

# “On Mission Together”

## Saskatchewan Conference of MB Churches

### Director’s Calendar

#### January 2024

21 – Faith River Fellowship (Saskatoon)  
21 – Hibrets Saskatoon Christians Church  
24 – NFLT Mtg.  
26 – SKMB Ex. Board Mtg.  
28 – Gateway Community Church (Canora)

#### February

1 – Forest Grove Community Church (Saskatoon)  
4 – Riverhurst Community Church  
11 – Woodrow Gospel Chapel  
18 – Christian Fellowship Church (Lucky Lake)

#### March

22-23 – SKMB Assembly (Swift Current)  
*Please pray for traveling mercies.*

#### Director of Ministry

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### Next Level Leadership



*To what extent does an impending crisis invigorate or paralyze you?*

[Click Here](#) to read

### Competition and Conflict

By Mark Wessner, President MB Biblical Seminary, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies for Leadership.

### Your Year of Encouragement?

#### Choosing A Positive Pathway Through A New Year

“By all this we are encouraged.”

2 Corinthians 7:13

“Encouragement is oxygen to the soul.”

George Madison Adams

Happy New Year, friends!

My wife Janine recently turned sixty. As a way of commemorating the year she told me about her intent to start a special gratitude practice. Janine intends to write out on a small, coloured piece of parchment one truly significant blessing that she receives each week. She will then place it in a special glass container for safe keeping. This vessel was carefully chosen and decorated for this purpose. At the end of the year, with fifty-two notes in hand, she will read them. This entire practice is intended to be a reminder of God’s goodness. All through the year, and at its end, she will see these notes of blessing and be encouraged.

If you’re breathing, you need encouragement. Every child, teen, middle-aged adult, senior, male or female not only truly welcomes encouragement, but absolutely must receive it for their overall wellbeing. Those a lot wiser than me have claimed that encouragement has the following personal benefits:

- inspires
- gives hope
- restores or bolsters self-confidence
- empowers one to keep going
- is an ingredient for success
- improves attitude
- enhances performance
- reduces stress and anxiety
- fosters peace in one’s spirit
- reminds one they are not alone
- reminds one they are supported
- reinvigorates trust
- changes perspective
- squelches negativity

In my latest book *Hello Again – More Letters To My Friends*, I included the following fable with some counsel on the importance of encouragement:

“Five frogs were hopping through the woods when two of them fell into a deep hole. The remaining frogs gathered around the edge of the hole and peered into it. Assessing the situation as dire, they shouted down to the two frogs in the hole, “I’m sorry, but the hole is too deep. You’re trapped and we can’t save you. It’s hopeless!” Initially the trapped frogs ignored the despairing shouts of the others and tried to hop out of the hole with every bit of energy they possessed. The frogs at the top shouted even

louder, "Just give up already, it's too deep."

The two frogs, however, kept trying to bound out of the hole. After some time, one of the two exhausted frogs, hearing all the discouraging sentiments from the frogs at the top and seeing his efforts fail, gave up and soon died. The second trapped frog kept hopping and hopping and hopping until he finally escaped the hole.

Amazed at the resolve of their exhausted fellow frog, and despite what they shouted, the three frogs surrounded the escapee with curiosity. To their surprise he panted and said, "Thanks guys. I'm deaf, but I could tell just by looking at you that you were encouraging me the whole time."

Friends, encouragement or lack of it really matters. Sometimes it's the difference between life and death."

Friends, why not start a new year today, making it your year of encouragement; encouragement for yourself and for others? Certainly, scripture reminds us to be encouraged ("*You turned my wailing into dancing, you removed my sackcloth and clothes me with joy*" [Psalm 31:11]; "*He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand*" [Psalm 40:2]) and to be encouragers ("*But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today...*" [Hebrews 3:13a]; "*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching*" [Hebrews 10:25]).

In light of the personal benefits for one's wellbeing and scripture's counsel, the following are some helpful and creative ideas for you to accomplish making these next 365 days a year of encouragement.

For you...

- Once a month memorize a new passage of scripture that encourages you. Recite it every day. The next month, repeat. This time though recite both passages, the next month, all three texts, and so on. Here are seven powerful time-tested passages of encouragement to help you get started: Psalm 4:8; 18:2; 34:10; Proverbs 3:5-6; Isaiah 41:10; 46:4; Zephaniah 3:17.
- Every month jot down one meaningful quote from an author, athlete, faith leader, etc. which encourages you. Fasten this sentiment to your fridge, bathroom mirror or daily calendar. Read it aloud every morning as you begin your day.
- Ask a trusted friend to help you out with an encouragement project. Give your friend enough money to purchase twelve postcards and twelve postage stamps. Ask your friend if they would be willing to send you a postcard of encouragement once a month for the whole year. Give your friend complete freedom to choose the kind of postcard and the message's content. As a bonus, offer to do the same for your friend.

For others...

- Once a month mail (yes with an envelope and stamp) a handwritten (correct, with a pen or pencil) note of gratitude to someone who has helped shape you positively into the person you are today. Tell them exactly how their actions or words influenced you.
- Create a prayer list of twelve people who you know are facing a tough year. Every month touch base with one person on this list telling them that you intend to pray for them every day for that month. Ask them if they would be willing to share with you some of their weightiest worries, fears or hopes.
- Ask the Lord to give you opportunities to be a person of encouragement to strangers, friends, family, co-workers or neighbours. Commit yourself to looking for these opportunities. It may be a random act of kindness, sitting with someone at church who is alone, giving a hug to a co-worker who is having a bad day or helping a neighbour shovel snow or rake leaves. Whatever it is write it down somewhere and at the end of the year read these stories as a way of being encouraged yourself.

As disciples of Jesus, we are to be salt and light in our world. As we step into the troubles of the year to come – and there will be many – can we be salt and light through expressions of encouragement?

*Be somebody who makes everybody feel like somebody.*

Rev. Phil Gunther

Director of Ministries, SKMB

Save the date – Assembly 2024 – March 22-23 – Swift Current

**Supporting SKMB Churches and Camps in Making Disciples**