

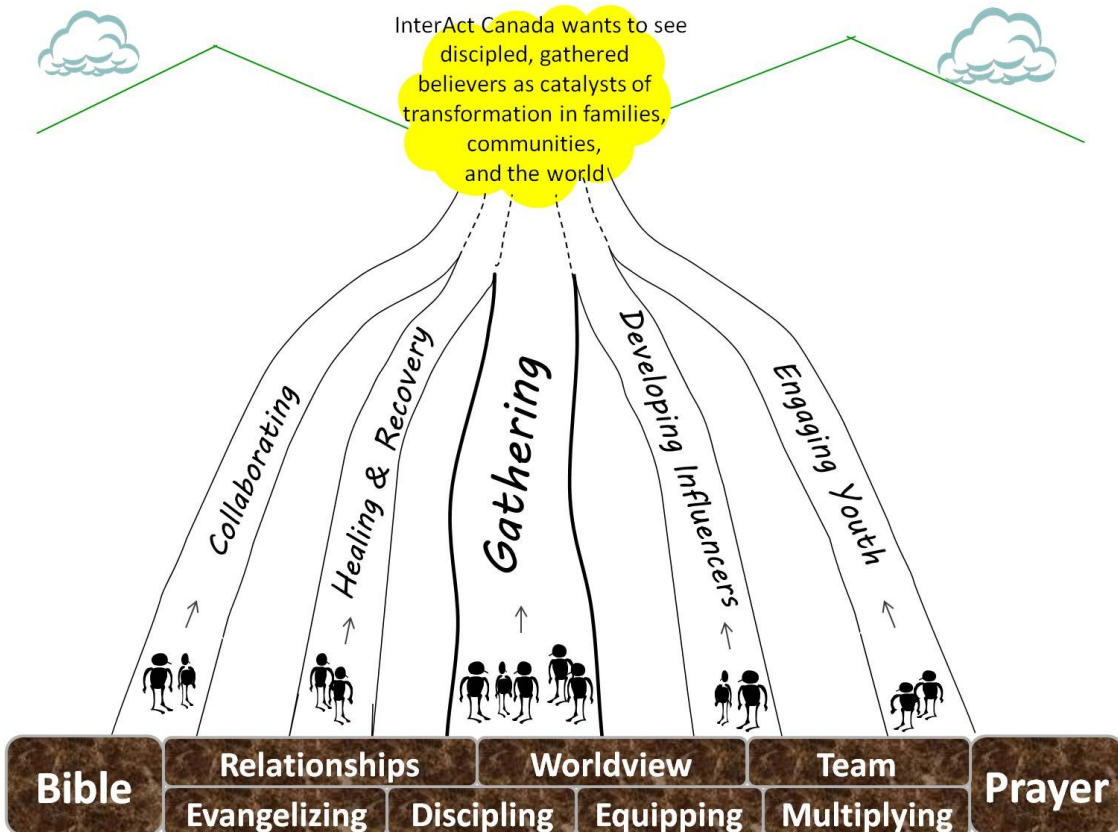
Canada Field Report
February 2012

The InterAct Ministries Canada field continues to be involved in Kingdom work. Among the 29 active missionary member “units” on the field we have an employment spectrum from volunteer to full-time serving in 16 ministry locations across western Canada. Every missionary is committed to developing relationships resulting in disciples who are in a growing relationship with Christ. Most are working towards establishing a reproducing gathering of believers who are impacting their community. It is not easy to maintain a strong passion when working among three of the most resistant people groups in western Canada but InterAct missionaries have a deep-seated desire to be effective.

VISION

A vision statement for the Canada field has been difficult to nail down. Three significantly different people/religious groups in a variety of contexts means that each local ministry needs to craft its own ministry vision and strategy within the “box” of field vision and organizational vision. Over the past year the Canada Leadership Team (Greg Hamilton, Paul & Joanne Janzen, Wes Schellenberg, Dan Woodard and myself) has spent considerable time discussing the vision for InterAct’s Canada field and defining the field vision “box.”

The diagram below is a refined version of the draft Canada field MAP presented to the board and members last August. The three main elements; a vision statement for the field, five “roads” which we will focus our ministry energy on towards achieving that vision, and “foundation blocks” that permeate each one of the roads gives field leadership a management tool which will help us keep the main things the main things. It will also give direction for continued training and equipping and in evaluating new ministry proposals as well as ongoing ministries.



Native Ministries

Native people remain the primary ministry focus on the Canada field. While many Native communities are home to at least a handful of believers there are very few sustainable, reproducing, local gatherings of believers. InterAct missionaries remain committed to discipling and providing resources so mature believers can be raised up. Believers who will remain committed to serving God in their community and beyond.

“Ten miles to walk into the bush, ten miles to walk out of the bush.” This quote, attributed to a Native elder, captures the essence of the long term relational ministry we are called to in First Nations communities. Change in all of our lives, barring a miracle of God, is generally a process over time. It feels like it would be wonderful if people and communities developed a biblical perspective on life and became spiritually mature overnight but that is not the way God seems to choose to work. He is at work in the process and we must not become disheartened or impatient. I don't think He does!

Native Bible Centre (NBC) continues to produce their training material out of the Canada office as well as work towards offering courses online. **Ed and Glenna Houston** have moved to Wardner, BC (close to Jaffray). Ed has faced some significant health issues this year which has slowed down the promotion of the material and the subsequent orders. Lord willing, the treatments will do their work. A potential partnership with Jim Capaldo and ChangePoint Church in Alaska may provide the resources needed to offer NBC courses online.

Anchored Warriors completed their pilot project year last September. **Kim Kakakaway** and **Amy Sell** continue to give leadership to this project. The vision “*to inspire youth through hope and change that impacts the heart of aboriginal communities*” remains the same. The focus has morphed from seeing youth ministry developed in Native communities to developing and resourcing leaders who can develop youth ministry. The second annual Momentum Leadership Retreat is scheduled for January 2012 . The leadership team of five is consistently connecting with 15 or more emerging leaders in communities across western Canada. Being a full-time “missionary,” and raising the necessary finances for that, seem to be more significant hurdles for this younger generation than they have been in the past.

The Native Youth Conference continues as well. All of the Anchored Warriors team gives leadership to this weekend conference as well as several InterAct missionaries volunteering in various roles. The Native Christian community is standing behind this event as well. Every year over 40 people volunteer to make this event a success.

Loon Lake, SK is the only location in western Canada where InterAct missionaries, **Dick and Ruth Browning**, work with a group of believers who meet in their own church building. Dick and Ruth continue to bring in outside resources that will develop existing leaders. Dan Woodard and myself had the privilege of being one of the outside resources as we led a MAP'ing weekend to help the church focus on their strengths and passions. InterAct's partnership with Healing Hearts Ministries gives the freedom for a Healing Hearts youth worker to work alongside the Brownings to see the Native church develop a stronger youth focus.

North Battleford, SK has six First Nation communities around the town and 20% of the 14,000 people in town are Native. **Paul and Joanne Janzen** continue to disciple, hold Bible studies, and

work alongside local Native believers. A working relationship with their local ministry partners, Edward and Pat Bird, is not always easy but it is a huge piece in the development of a sustainable Native church. A partnership with Youth For Christ Regina has resulted in **Ron and Taya Browning** renewing their InterAct membership and giving leadership to YFC's Jedidiah House in North Battleford. This is a boys home for young teens. It is likely that 80% of these boys will be of Aboriginal descent.

Lethbridge, AB is home to about 50% of the 10,000 Blackfoot people registered on the Kainai Nation next door to Lethbridge. **Dan and Barb Kees** and **Dianne Voth** continue to team up and serve through ongoing relationships, weekly Bible studies, and a Sunday gathering. Some of the most committed Native believers attend the Anglo church services and attend the Bible studies lead by this team. Dan is an important part of the southern Alberta ministry network. The team continues to pray for the recruitment of a young couple they can pass the ministry baton to.

Cardston, AB is the Mormon capital of Canada bordering the south end of the largest geographic reserve in Canada, the Kainai Nation (Blood Tribe). **Roy and Laura Thiessen** are serving in the interim pastor role at Cardston Baptist Church where half the congregation is Native. Roy is seeing God use the Genesis Process training as an effective discipleship tool. After 18 months of waiting the Thiessens continue to wait to hear from Canada Immigration services on their Permanent Resident application.

In **Eden Valley, AB** the Stoney people continue to use their language. **Joel and Amanda Sewell** remain focused on learning the language but feel the need for greater immersion in everyday life to make that happen. They are pursuing permission to build a cabin on the reserve where they will be able to live a few days every week so they can acquire this language. Obtaining permission will be a result of God's power released through prayer. Sewells are in the Permanent Resident application queue as well. The Sewell family is currently on a four month Special Assignment (deputation) connecting with supporters in the USA.

Morley, AB is the significantly larger reserve of the Stoney people. **Boris and Mirka Vyskocil** continue their volunteer ministry through a lay pastoral ministry at the United Church on the reserve. When the teaching is biblical the church begins to fill but when the denomination provides pastoral leadership and the teaching focuses on social gospel content the church attendance quickly drops.

Kamloops, BC has a Native church that meets regularly. **Valen and Carol Straley**, teamed up with **Ellis and Dottie Kasten**, are ministering to a significant number of single parents and a host of kids and teens. **Byron and Danielle Sayer**, living in Vernon, BC have become involved every other weekend with the youth ministry at Kamloops. As discipleship continues they are praying that leaders for this church will emerge.

Williams Lake continues to be a strategic ministry hub. **Jess Tanis** is regarded as an elder by many of the Chilcotin believers. His ministry partnership with the Cariboo Community Church has been helpful and positive. Jess plans to continue in ministry relationships as long as the Lord gives him strength. Jess would make a wonderful mentor for a younger missionary couple. Pray to the Lord of the harvest.

The ministry team at **Redstone, BC** is going through a difficult transition. After many attempts at resolution, unresolved conflict between the team members has resulted in InterAct leadership asking **Steve and Jill Horsman** to move to another InterAct ministry. **Don and Kim Gillaspie** will remain in ministry at Redstone and build on the many years of ministry Horsmans and other InterAct missionaries have dedicated themselves to. Evangelism, discipleship, and Sunday gatherings are continuing under Don's leadership. Continued prayer for the missionaries and local believers alike is needed as this transition will not be completed until July 2012.

The Native communities around **Fort St. John, BC** are asking *John and Anne Giesbrecht* to lead Bible studies for them. Despite their need to continue employment they are giving as much time as they can to meet these requests. The Lord has provided them with a younger couple willing to volunteer time and help out. More help via a full-time missionary would be a great answer to prayer.

With Ernie's passing in December, *Barb Gonzales* has come out of retirement as a half-time employee with a focus on praying for the ministries of InterAct. Her heart for this ministry is huge and I look forward to God using her faithfulness to move InterAct ahead in some obvious ways.

Dan Woodard (Deanna) continues to network with many Native ministry leaders across Canada. He also chairs the committee forming a new ministry development program, Preparing All-Nations for Transcultural Horizons (PATH). Dan's abilities as a resource facilitator are very helpful as we move into an era where one of the mission's roles will be to facilitate indigenous ministry.

The **Camp Gladstone** ministry is continuing at the Gladstone Mountain site despite the uncertainty caused by the facility being for sale. A committee of Native people has placed a formal purchase offer for the property. Negotiations are continuing.

East Indian Ministries

Recruitment into the Punjabi ministry is at a standstill and the need for Gospel witness is increasing as immigration continues. There are a few local churches actively ministering to the immigrants around them but the need for more workers is very real. We need to pray for more workers in the harvest and maybe more creative ways to equip and release local believers to love their Punjabi neighbours.

Surrey, BC is home to over 75,000 Punjabi Sikhs. *Sam and Judy Paras* are partnering with a Canadian National Baptist Convention worker and the Satsung (fellowship) is now meeting in the basement of a church. Sam and Judy have discipling relationships with many Punjabi people. Some are followers of Christ and many are not ... not yet.

The Indo-Canadian church in **Abbotsford, BC** continues to develop. *John and Tracey Tobin* work under a Punjabi pastor, helping the Indo-Canadian Christian Fellowship (ICCF) become sustainable. As well John has an office at the Evangelical Free Church and he continues to impact the lives of addicted Punjabi men and their families through continued relationships.

Muslim Ministry

Getting more people involved in ministry to Muslims in western Canada remains a concern. However, over the last few years there are other organizations that have developed a vision for reaching Muslims in Canada as well so that is encouraging. Canadian Network of Ministries to Muslims (CNMM) is an effort by these organizations to connect and work together.

Dave and Alice De Haan continue their relationships among the Turkish people of **Edmonton, AB**. Dave and Alice have many contacts and relationships and they are focusing on sharing the Gospel message and getting the Word into people's hands whenever the opportunity arises. They believe they may have found a church that could be home to new Muslim background believers as they come to Christ.

Calgary, AB is where InterAct began ministering to Muslim people over 12 years ago. *Dave and Marlene Nelson's* involvement in the CNMM, both locally and nationally, continues to be a big help for this developing network. Marlene's continued relationships with Muslim ladies opens doors to family and extended family. David's MS continues to progress and he is very limited in what he can do outside the house. *Fayez and Vivian Narooz* have a small group of

Arabic believers gathering whom Faye pastors. They continue their evangelistic efforts in the Arabic Muslim community as well. Faye continues to enjoy his doctoral studies and hopes to complete his requirements within the next two years.

Recruitment

Jim and Becky Hamilton are pouring themselves into recruitment and preparation for the short term *EnGage!* program this coming summer. Join us in praying for 12 *EnGage!* participants in 2012. Jim's strategy and emphasis has had a very positive response from the Canada staff.

There are a few recruitment contacts in different stages of dialogue and exploration but at this point there are very few applicants in the Canada field pipeline. Canada field missionaries continue recruiting at four western Canadian colleges as well.

Administration

The administrative infrastructure of the Canada organization continues to develop. The seemingly endless legal and government requirements for non-profits keep the administrative abilities of **Wes Schellenberg (Carol)** honed. In his role as Assistant to the Field Director **Greg Hamilton (Laura)** is doing a good job of picking up the human resources side of the administrative requirements as well as other things. There is a significant government required policy review looming that will tax the administrative energy of the Canada office team.

With both Greg and Jim relocating to Carstairs, AB, and with Dale's need for office space in Canada the plan to move the Canada office to Crossfield, AB (in between Calgary and Carstairs) is picking up steam. I look forward to seeing how God provides and what the end product will look like as we go down this road.

Dale and Debbie Kenyon (seconded to SIM) are well into their first year of language learning and ministry in Bolivia. They have said a few times how much they appreciate the administration of InterAct now that they are with a different organization.

Dale Smith has laid out four "P's" for each field to be developing. Here are a few of the things happening on the Canada field to move ahead in these areas:

Prayer. Last September the CLT made a commitment to use InterAct's prayer tools (monthly Prayer & Praise, Intercessor, etc) on a regular basis. In February many of the Canada field staff will participate in a retreat that will be both a personal and corporate prayer focus. I also will work at making prayer a stronger focus for my field director role on a personal level and in my communication with the missionaries.

People. Developing people remains a strong value and goal on the Canada field. The current training focus is solidifying and implementing the worldview and Genesis Process training that has been taught in the last few years. Another need that has been highlighted this past year is for full-time member care personnel who can make ministering to missionaries their primary focus.

Partnerships. As can be seen in this report, partnerships at many different levels, have become an integral part of InterAct's ministry on the Canada field. One particular partnership that I am asking God to open the door to is with another Muslim ministry organization that we can work alongside.

Promotion. A lot of energy is going into the *EnGage!* program. We are also encouraging missionaries to tell their stories via the reformatted InterAction and through their own constituency so that people will know what God is doing through InterAct Ministries. There are also a few short-term church teams in dialogue with missionaries about summer ministry opportunities with InterAct.

It has been another stretching year and, while it is not always comfortable, it does indicate that God is continuing to shape and mold me for His purposes. As Bev and I have visited InterAct missionaries we have been impressed again with the quality of people we have the privilege of serving alongside. InterAct is full of faithful people who are pursuing being effective servants of their King. It may seem hard to quantify at times but God is continuing to do His Kingdom work through His faithful servants in InterAct Ministries.

Thankful for the privilege to be a small part,

Dan Mayerle
Canada field director