

Pot-Luck Helps Support Roof

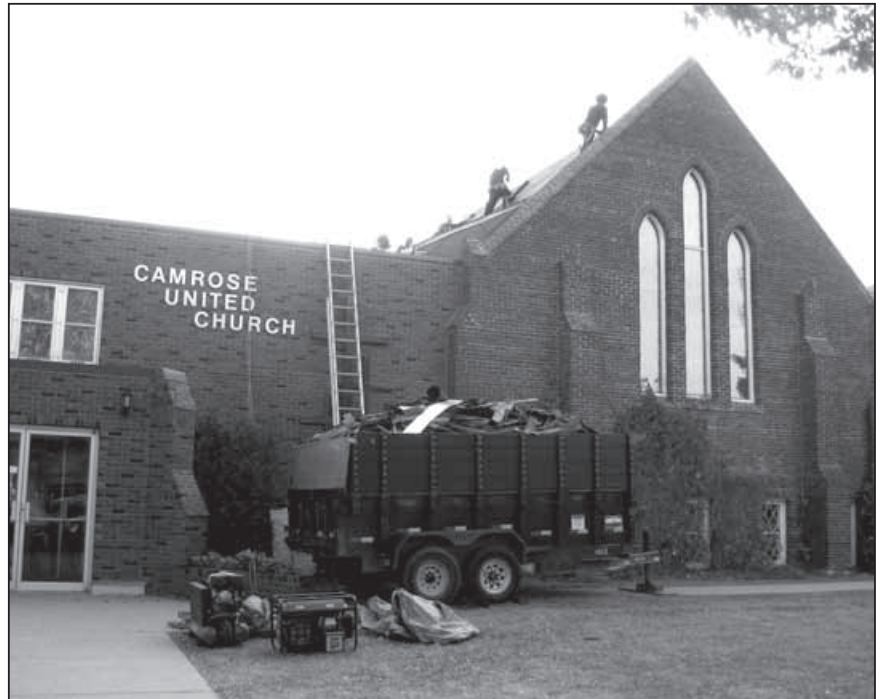
Sometimes it pays to do something on the spur of the moment.

On Sunday, August 30, at Camrose United Church, Alex and Bonnie Oliver announced at coffee after church that they would host a Saskatchewan Pot-luck in their back yard on the following Thursday at 5:00 PM. Those who came must take a salad or a dessert for pot-luck and the Olivers would supply hamburgers, buns, tea, coffee, and lemonade.

How many would be interested? A preliminary hand count showed that about 25 to 30 people would attend. The gathering would also provide the opportunity to donate to the Roofing Fund for Camrose United Church.

Alex assured all there that everyone was welcome because there were only two types of people in the world – those who come from Saskatchewan and those who wish they'd come from Saskatchewan. Therefore, that included everyone in the church!

By word of mouth the numbers grew so that by 5:15 PM on Thursday a total of 68 people assembled in Olivers' back yard.



The crew who helped included Jean Martens and her mother Bessie Darrach as well as Penny and Jim Sawchyn, Jim and Sharon Anderson, and Gerry and Cathy Kennedy. The Sawchyns also provided the wieners and coffee.

The real Saskatchewanians taught the rest to sing The Saskatchewan Hymn at which

point Alex declared that all assembled were now honoured Saskatchewanians.

The weather was perfect and the fellowship fantastic.

And, by the way, a total of \$5,196.00 was collected and donated to the Roofing Fund!

– Alex Oliver

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President's Pen — Northern Light

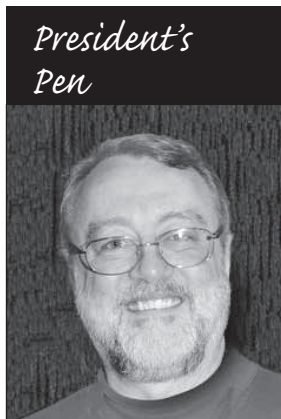
Thank God for Brian Wren!

When I sat down to scribe my first "Northern Light" column, it was mid-July. Days were long, in fact at that time of year at 62° North, the sky never gets dark. "Northern Light" seemed an apt title. But when you read these words it will be November. The light is dwindling, heading to the winter solstice on The Longest Night. Not only are the days getting short but November is the time when whatever summer heat was absorbed by the deep, clear waters of Great Slave Lake starts coming back out of the water in the form of fog and cloud. November days are not only dark but often overcast. It's not a light-filled time of year. "Northern Light" seems more a dream than a reality.

Which brings me back to Brian Wren.

In case you don't know that name let me invite you on a little "Voices United Treasure Hunt." Look Brian up in the index of your hymn book. You will discover that the treasure lies in the beautiful, masterful words of a very creative hymn writer.

Gospel may mean "good news", but it also often means "unexpected news" — the upside-down, last-is-first kind of news that typified Jesus' stories and message. Brian Wren has a grasp on this understanding of the gospel. As a result, we find words like this: "Joyful is the Dark".



Peter Chynoweth

In a faith culture which so often equates light with insight, wisdom and finding our way, we need the upside down idea that darkness can be joyful. Northerners need to hear that kind of gospel, especially in November.

We are a people who dare to dream dreams. Most of my dreams take place in the darkness of night, during a dream filled sleep, or perhaps a sleepless mulling of options and actions. Samuel was called in the night and in so doing set an example of wisdom from the young. Jacob wrestled with God in the darkness at a night time encampment by the river Jabbok.

How many times have I read or heard of other people who discerned the call of God at night in the dark in a voice speaking to them in a dream, or in eyes closed contemplation? How many times have we formulated a plan, or devised a way forward by "sleeping on it" and letting the wisdom of God speak to us in the blanket wrap of darkness?

I would love to hear your stories:
anw-northernlight.blogspot.com

Blessings . . .

— Peter Chynoweth

Naramata Centre Winter Session for Young Adults 2010

10 January 2010

Winter Session is an opportunity for people aged 18 – 25 to spend time exploring the values and spirit that give life focus and foundation. Join other young adults for a time away for learning about self, about building healthy relationships, about living with integrity, about your spiritual life. Come to Winter Session.

A foundational program in Naramata Centre's strong

tradition of experiential learning, Winter Session is a unique three-month-long living and learning experience, offered every second winter. Scholarship information is included in the application materials. Please call or email Allison Rennie at 250-496-5751 ext 210, or arennie@naramatacentre.net for conversation about this program to see if it is a fit for you.

— Allison Rennie



Sacred Space at the Naramata Centre —
Labyrinth from above

Garneau Community Church Bread Run

Just over two years ago Garneau United Church and Knox Metropolitan United Church were approached by Millwoods United Church to start a much needed Bread Run in our area (south side Edmonton). Betty Marlin (retired Diaconal Minister, Garneau United Church) and Lynda Gow (recently retired Diaconal Minister, Knox-Metropolitan) discussed the impact of food insecurity on residents with low incomes, those who were between jobs, and those who were no longer able to find work of any kind. How were they making ends meet? In December 2007 the three churches began a Bread Run that provided food to a small group of five to seven families each Saturday morning.

How does the Bread Run work? Preparations for the Bread Run begin mid week. On Friday afternoons volunteers collect donations from the downtown Food Bank. We purchase additional protein sources and personal items as necessary. The Wild Earth Bakery, Riverbend Safeway, Italian Centre – Southside, and Sobey's – University generously provide baked goods. Cooked foods from the Ashbourne (seniors' residence affiliated with Garneau United) dining room and special events add variety to the selection. Volunteers lay out the tables and serve participants the containers of cooked food, canned goods, produce, and baked goods. On September 12 the Bread Run at Garneau United served 56 people; that food augmented the week's meals for 36 adults and 20 children.

The primary goals of the Bread Run have been: to provide access to healthy food sources; to augment what participants can obtain independently; and to provide a source of social support and pastoral care over morning coffee and snacks. However, this spring Bread Run volunteers decided that it was time to move beyond handouts. We realized that our clients need a resource **that will enable them to help each other, develop new skills, and access nutritious meals at a reasonable cost.** We envision a collective kitchen to be the next step.

We have received a project grant from the United Church of Canada. Current Bread Run participants are interested in being involved in the new venture. We are working on the details of location and additional support now.

Photo: Helen Madill



Shin Hee Park assembles juice for Bread Run

The 2009/2010 Bread Run volunteers include: Betty Marlin, John Wright, Barry Roberts, Ellen Raitt, Fran Jordan, Basil Henderson, Shin Hee Park (Garneau), Pat Barnes, Heather Buckie, Indira Gajraj, Shantie McGrandles, Kevin & Christine Gue, Nancy Kerr, Helen & John Madill, and Kathie Reith (Knox-Metropolitan) and Terry Kaasa, Linda Vensland, Lea Halinen, Teresa Bellinger, Jean Gillespe, Jenny Peetom-Heida, Laura and Bishu Fras (St. Paul's).

— *Helen Madill, Betty Marlin, & Nancy Kerr*

A Vision of Service: Early Women in the Alberta Church

When people of the Congregational Union, the Methodists and many of the Presbyterians united in 1925 to form the United Church of Canada, they brought a great vision to the work of the church. They believed that in unity they could be more effective in worshipping God and in doing the work of the church in caring for each other and for those less fortunate. Though seldom credited, the women of the church, both wives of missionaries and ministers, those sent by the Woman's Missionary Society (WMS), and the many working locally had lived their faith throughout the west by establishing congregations, teaching, nursing, providing care in community and working for social reform.

Missionary and historian Rev. John Maclean wrote, in *Vanguards of Canada* in 1918, that, "It seemed a strange thing for a woman to found the first Protestant Mission in Southern Alberta, but that honor was reserved for Miss Barratt (sic), the mission teacher, whom John McDougall sent, with one of his daughters as companion, to Fort Macleod."

Though the first unmarried woman to work for the Methodist Church in what is now Alberta, Elizabeth Barrett, who arrived at Whitefish Lake in 1875, was not the first. Margaret Sinclair, Jessie Steinhauer and the women of the McDougall family were already here.

Soon both Methodists and Presbyterians had established schools and hospitals. Women worked at the orphanage at Morley, school homes at Wahstao, Kolokreeka, Radway and Vegreville, hospitals in Lamont, Bonnyville, Grande Prairie and Vegreville. Red Deer College for Girls, established in 1910, later moved to Edmonton as Westminster Ladies

College, "A High Class Residential and Day School for Girls and Young Women." Alberta College had female faculty members in some programs.

Several Women's Guilds (Edmonton, Calgary, Camrose, Lethbridge and Wetaskiwin) assisted Edmonton's Robertson College, raising funds to furnish and maintain the residence and holding fruit and vegetable showers each fall to stretch the food budget.

Preserves and pickles were welcome! Mrs. W.H. Graham wrote in a 1925 history of the Methodist Woman's Missionary Society, that much work was accomplished because, "The very truest of Christian women are giving themselves in daily service."

The Congregationalists too had strong women in their midst. In a 1912 letter of resignation, Astor Schrag assured the incoming minister that, "You already have among you Miss Hatty Houle, one of our best and ablest workers, both in Sunday school and in the Christian Endeavour Society."

Mrs. George Bremner wrote in 1915 that, "Some day someone may give to these noble women the place in history they deserve, and pen a worthy tribute to their devotion and self-sacrifice."

The Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA) and the Alberta and Northwest Conference Archives hope to do just that. In collaboration, they will present a tribute to the women of the United Church and its predecessor denominations with a public display at the PAA in Edmonton from late February through March and April. More information on dates will be available in the new year.

— Gayle Simonson



PR1975.387/415
Jennie Robinson, a W.M.S. [Woman's Missionary Society] worker in Edmonton, helped the police woman. [191?] Credit: Provincial Archives of Alberta / United Church of Canada ANWC Archives

Stavely United Church 100th Anniversary

On Sunday, August 9th, 2009 — 100 years to the day, Stavely United Church celebrated its 100th anniversary. The weather was perfect. With 125 plus people in attendance to help the congregation celebrate this special milestone, extra seating was needed — we were thrilled!

Rev. Henry V. Friesen, our minister, opened the service with prayer and the call to worship. One of the seven member planning committee had written 25 vignettes about people and events in our 100 year history. These were read, wherever possible, by descendants of the people the stories or events were about. Interspersed were several hymns taken from the 1930 Hymnal.

A solo, sung by Rev. Jim Roberts, a former minister from 1959 – 1962, brought back memories to people who had known him at that time. Our organist, with another very talented pianist, performed two lovely duets in addition to the hymns. The service ended with Rev. Friesen pronouncing the benediction. Following the church service, we shared in a pot luck lunch



Photo: Bill Andrus

Ottalie Nelson, Stavely United congregant for over 70 years, cuts the 100th anniversary cake.

of roast beef, ham and an amazing array of salads.

The day continued with music, song and the reading of letters of greetings and congratulation from former ministers, Presbytery and the town of Stavely. Several former ministers were in attendance and spoke of fond memories they had of their time in Stavely United Church. The day of celebration, fellowship and memories was captured in a commemorative DVD and in photo for all to enjoy.

As the committee was finishing the clean up, we all agreed that the celebration had been a huge success, and would

be remembered for a long time. Some of us felt that although it had been well worth the planning and hard work ~ we would be tempted to let others plan the 200th!

Thanks be to God for His presence over these past 100 years and may He be with us for many more to come.

— Linda Emann

Consort United Church Celebrate 100 years

On June 7, 2009 Knox United Church celebrated one hundred years of faith community. The first history of the formation of a formal church in Consort is recorded in a diary of William Buzza in 1909, grandfather and great grandfather of current members of the church.

The early church grew out of the loneliness of pioneer life; the need for community and a sharing of spiritual life through the good and the bad times. These first gatherings predate the village of Consort.

To commemorate the occasion, a bronze plaque was dedicated "to the Glory of God and all peoples of this faith community from 1909 to 2009", a special service was held with Rev. Susan Bowyer, a former member of the church, as guest speaker, followed by a bountiful potluck dinner and reminiscing by former clergy and visiting members.

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Renewing Lay Worship Leaders in Northern Lights Presbytery

Spirit of Peace United in Spirit River, Alberta, hosted a second (we hope it remains “annual”) renewal event for the licensed Lay Worship leaders of Northern Lights Presbytery in June. A dozen participants learned and shared for their roles in supporting their congregations in pulpit supply and during pulpit vacancies.

Emily Sylvester led a session on using stories as sermons, Marilyn Carroll on stories for toddlers, babies and adults in services and elsewhere. Gayle Williams led us in shared favourites and new music from *More Voices*. Carolyn Smith and Myrna Zahara coached us through making cross pendants from horseshoe nails. This last part may not have been intended as a sheer comedy of errors and humility, but it sure was for us trying to make them! We laughed so hard our tummies hurt.

Our Presbytery is vast. Most of us live and volunteer many miles from each other. As one of the participants wrote later, “I appreciate seeing the people I took the Lay Worship Leadership training with; it’s the only time I see them”. Learning and laughing together helps renew us as we were for our original program.

Thank you in particular to Martha Dawson who brought Presbytery’s support to our event, to Myrna



Back Row: Myrna Zahara, Eileen Gerrits, Brenda Bailey, Gayle Borgedahl, Harold Imes, Elie Robinson

Front Row: Carolyn Smith, Gayle Williams, Sheila Reinders, Emily Sylvester

Zahara who organized everything, and prepared some mighty fine meals too, to Spirit of Peace who lent us a welcoming space, and the presenters who shared their talents so generously.

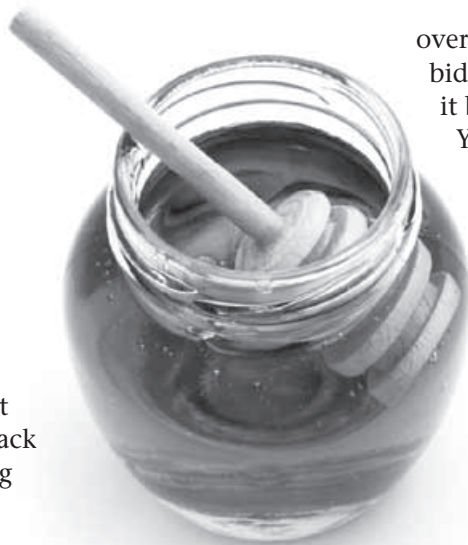
– Emily Sylvester

“Sweetening the Pot”

It is perhaps the most valuable honey in all of Canada, and a honey of a deal for the Mission and Service Fund.

Mary Goede-Kohn from High Prairie came to the September meeting of Northern Lights presbytery with a one kilogram container of famous High Prairie honey. Peace River country in Alberta is famous for its honey!

The honey was auctioned off at the presbytery meeting, donated back and then auctioned again — raising



over \$100 for M & S. The winning bidder was Kathy Burns. She took it back to her home congregation, Yellowknife United Church where it was auctioned again, this time raising another \$34 for M & S.

What was the reaction of presbytery and congregation members when they heard how much the honey raised for Mission and Service?

“Sweet!”

— Peter Chynoweth

St Stephen's College 2nd Annual Chancellor's Gala

On Friday 18 September 2009, St Stephen's College celebrated the Second Annual Chancellor's Gala at the Sutton Place Hotel in Edmonton. The event brought together almost three hundred students and alumni/ae, family, faculty, staff and friends of the College. Chancellors or their representatives were present from The King's University College, Concordia University College, Newman Theological College, St Joseph's College, and The University of Alberta; along with many friends from the Pastoral Charges and Courts of the United Church and other faith communities. The College was especially pleased to welcome Alberta's Lieutenant Governor, The Honourable Norman Kwong, and Her Honour, Mrs Mary Kwong, who were presented with one of the College's beautiful Centenary crystals designed by The Revd Samson Cho of Calgary.

The evening included live and silent auctions featuring an extraordinary variety of original paintings, pottery, sculpture, jewelry, photography, gift certificates, trips, plays, Oilers tickets, antiques and treasures—including gift baskets prepared and donated by United Church congregations. All were the objects of brisk and friendly competition, which added

to the fun! One of the highlights of the evening was the spirited bidding for a Gourmet Dinner for Eight hosted by the Chancellor and Dean of St Stephen's, and cooked by Red Seal Chef Raymond Abboud with Co-chef Ryan Feehan. The evening concluded with dancing to the Big Band sounds of "The C-Jammers".

Proceeds from this year's Gala were again directed towards making the College building accessible to persons with disabilities. Throughout the evening, guests were invited to view blueprints and drawings outlining the accessibility project. Thanks to the generosity of donors who underwrote the costs of the event, all proceeds of the evening can be directed towards this exciting transformation.

It was an evening of sacred moments, a time to celebrate the unique gifts of the many people who comprise the College community and who connect in love, mutual respect and commitment to a common vision. Above all, it was an occasion in which to reflect with particular brilliance that greatness and love which is the very nature of God. We look forward to the Third Annual Chancellor's Gala—Monday 17 September 2010.

— Mona-Lee Feehan and Earle Sharam



Dr. Earle Sharam greets Gala attendees.

Consort United Church *continued from page 5*

The riches of attics provided a lovely period clothing display that adorned the church hall. Included were baptismal gowns from the very early years, hand made heirloom dresses, both men and women's hats of every description, spats, flapper dresses from the twenties, the little boys coats and hats that had been remade out of adult garments, an indicator of the hard years of the thirties and forties. A

wedding dress from the late thirties, a tortoise shell purse from 1912, men and women's suits of the teen years and post war time as well as many antiques exemplified life during the early years.

A history book was published for the occasion "100 Years of Faith Community" from *Buggy to Buick and Beyond* that documents the progression of the years and the activities of the church in Consort and surrounding districts. From 1909 to 2009, Knox United Church and its early predecessors

have been a constant pillar of stability in this community. It was the spiritual and social gathering place that was the common thread that bonded the people together that settled in this area from so many different places and walks of life. The church has been there for one hundred years to celebrate and grieve with families and to recognize the struggles of individuals or the community as a whole, all the while enveloping them in the love of Christ.

— Adah Fawcett

Around our conference

Upcoming Events

December 26 – 31. 90th session of the TUXIS Parliament of Alberta. Games, debate, social programs, fellowship, good times! For more info, contact Katie Kelly, Minister of Recruitment, at 780-906-4764 or K.G.Kelly@hotmail.com or Bill Wright, Chief Returning Officer at 780-232-3943 or TUXISCRO@Gmail.com .

April 8 – 10. Dancing the Hope. A Kananaskis Stewardship Event featuring Bruce Sanguin, author of Darwin, Divinity and the Dance of the Cosmos. Registration through the Conference office. kjackson@anwconf.com .

May 13 – 16. Sounding the Bamboo (A Conference for Racialized Women: Racial/Ethnic Minority and Aboriginal Women). Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Manitoba. www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/events/sounding-the-bamboo



News from the United Church Administrators

We encourage all United Church Administrators to join us. We are a friendly bunch who gives each other support throughout the year. Our meetings start at 12 noon with a brown bag lunch business meeting. We then go into a time of professional development.

November 17 — Excel Workshop at Mill Woods UC. Last fall we did an introduction to Excel, this workshop will be the next level. This is a hands-on workshop, so if you have a laptop with Excel, you are invited to bring it along. The cost will be \$15. Our business meeting will be shortened to allow more time for the workshop.

Our Christmas Luncheon will be held at Southminster-Steinhauer United Church. The date and time is to be announced.

January 19 — Managing Change Sherwood Park United Church. Speaker: Pat Bourque.

We are updating "Beyond the Sunday Bulletin". We are also improving our website www.unitedchurchadministrators.ca. Please contact Cathy Stapleton at McClure UC mclureunited@telus.net for more information, suggestions for topics, or to register for the Excel Workshop.

— Cathy Stapleton

in Contact

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