

#74 December 2024



CONNECTOR

Yesterday I listened to the full rendition of The Messiah. It stirred my heart once again to listen to the big picture—the Word of God from the beginning to the end of time. Worthy is the Lamb. This might be a blessing for you to listen to as well.

From there I listened to Susan Boyle's rendition of St. Francis of Assisi's prayer:

"Lord, Make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love.



*Wishing you a Merry Christ-
filled Christmas and a Happy
New Year With H/M.*

Gerald and Dorothy
Hogenbirk
National Volunteer POWER
team coordinators
hogenbirkgd@gmail.com

For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

O God, may that not just be a nice prayer on the wall, but an expression of my heart's desire and life, today and in this New Year to come. So, we invited ten guests to the church Christmas concert last night. Three of our neighbours prayed to ask Jesus into their lives. Rejoice with us, as do the angels in heaven. We're looking forward to the follow-up.

Mother Teresa has said, "Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love." Great guiding words for us perhaps, at this stage of our lives.

May God bless each of us, as we continue to serve God and man.

Emmanuel—God with us.
Warmly, Gerald and Dorothy Hogenbirk



Regional Gatherings of POWER Team members



CCD DS Shane Gould

CCDistrict, Hamilton Ontario area October 15, 2024

Front Row -DS Shane Gould, Carol Woon, Dorothy Hogenbirk, Jeannette Bucek

2nd Row -Wayne Kerr, David Freeman, Jean Shannon, Marion Ratzlaff, Ray Peters, Rhonda Neudorf, Gail Whyte, Gerald Hogenbirk.

3rd Row, Doug & Glendyne Gerrard, Doug Woon, Stephen Whyte, Eugene Neudorf

We were delighted to have District Superintendent Shane Gould, along with National Coordinators for **POWER Team** Gerald & Dorothy Hogenbirk join. This was the first time many of our members had an opportunity to meet our new DS, and to hear his support and encouragement for **POWER Team**.

Chinese Alliance POWER Team in the ECD



We appreciate that William & Margaret Yung head this group. Gerald & Dorothy Hogenbirk were guests of this gathering. William Yung wlyung052@gmail.com

Combined Christmas and Octogenarian Celebration in London Ont.

The Regional **POWER Team** in the London Ontario area is very consistent in connecting a number of times a year. The most recent one for a Christmas celebration expanded into honoring 5 of their members for entering into their 9th decade in 2024. In fact, 6 of the 11 that attended are in their 80s.



It is hard to get one's head around the reality of this when we thought some years ago that such a person was well over the hill.



Wayne & Betty Kerr, Joanne Lightbody, Jan & Nelson Annan



Back: Nelson Annan, Stuart Lightbody, Wayne Kerr, Gord Brown & Deb Wilkins
Front: Jan Annan, Joanna Lightbody, Betty Kerr, Anne Brown, Hope Reichert



Photographer Mary McElhone is in this picture 3rd from right

Gathering a number of times a year has been a real blessing to each one in this season of our lives.

We encourage any one of you to reach out to those **POWER Team** members within driving distance to gather for food, fellowship and celebration. Great connector and a great blessing.

Another Graduate: Dr. Charles Shepson

November 30, 1928 - September 16, 2024

Charles was celebrated November 7, 2024 at The Village Church at Shell Point, Florida.

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” Matthew 7:7 (NASB) (Charles’ life verse)



Charles’ early years were incredibly formative. He was born in a very complicated time leading to the Great Depression, to a family having lost every thing, and with an undetected life-threatening condition lurking in his body. By the age of five, he was showing signs of trouble caused by Spina Bifi da, which forced him to do elementary school from home. By the age of 12, surgical intervention was necessary. Doctors predicted he would not live past age 14 without it. Led by the genius 28-year-old orthopedic surgeon, Dr. John Royal Moore, a team of eight surgeons performed the experimental operation, fashioning a new spine out of nine inches of leg bone harvested from Charles’ right leg. Before the surgery, Dr. Moore warned Charles’ mother that “if he survives, he will probably never walk. Even if he could learn to walk again the very best he could hope for was 20 years of being ambulatory. Then he would be confined to a wheel chair.” She replied, “you do what you can, and we will trust God for the rest.” The doctor and his team did an outstanding job, and God came through with the rest. Charles recovered, learned to walk again, and was fully ambulatory for some 70 years. He came away from this early experience with a profound faith in God and unsurpassed empathy and hope for the many hundreds of hospital visits to suffering parishioners over his career.

When his father left during the Great Depression, Charles had to drop out of high school to work where he could to help support his mom and younger brother. When he was just **seven years old**, Charles **felt called to be a pastor**. He perceived that illustrations were what really made sermons come alive. By the time he was eleven, he had amassed a file card catalog of 1,000 illustrations categorized by topics. By the time he entered the Nyack Missionary Training Institute, the tally was over 2,000. **Charles was ordained in 1950** with the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He described himself as a **“pastor with a heart for missions.”** His pastoral ministry began in 1951

In 1953, Charles fell in love “at first sight” with, and one year later married, Elaine Campbell. Together they served in pastoral ministry in several churches in New York, New Jersey, Minnesota, and Vancouver, British Columbia.

In 1978, Charles and Elaine were called **to pastor Tenth Avenue Alliance Church** in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

Brian Thom wrote: I had the privilege of being on staff with him for 3 years at Tenth Ave. Alliance in Vancouver. He was a wonderful mentor and friend. He passed away at his home in Shell Point Village.

A Memorial Service took place there.

<https://vimeo.com/1027443625/00d2447afe>



Over the decades of pastoral and mission experience, Charles perceived a growing need amongst his former students and mission acquaintances. Many were experiencing **burnout and serious struggles with the stresses that** come with serving the Lord in ministry. He prayerfully set out to create a place where people could come for rest, restoration, and receive sound counseling, if needed, in a peaceful, safe, and confidential setting. After much prayer and diligent searching, the Lord help him to found and direct Fairhaven Ministries. Later, Fairhaven Ministries Retreat Center in Vernon, British Colombia, Canada was founded. Many hundreds of pastors, missionaries, and lay people have enjoyed rest and counsel while rebounding from difficult situations, or just refreshing from the pressures of this world.

Graduate: Gladys Fowler

July 27, 1931 – October 29, 2024



Gladys Fowler of Edmonton, went to be with her precious Lord on October 29, 2024, at the age of 93 years. She was the loving wife of Rev. Gerald Fowler who was the Executive Vice President of The Alliance Canada for a number of years when Mel Sylvester was President.

Gladys' son is Dr. David Fowler and his wife Cheryl Fowler of Ajax, Ontario, and their daughter Sandra Cook, wife of Rev Timothy Cook of Edmonton. These are all **POWER Team** members.

Gladys was born in Calgary, Alberta on July 27, 1931, and was the youngest of 9 Children. She came to faith in Jesus at the age of 12 under the ministry of Rev. J.D.

Carlson and through the involvement of three ladies who rented a suite in her home and attended the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church. It was there in church that she met and fell in love with Gerald and after a courtship of six years they were married on August 15, 1952.

Gladys had a love for music and sang in choirs in each church they attended in Calgary Alberta, and Unionville Ontario. She also was a part of a ladies' trio and ladies' sextet.

Do you want to catch up on past CONNECTORS?

Check this link out. Click on **POWER Team** Learn More, then click on **CONNECTOR** Newsletters

<https://thealliancecanada.ca/ministries/ministry-networks/>



CONNECTOR greetings:

It has been a pleasure to gather **POWER Team** members' stories and ministries for our last **CONNECTOR** issue. We want to say a big "thanks" for your input. We get many responses because of the updates of fellow servants of the Christ-child, who became the Saviour of the world. God called us to different regions of the world as well as to retire in different places, so it has been great to keep connected.

Betty and I want to say thanks to many of you who have journeyed with us, especially over the past year, and inquired of Betty's health situation for their continued prayers.

Here is a brief report:

- a year ago, we had an early Christmas in November as Betty was given one month to live re: pancreatic cancer
- God touched her in a miraculous way
- in June, the cancer had returned and she has been on chemo ever since.
- most recently, the oncologist informed her that she would be on chemo the rest of her life.



This was a shocker, but God is our maker and sustainer of life. He has numbered our days. This past August we celebrated our 57th anniversary and we both turned 80 in 2024. Thanks for your continued prayers. Betty is doing very well for which we are grateful to God.



*Have a meaningful, joyous Christmas season
As well as a fruitful and fulfilling 2025*

