

Connections Fall 2017



COMOX VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

As I write this the summer is only half over and yet, as I reflect on the past months, I see that it has been full of wonderful experiences, adventures and events. This is a common thread that I try to keep throughout the year, not only in summer. The most memorable event thus far is our recent trip to Germany. Ever since I met Mike and learned about his heritage, I have wanted to visit Germany, and as the 500th anniversary of the Reformation approached it seemed like 2017 would be a good year to visit. I am so glad we decided to go!

We had a lot of fun meeting with members of Mike's family and long-time friends, and seeing historic cities and towns like Leipzig and Berlin. However for me, visiting Wittenberg, the birthplace of the Reformation, was moving, powerful, and awe-inspiring. As I stood at the door of the

Castle Church, where Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses (now commemorated with an iron casting of the 95 theses on the door) I was struck by his courage, audacity, strength and persistence. As a priest within the Roman Catholic Church at the time, Luther faced grave consequences for his actions but he believed so strongly that the church needed to change and make reforms that he was willing to risk even his life. Likely through providential circumstances, Luther was able to continue to fight for these reforms and build a critical mass of people who felt the same way and eventually the Protestant Church took shape.

I have to be honest that the irony was not lost on me that, as I stood at the Castle Church doors, The Presbyterian Church in Canada was holding their 143rd General Assembly in which the topic of human sexuality and full inclusion was being

discussed. It has been a lengthy and challenging debate for many, and it was ultimately decided that the church should take further time to discern and discuss this topic. I'm not so sure Luther would have acted with such patience. However, it is important that we continue to pray and seek the Spirit's guidance as we think about how the church needs to reform in this modern age.

It is also vital that churches work together rather than against one another, and this was all the more evident by the wonderful joint services held throughout July. It was truly special to host a service with a packed church, and a real privilege to worship with the United Church congregations. It is a reminder that we are not all that different, and that working together, singing together, and worshipping together can be rewarding and fulfilling. Thank you to all who attended those services and especially to the Fellowship Group who made our host Sunday wonderful with cupcakes and goodies!

Luther nailed those 95 theses on Oct. 31, 1517. We look forward to continuing those celebrations with an event on Nov. 3 in which I will share some of my pictures from our visit to Wittenberg, and we will enjoy a "traditional" German soup supper.

This will also be a fundraiser to support some upcoming maintenance, like a new furnace. This event will include a craft table, and Ruth Dickson will have some of her pieces for sale. Join us to celebrate Luther 500 and the many talents within this church!

There are numerous other events and studies that will take place in the fall. Following a successful Book study of Philip Yancey's Book *What's So Amazing About Grace*, it was decided that we spend some time looking at the Book of Acts. The study is called *Risking It All: The Book of Acts*, and will include video sessions with Lisa Harper, small group discussions and conversations about the history of Acts and how it applies to us today. It will start Oct. 4 and run for 8 weeks every Wednesday from 2-3:30pm. I look forward to leading this Bible study.

If you signed up to be a Prayer Partner you will receive the name and brief information about your partner in September. We look forward to this unique and fun ministry at CVPC.

It is also our plan to have a time of fellowship and lunch following the service on September 24. Please keep an eye out for upcoming bulletins about this event.

Rev. Jenn Geddes

CHAIR DEDICATION - MAY 7

Rev. Jenn Geddes and Laura Cronsberry with the newly dedicated chair, given in memory of the late Ivan Cronsberry.



Important Dates from the Minister

- Sept. 9 Food Safe Training at St. Andrew's, Nanaimo (Registration full*)
- Sept. 11-18 Jenn on Holidays
- Sept. 24 Fall Fellowship following the service
- Oct. 1 World Communion Sunday
- Oct. 4 Risking It All: The Book of Acts Bible Study
Will run every Wednesday until Nov 22 at 2pm
- Oct. 13-15 Jenn attending the Synod of BC annual gathering in Surrey, BC
- Oct. 15 Presbyterians Sharing Sunday
- Nov. 3 Luther 500! Soup Supper

* contact Elaine Toole 250-751-1626 re possible waiting list for space

LUTHER 500 - MAY 23

Thank you to the Fellowship Group for hosting the viewing of "Luther 500 with Rick Steves". We were glad to have members of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church join us. It was

Below: Members of our congregation and the community share refreshments and conversation at the Luther 500 event.





Left: Rev. Jenn chats with guests at the tea.

ANNUAL SENIOR'S TEA — JULY 21

Thank you to the Pastoral Care Committee and their helpers for the wonderful tea on July 23. Despite rainy weather it was a great turnout that included people from the United Churches and friends from as far as Duncan! Thank you also to Rodney MacMillan for the wonderful music.



Left: L-R Maggie Shaw, and Kathy Wilson at their table with cheerful flowers and sumptuous treats .

Right: Mike Day and Elizabeth Hyndman



The following is reprinted from: THE PRESBYTERIAN MESSAGE May 2017

There is more than one way to look at
refugees. So read this poem twice, the second time from the bottom up.

Refugees

They have no need of our help
So do not tell me
These haggard faces could belong to you or me
Should life have dealt a different hand
We need to see them for who they really are
Chancers and scroungers
Layabouts and loungers
With bombs up their sleeves
Cut-throats and thieves
They are not
Welcome here
We should make them
Go back to where they came from
They cannot
Share our food
Share our homes
Share our countries
Instead let us
Build a wall to keep them out
It is not okay to say
These are people just like us
A place should only belong to those who are born there
Do not be so stupid to think that
The world can be looked at another way
(now read from bottom to top)

Brian Bilston brianbilston.com/2016/03/23/refugees

Thanks to Rob Shropshire, PWS&D Refugee Sponsorship & Special Projects Coordinator for sharing this poem, and to Laura Cronsberry for bringing it to our attention.

Presbyterians Sharing

Together, Presbyterians across Canada are making mission and ministry happen

Equipping congregations

"I was excited and so happy to find that we have an Arabic church here in Winnipeg. I found a family here. I want to thank God for everyone who has helped this church to exist in one way or another."

— Iyad Malouf, Lighthouse Evangelical Arabic Church, Winnipeg, MB



Equipping church leaders

"Stewards by Design has been very helpful and we have been finding immediate application in our ministry. God has used it all for great good!"

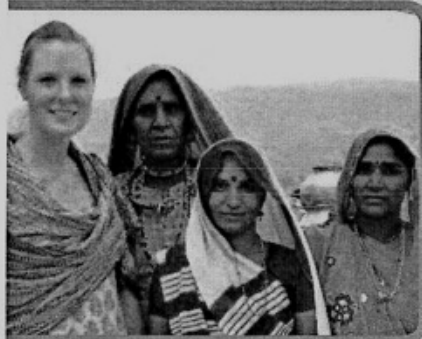
— Rev. Tim Archibald, Kings Church, New Minas, NS



Sending mission staff

"God calls us to emulate Christ's love for one another and to support those in need through our actions. Gifts to *Presbyterians Sharing* make it possible for me to run nutritional education programs to help babies and pregnant women in India."

— Michelle Verwey, Community Health Advisor, Church of North India



Supporting native and inner-city ministries

"When I felt like giving up on life, they gave me hope and showed me that there is more to life. Today I am a mentor in the youth mentorship program. I first came seeking help and support, and now I am dedicating myself to showing others that change can happen."

— Danielle, Kenora Fellowship Centre, Kenora, ON



Empowering youth

"I believe that CY gives us a great opportunity to worship God in new, daring and exciting ways. Big Worship. Big Experience. Big Fun."

— Emily, participant, Canada Youth

For we are God's servants, working together.

— 1 Corinthians 3:9

How is the money spent?

The 2017 budget for *Presbyterians Sharing* is \$9,244,251

Out of every \$100

- \$36** grows and equips congregations with resources and grants
- \$17** supports leadership development and our three theological colleges
- \$15** provides grants and sends mission staff to support our international mission partners
- \$13** supports finance and administration
- \$7** hosts General Assembly and supports ecumenical relations
- \$7** supports our Native Ministries
- \$3** funds communications and stewardship
- \$1** advocates for justice and human rights issues
- \$1** supports specialized (inner city, rural & refugee) ministries in Canada

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