

LAKESHORE LINES

December, 2011

Free – and worth every cent!

WILL YOU HAVE TIME FOR CHRIST THIS SEASON?



Young volunteers pose by the tree after helping to decorate the sanctuary and narthex. Thanks to all who helped, both young and old. See inside for more pictures.

I recently had a conversation with a colleague about the word ‘Advent’. We were pondering the question of whether or not people in our post-Christendom culture understand what the word means anymore. We wondered if most people think of the month of December simply as ‘The Season of Christmas’ rather than a month containing two distinctly separate church seasons: the season of Advent and the season of Christmas.

Advent (from the Latin word *adventus* meaning "coming") is a season of preparation that is observed in most churches. It is a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the nativity of Christ in Christmas. Engaging in a season of preparations can be a challenging exercise because we live in a world which encourages us to jump ahead to Christmas on the 1st day of December. Our culture tempts us to jump right into Christmas without preparing. To indulge in decadent foods, expensive gifts, and a calendar full of parties.

While these are wonderful and exciting parts of the Christmas season, there is a unique call that occurs in the Advent season. Prior to Christmas celebrations, there is a call to quiet oneself and prepare during Advent. How many people actually take time to prepare their hearts for Christ during Advent? How many people take the time to create a quiet moment in their day to just ‘be’ and ponder the coming gift that will arrive in the Christ child? How many people will engage in the spiritual depth of Advent?

Some may be wondering about how to approach Advent. There is a range of practices. One might simply set aside a few moments each day where they can pray or meditate on the meaning of this season: finding a quiet spot to sit, centering yourself with a candle or a scripture reading and

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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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Will You Have Time?

experiencing the Spirit in that time. Other preparations might be more communal: many households will light a candle (or even better a homemade Advent wreath) and take a moment in silence prior to dinner, others will share a Bible reading together, still others will offer a time around the table considering how each week's Advent theme (hope, peace, joy and love) are needed in the world. While there are many approaches towards practicing Advent, there is no 'right' way to faithfully engage in this season of preparation.

As we think ahead to the nativity story that we hold so near and dear, we know that we will lament Luke's report that "*While [Mary and Joseph] were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in bands of cloth and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn*". Indeed, we are troubled at how the people in Jesus' time did not have room for his birth: relegating Jesus' nativity to a dirty stable. As we look ahead to Jesus' birth into our hearts in this year of 2011, we wonder how we will do. Will we make the necessary preparations to create room for Christ's birth in our lives? Or will we be so consumed by the ways of the world that we will demote his birth to a dusty stable?

Let us together prepare for God's immeasurable gift that is coming; the precious gifts of hope, peace, joy and love; the gift of the Christ Child.

May your Advent preparations open your hearts and lives to God's gracious gift of the Christ this year.

Rev. Scott



News from the Outreach Committee

Deer Lake United Church continues to reach out to both the local and the global community:

Naked Tree

Continuing the Christmas tradition begun by the late Bill H., there will be a "Naked Tree" in the Narthex again this year. Please help decorate this tree with donations of new socks, gloves, toques and personal grooming products (soap, shampoo, tooth paste & brushes, etc.) These will be donated to Burnaby's homeless in early January.



Dixon House

A representative from **Dixon House**, the Burnaby shelter for battered women that was founded at DLUC, will speak at a service in the new year to update us on the valuable service they provide to Burnaby families. They greatly appreciate the donations of clothing and other items which DLUC members regularly provide. These donations can be left in the labeled bins in the church hallway.

The Outreach Committee would like to thank all at DLUC who provide their time, talents and treasures in support of this work.



Hope for Families:

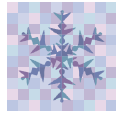
We will be supporting three families and two seniors this year through the Burnaby Christmas Bureau. Sign-up sheets will be posted in the hall for contributions. Donations through the envelopes, by marking Christmas families in the "other" category are also welcome. Please contact Phyllis Slater if you would like more information. Food and gift donations should be brought to church on Sunday, **Dec. 18**. The hampers will then be prepared for the hosts to deliver later that day.

The **Hope for Families** program, formerly known as **Christmas Families**, is an annual outreach initiative of DLUC to assist families in need. Recognizing that many families, and particularly children of families in need, require assistance year round, it was decided several years ago by the DLUC board and Outreach committee to allocate a portion of those funds left over after Christmas to be used to address this need. Those donations which exceed the amount required to prepare the hampers for families at Christmas are used the following year to send several underprivileged children to summer camp. Your generous donations to this fund make a big difference to many families and children, both at Christmas and throughout the year.

Lunch on the Run

The **Lunch on the Run** held on **Sunday, Oct. 23** raised over \$330 for **The Youth Hub**, formerly known as Edmonds Youth Centre. Thank-you to all who participated in this fund-raising activity.

Greetings from Saskatchewan



Greetings to the church meeting at Deer Lake from the church in Ponteix, Vanguard and Kincaid,

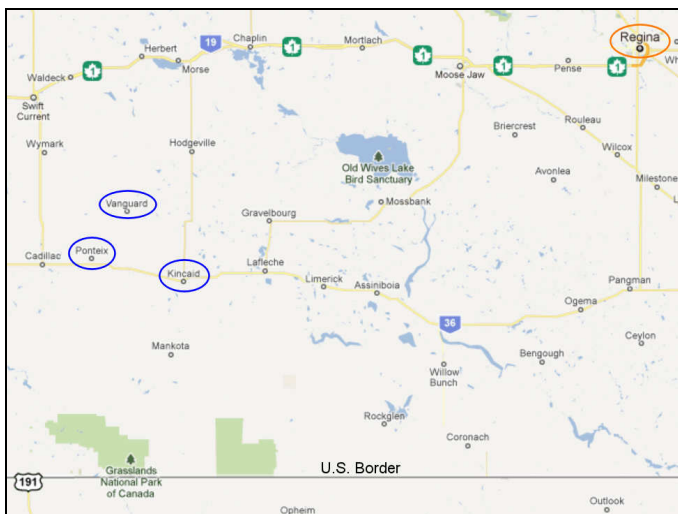
I was checking out my computer last Sunday. It posted a temperature of -2C for Vancouver. That's cold. Perhaps you had snow making travel somewhat challenging.

Here, it was -22C. A twenty degree difference! But the sun was shining, the roads clear and the snow sparkling. It's been two days since I've seen any ducks or geese heading south. Perhaps they have now all made it south for their winter vacations. The only abundance of wildlife in town now are the skunks. It was a good year for them and some days I think there are as many of them in the village as people.

I am keeping busy with service preparations and am now working on bulletins for Advent, Christmas Eve and Epiphany. November 21 the east side of the Presbytery had a gathering of ministers (this happens once a month) for a time of reflection, prayer and, of course, a meal. It is good to connect with colleagues that you are very unlikely to run into on a day to day basis with the many kilometers that separate our work places. November 11 Kincaid hosted a community Remembrance Service. I shared leadership of the service with Father Caragnan, who is based in Ponteix. There have been two more funerals, home visits, services in the supported living and nursing home, three more fall suppers and the local hockey season is in full swing. Needless to say there is no dust settling on me yet.

During Advent we assume a posture of waiting -waiting for the arrival of Christ -while enjoying nearness of the Sprit of God in everything we do -the ordinary events of daily living. May the holy break into your day in wonderous and awesome ways.

Pamela Scott



Ponteix, Vanguard and Kincaid are located about 230 km WSW of Regina.

A Pastor's Appreciation of 'Pastor Appreciation Month'

I wanted to take a moment to thank the many people who were so kind and thoughtful during October's 'Pastor Appreciation Month'. To be honest, I had never heard about this initiative and was quite surprised by it all. I found myself touched by people's sincere appreciation. I received a number of thoughtful cards, homemade delicacies, and box seats for a Canucks game. Each and every offering was deeply appreciated. Appreciation is nice as it serves as a tangible reminder of the difference made by one's actions.

A common challenge among clergy continues to be the task of evaluating the effectiveness of ministry. In matters that pertain to the heart and spirit, how does one know that they have truly made a difference? This is especially difficult amidst the days of church decline when helping a church close its doors can be a sign of good and faithful ministry.

I have a friend who is a brick layer and he will proudly show pictures of his creations. When it comes to ministry, however, we rarely get these type of visible results. Sometimes, a sermon preached, a study group shared, pastoral care offered is more like a seed sown than a brick laid. The rich gift that I continue to enjoy is in watching those seeds of faith take root and grow towards the heavens.

So...thank you for your appreciation. I continue to feel so very blessed to minister among the Deer Lake community

Rev. Scott



HELP NEEDED

Volunteers needed to collect and count the offering on occasional Sundays. Volunteers work in pairs. It takes about one hour to count the money and make the night deposit. Training, help and printed instructions are available. An Excel spreadsheet is also available if you would like to use a computer to complete the counting sheet. Please see Mary if you can help.

UPCOMING CHRISTMAS EVENTS

WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST

Saturday December 17th @ 9:00 a.m.

All women of DLUC are invited to Janice C's home! Please sign up on the sheet in the hall to attend and bring food.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Sunday December 18th @ 10:30 a.m.

An 'All-ages' style gathering where many of our younger members will participate in presenting the meaning and mystery of Christmas. You won't want to miss this exciting celebration of our communal expression of Christmas!

CHRISTMAS EVE: ALL AGES SERVICE

Wednesday December 24th @ 4 p.m.

On the eve of the birthing of God's greatest gift to the world, we present an All Ages Service. This interactive service is thoughtfully designed to be inclusive for people of all ages (especially those who try to get to bed early to listen for reindeer hooves on the roof).

CHRISTMAS EVE: CANDLELIGHT, CAROLS & COMMUNION

Wednesday December 24th @ 7:00 p.m.

An elegant service of lessons and carols that includes the Deer Lake Choir. This service will include Holy Communion and candle lighting.

CHRISTMAS DAY in BURNABY

Sunday December 25th @ 10:30 a.m.

This year, Christmas Day falls on a Sunday. We invite you to gather with the other United Churches in Burnaby at West Burnaby United Church (6050 Sussex Avenue) for a Christmas Day service. We will gather for an informal 'Carol Sing' by request at 10:30 which will be followed by a Christmas Service at 11:00. We will conclude with a light lunch.

To make this day a success, we need your help! We need people to prepare food (3 pots of soup/stew and 3 trays of sandwiches). We also need someone to provide a ride at 10:30 a.m. from Deer Lake to West Burnaby in the event we receive any 'drop ins' who come to Deer Lake. Sign-up sheets are posted in the hall for those who can help.

LOOKING AHEAD TO LENT...

Mark your calendar. Lent commences next year on Wednesday February 22nd. To help people move into this reflective season, we invite you to gather for a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on **Tuesday, February 21st** at 6:00 pm. This will be followed by a Lenten Worship Service at 7:00 pm. Special thanks to our Men's Group for once again coordinating the pancake supper.

CHRISTMAS DECORATING PARTY

Folks of all ages gathered on the evening of November 25th to decorate the sanctuary and narthex. Many eager hands made quick work of it. Come and enjoy Advent and Christmas in Deer Lake's festive décor.



Non-Christmas Events at Deer Lake

Christmas is a busy time of the year, but Deer Lake United Church and the people who frequent it are always busy. Here is a sampling of the events that occurred prior to Advent.



Rev. Scott with Tammy D., Luca R. and Franco R. at Luca's July 26th baptism.



Five Deer Lakers accompanied Rev. Scott on a visit to Temple Shalom on October 18th.



Faith LaF. and Evan F. were married at Deer Lake on November 26th



The Halloween party and pumpkin carving contest held on October 29th this year was very popular again.



An Update on the Burnaby Church Discussion

Over the past few editions of *Lakeshore Lines*, I have sought to keep everyone updated on the developments within the Burnaby cooperative church initiative. Meetings have been occurring with representatives from the seven United Churches in Burnaby. This began with clergy-only gatherings, in which I (Rev. Scott) did not participate. Meetings later expanded to include two representatives from each church along with the ordered clergy. I, along with Janice C. and Ernie C., have been participating in this newer development for the past year. The churches find themselves in a variety of different situations. Some congregations have dwindled down to only a dozen members and can not sustain a future beyond two years; others are concerned by the current trends and are exhibiting signs of challenge. Deer Lake finds itself in the unique position of experiencing gentle growth alongside generally stable membership and finances. Following the June meeting, we reconvened in November. There is now a definite commitment to meeting monthly in order to prayerfully move this initiative along. As we planned our upcoming areas of focus, we committed to include the following:

Lament and support for one another:

As we move towards the inevitable closure of several of the churches, there is a definite need to support the people of these congregations. Many were founding members who grew up in these buildings and call them 'home'. The future closure and sale of these buildings represents a deep loss. While we rationally know that a church is a gathering of people rather than the physical location where one gathers, many of our memories inevitably become paired with our church building. This next chapter for the United Churches in Burnaby will be painful for many.

Faithfully Using our Legacy

While we are facing tremendously difficult times, we are also tremendously blessed. As a 'church', we have an abundance of properties at our disposal. As we consider new ways to be the church in Burnaby, we need to celebrate the bless-

ings that the previous generations have gifted to our faithful stewardship. We have many opportunities available to us if we consider the strength that is found through the unity of a common vision.

Discerning God's Vision for the Future

As we look ahead to the future, there is an excitement in thinking about what the future of the United Church in Burnaby will look like. So much has changed since we 'broke ground' with the vision of a church in our respective neighbourhoods. In most cases, traffic patterns have changed, demographics have altered, and the needs of the communities have shifted. We will be considering: Where are the key geographical areas for us to be located? What styles of worship, outreach, education and pastoral care will we

offer? How will we shape the next generation of the United Church for the generations to come?

Looking ahead

I will do my best to keep you informed as things develop; however, please do not hesitate to speak with Janice, Ernie or myself. We are currently redeveloping our presbytery website (<http://westminsterpresbytery.org>) to provide a spot for updates and dialogue on this project. Finally, I would ask for all your prayers for this ministry initiative. These are days filled with both anxiety and pain, as well as excitement and hope. May we find God's wisdom and grace through this process.

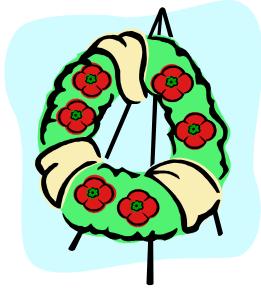
Rev. Scott



Men's Christmas Breakfast

More than twenty men, young and old turned out for an early morning breakfast on November 26th. After breakfast, Don S led the group in thoughtful discussion and Christmas carols.





Remembering

On November 6th we honoured our veterans with a Remembrance Day service.



Bert W. & Don W.

We know our veterans as we see them in the picture above. It can be difficult sometimes to remember they were once young men and women. Young men and women like those you see below who made enormous sacrifices for our freedom. Let us not forget.



Jenny R.



Tom C.



Bert W.

A Christmas Letter...from Jesus

It has come to my attention that many of you are upset that folks are taking my name out of the season. How I personally feel about this celebration can probably be most easily understood by those of you who have been blessed with children of your own. I don't care what you call the day. However, if you want to celebrate my birth, the greatest gift you can give me is to Love God and Love one another.

Now, having said that, let me go on. If it bothers you that the town in which you live doesn't allow a scene depicting my birth, then just get rid of a couple of Santas and snowmen and put in a small Nativity scene on your own front lawn. If all my followers did that there wouldn't be any need for such a scene on the town square because there would be many of them all around town.

Stop worrying about the fact that people are calling the tree a holiday tree instead of a Christmas tree. It was I who made all trees. You can remember me anytime you see any tree. Decorate a grape vine if you wish: I actually spoke of that one in a teaching, explaining who I am in relation to you and what each of our tasks were. If you have forgotten that one, look it up in John 15:1-8 "I am the true vine and you are the branches"

If you want to give me a present in remembrance of my birth here is my wish list:

1. Instead of writing protest letters objecting to the way my birthday is being celebrated, write letters of love and hope to soldiers serving away from home or to captives or political prisoners through the Amnesty International program.
2. Visit someone in a nursing home. You don't have to know them personally. They just need to know that someone cares about them.
3. Instead of giving your children a lot of gifts you can't afford and they don't need, spend time with them. Take them to church. Tell them the story of my birth. Hold them in your arms and remind them that I love them. Pick someone that has hurt you in the past and forgive him or her.
4. Did you know that someone in your town will attempt to take their own life this season because they feel so alone and hopeless? Since you don't know who that person is, try giving everyone you meet a warm smile; it could make the difference.
5. Instead of nit picking about what the retailer in your town calls the holiday, be patient with the people who work there. Give them a warm smile and a kind word. Even if they aren't allowed to wish you a "Merry Christmas" that doesn't keep you from wishing them one.
6. If you really want to make a difference, support a missionary – especially one who takes My love and Good News to those who have never heard My name.
7. Here's a good one. There are individuals and whole families in your town who not only will have no "Christmas" tree, but neither will they have any presents to give or receive. If you don't know them, buy some food and a few gifts and give them to the Burnaby Christmas Bureau or some other charity which believes in me and they will make the delivery for you.
8. Finally, if you want to make a statement about your belief in and loyalty to Me, then behave like a Christian. Don't do things in secret that you wouldn't do in My presence. Let people know by your actions that you are one of mine.

Don't forget; I am God's Son and can take care of myself. Just love Me and do what I have told you to do. I'll take care of all the rest. Check out the list above and get to work; time is short. I'll help you, but the ball is now in your court. And do have a most blessed Christmas with all those whom you love and remember.

I LOVE YOU,

JESUS

Moderator's Advent Message

Dear Friends,

When my thoughts turn to Advent, I often recall a remarkable worship service on a first Sunday of Advent many years ago..At the time, good friends Bob and Gwynneth Wallace were serving my congregation and encouraging us all, especially children and youth, to bring our artistic gifts into worship leadership.

From the balcony on that particular Sunday morning, a young man's clear voice floated gently above the congregation, piercing the quiet as we gathered for worship. The opening of Godspell's 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord' filled the air. It was quiet at first, then the volume rose. A rock band composed of three more teenaged boys added the harmony of electric guitars, then the driving percussion of the drums. In moments we had moved from a gentle invitation to a lively, participation. We were on our feet, swaying and clapping, ready to prepare the way of the Lord with our whole being!

I pray that your experience of Advent will build with joy, expectation and preparation for the power of what's to come. As Advent begins I am meeting with church leaders from around the world in Durban, South Africa at the United Nations climate change talks. I see our presence here, among other things, as an Advent action and witness. We are encouraging national leaders of our global community to take steps to mitigate the effects of global warming and prevent further threat to God's creation, and in so doing to help prepare the way of the Lord. And if, at times, we feel that our efforts resemble "a voice crying in the wilderness" - well, that too is an Advent task. But we know we are not alone.

There are many ways to make straight the path and prepare the way of the Lord. Your solidarity in both prayer and action during the climate change talks is one.

<http://www.wondercafe.ca/blogs/moderator-mardi-tindal/moderator-mardi-tindals-blog-changing-climate-gaining-momentum>

<http://www.wondercafe.ca/blogs/moderator-mardi-tindal/moderator-mardi-tindals-blog-road-durban-what%E2%80%94love-requires>

I mention a few others in this Advent video message which is available for use in Sunday worship if you wish.

<http://www.united-church.ca/communications/news/moderator/111122>

<http://www.united-church.ca/fr/communications/news/moderator/111122>

In what ways are you and your community 'preparing the way of the Lord' and making way for new life?

May all that you do to mark this start of the church year be experienced as God's blessing in your own life, and in the lives of others.

May we all rise to our feet with the energy required to prepare the way of the Lord.

In the abundant joy of Christ,

Moderator,

Mardi Tindal



On December 3rd about 30 people turned out for a pot-luck supper and presentation by Tony and Peggy W. Peggy prepared two traditional African dishes and Tony spoke about the Water School project that he is involved with. This project brings clean water to villages in Kenya, Uganda and Haiti, using low-tech solar disinfection and education.

WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST

All women of DLUC are invited!

Saturday, Dec. 17 at 9:00 am in Janice C's home.

Please sign up on the sheet in the hall to attend and to bring food.

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](mailto:jimyoun@shaw.ca)

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Submission Deadline Sunday, March 4, 2011