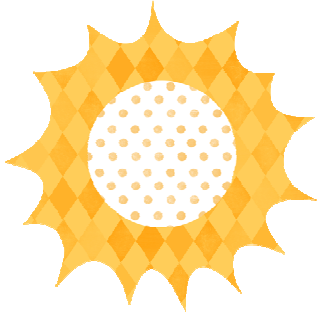


# Yellowknife United Church Summer Newsletter 2009

## Summertime and the living is ....?



I woke up early this morning – way too early, but that's normal for this time of year when the sky is never dark. I was humming “Summertime and the living is easy”. I'm pretty sure it wasn't the weather that led me to my musical reflection, except that the long days and predominantly sunny skies are at least a hint of what we might expect in the hopefully not too distant future. I expect instead that the music running through my head came from memory of summers past. I love Yellowknife summers especially when a cool spring like the one we are having this year does its part in keeping the bug population at bay. I expect also that Yellowknife summers are so enjoyable because of the weather we are required to deal with in the winter months.

I spent a lot of time in my twenties hiking in the Rocky Mountain national and provincial parks. During those many hiking trips I always felt that the beauty of a particular mountain vista was directly proportional to how difficult the hike was to get there. Of course, there's a certain logic to that – better views can be found at higher elevations, and higher elevations make for more arduous hiking, but I suspect that the sheer amount of energy exerted to get to a wonderful panorama helped to make the beauty seem even more profound. I know there were times when I certainly hoped that was the case. You see there were tour companies that offered heli-hiking for people who had the money to go to high places without putting in the effort of walking or climbing there. I consoled myself by imagining that the people who went to the same place I did by riding in a helicopter for fifteen minutes compared to my four or five hour trek just would not experience the view in the same majestic way. That's sort of how I feel about NWT summers. They are so nice because the winters are so long and so cold.

There's a theological principle to be explored here. Is it true that the harder things are to achieve the more deeply they are appreciated? I expect a lot of us would agree with that. But that common sense is turned on its head at least a couple of times that I can name in the Bible. There's the parable of the workers in the vineyard. They were all paid the same regardless of whether they worked all day or just the last hour. Jesus used the story as an object lesson for several different points. It was a story about the abundance of God, and a story about justice – what was promised was given, and what was needed was provided. It was a story about grace.

Paul writes about grace a lot. His general theme is that grace is available to everyone regardless of circumstance. Assuredly it's a difficult message for dedicated, hard working church folks, just like it was for the older brother when the prodigal son returned to a party held in his honour, after years of idle and wasteful living. The faithful, home body older brother was just taken for granted and for anybody who has been in that situation, we know what that can feel like!

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German pastor and theologian, in his ground-breaking book “The Cost of Discipleship” acknowledged the issues on the other side of the equation. He warned of “cheap grace”. Grace is grace and it comes without being earned by hard work, but grace – once experienced, demands discipleship. In other words, grace is offered freely, but its very presence in our lives demands much of us.

And so once again, the tension that so often describes the biblical message appears. Perhaps I should be humming - “Summertime and the living ain't easy”. I'm not sure that was the mood George Gershwin wanted us to experience when he wrote the music. I think he might well have imagined the sense of sabbatical that summer offers to us, especially us northern dwellers, a chance to rest and re-create.

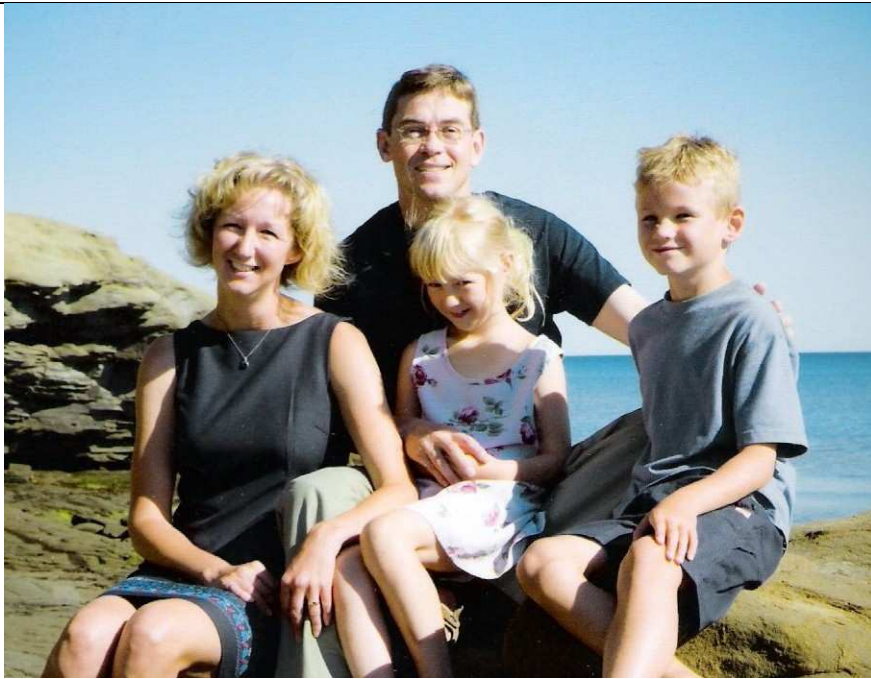
But I don't want us to lose the tension that is offered between the call to “observe sabbath” and the call to work faithfully – which so clearly means “justly” in so much of what Jesus had to say to us about walking in God's way.

I suspect there's something to be said for “you get what you pay for” as the marketing people so often want to tell us, but I also take delight in the upside down, there is so such a thing as a free lunch, message of grace which comes to us in the biblical story.

So enjoy your summer and the rest and chance for sabbath it offers, but also be aware of the call to faithful living and the question of whether there really ever can be such a thing as time off.

Peter Chynoweth, Minister

## SAYING GOOD-BYE



Susan Chisholm and her husband Dr. Michael Young, with their children Simon and Claire, are moving to Halifax, Nova Scotia this summer, where Michael has accepted a position with the Dalhousie University Hospital. Susan is the Director of the Yellowknife United Church choir as well as music teacher in two elementary schools in Yellowknife. Michael is a pediatrician who practices in the Stanton Hospital. His medical practice in Northern Canada has taken him to many communities of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Claire is nine years old and she will cherish the friends she has made in Yellowknife since she was two years old. Mieke Stewart was her first babysitter and is a great friend. They do special

things together like painting flower pots. Claire is happily anticipating playing with her cousins who live near Halifax with their horses, donkeys, cats and rabbits. Simon, eleven years old, says he is looking forward to living near his grandparents and he's *really* looking forward to his Dad being around home more!

### Reflection with Susan Chisholm, Director of Yellowknife United Church Choir

Susan is Director of the Yellowknife United Church choir. She has led the worship services in music for seven years. In her years directing the choir, Susan says the choir is amazing at coming together to make one voice out of many separate voices. Susan said, "Something remarkable happens when we sing together. As an experience it is soothing, healing, energizing and intimate."

Susan thinks that there is an amalgam between the words and the music. This occurs when she selects music that contains one sentence or a single phrase that shapes the whole message of the Sunday service and captures what people in the congregation might carry with them from worship into the week ahead. As choir director, Susan was focused on how worship feels to others. She was very conscious of who was in the congregation and what they needed from worship, who was in the choir and why they were there. Susan laughed and said, "I feel so responsible for everyone having a good experience in church through the music we sing."

Working in Africa for four years in the mid-nineties is connected to everything Susan and Michael do, and the way they do it. Susan was thoughtful when she said, "It's a degree of humanity, sensitivity to those around you that you carry with you always. It arose out of a need to understand the African people around us and what they have to live with and suffer through."

*The choir members feel the loss of Susan's inspiring direction and they wish Susan and her family all the best as they move east. The choir thanks Susan for the gift of showing them how to love one another and her gift of joy.*

## Lorne Gushue – Caring Canadian Award

On Tuesday, June 16, church and community members met in the church auditorium to celebrate one of our own when Lorne Gushue was formally presented with the Governor Generals' Caring Canadian Award, which honors selfless volunteerism.

Commissioner Tony Whitford presented the award, consisting of a certificate and lapel pin, on behalf of the Governor General, Her Excellency the Right Honorable Michaëlle Jean. Lorne is one of only four people from the NWT to have received this award – another is our very own Jan Stirling. The award was established in 1996 to, according to the Governor General's web site, "recognize the fine example set by those special volunteers whose compassion and charitableness are such a part of the Canadian character."

Various groups that Lorne has been involved with over the years collaborated in the celebration. The NWT Human Rights Commission sent two staff members to talk about Lorne's involvement on their Board of Directors, our church choir sang a special anthem, a Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary member read a letter of congratulations from the District Director, the Yellowknife Choral Society performed a song with a familiar tune to special lyrics about Lorne and a former Board member of OutNorth gave a wonderful, humorous and touching speech about Lorne's time on their Board of Directors. Reverend Peter Chynoweth made the whole event go smoothly by serving as emcee.

After the formal program, attendees enjoyed refreshments, visiting and a slide show featuring pictures of Lorne involved in voluntary activities. It was a wonderful event and a good opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of one of our church members with the wider community.



## Good to Eat Box Gardens

These are the gardeners who have planted boxes around the Northern United Place for residents and passersby to enjoy the blossoming flowers throughout the summer as well as snipping some of the herbs for use in the preparation of their meals. Thank you to both Karen and Elaine for the fine work they do in the leadership of the youth of Yellowknife United Church.



The youth group pictured from left to right with their leader Karen Hamre, Paige Elkin, Johanna Stewart, Martha Hamre, Stuart Hamre, Seamus Daly and leader Elaine Stewart.

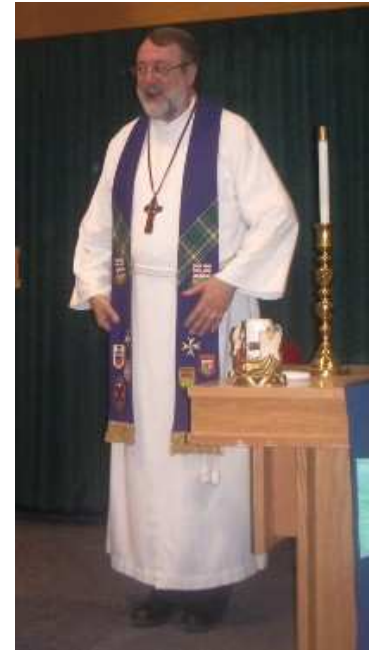
On May 24, Reverend Peter Chynoweth was installed as Alberta and Northwest Conference President in Sherwood Park, Alberta. The duties of this office are two fold: pastoral and administrative. There are expectations as a Spiritual leader and this means that Peter will be invited to many anniversaries, ordinations and special events in the nine presbyteries which take in northeastern British Columbia, Alberta, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories which includes Hay River as well as Yellowknife. Peter's excellent technical abilities will enable him to stay connected and the travel that Peter will do associated with his position will enable him to brag about Yellowknife United Church and the people within this community. Peter is honoured to be the first Northern president. Part of the discerning for Peter was that people voted for him to hold this two year term of office because he represents the people of the North.

Peter believes that even though Yellowknife United Church is geographically distant from the other presbyteries it is well connected to the national church. He cited Peter Short, a former minister of Yellowknife United Church who is a past moderator; and Nora Sanders, a former member of the Yellowknife United Church who is currently the general secretary at the General Council office, as examples of some of the connections Yellowknife United has with the national church.

"One reason I got elected was to spread a little northern light" said Peter.



Following the service of installation of Reverend Peter Chynoweth as President of Alberta and Northwest Conference, he was presented with the symbols of office by the outgoing president, Reverend Tom Sawyer. These four symbols are the cane which symbolizes both a support and a shepherds crook to gather in those who stray into danger. The gavel and platform symbolize the administrative role of office. The stole represents his priestly role in attending to the spiritual needs of the people. The banner bearing the symbols of all of the regions of Alberta and Northwest Conference is hung in the home congregation where the president attends worship. As parishioners of Yellowknife United Church we will be able to see the banner regularly during worship services and be reminded of the honour Peter has brought to our community of worship and of his service to the greater vision of the United Church of Canada.



### In Appreciation of Sean Daly

Who combined joy and humour with learning for the children of Yellowknife United Church school? Sean Daly, the outgoing superintendent of the Sunday school. Sean was superintendent for the past three years and was on the Christian Education Committee for four years prior to his time as superintendent. Most recently, the Yellowknife United Church Sunday school has been using *Seasons of the Spirit* for the curriculum. Sean brought a variation to the teaching of Sunday school for the teachers who volunteered on Sunday mornings. He introduced the idea of teachers teaching for a series of three Sundays thus changing a familiar recruitment of teachers for a full term or year of Sunday school. This enabled more members of the congregation to be involved in the important task of teaching the young members of the congregation as well as allowing for teachers themselves to participate in worship services for their own spiritual growth and nourishment. Some of the joys for Sean in doing this work of the church were seeing the children grow and assisting the adults who decided to step up to the plate and teach the children. Sean hopes that his work in Yellowknife United Church Sunday school has been vital and that he and the teachers have provided a foundation for faith questions in the children of the Sunday school. Sean brought many of his gifts as a practicing artist to the children: visual art, music, drama and photography. Regarding symbolism and ritual that were important for Sean in starting Sunday school sessions each week, Sean said "I used the candle as the symbol of the light of Christ being with and within us and that you could take this light from this place of worship into the week ahead."



*Sunday School Recognition*

**A Celtic Night - With food from the Cornish Coast**  
(a.k.a. Dinner and Music by “Hughie And The Boys”)

On Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, eight women were treated like royalty for an entire evening! This event was the result of a hard-fought battle at the Silent Auction back last October when bidders went against each other for the privilege of being spoiled by “Hughie And The Boys” – Hugh Latimer, Brad Hall, Randy Wedel, Sean Daly and Peter Chynoweth. The eight lucky winners were: Sue Ashton, Marlene Bonnell, Susan Chisholm, Sharon Chynoweth, Cynthia Creed, Bernice Dillman, Marg Henderson and Jan Stirling .

The women were flagged down on the street and guided to valet parking (Sean), escorted up the walk to be welcomed by the doorman (Randy) and then greeted by the butler (Brad) who took their coats. The women were offered a fine beverage (a choice of white or red fermented grapes or cranberry punch) by server extraordinaire, Hughie. Appetizers soon followed (prawn dip with English water wafers, shredded wheat crackers with cheese and cucumber wedges and cheddar cheese puffs). And we’d only just begun...

The meal itself was spectacular – Potato, leek and mushroom soup (hold the leeks) to die for, Cornish game hens, hazelnut cranberry stuffing, steamed asparagus with Hollandaise sauce, dinner rolls and “creamery butter”. Just when we thought we couldn’t eat another thing, along came dessert – Berry Lemon Curd Trifle. Bravo to Chef Pierre (the other one...with the Cornish last name) and Chef Sean helped ably by the other boys!

Oh – and the music! Hughie put together a beautiful program of songs with a Celtic theme. From “Molly Malone” and “Galway Bay” to “Skye Boat Song” and “When Irish Eyes Are Smiling” – the selections were wonderful. When the last note of “Danny Boy” was sung, the lace hankies appeared en-masse, the tears flowed and the sobbing practically drowned out the incredible bass and tenor voices. Brad’s Scottish accent while singing Loch Lomond will forever remain in our hearts – wow!

Beyond the music and the food, the evening was one of respect, grace, and companionship. Watching “The Boys” lovingly work together to treat us to such an elegant evening and the opportunity for the women to get to know each other better – not to mention laugh ourselves silly – was an added bonus.

And to quote one of the dinner guests “Being given a flower to take home at the end of the evening was a lovely touch. You guys really thought of everything!” Thank You Hughie! And Thank You Boys!



## It's Not too Late

If you were not able to accept a request to serve on a committee within the church for the coming year before the AGM on May 31 the opportunity is still there to get involved. The position of Superintendent of Sunday school is still vacant and it would be a terrific opportunity for a couple of people in the congregation to get together and take this on. Remember how we make a promise during Baptism to help parents raise their child in the love of God? Here is the opening to put this into action.

### 2009 Nominations Committee Report

#### Executive

Chair Donna Allen  
 Vice Chair Ian Moir  
 Treasurer Terrilynn Hayden  
 Recording Secretary Jeannette Hall

#### Christian Development Committee

Youth Rep Vacant  
 Scout Rep Vacant  
 SS Co-Super. Vacant  
 Sandy Little  
 Denise Drouin  
 Gwyneth Davis

#### CLAM

Barb Paquin  
 Jan Stirling  
 Sharon Chynoweth  
 Gillian Moir  
 Joyce Caines/Melanie Dumont (newsletter)  
 Kathy Burns (Observer)

#### M&P

Margaret Melhorn  
 Cappy Elkin  
 Lindsay Chiasson  
 Randy Wedel

#### Outreach

Nancy Trotter  
 Elizabeth Tamblyn  
 Joanna Wilson  
 Brenda Tittlemier  
 Jeannette Hall (Meals on Wheels)

#### Trustees

Margaret Melhorn  
 Larry Elkin  
 John Soderberg  
 Bruce Graney

#### Property & Maintenance

Bruce Graney  
 Chris Dumont  
 Ron Chiasson  
 Stuart Oldham

#### Congregational Meetings

Chair John Stewart  
 Alternate Lloyd Henderson  
 Secretary Kathy Burns

#### Nominating Committee

Lloyd Henderson  
 Bruce Graney  
 Joyce Caines

#### Worship

Kathy Burns  
 Elaine Stewart  
 Janice Brown Daly  
 Lorne Gushue  
 Lloyd Henderson

#### Stewardship

Marg Henderson  
 Terrilynn Hayden  
 Sue Ashton  
 Marta Moir

#### Presbytery Reps

Kathy Burns  
 Barb Paquin (alternate)

### FOR INFORMATION

#### NWT Community Service Board

Larry Elkin  
 Gary MacDougall  
 Randy Wedel  
 John Soderberg  
 Marg Henderson  
 Gordon Hamre

#### United Church Women (UCW)

Chair Rotating  
 Secretary Jeannette Hall  
 Treasurer Marg Henderson



*Harvey & Susan*



*Jennifer & Elaine*



*Karen & Quinlyn*

### **Secret Pals Revealed**

Who says penmanship is dead? The revival of making friends through messages penned in ink has been going on in Yellowknife United Church since February. The post mistress Cookie matched up some of the youth of Yellowknife United Church with some of the adult members of the congregation. Bluenoser, Fairy Queen, Soccer Hawk, Ook, pipdog99, funky monkey and pickle person are just a few of the code names that successfully disguised the true identities of all of these members of the secret pals within the Yellowknife congregation. Following the worship service on Sunday June 14 the secret pals found their writing partners and shared a picnic with them. Pals got to talk to one another and share their surprise when they discovered who they were writing to. Adults and youth talked over lunch and learned a lot more about each other than they could after regular Sunday worship service or in joint group activities within the church. It is the beginning of ongoing relationships that emerged from writing throughout a long Yellowknife winter. A special thanks to Gillian Moir and Marg Henderson for making door to door deliveries at times through the winter when Cookie was unable to, and to Stuart Oldham for the beautiful mailbox!



*Lorne & Ida*



*Cookie at the Luncheon*





*Seamus & Marie*



*Emily & Sean*



*Martha & Denise*

**Secret Pals Revealed (continued)**



*Joyce & Stuart*



*Robert & Peter*

### Northern United Place

Northern United Place was conceived, developed and constructed as the vision and initiative of the Yellowknife United Church in the early 1970's spearheaded by the Church's Minister at the time, the Reverend Jim Ormiston. The letters Patent for the non-profit established for the operation and management of NUP outlined the basic purpose;

- To provide accommodation for among others, the poor, needy, elderly, handicapped, recent arrivals, visitors and transients in Yellowknife; and
- To provide food and beverages and meeting places and other facilities for among others, religions, educational, charitable and voluntary organizations.

Since the completion of construction in 1976, Northern United Place has met many needs in Yellowknife consistent with this mandate.

There are currently eighty-four apartments that provide affordable housing for seniors, singles, families and persons with disabilities. A broad mix of people from across the NWT, Canada and new Canadians call NUP home. The multi-purpose area of the building on floors 1 and 2 in tower A including the auditorium, kitchen and several meeting rooms continue to meet a broad range of space and food preparation needs in Yellowknife for recreational, social, cultural, educational and spiritual purposes for many volunteer and non-profit organizations and meetings for various Government departments and private companies. The auditorium is the place of worship for Yellowknife United Church on Sundays. The Yellowknife Campus of Aurora College is located on the first three floors of tower B and the third floor of the tower A. The remaining seven floors in tower A are used as a student residence for Aurora College students from NWT communities.

Major Capital improvements are being made to Northern United Place. A significant upgrade of the elevators has just been completed. During the summer, new exterior siding will be installed on the first three floors of NUP, the remaining section of the roof that has not been replaced will be completed and the victaulic water lines will be replaced. This work will create some inconveniences during the construction period, but when completed, will improve the efficiency of the building and provide added comfort to our tenants and users alike.

The present Board for the Corporation has nine Directors. Six Directors are members of the Yellowknife United Church elected by the members of the Corporation. All Yellowknife United Church members who are on the roll of the Yellowknife United Church are members of the Corporation. The other three Directors are selected from the Yellowknife community at large and are approved by the Board.

The Board is served by a strong management team who are both responsible for the day to day operation and management of NUP and the necessary planning and research associated with the long-term viability of the building.

Through the combined efforts of the Board, the management team, and the United Church members who are on the roll, the initial objectives for NUP established back in 1976 continue to be met as effectively as possible.

### Editors' Epilogue

Compiling the summer 2009 issue of the Yellowknife United Church newsletter brought me face to face with many people who are or who have been leaders within Yellowknife United Church. Sean Daly, the outgoing Sunday school Superintendent mentioned Reverend Liz Richards when he spoke about Liz laying the ground work for the *Seasons of the Spirit* curriculum and her other influences in the education of the children. In conversation with Susan Chisholm, Liz Richards came up again when Susan spoke openly about her troubled times reintegrating back home in Canada after her life changing experiences serving in Africa. As Susan wrestled with issues of Faith, Liz gently but firmly supported Susan in her struggle. When I talked with Peter Chynoweth he referred to Reverend Peter Short and Nora Sanders both former members of Yellowknife United Church who work or have worked within the national office of the United Church of Canada. These weavings of people and spirit and people in spirit made me realize that wherever we serve we are one body. And as sad as it is to say goodbye to people who have held positions within our smaller collective, we need to know that they will be serving where the wind takes them and we can rejoice in that. There is joy in celebrating the honour of those among us called to serve in new positions whether in the national operation of the United Church or in healing the sick and needy in other parts of Canada and the world. We are one body in Christ and there is truly *Seasons of the Spirit*.

Joyce Caines