



ANNUAL

REPORT
2020

Living Bible Explorers
Annual Report

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Board of Directors Report

RON KLASSEN

This year has thrown numerous curve balls at LBE with the COVID-19 situation being at the core of all of it. However, it is with admiration for Daniel and all of our staff that I can truly say that the ministry of LBE to children and their families in the West end of Winnipeg continues to show the love of God to those we have been called to serve. As a Board we continue to provide general oversight of all policies and procedures at LBE and have continued to meet monthly in an effort to oversee this ministry of LBE in the West End.

The COVID-19 situation has affected the ministry of LBE in some very significant ways this year. To begin, we were not able to run overnight camps but instead offered a “camp like” experience through Day Camps. We offered canoeing, hiking, mountain biking, arts and crafts, beach days, BBQ’s, trips to the splash pad and various other experiences in lieu of our overnight camp experience. In total more than 210 kids came to our day camps this year.

Secondly, a benefit of the COVID-19 situation was the numerous grant money Daniel was able to attain, which really helped us to be able to offer paid positions to more volunteers. The benefit has been that many of these leaders like Ezra and Mercy have been able to continue with LBE.

Thirdly, our annual fall family day, Fund raising banquet, and fall programming were significantly impacted by COVID-19. However, Daniel was able to make changes in our registration process such that by the time fall came around we had a completed and updated information on our children and families and where to take each family a “Family Day in a Bag.” Each bag contained program information, a dozen hotdogs, a dozen buns, a bag of chips, and 5 hot chocolates.

With some imagination and forward thinking Daniel replaced the Fund raising Banquet with LBE’s 12 Days of Christmas campaign which turned out to be a big success. The other event which we may never have offered was the DMCI graduation event which was a real highlight for our grads in a year when graduation was sidelined to a low key, impersonal event. This allowed our graduates the opportunity to gather and celebrate in community, to participate with the streaming program that we showed on our projector, and have each graduate come forward to accept their diploma and have a picture taken with their families.

But despite the notable changes we did make to running our programs at LBE, there were casualties. Our lunch program wasn’t able to continue and with the schools going to code orange and red, we had to increasingly take our RSK, Arise, and Teen programs online and unfortunately our kids don’t do well with things virtual. Some don’t have access to technology and other are not interested in meeting unless it’s in person.

Not only has the COVID-19 situation been a hardship and required some adjustments we have seen some significant changes in the Board also. This year Gloria Fligg, Norma Kendrick, Robert Franks, Naomi Letkeman, Katherine Peters, and Bill Feniuk have left the Board and so we have been aggressively recruiting to fill the vacant positions. If you or someone you know is interested please reach out to us! At the time of writing, I am happy to report that we have several new Board members who have been adding their input and talents to our Board. Within the last 3 months we have seen, Gord Buczko, Kurt Hollander, Art Pauls, Ross Penner, and Don Roe express interest and attend Board meetings. Board inductees need to attend 3 board meetings and be voted in become official members of the Board. I am very thankful for Jon Letkemann, Jack Penner and Melvina Guiboche who have continued on in faithful service to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Please pray that God will guide us as we seek to fill the Board with the talents and gifting that is needed to run this ministry wisely.

Finally, I need to raise some of the concerns I see for the future of this ministry. It goes without saying that we need to bring on administrative help and staff support to assist Daniel in this ministry. Between ongoing day-to-day operations, and keeping programs running, while trying to find time to do the important things like fundraising, grant writing, getting our building and office in order, hiring staff, and looking to the future, there is a lot on his plate. We also have a building situation that desperately needs some attention and funding. We want to start a capital campaign and just recently we have struck a committee to proceed with addressing this issue. I see future partnerships with other ministries in the West End to be vital for the expansion and building of God’s Kingdom within the West End. Nothing happens in ministry without the faithful, steadfast prayers of God’s people. I earnestly ask that you would continue to uphold Daniel, our staff and the Board as we endeavor to advance God’s Kingdom in the West End.

Executive Director Report

DANIEL HORNE

2020 has been a year like no other. Our world changed overnight, and LBE was impacted along with everyone else. COVID-19 restrictions took affect weeks before we were supposed to host our AGM and fundraising banquet. We found ourselves repeatedly making, changing and canceling plans. We would plan, re-plan, pivot, and sometimes on the spot come up with something that made sense and upheld restrictions.

We were forced to reconsider how we run our lunch club meal program, we could no longer run it in the building, so we set up a tent and moved outside for as long as we could continue.

Summer programming was logistically challenging, but we still managed to offer 211 kids a summer camp experience. Because of restrictions we could not run overnight camps, so instead of running both a sleep away camp and inner-city camps this year, we decided to combine the two and tried to create an overnight camp experience in a day camp format. This meant we were providing a lot more transportation, which was long and slow, as we were picking kids up and dropping them off every day.

The kids had the opportunity to go mountain biking, hiking, canoeing, swimming, beach trips, crafts like making slime, wide games, the younger kids were taken to the splash pad. We had a daytime campfire experience where kids had the opportunity sing, worship, pray and learn lessons from the Bible.

Because of a new food charity in Winnipeg, Second Harvest, we were able to depend less on what we receive from Winnipeg Harvest and it meant we were able to provide the kids with a lot of vegetables and nutritious meals.

In 2020 we qualified for some additional grants so we were able to hire more summer staff and junior leaders than usual. This meant we had a high staff to student ratio and we could focus more on leadership development.



This year our building was broken into twice, thieves broke a hole through the wall at the rear of the building, during one of the break-ins they set off 10 fire extinguishers, we have repaired the damages and working to improve security.

We have tried to make the best of the restrictions, making some much needed improvements in the office and around the building, updating technology in an attempt to do more in-house and reduce expenses, we have also adopted technologies to continue doing ministry virtually. This year we focused on virtual programming, home visitations, outdoor one-on-one and small group activities when permitted.

Some of our staff spent also spent a significant amount of time revising our policy manual. Through the pandemic we reduced costs by operating with a lean staff. In 2020 we said goodbye to Mary Ann Funk after 10 years of service and Mikayla Wiens after 8 years. Since that time, we have hired Miranda Lohvinenko as a Program Director.

We could not offer our family events so we delivered "Family Day in a Bag" to all of our families. The bag contained, hot dogs, buns, hot chocolate, chips for the entire family. Christmas was also different this year so we focused our energy on Christmas Hampers and gift cards. Through partnerships with individuals and churches like Grant Memorial we were able to deliver over 50 Hampers to families. Some of these hampers even contained gifts for all of the children. We are also able to distribute a large number of gift cards.

We look forward to the opportunities that 2021 will bring, and as we examine the future needs of LBE, and the communities that we serve. We have made great strides in making LBE more sustainable and we continue to strive for long term sustainability and taking the necessary steps to ensure that. At this time, we are exploring how best we can serve our community, and if we need to improve facilities or programs to serve them better. Stay tuned for announcements in 2022.

Teens Report

MIKAYLA WIENS

A year into the pandemic, it can be hard to remember what life was like before lock downs and social distancing was a thing. In the beginning of 2020, we were working on a series called, "What does God say?" It started at our winter retreat in January, where Nikki Hill lead sessions about what God says about us. Over the course of the weekend, we talked about lies we believe about ourselves and the truth God says about us. We continued on the series with and even had Dallas Cornelsen from the Crisis Pregnancy Center come in to speak about what God says about Sex. We also continued to meet with small groups up until the March lock down began.

During the first lock down we continued to plan online activities for the teens that included a Facebook group to share encouragements, games nights, and other ways to try and engage. In June we were finally able to meet with small groups again, and did so cautiously. Over the summer, X teens worked at our summer day camp. It was so encouraging to watch these young leaders step up and start to lead. In the fall, we planned for all the teens to be in small groups of less than 10 (with leaders) so that we could continue under the Public health restrictions. We continued until October when the code red lock down prevented non-household members to meet. At this point we switched back to online games nights. Our games nights included fun games (like mafia, code names, and trivia) and times to check in with those present and pray for things going on in our lives.

For many of the leaders and teens, it was hard to move from a vibrant in person community to distant video calls. Many have struggled through this time and I ask that you continue to keep praying for them. As of January 2021, I have stepped down from my roles at LBE. This program has been special to me during my time at LBE because I have love watching teens I met as children become adults and grow into fine young people who are kind, caring, and compassionate.

Arise: Middle Years

EZRA ENNS, MERCY ACHIENG AND MIRANDA LOHVENINKO

In the Fall of 2020 I started work at LBE and began in the role of Program Director for Arise. We also have Ezra Enns and Mercy Achieng working part time to help run the program which has been a huge blessing as they introduced me to the program and children, walking me through how things are done.

For the month of October, we were able to do in-person programming at the building with groups of 15 kids. We rotated a different area of the city each week: Weston, West End, North End 1, North End 2. During these weeks we played games, ate food, and explored the question, "What is the Bible?"

In November we were forced to make changes as Code Red restrictions were implemented. We moved Arise to online through our Facebook group, and we began meeting over video chat every Thursday evening at 6:30 until around 9:30. We took this opportunity to really try and engage with our kids and their families through the Facebook group page where we have posted a weekly video done by The Bible Project, as well as a "Bible Verse of the Week". We have continued with the topic of "How to Read the Bible", exploring different aspects of the Bible and understanding how it is a series of shorter books that are all telling the same story and pointing to the glory of God's Kingdom. During December we took a break from this topic and focused on Advent- Peace, Hope, Love, and Joy.

A typical Thursday night online often involves some time spent just catching up, sharing about our week and anything else that's going on. We then sing some worship songs together and watch the video for the week. We spend some time discussing it and answering any questions kids might have, and then we finish off the night playing games online. While the attendance is not very high compared to in-person programming, we still feel God working through what we are able to do and we are thankful for the opportunity to connect with the kids that do come, even if it's just for part of the evening.

Two special events we did to end off the year in December were Christmas Cookie decorating and watching a Christmas movie. We baked cookies and put together decorating kits for each kid that wanted one then dropped them off at their houses so that we could all decorate together in the evening over video chat. It was by far our biggest turn-out online and it was so fun to be able to do something together while still apart. The following week we watched a Christmas movie together also over video chat by all pressing "play" at the same time on our own devices. This, too, was a special time and a fun way to end off the year before breaking for Christmas.

Moving programming to online has not been the easiest thing and we have felt the absence of seeing each other in person, but we see God working through what we are able to do and we are so thankful for the resources and blessings he has poured over us to be able to connect in this way! He has also given us the strength, encouragement, and creativity we need to do the best we can given the circumstances. We are thankful for this and we praise Jesus for these blessings!

Rock Solid Kids

SHANNON NEUFELD

Jan-March 2020

Saturday kid's church was running as per normal. We picked up West End & Weston one Saturday, then the North End & Central on the alternating weeks. We were also visiting the kids each week while on home visits, sharing info about programs and praying for/with families as opportunities arose. We were just planning an incredible DVBS-style program for over Spring Break that involved SOAR Heartland, The Salvation Army Weetamah and others, when COVID-19 forced us to cancel everything.

April-June 2020

A major shift occurred with COVID-19 restrictions. I collected parent's emails and started making videos for the kids and emailing out links. We did a coloring contest for Easter with prizes for everyone who entered. We tried to make Easter special by delivering goodies to each home. I was also able to coordinate and deliver donations from Jabez Blanket Ministries that included a backpack, school supplies, a knitted blanket and teddy for each child.

July-Aug 2020

We shifted gears into summer programming and I supported all that was happening for summer day camps, specifically keeping registrations, pick up lists and attendance up-to-date and entered into our file server, and hanging out with the kids who participated in day camps. I led a slime making craft each week that the kids loved.

October 2020

We hosted groups of 15 children each Saturday in October at the Living Bible Explorers Ministry Centre, as no other locations were available for rent due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I was ecstatic to show the kids a PowerPoint of pictures from 2020's Summer Day Camps, because I knew they would love seeing themselves, siblings, and friends on the big screen. I introduced "LBE bucks;" fake money designed to help the children learn to start thinking about saving, as many don't learn healthy banking in their homes. LBE bucks could be saved for prizes, or spent at the end of kid's church on a small food item or drink.

October's lesson was about how seasons change, but God never does. The message was two-fold: COVID-19 or other challenging situations will not last forever, and at the same time, our unchanging God is a good God, and He's good right now.

Nov - Dec 2020

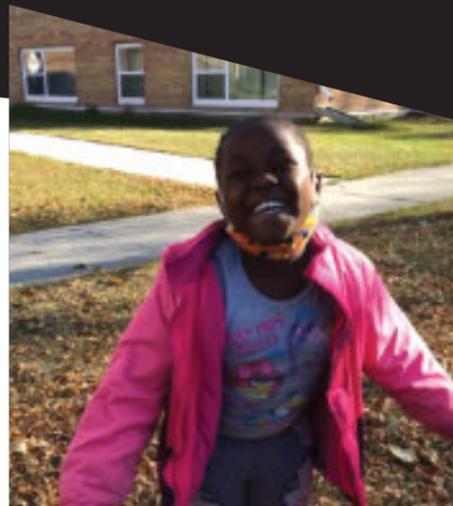
With November 2020's 'code red' status, I began making colouring books that we delivered with a snack or juice. Each book had a theme:

Nov 2020 – "Changing seasons" – This included a processing page with COVID-related images and a spot to draw how they make you feel, and verses about what God says about fear and loneliness

Dec 2020 – "Is is time yet?" The Messiah came at the perfect time

Office Report MIKAYLA WIENS

This year in the office, Kristan continued to do the financial pieces and I, Mikayla, tried to fill in the rest. One of the big things that I got started was working on the Staff Manual. The last time it was re-written was in 2010, and things have been updated since then. There were no big changes, just updating languages and putting policies that we have been following on paper. Starting this process was not just a way to fill time in a pandemic, but it helped to start clarifying policies for new workers.



Student Intern

SHELBY BEARDY

Originally from Grand Rapids, Manitoba, Shelby is completing her three-year psychology degree at Canadian Mennonite University. Shelby first became acquainted with LBE through the Mission X program at Steinbach Bible College, and started interning at LBE in October 2020. She has especially enjoyed serving at lunch club (October), and has been a great helping hand this year.

Camp Construction

JACK PENNER

During 2020 the camp was not used for camps due to COVID-19 conditions leaving it available for work to be done, however having groups of people working together and traveling together was also limited. Progress did continue.

Activities done in the past year included:

- Drywall work continued. One double cabin is now completely boarded for the bedroom and washroom areas with most of the taping also done. Several volunteers we had not had there before as well as more regular volunteers came out to be involved.
- The installation of fascia and ridge caps on all cabins was completed.
- Repairs were done on a camper trailer preparing it to be used for housing staff again.
- The camp has been further cleaned and organized. Camp staff was also out working at it.
- Daniel worked on the canoe trailer to make it usable again.
- One shed now has a door installed.
- A new mast and main switch with proper wiring to the panel was installed in one double cabin. Thanks to Rick Stoetzel of Morning Star Electric for providing work and materials for that job.
- The camp was prepared for the winter months.

Activities that need to be addressed include:

- Two of the 3 double cabins still need to be insulated, have drywall installed, and have the electrical updated.
- Dividers, trim, and doors need to be installed in the washrooms.
- One shed needs to have a proper door installed.
- Construction of a Coverall to provide a storage space or equipment.
- Some of the exterior trim on cabins still need to be completed.
- Some finishing is required for the tiling of the bathrooms.
- There are always more dead or fallen trees that need to be cleaned up.
- The beach was not used as much as usual this year but will need some work to improve it.
- Electrical connections from the generator to the cabins need to be buried.
- Plumbing lines around the cabins should be buried.

We don't know what to expect this year but look forward to working together to make the camp more useful. I am thankful for the participation of the camp committee members Shane Shodine, Mark Davis, Kurt Martens, and Gord Hoffman and to Daniel Horne, as well as others who have come out to join us.