



# Bala United Church

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## Celebrating the life and work of our Church

Rev. Sue Woods, Minister

### Minister's Chat

It is the eve before holidays and I am looking over my book shelves to see what I would love to read by the pool for the next two weeks (I know, I know tough life!). My fingers seem to dance up to a book written by DeePak Chopra entitled Why is God Laughing. It is a story about a successful L.A. comedian, just a regular guy, who comes in contact with a mysterious stranger who changes his life forever. The two begin an ongoing discussion about the true nature of being. The author then spells out the lessons that the story imparts to us: ten reasons to be optimistic even in these challenging times. The author believes that the healthiest response to life is laughter from the heart. From the jacket of the book, Why is God Laughing, we see that "without a doubt that there is always a reason to be grateful, that every possibility holds the promise of abundance, and the obstacles are simply opportunities in disguise. In the end, we really don't need a reason to be happy. The power of happiness lies within each of us, just waiting to be unleashed." I love to laugh and the book mark tells me that I have not finished reading it so I slipped it in my bag next to a couple of mystery novels.

Can you believe it? It is finally May and what a long winter it has been. I love this new month with all the excitement it brings of new activities and green grass! I enjoy reacquainting myself with all the folks who have just returned from being down south (that is where I'll be for the first 14 days of May. LOL). It seems that fun has returned to a dormant land even though

spring seems so late this year. Having Easter the last weekend in April, the Hallelujah hymns are still ringing in my ears and the beauty of the flowers and their aroma are still lingering in the church. What a wonderful message of new life. These words with which I closed the sermon on Easter Sunday I share again. As we see new life in our world, where have you seen the Risen Christ?

I have seen the Risen Christ.

He is in his people, in the church.

I have seen the Lord in each of you.

I have seen the Lord in those who come to see me seeking help for their difficulties.

I have seen the Lord in weak knees struggling to climb our church steps.

I have seen the Lord in young faces discovering the message of love.

I have seen the Lord in the faces of parents, and in the wisdom of grandparents.

I have seen the Lord in those whom age has weakened, who long for God to take them to God's very Self so that they can be present with the Risen Lord in a new and complete way.

I have seen the Lord in those with whom I agree and in those with whom I find myself in disagreement.

Jesus lives in us and we know him not in an empty tomb but in relationship with him and in those who are his own today in whom he lives and moves and has his being. Let us listen to his voice.

Blessings, Rev. Sue

## Notes from Council

Happy Movie Night participants on March 26 enjoyed popcorn, hotdogs, and—most importantly—the screening of "Secretariat." Thanks go to the Coutures, the Crofts, and the Niess' for this new and successful "night out" for townsfolk. While not a fund raiser, proceeds of food sales met expenses—just!

Future happenings include an "outside clean up" morning, May 14, at 8:30 a.m. (Bring your rake!); the Official Board meeting, Tuesday, May 24, at Bala United Church; our Congregation Meeting, Sunday, May 29, after service; and Valley Men's Choir—Saturday, September 17, at 7 p.m.

With the support of Council, Marian McDonald will pursue the organizing of archival material currently lodged in the Church's safe. Council has asked Property Chair, Bill Niess, to undertake the matter of re-keying all locks to the Church for reasons of security and protection from liability. Bill intends to issue keys on a needs basis, short term and long term. Council supported the purchase of a certificate for pizza from the Bala Pub as a token of appreciation to young men, Jordan, Matt, and Kyle Cameron, and their dad, Neil, who (at the time of writing) have moved the piano from the Jackson C.E. Wing to the Sanctuary. This "move" has become a pleasant tradition that saves the backs of Members less agile.

Under Bill Niess' leadership, a small team has come together to plan the basement renewal in the Jackson C. E. Wing. First, the team will explore a vision and possible uses for the space there. A building permit will be applied for and the appropriate drawings submitted for the approval process. All Members of the Congregation are invited to speak to the following re possible ideas and uses of the basement space: Leo Couture, Beth Croft, Brian McDonald, Bill Niess, and Anne Snowdon. At some point the committee, through their Chair Bill, will bring recommendations to Council for support. Of course, Treasurer, Leo Couture, will play an integral part in the unfolding of the basement renewal.

On the topic of Swift River's potential development of the Bala Falls for hydroelectric generation and possible impact on properties adjacent to our church, copies of letters written

and the oral presentation (speaking notes) made by Brian to Township of Muskoka Lakes Council on March 14 are available through our Council secretary, Marian McDonald.

Brian McDonald, Vice-Chair

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Secretariat

On March 26, members of the congregation and community joined together for an evening of food, fun and friendship followed by the movie Secretariat. Housewife and mother, Penny Chenery, despite her lack of horse-racing knowledge and against all odds, guides her long shot, but precocious stallion Secretariat, in 1973 to set the unbeaten record for winning the Triple Crown to become America's hero and racing legend. Secretariat proved to be a very uplifting, inspiring, exciting movie about a true story that left the audience sitting on the edge of their seats waiting and cheering for results of a race already in the history books. Anyone passing by the church that evening must have wondered what was going on! Many thanks to all those involved with the organization of such a fun evening...hot dogs by Chef Leo, pop and homemade popcorn by Chefs Rev Sue and Beth. What a great way to spend a Saturday night!

Guest reporter, Lexan Wheaton

## Announcements:



### The Bala United Church Gift Shop . . .

The shop is open Mondays from 10 am to 12 noon or by appointment. Call Helen at 762-2625 or Cecelia Colwell at 762-2323.

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### Knitting Group

Every **Monday** 10 am – 12 noon  
Jackson C.E. Wing – Everyone is welcome.  
Coffee is served.

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**Bala United Church Council Meeting**

Tuesday, June 7, 2011

9:30 am Jackson C E Wing

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**HELP WANTED:**

- ❖ Ushers
- ❖ Women and men to sit with children on Sunday mornings
- ❖ Coffee makers, and a
- ❖ Newsletter Editor

Please fill in the sign-up sheets in the JCE Wing and let us know that you are ready to take on one of these jobs!

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**BALA UNITED CHURCH WOMEN**



**Thursday, May 12, 2011**

**Social: 11:30 am**

**Pot Luck Luncheon: 12 noon**

All women of the church are invited as we share winter stories and discuss summer plans. Please bring your favourite recipe to share on the buffet table.

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**Don't forget !**

**A DIME A DAY FOR**



**MISSION AND SERVICE**

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**Easter Sunrise Service  
42 for breakfast!**



**V.B.S. 2011**

Set Sail for SonTreasure Island!  
Join the Treasure-Hunting Adventure at  
Bala United Church  
August 9 to 11 beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Registration forms are available in the blue pail by the decorated bulletin board in the church or online.

Hurry and set sail for SonTreasure Island.



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**Happy Mothers  
Day!**