

SPOTLIGHT ON MISSION

Positive stories. Valuable work.



Intensive training for group counselors at Mount Joy College.



The sailing ship rehab program for young substance abusers.

Photos courtesy of Mount Joy College

Keeping hope alive

Experiential training, both scientific and scriptural for a challenging outreach

Mount Joy College

"The Lord now chose 72 other disciples and sent them...Go and remember I am sending you...As you heal the sick, say the Kingdom of God is near you now" (Luke 10:1,3,9).

VICTORIA, BC—There is an urgent need to treat damages felt by people traumatized by abortion and childhood mistreatment. This is one of the most important driving desires behind the Hope Alive counseling programs offered at Mount Joy College.

"Mount Joy College trains

Christians to help the Lord heal those who are deeply damaged by a combination of childhood mistreatment and abortion. There is also a sea-going program for young people who are struggling with substance abuse," says Mount Joy College president Dr. Philip Ney. "As Christ taught us, we help heal and gently lead wounded people to His Kingdom."

"Approximately 60 per cent of Canadians have aborted at least one of their children by the age of 45," Dr. Ney says. "Most of them were neglected or abused as children. This combination is very dehumanizing and destructive." The intensive Hope Alive program

trains counsellors between the ages of 20 and 50 to resolve post abuse and post abortion conflicts and to discover the joy of knowing Jesus. After they pass the exam, we will help them set up their own practice.

Intensive counsellor - seaman-ship training equips strong, courageous Christians to help teens overcome drug and alcohol addictions while sailing the three-masted schooner, Horizons Unbound. Teens between 12 and 15-years-old learn to discover, explore, solo survive and appreciate God's amazingly beautiful creation in the remote coast of B.C. Together with one parent they learn to know

themselves and implement healthy body, mind and spirit activities.

"Don't wait to be called or for doors to open," says psychiatrist/psychologist Dr. Ney. "You have been commanded to love others. This means meeting their medical, psychological and spiritual needs." Here is a mission with good scientifically proven results. If you see the need, this is a way to serve and honour God. Selected potential crew will be trained without charge while they donate 4 months. If selected as permanent crew they will make a reasonable salary.

For more information, call (250) 642-1848 or e-mail mtjoycollege@islandnet.com.

More churches take on "creation care"

Frank Stirk

Senior Correspondent

VANCOUVER, BC—Christian environmental activist Marrku Kostamo concedes the number of churches currently engaged in caring for God's creation across the country is "patchy" at best. But he also sees those numbers growing.

"There are places where people aren't open to it. But I would say there's an increasing openness to this in all kinds of denominations," he says. "It's new for some people who haven't even thought about it, so it's understandable that it would take some time."

Kostamo is president of A Rocha Canada, a Vancouver-based

ministry dedicated to scientific research, environmental education, and community-based conservation projects.

On April 27—five days after Earth Day—it held its third annual Good Seed Sunday, when churches are asked to devote their worship services to celebrating God as Creator and the goodness of His creation. About 500 churches took part, up from about 300 last year.

But the real challenge is for these churches to then put their words into action, and take some practical steps on behalf of the environment.

"Some of it's internal, like transitioning from Styrofoam cups to real coffee cups," says Kostamo.

"Some of it's outreach-oriented like initiating a community garden. So you could be caring for creation, and at the same time provide food for low-income families."

Other projects could include partnering with local governments and other organizations to care for a local stream or park, and encouraging others to "go green."

"For churches where this is a growth edge in thinking about Christian mission, Good Seed Sunday provides sort of a soft entry and a good place to begin," Kostamo says.

In his 13 years with A Rocha, Kostamo says he has seen "a real shift" globally—which he attributes to a moving of the Holy Spirit—as the Church becomes

more conscious of its responsibility to be good stewards of the world around them.

"We come from the perspective that we were created to be in relationship with God, with each other, and with creation, and that the biblical story is about how these relationships were broken and are being restored through Christ," he says. "And I think that lands well with the majority of the Christian community."

One change Kostamo says they will "definitely" make to next year's Good Seed Sunday will be to start promoting it in October so churches can get it on their calendars a lot sooner. This year's drive began in January.