

# New pastor has high 'hopes' for Springvale church

If a halo surrounds the sanctuary at Springvale Baptist Church Sept. 18, or a rainbow arcs over the roof, deacon board chairperson Paul Simpson won't be surprised.

Neither will the congregation. It's a Sunday to which all have looked forward for more than a year. Dr. Ed Fontaine, Springvale's new minister, will be officially welcomed.

Pastor Ed, as he prefers to be known, will fill a pulpit position made vacant when Bob Flemming, Springvale's spiritual leader for 28 years, departed for greener pastures. Pastor Bob is now the regional director in the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches, serving Ontario and Quebec. He lives in Guelph.

Born in Truro, N.S., Pastor Dr. Fontaine received a B.A. from Washington, D.C. Bible College, a masters degree at Dallas Theological Seminary in Texas and a doctorate from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago.

As a young lad, he attended Charlottetown Bible Chapel.

"My parents were always supportive," he said. "I enjoyed an untroubled life, one that provided plenty of involvement in sports."

His father was an officer with the Canadian Coast Guard.

"While I attended church regularly, it wasn't until age 17 that I personally accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior," he said.

It was during a year spent at bible school that Dr. Fontaine sensed God's call to full-time ministry.

"There was a desire to do something with my life that would impact people for eternity," he says. This aspiration was further encouraged through association with several close friends.

His initial pastorate was in Faith Baptist Church in Huntsville. He would later achieve the position



**Roaming Around**  
with Jim Thomas

nearly 16 years.

By coincidence, Bethel and Springvale are alike in many ways, Ed explains. Both churches provide worship involvement for people of all ages, he says, with congregations similar in size.

He retains fond memories of years spent at Bethel, describing the membership as "a great group of people who loved God and one another".

Crystal, his wife of 24 years, shares this affection.

"However, she's currently grieving the loss of deep relationships established within the community and the church," Dr. Fontaine admits, "but, at the same time she's excited by opportunities available

in a new congregation and a new area."

Ed and Crystal have three sons, Dallas, Denver and Brett.

Dr. Fontaine foresees impressive visions for Springvale.

"I want the church to grow and serve the community in new and different ways," he says, "providing fresh hope for people, not only in their relationship with eternity, but in facing mental and physical struggles within their daily lives."

He considers leadership and preaching his main personal strengths.

It was following several interviews that Dr. Fontaine was asked to visit Springvale and preach for a call. The congregation was

ecstatic.

Members of the Springvale search committee included chairperson Gary Hockley, Dale Heywood, Michelle McGowan, Marcus Olson, Mark Josephs and Terry Ratcliff.

"(The committee members) were very organized, very honest, very open and obviously very excited about their church," said Dr. Fontaine.

The end result of this labour of love will be visibly evident on Sunday, Sept. 18. Worship time is 9:45 a.m.

*Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 60 years.*

of senior pastor at Bethel Baptist Church in Strathroy, a successful ministry that spanned

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