



Fort Massey Star

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SUMMER 2012

From the Desk of the Pastor...

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The Hebrew book of Ecclesiastes contains those well-known sayings: There is a time to weep and a time to laugh; there is a time to work and a time to play. And he writes, I know that there is nothing good for anyone except to be happy and live the best life he can while he is alive. Yet few of us spend much time really thinking about how to be happy.

It's summer! The list of activities which some people enjoy is endless. I remember when the game Trivial Pursuit was the rage and listening to a sermon where the minister proclaimed "When I visit friends and that blasted blue box comes out, I cringe - I do not enjoy trivia!" Yet for many people it was fun learning new tidbits of knowledge.

If you spend a lot of time alone often you enjoy time around people. But if you spend your day surrounded by others, often you enjoy the quiet moments. Yet some of us

have done a good many things over the years for leisure which we actually do not find relaxing at all. It falls more in the category of work, or education, or bored out of your mind or stressed out. Some of this is inevitable. We live in relationships and so we accommodate other people. Sometimes we'll try something new for them, and occasionally we will even find new things that will actually make us happy. Leisure is essential for our well-being. We need to take time for ourselves and do things we enjoy, not what we wish we enjoyed.

This summer make a mental list of what actually is fun to you. It could be Gaelic classes, yoga, or a good murder mystery. Be honest and ask yourself how much time do you spend doing anything that is fun. Having fun is not just for the young.

We adults do not have to leave that behind. How do we maintain a balance in our living, a sense of proportion to life, if we

never enjoy anything?

Gretchen Rubin, writer of "The Happiness Project," who lives in New York, remembers seeing a poster in the subway with a photo of a Chinese food take-out container on top of a couple of videos - the caption read 'If this is how you spend your time why are you living in New York?' It made her feel guilty. She could be going to the ballet, to off-Broadway plays, shopping, eating in exotic restaurants, yet she rarely does any of that. Often we feel the same. In Halifax we could be eating authentic Korean food, yet we actually prefer meat loaf and rice pudding or strawberry shortcake.

It is summer! It is a time to reflect on what it means to enjoy yourself and what it means to be happy, living the best life we can while we are alive.

Be happy!

Rev. Trent



News from the UCW

On June 3rd the UCW conducted the church service while Trent was attending Maritime Conference in Sackville, NB. This was the 50th anniversary of the UCW organization.

50th Anniversary Project: The National UCW Executive is supporting the *Morogord Women's*

en's Training Centre in Tanzania. United Church Women, with your help, are raising \$50,000 for this maternal health improvement project in Tanzania. The program will train 25 women at each course, covering travel, accommodation, food, a medical kit and a solar LED lighting system

for each participant, as well as the cost of instructors and materials. You are invited to contribute a toonie towards this cause, leaving your donation in a separate envelope marking it "*Morogord Women's Training Centre in Tanzania*," giving it to either Irene Parks, UCW President or Jean Brown,

UCW Treasurer or placing it in the offering plate. Thank You!

Submitted by Irene Parks



Celebrating Margaret Tse Perron's Musical Talent

A year ago, Margaret Tse Perron was asked by her cousin, Daniel, Chair of the University Council, University of Macao, to write a melody for a poem he had written (in Chinese) as an ode to the university. With some help on the harmony from her husband Pierre,

the director of music at Fort Massey, she developed and submitted a choral arrangement.

This spring Margaret received an email from the President of the university accepting the music as the official anthem of the university, along

with an invitation to attend the June 18th Convocation in Macao - all expenses paid!

As Margaret was born in Macao they will also visit her sisters, nieces and nephews in Hong Kong.

They have learned that

Margaret's nephew, Jackson Leung, a professor of piano at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio has written an orchestration and a choir and orchestra will play it on June 18th.

A true family affair and what a well deserved honour for Margaret!

Thank You

FONG - The family of the late Bill Fong would like to express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all who made memorial donations in Bill's memory, sent food, sympathy cards and for all the phone calls.

Also a special thank you to Rev. Trent Cleveland-Thompson from Fort Massey United Church and Rev. Kenn Stright from the Presbyterian Church of Saint David for the beautiful memorial service, and as well as,

the Fort Massey Choir and the choir from Saint David's.

Your kindness will always be remembered.

Brenda, Peter and Family



Notable Achievements

Isabel Robertson, a lady with strong Cape Breton roots, recently received recognition for her service as a nursing sister during the Second World War.

On May 31st, 2012 she was presented with the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal by the Commanding officer of the Canadian Forces Hospital, Halifax. Ten of her friends from Fort Massey had the honour of attending this ceremony and one, Colleen Estabrooks, was able to take these photographs.

Isabel still has and treasures photographs of

the 'hospital trains' on which she served!

One of her granddaughters, Emma, is following in her footsteps by also becoming a nurse and graduating as such from St. FX this Spring!



An Old Farmer's Advice

*Your fences need to be horse-high, pig-tight, and bull-strong.

*Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.

*A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.

*Words that soak into your ears are whispered, not yelled.

*Forgive your enemies. It messes up their heads.

*It don't take a very big person to carry a grudge.

*You cannot unsay a cruel word.

*Every path has a few puddles.

*When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.

*The best sermons are lived, not preached.

*Don't judge folks by their relatives.

*Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.

*Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't both-

erin' you none.

*The biggest troublemaker you'll ever have to deal with watches you from the mirror every mornin'.

*Always drink upstream from the herd.

*Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier than puttin' it back in.

*Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly.

*Submitted by
Holly MacIntosh*



A Letter to God



Our 14 year old dog, Abbey, died last month. The day after she died, my 4 year old daughter, Meredith, was crying and talking about how much she missed Abbey. She asked if we could write a letter to God so that when Abbey got to heaven, God would recognize her. She dictated and I wrote:

Dear God,

Will you please take special care of our dog, Abbey? She died yesterday and is in heaven. We miss her very much. We are happy that you let us have her as our dog even though she got sick. I hope that you will play with her. She liked to play with a ball and swim before she got sick. I am sending some pictures of her so that when you see her in heaven you will know she is our special dog. But I really do miss her.

*Love,
Meredith Claire*

PS: Mommy wrote this for me after I told her the words.

We put the letter in an envelope with two pictures of Abbey, and addressed it to God in Heaven. We put our return address on it. Then Meredith stuck some stamps on the front (because, as she said, it may take lots of stamps to get a letter all the way to heaven) and that afternoon I let her drop it into the letter box at the post office. For a few days, she would ask if God had gotten the letter yet. I told her that I thought He had. Yesterday, we took the kids to Peoria to a natural history museum. When we got back, there was a package wrapped in gold paper on our front porch. Curious, I went to look at it. It had a white card on the front that said "To: Meredith" in an unfamiliar handwriting. Meredith took it in and opened it. Inside was a book by Mr. Rogers, 'When a Pet Dies'. Taped to the inside front cover was the letter we had written to God, in its opened envelope. On the opposite page, one of the pictures of Abbey was taped under the words "For Meredith." We turned to the back cover and there was the other picture of Abbey and this handwritten note on pink paper:

Dear Meredith,

I know that you will be happy to know that Abbey arrived safely and soundly in Heaven! Having the pictures you sent to me was such a big help. I recognized Abbey right away. You know, Meredith, she isn't sick anymore. Her spirit is here with me - just like she stays in your heart - young and running and playing. Abbey loved being your dog, you know. Since we don't need our bodies in heaven, I don't have any pockets - so I can't keep your beautiful letter. I am sending it to you with the pictures so that you will have this book to keep and remember Abbey. One of my angels is taking care of this for me. I hope the little book helps. Thank you for the beautiful letter. Thank your mother for sending it. What a wonderful mother you have! I picked her especially for you. I send my blessings every day and remember that I love you very much. By the way, I am in heaven and wherever I am, there is love.

*I love you Meredith,
God*

PS: My special angel wrote this for me after I told her the words.

As a parent, a professional, and a pet lover, this is one of the kindest things that I've ever experienced. I have no way of knowing who sent it, but there is some very kind soul working in the dead letter office!

Written by Joy Scrivener, Meredith's mother, San Antonio, Texas.

Submitted by Ruth MacKenzie