



# hcf heartbeat

## Hamilton Christian Fellowship's Monthly Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2010

VOLUME 3.2



### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- "Betrothed" by Rosanna Megna
- Profile—Jenn Jones & Chris Byers
- 'Musings' by Bob Cowling
- Monthly Event & Prayer Calendar

## "Betrothed"

By Rosanna Megna

In the book of Hosea 2:19 & 20, we see the Lord making this statement to the nation of Israel: "I will betroth you to Me forever. I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. I will betroth you in faithfulness and you will acknowledge the Lord."



Betrothal! To understand the meaning of this word come with me to the Hebrew language to really grasp the full meaning. The word for betrothal in Hebrew is "erusin" which is related to the verb "aras" meaning "to bind". This communicates to us that

betrothal is legally binding. Exodus 19:3-7 finds us on Mount Sinai where God betrothed Himself to the nation of Israel; just like the obligation between a husband and a wife. God made a marriage contract with Israel and Israel accepted God's marriage proposal by saying "All that the Lord has spoken we will do." (Ex. 19:8)

What does this mean to us as ingrafted olive branches? Messiah Jesus is the Groom and the believers in the Messiah are the Bride. When Jesus came 2000 years ago He came so that whosoever would put their trust in

Him would be wedded to Him forever.

He came as the suffering Messiah in the first coming and He ascended to heaven to be with God the Father until He returns at His second coming as the Bridegroom King. Right now we are betrothed to Him spiritually and at the second coming physically. To the Lord this is very serious because the moment we say 'yes' to Him we enter into covenant. His Word is like the Jewish "ketubah" or marriage covenant document. Have we understood the commitment of our covenant with Him?

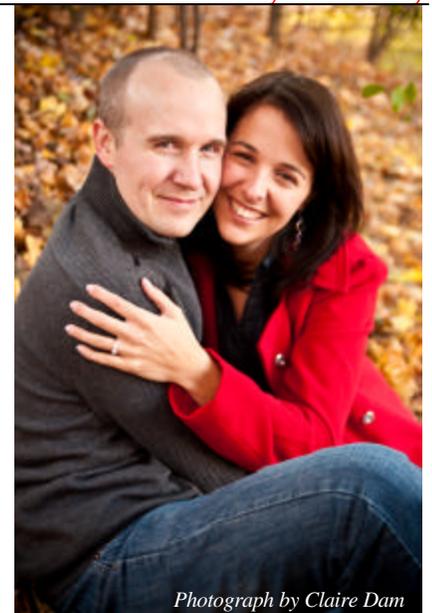
In Jewish wedding tradition a bridal price is paid. Jesus paid *Cont'd ...pg. 2*

## Profile - Jenn Jones & Chris Byers

By Trish Connally

When Chris Byers approached Ian and Anne Jones to ask their blessing on his marriage proposal to their daughter, Jenn, Ian responded that it would be an "honour to have you marry our daughter." On October 31st, when Chris proposed, he told Jenn that he would be "honoured if you become my wife". Finally, when Chris approached his eight year old son, Noah, to be his best man, Noah declared, "I would be honoured." Honour, the high regard or esteem one accords another, is woven deeply into the lives of this young couple. This betrothal

season is truly a period of preparation. Not only is their excitement and attention drawn to the details of a wedding day, but, Chris and Jenn are focused on planning their marriage. They love one another deeply and esteem the Lord, acknowledging Him to be central to their future plans. They encourage one another in their growing relationship with Him, so iron will surely sharpen iron in this relationship. Prayer is an important part of their relationship, helping to develop the 'oneness' that both desire.



Photograph by Claire Dam

*Cont'd ...pg. 2*

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Glory to God ... cont'd from Pg. 1

the bridal price required for His Bride with His life. Therefore, we are His forever. This should give us pause to consider... as His Bride, are our affections towards Him or towards too many other things as well? Are we making ourselves beautiful for Him in anticipation of His return? Are we acting like a Bride that is in love and enjoy drinking every word that He whispers to us? Or are we still like a teenager that has so many different infatuations, not being able to keep our promises because of immaturity?

He is beautiful; He is worth it! And no one can love us more than Him! The more His words shine in us, the more we are compelled by love (His love) to act like Him. When we are engaged to be married our thoughts are only for our

groom-to-be. We think, 'How can we make ourselves more beautiful to Him? How can we please Him?' We make every effort to know Him. We work toward that final day to be ready for the wedding. We wear our engagement ring, showing our loyalty to Him; we take pride in that ring and we display it. Just as in our wedding tradition the bride is given this gift before the wedding; we are given Holy Spirit, our deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

The difficulties of life test our love for Him. He purifies our hearts so that our love grows fonder. Our whole life is an engagement! It may seem long to us but in fact, if we think about it, we are preparing for the most beautiful wedding in the history of all creation and we'll be wed to the Creator Himself, so the preparation is necessary. As we behold Him, we are going to look more and more beautiful and youthful; until that moment

that our hearts are totally His.

He is altogether lovely. I encourage you to read and meditate on Song of Songs 5:10-16 and get acquainted once again with Him to Whom you are betrothed:

*"My lover is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand. His head is purest gold; his hair is wavy and black as a raven. His eyes are like doves by the water streams, washed in milk, mounted like jewels. His cheeks are like beds of spice yielding perfume. His lips are like lilies dripping with myrrh. His arms are rods of gold set with chrysolite. His body is like polished ivory decorated with sapphires. His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of pure gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as its cedars. His mouth is sweetness itself; he is altogether lovely. This is my lover, this my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."*



"We must see God's jealousy as His desire to love and shelter us through life. He is without the dark, evil elements that human jealousy has. But even with our finite understanding, we know jealousy is a response to unfaithfulness in a loved one. Once human jealousy awakens, it easily can become a consuming fire. If this has happened to you, then you know somewhat how our unfaithfulness affects the Lord's heart. Paul certainly was thinking about this when he wrote, "For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin" (2 Corinthians 11:2)."

Francis Frangipame

Profile ... cont'd from pg. 1

Chris and Jenn are blessed to have family connections with which to share their lives. They knew one another, as friends, years ago in joint youth group adventures, when Chris was a youth leader with Lionheart. In fact, Chris knew Jenn's brothers, Matt and Chris, and was good friends with cousin-in-law, Ryan, long before the budding of their romance. Chris's musical talents as a singer and song-writer found him collaborating with cousin, Rebekah. Jenn and Chris both saw, first hand, the expressions of honour in their parent's relationship of mutual respect and affection, which they desire to replicate. Chris has a treasured place in the hearts of his future in-laws and Chris's parents see Jenn as "an answer to their prayers". Any married couple will tell you that

to have the blessing and affection of one's in-laws is a tremendous gift.

When asked about the challenges this betrothal time brings, both were unanimous in declaring two things: the distance of a seven hour drive to New Liskeard and the impersonal nature of a long-distance relationship via telephone. Jenn and Chris are warm, caring and people-loving individuals, so to have important conversations without the benefit of looking into one another's eyes (and Jenn LOVES Chris's eyes) and seeing the subtle nonverbal cues is frustrating. Daily text messaging adds little touches of intimacy, especially when they can scroll back, in a lonely moment, to re-read tender words.

This couple is determined to focus on their future, now. As

much as Jenn admires Chris's past achievements in real estate, she is stalwart in encouraging him toward his new goal of becoming a police officer and Chris is equally supportive of Jenn completing her university/teaching degree, when she is ready. In spite of the challenges, Jenn declares that it is "hard to imagine being happier than I am right now", while Chris is excited to "start from scratch, with lots of new experiences to share" because "we can face whatever comes, together."

This desire to start their life together is fueled by a common value. Not only does Chris appreciate Jenn's kindness and transparency, he is encouraged by her sincere love of children. Jenn's vocation, working with children,

MARCH'S THEME IS "CAN I HELP?"

Send us your dreams, noems, songs, quotes, thoughts before February 22nd at newsletter@hcfchurch.ca

“Musings”

By Bob Cowling

When you ask a single man about his future wedding plans you will see a look on his face that immediately indicates he has never thought about the subject...even if he's already engaged! So to ask guys to go even further and think of themselves as a bride, well you might as well ask us to chew on a bowl of anchovies – it's just not something that we enjoy doing – not when there's so many other options like being a warrior, a king & priest, etc. What possible benefit could there be in encouraging men to think of themselves as a bride? And yet lately, as I've been encouraged at HCF to know God's heart, to grow in intimacy with Him so I can hear His voice more clearly and know His ways, God has been pointing out the fact that according to His word, I am betrothed to Jesus, our wedding day is fast approaching and as His bride-to-be

I have much to do to get ready!.....yikes!!!

What's really helpful for me and something that I've only just started to catch a glimpse of is that the life of Jesus on earth and his soon return mirrors the Jewish tradition of how the man prepares for his upcoming wedding. I've always looked at Jesus' life story as one in which his whole mission was to come and destroy the works of the devil and take back the keys of the kingdom, yeah!!! And while this is what Christ did, His death on the cross is also the price He paid for His bride to be His as it says in I Corinthians 6:20.

This idea of paying a price so the engagement can begin is a tradition known as the 'mohar' in Hebrew. And the engagement is considered legally binding, to the point that a divorce is needed to break it.

Can you start to feel this devotion of Jesus touching your heart? At this point the groom leaves and returns to his Father's house to prepare a portion of it for him and his bride (John 14: 2-3). And while he's away the Bride engages in a ritual cleansing known as a mikvah, which is like our admonition to be baptized, which is a marvelous ritual in itself but even more rich in the light our heavenly marriage preparation.

This whole subject is like that, it makes everything richer. And the wonderful climax of it all is when the trumpet sounds to usher Christ's return for me as His bride, His betrothed, now seems so personal it really makes me feel warm in side, like mush, and that is something I want more and more of in my relationship with God.

Re: Song of Songs 8:5  
 "under the apple tree"  
 That is the wood of the Cross, where the Son of God was Conqueror, and where He betrothed our human nature to Himself, and, by consequence, every soul of man. There, on the Cross, He gave us grace and pledges of His love."  
*St. John of the Cross*



Profile ... cont'd from pg. 1

along with her leadership in Children's Ministry, coupled with her life's longing to be a mother, are testimony to this deep love. In turn, Jenn shared that she is blessed to be able to witness, firsthand, Chris's wonderful ability to be a gentle, loving and godly father to Noah. Over the past four years, Chris's priority has been to spend lots of time with Noah, providing him with a safe and secure home life. In fact, Noah saw his life as "just perfect" with his Dad. That is, perfect until Jenn entered the picture. After a number of enjoyable visits with Jenn, Noah turned to his Dad and said, "I've never wanted a step mother until now. I want Jenn to be my stepmom. Can we ask her to marry us?" What a testimony to Jenn's warmth and natural ability to connect with children. Chris de-

scribed their new family relationship as being even more exciting, more fun, with a strong feeling of contentment. He and Jenn are enjoying becoming rooted and established as a family during this betrothal time, and, with God's timing and blessing, in marriage, to expand their family.

A wedding lasts for a day, but a marriage for a lifetime. Chris and Jenn look forward to their special day, when they will celebrate the "newness of being one". In this betrothal time, however, they are establishing the value of honour, laying a godly foundation of mutual trust and respect that will endure. Chris and Jenn, your HCF family loves you, stands with you and asks God's blessing on your marriage.



Check out the new HCF library for Fiction, Ladies and Men's Interest books, the bible on tape and more! It's a great resource for Christian literature of all kinds. Do you have a book recommendation? Send it in, we'd love to hear from you.



Financial Update

Watch for the date of our upcoming Annual Meeting.

**YTD:** \$14,077.60  
**July:** \$14,077.60

Thank you for your ongoing tithes and offerings.

**CURRENT BALANCES:**

Bldg. Fund: \$10,866.  
 Israel Fund: \$2,382.  
 Gardens: \$942.78  
 Arimathea Project: \$702.00  
 Prayer Room: \$1,238.00



**Bride at the Wall**  
by  
Constance Woods

"To Glorify Elohim  
& To Encourage  
His Bride"

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## February 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 8-9 a.m.— Kingdom Prayer  7:30-8:30pm Prayer for Kids	<b>2</b> 2-4 pm Israel Prayer Watch <b>SoupFest - Convention Centre</b>	<b>3</b> Corporate Prayer 6:30pm	<b>4</b> 7-8 a.m. Prayer for Older Kids 9:30 am—Corp. prayer Ablaze Prayer -5:30pm <b>Women Ablaze 7pm Band of Brothers 7pm(fellowship rm)</b>	<b>5</b> Men's Prayer 6-7 am	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Prayer 9am <b>Community Sunday 10 a.m.</b> Devotional 1 pm	<b>8</b> 8-9 a.m.— Kingdom Prayer	<b>9</b> 2-4 pm Israel Prayer Watch	<b>10</b> Corporate Prayer 6:30pm	<b>11</b> 7-8 a.m. Prayer for Older Kids Nehemiah Prayer First Place 11:30am - HH Prayer 5:30 <b>Healing in our Hands 7pm</b>	<b>12</b> Night Watch 10 p.m.—6 a.m.	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> Prayer 9am <b>Service 10 a.m.</b> Devotional Prayer 1 pm	<b>15</b> 8-9 a.m.— Kingdom Prayer  7:30-8:30pm Prayer for	<b>16</b> 2-4 pm Israel Prayer Watch	<b>17</b> Corporate Prayer 6:30pm	<b>18</b> 7-8 a.m.—Prayer for Older Kids 9:30 am—Corp. prayer Ablaze Prayer -5:30pm <b>Women Ablaze 7pm Band of Brothers 7pm(fellowship rm)</b>	<b>19</b> Men's Prayer 6-7 am  <b>← TRUE CITY CONFERENCE →</b>	<b>20</b> B4L Prayer Siege 1- 2 p.m. McMaster
<b>21</b> Prayer 9am <b>Service 10 a.m.</b> Devotional Prayer 1 pm	<b>22</b> 8-9 a.m.— Kingdom Prayer	<b>23</b> 2-4 pm Israel Prayer Watch	<b>24</b> Corporate Prayer 6:30pm	<b>25</b> 7-8 a.m. Prayer for Older Kids Prayer—9:30 am <b>Bible Study 7pm</b>	<b>26</b> Shabbat Dinner 6:30 p.m.	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Prayer 9am <b>Service 10 a.m.</b> Devotional 1 pm <b>Leadership Mtg 6pm</b>						

**NOTE: All prayer watches are held in the Prayer Room EXCEPT for Sun. Pre-service Prayer (downstairs in main bldg.) and Thurs. a.m. & Sun. Devotional Prayer (main sanctuary)**