

# *The Parish Light*

The Parish of the Northern Lights Newsletter

October 2015

## **First Fruits**

**Merciful Father..**

**We offer with joy and thanksgiving...We say "thank you" to God with our offerings. Christians return a portion of their blessings to God, not because they have to or should. We joyfully and thankfully give back because God has given us everything.**

**..what you have first given us...We are only able to give because God first gave to us. His best gift was his Son. So we follow God's example of returning our "first fruits" to support the Lord's work.**

**...our selves, our time AND our possessions — signs of your gracious love...We declare stewardship as a way of life. We do not say, "ourselves, our time, or our possessions." The word "and" means we confess whole life stewardship.**

**...Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. By learning how to give of all we have — our very lives, as Jesus did — we become more like him, stronger in our faith and more joyful in sharing his love.**

**Sharing our time, abilities and resources enables our congregation to fulfill its mission and ministry.**

**Through this church home, we provide Christian education programs, opportunities for outreach and fellowship activities. We help others come to know Christ with each minute volunteered, each dollar given and each day lived to follow God's will.**

**May God help us to respond to his love with gifts of joy and thanksgiving!**

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A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. She was alternately stroking her own

cheek, then his again. Finally she spoke up, 'Grandpa, did God make you?'

'Yes, sweetheart' he answered, 'God made me a long time ago.'

'Oh,' she paused, 'Grandpa, did God make me too?'

'Yes, indeed, honey,' he said, 'God made you just a little while ago.'

Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, 'God's getting better at it, isn't he?'

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## The Silent Sermon

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, suddenly stopped coming to church. After a few weeks, the Pastor decided to visit. The Pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his Pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited. The pastor made himself at home but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs.

After some minutes, the Pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and lifeless.

The Pastor glanced at his watch and realized it was time to leave, so he slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow, once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the Pastor reached the door to leave, his host said with a tear running down his cheek, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."

..... Author unknown

On a very cold, snowy Sunday in February, only the pastor and one farmer arrived at the village church.

The pastor said, 'Well, I guess we won't have a service today.'

The farmer replied: 'Pastor, even if only one cow shows up at feeding time, I feed it.'



# October Happenings

**September 29<sup>th</sup>** – 7:00 pm: Small Group Bible Study starting up Tuesday evenings at Bill and Cathie Creasers residence. Beginning with a 6 week study on “Understand Your Spiritual Gifts”. Call or email Bill or Cathie Creaser for more information: 780-327-9975 or [cathie.mmaestro@gmail.com](mailto:cathie.mmaestro@gmail.com) or Bill at [bill@semalta.ca](mailto:bill@semalta.ca)

**October 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>** - ***Coffeetime*** at St Andrew’s Zion Church Hall – 10 am to 12 noon. Everyone welcome.

**October 3<sup>rd</sup>** – St Andrews Zion Fall Supper – at the Colinton Community Hall – 5 – 7 pm;

Adults \$12. ~ 6-12 yrs \$8. ~ Children under 6 Free

**October 11<sup>th</sup>** – Baptism at St Andrew’s Zion

**October 18<sup>th</sup>** – Back to Church Sunday, St Paul’s, Boyle & Christ Church, Wandering River

**October 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Parish Event at St Andrew’s Zion ~ 7:00 pm – “Snacks and Surprises!”

**October 25<sup>th</sup>** – Back to Church Sunday – St Andrew’s Zion, Colinton

**October 26<sup>th</sup>** – Parish Council Meeting ~ 7:00 pm

**October 30<sup>th</sup>** – St Paul’s Fall Supper – starts at 5:00 pm

**October 31<sup>st</sup>** – Deanery All Clergy and Lay Readers from the Athabasca Deanery Event

Wandering River, 9:30 am - bring your own lunch

**November 8<sup>th</sup>** – Back to Church Sunday, St Thomas, Perryvale

**November 27<sup>th</sup>** - Bishop Fraser will give a presentation on his trip to South Africa –

St Andrew’s Zion, Colinton – 7:00 pm

**November 29<sup>th</sup>** – Fifth Sunday Service at St Andrew’s Zion Colinton at 11 am ~ pot luck follows

## **YOUTH GROUP**

**Upcoming Youth Group Dates/Events (7:30pm-9:30pm, unless noted different), in Colinton. All youth 12-18 (Grades 7-12) are welcome! Bring a friend. Anyone wishing to help with the youth group please contact Joanna [joannamuzyka@hotmail.com](mailto:joannamuzyka@hotmail.com) or **780-689-4326**.**

October 9/15

October 23/15 - Parish Game Night, all youth and families are welcome to attend, starts at 6:30pm in Colinton

November 6/15

November 20/15

December 4/15

**Musings from Cecil Harrison, Wandering River:**

(submitted in August – forgotten to insert in September !)

Our little community that has grown 3 times in the last 2 years still has no community newspaper. The Advocate and the LB Post papers carry no news about Wandering River unless it a disaster. Even Buy-Low community ads in the Athabasca news have the wrong time for Sunday worship. The Seniors tried to publish a newsletter but after 40 years, they have closed up for the summer.

Wandering River with its new gas stations and 4 restaurants which are the 'pit stops' for many hundreds of travellers on Hwy 63 is a going concern. Real estate ads up and down the hwy and local county roads bristle with For Sale signs. Hwy 63 might be just an extension of Edmonton's 99<sup>th</sup> Street. Picture that! 400 kilometers of dwellings, cottages, eateries all the way between Ft. Mac and Edmonton!

We (WR) people have many nationalities in our community. Besides the European people, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Scots have moved in. So Wandering River's 'mosaic' population is representative of what Canada will look like from coast to coast.

Our congregation is dwindling with people moving out. Sometimes the four regular men attending out-number the females. But no children! Where are they? The Pied Piper of Hamelin must have gotten rid of the rats and come back for the children!

We purchased Church signage to be erected on both north and south lanes that are 'almost open'. The old ones were taken down during road construction.

Maybe people will seek out our location.

***Editor's note: I found Cecil's email very interesting – while not entirely "Christian-based" we do get a look at the challenges facing our church family in Wandering River. Are we keeping them in prayer?***

