



September 2016



CONTRAST

With the intent of reflecting the character of God to the nation of Israel, the prophet Isaiah penned:

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.
"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts."*

Understood in the context of God's goodness, these verses breathe assurance and comfort into our souls.

What are we to make of this however, when rather than comfort, this truth disrupts our well-intentioned lives leaving us with a sense of disquiet? Perhaps, life encounters an abrupt twist; a job loss, a death, relationship failure, or a challenging health diagnosis. What are we to make of this truth when we find ourselves with a sense of unease, of uncertainty, and a lack of security, perhaps even profound questions that speak to the very foundation of our relationship with Christ. Then what?

Inherent in the Isaiah passage is the notion of contrast; the stark difference between God's perspective and plans, and ours, as finite human beings. It is not uncommon, particularly when life circumstances are challenging at best, for this contrast to evoke tension, anxious thoughts and hurried activity.

Used in the context of home décor, "contrast" reflects the tension between colors, textured surfaces, or between modern and vintage styles in order to highlight distinction and create beauty and individuality. In photography, contrast, as one author states, is a tool that photographers use to direct viewers' attention to their subject utilizing the differences in tones from the lightest tones to the darkest tones, or through the way colors interact with each other.

Considered from this perspective, when God's ways seem strikingly different from how we anticipated life might have unfolded, we are invited to pause and notice the subject and the beauty with in. Rather than resisting or denying the tension, perhaps the Psalmist's was on to something when in the midst of the unease, the encouragement to be still and know that He is God, is offered.

Since the last newsletter, we've been walking through a season of contrast here at Fairhaven and the words of the Psalmists have been a trustworthy reminder of God's faithfulness.

Comings and Goings

When Kent and Val Tower joined the Fairhaven team in the summer of 2015 they embraced the mission and gave themselves to shaping and facilitating the experience of our guests. Many will be aware that during this time they have also been journeying with a significant cancer diagnosis. In recent months Val's health has increasingly necessitated the application of the Fairhaven vision to their lives personally. On October 8th they will wrap up full time involvement in order to more fully give themselves to this next season in the journey.

Anticipating with Kent and Val the need for another couple to join the Fairhaven team, a search was begun. God, in His continuing faithfulness, nudged a number of well-qualified couples and individuals to apply. I am pleased to announce that after a process of interviews and discernment, Dallas and Donna Sylvester, along with their youngest daughter Katelyn will be relocating to Fairhaven and will join the team in early October.

Dallas and Donna bring with them a passion for encouraging and supporting Christian leaders, servant hearts, and gifts that find expression in hospitality. Dallas will be focusing on grounds and facility maintenance. Donna will be assisting with the day to day guest services. Please join us in welcoming them to the team!

Happenings at Fairhaven

Ultimately the contrast we pray for daily here at Fairhaven is the difference between the experience of our guests upon arrival and their sense of renewal and encouragement upon departure. For your encouragement, a few expressions from our guests:



Dallas & Donna Sylvester

"Thank you for another great week of study. I meet God in ways that are unique when I come to Fairhaven. Thanks for your commitment to this place. You have blessed me and many others."

"What a blessing our time at Fairhaven has been to our family. Fresh air, space, and beauty. Quiet to read and hear from the Lord. We are in a time of waiting and listening and leaning on Him. We came exhausted and beginning to feel lost in the mess of life. We leave with a renewed resolve to wait and trust our Saviour. He is so faithful! Thank you for providing this haven for tired workers."

"Thanks to all of you at Fairhaven for another wonderful retreat. We so appreciate you caring for us, more than we could ever say. You really do make this a little piece of heaven on earth, and a place of much physical, emotional and spiritual refreshment. Many, many thanks."

This is God's story of renewal and restored hope; one in which we have the privilege of playing a small part.

Since our last newsletter there is much that has occurred.

April - May 2016: Wonderful season of Dinner/Dessert tours as we reconnected with the extended Fairhaven family. The gatherings also provided an opportunity to share memories and expressions of fond farewell for Len and Fay. Along with Sherwood Park, Calgary, Vernon and Surrey, Saskatoon and Moose Jaw hosted events as well.

May: Following a year of overlap with Gwen and I, Len and Fay wrapped up 19 years of founding leadership.

June: Annual on site Board Retreat during which Dale (and Kim) Loewen were welcomed to the Board. Albert Elliot and Darren Malin, having served faithfully for many years, concluded their board service.

June - August: A wonderful summer of ministry here on site. Our guests continue to experience God's transforming presence and the renewing power of His Spirit during their time at Fairhaven.

September - October: Grieving with Kent and Val as they transition out, even as we begin to celebrate the arrival of Dallas and Donna. Both couples I'm confident would welcome your prayers in their respective transitions.

Next Building Project

In keeping with the master plan, we continue to discern God's leading with regard to the next addition to our village. Growing out of an increasing number of requests for group retreats and leadership development opportunities involving teams we've begun to explore the feasibility of a larger facility that would incorporate multiple guest accommodations surrounding a core meeting and group area. We are anticipating greater clarity by the time we begin our 2017 Dinner and Dessert tour. Stay tuned.

Each day we acknowledge our dependence upon God as the One who is at work touching the hearts and lives of those who come seeking rest and renewal. And each day we are aware of the privilege of partnering with each of you in stewarding your passion and resources toward this end. Your investment is making a significant difference in the lives of those who come and in the lives of those touched by our guests as they return to their respective ministries renewed and encouraged,

With continued growth comes an increase in day-to-day operating expenses. Whether ongoing upkeep, cottage refurbishment, or staff remuneration, we desire to honour God in all that we do. To meet these realities we are praying for 165 new partners who would join us in this good work giving the equivalent of \$100.00 per month each. Would you pray and trust with us for God's provision in this need?

Dear Friends,

We wish to express our deep gratitude to God and to all of you who have supported the ministry of Fairhaven in various ways. We have been so very privileged to be a part of what God has been doing in partnership with you. Thank you for joining this amazing journey.

We want to thank those who have recently sent donations to Fairhaven to honour and bless the 19 years we have given in service to our spiritual leaders. Because of the commitment to the confidentiality of Fairhaven donors, we do not know who you are.

Though this thank you is less personal than we would like it to be, please know that we love and appreciate you and feel honoured and encouraged.

Thank you also to those who have sent words of encouragement which have blessed us immensely. God's people have expressed exceptional generosity over the 19 years. It has been humbling and faith-building to be involved in what God has been unfolding at Fairhaven.



We would encourage your ongoing support of Fairhaven should the Lord direct you in that way. We continue to firmly believe in the value of the mission and that it is a God anointed ministry.

Above all, prayer has formed the foundation for this work, and we would strongly encourage you to continue lifting up Fairhaven to our Lord.

May it continue to minister in strength and effectiveness. Again, thank you for your generosity and the love you have shown us. We can never adequately express how much you mean to us.

With our love and appreciation,

Len & Fay (lenandfay@gmail.com)

The ministry of Fairhaven continues to unfold through the prayers and provision of those who share the mission of encouraging the health and renewal of Christian leaders. We are grateful for your partnership. Thank you for your commitment and generosity in supporting God's work through Fairhaven.

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In the confidence of His leading,

