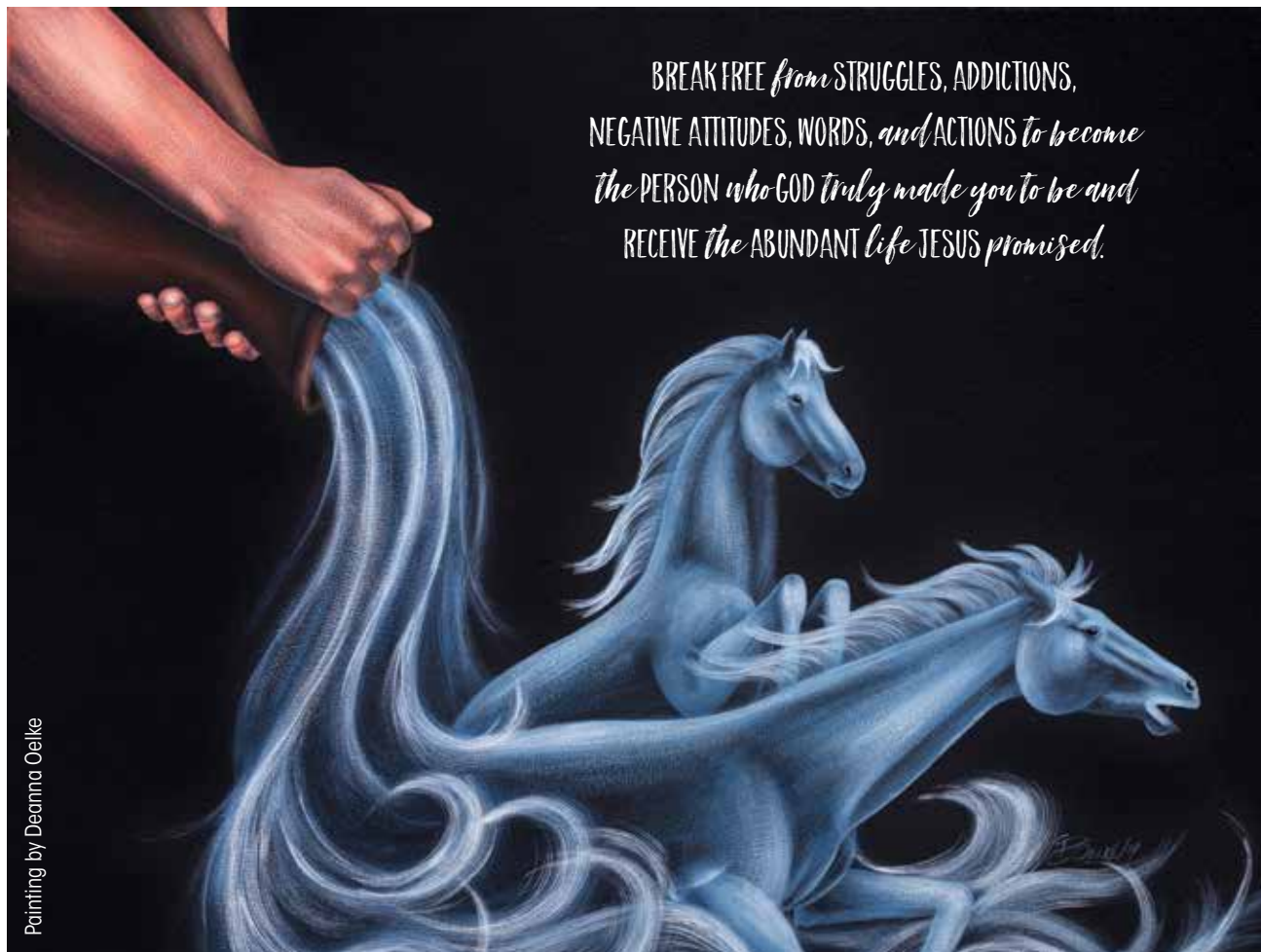
But it's not about us. We do it to glorify and magnify our Lord and Saviour. We do it because Jesus modelled for us the importance of community with a purpose. We do it because we love being together, growing together, worshiping together, and serving together – and want others to experience this too. We share because we want to spur one another on—to listen to what God is saying, and then, in courage and faith, take that next step. We pray that each of you find a community like ours to belong to, to grow in, and to serve with. Believe us – it's worth it!

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:24-25



Photos by Michelle Bonnier

Encounter God's Presence Weekend



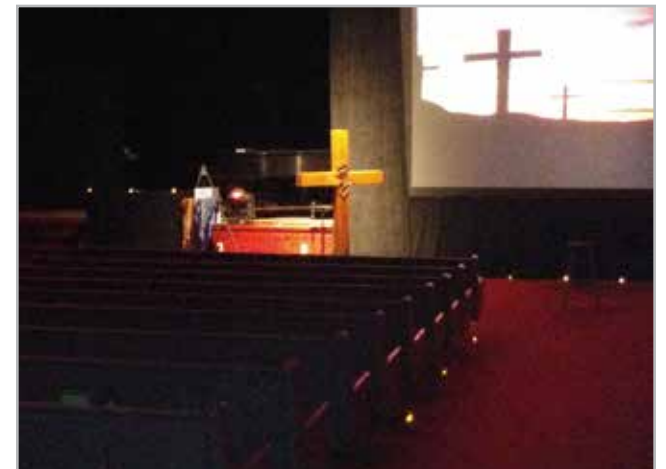
February 8-10, 2019

Encounter God's Presence Weekend is held three times per year for followers of Jesus to learn to Walk with God and experience a fresh and renewed sense of intimacy with Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit. They experience anointed worship and learn about spiritual warfare and the battle we all face. Participants experience the council of Holy Spirit and practise hearing God's Voice. Through the counsel of Holy Spirit, they identify and break free of bondages in their lives in the areas of occult influence, sexual impurity, negative attitudes and behaviours, unforgiveness and generational curses and sins. Throughout the entire weekend participants receive the deep restorative healing of Jesus as He heals wounds and pains in their life.

On Sunday participants encounter Jesus at the Cross to experience the magnitude of what Jesus did on our behalf. All weekend long participants share with like-minded companions and through it all receive encouragement and support from a team of trustworthy leader's, teachers and group leaders.

Encounter God's Presence Weekend has now taken over 1050 people through the journey of healing and restoration that God has prepared in advance. At the Encounter God's Presence Weekend in February 2019 we had 48 participants attend. Here is what participants testified about:

- EGPW has empowered me to break free. Knowing the enemy is defeated builds confidence.
- I came into this weekend with a lot of stress and anxiety from work. I felt a new connection to the Christian community and my joy was restored. I am leaving here changed and renewed.
- EGPW opened my eyes about the truth that the enemy has no authority over me.
- EGPW allowed me to experience God's love for me.
- I now know that God always forgives our sins and shortcomings. His promises are true. I learned how to listen to Him.
- EGPW helped me face my reality and deal with it by giving it to God.
- EGPW gave me hope that Jesus is TRUTH and by choosing life He will bring blessings.
- EGPW helped identify certain lies I have believed.
- I learned more and desire to grow in Christ.
- This weekend helped me realize the power of forgiveness.



May 3-5, 2019

At the Encounter God's Presence Weekend in May 2019 we had 43 participants attend. Here is what participants testified about:

- I finally got to the end of my pain and so now I can complete the healing journey.
- EGPW helped free me of the bondage and soul ties and understand the roots of anger and fear that I kept for 10 years.
- God is working to draw me closer to Him.
- I'm walking into the same situation I entered the weekend with but now with peace and faith and trust in God the Father and Holy Spirit.
- EGPW taught me ways to dig deeper, listen to the Holy Spirit, pray about everything and just wait for an answer.
- The combination of teaching and responding in small groups was really important in moving from theory to practice.
- I came here for healing from a past hurt, but as the weekend went on, many other things were exposed. These were brought into the light and dealt with. Just an awesome freedom now!
- I realize how destructive the power of anger is and how it permeated so many areas of my life.

- I know who I am and I love myself because of Jesus. I have a change in heart, attitude, behaviour. I feel light and loved; I feel that I belong here with my Christian family.
- EGPW reminded me that life with Jesus is more important than what the world offers. Trying to achieve more money or things is not success.
- My soul is on fire for God now!
- I have a better and deeper understanding. It was a powerful weekend!
- This weekend changed my life forever.
- EGPW gave me hope to break away from generational sin. Gave me the tools to address destructive habits that stem from attitudes and beliefs.
- This weekend helps to turn my mind and heart back to God.



Participants receive encouragement and support to meet with God in a new and fresh way. Photos by the Encounter God's Presence Team

BAPTISM *testimonies*

Central Campus - June 1-2, 2019



CELESTE ANDERSON - Coming from a Catholic background, I believed in God, but did not have an understanding of how to be close to Him. Five years ago, my marriage ended and I was depressed and contemplated suicide. I was scared that I could not survive in Canada without him. It was the saddest time of my life. After the divorce, I had time to focus on God again. I realized He was the only one that could help me get my strength back. A co-worker invited me to a Bible Study, I started attending a Christian church and discovered how much God loves me. Through pain and loss, I have come to know God's loving heart for me. I started attending CSC last February. The worship and teaching drew me closer to God and I became interested in reading the Bible. I eagerly read His Word and watch Bible movies to understand better. When I saw people baptized here at church, I knew I wanted to enter into that close relationship with Jesus and follow His command to be baptized as well. I am so glad I accepted Jesus as my personal Lord and Saviour. Now my life is changing in so many ways. I have become more joyful and thankful in every little thing. God is working on my character day by day as I am working on appreciating people more, being honest, and forgiving. When people ask me why I am happy and always smiling, I realize God is working on me. I might not have a husband anymore, yet my Father in Heaven takes care of all my needs. He loves me unconditionally. He will be there to guide and help me. He will never abandon me.



BIEUGEN BARTE - I had known and believed in Jesus Christ, but I was so distant from Him. I chose to live my life my own way. Instead of serving God, I wanted Him to serve me. I saw Him as a vending machine. Last summer, my wife and I experienced the greatest, most difficult season of our marriage. She was suffering postpartum and I was dealing with insecurities at work. We felt our Lord was so far away from us. Our small group advised us to attend an Encounter God's Presence weekend. There, I confessed all of my sins since childhood. I wept many times during the course. After confessing, I felt light and new. I was born again and had new life. I repented and changed the direction of my life. I felt a true peace, joy, and love. Now I live my life for Christ. I talk to Him most of the day. I learned to live simply in Christ. Everything I have, He owns. I trust Him for all my needs. My baptism is my public declaration that the old me is gone. A new me with Christ has come. I also celebrate my newfound intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.



NANCY CHOW - I have known Jesus since I was twenty years old. I heard about Him when I was young. When I came to Canada in 1979, I had some troubling circumstances and I prayed for Jesus to help me. Fifteen years ago, my friend's young daughter had a very serious pneumonia. She was in ICU at Foothills Hospital. The doctor tried all kinds of medications to heal her lung, but the medications did not work. At that time, everyone was so worried for that little girl. I started to pray for her, to ask Jesus to come to heal her pneumonia. The next day my friend called and told me that her daughter got better. That was such a miracle from God's power. I came to love and trust Jesus more through this. I have had Christian friends in my life who have encouraged and supported me when I was in trouble. I want to be baptized because I want to be obedient to God and follow Him.



JANET HAEGEDORN - I have attended church for many years looking for a better relationship with Christ. I started my journey at CSC volunteering with the SALT team when my son was involved. I have worked through the Discipleship program and been involved with two different small groups. I have been through Freedom Session, which is where I received the most peace and a complete understanding of what a true relationship with God really is, along with forgiveness. I feel very much at peace with the help from the lessons and from my sponsor. I want to be baptized today, as I feel God is calling me to have a stronger connection with Him.



DELANEY RIVARD - I came to know Jesus when I came to Centre Street Church when I was 16. My friends in the Special Needs Ministry and Pastor Corinne make me feel at home. I enjoy the Outpouring on Friday nights. My favourite Bible verse is: Jeremiah 1:5: It says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." I want to be baptized today because I am a child of God.

★ Stampede ★ BBQ ★

Wednesday, July 3



CSC Stampede BBQ Lunch for our Central Campus Business Neighbours

BY SHANNON IRWIN,
Contributing Writer

Warm sunshine, cowboy music, plaid shirts, and beef on a bun—a classic picture of Stampede events. For our CSC Staff, however, hosting the 5th Annual Stampede BBQ for our business neighbours was an intentional opportunity of getting to know one another better and building on relationships from the past four years.

Weeks before this special event, our staff began preparations – creating the invitation, planning the menu, praying, and signing up to serve as table hosts, set-up crew, and greeters. A week before the BBQ, we headed out on foot to distribute our invitations to businesses in our Central Campus neighbourhood, where we were warmly greeted by now-familiar faces, smiles, and comments such as, “We’ve been waiting for you,” and “We always love coming to your BBQ!”

On Wednesday, July 3, 2019, our guests were warmly greeted and guided to grab their BBQ grub. Pastor Matt Schorr frequently welcomed our growing crowds, expressing our delight to host them, drawing their attention to the materials on the tables (including Summer Events @ CSC and prayer cards), offering church tours, and drawing names for door prizes. Excitement built as guests came to collect their gift certificates from local restaurants.

Around the tables and spread out on the beautiful south gardens, our table hosts engaged guests in meaningful conversations. This year many guests referenced their positive memories of conversations with our staff from last year. One guest shared that he started attending CSC two years ago after attending one of our Stampede BBQs. A young man listened intently to the gospel message while in conversation with one of our Children’s leaders. And another guest shared with Pastor Lawrence that he wanted to recommit his life to the Lord, which he did that day!

Around noon, the crowds hushed as a welder from one of our local shops shared his testimony of coming to faith, overcoming anger, and celebrating God’s redemptive work in his life.

A new activity we tried this year was axe throwing, a fun opportunity to learn a new skill with new friends. While most of our throwing attempts were laughably feeble, we were wowed by Pastor Gentry who nailed the bull’s-eye on

his first throw!

As guests departed, some of our staff bid them farewell. Wally shared how two ladies thanked him for hosting this annual Stampede BBQ. One of them said, “It was so great!” to which her co-worker quickly quipped, “It wasn’t just great, it was amazing!”

Our 2019 Stampede BBQ was truly an amazing opportunity to get to know our neighbours better and invite them back to CSC for lunch, for summer events, and to journey with them spiritually. Praise be to God for another fruitful outreach. Yahoo!

KYLE PANKRATS’ TESTIMONY

“Lawrence asked me to share today some of how God has been at work in my life and how I chose to follow him. It took me a bit to puzzle out what to share, but I think I have managed to put together a few snippets that capture the main pieces.

My personal decision to faith was near the end of junior high, but I didn’t really start to act on it until I was much older and I was challenged by someone who said, “You’re a lonely, angry and unapproachable guy. I thought you were a Christian. Aren’t you supposed to be different?”

This question caused me to pause and to think about who I was, and he was right: I was a self centred, angry introvert who pushed people away.

Coming to that realization, I decided I didn’t want to be that kind of person: a person who wasn’t really a Christian that just said the words but didn’t act.

I decided to trust God to help me.
He helped me deal with the anger I felt and gave me a purpose and a place to belong.

Over the last number of years, God has changed so much in my life.

I have been richly blessed with so many good friends and an awesome church community.

I am no longer always angry with the world, which makes life far more enjoyable. :)

I have learned that I can trust Him in all life situations, such as when my truck got stolen.

He is always faithful no matter what.”

Photos by Pam Hawkes and Ella Schorr



FEEDBACK FROM BUSINESSES:

"This Stampede Lunch provides me with an open door to have conversations with my co-workers. I have started coming to CSC now."

"We look forward to it every year! Thank you!"

"A few employees from a mechanical shop around CSC said they were so appreciative of the meal and the opportunity to connect."

"This lunch gave us the opportunity to connect with other shop and business owners. It was nice to have time to talk about our lives, family and our work."



Photos by Pam Hawkes and Ella Schorr

MORE FROM THE
★ Stampede ★ BBQ ★



Photos by Pam Hawkes and Ella Schorr

Family In Christ



Angela Prado. Photo from the Prado Family

AS TOLD BY ANGELA PRADO, Contributing Writer

Originally from Colombia, I have lived in Canada for 15 years. I grew up in a Catholic family, where my mom and grandma were my example of attending church every Sunday and helping those in need. I would 'attend' church every Sunday, but I did not have a close relationship with Jesus. My life was focused on my own plans and my ways. My goal was to please people around me and accomplish the demands and expectations of my culture and the world. As result, I used to experience a constant emptiness, frustration, loneliness, fear and anger. There was no joy or peace in my life. There was also no real purpose in my life. I was completely lost.

I received Jesus as my Lord and Saviour 18 years ago. God used my neighbour, who invited me to a Bible study, and some struggles in my life to get my attention. Thankfully, I accepted the invitation. God was waiting for me. He met me at that Bible study. He spoke to me through His Word and the people who were around me.

The Scripture passage that was spoken that evening was John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." This passage impacted me because at that time in my life, I was relying on my own strength and was trying to understand why innocent people are dying around me due to violence. I received Jesus as my Lord and Saviour that day. As a new creation in Christ, I decided to be His disciple, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide me daily and to reflect the character of Jesus.

Since then, I have had a profound interest to grow in my relationship with my Abba Father. My life after Christ is defined with the following verse, 1 Corinthians 5:17 "Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone, the new has come." Since I accepted Jesus as my Saviour, this Word has been kept in my mind and my heart. I have been transformed by Jesus. It has been a process. Sometimes it has really been painful, but with a divine purpose. The beauty of the process is that I have learned to trust,

rest on Jesus and surrender my life to Him. I can now experience His promises of peace, joy, hope strength, comfort, and victory. And also I have understood that God is my purpose. He has a specific plan for my life.

The Lord led me to CSC four years ago. My husband Alejandro was invited to Alpha and "Why Believe?" which were offered by the church. My daughter Katalina was also invited to be part of the youth group. For a certain of period time, it seemed that the Holy Spirit was leading me to pray in the direction of moving out of my comfort zone and into a deeper relationship with Jesus. My desire of having a close relationship, intimacy, with my Heavenly Father has been an amazing learning journey. To know about God's character has given me a great confidence of His faithfulness. He has shown me His unconditional love and mercy in various circumstances and seasons of my life. I have experienced Him being my Comforter, Prince of Peace, Rock, Fortress, Strong Tower and my Defender.

God has been using me in ways that I would have never imagined. He has encouraged me to use the talents and gifts that He has given me to bring glory and honour to His name. My passion for teaching has taken me to be volunteer in the Children's Ministries at CSC. It is a great place to impact the future of God's Kingdom, and also to introduce Jesus to children who do not know Him.

In my community the Lord has poured over me the desire to share the Good News of knowing Him. Through MNE (Monday Night Evangelism), I have the opportunity to share the hope that Jesus has given me to those who are experiencing brokenness, loneliness, illness and hopelessness.

My workplace has been also my mission camp. Teaching Spanish and preschool gives me the opportunity to intercede for my co-worker's needs and also reflect Jesus' character in joy, peace, compassion, understanding and forgiveness.

My journey with Christ has been amazing, not because it has been easy, but He has been with me. Moving to Canada was really challenging. Learning a new culture, language, and leaving family, friends, etc. In that process, God has been faithful. He has given me the strength, courage, peace and joy to face all those challenges and new ones. In addition, becoming a part of a community of godly people has been an enriching and encouraging experience. I have found a family in Christ.



The Prado family. Photo from the Prado Family

My Daddy and Best Friend



Katalina Prado. Photo from the Prado Family

BY KATALINA PRADO,
Contributing Writer

I was born and raised in a Christian home with a mom and grandmother leading me to grow in a relationship with God. I attended a Spanish church because it was my mom's first language. My grandma constantly sang worship music to us, shared Bible stories and prayed with me whenever she could.

I remember interrupting my mom's time with the Lord one time and I asked why she was crying. She answered simply by saying she heard God's voice. I was confused, but my mom's faith was an amazing example in life. She has an abundant love for Jesus.

As I grew up, Sunday became a routine for me. I went to church to see my friends and talk. Our Spanish church was comfortable; it was a place where we felt culturally accepted and not judged.

At the beginning of Grade 6, God prompted my mom to seek a new place of worship. He was moving her out of her comfort zone. My mom prayed and waited for a clear sign from God. As an act of obedience, we followed God, and He led us to Centre Street Church.

The first service I attended was amazing! The environment was very different, yet I felt so welcomed. I belonged! Moving to CSC was a turning point in my spiritual journey. It allowed me to see the Christian faith with a new perspective. Each service felt like a new adventure, and I was always excited for the time of worship.

I remember one Saturday night service vividly. The worship was calm and peaceful, but as it ended, God met me. I raised my hand without a care, and I felt God's presence wash over me. Because of His overwhelming presence, I

began to cry. In that moment God welcomed me home and showed me His overwhelming love. I became closer to God through the power of praise and worship.

A friend invited me to youth group, and I had never experienced anything like it. The environment was fun and exciting, and it was a place where I could just be myself. I have made life-lasting friends that I will always cherish.

On Sunday August 9, 2015, I was baptized in the Bow River. As I came out of the water, I felt the statement "I am a citizen of heaven" come to life. God made me His beloved daughter. I beamed with happiness knowing that there was a party in Heaven.

Grade 7 was a hard year, as I wanted friendships that grew me spiritually, but struggled. I began to lose sight of how a true friend is supposed to act. I began to please people because I wanted to feel accepted and I felt lost and lonely. I continually asked for advice from my youth leader and mom. I took their advice to heart but did not see a huge impact.

I continued to stand firm in my faith, but when Grade 8 started, I realized that people will fail me but God will never fail me. He directed my steps and put me on the right path. Because Jesus is my best friend, He taught me how to be a good friend to others. I grew to know that I can trust Jesus with any problems.

God blessed me by giving me new, great friendships at school that always make me smile. I am still growing these friendships and allowing God to lead me. Through all of this, my relationship with my mom has grown and we can talk about God every second we have with each other!

On the other hand, my relationship with my dad began to drift. He was laid-off from his job, and he encased himself in worry. I tried to comfort him with my faith, but his focus was on the things of the world. My dad always makes me laugh and shows me unconditional love, but spiritually he does not understand me, and I do not understand his beliefs. I began to plead with God to give my dad a job so that my dad would give his life to Christ.

God continued to comfort me and encourage me to share my feelings with Him.

Since then I have called God my Daddy, the one who understands every part of me because He created me. God has given me the understanding about His timing and the joy of knowing that He is working in my relationships.

I have become involved in Deeper at CSC, which has allowed me to jump into the deep end in my relationship with God. In one class we received identity cards from scripture passages. These verses brought my identity into reality. The identity card that said I am a daughter of God really captured my attention. I felt a weight being lifted off of my shoulders. I found so much clarity realizing that being God's daughter is a privilege. We were encouraged to go home and ask God what identity statement He has specifically for us.

When I got home, I asked God, "What do you see me as?" With a pencil and notebook in hand I began to cry. He said, "I see you as a princess. I have dressed you in robes of righteousness and placed my words on your lips and a crown over your head. Your identity is found in the throne room of God in My very presence."

This moment truly changed my relationship with Jesus because through the journey He taught me who He is and who I am in Him.

Knowing my identity in Christ has allowed me to be bold in my faith by being obedient to His callings. God has placed a desire in my heart to reach the lost. In a leap of faith, God led my mom and me to Monday Night Evangelism at CSC.

The first night we went, I watched as others shared. I continued to go every Monday, and God was faithful in growing my boldness in sharing my faith. Each step is small, but I know God is proud of me. God has led me to talk to others in faith and let the Holy Spirit speak through me.

God has grown me immensely, and He excites my spirit with how He is going to keep working. I am eager for Him to put me into new situations as I am equipped to bring glory to His name. I am excited to walk each new day with my Daddy and my best Friend.



Katalina Prado with her mom, Angela. Photo from the Prado Family

csc family life

Birth Announcements

| NAME | DATE | PARENTS |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--|
| Taylor Marie Iverson | November 16, 2018 | Devin and Christina Iversen |
| Eliza Kwafi Obeng | January 19, 2019 | Frederick Asiedu and Cherrie Dominguez |
| Noah Eli Dyck | April 25, 2019 | Josh and Katie Dyck |
| Claire Louise Goosen | June 11, 2019 | Joel and Alisha Goosen |
| Roman James Jacob | June 14, 2019 | Josh and Danae Jacob |
| Bethany Hope Monson | June 20, 2019 | James and Coral Monson |
| Story Sunrise Rossler | June 21, 2019 | Thomas and Sonya Ediger-Rossler |
| Levi Howard Burgess | July 1, 2019 | Andrew and Natasha Burgess |

Dedications

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Noah Timothy Buffam | June 29, 2019 |
| Chloe Jean Buffam | June 29, 2019 |
| Oliver Lloyd David Roman Pierce | June 29, 2019 |
| Elraya Mariam Kadavil | July 3, 2019 |
| Chanelle Tiffany Sears | July 6, 2019 |
| Zayden Jaxon Gopez | August 24, 2019 |

Weddings

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| John McCune & Stacey Hagen | May 18, 2019 |
| Colburn Lien & Angela Yule | June 8, 2019 |
| Steven Tseng & Cheryl Li | June 15, 2019 |
| Adonis Galang & Joyce Quemuel | July 6, 2019 |
| John Rinke & Caroline Kainz | July 30, 2019 |
| Jorel Quemuel & Laurie Castro | August 17, 2019 |
| Jarod Wells & Kristle Magno | August 30, 2019 |
| Jacob George & Sarah Mohan | August 31, 2019 |
| Colin Wong & Sofia Urbano | August 31, 2019 |

In Remembrance

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Alvin Manske | April 19, 2019 |
| John Krawchuk | May 1, 2019 |
| Marjorie Simpson | May 6, 2019 |
| Carman Covey | May 15, 2019 |
| Herman Dahlke | May 22, 2019 |
| Marilyn Tryon | May 29, 2019 |
| Sean Kong | May 30, 2019 |
| George Mathai | June 7, 2019 |
| Colton Meaden | June 9, 2019 |
| John Sweeney Sr. | June 14, 2019 |
| Lloyd (Ray) Groff | June 19, 2019 |
| Walter Dawson | July 2, 2019 |
| Ray Milne | July 8, 2019 |
| Ramon Sergio Luarte | July 11, 2019 |
| Kelly Grams | July 12, 2019 |
| Gerald Logue | July 17, 2019 |
| Benjamin Prashad | July 18, 2019 |
| Murray Moir | July 21, 2019 |
| Rosalie Belsher | July 26, 2019 |
| Basilia Oluranti Aliu "Ranti") | July 26, 2019 |
| Ivan Radke | August 14, 2019 |
| Dorothy Rausch | August 28, 2019 |
| Glen Sylvester | August 30, 2019 |

Baptism

*child **youth

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Ivy Afseth* | Jessica Jarvis |
| Diesel Afseth* | Viktor Kacperski |
| Celiste Anderson | Jane Kiarie |
| Diego Aragon | Sarah Kiarie* |
| Julia Armstrong | Beatrice Kiarie* |
| Garnett Bailey | Rachel Kiarie* |
| April Barbadillo | Valerie Lundgren |
| Zachariah Barna** | Michael Marcelo |
| Bieugen Barte | Ethan Mellott* |
| Mario Blair | Gloria Mutua* |
| Jimmy Bongily | Caleb Mutua** |
| Rochelle Callaway | Grace Mutua** |
| Tony Castrilli | Arien Mykytyshyn* |
| Trevor Chan | Fiona Ng |
| Daniel Chen** | Josephine Ng |
| Caleb Chen** | Jethro Oribello |
| Nancy Chow | Ezekiel Palomo* |
| Anna Couillard** | Daniel Park* |
| Haley Couillard** | Colinda Rabbit |
| Rachel De Groot** | Andrea Rebalbos* |
| Tyson Durant | Mark Rebalbos |
| Nyssa Eagle | Xamanatha Rika Cano* |
| Paul Fons* | Delaney Rivard |
| Logan Gabel | Mary Ann Salazar |
| Shammah Gasangwa** | Ryan Salazar |
| Joy Greening | Rachel Santos |
| Abigale Grisdale* | Andrzej Andrew Sroka |
| Jessie Gustavson | Karen Stewart |
| Janet Haegedorn | Yenny Suarez |
| Valerie Heerema | Rueben Thomas |
| Kyeongah Jang | Safiya Throkelson* |
| | Matthew Tubb* |
| | Mandie Woods |
| | Sheryl Yanga |

New Members

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Margaret Andrusky | Jill Hilstad |
| Marwan "Mark" Atiyeh | Peter Jacoby |
| Nadine "Danny" Boustani | Danielle Kuelker |
| Elvira "Elly" Boldt | Adrian Lao |
| Harold Boldt | Soo Lao |
| Lynne Erickson | Karen Lai-Wan Leung |
| Paul Erickson | Wilfred "Adrien" MacDonald |
| Shawna Gibbs | Eva Pasztor-Buzassy |
| Laurie Griffin | Pamela Stevenson |
| Janet Haegedorn | |

Our Centred Singles had eighty people attend the annual retreat at Camp Evergreen near Bergen, AB. The retreat is a great place to connect with our three Missional Communities of single adults, seeking to strengthen their spiritual walk through engagement with the Word of God, personal prayer and interactive group discussion. It is a time to build friendships while having fun in a relaxed setting and an opportunity to explore individual and group activities.

This year the theme was Discovering Your Spiritual Personality. Attendees learned how their distinct personalities function differently within the Body of Christ and how they affect our engagement cultivating the spiritual disciplines. Guest speaker, Rosemary Flaaten, enriched the weekend with tools for a variety of soul care practices tailored to fit various personal styles.

Participant Feedback

"I very much enjoyed learning about others personalities. I feel I have a greater sense of peace about my life. God mostly showed me that I need to trust Him. I was challenged to go deeper with my devotionals and focus on what is really important. I felt loved and accepted by people who I only just met."

"I came to reconnect spiritually with God. I was impacted by God speaking to me and being in His prescence. To get back into His word daily and prayer. I had a hard time connecting with people but I had a great time over all."

"I came to take a break from the busyness of life. I learned that I need to really know my own character so to be more effective for the Lord. I now have a better understanding of myself and others."

"I had some wonderful conversations with others who love our Lord. Seeing their desire was very encouraging."

"I really appreciated the personal instruction that related to personality types. The focus on how we are all different, unique and all needed was awesome!"

"I felt refreshed spending a whole weekend focused on God & nature & sharing with believers. God showed me more about Himself and about myself. God spoke to me about valuing, learning from and loving those different from myself."

"Getting away allowed me to gain a fresh perspective on work/life balance. I really liked the personality test. God wants me to rest more and find a rhythm."

"I had such an amazing quiet time with my Lord. This year has been difficult and busy to a ridiculous level. I felt as if we were on a mini honeymoon! I met people in the singles ministry and grew a relationship with a friend."

"I am a single parent and sometime get no real rest. I did no activities and just relaxed. I feel so much better and could go back to life refreshed."



A retreat filled with lots of activity, fun and community. Guest speaker, Rosemary Flaaten, provided practical tools for 'soul care'.
Photos from the Centred Singles Team





/ by design

We live in a society that gives us mixed messages about identity, sex and relationships. These messages often run counter to what the Bible says. Throughout the first half of 2019, we took bold and prayerful steps toward providing the biblical view of deeply challenging topics and our call as a church to uphold truth, lean in with love and offer hope. We did a 9-part sermon series, along with supplemental learning and growth opportunities to hear people's stories, dig deeper, have in-depth discussions and ask questions.

Through the series, By Design, our vision was for everyone to know that, as human beings, our identities have been handcrafted by a loving and purposeful God who shapes every awesome detail of who we are. Whether we are single or married, God's design for our sexuality impacts the way we love God and love one another in all our relationships.

To learn more about By Design, including stories and available resources, visit cscchurch.ca/bydesign/

"It can't be understated the impact of the resources that CSC is bringing together. My husband and I feel CSC has equipped us with the perspective and vocabulary to compassionately uphold truth with people who are wrestling with this subject — on all sides."

"I cannot imagine how the subject could have been more delicately broached or lovingly presented."

"I just want to thank Henry and our church leaders for their courage, faith and wisdom for demonstrating the truth of God's Word in the upcoming messages. Thank you! We will be listening with eager hearts and praying for all of you."



"It was so good to see genuine, emotional worship."

"The energy of the night was awesome!"

"The evening felt like a giant party – the vision and direction of youth came together!"

"It was so powerful seeing youth so engaged in worship!"

"I could really feel the unity in the worship team."

"I was blown away with how many youth showed up! The youth area was so much fun!"

"The Atrium is amazing, the welcoming atmosphere! It is so cool to see everyone congregating and hanging out together, really getting connected. It makes the church feel smaller."

N.O.W. in July was full of celebration and worship. From Ezekiel Paloma's baptism and an excellent message from Pastor Henry to powerful music and passionate prayer. Photos by Shelly Sylvester

72 HOURS OF
**INSPIRATION
CHALLENGE
ADVENTURE**

XTREME CHARACTER CHALLENGE
JUNE 6-9, 2019

What are you living for?
4M is a worldwide movement of Men!
Ordinary men living extraordinary lives!
Inspiring men on the **boulders** of Faith,
Brotherhood, Adventure and Justice.
The **crucible**, The Xtreme Character Challenge.
A 72 hour ultimate endurance event in the wild
that tests a man's character, builds true friendship
and ignites faith. It is **not** a men's conference or
retreat. Men return home as **NEW** husbands,
fathers, friends and brothers with new insights into
their lives and their relationship with God.
It's time! **Decide!**



SYNOPSIS OF THE 4TH MUSKETEER MINISTRY

4th Musketeer - Inspiring Men's Hearts Through Adventure, Brotherhood, Faith, and Justice. The Xtreme Character Challenge (XCC) is not a men's conference or retreat. Men are led into the wilderness where inspiration, adventure and challenge forge a deep spiritual experience, and in some way, man and God meet. For 72 hours, men work in teams and discover important lessons about God's intended purpose for their lives. Men are tested physically, mentally and spiritually; and at some point, every man has a breakthrough. The end result...strong men will return home as new husbands, fathers, friends and brothers with lasting impressions of an adventure that has given them new insights into their lives and their relationship with God. Choices were made, brotherhood was formed, and they can no longer be the same.

The XCC starts on Thursday night and ends Sunday at noon. Multiple teams of seven to ten men (21 and over) band together to face the stunning scenery and rugged terrain bordering on the Continental Divide. Men leave behind the comforts of home. There are no showers. No running water. No bunk beds and cozy lodge. During the XCC, teams walk considerable distances carrying their backpacks with needed equipment. The XCC is designed for men to finish. Men will discover their capacity to do more together.

The first XCC was held in 2008 in the Netherlands. Today, we total more than 20,000 men from 20 countries. These men understand their ability to give their best in every area of their lives.

SYNOPSIS OF THE JUNE 6 - 9 WEEKEND

Xtreme Character Challenge 2019 (the sixth one in Canada) was the largest turnout for North America. Over 180 men braved the trails and completed the journey just east of the Continental Divide. Men were challenged physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Weather was a significant challenge, with the men waking up Saturday morning to 10 cm of snow. This added to the memorable experience when a spontaneous snowball fight erupted during the Musketeer Games.

Men come with varied abilities and capacities, yet almost all completed the weekend. Several men with serious medical limitations, injured knees, and blistered feet made it up to the highest place on earth (the cross) and into camp Sunday. It took the combined

help of the whole team to "bear one another's burdens," but the men were up to the challenge and helped their brothers.

The testimonies shared on Sunday morning demonstrated the faithfulness of God, the bond of brotherhood, and the deepening of faith.

The Biblical character studied throughout the weekend was David. Men took on the "giants" of loneliness, lust, apathy, injustice, the father wound, and demonstrated the power of friendship.

The men learned that struggle and trouble belong to life and God wants us to remain standing in that struggle in dependence on Him.

FEEDBACK FROM THE MEN

"I will ask for forgiveness from my wife and kids, mother and father, mother-in-law and father-in-law. Rededicate myself to walking with and serving Christ."

"I will be a better husband and father, be more involved with my church, trust in God and Jesus 100%!"

"I will be intentional each day to do an unselfish act for someone else."

"I will be on my knees every morning to ask God for guidance."

"I desire to delve deeper into the Word of God, pray regularly and surrender myself to the Lord."

"I want to give 100% in the things God has called me to. Being present and intentional in my relationship with my wife, my kids and fellow brothers."

"I plan to serve the Lord and my Church and my family and my community without question or hesitation."

"I plan to wake before my family to pray for my wife, my children, my church and my brothers. We fight on our knees in humble dependence upon the power of God for His mission, His Glory and HIS Kingdom. Lord make me a useful man in Your army."

"I will wake up in my marriage. I will commit to spending quality time with wife and children."

"My call to servant leadership starts at home. No more apathy, 100% for His Glory."



Photos by 4th Musketeer Team



Photos by 4th Muskateer Team

Grace After Forgiveness

BY KELSEY GINTHER,
Contributing Writer

**"Jesus showed [me] that I
can have relationship with Him...
He became a father to me."**

For Cherry Juric, coming to know Christ as a father has been particularly meaningful. When she was only ten years old and still living in the Philippines, she lost her father. Cherry was very close to her father, and she struggled for a time with feelings of anger and hopelessness. Although she had an awareness of Jesus through her Catholic upbringing, He began to use events around her to show her who He was personally.

Cherry remembers having a conversation with her brother's friend that prompted her to try to discover more about who Jesus actually was. Eventually, she found herself in an extra credit class in school where the teacher was a pastor. He used his wedding ring as a simple metaphor to illustrate how God protects His children, and Cherry was moved to accept Jesus into her life. As Jesus continued to build a relationship with Cherry, she started to bring everything to Him—her career, marriage and plans for the future. He became her Abba, Father.

When Cherry first came to Calgary, she was unable to connect with a Christian church and greatly missed being part of a community. On the recommendation of a co-worker, Cherry came to Centre Street Church hoping for a confirmation that it would be right for her. It turned out that the sermon topic was the Ark of the Covenant, which was exactly what her previous pastor in the Philippines had been preaching about, and she felt at peace. After the sermon, she introduced herself to Pastor Henry, and he invited her into the CSC family.

Cherry's life was upended when she and her husband Paul moved to Saskatchewan to start a business with a family member, only to have the opportunity disappear (and their investment with it). Moving to a new city as a young couple had been difficult enough, but this unexpected change left them feeling even more alone. Still, they carried forward, with Cherry working and Paul attending Bible college. They were also able to connect with a local church. In time they found out that they were going to have a baby, and this brought a new sense of excitement.

Then one summer night, the unthinkable happened. The Jurics were going through their usual night time routine, which included their son Klaeton going to his grandma's room to spend some time watching TV before bed. But that night, when Cherry went to get Klaeton, she couldn't find him.

"I knew something was wrong. I ran to the pool. He was there facing down. I took him out of the pool and called for help. My world crushed. I was shocked and paralyzed."

The death of her young son shattered Cherry's heart. "I was lost," she says. "I lost my purpose.

I lost my identity. I lost my hope."

Even with the passage of time, Cherry carried the heavy burden of grief and guilt, unable to emerge from the fog of living life in survival mode. Paul and Cherry had another son, Ethan, then moved back to Calgary and had their daughter Chloe. Although Cherry knew that God was still there for her, she struggled with depression and suicidal thoughts.

It was during a CSC service with guest speaker Ken Dyck that Cherry felt a push to enroll in Freedom Session. Despite being skeptical of the program and the serious commitment involved, she decided to follow God's lead. After seven years of trying to bury the past, she began to work through it.

"I was desperate for healing," Cherry explains. "I knew in my head God had forgiven me [for what happened with my son] but not in my heart."

With the support of her facilitator and her Freedom Session group, Cherry faced the difficult task of preparing an Inventory – a tool for reflection and healing – for Klaeton. Through this exercise, she was able to identify and distinguish between true guilt and false guilt and receive forgiveness. As she continued to walk the Freedom Session journey, she finally was able to forgive herself for her son's death.

Today, Cherry shares openly about this transformation. "I used to see my pain, but now I see God's grace in it after forgiveness." Her desire is that God would use her story to speak to others, to help them through their own dark valleys, and for God to be glorified in it.

To people in pain Cherry says, "Allow yourself to feel the pain, but talk to God about it. Only God can go to that deepest pain."

Cherry also advises that you allow your friends to surround you "to keep you from getting addicted to something in order to cope with the pain." She is extremely grateful for the people that God placed around her to give her support in those times.

What Cherry found most valuable was a short phrase that Pastor Henry often shared in his sermons, "Pray anyways." Throughout her life, even when she was at her lowest, she stayed true to this mentality. When she was angry in the wake of her son's death, she prayed. When all she wanted was to flee, she prayed. When she couldn't escape the pain of her grief, she prayed. In all things, she talked to God.

When asked how to come alongside those who are grieving, Cherry has simple and practical advice to share. Rather than trying to say the right thing, she recommends that you offer your presence instead. For someone who has experienced deep loss, a hug or time spent together can be more beneficial than words.

As Cherry continues to live in God's love and grace, she looks forward to how God will use her and her testimony to impact others. She would be greatly blessed if you would join her in praying for continued healing and the courage to share her experience as she moves forward in freedom.



Top: Cherry & Paul with their son, Klaeton; Left: Cherry and Klaeton; Right & Bottom: Cherry, Paul and their children, Ethan and Chloe Photos from the Juric Family

FROM STUDENTS

"This retreat was really fun! We did high ropes, bubble soccer, and hiking. The large group talks helped remind me that my sins are forgiven. I liked the Water Bucket Exercise, where Mr. Jigs encouraged us to write down what we wanted to give to God to "wash away." It felt good to write my thoughts and put my paper into the water. Afterward, there was a giant worship party, which was really fun because we were all praising God together! On the final morning, I went up during the altar call, to confirm that I wanted Jesus in my heart. Mr. Jigs prayed with me afterwards and I felt affirmed in my faith. I feel much stronger and I am ready to show my commitment to following Jesus. I want to learn about how to get baptized. I am nervous, but also excited to prepare for this next step in my faith."

- Griffen Mulder

"I loved the Candle Light Ceremony, where we wrote our sins and prayers on paper to put in the water. When I was praying for God to forgive me for my sins, I saw a huge hand wave over everyone. It was truly amazing! After the hand disappeared, I just prayed, "Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for showing Your presence at this ceremony, and for coming down to show me and everyone here Your amazing love. Amen." That truly changed me! After the camping experience I now sing all the worship songs in church and in school. Every night I pray and thank God for my wonderful experience."

- Atinufe Akinniyi

FROM PARENTS

"Although we are in a season of financial humility, when the announcement came for Grade 5&6 retreat, we had no hesitation paying for our daughter to go. We are grateful, because when she came home, she told us her experience and it really imparted into her spirit. It was truly a memorable, miracle-moment that our 10-year-old would experience the real presence of God and see His Hand of blessing at work."

- Agape Akinniyi

FROM LEADERS

"This was my first time serving at a retreat, and it was amazing! It was exciting to see all the kids participating in the activities. I am so glad I was able to spend time with the students and get to know some of them better."

- Haylee Tavares

"My son has been a part of Grade 5&6 Ministry and I have seen a lot of growth in him. I chose to volunteer as a chaperone for the retreat and was impressed with the number of student leaders that also dedicated their time to serve. As I interacted with individual campers, I saw how I was taking part in supporting the future foundation of our church congregation. The testimony night was powerful, as students shared sincere and deeply heartfelt testimonies. I was inspired watching my son with his peers, glorifying God with fullness of heart and joy! My heart was full, knowing that I had a part in helping students deepen their faith and conviction in Jesus."

- Ellen Au-Mulder



This Grade 5/6 Retreat, themed "Homeward Bound," was prepared to help our students understand their identity through relationship with Christ. One highlight was the Quiet My Soul Night, when we shared testimonies and encouraged the students to be quiet and ask the LORD who they are in Christ. We told them not to stop asking until they hear from the Lord. While we were worshipping, students started crying and the place was filled with the Holy Spirit. Students started sharing testimonies, encouraging one another, quoting passages of Scripture and asking for prayers. It was an amazing time of experiencing God's presence. One student accepted Jesus, many affirmed their faith, and some asked prayer for their burdens. There were no dry eyes that evening. Afterward was a celebration of praise! Everyone started singing to Jesus. What an experience!

We added a new element that we called the Encouragement Bag. Students and leaders wrote encouragement to each one whenever they felt led to. At the end of each day, leaders and students excitedly opened their bags and read the encouragement they received. Students were excited to share their experience with their parents.

Over 120 participants attended the retreat, and many lives were changed. God is present and active in our Grade 5/6 ministry!

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Photos by Jigs Gonzalez





Photos by Jigs Gonzalez

Freedom Session 2019

BY ELSA HENDERSON,
Contributing Writer

The air in the lower level of West Campus was full of excitement as the grads gathered for final instructions. Upstairs in the sanctuary, friends and family of the grads were claiming their seats. The platform was tastefully decorated in bright yellow balls of flowers. Off to one side Jason MacKenzie was playing soft music on the piano.

When the program was about to begin, Jason's wife Kelsey stood up to the mike and bowed her head in silent prayer. Then she opened her eyes and began to sing "Clean," by Natalie Grant. The opening words were electrifying in their appropriateness:

*"I see shattered; You see whole.
I see broken, but You see beautiful."*

The audience hung on every word as Kelsey's beautiful voice filled the air.

*"You're helping me to believe;
You're restoring me piece by piece.
There's nothing too dirty
That You can't make worthy.
You wash me in mercy; I am clean."*

The song seemed to have been written for Freedom Session.

*"Washed in the blood of Your sacrifice;
Your blood flowed red and made me white.
My dirty rags are purified.
I am clean."*

Karen Doerksen, Director of Freedom Session, opened with a brief introduction to Freedom Session before the 65 graduates walked across the stage to give their testimonies and receive their certificates.



Above: Friends and family of the graduates; Jason & Kelsey MacKenzie shared their gift of music during the Grad. Photos by Colin Brown

Here are some of their statements:

- Freedom Session changed my life in ways I can't explain.
- God wastes nothing and will use every page of my story for His glory.
- FS is not easy, but it's worth all the struggle and the tears.
- I learned practical steps and the importance of forgiveness.
- The highlight was nailing my sins to the cross.
- I had baggage I needed to discard.
- FS gave me a life plan, a framework.
- My wounds are no longer my identity.
- I learned the importance of making amends.
- My relationships needed boundaries.
- It took time to release each painful memory.

- My chains are gone! He has set me free!
- FS helped me see my hurts through the eyes of Jesus.
- I am His daughter. I am not a victim!
- The rest of my life will be the best of my life.
- All my life I harboured forgotten pain.
- I was tired of lies and of hurting those around me.
- FS is about uncovering the things that caused the pain, not about removing the pain. Now I can start to rebuild.
- It took a heart attack to heal me of my addiction.
- I no longer have to blame others for my problems. My problems are still there, but I have the tools to handle them.
- What we don't know about ourselves will be used by the enemy against us.
- My marriage is a lot healthier and happier.

- Once you shine light on addictions, they lose their power.
- I gained a deeper understanding of my own brokenness.
- I wanted to become a whole Christian. Being brutally honest has set me free.
- God said to me, "We will walk the journey together. Hang in there! I'm with you."
- I nailed "not good enough" to the cross. I don't have to believe that lie any more.
- I discovered my true identity in Christ.
- I found power to forgive others and myself.
- There is nothing His blood can't fix.
- Jesus helped me quit smoking after 47 years!
- God showed me how much He loves me and values me.
- Anger was ruining my life. When my sponsor prayed God's forgiveness over me, a huge burden was lifted from me.



WHAT IS FREEDOM SESSION?

Freedom Session is the ultimate journey into discipleship. It involves traveling back into areas of our lives to unlock memories, which often are contributing factors to our current negative belief systems, toxic thought patterns and destructive behaviours—none of which align with God’s thinking or how He views us.

Freedom Session shines a light on lies we have believed. In the process, we begin to make sense out of the unhealthy coping strategies we have developed along the way. It uses the framework of the Twelve Steps like a roadmap, to redeeming our future no matter what our past looks like.

In this process God recovers what was lost in us, and we get to rewrite the ending of our story. We restore brokenness, heal deep wounds, put our marriages back together, remove our labels, and start believing what God says about us. Then He starts to equip us. He rebuilds, restores, and redeems. Then we are ABLE to live ALL out for Jesus Christ.

Every grad has in common the end result—an awe-inspiring story of the miracle our amazing God has performed in their life.



Above: The Graduates of Freedom Session 2019. Certificates and gifts for the Grads. Paivi Bloem speaks in memory of her husband, Martin, who was very involved in Freedom Sessions. Below: Graduates wait downstairs before the ceremony. Photos by Colin Brown



Above: Karen Doerksen welcomes everyone to the 2019 Freedom Session Graduation. Below: The sanctuary was beautifully decorated in celebration of the graduates. Photos by Colin Brown



Freedom Session 2019.....continued from page 24

Pastor Henry closed with a brief message stressing the need for continued humility, transparency, honesty and community. Transformation rarely happens just by listening. God is concerned, not with perfection, but with the direction of your life. Confess your sin and keep walking with God. He will never leave you or forsake you.

ABOUT FREEDOM SESSION PARTICIPANTS:

- 356 participants in the last two years at CSC
- 46% felt intense guilt/shame for something they could never be forgiven for.
- 40% used prescription and illegal drugs/alcohol or food in secret.
- 36% had trouble seeing God as a loving Father.
- 36% felt alone in their problems.

- 32% struggled with chemical dependency (drugs).
- 29% had thoughts of suicide.
- 28% tried unsuccessfully to stop engaging in unhealthy sexual behaviour.
- 26% were sexually abused.
- 24% on medication for anxiety, depression and/or insomnia.

Hi!
 My name is Savannah.
 My friends and I are so excited to share
 some amazing pictures from the CSCamps.
 We will try to stay out of the way, but we like to
 get a close-up look at all the kids who
 spent the week with us!

Life was **wild** at our CSCamp Roar this year! Our kids learned when life is wild, God is good, all the time! With 286 campers, 92 volunteers, and 5 days of camp, we learned about the great love of our God and Saviour.

Every morning included a large group time of worship and teaching, and then campers were split into their groups and headed off towards their morning stations. Imagination Station, Wild Bible Adventures, Stampede Sports, KidVid Cinema, and Hungry Herd Café used every kind of teaching tool to help our kids learn about their Bible point for the day. Each group had 8-10 crews, and each crew had 5 kids, so every morning was a blast as we learned that God is good all the time! In the afternoon, campers went on field trips to bowling, Laser Tag, Injanation, and Big Box! We were very excited to head out to new locations this year, and our campers had a great time.

This was our biggest year for new kids. At least a dozen of our new kids had never heard of Jesus before in their lives, and CSCamp Roar was their very first introduction to Him. For the other children who didn't regularly attend church, this was a fun and rare opportunity to come and experience God's love first hand! Several of our regular attendee children brought friends for the first time after asking their parents over and over and over again; their persistence was absolutely admirable. By the end of the week, 14 children accepted Christ for the first time!

Our volunteers were excellent at building strong relationships with our kids. With our biggest camp ever, we needed more volunteers than ever before, and God provided all we needed and more! Many of our kids listed their leaders as their favourite part of camp. Other favourite things included worship, games, and field trips. We also raised money for our mission project, supplying churches in Bolivia with school supplies, and we raised over \$540!

CSCamp Roar was a huge success, and we look forward to helping our campers grow closer to God through the rest of the year!

CSCamps

July 22-26, 2019

• *I was having a really hard summer, but at CSCamps, I learned that through it all, God is good!*

CAMPER FEEDBACK
 • I learned a lot and had so much fun!

• I invited a friend from school and it was so cool to spend the week with him, at my church!

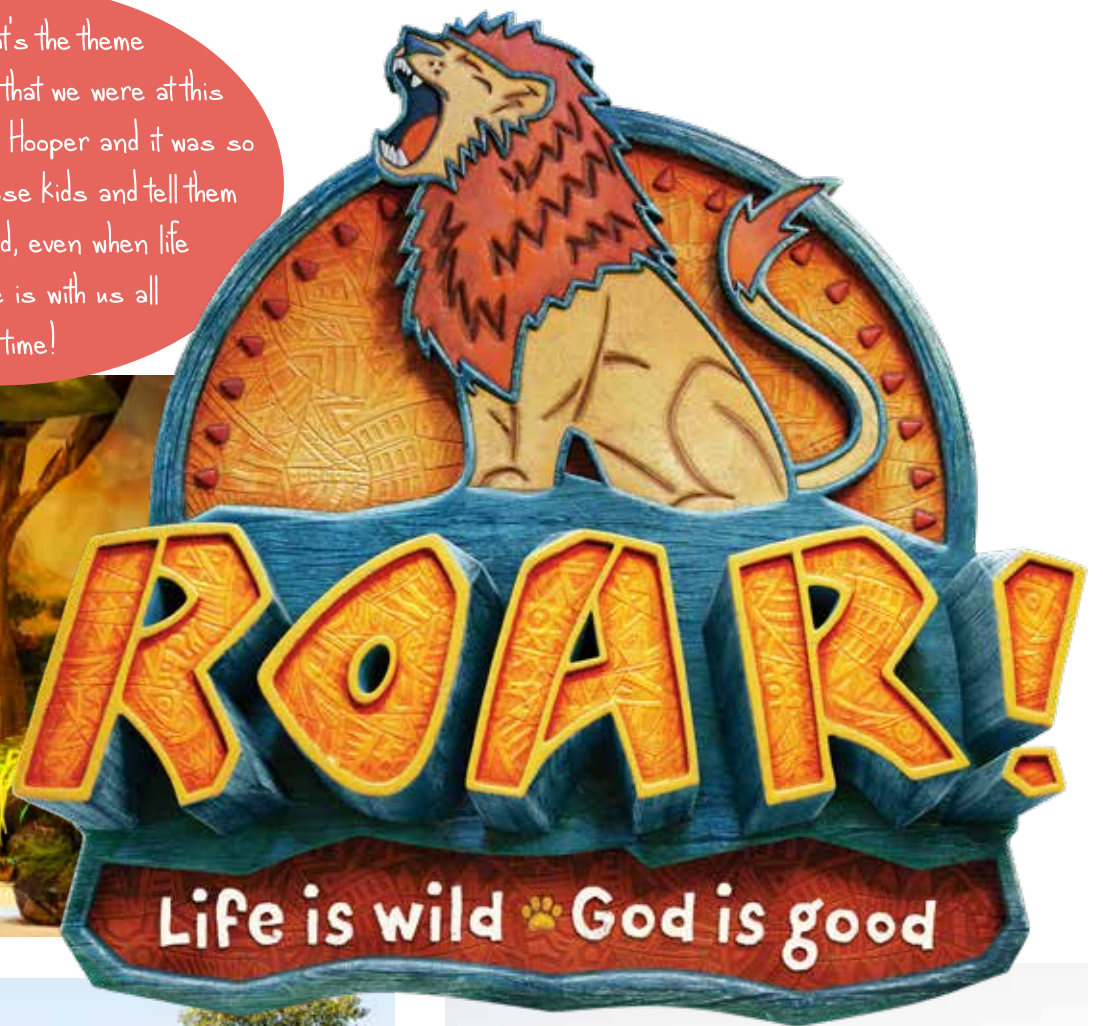
Hey!
 It's me, Zion! It's so great to see everyone from the ROAR camp! We had such a great time learning about God's goodness. Did you know God is good even when life is sad? It's true... He is!



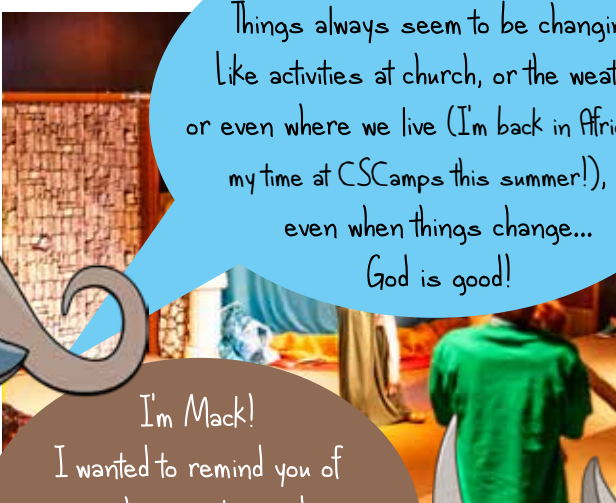
Photos by Colin Brown



"Roar"... that's the theme for the CSCamps that we were at this summer! My name's Hooper and it was so great to meet all those kids and tell them that God is good, even when life is scary! He is with us all the time!



Photos by Colin Brown



Photos by Colin Brown

