



*belonging, believing,
becoming in christ!*



December 2012 — Volume 1 Issue 7

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From the Editor

This is the seventh edition of our Newsletter and the last for 2012. As we come to the end of 2012 we feel a great sense of satisfaction that the Newsletter appears to be growing in popularity and acceptance. We thank you the readers for your compliments and for your suggestions. We also thank the contributors for their articles and for all your constructive suggestions.

I, Errol, write the words, and Bill speaks even more eloquently with the layout and the graphics and colour. Producing this Newsletter has become a labour of love as we certainly enjoy doing it and working with one another.

In this issue, we are overjoyed to receive a message of joy from Rev. Art Hadley, and as one reads that message, one visualizes Art at the pulpit delivering his sermons with the clarity, passion and excellence that we all know so well. We also present Pastor Michel Belzile's initial message, and also a lovely message from Pastor Dine. All three messages are topical of the Christmas Season. We also continue with the second installment of Ernie Domet's discussion on Islam. We even have a little message from one of our youth!

We look forward in 2013 to articles from Rev. Dr. Ron Watts, Pastor Emeritus and from Rev. Jack Anderson as well as several lay persons who continue to be the pillars of our church.

Our New Year wish is to increase the contributions and participation in this Newsletter from our Portuguese brothers and sisters, and as we observe the close working association between Pastor Michel, Pastor Dine and Pastor Steve, we have no doubt that this will become reality. We also wish to improve the distribution to our less mobile brothers and sisters.

Please take a look at our upcoming events over the Christmas Season.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!

Yours in Christ!

Errol Anderson and Bill Goodbrand



December 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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Saturday, December 8th - 8:00 p.m.

Central Baptist Church hosts Oakville Improv and It's a Wonderful Laugh

Sunday, December 9th - 10:00 a.m.

Children and Youth Christmas Celebration and Dinner

Saturday, December 15th - 5 p.m.

Portuguese Christmas Celebration and Dinner

Monday, December 24th - 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve Service

To our visitors

Welcome to the joy of worship and the warmth of our congregation!

If you are searching for a local church home, we invite you to make your home with us. If you are a newcomer, please include your name, address, e-mail address and telephone number on the Contact Cards. We're glad you're here! We encourage you to feel free to participate in any church activities you read about in this bulletin. If you have any questions, please speak with an usher.

The Christian Neigh Dweller

The Advent Season is upon us and with it comes a spirit of expectancy. We look forward with anticipation to the coming of the Christ Child Jesus. It is also a season of unspoken, and all too often, unrealistic expectations. We want this Christmas to be the best ever: a Christmas where everyone will be gathered under one roof without fuss or quarrels. Everyone will



the neigh dweller

get along and the Christmas meal to go off without a hitch. And of course, Hope, Peace, Joy and Love will radiate from us to those around us and all will be well on earth as in heaven.

Likewise, as I begin my ministry among you at Central, I am keenly aware that our Advent spirit of expectancy is also accompanied by a wide variety of equally unrealistic personal expectations for our ministry together in Christ's name. Some of us expect things

to return to the way things used to be and should be. Others expect some drastic changes that will have the church bursting with life and new members within a year. Neither is likely.

If we expect that my arrival among you will magically result in "peace on earth and good will to all", we will all be sadly disappointed. However, what we can expect is the Advent of God among us in Jesus Christ. I have no doubt that Jesus will make himself known to us.

Eugene H. Peterson puts it this way in his translation of John 1:14 from *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (2002):

"The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood.

We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory,

Like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish."

That is what we should hope for and expect to see this Christmas as we journey through Advent and beyond together.

Pastor Michel

o Morador de Rincho cristão

A Estação de Advento é sobre nós e com ele vem um espírito da espera. Parecemos avançados com a antecipação a vir da Criança de Cristo Jesus. Ele é também uma estação de não dito, e demais muitas vezes, expectativas não realísticas. Queremos que este Natal seja melhor alguma vez: um Natal onde todo o mundo será reunido embaixo de um telhado sem espalhafato ou disputas. Todo o mundo conseguirá ao longo e a refeição de Natal ir-se sem um puxão. E naturalmente, Esperança, Paz, Alegria e Amor irradiarão de nós àqueles em volta de nós e todos estarão bem na terra como no céu.

De mesmo modo, como começo o meu ministério entre você em Central, sou agudamente consciente que o nosso espírito de Advento da espera também é acompanhado por uma larga variedade de expectativas pessoais igualmente não realísticas do nosso ministério em conjunto no nome de Cristo. Alguns de nós esperam coisas a devolver ao caminho coisas usadas para ser e devem ser. Os outros esperam algumas modificações drásticas que terão a igreja que estoura com a vida e novos membros dentro de um ano. Nenhum é provável.

Se esperarmos que a minha chegada entre você resultará magicamente "paz em terra e boa vontade a todos", seremos todos tristemente desapontados. Contudo, o que podemos esperar é o Advento do Deus entre nós em Jesus Cristo. Tenho não há dúvida que Jesus se fará conhecido para nós.

Eugene H. Peterson põe-no este caminho na sua tradução de John 1:14 da *Mensagem: a Bíblia em Língua Contemporânea* (2002):

"A Palavra ficou a carne e o sangue, e moveu-se na vizinhança.

Vimos a honra com os nossos próprios olhos, a honra incomum,

Como Pai, como Filho, Generoso no interior e fora, verdadeiro do princípio ao fim. "

É o que devemos esperar e esperar ver este Natal como viajamos pelo Advento e além em conjunto.

Pároco Michel

Portuguese Ministry

O impossível aconteceu.

“Maria perguntou ao anjo: mas como, se sou virgem?”

O anjo respondeu:

O Espírito Santo virá sobre você,

O poder do Altíssimo a envolverá.

O filho que você dará à luz
Será chamado Santo, Filho de Deus”

(Lucas 1:34,35 de acordo com “A Mensagem – Bíblia em linguagem contemporânea, por Eugene H. Peterson)

Lucas era médico. Ele sabia que uma virgem não poderia conceber um filho. A concepção virginal não era improvável, mas impossível. Entretanto, é assim que Lucas narra a história no primeiro Natal. Deus enviou um anjo para avisar a Maria que ela conceberia um filho no seu ventre, ainda no seu estado virginal.

É importante observarmos que Maria creu nas palavras do anjo e se submeteu à vontade de Deus para a sua vida. O impossível aconteceu. O milagre acontece quando a gente obedece.

A nossa reação mental e espiritual diante deste relato bíblico determina o que cremos acerca da natureza de Jesus. A doutrina bíblica acerca do nascimento virginal de Jesus não tem como objetivo destacar a virgindade de Maria, mas a natureza divina do bebê que ela trazia no seu ventre.

O Deus de Maria é o mesmo Deus dos cristãos em todo o mundo. O Deus dos cristãos é o Deus do impossível, o Deus que faz o milagre acontecer. No Natal celebramos o poder e o amor de Deus. Deus é poderoso para fazer o impossível acontecer. Deus nos ama ao ponto de se tornar um de nós e viver em nosso meio. Deus nos ama ao ponto de experimentar a nossa dor e sofrer até à morte, e morte de cruz.

Vamos celebrar o Natal oferecendo a Deus a nossa mais completa submissão, como a atitude de Maria nos ensina. Creia no Deus do impossível e submeta-se à vontade dele. Tenha um Natal muito feliz e abençoado.

Pastor Diné Lóta

The impossible happened.

“Mary said to the angel, “But how? I’ve never slept with a man.”

The angel answered:

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you,

The power of the Highest hover over you;

Therefore, the child you bring to birth
will be called Holy, Son of God. “

(Luke 1:34–35 (The Message – Eugene H. Peterson)

Luke was a doctor. He knew that a virgin could not conceive a child. The virginal conception was not improbable, but impossible. However, this is how Luke tells the story in the first Christmas. God sent an angel to tell Mary that she would conceive a child in her womb, still in its virginal state.

It is important to note that Mary believed the angel’s words and submitted to the will of God for your life. The impossible happened. The miracle happens when we obey.

Our mental and spiritual reaction before this biblical account determines what we believe about the nature of Jesus. The biblical doctrine about the virgin birth of Jesus is not meant to highlight the virginity of Mary, but the divine nature of the baby she was carrying in her womb.

Mary’s God is the same God of Christians worldwide. The Christian God is the God of the impossible, the God who makes the miracle happen. At Christmas we celebrate the power and love of God. God is able to make the impossible happen. God loves us to the point of becoming one of us and live in our midst. God loves us to the point of experiencing our pain and suffering unto death, even death on a cross.

Let us celebrate Christmas offering to God our most complete submission, as the attitude of Mary teaches us. Believe in the God of the impossible and yield to his will. Have a very happy and blessed Christmas.

Pastor Diné Lóta

Status Report to October 31, 2012

Anniversary Fund Raiser English Ministry (60th); Portuguese Ministry (25th)

Significant Dates/Events

Annual Meeting March 25th, 2012: Anniversary Fund Raiser approved by Church

Amount: \$60,000 or more

Start Date: by April 30th, 2012

End Date: September 30th, 2013
(hopefully much sooner)

Methodology: Love Gifts, More love gifts and still more love gifts until Goal, or more has been achieved

Support Mechanisms: Individual Prayer, Group Prayer, Congregational Prayer and, Prayer without ceasing until funds have been raised and all projects completed.

Total committed to date: \$31,680

As a percentage of objective: 52%

Still required to achieve goals: \$28,320 (or more)

Personal financial commitments to the fundraising endeavours have slowed dramatically over the past several weeks. We hope this is “End of Summer” DOLDRUMS and we encourage you at this particular season of the year to review your personal financial situation(s) and contribute generously towards the early achievement of our Project Fundraising activities. We continue to need your Prayerful support as we work towards fulfilling our work in our Community.

Our underlying theme continues to be PRAYER, PRAYER AND MORE PRAYER.

Your Finance Committee

2013 Stewardship Commitment Cards

These were dispatched to members, friends and adherents of Central Baptist Church as part of the package dealing with the budget proposals for 2013. Very few of these commitment cards have been returned so far. Your Finance Committee continues to consider completion of these cards an important component of the Church’s Financial Planning capabilities, as providing a strong indicator of funds we are reasonably confident of receiving during the year. They help our budget planning process.

The amount(s) committed can be

changed at anytime if circumstances dictate; increased, decreased, or, cancelled. Confidentiality is assured as the only person seeing these cards is Mary Coggins, the Envelope Secretary.

We again encourage each and every church attendee to complete and return a commitment card to the Envelope Secretary at your earliest convenience. In the event your card has gone astray, a supply of cards and return confidential envelope are maintained on the information table in the narthex.

Finance Committee

Community Outreach

Morden Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club at Morden Public School (BC at MPS) isn’t just making toast, scrambled eggs and hot chocolate. We have some interesting feedback (pardon the pun) from the students as to how they rate the experience/menu on Tuesday morning:



• 8.5 out of 10

• Plain toast, please

- It’s good!
- Wish we could have pancakes instead
- Crusts hidden beneath the table/on a lap in spite of our insistence that they be eaten
- I like French toast
- Rather have pancakes than French toast
- I don’t like eggs. I told you last week. Don’t you remember?
- Toast is crusty (Now there’s a witty one.)

Student: Can I have some more eggs?

Cook: Pardon?

Student (louder): Can I have some more eggs?

Cook: Pardon?

Student (much louder): Can I have some more eggs?

Another student: Say “Please”, silly.

Student (quietly): Can I have some more eggs, please?

Cook: Certainly. (We couldn’t insist on “may” after all that, could we?)

Would you like to get in on the fun of BC at MPS? Speak to any one of the volunteers: Marianne, George, Dine, Warren.

Warren McBurney

Pastor Robin's Sentiments

Thank You! What more can Deborah and I say for the amazing year we have spent here at Central. What an astonishing year it has been. You are an amazing congregation that has much to share with the world around you. There is within your hearts all that you need to prove you are not just a child of God but an heir. Share your enthusiasm, and your love and joy that only comes from Christ. And begin by sharing Jesus Christ.

When we arrived, we shared with all of you what a congregation needs to share Christ with anyone and everyone. We ended with the same

five directives. You are doing it. Keep going, keep growing, keep stretching yourselves and especially, continue to share all you learn and see each and every day with each other. That might be the key for Central.

Thank you for the wonderful gift you gave to us as we stepped down to make way for you new pastor. It is much appreciated. As we all move on with our lives, Deborah and I would like to assure you, we will continue to pray for each and every one of you and will forever hold you dear in our heart.

Blessings & Peace
Robin & Deborah

Highlights from Board of Ministry and Outreach

At our November meeting plans were finalized as we move closer to our neighbourhood Christmas initiative, hosting "ITS A WONDERFUL LAUGH" on Saturday, Dec. 8th at 8:00 p.m. A postcard has been printed and distributed announcing our Christmas plans as well as the welcoming of our new Senior Pastor. This will be a marvellous venue to introduce Pastor Michel to friends and neighbours.

By now you should have been made aware of who your deacon is; if you have been missed, please call the office or speak to Kathy Geisler, Board Chair or one of the pastors.

The Induction Service for our

Senior Pastor has been set for Sunday, January 27th at 7:00 p.m. so put that date aside for your 2013 calendar

It was a Board decision to present an Honorarium to Suzanne Houser and to Virginia Fletcher as a small token of the Church's gratitude for their faithful and gifted ministries.

The Board will be kept busy as we enter this new phase of our lives moving towards our 60th Anniversary as Central Baptist Church. As we uphold you in our prayers, we also covet your prayers for wisdom and guidance.

Pat Nowlan,
Board of Ministry and Outreach

Hey everyone,

I know we had a great clean up; got lots of leafs and cleaned up well. Just want to say a special thanks to everyone who came to help and support Central. We look forward to the spring clean up.

From Darien Beckford (Member of Jr. High Ministry)



SPECIAL PRAYERS

“ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours ”

Mark 11:24

Let us remember our brothers & sisters in our prayers especially:

- Velda Clifton who is recovering at home
- Kathy Waldron, Helen and family, as they continue to deal with Kathy's health issues
- Kerr Street Ministries

Thursday December 6 is our Christmas dinner with the Prime Timers and Sunday December 9 is the children and youth's Christmas pageant. There will

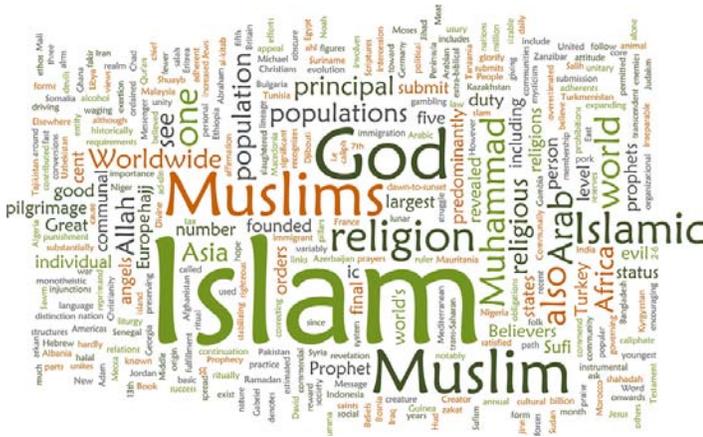
be also be a family movie night on Tuesday December 11. The Avalanche

and Blizzard winter retreats are happening in January and February and prayers are appreciated for an amazing experience where our students and leaders can grow spiritually.

Steve Elshaw, Pastor of Youth and Children's Ministry



Adult Education



Encouraged by his wife, he began to preach in the streets and markets of Mecca and soon aroused bitter opposition. Mohammed never claimed to be divine, but insisted that Allah had called him to be a prophet. Finally, in 622 A.D. he was forced to flee to MEDINA, a friendlier city. That flight is known as the HEGIRA and the year of the HEGIRA - 622 A.D. became the first year of the current Muslim calendar.

Mohammed became the religious and political leader of Medina. After much fighting with the Meccans, Mohammed's forces and Islam triumphed. He entered Mecca in 630 A.D. and destroyed every idol in the KA'ABA - the main temple Muslims believe to have been built by Abraham and his son Ishmael (by Hagar, Sara's slave girl). However, he left the Black Stone intact which is a sacred meteorite enshrined there. Mohammed then declared the KA'ABA to be the most holy shrine in Islam to which all Muslims must direct their daily prayers. During the next 2 years, Mohammed strengthened his position as the leading prophet and ruler of Arabia. He also united all the different Arab tribes into a vast army of the faithful.

An Overview

Last month we introduced Ernie Domet's overview of the monotheistic religions and the comparison of Christianity and Islam. Ernie observed "most Christians unfortunately know very little about other religions. This includes the totally erroneous view - held by far too many Christians - that all who worship one GOD are basically on the right track". We now present the second installment of Ernie's discussion.

MOHAMMED

Mohammed was born in 570 A.D. in Mecca, now Saudi Arabia into a prominent and highly respected family. At age 25, he married KHADIJA, a wealthy widow 15 years his senior. The union turned out very happy. But only one of their children lived to maturity, their daughter FATIMA. In his youth, Mohammed travelled with Trading Caravans from Mecca to Syria. He was known to have come under the influence of Jewish and Christian teachings. Also, he had a reputation for honesty and wisdom and hated the idolatry and immorality rampant in Arabia at that time.

Mohammed spent a lot of time in solitary meditation in caves and had many disturbing visions. About 610 A.D. he believed he saw the angel GABRIEL who told him:

"Recite (Qu'oran) in the name of the LORD who has created, created

man from clots of blood. Recite, seeing that the LORD is the most generous, who has taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know."

Thus, the Muslims' bible, the KORAN is the "reciting" of revelations given to Mohammed over a period of 22 years.

HISTORY OF ISLAM

Mohammed died in Mecca in 632 A.D. His death did not lessen the fervour of his followers in any way. His successors were known as the CALIPH'S (means "successor") - who were men chosen by the people. A CALIPH had the same authority over the Muslim community as Mohammed, and had to have a number of special qualities. The most important, that he be divinely inspired.

Under the leadership of the CALIPHS, the Muslims soon embarked on a crusade to conquer the world for Allah. The victorious warriors of Allah on horseback rapidly conquered the Middle East, Iran and Byzanz (East Rome) now Turkey, all Christian then, and spread into Asia. Their conquest of the Holy Land in 636 A.D., just 4 years after Mohammed's death ultimately led in 1099 A.D. to the first of the terrible Christian Crusades to recapture Jerusalem from the Muslims.

With reference to the "ISLAMIC NATION" mentioned previously, it is worth noting that these Crusades were

“ordered” by the Pope as spiritual and de facto political ruler of the numerous European entities comprising the Holy Roman Empire at the time which one could also call the “*Christian Nation*”. The duty to participate was imposed on all the “Faithful” (i.e. all the Kings, noblemen and knights) comprising the ruling classes in the “Holy Roman Empire”. It does not take much imagination to see in those Crusades the Christian equivalent of the Muslim “JIHAD” (Holy War).

Next, the Islamic whirlwind stormed across North Africa, and in 711 A.D. crossed the Straits of Gibraltar into Spain. They defeated the weak Visigoths opposition there, crossed the Pyrenees into Southern France, looted and burned Bordeaux and marched northward.

Finally, in 732 A.D. Charles Martel (the Hammer), King of the Franks, met the SARACEN armies (*Saracen was the medieval Christian name for Muslim*) at POITIERS, just outside TOURS, about 150 miles SW of Paris. The 2 armies faced each other for 7 days; then battle was joined. The Saracens suffered their first major and decisive defeat. They retreated back into Spain where they stayed for many centuries and their influence is visible to this day in architecture, music (Flamenco) etc. Most historians regard POITIERS as one of the most important battles in history because of its fundamental effect on the future of Europe and, ultimately, the rest of the world.

Some statistics seem to indicate that ISLAM is now the fastest-growing religion, especially in Africa and Asia. However, through migration and its very strong missionary emphasis, Islam is now also represented heavily in Europe and North America.

Like JUDAISM and CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM also had its share of splits and sects soon after Mohammed’s death. The first major split, much like our Protestant and Catholic) was into

- SUNNI MUSLIMS. and
- SHI’I MUSLIMS.

There are also many sects, such as the WHAHABIS, to which Osama Bin Laden belonged as well as orthodox and liberal Muslims.

SOME LESSONS WE CAN LEARN FROM MUSLIMS

Apart from some of the doctrinal and other issues discussed so far, the fundamental difference between Islam and Christianity is this:

- To the Muslim, the WORD of GOD is the Koran; Mohammed witnesses to the WORD;
- To the Christian, the WORD of GOD is a Person, Jesus Christ. The Bible witnesses to HIM.

Therefore, Mohammed is a dead PROPHET while Jesus Christ is a living SAVIOUR. Muslims may rightly claim from their perspective that “We (i.e. Jews, Christians and Muslims) all worship the same GOD”. That view is based on their belief that both the Torah (Old Testament) and the Gospel are also scriptures inspired by Allah. But a Christian can never agree and say: “Yes, ALLAH is also our GOD” because Jesus revealed to us in his person, life and teachings a totally different GOD. However, there are also quite a few things we can learn from Muslim believers:

- a. Muslims would never question the Koran. In fact, they often adjust worldly knowledge to the Koran, instead of the other way around;
- b. The sovereignty of Allah. No Muslim ever says anything regarding a plan or idea without adding a final “Insh Allah” (“God willing”) - an important point which we neglect to do most of the time (see James 3:15);
- c. In discussions with unbelievers, committed Muslims would never water down their own belief in the absolute truth of the Koran, their practices, etc. just to please or be polite;
- d. Real Muslim believers are very mission-minded. I also found that they generally don’t respect any Christians who are unable to state their faith clearly and just as firmly

(To Be Continued In The Next Issue)

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The second Prayer shawl ministry meeting was held Nov. 21. We had 9 ladies who are all working very hard to produce shawls and we are all having a great time of fellowship as we work. Three shawls have already been distributed to Val Clifton, Kathy Waldron, and Mary McPherson (a former neighbor of Jean Hunter). Each shawl was received with joy and gratitude.

The shawls we have produced will be blessed at the service on Dec. 2. After that, they will be ready to be given to those who need that special feeling of God's love in their lives.

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday January 16, 2013. All ladies are welcome to join us from 12:00 - 2:00.



Thanks to all the ladies working on their own at home. Their efforts are greatly appreciated as well.

Ellen Kaye

Each One Teach One

References from this month's contributions of Pastor Michel and Pastor Robin triggered a long distant memory of the proverb "Each One Teach One". I first heard the proverb as a young boy, in a remote village, in connection with an initiative to teach certain daily survival skills to unskilled and unsophisticated mothers – skills that we take for granted all these years later. The connection between the events of long ago and both Pastors' comments impelled me to offer these comments.

Each One Teach One is an African American proverb: the original author is unknown. This phrase originated in the United States during slavery, when Africans Americans were denied education, including learning to read. Many, if not most slaves were kept in a state of ignorance about anything beyond their immediate circumstances which were under control of owners, the law makers and the authorities. When a slave learned or was taught to read, it became their duty to teach someone else, spawning the phrase "Each one teach one." In the first half of the 20th century, the phrase was applied to the work of a Christian missionary, Dr. Frank Laubach, who utilized the concept to help address poverty and illiteracy in the Phillipines.

What has the foregoing to do with Pastor Michel? I quote "Some of us expect things to return to the way things used to be and should be. Others expect some drastic changes that will have the church bursting with life and new members within a year. Neither is likely." What has it to do with Pastor Robin? Pastor Robin maintained for fourteen months that as a growing church we must spread the word about who we are and about what makes Central so special. He exhorted us to bring

a friend and employed statistics to say that most people do not go to church because they were never invited. He said that 75 percent of people invited will go.

During my early years at Central I was very impressed by the depth and intellect of Pastor Richard Root's sermons and often regretted that only we, a privileged few had the opportunity to hear those messages. I often voiced this concern to Chris and wished I knew how to get those messages to the world at large. The same applied to the modern views and passion of Pastor Robin Barlow; and the same will apply to the earnestness of Pastor Michel Belzile's messages unless we can get the messages out of the walls of our sanctuary to believers and non believers alike. After all, if we have such a good thing here, why not share it? Is this not what Evangelism is about? Is this not what Robin's five characteristics of a growing church about? Was not Michel's sermon this past Sunday about "the fellowship of the believers".

I proudly speak of my church, of Central and I invite others to visit, as I am sure many others do. I am yet to achieve Robin's seventy five percent, but I continue to hope and pray and invite. I urge us all to borrow from that old African American proverb "Each One Teach One" and "Each one bring One". You never know. If Dr. Frank Laubach could employ that concept to bring literacy to "the silent billion" in over 103 countries, maybe – just maybe we can employ it to bring a few souls to Christ and enlarge and enrich our "fellowship of believers".

Errol Anderson

Remember My Birthday?

As you well know, we are getting closer to My birthday. Every year there is a celebration in My honor and I think that this year the celebration will be repeated. During this time there are many people shopping for gifts, there are many radio announcements, TV commercials, and in every part of the world everyone is talking that My birthday is getting closer and closer.

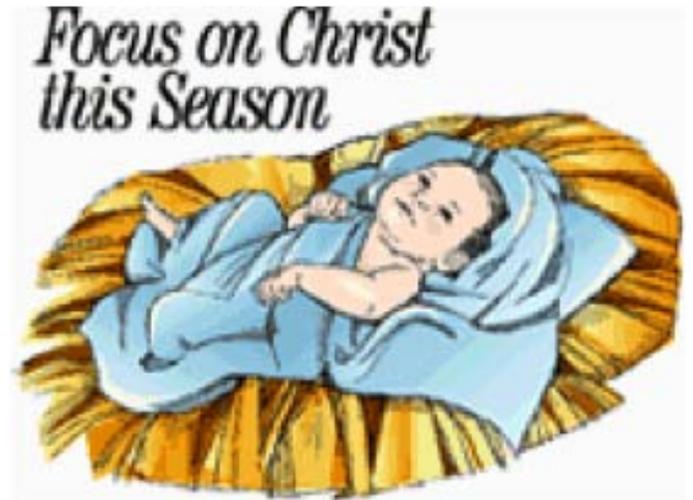
It is really very nice to know, that at least once a year, some people think of Me. As you know, the celebration of My birthday began many years ago. At first people seemed to understand and be thankful of all that I did for them, but in these times, no one seems to know the reason for the celebration. Family and friends get together and have a lot of fun, but they don't know the meaning of the celebration.

I remember that last year there was a great feast in My honor. The dinner table was full of delicious foods, pastries, fruits, assorted nuts and chocolates. The decorations were exquisite and there were many, many beautifully wrapped gifts. But, do you want to know something? I wasn't invited. I was the guest of honor and they didn't remember to send Me an invitation.

The party was for Me, but when that great day came, I was left outside, they closed the door in my face... and I wanted to be with them and share their table. In truth, that didn't surprise Me because in the last few years all close their doors to me.

Since I was not invited, I decided to enter the party without making any noise. I went in and stood in a corner. They were all drinking; there were some who were drunk and telling jokes and laughing at everything. They were having a great time. To top it all, this big fat man all dressed in red wearing a long white beard entered the room yelling Ho-Ho-Ho! He seemed drunk. He sat on the sofa and all the children ran to him, saying, "Santa Claus, Santa Claus"... as if the party were in his honor!

At 12 midnight all the people began to hug each other; I extended my arms waiting for someone to hug Me and ... do you know ... no one hugged Me. Suddenly they all began to share gifts. They opened them one by one with



great expectation. When all had been opened, I looked to see if, maybe, there was one for Me.

What would you feel if on your birthday everybody shared gifts and you did not get one? I then understood that I was unwanted at that party and quietly left. Every year it gets worse. People only remember to eat and drink, the gifts, the parties and nobody remembers Me. I would like this Christmas that you allow Me to enter into your life. I would like that you recognize the fact that almost two thousand years ago I came to this world to give my life for you, on the cross, to save you. Today, I only want that you believe this with all you heart.

I want to share something with you. As many didn't invite Me to their party, I will have my own celebration, a grandiose party that no one has ever imagined, a spectacular party. I'm still making the final arrangements. Today I am sending out many invitations and there is an invitation for you. I want to know if you wish to attend and I will make a reservation for you and write your name with golden letters in my great guest book. Only those on the guest list will be invited to the party. Those who don't answer the invitation will be left outside.

Do you know how you can answer this invitation? It is by extending it to others whom you care for...

I'll be waiting for all of you to attend my party this year... See you soon... I love you!

~Jesus~

HOME

submitted by Anne-Marie Domet

Finance and Property Maintenance

Church Budget Meeting for Fiscal 2013 Held November 11th, 2012

The Annual Budget Presentation Meeting was held on a beautiful Remembrance Day morning, following the Church Service. A somewhat disappointing turnout of only 51 was attributed to the beautiful day and many members and veterans who wished to participate at the Memorial events being conducted at the Cenotaph at the same time.

The budget for 2013 was set at \$350,091; just slightly below the current year’s budget of \$353,761. It was felt to be easily achievable, and, after a category by category presentation, it was unanimously approved. This is now your collective budget, but we must continue to pray for its achievement as we move quickly ahead into 2013 activities.

In addition to the General Church Operating Budget, the **Capital Budget for 2013** and beyond was also presented and items approved were as follows:

- Continuation of doors replacement project (3 sets) in the increased amount of \$25,000
- Replacement of basement windows..... 5,000
- Replacement of one Laptop/Desktop computer 1,500
- Renovation /upgrade of vestibule and foyer areas (subject to further review / consideration when money from the fundraiser is available and revised estimates are received) 20,000

AND, projects under consideration for beyond 2013 are as follows, as part of our longer term planning process:

- Establishment of a Capital Sinking Fund Account of \$10,000 annually. To form a part of future budget proposals.
- Replacement of all kitchen windows
- Total refreshment of other kitchen facilities
- Repaving of parking lot
- and forward scheduling of any and all other major projects as they arise

Your Finance and Property Maintenance Committees are working diligently to ensure our financial and project planning processes are well managed and prayerfully thought out. As can be seen, there is much to think about and even more to pray about as we move into 2013 and the growing years beyond. As usual, any suggestions

for the improvement, and/ or betterment of our church facilities, should be advanced to the Chairs of Finance or Property Committees, Dwight Nowlan and Bill Goodbrand respectively.

Your Finance and Property Maintenance Committees

Board of Finance

FALL OF 2012 FINANCIAL UPDATE

Ten Months to end of October

	Actual	Budget	Better/(Worse)
General Offerings.....	\$249,969	\$267,718	(\$17,749)
Total Revenue	277,319	294,801	(\$17,482)
Total Expenses	232,786	294,801	\$62,015
Net Surplus (Deficit).....	\$ 44,533		

We currently have a significant surplus because we have not been funding a full time Senior Pastor during the year to date for an INTERIM EXPENSE REDUCTION of \$37,000; in addition to \$8,000 due to unfilled position of Music Director. Other reductions/overages were scattered but these were the major variances.

church rentals is below budget. General offerings and overall revenue have an unfavourable variance of more than \$17,000. The Senior Pastor Position is now staffed and operational and we are hopeful contributions will similarly come back on track. Please continue to pray for the financial well being of the Church as we head into a new and challenging Fiscal year.

For the year-to-date every category of income, except



A Gift from Christ

by Rev. Art Hadley

There are so many gifts given to us in the events of the first Christmas, but one of the best is found in a tiny three-lettered word – JOY. It starts with Mary exclaiming “My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour!”. And it continues with the angelic word to the shepherds “I bring you good news of great joy”.

Joy in its biblical understanding may be hard to define in a dictionary, but we understand that it has more height and depth and breadth than mere happiness. It is a special gift of God’s grace, so that in the midst of deep sorrow joy says that there is comfort and sustenance – in the midst of pain and undue pressure there is a ministry of courage – in the face of anxiety and perplexity there is the provision of genuine hope.

The note of joy was sounded in the pages of the Old Testament. “When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy, my heart’s delight” (Jeremiah 15:16). “Those who sow in tears will reap with joy” (Psalm 126:5). “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads” (Isaiah 35:10).

Jesus said to the Twelve: “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete”. And in His great prayer to His Father on their behalf he said: “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them”. (John 15:11 and 17:13).

Paul continues the same theme in his various letters, and Philippians is often called the epistle of joy. Typical is his prayer for the Colossians when he asks “May you be strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience, with joy” (Col. 1:11).

A benediction of Paul’s often overlooked but filled with the ministry of God’s grace reads: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13).

Joy is a dominant note in the Christmas carols which have been sung down through the ages. An unknown patient in a hospital wrote these arresting lines about the carols: “As I glanced at those hymns and read the words of them, it struck me as never before that Christ came to bring joy into the world and into the lives of the people He met. If Christianity really means belonging to Christ, why is it that this sense of joy is missing so much in the church?”

An answer to that question might be found in a well-known Baptist church in London, England which in the first year of a new pastorate took as its motto and theme those words of Nehemiah, spoken in the midst of the tough times of rebuilding following the return from exile: “The joy of the Lord is your strength” (Neh. 8:10). It meant so much to that congregation throughout the first year, that they adopted it for the second, and then decided it was the best theme and practice for every successive year.

Paul asked the Galatian churches a most important question: “What has happened to all your joy?” (Gal.4:15). In the same letter he indicated that joy is the second element of the nine which make up the fruit of the Spirit. Joy is a gift from God, but it is also to be through us a gift to God and to others. Lesslie Newbigin was a Presbyterian missionary who became a bishop of the Church of South India. He gave a series of talks to the students and staff of the Christian Medical Centre in Vellore, India ably entitled Journey into Joy. In one of those talks he said: “Joy cannot be trapped and held that way. Joy cannot be accumulated in a safe or put on deposit in a bank. The joy of God is the joy of boundless generosity, of endless giving. God gives us all things freely, but gives them so that we may also learn to give them up. Our joy is not in getting and hoarding, but in getting and giving. The supreme joy is to share both the richness and the generosity of God. God is faithful. That is our security. We know that He can never fail”.

JOY! It’s a wonderful gift! Take it! Believe in it! Practice it! Rejoice in it!

Paul says it best in the New English Bible translation of Philippians 4:4: “I wish you all joy in the Lord. I will say it again: all joy be yours.”

A JOYOUS CHRISTMAS AND A JOYFUL NEW YEAR!!!

Art Hadley

Christmas Choices

Do we walk quickly by
And pretend not to see
The lumpy sleeping bag
On the city sewer grate?
Do we ignore the hand
Stretched out for help?

It's our choice.

Do we grab the remote
When a TV appeal is made
By a sad-eyed Third World child
Do we think that switching
channels
Will make the problem go away?
Along with responsibility?

It's our choice.

Do we tell ourselves
We'll drop some coins in
The Sally Ann Kettle
The next time we're in the mall?
Do we have no change left
And are reluctant to put in a bill?

It's our choice.

“Inasmuch” is an intriguing word
Denoting generosity of spirit
Coupled with love in action.
Giving to the less fortunate
Is really a gift to God
And honours the author of
Christmas.

It's our choice.

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Operation Christmas Child Boxes

On Monday November 20th, 130 Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes from Central Baptist Church were delivered. Thank you to all our members!

A niece of Margaret McBurney Thomas, Ruth McComb, and her youth group helped with the preparation of the Operation Christmas Child boxes in Waterloo in late November. We asked her to write a paragraph about the work that goes on after the boxes leave here. We thought you would be



interested in hearing about the process. Margaret added that articles not suitable to include within the Christmas box are collected and sent to the local Social Services office.

Original Message From M&P Thomas

Dad, Evie's daughter Ruth and her youth group helped out at the Operation Christmas Child yesterday so I asked her to write a paragraph for you to explain what goes on during the sorting. I told her you do the 'Missionary Moment' at your church and wanted to include the Christmas Child operation at some point. So here are her thoughts:

Preparing the shoe boxes for OCC is a very particular but simple task that volunteers of ages from 14 + enjoy. There are about 6 people at each pod/table so there are two inspectors and one inspector on each side. First, there is the pre-inspector that looks through the box for any monetary donations and generally looks through for any inappropriate items. Then, it gets inspected again by the next person in line. Going through each and every item more thoroughly than the first person and checking for appropriate label (boy/ girl and clearly marked age) (If the box is not 2/3 full it goes to the 'box hospital' to be filled).

Next, the last person tapes the box together with special tape so packers know it has been inspected. It then gets sent down the rollers to be stacked in shipping boxes. Some items that are not allowed are any kind of liquid (toothpaste, hand sanitizer, shampoo etc.), food (chocolate, candy that does not have a hard shell etc.), weapons or anything that is related to war (camouflage, toy guns etc.) or anything that could possibly scare a child, playing cards, anything that is breakable etc.

There are 2 OCC warehouses in Canada (Waterloo and Calgary). On Saturday morning we processed about 6000 boxes and their goal is to process more than 300 000 in Waterloo this year. We are the last people to see the boxes before the special child receives it. It was a fun project to be part of!

June and Warren McBurney

And Finally...

Thank you to all who have contributed to this issue. We would love to have more participation. Do let the church office know if you have any items family news, ministry, interests etc. Also, if you would like to receive this Newsletter by e-mail, please also let the church office know.