

# Deer Lake United Church

# LAKESHORE LINES

December, 2006

Free – and worth every cent!

## What's with wondercafe.ca



## Christmas Greetings from Chali

By Garry F

Have you visited wondercafe.ca? Have you even *heard* about wondercafe.ca? Do you even care? Should you care?

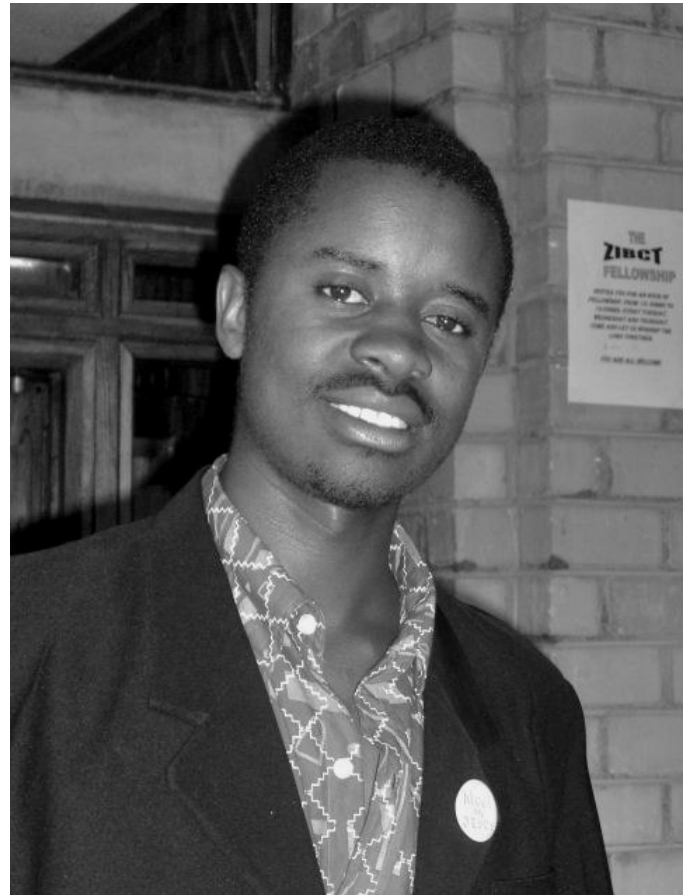
The first I heard of wondercafe.ca was on a radio talk show about three weeks ago. It and the United Church of Canada were getting slaughtered on the airwaves. "Those ads are scandalous! And that squirrel! Are they serious having a squirrel give easy answers to life's questions? The United Church has lost its way. What a joke!"

As I drove down the freeway, listening to the many callers voicing opinions like these, I became increasingly concerned. I knew the United Church intended to launch an advertising campaign to attract thirty- to forty-five-year-olds, but was this it? If it was, it sure sounded like it had been botched. Why hadn't we been notified prior to going public? As I arrived at my destination, the radio debate raged on and I rolled my eyes as I turned off the ignition. What the heck had they done? This sure didn't sound like my United Church that was being so savagely disparaged.

That evening, Gloria and I sat down at the computer to take a look at wondercafe.ca for ourselves. We were ready for the worst. Thank goodness we didn't find it. As we explored the web site, we wondered aloud what on earth those people on the radio had been talking about. After about an hour on the site we both felt much better. It was apparent that most of the talk show callers were either not United Church members or had totally missed the point of the ads and the squirrel. Here's what we found, and what I think of it.

Wondercafe.ca is a web site sponsored by the United Church of Canada. You are greeted by a colourful space containing one of several grayscale photographs of smiling people not unlike those you would find in any United Church publication. Below the picture is the greeting "Welcome to the home of open-minded dis-

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Chali sends Christmas greetings to his Deer Lake family: "Leza akuleleke!"

The Bemba words mean "God be with you!"

### Vision Statement

Deer Lake United Church welcomes you into a Christian community for all ages that explores and expresses spirituality through:

- worship and music
- fun and fellowship
- caring and outreach
- involvement and growth

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## WonderCafe.ca

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cussion and exploration of spiritual topics, moral issues and life's big questions." It is clearly meant to represent a lively café filled with lots of people involved in interesting discussions.

The first thing we checked out was the Ad Campaign. It consists of six full-colour ads entitled *Jesus at the Mall*, *Bobblehead Jesus*, *Baby*, *Bible*, *Sex*, and *Gay Marriage*. While I understand that these ads may be controversial to some people, in my opinion they are merely thought-provoking. Each of them makes a point in a sentence or two, asks the viewer what they think and invites them to share their opinion. Many of them use humour. I think this is what sets the United Church apart from almost all other Christian denominations.

Next we checked the EZ Answer Squirrel video. The only thing I don't like about it is the use of the American Zee in the name, but that's a personal pet peeve. Contrary to what callers on the radio seemed to think, this video makes the point that if you want easy answers the squirrel might be able to help you, but if you want to explore topics more deeply, wondercafe.ca (i.e. the United Church) is the place to go. That's exactly why I'm a member of the United Church and not one of the other churches. I don't think the people who called the radio station had even bothered to watch the video all the way through, or they wouldn't have made the outrageous comments they did.

Wondercafe.ca also includes a Church Search. We tested it to see if we could find Deer Lake United Church. We could. The Quick Facts about Deer Lake need to be populated, but our address and phone number are correct as shown. The Quick Facts will be updated shortly.

Finally, we entered the Discussion Lounge. This is where the real meat of the web site is. Discussions are categorized by Hot Topics, Parenting, Relationships, Health & Aging, Religion and Faith, Popular Culture, Global Issues, Politics, and Social.

At the time Gloria and I viewed it, the top Hot Topic was something to do with sex. There was a very lengthy and varied discussion going on. Someone with the moniker *prazgod* took a very extreme, fundamentalist stand and numerous others, including the

intriguing pseudonym *pastor007*, voiced more reasoned opinions. It was a lively and, for the most part, respectful discussion.

As I write this, the top five Hot Topics are

- Pornography (Relationships)
- I don't think Jesus really existed...or that the dust of Galilee ever touched his sandals... (Religion and Faith)
- When did a Teenage Single Mother become a Cool thing to be? (Parenting)
- Is Canada Oblivious? (Global Issues)
- Finding Balance (Health & Aging)
- Mennonite Christmas Festival this weekend (Social) – This one isn't very hot, with only six views and no replies.

The topics are extremely far-ranging, for the most part thought-provoking, and certainly worthy of discussion.

Finally, there is the Café Guest Speaker corner. Gloria and I didn't spend any time here, but there seems to be a different guest speaker each week who introduces a different topic, upon which visitors then comment. There are a number of other minor areas on the web site, including About WonderCafe, Media Room, Privacy Policy, and Guidelines of Conduct, to name just a few, but I haven't explored them in any depth.

I think the United Church of Canada did a disservice to it's congregations across Canada by announcing wondercafe.ca to the media without giving its congregants enough advance warning to familiarize themselves with the web site and the ads. Had they done so, I and others like me would have been prepared to counter the negative reactions from the media and more fundamentalist and traditional denominations. Having perused wondercafe.ca, I am now quite happy with the face that the United Church is presenting to the world. Yes, I can laugh at a Bobblehead Jesus and not feel I'm damned to Hell. No, I don't think sex is a sin – even if it involves whipped cream. And thank God the United Church of Canada doesn't provide black and white answers to life's difficult questions. If it did, I wouldn't be here.

What do you think? Visit wondercafe.ca and share your opinion, or just enjoy the exchange of ideas.

## A Message from the Chair of the Board

This time of year can be a real challenge for us. Caught up in the whirlwind of commercial Christmas, we strive to find just the right gifts for those we love without putting ourselves further into debt. In the rush of shopping and socializing, it can be difficult to slow down and remember the birth of Jesus and the difference He has made in our lives.

As we enter the Christmas season, please consider what Deer Lake United Church means to you and your family. Read the many stories in this newsletter that reflect the spiritually thriving community that we have and the good work that it does. Consider how it has affected your life and those of your children. If you are like me, you have received an abundance of riches that are impossible to place a value on.

As you consider your Christmas gift-giving and start to make plans for next year, please remember Deer Lake. We are facing another possible deficit in 2007. It can be difficult, I know, but if you are able, please consider increasing your envelope offerings in 2007.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your contributions to Deer Lake, not only your hard-earned money, but your even more precious time. Thank you! May this special time of the year fill your lives with joy and wonder. Merry Christmas!

*Garry*

## A Student's Report

By Nick J

"He has . . . raised on high the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good things,"

Luke 1:52-53 REB

Friends, we are fast approaching a season of celebration. We have already had our Men's Group Fall Supper and by the time you read this the Men's Christmas Breakfast will be a gastronomic memory! Soon there will be decorating, Gingerbread houses and special church services. It will also be a time when we are particularly attentive to the needs of the marginalized in our society.

These last few months have been happier for our community after a spring and summer of saying goodbye to longtime, dearly loved members.

It's great to have a field placement at Deer Lake. Other students listen with envy when I describe my experience with you. Next September I will be going on Internship probably out of town, and so I hope that the community will be ready to receive another student who will benefit from your care, guidance and feedback.

I am delighted to be working this year with five very special individuals who have agreed to work together to develop our abilities to reflect theologically. In addition they will provide specified feedback, and to monitor my progress in three or four Practical Theology goals.

These goals are decided in consultation with Scott as field supervisor, the field educators at Vancouver School of Theology and me. The five members of the Ministry Reflection Group have a role in making sure that the goals are clear and met. The goals include: pastoral work; meeting with a family who have experienced the loss of a loved one and conducting the funeral; developing a spiritual practice which will support me in full time ministry; and observing and completing the

## Prenatal Surprises

By the Rev. G. Scott Turnbrook

As we read this edition of "Lakeshore Lines", I invite us to consider how we have also entered into a prenatal season of our spiritual lives. This is the season that we prepare for the birth of the Christ Child. As I think of the time prior to any childbirth, there are two dynamics that commonly occur.

The first dynamic concerns time no longer being under our control. The birth of a child never happens on a timeline that is even remotely mindful of our schedules. Babies have their own schedules that demand us to accommodate theirs. For most of us, this is not the best time to prepare for the arrival of a baby; however, during the four weeks of Advent, our spiritual work is just that - preparation. This is indeed a challenge when we consider accommodating our December schedules. We ask: Who among us is not overwhelmed with Christmas baking, decorating and shopping? Who among us has any free time on top of that to prepare spiritually? Yet, we know that we must prepare room at the 'inn of our hearts' for the greatest gift of the season to truly be experienced. What would have happened if no one had prepared room for the birth 2,000 years ago? What will happen if we do not take the time to prepare room at the inn?

The second dynamic concerns the surprising changes that come through a birth. Those in the family will be deeply changed as a result of this event. What occurs during and after the birth is always a surprise. A child brings along with them many things ranging from wonder and joy as well as pain and struggle. It might seem odd to consider pain at this time of year; however, we know the birthing process to be a tremendously painful one. To watch my wife go through the pains of birth was one of the most painful events of my own life. (And I didn't even experience the contractions!) It is important for us now to be mindful that what becomes one of the most beautiful times in life begins with pain. Indeed this is a time of wonder and joy as well as pain and struggle. Are we ready to embrace the many emotions of this season and allow God to birth the miracle of Christmas?

Perhaps our prenatal preparations might be an opening of our eyes so that we can be surprised and amazed at what God is birthing in the world. Perhaps we might do something new, try another approach, and expect elements of surprise. Perhaps our prenatal preparations should invite us to embrace the pains and hurts of those around us to see what God is birthing. Perhaps our prenatal preparations should cause us to be attentive to the hurts inside ourselves to see what God is bringing to life. May we take time during this season to make room at the inns of our hearts, preparing for a God whose coming will surprise and amaze us and leave the world forever changed.

Shalom/ Peace,

*Scott*

marriage preparation of a couple, and conducting their wedding ceremony.

This has been a wonderful term of learning, conversation, doing and reflecting. I thank each one of you—the members and adherents of Deer Lake for this opportunity. A special thank you is due to Scott who meets with me each week, and Eileen

M , Aaron S , Bob M , Andrew H and Carol P —the members of the Ministry Reflection Group for their love and work.

I wish each of you a happy and spiritually rich holiday season with family, friends and acquaintances.

## GIVE AND TAKE

**GIVING:** Are you on PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance)? If not, please consider applying. It makes your weekly offering so easy and convenient, and you can change or cancel it at any time. Please see Mary Cazalet for more information.

**TAKING:** Would you like to help with the collection? Many hands make light work. Mary would like to hear from you if you are able to help.

## Halloween at DLUC

By Elizabeth C



The Christian Education Committee held a fun Halloween Party on Friday October 27<sup>th</sup>. We had 25 youngsters attend with their Moms, Dads and Grandparents. We started the evening with a tasty Potluck dinner and time of fellowship. This was followed with relay races to make jack-o-lantern faces, and carry candies on tooth picks, to name a few. We then had a costume parade. There were many fabulous and imaginative costumes; ladybirds, fairies, Hawaiian Hula girls, skeletons, dinosaurs and pirates. Prizes included the Biggest-kid-at-heart which went to our organist, Donna, ahoy there mateys!! The evening concluded with the children dashing about the Hall collecting treats (and spiders!) from the candy toss. It was wonderful to see so many new families and friends attend this evening. Everyone, big and little, went home with a smile. Also, thanks to Peggy and Judy for their help in the kitchen.

## Our Amazing Youth

By Peggy W

With the departure of our youth leader, Carli T , new energy has sprung forth from our enthusiastic church community. Our Christian Education Committee has tried very hard to stand back and analyze the needs and wishes of our youth and their parents. We've had a flock of Sunday School teachers offer their talent and wisdom to help this ministry of our youth thrive and grow. Youth Group has also been re-energized by Shannon C who has volunteered to co-lead the group with me.

Most exciting is that we've had 10-12 youth weekly attending Sunday School, which is being taught in 3-week segments by either Gloria F , Don W , Jean M , Tony W , or myself.

A Youth Confirmation Class will be led by Rev. Scott beginning in January.

Youth Group started the year with an evening making sushi, led by Rev. Scott, where the turnout of 12 youth had lots of fun satisfying their appetites and engaging in conversation with Rev. Scott. The topic of conversation was entitled "Everything you always wanted to know about the United Church, but were hesitant to ask!"

Many youth headed down to First United with other members of our congregation a couple of weeks ago for their afternoon service and dinner. Being a part of that community makes the realities of others' lives more vivid in our own minds.

Don Wade led our youth in the November 19th Youth Church Service. It was filled with glorious music from our talented Kidz Band, and readings and prayers by our inspirational youth.

Coming events include the Great Gingerbread Bake-off, on Dec 3rd, organized by Sharon H and Cathy M , and sponsored by the Men's Group. Shop 'til You Drop (date to be determined) will involve the annual shopping for the children of our church-sponsored Christmas Bureau families.

2007 will begin with a fun afternoon on January 14th of tubing in the snow on a local mountain. More details will follow.

We have an amazing community of youth, and serving them well is a high priority. The Christian Education Committee is open to ideas and comments. We look forward to collectively engaging these young minds in body and spirit.



**There are two personal miracles described in this newsletter. Can you find them? Can you find more than two?**

### **10<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CHILDREN & THE CHURCH SERIES**

**Being Spiritual Anchors in the Lives of Children**

**8:00 a.m., Saturday, February 3, 2007**

**Vancouver School of Theology**

Workshop topics include: Inspiring Youth to Belong;  
Achieving Success in Multi-age Sunday School  
Classes;

Blessed are the Leaders; Kids in Community.

Cost: Before January 10 is \$70 per person,  
\$65 (2 or more from the same church), \$60 (65+)

E-mail: [Chalmers@vst.edu](mailto:Chalmers@vst.edu). Website: [www.vst.edu](http://www.vst.edu).

## News from the Board of the Marguerite Dixon Transition Society

By Sharon A

I have had the pleasure of serving on the Board of Directors for the Marguerite Dixon Transition Society for the past 18 months. In October this year we had Adele W , the Executive Director for the Society, come to our Sunday service to talk about the Society's work and share stories about some of the women who have been helped. It was quite inspiring to hear how some of them have been able to turn their lives around. Most of us have never had to think about fleeing our relationships, but the sad stories in the news lately underscore the importance of having transition houses available in the communities.

I am looking forward to the annual Christmas Party for past and current clients and their children. Last year was the first of these for me, where I joined other Board members to assist with set-up and food service. It is a very happy event for these mothers and children, where they can

renew some acquaintances from their stay in the house, and enjoy some fun and fellowship, including a visit from Santa, in a safe and caring environment. The staff from the house attend as well, and are rewarded by the realization that those whom they saw in crisis are moving toward better times. It was an eye-opener for me last year to meet some of these young women and to realize the diversity of their socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. Everyone left with gifts and food, and the joy in the children's eyes, some of whom had less than happy memories of past Christmases, was a wonderful sight. Small miracles...

The next year will be a busy one for us, focused on raising funds for our ambitious plans for our planned new second stage housing adjacent to the current transition house. This will provide some badly needed additional second stage accommodation as well as increased accessibility and support for the women and children. I will

report more on this project as our plans become a reality.

We are planning another clothing swap during the spring, likely in late February or March. The last swap was a huge success and we will need your support to make the next one as successful. Our big event this year will be the **'Transitions Luncheon'** planned for May 6 at Horizons Restaurant. Mark this date on your calendar - it will be an event not to be missed! Grandmothers, mothers and daughters will all be welcome, and grandfathers and dads too.

Finally, a big thank-you to all who support us financially, and with your donations of food and clothing. It would not be as successful a program as it is without this help.



Make them both a part of your  
Christmas

## A Journey to Nairobi with Ross Davidson

By Scott Turnbrook

On Sunday October 29, our worship service focused on the "Kicking Aids Out" initiative that Ross D traveled to work on. During the service, we sang music that is indigenous to Kenyan culture, saw pictures, and heard a dialogue sermon between Ross and Rev. Scott.

Ross, who is now studying in his first year at UBC medical school has had an interesting year. For 9-months, Ross lived in Nairobi, Kenya, and volunteered in one of the largest urban slums in the world- Kibera. A dearth of government services make life a challenge. No waste management, no clean water and very few medical services. Four out of every five people are unemployed and one in five are infected with HIV. Ross worked hand-in-hand with 'Carolina for Kibera' a non-governmental organization, and developed a peer education program that uses soccer to teach youth about HIV infection, substance abuse and gender equality. Currently Ross is raising funds for a scholarship fund to send the peer educators to school, and to continue developing

them into contributing members of our global society.

Ross writes: "Every time I get to share my experience I feel touched, and blessed that I am able to do so, and know that in my own way, I can help another person on this planet. Personally, during my time in Kenya, I changed in magnitudes not easily measured conventionally, and often things have not made sense. Sometimes I've felt frustrated, and sometimes angry, but one thing is for sure - there is hope that the thousands of people that lack access to the most basic needs can find them, one at a time. The only thing that we battle is the urge to be complacent." You can read about Ross' week to week adventures at [www.rossinkibera.blogspot.com](http://www.rossinkibera.blogspot.com).

We ask that you keep this work in your prayers and if you choose to make a financial contribution, cheques may be made out to 'Carolina for Kibera' with a note to contribute to the 'Rose Scholarship Fund'. Thanks for your kindness. Learn more about the Carolina for Kibera charity at <http://cfk.unc.edu>.

## Mystery Visitor

By Bill H

For the past two years Deer Lake United Congregation has been sponsoring Chali Chilimboyi who lives in Lusaka, Zambia. We have raised close to \$4000 toward his educational fees and living expenses as he attended an International Commercial College to attain his Diploma in Business Administration.

There is a very real possibility that someone who knows Chali better than anyone else may visit Vancouver next June. That person is willing to speak to us and give us intimate details of life in Zambia. The actual date of presentation is not certain at this time, but as details emerge you will be informed and we invite you all to come and meet this person and to hear what he has to say.

# IMPRESSIONS OF FIRST UNITED CHURCH

By Marg M

When Scott asked if I would write up our visit to First United for the newsletter, I said I could only reflect its impact on me personally and trust that others would identify with some of my feelings. The visit was an eye-opener for me – like having one of the buckets of cold rain coming down that afternoon thrown in my face!

I've been aware of First United's ministries since my childhood in the "dirty thirties" when my parents listened to radio broadcasts of services there led by Rev. Andrew Roddan, highly regarded minister of this "Church of the Open Door" as it was known.

Over the years I've supported First in the usual ways. I felt proud of being a small part of its big mission. Smug, even. I was eager to reconnect with the 21<sup>st</sup> century version, sit down with current members for a potluck, enjoy the meal and hear their experiences of worshipping and serving in this problem ridden area of the inner city. Maybe I'd get some insight. Little did I know! We arrived about half-an-hour before the planned 4 p.m. service. About 24 of us – adults, youth and a few children. We met in the underground parking. While some of us unloaded clothing and food bank donations, myself and others carried food for the potluck upstairs to the kitchen, meeting some of the members and volunteers.

We set up as we do for DLUC potlucks. I felt we were organized. Wrong! Here's how things developed.

When the time came for the service we moved to the sanctuary to be greeted by Rev. Phillip Cable. Scott and Phillip led worship, assisted by DLUC members with a dramatic version of the Ruth and Naomi story. Jean M played the piano beautifully for us. I was disappointed to see DLUC greatly outnumbered First's members in attendance, but tried to overlook the imbalance by concentrating on worship.

In the meantime I was aware of voices in the hall outside the sanctuary. Rev. Phillip explained we were hearing some street

people gathering to join us at dinner. Oh-oh, I thought. Not just the congregation and us? Oh well, maybe I'll get to chat with one or two. It might be enlightening.

After the service we filed into the gym. I went to the kitchen and along with others set out the food – heated casseroles, condiments, bread, buns desserts, along with dishes, etc. Tea and coffee were ready. We were ready.

I can't recall if it was before or after grace when the outer door was opened and in swept a crowd of rain-soaked people who formed a line and rapidly began to serve themselves and join those already seated. Plates came away piled high. Too high, I thought, for those at the back of the line!

As more people came in, I realized we were not ready for this! Soon the food, though plentiful, would be gone. Others of us felt the same and we hastily opted to forgo our suppers. As for socializing with First's members, I said to myself "forget it". The places were all taken up, anyway. I considered belatedly squeezing in at a table, but I realized the street people, many of whom seem to know each other, were concentrating on eating and for the most part simply ignored us.

I felt distinctly uncomfortable, standing against the side wall, like a voyeur at the sight of so many wet hungry people eating urgently as if it were their last meal on earth. (A voice in my head said "well for one or two it might be so for all I know").

Those of us watching soon saw the food was gone and yet people were still in line. I saw only broken bread and pieces of buns left. I feared a violent reaction. We needed a miracle!

Can you believe? Just in the nick of time someone brought in a huge plastic tray of sandwiches – and then another. Surely an answer to prayer? A seated stranger told me they'd prepared sandwiches for outdoor distribution at a nearby park, but the weather was so dreadful nobody came, so the workers brought the sandwiches to us. Thus the bulk of the hungry were fed. (A few final stragglers had to be content with only hot tea or coffee when the sandwiches

also ran out).

A second miracle, or so it seemed to me, happened that evening. An oldish man sitting near the back wall of the gym asked me if I might find him a pair of dry socks as his were soaked. I told him I was a visitor but I'd check for him. I found Rev. Phillip and relayed the request. "No", said Phillip, "he'll have to come to mission at 3:30 tomorrow". I persisted. If Rev. Phillip was too busy could I dig out a pair perhaps? No. What would be given to one in need then would demand giving to all with the ensuing chaos. Order is required. I went back to tell the fellow the bad news and as I did, a young man and his girlfriend listened to this. When I was through, the younger man who was seated next to me, reached into the pocket of his bomber jacket and pulled out – what are the odds? – a pair of socks! He gave them to his neighbour. I thanked the young man, smiled at his girlfriend and muttered, half to myself – "that's really being a family" and left in amazement. I hope the older man thanked him too. I didn't hear.

In about an hour or so the gym cleared and we all helped clean up. Even the smaller kids helped stack the clean dishes back on shelves as they came out of the dishwasher. After this, Rev. Phillip gave us a tour of the building and described various programs and personnel. I was pretty dumbstruck by witnessing the meal, so I didn't retain much of the information. I did hear him say they have people like that "everyday". I'm mind-boggled! It is surely worse than I imagined!

My emotions ran the gamut in those few hours. In no particular order I felt anticipation, curiosity, disappointment, sadness, warmth, acceptance, worry, pity, annoyance, anger, shock, shame, frustration, relief, skepticism, enjoyment, gratitude. I won't bore you with further details. Ask me sometime.

P.S. What did I take away from this experience?

1. I/we need to inform my/our self more thoroughly about the present

*Continued on next page*

## What Youth, What a Service!!

By Don S

We have many blessings in our Congregation. And one of them is most certainly the number of youth – vibrant, enthusiastic and talented youth – that fill up and round out our church.

It was this same talented bunch that planned and led our November 18 Service.

Worship was led musically by Don W's Kidz Band. This 12-piece brass, woodwind, bass and keyboard ensemble wowed the congregation with tunes like: *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*, *Siabumba*, *Jesus Loves Me* and, *Kumbaya*. And was the Band energetic and tight? You bet!! Well-done, y'all!!!

Our younger children presented the drama, *God's Miracles Big and Small*, an adaptation by Rev. Scott of a favourite children's book. The characters complete with angels and animals (dinosaur, spider, cheetah and cat) showed us how Gemino lost his jewel heart but more importantly gained a living, blossoming flower. Thanks to Marie, Shannon and Elizabeth for helping guide the children.

The older youth both wrote and presented a powerful prayer – covering the thoughts and ideas most important to them. Powerfully delivered.

Allison and Demmery rounded out the Service by contributing piano solos for the Prelude and Postlude respectively.

Our thanks to our youth for a thought-provoking, well-organized and well-presented service. It was a wonderful expression of their talents and of their growing faith.



## First United

*Continued from previous page*

activities at this church and what sort of help is most useful from the likes of me/us.

2. I/we need to encourage leaders of Presbytery and the greater Church to support this difficult but worthwhile ministry to their fullest extent.
3. If we are invited again sometime, we have to have a clearer picture of what's expected so we will be better prepared and organized.
4. My preconceptions based on experience long past couldn't match up with the aching reality they deal with daily. I was powerfully affected as I'm sure the others were, each in his or her own way.
5. I have a challenge to be truly mindful of all these others living and working in the downtown eastside.

Thanks be to God.



## The Watch

By Bill H

Most of you know that Chali, whom Deer Lake is sponsoring in Zambia, and I have a very close father-son relationship. This story relates to an unexpected encounter linked to that relationship – something that happened a couple of weeks ago. Some of my acquaintances have said, “It’s only coincidence.”

But four coincidences in a row?

Chali and I talk on the phone nearly every Friday evening. I try to connect to him as a long distance dad. A couple of weeks back he asked about getting a watch.

“You don’t need a watch,” I retorted.

“It would help me be on time for appointments when I begin my career that Deer Lake is helping me prepare for.”

“No watch!”

There was silence on the other end of the phone line, and then the conversation moved on. I didn’t think any more about the watch and spoke to no-one about my conversation with Chali.”

The very next day, as I was going to lunch at the Mulberry Residence, where I live, a small lady approached me and asked, “Does your boy, Chali, in Africa need a watch? I would like to send him one.”

### WOW!

I was dumb-struck and didn’t know how to answer.

I came to the church for bulletin folding on Thursday and related the story. A good member said, “I’ve just returned from China where I bought an extra watch. Chali may have it.”

### WOW!!

I returned to my residence and the same lady said, “I’ll pay the postage. You send Chali the watch.” The watch is now on its way with Canada Post.

Coincidence? To me it was more like a miracle. A miracle that shows me the light of Christ burning all around us.

Let your light shine, reflecting the light of Christ.

## Fall Turkey Dinner

By Garry F

On Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup> Deer Lakers not only remembered our veterans, we also joined together that evening to enjoy the annual Fall Turkey Dinner sponsored by the Men’s Group. More than 80 people attended this perennially popular event. More than a dozen men were busy cooking, dishing up plates of food, and waiting on tables. Jean M, Don W and Aaron S entertained between courses. As usual, we received plenty of feedback after the event, the most common comment being, “Too much food!”

A big thank you is due to everyone involved in planning, preparing for and participating in the event. A special thank you goes to those ladies who supplied the table decorations and desserts. And last but not least, the biggest thank you of all goes to all of you who bought tickets to the dinner and helped to raise over \$1,200 for the Building Contingency Fund.



Rev. Scott serves bread to the hungry masses.



Don looooves pumpkin pie!



Jean and Don cookin’ up a storm



## An Adventure in China

By Audrey L

Our trip to China leaves many pleasant memories for us. On September 15th we flew to Anchorage, Alaska where we embarked on the Sapphire Princess. Our voyage to Beijing took 15 days during which we made stops at Kodiak Island in the Aleutians, Petropavlovsk in Siberia, and 3 stops in Japan - Muroran, Tokyo and Nagasaki.

We visited Peace Memorial Park in Nagasaki. This was ground zero for the second atomic blast in Japan that levelled that city on August 9, 1945. It felt like we were walking on hallowed ground.

We were spoiled on the cruise but didn't object. When invited, I was happy to participate in worship leadership and served communion during the well-attended worship services. We appreciated the opportunity to have communion with our fellow pilgrims.

We also enjoyed meeting so many wonderful people. There were many bridge players on this cruise and excellent lectures to brush up on our game. The time flew and before we knew it we were at our destination and beginning the next phase of our journey - a Uniworld bus tour of mainland China..

It was a fast-paced tour that included 5 plane trips to the various tourist attractions. Everything was so different, particularly the food. During one lunch we had twelve or more different kinds of tasty dumplings, each a different shape and colour depending on its content. During our meals we tried to know what we were eating but that was difficult. One needed to use bottled water at all times which we did, yet picked up some germ at one point. Each of us had a "day of rest" at different times on the trip.

However, we did enjoy seeing the sights. In Beijing we toured the Forbidden City, a huge complex of palaces, throne rooms and gardens. In sharp contrast to that luxury, we had a rickshaw ride through the oldest residential section of Beijing called the Hutongs. The next day we walked on the Great Wall, that 4000 mile-long fortification built to thwart barbarian invasions. .

Everywhere there was new construction going on, causing our guide to comment that China's national bird was the crane - the construction crane! Old and new converged everywhere. Roads were travelled by modern vehicles, horse drawn carts and bicycle carts. On one street we saw a man hauling a dead pig cross ways over the back fender of his motorcycle.

From Beijing we flew to Xian, where we had an unforgettable welcome ceremony at the city gate. We had always been intrigued when reading about the terra-cotta warriors which guarded the tomb of the first emperor of China and they lived up to our expectations.



Glen and Audrey on the Great Wall of China

Our journey continued by riverboat for a 3-day cruise on the Yangtze River where we viewed one of China's most scenic areas featuring elegant peaks, exotic rock formations and serene forests. However, one couldn't help notice how muddy the river was and the lack of birds and other wildlife. Concluding our trip to that area we visited the Three Gorges Dam which is already generating electricity. The dam's main purpose is flood control, followed by power generation, navigation and irrigation.

Next we flew to Shanghai, China's largest city. After sightseeing we were thrilled to see an exciting performance by the Shanghai Acrobats.

Again, we packed our bags and flew to Guilin where we saw the Flute Reed Caves and enjoyed an all day cruise of the Li River. This was a beautiful area of jagged, mist-covered mountains. Here the river was clear, the birds plentiful, and water buffalo swam near our boat, sometimes grazing for grasses on the bottom and surfacing with their mouths full.

Our final three days were spent in Hong Kong sightseeing and visiting friends.

We felt truly blessed that we could take this trip to China. We learned a lot about an area we had only read about. The people were gracious to strangers in their midst, and the cultural events and concerts helped us understand their culture.

### WANTED: ONE PIANO

Deer Lake is in urgent need of a piano to replace the one that is dying a slow death at the front of the church.

We are looking for creative ways to achieve this in the face of a budget that doesn't include a piano.

If you have, or know of, a good piano (preferably a grand or baby grand) that can be donated, loaned or had for a good price, Good Ol' Don would sure love to talk to ya!

## I Heard a Joyful Sound

By Jim Y

Pat and I have recently returned from four weeks on the bottom side of the globe, the first three in Australia and the last week on Rarotonga in the Cook Islands. We arrived at the Rarotonga Sunset late on Saturday evening, leaving us only time to hang up some clothes and figure out the safe (not that we had much to put in it). Watching TV was pretty much out of the question because the Cook Islands only have one channel, and sometimes it doesn't start broadcasting until late afternoon.

Our first contact with other guests was at breakfast time on Sunday morning. Those who had been before urged us to take in a church service. "You'll love the music," everyone said. Of course we'd heard this before we went and had fully intended to do so.

The manager of the Sunset took Pat and I and six others to a lovely church (The Cook Islands Christian Church) just down the road.

It looked like it was built at the turn of the century (1700) by missionaries. The inside walls were rough plaster painted bright white and the ceiling around the perimeter was about 20 feet tall. The centre of the church had a much higher inset, probably allowing for a cooler service. There were about 20 oscillating fans mounted on support posts, plus half a dozen ceiling fans.



The Cook Islands Christian Church

The dais (if I can call it that) was reached by a staircase of probably 10 steps. This is where the minister would preach from.

When we entered the sanctuary, the place was nearly full (a couple of hundred downstairs plus perhaps another 60 or 70 in the loft). The first eight or ten pews were empty and I thought this is where the choir would be sitting. Apparently they fill their church from the back pews also. (I soon discovered there was no choir.)

The service started with a call to worship in English by a middle-aged Maori woman. Eventually, the minister arrived through an outside door near the front carrying a valise and I thought to myself how much he reminded me of Scott. O.K. ... he had hair and darker skin and he was fuller in the face. I'd say his suit was a 54-Short and his backwards collar totally concealed his neck.

He climbed the stairs and began with a prayer in Maori. On the Kalema Scale (measures volume of the spoken word) of 0-5, I'd say this minister spoke at a level four (Scott delivers his message at a comfortable 3). On the other hand, Abiel hit a 6 a few times, especially after he got wound up.

Thinking about it, perhaps the Cook Islands minister more closely resembled Abiel.



The elevated pulpit

Anyway, after the prayer, a woman sitting just behind me uttered the first couple of notes of a hymn, followed by the rest of women. The men joined in a couple of bars later. As each began, they stood and the rest of the congregation (visitors to the service) followed.

I couldn't begin to describe the sound. The harmony touched me deeply and each part could be clearly distinguished. There was no arm waving, clapping or even swaying, though I did observe one of the men tapping his foot. (I later tried to purchase a CD, but it was impossible to capture the feeling that this singing produced.)

All of this was a cappella and each of the hymns seemed to last as long as two "She Flies On" (a good thing) and likely was written prior to 1910.

The entire service was conducted in Maori with the exception of the scripture reading.

After the service concluded, the minister descended from his pulpit and I thought to myself how much he resembled Danny DeVito. After inviting the congregation to join in refreshments at the hall down the road, he disappeared out the same door from which he made his appearance.

What a wonderful experience. Of all the surprises Rarotonga had to offer, this church service will be with me the longest.

Are you able to help out by making coffee one Sunday morning? If you don't know how, Shirley Mc will be happy to show you how.

Please sign up in the Fellowship Hall.

## A Perspective on Aging

By Jim Y

**A while:** (*n*) A relative length of time.

I've been around for a while, though not as long as I'd like. To some folks, I'm a really old guy and to others, like my old friend Ernie, I'm still pretty young.

I remember thinking, when I began my apprenticeship as a printer at the Vancouver Sun in 1961, how old the journeymen printers seemed to be. Looking back, most of them had to have been in their early to mid-forties, because I worked with them for another twenty years or so.

One third of the people who work for Pacific Newspaper Group weren't even born when I began working there (including our new publisher). I guess that makes me an old guy . . . but not a *really* old guy.

Some years ago, I had a verbal altercation with a pimply-faced adolescent about the manner in which he was driving. He took exception to a few suggestions I offered. "Why, you forty-year-old piece of feces (that wasn't the word he used)," he started. I was 55. I could have kissed him.

When I observe young children, I can't help wonder about potential . . . theirs, the world's . . . and how does everything fit. As people age (with few exceptions), their influence on the world around them diminishes as does their importance, and they're often ignored.

I have a nephew who needed a tree removed from his front yard a few years ago. A small work party gathered and a strategy was decided upon. Some guy with a chain saw cut off a few of the larger branches, someone else climbed the tree and at-

tached a rope to the top part and the tree was cut in half while a few of the others pulled the rope to keep the tree away from power lines and the house.

A couple of guys dug around the base exposing the roots and these were cut. One end of the rope was then tied to what was left of the tree and the other to a truck. It was no match and the tree surrendered.



All the while, my nephew's grandfather Gordon (eighty-something) stood there holding an axe. Basically, he was ignored. No one, including me, took time to include him in some safe participation.

A couple of years later, I attended a Christmas dinner at my sister's place and old Gordon was there. The dinner was lavish . . . beautifully cooked turkey and three or four delicious casseroles. There was much chit chat around the table, but no one paid attention to Gordon. He sat across from me with his head bowed; probably wishing he was somewhere (any-

where) else.

After the main course dishes had been cleared, I flicked a napkin ring towards Gordon. His head lifted and he looked at me. He flicked it back. I returned it. He did likewise. I set up a couple of candle sticks to shoot between and for the next few minutes, Gordon and I scored lots of goals. The smile on Gordon's face was probably the best gift I received that year. I think that was Gordon's last Christmas.

A funny thing about getting old(er): None of the folks around me. . . my friends and family . . . seem to, and perhaps that's a good thing. Garry will always be a young guy falling off his bike, Scott will always have that youthful look in his eye, and my kid Sue will always be my kid.

I'm hoping that those close to me also don't see me "aging". I had the same doctor from 1961 until he retired a few years ago. My hair loss and weight gain have been quite gradual, I'm hoping he didn't notice. Over the years, he and my prostate became quite good friends, and when I had to change doctors, my new one looked like Doogie Howser.

Society in general has expectations of how people should act their age and make allowances. Take church for instance. When a really young child becomes restless, we're understanding and even sometimes offer to take the kid off the mother's hands. At the other end of the scale, we have our seniors. We give them two cushions if they want, and we make allowances if they sing off key.

And me? If I happen to drop off during the sermon, it isn't because I'm bored. I'm just old.

### **Reel to Real Movie Night**

Plan to come along for friendship and popcorn  
Friday Jan 26<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm at the home of Pat & Jim  
on Sussex Ave (Bond & Nelson)

Come watch the movie *Finding Forrester* with Sean Con-  
nery, and discuss friendships, needs and mentors

If anyone picked up or put away a hardcover children's atlas with the name James inside please contact Hugh J. It was placed on the coffee table for people to look at after church on multicultural Sunday.

Hugh: 604-431-5046



Shirley, in her finest Sunday hat, encourages members of the Deer Lake United Church congregation to come out and help decorate the sanctuary and do Christmas crafts on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

*Getting  
Ready  
For  
Christmas*



Members of the Gospel of Peace Church congregation decorate the tree while Carol and Scott arrange the Advent candles.



Nineteen men gathered at the home of Audrey and Glen on November 25<sup>th</sup> for the annual Men's Christmas Breakfast. The food was good, the fellowship even better and the carol singing exceptional. Thank you to Nick for leading, organizing and coordinating the readings this year.



Pastors Andre, Scott and Andy pose together after they and members of the All Nations Church, DLUC and Gospel of Peace Church worked together to decorate the sanctuary their congregations share.

**Taking Chances**

A man and his ever-nagging wife went on vacation to Jerusalem. While they were there, the wife passed away. The undertaker told the husband, "You can have her shipped home for \$5,000, or you can bury her here, in the Holy Land, for \$150." The man thought about it and told him he would just have her shipped home.

The undertaker asked, "Why would you spend \$5,000 to ship your wife home, when it would be wonderful to be buried here, and you would spend only \$150?"

The man replied, "Long ago a man died here, was buried here, and three days later he rose from the dead. I just can't take that chance."

**Submissions**

**Lakeshore Lines** will be published four times each year. Submissions may be made to one of the Communications Committee members (preferably by email):

Garry Forwood: gforwood@telus.net  
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