

# Stepping Forward

## Ishaawin Counselling Centre

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*Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Galatians 5:25*

## Welcome from our General Director Bonita Ledua

"Stepping Forward" is the theme for this year's fundraiser breakfast; but it is more than just a theme! It is birthed from the desire to move towards the vision that God has given! Just as Galatians 5:25 reminds us to keep in step with the Spirit, much prayer has taken place over the last month as we plan for the coming year. We are excited about how God is already leading and the prayers he has already answered! There are also numerous changes that have taken place at Ishaawin over the past month:

### *Staff Changes*

**General Director:** Larry Brigham has completed his term as Interim Director at Ishaawin as of December 31st. Rising Above is grateful to him for filling in the gap and completing his mandate to find a General Director. Larry recommended myself and Rising Above appointed me (Bonita Ledua) as General Director as of January 1, 2015. I joined the team four years ago as an associate counsellor and will be serving part-time as both counsellor and director. This appointment is part of a partnership with Rising Above and NorthWind, a Thunder Bay based Aboriginal ministry that my husband and I lead.

**Liz Beardy:** Liz has sensed the Lord stirring in her heart over the past year and believes that now is the time to step away from her counselling responsibilities at Ishaawin. She has been caring for her elderly parents for three years. Her mother recently passed away and her father continues to fight cancer. She will be greatly missed by the Ishaawin team and her clients. Please join us in praying for God's richest blessings on her life, for rest and encouragement as she continues to care for her father and as she trusts God to lead her into the new paths he has for her.

**Joshua Wong:** We are thrilled to introduce the newest member of the Ishaawin team. Joshua comes to us from Southern Ontario. At present he volunteers one day a week with the possibility for that to increase. He is a great addition to the team and an answer to prayers for a male counsellor.

We continue to have the great blessing of **Gini Thompson** (Office Manager) and **Christina Long** (Associate Counsellor) on the Ishaawin team. They have been a part of the Ishaawin "family" for many years and have shown incredible commitment to the ministry as they carry out their responsibilities with excellence. Please pray for Christina as she completes her MA in Counselling Psychology this spring.

### *Ministry Opportunities*

Over the past month God has brought a significant increase in the number of clients that we serve! In January of this year we already had one quarter of the intakes that came in over the entire 2014 year. And they continue to come in! The team is excited by what God is doing and we consider it an incredible privilege to come alongside others in their times of loss, challenges and heartache. To be trusted with another person's story is truly an honour! The Ishaawin team has been engaged in strategic planning for 2015 regarding support groups, workshops and seminars. We look forward to sharing with you some of these plans in the coming weeks. We have also been connecting with numerous organizations and churches in the city. One such connection is with the Embrace Life Conference (Feb 19, 20, 21) where we will be providing counselling and support to those that are attending. There are many more exciting opportunities on the horizon that we would love to share with you. We hope you will join us at the Ishaawin Fundraiser Breakfast! Thank you for your partnership with us in this vital ministry.

Another step forward is in the way that we communicate with you, our friends and supporters. We will be moving to electronic mailings (but are willing to mail out a hard copy to those that request it). To make this transition as smooth as possible we would encourage you to send an email to [ishaawin@risingabove.ca](mailto:ishaawin@risingabove.ca) requesting to be placed on the electronic list. This will help reduce our expenses. Thank you again for your support.