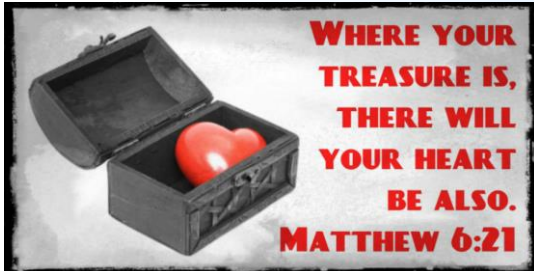




# BRIDGES OF LOVE

**LOVE IS ACTION – December, 2018**

***“FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE YOUR HEART WILL BE ALSO.” Matthew 6:21***



Jesus is clear that having treasures not focused on Him, leads our hearts in the wrong direction. What we treasure the most is what controls us! Jesus calls for a decision that allows us to live contentedly with whatever we have and to place eternal values over temporary, earthly treasures.

In 1677, twenty-seven year old Henry Scougal wrote this to a friend: “The worth and excellency of a soul is to be measured by the object of its love” (The Life of God in the Soul of Man, 20).

It is difficult to dismiss where our pleasures lie because pleasure is the measure of our treasure. We know that what we truly treasure is what we really love. Henry Scougal was right: the object of our love, the treasure we passionately want, measures the worth and condition of our soul.

## **Have we lost our first love and the power of God?**

Do we have little or no time with Jesus; more concerned with ourselves and our personal desires than concerned about the things that concern Him? Are we willing to give our time, energy, and money to a sporting event or some sort of entertainment, than to the things of God?

It is a dangerous thing to go through the motions of Christianity without a passionate love for Christ. What Jesus wants is for us to love Him like He loves us. He demonstrated that love for us on the cross when He suffered and died for us, bearing our sins on Calvary's cross. Not because he was forced to, but because of His love for us and His desire to bring us into relationship with the Father.

We know the things and pleasures of this life are temporal and the older we become, the quicker this life passes. This Christmas season, let us go back to when we first met Jesus, remembering the love we felt and the adoration we had for the Saviour – back to our first LOVE.

## **CALIFORNIA WILD FIRES, 2018**

**“This event was the worst-case scenario,”  
Butt County Sheriff Kory Honea said, “It’s the  
event that we have feared for a long time.”**



Reading the many accounts from the latest devastating California wild-fires, one story particularly stood out. It was regarding a son searching for his 75 year old mother, a widow whose house burned down, along with the rest of her neighbourhood. She lived alone and did not drive.

The son posted a flyer on social media, pinned it to bulletin boards at shelters, and showed her picture to evacuees asking if anyone recognized her. He ran across a few of her neighbours, but no one had seen her.

As he drove through the smoke and haze to yet another shelter, his thoughts were on the worst case scenario, but he knew she was a smart resourceful woman, so he held out hope of finding her...

As I read this account from one member of the devastated community, I wondered if the outcome could have been different if a CERT member lived in close proximity. Would she be safe in an evacuation centre, due to the efforts of a trained volunteer, who took the time to learn basic emergency skills and information to assist in times of disaster? CERTs are trained to know their community, and who might be the most vulnerable and need an extra hand, should a catastrophic event happen in their locality.

**CERTs, doing the greatest good for the  
greatest number**

**NEIGHBOURS HELPING NEIGHBOURS**



Alert Ready is Canada's emergency alerting system. Alert Ready delivers critical and potentially life-saving alerts to Canadians through television, radio, and LTE-connected and compatible wireless devices. The Alert Ready system was developed with many partners, including federal, provincial, and territorial emergency management officials, Environment and Climate Canada, Pelmorex, the broadcasting industry and wireless service providers. Together these providers work to ensure Canadians receive alerts immediately to know when to take action to stay safe.

## **What should I do if I receive an emergency alert?**

- ✓ Upon receiving an emergency alert it is important to take action safely. Alerting authorities will include within the emergency alert the information you need, including any action you need to take. This could include, but is not limited to: limit unnecessary travel, evacuate areas, shelter-in-place, etc.

**For More Information:**

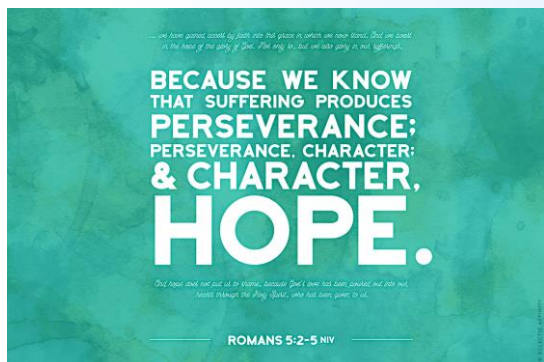
<https://www.alertready.ca/>



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – November, 2018

**SUFFERING PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE... Romans 4:5**



As the rule rather than the exception, first-century Christians experienced extreme suffering. The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 5:2-5 that we must overcome and grow through our trials. Rejoicing in our suffering is not an easy response but we know God uses life's challenges to build character. Problems we encounter will develop perseverance—which in turn will strengthen our character, deepen our trust in God, and develop greater hope for future sufferings we may face.

Perseverance is the Bible's description for resilience. People who are resilient are able to withstand and survive from difficult circumstances. They are strong, flexible, and buoyant; able to rebound with relative ease. These are the people who are still standing after experiencing a devastating blow. How do they achieve that skill, to not only survive through stormy weather, but to thrive?

Studies teach that resilience is a set of acquired skills. It involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone. Life is harder than we expect and pain comes to us all. We have to be prepared to stand firm against the disappointments and hardships of life.

We are not alone in this world as God is our strength and our comfort. He gives us the Bible as a roadmap to manoeuvre the bumpy roads we encounter. He gives us the Holy Spirit to teach and transform us into His likeness.

We have a choice for how to respond to the trials and disappointments we experience. The more we can leverage challenges as opportunities to grow, the more resilient we are likely to become.

**Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**  
James 1:4

## CANADA'S PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Canada's Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) was established in 2009 as a multi-stakeholder national mechanism that coordinates and advises on areas of propriety requiring concerted action. It has national oversight and leadership and is comprised of more than 700 members representing local to national levels of governance, multiple sectors and organizations to provide a whole-of-society perspective to reducing risk.

In 2015, along with 186 other countries from all over the world, Canada endorsed a post-2015 Hyogo Framework, known as the United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030). DRR is defined as a systematic, whole-of-society approach to identifying, assessing and analyzing the causal effects of disasters and disaster based on risk assessment.

**Public Safety Canada** hosts an Annual National Roundtable for Disaster Risk Reduction, which provides a valuable opportunity for discussion on implementing the Sendai Framework.

### VISION

- A safer and more resilient Canada through the reduction of risks and leveraging of capacities and opportunities across all levels of government, the private sector, academia, non-governmental organizations, professional associations, Indigenous groups, and the general public.

### OBJECTIVES

- To work in an integrated manner to reduce risk, vulnerability and impacts of natural and non-natural disasters to Canadians;
- Provide a coordinating mechanism for DRR across sectors and using our existing networks; and
- To support stakeholders with relevant knowledge and information.

[ps.drr-rrc.sp@canada.ca](mailto:ps.drr-rrc.sp@canada.ca)



## EMERGENCY RESPONSE HELPER TRAINING AVAILABLE

Posted on: October 23, 2018  
By Lawrence Gleason, Local Press Writer  
Photo by Lawrence Gleason

Marg Pollon is the founder of Bridges of Love Ministry that helps in community disasters. The ministry created a disaster readiness course now available.

[Read More...](#)

## South Centre Mall Emergency Fair - October 21



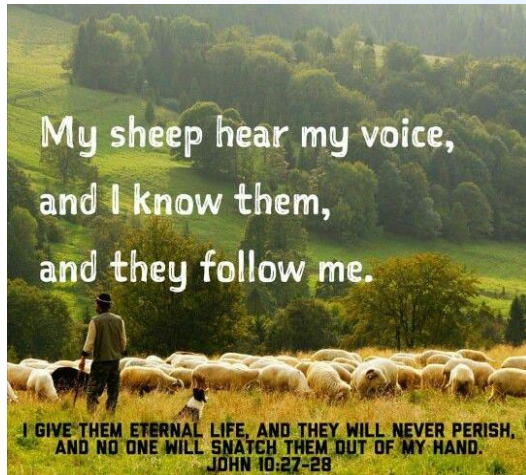




# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – October, 2018

MY SHEEP LISTEN TO MY VOICE; I KNOW THEM, AND THEY FOLLOW ME. John 10:27



What if we faced a life-or-death decision involving two unknown paths? One path leads to a longer, more fulfilled life and the other leads to a painful, unsatisfying existence with ultimate death. Would we base our decision on which path to follow by our feelings; or would we investigate various options and seek advice from those who might have better understanding, for the best path to follow? Some might follow their feelings, but those who are wise, would follow guidance from those whom they trust with more knowledge and experience.

We have a trustworthy guide available to us. If Jesus is who He claims to be, then He is the only one who knows the absolute truth about life—both on earth and for eternity. The words in the Bible provides us with the only advice based on absolute truth.

It is this truth that the apostle John brings to us in this book. John's Gospel offers a conclusive demonstration that Jesus was, and is, the very heaven-sent Son of God and the only source of eternal life.

Those who identify with Jesus hear his voice and come to know and trust in Him. They follow in love, wanting only to be in relationship with Him.

*"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand" John 10:28*

## GOT IT COVERED!!

In recent years, Alberta has been ground zero for unprecedented losses, in Canada.

Glenn McGillivray, managing director of the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, reported in the [Globe and Mail](#), May 2018, six out of 10 natural disasters (events that caused a minimum \$25-million of insured damage) have taken place in Alberta, with the biggest currently sitting at \$3.6-billion insured. Seven of the top 10 costliest natural catastrophes in Canadian history have occurred in Alberta, generating \$8.2-billion in insured damage and considerably larger economic losses. All have occurred since 2009.

He goes on to say, while we cannot stop the wind from blowing, the rain from falling or lightning from igniting the boreal, we most certainly can take action to prevent a natural event from intersecting with the built environment and becoming a disaster.

The next question, of course, is how?

He states, the answer lies in the implementation of a holistic program for natural-disaster mitigation that involves many stakeholders, including all levels of government, academia, private industry, and property owners.

This must be addressed to have any hope of taming the trend to more and larger losses related to severe weather in Alberta. We cannot have business as usual!



## INSPIRED

Last month, Bridges of Love was profiled on Darrel Janz's program, "Inspired"

If you missed the airing, please log in to [CTV's Website](#) to catch our segment as well as additional inspiring stories about others who are making a difference in their communities.



## CERT Training Summits

The CERT basic training course is delivered as a classroom-based lecture, discussion, demonstration, and hands-on experience to ensure participants acquire knowledge as well as practical skills.

The eight modules are taught over two Saturdays by professionals who offer their expertise, experiences, and training. The Friday evening Key-note session varies from Summit to Summit.

Topics covered in past events:

Alberta Hazards, Pandemic Preparedness, Tornadoes, Hail Storms, Volunteer Liabilities, Financial Preparedness, and Electromagnetic Pulse attack.



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – August, 2018

**“LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED” John 14:1**

“Let not your heart be troubled;  
you believe in God, believe also  
in Me. In My Father’s house are  
many mansions; if it were not so,  
I would have told you. I go to  
prepare a place for you. And if I  
go and prepare a place for you, I  
will come again and receive you  
to Myself; that where I am, there  
you may be also.  
John 14:1-3

Jesus’ words show that the way to eternal life, is prepared and secure. These verses are rich with promises for what He has prepared for those that believe and love Him. Our life and eternal destiny with God is secure through Jesus Christ.

For the past year, we have been praying for God to prepare a place for Bridges of Love. We were initially looking for a home where we could live as well as have room for the ministry. Six months ago we came across a former Law Office that appeared perfect for the ministry with a generous basement that could be finished as our residence. After looking into this possibility, however, we could not purchase this Commercial property personally unless we rezoned and then they would not let us make any changes to build a suite downstairs. Bridges of Love would have to purchase the property to make it feasible.

We were told properties did not move too quickly in Claresholm, so we felt confident God would save the property until we had our funds in place. Fund raising efforts immediately went into action through “Operation Stone Soup.” Our first activity to raise awareness of our intentions was an invitation to introduce Bridges of Love to the Claresholm Ministerial. There was good attendance at their meeting where the vision for Bridges of Love and The Shepherd’s Staff was shared. We were indeed optimistic that this was God’s plan and we were being obedient.

## ANSWERED PRAYER

After two years of ups and downs trying to sell our one bedroom condominium in Calgary, it finally sold June 10. So much prayer had gone into this sale from many, so we were all giving praise to the Lord for answered prayer, believing His timing was perfect. The buyer wanted possession on July 4 so that gave three weeks to pack and find another residence. Since the Shepherd’s Staff was clearly what God had called us to, we knew Claresholm was our destination. Once we were settled, we would step-up our fund-raising efforts for the former Law office.

A duplex with a finished basement was purchased as our home and temporary location for Bridges of Love. Since our office belongings were stored for over a year, we wanted to move it from the MI Box as soon as possible, in order to not incur more expense.

Upon arriving in Claresholm, a stop was made at the Post Office, to secure a Postal Box #. The Post Office, located across the street from the former Law office, was also next to the Real Estate Company that listed the property. The ‘For Sale’ sign was laying on the grass so we made an inquiry whether there was any interest in the property. Much to our disappointment, we were told the property just sold and the sign would be going up shortly. By the time we drove away, the sign was indeed posted, July 4<sup>th</sup>, our moving day.

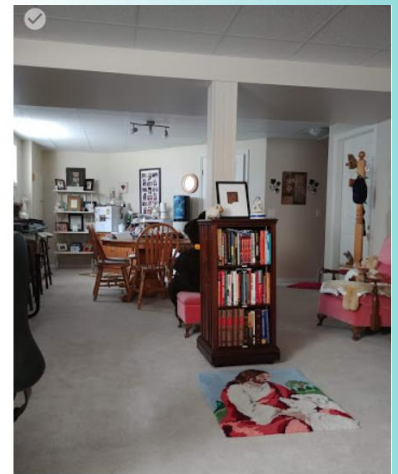


**YOU BELIEVE IN GOD,  
BELIEVE ALSO IN ME.**

Even though this news was not what we planned for or expected; God ways are not our ways. We know He has us and Bridges of Love here for His purposes.

Oswald Chamber’s daily devotional for July 4<sup>th</sup> read...  
“Do not fret—it only causes harm” Psalm 37:8

*Fretting rises from our determination to have our own way. Our Lord never worried and was never anxious, because His purpose was never to accomplish His own plans but to fulfill God’s plans.*



The Shepherd’s Staff

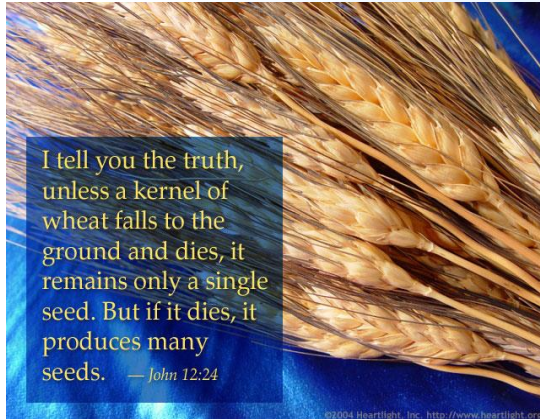




# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – July, 2018

“JESUS REPLIED. THE HOUR HAS COME FOR THE SON OF MAN TO BE GLORIFIED” John 12:23



This is a beautiful picture of the necessary sacrifice of Jesus. Unless a kernel of wheat is buried in the ground, it will not become a blade of wheat producing many more seeds.

John Piper shares in his article, “Dying as a means of Loving” is the way we see Jesus and the way we show Jesus. He reveals himself to us as a Person who goes to glory and bears much fruit by dying—by hating his life in this world. That’s what we see. And then he says, “Follow me. Die with me. Hate your life in this world with me. Serve me.” And if we do, we show Christ to the world. Christ means to be seen by every people group in the world. And the way he means for it to happen is by our becoming like him in his dying so that others may see him in us.

The way is hard and glorious. If we see only the hard part, we miss the power and the freedom. If we see only see the glorious part, we will minimize the sacrifice.

The secret of a disciple’s life is devotion to Jesus Christ, and the characteristic of that life is its seeming insignificance and its meekness. Yet it is like a grain of wheat that “falls into the ground and dies”—it will spring up and change the entire landscape.

## WISDOM FROM OSWALD CHAMBERS

The Christian Church should not be a secret society of specialists, but a public manifestation of believers in Jesus.

## DYING AS A MEANS OF LOVING

After two years trying to sell our condo in Calgary, God’s timing is now! PTL



As many know, we are optimistic and excited to expand Bridges of Love, by purchasing a facility in Claresholm, AB. Our fund raising initiative “[Operation Stone Soup](#)” has been on-going for several months. The facility is still available so we will continue our efforts with great gusto, once we get settled. In the main time, we have purchased a half-duplex in Claresholm, which will accommodate our office.

Five years this month since the 2013 Alberta Floods. I am sure this devastating event is still very fresh in many people’s minds, especially those who were directly affected by the raging waters.

The Government of Canada’s Get Prepared website shared, “In Alberta, a tornado can strike quickly with significant damage. Wildfires can threaten communities and restrict movement. Heavy rains can cause flash flooding. In addition to natural disasters there are other types of risks such as power outages, and industrial and major transportation incidents. There is also the possibility of intentional acts including terrorism on Canadian soil. These hazards could happen in your community.” **Are you ready?**



## BRIDGES OF LOVE “TRAIN THE TRAINER”

### Community Preparedness

The Shepherd’s Staff facility will provide training, resources, and mentoring for communities across Canada to be ready to respond to any disaster. A framework for a proven and tested emergency training system (CERT), and a resource distribution system, provides solutions that will equip communities to be prepared **BEFORE** disaster strikes.

### “OPERATION STONE SOUP”

*By working together, with everyone contributing what they can, greater good is achieved.*



CERT is a grass roots strategy that is both practical and realistic, strengthening community safety and preparedness, through increased civic participation.

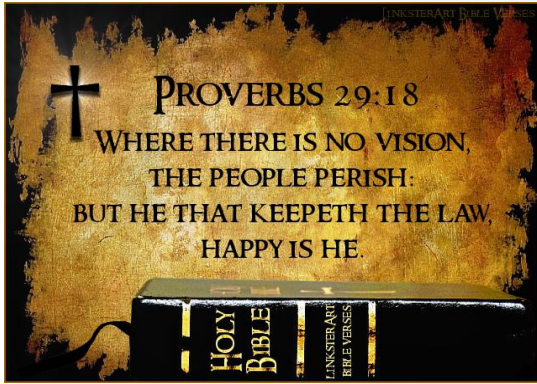




# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – June, 2018

**“BUT HE THAT KEEPETH THE LAW, HAPPY IS HE. Proverbs 29:18b**

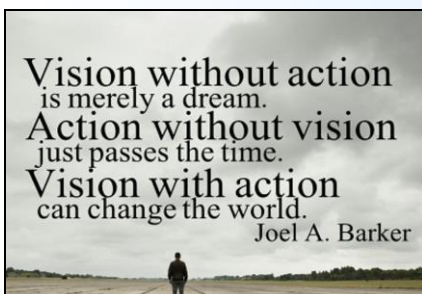


Solomon, left a legacy of written wisdom in three books of the Bible – Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. In these books, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he gives practical insights and guidelines for how to live according to Godly wisdom.

As we read Proverbs, we understand that knowing God is the key to wisdom. A successful relationship with God counts for eternity. Everything else is perishable. All our resources, time, and talents come from God so we should strive to use them wisely.

Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained.” This verse underscored the importance of honouring God’s revelation. “Vision” is speaking of ‘prophetic’ vision – the revealed Word of God being proclaimed to them. The second half of the verse, “Blessed is the one who keeps the law” points God’s people to the Law and calls them to repentance.

When God’s word is not being faithfully taught so that people understand its claim on their lives, they cast off restraint—and give themselves over to sin.



## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD

On behalf of Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Senior Officials Responsible for Emergency Management (SOREM), we are pleased to inform you that you have been selected as a recipient of the inaugural Emergency Management Exemplary Service Award. Congratulations!



The Emergency Management Exemplary Service Award is a prestigious recognition for exceptional service and achievement across Canada to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters. As a partnership between provincial, territorial and federal governments, the award recognizes recipients who have achieved excellence in their respective fields. Across Canada, there are many deserving individuals and groups working on emergency management, such as community-based volunteers, people working in all levels of government in emergency management organizations, and Indigenous communities.



MLS® # C4161186



## CAN YOU IMAGINE?

A space dedicated to building **Bridges of Love.**

We wait on God's timing, God's provisions, and God's revelation.

**“OPERATION STONE SOUP”**  
By working together,  
with everyone contributing  
what they can,  
greater good is achieved.



**Your contribution to the pot~**  
**WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**





# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – May, 2018

## “I AM MAKING EVERYTHING NEW!” Revelation 21:5

*“He who was seated on the throne said,  
“I am making everything new!”  
Then he said, “Write this down, as these  
words are trustworthy and true.”*

Revelation 21:5

Jesus promised to make everything new one day. The Bible begins with the majestic story of His creation of the universe, and then concludes with His creation of a new heaven and a new earth. When we are with God, with our sins forgiven and our future secure, we will be like Christ. We will be made perfect in Him.

Out of a world, so full of distress and despair, and overshadowed by clouds of sin, will emerge the new world. What God creates in the new heaven and the new earth will surpass anything imagined as written in 1 Corinthians 2:9.

***“No eye has seen, no ear has heard,  
no mind has conceived what God has  
prepared for those who love him.”***

This world is not all there is. The best is yet to come for those who believe in Christ's death and resurrection and put their faith in Him. All who reject God's message are missing the mark, no matter how wise the world thinks they are.

When we allow Christ to function as Lord of our life and the Holy Spirit is active to do His work in us, life no longer consists of merely doing good works for God. Instead, the Christian life proves to be an exciting adventure, walking in God's footsteps.

For these words are true and faithful; because they came from God, who cannot lie, and "faithful", because they would be fulfilled exactly as said.

We will meet Jesus face to face one day. There is no escape. Will we stand at the Judgement seat of Christ as Christians or before the Great White Throne as non-Christians. Where we spend eternity is the decision in this life for eternity.



MLS® # C4161186



We continue to pray for the doors to open for Bridges of Love to purchase the property in Claresholm, AB. The former Law Office has five offices, a communication hub, and a large center area that would be ideal for our CERT training. We are indeed optimistic and hopeful that this central location in Southern Alberta, will become a reality. It is truly a God sized project for a relatively small charity to undertake, but we know with God, all things possible!

### “Operation Stone Soup”

***“And do not forget to do good and to  
share with others, for with such  
sacrifices God is pleased.”***

Hebrews 13:16

## STONE SOUP RECIPE

- 1 very clean stone
- 4 cans (14 1/2 oz.) chicken broth
- 4 medium red potatoes, diced
- 1 yellow summer squash, chopped
- 1 cup cabbage, chopped
- 2 medium carrots, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 4 cups cubed cooked chicken
- 1 cup frozen cut green beans
- 1/2 cup quick-cooking barley
- 1 can (14 1/2 oz.) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 4 cups salad croutons
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Now that's it!

Let the stone work it's magic...



Collaboration is the key for success!  
“Operation Stone Soup” requires  
everyone to give what they can.  
Everyone will benefit!!

### The Shepherd's Staff

*Serving communities for God's Glory*

No donation is too small. Let the vegetables/meat flow to make the most delicious soup ever. We will celebrate, with a grand home-made soup luncheon, when our goal of **\$100,000** is met.

Thank you!



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – April, 2018

## “THOUGH IT LINGER, WAIT FOR IT” Habakkuk 2:3

*“For the revelation awaits an appointed time;  
it speaks of the end and will not prove false.  
Though it linger, wait for it;  
it will certainly come and will not delay.”*

Habakkuk 2:3

Habakkuk complained vigorously to God about the injustices in the world and God answered. “Be patient! I will work out my plans in my perfect timing.” It isn’t easy to be patient but God told Habakkuk to ‘wait for it.’ To trust God fully means to trust Him even when we don’t understand why events occur as they do.

Erwin McManus says God steers us in the direction of His kingdom, His purpose, and His passions. His desire is not to conform us, but to transform us. Not to make us compliant, but to make us creative. His intent is never to domesticate us, but to liberate us. Christ’s passion drove Him to the cross; the cross of Christ drives us to His passion (Phil. 2:13).

**“Living Proof of a Loving Saviour”** exhibiting God’s love to a watching world; providing opportunities and resources for the local church to connect with the community, continues to be our mission and passion. The vehicle has varied from mobilizing churches in support of the Micah Challenge (Poverty) - to the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI) and emergency training through Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Oswald Chambers says the only way to be obedient to **“the heavenly vision”** is to give our utmost for His Highest—our best for His glory. This can be accomplished only when we make a determined effort to continually remember God’s vision – to love Him and our neighbour.

The call of Jesus is one that demands **ACTION**. To claim we believe is simply not enough. We are called to participate in the mission of God and embrace the cause of Christ with faith, hope, and love. To belong to God is to belong to His Heart with a life fueled by passion, to follow Him.

Bridges of Love is ready, in obedience, to carry the heavenly vision forward.

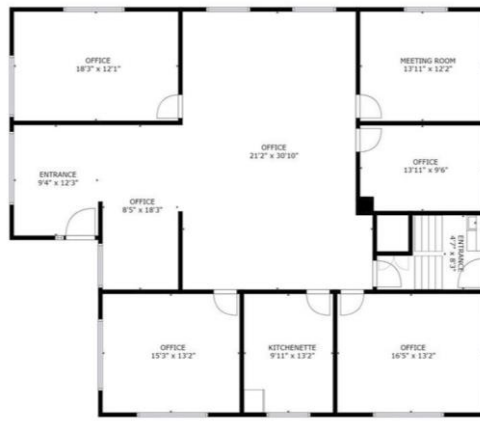
**“Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God;  
may Your good Spirit lead me on level ground.”**

Psalms 143:10

**“Though it linger, wait for it...”**



**“To God be the Glory”**



*“In the Bible the shepherd’s staff appears as a source of comfort, concern and compassion, often symbolizing the Spirit of God. In Moses’ hand, it was a sign of God’s miracles and deliverance. It parted seas. To David, the Lord’s rod and staff were a source of comfort. The staff had a type of aura about it. Shepherds used a variety of equipment and aids while tending their flocks, but the staff was mainly practical, used by shepherds to draw sheep together, guide them, rescue them and set them free from entanglement. It is no accident that the word shepherd has the words “she” and “he” in it. As women and men serving in his Kingdom we are living staffs used by the Lord to guide and lead his sheep as he would have. This book illustrates the key characteristics a living staff should have, as we also lead as good shepherds.” Excerpt from...*

**The Shepherd and His Staff: A Guide to the  
Biblical Principles and Practices of Leadership”  
by Theodore Mistrá**

## TO GOD BE THE GLORY

To God be the glory,  
Great things He hath done,  
So love He the world that He  
gave us His Son,  
Who yielded His life our  
redemption to win,  
And opened the life-gate that  
all may go in.

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,  
Let the people hear His voice;  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,  
Let the people rejoice;  
Oh, come to the Father, through  
Jesus the Son,  
And give Him the glory; great  
things He hath done.*

Oh, perfect redemption, the  
purchase of blood,  
To every believer the promise  
of God;  
The vilest offender who truly  
believes,  
That moment from Jesus a  
pardon receives.

Great things He hath taught us,  
great things He hath done,  
And great our rejoicing through  
Jesus the Son;  
But purer, and higher, and  
greater will be,  
Our wonder, our transport when  
Jesus we see.

Fanny Jane Crosby  
1820 - 1915





# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – March, 2018

**“OH, THAT YOU WOULD BLESS ME, AND ENLARGE MY TERRITORY!” 1 Chronicles 4:10**

*Jabez cried out to the God of Israel,  
“Oh, that you would bless me, and enlarge my  
territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me  
from harm, so that I will be free from pain.”  
And God granted his request.*

*1 Chronicles 4:9-10*

Jabez is remembered by a prayer request rather than by a heroic act. In his prayer, he asked God to bless him, help him in his work (enlarge his territory), to be with him in all he did, and to keep him from harm. Jabez acknowledges God as the focal point and reason for his work.

*“Sometime around three thousand years ago, one of history’s great nobodies decided to pray. When he looked at himself and his circumstances, he saw no reason for hope. But when he prayed, he prayed the boldest, most hopeful prayer he could imagine. And God answered. God is still answering.*

*The prayer of a man named Jabez is motivating millions of people today to seek the Lord in a new way, to cry out to Him for blessing, and to reach for a larger life in His service. Are you one? Then you too are an answer to Jabez’s prayer. Once you see what God can do through His most ordinary servants, you’ll never want to slide back into mediocre living.*

*For too long, Christians have drastically underestimated God’s desire to bless them and work through them to accomplish His will in the world. If Jabez were around today, he’d be quick to tell you that the words of his little prayer hold no magical powers. But he would also tell you that if you want to experience God’s greater purpose for your life—no matter how unpromising your circumstances might be right now—you’re just a prayer away.”*

*Bruce Wilkinson  
The Prayer of Jabez*

Over a year ago, Bridges of Love’s Board of Directors, prayed the prayer of Jabez. We are ready to trust God to enlarge our territory?

## Enlarging Bridges of Love’s Territory

For the past 14+ years, we were very fortunate of have our office located in St. John Lutheran Church (Bridgeland). It was indeed a special place where we were blessed and encouraged as we developed a ministry for God’s Glory. Our goal and passion to connect church and community through emergency preparedness and training evolved to where we are today.

During the 2013 Alberta Floods, the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI) was activated. Finding accommodation for 24 flood volunteers was a quick yet effective process, due to information stored in our Church Contact and Resource database, compiled prior to the disaster. FEPI Churches provided facilities with showers, another church provided cots, and others shared hot meals and man-power. Good did indeed come from a catastrophe.

Grants from the Calgary Foundation provided an opportunity to test the waters for Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. After nine successful CERT Summits across Calgary, the template is tested and proved beneficial, to share with other localities.

St. John Lutheran Church closed its doors last June. The new church owners are over-flowing with youth so needed additional space for Sunday school rooms. We have, therefore, been operating from our one bedroom condo since leaving our church office.

After a year of prayer and searching most communities across Southern Alberta, a possible site was found in Claresholm. This former law office has potential for Bridges of Love’s office, a CERT training center, as well as additional room for our residence. Our hope and prayer is that Bridges of Love can serve Calgary to Lethbridge from this central and high visibility location. [View](#)

This is truly a God sized project. We know disasters are on the rise, so there is urgency for communities, to be prepared and trained. We also believe God wants us to step out in faith to accomplish His agenda. We ask for your support to join us in prayer and action.



Some travelers come to a village, carrying nothing more than an empty cooking pot. Upon their arrival, the villagers are unwilling to share any of their food stores with the hungry travelers.

The travelers go to a stream and fill the pot with water. A large stone is then dropped into the pot, and placed over a fire. One of the villagers becomes curious and asks what they are doing. The travelers answer that they are making “stone soup”, which tastes wonderful. They would be delighted to share with the villager, although it still needs a little bit of garnish which they are missing, to improve the flavor.

The villager, who anticipates enjoying a share of the soup, does not mind parting with a few carrots, which are added to the soup. Another villager walks by, inquiring about the pot, and the travelers again mention their stone soup which has not yet reached its full potential. The villager shares a little bit of seasoning. More and more villagers walk by, each adding another ingredient. Finally, the stone is removed from the pot, and a delicious and nourishing pot of soup is enjoyed by travelers and villagers alike.

**Moral of the Story...**  
*By working together, with everyone contributing what they can, greater good is achieved.*



# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – February, 2018

“ALWAYS BE PREPARED...” 1 Peter 3:15

Always be ready  
to give an explanation  
to anyone who asks you  
for a reason  
for your hope.

1 Peter 3:15



*“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord.  
Always be prepared to give an answer to  
everyone who asks you to give the reason for the  
hope that you have. But do this with  
gentleness and respect.”*

1 Peter 3:15

Many first century followers of Christ were suffering, being abused and persecuted for believing in and obeying Christ. Peter knew persecution firsthand. Beaten and jailed, Peter had been threatened often, but he knew Christ and nothing could shake his confidence, in his risen Lord.

The scriptural mandate to ‘be prepared to give an answer’ is not just to help us effectively communicate the gospel, but to arm us with the tools to resist certain nagging doubts. We need to fortify our faith when we encounter moments of weakness and bombarded by negative external influences.

Truth is a casualty of our popular culture. When truth goes, the authority of the gospel is undermined. Our postmodern culture teaches that truth and morality are relative, that there is no such thing as absolute truth.

When we suffer for doing what is right, remember that following Christ is a costly commitment. He suffered for us; as His followers, we should expect nothing less.

Norman L. Geisler, Frank Turek; “I Don’t have Enough Faith to be an Atheist”, Crossway Books, 2004.

## ALBERTA HAZARDS

### Earthquakes

You cannot prepare for everything, so it is important to know the hazards which are most prevalent in one’s area. Preparation for those threats will give added protection for family and community. One such threat is earthquake.

An earthquake is a sudden slipping or movement of a portion of the Earth’s crust or plates, caused by a sudden release of stresses. Earthquake epicenters are usually less than 25 miles below the Earth’s surface and are accompanied and followed by a series of vibrations. Earthquakes occur without any obvious warning.

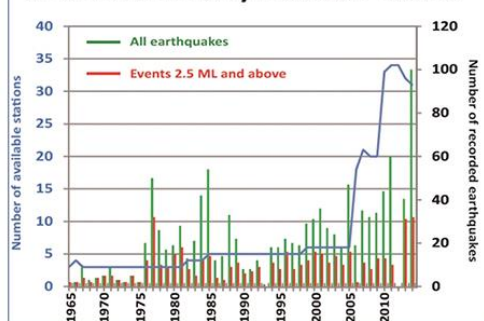
The reason earthquakes are such a risk is because shaking ground can:

- Cause buildings to move off of their foundations or collapse.
- Damage utilities, structures, and roads.
- Cause fires and explosions.
- Cause structural instability, such as dam failures that can trigger flash floods.

Historically, Alberta has been a seismically quiet part of North America. The federal government began serious monitoring of Alberta seismic activity in the mid-1960s.

An over-night earthquake on July 6, 2017 left some Calgarians shaken and stirred. Even though earthquake disaster is minimal in our locality, travel makes us more vulnerable, while visiting other parts of the world.

Alberta Seismicity 1965 to Present



## I SURVIVED THE MEXICO CITY EARTHQUAKE...THIS IS MY STORY

By Devon VanHouten-Maldonado

I was at home in Roma neighborhood when the 7.1 magnitude earthquake hit Mexico City on September 19, 2017, exactly 32 years after the 1985 tragedy that killed thousands. There was no warning that the quake was coming, despite the fact that the capital boasts one of the most advanced earthquake alarms in the world.

The first tremble from beneath the earth was minor, and I thought it was a truck passing or the metro slithering underneath—normal things that make the streets rumble in this megalopolis. But the second shock hit with a force that launched me to my feet. The house swayed and twisted as if it were made of paper, and the city erupted into a cacophony of sirens and sounds of destruction as I stumbled out the front door.

Suddenly, I was shirtless and shoeless in the street with my neighbors, being thrown back and forth by the ground that seemed to turn to liquid.

As we reeled in the street, the smell of gas seeped out of the front gate of our *vecindad*, a condo-style building with small houses sharing a courtyard and a gated entrance. “Shut the gas and turn off the electricity, there’s a leak!” shouted one neighbor.

The chaos and noise only growing until the city descended into total gridlock.

[For the rest of the story...](#)





# BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – January, 2018

**“PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU; MY PEACE I GIVE YOU.”**

**John 14:27**

*Peace I leave with you;*  
**MY PEACE I GIVE YOU.**  
*I do not give to you as the world gives.*  
*Do not let your hearts be troubled and*  
**DO NOT BE AFRAID.**

JOHN 14:27 NIV

Looking back at the early church, the impact and accomplishments of the early believers was strong despite lack of adequate resources. They were very ordinary men and women for the most part, trying to make a difference, through fierce opposition. Despite severe persecution, they emerged victorious.

Today, in our setting, we have every resource imaginable to assist with our Christian walk, but there is still so many forces at war within us. Only through the peace of God can we overcome these hostile forces to bring comfort in place of conflict. Jesus says He will give us that peace if we are willing to accept it from Him.

The end result of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives is a deep and lasting peace. As we begin a New Year, most yearn for this peace through every circumstance, in our daily lives. True peace is not found in positive thinking, in absence of conflict, or in good feelings. It comes from knowing that God is in control and allowing Him to guard our hearts against anything that robs us of His everlasting peace.

So what was the secret of the early church? There was no secret. Their faith was a very simple one of God's people proclaiming the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit...and confirming it with holy lives.

Are we missing the power and work of the Holy Spirit to unleash God's power to see transformed lives?

## PREPAREDNESS + TRAINING = PEACE

Complacency is perhaps one of the biggest challenges we face in our emergency action plans. Immediately following a disaster, we are eager to improve in our emergency preparedness but it doesn't take long before we forget the experiences and planning efforts.

When it comes to personal safety, complacency can be a literal “killer” for each one of us. There is much danger in going into “autopilot” not worrying what tomorrow might bring. We only have to spend a little time looking back over the past ten years to see the trend that has emerged for disasters all over the world. This trend is the new norm so it is dangerous to put our preparedness planning on the back shelf in hopes that it is never needed.

### Solution

One technique found to be effective in battling complacency is to investigate what the professionals say regarding personal and community preparedness. Before Christmas, Bridges of Love received a letter from the Honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Public Safety Canada expressing affirmation for CERT training.

*“First allow me to congratulate you on the progress that you have made in developing a successful community training program and hosting nine CERT Summits over the past two years. Initiatives to strengthen emergency preparedness and response at the local level are critical for building resilient communities. As I mentioned in my statement on the International Day for Disaster Reduction, every one of us has a role to play in building a safer and more resilient society. I sincerely commend your contribution to this collective responsibility.”*

## WHAT IS IN YOUR CUP?

You are holding a cup of coffee when someone comes along and bumps into you making you spill your coffee everywhere.



**Why did you spill the coffee?**

**“Well, because someone bumped into me, of course!”**

**Wrong answer...**

**You spilled the coffee because there was coffee in your cup.**

**Had there been tea in the cup, you would have spilled the tea.**

**What occupies the space in the cup is what will spill out...**

**Therefore, when life comes along and shakes us, whatever is inside will come out. It's easy to hold on, until we get rattled.**

**So we have to ask ourselves...**

**What's in my cup when life gets tough? What spills out?**

**Is it joy, gratefulness, peace, & humility or is it anger, bitterness, with harsh and negative words?**

**We choose the reaction!**

**When life overwhelms, let our cup be over-flowing with the fruits of the spirit & God's peace.**