



"For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land."

Song of Solomon 2:11-12



## Greetings

By: Yvonne Schuurman

Spring is quickly approaching, and with spring we see new growth, new life, and really everything just looks so fresh. Along with this we have longer daylight hours and everyone seems a bit happier. One of our team members frequently says that "we are children of the Light, and we are meant to live in the Light." How true this is. There is so much hope and renewal with the changing of the seasons. God's amazing grace was also shown once again when we were able to see a Full Eclipse As three of us, from the CCC team, stood watching we were in awe of God's power!

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# News at the CCC

**By: Yvonne Schuurman**

At CCC we are experiencing a time of change, and new growth. We welcomed Ana to our team in London at the end of March, and Adrian is joining us in May. As well, we will be opening up a Calgary office over the summer, and Brenda who was our intern will now be our first Calgary Employee. We are also currently in the process of reviewing Intern applications for a variety of different positions.

Some other new changes that we are so happy to share are in regards to new locations. More information about this change can be found later in our newsletter. We are thankful to the Community of Fergus North Canadian Reformed church for allowing us to use space in the church for the last 10 years, as well to the previous New St congregation, and now the Fellowship Church community for use of the property on New st. Both have been such a great blessing for us as we were able to serve and grow in each community.

In March we were also able to host Encouragement Cafe. Jennifer Kroesbergen shared with us her family's story she titled "The Beauty of Adoption, The Reality of Trauma." There were times that there was complete silence in the room. She shared with us how God provided so much hope as they have traveled this journey together, and how Christian Communities can come alongside families going through difficult times. In this newsletter is an article written by Jennifer for those who could not come.

Encouragement Cafe is our one main fundraising event and we were able to raise over \$5000 that evening. We are grateful for everyone's support both in person and financially. As well, for this event, we had many businesses who donated, some even very last minute. In my 9 months at CCC I still continue to be in awe of how many faithful donors that God has provided, and how much support there is for the work of CCC in our Christian Community.

In Proverbs 16 we see that when we commit our work to God, and when we follow him He will establish our steps. When we align our plans in ways that honour Him, those ways are blessed and that every decision is from God. As we begin to meet about our Strategic plan, and hear about how we can serve you better, and what the next 5 years will look like for CCC, I feel blessed and privileged to be part of this journey with the board, the staff team, and with you all. And I pray that the work we continue to do will be guided and blessed by God, and used to serve the community.

# Why Do We Have a Board?

By: Gerhard H. Visscher

Why do we have a Board? Well, for one thing, you cannot run a non-profit charity without a Board. As a Board, we know it to our duty to look after the general well-being of CCC, which includes making financial, personnel, and policy decisions that are in the best interest of CCC. We specifically want to make sure that we preserve the well-being and longevity of CCC to ensure that the Reformed communities will always have a place to go for counselling which they trust and have full confidence in the staff. We recognize at the same time, that it's the counsellors and not the Board members who are the experts in providing the necessary services, so we are careful to allow policy directions to be recommended to us by the staff for adoption. While we have some professionals on the Board, we also have a selection of non-professionals who just rejoice in ensuring that this valuable service continues for the benefit of us all. Life is good, God is great, but that does not mean there are no rough spots where we all can use some help.

## We would like to introduce some of our newest board members:

My name is Heather Bolle - I was interested in serving on the CCC board as my background is in nursing. Since I am not working currently in the field (I stay at home with our 3 children) I wanted to stay involved in serving the community. I like being able to contribute to the Christian Community to help people achieve wellness, which is why I went into nursing. And I feel that CCC allows me to do this.



My name is Crystal Sinke (née Law) and I recently joined the CCC board in the fall of 2023. As a lawyer, I have encountered my fair share of stressful periods and understand how important it is to take care of one's mental health with a Christian perspective, something that is lacking in the profession of law. As a result, I was drawn to CCC and the need that it fills in our communities. I am thankful for the opportunity to utilize my gifts and legal background in supporting the various needs of CCC.

My name is Jake Ruggi. Recently a current board member reached out and asked if I would be willing to fill a vacancy on the board. I worked as a teacher at Guido de Bres Christian High School for many years and I have served as an elder at Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church, and through these experiences, I have been able to see the value of, and the need for Christian Counseling Services. Serving a term on the CCC Board promises to be a rewarding way to learn more about mental wellness.



# The Beauty of Adoption and the Reality of Trauma

By: Jennifer Kroesbergen

I count it an honour to share some of the lessons we have been privileged to learn over the past 24 years of fostering and adoption.

To be the hands and feet of Jesus pouring His love into the lives of the needy and broken is truly beautiful work.

Adoption is beautiful because it is a demonstration of pure religion that flows from a true and real faith in Jesus. - James 1 v 27

Adoption is beautiful because it is in obedience to God's command that we love our neighbour as ourselves.

Most profoundly, Adoption is beautiful because it mirrors the gospel. Jesus saw our brokenness, came into this world, suffered on our behalf so we could be adopted into His family. - Galatians 4 v 4 & 5

However, there is another reality we cannot ignore. Amy d'MarcAngelo in her article on this topic says " While adoption is a beautiful part of God's plan, earthly adoption only happens because of brokenness. Poverty, neglect, abandonment, death, loss and abuse are what make children orphans in the first place. There is tragedy involved - searing pain that only God can heal. "

That loss, pain and brokenness, that trauma, can have a lasting impact on a child. Recent neuroscience is teaching us that the effects of trauma are profound. It has proven that early trauma literally has an effect on how the brain is wired.

Trauma can also occur prenatally, before a child is born by exposure to alcohol. The Canada FASD Diagnostic Network gives this definition: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a diagnostic term used to describe the impact of prenatal alcohol exposure on the brain and body. FASD is a lifelong disability. Individuals with FASD will experience some degree of challenges in daily living, and need special supports to help them succeed with many different parts of their daily lives.

I want to share some things I wish we had known and understood when we started our adoption journey.

It takes a village to raise a child. Therapeutic parenting is hard work. Foster/adoptive families cannot and never should do this work on their own.

Become educated. Learn about the effects of trauma, and attachment and what therapeutic, trauma informed parenting looks like. Learn about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

If a child has FASD, an early diagnosis gives a much greater chance for success.

These children need compassion; a supportive approach rather than one focused on discipline.

When things are tough, don't keep it to yourself. You are not alone. There are many in similar situations, and it is so helpful to talk to someone who gets it.

Self care is NOT selfish. If you don't take care of you, you will not be able to take care of your child.

Acknowledge the grief that can come with this journey. John Piper has some very wise words about grief. "Occasionally weep deeply over the life you hoped would be. Grieve the losses. Then wash your face. Trust God. And embrace the life you have."

Whether you are an adoptive parent, or an adoptee, find a counsellor for yourself who is familiar with the complexities of adoption and trauma.

Remember that you are not expected to do this work in your own strength. Our great God, who put the desire in your heart and in his providence arranged every detail to bring your child to you is with you every step of the way. He loves you and He loves your child.

1 Corinthians 15v58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

The LORD knows the big picture. We have no idea what the long term outcome will be from our saying yes to child. The ripple effect will be way beyond what we will ever see. We don't know all that God has in store for each one of us.

What we DO know is that God is GOOD and we can trust him. To Him be all the Glory!!

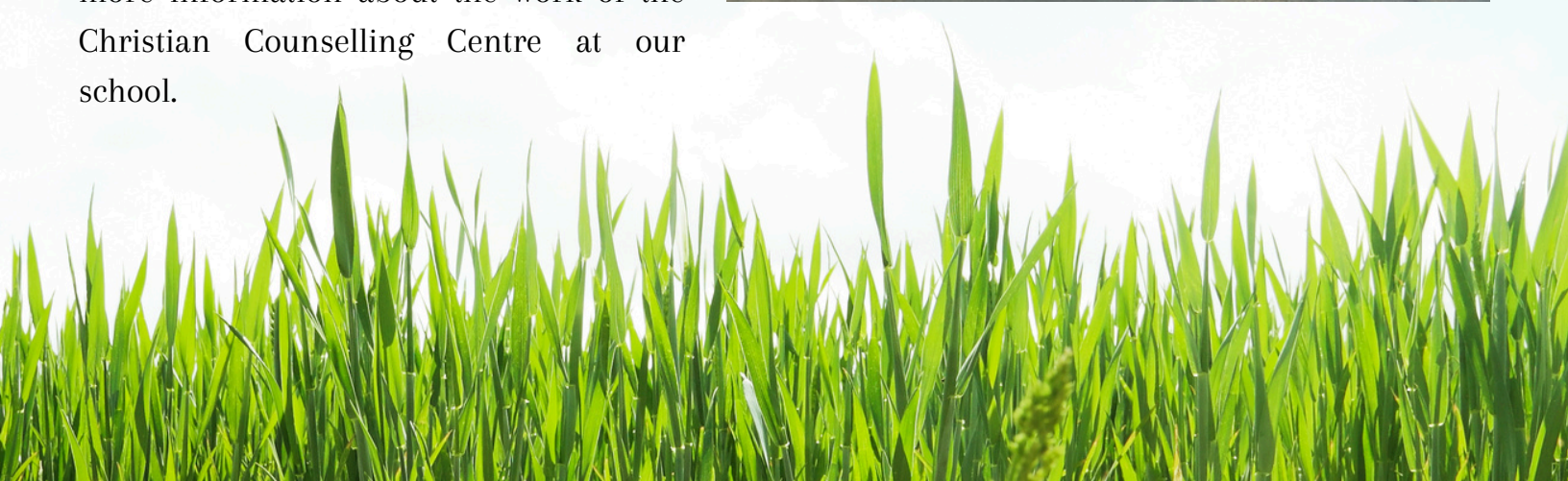
# Grace Christian School

By: Mike Nederveen

Over the past few years, the topic of student mental health has been a regular discussion point at our school. Grace Christian School is a JK-8 school with around 150 students, and last year we got much more intentional about how we address student mental health here at school. As educators we recognize the scope and limitations of our expertise and experience and so we were looking for practical ways to work within this educational sphere to maximize how we address student mental health.

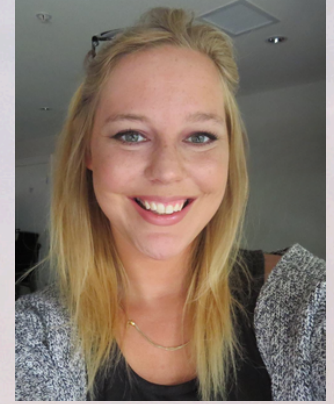
For the 2023/2024 school year we partnered with the Christian Counselling Centre and have worked specifically with Abby Tigchelaar. In January 2024 Abby came to the school for two full days; on the first day she led three 45 minute assemblies in our gym to grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-8, with parents attending these assemblies, on mental health in general. These assemblies were spaced out to allow for Abby and parents to dialogue after each assembly. For the remainder of the first day and over the second day, Abby visited each classroom for 30-45 minutes and spoke to the students about topics tailored by their teachers. These visits went well and, based on feedback from our teachers, we're planning for Abby to return next school year to visit each classroom once again, but this time for a longer period of time each visit.

Abby and the Christian Counselling Centre have proven to be valuable resources to help us meet our goal of being more intentional about addressing student mental health here at Grace Christian School. I welcome any interested parties to contact me so that I can relay more information about the work of the Christian Counselling Centre at our school.



# New Volunteer

**By: Amanda Koskamp**



My name is Amanda Koskamp, née Krikke. I am a volunteer at the Christian Counselling Center, and am currently completing my Master's of Counselling Psychology at Yorkville University.

Ever since I was younger, I knew I wanted to work in the mental health field, and as time went on, I learned about the healing power that can only truly come through Christ. Having experienced and worked through my own variety of struggles, having worked with others struggling with mental health, as well as learning the practical pieces of counselling at school, I am excited to walk alongside others in their journeys.

With my desire to work in this field, and the values displayed by the Christian Counselling Center, I felt this would be a great fit. I began as a volunteer at the CCC in December doing various tasks that support the administration and have been enjoying my interactions with the staff and the ability to glean information from them regarding different aspects of being a counsellor.

My goal upon completion of this master's program is to work as a counsellor, continue learning through various workshops and trainings, and become a registered psychotherapist. Ultimately, my desire is to continue learning so I can assist others in the challenging seasons they find themselves in life.

*"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will."*

*Romans 12:2*

# WrapAround CCC

By: Shirley Broekema

CCC Wraparound Volunteer Coordinator and Coach

“What is WrapAroundCCC?” This question is often posed to us. Some have never heard of it, others have heard something of it, and yet others have experience with WrapAroundCCC in different capacities.

In a nutshell, WrapAroundCCC is a team of people working with an individual or family to address their complex and significant needs under the guidance of a faith-based trained and certified CCC facilitators.

A faith-based WrapAround is living out the Gospel mandate to serve our neighbour in a Christ-like manner using the principles of the WrapAround process, while acknowledging that God is our Sovereign Lord and Provider. We hold to the foundational truth that we are made in the image of God and called to live out this image for His glory. It is because of our relationship with Jesus Christ that we are called to serve one another. In His Word, Christ demands from us that in our love for Him, we show love, care, and compassion for one another. It commands us to remember who we are and who we become by grace alone.

Words always sound great and look wonderful on paper, but how do we carry this out in practice when we are feeling burnt out, tired, and struggling to find the best way to work through the hard times? At CCC, we would like to suggest the WrapAround process.

Connecting with us means that you would have access to one of our trained and certified facilitators who would meet with you as an individual or a family to share some of the difficult and complex challenges you face. Being in a WrapAround means that you have access to a model of care that helps you navigate your situation with a team with your natural and formal supports within your community. A WrapAroundCCC facilitator will assist you in creating and implementing a plan which includes core principles and values like:

- Your voice, your choice – you identify your needs and your team members
- Nothing about us without us – confidentiality is a must between you and your team – we promise to handle your concerns with the utmost care and privacy
- Strengths-based – which gifts and strengths has God blessed you with that can be used to reach better outcomes.

Today, we still live with the effect of sin in our lives, whether it comes to us through our struggles, sickness, or disability. Often, when faced with these circumstances, we struggle in isolation. God asks us to journey together towards a fuller life as a people working together with a common goal through trust and mutual relationships.

In 2020, the Christian Counselling Centre agreed to bring WrapAround under their umbrella of care. Since that time, we have trained and certified more than 25 facilitators across southern Ontario ready to serve and ‘wrap’ individuals and families with care and support.

Recently, we held our first ever Facilitator Event as a learning and support effort for our facilitators. Kevin Hoogstad presented on the topic “Coming Alongside Christians Struggling and Stuck.” CCC Executive Director, Yvonne Schuurman explained what it means to be a facilitator with the CCC and provided an update on the organizational changes. This “first” ever event was well received as informative and upbuilding for those in attendance.

If you would like to know more or are interested in a WrapAround, please contact [wraparoundccc@gmail.com](mailto:wraparoundccc@gmail.com)



*“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.” – Galatians 6:9-10*

# We are moving two offices, and we need your help

**Fergus Location** - as of June 6th our Fergus office will open in a new location, 125 St George St W in Fergus. For the last 10 years we have been using office space in Fergus North Canadian Reformed Church. We are so thankful for their generous support. Our hope is that in the fall we will be able to bring on a new intern as well, to add some additional days to our office in Fergus.

**Burlington Office** - as of July 2nd we will also be in a new office in Burlington. Due to this being a larger move, our office will be closed for in person counselling the week of June 24th-28 while we move. We will reopen in our new space July 2nd at 720 Guelph Line LL 101. There is a large parking lot behind the building - you will see a sign from the parking lot for the main entrance. Take the stairs or elevator down to LL 101 and come and see us in our new space.

## How can you help us?

We need your support in so many ways

1) First - both churches had been so generous, and most of our furniture is not our own. So we need to furnish both new offices. We have come up with a list of ways for people to help us with this, if you are able

a) Financial Donations - we have set up online giving with Canada Helps, that you can specifically donate to our Office Relocation and Set up plan.

b) E-transfer - you can still e-transfer us at [ccclambeth@bellnet.ca](mailto:ccclambeth@bellnet.ca) - please indicate that this is for the office relocation and set up project.

c) We recognize that some people enjoy buying things - we have set up a Registry list with Amazon. You can log into our wish list and purchase items. These items will be sent to our current Burlington location, and we will be able to use it in our new space. The list is public so go to [Amazon.ca](https://www.amazon.ca/registries/gl/guest-view/2FQUBRK5UTMMB) and look for Office Relocation and Decoration Project this list will be changing regularly so please check it often. If you would rather purchase somewhere else and drop it off, we are ok with that too - please just email or call Yvonne <https://www.amazon.ca/registries/gl/guest-view/2FQUBRK5UTMMB>.

Donations through this means will be gift in kind, so we are still able to give a receipt. Please just be sure to send us your receipt

2) Do you have a moving company? We will be looking for movers.

3) Are you a student looking for volunteer hours - we will have hours for you as we set up, and unpack everything in our new space - email Yvonne to sign up for this [yvonne@christiancounsellingcentre.ca](mailto:yvonne@christiancounsellingcentre.ca)

The anticipated costs of these office moves and set up is \$30,000. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers as with both offices, our intent is to be able to increase our services in the communities. We want to make these spaces warm and welcoming spaces. We also hope to make our spaces nice for our team to work in. Coming to counselling can be very hard, and we hope that our environments will be areas that people find comfort in. We are so thankful for the ongoing support of our donors. We pray that God will bless these changes.