



# Christmas

St. David's Presbyterian Church, 98 Elizabeth Ave, St. John's, Newfoundland, A1B 1R8, (709) 722-2382, [stdavids@nfld.com](mailto:stdavids@nfld.com)

## Moving in the Direction of the Light Minister's Message, Dr. Jonathan Dent

Preparing our hearts for Christmas time remains a challenge in our over-consumption and under-spiritual cultural context. Most of us have a difficult time distinguishing between the preparation and the stress of the season. Deep down we love the timeless recounting of the baby who is the promise of hope, peace, joy and love. Yet we experience the rush of buying, the family politics of who should receive what and the overabundance of food and celebrations.

The lights remind us of the Light of the world. As the days become darker and the weather changes, so do we appreciate the light and the lights of the season. Without the light, we grope for our bearings, for our orientation. With the Light, we once again remember what is important, or rather who is important. I encourage us all to take moments during this season to stop and talk to the One in whose name the season is called. Jesus the Anointed One, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords quietly continues to be in the periphery of our cultural celebrations. Just as during the rest of the year, He looks for opportunities to get our attention, and to remind us of His love for us.

Jesus uses our losses, our neediness, our joy, our difficulties, our depression, our loneliness, our confusion, our amazement, our laughter...He uses it all to guide us back to who He is, and what He wants for us in our relationship. He once again whispers to us how much He wants our best, for us individually, for our spouses, children, grandchildren, neighbours, and extended family. Sometimes our schedules get away from us. We often say we don't have enough time for this or that.

As we have finished another church year and approach the end of another calendar year, I hope I may be bold enough to suggest a spiritual and practice exercise for you. If you find yourself not having the time for spiritual activity and prayer, take the time to see where your time is going on paper. Take a 8 ½ x 11 sheet of paper; in landscape orientation (horizontal rather than the normal vertical way we write) and draw 7 columns. Put the seven names of the days on the columns, and eighteen hour slots on the rows for 6 am to 12 midnight, or whatever is appropriate to your schedule, record what you have done in the last week, and let the Lord speak to you about your time.

Time and money seem to define our priorities and choices better than most indicators in our lives. I trust this Christmas and the year of our Lord 2008 will begin with a new resolve to place our resources at the feet of the One the Magi sought so long ago. ✨



Contents	Page
News from the Pews	2
Announcements	3
S. Sutherland Letter	4
Reports	5
Grumpy Camel	6



NEWS FROM THE PEWS .....

- Fred and Heather Morrissey will be coming home from Calgary to spend Christmas in St. John's with their parents, Valda Morrissey and Frances & Jim Steele.
- Stewart and Penny Gillies will be in Smithers, BC over Christmas with their daughter, Joanna, and son-in-law, Gordon as they eagerly await the arrival of their first grandchild. Daughters Kirsty and Allison will be in Scotland celebrating Christmas with their Grandma Pat, aunts, uncles and lots of cousins. We will miss all our friends at St. David's this year and wish everyone a Merry Christmas!
- Dave and Judy Rudofsky are elated to announce that their daughter, Krysta, and husband Keith Pike are expecting their first child in June 2008. This is the first Grandchild for Dave and Judy and also the first Grandchild for the Rudofsky family in North America! Watch this space for more exciting news as it develops!

You're close enough, take the picture already!



From Barbara Ellis . .



Stoyan Stretiev and Family

We are back in Florida but thought the congregation might like to know the latest information on Stoyan Stretiev. Stoyan Stretiev, one of the Bulgarian refugees who came to Newfoundland almost 20 years ago and attended St. David's with us is living in Toronto area with a Dental Equipment Sales and Repair business. He was married in Bulgaria to his wife Yanska last year and they had their first child, a boy named Kristoffer on June 12, 2007 in Bulgaria. Immigration proceedings were very slow and they didn't arrive in Canada until October. John and I stayed with them and had a wonderful visit meeting our new family on our way to Florida. Stoyan always considered us as his adopted parents even after his mother arrived in Newfoundland so we are now the Grandparents to Kristoffer, John being the only grandfather he has.

Boy, how my family grows!

Barbara Ellis

More news from the pews .....

- In a recent note to the Bruneaus from Catherine Whitehead (currently living in British Columbia) she included the following message: "Our sabbatical is so far very enjoyable and rewarding. Best wishes to you and yours and to friends at St. David's".
- Millie Hammond writes "We have had very good news from John Abraham. John would like all his friends at St. David's to know that his wife and young daughter recently arrived in Calgary from Ethiopia to be reunited with him. John came to St. John's early in 2005 having fled from Sudan to the relative safety of Ethiopia. He faithfully worshipped at St. David's until May 2006 when he left for Alberta to seek better employment. He made many friends here and he wishes to be remembered to you all".

Fall 2007 report from the Quinton Family

- Luke graduated Cum Laude from Texas State University in May with Bachelor of Liberal Arts in English and Education. While exploring his options for work and/or education, he has been substitute teaching from grades 1 to 12 in Austin, Texas and has acquired a new appreciation of standing on your feet for hours and hours on end.
- Josh graduated from Memorial University in June with a Bachelor of Commerce (Co-operative). He was awarded the Dean of Business Advisory Board Leadership Award, the Fry Family Foundation Award for Leadership and the Chancellor's Undergraduate Award for Leadership. He has taken a job in New York City with Bloomberg and is living parallel to Manhattan on Roosevelt Island. He has become a consummate "tour guide" for all the sites of NYC to all the travelling Newfoundlanders passing through New York.
- Cassidy is in her 2nd year in Business at Memorial and was part of the ACE Memorial Business Team (SIFE in the states) who brought home 2nd in the World Cup Competitions this October held in - New York City - receiving an Honors Certificate from the University's president. She got to spend some time with Josh and by all accounts a great time was had by all. As a member of QVE, Quintessential Vocal Ensemble, she is looking forward to travelling to France in the spring for the World "Tours Festival". Becky and Leith are excited to have all home for the Christmas Holidays!





## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### DEATHS

Myrtle Burton – August 27, 2007

Murdo Martin – November 3, 2007

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH –**  
November 25, 2007

Stephen McKenzie  
David Bruneau  
Jackson McLean



### **TO: PARTNER CHURCHES OF BRIDGES TO HOPE**

We, at Bridges To Hope, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the wonderful response we have received to alleviate the food shortage that we experienced two weeks ago. It has been wonderful and we pray that you are able to maintain this generosity throughout the festive season.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Staff and Board at Bridges To Hope. May Christmas find you surrounded by those who love you. God Bless!

**Derek Winsor, Program Director Jennifer Whitfield, Food Co-ordinator Marion McCarthy, Admin Assistant**

### Fabulous Homecoming Event! Nov 6. 2007



### Cynthia McKenzie's got Mussels!

Read up on a great article featuring the work of Dr Cindy McKenzie on the following link:

[http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/Story/nl/mussel\\_industry\\_e.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/Story/nl/mussel_industry_e.htm)

A few snips of the article are provided below.



#### Seeding an industry: mussel culture in Newfoundland

If you run out of seeds for your garden, you can just order more. But what if your garden is the sea, and there's no seed store to browse for supplies? That's the case for mussel farmers in Newfoundland. The expanding industry will require a reliable annual seed supply, and is acting today to head off potential shortages in the future. A multi-partner program led by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) is scoping out new seed sources that promise to increase production capacity...

At a mussel industry workshop in 2005, "operators told us the chief problem facing them would be seed supply," says research scientist Cynthia McKenzie of DFO's Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Centre in St. John's. "That's what we've set out to remedy." ..

**God Bless you, the people of St. David's and of my home, Newfoundland****Rev Sandy Sutherland**

The chill from the cold November rain did not dampen the spirits of those gathered that evening in St. James Presbyterian Church in Beersville New Brunswick. The Presbytery had been meeting throughout the day, darting back and forth from the fire hall for meals, and now came the grand finale to the day.

At six-thirty that evening the presbytery reconvened to consider my ordination and induction. Visitors to the presbytery, Rev P.A. McDonald, Rev. Sydney McDonald, and Rev. David Sutherland were noted as corresponding in the meeting of presbytery [notably as they would have words to say in the following worship service.

And though the evening seemed to be roaring by in its business, its effect lingers even now some two weeks later. I tried to grab onto each word, grasping those last moments of a strictly student mindset, but also climbing that last ascent on what has been an often arduous climb over one struggle after another. Certainly not assuming that the work was over, nor the road ahead held any more promise of 'easy streets', yet it was becoming clear that the end of one leg of my life's journeys was reaching its pinnacle.

**THEN****and NOW**

I smiled as Heather Morton – chair of the search committee - came forward to the pulpit to read. Despite all her nerves, her words shone with wisdom and sincerest intent. This set the bar for Rev. P.A. McDonald and my father in their readings as well.

Yet, I was astonished by the careful words of Rev. Jeffery Murray, who graduated the same year I had [but from that other school in Toronto]. In his sermon I was pleased to be offered the wisdom of simply two first straight-forward years he had enjoyed, yet honest in his own challenges as a new minister. Looking back I am reminded that indeed I am only at a beginning.

Ringing in my mind during all of this were the questions – the four questions of faith and intent that the Church asks of those being ordained. And when I was called forward by the Moderator Rev. Martyn Van Essen; my heart was singing as I declared my faith anew as God is the giver of my faith.

As I looked out into the congregation, all those gathered there that night, I saw gentle smiles that had welcomed me for years. There was my family, Aunts and Uncles from both of my parent's families. There were the congregations that I had served in New Brunswick, there were the faces, some worn and tired from long drives, others beaming with joy at my joy. And then there were the congregations, representatives of the people I would come to serve.

And that was about it; I knelt before the Lord's Table and knew my purpose. Hand after hand weighted on my shoulders yet my knees shook with the weight of the prayer in my heart: that this moment would never be small in my memory.

And when I arose and was handed my stole and collar, my heart indeed was soaring.

I will never forget the words offered by my wise advisor Rev. Sydney McDonald [I now have a written copy of it]; I will never forget the joy on so many faces; I will never forget that it took a road that winded across this country; from the ocean of the Atlantic to the seas of prairie wheat. And I am thankful.

God Bless you, the people of St. David's and of my home, Newfoundland, for all you have done and for how you have welcomed me, and how you sent me on my way a stronger person. As I move on to serve here in the Bass River Charge, I will remember always how your wisdom and support got me here will strengthen me as I go to fulfill my calling in God.



## **BOARD OF MANAGERS**

The Board carried on this fall without Jamie Merriam as chair who moved away after hearing the call of his western homeland. In August, Jean Bruneau and John McLean rejoined the Board of Managers after a hiatus of a few years. Jean showed a devious side by nominating John as co-chair with Anne Calver. Thanks Jean. The Board has addressed several issues during the fall. With the guidance of the property committee (Hugh Cumming, Peter Clouston, Jean Bruneau) and with the help of Anne Calver, the minister's vestry is in the process of getting a facelift. The Womens Auxillary is helping financially with the new flooring.

The church is used increasingly by many groups outside the church community. With this increased use, there have been problems with access to the church facilities by members and with parking. The church rents several parking spots to Johnson Insurance and Parkdale Pharmacy and with more visitors to the church, empty spaces have often been at a premium. The Board and Judy Kearsey (administrator) are trying to address the parking space issue by making certain that spaces are being used by those who are supposed to use them. In order to have spaces for, at least, the minister and administrator, Bob Patey had signs made to assign spaces to them. The increased use of the church has put a strain on availability of our church groups to use the facilities at times. The Board is looking into revising rental agreements with outside groups using the church for next year. It has been several years since rates have changed. In that time period, electrical and heating rates have gone up considerably and the new rates will better reflect the true costs and needs of the church.

The Board has enlisted the help of David Rudofsky and the son-in-law of Board member, Steve Andrews, to tweak and to help us understand the beautiful sound system that was purchased by Jamie in the spring. Hopefully, those little feedback noises and those intermittent loud 'crack' sounds will become a thing of the past with the adjustments suggested by our consultants and with the increasing confidence of the managers with the system as time passes.

Finally, the Board reports that the congregational donations to the church in the fall are at budgeted amounts or slightly below budget.  
John McLean Co-chair



## Watch our Choir in Action on YouTube!

## St. David's Choir Notes



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bhPZEtMAPM>

This past Fall has been a busy time for the choir as we attempted new (and sometime difficult!) music from various genres. The choir explored contemplative works as Daniel Pederson's "When I Forget, Yet God Remembers" (based on a Robert Browning poem) to upbeat spirituals such as "Ride On, King Jesus," a powerful and lively work by African-American composer, Moses Hogan. In mid-November, the choir took part in a choral workshop with renowned local conductor Dr. Valerie Long. Dr. Long returned to St. David's to offer her immense expertise and her joy for the choral art - it was certainly an evening to remember. The choir is hoping to work with Dr. Long again in the early Spring, to work on Lenten and Easter pieces. Once again, we extend this invitation to all members of the congregation...more details to come in the New Year. I hope you enjoy the music selections from the Choir over the upcoming weeks as we explore the Christmas music of Canadian composers Stephen Chatman and Mark Sirett. All the best to you and your family during the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Warm regards, Mike Fisher

*want to learn more about conflict resolution and mediation? Contact . . .*



**Community Mediation Services**

Melody & Scott Morton-Ninomiya  
Tel. (709) 722-5040 Fax. (709) 722-5035  
E-mail: [cms@nfld.net](mailto:cms@nfld.net) Website: [www.cmservices.org](http://www.cmservices.org)





## From the Atlantic Mission Society ...

Having completed a five year commitment to the Fraternidad of Mayan Presbyterians in Guatemala, St. David's Auxiliary has selected **Malawi** as the focus of its new international mission project. Our commitment is for three years and will focus on financial support for clean water (wells or boreholes), seeds for farmers, and small animal husbandry projects with goats, chickens, pigs, rabbits, etc. At the Auxiliary's October meeting, our guests were two Elders from the Presbyterian Church in Malawi who happened to be visiting St. John's in connection with international work being done by the Marine Institute. Through the Institute, we hope to establish a local contact who may be able to keep us abreast of projects in Malawi. Our first fundraising event for the new project is being planned for Friday, February 1, 2008. Details have not been finalized but there will be food and entertainment with an African focus and/or flavour. Please take note and mark your calendar!

## The Parable of the Grumpy Camel



Nuri the camel was in a very bad mood that first Christmas night. Now camels are not by nature known for their sweet temper, in fact they grumble all the time, and when a camel looks down his haughty nose at people, it's already obvious that there won't likely be a lot of co-operation forthcoming. With camels, when you try to back them up, they balk and refuse to move; when you haul them forward, they stick their feet in and spit, snort and make all sorts of rude noises. When they're up, they don't want to get down, and when they're down ... for loading ... they are determined not to get up! I once went down the Mount of Olives on a camel – which was a major error of judgement .... This form of transport is not for anyone afraid of heights or prone to seasickness. I could well imagine why Jesus opted for the donkey not the camel on Palm Sunday.



But to get back to Nuri ... He had come a long way with his master Balthazar, who was, of course, one of the wise men; the journey from near modern Baghdad, if tradition is to be believed, would be about 900 miles, and Nuri grumbled the whole way, because his feet were sore, they had loaded him up with too much stuff, it seems as if he had been on the way forever, and besides he and the other camels were beginning to think the wise man hadn't a clue what they were looking for!

The last straw, if you will forgive the phrase, was when they finally reached Bethlehem, very late, very tired, yet nothing would do but for the travellers to stop off first at the stable door over which the star was seen. Well, when Nuri saw that door he knew at once it was your standard no-go area, at least for the camel contingent on this trip. Take a ten foot camel, with a full load on, a six foot human on top of that and a door that's both vertically and horizontally challenged .... And you have a logistical problem that would challenge even an Angus Bruneau!! The maddening thing for Nuri was that he could see the light inside and what looked like a really terrific party going on, but no way of getting in.



Well I'm sure you know what happened next. First they tried to lead the whole entourage through the door ... fat chance of that in spite of a lot of pushing, shoving and yelling. Then they got Nuri down so Balthazar could get off, and up again to have another go at the doorway ... no way even though at one point Nuri got stuck and almost took the door off trying to back up (see paragraph one!). Much arguing from the camel drivers till somebody had the bright idea to unload Nuri completely, and strip him down to just one halter, but he was still just too tall for that door. By this time, Balthazar and the other two kings had gone in ahead, the camel drivers were ready to strike, and poor Nuri was so mad having come all that way and not able to see the Christ child, that he was snorting, spitting, chomping his teeth, snapping at everybody. Finally one little fellow timidly said, "well, why don't you try to get him in on his knees?" And that's just what they did .... With a lot of pushing and squeezing Nuri hunkered his way in, and from right next to the door he could see The Holy Family and everything that was going on, and his long journey was all worthwhile .... He even stopped complaining!

And the moral of this story is .... If we want to see the Christ Child this Christmas Eve, we must let go of all the loads we carry – busyness, tiredness, grumbling, self-pity, pride, anger, fear - and we must come in through that stable door on our knees to worship the King of Glory. For remember, with God, **all** things are possible, even camels through the eye of a needle – or a stable door!

Sheena Findlay





**Craig & Kim departing the amphitheatre in a horse & carriage.**



### **A Good Year for Steve & Emir Andrews !**

On August 24, 2007 Kimberly Andrews, daughter of Steve and Emir, and Craig Putt were married on the stage of the Cabot 500 Theatre in Bowring Park. The wedding took place in beautiful sunshine, with their families and friends there and their dog Ray performing perfectly as ring bearer - no one told him he had "prop" rings! After a week's honeymoon cruise, it was back to Guelph - a new job as technical director with the Stratford festival for Craig and studying for her Board exam to help complete the requirements to graduate as a veterinarian next June for Kim. These she wrote on November 22. Now she just has to complete her various rotations at the Ontario Veterinary College - lots of work, but less studying! They will both be home in St. John's for Christmas.

This summer, along with the wedding, we, Steve & Emir Andrews, raised a litter of 7 Scottish Terrier puppies - all girls! For our part we have kept two pups - Solitaire and Tatiana - to run on and will likely place one later. Of the other five, one - Ceilidh went to the St. David's family of Ken & Sue Templeton, three - Jinx (to be named Jill), Domino and Vesper - are gone to breeders in the eastern US. The last one - named Honey (short for Honey Ryder) - went to a show/breeder home across the Atlantic. After looking into the costs, which turned out to be the same whether the dog was shipped or traveled with someone, and preferring to meet the new owners, Steve set off on Oct. 11 to deliver Honey to her new family, the Möllers, in the town of Bred (about 180 km east of Copenhagen), in Denmark. The new owners were delighted with the dog and gave Steve a quick tour during his 4 day stay. Just in case you haven't figured it out, with 7 girls, we thought it appropriate to use the name of 007's intriguing women from the James Bond movies!



**Three pups playing with our Bengal Cat. Honey Ryder is at the bottom of the photo.**

#### **HANDY LITTLE CHART God has a positive answer:**

<b><u>YOU SAY</u></b>	<b><u>GOD SAYS</u></b>	<b><u>BIBLE VERSES</u></b>
You say: "It's impossible"	God says: All things are possible	Luke 18:27
You say: "I'm too tired"	God says: I will give you rest	Matthew 11: 28-30
You say: "Nobody really loves me"	God says: I love you	John 3:16 & John 3:34
You say: "I can't go on"	God says: My grace is sufficient	II Corinthians 12:9 & Psalm 91:15
You say: "I can't figure things out"	God says: I will direct your steps	Proverbs 3: 5-6
You say: "I can't do it"	God says: You can do all things	Philippians 4:13
You say: "I'm not able"	God says: I am able	II Corinthians 9:8
You say: "It's not worth it"	God says: It will be worth it	Romans 8:28
You say: "I can't forgive myself"	God says: I Forgive you	1 John 1:9 & Romans 8:1
You say: "I can't manage"	God says: I will supply all your needs	Philippians 4:19
You say: "I'm afraid"	God says: I have not given you a spirit of fear	II Timothy 1:7
You say: "I'm always worried and frustrated"	God says: Cast all your cares on ME	I Peter 5:7
You say: "I'm not smart enough"	God says: I give you wisdom	I Corinthians 1:30
You say: "I feel all alone"	God says: I will never leave you or forsake you	Hebrews 13:5

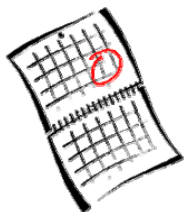
In addition to your regular church offerings, there are several other ways you can support outreach projects at St. David's:

**Recycling** - St. David's has an account at Evergreen Recycling if you'd like to donate your recyclable beverage containers!

There are boxes in the church entrance for:

- **Grocery Tapes** - Dominion or Sobey's cash register tapes (used for fruit baskets and food hampers at Christmas)!
- **Magazines** - Distributed by volunteers to the library at H. M. Penitentiary
- **Canadian Tire Money** - Used to purchase small maintenance items, such as light bulbs, batteries, etc.





### Christmas Schedule

December 16th - Church School Pageant

December 23rd - Sacrament of Holy Communion (9 AM & 11 AM)

December 24th - Family Service - 6:30 P. M. Candlelight Service - 11:30 P. M.



We encourage you to view the Newsletter in color on the St. David's website. [www.stdavids.nf.ca](http://www.stdavids.nf.ca)

In addition, sermons and bulletins are posted regularly

The editorial committee wishes to thank all those who contributed items to this edition of our St. David's Connection newsletter. Please feel free to drop items or notes off any time to members of the newsletter committee listed, or, leave them in the church mailbox.

#### Newsletter Committee:

Jean Bruneau	722-6436
Lillian Crawford	754-2362
John McLean	754-2616
Steve Bruneau	722-6542