

# CONNECTION

WINTER 2013

For one week in late September, students at Bethany College leave the classroom and head out on

## SERVICE LEARNING MODULES



Photo by Randy Klassen

This year, a total of 85 students were organized into eight teams, each travelling to either a Canadian city or a First Nations community in northern Saskatchewan, along with a staff member or alumni. In a school that sees practical discipleship as central to its mandate, these annual trips are both essential and exciting. Students regularly describe these trips as life-changing.

Five teams of first-year students were sent out, including two teams to Calgary, and one each to Kelowna, Regina and Saskatoon. All of these groups were immersed in the challenging, and often exhausting, work of being the hands and feet of Jesus to those considered to be on the fringe of society. They were connected with agencies like *The Mustard Seed* and the *Jesus Loves You Society* in Calgary, the *Kelowna Gospel Mission* in Kelowna, and the *Healing Hearts Ministry* in Regina. To align with Bethany's culture of intentional relationship, Jerry Letkeman, Service Learning Director, says the purpose of the first-year module is for students to have a strong small-group experience early in the school year and also to become more aware of urban issues around poverty, homelessness, and new Canadians.

Claressa Campbell, Residence Director at the college, led her team to Saskatoon, working through MCC Saskatchewan's Chalo program to learn about issues that affect immigrants and refugees. This was eye-opening for Spencer Groenenboom, first-year student, who said, *"I had never considered how difficult it would be for some immigrants to do things I consider simple, like grocery shopping, driving a car, finding work, getting medical service, buying weather-appropriate clothes, and inexpensive furniture."*

For Sherianne Penner, first-year student, the experience of listening to fellow team members and praying for each other was significant. She says, *"I think it is one of the most powerful things in the world to pray for another person. To know what they went through, so you can see how it made them who they are today."*

For their part in the Service Learning trips, 35 second-year students visited three different Cree communities in Saskatchewan; Sturgeon Lake, Beardy's Okemasis, and Hall Lake. The purpose of this module is for students to live and relate in a Cree community so that they can make new friends and gain greater understanding of the strength of our First Nations communities and gain an awareness of the issues they face. This effort makes sense in a province where it is estimated that First Nations people will make up one fourth of the population within twenty years.

Over the 10 years since these visits began, these trips have developed into a true partnership between the college and the local communities. Both the Beardy's and Hall Lake communities coordinated these visits with their schools' annual cultural awareness emphasis conducted by their schools each year. They invited the Bethany students to snare rabbits, catch fish, eat moose meat, bannock and duck soup, create beaded bracelets, hear stories and interact with them – together with children, youth, adults and elders alike. Randy Klassen, Instructor in Bible and Theology, and team leader to the Beardy's Okemasis First Nation community says, *"For both groups, it's a win-win proposition. Bethany comes to serve, but also discovers a generous and hospitable community ready to make friends."*

An exciting development for Bethany College is that aboriginal students are choosing to study here. Building these relationships helps our native students find a more understanding community of believers and, at the same time, positions Bethany to nurture aboriginal disciples and train them to lead.

Well worth leaving the classroom for a week.

Submissions by Jerry Letkeman, Service Learning Director,  
and Randy Klassen, Instructor





Bethany College Students 2013-2014

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

In my travels this year I am regularly asked, "How are things at Bethany?" I respond:

- We have **faculty and staff** fully engaged in nurturing disciples and training leaders to serve, and ensuring that the values of discipleship, community, and transformation are woven into all of our activities.



- We have **students** who

are not only learning to love Jesus more, but also the church, in both knowledge and in tangible ways of service and leadership.

- We have a **business model** that needs to be re-energized due to aging buildings and infrastructure renewal needs.
- We are experiencing a decrease in **new-student enrollment** this year.

The last two items usually create a pause in the conversation until I explain that most post-secondary education institutions in Western Canada, including Bible colleges, are experiencing these issues, creating financial headwinds that take energy away from the core activities of mission accomplishment.

Fortunately, there are **positives** regarding our financial situation:

- Bethany College is bucking the trend of decreasing **church support** that most Bible colleges are experiencing. In contrast, a number of MB churches are increasing their annual giving to our col-

lege. This is huge! Thank you.

- Funds to provide for **student bursaries** have been growing in the past five years.
- Having decreased resources has forced the College to **define and focus** only on core activities.
- Student **education and experience** has not been impacted significantly.
- The **Canadian MB Conference** is helping us with financing our on-going building renewal.

But there are the **negatives**:

- **Additional resources** must be invested in fundraising and cost reductions.
- **Personnel morale** is impacted any time discussion occurs about a decline in financial resources.
- Donors have directed donations into student bursaries, but **support for day-to-day activities has declined**.
- **Short-term debt servicing costs** have added to the annual operating financial needs.

In response to this reality, the college wrestled with cost reductions including cutbacks and layoffs of faculty and staff this year. Aligning the budget to the size of the student body was HARD to do but was done by following three core principles: maintain all program elements, attempt to maintain all revenue drivers, and third, define and focus on priority activities in each area.

No, Bethany College is not on the brink of closing but we are being proactive to ensure our long-term viability. This continues to be a place where young adults wrestle

with faith and life issues and develop their character and skills to serve in the work place and in the church.

We continue to believe that a Bible college education is an imperative for our denomination and our society. And it's what we're good at! As such, we continue to be committed to the mission of the College and our partnerships with churches. We have a tremendous resource of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and supporters – in this, we are blessed!

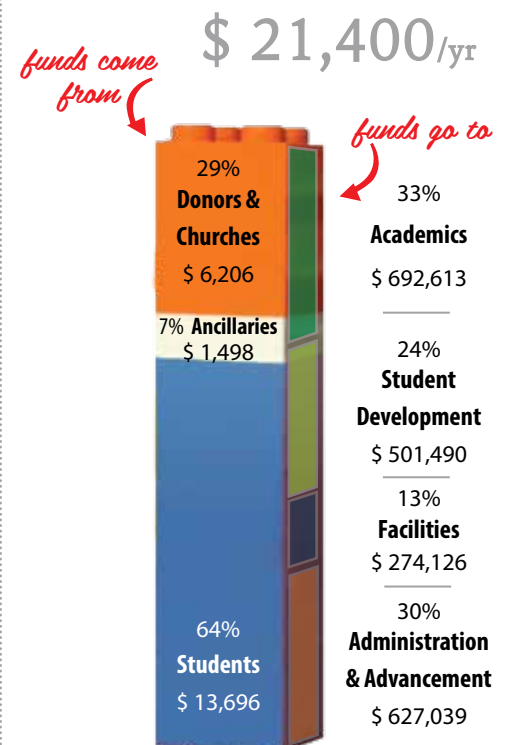
Bethany College has a 100-year history, beginning with Herbert Bible Institute in 1913, and continuing in Hepburn since 1927. Along with its notable history has come significant impact, and although we face these challenges, we look to the future with optimism.

So if you ask me, "What can I do?" I would respond:

- Please **pray** about giving financially to the College.
- Please **support us financially** as you are able. Remember, every dollar given to Bethany College goes to support our students.

Howie Wall, President

### What does it cost to EDUCATE ONE STUDENT:



**\$ 250** Buy Food for Youth Advance students

**\$ 450** Sponsor Bethany display table at local career fair

**\$ 500** One-month telephone bill

**\$ 708** Maintain fleet vehicles for one month

**\$ 750** Table and stools for mall area

## WHAT I DISCOVERED ABOUT BETHANY...

**W**hen I was hired to “tell the Bethany story” I didn’t know what to expect, but in my short time here I have begun to see it like other Saskatchewan stories that are starting to peak out from behind the clouds. I discovered that Bethany College has no reason to be shy... When you look into the classrooms you’ll find instructors with significant expertise and credentials behind their names, cultivating an environment where tough questions of faith and life are welcomed and grappled with. However, the importance of their credentials goes unnoticed as the students relate to them on a first-name basis. And the relationship doesn’t end there. Each one of these men and women who are committed to the life-long study of the Bible themselves, devote time to one-on-one mentoring relationships with students!

In fact, mentoring is part of the culture here. A lot of effort goes into fostering a culture of intentional relationships between the students, and with staff.

At the end of their second year, these relationships culminate into an occasion where instructors, staff, and mentors meet with the student to dialogue about the gifts they see in them, and offer guidance about their future direction.

Equally impressive, I discovered, is the opportunity for students to get involved in active learning options. You’ll get a small taste of these in this edition of *Connection* including Service Learning modules and theatre production, to name a couple.

It’s also important to mention Bethany’s commitment to quality programming and administration, and its status as an accredited school. As a result of the regular, rigorous review of its programs and processes, Bethany offers a well thought-out and focussed learning experience for students, along with a carefully scrutinized process for using the funds that many of you graciously provide. Accreditation also makes it easier for students to get academic credit in other colleges and universities.

And yes, quite honestly, a couple of the

buildings could use a carpenter’s touch – or even a whole make-over – but here’s where we rely on your help. It isn’t easy asking for money to pay the bills but it is certainly *easier* when we can confidently talk about the transforming work of God that we see taking place here. I regularly find my hope renewed when getting acquainted with students here who are filled with love for Jesus and are intentional about being the Good News of Jesus to those around them.

Sending youth to Bethany College shouldn’t be viewed as an option. As Claire Penner, a parent of Bethany alumni reminded us, “*What we offer to the world is more than just a career or a vocation. We offer to the world ourselves and our being, and if we don’t somehow nourish our soul and the core of who we are, we will have nothing to give to the world.*”

I have discovered that Bethany College is, indeed, a great place to “nourish our soul” and train leaders to serve!

*Rick Guenther, Director of Advancement*

## STUDENTS ENGAGING WITH THE CHURCH

**W**ith special thanks to the Canadian MB Conference and Lendrum MB Church for their generosity, Bethany College was pleased to send 22 students and eight faculty and staff to the recent Study Conference, “*Honouring God with the Body,*” at River West Christian Church in Edmonton, AB. These students joined over 300 church leaders and delegates from across Canada who gathered to pray, worship, study the Bible, and listen to academics, pastors, and delegates discern together how to think about and respond to the complex questions around human sexuality. The conference was a highlight for faculty and students alike, and the youthful presence of our students was repeatedly noted by conference organizers. Bethany students engaged with the material at a very high level and were eager participants in discussions with church leaders from across the country. Many conversations that began during plenary sessions and workshops continued into coffee breaks, meals, and long into the evenings. It was obvious that these are precisely the conversations that our students are eager to have.

Perhaps the more encouraging outcome, however, was the warmth that this experience generated from our students toward the church. Third-year student, Stephanie Chase, said, “*What I am coming home with is a fiery passion for the church.*” Most students witnessed for the first time what it looks like for leaders to wrestle with the Bible and theology while considering how these highly relevant issues play out in the life of the church. They caught a glimpse of the tensions that can arise but they also noted the beauty of a diverse body of people honestly seeking to live faithfully under one Lord. In a time when many are talking about the “exodus” of young adults from the North American church it was a blessing to see a striking example of student engagement with the church!

*Gil Dueck, Academic Dean*

*What I am coming home with is a fiery passion for the church.*

Stephanie Chase,  
3rd Year, BA in Christian Studies  
and Church Leadership



Photo by Ellaina Brown

**\$1000**

Provide cleaning supplies for one month

**\$ 1150**

Provide Piano repairs

**\$ 2300**

One month books and subscription services

**\$ 3150**

Send a team on a Service Learning Module

**\$ 5916**

Pay the Natural Gas bill for one month



On the weekend of Oct 31 – Nov 2, Bethany College presented Joseph Robinette's dramatization of C.S. Lewis' **"The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe"** at our annual Fall Dessert Theatre. In five showings, 1470 guests joined over 30 cast and crew in stepping through a wardrobe and into Narnia – an alternate reality of talking animals and

mythical creatures in which we are invited to view the Biblical narrative of creation, fall, and redemption in a new light. See our website under News and Events / Fall Theatre for more photos of the elaborate colors, costumes, make-up, and masks prepared for this production ([www.bethany.sk.ca](http://www.bethany.sk.ca)).

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### MODULAR CLASSES

Jan 6 - 10, 2014

### YOUTH ADVANCE

Jan 31 - Feb 2, 2014

### ALUMNI TOURNAMENTS

**Basketball:** Feb 21 - 22, 2014

**Hockey:** Jan 17 - 18, 2014

**Soccer:** Jan 17 - 18, 2014

### CLOSING WEEKEND

**Spring Concert:** Apr 18, 2014, 7:00pm

**Commencement:** Apr 19, 2014, 2:00pm

For more details visit [bethany.sk.ca](http://bethany.sk.ca)



for the latest  
Bethany news

## A NEW PARTNERSHIP

**B**ethany College is pleased to announce a new partnership with ADVISORS with Purpose.

AWP is a ministry of the Canadian National Christian Foundation and helps Christian ministries meet the needs of their donors in the areas of charitable estate planning as well as capital gain issues relating to the sale of long-term capital assets. In both areas their desire is to be a blessing to the individuals they serve by minimizing taxes, providing for their families and retirement, and increasing charitable giving.

For the Christian, estate planning may be the most important act

make their services available to you without cost or obligation. **To this end, we invite you to read the letter and complete the survey included with this newsletter.**

Please be assured that AWP does not sell insurance or any other product; they will simply study your information and develop a plan that will maximize your goals for family and ministry while minimizing or eliminating taxes. Your personal financial information will never be shared with us and will be held in the strictest confidence by their professional associates. We trust that what they do for you will be a blessing to you, your family, and the Kingdom.

Did you know only **4%** of all Canadians give to **charity** through their wills?

Does your will incorporate your faith and your values?

Will the legacy you leave reflect the life you lived?

Did you know... **60%** of all Canadians lack a current up-to-date **will** or none at all?

of stewardship he or she will ever undertake. Sadly, the traditional planning approach has been to find ways to pay taxes at the time of death making the government an unintentional, but major beneficiary. We at Bethany College have asked ADVISORS with Purpose to

If you would like to contact ADVISORS with Purpose and the ways they can help you, please call, 1-866-336-3315 or visit [www.advisorswithpurpose.ca](http://www.advisorswithpurpose.ca).

*Cliff Brandes,*  
Associate Director of Donor Relations

## Contribute to CAPITAL PROJECTS:

**\$10,000** Student Development Centre Reno

**\$40,000** Dining Hall Roof

**\$10,000** Board Room Construction

**\$30,000** North Court Roof

**\$10,000** North Court Windows

**\$35,000** North Court Heating

Church Donations **\$200,000**

Church Donations

**\$97,182** 49% to date

General Donations

**\$131,552** 33% to date

2013/14 Fundraising Goal

**\$400,000**