



Bala United Church

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Issue 46

Newsletter December, 2010

Celebrating the life and work of our Church

Rev. Sue Woods, Minister

Minister's Chat

I am almost never lost for words but today I am. The deadline is here. This morning I am supposed to write a Christmas message for the December newsletter while my heart is very heavy with the losses both churches are suffering. Our organist, Leda, at Bala United lost her very caring husband, Bob Sutton, and our church in Port Carling lost a courageous and brave individual, Jan Douglas. What can I say in such sadness? Then I received a gift via email: I clicked on it and cried through the whole performance. It was one of those aha! moments when, in the midst of sadness, there is a ray of hope. It gave me goose bumps.

Just click on:

<http://youtu.be/SXh7JR9oKVE>

Handel's *Messiah* tells the story of a Saviour come to Earth -- the reason Christmas is celebrated. This peace brings together the wonder of the Christmas story and the beauty of music. Our Christmas journey begins with ADVENT. Advent is a dance set to the

rhythm of waiting. We wait for the holy; we wait for the birth; we wait for the light. In our haste to make it to Christmas, we often fill our waiting with frantic steps of shopping, baking, Christmas card writing, decorating, and caring for others. We may wear ourselves out in the process and then wonder why our spirits sink after the holidays. Or we may dance a slow, painful dance of aloneness, wishing that the images of happy, prosperous families and friends would hurry by until another year.



All her life, Edith never wished anyone a Merry Christmas. To those who knew her, however, it was not at all strange. Edith loved Christmas and she cleaned, polished, baked, and trimmed her tree with delight. She knew, nonetheless, that all of that was just glitter that caught the eye. To her friends and family she said, "I wish you Christmas." And in those words she wished peace, joy, love, and hope. Edith had it right.

Christmas should be more than merriment and glitter. Advent calls us to walk the way of hope, peace, joy, and love -- the real journey to Christmas.

God of new birth, we long to see the star
and hear the angels.

God of new life, we long to be filled with
joy and peace.

God of love, we long to see the wonder of
the baby.

God of hope, we pray as we journey that
we may know Christmas. Amen

Christmas blessings
Rev. Sue

Notes from Council

Your Council meets monthly to assist the carrying out of the work of our little Church. Through Council and through general membership, our Church continues to be involved in the broader community. More recently our Chair, Steve Burdick, thanked Members of the Cranberry Festival Board for the opportunities they provide, through Festival, for Churches like ours to fund raise. As with many organizations readers are familiar with, membership in Bala United Church seems to bring with it an involvement in fundraising.

On this note our Treasurer, Leo Couture, at Council meetings in October and November reviewed expectations of Canada Revenue Agency. Our continued respect for these regulations will ensure that Bala United Church maintains its charitable—not for profit—status. Members of Council value highly Leo's leadership and efforts in this regard and in regard to budgets developed for our Church and for the joint Bala Port Carling Charge.

Members of Council also recognize Marilyn Niess' hard work and leadership both re the Church Directory and the development of a plaque that recognizes contributors to the new sound system. Indeed Bill Niess hung the new plaque in the Sanctuary this Friday morning. At every turn and almost every day, in our congregation, good deeds take place in our Church and beyond. Of course, Council Members hold no monopoly on these sometimes covert Christian actions. Witness, for example, the outstanding preparatory work for Christmas executed by Mavis Legris, Cecilia Coldwell, Jean Cameron, and Dick Colwell.

Property Chair, Bill Niess, continues to be vigilant re the property needs of our Church. More recently this has included the installation of an eaves trough on the far side of the Jackson C. E. Wing to direct moisture away from the basement walls. Bill also continues to play a pivotal role on the Ministry and Personnel Committee. In that vein, at the last meeting of Council, Bill presented a document to establish a protocol for a ``nominating committee" to support the work of Council including the appointment of trustees.

At the last meeting of Council it was decided to hold a Christmas Breakfast on December 7 that includes Members' spouses and partners. Leo Couture will provide an energetic charge to this culinary challenge. At the same meeting, Council appointed Council Member, Marg Couture, to assist as Acting Vice-chair during the absence of the Vice-chair.

Respectfully submitted, Brian
McDonald, Vice-chair



Schedule of Christmas Services

Sunday, December 12, White Gift Service:

Gifts of food items wrapped in white tissue paper or money will be received. These will be given to the Christmas Food Drive for needy families in the area.

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Sunday, December 19, Christmas Communion service at 11:00 a.m.

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Friday, December 24, 2010 5:00pm Family Christmas Eve Service at Bala United Church.

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Sunday, December 26, 2010 11:00 a.m. at Bala United Church

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Sunday, January 2, 2011 11:00 a.m. at Bala United Church



With
Deepest
Sympathy

We mourn the death of Bob Sutton, husband to Leda Sutton. Bob passed away on Monday, November 21, 2010 at the Bracebridge South Muskoka Hospital. Bob's Memorial Service will take place at Bala United Church on Friday, December 10, 2010 at 1 pm. A reception will follow the service in the Jackson Christian Education Wing at the church.

We also mourn the death of Jan Douglas, from Port Carling United Church, who died on Friday, November 19, 2010 following a courageous battle with cancer. Jan was a joyous, and generous woman who will be greatly missed. Her funeral took place on November 23, 2010 at Port Carling United Church



Ice Luminaries

On Christmas Eve the pathway into the church will be lined with candle/ice luminaries. They will be lit "in memory" and "in honour" of people who have special places in our hearts.

If you would like us to light luminaries on your behalf, please send \$10 for each to Bala United Church Women, at P O Box 313, Bala ON POC 1A0 or give the money directly to Marian McDonald with the names of the people being honoured.

At the conclusion of the service, the luminaries will remain at the church or they can be taken home to mark your own doorway.

A DIME A DAY FOR



MISSION AND SERVICE



New Year's Reflections

Upcoming Events:



Saturday, December 4, 2010

Trek to Bethlehem

Bala Community Centre

Guided tours start at 6 pm

Sunday, December 5, 2010

Dedication of the

Habitat for Humanity Homes

2:30 pm

1014 & 1014A Burgess Street

Bala, Ontario

Light refreshments will follow at

Bala United Church.

Tuesday, December 7, 2010

Church Council Christmas Breakfast

9:30 am, JCE Christian Education Wing

Thursday, December 9, 2010

ACW/UCW-- Ladies Annual

Christmas Dinner: 6:30 pm

Trinity St. Albans' Anglican Church

Please bring your favourite potluck dish and
an unwrapped toy.

Looking back on the months gone by
As a new year starts and an old one ends
We contemplate what brought us joy
And we think of our loved ones and our
friends.

Recalling all the happy times
Remembering how they enriched our lives
We reflect upon who really counts
As the fresh and bright new year arrives.

And when we ponder those who do
We immediately think of you.

Thanks for being one of the reasons we'll
have a Happy New Year.