



In the Orchard

Hang Up the Baby's Stocking

Hang up the baby's stocking! Be sure you don't forget!
The dear little dimpled darling, she never saw Christmas, yet!
But, I've told her all about it and she opened her big blue eyes, and I'm sure
she understood it – she looked so funny and wise.
Dear, what a tiny stocking! It doesn't take much to hold such little pink toes as
baby's away from the frost and cold.
But then, for the baby's Christmas, it will never do at all.
Why, Santa wouldn't be looking – for anything half so small.
I know what'll do for the baby, I've thought of the very best plan.
I'll borrow a stocking of Grandma's the longest that ever I can.
And you'll hang it by mine, dear mother, right here in the corner, so!
And leave a letter to Santa, and fasten it on to the toe. (cont. on pg. 2)
Write—this is the baby's stocking, that
hangs in the corner here.
You never have seen her, Santa, for she
only came this year. But she's just the
blessed'st baby.
And now, before you go, just cram her
stocking with goodies from the top
clean down to toe.

Author unknown

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Hang up Baby's Stocking (cont.)

This poem was recited by Fran Turner at 6 years of age as part of the Christmas concert in her one room school house in Savage Harbour, PEI. When Fran read it she changed the “she” to “he” because her baby brother had been born that year (1940). It was very special for her to do this

reading because kids in rural areas in her day did not often get the chance to do a lot of public speaking and this was something that she really wanted to do.



Fran Turner as a six-year-old and now.

Over the Top Advent

It's been a tough year for many of us. Cheryl and I haven't seen our children for almost 2 years and no sign of that changing soon.

How can I possibly write this year's Advent article without reflecting upon the hardships of the past year? There's been painful lessons and agonizing losses. But this year we also stood up, never gave up, persisted, hung in there, and kept the faith, all the while still demanding justice and seeking peace. When those that don't know us assumed the hardships of the year would have beaten us down, we can proclaim that we're still strong and we're still here! I think that's why this year we need to go through Advent and into Christmas not with regular hope, peace, joy, and love, but with preposterous hope, overwhelming peace, outrageous joy, and radical love. That can be our Advent this year. Yes, as we venture ever deeper into Advent the days grow shorter and colder while the nights get longer. And yes, there's going to be chaos in the stores and orders arriving late. And along with hardships and trials of the heart, there will be neighbours helping neighbours. There

will be concerts and indulging on sweets and nuts and warm drinks, and on long distance phone calls to loved ones we haven't been able to hold for a year or more. And we will experience sitting around tables rejoicing with family and friends. And for Cheryl and me, each of you are not only our friends, but our family as well.

And in all of this God is ever present. This year we all need to know that throughout our tribulations, God is there. Throughout our Advent weeks, in the ups and downs, in the cold and the sunshine, God is there. And we need God. And we need one another maybe more than ever to remind us that our ever-present God will be coming again,

the word made flesh in the beauty and vulnerability of an infant child.

So, this Advent Season, having shown what we are capable of, let's not only hold on to Hope, but take hope to a ridiculous level! Let's not only find Joy but go crazy and giddy with Joy. Not only seek peace but let the peace of God completely engulf us. And when we love, let it be unrestrained and profound like never before. Let us walk week by week this Advent knowing that in all that has challenged us this year, God is with us in it all, ready to be born through an infant and into our lives once again. God is good!

Peace and Blessings, Rev. Don

Love to You All

Love to you all. This has been an interesting year for our church, community, province, country and the world. We have proven our strength and commitment making it through the tough times and continuing to hold faith. The council has been working hard to maintain the functioning of the committees to ensure our Orchard Valley Family is cared for.

Through zoom meetings, in person meetings and a mix of both we have continued to make decisions, support

each other and discuss important issues on your behalf. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our dedicated members of the council for their unwavering support, work and commitment to our family in faith.

So much happens "behind the scenes." Committees; reaching out to members through visits, phone calls and cards; diligently studying the public health guidelines as they change and expand; working to get outreach projects up and running again; raising money for

Love to You All (cont.)

our new space; moving forward with the planning for a new space; ensuring services are available to all through live streaming; connecting with other churches in our communities to support the wider community; creating youth focused programming and supports; providing supplies for worship and music; maintaining our building; ensuring information is provided to our members in a timely and user friendly manner; keeping an eye on our finances; and making sure our staff are well looked after.

The range of council activities is impressive, and I am sure I did not capture everything. In reminding you of the type of work the council is involved with I ask that you consider the list carefully. If something speaks to you or you recognize one of your talents, please reach out to me or any council member to talk about sharing your talent and getting more involved. Many people have been very generous with their talents and time - "many hands make light work" - and we can always use more hands and lighter work.

As the season of Advent approaches with its messages of hope, peace, joy and love I challenge each of you to



take these verbs (a word that expresses an action or a state of being), embrace them, and share them through your thoughts, and deeds. Our communities, provinces, countries and world need you. It is easy to complain or to sit back and expect someone else to act. Living our faith is not always easy. We hold the key to ensuring these messages are seen, heard and felt. In doing this, we create a wave whose ripples reach further than any eye can see.

Peace and Blessings,
Susan Cater, Chair of Council

Our First Christmas Together

Hello! For those of you I haven't met yet my name is Pastor Katie Logan and am your new youth and family minister here at Orchard Valley.

I'm so excited to be working with all of you and the experience so far has been wonderful! I'm a Master of Divinity Student at the Atlantic School of Theology in Halifax, currently

doing online courses so I can work here in the Valley. I've got a bachelor's degree in political science specializing in reconciliation in Canada and Northern Ireland from Saint Mary's University (sorry Acadia folks).

I'm one of three children and I'm right in the middle between my older brother and younger sister. I've got a wonderfully supportive mother and father who love me very much and if you attend worship you may even get the chance to meet them! I've been a member of the United Church my entire life and I'm so grateful to be able to give back to a church organization

that has gifted me with so much.

I'm a creative soul at heart, my passions lie in drama, art, and music and I also have a deep love for science, literature, and social justice. I take these passions with me in my ministry and work with our youth and kids to affirm their gifts as well. I've been working with youth and kids my entire

young adulthood, and I've been blessed with experiences at different churches and in different programs, including a peace education program that took me across the ocean to Northern Ireland where I worked directly with children and youth.

This journey has led me to you, and I couldn't be happier to be here!

Advent has now arrived, and although Christmas is my favourite part of the year I've been hoping it would take just a little longer than it did to get here. Between all the busyness of the season in the church and my home life as well as term papers and reading assignments I've been trying

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Our First Christmas Together (cont.)

to find some time to really sit with God and celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Many of us are scrambling to get everything together for our first Christmas back with people, or maybe we're just scrambling to celebrate on our own, but regardless, this time of year always feels just a little bit chaotic.

Kelly Clarkson sings a Christmas song that I performed with my youth choir when I was younger called "Grown-up Christmas List". It's about all the wishes that we have for the world as adults, no longer wishing for toys and books if you're a bit of a nerd like me, but rather wishing for peace, friendship, and healing.

So this year my grown-up Christmas list includes the prayer that we all find time for rest and time to spend with God. May your season be blessed and filled with the warm light of Jesus.

New Face in the Office

by Carol Dewar

The new smiling face in the office is that of Rachel MacLean-Hawley who started work with us at the end of this summer. Rachel is a PK, a preacher's kid, her father was a Baptist minister, and she spent her childhood growing up in rural churches all around Nova Scotia.

Her whole family is very musical, and her parents and three siblings all enjoyed singing together at home and in the church.

Rachel is a singer, songwriter and recording artist, and sang professionally with her sister Mary. They were known as the MacLean Sisters/The MacLeans, for fifteen years, recording five albums during that time. She has continued writing songs and has been singing solo, professionally, for over a decade, performing and recording two solo albums which covers inspirational, folk and seasonal music genres.

Rachel is married to Len Hawley, the voice of the Acadia Axemen hockey team, and they have two



children Breagha, 19 and Myah, 16. Many of you will remember Myah as Grace's friend who came with her to church and Sunday school. Rachel has a huge love of history and family & friends' genealogy and spends most of her free time researching when she is not at the church or singing.

When I asked Rachel what she likes about working at Orchard Valley, she stated she feels very at home in the church, she loves the warmth and kindness of the people she has met here, and she loves working with Don, Katie and Doug (as well as everyone else!).

Advent Music in the Orchard

We certainly are gearing up for Advent! The Orchard Valley Chimes will soon be recording their Advent offering for December 12. Our choir will be recording various musical offerings for the 19th which will be a service of Lessons & Carols. We haven't had such a service in a few years. It's time. We are sad that the anthems must be recorded. However, these are the times in which we currently live... Regardless,

this will be a very special service!

Caroline Burton has enthusiastically agreed to record a music offering for Christmas Eve. We look forward to witnessing her wonderful musical talents.



The Orchard Valley Chimes, directed by Ken Hassell, consist of Sheila Francis, Andrea Purvis, Valerie Mosher, Judy Gilmour, Angela Whiteway, Cheryl Sellsted, and Trish Findlay-Williamson (missing).

Progress Made in Renovations and Fund Raising

As we near the end of 2021, and hopefully the COVID-19 pandemic, it seems a good time to update you on the progress of the church building renovation project and the fundraising which has been underway this year.

Prior to the pandemic, and after much consultation and research, the congregation approved a renovation plan to expand our current building in order to better serve our mission: Inspired by the grace of God, we are a welcoming faith family called to love ourselves, others and the world. We seek to deepen our spiritual understanding and reach out to others through worship and socially just action.

This project includes many steps of approval and planning, and is continuing in the direction of a spring 2022 ground breaking. The Facilities Committee will be announcing two or three meetings in December to provide an update to the congregation on the plans and process for the coming year. We couldn't be more excited to see it come to fruition with hope for a bright future in the orchard!

With a price tag of approximately \$2 million, and funds in trust of \$1.4 million, we set out some months ago to fundraise \$250,000 through our

efforts with the congregation. A small committee has approached individuals and groups and we have secured over \$200,000 to date! Thank you to those who have made generous gifts and pledges over two to five years.

If you have not had an opportunity to participate or to hear more about the project, now is your chance. Feel free to contact any one of the committee members listed below to talk about your interest and to ask questions.

To pledge your support, there are several options:

1. Call the office (902-681-0366) and update your PAR to include an additional monthly amount specifically for the Building project;
2. Drop off/ mail a cheque (130 Cornwallis Avenue, New Minas B4N 3M7);
3. Give online through our website: orchardvalley.com (Canada Helps is the organization which processes our online donations and takes a small fee for the service);
4. Transfer a gift of stock through our investment account at Scotia Wealth (902-678-0777).

We are grateful for your interest and support and will be happy to share an update in the New Year.

Sincerely,
Building Fundraising Committee

Region 15 President: Jane McDonald

When asked why she decided to run for election Jane replied, “I wasn’t really thinking about it but Rev. John Moses at Aylesford United said I should run. On thinking about it I said ‘why not?’ My sister had been President of Maritime Conference and my Great grandfather was a United Church minister. The Church is my larger family and I want to do my best in helping us to be the caring and loving Church I know we can be.”

Jane’s goals for her term: “I was really hoping to be able to get out and meet with people. Unfortunately that isn’t happening as much as I would like. I love having those personal conversations that offers the opportunities to get to know people. Also to bring awareness to some of the greater issues that are facing our Church currently. We are all aware of the racial injustice in society and that still happens in our Church. We also have so much to do with respect to reconciliation with our Indigenous peoples. We have only taken baby steps and need to grow more into educating ourselves and being there for those that’s are suffering injustices.”

What you have accomplished thus far: “Well, as mentioned baby steps. I have written a couple of Pastoral messages for the Region. One around our



role in the Residential School system and the discovery of unmarked resting places of indigenous children of which some were under our care. Most recently an Advent Message. I hope people find them informative and caring.”

What is the latest on Bermuda and what Region 15’s new name might be:

The discussions and a Memorandum was finally sent to the Churches in Bermuda to vote on. There are 3 churches in Bermuda who were part of our former Maritime Conference. We have not heard the final outcome yet but hope to hear very soon. At that time we will need to discuss what our name should be. Some people like the simplicity of Region 15 although I would expect it to ultimately be somewhat descriptive of where in this country we are. Time will tell. Perhaps if the agreement goes through I can visit before my term ends next May.”

For additional information about Region 15 see their website: <https://ucceast.ca/regional-council-15/>

Meet Your Feet to Reopen Soon

by Carol Dewar

After being cancelled by COVID-19 in March 2020, Meet Your Feet is now ready to resume offering their footcare services in December on the 8th and 9th.

Meet Your Feet was started in October 2015 by our Outreach Committee, spearheaded by Cheryl Manzer, to provide free monthly professional footcare to some of our most vulnerable citizens. It aimed to reach those limited by financial, mobility, social, transportation and mental issues, who are unable to afford this essential service.

The service is provided by nurses with advanced footcare training, and until COVID-19, was offered monthly in our church as well as in a church in Wolfville and one in Kentville. Volunteers helped with supporting roles in registering the clients and offering hospitality.

With the pandemic still upon us, it became clear that a new strategy and location were necessary, and through Cheryl's tireless efforts, a vacant space in the County Fair Mall was offered to Meet Your Feet at a very minimal price.

Both the Women's Breakfast Group and the Men's Group have given

Meet Your Feet a donation of \$1000 to cover the cost of new flooring and paint, with the Men's Group doing the painting as well. A grant from the Valley Regional Hospital for two new lift chairs had just been received before the shutdown, and along with our other two lift chairs, we can now provide service to four clients at a time.

Our nurses are ready to go ahead, and will follow all the required Covid 19 protocols, and clients will need to be double vaccinated and masked.

The clinic will be open for two full days, the second Wednesday and Thursday of each month. The clinic is on the bus route and the location is central to the three communities and surrounding areas. The Mud Creek Rotary of Wolfville, as well as the Health Foundations of both Eastern Kings Memorial and the Valley Regional Hospital, have been very supportive and generous over the years, and we start this year in a good financial state, but we realize we need to find a way to sustain our program. Many of our clients wanted to make a donation, so just before the pandemic began, we had started with a Free Will Offering Box, and we will continue with that as well as

looking for alternative ways of funding.

Unfortunately, we will be unable to provide the social time with tea, coffee and snacks, and clients will have to preregister by phone or email for the service. Volunteers will still greet clients and help with the non medical office tasks. We are appreciative of donations of money, socks, & unscented moisture cream, as well as the time given by volunteers to make this clinic a success.

Cheryl Manzer shows one of the lift chairs that makes footcare easier for clients and footcare nurses alike.

Meet Your Feet footcare nurses Denyse Nelson and Lisa Campbell stand with founder Cheryl Manzer in their new location in the mall.



On the Road to Affirming

“The message you heard from the very beginning is this: We must love one another.” (1 John 3:11)

Orchard Valley’s Affirming Committee has been on an enthusiastic and rewarding journey since our first meeting in April 2019. We have certainly learned and grown along the way, although Covid restrictions prevented us from meeting in person or hosting outreach events.

In spite of the lengthy provincial circuit-breaker lockdown beginning at the end of April this year, we achieved many of our objectives. These included making a donation to the Valley Youth Project (for youth age 25 and under from the 2SLGBTQ+ community, as well as straight and cisgender allies) to help with their purchase of resource material. We celebrated Pride Sunday, with full participation by all our committee members and much positive feedback on the service. We have two handmade Pride banners under construction, made possible by Cheryl Sellsted and Helen Seymour.

In addition, Orchard Valley’s Inclusive Marriage Policy, Vision Statement,

Mission Statement and Plan of Action 2022 have been approved by the Affirming Committee, the Church Council and the Eastern Canada Affirm United Coordinator. These documents are all requirements we must meet prior to declaring Orchard Valley an Affirming Ministry. We will be bringing the enhanced Mission Statement and the Motion to become an Affirm United to a congregational vote at the AGM.

We are grateful for ongoing affirming moments in Sunday services, whether it is the lighting of the Unity/Christ candle, Minutes for Mission or Scripture passages read from the recently donated Inclusive Bible. Additional information and resources are available on the OVUC Affirming website under Committees. There are several inclusion-focused books, many of which are appropriate for children and youth, available for borrowing from the church office.

Vicky Austin and Dale MacArthur,
Affirming Committee Co-chairs

Micah Bornemann-Davis reads “M is for Mustache” for the Children’s Time during the Pride Sunday service on June 27.

