

**News Release**

June 22, 2012

**NTC Selection Committee announces 2012 winner of Kevin Carr Christian Leadership Award**

**Dr. Kae Neufeld, D. Min.**



**Edmonton** - The Kevin Carr Christian Leadership Award Selection Committee is pleased to announce Dr. Kae Neufeld, D. Min. as recipient of the 2012 Award.

After 13 years as a stay-at-home mom, Kae went to university and earned a B.Ed. degree at the University of Alberta. After several years of teaching, she was granted a sabbatical leave during which she completed a M.Ed. degree (also from the U of A) and returned to work as a school principal at Rideau Park Elementary School in Edmonton. Kae loved teaching and loved being a principal. She enjoyed seeing children learn and grow. During this time in her life, Kae recounts that she felt confident in who she was and the gifts she had been given; her trust in God grew steadily as she served in all her roles. In total she was school principal for eight years

and taught in the Edmonton Public School District for 14 years.

After taking early retirement, Kae took up many volunteer roles in the community, eager to use her leadership skills and to engage her spirituality. Kae grew up in the Mennonite Brethren Church, and much of her community involvement grows out of and reflects this particular heritage of her Christian faith. She served for three years as Moderator and six years as Associate Pastor of the Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church in Edmonton. During that time, she coordinated discipleship ministries, missions and services, small groups, Christian education and pastoral care. She served for five years on the Board of the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California. She served for a time on the Board of the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, including two years as Chair of the Board. And she became very actively involved in the Edmonton branch of Habitat for Humanity.

*"Through the years, Kae has touched many lives in our city and beyond - from schoolchildren to street workers, prisoners to parishioners,"* said Julien Hammond, one of the nominators for this year's winner. *"No matter the person or their circumstance, she treats everyone as they are God's beloved children, reflecting God's image for the entire world to see."*

Kae ended six years of ministry as Associate Pastor at Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church in 2005, but this did not end her service to the community nor her desire to use her intellectual, personal, and spiritual gifts for the betterment of humanity. Kae served as co-interim director of Community Justice Ministries of the Mennonite Central Committee-Alberta. This venture allowed her to deepen her experience and understanding of prison ministries, and she took a specific interest in visiting and working with female inmates at the Edmonton Prison for Women. During this time she began to look into the terrible reality of domestic violence in society and the harm done to men, women and children who are victims of such violence, and the system that seeks to punish offenders. This led to an interest in the Restorative Justice movement and an idea that she brought to her church community: to host at their church an annual Christmas banquet for "lifers" and their families. At this banquet, members of the congregation work elbow-to-elbow with "repeat attendees" from halfway houses or on parole to prepare food, decorate, play music, and to share a meal together. Speaking of the experience in a media interview, Kae was quoted as saying: *"People serving a life sentence in prison or on parole are people on a journey through life, just like the rest of us. In a small way, the people who*



The Catholic  
Archdiocese  
of Edmonton



The Association of Theological Schools  
The Commission on Accrediting

*come to eat with the lifers are saying, 'We care about you and accept you in spite of what you have done.' That is the good news part of what Jesus did."*

The Christmas banquet for lifers, now almost 10 years old, has become a permanent part of the Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church's pastoral year, fully embraced by everyone in their church community.

In 2005, Kae also began working on a Doctor of Ministry degree from St. Stephen's College in Edmonton. She wanted to research challenges facing women in ministry leadership in her own church community. As part of her research, Kae examined stories of attitudes, language, and structures that did not recognize the leadership of women in equal partnership with men. She proposed a number of shifts that must occur in the church debate if women are to be attracted to ministry leadership in the Mennonite Brethren Church. Her dissertation, *Caught by the Fence: Challenges Facing Women in Ministry Leadership in the Mennonite Brethren Church*, was completed in 2010, the same year she received her D. Min. degree. Shortly thereafter, Kae was hired on by St. Stephen's College to direct their Doctor of Ministry program and to guide other students along similar journeys of theological and spiritual growth. Kae will be retiring from St. Stephen's College in the summer of 2012.

*"I commend Kae Neufeld to you as a woman of deep personal faith, and of passionate commitment to uplifting the whole people of God. She would be a worthy recipient of this award; and her choice would significantly honour both the Christian leadership of Kevin Carr himself, and of Newman Theological College,"* said Earle Sharam, nominator as well as Principal and Dean of St. Stephen's College.

Kae continues to serve as an active member in her church community and beyond: on Monday afternoons, she helps to facilitate a support group for women who are coping with domestic violence and abuse; on Tuesday mornings she leads a weekly adult faith/bible study group at the church; on Wednesdays she goes to prisons to work with men and women who are incarcerated; at other times she coordinates discipleship ministries and participates in a quilting group in the congregation. In the last couple of years Kae has also been a leader in coordinating ecumenical meetings between members of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Edmonton and local leaders in the Anglican Diocese and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese. These ecumenical ventures have done a great deal to bring Mennonites and other Christians into deeper reflections on the gospel as it could and should be lived in the modern world.

Kae Neufeld will be honoured at the 9th Annual Kevin Carr Christian Leadership Award Luncheon on **Wednesday, September 19, 2012** at the Royal Glenora Club.

For ticket information please contact Michelle Maxwell at 780.392.2455 or [michelle.maxwell@newman.edu](mailto:michelle.maxwell@newman.edu) or our receptionist Lorraine Kasha at 780-392-2450.

The award is named for Kevin Carr, who in 1993 became the first layperson to be appointed president of Newman Theological College. It recognizes individuals whose outstanding Christian leadership reflects the values of the college and the qualities that Carr cherished and exhibited in his work as president.

Previous Award Recipients:

2011 – Rosanna Saccomani, Q.C.  
2010 – Ben Hochhausen  
2009 – Sr. Annata Brockman  
2008 – Don Zinyk  
2007 – Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C.  
2006 – Tim Spelliscy  
2005 – Ernest Chauvet  
2004 – Hon. Jean Forest

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