

NORTHERN LIGHT

The Official Newsletter of

The Cariboo Presbyterian Church

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The Best Christmas Gift Ever!

By Jon Wyminga

Christmas is coming! Who doesn't remember that childhood excitement in this season of gift-giving? In a few weeks several people in Nazko will help Shannon and me prepare gifts for all of the kids in the villages of Nazko and Kluskus; gifts that have been provided through the generosity of many of you, our supporters. Others may be preparing gifts for children in other parts of the country and beyond. Still others may prepare food hampers for families in need. Of course many of us will be giving charitable gifts, perhaps by dropping some cash in a Salvation Army kettle or by writing a cheque to our favorite charity. Here in the Cariboo House Church Mission we receive a very large part of our financial support in the season of giving and we're grateful for every single cent – even in a time when pennies no longer circulate! We're especially grateful this year as our finances are tight and our needs have increased, having taken on an additional full time missionary in preparation for the retirement of Dave and Linda Webber. In addition to all of this gift giving we'll all be preparing presents for family and other loved ones. Sometimes this can be really difficult, even stressful, especially when the stores are jammed, we haven't got much money and the people we're buying for seem to have all they need. If you find yourself having difficulty choosing appropriate gifts you may be interested in the article about alternative ways of saying "I love you" that my wife Shannon has prepared.

Where did all of this gift giving at Christmas come from? I can't say for sure but my mind always goes back to those mysterious travelers from the east who came searching for the one born "king of the Jews." When they found the child Jesus and his mother the Bible says "they bowed down and

worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh." (Matt. 2:11) Those were pretty extravagant gifts at the time: exotic minerals and resins from a faraway land. It seems, though, that these strange visitors were aware of an even greater gift in their presence that day. In fact their gift giving was a response to that greater gift. Believe it or not that greater gift was the very one they had come to see: that little child born to a humble Hebrew family. Could this kid be "the kings of the Jews" – or any kind of king for that matter? Certainly they believed it. Why else would they bow down and worship him? Why else would they offer such extravagant gifts to him?



In this season of gift giving may we all be touched with a renewed awareness of him who is the greatest gift of all: The one whom the Creator of all things sent to share our very human existence with us, not just in life but also in death, so that, by his victory over death, we might share the Creator's existence with him. My you all have a very Merry Christmas!

Some Special Ideas for Christmas

Submitted by Shannon Bell-Wyninga

Speaking Love at Christmas

How do you speak love? Did you know that there are different languages to express love? In his book *The Five Love Languages* Gary Chapman describes how there are five basic ways that people give and receive and understand expressions of love. We all have a primary 'love language' or perhaps two. Problems in relationships can arise when we are speaking and hearing different 'languages' and we don't interpret the love that is expressed. Do you ever feel like you are trying to show love to someone in your life and they just don't seem to get it? Or do you wonder how much someone loves you because they never say it or show it in a way that makes sense to you. It could be because you are speaking different languages. If we can begin to identify and understand those differences, we can make an effort to speak the love language of the people we are trying to show our love to.

Briefly, the five languages are: words of affirmation; giving gifts; physical affection; time together; and acts of service. If you are always trying to spend time with someone and doing things together, but their love language is physical affection, they may not get your message. If you can figure out what your love language and theirs is, it can go a long way in successfully giving and receiving love.

These insights have helped me immensely in some family relationships. I had continual conflict with some family members who always wanted to give us stuff and I was trying to live a life of simplicity without 'stuff'. When I realized that their primary love language was gift giving and that was at the bottom of my language list, it helped me understand the differences.

The languages of love can be a great way to consider how we give to one another at Christmas. The greatest gift of Jesus at Christmas was a gift of love. As his followers we seek to share his love as we give gifts at Christmas, but the commercialism and consumerism of the culture around us can easily distract us from that focus. We become bombarded with messages of "buy, buy, buy" and find ourselves depleted financially and emotionally. How little of the glitter and pressure has much to do with the babe in a feeding trough in the cold night of Bethlehem.

So how can we extract ourselves from the overwhelming pressures of the 'industry of Christmas' and still be able to enjoy sharing gifts of love in the spirit of Jesus' gift to us? There are more and more common alternatives offered to us through things like donations to charity and ministries in the name of our friend or family member. In my grandma's latter years, I donated to the Bible Society for her each year since in her 90's she didn't need more things but loved to support that cause. Giving to help in disaster situations such as the typhoon in the Philippines this year or giving to your local ministry is also great. A lot of ministries, this one included, depend upon love gifts that come in at Christmas time.

But what about getting even more creative if donations aren't your thing? Think about what the specific love languages are for the people in your life. What way do you see or hear them most often expressing their affection for others? That is probably their love language. Look up on-line and get a fuller description of those languages and see if you can figure out each person's love language and then find a way to give a gift that fits with their language. Some will be harder than others, but you are a creative person! You can do it! Here are a few suggestions to get you going.

Words of affirmation:

- Write a poem or song or letter that expresses all the things you admire or appreciate about the person.
- Get a simple mirror and write or paint around the edges words that describe their great attributes so they are affirmed each time they look in the mirror.
- Get a blank book and on each page write one more reason why you love them. Decorate it to make it extra special.

Giving gifts:

- Agree to give gifts that are either homemade or from a thrift store or from your own closet. My girls have given each other items that they knew the other one like from their own wardrobe.
- Make a box of assorted cookies and squares and put them in a nice tin. While I was still a student I

did this for every older member of the family who didn't bake for themselves any more. This year a student friend will be receiving several gift jars containing the ingredients to make soups and other meals along with the instructions.

- If you have a hobby, make it a gift – crafting, knitting, make a music CD, write a story, etc.

Physical Affection:

- This one is harder to do as a Christmas gift. My daughter gave me a gift certificate last year for an hour of back rubs to be used as I wanted in chunks of time.

Time Together:

- Here's where you can give experiences : Plan a weekend away to do something the other person particularly enjoys.
- Give a homemade gift certificate of a day or evening of your time to do whatever the other person wants to do.
- Give tickets to see a concert or play together or a trip to a historic site or other event.

Acts of Service:

- Give homemade gift certificates for all kinds of things that you can do for the other person:
 - a week of doing all the cooking
 - an oil change
 - cutting and delivering a load of firewood
 - 5 days off of chores (great for kids to use when they want to)
 - a task that the person hates doing – cleaning toilets, scrubbing floors, etc.

These gifts can spread out through the year so it is not all about the hype of one day. They express love even better than a new toy or gadget and are usually more affordable, allowing us to use our financial resources to help those whose needs are greater than our own.

Have a loving Christmas and learn a new language to give love in!

Cariboo Christmas Ornaments

Here are two versions of a Christmas stocking ornament Cariboo style! They makes great gifts. One is cowboy style using leather or felt. *The other is First Nations button blanket style using wool melton cloth or felt. Instructions specific to the FN version are in italics.*



You will need:

- Stocking pattern. You can easily draw this on a piece of cardboard and then trace it onto your materials. The stocking should be about 12 cm high.
- 2 pieces of Leather or *wool melton cloth* or felt (for either) about 12 x 12 cm square
- Contrasting coloured leather or *coloured wool melton* 12 x 5 cm
- Scissors
- Leather glue or *tacky glue* (either works for both)
- Artificial sinew
- Thread*
- Ribbon or thin cord*
- Conchos or other decorations
- Shell buttons*

Cut two of the basic stocking in your chosen material. Decorate the top layer of the stocking in the appropriate style.

- For cowboys, sew on a concho. Cut a contrasting piece of leather that is the same width as the top of your stocking. Fringe it with scissors. Glue on fringe piece at the top of the stocking.
- *For FN, sew on several small shell buttons. You could also make a fringe at the top of the stocking as described above.*

Attach the back of the stocking to the front exactly.

- For cowboy, either use leather glue around all edges but the top or using a leather hole punch, punch holes around sides and thread artificial sinew all the way around, leaving a long tail at the end (about 20 cm) to make a loop to tie back in to the end. This will be for hanging your ornament.
- *For FN, sew all the way around the stocking on all sides but the top. Attach a ribbon or thin cord to the top corner for hanging.*

Gift Jar: Cowboy Cookie Mix

1 1/3 cups rolled oats
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 cup white sugar
1/2 cup chopped pecans
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
1 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp baking soda
1/4 tsp salt

Sift flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.
Layer in quart jar in this order: flour mixture, chocolate chips, white sugar, oats, brown sugar and pecans. Seal and decorate jar as desired.

Attach this ingredients list and instructions to the jar:

Cowboy Cookies

1 jar Cowboy Cookies Mix
1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted
1 egg
1 tsp vanilla

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a medium bowl, mix together butter or margarine, egg and vanilla. Stir in the entire contents of the jar. You may need to use your hands to finish mixing. Shape into walnut sized balls. Place 2 inches apart on prepared cookie sheet. Bake for 10 – 13 minutes.

Gift Jar: Friendship Soup Mix

1/2 cup dry split peas
1/3 cup beef bouillon granules
1/4 cup pearl barley
1/2 cup dry lentils
1/4 cup dried minced onion
2 tsp. Italian seasoning
1/2 cup uncooked long grain rice
1/2 cup alphabet macaroni or other small macaroni

Place macaroni in a clear plastic bag, seal and set aside. Layer in pint jar all ingredients in the order listed. Seal and decorate jar as desired.

Attach this ingredients list and instructions to the jar:

Friendship Soup

1 Jar Friendship Soup Mix
1 lb ground beef
3 quarts water
28 oz can diced tomatoes, undrained
1 cup chopped vegetables such as celery, carrots or onions (optional)

Remove macaroni packet from top of jar and set aside. In a large saucepan or Dutch oven, brown beef and drain the fat. Add vegetables and water, tomatoes and soup mix; bring to a boil.

Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 45 minutes.

Add reserved macaroni; cover and simmer for 15 – 20 minutes or until macaroni, peas, lentils and barley are tender.

Cranberry-Raspberry Shorty Squares

1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries
1 cup fresh or frozen raspberries
1/2 cup brown sugar
2 strips lemon rind 1" wide
1 cup butter softened
1 cup sugar
2 egg yolks
2 cups flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1 pinch salt

-Line 8" square pan

-In sauce pan bring cranberries, raspberries, brown sugar, lemon rind and 2 T. water to boil. Reduce and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir often until very thick and spoon scraped across bottom of pan leaves strip that fills in slowly. Cool completely. Remove lemon strip.

-In large bowl, beat butter with sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg yolks 1 at a time until well combined.

-In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt. Stir into butter mixture.

Lightly press 1/2 into pan. Refrigerate pan and remaining dough 30 minutes. Spread cranberry mix.

-Crumble rest of dough on top.

-Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes.

-Sprinkle with icing sugar when done and cool.

News from Our House Churches and Other Ministries

Kids Space, Teen Space and '13 to 93'

by Elaine Adams

God likes kindness. At Kids Space we've shared Bible stories related to kindness. Stories such as the four friends who help their paralyzed friend see Jesus, the Good Samaritan, loving your enemies, and, in November, how David is kind to Mephibosheth are told to the children. When being kind becomes difficult, realizing David showed kindness for the sake of his friend Jonathan we too can find a reasonable motive. "Don't be afraid," David said to him, "for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan." Being kind for Jesus sake shows we love him. God's ultimate act of kindness was sending Jesus to us. Acts of kindness become more poignant during the celebration of Jesus' birth.

How about coming to the "Teen Space Chili Cook-Off"? If you missed the one in September '13, Teen Space invites you to the Second Annual Chili Cook-Off in Autumn '14. The Teens competed for the best chili and the guests voted on their favourite. Fessica Foucher, Katelynn Duits, and Dawn Caldwell won the "Golden Spoon Award" by cooking up a great chili. See recipe below.

Ray Vanderlaan provides the biblical inspiration for our '13 to 93' group. His videos take us to the places where Jesus walked, where the disciples brought the Word and where God freed his people. This autumn '13 to 93' is studying Faith Lesson Volume 8 – "God Heard Their Cry." The DVD case describes it like this: "In ancient times, nothing was bigger than Egypt. Powerful pharaohs, strong armies, and a multitude of gods. God's people were no match against the Egyptians. In this eighth volume of Faith Lessons, discover how God answers the cry of his persecuted people and proclaims himself LORD to them and their oppressors." Discussions are inevitably interesting because of reflections in regard to the historical aspect and personal stories are shared of how God hears our cries today.

Kids Space, Teen Space and '13 to 93' share The Word with the people in the Interlakes Community. God is good. He blesses us with facilities, finances, volunteers and listeners to His Word.



Slow Cooker Chicken and Sausage Chile

Submitted by Katelynn Duits, Fessica Foucher & Dawn Caldwell (and <allrecipes.com>)

Ingredients

3 (14.5 ounce) cans stewed tomatoes, chopped
¼ teaspoon hot sauce
2 beef bouillon cubes
1 tablespoon brown sugar
½ teaspoon chili powder
½ teaspoon paprika
¼ teaspoon dried oregano
¼ teaspoon garlic powder
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon olive oil
½ red onion, chopped
1 pound ground chicken
¾ pound bulk Italian sausage
2 (6 ounce) cans tomato paste
1 (15 ounce) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained

Directions

1. Combine the stewed tomatoes, hot sauce, bouillon cubes, brown sugar, chili powder, paprika, oregano, garlic powder, and cayenne pepper in a slow cooker; cook on High for 1 hour.
2. Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat; cook the red onion in the hot oil until tender. Stir in the ground chicken; cook and stir until completely browned. Transfer the mixture to the slow cooker and return the skillet to the heat. Fry the sausage in the reheated skillet until completely browned and crumbly; add to the slow cooker. Mix the tomato paste and kidney beans into the chili. Continue cooking on High another 2 hours. Switch the heat to Low and simmer 4 hours more.

Springhouse Macalister Church: by Reg Steward

Even as I write the name of our gathering I realize the changes that have occurred since last writing. The name really doesn't cut it for us anymore as our gathering has been blessed by the Lord to grow beyond those two distinct regions. In fact the majority of our people now come from Williams Lake! The growth in our lives and numbers has been wonderful and has caused some changes to be necessitated. When everyone is present we have between forty and fifty people attending for our Sunday gatherings. To facilitate this we had to seek the Lord and a space that worked for us to continue our family integrated style of meeting followed by the sharing of a meal and engaging the afternoon in either activity or discussion. The Lord provided an excellent and affordable meeting place. We now meet at the Youth For Christ building in Williams Lake. The converted house still reminds us of our great commitment to the home church model while providing large meeting room, kitchen and recreation facilities. As such we will need a new name to correctly reflect where we gather every Sunday at 10:30 am for service. We continue to import our messages, which allows us to receive great teaching each and every Lord's day. The worship continues to be led by the Steward boys accompanied by Mark Carter and any others who so chose. Thanks to Isaac for his leadership in this area. The new additions to our group have been a wonderful insurgence of great folks, many of whom were looking for a church home for some time and find the biblical model of home church and family integrated worship and growth together refreshing and exciting.

Please continue for us in prayer as we do for you.

Comfort: by Jody Malm

Lying here, watching the cool crisp air rise from my breath. I know it has been a chilly night (-10). Ken climbs out of bed and proceeds to tuck the sleeping bags in all around me. He chuckles, "don't move, I will build a fire" and then climbs out of the tent. With my toque on, the sleeping bag tightly wrapped around me, I drift back off to sleep. I hear the faint chopping of the wood, breaking of ice. Mm the coffee pot is filling and I know sometime soon it will be perking on the fire. I am completely safe and secure, wrapped in a blanket of love. I am taken care of. **What comfort!**

This is how I feel about House Church. From the moment I walk through the door, you are greeted

by smiles, a hug, a hello, how are you? I feel the fruit of the spirit, **love:** for my house church family, **peace:** a time to be quiet, **joy:** raising our voices in song, **kindness:** being pleasant, **faithfulness:** standing firm with each other, **goodness:** being true to one another, **gentleness:** touching and listening from the heart, **longsuffering:** never giving up and **self-control:** allowing God to enter our heart and be in control. All the while, we are safe. We are secure. We are taken care of. **What comfort!**

This is how I feel about God. From the moment we let God into our heart, we are greeted with open arms. Smiles, a hug, a hello, how are you? Most of all we are greeted with "I love you" and next "Unconditionally." Can you imagine? I can't, but I try! But I do know that, I am safe, secure and taken care of . . . in good times and rough, no matter what. **What comfort!**

And when I have moments of doubt, thank goodness there is Grace . . . God's Grace!

I do pray that someday all of us will feel Gods love. Sheridan Lake House Church is held on Wednesday nights at 7:00 pm, at the Bonter residence (7183 Hwy 24) or at the Malm residence (7140 Hwy 24). Everyone is welcome and the Coffee Pot is always on. Please come join us and feel comfortable!

A Note of Thanks: by Joelle Wyminga

I would like to thank you those of you who supported me financially during my summer out at Ness Lake Bible Camp. Your support was greatly appreciated.

This summer was by far one of the best summers I have had. I got to work with so many crazy and awesome people. I got to have a very different experience at Ness this summer. Part way into staff training I took the job of permanent wilderness LIT. It was definitely a challenge at some points, but it was totally worth it. Even though I was out in the bush all summer, and I didn't get to see much of main camp, I got to know so many amazing and inspiring people. While getting the opportunity to share God's love to so many kids, I also got to learn so much about him. I grew so much this summer in my faith, and love for God. Being out in the woods really help me to start to understand how amazing and creative our God is. I was able to see what He had created every day in a more relaxed environment.

Now, there were only nine staff members that I actually saw on a regular basis, and even though I thought that I would be sick of them at the end of the

summer, I became such good friends with my other wilder staff. We were each able to grow in our relationship with God together, and help each other through the tough times. I am so happy that I got to be a part of that tight staff, because I knew that I could go to them with anything.

I have only begun to explain how much this summer changed my life. But I could not have done it without God and your prayers for me. Once again, thank you so much for being a part of this amazing summer.

Reflections from Some of Our Elders

Knowing the Unknowable? by Bruce Wilcox
(Editor's Note: Many of you will remember that Bruce has been getting ready to serve among us full time as we prepare for the retirement of Dave and Linda Webber. Bruce and his wife Jackie have recently stepped into this new adventure and we have been blessed to have them.)

The Bible talks about the critical importance of essential and sound doctrine, and I'm sure we all agree with that. Many of us are aware that Biblical illiteracy is also definitely a concern these days. But is there something else . . . something beyond that nice tidy exegetical line that we feel comfortable with, and sure about in our interpretations and understanding of Scripture?

Paul prays that Christians would be able to "*know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.*" (Eph 3:19, NKJV). Now, is this a contradiction? An oxymoron? How can we "know" something which actually "passes knowledge"? Or know that which is beyond knowing?

It seems that Paul is saying (and praying) something to the effect that our relationship and our dealings with God must go beyond merely our intellectual and rational processing of Biblical doctrines about Him. It must go beyond trying to confine God into any nice tidy systematic theology. It involves a knowing of His love, and therefore a knowing of Him personally. That can only be produced in us and increased in us by the Holy Spirit because it's *His* love: "*the love of God (that) has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit*" (Rom. 5:5).

This is of course totally supernatural. And the very definition of eternal life itself that Jesus gave is that we "*know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent*" (John 17:3). But how we experience Him and know Him and His love is probably as different for each of us as is our own created uniqueness in the first place. So objective truths about God in His written Word were never

meant to be an end in themselves. They were intended to result in a personal knowing of Him, the "Living Word." That is actually subjective in the sense that we are all at different places on this journey. If a family hears exactly the same story together, even though they all experience the hearing of it accurately, the five year old, the teenager, and the parents in that family are going to understand and respond to it quite differently, yet still appropriately.

Eugene Petersen reminds us of something important that I for one have needed to hear. Petersen has a glittering academic resume and intellectual gifts, and should therefore know what he's talking about when he says that an academic "students-getting-ready-for-an-exam" approach to the Scriptures is a "poverty-stricken" approach. He warns that we are so easily tempted to "use" and "apply" Scripture (in sometimes manipulative ways), rather than just humbly coming before it in a listening/responding way, where we seek to just prayerfully submit to it. As Petersen aptly says in his book *Living the Message*, we need to "let the Word use us, rather than using the Word." In other words, to follow the same approach we want to have in our relationship with the "Living Word", Christ Himself.

But could it be that here in the West especially, our whole educational system has geared many to assume that the "academic" approach is all we really need - even with Scripture? Are we to be content with just an intellectual Christianity? Where we read the text only to analyze and extract information in order to "win" theological arguments, and end up with sometimes even more unnecessary divisions in the Body of Christ?

Isn't it interesting that in China in 1949 there were about one million Christians, and by about 1952 the communists had eliminated all foreign influence there? No missionaries, no seminaries, no Bible colleges, and not even many Bibles. Many Christians in the West were concerned, "What's going to happen to persecuted Christianity in China?" About forty or so years later China began opening up again, and the

world discovers there are now 80 to 100 million Christians there, and the fastest growing church in the world! Ironically, during the same period Christianity in the West has declined rapidly. Why? Perhaps because they came to “know” more of that which we all need more of; that which “passes knowledge.”

I just want to say in closing how blessed we have been in experiencing the love and fellowship of Christ in so many ways through getting to know more of our family in Christ better in all the southern house churches during Dave’s absence. We have seen your love and care for one another, and others in the reaching out and inviting neighbours and people around your respective areas in His love. We sometimes see new folks as a result. What a blessing to worship the Lord with you all. And thank you for your really encouraging love, prayers and support for Jackie and me! Bunches of blessings to all.

Worship as a Way of Life: by Ginny Alexander

King David, and all Israel, brought the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom back to the City of David and set it up in the tent of meeting. Next, he appointed Levites and priests to minister there regularly, by presenting burnt offerings to the Lord on the altar of burnt offering, morning and evening, in accordance with everything written in the Law of the Lord. To help everyone to worship God, David wrote psalms of thanks to the Lord:

*Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon His name;
make known His acts among the people;
declare His glory among the nations.
(I Chronicles 16:8, 24)*

*Sing to the Lord a new song;
proclaim his salvation day after day;
meditate upon all His wondrous works.
(Psalm 96:1,2, 145:5)*

*Glory in His holy name;
let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.
Look to the Lord and his strength;
seek his face always.
Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles and the judgments of his mouth.
(I Chron. 16:10-12)*

*Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength,
for great is the Lord and most worthy of praise.
(Psalm 96:7, 4)*

*Bring an offering and come before him;
worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.
(I Chron. 16:29)*

*Give thanks to the Lord for he is good;
his love endures forever.
(I Chron. 16:34)*

*Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.
(I Chron. 16:36)*

The Israelites had a host of reasons to be thankful to God, as do we. They were to intertwine acts of worship into their everyday lives, into everything they did. Let us strive to weave acts of worship into the fabric of our everyday lives, or as the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

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. We really appreciate all of your encouraging notes and letters that you send to us.

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

Once again 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 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.