



May/June 2018

Dear Prayer Partner,

As we anticipate summer at Shalom, rejoicing is on our hearts. Yes, there remain challenges, but there are so many reasons to rejoice.

April ended on a very spring like note, and after the long winter the arrival of spring has our hearts rejoicing. Spring's arrival also means we can finalize our Spring Garden Bee and we already have a good number of folks signed up, another cause for rejoicing. In late April we held our Annual General Meeting and were rejoicing that the turnout was improved from the turnout of the last couple of years. We also rejoiced that not only did folks turn out, they stayed after the meeting to visit and ask questions over coffee and dessert.

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!
Philippians 4:4 (NIV)

Funding is one of the constant challenges at Shalom. We are rejoicing in the little ways God is providing fund raising opportunities for us in 2018. Further, God is opening possibilities for 2019. I was recently reading in Isaiah 45 where God promised King Cyrus

I will give you hidden treasures, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD.

Isaiah 45:3 (NIV)

"hidden treasures, riches stored in secret places."

I wondered, "Could God provide for Shalom's needs from His 'hidden treasures ... stored in secret places'." In the past few weeks, God has opened up a few possibilities, one from a secret place that I would never have imagined. We are rejoicing at these reminders that the LORD God has Shalom in the palm of His hands and that He can and will provide for our needs.

Benno Fath
Executive Director

Thankful for:

- An encouraging Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the fellowship that those who attended enjoyed.
- Returning Board members and two new board members who were affirmed at the AGM.
- Staff who have recovered and are recovering from health related issues. After quite a number of very quiet weeks, it is great to have all counselling staff on site if even for a couple hours each day. The waiting room is active, and it is good to be able to serve more clients.
- Bonnie, our community relations manager, who continues to have opportunity to visit churches where she has been invited to share about the work of Shalom. We are grateful for these opportunities and for the interest of the church community in the work of Shalom.
- Small fundraising opportunities for 2018, and potential, more significant, fundraising opportunities for 2019. In more than one case, Shalom has been invited to join an initiative that we would not have known about. There will be much work for us to do, but our Father God will be glorified in the end.
- One of our counsellor's wrote, "I'm glad my schedule is allowing for new clients; some [past clients] have "graduated" and some seeing me less often. It's great work to do, such a privilege." We rejoice when client's gain skills and find resolution to hurts and challenges in their lives and relationships, and rejoice in the privilege to play a part in their journey.
- The new and returning volunteers who have recently expressed their willingness to contribute to upcoming activities and initiatives.
- Our prayer partners. As I think of each of you, I rejoice and thank God for the many who support and uphold the work of Shalom in prayer.

Requests:

- Another registered therapist is still needed to allow us to serve those coming to Shalom in a more timely manner. Pray that God would be preparing that person and direct their path to Shalom.
- Pray for each of our counselling staff that our Father God would grant understanding and insight such that they may be a source of support and encouragement to their clients.
- While the vast majority of clients who come to Shalom report a positive experience, some leave with their expectations unmet. Pray that they would find services and supports elsewhere to meet their needs.
- Pray for our fundraising efforts in 2018. We have no significant events on the calendar in 2018, and will be reliant on the small opportunities that our Father God has provided and will provide. Pray that each small fundraiser would be successful, and pray for new opportunities and partners for 2018.
- We thank God for some larger fundraising opportunities on the horizon for 2019. Pray that God would raise up the volunteers that we will need to successfully stage these events.
- The 2018 board, with new and returning members will hold their first meeting on 26 May 2018. Pray for togetherness, for energy and vision, and for wisdom as they lead Shalom into our 20th year of operation in 2019.
- Pray for those who come to Shalom with their emotional and relational struggles. Pray that they may find hope and conciliation in their lives and relationships. For those that do not know the source of all hope, pray that their journey to Shalom we be another step on their path to knowing the Prince of Peace.
- Our staff counsellor, Shari Moore has had opportunity to share a Healthy Relationship presentation in a number of Central Alberta schools. Pray that the students who hear the presentation will be equipped to make better decisions that will spare them from the pain and wounding of unhealthy and broken relationships in their futures. Also pray that God will provide the extra funding that we need to sustain this program.
- Another educational presentation offered is intended to help those at the stage of life where they are downsizing, moving to a smaller home. Pray the presentation will assist this group as they and those who support them work through change.
- Continue to pray that the Holy Spirit will dwell in our midst at Shalom, such that those coming through our doors may sense God's presence and peace. Pray that they would leave uplifted and with a hunger to experience more deeply the source of that peace.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting
Father, **Prince of Peace.** Isaiah 9:6

Below are some recent client comments that give some sense of their journey and progress.

- My therapist has been a true God-send in my life.
- Realizing it is me who is struggling and realizing that it is my choice to change.
- Seeing small improvements in my awareness.
- Most days are okay, not always sad.
- We are getting better at talking to each other.
- I felt understood and felt hopeful after the session.
- A problem isn't all the other person's fault. There are things I can do to help.
- I am able to be less defensive and listening.
- Much more peace and okay with my imperfections.
- Able to discuss hard things that normally cause conflict.
- The goals we set with our therapist are helpful.
- I was given opportunity to practise listening to my spouse.