

November 2009 – Newsletter

The purpose of this document is to inform you about my:

- 1) *Commitment to continue in full-time ministry, serving as a “Long-Term Missionary,” and*
- 2) *My need to develop a team of Ministry Partners; both financial and prayer.*

I am so thankful that my home church has “approved” me as a Centre Street Church Missionary, serving with a ministry organization called *Father’s Heart Projects* (FHP). It’s important for you to know that FHP’s staff operate by faith and are without financial guarantees of any kind. It is the generosity of people like you that sustains us and our mission. I will share more about FHP later on.

I will present “my story” in a way that it might come across if you and I were sitting at a table having a meal or a coffee.

That being said, allow me to tell you why I am going down this “missionary” road.

Well, I have determined that I want nothing less than to serve God in a full-time capacity for the remainder of what I hope will be known as my “second half of life.”

When I was 44 years old (in 2001), I began to serve as a staff member at Centre Street Church in Calgary, and have been mainly working/serving in a recognized full-time ministry capacity ever since. Simply stated, I want to continue giving my time, and use my skills and abilities to serve God, full-time, for the rest of my life. Oh sure, I still want to golf & play hockey, and have a holiday or two, but not at the expense of what is most important. The way I see it, these “temporary pleasures” will pale in comparison to what awaits you and me in Heaven anyways.

My Journey

I gave my life to Jesus on May 27, 1984, and I told Him then that I was willing to go, do, and serve Him however He chose. That was a big statement. Only time would tell if I was sincere. It was a little unnerving at the time, but I said I was willing to put my complete trust in Him for the rest of my life. However long that might be.

It has been a most remarkable journey, one that has involved tremendous highs and lows and plenty “in between.” I could not have imagined He would enable me to do the things and serve in the ways I have. I am looking forward to what He has for me (and my wife Heidi) as I continue on through what many now refer to as “the second half of life.” At least I am hoping He has as many years ahead for me as I had in the “first half.”

Ever since that memorable day in 1984, I had prayed and hoped that God would allow me to serve in full-time ministry. It took almost 17 years, but finally in 2001, I was given an opportunity to serve on staff as a “paid” person involved in what many would refer to as “full-time ministry work” at Centre Street Church (CSC) in Calgary. This was an unbelievable answer to prayer for me.

I served at CSC for close to eight years, initially as the Pastor of International Ministries and for the last three years as the Men's Pastor. It was at CSC that my love for overseas missions really caught fire. I loved to be with people from other cultures (and still do), and I certainly was developing a great passion for them and compassion for their struggles. I had the pleasure of leading, serving with, and training many teams from CSC to serve overseas. I was also realizing how my heart was breaking for the people we went to serve, most who through no fault of their own were living "hand to mouth" so to speak. It was most disturbing to me to see innocent children living the way they were.

In the fall of 2007, while on staff at CSC, it became clear to me that God was calling me out to a "new thing." Isaiah 43:18-19 was the scripture God gave me to help me make the decision to leave what I felt at the time was "my dream job." It reads, "*Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?*" I never imagined I would ever leave CSC, but after asking for guidance and receiving that verse, it was clear to me what I needed to do to be obedient.

In February of 2008, I joined the staff of Power to Change (PTC) and served on the Development Team for one year as a "salaried person." This was a rare occurrence at PTC. Typically, their staff had to raise their support in order to serve. I was very thankful for this "exception." About half way through that year, I realized this wasn't a good fit for me. I concluded that I had to start using the skills God gave me if I was to serve Him effectively. I knew my dominant skills were/are Administration and Strategic Thinking and Implementation.

The question I asked myself at that time was "How and where can I use these skills while serving God full-time?" I knew working with a ministry organization could enable me to do this, but I also knew that most of them would require me to "raise my own personal and ministry support."

After receiving Heidi's blessings (I believe you need to be in unity for something as big as this), I decided to "test the water" so to speak, and ask a number of people if they would be interested in standing with me, and support me in this "faith-based" venture. Having received enough positive feedback, we felt it was time for me to step out in faith and pursue a career as a full-time "supported" missionary.

Now this wasn't a new thought to me, as I had a sense for many years that God might be leading me this way, and I remember telling my wife back when I was serving in Missions & Outreach at CSC, "to not be surprised if someday we are serving full-time, overseas."

I believe it is significant that **two years before I gave my life to the Lord, I wrote what I thought was a peculiar song.** It was the VERY FIRST song I had ever written. At the time I had no idea why I would write a song "like that!!!"

Looking back, I believe God was working on me even then. I will share it with you; it's called "**The Calling.**"

*He thought about it often
when he looked at what he had.
A job, a car, a new guitar,
he never had it bad.*

*But he'd say it really wasn't fair
to be born in a land so rich,
when there's millions of children dying,
in places like Bangladesh.*

*He used to send them money,
he hoped it would ease their pain.
But he knew in his heart, that was just a start,
there was so much more they would gain.*

*So he sold his car, and his new guitar,
said goodbye to his family and friends.
Bought a one way ticket to a foreign land,
he hoped soon their hunger would end.*

*Their eyes were sad and their bodies were thin,
their land was poor and dry.
It'd take a miracle or two just to pull them through,
he'd ask the Lord to help him try.*

*He'd say ...
I just want to help the children,
I just want to see them grow.
You know we have to save the children,
and we've got a long way to go.
I said we've got a long way to go.*

*Well two years past, then another three.
He was working night and day.
Planting seeds of love and hope
to help them on their way.*

*The children grew stronger
and his days grew longer,
as the years went by and by.
Till one dark morning he never rose.
It brought tears to the children's eyes.*

*They laid his body in a dusty field,
near a place where he called home.
And on his stone his friends had placed
a short and simple poem.*

It read ...

*Here lies a man with a great big heart
who knew we had a long way to go.
He had a dream from the very start
and it helped the children grow.
Yes, he helped the children grow.*

Only time will tell if this is a “prophetic” song. Could this be my... destiny? I find it extremely interesting that I would write a song like that, at that time in my life, and now to see what it is I am trying to do for the Lord. Extremely interesting!

Initially I thought I would pursue “supported missionary work” with PTC, the organization I was working with at the time. However, I kept having a reoccurring thought that involved a ministry I was trying to develop with my good friend Paul Miles called *Father’s Heart Projects* (FHP). At the time, we had been working on our application for Charitable Status for well over a year and a half, and the thought kept coming to me that perhaps I should be thinking about giving my “immediate” future to FHP.

I knew I had to get away and seek the face of God. This was a BIG decision for me and my family.

On February 28, 2009, after four days of prayer and fasting at Kingsfold Retreat Centre, I made the decision to step out in faith and pursue the life of a missionary with FHP. I made this decision not knowing if we would ever receive Charitable Status approval from the government to continue the ministry we had already started. I just felt/knew that given the two options, FHP was the right one for me. I would trust the Lord to take care of the rest.

To my great pleasure, while I was away at Kingsfold seeking God’s direction, unknown to me at the time, we received notice that FHP had been approved for Charitable Status. I was ecstatic. This was a huge confirmation for me; I felt confident that I made the right decision. Now, it was time to get busy and put all my energies into helping develop this ministry, and to get serious about establishing my support team; those who would faithfully want to partner with me financially, prayerfully, or both.

I began to work full-time with Father’s Heart Projects on March 1, 2009.

Father's Heart Projects and my Role

"This ministry is committed to the relief of poverty by providing basic amenities, including food, clothing and shelter to persons in need, especially widows and underprivileged, orphaned and abandoned children; in third-world and developing nations."

No matter how you say it, it is still hard to believe that in Africa:

- Every 15 seconds, a child becomes an AIDS orphan
- Everyday 5,760 children become AIDS orphans
- Every year 2.1 Million children become AIDS orphans

James 1:27 says, *"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress ..."*

This is our Foundational scripture. This is the "mission" of Father's Heart Projects.

We see FHP as a two-fold ministry. Our mandate is to "look after orphans and widows." What that will look like in various places and countries could differ, but it will probably involve both monthly Child and Widow Sponsorship Programs.

In Kisumu, Kenya, we have developed a Monthly Child Sponsorship ministry that cares for 56 children at the present time, with plans to increase to at least 100 in the near future. In this city, we have also built and started a Primary School that has 5 teachers, one cook, and 60 students. We are currently in the process of building a larger school on a new site, to be able to accommodate the need to add more grades to the school. We are also developing a fairly unique ministry for Widows, where we will be able to offer opportunities for people to sponsor Widows similar to what we do with our Monthly Child Sponsorship Program. We plan to incorporate *skills training* through a Micro-Credit Program for these Widows to help them learn to eventually take care of their own financial needs.

Our website will provide you with a greater sense of who we are, and what we are doing. Visit www.fathersheartprojects.org to learn more.

My roles with FHP involve serving as Vice-President, Treasurer, and Administrator. Paul Miles is the Founder and President, and our main Promoter & Fundraiser. I have been a friend of Paul's for over 20 years, and together we are trying to develop FHP into whatever God wants it to become. We also have a solid Board who are passionate and active in the development of this ministry.

As mentioned previously, one of my skills involves Administration. I am very detailed, organized, and have the ability to look at something and figure out what needs to be done to make it work better or more efficiently. I certainly don't have all the answers for everything that needs to be accomplished within this ministry, as it relates to my responsibilities, but with God's guidance, I will find those who do, and together we will implement what is required to make things happen. Always learning, always trying new things!

The good news is I really enjoy doing this sort of thing.

Basically, I am responsible to handle the details of the home office, including Finances and the development of Policies, Procedures, and Systems within the organization. I also handle the Marketing (including our website), and will assist in the Fundraising when I can. I also am responsible to ensure our Systems and Procedures are in place and working smoothly in the countries we are involved in, which at this time only involves Kenya, Africa. When I am free from ties to Calgary (i.e. not having to work another job here), I will spend upwards of 3-4 weeks at a time in Kenya, working with our Field Directors, and being more “hands on” at ground level with our Projects.

We feel/believe that my focus for the foreseeable future needs to be in helping Paul develop this ministry from our home base in Calgary. That being said, I do see a day when God could have Heidi and me working and serving full-time in one of our mission fields. What an honour and joy that will be some day.

Current reality

I am currently working 40 hours per week driving a Charter bus (and have been since June), as I try to raise the support I require to get back to serving and working full-time with FHP. I am so thankful for the men and women who encouraged me to “step-out” in faith to serve with FHP, and who are now known as my “Charter Partners.” Thank you for your faithfulness.

Even though we have seen tremendous growth in the ministries of FHP in 2009, this “extra job” scenario has caused the development of FHP to move forward at a much slower pace than we all want. The needs we are trying to meet are not going away. In fact, they continue to increase. For those that know me well, you know that this drives me crazy. However, I must be patient, and know that it will all come together in God’s timing. Not mine.

Invitation to join my Ministry Partner Team

Well, there you have “my story.” Thank you for coming this far with me. I am truly thankful.

I now ask that you PRAYERFULLY consider what God would want you to do with this information.

God says He “*will meet all your/my needs according to his glorious riches.*” (Philippians 4:19) I am trusting in this truth. He knows what I need to be able to serve in this ministry capacity, and He knows through whom He wants to meet my needs.

It could be through you, or it might not be. I believe you will know if you take it to Him in prayer.

Financial assistance will enable me to serve through FHP, and it is a very necessary element, but PRAYER will keep me serving.”

Having people commit to praying for me and FHP is so crucial. We just can't say enough how important it is for us.

If you would be willing to join my Prayer Team, please send an e-mail to john.naud@fathersheartprojects.org to let me know. It will be such an encouragement to me.

Final thoughts:

In return for your partnership, I will commit to the following:

- I will be consistent in keeping you informed about my ministry, and how the Lord is using me to serve and help "widows and orphans,"
- I will keep you informed about the progress we are making with FHP as we seek to honour Him through this ministry,
- I will send you regular prayer requests for both myself, my family, and FHP,
- I will consistently and specifically pray for you and your personal walk with the Lord, your family, your health, and your business/careers.

If after prayer you are feeling led to "*Get Involved*," in any way, you can find the "how-to's" on our website. (www.fathersheartprojects.org)

May God continue to bless you, as you seek to do His will, and bring Glory to Him in all you do and say.

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