



# THE BURNING BUSH

101 COBURG STREET, SAINT JOHN, N.B. E2L 3J8

## GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PHONE 634-7765 OR FAX 693-3223 OR EMAIL - [church.sjss@nb.aibn.com](mailto:church.sjss@nb.aibn.com)

<http://www.gracepresbyterianchurch.ca/> [www.facebook.com/Gracesaintjohn](http://www.facebook.com/Gracesaintjohn)

## Lent 2013

MINISTER: THE REV. DR. JOHN CRAWFORD, B.A., M.Div., D.Min.

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The teaching of Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem (310A.D.-380A.D) in the third century A.D., remind me of the importance of the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Cyril writes in his Catechetical Lectures IV,

"He was truly crucified for our sins. For if you would deny it, the place refutes you visibly, this blessed Golgotha, in which we are now assembled for the sake of Him who was here crucified...And though as Man He was at that time despised of men, and was buffeted, yet He was acknowledged by the Creation as God: for when the sun saw his Lord dishonoured, he grew dim and trembled, not enduring the sight."

First, Cyril took a great interest in teaching adults catechism and from his writings it is plain that much was expected of the catechumens if they were to participate in the sacraments and life of the church. Cyril would take his catechumens to Golgotha (Calvary) and remind them it has been sanctified by his blood, and that Creation acknowledged Jesus as Lord by dimming its lights as a protest against the blasphemy of putting the Son of God to death.

What a humbling moment it must have been for those gathered in that place to know that forgiveness for sin and the sting of death and the grave was vanquished forever. At Golgotha –just outside Jerusalem our world was changed by the reconciling work of Jesus Christ, as Peter wrote, "He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls" (1.2.24-25). My hope is that like the catechumens of Cyril's day I might too stand at Golgotha (Aramaic for "place of the skull") and feel both gratitude and grace when I stand there beneath the shadow of Jesus' cross.

Grace and gratitude are not merely feelings but become the disposition of the Christian throughout their life long journey. When Jesus foretold his death what were his thoughts about all the catechumens? Jesus said, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it" (Luke 29.23-24). Looking out from Golgotha we see that our calling is inconvenient, lowly and sometimes lonely as it was for the Saviour. Rely on Christ and you will not stumble when you feel the weight of the cross's beam on your shoulders as you serve him.

The peace of Christ be with you all.

Rev. Dr. John Crawford

## **CHURCH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Church Management Committee has met twice this year. We are organizing men's groups that will meet at the church on Saturday mornings to improve the look of the church. If any of the men of the congregation are interested in joining a group they can contact Kent Mackay who is leading the organization of the work parties. So that there is no long term commitment for work on a regular basis by any one group, it is our intention to have several groups formed that will take turns doing the work. Please assist even if it is only one Saturday a month that you can devote to this project.

Our insurance company did an audit of the building and there are several concerns with the wiring and the number of extension cords in use in the Sanctuary. The use of the church building by outside groups is also a concern and the CMC will create a form to be signed by these groups detailing their responsibilities.

The finance committee also would like to have budget figures from the following church groups/categories; choir, Sunday school, secretarial supplies, minister's discretionary fund, and any other groups that will require funds from the church operating budget. Please have your budgets submitted to me by the end of February.

Laurie Hossack

CMC Chairperson

## **CO-OP KITCHEN**

This group started the year on a sad note when one of our girls, Susan Cook-White, suffered a fatal heart attack January 1<sup>st</sup>. We all knew she was plagued with very poor health but her perseverance and smiling pleasant ways hid their severity. Since the funeral was held in her home town of Blackville, we held a Memorial Service here for those who could not travel to the Miramichi.

We have had one cooking session since then and the girls treated their loss, as they do their continual life challenges, with acceptance and then determination to find pleasant and positive activities to move on to.

With 8 L of turkey stock on hand from our turkey dinner we made enough turkey soup for each girl to take home 2 containers of it. Each girl mad a pan of corn bread to go with it.

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Each Thursday we wonder if many children will brave the winter weather we've been having, but each week many do. They are glad to wrap their fingers around a mug of hot chocolate before getting down to business. They are just as grateful as we are that there are warm mittens and socks available, thanks to the Congregation's generosity, for them to use as needed.

Our Christmas Party brought 20 children out. They had a wonderful time and were thrilled with their gifts which came tucked in a pair of warm mittens or socks.

We have a large group of Middle School children,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our enrollment this year. A third of the group are girls, which makes for a refreshing change.

Many of our older boys are enrolled in sports at school so their attendance fluctuates with their games there.

Many of the older girls are interested in learning to knit and crochet and have begun projects which will require a touch of "magic" for them to finish.

The younger children enjoy sports, crafts, cooking and games and everyone is glad when Wendy announces, "Snack Time".

## **BOOKS AND BLANKETS**

Our attendance in this program is down but those who come enjoy themselves. Their reading is becoming more mature, most are interested in popular Chapter books.

Our read aloud material includes books set in different countries. Each child has a "passport" which gets stamped and requires information regarding the flag and important facts concerning that country.

In addition, we use stories concerning Seasonal Holidays and are adding material, sometimes biographical, meant to be inspiring to our young people. Poetry and joke books are great for a certain mix of kids and Robert Munsch never fails in popularity.

We have added the making of fleece "Linus" blankets to our activities. Each child takes one home to snuggle with in this cold winter. They also can choose a book each week to take and call their own.

- Glenda Hossack

**Saint John Regional Hospital Auxiliary Members**  
**of Grace Presbyterian Church:**

I have been Convener and Presbyterian Denominational Representative for the Auxiliary for the last five years.

At a recent meeting, we were informed of changes being made in the structure of the Auxiliary. Instead of 10 Committees, there will now be five (See information on Church bulletin board). You may still be an active member of the Auxiliary by joining any of the 5 committees and paying dues. There will no longer be Conveners or Denominational Representatives. Notices of the Annual Meeting, Memorial service, etc. will be communicated directly to church offices/secretaries for inclusion in their church bulletins and through available media.

Of the 300 memberships we now have in all the churches, not all are volunteering at the hospital. It was found to be too expensive to pay for each member, thus the changes. Your present membership will allow you to attend the Annual general meeting on April 18th at 12:00 noon at St. Marks United Church and have a vote.

Knitting of the newborn baby bonnets, toe cast covers, etc. will still continue and yarn will still be supplied by the Auxiliary. The knitting is still very much needed. I will continue to give out the yarn and patterns and take the finished articles to the hospital

The Auxiliary will continue to work toward raising funds to support initiatives in keeping with our mission, vision and values.

My thanks is extended to all Grace Church Auxiliary members this past five years for your support of the Auxiliary.

Helen Humphreys  
Convener

## **OUR NEW ORGANIST AND CHOIR DIRECTOR**

A warm welcome from the congregation is extended to Claire Driscoll, our new Organist and Choir Director. Claire began the job in October and was immediately immersed in the preparation of Christmas music.

Claire was a year old when she first came to St. John and St. Stephen church with her family and at 14 left to become Organist at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Hampton for four years; followed by four years at Quispamsis United Church. When she returned from University she became Organist and Choir Director at Germain Street Baptist Church and remained there for over fifteen years. In the interim and prior to becoming organist of Grace Church she sang in the choir here and performed occasional piano and organ duos with her dad, Murray. Claire received her BBA from the University of New Brunswick, Saint John and her MBA from Dalhousie University. She studied piano in her early years with Ina Rowe and Louise Milota. While at UNBSJ she was fortunate to study with Margaret Ann Ireland. While at Dalhousie, Claire studied organ with Larry Nelson of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Halifax, where she also sang in the choir.

Claire is presently studying advanced music theory and history through the Royal Conservatory of Music and piano performance with Roger Lord of Moncton to prepare for her ARCT (Associate of the Royal Conservatory in Toronto). She also accompanies the choir Treble Clef and is a long distance runner with several marathons to her credit.

## **Baptisms**

Matthew Iain Laughlin Gerrits December 24

Willem Sean Andrew Gerrits December 24

## Announcements

**ANNUAL REPORTS** – It is that time of year again. It's time to start working on your 2012 Annual report. **Reports must be in no later than March 4<sup>th</sup>**. You may e-mail your report to [gracechurchsj@gmail.com](mailto:gracechurchsj@gmail.com) or bring it to the office Tuesday to Friday, 8:30 am to noon.

**LAY READERS** – If you would be interested in participating in the morning worship service as a lay reader and have not been approached, please call Judy in the church office at 634-7765.

**CARDS TO SICK AND SHUT-INS** – If you know of someone in our church family who should receive or would appreciate receiving a card, please write their name on a piece of the paper provided and put it in the box on the table in the vestibule.

**WEATHER POLICY** - Grace Presbyterian has a new Inclement Weather policy that we want everyone to be aware of. If there is a winter storm we would ask you to call the church and listen for the storm cancellation message which will be as follows: "Thank you for calling Grace Presbyterian Church. Today is Sunday [Date X] and, due to the inclement weather, our 11:00 am service is cancelled. Please take care; we look forward to seeing you next week." We will strive to have the decision made to continue with or cancel the service by 9:00 am or before.

**THE PIECEMAKERS OF GRACE CHURCH** have produced a quilt to raise money for Presbyterians Sharing. Tickets are available from Helen Humphreys or Nancy Floyd. Tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5.

**DO YOU LIKE TO SING?** Not only would the Grace Presbyterian Church Choir love you to join them, but there are Saint John community choirs that would also welcome your talents! Helen Humphreys and Diane Reid sing with the Saint John Chorale. Sheri-Lynn Haynes and David Taylor sing with the Carleton Choristers. If you are interested in joining either community choir, speak to Helen, Diane, Sheri-Lynn, or David.

**THE COMMUNITY FOOD BASKET OF SAINT JOHN** wishes to thank the Congregation for its increasingly generous contributions to the food bank and we urge the members to continue. We will always need clean jars, plastic garbage bags as well as non-perishable foods, especially cereals at this time.

**PWS&D** – In February we observe Presbyterian World Service & Development Sunday. We would like to ask you to donate your pennies to PWS&D. From now until the end of Lent there will be a collection container at the back of the church for you to put your pennies in. There are also coin boxes available if you would like to have one to save your pennies at home and bring them in at the end of Lent.

**Christian Education-** We are looking for volunteers to teach the primary class on March 10, April 14, May 19, and June 9. If you are able to help out please contact Denise McGill at 674-0198 or [dmcgill@bellaliant.net](mailto:dmcgill@bellaliant.net).

**WHEELCHAIR-** If you need or know someone who can use a practically new wheelchair, please speak to Laurie Hossack.

**RESEARCH PROJECT** - Parents, Autism and Faith Study Call for Participants: I am seeking parents of children with Autism for an important research project through the Atlantic School of Theology. The purpose of this study is to explore the lived faith experiences of parents of children with autism. This study asks questions related to parent's faith experiences and faith questions. It will explore participants' relationships with the church, ministry staff and congregational life. Parents will also be able to express their recommendations for enhancing their faith experience. All markers identifying individuals will be coded for confidentiality during the research to maintain the anonymity of participants throughout the project and in the final reporting process. If you are interested in participating or for more information please contact Michelle at [michellenarmstrong@hotmail.com](mailto:michellenarmstrong@hotmail.com) or 457-2972

<b>Lent 2013</b>		
February 20 <sup>th</sup> – March 20 <sup>th</sup> – Wednesdays		Lenten Bible Study 12:00pm
March 24 <sup>th</sup>		Palm Sunday 11:00am
<b>Holy Week, March 25<sup>th</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup></b>		
March 25 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup>		Daily Communion 8:00am
March 28 <sup>th</sup>	Maundy Thursday	Seder Supper 6:00pm
March 28 <sup>th</sup>	Maundy Thursday	service 7:30pm
March 29 <sup>th</sup>	Good Friday	11:00am Service at Saint Columba
March 31 <sup>st</sup>	Easter Sunday	Ham & Egg Breakfast 9:00am
		Communion 11:00am

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The deadline for the Pentecost issue of THE BURNING BUSH will be May 12<sup>th</sup>. Please contact me at 849-8934 or [nancyhossack@hotmail.com](mailto:nancyhossack@hotmail.com) to submit articles at any time up to that date. Please pass along news of graduations, anniversaries, or things that the congregation would be interested in reading about.

- Nancy Hossack

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