

Tribute to Kathy Bender - Jeanette Domes

On April 18, 2013, Kathy Bender, former Executive Director and Missionary of the BC Mission Boat Society and member of the Our Saviour Lutheran Church family in Parksville BC, was called home by the Lord at Nanaimo General Hospital. At age 52, Kathy was the first to say that even though she had known her cancer would overtake her at some point, it was coming just too soon. She wanted to still live as mom, friend, and Christian with a heart to serve. Her multiple myeloma impacted her whole body over five years, but it didn't impact her motivation and passion for life, for people, nature and for all of God's kingdom.

Kathy joined the BC Mission Boat team in its founding year as a Board Director and mission volunteer. This appealed to her adventurous and outdoor spirit. In 2002, she left her career as a Bank manager and financial advisor to assume the role of Outreach worker with the BC Mission Boat, a place where she could do all of things she really loved in life, including singing, bringing joy to others and spreading the word of God. At the time, the ministries vision was "to show and bring Christ, by ship based mission, to British Columbia coastal communities." In her adventuresome spirit, Kathy prepared herself with courses and understudy to become a co-captain on some of the mission trips. She thrived on bringing smiles and God's message of love to the coastal residents and remote communities along the BC Coast.

In these years, she worked with a very dedicated team of volunteers, Pastor Bob Koebernick and Our Saviour Lutheran Church, summer staff and Concordia University College of Alberta, and a broad community of support across North America. She energized this support community so that in fact, it became a "family of faith" who all were engaged in showing, bringing and receiving Christ's blessings through their involvement. Kathy's beauty was seen in her inner spirit, many friendships, positive spirit, contagious laugh (giggle) and in her testimony of faith.

Kathy was a gifted woman. Her children, Michelle age 23 and Adam age 21 have been her 'most amazing gifts'! She loved them so much and championed everything they did and all they are becoming. They shared many travel and local adventures from childhood until even last year when Kathy carefully coordinated her treatment sessions with travel. Communication was a gift that she offered in friendships, as an advocate, leader and organizer, in Bible study and prayer groups and as the Mission Boat Outreach worker. She expressed her creativity as a self-taught and excellent carver, watercolour painter and creator of photography books and slideshows. She enjoyed passing on these interests to encourage creativity in others. Compassionate in her relationships, she was

always connecting with people in need, even while greatly challenged with her own health. Kathy demonstrated how Christian 'care-givers' must also seek and appreciate the support of others and become willing 'care-receivers'.

Kathy inspired the BC Mission Boat family with her value for each person she met and community she visited. We continue in this spirit to share God's love through each opportunity to serve and be served as members of God's family. Every one of us who knew Kathy will remember her for the relationships of friendship, faith and support that we had with her. Blessed are they who walk in the ways of the Lord!



Kathy with one of the children on the Mission Boat

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

~Isaiah 40:31~

Right Where God Wanted Me - Krysta Davis



It was a dark and early morning. I couldn't make out the outline of the community. I had no clue where north was. I only knew the members of my team. Yet I knew it was going to be a fantastic God-filled week. I knew this would be the start of a wonderful relationship. Who knew how deep that relationship would be....

In February of 2006, I started out on an adventure that would show me God's great goodness and beauty in a way that I had not experienced before. In the fall of 2005, I had started attending Concordia University College of Alberta, and one of the student experiences that I had the opportunity to be involved in was the mission trip. Having served with other mission teams as a youth before, I was excited to take this opportunity to serve as a young adult. After applying to attend, I was put on a team that was to go to a place called Klemtu. I did not have a clue where it was, how we would get there or what we would do, but I slowly started to fall in love. Rather God started to fill my heart with love for the place he had called me to.

As I got off the ferry in 2006 I was greeted with welcome and kindness. Other team members were hugged and welcomed home. The week spent in Klemtu opened my eyes to the kind of relationships Concordia and the BC Mission Boat Society were a part of. We were given a great house to stay in. Kids flocked to our door, youth joked and laughed with us and elders shared stories and trials. We spent time in the school, hung out at the hall and worshiped at the church. We shared the Gospel and God's great love with the kids, youth and adults. They shared it right back. The family of God was built up, strengthened and shared.

Since that trip, I have returned to Klemtu four times. My most recent trip was in February of 2013, after a three year absence. As we traveled on the ferry, I struggled with my own insecurities. I feared that the friendships I had made in the past wouldn't be there. I feared I wouldn't be able to remember anyone's names or where they lived. I was scared no one would remember me. As my fears built up, God gave me a gift. The gift He continually gives me, people. First I bumped into Roxanne. She had been a person from Klemtu that I remembered as someone with a bubbly personality, a great smile and wonderful kids. Not only did I remember her, but I also remembered her name! She remembered me as well. Then I slowly ran into others from Klemtu. Some, I remembered their names, others I recognized their faces. My fears slowly began melt away, until the moment when I looked out the window and there it was. Klemtu and all I loved about it. The Big House was bold and beautiful. The school at the top of the hill, looming over the town and the float house we would be staying in for the week. But most importantly were the people, all the people I had met, that I would meet. My fears had no room anymore because the excitement, joy and love I felt took over. I was where God had taught me so much before and where He would teach me again.

Throughout that week I was amazed at how God answered prayers. I remember in 2006 having Elders ask us to pray for the young people in the community, that they might become leaders and learn not only the ways of the community but the extent of God's love for them. Yet as I lived and shared with the community in 2013, I saw those prayers being answered. One young woman who had been in high school and had lead the dancers was **Continued on Page 3**



Krysta & Cheyenne in 2006

now working at the Band Office, contributing to day to day life of her community. Another young woman was just done school when I first met her and now she had four kids, worked at the health center and spent time supporting the Elders. One man I had met never said a word that first year, now he proudly shared his successes in sobriety, he spoke of his faith and his desire to study and know God's Word. All of these were testaments to God answering prayers and growing a community.

One of my dear friends, Cheyenne, and her family taught me again what it means to be a loved child of God. When we met in 2006, she was 14 years old I believe. She was shy, quiet but wanted to hang around. We talked and got to know one another better. As I continued to return to Klemtu, I met her family, her boyfriend and friends. We celebrated high points and grieved over low points. We kept in contact through Facebook and email in-between trips. No matter the length of time between visits, we always stayed connected. This visit was no different. Once we got to Klemtu we headed to the hall to see who was around.

Cheyenne's boyfriend and her sister were there. A new niece was there too. But the part that I had been not so patiently waiting for was a hug from Cheyenne and the chance to hold her beautiful baby boy. Seeing them,

getting that hug and a cuddle from her son, that was my lesson. God's love has no limits, He has no restrictions. He can do great and wonderful things, including connecting people in ways that make no sense. He builds relationships so that people can care about one another. As I spent time with Cheyenne and her family I was reminded of how God had used Klemtu to change me, to grow me and to teach me about His continual and unending love. 2006 was a long time ago. Yet it seems like yesterday being scared, not knowing who I would meet and being so far from home. Yet in the briefest of moments God answered prayers. He took away my fears, He showed me His great people and He made it home for a little while. He continues to answer my prayers, allowing me to experience His love through His people of Klemtu.



Krysta, Cheyenne & Gabe in 2013

Need prayer?

Prayer requests are handled with confidentiality, trust, and respect.

Feel free to call our office anytime at **1-877-303-2323**.

If no one is available to take your call, leave a message, and we will call you as soon as we can!



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Seminarian on a Mission: Part 2 - Marcus Huff

This past August, we were joined by Barrett Grebing, a current seminary student at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri and a long time personal friend. As you may have read in our Spring 2012 edition of The Compass, he joined us to receive some cross cultural ministry training, participate in a mission trip to Klemtu, and receive credit for a seminary course.

When he returned, we had a chance to talk to him later in the fall of 2012 and reflect back to his involvement in our ministry and this is what he had to say.

Q: So how was your mission trip to Klemtu?

A: My mission adventure to Klemtu was amazing. I say adventure because that was the case. From our travel to our time spent in Klemtu, I felt that I was on an adventure.

Q: What ministry did you take part in?

A: We made house visits, lead a worship service, partook in relational ministry and discipleship. One of my fondest

memories of our time in Klemtu were the mornings we spent with John. John is one of Klemtu's spiritual leaders. Each morning we had the opportunity to open God's word. This allowed us to share how each of us serves the people God puts in our paths.

Q: Before you went you mentioned that you had hoped to be stretched, in what ways did you see this happen?

A: My stretching experience on this trip was directly related to our devotional time. During our devotional time we talked about waiting. In a fascinating way, our trip out of Klemtu was delayed.

Our devotional time was put into practice when "waiting" became our reality. Sometimes, God's timing doesn't align with our timing. During this time of actual waiting, God stretched me to put my words into practice.

Q: You had hoped to be a physical presence of God's love and give a listening ear, were you able to do this?

A: I still hope that I was able to do this. I know that I was able to be in a community where God's love was present before I got there. Klemtu is an area that is similar to many of the areas we live. There is sin and hurt, but there is also hope and joy. I saw this when we met with the men's small group after their church service. I'm not trying to romanticize the experience, but these men were very open about their struggles and sin. Then they were just as open to encourage one another and remind each other of the promises of God. Participating with these men gave me an opportunity to listen and to be heard.

Q: What have you taken back to your ministry in St. Louis?

A: There are many things I have taken back to St. Louis. Stories, pictures, and friends immediately come to mind. But the enduring thing that will travel home with me is a broader view of the Kingdom of God in His people. God's Kingdom is breaking into the world through men and women in Klemtu in the same ways that it is breaking into the world around me in St. Louis.

Q: Any advice, suggestions for those considering going or supporting this ministry?

A: People who are looking for an adventure with a mission should go with BCMB on a trip. It truly is an adventure where you can grow in your faith and see a larger view of God's church. If you are considering supporting the ministry- YOU SHOULD. BCMB's work in the First Nation communities in BC is equipping people to do ministry in their homes as well as caring for individuals where they are.



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Financial Update - Craig Tufts, Director of Finances

There are three numbers we need to consider at this time.

1. 24,662.50
2. 18,464.60
3. 5,036.16

But before we do that, there is one very important job I have to do. Thank you. Thank you to all of you who so generously supported the BCMBS last year.

Thank you for the great response to our appeal for funds in April, which continued throughout the year. This response, along with your words of encouragement to see the work we are doing continue to grow, and expressions of desire from the communities for the same, moved us in January of this year to apply for a Director of Christian Outreach intern to enhance our outreach. Thank you.

Now .. about those three numbers.

\$ 24,662.50 is the amount of funding we needed to receive in donations and grants through the end of March. The actual amount we have received is \$ 18,464.60. We are used to seeing the first

three months of the calendar year be low, but this is a more significant decrease than in other years. In fact, it is \$5,036.16 less than we received last year at this time. We anticipated some of that, as one of our major supporters had to reduce funding. But it is a greater decrease than we expected.

We are still in a decent financial position. A special one-time grant we received at the end of last year will sustain this for another few months. And we are confident that as people are made aware, the funding will come in as it did last year.

So, thank you for considering how you may be gifted to respond to this. If you are in a position to make a donation to support the work God is doing through the BCMBS, that would be very helpful. If you know someone who might like to support, or take part in a Canadian short term mission organization, tell them about the BCMBS. And pray. Pray that God nudge people's hearts to fund the work that God desires to be done through the BCMBS. It can't get any better than that. And the grace of Jesus bless you all.

Giving Made Easy! - Jessica Pixner

Whether you prefer to make one-time or monthly financial gift with a pen & paper through the mail, use the internet to give online or want to make a future contribution in the form of a planned gift, there is giving option for you! Supporting the BC Mission Boat Society in the form of a financial gift has been made easier and here are a few different ways you can do so now!



Mail

Make your one-time or monthly post-dated donations payable to:
BC Mission Boat Society, 795 Island Highway W. Parksville, BC V9P 1B9



Online

Check out our website & follow the link below to make your donation through your Paypal account or with your Credit Card www.bcmissionboat.org/#/donate



Planned

Contact **Lutheran Foundation Canada** to learn about making a future financial contributions through bequests, legacies, endowments and other gift plans.
Phone: 1-877-711-4438 Online: www.lutheranfoundation.ca



It is through your generous financial gifts that we are able to continue reaching out to share God's amazing love!

Looking to the Future - Melanie Kuhn, Board Chair

Each fall the BCMBS Board of Directors gather for a retreat. With most of our meetings being done via conference call, this is a great time for us to get together face to face and talk about the goals and direction of this ministry. As we have seen and feel God is moving our ministry in new ways, we purposefully spent some time clarifying our mission and ministry. With much passionate and fruitful discussion, we defined or clarified our ministry as *building and enriching Christ centered lives in isolated First Nation communities on the BC mid Coast*. The bottom line is that we are seeking and wanting to see lives changed by Christ. So as a Board we worked at creating some ways of making sure we were moving in this direction and at the same time identified that we needed to improve our year round support for these communities. The following five bullet points are what we have identified as our goals in this process:

- we commit to pray for our mission communities and for God's guidance;
- we also invite you, as our supporters to pray with us;
- we seek additional teams that would come outside of the summer months
- we work to add one new staff person
- we strive to increase financial support by 10%

We also set up a task force to explore options for expanding our year round support for our mission communities. This group gave us some exciting options, and after discussion and prayer, we energetically decided to apply for a 12 month intern from Concordia University in St. Paul, Minnesota. And this past March we were blessed to have our application granted and this coming May we will welcome Anna Reincke, who will join and work with us in our ministry.

God has richly blessed us with a dedicated and gifted staff, committed board members, great supporters and a growing number of mission teams to go into the communities. May we all continue to work together to build up and strengthen God's Kingdom.

An Introduction - Anna Reinke, DCO Intern

Hello! My name is Anna Reinke and I am a senior at Concordia University in St Paul pursuing a Director of Christian Outreach certification, especially by partnering with BC Mission Boat. With this major, along with my minor in Bible translation, I am excited to work in areas of ministry that challenge my language skills and my cultural comfort zone. I am especially looking forward to working alongside others to learn about Christ's love for us as a part of His creation. This cannot be done on my own, but rather through the strength of the Holy Spirit given at Baptism.

I want to thank you all for this opportunity to learn and to grow in my ministry, but especially my faith. Not only will I get to do that, but I am looking forward to building relationships with you and the communities that we will be serving. I am quite the extrovert, so if you have any ideas of places to go or things to see, I'll grab my gear and will be glad to go with you!

To help you (briefly) to get to know me, one of my favorite Bible passages is Galatians 2:20 (below). It serves as my vision statement and shows where my identity stands. While I am a painter, musician, and a killer athlete (this is your warning if we play volleyball or softball), my heart is Christ's. What am I without Him? It is my passion to share that passion with the world.

Please keep me in your prayers as I make the transition and the journey, as my prayers are with you all right now. So I leave you with the verse, and look forward to meeting you all in person!

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

~ Galatians 2:20 ~

