

**Special points of interest:**

- Flights diverted to Newfoundland: Approximately 75
- Passengers stranded in St. John's: Approximately 3700
- St. David's call to action: 8:00 PM, Sept 11, 2001
- Preparations Complete for 70 guests: 11:00 PM
- Prior knowledge of Guests' needs and duration of stay: none

Special Edition

Issued November 2001



September 11, 2001 - SPECIAL EDITION -

Message to the Congregation.

(read by Stephen Bruneau at St. David's Church Service, Sunday, September 16th)

This week an extraordinary event took place.

Throughout the world and in our own community the strength and spirit of a great many people worked tirelessly to right a terrible wrong. A wrong which for the most part took place a long distance away and involved people we do not know. In the blink of an eye 5000 of our brothers and sisters vanished from existence, and through some twist of fate, 5000 more appeared on our doorstep. To many of us these groups could so easily have been, and were symbolically, one and the same. The actions of the people of this congregation and others in our community who so willingly devoted their time and efforts to care for the stranded visitors was deeply moving and wonderful to behold.

Deposited in a strange place with no belongings, and no explanations, the unsuspecting passengers were tired, worried and anxious. Many have now left well-rested and at ease. Here at St. David's they found no strangers, they were not hungry, the expected isolation from news events, telephones, conversation and compassion did not materialize. To many of our guests this experience was affirmation that the vast majority of people in the world are one in spirit and will endure together. Sung so beautifully for us by one of our thankful guests during an impromptu concert here in our sanctuary was the song whose words I will close with:



World Trade Centre: The unthinkable collapse caused by acts of terrorism. (Inset) St John's Airport: Unsuspecting guests

Let there be Peace on Earth
and let it begin with me.
Let there be Peace on Earth
the Peace that was meant to be.
With God as our Father
Brothers all are we.
Let me walk with my brother
in perfect harmony.

Let the peace begin with me,
let this be the moment now.
With ev'ry step I take
let this be my solemn vow.
To take each moment and live
each moment in peace eternally
Let there be peace on earth
and let it begin with me.
Amen.

The Congregation Responds Reverend John Duff

It started with a phone call from one of our members who was listening to the radio. "The mayor is saying we're going to need church halls to accommo-

date the passengers whose planes have been diverted here," he said. "Is St. David's going to do anything?" A couple of phone calls, to Lillian

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The Congregation Responds Rev John Duff

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Crawford, Clerk of Session, and Stephen Bruneau, one of the co-chairs of the Board, led to both mobilizing some people who might be ready to do something if we were called on. At eight o'clock a few extra people "crashed" what was to have been a meeting of the Atlantic Mission Society, and after a period of fervent prayer for the many who had been affected by the tragic events of the morning of September 11, 2001, the people there set to work.

We discovered that help was needed to provide emergency shelter in halls such as ours. We soon found ourselves saying that we could get ourselves ready for seventy. After that, people at the meeting fanned out, using cell phones to contact many more people to look for sleeping bags, air mattresses, blankets, sheets, pillows, towels, toothbrushes, food and drink for our unexpected guests. By eleven o'clock or so mountains of these things had arrived, and the work of many hands had turned them into made-up beds ready for weary travellers, and coffee, tea, and fruit ready in the kitchen. At one o'clock in the morning the first forty guests arrived, and watched in numbed disbelief the images on the television set of what had happened while they had been in the air or sitting on the tarmac in their plane for several hours after landing here. And then they went to bed. Two more groups arrived during the night until by morning we had 69 passengers, and one cat!

"... until by morning we had 69 passengers, and one cat!"

Grace and Patience, Virtues of our guests

I had been cooped up in an aircraft for many hours without a clear understanding of why this was taking place, and then had been brought down to a hockey stadium to be sorted and registered. I think that when I finally got off a bus bringing me to a place to sleep in the wee hours of the morning, the sight of dozens of sleeping bags and air mattresses on a big gym floor as the answer to my accommodations needs might have made me ready either to burst into tears or eat someone live. But overwhelmingly, our guests were given grace to accept the situation in which they found themselves, and their patience and cheerfulness made the task of addressing their needs deeply rewarding.

Well over a hundred of St. David's people contributed to the passengers' many needs in the next five days, and just as many people and businesses from the community who came to us to see what they might be able to do to help. Two lads from across the street who belong to St. Pius X parish came to St. David's to see what they could do. They did everything from taking the garbage out to gathering up fans from all their neighbours to keep the hall comfortable on a warm night. Nearby gyms opened their facilities without hesitation so our guests could shower, and people ar-



Within minutes the transformation began in just a few short hours the transformation was complete



rived just when they were needed to take visitors shopping for fresh clothes, show them the sights of our city, or to lend a listening ear. Part of that could be explained by the instincts of key people like Lillian Crawford who put in a marathon 26 hours or more non-stop and knew who she could call. Part of it had to be the work of angels, as complete strangers to us at St. David's came to see what they could do to help. Boundaries dissolved, and a community worked together. Those who helped didn't need to say very much about our motives for helping; guests who wrote to us interpreted what was done as a sign of God's presence and love in a bewildering and disturbing time.

Of course, this scene was repeated in church halls, school gyms, community centres, and homes across Newfoundland. The people of the province responded with open-handed generosity to the need that suddenly presented itself. But I was especially proud of what so many did at St. David's to turn a very stressful event into an experience for which many passengers gave thanks, not only to their helpers, but also to God.

At a time when evil broke in from the skies, good burst forth from the hearts and homes of thousands of Newfoundlanders. Thanks be to God!



Unexpected Visitors

Ian S. Wishart

(Excerpt from an article of the November edition of the Presbyterian Record),

Dr. Alvin Crawford, a noted orthopedic surgeon from Cincinnati, on his way back from a medical conference in Sweden, was one of the visitors at St. David's. On Wednesday morning he took the opportunity to visit colleagues at the Health Sciences Centre. He was very impressed with the reception which passengers received. "The hospitality has been remarkable, unbelievable. I have seen people who are caring and very compassionate, who went out of their way to make our lives as comfortable as possible. Once you've been in a situation like this and have had this kind of care, then you can never look at things again in the same way. Our ability and willingness to volunteer help will be enhanced by this experience". His wife Jean added that she had made new friends with whom she will keep in touch.

Margaret Ewers, an elderly English lady, was the

"Our ability and willingness to volunteer help will be enhanced by this experience"

Dr. Alvin Crawford, guest of St. David's

You are not forgotten, nor are you alone

lines flight 105. She was apprehensive that she might be forgotten. On Thursday a young man turned up at the church. He identified himself as Dave Astle, pilot of the plane. He had checked all the locations where his passengers were staying, and assured Margaret that he would not take off without her.



St. David's guests watch the news in silence

Inside Story Headline

Joe and Jackie Logan, from Ayrshire in Stockland, were travelling via Delta Airlines to Florida on holiday, and wondered if they would get there. Jackie said that they intended to come to Canada next year, but this visit was a surprise. "We have not been disappointed. The people are just lovely. It has been amazing. Perhaps we should stay here - - holiday here. We just cannot thank anyone enough".

Previn Moore is an American signer who has lived in Germany for twelve years. He was heading for Cincinnati to see his mother who has had recent surgery. "We arrived at St. David's late at night, all so tired, and we did not really know what had happened. It was only at the church that we were able to see the pictures. It seemed so absurd. None of us can fathom the purpose of these horrible acts - horrendous, outrageous, mind-boggling. But who would believe the kindness we found? There was love and compassion from wonderful people. I hope to get to Cincinnati soon, but there will be a tear in the corner of an eye at parting from them. They have reminded me that love is still the winner. Love will still win against this horror. Humans will say no, but God says yes. I have thought about Psalm 91: God is our refuge and our fortress, and in him we trust. To the people of St. David's I say thank you, thank you, thank you".



Make-shift shrine in New York



Mission in Action

Lillian Crawford

The following brief account, written by Lillian Crawford, was shared with members of the Atlantic Mission Society at their Annual Meeting in Miramichi, New Brunswick, September 21-23, 2001.

St. David's AMS meets on the second Tuesday of each month so we had planned a meeting for September 11, 2001 at 8 P. M. One of the items to be discussed was selection of a mission project for the year. Several of us had reviewed the "Something Extra" projects and were to make recommendations to the group.

We all know what happened in the morning of September 11th!

At about 5:30 P. M., our Minister called to say that 5,000 international passengers were expected to land in St. John's and our church facility had been offered as a site for some of them to stay. We might not get any but perhaps we should be prepared. A few minutes later, the Chairman of the Board of Managers called with the same message.

Well, we're going to the church for an AMS meeting anyway so we just expanded our group to include some members of Session and the Board of Managers.

Our AMS program was pre-empted, changed to a prayer meeting and then a planning session for our unexpected visitors. We still didn't know if our church would be used but we decided to get ready anyway!

The Call went out

sufficient bedding, air mattresses, towels and essential items just in case. Another call and, yes, we were getting some people.

At 1:00 A. M., a busload of 39 passengers from Sabena 559 from Brussels arrived; then at 3:30 A. M. 15 more from another flight; and at 5:30 A. M. fifteen more arrived in a stretch limo. They came to us tired, anxious and unaware of the circumstances which caused their arrival in this place they knew nothing about!

These sixty-nine people were part of approximately 17,000 people who arrived unexpectedly



Within minutes the transformation began in just a few short hours the transformation was complete

at various locations in Newfoundland – St. John's, Stephenville, Deer Lake, Goose Bay and Gander. Gander, a town of approximately 10,000 people, doubled its population in several hours.

And we saw mission in action!

The people of Newfoundland opened their homes and their hearts to make sure that all these visitors were warmly received and well treated and we witnessed numerous individual and collective acts of kindness and compassion.

Over the two days these people were at our church, there was a steady stream of volunteers offering to help in any possible way. Religious affiliation didn't matter – people just wanted to do something!

There were many fascinating stories and by the time the visitors left, these tired, anxious people from all parts of the world were now speaking to us on a "first name" basis. Our mission project came to us and we responded!

The person leading our AMS meeting that night had prepared a meditation based on Psalm 91 which she initially felt was inappropriate under the circumstances but one of the passengers upon departure, used the words of that very psalm to express his feelings about his experience. "I will say to the Lord, my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust".

So a mission project doesn't always take place in a faraway place or a distant land – sometimes it just arrives on your doorstep! Be ready!

"... by the time the visitors left, these tired, anxious people from all parts of the world were now speaking to us on a "first name" basis. Our mission project came to us and we responded!"



Just Like Any Other Day

Janet Barnes Aitken, St. David's

September 11th started out like any other day and I was at work when I overheard the receptionist tell another employee that a plane had hit the World Trade Centre in New York. At first I thought I had heard wrong and asked her to repeat what she had said.

the World Trade Center. We were so happy we cried with joy at the sound of his voice, but too shocked to get any other information.

It wasn't until much later in the evening that we finally got to speak with him at length and explain his ordeal of that day. He was on the 38th floor of the North Tower when the first plane hit the tower. He was thrown to the floor, as it was first thought to be an earthquake he and fellow workers were told to leave the building immediately. It took 45 minutes to descend the stairs to the lobby, as the stairwell was so crowded. While descending the stairs he was informed that the south tower had been hit and they knew it was not an earthquake. Upon reaching the lobby, which was badly burnt, they were told to keep moving as far away as possible. He was approximately 10 blocks away when he saw the South tower collapse and was told to keep going as far as he could. He and his friends went on another 20 blocks to an associate's apartment. It will take him, as well as us, a long, long time to get over that day.



New York skyline before September 11, 2001

After confirming what she said, all the life drained from my body - - my son Steve worked in the North Tower of the World Trade Center. My first instinct was to pray for his safety. I called my husband, Paul to see if he had heard any-

we don't know what will happen in the future months and years to come but we thank God every day for keeping our son, Steve, safe on that day. Our prayers go out to those who still wait and will never receive that call.

note

that Steve would try to contact us to ensure us of his safety. There was no message - - I was devastated and again I prayed.

My husband arrived home shortly after and informed me that Steve's friend, Jason in Toronto had received a brief message from him, asking him to let Paul and I know that he was safe. We received no other details. We had no idea where he was. As we continued to watch the news our anxiety increased.

It was 2 hours later that he finally got through to us. He was 30 blocks away from



New York skyline with Trade Center destroyed

"... all the life drained from my body - - my son Steve worked in the North Tower of the World Trade Center."



Close to Home

The Bonnells

Date: September 17, 2001.
To: St. David's Church
From: Aubrey and Eleanor Bonnell.

We wish to thank all those who expressed care and concern for the safety of our son, Scott, during the recent tragedy in New York City. We thank you for caring, and for your support during that difficult time. Scott was one of the fortunate ones, and we thank God that he survived. We will be spending Thanksgiving at the home of our older son, Steve, in Toronto, and we plan to have Scott come there to be with us as well, as we need to be together as a family after these past few terrible days. We have much to be thankful for this Thanksgiving, for we have been truly blessed. We would like to share an e-mail we received from Scott.

"... We have much to be thankful for this Thanksgiving"

"I am alive and safe in NYC"

Date: September 17, 2001
From: Scott Bonnell
To: Aubrey and Eleanor Bonnell.

Subject: I am alive and safe in NYC.

As you all know, on Tuesday, September 11, New York and the world experienced a terrible tragedy. The collapse of portions of the World Trade Center, including the famed twin towers, has had a terrible human toll and has caused devastating damage to New York's financial district. There is obviously an overwhelming sense of loss.

Passlogix is located just under a mile from WTC (just off Wall St). When the South Tower collapsed, around 10 a.m., our building began to shake and tremble. We immediately evacuated (my wallet and keys are still in my desk!). As we sprinted to Wall St. we were met by a towering plume of thick, black smoke and the rumor was that the Stock Exchange had been bombed. In an effort to avoid the debris, we ran to the water and, unfortunately, realized that we would soon be enveloped by smoke. Our only option was to scale a concrete wall and to get ourselves up onto the FDR highway. From there we walked just over 4 miles to the safety of the Upper East Side (where I live). Fortunately, I am pleased to tell you that

"... There is obviously an overwhelming sense of loss!"



Shannon Stapleton / Reuters

all of my co-workers and close friends have been contacted and there is no structural damage to our offices at 160 Pearl Street.

The experience was traumatic (as was being caught in the middle of a bomb scare near the Empire State Building the

following evening); however, the response by New Yorkers has been truly remarkable. Everything you have heard on the news (hopefully NBC) is true; blood donor clinics are filled to capacity, hundreds of volunteers line the streets near the Javits Center and Chelsea Piers, and thousands of people have donated clothes, food and money to the recovery effort.

We now embark on the difficult rehabilitation of our city. While our focus is on the well being of friends and family, we will return to work and we will return to life.

I thank you all for your notes and phone calls.

Scott Bonnell



IN MEMORIAM

• AMERICAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 11

• UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT 175

• AMERICAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 77

• UNITED AIRLINES FLIGHT 93

• WORLD TRADE CENTER

• THE PENTAGON

Search by last name: A-F G-L M-R S-Z

To find a person's name, click on a link above, then hit Ctrl-F for "Find" on your browser. Type the name in the box to search on that name.

• WNBC-New York: List, photos of missing

• How to help, who to call

• Complete coverage

World Trade Center

- Asamoah, Gordon McCannell Jr., 32, New York, N.Y., investment banker, Sandler O'Neill & Partners, Reported dead
- Abad, Edelmiro (Ed), 54, New York, N.Y., senior vice president, Fiduciary Trust International, Confirmed dead
- Abad, Maria Rose, 49, Syosett, N.Y., senior vice president, Keefe, Bruyette & Woods, Confirmed dead
- Abate, Vincent, 40, New York, N.Y., bond trader, Cantor Fitzgerald, Confirmed dead
- Abate, Andrew Anthony, 37, Melville, N.Y., bond trader, Cantor Fitzgerald, Confirmed dead
- Abel, Laurence, Cantor Fitzgerald, Reported missing



Tragedy and Peace

The McKays



The McKay Family.

“... Cameron can only see smoke, where once the twin towers of the World Trade Center dominated the New York City skyline”

During the General Assembly session, Cameron McKay, works in the messenger's unit of the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan. Cameron, and his uncle, Robert McKay, live in mid-town Manhattan, just across the street from their respective workplaces at the UN. From his office on the 37th floor, Cameron can only see smoke, where once the twin towers of the World Trade Center dominated the New York City skyline. Cameron and Robert are honoured to be part of the Nobel Peace Prize-winning organization, but both are looking forward to rejoining family and friends for a peaceful Christmas time in Newfoundland this December. Cameron will return to his studies at Memorial University of Newfoundland in January.



UN Headquarters in New York City

My 9/11 Experience

Valda Morrissey

“My 9 / 11 Experience”

Valda Morrissey.
St. David's

“... after the announcement there was silence and bewilderment”

On Tuesday, September 11, 2001, I was returning home after a wonderful two-week visit in Calgary and Banff with my son Fred and daughter-in-law Heather (Steele).

My flight out of Toronto was due in St. John's at 1:00 p.m. One hour before landing the Pilot advised us that our flight was being diverted to Moncton because of an incident in the United States. It had nothing to do with Canada, he said. There were 208 passengers on board and after the announcement there was silence and bewilderment.

We landed in Moncton where the airport was already overrun with reporters and RCMP. It was scary, as we still hadn't been told why our flight had been diverted. When we were finally told about the terrorists' attacks in New York and Washington, shock, disbelief and confusion set

in. I was alone and not a familiar face in the crowded airport. My first instinct, of course, was to let my family know where I was and that I was safe. A gentleman who had sat next to me on the flight allowed me to use his cell phone.

Planes continued to arrive and after a few hours passengers were driven by shuttle bus to the Coliseum in downtown Moncton. On the bus ride into Moncton I met a very nice couple, Bea and Richard Evans from Toronto. They were both in their seventies. He was recovering from a stroke and used a wheelchair. They were going to Newfoundland for the first time on vacation. Over the next few days we became very good friends.

When we arrived at the Coliseum we had to line up to register. Red Cross volunteers were all over the building doing everything to make people welcome. By 6:00 p.m. approximately 3,000 passengers of every nationality had arrived. Cots were set up in the stadium and arrangements were made for others to stay at Hotels and Bed & Breakfasts. My new-found friends and I were



My 9/11 Experience (continued)

Valda Morrissee

lucky to get rooms at the Comfort Inn (a fitting name). The Red Cross had to be advised of our whereabouts at all times.

Wednesday, September 12 - - Day 2. A shuttle bus picked us up at the hotel at 9:30 a.m. and took us back to the Coliseum for a briefing at 10:00 a.m. The briefing was delayed as organizers were waiting on further information. In the midst of all this, to make matters worse, there was a bomb scare at the coliseum. Thousands of us had to be evacuated outside. It was really hot and it was a long time before we were allowed back inside.

We remained at the Coliseum all day... still no news. We were treated well and food of every kind was available in abundance. Finally, in the evening we were driving back to our hotel where we were advised that our flight still had not been rescheduled and that we were to remain in our hotel and not return to the Coliseum on Thursday.

Thursday, September 13 - - Day 3. Still no word on flying...no luggage. A volunteer picked us up at our hotel and took us to the Champlain Mall in Dieppe where we had lunch and purchased a few necessary items. When we returned to our Hotel we were advised that Air Canada had arranged for us to be transported, on Friday morning, by bus from Moncton to North Sydney and by ferry from Sydney to Port aux Basques and from there by bus to St. John's as there was no room for our aircraft on the ground in St. John's. My poor friends! I didn't know how they would cope with the long ride. At least I was going home.

The Beginning of the End

At 12 noon we went back to the airport to retrieve our luggage and then set out for North Sydney. The bus ride was fine and the day was sunny. The night crossing on the ferry was awful. We experienced the tail end of a hurricane, it was really rough and I didn't sleep.

Saturday, September 15 - - Day 5. Finally we were at Port aux Basques. The bus ride across the Island was pleasant and the weather was good. We were dropped off at the airport in St. John's around 8:15 p.m. To say I was glad to be home would be putting it mildly.

My new found friends traveled with me for the entire journey and in spite of everything went on to have a very enjoyable vacation on the Avalon, including an afternoon with me at my home.

While it was an experience that I shall never forget, I thank God that it was not the tragedy our American friends endured. May God bless them.



Guests dine with one another, and with St. David's helpers



Besides a short lived hurricane, guests enjoyed our finest weather.



Beds in the sanctuary — nothing to do with the sermon!

"My new found friends traveled with me for the entire journey and in spite of everything went on to have a very enjoyable vacation on the Avalon, including an afternoon with me at my home."



It's a small world after all

Christine McLean

It's a small world after all..

It seems almost irreverent to say that the events of September 11th have a positive side to them, but for a lot of us at St. David's they truly did. I felt so privileged to be a part of the action that resulted from hosting our delayed passengers during the days following that horrendous Tuesday and I felt truly blessed to be a part of the St. David's family.

The two events that I will recount for you give credence to the expression "It's a small world". On Wednesday evening I was chatting with Previn Moore (and who can forget wonderful Previn!) only to discover that he and I had a shared passion. He was from Cincinnati originally and I had lived there for a few years myself so we were regaling each other with tales of Graeter's ice cream - a heavenly ice cream that is made in Cincinnati and only available in Cincinnati. I was telling him stories of my bittersweet chocolate sundaes with a cherry on top and he was telling me how much he was looking forward to his mocha chip as soon as he got home ("Oooo, girl! Mocha chip with whipped cream!") when Alvin Crawford, another delayed passenger from Cincinnati, who was eavesdropping nearby, approached us - eager to get in on the conversation. He asked me "What do you know about Cincinnati? Once I told him that I used to live there he asked where I used to work. "Cincinnati Centre for Developmental Disorders" says I.... "Get out of here!" says he. Turns out - that is where he works! He has a clinic there every week. We knew people in common and everything! Imagine how surreal that experience must have been for him. He had barely heard of Newfoundland before his plane landed here and the next day he is chatting with someone who worked in the very same place as himself. Forget six degrees of separation...we were definitely narrowing down that theory! He also told me that Charles Janeway was a professor and mentor of his during medical school....again - it must have been a real "Twilight Zone" experience for him to find himself doing rounds at the Janeway hospital (which I hear he did later in the week) while he is stranded

"... he was telling me how much he was looking forward to his mocha chip as soon as he got home!"



Christine McLean at work with John not far behind

on this island of ours stuck out in the North Atlantic.

Five little monkeys

The second event was a simple one - but one that spoke volumes. At one point I found myself (along with Nicole Myles and my daughter Emily) in the nursery, entertaining five little passengers, all of whom were under the age of five. Two were from Brooklyn, two from Scotland and one from Spain. While we were reading stories and singing songs, we broke into a chorus of "Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed". To my surprise and delight every one of those children knew all of the words as we chimed together "No more monkeys jumping on the bed!!" as loudly as we could. What a feeling to look at those little faces, all of them stuck in some unknown place among a bunch of strangers, and yet to sense the joy and trust that they each inherently possessed. It truly drove home the point of how close we all really are, how much we really need each other and what a small world it is after all!





Until All are Accounted For Rebecca Quinton

Rebecca Quinton
St. David's.

My daughter takes voice lessons from Jacinta Graham of Gonzaga High School - on September 14th, Jacinta calls to confirm Cassidy's lesson time - we got to talking about September 11th. She told me the following story:

As she was leaving school late one afternoon she spied a man wandering around the soccer field behind the school. He seemed lost and she knew that he looked out of place - and figured him to be one of the stranded passengers. She asked him if she could help in some way and he said he was trying to find a route to Elizabeth Ave. and St. David's Church. She said "are you one of the stranded Americans?" and he said we are all Americans... (meaning north America). Not offended by the odd response she said "Yes, I realize that". So, she offered to take him there - he was reluctant to put her out and he had nothing better to do but walk - and she assured him it was no trouble - he took the ride and she asked him where he was staying and where he had been... it seems he had been all over the town that day seeking people in different locations - from his American Airlines flight - they talked a little about music - and then she dropped him off at St. David's... she was struck by his emotions seemingly "on his sleeve" and felt as if she could empathize with his predicament.

Extra Knickers!

Meanwhile... I had the chance to work for 10 hours at St. David's on the 12th, just driving people around - cooking food - setting up tables - sharing all the stories of how many of the passengers thought when they landed or turned around on the 11th that they were being hijacked!...any way - I had met a lovely older lady named Margaret from Lon-

don, England. She was the only one from her particular flight at St. David's - and she would not go anywhere or take any tours because she was afraid they would miss her in all the confusion. No one could reassure Margaret that we would not lose track and besides no one was going anywhere for a while... - and she said to me she was fine and really would dare not leave and anyway - that she always carried an extra pair of knickers in her purse - just in case! Ha...ha!

That Sunday in Church, Lillian who was the mountain of organizational strength and the one in charge of all the people in St. David's got up to tell a little story about all the goings on - She started with - A young man came to the door of the church this day asking if we had any passengers from American Airlines flight 115 here at the church. Lillian asked for ID, and the nature of his visit, etc.. before she would allow this man in - as she had grown very protective of her charges... when at last she was satisfied that the man was who he said he was she led him to where Margaret was. When he addressed Margaret he took her hand and said Margaret, I am Captain David Astle, the pilot of your American Airlines flight ...and I am here to assure you that we will not leave without you. I will not leave without any of my passengers or crew - until all are accounted for. Needless to say it was an emotional moment for everybody.... So, apparently Captain David had gone to each and every 225 passengers and crew of his flight to personally reassure them that they would continue on together.....



"... are you one of the stranded Americans?" and he said we are all Americans... (meaning north America)."



Opportunity to do “Something”

Freda Denness

My daughter Laura and I had just witnessed, on TV, the collapse of the World Trade Centre. We heard plane after plane landing at St. John's. What would happen to all the people on the planes? The airport at St. John's is undergoing major renovations and there wasn't even a departure lounge that these people could pace up and down.

I phoned CBC, NTV, Red Cross and the Salvation Army. I wanted to help; do something for someone, serve tea, make muffins, give someone a bed. No one seemed to know what was happening. I didn't want to go to the airport to add to the confusion that had to be happening. My prayers were answered when I got a call from St. David's. I was going to be able to do something

“My prayers were answered when I got a call from St. David's. I was going to be able to do something”

I phoned some friends and arranged to pick up cots and air mattresses, blankets and pillows, soaps, shampoos, some razors, tooth brushes and deodorant. I was on my way, with Laura, to actually do something. I had no idea then how long the “something” was to be. I did not think that 5 days later we would be saying a sad cheerio to new friends.

Lucky enough to host

ily. The Logans – Jacqueline, Joe, Dawn, and Stewart shared our home. The Logans hail from Stewarton, Ayrshire in Scotland and we really enjoyed their company, blethering (chatting) and putting the world to rights. After many false starts they were eventually able to continue their journey and phoned us when they finally arrived

in Orlando and again while at the airport awaiting their return journey. We've e-mailed and caught up on things and when we are back in the UK next year for a family wedding, we have made a date to meet them.

Although a terrible tragedy happened on Sept 11th, I'm sure that many friendships like ours would never have happened. I'm glad we met the Logans but would have liked it to have been under different circumstances. I'm also very glad we were given the opportunity to do “something”.



St. David's Church Hall September 11 2001

Getting started on “something” before confirmation that St. David's would host anyone.



St. David's Church Hall

Many from outside the congregation provided support for the effort at St. David's



John McLean, David Charmichael and Harold Hammond work on air mattress detail.



Night Shift

Barbara Ellis

Night Shift (2:00 A.M. – 9:00 A. M) – September 12, 2001-10-16

This was a very heart warming time spent with the passengers who stayed at St. David's. When I arrived just before 2 a.m. I was met on the parking lot by Don McKay who was just leaving. He briefed me on what was going on with our group.

Once inside, everything was quiet. All except one person was sleeping. She was watching the horrors on television and doing crosswords in the Armour Room. I spent some time with this lady talking about her life as an educator and my life in Florida for the six months of the year working with the youth there. Eventually an elderly gentleman arrived with his book as he was having problems sleeping. Everything was quiet until 6 AM when the call

"... It was as though they were glad to be off but really didn't want to go..."

The News

Came through to get people up for the Sabena flight as they would be picked up between 6:30 and 7:00 A. M. This meant waking everyone as

people were sleeping everywhere and not according to flight numbers. Coffee had already been put on and breakfast was quickly prepared so the passengers would be fed before they left.

When the bus arrived it was very touching as they said their good-byes. It was as though they were glad to be off but really didn't want to go and leave their new found friends and face what was ahead of them as they were to return to Brussels. These good-byes seemed to continue but finally the bus got away with extra food aboard for their long wait.

On returning to the hall, I found that we had a paediatric orthopaedic surgeon among us who had finished the book he was reading and now wished to spend some time at the hospital with his colleagues. This was easy to arrange with Dr. Deane at the Janeway, and he was able to spend time at the hospital and later out to dinner.

This was an experience I wouldn't want to have missed. It shows us just how small our world is and in time of trouble we can pull together and become one big family.

Refusing the Tip

Dave Rudofsky

Dave Rudofsky

St. David's.

"Taking two Austrians on tour and refusing the tip!"

I appeared at the church on September 12th eager to offer any assistance during the current crisis. The organization already in place was amazing and one would have thought that weeks of planning had gone into the event not just a few hours, it was truly remarkable!

Lillian Crawford asked if I would mind looking after two young Austrian men, Karl and Alex for a couple of hours or so and show them around. After the introductions, I quickly found out that their English, although not very good, was significantly better than my extremely poor German. They were in their early twenties and from a small village in rural Austria, they had just started their holidays! (Some holiday I thought to myself as we pulled out of the church parking lot!)

Now what do we do, I said to myself. A small brainwave reminded me that the Johnson Family Foundation had just published a traveller's guide to Newfoundland and Labrador and in three languages – English, French and German. So we



Refusing the Tip (continued)

Dave Rudofsky

dropped by my wife Judy's office and sure enough there were a couple of copies in German, hot off the press. Wunderbar I exclaimed proudly! I could point to various sections in the book and all was explained. It was particularly helpful as they had never heard of Newfoundland and Labrador! Oh yes, they knew that they were in Canada all right but had absolutely no idea where they had landed. Can you imagine – landing in a foreign country in a place totally unknown and then having to spend eight hours sitting on the tarmac, still not knowing! Being grounded has taken on a whole new meaning since September 11!

Being European and smokers, they were in need of two addictive pursuits. The first being cigarettes, which they had and the second being coffee which they didn't. So, what better opportunity than a visit to Auntie Crae's, for some "Old Broad Cove Blend". Of course as you would expect, they had no Canadian dollars, as this trip was not on their agenda. However, I doubted that anyone would refuse their US dollars at par! As we sat outside the café on Water Street, I felt rather out of place, here in my home town, sitting at a sidewalk table, proclaiming that they were drinking the best coffee in town. They certainly agreed! There were a few frowns from passers-by but it was a nice day and the sun was shining, so we did not look too out of place.

After about half an hour, I suggested that we move on and so we went to see the harbour and I explained some things about icebergs. This was greatly enhanced when I consulted the visitor's guide again, where there was an article written by Stephen Bruneau on the subject. (My, the resources of St. David's church came to the rescue again!) We dropped by Quidi Vidi and then the standard "magical mystery tour" up Signal Hill to see the view and to visit the Tower. They knew the name Marconi but did not know much about him. I asked the staff in the gift shop if there was any information available in German, and they told me to drop into the Interpretation Centre, just below. We did and again, we were lucky enough to get a one page explanation about Signal Hill in German. The guys were nodding their heads in approval, so I guess that it all made sense.

Lillian asked me to get them back for lunch and as it was just after noon, we made our way back to the church. As we got out of the car to go inside, Karl wanted to pay me for my time! Boy, did that really feel strange! Of course I declined the offer but my mind flashed back to a few weeks earlier, when we were in Cuba. Here we were in a foreign country, tipping the staff for services rendered. What a strange twist for the shoe to be on the other foot!

Unfortunately, I never knew their final outcome as passengers from the Sabena flight. Planes were not allowed to proceed west but had to return to their point of origin. The two chaps did not want to return to Europe. As I mentioned at the beginning, they had just begun their holiday and were planning to go mountain climbing in California, so the last thing that they wanted was to return to Brussels. However, most passengers did return, while others continued on their journey on their own time and expense.

In any event, they enjoyed their brief stay in St. John's and promised to return. They were so grateful for the care and compassion shown to them and like all their fellow passengers, were quite overwhelmed by the experience. So many people have come to know of our province and its hospitality that would never have done so, without the strange events of September 11, 2001!

So many people have come to know of our province and its hospitality that would never have done so, without the strange events of September 11, 2001!



Little ones—enjoying their stay



“About Anne” Ken and Sue Templeton

**Ken and Sue Templeton.
St. David's.**

“A little blurb about Anne”

Anne Nakanjako Ssali arrived at St. David's in the wee hours of the morning of September 12th, when the Delta 11 flight on which she had been travelling was diverted to St. John's because of the acts of terrorism in the United States. Anne had already had a very long trip, having left her home in Kampala, Uganda on Monday, September 10th, enroute to a new one year position with Habitat for Humanity in Atlanta.

She arrived understandably tired and confused, but settled into the temporary accommodations provided at the church with good cheer and gentle patience. Mrs. Crosbie, a longtime member of the congregation who lives in Elizabeth Towers next door to the church, opened her home to Anne, who welcomed the quiet rest and a warm bath after her long journey. Vivian Pallard, a member of St. Andrew's congregation, learned about Anne's new work, and took her to see the Habitat Homes that had been built here in the St. John's region.

On Thursday, September 13th, after two days of camping out in the church hall, and after some of the passengers from other flights had departed enroute back to Europe or on to the United States, it was decided that the remaining guests be billeted in homes of volunteers from the congregation. Anne stayed overnight with Ken and Sue Templeton and their family. Even though the temperatures here were warm for Newfoundland, Anne found it quite cool, and was grateful to borrow Christine McLean's jacket and Sue's sweat-shirt, which she wore even inside the house! Ken got out the atlas to show Anne just how far she had travelled... and how much farther she had to go before arriving in Atlanta. She was amazed at the distance she had covered in just a couple of days!

What a Beginning!

Anne met family and her contacts at Habitat in Atlanta before settling in for a long sleep in a warm bed. The hoped-for long sleep was interrupted at 5 a.m. on Friday when officials at Mile

One Stadium called to say that Anne's flight would be leaving later that morning, and that she was to report in by 5:30. Quickly, she gathered her backpack and headed off for the last leg of an unforgettable trip, her first by plane, and her first international travel outside of Africa! What a beginning!

Those of us who had the privilege to meet Anne, and get to know her a little, will remember her ready smile, her patience and good humor, and her friendly manner. Her family would be so proud of her calm acceptance of the delays she encountered on her way to a new career in the United States. We trust that Anne is now busy, safely learning her new role with Habitat. We wish God's blessing on her work, and God's continued protection as she offers humanitarian aid to those in need of affordable housing. It was a blessing to all of us to take part in hosting her unexpected visit to St. John's. We hope she will visit us again in happier circumstances!

Anne sent a message of “Thanks” via an e-mail to St. David's on September 20th.

“ Mrs. Crosbie, a longtime member of the congregation who lives in Elizabeth Towers next door to the church, opened her home to Anne, who welcomed the quiet rest and a warm bath after her long journey”



Kitchen Duty



Happy Customers



Sunday Service

John McLean

John McLean
St. David's.

Re: Sunday Service – September 16th.

Hi John,

I didn't get a chance to tell you this in church but I thought your service today was wonderful. It was just what I needed. As you said so eloquently, there are many many good people in the world and despite what happened, it is a wonderful world. Maybe you could have a portion of your sermon put into the upcoming newsletter.

You are definitely right that many people wanted to do something to help in the wake of the tragedy and we in St. John's were given the opportunity to do something. I want to thank you for being so quick to offer St. David's as a shelter to the stranded passengers. The sustained effort by people like you, Stephen, Lillian and others really showed that we have a caring church family who can get things done.

Best wishes,

John McLean

“... your service today was wonderful. It was just what I needed.”



The People of St. David's - Celebrating 225 years of worship and service



Our Guests Respond

From: Sara Ivy.
 Date: September 24 / 01
 Dear Reverend Duff and church family:

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your hospitality to us on September 11th, 12th, and 13th. My husband and I were overwhelmed by the sacrifices you all made to give us a comfortable place to stay while we visited your city! We were touched by the many things that you did to make us feel welcome: gather an amazing number of pallettes for us to sleep on, stay up all night to help us get comfortable, take us to Wal-Mart and to showers in the morning, prepare meals and wash countless dishes, and generally share your love and comfort with us in a time when you, too, were grieving. We were astounded when you went as far as to provide us with entertainment throughout the day and night! Words cannot express how thankful we are for you and for the love of God that you shared with us and the other passengers. I imagine that there were nonbelievers staying with us in the church who will be forever changed by your Christian love. I will soon be writing a short article for our local small-town newspaper, about the amazing kindness of the people in St. John's. I will send you a copy. Thanks so much – With love.

The article reads:

On September 11th, our plane was unexpectedly diverted to Canada. In light of the terrorist activities, it was necessary for us to leave the plane so that every passenger and every piece of luggage could be thoroughly examined before we proceeded to the U.S. The Red Cross in Newfoundland was charged with the monumental task of finding food and accommodations for over 6,000 passengers of various U.S. bound aircraft.

This was no small task, considering the fact that the town of St. John only had about 1500 hotel rooms. To further complicate the situation, we had to leave all our baggage on the plane, for security reasons. So the community had the added responsibility of finding clothing and toiletries for all those "refugees".

The most amazing thing about this experience was the way we were treated by the Canadian people. It seemed as if every person in the town of St. John contributed time and personal possessions to ensure that we were comfortable. We were overwhelmed at the kindness and generosity of every single person we encountered, from the time we stepped off the plane. The customs and airport officials were so gentle and warm it made you cry. The Red Cross volunteers who registered us were thoughtful and helpful, anticipating every need. Even the bus drivers tried their best to answer our hundreds of questions. The first thing we were given was a homemade sandwich and something to drink. In light of the tragedy at hand, I felt awed by the personal effort that so many people had given. As passengers were allowed off the airplanes one group at a time, all night long, the volunteers continued to be cheerful and kind. It was so touching!

We were taken with a group of passengers from our plane, to St. David's Presbyterian Church. We were met there with an even greater measure of compassion. As the pastor said in an e-mail to me this week, the church people "all wanted to do something in the face of the terrible evil we had been seeing unfold on television". They "counted it a privilege that the opportunity to pitch in 'fell into

our laps' so to speak". And in fact, we could tell that the people felt privileged to help us. We were treated like royalty. We were touched by so many things that were done to make us feel welcome. They began by gathering towels, washcloths, fans, and an amazing number of pallettes for us to sleep on. They stayed up all night to help us get comfortable, answer questions, comfort those who couldn't sleep, and receive another group of passengers late in the night after most of us were asleep. Another group of church members arrived in the morning to bring toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, and soap. They prepared breakfast while we watched the news, and took us to Walmart for clothing. Nearby people and businesses allowed us to use their showers, and some people even went out to buy hairdryers and other supplies for us. At WalMart, the employees were overly helpful, there to assist us in finding every item and willing to take our foreign currency although it was extra work for them. Back at the church, other people prepared meals and washed countless dishes. Even when we volunteered to help, we were told to relax. We were completely astounded when they went so far as to provide us with entertainment! During the day we were given tours of the city and nearby countryside, and in the evening we were entertained by children and adults in a "talent show".

Other examples of hospitality ranged from the corporate effort of the city to provide us with free phone calls to home, to the volunteer effort of neighborhood children who showed up at the church to take out trash and wash dishes. I cannot begin to describe how touched we were by the overwhelming hospitality of everyone we met in Canada. I only hope that I will be so kind and generous, the next time I have an opportunity to help someone in need. Thank God for Christian love and compassion all over the world.



Our Guests Respond

From: Danine Schilling-Jordan.
Subject: Hebrews 13:2
Date: September 24, 2001.

Rev Duff,

Thank you for writing us back and letting us know what was going on in the past couple weeks- It warms my heart to know that people are still doing God's work and I feel especially BLESSED that my friend and her family were welcomed by you and your congregation. The Ivy's are wonderful Christian people and I am sure that is why an angel guided them to you.

I look forward to hearing from you and sharing your newsletter with the rest of our staff across the United States. Thank you once again for taking in Sara Ivy and her family and the rest of God's children on those flights. Our gratitude at VRS is more than words can express!! And my simple "Thank You" doesn't seem enough, but that is all I can offer. In God's Love,

From: Joe and Carolyn Loghry
 Imboden, Arkansas, USA
 Date: September 12 / 2001.

Dear Minister and Congregation,

We have just heard from our daughter how well you are caring for her and her husband and friend, Sara Ivy. We are so thankful that Christians in Canada are so concerned and caring to offer such comfort and care to our family. Please thank everyone there for their love and its testimony to God's work in their lives. May God bless you and your ministry there. Sincerely,



**A surprise Birthday -
 Everyone enjoyed the cake!**





Our Guests Respond

From: Francis Radoux and Luc Renson.
Flight SABENA 559 American Airlines 6207 / Brussels (Belgium)-Dallas (USA)

Tuesday, September 18, 2001 9:46 AM

Subject: Thanks, many thanks !!!!

Hi Dear You All!

I'm back home (!) after all those days... Many thanks for your hospitality, your kindness, the way you take care of us! It's unbelievable. After days we now realize what happens. The terror for all those families now missing someone. Fortunately you transform our tragedy into hopes, hopes that it was finished, hopes to see our families very soon. We were all together, like a big family, sleeping, eating and waiting.

Many thanks for the time you gave us, taking care of any doubts, of any enquiries. I could not remember the name of all of those from the community and the others, but please be kind to transmit our very best greetings and thanks to all.

As a reminder, I carefully keep the calendar you gave us as an image of friendship, of hope, of liberty as the associated pictures suggest beauty, calm, serenity and space. Be sure the way you welcome us will stay as unforgettable.

Best Regards to all of You.

P.S. We leave St David Church at around 7:00am Thursday 13th, September, 2001.



Our Guests Respond

From: Betty Chaney.

Date: September 17, 2001.

Subject: Oklahoma arrival, and thanks

Hi Allison and everyone at St. David's Church,

Thanks again for your many kindnesses while we were stranded in your lovely town. Never have we been treated with more care and concern. Our eternal thanks to all of you, and may God bless you abundantly and all of your nation as well. Rest assured we will never forget your help.

We arrived on Sabena flight 559 from Brussels Tuesday the 11th, and through a quick decision we flew out Thursday on the private jet sent to Montreal by Provincial Airlines (PAL) to bring the owners back to St. John's. To our knowledge, we were the only ones leaving that morning. Our Sabena flight was going to return to Brussels, and we felt during this national crisis, we needed to stay on the North American continent, with neighbors, and get home if at all possible.

We managed to rent the last car available at that time at the Montreal airport. We drove that car to Detroit Mi., there turning it in and getting another one we could drive to Oklahoma City. Our family met us, and we were home in Ardmore by Sunday. Everywhere we went in Canada people were most helpful and kind. You have much to be proud of, and I can only pray that our nation would do as well in a crisis as you did.

When you have time, I would like to know when the stranded flights started flying out As we were the first to leave St. John's, and have not heard of the others on our flight or about any of the other flights. Also if it is not too much trouble, we would like the postal mailing address of the church, and also of Provincial Air Lines.

Many thanks,

Leo and Betty Chaney



Our Guests Respond

Subject: To our "New Found" Friends!

Date: September 19, 2001 7:25 PM

To the entire St. David's Congregation:

Chris and I would like to extend our deepest and most heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you! We really do not know how to express in words our gratitude for the graciousness, love and hospitality you showed us last week. In the midst of such a tragedy, we feel extremely blessed to be among the lucky ones. The Lord took care of us throughout the entire journey.

He brought us to one of the most beautiful places on earth and He provided "angels" to take care of us.

The people of St. John's, especially our friends from St. David's, could not have been any more gracious or hospitable (and we thought us Texans were the friendliest people on earth)! As one stranded passenger remarked, "they are taking better care of me than my own mother."

From the moment we entered the church Wednesday morning around 1:00 a.m. when Steve so warmly greeted us, to the wonderful service we were able to witness on Sunday, we felt safe and cared for. We were constantly overwhelmed with the helpfulness and compassion of the congregation and everyone's "servant heart."

A special thanks to Lillian Crawford for her tireless effort in coordinating everything, to Rev. Duff and Viola for picking us up on Sunday and for the eloquent tribute Rev. Duff delivered, to Freda and her daughter Laura (for taking Chris out to the "local" spots on Wednesday night), to Ian who played golf with Chris and I on Sunday, to the talented youth who performed on Wednesday evening, to those who chauffeured us to WalMart to purchase clothes and took us sightseeing, and to the countless others who provided sleeping bags, pillows, towels, showers and the delicious food.

While our journey to Newfoundland was unexpected, it turned out to be one of the greatest blessings and adventures of our lives! We hope to return one day (under better circumstances) and we look forward to seeing our "Newfound" friends. We also want to extend to you an open invitation - if you are ever in Dallas, Texas, please feel free to call us and know that you have a place to stay!

Thank you again for the love you showed us and for demonstrating that good certainly does overcome evil. Know that your acts of kindness will never be forgotten and that we thank God for each of you. The quote below came from my desk calendar dated 9/12/01:

"We've heard how the heat of battle can take mere soldiers and turn them into soul mates.

Somehow, the fire of affliction fuses a bond between those who might, under "normal circumstances," overlook or even avoid each other.

It seems the strongest and most enduring friendships are not necessarily the oldest ones. They're often those forged in the furnace of adversity.

Maybe this happens because emergencies heighten our senses and, at the same time, make us vulnerable. Tough challenges reduce our reserve. They ripen our hearts for relationship and lay our souls open to intimacy."

With grateful hearts,

Amy and Chris Prideaux

P.S. We caught a flight on Canada 3000 at 6:30 a.m. Monday to Toronto. We then flew from Toronto to DFW and arrived around 3:00 p.m.



Our Guests Respond

**From: Carol Stewart
Fort Worth, Texas**

September 13, 2001.

Thank you & may God bless you. I don't have the words to let all of you know how much your kindness & support mean.

Respect fully.

**From: James Stewart. Fort Worth Texas.
October 4, 2001**

I feel I must also express thanks to you and all who aided in a time of deep and extreme turmoil and confusion. Having read and re-read your kind response to my wife, I felt it necessary to respond personally. May all who encounter another be as generous, and blessed. please accept the following in the spirit in which it was written.

“If this were my last day among you and given five hours of daytime, this is how I hope they may be filled:

**Find a young child to gain a smile.
Find a person who needs to smile.
Find one that I've done wrong and
one whose done the same.**

**In this, there will be atonement.
To find one to teach a skill.
To find one to give a thrill.
Find one whose soul aches
that I can ease some pain.**

**This will give me contentment.
To find one to aid in time of fear.
To find one to erase a tear.
Find a way to show all who have
given my life gain.**

This will give me PEACE.



Our Guests Respond

**From: Joe, Jacqueline, Dawn and Stuart Logan
Stewarton, Ayrshire, Scotland**

Date: September 30, 2001.

Dear Rev. Duff,

On behalf of my family, I would like to thank yourself and your parishioners for the warmth of welcome, compassion and friendship shown to us all after the tragic events of 11th September.

We were stranded in what we stood up in but through the generosity of one of your families I am now proud to call friends, namely Freda, Ian and Laura Denness, we were taken to the local shopping Mall where we could purchase a change of clothing. Freda and her family eventually allowed us to share their home for the remaining three days prior to departing. For that I am eternally grateful as my wife Jacqueline has a disability and was beginning to suffer a bit sleeping on the floor.

Still that suffering is nothing compared to the people of New York on September 11th. We all have our health and families when others have lost everything. I can relate in some small way to the rescue services as I was a serving Police Officer during the Lockerbie disaster in the late 80's. I too had to recover the victims and worked for three weeks in the mortuary personally dealing with 86 victims. I can assure you that I can still, even after so long a time remember almost all, and watching the TV news brought everything back to me so vividly.

It is truly amazing the resilience and fortitude of the human spirit in times of trouble and distress. An example being Lillian, who must have worked through 36 hours without a break and still had a smile for everyone.

Would you please convey my eternal thanks to all your parishioners and be assured that I will never forget my trip to Newfoundland which to many of us is truly a New-Found-Land. But as your Church is styled on the Church of Scotland, and many of the parishioners are from Scotland, I would expect nothing less.

Best Regards.



Our Guests Respond

*From: Valerie Delacave
Subject: Thanks for the 11th of September help.
Date: October 18, 2001 7:26 AM*

Dear all,

I have not had the occasion yet to thank you for the incredible solidarity and love that we felt when we were stuck in Canada following the 11th of September attacks.

I was on my way from Brussels, my country's capital, to attend a conference in Las Vegas, when I suddenly ended up discovering Newfoundland and its reputable hospitable people.

I want to thank you all, and please mention this to all of those who helped out, for the amazing reaction that people had. I was travelling on my own that day, and thanks to your people, the whole experience remains a sweet memory. It is weird to say, considering the cause that brought us there, but your community was so protective and dedicated. Your people showed that bad can bring out the best of people as well, it sounds cliché, but I experienced it comes from truth.

This said, I hope that you are all doing fine, and thanks again.



H.Q. Reception Table—a quieter moment



True Story

*From: Iain Bruce <ibruce@mun.ca>
To: stdavids@nfld.com
Subject: Gratitude of American passengers
Date: October 12, 2001 2:58 PM*

*From: "D. Vickers" <dvickers@ucsd.edu>
To: "Beverly Evans-Hong" <bevans@mun.ca>
Subject: Re: HELLO FROM DANNY
Date: Mon, 8 Oct 2001 14:46:48 -0700*

Dear Bev:

I am appending two emails, probably no news to you, but striking in that they are circulating around UC San Diego without any prompting from me. People around here seem quite flabbergasted at the response of Newfoundlanders--some even wondered if the story was true. I had no trouble imagining it happening; on a smaller scale, it goes on in Newfoundland all the time. It's such a privilege to be able to tell people I was lucky enough to have been able to live there myself once. The note at the bottom was added by my sister, who lives in Ontario.

I trust you are well, that motherhood still agrees with you, and that the snow has yet to fly.

Give my best to everyone.

Love, Danny

*From: Hatch, Nancy
To: dvickers@ucsd.edu
Sent: Monday, October 08, 2001 9:21 AM
Subject: Maybe True Story*

Dear Dan,

I don't know whether or not this is a true story; if it's not, should be- Nancy.

Here is the story from Nazim-Amin:

We were about 5 hours out of Frankfurt flying over the North Atlantic and I was in my crew rest seat taking my scheduled rest break. All of a sudden the curtains parted violently and I was told to go to the cockpit, right now, to see the captain. As soon as I got there I noticed that the crew had one of those "All Business" looks on their faces. The captain handed me a printed message. I quickly read the message and realized the importance of it.

The message was from Atlanta, addressed to our flight, and simply said:

"All airways over the Continental US are closed. Land ASAP at the nearest airport, advise your destination." Now, when a dispatcher tells you to land immediately without suggesting which airport, one can assume that the dispatcher has reluctantly given up control of the flight to the captain.

We knew it was a serious situation and we needed to find terra firma quickly.

It was quickly decided that the nearest airport was 400 miles away, behind our right shoulder, in Gander, on the island of Newfoundland.

A quick request was made to the Canadian traffic controller and a right turn, directly to Gander, was approved immediately. We



True Story

found out later why there was no hesitation by the Canadian controller approving our request. We, the in-flight crew, were told to get the airplane ready for an immediate landing. While this was going on another message arrived from Atlanta telling us about some terrorist activity in the New York area. We briefed the in-flight crew about going to Gander and we went about our business 'closing down' the airplane for a landing.

A few minutes later I went back to the cockpit to find out that some airplanes had been hijacked and were being flown into buildings all over the US. We decided to make an announcement and LIE to the passengers for the time being. We told them that an instrument problem had arisen on the airplane and that we needed to land at Gander, to have it checked. We promised to give more information after landing in Gander. There were many unhappy passengers but that is par for the course.

We landed in Gander about 40 minutes after the start of this episode. There were already about 20 other airplanes on the ground from all over the world. After we parked on the ramp the captain made the following announcement.

"Ladies and gentlemen, you must be wondering if all these airplanes around us have the same instrument problem as we have. But the reality is that we are here for a good reason." Then he went on to explain the little bit we knew about the situation in the US. There were loud gasps and stares of disbelief.

Local time at Gander was 12:30 pm. (11:00 AM EST) Gander control told us to stay put. No one was allowed to get off the aircraft. No one on the ground was allowed to come near the aircrafts. Only a car from the airport police would come around once in a while, look us over and go on to the next airplane.

In the next hour or so all the airways over the North Atlantic were vacated and Gander alone ended up with 53 airplanes from all over the world, out of which 27 were flying US flags. We were told that each and every plane was to be offloaded, one at a time, with the foreign carriers given the priority. We were No. 14 in the US category. We were further told that we would be given a tentative time to deplane at 6 p.m.

Meanwhile bits of news started to come in over the aircraft radio and for the first time we learned that airplanes were flown into the World Trade Center in New York and into the Pentagon in DC.

People were trying to use their cell phones but were unable to connect due to a different cell system in Canada. Some did get through but were only able to get to the Canadian operator who would tell them that the lines to the US were either blocked or jammed and to try again. Some time late in the evening the news filtered to us that the World Trade Center buildings had collapsed and that a fourth hijacking had resulted in a crash.

Now the passengers were totally bewildered and emotionally exhausted but stayed calm as we kept reminding them to look around to see that we were not the only ones in this predicament. There were 52 other planes with people on them in the same situation. We also told them that the Canadian Government was in charge and we were at their mercy.

True to their word, at 6 PM, Gander airport told us that our turn to deplane would come at 11 AM, the next morning. That took the last wind out of the passengers and they simply resigned and accepted this news without much noise and really started to get into a mode of spending the night on the airplane. Gander had promised us any and all medical attention if needed, medicine, water, and lavatory servicing.

And they were true to their word. Fortunately we had no medical situation during the night. We did have a young lady who was 33 weeks into her pregnancy. We took REALLY good care of her. The night passed without any further complications on our airplane despite the uncomfortable sleeping arrangements.

About 10:30 on the morning of the 12th we were told to get ready to leave the aircraft. A convoy of school buses showed up at the side of the airplane, the stairway was hooked up and the passengers were taken to the terminal for "processing"

We, the crew, were taken to the same terminal but were told to go to a different section, where we were processed through Immigration and customs and then had to register with the Red Cross. After that we were isolated from our passengers and were taken



True Story

in a caravan of vans to a very small hotel in the town of Gander. We had no idea where our passengers were going.

The town of Gander has a population of 10,400 people. Red Cross told us that they were going to process about 10,500 passengers from all the airplanes that were forced into Gander. We were told to just relax at the hotel and wait for a call to go back to the airport, but not to expect that call for a while.

We found out the total scope of the terror back home only after getting to our hotel and turning on the TV, 24 hours after it all started. Meanwhile we enjoyed ourselves going around town discovering things and enjoying the hospitality. The people were so friendly and they just knew that we were the "Plane people". We all had a great time until we got that call, 2 days later, on the 14th at 7AM. We made it to the airport by 8:30AM and left for Atlanta at 12:30 PM arriving in Atlanta at about 4:30PM. (Gander is 1 hour and 30 minutes ahead of EST, yes!, 1 hour and 30 minutes.) But that's not what I wanted to tell you.

What passengers told us was so uplifting and incredible and the timing couldn't have been better. We found out that Gander and the surrounding small communities, within a 75-kilometer radius, had closed all the high schools, meeting halls, lodges, and any other large gathering places. They converted all these facilities to a mass lodging area. Some had cots set up, some had mats with sleeping bags and pillows set up. ALL the high school students HAD to volunteer taking care of the "GUESTS". Our 218 passenger ended up in a town called Lewisporte, about 45 Kilometers from Gander.

There they were put in a high school. If any women wanted to be in a women only facility, that was arranged. Families were kept together. All the elderly passengers were given no choice and were taken to private homes.

Remember that young pregnant lady, she was put up in a private home right across the street from a 24 hour Urgent Care type facility. There were DDS on call and they had both male and female nurses available and stayed with the crowd for the duration.

Phone calls and emails to US and Europe were available for every one once a day. During the days the passengers were given a choice of "Excursion" trips. Some people went on boat cruises of the lakes and harbors. Some went to see the local forests. Local bakeries stayed open to make fresh bread for the guests. Food was prepared by all the residents and brought to the school for those who elected to stay put. Others were driven to the eatery of their choice and fed. They were given tokens to go to the local Laundromat to wash their clothes, since their luggage was still on the aircraft. In other words every single need was met for those unfortunate travelers.

Passengers were crying while telling us these stories. After all that, they were delivered to the airport right on time and without a single one missing or late. All because the local Red Cross had all the information about the goings on back at Gander and knew which group needed to leave for the airport at what time. Absolutely incredible. When passengers came on board, it was like they had been on a cruise. Everybody knew everybody else by their name. They were swapping stories of their stay, impressing each other with who had the better time. It was mind-boggling.

Our flight back to Atlanta looked like a party flight. We simply stayed out of their way. The passengers had totally bonded and they were calling each other by their first names, exchanging phone numbers, addresses, and email addresses. And then a strange thing happened. One of our business class passengers approached me and asked if he could speak over the PA to his fellow passengers.

We never, never, allow that. But something told me to get out of his way. I said "of course". The gentleman picked up the PA and reminded everyone about what they had just gone through in the last few days. He reminded them of the hospitality they had received at the hands of total strangers. He further stated that he would like to do something in return for the good folks of the town of Lewisporte. He said he was going to set up a Trust Fund under the name of DELTA 15 (our flight number). The purpose of the trust fund is to provide a scholarship for high school student(s) of Lewisporte to help them go to college. He asked for donations of any amount from his fellow travelers.



True Story

When the paper with donations got back to us with the amounts, names, phone numbers and addresses, it totaled to \$14.5K or about \$20K Canadian. The gentleman who started all this turned out to be an MD from Virginia. He promised to match the donations and to start the administrative work on the scholarship. He also said that he would forward this proposal to Delta Corporate and ask them to donate as well.

Why, all of this? Just because some people in far away places were kind to some strangers, who happened to literally drop in among them?

WHY NOT?

Nazim

Final Comments

Anecdote overheard:

On learning that her flight was re-routed to St. John's one woman was thrilled that she would be returning to the city of her honeymoon. Imagine her surprise when she learned that the plane landed in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, and not St. John's, Antigua in the West Indies.

~~Kathy McKay's experiences with stranded:~~

On Wednesday morning I offered a sightseeing tour to anyone interested. The Logan family from Scotland and I were soon headed toward downtown St. John's and the harbour. Then we drove up Signal Hill for a brief walking tour and continued on to historic Quidi Vidi where we were given free admission to the battery. The Logan's are considering a planned trip to Newfoundland for next year's vacation.

That afternoon, several of our young guests from the Netherlands asked where they could buy French fries. We headed straight for the Ziggy Peelgood's truck in Churchill Square. After visits to several shops we headed back to St. David's. As we passed Churchill Park, one of them called out: "Oh! Look at the green! Look at the hills! Oh! Look at all the trees! She was overwhelmed with even this small sample of beauty in our city.

Donald McKay's experiences:

Catherine Whitehead and Kathy McKay arranged a small concert to entertain our guests on Wednesday night. I agreed to provide some vocals to the accompaniment of Bruce Shawyer, who played a number of Newfoundland melodies on the sanctuary piano. The Bartellas children with their friends played Newfoundland fiddle tunes and classical music. Later, Noel Veitch joined Bruce Shawyer for some more spirited tunes. Then, Previn Moore, a professional vocalist who happened to be amongst our guests, volunteered to perform a piano / vocal solo. Listening to Mr. Moore sing, I decided that my talents were better suited to the midnight to three shift as desk clerk at the 'St. David's Four Star Hostel'. I was joined by Dave Rudofsky and Ian Wishart for three hours of high-spirited story-telling. Around one in the morning, Ian Bruneau, joined us and volunteered to visit the emergency headquarters to get details on the expected departures announced for the coming morning.

The next night, we came back for more night duty only to be handed buckets and brooms for the clean up. All of our guests were either on their way or were transferred to other hostels. Due to the generosity of the people of St. John's and especially our congregation, many supplies remained after the guests were gone. Considerable donations of food, toiletries, magazines and more were made to organizations including Kirby House, the Food Bank, and H.M. Penitentiary. Some supplies were put away for the Operation Christmas shoe boxes.



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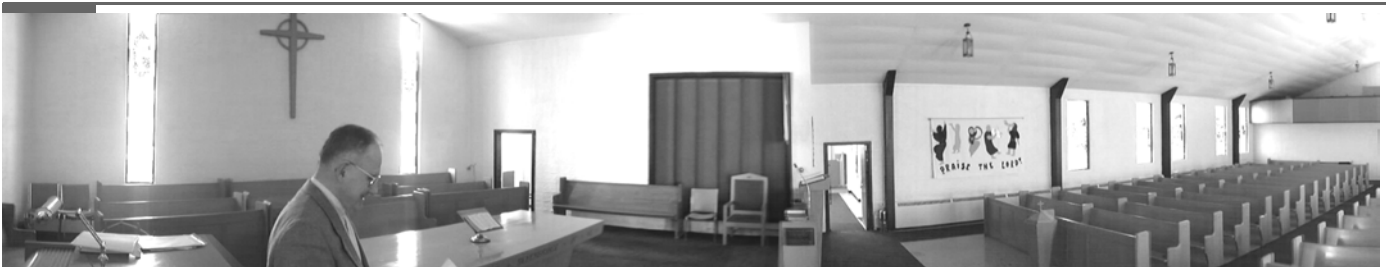
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The editorial committee wishes to thank all those who contributed items to this special edition of our St. David's Connection newsletter. Please feel free to drop items or notes off any time to members of the newsletter committee listed below, or leave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

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A moment of reflection