

BRANCH OFFICE

(Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District)

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Galilean Bible Camp (Blind River)
 Louese Cameron - Chair

DayStar Native Outreach
 (Ontario's mid-north)
 Ron Piche - Chair

Monarch Bible Camp (Fenelon Falls area)
 Ross Fogwell - Chair

Willow Springs (Stouffville)
 Wendy Armstrong - Chair

We appreciate your donations to CSSM Ontario. By law all gifts given to CSSM Ontario are given to this charity to pursue a program or project in keeping with the objectives of CSSM Ontario. We commit to use your gift for the program or project that you request, as long as it needs funding. If for some reason the program or project cannot be carried out or is funded sufficiently, you have authorized CSSM Ontario to use the funds for other ministry purposes within the CSSM mandate.

Ministering Through the Winter

Ministry is more than just a summer thing!

Even though the summer camp equipment is all put away and the snow has already been on the ground in some places, much CSSM Ontario ministry continues throughout the chilly winter months. Outreach continues in various ways during the winter and preparation for summer camp has already begun! Below is a list of some of the activities at our various sites this winter:



- Bible Clubs (Algoma, Rainy River)
 - Boys Club (Rainy River)
 - Community Involvement (all)
 - Community Centre Programs & Clothing Depot (DayStar)
 - Guest Speaking & Promotion at Churches, Conferences, or other venues (all)
 - Men's Ministry (DayStar, Willow Springs)
 - Mentoring Ministry (Rainy River)
 - Ministry at Youth Detention Centre (Rainy River)
 - Pastoral Ministry (DayStar, Rainy River)
 - Sports Coaching (DayStar)
 - Summer Program Staffing (all)
 - Summer Program Planning (all)
 - Winter Retreats & Rentals (Dorion, Galilean)
 - Youth Groups (DayStar, Rainy River)
 - Youth Snow Camps (Galilean)
- Maybe you'll have a chance to experience one of our ministries this winter!

A View from My Desk

By Shelley Hodgkinson, Assistant Branch Director/Admin

Donations made to the General Fund, Staff Development Fund, all donations given in support of full time, part time and seasonal staff as well as most donations made to the various ministries under CSSM Ontario come through our office in Sault Ste. Marie. What a blessing it is to see the generosity of God's people and the trust that is displayed when you give.

When we started the Preauthorized Monthly Donation program, enabling us to debit donor accounts once a month, one of the first people to sign up was a senior saint. This man had donated for many years by sending a \$50 bill through the mail once a month. We marvelled at the trust he had that the money he donated would get to where he intended for God's use.

Some of the donations come with a note of encouragement for the ministry. One such note said "we will be praying for our precious granddaughter" who was serving for the summer with CSSM Ministries. What a boost that gives the worker to know they are covered by prayer as they endeavour to share the Gospel.

We want you to know that we understand that the donations we receive are a trust to be used to honour God. Your donations are used to support the ministry you specify, unless the project is fully funded. If you donate to the General or Staff Development Fund, we accept the responsibility of being good stewards with the Lord's money. If you stop by the office for tea and a chat, which we would love, wear a sweater. We keep the office a little cooler than most homes, in order to stretch our dollars!

Please Take Note

If you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, please contact the office by phone or email and we will remove your name from our mailing list.
 Phone: 705-945-0736 • Email: on@cssm.ca

FOOTNOTES

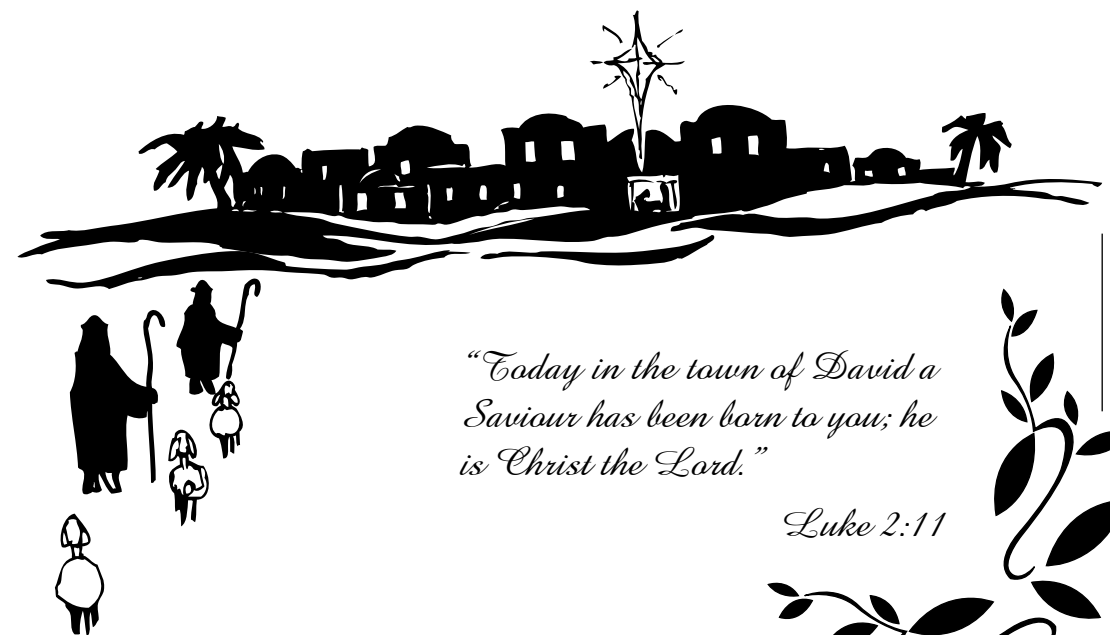
Isaiah 52:7

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns'."



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sketch by Bob Knight

Christmas Greetings to You!

By Jim Snell, on behalf of the Ontario Executive Board

In my teens I was often charged with harvesting a Christmas tree from the forest which surrounded our community. On one occasion, while climbing up a steep logging road, I spotted the perfect specimen. It was the top of a large Douglas Fir with its base 30 meters down a very steep bank off the edge of the road.

Up for the challenge, I navigated the bank, climbed up the sticky, prickly trunk, sawed off the top, and eventually dragged my prize home. It was there I realized that the tree would not fit into the house let alone the living room but after rigorously cutting, pruning, drilling and grafting we had our Christmas tree in place.

It has occurred to me that our understanding of God and His work can be very much like my misperception of the size of that tree. Our later understanding can be changed from what we had comprehended in the beginning. Probably everyone has had perceptual changes regarding Christ's

incarnation from fascination with the Christmas story of baby Jesus to amazement at Emmanuel - God with us, Jesus Christ - the God man, Saviour, God's perfect gift born to die to give us life.

When it comes to God's work we can perceive it to be small when, in reality, it's large. CSSM Ontario is a small mission family but the Kingdom work it does is significant in this province. And, in order to do it, our missionaries and staff need the prayer and financial backing of faithful supporters. Together, by God's grace, we will grow and become more effective than what we are now.

In the same way that our understanding and appreciation of Christ's incarnation expands at this time of the year it is my hope that our understanding and support of what He is accomplishing through CSSM Ontario will expand, resulting in greater Kingdom growth for His glory.

Personnel Conference - October 2008

This fall we had a wonderful CSSM Personnel Conference at Galilean Bible Camp! It was a time for our missionaries, who are usually spread out across a very large province, to come together to share with and learn from each other. We focused on the theme "Together in Mission" with the key verse being "Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart." (2 Corinthians 4:1) It was a time of fun, refreshment, praying together, sharing together and gleaning some new ideas to put into practice in our ministries.

We had the privilege of recognizing 5 missionaries for 20 years of faithful service with CSSM Ontario. They were Tom & Brenda Koert,

Bob Knight and Mark & Tina Mast (actually 21 years as there was no Provincial Conference last year). We also had the privilege of welcoming 1 new missionary, Debbie Friesen, who's serving in Itinerant Youth Ministry in the Rainy River District. I trust you will enjoy their stories printed here.



Personnel Conference

What Itinerant Ministry Looks Like

By Debbie Friesen, Rainy River District

My entrance into ministry was like a snowball: helping there, taking leadership here, starting something new over there. The result has been what I call 'itinerant youth ministry'. My prayer is that God would use me and the programs I'm involved in to disciple the young people of the Rainy River District to be godly people of influence.

Here's a sample of what that looks like:

- **GIFT (Growing in Faith Together)** is a monthly event which incorporates music and inspirational speakers to challenge Christian teens to live all of life for the glory of God. The music teams are made up of high school students. I meet with them weekly to work on musical skill and to learn together what it means to be worship leaders.
- **Leading a youth group** is another avenue of discipleship. In our weekly meetings we take time to study the Word as well as have fun together. This year we are focusing on growing in our faith personally and reaching out to share Jesus with others. Right now we are looking forward to having a "Just Because We Can!" party, which will include many bizarre activities and a Gospel presentation.
- Another amazing ministry outlet involves going into the public high school in Fort Frances to **lead a Christian discussion group (ISCF-Inter School Christian Fellowship)** each week. We have recently started meeting on Monday mornings as well to pray for the school, students



Debbie Friesen

and teachers. One of the joys of ISCF is meeting with a few students to plan the weekly meetings and now seeing those students starting to take initiative and leadership.

• **Camp Ministry** during the summer involves me in planning and serving at the camps and summer program in the Rainy River area.

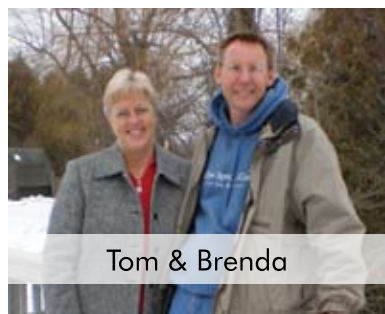
It has been a true privilege to be involved in the lives of teens through these and other ministry opportunities and to see them going on with Jesus as they find their place in the world.

Editor's note: Debbie Friesen is currently in the process of raising her financial and prayer support to cover her ministry for the Lord in the Rainy River area. Anyone interested in becoming a partner to Debbie in this way can call the office for more information.

God's Goodness to His Servants

By Tom & Brenda Koert, Willow Springs Bible Camp

Looking back at the previous year gives us many opportunities to thank God for His goodness and provision. We praise Him for full summer camp sessions with many young people trusting in Christ and growing in Him. We can also see how He provided for the many staff needs and brought us a great group of workers to serve the many campers.



Tom & Brenda

It's also good to look back with thankfulness over the past 20 years. Our ministry with CSSM Ontario began with us serving in CSSM day camps one week each summer for several years with our College and Career group from Michigan. After we finished university and were

married, it was suggested that we drop off our resumes for permanent ministry work at Willow Springs Bible Camp. The doors to that position just kept opening for us and we moved to Ontario and began full time service with CSSM in May of 1988.

In the early years, finding qualified staff was a challenge, but as time went on, we have seen God provide an excellent team. Most of the summer staff that serve now are previous campers. God also provided for several projects that we undertook, such as changes to the waterfront by doing dredging and adding an iceberg and fountain. Improvements to the barn, cabins and camp property have created a safer, more efficient and comfortable place to share the Gospel. We look forward to building a new tuck shop and adding a waterfront centre for canoes and kayaks in the near future.

As we look back and ahead, we are amazed at God's grace, goodness and faithfulness.

Twenty-One Years of Ministry at Rainy River

By Mark & Tina Mast, Rainy River District

Looking back over the past 21 years, it is remarkable to reflect upon the marvelous things that the Lord has done. On June 2, 1987, we crossed the Canadian border in Northwestern Ontario with all of our worldly possessions in a very small U-Haul trailer. We had journeyed on a north-westerly course from Drenthe, Michigan with our destination being Rainy River, Ontario. Over the course of the 1,400 kms we traveled, there were many times that we quite honestly thought we were insane. Had God really called us to this "God-forsaken" land that we traveled through? Upon arriving at the border, we were informed that the immigration officer had just gone home and that we would have to travel 120 kms east to the next nearest crossing. Because Tina was "great with child" the kind-hearted custom official took pity on us. He made a telephone call and within five minutes a cheerful immigration officer drove up and completed the paperwork we needed to allow us entrance into Canada.

I could relay a thousand more stories of times that we have nearly despaired and wondered "God? Is this really You?" Each time, He has proven in a myriad of ways that "Yes! It is Me!! I have a special job for you to do." By God's grace we have completed those tasks. We can only proclaim that there is great joy in living and serving in the centre of God's will.

Twenty-one years have gone by since a very naive young couple moved



Mast Family

from Michigan to Rainy River to replace a CSSM missionary (Vivian Smith) who had been praying for many years for "a young couple to take over the 'work' when she retired." By God's grace we have taken the torch and sought to be a light to the "otherwise unreached" of this portion of God's harvest field.

*"But may it never be that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."
Galatians 6:14a*

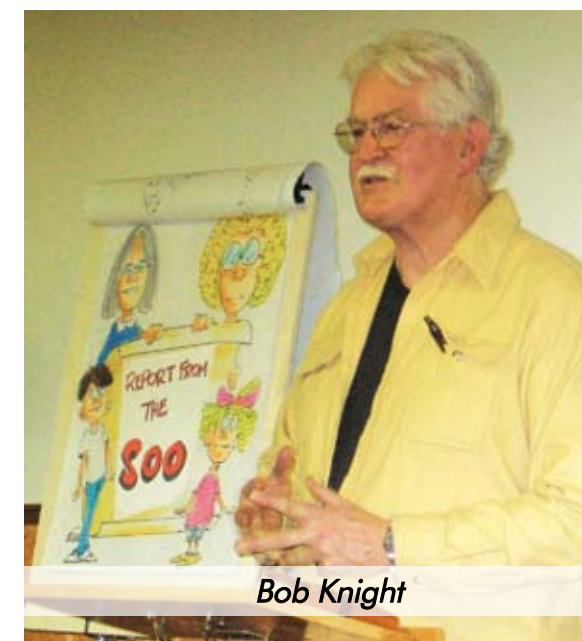
Twenty Years of Telling the Story of Jesus

By Bob Knight, Algoma Bible Clubs

Twenty years seems like a long time and yet when I look back to the day that I joined CSSM Ministries, it feels like only a moment.

I remember when I was introduced to the mission through a weekend retreat at Galilean Bible Camp. That retreat was in the winter, with a windchill factor reaching -50° F. No one could get their vehicle started and I wondered who in their right mind would want to live in this kind of climate? I was used to camps and churches in areas like Virginia, New Hampshire and New Jersey.

Needless to say, my interest level was not in the direction of a Northern Ministry. But, when God puts an obvious call on your life it is wise to listen. When you give all to Him, your talents, your time and your life, He redirects your heart's desire. God gave me a heart for the youth of the north and I have often told people when I have been



Bob Knight

down south visiting family or doing ministry and head north and then west at Sudbury, I feel like I am home.

The greatest thrill of all is to be there when God does the miracle of miracles in the hearts of the children that God brings to us in our ministry opportunities in the school Bible Clubs and Camps. I think of a native girl that stayed after Bible Club at Spanish Public School to receive Christ into her heart. As my wife, Karen, was counselling her, she commented that she had never heard or realized that she could receive the gift of eternal life simply by asking Jesus into her heart and have her sins forgiven. We have seen this happen scores of times with the youth of the north and it never gets old.

I thank God every day that it pleases Him to use me in His Ministry!