

Twædsmuir Tidings

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Perspective from the Pulpit

"Greatest Story Ever Told"

There are two ways of looking at the Gospel accounts of the birth of Jesus. One is to see the Gospel accounts of the Nativity in Matthew and Luke and John as something like newspaper articles which tell the stories of Jesus' birth as a series of factual happenings. The other approach is to understand the Nativity accounts as stories told to convey a message with a very clear message. This is how I believe the Gospel stories of Jesus birth are to be understood.

Each character in the Nativity stories has a definite meaning. The Wise Men who journeyed from the East were most likely scholars from Babylon. Babylon was one of the ancient seats of wisdom and knowledge. To say that Babylonian scholars came to worship the Christ Child is to say that all the great truth of humanity is caught up in this Jesus. He is not just a child, affirms the Gospel of Matthew and John, but is the very Way, Truth and Life. As well, Babylon was the ancient empire that took 6th century B.C. Israel captive. For Wise Men from Babylon to kneel before the Christ Child is to say that the captors of Babylon have become the humble servants of the Jewish Messiah. What an amazing reversal of position.

The coming of the shepherds of Bethlehem to the manger scene was filled with significance. These were not just any shepherds. These are the shepherds who cared for the sheep, which would be sacrificed in the Jerusalem (only 6 miles from Bethlehem) for the atonement of the People of Israel at the Passover. They were a symbol of the sacrificial Lamb of God (John 1), Jesus, who was come in a Bethlehem manger to take away the sins of all the Human Race.

The presence of the Heavenly Host of angels was included in the story not just for the sake of music lovers.

The angel chorus tells us that the birth of this child in a manger has something to do with bringing heaven and earth together as one. What happens in that Bethlehem manger has an impact on earth and in heaven. It was the beginning of what Jesus would later declare in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven".

The Nativity Story as such is also something of a sermon to all who have heard it over the centuries. It is a challenge to us to be like the Wise Men, surrendering the best of our intellect to him who is all truth and wisdom. It is a challenge for us who need a saviour to realize that he has already come. We need to look no further than the Bethlehem manger scene to find our source of the help we so desperately need. It is a challenge to our all too earthly fixation to realize that there is more to life than we see around us here on earth. There is an eternal heavenly reality on which we are invited to pin our eternal hopes and dream.

This is truly "The Greatest Story Ever Told"! Take it to heart this Christmas Season. Take it to your hearts this Christmas Season, but even more so take it to heart for all eternity.

Blessings,
 Harvey Self

Emmanuel - Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel.



Christmas Food Drive

The care committee will be having their annual Toy and Food drive on Saturday, December 15th. Please bring a new unwrapped toy or a non-perishable food item. These will be sent to the Salvation Army for distribution at Christmas.



Christmas VBS

The Mission committee are arranging a **Kid's Christmas Shop and Parent's Day Out** on Saturday, December 1st from 9 am to 3 pm.

Parents, do you need a day out to get ready for Christmas or to do a little shopping? Bring your children to our VBS for some fun while they learn what it means to share the real joy of Christmas through a Christmas project for the *Choices Youth Shelter*.

A Volunteer Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 27th at 7:00 pm at the church.

Volunteer Meeting Tuesday, November 27th at 7:00

Lynn Ritchie from the Board has been in contact with groups to advise on the new Legislation that has been accepted by the Provincial Government. This involves tips for serving people with disabilities. Lynn has prepared a booklet for our use. Please contact her for a copy.

With her graduation from Tyndall College as a Reverend, **Linda Stover** has finished her work with the Riverforce Youth Group. We will be considering how we wish to proceed with our youth program in the near future and will be sending out a survey to families with children to get their feedback.

You may have noticed that the projector and screen is now being used in the service. This is assist new people and those with difficulties reading the Hymn Books. We are projecting the four responses used during the service – "Holy, Holy, Holy", "Glory be to the Father", the Doxology and the Blessing at the close of service. Please let us know your thoughts.

At this time, we are working on the budget and planning for the New Year. If you have information you think would be helpful, we would like to hear from you. The ideas you have on the direction you would like to see our church take in the future would help us to plan. Please consider this.

How the world changes! We have a new insurance carrier and been advised by them that, based on new legislation, to be completely covered with our insurance, all member of the Session and Board as well as those working with children and anyone visiting the congregation must have a police check completed. Session and Board already have their forms. You will be notified if it will be necessary for you to participate.

We will be the recipients of a defibulator machine which has been donated through the OPP and the family of Corporal Matthew McCully. Another item that we now must comply with are having persons with up-to-date First Aid training available at every service. If you have had qualified training, please give your name into the office.



Do you remember seeing this at the Santa Claus Parade last year? This year, the Bethel Church constructed to celebrate our 175th Anniversary will be at the Kay Cee Gardens during the annual Christmas in the Park, sponsored by the Optimist Club, starting on December 7th and ending on January 1st, 2013.

The WMS sent over 200 Pneumonia prevention vest to the Bhil people in India. This is the last year that the WMS will be collecting Pneumonia Prevention vests, as a program to have the women of Malawi knit the pneumonia vests has been started.

At this time, we are looking into different knitting programs that are available. These include prayer shawls, lap-blankets for hospitals or nursing homes, hats, scarves and items for native children. We will inform you of these as they come to our notice. A big "thank you" to everyone who contributed to this program.

Once again, we will be collecting for Evangel Hall, the Presbyterian Mission that gives aid to street people in Toronto. In particular, they are desperate for warm mitts, scarves and socks – which can be gently used. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

Recently, a speaker from Youth for Christ came to one of our meetings to tell us that there is a need for clothing and items for the youth living on the streets in Orangeville. We have put a basket in the foyer to receive your donations. Please do what you can to help others.



Music Ministry

On November 18th, the congregation enjoyed a Pancake Brunch after the service. We would like to thank the choir for all their work and they would like to thank those who attended.

The Choir will present the Cantata "**God's Gift to the World**" at the December 15th morning service.

They will also present the cantata at both The Lord Dufferin and the Avalon Retirement Centres in December.





VBS

We asked Wil and Marie to talk to us about this summer's VBS experience:

Look up in the Sky! It's a plane and a chipmunk is driving it! Huh? Well, "nothing is impossible with GOD" and that was the motto of the 2012 VBS, "SKY".

For one week in August, our church was decorated with everything sky related, including planes, hot air balloons, and plenty of clouds. We wanted to make sure that all of our Aviation students (participants) really got into believing that the Sky meant no limits.

Each day was a different story with a different focus on what God means to us - from Paul being bit by a snake to Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, we showed how God is with us no matter what. With all kinds of interactive stories, skits, games and activities everyday, our intention was to make learning about God as fun as it could get.

Another important part of the SKY VBS was raising awareness of missions to the participants and their families and this year we set about raising money for Mosquito nets in Mali. We the help of the church we were able to raise over \$224 for this cause - that was enough for 37 mosquito nets!!

We finished the week with a grand finale where all of our aviators completed their training and received their very own aviator caps and celebrated with a fun BBQ.

Marie and I want to thank everyone for their prayers and support for the VBS because we just can't do this without all the help we get every year. We want to especially thank everyone who volunteered for the VBS week and the WMS who do a great job of supplying the snacks every year.

Thank you everyone!!!

Wil and Marie



Congratulations!

As you know, for the last five years, Linda Stover has been guiding the young people of Tweedsmuir as the Youth Leader.

Linda has now graduated from Tyndall College as a minister. Not only did she do well at Tyndall, Linda was the valedictorian of her graduating class!

We wish Linda all the best in her future endeavours.



Choices ... An Update

Mary Vervoort, Executive Director of Choices recently visited Tweedsmuir to thank our members for all of the wonderful gifts of love and prayer over the past year. She also told us how the young people of Choices truly appreciate the homemade treats, birthday cakes, meals, donations of milk, clothing, Christmas Gifts, money etc. that our members have lovingly provided.

Many people from Tweedsmuir have provided support to Choices including some of our handy people, who have gone over to do repairs and odd jobs around the house; the Sunday School children who have cooked dinners; the Ladies Fellowship have donated hats, mitts, socks; and the Choir, who have provided donations. It is so heart warming to see how so many of our members have gotten involved in so many different ways. The staff and residents at Choices really are grateful for this!

Mary also shared with us the great new happenings at Choices such as the purchase of their new home which will provide affordable transitional housing for young people, and that Choices was the recipient of the prestigious Ruth Atkinson Hindmarch Award.

If you would like more information or would like to join our team of bakers and handymen, (experience not necessary, all you need is love!) call or e-mail Debbie at 519-942-1653 or email her at dhuntca@sympatico.ca.

Thank you!





CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH

JESUS
MANGER
ANGEL
MARY
JOSEPH
STAR
SHEEP

Provided by Wil McGilvery



Tweedsmuir Ladies Fellowship Group

The Ladies Fellowship Group invites all women of the church to a Christmas Dinner and program on Tuesday, December 11th. Please call Phyllis Roberson at 519-941-4181 if you would like to attend. Cost: \$17.⁰⁰. If you are able, please bring a small donation for Choices Youth Shelter.

We thank everyone who participated at the Christmas Bazaar to make it a success.

Each year at this time, the Fellowship Group make donations to Charities in our area. One of these is Sleeping Children around the World. The picture below was sent to us to show the children who receive this gift.



Merry Christmas at the Bazaar!



People in the News!

Brandon McGilvery will be leaving in early 2013 to go to Australia to continue his work with Youth with a Mission. We wish him the best of luck as he continues doing God's work.

Jayne Self – has published her second Seaglass mystery novel, "Death of a Highland Heavyweight" and was one of the featured authors at BookLore on November 17th with other members of the Headwater Writers Guild. Jayne's books are published by Harbourlight Books, whose mandate is to uphold the Christian truths spelled out succinctly in the Apostles' Creed, proclaiming without shame that Christ suffered, died and was resurrected in order that those who believe might have eternal life.

Rev. Harvey Self – who was a recipient of a Diamond Jubilee medal, which honours Her Majesty and recognizes the service of Canadians from all walks of life and backgrounds who have made significant contributions to their communities. Harvey, who was nominated by David Tilson, was one of only 30 people who were awarded for Dufferin/Caledon. Congratulations.

Happy 60th Anniversary!

This has been a special year for their 60th Anniversary:

Sandy and Helen Robson
Dr. Jim and Grace McBurney
Cecil and June Smith



Congratulations!

Calendar

December

- 1st – Christmas VBS & Parent's Day out
- 2nd – Sacrament of Communion
- First Sunday of Advent - Hope**
- 9th – **Second Sunday of Advent – Peace**
- "Messy Christmas" – an event for children and their parents at Wil and Marie McGilvery's house
- 15th – Saturday morning – Toy and Food Drive collection for the Salvation Army
- Progressive Dinner for Jr High/Sr High 7-10 pm
- 16th – Choir presentation, "God's Gift of Love"
- Third Sunday of Advent – Joy**
- 23rd – Christmas Sunday
- Forth Sunday of Advent - Love**
- 24th – Christmas Eve service 7 pm
- 30th – Special service of Carols and readings

January

- 5th – Family Film Night; "Soul Surfer"
- 21st – Robbie Burns Supper

March

- Pasta Dinner date to be announced