



A Time To PRAY!

Tim Harden



Here’s a little note to bless and encourage you in the midst of the horrendous amount of bad news in the paper! We see escalating tensions regarding the proper response to the Corona Virus and its variants. We read of an increase of racial tension, crime, lawlessness, anti-police rhetoric, build-up of military power by China and Russia, and I could go on and on. Our politicians, police, our first responders and numerous counsellors are doing their best to address the needs and help those who are anxious, stressed out and depressed. All of their help is good and necessary I’m sure, **but it is not the ultimate answer that people need.**

God has told us in Isaiah 26:3
***“You will keep in perfect peace
all who trust in you,
all whose thoughts are fixed on you!”***

What we need today, in this hour, is a powerful move of the Holy Spirit leading us into a posture of repentance, humility and admission of our desperate need for His intervention. This is beginning to happen as more and more people become involved in prayer opportunities. I want to encourage you to join, if and when you can, with others in times of prayer. Perhaps your local church has a Zoom prayer gathering like we do at Bethany EMC in Kitchener, where I attend. Let’s be in the loop with what God is doing in the unseen realm in these days of significant need in our culture and our neighborhoods. ***We can tap into the ONLY answer – The REAL answer*** to the perfect peace, rest and hope that people are in need of.

Oasis

Older Adults Still in Service
A ministry of the EMCC
Psalm 92:14

***“They shall still bear fruit in their old age.
They will be fresh and flourishing!”***

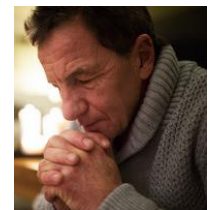
**From John Cressman,
EMCC Interim President**



These days I feel a kinship with seniors. For a number of years now, we have gently been invited to attend our Plattsville EMC “Forever Young” 55+ gathering. We keep hearing that the food is great, the laughter is contagious and the fellowship is rich. But Melanie, my wife and I have graciously responded, “Not yet!” We have continued to participate with a few in what might be sheepishly called the ***“In-Denial”*** group. But more recently, on the eve of turning 60, I have been labelled “old.”

Frankly, I don’t prefer the label. Who really does? Sadly, it feels like our culture tends to treat “old” as replaceable or discardable. For me, the word is loaded with too much negativity. Frankly, this is not my experience interacting with seniors along my journey. I would like to elevate and celebrate the term “elder” as a replacement for the label “old.” The Lord has blessed me with many “elders” who have shaped who I am. Still today, I seek out my elders for their wisdom, encouragement and prayer.

If I may change one word in Hebrews 13:7, ***“Remember you elders who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.”*** Imitation is a far cry from discarding, ignoring, or sidelining. Most recently, I have been invited by the Holy Spirit and younger generation leaders to embrace the role of “elder” (spiritual father) in their lives. I do so humbly, surrounded also by my own wonderful team of elders. Thanks OASIS, for being elders in the Church of Christ.



The Fuller File

by EMC Historian, Clare Fuller

Loving Brothers and Sisters:

While I was pursuing some history project, I came across an Ontario Conference *Journal*, that a certain “F. Willison” was “*conditional*” in the year 1933. My curiosity was aroused! I had never seen that name anywhere in the record of our church documents. Willison was a woman who was listed among the “City Mission Workers.” This young lady was unmarried and in those days our conference only had credentialling for single women, 20 years and older. As “Conditional,” Willison was saying that she could do something but she had *conditions* that prevented her from doing anything!



So, who was “F. Willison”? The latest Canada census returns open to the public are from 1921, and there was a listing for a “Flossie Willison, 16 years old at that time and living in Aylmer, ON. Interestingly, her father was listed as, Charles. The record said he was “Scotch” and under religion, that he was “Mininight.” (I kid you not!) Her mother, Isedora (French) listed her religion as “Mission”! If this was my “F. Willison,” she would have been 27 or 28 years of age in 1933.

I knew that our denomination had a city mission Aylmer in 1921, known both as Mennonite, and as a Mission, so despite the enumerator’s ignorance of the spelling of Mennonite, both descriptions could fit our fit. There the matter of my investigation stopped for a number of months. Then I came a poem by a “Flossie, E. Willison Kilmer. (Mrs. Ken Kilmer) in a 1952 edition of our church magazine, “The Gospel Banner.” There it said the poem was dedicated to my friend, **Miss Annie Yeo.** (1905-1983) This was of interest because, evangelist - Annie Yeo, was famous for her missionary work in Nigeria. She was from nearby, St. Thomas, and an age-mate to Flossie. This pretty much confirmed in my mind that F. Willison of 1933, was in fact, the poet, Flossie Kilmer.

Then, just a few weeks ago, while working on the Missionary Church Historical Trust collection, I came across the history of the Aylmer EMCC from 1990, edited by Jean Pearce. Mrs. Flossie Kilmer was one of those interviewed for the early history of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Mission in Aylmer. Willison relatives are all mentioned. In fact, that record cleared up another mystery for me. One of the earliest preachers was listed only as T.W. Brook. It turns out, another young lady evangelist, who had started as Maggie Rennie, had married Thomas W. Brook, thereafter using the name, Mrs. T.W. Brook!

It is hard enough today for us to love those near us, but I wonder if you will allow me to expand our love not just to Christians of other countries but to our dear brothers and sisters in Christ from the past? Are you familiar with the Apostle John’s instructions, “*For this is the message*

that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” 1Jn.3:11 TNIV. John was quoting his master, Jesus, who said the same thing in John 15:12 It is clear that we are wise to continue learning how to love one another in the present church, but lovingly recall those who are part of our foundation build on the Rock, Christ Jesus. As a teacher in Nigeria, I had to think my way through why we bother teaching History today. Many people don’t seem to care about the past. I reviewed the old reasons:

- ❖ Lessons to implement
- ❖ Mistakes to avoid
- ❖ Understand humans today by looking at them in the past
- ❖ Gain a sense of values that stand the test of time, etc

When it comes to the History of the Church, there is another reason for the effort! We need to learn to love the believers who lived out their faith in the past. Jesus said in a dispute about the resurrection, “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to Him, all are alive. Luke 20:38 Jesus is alive, and as He remarked to Thomas, “*Blessed are those who have not seen Him, yet have believed and love Him.*” John 20:29 Paul wrote, “*Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.*” Eph.6:24 So, in lesser measure we can love all the Saints of all times, including Flossie, Maggie and Thomas!

A Glimpse Into the Life of Ruby Gray

I was born on a farm about 10 miles west of Palmerston into a loving Christian family, with 3 brothers and one sister (Joy Hamilton). Growing up we attended the Wallace Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church which later joined with another area church to become United Missionary Church in Palmerston.



I was about eight years old when I became a Christian. I was sitting with my Sunday school teacher at a Sunday morning evangelistic service and she asked if I wanted to become a Christian. I said “yes”. At eleven, I was baptized in a nearby river. The Lord was with me during my teen years and directed my path. I attended Kitchener Camp quite regularly and spent time there in the summers serving in the dining hall and attending youth events. This was a time of refreshing spiritually, also a time to make new friends.

In my early twenties, I felt led to attend Emmanuel Bible College and it was there that I met

Douglas. After EBC, I trained as an RNA (registered nursing assistant) then went to work at the hospital in Wiarton. When Doug graduated from EBC, he assumed the role of pastor at Lion's Head following the departure of John & Joy Hamilton. We married a few months later.

We served at Lion's Head for three years and during that time our first son arrived. Soon after, the Lord led us to Collingwood. It was there that son #2 and our daughter were born. After that, we served at five more churches including Aylmer, where we had son #3, and Stouffville where Doug served as pastor to seniors and also as chaplain at the Parkview Nursing Home. Wherever we served, I was involved in ministry in some form or another whether it was children's ministry, ladies ministry or – while in Stouffville – helping with the seniors, and playing piano at the nursing home.

Stayner Camp became a big part of our family life. Of the 56 years that Doug and I were together, we only missed attending Family Camp one year.

During my childhood, my parents had often entertained missionaries and we heard a lot about Nigeria. Even as a child, I was interested in the work there as we had a pastor that had left our pastorate and gone to Nigeria. Later, Doug and I also entertained a lot of missionaries, and had a great interest in missions. While in Stouffville, the Lord opened the door for us to travel to Nigeria to minister at a missionaries' retreat. This was a real blessing! While there, we stayed with Jim & Pat McDowell who were serving in Illorin at the time. It was wonderful to see the church in Nigeria, how it had grown over the years – many churches, large and small – and this was 30 years ago.

We retired to Palmerston in 1997 and began attending the Missionary Church there. Doug took on its seniors' ministry and also took on leadership of OASIS. I supported him in whatever way I could. Visiting people in the local nursing home was something I enjoyed doing and continued to do after Doug died in 2012, right up until the pandemic hit. Since then, I have tried to keep in touch with a number of our church's senior ladies by phone. It has been a great source of encouragement for me and hopefully for them as well.

God's Path in Life

by Pastor Harvey Fretz



The big question when we start out on the *path of life* is "What and who guides us in our walk of life?" I was raised on a Vineland fruit farm and my Dad thought we should all be farmers. My mother loved the Lord, saw to it that we got exposed to all the church had to offer, even to the point of being able to lead

youth meetings. My older sister went to Emmanuel Bible College and came home weekends with great stories and lots of music played around our piano.

God started to speak to me that my life should be more than farming, and I needed help in direction and money for tuition if I was to attend Emmanuel Bible College. I found work part time, prayed for provision, and managed to get enough money for one semester at EBC. I asked for Divine guidance to help me determine courses and find an afternoon job so I could gather enough money for the next semester. Was I to be pastor or missionary? What did God want me to prepare for? I felt led to take courses in both fields, and it took me five years to complete my courses and graduate.

I chose Bethany United Missionary Church in Kitchener as my home church along with taking part in opening a new church, *Evangel*, in Kitchener and in my last year of studies, I helped with Bethany Youth under Rev. Lloyd K. Sider.

Of course, my heart went pitter patter for God's help in finding my mate in life and God clearly led me to Laurene (Rene) Vansickle, who was preparing herself to be a Registered nurse right there in Cambridge. During our final years of study, we decided to get married after graduation in 1959.

After graduation I was working in the Engineering Department of the Kitchener City Hall and Rene had no trouble finding work as a nurse. Our home church, Bethany was active in church planting, and they had a committee who asked Rene and I if we would go to the east end of Kitchener, and plant a church there at the edge of the Kitchener Camp Grounds. We began with 18 people helping to form a core group for a good

start in community. Friendship, practical help and hard work combined to make a great start. My task was to still do my City work for my finances, and in the next four years, Faith Missionary Church grew and God was blessing the church while helping me to gain valuable experience. I was so grateful that God had shown me my ***Task in Life!***

God blessed Rene and me with a wonderful boy Brad, and an equally wonderful girl named, Karen. God was good and life was great and we were thankful!

God gave us a change in direction when we felt his leading to pack up and go to Hamilton to help with a struggling new work. Lots of great people helped, the community responded, and I found financial support by working part time at Harbour Rescue Mission, in downtown Hamilton. These were very busy, full days.

Rene and I had never forgotten what God had shown us about our future as we entered our time of study and training. An article appeared in The Gospel Banner saying help was needed in teaching at a Bible School in Nigeria. Annie Yeo and Ruby Wilson had put out a call for help because they were retiring. They were looking for someone to take their place at a village school where they taught in the Nupe language.

As we prayed about this need, we wondered, could we take our two children at ages six and seven out to Nigeria? Could we then send them 500 miles away to go and be cared for by house parents for ten months of the year and come home to be with us for two times a year for a month each time??? That's the way it was done at the time!

In 1958 we applied and were accepted by the Canadian church under the direction of Rev. Grant Sloss, and also the joint board in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. We had to pull up stakes in Hamilton and they requested us to further prepare by moving for a nine month stay in Flint, Michigan, under the ministry of Rev. Bruce Pearson. God helped us in that process as it meant our two children doing school there and then all of us coming back to Kitchener only to pull up stakes again as we packed shipping barrels and luggage which we took to Halifax. We prayed it would show up at our new home in Share, Nigeria, 40 miles out from the headquarters in Ilorin.

My life story also includes pastoring in Waterloo for two ministries, one at Lincoln Heights EMC for six years, then five years back to Nigeria. Then I headed up World Partners for two years while Ed Prosser was the District Superintendent of the Canada East district. Next, I spent seven years as lead pastor at Trinity EMC in Waterloo. It was while I was

there that I fell off the roof of my house and could easily have died. I am so thankful for the prayers and support and the gracious healing God brought to me. Rene was my wonderful life partner until she graduated to glory in 2012.

Reading and praying friends of this OASIS article; there is a ***Path of Life***, which we must walk, in faith, every day, trusting and obeying God. I want to thank so many of you for being my friends throughout my journey. God be with each of you, and keep you on His PATH OF LIFE. Psalm 16:11

Love, ***Harvey.***

WE NEED YOUR FAITHFUL HELP & SUPPORT!

May the Lord bless you richly for your faithfulness. I want to thank you for praying about your support of the following 2021 Oasis projects.

- \$2,100.00 to Najib & Torpekai AZARM, Missionaries with Operation Mobilization for their radio missions ministry to Afghanistan and other Muslim countries. See www.hope4afghans.com
- \$1,100.00 for the Christian Salvage Mission
- \$1,100.00 to support Emmanuel Bible College
- \$1,100.00 for Evergreen Christian Ministries – General Fund
- \$1,100.00 for “Evergreen Camper Tuition Support”
- \$1100.00 Rob & Sharlene Dilts in their ministry to 1st Nations
- \$1,100.00 to Jason & Erin Baan who serve as missionaries in Mongolia.
- \$1,100.00 for Stan & Sally Bragg in ministry to Saugeen 1st Nations.
- \$1,100.00 EBC Scholarship Fund

Total 2021 Oasis Budget: \$10,700.00

Would you pray about a gift to Oasis that will help us fully meet our 2021 budget, IN SPITE of our not being able to take up an offering at our in-person events?

WAYS to DONATE:

Cheques payable to “Oasis Ministry”

If you wish to send a cheque, send to:

Oasis c/o Susan Thomson
96 Samuel Street,
Kitchener, ON
N2H1P6

Or you can do an **E – Transfer** to:

oasisministry2@gmail.com

Those receiving this by regular mail, we have included a self-addressed envelope you can use to send in your support for our missions' projects.

Thanking God for EBC - by Chureb Kowtecky

As for many others, Emmanuel Bible College has played a vital role in my life over the years. My first exposure to the College occurred many years before I was even eligible to attend. I grew up on a farm at Gorrie, and my family



attended Listowel Missionary Church. My parents (Ralph and Cora Tompkins) made a point of having “family devotions” every morning; my mother would read a chapter of scripture and we would kneel at our chairs around the kitchen table while my dad prayed. He prayed faithfully for our pastors, for many missionaries, and always for Emmanuel Bible College. The school became very familiar to me, especially when ministry teams visited our church.

In March 1968 I joined some youth from our church for a “Look-In” at EBC. I was in Grade 11 that year, and though I really enjoyed my day at the school, I had “already planned out” my post-secondary education, and I didn’t have time for Bible College. But after I graduated from high school in 1971, all my plans fell apart, and I had to re-envision my future. I turned to my pastor (David Crouse) and his wife for some guidance but, when he suggested a semester at EBC (where he was teaching at the time), I explained that I didn’t have time for Bible College. “Well...now you do”, he replied. I started there in January 1972.

I had a sister-like cousin, Janet Tompkins, who was already attending EBC, and I quickly felt at home. With working part-time, my degree program took a little longer than usual, but I

had always loved academics (especially history and languages), and studying those from a biblical point of view was a gift! Dr. George Shillington inspired my love for New Testament Greek, while Dr. Thomas Dow fed my love of history. It was Rev. Ray Priddle, who expanded my love for biblical studies. Like many others, I travelled with the EBC choir, directed by Mr. Wishart Bell. For Field Education, one Fall semester, some friends and I were encouraged to start an after-school kids’ club at Evangel Missionary Church. For over three years the club continued to meet and grow, with up to 45 kids coming from neighbouring public schools. Usually, you had to choose a different Field Ed. assignment every year; but the College encouraged us to “keep the ball rolling” at Evangel. We were so thankful for that, as many of the children came to faith during that time!

It was at EBC too that I met my husband, Paul! In his second year, he needed a pianist for some solo work that fall, and Wishart Bell suggested he “ask the new girl” to volunteer. Later that year, he needed help with his Greek, so at George Shillington’s suggestion, “the new girl” volunteered again! I had a rule that we couldn’t go to HiWay Market for coffee until we did at least an hour of Greek first. Paul and I were married in July 1976. (Can’t believe that will be 45 years this summer!) I also made a very dear friend on staff, Della Schlichter, who was head of Food Services for many years. Her loving influence helped to shape my priorities and family values for decades.

Ten years after I graduated from the College and we had started our family, Ellis Lageer, then president of EBC, invited me to apply for a new position being created. Up until that time, the Academic Dean (then Rev. Ray Priddle) had also served as Registrar; but the

workload was becoming prohibitive, and the College wanted to create a separate Registrar's position. I had very little confidence when I went for my interview with Dr. Dow and Mr. Lageer. But they were convinced I could do the job, and so I began in May of 1987. I've always considered my thirty years in that position as a gift from the Lord. It was a challenging job, but so rewarding. I'm so grateful for the opportunities I had to work with so many great students, and with administrators (like Thomas Dow, James McDowell, Stephen Roy, and Mark Boughan), with faculty (like Fred and Heather Gingrich, Ray Deitz, John Schuit, Carol Blake, Glynis Burkhalter, Olu Peters, Hugh Hill, Aaron Smith), with staff (like Ruth Scott, Edna Williams, Helen Oviedo, Bobby Linder, Mark McLimont, Anita Boles, Linda Zane), and with my many office assistants over the years. My relationship with Christ grew weekly too through our staff prayer meetings (especially with Lloyd and Marie Fretz).

As I look back, I'm so grateful to God for the many people He graciously brought into my life: my own parents, guiding pastors, EBC's administrators, staff, faculty, colleagues willing to come alongside and encourage, my husband Paul, and others who lovingly built into my life. Reviewing all their contributions now has also reminded me again of the need to "pay it forward", to build into the lives of those whom God has placed into our lives at this time. We don't always realize it, but the generations coming behind us are counting on that!



The Final Word:

1st John 4:7-10 *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.*

⁸ He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

⁹ In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

¹⁰ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins

Two things that we can still do every day are:

1. To pray and intercede for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. Prayer changes people, situations, families and it is a mighty and powerful calling that ever committed Christian senior ought to be involved in!
2. We can always choose LOVE! Love God, love others, and love all that God loves. It is a daily choice. Decide to love the Lord and those around you today!

