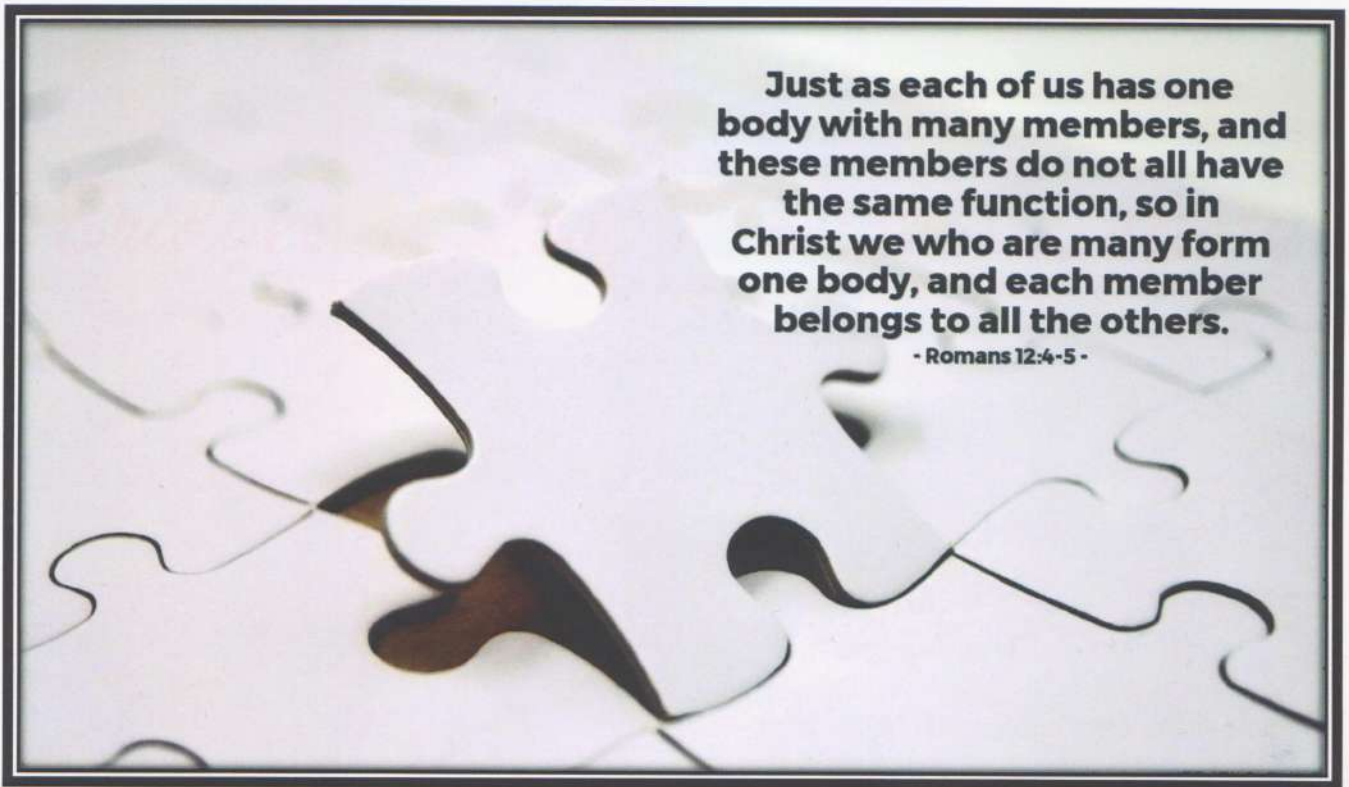


WELCOME

Bridges of Love Ministry Society

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

August 1, 2022 - July 31, 2023



*"So we who are many are one body in Christ
and individually members one of another.*

Romans 12:5

Bridges of Love Ministry Society
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
2022/2023

October 12, 2023, Noon – 2:00 pm
 Heritage Inn, 1104 – 11 Ave. SE
 High River T1V 1M4
 403.649.0087



Meeting Called	Board of Directors	Type of meeting	Annual General Meeting
Chairman	Marg Pollon	Note taker	Sandy Widmer

Board Members	Denise Hill, Tom Pollon, Marg Pollon, Sandy Widmer
Regrets	
Guests	Michael Lum, Executive Director's Associate

Agenda

Call to Order		
Opening Prayer & Devotional	Michael Lum	5
Acceptance of 2020/2021 Minutes	Marg Pollon	5
Executive Director's Report	Marg Pollon	5
IT Report	Tom Pollon	5
Treasurers Report	Marg Pollon	5
Vision Casting	Michael Lum	5
Discussion/Questions	All	5
Election of Directors	Marg Pollon	5
Close in Prayer/Grace & Adjournment	Sandy Widmer	

Additional Information - Pie at Bridges of Love's office #6, 609 Centre St. SW High River, AB

Observers:

**Bridges of Love Ministry Society
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**



**August 1, 2021 to July 31, 2022
Luncheon - Heritage Inn, High River
October 21, 2022**

Meeting called by: Board of Directors **Type of meeting:** Annual General Meeting
Chairman: Marg Pollon **Note taker:** Tom Pollon
Time: Noon

Attendees: Marg Pollon, Tom Pollon, Denise Hill
Guests: Gerrit Swanepoel, Judy McMillan, Andrew McMillan

Agenda

Opening Prayer & Devotional **Denise Hill**

Hebrews 3:1-6 Perseverance, having the confidence that Jesus will do what He says! Affirmed Marg's perseverance over the years in never giving up!

Acceptance of 2020/2021 Minutes

Discussion:

Motion: To accept minutes as recorded: Marg Pollon Seconded: Tom Pollon Carried

Chair Report

Discussion: No Chair Report

TBA

Action items:	Person responsible:	Deadline:
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Executive Director's Report **Marg Pollon**

Discussion:

Marg presented her report for the year. See attached.

Discussion:

Motion: Accept Executive Director's Report as read: Marg Pollon Seconded: Andrew McMillan Carried

Action Items. The report will be posted on the Bridges of Love web site.	Person responsible: Tom Pollon	Deadline: Immediately
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IT Report		Tom Pollon	
Discussion: Written Report			
Motion: Accept IT Report as read: Tom Pollon		Seconded: Judy McMillan -Evans	Carried
Action Items. Post AGM Reports on Website		Person responsible: Tom Pollon	Deadline: ASAP
Treasurer's Report		Marg Pollon (Acting Treasure)	
Discussion:			
Motion: Accept Treasurer's Report as read: Marg Pollon		Seconded: Denise Hill	Carried
Action items: Actively seek a Treasurer to take over duties.		Person responsible: Marg Pollon	Deadline:
Casting the Vision		Gerrit Swanepoel (Project Coordinator)	
Discussion: Thank you Gerrit for "Casting the Vision" for the upcoming year and for the revised website.			
Action items:		Person responsible:	Deadline:
Election of Directors			
Discussion: Denise Hill will remain a Board Member for another year. Thank you Denise! We will continue to seek additional members of the Board, especially a Treasurer.			
Elected Directors - Marg Pollon, Tom Pollon, Denise Hill			
Action items:		Person responsible:	Deadline:
Adjournment: 12:45 pm			
Motion: Move the meeting is adjourned: Marg Pollon		Seconded: Tom Pollon	Carried
Closing Prayer – Tom Pollon			

Executive Director's Report

October 12,

2023

Paul uses the concept of the human body to teach how Christians should live and work together. Just as the parts of the body function under the direction of the brain, so Christians are to work together under the command and authority of Jesus Christ.

**BRIDGES OF LOVE'S
ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**



BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago, Bridges of Love's Vision Statement was drafted. It read... *"To influence the Christian life to be expanded beyond self-interest to the greater concerns of the community and world around them. To embrace the Great Commandment, to 'Love our Neighbour' and to display living proof of Christ's Love through passionate acts of service. To assist Pastors personally embracing the higher goal of influence, with churches redesigning their structures, with lay people rediscovering the real Christian life. To transform the church back to a 'guiding light' of influence and love within their communities."*

We have not deviated from this vision but building a bridge of love to a community can take many forms and as with any bridge design, the architecture can be quite varied. In 2005, our vehicle for serving and connecting with the community changed from the "Micah Challenge," mobilizing churches in support of the Millennium Development Goals, to "Pandemic Emergency Preparedness" due to an invitation by a Burnaby doctor, Tim Foggin. Due to his involvement with SARS while working in Shanghai, watching the progression of the Avian Flu, and with a pandemic overdue, Tim felt the need to prepare the local church to be ready to care for the community in which they were found, should there be an Influenza Pandemic outbreak. This opportunity for the local church to reflect Christ's love, ready to care for the community, during times of disaster provided a fit with my medical background and with Bridges of Love's mandate.

Over the years we have learned that following Christ's call to mission leads to a kingdom mindset more than a church mindset which ultimately leads to strength within the body. This not only enriches lives but establishes and strengthens relationships in the neighbourhood which in turn build stronger communities. Strong communities build a more compassionate body of people who benefit from the rewards gained from fulfilling the Great Commandment. Our aim, therefore, with building Bridges of Love, has been as a link, facilitating action between concerned and compassionate believers in the local church and disaster victims in their communities through the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI).

After the 2013 Alberta Floods, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training became our second program to build resilient communities for not only church members, but for the community at large. This opportunity came through the Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA), as they offered their partners CERT training bringing the LA trainer to Calgary. After all was said and done, CEMA made the decision to develop their own training (Ready Calgary), giving Bridges of Love the go-ahead to use CERT as our community emergency training program. This came with many months of work revising the US materials and PowerPoints into Canadian content and branding. Since 2014, CERT training has become a very viable basic training tool with over 50 students graduating from the program over the following five years.

There are so many people who have played a vital role in Bridges of Love to reach this milestone. Unfortunately, we cannot thank all those who deserve our appreciation, but we would be remiss not to mention Dorothy Schumaker and St. John Lutheran Church. We know God had his hand in this union of 15 years, as who could have orchestrated Bridges of Love location, in Bridgeland!! We had our beginnings in this church and truly became a part of this congregation as we enjoyed their fellowship and events, even though our roots were not of that denomination. Due to the sale of their facility, we relocated in 2018, but St. John Lutheran Church gave us many years of office space and fellowship. Thank you, Dorothy!

After working from our home office for several years, we moved to Claresholm and then a year later to High River. In 2020, Bridges of Love's office and CERT Canadian headquarters became a reality in our present location! While COVID was creating an atmosphere of fear, we felt God was paving the way, giving a green light to step out in faith! Our hope in gaining office space was to begin the process of developing a sustainability plan for the ministry. The first step to have a place to enlarge the ministry put the plan in motion.

Having a strong financial foundation was step 2 of our sustainability plan. During the first year in our new facility, we outfitted the space to accommodate 3 workstations, tables for 14 CERT students, and a comfortable environment in which to work and grow. To grow and multiply however, it was necessary to have the finances to hire additional members of the team. 2022 brought a grant from the Alberta Civil Society Fund in support of initiatives assisting communities with COVID recovery. This funding opened the door for Bridges of Love to hire our first Staff Member. This position for Project Coordinator, was filled in October 2022. Gerrit developed our new website during his four months of employment, so we are very grateful to have this improved site completed before he moved on.

With difficulty filling the vacated position in a timely manner, we took on a summer student, TJ who was a 3rd year honours computer science UofA student who conveniently lived in High River. As a quick study, TJ took on the program

development for "Alberta Recovers" and "Crosswalk", two FEPI extensions and on-line donation management platforms which assist disaster victims in the recovery phase. With a focus on compassion, confidentiality, transparency, and community engagement, these platforms foster unity and hope during times of crisis. In the wake of numerous natural disasters that have struck Alberta in recent years; including wildfires, tomados, floods, and other unforeseen emergencies, there has been a pressing need for a comprehensive and efficient platform to manage donations in support of the affected communities. 'Alberta Recovers' addresses this critical issue by leveraging front-line technology to ensure that aid reaches those in need swiftly, effectively, and compassionately. These platforms serve as powerful tools to bring together donors, volunteers, and those in need; united in the shared mission of rebuilding lives and restoring hope.

After many months of prayer and seeking God's BEST, let us now introduce Michael Lum, our newest Staff Team Member. September 11, 2023 Michael started work as Executive Director's Associate, our answer to the last phase of our sustainability plan. As difficult as transitions tend to be, we know my work and call to building Bridges of Love is coming to a close. When the time comes to pass on the baton, want the change to be as smooth as possible. Michael is the former pastor of the High River Alliance Church so brings with him a Godly heart and desire to serve the community ~ an answer to our prayers and willingness to take us to the next level!

Our Project, "The Power of Civil Society, moving at the Speed of Trust" has ten months remaining so there is much work ahead to fulfill our funding obligations. At this time, I would like to thank former MLA, Roger Reid, Livingston McLeod, Dr. Garth Mann, my brother, CAO & President Stateman Corp, Heather Green, CERT Grad and volunteer, Judy McMillan past Board Member and CSF Evaluator, Andrew McMillan, CERT Instructor, Al Hird, retired Calgary District Chief, Cam Nikitiuk, CERT Grad, and Bob Davies, Edmonton CERT Affiliate who all wrote letters of affirmation which helped secure this funding. Another colleague and friend, Wayne Cao who is our Guest Speaker for our 20th Anniversary celebration, has also been instrumental in helping gaining credibility by writing letters of support and attending our events over the years.

If we had many hours to share all those who should be publicly recognized on this special occasion, you are certainly deserving. Please accept our heartfelt appreciation for being a cog in the wheel that has kept us in motion for the past 20 years. You have been an answer to our prayers and built trust that with God, all things are possible.

With three wonderful years in our High River office, with enough space to conduct a CERT training the next goal was to build a sustainable funding base. In 2022 we secured a Civil Society Fund grant, so the past fiscal year has indeed been one to celebrate! Now, please allow us to share some of the highlights from 2022-2023!

- **CYBER SECURITY SPECIALIST– Summer, 2022**



With aging computer equipment and communication systems, we were pleased to be included in CDI College's five-week practicum. Eduan, a Cyber Security student spent a month upgrading our computers with security as a priority. Our older computers were like new systems with everything working like a charm. We were very fortunate to have this opportunity through the College.

- **ALBERTA "CIVIL SOCIETY FUND" (CSF) GRANT – July 12, 2022**

Before year end, the first year's CSF grant was deposited in our account July 12, 2022, three months behind their schedule! A new Bank Account was set up with Servus Credit Union as the government requested the funds be kept separate from the normal day-to-day operations. The first task at hand was to hire our first staff member, with Gerrit joining as Project Coordinator in early October. Gerrit had Project Management experience and he seemed eager to begin a new chapter of his life, looking forward to the challenges and rewards.

- **NEW WEBSITE**



With computer security on our minds, one of Gerrit's first tasks was to find an affordable Domain that could host our site with SSL security. After investigation and Gerrit's recommendation, we made the decision to host our site with WIX. Gerrit transformed BofL's website into a mobile friendly site with improved capabilities. He also provided a Social Media presence and helped plan and market our first High River CERT Summit, teaching the Personal



Preparedness module. Gerrit surprised by giving his notice on February 4th so unfortunately, we were once again seeking another staff member.

- **POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

It became evident after hiring our first staff member, that a Policy and Procedure Handbook was something that should be available for clarity for office policies and procedures. This document was completed and reviewed by the Board. We felt this document would be helpful for any future staff joining Bridges of Love.

- **“Civil Society Fund” Grant Reporting**

Each six-month period, we are required to submit reports for the CSF grant. Our Evaluator, Judy McMillan-Evans a former Board Member was familiar with this requirement from other charities she was involved. At the time of hiring Gerrit, we began having weekly planning and reporting meetings. Monday morning, we set the stage for the week’s activities and then Friday morning we each reported on our achievements or lack thereof! It proved to be a great help to keep track of our progress and built a team atmosphere. This schedule has continued and the weekly reports are a great resource when it comes time for our CSF grant reporting and regular Board Meetings.

- **CERT TRAIN-THE-TRAINER**

Two training sessions were planned to give instructor training again, but unfortunately, we did not have a strong enough response in November or May to proceed. Judy McMillan-Evans was again prepared to do the training with me, so we spread the word via posters, and social media to Vulcan, High River, and Okotoks. With Gerrit being from Vulcan, we made the decision to focus on this county initially in hopes of having increased interest and attendance for our training session. Even though we did not train any new instructors, we were able to recruit excellent trainers for our first CERT event for the New Year.

- **“CROSSWALK” ~ A FEPI EXTENSION**

Crosswalk discussion started in January 2023 as we looked for ways to keep FEPI a viable program. Keeping interest and the momentum for a disaster is a challenge, so we were investigating ways to engage both church and community in an endeavor that assists during everyday challenges. The planning began and Gerrit did a great job for the Crosswalk logo. We continued to discuss this addition but didn’t do any serious work on it until the summer when we hired TJ, a 4th year honours computer science student. More to follow on that topic!



- **HIGH RIVER CERT CANADA SUMMIT, February 3, 4 & 11**



Our first High River Summit had a ‘stormy’ beginning due to a severe snowstorm that hit Calgary and threatened our region as well. Since our Key-note Speaker, Leann Hackman-Carty was coming from Calgary, she suggested we either post-poned the Friday evening or continue with a virtual presentation. Since the forecast was for continued snow over the weekend, we made the decision to postpone both the Friday evening and Saturday training and move both to the following weekend. Fortunately, all our instructors were able to comply with the changes and the event and training went ahead as planned, only a week later.

The Friday evening key-note speaker and dessert evening was held at the Highwood Golf Club with approximately 20 in attendance. Brenda Walsh, Deputy Mayor brought greetings from the town and Leann, Alberta’s CEO Economic Development gave an excellent presentation, affirming CERT as a viable program for community emergency training. The training went very well with excellent instructors, so we were pleased. The numbers were small but those who attended were engaged. Leann shared this note affirming CERT on LinkedIn.



“I enjoyed speaking in High River last night with Marg Pollon and Deputy Mayor Brenda Walsh about the importance of preparedness, response, and recovery of the latest Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training session.

Bridges of Love’s CERT training ensures a safe ‘neighbours helping neighbours’ response. It’s a practical, realistic grass-roots strategy that strengthens community safety and preparedness, through increased civic

participation. Personally, I would love to see this program expanded to many Alberta communities and beyond. To find out more about CERT training, contact Bridges of Love directly. It's not if a disaster is going to happen, it is **WHEN! Make sure you know what to do!**"

• COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

Our communication and marketing for the Summit was multi-faceted. We advertised our event on social media, 2 newspapers, (one in High River and one in Okotoks), Radio Ad (FM 99.7) for three days on the High River Sun Country station, posters and postcards were hand-delivered as well as emailed to our database contacts. I don't think we missed any means of sharing the Summit with regions surrounding High River. The people who attended the event were personally known or had connected prior to the event planning. After all the costs and hard work, it did not hit the mark, with new attendees attending. We feel making personal connections is the best method to meet people where they are.

For the Friday evening Key-note event, we targeted businesses, Economic Development in Okotoks, Chamber of Commerce and all others who were invited to the Summit. Since Leann was known in High River, we thought she would attract others who are familiar with her book and work. The event closed with 20 attending on the Friday evening, which was lower than expected but all-in-all everything went well and as planned.

Since Marketing and Communication was an area that we felt needed more support, our next staff members' description was to hire a Public Relations, Communications, and Marketing Specialist. We received some very impressive resume's that came mainly from other countries or people who were new to Canada, so we did not find the fit we were seeking.

• NEW FORMATTING



Since our website moved over to WIX, our Newsletter has been sent out via their site. This has been convenient and when someone wishes to be removed from the database, it is easy for them to navigate. The site also contains statistics which are helpful.

We continue to mail an older version hard copy to one of Bridges of Love's supporters who does not have a computer. The new format does not print out as conveniently as the older version, so we continue to document both versions each month. Newsletters back to 2004 are located on our website.

• OFFICE REORGANIZATION

Our office has been reorganized and I must say it is a great improvement! The staff member's desk has been moved to the other end of the room (under the large TV) which is a cooler spot when the sun is shining. The coffee room is now located where the desk was, next to the washroom. The two new shelving units which were purchased in the New Year were also relocated. One shelving unit has the CERT bags and the other has bins with kit equipment and training materials. We now have a much better idea



how many resources we have in stock. It will make for an easier time to fill the kits when additional ones are needed. We tried to move as many items as possible to the new shelving units that had been kept previously in our outside storage.



• SUMMER STUDENT



A 3rd year Honour Computer Science UofA student came across our path, and since we had resources from last years employee funding, we invited Timothy (TJ) Rugg to join our team. A resident of High River, TJ started work on May 1 and was hired to carry on throughout the summer months. Little did we know what a computer wiz and competent young man we had hired! TJ proved to be a great addition to our team and had the expertise & education that was needed for developing Alberta Recovers and Crosswalk online donation management platforms. The work that TJ accomplished over the four months including an Operations Manual documenting the programing will live on for years to come!

- **OUTREACH TOOL**

An outreach resource was developed as a visual to help explain Bridges of Love's programs. Our first presentation made to the Fellowship of Christian Assemblies, June 29, 2023 was due to an invitation from Pastor John Lucas. This group were holding their quarterly meeting in Innisfail. We shared our Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI) and introduced "Alberta Recovers" our online donation platform. We shared over 30 lights as an introduction to our initiatives. This resource is shared with churches when introducing Bridges of Love and programs explaining how they can be a shining light in their community.



- **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK**

This year we had two events for Emergency Preparedness Week. Bridges of Love had an Open House inviting High River residents to come see our facility and join us for coffee and a donut. The following Saturday, we were invited to participate in Okotoks Emergency Week activity which was greatly appreciated. Cam Nikituk, CERT Grad came to help so we appreciated sharing in this day with Okotoks residents.



- **HIGH RIVER SUPPORT?**

An inquiry was made to Jamie Kinghorn, Town Councillor on the status of his invitation to give a presentation to their Emergency Committee. He indicated back in January that he would ask if the committee would like us to give an update as we had presented to them three years previously. Much has changed for both the Council and our programs so felt it was a good time to reintroduce in hopes that we would be included in this years Emergency Preparedness Week event. In November, I invited the whole committee to come for lunch at our office.

On March 14, I wrote to Jamie to inquire whether we were invited to give a presentation. His reply was "No" they did not want a presentation. My reply, "Why?" He said the town does not support Bridges of Love! That day, we also heard that we did not receive the small grant from the United Way that had to be approved by the Town Councillors.

This was indeed very disappointing news and difficult to understand. Jamie said he would ask again, however, for their May meeting but again there was no response follow-up! It is impossible to build relationships of trust if they will not engage at any level, but we will continue to do what we can to build that trust whenever possible.

- **Seven County Database**

Since we now have seven counties included in our CSF focus (Lacombe, Red Deer, Mountain View, Kneehill, Wheatland, Foothills, and Vulcan County) to concentrate our efforts, we have developed databases for all the churches, CAO's, Businesses, Emergency Managers and any others who might be interested in attending our training. A letter of introduction was sent to each person and the churches were included in our monthly Newsletter send-out.

- **PRESENTATION, FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLIES, June 29, 2023**

Our last event for the fiscal year came with a presentation made to the Fellowship of Christian Assemblies, due to an invitation from Pastor John Lucas. This group were holding their quarterly meeting in Innisfail. John is a long-time friend, so we appreciated this opportunity. We shared our Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI) and introduced "Alberta Recovers" our online donation platform. We handed out over 30 pages with the light attached as an introduction to our initiatives. We stayed an extra night in Innisfail and visited six churches of various denominations in Innisfail, Didsbury, Olds, and Crossfield on the way home. Just 3 days later, a Tornado touched down, devastating homes in Mountain View, County! We hoped to have some churches sign to become FEPI members after the tornado incident.

- **ALBERTA RECOVERS NEWS RELEASE, JULY 28, 2023**

With the early wildfire season in Northern Alberta, the Red Cross offered a small grant for charities to assist with those affected. We had been discussing how we could assist, so applied for the grant with "Alberta Recovers" an innovative online donation management system designed to streamline and enhance assistance for those affected by disasters in the Alberta region, as our means of assistance. In the wake of numerous natural disasters that have struck Alberta in recent years, including wildfires, floods, and other unforeseen emergencies, there has been a pressing need for a donation management system that eliminates the need for storage space yet manages donations and volunteers in an

efficient on-line platform that matches donors with disaster victims. "Alberta Recovers" addresses this critical need by leveraging front-line technology to ensure that aid reaches those in need swiftly, effectively, and compassionately. In the past, donation management and volunteer coordination has been difficult to administer, with mounds of donations becoming as large a problem as the disaster itself! Stockpiling and the need for warehouse space can be eliminated or diminished through this forward-looking initiative!

After discussing with TJ for his timeline to develop the program, he felt the end of June would be feasible. The program was completed by the date specified, but unfortunately, after letting them know it was ready to go, we have not heard back from the Red Cross.

A Press Release announcing this new platform was sent out to media the end of July. We now need to make this opportunity known so it can be utilized after an Alberta disaster. To my knowledge there is no other organization that has such a program. We are a step ahead with this innovative platform as far as we know!

• A SUMMER TO FORGET!!



July, the last month of our Fiscal Year, ended with a very nasty case of "shingles" which put me on complete bed rest for two very painful weeks. Even though I was still weak and suffering side effects, I continued to work the remainder of the summer, as even though TJ was doing fine on his own, there was work waiting to be done and a new staff member to be hired!

SUMMARY

I am sorry to end the year on a low note, but good news did come near the end of the summer. Since our new staff member, Michael Lum is with us for our AGM, we can indeed celebrate the new fiscal year on a high note!! Even though the past year has had it ups and downs, God has been faithful bringing us through.



We look forward to renewed excitement and engagement for the remainder of 2023 and a fresh start in 2024, as we continue to build Bridges of Love to Alberta communities. Thank you for sharing as part of God's plan and His journey of LOVE!

Respectfully Submitted:

Marg Pollon, Executive Director
Bridges of Love Ministry
October 12, 2023

Bridges of Love Ministry Society AGM IT Report October 12, 2023

As Bridges of Love works to expand our base of operation to seven counties in Alberta, we have been working to upgrade and expand our technical systems. This fiscal year, we have been working to upgrade our office equipment, infrastructure and security of our computer network and hardware.



Some of the changes will be more obvious to visitors to our new secure Bridges of Love (Wix) website. As you click on the various tabs on the [Home Page](#), you will gain access to a treasure chest of resources including Information on [\(INFO\)](#) our Board Members, Team and more in the [About Us](#) section. Then the [GIVE & GET HELP](#) tab is where FEPI churches and communities can respond to specific requests for assistance from anywhere in Alberta. You will also see what is new and happening with our [FEPI](#) and [CERT](#) programs. [SHOP](#) is where you can purchase

resources and sign up for various Bridges of Love events and our CERT or rain-The-Trainer training. [CONTACT](#) gives you our phone, email address and a form to request more information. More is where you can check out our [Supportes](#), [Partners](#), Live Streams (coming soon), our [BLOG](#) and online booking (coming soon).

As always, your comments and suggestions are most welcome and appreciated.

SUMMARY

Our website has come along way over the past year thanks in part to Gerrit Swanepoel, our Project Coordinator and TJ our Computer Science summer student. Gerrit took the template Marg and I developed and created a mobile friendly site that has greater capabilities, and it is easier to navigate once familiar with the program (WIX). TJ did hundreds of hours of programming to develop the forms and capabilities for Alberta Recovers and Crosswalk.

Michael is now learning to pick up where Gerrit and TJ left off, so we can put them into action!

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Pollon
Director, IT
twpollon@bridgesoflove.net
October 12, 2023



BRIDGES OF LOVE MINISTRY'S FINANCIALS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,

July 31, 2022 – August 1, 2023

Please see Financial Reports included.

Bridges of Love's past fiscal year has come with less pressure due to the Civil Society Fund (CSF) grant we received, July 12, 2022. As mentioned previously in our ED Report, the funds were late in arriving, so we did not change our way of operating, until we knew the funds were in place. The grant came in two installments, so the second portion arrived on schedule, the end of March 2023.

Since the government requested grant recipients deposit the funds in a separate account from everyday banking, we opened two accounts at the Servus Credit Union in High River. The funds, not immediately needed, are kept in the Savings Account to collect interest, and approximately \$5000 are transferred when needed to the Community Account for immediate use. We have been very pleased with the service we receive from the Credit Union. They do not charge for e-Transfers, or they do not have a monthly Service Fee for charities.

Since we allocated funds in our CSF to have an accountant oversee our books, shortly after receiving the grant, we secured Lorac Management Inc. Carol Layll, owner has been very helpful so together we make sure everything is in order each month. Since hiring our first staff person, we also had her load the newest accounting program for QuickBooks with payroll included. I continue do what I can to save dollars, posting our transactions on QB's each month.

Each six months we are responsible to complete the CSF grant reporting. Since we had additional funding at year end, due to our staff position vacancy from February 3 to May, funds was deferred, so we would not have a large balance for 2023 year end.

Due to the slow hire for our staff replacement, we made the decision to hire TJ, a computer science major as our summer student. TJ was with us for four months and his salary started at \$20/hr (7-hour day) and ended at \$25.00/hr. due to his excellent performance and dependability. The timing for his hire was perfect as he did all the programming for our new FEPI extensions. This was a huge undertaking, so we are very thankful the opportunity came along to hire TJ when we did!

Michael was hired in August with the position Executive Director's Associate and his salary was set at \$60,000 per year. This is more than what we budgeted (\$55,000) but the CSF grant allows for a 10% allowance on each budget item, so this was in line with their requirement. We still have a surplus for staff, but after speaking with a member of the CSF team, they said we could extend the grant a few months to use up the additional funding. We will speak with them again on this subject as the date draws nearer in 2024.

Fall of 2022, we did apply for two additional grants, The Calgary Foundation (\$70,000) and the Lethbridge Foundation (\$25,000). The CSF grant received was \$100,000 less than our budgeted amount so we hoped to receive additional funds from these two streams. Unfortunately, we were not successful with either of these sources. When asked why we did not receive the grant, I was told there were 140 charities that applied and since we had already received a grant from the Alberta Government, they wanted to see how we made out with this grant before we were issued additional funds. We also applied for several smaller grants but have not been successful in our bids, we feel due to being a faith based charity.

Private donations have been minimal over the past year so this is an area that needs our attention. We cannot rely totally on grants to sustain the ministry so building a stronger financial base is an area of focus for this year.

We have been able to add additional pieces of office equipment through our CSF grant. We purchased two new computer monitors for the staff member and one for Tom's desk. Our computers continue to operate well since their upgrade and updates done through our computer practicum student in May, so they should be adequate for the coming years. We did purchase some shelving units to hold our CERT kits and CERT materials. They had previously been stored in the outdoor deck storage, so they are now organized and kept clean and readily available.

We incurred some expense from our CERT Summit held in February 2023. Leann Hackman-Carty, Key-note Speaker, CEO Alberta Economic Development, came with a \$750 price tag. She also required we purchase 20 of her books, "Master Your Disaster" for resale at the event. We had additional expenses from the room rental and dessert for the Friday evening event held at the Highwood Golf Club. Since numbers were not as hoped we were not able to break even for this training event.

The New Year brought a few additional funding opportunities. There was a smaller grant through the United Way Community Partnerships in collaboration with the town of High River. We appeared to be approved from the United Way but when it went to the Town Councillors, unfortunately, they did not approve the \$3500 which we hoped to put towards additional CERT equipment.

Another purchase we made was for a small tabletop dishwasher, necessary when we have events. The small dishwasher purchased is adequate, but a larger unit would certainly be better if we had the space!

Our CERT Affiliate partner, Bob Davies, RMD Safety Ltd. paid their yearly Affiliate Membership Fee (\$500) in the New Year. We were glad that he is still engaged but due to a busy work schedule, he has not done any CERT training that we are aware of.

Our MBNA Credit Card is used for most purchases and the balance is cleared completely each month, so no interest is paid.

We had a few pizza lunches over the course of the year. When folks came for an interview from out-of-town, we provided lunch. This provides a less formal opportunity to get to know the person applying for the job, a little better. We also had going away lunches for Eduan, our computer specialist practicum student, and TJ, our summer computer science student.

Accounting has become more complicated since receiving the grant, so we are thankful to have Carol to keep us on track. Each month we send off the deductions for our staff's pay to keep the government requirements up to date.

SUMMARY

We are very thankful that our financials are in-line with the funds allotted from the CSF. One area, however, that we are now responsible for is our office rent. One item we had to decrease due to a smaller grant, was funds for the second year to cover our rent. We are now responsible for \$525.00 each month from Bridges of Love's Bank of Nova Scotia account. We are grateful that our landlord has not raised our rent since we took occupancy, three years ago.

Since coming to High River, we have not had a Treasurer on our Board of Directors. This is a position we feel should be filled. If you know of a Christian with some experience in this area, who would be interested in joining our board, we would appreciate connecting with them. Thank you!

As we look back over the past 20 years, God has provided for our needs every step of the way. We may not have the biggest or the best, but we have all that we need to accomplish the work that He has given us to do. For that we remain thankful and blessed!

Respectfully Submitted:
Marg Pollon (Acting Treasurer)
October 12, 2023

When given the opportunity to share a devotional, I was asked to speak on unity. This may seem like a basic task, but when the Bible is opened, and in particular, the New Testament, it is hard to find just one place to focus on when it comes to unity. The Old Testament in Psalm 133:1 rightly reminds us, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!"

In the New Testament in the Gospel of John, in the 17th chapter, in our Jesus' high priestly prayer, he mentions unity or at the very least, believers being "one" eight times in 26 verses. One brief example of this is in verses 22-23 which says, "The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." So after hearing and knowing this, we know that unity is an important topic to our Saviour and therefore, must be an important topic to us as well.

Although I could plant us firmly in that passage in John or even Psalm 133, I want to instead share three verses from Ephesians 4 regarding unity. They remind us that we are united even when it seems like each person has a different idea or opinion about almost everything. Ephesians 4:4-6, reading from the English Standard Version says this. "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

The Apostle Paul writes the letter to the Ephesians in a context very much like our own. People were doing things that were right in their own eyes and the church, the early church in that context needed reminders. The first half of the book of Ephesians reveals the gospel and the last half, which Ephesians 4 is included in, reveals how the gospel changes our lives, including unity.

There is one body, Paul says. Not multiple. Yes, there were then and there are now various local bodies of believers, but we all make up one body. As the song we will sing later rightly says, "we are one, one in you." It is the "in you" part which makes our unity so strong and unbreakable. It is also the "in you" part that makes us respond in praise and obedience to Jesus. There is one spirit- the Holy Spirit. And we were all called to the one hope that belongs to your call. Paul doesn't say we will be called to the one hope. No, he says, you **were** called to the one hope. It's already happened in Christ. And then verses 5 and 6 display the mystery and glory of our unity.

One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God, and Father of all, over all, through all, and in all. Unity is not something that Christians create on their own. One, one, one. I hope you can see it. Our unity is based upon these things that we share. Christians may and do have different opinions about secondary things, but our unity is not based upon those secondary things. They are based upon one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism all because of the one God who saved us. It is a glorious mystery. People from all nations, backgrounds, ages, and stages in life. United.

Psalm 133 is indeed correct. It is good and pleasant when brothers (and I add sisters) dwell in unity. May we say after today is done that today, was good and pleasant because of our unity and may we endeavor to keep that unity for the sake of the gospel and our great Lord, Jesus Christ. Thank you very much.

Bridges of Love Ministry Society
Profit & Loss
 August 2022 through July 2023

Aug '22 - Jul 23

Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
4100 · DONATIONS	
4110 · Donations - Receiptable	1,136.19
4120 · Donations - Non Receiptable	1,290.72
Total 4100 · DONATIONS	2,426.91
4200 · GRANTS	
4210 · GOA - Civil Society Fund	45,000.00
Total 4200 · GRANTS	45,000.00
Total Income	47,426.91
Gross Profit	47,426.91
Expense	
5100 · ADMINISTRATION	
5110 · Accounting & Audit Costs	2,378.66
5120 · Bank Charges	75.00
5130 · Credit Card Charges	2.04
5150 · Insurance	479.43
Total 5100 · ADMINISTRATION	2,935.13
5300 · COMPENSATION	
5310 · Salaries & Compensation	
5311 · Staff Member	18,547.20
Total 5310 · Salaries & Compensati...	18,547.20
5320 · Payroll Expenses	
5330 · Canada Pension Plan	994.52
5340 · CSF Evaluation	1,438.37
Total 5320 · Payroll Expenses	2,432.89
5360 · Contracts	8,380.00
Total 5300 · COMPENSATION	29,360.09
5400 · FACILITIES	
5410 · Office Rent	6,134.20
5420 · Office Equipment	1,424.56
Total 5400 · FACILITIES	7,558.76
5500 · MINISTRY COSTS	
5510 · Activity/Event Supplies	1,021.08
5520 · Duplication & Printing	24.39
5530 · CERT Summit	
5532 · CERT Shirts and caps	0.00
5530 · CERT Summit - Other	1,664.38
Total 5530 · CERT Summit	1,664.38
5540 · Communications	
5541 · Cell Phone Charges	960.54
5542 · InternetAccess/WebPage	296.26
5545 · Telephone Services	214.98
Total 5540 · Communications	1,471.78
5550 · Educational Resources	99.04
5551 · Marketing Costs	1,220.08
5560 · Food & Refreshment Expense	303.79
5570 · Gifts, Cards & Appreciation	364.46

Bridges of Love Ministry Society
Profit & Loss
August 2022 through July 2023

	Aug '22 - Jul 23
5580 - Office Supplies	
5581 - Computer Cartridges	230.34
5582 - Paper	45.85
5580 - Office Supplies - Other	1,705.15
Total 5580 - Office Supplies	1,981.34
5590 - Postage & Shipping	56.49
Total 5500 - MINISTRY COSTS	8,206.83
5700 - TRAVEL	
5710 - Lodging	304.76
5720 - Fuel	222.99
5740 - Meals	77.43
5750 - Mileage	210.00
Total 5700 - TRAVEL	815.18
5800 - GST/HST Expense	0.00
Total Expense	48,875.99
Net Ordinary Income	-1,449.08
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
4150 - Recovered Expenses	1,047.40
4155 - Bank Interest	348.03
4190 - CERT	286.29
Total Other Income	1,681.72
Net Other Income	1,681.72
Net Income	232.64

Balance Sheet

As of 31 July 2023

	31 Jul 23
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Chequing/Savings	
1100 · BANK ACCOUNTS	
1110 · Scotia Bank Operating	2,406.43
1120 · BofM Acct#1	0.56
1130 · Servus Credit Union - Commu...	9,886.70
1140 · Servus Credit Union - Savings	90,301.70
Total 1100 · BANK ACCOUNTS	102,595.39
Total Chequing/Savings	102,595.39
Total Current Assets	102,595.39
TOTAL ASSETS	102,595.39
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
2200 · GST Recoverable	-284.87
2400 · Deferred Revenue	100,000.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	99,715.13
Total Current Liabilities	99,715.13
Total Liabilities	99,715.13
Equity	
3900 · Retained Earnings	2,693.95
Net Income	186.31
Total Equity	2,880.26
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	102,595.39

Short Biography:

Born in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, growing up in Fort St. John, BC, and living my teenage years in Calgary, AB has made me aware of the landscape of Western Canada. As a pastor's kid and later as a pastor, I also understand the area of local church ministry which has prepared me for this position at Bridges of Love. I am thankful to Marg and Tom for this provision from the Lord to be a part of this ministry.

Vision Report

After seven years in pastoral ministry, it was clear that God was calling me out and one of the questions that created some immediacy for myself afterwards was, "where would I go for work?" By God's providence, he had created an already built relationship between myself and Bridges of Love months before. As the Lead Pastor of High River Alliance, Marg had reached out to me to see if the church would sign the FEPI form and it didn't even take me time to think about it. I immediately signed the form and to this day, High River Alliance is a part of the database.

Through this already formed relationship, I knew that Bridges of Love was looking for an Executive Director's Associate and from my previous knowledge as well as relationships in pastoral ministry, I figured that it would be a good fit. After a short conversation in August, it was apparent that this would be a good thing and in September, I started in this position. I want to acknowledge my gratefulness to Marg and Tom as this position has been a provision for our family.

Much of the conversation over the past month has been about moving forward. In fact, early on Marg asked me to make a document that would detail my thoughts regarding the future of Bridges of Love. This document was filled with questions regarding each part of Bridges of Love and much of it was beneficial for all three of us. We spent a great amount of a morning on this document.

As I hear more about the history of Bridges of Love and see Marg's passion, it's clear that the very foundation of what this ministry is can't change; however, it is clear to all of us that Bridges of Love stands at a very important transition time. They have therefore looked to me for signs of vision and advice for the future.

So, what can I say? The dictionary definition of vision is "the faculty or state of being able to see." Of course, though when we talk about vision casting, it's different. Vision casting is the ability to see forward into the future, not just the ability to see.

Now this is problematic because only God knows the future and as creatures, we are dependent on the creator to sustain us through uncertain futures. So, we must do as James said in James 4:15, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." If the Lord wills.

So, the first point in vision casting for Bridges of Love is to say, "if the Lord wills." We trust in the Lord.