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LevelGround

Mennonite Church

2011 Annual Reports

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Moderators Report

Ben Falk & Gerry Binnema

Lead Team

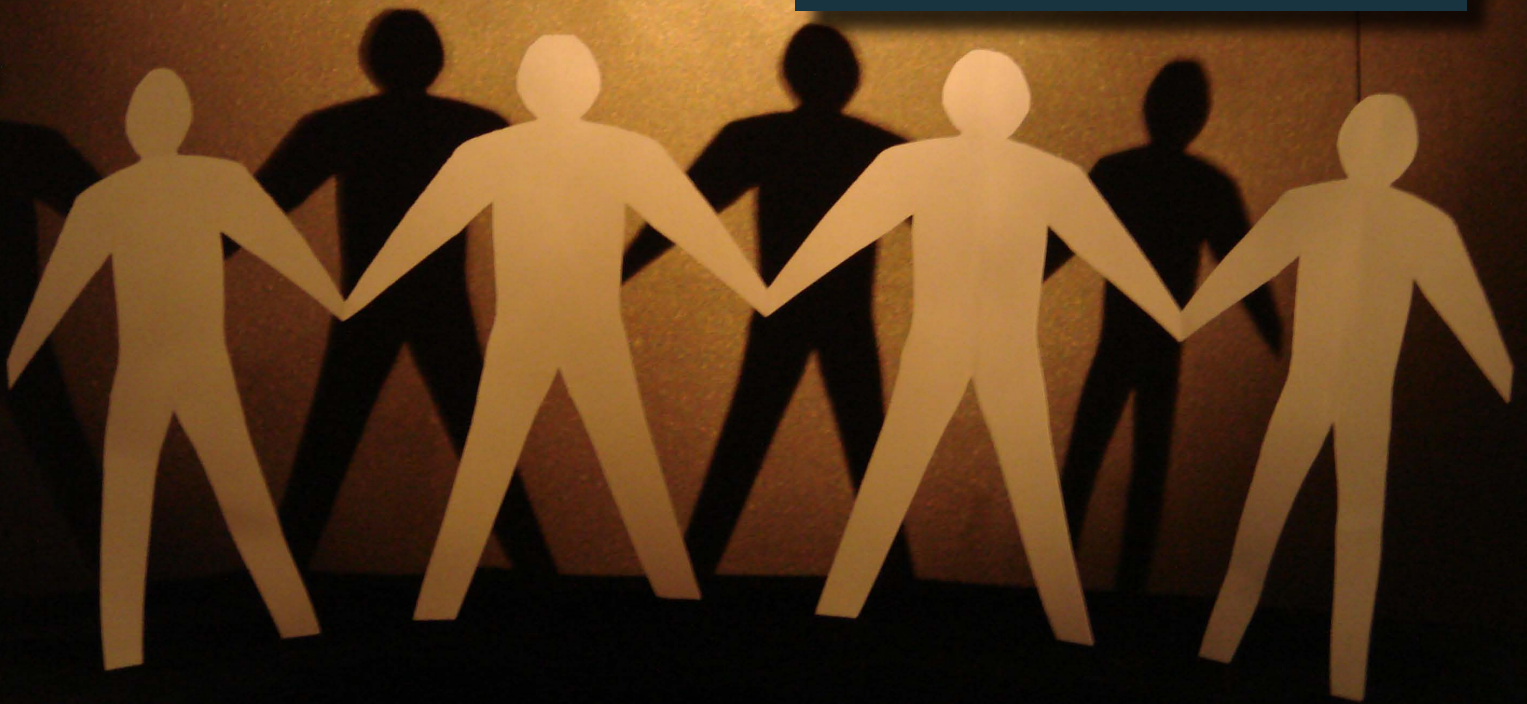
James 2:14 - 17

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

If you think about the “Purpose Statement” and “Vision Statement” we as a Church have adopted it is easy to see that we have challenged ourselves with a huge ministry.

While Level Ground has had its set of challenges this past year, we have seen the Lord at work in our Church. It is amazing to be part of a Church that offers so many ministries that reach out in our local community. Many of us have heard it said by visitors coming that they can see the good work our church does in helping hurting people.

Moderator's Report



A challenge for many of us is to set our goals as high as our staff and many of the volunteers that work in the various ministries in our Church. The enthusiasm, caring and loving attributes each of the staff daily express only give Glory to God as He is able to accomplish His work through these people's lives and the work they do.

One highlight for us as a Lead Team was how God showed His faithfulness through the expression of His people as we found ourselves in a financial crisis. When we as a Lead Team presented the financial crisis to the congregation of Level Ground we presented options that we thought needed to be presented to the congregation to help the financial situation. The congregation responded in a way that we can only say is an answer to prayer and God showing us all that He will provide our needs if we ask.

Another highlight for the Lead Team has been how individuals will step forward and fill gaps in our ministries. It continues to amaze us how people who once were hurting find time to give back to God their time in helping God's ministry fulfilled.

Moderator's Report



We now look on into next year with anticipation and excitement to see how God will use our Church this coming year. Our prayer is that we will all continue to seek out God's will for our Church and never lose sight of our purpose and vision of this Church.

James 2:14 states, to have faith without deeds is really is a faith that has no value. If we say we have faith we need to follow through with action. We believe our Church does just that and we give God the Glory for the things He has done through the many volunteers and staff at Level Ground.

Gerry Binnema and Ben Falk, co-moderators

Registrar's Report

Rita Ewert

A Look at the Numbers

192 Members as of April 28, 2010 | **196** as of May 27, 2011

4 Births - Lyla Rose Woodman, Mariah Kadance Prince-Robbins, Brooke Ann-Marie Martins, Lucas Coleman

5 Baptisms - Shawn Feldman, Kendra Giesbrecht, Shawna Lakey, Cam Bruce and Sasha Goulet

8 Membership Transferred In - Sheryl & Travers Whelan, Kerry & Ken Polkey, Hanna & John Neudorf, Helena Unruh, Elaine Binnema

2 Members Transferred Out / Withdraw -John O'Carroll, Wade Weatherbee

7 Deaths - Anna Hampel, Katharina (Kay) Rempel, Susie Harder, Evelyn Zacharias, Elaine Wills, John Peters, Helen Vogt. (**3 Non-Members**) Gary Trepke, Annie Peters, Howard Hildebrand)

Constitution Committee

Richard Thiessen

The Fine Print

The constitution committee met several times this year.

On March 21, 2010, the congregation voted to accept by-laws 1-11. These by-laws focus on membership, membership meetings, the lead team, pastoral staff, and zone coaches. Since then, we have worked on a number of additional by-laws, numbers 12-24, providing more specific guidelines for the lead team, zone coaches, and pastoral staff, along with by-laws dealing with signing authority, auditors, church ministries, delegates to conferences, and the amending of by-laws.

A policy for the selection of lead team members was also developed. Additional policies to be developed include those dealing with confidentiality, meeting rules of order, and the selection of zone coaches. These have been forwarded to the Lead Team for their review and will be presented to the congregation in the fall for their review and potential approval.

Richard D. Thiessen

Zone Coaches

Ron Daku

The Zone coaches Gerry Binnema, Orlando Unruh and Ron Daku meet with Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen usually once per month to keep abreast of that which is happening in the Journey Groups. In these meetings we attempt to have a finger on the pulse of the general spiritual health of, not only our Journey Groups, but, to a limited extent, of the entire congregation. Within our group there is a genuine love and concern for the spiritual well-being of the entire church. We recognize that a lot of spiritual care is happening in our church, but indeed, a primary source for caring is the Journey Groups.

At present, there are approximately 150 people participating in Journey Groups.



Journey Group Leaders

We are grateful for the leadership of each of our Journey group leaders.

Kent & Kara Bergstrom, Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen, Gerry Binnema, Mark Hildebrandt, Max Lucado, Ron Daku, Sandra Hendy, Rita Ewert, Henry Krause, Hans Federau, Shirley Martin, Yvonne Gronau / Leanne Reimer, John & Hanna Neudorf, Orlando Unruh.

Several new leaders have come forward and several new groups have formed during this past year. We expect this process to continue in order to accommodate the continual need for more Journey Groups and consequently, more leaders.

The Journey Group leaders meet with the Zone coaches at least four times per year. The coaches have recently determined that it is beneficial for each leader to have a specific Zone coach to whom they can relate for encouragement, general support, problem solving, etc.



Lead Team Nominations

Hans Federau has chosen to not continue as a Zone coach. Although we miss his wise counsel and participation, we have recognized his need to be relieved of some areas of ministry as he has requested.

As our Journey Groups continue to multiply in number we will have to find someone to serve as a Zone Coach as per our Constitution stipulation. During this year the Lead Team has given us an additional task of serving as a nominating committee to provide a slate of nominees to serve on the Lead Team. The process we are using is to make the church aware of the need for nominees through general announcements and by asking the Journey Group leaders for suggestions from within their group. The Zone coaches accept suggestions from any source and process the suitability of the candidate which we then pass on to the Lead Team. Although there is a general reluctance of our church members to serve on the Lead Team, we are grateful to those who are willing to accept the challenge. Lead Team is a vital leadership team of our church and we must all support them in our prayers.



Some Goals we have achieved

Several goals from last year's report have been achieved. These being:
More people in Journey groups through active promotion of the small group idea. (Comment: We are still a church *with* small groups and I would like us to become a church *of* small groups.)

We are grateful that new leaders have stepped forward. (Comment: compare the list with last year's report.)

Although, we do not have comprehensive training for new leaders, training, to some extent, does occur in our quarterly meetings. The training of new leaders needs to become more of a priority for us if we are to provide Level Ground with future leaders.

Journey Groups are a vital part of Level Ground Mennonite church. The Zone coaches are a listening ear and together with each Journey Group leader can indeed have a strong sense of how God is at work in our church. We sense that God is INDEED at work among us and we are thankful!

May we continue to minister through the power of the Holy Spirit, the transforming work of Jesus as He touches our lives deeply.

Submitted by Ron Daku

On behalf of Gerry Binnema and Orlando Unruh.



Children's Ministry Report

Jen St. Jean, Leanne Reimer, Yvonne Gronau and Rita Ewert.

Focus

Our Children's Ministry exists to help children learn about God in an inspiring, safe and fun environment.

Matthew 19:14

"But Jesus said, "Let the children come to Me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children."

Core Values

1. Christ Centred
2. Bible Knowledge
3. Teaching through Modelling
4. Life Changing
5. Safety: Children's church is a safe, child-centred environment.
6. Teaching is relevant and application-oriented.
7. Relationships: build relationships with other children and adults
8. Fun: Rooms are decorated and attractive to children

Nursery

Time in the nursery went well this year in large part to the wonderful volunteers we have. They work selflessly and tirelessly with your children willing to lend comfort and do whatever task is asked of them. Your children are precious to us and we thank-you for entrusting us with them. As we head into the summer months I ask that you please continue to pick up your children immediately after the service as the volunteers have their own families and events to get to. Also, we will continue to be strict about who we release your children to -- this is for their safety. We ask that you write down any and all names of the people you've given permission to pick up your child. Thank-you for your co-operation with these requests.

My hope and dream for the coming year is that your children continue to feel safe and loved during their time in the nursery and that we can implement a few structured activities for the older children in the group. Feel free to come to me with any questions or concerns.

A big thank-you to all the volunteers for your work: Yvonne Gronau, Emily Friesen, Isaac Thiessen, Shawna Lakey, Leanne Reimer, Luciana Unruh, Kylie Davies, Becky Neufeld, Ruth St. Onge, Dayna Roth, Tara Masson, Elianah St-Onge, Julianna Friesen, Victoria Toews, Lisa Unruh, Conny Delorme, and Hanna Neudorf. You are greatly appreciated and without you we wouldn't be able to have such a successful nursery experience.

Preschool Class

The Preschool Class has been going well. Our numbers have grown since September which is exciting but brings with that a few challenges.

The challenge for our class this year was that Leslie Tate has taken a sabbatical for awhile. This left us feeling uncertain as to how things would work, as Leslie was the driving force behind the organization of this class. The teachers and helpers have stepped up and the class is doing great.

A big Thank you to our teachers: Leslie Tate, Kaeli Unruh, Shauna Willems, Christy Price and Leanne Reimer. Leanne and Kaeli stepped in to teach when Leslie went on sabbatical.

Thank you to all our helpers: Sol Thiessen, Elianah St. Onge, Emily Friesen, Alan Peters and Kylie Davies.

Our classes begin in September, so if your child is three by the end of December 31 of that year, you may start your child in the Preschool class in September. We also take children in January the following year for those whose birthdates are in January or February and will be three by the end of February, you may start your child in January.

Kindergarten to Grade 2

The Kindergarten to Grade 2 class has been going very well. We have had between 12 to 15 children attending on a regular basis and they have been a joy to teach and interact with. A few times we have had as many as 19 in a class, a little crazy on those Sundays.

Thank you to our teachers: Jen & Keith St. Jean, Christine Dahl, Kalindi Coleman and Lise & Peter Buitendyk. Thank you to our helpers: Jon Giesbrecht and Jacob Lakey.

Grade 3 to Grade 5

Our numbers have grown since September with our average attendance being 12 children with as high as 16 children. Thank you to our teachers: Adrian Dueck, Robin Price, Mr. Luongo, Rita Ewert and Lise & Peter Buitendyk. Thank you to our helpers: Levi Dahl and Shawna Lakey.

July - August - Veggie Tales

Summer -- Veggie Tales -- for the months of July and August 2011

Preschool to Grade 5 classes will be combined for the summer. The older children (Grades 4 and 5) will be the teachers' helpers. If you would like to teach one Sunday during the summer, please speak to either Jen or Rita.

2011/2012 Changes

We are excited about the upcoming Fall. As our classes are growing, we have determined that we need to add a class.

Nursery: has a full slate of helpers

Preschool: still need one or two more teachers

Kindergarten and Grade 1: still need one or two more teachers

Grade 2 and Grade 3: still need one or two more teachers

Grade 4 and Grade 5: still need one or two more teachers

If you are willing to teach or help, please speak to Jen or Rita.

Special Events

This year our team decided to organize a Mexican Fiesta on May 1st. We had fun decorating and planning the areas. The games may have been aimed at elementary students but I noticed adults having fun with the games as well. We will continue to make sure that there are opportunities for families to get together and enjoy each other's company.

Building and Maintenance

Robyn Friesen

The BAM Team

This year has been uneventful as far as major projects to complete. All we have to report are the many mundane chores that come with a busy Church family (with a few surprises along the way).



- loose screws tightened
- toilets repaired (small plastic lids and pipes don't mix)
- drains cleaned (plastic stir sticks can cause problems)
- lights that don't work
- baseboard heater removed
- (excess heat melts plastic toys)
- walk-in cooler repairs
- staff Hot-Tub and Sauna prep. Install planned for summer 2012.

At the end of this year Sandra Hendy became a welcomed addition to our team. Thanks to all others who assist in many ways.

BAM Team:

Allan Dahl, Ron Daku, David Toews and Robyn Friesen, New Member: Sandra Hendy

Library Report

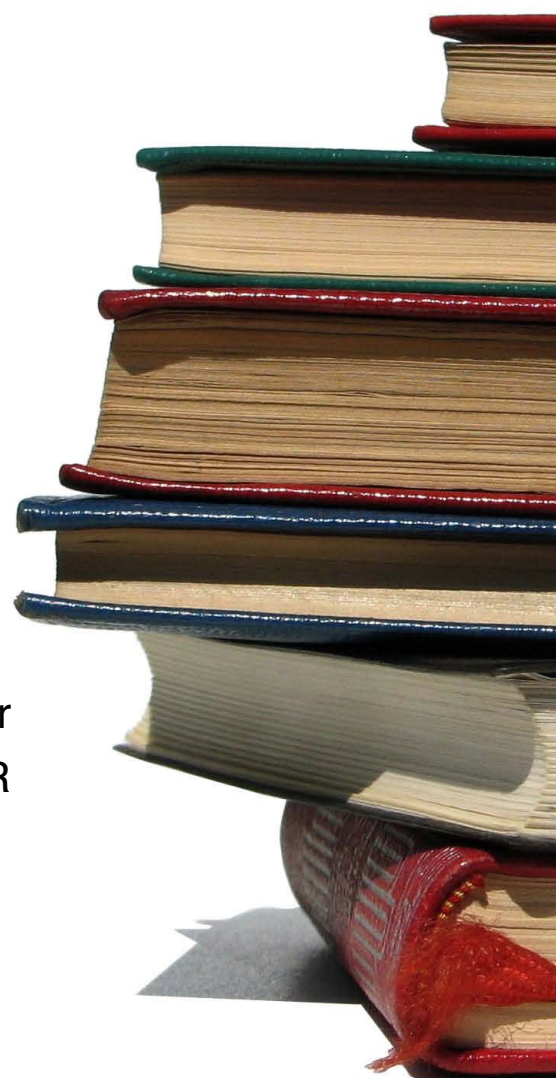
Irene Ens

Top 10 Reasons to Support Your Library

I knew that Top Ten lists were popular, but was surprised by the variety of such lists after checking Google. Consider that even God used this format when He gave Moses rules for living, in what was probably the first such list. The 10 commandments were likely not listed in reverse order. So, in true Letterman fashion, here is the first such list for Level Ground library. Note that these are not necessarily in order of importance.

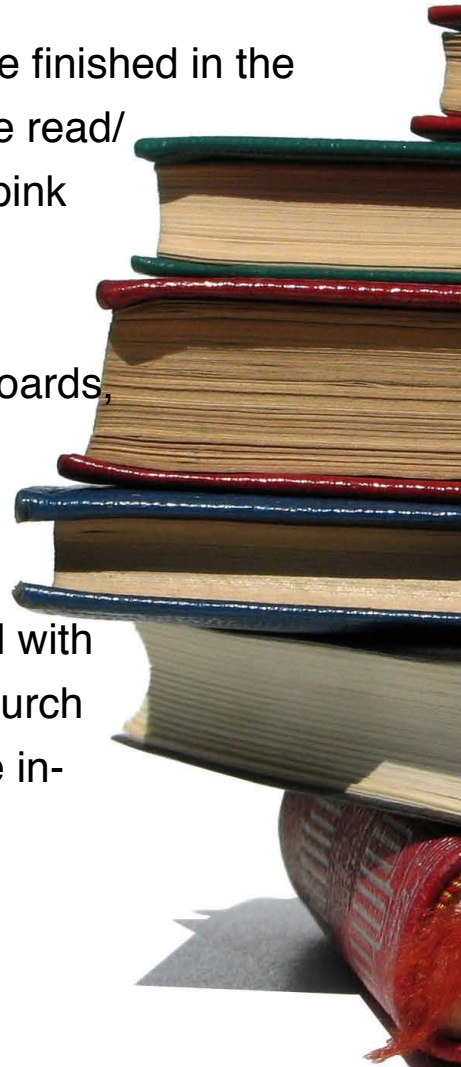
10. Our collection has been weeded in the past year and many old, unused books were recycled, given away or taken to House of James in trade for credit for new purchases. We now have 2526 books, 50 DVDs, and 89 videos on our shelves. Do you know that we have copies of The Canadian Mennonite periodical that you may borrow?

9. This is your library and you approve an annual budget of \$1000. Please make recommendations or suggestions for items you would like to see in YOUR collection.



Top 10 Reasons to Support Your Library

- 8.** When the church budget allows, I dream of barcoding the collection to make circulation and keeping track of items on loan more efficient. This will require a newer computer and a scanner. We need to decide if enough people use the library to warrant the cost.
- 7.** Donate books to our library, but be aware that we don't have space for duplicates and that outdated books take up space and are rarely borrowed. We want to keep our collection as current and user-friendly as possible.
- 6.** Return or renew a book or movie that you haven't quite finished in the 2-week loan period. A library works best when items are read/viewed, enjoyed, and then returned on time. Avoid the "pink slip" by being prompt.
- 5.** Be aware that new books are promoted via bulletin boards, in-library displays, and bulletin inserts. Please come and ask "what's new?"
- 4.** Check the book displays which are often co-ordinated with the sermon series or with important events in the church year. This provides a great opportunity to pursue a more in-depth study.

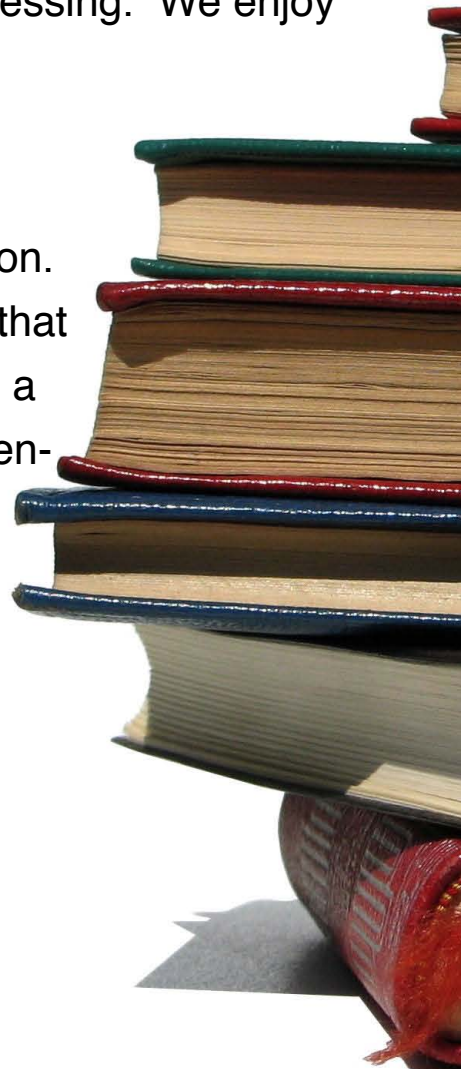


Top 10 Reasons to Support Your Library

3. Become part of the growing number of people who regularly visit the library. Parents, remind your children to explore the wonderful books and movies that can help answer their questions about God and faith. Teens, let us know what you would like to read.

2. Our library committee works diligently to keep things organized and easy-to-find. Congratulations to Carla McBride on completing the library technician program at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV). Thanks to Miranda Dahl for regularly helping with shelving and processing. We enjoy interacting with people on Sunday mornings.

1. The library provides a unique ministry to our congregation. Each Sunday someone is there to point out the resources that will answer questions, offer needed information, or provide a wholesome “good read”, hopefully with a smile and an encouraging word. Support your library.





Tippytoes Preschool

Wanda Hildebrandt

We've had a great year...

We've had a great year at preschool, I have a class of 10 for the 4 year olds and 6 in the 3/4 year old class. We've had a number of field trips ie to Willowview farms, Aldor Acres and other special days. I had 2 student teachers from University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) this year, one September to December and one January to April. They can be challenging sometimes and other times quite a blessing, I appreciate the opportunity of having them in my class.

Our registration for fall is going well. The four year old class is full with 10 children registered and only two registered so far in the Tuesday and Thursday class. If necessary, I will run an afternoon class for 4 year olds but we will wait and see what the fall brings.

Thank you to Rita Ewert who does an awesome job on the monthly newsletters and anything else I throw at her unexpectedly. A big thank you to Cliff Delorme who cleaned up our messes, we will miss him and Bella in our classroom.

My vision for Tippytoes is for it to be an outreach to community families with the help of families attending Level Ground. It would be great to have some parenting classes and other workshops for families with young children. I want this to be the church's preschool and not just the preschool in the church building.

I ask that you would pray for us daily and for the ministry at Tippytoes Preschool.

Thank you for your prayers and support,

Wanda Hildebrandt

LifeBridge Ministries Report

Keith St. Jean

LifeBridge Year Two

Another year has come and gone bringing with it both blessings and challenges. The ministry has continued to expand and make a name for itself in the recovery community and with that expansion has come a renewed sense of vision. One of those expanding visions has been the growth of the ministry to include women in recovery. We experimented with a divided men's and women's Alpha which met with mixed success. We started a co-ed 12 step group out of LGMC.

As I continue to invest in the lives of those in recovery and engage in real relationship with them it has become more and more apparent that a concerted



program that incorporates issues that affect the lives of these men and women needs to be developed and implemented. With that in mind I have begun work on the Next Steps: Understanding Series. This series presents Jesus' teaching on such topics as Anger, Relationships, Forgiveness, Integrity, and many others. I am driven by the belief that it is not their behavior or their pasts that define these men and women but rather the love that God has for them and the immense value He places on each of their lives. I look forward with great anticipation to another year of service and ministry with LifeBridge.

The Year that Was

October 2, 2010

Benefit concert featuring Calvin Dyck, Father's Daughter and Mennonite Jazz Committee held at LGMC.

Fall 2010/ Winter 2011

Ran two separate Mentor training sessions that were well attended and well received.

February-March 2011

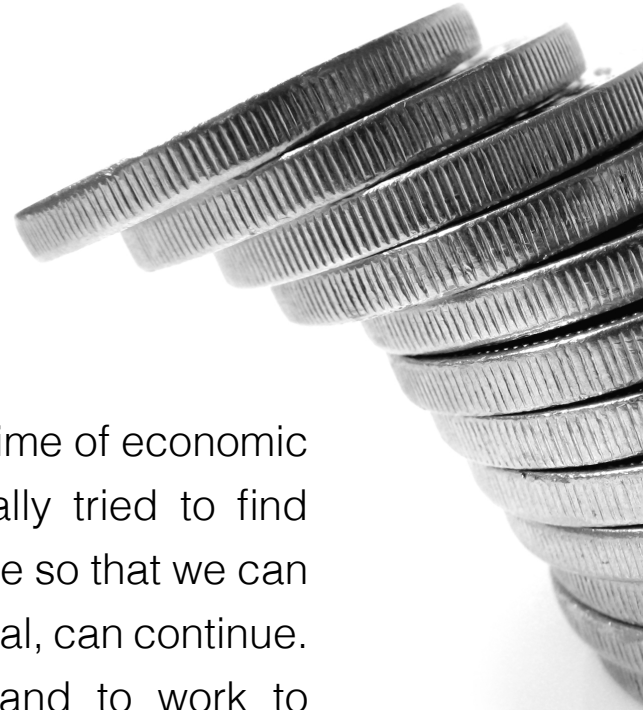
Alpha runs co-ed once more. The turnout was good and the day away was a highlight for everyone.

December 2010

Participate in the King Road MB
Christmas dinner with Cynthia and Pedro sharing their stories.
Thanks Harry for all your work on this event.

April 2011

Met with the LGMC College and Career group to talk about LifeBridge. The discussion was invigorating and challenging.



Raising Funds

One of the challenges LifeBridge faces in this time of economic uncertainty is its finances. We have continually tried to find ways to increase our exposure and our influence so that we can ensure that this ministry, that we believe to be vital, can continue. We will continue to trust God to that end and to work to create opportunities to spread the message of what we are doing.

Prayer Requests

Please continue to be in prayer for LifeBridge. Through this ministry lives are being transformed and hearts are moving in harmony with the love of God. Not only for those in recovery but in the larger church body as well.

Psalm 71:14-17

But as for me, I will always have hope;

I will praise You more and more.

My mouth will tell of Your righteousness,

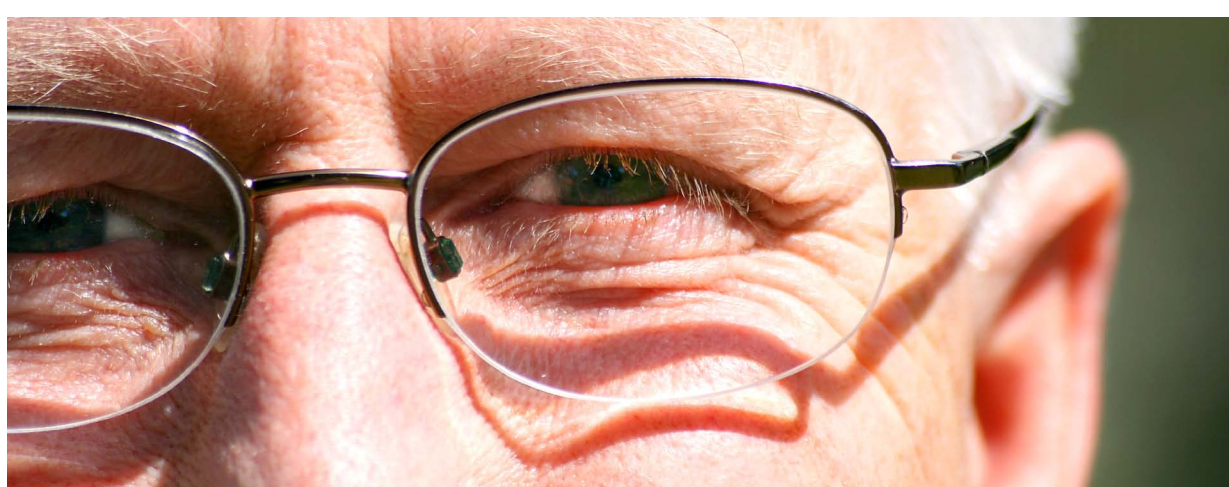
Of Your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure.

I will come and proclaim Your mighty acts, O Sovereign Lord;

I will proclaim Your righteousness, Yours alone,

Since my youth, O God, You have taught me, and to this day I declare Your marvellous deeds.

It has been a privilege for us to walk alongside the senior seniors of our congregation. We like to think of the Seniors Ministry as another “Journey Group.” Most cannot be part of journey groups that meet regularly, but we are all on our journey as followers of Jesus. Some have been on quite a long journey already.



Walking the Journey

At our visits we are enriched by their sharing of the various experiences along the journey. Quite often they tell of the Lord's marvellous deeds in their lives. In their sharing with us we hear often those expressions that the Psalmist has given us in Psalm 71 such as: ...I will Hope...I will praise the Lord....tell of Your salvation...I will proclaim Your mighty acts... Your marvellous deeds.

The following seniors have come to the end of their earthly journey this past year and have gone into glory to be with their Saviour:

Anna Hampel April 30, 2010

Katharina (Kay) Rempel November 23, 2010

Evelyn Zacharias December 8, 2010

Susie Harder December 16, 2010

Annie Peters December 17, 2010

John Peters March 25, 2011

Helen Vogt April 19, 2011



A Few Highlights

Some senior members are attending very regularly the Wednesday Morning Bible Studies. Hans is leading it but John Taves has been a great asset with his assistance in leading the Bible Study. Thank you, John.

We are grateful to God for the many volunteers who have joined us.

The Seniors Ministry Team now consists of the following members:

Trudy Defries, Hans & Alice Federau, Ken & Kerry Polkey, Pastor Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen, Helena Unruh and Sheryl Whelan. Each of us is trying to visit and keep in touch with a few of our elderly. We thank Trudy for getting the birthday cards ready for all 65+ Seniors, she is carrying on her mother's legacy.

A few highlights of the ministry were the well attended Seniors Christmas party and the after Easter Spring/Tea/Coffee hour. We thank all the volunteers for helping at these events. A special thank you to Rita Ewert for willingly helping us out on many occasions.



We hope that we the Senior Ministries Team can somehow be a blessing to our seniors.

Our hope is that before long the church will have a lift for the disabled and seniors. God only knows when and if any of us will be needing it to join the fellowship downstairs.

The Purpose of Youth

a place to encounter Jesus
a place to belong
a place to grow
a place to give
a place to reach out



What we Do

Youth Small groups & 1-on-1's

Girls & Guys groups (led by Jacquie, Laura, Robin)

Youth Events

Fun & active social events that youth are free to interact with other youth and bring friends.

Youth PAWN Nights

Pizza And Word Nights, teaching & sharing on important issues

Youth Retreats

Canim Lake, Squeah IMPACT Retreats

Youth Service/Missions/Outreach Events

Soccer camp, MCC Warehouse, Service projects

C&C / Young Adults Journey group Led by Kent & Kara Bergstrom and other student leaders)

Average Attendance

Sr. Youth: 15-20 youth attending weekly youth events and cells.

Middle school Youth: about 8-12 youth.

Young Adults (C&C): 15-20 people.

Our Team

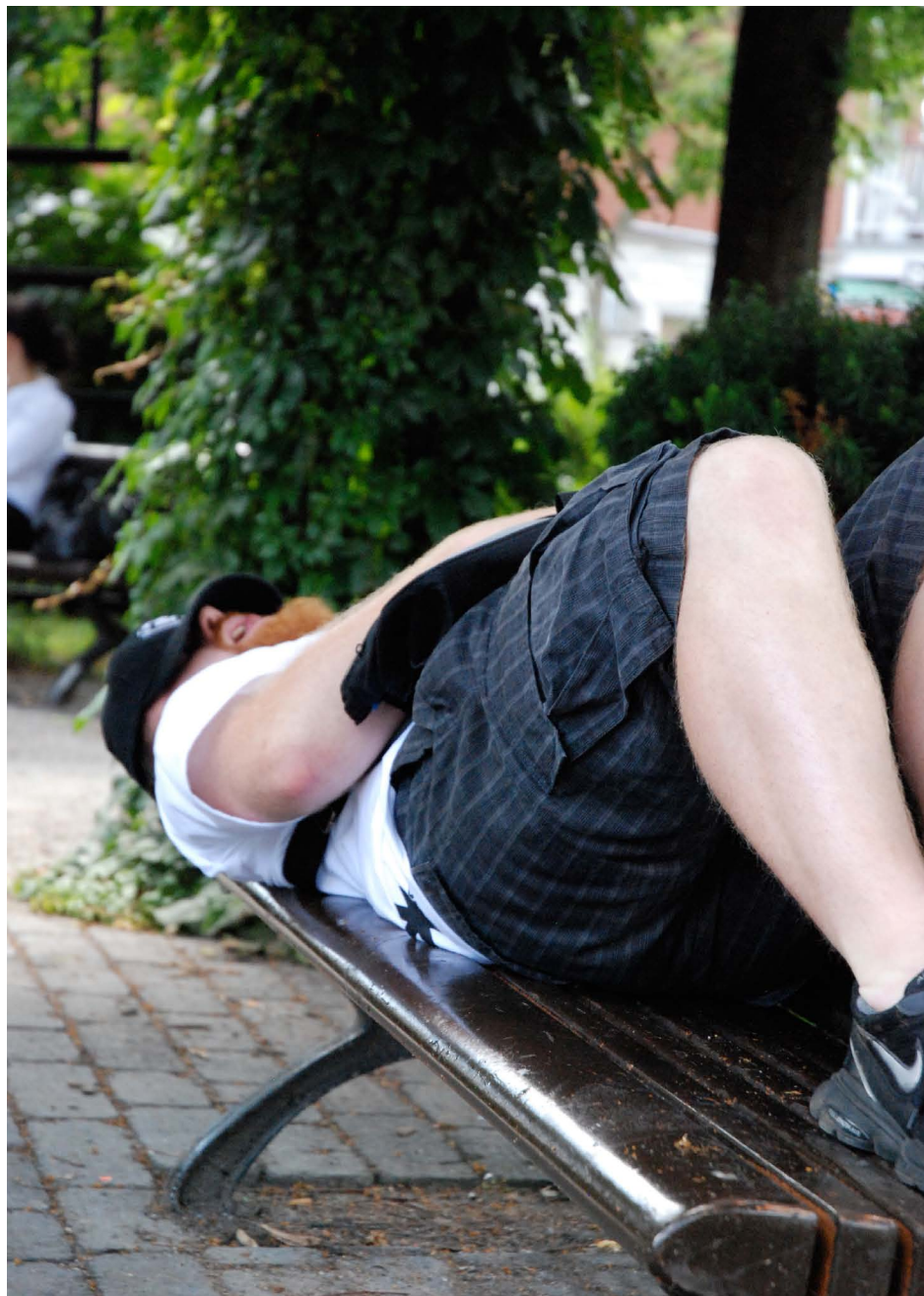
Over the past year I have had a great group of supporting youth sponsors, resource people and youth interns. Without their help, youth ministry would not continue to have breadth of influence into the lives of youth that it has today.

Huge Thank You to: Jacquie Ewert, Laura Auxier, Julie Rempel, Josiah Dahl, Mark Brauer, Alyssa Donaldson, Nick Brauer, Bob Roth, Crystal Mauthe, Samuel & Kalindi Coleman, Keith & Kristi Weir, and the many parents & families who support & resource LG Youth Ministry.



This Past Year

Here we are at the end of another year & the beginning of a new one in the journey of Level Ground Youth & Young Adults. I find each year has its own unique atmosphere. These times can be identified through events, retreats, service opportunities, life circumstances and most importantly, people & relationships. For myself personally, the year started off with some big changes. Renovating & moving into a new home with all the joys (& stresses) that come with that. Life with a little one and another little one on the way quickly becomes full of a lot of activity and new stages. We dedicated our daughter Evelyn in the spring, she continues to be a great joy in our lives. We are grateful for the many ways our family has been loved & supported by the Level Ground community.



Highlights

This year we got to celebrate the baptism of 2 of our youth last June: Shawna Lakey & Kendra Giesbrecht. The weeks leading up to baptisms are always a highlight for me as we spend time digging into God's Word and deliberately going deep with God. It is a time in which we discover who we are and who we are in the eyes of God. I myself am challenged and encouraged throughout these weeks of discipleship.

Summer ministries & cross cultural discipleship programs continue to be a valuable part of the growth & spiritual development in the lives of our youth & young adults. This past year we sent youth & young adults out to the following ministries/discipleship training programs: YWAM, TREK, Life Teams, Simonhouse Bible Camp, Camp Squeah, Camp Tulahead & High Power Soccer Camp.



Youth & Young Adults



Who Went Where?

Simonhouse crew – Summer 2010: Karola Schmidt, Josiah Dahl, Sylvia Braun, Abram Thiessen & David Fawcett

Camp Squeah - Summer 2010 - Nick Brauer, Phillip Binnema, Laura Auxier, Anthony Davies, Jon Giesbrecht & Breanna Pawelke

Camp Tulahead - Summer 2010 - Kia Krause

High Power Soccer Camp - Summer 2010 -Christine Dahl, Adrian & Patty Dueck, Shirley Martin, Keith & Jen St. Jean, Sol Thiessen, Andrew Falk, Daniel Mann, Alyssa Donaldson, Caleb Giesbrecht, Mark Brauer, Natalie Dahl, Brittany Collet, Kendra Giesbrecht, Dayna Roth, Kaitlyn Brauer, Emily Friesen, Julianna Friesen, Isaiah Schluter, Vicky Toews, Shawna Lakey, Miranda Dahl, Levi Dahl, Lise Buitendyk, Samuel & Kalindi, Crystal Mauthe, Ebenezer Youth and many other supporting cast members!

Young Adults training & serving elsewhere in 2010/11:

Jon Giesbrecht - TREK Program (Lithuania)

Caleb Giesbrecht - YWAM DTS (Australia, Papua New Guinea)

Karola Schmidt - Simonhouse Bible Camp (Northern Manitoba)

Natalie Dahl - Life Teams (Abbotsford, BC)

Laura Dueckman - SALT MCC (Indonesia, starting Fall 2011)

A few Reflections

Summer was also a time in which we paused to remember the 1 year anniversary of Paul Jaholkowski's death. His loss continues to be felt by many, yet his legacy also inspires us in our life journey with our Lord & Creator. A word that has struck me over and over in the past year is that "God - He is, He was, He forever will be." In our lives we may face many joys & victories, but there are also times where we face great fears, failures, worry and doubt. It brings a great sense of peace and soul satisfaction when I know

that God is greater. He is, He was and forever will be. To know that He is ultimately the one who can satisfy my soul, He is the recipient of all of my affections and efforts and He will decide when He will prove himself and reveal His glory. As I go through a year of ministry full of ups and downs, relational joys and hardships, this word is vital for me to remember. Instead of self-focus, self motives, self-satisfaction, self doubt, self sufficiency - there is - God, His resources, His way, His time, He IS... He is Lord.



Retreats

Late August we kicked off our new youth year with a Sr. Youth retreat up at Canim Lake. This years theme was “Life in 4D”. Sessions focused on Depth, Dealing with sin, shame & fear, Decisions and Delighting & Dreaming. The session speakers were Caleb G., Jonathan G. and myself. As always, these weekends are a big highlight with times of fun outdoors, on water, in the bush, eating food, spiritual reflection and building friendships. We also attended the annual IMPACT retreats at Camp Squeah in April (Middle School) and November (Sr. Youth). These retreats are organized and planned by MCBC youth pastors and sponsors. Both retreats are yearly highlights and great times of connecting together.

Another interesting part of the year was our first ever Polar Bear swim in early January. As most of you know, I don't like doing things half-way so I made arrangements for a literal Polar Bear swim, with the Polar bears at the Vancouver Aquarium. Most of the youth ‘chickened’ out but kudos to all five people that jumped in! The injuries and sub-sequent hospital trip was well worth it! Aren't air-Ambulances are so much fun?



Our Desire For this Youth Ministry

I remember a few years back we had a leaders meeting together in which we reflected on what our desire was for our youth and who we want to be as leaders. I believe these reflections continue to be true and continue to be part of our core values today:



As leaders...

we want to be spiritual mentors, to encourage & challenge youth, committed to youth regardless..., to be available, to point to Jesus, to be real with them (talk about real issues, ask real questions).

Our desire for the youth...

to grow with those who need to know Jesus, a place to grow spiritually, to belong, to be themselves, to be encouraged and challenged, a place to discover God-given dreams & pursue them, to reach out.

Looking Ahead

Summer ministry teams:

- Youth MDS Trip (Mennonite Disaster Service) - Flood Relief in Kingcome Inlet - July 15-22nd.
- A variety of people looking to serve at camps both in and out of province.

Goals for this next year:

- more leadership development (teaching/discipling),
- dedication to solid teaching times (for youth & young adults),
- listening/visioning/prayer with youth resource team,
- communicate prayer requests for youth ministry to prayer team.



Worship & Creative Arts Report

Dan Loewen

Cooking up a Sunday

Planning Sunday services is a lot like cooking a meal. Just as a chef would peruse a local market for the freshest and best ingredients, my job is to find illustrations, songs, movie clips, photos etc. that might enhance and add flavour to our Sunday Services. Once the 'ingredients' are collected, Karen and I carefully plan how we could include them on a given Sunday. A lot of thought is how we can maximize the impact of each Sunday's theme through video, illustrations, speaking, prayer, singing etc. Our hope is that the message will be clearly communicated and that people will be challenged & encouraged in their spiritual walk.



Photo by Scott Liddell

Sound/Media Techs and Worship Team

Joe Defries
Nick Brauer
Robin Mauthe
Daniel Gjesbrecht
Jonathan Gjesbrecht
Christa Gjesbrecht
Kendra Gjesbrecht
Dan Callaghan
Mark Hildebrandt
Richard Thiessen
Jonathan Falk
Sol Thiessen
Kara Bergstrom
Steve Pelland
Eric Gronau
Anna Suk
Jared Lakey
Abram Thiessen
Caleb Gjesbrecht
Pat Wood
Juanita Thiessen
Lynn Loewen
Gregg Lovvo
Kalindi Coleman
Jared Unruh
Leanne Reimer
Mark Brauer
Phil Binema
Trudy Defries
Cam Tate
Josiah Dahl
Amy Bergen
Charlene Neufeld
Rita Ewert
Jen St. Jean
Sandra Hendy
Donovan Taves



LGMC on the Interweb

We have invested significant time and effort into making our website current and useful for our members and those looking for information about our church. Over this last year we have added a community section which includes areas for prayer requests, classifieds and business listings. We have also increased our integration with Facebook as a way to connect and converse with those in our congregation. Our website averages 700-800 views and around 200 unique visitors per month.



What's Growing

A couple exciting things are in the works at the moment. We recently had our junior worship team ages 7-11 play lead a couple worship songs for the congregation. I'm excited to see this team develop their skills and grow.

I'm also part of a community based C & C worship night called The Well. The exciting part is that the teaching time includes discussion. It's similar in some ways to the Re:Think cafe just including worship. I'm excited to see how this ministry will grow and develop in Abbotsford.

In other exciting news, we will be putting together a professional xylophone/tambourine team which will participate in a regional tournament hosted here in the Fraser Valley. Stay tuned for Audition dates!

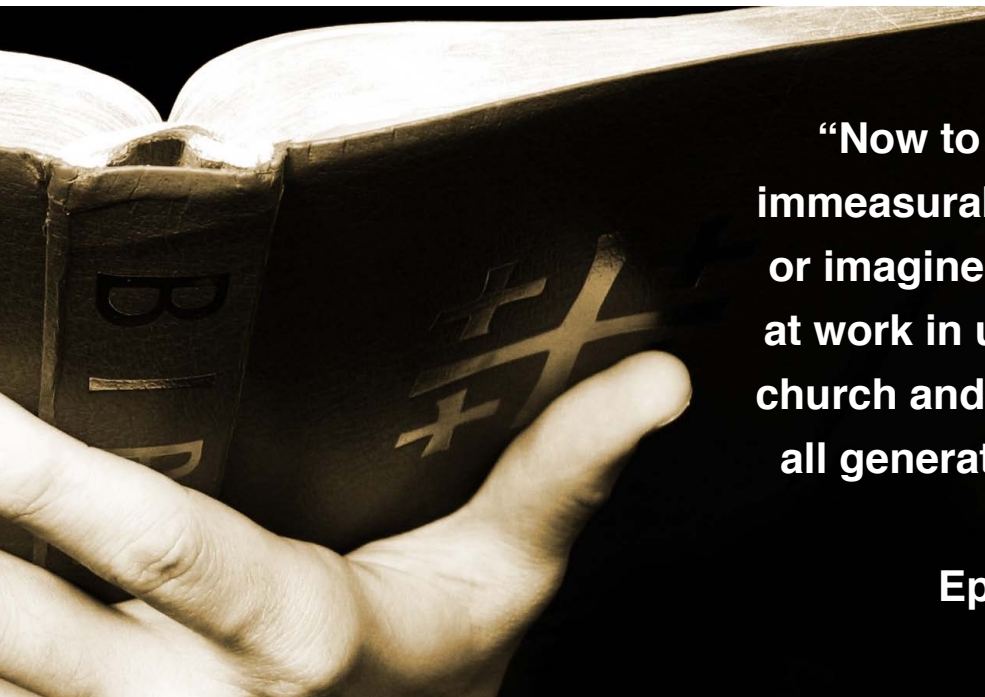


More Than You Can Imagine

It was almost three years ago (September 2008) that we began meeting as “New Church”. Some people thought the whole idea of bringing together two churches was absolutely crazy. How could you bring together two churches with such different histories? How could the distinctive personalities of two congregations blend into one? How could staff ever find a way to work together? What would happen when one group wanted to do things one way and the other group wanted to do things their way? What would happen when the traditions and values of the two churches conflicted?

How could this crazy dream ever become a reality?

Again, I return to the verses that has seen me through so many years of church ministry:



“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all you ask or imagine, according to His power at work in us, to Him be glory in the church and Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever.”


Ephesians 3:20-21

They say that change often takes three years to really take root. The first year we experience “incremental change” as we deliberately make the choice to open ourselves to shifting our patterns and modifying our behaviours. This initial phase of change requires us to consistently make conscious choices that will move us toward our long-term goal. We need to be constantly vigilant so that we don't fall back into old patterns but move forward into the new reality we are choosing.

In the second year of a change process we experience “transformational change”. The change begins to penetrate our skin and touch our soul. While we still need to be mindful that our decisions and responses are in line with the change we are moving toward, we increasingly find they come more naturally and intuitively to us. We increasingly find ourselves making decisions and modelling behaviours that are in line with our long-term goal without even thinking much about it.

It is in the third year that we experience what we call “transformational change”. That is when the change has become such a part of who we are, that we no longer have to self-consciously think about it. A new, changed identity has emerged and we almost find it hard to recall what we were like before we experienced this change. This change has become our “new normal” and we now work intuitively within a new framework.





Identity

It is as we move through this third year as Level Ground Church, that we discover ourselves moving deeper and deeper into “transformational change”. We no longer define ourselves as “Wellspring people”, “West Abbotsford people” and “new people”. We have become one church. We no longer ask “How did West Abbotsford/Wellspring do this?” because we now know how Level Ground does this. Although our values have undoubtedly been shaped by our past church experiences, they are now primarily defined by our new experience as a community at Level Ground. We no longer need to dream about what it might look like for West Abbotsford and Wellspring to become one church because we have indeed become that.

In the past three years, I have seen God work beyond my best imaginings. God really has “done immeasurably more than all we asked or imagined, according to His power at work in us.” I have had so much fun doing this journey together with you! I am also increasingly looking forward to the future because I am pretty confident that God has some new adventures in store for us. I am eager to grow together with you into the new visions and dreams that God is beginning to form among us!

Financial Report

Rod Ewert

Receipts

	2009	2010	2010	Variance	2011
	Actual	Actual	Budget	to Budget	Budget
Donations	256,748	283,770	322,088	(38,318)	310,000
Donations - Designated	7,000	6,321	0	6,321	0
MCBC Subsidies	20,300	8,250	9,000	(750)	0
LifeBridge Subsidy	0	0	0	12,000	
Rent	2,175	1,900	2,000	(100)	1,500
Preschool Fees	14,374	17,122	20,000	(2,878)	16,000
Other Income	906	1,907	1,000	907	2,000
Churches Supporting LifeBridge	0	2,615	0	2,615	0
Loan	50,000				
	351,503	321,885	354,088	(32,203)	341,500



Financial Report

Rod Ewert

Staff

	2009	2010	2010	Variance	2011
	Actual	Actual	Budget	to Budget	Budget
Payroll	237,781	249,749	258,574	8,825	255,000
Benefits	28,264	32,659	31,568	(1,091)	34,200
Staff Expenses	3,450	1,984	6,000	4,016	7,280
	269,495	284,392	296,142	11,750	296,480



Financial Report

Rod Ewert

Building & Administrative Expense

	2009	2010	2010	Variance	2011
	Actual	Actual	Budget	to Budget	Budget
Communications	3,667	3,816	3,800	(16)	3,000
Utilities	11,425	10,632	12,300	1,668	12,300
Maintenance	16,567	14,229	14,400	171	15,000
Administrative	5,081	4,162	4,000	(162)	3,500
Loan Payments	2,290	3,926	3,926	0	3,926
Roof & Furnace	24,994				
	64,024	36,765	38,426	1,661	37,726



Financial Report

Rod Ewert

Ministry Expenses

	2009	2010	2010	Variance	2011
	Actual	Actual	Budget	to Budget	Budget
Alpha	5,217	1,083	3,150	2,067	2,800
Childrens Ministries	(1,437)	76	1,500	1,424	1,000
Discipleship - Materials	(49)	215	500	285	500
First Steps/Next Steps					
- Bibles & Materials	0	3,333	500	(2,833)	0
Community	5,495	3,142	3,750	608	3,500
Global Missions -	3,173	2,894	0	(2,894)	0
Mennonite Church BC -	0	758	0	(758)	250
Hospitality -	553	391	1,000	609	1,000
Journey Groups -	178	0	500	500	500
Library	820	625	1,000	375	1,000
Media - Maintenance	545	891	1,000	109	1,000
Re:Tink café'	192	39	400	361	300
Seniors Ministry	0	71	200	129	0
Tippytoes Preschool	1,604	1,662	1,920	258	1,920
Worship	1,585	1,791	1,800	9	1,850
Youth	3,473	2,031	2,300	269	2,000
Care Fund	0	3,217	0	(3,217)	0
	21,349	22,219	19,520	(2,699)	17,620

Financial Report

Rod Ewert

Ministry Expenses

	2009	2010	2010	Variance	2011
	Actual	Actual	Budget	to Budget	Budget
Surplus/(Deficit)	(3,365)	(21,491)	(0)	(21,491)	(10,326)

Available Funds - Dec 31, 2010

General	26,594
Loan Balance	(47,614)



Financial Spreadsheet

2010 - Level Ground Financial \$						
		2009	2010	2010	Variance to	2011
	Account	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget	Budget
Receipts						
	Donations	256,748	283,770	322,088	(38,318)	310,000
	Donations - Designated	7,000	6,321	0	6,321	0
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	Loan	50,000				
		351,503	321,885	354,088	(32,203)	341,500
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	Payroll	237,781	249,749	258,574	8,825	255,000
	Benefits	28,264	32,659	31,568	(1,091)	34,200
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		269,495	284,392	296,142	11,750	296,480
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	Maintenance	16,567	14,229	14,400	171	15,000
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	Roof & Furnace	24,994				
		64,024	36,765	38,426	1,661	37,726
Ministry						
	Alpha	5,217	1,083	3,150	2,067	2,800
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		21,349	22,219	19,520	(2,699)	17,620
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	Available Funds - Dec 31, 2010					
	General			26,594		
	Loan Balance			(47,614)		