

# Journey Together

Journey Together  
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## From The Desk of Pastor Barry

### BEEN THINKING ABOUT: LOSS

Yes, I did lose my beloved Mother this year and it is true that I miss her encouragement and support but that is not the kind of loss I am thinking about today. My focus is on the loss of members and adherents here at the church. I am not even thinking of the reasons given, whether real or imagined as to why someone would have left. I am thinking of how we may react should a radical change be made in the focus and direction of the ministry of the congregation.

4 What prompted this thinking process was an article given to me at our recent Triennial Conference held here in Winnipeg. The article tells the story of a small community of believers who went on a search for truth as they came to the sixtieth anniversary of their church's existence. They asked themselves two questions in this search. If we left this community would it matter to anyone other than those who attend weekly? Are the people in our lives better off because they know us or we know Jesus?

They mention that the answers were painful as they concluded that as a church and as individual members they were not involved in any real and meaningful way in the community in which they lived and the church resided. Such honest evaluation brought change as the congregation decided to spend at least as much time practicing discipleship as they did talking about it. The congregation made changes to become involved in the community. They became involved in the local public school and in the lives of couples desiring to adopt children, as well as creating a food bank and other means. The end result was that the church lost eighty percent of its attendees over the next couple of years.

One may wonder why a church would experience such loss. It isn't a surprise to me. The prevailing trend in North America in our churches is toward personal fulfillment and focus. If one listens to the reasons why people leave churches it is often self-focused. How often have you heard people say that they are leaving because they are not getting the food they need or

because "God has led them" to another congregation. The truth is that when the focus moves from the members and adherents of a congregation, to the needs of those outside of the church in the community many get upset. It isn't that they feel those outside should be ignored. It is because they feel ignored when the church no longer has the time or applies the same effort in their lives. And if they cannot come to grips with this spiritually or find a niche in the new focus they leave.

We here at FRBC have talked about the focus of our ministry and have been getting more involved in community. We still have a long way to go. What stops us? Is it because of the potential loss of members or adherents if the focus changes? Are we willing to experience the loss in order to fulfil the mission that Christ has called us to?

**Think about it!**

I HAVE POSTED THE ARTICLE ON THE BULLETIN BOARD AT THE REAR OF THE SANCTUARY. IT IS CALLED, IS IT TIME FOR A JUBILEE? IN THE PAMPHLET CALLED INTERCESSOR.

Did you ever wonder if perhaps God is a little self-centred and that is why worship is so important to Him? Or maybe He likes having his ego stroked? Or maybe He is selfish and jealous and wants all the attention for Himself?

I don't think so. There may be other reasons, but one of the reasons God wants us to worship Him is that He knows that worshipping Him with all our heart and mind and strength and soul is the best thing **for us**. God knows that nothing on this earth satisfies

us or compares to Himself and that if we end up worshipping anything else even a little we are missing out on the best there is!

The Bible makes it clear that God is the best there is, both in describing who He is and through the example of people in the Bible. Consider just these two aspects of who He is:

*Joy is **always** found in His presence*

*His love has no height or depth that you can measure*

When you look at anything else on this earth it/he/she/them could never live up to what God

has to offer in His love and joy, let alone all the rest of who He is. But you only receive what God has to offer when you turn away from worshipping all those other things, and worship God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength.

David and Paul are just two of the people in the Bible who knew this. Consider how both of them would give up everything in the world to be with God - not out of duty and not out of obedience alone but because they found someone so amazing they couldn't be without Him. There is no greater worship or indication of how much you value someone, than to give up everything for them.

*Ps 27:4 One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.*

*Ps 63:3-5 Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you.*

*Phil 3:8-9 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ*

*Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him...*

There is nothing better than a life centred on worship of God and filled with worship for God. I am convinced this does not require us quitting our jobs or leaving your kids to live in a temple in Jerusalem. But it does require our total surrender and focus to God.

Do you want to worship more? Ask God what the next step is for you. Do you not want to worship more, but wish you did? Tell God about it and ask Him to change your heart. Don't give up in asking – God will answer.

There is nothing better than a life centred on worship of God

# Coming Events

## FRBC

### August

- 4 - Prayer Meeting
- 6 - Winnipeg Harvest

### September

- 1 - Prayer Meeting
- 10 - Elder/Ministry Leaders Meeting
- 11 - Y- Neighbors starts up again
- 17 - Winnipeg Harvest

### October

- 1 - Winnipeg Harvest
- 16-17 MBA - AGM in Morris

## Community

### August

- 6-7 - Leadership Summit
- 29-30 - ALS Yard Sale

\*there are also various summer camps happening thought the summer months - please see the bulletin board for more details, dates, times & locations.

More information on any of these events is available on the bulletin board at the back of the sanctuary.

# Summer Fun Puzzles

## Summer Fun Sudoku

Fill in the pictures below, so that every row, column and section contains only one of each.

?			?	?	
		?			?
	?			?	
				?	?
	?	?			
?			?		

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## Summer Fun Beach Blanket Maze

Forgetful Franky has forgotten where he has set up his beach blanket. Can you help him find his way though this crowded beach to his blanket?

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## Fort Richmond Baptist Church

10 Radcliffe Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3T 3Y9

Phone: 204-275-7775  
Fax: 204-275-7757  
Email: [admin@frbc.ca](mailto:admin@frbc.ca)

We're on the Web!  
[www.frbc.ca](http://www.frbc.ca)

*Our mission is to assist  
people to become God's active  
servants in our community and  
around the world*

## Ministry Spotlight: Children's Ministries

*By Michelle Larcombe*

Children's Ministry in this past year has been an interesting journey, both for me personally, and for the ministry in general. I started last fall as the Children's Ministry Team Leader. I had been volunteering with the kids for a number of years at that point, but not in that position. A huge thank you to all the people who have put so much time and effort into the kids and FRBC in this past year, teaching, organizing, and just being willing to give some of their time to be able to see the kids grow.

One of the main goals that we have in the Children's Ministry is to see the kids grow in community with each other. Having friends who will be there for you, supporting and cheering you on as you go through life is so important, and having Christian friends to be encouraged and learn how to encourage others in their walk with God is something that is amazing to see. It is

incredible to watch kids grow closer to each other and further along in their walk with God, seeing them willing to open up and ask for prayer, and being sensitive to one another in that area. It's great to see kids excited to see their friends as they come back week after week.

This fall we are going to be running a program called "Paul and the Underground Church." It is a very interactive experience for kids kindergarten to Grade Six. We will be setting up a Roman Marketplace in the church, where kids will get to visit different shops, learning about the Roman culture at the time of the apostle Paul. They will get to visit Paul himself, guarded under house arrest, and tell him about visiting Rome, while he tells them about his own life. They will get to visit the underground church, and learn what life and a relationship with God was like for Christians starting the early church. They will get to

play Roman games, and sing songs that remind us of the early Christians. Most importantly, this is something that the kids get to experience together. We want this to include as many kids as want to come. Kids, invite your friends. Parents, encourage your kids to invite their friends. If you know of a family who might be interested, encourage them to check it out. Information on times and dates are included in the bulletin, and more details will be provided throughout the summer and into the fall.

I am personally very excited for this, as well as Kid's Church resuming in the fall. If you would like to know more about the programming that we have for Kids, or would like information about being involved, my email address is [larcombe.m@gmail.com](mailto:larcombe.m@gmail.com), and I could be happy to try to answer any questions you may have.