

# Lent 2011: People and the Land

On Sunday April 3, Augustine hosted a guest speaker, Glen Sanderson, a policy advisor from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs to discuss the conditions on Manitoba's northern reserves. Mr. Sanderson touched on many issues facing the isolated First Nation reserves, such as lack of running water, overcrowding, inadequate education and funding.

This event was held partially in response to the series of Winnipeg Free Press articles "No Running Water" printed in the fall 2010. The Social Justice team wanted to address this issue in greater depth. We wanted to hear from the First Nation communities on what they needed and how we could support them. We worked with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs to contact the Island Lakes Tribal Council to determine the most appropriate way to help. The response was to advocate using

petitions, postcards and letters to Members of Parliament about the issues, and to collect clean buckets to facilitate hauling water for the households who lack running water. In addition, we collected toothbrushes, soap and toothpaste as recommended by the Free Press articles. The congregation generously responded to all of these requests.

The issues facing First Nation communities in Manitoba are very complex. Several members of Augustine have raised important questions during this campaign such as "What is the most effective way to support the communities?" and "How do we enable people to make their own positive changes?" I hope that we continue to learn from each other and to talk about these important issues. For me, organizing this event was a great learning

opportunity. Let's keep the discussion going.

I would like to thank the congregation for their input and their generosity during this campaign.

- The Social Justice team



## Holy Week Services at Augustine

Maundy Thursday, April 21: 6 p.m. potluck supper and Holy Land Communion in the Guild Hall (entrance off Pulford St.). We will be using a new liturgy Loraine has written that depicts the Holy Land setting of the Last Supper, accompanied by powerpoint pictures of the land and art.

Good Friday, April 22: 10:30 a.m. service with the choir singing Maurice Duruflé's Requiem.

Easter Sunday Service, April 24, 10:30 a.m. with Communion

Please join us. All are welcome.

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The *AugustZine* is published by Augustine United Church. Writing for this issue by: the Social Justice team, Patrick Woodbeck, Loraine MacKenzie Shepherd, Jean Grevstad, NJ Renwick, photographs by NJ Renwick, Charlie McDougall and courtesy of Wikipedia. The next issue of *AugustZine* will be published in June. If you have ideas or would like to write an article, please contact [augustzine@mts.net](mailto:augustzine@mts.net). Augustine United Church is located at 444 River Ave., Winnipeg, MB, and can be contacted at (204) 284-2250, [augustine.uc@mts.net](mailto:augustine.uc@mts.net) or on-line at [www.augustineunitedchurch.org](http://www.augustineunitedchurch.org).

# AugustZine

The Zine of Augustine United Church, April 2011

## Reflections: Easter 2011

"In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone." We are a resurrection people. We in the United Church, every Sunday, speak the language of Easter, the language of resurrection. For Christians, Easter marks the end of Lent, the 40 day period of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline that prepares us for Easter. On Easter Sunday we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus after the crucifixion commemorated on Good Friday. For many Christians, Easter is a time to remember the sacrifice of Jesus, and his dying on the cross for our sins. Through the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ we are redeemed - Christ died on the cross for our sins - and this has become one of the foundations of the Christian faith. We are given a new life in the resurrection of the crucified Christ, which established Jesus as God incarnate.

I have often thought of Easter and what it means for us in today's world. We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus but how can we relate to this in our lives today? If we focus on the concept of resurrection, we might imagine how we can find resurrection in our lives today. I am sure for many of us there are times when it is hard to see resurrection after crucifixion. Yet, we can find resurrection in the coming of a new way of being church, a new way of being in communion with one another. Resurrection as we work to bring social justice to this world full of injustice. Resurrection as we work with those marginalized in this world. We are also called to remember during this season, yet as we work and live the resurrection, do we see how we can contribute to the crucifixion? As Richard Rohr, the Franciscan Friar, explains "'Resur-



rected' people prayerfully bear witness against injustice and evil -- but also agree compassionately to hold their own complicity in that same evil. It is not over there, it is here." In living as a resurrection people we must be willing to live the entire resurrection. We must be willing to live through the pain of crucifixion, our own pain at our complicity in a world of our own making, this same world full of injustice, and the joy of resurrection as we work towards ending those injustices in the world today.

So as we celebrate the crucifixion and resurrection this Easter season let us remember that we do not only live this out today but every day, as we bring the hope of resurrection to the world around us.

- Patrick Woodbeck

## Reflection: North Main

We were on the bus home from a play the other night, the number 11 that goes through North Main. And there he was, a few rows in. You know the guy I'm talking about. He's the stereotypical aboriginal guy, the one that scares people in the suburbs from going downtown.

You can picture him. You know you can. He had scraggly, unwashed shoulder length black hair, no front teeth, not many teeth at all, actually. He smelled like addiction and abuse. Wore dirty jeans and a plaid jacket. Glazed eyes. He waved hello to everyone, high-fiving people as they went by. Talking away saying something only he understood except to shout out "Portage Place" loudly every few stops to remind the driver where he wanted off.

Everyone on the bus avoided eye contact. Looked at their smart phone, or book, or out the window, or anywhere but at him. Pretend he's not there and wait till Portage Place when he leaves, that's what we do.

Then a couple of seniors got on the bus. No seats left.

One person got up so they could sit down. The aboriginal guy.

Lent challenges us to follow in the ways to Jesus and give up something for 40 days, try to get a sense of the suffering he went through, understand how precious what we have really is.

Then Easter asks us to accept the gift that Christ gave us, that he suffered, was crucified, and then lived again - was resurrected, so we could have the gift of eternal life.

It's a tall order, it's a lot for us to live up to, his life and death. But Jesus was also human. He understands how fallible we are and loves us however we try to follow His ways.

The song "One of Us" by Joan Osborne asks "what if God was one of us, just a slob like one of us/ just a stranger on the bus trying to make his way home."

This is the challenge for Lent, for Easter and hey, for anytime after that too. Look at the stranger on the bus, the one that makes you want to look away. Then look at him and see that on a cold winter's night he's the guy who gave up his seat for the old couple. And while you're trying to live up to the promise of Lent and Easter, try to be as good a person as he was.

- NJ Renwick

## Lorraine and Nancy's unfolding year

*In October, Lorraine announced a change in her pastoral relationship with Augustine. She and Nancy are moving on to new challenges. Here is what the coming year holds for Lorraine and Nancy:*

Our plans for July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 are falling nicely into place, although not necessarily along our dotted blueprint lines. The United Church was not able to find a volunteer placement for us as overseas personnel. While disappointing, this relieves the pressure to become functional in Spanish in six months. Now we will have the full year to learn Spanish at a more relaxed pace.

Our plan is to leave the first week of July and spend nine months in Spanish language schools. We will go to Cochabamba, Bolivia for three months, then to Arequipa, Peru for three months, then back to Bolivia for another three months. April 1 we will fly to Costa Rica, where the Universidad Biblica Latinoamericana has offered us free accommodation in exchange for Nancy and me to volunteer in the library. I will also be helping with music at the weekly chapel services. There may be opportunity for me to offer a workshop / presentation at some point.

These three months in Costa Rica will offer us the opportunity to do much of what we were hoping to do

as overseas personnel volunteers. We are grateful.

From June 20-30, we plan to visit friends in El Salvador before returning home July 1. We are also grateful that Kristen and Rena have decided to rent our house during this year. That's a huge worry that has been lifted from us. We are now in the midst of the multitude of travel preparations necessary for a year of fun in the sun!



## Raising the roof at Augustine



On March 12 Nafro Dance Productions hosted Music for the Soul, a fundraiser for Augustine. The concert raised more than \$4800 for the church. Thanks to Nafro and everyone who worked to make it so successful. Photos by Charlie McDougall.

## I always knew I was Irish

As a baby, some 83 years ago, I was adopted into a loving and caring family. My parents didn't have biological children; therefore I grew up as 'only' child, always longing for a sister or brother.

After my adopted mother died I decided to try to trace my biological mother and possible siblings. Through Vital Statistics I learned that my mother was Irish, came by ship from Ireland to Canada in June 1926, at 21 years of age. I have in hand my adoption papers and original name, also the passenger list from the ship's records. Through friends of mine who did a tremendous amount of research, much more information was obtained and the strong possibility that I had a sister out there.

A month ago now, I had a phone call from a young

woman, who said 'I think you are my aunt, who I have been trying to trace for the past 5 years.' Everything seemed to fit in place; she immediately sent me a number of family pictures which included photos of my biological mother (who had passed away in 1967).

So she told me I have two half sisters and numerous nieces and nephews and extended families. The three of us have had DNA tests which confirms the relationship and the strong possibility that the sister closest in age and I may be full sisters

One sister lives in Edmonton, one in B.C. and my niece who has done all the work lives in Yellowknife. My mother is buried in Edmonton.

A reunion plan is in the works.

- Jean Grevstad