

# THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST

## FELLOWSHIP OF CANADIAN EVANGELISTS

### NEWSLETTER

#### PRESIDENT'S LINE

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#### ***Moving Ahead ... with New Horizons***

I am delighted with the fact that FOCE is moving forward again. The period of limited communication and sluggish accomplishments are behind us. We are once again steaming ahead ... with new horizons.

##### **1. Embracing A New Decade**

Believe it or not ... FOCE has entered its second decade of existence and operation. Several members of FOCE need to be applauded for their continued and faithful participation and partnership in the establishment and development of FOCE since its launch in June 1992. The mission of FOCE is as relevant today as when we first began.

##### **2. Empowering A New Generation**

I am sensing that God's Spirit is raising up a new generation of Canadians to become evangelists. Some clear signals of this are readily apparent:

- The large attendance and enthusiasm for evangelism displayed at *Harvest Prayer Summit* in Abbotsford BC, May 1-4, 2002.
- The gathering of Christian leaders for *Crossroads Summon* in Burlington ON, November 7-9, 2002 calling for action to increase the harvest force and prayer-driven evangelism.
- Creation and inclusion of the "*Equipping Evangelists Action Track*" in VISION CANADA – the Evangelism Round Table of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.
- Increased enrolment of students desiring to be evangelists in the brand new campus of Taylor College of Mission and Evangelism in St. John NB.

##### **3. Engaging New Technology**

Electronic communication is here to stay. It is becoming a more pervasive and permanent dimension of our lives. Wisely used it could enhance communication more effectively and efficiently to a broader audience. Hence, we launched this website in early February, 2003.

Why not each reader (like you) commend the FOCE website address to personal friends, board members, and supporters of your ministry and ministry leaders across the land. The more Christian leaders that know about FOCE the clearer and higher the profile of the evangelist would be. So, do not procrastinate. Pass on the FOCE website address:

[www.canadianevangelists.com](http://www.canadianevangelists.com). You will be helping us move ahead.

*T.V. Thomas*

*March 2003*

# Is the Evangelist Facing Extinction in Canada?

by Dr. Larry Brice

Believe it or not, I am the only full-time evangelist from the Presbyterian Church in Canada – in the last 50 years. Other itinerant evangelists like me, from various other denominations frequently refer to the few ministry invitations received from local churches and a meager income to live on. All that says a great deal about the drastically reduced importance of the evangelist in the Canadian church.

Is the evangelist facing extinction in Canada?

I am convinced of my calling as an evangelist. I am equally convinced that the role of the evangelist will not die out in Canada. Here are four reasons:

## **1. The Evangelist is in the biblical order of ministry.**

Like the prophet, apostle, pastor and teacher, the evangelist is in God's scheme of leadership for the church (Ephesians 4:11-13). The apostle Paul urged Timothy "*to do the work of an evangelist*" in his orbit of regular pastoral leadership (2 Timothy 4:5). One of the longest descriptions of a specific ministry in the New Testament is that of Philip "the evangelist" winning the Ethiopian official to faith in Christ after completing outreaches in Samaria (Acts 8:4-40; 21:8-9).

## **2. The Church's history reveals the significance of role of the evangelist.**

Throughout church history, God has continually used the evangelist to call people to believe and obey God. God has used evangelists and missionaries with evangelistic passion and calling to go and preach the Gospel. They exhorted listeners to come to Christ by personal faith.

Both in the old and New Testaments the evangelist exhorted and persuasively called people to give their lives to God. See Moses in Exodus 32:25-26, Elijah in 1 Kings 18:21; and Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:20 in their role as an evangelist.

Evangelists like John Wesley, Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, Charles Finney, D.L. Moody and Billy Sunday to mention just a few who significantly shaped the recent history of the church in the West.

## **3. God is still calling people today to be evangelists**

I have absolutely no doubt that God has called me personally to be an evangelist. As a teenager in my Bible study class at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Maple, Ontario God called me to pastoral ministry but the same time he gave me a longing to tell as many of my generation as possible the glorious message of Christ's and His offer of salvation. I also had a lingering sense I would someday do the work of an itinerant evangelist. Then, years later in 1987 at the Billy Graham School of Evangelism God spoke powerfully to my wife, Karen,

and I. God wanted us to begin an evangelistic ministry. It is encouraging to hear that God is still calling other individuals into the ministry of the evangelist. We need to pray for more to respond to God's voice and enter as workers to bring in the harvest.

#### **4. People are responding to the ministry of the evangelist today.**

One constant that keeps me in evangelism is God's confirmation of my ministry. People respond to the proclamation of the Gospel. Whether it is at a crusade in a community or an evangelistic telecast I have received positive feedback that is most encouraging. People are taking the step of faith and coming into a personal relationship with Jesus. Christians are excited that God called people like me to declare the GOOD NEWS. God confirms His calling for this work.

Well known Canadian evangelists like Barry Moore, Marney Patterson, John Moore, John Wesley White, Leighton Ford together with tens of other evangelists have served Canada diligently for decades. I believe we need more and younger evangelists in this nation. If the Canadian Church does not encourage and empower evangelists, there will be a diminished level of leadership in the Church which results in a dramatic impoverishment of evangelism in the nation. In most nations where the church is growing you will find evangelists are highly valued and their ministries are flourishing. May that soon become a reality in Canada!

*Dr. Larry Brice is the evangelist of Reachout Ministries and lives with his wife, Karen and their two daughters Alena and Erika in Port Rowan, Ontario*

## **An Evangelist in Every Church**

by Justyn Rees

God's method to reach the world is people. People in loving unity. Always has been – ever since he reproduced his likeness in Adam and Eve. When that couple first came together in God-like loving unity... Surprise! – baby Cain – the likeness was reproduced. Loving unity is the secret of life. It's who God is.

Twos and threes coming together in loving unity has always been the place where blessing is commanded and eternal life given. That's where Jesus' presence is felt, where he loves to receive worship and where he delights to answer prayer.

Loving unity makes the Gospel credible. *"If you wish to be recognized by the world as authentic, love each other as I have loved you,"* said Jesus, who went on to pray: *"May they be brought to complete loving unity, like ours, Father, then the world will believe that you really do love them, love them enough to send me."* (John 13-15, 17)

Individual evangelism has its place as Philip discovered on the Gaza road, but the ideal for the evangelist is in the context of loving unity. That's where God designed the evangelist to primarily operate and that's why God so gifted him/her: *To equip the Church for (the evangelistic)*

*work of service.* DL Moody observed that “it is better to put 10 men to work than to seek to do the work of 10 men.” Common sense says that it is better to equip a whole church to think, pray, plan and act evangelistically than to conduct a one-man crusade.

Bill Hybels argues that every church should recognize an evangelistic point person, initially as a volunteer, but later as a staff person. He points out that to run a successful business you not only need to give the best service to your existing clientele, but you also must be constantly seeking new customers. Why therefore, he asks, does the local church devote but an average of 2% of their annual budget to local evangelism? The most significant contribution we could make to evangelism is to recognize and appoint an evangelist or an evangelistic point person in every church in Canada.

Those charged with the responsibility to train Canadians for ministry do an excellent job equipping pastors and teachers. But why is there precious little available to train life-long evangelists? Last month members of FOCE and Vision Canada met with members of the Round Table on Higher Education of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada to discuss how this imbalance might be rectified. Exciting plans are in the pipeline. Meanwhile follow the links to Taylor College to see what is already available.

One vital focus of FOCE is to help promote the role of the evangelist as a member of the local church team, an equipper of the whole body, rather than as a lonely nomad. Programs have their uses. Eloquent proclamations are powerful. Slick presentations are better than chaos. But it is the loving unity of the local church that represents the loving unity of God such that others are drawn into His loving unity. The evangelist will be more effective as one who beckons than as one who merely points.

*Justyn Rees is a Vice-President of FOCE and an evangelist with Upstream Christian Initiatives*

## **BOOK REVIEW**

The Media and the Message: Communicating For Results by Barrie Doyle (Beamsville ON: Gateway Communications International, 2002)

The world of communication is constantly growing in complexity and sophistication. Therefore, no evangelist can afford to neglect learning and sharpening his/her skills in communicating the GOOD NEWS.

Barrie Doyle, a highly accomplished Canadian communications expert and active Christian layperson has developed a user-friendly, how-to manual with his distilled wisdom for churches, Christian organizations (and I believe for evangelists as well) to effectively pass on the GOOD NEWS using the public media. Readers will also pick up tips on how to write effective newsletters, how to do a news release, how to organize and implement an event, etc. To order a copy, contact the author at [gateway@cogeco.ca](mailto:gateway@cogeco.ca).

*T.V. Thomas*

## **Two Gatherings Highlight Prayer and Evangelism ...**

***Harvest Prayer Summit***  
***May 2-4, 2002***  
***Abbotsford, British Columbia***

*Harvest Prayer Summit* was a strategic event for evangelism in Canada. Joyful worship coupled with personal and corporate prayer saturated the three-day event. Over 250 Canadians from a wide spectrum of Christian tradition and age gathered in Abbotsford and covenanted to be evangelists. Many were commissioned at the closing public rally of the *Canadian Prayer Assembly* held at Abbotsford's Tradex Complex.

FOCE Vice-President, Justyn Rees along with David Noble and a team of volunteers did a magnificent job of hosting, leading and serving all the participants. Undoubtedly the Holy Spirit used *Harvest Prayer Summit* to leave an indelible impression on participants' hearts to seek the lost.

***Crossroads Summon***  
***November 7-9, 2002***  
***Burlington, Ontario***

More than 40 church/para-church leaders gathered at the Crossroads Centre in Burlington, Ontario in November 2002. The three-day *Crossroads Summon*, a Canada In Prayer initiative was called to galvanize the evangelical community around evangelism in our nation. They discussed the current state of Canadian society, the church and prayer-driven evangelism.

The leaders ratified the *Crossroads Declaration* (see [www.canadainprayer.com](http://www.canadainprayer.com)) which calls for cooperation of all Christians and emphasized the need for prayer-driven evangelism – prayer for the harvest must precede successful evangelism. Summon's moderator Brian Warren sums up the importance of the document by noting that “*with this declaration the body of Christ is beginning a dialog and committing to sing off the same song sheet for the next three years. I believe our heavenly Father is very pleased.*”

### **WE NEED YOU!**

If you have a good idea, send it to us. Or, if you have something to share – a book review, a ministry story to tell, some advice to pass on, please email it to me: [editor@canadianevangelists.com](mailto:editor@canadianevangelists.com).

Dr. Larry Brice  
Newsletter Editor