

COMPASS

NEWSLETTER

BEING WHERE YOU ARE

Having two men in my life pass on to the glorious presence of our LORD Jesus Christ these past four weeks has given me cause to reflect about life more than I have in quite some time. This has been a healthy experience and yet troubling at times. One principle of life that dug deep into my mind yesterday is the 'Be Where You Are' principle. I've known of this principle for quite some time. Ken Blanchard, in his book called, *Big Bucks*, talks about avoiding the 'work-a-holic' syndrome by practicing the 'being where you are' principle. In essence it means that where your body is – make sure your mind and heart are there also. So, if I'm at work, it means to throw myself diligently into the tasks of the day and when I'm at home with family, to do the same there.

The tragedy is, in today's ubiquitous presence of mobile social media, we are constantly tempted to escape to a virtual world. People are busy posting to their *Facebook* friends about what they are doing rather than actually enjoying doing what they are doing. They are engaged in texting conversations with remote friends while the friends or family members in their physical presence feel abandoned.

But social media isn't the only culprit; many of us rob ourselves of 'enjoying the moment' because we are held captive by our past. We let our past experience dictate our present and future experience. Our teacher at Men's Breakaway, Lennett Anderson, coined this phrase – "Our past is a place of reference, not a place of residence." Good stuff to remember. Yet, many of us live in the past – whether it be past tragedies that have caused heartbreak or past successes that have defined us.

Our past is also not the only thief of our present experience. Others of us allow our preparation for the future to rob us of living in the present. We are busy fretting about our future and so we employ our energy into achieving a great plan for the future or finding ways to guard us from potential risks. I'm a planner by nature and this can easily be my downfall. Planning my schedule, my goals, my allocation of resources – these can consume me and limit my enjoyment of all the good things that God has given me in the very present reality.

We are repeatedly reminded in Scripture that our existence is like that of grass and wildflowers – we live brightly for a short time and then fade away and are no more. We are also exhorted to think often about our future glory, the heavenly Kingdom that awaits those who have trusted in the work of Jesus Christ for salvation. These are two tensions that should keep us focused on enjoying the blessings God has given us in this world daily while recognizing that these blessings will soon fade away to something richer and more beautiful than we ever could imagine.

I want to learn to live much more in the present. Still holding loosely the things of this world but to drink deeply of all the wondrous blessings and opportunities that God gives me day to day. It was yesterday at a hotel poolside while watching our youngest daughter and our two 13 year-old Japanese exchange students frolic in play that I decided to put aside my 'work' and jump in with both feet and enjoy the moment of play with them. That was my start into the world of 'being where I am'. It felt really good. And it made my daughter really happy!

Be encouraged by the comforting words from our LORD in **Luke 12:22-34**. He reminds us to live with an attitude of thankfulness, resting in His constant care.

Your fellow Traveller,
John Friesen
CEO, Muskoka Bible Centre



COMPASS
NEWSLETTER FALL 2013 ISSUE

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Read a letter from the board on our website regarding changes to the shared leadership structure.

Contact Us

Want to connect with MBC?
There are several ways!

Phone: 1-800-551-0168
Email: mbc@mbc.on.ca
Web: www.muskokabiblecentre.com
Facebook: [fb/MuskokaBibleCentre](https://www.facebook.com/MuskokaBibleCentre)

We're looking forward to hearing from you!

Widji News

In the spring I told you it was **all about relationships!** That was so true of our summer at Camp Widjiitiwin. Thirty-five campers made decisions for Christ and began a journey that we pray will last a lifetime and into eternity. We were also up in our camper weeks with 36 more campers than in 2012. The summer staff was excellent and while there was some drama we had a great summer of ministry and growth, both personal and spiritual.



We hit two attendance records for recent years. First, we hosted 107 for Malvern week (plus officers), now called the Fresh Air Week. That's a long way from where we started in 2009 with 30 campers. Next, we hit 103 in the second of our joint TNT/Blast weeks. WOW, were those weeks busy! We had extra cabin leaders and volunteers to make it

work. **"Escape"**, our partnership week with Hughson Street Church in Hamilton, had 51 campers in two age groups (TNT & Blast) this summer, up from 27 last year. That week saw nine new believers. Very exciting!

We accomplished two major facility upgrades this year in our waterfront rebuild and a staff lounge. Both projects took longer than expected, but look really good. We added a new game called nine-square-in-the-air that became popular very quickly.

Our new partnership with Ontario Harvest churches for a junior high week of camp in the first week of the summer went well with 27 campers attending. Our **radically different** (for Widjiitiwin) double age group adventure went over very well this summer. Having TNT & Blast in the same week was so successful that it meant a lot of our regular August campers came in July. This will now be our new normal. In 2014 we will offer four weeks of camp where TNT and Blast aged campers can attend at the same time. Parents really appreciated this new format. We learned a lot and made adjustments as we went.

Our themes for 2014 are: *The Hobbit, Destination: Hawaii, Sherwood Forest* and *Once Upon*

A Time. Details will be out soon. We will definitely be getting the castle back out for 2014.

We thank you for your continued support of the ministry at Camp Widjiitiwin.



Serving Him together,

Mike Greenfield

Mike (Moose) Greenfield
Director, Camp Widjiitiwin



www.widjiitiwin.ca
www.facebook.com/CampWidjiitiwin
www.vimeo.com/campwidjiitiwin

Being ambassadors for Christ to children and youth

Volunteer Profile - Jo Ann Kerr

This past Thanksgiving Weekend marked the end of Jo Ann Kerr's 18 years as manager of the MBC Bookstore. It was a privilege to be able to honour her for her many years of volunteer service. Though Jo Ann has been on her own this past year and a half, we really honour both her and Dan – this was always a team effort, a decision they made together as a family. And though Jo Ann was the one MBC folks connected with most, Dan was the one who stood alongside her and supported her and this ministry, and freed her to give so much of her time and energy to MBC.



Jo Ann's involvement with MBC has spanned over 40 years – her first MBC experience was as a teen in 1967, when a friend invited her to come to Youth Week. And clearly Jo Ann caught the vision of this place. After that came various part-time positions: a week on staff at Camp Widjiitiwin, helping with the Word of Life Snow Camp. And after she and Dan were married, they spent many weekends here, working with youth retreats, Mens Breakaway, womens retreats.

It wasn't long before God laid it on their hearts for Jo Ann to spend her summers volunteering here at MBC, with Dan joining her on the weekends – usually spent building or repairing something in the bookstore, or delivering shipments of books! Jo Ann has been Dining Room Hostess, Hub Supervisor, Dorm Parent for summer staff, and Sound Technician in the Chapel – she's just about done it all. Of course, the past 18 years she has been the mainstay of the MBC Bookstore, and we are so grateful for her

diligence, her attention to detail, and her over-the-top commitment to the ministry of MBC, and the fulfillment of our mission here. We look forward to exploring many other volunteer opportunities for Jo Ann next summer, and throughout the year!

*The Bookstore
at MBC*



Pointing Youth to Christ

'Pointing youth to Christ'. That is the purpose of youth ministry at MBC and we believe that nothing is more important in life than to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18). Through our words and actions we hope to model a sincere faith that is contagious to the youth that come through the program. This heart for youth is intentionally packed into a program that is full of fun and excitement.

This past summer we were encouraged by an increase in registrations which means we had a lot of new faces to get to know. Some of these kids leave a huge impression on us all. Kids that were so easy to love and made us all laugh along with their unique personalities, and others who have an instant spot in our hearts because of the difficulties they have experienced so far in their relatively short lives. I can only imagine what it must be like to raise a child, but if youth ministry is any insight, I'm looking forward to it! I've learned so much from my few summers of

leading youth min at MBC and I can honestly say that I love these kids a little more every year. It's the simplicity of **establishing relationships** and **servicing Christ** so directly that has kept me coming back. Watching youth grow in their faith and striving to know their Creator is truly a wonderful experience.



The Skills program has been a real success over the last few years, seeing each of these activities – Archery, Arts & Crafts, Baking, Biking, Outdoor Survival & Team Sports – offer youth an opportunity to learn specifics

in a safe and fun environment. In the classroom, lessons from the Bible are taught six days a week. Our faith is founded on the Word of God and it is the Bible that gives us the outline of God's character. I am convinced that a flourishing faith comes from an accurate understanding of the God we serve and of who we are in Him.

So, looking forward to the summer of 2014, we would like to extend an invitation to you and your family to come and enjoy all the wonderful things that MBC offers, especially the youth ministry. A special thank you to those of you who have attended. Each of you help make this youth ministry the success it has been.

By grace alone,

Ben Hamilton

Ben Hamilton
Youth Ministry Coordinator
Muskoka Bible Centre

Let us Pray!

Kids Ministry was full this summer...and I'm not just referring to attendance but the visual of a cup overflowing! The KM team was made up of vibrant, devoted young individuals that were passionate about children and sincere about the impact that the Word has on God's little people! Hats off to Stretch for his leadership and our wonderful team for providing outstanding individual care and intentionality to our Kids Ministry Program!

"Let us pray, let us pray, everywhere and every way. Every moment of the day it is the right time, For the Father, up above He is listening with love and He wants to answer us so let us pray! Yah!" (Lyrics by Steven Curtis Chapman). This is one of the songs that echoed in the Kids Ministry area this summer as the children focused on the theme of Prayer-Our God is a God of Possibilities! A variety of ways to pray were explored this summer with the children as we highlighted these Bible points weekly: "God will win the Battle", "He Hears our Prayers", "God is Able" and "Pray without Ceasing".

Many families commented on the Prayer Banner hung up in the Adult Chapel that revealed our children's hearts through

written word and drawings on Glow Night. "From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise" Matthew 21:16. It was wonderful to see our youngest age groups using a Prayer Blanket to visually reveal God's many gifts to us and see their tiny fingers spread over it as they prayed in Thanksgiving. As a staff it was refreshing and inspiring to hear the children pray to God as they shared honestly their faith in a Great God.



One of my favourite memories from the summer was a conversation that a Mom had with her little girl. "Mom, I can't follow you anymore". The Mom replied, "Why not?" The little girl boldly replied, "because I need to follow Jesus, He's the only way!". How precious are our young that they would remind us of the importance of putting

Jesus first and keeping Him there.

I trust this summer was refreshing for you and that you were able to reconnect with your Creator God and build meaningful memories with your family. We are eagerly anticipating a Family Fusion Escape for families at the beginning of March Break. It will be a time to reflect on your family values, enjoy the outdoors together and also invest in the ones that God has given you to love! Check the MBC website for all the details coming soon! I hope to see you all there!

As you finish out this year, I encourage you to reach out to those around you, who so desperately need to hear and see His love. God has blessed us with much. May we be faithful in giving much! What an example for our children to see Christ at work in us as we model to them the Joy of being His hands and feet on earth!

Psalm 143:5 "I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all Your works and consider what Your hands have done."

Julie Leis "Smarties"
Child and Family Ministry Director

MBF COMPASS BUILDERS UPDATE

In a society where God seems to have been forgotten we are in dire need of places and experiences where we are reminded of the truth and redeeming love of our Creator God. Muskoka Bible Centre is such a place.

Muskoka Bible Foundation exists to support the charitable ministry work taking place on the grounds of MBC. The content of our programming is designed around the gospel of Jesus Christ with the foundation of Scripture as our source of truth.

This year we have seen continued growth in the number of guests impacted as they have participated in our Summer Bible Conference, programmed retreats such as Women of Grace or at Camp Widjiitiwin.

We have witnessed the power of Christ to transform the lives of youth through our Stepping Stones Discipleship Experience. More than 100 youth participated in this experience over the spring and summer. These youth were prepared to persevere in their faith as they headed back into their home and school communities this fall. Six INTERNS, including four from Germany, are currently being impacted by an 8-month term of service

and growth at MBC.

We conservatively estimate that more than 8,000 individual guests of all ages will be impacted this year through one of our programmed events. Our children and youth registration in the summer saw a significant increase from about 1,800 registrations last year to over 2,200 this year. This is just during the 9 weeks of Summer Bible Conference. We also saw an increase of 36 camper weeks (over 2012) at Camp Widjiitiwin. We thank God and give Him the glory as we witness a steady growth year over year in the impact and reach for the Kingdom.

Our ministry programming is supported primarily by donations to the Muskoka Bible Foundation. Our need for 2013 is \$690,000. This covers the cost of staff, volunteers, teachers, and musicians as well as the cost of the facilities to support the programming.

We experienced a great Thanksgiving weekend and are so grateful for the significant offering that came in on Sunday. Your generosity reduced our year to date donation shortfall to \$50,000 and we praise God for that. We continue to trust God for His provision. As

such, we invite you to be part of His provision this last quarter of the year.

Please consider sending a financial gift to the Muskoka Bible Foundation to help us reach our year-end target. We thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration.

Giving made easy.... There are several ways you can give.

Call the MBC office at 800-551-0168 and we'd be happy to process your donation over the phone.

Mail your gift – cheque made payable to Muskoka Bible Foundation, P.O. Box 10020 Huntsville ON P1H 2K1

Give online – click on the *Canada Helps* link on the website to give right now!

Please note: donations made through Canada Helps will be receipted by Canada Helps and not by MBF (though the donation will come to MBF).

In Christ,
John Friesen, CEO



Marriage on the ROCK ... not on the rocks

Couples 'Winter Wonderland' Getaway
January 17-19, 2014



with
Rich & Linda Reed

Winter fun in beautiful Muskoka

Visit the MBC website www.muskokabiblecentre.com for more information

FAMILY FUSION March 9-12, 2014



Winter Escape 2014

Upcoming Events

November 8-10, 2013

Stepping Stones Reunion

January 17-19, 2014

MBC Couples Getaway

January 31 - February 2, 2014

Widji Snow Camp

March 9-12, 2014

MBC Family Fusion Escape

May 2-4, 2014

FEB Pastors Wives Plus Conference

May 30 - June 1, 2014

Women of Grace Weekend 1

June 6-8, 2014

Women of Grace Weekend 2

June 9-12, 2014

FEB Pastors Conference

See website for more information.

2014 Bible Teachers

Week 1, June 28 - July 5

To Be Announced

Week 2, July 5-12

Charles Price & Lawrence Jensen

Week 3, July 12-19

Inspire Hope Conference - Wess Stafford

Week 4, July 19-26

David Earley & Paul Carter

Week 5, July 26 - August 2

Dwayne Cline & Brett McBride

Week 6, August 2-9

Rick Reed & Michael Haykin

Week 7, August 9-16

David Epstein & Jeff Gowling

Week 8, August 16-23

Creation Super Conference - with CMI

(Special conference fee will apply)

Week 9, August 23-30

Lane Fusilier & John Garner


Thanks for taking the time to read this update on Muskoka Bible Centre. We trust that you are encouraged along with us as we see God continue to use and expand this ministry for His Glory & Honour. Be sure to drop us a note or email if there is anything that we can do for you.

Your servant in Christ,
John Friesen, CEO

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