



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – January, 2024

"FOR GOD DID NOT GIVE US A SPIRIT OF TIMIDITY" 2 Timothy 1:7

For God hath not given us  
the spirit of fear;  
but of power, and of love,  
and of a sound mind.

— 2 Timothy 1:7 (KJV)

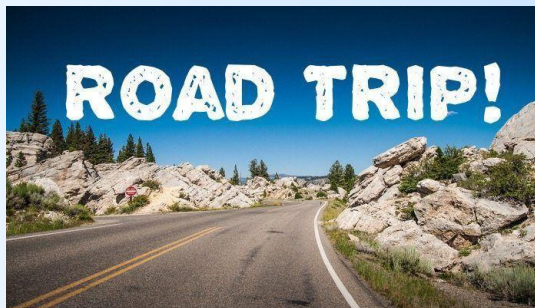
Upon ordination, Timothy was given special gifts of the Spirit to enable him to serve the church. He did not need new revelations or new gifts; he needed the courage and self-discipline to hang on to the truth and use the gifts he had already received.

To live consistent with these teachings, Paul exhorted Timothy to fearlessly continue to preach the truth which he heard from Paul, and not be ashamed of Paul's chains in the gospel. But it was up to Timothy to decide whether to walk in the holy calling.

This verse is a good reminder for the New Year that God gifts His children with courage, power, love, and self-control and it is up to each of us to use these gifts for His Glory. As we begin a New Year the tasks ahead may seem daunting! It is easy to fall into discouragement and complacency with a desire to give up! Perseverance comes from calling on God's strength, praying for His wisdom, and waiting on His timing.

As we plan for the next CERT Summit in Mountain View County, it could indeed be an overwhelming endeavour if we try to do it in our own strength. We know that all things are possible for God, however, so we trust in Him to put this event together, for His Glory.

## MOUNTAIN VIEW COUNTY UPDATE



Our second road trip to Mountain View County proved to be another profitable and very enjoyable time. Meeting with the Emergency Manager, Ryan Morrison, the plans for a February CERT Canada Summit were shared. He was receptive after learning more about Bridges of Love's Community Emergency Response Team training.

With a little detour to Cremona, we delivered CERT Summit posters and brochures to churches throughout this beautiful countryside before heading back to Sundre, Olds, and Didsbury, meeting with a few new churches that were missed on our first visit. Returning home, a brief stop was made in Carstairs to drop off a bag of candy for The Rock Church's Christmas celebration. It was a full two days of travel! We give thanks to the Lord for His protection, as we just missed the storm that hit that area with vengeance just hours after we passed through. God is good!

As you will see in the MVC CERT Summit poster, Laura Stewart, a wildfire specialist from FireSmart agreed to present this timely topic for our Friday evening session. With a very dry winter to date, the time is now to anticipate and prepare for another severe wildfire season. As with all disaster responses, we plan for the worst-case scenario but pray for the best!

Having local CERT instructors from Mountain View County is our goal, providing opportunities for other training sessions in this county, duplicating Bridges of Love's model by engaged residents.

## COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) TRAIN-THE-TRAINER



CERT TRAIN-THE-TRAINER TWO DAY TEACHING AGENDA	
Thursday, January 18 - DAY 1	Friday, January 19 - DAY 2
<b>MORNING</b> 8:00 am - Noon	<b>MORNING</b> 8:00 am - Noon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction</li><li>• Your Role as an Instructor</li><li>• Unit 1 Overview (Disaster Preparedness)</li><li>• Unit 2 Overview (CERT Organization)</li><li>• Unit 3 Overview (Disaster Medical Operations 1)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unit 4 Overview (Psychology of Trauma)</li><li>• Unit 5 Overview (Fire Safety &amp; Utility Controls)</li><li>• Manage the Classroom</li><li>• Unit 7 Overview (Light Search &amp; Rescue)</li></ul>
<b>AFTERNOON</b> 12:30 pm - 3:30 pm	<b>AFTERNOON</b> 12:30 pm - 3:30 pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lunch</li><li>• Unit 4 Overview (Disaster Medical Operations 2)</li><li>• Hands-on Learning</li><li>• Teach-back #1 (Assignment Preparation)</li><li>• Teach-back Presentations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unit 5 Overview (CERT &amp; Terrorism)</li><li>• Teach-back #2 (Assignment Preparation)</li><li>• Preparing for CERT Basic Training Course</li><li>• Course Summary</li><li>• Graduation</li></ul>

**CERT TRAIN-THE-TRAINER INSTRUCTION**  
CERT T-T-T INTRODUCES CERT MODULES AND SHARES TEACHING TECHNIQUES TO ASSIST PROFESSIONALS BE CAPABLE CERT TRAINERS.  
Disaster Personal Preparedness; CERT Organization; Disaster Medical Operations, Units 1 & 2; Psychology of Trauma; Fire Safety & Utility Controls, Light Search & Rescue, CERT & Terrorism  
[www.bridgesoflove.net](http://www.bridgesoflove.net)

**WHERE:** Thursday – January 18, 2024 & Friday – January 19, 2023  
**WHERE:** TBA  
**COST:** \$50.00 - Includes 2-day class instruction, certificate  
**INSTRUCTORS:** Judy McMillan-Evans & Marg Pollon  
**REGISTER:** On-line – [bridgesoflove.net](http://bridgesoflove.net) or Call: 403.649.0087  
Email – [margpollon@bridgesoflove.net](mailto:margpollon@bridgesoflove.net)

We are very grateful to have Randy Smith, a retired Fire Chief who lives in Olds, instructing the Fire Safety and Search and Rescue modules. We are now seeking additional professionals to present the Disaster Medical Operations Units 1 & 2; Psychology of Trauma, CERT & Terrorism, and Personal Preparedness sessions. We will deliver the manuals to individuals who are willing to give back to their communities by volunteering their services as a CERT trainer with our heartfelt appreciation! Each module is 1.5 hrs. so the emergency training information is basic for Neighbours helping Neighbours!

### REGISTRATION:

[www.bridgesoflove.net](http://www.bridgesoflove.net)  
or call 403.649.0087



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – February, 2024

"LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND" 1 Corinthians 13:4-8



The church is composed of many types of individuals from a variety of backgrounds with a multitude of gifts and abilities. It is often the case, that these differences may cause people to be divided as in the case of Corinth. But despite the differences, all believers have one thing in common--faith in Jesus Christ. On this essential truth, the church finds unity! As members of God's family, we may have different interests and gifts, but we have a common goal.

As Valentine's Day draws near, this is a special time when we demonstrate our love in tangible ways for family, friends, and others we hold dear. We all appreciate a box of chocolates or a bouquet to celebrate this yearly tradition.

My husband Tom proposed marriage on this romantic day, February 14, 1968, and we are now in our 54th year of marriage! Our love has withstood the test of time with mountain-top and valley experiences! We are often asked what has kept us together through the ups and downs when divorce is so common.

Our response comes with the words "I WILL" spoken during our wedding vows which impacted our marriage and faith commitment.

**"LOVE ALWAYS PERSEVERES"**

## MOUNTAIN VIEW COUNTY UPDATE

Our third road trip to Mountain View County, January 23 - 24 was another profitable and very enjoyable time. The focus was to visit the town offices to encourage their support for our upcoming CERT Canada Summit and to share posters and brochures with churches we missed on previous trips, schools, insurance companies, and grocery stores, all located in Carstairs, Cremona, Sundre, Olds, and Didsbury.



The highlight for this short road trip was meeting the Council Members from St. Stephens Catholic Church who kindly invited us to share while we were in Olds. What a lovely group of people who gave their full attention to our short presentation. We came away feeling blessed by their warmth and hospitality. Thank you, Father Nilo, for this special opportunity!

Another commitment was made to our Alberta Government when we signed the Civil Society Fund grant contract in March 2022 in support of Bridges of Love project, **"The Power of Civil Society, moving at the Speed of Trust"**. We are in our final leg with only five months remaining to fulfil what we said we would accomplish! We cannot do this alone, however, as support is needed from the community!

## MVC CERT SUMMIT

**"Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all."**  
—Dale Carnegie.

This Summit has been the most challenging of events due to facilitating it in a county that is not familiar with Bridges of Love programs and where we do not know the various communities.

Building trust and strong relationships takes time but unfortunately, with another Summit to complete before the end of June, we do not have the luxury of taking many months to build stronger relationships. We also felt it wise to have our instructors from Mountain View County so they could continue to train once we share our template so CERT teams would bring ongoing strength and resilience to the county.



**Thank you in advance for your assistance in making this event a resounding success! We look forward to meeting soon!**



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – March, 2024

"TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE" Ecclesiastes 4:9



## MOUNTAIN VIEW COUNTY CERT SUMMIT UPDATE

After completing the Mountain View County CERT Summit, we are pleased to report that our graduates all expressed a desire to be part of a CERT team in their communities. The evaluation results were very positive with strong support for the training and capable instructors. The Friday evening keynote speaker (Wildfire Specialist) was exceptional, sharing information that was very applicable for the season and present conditions.

Our only struggle was finding adequate participants who were willing to give up two Saturdays and a Friday evening to attend. Varying marketing methods were undertaken with personal visitations, poster & brochure distribution, radio and newspaper ads, newsletters, our website, social media, and the local radio station in Olds interviewed to hear more about the event coming to their town. Three months of planning and preparing with three individuals registered! How do we stimulate more participation for an activity that can save lives and protect property?

Even though our numbers were small we had great participants! Two attendees were from Carstairs, and one came from Olds. Our training teaches that CERTs do not respond on their own, and as mentioned, preferably 5 - 7 cert grads are on a team. Greater participation is necessary to build sustainability for a community response but even though we have three new great CERT graduates, we hope to have a stronger show for our next CERT training event.

Now is the time to consider attending Bridges of Love's next CERT Canada Summit. We realize it is a commitment to take time for this activity, but remember that when disaster strikes, the time to prepare has passed!

## CERT 'BEARING TOGETHER' TEAM MEMBERS



A friend in Ontario kindly shared the pattern and a bear her husband received after a recent stay in the hospital. Her Presbyterian Church group is knitting bears as a community outreach. Since April, they have made 400 bears that are shared with hospitals and people who need a touch of God's love.

What a great activity!

Four CERT Bearing Together bears named Buddy, Ami, Chip, and Scout recently joined our CERT Team! Buddy and Ami have already been deployed to duty, bringing joy to a CERT instructor's family, who recently lost their beloved golden retriever! **Love is ACTION!**

## "BEARING TOGETHER"





# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – April, 2024

**"HE MAKES MY FEET LIKE THE FEET OF A DEER" Psalm 18:33**



Each evening for the past week, this beautiful creature curls up under our bedroom window, and spends the night! My husband Tom shares soft words, and she is all ears with no fear or trepidation! We didn't know Tom was a "Deer Whisper!" We have felt a sense of protection from her presence as if God is saying, "Don't worry, I am with you!"

The past month has indeed been a roller coaster ride as we sold our High River condo with ease and then the difficult journey to purchase a new residence in Red Deer along with the surrounding area began. It has been a time of trusting the Lord as we once again put our staff in the Red Sea, saying "Yes Lord" we will follow where you lead! God doesn't promise to eliminate challenges; instead, He promises to give us strength to meet those bumps in the road. If we had no rough roads to walk, no mountains to climb, and no battles to fight, we would not grow and mature in our faith. He does not leave us alone with our challenges, however. Instead, He stands beside us, teaching, and strengthening our faith, to face every obstacle.

The Pollons have purchased an apartment in the Michener Hill area of Red Deer so a busy time packing for May 1, possession date. 😊

## NGO COUNCIL OF ALBERTA

We are very pleased to be a member of the NGO Council of Alberta. Special appreciation to Kate Stafford, Co-Chair for her tireless work on the 2024 Handbook.

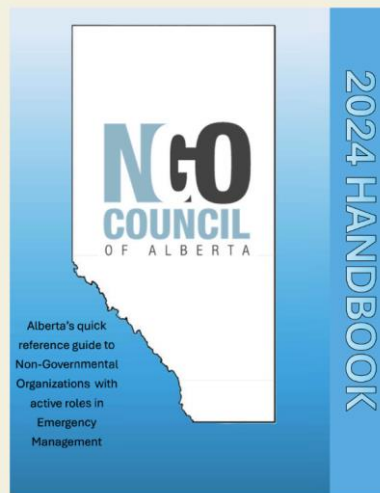
Emergencies and disasters in Alberta are becoming more frequent, more complex, and are in need of a comprehensive, efficient, and cost-effective response and recovery strategy.

The Alberta NGO Council is a network of non-governmental organizations that are active participants in Alberta's Emergency Management landscape.

The purpose of the Alberta NGO Council is to support municipal and provincial emergency planning and preparedness, response and recovery efforts through coordination, cooperation, collaboration, and communication.

By valuing their independence and neutrality, and by utilizing their collective knowledge, experience and resources, the Council members remain committed to supporting municipal and provincial emergency management jurisdictions when disasters strike in the Province of Alberta.

NGO Council's [Handbook](#) found on-line.



## INTRO - "THE SUMMER CANADA BURNED"

The Wildfire Season that Shocked the World

A calm prevailed before the firestorm...

Canada awaited the start of wildfire season. It was the end of April. The annual battle of the blazes was not expected to begin in earnest for weeks, maybe even two months in a good year. But it would soon become clear that the 2023 season would be anything but good.

On April 30, the first "wildfire of note" - meaning it could threaten public safety or critical infrastructure—popped up in Alberta. About an hour's drive west of the capital city of Edmonton, near the hamlet of Entwistle, a fire devoured tinderbox-dry trees and grass.

A few minutes away a second wildfire of note burned simultaneously. This one cropped up closer to the hamlet of Evansburg. Humorously known for electing a 'town grouch' in past years. There was nothing funny, however, about what was about to occur. Something had sparked Alberta's first two notable fires of the year, igniting a wildfire season across Canada unlike any other.

Learn more about the horrific wildfires across Canada.

Monica Zurowski|POSTMEDIA



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – MAY, 2024

**"MAY HE GIVE YOU THE DESIRE OF YOUR HEART" Psalm 20:4**

*May He give you the  
desire of your heart and  
make all your plans  
succeed.- Psalm 20:4 NIV*



The theme for Psalm 20 is a prayer for victory in battle. David knew that trust should be placed in the Lord more than in human power. The congregation looked forward to celebrating David's victory over the enemy). The victory would be achieved "in the name of our God." In other words, David and his army would act on God's behalf. This man of God knew that when the desires of our heart are in harmony with God's plans and purposes, we are living in the unity of the Spirit and walking in accord with His perfect will. Such a prayer can help prepare us for any great challenge.

Our relocation to Red Deer has indeed posed a greater challenge than expected! Best-laid plans do not always go as hoped, as the mobile home we thought was going to be our residence did not come to fruition, due to an inspection report that caused concern. Since we began down this road, however, we along with our Board of Directors, have prayed earnestly that we would be in tune with God's purposes.

With just a month before our scheduled move, we purchased an apartment in the Michener Hills area of Red Deer. It been an emotional and tiring process but we know we are following the Lord in these decisions, so He is giving us strength and courage to make this transition.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK

**Take action so that you, your family, and your community are prepared for emergencies.**

Emergency Preparedness Week (EP Week) is a national event supported by Public Safety Canada, working closely with provincial and territorial emergency management organizations, Indigenous organizations, non-governmental organizations, and private sector organizations who support activities at the local level.



Everyone has a role to play in an emergency. EP Week is an opportunity for you to take action to ensure you are prepared to protect yourself, your family and your community during an emergency. This year, the theme "**Be Prepared. Know Your Risks**". encourages Canadians to understand the risks in their area and learn what actions they can take to protect themselves and their families.

We forward to another opportunity to share at the Okotoks Emergency Preparedness Week event taking place May 11, 2024, on the north side of 99 Okotoks Drive from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. CERT Graduates please consider joining us for another great day with the community! We will be sharing resources from the Wildfire Management Branch, Forestry Division, Alberta Forestry and Parks to assist with the wildfire season which is predicted to be severe.

## WILDFIRE SEASON

Wildfire season runs from March 1 to October 31 in Alberta, which means fire permits are required for activities such as residential, industrial or agricultural debris burning. Albertans living in the Forest Protection Area can get a fire permit through your local forest area office.

Alberta is preparing for an intense 2024 wildfire season. A sweeping fire restriction has been put in place across Alberta as hot, dry weather leaves forests tinder-dry. Emergency officials are urging extreme caution in the weeks ahead as a persistent and severe drought pushes Alberta's wildfire danger to the extreme.

Fine particles in the air from wildfires can get deep into people's lungs and bloodstream and cause inflammation. Those with asthma, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), or other chronic lung diseases are at increased risk of additional inflammation and may become wheezy or short of breath.

Steps to help support health and protect lungs from damage:  
Drink plenty of water, drink hot liquids, use saline nasal spray, and rinse sinuses with Neti Pot.



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – JUNE, 2024

**"YOUR KINGDOM COME. YOUR WILL BE DONE. ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN" Matthew 6:10**



When we pray "Your will be done" we are asking that God's perfect purpose will be accomplished in this world as well as in the next. We are not leaving it to fate, but Christ's reign in believers' hearts will be complete when all evil is destroyed, and God establishes the new heaven and the new earth (Revelation 21:1).

As did many of you, I grew up in the era when students started each school day reciting the Lord's Prayer. It was a wonderful reminder that God is our sustainer and provider. Prayer is the opportunity for confession, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise. Praying helps us understand and accept His Will because His plans are always for our good. The Bible affirms this truth, 'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future' (Jeremiah 29:11).

Many prayer petitions proceeded to our decision to relocate to Red Deer from our Board of Directors, hubby Tom, and myself. We will freely confess this move has not been easy, but due to God's strength and courage, we look forward to a new beginning for Bridges of Love in a larger, central Alberta location. We are pleased to have a slightly larger office space with 'first right of refusal' on a second open area room across the hall that would be a perfect training area. Possession takes place on June 1, 2024, so we'll be heading back to High River this weekend to finish the packing and ready for the move on June 5 to our Bridges of Love's new home!

#101, 5208 - 53 Ave. Red Deer, AB T4N 5K2

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK



This year, Bridges of Love had another opportunity to share at the **Okotoks Emergency Preparedness Week** event which took place May 11, 2024. We appreciated CERT Graduate, Cam Nikitiuk who also participated, sharing his emergency preparedness knowledge with the community. Thank you, Garth Misura, Okotoks Emergency Manager for arranging another great day of activities so communities can become more informed and ready to take action when disaster strikes.

Special appreciation to wildfire preparedness resources provided by the Wildfire Management Branch, Forestry Division, Alberta Forestry and Parks.

## THANK YOU FIRESMART CANADA!

As FireSmart™ Canada Wildfire Community Preparedness Day partners, The Co-operators Group Ltd., the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, the National Fire Protection Association, and the provincial and territorial wildfire agencies are committed to bringing neighbours together to help reduce risk to homes and neighbourhoods from wildfire.

**Bridges of Love greatly appreciates the \$500 Award and FireSmart Resources to assist with our Wildfire Preparedness Day activities.**

## BRIDGES OF LOVE'S NEW RED DEER OFFICE

We are so very grateful God provided an affordable and suitable facility to continue Bridges of Love's activities. Additional vacant space is available across the hall which could be utilized for our CERT training sessions/team meetings, storage and volunteer workstations.

We secured a contract with the owner of the building for L101 until the end of December 2024 which fits our budget for the Alberta CSF grant. Due to our relocation, the CSF team kindly extended the time frame for completion of our grant commitment until the end of this calendar year. Could we ask for your monthly commitment to assist in securing this additional space? Five \$100/monthly donations would allow us to hit the ground running with our heartfelt appreciation!





# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – JULY, 2024

**"I KNOW YOUR DEEDS. THAT YOU ARE NEITHER COLD NOR HOT" Revelation 3:15**

## LUKEWARM CHRISTIANITY



*I know your deeds,  
that you are neither  
cold nor hot; I wish that  
you were cold or hot.*

*Revelation 3:15*

Webster's Dictionary defines lukewarm as 'moderately warm or tepid; lacking conviction or half-hearted.' The synonyms for the word is also revealing: dull, apathetic, moderate.

Many years have passed since the church we were attending offered a course from the Navigator's. I will never forget the evening our instructor spoke on Revelation 3:15 and the traits of a lukewarm Church and Christian. I felt a tug at my heart asking, was I a lukewarm Christian? That night I prayed for God to take me off the fence and make me on fire for Him!

That prayer was over 20 years ago, and He did indeed answer my prayer with the birth of Bridges of Love Ministry.

### OUR NEW OFFICE ADDRESS:

101, 5208 – 53 Ave.  
Red Deer, AB  
T4N 5K2

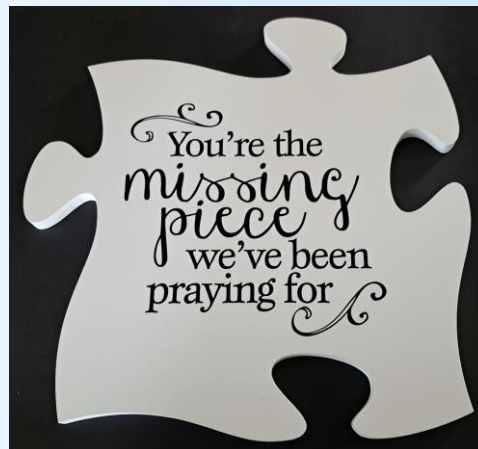
Office Phone: 587.273.0599

**LOVE IS ACTION!**

## OPERATIONS & TECHNICAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Our next step in relocation, is to fill the "Operations and Technical Support Specialist" position. The Operations and Technical Support Specialist plays a critical role in supporting Bridges of Love's mission for community emergency preparedness, training, and recovery efforts. This individual will be my right-hand person to assist and learn the ropes for every area of ministry. We are praying for that special person who has a servant heart, willing to do God's Will utilizing their gifts (faith), training, and knowledge for every aspect of this position.

For now, this position is a six-month contract to the end of 2024. Funds are already in place thanks to the CSF grant so once additional funding is in place and this person proves to be our answer to prayer, they will be offered a staff position starting January 1, 2025. Please pass on this opportunity to your sphere of influence as we ready to hire! Thank you.

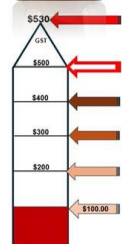


Please see [www.bridgesoflove.net](http://www.bridgesoflove.net) for complete job description.

## YOUR DONATION IS THE KEY!

Last month we introduced Bridges of Love's need for additional space. We hope to raise sufficient funds to secure the 600 ft. room across the hall. This additional open space will allow for training events, team meetings, fund raising dinners etc. with ease; utilizing the resources we have in storage.

As we continue our journey with Bridges of Love Ministry, we are constantly reminded of the profound impact that each act of kind generosity can make. Today, we reach out to you with a heartfelt plea for assistance. As of this date, a monthly donation of \$100 has been pledged. Could we ask for your partnership to open the door for this perfect opportunity? Thank you





# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – AUGUST, 2024

**"FORGET THE FORMER THINGS; DO NOT DWELL ON THE PAST." Isaiah 43:18-19**



## "THE POWER OF CIVIL SOCIETY, MOVING AT THE SPEED OF TRUST"

Bridges of Love's Civil Society Fund project builds resilience and relationships of trust. Programs cannot proceed, however, without church and community solidly on board.

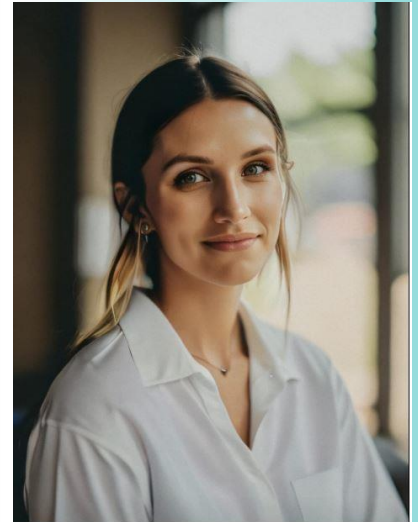
To help track our FEPI activity, two maps were purchased. A detailed map of Red Deer and an Alberta map to identify those areas where assistance is already in place. We would love to include your church with a 'mapping pin' indicating your participation.



Once FEPI on-line forms are completed, the process is ready for ACTION! Critical time is saved by knowing before disaster strikes, what churches are on-board and what resources/people they have ready to assist. Don't delay, sign a FEPI form today!!

## CHURCHES HELPING NEIGHBOURS

## WELCOME FELICIA SMITH OPERATIONS & TECHNICAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST



Felicia is thrilled to join Bridges of Love and contribute to the mission of enhancing emergency preparedness in Red Deer and surrounding communities. With a background in EMS, she is a certified firefighter, with a strong passion for helping others.

Married to her wonderful husband and a mom of two young children, her Christian faith is a focal point for life.

Felicia is excited to work for an organization that shares her values and commitment for serving the community. She looks forward to growing with Bridges of Love and supporting the impactful work.

God, through the prophet Isaiah, is telling us that we can place the past behind us. We can reprogram our brains in such a way that we can forget the past and put it behind us. It generally involves three steps: 1. Deal with the past (emotionally, spiritually, and relationally), 2. Choose not to dwell on the past, 3. Choose to focus on the immediate and what lies ahead.

To live in the present and embrace the future with optimism, pay close attention to what is going on around us. As Henry Blackaby says, "See where God is working, and join Him there!" If we don't pay attention, He may go off in a direction while we are too busy smelling the dying roses! Be open to what God is doing and join eagerly to participate in what is about to come.

God ensures that His plans **ALWAYS** succeed, even if that means a shift in our activities! We are to discern the path that God is making and walk alongside Him as He forges a new path forward. By walking alongside Jesus, rather than camping out in the past, we are best prepared to grow and mature.



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – SEPTEMBER, 2024

**"AND I WILL BRING THEM BACK TO THIS LAND." Jeremiah 25:6**



**Jeremiah 24:6 KJV**

*For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up.*

In God's eyes, Jeremiah was one of the most successful people in all of history even though throughout his life, he stood alone. Declaring God's messages, announcing the new covenant, and weeping over the fate of his beloved country, success, as measured by God, involves obedience and faithfulness. The basic theme of Jeremiah's message was simple: **"Repent and turn to God, or He will punish."** Because the people rejected this warning, Jeremiah then began predicting the destruction of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah urged God's people to return to God from their sins. For 40 years, he served as God's spokesman to Judah. During that time the people ignored, rejected, and persecuted him. Jeremiah's preaching was unsuccessful by human standards, yet he did not fail in his task. He remained faithful to God despite looking unsuccessful with no money, family, or friends.

Serving the Lord in ministry is often daunting, but over the past 20+ years, we have learned to trust Him one day at a time. Keeping our eyes on Him, instead of on our circumstances is the answer to serving with joy and a commitment to not grow weary.

## COFFEE & PIE MEET & GREET!

Join Us For  
**COFFEE & PIE**



**WEDNESDAY AUGUST 28TH**  
**1:30-3PM**  
Bridges of Love Ministry

RSVP by Aug 27th

5208 53 Ave. #101  
Red Deer, AB  
Phone: 587.272.0955

Join Us For  
**COFFEE & PIE**

We warmly invite all church leaders or admin in the Red Deer area to join us for a casual coffee and pie gathering. This is a great opportunity to put a face to the name, get to know each other, and explore how Bridges of Love Ministry can support your church's community outreach and preparedness efforts.

Mmm...Apple Pie!  
Apples, Apples! Crispy, Crunchy  
Juicy, sweet, mighty munchy!  
Climbing, climbing up so high,  
To pick some apples for a pie.  
Twist them, turn them, pick them quick.  
Pulling hard will do the trick.  
Our baskets full so off we go  
To slice the apples, roll the dough.  
Add sugar, spices too  
A pinch of cinnamon, that will do.  
Bake it, bake it, till it's done  
Apple pie! Yum! Yum! Yum!

Please RSVP by phone or email.  
Parking is available next door at Potter's Hand Church  
We look forward to having you!

RSVP by Aug 27th

5208 53 Ave Unit 101 Red Deer  
margpollon@bridgesoflove.net  
Phone: 587.272.0955

## FELICIA'S FEATURE



As a newcomer to both Bridges of Love and Red Deer, I'm excited to share a bit about my journey and the work I've been diving into this month. My family and I recently relocated from abroad, and joining Bridges of Love has been a meaningful part of our own personal rebuilding process.

In partnership with Marg, our dedicated Executive Director, we've been working on an exciting initiative to help us establish strong connections in our new community. We're thrilled to be hosting a "Coffee & Pie" meet-and-greet on Wednesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>.

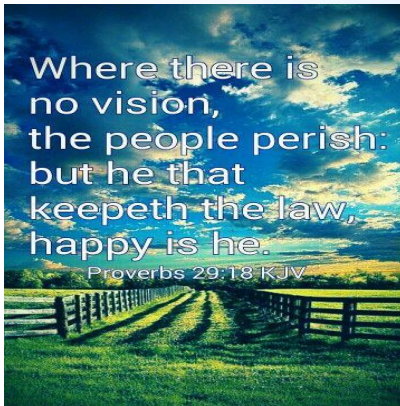
This event is a key step in our efforts to build our presence here in Red Deer, strengthen our Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI), and forge new partnerships with local churches. Our aim is to create a robust network of support that aligns with the core values of Bridges of Love and helps us serve the community effectively. I'm grateful for the warm welcome I've received.



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – OCTOBER, 2024

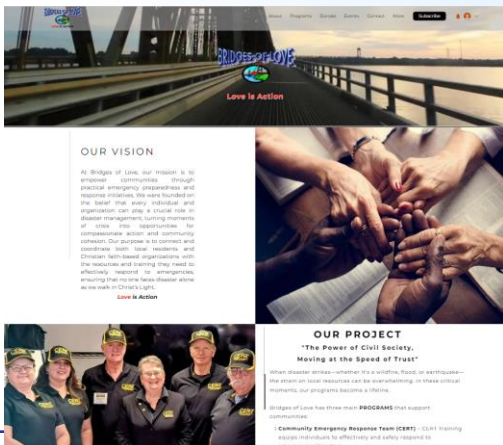
**"WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH" Proverbs 29:18**



As we celebrate the completion of Bridges of Love's 21st Fiscal Year with our Annual General Meeting (AGM), a report we highlight, **"Vision Casting"** brings to light what we look to accomplish.

In Proverbs 29:18, we are reminded that to function well, people must know and follow God's ways and rules. Having God's Word means little if we are not obeying it. Wisdom is a gift from God, and every word he speaks is full of revelation and becomes a fountain of understanding within us.

We are grateful to the Lord for the completion of another year. May we always seek His wisdom as we follow Him into another year of building Bridges of Love Ministry. Please check out our new website for our Annual General Meeting 2023 – 2024 Reports. Thank you!



## COFFEE & PIE MEET & GREET!

We appreciate the attendance from 6 local churches (9 representatives) at Bridges of Love's first "Coffee & Pie Meet and Greet" event held at our Red Deer office. Please join us every Wednesday afternoon for a piece of pie and visit as we get to know our Red Deer Community.  
Please R.S.V.P.  
margpollon@bridgesoflove.net or  
call 587.272.0955



## WELCOME NEWEST FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE (FEPI) CHURCHES

- Garrington Community Church
- Deer Park Alliance Church

## CALLING ALL KNITTERS!

"BEARING TOGETHER" CERT COMPANIONS ARE MULTIPLYING! IF YOU WISH TO JOIN US FOR A MORNING OF KNITTING THESE SPECIAL FRIENDS, PLEASE GIVE US A CALL TO HEAR HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED.  
587.272.0955



## FELICIA'S FEATURE

Our vision is to create a community where faith and preparedness are intertwined. In times of crisis, we aspire for local churches to be beacons of hope and support, equipped to respond effectively to the needs of their congregations and neighbours.

As stated in Proverbs 27:17, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." By collaborating with emergency services, local organizations, and community members, we can build a robust network that serves everyone, especially the most vulnerable.

In recent years, Alberta has experienced an alarming increase in natural disasters, highlighting the urgency and relevance of our initiatives. We acknowledge that this journey will not be without challenges.

Bridges of Love has faced numerous roadblocks and obstacles in the past, yet our faith remains steadfast. We are optimistic that through Marg's vision and our collective efforts, God will provide a way if it is meant to be. Together, we can cultivate a spirit of resilience, transforming setbacks into stepping stones toward fulfilling our mission.



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – NOVEMBER, 2024

**"ENJOY HARDSHIP WITH US LIKE A GOOD SOLDIER OF CHRIST JESUS" 2 Timothy 2:3**



As Remembrance Day draws near, we think of those men and women who fought for our country with courage and valour. As followers of Jesus Christ, we too must stand strong with courage. Suffering, and enduring hardship for the sake of Christ, was the expectation of the person who sought to live fully for God. Timothy was to suffer "as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." Paul did not have violence in mind, but rather the attitude of a well-trained soldier.

Enduring hardness means we should not allow ourselves to become easily discouraged. We must always be prepared for conflict and should not back down from the enemy's threats. Paul warns Timothy of the way men will behave in the last days before Christ's return. The good Christian soldier must be wise to the ways of the devil; he must know that Jesus is greater than any enemy (1 John 4:4). The good soldier not only cares about his own welfare, but he also looks out for the welfare of his fellow soldiers (Galatians 6:2).

CERT training affords an opportunity for ordinary people to be equipped to show Christ's love to their community in times of disaster. CERTs are not professional responders, but they have enough basic skills to help when over-whelming circumstances, call for immediate **ACTION**.

## Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Empowering Our Community **FELICIA'S FEATURE**

Settling into my role at Bridges of Love, the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program was introduced. Coming from an emergency response background, I understand the uncertainty civilians face in crises. Many well-meaning individuals may inadvertently put themselves in dangerous situations when attempting to help. CERT provides basic yet essential training that empowers participants to manage their safety and assist their neighbours until professional responders arrive.

One of the most valuable aspects of CERT is its focus on practical, basic training that prepares people to help themselves and their neighbours during disasters. Many people may think they need advanced training or specialized skills to make a difference, but CERT demonstrates that anyone can contribute effectively. This program helps bridge the gap between good intentions and real, actionable support during a crisis.

One of the key benefits of CERT training is that it establishes clear rules and a code of conduct for members. This structure not only ensures that participants operate within their training limits but also promotes professionalism and safety. Members are trained to prioritize their own safety and to assist only until professional responders arrive. This structured approach not only enhances personal safety but also fosters a sense of community.

CERT is an excellent reminder that we all have the potential to contribute to our community's resilience. If you're interested in learning more about how you can get involved, I encourage you to explore what CERT has to offer.

**CERT**  
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY  
RESPONSE TEAM  
Bridges of Love

## CERT TRAIN THE TRAINER

**FREE TRAINING SESSION**

**What is CERT?**  
The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program trains local community members in essential skills to help themselves, their loved ones, and their neighbours during a disaster until professional responders arrive.

**We Need Your Expertise!**  
We invite professionals in emergency response and related fields to contribute their knowledge during our training sessions. Your insights can help empower our community to be better prepared.

**Training Details**

- One Day Training Session  
Pick which training day works for you!  
Friday November 22 (9am-4pm) OR  
Saturday November 23 (9am-4pm)
- 5208 53 Ave. #101 Red Deer

**Register Now**

587.272.0955  
www.bridgesoflove.net  
admin@bridgesoflove.net

**CERT instructors are professionals and well versed in their area of expertise. Bridges of Love offers CERT Train-the-Trainer to include additional teacher training and introduction to our 8 CERT Modules. Please join Bridges of Love for this practical, one day instruction.**

*"I attended the Train-the-Trainer course and was impressed with the professionalism and quality of the presentations and the good management of the course. I have attended many such seminars, and this was among the best I've seen. The commitment and desire to succeed was very evident to all who attended."*

*Allan Hird, Retired District Chief - Calgary Fire Department*



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – DECEMBER 2024

***“MAY THE GOD OF HOPE FILL YOU WITH ALL JOY AND PEACE” Romans 15:13***



In literature, the theme of hope is often explored through characters who demonstrate resilience, determination, and a positive outlook on life, even in the face of adversity. Stories of hope can offer a sense of inspiration and comfort to readers, especially during difficult times.

Why is hope a gift of the Lord? The Holy Spirit of God delivers a wonderful result of hope. He gives us the power to hope and that is a demonstration of God's love for us. His hope works together to give us confidence, joy, peace, power and love.

The centre of the Christmas story is focused on the birth of Jesus. He is the fulfilment of Israel's hope that God would push back the darkness and shine a bright light into the world.

One of the reasons Christmas resonates in our hearts is because we, too, live in a world that is similar to Israel. Our world is dark and corrupt because of the sin in every corner of the globe. There is war, disease, conflict, and oppression all around us. We, too, are in need of the Messiah, the Christ to bring light to push back the darkness around us.

Christmas is a reminder that whatever it is we hope for in our lives—healing, restoration, forgiveness, or a fresh start—it is available to us through Immanuel, God with us. All true hope is a result of the presence of God. And because God is trustworthy and keeps **ALL** his promises, our hope in Him is sure and secure.

## ADVENT: A SEASON OF PREPARATION AND COMPASSION **FELICIA'S FEATURE**

As we enter the season of Advent, we are reminded not only to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ but also to be ready for the challenges life may bring. Advent calls us to reflect on God's love and the hope we have in Christ's birth, while also inspiring us to act with compassion and readiness in times of crisis.

In Matthew 25: 35-40, Jesus teaches: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

The righteous will answer Him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?" The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

This Advent, as we anticipate the joy of Christ's birth, we are also called to be ready to serve others in tangible ways. Just as we prepare our hearts for Christ, we must also prepare ourselves to be His hands and feet in the world. At Bridges of Love, we are committed to empowering communities to respond to disasters with love and efficiency. Through programs like our Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI), and Alberta Recovers, we ensure that when crises strike, we are ready to act with compassion and care.

## BRIDGES OF LOVE'S INFORMATION SESSION AND CHRISTMAS FUND RAISER



Marg Pollon and Felicia Smith, with Bridges of Love, stand by a CERT emergency kit just before the nonprofit organization hosted an information session on Friday, Nov. 29. (Photo by Sean McIntosh/Advocate staff)



What a pleasure to meet a lovely couple, Perry and Angie, who attended our Information Session and Christmas fundraising event. They were the recipients of the First Aid Kit door prize and also purchased a few emergency resources. We appreciated this time to share a little about our programs and the opportunity to meet Red Deer residents.