

## In Battle



As flawed human beings we are all susceptible to

the lies of the accuser. Sometimes he is blatant in his deceptions, grandiose allegations that fly in the face of God's Word in such an obvious way that they cannot be mistaken for anything but lies. With the prominence of the horror entertainment phenomenon in our culture it's easy to imagine the devil as a cloven hoofed monster, lurking in the shadows and waiting to latch on to his prey and drag them down to the fiery pit. My own experience as a Christian has been a much more subtle, quiet battle. 1 Peter 5:8 tells us that our enemy *"prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour"*. Without a doubt, by the time the enemy roars he has been prowling for a while. In recent weeks I have been identifying some lies and false beliefs that have been so expertly woven into the fabric of my life that I didn't notice their arrival or presence. The enemy had been prowling for years, placing

mines at the borders of my mind, subtly wrapping barbed wire around my heart, dosing the waters of my soul with bitter liquid one drop at a time. Life is busy, I have three kids at different stages of development, one with special needs. I have a job, I have animals, I have friends who need help with various things. As long as life remained busy enough to distract me from God, as long as I was so entrenched in my life that I stopped listening for His soft voice, the enemy's prowling went unnoticed.

At some point God nudged me and reminded me that I was neglecting to balance my spiritual life. I repented and started making a concentrated effort to get back to church and start reading scripture again. Perimeter alarms blared. Strobe lights and sirens screamed to life. The enemy started to roar.

When we begin to inch closer to where God wants us to be, the enemy gets angry. He knows the battle has been won, but (cont'd on page 3)

Lenten Series Starts March 1st

Teach  
us to

pray

  
oak park  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Calgary Church of Christ - 10am - Four Churches, One Service**



**Good  
Friday**

(cont'd from page 1) he delights in working to convince us that it still rages. I believe that the enemy knows full well that Christians are more likely to feel defeated when they are subjected to those quiet battles. The nagging voice that tells you, "stop talking, you're being annoying". The rasping whisper, "you will never be as good as they are. Why even try?" The seething snarl, "you don't deserve God's grace, what have you done to deserve His favor?" Intellectually we understand that God is patient, loving, and abounding in endless grace. We know that He doesn't require perfection and that He has created us knowing full well that we are fallible and will sin. Intellect can be strangled by emotion.

The good news is that when the enemy roars, when his traps are tripped and his sirens scream, God remains firm and steadfast amidst the chaos. When we reach for His outstretched hand and ask Him to show us the truth, He embraces us and reveals it. Patiently and lovingly He will silence the beast, remove the mines and discard the barbed wire. More good news is that He has created not one of us, but a family of us. Society tells us that we should strive to power through alone. Grown ups don't cry. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger. Get over it and get on with it. But God created us to be in fellowship together, to strengthen and sharpen each other - that is what the church is intended to be and do.

So be watchful and alert. The enemy may prowl through your life and leave his traps and tricks but the fortress built and fortified by Christ Himself surrounded by guards of love, fellowship, and communion will stand victorious.

By Kristie Buckingham

## Coming soon to Oak Park...

The logo for radicalmentoring features a stylized lowercase 'm' in blue, followed by the words 'radicalmentoring' in a lowercase, sans-serif font. 'radical' is in blue and 'mentoring' is in grey.

Men's mentoring. For more information contact Rob Beingessner.

"Radical mentoring gave me the tools I needed to step up to my responsibility to demonstrate how a father loves his children, how a husband loves his wife, and how a family worships God."

-Ray Snyder, Lead Mentor, The Church at LifePark

# 7 things you may not know about the Oak Park Food Bank

We're excited to announce that the next Food Bank event is coming up on **April 5** and **6**, here at Oak Park. Here's a few things you might not know about this ministry:

## 1: Families from near and far

We serve families from our church and neighbouring communities. Their names are provided by our church staff and by Calgary Housing, who are in direct contact with those most in need. Some are local Calgarians; others are new immigrants from various cultures, backgrounds, and religions.

## 2: No canned fruit/veg please

It may seem like a great item to donate, but feedback from the recipients indicates that these items are not as popular. Folks from other countries and cultures may not be familiar with food in this format and can

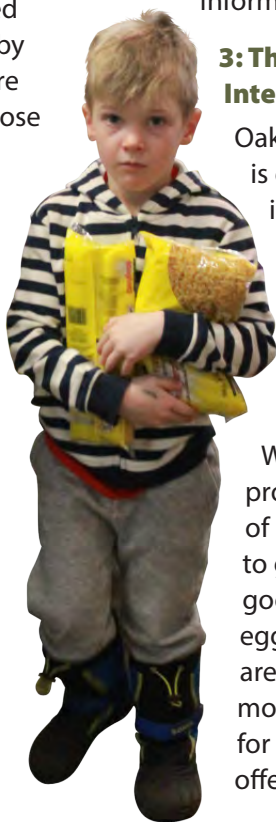
be wary – even suspicious – of what is in that can. A list of items that are most appreciated is available at the Information Centre.

## 3: This is NOT the Calgary Interfaith Food Bank

Oak Park Church Food Bank is entirely self-sufficient and independent. It operates solely on the basis of donations of non-perishable food and money from our church congregation.

## 4: Funds for fresh food

We're pleased to be able to provide our clients with a variety of high-quality fresh food items to go along with non-perishable goods. Fruit, vegetables, milk, eggs, beef, turkey – all of these are made possible by your monetary donations, designated for the Food Bank on your offering envelopes.



THANKS TO SHIRLEY CATES FOR THE PHOTOS!

### 5: The world may hate plastic bags, but we love them!

It's not that we are trying to destroy the environment, but when

we give away as much food as we do... On average, we use between 350-400 plastic grocery bags at each event. If you have any that you want to get rid of guilt-free and put to good use, bring them to us!

### 6: Not just food at the Food Bank

We encourage our clients to pick up their food from the church so they can stop and enjoy a coffee and a chat, help themselves to Doris' clothing racks, and take away any of the donated household items we have to offer.



sorting and packing perishable goods on Monday afternoon. Come join the fun – no experience necessary!

Packers, sorters, shoppers, drivers – all are essential roles to make the OPC Food Bank a success. If you would like to learn more about what goes on behind the scenes or in the heart of the action, we would be happy to train more volunteers and share the load (and the joy of serving). Please contact Kerry Grant ([kerrygrant66@hotmail.com](mailto:kerrygrant66@hotmail.com)) for more information or to volunteer.



### 7: Many hands

Dozens of our church members (from ages 3 up to ??) participate in the packing of the non-perishable goods on Sunday after church, and





*Eat Well. Spend Less.*

 **Oak Park**  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

2020

**Any one can order one or more  
Good Food Boxes.**

Boxes must be pre-ordered and paid for in cash (exact change) on or before the order by date. You can pre-purchase your next box when you pick up your order. Boxes must be picked up, before 6pm. (Note: Boxes not picked up will be donated - no refunds will be given.)

Good Food Boxes come in the following sizes:

<b>LARGE</b>	40 lbs	\$35.00
<b>MEDIUM</b>	30 lbs	\$30.00
<b>SMALL</b>	20 lbs	\$25.00

**ORDER BY**

January 13

February 3

March 9

April 13

May 4

June 1

September 7

September 28

October 26

November 30

**DELIVERY DATE**

January 22

February 12

March 18

April 22

May 13

June 10

September 16

October 7

November 4

December 9

For information call Oak Park Church office at (403) 251-5150 or email [office@oakpark.ca](mailto:office@oakpark.ca)



## **Oak Park - Tsuut'ina Bridge of Hope**

Upcoming luncheon dates:

**March 16, April 6 & May 11**

We would be thrilled to have you participate in this ministry! You can help by donating a pot of hearty soup, assisting with set-up and/or clean-up, and having lunch at a table to visit with some of our guests.



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>

11:45 AM

AGM Materials will be distributed to Oak Park's voting members\* and there will be a **Pre-AGM "Q&A Session"** held **March 22** after the service in the Fireside Room

There will be a **Pot Luck Lunch** during the AGM for those attending the meeting. Voting members\* are asked to bring the following:

**Last names A-L: Sandwiches (no nuts please)**

**Last names M-Z: Veggies/Dip, Fruit or Desserts (no peanut butter)**

Beverages will be provided

**Note:** There will be child supervision upstairs.

\* If you are not sure if you are a voting member, please contact the church office.

1UP  
03

HI-SCORE  
RES SUM

# Family Event!

# EASTER ESCAPADE

Saturday, April 4, 2020

10:00 am

## Update on Oak Park Missions



### Vienna Moilliet

Vienna has moved to her new location, Tabuk where she will open a shelter in June for abused women and children. The shelter is presently under construction. The shelter is attached to a local church whose pastor and wife have dreamed of this project for years. The pastor's wife is a social worker and she will team with Vienna and her friend Elnora to provide safety, shelter, education

and hope. This is such amazing, rapid progress but we know God has gone before putting all the 'pieces' together. Let's keep Vienna in our prayers that God would protect, guide, and help her work out all the details.

E A S T E R   S U N D A Y



Baptisms and  
Baby Dedications

If you would like to be  
baptized or have your child  
dedicated on Easter  
Sunday, April 12, please  
contact Pastor Martin at  
[martin@oakpark.ca](mailto:martin@oakpark.ca)



## Financial Update - What is the Benevolence Fund?

Over the next few Park Bench issues I will explain the purpose and use of the different funds that you can donate to at Oak Park. The **Benevolence Fund** is a long-standing practice at Oak Park of collecting designated gifts (meaning you must specify or indicate on the envelope that the money is for our Benevolence Fund) for the purpose of providing a helping hand to those in acute need. At its most basic, the fund works to uphold James 2:15-17: "Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

The Benevolence Fund works by taking requests through Pastor Martin who then passes the requests on to a small committee of congregation members (including Board and Elder representatives) who then prayerfully consider the need. Requests include essential things like utilities, rent, mortgage payment, groceries as well as special requests for expenses that are simply not able to be met. It is important to note that requests come from within our church family and also from the wider community. While it is always tempting to restrict the Fund to only those within our church family, we must be obedient to the radical call of the Scriptures to care for those who have no worldly status (see 1 John 3:17-18; Galatians 2:10; Romans 12:20; Acts 9:36). This is also a powerful witness to our community that we exist for them and not just ourselves. Part of our vetting process with requests from those outside our church family is aided by the support of Calgary Housing, Patch Services, and SWCRC. We wish we could meet and cover every request, but unfortunately, we are limited in how much we can help by the balance of our Benevolence Fund.

If you have any questions about Oak Park's Benevolence Fund, please feel free to talk to either Pastor Martin or Pastor Lane. Thank you for so generously continuing to support this Fund that is so central to our mission and calling as a church family.

By Pastor Lane

# Save the Date!

## Plan to Protect<sup>®</sup>

### Refresher

Sunday, May 3

12:00 pm to 1:30 pm



### The Blanket Exercise:

the Indigenous rights history we're rarely taught

Saturday, April 25  
12:30 - 5:30pm

Lunch  
Interactive Learning  
Music, and more

Tickets \$10  
Minimum Age 14

Oak Park Church  
11263 Oakfield Dr SW



Bridge of Hope is a ministry of Oak Park Church of Christ in partnership  
with the Tsuut'ina Nation Men's Shelter

# ART IN THE PARK

- Saturday, May 9
- 7-9pm @ Oak Park Church
- Art, Live Music & Refreshments
- Free Will Offering & Art For Sale



## ARTISTS NEEDED!

Calling all artists of Oak Park! We are hosting an "Art in the Park" night on Saturday May 9th. This event is for artists of all kinds - musicians, painters, sculptors, quilters, photographers and any other art forms you can create!

If you would like to participate and display your art for the night please contact Shelley at [shelley@oakpark.ca](mailto:shelley@oakpark.ca).



## Church of Christ Development Company Ltd.

Funding Churches...Building Ministry  
In Canada since 1957

**Get Connected**

If you would like to be included in any of these, please contact the church office:

- phone directory
- prayer chain
- eNews

# You are invited to attend...

## **Church of Christ Development Company Ltd. 2020 Annual Information Meeting Hosted by Oak Park Church of Christ**

**Church of Christ Development Company Ltd. (CCDC)** exists to help Christian churches and organizations in Canada to achieve their ministry goals by providing low interest loans for capital projects. We are currently offering 2.75% for the first five year term.

CCDC also provides many other services including:

- Building planning information and workbooks
- Information on stewardship campaigns for fund raising
- Free Administration of Designated Gift Funds providing matching camp donations

**Please join us and meet with representatives from our board of directors and staff.**



Did you know Oak Park has an app? Download to your smartphone to access online sermons & event information. You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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