

# CONESTOGA Connections



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## *Singing Christmas Carols . . .*

. . . before Christmas really puts you into the spirit of Christmas. Two different groups from Conestoga enjoyed caroling on Monday evening, December 20, and then again on Friday morning, December 24. At one visit we were told by some nurses that a lady who had not

spoken for several weeks began singing when she heard us singing. Another “joy” was seeing Sara Scott mouthing the words as we sang the old familiar carols. And then what a blessing it was to hear Lavern Petersheim singing along with us—one song after another—all by memory!



*Andy Leatherman (right) hammering on the job for Habitat for Humanity.*

## **ADVENTURE with Habitat for Humanity**

“Why would you live in an RV (recreational vehicle) full time? Don’t you miss having a home to go to?” we asked Jim, our new 72-year-old friend in the Habitat RV park.

“But this is my home!” Jim responded with a smile. My wife and I have lived in an RV for 12 years, and we are so free! I am at peace. We spend time at our children’s homes. We have participated in over 50 ‘builds’ over the years, not all with Habitat for Humanity. We travel where we want to; pay no taxes or upkeep

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*Right: Dot Leatherman moves her hammer REALLY fast!*





# The PASTORS CONNECTION

## Testing Revival Without Putting It Out

*“Do not put out the Spirit’s fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything.”* I Thessalonians 5:19

Our summer of 2010 Spiritual Gifts Sunday School elective discerned that it would be useful to develop a policy on gift use. The Pastoral Team has developed a draft. What follows yet needs further testing; by the Pastoral Team, through adult Sunday School classes, and by the congregation.

Biblical principles shaping our proposed use of spiritual gifts policy:

1. We believe God deposits His Holy Spirit into every person who invites Jesus to be their Lord and Savior and yields to water baptism (Acts 2:38, Luke 11:13).
2. We believe God’s Holy Spirit is available to flow through us on an ongoing basis (Rom. 15:13).
3. We believe the Holy Spirit gives one or more spiritual gifts to every believer for the purpose of building up the



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body of Christ (I Cor. 12:7-11).

4. We believe spiritual gifts are sometimes given for ongoing use; sometimes for a specific time and task; as the Holy Spirit discerns (Heb. 2:4).

5. We believe all spiritual gifts listed in scripture (Rom. 12, I Cor. 12, Eph. 4, etc) remain available in our day, moving the Body of Christ towards its full maturity and final redemption (Eph. 4:11-13).

6. We believe no spiritual gift is given to every believer; nor serves as evidence of what is sometimes called a “second work of grace” (I Cor. 12).

7. We believe the biblical measure of spiritual maturity is an increased fruit of the Spirit as outlined in Gal. 5:22-23.

8. We believe both biblical and revivalist records reveal that when God brings revival the people impacted respond in unorthodox ways (Acts 2:13).

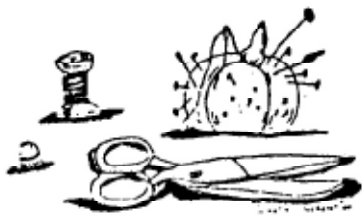
9. We believe the potential for kingdom growth is maximized when the biblical call to “not put out the Spirit’s fire” and to “test everything” are both honored (I Th. 5:19).

10. We believe leaders are responsible to oversee the use of spiritual gifts in the Body. Oversight includes weighing the counsel of members when that counsel grows out of prayerful discernment. In so doing, the full wisdom of God is discerned from a strong base of mutual submission to Christ (I Cor. 14:26-32, Acts 20:28).

Application of the above principles means we propose welcoming the use of all spiritual gifts in our life together as a church family. Expression of gifts will be shepherded by the Pastoral Team according to biblical principles as outlined above. We will discern response according to whether impacted lives are better producing Galatians 5 fruit. Reactions will be considered a teachable moment (Acts 2:14-16). Our goal as your Pastoral Team will be to discern what is rooted in faith and what in fear. Our commitment is to serve God’s purposes with leadership founded upon faith.

The counsel of your insights, concerns, and affirmations concerning the above is welcome!

*Joyfully living His story with you, Pastor Bob*



## Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle met on Wednesday, December 1, 2010.

There were 13 ladies present. The following items were donated: 25 kit bags and 10 comforter tops. Completed items included: 25 baby blankets, 37 diapers, 2 comforters, 3 baby gowns, and 10 health kits.

For devotions, we sang "Joy to the World." The Scripture reading was from Luke 1:26-33, and a devotional entitled "Mary's Christmas" was read.

Our special offering totaled \$43.00. We sang "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" before adjourning.

*- Betty Cannell, Secretary*

# NEIGHBORS caring & sharing

*Neighbors meets on Tuesday mornings during the academic school year in our church fellowship hall from 9:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.  
Everyone is welcome for this time of fellowship!*

— January 4 —

**"Joy and Forgiveness Through Adversity"**

*with Terri Roberts*

— January 11 —

**Work Day at Second Street Thrift Store**

*to Support the Mission for the girls in India—shopping as well!*

— January 18 —

**Mission Work in Canada**

*with Dave and Elva Burkholder sharing their story*

— January 25 —

**Game Day (and) Hear the Story of Twin Valley Coffee Co.**

*told by Lynne Burkholder as we enjoy coffee samples*



*Conestoga's Bryce Petersheim was one of the singers in the Conestoga Christian School Ensemble who led us in worship in December.*



## ADVENTURE WITH HABITAT . . .

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on a house. We are satisfied with what we have, and do not want more. Our children are trying to buy us something for our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, but we're satisfied with where and what we are!"

We have made many new friends, such as Jim, as we participated in one of Habitat for Humanity's two week

'builds' in Dade City, Florida. Our 20-foot trailer looked so tiny beside the 40-foot RVs in this RV park/field, but we didn't mind! Some of them assured us that they had started out in small trailers first, and that we would surely graduate to a larger size later!

Dade City's Habitat program builds houses year around for poor people in this location. Dade City was recently approved as an international site for Habitat volunteers. Applicants for these volunteer-built houses are screened carefully, must give 400 hours of sweat equity (200 hours can be contributed by family members and friends).

The house is constructed after an application is approved. Applicants are required to take Habitat-provided internet courses on home care and are assigned a sponsor to partner with them as new home owners. Their low-cost mortgage is granted from Habitat funds with no interest. All the houses offered to these applicants are built by volunteers, such as us, with Habitat construction supervisors.

Each house is usually three bedrooms, two baths, laundry room, living room, kitchen, a small deck, and a sturdy fence around the property, but no basement or second floor.

We were part of Habitat's Care-A-Van program organized especially for senior citizens who come in their RV's and sign up to help build for two weeks at a time. Our group was made up of six couples and two single men, ages 61 to 80. Our days started at 8 a.m. when we met for signing in, loading supplies, a morning prayer, and a general idea of the kinds of jobs to be done that day. We ended each day at 2:30 p.m., just the right amount of work

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for us “oldsters!” Habitat provided lunch four days a week as well as all necessary tools.

For two weeks we worked on two new houses, nailing plywood to the outer walls, putting on the roof and attaching hurricane strips securing each stud to the roof with ten heavy nails. Steel rods every 6-10 feet anchored the cement foundation right up through to the roof. We joked that should a hurricane come the weight of all the nails we put into the structure would keep it from flying away. At least it would always stay in one piece, and could never fall apart! We painted, helped frame the inner walls, put in windows, calking, etc. What fun! What sore muscles!

It was very satisfying to us to hear the stories of the recipients of these houses. One boy’s grades went from D

to A after moving into their own Habitat home. One family (a single mother and her son) whose house we were working on, had two picnics on the dusty dirty front (to be) lawn.

The Habitat RV “park,” more like an open field, was in the middle of a Habitat community of new houses built by Habitat over the past five years. Children played on the streets nearby, part of the peaceful community. It was fun to see them edging closer and closer to us as we sat in a circle after a day’s work. We tried to make friends, but our time there wasn’t long enough.

We’ll never forget the sounds of Florida! All night long, several times an hour, the long freight trains would rumble by, blowing their loud whistles at every crossing. Sometimes we heard the sandhill cranes flying by, saw flocks everywhere of snow white ibises and egrets, but no alligators! We joined in with fellow workers around a campfire several times when it wasn’t too cold, hearing RV stories, and such like. Several nights we endured freezing temperatures in the 20’s.

For our two Sundays in Florida, we visited Mennonite churches. The African American church in Tampa had thirteen flags on the back bulletin board representing many of the Caribbean countries from which the members came. The other church was Immanuel Mennonite in the setting of the university city, Gainesville, Florida. In the Tampa church, for the pastoral prayer, nearly the entire congregation went front for special prayers. The pastor emphasized that we Mennonites believe in the “priesthood of believers” and

we pray for each other! At offering time, “tithers” were first invited front to present their offerings, followed by a general offering plate passed around by ushers to the rest of us.

We thoroughly enjoyed traveling to and from Florida in our small travel trailer without getting tired of each other! Every night we stayed in a different campground. While the trip was fun and hard work, we would do it again. What joy and satisfaction when we arrived back home and could walk into our very own home, just in time to celebrate Christmas with our families and our church.

- *Andy and Dot Leatherman*





## Jr. Youth Christmas Party

The Jr. Youth with Doug and Bonnie Beam as leaders enjoyed a “fun” Christmas party exchanging gifts (some funny) plus a pizza party.

Thank you,  
Doug and  
Bonnie!





## Senior Connections at Conestoga

*Conestoga Christian Schoolers surprised the seniors at our December meeting. The students even made a Christmas card for every senior!*

**Senior Connections**  
**Thursday, January 13, 2011**  
**at 12:00 noon**

Soup, sandwiches, and dessert.  
 Fellowship, games, and more!



## Child/Youth and Adult Protection Policy at Conestoga . . .

Everyone at Conestoga who is involved in some way with children and youth are requested to attend either the January 5 or 23, 2011, training meeting. Here at Conestoga, we acknowledge our God-given responsibility to protect children and youth from all forms of abuses. Awareness and commitment to the safety and spiritual nurture of our children and youth is God-commanded.

## Atlantic Coast Conference News . . .

**Shawn Petersheim** was recently appointed Conestoga's "Peace Advocate" at the request of Atlantic Coast Conference of the Mennonite Church. Shawn's role is to provide a link between Conestoga and the ACC Peace and Justice Committee as he encourages us as a congregation to reflect and act on what it means to be followers of Christ, the Prince of PEACE, as we live out Christ's call to be peacemakers. Thanks, Shawn!

## Conestoga Members At Work . . .



Larry Bush works at Shady Maple Smorgasbord! We stopped to take his picture on December 23—Midnight Madness afternoon—and he was glad that he did not need to work after 4:00 p.m. when his shift ended. Thank you, Larry, for serving God so well at your work site! Yes, we talked to some of your fellow employees, and they said they appreciate your humor and friendly smile!! - Lemar & Lois Ann Mast

# Life at Conestoga in December



Lyle Essick and Fred Peachey repairing the kitchen shelving—thank you, guys!



Above: Over 20 children enjoyed the Community Christmas party on Dec. 11.

Left: Singing Christmas carols on Dec. 19.

Right: Lemar Mast and Roger Mast setting up scaffolding to do needed repair on the foyer windows.

Below: Enjoying Christmas Brunch on Dec. 26.

