

District Finances

While we all still all struggle with the Covid restrictions, God does not miss a beat in Kingdom building.

We may be surprised by what God has done to reshape and renew his churches once we get to the other side of this pandemic. God has certainly been faithful with our finances in the district.

As of the end of February we had income of \$46,091, which is just slightly behind budget, and

expenses of \$45,314, giving us a surplus of \$777. The balance in the APD general fund at the end of February was \$15,638. The All Nations church in Wembley is doing very well, with year to date (end of February) revenue of \$58,181 and expenses of \$40,473, giving them a surplus of \$17,708 (the total accumulated surplus for Wembley is \$61,175).

Thank you for continuing to support the district finances.

Submitted by
Bob Gordon, Treasurer

Coming Up

EFCC Conference/Theology Conference

May 13-14: Michael Wittmer will be speaking on "Shadows of Tomorrow" Topics include: creation, fall and the restoration of all things, heaven, hell, dealing with death and grief. Registration details coming to your church.

May 15th: EFCC 2021 Annual General Meeting via Zoom. Agenda items include new restructuring and Constitution. Check with your pastor about registering as a delegate.

Pastors and Wives Retreat

Our annual Pastors and Wives retreat was scheduled for May 30-June 1st of this year. However, in consultation with Camp Nakamun, we felt it unlikely that we would be able to have a meaningful retreat under the present restrictions. Therefore we have postponed our retreat to October 3-5th. Hopefully by then restrictions are lifted and we will all be ready to spend some R&R time with each other. Mark it on your calendars!

APD Annual Conference

The conference will be held at Camp Nakamun this year, November 5-6th.

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Watch for updates on the District's Facebook page at
www.facebook.com/@apdofecc

CONNECTIONS

Alberta Parkland District of the Evangelical Free Church of Canada

Spring
2021

Ramblings with the Superintendent

*And the grace of the Lord
Jesus Christ be with your spirit.
Philippians 4:23*

When Covid-19 first hit us thirteen months ago, the dominant emotion for many people seemed to be fear. Fear of the unknown, of a virus not yet understood, of financial stresses, of life adjustments.

When life returned somewhat to normal the summer of 2020, we were hopeful that we had ridden out the worst of the viral storm. And then the second lockdown shut out our kids at Christmas, dampened all Christmas festivities, and relegated church life to television participation.

That second shutdown seemed to illicit a change of emotion from fear to anger. Why had this not been beaten? Why another round of restrictions? Some chose to act out their anger in defiance.

And now we are into a third round, and I hear a lot of despair. All the vaccinations haven't promised us liberty from face masks. We are back to lineups at grocery outlets and backyard connections with friends and family for a social life of any kind.

These days I hear a lot about fatigue. Covid fatigue! We are all

getting tired and the stresses of living "on edge" has depleted our reservoir of hope.

Counsellors and doctors told me when I went through burnout twenty years ago, that our serotonin (our happy brain chemical) gets depleted about six months after a stressful event. We are built to weather a storm, but not to endure in it long term. Something usually gives under the long-term pressure.

Lately I have sensed some of that in myself, and I hear it in our pastors. They are worn out. At 15% capacity, services are multiplied to still minister to a whole congregation. Every task takes longer when you have to get it ready for virtual transmission as well.

Those, like myself, who are tech illiterate are frustrated navigating Zoom, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Facebook Live. We sometimes get stumped by what a 5-year-old already knows how to navigate.

Life itself just takes longer. The in and out for a license renewal now necessitates lineups for up to an hour, or figuring out the latest app to do it online.

My dentist wants a form filled out on the phone before I come in, but it is sent while I am travelling to my appointment. But, I am not supposed to text and drive!

Oh well, we have all lived it for a year plus now. People get snarky and snappy, and our patience ran out at the last store. We have no more left for this one! And it spills over into church life, as well.

Maskers and anti-maskers are impatient with each other, or downright hostile! Pastors are weary of trying to navigate a middle ground, which usually means you lose people at both extremes.

Paul, at the end of Philippians, says "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." We are so used to giving out

grace to others, just like old grandparents are used to handing out candy to kids.

Sometimes we forget to give grace to ourselves. Jesus isn't expecting more from us than we can handle. He doesn't demand that long lineups or technical glitches mean you have to add another two hours to your present 24 each day.

Let's cut each other some slack, give room for each other's opinions, be patient with fewer or slower results. The Lord's grace is not just for others – it is also for ourselves.

Don Harder



superintendent search and succession with the goal of a new superintendent in place for January 2022.

We love our district and it is an honour to serve you, but part of that involves knowing when to prepare for the next person in this role.

I will remain on for the balance of this year, and if needed, any transition time that needs to be covered until my successor is in place.

Pray with our district search committee as they lead in this process, and pray for us as we know we still have energies to give somewhere to God's people.

Don

Notice of Transition

In early January, after spending the Christmas season in solitude and reflection, I came to the realization that though I had two more years in my present term, the promised re-opening and uptake that we hope to see in 2022 would best benefit a new superintendent. I have been hobbled in my travel and ministry by the shutdowns, but 2022 promises a post-vaccination rebuild.

As I thought about it, it made sense to me as I prayed about it that my successor would be the best beneficiary of that gathering momentum. In light of that, I have informed our APD board that they should begin a

In Search of a Superintendent

Our superintendent, Don Harder, is planning to retire at the end of this year. Don will certainly be missed and we are very thankful for the time we have had, working together with him in ministry.

The APD Board has appointed a search committee that began the process about February 1st. We have surveyed our Pastors and Board Chairs to get their input on this. Thank you to all who participated. If you have any

suggestions or comments, I would certainly welcome them. Please email them to me at dr@crcrents.com.

Our timeline for this process:

- May 1 - advertise hire package
- June - review potential resumes
- August - select and prepare for approval by annual conference
- October - submit Candidate for district conference approval.

Please pray with us, as we need God's guidance in this process.

Blessings, Darryl Rachar, APD Board Chair

Womens Ministry

My prayer is that this spring brings you precious moments of peace in the presence of God.

With current health guidelines for Camps, the Ladies' Retreat for 2021 has been cancelled. We are waiting to confirm dates for 2022, and look forward to what God has in store for us when we can connect in person again.

With that, please pray for the ladies across our district; each one

is journeying through this challenging time in her own way, Some are struggling with the day-to-day, while others grapple with the bigger picture. Ask the Lord to give you courage to reach out to whomever He puts on your heart. Send a text or email, call or video chat, to encourage someone in their walk with Him.

Blessings, Jennifer Bergen APD Women's Ministry Representative

Knox and the Mustard Seed

Knox Church was approached recently by The Mustard Seed organization about the possibility of making our gym, kitchen and Sunday School facilities available for a 24/7 shelter for those currently experiencing homelessness.

We were pleased to offer our facility, so, after a number of

renovations and preparations, the shelter began operating at the beginning of April, with properly distanced cubicles provided for up to 33 residents.

The Mustard Seed staff has been extraordinarily easy to work with and we at Knox look forward to serving in whatever manner the Covid restrictions will allow to minister to our new church guests.