

# THE BRIDGE

A Newsletter Connecting You to Temple Baptist Church

Issue 2 December 2013

## CHRISTMAS SERMON SERIES



Lead Pastor  
Dom Russo

Priceless, as some of you might know, is one of those words that help us express those wonderful and memorable moments in life.

With small children in our home, the priceless look on the faces of our kids as they open their Christmas gifts is so special that we try hard to hold on to those moments.

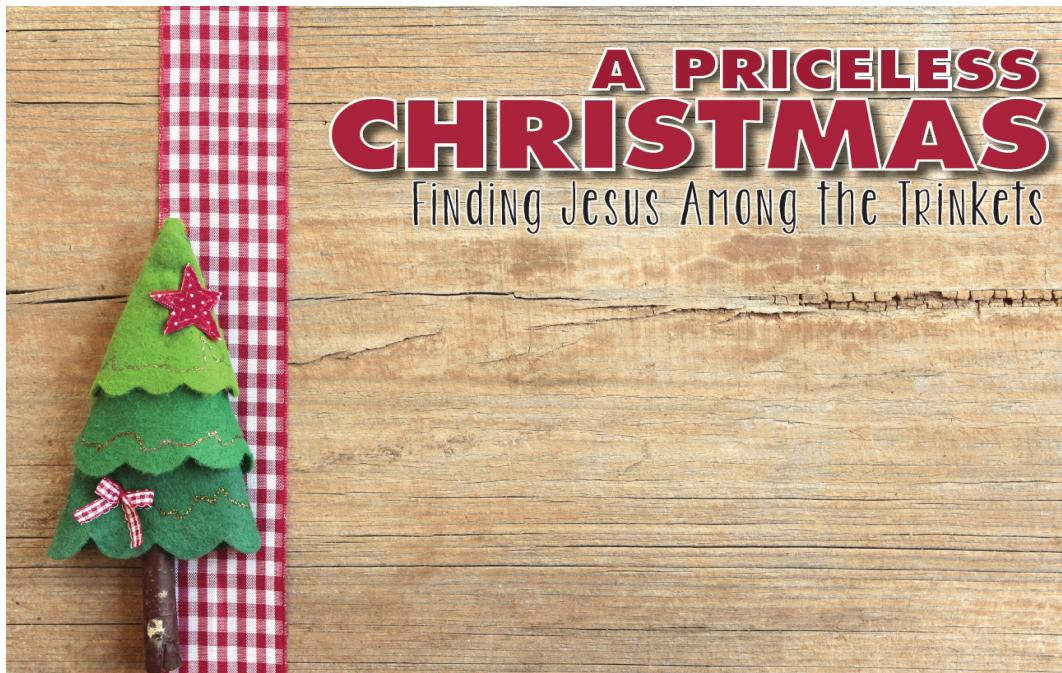
Why? They are priceless!

I often wonder how God the Father feels when we, His children, come to embrace the priceless gift He gives us at Christmas.

The Christmas story as found in the Bible points us to the great gift of Jesus, God incarnate, and the priceless experience of the biblical characters as they realize the hope that awaits them because of Jesus' birth.

You are holding our second edition of The Bridge, a communication resource to keep you connected to some of the exciting things that God is doing at Temple.

As we try to keep people updated on exciting and transformative moments, one word that helps us describe them is "priceless."



The Bible tells us that the shepherds are visited by a host of angels who tell the shepherds to go look for the newborn child.

When they find him, the Bible says, "When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them" (Luke 2:17,18).

Luke tells us that amazement gripped the hearts of those who heard about the priceless gift available

in the birth of Jesus. This Christmas we all get a chance to stand amazed again at the gift that has been given to us. As we stop to reflect

on this special gift, may we never forget that the joy and hope available to us at Christmas is truly priceless.

## IN THIS ISSUE:

Small Groups at Temple.....	pg. 2
A Thank You to Pat Bell.....	pg. 3
Church Christmas Schedule.....	pg. 3
Dear Church Family.....	pg. 4
Remembering Kids at Christmas.....	pg. 5
College Ministries .....	pg. 5
Introducing Lelanya Perryman.....	pg. 5
Children's Ministries .....	pg. 6
'Tis the Season.....	pg. 6
An Alpha Story .....	pg. 7
2013 Christmas Hampers.....	pg. 8

# SMALL GROUPS AT TEMPLE



Greg Mac Robbie  
Pastor of Church Ministries

## The Meeting Place

Ok, you're new. You've been coming to Temple for a while now, and you're lovin' the Sunday morning experiences, but you realize that there's more to it than that. You want to connect on a deeper level with

others, but you're not sure what to do. You've heard about small groups, and you feel like you would really love to find your place with a group of friends you can share the journey with. But, you're hesitating... wondering... "What if I don't like the group I join? What if they don't like me? What if it's awkward and difficult? Is there any way I can give small groups a try before taking the plunge? Is there somewhere I can go to meet people and find out whether or not we really click?"

The answer to your questions is "YES!" The Meeting Place is a new venue we've introduced this fall to help you meet new people and test-drive small groups.

It's a two-hour gathering, once a week for 4 or 5 weeks, where you'll enjoy a great meal, get to know great people and have a great discussion around a great video series.

You can participate as much as you feel comfortable with. You can switch up where you sit so you can meet even more people, and you can do all of this without the pressure of having to join anything at the end. If you find connections for a group, great! If not, come back again!

Our first Meeting Place is just finishing up now. Guests are talking about how great the experience has been! Why not be a part of it next time?

Watch for an upcoming Meeting Place in the New Year!

## A New Kind of Equip

Skills and tools for life!

Look at the ads on the net and in your mailbox and one thing's for sure, the new models for 2014 are already on the floor.

Whether it's the flashy iPhone 5s, or the 2014 Toyota Corolla, there's a buzz in the air of new things coming.

Why all the hype on new things? Besides the obvious attempt to capture your attention, there is a constant effort in most industries to make things better, faster and more competitive.

Here at Temple, your staff and ministry leaders are constantly looking for ways to improve the way we do things. One result of that effort is a new kind of Equip Class.

The goal is still the same: to provide you with the skills and tools you need to grow deep in your relationship with God, and widen your influence with others. But the packaging is changing. Rather than confining Equip to a one hour time slot before the services on Sundays, we are going to offer a more flexible and creative scheduling model.

Classes will be tailored to provide the most valuable skills, crafted for maximum impact, and delivered in the most concise schedule possible.

That means you might find a class you want running for 6 weeks on a Wednesday night, or for 4 weeks on a Saturday morning. We are excited about this year's model, and hope you give it a spin in the New Year!

# THE MEETING PLACE



# RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION OF PAT BELL

**A**s many of you know, Pat Bell has served as the Missions Committee Chair for 5+ years. We cannot express how grateful we are for her countless hours of work and devotion to missions here at Temple. When I think of Pat, I think of:

Patient with missionaries.

Advocate for missionaries.

Time well spent with missionaries.

Builds good relationships with missionaries.

Example for other Mission Committees to follow.

Loves on missionaries.

Listens without criticizing missionaries when they need to ‘vent.’

Pat has been a wonderful friend, and support of ours for many years!

— James and Cindy Borody

**W**e pull into the driveway, all exhausted and worn. We had just driven across the country from Seattle Washington to begin an intimidating part of our missionary journey- support raising. We are far away from friends, family and anything familiar.

We see someone in the lot and a lady gets out of her car. She welcomes us and shows us around. She is so easy to get to know and already we feel like we have known her our whole lives, yet we have been here less than 5 minutes. I immediately wanted her to stay so I



## Temple Baptist Church Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve – Tuesday, Dec. 24

Church Office will be open from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
Temple's Candlelight Christmas Eve Service is at

6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Day – Wednesday, Dec. 25 (closed)

Boxing Day – Thursday, Dec. 26 (closed)

Friday, Dec. 27

Church Office hours (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

Monday, Dec. 30

Church Office hours (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

New Year's Eve – Tuesday, Dec. 31

Church Office will be open from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

New Year's Day – Wednesday, Jan. 1 (closed)

could hear her life story and I could tell her mine.

After she leaves, we look at each other and say- “We love Pat Bell!!” She is truly genuine and even back then, we felt like we could tell her anything and would only ever find grace — and of course, a laugh or two! :)

We came here with no home, few friends and no family. We are leaving for the mission field with a hometown, and friends that have become family to us, whom we will always come home to.

God used Pat Bell to create that for us from the second we arrived. And God continues to use her life to bless and encourage us.

We are eternally grateful for Pat, her heart for seeing the Great Commission carried out, and her love for Jesus, which shines thru her life here, and to the ends of the earth.

— Wesley and Tenley Jank

## “Pat Bell, Thank you”

Pat Bell is indeed “priceless.”

**A**s full time career missionaries, we have had the privilege of being on the receiving end of Pat’s tireless efforts for the last 15 years.

Pat has a genuine Passion and devotion for Missions, and for us Missionaries.

Whether we are on the field, returning from our field of service, or heading back overseas, Pat in her leadership role of the Missions Committee, has endeavored to do all she can, to best serve us.

Pat is always Ambitious. Through the years, she has arranged for housing and had groceries and gift cards waiting for us upon our return. She has also planned BBQ’s and gatherings, to make us feel special, as part of welcoming us home.

As the Missions’ Chairperson, she has always given us the opportunity to share our hearts with her and the other committee members. These times have been a source of encouragement to us as we have freely expressed needs we might be experiencing as well as the struggles, joys and challenges we have faced in our last term on the field.

She would share these needs with others so they could pray for us more effectively.

Pat, thank you for tirelessly and sacrificially giving your time for us missionaries. Your efforts have not been without notice, and we are very thankful for the part you have had in our ministry in helping take the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

— Mike and Beth Sutton

# *Dear Church Family,*

## **THANK YOU!**

On behalf of the leadership and all of those who call Temple “home,” Jim Bailey and I would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation for your generosity this year. Your financial gifts have given us strength to engage in fresh work, hope to dream new dreams, and the resources we need to participate creatively with God in his transforming work in Sarnia and around the world.

This has been a remarkable year. As we move toward a strong finish to 2014, we look back with a sense of amazement at how God has walked with us.

For Jim and I three things stand out in particular:

1. We are an active and faithful church – The people of Temple have put their commitment on display, standing together in the midst of a season of transition and change. We are living examples of what it means to grow together in purpose in unity and we have God to thank for that.
2. We are at another exciting moment in the history of our church – Temple has had a long history of experiencing new seasons of renewal and growth. We believe that the strengthening of our staff team under the strong teaching and leadership of Pastor Dom Russo has given us the resources we need moving forward with trust and anticipation.
3. We are dreaming about the future together – 2014 promises to be a year of new dreams and new initiatives. We have continually been in prayer, asking God to show us how to best impact and transform our City and surrounding area. Together with the exceptional gifts and abilities we have in our congregation, we are preparing for innovative kingdom work in the years ahead.

*As we approach the end of the church year, please keep Temple in mind as you consider your year-end donations. Prayerfully consider giving a donation so that we, as a church, can end this year in a strong financial position.*

There are a number of ways you can give:

1. Offering envelopes are available at the Welcome Centre or can be requested through the office
2. We are registered with all banks in the City. When you go to a bank, you can ask your teller about making a donation to Temple and they will assist.
3. Donations can now be made online through our website ([www.templebaptist.com](http://www.templebaptist.com))
4. Some people have chosen to use the church's pre-authorized giving plan. For more information about this, please contact Jim Bailey at [treasurer@templebaptist.com](mailto:treasurer@templebaptist.com).
5. A series of post-dated cheques can also be a convenient way of making regular donations, especially if you are away or on vacation.
6. Others have decided to take advantage of the added tax benefits of giving a donation in the form of stocks and bonds, and thus avoiding taxation on capital gains. Again, if you would like to explore taking advantage of this option, please contact Jim Bailey at [treasure@templebaptist.com](mailto:treasure@templebaptist.com).
7. Whatever the form or method of giving, let us express our deepest thanks in advance for your ongoing kindness and generosity. We wait expectantly to see what God has planned on the road ahead and we look forward to traveling there together.

In Christ,  
*James Bekkers (Executive Pastor) and  
Jim Bailey (Treasurer)*

*Reminder: Donations must be received in the office by noon on December 31, 2013 if they are to be included in your 2013 tax return.*

# OUR YOUTH: PARTNERING WITH THE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

Christmas is quickly approaching, and as you walk through the malls, the sight and sounds of the Season are upon us.

We easily get caught up in the hustle and bustle of Christmas shopping, trying to find those perfect gifts for family and friends.

But so often we forget about those who are less fortunate than us — those parents who can't afford to make their kids' Christmas wishes come true. This is when I am so thankful for organizations like the Children's Aid Society because this organization is in tune with the needs of these families.

Over the past seven years, our senior high ministry has had the privilege of partnering with the Children's



Pastor Dave

Aid Society in making some of those Christmas wishes come true. Last year we collected over \$1800 and were able to shop for 18 children.

This year the benevolent offering collected on Dec 1st will go toward this project. Then on the evening of Dec. 8th, our high school students will be going shopping for these children.

The exciting part is that our students also contribute money and are able to be part of something bigger than themselves as they wrap gifts for these kids. It is an event that our students look forward to every year. Would you please consider giving as we help to meet this need in our community?



Sarnia-Lambton  
Children's Aid Society

## COLLEGE MINISTRY AT TEMPLE

For those who have been, or are currently enrolled post secondary studies, you'll know that Christmas break usually seems like a wonderful yet distant idea. The end of the semester can be so incredibly busy with essays, presentations and exams that it's hard to believe that a time of rest is just beyond the horizon.

This is the season that a number of our College/University students are just coming out of, so if you can, encourage them!

These students have worked hard and they've earned this time to rest and prepare themselves for yet another semester.

As we move forward with our Young Adults ministry, we really want



Pastor Fraser

to be a welcoming place not only for students who are from the area but we want to be a home for those coming from outside the city.

There are a number of students at Lambton College who come to Sarnia with little to no connections at all.

Our hope is that as the Lord continues to use our Young Adults to reach out to these students and serve them on their own initiative as the Spirit leads them to do so.



Lelanya Perryman  
Office Coordinator

## INTRODUCING LELANYA (OFFICE CO-ORDINATOR)

Lelanya Perryman comes to Temple from London, with past connections here in Sarnia. She has been attending Temple for the past 6-8 months.

She has a special love for travel and evangelism; having made several mission trips already.

Currently she is helping with Girls Alive and will be joining us as our staff clerk.

Over the last 7 years Lelanya attended The University of Western Ontario.

She completed her BA in English Language and Literature (2010), and recently completed her Masters in Library and Information Science. Lelanya is creative, personable

and has a special eye for detail. We sense this opportunity is an excellent match for her skills and background and we're looking forward to getting to know her better.

When asked about her new role, Lelanya replied, "I am hoping my personality, skills, work experience, education and my faith experience will add value to Temple, and I am really excited to begin this new chapter in my life."

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY UPDATE

## Dude, you hear what I hear?

Christmas time at Temple is always priceless!

It is magical to see how the spirit of Christmas and the birth of Jesus bring extra spunk to the kids. This year our Christmas musical takes place on the heels of our Girls Alive Tea Night and the Boys X-treme bowling nights. The kids have been even more excited now that the Christmas musical is in full swing.

Just imagine being in a store and seeing the mannequins come to life! These mannequins only know what Christmas is about from the PA system in the store and from the shoppers. They soon learn that they have been misinformed. This is a musical you will not want to miss! The kids have been practicing since September and are excited to



Kathrine Reyes  
Director of Children's Ministry



Girls Alive Gr. 4 girls with their "Rice Krispie Houses."

encourage you this Christmas!

Sunday, Dec. 15th at 10:30 a.m., come hear what Christmas is all about from the children at Temple! Bring your neighbor, friends and family for this special morning.

## 'TIS THE SEASON



Andy Sherlock  
Director of Worship

As I walk into the local coffee shop, I am bombarded with smells of peppermint, apple, and cinnamon. Houses throughout my neighborhood have begun to decorate their yards with twinkle lights and colorful blow-up lawn ornaments.

It's that time of year again ... Christmas! Christmas is an exciting time that fills my mind with thoughts from Christmases past, and endless excitement for the upcoming Christmas season.

We at Temple are very privileged and excited to have you come and spend your time with us in celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. During this season of celebration, you can expect some new and wonderful events. . .

This year at we were happy to bring a fresh new look to our auditorium stage. This new setup allows us to incorporate additional

features into our regular worship services and enhance our special Christmas events.

On Sunday, December 15, the Children's Christmas Musical, "Dude, you hear what I hear?" will be performed during our 10:30am Worship Service. I know these kids have been practicing for months and are so excited to be sharing their excitement for Christmas.

On December 22, we are delighted to have Promiseland's choir on stage singing with our Worship Team. I can't wait to see which young children have a real interest in performing; maybe one day they will be a part of our Worship Team!

We are pleased to announce on December 24, a brass quartet will be playing a variety of Christmas carols.

This will be followed by our traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve service from 6:30-7:30pm.

We hope to see you and your loved ones celebrating this Christmas season and wish everyone a blessed New Year!

# CHRISTMAS TIME AT TCA!

For about 4 to 5 weeks each year, TCA acts as a pickup and delivery depot for Operation Christmas Child (OCC). A large number of gift boxes, about the size of a shoebox, are dropped off to TCA in October. Some boxes are assembled by our grade 7/8 students and distributed to our church family at Temple.

Boxes are also picked up by other churches and groups in our community. Once the gift boxes are filled and marked "boy" or "girl," they are dropped off back at TCA where they are packed into larger boxes and shipped to a warehouse in Kitchener.

From there, they are shipped to children all over the world. TCA has been involved in OCC for over 10



Dave Lawrence  
Acting Administrator TCA

years now. We expect to send over 750 gift boxes this year!

The children who receive these boxes, filled with gifts and toys, will also be presented with the Good News of Jesus Christ and His wonderful gift to mankind! Priceless!

On a local level, TCA students play a part in buying food and gifts for our Christmas hamper program. TCA students are also involved in the sorting, assembly and delivery of Christmas hampers.

In early December, TCA students present a Christmas program for our seniors.

It is a delightful time for students and seniors alike followed by a wonderful Christmas dinner prepared by TCA parents.

Thank you for your generosity which affords TCA such wonderful opportunities to serve!

Merry Christmas from TCA!

## AN ALPHA STORY...

By Anne Wong

It is a delight to be a part of any ministry that involves helping people discover who Jesus is and find joy in undertaking a personal faith journey with God. After re-launching the Alpha program with a winter Alpha course in January 2013, we have now just concluded our second course this past fall.

On Tuesday evenings for 8 weeks, the Alpha course meets to explore the Christian faith in a friendly and relaxed manner.

It's a place where people can ask questions in a non-threatening environment and look for answers together.

Each session begins with a great meal, followed by a video on a pertinent topic of the Christian faith and small group discussion around the table. We consider topics such as "Who is Jesus?" "Why did Jesus die?" and "Why and how do I pray?"

It is a joy to see our Alpha ministry supported by set-up teams, meal teams and caring table discussion facilitators. As friends bring friends and family along to share the Christian journey, here is what some of our Alpha participants have to say:

Emilie Roussis (Winter Alpha, 2013) – "The support I received from the people I met at Alpha played a huge part in my spiritual journey. I was able to find answers to many of the questions I had. Some were



doubts, concerns or plainly stuff I did not understand that I had read or heard. Looking back there are still many quotes I use that I learned during the Alpha course. There are many things I learned that helped me answer other people's questions too."

Louise Dufresne (Emilie's mom, Fall Alpha, 2013) – "I decided to take the Alpha course to understand what Emilie, my daughter, was talking about. I had seen changes in my daughter since she had given her life to God. I never expected what happened to me after that!"

While attending a church service of music and worship in Winnipeg with my daughter I started to cry.

I prayed for faith, clarity and no regrets. Later, after talking more with my Alpha table group and reading a verse recommended to me (John 1:12) I realized that I too now had asked Jesus into my life.

Now the Holy Spirit lives in me – abundant and plentiful! Nothing is the same anymore.

Thank you very much Alpha and especially those at my table. Alpha has been life changing for me."

Kevin Hodgert (Fall Alpha, 2013) – "I loved the course and our leaders. I loved that as a new Christian there was no pressure. It inspired me to join 'The Meeting Place.' I am reading my Bible daily now."

Julie Brown (Fall Alpha, 2013) – "An Alpha highlight for me was seeing the growth in my daughter and seeing how close she is to accepting God to take over her life! It excites me because 5 years ago, I was close to where she is now."

# 2013 CHRISTMAS HAMPERS!



Jim Train  
Congregational Care

"I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare."

— C.S. Lewis,  
*Mere Christianity*



**130 hampers were given out last year!**

This penetrating quote from the past has been a living reality in the life of Temple's congregation. Every year we prepare for the Christmas Hamper ministry knowing we need \$18,000-\$20,000. God moves His people to meet the need through money but also by purchasing gifts, volunteering to help sort food, fill hampers and deliver them to over 130 homes last year.

Why do we do this? Jesus tells us to minister to the needy and it's a joy to do so. Christmas time helps us also to reflect on how much God has given us through His Son. We not only have salvation and eternal life but also great hope, peace within, love, joy and much more.

I'd like you to read this letter I received from a 2012 Hamper recipient:

Dear Pastor Jim,

Please share my letter with your congregation at Temple. My family was overwhelmed by the very generous Christmas food hamper and the gift delivered to our door December 19.

The large turkey was enjoyed by everyone. I was able to make soup with all the leftovers which we enjoyed for days. We were totally surprised when there were gifts for our son and grandchildren as well. The kids are busy now learning how to play the new games. Our son is off to Lambton Mall with his gift card to buy much needed clothes.

I enjoyed a warm visit with one of the delivery teams. Sarah was a very gracious listener. Our lives have been greatly touched. We are so grateful for the ministry your congregation continues to support each Christmas.

Wishing everyone at Temple a blessed year of good health and much happiness.

Thank you in advance for meeting the needs of many.  
Pastor Jim Train



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