

LAKESHORE LINES

September, 2011

Free – and worth every cent!

A Church for the ‘Spiritual But Not Religious’ too

by Rev. G. Scott Turnbrook

There is a recurring conversation that I experience at dinner parties, open houses and backyard BBQs. When a person learns of my profession, they inevitably share their concern over our ecclesiastical institution and proceed to give a testimony as to why they do not attend church. Have you ever experienced a conversation like this? As I think about this dynamic, it seems very odd. When I meet a math teacher, I don't feel the need to say I have always hated math. When I meet a chef, I don't need to let it be known that I can't cook. When I meet a clown, I don't admit that I think clowns are scary. I keep that stuff to myself. But everybody loves to tell a minister what's wrong with the church. And more often than not, the “church” they describe bears no relation to the one I serve. In this article, I would like to suggest that members of the Liberal Protestant church, like the United Church of Canada, need to do a better job in sharing what we have to offer.

I usually find people bearing negative feelings about church to have made several stops in the religious marketplace. Here are a few of the common stories that I hear. They were raised a Catholic but felt limited by that tradition. Their questions weren't answered or welcomed and

the worship, rituals and preaching seemed irrelevant. Or perhaps, they were drawn to a fundamentalist branch of the church. They liked the people who were in it, they liked the music, but later realized that the church held strict moral beliefs that they could not adhere to and they drifted away. Today, they find Sunday mornings best suited for sleeping in, reading the paper or putting on running

shoes for a jog through the woods. This is their religion today they say: ‘I worship nature. I see myself in the trees, the sky and the water. I am one with the great outdoors. I find God there. I have come to realize that I am deeply spiritual but no longer religious’.

Does this description ring any bells with
(Continued on page 2)



Andrew W. and bride Louise with Andrew's family on the occasion of their wedding this summer. See page 3 for more wedding pictures.

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

INSIDE

Bby Cooperative Church Project 2	Campout Concern.....5
George Stegan Poetry3	BBQ Bliss6
Wedding Pictures.....3	Garden of Welcome and Hope 6
Naramata.....4	Holiday in Haida Gwaii7
Bby Hospice Memorial Service ...5	Pictures.....8

A Church

(continued from page 1)

you? Have you had conversations like these with people whom you have met socially? Of course you have. The Sunday jogger, newspaper reader, sleeper-inner, nature worshiper is a staple of mainstream culture. They are perhaps the fastest growing group of people. If they have children, I find the spiritual but not religious are likely to say they see God in their children (at least when they are doing loving things or saying something about God). These spiritual but not religious adults don't want to hear about God at church, but they never tire of hearing about God from their own children. These are the people who keep sending out the e-mails with 'cute things kids say about God'. My suspicion is that, like most children, they are merely parroting back their parents' values - and because they are children, they do so in much cuter ways. Comments like: "I think there will be doggies and birdies and grandma's candy bowl in heaven" are the ones we often hear.

Hmm...what an interesting insight: heaven filled with "doggies, birdies and grandma's candy bowl". But let's take that idea a little further. Will there be sharks and snakes in heaven too? How about vampire bats or cancer? I would suggest that these kids who apparently are teaching their parents their homespun theologies are being very poorly prepared. Are we not doing them a disservice by telling them that all churches are bad? If they went to Sunday school on a regular basis, they might learn to think about the bats and scorpions. At least they would have a chance to ask about cancer when a grandparent gets sick. They would have a place, a spiritual community, in which to go a bit deeper into these matters. Sadly, their parents, so afraid that the church will force their kids to accept its answers, have made sure that no such formation or guidance is offered. This approach works for a while. It works as long as there are rainbows and the kids are happy, but it doesn't work so well in the face of tantrums, selfishness and, dare I say it?, brokenness and sin. Most self-developed Sunday morning rituals have little room for the inevitable encounters we have with pain, suffering and sin. Suffering in these self-made spiritualities

is something we can overcome by hard work, exercise and reading the op-ed page. But worldwide disaster, how do you wrestle with that?

One emerging form of spirituality that I regularly hear among this group is a theology of gratitude. It might go something like this: "Listen to what my son wrote: 'Children are starving with empty bellies in faraway lands. They have nothing to eat. All around them they hear the sounds of gunfire and bombs going off. And it made me realize that we are so lucky. We are so lucky to be living here and not there.'" The parent proudly reports: "I had tears in my eyes. I was blown away because I realized that he gets it, he really gets it. It is gratitude. That's our religion - gratitude".

Before you come to the end of this article, please don't get me wrong. I'm not against gratitude any more than I am against finding God in a sunset or a child's eyes. Those are all good things, along with puppies, rainbows, and grandma's candy dish. But none of that constitutes a religion. And contrary to popular wisdom in the age of the spiritual but not religious, we need religion and we need the church. We are pleased when we see a posture of gratitude in others; however, there is something missing when we stop there. What's missing from that worldview is something you might get in a Christian community, a perspective that would take you from feeling lucky for not being hungry to actually doing something to feed a hungry person. The church teaches us not to stop with the self-made religion of gratitude because it will not sustain them or God's world. If we stop at gratitude, we fall short of Jesus' vision and short of what God would have us do. At some point, a

worldview based simply on luck and gratitude becomes insufficient. At some point we figure out that there is something more. There is something as outrageous as a new heaven and a new earth.

I deeply believe that the United Church of Canada and other Liberal Protestant Churches have the greatest chance of connecting with this sector of our world - the self proclaimed 'spiritual but not religious'. As we look ahead, I am suggesting that we must continue to build a church for them and us. If we made a church that included the spiritual but not religious, if we got them all together to talk about their beliefs and their incredibly unique personal religions, they would find out that we have a lot in common. In church, we hear scriptures like the one in which Jesus says to ordinary, fallible Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my church." As descendants of Peter, we too are ones upon whom the church will be built. I celebrate our various ministries and all our people who put them into action. I think about all the ministries that allow us to be a welcoming, vibrant and engaging church where people can explore and express their spirituality. But the challenge is out there: the spiritual but not religious need us to welcome them in. And as ones called to be the church who grows and serves, we need them too.

I look forward to the new and exciting ways in which Christ's ministries will reach out through each and everyone of us.

Shalom, Salaam, Peace,

Rev. Scott.

AN UPDATE ON THE BURNABY COOPERATIVE CHURCH PROJECT

The May edition of *Lakeshore Lines* noted this new initiative among five of the seven Burnaby United Churches (South Burnaby, West Burnaby, Willingdon Heights, Cliff Avenue, Deer Lake). Thus far, Vancouver Korean and Ellesmere have not desired to continue in these talks. Representatives from Deer Lake have included Rev. Scott, Ernie Colledge and Janice Cambuzzi. While the dramatic decline in attendance combined with the growing financial strain upon these churches was the main catalyst, there has been a fundamental desire to discern how God is calling us to be the church in the decades ahead. To be sure, these are times filled with fear, uncertainty and tremendous potential. There have been some invitations for joint worship, youth events, and fellowship opportunities. There is a hope for some upcoming 'town hall' meetings where everyone will be welcomed to gather and have their voices heard about this exciting time.

George S. Remembered in His Poetry

While visiting with Claire Stegen a few weeks ago, she produced a poem that George had written. At the time George had the tune to the Vicar of Bray in mind and wrote these words to fit the music. (The Vicar of Bray can be downloaded from iTunes ... fun song!)

In this untitled poem, George describes briefly his spiritual journey.

When I was young and had no sense
My eyes were on the Ministry
I asked my dad what college best
Of course, my son, it's Trinity

So off I went
With one intent
To be a Holy Father

But now I'm old and have more sense
To be human I would rather

I sought the truth with all my might
I craved to be Angelic
But soon I discovered to my fright
That shadows shared this relic

So scared was I
I masked my lie

I felt my vulnerability
So off to my Psych and Gospels too
To find my own tranquility

I looked to Christ to what he said
And He confirmed my laboring
God loves the one who fully loves
And can accept His calling

So off I went
With more content
To be truly human

To affirm who I am without pretence
'Tis really what I'd rather

To you who hear this soulful song
I beg of you my people
To live your life and know you're loved
We'll sing it from the steeple

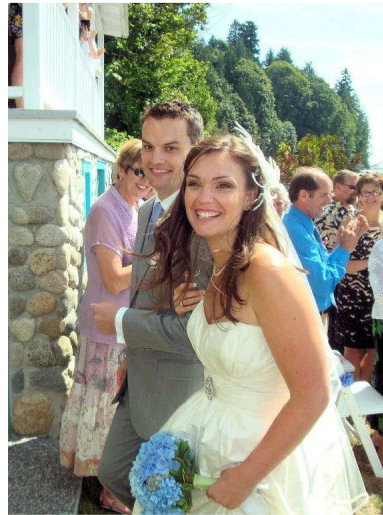
To share your joys
And share your woes

And be fully alive and fully human
So filled with joy and hope and love
Because our God is in you.

by Rev. George S.

Summer Weddings Aplenty

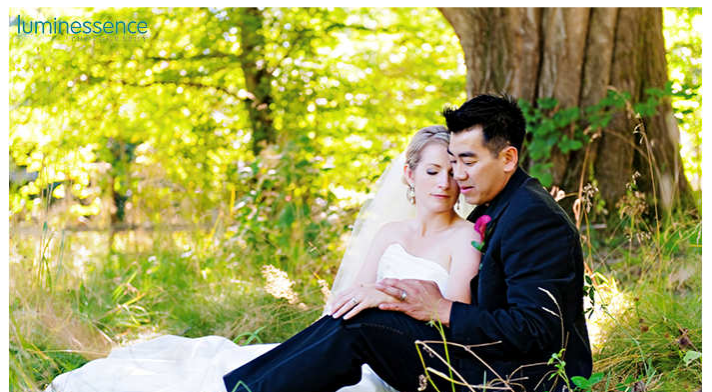
In addition to Andrew Woodruff's marriage to Louise Higginbotham at Tony and Peggy's property in Sechelt, three other weddings of note occurred this summer:



Quinn and Elizabeth .
W., also married in
Sechelt



Ting G. and
Wei Lun C.,
married at DLUC



Dr. Robin B. and Ti Pho H., married at DLUC

Naramata – More Than Just a Place Name

By Cathy M.

Naramata. To our family that word is more than just a geographic place name. It's an experience, a tradition, and a joyful part of our lives. As we have since 1996, our family (or most of us!) packed up and headed to Naramata this summer for Music Week.

It was not the best start to the Naramata year. The Centre rolled out a new online registration system but there was a significant computer glitch. The first-come first-served policy was not followed. The Centre acknowledged the problem but the error was not to be corrected, and so several of our Deer Lake families were disappointed to have no accommodation, despite their speedy registration times. This unfortunate situation was disheartening for many.

But from our early arrival on the Saturday, before the site began to bustle with full attendance on Sunday night, the magic of Naramata Centre made itself felt, and allowed us to slow down, shed the burdens and concerns of daily life, and breathe deeply. The air was clear and fresh, the lake water warm, and the peacocks sang. Time to relax.



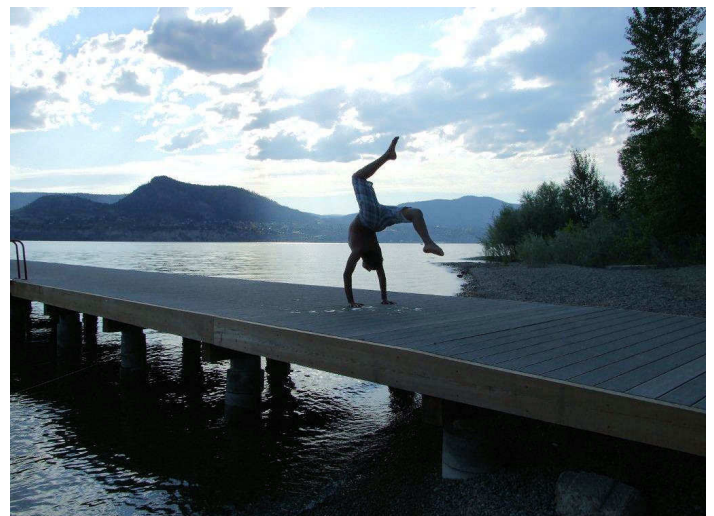
This year ten Deer Lake families were lucky enough to enjoy Music Week. The adults welcomed Laurier Fagnan; a repeat conductor and a favourite of many. He brought with him a wonderful variety of music – beautiful, stirring and upbeat – with English, Latin, and Russian texts. The Young Adults were thrilled with the dynamic Scott Leithead, another repeat conductor. They created some fantastic music with English, Swahili, and Norwegian texts, and some stunning throat-singing. The children and youth enjoyed their programs and choirs. Those who didn't sing enjoyed some down-time, including cycling, wine-tasting, visiting with friends, and relaxing at the beach. Don and Jean hosted an open house, so we could all have a peek at the home where they'll enjoy retirement.

This year marked the 50th Anniversary of Music Week, and this milestone was celebrated in various understated but meaningful ways. During Wednesday worship on the beach we were reminded of the threads of time – past, present and future – with three strands of yarn given out during communion. During an evening of music and dancing hosted by Don Wade and friends, we were treated to a slide show of people enjoying their time at the Centre year after year. We acknowledged the contributions of the Music Week committee members. Through the Naramata Summer School of Music Arts, and now through the Centre, many individuals have given their time and talent to organize an inspiring week of choral music for the past 50 years.

The most memorable event of the week (in a week filled with them) was an evening of entertainment by the Hafso family. Marc Hafso has conducted and delighted the adult choir several times since 1998, and he, Judy and their daughters treated us to songs, stories, and jokes. We listened and laughed, sang together, shed a tear or two, and remembered the past. It was a lovely, touching evening - filled with humour, sweetness and nostalgia. As we watched this wonderful couple entertain us with their daughters (who many of us first knew as very small children) we were reminded of the best of Music Week, and the how the threads of time are woven.

As always, we wrapped up the week with a Celebration of Music that, while a bit long, could have been longer. It was that good.

Despite the registration issue, we came away from Music Week with renewed appreciation for Naramata Centre and its deep value. We also came away with a renewed commitment to support the Centre as we are able. How fortunate we and so many of our Deer Lake family have been to enjoy this experience year after year. And how grateful we are. What a gift. Here's to 50 more years of Music Week.



MEMORIAL SERVICE:

A Gathering for HEALING and HOPE



Deer Lake continues its partnership with the Burnaby Hospice organization by hosting their biannual Burnaby Hospice Memorial Service on October 24 at 1 p.m. All are welcome to attend and invitations have been extended to clients who have suffered a loss in the past year. This gathering is one part of the many essential services that Burnaby Hospice offers within its scope of bereavement care. We will need help greeting, setting up the hall, and serving refreshments in the fellowship hall after the service. Please speak with Rev. Scott if you would like to get involved in this important outreach to the community.

CHURCH LIBRARIAN POSITION VACANT

We have an excellent library collection that is very organized and features a complete online catalogue at www.libarything.com. Would you like to be our new church librarian? Our outgoing librarian has offered to train the new person so that the transition goes smoothly. If you would to serve in this capacity, please speak with Rev. Scott or Kathy Richardson.



MARIE T., our visually impaired congregant, would like two more people who would be willing to take her for about a one- to two-hour walk on **one** Friday afternoon per month. If you are able to do this could you please phone Marie at 604-522-0167. She has three “walkers” at present, but needs two more for the other Fridays. Thank you very much for considering this.

From the Pastoral Care Committee



Campout Concern

Dear deerlake united church,

I Sean K. would like to put out as a notice to the community that the men got to go on there relaxing get-away, the women got to go on a getaway but the children and family's never got to go camping at cultus lake. Which I know we have had some amazing times, experiences, and memories that lay fondly in our minds.

I myself and if I'm not mistaken other's are upset by this misshappen. As I have been informed the result of this may of happed either because of the lack of communication or the amount of people that volunteered was too little to make camping possible.

I hope that next year we have a cultus lake camp out for that would be very much appreciated.

Sincerely Sean

A reply to Sean from the Christian Education Committee:

Dear Sean,

Thank you so much for your letter about Cultus Lake. We trust that in the next year volunteers will come forward to organize the camp, and Deer Lake will enjoy another camping experience.

History Of Deer Lake Video Now On YouTube



The 20 minute video which was shot and produced by Presybtery last summer was recently posted online at Youtube. It is posted in two parts. Check it out at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lvPH6SUfNY>

CHRISTMAS DECORATION PARTY

Friday November 25 @ 7 p.m.

It might seem early to be speaking about Christmas; however, we know how busy life gets, so please mark your calendars now. As we spiritually prepare for the coming of the Christ Child during Advent, this will commence by physically preparing our sanctuary for the season. There are banners to be hung, trees to be put up and decorations to be placed. This promises to be a fun community experience as we welcome our other congregations to share in the joy. There will be activities for the children, refreshments, music and (hopefully) a little singing. Please join us on Friday November 25th at 7 p.m.

210 Minutes of BBQ Bliss!

T minus 90 minutes: Two men arrive at the church to prepare for the annual Deer Lake Welcome Back BBQ. The barbecues are set up in the parking lot and fired up.

T minus 75: More men arrive. Coffee is put on to percolate. Tables and chairs are carried from the hall to the parking lot.

T minus 65: The numbers swell and the activity increases. Burgers and wieners go on the grill, tomatoes are sliced and onions are diced. Buns and fixin's are put out. Two crock pots arrive, full of beans and ribs.

T minus 30: Coffee mugs and juice glasses are set up and the coffee urn is moved outside. A few early arrivals wander into the parking lot. A sprinkle of rain is felt, eyes turn to the heavy cloud, then hopefully to a few wisps of blue sky. The rain stops. The aroma of grilled burgers fills the air. Potato chips begin to slowly disappear from their bowl by the condiments.

T minus 5: BBQ Bob checks his watch and does a quick head count. Too many burgers, too few people.

T minus 0: (Turnbrook Time) Reverend Scott says grace. Hungry adults and hungrier children queue to claim their choice of meat. Burgers and hotdogs are built and plates are piled high.

T plus 5: Tables fill and the line grows longer as the gathering swells from thirty to sixty. Bob begins to wonder if there will be too many people, too few burgers.

T plus 30: Happy chatter fills the air as friends catch up on summer happenings. Plates are emptied while others are refilled. Children run about. Others climb trees.

T plus 90: Conversation is replaced with a whirlwind of activity as seemingly everyone grabs something and starts to clean up. Plates, cutlery, mugs and glasses are whisked to the kitchen for washing. Chairs are stacked, tables are collapsed, and the barbecues are cleaned and put away. Before you know it the parking lot is bare.

T plus 120: The dishes are clean, leftovers are dealt with and the lights are turned out. After expenses, over \$80 is raised for the building fund. Thanks to everyone for another successful Welcome Back BBQ!



The Garden of Welcome and Hope

Pat Y. for The Garden Club

I hope you had a chance to see the garden in all its glory this spring and summer. Many thanks to those who took the time to do a little weeding and trimming, which kept our church looking its welcoming best for us and newcomers too.

Special thanks to Bob C. and Ernie C. for their work on the edging, it is all coming along beautifully.

Garden benches were purchased with donations received. One is in memory of our friend and mentor: Bill H., donated by a very caring individual. Plaques have been purchased for both benches and will be attached shortly. The benches are not in the garden yet, as we are planning to get them placed in concrete, so they don't walk away.

We will be having a Fall Cleanup of the garden on Saturday October 22nd. Please plan to give an hour of your time to help complete this task before winter sets in. And do take time to 'smell the roses'.



HOLIDAY IN HAIDA GWAII

By Audrey L.

Following a two-hour flight from Vancouver Glenn and I landed in Haida Gwaii, formerly known as Queen Charlotte Islands. The low-flying propeller plane allowed us a clear view of the southern area known as Gwaii Haanas which is not reachable by road. Upon arrival at Sandspit on Moresby Island, Glenn and I boarded a shuttle bus and ferry which took us to the Village of Queen Charlotte on Graham Island. We were promptly met by the owner of the guest house which would be our home base for the next four days. We were also able to rent a car from the owner.

This was an area I had been curious about for some time. It is a place where land and sea are woven into Haida culture. We were fortunate to have sunny weather the whole time for Haida Gwaii is known as "the Misty Islands," a name that reflects the often overcast skies and fog. The isolation and climate are but part of the island

mystique. The Haida, traditional residents of the islands, add to the mystery and enchantment.

The Haida Heritage Centre at Skidigate was a helpful resource for conveying Haida history and culture where local Haidas gave presentations on totems, canoes and weaving. We learned about the crests and stories displayed on the totem poles, saw a variety of traditional Haida cedar canoes including Bill Reid's famous 50 foot canoe, *Loo Taas*, housed in the carving shed. We learned about the four main styles of Haida weaving, tracing it from gathering to processing through to weaving, and saw how the process has evolved over the years using traditional materials including cedar bark, spruce root and mountain goat wool.

In this remote place of our province The United Church of Canada has a ministry and while visiting the Haida village of Skidigate we came across Skidigate United Church. In keeping with its context, the large double doors at the church

entrance were carved in Haida design. We were told that the minister also goes to Port Clements to offer pastoral care and worship services.

Beyond the Haida influence that permeates the islands is the sheer beauty of Haida Gwaii from its soaring eagles, ravens and other sea birds to the numerous Sitka black-tailed deer that fearlessly approached us on the road. On the eastern shore, broad scenic beaches front Hecate Strait. Driving northward we stopped to examine curious natural phenomena - a huge rock balanced on a small base, St. Mary's Spring, a forest in Naikoon Park covered in moss that hung strangely to branches like muffs, a blow hole that sent forth spectacular sprays.

Haida Gwaii is untouched by many of society's influences. There are no banks nor McDonald's, only two gas stations, one traffic light and a few restaurants. It is a world where you can set your pace to savour what these isles have to offer. Four days was not very long to be there but, nevertheless, has left an indelible impression on us.





Kellee M. celebrates an unnumbered birthday with daughters Laura and Susan



More images of Haida Gwaii



"Hey, how'd your cell phone get under here, Gary?"



Can you guess what these boys are up to?



Dona in the News

Dona Lethbridge was featured in an item on CTV's website this summer. You can read the article and see a lovely picture of Dona by going to <http://www.ctvbc.ctv.ca> and searching for "Dona Lethbridge".

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: g.forwood@yahoo.ca
- Jim Young: jimyoung@shaw.ca

Next Issue: December 2011

Submission Deadline Sunday, Nov 19, 2011