



# WHAT'S UP?

ST. GILES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Fall 2013 Issue

## MINISTER'S MESSAGE

### *On the Trails (of Life)*

When I came to Alberta I always thought, "One day I should go to the mountains." Now, I didn't just want to drive through the mountains, I wanted to experience the mountains. In August, with a little bit of encouragement I went with two friends to the Grassi Lakes trail near Canmore.

I must have enjoyed that trip to the mountains because since that day in August I have been to the Rockies six times to explore the trails and enjoy God's majesty in nature.

I have to say I have learned a few lessons while on the trails. For example: 15 kilometers are a lot further than you think especially going uphill; the backpack gets exponentially heavier the further you go; it is great to take a camera with you because you can take a break without it looking like you need a break; the scenery is well worth it especially at 8:00 am; bear-spray eases the mind; hiking shoes are a blessing (just bought winter hiking boots for the snow); when you get lost, which has happened once, don't panic and buy a map and compass (I have done that now too); when it gets cooler it is very important to have the right clothes. Even after a grand total of seven trips and a total of 67.5 km hiking I still get tired. My legs feel the strain and I huff and puff like the wolf from the three little pigs, even though I drink enough water and wear the right clothes. Regardless of all this I still enjoy my hikes.

Just as it is important to have the right equipment to truly

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enjoy hiking on the mountain trails, we also need certain things to enjoy and find joy in life. The Reformation, which happened about 500 years ago, gave us essential *tools* to enjoy and find joy in life as children of God.

**Sola Scriptura** – by Scripture alone: Scripture is such an essential part of being a Christian; without Scripture it would be very hard (impossible) to be a Christian. It is in Scripture where we meet God, where we learn who God is and God's purpose for our lives. It is in Scripture where we find hope, assurance, and guidance.

**Sola fide** – by faith alone: It is by faith alone that we are justified (declared just) by God. It is not our good works (because who defines what is good?; and Scripture (Mark 10:18) teaches us that no one is good except God) that makes us right with God, it is our faith in God.

**Sola gratia** – by grace alone: It is by grace alone that we are saved and that we can be in the presence of God.

**Solo Cristo** – through Christ alone: It is through faith in Christ that we are reconciled with God. Jesus took the cross upon Himself so that you and I can be redeemed (our sins washed away) and we can be clothed with Christ's righteousness.

**Soli Deo Gloria** – glory to God alone: What we do from day to day is for God's glory. This helps us to focus. If your focus is God than we will focus upon God's will for us which is beautifully summarized in Scripture as "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind; and your neighbour as yourself."

If we desire to enjoy and find joy in life embrace the five **solae**. Yes, we may still get tired and when we go uphill we will feel strain and when we go downhill we'll need to put on the brakes, but through Scripture we'll find guidance and through Grace Alone, by Faith Alone, in Christ alone we'll be able to give God the Glory.

Many Blessings,  
Rev. Dewald (Dewey) Delpont

*MISSION STATEMENT: "St. Giles' mission is to nurture a vibrant Christian life; we will seek to grow in our relationship with God, we will care for the community and we will dare to follow Christ into the world."*

## *EDITORIAL*

Over the past few weeks we have heard inspiring sermons based on the Psalms. These ancient songs challenge us to think and encourage us to sing praises of thanksgiving; similarly you will find this issue will do the same. I felt compelled to share snapshots of both.

We see the devastation that the June flood waters delivered as their force swept through Calgary and southern Alberta. We hear the emotional stories of those who found their homes inundated with water and muck and their gratitude to the multitude of strangers who offered their help. **Thank you to these volunteers** and also to those who supplied food, snacks and water to nourish the volunteers.

*Psalm 23:1-2 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul.*

We see beautiful children gathered together, smiling out from behind giant **Thank You St. Giles** letters. They are so grateful for new shoes and clothes that fit, warm coats and book bags that have them walking just a little bit taller.

*Psalm 100:1-2 Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.*

We see the beauty of our surroundings; the splendour of the Rocky Mountains, the vastness of the night sky, the diverse landscapes that make up our country and **we give thanks** for the majesty of God's presence in nature.

*Psalm 95:3-6 For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker ..."*

We see the bounty of riches that we enjoy daily and **thank God** for these blessings and the opportunity to serve others through programs like the Inn From The Cold and the Food Bank.

*Psalm 9:9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.*

Wishing you many blessings this Thanksgiving as you reflect the glory and grace of God in all you do.

Susan Carmichael for the Editorial Team

### *NOTE - WORTHY*

To the Congregation of St. Giles Presbyterian Church,  
On behalf of the children of Thutong ya Bana, and myself,  
please accept our deepest gratitude for your very generous  
donation to us.

We struggle to keep all our young people properly clothed  
and shod, especially in winter. Your donation was like a  
God-send from heaven.

I wish you could have experienced the joy and excitement  
especially of the smaller ones as they milled about  
choosing their clothes and shoes under Marni's maternal  
care. The street children miss Marni's treats - fruit and  
cheese, etc.

May the good Lord reward you for your wonderful  
generosity

Sincerely  
Br. Liam

Dear Friends,

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my St. Giles  
family for your comforting words and prayers for my  
daughter, Dawna, at this time of her challenging and  
difficult illness.

Thanks so much.

Sincerely,  
Beth Ferguson  
<><><>

Dear Friends,

Thanks to all our friends at St. Giles for their prayers,  
visits, cards, gifts and goodies that we received when  
Lindsay was ill. It was greatly appreciated by all the family.

The Mackie and McMillan Family

## CALGARY FLOOD JUNE 2013

### BY JANET ASTLE



I know a lot has already been written about the Great Flood of 2013, but, as the St. Giles historian, I feel obliged to include something in our newsletter for posterity. I don't know about other folks, but it took me a couple of days to realise the magnitude of the disaster, particularly as I live up on the hill and thus could not see the river levels rising. By the weekend of the 22 and 23 June, Jim and I, like many Calgarians, were deeply frustrated because we knew there was a disaster in the making but could do nothing to help due to the City asking the public to stay away from the flooded areas and to not drive anywhere if possible. By the Monday morning, however, we, along with thousands of other people were just itching to DO something to help. Here are some recollections from a few of the St Giles members who got involved...

#### **John and Katie McLean:**

On Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, Katie and I went over to McMahon Stadium to sign up for the volunteer brigade. Upon arrival, it quickly became obvious that the response was overwhelming and that there were many more people than the organizers could handle. We decided to drive down into Sunnyside, and started asking people if they would like some help. As this was the first day of cleanup, many people were not yet organized, so we helped out at a few different places doing various jobs - mainly carrying ruined possessions out to the curb to be removed by the city in a day or two. Many seemed to have resigned themselves to just throwing away anything that had come in contact with the dirty flood waters, while others were not quite there yet. At one house, the wife was directing a

small crew of us to take everything from the backyard and carry it around to the pile at the front of the house. As we did this, her husband was picking through it and carrying much of it back into the house! Finally, he asked us to leave, as in his words "You people are throwing all of my things away". It was really sad to see this man and know that he felt so helpless in this terrible situation.

Next, we moved around the corner and spent the remainder of the day helping another family who had lost everything in their basement, including a library worth in excess of \$100,000 (they were in Europe on holiday when the flood struck). As the sodden books came out of the basement window, we carried them to the heap out front and one-by-one, the man's library which contained textbooks written by his father as well as by himself, became a pile of rubble to be loaded into a dump truck at some future date.

That evening, Katie sat down and wrote a song that she entitled "Calgary Strong". She was so inspired by what she had seen that day, in terms of volunteer spirit and the resiliency of the flood victims, that the lyrics came to her very quickly and the tune as well. This song became quite a hit on You Tube, as it struck a chord with many Calgarians.

#### **Janet Astle and Jim Weisert:**

Like John and Katie, we realised there were too many volunteers at McMahon Stadium on that first Monday morning so we went to help an acquaintance in Sunnyside. While it was a sight to behold to see the damage and the piles of belongings piled on the streets awaiting pick-up by the endless streams of trucks, I was most amazed by the hundreds of pristine porta-loos that had been placed outside all the houses. Where did they all come from? How many trucks had delivered them? And this was in just one small area of town. We spent the afternoon clearing a basement of every single item that was down there, all in a soupy mess of muddy, sewage laden water. Initially we were working in the dark, because there were no utilities, but fortunately a stranger stopped by who went home to collect flashlights. Other strangers asked to help and one couple hauled hundreds of sodden books up

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## CALGARY FLOOD JUNE 2013

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the stairs to the curb. They had driven for 50 minutes, through packed traffic, from NE Calgary just so they could volunteer. The community spirit was incredible. Other strangers walked up and down the streets offering food, bananas and bottled water. It turns out bananas are a Godsend because they can be eaten with filthy hands!

At other times we went to Bowness. One homeowner told us that when the floods had hit he had run out to his SUV, backed it into the street, and the flow of water had washed his car sideways down the street at tremendous speed. We spent the entire day gutting a basement. As Jim and I were the only ones with headlights (we had learnt from Monday's experience) we were at the head of the chain that formed to carry stuff out of the basement. We peered into the Stygian gloom to find what appeared to be the entire contents of a tool room that had once been on shelves, but were now all swished into a solid pile that was thick with mud. Jim gingerly picked out the items one at a time: every household and automotive chemical and can of paint one could think of, garage tools, circular saw blades, nails, endless light bulbs in various states of completeness, hunting knives, gun cartridges and four guns!! A doctor in the group kept asking if we had all had our tetanus shots. The poor owner was stunned and could not accept the need for what we were doing, but a good friend had taken control of the situation and was directing operations. Fortunately for us, a group of ladies had set up a food table just at the bottom of the driveway so when we got tired we could walk down there for fresh air and delicious sandwiches and snacks. A constant stream of trucks and muddy people passed by us as we ate, I don't know how we all avoided being run over. Once we had emptied the basement of contents we, like so many others along the river valleys, picked up pry bars and began the sad work of tearing out every single piece of wood in the basement and ground floor room.

### **Trish Terrill:**

In the aftermath of the June floods, I volunteered to help in three quite different situations. Being unsure of whether I could fulfill the physical demands required in demolition and cleanup, I decided to opt for something a bit lighter, and headed to the Siksika Nation where, according to the

YYC Helps website, they needed people to come and sort through the many donations they had received. The command centre was located in the High School adjacent to the Sportsplex, so I went there, signed in, and was given my assignment. There were many families living in the Sportsplex, sleeping in the gym. I was asked to clean any areas that needed cleaning. With all those people living in a building not built for that purpose, there was work to be done! Soon I was busy cleaning table tops, floors, and washrooms, as well as toting garbage to the dumpsters outside. During my time there I spoke with a few people, including children. We didn't talk about much, just pleasantries, really. They were very kind, and thankful for the help. I looked in at the arena where the donations were being sorted. There were mountains of clothing and household goods. It was truly amazing! The residents were able to go in and select clothing, and necessities. I was impressed with the organization of the entire assistance effort, particularly because everything had been put together so quickly.

My next foray into the volunteer cleanup was in Mission, where the streets were bustling with activity. Every apartment building had mounds of soggy building materials and appliances piled on the sidewalk outside. I was sent from the dispatch centre in the Safeway parking lot to a condo building on the river. All the furnishings and personal effects had already been removed, and the lower suites were being gutted. It was remarkable how fast the demolition proceeded. There was a small group of paid workers who were experienced in the building trade, and they were able to give the rest of us, who were rookies, guidance. Drywall was coming down, ceilings, sodden carpets, bathroom fixtures—everything was ripped out and carried to the curb. It was hard work, but everyone was cheerful, and it was amazing that all of us worked away with no steel-toed boots or hardhats, and there were no injuries. After a long day, the entire level was cleared down to the studs, and we all left, having been thanked repeatedly by the building manager. I spent another day down there roving with a few other volunteers, cleaning out storage lockers, garages, and another building.

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# CALGARY FLOOD JUNE 2013

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I made it down to High River within a couple of days of the residents' return to their houses. At the command center, volunteers were assigned to residents who had requested help. A group of 8 of us were assigned to a gentleman who could not hide his disappointment at our motley crew. He said, rather doubtfully, that he had been hoping for some strong young guys to help clear his basement. We all said we were game, so after a few more assurances from us that we were prepared to do dirty work, off we set. That day was, indeed physically very demanding. We formed a bucket brigade from the basement, and passed innumerable buckets of mud up and out of the basement. Many hours later, our host thanked us profusely, and I couldn't resist throwing in "We did ok for a bunch of old people!" He was very apologetic, and explained he just didn't want anyone to get overworked. Nevertheless, despite my smart remark, I did decide that perhaps I was pushing my limits, and that was my last trip into the physical clean-up work.

As the days went by, it was truly amazing to see the food, gloves, safety glasses, and other items that were laid out for the volunteer contingent. Many people who could not do the heavy work brought home baking, and also wandered the streets making sure we all had enough water and snacks. The community spirit we have all heard about was evident everywhere I went. People worked together, flood victims and volunteers, to simply get the work done. I worked with young people, men and women, locals, and people who came from out of province to lend a hand. Many of us were engaged in activities we city folk don't expect to do like tearing out walls, and getting covered head to toe in mud. It was an amazing experience, made almost surreal by the fact that up here in the NW, on higher ground, life was going on pretty much as usual.



High River flood damage



Flooding in Calgary



Water from Bow River flooded Bowness Park



Inglewood Bird Sanctuary flood damage

## **FALL IS HERE AND IT IS TIME TO GET INVOLVED!**

### **BY JANET ASTLE**

*(Adapted from a document originally developed by the Search Committee and printed in the September, 2010 What's Up? edition)*

**H**ere is an overview of all the activities that you are welcome to participate in at St. Giles...

**Policy and Planning Committee:** ensures the activities of the various congregational groups are organized in such a way as to provide effective leadership within the congregation. It also oversees major projects.

**Human Resources Committee:** deals with any employee-related issues.

**Growing In Faith Together (GIFT):** oversees church school teaching, youth leadership and facilitating adult education groups. Includes:

**Sunday morning Church School.**

**Vacation Bible School**

**Youth Group,** for grades 3 and up, meets monthly on Fridays

**Adult Bible Study Group** is held on Wednesday mornings

**Library** - located in the house, from which you are welcome to borrow books.

**Mission in Action:** provides information on international, national and local mission opportunities, e.g. the Food Bank and CUPS (Calgary Urban Project Society.)

**"Inn from the Cold"** program is held at St. Giles once a month. This provides up to 15 homeless people with a bed for the night, an evening meal, breakfast and a packed lunch.

**The Prayer Shawl Ministry,** where members knit or crochet shawls for those friends of St. Giles who are sick or grieving.

**Mid-Week Praise:** an evening communion service held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month.

**Choir:** Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings. Any adults and youth who love to sing are welcome.

**Pastoral Care Committee:** congregation members who maintain contact with sick and homebound members.

**A special communion service and luncheon** is held twice a year for those who find it hard to get to regular services.

**Finance and Budget Committee:** responsible for the financial affairs of St. Giles.

**Facilities and Maintenance Committee:** ensures the building, surrounding gardens and parking lot are well maintained, and oversees the work of the custodian.

**Events groups:** plan several social events during the year, such as the **Spring Tea, September Welcome-back lunch, and Christmas Tea and Bazaar.**

**What's Up?:** An editorial team produces the church newsletter three times a year.

**Midweek Mix:** is a light-hearted get-together at 11:30 am on Wednesdays where participants bring a bag lunch and meet for a variety of activities, which may include seated exercises, crafts or a talk.

**Fanning Centre (a long-term care facility) Service:** church members hold a monthly (Tuesday) service with the members acting as escorts and providing the music.

**Second Sunday Singers:** shares the joy of Christian music with residents at the Hillcrest Nursing Home on the second Sunday afternoon of the month.

*There is certainly no reason to say that you are bored if you belong to St. Giles! All of these groups would welcome newcomers, so please speak to Dewey to find out whom you should contact for more information.*

### **Care of our Church Grounds during the summer months**

**D**riving or walking past St. Giles over the summer months is always a joy to see the beautiful flowers and landscape that greet you as you pass by. Once again this year, we would like to express our thanks to **Norm Miller** for his dedicated and hard work in taking care of our church grounds during the summer months.

## ***IN THE BEGINNING...***

### ***BY MICHAEL MOORHOUSE***

*'In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep ...'.*

Well, they got that much of it right, but after that our Holy Book sets out into a creation story and a mystical flood which, apart from biblical literalists, present day Christians either find awkward or, like me, acknowledge with respect that these were the beliefs of an ancient people. From there Scripture moves into an historical narrative about the Israelites, God's special people, those precursors of our modern faith, until in the New Testament it bursts into the glory of Jesus Christ. Our acceptance of those ancient beliefs is acknowledged in our modern creeds, the Apostles and the Nicene, each of which goes back to the earliest days of the Church.

Significantly, each creed begins more or less with the words 'I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth ...', but that's all they say about this place we live in, leaving the ways and means of creation to an endless dispute between true believers and the narrow champions of science. True, from time to time in our daily life we are confronted with the reality of our time and space, but these moments are usually narrowed down to media bites about earthquakes and floods. Only rarely do we take the time to wonder about God and the works of His Creation.

Once in a while however we are granted an opportunity to reflect. It could involve a view through a telescope at Mars or the moon, or a peek down the barrel of a microscope at some mini-marvel of biology, and the moment often brings a sense of astonishment, a feeling that it's been here all along and we never thought about it.

I've had a couple of these glimpses in the past few months. One was on a cruise ship in the Tasman Sea between New Zealand and Australia. We had taken the late supper serving and were back in the room wondering whether to go to the usually Vegas-style evening show or pack it in and get up early for the morning sail-in to Hobart in Tasmania.

Our stateroom had an external balcony and I stepped outside to sense the evening. April is early autumn in the

Southern Hemisphere and although it was pleasant it was also dark. Leaning over the balcony rail and looking overboard there was nothing to be seen in the blackness, and because we were on the topmost accommodation deck the water below was almost silent as it rippled along the ship's side. It was a sort of nothing world. Nothing that is until I looked up into an immensity of stars. I was sort of familiar with our northern night-time constellations like the Pleiades and Orion, and I wondered what the Southern Cross might look like. I guess it must have been up there somewhere but I couldn't find it. There were just too many stars. Big ones, little ones, bright ones, faint ones, singles and bunches, just zillions of them. This is God's stuff, the sort of everyday things that are just there. Things we never think about.

Another moment of reflection had to do with time. Just when was this *'In the beginning'*? For instance when you drive the TransCanada Highway there's a point not far east of Winnipeg where in an instant you've just moved more than two billion years back in time, at least insofar as what lies under your feet. That limestone, the beautiful stuff they built the Parliament Buildings out of, is gone and suddenly there's a low mound of rock, greenish black and hard, and worn all smooth by countless eons of time we never knew. You're back in the Archean when those ancient lavas were poured out over sea bottoms that covered much of the earth. And think, if you can, of all that has happened since then: a deep burial and a profound erosion, a covering of continent-wide seas that hosted endless sediments with their fossil remnants of the most diversity of life our world has ever known. And after all that was scraped off there was what - maybe a thousand feet - of ice, but suddenly it's all gone and now here's our little patch of greenstone, a testament to God's time.

Why talk about this? Maybe it's summering at a wilderness cottage. Perhaps it's a total over the years of maybe more than a couple of months spent at sea. Maybe it's long ago and several months of actually staring down the barrel of a microscope at the wonders of mineral crystals that few ever get to see. It's that these are just a couple of the raw wonders of God's universe that were around long before the Israelites and, it can be argued, long before the Word. God has been around a long time.

## REFLECTIONS BY MICHAEL MOORHOUSE

A few Sundays ago our Treasurer Ted Samson pointed out in the bulletin that at the end of August our year-to-date expenses exceeded revenue by getting near \$37,000. That means we are eating into our reserves, like our memorial funds. Sure, these were end-of-summer numbers, and things will pick up in the fall. And yes they will, but this isn't pocket change folks. It's more than a few turkey dinner fundraisers.

Along with some of you, I've been down this road before. One of the sad things about it is that the first thing to suffer is that we cut back on paying our budgeted obligations to the support of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, our national presence. That means cutting back on the good works that we do as Christians, whether it's overseas or at home.

Does anyone else remember an Annual Meeting around 1968 or '69 when we were harangued for a solid ten minutes by a member of Presbytery for not doing our share. It wasn't fun. But we were paying off a mortgage

and I suppose there was no doubt where the priority lay among the members. I also remember a day in 1974 when we became debt-free, and four of us scorched our fingers at a Sunday Service holding up a silver platter of burning mortgage. And then there was that Annual Meeting in 1990 when for the first time the people of St. Giles agreed to take on the full amount of our assigned General Assembly allocation. We kept it up for a few years and it became a habit, but we don't do it nowadays. It's a shame.

In fact the worth of it was brought home the other evening when responding to an item that Dewey put in the leaflet. I went over to Varsity Presbyterian Church to attend a presentation by an organization called Oikocredit that puts out small loans to equally small start-up businesses in Central America. It works, and it's partly funded by the World Council of Churches, meaning in part, us, through PWS&D. And that felt good. So come on folks, it's time for all of us to look at the numbers and do a little more.

### CALGARY INTER-FAITH FOOD BANK

As sometimes happens the Fall *What's Up?* edition coincides with our annual Food Bank event. This year it is also Thanksgiving. Writing this ten days in advance it is maybe presumptive to say thank you for something that hasn't happened yet, but given these coincidences, perhaps you will understand. I always phone the Food Banks community relations person at this time to learn their current themes. This year the answer came back in a form many of you will recognize.

**Framework Statement**

The Calgary Food Bank is an emergency food distribution hub, sharing food with individuals and families, and with other service providers working with low income Calgarians.

**Our Vision**

Working together to create a hunger-free community.

**Our Values**

All people are created with compassion, dignity and understanding.

Our clients deserve the most nutritious food we are able to provide.

The best way to address food insecurity is in collaboration with others.

Volunteerism is our strength and primary resource.

We are accountable to our community for the programs and services we deliver.

We are responsible and transparent stewards of the resources entrusted to us by our community.

We encourage leadership at all levels.

Safety in our operations is paramount.

**Our Mission**

Working with our community to gather and distribute healthy emergency food to those in need and contribute to public awareness of the conditions that lead to food insecurity.

We couldn't have said it better ourselves. So thank you in advance.

Michael Moorhouse  
Convenor

# *THUTONG YA BANA (KIMBERLEY, SOUTH AFRICA) SAYS THANK YOU TO ST. GILES BY MARNI STROME*

## What We Did With the Money...

With your generous donations amounting to almost \$2700.00, I was able to buy so many things that the kids in Thutong needed. Remember, these kids are among the poorest of the poor living in the township of Galeshewe, a shantytown just outside Kimberley, South Africa. Many of the children have one outfit to wear to school, and while some get food at home, there are many who have little to eat besides the daily meal of pap and a small amount of meat that the school supplies. Every day I bought them a healthy snack. Sometimes it was apples, or cheese, or other fruit, or treats like biscuits or chocolate. The kids were always happy to pose for the congregation of St. Giles in order to display their appreciation!!



Perhaps the most fun thing to do was to take them all shopping! There are 65 students attending the school right now, and we took them in van-loads over a 10 day period to the local **PEP** store in town. There, they were told to choose the item they needed most: a new pair of shoes, a new pair of trousers, a jacket, or, if they had all these items still with room to grow, they could get a new school bag.



Many of the kids had shoes which they wore undone because they were too small, trousers that were up past their ankles and stitched together in the seat, and light jackets which wouldn't see them through the morning and evening temperatures that hovered around 0 degrees or lower.

*Before - shoes that are too small*



*...Yay! These are just right!!*

The youngest ones had anticipated their trip all week. When the day came, they lined up to get into the van making **NOT** a SOUND!



We started singing along the way, but the singing soon died out as the kids became taken with what they were seeing out the window. Many had not been downtown before!



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## ***THUTONG YA BANA SAYS THANK YOU TO ST. GILES***

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School bags were coveted. Many of the kids wanted them over shoes, but the teachers told them they had to choose shoes if they needed them. Sometimes I would sneak a second item to some of the kids when I thought I could get away with it.



*This girl had been so disappointed that she had to get shoes instead of a school bag, that a couple of days later, I got the bag and brought it to her. She was ecstatic!!!*

The kids proudly wore their school bags to school, even though they had nothing to carry in them.



Besides the individual items, I was able to purchase pencils, pens, crayons, notebooks, rulers, scissors, glue, balls for the recess period, reading books, and so many other supplies that the volunteer teachers asked for. On top of that, I could still leave \$1500.00 for Brother Liam to continue to make these purchases, along with more fruit snacks in the week. It was so much fun to have this money available, and to see it bring such joy to every individual in the school. Many of the kids specifically asked me to thank you on their behalf. I think you would have been very gratified to see how far the money could go, and how many people were personally affected by it. I thank you for your generous support of these kids, and of the work Brother Liam is doing to try to ensure they get some kind of education, and some nutrition. I plan to tell you more about the experience after church one day in the form of a slide presentation, so that you can really get an idea of how much your generous donations were enjoyed and appreciated by all.



## **A REVITALIZED MISSION STATEMENT FOR ST. GILES**

### **BY BILL WOODWARD**

On Sunday, September 29, 2013, the Congregation of St. Giles Presbyterian Church in Calgary held a special meeting to give final consideration to the draft Framework Statement, Values, Vision Statements, and the revised Mission and Motto statements that were presented at the beginning of the summer.

Each of the elements were reviewed individually and those present were invited to provide additional feedback or input. Over the course of the meeting, the Framework statement, the values, the vision and the mission statement were reviewed and considered for submission to Session.

This review process was instigated in the winter of 2013 at the request of the Presbytery of Calgary MacLeod. Presbytery recommended to St. Giles that it review its mission statement. Session, through the Policy and Planning Committee asked several members of the church to engage in a conversation regarding the Church Mission and to consider a Motto, Values and Vision if the opportunity presented itself. Draft responses to that request were presented to the congregation in the summer of 2013.

During the meeting, the mission statement was reviewed and a modified statement was presented for the consideration of the congregation. There was unanimous approval for the adoption of:

**St. Giles' Mission is to nurture a vibrant Christian life;**

**we will seek to grow in our relationship with God;**

**we will care for the community and**

**we will dare to follow Christ into the world.**

Those attending the meeting were also asked to choose one of the two candidate motto statements that they would recommend to Session. During the conversation regarding the two statements, it was noted that the two were focused somewhat differently, one on a personal level and the other more at a social or community level.

Following a discussion in small groups, there was, a unanimous approval for the motto;

**Called by Christ, Committed by Faith,  
Connected by Community.**

It was noted that the alternative "He will live in you if you live in Him" was a strong statement that might be used to reflect our beliefs at a very personal level.

Those who attended the meeting also reviewed and unanimously recommended the Framework Statement;

**We are God's people: enabled by the Holy Spirit,  
saved by Grace and nourished by Scripture.**

The Values and corresponding Vision statements were also review during the meeting and were recommended unanimously to Session for adoption.

The meeting concluded with an acknowledgement that the words written on the page are representative of the foundational aspirations of the congregation. It was also acknowledged that they are not "finished" and that Session will now need to help the congregation bring those aspirations to life. There was also an acknowledgement that the process of reviewing and evaluating progress towards these statements should be an ongoing mandate of the Session.

Thank you all so very much for your involvement, your commitment and your dedication to creating a set of statements which will help St. Giles to nurture vibrant Christian lives over the next several years.

### ***The Promise of the Holy Spirit***

<sup>6</sup> Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

<sup>15</sup> "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, <sup>17</sup> even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

*John 14:6, 15-17*

## **MISSION IN ACTION COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The Mission in Action Committee met for the first time this fall after our morning worship service on Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup>. First on the agenda for discussion was the Presbyterian Sharing Sunday service to be held on October 20<sup>th</sup>. Rev. Delpont asked that our Committee lead the service on this day as both he and Sandra Cameron Evans will be attending the Synod of Alberta and the Northwest meeting which is held in Lloydminster this year.

The committee decided upon a fall mission project that will be in aid of flood victims in High River, Alberta. Many individuals are still out of their homes and our

efforts will help them as they begin to move back into permanent accommodations. More details on this will follow shortly.

The Mission in Action Committee has a core of committed individuals with a particular interest in leading the mission work at St. Giles. If you would like to get involved in this area of service, please contact John McLean either by phone at 403-282-0630 or e-mail him at [j.r.mclean@shaw.ca](mailto:j.r.mclean@shaw.ca).

John McLean  
Convenor, Mission in Action Committee

## **PASTORAL CARE COMMUNION AND LUNCH**

**Thursday, October 10, 2013 at 11:30 am**

On the Thursday before Thanksgiving, The Rev. Dewald Delpont conducted a short service in the sanctuary for 20 or more keen participants. His theme was based on the gospel of John 6: 25-35 which suggests that we be thankful for not only the bread of the harvest, but for the bread that endures. Christ said he had come as the bread of life itself, so we give thanks for the empty cross. The bread and wine were distributed remembering what Christ had done for us. Dawn Flint and the Minister served the elements, and we are grateful to them and to Beth Ferguson for the music and Walter Cooper for the sound.

Lunch was served in the narthex where Dawn Flint had decorated the tables with beautiful Fall flowers and leaves, and Donna Russell and her helpers had produced plates of tasty sandwiches, pickles, cookies and cherry dessert. Jenny Thompson just managed to get her attractive thistle serviettes from Scotland there in time! Thank you to all who helped, including the phoners and the drivers and the photographer.

It is so good to be able to share in fellowship with members of the congregation whom we don't see on a regular basis, and be in touch by phone with others who are not able to come.

***Happy Thanksgiving to all.***  
Chris Browne

## **THANKSGIVING DAY**

**Thanksgiving Day** in Canada has been a holiday on the second Monday of October since 1957. Special church services are held on the Sunday prior and, on October 13<sup>th</sup>, St. Giles Choir members decorated the tables in the sanctuary with fruits and vegetables and we gave thanks for the blessings in one's life, particularly for a good harvest and the many other successes during the past year.

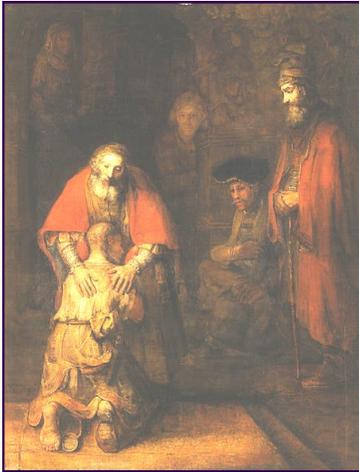
Most people use the Thanksgiving weekend to visit with family or friends. A special meal is also prepared at some point during the long weekend. Traditionally, this would include roast turkey with all the trimmings and a delectable apple or pumpkin pie for desert.

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect and be thankful for all that God has given us.

## A BRIEF THOUGHT FOR YOU

I haven't spoken on these pages for quite some time as Clerk of Session. During this time it has been my privilege to serve the congregation and Our Minister in that capacity.

In my living room is a copy of a Rembrandt painting of the prodigal son. It is one of my favorite paintings.



I never pass it by without having a good thought to ponder on. Henri Nouwen wrote a book on this painting. The book is called *“The Return of the Prodigal Son”*.

In his meditation Henri looks at all parts of the painting and connects the biblical message with his own

life. He explains from the very start to notice people standing far off in the safety of the distance from the

action. He explains further that he feels he has spent most of his life in the safety of the background observing the action of others. I too, often think that I spend a lot of time in that distant place. I think many of us do just that. The safety of the shadows are there for all of us.

However I think we must hear that knock on door from Christ. You know the door in another famous painting with no handle on the outside and Christ portrayed as standing there waiting for us to open the door and invite him into our hearts. I know he will give us the courage to do the best we can and share his love and warmth to ALL. INVITE a neighbor, your grandson, your best friend, the lonely person sitting on the park bench or whoever crosses your path TO CHURCH. Tell them you would appreciate their company and would be excited to have them meet one or two of your friends.

God Bless,  
John Watson  
Clerk of Session

## PRAYER AND SHARE

*“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (KJV Matthew 18:20)*  
*“Do ye now believe?” (John 16:31)*

As a matter of fact, we do. So, on Wednesday afternoon at 1.30 pm on the second week of the month, we meet in the Park Room at St. Giles. To acknowledge that we do have a purpose, our ‘Prayer and Share’ time begins by lighting a candle.

We briefly catch up on the happenings in our own lives, and then make a list of relatives, friends, and church family

to hold up in prayer. We also include any significant prayer need for our country and the world at large.

Our prayer begins by giving thanks to our Father, in Jesus’ name. The list is then passed from one person to another. Each person who is comfortable with praying aloud, prays for one or several people. Some of us are (were!) a little shy at first, and it’s okay to offer prayer support silently.

Oh we also enjoy a cup of tea together.

Please join us!  
Eileen Jardine

### Prayer for help and Thanksgiving for it

*The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts; so I am helped, and my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. Psalm 28:7 (NRSV).*

# Choir News

BY MARNI STROME

**St Giles Choir** is back at it again - rehearsing and socializing!! On the calendar for Fall will be a workshop with visiting conductor **Dr Dana Ihm** ( from University of Pueblo, Colorado ), and special music for Thanksgiving and Remembrance Day.

Among our activities in the Christmas season will be a Carol Sing evening in December, and special music with our guest string ensemble, Allegra, on Christmas Eve.

Practices begin on Thursdays at 7:30 pm, and all are invited to drop in - no experience necessary! We would really like to have more singers, so PLEASE don't be shy. If it's something you've thought about trying - NOW is the time!!!



## HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE UPDATE

After more than a year of advertising for a Nursery Worker, St. Giles was fortunate to have **Elaine Zhao** volunteer to be a Nursery Helper. Elaine is a Chinese student in Calgary on a 'Study Visa'. She is very cheerful, friendly and loves being with children. On the Sundays that she doesn't have children in the Nursery, Elaine has helped Heather with Church School projects. Welcome, Elaine.

Early in September, **Fiona Wilkinson** resigned as Church Secretary. She had moved to the south side of Calgary and is hired as a Community Hall Administrator. This position provides more hours and is much closer to where she lives. While we were very sorry to have her leave, we are pleased that she has found a job more conducive to her personal requirements.

It was requested that the title for this position revert to Administrative Assistant as it is in most of the Presbyterian Churches in Calgary. It was advertised in our bulletin and we hope to have our new candidate sitting in that office very soon.

The HR Committee has also had some changes.

**Irene Savage** has moved to Ottawa thus resigning from the committee. We will certainly miss her counsel but know she will love having more personal contact with her family.

**Leslie Hawkes** has agreed to serve on our committee and we are very thankful to have her expertise. Already her computer skills have been put to use as she is working with Rev. Delpert to provide the power point presentations for Sunday Services on an interim basis.

The members of the Human Resources Committee are: Sandra Cameron Evans; Lorne Cowan; Ted Samson; Leslie Hawkes and myself. Rev. Delpert also attends our meetings.

Marilyn Machum  
Convenor, HR Committee

## St. Giles Roast Beef Dinner

Everyone is invited to come and bring a friend and enjoy a succulent Roast Beef dinner, served with Yorkshire Pudding (Yorkies) and with all the trimmings that is being held on:

*Date:* Saturday, November 2, 2013

*Time:* 5:30 pm

*Place:* St. Giles Lower Hall



The organizers of this special event are **Walter and Susan Cooper**.

Tickets are available on Sunday mornings from Doreen Higgin or from the Church Office.  
Tickets are \$20.00 per person and \$5.00 for children 12 years and younger.

# Church School News

BY HEATHER MACKIE

We are happy to see the kids back again after a busy summer of outdoor activities. Our busiest time of year is approaching with the church school involved in lots of events and outreach projects in the coming months. We are inviting the congregation to help with any of our projects.

We will once again be making gift bags for children in need for Christmas. We will be asking the congregation for donations of toiletries (not from hotels), stationary, small toys, etc. The children will be making the gift bags up likely in early November.

We are also arranging a Church School shopping trip so if you would rather give a donation of money, you can give it to Heather and we will divide it up so the children can spend the money. We did this last year and the children

had a great time going through the stores deciding what would be good for the bags. It was so neat to see them thinking of what would be good choices and what would be the best use of the money. More details will follow in the bulletins as soon as we know dates and the charity for this year.

The children will also be taking part in the worship service on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, and together with their teachers, they are busy preparing for this Christmas event. They are also making special cards for the Shut-ins.

We are always open to new people who would like to teach on a semi-regular basis as we currently only have two regular teachers. If anyone is interested in teaching please talk to Heather.

## Camp Kannawin 2013 (Faith Grows at Camp)

Thanks to the generosity of St. Giles congregation, two of our Church School children went to Camp Kannawin this summer. Here is what they had to say:

Thank you St. Giles members for helping me go to Camp Kannawin. I really enjoyed it there! At camp we did lots of activities. Activities include art, canoeing, music, games and learning about God and his children. Some special features include swimming in the lake, solving the pink panther mystery and best of all pranking the boys' cabins and raiding the kitchen. I am really thankful that I got to enjoy my time there.



Shannon at Camp Kannawin with her camping counsellors

Once again thank you for sending me to Camp Kannawin!

Shannon Gaskarth  
(10 years old)

This summer I was very happy and excited to go to Camp Kannawin. At camp I met a lot of nice girls. I had six girls in my cabin. And we all were into the same things like archery and running, and we all enjoyed the campfire at the end of the night. After lunch we would get to go to Bible Study. The minister's name was Terry. Camp was full of fun activities and fun new friends from all over Alberta! It was super fun and I am hoping to go back next year.



Jill unpacking at Camp Kannawin

Jill Stephen (9 years old)

### On the Lighter Side

*Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, 'Why is the bride dressed in white?' The mother replied, 'Because white is the color of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life.' The child thought about this for a moment then said, 'So why is the groom wearing black?'*

## **COMMENTS FROM YOUR REPRESENTATIVE ELDER ON PRESBYTERY BY SANDRA CAMERON EVANS**

The September meeting of Presbytery was held at St. Andrew's, Calgary with an evening service to induct Rev. Jan Hazlett as Moderator for 2013-2014. During the Theological Reflection, Rev. Peter Coutts led Presbytery in considering the future use of its Lands and Building Reserves. This was the first meeting attended by Cathy Brown as an Equalizing Elder.

### **Discerning the Future of our Presbytery**

- Enthusiasms and Concerns Regarding the Ministries of the Presbytery
  - Centennial partnered with Varsity Acres for Vacation Bible School
  - St. Andrew's Lethbridge hired a children's music programmer as a community outreach
  - Peter Coutts' book, "Choosing Change" is now available
- Strategy and Leadership
  - Presbytery adopted income-based dues with a needs-based budget. A set percentage will be determined annually

### **Reports on the Ministries of our Presbytery**

- Interim Moderator's Report for Calvin Hungarian
  - Bertalan Bocskoras and his family have been settling into their new life in Calgary. Unfortunately, they were evacuated from the Manse during the June floods but have since returned
  - Mr. Bocskoras is working on his English and the requirements for him to be inducted into the PCC
- Presbytery Representatives' Report for St. Andrew's, Calgary
  - Presbytery approved the position descriptions for the ministerial team: Minister, Vision and Direction; Minister, Congregational Care; Minister, Family Ministries. The Search Committee has completed the Profile for Minister, Vision and Direction
  - Presbytery gave permission to begin the search for Minister, Family Ministry when the current search is settled
- Pastoral Effectiveness Group
  - Pastoral Relationships with Congregations
    - Each congregation is asked to provide information on administrative, musical and custodial staff positions that will be used to create Presbytery benchmarks
    - The 2013-14 Work Plan for the General Presbyter was presented

- Education for Effective Leadership and Policy Implementation
  - A workshop on communication – how to tap into social media, is planned for February 22, 2014
- Pastoral Relationships with Individuals in Ministry
  - Che Napoleon is still working on his requirements for Presbyterian Polity

### **Reports on our Ministry Partnerships**

- The Presbyterian Church in Canada
  - WMS
    - The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the WMS will be celebrated in conjunction with the National Presbyterian Women's Gathering, "Burst Forth" in May 2014
- Synod of Alberta and the Northwest
  - **Director of Regional Ministries**
    - *Wisdom on the Journey: Walking to a Sacred Place*, held on June 7 & 8 was a meaningful and transforming event for 120 participants. Individuals and groups committed to future acts of engagement
    - Donations received from PWS&D Flood Relief in Southern Alberta will be divided equally for the following organizations to assist in the recovery phase after the flood: Alpha House, Calgary, and the Food Banks of Eden Valley, Stoney Nakoda (Morley), Siksika, reserves and High River
    - The Ghanaian Presbyterian Church of Calgary is working on their applications for Charity Tax Status, City of Calgary tax exemption and a Canada Ministries grant. They wish to be erected as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in Canada soon and have a wish list of items that congregations are invited to supply in support of this new ministry

### KAIROS

- Work with CUPS has expanded to four communities where CUPS provides housing supports: Acadia Place, Claire, Longbow and Bankview
- A Coldest Night of the Year Walkathon will be held on February 22, 2014

**Next Meeting** – The next regular meeting of the Presbytery will take place on Tuesday, November 5, 2013, at Grace Church, Calgary, at 1:00 pm. Presbytery is open to guests; consider joining us as an observer.

## **FINANCIAL UPDATE TO SEPTEMBER 2013**

### **BY TED SAMSON**

Since we have reached Thanksgiving and completed nine months of our financial year here at St. Giles, we should look back over the summer to see how we are doing.

At the end of May, we had an operating deficit of \$23,319. In June, the shortfall only increased by about \$1,800 because our expenses were near average and revenue was only slightly below normal. Then in July, we had our lowest monthly income for this year so far - \$12,957. Our expenses were roughly \$1,200 above expected and the deficit reached \$33,630.

In August and September, our income stabilized somewhat, averaging \$15,560 while our costs for operating the church were a little below the budget. As a result, the deficit increased both months: first by \$3,145 in August and by \$5,064 in September, to reach \$41,839 by September 30.

Over the last nine months, we have only been receiving about \$16,000 each month in revenue, rather than the budgeted amount of \$20,311. We know there may be many reasons why income is down this year, but our expenses are only about two percent over budget, even after the large costs for the repair of the kitchen cooler and the main kitchen dishwasher and recently to replace the sump pump.

If it is a problem to have a donation ready each week, may we suggest you use the St. Giles PAR Program, where the receipt is securely transferred from your bank account or credit card into the church's bank account once a month. Pamphlets for enrolment are available on the narthex table.

The table below shows the actual numbers for Revenue, Expenses and Deficit from June to September, 2013.

	June	July	August	September	YTD	Budget
Revenue	\$19,052	\$12,957	\$15,439	\$15,673	\$144,064	\$182,799
Expenses	20,831	21,489	18,584	20,737	185,903	182,799
Deficit	(*1,779)	(*8,532)	(*3,145)	(*5,064)	(*41,839)	0

*\*(x,xxx) indicates a deficit*

## **St. Giles Christmas Bazaar and Luncheon**

**Saturday, November 30th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm at St. Giles Church...**

Please mark this date on your calendar as the easy way to Christmas shop while you enjoy a scrumptious lunch of soup and a bun. There will be a Bake Table (provided by the greatest bakers in Calgary), Craft Table, Cookie



Exchange Table, Fishing Pond (with lots of surprises) and a variety of beautiful Christmas Baskets. Bring your spending money because any of these baskets make wonderful gifts.

All this and a hot lunch for the price of \$7.00 per person. Come and do your shopping and wish your friends at St. Giles a Merry Christmas.

The Organizing Committee is busy with the planning of this event and would appreciate your donations of baked goods for the Bake Table and items for the Craft Table (such as napkins, hot chocolate, tea, coffee, nuts, chocolates, cookies, soap and hand cream).

***Come and bring a friend***

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### WORSHIP SERVICES ARE HELD EVERY SUNDAY AT 10:00 AM

- ★ **Bible Study** .....continues on Wednesday mornings at 10:15 am. Led by Rev. Dewald Delpont
- ★ **Mid-Week Mix**....continues with exercises at 11:30 am, followed by a bag-lunch at 12:00 noon.
- ★ **Mid-Week Praise**. Come and join us on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm.  
We'll sing some old songs, some new songs, and learn a few more.
- ★ **Saturday, November 2**....Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pudding Dinner — everyone is invited.
- ★ **Saturday, November 30**..St. Giles Christmas Bazaar and Luncheon — come and bring a friend.
- ★ **Sunday, December 15** ....Church School children will take part in the Worship Service.
- ★ **Tuesday, December 24**....Christmas Eve Service.  
7:00 pm—Christmas Eve Worship Service of carols, scripture and special music  
in celebration of the birth of Jesus.
- ★ **Wednesday, December 25** Enjoy Christmas Day with family and friends

*Special thanks and appreciation to our Music Director, Marni Strome, our pianists, Esther Woelffle, Lori Chang-Foid and to our guest musicians, for the wonderful and inspirational music that they have provided to us.*

**Check our Church Bulletin for other Upcoming Events**

### ***The Word became Flesh***

*<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.*

*John 1:10-13*

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