

Welcome to our new staff - Mark Sawatzky & Christine Elias

Hi, I'm **Mark**, recently added to the PCC team. I've come on board to fill the part-time role of Business Development Officer working 2 days a week. I grew up in Winkler, received a Bachelor of Commerce from University of Manitoba in '92 and work has taken me many places including Winnipeg, Hamilton and Vancouver over the years. In 2000 my wife and I moved back to the area (Morden) from Vancouver to see what life would be like raising a family in Southern Manitoba before we made a longer commitment to Vancouver.

As it turns out it was a good decision (Dairy Queen may not be as fancy as some of the places in Vancouver but with grandparents around, at least Kim and I could go out once in awhile). Today I have a great family which includes 3 kids ages 13 to 18 and their independence is freeing up some evening time for me which I plan to use to start painting again (see below). I'm looking forward to my work with PCC and I am excited (nervous?) to see how God will use this experience to shape me to becoming the person He created me to be.



Hi!, My name is **Christine** and I have recently joined the team at Pembina Counselling Centre as a contract counsellor. My husband Frank and I have been married for 25 years and live between Winkler

and Morden with our four children.

Joining the team at Pembina Counselling Centre is not only the culmination of many years of intense learning, but it is also a dream come true. This week, as I walked through PCC's front doors and took a seat in the counsellor's chair for the first time as a contract counsellor; it felt natural. If I am honest, I had never really imagined myself counselling anywhere else. As a Christian, I was drawn to PCC as I saw that their vision and mission fit well with what I sensed God calling me to do.

As a teenager and young adult, I had always felt pulled in the direction of the social sciences and imagined

that one day I would be a trained helper and encourager. I attribute this pull in my life, to God's leading and the gifts and passions that he has blessed me with. Although throughout our married life, my husband and I served others through involvement in our church; it was not until after we had worked with MCC in Bolivia, that I was convinced of the importance of furthering my education in order to help others. I often found myself, the recipient of other peoples' personal stories and I was convinced that in order to be most helpful, I needed to become equipped.

When our youngest daughter started grade one, I enrolled in my first counselling course at Providence Theological Seminary and the rest is history. After seven challenging years, marked by perseverance and God's faithfulness, I am currently working on my final course and will be graduating this April.

I look forward to my involvement with PCC and to getting to know the community of individuals that support this important work.