



# Storyline

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FALL 2015



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# *just a few thoughts from Pastor James*



**E**veryone has a story. Some may seem more exciting than others but in reality all are significant. My extended family story is complex and chaotic and yet God intervened, became the difference maker, and changed lives. I'm here today because people prayed for my parents, introduced them to Jesus, and taught them what it means to follow him. That's why I'm passionate about celebrating each person as invaluable and irreplaceable in the eyes of God. Like Jesus, we are learning to love people when they least expect it and least deserve it. Everyone has a story ... and when we take time to listen to it, to really hear them, we can discover where God has already been at work in their lives. Ask a few questions and listen ... you'll be amazed!

My story has taken me to many places and most recently back to Calgary to be your pastor. Later this fall we are going to listen again to the story of God in a new series called "God Sightings." We're going to discover more about who our God is and how he shows up in our lives in very special ways. And we would love to hear some of your story. If you'd like to share a story of when God showed up in a special way in your

life please be in touch with us – I love to hear stories so don't hold back! We're in this journey together ... All for Jesus!

*James Paton, Lead Pastor*

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FACCCALGARY

# First Alliance Church ... building lives that honour God.

**What makes us tick?** In a nutshell, God – and you! Thousands of us come together each week, from all walks of life, with ethnic diversity and from all ages, to "build lives that honour God." The Bible is our plumb line ... the absolute truth that sets in motion our teaching, our music and how we relate to each other and to God. We want more than anything as individuals and as a church to impact the city of Calgary and beyond. As part of the Christian and Missionary Alliance of Canada, we also think it's very cool that we get to partner with some amazing people in other parts of the world as they also "build lives that honour God."

### We Value ...

**CONNECTING** in Small Groups – small groups of people who meet regularly to study the Bible, pray, serve and build relationship together. **GROWING** in our understanding of who God is and who He wants us to be – learning through prayer and the Bible how to live in vital connection with Him. **SERVING** God by serving other

people within the church and our community. **SHARING** the love and hope of Jesus Christ with others, both locally and globally.

### "We read to know that we are not alone."

– C. S. Lewis in the William Nicholson film, *Shadowlands*.

**Storyline** is a platform for stories to be shared here at FAC: stories to make us smile, cry, laugh – and ultimately guide us toward a transcendent hope in Jesus in the midst of a broken world. This quarterly publication also leverages the talent of volunteer photographers, writers and graphic designers from within our church community, giving them the opportunity to serve God by connecting their passion and skills to the people behind each story. What has God been doing in your life lately? Have a story to share? We'd love to hear from you: [storyline@faccalgary.com](mailto:storyline@faccalgary.com). •

# Storyline

*"Changed lives through the power of story."*

A quarterly local publication of First Alliance Church in Calgary, Alberta of the Christian & Missionary Alliance in Canada.

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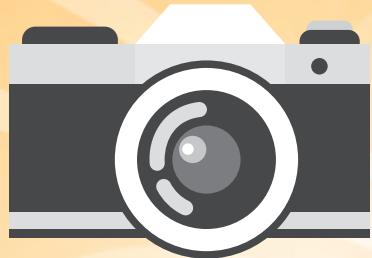
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*"Words could hurt more than sticks/stones. At times we're hurt, at times we hurt. There's help. #FACReflections" – @tolu\_la (Sept. 6)*



*"Answers do not give people hope, Jesus gives people hope!  
@faccalgary @BillMcAlpine #facreflections" – ianatsp (Aug. 23)*



# Photos of Summer

& FAC TWEETS!



Baptism in the Bow



Extreme Rakeover



Baptism in the Bow



Dog Days

#FACReflections @faccalgary "He has taken away my clothes of mourning and clothed me with joy..." #AllforJesus  
- @mamalmeida (July 26)



Stampede Breakfast

"Share your stories of what God has done with others. Celebrate what He has done. @patonrules #FACReflections"  
- @LanaNeher (July 12)



Stampede Breakfast



Pastor James' Welcome Weekend



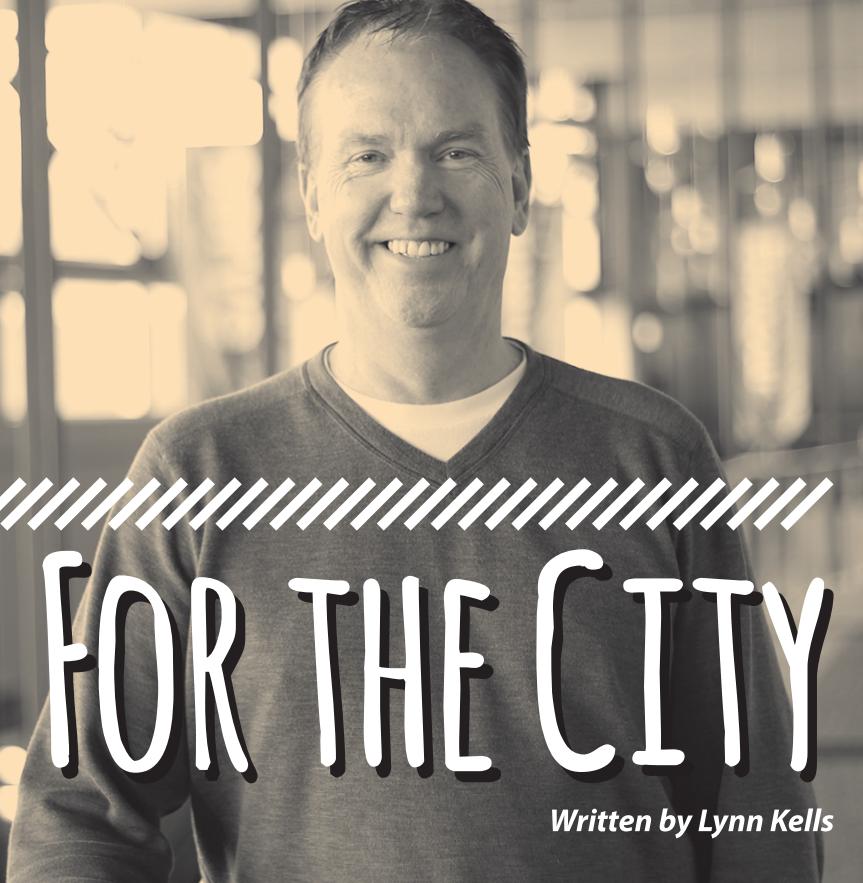
Baptism in the Bow



Stampede Breakfast

"There is no situation that is so bad that God cannot be present."  
@patonrules #facreflections - @ekgko (July 18)

Check out more photos from summer on our Facebook Page: [facebook.com/faccalgary](https://facebook.com/faccalgary)



# FOR THE CITY

*Written by Lynn Kells*

PEOPLE ALL AROUND US ARE HURTING,  
HUNGRY, AND LOST – BUT WILL  
NEVER ENTER A CHURCH BUILDING TO  
HEAR OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Here at FAC, this is a call to action. Reaching people where they are, meeting their immediate needs and impacting lives with the message of Christ. “Bringing Jesus where people live and work” is the mission of our Community Impact ministries.

**“It’s time for the church to look outward into the community and to share the love of Jesus by serving people. We need to reach into our neighbourhoods with prayer and begin meeting the needs around us,” says Community Impact Pastor Al Hall (*pictured above*).**

Our September series, “For the City,” has focused on the needs of the community and provided practical opportunities to serve where we live, work, and play.

The first weekend, September 12/13, focused on how we can **“Love the City”** – how we can be the physical hands of Christ to feed the hungry, the poor, and the hurting – like contributing to a city wide food drive.

**“Do Good for the City”** (September 19/20) reminds the church family to pray for our friends and neighbours, covering the City of Calgary in prayer. Small Groups are encouraged to organize prayer walks through neighbourhoods, praying for the needs of the people who call them home. A special prayer group will be organized for the Lynnwood/Ogden area to walk through the community, lifting the people and their needs to the Lord in prayer.

September 26/27, **“Together for the City”** will encourage us to partner with others to serve our city and communities for Christ. This final weekend will showcase ministries that have partnered with FAC to serve the City of Calgary. “We have aligned ourselves with established organizations with similar values to reach our communities for Christ,” Pastor Al explains. Some of the following partner ministries will be set up on Main Street to provide information about their organizations and how to volunteer with them.

## **Stop by any of the tables to find out more about these Community Impact ministries:**

- Many people will not attend a church service but will walk around a **Show ‘N Shine** car show to look at all makes and models of cars, trucks, and motorcycles. This is an opportunity to represent Christ to people who would otherwise not see Him.
- Several times a year volunteers with mechanical capabilities serve others with basic car maintenance through our **Oil Change Days**. Email: [oilchangedays@faccalgary.com](mailto:oilchangedays@faccalgary.com).
- Volunteers working in the **Tool Team** ministry serve others in a variety of practical, hands-on ways. Email: [toolteam@faccalgary.com](mailto:toolteam@faccalgary.com).
- Christmas is a season to celebrate the birth of Christ with family and friends but there are many people who find themselves alone for the Christmas season. The **Christmas Lunch** (*pictured opposite, left*) is an opportunity to serve a home-cooked turkey dinner and spend an afternoon with someone who has no one. Email: [christmaslunch@faccalgary.com](mailto:christmaslunch@faccalgary.com).
- **Inn from the Cold** ([innfromthecold.org](http://innfromthecold.org)) provides shelter for families who cannot afford housing in Calgary and are forced to rely on emergency shelters. By donating clothing and



time, we can show families in need the love of Jesus.

- **The Mustard Seed** ([theseed.ca](http://theseed.ca)) helps meet the basic needs of shelter, food, and clothing for men and women living in poverty. This is an opportunity to extend a helping hand to someone in desperate need of the acceptance of Christ.
- For families working through adoption or foster care, having a place to come and talk to people in a similar situation is important. The **Adoption and Foster Care Ministry** offers a way to connect and support each other through the journey. Email: [adoptionfostercare@faccalgary.com](mailto:adoptionfostercare@faccalgary.com).
- Women who find themselves facing an unplanned pregnancy with no emotional or physical support often feel lost and alone. **Calgary Pregnancy Care Centre** staff serve these women and show them that someone cares and that they are not alone ([pregcare.com](http://pregcare.com)). By sharing their burden we can represent Christ to these women.
- Many women and children are caught in the devastating reality of domestic violence. **Sonshine Community Services** ([sonshine.ca](http://sonshine.ca)) provides shelter for people facing the challenges of violence at home and works to put an end to domestic violence.
- **Home Away From Home** helps connect international students from the University of Calgary with Canadian families; making a great opportunity for you to show the love of Christ through hospitality throughout the school year.



We also partner with several local schools through our annual **Backpacks for Kids** drive in August (*pictured above*), and an ongoing **Breakfast Store**, as well as ongoing support of **Teen Challenge** ([teenchallenge.ca](http://teenchallenge.ca)), **Emma Maternity House** ([emmahouse.ca](http://emmahouse.ca)) and other non-profits in Calgary. To find out more, go online: [faccalgary.com/communityimpact](http://faccalgary.com/communityimpact) or contact Briana Southerland [bsoutherland@faccalgary.com](mailto:bsoutherland@faccalgary.com)/403-212-8847.

It's time to look outward into the communities where we live and work. Opportunities are around us to reach into our communities and workplaces with our prayers and to meet the needs of our friends and neighbours in a practical and caring way. •

*Lynn Kells is a Business Analyst and enjoys reading, hiking, biking, travelling and spending time with friends and family. She has attended FAC since December 2013.*

 **Follow Community Impact @faccalgary\_CI**





# RELEVANT RELATIONSHIP

## MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE CHURCH IN BALI

WRITTEN BY TERRY SCHMIDT

**D**uring a three-week excursion into Indonesia in July 2015, FAC pastors Grant and Crystal Sylvester, Les Bon-Bernard and his wife Dawn (*pictured above with retired International Worker Lelia Lewis*), expected to meet with and help resource the pastors and ministry leaders at Gateway Community Church (GCC) located in Sanur on the island of Bali.

Bali, an island province of Indonesia, is a mere 5633 square kilometres but populated with nearly 4 million people. Visitors, including the FAC team, find the local people to be friendly, hospitable and generally content. Creative and artistic pursuits, like woodworking, jewellery, stonework and metalwork, are a source of pride. The island is unique in the religious practice of Hinduism by over 90% of the populace in this primarily Muslim nation.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance has been present in Indonesia for over 80 years and there are presently over 50 C&MA national churches, though most are very small congregations. Gateway Community Church was established in 1979 as the English Worship Service by three North American couples – one of whom were C&MA international workers – as a service to ex-pats living in the area.

GCC flourished over the years, but in 2009 were unable to secure a permanent senior pastor and had a number of short-term interim pastors for the next five years. Nori Anderson came to GCC just over a year ago with his wife Shelley, with a plan to settle permanently as the church's senior pastor. The church is finding

stable footing again.

So what is First Alliance Church's role in partnering with Gateway Community Church in Bali?

**"We're there at the request of the C&MA Global Ministries and Gateway Community Church,"** says Pastor Les Bon-Bernard, **"and the goals are simple – to be helpful and to effectively reach out to GCC to support their ministry efforts."** But he qualifies the parameters of the aid to be provided. "We need to be present and renew our sense of that church's current reality and have conversation around their needs. We want to aid them in a way that is contextually relevant to their reality."

Grant Sylvester agrees. **"I went there expecting to preach and**



**meet with ministry leaders. But I also had my mind and heart stretched. Building a relationship with this church and its people opens our eyes to their true needs.”**

Dawn Bon-Bernard feels the same way. “I went to breathe life into their ministries, to listen and come alongside them in their work.” All the team members recognize that the best way to achieve that is through pursuing relationship and, through that, understanding the reality of international ministry.

**“Often international workers feel out there on a limb, isolated and alone,” relates Crystal Sylvester, who came along on the trip to make connections with the children’s ministry leaders (pictured left).** GCC has no dedicated meeting space; services are held in a hotel meeting room and weekday ministry operates out the Andersons’ ministry home. “The Sunday school operates out of a hotel room cleared of furniture,” adds Crystal. “You can’t just run to the dollar store or Michael’s to get supplies for a children’s craft or order it off the internet.” Internet connections are inconsistent and what resources they can access are not what you can expect to find in North America.

### **What can the congregation of FAC do to build a relationship with Nori and Shelley Anderson and Gateway Community Church?**

“Imagine what it would mean to the Andersons to know that thousands of people were praying for them,” muses Grant. Nori



and Shelley (pictured left) have an email prayer team and anyone can join up by contacting Les or Grant to connect with these dedicated international workers.

“The C&MA Global Advance Fund takes donations directly and supports our full-time international workers,” adds Les, “but it can take the face of the workers away from the donors.” FAC is the sending church for Nori and Shelley Anderson and they count on the prayers of their home congregation. “But in addition to the importance of investing prayers, it is also important to invest financially to fund and fuel their ministry.”

Along with prayer and financial support, building and maintaining the relationship is a big step in partnering with this growing ministry and church body. This small community of believers need to know, in this time of transition, that no one is going anywhere. And there are many opportunities for continued resourcing and support.

“We’re in this for the long term,” Les concludes. “There are no quick fixes for the challenges GCC faces in an unchurched and spiritually charged environment, but through relevant relationship, understanding the context of their reality, we can support and encourage the evangelical church in Bali.” •

# **Belarus & Moldova Mission Trip Updates**



“Thank you for your encouragement and support of the Belarus 2015 team. Clearly, God went before us and paved the way for unity amongst all the leaders. The community witnessed by leaders and campers is unparalleled to what I’ve seen in previous camps. **Many young people have come to faith in Jesus Christ and their eternity is forever sealed.** Others have begun to think about who Jesus is and how He can make a difference in their life. Join us in praying for small group leaders at Light of Hope Church as they begin to disciple new believers and for deepened relationships with ‘not-yet’ believers.” - **Karen Cooper**

“Moldova15 English Camp ended on Saturday, August 8 and we miss the kids already. We had 97 teens at camp and it was a lively time. ESL classes went well for Ken and Judi and crafts went very well for Shirley. **Half of the kids responded on the last night of camp either to receive Christ as their Saviour or to rededicate their lives to Him.** The kids at camp were extremely receptive to the daily teaching on God’s love. We’re excited that all of the students will be followed up with in the 7 locations they return to by the Moldovan pastors. Again the pastors expressed their deep appreciation for the North American team that we were excited to be part of. We’re looking forward to seeing what God will accomplish in the year to come. Moldova16, here we come!” - **Ken Keeler**

*Written by Terry Schmidt*

# BLENDDED MINISTRY



## MY FIRST MINISTRY

with young people was to lead a small group of grade 5/6 boys and then to be a large group teacher to upper grade school kids. A couple of years later, I was asked to lead

a group of junior high students in a new youth drama ministry. In second thoughts of terror after I'd agreed, I prayed to God I could love these kids in the midst of the ministry. I thought perhaps if I loved them I wouldn't throttle them. It turned out to be a prayer that has defined the last fifteen years of my ministry life.

THERE ARE FEW THINGS I KNOW FOR SURE BUT I AM CERTAIN THAT GOD HAS CALLED ME TO LOVE, SUPPORT, ENCOURAGE, PRAY FOR, AND MENTOR YOUNG PEOPLE. OVER THE YEARS THAT'S TAKEN MANY FORMS.

For fourteen years, I've volunteered at Camp Chamisall and the first year as a kitchen assistant I cried through most of the week. I was moved by this Christian community that cared for and doted

on these young people and created for them a fun and nurturing environment where God radically transformed their lives. When you close out the world and maintain a spiritual focus as you live 24/7 with these youth, God impacts them in a way that even years of weekly youth ministry cannot. (*Below: At Camp Chamisall with a camper from 2008*).



## CAMP CHANGES LIVES.

In 2005, I served with 19 high school students and four other leaders in the desert of Argentina among the country's indigenous peoples. This first cross-cultural experience in missions changed my view of how God was at work in the world. This experience and those on 10 other trips have developed a deep passion to build into young leaders' lives by helping them to expand their worldview of God and His global church through cross-cultural

experiences. Because we live in affluence and freedom, the North American church has a responsibility to encourage and support and build relevant relationship with God's church around the world. Every time I go, the experience changes how I think about, how I serve, how I lead, and how I love people.

I was looking to build a team for a new mission experience in early 2011 and I came across an organization called *TeachBeyond* (formerly *Janz Team*). They have a long history in using education as an effective catalyst bringing hope to individuals and positive transformation to societies. They are expanding their summer camp ministry throughout Europe and that year they were looking for a team to staff an ESL/Bible camp in Belarus, an Eastern European ex-soviet bloc country in which the evangelical church was growing.

## IT SEEMED A PERFECT FIT FOR ME ... YOUNG PEOPLE, CAMP AND MISSIONS - ALL MINISTRIES I WAS PASSIONATE ABOUT.

The Holy Spirit inspired me as He moved me towards this new kind of mission trip.

That summer I led a team of young adults from First Alliance Church to Belarus and began a relationship with the organization and a young church in Minsk, *Light of Hope*. Teams from FAC have staffed camps for the last four years, leading dozens to faith and building up church leaders (*pictured opposite page, top*).

*TeachBeyond* approached me in the fall of 2014 with the offer of a position as a Camp Supervisor, inviting me, as an associate missionary, to help develop English camps in this country I've come to love. A second church in Minsk was looking to staff a camp and hoped to build their youth ministry through this effective mission. My role was to raise up two teams; train them in teaching conversational English; support their efforts in fundraising; aid them with the endless administrative paperwork; liaise between the two Minsk churches, the two North American teams, and the organization around budgets, schedules, supplies, and itineraries; and supervise the two camps in-country, spending nearly a month away from home. I accepted the position after much prayer and discussion with my loved ones.

## THE LAST EIGHT MONTHS HAVE BEEN AN INCREDIBLE JOURNEY FILLED WITH NOT A LITTLE FRUSTRATION

## AND HEARTACHE BUT ALSO JOY AND WONDER.

The details seemed endless. The management of people and paper, labyrinthine. But He is faithful to us when we labour in His love and He appears in so many ways during the process and in the middle of the mission.



He blends a perfect team of individuals, here and abroad, into a seamless match for the campers He'll draw to the camp. (*Pictured with new friend Dima Krivonogow from summer 2015*).

He provides flawlessly for the individual, revealing Himself in the process until you stand in an airport with bulging luggage and a pounding heart, hardly knowing how you got there.

## GOD DOES NOT SHOW UP IN ENGLISH CAMP WITH BLAZING GLORY AND CHOIRS OF ANGELS SINGING. HE SHOWS UP IN DOZENS OF LITTLE WAYS; DIVINE MOMENTS ...

... in one on one stilted English conversations, Bible study discussions, mealtime exchanges, an encouraging smile or hug, the fun and craziness of camp games and activities. There's an atmosphere of compassion and acceptance and security. The campers notice. They feel significant. Hearts are changed. Decisions made.

It is worth everything – worth the cost of time and resources, the effort in fundraising, the countless meetings, the planning and organization, the physical discomfort or exertion, the sacrifice of extended time away from loved ones, and the exhaustion – to know you have had a part in affecting the transformation of someone's earthly life and their eternal destination. It's an honour and a privilege to serve at these English camps.

I can't see what future God has for me. While I hope I can continue in this new role, what I desire most is to be in His will. I'm not always ready for what He plans for me, but He's proven Himself faithful enough to me that I am always willing. •

# The Future of Journalism

CONTENT FROM AND FOR STUDENTS AT FAC

## 5 Helpful Tips for Back-to-School Studying



**All good things must come to an end, and summer is no exception.** The beginning of the school year marks the start of tests to take and homework to do. Studying for a test after relaxing all summer can be difficult to adjust to, so I've compiled this short list of five back-to-school study tips that can hopefully aid you to start off your school year without a problem.

**1. Find a good place to study.** Location is important when it comes to studying. It has to be somewhere you can concentrate effectively, not somewhere loud and distracting. Look at your local library for quiet study rooms, or find a quiet room of your own where you are sure not to be disturbed.

**2. Go find help when you need it.** Many schools like my own tend to have subject-specific tutorial times before and after school where you can go to a teacher and ask questions about something you didn't understand in class. This is

a great way to get help on prepping for tests, as the teacher can explain things to you that did not make sense previously. If a teacher is unavailable to help you, try searching online or find a classmate to help you out. Both can be good alternate sources when in a pinch.

**3. Make a checklist.** For bigger tests, making a checklist of what will be on the test can help you to assess what you know and what you don't. It's a good studying starter point to find out what needs to be looked into.

**4. Test yourself.** Quizzing yourself is one of the best ways to memorize things. Making flashcards with questions, jotting notes, or getting someone else to ask you questions are all ways to do this. By showing what you know through your answers, you can see what needs to be reviewed or memorized.

**5. Go over previous mistakes to learn from them.** A lot of the time, lost marks on tests and quizzes can be attributed to careless mistakes or not knowing how to do something. Understanding where things went wrong and what to do for next time by learning from them is another good way to study for another test.

Here's to another great school year, and good luck studying, everyone! • *Eryl David is a Grade 12 student here in Calgary and has been apart of FAC for the last five years. She enjoys blogging and plays the clarinet.*

# TO FORGIVE OR NOT TO FORGIVE?

## "MOMMY! WHERE ARE YOU?"

cried Kyle as he raced into the house, the screen door slamming behind him. Mommy whirled around, dropping the spoon she had been using to mix a batch of chocolate chip cookies.

"Spencer pushed me off the swing. I hate him! He's so mean!" shouted Kyle.

Dusting the flour off her hands, Mommy knelt in front of Kyle. "OK," she said, "let's see if you're hurt."

"My knee hurts," Kyle replied as he stuck out his leg.

"Look at that tear! Spencer wrecked my favorite jeans!"

"Not to worry, Son. I can mend them. Now let's clean that scrape and get some ointment for your knee. We don't want it to get infected," said Kyle's mom.

"No!" Kyle protested. "That will only make it sting!"

"Sometimes we have to do things that hurt for a little while so it doesn't get worse later. Be brave for me, Kyle," his mom instructed kindly.

Kyle nodded his head slowly as he shuffled behind Mommy who was already on her way to the bathroom where the First Aid kit was kept.



As she gently wiped away the sand and blood from Kyle's knee, Mommy said thoughtfully, "You know, this reminds me of something that Jesus talks about in the Bible. Sometimes our feelings get hurt by the things other people do or say to us.

If we stay angry or try to hurt them back, it's like the dirt in your scraped knee. It will get infected. We need to talk to Jesus and ask Him to wash away the hurt and anger with His

love. We need to ask Him to help us forgive the person who made us mad."

"Well, I am so mad at Spencer. See what he did to my knee and my pants!" declared Kyle.

Mommy didn't say anything. She just smiled knowingly and finished bandaging Kyle's knee with a gentle hand.

Kyle thought about what Mommy had said. He sincerely wanted to obey Jesus; after all, he had asked Jesus to forgive him for the wrong he had done.

"Are you sure Jesus wants me to forgive Spencer? I do want to be like Jesus and obey Him. Do you think He would help me to get over being angry at Spencer and forgive him?" Kyle questioned.

"I know He will, Kyle," Mommy said proudly. "Let's ask Him now."

• **Written by Helga Lempriere**

## HOW ABOUT YOU?

Are you holding a grudge against someone right now? Do you have a hard time forgiving someone when they hurt you? Ask God to help you to forgive – He will be glad to help you.

## KEY VERSE ...

*"And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us." (Luke 11:4)*



# PLAN B ...FOR BACON! (MMM.)

*Written by Sterling Hunter*

In the kitchen we always make plans and the only thing louder than the pot lids clanging is the sound of God laughing. It's a rarity that dinner will be served when and how its host and chef design it. Sometimes we foodies have to feed our kids' 5000 extra friends – who, by the way, are almost always celiac and hate fish – or we just have to use up leftovers ... Either way, forget plan A – move straight to plan B! Agility is almost as important in food service as timing and an experienced palate. So when serving this year, in your homes and elsewhere, expect the unexpected, and with the heart of Mary serve like Martha ... Oh, but also bacon ...

## Maple Pepper Bacon

*You'll Need ...*

- **Extra thick sliced bacon**
- **Maple syrup (the real stuff)**
- **Course ground pepper**



Marinate bacon in a little touch of pepper and enough maple syrup to coat the bacon well in a casserole pan or Ziploc bag. (Make it as peppery as you want, however the maple syrup will cut the "heat" of the pepper by almost half, so go nuts!) Let 3 days pass by while you dream of bacon. Remove bacon from marinade, shake off excess (save syrup for next batch), lay on a greased cookie sheet, and bake at 400° F till golden. Consume immediately, as it gets very sticky the instant it starts cooling. Try adding several splashes of soy sauce and a few drops of sesame oil for an Asian flair!

*Joel  
Balzun*

*Written by Lynn Kells*

Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Centre, cathedrals, abbeys, castles and churches – Joel has performed in them all. His love of music has taken him across Canada, the United States, England, Scotland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia.

His talent was cultivated from a young age by his mother who was his first piano teacher. When an injury forced him to stop playing, a friend suggested opera.

Joel fell in love with this art form where his gift for performance and composition has thrived.

For Joel, opera is a portrayal of real life and real emotions providing an opportunity to reveal the truth of God to audiences. Each time he steps out onto the stage, his prayer is that someone listening will learn truth through his performance.

When not studying, performing or travelling, Joel can be found watching the food channel. "Often I stress bake," he laughs when asked how he handles the pressure. Spending time with good friends eating good food is one of his favourite past times.

After completing his studies at Eastman School of Music, Joel returned to Calgary, temporarily joining the staff at First Alliance Church where he often sings with the worship team. As of this fall, he has moved to Los Angeles to become a voice instructor with Biola University.

FAC will miss Joel's heart for worship, talent and leadership. We wish him God's best as he steps into this exciting new opportunity. •

*Artist*

*in the  
Spotlight*



# Protected

## This Is My Story

Written by Kymbralee Martinuzzi  
with Elizabeth Anderson

I always believed in God. I grew up in a small town in Nova Scotia. I was baptized in the Anglican Church as an infant and my mother took my sister and me to Sunday School. God has watched over me through the years but I was unaware of how much He guided and protected me.

### God Watching

When I was 8, my younger sister and I were asleep in the back seat of our mother's car. We had an accident and I awoke to find us hanging over a cliff. I was scared and too young to realize that God had saved us from crashing into the waves of the ocean below.

My parents, after having my sister and myself, dreamed of having a son and starting their own business. We moved to another small town where they adopted a baby boy and bought some land to build their motel and restaurant. My parents had to work very long hours and look after us. My mother took us to church when she could. The demands of the business were huge. My parents were exhausted and my father turned to alcohol to handle his stress. He withdrew from his family and did not know how to deal with teenagers. I felt unimportant and my self-esteem plummeted.

They knew their marriage and family were suffering so they put their business up for sale, but without success.

Feeling lost after a day of listening to my father and teenage brother fighting, I ran to the car and drove, not knowing where to turn. God guided me back to the church I had not entered since Sunday School.

I sat alone on the hard, cold pews and cried for hours, telling God I didn't know how to properly pray, and begged Him to show me and to please help our family.

Shortly after, a couple from Germany knocked on our door and asked my parents if they would sell their business to them. After selling and moving to the city, my parents found new jobs that they enjoyed. My father became a loving husband and a kinder and more understanding father; we now enjoy a close relationship. My parents were happy again. It seemed this was God's answer to my prayer.

As an adult, I fell asleep driving one night and God woke me in time to brake so I didn't drive off the bridge into the water. I was quite shaken, especially at the realization that I had been saved again. God was watching over me even though I did not know it.

**"I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go."**  
**Genesis 28:15**

### Faith: Searching for Jesus

I often talked to God when I needed something and was thankful for the things He provided. I prayed for Him to help me in situations where my free will got me into trouble. However, I also spent many hours worrying. Satan enjoyed getting into my mind and distracting me with jealous and negative feelings. I tried attending various churches but still felt spiritually empty and alone.

I longed to feel the love and presence of Jesus, and hoped to hear His voice someday. I had no idea how desperately He was still watching and searching for my heart.

My parents were very much in love when I moved to Calgary. However, my world fell apart when my mother passed away from early Alzheimer's disease. My father was alone now and devastated.

I was a single parent with a young daughter, no financial support and a full-time job that was in jeopardy. My spirit was broken and I was hurt, confused, angry, and living in Calgary, with my family

3000 miles away. One day my Christian employer gave me a copy of the book, "The Purpose Driven Life." This was the turning point in my life and after reading the words of Pastor Rick Warren, I realized there was nothing – absolutely nothing – that is more important than developing a relationship with God and I wanted it to last forever.

I prayed for understanding and forgiveness while God picked me up and held me in his arms and I cried.

Within a few months, God had an unexpected surprise for me. He sent a widowed father and his children to enter my life. With much joy, we were married, united our families under God, and I now have three wonderful children. God was there again – and then we found First Alliance Church!

**"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."** Matthew 7:7

## Peace: My New Relationship with Christ

It's been four years since I was watching baptisms at FAC and my heart started pounding and I couldn't stop shaking.

I heard a voice say, "Come now," and I ran to the front of the Sanctuary where Pastor Scott prayed for me as I cried tears of joy.

On that day, I accepted Jesus Christ as my one and only Saviour and I have received overflowing peace in my heart ever since. This is the relationship with Christ I prayed for – and He found me!

**"The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace."** Romans 8:6 (NIV)

## Joy: The Power of Prayer

Eight months ago, God made me aware of a tumor in my body through the passing of tissue. I was shocked and terrified to receive a diagnosis of endometrioid adenocarcinoma. A member of FAC prayed over my family and we were added to the prayer chain. I was immediately blessed with countless prayers from friends, family, and church brothers and sisters, some of whom I have never met. My supportive husband and family prayed and

cared for me, and the day of my surgery Jesus guided the surgeon's hand to successfully remove all of the cancer.

I am so thankful and humbled that Jesus found me worthy enough to heal my sick body through His love and grace.

**"... When believers pray, great things happen ..."** James 5:16  
**"O Lord, I cried unto Thee and Thou hast healed me."** Psalm 30:2

God's ability to protect me is unrelenting. I am so overwhelmed by the miracles He has placed in my life. My mind, body and spirit now belong to Jesus and I experience His love every day. He is the very source of my hope. God knows what is best for me so I can give Him all my fear and not worry about tomorrow. I accept all that He has planned and look forward to fulfilling His purpose. I am strengthened by every step I take with Jesus. He carries my weakness as I am afflicted with arthritis and chronic fibromyalgia; but my pain is nothing compared to the suffering that Jesus endured on the cross for me. I will live the rest of my life with faith, peace, and joy, knowing I am never alone with a promise of His home in Heaven. •



# Say "Cheese!"

Forty-five volunteers connected over a fun day of landscaping on June 5 at the "Extreme Rakeover". (Photos courtesy of Judith Tuck)  
"Like" [facebook.com/faccalgary](https://facebook.com/faccalgary) for more FAC photos!



# What's Your Story?

**Storyline** is all about telling the stories of what God is actively doing in and through the people of FAC – and we'd love to hear yours!

Fill this out and drop it in the offering basket, or email this info to [storyline@faccalgary.com](mailto:storyline@faccalgary.com) and we'll be sure to follow up with you.

Hello, my name is ...

This is how God's been at work in my life lately ...

Here's how you can contact me for follow up ...



# SUMMER @ CAMP CHAMISALL



**F**riday night tends to be special as Camp Chamisall staff get to hear what God has done in campers over the week. This year at Week 5, one student, who had sprained his ankle earlier in the week, hobbled to the front on crutches to describe three frustrating years in which he lost sensation and control of his leg (the opposite one from the one that he had sprained). He described having to reteach himself to walk and to hide the effort it now required. The doctors had told him there was nothing else they could do for him, but he trusted God would heal him in His time.

**After campfire had ended, God put it on my heart to pray for healing.** His counsellor and I began by praying for his sprained ankle. After our first prayer, it still hurt, but he was able to move it a little more. We prayed again, and it no longer hurt. He could stand on it. As we unraveled the tensor bandage we saw the swelling completely disappear. We began to pray for his other leg. No change. We prayed a second time, and I could feel the slightest movement in his toes. By the time we prayed a fourth time, he exclaimed, **"I can move my toes! I haven't been able to move them in three years! I can feel my foot!"** God completely healed both his sprained ankle and his other leg! What an amazing God we serve!

- Kendall Delamont ("Sardine")

I just wanted to thank you and the entire staff for all you did to make camp so wonderful for my son... We sat for an hour talking about the daily Bible study, all about different books of the Bible and how much he had learned. He said his counsellors were amazing people and answered so many questions and helped him so much. They have definitely made a difference for him. - Parent of a Camper

**Camp Chamisall ends up being the best of times and the worst of times.** The best is that we see God working in the lives of children and students in phenomenal ways. The worst of times is that we sometimes get an insider's look at their struggles and the things they're having to deal with. **At the end of the day it's amazing to see the way God works in their lives and to see how resilient they are in the face of ongoing challenges.** What a blessing to be able to be part of this ministry that "impacts lives and challenges each individual to follow Christ."

- Les Bon-Bernard ("Bigfoot")



To learn more about Camp Chamisall, visit: [campchamisall.com](http://campchamisall.com)

**F**or years FAC has been serving the students at one of our school partners by running a breakfast store. As a result we have had the privilege for the past 5 summers of sponsoring students to go to Camp Chamisall. **This past summer FAC sponsored 32 students to go to various weeks of camp.** For a number of those campers, this summer was the first time they have been to Chamisall. The reports are that they all had a great time and felt loved by the staff ... and 12 of those campers made first-time decisions to follow Jesus. Thanks for your generous support of the Care Fund at FAC which has made this summer life-changing for those students!

- Randy Carter ("Shrimp")



# Tis the Season to Be

Written by Joyce Rempel

# ... Thankful?

**E**very time autumn arrives with its crisp air and changing colours, the annual gathering of pumpkins, the aroma of roasting turkey, well ... don't you just get a little tired of being told to give thanks? Especially when circumstances are tough?

There's a constant negative narrative that runs in my head. Sometimes it's my inner critic, or shame from being rebuked by someone, or the voice of Satan. So when I picked up the book *1000 Gifts*, I was really challenged to find simple gifts already present in my life for which I could be thankful. The subtitle of the book is *A Dare to Live Fully, Right Where You Are*. Live fully? Really?

I'd read Jesus' words in John 10:10 about having "abundant life," then look at my circumstances or failures and think, "What abundance?" I was taught to believe in a good God who meets all our needs out of His riches in glory. After all, doesn't He own "the cattle on a thousand hills and the wealth in every mine"? Like the old question "Is the glass half-full or half-empty?" I was always half-empty, in a perennial state of disappointment. Reality (and I) never seemed to live up to expectations.

## Then the question came ... What if abundance has nothing to do with perfection, position, or possessions?

No cornucopia of "blessings" spilling out on the table? No cup full and running over? What if abundance has to do with my perspective?

"Blessed are the poor ..." Jesus said. "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Heaven on earth? Now, isn't this true abundance? The very presence of the Spirit of Christ, on earth, in me, "the hope of glory"?

The key word from which "thanksgiving" originates is *eucharisteo*: an attitude of thanks, life-filling gratitude. In Philippians 4, Paul affirms what it takes to develop this kind of attitude: "I have learned to be content ... I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency" (Philippians 4:11, 13 AMP)

Even when I do not feel grateful, I can choose my attitude. In fact, I have a responsibility to do so. A response-ability to control my attitude toward my half-glass life. To see what is present with the eyes of



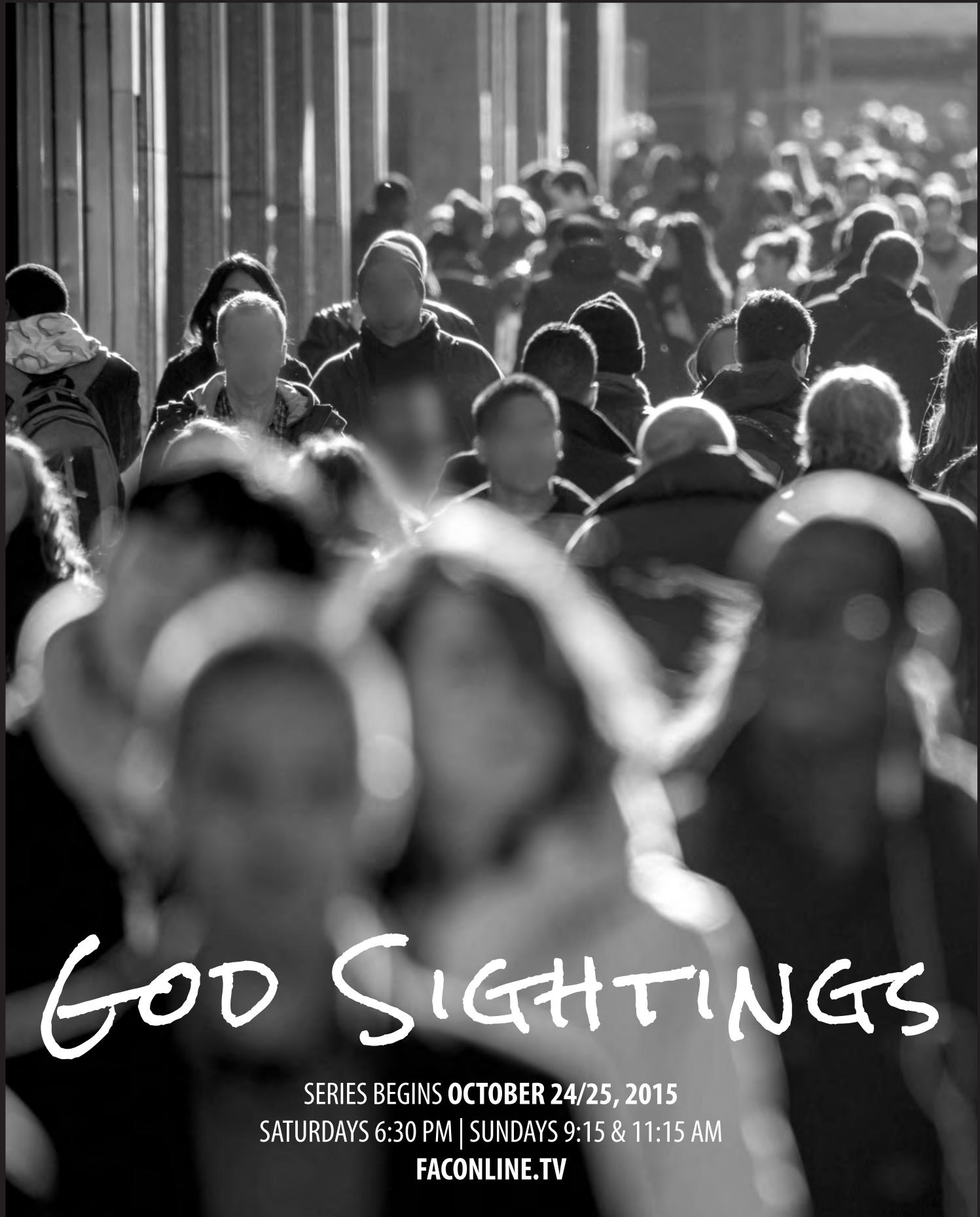
my heart open to what I missed in my previously jaded glance. *Eucharisteo* allows me to live fully right where I am. As I began to name gifts a few at a time, one day at a time, my perspective changed. My glass isn't half full any more. The glass is simply the wrong size.

In the power of the Spirit, I can trust the truth that God is good, loving, and sovereign in every circumstance, even when I fail. It is His presence that strengthens me to live the hard *eucharisteo* – obedient thanks – when circumstances seem humanly impossible, like the untimely death of a loved one. God's mercies, new every morning, give me faith that hard gifts are the crucible which shapes my beautifully broken life for good and for God's glory. "Good" as God defines it, not as I define it. To trust the truth of Philippians 4:6: instead of worrying, I can tell God what I need, thank Him for what He's already done, and peace will follow. In fact, it says, "Peace will rule in your hearts."

**Practicing gratitude each day opens my eyes to God's presence, power, provision, and peace.**

Now, that's abundance! •





# GOD SIGHTINGS

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