



Christian Fellowship Church Newsletter

MARCH 2017

For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. – Song of Solomon 2:11-12



To God Be The Glory

To God be the glory, great things He has done;
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the life gate that all may go in.

Refrain

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
Let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory, great things He has done.*

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

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

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How hymns travel throughout space and time is fascinating. "To God be the glory" was included in William Doane's *Songs of Devotion* in 1870, indicating that it was written at least five years earlier than the 1875 date that is usually cited.

Ira Sankey probably saw the hymn in Doane's collection and incorporated it into the first edition of his *Sacred Songs and Solos* (1875). Dwight Moody and Ira Sankey helped to establish the hymn's popularity during their revivals in Great Britain in the late 19th century. It also appeared in some British hymnals including the *Methodist Hymn Book* (1933).

However, it was not until the 1954 Billy Graham Crusade in Nashville that Cliff Barrows introduced this song to congregations in the United States. Mr. Graham and Mr. Barrows had learned the song during the 1952 revivals they had conducted in Great Britain.

A hymn's journey

Hymnologist William J. Reynolds, writing in his hymnal companion *Hymns of Faith* (1964), documented the return of this hymn to the USA: "It is most extraordinary that this long-forgotten American gospel song should have been imported from England and become immensely popular during the last decade."

Frances Jane Crosby's hymns have historically been among the most popular songs sung by Methodists. Crosby (1820-1915), who became blind as an infant, was a lifelong Methodist.

She began composing hymns at age 6, became a student at the New York Institute of the Blind at 15 and joined the faculty of the Institute at 22, teaching rhetoric and history. Her hymn texts were staples for the music of the most prominent gospel songwriters of her day.

Few gospel songs express gratitude to God as creator of the universe or to God's providence in our lives. For evangelicals, God's primary role is often found in the gift of Jesus Christ, the redeemer of the world and God's greatest gift to humanity—the thesis of John 3:16.

Dr. Hawn is professor of sacred music at Perkins School of Theology.

From the Pastors Desk



Our Trip to Thailand

From January 19-30, we (Brad and Casadi) traveled with MBmission to Thailand on a Vision Trip. MBmission is the mission agency connected with the Mennonite Brethren church in Canada and the United States. Their vision is to engage in holistic church planting that transforms communities among the least reached around the world. They regularly host Vision Trips which are an opportunity for those in North America to travel to countries around the world where MBmission is doing work in order to gain exposure to the work being done.

During this Vision Trip a team of 10 individuals travelled to Thailand. A team of 6 from an MB church in Winnipeg stayed in the area of Chonburi and hosted a VBS for kids in the area. Meanwhile Casadi, myself, and Lloyd and Carol Letkeman (MBmission central Canada mobilizers) travelled to 3 different areas of Thailand where MBmission has teams ministering to the people of Thailand and planting churches.

We first went to the city of Chachoengsao. Here there are 5 missionaries that are working alongside of Thai national leaders to plant churches in this area. We were able to worship with one of the churches as well as hear testimony from two of the Thai pastors/leaders. We also heard testimony from several students who are involved in ministry at their university. Lastly, we met with some of the leaders from a church plant among the Burmese migrant workers near Chachoengsao. It was amazing to hear the passion these leaders and students have for Jesus and for their fellow Thai and Burmese people whom they long to introduce to their Saviour.

From here we flew to Chiang Mai in northern Thailand. Here there is a team of 7 missionaries who are involved in church planting and prison outreach ministries. We were given a brief overview of the work being done in all of Southeast Asia (Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Philippines, etc.) by the MBmission leader located in Chiang Mai. After this we toured and prayed through a famous Buddhist Temple on a mountain site near the city and heard a bit about the influence of Buddhism in Thailand. The vast majority of Thai's identify as Buddhist though the Buddhism practiced has evolved and includes various cultural expressions as well. We also visited the Women's Juvenile Detention Center where this team hosts Bible studies and ministers to the women in this center and we heard testimony from one of the young women who's life has been changed through Jesus and this ministry. Finally, we heard testimony from a pastor of a church ministering to the Khmu people in Thailand. It was amazing to hear how God is moving each day among these people groups, drawing people to Himself.

Lastly, we traveled south to Chonburi. While we were blessed and encouraged by the work being done in Chachoengsao and Chiang Mai it was the work here in Chonburi that really pulled on our heartstrings. The team there runs an orphanage for HIV children (called Abundant Life Home or ALH) that is taking care of approximately 24 children currently. It was beautiful to see these kids experiencing the blessing of a Christian family and home while having their physical needs met at the same time. These kids loved life and their smiles were amazing to see! We were also told of this team's vision for a discipleship training center on site at this orphanage where local Thai believers as well as North American mission teams could come and receive training in the Bible, missions, and discipleship. We also saw some of the church plants that this team is working with here. Finally, one evening we travelled a little further south to the city of Pattaya which is the sex tourist capital of the world, famous for its vast sex trafficking industry.

On the way up we were also asked to pray for Oom. Oom is a girl from the ALH orphanage. She was raised there but ran away and became a prostitute on the streets of Pattaya. As we entered the city and began the prayer walk in the red light district, it seemed every metre and a half or so there was a girl standing out. Some of the history of Pattaya is the sex trade started after the Vietnam war when soldiers would come to rest in the quaint fishing town. The locals began to bring their women to be used in exchange for money. So there is a history involving the responsibility of European and Americans/Canadians who founded this sex tourism. After we entered the city and began walking we stopped to pray, and out of a million people there was Oom, she pulled up on a motorcycle behind us as we prayed, and called out to the orphanage mom and dad that were with us. It was a miracle and assurance to us that even in the midst of this evil that God is at work. Then the men split off from the prayer walk and the women continued down into the brothel area. Flocks of white men, like hungry wolves, their eyes seem to be glazed over with only one thing on their minds, to satisfy their fleshly desires, preying on these women. You would see them, mostly middle-age white men touch the girls, approach the girls, and sometimes walk away with them. After what seemed like hours of this, I (Casadi) began to feel overwhelmed and hopeless, but it seemed God spoke to me in those moments and told me to look deep into their eyes to pray for the men using the girls/women, and to pray for the women on the streets selling their bodies. I felt the Lord say to me “these are mine, these are my lost children, do not go numb, look into their eyes and pray for them, they are human just like you and I love them deeply”. It was a painful experience but definitely eye-opening as to the great need there is in Thailand.

All things considered this Vision Trip was a full, interesting, stretching, and worshipful experience. We benefitted greatly from seeing firsthand the work being done in Thailand. It is one thing to read about MBmission’s work there and another to see it. Here in Canada we have an established church. Generally speaking it isn’t difficult to find churches, believers, or opportunities to hear the gospel preached and grow in biblical knowledge. We face challenges in ongoing discipleship but there are opportunities for this. In Thailand, however, the church is young and still striving to become established. Christian churches and fellow believers are few and far between and opportunities to hear the gospel and learn the Bible are difficult to find. We can pray that the kingdom of Jesus continues to come and God’s will continues to be done in Thailand. That Thai nationals would continue to come to Jesus and take ownership of the church and its work in their country. And we can continue to pray that the Lord of the Harvest would send workers into his harvest field. There is a great amount of work to be done in Thailand and very few workers to do it. Workers are needed who would come alongside the Thai church and train pastors, disciple young believers, plant churches, proclaim the gospel, teach the Bible, and work for justice particularly in the areas of human sex trafficking, orphan care, and prison ministry where the MBmission workers are involved. There is so much more that we can share about our time in Thailand, the work being done there, and the needs they have. If you would like to hear more, please speak to us and we will be happy to share more with you!

Brad and Casadi



Some information about Iraq where the Hassoo family is originally from:

Location: Middle East, bordering the Persian Gulf, between Iran and Kuwait

Capital: Baghdad

Climate: mostly desert; mild to cool winters with dry, hot, cloudless summers; northern mountainous regions along Iranian and Turkish borders experience cold winters with occasionally heavy snows that melt in early spring, sometimes causing extensive flooding in central and southern Iraq

Population: 32,585,692 (2014 est.)

Ethnic Make-up: Arab 75%-80%, Kurdish 15%-20%, Turkoman, Assyrian, or other 5%

Religions: Muslim 97%, Christian or other 3%

Government: parliamentary democracy

Iraqi food is so strongly influenced by its neighbouring countries, Turkey and Iran, it is one of the few nations of the Middle East to lack a unique cuisine. Like the Turks, Iraqis like to stuff vegetables and eat a lot of lamb, rice, and yogurt. Like Iranians, they enjoy cooking fruits with beef and poultry.

Although Iraq may not have a distinct cooking style, there are several dishes native to the country. *Masgoof* is a whole-skewered fish barbequed on an outdoor grill. Iraqis cook almost every part of an animal, from the kidneys and liver, to the brain, feet, eyes, and ears. *Pacha* is a slowly cooked combination of sheep's head, stomach, feet, and other parts in a broth. A popular side dish, *turshi*, is a mixture of pickled vegetables.

Wheat, barley, rice, and dates are the staple foods of Iraq. Sheep and goats are the most common meat, but lamb, cows, chickens, fish, and sometimes camels are eaten as well. The meat is usually cut into strips, then cooked with onions and garlic, or minced for stew and served with rice. For the majority of Iraqis who practice the Muslim religion (95 percent of Iraqis), eating pork is forbidden.

Alcohol is also forbidden to Muslims, so Western soft drinks, ice water, tea, and coffee are drunk. Coffee and tea are served before and after, but never during, a meal. Iraqis usually drink their coffee with sugar and cream or milk. The rich, dark coffee prepared in Iraq is unique. The beans are ground, then heated and cooled nine times before the coffee is served. This is believed to remove all impurities from the imported coffee.

Hospitality is considered a highly admired asset to the Iraqis. Iraqis are known for being very generous and polite, especially when it comes to mealtime. Meals are more often a festive, casual experience than a formal one. Many Iraqis were raised to feed their guests before themselves, and to feed them well. Most Iraqis hosts feel that they are failing in their role as hosts if their guests have not tried all of their dishes. In fact, proper appreciation is shown by overeating.

A typical Iraqi meal starts with a *mezze* (appetizer), such as *kebabs*, which are cubes of marinated meat cooked on skewers. Soup is usually served next, which is drunk from the bowl, not eaten with a spoon.

For *gadaa* and *ashaa*, Arabic for lunch and dinner, the meals are much alike. A simple main course, such as lamb with rice is served, followed by a salad and *khubaz*, a flat wheat bread served buttered with fruit jelly on top. Other popular dishes include *quzi* (stuffed roasted lamb), *kibbe* (minced meat, nuts, raisins, and spices), and *kibbe batata* (potato-beef casserole).

This is, of course, general information gathered from encyclopaedia web sites. It is to give a general idea of where the Hassoo family originally came from and some of their customs and familiar foods. After fleeing and living in a refugee camp, it is hard to say how their customs and traditions within the family have been affected but we pray they will come here to live in safety and confidence and we can mutually share in learning our differences and assuredly we will find we have a lot in common.

Mennonite Brethren



March 1, 2017

Winnipeg, Manitoba—Jordan Duerrstein is the recipient of the Mennonite Brethren Historical Commission’s summer archival internship for 2017. The selection committee chose Jordan from several strong candidates from various universities and colleges in the US and Canada.

As intern, Jordan will spend a total of five weeks visiting each of the MB archival centers in North America (Fresno, Hillsboro, Winnipeg, and Abbotsford) during the months of May and June. In addition to discovering the unique character of each of these Mennonite archives, he will explore the stories and images housed in them, especially pursuing his interest in Mennonite communal life: the theology that shaped it initially, the ways it has changed over time, and the prospects for forming intentional communities of faith today.

“We are very pleased to award the archival internship to Jordan. Hopefully it will be a rich experience for him and one that provides insights for the Commission, too. We see this as another part of our mandate to document and communicate the story of God’s work among us,” says Don Isaac, chair of the Historical Commission.

Jordan is a seminary student at Wycliffe College at the University of Toronto, having completed both BEd and BMus degrees. Scott Street MB Church and Southridge Community Church in St. Catharines, Ontario, are both places he calls home. FreeChurch Toronto is where he currently serves as a pastoral intern. Jordan and his wife, Danielle, enjoy finding ways to combine downtown missional community living with Christian ministry.

The summer internship is made possible with support from US and Canadian Mennonite Brethren Churches.

—Jon Isaak, Executive Secretary, Historical Commission www.mbhistory.org



He's Here:

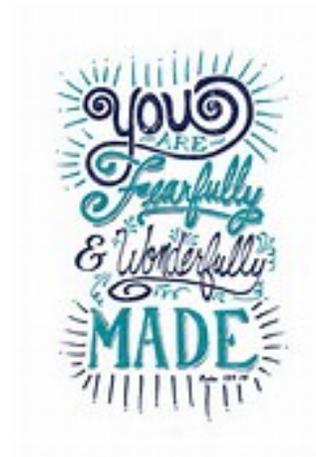
James Gordon Fisher

Born March 25, 2017 8 lbs 2 oz

Parents are Amy & Logan Fisher

And Lily is a happy big sister

Grandparents Beth and Jerome Fisher



Social Media.....Good? Bad? Ugly?



Is Social Media Ripping Off Your Time With God & Others?

If your finding your relationship with God and others a little challenging, consider if time spent with your smart phone is ripping time away from the important people in your life. Let's find out if your most important relationships are in danger of sabotage by social media.

Social media can kill your relationship with anybody but especially God. He doesn't scream out for your attention like the other people in your life. But maybe the important people in your life have quit screaming!

Fact: social media is fun. It's cool to be in the know. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google Plus, Pinterest, and LinkedIn, can even help us engage with our family, friends, and circles of influence. **But for social media to be an advantage it needs to enrich our relationships rather than rob from them.**

Here are a few questions you can ask to determine if social media is killing what you really want to thrive.

Social Media Tilt-Meter Test: (See if any of these apply to you.)

What's the first thing you reach for in the morning? Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest or your Bible?

Upon waking, who do you comment to first, your mate or your friends on social media?

If you added up all the minutes you spend on social media each day - would it be as much as you give God for Bible reading and prayer?

Do you know more about what's going on in the life of your peeps than you do your kids?

How often do you check in with your tweeps and peeps in comparison to how often you check in with God?

When your dining with a loved one, do you know more about what's on their plate, or more about the dish you just found on Instagram?

There's nothing wrong with social media, as long as it doesn't snuff out the time you need with God or other important people in your life.

Try the Media Fast Challenge:

Go on a social media fast. Try it for a week. You will be amazed at how much more time you have to talk with God and others. Instead of grabbing your phone or electronic device, read your Bible and other good books. Take time to think. Enjoy a walk with someone important in your life. Or hey, just take a walk by yourself. Remember what it's like to smell the roses.

Unplugging will help you get your groove back. It will reset your brain.

If you can't resist the urge to check in with your tweeps and peeps, then delete the apps. Go ahead. It's ok! You can always get them back.

Yes, you will miss social media at first. The first time I did a social media fast I thought I was missing out on everything important. But here's what I learned: The world around me isn't as important as what's really important. God. My husband. My kids. My close friends, and yes...me!

You'll find social media a hard habit to break. But once broken it will bring freedom. Freedom to your relationships. With God. With others. With yourself.

Don't let social media rip away your time with God and all that's important. Take a little media break. You'll have greater clarity when you return...and better relationships.

The Dos and Don'ts of Being a Good Digital Citizen



Just like in the real world, people also belong to one or more online communities in the digital world, which grants them their digital citizenship. As digital citizens, we have various rights and responsibilities; ideally, good online citizens should always act with respect for themselves and for the others. There are rules that dictate how we should act and behave so that everyone can stay safe and enjoy their use of the Internet:

Digital Dos:

Most of us are effective participants in the digital world, which means we post, comment and share photos, videos and other information about ourselves. Sometimes, this can be private or sensitive information that we don't share publicly, but only with a friend or a selected group. Nonetheless, we are not always safe from hackers and online predators, so the best way to protect ourselves is to post only those things we wouldn't mind everyone else seeing.

Report harmful online behaviour affecting you or someone else, either to the site's authorities or to a parent or another adult you trust. Examples of harmful behaviour include cyber bullying and online predators.

Basic digital etiquette says to treat others the way you want to be treated, i.e., be respectful, polite, and positive. Unfortunately, many Internet users fail to act this way consistently. Really good online citizens thank people who have helped them in any way, and do their best to help others in need.

Read carefully the rules and guidelines of each site you use, be it a classroom forum or a social networking site. These are community-specific rules that you need to know and follow.

Practice safe online behaviour. There are countless websites that offer useful Internet safety tips, but as a general guideline, never post or give your personal information, home/ school/ office address, passwords, etc. to someone you don't know in real-life or you've just met. Don't divulge this type of information about someone else, either.

Digital Don'ts:

Don't say anything online you wouldn't say if the person were standing in front of you. Take responsibility for your actions even if you are sitting behind your computer or Smartphone. Think twice whether you really want to say it, and consider that the other can read your online comment over and over, which can make it even more hurtful than if you have said it to their face.

Don't post photos and comments that you cannot take back once you change your mind. Posting something online probably means it will be there forever for others to see or read. So, if you are not comfortable with it, don't post it.

Don't believe everything you read online. The Internet is a place for manipulation, so do your own research before believing or sharing anything.

Don't share other people's creations without their permission. If you do share someone else's photos, videos, reports, blogs, articles, etc, in their entirety or just portions, ask permission first and give proper credit. Remember there are copyright laws that protect this type of content.



Returning in May:



Watoto Children's Choir

Friday May 19, 2017 7:00pm

Lanigan Town Hall

This appearance they will be performing at the Lanigan Town Hall so we will be able to enjoy fully their exuberant and exciting performance. Mark your calendars so you won't miss this joyful evening and be sure to invite neighbours and friends.



"Next time Pastor Bob asks if you know what the sermon was about, the answer is not 'about three hours.'"