

NORTHERN LIGHT

The Official Newsletter of The Cariboo Presbyterian Church

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

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Editor: Linda Webber Winter Edition 2009 (Including the Annual Report for 2008)

A Report from the Mission Team

1. From David and Linda Webber (For house churches in the south and central portion of the Cariboo-Chilcotin)

Last night I found myself at Mcleese Lake. It must have been Tuesday. We sang for an hour accompanied by an energetic worship band made up of extremely talented teens and one old dog (me). We studied the Scriptures for an hour, sharing some in depth exegesis and a diversity of hermeneutical insights. We prayed for half an hour and had fellowship around coffee, tea and dessert for another hour. Sometime around 10:00 PM about forty of us, from newborns to eighty somethings, lined up to leave the house. Linda and I drove home arriving at Lac La Hache about midnight, just as Stuart McLean was signing off the Vinyl Café on CBC Radio.

That pretty much sums up how Linda and I spend our lives as missionaries. The only thing that changes is the location, the day and the size of the group. Sunday morning it is William's Lake with up to twenty folks, Sunday night it's Watch Lake with about seven or eight, Monday night it's Canim Lake with six or seven, Tuesday night I just told you about, Wednesday night it's Sheridan Lake with about fourteen, Thursday it's 103 with about five. And oh yes, there is another Sunday group meeting at Springhouse and MacAllister with about fifteen. Oh, and I forgot the Kid's Space at Bridge Lake with about twenty on every second Friday and the Galilean's Coffee House at Lac La Hache the second Friday of each month with upwards to fifty. The numbers are completely insignificant as far as we are concerned but it seems to be what everyone else likes to hear, so there you are. What is important, what is crucial, is that in all of these rural places the Church of Jesus Christ is being fostered (and that's mission) and as a result Christ is being made incarnate through the lives and witness of His disciples (and that's ministry ... and don't confuse the two).

I just received an email from one of our elders as I was typing this. Bruce Wilcox ministers regularly at a senior's residences in 100Mile House, doing regular worship services as well as all of the ministry that shakes out from that. He just emailed to ask for prayer for the family of one of the care workers who committed suicide yesterday. Bruce is ministering to the family as I type this. I share this just to say that lest you think that all of the ministry that we do happens at the hands of the ordained missionaries in this mission, you have completely misunderstood us. The bulk of it happens at the hands of the people, the laos, whom we are so fortunate to share this incredible regional rural congregation with.

2. From Charles McNeil (For the Lac La Hache Community Church)

When 2008 started I was working more or less half-time each at Thompson Rivers University and the Cariboo Presbyterian House Church Mission. Although I continued to enjoy teaching and found great challenge and fulfillment in it I had a sense that my teaching at Thompson Rivers University was coming to a close.

The combination of teaching university and doing mission work in the church continued until the winter semester ended at the end of April. A prayerful process had begun sometime in late January, which saw God move me from that arrangement to full-time ministry. The move to full-time ministry was confirmed by the session, congregation, presbytery, and was communicated to Canada Ministries.

The summer saw the usual routine of my working partners and I covering some of Dave Webber's house churches as well as our own responsibilities. I can hardly talk of my work because it is God working through me and our elders, together in mission and ministry. The summer truly blessed me because I saw a range of people come along side to see that the work was done. I

designed some Sunday school curriculum for the Williams Lake House church's children and the saints within that house church provided a wonderfully fulfilling summer Sunday school experience for their children. As well, Tyler Durand looked after the music ministry for the Sheridan Lake house church. Tyler's leadership and participation in the weekly worship blessed me as I worked alongside the saints of Sheridan Lake.

While I live and work out of Lac La Hache, as well as lead worship here, the focus continues to be spread along the Highway 97 axis covering 100 Mile House, Lac La Hache, and Williams Lake. The elders (Bruce Wilcox, Ginny Alexander, and Gordon Kellett) and I complement each other's work. The worshipping experiences of Lac La Hache, Carefree Manor, and the Mill Site Chapel service call on us to cover the bases and see that the various venues all receive the sort of leadership and attention they deserve.

Much of my time is concentrated in teaching and instructing through Bible study and short courses for elders and others. I also continue to provide pastoral care and attention to people who want nothing to do with church. Two comments illustrate something of the contradiction and need. The first came from someone who said, "I'm not religious, but you're our pastor." The second comes from someone else in crisis. "I've never asked for help from a minister before. But I need your help now." Being as Christ to a range of people is a calling, a challenge, and a privilege that touches the heart of their need and something of the gospel.

One very important thing I learned or relearned this year was to respond to whatever was asked of me and no more and no less. There was another pressing pastoral need and the person asked if I listened to peoples' troubles? I responded that I did so we set a time to get together. I listened and responded as was fitting. The appointment ended and I assumed that there would be need for follow-up. And so I gave the person my telephone numbers and took theirs. I haven't heard from them again. However, in prayer and reflection God has revealed that I did what was required. I listened and that is all that was needed. Connect need with response and leave the rest to God and the person or people involved. A simple lesson but a challenging one for a would-be Mr. Fix-it.

In conclusion I am thankful to God for both employment and vocation. Lac La Hache is in the middle of one of the most beautiful areas in the country. And yet there are challenges to/for mission and ministry. Lac La Hache is the middle of somewhere. Somewhere that needs the gospel but runs from it. Somewhere that is broken and relishes the brokenness. Somewhere that cries out and then runs for the hills. Please keep us in prayer as we continue to be faithful, obedient, and present – as Christ to part of the south Cariboo.

3. From John Wyminga and Shannon Bell-Wyminga (For Nazko and Area Dakelh Outreach)

"When [Jesus] saw the crowds he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'" (Matt. 9:36-37)

It is with this amazing love of Jesus that we seek to reach out to the rural and remote people of the Cariboo region of British Columbia. We seek to remain faithful labourers in that harvest field. In the northern part of our region these efforts continue to take on a distinctively First Nations flavour. Our house church fellowships in Nazko (*Ndazkoh*) and Quesnel as well as our satellite ministry in Kluskus (*Lhoosk'uz*) continued faithfully through 2008. Another nearby house church in the non-native ranching community of Punchaw continued to meet regularly for worship, fellowship and teaching.

In addition to our regular worship gatherings we also enjoyed several special events through 2008, which we trust displayed Christ's amazing love for us and all the people of this region. A consultation gathering in January with others in First Nations ministry helped Shannon and I share the struggles of this work with those who truly understand. In May Shannon and Dave Webber, of our southern ministry, co-led a special weekend for several teenaged girls to experience the love of Christ through worship, fellowship, teaching and just plain fun. In June First Nations recording artist and preacher Cheryl Bear and her family joined us for Aboriginal Day celebrations in Quesnel and helped

display the love of Christ for First Nations people through the means of their culture. In July a Korean Love Corps team returned once again and reached out in love and blessing to the whole community of Nazko. And in December the demonstrations of love culminated in the special Christmas luncheon for the elders of Nazko and the distribution of Christmas gifts for the children.

Of course there are continuing struggles in our region. The downturn in the economy, the continuing struggle of cattle ranchers to make ends meet and the ongoing crisis of addiction, poverty and despair among many First Nations people are only a few. The devastating suicide of a thirty-four year old man in Kluskus in November was a most tragic example. These struggles only show how harassed and helpless we can be and how much we continue to need the overwhelming compassion and love of Jesus.

We deeply appreciate your prayers and support for those of us who labour for Christ in this harvest field. Blessings in Christ.

A Report from the Elders

BY Penny McIntosh, Clerk of Session

The year was a busy and eventful year. I report only on some of the highlights. The Session met 4 times in 2008. Work on setting up the Endowment Fund continues; a committee has been formed. Charles McNeil and Shannon Bell-Wyminga attended the General Assembly and did deputations in Ontario in the spring of 2008. David and Linda Webber received an invitation to speak to the Synod of New Zealand and various churches in New Zealand. They are to go in June 2009. The Session gave their approval. We wish them a wonderful trip. One member transferred to the Cariboo Presbyterian Church. We are now receiving a grant from the Life & Mission Agency-Native Ministry covering Jon Wyminga and Shannon Bell-Wyminga's stipend. Instruction for young communicants was held in Prince George, done by our missionaries Dave and Shannon. It was very well received. David and Shannon are arranging an appropriate/convenient time for baptisms and affirmation of baptism in 2009.

There has been discussion about a Healing Centre to be developed in Nazko. At this time there has been no decision made. Please see the item "A Place to Heal and Grow" towards the end of this report for more information.

The Lac La Hache Community Church

BY Charles McNeil

A View from the Windy Hill

I was reflecting upon the life and work of the little church on the windy hill in Lac La Hache. It is still there and so are the folk who worship and serve out of it. The building is a reminder to all who travel on Timothy Lake Road that there is a place of worship and resourcing within Lac La Hache. The red and white church can be seen from Highway 97 as a reminder that there is a higher way, which calls for challenge, commitment, and obedience.

As importantly there are faces of people who give voice and personality to that little church on the windy hill. I cannot really say what specifically the saints within Lac La Hache are doing. The left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing. Some of the folk are dealing with stressful and chronic realities which afflict their families, friends, and neighbours. They are applying gospel imperatives to the hurt and hurting situations. They look to the worship, fellowship, and two Bible study groups for a sense of reinforcement of the truth of scripture and a sense that God continues to work sometimes despite us but often through us.

There are those who take the gospel and put it to work through being incredibly good and giving neighbours. These folk go out of their way and apply the gospel in practical situations and to practical needs and realities. There's no big deal made of such ministry but the affect is nevertheless felt and the gospel is preached through kindness, generosity, and sharing.

Then there are those who shoulder the cross and drink the bitter cup of the stuff of life that simply isn't fair. There is very little said, and there are no complaints. It could be pressing health concerns. It could be life's baggage that others have heaped upon them. It could be simply and

profoundly seeking to keep body and soul together. Whatever the specifics the folk have taken up their cross and followed Jesus, and sought the strength from Jesus to continue on in significant and faithful ways. They witness by what they do and the crosses they carry.

Mostly the saints of the environs of Lac La Hache continue to seek to make sense out of life and to witness to the goodness and grace of God in Jesus Christ. We go out and disperse after having met in groups of 2's, 3's, 4's, and sometimes 8's and 10's. The gospel is preached. The sacraments are shared. And life goes on. Such is a slice of the life and work of the Lac La Hachians.

A Report on the Pressy Lake House Church

By Ginny Alexander

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. . . do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry (2Tim4.2,5b).

In response to a request from John and Trudy at Pressy Lake, about 70 km southeast of 100 Mile House, we began holding services at their house in September 2007. Almost to a year, things changed. Some of their family moved into the area, and they decided to travel to the Clinton area with their family, most notably their grandchildren, to participate in church with a Sunday school. And so the Pressy Lake house church comes to an end, which means that the season of ministry has changed. And so we look forward to what Christ has for us in the next season of ministry. We continue to cast our lines and watch for where the fields are ripe unto harvest ... for the harvest season ... in other words to evangelize and to fulfill our ministry.

The Carefree Manor Church

By Bruce Wilcox

We have continued to be blessed through the ministry at Carefree Manor through 2008, with the Lord also steadily bringing new faces and family members to hear the Gospel of Grace. This spring marks the fifth year of weekly services for the Manor Church. Hard to believe it's been that long already! We are so encouraged and inspired by the work of the Lord here, and the strength and wonderful spirit of these brethren, many of whom are struggling with a variety of very difficult circumstances. Yet God uses their faith, hope and love to continually in turn minister to us who minister to them, and to bless the building of our lives into one another. The law of Christ is fulfilled in many profound ways through the bearing of one another's burdens. It has also been a hard and sad year with the deaths of some, who are sadly missed and will always be remembered, but who are now in the presence of their Good Shepherd forever, praise God!

Many thanks to Rev. Charles McNeil for his wonderful ministry to us all, filling in when I am not there as well as providing regular communion services. Also thanks to Maggie Wiens for her blessed musical ministry, fellow elders Ginny Alexander and Gordon Kellett for helping to fill in here and to Activities Manager, Barb Wilson for all she does. And of course my dear wife Jackie for her invaluable support and ministry here. And many thanks to everyone else in the Cariboo Presbyterian Church and everywhere for your indispensable prayers!

The Red Willow Ranch House Church (Watch Lake)

By Elke Hirsch

The year 2008 at Red Willow Ranch was a year of last farewell, sadness and tears; but carried through grace by faith. We had to say good-bye to Christian, my beloved husband, our father, grandfather, father-in-law and brother in Christ. Thanks to our pastors, Charles and David as well as members of the house churches, we had great support and help.

The year had started with a wonderful farewell journey through Europe for Christian and I. We saw nearly all of our friends and family. We had wonderful drives through the country. Meanwhile back at the ranch the house church prayed for the cow stuck in the attic of the barn had moral and

helpful support from Linda and David until they found a solution to get the cow down. Eventually she even had a healthy calf in the spring.

Then came the time of searching for an answer for Christian's problems. Eventually we did get the devastating diagnosis of ALS, three letters which changed our life forever. Prayers and talks and visits from Charles and David helped us through the time. In May we were able to celebrate my 60th birthday, forty years of marriage and ten years on the Red Willow Ranch. Christian gave a speech, carried by his faith, and in his last discussion he said, he was curious as to what it will be like "up there." I am sure he knows now. On June 29th Christian passed away --our church wedding anniversary--- a grace for him that he did not suffer too long. He was carried by his faith. It was Sunday and thankfully Charles had come earlier that day to pray with us, the only time when Christian was awake all that day. For me the time stood still, but the house church went on, a memorial service was held and family and friends came, Charles led the service and David came from his vacation to give the sermon ... a big thank you again.

Throughout the year many guests and helpers attended the house church services at the ranch and I am sure they will take some messages home. Thank God for the house church and all the members.

The Sheridan Lake House Church

By Pete Bonter

As I sit down to pen something for this report, my mind goes back over some of the sessions and scriptures we've walked through in the past year at Sheridan Lake House Church. There are many that stand out, but the most poignant are the studies of the Seven Churches that we've just completed. We need to realize that what was written for one church was written for all and not just for their place and age but for this place and age as well. Beyond that, what has been said to the seven churches by way of admonishments, warnings and promises can also be brought down through the ages to our very doorsteps where it can be applied to our walk with Jesus and how we're dealing with issues **today!**

There is one word that drums out to me and it was used to present the promise held out to all seven churches. The word is "overcometh" (KJV). Now if I were to pause and begin to think of the things in today's world that need to be overcome whether they be spiritual, broken relationships, financial or just plain old uncertainty ... it would take but one nano second to come up with a list that would be longer than my horses tail even in fine print.

On the other hand, if I go to my chain reference and look up some of the rewards bestowed on an "overcomer", I find myself at places like 1Jn.4 or Jn.16:33 or many more where He tells me that in Him, I can have peace and confidence and calmness because He's already done the work! I find myself back on the doorstep of all seven churches asking myself, "Do I still have my first love?" Asking myself as my Grandmother would: "How's it with your soul?" with her unwavering look that seemed to burrow to the very depths of my being and from which there was no escape even if I didn't choose to answer because I already knew. How's it with yours? The trouble with the churches in Revelation is that somehow they had let the cross slip behind them as we're all prone to do. The remedy is found within the words of a song that is sung within all our house churches, which is entitled The River (written by Brian Doerksen, Michael Hansen & Brian Thiessen, Integrity music):

*To the river I am going bringing sins I cannot bear
Come and cleanse me, come forgive me Lord I need to meet you there*

*In these waters, healing mercy flows with freedom from despair
I am going, to that river Lord I need to meet you there*

*Come and join us, in the river Come find life beyond compare
He is calling, He is waiting Jesus longs to meet you there*

He is calling, He is waiting Jesus longs to meet you there

Chorus:

Precious Jesus, I am ready to surrender every care

Take my hand now, lead me closer Lord I need to meet you there

Take my hand now, lead me closer Lord I need to meet you there

The Sheridan Lake house church continues to be a small tight knit group that keeps Christ at the centre of their worship circle. We praise God for small growths and for His Word that goes out from here, but most of all for His goodness to us in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. God bless you all!

Inter-lakes Community Kids Space

By Elaine Adams

Thank you for giving Inter-lakes Kids Space your prayers and financial support.

How did Kids Space come into existence? There was no program in the Bridge Lake/Interlakes Community providing children with an opportunity to hear the Message. Some thought an outreach specifically designed for children was a good idea but no one was willing to take on the task of providing leadership. Being a retired teacher and always enjoying my grandchildren when they come to visit, there was encouragement from the parents for me to facilitate such an outreach.

What is the evidence of God working through Kids Space? One of the girls in Kids Space came to her mother one morning saying the night before she accepted Jesus as her Saviour. Her seed faith was sprouting. Another little girl, after one particular lesson, talked continuously for a morning with her mother about Jesus and his ability to help her cope with fear. A first time visitor was excited to come because she liked the thought of going to a party. She was excited to be visiting a boy at his home. Children are attracted to Kids Space because it's a social event too. God uses all kinds of settings to bring children to him. A father began reading the Bible with his daughter, something he neglected for many years. (All children who attend Kids Space receive a Message Bible as a gift.)

Kids Space is an acronym for:

Kids S = Singing
P = Praying
A = Adoring
C = Christ
E = Enthusiastically

Who are the leaders in Kids Space? Sibylle Vogel is mother to two boys who plays the piano and leads the music program. Jacquie Nettleton is a willing worker providing the meals and organizing the crafts. Kathy Cant is a mother to two girls who prays for Kids Space and encourages the others. My name is Elaine Adams. I accepted Jesus as Saviour as a child and was baptized as a young adult. To summarize a life time of walking with Jesus is difficult so I just want to say he is my love and true companion. He led me into facilitating Kids Space. Kids Space is all about Jesus sharing His love for the children.

What is the significance of Cariboo Presbyterian Church supporting Kids Space? Because of the willingness to provide ongoing prayers Kids Space continues to hold meetings about twice a month. Because of the financial support the stress of organizing is relieved. Thank you so much for being part of this ministry.

The Canim Lake House Church

By Gordon Kellett

Another year gone and I don't know where the time went. We continue to meet at Marion Kelletts' home each Monday evening. We haven't grown in numbers, but we remain a lively bunch. Currently, our group consists of Tim Beaudoin from the north side of the lake, Marion Kellett (Mom), Dennis and Marilyn Simonton from Lac La Hache, and myself. Our Pastor, Dave Webber, and his wife Linda lead the worship services and singing. When Dave is away, Charles McNeil leads the service, often with the musical accompaniment of Ginny Alexander on her keyboard.

It has been an eventful, but quiet year. In July, I officiated at an informal Memorial Service for the late Olga Pugsley of Canim Lake, who died from a stroke earlier in the year. After eighteen months of living with Mom following my surgery I moved in to my own home on September the 1st, with the help of several members of the Canim Lake Volunteer Fire Department.

As Legion Padre I again led the Remembrance Day Services at Forest Legion and it seemed the attendance has grown as we continue to lose soldiers in Afghanistan and elsewhere. I also took the Thanksgiving Service at Carefree Manor in 100 Mile House filling in for Bruce and Jackie Wilcox. In Dec., the church group and the Canim Lake Community Club honored my Mom by hosting a couple of surprise parties to mark her 90th birthday. God Bless!

The 103Mile House Church

By Arlene Martin

Hello from the 103Mile House Church. We got off to a slow start this season due to surgeries and recovery. Our studies have been exciting though. We have had several weeks where we could not meet due to appointments and such but we are looking forward to this next half of the year. We have all enjoyed the Galilean's Coffeehouse and listening to all the wonderful talent in our town and surrounding area. The music, poems, laughter and clapping is just a great time.

The Williams Lake House Church

By Heleen Scrooby

The year 2008 has seen been a good one for the Williams Lake House Church. We continue to meet each Sunday at 10 AM and rotating between four host homes in William's Lake. Peter and Elizabeth James joined us early in the year and that was great. Then in the Fall Chelsea Webber's fiancée, Michael Van Kuipers began to regularly attend. We have Worship led by Dave and Chelsea, Scripture proclamation and sharing which is followed by prayer. While adults study the Scriptures our four children have Sunday school with Chelsea.

It is not always easy to deal with one's problems. And if you have to do it with no family around you and in a different language as we do, it even makes things worse. To share one's feelings with your fellow Christians helps, especially in the grieving process and dealing with the kids losing a neighbor-grandpa, as we had to do this year. Thanks to the Williams Lake house church supporting us in this time and throughout the last seven years.

The McLeese Lake House Churches

By Cynthia Noble

Greetings from McLeese Lake! Our house church continues to grow here in McLeese Lake. We have around forty people most nights – a real house full! We meet mostly at our home because it has the largest living room. New families that have joined us in 2008 are: Jerry and Beulah Munson and their children April, Amanda, and Anthony; Clarence and Suzanne Culp and their son Samuel; Paul and Charlene Geerds and their son Arne (and a new one due in March); Lisa Johnson and her daughter Jessica; Tina Dickson; Barb Smith; and the newest Morgan family addition, Anastasia Valerie Morgan. It is an encouraging time for us all as we study God's Word and discuss how it is relevant in our lives each day. And of course there is always lots of fellowship and food too.

A number of exciting ministries happened in 2008 from the Mcleese Lake house church. Most notable was a very successful VBS program in July where two children accepted Jesus as their Lord

and Savior. Music continues to be a center point for us, with special musical offerings often being featured at our worship times. In addition, many of our young people carry their music ministry out to several cowboy-church services at local rodeos. Christmas celebration was done at the Mcleese Lake community dinner. And most recently, many of our folk have been doing music ministry monthly at the Galilean's Coffeehouse outreach in Lac La Hache.

The Macalister/Springhouse House Church

By Reg Steward

This group continues to meet every Sunday morning alternating at the Carter home in Macalister and the Steward home in Springhouse. Glen Morgan and his family make the trek from their home east of McLeese Lake and these families are then joined as able by various others. We have worked through the scripture this past year with a dedicated view toward a greater understanding of our roles in community as family and within the family a better understanding of Gods' design for marriage, children and the responsible roles that He has laid out for us. We have been greatly blessed by teaching materials from Vision Forum, John MacArthur and our own "Berean" undertakings.

Our efforts have also been directed to gain greater understanding of the community of believers as known by the early church of the New Testament and we seek to model that. As such our Sundays begin at 10:30-11:30 (running on Cariboo time) with a time of singing and sharing. We are blessed with many capable and keen musicians. Each one is invited and challenged to come able to share that which the Lord has taught them or the varied "tossings" of life which they have encountered during the week. We then have a family integrated time of teaching & prayer followed by a shared lunch. The afternoon often unfolds with the men and women undertaking specific directed studies led by any one of the group. There is often time for weather permitted activities; a walk about the respective ranches, volleyball, hockey, horseshoes, crafts, quilting, scrapbooking, teaching videos or an entertaining family movie. Supper follows and then there can be games, visiting, or singing. There is always lots of coffee, goodies and a true day of rest. This is a day honestly anticipated throughout the rest of the week as we look forward to what God would have for us as we gather.

The Quesnel Fellowship

BY Shannon Bell Wyminga

The Quesnel Native Fellowship (we need to find a better name one day!) has been meeting over the year fairly regularly. I meet on Sunday afternoons with Violet Boyd and Doreen Patrick for worship and study. At times we are joined by an assortment of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. This summer Jyung Kyoo and Sung Sub Han from Vancouver Korean Presbyterian Church bought a motel in Quesnel and have been living between the two cities. They joined us for worship once and we hope that in 2009 they will become a more regular part of our fellowship. It is great that we can further our ties on another level with the church in Vancouver who supports us so faithfully.

In Quesnel we are also enjoying a shared feast on the last Sunday of the month and we join together for lunch before having our time of worship together. We trust that as the Creator grows our faith, we will also share that with others who will grow our fellowship.

Lhoosk'uz (Kluskus –for the untrained tongue)

BY Jon Wyminga

We began serving Christ in Lhoosk'us (Kluskus) several years ago when the village was still only accessible by an old wagon trail that took hours to travel. With the help of John Noble from McLeese Lake we were able to fly in every month in his floatplane. With the construction of a new logging road two years ago, a road journey that was once four hours long has been reduce to one and a half hours. In other words, it's a lot easier to get there now. I continue to drive there every two weeks or so to be a part of what our Creator is doing among the people.

We would certainly welcome your prayers for Lhoosk'us, its people, its chief and council and for us as we seek to sensitively and effectively serve there. We have seen signs of interest and new birth in Christ but we have also seen constant transition and even great tragedy and need. I continue to drop in and visit with people and have had some wonderful conversations about the Creator's love in Jesus Christ. The village has seen frequent changes to its teachers, each of whom faces huge challenges to teach everything from kindergarten to grade ten in a very isolated setting with limited resources. And while some residents experienced the heart wrenching loss of an adult son and his four friends in a tragic car accident in 2007 the whole community was sent reeling as the result of another tragic loss of one of its residents through suicide in 2008. Traditional healing ceremonies and other initiatives have taken place to help heal the pain but there is still much more recovery to be done. May the one who is so familiar with suffering and tragedy in Christ bring healing and wholeness to Lhoosk'us and its people.

The Parson Meadows House Church

By Jon Wyminga

One of the earliest house churches that Dave and Linda established back in our early days continues to meet but has been facing some significant transitions more recently. Bill Ripley, one of our hosts, passed away a year and a half ago and Lou, his widow, continues to live on the remote old homestead. Isolated from hydro and telephone service and without a driver's license or reliable transportation this makes for quite a challenge for Lou, especially while she is still tending a small herd of cows. Since Bill's passing we have been joined in worship by Norm and Lona Saunders who moved to Nazko from Williams Lake a few years ago. Their addition has been a great blessing to us and they have even begun hosting us in our times of worship and Bible study. Thank you Norm and Lona! We would appreciate your prayers as we meet and seek the Lord together. And please remember to pray for Lou, who continues to adjust to life without Bill and faces many challenges and decisions about her future.

The Punchaw House Church

By Lynn Poole

Greetings to everyone from all of us in the Punchaw House Church. Another busy year has come and gone in our lives, on our ranches and in the house church. Jon continues to meet with us every two weeks for worship and study. Our group has gone through some changes this year with Dad being moved into town to the extended care facility. It is a blessing Jon goes out of his way to visit with Dad in Prince George most weeks that he meets with us out here at Punchaw. Mom is still on the farm and is able to visit Dad once a week if the roads aren't nasty. It has been a blessing to her that George Wheat has been able to rent the near by farm so he is nearer to help her. Sarah-lyn Poole was greatly blessed by the Mediterranean Cruise, discipleship weekend that Dave Webber and Shannon Bell-Wyminga put on for the girls of the house churches, in Prince George last May. God is a continual blessing and comfort to us all as we continue on this journey. God has blessed us greatly with each member of our house churches.

The Nazko Valley House Church

BY Shannon Bell-Wyminga

Through 2008, the Nazko Valley Church has sought to pray for our community, grow together in Christ, and be a witness to those around us. We have met faithfully on Sunday evenings, with a break in the summer during the pastor's vacation time. Our members have faced struggles together while enjoying a sense of family where we are there for one another. We have been using our 'big drum' off and on during worship and have studied a variety of passages in the Bible over the year. Some members have been following daily Bible reading programmes as well.

We have welcomed a new family in Nazko who have joined us in worship: Denis and Roxanne Gordon who are living at the Blackwater Ranch. We have extended our fellowship as well by having a

shared feast on the last Sunday of each month before the service. Like most people, we enjoy eating together!

Jon and I have been away a great deal in the past year, but almost always, worship continued with the person who was still at home. In January 2008 we enjoyed organizing a gathering for people in Native ministry in more Northern or remote communities. It was an engaging and informative time of sharing for four days in Chase. Jon also attended the National Native Ministries Committee meeting in Edmonton in May followed by Shannon's trip at the end of May and into June for nearly three weeks to attend General Assembly in Ottawa and then speak in several churches in Southern Ontario. Shannon and Ginny Alexander also represented the Cariboo at a conference in Ontario in early December for 'Specialized Ministries' within the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

July brought us our youth friends from Vancouver Korean Presbyterian Church again. We had a great time with Vacation Bible School and making connections at Billy Barker Days.

We trust that as we begin 2009, that God will have new growth for each of us ahead as we seek together to walk the Jesus path.

Nazko Teen Girls' Talking Circle

BY Shannon Bell-Wyominga

For most of 2008 the Girls' Circle was not meeting regularly. There was a lack of commitment and interest on the part of the girls at the time and I decided to give the programme a break and just do occasional special events. Most of the special events were well attended. We had a spa day in the spring after the Cariboo Teen Girl's Discipleship Weekend. My daughter Shelby and another girl from Nazko attended that weekend. For the weekend we had a paraffin hand bath for hand treatments and did the same for the Girls' Circle in June. After my trip to Thailand in August, I did a Thai night for the girls, showing a slide show of Thailand and showing them various items of clothing and Thai handiwork I had brought back. I cooked Thai fried rice, fresh spring rolls and fried bananas. It was the first time the girls were so enthusiastic and asked if we could start having Girls' Circle regularly again.

As we begin 2009 the plan is to begin to meet biweekly again. In the past the girls have given leadership to the group and have chosen a topic for discussion that they led themselves. With the change in the girls who are coming, at this point I will prepare a programme for each meeting and see how that goes. The group has a wide age spread with two girls who are 18-21, two who are in grade 7 and just started coming and two to three others in between. I look forward to seeing what the year holds. All of the girls who started with me when this programme began graduated in June. I keep in touch with all of them on Facebook, which has become an invaluable tool for connecting with teens. So we use whatever works!!

Ndazkoh Kid's Bible Classes

BY Shannon Bell-Wyominga

Bible Class has been so much fun this past year. We have two great groups of kids who meet on alternating Tuesdays. Our little school has shrunk in size, but grown in the quality in terms of our time with the kids. By December our school enrolment was down to around twenty kids, but all but two of those attend Bible Class regularly. The smaller numbers and the great behaviour of these groups mean that we can communicate the gospel more easily and clearly. For 2008 we learned about the miracle stories of Jesus including the feeding of the 5000 when we shared bannock and goldfish crackers for snack; the stilling of the storm; the healing of the ten blind beggars; the raising of Lazarus; the healing of the woman with an issue of blood and of Jairus' daughter and many others. Each week the kids would clamour to volunteer to act out each story. Months later they remembered the stories and remembered what part they had played. It became an easy and active way to share the stories. We did a lot of fun crafts and served healthy snacks. At least once with each group we got out skating on the rink that Jon creates and keeps at the school.

Each week we also assign a Bible memory verse. The older group (grades four-seven) especially do well with this. The kids earn stickers for good behaviour, helpfulness and memory verses. The stickers are then traded in occasionally for prizes.

We trust that we are planting seeds in young hearts that will help carry them through the challenges of life and encourage them to turn to the Creator for all their needs and to know Creator's son Jesus.

The Galilean's Coffeehouse

By Isaac Steward

On the 15th of November 2008, the first Galilean's Coffeehouse was well attended. Musicians from 100Mile House, all the way to McLeese Lake had come to play and listen. Dave Webber had foreseen this as an excellent outreach as well as fellowship for Christian artists and it turned out to be just that. I had the privilege of playing with my family at the first coffeehouse and have been back to play once again. It has been a great way to use some of our God given gifts and talents to bless others. These evenings have continued since the first one in November and occur on the second Friday of every month. Through the encouragement of others who attend and play at this event, I have been challenged to continue to focus on God-honoring song writing and to share with others my experiences through music. My hope is that it will continue to grow and that we will have more and more participants. We currently gather at the Community Church in Lac La Hache and have been consistently filling the seating. If you haven't spent an evening at the Galilean's Coffeehouse, I would strongly suggest making your way down there for an evening of live music and coffee. Along with the music, we have had poetry also, which was well received. Some of the artists you may hear at the Galilean's Coffeehouse are, Bruce Wilcox, Maggie Wiens Mark Carter and family, Mary Noble and family, Jessie Chapin, Dave and Chelsea Webber, Harold Marshall, Jon Wyminga and family, Four Strand Cord (the Steward brothers) and the Steward family. It is really neat to see families coming and playing together. Hopefully the next time you read about the Galilean's Coffeehouse it will have been moved to a bigger location, and there will be names of artists who were not named in this article, because that would mean God is growing it both in attendance, and performance.

Ministry with the BC Cattlemen's Association AGM

By Dave Webber

The BC Cattlemen's Association held its Annual General meeting in 100Mile House, BC on June 12-14. Pete Bonter, one of our ranchers, who was also the chairperson for the local organizational committee, said one night at the Sheridan Lake house church, "You know, as far as I can remember the BC Cattlemen's Association has never had any direct involvement from the church at its AGM. I think we should get involved, especially given the problems that are brewing in the industry right now and the dreadful effect they are having on ranch families."

And so, thanks to Pete and Nikki, a booth was rented in the trade fair portion of the event, a rotation of house church members organized to tend it and materials collected from a variety of sources to be given away at the booth. The theme of the booth was simply stated by the large sign plastered across its backdrop: "Crises? Consider Christ and His Church in your Community for Compassion, Counsel, Comfort, and Care." The idea was to be present on behalf of Christ for ranch families attending the meeting, to be an ear if people needed to talk and to provide resources for people who were searching. Resources that were given away included everything from Cowboy Bibles through to books from several appropriate authors, (including three of my own), copies of a variety of papers written by Dr. Cam Harder and copies of the Canadian Rural Church Network newsletter.

At the close of the BCCA AGM, three things stood out for me. One was the very positive reception we received from the BC Cattlemen's Association and the people who organized the event. This very pleasantly surprised me as one never knows how one will be received as Christ's representative in a secular event such as this. Fear of rejection often prevents any involvement. Second, was the heartfelt interest from people, mostly ranch folk, who visited our booth. Several

significant connections were made with people and the volume of materials that were given away and enthusiastically received was amazing. Third, was the disconnect between what was going on in the Cattlemen's meeting and what was represented at the trade fair. The meeting was full of ranch folk facing huge problems head on; everything including severe marketing fallout from BSE, the effects of new government regulations on small abattoirs, feed shortages and land use conflicts. The meeting was reported to me as the most tense and honest meeting, perhaps in the history of the BCCA. People were talking "straight from the shoulder" about crisis situations. This just reflects the huge burden ranch families have to carry just now. Next door in the trade fair, except for our booth, you would never have known a ranch crisis existed in the province. Booths representing several branches of government, numerous artisan's, equipment dealers, folks flogging the newest drug programs and irrigation equipment were every where and carrying on as though what was going on at the meeting next door didn't exist. I am not sure what to make of this, even after almost 10 months of reflecting upon it, except to say denial is a wonderful thing if you are not the one being hammered by reality.

A Place to Heal and Grow

By Shannon Bell-Wyminga

After more than 14 years of involvement in what has become the *Nazko and Area Dakelh Outreach (NADO)*, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize that the greatest need in this area of mission is for healing and growth: healing from the wounds of the past and the burdens and bondages of the present; growth for the future in faith and ministry. Over the past several years, God has been growing in Jon and I the idea of building a ministry of healing and equipping for the First Nations people of the North Cariboo region, specifically in the Nazko area. However, it has seemed much too large a dream for us to tackle. During the last several months, we have been reminded that the Lord is much bigger than our limitations and that nothing is too hard for our Creator. It has been with awe and trepidation that we have shared this dream with the ministry team and the session. We want now to share it with you and invite you on an adventure of discernment.

We dream of building a team made up of Native and non-Native believers who have experience in the healing ministry and could carry out the overall vision of having a place for First Nations people to find healing and be equipped for Christian leadership. We could offer opportunities for people to heal on all levels of their lives: physical, emotional, social and spiritual. It would be a place of safety to begin to make the needed changes to live a healthy, whole life. We could also offer opportunities for followers of Jesus to learn leadership skills that fit into a First Nations context.

At present, the session is discussing this vision as well as the possible purchase of property in Nazko. There is a property adjacent to the reserve which is for sale. We are confident of a special grant through Canada Ministries for the purchase of that property. However, we want to do this carefully and prayerfully. Therefore we are inviting you to pray with us and discern what the Lord would lead us to do with this vision. Pray that the elders will share a clear sense of vision on this matter. Pray that the local community in Nazko will affirm any decisions that the session makes. Pray for God to lead the right people to share with us in making real any plans that we might come to.

If the session feels that God is leading us forward to take action to develop a ministry of healing and equipping, we look forward to having a congregational meeting to further share this with the congregation as a whole and together move forward in making that a reality.

World Vision Report

BY Linda Webber

I would like to thank all those who support our four World Vision children. They are Jenny Shirley Duran from Columbia; Ferdus Hasan from Bangladesh; Shrijana Taku from Nepal; and Paukar Tjorres from Ecuador. This year Johir Mohammed from Bangladesh turned eighteen, finished school and went to work to support his family. We supported Johir since he was a very young boy.

January 2008 beginning balance..... \$ 1386.78
 Money raised in 2008..... 1713.35
 Money sent to World Vision children in 2008 1680.00
Balance in account 12/31/08\$ 1420.13

From this total, \$440 has been put aside for Youth Mission Education. For 2008, a family in one of the house churches gave a full years offering to the World Vision account for the children so that we could do some extra mission projects in 2008 including:

1. Buy bikes for evangelists in Kenya. We raised \$2, 598.85
 2. Provide dignity & compassion for refugees in Montreal. We raised 220.00
 3. Provide clean water and sanitation in Malawi. We Raised 1,149.71
 4. Provide study Bibles for evangelists & Bible students in China.769.71
- Total extra raised for missions for 2008 ...**4,758.27**

Treasurer’s Report For 2008

By Shannon Finley, Treasurer

Accounting is all about balance. At the end of the year you have to make the revenues and expenses balance. On the one hand there is all the expense of running this ministry – the financial expenses, the huge need for resources of caring and learning and sharing God’s love. And on the other hand there is the overwhelming giving; the outpouring of resources of finances and prayers and healing and love and time.

Achieving the balance is an exercise in faith. As I contemplate the year past and see how need was met with generosity, it gives me the faith to look confidently ahead at the next year, knowing that God is blessing this mission work in the Cariboo and resourcing it with all it needs to continue its’ witness in this very needy area.

A couple of days ago I noticed that the gas prices which had been lower than we had seen in a very long time, took a 12 cent jump overnight. I was lamenting the fact as I opened an envelope containing \$400 cheque from Canada Ministries with donations to “Fill a Ministers’ Gas Tank”. God’s perfect timing made me laugh out loud.

This week as I assembled the receipts and stuffed the envelopes, it was like a little visit with each of you. I remembered the names and the little notes of encouragement and the stories of how funds were raised. Occasionally you shared a story of hardship and wished the size of your donation was larger. Well we are grateful to receive all your gifts of prayer, faith, hope and funds. Like the loaves and fishes, God does unexpected and wonderful things with it all.

In this treasurer’s job, the work is not really about dollars and cents. It is a witness to all that a group of Christians who grasp Jesus’ call to go out into the world and spread the good news can do when they pool their resources of time, love, faith, hope, prayer healing – and yes, money.

Please Don’t ‘Grow Up’

By Shannon Finley

As a minister’s spouse one of my greatest sources of amusement over the years has been the interaction between my husband and children during story time at worship. Our son was never privy to the story beforehand as Charlie learned early on that Tim listened and always had a response; usually very logical and one he had not counted on. They were a great comedy act. Well, Tim ‘grew up’ and we haven’t had the same fun for a long time, until this morning.

The story was based on the five loaves and two fishes Bible reading. He asked the question, “What do you say if God asks you to do something?” Charlie and likely many of the rest of us knew the answer – “You want ME to do WHAT!” “I’m too busy!” “I can’t do THAT!” What he wasn’t expecting was: “OK!” I loved that answer. Short, simple and full of faith.

Later around the communion table we shared the bread and the wine. As the same child put down the communion glass he exclaimed, “Wow!” The rest of us were silent as we lowered the cup from our lips, but I thought this young boy had nailed it right on again – Wow! YOU broke your body and spilled YOUR blood for ME! Wow! What a gift! How exciting! No wonder his first response to

God's request is an immediate and enthusiastic "OK!" I could feel Jesus' presence at that table this morning – and He was grinning with delight!

We Need Help Down Here Lord!

By Lorraine Faessler, Bridge lake

This is a true story, which happened to my best friend June Buchan's daughter and grandson on November 16, 2008. They live in Kelowna. Jacob is fourteen years old and has two sisters, Breanna and Emily. Jacob was born visually impaired with a sliver of sight in his lower left eye and is also mentally challenged. He attends the school for the blind. Although he suffers from this tremendous handicap Jacob is a very happy young fellow. He is very religious and his whole heart is consumed with his faith in God. He has a fantastic memory and a beautiful singing voice like an angel and loves singing hymns. He can listen to someone sing a song once and it is implanted in his mind word for word even if it's in a native language. He also loves to practice on the trumpet because, he says, all the angels play the trumpet.

Twice a year Jacob is taken to the Children's Hospital in Vancouver, over the "Connector Highway" from Kelowna. On November 16 he and his mother had to make the trip. The roads and weather were in a dreadful condition. On their return home his mom lost control of their vehicle, which swerved, hit a rock wall, flipped over and went down embankment upside down where they hung like bats (Jacob's description) from their seatbelts. Jacob's mom was knocked unconscious in the fall while Jacob suffered minor bruises to his face and leg, which he thought at the time was broken. Jacob tried to wake his mom with no results. He struggled to get his seatbelt off. Finally his religion came to the fore and looking to heaven he called out, "We need some help down here Lord." At this point his seatbelt unsnapped. Still trying to wake his mom he heard someone scrambling down the bank. It was a young woman who happened to be a nurse who had noticed the upside down vehicle. She was shortly followed by another motorist who happened to be an off duty fireman. Between the two, they extricated Wendy from the wrecked vehicle, laid her on the side of the road and returned for Jacob, which the fireman piggybacked up the snowy bank.

Meanwhile at home June had a bad premonition waiting for her daughter's phone call on her cell phone a habit, which they had when out alone in the car with the children. June made a call but had no luck contacting her. By this time she was very worried.

A short time later the phone rang and a lady identified herself, she said that Jacob had told her there was a cell phone in his mom's purse. She told her that their daughter and son had been in an accident and was waiting for the ambulance, as Wendy was unconscious and going into shock. She informed June they were going to leave Jacob by the wreck with the cell phone. This is where June really panicked and informed them that Jacob was blind and mentally handicapped and he might wander out onto the road and get killed. They took Jacob with them.

Wendy remained in hospital for a number of days until she regained consciousness. Jacob's leg is recovering nicely but he is suffering from post trauma stress and he refuses to get into a vehicle if there is snow between the house and the school bus and is always worrying about road conditions.

Wendy has tried unsuccessfully to trace the rescuers with no results. So were these people angels answering Jacob's call? Will we ever know?