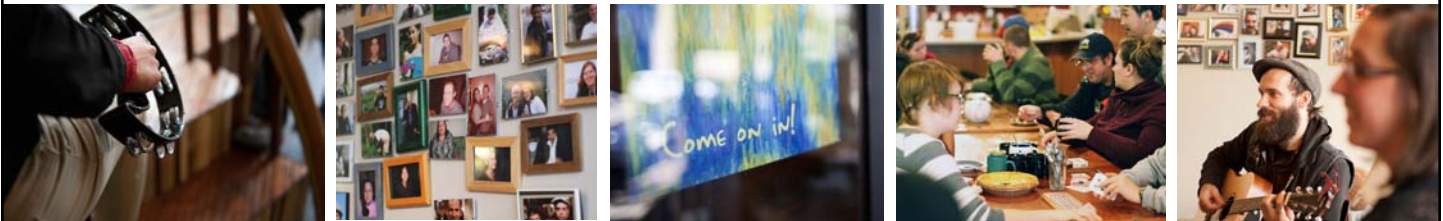




jacob'sWELL

Summer 2014



In this issue, our focal point is on transitions. Though life's circumstances take us in different directions, Jacob's Well as a community holds together these changes loosely, as we let the Holy Spirit lead our community organically in life together.

It's Worth It *by Beth Carlson-Malena*

Beth has been a prominent member and leader at Jacob's Well for the past 9 years. She has blessed us with her leadership skills, pastoral care, musical talent and just being a great friend. As she moves to Toronto to follow God's calling on her life, she leaves us some words of encouragement reflecting on her time at Jacob's Well. We will miss her dearly!

Friends, I'm writing to you from the road to Toronto where I will soon begin my new job with New Direction Ministries. Although the many tears I shed hugging you all goodbye suggest I've begun to feel the grief of leaving you, in reality, it hasn't quite sunk in that I will no longer have the privilege of seeing you all regularly. It's hard to believe I won't be at Community Kitchen and Wednesday worship and Friday coffee time in coming weeks. These times have become very holy and precious to me; I will miss them and I will miss you.

As I have tried to process this transition, I've been pondering what to write to you here. We've had a tradition at Jacob's Well that when staff leave the community, they leave behind some kind of encouragement or exhortation.

For me, one phrase has been consistently coming to mind... Love, friendship-love, love across the divide... is worth it.

It took nine years of Jacob's Well to learn the lesson that our love is never a waste of time or effort, even if it feels useless or futile in the moment.

I know how it is at Jacob's Well and other communities who specialize in diversity. We're encountering people so different from ourselves, from such different backgrounds and life experiences, that it can take superhuman energy just to start catching a glimpse of how they see the world. From there, it can take years and years to get to the place where we trust each other with



Beth leading worship at Gleaners

vulnerable parts of ourselves—you all know how long this took for me! We all have walls built up, whether they're made of pride, past betrayals, bitterness, fear, or the need to be in control. This makes love hard.

Some days at Jacob's Well, you go out of your way to be patient with someone, and they snap back at you. You listen to someone's story but they show no interest in yours. You share your problems with someone, and instead of empathizing, they respond with assumptions or heavy-handed advice. You sit in the prayer room, and wonder if it makes any difference whether you pray for anyone or not. You spend an hour washing dishes and think about all the ways your time could be better spent. You fumble your way through a friendship, and feel like it's two steps forward, one step back. You try to show love, but it doesn't seem to change anything or matter

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to anyone. And some days, you just want to give up this hard work of loving people who are different from you, and stick to hanging out with folks who are more similar to you, or at least give your time at a non-profit where the results are apparent and measurable.

I have felt this way so many times at Jacob's Well. But I'm convinced now that my love, and your love, is not wasted. I could try to convince you by telling you that God sees it all, knows your hearts, and will reward you in eternity for the love you show and the friendships you've worked on. Even though it's true, maybe that's too abstract and future-oriented to motivate you today. Instead, I'll tell you that every person is a battlefield, and your love helps the right side win.

In First Nations tradition, every person has a good wolf and a bad wolf fighting inside them, and the wolf that wins in the end is the wolf they feed the most during their lifetime. (If you're the type that prefers more theological terms, you could interpret the good wolf as Christ's reign in your life, and the bad wolf as the reign of your own fear and sin.)

When you show love to someone, whether or not they seem to notice or care, you feed the good wolf in yourself, and you make it possible for the other person to do the same thing. When you recognize the image of God in someone and treat them with the dignity they deserve simply for bearing His image, you start to strip away layers of bad-wolf-shame. When you choose to view your enemy through the eyes of God, and listen to their story (Brian Zahnd says an enemy is someone whose story you haven't yet heard), you become nutritious good-wolf-food. Some of these effects and results of love are invisible for a long time, until the good wolf gets strong enough to really

flex its muscles. But just because it seems like nothing is happening doesn't mean your love, even your tiny acts of love, are going to waste.

Peter Maurin, a good friend of one of my heroes, Dorothy Day, said he wanted to "help build a society in which it is easier for people to be good." He noticed that when people felt able to be good people, they were happier people. By loving and including each other, warts and all, you inspire and encourage the good in each other. You become more like Christ, and you work alongside the Holy Spirit to transform each other. Through the experience of being loved and included by a multitude of diverse people at Jacob's Well, I have been transformed. Your iron has sharpened my iron (Prov. 27:17). I leave Vancouver with a much healthier good wolf.

So friends, I challenge you and I challenge myself to do the same things from opposite sides of the country—you in your good work, and me in mine... Include everyone. Honour everyone. Pray for each other. Forgive even when it hurts. Listen to your enemy's story. Resist evil with small, seemingly insignificant acts of good. Believe that you are being transformed for good, and that you are part of that same transformation in others, even when you can't see the proof. Feed the good wolf. Above all, clothe yourselves in love (Col. 3:14). Love is never wasted. Love is always worth it. I love you all.

Summer Water Colour Workshop by Gherhardus H. Shievink (Harry) — hosted at Jacob's Well



Pictured above: Stretching canvas in a water bath, gallery showing and picture with some of the students. Thank you Vancouver Foundation Neighborhood Small Grants for helping Harry share his talent with others!

All About Gleaners *by Ron H.*

Ron has been part of our community for more than 10 years now, and continues to bless us with his smile and work around the Well.

I'm grateful that the Lord used me as a tool to help those less fortunate than me. This was my second time on the trip to the Okanagan Gleaners. It is located in Oliver, B.C. about 5 hours from Vancouver. I really enjoyed the car ride there and back. The weather was really nice, and so was the air-conditioning! At night we camped out at the orchards.

Our days began by waking up in the morning, having a shower, and eating breakfast together. After that, we went to process cherries and potatoes. I enjoyed processing potatoes, but I liked processing cherries better. To process the cherries I first separated the good from the bad ones, made sure they were clean, and then pitted them and sliced them in half. After a while we took a coffee break together and then went back to processing. Some of us spread the chopped food on trays and placed them in driers for at least 8 hours. After processing, we had lunch together. Then in the afternoon, it was our free time.

During our free time, we went to the beach, played catch in the sand, and bocce ball on the grass. Some people went into the lake, but I did not. After that, we went back to Gleaners, and we had dinner together and played games like Koob (it's like lawn bowling with wood!), and cards.

On the last full day a few of us went to Tim Horton's to escape the heat and play cards. After dinner that night we drove to Tickleberry's to enjoy some ice-cream. I had 2 scoops of black cherry ice-cream, and it had pieces of cherry in it! What a nice way to end the trip!



The Impeded Stream is the One that Sings *by Berto Jaramillo*

Berto has been part of the JW community for over 9 years, and continues to share his passion for people with us.

What image comes to mind when you think of Jacob's Well? We have attempted on many occasions to find creative imagery to describe our community. It is an evolving process as we learn more about our community, our neighbourhood, and the transitory nature of those living in Vancouver.

People who come to Vancouver have a tendency to stay for a while but then move on. We at Jacob's Well have struggled with this, even feeling abandoned at times when someone leaves us for another country, city, or neighbourhood.

Over time, however, God showed us that we are not meant to keep His servants for ourselves. Instead, He brought them to Jacob's Well so they could come in contact with those close to His heart. They learned to love and see the poor and meek through His eyes. In the midst of it all, their eyes were opened to the plight of those living on the margins in their own neighbourhoods and cities.

We have also learned that Jacob's Well is shaped by the passions and skills of those in our community. Even though Jacob's Well has set values, the way in which those values are lived-out differ depending on who is with us at a given time. When Dave Aupperlee and Tom Wuest came to us they brought a deep knowledge and ability for gardening that allowed us to start several community gardens in the area. When they left, while Jacob's Well was richer in knowledge and abilities, we had to find others in the neighbourhood to do the gardening. It makes me think about Beth Carlson-Malena's recent departure from our community and wonder how it will impact and change us.

The best imagery I've found to explain the transitional nature of Jacob's Well is that of a stream filled with stones. Jacob's Well is a fluid community in a fluid city-culture. Our stream has had a lot of stones in it (Jane, Joyce, Dawn...), and those stones have diverted the stream's flow in small but profound ways. When a stone is uprooted or placed in the stream, the flow of the stream is changed.

Beth contributed greatly to the life and shape of Jacob's Well over the past 9 years. Even in the short time she has been gone, we have seen the effect she has had in our lives and community. Over the next few years, we will continue to see effects of her legacy. Some of what she was passionate about may find a home in someone else in the community; some things may have left with her.

Wendell Berry summed it up best in his poem *The Real Work* when he said "the impeded stream is the one that sings."

Public Art Project

Two of our own poets Robyn Livingstone and Gherhardus H. Shievink (Harry) made a permanent mark on the sidewalk this summer through a collaborative project called *The Lowdown*, put together by F.O.U.N.D. spaces. About 15 poets participated in the project; you can see their quotes all over the DTES.

"My love has fine sable hair, Thin as a stick, Nothing to spare." (Quote by Harry, unfortunately got powerwashed out)

"I & You & we are all just waiting..." (Robyn's quote by Seymour and Pender)

"Within each and everyone, Stardust, priceless, irreplaceable" (Robyn's quote in front of the Jubilee Rooms)



[Photo credit: Belle Ancell Photography]

For more information on *The Lowdown* project and/or to read Robyn and Harry's full poem and article, please visit:

<http://foundspaces.wordpress.com/>



If Change Were to Continue to Take Place *by Ian*

Ian has been part of our community for many years and volunteers at Jacob's Well at least once each week.

This "Letter" or this theology/philosophy is a continuation of "Where Real Change Takes Place" in the October 2013 edition of Jacob's Well newsletters. The last paragraph began "In conclusion", however that was a lie. I have more to say as I attempt to encourage "everyone". I believe that if an individual has a desire to be a true friend, brother, neighbour, etc., and if a person wants to nurture friendship, share brotherly love, sow a loving knowledge of sacrifice, help resist temptation, walk with the loss and fight loneliness, we will have to share this friend's responsibilities, baggage, failures, and successes, which are the type of problems that nag us in the back of our minds. The ones we tell no one about. The ones we are afraid to face and see.

These insecurities, anxieties, confusing thoughts, shaky trepidations can be difficult to handle. Many have tried to see if they are an exception to the rule, sometimes successful, but at what cost?

"Anything worth having is worth fighting for." I believe love and friendship are worth fighting for while maintaining an attitude and lifestyle that honours both Christ and other Christians. As Christians, we should be the ones that express sincere love for others, foster positive change for you and your community. However, we have failed a great deal in the past, leaving you feeling unworthy, undeserving, and misunderstood, but we continue to take great measure to make sure that you feel the love of God perspire out of every pore, crevice, and crack. Our friends will eventually know that if I care, God cares.

I believe that we can only grow in love if a person has been shown real love. What does real love look like? I can tell you that my family was not perfect, but there are definitely many positive things that my parents did to ensure they raised me in a healthy, loving family. These included involving my sisters and me in healthy communities like church, Cubs, Scouts, Brownies, and Guides. Our family also enjoyed spending time together through movies, music, and the outdoors. My father always ensured he could give his family a summer vacation and always went to great lengths to give his family a Christmas. Although I at one time loathed my family and they loathed me, they are all pretty much my best friends now.

May the grace of God through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ flow throughout your lives, brothers and sisters.

Our Community

Recently Joined! Amanda Jang has joined our community since the last newsletter. Amy So joined us for a couple of months over the summer while interning with Servants. Also, Jacqueline Dewar has joined the staff team since June.

If you are interested in becoming a community member, please let us know. We would love to get to know you better and talk about how you could fit into our community!

A farewell to Beth Carlson-Malena who took on a new position with New Direction Ministries in Toronto. We miss Beth dearly!



A Heart for Neighbours *An Interview with Micheal Spiers - by Yolanda Bonkowski*

Back on Friday February 21, 2014, a stabbing incident took place across the street from Jacob's Well. While most people panicked, one of our longest standing community members Micheal Spiers sprang into immediate action. Though the VPD took credit for saving the man's life, the following interview reports some of the events that happened before VPD arrived at the scene. After the incident, Micheal continues to find ways to help others.

What happened on February 21, 2014 during Friday coffee time? I was drinking coffee in front of the corner store, and I heard some yelling and the sandwich board in front of Waves fell down. At first, I thought it was just a fight, nothing unusual, but then a guy yelled, "He is stabbed," but still I thought it was just a minor wound at the time. It was only when I got closer and saw the blood squirting 2ft high that I realized how serious this man's injuries were.

I tried to stop him from running around like a chicken with its head cut off. When I saw quite a bit of blood, that's when I asked Beth to call the cops. Then I grabbed his arm and tried to put pressure on the wound with my bare hands. I then asked if people around me had a tourniquet (or more specifically if anyone had a belt), but people were in too much shock to help. I went into Waves to get some gloves and towels and then took off my belt. I started putting the belt around his upper arm to try to stop the bleeding while pulling my pants up!

Did it stop? No, but it did slow down a bit. Then the guy went unconscious, he was white and cold.

What did you do then? I just kept putting pressure on the wound and kept the belt tight on the guy. When the cops showed up, I asked them to get the tourniquet from their car, and soon after the paramedics came. They threw the guy on the stretcher and took off.

To my understanding, you have since been enrolled in different programs under Vancouver Volunteer Corps (VCC), what type of training are you involved with? There are three sectors under VCC: Emergency Social Services (ESS) which runs an emergency response team in case of a disaster in Vancouver; Neighbourhood Emergency Assistance Team (NEAT) which is a team of trained volunteers who support first responders like fire, police and ambulance in case of an emergency and Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program (NEPP) which trains volunteers to teach neighbours how to prepare for a disaster. I am part of the ESS and NEAT teams.

What moved you to join this program?

I always had an interest in helping people. I remember about 11 years ago, I saw a guy unconscious outside of the court house. He was not sleeping but passed out. After I checked the pulse, he barely had one, I called 911 and the fire department walked over and gave him some Narcan. He woke up right after and started fighting us. This person and I did not get along prior to this incident, but afterwards we were able to be at peace with each other. If I wasn't there that day, he might not be here anymore.

Reflections on the Live Recording By Scott McTaggart

Scott is a young pastor who is starting up a church and has been on Friday team for about 3 years now.

A few weeks ago we did something we've never done at the Well; a live album recording. The idea was inspired by our Friday Variety Hour shows. You've probably heard stories of the totally awesome and random displays of talent we have witnessed. I'm talking monologues, unicycling, wood-burning, beat-boxing, poetry, and the list goes on. But it was the music from these times together that sparked the idea for a live recording. There is so much musical creativity festering in the Well's waters, but you wouldn't know it until you experience it. Variety Hour quickly became an outlet for people to reveal their random talents and heartfelt music and lyrics. For example, I remember the first time I met Barry. Soon after our introduction I found myself at the keyboard and him with his guitar singing "Maybe Baby", a beautiful country song that he had written. I was astonished, to say the least. I, being a product of Langley's undiversified streets, was surprised to hear these beautiful country melodies and soulful lyrics bursting out from this tall, unassuming, Aboriginal man's mouth. There were many instances like this where I found myself amazed by the raw talent at the Well; from Edwin and his fingerless chording, to Stan and his jazz-eriffic tinkerings. I thought, "This has to be recorded!" And that's just what we did.

I called a dear friend, Mr. Daniel Klenner (of Klenner Productions) at The Space Studios in East Van and I told him about the project. He loved it and agreed to volunteer his time and equipment to record and mix the project! What an amazing gift! (Thank you Dan!) Shortly after talking with Dan a team was formed and off we went formulating a list of songs that would represent our community on the album. There are about 12 incredible acts on the album. It was a beautiful night. Sweaty and hot, but beautiful. People were eager to participate and sing along and cheer, and there was a genuine feeling of support as every performer got up to share their art. All of the acts nailed it with precision and grace, and I think the guests who joined us that evening were deeply moved as well. The crowd was just as much part of the recording as the performers. It was a moment that I will not soon forget.

Bringing this project to completion will involve mixing and mastering the tracks from the night with Dan at The Space Studios. Then, it's on to printing and distribution. I'm excited to wrap things up so we can share it with the rest of the Jacob's Well world and beyond! There are also talks about an album release party happening, so keep your ears open for that.

A huge thanks goes to the planning team which mainly consisted of Beth Carlson-Malena, Berto Jaramillo, Felicia Wall, Dave Staniforth, Jon Ng and Dan Klenner. It wouldn't have happened without these fine peeps! They've graciously given of their time to make this project a reality. The work isn't done yet though. If you want to help or show support, here are a few ways you can do that. Please come to the album release party, buy the album when it is released, or donate toward the project!

A Genuine Expression by Madie Eirikson

Madie has been on the Wednesday night worship team for about a year. She was part of the audience for the live recording project.

We arrived at Jacobs Well just as the doors were being closed for the first act. The room was packed with people, all the seats filled with others standing in the kitchen and sitting on the floor. The evening had some sing-alongs and an exhibition of "stupid human tricks" but the highlight was the incredible solo and group performances.

The audience was moved to tears at times and clapped and sang raucously along at others. How marvelous was the courage and the generosity of the musicians to share their work with us! Each performer shared a work that was meaningful to them, many were original pieces and the unique hearts behind them all really shone through. I have to thank them all; their music blessed us greatly.

I am coming up on one year at Jacob's Well and the thing I have come to appreciate most is the great diversity. Unlike some, the diversity is not forced or tenuous, but works like a mosaic to make something gloriously precious and intricate, beautiful to look at both as a whole and in segments. The live recording was such a genuine expression of this: all ages and demographics coming together to revel in the joy of what we can create communally.

I did not contribute to the food, music or performances of the evening, but I feel I'd like to offer something to the creative pool at JW if it's not too late. So here it is: my passion for amateur limericks.

An Ode to the Live Recording:

Musicians take to the stage at the Well
Over the crowd in the room a hush fell
The harmonies flowing,
The melodies growing
Crafting a beautiful spell



Jon, Robyn, Felicia and Scott performing during the live recording project.

It Was an Honour *by Edwin Canfield*

Edwin had been sharing his musical talent with us for the past 10 years. He continues to praise God with His original songs.

I had the honour of being part of the Jacob's Well Live Recording Project. This project had a lot of prayer (over a couple of years), and it turned out really well. I played an original song called, "The Mountains of Time" as part of the CD project. The sound engineer, Dan, was a real blessing. He really knew what he was doing and set-up the sound system quite professionally. It was a great joy to work with him and everybody at the Well. I was truly blessed and honoured.



Above: Audience enjoying the live recording, Stan on piano, Edwin smiling and Barry performing "Maybe Baby"

A New Tune *by Mallory Gliko*

Mallory has been part of the JW community for more than a year and a half. She joined our community while interning with Servant Partners. This year she takes on the daunting task of leading Wednesday night worship at Jacob's Well.

The Bible is littered with stories of ordinary people who are stretched beyond their perceived capacity. God calls Abraham away from all the comforts of his home to follow him into the great unknown. As God shares his big dreams with Abraham, looming questions undoubtedly arise as Abe considers the major transition to come. Likewise, Jesus meets Simon and immediately invites him into an adventure that will eventually transform his entire life. "Simon?" Jesus says, the name that connotes flimsy reed. "No, from now on your name is Peter (rock)."

Each of these examples strike a suspended chord in me as I consider my own season of transition. After completing a year and a half long internship, I have joined staff with Servant Partners, a nonprofit in the DTES that seeks transformation among urban poor communities through church planting. In addition to building relationships among the DTES community, my recent internship provided me with a unique opportunity to explore and discern my particular calling and gifts in ministry.

Jacob's Well has served me immensely in my discernment process. Throughout my involvement in the community, I have had the chance to exchange stories and experiences while making artwork, growing in my understanding of the kingdom of God over coffee, and more recently, utilizing my own passions and gifts in musical worship. After an assignment given to discover my spiritual giftedness, worship leading arose to surface. One Wednesday night, Beth graciously allowed me to lead a worship set of my own in a style of which would seem outlandish and intimidating to anyone. Regardless, the community members showed great mercy and engaged with the foreign style of worship to the degree that they were comfortable.

As a result of this experiment, God gave me a warm welcome to an uncharted territory of leadership in my ministry. My new role at Jacob's Well perfectly harmonizes with my increased responsibility on Servant Partners staff in the continual pursuit of reconciliation within the neighborhood. I have a deep desire to create an inviting space for diverse individuals to find a sense of belonging and freedom from fear and shame.

Through his model of discipleship, Jesus reminds us to call out the untapped potential in each other. This is one of the many reasons that I feel so blessed to be a member of Jacob's well. As mutual friendships grow deeper, I have the opportunity to acknowledge the gifts and strengths of my friends and feel supported in my own. God never requires us to be perfect in order for us to take the next steps in our journey with him. I am learning that He is much more gracious and creative than we give him credit for. Word on the street is that He once called a flimsy reed a rock.

About Jacob's Well

Jacob's Well is a faith community located in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, Canada. This neighbourhood has complex difficulties, some of which are extreme poverty (the poorest postal code in Canada), drug addiction (more than five thousand needle users), widespread disease (highest HIV & AIDS infection rate in the western world), and prevalent mental illness (estimated more than 50% of area residents). It's also a neighbourhood full of beautiful, resilient, caring people who have much to give.

We have a relational approach to sharing life with the residents of our neighbourhood. We seek meaningful friendships where we both give and receive from one another. This guiding principle we have inherited from Pauline Fell, who founded our community in 2001. She is a remarkable ninety-eight year-old woman who has spent over thirty years building friendships with countless people in this neighbourhood.

We spend our days visiting people, gathering around the table, worshipping, praying and serving. If you would like to know more about our community, we encourage you to visit our website or Facebook page, or give us a call and arrange a visit in person.

Life in the Margins Workshop

This is a weekend workshop where we explore God's heart for people on the margins of society.

We will examine stories from the Bible and talk about the theological mandate to seek relationship with marginalized people who bear God's image. While we will speak out of our experience from life in the Downtown Eastside, we will discuss how these principles apply to all the various places where we live and work.

Next Workshop:

Friday, October 3rd 2014 (6:30 – 9:30 pm)

Saturday, October 4th 2014 (10:00 am – 4:00 pm)

Cost: \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door.

All participants must pre-register by emailing workshop@jacobswell.ca.

Please join us!

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