

Advent and Christmas Portside

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The Quiet Wait Begins.....

Report from the New Facilities Investigation Ad Hoc Committee (NFI)

When did we start this whole process of assessing our physical space? My memory takes me back to my first annual congregational meeting in February 2009. Council was asked through me what exactly we were going to do about our aging building and all the problems associated with it.

Our Property Ministry received approval to ask an engineering firm to assess our structures. This is the Byrne Report. What was the shocker was not the cost so much but the amount of degradation that has occurred over years.

What to do with the Byrne report? A small ad hoc group was formed, consisting of John Zinkie, Bill Mercer, Grace Hall and Bev Buckingham. They were asked if we should tear down the auditorium or fix it up. Their report was full and complete and recommended neither option but rather to look at other options. They did not recommend renovating. Prior to and during these deliberations we held town hall meetings asking the congregation what their dream church would look like. The four items that were mentioned repeatedly were

1. Building has to be accessible to all
2. Building has to be energy efficient, be good stewards of our resources
3. Building must have a good working kitchen
4. A variety of spaces, which must serve more than one purpose

(These four items were repeatedly endorsed in the survey that was done late this summer.)

Council determined that the following motion be brought to the congregation, "*moved that Council prepare a report and make a recommendation for the rebuilding of a new and improved facility (East of the existing sanctuary), together with a sound plan for financing the improvements, all of which will be approved by the Congregation prior to commencement of the project*". The motion passed with a significant majority (affirmative votes were more than 70% of the votes received).

Council then approved the formation of an ad hoc committee to oversee the research. This is the NFI or New Facilities Investigation group.

(Continued on pg. 6)

Michael's Musings

O, that you would tear open the heavens and come down! (Isaiah 64: 1)

From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait. (Isaiah 64: 4)

At various points, this has been the cry of every person of faith: "O, that you would tear open the heavens and come down!" (Isaiah 64: 1). It is likely no coincidence, then, that this reading is the first we encounter for the New Year – the beginning of this season called "Advent." The schedule of readings we call the Revised Common Lectionary was formed as an ecumenical response to the need to create a way for most of the Bible to be read in public worship over a three-year cycle. Some church traditions are mandated to follow the Revised Common Lectionary by their denominational authorities. Other traditions, such as ours, tend to use the schedule as a guide.

"Sometimes, the speeds at which our human tearing and God's tearing happen are in conflict."

As we begin this season of Advent, I realize I have journeyed through the schedule once with you! So as I begin my fourth year of ministry at Port Nelson, I feel the need to take stock of the ground we have traveled together, and the ground yet to be explored. On the cusp of the turning of another church year, this seems appropriate.

Some of you may recall my Easter Day sermon in April 2009. I was celebrating the first 100 days "in office," so to speak. I made reference to the widely publicized expectations of newly elected President Barack Obama in his "first 100 days." One member of our church family even told me shortly after I arrived that I had 100 days to basically "make it or break it!" I made light of this in the Easter sermon, but there was a more serious side that has lingered with me ever since. The question of when I felt I, and perhaps we as a church family, would begin to turn the corner, to begin to write a new chapter, to discover and, even more importantly, realize the new ways God is inviting us into being church together, has lingered long and large in my heart.

O, that you would tear open the heavens and come down!

For some, this never happens fast enough. For others, it happens faster than a piece of paper can be torn in two.

Sometimes, the speeds at which our human tearing and God's tearing happen are in conflict. This reminds me of well-known words from elsewhere in scripture: "For everything there is a season; a time to tear, and a time to sew." (Ecclesiastes 3: 7)

So why now? Simply put, this past fall, I have finally begun to experience that turning of the corner, the beginning of that new chapter. It took a little longer than 100 days! The tearing open of the heavens has, at times, felt more like trying to fell a 100-year-old maple with a small, hand-held hatchet. Indeed, Isaiah has something to say about that, too – about a new, tender shoot arising from the remnant of a well aged, seemingly immovable tree. (Isaiah 11: 1) But, having been through the cycle once, things are beginning to feel new and fresh, as are the possibilities for the future.

Some of this has to do with my own personal journey and the place I find myself on that journey. If someone had told me five years ago that I would be announcing a same-gender wedding in the church I serve, and, furthermore, the wedding would be my own, I would have, quite literally, laughed. Perhaps many of you would say that if someone had told you five years ago that your church would be welcoming me and my partner in your midst, you might have laughed. I know, however, that what has brought us all to the place of being able to say, "this is part of our sense of community and being inclusive at Port Nelson" is not a laughing matter. It has not been without cost.

It has been, I believe, where the Spirit has been leading all of us in the last five years, even if we

didn't realize it was happening – even if, at times, we cried out, “O, that you would tear open the heavens and come down” – come down to show us what in God's name is happening.

So yes, some of it has to do with my own personal journey – a journey that I can't help but bring into my ministry with you. But beyond that, there are other signs of the new chapter, the new page, the view of what might be around the corner. Here are some concrete acts of faith from the last three years that I believe have laid the foundation for moving us forward in God's grace:

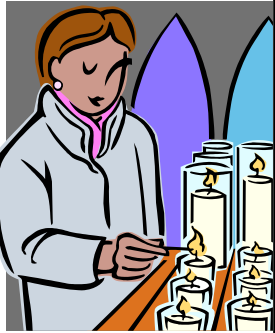
- the wisdom of our Church Council in discerning the need to clearly articulate our church family values and mission
- the wisdom of our Church Council in affirming the need to live with those values for a time before racing into the “what's next” questions
- the increased realization that it is more fun, more faithful and more productive to grow forward the strengths God has given us than to spend excessive energy trying to shore up weaknesses
- the wisdom of those who are now looking at those “what's next” steps in making them clear, concise, measurable, strengths-based, values-based and realistic
- the wisdom of those who have spent hundreds of hours of work in trying to discern alternatives for our physical space so that it might more closely reflect who we are and what we value
- the diligence and passion of our current staff team as they give leadership to the various ministries of our church family
- the vibrancy of our stewardship ministry, and their efforts, in faith, to grow our understanding of giving; the result of this (not the intent, or the means) has been a 20-percent increase in regular offerings to the church in the last two years, or about \$70,000 in new giving and over 20 new people joining the giving family
- the growth of our reaching out ministry in both the community and the world, the result being (not the intent, or the means) increased giving to local outreach and increased contributions to the Mission & Service Fund of The United Church of Canada
- the compassion of the many volunteers who have moved into new roles of leadership in the last six months in a variety of small group settings and pastoral visitation roles
- the growing vibrancy of our worship gathering, the result being (not the intent, or the means) new choir members and increasing attendance

As Port Nelson looks to the celebration of its 60th anniversary as a chartered congregation of The United Church of Canada this coming April, I believe most of us would agree that we are not the same congregation we were when we celebrated our 50th anniversary. I sincerely hope that many of us recognize and proclaim that we are a more caring, inclusive, Christian community than we were ten years ago – a community that seeks to reach out to one another and our world as we grow spiritually and worship God in meaningful ways. Surely, this is what is most important.

The promise from God through the prophet Isaiah is that God works for those who wait. As we celebrate where we have come from and what God has done in our midst, let us also wait with joyful expectation for the new chapter to continue. It will be yet another chapter in the endless book we call life.

– Michael Brooks

“I sincerely hope that many of us recognize and proclaim that we are a more caring, inclusive, Christian community than we were ten years ago”

December 6th Vigil

Dec. 6 represents a time to pause and reflect on the phenomenon of violence against women in our society. It is also a time to have a special thought for all the women and girls who live daily with the threat of violence or who have died as a result of deliberate acts of gender-based violence.

Last but not least, it is a day for communities and individuals to reflect on concrete actions that each of us can take to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women.

**Come and Join Us
For a Candlelight
Vigil**

**7:00 to 8:00 p.m.
Port Nelson United
Church**

**Time to Remember
Time to Reflect**

Gord's Stuff

She always knew she loved him. When she looked at him her heart melted inside and she wanted to do everything she could for him. It was worth it, wasn't it, to love like this?

Oh, sure, he growled at her just about every day, but he had reason, didn't he? He couldn't work because of that back injury almost ten years ago. It wasn't fair, taking away his source of pride, his very identity. When he couldn't work it was like part of him was missing. She could see it in his eyes, hear it in his voice, notice it in the way he raised his hand at her.

His words were like stones cutting her down, one shout at a time. Yet she loved him still. She would do anything for him. She wanted him to learn how deeply she loved him, how she was devoted to him, how she could see beyond his behaviour to the man inside. Why didn't he understand? Couldn't he see? Maybe if she just stayed at it, persistently, he'd learn. They were only in their sixties so there was still time. Wasn't patience a virtue?

Once a month she went to the church to get a Food Voucher. It wasn't much, but it made the difference between going hungry too many days and just eking by. It wasn't easy. It made her feel

small, at first. Yet they seemed to care. They listened and they didn't shout. They nodded with understanding, wondering with gentle words if she needed to get out, worried that she was in danger.

It made her cry and those tears surprised her. She never cried when *he* shouted at her because that just made things worse. When those tears flowed, as they always seemed to do in the church, all her fears, all her pain, all her anger, all her hurt seemed to drain away. She would leave after shaking their hands over and over again. As she walked home, she hoped the peace would last just a little longer.

It never did. He was there and the tears dried, her heart ached and her mind retreated.

The last time she got a Food Voucher the people told her about a special service. It was to take place on Tuesday, December 6th at the church. It was to remember 14 women murdered at Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal in 1989. It was to contemplate violence against women. It was to raise awareness and to open eyes and hearts. It was a place and a time to connect with God in a place of quiet contemplation, deep reverence and passionate example.

She shook her head

when they told her. It wasn't like that at home. It would just take patience and time – persistence, like the widow in the Bible.

December came and by now all the Christmas decorations were up. The lights blazed with hope-filled glory and glimmered with promises of new life. There was abundance everywhere, yet her heart still ached as words like "Stupid," "Worthless," "Hopeless" and "Useless" echoed in her ears. Why did she feel so empty?

One night, out walking after a particularly bad fight, she found herself entering the church. It was like her feet had a purpose of their own, taking her where she never thought she could go, challenging her to risk, again. It was December 6th. The doors to the sanctuary were open. The light was soft and subdued when she edged in. At the front of the sanctuary were candles of many sizes and colours, all flickering quietly, mute testimony to tragedy.

She sat in one of the back pews, slouching down to keep small, not wanting to be noticed, not sure she belonged. Those dancing candle flames captured her eyes, taking her to an inner place of turmoil. Staring at the dancing lights, letting her feelings wash over her, facing her reality

Continued on page 7

Men in Aprons

Formed ten years ago, the *Men in Aprons* group of twenty retired church members meets on a monthly basis to socialize and prepare a hot meal. In addition, this group:



- Coordinates a team of Port Nelson men and women who help at the Wellington Square United Church's Friday night dinners for the needy of Burlington and area;
- Prepares soup to be distributed by Teleministry to shut-ins;
- Sponsors a monthly Saturday morning Breakfast and Speaker—which is also open to the men in the community;
- hosts the Annual Pancake Supper for Port Nelson Church's families and our neighbours.

For any who might wish to be involved in any of these functions please call Charlie Hancock (905-632-1456) or Patrick Sweeny (905-634-5177).

CARING CONNECTION – COOKIES & POINSETTIAS



Imagine if you will, answering a ring of your doorbell and finding a smiling, friendly face offering you a box of home baked goodies or a Christmas poinsettia. Wouldn't your day be brighter? This Christmas we continue to carry on the long standing Port Nelson tradition of being sure that special folk know that they are celebrated as "family". This "Caring

Connection" continues to nurture not only those that receive cookies or poinsettias but all of us who bake, package and/or visit. This Christmas we will likely do 25 cookie visits (needing 50 dozen cookies) and 50 poinsettia visits. Cookies are to be dropped on December 14th at the church on the Evening of the Women's Dessert & Communion. We will need friendly

visitors to deliver cookies and poinsettias after Sunday worship on December 18th.

Share the love and in Tiny Tim's words "God Bless us everyone! "

Laurel Grace, Chair
Pastoral Care Ministry

Christmas Thoughts

In the silence of the night,

That holy night,

A baby was born

Who would call this world to peace and justice.

Do not lose this vision,

For every child born,

No matter where,

Deserves that we will always strive

To follow that call

Diane Hancock



From Your Library.....

*“Christmas comes
but once a year-
which is unhappily
too true, for when it
begins to stay with
us the whole year we
shall make the earth
a very different
place.”*

Charles Dickens

The Spirituality of Music... by John Baird

This is the ideal book to peruse during this season of concerts and carols. The author looks at music from many aspects, accompanying his text with a number of quotations and photographs. Each chapter is complete in itself, so the reader can sample one at a time. While relaxing with this book, **why not play some seasonal music from your library's CD collection.**

The First Christmas – What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Birth...by Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan

In their introduction, the authors state their purpose. “Our task is twofold. The first is historical: to exposit these stories and meanings in their first-century context. The second is contemporary: to treat their meanings for Christian understanding and commitment today.” Both Matthew's and Luke's account of the Christmas story are looked at carefully. Surprisingly, they are quite different. Although the Christmas stories are “tidings of comfort and joy”, they are also, the authors contend, “edgy and challenging. “ Theirs is a new look at a story we thought we knew.

Good to a Fault...by Marina Endicott

This Giller Prize Finalist novel looks at some interesting questions. What exactly does it mean to be good? When is sacrifice merely selfishness? What is the fine line between being useful and being used? When Clara Purdy is involved in a car crash, the family she meets and the obligation she feels will change her routine life in radical ways.

NFI Report (cont'd. from Pg. 1)

This group's mandate is to determine the needs of the congregation, develop possible cost estimates to demolish the current facility (and build a potential new facility), to develop a fund raising plan to determine feasibility of the project and present to Council and subsequently the congregation the results of the studies. **Our mandate is not to build a new facility! Let's be clear on that. Our mandate is to research what a new facility might look like and how we might pay for it.**

So where are we? The architects have been sketching different scenarios and have tested them back to the members of the NFI team. The finance group has been doing research into grants and capital campaigns.

Next steps: The NFI hopes to present their recommendation at a special meeting of Council on November 23rd. We have tentatively planned to have a congregational meeting on December 4th after worship. I encourage you to attend this meeting. **NO DECISIONS WILL BE MADE AT THIS TIME.** We will meet and have a good dialogue. The NFI team will hear all your thoughts. This is a fluid process, open to all.

I also need to remind you that doing nothing is not an option. The facility's inaccessibility and inefficiency require us to look toward the future. Our mission and values are leading us.

I ask you again to keep this hard working and dedicated group in your prayers as we accumulate our research.

With faith and hope, June Wright

Gord's Stuff... cont'd. from pg. 4

instead of discounting it, she discovered an unexpected place of peace, of communion, of hope. For the longest time she sat, her mind, for once, slowed to the rhythm of her breathing.

Images flowed through her mind, images of the helpless baby Jesus, scenes of the rude, spare surroundings of a stable as temporary shelter, the only shelter, picture book stories of that vulnerable beginning which led to further vulnerability in adulthood as he shared his ministry of good news, of healing. She breathed in that healing and breathed out her quiet desperation.

More images flowed, showing growing crowds, growing acclaim, growing notoriety, all the while clouds of danger, of death, hovered around the edges, leading to his

crucifixion. She breathed in that crucifixion and breathed out her own dying.

Still more images rushed into her mind's eye, aching sadness, terrified disbelief, wounded fear, cowering shame – then – resurrection light! She breathed in that blazing light, that new life, and breathed out her shame.

Her eyes were still focused on the seeming feeble light of the candles on the communion table, but she had been transformed. She had shared a journey with fourteen vulnerable women, with too many other women murdered in their homes this year, with the vulnerable Christ. She breathed in hope and breathed out despair.

She lifted her head and looked around. Just a few, isolated others

pondered the meaning of the candles, but she felt a curious connection, a stirring solidarity, a comfortable companionship with them all. Though she was still vulnerable, she was not alone any more. She breathed in resolve and breathed out fear as she rose to leave.

Entering the street once again, she clutched her collar closer around her neck against the sudden chill. She didn't travel her usual path, for the flickering lights from inside still caught her heart. She walked her usual slow pace, but now with a new purpose toward a new life. She hoped her friend was at home. She would need a place to stay for a little while.

And still the candlelight flickered and flashed inside – waiting.

“Still more images rushed into her mind’s eye, aching sadness, terrified disbelief, wounded fear, cowering shame – then – resurrection light!”

From Rainbow Connection...

We have had a great start to this Church year with our Superhero theme. It has been fun learning about the many Heroes of the Bible and how to live as a hero in our everyday lives. Be sure to ask your child or grandchild what Hero they have learned about each week.

It is hard to believe that Christmas is fast approaching. As the season starts to get busy, here are some important dates to mark in your calendars. December 11th is our White Gift Service and the Rainbow Connection will be involved in the service. Please watch your e-mails for details.

Christmas Eve family service will be at 7pm. All children are invited to be a part of our Christmas story. Angel and Shepherd costumes will be handed out before the service. All are welcome. Please plan to arrive by 6:45 p.m.

There will be no Sunday School on December 25th or January 1st. Regular classes will resume on January 8th 2012. Thank you to all our teachers and helpers for all your hard work – your efforts are much appreciated.



Consecration Sunday

October 23rd was a great day at Port Nelson. We celebrated Consecration Sunday. We were blessed to hear a wonderful message from Don Smith. We had an opportunity to prayerfully and faithfully consider what portion of what we have we wish to return to God through our offerings. And we enjoyed a delicious lunch together. It was a joyful, fun day. Thank you to all of you who participated and who organized.



Now for some statistics (as of Nov. 6, 2011):

184 families completed a commitment card

93 families increased their givings by 17%

81 families maintained or slightly reduced their givings by 2%

10 new members completed a commitment card. 10 new givers completed a commitment card in 2010. WOW, 20 new givers! Good news!

12 families became PAR givers for the first time.

All great news.

Thanks be to God for all our blessings.

- June Wright
Consecration Sunday
Chairman

Pinnacle Has Been Launched!



ATTENTION all youth in grades 6 to 12. Join Jay Poitras, our new Developer of Youth Ministry, Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. for the Pinnacle Program (Port Nelson United Church Young Leaders).

Pinnacle is already off to a great start. Come and join in the discussions about leadership. There will also be mid-week and weekend activities for fun and community.

Have You Heard the Buzz??

Are you one of "The Girls with the Grandmother Faces"? This book is taking wing, being read and then passed along by a reader to someone in the Congregation who they think would like to read it. I hope this book gives you some inspiration or aha moments. Once the book has completed



the journey and comes back to me for the last time I will set a date for a get together – with tea and treats and good conversation.

Blessings, Laurel

Photo Directory

By the time you are reading this issue of the Portside, you should already have had the opportunity to browse through the new photo directory. As I write to you, the committee is hoping the book will arrive by November 15. The big moment has been delayed for several reasons: a number of our members were omitted as their pictures were put into the Roseland Tennis Club's issue and not ours, our proofs were delayed or lost in the mail, and it takes an extra month to publish with a hard cover. **Thank you** to Gord Dunbar who gave up his holiday time to recopy our

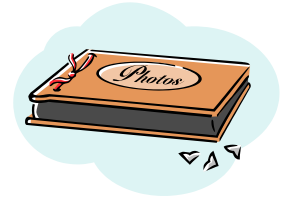
papers and to resend them to Lifetouch.

Thank you to the committee - Joan and Jim Thomblinson, Joan Thompson, and Gord Dunbar. You are great folks to work with, adjusting your own busy schedules to accommodate meetings for the group. **Thank you** to Rebecca Murphy, church administrator, who helped in so many ways. **A special thank you** to everyone who manned the telephones to book appointments, who hosted the photography sessions and who were generally

available to help in any way they could.

Of course, the directory would not be possible if you had not volunteered to give up your time to have your picture taken. There were some scheduling delays and we felt badly. **Thank you** for being part of this valuable process. We hope you value your complimentary photograph and that you will enjoy the directory of our church family until it is time to redo the process once again!

- Jean Redgrave,
Coordinator



With Thanks from Gord.....

By now many of you have picked up your Port Nelson United Church Photo Directory. The pictures in our new directory record in two dimensions what took God's initiative in Christ to form. It shows in pixels the hard work of gathering, of worshipping, of singing, of teaching, of learning, of listening, of laughing, of celebrating, of tending, the joys shared. With each face and with each touch, we become ever more connected to God in Jesus.

In this family of faith we discover our true strength – that within our weaving of relationship we plumb the expanse of God's heart. Within the connections we foster we are loved more intimately than we could have ever hoped, despite how we see our own selves. Thank you to all those who volunteered and made this project a success! Thank you to all those who had their pictures taken, graciously enduring some unexpected delays.

Thank you to the staff for their contributions, especially Rick and Rebecca. Thank you to all those who staffed the reception table and took care of the paperwork. Thank you to the committee: Joan Thompson, Jim and Joan Thomblinson, Bill Wallace and especially our diligent, efficient, always on top of the details, Chair, Jean Redgrave. It never would have happened without any of you!

“It shows in pixels the hard work of gathering, of worshipping, of singing, of teaching, of learning, of listening, of laughing, of celebrating, of tending, the joys shared.”

“.....we can live the promise both of the manger and of the cross as you consider how to support the eight charities featured inside”

Why Christmas? Christmas Gift Catalogues

At first blush it seems like a foolish question. If it all began with the birth of the baby Jesus, what is there to explain?

Yet in the ebb and flow of the Christmas season as our society lives it, the focus is upon encouraging good little consumers to buy ever more stuff. By buying more we can stimulate the economy – a requirement made essential in these times of financial downturn and crisis (we are told). The pregnant waiting and the joyful anticipation marked during the season of Advent, those four weeks prior to Christmas day, are pushed aside by the rush to the malls. Anticipation comes by creating Christmas shopping lists for gift purchasing, all squeezed into the hurly burly of the seasonal rush. We weigh down with

growing weariness and mounting panic.

Yet the gift we were first revealed to the marginalized shepherds. They were invited to leave their commitments, their flocks, the life they knew no matter how humble, and witness a saviour. This was too much, too terrifying, too challenging. In response to their fear, the angel commanded them, “Do not be afraid!”

We, too, are afraid. To step outside our routines, to ponder faithfully our priorities, to change our habits, is a daunting challenge. Yet the astonishing result of God’s gift of Jesus ended with the cross. We are vulnerable, indeed, if we follow the example of the cross and of Jesus’ self-giving.

To follow God’s call

into change, into caring for the “least of these,” into changing our priorities, means we can change the world one relationship at a time, just as Jesus did. To buck the trend during this season of buying is to make ourselves vulnerable just as the shepherds were vulnerable.

By making use of the Christmas Gift Catalogue, we can live the promise both of the manger and of the cross as you consider how to support the eight charities featured inside. You will find the catalogue at the back of the sanctuary or on our web site at www.portnelsonunitedchurch.com. The deadline for the Order Forms is Sunday, December 11th, 2011.

From the Editor.....

There it is again, that sense of expectancy, of waiting for what comes next.

As I read the submissions for this issue I continue to be amazed at the wealth of talent that abounds within this congregation. From poetry to humour, from sensitivity to just plain facts, there is no lack of material and as I read about the upcoming Christmas events and

special worship services I am reminded once again of how fortunate I am to be a small part of Port Nelson United Church. This year, for the first time I will be away at Christmas, enjoying a family cruise which means that on Christmas Eve I will not be here in our beautiful candlelit Sanctuary. I will miss that even as I look forward to celebrating Christmas in a

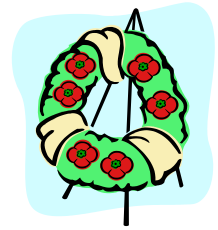
different way. My wish for you is for peace, good health, happiness, and the joy of this special season. Please remember-- Portside is your newsletter and you are invited to submit short articles, poems or pictures to lormacmaster@sympatico.ca. They will be published as space and time permit.

Seniors – Mark Your Calendars!!



We've gotten off to a great start with two luncheons this fall, both with interesting speakers and a good time was had by all.

Wednesday, December 7th, at 12 Noon is the next Luncheon. Won't you join us for a festive meal and good conversation along with some special entertainment?



In Memoriam

Rev. Gerry Brown

George Cumming

Margaret Dolman

Mae Gardner

Ann Gillespie

Marilyn Litton

Audrey MacIntyre

Jim Phillips

Elizabeth Smart

Florence White

Lynn Macaulay in El Salvador

Lynn Macaulay, confirmed in Port Nelson Church as a teenager, was active in youth group and church school. After completing university studies, Lynn worked in Kitchener with a social agency. Always involved with the United Church she felt called to explore becoming a missionary with the United Church (now known as overseas personnel). Following her acceptance and training she was sent to El Salvador. It has been a learning experience for her. The country has been under severe flooding and crops upon which the population depends have been destroyed. However,

Lynn says she is amazed at the resilience and spirit of determination of the people. Although many people have little they share with others who have nothing. Learning about the ways of agriculture has also been an experience for someone used to buying everything in packages at a supermarket.

Last week Lynn was able to connect with her home congregation of Westminster United in Waterloo by Skype. This gave her an opportunity to bring to them an update on the current situation in El Salvador.

As she works with women at the agency, she is able to speak with them about their faith. Lynn says that she has learned that there are many ways to approach, worship and understand God. Sharing the vastness of God's love for all, she feels the connectedness of the whole family of God, even living so far from her familiar surroundings.

(To read more about Lynn's work please go to the November issue of the Observer)



Port Nelson United Church
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We're on the Web!
www.portnelsonunitedchurch.com

Upcoming Worship Advent-Christmas-Epiphany 2011-12
(all services at 10:30 a.m. unless stated otherwise)

Please join your church family in worship:
Gathering, Seeking, Responding, Reaching Out

- November 27th – First Sunday of Advent
A Service of Advent Lessons & Carols
- December 4th – Second Sunday of Advent
Celebration of Communion
- December 11th – Third Sunday of Advent
White Gift Service led by our children & youth
Please bring a non-perishable food item for Wesley Urban Ministries
- December 14th - Women's Coffee & Dessert; Communion Service Following
 (7 pm)
- December 18th – Fourth Sunday of Advent
- December 18th – Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols
 (4:30pm) *Choir leads this annual Christmas tradition*
- December 21st – Longest Night Service
 (7 pm) *A Service for those who find the season a difficult time*
- December 24th – Christmas Eve Family Service
 (7 pm) *All children are invited to gather at 6.45pm for a costume!*
- December 24th – Candlelight Communion Service
 (11pm)
- December 25th – Christmas Day worship
- January 1st – New Year's Day Worship
- January 8th – Baptism of Jesus
You are invited to come to renew your baptismal faith
- January 15th – "Lament Displaced"
- January 22nd – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- January 29th – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- February 5th – Holy Humour Sunday!