



THE BURNING BUSH

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

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Pentecost 2013

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

The Gospel of John 14:26, 27a)

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you."

When I was a young boy of 5 or 6 I was fishing with my father on the North Forks Stream. My father was walking down the river fishing the various pools and I was following on the bank. However, I became tangled in the alders and could not keep up. I thought my father had left me and gone down the river without me and I became afraid because I was alone. I still remember the feeling of terror and fear of being alone and separated from my father's protection.

In truth, my father was there all the time but I could not see him for the tangle of the alders and my anxiety. When I began to cry and call out from the bank of the stream I can now only recall seeing my father coming towards me saying to me, "I'm right here John, I'm coming to you." My father assured me that I was safe even though I couldn't see him at that moment.

I remember the relief and peace that I felt when I heard his voice, the splash of my father coming over to me and his strong arms lifting me from the morass of alder and bramble. He wiped the tears from my eyes and handed me his rod. I caught my first trout on my father's shoulders and I remember my happiness and excitement that from these shoulders I could go anywhere.

The disciples were terrified that Jesus was crucified and that he died. They were confused and saddened because it seemed that Jesus was gone forever until the 3rd day when he was resurrected. He came to them again and they were filled with joy and he wiped the tears from their eyes and banished their doubts and fears.

Though we do not see Jesus the Spirit reaches down to us and lifts us up and sets us upon his shoulders. Jesus the one who has overcome death, and is the lord of life finds us and in the power of the Spirit confidently begins to move us and assure us that in his care we are always safe, that we are never alone, and in him we can do impossible things like becoming fishers of people.

Do not underestimate the power of the Spirit to fill you with the peace and power of Jesus Christ as you walk along your life's path.

Rev. Dr. John Crawford

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Recently, I was away on vacation and was so pleased to learn upon my return that everything had gone, "very well thank you". Many of the staff have commitments immediately preceding the program and, as luck would have it, they realized before I left that on a couple of occasions they would experience a conflict of responsibilities. So I added casual staff and was very fortunate when Natasha Daley expressed an interest in volunteering. She's a wonderful addition and it's great to have 2 young people from the church involved with the program. On many days she and Katy Gunter each bring a friend - another bonus.

Each volunteer brings their own strengths and experiences to the table. The children have been really benefiting from this, and for the first time in years we often have more girls than boys. In addition, our staff continues to shine. Wendy Rowe will graduate from a computer course this week and Leo Lefleur, our sports director, had an article written about him last week in the Telegraph Journal as he prepares to record his first album, "Manic Courtly Love". He has launched a kick starter campaign to fund the album on **kickstarter.com**, a "crowd funding" website which allows fans to make donations to artists who have created a profile and set a specific amount of money to raise for a venture. The sum must be raised in 35 days or the artist won't receive anything. Leo has raised 63% of his goal.

In the near future we hope to be taking the children to the Fire Station so they can donate their large supply of pop can tabs and then it will be June and our closing bowling party.

CO-OP KITCHEN

In March, we welcomed a new girl into this program. She has one child. We accept, when space becomes available, women who have children and see opportunities in our program.

I have been very grateful to Wendy and Dian who attend the program. Wendy has proved to be a dedicated leader with sound judgement in the After School Program. The staff and children love her. And likewise, Dian, who filled in while I was away from the children's programs. She proved very responsible and took on quite a load.

Some of the girls have been taking courses this winter and have developed more confidence with the experience.

As we head into June we will all look forward to our annual retreat, a day for Moms to be away from responsibilities of children before summer's onset.

BOOKS AND BLANKETS

The ages of the children attending this program vary from six to fourteen yet it seems to work quite well. The older children are quite focused on certain series of books. They have individual tastes in their reading and hope each week that I've found the next book in their particular series. It's very rewarding to see them at this stage of their reading. In addition they often offer to read aloud to the younger children and are developing skills in raising points of discussion with them.

It's also great to see a 6 yr old confirmed non-reader get swayed into attending the program and enjoy it so much that he wanted to take 3 books home with him.

This week we said, "goodbye" to a 10 year old dedicated reader of "Guardians of Ga Hoole" and gave him the next 5 books in the series. His eyes were shining. He has moved to West Saint John.

Glenda Hossack

CHURCH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

A custodian has been employed to wax strip the church floors and to re-wax them. As well, the CMC have hired a flooring company to resurface and repair the flooring in the Ladies parlor and mezzanine area surrounding MacLaren Hall.

Thanks to the generous donation by the Women's Group, and to those who have donated towards refurbishment of one of the stain glass windows, work is now ready to begin on repairing the window that was badly warped.

As a result of an insurance audit the church was asked to reduce the number of extension cords and the exposed wiring in the sanctuary. Two electrical outlets were added below the front of the pulpit, one for electric candle lights and the other for the piano.

The committee is also planning a church clean-up day for the first Saturday in June. Unwanted items in the church will be disposed of in an appropriate manner and there will be a clean-up of the garden in front of the church and the alley along the side of the building. Kent MacKay is the person to contact if you can spare a few hours on Saturday morning. We will have a sign- up sheet for volunteers at the church entrance next Sunday.

The committee welcomes Doug Sewell as its newest member and wishes also to thank David Cunningham and Jim Thomson for their continued assistance with maintenance.

Laurie Hossack

CMC Chairperson

THE WOMEN'S GROUP

We continue to make soup for Romero House. As well, we served lunch after the very moving Lenten Meditation given by Murray Driscoll during Holy Week.

The Women's Group has given \$1000 towards the repair of the Stained Glass Window which will cost \$1820. We have asked the congregation to match the \$1000. To date we have \$879.50. We hope to end the fundraiser on the last Sunday in May. Of course if anyone wishes, you may put money in the collection plate and mark it "Stained Glass Window".

Nancy Hossack came to the Women's Group offering to make a presentation about "Epicure" as a Fundraiser.

Everyone who went got to sample the dips. On each order five dollars will go to the repair of the window. Nancy would like all orders to be in by the last Sunday in May. It will certainly help the fund. Many thanks to you Nancy.

Respectfully submitted
May Megaw
Vivian MacDonald

NURSING HOME NEWS

Spring is finally here and the Home is bustling with activities. The gardens are abloom with vibrant colors and the residents are getting out and enjoying the fresh air. After a winter of confinement, including almost two months of seclusion due to flu concerns, a chance to escape the confines of the building is very much appreciated. The Home is equipped with a number of patios and decks that allow the residents access to the outdoors and volunteers can also guide them around the walkways to view the burgeoning garden beds. The better weather also allows them to venture farther afield with the van.

Some residents were able to come to Grace on May 8th for the Springtime Variety Concert in support of the Saint John Jewish Historical Museum. Another fun adventure was the Mother/Daughter fashion show, held at the Home, on May 5th to support the Grace Foundation. There was a great turnout and members of Grace, staff of the Home and a resident were the models. Everyone had a good time and tea and sweets rounded out a happy afternoon.

With the spring comes a need to spruce up the grounds and there's mention regarding this included in this newsletter. If you like to get your hands dirty, read to seniors, push a resident around the property, play cards or even just hold a hand then come and join the small but mighty group of volunteers at our wonderful nursing home.

The Annual General Meeting will be June 25th in St Andrew's Lounge. All members of Grace are stakeholders in the Home and are encouraged to come.

Janet Soper

Mony a mickle maks a muckle

So say the Scots, while Sassenachs opt for “Great oaks from little acorns grow”. The same can be said about the chestnuts begat by the handsome old tree which graces the north corner of our church garden. The green thumbs of a good friend of our member, Hugh McLellan, have generated quite a number of scions from this veteran. These are now in several gardens with five outside the west wing of our Nursing home, two of them dedicated to the memory of Judy’s parents. Their big juicy Spring buds are like candy to the ever-increasing deer population but the seedlings are still winning so - continue to wish them well. It is now fifty years since our old church tree required major surgery with huge bolts added to preserve its integrity and to allow it to continue to flourish. Give it a deferential bow the next time you pass it by!

The sale of bundles of kindling began quite a few years ago in support of gardens both at our Church and Nursing Home. That was supplemented by the generous sponsorship by many members of roses, “burning bushes”, other plants and bulbs to produce a brighter Coburg Street frontage. BUT in this sad age of trash generation the bushes tend to trap items of rubbish so, PLEASE, if you see and can reach some or even all of this debris, collect it and drop it in the garbage bucket in the front lobby to keep our image as tidy as possible. With the church garden developed, the revenue from kindling sales, totaling \$1,350.00 over the past two years, has been donated to the Nursing Home where any joyful additions to the views from the Residents’ windows are very much appreciated. We buy annuals, bubs and lots of fall chrysanthemums to add to the perennials, shrubs and trees. There are small garden spaces devoted to the memory of Debbie Chapman, Mollie Smith and Gladys Bell and more of these might be promoted but help is needed to maintain and extend the landscaping embracing the Home.

Fresh ideas are always wanted and volunteer support even more so. Can you contribute either or both? Individual commitments need not be huge – together we can do lots more.

Please do respond to this appeal and start saving to buy more kindling in the Fall.

Hamish Murdoch

COMMUNITY FOOD BASKET

The postponed Annual General Meeting of the Community Food Basket of Saint John, Inc. was held at 215 Charlotte Street on Thursday, 9th May 2,013. This is one of our outreach ventures to which we contribute monthly. Several of our congregation are active volunteers in its operation. As we know, Esther Shanks contributed her energy and enthusiasm as the co-ordinator of its function from its opening on the 4th May 1984 until her retirement at the end of April 2012, 28 years! Thank you again, Esther for all those years of hard work and dedication. Wow! Philip Barthelot is one of the most valuable and dependable volunteers at the constant beck and call of the co-ordinator who very much appreciates his willing help. Thank you too, Philip, for your cheerful dedication.

Sadly, at the AGM, the present co-ordinator Mrs. Brenda MacIntyre submitted her resignation effective as of August of this year, to allow for the training period for her replacement.

Ian McCoy is our Church's representative on the Board of Directors and he will keep us informed on the work of the Food Basket. Ian was unable to attend this revised AGM date because of a prior commitment to a Nursing Home meeting in Moncton.

In review of the finances of the Food Basket, the very generous bequest of our late member Deborah Chapman was recorded with much gratitude.

The Food Basket must thank our congregation for the continuing supply of non-perishable food. We always need glass jars of all sizes. Please make sure that they are clean, complete with lids and, if possible, with labels removed. We can also re-use regular size plastic grocery bags. Please continue this much needed generosity.

Anne Murdoch, on behalf of Ian McCoy

Announcements

WOMEN'S GROUP – The Women's Group is once again looking for help from the congregation. The stained glass window in memory of Rev. Donald MacRae and his wife Catherine is badly bowed and in need of immediate attention. An estimate has been given to us of \$1820 to repair the window. The Women's Group will give \$1000 towards this repair. We are asking the congregation to match this donation – perhaps in the same way we were able to pay for the lights in the sanctuary. Perhaps you might donate the cost of a tea or coffee each week and put it in the container available for it. If you wish to receive a receipt, place your donation in an envelope marked Stained Glass Window and put it in the offering plate. Thank you for your support.

To further their fundraising efforts, The Women's Group, with Nancy Hossack's assistance, will be running an Epicure Selections Dip fundraiser. This includes three delicious dip mixes and a recipe booklet attractively packaged in a reusable cloth bag. The Fundraisers sell for \$20.00 each and we make \$5.00 from each Fundraiser sold. Please see Nancy Hossack for order forms, or contact her with any questions at nancyhossack@hotmail.com or 849-8934. **Please note, all order forms and collected funds are due back May 26th.**

ANNUAL PLANT, BAKE, BOOK & BLING SALE at Silver Falls United Church , 840 Loch Lomond Rd., **May 25th 9 am-1 pm.** Perennials, annuals, herbs, home baked goods, beautiful new & used jewelry and books! Held indoors, canteen available, come early for best selections! Rain or Shine!

PRESENTATION ON ESTATE PLANNING – May 28th – 7PM The Session of Grace Presbyterian Church is pleased to offer a presentation by the Law Firm of Stewart McKelvey on Estate Planning. This presentation will provide an understanding of the basic estate planning documents including Personal Care Power of Attorney, Enduring Power of Attorney and Last Will and Testament. Discussions will focus on the importance of choosing attorneys and executors wisely, what to do if someone is being exploited by their attorney or executor and additional estate planning considerations. We encourage you to attend this information session to help you gain an understanding of the importance of these documents and how they protect you and your interests. If you are planning to attend, please call the church office at 634-7765 to pre-register. The presentation will be held in MacLaren Hall. Please use the Hazen St. Entrance of the church.

CONCERT - “Of Peace and Harmony” Presented by the CARLETON CHORISTERS **May 28th, 7:30pm,** Grace Presbyterian Church, 101 Coburg Street. Tickets will be available at the door - \$10.00.

BENEFIT CONCERT - A benefit concert will be held at Quispamsis United Church on **May 30th at 7pm.** Proceeds from an offering will be donated to Greg and Jocelyn (Tonge) Smith and their young family. The Smiths live in the US and Greg had unexpected medical issues while in transition of jobs leaving them with devastating bills. Terri-Lynn Russell and the Quispamsis United Church Choir with special accompanist, Franco Cucinelli, the QUC Quartet, The Sunday Night Jammers and Just the Four of Us will be performing a mix of sacred and secular music. Refreshments will be served following the concert. Plan to come and bring a friend.

2013 RUN FOR THE WORD – 1K/5K WALK/RUN – on **Saturday, June 1st, 2013** in support of “She’s my Sister”, bible-based trauma-healing. For more information or to register go to www.biblesociety.ca/runfortheword

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The deadline for the Thanksgiving of THE BURNING BUSH will be October 6th. Please contact me at 849-8934 or 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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