



The Signal

A publication to share information of interest to the people of the
Conception Bay South Corps and Community

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Pastoral Letter from our Corps Officers

December 2009



331 CBS Highway

PERSPECTIVE The Gift Goes On

In recent days, the Christmas Cheer Kettle has been a familiar sight from St. John's to Victoria. No doubt, each contributor has a story to tell. For some people, it's a timely tradition. Some give because they just can't help from doing so. It's the charitable thing to do.

Some want to share their wealth for the benefit of the less fortunate. Others give in gratitude. One woman remembers that, as a child, The Salvation Army provided the only Christmas she can remember. A well dressed man gave as part payment for an overcoat his father received in 1936 in Windsor, ON. It is a story of giving and receiving. Speaking of giving, are you planning any special gift exchange this year?

God gave His best gift, Jesus Christ, our Savior. In addition to our financial gifts, what will we give HIM this Christmas? Welcome His Peace and enjoy His Presence!

Major Cora Dodge



Dear Salvationist:
The people in my house send greetings to the people in your house. Our prayer is that God will be glorified in your Christmas Celebrations. Mrs. Major Green and I thank you for every kindness and your wonderful support. I have asked the Signal editor to give the space required because I want to share this true story by Rob Reid.

The brand new pastor and his wife, newly assigned to their first ministry to reopen a church in suburban Brooklyn, arrived in early October excited about their opportunities. When they saw their church, it was very run down and needed much work. They set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on Christmas Eve.

They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, etc., and on December 18th they were ahead of schedule and just about finished. On December 19th a terrible tempest - a driving rainstorm - hit the area and lasted for two days. On the 21st, the pastor went over to the church. His heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, causing a large area of plaster about 20 feet by 8 feet to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary just behind the pulpit, beginning about head high.

The pastor cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the Christmas Eve service, headed home. On the way he noticed that a local business was having a flea market type sale for charity so he stopped in. One of the items was a beautiful, handmade, ivory colour, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colors and a Cross embroidered right in the center. It was just the right size to cover up the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church.

By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus. She missed it. The pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus 45 minutes later. She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he got a ladder, hangers, etc., to put up the tablecloth as a wall tapestry. The pastor could hardly believe how beautiful it looked and it covered up the entire problem area. Then he noticed the woman walking down the center aisle. Her face was like a sheet. "Pastor," she asked, "where did you get that tablecloth?"

The pastor explained. The woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials, EBG were crocheted into it there. They were. These were the initials of the woman, and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before, in Austria.

The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just gotten the Tablecloth. The woman explained that before the war she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria. When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week. She was captured, sent to prison and never saw her husband or her home again. The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth; but she made the pastor keep it for the church. The pastor insisted on driving her home, which was the least he could do. She lived on the other side of Staten Island and was only in Brooklyn for the day for a house-cleaning job.

What a wonderful service they had on Christmas Eve. The church was almost full. The music and the spirit were great. At the end of the service, the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door and many said that they would return.

One older man, whom the pastor recognized from the neighbourhood, continued to sit in one of the pews and stare, and the pastor wondered why he wasn't leaving. The man asked him where he got the tablecloth on the front wall because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war and how could there be two tablecloths so much alike? He told the pastor how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety, and he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in a prison. He never saw his wife or his home again all the 35 years in between.

The pastor asked him if he would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island and to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier. He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door and he saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could ever imagine.

Friends, Christmas is the story of God making reunion possible. If you are away from God and the Church, let me assure you, you are invited and welcome to come back. We would love to see you in Our Father's House and know that your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Merry Christmas, to you and yours, this and every year!

In This Issue

Pastoral Letter	01
Perspective	01
Christmas Reflection	02
He giveth more grace	03
Running with the flame	03
Seasons Greetings	03
Picture This	04

Majors Wayne & Rosemary Green

Christmas Reflection from Bangkok



In 1998 Cec and Joyce Sturge retired from the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, after spending thirty years as classroom teachers, administrators and coordinators of French (Cec) and Language Arts (Joyce). Most of those years were spent with the Avalon North School Board.

Shortly after retirement, they took teaching positions with Bangkok Christian College, Thailand, working in the English immersion section. After one year, they moved to Taiwan to work for two more years at Cornel Language School in Taichung. In 2004, they signed a three year contract with the College of the North Atlantic in Qatar in the Middle East. Cec completed that contract, but about halfway through, Joyce returned home to care for her mother and sister who both passed away in 2006 and 2007 respectively. They moved to Conception Bay South recently and attend The Salvation Army. They recall their first Christmas in Bangkok.

We had been living in Bangkok for about eight months before that first Christmas; long enough to have gotten over the culture shock of those first few weeks after our arrival. Nothing prepared us for this city of ten million souls who daily poured out into the streets. Just imagine, if you can, the clanging from overhead trains, honking taxis, chugging tuk tuks (Thai 3-wheeled taxis), the thunder from thousands of motorcycles, shouting vendors, police blowing whistles, blaring music from shops, and crippled mangy dogs barking. Now throw into this mix the smells from a sea of humanity carrying on their daily lives of preparing food, eating, cleaning up; all in the midst of rotting fruit and vegetables underfoot, while baking pedestrians squirm their way through under the blazing sun sending temperatures soaring to the forties!

Bangkok is a city of extreme poverty on the one hand and absolute wealth on the other. Above everything else, it was the shock of experiencing this poverty that was so disturbing for us. Imagine again. On the sidewalk sits a young mother with a naked newborn on her lap. The mother holds out her hand and gratefully accepts the money you offer. You almost trip over a young man lying on the sidewalk, severely burned, gaping wounds and sores, cooking in the torrid heat. In front of him, he painfully pushes a small tin can. Old people, left on the fringes of society with no one to care for them, have to beg for the last few meals they will eat this side of eternity. Very young girls thrown out to fend for themselves when their 'owners' determine they are not profitable for the sex trade in the huge 'red light' district.



Homes along the Chao Prya River in Bangkok

Since we were not coming home for Christmas that year, what could we do for the traditional gift-giving? A few days before the twenty-fifth, we changed some baht (Thailand's currency) into smaller donations and stuffed our pockets. We knew the people there did not need toys or trinkets! With what we had, we set out on Christmas Eve to distribute our 100-baht notes. Thailand is a Buddhist country and Christmas is not celebrated as in the West, but as we walked along one of Bangkok's busiest streets and saw sad eyes light up, the grateful poor accepting a small gift and hearing "God loves you", we felt this was the true spirit of Christmas. We will never forget these gentle people as they placed their hands together and said "Kop kune ka" (Thank you in Thai). We felt truly blessed to have had such an opportunity to experience the feeling of giving without any possibility of a return gift. It truly felt "more blessed to give than to receive"

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The Exquisite Grand Palace

Lorraine Spracklin—He giveth more grace



Lorraine Moore was born in Clarke’s Beach but moved to St. John’s as a young child. Her family linked up with the Mundy Pond Corps (now St. John’s West) and at the age of seven, in childlike faith, Lorraine asked Jesus to be her Savior. The next year she was enrolled as a Junior Soldier and later became a Singing Company member, a Sunbeam, a Brownie,

a Girl Guide and a graduate Corps Cadet. She was also the first Cub Leader at the Corps.

When Lorraine was still a teenager, her dad became very ill and passed away just a few days before Christmas. As a result, Lorraine left school to care for younger siblings, so her mother could work to provide for her family. This would be their only source of income for the family. Thus Lorraine’s dream to become a nurse was shattered.

Eventually, she married Fred Spracklin and they became proud parents of three lovely children. The family attended church and participated in different activities and life seemed complete. However the idea of a nursing career never left her mind. Through the encouragement of family, her own persistence and hard work, at the age of 47, Lorraine became a Licensed Practical Nurse. She enjoyed caring for the sick and ministering to their families at the Health Sciences Complex and the Miller Centre.

Lorraine and her family moved to CBS about ten years ago, and she found a warm welcome back at The Salvation Army. Lorraine confesses that she had made mistakes and tried to go her own way, but she is so thankful that through it all, God never left her. She rededicated her life to Him and joyfully serves God through Women’s Ministries, 50-Plus, Community Care Ministries and gives assistance in many other activities.

For over 40 years, Lorraine has endured chronic pain due to osteoarthritis and fibromyalgia, but she witnesses that God’s grace is sufficient. She enjoys spending time with her 3 grandchildren and her desire is to live so that others will see the beauty of Jesus in her life and be encouraged to follow Him as well. She claims the promise that “God will never leave us nor forsake us”. (Hebrews 13:5). No matter what trials or difficulties we face, Lorraine is confident that God will lead us through and we can live a victorious life in Him.



Congratulations to Jonathan Hicks, son of David and Sheila Hicks of CBS, who was a participant in the 2010 Vancouver Torch Relay. A Level III Graduate student at Holy Spirit High School, Jonathan excels academically and actively participates in a number of extra-curricular school programs.

Nominated by his school, he was commended for his positive attitude and his desire to help others. A cancer survivor, Jonathan has a reason to celebrate life, and helps to make others aware of the disease and also helps with fund-raising. He finished his allotted distance on the CBS highway, not too far from his home. Family and friends gathered to share in the victory, as the flame from the Olympic torch waved in the breeze.

GREETINGS FROM THE TOWN OF CONCEPTION BAY SOUTH



I am delighted to bring Christmas Greetings to you on behalf of the residents of the Town of Conception Bay South. Christmas is a time to spend with family and friends to reflect on the past year and to rejoice in all its beauty.

We would like to extend Best Wishes for a Joyous Christmas and a wonderful and prosperous New Year.

Woodrow French, JP CRSP
Mayor
Conception Bay South



CBS Senior Band with Bandmaster Steve Barrett



Mr. Fred Wicks, a faithful volunteer for the Salvation Army



(L to R) Major Rosemary Green, Major Wayne Green, Abby French (daughter of MHA Terry French_ MHA Terry French, CBS Mayor Woodrow French, Sobey's Store Manager, Terry Roche; and Zita Butler



The Salvation Army Flag (carried by Nick Dobson) on parade on November 11, 2009.



Great deals like these made the Home League Sale a huge success.



Happy Birthday



Mrs. Lydia Hiscock, was 94 on November 25, 2009.



Mrs. Evelyn Howlett was 84 on October 27, 2009.

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