

# LAKESHORE LINES

Free – and worth every cent!

## Rev. Tracy's Last Service

Deer Lake bade Rev. Tracy Fairfield a heartfelt and tearful farewell on Sunday February 26<sup>th</sup>. Both Tracy's message to the children ("See ya later, alligator") and her sermon ("Hello, Goodbye") spoke to the inevitability of change, which often requires us to say goodbye. In addition to the regular choir anthem, the service included two additional musical offerings, one by Lani B and family members, the other by members of the choir. In her Release of Covenant, Tracy was presented with a number of gifts by members of the congregation (including the children) and by Rev. Shannon Tennant, representing Presbytery.



The service was followed by a delicious potluck lunch and a very clever and equally tasty rainbow batter cake. Farewell, Tracy. As the cake says, our thanks and love go 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

## Inside this issue

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| The Path Ahead of Us              | 2 |
| Committing to a Vibrant Future    | 3 |
| 2017 Committee List               | 4 |
| Christmas Cantata and Movie Night | 5 |
| The Most Complex Place on Earth   | 6 |
| Outreach                          | 7 |
| Being a Self Advocate             | 8 |

And much more!

## Reverend Brian Burke Is Here!!

By Peggy W



It is with open arms we welcome the Reverend Brian Burke to our community here at Deer Lake. Brian is serving as our part-time minister from now until the end of May. His time will be spent leading us in worship with inspiring sermons, thoughtful prayers and reflections with a spiritual foundation and sincere care of our community.

Brian brings much to our congregation. He was born in Montreal and moved to Vancouver as a child. Raised as a Catholic, he left the church as a young adult after deciding it wasn't for him. A big part of his working life, prior to going into the ministry was spent in Ottawa amongst the politicals of that grand city, including Ian Waddell and Margaret Mitchell.

*Continued on page 2*

# The Path Ahead of Us

By Gary H

Much has happened over the last several months including the resignation of Rev Tracy, the hiring of a Communications consultant, the Annual Congregational Meeting, the appointment of Rev Brian Burke as our part-time minister and snowfalls like I've never seen in Burnaby before. While I want to touch on a couple of those topics in this note, I want to start by thanking the unsung heroes who toil away in the background doing the work of our church. For many, it is business as usual – something needs



Kathy Davies addresses the congregation at the ACM

*Continued from page 1*

He was first introduced to the United Church in 1980 which lead him to making a decision to go into the ministry around 10 years later. Having gone back and forth between Ottawa and Vancouver a few times, he established himself firmly here to begin his studies at the Vancouver School of Theology. South Hill United Church in Vancouver sponsored him during his studies which culminated in 1996.

Brian's ministry has touched several congregations beginning in southern Saskatchewan. After 3 years there, Brian heard from his only sister that she was very ill in Vancouver, and ended his time there to return to Vancouver and spend time with her. His ministry in this area has included First United, Vancouver, St. John's United, Vancouver, and Trinity United in Port Coquitlam. Brian retired in 2014, and has had various assignments at different churches and has just begun participating in the First United Listening Ministry.

Brian is a voracious reader, enjoying lots of non-fiction. He and his partner, Bill Siksay, live in north Burnaby where he struggles with looking after his vast library of books. He dreams of a big room in a log cabin that will house his well-loved books on shelves in a style which honours each title.

We appreciate Brian serving our congregation during Lent, Easter, and the glories of spring. Feel free to pass along your personal welcome to him.

to be done and they spring to it. For others, recent events have caused them to do a ton more work than they expected when they signed up for their role on the board. At the risk of missing someone I won't name names here but, as past chair of the board, I do want to thank all of you for your work! You know who you are – so thank you very much!

There are two things that I want to touch on in this note – our recent Annual Congregational Meeting (ACM) and the hiring of Amanda Fenton.

Our ACM was long but I believe everyone was engaged, and a few very important issues were covered off.

Kathy Davies, B.C. Conference Minister for the Presbyteries of Fraser and Westminster explained the Process for Interim Ministry. An Interim Minister has been specially trained to work with congregations in the calling of a permanent minister. The Board graciously accepted Kathy Davies' offer to work with others at Conference in selecting the best person available to work with us. Interim Minister placements are announced in late March or early April and ours will start to work with us on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Kathy explained that a Transition Team will serve as liaisons to our congregation, working closely with the Interim Minister and two presbytery representatives, through the two-year process to call our next minister.

She also lead us through a Circle Activity to list the Key Goals that attendees believe are most important in the near future. These Key Goals will be used in the initial meetings to give the Transition Team, Interim Minister and the two Presbytery representatives some insight into our congregational needs.

The other significant outcome from the ACM was the decision to appoint a part-time minister for three months effective March 1<sup>st</sup>. The budget, as presented in the annual report, included provision for four months of pulpit supply from March 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. Agreeing to accept the proposal to hire a part-time minister for 3 months meant that an additional expense of \$9,000 would be incurred and bring the budgeted deficit to \$28,000 – rather than the \$19,000 as listed in the annual report. There were passionate arguments for and against the decision to increase the deficit. In the end, the vote was 75% in favour of hiring a part-time minister for the period March 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>. Many of us were already familiar with Rev Brian Burke and at the time of this writing have already been treated to two of his thought-provoking sermons. Welcome back Brian!

In late fall, Deer Lake was successful in our application for a ProVision grant from our Presbytery for consultancy services to help revitalize our church. On November 29<sup>th</sup>, many of us met with Amanda Fenton to see if there was a fit between her skills and our needs. Amanda is an experienced consultant in group process facilitation, group communication, and transitional work. After our meeting, Amanda provided us with a proposal, which centred on building healthy practices for conversation and being in community together.

*Continued on page 3*

*Continued from page 2*

On January 10<sup>th</sup> the Board agreed to accept Amanda's proposal to help in our ministerial transition. On February 7<sup>th</sup> Amanda and Kathy Davies facilitated a session with the Board opening up the conversation, acknowledging tensions and issues felt within the congregation, and allowing a diversity of voices to be heard. We used a circle process with guidelines to help hold us in respectful speaking and listening: speak with intention and respect, listen with curiosity and compassion, respect the talking piece, share airtime, honour confidentiality, and pause from time to time.

Amanda's process didn't magically remove all the tension that was present. However, I believe most of those in attendance agreed that our first session was a good step in learning better communication practices. We will need those skills to constructively work together in the common goal of developing Deer Lake's ministry.

Circle has its origin when our ancestors gathered around a fire – originally for food, warmth and protection. They quickly discovered that the circle could help design social order by serving as a democratic space where each person present is equal to the next. A circle is a place where we can look each other in the eye, lean in and listen, and ensure that all voices are heard equally.

Two more sessions are planned in which Amanda will introduce us to the theory and practice of the Circle Way and later help us apply those practices in a Decision-making Workshop. As Amanda notes on the Circle Way website, "I love working with groups who want to re-claim a better way of meeting and working together, engaging hearts and minds."

Yes, it is a departure from our normal decision making practices; however, many of our members have stated that change from what we've done in the past is needed. In addition to teaching us how to use the circle practice, Amanda believes that she will also be able to facilitate us in developing guidelines for better governance. An example could be giving committees the authority to freely make decisions within their mandate, with the understanding that they are accountable for their decisions and actions to the board.

The proposed dates for our workshops are the morning of Saturday April 22<sup>nd</sup> and evening of Monday May 8<sup>th</sup>. We will have a sign-up sheet in the hall for the 30 available spaces. Preference will be given to the Transition Team members, Board members (anyone on a committee) and members of our congregation – in that order of priority. If you are interested, please ensure you get your name onto the list as quickly as you can.

Amanda has also agreed to consult with the Transition Team and our soon-to-be-announced Interim Minister as they begin their work to call our next minister.

Yes, much has happened in the last few months and a good deal of it is very exciting. I hope you too will be reinvigorated in the life of our church. If you want to get involved, there are still a few spots available on our committees.

*(See circle guidelines and committee list on page 4.)*

## Committing to a Vibrant Future

*By Dana J*

As the new Board Chair, I wanted to write something for the newsletter that would provide good communication, be inspiring, promote a willingness to commit to our community of faith and encourage everyone to approach our future with open hearts and minds.

A lot has happened at Deer Lake United over the last few months. Rev. Tracy's resignation resulted in some congregants feeling angry, disappointed, sad and confused. Communication challenges within our Board structure, between committees and throughout the congregation have been highlighted, as were mistrust and exclusiveness. I believe that the work we are doing with Amanda Fenton, Consultant for Group Process Facilitation and Design, will result in healing and growth, learning to respect our differences, and to speak and listen to each other with respect and acceptance.

Rev. Tracy's last Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, was a wonderful worship service filled with love, music and celebration. I personally appreciated that her sermons for the last few months with us were relevant and spoke directly to the very issues we were dealing with, and I thank her for that leadership. The next leg of our journey is to welcome Rev. Brian Burke who is joining us as our part-time Minister for the three months of March, April and May. Pulpit supply is being planned for the month of June, our Interim Minister will be appointed shortly, and will begin their two-year appointment on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Meanwhile, the Nominating Committee will have presented the members from Deer Lake United who have agreed to be on our Transition Team: Elizabeth C, Garry F, Linda P, Trish S and Bruce V. The Presbytery representatives will be Rev. Dave Anderson and Rev. Leeanne Shiels. At the ACM, the activity was to come up with Key Goals to guide us forward, and the information was collected and collated as follows:

**Long term Goal:** *To grow a healthy and sustainable congregation at Deer Lake United Church focused on community, families, and all ages, that is open and welcoming.*

### **Interim Ministry Key Goals:**

1. *To re-new and re-engage the Vision, Mission and Values at Deer Lake United;*
2. *To build conflict resolution and interpersonal communication skills within the congregation*
  - a. *Rebuilding trust*
  - b. *Improving capacity to communicate differences with each other*
  - c. *Ability to give and receive feedback with respect*
3. *Clarification and Education*
  - a. *Improve communication*
  - b. *Clarify roles and responsibilities, engage leadership capacity*
  - c. *Clear, transparent leadership and decision making structures*
  - d. *Understanding, communicating and living into healthy and effective authority and accountability practices.*

*Continued on page 4*

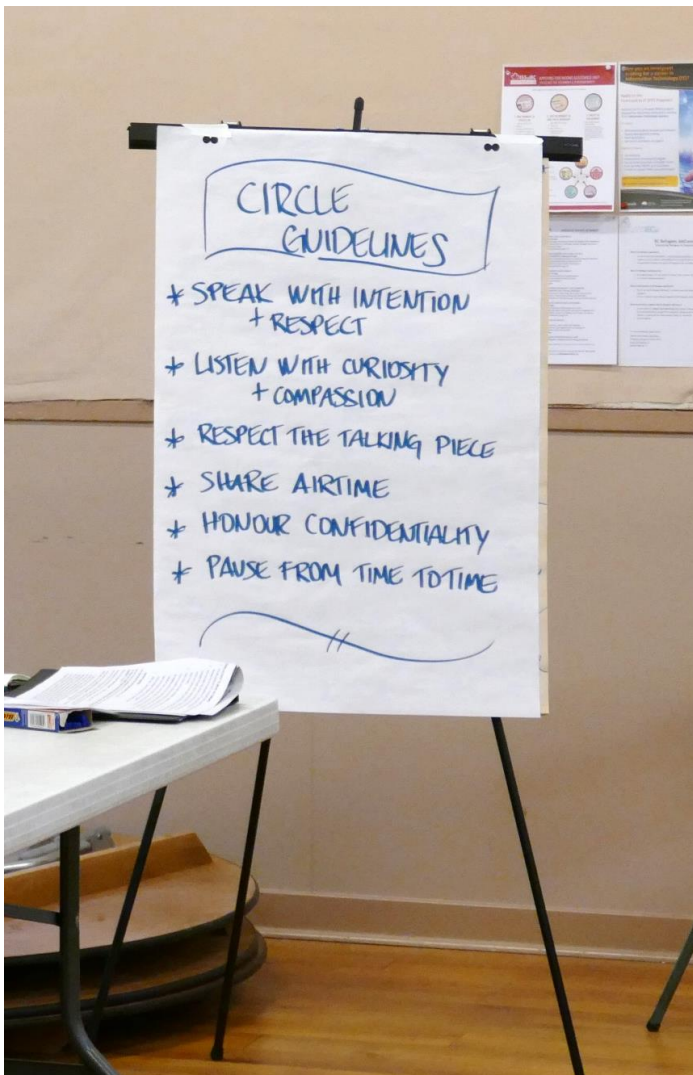
*Continued from page 3*

*Building on Deer Lake United's strengths as a congregation – strong commitment to do the work of rebuilding, deepening our faith in ways that are relevant to our lives, supporting each other in pastoral care, continuing to engage in community outreach, and re-connecting to the joy of connecting in community with each other.*

The Transition Team's job will be to work with the Interim Minister to develop and expand on these goals, figure out who we are, and what we are looking for in a new minister, with the expectation of calling a new minister to begin July 1, 2019.

Many hands make light work – that is what my Nanny (Grandma) always said. Now is the time for each of us to make a commitment – whether it's financial, physical, time or talent, all of these are important. We have an amazing congregation – I think that the possibilities are exciting. Rev. Brian's first sermon was on the Cost of Discipleship – what does that mean to each of us?

What commitment do you bring into the room? What are the gifts you hold that have not been brought fully into the world? Many hands make light work – I look forward to working alongside each of you - we are not alone – thanks be to God.



## 2017 COMMITTEE LIST

### BOARD EXECUTIVE

**Chair:** Dana J  
**Vice-Chair:** VACANT  
**Past Chair:** Gary H  
**Secretary:** VACANT  
**Treasurer:** Cathy M

**Envelope Secretary:** Kathy R

\*Plus one representative from each ministry committee

### BOARD APPOINTED COMMITTEES:

#### MINISTRY & PERSONNEL

**Chair:** Peggy W  
 Larry J, David V

#### TRUSTEES

**Chair:** Laurie S  
 Bob C, Janice C, Steve McL

### OTHER COMMITTEES:

#### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**Chair:** VACANT  
 Gloria F, Sharon H, Elizabeth C, Jean J, Elizabeth W

#### FINANCE

**Chair:** Cathy M  
 Mary C, Tony W, Kathy R, Bruce C

#### OUTREACH

**Co-Chairs:** Phyllis S & Marj R  
 Linda Wm Paul Am Claire Sm Bruce VanL, Janet A

#### PASTORAL CARE

**Chair:** Shirley McG  
 Mary Cm Kathy R,  
 Trish S (Sunshine Committee)

#### STEWARDS

**Chair:** Paul A  
 Rick M, Bob C, Arnie B, Bill P,  
 Don S (Tenant Liaison)

#### WORSHIP

**Chair:** VACANT  
 Mary C, Janice C, Dana J, Shirley McG,  
 Joanne A (Liturgical Arts)

#### COMMUNICATIONS

**Chair:** Garry F  
 Tony W

#### LIBRARY, PHOTOGRAPHS & RECORDS

Ruth S, Coleen McK

#### PRESBYTERY REPRESENTATIVE

Janice C

## Christmas Cantata

During Advent the children at Deer Lake normally put on a Christmas pageant. This past Advent was different. There was no pageant. Instead, on December 16<sup>th</sup>, the fourth Sunday of Advent, the Deer Lake choir presented a Christmas Cantata, "Night of the Father's Love" by Pepper Choplin.

This eight-part musical collection skillfully guides the listener through the Christmas story, employing a diverse array of musical styles that beautifully express the essence of Christmas. While some in the congregation doubtless missed the traditional pageant, everyone was captivated by the choir's superb rendering, skillfully directed by Rebecca T. We can hope that the enthusiastic response from the congregation may encourage a repeat performance



Rebecca directs the choir in "Night of the Father's Love"

## Movie Night

The choir's annual fund-raiser concert occurred on February 24<sup>th</sup> this year. The theme was music from the movies and the performers didn't disappoint. The usual mix of full choir, small group and solo acts kept the audience entertained.

This year's guest performers were Lani B singing "Part of Your World" from *The Little Mermaid* and young Antonette, Cole, Domina, Lea and Rizal singing "Do Re Mi" from *The Sound of Music*. As usual, the men garnered the majority (though not all) of the laughter as they performed "At the Hop" from *American Graffiti* and "Greased Lightning" from *Grease*. Best Costume goes to Kathryn S, singing "Hello, Young Lovers" from *The King and I*.

Intermission offered a silent auction and the usual selection of delectable desserts. The concert raised \$1,760 and the auction another \$1206. Thank-you to everyone who contributed.



## The Most Complex Place on Earth – India

By Tony W

Do you know the 3 musts for an Indian car, Madam?"

"No, I don't, Madan, what are they?" said Kathy R.

"Good horn, good brakes, and good luck, Madam!" replied Madan, laughing.

It is just after midnight and we are driving from Delhi airport to our hotel, the Metropolitan, in central Delhi, after a 30 hour trip from Vancouver. It is Thursday Feb 9<sup>th</sup> – the party is Peggy, me, Doug and Kathy. It is a big road, 4 lanes each way, but Indian ingenuity manages 7 lines of traffic. The main rule of the road is that if you leave a square centimeter of space in front of your vehicle, everyone leans on their horn. Trucks are only allowed into the city between 11pm and 8am, so many of the vehicles are trucks. The air is sulphurous and thick. Traffic police enforce traffic lights, so they are mostly obeyed. As the green light the opposite way turns to red, the cars at the front, anticipating their change to green, start honking, like an orchestra tuning up before the arrival of the maestro. But in the apparent chaos, there are rules of conduct and no one gets upset. It's just what you do in Delhi. But a driver has to be aware – the most unpredictable are the tuk tuks, which can suddenly change direction or lane, or do a complete U-turn. Occasionally a vehicle goes flying across a red light at full speed. There are also a lot of motor bikes and scooters, which seem to have a rule that the minimum number of passengers must be 4 people (less if you are transporting live goats). We count 18 people in a small jeep.

We made it to our hotel, and the next day went by train (a great experience) to see the Taj Mahal in Agra (definitely the world's most beautiful building). Then we headed south by plane and car, first to Mysore and then to Nagarhole National Park, where we saw leopards, crocodiles and elephants. Southern India is completely different from the north – different languages and writing scripts, and less poverty, pollution and garbage. Altogether more relaxed and civilized - some parts could be in southern Europe. And beautiful vegetables and fruit growing everywhere – India has over a billion people, but has more than enough food!

The last part of our trip was in the southern coastal state of Kerala – a magic land of lakes, mountains, beaches, fish, spices, coconuts and rice. This is an account of one amazing place we stayed:

Pepper Trail is a 200 acre estate of coffee, tea and pepper plants, and has been in Anand's family since 1932. He is about 35, and is managing the estate, and adding features to expand it into a boutique tourist stay. He took us to our rooms – easily the most unique place I have ever stayed. We walked up a wooden, swaying bridge, 40 feet up into the forest canopy to our house, built on 2 giant jackfruit trees. One tree went through our bedroom and the other went through the bathroom. We had a balcony too!

"It may be noisy in the morning, because monkeys will jump on your roof" explained Anand. In fact the monkeys were



everywhere and when we walked up and down the bridge, we often had to shoo them away. I went into the bathroom, and 2 faces hung from a rope, looking in the bathroom window.

"They are very curious – don't leave anything outside, or they will steal it. Recently, a lady washed her underwear and hung it out to dry, and the next thing we saw was a monkey high in the trees, wearing them." In fact the next day, we woke up and looked out on our balcony, and in the night, they had dismantled a deck chair.

The dining room was a large, open hardwood platform/room looking out over the tall forest, with coffee plants on the forest floor. The bird sounds were amazing – especially around dawn. We had lunch. All the food was Keralan style, and at every meal we had at least 6 dishes, many with a coconut sauce base. Also fish, beans, pineapple, tomatoes, yoghurt and many vegetables we didn't know. Finally Anand showed us an article in the June 2016 edition of Conde Nast magazine, which named Pepper Trail as one of the 10 most imaginative new hotels in the world. We all heartily agreed.



Hijinks during the Italian Dinner and Video Night held on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Forty-five people enjoyed a delicious meal and a showing of the Deer Lake 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary video and a video of a recent trip to South America by a group of Deer Lakers. \$916 was raised

## Greetings from the OUTREACH COMMITTEE

By Phyllis S

We have had a great last few months (Snow permitting!!!) We hosted the Epiphany Lunch, and even though we didn't have a great turnout, we had a great time.

We have a new member on the Outreach Committee this year, Janet Ahmelich, and we welcome her to our group. New, and open, minds are always a bonus.

We sent two of our members, Claire Stegen and Phyllis Slater, to the Provincial Foodsafe Program and they passed with flying colours! From that course they learned that food kept out for two hours is inedible; so we are looking for new ways to keep our food hot (or cold). We are also putting in coloured cutting boards that can only be used for specific foods. I.e. black board for meat products, red board for cutting NUT free items, and large plastic board for gluten free items. We do not want to have any cross-contamination. So, those working in the kitchen, please be cautious.

Keep your calendars marked for Sandwich making on the following dates; March 22, April 26 and May 24<sup>th</sup>. All hands on deck for Noon on these dates. We make 70 lunches on the friendliest bag line you'll ever find.

And also mark April 9<sup>th</sup> and Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> on your calendars for Lunch on the Run. Feel free to bring as many guests as you want, but please advise us the numbers.

A big thank you to Maureen Hill, who delivers our donations for 1<sup>st</sup> United.

If anyone would like more information on our programs – please talk to our committee members.



## Our Syrian Family – One Year Later

By Garry F

A year ago I wrote about Gloria's and my new adventure with a Syrian refugee family that we had just started mentoring. I'm happy to report that fifteen months after we met them, our official term of mentorship has ended, but they have now embraced us as part of their extended family.

We get together with them every Monday evening and occasionally in-between. During our Monday evening gatherings we discuss what has happened during the previous week, touch on current events, and explain aspects of Canadian culture. We challenge each of them to talk to us as best they can, and we end each evening with a word game of some sort: Bingo, Hangman, Charades, etc.

The two youngest children, seven-year-old Abed Alrahman and nine-year-old Israa are real chatter-boxes. Israa is very competitive. Twelve-year-old Alaa is bright but quiet. Those three speak English almost like natives. Fifteen-year-old Abed Alhamid is athletic and the joker in the group. He's deaf in one ear, so that has hampered his English somewhat. Eighteen-year-old Mohamad's English has improved from almost nothing to very good; he's become the chief interpreter for the family. Twenty-year-old Asmaa speaks English almost as well as Mohamad. She's very outgoing. Her older sister, Doaa, is sweet and quiet. She needs a bit more encouragement to practice her English. Zakia, the mother, is improving but, as expected, struggling more than the children. Khaled, the father, has the greatest difficulty with English. This is to be expected, though, since he was illiterate in Syria. Now, he is learning not only to speak English, but also to read and write it. Ironically, he will be more literate in English than Arabic!

Grandmother is blind and very quiet. She joins us for our visits but just sits and smiles. She and Grandfather, who just turned 93, will never speak English. They are from another world and another time. He has a great sense of humour, though. I once commented on his very young wife. (She's 21 years his junior.)

*Continued on page 8*

## In Loving Memory of Alice Stephenson

We are mourning the loss of Alice who died on March 3, 2016. Alice was a much loved and respected Office Administrator at Deer Lake for many years, until her retirement. She worked with Rev. D. Martyn, Rev. N. Parker, Rev. J. Cawley, Rev. A. Khalema and Rev. S. Turnbrook. Alice's grace and wonderful sense of humour helped the ministers and the congregation to weather many celebrations as well as some tough times.. She always had time for a quick chat a cup of coffee and reassuring words. Alice was responsible for creating the "Bulletin Folding" group since she loved to visit but also had work to do!

Alice retired to Mission with her husband John where her chronic asthma finally was relieved. She love to travel to her cabin at Deka Lake and to spend time with her family. Unfortunately Alice suffered from Alzheimer's disease which robbed her of much of her happy retirement.

Alice is survived by her husband of 50 years, John, her daughters Karen (Tony) and Kirsten (Chris), and her much-loved grandchildren Laura, Jordan, Rhys and Gavin. Alice was always so excited when a visit was coming! She also leaves her "chosen" children, Bradley (Mary) and Brittany (Matt and Payton) with whom she shared so much. We all felt like we knew her children well, as Alice loved to talk about them and their many adventures. Many photographs were shared!

A celebration of Alice's wonderful life will be held at her home church, St. Aiden's Presbyterian at 1320 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, New Westminster, on Saturday, March 25th at 1:00 PM.

Online condolences may be sent to the family by visiting: [www.bakerviewcrematorium.com](http://www.bakerviewcrematorium.com).

## Being a Self Advocate



Hello My name is Gerry Juzenas and I am proud to say that I am a Self Advocate. I have been involved with the self-advocate movement for over 40 years!! Boy have I seen changes.

The first organization that I become involved with was called Burnaby Peoples First in 1975. Then, in 1989 I become involved with the Lower Mainland Base Services Society and I was involved with them for ten years, even serving as the Vice President of the organization.

I was also involved with the Self Advocate Caucus and I did so well that I was elected to four terms as a board member which spanned 8 years.

I continue to be involved organizations that are still providing services to this day, such as the Simon Fraser Society for community inclusion and Burnaby Association of Community Inclusion (BACI).

One of the most important things that I got to participate in with these organizations were the conferences! More than once I got to go to Portland Oregon.

I have attended other conferences where people came from all over the province. This is what I would like to pass on to the younger generation. - If given the opportunity to go to a meeting – Take it!! There are many things that you can learn about advocacy and things that change people's lives. You can even work together to make government accountable – I have been involved with helping the people coming out of Woodlands Institutions and fighting to get our bus passes. Conferences are also a good way to learn how to become a leader.

You have to be responsible and can learn about various organizations and how they operate. Most importantly, you get to meet very nice people who can often become your friends.



## Upcoming Events At and Around Deer Lake United Church

### Good Friday Service

Friday April 14<sup>th</sup> at 10.30 am Cliff Avenue United Church

### Easter Sunday Service

Sunday April 16<sup>th</sup> at 10.30am

### Jazz for Uganda

April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7pm at Brentwood Presbyterian Church

### Women's Retreat

May 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> at Riverdell

### Men's Retreat

May 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> at Jo's in Parkesville

### *Continued from page 7*

He smiled, struggled up off the sofa, hobbled across the room, sat down beside her and put his arm around her, grinning from ear to ear. She shooed him off, to everyone's delight – including his. The other week he told me (through Mohamad) that I should learn to speak Arabic. I told him I will learn as much Arabic as he learns English. He laughed. That was the end of that. Humour can unite people of different ages and different cultures.

It isn't all laughs, though. They desperately miss their family and friends. Last week they showed us a video on their cell phone of a stream of refugees on foot and in trucks passing through Grandfather's bombed-out village as they flee from the cities into the "free country". All we could do was shake our heads and echo their grief – although I took the opportunity to reinforce the benefits of Canadian democracy.

Life is slowly improving for our Syrian family. They have settled into the community and, for the most part, don't require our help to do their day-to-day business. There are definite financial challenges, though, and employment is still a ways off. However, Khaled has retiled our kitchen backsplash and has another residential tiling job or two in the offing. The three older children volunteer at BASES, and I have no doubt they will be working before long. The future looks hopeful for them – far more so than that of their friends and family left behind.

## Submissions

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

newsletter@dluc.ca

### Next Issue: June 2017

Submission Deadline Sunday, June 4, 2017