

The Church Mouse

The Newsletter of Oxford Presbytery in the United Church of Canada

January 09, 2008

Volume 27 Issue 1

To Oxford Presbytery Friends:

On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit...and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:2.

John doesn't tell us what the dozen kinds of fruit are, not exactly what their various leaves will heal and how. His tree, fruit, leaves are symbolic. In several fields across rural Mozambique, CCM is growing much more than a dozen varieties of plants which, whatever their symbolic value, have actual, physical healing properties, for individuals in this nation of Mozambique.

These all are crucial in the fight against AIDS and associated diseases and infections. Here in a country where the government's budget for pharmaceuticals is only \$1 per person per year, and 1 in 6 adults is HIV+, these plants are crucial - locally growable, inexpensive and sustainable. Families of subsistence farmers struggle in the best of times and when someone in the family is weak with AIDS, his or her labour is lost, and the family rapidly becomes even more vulnerable and destitute.

Many of these plants you might recognize—aloe vera, garlic, periwinkle, peanut, passion flower, artemisia, marigold and many others. A few you might even have used – like the aloe vera plant for healing skin lesions. The proven uses of others in treating AIDS - related conditions might surprise you.

- * Peanuts and passion flower fight the insomnia which robs the body of precious strength.
- * *Periwinkle builds immunity and fights urinary infections.*
- * Artemisia like garlic too, fights malaria which so often attacks those whose resistance has been weakened by AIDS.
- * *Garlic also fights herpes and hypertension.*

CCM trains community volunteers in these uses. The typical course runs two weeks. They learn how to tend the plants, how and when to

harvest flowers, seeds, leaves, roots – whatever is the plant's therapeutically active part. They learn how to prepare the medicine; some become powders, others are syrups, still other are lotions. They learn how to store them, in recycled jars or bottles or clay pots. They learn how to administer the healing product to affected families, who pay only what they can.

These fields are rural pharmaceutical factories, and the volunteers' houses are pharmacies. The project is headed by our colleagues Balbina, a nurse and Baltazar, an agronomist. From CCM nursery fields, they take cuttings and seedlings, to transplant to new pharmacy fields which they will start in other communities.

We pray for rich harvests of medicinal plants for the nation and pray that the produce of all those fields bring sustenance and healing to many. What a blessing for Christmas and all next year!!.

In mission and service, *Karen and Bill Butt*

Have you been dreaming of going to Mozambique?

An information session will be held January 12, 2008 for anyone who think they may be interested in being part of such a group. It will be an opportunity to experience a more direct engagement in justice issues through partnership and face to face encounters with our partners.

There is an information package and application form that can be found on the Conference web site.

<http://www.londonconference.ca/content.php?id=95>.

This is a 14 day trip organized by the Conference Division of World Outreach, for the purpose of education and exposure by a visit to the Christian Council of Mozambique, partners of UCC. Ten people will be going in August 2008. Applications are due January 15, 2008. If not sure go to the Information Session first, then apply!



Innerkip/Eastwood Pastoral Charge welcomes Rev. Maya Landell and her husband Adam Hanley. We waited so long, that when she arrived for her first preaching Sunday, it seemed like we had experienced our Advent, the wait was over and we welcomed her with open arms.

Hello, my name is Maya Landell, and I guess because of my late arrival I am the last person to be settled here in Oxford Presbytery in 2007. I am late because I was filling a sabbatical position from May until mid-December at Naramata Centre in the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia (our sister United Church education centre to 5 Oaks). I worked there every summer during my theological studies at Emmanuel, and was finishing up some ministry there before with JOY I came to Innerkip/Eastwood Pastoral Charge.

My roots are in Elgin Presbytery, former director at Pearce-Williams United Church Christian Centre. I

bring a passion for camping, children and youth and intergenerational ministry.

My partner Adam Hanley (we were married on the 4th of January in Oshawa) is in his second year at Emmanuel College and will be taking the train two days a week for school. We look forward to making Woodstock home, and putting down roots, building relationships and being part of a ministry that is life-giving, faithful and intentional. I start the year here full of gratitude for Innerkip/Eastwood, and open to the laughter, learning and possibilities that 2008 will bring.

Maya Landell

YOUTH

They will sit where we are sitting, and when we are gone, attend to those things we think are important. We may adopt all the policies we please, but how they will be carried out depends on them. They will assume control of our cities, states and nations. They are going to build our homes and take over our churches, schools and corporations. All our work is going to be judged, praised or condemned by them. The fate of humanity is in their hands. So it might be well to pay them some attention. Anonymous

M & S by Matthew

You know, the work of Mission and Service is a partnership on many levels, but perhaps the most immediate partnership exists between you and our overseas personnel. You are on the frontlines of fundraising for M&S, while those who are placed around the globe are on the frontlines of ensuring that those funds are utilized in the most effective manner.

Whenever I read the messages from overseas I am constantly reminded of the bounty we enjoy, and never really think about. We are quick to grumble and complain when the garden vegetables and produce in the supermarket (*in late December*) aren't quite as fresh as we think they should be; or when some of the dozens of different varieties of bread available to us, feels the least bit stale. But, do we ever stop to consider the vast quantities of food that winds-up in the garbage - not because it isn't fit for human consumption - but simply because we have too much!

I was in a mall the other day, when a maintenance-man was

servicing a drinking fountain. Just in passing I said to him: "Are all these thirsty shoppers wearing out the fountain?" His reply stopped me in my tracks! He nodded toward an adjacent, huge, refrigerated, bottled-water dispensing machine, and he said: "Ever since those things were installed, no one uses the fountains any more. They just get seized-up from lack of use." Every time someone plunks another "Looney" into one of those machines, is there even a single thought to the enormous amount of energy that is wasted in producing, distributing, and refrigerating that plastic bottle of water - in the country that possesses the greatest amount of drinking water in the world? As I watched the maintenance man restoring the unused drinking fountain, I couldn't help but recall a photo of the women in Wake Tiyo, Ethiopia, laughing joyfully as they filled their water containers at the taps of their newly restored village well.

Remember that the need continues long after we've packed away the coloured lights and shiny ornaments for another year. Let's take some time over this holiday period to reflect and renew our commitment to the Mission and Service Fund activities of our United Church of Canada. You know, for each of us that renewed commitment will become apparent in a variety of ways, for it's not just about fundraising, it's also about being good stewards of the resources we already have.

May 2008 be a year for all of us to look back on and recall as the time when an abiding sense of mission became our personal ministry. And, may 2008 also be the year when each of us individually comes to fully understand the words of Matthew 25:35-38 & 40:

"When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger, you welcomed me, and when I was naked, you gave me clothes to wear. When I was sick, you took care of me, and when I was in jail, you visited me." "Whenever you did it for any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me."

Matthew Stevens

Stewardship Education/Justice

London Conference

Five Oaks

Ministry with the Whole Youth: From White-bread Programs to Whole Grain Ministry and is happening January 18-20. It will be an opportunity for participants to become empowered to imagine, risk and create ways of engaging and transforming our church through holistic ministry with youth. It is a Neos program. Jessie Negropontes and Chris Giffen will provide leadership — www.fiveoaks.on.ca.

OBSERVER

Did you see in the January edition: Unusual undertaking/24
The gospel according to Al Gore/14; The family farm/50; The 3% Solution/27.

BRIDGE: Thamesville United Church 1 & 5; To Go to Togo/4; Christmas Cards/5. Page 3.

CAMP TANNER DINNER AUCTION

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 2008

EMBRO WEST ZORRA COMMUNITY CENTRE

VIEWING at 5:30 PM DINNER at 6:30 PM

TICKETS \$16.00

Tickets available from Camp Committee Members

or call Sandra @ 519 475 4833

Sheila @ 519 349 2768

Sponsored by Oxford Presbytery Camping Committee

Oxford Presbyterial United Church Women

46th Annual Meeting

The Centre Within

Theme Speaker

The Rev. Tracy Crick-Butler

Wednesday, January 23rd, 2008

Westminster United Church

115 George Street

Thamesford, Ontario

Join us January 20 at 3pm for the
Covenanting Service for Rev. Maya Landell
at the Innerkip United Church. Let us
welcome Maya with our presence.

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Yes, there was the Christmas Place again this year. We trust that there were lots of donations and people coming to buy. Sorry I did not get the information so I could put a write-up in the November Church Mouse.

“Taking Mary out of the Christmas Box” did not go ahead as planned. I believe it will take place in the spring, around Easter. A firm date will be announced probably next month.

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

HEAR YE!! HEAR YE!! OLD WEST OXFORD CLUSTER UNITED CHURCH

CHALLENGE

ALL CHURCHES IN OXFORD PRESBYTERY & OXFORD PRESBYTERY

to raise \$21,000 to build a new four room
school in Waikato, Ethiopia, Africa

Well how did we do? Over \$9,000.00
came in the night of Presbytery at Sweaburg
Since then we are now up to **\$11,593.50**
well over half the amount needed for the
school. Churches were giving their
Christmas Eve offerings & not in yet.

The late Woodrow Wilson was the son
of a minister. His father, who was tall and
very thin, would often take young Woodrow
with him on his parish calls, which he made
with a horse and buggy. One day, on one of
these calls, a parishioner asked: “Reverend,
how is it that you’re so thin and gaunt, while
your horse is so fat and sleek?” Before the
father could reply, young Woodrow said,
“Probably because my father feeds the horse
and the congregation feeds my father.”

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### HOW LONG IS TOO LONG?

I do not think we should use television as the  
measurer of all attention spans. I have heard people  
of all ages listen for hours as a speaker or two gives  
them stories, harangues and marching orders for  
their various causes. And they listen for every word.  
Could it be that the attention span problem for  
sermons is that the setting is too much like a  
television-viewing setting that calls for passivity? If  
the church became a movement again, and if we felt  
a life-and-death urgency about getting the message  
out and getting it right, we would probably not be  
discussing how long we should go on.

Martin E. Marty in Context (Sept 15/92)