

Report of the General Superintendent

BY DAVID WELLS



As a Fellowship, we reminded ourselves in Ottawa in 2012 that, “For His Glory,” we are committed to fulfilling the Great Command, the Great Requirement and the Great Commission. Our passion for lovingly pursuing His glory in this manner has not receded.

In order to encourage and equip the fulfilment of our shared mission as a Pentecostal family, I have championed the Every Day Faith matrix as a means of keeping us continually focused on the main things we are called to be and do. “Every Day,” we who are followers of Jesus are given the opportunity to be in an intimate relationship with God, and to be transformed by His Word as we generously share of our lives in word and deed.

During these past two years I was prompted by the Lord to evaluate how we are expressing the spiritual, theological and missional vitality that He calls us to. With evaluation comes the affirmation by the Spirit of what is good and right and the challenge of what needs to be addressed as we move forward.

Spiritual vitality is at the core of any church or ministry organization that will fulfil its mission to glorify God, as we seek to do. As the Spirit indicated to the church at Ephesus, if that is missing, then the very essence of being His people is in jeopardy. I take this seriously because I believe the Canadian church, like Ephesus, is prone to be highly active and generally theologically orthodox but with the danger of internal soul rot—which could lead to an eventual implosion of theology and mission.

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To encourage spiritual vitality, we have continued to call our Fellowship to intimacy with God through the Pray Every Day focus. I am grateful for the prayer ministries and related leadership that is on the increase in our Fellowship. Understanding that Spirit empowerment is essential for a vital life in the Spirit, we have joined with the global church and the Empowered 21 movement to re-emphasize Pentecost Sunday as a God given opportunity to equip and encourage congregations regarding the work of the Spirit. We are highlighting the necessity of Spirit-baptism and the adventure of living “naturally supernatural.” Networking is increasing among Pentecostal-Charismatic movements across Canada, and on June 8, Pentecost Sunday, we will have the opportunity to link up every province for a Pentecost Day Experience together.

Through Every Day Faith, we have also been encouraging theological vitality through the engagement of Scriptural truth. Read Every Day is more than a quaint ditty. It is a passionate call for our constituency to re-engage the Word of God in a living, active way. While stats from partners such as LifeWay Research and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada have certainly raised concerns regarding Canadian Christians’ involvement with the Scriptures, it has been encouraging to note the many leaders and churches that are consistently challenging and equipping their congregations to be in the Word. Keep it up, friends!

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A "heart and mind" embrace of God's truth does indeed set us free. For that reason, we have continued to encourage the ongoing work of our Theological Study Group and to facilitate contexts for authentic discussions regarding the truths we hold to. A well-crafted Statement of Fundamental and Essential Truths is good to have, but if we never interact with it in a living way, it is simply a library document. Because truth matters, we will continue to encourage the work of the pastor-teachers and academics among us as we continue to serve in a culture with numerous theological and philosophical sinkholes.

Through the time period of Autumn 2014 to Spring 2015, we will be co-operating with our districts and colleges/seminaries to visit a number of regions across the country for facilitated discussions regarding our spiritual, theological and missional vitality as a Pentecostal family. One conversational track will be regarding our spiritual and theological vitality. Our next gift book with the theme of "Principle-based Leadership" will be distributed prior to that conversation. This material will help us to consider the spiritual commitments we make as pastoral and congregational leaders. Our Theological Study Group will also present on areas from our doctrinal statements that will lead to useful, motivational interaction.

A second track of conversation across the country will focus on our missional vitality. Part of my evaluation process over the past two years was to travel with our Mission Canada (MC) director, Brian Egert, to hold Mission Canada consultations in each district regarding

how we are reaching the unreached in Canada. It led to a summary of "7 Big Ideas" that our district superintendents interacted with as part of our Mission Canada Committee. I am very grateful for Brian and the MC team who are seeing an increase in our MC workers and a number of new initiatives through our MC network focused on our national missional priorities. Brian's report follows.

In order to evaluate our missional pulse over the past five years, I reviewed every church closure, amalgamation and disaffiliation, as well as every church plant, satellite, campus and new missional initiative from 2008-2012. My full report went to the General Executive in November 2013. In summary, it showed we had 62 closures, six amalgamations and 13 disaffiliations. Of the closures, 68 per cent occurred in the urban/suburban bands of our nation. During the same time, we had 104 new church plants, satellites and other missional initiatives. Fifty churches (church plants, satellites and re-openings) moved to affiliated church status during that time. Thus we had a slight decrease in affiliated churches but an actual increase in churches, satellites, and missional communities overall.

In presenting this to the General Executive, we were encouraged to see that the missional impulse is still among us, but that a shared vision and strategic initiative is needed to experience the church revitalization and multiplication we believe God intends for us to have. The General Executive then passed the following "Initiative 2020" motion:

“With a shared vision for church revitalization and multiplication, we are believing God for 350,000 Christ followers (1% of Canadians) by 2020 within our Canadian churches. We are also calling all of our healthy churches to reproduce themselves within Canada in the next seven years by planting, partnering and/or providing for a new disciple-making community, so that in 2020, we will have 1,500 disciple-making communities.”

This initiative calls for approximately a 35 per cent increase of disciple-making communities and Christ followers in 2020. In addition, our International Missions ministry is also trusting and believing God for exponential growth over the remainder of this decade. Murray Cornelius will comment further on this within his report. Clearly, in order to fulfil this vision, we will need to be a Fellowship of believers who sacrificially gives of ourselves every day and who daily share the Good News in word and deed. I ask you to prayerfully ponder how you and the ministry you are engaged in will continue to cultivate an intimate relationship with God—being continually transformed by His Word and generously sharing our lives—until 1 per cent of all Canadians are part of our disciple-making communities in 2020.

I want to assure you that, as an International Office, we have spent extensive time in 2013 ensuring that we align our initiatives, staffing and budgets to support not only Initiative 2020, but to be the supportive team we should be to assist our Fellowship to be “One Church in Mission.”

My special thanks go to Judy Hearn, our director of Finance and Accounting and a member of our Lead Team, for spearheading our strategic processes in the office.

I am very grateful for the gifted, sacrificial persons the Lord has privileged me to serve with at this time. My admiration only grows for my wife, Susan, my fellow executive officers and Lead Team, my administrative assistant, Colleen Stuckless, and so many others in the office, across our nation and our global workers in 60+ nations.

We are a blessed people!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. David R. Wells
General Superintendent

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