



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – DECEMBER, 2006

“...PRACTICE TENDER-HEARTED MERCY AND KINDNESS TO OTHERS.” COL. 3:12

How we live our life is a reflection of Christ and as His Ambassador, others will view God by what they see in us. Do we faithfully do our best to exhibit Christ's Love to those we meet?

Max Lucado says in his book, “Just Like Jesus”...God loves you just the way you are, but he refuses to leave you that way. He wants you to be...**JUST LIKE JESUS.**

Max reminds us that God rewards those who seek *him* – not those who seek doctrine or religion or systems or creeds. Many settle for these lesser passions, but the reward goes to those who settle for nothing less than Jesus himself.

And what is the reward? What awaits those who seek Jesus?
Nothing short of the heart of Jesus.

“And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him.” 2 Cor. 3:18

What does it mean to have a heart like Jesus? It means to kneel as Jesus knelt, touching the grimy parts of the people we are stuck with and washing away their unkindness with kindness. Or as Paul wrote...

“Be kind and loving to each other, and forgive each other just as God forgave you in Christ” Eph. 4:32

This past week I received news that a man whom I had befriended while working at NeighbourLink, suddenly passed away.

John was an alcoholic and he was a difficult man at times. While drinking, he was often verbally abusive but I knew he was a hurting man and needed a touch of God's mercy and kindness.

I wish I could say that John accepted the Lord because of the love shown to him. I believed that love conquers all but I learned that this is not always the case. My responsibility is to obey and follow what God is calling me to do ‘unconditionally love your neighbour’ and the outcome, is then up to the Lord.

The responsibility of bridge-building falls on the strong one, not on the weak one. The one who is innocent is the one who makes the gesture. Relationships don't thrive because the guilty are punished but because the innocent are merciful.

I cannot think of a greater gift this Christmas than to be just like Jesus - **to possess His Heart of Love and Compassion.** As we thank God for the gift of His Son, let us pray that He will mould us into His likeness, so that we may have kindness for the diseased, mercy for the unlovely and the courage to face the challenges of life with His tender-hearted mercy showing kindness to all.

*Merry Christmas
With Love,
Marg*

NOT ONLY CHRISTMAS DAY

By Mary Fairchild

Lord, this is my prayer
Not only on Christmas Day
But until I see You face to face
May I live my life this way:

Just like the baby Jesus
I ever hope to be,
Resting in Your loving arms
Trusting in Your sovereignty.

And like the growing Christ child
In wisdom daily learning,
May I ever seek to know You
With my mind and spirit yearning.

Like the Son so faithful
Let me follow in Your light,
Meek and bold, humble and strong
Not afraid to face the night.

Nor cowardly to suffer
And stand for truth alone,
Knowing that Your kingdom
Awaits my going home.
Not afraid to sacrifice
Though great may be the cost,
Mindful how You rescued me
From broken-hearted loss.

Like my risen Savior
The babe, the child, the Son,
May my life forever speak
Of who You are and all You've done.

So while this world rejoices
And celebrates Your birth,
I treasure You, the greatest gift
Unequaled in Your worth.

I long to hear the same words
That welcomed home Your Son,
“Come, good and faithful servant,”
Your Master says, “Well done.”

And may heaven welcome others
Who will join with me in praise
Because I lived for Jesus Christ
Not only Christmas Day





BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – November, 2006

...Act Justly. Love **KINDNESS**. Walk Humbly Micah 6:8

*The best way to find yourself, is to
lose yourself in the service to others.*
Gandhi

John Piper, Pastor/Author says that God loves us by liberating us from the bondage of self so that we can enjoy knowing and admiring him forever. Love has to do with showing a dying soul the life-giving beauty of the glory of God, especially his grace.

We can show God's glory in a hundred practical ways that include care about food and clothes and shelter and health. Every good work should be a revelation of the glory of God. What makes the good deed an act of love is not the raw act, but the passion and the sacrifice to make God himself known as glorious. If we don't point people to God for everlasting joy, we don't love.

Suffering with Jesus on the Calvary road of love is not merely the *result* of magnifying Christ; it is also the means. He is made utmost in our life when we let go of this mortal life. Jesus knew that suffering (whether small discomforts or dreadful torture) would be the path in this age for making him most visibly supreme.

When we embrace with joy the cost of following Christ, his worth will shine in the world. The cost itself will become a means of making Christ look great.

If our single, all-embracing passion is to make much of Christ in life and death, and if the life that magnifies him most is the life of costly love, then life is risk, and risk is right.

Taken from "Don't Waste Your Life"
John Piper

*God created us to live with a single
passion to joyfully display his supreme
excellence in all the spheres of life.*

An Open Door to Serve- Pandemic Preparedness

We know in the days of the early church, the thing that most impressed their neighbours was their community of love they witnessed among believers. In every age, the most persuasive evidence for the gospel was not words or arguments but a living demonstration of God's character through a Christians love for one another. This love was expressed both in their words and especially by their actions.

Christians have an opportunity like never before to put our faith into action. Pandemic Preparedness is not a familiar topic to most of us but through awareness, education, and a deep love for our Lord, we will conquer our fears and take hold of this opportunity to love our community.

The scope of a major pandemic will be by definition and historical records, unlike any other emergency; it happens, then it happens some more, and it keeps on happening. Just when it looks like it is going to recede, it returns even more severely than before. It happens in virtually all communities, leaving little possibility for outside help; and with it, being a novel infectious disease, comes a fear of infection for self and family.

Knowledge creates our current high level of global concern for a pandemic and gives us an unprecedented chance for preparation. The media predicts that the pandemic is on our doorstep but the timing is not ours to dictate.

Preparation now will serve us well for the future. Please call for more information on how your church can be '**A Church Prepared**'.

403.263.5683

KINDNESS Pass it on!

Give a flower Eat lunch with someone new
Listen with your heart Visit a sick friend
Clean a neighbor's walk Offer a hug
Give an unexpected gift Make a new friend
Pick up litter Say "hello" Call a lonely person
Open a door Help carry a load Plant a tree
Pass a kindness on Buy someone's meal
Cheer up a friend Thank a teacher Give blood
Read to a child Do one kind act every day
Leave a thank you note Offer your seat
Tip generously BE TOLERANT Let another go first
Bake cookies for emergency workers Tutor a student
Give a compliment Pay the next driver's toll
Lend a hand Give a balloon to a child
Offer a ride Celebrate the day Respect others
Encourage a child Walk a dog Do a favor
Forgive mistakes Drive courteously Share a smile

www.actsofkindness.org

the random acts
of kindness foundation



BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – October, 2006

A Bridae of Truth

Christianity is not a series of truths in the plural, but rather truth spelled with a capital "T." Truth about total reality, not just about religious things. Biblical Christianity is Truth concerning total reality—and the intellectual holding of that total Truth and then living in the light of that Truth.
Francis Schaeffer, April 1981

Nancy Percy, in her book 'Total Truth' says that believers today may find themselves drawn into a secular worldview—while remaining orthodox in our theology beliefs. Many believers have absorbed the fact/value, public/private dichotomy, restricting faith to the religious sphere while adopting whatever views are current in the professional or social circles.

Living out our faith in today's society is becoming increasingly difficult as we embrace the world's perspective and views from our surrounding culture in the absence of a biblical standard for interpreting the subject matter closest to God's heart. Has the modern Christian succumbed to secularism, accepting a 'frame of reference constructed by the secular mind and a set of criteria reflecting secular evaluations?' We often take great pains to make sure our message is biblical but do our methods also reflect God's heart of love?

'Living Out' our faith by building bridges of real spiritual integrity between itself and the community will act as a catalyst for change and serve as a vehicle for influence. Pandemic Preparedness is an "Open Door" of opportunity for the local church to build not only unity in the faith but maturity in the church.

Please step up to the challenge and reflect God's heart as we become 'equipped for works of service' to demonstrate Christ's love in our community.



'...I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some'.

1 Cor. 9:22

Micah Challenge Testimonies

...Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly... Micah 6:8

October 15th was Micah Sunday and stories were shared by Pastor Norm Dyck from Graysville Mennonite Church in Graysville, Manitoba. Also, Dan Weins, Education Coordinator, Canadian Food Grains Bank & Micah Challenge, Education Chair shared from his church community. It sounds like Manitoba Churches are making an impact. ☺

1. We began our Micah Challenge emphasis a week early on Thanksgiving Sunday, spending the worship service reflecting upon hunger and poverty related issues. Over the next 8 weeks each of the MDG's will be highlighted in our Sunday bulletin and at the end of November we will offer a focused opportunity to sign the Micah 'Call'. Our youth and young adult Sunday school class began using the Micah Challenge material this month as well and the most encouraging comment I could have received came from an 18-year-old young woman in our congregation who said something like, "Wow, there's a lot to think about and talk about. This has really given me a different perspective on life."

And just this afternoon I received a call from our denominations Director of Evangelism & Service Ministries asking for more information and offering his help in getting the Micah Challenge out to the 50 congregations in Mennonite Church Manitoba – the denomination of which our church is a part. God is indeed at work!

2. At least three of the seven churches in my little town of Niverville, Manitoba conducted Micah Sunday and Stand Up events yesterday. In my own church, a beautiful Stand Up commemoration was done and a description of Micah Challenge was given. All of these events were organized using resources from the MC website. I have to say that tears came to my eyes during the event at our church as I realized that God is using our feeble efforts to change the hearts and the minds of Christians across the country...

www.micahchallenge.ca Sign the 'CALL'

CAN YOU SLEEP WHILE THE WIND BLOWS?

Years ago, a farmer owned land along the Atlantic seacoast. He constantly advertised for hired hands. Most people were reluctant to work on farms along the Atlantic. They dreaded the awful storms that raged across the Atlantic, wreaking havoc on the buildings and crops. As the farmer interviewed applicants for the job, he received a steady stream of refusals.

Finally, a short, thin man, well past middle age, approached the farmer.
"Are you a good farm hand?" the farmer asked.
"Well, I can sleep when the wind blows," answered the little man.

Although puzzled by this answer, the farmer, desperate for help, hired him. The little man worked well around the farm, busy from dawn to dusk, and the farmer felt satisfied with the man's work. Then one night the wind howled loudly in from offshore. Jumping out of bed, the farmer grabbed a lantern and rushed next door to the hired hand's sleeping quarters.

He shook the little man and yelled,

"Get up! A storm is coming!

Tie things down before they blow away!" The little man rolled over in bed and said firmly, "No sir. I told you, I can sleep when the wind blows."

Enraged by the response, the farmer was tempted to fire him on the spot. Instead, he hurried outside to prepare for the storm.

To his amazement, he discovered that all of the haystacks had been covered with tarpaulins. The cows were in the barn, the chickens were in the coops, and the doors were barred. The shutters were tightly secured. Everything was tied down.

Nothing could blow away. The farmer then understood what his hired hand meant, so he returned to his bed to also sleep while the wind blew.

When you're prepared, spiritually, mentally, and physically, you have nothing to fear. Can you sleep when the wind blows through your life?

The hired hand in the story was able to sleep. He had secured the farm against the storm.

Let us follow his example, by being prepared so we, too, will have peace in the midst of the storms.

Author Unknown

It is easy for us to imagine that we will suddenly come to a point in our lives where we are fully prepared, but preparation is not suddenly accomplished. In fact, it is a process that must be steadily maintained. It is dangerous to become settled and complacent in our present level of experience. The Christian life requires preparation and more preparation. Oswald Chambers



BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – October, 2006

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BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – September, 2006

The Paradox Of Forgiving Love

“And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all...”

2 Timothy 2:24

God's concept of love is so radically different from our own. We tend to love what we like. He loves what is in our best interest. We are inclined to forgive when we think it is in our best interest to do so. He wants us to forgive when it is in the best interest of someone else to do so.

Loving others requires that we be willing to forgive. Forgiving others requires that we be willing to love. Both require an ever-deepening (super-natural) relationship with God.

“What does Christ-like love require?”

Tim Jackson, in his little book, “When Forgiveness seems impossible” says that it depends on the circumstances in which we are asking the question.

- ♥ Sometimes love requires us to say, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Lk. 23:34).
- ♥ Sometimes love requires us to forgive again and again (Mt. 18:21-22).
- ♥ Sometimes love requires us to withhold forgiveness for the sake of the one who has harmed us. (Lk:17:3-4).

This last point surprised me as I, like so many others, thought that forgiveness required an unconditional release from past wrongs. I assumed that I had to forgive in order to love. The need for loving confrontation is apparent.

When there has been a separation in a relationship and things are made right through repentance and forgiveness, there is a wonderful moment of release that words cannot describe.

“If your brother sins against you, rebuke him:” Luke 17:3

Global Day for Darfur Rally

...Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly... Micah 6:8

On September 17, people around the world will take part in the Global Day for Darfur to show support for the people of Darfur and to put pressure on our Governments to protect the civilians. Events are planned in 31 cities, from New York to Nigeria, Moscow to Melbourne. In Calgary, a rally with music, speeches and a silent vigil will take place at the Harry Hays Federal Building.

Despite the signing of a Darfur peace agreement on May 5, 2006, the violence in western Sudan has not stopped; in fact, in some parts of Darfur, the violence has grown worse.

When - Sunday, September 17,
1pm – 3:30pm

Where - Harry Hays Federal Building,
220 4th Ave. SE

What - For more information on the rally visit:
http://www.dayfordarfur.org/Events/Calgary_Canada.htm

THE UNCONVENTIONAL WAR

This 105 – minute documentary chronicles the life in northern Uganda's Acholi homeland. For nearly two decades, a bizarre predatory cult known as The Lord's Resistance Army has abducted over 100,000 children.

For a showing of this video and a power point of my recent trip to Uganda, please give me a call.

How to Build Global Community

- ♥ Think of no one as 'them'
- ♥ Don't confuse your comfort with your safety
- ♥ Talk to strangers
- ♥ Listen to music you don't understand
- ♥ Acquire few 'wants'
- ♥ Visit people, places and cultures...not tourist attractions
- ♥ Watch films with sub-titles
- ♥ Understand the global economy in terms of people, land and water
- ♥ Never believe you have a right to someone else's resources
- ♥ Don't confuse money with wealth, or time with money
- ♥ Judge governance by how well it meets everyone's needs
- ♥ Choose curiosity over certainty
- ♥ Re-define progress, satisfaction and success
- ♥ Assume that many others share your dreams
- ♥ Know that no one is silent though many are not heard. Work to change this.
- ♥ Reach out to minority groups in your city
- ♥ Support the **Global Day for Darfur** by sending a letter to raise awareness of this crisis www.dayfordarfur.org
- ♥ Sign the 'call' at www.micahchallenge.ca
- ♥ **Show we are followers of Christ by demonstrating God's LOVE is indeed ACTION!**



BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – August,

The Covenant Love of God

The Apostle Paul said, "...the greatest of these is love." Without love, we can do many great things, demonstrate the gifts of the Spirit and exercise all the disciplines in the will of God; but it will all be futile. We must recognize that God is love, and love is the foundation for a successful walk.

John Mulinde

If we don't do things in love, we diminish our use in the kingdom of God. Many times we do God's will outside of the Way of the Lord; **without love.**

During my trip to Uganda in June/July, I came to a greater understanding of what it means when we hear, Love overcomes all and is the only commandment that fulfills all the requirements of God. We have learned that love casts out fear, love endures forever, and love covers a multitude of sins. Love is God and Love carries us forward.

After spending a few days travelling to internment camps outside of Kitgum and visiting a compound with children who were night commuters, David Collins who lead our expedition, asked us to share our thoughts and feelings after this heart-rending time.

Day 5 - Kitgum...Northern Uganda

Last night I became very aware of what 'suffering for Jesus' meant as I looked into the eyes of those precious children who love God with their whole heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Before I came to Africa, I expected to feel great despair for the African people. Despair because of their poverty, despair because of their lack of proper living conditions, and despair because they did not possess what we have in Canada.

Since arriving in this beautiful land and having the privilege of meeting so many wonderful people, I have felt no despair. I was wondering if I had distanced myself from feeling their heartache. I didn't understand why I was not feeling more hopelessness for their living conditions.

Last night after talking with three young girls at the children's compound, where they gather after walking for hours to sleep in relative safety, God revealed why I was feeling joy instead of heart-ache.

These young girls taught me a lesson that I pray I will never forget and one I would like to share with others. This may not be possible, however, as it may be necessary for each one to reach this revelation individually and uniquely as God sees fit.

The lesson that I learned that night was that **Jesus' Love is sufficient**; He is all we need. Those girls who were devastated by war, poverty, lack of the essential things that we feel are necessary for life were being filled and satisfied by the love of Jesus Christ. They have felt His divine Love to the depths of their souls.

This was why I had felt no despair. They were full to overflowing with something far greater than anything we could give them. They have learned to be satisfied being filled with the Holy Spirit to sustain their every need.

What a gift I was given to meet these precious children of God. They are indeed 'suffering for Jesus' but they know deep in their hearts that God's love will sustain them until eternity.

"No eye has seen nor ear heard what God has prepared for those who Love Him."

BRIDGES OF LOVE AGM & A 'PEEK' INTO UGANDA

Please join Marg and the Board of Bridges of Love for the Annual General Meeting followed by dessert and A little 'peek' into Uganda"

Date: Fri., August 18th – 2006

Where: St. John Lutheran Church, 204 – 6 A St. NE

AGM – 6:45 PM

Dessert: 7:30 PM

Ugandan Presentation:
8:00 PM – 9:30 PM

I would like to encourage your attendance for this special evening as you hear how God continues to build this ministry. Thank you so much for your prayers providing His Power, Strength and Wisdom.
Thank you

**Please R.S.V.P.
by August 15th, 2006
263.5683**

margpollon@bridgesoflove.net





BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – May, 2006

Surrender to Love

Love is God's Character...not simply an emotion or feeling. Love invites surrender and surrender is at the core of spirituality. The interweaving of Love, surrender and spirituality flows out of both the nature of love and the nature of human beings.

David Benner – Surrender to Love

Since my journey began in building 'Bridges of Love', I have been learning that Divine Love – God's Love, is where I find my truest and deepest self in Christ. As I surrender to His perfect love I experience the depth and intimacy of His love.

He courts us with tenderness and unimaginable kindness as he wants our heart, not just our will. Only love can induce us to surrender and absolute surrender can only be offered to Perfect Love. Only God deserves absolute surrender, because only God can offer absolutely dependable love.

Unfortunately, too often we spend our time working for God rather than simply being with Jesus. Benner says that the Christian spiritual journey consists of more than surrender to love, but it contains nothing more important. Surrender to God's love involves confession, repentance, obedience and service. For surrender to be transformational it must be surrender to love. And for it to lead to union with God, it must be **surrender to perfect love**.

Love connects us to life, because the presence of genuine love always reveals the presence of God. Love is the fulfillment of everything that makes us human and gives us the ability to care deeply for others as we place their interests ahead of our own.

This, then, is what I pray for you. I ask that the Spirit of God give you the power for your spirit to grow strong and that rooted and grounded in love, you will be able to understand the breadth and length, the height and the depth of Christ's everlasting love for you.

Ephesians 3:16,19

FULFILLMENT OF A DEEP LONGING OF MY SOUL

Two and a half years ago, I wrote a 23 page ministry plan for Bridges of Love. The introduction began with the words 'Follow Me'. Little did I realize that my sincere desire and commitment to follow God, would lead me to an exciting adventure with Him.

The image of journeying with Jesus highlights the relational nature of Christian spirituality. Even though I had been a follower of Christ for many years, it was at this time that I made a conscious decision to not only follow Jesus, but to travel with Him wherever He would take me.

I truly do trust God with my life and I know that this trust will lead to many divine adventures that few would dare to go. The risks may be many but the rewards will be eternal.

On June 10th I leave for Uganda for a 24 day adventure. I am sure this journey will be one of growth and transformation. It will be a journey of progressive union with God – not only of achievement but one of building a closer walk & trust with Him.

For those who have followed my journey the past few years and have prayed and supported me in building 'Bridges of Love', I would like to thank you so very much for allowing me, to follow my heart and my Lord. To Tom, my husband who has encouraged his 'eaglet' as he calls me, to grow and mature to fulfill a deep yearning to spread my wings and soar above the clouds of normalcy.

I thank those who have seen God working in and through me and have been an encouragement to never give up. I know that He has a mission for me to fulfill and I am truly excited to trust Him one step at a time. Thank you for your continued prayers for God to do a marvellous and breath-taking work through me as I continue to follow Him into the unknown.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOVE
BLESS YOU!**

90 Day of Blessings

As part of the Global Day of Prayer initiative Christians all around the world will reach out into their communities for 90 days after the June 4th prayer gathering. Here in Calgary Christians will unite to bless communities in the NE quadrant. Servant teams will be able to demonstrate the love of God in a variety of practical ways. We believe and see evidence that community transformation occurs when churches work together for the welfare of their city. Come join us for 90 Day of Blessings.

There are several ways that you can participate during June – Sept. 9th.

- Prayer Walking
- Community Clean-up,
- Community Carnival
- Food Hamper Delivery
- Random Acts of Kindness
- Community Celebration

If you would like to volunteer a few hours during the ninety day time period let us know by contacting
globaldayofprayer@shaw.ca

Deeds Irwin

"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue, but with actions and in truth."
1 John 3:18



BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – April, 2006

Blow a clear trumpet...

The lord said to mooses: Make two trumpets of hammered silver, and use them for calling the community together and for having the camps set out.

Numbers 10:1

God commanded Moses to 'make yourself' these trumpets. He was not to buy them, rent them or borrow them from a local marching band. He was to hammer them out for himself and then learn to blow them until they sounded clearly. The trumpets would be used to call the congregation together, to summon the leaders, to warn the people and to bring organization to the nation's travel plans whenever God told them to move.

Wayne Cordeiro, in his book **'Doing Church as a Team'**, stresses the importance of taking time to learn principles and new perspectives to hammer out what God's vision is for each church. Not a cookie-cutter template but a God sized vision that will be unique and embraced by the whole body of believers.

We have an opportunity to 'seize a moment' that will impact our community/city/nation/world with the love of Christ. With the widespread talk of avian flu and a possible pandemic outbreak becoming a reality please consider how you and your church could respond.

Pandemics of influenza are unusual events and their timing cannot be predicted. From past history, however, we are told that we are over-due for this catastrophic event to occur so we must prepare for the inevitable.

Nehemiah was a master builder who accomplished amazing feats in a very short time. He was broken hearted, prayed, prepared and took action.

He consulted the King for release and then accessed what needed to be done. He mobilized workers and joined them to rebuild the wall...each one responsible for their own piece of the wall. Everyone working together accomplished great things for God's Kingdom and for His Glory.

I see a great parallel with Nehemiah's story in preparing a church response for an Influenza Pandemic.

As with Nehemiah, prayer should be our first response. How does God want each church to prepare? As we seek Him, God will hammer out the template for each church in their community so we will be walking in His Steps with a clear trumpet.

Dr. Tim Foggin, a Burnaby doctor and myself have prepared a Discussion Guide that we pray will act as a starting point for a church response. Please feel free to download this paper and accompanying power-point from www.bridgesoflove.net

As well, please have a look at www.churchresponse.org a site where Dr. Foggin has resourced many papers and web-sites which will give additional information and perspectives from a variety of sources.

As stated by Dr. Foggin...

"The impetus for developing a regional church emergency response strategy comes from assessing the risk of an influenza pandemic, yet it is clear that such a strategy would also be applicable in a multitude of other scenarios."

We need to simply and practically look out for and truly love our neighbours. Why? Because we love our God and want to be obedient to His Call.

A Testimony to God's Love

For those who have been following my ministry over the past few years, you will testify that it has not been an easy journey but God has opened some amazing doors as I have been seeking His Best as I follow Him.

Let me share a quote from Erwin McManus's book, "Seizing Your Divine Moment" that has inspired me to do what I am doing.

"You know where to begin; take initiative. You know who God is, so embrace life's uncertainty. Remember that the person you are becoming in Jesus Christ is your greatest gift to others. Every great adventure is filled with peril and danger, but the risk is worth it. You have already been authorized to move forward, so advance. Impact your world by fighting the battles that are on God's heart. Move with an urgency that creates a movement. Engage in an adventure so compelling that it causes the awakening of the dead in spirit. In this moment, each of us will have to choose."

I would like to invite you to join an adventure that might be full of danger...but the risk is indeed worth it. God has called each one of his followers to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and love your neighbour as yourself.

Whether a pandemic comes or not, is not the defining issue. We have an open door of opportunity to start building intimate relationships with our community; to let them know that we care enough to take action and be prepared.

Please pray and seek God on how your church will respond. Our responsiveness is always determined by a continuing exploration of the distinctive identity and purpose of the church as the community called to witness to God's mighty work in Jesus Christ.



BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – MARCH,

A REVOLUTIONARY CHRISTIAN...

A quiet Revolution is rocking the nation. According to George Barna in his new book, "Revolution", we are in the midst of a Revolutionary Age which is reshaping Christianity, personal faith, corporate religious experience, and the moral contours of the nation.

Barna describes a Revolutionary Christian as one who reflects the very ideals and principles that characterize the life and purpose of Jesus Christ and that advance the Kingdom of God. They are people who want more of God—much more—in their lives. And they are willing to do whatever it takes to get it.

These are individuals who are determined to glorify God every day though every thought, word and deed in their lives. These people are devout followers of Jesus Christ who are serious about their faith, who are constantly worshipping and interacting with God, and whose lives are centered on their belief in Christ. The key to understanding Revolutionaries is not what church they attend, or even if they attend. Instead, it's their complete dedication to being thoroughly Christian by viewing every moment of life through a spiritual lens and making every decision in light of biblical principles.

Are you a Revolutionary? Is someone in your family or your circle of friends a Revolutionary? Would you like to be a Revolutionary—someone who lives only to love, obey, and serve God, rejecting and overcoming every obstacle that emerges to prevent such a life?

Love the Revolutionaries in your midst and remember that they are disciples who seek God with all of their heart, mind, strength and soul. Don't be distracted by the routes they take in doing so.

LIVE THE REVOLUTION

This revolution is not something you join; it's a way of life. Jesus made clear that the entrance fee for membership in this club is repentance, obedience, love, and service. Most revolutions—gained ground for their cause by following a strategic plan. God's revolution, however, has no incremental plan. This war is won by the fanatics on God's side living in concert with the revolutionary ideals that Jesus prescribed.

This is a war that is not won by force. It is won by the daily demonstration of courageous faith—the faith to be God's person wherever He puts you, doing whatever He calls you to do.

Don't wait to sign up. Just live it!

Please, may I recommend this little book and see if you fit with George Barna's definition for a Revolutionary Christian. Be forewarned however, that just as Jesus Christ, was scorned, misunderstood, persecuted, and eventually murdered for His extreme love goodness, compassion, humility, wisdom and grace, it is not uncommon for Revolutionaries to meet with rejection—verbal, intellectual, relational, or experiential—simply because of their determination to honour the God they love.

I pray that perhaps you, too, have the makings of a spiritual Revolutionary—and the desire to participate in the moment of profound change.

George Barna – Revolution, 2005

DO YOU HEAR THE CALL?

By Steven McDonald

In the fall of 2005 I was asked to write a song for "The Micah Challenge". Like many, I had never heard of "The Micah Challenge" and not being a songwriter of renown I was initially surprised to be asked. That surprise turned into humility as I was told by Marg Pollon what it was "The Micah Challenge" was endeavoring to do and that the its foundation was the Micah 6:8 verse.

As I began the journey of writing the song, I read and re-read the "Micah Challenge" tool kit and the book of Micah so that I could better understand what was needed to be said. Almost immediately I realized I could not just write the song. Those issues that I had supported financially over the years and for which I had compassion were collectively in front of me. More importantly was the realization that God was not "asking us to "act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God"; He was requiring it of us. This was not a "life choice" I could make; it was something I must do.

As a Christian I must take my cue from the Bible. To do otherwise is to believe that I know how to fix the problem. Well in spades we have collectively shown that we can't and that the system is broken. "The Micah Challenge" at its most basic level is saying we must get back to our foundation.... The Word of God. We can then apply what it is He asks throughout the world.

In the year 2000 all nations signed onto the Millennium Development Goals, a grand and noble gesture which will be meaningless unless the light continues to shine on every nation. "The Micah Challenge has taken up that "challenge" and seeks support of Christians to Sign the Micah Call and support its actions.

"What will it take for you to hear the call?" www.micahchallenge.ca



BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – February 2006

“IN ALL THINGS, LOVE.” Nothing could be more Biblical! St. Augustine

God has been teaching me through building ‘Bridges of Love’ lessons that I know, could not have been learned otherwise. I am so very thankful that I have had the honour of serving Him through this journey. Please let me share some concepts that I have learned over the past two years.

- ♥ The ‘Mark’ of a Christian is **LOVE**.
- ♥ **Proclamation & Demonstration** are both needed to communicate the Gospel in its fullness.
- ♥ Without the supernatural **love of God**, all other loves will be distorted.
- ♥ Love is a ‘**choice**’ and an ‘**action**’.
- ♥ The **church** reflects God’s love and fullness when its members intentionally touch others with the love of God.
- ♥ We need to **care** for the things that would be on Jesus’ heart.
- ♥ There are four characteristics that we – the church – need if we are going to be effectively used for His Service: **humility, love, works of service and unity**.
- ♥ A **servant heart** is necessary to model the life of Jesus Christ.
- ♥ A love that is real, genuine, motivated and born out of a **relationship with God**...can change the world.
- ♥ Without God we can only love with a **selfish love**—one that cannot be given if it is not received and returned.
- ♥ **Unconditional love** gives others the right to hurt us – we must give it anyway.
- ♥ The **knowledge** of God’s Word without love is a destructive force because it puffs us up with pride and legalism.
- ♥ **Sacrificial love** is the way that the full character of God is expressed in the world today.
- ♥ **You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.**

‘Bridges of Love’ is a concept that describes how to bridge the gap between the church and the community to meet people in a real way where they are. God brought to my ministry two very important bridges and open doors of opportunity to build those loving relationships with our neighbours.

The MICAH CHALLENGE

Last week in Mississauga I attended a meeting for the Micah Challenge. In attendance were many denominations and mission agencies. It was indeed an honour to witness a unity of spirit as we focused on God’s Agenda for reaching those in this world who are suffering.

God said He is pleased by service to the poor and oppressed. Isaiah 58:6-7. The Micah Challenge is a ‘**CALL**’ to all Christians. A call to **act justly**, to **love kindness**, and to **walk humbly** with our Lord. Micah 6:8. This is what God requires of us.

A CHURCH PREPARED

With the Avian Flu becoming more wide spread, a pandemic is a very real possibility. Is the local church ready to reach out with a loving hand to care for others? The ‘WHO’ has stated that a pandemic is not a matter of ‘if’ but ‘when’ - will it hit.

Can you imagine the ‘**light**’ that would shine from God’s House if Christians reached out to their neighbours in such an emergency?

Dr. Tim Foggin from Burnaby has invited me to assist him and others in mobilizing churches to be prepared. We have developed a **Preparedness Guide** which gives medical resources as well as a Biblical Foundation for why a church response.

Please visit our web site for Pastor’s. Sign-on and familiarize yourself with the material that is available. We welcome and appreciate your feed-back for a church perspective. Thank you

http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/church_emergency_preparedness

The MICAH Call

This is a moment in history of unique potential, when the stated intentions of world leaders echo something of the mind of the Biblical prophets and the teachings of Jesus concerning the poor, and when we have the means to dramatically reduce poverty.

We commit ourselves, as followers of Jesus, to work together for the holistic transformation of our communities, to pursue justice, be passionate about kindness and to walk humbly with God.

We call on international and national decision-makers of both rich and poor nations, to fulfil their public promise to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and so halve absolute global poverty by 2015.

We call on Christians everywhere to be agents of hope for and with the poor, and to work with others to hold our national leaders and global leaders accountable in securing a more just and merciful world.

Please sign the ‘**CALL**’

www.micahchallenge.ca

...and have a voice for those who have none.



BUILDING BRIDGES OF LOVE

Love is Action... January, 2006

Right worship or just relationships? Which is it? Wrong or Lost??

John Fischer, Senior Writer for Purpose Driven Life Daily Devotionals says that the world is not wrong as much as it is lost, and **'lost'** is the operative word.

It has been very important to Christian circles that the world is wrong. As a result, a good deal of effort has been put into trying to fight the wrong in order to overcome it and make right prevail. This has been unfortunate in some ways for our mission in the world, which is to spread the good news of Christ's forgiveness to all because of the cross, and invite people to become followers of Christ. As a result, a confusing mixed-message has gone out. Something like: We love you and want to let you know that Christ died for your sins; ...we really don't like you unless you see things the way we do.

When someone is wrong, the others' job is to set that person right. This attitude creates a very conditional relationship and one in which the person who is 'right' is always better. In contrast, when someone is lost, the other's job is to find that person, and someone coming to ones rescue is a much more welcome sight than someone coming as a judge.

Jim Henderson takes this concept and unwraps it in his new book, a.k.a. 'Lost'. He says that connecting with the people Jesus misses most—those formerly known as 'lost'—is really not complicated. Ordinary Christians who want to connect with the people Jesus misses most need a map. We can see the destination; we just don't know how to get there. Getting there is simply a matter of living a little more intentionally. It involves being yourself and focusing on others. It's based on everyday things

Asking questions, listening, giving away your attention, and praying behind people's backs are things that anyone can do. Each of these perfectly sane activities helps communicate the gospel.

Finding the people Jesus misses most isn't about boldness; it's about **LOVE**. When Jesus was asked what must be done to inherit eternal life, he affirmed what he called the greatest commandment: *"Love the Lord your God with All your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and love your neighbour as yourself". (Luke 10:27).*

This is one commandment, not two. It is a commandment about our relationships—our relationship with God and with each other. It is a commandment not just about whom we must worship but also about whom we must love. It is a commandment not just about what we must believe but also about **what we must do**.

Dr. Bryant Myers says that loving God and loving our neighbour are two sides of the same gospel coin. They are inseparable, seamlessly related. When we attempt to do one and fail at the other, we fall into error. When we worship God and fail to love our neighbour, our worship becomes empty. At the end of the day, how we treat the poor & others is a measure of whom we truly worship.

Is the evidence of true worship just social behaviour?

When we pay attention to people, we nudge them toward Jesus. It becomes the connecting bridge between them and God.

A Gift of Love??

An elderly man lay dying in his bed.

In death's agony, he suddenly smelled the aroma of his favourite chocolate chip cookies wafting up the stairs. He gathered his remaining strength, and lifted himself from the bed.

Leaning against the wall, he slowly made his way out of the bedroom, and with even greater effort forced himself down the stairs, gripping the railing with both hands.

With laboured breath, he leaned against the door frame, gazing into the kitchen. Were it not for death's agony, he would have thought himself already in heaven. There, spread out upon newspapers on the kitchen table was literally hundreds of his favourite chocolate chip cookies.

Was it heaven? Or was it one final act of heroic love from his devoted wife, seeing to it that he left this world a happy man?

Mustering one great final effort, he threw himself toward the table, landing on his knees in a crumpled posture. His parched lips parted; the wondrous taste of the cookie was already in his mouth; seemingly bringing him back to life. The aged and withered hand shakily made its way to a cookie at the edge of the table, when it was suddenly smacked with a spatula by his wife.....

"Stay out of those," she said, "they're for the funeral!!!"

Love talked about can be easily turned aside, but love demonstrated is irresistible. ..Stanley Mooneyham