

# NORTHERN LIGHT

*The Official Newsletter of*

## **The Cariboo Presbyterian Church**

PO Box 156, Lac La Hache B.C. V0K 1T0

Visit our website: <http://www.cariboopresbyterianchurch.bc.ca>

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**Winter-Easter Edition 2017**

### **Annual Report for 2016**

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## **2016 Missionary Reports**

### **From Our Missionaries in the North: Jon Wyminga**

You could say this newsletter is about looking back. You could also say it's about looking ahead. Yet ultimately I believe it's about looking to God. And that is the way it should be for those of us who seek to love and serve Jesus Christ in the world.

In this newsletter we look back on all that God has done among us in 2016. It has been an eventful year in the Cariboo. No less for Shannon and me as we seek to serve God in the northern end of our region.

Shannon and I continued our regular weekly schedule of house churches in Quesnel, Nazko and Punchaw as well as other ministry activities like visitation in the village of Kluskus and a children's Bible Class program in Nazko. At the same time we have been pleased to encourage a lot of leadership development in the house church ministry as a whole. The session (elders) continues to meet regularly. Given the distance between us that is not always easy to do. We have also endeavored to have regular Leadership Team meetings to which all elders and house church leaders are invited. At times it's been hard to maintain our monthly schedule but they have been special times of encouragement just the same. Our most recent meeting included an engaging time of prayer for many of the needs in our house churches and beyond. Be assured your pastors and house church leaders are praying for you! Shannon has been please to work with our new Management Team and we are both encouraged by the development and adoption of our renewed "Mission Statement and Action Plan." You'll read more about these later in the newsletter.

In addition to these tasks of oversight Shannon and I were privileged to be a part of several other special activities through 2016. There was the first annual Nazko Arts and Music Festival in February, the annual house church Rendevous (McLeese Lake) in June, the visiting team from Norman Kennedy Presbyterian Church (Regina) in July, the First Nations Elders Gathering (Williams Lake) in July and another visiting ministry team from Vancouver Korean Presbyterian Church again in July. We also had the privilege of attending two pow wows, one in Kluskus and one in Quesnel. Then there were the Christmas gifts prepared for all of the children in Nazko and Kluskus. A special thank you to all of the individuals and groups from churches across the country that help provide for this each year. As well, Shannon and I were able to share in the celebration of weddings and accompany those grieving at funerals.



The year 2016 was then filled out with a few trips further afield for us. I attended the Presbyterian

Church's Canadian Ministries Gathering in Ontario in May with Bruce Wilcox. We used the opportunity to share about the house church ministry among some of our supporting congregations in Ontario. Shannon attended the Presbyterian Church's annual General Assembly in June and I continued my bi-annual visits to Prince Rupert and Kitimat in order to be with two congregations that continue their ministry despite being unable to afford a pastor. We are certainly grateful for the new truck the ministry was able to purchase to help us continue this work. Special thanks to Colin and Kathy Carter who loaned us one of their trucks when we were told our old one was no longer safe to drive. Replacing the frame on it will be covered by a recall campaign but there has been a considerable backlog in the production of those frames.

Looking back at 2016 invites us to look ahead to 2017 when many of these activities will be repeated, some discontinued and other new ones introduced as the Lord leads us.

We also find ourselves at a time of the year when we look back at Christmas, which, as I write, happened about two months ago, and ahead to Easter, which will happen in two months. In fact we've chosen to delay mailing this newsletter so that many of you will receive it during the season of Lent, in the weeks leading up to Easter. Looking back to Christmas and ahead to Easter remind us, of course, to look to God and what God has already done among us in Jesus Christ. We remember how God chose to share our human flesh in Jesus and be "God with us." We remember how in Jesus God chose to share that human form even to the point of death; and an agonizing and humiliating death on the cross at that. We remember how this victim had victory over death in his glorious resurrection. We remember how often we can fall victim in our own lives – sometimes because of circumstances beyond anyone's control, sometimes at the hand of others and sometimes as a result of our own brokenness and sin. We remember how through his resurrection Jesus seeks to achieve a resurrection victory in each of us as we put our trust in him. And this reminds us of why we did everything we did in 2016 and why we plan to do much of it again in 2017.

#### **From Our Missionary in the South: Bruce Wilcox**

2016 was another exciting and eventful year in this far-flung ministry!

The little building in Lac la Hache continues to be well used, with blessed weekly AA meetings, a

vibrant mid-week Bible study led by leaders from within the congregation, and a thriving and growing community of worship and fellowship Sunday mornings.

Our house churches also continue to be a huge blessing to be part of, and you'll hear a little more about them and some reports from all of our ministry points from last year in this edition of the *Northern Light*.

We continue to foster a house-church family type environment and missional approach in all of our communities of faith here in keeping with our newly revamped Mission Statement, which involves discerning spiritual gifts and God-given opportunities to use them, including the development of indigenous leadership. We have also been really blessed with the addition of a new elder to our session leadership group: Don Lipsett. We thank the Lord for Don's gifts and ministry!

We have been really encouraged and inspired by the provision and love of God in action in helping out one of our precious house church families who lost everything in a fire last year. Folks from our Sheridan Lake House Church especially, as well as others in the churches and community here and beyond, have been amazing!

In the interests of providing additional evangelistic options through another ministry point in the large area between Williams Lake and Quesnel, last fall one of our Macalister House Church families felt led to offer to host another weekly house church at their home near McLeese Lake. This expansion is yet another reminder that this is God's work and His ministry, as He works in His perfect timing through the different callings and gifts of His people, such as the ones described in Ephesians 4:11.

We were blessed last summer with a visit from lay-missionary Ronda Bosch and her wonderful team of four young people from Norman Kennedy Presbyterian Church in Regina. (You may have read the reports of their visit in last fall's *Northern Light*.) It was also really special to have a visit from missionaries Dave and Jessie Chapin and their family to a number of our churches last summer. The Chapins are a part of our house church family and have been serving the Lord overseas with Mission Aviation Fellowship. We have missed them, so it was awesome to see them again as well as be inspired and encouraged by their amazing testimony of what the Lord has been doing with and through them in their ministry in central Asia.

We continue to try to make the most of different outreach opportunities and special events in connecting with our communities and areas as God leads. We accepted another invitation from the Lac La Hache Community Club to do church at the big annual Garlic-Fest on the lake. We were involved in the Remembrance Day ceremony in Forest Grove. We participated in last year's 100 Mile House rodeo parade and cowboy church service. Jackie and I also took a trip for the first time to share in some of the fellowship and ministry of the Tatla Lake Jamboree last summer in the Chilcotin.

We continue to sponsor coffeehouse evenings in downtown Lac La Hache. This is not only an ongoing opportunity for evangelism through some of the music and commentary, since it also gives a considerable number of un-churched folks the opportunity to contribute to voluntary offerings for those in need. It's a great way to connect and integrate ourselves as the local church into the community at large in ways that are as important for us as for those out there who still need Jesus!

The annual Rendezvous for the Cariboo Presbyterian Church was another big hit last year, and our Macalister and McLeese Lake families did a fantastic job hosting that! Along with the usual activities and games, great food, music, fellowship and worship, there was even free airplane rides courtesy of John Noble and his son Joe!



Christmas of course is always a special time, with folks in our churches variously involved in putting on Christmas pageants in some places, helping with food hampers and knitted items for needy families, as well as participating in some ecumenical ministry with other churches in helping providing free turkey dinners for hundreds of people in local community halls.

The Cariboo Presbyterian Church continues to do a lot of ministry for seniors, with regular church

services in assisted living places in both 100 Mile House (Carefree Manor) and Williams Lake (Seniors' Village).

We also do some regular ministry at Millsite Lodge in 100 Mile House. This is a very unique kind of congregation, because many of the folks at Millsite are in advanced stages of Alzheimer's among other things, and require constant total care.

I've been thinking about how really special these folks are in God's sight, which in turn also forcefully reminds me of the need to examine myself - that is, my motives for ministry. I think I understand how easy it would be for some preachers to get "hooked" on speaking in front of really large groups, and feeding off of the energy that a responsive and enthusiastic crowd can provide. I have occasionally experienced a wee taste of that in front of perhaps several hundred people, and I imagine that preachers speaking in front of "mega-church" auditoriums of thousands might experience that rush even more intensely.

Then I contrast all that with a service at Millsite Lodge; a sparsely populated room with a high percentage of wheel-chairs. Quite a few folks seemingly comatose and unable to respond to anything - in fact only a few who seem to be cognizant of anything I am saying at all. Music seems to produce a little more response. In fact the only time some lips move at all is when they quiver a little in trying to sing along to some old favorite gospel song, probably from their childhood.

Yet something about ministering to these folks feels so pure, and so right because God is love, and is still doing something! Yes, it's true that sometimes a nurse or family member who is present may be drawn to Christ as a result, which we pray for as well, but really there's something about ministering to these folks that washes away any ulterior motives. Because it's not about trying to merely build up our congregation's numbers, or connecting with people who might contribute financially to our mission. For these folks, it's like their lives have come full circle, and they are as helpless as babies again - and just as loved as babies are, unconditionally, by God! And somehow then I feel more of His love for them at work inside me. I can't quite explain it, but sometimes it almost feels like ministering to angels; and I realize what a privilege it is to share the message of Christ with the world, *wherever* we can!

Blessings to you all, and many thanks to all of our faithful supporters in this mission!

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# 2016 Elders' and Management Team Reports

## Elders' Report: Ginny Alexander (clerk of session)

The Session (elders) of the Cariboo Presbyterian Church met four times in face-to-face meetings at the Youth for Christ building in Williams Lake, and had four teleconference meetings. Some of our accomplishments were:

1. We wrote up a new Mission Statement and Action Plan for 2016-2020. The Missionary Team then preached on the Biblical basis of the document in all the House Churches, so that everybody could know the plan and be able to knowledgeably vote on it. *(Editor's Note: The statement was strongly supported by the vote. Of the 42 ballots we received 37 were in favour, one was against and there were four abstentions.)*

2. It was determined that the Church needed a Management Team to take care of a lot of the administrative duties, so a job description was drawn up, potential people to be on the Team were contacted, and now we have a working Management Team! It will take the Team approximately a year to learn the ropes, but once they do it should free up the Missionary Team to do more of what they are called to do – that is, preach the gospel.

3. The Session was delighted to be able to plan for and then welcome a mission visit from Ronda Bosch (Lay Minister) and four young people from her church, Norman Kennedy Presbyterian Church in Regina. We had no idea when we were doing the planning, that Ronda loves horses. So when I told them we would be spending Saturday together at the Williams Lake Stampede, Ronda was ecstatic! The whole Team managed to get decked out in western gear on Saturday morning! Now, somehow, we need to dream up a mission trip to Saskatchewan . . . .

4. We saw the hand of the Lord in awesome provision when Jon and Shannon needed a new truck for their mission work in the Nazko/Quesnel area. The Lord knew the need before any of us did, and thanks to a couple of large donations, we were able to write a cheque for the purchase a new 2016 Toyota 4Runner! Praise the Lord!

The Session has seen some changes over the past year with the resignations of Bob McIntosh and Penny McIntosh from the Session, and with the addition of Don Lipsett to the Session. Thank you

Bob and Penny for your years of service with us and welcome, Don!

I continue to travel to Williams Lake on Sunday mornings to lead music. I share the preaching with Bob McIntosh. (We each do half the Sundays every month.) It is a great blessing to be part of the House Church ministry; I keep growing spiritually as I read, study and meditate on God's holy Word in preparation for sharing a message with others on a regular basis. I praise God for His faithful love and gracious mercy!

## Management Team Report: Shannon Bell-Wyminga

During 2016 the session appointed a new team of people to help with the management of the ministry. This was done to lift some of the work of administration from the Ministry Team so we could be free to focus on pastoring and preaching (See Acts 6:1-6). It has been a year of learning as the team goes through each month discovering the various tasks to be undertaken. We began with four men in the spring but due to circumstances, two of them resigned by the fall. Don Lipsett, who in the meantime has also been elected as an elder to the session, and Colin Carter have been and remain wonderful leaders in this area of ministry. Thanks also to Bob McIntosh and Peter James who served on the Management Team in the



initial stages. We are pleased to have just appointed Diane Vanruyskensvelde as a third member to the team from Lac La Hache. The team has taken on things such as the financial management of the ministry, taking care of insurance, grant applications and the mailing of the newsletter. We are very grateful to them for their servant hearts and their skills in these areas. In future reports, you will be hearing directly from the team themselves.



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# 2016 House Church and Mission Reports

*The following reports are from each of our house churches and ministry points, beginning with Punchaw in the northwest and ending with Sheridan Lake, nearly 400 kilometers and more than a 5 hour drive to the southeast.*

## **Punchaw House Church:** Lynn Poole

The Punchaw House Church is blessed to continue meeting every other Monday night with Jon as we worship and encourage one another to grow in the Lord and find our ministry for the Lord.

The Poole family experienced the exciting event on October 1, 2016 of the wedding of their daughter Sarah-lyn to Robert (Bobby) Turner which Sarah-lyn insisted take place at the ranch. The ceremony took place near the house at the edge of the Big Flat overlooking the Blackwallow and river bottom with the Telegraph Ranch beyond. The day



began with the threat of snow on the far hills but God stayed the weather and, with Jon officiating, we all managed to

keep warm and it all came off without a hitch as they tied the knot. The reception followed after in Prince George. It was a fun event despite the coolness in the air.

In life we know we have joy and sorrow so with sadness Charles Poole's mom, Edna Alice May Poole passed away on November 12, 2016 at the age of 98 leaving behind her husband of 61 years, Hubert Poole, and family. Edna lived a long life seeing good in everyone and everything.

As life makes its circle George and Mickey (Migvar) Wheat became grandparents to a little boy named Colin from their daughter Rachel and her partner Brent. George and Mickey's daughter Katie continues nursing in Prince George and Daniel works out of Prince Rupert reclaiming scrap iron.

Lee Migvar continues to run the Homeplace with mom and George, trucking logs in the winter and ranching the rest of the year. His son, Cole, continues to reside, with his wife Cindy, in Victoria to avoid the snow. Cole is nursing and Cindy is learning small business. Lee's daughters Hayley, with her two little

ones, reside in Prince George where she works as a conductor for CN Rail.

January 8, 2017 saw us celebrating mom's (Anne Migvar's) 86<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Lord continues to bless her as she is still able to take care of herself at home, though her hearing and eyesight are fading. Lately she and her daughter, Mickey Wheat, have been enjoying a CD study of the 10 Commandments.

Let us be reminded of Galatians 6:9: "Let us not grow weary while doing good for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."



## **Kluskus (Lhooskuz):** Jon Wyminga

I continued regular visits to the remote Dakelh village of Kluskus through 2016. My intention is to get there every other Monday but sometimes other demands force these trips to be less frequent. Kluskus is a village that is always changing. One family may move to town. Someone else may come back. There may be a transition in the teacher at the school. At times some are concerned that the school will have enough students. At the end of June we said goodbye to Miranda and her husband Alex, who had been teaching in Kluskus since the fall. They brought a special energy to the school and they certainly left their mark, with all of the upgrades and changes. Their love for the people was evident in all they did. In September we said hello to Heather who has been teaching there ever since. She is a welcome addition to the community and, from time to time, we get to see her sister Liz, who taught in Kluskus before Miranda and Alex's time. Liz continues to be involved and supports Heather in her work.

When I come I continue to drop in at various homes for visits or I get involved with other community events. A Scripture reading in the Dakelh language and a reflection on it is well received in some homes. A time of prayer for the household and

community usually follows. At other homes there may simply be a friendly conversation at the door. I'm always heartened when someone from Kluskus sees me in Quesnel and goes out of their way to say hi. I receive it as a sign of appreciation.



Some of the highlights of the year were the annual Lhooskuz Pow Wow in August and the school's Christmas Concert in December. Shannon joined me and she brought along her puppet friends Beni Hooloh and Soози Wusnuk. Everyone enjoyed them as they told the story of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem so long ago. There were some good laughs at Beni and Soози's peculiar names – names which mean something quite different in the Dakelh language!

I long for the day when some of the people in the village seek to gather in the name of Christ to worship and grow in him. For now I appreciate opportunities to share Jesus and pray when they arise. Please continue to pray for this special village and its people.

#### **Nazko House Church: Jon Wyminga**

Sunday evenings brings together our little house church in Nazko. During much of the year we were engaged in a study of the parables of Jesus and the many simple but profound lessons they have to teach us. The year brought times of sadness as well as enjoyment. We grieved along with the members of the Boyd family, some of whom are in our Nazko and Quesnel house churches. They lost Morris, their father, grandfather and great grandfather at the age of 86. Then, just a few weeks after he passed away Ryan, one of Morris' many grandsons, died when he was hit by a car in Quesnel. This devastating loss continues to bring much sadness.

Thankfully there were times of enjoyment as well as sadness in our year. The Nazko Arts and

Music Festival in February was a great success. We were amazed at the amount of artistic and talented people right here in our small community. We were blessed to learn that we could fill the entire program almost exclusively with Nazko residents. Even the non-resident participants were people who either had lived here once or had some connection to the community. We look forward to the second annual Festival at the end of February this year.

We also enjoyed hosting the ministry team from Norman Kennedy Presbyterian Church in Regina as well as another "Love Corps Team" from Vancouver Korean Presbyterian Church. In fact it was the twentieth consecutive year that we have had the privilege of hosting a "Love Corps Team." As usual they held a Vacation Bible School for the kids and put on several youth activities. They were also warmly welcomed by the chief and others at the Nazko Band's Culture Camp. The high point of our "Love Corps" week was a Feast Night in which the Nazko Community hosted them to a marvelous meal and honoured them with several local gifts.

As we continue gathering as a house church and at other community events may we, and those in all the other house churches, grow in the amazing love and grace that God has for us in Jesus Christ.

#### **Ndazkoh Kids Bible Class: Shannon Bell-Wyminga**

The kids in Ndazkoh this year have enjoyed a growing friendship with two First Nations kid puppets who go by the names Soози Wusnuk (meaning 'my name is crazy' in the Dakelh language) and Beni Hooloh (meaning 'lost his mind'). Each week we have a group of elementary aged kids after school on Tuesdays who love to come for games, snack, crafts, activities and circle time with Soози and Beni. This pair of friends talk about things such as how to deal with fear, how to be still before God, being thankful, love, Jesus' birth, death and resurrection and being part of the family of God. They enjoyed cards from the children at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Abbotsford and returned cards to them as we talked about God's family. The kids are always eager for Bible Class day and it is wonderful to walk through the school and get greeted with hugs and the enthusiastic question, "Is it Bible Class day?"

At Christmas, along with our community volunteers, we wrapped gifts for about 70 kids in Ndazkoh and Lhoosk'uz and visited with each family in the two villages as we delivered them. We have some new families in the community this year who



are not believers, but want their kids to be introduced to teaching about God. We are happy to oblige!

It is more and more encouraging each year to see how the kids are growing and connecting with God. As a community we are seeing youth graduate

from high school each year which wasn't the case 20 years ago. These children are the future of



our village and we are privileged to see them grow up with a knowledge of Jesus Christ which we pray will grow into blooming faith as they become teens and adults. They are a constant source of joy and hope to us.

#### **Quesnel House Church: Shannon Bell-Wyominga**

The house church that meets in Quesnel has had its ups and downs through this past year. On the up side, Doreen Patrick was able to complete the second of three components for her Biblical Counseling course with Providence Seminary in the spring. Doreen has been finding these courses really helpful both on the level of her own personal healing journey, but also in giving her skills to help others in our communities. She will be doing the final module in Dryden, Ontario this spring to earn a diploma. This program is equipping Doreen for ministry and she may have opportunity to continue on as a teaching/lab leader once she is finished.

On the down side of this year has been the losses we have faced. In September Doreen, Violet and their siblings (some of whom are part of the Ndazkoh house church) lost their dad Morris who was a respected elder in our community. They were able to be by his side through the final days but, as a patriarch of nearly 200 descendants, his loss was deeply felt. Only one month later, Violet lost her only son Ryan to a tragic accident when he was hit by a car while crossing the street. Again, the same family was devastated by loss and grief. Just before Christmas, Carolyn who has not been attending our gatherings lately, but is loved by all, lost her spouse of 30 years. As a church we have tried to walk this road together, pointing to the hope that we find in

Christ. We pray that 2017 will bring more joy than tears and that God's loving power will bring healing.

#### **Macalister House Church: Clarence Colp**

The first thing we have to report is faithfulness!

God is faithful. We have seen that in the lives and experiences of those of us who are involved with our House Church and in our families, relatives and friends for whom we have prayed.

The people attending our House Church are faithful. We can count on them attending weekly and bringing yummy goodies and munchies for all to share.

Bruce has been so faithful in his attendance, leadership, and in sound Biblical teaching which we all appreciate. He has always been there when someone was in the hospital and we have experienced the results of his prayers on our behalf. We love Bruce and Jackie and know without a doubt that they love us.

Sharing on a personal level has been a highlight of our House Church group. We totally open up to each other and share the deep desires of our hearts with each other and with the Lord during our prayer times. This is a great advantage of House Church where everything is personal. We can truly report that our love and appreciation for each other has grown during 2016 as has our love for the Lord.

On Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, we had our Cariboo Presbyterian Annual Rendezvous at the McLeese Lake Community Centre. Food, fun, and fellowship just about sum up the wonderful day we spent together with delegates from other House Churches. We also spent a blessed time of singing and worship together. A special thanks to John and Joe Noble for the airplane rides over McLeese Lake!



One of our goals has been to reach more people with the love of Jesus in our area. We have been meeting each Tuesday evening at Colin and Kathy Carter's home in Macalister, and then in discussions with John and Cynthia Noble it was

decided to have House Church at their home in McLeese Lake weekly as well, with the intent of reaching out to others in the areas where we live. John and Cynthia's group meet on Tuesday afternoons and we continued on Tuesday evenings but by the end of the year, it seemed more convenient for us to meet in the afternoons also. We meet at the Carter's home at 1:00 pm on Tuesday afternoons and we share a pot luck meal together. We have some folks who also come from Williams Lake and it is more convenient and much safer for them to travel during the day. We are constantly looking at different ways to reach people.

In order to share Bruce between the two House Churches, it was decided that he would attend and lead at each place twice per month. John Noble was selected as leader of the McLeese Lake group and Clarence Colp as leader of the Macalister House Church.

Many of our young people have gotten married and moved away and we miss them and pray for them often. We pledge our faithfulness to our House Church and to the Lord in 2017 and beyond.

God is good – all the time. And all the time – God is good!

#### **McLeese Lake House Church: John Noble**

We began to meet last fall in response to some folks that were showing interest in coming to a house church because of family problems and/or to learn more about the Bible. So far neither of those families have made it out but others have. We still join the Macalister House Church monthly for a meal and fellowship together. Pastor Wilcox is emphasizing leadership within each of the groups by turning the meeting over to the groups when he is not there. We trust that we can be a better Christian influence in the community by reaching out to more homes. The Christmas caroling by the house churches has become an expected tradition by many in the community. This year we also gave out some turkeys, jam, or caramel corn, too. Pray that others would see the need to join us as they commit their life to Christ.

#### **Haiti Ministry Trip: Kathy Carter**

*(Kathy is active in our Macalister House Church)*

I went to Haiti a year ago January with Cheryl Howard and Lori Rapati. Cheryl had made a connection with a team in Pestel, a 7 hour journey west from the main city of Port au Prince. The country is beautiful, the people very poor but much better off than those living in the city. The head of

the team is Luther Rocher and his wife Anna, graduates of a Bible School in Port au Prince. Luther grew up in this village. His father was the Baptist minister for approximately 40 years. Luther and his wife have returned to the village with a vision to start a school, a trade school and a Bible College. They have with them a team consisting of another Bible School graduate and his wife, a husband and wife who have just graduated as accountants and a number of husband/wife school teachers. They have built an open school house with a roof and four to five classrooms, separate washrooms for boys and girls, and a new home that is their family home and can accommodate guests. They have the only indoor plumbed toilet in the village. Their close knit community enthralled us the most. They wanted to know what we thought of our experience. We all agreed it was their community life. They are hard-working, dedicated to serving God in their village and are willing to pay the price. They have brought a consistent level of education to the village that has never had it before. They want to provide the opportunity for the children as they grow so they will not leave for Port au Prince and a life of crime and drugs.

The country has been under the control of Voodoo for 200 years, but since the earthquake of 2010 there has been a revival which some estimate has affected 50 percent of the population. There are many young, fervent preachers everywhere. The problem has been giving them the solid Bible education they need. Luther is well educated and a visionary. He and his family live in the home with his parents. The house is full as the team lives there as well. While we were there Luther's younger brother arrived who is a famous and popular singer in Haiti, in his early 20s. At bed time we were wondering where he was going to sleep as the three of us had the only other room left in the house. It was no problem as he simply went into the bedroom with his parents who had a large king sized bed. Their relationships are so strong and down to earth, they never understood our amazement. Cheryl asked them what marriage looked like for them and whether their marriages were good. He replied that for the most part they were solid. Things were worked out between them but in the final analysis the husband had the last say. There is a strong sense of authority in the home, but Luther has noticed that the younger generation no longer give the same respect to the grandparents they once did. He attributes that to the influence of North American entertainment. There is



no electricity but there are generators that go on at 6:00 pm which is sundown, so there is TV.

The extended family unit is a very strong aspect of their society, but individualism and humanism are now taught in the universities and are gaining ground. They see this as a threat to the family.

The work of building the school had to be restarted following the hurricane. Pestel was in the eye of the storm. Many died in the village because of contaminated water. Dead animals polluted the sources and there is no transportation when someone is sick. Since the storm they have had money given to develop a better water system that is a large cement cistern that can contain sufficient rainwater for their needs, as well as money for rebuilding the school. The monthly budget for the school is \$2,000. They feed the children lunch as most of them arrive without breakfast, and there are five to six teachers. The children learn English as one of their courses. We felt overwhelmed by their needs and knew we couldn't raise the support they needed monthly. We felt the best thing we could do for them is to provide a van that would be used as a taxi and give them an income, as well as provide the community with transportation in emergencies. The UN in Port au Prince has cleared out their vans and, for a good price, we have been able to secure an almost new Nissan for them. God is good. Cheryl is going back down in March and will then be able to secure the van for them. We developed a love and deep admiration for these people who are willing to reach out and help each other with no support and no means of income themselves, but somehow they manage.

#### **Williams Lake House Church: Elizabeth James**

The year of 2016 brought both joy and sorrow to our house church. We had a joyful visit from Ronda Bosch and her summer mission team from Norman Kennedy Presbyterian Church. They attended our church service at Retirement Concepts which we hold every first and third Sunday of the month. Afterwards we had a fellowship luncheon at Penny and Bob McIntosh's home.

Some of our members also attended the Rendezvous held at McLeese Lake during the summer. The day was warm and sunny, the luncheon was superb, and there were outdoor activities for all ages. We listened to wonderful music provided by Dave Webber, Bruce Wilcox and the Noble boys.

Our house church also had some very sad moments when God called Annie Knight and

Florence Blair home in September. These two ladies attended our church services at Retirement Concept and we all miss their smiling faces.

The Chapin family is still doing missionary work in Central Asia. In July they were on a home assignment, which means taking a break from the field and reconnecting with friends and family. They had a heavy travel itinerary and returned overseas in the Fall.

#### **Lac la Hache Community Church: Don Lipsett**

The "little red church on the hill" is really, as is the case of all our house churches, a group of caring individuals and couples – part of the Body of Christ. In 2016 we worshipped together, blessed by the ministry of Bruce and Jackie Wilcox, welcoming new faces on many occasions throughout the year. Together or individually, the saints here have supported and encouraged those of our mission in their times of need, and the disadvantaged in the community, especially at Christmas. Last winter we hosted a special service of compelling music and storytelling about Christ's Passion, by a very gifted group from the lower mainland called PeaceMeal. The Coffee House at the Lac la Hache Pioneer Hall, held every couple of months, has continued to be an outreach to the community, bringing witness and music by local talent. Pastor Bruce led worship at the annual Garlic Festival in August. We began a Bible study in January, on Thursday evenings, which has been enriching in the sharing of God's Word and work in our lives. We have enjoyed fellowship and worship together at the Lac la Hache Provincial Park, at the Rendezvous, and some of us made it all the way up to Nazko for an Art and Music Festival, organized by Jon and Shannon. Here and "out there" we seek to share God's love for all.

#### **Carefree Manor, 100 Mile House: Maggie Wiens**

Church at Carefree Manor is a huge blessing to me. I am not always able to attend as regularly as I would like due to health issues now, so it is even more special when I can attend. In James 1:27 it says



“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” We are to remember the widows, the orphans and also the prisoners.

I thank the Lord for guiding me to a place of worship and fellowship where, through His love and Holy Spirit, there is unity of heart and genuine care for one another and a keen desire to worship in spirit and in truth and to be given opportunities to put His love into action each and every day. We reap what we sow in life so why not sow goodness, kindness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, peace and love into the lives of others when we can. However, we need the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us to help us to do so for we, in our flesh, are not always able to respond as we should or have the strength to do so. Desire to be filled more and more with the fruit of the Holy Spirit, desire to be used as a vessel of blessing towards others and we will be continually filled and blessed ourselves. Whatever we do in this life we must always remember we are doing it as 'unto the Lord', being pleasing to God in sharing the Gospel through His Word in and through us as we reach out in His love towards others in need. Draw nigh to God and He said He will draw nigh to us.

It is a privilege to attend church services at Carefree Manor where Bruce Wilcox passionately preaches and teaches the Word and where so much appreciation is shown by everyone in attendance; appreciation for bringing church to them as they can often no longer drive or are able to go out to their own churches anymore. We will all be old one day and must remember to treat others as we would want to be treated. We must remember that as we age, we cannot do what we once could and so let us remember that and offer whatever aid we can to others. We must indeed be our brother's keeper in this world.

When Bruce cannot take the service due to other commitments, then Ginny Alexander faithfully and willingly takes over. She put on another wonderful Christmas concert/piano recital for the residents of Carefree Manor this past December which was enjoyed by all. It was so appreciated what the volunteers brought for goodies as well!! Thank you Mindy for joining in with your harmonica during worship services, it is always a blessing!! Also to Rick, thank you for joining in with the tambourine when you are able to attend. Thank you to Paula for your generosity of baking wonderful, delicious pies, cupcakes, rolls, etc. What a blessing of hospitality

that is. Thank you to all the residents who faithfully attend each week despite having aches and pains of their own. Thank you for your love, your gratitude, your hugs. God is LOVE!! John 13:35 - “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

So let's all be doers of the Word, not hearers only, for faith without works is dead. Be living epistles of His love, mercy, and grace. Be His arms and legs on this earth. Be mindful that one day we will all be older and have times of feeling forsaken, times of loneliness, times of feeling like an orphan and perhaps even a prisoner at times due to age and health limitations, times of feeling insignificant, but no one is insignificant! We are all parts of the one Body of Christ and no part of that body is any less important than any other. Remember you are never alone for God has said He will never leave us or forsake us. . . . What a promise! Also, when you are discouraged and weary, remember Romans 8:28: “All things work together for good to those who love the Lord, and are the called according to His Purpose.”

*(note: Maggie's ministry also regularly includes her wonderful musical gifts. Thank you Maggie!)*

### **Forest Grove Community Church: Lorrie Meyer**

We seem compelled to somehow measure growth; to take our “temperature” from time to time. Are there more of us? Have we grown personally? Performed better? Prayed more? Given of ourselves enough? Have we used this last year wisely? Honest stock-taking might leave us unsure. Maybe personally we're as much a mess as we were a year ago.

But if the God of the universe values relationship above all, well, that's what matters here too. The teaching is inspired, but also Bruce and Jackie model caring; an attitude of “what can I do to help you?” That then becomes “what can we do to help each other?” If we know each other better now, if we can be real about our struggles, if we are more of a family than ever, then surely God says, “It is good!” If He was measuring. . . .

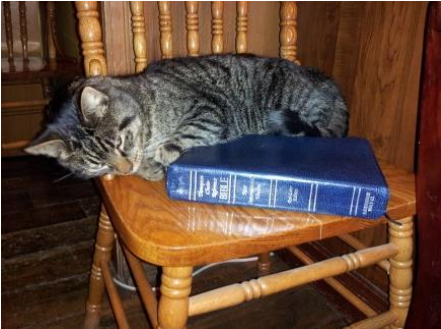
We've had puppies and babies and a particularly thoughtful and inquisitive young man from a new family that have joined us on our Sunday evenings. There's questions and laughs and sometimes coffee at the beginning instead of the end. There's been tears and heartfelt prayer and really good cookies, encouragement, discussion and

friendship. Our music is blessed and instruments include guitar, piano, harmonica and percussion.

And the thing that makes it possible, makes it work, is nothing to do with us, but rather God's amazing grace, which for sure is good!

**Sheridan Lake House Church: Jody Malm**

I have not been able to come up with the newsletter article for Jon, so tonight I am taking you all to Sheridan Lake House Church. You get to join in the circle (with the cat) and hear all the news first hand. Comments were shared



around of the events from the past year (2016) and I will try hard not to forget anything.

I will start off with the births. They are always joyful news: John Lloyd was born in June to Amber & Jim Malm, little brother to Kenny. Falon James was born in November to Jamie & Eric Cameron, little brother to Echo. As you can see we continue to grow and change, we also have others who have come back: the Kennedys and Rob and Sheila Bonter, who travel all the way from the north end of Canim Lake to join us. We also remember those who have gone.

A huge *thank-you* to the McLeese Lake House Church for the wonderful Rendezvous. Everyone who was able to attend just loved it. The plane rides topped it off. The smiles on the kids' faces could not be wiped away.

Summer gatherings continued with all of our lives continuing to be in God's hands. Hard times hit the Duits family with the loss of their home to a fire. The church family did its best to come to their aid with all that we could. All of us playing a small part made me realize that we must trust Christ. The Duits stood strong in their *faith* and I have seen *greatness* come out of tragedy by their love for Christ. Another family who has put so much in Christ's hands is Lloyd and Gen Garner. Their trails have been shared in emails to all of us. Their continued *faith and trust* has really been an inspiration to all of us who read their letters. We lift them in prayer weekly and personally. The prayer chain is such a blessing for all of us and I find it is a time to think of others.

A special summer night hamburger/potluck dinner was hosted by Nicki & Pete Bonter and our visitors from The Norman Kennedy Church in Regina

held a *wonderful, uplifting* service outside for many of us to enjoy. Later that evening the girls sat on our wharf with their feet dangling in the water and Sam, sitting in a deck chair with a little branch in hand tapping a table, serenaded us and the whole lake with beautiful Christian songs. (There's a video to prove it.)

We were busy in December preparing a meal at Interlakes Hall for the annual Christmas pageant by "Kids Space." This event is well supported by our community.



As you can see the *Hand of God* is at work in so many areas, in all our lives and definitely at our house church. Everybody plays a unique and special part in our house church family and by this we are all blessed.

Thank you to Bruce for faithfully ministering to us each week, to Ginny-Lou who fills in when Bruce is away, to Harold for his amazing harmonica (and jazzing songs up), to Alamaz for her beautiful voice and guitar, and to Pete and Nicki Bonter for hosting house church.

**World Vision Report: Jackie Wilcox**

A Big Thank You to everyone who contributed to the ongoing support of our four Cariboo Presbyterian Church World Vision kids. They are Yandri, a 7 yr. old boy in the Dominican Republic; Ferdus, a 16 yr. old boy in Bangladesh; Aguilar, a 9 yr. old girl in Ecuador; and Rong Xiu, a 13 yr. old girl in China.

The bankbook summary is as follows:  
January, 2016 beginning balance . . . . . \$2,463.48  
December 31, 2016 account balance . . . . \$2,073.48

We contribute \$156.00 per month for a total of \$1,872.00 for the year. Please keep these kids and their families and villages in your prayers. Thank you again for your steady support!



## The Ways God Provides: Shannon Bell-Wyminga

The Cariboo House Church Ministry has a history of God's amazing provisions. It was first founded in 1989 upon the gifts of the people of the churches in the Synod of British Columbia who caught a vision of what God was calling the church to do for those who live beyond the reach of the traditional church. In those first years the mission survived without grants from the National Church through prayer and faith and the faithful support of God's people. As the mission has grown through the years, that has never changed. We continue to rely on God's provision through individuals and churches and groups who share this vision.

In 2016 we adopted a new vision statement to grow in faithfulness and witness in the Cariboo-Chilcotin region. Part of that vision includes a section to explicitly state our call and plans for the continuation of this mission: "*we will trust in the providence of God to achieve full support for the entire work of the Cariboo Presbyterian Church.*" Three of the points in this section are:

- a. *We will continue to encourage the people within the ministry to support the financial needs of the ministry to the best of their ability.*
- b. *We will continue to make the needs of the ministry known to congregations, groups, and individuals across Canada and beyond through newsletter mailings, deputation work and other support-raising initiatives.*
- c. *We hope to maintain a relationship of mission support from the Presbyterian Church in Canada through an ongoing Native Ministries grant for NADO and will seek to decrease our need for the Mission grant for the southern missionary position.*

Thank you to all of those within this ministry who give sacrificially to ensure that not only does your own particular house church survive and thrive, but that *all* the mission work within the ministry is supported and grows.

Thank you to all of you in other places who generously and cheerfully give to this mission of Christ to enable us to share the love of Jesus with people in far-flung villages, ranches and First Nations reserves. We continue to depend upon your support to be a witness to God's gracious love in Jesus Christ.

We are grateful to Canadian Ministries for their support over the years and look forward to a continued relationship. We recognize that the funds

available from the National Church are decreasing and so we have agreed with Canadian Ministries that we would continue to seek to reduce our need for a grant for the missionary position in the south. This year we have been approved for a grant of \$10,000 towards the stipend of our missionary Bruce Wilcox. Beginning in 2018, we hope to be able to decrease that need by 20% per year until after 5 years we will no longer be requesting a grant for that position. In the meantime, we continue to need a grant for the First Nations portion of the ministry in Ndazkoh as much as the church is able to provide it. We recognize that these are difficult financial times for many in the church but we trust that as God has called us, God will also provide through all of you.

My daughter Joelle sent me a Facebook message from university the other day. She was feeling stressed as she wanted to apply for an apartment on campus for next year and the deadline was approaching. She could not apply without having a roommate to apply with her. She had talked to all her friends and everyone else already had plans or didn't live on campus. I suggested that she breathe deeply and pray that God would provide her with what she needed, whatever that looked like. The very next day I got another Facebook message telling me that she was in history class and had connected with a girl who wanted to be her roommate for the next year. An answer to prayer, in only one day! That is the God we serve – the one who knows our needs and cares for us. As we give our lives to our Saviour, seeking to fully honour and serve him, we trust that God will look after all our needs. Thank you that you have been a part of God's answers to our needs.

If you are considering sending us a gift, we ask that you would send it to the Lac la Hache address (Cariboo Presbyterian Church, Box 156, Lac La Hache, BC V0K 1T0) rather than to our other address in Nazko. Due to distance and not having daily mail service in Nazko, it is more difficult for us to get your gifts passed on to those who can make deposits. If you would like to find out about our PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) program for regular giving, we'd love to share that option with you. It is a simple process. We are also investigating ways of receiving donations on-line but that is still to come!

May God bless you all as you support us both in practical ways as well as through prayer. We couldn't do this without you!