



Bridges of Love

JANUARY, 2025



"TEACHER, HE ASKED, WHAT MUST I DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE?" Luke 10:25



The familiar parable of the Good Samaritan, begins with an expert in the law testing Jesus with the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus asked, "What is written in the Law and how do you read it?"

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself' was his answer."

Since the move to Red Deer, our office location is in the heart of the city, just down the street from the Homeless Shelter and the Addiction Recovery Centre. We have not advertised our ministry openly as there is so much need in this area, that we have honestly been afraid to let them know we were here! I am sure our response has not been what God called us to! We cannot help everyone, but we have been praying that God would place those we could assist in plain view, so a connection could be made to provide help in a meaningful way.

"**CROSSWALK**" a Bridges of Love program has been on the back burner for several years. We now feel it is time to launch this opportunity. Can you imagine churches engaged in an endeavour that regularly assists people who are suffering or struggling due to circumstances beyond their control? This is indeed an opportunity with the potential to fulfil the Greatest Commandment, to love God and our neighbour by providing a safe passage into our communities!

FELICIA'S FEATURE

"CROSSWALK"

Serving the Community through Compassionate Action

A new year brings new opportunities as well as continued challenges for many. Families and individuals may be facing loss of income, sickness, or depression that are often unseen and unspoken. Some are deeper issues, but other problems may just need a helping hand from someone who cares and can provide hope and bring light into the darkest moments. That's why "**CROSSWALK**", Bridges of Love's newest program has been created providing opportunities and open doors for the local church to support those who are going through hardships that are difficult to go through alone.

Crosswalk is about more than just providing resources, however—it's about creating lasting change through compassionate action. Since churches are the heart of this initiative, we invite interested members to engage from the start to shape and develop how best to structure this new program. For success, a broad base of passionate churches will be necessary so there will be many involved to help share in the many requests that may be forthcoming. Bridges of Love will provide the infrastructure, support, and help facilitate connections; to make the process as seamless as possible but we need your ideas, input and loving commitment!

As Galatians 6:2 reminds us, "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ."

Together, we can create a network of compassion that goes beyond church walls and truly uplifts our neighbours. The more we work together, the greater the positive change we can bring to those facing life's toughest moments.

RED DEER CERT SUMMIT



We are looking forward to introducing CERT to Red Deer and the surrounding area. As we spread our training across Alberta, we try to locate instructors from the region where the event will take place. If you know of anyone who might wish to be involved in our next training session, please ask them to give us a call. We are looking for professionals for the Disaster Medical Operations, Psychology of Trauma, Search & Rescue, and Fire Safety & Utility Controls modules. We offer CERT Train-the-Trainer instruction for any who wish to hone their skills and learn more about the CERT modules.

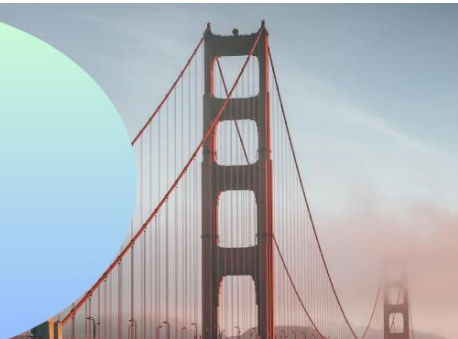


DONATE TODAY!



Bridges of Love

February 2025



"HE WILL QUIET YOU WITH HIS LOVE?" Zephaniah 3:17



"The Lord your God is with you, He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, He will quiet you with his Love, He will rejoice over you with singing."
Zephaniah 3:17

Zephaniah 3:17 reminds us that God is with His people always! He is with you. He is a mighty one who will save you, not just in the future, but today. He is your Saviour and He is Mighty, and He will rejoice over you with gladness.

This precious word is ultimately fulfilled in Christ's life, death, and resurrection. But in the context of the surrounding verses there is an added assurance that, despite the distressing things happening around God's children, He will save them from the judgement that falls on the unrighteous. God rejoices over you with gladness and will quiet the wrestling of your soul with His love. And most sweetly, He will rejoice over you with singing.

This was the God Zephaniah proclaimed. So often we view God as either loving or judgmental. But Zephaniah knew the secret to God's character, to His holiness, to His larger-than-us-ness. He knew that God would faithfully bring judgment (what else could He do when people refused to stop hurting themselves and each other?!). He would also never, ever remove Himself or His love from His people.

Zephaniah's verse gives hope and comfort in these turbulent and often stressful times. Everyone believes love is important, but love is usually thought of as a feeling. In reality, LOVE is a choice and an ACTION.

FELICIA'S FEATURE

Neighbours Helping Neighbours – The Importance of Being Prepared

Recently, our community (just down the street from our office) was reminded of the incredible power of neighbours helping neighbours when a group of brave individuals from Safe Harbour (homeless shelter) rushed to assist those impacted by the explosion at Prairie Bus Lines. Eight courageous people didn't hesitate to step in, doing what they could to help before emergency responders arrived. Their actions were a true reflection of compassion and community spirit, and it's heartwarming to see the way these heroes came together to make a difference when it mattered most.

Their quick and selfless response highlights the strength of our community, but it also brings attention to a crucial point: being able to help in an emergency is incredibly important, but it's equally important to have the right training to do so safely. In this case, the eight individuals were fortunate—luckily, none of them were injured while trying to help. But the reality is, that emergencies can be unpredictable, and without the proper training, the situation can easily turn from a rescue to a tragedy.

In times of crisis, people naturally want to help. It's human nature to step up when others are in need. But without some basic knowledge of first aid, emergency response, and safety protocols, there's a real risk of causing further harm—either to yourself or to others. Imagine trying to assist in a dangerous situation without understanding the potential hazards or rushing in to help without knowing how to handle someone who's injured. Without training, the person you are trying to help might inadvertently get hurt, and you could find yourself in a dangerous situation as well. This is why **CERT training** is a valuable community resource!

BRIDGES OF LOVE'S "STONE SOUP" LUNCHEON WITH DR. ROB BLACKABY

President & Ethics Professor
Canadian Theological Baptist
Seminary and College

INVITE FOR: Church and,
Community Leaders.

WHEN: MARCH 20, 2025
11:45 AM - 1:30 AM

WHERE: #102, 5208 - 53 Ave.
Red Deer, AB

COST: 1 item for the 'Stone
Soup'. Be creative!

Limited seating so please call to
reserve your place at the table.

Please RSVP
margpollon@bridgesoflove.net or
Call - 587.272.0955

Stone Soup

Heat some water in a pot,
Add a stone you've scrubbed a lot.
Sprinkle pepper, salt and herbs,
Let it boil undisturbed.
Drop in carrots, onions too,
Let the soup heat through and through.
Stir in milk to make it sweet,
Add potatoes for a treat.
Toss in ham bones. Let it stew,
Let it bubble. Let it brew.
Taste the soup and when it's done,
Share "Stone Soup" with
everyone!

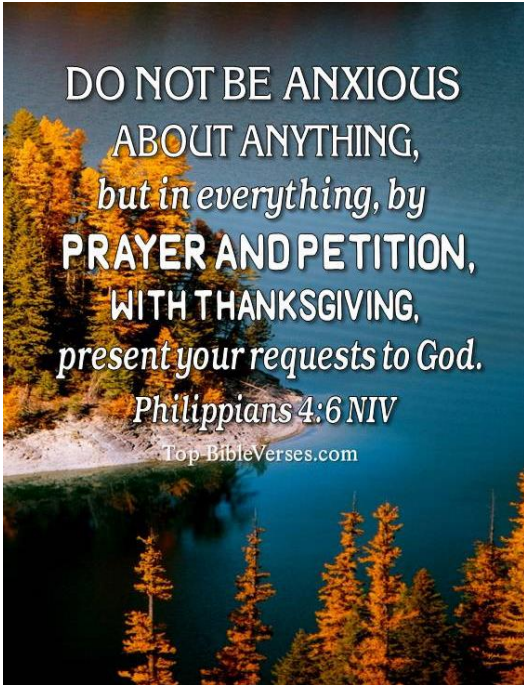


The message of the "Stone Soup" story is that by sharing what we have, even if it seems small, we can create something much greater together, highlighting the power of community and cooperation; essentially, "when everyone contributes, everyone benefits."



Bridges of Love

"DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING" Philippians 4:6



DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, *but in everything, by PRAYER AND PETITION, WITH THANKSGIVING, present your requests to God.*

Philippians 4:6 NIV
Top BibleVerses.com

Can we imagine never being anxious about anything? It might appear impossible as our human nature dictates that it is our job to do the worrying!

But Paul's advice is to turn our worries into prayers. Do we want to worry less - then He says to pray more! Paul learned the true secret of joy and peace is to imitate Christ, to serve others and to be thankful in all circumstances. Our inner attitudes do not have to reflect our outward circumstances. God's peace can guard our hearts against anxiety. Paul was content because he could see life from God's point of view. He focused on what he was supposed to do and was grateful for everything God had given him.

God loves to partner with us --He puts His stamp of grace on our words of faith and makes them happen. As we walk in step with the Holy Spirit, we find there's a time to prophesize, a time to pray, and a time to put God's plan into action.

As we come to the end of the Alberta Civil Society Fund, may be request your support for the next stage of building Bridges of Love Ministry with our thanksgiving.

FELICIA'S FEATURE

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to love and serve others, especially in times of crisis. Jesus commands us to "love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:39), and disaster preparedness is one way to live out that calling. When disasters strike—whether wildfires, floods, or personal hardships—the church can be a source of strength, hope, and practical aid.

Bridges of Love offers the local church a proactive role in disaster response through our Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI) and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. FEPI provides opportunities for local churches to become places of refuge and support, while CERT equips volunteers with essential skills, knowledge, and equipment to be ready to assist themselves, their family, and their communities. Preparedness allows the church to respond not just with words, but with action—offering food, shelter, and care when people need it most.

By preparing, responding, and recovering together, we fulfil Christ's command to love one another (John 13:34). Disaster preparedness isn't just practical—it's an expression of our faith in action. Please join Bridges of Love as we serve communities in times of crisis.

Red Deer Chamber of Commerce 'Business After Hours' event, Feb. 25 at the Ballad Training Centre. A great time of networking and building relationships of trust!



BRIDGES OF LOVE'S "STONE SOUP" LUNCHEON DR. ROB BLACKABY

President & Ethics Professor
Canadian Theological Baptist
Seminary and College

Red Deer Councillor, Vesna Higham will bring greetings from the city and introduce Dr. Blackaby.

INVITE FOR: Church and, Community Leaders.

WHEN: MARCH 21, 2025
11:45 AM - 1:30 AM

WHERE: #102, 5208 - 53 Ave.
Red Deer, AB

COST: 1 item for the 'Stone Soup' to be shared with people in need of a touch of God's love!
(Be Creative)

BRIDGES OF LOVE INVITES YOU

21ST, MARCH 2025
11:45AM-1:30PM

ETHICS OF COLLABORATION Luncheon

Guest speaker
DR. ROB BLACKABY
President, Canadian Baptist Theological Seminary & College

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken - Ecclesiastes 4:12

STONE SOUP LUNCHEON
Bring 1 item for the Stone Soup - Be creative!
The story of Stone Soup teaches us that by sharing even small resources, we can create something much greater together. Collaboration and generosity make a community stronger and more abundant.

CROSSWALK INTRODUCTION
Bridges of Love is excited to introduce our new Project Crosswalk with churches. This is a great outreach opportunity and a way to show Christ's love to those in our community.

MARGPOLLON@BRIDGESOFLOVE.NET RSVP BY MARCH 14TH, 2025

Limited seating so please call to reserve your place at the table.

Please RSVP
margpollon@bridgesoflove.net or
Call - 587.272.0955



Bridges of Love

"TRULY HE IS MY ROCK AND MY SALVATION" Psalm 62:2



Placing ALL hope in God, knowing that He is in control allows us to wait patiently for Him to rescue us. David must have been far from home when he wrote this Psalm. Fortunately, God is not limited to any geographic location. David won't be shaken, because the Eternal God is his refuge, the place he runs to hide. God was visible to David because he chose to make God his stronghold, to make God's Word the place he ran to first, not his last.

As our grant term is completed March 31, 2025, and present funding is still uncertain to keep Felicia in her position, we are trusting God to provide. We have individually and collectively prayed for many months for God to supply for our every need. With our programs ready to go and our facility completed for training and other events, it would be very unfortunate to delay operations. With increased disasters and severity, Bridges of Love's programs are very relevant for these uncertain times.

Our situation may appear dire, but I have learned over the years that we can trust Matthew 19:26: **"With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."** Felicia has done a wonderful job over the past eight months, so please hear her heart as she shares why she would like to continue in her position.

God is indeed our 'rock' and our 'salvation'. As we celebrate Easter this season, let us give thanks that Jesus died so that we may live with assurance that He alone is our fortress, so that we will never be shaken.

FELICIA'S FEATURE

As Easter approaches, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey I've had with Bridges of Love over the past eight months. I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to Marg and to this ministry. Working alongside Marg, I've had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the heart and passion behind everything we do. Together, we've faced challenges, celebrated small victories, and, most importantly, strived to be a source of hope and help.

Over these months, I've learned so much. Most importantly, I've discovered the true power of a small but committed team—like Marg and myself—working together to make a meaningful difference.

Easter is a time of new beginnings and a reminder of the hope we have in Christ through His resurrection. It's a season that inspires us to look forward with renewed faith and anticipation. Marg, Tom, and I have been praying for months, trusting that God will provide the resources we need to continue the vital work of Bridges of Love. As we find ourselves in the final hours of this crucial season, we remain hopeful and faithful.

In this season of reflection and renewal, we ask if anyone—whether an individual or a church—feels called to support the mission of Bridges of Love. Your generosity, no matter the size, can make a world of difference in allowing us to continue providing essential programs and services. If you feel led to give, we would be deeply grateful for your partnership in this work.

As the Bible reminds us: *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."* — Jeremiah 29:11. We trust that God's plans will unfold the way they are intended, and we are excited to see what the future holds.

BRIDGES OF LOVE'S "STONE SOUP" LUNCHEON WITH DR. ROB BLACKABY

March 21st, Bridges of Love hosted a "Stone Soup" Luncheon featuring Dr. Rob Blackaby, President and Professor of Christian Ethics at the Canadian Baptist Theological Seminary and College. Dr. Blackaby shared valuable insights on the Ethics of Collaboration, emphasizing how working together is key to achieving success in both personal and community efforts. The event focused on the verse, *"A cord of three strands is not quickly broken"* from Ecclesiastes 4:12, highlighting the strength found in working together.

Special guests from various sectors enjoyed sharing in a hearty bowl of soup around the table. During lunch, a video taken from an old European folk tale was shown where each person contributed to a shared meal, symbolizing how everyone's efforts can create something much greater together!

The luncheon was a meaningful time of fellowship and vision-casting. We look forward to continuing our efforts to foster a united and vibrant body of Christ followers in Red Deer and beyond.

Please view the PowerPoint presentation, which includes Dr. Blackaby's video message on the ["Ethics of Collaboration"](#) for those who were unable to attend.



Bridges of Love

"THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION" 2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

2 Corinthians 5:17



Everything that Paul and his companions did honoured God. Not only did fear motivate them, but Christ's love compelled their actions. They knew that Jesus, out of His great love, had given up His life for their sakes by willingly dying for all, and because Christ died for us, we are dead to our old lives.

Just as the butterfly begins a new life when it emerges from the chrysalis, we, too, experience a changed life in Jesus Christ. The old has passed away, and Christians are brand-new people on the inside. The Holy Spirit gives new life! We are not reformed, rehabilitated, or re-educated--we are re-created living in vital union under a new authority, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As spring brings new life and change, new believers are not only changed from within, but a whole new perspective emerges when Christ is at the centre of our lives. As spring brings renewed hope for brighter days ahead, God brings us back to Himself by blotting out our sins. We are now Christ's ambassadors, sent with His message of reconciliation to the world.



As Bridges of Love begins a new season, we face a time of apprehension due to Felicia moving on from her position as Operations & IT Specialist. With funding not secured when the CSF grant ended the

31st of March 2025, we understood that a paycheck was essential for her continuation. She left a legacy of excellence, however, where Bridges of Love will continue to appreciate and benefit from for years to come. **Thank you, Felicia Smith!**

"CROSSWALK"

Bridges of Love's newest program is an opportunity to put compassionate collaboration into **ACTION!** The local church is the key to success as we look to serve others who need a touch of God's compassionate LOVE.

About
"Crosswalk" Bridges of Love's newest program is an online portal located on bridgesoflove.net. This secure site is intended to be a non-threatening bridge for those going through a difficult time. Individuals seek assistance confidentially through the portal.

After Bridges of Love qualifies the request, a Crosswalk church or churches are contacted to see if there is a fit for their available resources. If a positive response is received, contact information is then shared so compassionate action can take place.

Contact Us
 • margpollon@bridgesoflove.net
 • www.bridgesoflove.net
 • 3208 53 Ave Unit 101 Red Deer, AB T4N 3K2
 • 587-272-0955

Charitable Number
84741 4471 RR0001

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, 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. Matthew 22:37-39

Crosswalk
Compassionate Action

Churches Helping Neighbours

Please call **587.272.0955** today to learn how your church can become involved by completing Bridges of Love's sign-up form. It's that easy to get started! Once Bridges of Love has sufficient church support to launch Crosswalk, you will be notified that we are ready to go! We can't wait to send you that exciting news!!

Become a Crosswalk Church
REGISTRATION FORM

To sign up your church as a Crosswalk Partner, please fill in the form below. Please note that all information collected is confidential and will remain strictly between your church and Bridges of Love. This information will not be shared with any third parties and will only be used for its intended purpose.

Basic Contact Information
Please provide current and accurate contact details. These will be used to reach out when there is a community need that aligns with the resources or services your church can provide.

Name of Applicant (Pastor/Church Admin): _____ Email Address: _____
 Name of Church: _____ Phone Number: _____
 Address of Church: _____ Name of Senior Pastor: _____

Church Resources and Services
Here you will select what resources and/or services your church is willing to provide to those in need. Please select all that apply:

Clothing (men) Clothing (women)
 Clothing (children) Clothing (baby)
 Food Transportation
 Deliveries Pastoral Care
 Baby Items (Diapers/Formulas)
 Other (please specify): _____



A group of frogs was travelling through the woods when two fell into a deep pit.

When the other frogs saw how deep it was, they told the two trapped frogs there was no hope; they were finished.

Ignoring the discouraging words, the two frogs began jumping with all their might, trying to escape the pit. But the group above kept shouting, telling them to stop trying and accept their fate!

Eventually, one of the frogs gave in to the negative voices. He stopped jumping, fell back, and died!

The other frog continued to jump as hard as he could. The crowd kept yelling at him to stop, insisting it was pointless. But he jumped even harder—until, to everyone's surprise, he finally made it out of the pit!

When he emerged, the other frogs asked, "Didn't you hear us?"

The frog explained that he was deaf. He thought they had been encouraging him the whole time, which kept him trying that much harder as he didn't lose hope!

Moral of the Story

The story highlights the power of perseverance and the impact of negative versus encouraging words. **"We should be deaf to negative comments if we aim to follow God's plan to accomplish His goals."**



Bridges of Love

"THIS IS THE DAY WHICH THE LORD HAS MADE: WE WILL REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT" Psalm 118:24



The theme for June's Newsletter was chosen from a verse from Psalms. This scripture was a good fit with a photo Tom took in the early morning as we walked our dog, Buddy, behind our condo where we enjoy a forested area. After fresh rain from the previous day, not only did we appreciate the beauty of nature's new life, but we also took in the sweet aroma that filled the air.

Psalm 118:24 declares joy and gratitude for God's creation and provision. It encourages people to find joy in the present day and celebrate each day as a gift from God.

1. **Joy and celebration:** It calls for rejoicing and expressing gladness in the current day.
2. **God's role:** It acknowledges that the Lord has made this day and that we should find joy in that fact.
3. **Meaning of "day":** Some interpret "day" not just as 24 hours, but as a period or season of life, suggesting we should find joy in each stage of life.
4. **Example of a prayer:** Psalm 118:24 can be used as a starting point for a prayer of gratitude, acknowledging God's provision and asking for joy in the current moment.

"FIRESMART ALBERTA"

Living in the lovely city of Red Deer for the past year has made us take note of the upkeep necessary for the many treed areas in this region. We appreciate the beautiful parks and tree-lined streets. It is truly a haven for nature lovers with beauty throughout the city. We cannot completely enjoy these treed areas, however, without a level of concern for the threat of wildfire!

The challenges that come from heavily treed areas call for a made-in-province solution for wildfire risk reduction and loss prevention—one that includes resources, tools, and programs that are accessible to everyone. FireSmart Alberta, founded in 2020, grew out of the top recommendation of the Government of Alberta's Spring 2019 Wildfire Review Final Report. Their goal is to foster an all-of-society approach to wildfire resiliency in Alberta. FireSmart Alberta works collaboratively and in alignment with FireSmart Canada.

Just as we all have a responsibility to be prepared for a disaster, we also have a responsibility to do what we can to prevent fire from destroying homes and landscapes in areas where we live. Wildfires are a natural part of Alberta's wildland ecosystems, so without wildfires, the landscape loses its diversity. Wildfires recycle nutrients, help plants reproduce and create a mosaic of vegetation that provides habitat for a variety of wildlife.

By choosing to extend our lifestyles and communities further into forested areas, however, we become more exposed to the danger of wildfires, putting our homes at risk. It is possible to live safely with this natural event, which is outlined on the FireSmart Website. Please check out the link below for resources on how to be FireSmart!

[FIRESMART RESOURCES](#)



Marg Pollon, founding executive director of Bridges of Love, stands by an information booth at an open house to wrap up Emergency Preparedness Week on Saturday, May 10. (Photo by Sean McIntosh/Advocate staff)

Bridges of Love closes Emergency Preparedness Week with an open house

Bridges of Love hosted an open house to conclude Emergency Preparedness Week - May 4-10, [Sean McIntosh](#)

Emergency Preparedness Week is described as a national awareness initiative and an opportunity for Canadians to take action to ensure they're prepared to protect themselves, their families, and their communities during an emergency.

"We're trying to raise awareness for what we can do personally (during a disaster)," said Marg Pollon, founding executive director of Bridges of Love.

"Everybody has a responsibility to themselves and their own families to be prepared for whatever might come their way. I think right now, with wildfire season, that's a concern for many. ... I think we all need to take stock of where we are and what we need to do to be prepared for whatever kind of disaster a region might suffer from."

[THE REST OF THE STORY](#)



Bridges of Love

"WE ARE HARD PRESSED ON EVERY SIDE, BUT NOT CRUSHED" 2 Corinthians 4:8



Paul reminds us that though we may think we are at the end of our rope, we are never at the end of our hope. Paul experienced suffering, trials, and distress as he preached the Good News. But he knew that they would one day be over, and he would obtain God's rest and rewards.

My niece Heather loves nature, with hiking and photography being two of her favourite activities. Heather introduced Facebook to her housemate, Willa Weaver, who lives in her window, sharing that Willa demonstrates balance, patience, creativity, and connectedness. Heather captured the beauty of Willa's magnificent web, as well as the heartache that comes with living life amid its challenges. We, too, become frustrated and discouraged by what seems like an endless journey going round and round in circles!



Just as in Willa's case, however, there is purpose in our suffering. Problems and human limitations remind us of Christ's suffering for us. They keep us from pride, they cause us to look beyond this brief life, they prove our faith to others, and they allow God to demonstrate His power. As Heather so beautifully expressed,

"Keep spinning and weaving, my friends, God sends His LOVE!"

"WILDFIRE SMOKE & MASKS"

Wildfire smoke can irritate your eyes, nose, throat, and lungs. It can make you cough, wheeze, and can make it hard to breathe. If you have a lung disease or heart disease, inhaling wildfire smoke can be especially harmful. The most effective ways to protect yourself from wildfire smoke are to stay indoors, limit time outdoors and reduce physical activity. People who must be outside in smoky air may benefit from wearing masks called "particulate respirators." Most people will find it difficult to wear the masks correctly. If the mask does not fit properly, it will provide little or no protection. Using respirator masks can make it harder to breathe so masks with a relief valve will make breathing easier. Anyone with lung or heart disease should check with their health care provider before using any mask.



Will a face mask protect me from wildfire smoke? Respirator masks worn correctly may provide some protection by filtering out fine particles in the smoke. These masks **do not** help with hazardous gases in the smoke. What face mask should I get? N95 respirators are the cheapest and most available masks to help protect your lungs from wildfire smoke. They are generally available at hardware stores and pharmacies. Make sure the mask is: Certified by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Not a one-strap paper dust mask or surgical mask. It should have two straps that go around your head. A size that fits over your nose and under your chin. It should seal tightly to your face. If the mask does not fit properly, it may not provide any protection.

ALBERTA RECOVERS



As you can see from Bridges of Love's Flow Chart of programs, Alberta Recovers is our response initiative. When disaster strikes, people need resources to help them sustain their lives and those of their family, until they can rebuild what was lost.

We have seen firsthand the devastation caused from improper donation management. After the Slave Lake fire, mounds of unwanted donations became a nightmare for those who were taking care of all the articles that came in. We were in Slave Lake months after the devastating event and were given a tour of the curling rink where truck loads of donated items were sorted and housed. They shared that three large truck loads of unwanted items had already been taken to the dump!

Bridges of Love's on-line donation platform, eliminates the need for a storage facility. Imagine, no truck loads of unwanted donations to deal with and the cost associated with the need for a facility to house the multitude of donated items.

Please check out our [website](http://www.bridgesoflove.net) to learn more.



Bridges of Love

"GOD OPPOSES THE PROUD BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE" 1 Peter 5:5

Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another.



1 Peter 5:5

The Bible contrasts humility and pride, portraying humility as a virtue that brings wisdom, honour, and God's grace. In contrast, pride is viewed as a destructive force that leads to disgrace, downfall, and God's opposition. God actively resists pride and rewards humility.

**Pride is our greatest enemy.
Humility is your greatest friend.**

CS Lewis's book, "Mere Christianity", affirms, "According to Christian teachers, the essential vice, the utmost evil, is **Pride**. Unchastity, anger, greed, and drunkenness are mere flea bites in comparison: it was through pride that the devil became the devil. Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind... It is Pride which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began.

How do we gain the mind of Christ and humble ourselves? To put on the mind of Christ, we must make a firm decision to ponder, understand, and adopt Jesus' way of thinking; His values and attitudes must become our own. His strong emphasis on humility and meekness, along with his example of it, must take hold of our thinking, desires, and conduct. We must admire His humility and strive to emulate it. For this to happen, we need to earnestly and regularly pray for the Holy Spirit to change our hearts, for it is impossible to do it in our own strength. We will also need to understand what Jesus meant when he called men and women to humble themselves.

CHURCHES HELPING NEIGHBOURS

Recently, we had a call from an agency that asked Bridges of Love if we were able to help with rent for one of their clients. I explained that we have a program, "CROSSWALK", that was on the back burner as we were waiting to have adequate church support to proceed. We didn't like to disappoint, however, so a decision was made to send out an email to our Red Deer Church contact list to explain the situation.

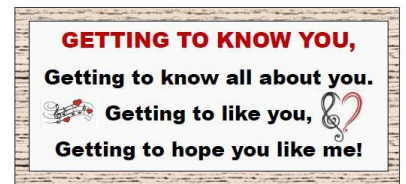
We are very happy to say, First Christian Reform Church answered our call, sending a Deacon to follow up with the agency's request. Thank you, Sonya, Church Administrator, who passed on our message to Bert, a Deacon, who met with the agency and client. Their church then kindly provided the financial assistance requested. A great example of compassionate action! **Could this be the start to CROSSWALK we've been waiting for?**



"CROSSWALK" Bridges of Love's newest program and opportunity for the local church to put compassionate collaboration into **ACTION** is ready to go as soon as we have sufficient church support to proceed. Please let us know if your church would like to participate in helping neighbours in time of need.

Call 587.272.0955 to learn how your church can become involved.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU!



Celebrating the completion of 22 years of ministry and our first Anniversary serving in the beautiful city of Red Deer! You are invited to join Bridges of Love for...



WHERE: Bridges of Love Ministry's Downtown Red Deer office: #101 - 5208 53 Ave. Lower Level (RO's Oilfield Industries Bldg.) Parking across the street.
WHEN: FRIDAY, August 22, 2025, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (Drop in)
WHO IS INVITED: Church and Community Members
WHY: KNOWING YOU - KNOWING US!
YOU ARE PRECISELY... OUR CUP OF TEA!
RSVP: Marg Pollon @ 587.272.0955 - Thank you, we're excited to meet you!

We look forward to meeting you, Friday, August 22, for tea & cake to celebrate Bridges of Love's 22nd Anniversary! 1 pm - 3 pm

It's a very ancient saying,
But a true and honest thought,
That if you become a teacher
By your pupils you'll be taught.

As a teacher, I've been learning
(You'll forgive me if I boast)
And I've now become an expert
On the subject I like most:

Getting to know you...

Heather G. who took our CERT training in Calgary, continues to share her emergency preparedness knowledge, news clippings,



and financial help. We appreciate Heather's support and friendship!





"LET US RUN WITH PERSEVERANCE THE RACE MARKED OUT FOR US" Hebrews 12:1

HOW SHOULD WE RUN THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US?



Hebrews 12:1-3

The Christian life requires hard work! It requires us to give up whatever interferes with our relationship with God, to run with endurance, and to struggle against sin with the power of the Holy Spirit. To live effectively, we must keep our eyes on Jesus. We will stumble if we look away from Him to focus on ourselves or the circumstances surrounding us. We are running for Christ, not ourselves, and we must always keep Him in sight!

Last month, we celebrated 22 years serving the Lord through Bridges of Love. Each year at our AGM, we give a Vision Casting Report to help clarify our goals and focus for the coming year.

Firstly, what is the definition of **Christian Vision Casting**? It is the process of clearly and compellingly communicating a vision for a church or ministry that is inspired by God, aiming to motivate and unify the congregation or members towards a shared purpose. It involves articulating a picture of a desired future, connecting it to God's purpose, and inspiring others to pursue it through practical steps.

Here is the truly Christian life, here is faith really working by love: when a man applies himself with joy and love to the works of that freest servitude, in which he serves others voluntarily and for naught; himself abundantly satisfied in the fullness and richness of his own faith.

Martin Luther

VISION CASTING

Each year, Bridges of Love's Annual General Meeting concludes with a Vision Casting Report. Please let us share the highlights of this year's vision for the coming fiscal year!

1. **Christian Vision Casting:** The process of clearly and compellingly communicating a God-inspired vision to motivate and unify a congregation or community towards a shared purpose.
2. **Faith in Action:** Emphasising the importance of demonstrating faith through tangible actions that reflect Christ's love, such as helping others during crises or disasters.
3. **Love and Community:** Highlighting the centrality of loving God and neighbours as foundational to the ministry's mission and actions.
4. **Challenges of Ministry:** Addressing feelings of being "jaded" or emotionally drained after years of service, and exploring how to overcome these challenges through spiritual renewal.
5. **Renewal and Dependence on God:** Encouraging transformation and renewal of the mind (Romans 12:2) to align with God's will and returning to a dependence on God rather than external support.
6. **Repentance and Surrender:** Calling for prayer, repentance, and surrender to God's will to refocus the ministry's purpose and mission.
7. **Faithfulness Over Success:** Stressing that God calls for faithfulness rather than worldly success, and the importance of serving others selflessly.
8. **Unity and Shared Purpose:** The need to unify congregations and community members to work together for a safer, more resilient community.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU!

BRIDGES OF LOVE'S 22ND ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
"GETTING TO KNOW YOU" TEA & CAKE EVENT
AUGUST 22, 2025



Thank you for attending our 22nd Anniversary, "Getting to Know You" celebration. This was truly a wonderful time with old and new friends coming together to get to know one another! We appreciated each one who took the time to attend, especially coming from as far away as Calgary. Following our event, Bridges of Love's Board of Directors concluded with our **Annual General Meeting**.

"YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE"

Please partner with Bridges of Love and receive a "You Make a Difference" pin with our appreciation! We value your support to accomplish the task God gave us!



**"LET US RUN WITH PERSEVERANCE
THE RACE MARKED OUT FOR US"
Hebrews 12:1**



Bridges of Love

"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



This verse, a call to gratitude and praise, of God's enduring goodness and steadfast love, is part of a song of thanksgiving that King David delivered when the Ark of the Covenant was brought to Jerusalem. It highlights two key attributes of God: His goodness and his everlasting mercy.

People who live the most fulfilling lives are the ones who are always rejoicing at what they have." "Nothing is more honourable than a grateful heart."

Thanksgiving is a time when we reflect on the blessings we received over the past year and thank our heavenly Father for all He has done for us. It is easy to focus on the challenging times and events that may not have gone as we thought they should. This is a natural and human response for activities that have not satisfied our longings. As we look back, however, God's ways are not our ways, so acceptance is key to understanding.

For those who have followed Bridges of Love for the past 22 years, you have witnessed firsthand God's hand in all we do and strive to accomplish. When Dr Tim Foggin invited Bridges of Love to join in Influenza Pandemic planning for the church community, we certainly stepped out of our comfort zone with a new but exciting chapter.

Who could have guessed this fledgling ministry would embark on this innovative approach to emergency preparedness by mobilising churches to be ready to respond to this impending threat? Back in 2005, when Pandemic Preparedness first began, most rolled their eyes in disbelief, but we now know only God knew the future, so this preparedness was just on track for what was to come!

We will always be appreciative to Public Safety Canada, which came on board with our pandemic planning, providing support and credibility for the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative (FEPI). It was truly the best of times with agencies, churches, NGOs, and the government (FEPI Advisory Council) all working towards a common goal. That is, a plan for churches to be ready to respond to the needs of the community, should an Influenza Pandemic become a reality. A pandemic was overdue, which naturally occurs every 10 to 40 years, so they knew the local church community could stand in the gap for such a catastrophic event.

In 2008, Bridges of Love facilitated a Faith Community Summit on Pandemic Preparedness and Response at Rocky Mountain College with sixteen professionals instructing Alberta Faith Leaders on how they and their congregations could make a difference. What an exciting and valuable learning time this was!

Over the years, we have facilitated many events, all focused on the church's role, not only for pandemic preparedness but for any disaster that might occur in Alberta. We have provided tools, contacts, resources, information, and training (CERT). We desired to open doors for the local church to make connections with their community, demonstrating the love of Christ through their participation. With affirmation from the Federal Government by presenting

Prime Minister Volunteer Award in 2014, and Public Safety's recognition in 2018 with their Emergency Management Exemplary Service Award, it has indeed been a fulfilling and rewarding time!

We will never forget the 2013 Alberta Flood, where Bridges of Love had the opportunity to put its FEPI program into action. Matching donations with flood victims and FEPI churches making deliveries was a time when ideas were put into practice. What an amazing time helping those impacted by the disaster with a touch of Christ's love. Hundreds of donations were shared with hundreds of flood casualties with absolutely no stockpiling (Alberta Recovers). We appreciate the Alberta Government for their recognition through the 3 Heroes of the Flood Awards.

Bridges of Love Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training began in 2014 with an introduction to the US emergency training. Citizens being ready to respond immediately to the needs of their community, bridging the critical gap from the time of the disaster to when the first responders arrive on the scene, only made sense. The Alberta Government saw merit in another innovative project, administering a Civil Society Fund grant for Bridges of Love to share our templates. We were indeed humbled yet honoured that they believed in our initiatives by supporting us financially.

We have run the race with faith that God was using this ministry for His Glory. We are indeed so very thankful to have learned and grown over the past 22 years. What a ride it has been as we navigated the complex politics of collaboration. We know, however, that the race is not over as there is still so much work to be done!



Bridges of Love

"PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU, MY PEACE I GIVE YOU." John 14:27



The result of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives is a deep and lasting peace. Unlike worldly peace, which is usually defined as the absence of conflict, this peace is a confident assurance in any circumstance; with Christ's peace, we do not need to fear the present or the future. As we prepare for Remembrance Day to honour our fallen soldiers, we thank the Lord for His peace amidst the storms of life.

Pastor Rick Warren's message, given recently at the World Evangelical Alliance's general assembly in Seoul, South Korea, urges the global church to emulate the early Christians' focus on love, prayer, with an urgency to fulfil the Great Commission by 2033, when churches around the world will celebrate the 2,000-year anniversary of Christ's death and resurrection. He argues that true biblical principles are transcultural and that genuine love is the key.

For the past 22 years, Bridges of Love's message of love has translated into programs for the local church and community to show God's Love during challenging times. Whether it is a major disaster or a job loss, the love of Christ can bring healing and comfort through the most difficult of circumstances.

"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."

John 3:16

THAT'S WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE!

This afternoon I took my daughter, Stella, to Chick-fil-A — our little daddy-daughter ritual. It's not fancy, but to her, it might as well be Disneyland. The moment she spots that red sign and the indoor playground, her whole face lights up like it's Christmas morning.

It's our place. Clean booths, soft music, the smell of waffle fries that seeps into your soul.

I order my usual grilled sandwich, she gets nuggets and apple juice, and we talk about her day — her teacher, her friends, and the latest playground drama that, in her six-year-old mind, is absolutely earth-shattering.

After she finished eating, she ran off to play. I sat back, sipping sweet tea, watching her climb and giggle behind the glass wall of the play area. I love these simple moments — when she forgets I'm watching, and I can see her just being a kid, wild and unfiltered and happy.

When she finally returned, red-cheeked and breathless, she asked if she could trade her kids' meal toy for ice cream. That's our thing — nuggets first, play second, ice cream third.

Usually, we take it to go and eat it in the truck with the windows down. But today she looked up at me and said, "Can we sit inside, Daddy?"

I almost said no. I had a dozen little reasons to rush home — emails, laundry, a phone call I'd been putting off. But something in her voice made me pause. "Sure," I said. "Pick any table you like."

She chose a booth near the counter where customers wait for refills. From that spot, we had a clear view of the entire front area — and, without knowing it, a front-row seat to a lesson I'll remember for the rest of my life.

As we were settling in, a man walked through the door. He wasn't there to order lunch. His clothes were worn thin, his shoes caked with mud, his beard tangled. He looked like he had walked through half the city just to make it here. His hands trembled slightly as he approached the counter.

"Ma'am," I heard him say softly, "do you have any extra food? Anything you could spare?"

The girl at the counter looked startled, glancing around nervously. People in line shifted uncomfortably. Some looked away. A few pretended not to hear.

But before the silence could stretch too long, the manager appeared — a tall man in a red polo with kindness written all over his face. He walked right up to the traveller and said, "Sir, I'll make sure you get a hot meal. Not leftovers. A proper lunch, on the house."

The man looked stunned. "Really? I don't want to cause trouble," he murmured.

"You're no trouble," the manager said gently. **"You're exactly why we're here."**

Then he added something I'll never forget.

"There's just one thing I ask before you eat," he said. "Would it be okay if I prayed with you?"

The man nodded, eyes glistening. "Yes, sir. I'd like that."

In a world where so many companies bend over backwards to avoid faith or kindness that might "offend," here was a man who simply lived his beliefs out loud. No slogans. No PR campaign. Just compassion in action.



Bridges of Love

"PEACE I LEAVE WITH YOU, MY PEACE I GIVE YOU." John 14:27



The greatest event in history had just happened! The Messiah had been born! For ages, the Jews had been waiting for this time, and when it finally occurred, the announcement came to humble the shepherds. The good news about Jesus is that He comes to all, which means you and me! He comes to anyone with a heart humble enough to accept Him. Whoever you are, whatever you do or have done, you can accept Jesus into your life. Come as you are and accept Him as your Lord and Saviour.

1976 was the year my husband, Tom, and I accepted the Lord as our personal Saviour due to an invitation from a local church in Scarborough, ON who made it their mission to care about their community.

Almost 50 years have passed since we invited the Lord into our hearts, and we are so glad God chose us to be part of His Family. How fortunate we were to be part of a Bible-teaching church that followed Christ's mandate to go and make disciples. Not only did they introduce God's gift of salvation, but they also provided a mentor (Audrey), who came to our home each week for the next six months to ground us in the Scriptures.

This Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour, we give special thanks for your joy, hope, grace, and mercy. Thank you, Lord, for your gift of salvation that we might know with assurance that we are secure with You for eternity.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY , TOM

December 9 marks a milestone birthday for my husband Tom. Since moving to Red Deer eighteen months ago, he has captured the beauty throughout the city with endless photos. When I came across this picture on Marketplace, I knew it was the perfect gift I was seeking to celebrate 80 years of life and service. A very appropriate and meaningful verse accompanies the winding path.



"THE PATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS IS LIKE THE MORNING SUN, SHINING EVER BRIGHTER TILL THE FULL LIGHT OF DAY."

Proverbs 4:18

This verse compares the journey of a righteous person to the rising sun, which grows progressively brighter, signifying a life of increasing understanding, wisdom, and righteousness until it reaches its full glory. The message is one of hope and progressive clarity: a life lived in obedience to God gets better and clearer over time.



We were fortunate to have a new website developed while Felicia was working for Bridges of Love. Our website is a critical piece for the ministry as it provides the opportunity to embed forms online for the Faith Emergency Preparedness Initiative, Alberta Recovers, and CrossWalk. A form was submitted last week, but unfortunately, it did not open, so we are unable to capture the information submitted!

Our website was Tom's area of expertise, but unfortunately, with the speed of technology, he feels the position needs someone younger. With funding limited, we are seeking a volunteer to assist with our website! Whatever time you have available, we will be on board to accommodate your schedule. Thank you!

Please give Marg a call at 403.616.0536 or email margpollon@bridgesoflove.net

"BEAR-TO-CARE"

Call for more information!

