

# Yellowknife United Church

## Winter 2013 Newsletter

### Connecting Some Dots

I've been serving Yellowknife United Church long enough and have had the opportunity to say some things enough times that people might be beginning to grasp a little bit of my theological framework. This was recently confirmed for me when someone mentioned the word "connections" and made reference to the fact that it would appeal to me.

Of course it is true. I remember a class in seminary when we were asked in a systematic theology (doesn't that term just make you want to go out and study theology! Not!) to provide a metaphor for God. The wide-ranging answers were anything but systematic, but they revealed a good deal of thought and spirit. I suppose it makes some sense that the metaphor I remember best is the one that I shared in that class. I described the concept of God as a gossamer web that spread itself all around the world.

That description of God continues to have some appeal to me, but like all metaphors it does not fit completely. What I do like about it is the image of something like fishing net made of spider web sized threads connecting the knots or dots in an unending web of connection.

That was all reaffirmed for me in the four months of my sabbatical.

Shortly after I returned to work in December I met with members of the Ministry and Personnel Committee to give a report on the research, thought, travel and insights that had occurred for me during my four months. Unusual for me, I did not write a prose report. Instead I simply wrote a list of words and phrases and used it to tell the (hour and a half!) story of my sabbatical, sometimes in chronological order and sometimes in an order that was suggested by a particular theme running through the whole four months of reading and reflection. At the end of my report, during which I was obviously quite engaged, excited and energetic, I was asked how it would be to return to my work in pastoral ministry after having been so stimulated by the things I had learned and discovered during the four months of study.

The answer came right to me. I responded that one of the most important things I had learned was that a good portion of my calling by God was to explain the connections I had made between my affinity and aptitude for technology and my interest in theology. In other words, I was not put here simply to study the things I studied on my sabbatical, nor was I put here to let those things go. I was put here to interpret, explain and make connections between the two.

In the past I have described my two path calling in life as a quest for my holy grail – the intersection of technology and theology. Much of the time it has seemed like a two path calling – almost parallel so that the paths never intersected, or so far from each other that they seemed to travel through different landscape.

I was only a couple of weeks into the four months of sabbatical when I made the connection – which the topic I was in the midst of studying was, the answer to my quest! No longer did it seem like I was grasping at something that was just out of reach, I had it in my grasp and now I could spend time analyzing, studying and interpreting.

In all that process, God was at work – opening windows and doors to more insights into how the topic I was studying was connecting to other things that were originally way beyond my expectations or consideration.

The Season of Lent has typically been something like a time of sabbatical where the topic of study is our inner selves. As we travel through this season as individuals and connect in many different ways as a community, what connections will help us to see the gossamer web of God's presence in new and different ways?

Peter Chynoweth

### From the 'Chair' of the Board

Hello Everyone. I trust the extra six minutes plus per day of daylight is putting a brighter smile on your faces as we move into the northern winter's fun time. Some of you may not be aware of a few news items of interest.

Most recently, the Community Services Corporation informed us that they are going to re-carpet the church floor and stage. Hopefully that will create a more welcoming atmosphere in terms of appearances. Of course, the real welcoming comes from your friendly presence.

The other item of note is the remaining major enhancement to the church manse. The new siding and insulation was added in 2011 and this year the final upgrade will take place, the renovation of the kitchen this fall. I am sure that any of you who have had the opportunity to take a serious look at the kitchen will agree the project is needed. The downside of this news is we will have to raise somewhere in the order of ten to thirteen thousand dollars.

Getting people to part with their hard earned dollars is never easy, however, not impossible. The trick is to do it in a way that they derive some enjoyment from the exercise.

So, on behalf of the Church Board I invite you to organize your most creative and inspiring thoughts into workable suggestions as to how we can enjoy this exercise.

One thing I have observed about this community is that there is a tremendous diversity of character and talent. I am looking forward to a synaptic tsunami.

Bruce Lewis

### United Church Women (UCW) News

The Yellowknife United Church Women (UCW) would like extend a big thank you to the whole congregation for supporting our Annual Christmas Tea & Bake Sale. Thank you to all those who donated supplies and/or helped out in the making of the antipasto and pepper jelly.

We're pleased to report that just over \$3,000 was raised. This money will be used to help support the life and work of the church locally, nationally and internationally.

Thanks also to those who came out to help with the kitchen clean-up on February 18<sup>th</sup>. Lots of helpers made the clean-up so much easier.

There are two more activities in our calendar this year. We invite anyone who's interested to come out and join us:

Apr. 27/13      8:00 a.m. - Garage Sale (UCW sells muffins, bannock, cookies and coffee)

June 3/13      6:30 p.m. - Year-end pot luck and penny auction (great opportunity for food, fellowship and fun for the women in the congregation), hosted by Margaret Melhorn

# ACTIVITIES OF YELLOWKNIFE UNITED CHURCH

## Christmas Pageant



Baby Jesus receiving the gifts from the Wise Men



The cast of the Christmas Pageant

## Shrove Tuesday



Brad at the grill on Shrove Tuesday

Ally and Dad, Dean MacInnis dining on pancakes



Sara and her mom, Kathryn enjoying pancakes at the Shrove Tuesday dinner

## **Temperatures warming, daylight returning ... the annual spring garage sale coming!**

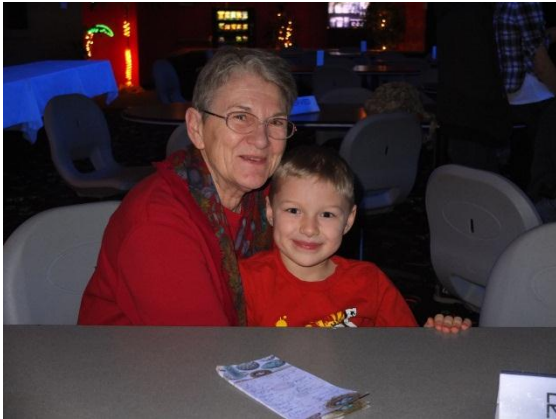
At this time of year many of us begin to feel a bit more 'spring' in our step and start to think about spring cleaning. Remember those unwanted, unused, un-needed items could be another person's treasure.

Our annual garage sale will be Saturday, April 27th. It's a great opportunity to clear items from your house and has the added benefit of helping the church. It is one of our major fundraisers for the year. In 2012, we raised \$2188, which was used towards local church operations.

So, start collecting items and we hope you will be able to help us on April 26th (evening set-up) and/or April 27th (morning sale). If you would like more information, please call Marg Henderson at 873-4428.



An Evening of Bowling



Grandma and Harrison having a cuddle



Barb and June enjoying the bowling fun



Mackenzie watching for a strike



The Royalty of Bowling:  
King Emery and Queen Kay



Bowling pros Larry  
and Harrison show  
off their skills

## Meet the Stewardship Committee



Stewardship Committee Members: Marta Moir, Susan Ashton, Terrilyn Hayden, Peter Chynoweth, Marg Henderson and Denis Bergevin.

The **Stewardship Committee** is responsible for supporting and nurturing the mission of the church and maintaining the overall financial affairs. As part of our financial responsibilities, the committee establishes the yearly financial budget which is approved by the Official Board and the Congregation at the yearly financial meeting. The committee then monitors revenue and expenses, arranges for the collection and deposit of Sunday offerings, and issues statements to envelope holders.

Each year the revenue projections include money from fund-raising. Over the years this has been done in various ways: the spring garage sale, the city clean-up, the dessert auction at the fall supper, a talent auction and a memorial hymn sing. This year we hosted a dinner theater on March 2nd.

All the best to Denis Bergevin who has been a member of the Stewardship Committee and the church treasurer for the past three years. Denis is leaving Yellowknife for a new job in Ottawa, we thank him for his contribution to the Stewardship Committee and to the life and work of our church during his time with us. We wish he and his wife, Lynn, well as they settle in Ottawa.

Our thanks to everyone who has supported Stewardship in their fun fundraising efforts. We look forward to your help and participation with future events such as the garage sale on April 27th and at the city clean-up in May. If you are interested in joining our committee, please contact Marg Henderson (873-4428 or [margh@theedge.ca](mailto:margh@theedge.ca)).

## Sabbatical Thank Yous

Last fall, our Minister, Rev. Peter Chynoweth took a four-month sabbatical, under the United Church of Canada's sabbatical policy that allows Ministers who have been in a pastoral charge for at least five years to take time for "reflection, recreation and revitalization". Peter's sabbatical covered the period from the beginning of August to the end of November. One of the requirements of the policy is that the Minister provided a report once the sabbatical is concluded. We have been able to follow Peter's activities and learnings on his blog ([opensourcespiritseeker.wordpress.com](http://opensourcespiritseeker.wordpress.com)) and on January 29, 2013 at Peter's presentation to a very interested audience which sparked a lively debate over coffee and chocolate chip cookies.

Yellowknife United Church had very large shoes to fill while Peter was on leave, but with the contributions of many, from both within and outside our congregation, we made it through! A very large thank you goes to everyone who helped out. In particular, we would like to thank:

- Those who provided us with meaningful and inspiring worship including:
  - Very Rev. Peter Short for leading our worship during September and October, and to both Peter and Sue Short for their contribution to the life of our church community during their time in Yellowknife. We hope they enjoyed their brief return to Yellowknife United Church as much as we enjoyed their presence,
  - Donna Allen / UCW, Karen Wilford, Elaine Stewart and the Youth Group for leading worship in the month of November,
  - Andrea Booth, musician, and
  - The Worship Committee for working with all the leaders to ensure Yellowknife United Church continued to experience meaningful, inspiring worship.
  
- Those who volunteered to provide pastoral care when it was needed:
  - Pastor Kirk Tastad, Holy Family Lutheran Church
  - Padre Bastien Leclerc, DND Chaplain
  - Congregational pastoral care team of Cappy Elkin, Susan Ashton, Lloyd Henderson and Nancy Trotter
  
- Those who contributed in other ways:
  - Rev. Bev Brazier of Whitehorse United Church, who represented Northern Lights Presbytery as our Pastoral Charge Supervisor. Bev sat in on our Official Board meetings by conference call, and we awarded her bonus points for her patience as we coped with the technology.
  - Brenda Tittlemeier who took on responsibility for keeping the Yellowknife United Church website updated.
  - Community Life and Membership Committee for coordinating the pastoral care team and encouraging our congregation to be particularly attentive to the needs of fellow church members during the period of Peter's sabbatical.
  - Gwyneth Davis, our Church Administrator, for helping make sure that as little as possible fell through the proverbial cracks.
  - Those who provided housing to Peter and Sue Short during their stay, in the form of housesitting opportunities; Teresa and Wally Watson, Elizabeth and Jamie Brace, and Andrea Czarnecki and Blair Van Metre.

The length of this list shows how many people were needed to fill those shoes!

Finally, I'd like to thank my colleagues on the Ministry and Personnel Committee for their insight as we worked with Peter Chynoweth to help him discern his sabbatical objectives.

Margaret Melhorn  
Chair, Ministry and Personnel Committee

## Somali Night

On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Refugee Sponsorship Committee along with our refugee Abdi Adow Aden's sister, Sadia, and a number of great volunteers provided a delicious Somali themed meal and a fun educational evening. Over 140 people attended and the evening raised over \$3000.00.

The funds were raised to assist Yellowknife United Church and Sadia in our joint efforts to co-sponsor Abdi, a Somali, who is in a refugee camp in Malta. It is our responsibility to raise enough money to support Abdi for one year after he arrives in Yellowknife.

The completed paper work to sponsor Abdi was sent to Citizenship and Immigration Canada by the United Church of Canada in December 2012. We have recently heard that the process to have Abdi come to Yellowknife could take up to 2 years.

In the meantime, we can send letters and cards of encouragement to Abdi. If you would like to make a donation or would like to send a card to Abdi please see any member of the Refugee Sponsorship Committee. Donations can also be placed in the collection plate labelled Refugee Sponsorship.

A big thank you to all those who helped make Somali Night such a success.

The Refugee Sponsorship Committee

Nancy Trotter  
Joanna Wilson  
Suzanne Ngo Likaa  
Barb Paquin



The hosts of the Somali dinner

Serving up the feast



The community enjoying  
a taste of Somalia