

ahead



NEW WAYS OF SEEING

Mark Anderson of Marineview Chapel, Vancouver gives us some insight into what he and his partners are learning in their current attempt to openly engage their community and be part of the expansion of the kingdom. We're particularly interested in Mark's thinking about paying attention to the openness of their new friends. More from Mark at mpcj@telus.net

The Pastoral Staff of Marineview Chapel in Vancouver is undertaking a new VMC-co-sponsored initiative called "Church Out There" to explore the possibility of establishing genuine faith communities "out there" among people who are currently very far from Christian faith and even further from church.

The idea is to understand the core essence of what a "church" needs to be and then push the limits on finding new forms which this essence can take—forms which are not just accessible, but even attractive to our postmodern, pluralistic, professional, proud, but very lonely friends.

To do this, we are setting aside time to intentionally invest in genuine relationships with friends, neighbours, co-workers, servers in coffee shops, other soccer Moms, etc. with whom we share a common interest or natural affinity—we're making time to spend with people we like! Of course, we have an agenda, but we keep it in the background, trusting that as we stay authentic as a spirit-filled believer in the relationship, that the faith which is an integral part of our lives will form an integral part of the friendship.

We pray for God to open our eyes to what is going on in the lives of our new friends. We pray that circumstances will arise which allow us to naturally demonstrate the difference our faith makes to us. We pray for patience

See Seeing on page 6

One Church - Two Locations



"It seems like a dream still... The evening of September 10, 2005, we dedicated our new 17,000 square foot facility in Ilderton, Ontario. Our one church in two locations has sacrificially given \$1.4 million to have a home base for ministry in this growing suburban community just north of London ON. We continue to be reminded, as new people come out, that this is God's dream and we're caught up in it big time. With him all things are possible."

Those are Scott Dakin's (seen here) words about Community Bible Church's new building (aerial view below) and its dedication day (parking lot scene above), and things in general. We're glad to celebrate with these friends of ours. And we're doubly excited, because it looks like it really made a difference to plant this church in a non-traditional way, i.e. a sub/sister congregation – what Community calls "one church in two locations". It's not



often that a new congregation has a brand new building after just five years – but this is more possible when you are part of something bigger. We see other non-traditional approaches from Toronto China Bible Church (in the facilities of Don Valley Bible Chapel); with *church without borders* (Vancouver) and *LifeSpring Christian Fellowship* (Waterloo ON) in linked house church models; and in conversations with a number of other groups across Canada. Have a look at Gord Martin's article on page 2 for some of our developing thoughts.



Marineview Chapel Staff: John Lum (left) and Petra and Mark Anderson.



General Directions

Jay Gurnett
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Vision Ministries Canada has just sent out (or is in the process of sending out) some more final words from the first **Thinking Shrewdly** event held last May. "More final words" of course, because we're never done talking!

A good part of the dialogue back then was about whether in fact there is a network of churches connected to VMC, but even more about what to call it, how it works, what benefits there are to being in this relationship.

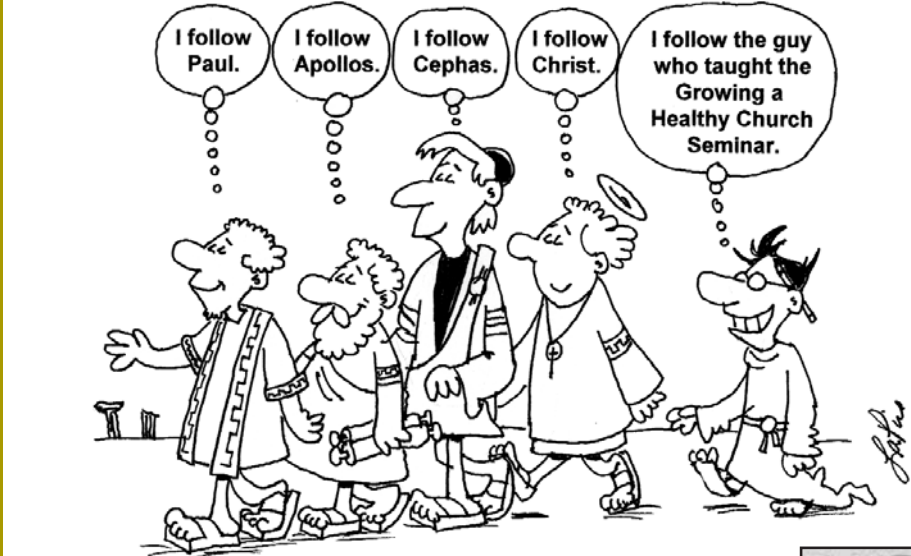
100+ participants representing about 2/3 of the churches we know and work with, told us that they value what we do (that was a side benefit to us guys who would probably do it anyway); and they said that they want to recognize that they are associated, or more formally choose to associate with us.

Well back then, and still today, we believe that can happen in one of three ways (we talked about four ways, but combined two into one). We understand churches to be part of our network if they:

1. Participate in an annual national spring conference, provincial seminars and regional Vision Leadership Networks **and/or**
2. Financially support the operating costs of VMC **and/or**
3. Complete and return a signed copy of an Agreement of Association or a letter affirming association, to our offices. (We're sending copies of these agreements to anyone we think might be interested - be in touch if you'd like one.)

Of course we intend to continue serving even those who aren't part of "the network." And we've defined the network loosely enough that the people who have been "acting network-like" would have to choose pretty definitely to get outside the net. They'd have to stop coming to events, learning from great seminars, enjoying free lunches.

But we didn't just loosely define things. We also chose (on the advice of our friends) to create a kind of Formal Association - that's described in point #3 above. It's still a relatively post-modern association, "clusters of churches," network vs hierarchical model. It includes these words: *the congregations and ministries of the VMC Church Network are not controlled by VMC in any way; neither is VMC controlled by its member churches. This relationship is voluntary and continues as long as it is mutually beneficial ...* and others like them. But it is nevertheless, formal



2nd Thoughts

Gord Martin

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THE MISSION OF VMC

When this ministry began in 1992 the missional focus was on church planting. It still is but the church landscape is somewhat different now than then.

Definitions of church keep on changing. We still have new independent church plants emerging but we are also seeing existing churches adopting new methods of extending their borders. We now hear of *one church with two or three or four congregations*, we hear of *multi-site churches, satellite churches, simulcast churches, electronic blog churches, networks of house churches* and the list goes on.

So...what is a church?

The New Testament commonly uses the term broadly as the community of Christ followers in a city or region. It further speaks of apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, elders, deacons and leaders within and among those communities of believers. And it speaks of the apostolic teaching and conduct appropriate for the churches in I Corinthians 4:17. It also urges unity and dignified resolution of conflict among the members of churches in I Corinthians 16:4. The Scriptures urge both freedom and order in gatherings of the church. The New Testament Scriptures have more to say, but it is clear that the genius of the Christian church is that it possesses a remarkable fluidity and is adaptable enough to flourish in a wide range of circumstances.

Church Planting Canada uses the following definition: *"a church is a Christian community with recognized leadership, meeting regularly for public worship and holding the intention of permanence and multiplication."*

This is a definition that includes the adaptability factor but also possesses elements of order and direction.

So, is a church that has one leadership group, one budget, one pastoral staff but

three congregations - one church or three churches? Is a network of fifteen house churches as valuable or more valuable than one large congregation? Is a large congregation with two or three services more or less influential than three modest sized churches?

Churches that add services or congregations or create sub-communities of believers are doing something that is very much like church planting. There are pros and cons to each of these approaches, but all are extending the kingdom and only time will tell how effective each of these approaches to ministry will be. The good thing is that by all means the good news and the discipling influence of the Gospel continue to spread everywhere.

Blending streams of influence?

Is there a way to blend the stream of planting new independent churches with the stream of enlarging congregations, and the stream of churches that are launching double congregations, multi site churches, simulcast churches and networks of house churches?

In early September eight of us from across Canada met to discuss that question. Could we develop a single missional focus on extending the kingdom of God in Canada by all such means?

Part of the difficulty is that leaders representing these different approaches are asking different questions and naturally relate to those that are seeking answers to common concerns. The ministries they are engaged in are quite different in terms of style and day to day functions. Yet, they have a common zeal for God, for extending the kingdom and for people who desperately need the new life that Jesus brings along with the sustaining ministries the people of God require throughout life.

raising a banner of diversity in church extension

We are adjusting

It is our desire as a ministry to serve the leaders of the VMC church network well, recognizing that growth and fruitfulness flow from the living hand of God and ultimately occur within his timing and sovereignty.

Currently we have more new church plants emerging than we have had for some time. But they are diverse. Some are beginning independently – from scratch. Some are emerging as communities of believers that are deliberately attached to an existing congregation and they anticipate continuing in that manner. Others are developing simulcast ministries, going to double services and expanding their facilities. Our intent is to view all of this activity as valid church multiplication. Any kind of church extension is as valuable as traditional church planting.

Therefore we are committing ourselves to raising a banner of diversity in church extension, planting, and multiplication. We want to raise it high: identifying, encouraging and stimulating all such activity wherever we find it! We will continue to bring people together who are wrestling with common concerns so that together they can find the direction and support they need.

Followers from page 2

association and we're glad of it. Like most organizations that grew from Plymouth Brethren roots, we've always been quite confident that we had a mission from God (say it like Dan Aykroyd would). But like groups that came before us (missions groups, bible schools, Interest Ministries, Stewards Canada), we "served our way to the table" with local churches and the people who were part of them. We don't think that that is how work or leadership amongst churches is supposed to happen. It looks like it was more intentional than that in the New Testament.

But could intentional association end up looking like the cartoon at the top of page 2? Well of course it could. But it shouldn't.

In mid-October, I had the chance to have lunch with Christian Schwarz who developed the program he calls Natural Church Development. Just a dozen of us there, learning from a fellow who has done an excellent job of what he considers to be recognizing the truth, not inventing a new system to measure church health (though he did put the system together). He was also a good presenter, a nice person; and an expensive training kit and lunch were free.

So is VMC following Christian Schwarz or NCD? We're certainly still making his materials available and coaching people through the system. Got a note from Norm Grube – a key NCD Canada person – after our last issue of this newsletter (that included a little push of NCD). Norm's words: *Great article Jay! In that short blurb, the keys were all articulated well. Impressive!*

But even those nice words don't make me a follower of Schulz. I'm glad to be in his network, exactly as I intend, but I'm not a "follower." We're pretty sure VMC doesn't have any followers either.

But boy do we love having an affirming, cooperating, getting-some-things done, network.

GOD PROVIDES

This is the corner of *thinking ahead* where we keep our interested friends up to date about our financial needs. We always have needs of course, and realize that we almost have a "biblical obligation" to talk about them. Just preached 2 Corinthians 9 on Sunday and saw Paul's straight-to-the-issue words; and I remember that Jesus spoke about money 15% of the time (more than his teaching on heaven and hell combined).



John Riley

However, we never stop remembering that God has this all in hand. The most recent example for VMC is John Riley ending up on our doorstep. Over the years, John has been associated with churches we know well, and these days he's part of Lincoln Road Chapel in Waterloo. Gord Martin worked with him on the board of Oasis Outreach Ministries in Kitchener ON. He was the Vice President, Sales Force Support when he retired from Mutual Life/Clarica (now Sun Life) in 2001.

Not too long ago, he had dinner with Dave and Gladys McClurkin. Then he got talking to Gord Martin, just as VMC was talking about the need we have to have someone spending more time thinking about our income. John was interested in doing this. We loved it when he said "When I realized what you people are doing, with just starting in 1992, I was amazed"; and "Giving to the Lord's work is a part of worship."

The end result of our talks: we're quite confident that God has provided John Riley to us, to help find funds for next steps in church multiplication, internships, network building. Keep your eyes open for his initiatives, and treat him nicely if he comes calling, please.



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SHREWD THINKER

months). For example Leadership D-Days are just 6 hours and 59 minutes long, attract people within driving distance, and anyone with leadership involvement or potential is invited along.

Thinking Shrewdly (make that **Thinking Shrewdly II**) on the other hand, invites just 2 or 3 people (the pastor and a key elder) from every church we know across Canada, to come together for nearly two full days (May 4-6, 2006) in Waterloo ON. But those are just the surface differences.

Thinking Shrewdly II is also a consultation for Vision Ministries – a chance to get good advice and promote what we believe in, from/to the churches we see as our partners. So we hope to inspire and hear some shrewd thinking.

To help make sure this happens, we “salt the plate,” by presenting some of the best thinkers we know. We’re doing that in style in 2006, by bringing Peter Roebbelen from Chartwell Baptist Church in Oakville to talk about “Growing without Building,” which will include some of his experience of that multiple-congregation church.

We’re also very pleased to have as our keynote presenter, shrewd thinker John Stackhouse. John is an award-winning historian,

Thinking Shrewdly is different from VMC’s Leadership Development Days (page six talks about two that are coming in the next few

philosopher, theologian, journalist, and teacher who specializes in explaining clearly what is happening at the intersection of contemporary religion and society. He has studied the North American church for more than twenty-five years, and currently serves as Professor of Theology and Culture at Regent College. We think this eminently qualifies him to speak to TSII’s theme: How do God and Church fit in Canadian Society? (*more about this next issue*).

Stackhouse was raised in the Christian Brethren in Ontario and is currently a member of Tenth Avenue Alliance Church in Vancouver. Three of his books relate particularly to the work of local churches: *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*; *Church: An Insider’s Look at How We Do It*; and *Humble Apologetics: Defending the Faith Today*.

For more information on John, visit www.JohnStackhouse.com; or find a number of his articles on the Internet, especially through christianity.ca and christianitytoday.com.

Shrewd Thinker at Thinking Shrewdly II. Don’t miss it.



John G. Stackhouse, Jr.



The second annual spring barbecue sponsored by the Mandarin Fellowship at Lincoln Road Chapel in Waterloo ON, happened in the big back yard (and the home) of Joshua and Felicia Tjong on June 4, 2005. Gord Martin was there, along with about 250 Mandarin speakers – many who are Chinese scholars from University of Waterloo. The event was twice as big as the one the year before, scheduled one week after a trip by 104 people to Niagara Falls. After the bbq, Lee Zhonglun (a good friend of the fellowship) gave a low-key, biblically based and evangelistically focused talk, particularly geared for Chinese intellectuals.

Nuke Shim of Lincoln Road says that almost as exciting to this growing fellowship is the emergence of a number of Mandarin-speaking leaders. That makes this even more obviously one more example of God forcefully advancing the spread of his kingdom in Canada.





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Steps of Obedience

Lifegate Bible Church, Windsor, ON

There are wonderfully encouraging words in Brian Doerksen's beautiful song "Lead Us Lord". It's an invitation to God: to bring us fruitfulness, to prepare our hearts to risk and to take simple steps of obedience as we stand at life's crossroads. This is the very outcry of Colin Heaton and the Christians at Lifegate Bible Church in Windsor, Ontario.

The last time we talked about Lifegate in this newsletter was 21 months ago. The small church had formed the previous year and landed in an old Coca Cola bottling plant. In that article the church requested prayer for their pastoral search process. Meanwhile, the Lord miraculously was timing a burning in the hearts of the Heaton clan.

Colin Heaton grew up attending Erindale Bible Chapel in Mississauga, where he learned about ministry, taking tiny steps of obedience serving as a youth sponsor and in other ministries. Over the years Colin had a desire to move into ministry but the right opportunity never presented itself. In 1996 the Heaton family moved to Forestview Church in Burlington, which unknown to them was moving them one step closer towards the call into ministry. Here Colin saw new ministry opportunities that stretched his faith even further. The desire to serve full time in ministry was as strong as ever but God still had not clearly shown Colin a direction. He always felt that the local church was God's primary place for outreach and ministry. Finally in 2003 after many years of having an unfulfilled desire, it looked as though God was going to open the door.

That year Colin shared his burden with Paul Fletcher. That led to taking a giant step of obedience by joining the VMC Internship Program in 2004. After 20+ years as a salesman, Colin would now share the Gospel. For 10 months, the family participated in the program, receiving intensive ministry training at Cambridge Community Church. During that time they became aware of the opening at Lifegate.

As the Heaton's hearts were heating up, things were stirring at Lifegate. But Colin postponed accepting the pastoral posting until he could finish some real training. Finally, Colin and Ruth, his wife of 24 years, and daughter Samantha (17) moved to Windsor. Their older son, Curtis has remained in Cambridge.

So the obedience steps continue! This Windsor church of over 100 recently affirmed a motto: "a friendly place to meet God". This fall, a daring expression of that focus came through their "adopt-a-BLOCK" campaign in which members committed to pray for residential blocks around the church and then proceeded to hand out 2700 invitations to Sunday service. Already they have seen many visitors come as a direct result of their prayers and pamphlets. The next step is to transition from adopt-a-block to invite-a-FRIEND.

Lifegate truly wishes to be an evangelistic tool for the kingdom, growing and reaching into their urban community. In all of this, they wish to be characterized as: authentic, welcoming, casual, relevant, and with straight talk on God. Can they do it? Not on their own strength. But when activity is derived from honest steps of obedience to the Master, then we might dare to claim the promise: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

That Doerksen song (at the top of this article) is alternatively titled "Dream Again". Why not let the forward movement of the Heaton's and of Lord's people in Windsor inspire you to dream again about where God has planted you.



Here are the Heaton's last Christmas, when Colin was still involved in the VMC Internship Program.

Curtis and Samantha are shown with parents Colin and Ruth

PRAYING for church plants

New churches need people praying for them. So we print and re-print this list of the groups we know best and have had some hand in getting off the ground, so that none of us will forget them. We expect more new local churches on this list soon, so as you can see by the change in type size below, we're raising the profile of fellowships begun in the last five years. Those first five years can be particularly challenging. But don't stop praying for, caring for, supporting the established groups on the first half of the list. Some of our favourite people in Canada.

- 1992** 1. Cambridge Community Church, Cambridge, ON
Rob & Helen Heintz, Dave & Gladys McClurkin
- 1994/1998** 2. Elim Bible Fellowship, Arkona, ON
Dave & Sandie Daley
- 1996** 3. New Hope Community Church, Waterloo, ON
Steve & Deb Tulloch
- 1997** 4. The Cornerstone Community Church, Barrie, ON
5. The Bridge, Bancroft, ON - John & Flo Coles
6. Quinte Bible Chapel, Belleville, ON
- 1998** 7. Bethany Gospel Chapel, Regina, SK (replant)
- 1999** 8. Brant Community Church, Brantford, ON
Andy & Theresa Flatt
9. Strome Community Church, Strome, AB
Brian & Pat McGaffigan
10. Orillia Community Church, Orillia, ON
Lawson & Karen Murray
- 2000** 11. Grace Multicultural Community Church,
Edmonton, AB - Dawit & Seble Isaac
12. Cornerstone Church, Eiderslie, PEI
Rusty & Vanessa Fulp
13. Community Bible Church Ilderton, Ilderton, ON
Scott & Esther Dakin
14. Central Community Church, Kitchener, ON
Dave & Mary Patterson
- 2002** 15. Bow Waters Community Church,
Calgary, AB (replant) -
Doug & Kari Siewert
16. Heavenly Light, Toronto, ON
Yonatan & Bethlehem Hiruy
- 2003** 17. Lifegate Bible Church, Windsor, ON
Colin & Ruth Heaton
- 2003** 18. Southview Christian Fellowship,
Edmonton, AB - Stan & Becky King
19. Elnora Bible Centre, Elnora, AB
Dave & Ruby Broadhead
- 2004** 20. Toronto China Bible Church
(in North York), Toronto, ON -
Ming Peng Gong & Tian Mei Wang
21. LifeSpring Christian Fellowship,
Waterloo, ON - Bruce Mills
22. church without borders, Vancouver, BC
Dan & Sharon Williams

and genuine love to keep us in the relationship for the long haul (measured in years) whether we are seeing "spiritual progress" or not. Biblically speaking, building and extending the Kingdom of God is God's work. Our role is to enter and receive the Kingdom, so we focus on keeping our faith healthy, vibrant, and integrated with every aspect of our lives ... trusting God to touch others with it. The early results are encouraging: people do respond to us by opening up their lives when we make it clear that we're committed to the friendship ... whether they come to our next outreach event or not.

In the meantime, we're paying attention to three forms of openness in their lives: **openness to us socially** (how interested or committed are they to us as a friend); **openness to spirituality** (allowing something bigger than them and beyond their control play a meaningful part in their lives); and **openness to a spiritual community** (allowing their time, priorities, and even beliefs to be shaped by a group of friends in a community submitted to biblical truth).

Patently building on the friendship to increase openness in the last two areas is the skill we are developing.

The main opposition we face is overbusyness (both theirs and ours!) along with a reluctance to sacrifice any kind of personal autonomy. So we are trying to share how commitment to a faith community not only overcomes loneliness, but also leads to a greater sense of personal freedom and fulfillment.

We find ourselves stretched to the limits as we are plunged into situations and social contexts we never imagined ourselves in. We're working hard to see the good and truth and beauty in new ideas. And in the midst of seeing others in new ways, we're seeing ourselves in new ways: more capable of being used by God to bring light and hope to people and much more deeply involved in the unfolding of His kingdom around us than we ever imagined.

He is real. As we reach out in friendship to others, all He is asking is that we be real, too.



Vision Ministries Canada Leadership Development Days

November 26, 2005

9 am - 3:59 pm
Oakridge Bible Chapel
2250 8th Line, Oakville ON

KEN TAYLOR

Community Fellowship Church
Waterloo ON

and Special Guest:

BRUCE CLEMENGER

Evangelical Fellowship of Canada



COMMUNICATION: Key to Church Life

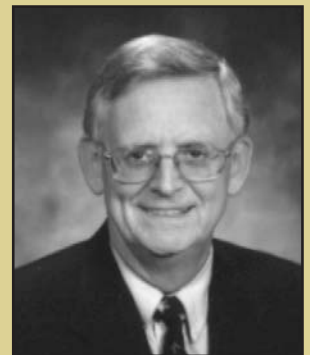
- Communicate! Communicate! Communicate!
- Communicating that Builds a Healthy Church
- Responding to what is happening in Ottawa (Bruce Clemenger)
- Church Strategies for Effectively Communicating with Seekers

February 25, 2006

9 am-3:59 pm
Lambrick Park Church
1780 Feltham Road, Victoria BC

ROY MATHESON

Chartwell Baptist Church
Oakville ON



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THE PASTOR'S SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Recently I've noticed more and more pastoral staffpersons who served their congregations for years, but who have been released from their ministry for one reason or another. There are others whose positions are in jeopardy. And they aren't bad people. Most often they are or were good at what they were doing. They loved God and they loved God's people.

But this has happened too often and too regularly for me to think that it's a coincidence. I can't believe so many churches just made bad choices when picking a pastor. So here are some of my thoughts about this situation, addressed primarily to church settings with a single pastor, but reflecting principles that should apply in other settings as well.

So what's the problem? Why is pastoral work such a high-risk occupation? I think there are a number of reasons.

First, there is the **chasm between being a leader and being a shepherd**. This might be called "the Paul and Barnabas syndrome". Paul was gifted in leadership; Barnabas was gifted to care for people. He was the "Son of Consolation," the encourager.

A great insight into the difference between these two men of God is in their dissention over the role of John Mark in Acts 15. Paul, the leader, was focused on **the mission**; Barnabas, the epitome of pastoral care, was caring for **the person**.

Few people can handle both these foci equally well. Many are gifted by God in one or the other — but not both. But it is assumed that because "he is the pastor," he is therefore the visionary leader of the church. However when people are engaging a pastor they are often drawn to a person who has shepherding skills and as a result, the process or selection committee might not even consider the importance of the gift of leadership.

People who are leaders in their own right may find a "shepherd" pastor woefully lacking and might even choose to mobilize a campaign to remove him from his position. The reverse can also happen. People who have a pastor's heart will notice if a "leader" pastor is deficient in terms of pastoral care. It's a sad day when a campaign like that happens. Sometimes the church never gets over it.

Second, there is the problem of **engaging a "doer" and not a "mobilizer of people."** A Leadership Team may think that because a person has a heart for people and loves to minister that he will be effective in mobilizing others to provide the care the church so deeply needs. But the skills of mobilizing are different than the skills of doing. It does not always follow that a person who loves to pastor people is also able to get others to do the same.

Businesses often make the same mistake. If a person has mastered the art of selling, has developed the skill of presenting the product, has sharpened his sense of timing and knows the

most effective way to close a sale, he or she is often promoted to sales manager, where motivating other people to sell is the focus. But not everyone who has learned skills can also transfer them.

Third, is the matter of **expectations**. It is not uncommon for a church, a pastor or both to enter into a ministry arrangement without clearly expressing and documenting their ministry expectations. What the church wanted to get is not what they got. That fact will become obvious over time. Because their expectations were not met, a chasm can gradually develop between the Pastor and the Elders or Leadership Team (or between the Pastor and members of the congregation.)

Fourth, there is sometimes a **difference between the "real need"** of the church and the "felt need" of the church. For example, the Elders Group may feel that what the church really needs is a visionary leader and they engage a pastor accordingly. They are likely right, at least partly. However the congregation's "felt need" may be for pastoral care or help in healing from a rough spot in the church's life. Often a pastor who is a strong leader cannot provide this pastoral care himself. The elders need to move quickly to fill this void or the pastor will encounter increasing resistance.

Is there a solution to these kinds of problems? Can they be anticipated and addressed for maximum benefit to the local church and to avoid negative fallout and loss for the kingdom? Here are some suggestions:

1. Accept the fact that a pastor may not have all the gifts that you hoped he would have. A wise pastor will be honest with himself and with the Leadership Team about the areas where he is not gifted or less fruitful in ministry.
2. Through one of the various analysis processes available, identify the gifts that a pastor has and where he excels. Give him freedom to operate in those areas without feeling guilty about the areas where he is not gifted.
3. Determine who in the congregation could supplement the weaker areas which are not part of his gift mix. Those who work in this important ministry of supporting the pastor should be secure, humble, and not competitive, particularly not competing to have the pastor's influence.

Generally there are three main functions related to the pastor's role that influence a church's effectiveness.

- Effective preaching
- Pastoral care
- Visionary leadership

Usually, if a pastor is gifted in two out of these three areas, the church can find the resources to augment his ministry in the third area. If he is only strong in one of the three, it will be more difficult for him to function effectively.

For example, if a pastor clearly has the gifts of preaching and visionary leadership but is not so gifted in pastoral care, then that important ministry deficiency will have to be addressed. Others on the Leadership Team or within the congregation will have to fill the key pastoral care role, with the end result being an even more effective pastor.

Pastors who are strong in pastoral care, but less effective preachers will probably still need to preach periodically in order to provide pastoral care for the people in a public way.

If the pastor does not have the gift of leadership and someone else provides this important gift for the church, that person will attract influence simply because he is a leader. He should consciously work at making the pastor succeed and in developing a fully functional partnership.

4. Pastors of course, also have to practise Christian humility and make sure their partners are recognized for the contribution they make. It's important to build a team where people feel "We are in this together and we need each other."
5. If finances are available, a local church should consider adding to the pastoral staff a retired person gifted in areas that the pastor is not. He or she could serve on a full or part time basis. Most often retired people have no axe to grind, they no longer have to prove themselves and they make ideal candidates to support and supplement a pastor's ministry.

At the end of the day, we all desire to see pastors and churches standing together, each supported by the other, recognizing that they are partners in the great task of the Great Commission.

Don't forget

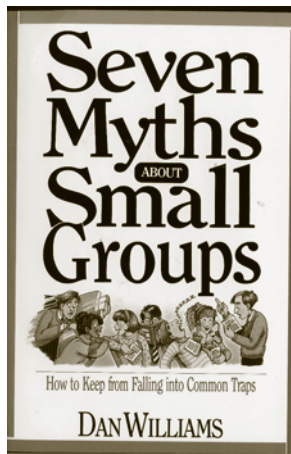


More than 30 friends of VMC are in Toronto, November 16-18, 2005 at the 5th biennial Church Planting Canada National Congress.

Please pray for an extra measure of God's blessing at this event (and for the church plants and potential church plants we represent).

Seven for Ten

Not only is it one of the best books about small groups that you can buy, now you can buy it for just ten dollars. Dan Williams (VMC church planter at *church without borders* in the lower mainland of British Columbia) has copies of his *Seven Myths about Small Groups* available for just \$10 (tax and shipping included). The book is also available for \$17 on the open market, but feel free to buy directly from Dan at danwilliams@telus.net This is a wise little book from someone who understands small/life groups as well as house churches.



February 25, 2006. Difficult subject, this “Supernatural Side of Ministry” – but vital for contemporary churches. More info on page 6.

Position: Challenge, Inspire, Mentor

Richvale Bible Chapel in Richmond Hill ON is seeking a full-time youth pastor to teach, challenge, inspire and mentor the youth of their Church, and to reach out to the larger community to win others for Christ.

Richvale is an evangelical community oriented church, with Brethren roots, in a northern suburb of Toronto. Sunday morning attendance is approximately 80-90 adults, 15 children and 30 youth. A larger number of youth regularly attend weekly youth activities.

Richvale wants a godly, dynamic individual with a passion for youth and previous youth ministry experience, with excellent interpersonal, teaching and counselling skills, with a focus on building relationships with youth, etc. Interested individuals should contact:

Youth Pastor Search Committee

Richvale Bible Chapel

24 Oak Avenue, Richmond Hill ON., L4C 6R7

Tel: 905-889-7073, Fax: 905-889-7387 or pchew@richvale.ca

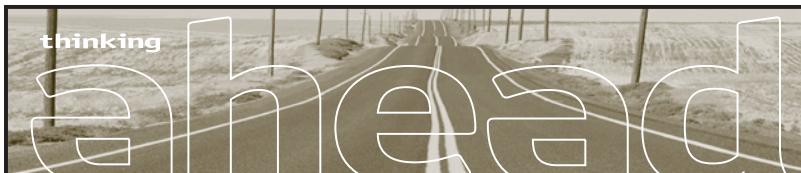
Don't forget Matheson

We sometimes get so focused on the latest version of Leadership Development Days, that we forget how much value there is in some that have visited 3 or 4 locations around the country. Lower mainland and Vancouver Island residents couldn't attend a much better Lead D-Day than the one that will be presented by Roy Matheson in Victoria on

100th Anniversary



Strome Community Church has just been around for about six years, but the Village of Strome, like it's provincial home Alberta, celebrated it's 100th Anniversary this year. No surprise to regular readers of *thinking ahead* that the 100th Anniversary church service (and probably some of the other events) were organized by SCC Pastor and Caleb Ministries/VMC church planter, Brian McGaffigan. Other SCC founders Pat McGaffigan and Ole and Marge Johnson were also very involved. And the church building was crammed full for the Sunday service.



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