

NORTHERN LIGHT

The Official Newsletter of

The Cariboo Presbyterian Church

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Christmas Edition 2012

God's Mission in Christ . . . and Ours!

Jon Wyminga

I got involved in a mission a few years ago: a search and rescue mission to be exact. An elderly woman near Nazko went missing in the bush around her remote ranch. It was well into the fall, the weather was getting cold at night and the whole community was deeply concerned for her safety. A massive search was launched. It included a trained search and rescue team and countless volunteers; some searching on ATVs, some on horseback, some on foot and other graciously preparing food for everyone else. I had been asked to help scour a forest that had recently been devastated by forest fire. The search and rescue workers got us to spread out in a line ten to fifteen feet apart and scout methodically through the bush. I tried to negotiate as straight a line as possible through burnt out trees that lay scatter like match sticks while smoke rose from areas still smoldering from the fire. It looked like a war zone. Sadly, a few days later the search and rescue mission ended as a recovery operation. The woman's body was found lying peacefully on the ground as if she had simply gone asleep; one of her dogs still faithfully by her side.

That search and rescue mission reminded me that God is on a mission too. In fact you could call it



a search and rescue mission. God's mission was fully launched some 2000 years ago but the plan had been hatched for a long time before that. We celebrate the launching of that mission every Christmas. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream

to announce that Mary would have a son and the angel said, "You are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (*Matthew 1:21, NRSV*) Of course Joseph would have understood that the name Jesus is derived from Joshua, or *Yeshua* in the Hebrew, and it means "Yahweh (the LORD) is Salvation". It's also a play on words in the Hebrew language, though Joseph was probably more acquainted with Aramaic. *Yeshua* means "Jesus" while *yoshia* means "to save". Joseph likely also had a better understanding of the word "sins" than we commonly do. He most certainly wouldn't have seen "sins" to be the misdemeanors, mostly sexual, defined by a hopelessly outdated moral code. He would have understood that "sin" means "to miss the mark". If we are honest, I think we can all admit to doing that, even according to whatever "up-to-date" moral code we choose to adopt. Of course the results of that "mark missing" can be devastating; everything from the petty grudges that devastate friendships to murderous violence that devastates families, communities and nations. What stunning news that Jesus came and lived from manger to cross to save us from all of that. Lord, bring it on!

God is indeed on a mission. It was fully launched some 2000 years ago but it continues today. God is on a mission and that means so are we. Jesus was sent to launch it and ever since the Holy Spirit has been sent to carry it on. Over the last two millennia millions have responded to the Spirit's call to that mission. Many of them are right in our midst. A bunch of them are in our congregation. Much of the rest of this newsletter tells some of their stories, though I know there are many more. This is how they serve the mission of the one whose coming we celebrate at Christmas.

The Chapin Family: Flying Missionaries from McLeese Lake

"We must be crazy!" My husband, Dave, and I sat waiting to meet with the Candidate Committee for Mission Aviation Fellowship. Our hearts beating and lumps in our throats, we stared at each other incredulously. "Here we are, waiting to hear either 'yes' or 'no'. If it's 'yes' we will pack up our children and spend five months in one of the most war-torn, 'unsafe' countries in the world. If it's 'no' we will return home to Williams Lake, BC in peaceful, safe, comfortable Canada. *But if it's 'no' we will be sad. We must be crazy!*"



October 2011, after more than sixteen years of training, preparation, hoping, praying and waiting, we waited for that answer, and the answer was 'yes'. Dave and I had been accepted and could proceed with plans for a short term assignment in Central Asia. We had five weeks between training sessions and departure to sort out passports, visas and immunizations. Before we even lifted off the ground in Calgary, we had already missed all our connections--twice! "Should we even be on this plane," I thought.

On January 3, 2012 the five members of our family along with every piece of luggage somehow managed to land safely in the capital city. "Now the real hardship will begin," I thought, and I believed it. We were responding to a desperate need for help in aircraft maintenance at this program, making this the country where Dave could have the most impact serving short term. We were testing the waters of missions in what I considered a hostile environment and I hadn't come to have a picnic. However, during the weeks that followed, all my assumptions were turned on their heads.

What a privilege to serve in one of the most impoverished nations in the world! The program in Central Asia serves the desperate humanitarian need through flight services as well as internet services and Dave had the opportunity to help keep four busy aircraft running, catch up on many overdue

maintenance directives, prepare parts and lighten the load of the overworked staff there.

What a thrill to be part of such an awesome team as well as the like-minded ex-pat community that surrounded us! My kids had friends from all over the world - they had the time of their lives. We had such sweet fellowship with the other families serving there - people who loved Jesus heart and soul, people just as crazy as us!

What a dream come true to finally be surrounded by another culture, bringing Jesus' light and love to a nation that needs it so desperately. The hospitality and warmth of our national friends, their relationship based culture and love for children, their fortitude in the face of adversity and war, were inspiring and humbling.

We expected five months of hardship and danger, but what God gave us was five months of abundant life serving him. We expected to meet a short term need and then pursue a full time position in another, 'safer' field, but what God gave us was a call to return to Central Asia. We expected to give, but the gifts of joy, peace, compassion and even vision became ours because, against what the world would label 'sound judgment', we were crazy enough to obey God and follow Him.

So what now? A year later, October 2012, we are officially on staff with MAF-Canada raising funds to return to the field full time. We are expecting our fourth child shortly after Christmas. Next summer, we have three months of required field training and then hope to be air born once again in August, 2013.

And what about you? I have been invited to share the vision for this ministry with you as part of this newsletter, and as part of the body of Christ who has been richly blessed through the Cariboo Presbyterian House Church. Would you like to receive our newsletters? Are you called to partner with us through prayer or financial support, to make our return to the field possible? We would love to hear from you! God Bless!

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(donations can be made to MAF-Canada under account #C491)

Revive 2012 in McLeese Lake: A Ministry of the Noble Family with SCA International

The REVIVE 2012 took place August 24 - 26 this year. It was held outside the McLeese Lake Recreation Centre beside the lake. About 200 people attended. Some chose to camp in RV's while some took advantage of tenting on the grounds. The main speakers were a native missionary to the prisoners around Abbotsford named Pascal Adam and cowboy evangelist named Herb Taylor. Many others shared the stage including worship leaders from 108 Mile Cariboo Christian Life Fellowship, Hope Haven Discipleship Group, Cariboo Community Church in Williams Lake and Dave Noble.

The music was phenomenal with a Gospel music Jamboree Saturday that included the Singing Hills, Crystal Taylor, Jessie Chapin, The Noble Boys and more.

The emphasis of the event was to bring revival to local Christians but included appeals for commitment to Christ as well as recommitment and renewal of commitment to calls of service. The event ended with seven people being baptized in the lake. Two potlucks, softball, children's ministry, and a delicious burgers and ice cream concession by the

Burger Bus were all a part of the fun and fellowship.

We are already planning another event for next year. This was planned and carried out primarily by five young people with John Noble and much help by others.



The expenses were generously covered by many people so that this free event could take place. Besides the baptisms, there were about eleven recommitments to service, about five that indicated the need for Christ. The work of revival in everyone's heart is known only to God.

Mary Noble: Missionary Teacher and Traveller

I loved being at Canaan Christian Community. This is a community that is an alternative to the normal life people experience in Haiti, because it is centered on Christ. There are about 65 kids living there, along with many teachers, nurses, and other random people, all doing various jobs. The kids all go to an English speaking school, right there on the grounds, which is where my friend Tanis and I worked. She helped in the Kindergarten while I was in a class that was grades 5-10, with the students ranging in age from 14-20 years old. This was an interesting challenge, helping them with their ACE homework, which is more like tutoring than actually teaching. It was definitely a challenge that was enjoyable and invaluable for me and them.

The people were so amazing, the teaching was a great experience, and the conversations with friends were awesome. I learned to be so thankful for every day, to realize that it is a gift from God, to see how

others live and be so grateful for my comfortable life here in Canada. But honestly, this is not what I came away with learning.

Before flying home, I prayed, "God, open every encounter I have with people on my trip home to be a lasting one for Your kingdom." When you pray prayers like this, be careful, because you never know what God may do with that! For some reason, Tanis and my seats did not get booked beside each other, so we sat apart on that 5.5 hour trip from Port au Prince to Montreal. I sat beside a UN worker, who had a ton of questions for me: why I was in Haiti, was I afraid being there, what my future looked like, what would Bible school do for me in the long run, etc Well, this opened a door to share the Gospel with him, basically from Genesis to Revelation (since we had a whole plane ride!). Three hours later, I was worn out from talking and listening! I don't know all that was going on in his mind, but I trust

that God planted or watered a seed in him that day.

Then I stayed in Montreal for a few days with some friends before coming home. I met up with another friend in Vancouver on my way back. By the time I arrived home, I was exhausted after all those conversations! But this is what I learned:

Throughout the time teaching, every morning I would have a devotional time with my class. One week the theme was "Courage". I read some of the story of Esther, who Mordecai told, "Who knows . . . maybe you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this." To which she eventually responded, "I will go to the king . . . and if I perish, I perish." This story has become an important building part of my life, because of that simple statement, "Who knows if you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this." Maybe it wasn't about going to Haiti, maybe it was *because* I needed to be on that plane to ride beside that UN worker, maybe it was just to say a simple encouraging word to a friend, or maybe it was just to drive back home and talk to someone on the way. I realized that often we *do not* know why we are in a place, but God has

perfectly placed us there to do His work. And that is when we say, "Let's go . . . and if I perish, I perish!" Because God has it all under HIS control.



I leave this encouragement with you- go ahead fully, into what you have been called, realizing that this may just be a crucial part of why you are here on this earth!

Go, with God's blessing, Mary

Jimmy Noble: Summer Missionary in Kenya

Kenya, 2012 was the time of our lives. We could not have asked for a greater experience. The goal of the trip was discipleship training for young men. My prayer was that the young men would come alive in Christ and never be the same.

Throughout the trip we saw God do amazing things. When we first arrived in Kenya we went right to work fixing and building the road to an orphanage by hand. It was not so much that we were getting a lot of work done, but more that we were building relationships with the Kenyans. Monday to Thursday we would work on this road and Friday to Sunday we would do full time ministry. Ministry consisted of going house to house or rather hut to hut with a local pastor from the church and sharing the gospel. Every Saturday and Sunday we would share as a team what God was doing in churches. The ministry in the church would be a song, testimony, preaching, drama, prayer and many healings. We also did a Jesus film ministry where we would simply set up a

sound system and screen and show the Gospel. There were a few days where we went to different universities and high schools to share the one story that can give life. Throughout the trip God was teaching the whole team amazing things that have changed the lives of the members forever. You cannot see poverty, miracles and the power of God and simply come back to normal everyday life in Canada. I believe that God has called us out of this world, out of the boat. We will never know what God can do unless we step out and say, "Here am I send me."

God willing, I am planning another trip to Kenya and maybe to the Ukraine as well. Please pray that God would direct me in making these decisions. I do not take this task lightly and know that for me to lead, God must be leading me. There is so much that we have simply settled for here in Canada. I will not.

Thank you for all the prayers. I cannot say enough about the power of prayer.

Shelby Wyminga: Camping Ministry and University Studies

(Our last issue included an article about Shelby, her summer ministry and an opportunity to support her through her university's matching grant system. Many of you generously responded.)

To all you beautiful people:

I would like to thank all those of you who generously supported me in my summer mission project at Echo Lake Bible Camp this past summer. I am shocked at the way God has provided for me these past two summers, and I am SO grateful for people like you who choose to get on board with God and make things happen.

This summer at camp was by far the best one yet. With school and living expenses, I honestly didn't think I could afford to go back to camp again, but somehow I decided to go anyway. It's easy for me to SAY I'm going to trust God to provide, I never expected Him to do it in such an overwhelming and obvious way! In past summers, I have gone to work at camp with a desire to serve, but I've also always had a jaded and cynical attitude towards a lot of Christian community, as I have seen the hypocrisy that seems to be such a huge issue in the church. I decided at the beginning of the summer to lay down that bitterness and allow God to replace it with joy and love and all the other great stuff He has to offer. I believe that God blessed this summer because of that decision and allowed me to be a part of amazing things.

For most of the two months I spent at camp, I led the LTS (Learning to Serve) program, through which teens come to camp for two weeks at a time and work. They learn what it is to really sacrifice and give of oneself by working behind the scenes at camp, washing dishes, scrubbing toilets, and studying the Bible in the process. I watched these kids grow SO much in the two weeks I spent with them. I had a chance to come alongside them, as a friend more than

a "leader," challenging them to step outside their comfort zones. The LTS kids also had a chance to learn some of the outdoor skills we teach campers at camp, and it was amazing to see the breakthroughs God made happen when the team was challenged physically as well. I know the day we learned to flip in kayaks, there were frightened tears from many of the girls, but they chose to push through that fear and each of them was beaming when we paddled back to shore.

I could tell so many stories about this summer, but I would run out of paper terribly quick. I think one of the greatest experiences I had, was talking to one of my LTS girls' mum a week or two after she had left camp. Her mum was so excited because she had been seeing her daughter just sitting in her room with a friend reading the Bible and praying almost every day since her return from camp.

At the end of the summer, I got engaged to my boyfriend of 4 years, Tyler Dumoulin, and we are looking forward to getting married this coming summer! The two of us are now back at Trinity Western University for a second year and, thanks to all of you, I'm able to pay for another year in my Bachelor of Fine Arts program without relying heavily on student loans. Currently I am in a student written theatre production called *Picture This* and in the spring, I have the honour of playing Harriet Smith in TWU's production of Jane Austen's *Emma*. I love my school and I love my studies and I am incredibly grateful for the prayer and support I have received from you, my church family.

God Bless, and have a Merry Christmas!

Joelle Wyminga: Summer Camping Ministry at Ness Lake, BC

This summer I worked at Ness Lake Bible camp as a cabin counselor. I got to spend all summer watching God at work and learning about God in everything I did. It was awesome. My job was to lead a cabin of about 10 girls, with one other leader, for a week at a time. I wasn't in a cabin every week, so the weeks that I wasn't I did something called

Service Week. Those weeks were always seen as our resting time, but it still wasn't restful. Our job was to do all the odd jobs around camp, whether it was cutting up cardboard for the crafts skill, or digging a trench for a new water line. But even in those jobs we could see amazing work being done in the lives of all the campers. As a leader of a cabin, we of course

had to watch over the campers in a motherly way, like making sure they brushed their teeth, and showered at least once in the week, but we also got to make sweet relationships with them, and introduce them to the wonderful things that God has done for them. We got to lead them in Bible studies and just hang out with them and love them. Each Cabin leader also got to teach one of the skills that the kids went to during the day, I taught the drama skill, and I

was able to share my passion for acting with the kids. While I was at camp I met so many amazing people, and we were able to build a super strong community at camp. It was amazing having so many people there to support you and help you through everything, and even just to have them there to listen to me when I needed to rant. Working at camp was an amazing experience, and the best experience of my life. Hopefully I will be back there next year!

Mary Krajczar: Mission Memories from a Previous Generation

(Our last newsletter included an article from Mary about her childhood memories of church. If you noticed it ended quite abruptly you were right. It turns out that when I “cut and pasted” it into the newsletter I did more “cutting” than “pasting”. My apologies. Here is the full article.)



Before and during the second world war there were four Presbyterian churches in our small fishing town on the north east coast of Scotland. My

Dad was the minister of what used to be called a tea caddy church. That was because it was shaped as a tea caddy. We had a service at 11am and one at 6 pm with Sunday School after the morning service and choir practice on Sunday afternoon.

The church had a pipe organ and when my two brothers were older one played the organ and the other sat behind a curtain and pumped the organ with a big wooden handle. I think that was hard work. We had a beadle, a man who cleaned the church and carried a large Bible up the stairs to the pulpit at the beginning of the service. Then he came downstairs and waited at the foot of the stairs while the minister made a grand entrance and climbed the stairs and once he sat down the beadle went back up and closed the door to the pulpit. I remember when I was very little during a prayer I wanted to go and see my Daddy so I slipped out of the pew and was half way up the stairs before my Mum noticed I had disappeared and came running after me.

After church one Sunday morning my Mum and I were talking to the beadle's wife. My Mum said to her that Mr. Thompson had a terrible cough. Mrs. Thompson (we never used Christian names in those days) showed little sympathy for her husband and replied in a broad Scottish accent, that there would be many a person in the graveyard would be glad of that cough. Afterwards when we were home my Mum told my Dad and said she thought Mrs. Thompson was a coarse Christian!

When we were little my two brothers and I got to stay home on Sunday nights with my Mum. We always had our own house church. One of my brothers was the minister and stood on a box and preached. The other was the organist and pretended to play the organ. I always had to be the congregation. Being the youngest I did not get a chance of being the minister.

The manse where we lived was a big granite house with nine rooms. We were as poor as church mice. The house was heated with coal fires and was never warm. In the early years we had no electricity but had a paraffin lamp and went to bed with our candles and stone hot water bottles. My Dad never had a car. We all had bikes and enjoyed them very much.

On a Sunday afternoon my Dad had to go up to the prison to take a service there. The prisoners all had a lifetime sentence if I remember correctly. The men used to tell my Dad how they managed to break into houses and they were quite skilled at the job. One evening my Dad was on his bike, coming down a long hill from the prison which was along the shoreline. Of course he had his hat on and it was a

stormy, dark night. He had his head down to keep his hat on his head and when he looked up there was a stationary car parked in front of him. To stop himself he put his hand out and it went into the back window of the car where two ladies were sitting. They used some choice swear words when my Dad stopped to apologies.

One Sunday I was ready for church and my Mum was taking a long time so I got a pair of scissors and cut my hair. By the time my Mum found out and gave me a new hair style with bangs we were late for church.

Then during the war, because we had a big house we had to take in three lodgers and my Mum cooked and washed for them. It was hard work and she went down town each day on her bike to get the

groceries. Our town had a big influx of people working in the shipyards and airport. Our church had a basement where we had a canteen and carpet bowling and games for the soldiers and air force. Some of them came upstairs to our evening service and my Mum used to always ask them to our house afterwards for a meal. How she did it on the food rationing she got I will never know. We only got one egg each a week, one ounce of butter and sugar. My Mum was from Ireland and she was used to hard times. She had been a district nurse in a small village in the south of Scotland where my Dad was the minister. She did her rounds on a motor bike. They were married in 1927 and they moved north in 1932. We were a happy family with loving parents.

Shannon Bell-Wyminga: An Invitation to Celebrate Our Mission Together

The house churches in the Cariboo have so much to celebrate! God is at work in such a variety of ways in our gathered communities of worship whether they are large or small. We need to share that with one another. Here is our chance!

For the third year, we will be gathering together for food, fun, fellowship and worship. This year the gathering will be hosted by the McLeese Lake and Ndazkoh house churches. Our theme will be a Ministry Festival! We hope to do a lot of the same great things we've done the past two years with a new twist and maybe some new activities as well. We've set a date, so write it on your calendar: **SATURDAY, 16 FEBRUARY, 2013.** We will have our festival at Maple Park Alliance Church on 2075 Balsam Avenue in Quesnel.

Here's what is in the works:

- Ministry festival of displays. Each house church or ministry point will be asked to prepare something for a table display that tells us about the ministry they have been involved in in the past year. Show us photos, bring in display objects, set up a game for us to participate in or whatever creative way you can share with us your ministry in your community and beyond. The usual annual reports will be printed up large and displayed in your table area as well.

- Worship. We'll have a time for singing, prayer and the Word together.
- Games and activities. You'll have to wait till you get there to see what we'll be up to! If you have a game or activity that you want to suggest, just contact me!
- Gifts on stage. Each house church will be given 5 minutes or so of stage time to share a song, a poem, a skit or some other creative outlet to let us know what you'd like us to know about your group – introduce yourselves, highlight some gifts, show some photos... Let us get to know you!
- Food – of course! What gathering is complete without it! Cynthia Noble and Kathy Carter will be the adept organizers of our pot providence meal.

If you have ideas or suggestions for the day, please contact me: Shannon at 250-249-9669 or cariboopc@xplornet.ca. We will plan to start our day just after lunch and finish in the early evening, giving everyone time to make the drive home. Set the date aside and start brainstorming with your house church what you might share! We want to emphasize celebrating ministry and getting to know one another beyond our own house churches. See you there! ☺

Ginny Alexander: Reflections on God's Faithfulness

(Sadly, Ginny's father recently passed away. Here are some of her reflections on that loss.)

Mom phoned me on Thursday, in the early afternoon, to tell me that the doctor believed that Dad had lost his will to live and to tell others to make him comfortable. Nothing else would be done to prolong his life. That night as I got ready for bed, I was reminded of the time when we still lived in Alberta. Both my parents were singing in the choir at Asker Lutheran Church. There was going to be a tri-church concert and during their warm-up I heard them singing,

*Lord Jesus I long to be perfectly whole;
I want Thee forever to live in my soul.
Break down every idol, cast out every foe –
Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.
Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow –
Now wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.*

I fell asleep with that song going around in my head. Friday morning I woke up singing the same song, but with an addition,

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee;
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee:
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!*

God had given me much assurance that Dad

was 'in the faith'. My husband, Jack and I quickly made plans to get down to Salmon Arm and see Dad, and we arrived shortly after 8:00 Friday evening. Dad was aware that we were there, but was not communicating. I knew he had always been tender to hymns, wiping his eyes and blowing his nose as we sang. Since his body was all puffy from being on IV and was very painful to touch, I slid my hand under the covers and barely touching his arm I sang 'In the Garden' and 'Jesus Loves Me.' Then I asked him, "Did you like that, Dad?" and he responded by blinking twice. Next I recited 'The Apostle's Creed', and we both said the 'Lord's Prayer' and again I asked him, "Did you like that Dad?" He responded a second time by blinking twice. Then he closed his eyes, very peacefully and went to sleep. That was his last communication with any of the family, as he died at 2:00 am on Sunday, September 23, 2012.

I praise God for His faithful working in my parents' lives all through the years. The good news is that is how it is with all people, and just because we can see no evidence of the Spirit's work, it doesn't mean that it isn't happening! I challenge each one of us to trust God completely in every area of our lives!

A Special Thanks from Our Envelope Secretary Linda Webber

On behalf of the Cariboo Presbyterian Church I would like to thank all of you who support Christ's mission in the Cariboo.

I would like to make special mention of all the people and congregations from "far away" without whose friendship, financial support, gifts and prayers this mission would not be able to continue.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a little pocket calendar given as a token of our thanks to all of our supporters.

Many of you remind me that we are not alone in this ministry by the special letters and notes that you write to encourage us, thank you so much for that.

The Advent/Christmas season is upon us and it is a time that we can reflect on what our Lord and Saviour has done for us. It is a season of great expectation in our faith. It is also a season of great expectation in this mission. Each year a huge portion of our annual mission support comes in to us in December. It truly is the season of gifts for us in the Cariboo mission. God Bless you as you prayerfully consider us this season.