



Care & Share

Why Was The Stone Rolled Away?

By Dr. Marno Retief

In 2019, I had the incredible privilege of undertaking a 16-day tour of Israel. It was an amazing experience and made the biblical characters and stories come alive to me in an entirely new way. If you ever have the opportunity to go and visit Israel, it's something I would really encourage you to do. There were so many highlights during the trip – visiting Bethlehem, Capernaum, Tiberias, Tel Megiddo, Qumran, and many other places – but one thing that will always stand out for me was my visit to the two sites in Jerusalem that are both regarded as the possible location of Jesus' tomb. The one place is called the Garden Tomb and is located in a very tranquil garden in Conrad Schick Street in Jerusalem. The other place is, of course, the well-known Church of the Holy Sepulchre, located in the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. Now when I visited these two sites, the most important fact about them – from a Christian perspective, at least – is that both tombs are empty. I was able to go inside the Garden Tomb and see for myself – it's empty. However, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was so busy on the day I visited that I wasn't able to enter the tomb there. But the tomb at Holy Sepulchre is also empty. Yet, both Holy Sepulchre and the Garden Tomb provide archaeological support to a fundamental truth affirmed in all four gospels: The tomb is empty. And for those of us who believe in Jesus, the empty tomb affirms the most important doctrine of our faith: Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, is risen! He is risen indeed! It's this faith in the resurrection of Jesus that's the ultimate reason for our hope as Christians.

But while I was preparing for this message, I was struck by a question I heard someone ask: Why was the stone at Jesus' tomb rolled away? When I was in Israel, visiting the two possible locations of Jesus' tomb, it didn't occur to me to wonder about why the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. But now the question stuck with me: Why was the stone rolled away? It seems like such a simple question, right? And I guess most of us would think the answer is obvious, right? But have you ever really thought about it? Have you ever really considered the implications of this question? Or – should I rather say – the implications of your answer to this question? As for myself, I had never really thought much about the significance of the stone being rolled away. For me, it was one of those obvious details of the biblical text and something which didn't really add much to my understanding of the gospel. But as I began studying this question, it became more and more clear to me that the reason the stone was rolled away is much more important than I ever imagined. In fact, I would even go as far as saying it's central to the proclamation of the gospel. I know this might not make sense to you now, but hopefully you'll understand by the end of the message.

So, why was the stone rolled away? Well, let's begin by considering this question from a skeptic's perspective, since I know there are some people who find the resurrection of Jesus a bit hard to believe. And if you're one of them, I invite you to carefully consider what I'm about to share. Now here's the question many skeptics ask: Was the stone rolled away because someone had

taken or stolen Jesus' body? Is it possible that grave robbers or certain radical followers of Jesus decided to steal his body? Or that his body was removed for some other unknown reason? Well, this is precisely the kind of reasoning offered by some early doubters of the resurrection. Now believe it or not – and this sounds quite contradictory – but Jesus' own followers were some of the first doubters. Yes, that's right, Jesus' own followers were some of the first doubters of the resurrection and seemed to think Jesus' body was removed from the tomb for some unknown reason. In the Gospel of John, we read how Mary Magdalene saw the stone had been removed and immediately thought some people had taken Jesus' body. Without entering the tomb, she ran back to Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple, saying, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him" (John 20:2b). Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple then ran to the tomb to take a look for themselves. Why didn't Mary Magdalene first inspect the tomb before running to tell the others what she saw? I don't know, but I guess – like most of us – the sight of an open grave was somewhat frightening to her. It seems like Mary Magdalene thought grave robbers or maybe even the temple authorities had stolen Jesus' body. And, of course, this greatly upset her.

And lest we think her faith was weak, let's remember that even that great pillar of faith, the apostle Peter himself, when he first saw the empty tomb, he didn't respond by believing Jesus had risen from the dead. Rather, in Luke 24, we read how Peter was amazed at the empty tomb. The ESV translation says "he went home marveling at what had happened" (Luke 24:12b). Now in the Gospel of Luke, to marvel or to be amazed is the typical response to something extraordinary, but it's not an indicator that someone will eventually believe. During Jesus' ministry on earth, many people were amazed at the miracles he performed, but it didn't lead all of them to faith in Jesus. In the same way, Peter, after being amazed at what he saw at the tomb, didn't immediately believe Jesus was risen. No, it seems he had some serious questions. The Gospel of John records how Peter saw Jesus' linen cloths lying in the tomb, along with his face cloth folded up separately (cf. John 20:6-7). Surely, Peter must have thought it was highly unlikely that thieves stole Jesus' body, since why would thieves want to steal Jesus' body? And besides, why would thieves go to so much trouble to unwrap the body and leave the grave clothes behind? It simply didn't make sense. In any event, regardless of any doubts Peter and the other disciples may have had, all their doubts were put to rest when Jesus appeared to his followers on at least ten occasions after his resurrection.

And besides Jesus' followers, there were some other doubters as well. At the end of Matthew 27, we read about how the chief priests and Pharisees asked for guards to be placed at Jesus' tomb, since they were apparently concerned his disciples would steal his body. And lo and behold, in Matthew 28, when the guards discover the tomb is empty, they go and tell the chief priests about what happened – about the earthquake, about the stone being rolled away, about the appearance of the angel of the Lord, and about the empty tomb. And Matthew records how the chief priests bribe the guards to spread the false rumour that Jesus' disciples stole his body at night while they were sleeping. Yes, from the very first day of Jesus' resurrection, there were people who responded with disbelief – in the case of the chief priests and Pharisees, falsely claiming Jesus' body was stolen.

In modern times, some biblical scholars such as James Tabor, have suggested that Joseph of Arimathea went to Jesus' tomb on the evening after the Sabbath, rolled away the stone, and for some reason decided to remove Jesus' body in order to rebury it in some other tomb – such as the Talpiot Tomb, discovered in the Talpiot neighbourhood of Jerusalem in 1980. However, as biblical scholars such as Gary Habermas, Steven Ortiz, and Craig Evans have convincingly shown, neither the biblical nor the archaeological evidence supports this hypothesis. So, was the stone rolled away because someone had taken or stolen Jesus' body? The answer is clearly no. That's not the reason why the stone was rolled away.

But moving away from the skeptics, let's consider another possibility, a view that seems to be popular among many Christians. Was the stone rolled away to allow the risen Jesus to get out of the tomb? After all, normally, when we want to exit a building, what do we do? We open the door. So, it makes sense to think the stone would be rolled away from the tomb's entrance for Jesus to get

out. Well, this is surely one of the most common answers to the question. And it seems to be a very logical answer. I guess that's why so many people think it's true. And I must admit, when I think of Jesus' resurrection, I've most often assumed the stone was rolled away for Jesus to exit the tomb. Many artists through the centuries have made the same connection. And some movies about Jesus' life and ministry make the same connection – a good example is the closing of Mel Gibson's *Passion of the Christ* where Jesus' emergence from the tomb is coupled with the stone being rolled away.

But, of course, from a biblical perspective, there is a big problem with this answer – actually two big problems. And maybe you've already thought of it. First of all, the risen Jesus had no need for the stone to be rolled away – his resurrection body had the ability to exit the tomb without the stone having to be removed. The Gospel of John reports how the risen Jesus was able to pass through walls and closed doors. So, Jesus had no need for the stone to be rolled away. But secondly – and this makes sense in light of what we just said about Jesus' resurrection body – Jesus had already left the tomb by the time the stone was rolled away! Notice in Matthew 28, while the women were on their way to Jesus' tomb, an angel of the Lord came and rolled away the stone. And also notice what the angel says to them: "He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay" (Matt. 28:6). The stone definitely wasn't rolled away for Jesus' sake, he'd already left the tomb. So, once again, was the stone rolled away to allow the risen Jesus to get out of the tomb? The answer is clearly no. Jesus had no need for that.

But what about this: Was the stone rolled away to demonstrate the power of the risen Jesus? This also seems like a very plausible answer. After all, just listen to how the book of Revelation describes the risen Jesus: "The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength" (Rev. 1:14-16). What a powerful description of the glory and power of the risen Lord Jesus! Yet, as much as Scripture emphasises the power of the risen Jesus - and it's true he could have easily moved the stone himself – Jesus wasn't the one who rolled away the stone. Matthew 28:2 says, "And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it." Yes, an angel of God, not Jesus, rolled away the stone. So, getting back to our question: Was the stone rolled away to demonstrate the power of the risen Jesus? The answer is clearly no. While it's true that the risen Jesus is almighty in power, it wasn't he who rolled away the stone.

But let's consider a proposal that's probably the most widely held view among pastors and theologians today. Was the stone rolled away to show the tomb was empty and thus convince people Jesus is risen? Once again, this seems like a very plausible answer, since, as followers of Jesus, we regard the empty tomb as evidence of his resurrection. And after all, as I emphasised earlier in the message, Jesus had absolutely no need for the stone to be rolled away. Even if the stone had remained in front of the tomb, the resurrected Jesus was able to pass through it. So, it seems the only logical reason God the Father would have wanted the stone to be moved was to convince us Jesus had risen from the dead. As one well-known evangelical commentator puts it, "[The stone] was rolled away so that others could see into the tomb and be persuaded that Jesus Christ was risen from the dead." But do the four gospels actually support such a point of view? As I mentioned earlier, the Gospel of John reports how Mary Magdalene's initial response to the empty tomb wasn't faith but fear! She feared someone had stolen Jesus' body! The empty tomb didn't convince her Jesus had risen from the dead! Neither did the empty tomb convince the women who went to the grave with Mary Magdalene. In fact, the Gospel of Mark reports how these women, along with Mary Magdalene, fled from the tomb in fear! And, as I noted, the apostle Peter's response was amazement, but not faith in the resurrection of Jesus. The empty tomb didn't convince him Jesus had risen from the dead either! The only follower of Jesus who seemed to respond to the empty tomb with faith was the Beloved Disciple, John. Yet, even in his case, it was very much a tentative faith. So, was the stone rolled away to show the tomb was empty and convince people Jesus is risen? Once again, the answer is clearly no. The empty tomb by itself did not convince most of Jesus' followers that he had risen.

But what was it then? If the stone wasn't rolled away for any of the reasons we've looked at, then why was it rolled away? The stone was rolled away to invite us to faith in the resurrection. Yes, to invite us, not convince us. It's possible to respond to the rolled-away stone in various ways. You and I could look at all the options, we could carefully weigh all the evidence, and still decide there is some other explanation for the empty tomb besides the resurrection of Jesus. But that's precisely the point. Believing in the resurrection of Jesus is ultimately a matter of faith.

And faith is a gift of God – you cannot come to faith through hard work, regardless of your best efforts. You can read your Bible, study theology, even pray and fast fervently – but none of this will bring you to faith if God doesn't graciously give you the gift of faith. As the apostle Paul writes to the church in Ephesus, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). You can travel to Israel like I did and visit the two possible locations of Jesus' tomb at the Garden Tomb and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. You can go inside the tomb, inspect the tomb, study the tomb, stare at the tomb for hours and hours – but none of this will ultimately bring you to faith in the resurrection of Jesus. You need God to give you the gift of faith and then – only then – will you begin to view the empty tomb of Jesus as evidence of his resurrection. In the Gospel of John, Jesus has a conversation with Nicodemus – who was a highly respected religious teacher in Israel – and Jesus explains to him how only those who are born again through the Holy Spirit can enter the kingdom of God. Without spiritual rebirth effected by the Holy Spirit, you cannot begin to understand what God has done for you through the cross of Christ and his resurrection. You need the power of God the Holy Spirit to bring you to saving faith in Christ.

For those of you who already believe in Jesus Christ, who believe he rose from the dead, I have a word of hope and encouragement for you. As Mary Magdalene and the other women were making their way to Jesus' tomb on Easter morning, they were extremely worried about who would help them to roll away the stone from the tomb. As the Gospel of Mark records, they were asking each other, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" (Mark 16:3). Yet, to their amazement, when they got close to the tomb, the large stone had already been rolled away. All their worrying about the stone had been for nothing. In God's perfect timing and providence, he had already rolled the stone away. Are you currently faced with a situation where you simply don't know what to do? No matter how you look at it, there doesn't seem to be a way forward. You feel overwhelmed. You feel like your strength is failing. And you're wondering, "God, how will I get through this? Lord, there's no way I'll be able to move this stone! Lord, what am I to do?" Well, I've got good news for you. In and through Jesus Christ, your risen Lord and Saviour, that stone has already been rolled away! In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells his disciples, "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33b). I believe Jesus is speaking these words to you as well. He is asking you to focus your eyes on him. He is asking you to remember that he has already overcome the world – there is no challenge, no obstacle, no problem that's too difficult for him. He is the Lord of your life and you share in the victory he accomplished through his death and resurrection. Let that knowledge be a source of strength and encouragement for you, as you see the stone has already been rolled away.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

After some summer weather, we are facing some colder temperatures again. March is telling us, "I'm not done with you yet!". April Fools?

Good Friday is approaching fast. Here is a poem that I found, written by Dorothy Krahn:

GREAT LOVE

<i>Can you imagine the torture</i>	<i>"It is finished, Thy will be done"</i>
<i>Of your Only Begotten Son</i>	<i>Were words the Beaten Son</i>
<i>Being accused and tormented</i>	<i>could voice</i>
<i>For things he hadn't done?</i>	<i>I will die on this rugged cross</i>
<i>Can you see the caring Mother</i>	<i>God and I made this choice.</i>
<i>Wringing her hands in agony</i>	<i>Beat, Begotten, Beloved Son</i>
<i>Heart crying,</i>	<i>Guiltless, yet Jesus bore the pain.</i>
<i>"Please don't hurt my son</i>	<i>Died while hanging,</i>
<i>I love him can't you see?"</i>	<i>work was finished</i>
<i>Yet they continued to beat him</i>	<i>Heaven...His Home to gain!</i>
<i>Mocking, spitting upon His face</i>	
<i>He the Only Begotten Son</i>	
<i>Enduring such disgrace.</i>	

Following Good Friday comes Easter which is my favourite celebration. New life, new chance, the way is open for us. Our sins have been paid for, taken care of by Jesus' precious blood. The grave is empty; the stone is rolled away! How can we show our thankfulness as redeemed children? Not all people think the same about it, but I believe when you receive something very valuable, you will treasure it and take care of it. How can we do more after receiving the life saving work of Jesus? Let us show our love to God and trust him wholly. We wish you all a blessed Easter!

Kathy Stahn remains in Thunderbay. She is stable and hopes to go back to the Fort Frances hospital soon. Greg has returned home.

Cathie Sinninghe's foot is much better. She still needs surgery and hopes to get that done at the Mayo Clinic.

Ted Kaemingh has had one cataract removed and will have the other removed on April 19th.

My (Annie) mother was admitted to the hospital on March 13th having trouble breathing / pneumonia. The medication did not seem to work and her heart rhythm became troublesome. By the end of the week the medication began to affect her kidneys and an attempt to restore the heart rhythm failed. Doctors had little or no hope for her. However, on March 20th, after one week in the hospital, the medication did start to work; most of the fluid behind her lungs is gone now, helping her heart rhythm to greatly improve, Her coughing is almost gone and the kidney function has also improved. She will remain in the hospital for a while and will have to move to a long term care facility after that. Please remain praying that the situation will remain stable or improve. Thanks, Jan and Annie van Rozen

Jeanette Van Heyst (sister-in-law to Peter Van Heyst and Wilma Wielinga), who lives in Brandon, has been experiencing some very challenging health issues.

Continue to pray for all those with health issues, that the Lord will sustain them and bring healing.

Congratulations to two couples who have recently been engaged:

- Kyle Sinninghe and Samantha Urban plan to be married on May 1st in International Falls.

- Alexa Veldhuisen and Josh Dykstra plan to be married on August 6 in Iowa.

We pray for the Lord's blessing as you plan your special day!

Sid and Carrie Smid have moved back to 16 Birch Place. They are both doing well.

Soon our college/university students will be getting ready for final exams, travelling home and looking for jobs. We wish you success in your studies and exams and pray for safe travelling and that you may find a job.

A heartfelt thank you to Elmer & Helen Cates for organizing a fun filled afternoon for our seniors. It was very well received. Elmer, you are a great cook!! The pizzas were “finger licking good”. Helen loosened us up with her ball game and bingo. The afternoon was very much enjoyed by all who came out.



Our seniors celebrating birthdays in April are Jan Van Rozen on the 10th, Elmer Cates on the 11th, Rudy Sinninghe on the 17th, Sietske Van Zwol on the 23rd and Marie Sinninghe on the 30th. Jan and Sietske Van Zwol will celebrate their 47th anniversary on April 17th. Congratulations to all who celebrate birthdays and anniversaries in April. May you have a joy filled day and year ahead!

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH:

The price paid for us was unimaginably high—the blood of Jesus Christ—and now we belong to Him... That's enough to bring a smile to anyone's face! Charles R. Swindoll

My Resurrected Lord

*So special he is my savior, my king,
Ruler, creator, his praises I sing.
The wondrous amazement of all that he's done,
My heavenly father sent down his own son.
How blessed we are to have such a chance,
No longer condemned to one circumstance.
But Jesus came down his life he did give,
That all whom believed through him now may live.
Though his death there alone did not pay our way,
For he is alive and the stone rolled away.
Thank you dear Jesus for saving my soul,
Through your birth, death, and resurrection I am made whole!*

Written By: Angela Ciero

CHURCH LIBRARY NEWS!

Our library will officially again be open after the morning service starting March 27, 2022. We hope everyone will respectfully follow the guidelines posted at the library door.

To accommodate the size of our library space, the Librarian Volunteer and two other people only at a time.

Please physical distance as best as possible.

In this way, for now, we can make everyone feel comfortable using this space.

EXCITING UPDATE!

The library catalogue is now posted on our church website, so anyone can access it online and browse to see what's available. The catalogue has been separated into the following genres for more convenient searches:

Adult Fiction (Fic)

Adult Nonfiction (NF)

Youth Fiction and Nonfiction (YF and YNF)

Children (C)

DVD's and Audio (DVD and CD)

To access this information online, go to Emo CRC – Library tab – sign in as member and with password emocrc. Please check it out, you may be surprised at what you find to read or watch!

Since restrictions during Covid-19, the library was not open to browsing, so we have just added lots of new items for the year 2020, 2021, and the start of 2022. This date has been noted in a column beside the new items so they are easily visible as new additions.

We know that there are members who don't access a computer, so if anyone would like a printed list of the church library catalogue at this time, please call Carolyn at 482-2871 or email cdstang@hotmail.com and a print copy can be put in your church mailbox.

A couple of notes for everyone, to make the job as volunteer in the library easier, please make sure you sign out the book card and leave it in the specified box before you exit the library; and names, not just initials, since we wouldn't always know who that may be.

We also have some new volunteers for the library. The library committee is now as follows:

Marie Sinninghe

Carolyn Stang

Sietske Van Zwol

Donna Vos

Thank you. And we hope to see you there!

FROM THE CHURCH LIBRARY

Below is a list of books that are in our Church Library Inventory but aren't on the shelves and the cards were not checked out.

Can everyone please have a look at home to see if these are on your book shelves and bring them the church into the library book return bin.

This is much appreciated.

Thank you,

Church Library Committee

AUTHOR	NAME	DESIGNATION
Berenstain	New Baby	Children
Kennedy	Five-Minute Bible Devotions : Celebrating God's World	Children
Schaap	Touches The Sky	Fiction
Goff	Live In Grace, Walk In Love ; A 365 Day Journey	Non Fiction
Lucado	One God One Plan One Life ; A 365 Day Devotional	Non Fiction
Schloss	After Auschwitz	Non Fiction
Thomas	Help! My Marriage Has Grown Cold	Non Fiction
Peretti	Nightmare's Academy #2	Fiction

TOP 10 WAYS...

TO RECRUIT COUNCIL MEMBERS

Many churches and councils find **RECRUITMENT** to be their most challenging task. So, we've compiled our Top 10 list to help make it a little less daunting!

- 1. Have a Recruitment Strategy** – Crafting and enacting a well thought-out Recruitment Strategy is a must before you begin searching for new council members. Unfortunately, potential council members aren't likely to magically appear at your doorstep imploring you to commit them to service, even if you did compose a fun and catchy bulletin announcement. If you aren't going beyond saying, "So... who should we ask this year?", then you're in trouble! The first problem with this is that **if it's everybody task, it's nobody's task**. You gotta have a plan!
- 2. Start On Time!** – This one sounds like a no-brainer but it's amazing how often boards and committees put off 'recruitment' until the last minute. Be sure to include an appropriate timeline in your Recruitment Strategy. As most of us will agree, recruitment can take longer than we think and the sooner you begin, the longer your nominees will have to carefully and prayerfully consider the ask.
- 3. Know Who You Are Looking For** – Figure out what your Council's strategic priorities are. What skills or expertise do you need on your council to help you achieve those priorities? Who is your church now and who do you want to be in the community in the next five years or so? What Elders or Deacons are finishing up their terms and what gaps will be created once they are done? This will help immensely in finding the right people at the right time.
- 4. Educate Your Congregation on What Being a Council Member Actually Means** – Sometimes people say "No" to a nomination because they don't really understand what they are being asked to do. Carve out time to educate your congregation on what the 'job descriptions' are for an Elder or Deacon. Here are some ideas to get you started:
 - a. Hold an 'Open House'**. Invite members of your congregation to check out a meeting so they can see your team in action! This will help people see that the work you do **MATTERS** and is moving your church's mission and vision along. Just be aware of any contentious or sensitive material being discussed;
 - b. Have written 'job descriptions' for each role on Council**. Always have these readily available (throughout the year) and make sure they are kept up-to-date;
 - c. Hold an Information Session** – Get creative and think about what would work for your church. Some churches plan these immediately after Sunday Morning Worship instead asking members to attend a weeknight meeting. Remember to keep it clear,

concise and interesting (no more than an hour.) Throw in a little bit of fun and include some light refreshments.

5. **Remember There is Parity Between “Offices”** – Again, this may sound like a no-brainer, but it’s important to ensure your entire congregation know the unique gifts and abilities required for each role on Council. Your church’s diaconate is NOT an “Elder Training Ground”, or vice versa.
6. **Involve Ministry Leaders and/or Former Council Members** – Including more ministry leaders in your search will extend your reach. They’ve likely worked alongside or crossed paths with a variety of your members and can speak to any gifts and abilities that would align with the work of an Elder or Deacon.
7. **Visit with Each Nominee** – While this one may be a new concept, it may be valuable for the Nominating Committee to hold an “Interview” with each nominee. This will help the Committee get a sense for who this person is and if they will be a good fit for the office they have been nominated for. There are several ways this can be done well and DMC can give you some help with this!
8. **Remember That “No” Doesn’t Always Mean “Never”** – If a nominee says no, don’t take that as a flat-out rejection. His/her current schedule may not allow the time required or he/she may feel they don’t have the gifts or passions required for the role, yet. Continue your contact and awareness raising: remember that recruitment is an on-going process.
9. **Treat Your New and Current Council Members Like Gold!** – You may be wondering what this has to do with recruitment. But if you’re having trouble finding new council members, don’t be afraid to ask **why**: What are our current or retired council members saying/sharing with their fellow church members? Do we take the time to invest in the care of current council members? Do we provide ample training? Do our council members feel appreciated? *Everybody likes to have their contributions acknowledged, especially volunteers! It’s free and easy to do so and the fruit of doing this can have far-reaching benefits!*
10. **Never, EVER Compromise** – While it can happen from time-to-time that not enough ‘qualified’ persons will allow their name to appear on the ballot, it’s important to hold fast to your Recruitment Strategy as well as what your church determines as the irrefutable qualities needed in a Council Member. Remember it’s far better to pick the right person over the available one. God ALWAYS provides what we need exactly when we need it. If possible, have the patience to keep searching and waiting. Your church’s Mission – GOD’S MISSION – will still move forward despite an empty chair or two around the Council Table.

Did you find these tips helpful?

Find more help with Recruitment on our website:

diaconalministries.com/resources/ under “Fundamentals of Recruitment”

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Diaconal Ministries Canada exists to inspire, empower, and equip deacons as they animate their congregations to join in God’s transforming work in their communities.

diaconalministries.com | 1-800-730-3490 | dmc@crcna.org





April

	<u>Old Testament</u>	<u>New Testament</u>	<u>Psalms</u>	<u>Proverbs</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 01	Deuteronomy 18:1- 20:20	Luke 9:28-50	Psalms 73:1-28	Proverbs 12:10
<input type="checkbox"/> 02	Deuteronomy 21:1-22:30	Luke 9:51-10:12	Psalms 74:1-23	Proverbs 12:11
<input type="checkbox"/> 03	Deuteronomy 23:1-25:19	Luke 10:13-37	Psalms 75:1-10	Proverbs 12:12-14
<input type="checkbox"/> 04	Deuteronomy 26:1-27:26	Luke 10:38-11:13	Psalms 76:1-12	Proverbs 12:15-17
<input type="checkbox"/> 05	Deuteronomy 28:1-68	Luke 11:14-36	Psalms 77:1-20	Proverbs 12:18
<input type="checkbox"/> 06	Deuteronomy 29:1-30:20	Luke 11:37-12:7	Psalms 78:1-31	Proverbs 12:19-20
<input type="checkbox"/> 07	Deuteronomy 31:1-32:27	Luke 12:8-34	Psalms 78:32-55	Proverbs 12:21-23
<input type="checkbox"/> 08	Deuteronomy 32:28-52	Luke 12:35-59	Psalms 78:56-64	Proverbs 12:24
<input type="checkbox"/> 09	Deuteronomy 33:1-29	Luke 13:1-21	Psalms 78:65-72	Proverbs 12:25
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Deuteronomy 34:1- Joshua 2:24	Luke 13:22-14:6	Psalms 79:1-13	Proverbs 12:26
<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Joshua 3:1-4:24	Luke 14:7-35	Psalms 80:1-19	Proverbs 12:27-28
<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Joshua 5:1-7:15	Luke 15:1-32	Psalms 81:1-16	Proverbs 13:1
<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Joshua 7:16-9:2	Luke 16:1-18	Psalms 82:1-8	Proverbs 13:2-3
<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Joshua 9:3-10:43	Luke 16:19-17:10	Psalms 83:1-18	Proverbs 13:4
<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Joshua 11:1-12:24	Luke 17:11-37	Psalms 84:1-12	Proverbs 13:5-6
<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Joshua 13:1-14:15	Luke 18:1-17	Psalms 85:1-13	Proverbs 13:7-8
<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Joshua 15:1-63	Luke 18:18-43	Psalms 86:1-17	Proverbs 13:9-10
<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Joshua 16:1-18:28	Luke 19:1-27	Psalms 87:1-7	Proverbs 13:11
<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Joshua 19:1-20:9	Luke 19:28-48	Psalms 88:1-18	Proverbs 13:12-14
<input type="checkbox"/> 20	Joshua 21:1-22:20	Luke 20:1-26	Psalms 89:1-13	Proverbs 13:15-16
<input type="checkbox"/> 21	Joshua 22:21-23:16	Luke 20:27-47	Psalms 89:14-37	Proverbs 13:17-19
<input type="checkbox"/> 22	Joshua 24:1-33	Luke 21:1-28	Psalms 89:38-52	Proverbs 13:20-23
<input type="checkbox"/> 23	Judges 1:1-2:9	Luke 21:29-22:13	Psalms 90:1-91:16	Proverbs 13:24-25
<input type="checkbox"/> 24	Judges 2:10-3:31	Luke 22:14-34	Psalms 92:1-93:5	Proverbs 14:1-2
<input type="checkbox"/> 25	Judges 4:1-5:31	Luke 22:35-53	Psalms 94:1-23	Proverbs 14:3-4
<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Judges 6:1-40	Luke 22:54-23:12	Psalms 95:1-96:13	Proverbs 14:5-6
<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Judges 7:1-8:17	Luke 23:13-43	Psalms 97:1-98:9	Proverbs 14:7-8
<input type="checkbox"/> 28	Judges 8:18-9:21	Luke 23:44-24:12	Psalms 99:1-9	Proverbs 14:9-10
<input type="checkbox"/> 29	Judges 9:22-10:18	Luke 24:13-53	Psalms 100:1-5	Proverbs 14:11-12
<input type="checkbox"/> 30	Judges 11:1-12:15	John 1:1-28	Psalms 101:1-8	Proverbs 14:13-14

“We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD,
His power, and the wonders He has done!” (Psalm 78:4).

February 2022

Greetings from Mark & Tina Mast

What a joy it has been to begin 2022 by declaring the **Gospel of Jesus Christ** to the “otherwise unreached” --those with the least opportunity to hear the **Good News** of salvation. Thank you for your **prayers** and **support** as we make **Jesus** known!

The Wonders God Has Done!

***On December 24, the **House of Bethel** orphanage was opened in **India**, paid for by the generous gifts of people with a heart to see **God** do miracles for this generation and prove His marvelous power and might to 50 little orphan girls rescued from the streets of Miryalaguda City, who would have otherwise been caught up in the sex trade and slavery of Asia. **Pray** for protection of Christians in India as persecution is on the rise.

***The love of Jesus inspired a group of 4 Canadians and 3 Americans to return to **Guatemala** after a 20-month “Covid reprieve” to serve “the least of these” there. This “**GO!**” **Team** built three homes, ministered at the El Tejar dump, conducted 8 Bible schools, preached at 5 church services and began construction of the **Grace, Love and Mercy Church** to complement the Christian school that was previously built for impoverished children.

***Over \$75k was recently raised to provide a trailer home in **Pikangikum First Nation** for a missionary couple to move there and flesh out the love of Christ to a generation of people that desperately need to see “the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, His power, and the wonders He has done” (Psalm 78:4).

***Sunday **Worship Services** and mid-week “**Prayer & Praise**” gatherings continue to edify the Body of Christ in northwestern **Ontario** (and around the world) through the use of technology that God has afforded. Evangelistic, discipleship and mentoring opportunities abound as well. **Pray** that many are gloriously saved.

*****Border EFC** has decided to move forward with plans to construct a “**multi-purpose worship center**” to replace the nearly 100-year-old building that has served as a house of worship for so many decades. **Pray** for the Lord's favor/blessing as we move forward in faith to be a Lighthouse for the Gospel in northern Minnesota.

Praise the LORD for the myriad of ways He is providing opportunities to shine the **Light** and **Love** of **Jesus** in new and exciting ways! **Pray** for the Lord's provision and direction to preach the **Gospel** to this generation in creative ways throughout 2022. **Pray** for “**Divine Appointments**” to advance the **Good News of Jesus**. What a **Mighty God** we serve! “**Thank You LORD** for Your faithfulness and provision.”

Thank you, dear friends, for the special encouragement that you are to us! We are deeply grateful for your **prayers** and financial support. **May the Lord bless YOU!**

Looking to Jesus, Mark & Tina Mast

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MINISTERING WITH

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Winnipeg MB R2L-1L8

USA Financial Support:

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***Gifts are tax-deductible. Please designate to: “Mark & Tina Mast”

***If from Canada, please make cheques payable to: “One Hope Canada”

***If from the USA, please make checks payable to: “One Hope International”

Donate Online with a Credit Card using the following link:

www.onehopecanada.ca

Click the “**Donate Now**” tab on the upper right hand corner. Choose to donate from the “**USA**” or “**Canada**”.
Please be sure to indicate that your gift is for “**Mark & Tina Mast**” in the designation box.

Thanks from Mark & Tina

Greetings in the precious Name of Jesus from Mark & Tina

Thank you so much for the financial support and prayers you have provided as we serve with One Hope Canada. We are deeply grateful for your sacrificial help and are so thankful for the opportunity to utilize your gifts in advancing the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

I am excited to announce that we are once again planning a trip to Guatemala! It came about with very short notice, but since the omicron variant has subsided significantly, we felt that a window of opportunity is being afforded us by the Lord. Six people will be participating, and we will (Lord-willing) be heading to Guatemala on March 28 and returning on April 5. Our main focus will be on building homes and also continuing construction of the church. I will also be doing lots of Bible schools and preaching as well. Please keep us in your prayers.

In recent weeks, I (Mark) have been doing some supply teaching in area schools as there is a high demand for substitutes with so many teachers being unable to be in the classroom because of health symptoms that potentially make them "positive" for COVID-19. This is providing a great opportunity to connect with children/teens who have attended Bible camp or VBS throughout the years. With all the restrictions of the past two years, it has been difficult to stay connected with youth. Yet it is so vital to continue pointing young lives to Christ!

Tina and Rachel will soon be starting up the Apple Blossoms program once again. This has been such a wonderful way to disciple and mentor young girls in their faith. Please pray.

Once again, thank you for the special blessing you are to us!

Looking to Jesus,

Mark & Tina Mast

Dear Emo CRC,

Thank you so much for your financial support of Christian Reformed Disability Concerns. Because of you, we have been able to recruit and support church and regional disability advocates throughout the Christian Reformed Church in North America and provide educational resources such as webinar series, books studies, and the Breaking Barriers newsletter. Your donations make all of this possible. We are so grateful you have joined us in the vision that in Christian Reformed Churches everybody belongs and everybody serves. We also want to thank your Church Disability Advocate Mark Van Heyst for their work within your congregation to make your church hospitable and accessible to people with varying abilities.

To learn more about our ministry, be sure to follow us on the [Network](#) as well as on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). If you haven't already signed up for our [monthly newsletter](#), please take a minute to do so! We also send our Breaking Barriers quarterly newsletter in e-format to everyone who receives the monthly newsletter.

Have more questions? Please be in touch to find out how we can assist your congregation in ministry.

From the Disability Concerns Staff Team

(Lindsay Wieland Capel and Becky Jones)

disabilityconcerns@crcna.org



Love Life



Saturday, April 23rd – 6:00pm-9:00pm

**All are Welcome to Come and Support
the Value of Human Life**

Rainy River Evangelical Covenant Church
Hwy 11 West, Rainy River, ON

Order of Events: Appetizers and refreshments, featured speakers,
“Respect Life” student speech and the movie “Unplanned”

Crisis Pregnancy Centre

Of Winnipeg

“Loving Life from the Inside Out”

Juergen Mike Severloh

The Right to Life

Association

Of Thunder Bay & Area

Cindy Harasen

Rachel’s Vineyard

Of Thunder Bay

(Post Abortion Healing Retreats)

Jessica McComb

“Respect Life” – Student Speech

Free-will donations are welcome.



Unplanned (the Movie)



Award winning film based on the life of Abby Johnson, former director of
Planned Parenthood (parental discretion advised).



This event is hosted by the Rainy River Evangelical Covenant Church in
partnership with One Hope Canada. For more information, contact (807)852-3202.

A	
APRIL 2022	

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Karmin Hettinga
3 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL 5:00 PRAISE & WORSHIP	4 Brad Webb Michael Veldhuisen 9:45 DORCAS	5 Alistair Marissen 10:00 MOMMY CONNECT 7:00 COUNCIL	6 Troy Veldhuisen 10:00 COFFEE BREAK 7:00 EMO DISCIPLE SHIP SCHOOL (EDS)	7	8 Josette Vargas	9 Colton Koomans Reuben Veldhuisen
10 Jan Van Rozen 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL	11 Elmer Cates	12 10:00 MOMMY CONNECT	13 10:00 COFFEE BREAK 7:00 EDS	14 Carina Mack	15 Dayle Allan  Good Friday 10:00 WORSHIP	16 Braden Webb
17 Rudy Sinninghe Logann Veldhuisen *Jan & Sietske Van Zwol (47th)  10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL	18	19 Jace Kaemingk 10:00 MOMMY CONNECT 7:00 OONSISTORY	20 Jordyn Veldhuisen 10:00 COFFEE BREAK 7:00 EDS	21	22 Brittany Koomans	23 Sietske Van Zwol Myra Kaemingh
24 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL	25 7:30 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING	26 10:00 MOMMY CONNECT	27 10:00 COFFEE BREAK 7:00 EDS	28 Caleb Koomans Wyllem Kelly	29 Stevie-Lee Kaemingh	30 MarieAnn DeGroot William Foster Morgan Redford Marie Sinninghe