

# The St. David's Connection

Quarterly Newsletter



St. David's  
Presbyterian  
Church

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St. John's  
Newfoundland  
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2012  
CHRISTMAS ISSUE

## An Act of Christmas Worship

Rev. Sandy Wessel

*Luke 2:13 (NIV) Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." 15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about" 16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who hear it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*

The chancel was still. Candles flickered. A baby whimpered. Her mother crooned a soft hush-a-bye. The choir began the Introit. "O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him. O come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord." Worship filled the sanctuary.

Centuries ago our Westminster forebearers penned in the Catechism that our chief purpose in living is to glorify God and praise Him (sic) forever. But what does it mean to worship God? What is worship? Is it only what happens in the sanctuary on Sunday morning? Or is there a broader understanding of worship?

If we take the angels and shepherds

for guides, the first thing we notice is that both glorified and praised God. More importantly, both shared that Good News – the angels with the shepherds and the shepherds with anyone they met in Bethlehem. And dare we assume that as the shepherds knelt in adoration at the manger which cradled the newborn baby Saviour of humanity that in Eternity the angels were also kneeling in adoration?

Which brings us to today. All of our life ought to be an act of worship. Whatever we engage in, ought to bring praise to our Saviour Christ Jesus. Whatever we do in our daily living, ought to sing the praises of God the Son. Whatever we do, if it doesn't meet that criteria, we ought to ask ourselves, "if this does not give praise to the LORD, nor bring God glory, who or what am I worshipping by doing it?"

Likewise, everything we do in the church, for the church, and within the groups of the church ought to bring God glory. From Bible Studies, to choir practices, to Board meetings, to Session meetings, to youth group meetings, all ought to bring praise to God's name. All ought to be "acts of worship" in that what is done in their several contexts brings glory to God here at St. David's.

Now that doesn't mean we live stodgy lives with long faces, quite the contrary. If we cannot laugh and love, is it praise? If our praise is joyless or forced, is it praise?

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Truly, God inhabits the praise of God's people. That praise ought to reflect our love and adoration for God and for the salvation which the LORD inaugurated that day so many years ago through Christ Jesus, the babe of Bethlehem. O come, let us adore Him, Christ the LORD, in word, deed and song this Christmas Season.

Have a very merry, blessed, joy filled, and worshipful Christmas and a wonderful love filled New Year in Christ our LORD. Amen.

### BIRTHS

Congratulations to John & Kay Scott and Philip & Frances Field on the birth of their twin grand-daughters, Eleanor Frances and Erin Kathleen, born November 20<sup>th</sup>. Proud parents are Craig Stewart and Valerie Field.

Born to Paul & Jennifer (Collins) Critch on October 18, 2002, a daughter, Emily Jacqueline, sister for Chelsea. Emily was baptized at St. David's on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Proud grandparents are Clayton and Jean Collins.

The Editorial Committee wishes to thank all those who contributed items for this edition of The St. David's Connection and we encourage you to continue to do so. Feel free to drop items or notes off anytime to members of the Newsletter Committee listed below, or leave them in the Church mailbox.

Jean Bruneau 722-6436  
Lillian Crawford 754-2362  
Neil Ellis 722-0992  
Judy Rudofsky 726-3184

## NEWS FROM THE PEWS

- At its November convocation, the University of Toronto awarded a Master of Science degree in Physics to Anna Kieffe. Congratulations, Anna. Well done! Even before convocation, Anna had commenced work on a PhD in Physics. She plans to spend the Christmas holidays with family and friends in St. John's.
- Joanna Gillies will return home from the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College in Toronto for Christmas. Allison, her youngest sister, joins the family from McGill University in Montreal for the holidays. Kirsty Gillies will celebrate Christmas in South America, where she is travelling with two cousins. She returns to St. John's January 14, 2003.
- Barbara and John Ellis left St. John's mid November to return to Gulfport, Florida for the winter months. Barbara holds dual

membership for St. David's and Gulfport Presbyterian Church where she has just become an elder and continues to work with the youth and missions.

- Fred and Heather (Steele) Morrissey will be returning home from Calgary to spend Christmas in St. John's with their parents, Valda Morrissey and Jim & Frances Steele.
- Harold and Jennifer Berghuis and their children will be home for Christmas, arriving December 21<sup>st</sup>. They will be spending a busy time with family and friends during the holidays.
- The Bruneau families are looking forward to having Peter and Meridith join them on December 22<sup>nd</sup> for Christmas this year. They have lived in Ottawa for the past 12 years but always look forward to a visit "home".



### Christmas Schedule

<b>December 21<sup>st</sup></b> -	Packaging and Delivery of Christmas Hampers
<b>December 22<sup>nd</sup></b> -	Holy Communion - 9 A. M. & 11 A. M.
<b>December 24<sup>th</sup></b> -	Family Service - 6:30 P. M. Candlelight Service - 11:30 P. M.



Check out St. David's on the Web @ [www.stdavids.nf.ca](http://www.stdavids.nf.ca)

## MEMORIAL TREE OF LIFE

An important part of remembering our roots as a congregation and knowing who we are is remembering those members and adherents of St. David's who have gone before us.

For some time the Board of Managers, Session and Trustees have recognized that we as a congregation need to do a better job in preserving the memory of those who over their lives made a significant contribution to the worship, work and fellowship of this congregation. This recognition and remembrance is a process. We marked the beginning of this process by dedicating The St. David's memorial Tree of Life. This fine piece of craftsmanship designed and fabricated by Dr. Angus Bruneau is the cornerstone of the St. David's Memorials. This tree is placed in the Sanctuary amongst many other memorials. The Tree will, on its 200 leaves, bear the names of individuals who had throughout their lives made a significant contribution to this congregation at the Elizabeth Avenue location as well as those persons who were instrumental in the move to

Elizabeth Avenue. At the time of dedication approximately 30 names were placed on the Tree. Other names will be added at an appropriate Sunday service at regular intervals.

Another significant part of our memorials is our Memorial Book. This hand crafted book was donated to our congregation some time ago. The names of members and adherents in whose memory funds were contributed to the Memorial Fund will be inscribed in this book, a stand will be fabricated and the book placed on display.

To manage the Memorials the Session and Trustees have struck a Memorials Committee from amongst their numbers. Under chair Rev. Sandra Wessel members are: Glenn Barnes, David Carmichael, Fred Chancey, Penney Gillies and Ken Templeton. The committee would welcome any input to the Memorials process from the congregation.

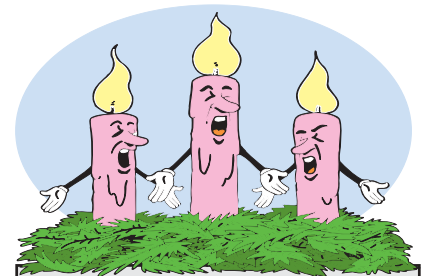
*Glenn Barnes, Elder  
Member, Memorials Committee*



## St. David's CHOIR News

*Jean Bruneau*

Many thanks to those who joined the choir and congregation for our annual Advent Brunch on December 1st. From the sounds of chatter and laughter in the hall that day it would seem that comfortable fellowship was enjoyed by all. The Choir wishes to extend special thanks to Mary Bruneau and Cynthia Boyd who volunteered to make the beautiful floral table centres which added considerable elegance to our humble Choir Soup! The funds raised (over \$475.00) are used to purchase music and books, and for supporting outreach activities such as the Sing-alongs With Seniors at Elizabeth Towers, Burn's Night celebrations etc. The Choir has not had to use the money budgeted annually for Choir expenses for many years thanks to your support at our Brunch. We are particularly pleased that this event, now traditionally held on the first Sunday in Advent has become such a welcomed opportunity for fellowship within the St. David's congregation.



### Grace for Christmas

This Christmas time You give to us  
Help us dear Lord, in You to trust;  
To give you thanks for all you've done  
For food and family, work and fun.  
AMEN.

## THE CHURCH BELL RINGERS

**W**e are looking for young volunteers who would be willing to pull the bell rope to ring our Church bell on Sundays from 10:50 am to 11:00 am. There is a sign-up sheet posted by the bell rope at the Tower (side) door. Some of the children (and many of the adults!) may not know what the bell sounds like when it is rung as it can only be heard from outside the building! A few practice pulls by an adult allowing the children to stand in the parking lot to hear the ringing is encouraged!



## From the AMS

- A note from our contact in Ibulanku advises that the Medical Centre (our previous project) is now up and running ... good news, indeed!
- We have made the first contribution (\$1500.00) to our new project – The Fraternity of Mayan Women in Guatemala!
- Watch for details of our annual International Dinner scheduled for March 2003!

# THE BLESSINGS OF CHRISTMAS

## Keeping Watch over the Plants Stall



L-R: Patsy Carmichael, Pat Melhuish (Penny Gillies' Mom)

## Retirement Notice



**O**n 1 November 2002, the departments of Classics and History of Memorial University celebrated the careers of three of its members at their retirement. All have or had connections to St. David's. From left to right are: Malcolm Macleod, Department of History, and husband of Heather Williams, former member of St. David's choir; Iain Bruce, departments of Classics and History; and, Gerhard Bassler, Department of History. Members of the congregation wish them well in the new phase of their careers.

# Thanksgiving Preparations



L-R: Mary Bruneau,  
Penny Gillies



Communion Table at  
Thanksgiving



**T**he Steneker family has heard from the Kudzina family in Belarus, and they are all doing quite well, despite a hepatitis scare for their older daughter Yulia. Marina is doing well at school. Apparently she speaks of Canada and her experiences here often. The Kudzina family expresses their gratitude to so many people here who contributed to make Marina's visit possible and so enjoyable.



L-R: Back-Maria, Rob, Jane      Front - Ian, Helen, Kate

## TRIP TO IRAN

Claire Martin

**I**t all began with a phone call from my husband John's Great nephew informing us that he was to be married in Barcelona, Spain in June and would we consider attending. This was followed by a message from his father in Iran suggesting that we combine a visit to Tehran for two weeks and then we would all go to Spain for the wedding. It began to seem like a great opportunity and so we were off!!

We flew to Tehran from Heathrow (London) Airport on an overnight flight and the first of many interesting incidents took place when after breakfast, the women who were fashionably dressed returned from the washroom completely covered as required by the Islamic dress code. I followed suit donning a head scarf

and long black manteau which was to be my dress when in public for the next two weeks. This was worn in a temperature of 35C and proved to be most uncomfortable.

Tehran is a large, relatively modern city with horrendous traffic and so is heavily polluted. We visited the museum which contained the Royal Jewels and a replica of the Peacock Throne. Also saw the last Shah's Palace. He lived very well!

The highlight of the visit was a 3 day trip to Isfahan -the 17th century capital of Persia. We happened to fly on the anniversary of the Ayatollah Khomeini's funeral, thus many of the sites were closed. Instead of a day of mourning, it seemed to be a holiday and time to have a picnic. The parks

were covered by women in their black chadors before a propane burner making tea!

As there is no tourist industry, we were supplied with a guide and car and the 3 days were filled with the wonderful sights of incredibly beautiful mosques, minarets and museums. At no time did we feel unsafe and we were treated with respect and kindness by everyone. As is so often the case, we are inclined to judge a people by their government and so often, it is not a fair judgement.

John and I are very grateful that we had this wonderful opportunity. We also had a wonderful time at the wedding in Spain!!

## Community Mediation Training Peace Makers

**H**afsat Abiola, a Nigerian activist for democracy in that country who lost both of her parents due to the actions of the corrupt government there has said: "Peace comes from being able to contribute the best that we have, and all that we are, towards creating a world that supports everyone." Are you interested in promoting peace in this community? If you want to test your ability to be an active peace maker please look for future advertisements for courses taught at the Church by CMS. In November CMS taught 15 people Interpersonal Conflict Resolution, this is the pre-

requisite for Mediation I and II. These courses are invaluable in everything you do; you don't have to want to be a mediator to get value from them. If you are interested in helping CMS administer the mediation process or to operate its bookstore in selling top conflict resolution texts, please see Scott or Mel Morton. Feel free to visit CMS and get a sense of how important a community ministry it is. If you are aware of any bubbling conflicts consider referring them to CMS before the boil over occurs, we can help. Peace and justice starts with you.

## JOYS OF THE *Season*

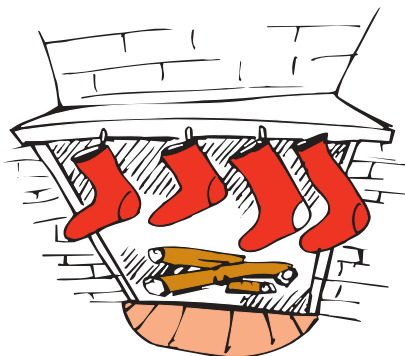


# Crystal-Gazing

By Harry R. Burton

When God stains my window panes  
 With fragile film,  
 I stare, amazed, at the crystal-glazed,  
 Mysterious realm,  
 In which He bids me enter.  
 And all the while I stroll the aisle  
 Of its fire-proof timber,  
 I hear sweet chimes of mystic climes  
 Played on December,  
 Accompanied by Winter,  
 On high and low-pitched winds. A  
 glow of frozen fire  
 So softly blends with a star that sends  
 Through space, a choir  
 Of angels, singing "Peace".  
 I see appear majestic deer  
 Of graceful forms;  
 They glide a sleigh, in their merry  
 way,  
 O'er snow-flaked storms  
 And clouds of fluffy fleece.  
 Soon, God will thaw the scene, and  
 draw  
 Across the film  
 A sunlit screen, to turn to green  
 My crystal realm.

Harry R. Burton was the organist at St. David's from 1963-1975. This poem, written in 1946, was published in "Poems of Newfoundland" by F. M. O'Leary Ltd. (1944-1952). The book held a collection of work from poets during that time.



# St. David's Women's Auxiliary

St. David's Women's Auxiliary reports another successful Afternoon Tea & Sale, with proceeds in excess of \$2300.00. A catering activity earlier in November also raised funds and we were pleased to be able to donate \$2500.00

to the Board of Managers for their continuing work.

The W. A. is a small group but always grateful for the tremendous co-operation and support of the congregation in all their activities.

**THANK YOU!**



**Sharing a joke while waiting for customers at the bake stall**

L-R: Elizabeth Thistle, Jean Mullowney, Judy Barnes.



Monet & Mom

Rev. C. Wessel  
 Christmas, 2002

# Lieutenant Owen William Steele of the Newfoundland Regiment

*Edited by David R. Facey-Crowther  
With a family history by James Steele*

A history of the First World War experiences of the Newfoundland Regiment through the diary and letters of Lieutenant Owen Steele.

Lieutenant Owen William Steele volunteered for the famed Newfoundland Regiment in late summer 1914. His war diary, begun as he embarked for England, relates the experiences of his regiment: training on Salisbury Plain and in Scotland, baptism of fire at Gallipoli, recuperation in Egypt, and, finally, the battlefields of France. Along the way his sense of adventure turns to a growing weariness with war, a desire to return home, and an underlying hope that he will survive. His diary ends twenty-two months later on the eve of the Battle of the Somme at Beaumont Hamel, a few days before his death.

Steele and his comrades expected war to be a glorious adventure, their personal intersection with events of historic importance. His diary entries convey the excitement that accompanied the passage of the "First 500" recruits across the Atlantic to England and the boredom that followed as the regiment moved

from training camps to garrison towns during the first year of the war. Steele's account of the regiment's role in the ill-fated Gallipoli expedition shows how the reality of war transforms individuals, shattering illusions about glory and heroic effort and replacing them with fears of death and wounding far from home. Steele's record of the shift to the western front and the events that led up to the virtual annihilation of his regiment on the fields of Beaumont Hamel on 1 July 1916 is filled with pathos and irony of war. His diary captures the essence of how the individual deals with war's uncertainties, the terrible possibilities of self destruction on the battleground, and the need to control and overcome those fears.

The Great War is of special interest to Newfoundland as it was the last significant effort by what was then a small Dominion to assert its place within the larger British Empire. Newfoundland's participation in the war resulted not only in the loss of lives and limbs but to the strains and tensions that led to its demise as an independent country.

"Steele's thoughts on the relationship

between Canadian and Newfoundland identity are fascinating, and his description of the 'flood' at Gallipoli is one of the best I've read. Facey-Crowther's introductory chapters are excellent." Jonathan F. Vance, Department of History, University of Western Ontario

**"An informative first hand account of the life of a disciplined, capable, and ambitious officer in the famed Newfoundland Regiment." Carman Miller, author of Painting the Map Red: Canada and the South African War, 1899-1902**

David R. Facey-Crowther is professor and head of the Department of History at Memorial University of Newfoundland. He is the author of several works and articles on Canadian military history and is currently a member of the advisory committee for the Canadian War Museum.

This book was published by McGill Queen's University Press. It is available through the Downhomer and Bennington Gate bookstores. A Book Launching takes place on Tuesday, December 17, 2002 at the Colonial Building on Military Road, 7-9 P. M. Refreshments will be served.

