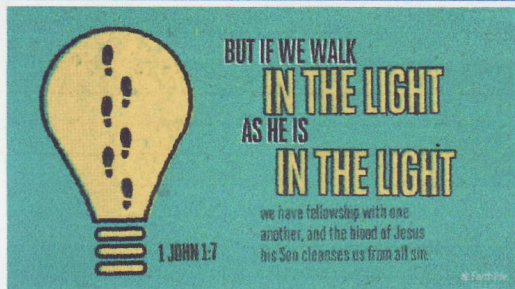




BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – January, 2023

“BUT IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT AS HE IS IN THE LIGHT” 1 John 1:7



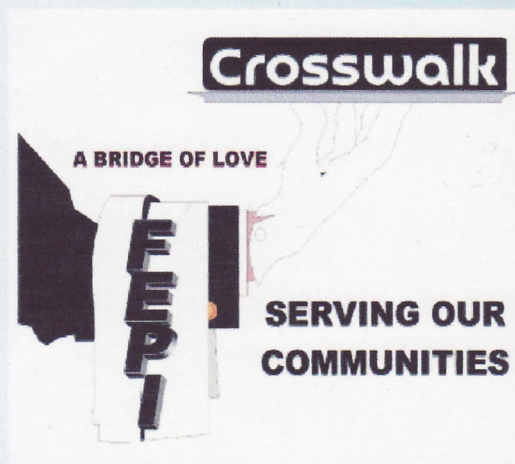
1 John 1:7 is a verse Bridges of Love has treasured since we began this ministry in 2003. A book that made an impact during those early years of ministry was written by Charles M. Sheldon. He asked the probing question, “*What would Jesus do?*” and then challenged his congregation to consider this question before engaging in all activities. No one in town was left untouched by this brief, probing question, as they learned to walk “*In His Steps.*”

So often we get caught up and busy with the tasks that we are given and neglect the person we are serving. This lesson came to light last fall, while in the process of hiring, our first staff member. The first candidate we invited to join as Project Coordinator, gave his notice after the first day! He said he felt like a ‘fish out of water’ as he learned more about our mission and vision. We invited him to reconsider and come and talk further, but he emailed saying he would not return. His last sentence was, “He felt Bridges of Love had become an idol!”

These words hit me deeply as my desire has always been to serve the Lord with His Love and to walk in the Light. We all want success in what God has given us, but God’s success is not always what we expect. His desire for us, is to seek Him in all things, loving Him with our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength and to love our neighbour as ourselves.

My prayer for 2023. Lord, help me to **LOVE** you more and to have a stronger walk in the footsteps of the Saviour.

FAITH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INITIATIVE



SEEING...IS BELIEVING!

Bridging the gap between the church and the community demands a tangible reality. A spiritual bridge involves a physical reality. People need to see to believe! Dr. R. Lewis

How do we move from a position of estrangement, to being embraced by the community?

“**CROSSWALK**” is an opportunity for FEPI Churches to serve and focus on the community in which it is found. Church members become passionate to serve when they discover a calling higher than themselves. A calling that falls in line with the Greatest Commandment - to love God and our Neighbour (Matthew 22:37-39).

“**Crosswalk**” a FEPI extension, is an online portal located on Bridges of Love’s website. This secure site is a non-threatening place to post a need for those going through a difficult time. This need is posted on the site with no name visible. When churches see the post, they decide whether they wish to fill the request, or perhaps they need other churches in the community to become involved. Once a decision to assist is made, information on the individual is shared from Bridges of Love Ministry making that initial connection. www.bridgesoflove.net

CERT CANADA SUMMIT Jan. 27, 28 & Feb. 4, 2023

As per our usual format, the Summit begins with a Friday evening dessert session with Key-note Speaker. We are very pleased to have Leann Hackman-Cary, CEO of Economic Development, presenting “**Fostering Disaster Resilience.**”



In addition to her work at EDA, Leann heads up MYD Global, with a focus on community capacity building, resilience, and recovery. She also authored the “**Master Your Disaster**” series of guidebooks, designed to help individuals, businesses, and communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. Books available.

Location: Highwood Golf Course
Date: January 27, 2023
Time: 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Cost: \$20.00 (No charge with CERT Training)

****Bring a friend and receive 25% off your book purchase.**

CERT Training

January 28 & February 4, 2023
Register: bridgesoflove.net



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION - FEBRUARY 2023

“CALLING THE TWELVE TO HIM, HE SENT THEM OUT TWO BY TWO...” Mark 6:7



AND JESUS CALLED TO HIM THE TWELVE, AND BEGAN TO SEND THEM OUT TWO BY TWO, AND GAVE THEM AUTHORITY OVER THE UNCLEAN SPIRITS. (MARK 6:7)

Jesus had a team of disciples who went everywhere with him. In this passage from Mark, Jesus sent his disciples out to begin doing their own ministry in team of two. Christian ministry is teamwork with a difference because followers are just as important as leaders. God uses the efforts of each team member in equally important ways, all unique and special. A collective vision is shared, born of the team members' collective wisdom, submission, and accountability.

An [interview](#) was recently conducted with Laura King, regional director of Canada for the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). They posed two questions to read her take on challenges and opportunities facing disaster management in Canada.

1. *“What do you see as the biggest challenge facing emergency manager and/or disaster management systems.”*
2. *“Similarly, what do you see as the biggest opportunity?”*

Her response, “Communication! We know the first responders to disaster are always regular people – neighbours, passersby, family members. Helping people understand how to prepare, what to do, and how to recover will reduce risks, impacts and costs – both financial and human.”

We have a unique opportunity to serve through CERT training. We pray we will not experience another disaster, but being prepared before an event, brings opportunities and peace of mind.

BRIDGES OF LOVE'S CERT CANADA SUMMIT

FRIDAY EVENING - January 27, 2023

Welcome: Marg Pollon, ED Bridges of Love (BoFL) Ministry
 Opening Prayer: Sandy Widmer, BoFL Board Director
 Bridge Over Troubled Water: Tom Pollon, BoFL Board Director
 Gerrit Swanepoel, BoFL Project Coordinator – Music Video
 The Order of the Red Blanket: Tribute to Lt. Col. Irene Stieckland
 Guesting: Brenda Walsh, Deputy Mayor
 Key-note Speaker: Leann Hackman-Carty
“Fostering Disaster Resilience”



Leann Hackman-Carty's signed copy "MASTER YOUR DISASTER" will be available. \$25.00

Thank you for coming!
We appreciate your support for building resilient communities!

Leann Hackman-Carty has been the CEO of Economic Developers Alberta since 2009. In 2014, Leann completed a project with 11 Southern Alberta food impacted communities. In 2015-17, she worked with the Fort McMurray region on business and economic recovery by setting up and operating the business hotline; validating businesses for Red Cross emergency relief; and leading a 10-member economic recovery assessment team to the region. In 2019 she updated the Community Toolkit for Economic Recovery and Resiliency (Canadian version) to help communities prepare for and recover from economic disruptions and through this resiliency training program to Canada in 2017.



SATURDAY – January 28, 2023

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM WELCOME & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM CERT ORGANIZATION

How to conduct the continual data-gathering and evaluation process at the scene of a disaster, documentation and introduction to IC5 are covered in this unit.



Marg Pollon, founder, and Executive Director for Bridges of Love Ministry, has a medical background as a Laboratory Technologist. Pandemic preparedness was the beginning for preparing churches to be ready to care for their community. Since 2006, the focus has broadened to cover any disaster through Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. Marg and husband Tom have 3 grown children and 4 terrific grandchildren.



Judy McMillan-Evans is the principle of McMillan-Evans Consulting and possesses over 35 years of business ownership in the technical service, electronic manufacturing, and business consulting education industries. She is an entrepreneur, adult educator, organizational coach, group facilitator and project manager. Along with consulting and facilitating, Judy instructs and develops courses for MRU, Bow Valley College, SAIT, and Community Futures organizations of Alberta.

10:45 AM – 2:15 PM DISASTER MEDICAL OPERATIONS, UNIT 1 - 2

In a disaster, there may be more victims than rescuers, and assistance from medical professionals may not be immediately available. Topics covered include treatment for life-threatening conditions, airway obstruction, bleeding, and shock. For other less urgent conditions, the greatest good for the greatest number, conducting simple triage and rapid treatment.



Geoff is a retired Paramedic who worked mainly in Calgary & Airdrie and for 18 years, was on the frontlines. He also had experience in the remote rural setting which gave him an opportunity to practice without the support offered in the major centres. This provided an additional challenge to enhance his skills. He has been a field trainer, mentor, and preceptor to new medics as they entered the EMS field. In his free time, Geoff enjoys the outdoors and spending time with his 2 boys.

2:30 PM – 4:00 PM FIRE SAFETY & UTILITY CONTROLS

“Yourself, your family, then your neighbours!” Your own preparedness in an emergency will make all the difference in being able to assist your community.



Gerrit Swanepoel was born in Vryheid, South Africa, where his family ran a family farm. In 2008, he and his family immigrated to Canada, settling in High River. In 2017, they purchased their first piece of land and now own one of the largest aquaponic farms in Canada. Unfortunately, a year later, they lost their farm and operation to a catastrophic fire. Being prepared for whatever disaster may come, has now become a more personal journey. Gerrit has extensive and varied experience and training in project management.

“TWO BY TWO” PLEASE BRING A FRIEND!

SATURDAY February 4, 2023

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM PSYCHOLOGY OF TRAUMA

Caring for Yourself, Your Buddy, and Victims. This covers how to provide “psychological first aid” in response to the impact of disaster on rescuers and victims.



Anna Swanepoel, RPC, MPCC, CPICA
 Anna is an experienced Trauma Informed Registered Professional Mental Health Counselor with a demonstrated history of working with diverse cultures and the National Director of CPCA. Skilled in Crisis Counselling, Communication PTSD & Disaster PFA, Expressive Healing Art & Music, Stress Relief Therapy, Anxiety Relief, ADHD CBT, Business & Entrepreneur Mentoring.

10:45 AM – 12:15 PM LIGHT SEARCH & RESCUE

In this unit you will learn S & R size-up, conducting interior and exterior search operations, safe techniques for lifting, leveraging, cribbing, and victim removal.



V. Andrew McMillan completed his studies at the Justice Institute of British Columbia, with his Bachelor of Emergency & Security Management Studies degree. Andrew served his nation for more than a decade in the Canadian Forces, including two United Nations peacekeeping missions. As a volunteer of ground search and rescue, both in British Columbia and Alberta, Andrew has held various positions and roles from ground searcher, team leader, right through to search manager. Co-workers have described Andrew as unflappable and a calming force during incidents.

12:45 PM – 2:15 PM TERRORISM

Integrated National Security Enforcement Team - The RCMP has refocused its National Security Investigations Sections (NSIS) to become Integrated National Security Enforcement Teams) to increase the capacity for the collection, sharing and analysis of intelligence among partners.

SGT. Eyvi Smith & CPT. Sgt. Eyvi Smith is a twenty-year Member of the RCMP having served in a general duty capacity in the Yukon for eight years, and five years with the Crest Lakes Marine Security Enforcement Team based out of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Sgt. Smith has been posted for the past eight years with the Calgary Integrated National Security Team in charge of the Public Engagement Unit.

Cpl. Shawn MacDonald is an eighteen-year member of the RCMP. Cpl. MacDonald started his RCMP career in Rocky Mountain House, before being posted to Calgary where he worked in the RCMP Federal Drug Section and Federal Serious and Organized Crime. Cpl. MacDonald has been posted for the last eight years to the RCMP Integrated National Security Enforcement Team in Calgary.

2:30 PM – 4:00 PM FIRE SAFETY & UTILITY CONTROLS

In this unit you learn about: Fire Chemistry, Fire & Utility Hazards, Fire Suppression Safety, Hazardous Materials.



Randy Smith, Retired Fire Chief - Randy began his career in Fort McMurray, AB where he joined the Municipal Fire Department in 1980. During his career he had the opportunity to work in several communities such as Inuvik, Nunavut, Terrace BC, and Innisfil Ontario. He spent 41 years in the Fire Service, and 31 as a Chief Officer. Randy received the Exemplary Service Medal from the Government of Canada, and the Queens Golden Jubilee Service Medal for volunteer service.

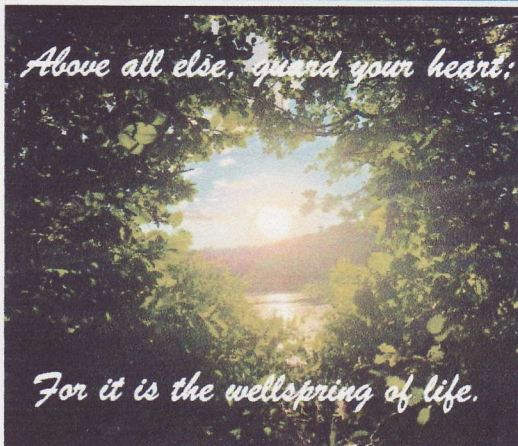


BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – March, 2023

“ABOVE ALL ELSE, GUARD YOUR HEART” Proverbs 4:23

Above all else, guard your heart;



For it is the wellspring of life.

Perhaps no book in the Bible has more practical wisdom and advice about how to think about and live our life daily than Proverbs. Proverbs is the “do” and “don’t” book of the Bible; filled with admonitions about what to do if we wish to have a life marked by goodness, honour, integrity, confidence, and virtue.

There is nothing more satisfying in life than doing God’s will, so we should do everything we can to keep in line, with what He desires for us. Solomon says in Proverbs 4:23, that we are to guard our hearts as everything we do, even accomplishing God’s purpose in our life, hinges on it. The Lord intends for us to guard our hearts by filtering our emotions, desires, thoughts, and responses through His Word, making sure we concentrate on those desires that will keep us on His path.

The heart is mentioned over 800 times in the Bible. The heart is seen as the center of emotions, feelings, moods, and passions. The heart functions as the source of thought, obedience, devotion, and intentionality. It represents the total person. Guarding our hearts means being wise and discerning in all we do, seeking Him as we protect ourselves from all the things that come to harm us.

Thank you to niece, Heather, who seeks and shares His love, through her spectacular nature photography!

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) TRAINING

This past month, Bridges of Love completed its first Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in our facility on Centre Street, in the town of High River.



Alberta’s CSF grant has trusted Bridges of Love to share our CERT & FEPI programs with communities across our Province. Completing our first CERT training were attendees from the diverse communities of Edmonton, Strathmore, Lyalta, Calgary, and High River. We look forward to our next training session, where citizens support the benefits of community engagement and readiness training before disaster strikes.



CERT is intended for anyone over 18 years of age. Disasters do not prefer any age group, race, religion, socioeconomic class, or position. We are all vulnerable when an overwhelming, catastrophic event strikes our region. Have we become complacent to the threats we face, without preparedness plans, and how best to care for our families and community? Register today for the next CERT training event.

CERT CANADA SUMMIT

Key-note Speaker, Leann Hackman-Carty, CEO Alberta Economic Development, set the CERT stage.



Leann's affirmation for CERT!

“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.”

“Master Your Disaster”

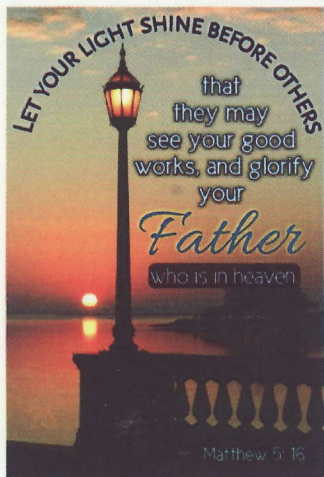
Your Readiness & Recovery Guide, available on Bridges of Love website ([SHOP](#)). \$25.00 includes Canadian postage.



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – April, 2023

“LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE OTHERS” Matthew 5:16



It is difficult to hide a city that sits on a hilltop. At night, its light can be seen for miles. Living for Christ, we also glow with **His LIGHT**, demonstrating to a watching world, **His LOVE.**

Jesus said, “Let your light shine before others” as no one lights a lamp just to hide under a basket. A lamp is meant to be placed on a stand to give light to everything around it.

We are all God’s children and are called to “give glory” to our heavenly Father through our good works”. This reminds us of the importance of our actions. Our actions allow us to let our light shine. Our actions allow us to share the light of Jesus with those around us.

What does it mean to let your light shine to bring glory to the Father? Being the light to others can come from a variety of actions. Intentionally going out of one’s way to help others, without the cost of expecting something in return.

Simple ways to let your light shine ~

- ✓ Be a ‘Crosswalk’ supporter.
- ✓ Be there for a friend or stranger.
- ✓ Be friendly and a genuine encourager.
- ✓ Use your passion to help others.
- ✓ Share your optimism & gratitude.
- ✓ Share generously with others.
- ✓ Listen with intent.
- ✓ Empathize with others by putting yourself in their shoes.
- ✓ Be a beacon of God’s truth offering His hope and love.

“CROSSWALK” A FEPI EXTENSION

“CROSSWALK” was recently introduced as an extension of the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI). Crosswalk is intended as a serving opportunity to meet the needs of individuals/families when circumstances are overwhelming, and help is unattainable from traditional sources. Crosswalk provides opportunities for the local church to connect with their neighbours; crossing with His Light and demonstrating His love, in tangible ways.



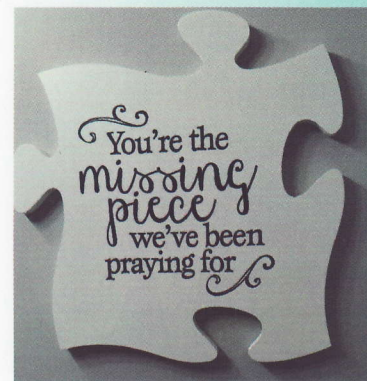
“Crosswalk” an on-line portal located on Bridges of Love’s website, provides a secure non-threatening place to post a request, where no personal information is seen by those viewing. When churches visit Crosswalk, they choose a request in their community, where they have the capacity to meet the need or partnering with another church/es, is a great option! Once a decision is made, contact information is shared from Bridges of Love, connecting the individual/family with a caring church/s.

Who can participate in Crosswalk? Any FEPI church partner who agrees with Bridges of Love’s Statement of Faith.

Is there a cost? No, but financial support is essential for daily operations, so any help is always appreciated!

Is Bridges of Love ready to introduce Crosswalk to Alberta communities? No. In order, not to overwhelm any one church with too many requests, we require many churches to be involved. Be the bridge, lighting up your community with God’s LOVE.

MINISTRY POSITION



Office Location: High River,
Salary: \$25.00 per hour - One year contract position based on a 35-hour work week.

Education: Post-secondary education in Public Relations or related discipline.

Bridges of Love is hiring a full-time **Public Relations & Executive Director's Assistant** for a one-year contract to help complete the CSF Project “**The Power of Civil Society, Moving at the Speed of Trust**”. This position may extend to a full-time permanent staff member in the Spring of 2024.

Bridges of Love is seeking a creative communicator and innovative public relations strategist who is resourceful and comfortable working in a small team environment. This position reports directly to the Executive Director in support of the project objectives.

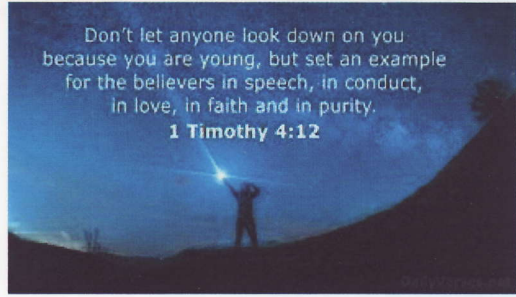
Please visit bridgesoflove.net/about for the full job description.



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – May, 2023

“DON'T LET ANYONE LOOK DOWN ON YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE YOUNG...” Timothy 4:12



Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.
1 Timothy 4:12

In the book of Timothy, Paul gives encouragement and instruction to Timothy, a young leader. Timothy was one of Paul's closest companions. Paul sent Timothy to the church at Ephesus to counter the false teaching that had arisen there. Timothy probably served for a time as a leader in the church at Ephesus and Paul hoped to visit him.

Living out our life in the world, we model our values demonstrating what we consider important and valuable. Timothy was a young man who was influenced by Godly believers who helped shape his life and promote his spiritual growth. Timothy became Paul's protégé and pastor of the church at Ephesus. As a young pastor, Timothy faced many pressures, conflicts, and challenges from the church and his surrounding culture. To counsel and encourage Timothy, Paul sent him a very personal letter.

Paul advised him on such practical topics as qualifications for church leaders, public worship, confronting false teaching, and how to treat various groups of people within the church. Right belief and right behaviour are essential for anyone who desires to lead or serve affectively no matter where their place of service.

This summer we are very fortunate to have a university student join our team. Bridges of Love is very thankful for this opportunity due to Alberta's CSF grant. We pray for Timothy, that this summer employment will be an exciting, rewarding, and perhaps life-altering experience!

FEPI CHURCH PARTNER

We are very pleased to renew High River Alliance Church as a Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI) partner.

For those who may not be familiar with our program, we invite you to visit our website at bridgesoflove.net. There you will find our FEPI Church Contact and Resource Assessment form. This easy to complete information document, gives critical data to help during times of disaster. For instance, your church may have showers which is not available in every facility. Every community church has unique resources to assist and once these resources are identified and catalogued, the process for accessing the help required is quick and the response expedited.



Once a church makes the decision to become a Bridges of Love FEPI partner, by completing the on-line FEPI Church Contact and Resource Assessment form, a Muster Sign is prepared for the new FEPI partner's church window. When neighbours see the sign in the window indicating this church cares and loves their community, one never knows what may transpire!

FEPI churches have an option to become a **“Crossroads”** partner. Crossroads is a FEPI extension helping community members through the challenges that everyday life may bring!

SUMMER STUDENT WELCOME



Timothy (TJ) Rugg is currently a computer science undergraduate student at the University of Alberta. Bridges of Love is very pleased to welcome TJ as a summer employee. He'll be performing various technical tasks where he looks forward to contributing to BofL's mission.

TJ grew up in High River and lived through the 2013 flood. He experienced first-hand the community's exceptional efforts to come together and support each other, so he has personal knowledge and understanding of the importance and impact of organizations like BofL.

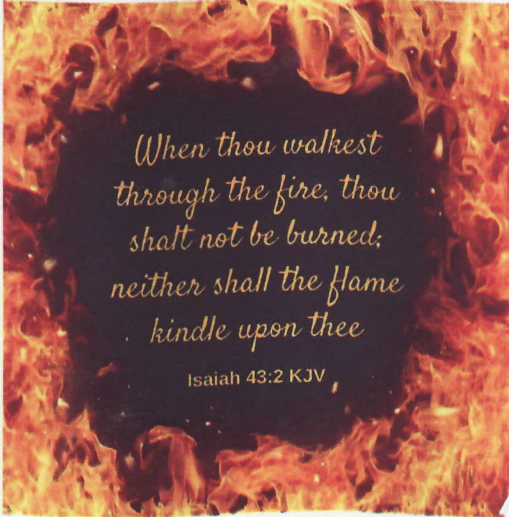
TJ is very excited to be able to give back through this opportunity, and he is incredibly glad to cultivate his personal skills while strengthening Alberta's crisis-readiness institutions.



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – June, 2023

“WHEN YOU WALK THROUGH THE FIRE, YOU WILL NOT BE BURNED...” Isaiah 43:2



Going through rivers of difficulty will either cause us to drown or force us to grow stronger. If we try to go through it under our own strength and have an unfavourable outcome, we suffer the consequences. If we allow God to go with us, however, He will protect, giving strength and peace to go through whatever the circumstance.

Albertans in many regions are experiencing devastating wildfires. Hot, dry conditions continue in many areas of the province. For wildfire updates, please call 310.4455 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Alberta.ca/firesmart.aspx states; preparing for the threat of wildfire is a shared responsibility. FireSmart is a framework designed to mitigate the risk of and educate residents and stakeholders regarding the potential for large uncontrollable wildfires near communities and critical infrastructure.

If you wish more information, please contact firesmart@gov.ab.ca. Bridges of Love was given introductory FireSmart booklets so we would also be happy to forward a copy to get you started on your wildfire preparedness planning. Give us a call to request your free copy.

Bridges of Love Ministry - 403.649.0087

BEE A FEPI CHURCH PARTNER

FEPI Registration

To sign up your church with Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI), please fill in the below form (Bridges of Love Ministry Society's FEPI Church Contact and Resource Assessment form).

Church Information

Church Name * Senior Pastor *

Enter your church's full name. Enter the full name of your church's senior pastor.

Church Address * Location City * Province *

Enter your church's address. Enter your city, town, or locality.

Postal Code * Office Phone Office Fax * Church Email Address *

4-1-1 3-1-1 3-1-1 3-1-1 3-1-1 3-1-1 3-1-1 3-1-1 3-1-1 3-1-1

Our church intends to be a FEPI partner (We are willing to be reached in the name of our community during and after a disaster)

24 Hour Emergency Contacts

Please enter the information of any emergency contacts.

Contact #	Contact Name	Position	24 Hour Phone	Email
Contact #1	Full name	Pastor	(303) 303-3333	contact@BridgesOfLove.ca
Contact #2	Full name	Pastor	(303) 303-3333	contact@BridgesOfLove.ca
Contact #3	Full name	Pastor	(303) 303-3333	contact@BridgesOfLove.ca

Church Resources

FEPI has a database of all churches and emergency services. During times of disaster, we can reference this database to notify emergency services for assistance in those areas in need. Please check the boxes for your church's resources.

Food Bank Elderly care services Day Care Diabetic Care Dialysis

Clothing Bank Homeless services Homeless shelter Homeless support services Homeless services

Emergency Planning Committee Fire Department Fire Department Fire Department Fire Department

Fire Department Fire Department Fire Department Fire Department

Fire Department Fire Department Fire Department Fire Department

Church Facility

Wheelchair accessible Air conditioning Heating Heating Heating

Communal kitchen Communal kitchen Communal kitchen Communal kitchen

Restrooms Restrooms Restrooms Restrooms

Prayer room Prayer room Prayer room Prayer room

Other services Other services Other services Other services

Church Volunteers

Please indicate which services you provide from your church and are able to provide in times of need.

Members of the church have been trained in disaster preparedness Members of the church have been trained in disaster preparedness Members of the church have been trained in disaster preparedness

The church has an emergency response plan The church has an emergency response plan The church has an emergency response plan

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Wrap-Up

Other areas of service:

Is there any other information you would like to provide to the community that you would like to be included?

Other notes:

Is there anything additional you'd like to add? (about the type of help your church can provide?)

I am an authorized church representative

I understand that the information shared on this form will be used by Bridges of Love Ministry to contact churches for disaster relief and to assist churches in need during times of disaster.

Thank you for completing Bridges of Love Ministry's FEPI Church Contact and Resource Assessment form!

SUBMIT

OKOTOKS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS EVENT

What a great experience participating in Okotoks EP Week activities. We appreciated being included as an Alberta Emergency Preparedness Stakeholder.



Speaking to young families, it was clear few had put much thought into their families or communities needs during a catastrophic event, often putting this planning on the back burner!

The children were excited to spin the "CERT Wheel" to answer questions for their family's preparedness plans. They were invited to ask their parents to have a 72-hr. kit & emergency plan ready for any disaster that might occur.

CERT Train-the-Trainer

Are you trained in one of BofL's CERT modules? If so, and you would like to become a qualified instructor, please attend our upcoming CERT Train-the-Trainer event.

May 30 & May 31, 2023
#6, 609 Centre St. SW
High River. T1V 2C2



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – July, 2023

“EACH OF YOU SHOULD USE WHATEVER GIFT YOU HAVE RECEIVED TO SERVE OTHERS” 1 Peter 4:10



As we celebrate **20 years** serving through Bridges of Love Ministry, many memories come to mind; cherished memories that will never be forgotten! One of these occasions took place while participating in the Micah Challenge, a global initiative providing useful tools for congregations seeking depth and connection through new commitments for community outreach. Micah 6:8 calls us to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God.

June 19, 2006, a group of Canadian and American Micah Challenge participants, along with many African nations; attended the Samaritan Strategy, an Eastern Africa Regional Training (Vision Conference) in Uganda. This compelling and transformational conference taught Biblical foundational truths for what God expects from His followers, which set the stage and direction, for building Bridges of Love.

As an exercise to practice the principles we were being taught, conference attendees were invited to consider an act of service, that could be shared with the Canadians and Americans in our group. As you can imagine, we didn't have many resources on which to draw, staying at a modest motel, not far from the conference centre. What act or service could we share with one another to demonstrate Christ's love?

Since arriving at our Ugandan residence, we learned hot water was a luxury enjoyed by few! After a few nights at the motel, however, a young man who served the guests, knocked on my door, sharing a large, yellow plastic container filled with hot water. What a wonderful treat! After inquiring with other conference attendees if they too, received this special delivery each evening, their response indicated, they were regretfully not as fortunate!

This made the decision for my act of service an easy one! With the yellow container of hot water arriving on que, my fellow Canadian and American attendees were asked to meet on the lawn to receive my act of love. They and the African conference attendees watching from the sideline, were surprised to experience and witness a foot washing, utilizing my treasured hot water from the yellow plastic container. What a memorable time as God's love was put into action.



In 2003, God gave me a vision and mission. Providing opportunities, resources, and open doors for the local church to show **“LIVING PROOF OF A LOVING SAVIOR”** to the community in which it is found, has remained constant.

Alberta Recovers

The Alberta Flood brought our greatest time of service through the ALBERTA.RECOVERS.ORG website. Who could have imagined the joy that resulted from such a devastating and catastrophic time! For a disaster survivor, they will acknowledge going through difficult times, brings out the best in people! The compassion, empathy, and generosity shown during the flood recovery efforts was truly remarkable and miraculous!

This season, we are once again reminded of the power of natural disasters! Through the wildfires of late, countless Alberta communities and Provinces across Canada are struggling to regain what has been lost. How can we help?

An online donation destination eliminates stockpiling. Those with items to share, post on Alberta Recovers. When Bridges of Love identifies a match with a wildfire victim's need, FEPI churches are given an opportunity to serve.

<p>Need help? If you have been affected by the 2023 Alberta Wildfires or need support, we'll do what we can to help you.</p>	<p>Submit a Request</p>
<p>Want to help out? We are looking for people who can donate money or goods, as well as those who can volunteer their time. You can view requests to donate to:</p>	<p>View Requests</p>
<p>If you're affiliated with a church, consider asking them to sign up for the next emergency preparedness retreat!</p>	<p>Register for FEPI</p>

ALBERTA RECOVERS
BOFL Donation Platform



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – August, 2023

"BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS" Galatians 6:2

*Bear one another's
burdens and so fulfill
the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:2*

Lord, help me to be there for my family and friends in the way You have always been there for me. Help me to encourage and care for them with compassion and kindness, with prayer, and actions. Help me to be a blessing so they may see You through me. Amen

As we bear one another's burdens, can we distinguish between "Compassion vs "Empathy?" According to Webster's Dictionary, empathy is our feeling of awareness toward other people's emotions and an attempt to understand how they feel. Whereas compassion is an emotional response to empathy or sympathy and creates a **desire to help!** How to we go from a position of empathy to the level of compassion, with a resulting desire to act?

The month of July has been a difficult one, as for the past three weeks, "shingles" has been my plight! My mom and sister both experienced this painful virus, but until I felt the pain that accompanies this disease myself, I could not truly understand what they had gone through! Perhaps, this is how compassion is developed; we must go through the experience, in order to be moved to action.

When it comes to disasters, we will not all go through the same catastrophic experience, such as a tornado. A similar encounter, however, where we can relate to what a person is experiencing and put ourselves in their shoes, can produce the spirit of compassion.

We are asking for churches and individuals to become involved in our newest endeavor, "**Alberta Recovers**". Please see our News Release for more information.

NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 1, 2023

Introducing "**Alberta Recovers**" - Bridges of Love Ministry Society pioneers an on-line donation platform for disaster victim assistance.

High River, AB - Bridges of Love, a nonprofit charitable organization is proud to announce the launch of its pilot program "Alberta Recovers," an innovative online donation management system designed to streamline and enhance assistance for those affected by disasters in the Alberta region.

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!

Key Features of "Alberta Recovers" include:

- **Seamless Donation Management:** "Alberta Recovers" provides an easy-to-use and secure platform for individuals, organizations, and businesses to make monetary contributions in support of disaster victims. Users can choose from various payment options and receive instant tax receipts for their charitable donations.
- **Real-Time Impact Tracking:** Donors can track the impact of their contributions in real-time. "Alberta Recovers" offers transparency by displaying how donations are utilized, giving donors confidence that their generosity directly benefits those affected by disasters.
- **Targeted Assistance:** The platform allows disaster victims to submit their specific needs, enabling Bridges of Love to allocate resources more efficiently and prioritize aid where it is needed most. Disaster victims' identity remains confidential to public viewing and only shares this information when a match is made.
- **Volunteer Coordination:** "Alberta Recovers" serves as a hub for volunteers to register their availability, training, and skills, facilitating a streamlined approach to disaster relief efforts.
- **Community Engagement:** The platform fosters a sense of community by enabling individuals/churches/businesses to connect with disaster victims, each other, share experiences, and offer support during challenging times.

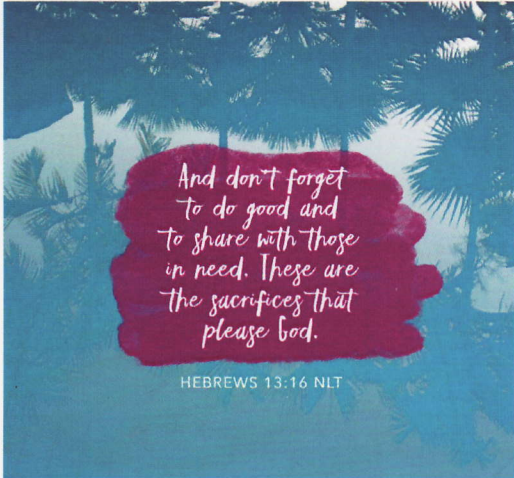
Amid the ongoing challenges faced by disaster-affected communities, "Alberta Recovers" aims to empower the spirit of compassion and togetherness, making it accessible and uncomplicated for people from all walks of life to contribute to the recovery and rebuilding process.



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – September, 2023

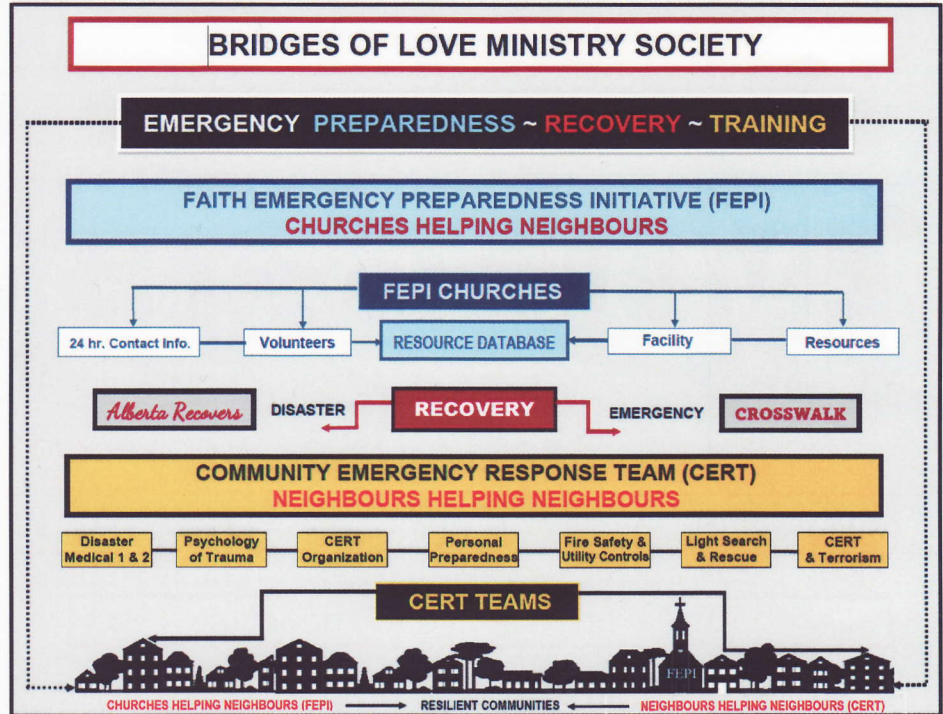
"AND DON'T FORGET TO DO GOOD AND TO SHARE WITH THOSE IN NEED" Hebrews 13:16



With the recent devastation in Maui, our hearts go out to the many residents who have been impacted by the unexpected fires which destroyed lives and property in Lahaina. Yes, this catastrophic event is not in our backyard, but with the increased fires in Canada, there is heightened concern we cannot be complacent! Newscasts have interviewed many residents who are displaced with homes destroyed. Gratitude overflows for the assistance they have received.

Hebrews 13:16, says we are not to forget to do good and to share with those in need. These sacrifices are particularly pleasing to God, even when they go unnoticed by others. Giving without appreciation is difficult but in Matthew 6:2, Jesus teaches that when we give to the needy, we do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the street, to be honoured by men.

Jesus says if we do announce good deeds, to receive appreciation from others, that will be the reward in full as giving is to be done in secret. God sees and His reward is assured. Our motives for giving must be pure, as it is easy to give with mixed motives, to do something for someone if it will benefit us in return. These acts should not be self-centred but God-centred, bringing glory to the Father.



Since Bridges of Love has developed two new recovery extensions to our Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative, please see the above flowchart for clarification of our structure. Past emergency programs have been focused on preparedness and training. We now are ready to offer on-line donation management recovery platforms which will help not only disaster victims (**ALBERTA RECOVERS**) but also those who are struggling in these challenging times (**CROSSWALK**). Managing donations has been a difficult task so this system works effortlessly, without stockpiling mounds of often unwanted items!

Our platforms are secure and confidential so anyone going through difficult times do not have to worry about confidential information being shared. FEPI churches who partner with Bridges of Love are invited to support Crosswalk. Once an account is made, churches can view the needs that have been posted and then decide if they are able to help. Perhaps the request is greater than one church can handle, so partnering with a neighbouring church, is always a viable option. Once the church decides, Bridges of Love shares the contact information of the person who posted the request. When the need is met, Bridges of Love is notified, to remove the post from the platform. The Crosswalk on-line recovery system is neat and expediate.

It may seem like a lot of information to take in, but once the program is used, the process becomes clear! We thank our summer computer science student, Timothy (TJ) Rugg who has been an exceptional JavaScript development and information technology summer student. TJ created a new onboarding process for our Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative and developed the frontend functionality and backend database architecture for our two platforms. All this has been documented in an Operations Manual for future applications.



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – October, 2023

“GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD; HIS LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.” 1 Chronicles 16:34

**Give thanks to the Lord,
for he is good; his love
endures forever.**

–1 Chronicles 16:34



Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgiving, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings. If we start out giving thanks for the small things, the more thankful we become, the more bounty increases.

This past week, Bridges of Love experienced a major event which threatened our ministry. Over 10,600 files were deleted from my computer, which was a huge portion of the past twenty years of ministry. Even though it was a very tense situation, God provided an answer through a tech company just adjacent to our office. Andrew was able to restore most of our files to their original form due to Microsoft One Drive's backup system (He received an apple pie with our thankfulness 😊)!

I am sure the people who have lost homes and lively hoods due to the extreme wildfires this summer, will also attest to the fragility of life! Only God is our solid rock where we can know with assurance and dependability, that He is loving us through the many ups and downs that life brings.

This Thanksgiving, we give thanks for God's unfailing Love, for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, for our new staff member, Michael Lum, for Bridges of Love's restored files, and for the past 20 years serving through this ministry. We are indeed blessed!



CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF LOVE & UNITY BRIDGING HEARTS, BUILDING FUTURES™

We are honoured to extend a heartfelt invitation to attend this momentous occasion – the 20th Anniversary Celebration of Bridges of Love's Ministry Society and Annual General Meeting! This milestone is a testament to the unwavering support of our donors/supporters and the dedication of our team in serving church and community as we build resilience and trust across the sectors during and after times of disaster.

Date: Thursday, October 12, 2023

Time: Noon – 2:30 pm

Venue: Heritage Inn Hotel & Convention Centre 1104 – 11 Ave. SE, High River, AB

Special Guest Speaker: **Wayne Cao**, Legislator Emeritus (1997 – 2015), Former Deputy Speaker, Retired MLA, Calgary Fort, Alberta/Canada: **“WE ARE ONE!”**

**** FOR THOSE WHO ARE COMING FROM OUT OF TOWN AND HAVE NOT HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT BRIDGES OF LOVE'S HIGH RIVER OFFICE, PLEASE JOIN FOR A LITTLE TOUR AND A PIECE OF MARG'S FAMOUS APPLE PIE A-LA-MODE! PLEASE INDICATE ON YOUR RSVP IF YOU WISH TO JOIN IN THIS INFORMATIVE & TASTY ACTIVITY.**

R.S.V.P. margpollon@bridgesoflove.net

By October 4, 2023

MICHAEL'S MOMENT

After two weeks as Executive Director's Associate for Bridges of Love, I can confidently



say God has been at work! It has been interesting as I learned the history of Bridges of Love, understanding the direction God has taken them.

To date, I have made a commitment to contact over 150 churches across various counties, inviting them to become a FEPI partner. Nine churches have voiced their approval to join the FEPI church network.

Congratulations McDougal Chapel, Main Avenue Fellowship in Sundre, West Zion Mennonite Church in Carstairs, and First Baptist Church in Olds for making a commitment!

The WIX internet platform, is one that I am becoming more familiar. I also appreciate leading our devotionals during our Monday staff meetings.

I look forward to the next few months as I meet new people and attend various meetings. Thank you, Marg and Tom, for your willingness to answer questions as well as for seeking God's will for the direction of Bridges of Love Ministry.



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – November, 2023

"I AM DOING A NEW THING!" Isaiah 43:18-19

FORGET THE FORMER THINGS;
DO NOT DWELL ON THE PAST.
SEE, I AM DOING A NEW THING!
NOW IT SPRINGS UP:
DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT?

Isaiah 43:18-19

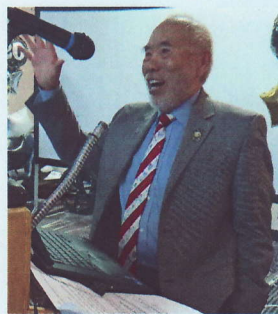
A paradigm shift is an important change that happens when the usual way of thinking about or doing something is replaced by a new and different way that upends and replaces a prior paradigm. In the New Testament, God's people came from any and all nations. The original New Testament word for "church" ekklesia literally means "called out." God's people were called out of every nation. This was a huge paradigm shift for the early followers of Jesus.

In the early days of our ministry, a Board Member shared some valuable advice. Wayne, a retired University Professor, recognized that a paradigm shift was essential, in order to accomplish what we were hoping to achieve. He felt for the church to engage, there needed to be a clear understanding that FEPI is a tool and practical opportunity to be 'salt and light' in the community. Bridges of Love's Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI) is a church resource to fulfil God's Great Commandment to, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

The paradigm shift - the church is not just helping Bridges of Love achieve our goals - we are also providing a tool for the church to fulfil God's Great Commandment in these challenging times in a very practical way.



Thank you so much to those who attended our 20th Anniversary. We enjoyed every moment of this special time, thanking God for the privilege of serving through Bridges of Love Ministry. We appreciated Wayne Cao, retired MLA for being our speaker.



The theme for our celebration event was **"WE ARE ONE"** taken from an older song written and sung by Brian Doerksen. We are one in Christ serving Him through the work of this ministry. Please view our [slideshow](#) for 20 years of very special memories.



MICHAEL'S MOMENT

Webster dictionary defines "prepare" as the action "to make ready beforehand for some purpose, use,



or activity." We prepare for the day by waking up, and eating a healthy breakfast and we prepare for having a child by buying the proper equipment. It is far easier to think about preparing for the things that we can see with our physical eyes around us, but how often do we think about the eternal?

"Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." - Matthew 24:44
John wrote, "And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming." - 1 John 2:28

Although we wait for his coming, we do not do so with a lack of preparedness. Christian preparedness is not about simply waiting; it is full of action. Titus 2:12-14, "... waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us..." Jesus in Matthew 24:42, tells us, "Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming."



BRIDGES OF LOVE

LOVE IS ACTION – December, 2023

"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD" John 3:16



The entire gospel comes to a focus in John 3:16. God's love is not static or self-centered; it reaches out and welcomes others in. ***"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."***

*Jesus loves the little children
All the children of the world
Red and yellow, black and white
They are precious in His sight
Jesus loves the little children of the world.*

*Jesus died for all the children
All the children of the world
Red and yellow, black and white
They are precious in His sight
Jesus died for all the children of the world.*

The familiar song, "**Jesus Loves the Little Children**" expresses God's pattern of true love, the basis for all love relationships--when you love someone dearly, you are willing to give freely to the point of self-sacrifice. God paid dearly with the life of His Son, the highest price He could pay!

Giving generously is an opportunity to trust in God's provision. The Bible reminds us that life on earth is uncertain and nothing is guaranteed, but when we put our hope in God's provision, we can rest assured that he'll provide.

As we celebrate Christ's birth, let us love like Jesus, so that others may join us in receiving His love.

MOUNTAIN VIEW COUNTY UPDATE

Building relationships of trust and acceptance for our project was the focus for our recent road trip to Mountain View County. Getting to know our rural neighbours was indeed a pleasure as we ventured into this beautiful countryside!

Our first stop was to The Rock Community Church in Carstairs, where Ardith, Church Administrator gave us a tour of their multi-functional, vibrant facility. So pleased to have The Rock as a FEPI partner.

On to Sundre where we joined Pastor Kent at McDougal Chapel, another FEPI partner. Pastor Kent was interested in the CERT training for not only himself but for his congregation. After a tour of their lovely facility, my husband and I moved on to Olds for the night, to find a place of rest for weary but enthusiastic travellers!

The next day brought renewed strength as we called on First Baptist Church in Olds to bring greetings and a friendly face from Bridges of Love! Pastor Doug, was unfortunately, on his day off, but a few muffins were left with Administrator, Shelly.

While in this rural town, we contacted Randy Smith, retired Fire Chief, who has been a faithful instructor for our CERT training. With increased interest in a Mountain View County CERT Summit, connections were made for trainers in that region.

On to Didsbury, where we had a great visit with Pastor Colin from Zion Church. With our involvement with Bonavista EM Church in Calgary, we had many close connections. Zion is a FEPI partner and is now reviewing CERT and Crosswalk church opportunities.

Before heading home to High River, we visited a small rural church outside Didsbury, Mountain View Evangelical Missionary Church. Pastor Paul had the coffee pot on so we enjoyed a warm country visit! FEPI affords opportunities to serve for any size congregation.

MICHAEL'S MOMENT

For the last two months, we appreciated "Michael's Moment." Unfortunately, Michael made the decision that Bridges of Love Ministry was not the long-term direction he wished to pursue, leaving the Executive Director's Associate position the end of October. We pray God directs his path and we wish him all His best!

Executive Director's Associate

This position plays a critical role in supporting Bridges of Love's mission for community emergency preparedness, training, and recovery efforts. Bridges of Love, a faith-based ministry, initiating the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI), and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. We are seeking a dedicated individual to join our ministry, aligned with Bridges of Love's mission and Christian values. Bridges of Love's project, "*The Power of Civil Society, moving at the Speed of Trust*" promotes community resilience empowering community members, who are often first in line to offer a hand up, who provide immediate disaster assistance, bridging the critical gap between the time of disaster and the arrival of emergency services.