

# WHAT'S UP...IN THE CWM

## CHRISTMAS IN REVIEW

January 2017

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Thank you to everyone who contributed to this year's Christmas in Review edition of What's Up...In the CWM. I hear all the time how happy it makes you to see photos and read about how our other congregations in the CWM celebrated Christmas. Our Christmas in Review newsletter is available online only so we have lots of space for photos and stories. I hope you enjoy it.

Our next issue of What's Up...In the CWM will be coming out in May. If your congregation has something you'd like to share in What's Up...In the CWM, please send me a write up and photos by April 15th. Children are welcome to write about a church activity too, so encourage your young writers to submit articles.

We want to ensure that everyone who would like to receive What's Up...In the CWM by mail, does. Do you know a non-resident member or friend of the church who should be on this list? Is there someone who physically can't get out to church, or an inactive member who would still like to read about what is going on in the mission centre? Please ask them if they would like to receive What's Up...In the CWM, and/or the Weekly Wire, send me their contact info and I will add them to our distribution list.

Blessings to you all,  
Debra Donohue  
debra@communityofchrist.ca  
1-877-411-2632 ext 4



### Mission Prayer

God where will your Spirit lead  
today?

Help me be fully awake and  
ready to respond.

Grant me the courage to risk  
something new

And become a blessing of your  
love and peace.

Amen.

# Edmonton



Eldon Watson, Harry Walton, Nancy Brooks, Tymeena Mason and Heather Barrington use some unusual instruments to accompany a song for the Joy Sunday of Advent.

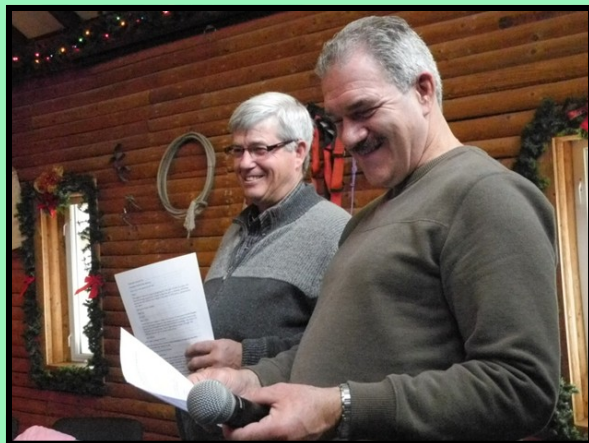
The Edmonton Community of Christ invited staff and youth of Youth Empowerment Social Services in Edmonton, to enjoy Christmas dinner with them during the advent season. This was our way of saying thank you for all the services they provide homeless youth in Edmonton and to let them know how much they are appreciated. This is part of an on-going relationship Edmonton Community of Christ is building with YESS. We couldn't take pictures of the youth, and then forgot to take any pictures till the dinner was over...so you get clean up pictures.



George Allen, Kay Lindemann, Deborah Mason, Ryan and Susan Levitt clean up after the YESS Christmas dinner. Kay and Susan were the cooks for the event.



Blankets for Canada operates out of the Edmonton Community of Christ building. They hold an annual craft sale to help pay their expenses. This year on the Sunday of the Craft sale, Eileen, one of the ladies from Blankets for Canada, gave a talk about the services they provide the community during the Disciples' Generous Response part of an Advent Worship service. (Again, no one thought of pictures till after... must get better at this.)



December 18, for the Advent Sunday of Love, Edmonton Community of Christ held their service 'off site' at Birch Bay Ranch. This was a service with a focus on the children and also included a potluck lunch, crafts for the kids and sleigh rides for all. Pics this time! David and Ryan Levitt, Bonnie Bock



Nicole Millian and daughter Madison light the candle of Love



Sleigh rides! Parker, Lucy and Susan Levitt on Sleigh ride two.  
Marian Thompson

# Victoria



## Back Row;

Jason Leblanc, Brandon Leblanc, Tyler Leblanc, Carl Bolger, Shirley Bolger, Tristan Bolger, Donna Martin, Martin Benoit, Felix Benoit, Marguerite Benoit and Dominic Benoit.

## Middle Row;

John Canty, George Glasier, Sally Glasier, Jodi Leblanc, Colleen Buckley, Pat Bouley, Cindi Arden, Jim Watson, and Peter Benoit.

## Little group on the front right;

Pam Dickinson, Betty Gurney, Peggy Smith, Elaine Watson and Norm Olson.

# Reflections From Christmas 2016

## “Generosity of Gift Giving, Receiving and Responding”

It is with great pleasure and love that I have the privilege of re-connecting with the membership and friends of the Canada West Mission. It will be two years February 28<sup>th</sup> since my retirement, and my memories and passion for the Mission of Jesus Christ in CWM burns brightly. I recognize the joy of being part of your lives, past, present and future. In this “Christmas in Review” edition of What’s Up ...in the CWM, I would like to share one unique gift that was given to me this past Christmas season. My hope is that my reflections on this Christmas will also encourage you to reflect upon your gift giving, receiving and responding also.

Most of you have been aware of Brother Steve Thompson’s triple-bypass surgery, and you have also received Brother Steve’s comments and updates, post surgery in our Weekly Announcements. Steve continues to express how blessed he has felt, not only in his healing process but also very tangibly by your love and support for him and his family. Let me encourage each of you to continue to support Steve and Marian in your prayer life and through notes of support for a holistic healing so that when the time is appropriate, Steve can come back to the Mission with his ongoing enthusiasm, joy, humour and professionalism for leading us

through the pathways of active involvement in “God’s Mission - Our mission”, in our everyday lives.

The one gift I received this Christmas was the ability to communicate and share with you by assisting Brother Steve as your Interim Mission President. As I looked at our list of Mission Pastors for 2016-2017, I am joyful that I once again have the opportunity and privilege to connect with our Pastors and also our present Staff of CWM. I couldn’t help rejoice at seeing these familiar names and thanking God for their dedication in our Mission, who not only over this past year but numerous past years, have served each of us, the membership and friends of the church, with integrity, love, and faithful servant hood ministry. Then it hit me! When was the last time that I approached my Pastor, or our Mission Staff, or any headquarters personnel such as President Veazey or Brother Art Smith, our Apostle for this jurisdiction, and simply said; “thank you”, for your ministry. Our thank yous can have many forms, such as a formal letter, a phone call, or seeking ways we can support our congregation in ministry through our actions or through our financial support. Each of

our congregations, our mission centre, and World Church exists because of so many dedicated folks like yourselves, as seen in the pictures and articles in this online newsletter. **THANK YOU** for such gifts of generosity of time, talents, treasures and testimonies being shared. Please be encouraged to not take our leadership locally and globally for granted. Tell them how much they are appreciated and valued. The spirit of gift giving is not just seasonal, but needs to be daily. My response to my gift of temporarily supporting the CWM while Steve recuperates, is to acknowledge and be intentional in thanking each of you for living the type of life that Jesus Christ would be proud of. Will you join me in this endeavor in your home communities and congregations?

May each of you be blessed with God’s gracious love and support in the New Year! May God’s gift of knowing God to you and your family and friends be recognized and appreciated with a sense of appreciation and action. Blessings to you in 2017!

Darrell Belrose  
Interim Canada  
West Mission  
Center President



# Saskatoon

We held our annual Christmas celebration on Sunday, December 11. In addition to singing Christmas carols and enjoying potluck lunch, we were divided into three teams for a fun Christmas competition. The competition began with a Christmas version of Hollywood Games Night "Name that Tune" which turned out to be difficult when the songs are played in a monotone voice without music.

Christmas is not complete until you have a Christmas tree so we proceeded to decorate our Christmas trees with Hunter Mag-Atas Blair, Daniel Neudorf and Andrew Jakobsen (not pictured) bravely agreeing to be our trees. Each tree was so beautifully decorated the judges declared it to be a tie.





The tree decorating was followed by a snowball race where the teams were required to pick up their snowballs (aka marshmallows) and place them on a spoon while wearing oven mitts then run to the other side of the room and drop them in a bowl. The competition was stiff and was taken very seriously by all participants (particularly Charles Lester and Bob Klombies, both over 80).



As a give-back project, we stuffed socks with personal hygiene products and Christmas treats for Saskatoon's underprivileged. The socks were delivered to Saskatoon's Mobile Crisis Unit who distributed the socks to those in need. As well, we received an abundance of personal hygiene products which were also donated to Mobile Crisis. We finished our time together creating decorations of Snowmen made out of tea lights. There was plenty of laughter, fun and food and it was a wonderful way to spend time together. Best wishes to all for a happy and healthy 2017.

Lisa Neudorf





# Chilliwack

This was our life size manger scene for our Christmas Eve Service, complete with angels in the sky.

Gwyn Beer and Linda Phelps created the manger scene with help from Lawrence Allen who hung the angels in the sky.



# Meadow Ridge

The Christmas season was full of joy and laughter in Meadowridge. For the month of December along with our regular food bank donations we also collected items for seniors as they seem to be "the forgotten ones" at Christmas. We provided simple bath items or toques and mittens...items that they just may not have the funds for.

We also had a fabulous pre "Christmas eve" service. Another church rents out our space on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and as Christmas Eve fell on a Saturday this year there was a lot of discussion as to what should we do. Should we just cancel the service altogether? Absolutely not it was decided! We made it work by having everyone come together Friday evening instead, and what a fabulous evening it was. We had a play that many members of the congregation participated in. There were fantastic music specials by Trinity Law, and Bruce Fraser with Angie Fraser signing the song, and Ed Salahub played his guitar and sang an original piece he wrote. We all went downstairs afterwards for some goodies and fellowship time. A wonderful evening was had by all. Many thanks to Dale Weiss for preparing the service and making the evening so very special.  
Lisa Wingfield







# Calgary

On December 6, 2016, Calgary Community of Christ partnered with Lions Village to put on a wonderful community Christmas dinner for the residents and members/friends of the congregation. With approximately 85 in attendance, it was a special moment for us, giving the congregation an opportunity to share with our new neighbours in close community.

You see, Lions Village took us in when we needed them most. In August 2016, our congregation sold our facility as part of its congregational renewal strategy. While this sale was planned and intentional, our community was in need of a safe, comfortable space to meet temporarily until we could finalize next steps in our new location...wherever and whatever it may be. Our congregation now meets each Sunday morning in a bright, warm space located inside the Lions Village facility in NW Calgary. These residents of this facility are our neighbours, and we wanted to show them just how grateful we were for their generosity by providing them with a community dinner.



In addition to dinner, the [Cochrane Young Singers](#) gave a beautiful Christmas concert, and all in attendance were even able to sing a few carols together. Special thanks to all those who helped to coordinate this event - you've helped nearly 100 people get into the holiday spirit!

Parker Johnson

# Ribstone

Advent and Christmas in Ribstone were nothing short of spectacular again this year!

The first order of business for Advent is to decorate our church. A group of ladies gathered to decorate the chapel, foyer, dining hall, and library; while outside a group of men set up the outdoor nativity and other decorations. The black silhouette style nativity was a new addition to our decorations this year. It was hand made by Eldon Dallyn. Isn't it beautiful?



While the decorating was going on, there was a crew busy preparing trays of baked goodies to give to the seniors and shut-ins in our area. The "Cookie Trays" are a big hit with the recipients. Many wonderful bakers make and donate the cookies for the trays.



During the Christmas season (and during all of the other seasons) we love to give. This year we collected mittens, scarves, toques, and gloves to hang on our "Mitten Tree". The tree falls over at least once every year during the two weeks we have it in the chapel. It's a little messy, but messy is fun. We also collect "White Gifts" and place them around our tree on the rostrum. The "White Gifts" are simply gifts that are unwrapped. The items from both of these collections are delivered to a local radio station that takes care of distributing the items. The gifts are wrapped and delivered to homes where the children may otherwise receive little or nothing at Christmas. The mittens and other items are given to those in need.



Our Advent openings this year were organized by Janet Perry. Each Sunday 3 or 4 people (representing different age groups) would take part in the reading, prayer, lighting of the candle, and Advent focus activity. This year our focus each Sunday was writing a prayer on a paper containing a picture symbolizing the week's theme. A dove for peace, a heart for love, etc. The prayers were then stapled to the bulletin board at the front of the chapel. The younger children that don't yet spell and print were encouraged to draw their prayers. By then end of the four weeks the board was plumb full of thoughtful prayers and drawings. Thank you to Janet for arranging this and for all of the people that took part each week.





As part of our Communion service in December, Tara portrayed Mary walking with her baby while the song "He Was Still Her Little Child" played. Tara walked slowly and dramatically around the chapel carrying her baby; then placed her bundle, representing the baby Jesus, on the Communion table. She unwrapped the bundle revealing a loaf of bread. I wish you all could have seen this beautiful and moving dramatic presentation. The pictures did not turn out very well, due to the dim lighting and my not being prepared to take pictures. I was too awestruck to turn on the flash.



Another special service occurred during the Advent season. Although this isn't a Christmas activity, it is just too special not to share with everyone. Daniel Skinner was baptized and confirmed on December 11<sup>th</sup> (almost 8 years to the day of when he was blessed in our church). Daniel was baptized by his grandpa, Wayne Skinner, and confirmed by his grandma Darleene Skinner. I was blessed to have been asked to assist in the Confirmation and to deliver the message.





Our annual Sunday School Christmas concert and turkey dinner was a joyous occasion. The children performed songs and readings for a full church. This year portions of the concert were videotaped ahead of time and made into short movies for the audience to enjoy. The littlest children, as is customary, dressed in costume to create a live nativity as part of the concert. The animals in the stable this year included a monkey, a lizard, and a horse that liked to slide down the step on his belly. The children are all very sweet and excited to perform for their families. A heartfelt thank you to the Sunday School teachers that planned and practiced the concert with our children. Your hard work, dedication, and love for our youth is so appreciated. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the delicious meal we shared after the concert. Turkey and all the trimmings, salads, and desserts galore. We have some wonderful cooks in Ribstone!



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With love and blessings,  
Joanne Fraser



# Vancouver

## Dickens Christmas Tea

Vancouver made a bold change to the Christmas schedule this year. After approximately 35 years of holding the Women's Christmas breakfast on the first Saturday of December, we moved it to the first Sunday after church, and made it gender inclusive! Our first Dickens Christmas Tea was a huge hit, especially with the men who normally do the dirty work, that is cook, serve and clean for the ladies. The change came about for a few reasons, but mainly because our church building is rented out pretty much 7 days a week now, and often with two or three rental groups in one day. We can't start decorating and setting up a couple days in advance as we have in the past, because the building is always in use by other groups (this is a great problem to have!). By holding the tea on Sunday, we have the resources of a much larger group of helpers, and of course attendees. Everyone brought tea sandwiches and our resident baker, Robert Peters, made the fabulous petit fours and desserts. \*We'd like to offer our sincerest gratitude to Inez Thederahn who started the Women's Christmas Breakfast so many years ago.





Above - Sara Peters sings O Holy Night, Rod Downing and Robert Peters

Cheryl Melder from the Surrey Women's Centre spoke to us about their programs and told us how much they appreciate the 80 or so gift bags we provide each year for the women who use the Surrey Women's Centre, as they are often the only Christmas gift many of these women will receive.



### Fishermen Helping Kids with Cancer

Many of our congregation help with the annual Fishermen Helping Kids with Cancer herring sale, in memory of Coley Eidsvik. Phil Eidsvik and his wife Lanette Vawter organize the event (and it really is an event) along with the help of many volunteers. Dan Beer, Kat Goheen and their band the Seabillys, perform every year to entertain the masses. This year the herring sale raised \$100,000 to support programs for kids with cancer.



**6<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL HERRING SALE**  
*Saturday, December 3rd*

**FISHERMEN HELPING KIDS WITH CANCER**

COME AND GET A GREAT DEAL ON FRESH, BEAUTIFUL PACIFIC HERRING, WITH **All (100%)** PROCEEDS GOING TO BC CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL TO HELP KIDS WITH CANCER.

**Date:** SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3RD, 2016  
**Time:** 9:00 AM TO 4:00 PM  
**Place:** 12740 TRITES ROAD, RICHMOND  
**Price:** \$15.00 FOR A 20 LB BAG OF HERRING (CASH ONLY)

**WWW.FHKWC.CA**

Sponsored by the BC Commercial Fishing Industry



### Annual Christmas Service and Luncheon

Inclement weather prevented some of our members from attending our annual Christmas Luncheon this year - yes it snowed in Vancouver, didn't go away, and then it snowed again, and again. In some areas we had 4-6 inches of snow on the ground for a full 7 weeks. For those of us who made it out, we enjoyed a wonderful service with truly inspired music from the choir, and an original play by Kat Goheen. Our delicious luncheon was prepared by Phil Eidsvik and Lana Cullis with help from many others in the kitchen.



Santa showed up to spend some time with the kids, and he even had a conversation with Pastor Lanette.

Then in the wiggle of a whisker he was gone. Who could blame him, it IS the busy season for Santa.

Debra Donohue

