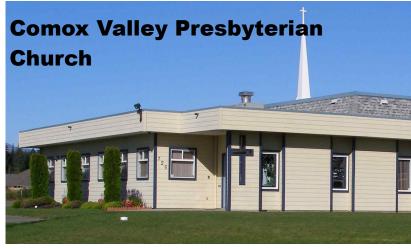
# **Connections Spring 2016**



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Message from the Minister Important Dates

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

I have visions of Africa dancing in my head as at the time of writing this I have been home for only a couple of days. I hope in the not too distant future I could entice you all to attend a gathering in which I share samples of something in his DNA that brings him back, tea from Kericho (we visited a tea plantation and factory) and some photos and stories of my trip while also explaining some of the work that CanAssist Africa Relief does throughout East Africa.

On our second full day, my Uncle, the one who started this charity, took us on a walk up a ridge along the Ngong Hills outside of Nairobi. He wanted to take us to a tree that looks over the Great Rift Valley. He says that it is under this particular tree that he comes on every trip to Kenya (which is about once a year) and he sits and contemplates. We sat having our lunch overlooking the Rift Valley, a place that is often referred to as the cradle of humankind due to the fact that relics of our

earliest ancestors have been found there.

My Uncle talked about the pull that he feels when he comes to this place- as if there is just like the Salmon or Monarchs when they migrate back to their birth place. I could not help but feel this pull myself. I would, however, take it a little further and say that we all have the ability to feel a pull homeward- to God. And there are many places in Africa in which God's creation is so brilliantly expressed!

Easter is the time when I feel that pull homeward the most. Perhaps it is because we come out of the rainy, grey weather into the bright colours of Spring flowers, or because we can see the days becoming longer (being on the equator the days are exactly 12 hrs long in Kenya!) but I really believe it is because God is calling us, every year, to the

empty tomb- to the place where we can experience God's salvation, love and grace at its fullest. It also allows us to begin anew on our faith walk, to start once again at the beginning. I pray that we can all do that this year, and each year, and that the services, programs and events at Comox Valley Presbyterian Church help us to do that.

You are all welcome to join us for our special Holy Week services. We will have an interactive Palm Sunday, a contemplative Maundy Thursday with communion held at 4:30pm on March 24, a tentative joint Comox Valley Ministerial Good Friday service is in the works with location TBA and our Sonrise service at 8:30am on Easter Sunday is always a great way to begin anew. You are encouraged to bring friends and neighbours to these special services as well.

We will also have the opportunity to engage with the national church's study guide on human sexuality entitled "Body, Mind and Soul" on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2:30-5pm. Please refer to the write up on page 3 for further information. However, I would encourage you to go to presbyterian.ca/sexuality to download the 119 page document. Individuals, congregations, presbyteries and Synods have all been encouraged to give feedback on the document and the conversations it begins. A reminder that CVPC and all Presbyterian churches are loving, welcoming, safe places for all and that the Presbyterian church is a place in which we welcome diversity of opinion. It is one of the many blessings of this denomination.

Have a happy Spring, blessed Easter, and fresh beginning to another warm and wonderful time of year.

Rev. Jenn Geddes



**Above:** Rev. Jenn sitting with students from SP Geddes School beside the new class room and water tank in Osiri, Kenya.

Below: the tree in the Ngong Hills



### **BODY MIND AND SOUL**

In 2015 the General Assembly adopted the following motion:

Recommendation No. 5: That the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) prepare a joint study guide on the topics of human sexuality, sexual orientation and other related matters raised in the overtures to be posted on the church's website by the end of October, 2015 and that congregations, sessions, presbyteries and synods be invited to share the result of their conversation with both the Committee on Church Doctrine and Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) prior to March 31, 2016.

To accomplish the General Assembly's resolution, a Design Team was established with members representing the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) to serve as an editorial body for the writer of the study guide, *Body, Mind and Soul – Study Guide on Human Sexuality*, which will serve as a basis for conversations in congregations across Canada. The study guide is available on line. Type in **presbyterian.ca/sexuality/** and you will find *Body, Mind and Soul* with a **Download** box to click.

Below is an excerpt from the pastoral letter the Moderator of the 141 Assembly, the Rev. Karen Horst wrote to the Church about the discussion the denomination is having about human sexuality:

As you know, this year was established by the 141st General Assembly to be a year of study and prayer regarding human sexuality. Study materials have been prepared and a number of presbyteries and congregations continue their work of discernment. Justice Ministries and the Church Doctrine Committee will welcome your responses throughout this year, but by February 15 these teams will need to be formulating their responses to the overtures that were referred to them from last June's assembly. As much as you can, I know they would truly appreciate receiving as many comments and thoughtful reflections as they can from congregations, sessions, synods etc. It is important for them to hear the voice of the church and so I encourage you to consider sending in comments by mid-February if you are able, in advance of the March 31 date set by the General Assembly. Certainly, we will anticipate your ongoing comments and study before our June assembly. There are many resource materials on the **web site www.presbyterian.ca** and you can download the study called "Body, Mind and Soul." Even if your congregation does not do a formal study together, then be sure as individuals to study and pray and consult on your own. The strength of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is our belief that God's Spirit works and speaks in the collective voice of the church. This is our chance to seek God's leading through prayer, study and conversations. We may not all agree but we can listen to one another and learn from others.

### A PROFILE OF IVAN CRONSBERRY

9 November 1927 - 13 February 2015

Picture this. It's 1953. You're 26 years old. Your home church, Toronto's Wychwood Presbyterian, has just confirmed you as a ruling elder!

Such an honour augurs a life of service to the church, and every obituary honouring Ivan confirms this outcome. Without doubt, Ivan's service to the PCC formed his moral core, but he was a man of many parts. Thus, while this profile acknowledges his legacy as a churchman, it aims to give a broader picture, to show the man in full.

### The Churchman

Ivan's direct service to the PCC continued as it began: member of the National Office's personnel committee, elder at Aurora ON and Victoria BC; representative elder to the Vancouver Island Presbytery, and its first lay moderator. (All predecessors had been ordained ministers.) Ivan's intense involvement with Young People's Societies saw him serve as YPS President in the Toronto area, and YPS chair in the Canadian Council of Churches. But his proudest moment came at General Assembly in 1998, when he moved *Living Faith* as a subordinate standard of the PCC.

### The Rotarian

Ivan never let his service to his church keep him from serving the communities he lived in. The most public aspect of this service involved his 40-year involvement with the Rotary Club, as member, secretary, vice president, and president in Forest Hill (Toronto), Aurora Ontario, and Victoria, where Rotary built the Oak Bay Lookout on Beach Drive. The club later built a Play Park based on a Peter Pan theme. To use it, Ivan had to get permission from London's Great Ormond Hospital which held (and still holds) the rights to J M Barrie's popular work.

#### The Public Servant

Ivan entered the workforce in 1946, right out of grade 12, hired by the County of York (just north of Toronto) as an assessor, to be trained on the job by a senior employee. In 1950, he received an offer from Forest Hill (a "village" inside Toronto) to do similar work there. Village leaders saw great potential in Ivan, and passed by-law 2953 appointing him as deputy clerk treasurer in 1953. Ivan then took correspondence courses from Queen's University to gain a professional accounting designation (AMCT). He used to joke that he was playing the role of Robin Hood: taking from the rich; giving to the poor! One hand collected taxes from the affluent majority (eg, Wayne and Schuster). The other wrote welfare checks for the tiny minority of unfortunates. In 1965, Ivan was named the youngest municipal clerk in the metropolitan area. He was just 38.

During a major merger in 1967, Toronto annexed Forest Hill. Though guaranteed a city job, Ivan feared becoming a pencil-sharpener. No lover of make-work, he had a chat with one of the former village's former officials, who in turn had a chat with officials of the now-township of York. Soon, York passed by-law 17834 to establish a new department (Personnel and Public Relations) and to name Ivan as its first director.

In 1975, the *Globe and Mail* named Ivan Cronsberry as the co-creator of a code of ethics for York employees, which banned them from receiving gifts, or acting for private interests in municipal matters. Code of ethics? Who could have been better qualified?

### The Family Man

Though Ivan did not marry Laura until 1974, he was always a family man. Upon their retirement, his parents moved to Aurora because it was halfway between family connections in Toronto and Lake Simcoe. Ivan moved there too, because they could not afford a house without his help. When his stepdad died in 1959, Ivan stayed on to care for his mother until her death in 1973, a faithful son.

In 1958, Ivan began corresponding with a church worker named Laura Jackson, who was making arrangements for a national Young People's Camp in Clear Lake, Manitoba. Perhaps because he'd never heard her voice—the budget didn't allow phone calls—he had pictured her as an elderly woman. Imagine his astonishment on meeting someone his own age! As a church secretary, she was also in charge of a nursing home, and a vacation Bible School. Then she was transferred to the National Office. When proximity led to love, Ivan and Laura married in 1974. Together, they became a powerful blessing both to the Presbyterian Church and to each other.

While Ivan was still working they lived in Aurora. But he only had to work another 12 years, because York's by-law 17834 stipulated that Ivan's prior jobs would be deemed as continuous employment with York. By 1986, his experience added up to 40 years, and he retired at 59! Shortly thereafter, he and Laura moved to Victoria, which became home base for their travels to 55 countries, nations as diverse as Taiwan, India, South Africa, Argentina, Australia, and Germany, the original home of the Kronesberger family. (The name was anglicized when the founders moved to England and then Ireland.)

After 15 years in Victoria, the Cronsberrys relocated to the Comox Valley, and joined us in the Comox Valley Presbyterian Church. where Ivan's financial acumen served the congregation well. As Ivan's health began to fail, he expressed a desire to die at home, with Laura at his side. His wish was granted on 13 February 2015, and his Service was held here at the Comox Valley Presbyterian Church.

By Jean Bullard

## What He Wrote John 8:1-11

Jerusalem. The Sabbath. In a corner of the Temple, Jesus is teaching those who've gathered to hear Him when—*uh*—oh—here come the ever-hopeful Scribes and Pharisees with yet another test. They've brought a woman caught in the very act of adultery. Can you see the anticipation on their self-righteous faces?

As if Jesus needed reminding, they point out that Moses decreed stoning for such a woman. Then they ask a typical trick question: What do you say? In earlier encounters with these self-appointed Guardians of the Faith, Jesus has pinned their ears back with well-chosen words of rebuke. This time, he doesn't say a thing. Instead, he bends down and writes in the dust. Since the gospel gives no further details, scholars and everyday Christians have debated the obvious question ever since: What did Jesus write?

Suggestions abound: The Ten Commandments? The Beatitudes? A verse from scripture? This last suggestion makes sense, for Jesus often prefaces his spoken rebukes with *It is written...* before he quotes the Law to those who claim to know it all. And the accusers facing Him now could use a sharp reminder. When they brought the woman without the man, they were flouting the Law of Leviticus 20:10.

"If a man commits adultery with another man's wife--with the wife of his neighbor—both the adulterer and the adulteress are to be put to death.

Jesus says not a word to the woman's accusers, but his silence only prompts them to keep on questioning Him. Can you hear their shrill quacking?

What do you say?

## What do you say?

### WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Their aggression shows that they're feeling insecure, and so they should. If they know scripture as well as they claim, they should now be recalling Jeremiah 17:13, the only Old Testament passage that speaks of writing in the dust.

LORD, you are the hope of Israel; all who forsake you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the LORD, the spring of living water.

And now, while his critics are vulnerable, Jesus lifts Himself up, and addresses them.

"Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

With that, he stoops and resumes writing in the dust. Now let's take our eyes off Jesus, and focus on the accusers. Can you see their faces falling? Hear their minds spinning? What if...what if He's writing our names in the dust? No wonder they decide to leave!

John says the accusers left one by one, from eldest to youngest, their voices stilled by Jesus' words. Yet for me, their departure is anything but silent. As they shuffle away, I hear the sound of stones dropping, smacking into the dirt floor, raising puffy clouds of dust. *Plouf*, *plouf*, *plouf*. Can you hear it, too? That's what it sounds like when the self-righteous drop the metaphorical stones they carry wherever they go.

As told in John, and portrayed in Renaissance art, the final scene unfolds as if Jesus and the woman are conversing privately, alone in the Temple. But that impression cannot be correct, for Jesus was teaching when the accusers broke in on His lesson. We can be sure His listeners are still present as witnesses, for who could resist staying on to watch a scene this juicy? Without them, there'd be no one to pass the story on to the author of John. And what a story! It must have made an intense impression then, for Jesus' example of true forgiveness impresses us still, two thousand years later.

Whenever the Scribes and Pharisees appear in scripture, we know they'll be casting metaphorical stones at someone: tax collector, prostitute, leper, Jesus. It's easy to sneer at those ancients, but what about us? Don't we carry stones of our own?

What would the world sound like if we all dropped the stones that weigh us down so needlessly? Just imagine the lightness of being once we empty our pockets of all those weighty attitudes that impede our progress *Plouf*, *plouf*, *plouf*. Freedom. Liberty. Peace.

By Jean Bullard

Go on your way, and sin no more.

# Fellowship Group Mandate January, 2016

When our congregation came together there was a need for a group to discuss, plan and implement activities and events. Today we are still active and carrying out these functions. Our primary aim is to foster fellowship within our congregation. Membership is free and is open to all in our congregation. Monthly meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month from September to June.

## **Current Activities Which Support the Mandate**

- We support the orphanage in Malawi with a yearly contribution.
- We maintain and equip our church kitchen.
- We handle the catering for special events upon request (memorials, birthdays, weddings etc.).
- We organize church dinners and events as planned by the Fellowship Group.
- We provide a yearly calendar of events planned by the group.
- We make purchases at our discretion for items needed within our church.
- We maintain the programs for Thrifty Foods Smile Cards, Canadian Tire money, Quality Foods Q-cards and printer ink cartridge recycling.
- We purchase supplies for the coffee hour and ensure that the supplies are in place each Sunday.
- We support the decorating of the church by providing funds for the plants. We ensure that the church is decorated for special Sundays such as Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving and Remembrance Day.

## **Refugee Sponsorship**

This post will try to list the major steps for a congregation considering sponsorship, and will include the most critical information from the linked documents.

The United Nations High Commission on Refugees determines whether people are eligible for refugee status. If they <u>decide to apply to Canada</u> their names go to Canadian visa offices overseas, and are forwarded to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), who puts those people onto <u>Blended Visa Office Referred</u> (BVOR) lists. Somewhere along the line the claimants are given medical, security and criminality checks. IRCC provides lists of profiles, usually without names, to the Presbyterian Church in Canada and thereby to the Presbyterian World Service and Development agency (PWS&D).

A group like our congregation (called a constituent group or CG) interested in sponsoring are asked to provide PWS&D with a profile of whom they would like to sponsor: nationality, size of family, medical needs, single mom etc. When a profile comes up that seems to match the CG's preference, Rob at PWS&D will notify the CG and they will have to make a quick decision to accept that case. For Syrians, the CG must agree to take a case within 48 hours of giving an initial expression of interest. Arrival tends to be in 3 days to 5 weeks. Non-Syrians: CG must agree to take a case within 1 week of giving an initial expression of interest. Arrival tends to be in 1-4 months (usually 2-3).

An example of the choices might be:

- 1. Husband and wife, 20-40 years old
- 2. Single male, 28 years old single, with a degree
- 3. Husband and wife in their 40s with two children
- 4. Single mom 23 year old with 4 year old son

The initial application process includes budgeting for the chosen family or individuals. Consider that a single young adult with no dependents may be easier to support and settle than a family of four.

The CG is responsible for all costs in the start up month for the newcomers. That includes first months rent, furniture, housewares, winter and summer clothing, linens, and utility hookups. This is estimated at \$7000 for a family of four. If some of this can be offset by donations of clothing, food staples, furniture etc., these figures must be shown in the budget presented to PWS&D.

From month two to seven, the federal government provides income support at provincial welfare rates. They also cover the costs of language programs, and health care including glasses, medications, hearing aids and walkers or wheelchairs.

From month eight to twelve, the sponsor congregation is responsible for rent, utilities, food, transportation, clothing, phone, internet, school supplies, day care, and pocket money. This is expected to match provincial welfare rates and is estimated for the family of four at \$10,000.

The congregation must show that they have budgeted for this period realistically and that they have those funds in hand and contributions in kind to support the newcomers until they are independent, which is expected to happen by the end of twelve months.

The CG must also fill out the <u>settlement plan</u> portion of the <u>application</u>. This is the physical commitment, help on the ground, and includes, but is not limited to:

- Meet the refugee(s) at the airport and provide transportation to the final destination
- Locate an interpreter (if applicable) and help the newcomers to learn English

- Apply for provincial health plan and Interim Federal Health plan
- Apply for Social Insurance Number
- Select a family physician
- Select a dentist
- Plan for medical emergencies
- Provide orientation (public transportation, banking services, etc.)
- Provide assistance in linking refugee(s) with community activities
- Enroll children in school (if applicable)
- Make child care arrangements (if applicable)
- Register for child tax benefit (if applicable)
- Enroll adults in language training
- Provide assistance in finding employment

This part of the application also specifically asks for the names of people who will be volunteering to assist with the refugee applicant's settlement and the tasks they will be assisting with. The CG must plan how, in those twelve months, to provide the care, emotional and social supports those newcomers will need to become oriented to a new and probably confusing culture. How will the congregation divide up the 24 hour 365 day commitment? Which congregants will specialize in certain kinds of support? It may be especially difficult in a community lacking the language or religion of home. The application also wants to know what kind of contingency plan the CG has if problems arise with the implementation of the settlement plan. The CG will also be required to report to IRCC the activities over the year.

Whereas some agencies are able to help (PWS&D for example can provide guidance), and people in the greater community may help, the sponsor congregation has the in-hand responsibility to ensure that the newcomers have their various needs met to ensure a healthy transition into Canadian life. Clearly, many people in the congregation will need to commit themselves to a significant amount of time and focused energy. It seems prudent that this commitment be clear within the congregation *before* an application is submitted.

After choosing who to sponsor, budgeting for the sponsorship and ensuring that the money is in place, and creating a <u>settlement plan</u>, including the budget and who in the CG will do what over the course of the year, the congregation sends in the application to PWS&D. They review it and submit it to IRCC, who also review it, and after approval, send it on to the Canadian visa office nearest to the individuals overseas. That overseas office will then take care of getting the refugee(s) to our closest airport. From sending in the application to the moment of the newcomers arrival in Canada could be one to seven months. *It is unclear whether there is any contact with the refugees during this period.* 

If this amount of involved and prolonged commitment is unsuited to a congregation who wants to help, a donation to the PWS&D refugee support fund might be an alternative to congregational sponsorship.

For more information, a good place to start is the PCC website. Click on <u>Presbyterian Church</u> in Canada Refugee Sponsorship Information.

contributed by Mike Werth

## **Costs of Refugee Sponsorship**

## http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/applications/guides/5413ETOC.asp#appendixA

Although the cost of living varies from one region to another, the following table can assist the sponsoring group in estimating the cost involved in sponsoring a refugee family for 12 months. The required financial resources indicated in the Sponsorship Cost Table are roughly equivalent to local social assistance rate figures, which will vary from region to region. (The realities of the actual cost of living may require you to consider additional support in tour budget.)

Family Size	12 Months of Income Support	Start-up Costs	Estimated Total Annu- al Settlement Cost (\$)
1	9,800 (12 x 817)	2,800	12,600
2	16,800 (12 x 1400)	4,400	21,200
3	17,700 (12 x 1475)	5,300	23,000
4	20,000 (12 x 1667)	7,000	27,000
5	22,500 (12 x 1875)	7,200	29,700
6	24,500 (12 x 2042)	8,000	32,500
Additional member	1,550 (12 x 129)	1,000	2,500

1 Updated: March 2014

Note: For *Blended Visa Office Referred* refugee cases, the government pays the first 6 months of income support, while the sponsors are responsible for start up costs and the last six months of income support. The cash needed for start-up costs will depend on what start-up needs can be covered by in-kind donations.

Please see the **in-kind deduction table** at the following link to help to monetize the in-kind contributions within your budget:

The chart on the following page provides an overview of some issues for sponsoring groups to consider as part of their settlement planning — it is adapted from:

- the RSTP Handbook: http://www.rstp.ca/images/resources/handbook/30factsheet7.3.pdf and
- CIC's Settlement Plan http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/kits/forms/IMM5440E.pdf.

Sample Start up costs and monthly budget and issues to consider				
Item	Cost	Questions to Consider		
Start Up Costs				
Clothes	\$ Initial amount (CIC indicates \$325 for basic clothing and \$175 for winter clothing - for a single person)	Consider costs of undergarments, winter boots and other clothing – things that cannot be hand-me-downs and that will be sure to keep the newcomers warm. Show newcomer how make use of second-hand and bargain stores.		
Furniture	\$ Initial amount	Use donations and second-hand stores. Furniture should be the newcomers' to keep.		
Household effects, bedding and linen	\$ Initial amount(CIC indi- cates \$345 - for a single person)	Consider what cannot be given in kind		
Food staples	\$ Initial amount (CIC indi- cates \$175 - for a single	Consider what cannot be given in kind		
Hook up costs (telephone, utilities, etc.)	\$ Initial amount (CIC indi- cates \$260 - for a single person)			
Rent (last month's	\$ Initial amount			
Monthly costs				
Rent	\$/mo (CIC indicates \$376/ month - for a single person)	Is rent at a level that newcomers will be able to afford after sponsorship ends? Budget for reasonable rent costs during the year, unless the newcomers are very close family members who can reasonably be expected to live permanently with relatives already in Canada.		
		Note: Sponsored refugees are eligible for the National Housing Supplement - \$75 approximately \$75/month for a single person.		
Utilities	\$/mo	Include electricity, heat, water.		
Food	\$/mo (CIC indicates \$230/ month for food and inciden- tals - for a single person)	Take into account the newcomer's need to have some national foods in his/her diet. Help newcomers to comparison shop and buy in bulk.		
Transport	\$/mo (CIC indicates	Availability of public transportation. Look into bus and metro passes.		
	\$128.50/month- for a single person)	Note: The dollar amount is likely set at the cost of a monthly transit pass.		
Clothes	\$/mo	Any additional clothing needs during the year.		
Phone/ Post/ Internet Access	\$/mo	Decide whether to fund long distance calls and, if so, to what extent. Remember that new-comers will need to communicate with family and friends elsewhere. Consider using pre-paid phone cards.		
Supplies	\$/mo	Take into account laundry and cleaning supplies as well as toiletries and baby supplies.		
Health	\$/mo	Plan for costs not covered by IFH or provincial health plans, any special costs.		
Discretion	\$/mo	Pocket money, recreation.		
Education	\$/mo	School supplies, school trips, books, day care to allow parents to study English and to look		
Reserve	\$/mo	Allow a minimum extra of 5% for unanticipated expenses.		

## Joy to the World Nativity Display 2015.

Joy to the World is a display of Nativity Sets from around the world, held at our church, and open to the public.

Our purpose in holding this event is to share the Christmas message by displaying nativity sets lent to us by church members and the community; by sharing hospitality, music and refreshments; and by providing information about our church. We first held this event in December 2014. It was very successful, and so it appears it will become our church's gift to the Comox Valley annually during the Christmas season.

The facts and figures about this year's event are as follows:

- There were over 160 nativity sets on display lent to us by congregation members, as well as by the public
- Between 350 and 400 people visited the display, a substantial increase over last year.
- There were about 7 hours of live music. Musicians came from our congregation, and from those who responded to a request sent out to piano teachers.
- Friday afternoon, reserved for seniors and those with mobility issues, saw busses from the Berwick, Cumberland Lodge, and the Views bring a large number of visitors, who enjoyed numerous cups of tea and treats baked by church members.
- The children's activity area was much appreciated by the many children and their parents.
- The life-sized outdoor nativity was a delightful addition, as it lit the way for our visitors.

Here are some of the many positive comments written in the guest book:

"Thank you for this beautiful Christmas gift to the town;" "Wonderful world-wide display;" "Next year I'll lend a set;" "Second annual visit; looking forward to next year." "Fabulous and touching;" "This so adds to our Christmas season celebrations;" "One of my favorite things I've done this Christmas." "My daughters and I enjoyed it – they loved all the nativities;" "What a gift to the valley, and an amazing display of global hope."

Through our nativity display, Joy to the World has brought much hope and gladness to the hearts of the community.



# Italian Night

On Friday, February 19 the Fellowship Group hosted an Italian Night supper. We got pizza and Caesar salad at reduced cost from Panago Pizza and WhiteSpot respectively. Maggie Shaw and Debbie Daniels treated the 64 attendees to lively musical renditions of Italian favourites. Maryka and Corrine Wester decorated with the green, red and white of the Italian flag. and It was a good chance to catch up with friends and warm up in an often chilly and damp season.



**Left:** Sheila McLellan ready to eat **Below:** Three generations from the Van Tongeren family



Ruth Dickson (below left) celebrates her birthday with the Fellowship Group (below) at their Dec. 9th Christmas luncheon.



