

From Barnabas' desk

At the beginning of the year we see and experience the return of the sun to the northern hemisphere. The assurance of warmth and light are the gifts upon us this time of the year. We remember the light that led the Magi to Christ Child. We celebrate Jesus the light of the world. In our personal, family and church life the loving presence of God journeyed with us sharing our joys and sorrows. The hand of God was upon us in our personal and corporate life. Some of our beloved ones who stated the year with us now left this earthly home to their spiritual home. We remember them with gratitude.

In the life of the church, children, youth, adults, young and aged, find a very special place. Sunday school program, Small Voices of Grace and Spirit of Grace music programmes, and Annie musical play brought so much of energy, life and enthusiasm to our church family. The commitment of parents, grandparents, and the energy Colleen, Kendra and Stephanie bring to our music and Sunday school programs are awesome and amazing to be thankful. Music has a very special place in our worship services. Our wonderfully gifted choir, Colleen, Small Voices of Grace and Spirit of Grace gladden our hearts with the gift of music and transform our worship services filled with joy and delight to lift our spirits. I thoroughly enjoy working with them. We are truly blessed to have a host of volunteers to support the ministry of the church. Behind the scenes the United Church Women work relentlessly to support the ministry, finance and the mission of the church throughout the year. Our United Church Women are a very special gift to the life and work of our congregation. Creativity and imagination are just the two words that will best define Laura Watson's talent to decorate the sanctuary on special occasions.

The fall and Lenten book studies were well received and attended by the group. Seniors and the elderly in different care homes are visited, and worship and communion services are held on a regular basis with the help of dedicated volunteers from our congregation. Norma Kapusianyk, Jean Fahlman, Kathryn Groshong, Bonnie Goranson, Nancy Styles and Terry Malley willingly help with music. Social time following church service and pot luck lunches has strengthened fellowship and friendship. Men's breakfast, funeral lunches, donation to food bank, Christmas hamper, Happy hour hot meal and Ten thousand villages are all part of the congregation's participation in outreach ministry. There is happiness and satisfaction in being part of a congregation that celebrates Christ's presence in a variety of loving and caring ways. We are truly blessed to have a great team of leadership and members serving on the various committees of the Board. In conclusion I record a special word of appreciation to Gerri Becker and David Rennie for effectively managing the work at the church office and around the church. I thank the congregation of Grace and God for giving me the wonderful opportunity of caring out ministry of church.

Blessings, Mohandas Barnabas
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