



FORT MASSEY STAR

Summer

A Word from our Pastor...

2010

Our summer edition of our newsletter is as much for our visitors as it is for our parishioners. So, welcome to Fort Massey *by-the-sea*.

We are a diverse group of people. What we have in common is that we choose to go to church in the city, in a powerful building, and to experience United Church worship in the context of this diversity.

We enjoy thinking outside the box, exploring innovative liturgy, progressive ideas and topical issues. We work hard at having a multi-cultural flavour to the service from time to time, singing in French, Chinese, Zulu (South African).

Above all else, we are an inclusive church. This means that all are welcome to attend, and that all are welcome to receive communion no matter what church or faith (if any) they are from. Different opinions and varying faith journeys are the strength of our church.

Some choose to come regularly to our church. Others come occasionally, and still others don't attend yet see themselves as friends of Fort Massey. Still others experience us virtually online (www.fortmasseychurch.com) all around the world. This may be because they love the building, appreciate its pres-

ence in the city or want to support the ministry of Fort Massey. We hope you experience the warmth and openness of our congregation while visiting with us.

Wishing you a summer of Sabbath time,

Rev. Trent

T. D. Cleveland-Thompson
(Minister)

Our Sunday Worship is @ 10:30 am. A staffed Church School & Nursery are provided from mid-September to mid-June. Our Youth meet several times throughout the school year with our Student Minister.

A brief history...

From the *Halifax Reporter*, 1871: "The interior ... has almost a cathedral appearance. In form and style there is nothing like it in Nova Scotia."

From the *Canadian Illustrated News*, 1873: "...one of the most handsome specimens of Gothic architecture to be met in the Dominion."

The Name: The unique name of Fort Massey Church recalls the early years of the garrison town when there was a blockhouse on the site. The fort was named after General Eyre Massey who was com-

mander-in-chief at Halifax from 1776-1780.

The Building: Opened in 1871, the Scottish architect, David Stirling, made skilful use of Gothic designs with more than a dozen window shapes and sizes and numerous versions of decorative window tracery. Inside there are richly-carved ceiling braces supported by hammer-beams, ornamental kings' heads and bands of trefoil arches punctuated by protruding, small winged creatures which gaze down into the nave below.

The interior was refurbished in 1993, and work on the exterior began in 2001. The church hall and gymnasium were added in 1898.

The three manual Casavant organ, installed in 1913, was played by television's first lady of the organ, Diane Bish (Joy of Music) in 1997 to a f u l l h o u s e !

The People: Fort Massey, along with many other Presbyterian churches, joined the Methodists and Congregationalists in the union of The United Church of Canada in 1925. Over the years many notable Haligonians worshipped at Fort Massey including Lucy Maud Montgomery (author of *Anne of Green Gables*) and Anna Leonowens (Governess to

Leonowens (Governess to the King of Siam's children) worshipped at Fort Massey while living in Halifax. Today, the congregation consists of neighbouring residents as well as people from throughout the Halifax Regional Municipality.



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A Letter to/from Malawi

Dear Martha,

I am writing on behalf of Fort Massey United Church in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada to express how deeply saddened we were to learn of your husband Simunji's untimely death. We were blessed to be introduced to Simunji through Erika Burger and to subsequently meet him and his colleagues from the Kachere Rehabilitation Centre when they visited Canada a few years ago.

Prior to that visit and ever since, Fort Massey has been donating money each year to the Kachere Centre to provide meals for the patients for the four days of Easter.

Fort Massey's continued support of Kachere has largely been because of Simunji and how people felt about him and the good work he was doing in Malawi. I personally had the privilege of getting to know

Simunji through frequent emails related to this project and felt him to be a man of impeccable integrity, goodness and grace. While his death is sadly premature the impact of his short life on the world was truly significant and will long be felt.

While we can't begin to imagine the depth of your grief, please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and your children and that we hope you will draw some comfort from the knowledge that the legacy of all that was precious in him will live on in you and your children.

With deepest sympathy,

Leslie

* * * * *

Dear Leslie,

Thank you so much. I have received the money gram. My children and I are touched by your kindness. Please convey our gratitude to members of your Church.

Me and the kids are getting on thanks to good folks like you. One thing I must mention is that the school term ended on 11th April and we'll be going into the third term on 20th April. I am mentioning this because I feel your financial assistance could not have come at a better time. I will use it to buy school provisions for the kids. My son has been complaining his school shoes are torn. I know he'll be happy when I tell him I will use some money from his Dad's friends from Canada for new shoes.

Thank you to all for thinking about us. I do not take such generosity for granted. May the good Lord continue blessing you all.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Martha



Family Traditions

We, at Fort Massey, are aware that William (Bill) S. Fong has faithfully acted as the Church's volunteer treasurer for over 35 years. He finally decided to resign this spring. However, his faithfulness has clearly started a tradition in his family, as we recently learned that one of his grandsons (10-year old Jamie) together with a friend (Nigel), held a fundraiser at their school to raise money for the Canadian Cancer Society.

As his mother, Jennifer, says the idea was entirely conceived, planned and executed by the two boys with the support of their wonderful school and several friends and families who donated stuffed toys and books.

Over two days, the boys raised over \$1600, well above their hoped-for goal.

The boys will make a presentation to the Canadian Cancer Society next week complete with jumbo-sized cheque.

Needless to say, his parents are very proud of Jamie for his leadership and initiative. He is carrying on his family tradition of doing things for others and supporting his community!!

Submitted by members of Jennifer's 'Down Home Support Team'



Howard Parker, Fort Massey member and presently a resident of the Camp Hill Veteran's Unit (where photo was taken) receiving the United Church Men's Distinguished Service Award. Included in the photo are his wife, Sarah, Rev. Trent, and Bill Fong, along with members of the United Church Men of Halifax Presbytery. Congratulations Howard!



The Parable of the Hummingbird in the Church

We gathered for worship in Robertson United Church in Nakusp, B.C. at the end of our Presbytery meeting. It was a warm day and the doors were open. The president of BC conference had been our guest during the meeting, and today he was also the guest preacher. About halfway during the sermon, someone noticed that a hummingbird had flown into the church. It was flying around the roof, and after awhile it seemed that it was getting desperate to get out of the church, though it did not seem to know what to do. And to be honest, nor did we.

The roof was too high for us to reach it. We watched this poor bird fly around and around hoping that eventually it would find its way out of one of the doors. Sometimes it would get close, but somehow didn't fully understand the path to freedom, and would then fly back into the church.

Now during the Presbytery meeting itself, we had explored a passage from Luke, in which Jesus had challenged his listeners over their ability to understand the signs of coming weather revealed by the sky, but were unable to understand the signs of the coming Kingdom of God.

We also explored the idea of the way finders, of people so in tune with the environment around them, if lost they would visualize the destination they were aiming for, and through this process would somehow reveal a glimpse or path that would allow them to find their desti-

nation. So it was hoped that if we as a congregation would engage in this process through prayer, the hummingbird would eventually find its way out of the church.

The hummingbird continued to fly around, and so it was decided that we would continue with the worship service. At one point, the president mentioned the hummingbird as being a symbol of the Holy Spirit in our midst. Now I have to confess, at this point I was concerned, what would happen if this hummingbird, now deemed to be a symbol of the Holy Spirit, became too exhausted in its flying around? Especially during a meeting when one of the challenges we had discussed was the possible death of the church. Was there a possibility that the hummingbird might actually die, exhausted by its exertions as a result of being trapped in the church? Probably not, yet, I couldn't get it out of my mind, but I still didn't know what to do.

Then someone from the front got some red flowers and started to walk around, hoping to attract the hummingbird. I offered to help, as I was taller. As I took hold of the flowers I noticed that they were plastic, and wondered how this would work, but I was told that the flowers were covered in sugar water! A couple of us hung around at the back of the church watching the hummingbird still flying around. Initially it didn't seem to even notice the flowers. I took the time to grab a cup, fill it with sugar cubes,

crunch them up in a little water, and so started to walk around with a cup of sugar-water holding it as high as I could. Someone else remembered that they had bird-calls on their iPhone, and started to play them.

Soon we noticed that the hummingbird seemed to be getting tired, and maybe it was the combination of the promise of nourishment and company, because at this point the hummingbird was no longer flying all around the church, but instead now it was remained fluttering around the back corner of the church, and here there was an open door! As it fluttered around this back corner, there was also someone muttering under his breath, come on you little bugger, maybe this tone was having the desired effect of keeping it there!

And then salvation was at hand, someone from the congregation had attached red plastic flowers to a broom, and we approached the hummingbird. I helped this person to hold the broom up. The bird noticed these flowers and landed itself onto them. We lowered it, but too quickly, it fluttered away, but it still remained in this corner. So we tried again, learning from our mistakes, and this time it landed, and was gently lowered, and in a few moments off it flew, to share its beauty with others, sent on its way by applause of the congregation!

So was the hummingbird the Holy Spirit? Well with reflection, I believe it was. It is the Holy spirit challenging us to embrace the future of

the church, a future where no longer will the Spirit be trapped by the walls of the church, but will fly free touching all of humanity and creation. And the Holy Spirit is challenging us to embrace the reality that we are an active part of the plan in which the Holy Spirit will be free amongst us. As the Holy Spirit fluttered amongst us, we prayed that it would find its way out. But as nothing seemed to happen, we continued with our worship service hoping that everything would work itself out. But then someone decided to act, and she inspired others to join her in this quest to set the Holy Spirit free. In time, we were able to offer the beginning of a path for the Holy Spirit to emerge in the outside world beyond the church.

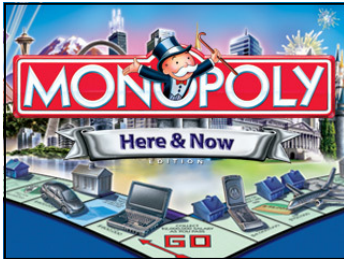
Through the combination of modern technology and a cup of sugar water we created a moment for the Holy Spirit to be made ready to proclaim the call of the God to share with all the Good News of Christ Jesus. And this was finally accomplished with some practical help from members of the church who actually understood what needed to be done! I have certainly been thinking about these events in the last few days, wondering were we lucky enough to share in a sign, and if so, are we ready for what is expected of us, as part of the unfolding of the Commonwealth of God?

By Rev'd Sandy Ferguson

(Sandy is a former member of Fort Massey, presently moving from BC to Edmonton Presbytery.)



Interesting Bit of History



You'll never look at the game the same way again!

Starting in 1941, an increasing number of British Airmen found themselves as the involuntary guests of the Third Reich, and the Crown was casting about for ways and means to facilitate their escape.

Now obviously, one of the most helpful aids to that end is a useful and accurate map, one showing not only where stuff was, but also showing the locations of 'safe houses' where a POW on-the-lam could go for food and shelter.

Paper maps had some real drawbacks - they make a lot of noise when you open and fold them, they wear out rapidly, and if they get wet, they turn into mush.

Someone in MI-5 (similar to America's OSS) got the idea of printing escape maps on silk. It's durable, can be crunched-up into tiny wads, and unfolded as many times as needed, and makes no noise whatsoever.

At that time, there was only one manufacturer in Great Britain that had perfected the technology of printing on silk, and that was John Waddington, Ltd. When approached by the govern-

ment, the firm was only too happy to do its bit for the war effort.

By pure coincidence, Waddington was also the U.K. Licensee for the popular American board game, Monopoly. As it happened, 'games and pastimes' was a category of item qualified for insertion into 'CARE packages', dispatched by the International Red Cross to prisoners of war.

Under the strictest of secrecy, in a securely guarded and inaccessible old workshop on the grounds of Waddington's, a group of sworn-to-secrecy employees began mass-producing escape maps, keyed to each region of Germany or Italy where Allied POW camps were regional systems).

When processed, these maps could be folded into such tiny dots that they would actually fit inside a Monopoly playing piece.

As long as they were at it, the clever workmen at Waddington's also managed to add: 1. A playing token, containing a small magnetic compass 2. A two-part metal file that could easily be screwed together and 3. Useful amounts of genuine high-denomination German, Italian, and French currency, hidden within the piles of Monopoly money!

British and American air crews were advised, before taking off on their first mission, how to identify a 'rigged' Monopoly set -- by means of a tiny red dot, one cleverly rigged to look like an ordinary printing glitch, located in the corner of the Free Park-

ing square. Of the estimated 35,000 Allied POWs who successfully escaped, an estimated one-third were aided in their flight by the rigged Monopoly sets. Everyone who did so was sworn to secrecy indefinitely, since the British Government might want to use this highly successful ruse in still another, future war.

The story wasn't declassified until 2007, when the surviving craftsmen from Waddington's, as well as the firm itself, were finally honoured in a public ceremony.

It's always nice when you can play that 'Get Out of Jail Free' card! I realize most of you are (probably) too young to have any personal connection to WWII (Dec. '41 to Aug. '45), but this is still interesting.

*Submitted by
Ruth MacKenzie*

*"It is the month of
June.
The month of
leaves and roses.
When pleasant
sights salute the
eyes,
And pleasant
scents the noses."
~Nathaniel Parker Willis*

Non-Zen Observations

1. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a broken fan belt or a leaky tire.
2. It's always darkest before dawn, so if you're going to steal your neighbour's newspaper, that's the time to do it.
3. If you think nobody cares if you're alive, try missing a couple of car payments.
4. Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.
5. If at first you don't succeed, Skydiving is not for you.
6. The quickest way to double your money is to fold it in half and put it back in your pocket.
7. Generally speaking, you aren't learning much when your lips are moving.
8. Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.
9. Never, under any circumstances, take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night!
10. A closed mouth gathers no foot.



My Nanny's Apron

As I sit here thinking of something to write for this issue of 'The Star,' I have a heavy heart as I am thinking of my stepsons, Hari (who has lived with Alan and I since 2003) and Chuck who are attending the funeral of their grandmother in Owen Sound, Ontario this afternoon. (June 4, 2010)

It was just over a month ago that Alan, Hari, Hari's girlfriend (Solange) and I made the long drive to Ontario for the funeral of Alan's beloved mother. It is hard to lose a grandmother and for my dear stepsons having lost both grandmothers in such a short period of time, makes it even more difficult.

I vividly remember my Nanny MacIntosh, as we lived with her, and she was an amazing woman. She was a school teacher and helped me with my studies. She made all my dresses for me, knitted our socks and mitts, despite having extremely poor eyesight. She was just a wonderful woman. She was the only grandmother I knew, as my mom's mother left mom and her five siblings when mom was 8 years old and they never heard from her again. That abandonment is still painful for my mother, today, at the age of 85 years. It may be because of that loss, that my mom is the best mother and grandmother ever!!

I will become a grandmother in early July, as my son Dane and his partner, Shandelle are expecting a baby boy. I am beyond excited about becoming a grandmother, for the first time. So with my mind focused on grandmothers, I got

to thinking about Nanny and how she ALWAYS wore dresses and she always wore an apron over her dress as she went about her day.

I don't think our children know what an apron is! The main use of my Nanny's apron was to protect the dress underneath, because she only had a few, it was easier to wash aprons than dresses and they used less material, but along with that, it served as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven. It was also wonderful for drying my tears.

From the chicken coop, her apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for a shy grandchild. And when the weather was cold Nanny wrapped it around her arms.

Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove. Kindling wood was brought into the kitchen in that apron.

From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls. In the fall, her apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.

When unexpected company drove up the lane, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.

When dinner was ready, Nanny walked out onto the porch, waved her apron, and

the men folk knew it was time to come in from the fields to dinner.

It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that



'old-time apron' that served so many purposes.

People would go crazy, today, thinking of how many germs were on that apron. However, I never caught anything from Nanny's apron, but LOVE!

The above photo was taken at Alan's mom cottage at Sauble Beach, Ontario, when we were visiting her in 2003. Alan had been helping his mom cook and was wearing one of her aprons. (By the way, he is wearing shorts under the apron!) He was also sporting a cast on a broken leg. His mother thought he really liked the apron, so she made him take it home with him. At the time we all had a great chuckle over that. But now that his mom is no longer with us, that apron holds very special memories for Alan and he treasures it.

By Holly MacIntosh

P.S. Congratulations to all those graduating this month.

Recipe for a Happy Home

In a large bowl of love mix:

2 cups of faith

2 cups of patience

1 cup sympathy (more if needed)

Blend in:

1 cup of forgiveness

2 tsp of kindness

1/2 cup of courage

Pour into a heart of joy, sprinkle with harmony. Top with a spread of understanding, sweeten with respect and bake in an oven of trust. Serve with a tender smile.

Recipe for a Happy Marriage

Love
Acceptance
Respect
Communication
Patience
Kindness
Gentleness
Self-Control
Commitment
Faith
Hope
Truth

Mix together, then thoroughly sift in daily life. Strain out jealousy, arrogance, selfishness, provocation and accounting of wrongs. Bake in the trials and tribulations of life for 50 years, then celebrate when golden.

