



CONNECTOR

#83 July 2026



General Assembly



POWER Team Gathering at General Assembly

A big thanks to our National **POWER Team** Coordinators Gerald & Dorothy Hogenbirk for the challenging service of arranging and pulling off a great time of connecting and encouragement.

Gerald writes: It was lovely to be together with the **POWER Team** members who were able to attend General Assembly—at the Missionary Legacy meeting, Missionary Dessert night, the **POWER Team** gathering and then the Ambrose Alumni gathering honouring Dr. Melvin Sylvester. What a joy to walk through the halls of First Alliance Church in Calgary and meet former colleagues and present workers. It was a great opportunity to listen, reflect and encourage each other to press on.



It has been said, “It is paradoxical that the idea of living a long life appeals to everyone, but the idea of getting old doesn’t appeal to anyone.” God has given us life. Perhaps God doesn’t want me to do more for Him, but He wants me to spend more time with Him. John Wesley’s last words were, “The best of all is God is with us.” Because He is with us, we can still be the fragrance of Christ and a fountain of blessing.

As we chatted with people, it was good to look up to God and look back at what He has done as we talked about places where we served together and saw Him do amazing things through the ups and downs. We look around at how we were able to journey together and by His grace we were able to hold fast and run with endurance. Looking ahead to the city of foundations, John Lennox aptly stated, “It’s not a question of which city you live in, but which city you live for—either Babylon or the New Jerusalem, the city with solid foundations.”

Dear **Power Team** members, as God gives us strength and life, may we be like Anna and Simeon, who kept on with the ordinary, but expecting the extraordinary, continuing to live life to the glory of God.

Gerald Hogenbirk
National **POWER Team** Volunteer Coordinator



.To Pat and Ardyce Worsley

They did all the legwork to provide the food for our very special **POWER Team** dinner together.

Here is a link to their retirement after 50 years of service with the Alliance.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1CeLXawUn2/?mibextid=wwXlfr>



We were visited by President Darren Herbold

Our **POWER Team** gathering started at 3:30 p.m. and the business session of General Assembly was reconvening at 4 p.m. President Darren Herbold (who would soon be elected for his 2nd 4-year term) was so gracious to join with us with words of encouragement and appreciation for the service that **POWER Team** members have given for the Kingdom of God through the Alliance.



**It's been a challenging ministry but I made it—
how about you?**



As we had to break up the “fellowship” and “re-union” time of **POWER Team** members after the 3:30 p.m. start, President Darren approached the platform and noticed on the big screen the picture on the left. Of course, he never missed a beat with his segway into what he was going to say.

He had to admit, that like most of the **CONNECTOR** readers, he too quickly turns to the last page to read the deep spiritual sayings, along with the rest of the Alliance theologians.

It was an honor and a blessing for us all to hear from and support the leadership of our president. Thanks, Darren, for taking this time which meant a lot to each of us.

Honoring **POWER Team** members that uniquely impacted our lives.

At our General Assembly gathering, I (Wayne Kerr) took the opportunity to express a thanks to a number of **POWER Team** members present, who impacted the lives of Betty and I over the years. As I looked over those gathered, I could say something about many of them, but risked mentioning a few.

-Eric & brother John Persson. Eric & Gwen served as IWs in Africa, John & Wenda served briefly in South America. They are Betty's first cousins who grew up in Regina and the old Tabernacle and God used them to lead her to become a follower of Jesus Christ.



-Joyce (Matheson) Grunau, who was a student at CBC and an IW with Floyd in Indonesia, disciplined Betty in her new found faith. She had Bible studies with her.

-Tim & Nancy Moore and **Bill & Heather McAlpine** influenced us greatly as we served on the same pastoral team at Glencairn in Regina.

-David & Cheryl Fowler who led our Drama team at Glencairn, had me fake a heart attack on the platform before Bill McAlpine gave his message on the Good Samaritan. After the service, I was given a roll of toilet paper that has written on it: "For the Best Performance by a Pastor in a Supporting Roll" Nov 13/85.

-John (DS) & Connie Healey for their support when the **POWER Team** had its beginnings back in 2013.

-Marilyn Parsons who flew to our place to spend a week with Betty before God called her to Himself, July 30, 2025.



These are just a few of the **POWER Team** members I mentioned.

I would welcome all of you to send me a list (with pictures) of **POWER Team** members who have had an impact on your life. This would encourage many of our **CONNECTOR** readers.



Remembering those who are experiencing the loss of a spouse.

During our time of round table discussion, we acknowledged those present who are in that season of their retirement years, experiencing life without their partner in ministry. There are many of our **POWER Team** family who are walking life's last years alone. We were delighted to have 4 of those present. Time was taken at the table to pray for those present and those we know in this season of their lives walking this journey.

Those present were Lorne Fredlund, Bob Voth, Wayne Kerr along with John & Connie Healey who lost a son.



John & Connie Healey, Melodie Ibsen, Lorne Fredlund & Bob Voth

II Cor says (my translation) ***"Though we are all experiencing the expiry dates showing themselves in different parts of our body, yet inwardly we are being formed into Christ-likeness, that others see, as we glorify Him in this season of our lives."***

-We are allowing His **POWER** to continue His sanctifying work in our lives.

Round Table discussions

During our time together, we had each table discuss, write down, then share the responses from their table,

- **WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR GREATEST JOYS IN THIS SEASON OF YOUR LIFE?**
- **WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR GREATEST CHALLENGES IN TRANSITIONING INTO YOUR RETIREMENT SEASON OF LIFE?**
- **HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE ALLIANCE PROVIDE MEMBER CARE/CONTACT FOR RETIRED WORKERS?**



CONNECTOR team would appreciate if each of you would take a few moments to answer these three questions and forwarded your responses to waynebettyk@rogers.com (today), so these can be compiled and shared in Issue #84 **CONNECTOR**.





**Gerald Hogenbirk with Ken Driedger solving
all the world's challenges**



**Matheson Sisters: Mora Bundy &
Joyce Grunau**



**Dee & Ray Matheson connecting with National
POWER Team Coordinator Gerald Hogenbirk**



Jean & Elizabeth Martin (SLD)



Roy & Betty Hubert
-just moved to Airdrie Alberta, from BC

Mel Sylvester honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award



Future **POWER Team** member, and Ambrose President's right hand woman, Marva Goertzen said:

"Tonight, it is my great privilege to present the inaugural **Distinguished Alumni Award**. This award recognizes alumni of Ambrose University and its predecessor institutions, whose lives and service reflect a lasting and redemptive impact on the world.

In 1980, this year's recipient, was elected the first President of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada. He provided national leadership during the historic transition to Canadian autonomy. His leadership helped shape the structure, mission, and future direction of The Christian and Missionary Alliance across Canada.

Through decades of pastoral ministry, he faithfully led the planting, growth, and strengthening of churches across Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario, while mentoring and investing in future pastors, missionaries, and Christian leaders. His influence continues to be seen in the many lives called into ministry and missions through his faithful leadership and example.

As Chancellor and Interim President, this year's recipient, also played a key leadership role in the historic relocation of Canadian Bible College and Canadian Theological Seminary from Regina to Calgary. His vision and steady guidance helped lay the foundation for what would eventually become Ambrose University as we know it today.

Tonight, we honor Rev. Dr. Mel Sylvester, not only for these remarkable accomplishments, but for a lifetime of servant leadership, unwavering faith, and profound Kingdom impact. His legacy continues to shape the Church, Christian higher education, and countless lives across generations".

Bryce Ashlin-Mayo -President of Ambrose University,

Marva Goertzen -Director, Development and Alumni

It was a privilege to have a guided tour of the Ambrose University Campus, led by President Bryce





Recently **POWER Team IW Ruth Stanley** graduated to her eternal home. Celebration of Life Service was held at Cedarview Alliance in Ottawa.



Florence Lucia “Ruth” Stanley

September 25, 1932 - May 30, 2026

Florence Lucia “Ruth” Stanley, 93...

..of Ottawa, died peacefully in hospital, going home to be with the Lord on Saturday, May 30, 2026.

Ruth was born on September 25, 1932, to the late Ross and Hazel Stanley. She is survived by many family members, along with a large church family, and many friends around the world.

Ruth was a teacher, who devoted 35 years of her life as a missionary in Africa after which she then did mission work in Quebec before retirement, but her commitment to ministry and mission in churches never ended.

1 Corinthians 15:58 ***“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”***

If desired, expressions of sympathy may be made in the form of a donation to Ruth’s favourite charities The Christian and Missionary Alliance for the Global Advance Fund or 100 Huntley Street Crossroads.

Here is the link to her Celebration Service [Ruth Stanley's Celebration of Life](#)

POWER Team members connecting at Ruth’s Celebration of Life Service.



Donna & Bruce Edwards with
Dr. Kenzo of Africa



(Edwards, Hogenbirks & McLeans-African IWs)



Gerald & Dorothy Hogenbirk
with IW Nancy McLean
IWJs John & Penny Hall
(Vietnam)

“What I am thinking about this evening, Jesus... (by Lorne Fredlund)

CONNECTOR asked **POWER Team** member Lorne Fredlund, who attended the General Assembly **POWER Team** gathering, to share with us part of his journey as he is experiencing the loss of his wife Peggy (Valentine's Day 2025). We are sure that this will resonate with many of our family who are walking this same road, as well as helping us better sympathize with our friends.



“What I am thinking about this evening, Jesus...

... it's about 17 months since you came to take Peggy's hand. The journey of lament and grief has so many pathways. You stream across my mind, daily, the many amazing understandings about what Peggy and I experienced together, many of which I just took for granted during the journey. Now you are revealing that 'real life' is not over and it is possible to 'dream again'. I see and want to see, more of the purpose for the years ahead, and how you will continue to redeem even this loss, for good.

The other day, I had this discouraging thought that perhaps 'the best has already come and gone'. I knew it's not true from an eternal perspective, but the yearning for more in the 'here and now' continues to drift back into my mind, day after day.



Recently, you blessed me with the image of a vase, broken, being knit back together, with amazing threads of 'gold and silver'. It was breathtakingly beautiful. My mind caught the picture that you are not simply re-doing the blessings and vision of the past in my life, but creating something new, beautiful and God honoring in a new way. How can this be...out of sorrow and loss? Now, it makes my heart beat faster with greater anticipation and expectation for how you are redeeming the loss to create life with more impact, and desire, in a different way. It reveals that

you, Jesus, are the 'redeemer in this too'! It makes me yearn deeply, for more! You are revealing to me that through loss, you are opening new pathways ... to see into other people's lives unlike ever before, and you are bringing people across my path regularly, who are searching for purpose and fulfillment....and it fills me up! I now understand, that 'without hurt, the heart is hollow – and the pain of loss has created a new way to fill my heart'.

There are moments every day that you separate out the beauty from the grief.

I also experience that there are moments every day that you separate out the beauty from the grief. I can still feel the pain of lament that tears my heart each day, but then you create moments in the day that separate me from my grief, where I can catch the delight of a dream, or the fondness of a possible, new experience. I want to move to the

place where time is not shrouded in lament – but that there is again, community, purpose, unselfish giving of self, and more of the mystery of the divine.

What a travesty to think that I might 'relinquish' the remaining days to despair, when they are filled with even greater understanding than I 'knew' before the loss. The 'present' seems like new life – new revelation. I am not naïve, I still have deep sorrow (and I just felt the pain of grieving as I wrote these words, and the tears weren't far behind). It is complicated...

How do you Jesus put a life back together after the deepest sorrows and loss, and then create a 'new kind of beauty', that enlivens a spirit again, today? As I carry the delight of 'what was of the past' along with the present, it just creates a craving for 'newer', new understandings, new truths in my heart (and my mind) and new experiences of what you have in store. I come back to this truth again..." you have made us even more than we will ever know, when we open up ourselves to you", and through this deepest loss of life, you are unfolding more of what you created in me that I have never known. I long for this now...it moves me, I want more. It also helps me see that you are 'the redeemer' who redeems all things for our good – if we 'let you in' to align our desires with Kingdom good. Now I understand more...I see and feel something deeper when I see that, without hurt the heart is hollow. In such a unique way, all this loss almost seems like 'grace (unmerited favor) disguised?'.



Thank you for continuing to help me experience/feel the profound emotions of the past and loss, whilst I discover the present and future.

Thank you for continuing to help me experience/feel the profound emotions of the past and loss, whilst I discover the present and future. How do you do all this? I find myself thinking back to the promises you have given in the past, which I failed to receive and internalize. Isaiah 43:19 *"I am doing a new thing...I will make a way in the*

wilderness, Lamentations 3:22-23 – Your mercies are NEW every morning, Jer 29:11 – "I know the plans I have for you...plans to give you hope and a future", Psalm 32:8 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go", Romans 8:28 – "God works all things for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose"

Lord, I ask, continue to make all things new in my life. I don't want to stay where I am... I want to know you more, and to daily see your face in my experiences and my journey. I want to experience the unshakeable you, to see you more clearly not through what others describe of you, not reading about it from other's experiences, but just you and me... seeing with my own eyes, my spiritual eyes, my emotional eyes. Always keep me tender hearted. May I always seek to see, not to be seen, and not just to grasp your hand before I seek your face. I give you full sway to lead me into the fulfillment of what you are placing on my heart. May the delight of 'capturing a glimpse of you' throughout each day be the normal experience of 'walking side by side' with you. May this be so For Your Glory, and My Delight! Amen!

We thank Lorne for his willingness to be transparent with us.



A number of retired IWs were honored for their years of service at General Assembly. We have not received the information yet to welcome them into our **POWER Team** family. Hopefully our next issue will provide these servants of the Lord to you.

A few smiles.

**MY FRIEND WENT BALD
YEARS AGO BUT STILL
CARRIES AROUND AN
OLD COMB WITH HIM**

UNKNOWN PUNSTER ©2019

**HE JUST CAN'T PART
WITH IT**

This getting old is a terrible thing. I blacked out for twenty minutes this morning, then I realized I'd put my hoodie on backwards

I'm adopting a **healthier lifestyle**, so I parked and walked inside to buy donuts instead of using the drive-thru.

**THANKS FOR BEING
FRIENDS WITH ME.**
QUESTIONABLE LIFE CHOICE,
BUT I APPRECIATE IT.



Old age comes at a bad time!
When you finally know everything. You start to forget everything you know."



**MY ENTIRE LIFE CAN BE
SUMMED UP IN ONE
Sentence...**



**WELL, THAT DIDN'T GO
as planned**

**I DIDN'T THINK
ORTHOPEDIC SHOES
WOULD HELP.**

BUT I STAND CORRECTED.

**WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN IGNORANCE AND
INDIFFERENCE?**

**I DON'T KNOW
AND I DON'T CARE.**

**YESTERDAY I SAW AN
AD THAT SAID 'RADIO
FOR SALE, \$1, VOLUME
STUCK ON FULL'**

**I THOUGHT, 'I CAN'T
TURN THAT DOWN'**

**My wife called to tell me she
saw a fox on the way to work.**

**I asked her how she knew it
was on it's way to work.**

She hung up on me.

Remember to submit your answers to the questions on page 4

Send your contribution for the **CONNECTOR** to:

waynebettyk@rogers.com 647-408-4204

