SUMMER

News & Views

2024

- Summer Events
- Vacation Bible School
- Committee Reports
- Building Expansion Update
- Banwell Missions
- Men’s Ministry Update
- And much more!
Want to know more? Scan me!

Come and join the fun!
Exciting activities await you.

JUL 29TH - AUG 2ND
6:30 - 8:30PM
As I have shared my faith with others I have often been asked, “So, what kind of Christian are you?” Jokingly, I often reply, “the good kind, I hope!” But what people are really curious to know is, “which denomination is your church?” When I reply “Baptist”, a whole set of stereotypes often emerge. Here are a few I have heard: “Baptists are against drinking, dancing, playing cards and going to the theatre”. “They are all King James Bible only, they are all Calvinists, they don’t believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit for today” – and my personal favourite, “Baptists don’t like to have fun!” I am always happy to clarify that while these stereotypes may be true of some Baptists, it certainly isn’t true of us all...

So what are Baptists all about? Historically, the Baptist church emerged during the latter part of the Protestant Reformation that began about 500 years ago. At this time a growing number of Christians had become deeply concerned that the Roman Catholic Church was corrupted by power and had exchanged the truth of God's Word with the traditions of man. Figures like Martin Luther, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, Thomas Cranmer, and John Knox were all key figures who boldly protested against the false teachings and corruption, seeking to restore the church back to its foundations through various reforms. These reformers emphasized things like biblical authority above human tradition, salvation by faith and not by works, the free gift of salvation by God's grace, Jesus Christ being our only mediator before God, and all things being done for the glory of God alone. This push to reform was not embraced by the Roman Catholic Church, which led to significant religious, political and cultural changes throughout Europe.

By the early 1600s there were still many Christians who believed that the reformation had not fully addressed the problematic teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, particularly when it came to the practice of baptism. At this time there was a growing movement of “Baptists” in England who held to the teaching that Baptism was for believers only and was to be administered by immersion, according to the practice found in the Bible and in the early church. These Baptists faced persecution for their beliefs not only from the Roman Catholic Church, but also from other Reformed churches and leaders. This led to migrations and the formation of Baptist churches where believers could practice their faith freely, in places like Holland and eventually in America and Canada. From there, the Baptist movement spread throughout the world and today numbers around 50 million Christian believers from all walks of life.
In our recent Next Steps classes I was so blessed to be able to teach over two-dozen students as they explored baptism and membership with our church. I was able to take time to encourage them in their walk with God and share some of the key distinctives of what makes a Baptist church. Things like, the emphasis on the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the authority of the scriptures, Believer's baptism by immersion and its connection with church membership, the priesthood of all believers, the autonomy of each local church, and the separation of the church and state – all vital distinctives of the Baptist church since those early days. I also shared that now, when people ask me what kind of Christian I am, my reply is simply this, “I am a follower of Jesus Christ who loves to worship and serve in a Baptist Church!”

You may already know that Banwell Community Church is part of the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec (CBOQ) which is made up of about 300 churches in Ontario and Quebec, and also part of the larger “Canadian Baptist” family of churches all across Canada. Each year delegates from our CBOQ churches gather in Toronto for our annual CBOQ Assembly. This year our four appointed delegates were Garry and Jenny Billings as well as my wife Heather and myself. Over the course of three days we were able to take part in times of worship, building connections with fellow ministry leaders, taking in teaching workshops and meeting to make decisions on pertinent issues that affect our CBOQ family of churches.

I was very pleased to see two things take place at this year’s assembly. Firstly, the formation of a long-awaited “Membership Review Panel”. This panel has been formed due to concerns that have arisen over individual churches that have deviated from our established beliefs, particularly around the Christian view of sexuality. This newly appointed panel is made up of highly-qualified and well-trusted leaders from among our CBOQ churches. As their work now begins, I am praying that God would give them wisdom, discernment and courage to properly address serious issues that have arisen in a few of our CBOQ churches.

The second, was the passing of a motion to establish an “Accreditation Review Process”. This move will help to ensure that ministry leaders (pastors, ministerial staff) are properly accredited (or pursuing accreditation) within the CBOQ and are in agreement with our core values, policies and procedures.

The establishing of both the Membership Review Panel and the Accreditation Review Process are going to be vital in ensuring healthy agreement and unity among our churches in this rapidly changing world.

In all, CBOQ Assembly 2024 was a positive experience for all of us delegates and we thank you for the opportunity to take part this year. It was encouraging to see this larger group of Baptists working together to build connections with one another and seek to faithfully represent Christ in our world today. As I left this year’s Assembly and have returned back to Banwell Community Church, I can confidently say, “I am a follower of Jesus Christ who loves to worship and serve in a Baptist Church!”
Words to capture the spirit of our New Life Sunday service fall short in capturing the uplifting feeling that filled the sanctuary. The initial dedication of three new babies was the perfect prelude to the baptisms that followed. The Testimonies from the thirteen candidates were absolutely riveting. Thank you to each one who shared their Christian experience that led them through the waters of baptism. Thanks also to Pastor Amorin for this special New Life Sunday service that left an indelible mark on our hearts!

-Jim Wheeler

Child Dedications
Kemoy and Kimone Smith dedicated their twins Keagan and Kinsley.
Chris and Amrita Masih dedicated daughter Nylah.

Baptisms
Neve Stroud
Diana Harris
Samuel Amorin
Pauvette Senior
Josiah Amorin
Heather Hanson
Daniel Dixon
Nathaniel Chalut
June Dixon
Chelsea Blanchard
Kimone Smith
Mario Tricarico
Marissa Jiminez

Congratulations to everyone who took a step of faith on this wonderful Sunday. Your testimonies are an encouragement to us all, and we the church are here to walk alongside you!
Many thanks to the people who volunteer to help keep our church building and property looking great! Tour our building and check out some of the improvements!

- In the foyer- A new solid glass window was installed looking into the office area.
- In the new library we have added a couple of new comfortable reading chairs for both sides of the fireplace, and the new Board Room style tables crafted by Pastor Steve has completed the update. It is now a beautiful Library/Resource Room.
- The former Youth Room has been repainted and new storage areas have been added.
- Our security cameras are now up and streaming and our upgraded security alarm system is now operational.

Your Property Committee has proposed and is going to stream-line the products and supplies required for the kitchen, washrooms and general maintenance supplies from Cintas. Much thanks to our Caretaker Ashley for filling in at this time! We are all incredibly pleased with the fantastic job she is doing.

A special thanks also to the team (under the direction of Gord Hambly) for the work they do regarding the outdoor landscaping and tree trimming. Our gardens and grounds are looking beautiful!

Many thanks to everyone who contributed and continues to contribute to keep our church looking great!

Ross Hickling
Chair of Property Committee
The project is proceeding well with respect to the budget. It was recently discovered that some underground drainage and landscaping work that was on the plans from the initial build in 2002 was never completed, there will be a small extra to restore this, but will allow us to have a properly graded and drained the east lawn area. Leveraging the skills, knowledge, and connections of several of our members, we have been able to find some cost savings on the kitchen cabinets, gym flooring, and gym divider curtain to help keep the project nicely on track financially!

Thank you to all of you who participated in the "Build It Together" Sunday service. We are excited to see such enthusiasm regarding the construction of the Community Outreach Center. We look forward to receiving all the bricks and commitment cards back over the next couple of weeks.

Thank you for your continued commitment to this vision for Banwell's future. Please continue to pray for the ongoing work, the safety of the construction crew, and for wisdom and guidance for all parties involved in this exciting undertaking to further reach our community!

Blessings,

Joel Wiebe VC BOD
Banwell Community Church’s new expansion (the Community Outreach Centre) is progressing along very nicely! The pace of work slowed down a little over the winter but the spring has brought construction up full swing, expect to see some large progress made in the coming months! The blockwork is complete, the walls all waterproofed, and the installation of the brick has started. The brick work will feature a textured architectural block on the bottom 4’-8” to match the current building, and a contrasting dark brick for the remaining part of the building. The West wall will feature a back-lit cross and sign as well as a peak to match the current building. All underground utility work is completed, and the concrete floor was just recently poured and cut.

You will notice the McNorton entrance currently under construction, the work to widen this access to a full 3 lanes (1 entrance lane, 1 left turn exit lane and 1 right turn exit lane) is underway, and should assist in eliminating any congestion of cars leaving the parking lot. Once this is completed, work will begin to close off the current right-in-right-out entrance/exit from Banwell Rd.

Since the walls are up, the roof is on, and the floor is in place, the framing of the interior walls will begin shortly, after that GLC will start the interior finishes. The Building Expansion Sub-Committee is working closely with the hospitality committee to finalize details of the kitchen, appliances, cabinets countertops etc. and the decorating committee to make sure all items get the correct colors and finishes.
WINDSOR DOWNTOWN MISSION - APRIL 27th

We received so much that we needed to come in on Friday to sort. We sorted items in their kinds. We had plenty. Our goal was to be as organized as possible.

We had food. We had shoes, women’s jackets, men’s jackets, sweaters, pants, and more. We had blankets and pillows. Once their, we set up tables in the parking lot. All 16 of us were ready to go.

The people came. It was like a flea market. Our people did awesome. We served hot chocolate. We listened to their stories. We got to know the people. We got to know the staff.

We shared the gospel. We shared God’s love. It was a great day.

Thank you Banwell for your donations and supporting the Evangelism Ministry.

*We are Ministering to the Broken-Hearted. ISAIAH 61*

*Erick Alfaro*
The photos that fill these pages tell the story of one person reaching out and inviting others to join to witness the less fortunate in our society. That person as we know is Erick Alfaro, who heads up the Outreach Team of witnessing warriors seen here at the downtown mission. This is a great witness for Banwell and blessings to Eric and his team.

-JW

*See the people, see the need. Ministering to the broken hearted.*
FRANCESCA NAJJIPU [BETHANY KIDS]
[Excerpts from her April monthly report] During the Easter break our Bethany Kids’ team at Joy Town Rehab Centre gave therapy services, assistive devices and spiritual nourishment to outpatient clients (mostly pediatrics). They come from families with disabled children who can’t afford to pay for private therapy services and government services are inconsistent. My main responsibilities include counseling sessions and sharing the gospel of Christ Jesus with children, parents, and their siblings. All the parents are supposed to pass through my counseling office on an exit at every therapy session.

During April, we traveled to Nyahururu in central Kenya. We held 3 days of training for 17 youths living with spina bifida and hydrocephalus, going over complications, management and the importance of rehab. We also highlighted and sensitized the youths on the government provisions, privileges, and opportunities for PWDs [people with disabilities]. We discussed attitudes and perceptions of friends, community, and relatives to persons with disabilities. What does the Bible say about the suffering PWDs go through? We also discussed challenges PWDs face growing up with disabilities and we shared our testimonies.

It was a refreshing and spiritually energizing moment for Bethany Kids’ staff to have a 2-day spiritual retreat at Limuru with our spiritual coordinator.

Some statistics: evangelism sessions: 28; those giving their lives to Christ: 2; follow up and discipleship: 16

MATTHEW HOUSE
Matthew House with its two locations provides settlement supports and helps these very vulnerable people “find HOPE, HOME, FAMILY” as their mission.

Over the years many Banwell people have helped out and are currently helping out at Matthew House and our own Corrina Alfaro has just been hired as “Volunteer & Administration Coordinator”.

Just 5 years ago at the Drouillard location Matthew House could accommodate a maximum of 13 refugee claimants but Executive Director Mike Morency had a vision and oversaw their relocation to the much larger Forest Glade location. Then, in 2023 with the continued influx of refugee claimants, Mike and the Board took a giant step of faith and leased “The Chappel”. They are now able to provide a safe and welcoming temporary home to 135 refugee claimants at one time and throughout 2023 they housed 229 men, women and children from 48 nations; sadly they were not able to house approximately one-third of the people who approached them, but they often were able to refer them elsewhere for shelter.

The “settlement supports” mentioned in the first line include helping refugee claimants prepare the legal documents and then referring them to designated lawyers with the expertise to facilitate the process of becoming “landed immigrants”. They also help them arrange the necessary medical checkups. Further supports they provide include employment supports, after-school homework help, community building activities, mental health counseling and dental care through a partnership with the Smile Wagon. They are very open to churches providing opportunities like a Vacation Bible School.

Francesca [front right] and the Joy Town staff
When I was a young girl just starting out on my faith journey, I did not realize how many people served behind the scenes to be a part of our Sunday Service. I would go to Sunday School and Sunday Service and be fed each Sunday never realizing the dedication it took to bring all that together. I did not know how many hours my Pastor studied and prepared for each Sunday's sermon or how much time was given to our congregational needs. I did not realize how much practice it took for our choir to sing every Sunday. I never realized what was required of each teacher I had to nurture me in my faith and present a Bible story I could relate to. I even thought our Church Secretary only worked on Sundays.

I vividly remember the first time I volunteered to teach a Sunday School class. I had been trying to figure out where I could be used. I felt God nudging me to step out in faith and I was trying to say "I am not equipped to do this" but He would not let me rest. After wrestling with this through that summer I finally spoke up and started to teach that September. I have to tell you it was one of my greatest experiences with those young children ages 10 to 12. I spent many years in children's ministry until I felt called to serve elsewhere. Every time I have volunteered or been asked to serve in any capacity, God has equipped me with what I need.

While watching our young people being baptized June 2nd I was so impressed with their faith statements. They are the future leaders of His church. They will be called to serve God in different capacities and it is up to us to nurture them and provide them with the opportunity to use their gifts. We need to walk alongside them until they feel confident enough to stand on their own. God walked with me but there were many people who have nurtured and supported me through the years.

One of my favourite Bible verses is Isaiah 6:8, "I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send and who will go for us? Then I said, here I am. Send me!"

What is God calling you to do?
Mary & Martha Ministry

This ladies ministry continues to provide compassionate meals for anyone attending BCC who may be ill, grieving, new parents and to support care givers. The contact person who oversees and handles requests for meals is Sandy Kettlewell and she can be reached at 519-739-6363

As is our usual custom, the M&M Ministry holds 2 events per year. The events are carefully planned to gather women in fellowship, to uplift and encourage one another and grow our faith in God.
Be on the lookout for our fall event and pray about who you can invite and bring with you.

M & M

THE BELLS WERE RINGING

The ringing sounds of our hand bell choir filled the sanctuary on Easter morning under the talented direction of Donna Wilcox.
It was especially enjoyable after such a lengthy hiatus from sharing their beautiful music. Hand bell choirs are unique as very few churches have had the opportunity to enjoy their distinctive sounds. We are grateful to the bell ringers who dedicated hours of practice for their special Easter Presentation. We look forward to their return to once again present the sound of the hand bells.
A special thank you to Donna for her dedication in making their return possible.

-JW
With so many people worried about money these days, I wanted to find a way to help, I came across CAP, Christians Against Poverty, which I had heard of a while back. I had also seen this program done in one of the churches we attended and thought, it is about time we started talking about this and then I thought, wow, even better, this is about how God wants us to use the blessings He has given us and how they are to be managed. You see, God gives us guidance in this throughout the Bible, maybe, we just don’t “hear it”.

As soon as I learned more information about the program, I was put in touch with the different committees to introduce CAP and see the value it could bring to the congregation and the community. Over a few months, I took the course to be a coach and now we are starting our CAP Money journey. On April 21 2024 we had the privilege to have Will McLaughlin, CEO of CAP Canada, to help us launch the program, and set us up for success with our first 2 courses completed in May and have already started our June sessions.

So far, we’ve had great success and have already started helping families.

We have learned that:

“Debt is overwhelming, it can drain hope from people’s lives. There is hope and a solution to your debt situation — you are not alone.”

What exactly is CAP Money?
It’s a simple budgeting course including financial skills that have a lasting impact. Participants receive a workbook and guidance on how to use this during the course. A simple way to set up finances with confidence that bills will be covered, debts can be paid, giving can be a joy, and saving for the future is possible. Everyone could use tools for managing their money. Many have never learned how to put together a simple budget, make it balance, or put away savings for a rainy day.

What does the Money Course cover?
Aside from how to build and balance a budget, it offers help understanding exactly how much is being spent and what it’s being spent on. Online tools and videos to support what you learned in the course, the CAP online tool does all of the hard work of budgeting calculations.

How is CAP Money a missional opportunity?
CAP Money is a missional opportunity for your church to provide these simple, practical tools for free not only to our church family, but to our wider community. Not only is it a practical tool, but a chance to build relationships that lead to faith conversations and evangelism opportunities.

How can I be involved?
If you would like to join me in helping people through His word and bringing people in our community to Christ by becoming a coach, we would love to have you to support multiple programs running in the church and in the community.

Thank you Banwell for your support with the CAP Money Course.

Heather Hanson
Jenny and I had the privilege of representing our church at the 2024 CBOQ Assembly this year. The theme of the Assembly was “All Hands On Deck” which emphasized the importance of the ongoing ministries of individual members using their God given gifts for the betterment of the ongoing ministries of their churches.

There were several workshops offered and we chose to attend one entitled Create and Cultivate:

Reaching the Next Generation with Intents and Purpose. The presenters talked about the importance of reaching the next generation:

1. Relentlessly Pursue Inter-generational and Culture.
2. Disproportionately Invest in the Holistic Development of Children and Youth.
3. Re-imagine Transformational Discipleship and Evangelism
4. Identifying young people within our congregation and working with them to become Anointed Leaders who will contribute to the future development of ministries in our churches.

The second workshop we attended was entitled “Developing Intercultural Competency within our congregations”. This stressed the importance of identifying the various cultures and making them feel welcomed and accepted as part of the family of God within the local church.

We also attended worship services where we heard speakers challenge us to be part of “the crew” in our churches as the gospel is being presented for the purpose of bringing others to a saving knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This was a great experience for Jenny and I and we want to thank the members of our church for giving us this opportunity to meet and worship with approximately 500 like-minded individuals from the various churches in the CBOQ.
Our men will have a busy summer with the Annual Fund Raisers and our popular Bar-B-Q. Don’t forget to mark your calendar!

MEN’S BREAKFAST SPEAKERS

Saturday, July 27th:
Speaker ERICK ALFARO

Saturday, September 26th:
Speaker RICK NICHOLLS

ANNUAL MEN’S BBQ
Returning by popular demand!
FEATURING Sizzling steak, and finger lick’n chicken, Plus, plus, plus! A great Menu!
DATE – Wednesday, August 21, 2024
TIME – 6PM – EAT 6:30PM.
PLACE – At the church
SUGGESTED DONATION $25.00
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE WELCOME CENTRE IN THE LOBBY STARTING SUNDAY, JULY 28.

CORN BOOTH
The delicious Essex County corn will be on sale by our men’s ministry again this summer. Thanks to Nortera Food Co. (Formerly Green Giant). The corn is donated with the funds raised by the sale used to support our school snack program.
LOCATION – Tecumseh Road East – Next to the Nortera Plant
DATES – Saturday, August 24th & Sunday, August 25

The success of our car wash and the corn sale are extremely important to the success of our school snack program, filling empty stomachs.

-JW
WELCOME, MARVIN
A bundle of joy MARVIN MICHAEL BRACCIO arrived on May 22nd, 2024, joining Braeden, Emily and brothers James and Leo. God bless your new arrival.

HERE COMES THE BRIDE
More good news as we send our congratulations and best wishes to Nathan Andrews and Sydney Falconer who will be married on Saturday, June 29, 2024. God bless you as you begin your life together.

HAPPY ENGAGEMENT
CONGRATULATIONS to Zach Zimmerman and Maria Alfaro who announced their engagement! Best wishes and God's blessings as they begin their new journey.
The News & Views Team wish you and yours a Christ-filled summer!

Jim Wheeler - Corrina Alfaro - Brenda Semande - Wayne Parsons