



Reflections on Stepping Stones Bible Camp

135 Campers attend the 2008 Stepping Stones Bible Camp.

Congratulations to all the dedicated workers who contributed their skills, energy and time to make the five, one week long camps a real success. This 2008 season was highlighted by several new endeavors. In the first place the number of weeks were increased from 4 to 5. Secondly, for the first time a specific one week camp for teens was held twice this season. In my comments I want to pay special attention to that endeavor.

The make up and style of this camp differed in many respects from the traditional children's camp.

It was much more a team effort than a play and learn effort. The teen campers were treated like adults. The

theme of the week was relationships and we dealt with six 'adult' topics. Several chaplains, both past and present contributed to the writing of the script. The result was innovation and diversity. Allow me to give you a brief description of what each day offered, so that you have an idea of how valuable this time was. Day 1 dealt with our relationship to God. How has God revealed himself and who is He in a most personal way to us through creation and redemption. Day 2 examined how we view ourselves in light of how God made each and everyone of us as unique individuals. This

became even more poignant in light of the fact that we had a mentally handicapped camper in attendance. In addition, a video testimony from a young "pastor" born without hands and feet, yet declaring that he was "wonderfully made" made a deep impact. Day 3 dealt with our relationship to our parents as the first authority God has placed over us. Not only traditional parents were in focus but also foster parents, adoptive parents, and single parents were covered in this chapel. Day 4 focused on our relationship with our peers, siblings, fellow students and friends, both of the same

faith and those who are not. On day 5 we dealt with the subject of romance and dating. In order to achieve the greatest degree of honesty and openness, the group was split up after chapel into male and female participation with an adult discussion leader. During chapel we had a young married couple as counselors and their testimony of struggle and triumph to stay true to their covenant with each other to remain pure before marriage made a deep impact upon the teenagers. The last and final chapel had as title "A purpose driven life". It highlighted the purpose for which we are created ; namely to "fight with a free and good conscience against sin and the devil in this life, and hereafter reign with Him eternally over all creatures" (Lord's Day 12). It was a week to be long remembered by everyone!

Out of the 135 campers that attended "Stepping Stones Bible Camp," 18 campers came from outside the church. It is my prayer that everyone, was helped in their quest to grow in faith and commitment, one step at the time.



Rezoning from Residential to Public Use

In the past year we have applied to re-zone the property in order to conform to the intended purpose of "Bible Camp and Retreat."

The Fraser Valley Regional District favours our proposal and required three things of us. We needed to provide geotechnical, fire and safety reports, as well as sewer and water reports. At the

same time the FVRD approached the Ministry of Transportation (MOT) for approval.

The MOT has rejected our proposal due to safety concerns on Brooks Rd. While

discussions continue to take place, this does delay opportunities for additional buildings and expansion at this time. We remain hopeful that eventually it will all come together.

**Marriage Retreat
The Second Half of
Marriage
Sept.19 & 20**

Keeping in mind what Scripture reveals to us regarding marital growth in our relationship with God and each other, nine couples came to this retreat on Friday afternoon. Welcomed by hosts Peter and Janey Van Seters, and Casey and Betty Dehaas, many couples brought their own campers, while some stayed in the cabin or the main house. The weather was beautiful, and on both days there was

time for a hike guided by Albert Visscher.

Friday evening we jumped



into session one of the "The Marriage Course" video series, presented by Nicky and

Sila Lee. We dealt with "Building Strong Foundations", and on Saturday morning with "The Art of Communication". After each video couples had the opportunity to discuss the material privately, in order to continue deepening their relationship. Although the seven-session course is suitable for any stage in marriage, we applied the material to

our mostly empty nester or (pre)retirement phase of marriage.

Delicious food was prepared by our hosts and by two well known chefs, Gary Riemer and Walter Togeretz.

Even though the material was mostly serious, we also had a lot of fun enjoying camaraderie and fellowship. We hope there will be continued interest and the opportunity to carry on with the series. Another marriage retreat is planned for next May at Deroche. Heartily recommended!

**Community Legacy at
Deroche Retreat**

"Legacies" are something left behind to be cherished and enjoyed by future generations. Throughout biblical times the Lord has seen to it that His people made provisions for real estate to be passed on without permanent ownership to any one individual. The laws were stated clearly enough, the basic law is contained in Leviticus 25, and the key principle is in verse 23: "The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants".

With this thought in mind we are moving forward to develop the Deroche Retreat property. The continued vision for the property would include a convention centre and multiple small accommodation units for overnight stays. This means that we are looking for a wide range of support from the reformed church community. This can and has been done in several ways. We had a good initial response for the purchase of the property with private, community funds. We also have had a good response from the community in the use of the property

for a variety of activities such as family reunions and retreats. We are pleased to see families, groups and individuals enjoying the property. Their donations help maintain the day to day operations of the facilities. In the matter of fundraising there is another aspect which we do wish to explore and that is in the matter of wills and estates. Perhaps a sensitive subject, but with the increase in wealth that the Lord blesses the community, we ask that you consider bequeathing a

small percentage of accumulated blessings to this "community legacy," which could then be enjoyed by future generations. The Deroche property is owned by a non-profit society and all donations are tax deductible. We thank you for your consideration and may the Lord continue to bless all our endeavors.



YES! I would like to support the Reformed Conference Society. Enclosed please find:

_____ \$25 membership fee

_____ Tax deductible donation

_____ TOTAL

Name _____

Address _____

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Please mail directly to: Deroche Retreat, 10943 Brooks Road, Deroche, B.C. P.O. Box 122, V0M 1G0.