

DAYSRING DAYBOOK

Monthly Newsletter of Dayspring Presbyterian Church, 11445-40 Ave, Edmonton, AB, CAN, T6J 0R4

March 2018

What is a family?

When we are asked to define a “family,” it is highly likely that we will start by describing the “family” in which we live. However, there are many forms of family.

- a nuclear family (an adult couple with children)
- a couple family (an adult couple, with no children)
- a single individual living on their own without close ties to anyone
- a pair or group of single individuals who live separately but “look out” for one another in various ways
- an extended family (at least three generations of blood relatives living together or in close proximity)
- a single parent family (adult and one or more children)
- a reconstituted or blended family (adult couple with children from a previous marriage or from single parenthood)
- living-apart-together families (adults and children who live together some, but not all, of the time)
- commuter families (adult couple, with or without children, with one of the adults living and working in a distant location, reuniting with their partner and children on weekends)
- rainbow families (families that include whoever wants to be part of the family whether living together or living separately but dropping in at will)
- tribal families (groups of persons, some related by kinship, others related by a shared cultural heritage, who see each other, adults and children, as their “family”)

Some would say that family includes only those who are blood relatives or who are related by marriage, while others would say the opposite. Some would say that a family led by same-gender married adults, or a couple comprised of same-gender adults, is indeed a family whereas others would have a great deal of trouble with that concept. Some would include their pets as part of their family whereas others might not. Some would simply say that family is a haven where members can experience support or feel secure.

Some would say that changes in values and behaviour that have, in Western democracies, resulted in nuclear families no longer being the norm, is extremely detrimental to the fabric of society. Others would say that diversity which has always existed is just being more widely recognized and legitimized and that, as a result, families (more broadly defined than in the past) are better able to contribute to the wellbeing of society.

- John Carr



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Ohana means family.
Family means nobody gets
left behind or forgotten.
- Lilo & Stitch

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Darlene Eerkes with her colleague, Bernice, and the Conference Attendees in Ghana

Walking Together – Visioning with Christian Leaders in Ghana

Again this year, January 13 – 23, 2018, I had the privilege to go to Ghana as a Learning Leader with Edu Deo Ministries, that has partnered with International Needs Ghana (INGH) to bring Christian education leaders together. I took with me a Christian colleague from the King’s University. For 5 full days (and I mean FULL days!), Bernice and I, along with 16 Ghanaian (Christian) educators, retreated to a conference centre in Adidome Ghana. We shared stories and discussed government curriculum, teacher pedagogy, student challenges and leadership/teacher responsibilities.

This conference again focused on Christ Centered Education, emphasizing a vision for Christian education that makes God “Lord of all Things.” This means understanding how to work with state-based curriculum systems while teaching students to understand their role in God’s story - to become Earth Keepers, Servant Workers, Idolatry Discerners, Beauty Creators, Image Reflectors, Community Builders, Justice Seekers, Creation Enjoyers, Order Discoverers and God Worshippers.

This 2018 conference was an extension of learning that occurred last year and I was delighted and amazed to hear Principal and Teacher stories on how these same conference participants of 2017 had implemented the learning from last year. Wow! They took their newly created vision and implemented it in their 3 schools: “Shaping hearts, minds and hands, through Christ-Centered Education to transform the world.”

This year we deepened this learning and developed curriculum units, wrote lesson plans and participants taught mini-lessons to demonstrate how essential curricular objectives could reveal how we might play our role in God’s Story in this world. Deep discussions occurred around how to “assess what we value” as Christian educators. Good teaching pedagogy was modelled – we had a lot of fun and laughter with this. We imagined ways to actively engage students in their learning and how we might meet the needs of struggling students. Yes, we powered through an incredible lot of experiential learning in one week!

At the end of the conference, we took lots of pictures, hugged one another and joyously celebrated the great learning accomplishments. We savoured delicious maple sugar candies that I had taken to represent Canada. We had tasted their unique foods all week long; it was their turn to “taste” maple sugar. They really liked it!

And, after the conference, just when Bernice and I thought our minds were empty (drained) and our hearts full to overflowing, we spent a few more days meeting with committed Christian leaders in International Needs Ghana (INGH) to envision some amazing projects that are underway in these communities.

These are just a few:

To invite many more Christian schools into these learning conferences so that more educators and students will experience our God as “Lord of all things.” This is a big vision as they work to find the resources to make this a reality!

We visited Amrahia Community Christian School for two days, observing teachers (some of our conference participants) and engaging in professional conversations, providing feedback, talking with students and trying to explain “snow” (I had some pictures of snow). It was consensus amongst the students and staff that they ALL want to come to Edmonton to visit – BUT, they want to “come in the summer, please!”

This Amrahia School (INGH) has an exciting vision for building on to the water treatment project they have already begun at the school, for the school. There is a great need for more clean water in this community and they want to make clean water available, beyond the school.(...p.4)

FROM OUR MINISTER:

The Family of God's People

Belonging to a congregation could mean many things. One of the things it could mean, is that there are people that we associate with. These people are folks that we look forward to seeing on a regular basis. It fills our heart with a measure of warmth when we get to see them. There needn't be a biological relationship, just a spiritual connection.

Looking at the spiritual connection can be what the apostle Paul refers to as the "Body of Christ." Similar to our own physical bodies, the body of Christ has many parts and each part is necessary for the body to function properly. If one part hurts, the rest of the body also hurts. When one person is sick or undergoing some form of painful experience, the whole body aches. It can be debilitating if we don't pay attention to the ailment.

How do these ailments get taken care of? For us at Dayspring we live by the values of being a community of faith and care. This implies that the congregation has people who make sure that these aches and pains are tended to. Make sure that we know about such instances of illness or difficulty. This is the only way we can bear knowledge of such times of trouble or need.

Do you feel that you are part of the congregation's family? If not, it may just mean that we need to get to know of you. You are the only one that can make sure that we are aware of you.

The extent to which we feel part of the family of

God's people often depends on a person's willingness to become involved. Make sure that you find your place in the wonder of Jesus Christ's body at Dayspring.



Heinrich



Jim and Wendy with their family

Another Kind of Family

- Jim Jeatt

Our little family is one not of design but of good fortune. We were unable to have children in the traditional sense but have stumbled upon a family type that works for us.

We have a dog and two cats. We have been blessed on how well it works. The dog Josie is a lab shepherd mix 8 years old, Brie is a grey female tabby 9 years old and Mr Whiskers is a male tabby 7 years old. They are treated as siblings and for the most part act the part. The cats get annoyed with each other and compete for the best spots in the house for the sun and for attention. Whiskers is a male cat and some male cats have dog tendencies. Whiskers has them in spades. Josie and Whiskers wrestle and play and sometimes the cat's head ends up in the dog's mouth.

We give a lot of love to the animals and they return it tenfold. Josie is walked twice a day at least and she also gets to run around in the yard during the winter chasing a laser pointer. Ensuring the dog is exercised means that we are exercised as well walking the neighborhood and walking at the local dog parks. We will sometimes put a lead on Whiskers and take him for a walk with Josie. We have invested a lot of time with Josie in training and working with her. It is something we take pride in having a polite and respectful dog. She gives love very easily to us and to others.

We are surprised that the cats are not aloof or standoffish. We are a family in many senses of the word. Upon returning from being away from each other there is a lot of excitement and nuzzling.

... **Visioning** (continued)

INGH is working to extend the work of their Vocational School (4 of these school leaders were in our conference) and re-frame this school to be a CEED program (Centre for Empowerment and Entrepreneurial Development) for women especially. The current vocational school for women was begun about 25 years ago when INGH partnered with the “Free the Slaves” organization to buy back Ghanaian women who were in slavery (in various ways). We heard some horrible stories.

These “freed” women needed something to do, so this vocational centre was begun to train women in various skills to go back into their communities and earn a living in entrepreneurial endeavours such as hospitality, cooking/baking, sewing, cosmetics, etc. At one time there were 200 women protected and trained in this program. In working with the Vocational School women (staff) at the conference, we became aware of their challenges and the deep vision to bring change to women and girls in Ghana. In light of the gender and child marriage issues, this CEED program is critical to bringing change in this area. There are even some plans to begin offering day courses for men, whose needs are also many.

This was an exhausting, whirl-wind conference, meeting with leaders and envisioning more training and work alongside our Christian friends. Again this year, my heart has been filled with the immeasurable blessing of our time together, their open-armed welcome, our joyful participation in worship together and multiple conversations where we shared and learned about their lives in Ghana. I know I leave a little more of my heart in Ghana, every time I visit!
- Darlene Eerkes



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SESSION

Moderator: Heinrich Grosskopf

Session Clerk: Darlene Eerkes

Deputy Clerk: Iris Routledge

Roll Clerk: Jim Jeatt

Other Elders

Bill Davis	Walters Munde
Jane de Caen	Nick Nation
John Carr	Stanley Ngwa
Ingrid Dukhedin-Lalla	Laura Patterson-
Peter Eerkes	Fortin
Carina Grosskopf	Todd Shipman
Sam Jaikaran	Darleen Springstein
Gina Kottke	Heather Tansem

MINISTER

The Rev. Dr. Heinrich Grosskopf

CHURCH STAFF

Church School Coordinator: Lynn
Vaughan

Youth Coordinator: Shane Johnson

Worship Arts Coordinator

Gordon McCrostie, B.Mus., M.T.S.

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Alternate Pianist

Darolyn McCrostie, B.Mus., P.D.A.D.
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