

Canada Field Report January 2020

A Native leader and his wife visited Bev and I the other day. In the midst of conversation about moose hunting and running marathons he asked me what I thought about the ministry of Native Bible Centre. I hemmed and hawed a little and eventually said, “Well, it gets used some, but we are not producing lots of books or graduating a lot of students. Interest seems to be declining so I am not sure what the future of NBC is.” His response was classic ... a few stories.

He told me about other ministry organizations working among First Nation over the years. Organizations who had developed curriculum and started discipleship and training programs but had abandoned their program after a few years because they didn't generate the desired response. Those organizations determined that it was not viable, not worth continuing. This man, who travels widely, said “I go into a lot of people's houses in Native communities and from time to time I see an NBC certificate hanging on a wall. You may not feel like it is ‘successful’ but NBC is being used and that is success. Don't stop doing it (NBC).” He then proceeded to give me some ideas on how we could improve it. Since that conversation he has pledged some of his contacts and resources to help us strengthen NBC.

Working among First Nation, Punjabi, and Muslim communities where people misunderstand and resist the gospel means it is not always easy to identify the successes. When comments like “What are you doing here?” or “We don't want you here!” are aimed at the missionary or when believers who are succeeding seem to lose their spiritual edge it takes a strong grasp of God's call and a dependence on His strength for missionaries to persevere.

I am reminded regularly in this role that every believer is redeemed and justified in an instant and every believer is sanctified over a life time.

God is at work redeeming people in the communities where InterAct missionaries serve. Sometimes it is difficult to identify those He is redeeming because there is a long road to salvation and few seem to be on it. But we don't stop doing it ... being a gospel messenger in the community. And we also keep growing and improving. Discovering ways we can make the message even clearer so that it connects with the heart of the hearer. I believe that God wants us missionaries to equip ourselves to be the clearest messengers we can be as we rely on the power of the Spirit to transform hearts. The Novel Approach system (Mike Matthews & team) is something we want to train new missionaries in as they come to serve in Canada. We believe it will help them become more effective messengers.

God is also at work sanctifying believers in the host community. Sometimes that work is easy to see and celebrate. Disciples are growing and sharing their passion for Christ with family and community members. At other times crisis hits, relationships get difficult, and discouragement sets in. Then it can become so hard for the missionary disciple-maker to identify that they wonder if sanctification was ever really there to begin with. I believe God wants us (Canada field leaders) to help our missionaries become sharper as they use the Word with people. So we keep facilitating and resourcing our missionaries to grow in using the Creator's ‘handbook’ which has what believers need for life and godliness. Biblical counselling training has continued to be a goldmine

for some of our missionaries as they apply the Word to their disciple-making relationships. Others are still ‘checking it out.’

God is also at work sanctifying missionaries as they serve in the community. Sometimes missionaries are filled with joy and faith and vigour as they serve. At those times the leader needs to run and catch up so we can be a voice in what is developing. Sometimes, when the fruit is not easy to find, the missionary is beset by discouragement or paralysed by indecision. Then the leader needs to be a ‘team-mate’ who comes alongside and walks with their brother through the valley and gently brings biblical discipleship principles to the pain of God’s sanctifying process. I believe that God is calling us to be better at doing ministry in teams. As more missionaries are open about their struggles with fatigue, discouragement, and even burnout the need for team becomes more imperative. As resistance to the ‘white-man’s gospel’ seems to increase, the need for ministry teammates becomes more necessary. Team can help long-term ministry become more sustainable and fruitful.

Staff Updates

Ed Houston passed into eternity on September 5. Glenna plans to continue serving as part of the Native Bible Centre team. The NBC team is going through some unsettledness as roles are re-defined and new responsibilities are determined.

Andy and Jesi Chinn are planning to move out of Anahim Lake, BC at the end of March. They will be moving to the Calgary area and spending a few months figuring out if mobilization and *EnGage!* are good fits for their next place of service in InterAct.

Urban Fire Communities

The Urban Fire team is now renting two houses and has two program participants enrolled. The last four months since the first participant entered the Urban Fire disciple making community has been a significant growth curve for the whole team. Sanctification is a life time process. The team has continued to hunt for non-profit business ideas and has narrowed the field to a couple choices. The past few months have illustrated that in-house work experience will be very valuable to Urban Fire’s overall objectives

Midway Bible Camp – Site 6 Proposal

Due to the shallowness of the lake and potential environmental controls around building a beach Cohle Bergen, the Midway team, and the CLT have decided to revise the Site 6 crown land application and re-apply for a rustic, single season camp use. There is no indication from the Manitoba Land Office or the First Nation Leader’s group if that revised application will even be considered. No development will happen until the application has been reviewed and approved.

Midway Ministries – Station Road office relocation

Prior to the merger, Midway Christian Leadership owned a house in Thompson, MB that served as a place to house a missionary family and as office space for Midway Bible Camp. The house is no longer needed to house a missionary family and the office space is less useful to the other arms of ministry emerging in Thompson. A commercial building which has been for sale for a while was reduced in price and became a viable option for potential purchase if the house could be sold.

Cohle has shown that the building could be sustainable as different spaces in the building are used by the builder's ministry, in-town housing available to the Sergers when they need a place to get away, an office for Midway Bible Camp, and a more public space for the discipleship that is happening in Thompson.

The team is proposing the sale of the Deerwood Drive house and raising approximately \$200,000 toward the purchase and renovation of the Station Road building.

Training

George Walker and Mike Matthews presented the 'A Novel Approach' system to the Canada Leadership Team (CLT) in November. It was very helpful and the team is determining how to use it as a primary tool in helping our missionaries understand the people and community they are evangelizing and discipling.

Administration

Greg Hamilton and I continue to be involved in the ongoing administration of the Canada field and organization. It never ceases to amaze me how much time and energy that can require.

The committee that oversees the Camp Nookoowai ministry in southern Alberta is working toward becoming their own charitable organization. They are unsure whether they will be able to accomplish this before the July camping season, so InterAct may carry their liability for one more season.

Mobilization and Recruitment

There is one *EnGage!* applicant for this coming summer in Canada and a few others are considering it. Recruiters will be visiting several colleges in the next month or so. Please pray with us for His choice of summer ministry people.

Member Care

I am very grateful that Bill and Lois Twichell are now available for some of the heavy lifting as member care personnel.

Leadership Development

More than one of the Canada Leadership Team (CLT) have struggled with fatigue and overload in the last few months. Wisdom is needed to be leaders who are able to abide in the True Vine and find the resources there to be fruitful while balancing all of life's demands. In turn we can then mentor others to do the same.

Dan Mayerle
Canada Field Director

CANADA STAFF LIST – 2020

(** denotes a change in role or involvement)

Native Ministries

Cohle and Rebecca Bergen. Full-time - Thompson, MB (Cree) – Midway Bible Camp – *CLT member*

Josh and Joylynn Beutler. Full-time - Lethbridge, AB (Blood Tribe/Blackfoot)

Dick and Ruth Browning. Full-time - Loon Lake, SK (Cree)

**** Andy and Jesi Chinn.** Full-time - Anahim Lake, BC (Carrier, Chilcotin, Bella Coola) – **moving to Crossfield**

David and Sally Cross. Full-time – Olds, AB – First Nation video curriculum, office asst., mobilization

Mark and Emma Dabrowski. Full-time – Native Bible Centre, Curriculum development & relationships

Stefan (and Kate) Dick. Full-time – Calgary, AB - Urban Fire Communities

John and Anne Giesbrecht. Volunteer, Part-time - Fort St. John, BC. (Beaver, Cree, etc.)

Don and Kim Gillaspie. Full-time - Redstone, BC (Chilcotin)

Jim and Becky Hamilton. Full-time – Urban Fire supervisor - Canada Mobilization - *CLT member*

**** Travis Harms.** Full-time - Thompson, MB (Cree) – Midway Builders - **Engaged, to be married in June**

**** Glenna Houston.** Full-time - Native Bible Centre, Bible studies and relationships

Dottie Kasten. Full-time - Kamloops, BC. (Urban Native)

Thomas and Nicole Olney. Full-time - Thompson, MB (Cree)

Kyla Plett. Full-time - Split Lake, MB (Cree)

Byron and Danielle Sayer Full-time – Kamloops, BC (Shuswap, Kamloops, etc.)

**** David and Vicky Sebald.** Full-time – Calgary, AB – Urban Fire Communities

Morgan and Krista Serger. Part-time - York Landing, MB (Cree)

Joel and Amanda Sewell. Full-time - Eden Valley, AB (Stoney) – Worldview Discovery coaching

Jesse Stigile. Full-time – Calgary, AB – Urban Fire Communities

Valen and Carol Straley. Full-time - Kamloops, BC. (Urban Native)

Roy and Laura Thiessen. Full-time - Cardston, AB (Blood Tribe/Blackfoot)

Boris and Mirka Vyskocil. Volunteer, Part-time - Morley, AB (Stoney)

East Indian Ministries

Akmal and Sarah Erastus. Full-time - Winnipeg, MB (Punjabi)

Sam and Judy Paras. Part-time - Surrey, BC (Punjabi)

John and Tracey Tobin. Full-time - Abbotsford, BC (Punjabi)

Muslim Ministries

Fayez and Vivian Narooz. Part-time – Calgary

David and Marlene Nelson. Full-time – Calgary

Administration

Greg and Laura Hamilton. Full-time, Ass't Field Director, Human Resources, Supervision

Dan and Bev Mayerle. Full-time, Field Director

Melanie Young. Hourly staff – 30 hrs/week – Financial administration

Member Care

Barbi Gonzales. Full-time, Prayer ministry for the Canada field

Dale and Debbie Kenyon. Full-time. Coaching missionaries, Mobilization

** **Bill and Lois Twichell.** Full-time, Member Care.

Active Retirees

Dan and Barb Kees. Retired - Lethbridge, AB (Blood Tribe/Blackfoot)