

The Spire



Photo by Shirley Nadeau

*News and Views from
Chalmers-Wesley United Church
February to May 2009*

That's the Way the Old Year Passes Fa, la, la, la, la – la, la, la, la.

While putting up my new 2009 Canadian Church Calendar (published jointly by The Anglican Church of Canada and The United Church of Canada), I took one last look at the old 2008 calendar. Just before putting it in the recycling bin, I noticed again that the theme for last year's calendar was taken from Isaiah 56:7 – “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.” It featured photos of churches all across Canada, many of them small rural churches. I think my favourite is the one of St. John's Anglican Church in Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia, with lupins in the foreground. On the last page there is a meditation about prayer, which I'd like to share with you. . . .

“Prayer can be a conversation with God. Our best conversations are usually with our closest friends. The closer the friendship, the more often we like to speak together. The same can apply to prayer. If we want to know God well, we need to speak with God often. Corporate prayer requires that we gather at particular locations on specified occasions, limited to time and place. Conversational prayer can happen anytime, anywhere, while walking in the park or watching the evening news.

“We don't need to wait for momentous happenings or write out polished prayers. All we need to do is share our intimate thoughts and feelings with God. We can open our hearts and minds, and invite God to feel what we are feeling and to know what we are thinking. We can ask God to help us with a burden or to guide us on our way.

“Anything that concerns us at the moment can be shared with God. We may be anxious about a difficult meeting – let God feel the anxiety. We may be working through a complex problem – let God know the details. We are relieved and cheerful after a good meeting or a solved problem – let God enjoy the pleasure. Allow God to become a constant companion.

“This isn't easy – so many things distract us every minute. We need to give ourselves repeated reminders. The Canadian Church Calendar, placed in a high-traffic area in your home or office (mine is on the wall just next to my computer), can serve as a memory aid. A line on your shopping list can also be a reminder, as can an entry in your Blackberry, or a Post-it note in your book or under a fridge magnet. Eventually, speaking with God will become second nature.

“What words are best? We can use many words, very few words, or no words at all. With our purpose in mind, we can simply say, “Please help” or “Thank you.” Or, we can just let the presence of God flow through us, to share our joys or sorrows. We can listen. We can spend time in meditation, “waiting on God.” We can take a few minutes in God's company to consider the events of each day, in a daily review.

“When the invitation is extended, God will help us to better understand and shape our lives. Jesus says, “I am with you always,” but it is our decision to focus our lives on God. As we open ourselves to God more and more we come to realize that we are known, supported, and loved by God – more and more.”

Contributed by Shirley Nadeau, Spire editor

MISSION AND SERVICE FUND

The “Minutes for Mission” which are read on Sunday mornings just before our offerings are received must really be working!

At an October meeting of Montreal & Ottawa Conference, Joan Shea accepted a “Certificate of Generosity” on behalf of Chalmers-Wesley Pastoral Charge for having raised the sum of \$4,815 in 2007 for the Mission and Service Fund and, in doing so, having exceeded our previous years’ donations. “Congratulations and Thank You” to all of our generous donors.

And speaking of donations

The Spire Restoration and Fund-Raising Project

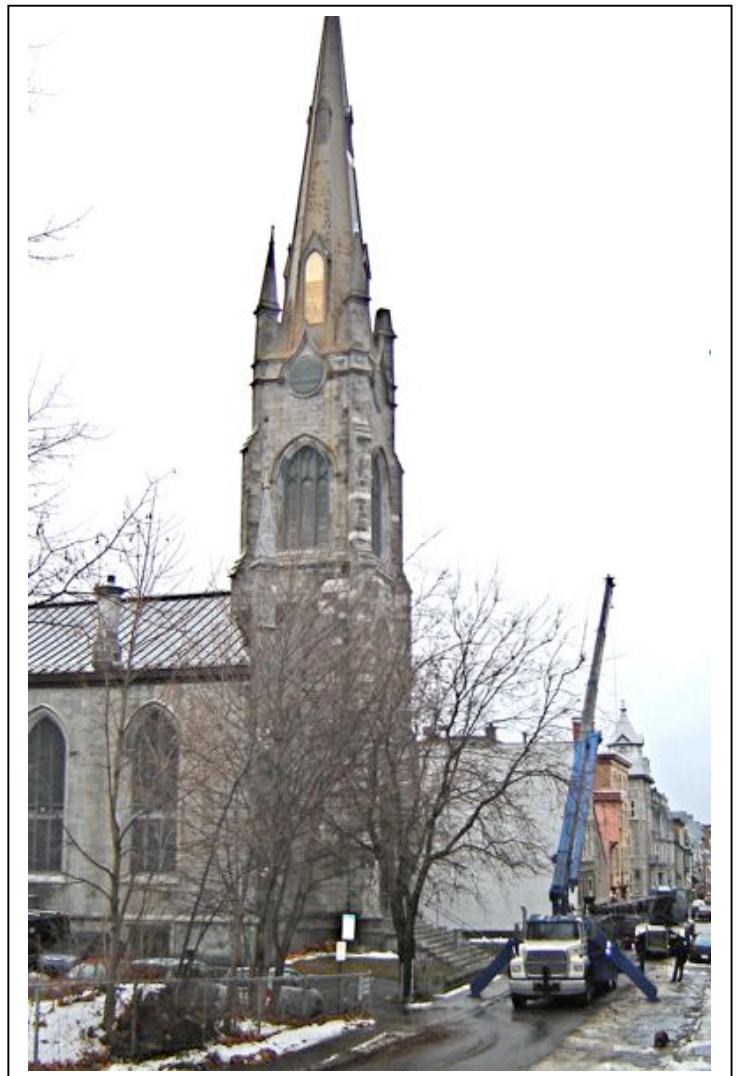
Recent Donations for the Spire Restoration Project were received from the Jackman Foundation (\$5,000) and the Matthew Ralph Kane Foundation (\$2,000).

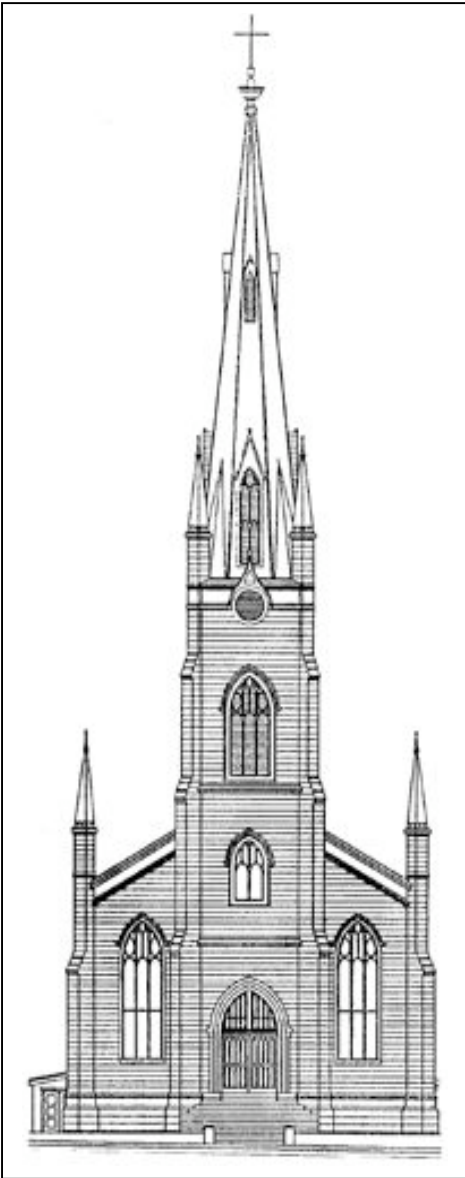
The letter accompanying the donation from the M.R. Kane Foundation contained this very interesting information:

“M.R. Kane was the Forestry Operation Manager of Price Brothers in Chicoutimi for over 25 years. In 1972, A.C. ‘Coosie’ Price established the Matthew Ralph Kane Foundation in memory of his only son who died during World War II. The Foundation to this day is administered by the grandchildren of A.C. Price.”

We are extremely grateful to both the Jackman Foundation and the Matthew Ralph Kane Foundation for their support of our restoration project. Some preliminary work on the exterior was begun in November 2008 but the bulk of the work is slated for the spring of 2009, once the snow melts!

How is our fund-raising doing? See the chart on the following page for details.





**Goal of Phase I of the Spire
Restoration Fund-raising
Campaign \$700,000**

As of January 2009 we have raised:

(76.2% of our goal)

A Total of Grants & Donations \$533,423

consisting of the following

(66.8% of our goal)

Total of Grants from: \$467,360

Religious Heritage Foundation
(Province) \$392,360
Ville de Québec (Municipal) \$75,000

(9.4% of our goal)

Total of Donations from: \$ 66,063

Foundations and Corporations \$44,835
Chalmers-Wesley
members & friends \$14,778
Consistoire Laurentien \$5,500
Église Saint-Pierre members \$950

**Balance remaining
to be raised (23.8% of our goal) \$166,577**

A huge “**Thank You!**” goes to everyone who has given so generously towards the restoration of our beautiful heritage church home. The Fund-raising committee (Mike Ayre, David Baker, Carol Bircher, Grant McConnell, Shirley Nadeau and David Rourke) is working hard to find the balance of the funds necessary to complete the project, along with the Property Committee (Jacques Ayotte, Jim Cruickshank, Grant McConnell and John Winterson) to carry it out.

As explained in a letter sent out to all members and adherents of the congregation, it has become necessary to split the final stage of the restoration project into two phases, the major part of which will be carried out this spring and summer of 2009. The second phase (estimated at an additional \$300,000) will be completed at a later date if/when more funds become available from the provincial government and other sources.

Women's Group Activities

Last September, the Women's Group of Chalmers-Wesley planned meetings and activities for the year. A group of some dozen women meets on the last Thursday of each month.

Our **Mission Statement** is as follows:

“In the grand tradition of the women's groups of Chalmers-Wesley, our mission is to provide a forum for women to express themselves through friendship and open discussion.

“We want to provide an environment that encourages the expression of various viewpoints. We envision this women's community to be a place of warmth, spirituality and loving kindness in which we can support each other while sharing ideas and thoughts. We invite you to be you!”

Besides discussion, we usually have an activity planned for each month. At our first meeting on January 29 we will discuss and plan a community outreach program in cooperation with the Jeffery Hale Community Centre, and have some fun game activities in the lounge in the lower hall. Tea, coffee and refreshments are always served. Please come, and bring a friend on the following dates at 7:00 pm.

January 29 - Planning for Community Outreach Program plus “Fun and Games”

February 26 - Craft Night

March 26 - Cooking Night

April (Date to be determined) - All C-W Luncheon

May 28 - Activity in support of Military Wives

Worship Services and Leaders

Sunday worship services will continue to start at 11:00 am until further notice. We have been so fortunate to have a great variety of worship leaders this past year while we have been searching for a new minister. In particular, Elizabeth Huse has led us not only in worship but also in Bible Studies before Sunday services. We are blessed to have such an eager and energetic person in our midst. See our weekly News from the Pews on our church web site to see who our worship leader is each week. <http://www.chalmerswesley.org/en/newsfromthepews.php>

La Grande Visite à Québec

Indeed it **was** a grand visit by a wonderful group of people. On Sunday, November 16, some 85 members of the Executive of the General Council of The United Church of Canada came to worship with members of Chalmers-Wesley and Saint-Pierre. In Quebec City for the weekend from all over Canada, they attended meetings from Saturday to Monday at the Campus of Notre-Dame-de-Foy in Saint-Augustin-de-Demaures.

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A crowd of more than 130 people gathered in the sanctuary of Chalmers-Wesley United Church for a service of thanksgiving. What a pleasure it was for the two congregations to see their church “pleine à craquer” and to be able to sing, pray and celebrate side by side with the members of the Executive of the General Council to the sounds of the great organ, piano, guitars, flute and drums.

Martyn Sadler (Minister Emeritus of Chalmers-Wesley) and Darla Sloan (Pastor of Église-unie Saint-Pierre et Pinguet) led the bilingual service together. In her sermon, Pastor Sloan commented on the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30) to offer a very appropriate reflection about the frequent fear of taking risks and the reasons to overcome it. She inspired the work of the Executive as a result.

The service was preceded by a time of sharing which included touching testimonials from members of Saint-Pierre and Chalmers-Wesley, both long-time members and relative newcomers. There was also discussion of the highs and lows of living as two distinct minority groups cohabiting in the same building.



During the service, the Moderator of the United Church, the Rev. David Giuliano, who was enjoying his second visit to Québec in 2008, thanked the two congregations for their welcome and spoke to them about a broken communion cup . . . which could still be useful.

(The above text is adapted from an article by David Fines in the January 2009 issue of *Aujourd'hui Credo*.)

Moderator's New Book Traces the Path of an Unwelcome Blessing

Toronto:

The United Church of Canada's Moderator David Giuliano is entering what he describes as the "home stretch" of his three-year term of office. It has been a period that early on was marked by the unexpected challenge of facing a personal journey "through a valley of shadows carved out by cancer."

This journey is celebrated in a new book entitled *Postcards from the Valley: Encounters with Fear, Faith, and God*, published by United Church Publishing House.

The book features a collection of David Giuliano's previously published articles and more recent writing, including his regular blog postings on WonderCafe.ca, the United Church's public online discussion forum. It is both a personal reflection on his journey toward the heart of God and the journey being made by many mainline churches.

"I dreamed of leading our church for a time from a place of strength, wisdom, and creativity. Instead I have been offering my weakness to the church," says Giuliano. And although he admits this journey is not one that he would have chosen, "I cannot deny that it has been a gift to me and to others."

Giuliano's book invites readers to reflect on fear, faith, joy, and the encounter with the Holy One in their own lives and within the common life of the church.

"Personally, this journey through the valley has been a source of deepening my experience of the presence of God and of the Way of Jesus," writes Giuliano in the foreword to his book. He describes the journey as a breaking open of the heart that has been an unwelcome and unasked-for blessing.

For the church, he says, his "wound near the temple" has become a lens through which he has tried to speak to the "woundedness" of our temple.

"As a community we are learning about the 'valley of shadows' after a history spent primarily on top of the world. We are experiencing tremendous change and loss as a community. The church we have known and loved is dying," writes Giuliano. "Death is always part of transformation. We don't know where it will lead, but we do know that we no longer claim special authority and place in our culture. For a long time we rode a great white charger. Now we are learning to ride the donkey. There is confusion, denial, and pain, as well as hope, in our body. I think we are closer to Jesus."

Postcards from the Valley: Encounters with Fear, Faith, and God is published by United Church Publishing House. The book can be ordered on-line at www.chapters.indigo.ca or by contacting United Church Resource Distribution at 1-800-288-7365 or 416-253-5456 or e-mail ucrd@united-church.ca.

Organ Restoration Work Underway



If you have been in church recently, you will have noticed that our organ is not being used at the moment and that, during Sunday services, our Music Director, Alain LeBlond has been playing our recently-acquired grand piano to the right of the choir loft. This lovely, gently-used instrument was purchased last year from the Conservatory of Music.

On Sunday, January 18, I had the opportunity to speak with Alain regarding the organ restoration work, which is currently underway. – Shirley Nadeau

Q – Why are we restoring the organ at this time?

A – As you know, our organ is now almost 120 years old. It was built in 1890 by the Warren Company and enlarged in 1912 by Casavant Frères. A major restoration in two phases took place from 1981 to 1985, the work being done by the Guibault-Therrien Organ Company.

Inside the organ, at the bottom of each pipe – there are over 2000 pipes hidden behind that beautiful façade of large pipes which we can see above the organ loft – there is a paper-thin sheet of leather which closes the pipe, preventing air from being blown through it. When the organist pulls certain “stops” on the organ console, this allows a certain section of the pipes to sound by controlling the leathers at the bottom of a section of pipes. There are four divisions of pipes within the organ known as Great, Swell, Choir, and Pedal. When a key or pedal is pressed, the leather on a specific pipe and section of the organ will open to allow air, forced by the blower, to sound that pipe.

The normal life span of these thin pieces of leather is usually about 50 years. During the restoration work of 1985 only the leathers on the Great section of the organ were replaced. As you can see, the rest of the leathers are well beyond their “BEST BEFORE” date!

Q – Who is doing the restoration work?

A – We have contracted with Les Ateliers Guibault, Bellavance, Carignan, organ builders and restorers of Saint-Hyacinthe, to do the work at a cost of \$41,700, including taxes. Theirs was the lowest of three bids received. The work they are doing involves the mechanical parts of the organ only and will not affect the sound quality of the organ.

Q – How are we paying for the work?

A - The Quebec Ministry of Culture has informed us that the Religious Heritage Foundation has approved our grant request and will contribute \$27,500, which is 68% of the cost before taxes. Thanks to our wonderful series of Summer Organ Concerts, we currently have sufficient monies in our Organ Restoration Fund to cover the balance of the cost of the restoration. So the good news is, we will soon have a fully restored organ and we won't be asking you for any additional donations to help pay for it at this time.

Q - When will the work be completed?

A - Work was started on January 6 and should be finished by March 15. A concert is planned on April 4 with the Conservatory of Rimouski and the Quebec Choir with organ and percussion. We will supply you with more details later about this concert.

To learn more about organs, go to Wikipedia at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organ_\(music\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organ_(music))

Accordion Music Anyone?



La BAND'ACCORDÉONS de Québec holds its regular practices at Chalmers-Wesley under the direction of Jean-Guy Gobeil (seen on the far left above). The eight accordionists were pleased to invite members of the community, family and friends to their final “dress” rehearsal on Wednesday, December 10, in the basement of the church.

The first half of the evening consisted of numerous Christmas pieces which they presented at the V'là l'Bon Vent concerts scheduled for December 14 and 16 at the Salle-Albert Rousseau. The second half of the evening featured a repertoire of classical music prepared by the group. A very appreciative audience attended the evening's entertainment and provided the Band with a live audience to practise on before their big concert. Un gros « Merci » à tout le monde!

