

CORNERSTONE

December, 2011

20 Young Road
Kanata, Ontario
K2L 1W1
613-836-1001
www.stpaulshk.org

St Paul's
ANGELICAN CHURCH



“A growing community called to know Jesus Christ and make him known in the world by our presence.”

Sunday Services

8:00 a.m. Sunday Morning – Holy Communion Said service

9:15 a.m. Sunday Morning – Traditional/Choral Holy Communion. Kids are invited to join the God Squad for children’s worship, crafts and games

11:00 a.m. Sunday Morning – Praise Music Holy Communion. Kids are invited to join the God Squad for children’s worship, crafts and games

Other Services

9:45 a.m Wednesday – Eucharist and Bible Study

2:00 p.m. Thursday – “Seniors’ Afternoon Out” Service and Social

7:00 p.m. Friday – EPIC Youth Group

Inside this issue:

- Messages from Father John and Father Craig
 - **Bishop Willimon’s Visit**
 - Our Sponsored Child
 - Christmas at Elmwood
 - Parish Council News
- ...and more!

January edition
deadline:

Tuesday, January 10, 2012

Please send submissions to:
cornerstone@stpaulshk.org



A Message from Father John

Dear Friends in Christ,

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you and your families a blessed Christmas. My hope and prayer is that you are well and that your life is filled with purpose. I pray that we all may encounter the mystery of Christmas and that we may be transformed by it.

I have to admit that I am always a little confused at this time of year. I love Advent with its message of Hope and Anticipation. I love Christmas with its message of Love and Joy. But there is something in the anticipation that also highlights our brokenness and fragility. It seems to me that many people are running around trying to find meaning at this time of year.



As the year comes to a close and the days are overshadowed with more darkness we begin to long for a glorious light to shine into our world. Christians are drawn to the mysteries of Advent and Christmas, because they speak hope to the life we are living.

We need to stop the hectic pace of December and reflect on the truth. **God loves us! God comes to us! God is alive!**

These three simple truths bring hope in our journey. They ask us to see God's action of Christ's birth into our history as an act of unlimited love. In addition we are encouraged to participate in this unselfish love towards others. God rejoices when we love one another unconditionally. We are invited to have an intimate relationship with God. We are called to the worship and adoration of a God who joins with us in the journey of life, and gives us the opportunity to Love as He loves us.

I know that Christmas is a hectic time filled with obligations to family, friends and work. Take the time and the opportunity to come and worship with us this Advent and Christmas. Invite your friends to join with us. May we all be surprised and sustained by the mystery of His Incarnation.

May the Christ Child of Bethlehem bless all of you this Christmas.

Peace Love and Laughter,



From the Desk of Father Craig

You can't take the Teacher out of the Preacher!

Lorna picked the title for this Cornerstone article, "You can't take the Teacher out of the Preacher!" I wonder who she was thinking of?? Well this teacher-preacher is giving thanks for the journey we have had together these past few weeks in the *We Believe* series.

My sense of awe and wonder at how amazing our God is has been re-ignited. Grounded in **scripture**, heard in and through the words of the **early Church** and renewed in our **personal encounter** with God, we should be excited about what this God can do in and through us!

Rev. Dr. Barbara Robinson challenged us not to limit God in Jesus. We lose out when we paint Jesus as either human or divine and not both! In fact, the God we worship loves us so much that he is "pleased to dwell" with us. One of Jesus' titles is to be Emmanuel, which means "God with us." (Matthew 1.23 and Isaiah 7.14)

As we move toward Christmas, what does it mean to have that the babe born in Bethlehem as my Lord? How is Jesus Lord of my life today? These are a few of the questions we are exploring on Tuesday nights as we look at the Nicene Creed. Through these evenings I am delighted that my view of Jesus as Lord is growing. And it is growing because I remain committed to being a disciple, Jesus' student.

As a student of Jesus, I continue to listen to the voice of Christ in scripture, the creeds and the words of the church today... Rev. Bar-

bara, Fr. Stephen, Fr. John and soon Bishop Willimon. I pray that the Nicene Creed can be a lens through which we can view scripture, the story of God's encounter with us, with a new sense of wonderment.

Let us always be ready to learn from one another and our God. For the mystery that is Jesus is not reasonable, but an outlandish love that truly is God alone. As I said a few years ago, "The Christ child is, was, and always will be, a gift to us. Let us constantly, prayerfully, and humbly find ways to celebrate that gift together." If we do that, God's kingdom will certainly be very near!

Blessing to all this holy season,
Fr. Craig+





In partnership with



November 2011

Dear Friends:

Christian Children's Fund of Canada (CCFC) and Socio Economic Development Program (SEDP) administrators are pleased to share with you the program graduation of one of our program communities in Kolkata, India. Your sponsored child, Ajarul Laskar, has participated in this program and has benefited immensely from your generous support.

Program graduation means that Ajarul Laskar's community has reached a point of self-sufficiency. Basic necessities such as education, food, water, healthcare and shelter can now be provided, without the help of outside organizations like ours.

Prior to CCFC partnering with SEDP in 1991, families in the communities were experiencing a level of poverty that was life-threatening. Malnutrition, disease and unemployment were commonplace, and most families were living in abject poverty. There was little reason for the children in Ajarul Laskar's community to have any hope.



Thanks to your support, CCFC and SEDP provided life-changing services to over 2,000 children and families in several Kolkata communities. The program focused on awareness of education which enabled many children to enroll in school, complete their education and become contributing members of their society. Nine resource centers were constructed and two were repaired which allows about 900 children to attend the centers to participate in study groups, do homework, play and meet their peers during special holiday events. 150 youth that were sponsored have been able to become members of child parliament. This allows the youths to

represent children and youth in parliament about issues that can positively impact their lives and future development. Three parks, along with play equipment, were developed which allows children the right to play. The community was actively involved in taking initiatives to ensure children were attending school, reduce drop out rate and curb early child marriages.



All of the enrolled children and their families benefitted from health check ups, and special assistance was given to 45 children who required surgery. Over the past five years, no acute endemic was observed and no under-five mortality deaths have been reported. All of the villages were provided with safe drinking water facilities and 400 sanitary latrines were constructed. The community was trained to use grey water for watering their gardens and reduce stagnation of water which is often a source for breeding mosquitoes.



192 Micro Enterprise and Micro Credit initiatives groups were formed, functioning independently and currently benefitting 190 families. This initiative supports a total of 52 trades and has significantly contributed to increased family income and self sufficiency.

Ongoing training to families and program staff in the rights of children (to education, play and protection) accounting, gender-equality, leadership have lead to increased understanding of community development and success.

Since your sponsored child's community is now self-sufficient and has the tools and resources necessary to succeed, CCFC and SEDP administrators feel confident it is the right time to withdraw from the community. This will allow the residents to experience total independence, and the opportunity to provide quality services for the children and families in the community. As self-sustainability is the ultimate goal of all CCFC programs, we are delighted with this result and hope you share in our sense of pride.



Now that Ajarul Laskar's family is able to provide for itself, they no longer need your support. CCFC is presenting a new opportunity for your continued support by asking you to sponsor a child in another community that is in greater need. Together you and CCFC can aim to achieve the same success in the new child's community.

CCFC and SEDP recognize that their work has been made possible through the commitment and loyalty of CCFC sponsors like you. Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,

Valmurugan Muniyasamy
Country Director, India
Christian Children's Fund of Canada

Mr. P. K. Chakraborty
Program Director
Socio Economic Development Program

Child Name: <u>Ajarul Laskar</u>		Date: _____
Child ID: <u>INDIA/001</u>	Program Code: <u>SEDP</u>	
Sponsor Name: _____	Program ID: <u>2400</u>	
Sponsor ID: _____		
[Handwritten text in Hindi]		
[Handwritten signature]		

Farewell from Ajarul Laskar

Our Christian Children's Fund Sponsored Child

New Year greetings to you and your family. I trust that you keep well by the grace of God. We are all well here. I convey my gratitude to you for helping me so much. Thank you very much for CDG money that you have sent to me and it has helped me a lot. I have received various types of benefit from the project like school fee, study materials, uniform, festival dress, health check up, nutritious food, etc. I was very glad to be in the project. I have learnt from the project that cleanliness keeps people healthy then how to prevent environment and also save money in a self help group and do a small business from that money. Trainings were also provided on animal husbandry, paddy cultivation, vegetable cultivation, and fish cultivation in a modern scientific method so that one can produce more and earn good money to raise the family income. The project has helped me to develop in all aspects. I would remember your kind help for ever. Your contribution has made our lives much easier. Hope you would get the opportunity to help some other children who need help more than me. Please pray for me so that I can have good education and become well established in near future. I am very unhappy to write to you a farewell letter. May God be gracious to you all. With lots of love and good wishes. With kindest regards.

Your beloved child
Ajarul Laskar

Introducing... Kiran Muniyasamy

Our New Christian Children's Fund Sponsored Child

Birthday: May 28, 2005

Age: 6

School Level: Elementary, year 1

Favourite Subject: Mathematics

Activities: Likes to draw and do crafts

Chores at Home: Runs short errands

Lives With: Mother and Father

Father's Occupation: Seasonal Worker

Mother's Occupation: Unemployed

Brothers: 1



Kiran thinks he would like to be a police officer when he grows up.

His family lives in a small, thatched hut that lacks running water. Potable water is purchased from a water truck. The child's father is a fisherman. His job is seasonal, and his income is meagre and unsteady. The family regularly relies on the use of moneylenders to cover their basic needs, and there are never enough funds to repay the loans. Their cyclical financial situation keeps them in a state of poverty. The family is Hindu in faith. They speak Tamil. Water and mosquito-borne diseases are widespread in this area. The community would benefit from more sources of potable water, basic sanitation facilities, upgraded health care, and improved transportation services.

If your family would be interested in communicating with this child on behalf of St. Paul's, please contact the church office at 613-836-1001.

India: Vembar Area Child Development

Location: Coastal Communities along the Gulf of Mannar, India

Age Range of Children: 4 to 18

Services Provided: School books and materials, meals, basic health care

Program Partner: People's Action for Development (PAD)

Number of Children Involved: 2000

The sea touches every part of life in the small villages that dot the coast of the Gulf of Mannar, south of the city of Ramanathapuram on the southern tip of India. Nine out of ten families here make their living by fishing the nearby reefs in small open boats. Others harvest salt from the ocean and still others work in factories that produce ice for packing the fish. The ocean even affects the water table, making it saline so getting pure drinking water is a serious challenge.

Poverty in this area is widespread. Fishing is a notoriously underpaid and dangerous occupation, and fishing communities in India are often overlooked in

government aid programs. As a result, most of the people in these villages are very poor and live in simple huts made of palm or coconut leaves. There's no phone service or public transportation and the closest hospitals and large schools are 50 to 100 kilometres away – a very long journey to travel by bicycle or foot!

The program provides basic education for children in the area, including day-care services, plus a supply of school materials and books. The educational component of the program is complemented by basic medical care for sponsored children, including regular health check-ups, dental care, and treatment when needed. The children also receive hot nutritious lunches every school day, as well as protein supplements, to help them stay alert and focused in class.

Parents of sponsored children also benefit from the program. They learn how to organize themselves to address local issues and problems, including children's rights and conservation practices that can lead to sustainable food production. Job skills courses also help to equip them for alternate livelihoods.



St. Paul's is delighted to welcome Bishop William Willimon, one of the foremost preachers of this generation! A must hear, and see!

December 2011 visit from Bishop Willimon at St Paul's, 20 Young Road, Kanata

Jesus, Our Hope Incarnate



The Reverend Dr. William H. Willimon
Bishop of The United Methodist Church of North Alabama, and former Dean of the Chapel and Professor of Christian Ministry at Duke University, NC

Friday December 9th

Clergy Day - Registration required

www.stpaulshk.org or call 613-836-1001

Morning Session - Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, Ontario & Montreal

Afternoon Session to include Ecumenical Ordained Brothers & Sisters

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Saturday December 10th

Laitly & Clergy - Registration and fee required

www.stpaulshk.org or call 613-836-1001

Teaching and optional small group discussions

Sessions - 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 2:30 p.m.

Morning Prayer 9:00 a.m.

Evening Prayer 8:30 p.m.

Sunday December 11th

Join us as Bishop Willimon preaches at our regular services

8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Hosted by St. Paul's Anglican Church, 20 Young Road, Kanata

Sponsored by the Anglican Dioceses of Ottawa, Ontario & Montreal

Registration deadline is November 18th

Don't miss this opportunity! Register for the Saturday teaching session today on St. Paul's website, or contact the church office at 613-836-1001.

A White Christmas at Elmwood

by Rose Gourlay Gosse

Just two miles from Carp Village, hidden behind a screen of overgrown trees and intertwining plant life, stands the stately ruins of a stalwart stone mansion. Started in 1869 and taking several years to complete, Elmwood (named for the tall elms around it) was the majestic home of Hugh Gourlay, from Ireland, and his Scottish Presbyterian wife, Maria Rose Lockhead of North Gower. Hugh planted a thirty-acre orchard on the land given to him by his father, John L. Gourlay. The family were devout Christians, always ready to help neighbours in need.

It is sad to think that their kindness has been repaid with vandalism. When the last resident of Elmwood went off to hospital, leaving the house unattended, vandals broke in, ransacked the house and stole all the family's prized possessions. Who is now pouring from Grandma's silver teapot, or playing her melodeon? Who was responsible for the fire that left the mansion in ruins?

The estate was sold - none of the scattered descendents of Hugh and Maria could afford to buy it. However, they all hold treasured memories of a happy family life behind those stone walls, in the estate called Elmwood.

The following moving Christmas story of life on the estate many moons ago was written by Rose Gourlay Gosse. Her book, Those Grey Stone Walls, tells the history of the Gourlay family, with information about their house, Elmwood, in Huntley township and other places in Carleton and Lanark counties. A copy is available at the Carp Library (published by the author, 1982).

Angela Kilby

It was Christmas eve many years ago. We were very happy and greatly excited as the train from Ottawa made its way winding through snow-covered hills and valleys toward the secluded village of Carp. We were to spend Christmas on the farm of my grandparents at Elmwood - where we knew we would be delightfully spoiled, and aunts and uncles would cater to our every whim.

As the train slowed down, jerking and grinding its way to the station, the conductor stood on the steps waving his lantern to and fro. The clanging bell gave loud warning of the arrival while jets of steam puffed into the frosty air. Suddenly the train stopped with a jerk.

Our family - seven in all - poured out onto the snow-covered platform. Blanketed horses with their cutters were tied to the hitching posts nearby. Suddenly we caught sight of Uncle William in his raccoon coat holding in check a team of horses hitched to a big sleigh, ready to take us to Elmwood. We and our parcels were soon bundled into the sleigh, covered snugly under buffalo robes - and off into the night. The ringing of the sleigh bells and the rhythmic beat of the horses' hooves awakened us to the enchantment of Christmas.

It seemed that in no time at all we were at the farm gate and moving towards the house by the circular evergreen hedge. There stood Elmwood, a veritable fairyland.

My grandparents had always followed the Scottish custom of putting lamps in every window on special occasions, and now the sight before us was beautiful indeed!

Those were the days of toques and overstockings, and as soon as we had exchanged greetings, we were all in the back kitchen shaking off the snow and removing rubbers and overstockings.

"Not one of you may see the big tree in the parlour until you have eaten a hearty supper. The Ottawa train was late tonight and you must be hungry." And so in the great dining room, festive with evergreens and holly from Vancouver, an excited, happy family sat down around the oval table with Aunt Annie presiding at the tea-cups. Everyone seemed to be talking at once.

"Hope the tree is a big one," my brother declared.

"Will it have real lighted candles again?" I asked. "Papa says they're dangerous."

"Don't be silly," my sister, Mary, retorted. "Uncle William will have pails of water behind the tree, and the candles will be lighted for only half an hour."

"Oh, I'm so excited I can't eat," exclaimed Hugh.

Suddenly a strange face appeared at the window. Someone yelled,

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“Look at the window! I’m scared!”

And, indeed, it was a sight to frighten anyone. A man with a cap pulled low over his forehead seemed to be looking straight at us. Could he be a robber, a prowler, or what? All were silent.

“Grandma,” I whispered, “what will he do? Will he hurt us?”

“I don’t like him,” whined my brother, Gordon.

Grandma tried to comfort him: “Hush, child, your Uncle William will look after things.”

Indeed, Uncle William was soon at the door, welcoming the stranger in and enquiring what he wanted. The man stepped in hesitantly, without removing his cap, looked furtively around and then spoke abruptly:

“I want to say something and say it fast. It is not pleasant - but I have come a long way through the snow to say it - and I have waited so long - so very long. Don’t stop me and don’t interrupt me.”

Looking straight at my uncle, he said, “I know you, but you don’t know me! You remember eight years ago you had a bumper crop of apples in your orchards? You were called suddenly to Landis, Saskatchewan, on some important business. It was the height of the apple season, and apple pickers kept the business moving by storing apples in that little summer house you called the ‘milk-house.’ Well, my friend and I knew that only your mother and sister were in charge. We had been taking small amounts for some years, but

that year, knowing the situation, we sold about a thousand dollars worth in Ottawa under your name.”

The stranger spoke rapidly as if his words had been too long pent up, waiting to be released.

“My friend was killed in a car accident four years ago,” he continued. “I am a Catholic. I believe he is still in purgatory, and I helped to put him there. His soul will not be at peace until the debt is paid - his and mine. Here is an envelope containing a thousand dollars - take it.”

Uncle William, amazed at this sudden revelation and the man’s intense hypnotic voice, drew back exclaiming, “No, I can’t take the money. I could use it, of course, as times are hard. But this confession of yours has taken great courage. Let bygones be bygones. The fact that you have come is enough.”

Whereupon, the man was more determined than ever. “No, I won’t take it back. I don’t want the money. I want peace.”

Grandma’s quiet voice intervened. “Take it, William. That money is a sacred trust. It has been given back to you at a high price - the price of mental suffering and deep remorse. It is very special.” Then after a pause she continued, “Tonight is the anniversary of the coming of the Christ-child. Let this money be his birthday gift, and let us take it to church next Sunday to be given to the sick and needy. Let us go into the parlour, and in the meantime put it into the ebony box beside the family Bible.”

Slowly, the man removed his cap, and followed the family into the parlour. There was the tree high as the ceiling, with its unlighted candles. Going to the nearby table, Uncle William placed the money into the ebony box, and as we stood in silence, he lighted the candles on the tree. Under the magic spell of the flickering candle light we joined hands and together sang our favourite carol, “Silent Night.” Quietly, the stranger spoke: “This night I have found the peace which I have vainly sought for many a year. Tonight I have learned the meaning of Christmas.”

Outside snowflakes fell softly, clothing the countryside with a fresh purity. On each succeeding Christmas Eve with its special enchantment and mystery, my thoughts take me back to that night when the stranger came among us, and we together sensed the presence of the Child.

This was truly a white Christmas.



What was the world like when Jesus was born?

by Bill Colls

Matthew and Luke tell us stories of Jesus' birth, and throw a very little light on his childhood. But they tell us almost nothing of the world that Jesus was born into. We tend to concentrate on the where, what and how of the Christmas story, but not the *when*. What was the world like when Jesus was born?

In 65 BC, Roman armies moved into Judea, at least partly at the invitation of some Jewish leaders, in an attempt to bring order and peace to the area that was in a continual state of unrest, bordering on civil war. They had limited success in this venture. This area was at the very fringe of the empire, and there was little interest in Rome expending great effort to bring it under firm control. In 40 BC, Herod went to Rome, and became friendly with Octavian (later known as Caesar Augustus) and persuaded the Roman Senate to Declare him King of Judea. It took a further three years, a Roman force of 6000 Cavalry, and eleven legions, but by 37 BC Herod the Great had gained effective control of Judea. He ruled over the land for more than 30 years, until his death in 4 BC. His kingdom stretched from the southern tip of the Dead Sea north of the sea of Galilee and beyond, and from the Mediterranean sea to the Jordan Valley. He began an ambitious building program, rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem, and the great port city of Caesarea Maritima on the Mediterranean Coast, among other projects.

As was the common practice of

the Romans at the time, the local population was generally allowed to continue living their lives much as they had before the occupation. Herod, as a Roman puppet governor, had a fairly free hand in governing, and there was no overwhelming Roman presence in the land. There were probably only a small number of Roman Auxiliary soldiers in the country in support of Herod. There was no effort to "Romanize" the population, and the Jews were allowed to practice their religion without hindrance or persecution.

Life in the villages continued much as before. But it was hard life. For the most part, the villagers were either day labourers for local land owners, or craftsmen, producing the items needed by the community. A few would have small plots of land from which they would scabble enough to survive. And all this was subject to complex, and heavy, taxation.

There were both direct and indirect forms of taxation. The Romans imposed a tribute tax, in part to compensate for the fact that the Jewish population was exempt from military service. These taxes, which could amount to as much as 25% of an individual's wealth, were particularly odious to the Jews, as they were paid to pagans. On top of this, Herod, and his successors, imposed their own taxes to pay for their own expenses and, in Herod's case, his ambitious building projects. Indeed, he was so greedy that he had to roll back his assessments several times to avoid

rebellion by his subjects. As well as these direct taxes, there were also levies on materials being imported and exported from Judea. Many towns imposed a gate tax on product coming into the town, and there were taxes, in the form of tolls, at many bridges and river fords.

In addition to these civil taxes, there were also religious taxes. These taxes were recognized, and supported, by the Romans. They provided facilities to enable collection, and provided armed escorts when money was being transported. The first of these was the Temple Tax, intended for the upkeep of the sanctuary, and the costs of officiating priests. This tax was imposed on all adult Jews, whether living in Judea, or abroad in the Jewish diaspora spread through out the then known world. The second of these taxes was the tithe. This was collected on behalf of the priests by the Levites, who were sent out to ensure that the tithes were properly collected. Everything was tithed, from the sheep in the pastures, to the eggs from the yard — even the herbs and spices used in the kitchen. The priests declared that any product that was not tithed was unclean, and could not be consumed.

So this was the land into which Jesus was born; a land of unrest, occupied by an unpopular foreign power, governed by a greedy, vindictive and cruel master, with a population splintered by the political infighting of religious and tribal factions.

Parish Council News

Highlights of the November, 2011 Parish Council Meeting

Operations

- **Sanctuary Sound System:** Approval for a new sanctuary sound system has been received and installation will commence soon.
- **Bike Rack:** A Bike Rack will be installed in the Spring for those into “green” transportation.
- **Kitchen Deliveries:** Restrictions on parking near the kitchen door will be established to keep a delivery path available at all times. New signage will also be posted.
- Estimates for more kitchen shelving are being investigated.

Program

Education:

- Bishop William Willimon will be the key speaker at a tri-Diocese (Ontario, Montreal, Ottawa) sponsored educational event to be held at St. Paul’s the weekend of December 9 -11, 2011.
- Over 90 people have already registered! All members of St. Paul’s are invited, and strongly encouraged, to register for the *“Jesus, Our Hope Incarnate”* workshop (an exceptional “not to be missed” event) featuring Bishop Willimon on Saturday December 10. Bring your friends. Register directly online via the St. Paul’s website (<http://www.stpaulshk.org>) or call the church office at 613-836-1001.
- We are especially privileged to have Bishop Willimon preaching at our Sunday services on Dec 11.

Outreach:

- An update on our refugee family status will be forthcoming soon.
- **Foster Child:** An assessment of our continued participation in this ministry is underway.

Leadership:

- A nominating committee will be struck in December under the guidance of Francis Chris-

tensen, Parish Council Chair, to solicit candidates for election to various posts at our Vestry in February 2012. All parishioners should prayerfully consider contributing of their skills, passion, and time to help fulfill the leadership required to sustain and grow the many ministries available at St. Paul’s.

• **Jerusalem Visit:** Fr. John reported briefly on his visit with the Bishop to Jerusalem. He noted that prayers are especially required for the ongoing persecution of Christians at this time in troubled Syria.

Finance

- There has been an upward trend in givings during the last month. Your prayerful consideration of last month’s request for increased givings is still appreciated to help meet year-end targets.
- **GIFT: (“Growing in Faith Together”):** We have applied to the Diocese for a feasibility study to help establish and focus our Campaign. Campaign Chairs for Administration and Volunteer Visitor Management are being solicited.
- **Budget Planning 2012:** December 15 is the deadline for all Parish Ministries to submit their 2012 budget wish list to the Treasurer to help actualize their respective mission and vision for St. Paul’s. Broad Group Ministry leaders please take special note.



Christmas in Cambodia

by Lenna Gore

Editor's Note: Last December, Lenna Gore was a volunteer English as a Second Language teacher for children in grades 1 to 6 at the Center for Children's Happiness International School, which is run by the Center for Children's Happiness orphanage in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. For more information about the CCH, please visit <http://www.cchcambodia.org/>.

This time last year, I was busy and exciting about getting ready to work at the Center for Children's Happiness International School in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. CCHIS is a private school run by CCH orphanage. Regular subjects, such as math and science, are taught according to the standards of the Cambodian National Curriculum. The children also receive vocational training, including sewing and computer skills. The material for the ESL program was developed in Canada.

The orphanage and school were founded by Dr. Mech Sokha, who was raised in an orphanage after his family was killed by the Khymer Rouge. The first children he brought

to his orphanage were living on the garbage dump, finding food to survive and selling whatever they could. I didn't know this then, but I was to meet 7 of these "first" children on New Year's Day.

When I arrived in Cambodia, I was met at the airport and spent the first night at my host's house. The following day I moved to a guest house, which cost me \$5/night, with 3 lovely meals included in the price. It was very comfortable; the food was great and the people delightful.

When I got to CCHIS, I was assigned a classroom on the second floor, at the top of an impossibly steep staircase. A local teacher was assigned to



Students at CCH. Photo by Nancy Farese. <http://photophilanthropy.org>.

work with me; he was very well-educated and a pleasure to work with. After removing my shoes (shoes are not allowed in the classroom), I was besieged by a dozen smartly-uniformed students with happy, smiling, laughing

faces. It took a while to settle them down.

A regular school day includes classes from 7:15 to 11 a.m., lunch at noon (with all students helping to set up the tables and chairs, then cleaning and putting away their trays, and re-stacking the tables and chairs), and classes from 1 to 3:45 p.m. In the mornings, I led the children in English language classes, which included computer programs and role-playing games. The afternoons were taken up with rehearsals for the Christmas Concert to be held on January 1, 2011. Every afternoon we serenaded the neighbours with our hearty renditions of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" and other such songs. Despite being Buddhist, all the students love Christmas, with its songs and decorations. Costumes for the grade 5-6 Nativity Play were sewn by students at the school.

The Christmas Concert was to be a grand event, with each class putting on an act before an audience of about 500 peo-

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CCH 2 dormitory and skill training centre for sewing and computers.

ple, which included the whole school, tourists, some friends and relatives, Dr. Mech Sokha, and of course the VIPs (sponsors or their representatives, whose funding is required to keep the orphanage and school going). When the day came, everyone arrived in the morning to set up and decorate the stage and audience stands. The concert began promptly at 3 p.m. My kids were (of course!) the best as they sang with great pizzazz the songs we had rehearsed and looked wonderful in the costumes we put together. ☺ There was a huge meal with rice, soups, entrees of delicious Cambodian food, fruits and pop (Coke, Sprite, etc). The show was followed by a “disco,” where the kids rocked to western tunes (Justin Bieber is very popular).

It was between the acts of the show that I had one of the most poignant experiences of my life. Seven of the original orphans rescued by Dr. Mech Sokha were there. After each performance, one got up and told the story of how Mech took them off the garbage dump where they lived in makeshift shelters and scavenged for whatever they could eat or sell on a street corner for a few riel, less than one of our pennies. The Cambodian riel is 4000KHR to \$1US. Mech started the orphanage to give these kids a home, then the school to give them an education. These seven had gone on to higher education in Australia, Hong Kong, or South Korea. Two of them taught at the CCHIS, others taught at similar schools, and others were still in university. What a wonderful achievement for Dr. Sokha and each of these kids individually!

Others have and will continue to follow in the footsteps of these first seven orphans.

Cambodia has faced many challenges over the past few decades in particular, with the war in Vietnam, land mines, and the cruelty of the Khmer Rouge, which killed over 2 million people and destroyed the lives of those who survived. Poverty, and all that goes with it, is beyond words here. Human trafficking, prostitution, and pedophiles are real and ever-present threats. Thankfully, there are people like Dr. Mech Sokha, who counter-attack these evils and bring hope. Thank you, CCHIS, for allowing me into your lives.

Lenna Gore

P.S. I would like to mention that I arrived in Cambodia with more than just my own luggage - I also had 100 lb of donated school supplies and plush toys in 2 suitcases, and about \$500, some of which was given by people at St. Paul's. I gave the supplies and money to an orphanage for children afflicted by disease or physical deformity run by the Sisters of Charity, a branch of the Roman Catholic order founded by Mother Teresa. The sisters were very grateful! Thank you for your support.



CCH 1 in Phnom Penh, with courtyard, garden, kitchen, library, classrooms, and Director's quarters.
www.cchcambodia.org.

Travel Bug Club Party



Come to the **Travel Bug Club Party** for Fun and Games!
Everyone is invited!

Friday December 30, from 2 to 6 p.m.

Bring potluck finger food. Eating at 5 p.m. Donations to the Kanata Food Cupboard are appreciated.

RSVP 613-836-2233 Nigel or Angela before noon on December 23.

About the Travel Bug Club

Have you got the travel bug? Join other fun-loving travellers to experience the adventures of world travel. The itinerary is personalized so that the members can enjoy travelling together, meeting other people, and socialising before, during, and after the trips. Those travelling alone have the option of pairing up with a roommate to keep costs down.

Not Just Tourists

Going on a holiday is a wonderful opportunity to support others less fortunate than ourselves – an opportunity to deliver much-needed medical supplies to clinics around the world. For more information, please phone Nigel at 613-836-2233 or visit the Not Just Tourists website <http://www.notjusttourists.org/>.

Upcoming Events

January 28, 2012 - Celebrity Southern Caribbean Cruise on the Celebrity Summit

March 2012 - Portugal Long Stay (2, 3 or 4 weeks)

April 8, 2012 - Uniworld Boutique River Cruise to Burgundy and Provence

October 14, 2012 - 12-night Mediterranean Cruise

Angela Kilby

nmkilby@cyberus.ca

613-836-2233

Folk Dance 4 Fun Christmas Party

Dress up and bring your families and friends to enjoy some dancing, food and fun!

Thursday, December 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bring potluck finger food. Eating at 11:45 a.m.

A donation to St Judes of \$2.00 each or \$5.00 per family would be appreciated.

RSVP 613-836-2233 to Nigel or Angela before noon on December 23.

Nigel and Angela Kilby

From the Kitchen

We would like to thank everyone who uses the kitchen for washing their dishes and helping keep the kitchen clean. Your efforts are appreciated! We would also like to remind everyone to make sure that all the dishes are put away in the cupboards after each use. The dishes that come out of the dishwasher are very hot and wet, and it is tempting to leave them on the counter to air dry and cool. However, please think of the group coming in after you - they will have to put those dishes away.

St. Paul's is a wonderfully busy church! We have several rental groups from outside of the church using the kitchen. We need these rentals to help cover the costs of running the church. Please make sure that the kitchen is always left the way you would like to find it if you had rented the hall for a special event.

Thank you!!

How I Outed Santa Claus

at the Presbyterian Church

by April Forsberg

Down in southern Ontario back in 1950 our little world hadn't yet connected with the Santa Claus theme. Financial and social effects of WWII still lingered; times were lean. My Dad worked shifts at the Ford Motor Company in Windsor. We rarely saw him. He was gone by 5am and came home tired 12 hours later.

By age five I was already suspicious of Santa Claus. Kids at school talked about him, but he was never a topic of conversation down the West Puce Road. There were only a few other kids on our road, and apparently they neither knew nor cared about the fat guy in the red suit who gave away toys.

The diversity of Santa Claus revealed itself the next year on a shopping trip with Mom to Detroit. Hudson's Department Store was majestic. It sported huge holiday decorations: Christmas trees with twirling lights and moving ornaments, big plastic bells with fat ribbons, and its pillars decorated to look like huge candy canes.

We had gone to buy a winter coat for me. But I preferred to wander through the Aisles of Beauty because it smelled so good there. So I did, at the first opportunity when Mom wasn't looking. Eventually, I met Christmas Elves that squirted me with real perfume, powdered my nose and gave me a wee candy cane. I'd never tasted one before that day. Fifteen minutes later two store security men and a ruffled Mother snatched me from the Elves' clutches. Mom was mad, but it didn't matter: I smelled good.

A Song in a Cage

Back then, store elevators had huge brass-caged doors and an Elevator Operator at the controls. Now, we did not see many people of colour where we lived, even though it was the northern end of the Underground Railroad. We were told only not to stare, and be polite. Dad said so, and Dad was the law. The friendly Operator sang an amusing song

as the cage rose to the fifth floor. "Floor two - get your shoes, Floor Three, see the Christmas trees, Number Four, here's lots more, Number Five, fashion comes alive: coats, dresses, petticoats and young lady fashions." I gave him one of my biggest smiles, and he patted my head.

An hour later, I had a new dark-green wool coat with cream trim and matching bonnet with rabbit-fur pom-poms. (how is it women can remember these things?) I begged to go down to the third floor to see the Christmas trees. Oh! Sparkles, tinsel, silver and gold - what a sight! And there was Santa Claus, in the flesh! He looked just like his picture. But the line-up was long. Two line-ups, actually, and I was asked by a tall, blonde Elf with curly toes, "Do you want to see a Black Santa Claus or a White Santa Claus?" What? There was a difference? Wasn't there only one Santa Claus? Confused, I shyly declined.

Elaborate Christmases were not the norm back then. We were given one sort-of-big present, and one small one, that's it. It was Christmas Sunday School, then Christmas service, and occasionally a trip to Midnight Mass with my lapsed-Catholic Dad. My nose always wrinkled at the smell of incense, but the singing was nice. But apparently, Santa didn't live in the Catholic Church, and certainly not at the Presbyterian one, either. Didn't Santa ever come to Canada? Why did the Americans get all the fun?

When I was seven, the Renaissance finally crept into Essex County. Santa was coming to visit our Sunday School! But downstairs - not in the sanctuary. Boy, those Presbyterians had rules to spare. Santa was actually going to be in OUR little church in OUR little unheard-of neck of the woods. And

(Continued on page 16)



he would bring presents and treats. For weeks we kids sat through an hour of Sunday School plus an hour of Church with no fidgets, and surviving admonitions of “look at the Minister when he talks” “keep your knees together” and “where’s your handkerchief?” It was painful, but we persevered.

The big day arrived the Sunday before Christmas. At the end of the two-hour trial, all 25 of we kids raced downstairs to meet Santa. There was only one Santa, and he was round and plump, with an impressive froth of a beard. Only one line-up, too. We would all get to sit on his lap, tell our little tale of want, and receive a gift from his very own hands. We trembled at the thought.

Voice of Reason

Because I was little (yes, I was little, once) I was one of the first to approach The Big Man. When I got up close, he looked awfully huge, and his beard looked something less than genuine. My inner angel said to be wary. My inner devil said ignore angel, go for the gift. So I climbed onto Santa’s lumpy lap, and gazed into the eyes of this icon of the north. I was so impressed I’d forgotten what to say. Recovering my speech (as I always do) I chattered along & snuggled into Santa’s pillowed tummy. A few minutes later, with big hands, he lifted me down in a somewhat familiar way, handed me a wrapped gift and ho-ho-ho’d in a big voice. I squinted, went back upon his lap and looked deeper into Santa’s eyes. I even poked into his beard. I then-and-there forged my decision on the reality of Santa, and then spoiled it for the entire Sunday School by squealing, “Hi, Daddy!”

The background music stopped, like it does when the bad-guy enters a saloon in a western. But I knew well the comfort of those big arms, and the colour of Dad’s eyes. But what really gave him away was his Lilac Vegetal after-shave. He liked to smell good, too! So, at seven years old, I knew that Santa, per se, did not exist in the real world. But my Dad did. And he was better than Santa, because I got to see him every day.

So, that’s how I outed Santa at the Presbyterian Church, and spoiled the myth for at least 24 kids. I always knew God had given me an outspoken talent, but sadly, He has never told me exactly why. Maybe I was just in training to help others face reality.

April Forsberg

Grocery Certificate Program

It’s a win-win situation!

When you participate in the Grocery Certificate Program, you get to spend every cent of your money on groceries, and the store gives a percentage of the money spent to St. Paul’s. Participating stores include: Farm Boy (5.5%), Bulk Barn (5%), Food Basics/METRO (4%), Loblaws (4%), Superstore (4%), and Independent (4%). Starting September 25, 2011, we will have \$20, \$50, and \$100 Sobey’s certificates for sale.

Smart Card technology allows you to purchase a card, say for \$100. You get the full \$100 to spend at that store. Each time you shop, the amount of your purchase is deducted, leaving the remaining balance on the card for the next time.

We are now able to process debit cards! No need to worry about carrying cash or forgetting your chequebook.

These cards make **wonderful gifts** for teachers, neighbours, or that special someone on your list who “has everything.” They are valuable additions to any gift basket!

Will you join us in raising money for St. Paul’s by NOT giving your money? For more information, come and see us at the table in the hall:

Larry @ 8, Jean @ 9:15, and Darell @ 11.
Or, please call Darell at 613-831-7580.

You can give \$\$ to St. Paul’s without giving any \$\$!

It’s true.

How? Get your grocery store to give \$\$ for you!



Vestry 2012 Reminder

Reports due January 27, 2012

If you are a Broad Group Ministry Leader, or report to one, please note that Vestry Reports are due at the church office by January 27, 2012. Reports can be compiled by the Ministry Leader, or submitted by sub-committees individually.

In your report, please answer the 5 W's ... Who you are, What you do, Where you meet, When you meet and Why? Then give us the highlights of your year and what you're looking forward to in 2012. If you don't have a computer at home, handwritten reports are welcome.

VESTRY is scheduled for **February 12, 2012**. All members of the parish are encouraged to attend.

Blessings everyone,

Lorna



Cartoon by Cuyler Black, Submitted by Darell Small

Why my children do not need more toys

by Tammy Rosenfeldt

They started off as babies who found my Tupperware drawer much more fascinating than their toy box.

The days I change the paper towel roll in the kitchen bring great excitement as they claim their new sword or telescope.

Their current toys are only exciting when I either reorganize them, put them neatly away, or when I start my garage sale pile.

Who needs toys when jumping on my bed like the five little monkeys brings tears of laughter?

They are content to look at the clouds and find shapes – most recently Caleb claimed he saw Thomas the Tank Engine. Really – just shouted it out while in the car.

To make one of them want to play with a toy, all I have to do is give it to the other one. Suddenly, that item becomes the best thing in the whole entire world.

The days I mop the kitchen floor and move the chairs into the living room are cause for adventure as they build tents and "dark, dark rooms."

A flashlight brings amusement to all for hours.

And my personal favourite – the other day they literally fought over who got to play with the fly swatter. I really wish I was kidding.

Submitted by Carol Spencer (from Pastor Tim's website <http://www.cybersalt.org>)

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