

# Kakabeka Central United Church

Newsletter 1 - Winter '09



104 Clergue St, Kakabeka Falls, On

www.KakabekaUnitedChurch.org

## SO WHAT'S THIS CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH ALL ABOUT?

*"Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by word and deed, through providing regular inclusive worship services, a nurturing environment, and meaningful outreach to our neighbours in the community of Kakabeka Falls and surrounding area."*

That's our "Mission statement". It states in a few brief lines what we're all about. Except... it doesn't *really* say what we're all about, does it? Sure, it states our viewpoint, but does it tell about the wonderful people that make up this warm-hearted congregation? Does it mention the joy, laughter and tears we share? The fundraising events for different outreach organizations in our community? Does it mention the spiritual journey we're on, the detours and shortcuts we experience? Well, not really...

Therefore this newsletter. To inform and to invite. Inviting you to read a bit more about this little country church in Kakabeka Falls with its big, warm heart. Also check our website for the most culminate recent information, and soon our blog. Happy reading!

## DECK THE HALLS...

We're entering the time of Advent, the 4 weeks leading up to Christmas. It's a time of preparation for the celebration of the Christ's birth. The Advent period makes all Christians acutely aware again of God's promise to us, and how it got fulfilled with Jesus' birth. Jesus showed us what it means to be fully living in God's image. It all comes together at Christmas, a day full of light and hope in a time of year that's marked by darkness. Darkness, when the days are at their shortest and the nights at their longest, but also darkness in a world that seems to be steadily moving away from "peace on Earth". Crime, lay-offs, economic hardship, wars, environmental degradation... sometimes it seems there's only bad news in the media. Maybe that's why we look so much forward to Christmas, because that's when the Gospel, the *Good News* started. Christmas celebrates hope in a world full of despair, it's good news when there's so much bad news. It's our light in the darkness. Join us for this coming Advent season and celebrate Christ's birth with us this December 24. See p. 3 for further details.

### ALTAR EGO. by Len Jones



The first reported case of 'Mad Cow' disease.

## CENTRAL UNITED LADIES GROUP – Still Going Strong!

Recently, Central United Church hosted two evenings of music to raise funds for the Rural Cupboard food bank in Kakabeka Falls. Both evenings, one in September with The King's Highway and friends and one in October with the Kam Valley Fiddlers, were a lot of fun with a surprise visit by violinist Pierre Schryer who joined in the merriment.

In all we took in \$629.00 in free-will offerings. The church then matched each evening's offering up to \$200.00 and the Church Ladies' Group also matched each offering up to \$200.00. Therefore we were able to donate a total of **\$1,429.00** to the Rural Cupboard Food Bank. We gratefully acknowledge the support of all who attended and contributed to the success of each evening in any way!

Fundraising to help others and to help maintain our church is mainly what the Ladies' Group is all about. Each spring and Christmas we hold a Tea and Bake Sale. At least once a year we also have a chili/stew or lasagna supper which also includes salad, dessert, buns and coffee/tea and in August we participate in the Kakabeka Street Fair with yard

sale and bake sale tables. We bake, sew, knit, cook, set up and do whatever it takes to make these events successful. This is our way of reaching out to the local communities and we are rewarded for our efforts when the community reaches back to us with donations of baking, crafts, time and monetary contributions whenever we hold one of these events.

We're a small and very dedicated group; when we are hosting one of our events, the entire congregation pitches in to help. We share in the work of vacuuming and tidying the Sanctuary, and anything else such as decorating for the different church seasons, that needs to be done. The "cleaning bee" is then followed by a short meeting over coffee/tea and goodies. These meetings are mainly to plan our next fundraiser, or to decide where our money would be best served at that particular time; making purchases such as new hymn books and everyday supplies and upkeep to the yard, to keep our church going. It's also a time to check up on the well-being of local residents known to members of the group and/or congregational families. We help support Kakabeka Fall local businesses by buying from local stores when possible, and using local restaurants for the Ladies' annual Christmas dinner in December, and June's wind-up dinner.

Some of the money that we raise also goes to sponsor a child through World Vision, and at Christmastime we also donate to the needs of third world families and communities through the World Vision Christmas Catalogue.

There is always something that needs to be done, replaced, purchased or upgraded and we are proud to be able to help maintain our church and to reach out to the local businesses and communities through our efforts. It is the support of the church, the Ladies' Group and the communities that make our efforts worthwhile and gratifying. God bless you all!

Nancy Schnieders, President  
Central United Church Ladies' Group

*Please extend our thanks to all concerned for the great fundraiser you hosted for our Food Bank. It was a wonderful evening and enjoyed by all!  
On behalf of everyone of the Food Bank thanks again.*

*Sincerely,  
Rural Food Bank Kakabeka,  
Gayl Poahachoff, treasurer*

## CENTRAL UNITED: A SMALL CHURCH WITH A BIG DIFFERENCE

You may not notice it when looking at that modest church building on Kakabeka's Clergue Street, but it houses a congregation with a difference... For about five years now this congregation has been functioning without a minister! Difficulties in finding a part-time minister for this rural church combined with declining attendance forced this church community to face the facts: they no longer could afford paid clergy. In fact, it was expected the church would close altogether...

And yet, five years later, folks gather here for worship each Sunday, plan new events and activities, reach out to each other, the community and the world at large. In short: this faith community is still very much alive and vibrant. The loss of their paid clergy meant that congregation members stepped up to the plate to lead Sunday worship, organize pastoral care and Bible studies. It meant everyone in this congregation now takes part in some form of leadership. From keeping the books to making coffee, from leading worship to making lunches – and everything in between. Ordained ministers visit regularly for guest worship leadership and special services, and the church is still very much part of the United Church of Canada.

In a way, continuing without a minister has been a blessing in disguise. It turned this average congregation into a resourceful, flexible and inclusive grassroots faith community that's open to where the Spirit leads it. These folks don't sweat the small stuff, they're open to change and even welcome it. It may well be a model for the future.

### **Advent and Christmas calendar:**

November 29: Kaija Makinen

December 6: Nancy Snieders (Holy Communion, open for all)

December 13: Jackie Cearnes

December 20: Rev. Lloyd Ivany (Holy Communion, open for all)

December 24: Marion McReady. Christmas Eve service, 7:00 pm.

Sunday services start at 10:00 am. Kids welcome at our Sunday School.

Coffee, tea, snacks and fellowship are shared afterwards. A great opportunity to meet new neighbours and friends.

For more information, visit [www.KakabekaUnitedChurch.org](http://www.KakabekaUnitedChurch.org)

### **Things You Never Hear in Church**

- "Hey! It's my turn to sit in the front pew!"
- "I was so enthralled, I never even noticed your sermon went 25 minutes overtime."
- "Personally I find attending church so much more enjoyable than hockey."
- "I've decided to give our church the \$500 a month I've been sending to TV Evangelists."
- "Hey, since we're all here, let's start the service early!"



### **Getting Rich Quick – not...**

Smith climbs to the top of Mount Sinai to talk to God.

Looking up, he asks the Lord. "God, what does a million years mean to you?"

The Lord replies, "A minute."

Smith asks, "And what does a million dollars mean to you?" The Lord replies, "A penny."

Smith asks, "Can I have a penny?" "Sure," the Lord replies, "in a minute."

## HOW TO GO GREEN THIS CHRISTMAS – Creation-Friendly Christmas Tips



Going green is much easier than most people think, plus it has enormous benefits for us personally as well as environmentally. Each one of us can make a difference this Christmas season. Did you know that the December holiday period sees a landfill increase of 25% more garbage?

You can enjoy Christmas and holiday celebrations while being good to our environment with just a few changes. With the tips below you can start a Creation-friendly Christmas that will reduce your carbon foot print, create minimum impact on our environment, and the good news is that it is easy, affordable, fun and rewarding.

**Buy local and buy fresh** – you will contribute to reducing long transportation use of resources and help the local economy.

**Say no to wrapping paper**; wrapping paper cannot be recycled or safely burned because of the high amounts of (non-degradable) printing ink on it. Try wrapping gifts in other gifts or hiding gifts in a sock, a bag or pot for extra fun. Make your own wrapping paper from the Sunday funnies and the occasional grocery store paper bag – kids love it! And/or:

**Use reusable gift bags.** Gift bags are an excellent environmentally friendly alternative to wrapping paper. However, many stores charge several dollars for a single bag. The solution is to shop at local dollar stores which often sell two or three gift bags for one dollar. At the end of the holiday season, received gift bags can be stored away for next year.

**Go for quality not quantity.** Purchase long-lasting gifts and consider making your own gifts. Hand-made gifts will have more meaning and are more likely to be cherished. If you have to buy gifts, buy those made locally and choose ones that will last, rather than the latest gadgets that will be obsolete in a few months and end up in landfill.

**Re-use Christmas decorations,** tableware and games/activities each year. Remember if you need to purchase new items ensure they are a good quality that can be re-used year after year, and buy them locally.

**Recycle** – this helps divert unnecessary waste from landfill. Ensure you separate your rubbish for recycling. Don't fall in to the 'lazy' or 'I'm too busy' trap at Christmas. Remember your choices do make a difference.

**Use LED lights for decorating,** and save money in Hydro bills while keeping your Christmas lights lasting even longer. Using LED lights is 90 (!) percent more efficient than using traditional Christmas lights. They also last much longer, release little or no heat, and if one goes out, the rest will keep glowing (so you'll never have to go through a whole strand of Christmas lights to find which one is burnt out – yay!).

**Time your lighting.** Get yourself a timer and set it to turn your Christmas lights off after a maximum of 4 to 5 hours each night. Leaving them on for hours on end is unnecessary. The best option for outdoors is to get solar powered Christmas lights which are now available in all sorts of shapes and colors.

**Make Christmas ornaments out of your old Christmas cards.** Cut out some of the images from Christmas cards that you've kept over the years (You kept them, right?), and make some cute ornaments out of them!

Merry Creation-friendly Christmas!