

CONESTOGA Connections



January 2012
Vol. XXIII, No. 1

Celebrating Advent Season at Conestoga Mennonite



*The Christmas Eve
candlelight service
was a
special blessing with
Scripture reading,
special music, and beautiful
autoharp music!*



Children's Bell Choir on Christmas morning!



*Chloe and Madison are sheep honoring baby Jesus (Hannah Petersheim)
with Mary and Joseph (Liz and Mike) at the Christmas Eve service.*



*Left: Rodney
and Heidi
Stoltzfus
family share
in the Advent
service.*

*Right:
Three-week-
old Hannah
Petersheim
lying in the
manger on
Christmas
Sunday
morning.*





The PASTORS CONNECTION

2012: Standing Firm by Dwelling in the Word Together

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. Colossians 3:16

I tell you the truth; whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. John 5:24

So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you... 2 Thessalonians 2:15

Each of us can testify to the transforming power of God's Word written. When David and Pegge Tenant were CMC newcomers I heard them express awe at the depth of spiritual insight shared in our older members' Sunday school. Newcomers also bring fresh wisdom, revealing biblical jewels our culture may prevent us from seeing.



CONESTOGA MENNONITE CHURCH

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Monthly newsletter for Conestoga Mennonite Church published since 1988. Deadline for articles and photos is the 20th of the preceding month of publication.

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Reporters: Bonnie Beam and Sharon Stoltzfus

Respect of the scriptures has been a CMC strength throughout our 250-year history. Although Dad seldom read books, I have vivid memories of him at his desk every Saturday night reading the next days' Sunday School text and lesson to deepen his faith and sharpen his contributions. Such memories help me "stand firm!" Today's generation is also finding multiple ways to dwell in God's word helping us "hold to the teachings passed on to us."

As a Pastoral Team we are grateful for this legacy. Throughout this past year, we have discerned together how we might deepen these practices in 2012 so the scriptures continue to form and transform us as individuals and as a corporate body. Last month our discernment led us to now invite the congregation to "dwell" in one text we will identify for each month in 2012. We envision members reading that text in daily devotions. We propose each member base their Sunday morning opening reflection from that text.

Although I reserve the freedom to preach from alternative texts as appropriate, we believe God's Spirit is confirming our designated texts as the primary preaching diet in 2012. We invite any member leading devotions during committee meetings to base their meditation on the designated text. We believe the Holy Spirit will use this immersion in one primary monthly text to deepen our understandings throughout 2012.

In January the designated text is Jeremiah 31:27-34. In the next month, we will narrow to twelve our current list and share them with you. We do not assume every member will follow this practice. We simply encourage you to make it a matter of prayer and then do whatever the Spirit confirms is right for you. What we know is that as we dwell in the Word together, we will be able to "teach and admonish one another in wisdom." We will daily be "crossing over from death to life." And our capacity to "hold to the teaching passed on to us" will deepen.

I look forward to witnessing the fruit God will release as we dwell in the word together in 2012.

*Joyfully Living Christ's Story with You,
Pastor Bob Petersheim*



Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle met on Wednesday, December 7, 2011. There were 13 ladies present. Finished items included 3 comforters, 13 diapers, 6 baby gowns, and 14 health kits.

For devotions, we sang “Angels From the Realms of Glory” and Luke 2:25-32, 36-38, was read, followed by a devotional encouraging patience using Simeon and Anna as our example. The special offering was \$63.00. We sang “O Little Town of Bethlehem” before adjourning.

- Betty Cannell

A Book Review . . .

How and When to Tell Your Kids About Sex: A Lifelong Approach to Shaping Your Child's Sexual Character

by Stanton & Brenna Jones

Realizing the challenge many parents face in this area, these authors have prepared a very comprehensive Christian resource for helping parents guide their children effectively in this area. They point out that public school sex education attempts to be “value-neutral,” but claim that “value-neutral sex education is a myth.” Whether you read this book from cover to cover, or if you read only the chapters applying to the current ages of your children, you’ll find it a helpful tool for undergirding your parenting skills in sex education.

Some of the chapters titles are:

- Teaching the Goodness of our Bodies
- Inoculating Your Kids Against Destructive Moral Messages
- Preparing for Dating: Dealing with Romance and Sexual Attraction

Our children are too precious to neglect this vital area of guidance for which parents carry the primary responsibility!

- Dot Leatherman, *Family Life Shepherd*

NEIGHBORS caring & sharing

*Neighbors meets on Tuesday mornings during the academic school year
in our church fellowship hall from 9:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Everyone is welcome for this time of fellowship!*

— January 3 —

New Beginnings
with Ruthie Dunkle

— January 10 —

Resting Like Martha
with Tami Horst

— January 17 —

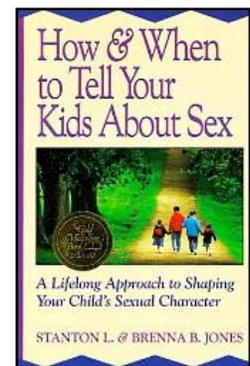
Serving as Hostess at Nairobi, Kenya's Mennonite Guest House
with Lois Boyer

— January 24 —

Knots of Love for MCC
Knitting comforters created by Krista Petersheim and Carmen Weber

— January 31 —

Humor—The Best Medicine
with Rita Richard





Josh Beam and Amanda Valentino looking at gingerbread houses. Credit: Karen Horning.

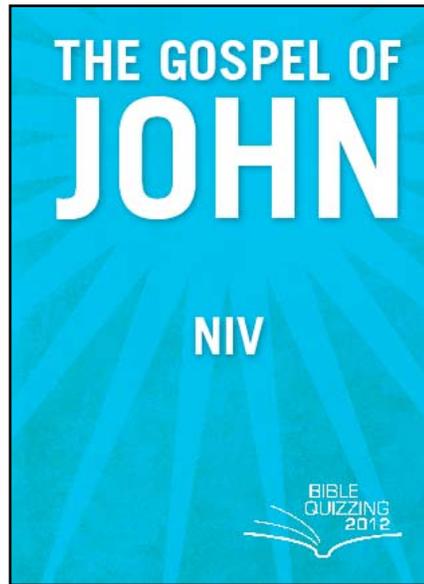
**Conestoga's
MYF Enjoyed a
Christmas
Party
With
Zion's MYF**



Joy Beam and Meredith Graff enjoying the houses. Credit: Karen Horning.



Joy Beam and others learning the rules of the gingerbread house competition. Credit: Karen Horning.



Conestoga's Bible Quiz Team in 2012

will include Joy Beam, Josh Beam, Mason Stoltzfus, and Meredith Graff along with Justin Pechart as coach.

This year the quiz material for study will be found in the Gospel of *John* as quizzers read, digest, and learn the smallest of details found in these chapters.

The first quiz is scheduled for Sunday evening, January 22, at Lancaster Mennonite High School. Check out accquizzing.org for more information.

WELCOME to Rachel Mast as Conestoga's new Minister of Youth and Young Adults! Thank you, Rachel, for your willingness to serve with the MYF, Jr. Youth, and Young Adults!



Meredith Graff as artist at work/play. Credit: Karen Horning.