

THE

TOPP

90
YEAR

ANNIVERSARY

Special Edition

ISSUE 20 | NOVEMBER 2011 | CENTRALCOMMUNITYCHURCH.CA

WELCOME TO CENTRAL

History has always fascinated me. As a new staff member at Central, and not having been a part of this church or denomination, I didn't know any of the rich stories that make up our history. In my preparation for this special 90th Anniversary edition of The Loop, I've spent countless hours pouring over historical documents, pictures, dvds, and scraps of newspaper articles from the early 1920's til today. After all of that, I can honestly say that I am proud to be a part of Central and its powerful history. All through the eras and generations of this church God's fingerprints have been seen as He demonstrates His power to heal, forgive, and restore lives. Whether you've been a part of this church for much of our history or you're new to Central, you are a part of something grand, something bigger than any one pastor, movement or era. You are a part of God's story for St. Catharines and the Niagara Region.

I believe that God is not even close to being done with this church. In fact, I believe that He has greater things in store for us in the future than He ever did in the past. Part of us understanding where we are going, is understanding where we've been and what God has been doing all along. This month, we turn 90 years old as a church and I want to encourage you to take some time to reflect on the amazing stories found in these pages as told from the experiences of some of our most committed and faithful members. Although God is doing a new thing, He also wants us to see and appreciate what He's already done. The historical information contained in these pages is not exhaustive, nor is the intention to articulate every event in our church's history, the aim of this edition of the Loop is simply to highlight the major events that have shaped who we are today.

Andrew Plett
Print & Publications Director

MAIN OFFICE

MONDAY TO FRIDAY
9am - 5pm

P.O. Box 20309, 240 Scott St.
St. Catharines, ON L2M 7W7
P: 905.937.5610
E: info@centralcc.ca
www.centralcommunitychurch.ca

SERVICE TIMES:

Saturday Evening [6pm]

Sunday Morning
[9:30am & 11:15am]

Sunday Evening [6pm]

**see calendar for details*

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

203 Church Street
St. Catharines, ON
P: 289-271-1014

SERVICE TIME:

Sunday Morning [10AM]

PEN CENTRE CAMPUS

Empire Theatre, Pen Centre
St. Catharines, ON
P: 905.937.5610

SERVICE TIME:

Sunday Morning [10:30AM]

NIAGARA FALLS CAMPUS

6970 Mountain Rd.
Niagara Falls, ON
P: 905.325.8224

SERVICE TIME:

Launching in Early 2012

DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN?

Our Children's Ministry is available during our Saturday evening and Sunday morning services at all campuses. If you're a first-time guest, please visit our KidPossible guest check-in station to register your children and to receive directions to your child's classroom. Our Children's Ministry welcomes children from infancy to Grade 6.

WONDERING ABOUT GOD, JESUS, OR THE BIBLE?



StartingPoint runs Sundays at the Scott Street Campus (10:45am). It is a 4-week, on-going course that explains what it means to be a follower of Christ, and is designed for new believers.



NextStep, based on the Alpha curriculum, is a 12-week course designed to answer life's big questions and to introduce the "basics" of Christianity. A meal is provided. For more info please contact davidtopping@centralcc.ca.



Momentum is a six week course, designed to help Christ-followers grow in the practical disciplines of living a healthy Christian life. These "how to..." classes focus on the daily application of Biblical principles. Each week people meet together for a meal, the topic of the day, and small group interaction. (Take advantage of the great Family Dinner rate @ \$5 per person starting at 5:30pm)

LOOKING TO GET BETTER CONNECTED?

Join us for Central 101, where we will provide a short overview of our mission and strategy, and provide info on how you can partner with Central to help transform our community. Central 101 is scheduled several times a year; the next class will run January 25 at 7:00PM. [Scott St. Campus]

If you are looking for ways to get involved, try volunteering in one of Central's ministry opportunities. Plan to attend an upcoming Ministry Forum to help determine the best next step.

For more information about the next Ministry Forum, please contact Karlene at karlenemarkham@centralcc.ca.

MISSED A SUNDAY?

Watch or download our Sunday morning sermons on-line at www.centralcommunitychurch.ca.

Sermons are also available to order on CD & DVD at the bookstore [Scott Street] or Central Connect [Downtown & Pen Centre].

THE ERAS

5

FORWARD

The role of historical archives in understanding the past and preparing our future.

BY HELEN DRESCHLER

10

THE BEGINNING: 1920s

A brief history of how Central started with Mrs. Mabel Cunningham in her house in 1921.

14

PURCHASING ELIM

The incredible story of how God led Rev. Montgomery to purchase our first building.

16

THE 30s + 40s

An era of growth through the ministries of traveling evangelists, many of whom were women with powerful and effective ministries.

22

THE 50s + 60s

An era of continued growth and expansion as the church comes into its own, developing a strong identity and call.

26

THE 70s + 80s

Two words can define these decades in the life of the church; Bus Ministry. An era of explosive growth and new building projects.

34

THE 90s + 2000s

An era marked by our passion to redefine what it means to be the church, to be within reach of people, and to see God move powerfully.



6

CONFESSIONS OF A PASTOR

A candid and honest look at life, faith and church from the perspective of Lead Pastor Bill Markham.

BY BILL MARKHAM

TRUE STORIES

15

DITCH DIGGING

How the story of Elijah in 2 Kings applies to Central today as well as looking back on every mile along the road.

BY ADAM FRY

21

PASTOR TOPPING INTERVIEW

A candid interview with the longest serving pastor at Central. What he's seen, done and learned through the last three decades.

BY ANDREW PLETT

30

HOW THE BUS MINISTRY CHANGED LIVES

The stories of three women whose own lives were not only changed by our bus ministry, but their whole families too.

33

IT WASN'T JUST SUNDAY SCHOOL

Gina Billard's journey toward God and Central started with a big red bus parked in front of her house.

BY DAVID TOPPING

INFORMATION

20

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Important information about the church, its finances and families.

22

STAFF DIRECTORY

Contact information for the staff at Central Community Church.

FORWARD

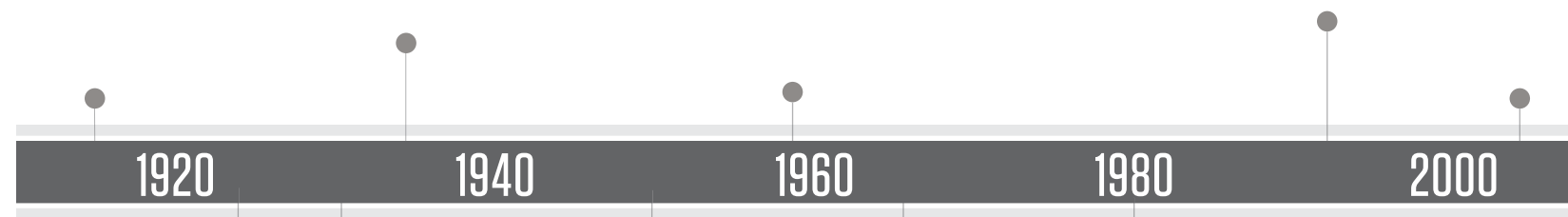
HELEN DRESCHLER: CENTRAL'S ARCHIVIST

“Archives are important historical records that help us understand the past, enrich the present and inform the future.” (Author Unknown)

In 2004, I volunteered to collect and catalogue pictures and news articles relating to Central's history. As a result we have a collection of scrapbook volumes as well as boxes of memorabilia. A full list of donors is listed in Volume 1 of our archives, and I would like to specifically mention the special contribution that some people have made to the preparation of this publication.

In 1976 Rev. Williams researched and compiled Central's 55th anniversary book and Jean Stadelmier donated many articles and newspaper clippings as well as an audio cassette tape on which her husband taped the speakers at the 55th anniversary service. (At this time the services were not taped.) This tape has been transferred to CD and is available for borrowing from the library. In this 90th anniversary publication we retell the story of how Central began in 1921 as told by Jean Cunningham Emmons Holmes, and Rev. James Montgomery's account of how Elim Tabernacle was purchased. Dennis Gannon from The Standard gave us pictures of where the Silverwood Dairy (one of our early locations) was located across from the downtown fire station. Beverly Quigley provided us with pictures of her grandmother Mabel Cunningham and her mother Jean Cunningham Emmons Holmes. (The Cunninghams hosted the first prayer services in their home on 77 Dufferin St.)

Thank you to Rosemary Stadelmier for assisting me in compiling the information needed for this publication. We are grateful to all the people who helped us preserve the past to support the future and we still welcome contributions to the archives.



History

BILL MARKHAM

LEAD PASTOR, CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH

billmarkham@centralcc.ca | SOCIAL: twitter: @billmarkham

As we look back on our history as a church, there is only one word that accurately describes what we have experienced: that word is “SUPERNATURAL”. For 90 years we, as a church, have believed the promise of Jesus in Acts 1:8 where he stated, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” The word used here for “power” is where we get our English word “dynamite”. That is exactly what our history reflects...it has been “dynamite!”

As I read the incredible stories contained in this edition of the Loop, I am reminded that we serve an amazing God and that His power is the only thing that can take our broken lives and transform them into something powerful; that He loves us so much and He has never given up on us; that when we trust Him, we see and experience things that can only be explained by this one word, “SUPERNATURAL”.

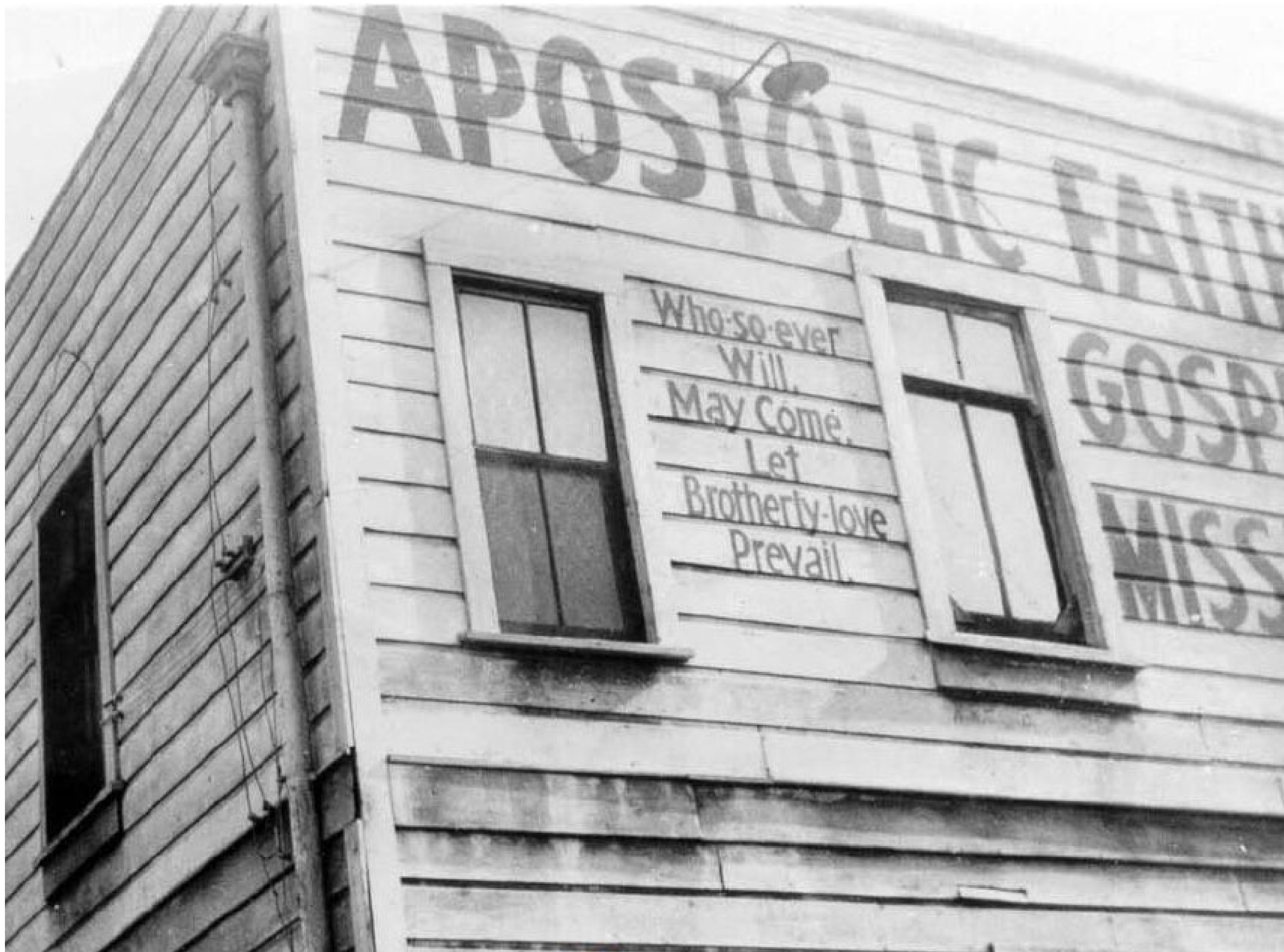
As I reflect on what God has done for us as a church over the past 90 years, I must confess that I am deeply humbled. Humbled by the reality that the incredible victories we are experiencing today, are simply the result of years of prayer, the dedication of many followers of Jesus, and the power of God. I have come to a painful, yet liberating reality: none of us is indispensable, in that God will do what God will do with or without us. Yet, in His plan and purpose, He has entrusted us with His power to change our lives, families, communities, and even the world. The stories contained in our history are simply a part of His story. The key is to tap into what His plans are and to passionately pursue His call in your life. When we do that, amazing things happen. Our history proves this and our future depends on it.

When we look back at what God has done, there are some amazing points of interest that must be noted:

1. God began to change lives in the downtown core of St. Catharines, and ninety years later we have come full circle, by having a campus only blocks from where it all began!
2. This church has always been within reach of people. Yet the methods have changed, but the timeless message has always remained the same. There is a God who accepts us just the way we are, and loves us too much to leave us that way.
3. When people have listened to the voice of God, and have stepped out in radical obedience, the power of God has always been demonstrated. This was true ninety years ago and it is still true today.

So, we believe that God has another amazing 90 years ahead of us, and we know that if we live in radical obedience to our supernatural God, we will have many more stories to tell of lives being transformed! It is our prayer that you also might become a part of His story. ■





IN A WAY,
OUR STORY
BEGINS
ON A STREET
NAMED
{AZUSA}

THE AZUSA STREET REVIVAL IN LOS ANGELES WAS A **MASSIVE** 3 YEAR CATALYST FOR THE MODERN PENTECOSTAL CHURCH AND THE DENOMINATION OF WHICH **WE ARE A PART OF**. WITHIN MONTHS OF THE REVIVAL'S BREAKOUT IN 1906 PENTECOSTALISM HAD REACHED THE HEBDEN MISSION IN TORONTO, AND BY 1908 VINELAND WAS AWAKENED WITH AN OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN POWERFUL WAYS.

BIRTHPLACE OF THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH

312 AZUSA ST IN LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

1920s

Prayer, Healing + The Birth Of A Church

MABEL BROMLEY CUNNINGHAM

Almost a century later, we still talk about the earliest days of our church. A mother/wife/prayer warrior named Mabel Bromley Cunningham, witnessed the power of God in her own life and simply opened her home to house-meetings filled with prayer, worship and faith building miracles.

Mabel Bromley grew up here in St. Catharines and married Clarence Cunningham in St. George's Anglican Church. After their wedding they moved to Montreal for a period of time only to be relocated to Ottawa because of Clarence's work. It was in Ottawa where they had their four girls. While they lived there Mabel met Jesus and gave her life to Christ. Some time later their eldest daughter developed a mastoid abscess and was rushed to the hospital where doctors gave them no hope for recovery. In the hospital a little woman who knew Mabel told her that she attended prayer meetings and asked if they could bring her daughter there to be prayed for. Agreeing, Mabel brought her daughter to the little prayer meeting where God miraculously healed her daughter.

In 1921, when a heart condition almost took Clarence's life and forced him to leave his job, Mabel's mother told them to come back to St. Catharines so she could help raise the young granddaughters. Not long after, their daughter Margaret became seriously ill with a fever of 105 degrees and was taken to the doctor, the diagnosis was the worst case scenario, Margaret had contracted black diphtheria, a disease which had killed 12 neighbour children. Mabel looked for someone who would pray for healing and found Mrs. Mabel Beyer, Mrs. Jefferson, and Mrs. House. As they prayed for Margaret's healing Mabel looked at her daughter turning black and said to Margaret, "God told me that He has healed you." Instantly healed, Margaret got up out of bed and declared that she was hungry. When the health authorities came to 77 Dufferin St. to put up a quarantine sign, Mabel rejected it saying that it wasn't appropriate because Margaret was healed and was outside playing; they did it anyway.

Neighbours saw the healing and started coming to the Cunninghams for prayer and worship meetings. While the prayer meetings were held at his home, Clarence recommitted himself to God, was healed, and became one of the elders. The house was soon overflowing with people, so they decided to rent a hall at 8 Ontario St. When Clarence saw 250 theatre seats being taken out of a theatre he asked what they were going to do with them. Since no one had purchased them he told the owners to take the seats to 8 Ontario St. The asking price was \$1 per seat, yet they had no money. God impressed on Clarence that the money would come. That very day when he got home an envelope containing \$250 was in his mailbox. There was no name on it and they never found out who put it there.

With faith rising and the house church growing, these pioneers of our church would soon need someone to shepherd them through the next exciting chapter of our church's life.

AUTHOR: HELEN DRESCHLER

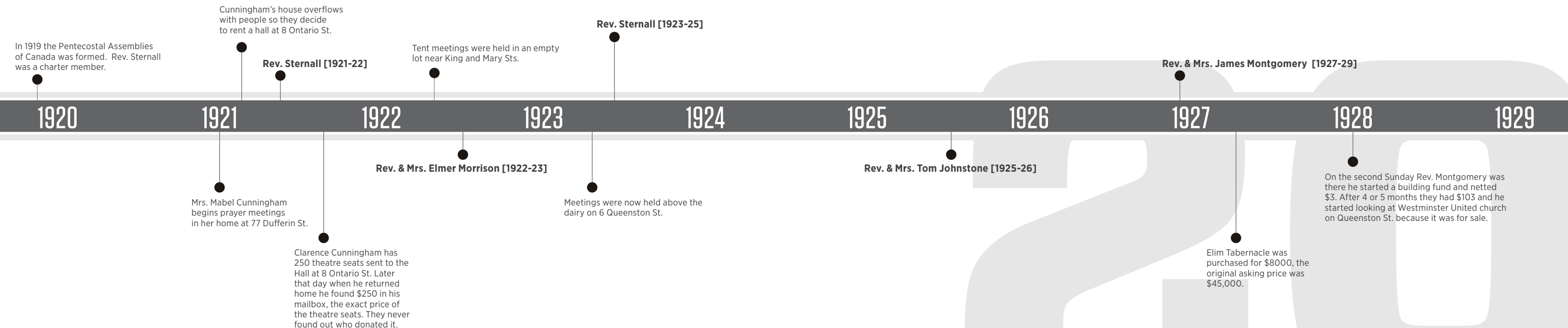


Elim

A Story Of God's Provision

FAITH IN ACTION + A PLACE TO CALL HOME

HISTORICAL TIMELINE FOR CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH



HOW TO BUY REAL ESTATE FOR A FRACTION OF THE COST: THE REMARKABLE STORY OF HOW WE BOUGHT OUR FIRST CHURCH BUILDING.

In 1927 Rev. James and Mrs. Montgomery came to Canada from Ireland where, after he became a Christian, he was forcefully persecuted by his father. At the time the Montgomery's came to St. Catharines the meetings were being held above the Silverwoods Dairy on 6 Queenston St. Holding meetings above the dairy was challenging: milk was brought to the dairy early in the morning for pasteurization; when too much ammonia was released, the congregation would have to vacate the building; the clanging of the milk cans was a distraction and in the summer it was extremely hot. Something had to be done. On his second Sunday upon arriving Rev. Montgomery started a building fund and netted \$3. After four or five months they had \$103 and he started looking at Westminster United Church, for sale on Queenston St.

They wanted \$45,000 for the church and Rev. Montgomery said that he would have to think it over. A few days later when he went back they had lowered the price to \$35,000 at which point he offered \$25,000. The next time they met he said that he had been in contact with his party and was told to offer \$12,000. No deal was made. A few days later Rev. Montgomery reported that he had been talking to the same party as before and he was advised to offer \$8,000. When questioned as to who this party was, Rev. Montgomery said that it was the Lord. That reply wasn't what they had expected and was met with a cold response and a firm no to the offer. Four or five days later in a complete turnaround, the committee decided to accept the \$8,000 offer on the following conditions: \$1,000 down, a payment of \$2,000 in 30 days; \$2,000 upon possession with a mortgage of \$2,000 to be paid within the year. Rev. Montgomery made a counter offer of: \$100 down, \$500 in 30 days and \$500 when possession was taken. Frustrated by his counter offer, the committee rejected it and left. Dejected and slightly confused as to why things weren't going well even though he felt it was God directing his negotiations, Rev. Montgomery headed home. A short time later the committee came running after Rev. Montgomery to announce that they had accepted his offer!

The first \$500 payment was quite easy to acquire but the second one was difficult as many people were out of work. The Montgomery's did not take a salary that Sunday and they were still \$100 short. If the money wasn't raised by Wednesday they would forfeit the \$600. On Monday and Tuesday the only mail they received were bills, and Tuesday evening Rev. Montgomery did not eat any supper as he was restlessly pacing up and down the house while praying, his Irish wife ordered him out of the house saying "Take your hat and coat James, and get out for some fresh air. You're distracting my prayers." As he walked towards the church, a man approached him and asked if he was Rev. Montgomery, "yes" was the cautious but inquisitive reply. The stranger gave him an envelope and walked away. Furiously opening the envelope Rev. Montgomery found ten crisp new \$10 bills. When he looked up again to thank the man, he was gone - nowhere in sight. Wednesday morning he waited for the bank to open, paid the money, and picked up the church key. When asked later on about the mystery man Rev. Montgomery confided that he thought he might have been an angel.

The congregation chose the name, "Elim Tabernacle" from Exodus 15. After moving from place to place in cottage prayer meetings and rented halls, Elim was a place of refreshment and security for the still struggling congregation. Elim Tabernacle was eventually sold for \$46,000, more than the amount that was the original asking price of the building. Rev. Montgomery played a key role in the life of the church, but there are several more pastors who would leave their individual mark on the church in the years to come. ■

DITCH DIGGING

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON OUR PAST FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

CREATIVE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
ADAM FRY

I was recently reminded of the story in 2 Kings chapter 3 where the reigning kings of Israel, Judah and Edom united together to defeat the city of Moab. After marching for seven days in desert, they ran out of water. Faced with the growing fear that these three kings were brought into the desert only to be handed over to the Moabites, the leaders and their armies began to break. Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, sent word to the people, looking for a prophet of the Lord, that they may inquire of the Lord through him.

Elisha, an officer of the king brought before the three instructed the kings to dig ditches - a lot of ditches - enough to fill the valley. He continued to say that without rain or wind, God would fill each ditch with enough water for both the armies and animals to drink. Furthermore, God would hand over the city of Moab to them as promised. The kings did as they were instructed and all that Elisha said to them came true.

The reason this story sticks out to me is because we are the fruit or the by-product of ditch diggers. Each one of us who makes up Central Community Church in its current location, position and influence in this city and region, is the result of the few faithful and obedient men and women who looked at the spiritual drought in the land, and began to dig ditches in faith in for the Lord to send the rain. Now ninety years later, the Lord is continuing to honor His promise by filling whatever ditch we dig in His name.

I am sure, there were countless moments in our history where backs were sore, hands were bruised and sacrifices had to be made. I am sure that there were seasons where it would have been easier to settle for just a few ditches, instead of filling the valley. I am sure that the Church had to remind themselves in moments of fatigue and weakness about the Lord's promise to give them this land. I am

"I am sure, there were countless moments in our history where backs were sore, hands were bruised and sacrifices had to be made. I am sure that there were seasons where it would have been easier to settle for just a few ditches, instead of filling the valley"

sure that we wouldn't be here today unless our fathers and mothers persevered in writing their story.

As the baton of leadership changes hands and as a new generation writes the next chapter of our story, let us follow in the footsteps of our fathers in faith and conduct. Let us push through the temporary pains of the present in order to ensure a future without drought for our children's children, and be part of a fellowship committed to doing whatever it takes. ■

30s-40s

A Movement Of Evangelism

REV. PERCY KING FROM FLORIDA

“The men who filled the church’s pulpit through early years were different in many ways as to background and personality. Tom Johnstone, with his rugged, forceful preaching style, followed Pastor Sternall’s second tenure. Tom had fought in the ring as a boxer, and carried the same aggressive style into the pulpit in his fight against sin. James Montgomery with his courageous heart and the quick wit of his native Ireland, carried the Pentecostal banner for the church in the years of 1927 through 1929. Frank Jolley, endowed with a fine singing talent and an outstanding preaching ministry, was in turn followed by a man singularly gifted with writing ability, E.N. Kulbeck. In 1932, the Kulbeck’s were succeeded by Pastor A.O. Sweet, and in 1935, much progress was made under the pastoral labours of George Atkinson, outstanding for his visitation ministry.” (Rev. Jack West, The Garden City Miracle)

In addition to the leadership of its pastors the church was greatly impacted by the evangelists who frequented Elim Tabernacle. The 1930s and 40s were decades marked by tent meetings, revival meetings, and travelling evangelists. Since we were in our newly purchased building on Queenston street, it was time for us to get maximum use out of it, and that’s what we did. Elim Tabernacle was a frequent stop for some powerful evangelists, who, in those days, were not concerned with being theologians and scholars; they were concerned with telling their story of how God had rescued them.

One such evangelist was Percy King from the United States. In order to advertise Percy King’s ministry (pictured on the right) they painted the time of the services on a truck. It was mobile advertising! After Percy King’s meetings, 28 people were baptized in Lake Ontario at 15 Mile Creek. Many of the evangelists were ladies. One lady evangelist was Ella Parmenter. She was pronounced dead by 4 physicians in Toronto. Her recovery was a direct result of prayer. Scores of people were attracted to her services and were saved. God was using ordinary people who had extraordinary encounters with Him in order to change lives.

The church was abuzz with many revival meetings that had great impact. In his book “The Garden City Miracle”, former pastor Jack West recounts those early days in this way: “The primitive prayer meetings, the humble ministries, the lack of financial support and inadequate facilities remind me of David with his sling standing before the towering Goliath. The pentecostal ‘Davids’ of the early years faced the formidable ‘Goliaths’ of opposition and rejection, but the same power that brought victory to David obviously was at work in them. Lives were changed dramatically. Believers entered into a new dimension of prayer and worship and testimony.”

AUTHOR: ANDREW PLETT



Evangelism

Women Evangelists

MISS ELLA PARMENTER

Miss Ella Parmenter was pronounced dead by four physicians in Toronto. Her remarkable recovery was a direct result of prayer. Scores of people were attracted to her services and saved by the grace of God.

"I was dead."

"I saw the Lord, seated on his throne."

"The angel spoke."

"I was an unusually timid girl."

HISTORICAL TIMELINE FOR CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Rev. & Mrs. Frank Jolley [1930-31]

Rev. Kulbeck also worked for the St. Catharines Standard as a part-time reporter.

Rev. & Mrs. Geroge Atkinson [1935-44]

During the depression of the 30's half of the assembly was out of work and the other half were working part-time.

Rev. & Mrs. C. F. Day [1944-48]

Once or twice a year Mrs. Day would be moved by the Holy Spirit to minister. Invariably on these occasions the congregation would be stirred and as a result of the "Glory Service" the altars would be filled with praying, seeking people.

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Rev. & Mrs. E.N.O Kulbeck [1931-33]

Evangelists held special revival meetings. In order to advertise Percy King's ministry they painted the time of the services on a truck. It was mobile advertising. After Percy King's meetings, 28 people were baptized in Lake Ontario at 15 Mile Creek.

Rev. & Mrs. A.O. Sweet [1933-35]

June 2, 1941 the first mortgage was paid in full and the papers burned in a service to celebrate the financial burden being lifted off the church.

In August 1944 an article was written in the Pentecostal Testimony concerning the church. "The blessing of God is resting in abundant measure upon the congregation here. A baptismal service was recently observed when eighteen candidates were immersed in water."

Rev. & Mrs. Eric Hornby [1948-58]



THIRTY-SIX YEARS AND STILL GOING STRONG

PASTOR DAVID TOPPING: AN INTERVIEW

As preparation for this 90th anniversary publication took place, I realized that we have an incredible resource at Central. His name is Pastor David Topping. Pastor Topping has been at Central for 40 years, and served as a pastor for 36 of those years. He's seen it all here at Central and, likely more than anyone, can speak with authority on the life of this church over the past three decades.

The Loop: How long have you been a pastor at Central?

Topping: 36 years as of September 1, 2011. At 35 years the church and board sent me and my wife on an amazing train trip through the Rockies.

The Loop: What attracted you to come to Central Community Church?

Topping: There were a number of things. What brought me here initially was knowing that pastor Morgan was a pastor here. I came from Toronto and my dad used to attend his church in Willowdale. My job as a high school teacher brought me here to St. Catharines and I just wanted to find a good church, so I thought that I'd check out Central Gospel Temple.

Gerald Morgan was one of a kind. Pastors can be good in one or two or three areas; well, Gerald Morgan was an awesome preacher, teacher, soulful guitar player and song leader all rolled up into one. That attracted me. The exuberant joyful Pentecostal worship, praise and singing, all of that - I loved it. I loved the choir; they were so happy and filled with praise. I joined the choir the first night I came to church. They didn't even know me; and I walked up and said "I love your choir, can I join?" "Sure, are you saved?" was the reply, to which I simply said "Yep". I remember the first song we sang was called "Lead On Lord Jesus". I loved the congregation-

al singing; everybody was joining in and singing with all their heart. That was a great time.

The Loop: At what point did you go to Bible School?

Topping: I taught high school for two years. It was through teaching that I really discovered that I loved souls and I wanted to see people saved. I saw some of my students saved and I got my passion for winning souls and the ministry through teaching. I had worked for two years, my parents were still alive and I wasn't married so it was financially possible for me to go to Bible College. I was getting an increasing hunger to study the Bible and was not thinking of changing from teaching to the ministry at all.

I was going to take one year and then go back to teaching. Well, the one year led to three, which led to full time ministry. When I got out of Eastern Bible College we had what were called AIM Teams at the church; the youth pastor was involved. We had backyard Bible clubs and bus ministry and street meetings and witnessing, all just hands on. I thought, 'wow', and I wasn't thinking about being on staff and whatever I wind up doing, this had been a good, practical, hands-on introduction.

The Loop: Describe the different pastoral roles you've had over the years?

Topping: Wow, there have been a lot. Some things changed over the times

because of the different pastors who were here. I never really knew what I wanted to exactly do, I just knew that I didn't want to be the head pastor. I've always been involved in pastoral care; back in the early days it was called visitation. I've always been drawn to helping people in their time of need, going to homes, hospitals, personal visits, nursing homes, making lots of phone calls and sending emails, and now I find Facebook an awesome way to minister.

I've always led the seniors' luncheon meeting. It used to be called Keenagers, and then it was switched a few years ago to 60s Plus. It has always been a flourishing ministry. I was a part of The bus ministry - I didn't lead it, but I was a part of that. Every Saturday morning we would have breakfast, then go out and visit every child in the whole Sunday school, hundreds and hundreds of kids. We had a huge team; maybe sixty or seventy people. We'd hand out a pamphlet called "The Gospel Roadrunner" and invite the parents out to church as well.

Kids camp at Braeside - I directed that for nine years. That was back in the bus ministry days and we would have two hundred kids at camp. Seeing

"I joined the choir the first night I came to church. They didn't even know me; I walked up and said 'I love your choir can I join?'"

kids' lives saved and transformed was awesome. I never considered myself a director but I guess that's what I did.

The New Christians class - I did that for years. We had a house beside the church on Scott St. and I held the New Christians class in there for years. I thoroughly enjoyed that because I love teaching.

Continued on page 32...

50s-60s

Growing and Expanding

FINDING OUR WAY AND ESTABLISHING OUR IDENTITY

It was under the leadership of Rev. Hornby in the 1950s that the church began to grow and make great progress. A number of expansion projects were needed to accommodate the new growth. The church auditorium was extended by twenty feet and the platform was renovated and enlarged. The new building included an office for the pastor, six new Sunday School rooms and a lower auditorium which was able to accommodate four additional class rooms. When Rev. Hornby began his role at Elim, the average Sunday School attendance was roughly 100, but by 1958 was averaging 250. The membership of the church was growing too, with a great increase coming between 1955 & 56 where we saw our membership grow from 118 to 130. The increasing numbers in Sunday School attendance and membership were a testament to the strong leadership that Rev. Hornby provided to the young church. Late in his tenure at Elim he reported, "We cannot estimate the number of people who have been saved, filled with the Holy Spirit and blessed of God through the ministry of this church over the years."

In 1958, shortly after coming to Elim, Rev. E.C. Williams was able to invite his predecessor back for a great celebration as they burned the paid off mortgage papers from the expansion project. The church was now debt-free again! It was also in the late 1950s that the music ministry began to take shape with a newly organized choir, complete with new maroon choir robes made by the Women's Missionary Council, and a new junior choir with their own robes as well.

The 1960s was a decade of continued growth and on Easter Sunday, April 17 1960, we set a Sunday School attendance record of 345. This growth came with the realization that another expansion would be required to accommodate what God was doing in and through the church. Little did they know at the time, that by the end of the decade God would have big plans for growth and for change for our church. On December 30, 1967 a membership meeting was held where a 93.1 percent vote was cast to build a new church on an pear orchard property on Scott St. for \$25,000. Things began to move very quickly for the church and by 1968 they had sold their Vine St. property for \$26,000 and Elim Tabernacle for \$46,000. With over \$100,000 in equity the day finally came to turn sod on the construction of their new church. The was to be renamed to mark this pivotal time. After a membership meeting to discuss the many names that were suggested, a decision was made to rename the church Central Gospel Temple.

As the 1960s came to a close, our new \$450,000 building was complete and on November 2, 1969 we held an amazing dedication service maxing out our new capacity of 900 seats. These were exciting days in the life of our church - we saw exponential growth through a revival of God that filled the altar weekly with people coming to faith in Jesus and seeing their lives transformed.

AUTHOR: ANDREW PLETT



Growing

32nd Anniversary Service

STOPPING TO REFLECT ON GOD'S AMAZING PROVISION AND LEADING

This image was taken during the 32nd Anniversary service to mark the move to Elim Tabernacle. The scroll on the right contained the names of the eleven pastors that had served the congregation up to that point.



HISTORICAL TIMELINE FOR CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH

The first bus, a converted 1947 Chevy panel truck brought people to church from Thorold. Mike Collison Sr. was the first driver.

Membership base of 118 in 1955. By 1956 the membership had reached an all-time high of 130.

Record Sunday school attendance on April 17 1960, Easter Sunday saw 346 children bused in from Thorold.

In 1967 the Vine St. property (current Immanuel Baptist church) was sold for \$26,000. Elim church was sold for \$46,000, \$1000 more than the purchase price first mentioned to Pastor Montgomery

September 1968. The church is renamed Central Gospel Temple

1950 1951 1952 1953 1954 1955 1956 1957 1958 1959 1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969

In 1953 the first Sunday School bus was purchased.

30 adults and 30 children gave their lives to Christ. Ten received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in 1957.

Newly organized choir sings for the first time on October 5, 1958

Rev. Earl & Marjorie Williams [1958-68]

A "Canada For Christ" crusade was conducted by Jack West in January 1963.

In 1967 2.7 acres of property was purchased on Scott St. for \$25,000. The parsonage on 91 Pleasant Ave. was sold. Total receipts for 1967 were \$55,000.00

Rev. & Mrs. Gerald E. Morgan [1968-74]

70s-80s

Innovation In Ministry

THE BUSES THAT TOOK OVER A CITY AND CHANGED A CHURCH

Did you ever wonder what Sunday School was like at Central in the 70s? Three words....busy, busy, busy! If you were working as a bus driver or route worker or involved in the bus ministry at all, your day would have started @ 7:30am. The drivers would start arriving to get their buses warmed up, then the route workers would start arriving with their clipboards ready for the day ahead. The buses pulled out of the parking lot going in all different directions, tackling their part of the city. Many of the bus workers and a few of the drivers were just in their teens. I'm not so sure as I look back that I would have been to eager to send my 3 year old on the bus that had a 17 year old driver. Families did. Often the workers would go to the door, help dress little Johnny and his brother and get them safely on the bus without even seeing a parent.

While up to 20 buses headed out on their first trip, the Sunday School teachers would start arriving. Every class had a dedicated teacher and a helper or two to look after the 1100 children that would be coming in that morning. Marie McColgan and I would be ready for our 25 - 30 three year olds. The toys were set out, our lesson was ready, as well as a craft and a snack. Sometimes after the kids arrived, we noticed that little Suzie did not have any socks on, or was just wearing a thin t-shirt in the middle of winter. We would then head to the nursery where Janice Miller kept a stocked cupboard of clothes to help the children out.

The buses would drop all the kids and workers off at the east side entrance of the church and then they would head upstairs to the beginner department or downstairs to the other class rooms. The buses then drove around to the west side, picked up the workers that took the smaller children to their class and then headed out on another route. After picking up "B Sunday School" kids, the drivers would drop them off for the second Sunday school on the east side, and pull around to the west side again where the children from "A Sunday school" waited to load the bus and go home. All the while church families were coming in and many with their children.

After dropping off the last child, the buses headed back to the church and depending on how far away the route was, it would be between 1:00pm - 2:00pm. I'm sure the drivers thanked the Lord for another safe day before they headed home.

Oh, I forgot to mention the bus "breakfasts" held every Saturday morning for the workers and drivers before they headed out to visit the kids on their route with the weekly edition of the "Central Gospel Temple Road Runner". You will have to check out the display in the lobby on the anniversary weekend....because that's another story!

AUTHOR: ROSEMARY STADELMIER



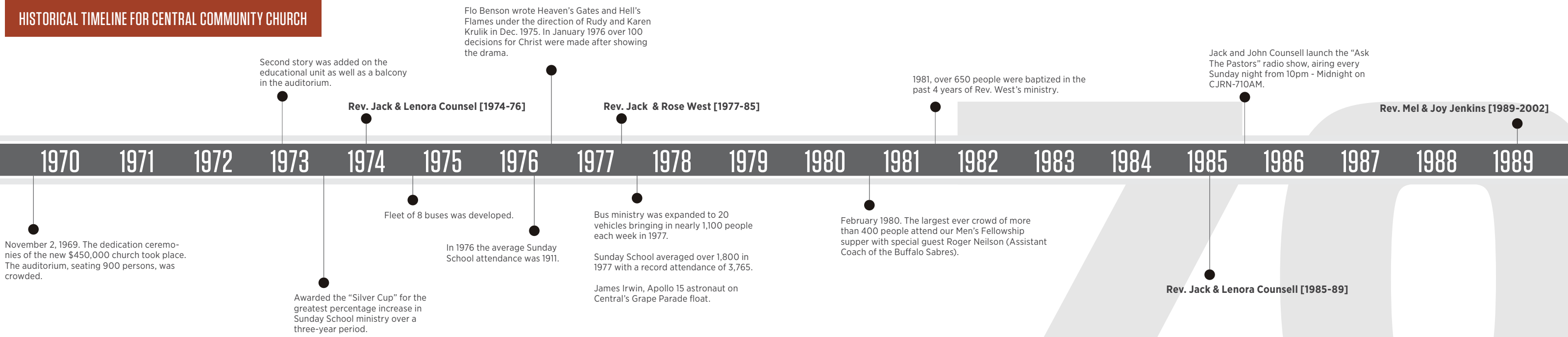
Life Change

Singing, Laughing & Life Change

BIG RED BUSES THAT GOD USED TO CHANGE LIVES

There are more stories of the impact of our bus ministry than we can recount in one place. Scenes like this were a part of the the "everyday" life of Central during the bus ministry years.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE FOR CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH



REAL LIFE STORIES

HOW GOD HAS USED OUR BUS MINISTRY TO CHANGE LIVES



LEAVING A LEGACY

SUE ABRAHAMS: AT CENTRAL FOR 33 YEARS

My life and the lives of many of my family are forever changed because of Central and the bus ministry. It was almost 33 years ago when some nice people came around to our neighbourhood, knocked on our door and asked my mom if they could pick us up and take us to church on Sunday.

My mom, who was a struggling single mom at the time was more than happy to let them take us so she could sleep off her Sunday morning hangover. My brother and I loved going on the big red and white bus each Sunday and going to a church with people who

loved us unconditionally, found value in us and who taught us about Jesus. One Sunday, my mom decided to come out too and see what all our excitement was about. On that Sunday she

accepted Christ as her Saviour and her life, as well as ours, was forever changed. Many other family and friends came to know Christ through our little family over the years. Most of my lifelong friendships and truly authentic relationships are with people at Central; in fact, my entire life is wrapped up in Central.

It was at Central that I accepted Christ as my Saviour when I was a teenager. I was baptized, married the man of my dreams, dedicated my children to God and also held the funeral for our 5 year-old daughter there. All of my

greatest joys and my deepest sorrows are at the altar of Central. All of these events are part of God's perfect plan for my life.

I love this church with all my heart and actively serve in many areas. I serve because of my love for God and for people, and if it weren't for some wonderful volunteers from 33 years ago, I have no idea where I would be today and what my life would be like.

It is because of the bus ministry and the people who took the time to care about me and my family that I am here today. I could never thank them enough for taking time out of their busy lives to invite kids like me to church. Central is a church that truly cares about people and it's part of our family. **L■**

MARG'S STORY

MARG GUBO: A MOTHER'S PERSPECTIVE

Divorced and struggling to raise 2 children alone, I was looking for love and acceptance in all the wrong places. Raised in a mainline denomination Sunday School, I asked Jesus into my heart at age eight, and forgot all about that when I became popular with boys. My home was extremely dysfunctional and at age 15 when my parents separated, I went wild in a life of drugs and alcohol. After a failed marriage and many broken relationships my children were all I had to live for.

When volunteers from Central Gospel Temple invited my children to Sunday School, I saw a wonderful opportunity to get some sleep on a Sunday morning, as I usually had a hangover from my Saturday night partying. Sue and Jeff loved their Sunday School, and those same volunteers visited weekly, inviting me to attend. Crushed by another broken relationship and still searching for answers, I agreed to come along and accepted Christ. Soon afterwards, my sister, her husband, their boys, my mother and even my father accepted Christ. That was 33 years ago, and I'm still here!

I wish I could say it was an overnight transformation after I asked Jesus into my life. It took time for me to believe that God could really love me. I sang in the choir, taught Sunday School, and served in the Singles Ministry, and five years later the man of my dreams walked through the doors of Central. Rudy and I have been married for 27 years now and lead the 60s Plus Ministry.

I want to thank the faithful volunteers who knocked on doors, visited, taught Sunday School, planned picnics, fun fairs and camp. Thank you to all of our pastors and staff over the years who listened to God and went the extra mile for people like me. And thanks to the partners of Central who invest their time, talents and treasures. I am a life that was changed, and am forever grateful. **L■**

FAMILY TRANSFORMATION

NICOLA SCOTT: FROM BEING BLESSED TO BLESSING OTHERS

My story begins shortly after we immigrated from England to St. Catharines, where we bought a little house in the North end. One Saturday a lovely young lady came to my door and asked me if I wanted to send my two little girls to Sunday school on the bus that would pick them up and drop them off. I said sure since it was a free baby sitter for the mornings and my husband Steve and I could go to Vic Tanny's and work out.

This went on for some time and the girls would come home so happy and tell me stories about Jesus. One Sunday that lovely young lady named Joyce Sholtens asked me to come to something special at the church saying that I could just go on the bus with the kids. I said sure. The driver of the bus was John Stadelmeyer and he had such a lovely smile and warm personality. I thought to myself, he must be a Christian, there's something different about him. Although God was drawing me and softening my heart, I was content to simply attend church on Sunday mornings. Some time later my little girl Tracey became sick and was hospitalized. That Sunday I went down to the alter to pray for her and a wonderful young man came to pray with me and minister to me. His name was David Topping. He went to visit her in the hospital and continued to pray for her and she recovered. Shortly afterwards on a Sunday when Pastor West gave the alter call, I literally ran to the front, gave my life to Jesus and have never been the same since. God is so good, forgiving and loving. I also was introduced to the reality of the Holy Spirit, who the Bible says "is our comforter" (John 15); I needed that comfort as Tracey became sick and died shortly afterward.

Moving ahead, both my husband and I were saved and joined the bus ministry. We were out every weekend bringing kids to Sunday school. Some Saturdays were spent making popcorn or toffee apples - anything to get them on the bus so they could learn about Jesus, and we won many awards for having the most kids. We had a wonderful time in the bus ministry and made lots of friends. We also joined the visitation ministry headed up by Pastor David Topping.

Looking back, everything was all God's doing: That fateful knock on the door; the kids getting on the big red and white bus to go to Sunday school; all leading up to the most important decision of our lives, giving our lives to the Lord. Those Sundays running our own bus were some of the best times of our lives with memories that we cherish to this day. **L■**

We had Thursday night visitation and supper - I led that for years. Today it carries on but we have visitation done by individuals or couples. They come for some training and wisdom and I am able to send them out to visit the sick and shut-ins. Years ago under Pastor Counsell's ministry, when he came the second time, he had me lead what was called the "ladies coffee fellowship" in homes throughout St. Catharines. That was where some of our own women would have a coffee fellowship hour in their own home in order to reach their neighbours. I also headed up weekly services in about twenty different nursing homes all over the Niagara peninsula.

Years ago we had a taped daily inspirational gospel message on the phone called "Ring the Reverend" - I did that for a long time as well. For years I was in charge of leading the Saturday night prayer meeting and I've always been involved in baptisms. Years ago under Pastor West's ministry, I really felt God wanted me to start up a singles ministry. I was a single guy, so I went to Pastor West and he told me that if I felt God was calling me to do it I should do it. That was where I met my wife Lorraine. Over the years I've always done weddings and funerals, benevolence and food programs, services in detention centers and a host of other things. I also spoke every Christmas morning for years and when we had Jonathan, I was coming to church and Pastor Jenkins said to Lorraine once, "If there's anything I can for David let me know." My wife said, "I can think of something right now - if there is any way he can have some Christmas mornings off so he can be at home with his family that would be good." So he did give me some Christmas mornings off!

The Loop: What was Central like when you were a young pastor here?

Topping: The physical appearance of the church, it was smaller. There were neither of the wings; the front of the church was where the steps start to go up to the platform today. The back of the church, my office, is where the back door used to be. In the lobby there was a glass wall between the main auditorium and the lobby where you could look right in during the service. We had to get rid of it because of the fire regulations, but it was beautiful. Oh, during the warm weather, the windows of the church were always open. That was beautiful. While the service was going on, whatever we were doing, the buses would start rolling and you'd hear the kids praising the Lord and singing all excited. Everybody in the church could hear it, and that was awesome.

The church was thriving when I was a young pastor. The bus ministry and Sunday school were exciting; there were kids wall to wall. The bus ministry was our DNA. There was no one who opposed the bus ministry and Sunday school, everybody was onboard. Those were awesome times. In those days all the ministers sat up on the platform very proper, suit and tie. We've always had a great staff; we've always had a great staff, lots of fun, enjoyable to work with. The church has always been very outreach orientated, even back when I started.

The Loop: What ministries did Central really excel in when you were a young pastor?

Topping: Well, there were quite a few that we really excelled in. The Bus ministry of course, with a fleet of up to 24 buses, with Sunday Schools A and B. We had an awesome music and drama ministry. Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames, that came from our church. One time we had it something like 25 times in 30 weeks. Many people were saved through that; it was incredibly dynamic.

The Loop: How has ministry changed over the last three decades?

Topping: There is a saying that is; "the old order changes yielding place to the new and God fulfills Himself in many ways", and that is so true. When God calls men He has certain giftings and we have to click into gear with whoever the pas-

tor is and fully embrace his vision, and that's what I wanted to do.

Things have changed. Everything is the same as far as outreach and the love of people, yet new in order to reach this generation. That happened through Darin when he came and brought on Bill; he brought us into the twentieth century and that was awesome. That was the way it had to be, it's a great thing. Of course the old hymns and choruses have largely been replaced with the Christian music of today, which is the way it should be. God is raising up new people with a new anointing upon them. What's happening is awesome, I love that. It's not an either/or: "well do you like the old or the new?" I love them all as long as we're worshipping the Lord. It's really only the style of ministry that's changed, not the content of ministry.

The Loop: Describe what you feel God's unique call for Central has been in the past, and is today?

Topping: That's very simple. Central has always been a church called to reach the city, the Niagara peninsula, and the world. And we still are today. That's a very easy question to answer.

The Loop: What was it like raising a family while on staff at Central?

Topping: It started when I married my wife in October 1984. A year later our son Jon was born; we took him right from the hospital to the church because we wanted Pastor Counsell to dedicate Jon before we even went home with him. Jon has come ever since; it's been easy raising my son in Central with people always being so kind and loving to him, no matter what colour hair he had when he showed up. Whether red, blue, green or bleached and he liked to sit right front row center.

When we lost our daughter Emily, the support of the congregation was overwhelming. Lorraine has always been extremely supportive of me, even in the first year after we got married. I was forever calling her Gloria, because we had three secretaries who were all named Gloria. I'd go home

Continued on page 38...

GINA BILLARD'S STORY

HOW GOD USED CENTRAL TO CHANGE ONE WOMAN'S LIFE AND HER WHOLE FAMILY AFTER THAT

PASTORAL CARE + ALPHA DAVID TOPPING

It was back in 1978 when Gina Billard became very concerned about the spiritual welfare of her two small children. She loved the Lord, yet did not really know much about Him, or know Him personally. She did know however, that she wanted her children to learn about the Lord and to know Him, and so she began to pray fervently for the Lord to show her how. She wanted them to go to a Sunday School, and had no idea of where to go or how to do it.

Gina's husband, Jack, was Chief Engineer on the ships on the Great Lakes. One day when Gina was on board one of the mighty ships, she saw one of the crew men carrying a Bible. In conversation with him, he told her that she needed to get her children into an "evangelical church" Sunday school. Then one Sunday morning, Gina looked out her front window and saw a big red and white bus with the words "Central Gospel Temple Sunday School" on the side. Immediately, she cried out, "That's it!" and without being properly dressed, she grabbed her children, rushed out to the bus, and jumped on. The children were singing, and soon Gina's son had joined in. Gina says, "I thought I was in Heaven! This is what I had wanted for years!"


When the bus reached its destination Gina found out that it was not just a Sunday School for her children, it was a beautiful church where she could go as well. After someone took her children to the nursery, Gina entered the church auditorium, and felt drawn to go right to the front. As the people sang "Hallelujah," she found herself in tears, and when the pastor asked for the first-timers to stand, Gina did so. That is when Gina's neighbour, Ruby, recognized her from a near-by pew, and from then on, Gina had a close Christian friend.

When Pastor Jack West gave the altar call, asking those who wanted to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord

and Saviour Gina went forward without any hesitation. A deep spiritual hunger had been consuming her. She had wanted to be "saved," and didn't know how. She says, "I met the Lord that day, and I asked Him to take away everything in my life that was not from Him." She was not a captive to worldly vices and bondages. Gina knew she was a sinner in need of the Saviour and she wanted to belong fully to Jesus; spirit, soul and body!

Even though Gina was always a happy person, her mother saw a marked increase in happiness and joy in her daughter after Gina gave her life to Jesus. Even though she was Roman Catholic, Gina's mom told her that she wanted what Gina had, and it didn't matter if she had to go to a different church to find it. Mrs. Slotwinski came to Central, was saved right away, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, and served the Lord for many years, right to her last breath!

As the years went by Gina's daughter, Maria grew up with Central as her church. It was here where she was saved and also where she met her husband-to-be, Jeremy, through Central's Youth Group. This Christian couple is now raising a daughter and son of their own, with Southridge as their church home. Gina's son, Gary, also a follower of Christ, is happily serving his Lord at Southridge's North Campus. A number of years ago, Gina had the wonderful privilege of leading her husband Jack to Christ.

Gina continues on, filled with love for her Lord, and, being a one-on-one person, she continues to bring people to her church, and to her Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. All glory goes to Him! 

90s-2000s

Redefining Church

A NEW DAY. THE SAME CALL. A DIFFERENT APPROACH

If I were to describe the last ten years in one word, it would be “Multiplication”. A decade ago, Pastor Darin Latham came to St. Catharines with a call much like that of the Biblical prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah 1:9 says, “Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “I have put my words in your mouth. 10 See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.” Thus began a journey of clearly re-establishing what we, as a church, were really all about. It was during this time of rebuilding that Core Values were established, and the mission statement, “Producing Passionate Followers of Jesus Christ” was adopted. It set in motion a renewed fervour to be within reach of people.

During this time, changes were made within the style and focus of our weekend experiences. It was also during this time that Central became more intentional in speaking the language of our culture. The message has always been the same, but the methods were changed in order to engage those who were disconnected or disenfranchised with the church. Due to this shift, Central Community Church has been, and continues to be, in a season of tremendous growth.

We have seen many new faces and families become followers of Christ! We have seen the birth of three new campuses, and the addition of two additional weekend experiences at the Scott Street Campus. In the last ten years, we have seen hundreds of people baptized and even more taking the ‘Next Step’ Alpha Course (a course that discusses the key aspects of Christianity). We have seen increased attendance in our Childrens’, Youth and Young Adults’ Ministries. What an exhilarating season of rapid change and growth that God has given us! Because of this, today we stand completely amazed at what God has done and has yet to do in his church. Greater things are still to come!

AUTHOR: BILL MARKHAM



Pastor's vow:

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2001

I'll never be boring

Preacher Darin Latham's conversational style is boosting attendance at Central Gospel Temple

Pastor Darin Latham plays an electric guitar while Pastor of Worship Sean Birtch sings a song of faith with the help of the Central Gospel Choir.

staff photo by Leonard LePage

Forward

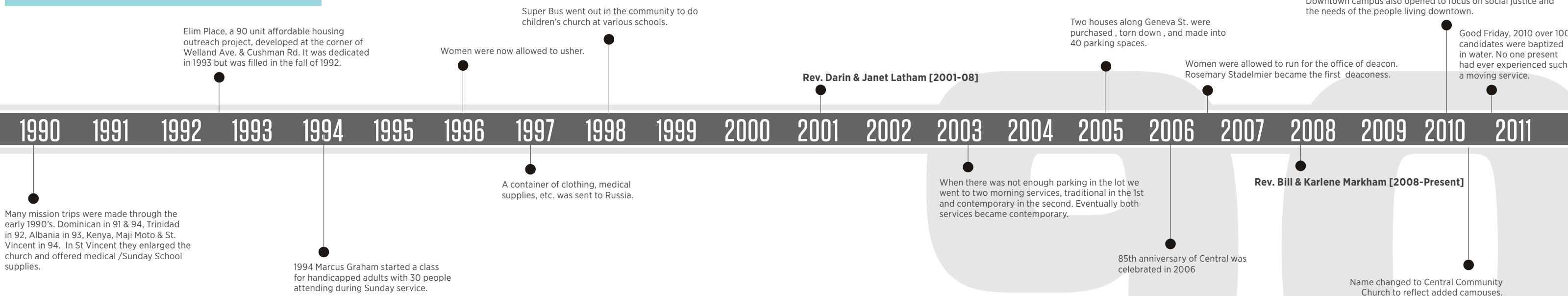
Where We Go From Here

KEEPING IN-STEP WITH GOD'S HEARTBEAT FOR OUR CHURCH

Lead pastor Bill Markham in front of our first permanent facility, Elim Tabernacle.



HISTORICAL TIMELINE FOR CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH



and I'd be calling her Gloria all the time.

The Loop: You've seen a number of seasons of growth and contraction. From what you've observed, what do you think is the key ingredient for continued growth today?

Topping: Well that's easy. Being a church that reaches out to people with love and the message of Jesus is the key. Being relevant is key, which has happened through Pastor Darin and Pastor Bill. Using today's media is very important, because people connect that way. Everything we're doing now is awesome, and it's reaching people today, you can see all the people that come. Most of all though, being dependent on the Holy Spirit working in us and through us and helping us to live as a congregation and staff as salt and light. Attracting people by our lifestyle and our love for the Lord is important.

The Loop: Do you have any stories that have really left a mark on you during your time at Central?

Topping: Several; when I was taken on staff, I was on the AIM team the summer of '75. Pastor Counsell didn't really know me because I'd been in Bible college, but he had heard of me and it was through my being involved in the AIM team that he got to know me. He had people telling him that I was doing really good in the backyard Bible clubs, in the city and park meetings, and witnessing.

So he came up to me one morning in the lobby and he said, "David I just want to talk to you." He didn't call me in the office or anything; that was him, that was the way he did things - very friendly and very off-handed. He said, "I've been praying that God would direct me to a visitation pastor and I've been looking all over the place, and God said to me 'why are you looking all over the place for a visitation pastor you have one right here in the church?'" So he asked me right there if I would come on staff. So that was a story that left a mark on me.

Another one that left a mark on me

was when our church experienced revival or renewal, or whatever you want to call it, for several years from about 1994 to 1999 - that was the highlight of my Christian life. I have to say that because it's absolutely true, accompanied by the manifest presence of God. That brought incredible refreshing and spiritual strength and renewal to me. Another story was when Jon was age 3. He was running ahead of Lorraine and she was pregnant so she couldn't run very fast. She was upstairs and Jon loved running and he didn't have a concept of falling or danger; he headed for the stairs. Just as she rounded the corner to grab him he was literally falling over. She saw this with her own eyes: an invisible force hit him in the chest and threw him back on the main level. That was awesome! We believe that was God. When she saw him falling over she screamed "Jesus" and wham! Back he came, that was awesome.

Another time was when we lost our daughter Emily. Lorraine was in McMaster really sick and she was sent home because they couldn't do any more. She hadn't been able to eat anything for weeks and the doctors said that if she didn't eat she may die. So I had the whole congregation at the church praying one night. When I came home she had a lady with her and I said to this woman, "Do you want to have a piece of pie?" and Lorraine said, "I think I'll have one, too," so that was a turning point the night the whole church was praying.

The Loop: What's your proudest moment as a pastor at Central?

Topping: Well, I'd have to say it's marrying my wife, and baptizing my son; watching my son grow up in a church, and the way we raised him, totally committed to the Lord. That's not a moment, that's a lifetime!

The Loop: How have you been changed by Central and the people here?

Topping: I've been changed incredibly. I've learned what loving people, caring for them, and being loved by them really means. I've been the re-

ipient of people's love. It's a privilege to serve people and to love them.

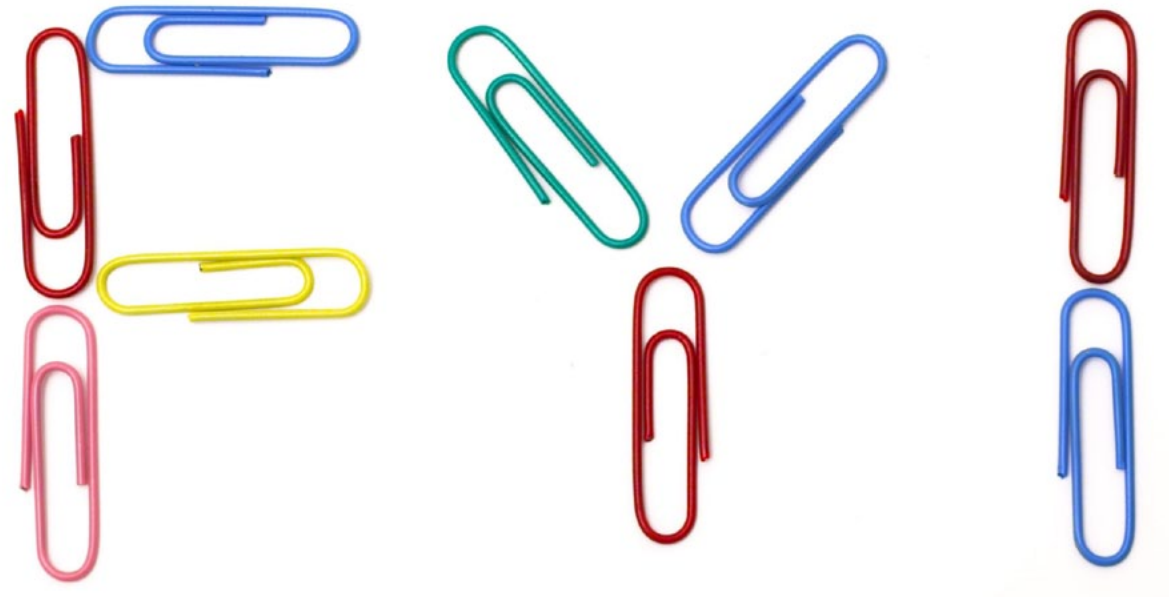
Over the years, working under different pastors I realized that God works in many different ways and I've learned to keep an open heart and an open mind to however the Lord wants to work.

Jack Counsell once that said, "We pray for revival, we pray for God to move, but we want to have it our way." When God does something entirely different we say, "Oh no God, I don't want it that way, I want it this way." I learned from Jack to be open to the different ways that God moves. ■

Pastor Topping has served faithfully for 36 years at Central. He's seen the best of what God wants to do through the church, and the worst of what the church can do in the name of God, yet through it all he is a man that remains untainted by bitterness, regret, anger or a pining for days gone by. On that sunny Friday morning in his office, I saw a man who is deeply devoted to the church and to people. He lit up as he reflected on the past and then just as much as he talked about the way things are today. We are better off because of Pastor Topping and we want to honour and acknowledge his incredible contribution to Central and the people of our region.



Image: Stage shot during the 2011 Live Out Your Love live recording event on September 11, 2011.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION

IMPORTANT INFORMATION PERTAINING TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY

PRAYER WALL

If you have a brief prayer request or praise report, why not share it on Central's prayer wall? (prayer.centralcc.ca) If you are looking for people to pray for and see God answer, make sure to visit the site and let them know!

CCB [CENTRAL COMMUNITY BUILDER]

Central's online community directory is a crucial resource for our church family as we grow. Request a login & password on a Connection Card and check off the appropriate box on the back, or email emilysluids@centralcc.ca. Once you are in, be sure to select your preferred privacy settings and your Facebook link (edit profile - social), so friends can find you.

THE LOOP ON-LINE

You can find it under 'Media,' and it is available the first Sunday that the printed version is available. Remember, one copy per household helps keep the costs down and helps the environment too.

DEBIT & CREDIT CARD MACHINE

Available at Central Connect (Scott Street Campus only at this time) for any giving or purchases you would like to make at Central. Please see the procedure card located at Central Connect for instructions. Cash Back is not available at this time.

LIBRARY & BOOKSTORE (Located at our Scott Street Campus)

The library is full of great resources for all your needs. Please make sure you sign up for your library card.

The Bookstore offers resources to purchase. These include sermons and series, which are available on both CD and DVD. Please visit the Bookstore (located at Scott Street) or Central Connect (Downtown & Pen Centre) to order your copies. There are also limited copies of books, Music CDs and DVDs from special guests who visit us from time to time.

FOOD CUPBOARD CENTRAL

A small but important food cupboard is available that relies on your donations to keep it stocked with non-perishable items for needs that arise within our church family. You can drop off donations on Sundays or during office hours.

CENTRAL LIVE CD & DVD

We have a NEW Central Live CD/DVD in production right now. Pre-orders will begin soon at Central Connect. (We are expecting sales to begin on December 11.)

Copies of last year's recording are available in the bookstore (Scott St), at Central Connect (Pen & Downtown) for just \$15, and also available on iTunes at itunes.ca/centrallive. All proceeds will be used to produce future projects.

PURSUIT DVD

Copies are available in the bookstore (Scott St), at Central Connect (Pen & Downtown) for just \$15, and online at thepursuitfilm.com. All proceeds will be used to produce future projects.

BOARD MEMBERS

Joe Caruso, Graham Coveney, Sharon Hauck, Jamie Idzenga, Shawn Ledwez, Gerry Martyn, Rick Rikkerink, Scott Schultz, Barry Wills

CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT

September Operational Budget: \$138,000

September Operational Actual: \$98,685

Missions and Benevolence Budget: \$17,000

Missions and Benevolence Actual: \$9,683

**Creative Arts Disclaimer: Central does not necessarily endorse all movies, artists or authors whose materials are used or referenced during our weekend experiences.*



CENTRAL COMMUNITY CHURCH
 P.O. Box 20309, 240 Scott St.
 St. Catharines, ON L2M 7W7
 P: 905.937.5610
 info@centralcc.ca
 www.centralcommunitychurch.ca

Lead Team

<p>Lead Pastor BILL MARKHAM Ext. 243 billmarkham@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Creative Communications ADAM FRY Ext. 245 adamfry@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Mission & Multi-Site [Campus Pastor, Pen Centre] JEFF PRICE Ext. 248 jeffprice@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Executive Operations MIKE HICKS Ext. 224 mikehicks@centralcc.ca</p>
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Pastoral & Ministry Team

<p>Campus Pastor, Downtown AMY MISKA Ext. 221 amymiska@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Campus Pastor, Niagara Falls JUSTIN DRIEDGER 905-325-8224 justindriedger@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Pastoral Care & Alpha DAVID TOPPING Ext. 244 davidtopping@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Worship Arts Director MARK WHITSON Ext. 260 markwhitson@centralcc.ca</p>
<p>Worship Leader, Niagara Falls MELANIE DRIEDGER 905-325-8224 melaniedriedger@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Worship Leader, Scott St. GREG SYKES Ext. 240 gregsykes@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Worship Leader, Downtown BECCA ROWAN 289-271-1014 rebeccarowan@centralcc.ca</p>	
<p>Young Adults Pastor+Red Frogs ROY OLENDE Ext. 251 royolende@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Student Ministries Pastor GIANPAOLO GALESSIERE Ext. 252 gp@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Professional Counselor AGNES VRIEZE, MSW RSW Ext. 241 agnesvrieze@centralcc.ca</p>	

Administrative & Support Team

<p>Reception & Admin Assistant ASHLEY COVELLO Ext. 221 info@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Executive Assistant To Lead Pastor DORENE MILLS Ext. 243 dorenemills@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Assimilation Director EMILY SLUYS Ext. 223 emilysluis@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Volunteer Director KARLENE MARKHAM Ext. 257 karlenemarkham@centralcc.ca</p>
<p>Video Director SCOTT TRAPASSO Ext. 256 scotttrapasso@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Production Director DARRICK VANDERWIER Ext. 245 darrickvanderwier@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Print & Publications Director ANDREW PLETT Ext. 258 andrewplett@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Building Support CORINNE DURKSEN SARAH LALONDE FLOYD MARTINEAU MIKE ORSHINSKY</p>
<p>Building Superintendent GREG BURNS Ext. 227 gregburns@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Accounting JUNE PUNTON Ext. 228 accounting@centralcc.ca</p>	<p>Central Catering IRIS REGIER & CHRIS FANNELL Ext. 230</p>	

WEDNESDAY NIGHTLIVE

The **BEST** night of your week, right here at Central.

FAMILY DINNER [5:30pm - 6:45pm]

Who wants to cook on a Wednesday night? Certainly not you! Problem solved, we have an amazing meal that you can enjoy alone or with your whole family. \$5per person OR \$15 for the whole family

AMAZING STUFF FOR KIDS + ADULTS

We have so much going on we can't list it all here, so just check out the side-bar of the calendar this month.



GR 7-12
 6:30pm
 In The Auditorium



If you are a guest with us today, thanks for spending some time with us. We would love to get to know you a little by having you fill out a connection card and bringing it to Central Connect in the Lobby. As a thank you for your visit we would be honoured to treat you to a free cup of coffee and amazing stainless steel travel mug. Don't worry, we won't put you on any mailing lists or anything like that, we're just glad you joined us today.