

FEBRUARY 2010

the

Advent Journey

Give your love freely and look for nothing in return. No one is measured by the love they give to others, but by how much they are loved.

-Brother Cadfael

CLWR ISSUES EMERGENCY RELIEF FOR HAITI

Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) is appealing to Canadians for financial support for relief operations underway to assist the people of Haiti following an earthquake on Tuesday, January 12, 2010. CLWR is working in partnership with other members of Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance to address people's basic needs and support rehabilitation efforts.

The 7.0 magnitude quake has buried thousands of people alive in Port au Prince, Haiti's capital city, and across the country. Tens of thousands of people have lost their homes. Donations to the appeal may be made **through your local congregation**, indicating "Haiti Appeal."

Your congregation will then forward these funds directly to CLWR. CLWR will be forwarding immediately to ACT an initial contribution of \$10,000 to support the first phase of the emergency operations and additional funds will be forwarded as they are received. More information about the situation in Haiti and the response by ACT may be found at www.act-intl.

ACT International has unified with ACT Development from 1, January 2010 under a new name, ACT Alliance. The new organization will expand our potential as churches and related organizations to better respond to emergencies, increase our collaboration in development work, and provide a shared voice for advocacy.

Our Friends

Our Palestinian refugee family, Bataa, Suha and Hussein, have arrived safely and are now settling in at Terry and Bob's lovely home. They have a fully furnished and beautifully decorated basement apartment, with 1 bedroom and a pull-out couch, full bathroom, fully equipped kitchen with all appliances (brand new stove), storage space and a walk-out to the garden when the weather gets better.

But back to the airport;

It took about 2 hours before they came through the gates, but in the meantime we met another sponsoring group as well as another refugee, Omar, from the same camp (he came in October). We teased Omar about the Canadian winter and he "complained" how he had to shovel snow, but seriously, he said "Anything is better than there (meaning the camp)."

There were 3 groups in all that arrived at this time.

Omar saw our signs and told us that our family are his friends, so if we missed them when they came out, we had somebody to help us. We were also so grateful to have Marlene Blacklock with us to interpret, both in speaking with Omar (his English was actually quite good) and of course when Bataa, Suha and Hussein finally were with us. Their worldly belongings are in 5 suitcases. May God bless them.

My husband, Jerry, and I stopped by for a little visit, the day after they arrived and they were happy to see us and have another person whom they could speak with (Jerry's Arabic is rusty, but they managed to chat away). As custom is, we were served nice Arabic coffee and Terry and Bob have already tasted their

cooking (They went grocery shopping earlier in the day).

Hussein and Suhan are eager to start learning English and I am sure Bataa (mother) will learn too. They brought with them an Arabic-lettered keyboard and will try and hook this up to Bob's computer so they can be in touch with family in Syria, Dubai and Egypt without costly long-distance call.

Bataa is originally from Egypt and she told us that she was married at 14 and has 11 children (7 boys, 4 girls). We know that one of the sons, together with her husband, were arrested and detained in 2005 and apparently died in detention for reasons unknown. The family never received the bodies and considers them dead as they have had no contact. Hussein (20) and Suha (22) are her youngest children.

What does this mean for Advent?

As you all know, in connection with our 40th anniversary we agreed to an attempt to collect and donate \$40,000 to (a) worthy cause(s).

The 40th Anniversary Planning Committee decided on 2 items (see copy of Minutes below):

1. To donate $\frac{3}{4}$ of the money collected to "Nuc-Tuct" – a non-profit housing project (and we did it!)
2. And donate the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ to the Refugee Sponsor program.

We originally envisioned this sponsorship as a "friendship," i.e. a family already in Canada wanted to sponsor a relative but were not eligible. Advent would be the sponsor on paper, but the relatives of the immigrant would be the ones to look after them in all ways. Our sponsorship is "Insurance"

something go wrong. In this way, we hoped we would be able to help several refugees / immigrants to come to Canada.

Over the years since then, in partnership with CLWR, we had several cases presented to us that we agreed to work with, but none of them panned out.

When we then, last summer, were told about the Al-Hol Refugee camp for Palestinians in Syria, and their desperate situation, it was decided that we would again agree to a sponsorship.

The major difference here is that this family has no relatives here who could look after them. So Advent Lutheran is monetarily responsible for them for 1 year. We have been lucky enough to get free housing, but Bataa, Hussein and Suha will need our assistance with all their other needs. As we discover their needs and their abilities to be self-sufficient grow, we will also be able to judge how much of the money we have in the Refugee Fund will be spent.

For now, council has voted to give each of them \$100 per month for the next 6 months. The host family has also generously promised \$50 for each for one year.

-Brit Missirlian

Michael's Meanderings

To the Christians in Corinth, Paul says: "The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work." As this year starts, I am aware of many opportunities for cheerful and lovingly giving:

- Bataa, Suha and Hussein from Palestine that we are sponsoring have arrived. Check with Brit Missirlian who is chairing the refugee committee to see if there is anything the family might need.
- The adult bible study called *The First Paul* is underway. Give yourself to a new experience of the bible and give others in the congregation benefit of your knowledge.
- We always need people to read in worship, usher, and serve communion. Maybe it's time to stretch your wings and take on a new volunteer experience?
- I'm working with various community agencies looking at establishing a food bank for our area in the near future. Perhaps you would consider community service? Let me know if you are interested and I'll keep your name on file.
- How about a gift of money to the Endowment Fund? Our church has a fund to help it grow into the future. The fund is not large now, but with your help it can be.
- Maybe the biggest gift you can give this year is the gift of silence by giving yourself permission one afternoon a week for quiet prayer and meditation. We can only change one heart, and that is our own.

-Blessings, Michael

Our House

We owe a bit vote of thanks to Bob Videcki because I am sure without his contacts and expertise we would have had MUCH more frustrations than we experience.

The following is a short point form report from Bob Videcki of a number of items that have taken place at Advent concerning the heating systems and their components.

1: Furnace replacement - as of tonight the 2 original furnaces have been removed and 3 new Lennox high efficiency furnaces have been installed. This job is now 98% complete with only a few minor touches to be finished off. The remainder will be completed early next week.

2: Ontario Duct Cleaning was brought in to clean the entire duct systems on the original part of the church where the furnaces were being replaced. I also had them clean the return airside along with the supply ducting. The volume of air at the floor registers is greatly improved and the return ducting at the ceiling level is now clean of all dust and spider webbing.

The cost associated for the cleaning is approximately \$ 600.00 plus taxes. I will have a copy of the invoice forwarded to your attention.

3: When the gas meter was relocated the gas company contractor gave notice of an infraction concerning the gas supply line that supplies gas to the sanctuary furnaces. The gas line must be altered to comply with current regulations. This will be done next week along with the other notice of raising the outdoor exhaust and inlet pipes that exit from the furnace that supplies heat to the entrance area. We also found that the furnace supplying heat to the sanctuary has a fresh air duct that is grossly over sized without a volume damper within the ductwork. This amount of fresh air decreases the amount of available heat greatly plus is a deterrent to furnace longevity. To put in a volume damper is a minor issue and it will be done when we rectify the main gas line and extending the vent repair. The cost involved to complete all of item 3 is only an estimate on my behalf and I suspect a cost of approximately \$ 1,000.00.

It is a pleasure to be of assistance - Bob Videcki

-Fran Brandes, Property Chair



*Happy Chinese
New Year!*

We Pray With

We pray with the Chinese members of our community who celebrate Chinese New Year on February 12. We also pray with Pastor Michael and Pastor Xuandong Zhu who are hosting a new Mandarin ministry on the second and fourth Friday's of each month. And we pray with all those in our parish who have undergone surgery in the last few weeks who have respectfully asked that their names not be reported, but who requested our prayers. May peace and healing be with you.

We pray for the people of Haiti, and the people dedicated to helping them salvage and heal.

We pray with the Palestinian Refugees our parish is sponsoring as they start a new life in a new country.

Blessings friends, our hearts and prayers are with you.

~the people of Advent

We Mourn With

We mourn with Robin Sheppard. This marks a significant year for Robin who lost her father a few months ago and her mother and also a dear family pet. Sometimes life is just hard. May the love of God be your comfort Robin.

We Celebrate With

We celebrate with the ELCIC for courage in developing a new statement on sexuality. The current one is over 40 years old. Being the church does not mean coasting through life, but addressing the important issues of the day with faith and humility.

With Gratitude

With gratitude to Bob Videcki for his work in our furnace crisis. There is heat throughout the building now and this is a wonderful thing. Thanks Bob. Thank you also to everyone who purchased promissory notes. The entire cost of furnace replacement has been financed by members of Advent. Well done good and faithful servants.

Advent Journey is the Monthly Newsletter of Advent Lutheran Church

2800 Don Mills Road, Toronto, ON

www.adventlutheranchurch.ca

Office of Pastor Michael Mills: 416.493.1435

Editor: Tara Lindemann. plaudite_cives@rogers.com. 647.343.5765

The *Journey* is available the first (or second) Sunday of every month.

The deadline for submissions is the third Saturday of every month. Submissions may include: committee reports, special event coverage, thoughts and opinions, photos, art, film, or book reviews pertinent to our community.

Date	Greeters	Readers	Altar Care	Ushers	Counters	Coffee Hosts
7th			Alice & Martin Hubbes		Walter Rothenburger Tara Lindemann	
14th			Alice & Martin Hubbes		MonaMarcobelli	
17th			Alice & Martin Hubbes		Tara Lindemann	
21st			Alice & Martin Hubbes		Fran Brandes Tara Lindemann	
28th			Alice & Martin Hubbes			

The editor apologizes for not providing a complete list of volunteers at this time and appreciates timely submission of information.

Meetings and Events

February 12th, 7-10pm: Celebrating Chinese New Year Mandarin and English speaking members of Advent and their friends and guests. We will make jiaozi (dumplings) together and share a potluck meal and have lots of fun.

February 17th 6:00pm: Ash Wednesday Soup Supper

February 17th 7:30pm: Ash Wednesday Service

February 28th after worship: Annual General Meeting

The Last Word

“Whenever the journey to Easter begins, it must always begin right here: at the contemplation of my death, in the cold conviction that I shall die.

“Remember,” the Pastor has said for centuries, always on this day...Ash Wednesday, the day of the personal ashes, the first of forty days of Lent: Like a deep bell tolling, this word defines the day and starts the season and bids me begin my devotional journey: *Memento!* “Remember!”

“Remember now that thou art dust. Death now - yes, even in the midst of a bustling life. My death and Jesus’ death, by grace conjoined. *Memento!* - Because this death, remembered now, yields life hereafter. And *that* life is forever.”

-Walter Wangerin Jr., Reliving the Passion