

#73 November 2024



CONNECTOR



This is a special edition of the **CONNECTOR** as we come to **REMEMBRANCE DAY 2024**. We are thankful for the freedom Christ has given to us due to His sacrifice for us.

This is also a time for we **POWER Team** members to remember those who have gone before us. They modelled and lived the Christ-life that influenced us in our development in life in service, and in ministry. We remember our parents, Sunday School or Club leaders, our teachers, pastors and others God brought into our lives to help mold us into His image after his likeness.

An email sent to us from Joy Tira, with spurred us on to develop this 73rd edition of **CONNECTOR**. We invited our **POWER Team** Coordinators/members to submit one "soldier of the cross" that had an impact upon their lives .

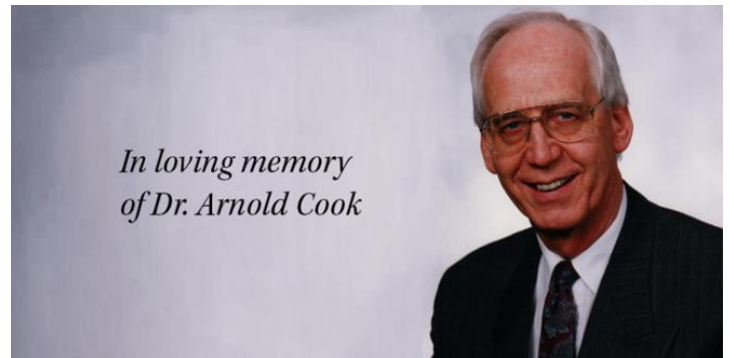
Read with interest and take some time to thank God for those He brought into our lives to impact us for His glory. We trust that this will spur you on to send to us a page of one "soldier of the cross" that invested in your life. Since we are mainly focused on our own denomination, we prefer at this time it is one of our Alliance family if possible.



Joy Tira writes: My Veteran to Remember is Arnold Cook

Let us not forget our great leaders. Dr. Cook was a pastor, missionary, and educator.

He was a respected global missions strategist. As president of the Christian & Missionary Alliance Canada and Alliance World Fellowship. Dr. Cook worked “outside of the denominational box.” He was also a Kingdom-collaborator, and on a personal level, Dr. Cook was my first supporter, a cheerleader of the work that God had put close to my heart, and a friend.



When I was young pastor, Dr. Cook recommended me and my wife to a Christian Foundation Study in Israel—the Holy land where the Master Jesus walked. Then, when others were skeptical about Diaspora Missiology, a field of study close to my heart, Dr. Cook encouraged me to “go for it with gusto!”

We were on the same page about Albert B. Simpson — the founder of our denomination, Christian & Missionary Alliance, and who we consider was the first C&MA “Diasporologist.” I was privileged to watch Dr. Cook’s life modelling at close range while I served with him on the denominational board of directors.

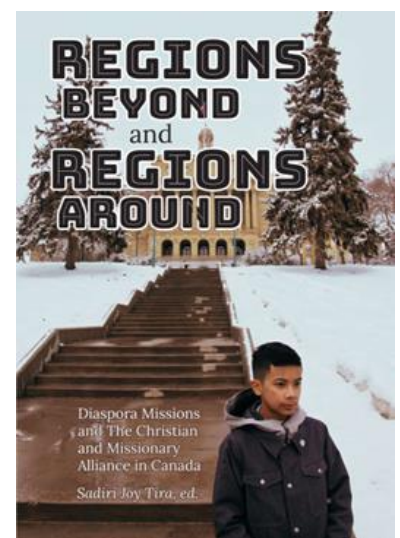
My last unplanned conversation with Dr. Cook, was at an obscure Tim Hortons outlet between Lake Huron and Owen Sound, ON—there we had an hour for coffee and “do-nuts.” I was honoured he let me buy him a “double - double “ at the cashier, but on our way out from the fast food store he inserted a \$50 bill inside my pocket. Dr. Cook was a generous Uncle Arnold!

In later years, I had the privilege of visiting him in his seniors home in Scarborough, ON. There he was alone and very weak, seated facing the window. He was silent but he was not embarrassed to show his tears (only God understand those tears) and he whispered, “Thank you Pastor amigo Joy” after I prayed. I will always remember Dr. Cook.

The book I recently edited, **Regions and Around** (PageMaker, Canada. 2017) was dedicated to Dr. Arnold Cook on whose shoulders I was privileged to sit atop! On this Remembrance Day 2024 I thank God for Arnold’s life ministry and godly lifestyle. As I write this brief tribute, I pray that God would raise up, from a new generation, another Arnold Cook.

I lament for younger leaders, “oh God, raise up another Arnold Cook”. My greatest moments were at the funeral services of Billy Graham and Arnold Cook.

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SOME PEOPLE INVITE YOU TO LIVE, OTHERS INVITE YOU TO DIE!

I want to tell you about a man named **Alf Orthner** who invited me to live. He hired me on to his team in my first full-time Pastorate in June 1980 at Surrey Alliance Church—800 people and a 2 million dollar building program with a mortgage at 18% interest. He was 65, but was young at heart with great enthusiasm. He was not a bitter, grumpy old man. He still had energy, love for God and people and saw the bright side of life. He had a big laugh in tough circumstances. He was always looking for what else could be done to advance the church.

I never felt inferior around him. I was just part of the team. Respect and trust engenders respect and trust. He wanted to see me do well and when the gruelling ordination process began, he would laugh and say, “Gerald, we’re trying to get people into the ministry, not out! Keep on!” I walked into his office on the first day of work. He had a wooden boot on the table with these words: “Lead, follow or get out of the way” A man of action. He went on to tell me that he had been a Pastor in an untold number of churches, been a District Superintendent and head of the Canadian C&MA before autonomy. Then he said, “One thing I learned—you learn by making mistakes—now go out and make lots of them, and close the door on your way out”. As I headed out he said, “I’ll be here. God will be with us.”

With fire in my bones, empowerment, love, respect, care, friendship, experience—who couldn’t succeed? I wanted to do my best for Christ and for Alf. His words and life of love, encouragement, empowerment, life of prayer, trust in God, innovation, risk-taking—not for risk’s sake but for Jesus’ sake and the sake of the gospel—echo in my heart to this day. After only one year from my arrival he left, for he wanted to tenderly care for his wife Arlene, who had developed severe heart troubles.

What can happen in one year? A trajectory for a lifetime. He wrote me regularly in my years in Africa and delighted to see me when I returned, stuffing a few bucks into my pocket on occasion.

He cheered me on as Christ does and as I now choose to do for those that God has entrusted to my care. “Let’s risk for Jesus’ sake and the sake of the gospel. I’ll be there and God will be with us.”

Some people invite you to live!

Gerald & Dorothy Hogenbirk hogenbirkgd@gmail.com
(National POWER Team Coordinators)



Lloyd and Irene Draper - submitted by Nancy McLean (ECD)

The Drapers impacted our lives and ministry for several decades. In 1971- 72 during our first year of home assignment in Kingston, Drapers were pastoring.



Following the initiative of the Drapers, several members of that congregation became “life-time” prayer partners, reminding us that we were “family” and encouraging us to come for visits on succeeding home assignments right up until our retirement.

“Back in the day” we packed barrels with a 4-year supply of clothing, tools, office needs, etc. Lloyd placed a barrel in the foyer encouraging the people to donate items. As the barrel began to fill, he would remove some things allowing the people to continue their giving.



In 1981-82 and 1986-87 in the Kelowna Alliance Church, we once again enjoyed the Drapers. Lloyd continued to find ways to make us feel like “family” in a local church setting. He invited Laurie to sit in on staff and board meetings. This was an excellent way for Laurie to see a senior pastor interact with a multiple church staff. These observations prepared Laurie for his future ministry of being a team leader in Gabon. Irene invited me to share in the women's Bible study programs allowing me to sharpen my skills. Once again under their leadership, we made friends who supported us in the following years.

In 1986, our daughter was planning her wedding. As we arrived back from Gabon just a few weeks before the wedding, we found that the Drapers had helped our daughter prepare. A year later Laurie and I were in Ottawa about to leave for Gabon, when our daughter and her husband were in a bad car accident and ended up in a hospital in Princeton, B.C. We phoned to Drapers in Kelowna asking them for prayer support. In their usual “shepherd” fashion they immediately got in their car and drove several miles to the hospital, once again sharing our burdens.

Our last formal ministry contact with the Drapers was in Gabon when they accepted to be our field pastoral care couple. It wasn't long until each missionary felt that God had given them an additional shepherd who cared for them.

Over the years I often collected sermon notes from both Lloyd and Irene which spoke to me personally and then were available to share with others.

Their personal example and friendship were a big part of our lives and our ministry. Whenever we needed nurturing, the Drapers were right there to provide love, prayers and godly wisdom. I thank God for this couple who knew what it was to be “shepherds” of His sheep.

Nancy McLean laurie.n.nancy@gmail.com



Ross & Marg Ingram -Submitted by Wayne & Betty Kerr



The first Veterans that came to our mind are Ross & Marjorie Ingram.

It first started when I was a teenager and Ross was involved in the district youth rallies.

Secondly, it was when Ross was not only the founding pastor at Rexdale Alliance, but interim DS of the Eastern & Central Canadian District that he was instrumental in moving us from Truro NS. to pastor the Barrie Alliance Church in Ontario.

While in Barrie, he would invite us to attend Rexdale Elders' planning and vision casting weekends. He mentored us by example..

After a number of years, Alf Orthner (mentioned above and DS of the CMD), influenced us to move to the two-year-old smaller church, Glencairn Alliance

Church in Regina. We were blessed to see significant growth through new followers of Christ in that community. This resulted in a building program and multiple services.

At the same time, Ross & Marj Ingram had finished 19 growth years at Rexdale and had moved to England to establish an Alliance Church there. At the end of that ministry, they returned to Canada and we had the privilege to partner with Dr. Rex Boda, president of Canadian Bible College to have Ross commit to 3 years on staff at CBC and be a part time preaching pastor with me on staff.

He committed himself to preach 3 messages a month. I find it interesting that in those days we had morning and evening services plus midweek Study and Prayer meetings, so I preached myself 3-4 messages, when today in many churches pastors preach only 3 messages or less in a month.

Ross was more gifted by God in all ways than I was. He never once was looking for a title, but always served with a towel. Ego was not a problem. He knew his lane and he fulfilled the three years before moving on to be Lead Pastor of First Alliance Church in Toronto. All through those 36 months we never had one idle word spoken to each other, though we were very different. He modeled servanthood, humility, submission and all of the fruit of the spirit plus the joy of allowing the Holy Spirit to minister through him with many (if not all) of the gifts listed in the scripture in his role of associate pastor. He modelled being a Christian when he was not in charge.



Along side of Ross was a wonderful wife who also carried a towel, served in many of the lowly places in ministry and modeled the role of a pastor's spouse for the building up of the body.

Betty and I are forever indebted to our God for placing these veterans in our lives. We have been better servants of Christ because of these and others he has placed in our lives.

Eugene & Muriel Kelley -- submitted by John & Connie Healey

He Could See the Big Picture – He Taught Me to Honor Jesus

We are reminded in Scripture to please our Lord Jesus. Living to please people will distance me from Christ Jesus (Galatians 1:10). God has used numerous people to show me how to please Jesus, to



impress upon me the next step I was to take – the character to pursue – the life to be lived.

One who stands out in this crowd of witnesses is Dr. **Eugene Kelly**. Eugene and Muriel were Canadian Alliance Missionaries to Latin America. I'm tempted to say, "to Colombia" and then better "to Peru" but in truth their impact was international, and they impacted my life in the process. My wife and I had the good fortune, as did Eugene and Muriel, to call the Assiniboia Alliance Church our home church. Those rural roots did much to form similar values in all of us.

Eugene and I were to serve together in the Latin America Towards an Encounter with God movement. Eugene and Muriel were among the originators of this movement that called thousands to Christ, then trained and mobilized thousands to serve Christ in Latin America. The movement directed millions of dollars into the advance of Christ's Kingdom. Eugene was my "apostle to Latin America." I have never seen his equal. His passion for Christ and his love for Latin Americans was infectious. His gift of leadership was evident to all. I wouldn't say Eugene was a masterful preacher, but he was certainly a masterful communicator. I have seen an auditorium of young leaders come alive as "don Eugenio," as he was known in Spanish, would open God's Word to them and paint a picture of God's call upon their life. I have seen half-hearted believers step out in obedience after meeting Eugene. I have seen him step into the most difficult of situations and carry the mantle of healer, pastor, reconciler and friend when much damage had been done. His vision for the lost, for the discipling of new believers and the mobilization of the local church was unequalled to me. Eugene believed in his young leaders, and they knew it. Eugene believed in me.

Eugene's life was often the template the Lord Jesus pressed upon me when I was called into places of leadership. What to say, what to prioritize, how to continue, how to find courage, how to pray and how to delight in God's people were Eugene's gift to me.

Years ago, Eugene and Muriel retired to Regina, Saskatchewan. On one occasion I was invited to speak to a sizable group and Eugene was there to cheer me on. As I look back, I would admit that it was perhaps one of my worst preached messages ever. It was a lost opportunity and both Eugene and I knew it. I sort of remember what I preached. I distinctly remember what Eugene said to me. Nothing. I knew it was bad. He knew it was bad. His kindness and the nudge on my arm simply said, "we'll try again tomorrow." My "apostle of Latin America" reminded me that leadership sometimes says nothing. He did not try to please me with kind words. He honoured the Lord Jesus with his silence, and he honoured me on a bad day by helping me to see I still had a future as a leader when my last time up to bat didn't go so well. I will never forget his kindness.



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Calgary, Alberta (WCD)

BOB GOULD, MY MENTOR AND FRIEND - submitted by Ray Peters (CCD)



A dear friend and mentor of mine was Bob Gould.

I first met Bob in the early 60's when I attended a CBC Youth Conference. There was a basketball game and Bob was a referee. He looked so big and strong in his uniform. I was impressed! We didn't speak, but I remembered his name. (Something which is becoming increasingly difficult for me).

Later, he was the Pastor of my home church in Morden, Manitoba and my parents spoke highly of Bob and Louella.

Later still, I was a Pastor in a local church, and he was the District Superintendent. We were fishing on Lake Simcoe, just enjoying the beauty and peace on a calm lake. While we were having lunch together, I was eating a banana and when I finished, I just flipped the peel over the side and into the water! Without a word Bob reached into the water, picked up the peel and put it into his lunch box! This Eagle Scout showed me that among his many other great qualities, he also cared about the environment!

Sometime later, I was in Bob's office when a phone call came for me! (This was before cell phones). I went to an empty office to take the call. It was from my mother, telling me that my father had just had a heart attack and died! When I told Bob, he said "Oh no! I'm so sorry." It was so comforting to be in his presence as he prayed with me. I couldn't have heard this dreadful news in a better place.

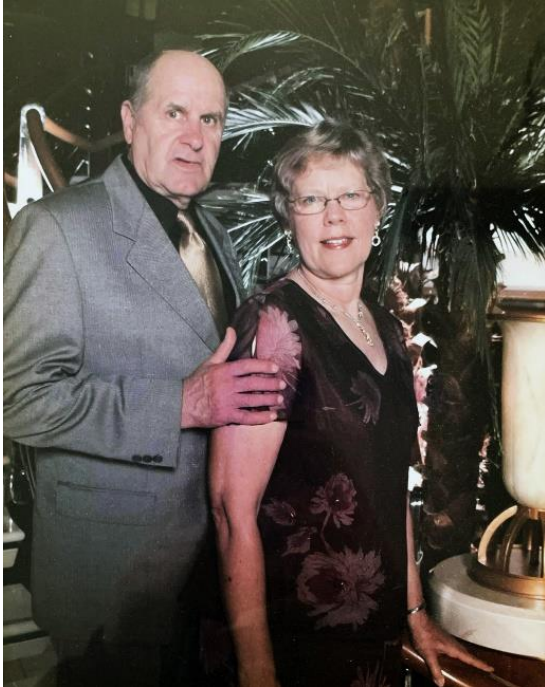
Later, as Bob and Louella's health became an issue, our friendship continued. We visited them in their home, and they came to ours. Although Bob was in constant pain, he never focussed on himself. It was never "poor me" or "why me"? Instead, he would ask, "How are you doing?"

Bob was a good preacher and leader. But as a boss and friend, he never lectured or pointed his finger at my shortcomings. He just calmly and quietly set an example of what it means to be a loving and Godly man.



I miss my dear friend and look forward to meeting him in heaven. Knowing him, I'm sure he's watching and waiting. When the time comes, he'll be reaching out his arms to welcome me home!
-Ray Peters rayanddorothypeters@gmail.com

Jess & Ann Jespersen -submitted by Alan & Judy Hack (SLD)



Reflecting on our 47+ years of pastoral ministry here in Québec we recognize how the Lord used various people to encourage us.

Not having a formal mentoring program, one couple stands out - **Jess and Ann Jespersen**. Even though Jess was the first District Superintendent (DS) of the St Lawrence District (SLD), Jess & Ann became close friends over the years. In those early years of ministry in Quebec, we often felt isolated and on our own. However, we knew that they were always there to encourage and pray for us, to listen and to share in our struggles. They didn't offer quick or easy solutions (there weren't many to offer!) but you knew that they understood the challenges we faced as we were learning how to do pastoral ministry in a different language and culture.

In his role as DS, Jess would often stay at our home and became 'Uncle Jess' to our 3 boys. When staying at our place one winter day, he helped get our 3 very young boys ready to go outside. Doing so, he made the comment how he would prefer to deal with teenagers rather than struggle putting on kids' snow suits!

Jess had a great sense of humour and enjoyed keeping kids in church spell bound as he made a penny disappear while rubbing it into his skin.

While he was a very down-to-earth, practical person, Jess also had an ongoing desire to deepen his relationship with the Lord. Not with a holier than thou attitude, but one marked by humility and care for those around him.

Jess and Ann ministered together each using their particular gifts. This was an encouraging model for us in our ministry. And they made it clear that we were always welcome in their home, either informally or while attending an SLD committee meeting.

It's been several years since Jess has gone to be with the Lord, but it's always encouraging to see Ann who, dealing with physical challenges, greets us with a quiet word and a peaceful smile.



May all who come behind us as POWER Team members....FIND US FAITHFUL

We're pilgrims on the journey of the narrow road
And those who've gone before us line the way
Cheering on the faithful, encouraging the weary
Their lives, a stirring testament to God's sustaining grace

Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses
Let us run the race, not only for the prize
But as those who've gone before us
Let us leave to those behind us the heritage of faithfulness
Passed on through godly lives

Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful
May the fire of our devotion light their way
May the footprints that we leave lead them to believe
And the lives we live inspire them to obey
Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful

After all our hopes and dreams have come and gone
And our children sift through all we've left behind
May the clues that they discover and the memories they uncover
Become the light that leads them to the road we each must find

Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful
May the fire of our devotion light their way
May the footprints that we leave lead them to believe
And the lives we live inspire them to obey
Oh, may all who come behind us find us faithful

Songwriters: Jon Mohr, Tom E. Fettke listen to the link below

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKT5BCmvmq0>

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Check this link out. Click on **POWER Team** Learn More, then click on **CONNECTOR** Newsletters
<https://thealliancecanada.ca/ministries/ministry-networks/>

-We would love to hear from you and HIStory of a veteran in your life. waynebettyk@rogers.com

