



Port Carling United Church

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Celebrating the life and work of our Church

Rev. Sue Woods, Minister

Minister's Chat

I love setting out the crèche as part of the decorations for Christmas. I look at each figure and place them very carefully around the manger waiting to place baby Jesus on Christmas Eve. Now is the time to put them all away with memories of 2009, each wrapped carefully in newspaper. I always pause when I put away the shepherds, I guess because in some way their story touches me deeply.

Shepherds in biblical times were dirty and smelly.



People did not pay much attention to them. They did their job and left everyone else alone. No one thought a shepherd was worth worrying about. They didn't make much money, they weren't very clean, and they lived with animals. They just didn't matter a great deal to anyone. They were unimportant.

But all that changed one night when the shepherds were out in the field watching their sheep. You know the story "while shepherds watched their flocks by night" an angel appeared to them and told them the greatest story ever. Yes the angel told these poor uneducated people first!

Imagine that, here were shepherds who didn't matter to anybody. Shepherds who no one cared about or paid any attention to, and YES God decided they should be the first one on earth to receive the good news that Jesus had been born.

This tells us something about God. It tells us that God doesn't care how much money we have. God doesn't care where we live or what we look like. God doesn't care what kind of job we have. God doesn't even care if no one thinks we matter, because we all matter to God. We might be nobodies to everyone else, but each of us is a "somebody" to God.

God could have sent an angel to the kings first but God

chose to deliver this precious message to the lowly shepherds. So in the middle of January when the Christmas decorations are all put away, the crèche is wrapped up in newspaper and put back in the well used box, the snow is up past the windows sills and you are feeling down and out, remember the shepherds and remember that YOU will always matter to God.

Rev Sue



The Christmas Pageant

The Christmas spirit was alive and well as Port Carling Sunday school shared with us the importance of sharing on Sunday, December 13 at the White Gift Service. The Christmas Pageant focused on the animals that came to visit baby Jesus on that precious night with their gifts. Only Michael the mouse had no gift to bring. In the end Michael, the animals and the congregation realized the most precious gift we can give this Christmas season is ourselves.

With the help of Glen Orchard School food drive and all the churches with their white gifts over fifty families were given hampers that will help them in this season of sharing.

Prayer Chain at Port Carling United

Did you know that...

1. *It is a proven fact that prayer works*
2. *We have a prayer chain at our Church that has been in existence since the 1980's.*
3. *You do not have to give names or specific details of the person you want prayer for unless you wish. Remember God knows all!*
4. *You can request prayer for yourself, a family member or just a friend, or a specific situation.*
5. *You can call with your prayer request 24 – 7 in emergency.*

Paul knew the experience of the peace and comfort that comes from prayer. In Phil 4: 6-7 he writes “do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

If you would like prayer or you wish to be on the prayer chain, please call Dawn Stephen at 765-3936 or Bette Clark at 765-5049.

Are you interested in pastoral visiting or phoning shut-ins, or our seniors? Please let Rev. Sue know.

Bakeless Bake Sale a Success!

We hope everyone has had the opportunity to see the attractive new rug on the staircase leading to the Sunday School. This was purchased with the proceeds from the Bakeless Bake Sale and it is certainly a wonderful and cheery addition to our Sunday School. Thank you all who donated to the cause and to the selection committee of Bette Clark and Joan Wallace who made the purchase through Marcie's next door to our church.



The door at the top of the stairs to the Sunday School is also very inviting: with the “ring of hands wreath” on the Sunday

School door and the wording “Our Hands Can Show God's Love.” The wreath is the creative work of Leann Wallace.



The snow was falling and predictions of stormy weather did not stop the UCW ladies meeting where they packed cookies to be delivered to shut-ins and to special people in our community.

After the cookies were packed, the ladies then enjoyed a Christmas lunch provided by Carol Dion, Louise Kirbyson and Kathy Haller. Needless to say it was delicious and enjoyed by all.

Then the “big” task at hand was the decision to allocate the monies that the ladies had raised through their many raising efforts. A total of \$5,500 was distributed to the Chaplaincy Fund, Mission and Service Fund, Shannon Brieese for her work in Africa; Manna Food Bank, Grandmother's to Grandmothers and Port Carling United Church.

A Word about Grandmothers to Grandmothers

The Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign: seeks to raise awareness and mobilize support in Canada for Africa's grandmothers. The campaign was launched by the Stephen Lewis Foundation on March 7, 2006, on the eve of International Women's Day. Since the launch, more than 220 groups of Canadian grandmothers have taken up the call to action and the campaign has raised over \$7 million. SLF directs these funds to community-level organizations in 15 sub-Saharan African countries that provide grandmothers with much needed support, such as food, housing grants, school fees for their grandchildren and grief counseling.

If you would like to learn more about Grandmothers to Grandmothers check out their web site at www.grandmotherscampaign.org

2009 Medical Mission to Honduras Report by Lynda Appleby

Upon our arrival in Honduras we were driven to a town named Colinas in the Santa Barbara area of Honduras and stayed in a hotel there. A hotel in Honduras doesn't have many stars on its sign, believe me – two people share a room about 9 x 9 ft with a flush toilet and cold shower. We were able to take over the hotel and a large locked room was set-up as

our pharmacy along with the dining area for our meals. Our cook took over the kitchen so once again our food was safe and our drinking water came from large plastic containers just like we have here.

The full team of eight North Americans, two Honduran dentists, three translators and about five other local folk who had volunteered to help us, took our medicines in trucks to very rural mountain villages. Our director's wife is a family physician and she headed the medical team plus, another doctor from the USA and two nurses. Once our clinic was organized in a small school, the people who had come to the clinic were registered. They then received their antiphlastic medicine and had their blood pressure, weight and pulse recorded. They told a translator about their health problem and this was written on their registration form. They then saw either a doctor or a nurse. All who come to the clinic are given vitamins and often Tylenol, Tums, or some other over the counter medication. Pain, arthritis, stomach distress and skin problems are the most common complaints.

The villages were about one to two hours away from Colinas over very rough roads that compare to logging roads here. Other missions I have been on the patients have walked hours to come and see us and so this was better and we were able to see where people live, in the higher altitudes.

Our special project this year was to purchase, in Honduras, a portable dental compressor. We purchased the portable dental compressor using a portion of monies donated by the UCW of Port Carling United Church. It was very gratifying for us to fill cavities instead of pulling teeth as in the past. This is real progress for the Honduran mission and those to follow throughout the year.

I also gave a large contribution to our director when three days into our mission, he had to go to San Pedro Sula for more medicine. We bought vitamins for adults and children, medications for high blood pressure, medicine for epileptic disorders and more antibiotics. Funds were also used to buy a rooster and five hens for a very poor family; shoes for a young boy to go back to school in January and food and powdered milk for a very malnourished couple and their two small little girls.

As usual, I helped the pharmacist count, label, and repack vitamins, Tylenol, Tums, Ibuprofen and other over the counter medications to be given out to the

patients. As there were only three from USA and five Canadians on the team we were all very busy. It was a very heart warming experience, however, I am often thinking about the few families we met who were not able to feed themselves or their children. Some of those cases are because one of the parents is suffering from a mental illness so there is no stability in the house.

Pray for the people of Honduras as they, hopefully, settle their political differences and get back to work caring for their people who need it so badly.

Lynda Appleby

Volunteers for the month of January

Ushers: Perry and Karen Bowker

Kitchen Helpers:

January 3rd: Lynn Schroth
10th: Marge Brown
17th: Carol Dion
24th: Bette Clark
31st: Catherine Dedrick

Lane on Holiday!!

In Lane's absence, the following people have so graciously volunteered to provide the music for the month of January.

January 3rd Rev. Sue
10th Joan Wallace
17th Dan Brooks
24th Leda Sutton
31st Dan Brooks

Thank you to Joanne Wilson and Dan Brooks who so willingly provided the music on the organ and/or piano during the month of December.

The Last Word

May we live as God intended, in a world at peace and the awareness of His love in every sunset, every flower's unfolding petals, every baby's smile, every lover's kiss, and every wonderful, astonishing, miraculous beat of our heart.

~~ Author Unknown ~~

A Happy New Year To All !!