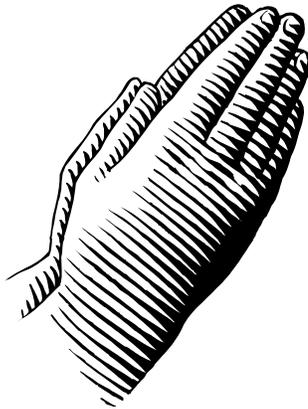




# PEACE RIVER NEW CHURCH CURRENT

NEWSLETTER OF THE DAWSON CREEK CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

OCTOBER 2013



## GIVING THANKS

By Rev. Coleman Glenn

Someone recently shared with me a prayer from the book *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* by Shane Claiborne. The prayer begins like this:

Lord God, Creator of all,  
in Your wisdom You have bound us together  
so that we must depend on others  
for the food we eat, the resources we use,  
the gifts of Your creation that bring life, health  
and joy.  
Creator God, we give You thanks.  
Holy be the hands that sew our clothes so that we  
do not have to go naked.  
Sacred be the hands that build our homes so that  
we do not have to be cold.  
Blessed be the hands that work the land so that  
we do not have to go hungry.  
Creator God, we give You thanks.

I was reflecting on this, and thinking how grateful I am to be living in a community where I *know* the

people who are working the land; where I *know* the people building our homes. More than that: I know the logger who provides the wood for my home, the saw-mill worker who turns it into lumber, the electrician who wires my home, the roughneck who works miserable hours in the oil patch for the gas to heat my home. It's one of the wonderful things about living where we do: we can clearly see the actual *people* who provide us with the physical things we need for our daily lives.

Of course, we all still rely on people who we don't know and haven't met. And it is important that we remember that they, too, are people; and one of the great things about *giving thanks* for people we do not see is that it helps remind us that they, too, are real people, created in the image and likeness of God. The people who toil to make our clothes, our cars, our electronic devices – each one of these is a unique child of the Lord, created for a specific place in heaven that no one else can fill. It is good to give thanks to the Lord for their work.

A few other things came to mind as I reflected on that prayer. The first is the flip side to the blessing of knowing the people who till the land and build our houses. In some ways, it's easy to pray for abstract people, to imagine "the hands that work the land" as belonging to a good farmer with a completely pure heart. It can actually be *harder* to thank the Lord for the specific people who do these things. When it comes to specific people, we know their imperfections. We know their faults. It can be hard to thank the Lord for the people who built our house when we happen to know that Joe or Bob who *actually* built our house is not a very nice person. But in some ways there is even *more* value in thanking the Lord for these specific people and their work. It's valuable because it helps us see what is from the Lord even when that is not easy. When we thank the Lord for specific people who have done specific uses, it forces us to acknowledge that those people really do serve a use. The book *Arcana*

*Coelestia* says that angels look for what is good in everyone (AC 1079); thanking the Lord even for the people we have trouble getting along with helps us to share that heavenly perspective.



Along the same lines, it can also be hard to thank the Lord for the resources we use when we know all too well how harmful to the environment some of those resources are. Can we really thank the Lord for fossil fuels? Can we thank the Lord for Shell and Encana when we how many faults those companies have? I think we can, and I think it is actually important. Because rather than excusing excessive consumption, thanking the Lord for those things – the natural gas, the oil, the coal – actually *reminds* us that these things are *gifts* from the Lord, to be used as wisely as possible, rather than in a selfish way with no regard to the consequences. Consciously choosing to thank the Lord for natural things reminds us to think of even those natural things in a spiritual way; so for example, rather than overindulging in food simply for the sake of our own pleasure, it reminds us that the Lord provides food so that we may have “a sound mind in a sound body” – and that that sound mind is given so that a person may gain intelligence and wisdom, and from this, serve the Lord’s kingdom (see *Arcana Coelestia* 4459:6).

Thanking the Lord for people and things that are not perfect does not mean we ignore everything that is harmful in the world. To truly love a person means to love what is good in him *and* as far as possible to try to help them amend their lives in ways that are necessary. To truly love a community or a country is to love what is good in it *and* to seek to amend what is bad in it. But choosing to thank the Lord for those people and their service reminds us to see people as the Lord sees them – as His children, with a unique and beautiful role to serve in His kingdom.

## THANKSGIVING SERVICES

On Sunday, October 13th, we will be celebrating Thanksgiving both at the Dawson Creek New Church and with the Grande Prairie circle at the church in DeBolt.

In Dawson Creek, we will have a family service at 11:00 am, followed by a Thanksgiving dinner in the hall downstairs. As part of the service you are invited to bring a fruit or vegetable offering as a symbol of gratitude to the Lord. The offerings will be distributed after the service.

A sign-up sheet for the Thanksgiving meal will soon be available at the church; or feel free to call me (Coleman) and let me know what you plan to bring and I’ll add your name to the list.

In DeBolt, we will have church at 4:30 p.m., followed by a Thanksgiving supper downstairs.



## CHURCH BASEMENT FLOORING

A huge “thank you” goes out to Dorothy Friesen, and to Richard and Teresa Friesen and family, for the new flooring in the church basement! The family donated these new floors in loving memory of Corney Friesen. Already they have made the church hall feel much warmer and more welcoming. The flooring is made with Harbinger industrial grade vinyl planks, which are durable and easy to clean. Come by and check it out!



## PARKING LOT UPDATE

We're making progress on the parking lot! After a rainy summer that backed up our timeline, it looks like we will be getting the paving done just in time, before the really cold weather sets in. Paul and Tracy Bouchard dug out the lot with a Bobcat last week, and Howard Myatt dropped off several loads of gravel earlier this week. All that remains is to level out the gravel, then Peters Bros will come in and do the final prep work and the paving. So far there haven't been any jobs that require more than one or two people, but we'll be sure to call those of you who have offered to help out when we need you. Thank you!

## BEGIN A NEW LIFE

This month we continue to follow the "Begin a New Life" program. As you may recall, the first three weeks of the program looked at the first three steps of repentance: to examine ourselves, to recognize and acknowledge our sins, and to pray to the Lord for His help and power. This month, we conclude the series. First, we'll look at the final step of repentance - actually beginning a new life. Then we will look at an easier form of repentance, useful for anyone who has trouble with the more in-depth form, and also useful for anyone who wants to *focus* on one particular area but who also realizes they need to stay on top of a few other things as well. Finally, we will take a look back at the process as a whole, and celebrate Holy Supper together.

On October 13th we will take a break from our sermon series on "Begin a New Life" to celebrate Thanksgiving, resuming the following week. We will

still have a meeting every Tuesday evening, however, including that week of Thanksgiving. That means that in the group we will talk about the topic for Week Five ("An Easier Kind of Repentance") *before* we've had a sermon about it. But this actually works out well, since it means we can have our final group meeting on October 22nd and talk about the value of preparing for and taking Holy Supper before we have our Holy Supper service on October 27th.

Everyone is welcome to come to the Tuesday evening meetings, even if you haven't come to any before. There is no pressure to share what specific thing you're working on - we just talk about what it is like for us to go through these steps, the insights and questions we have about the process itself. Again, these meetings take place at the church Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. and last until about 8:15 p.m. Hope to see you there!



## THE DAWSON CREEK CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSAEM

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(250) 782-8035

**Worship: Sundays at 11 a.m.**

For information on services in Grande Prairie & Debolt, please contact Mrs. Lavina Scott at (780) 957-3625.

**If you have news or other information for this publication, or if you have any pastoral concerns, please call the pastor, Coleman Glenn, at (250) 782-8035 or (cell) (250) 467-2313, or e-mail [pastor@dawsoncreeknewchurch.ca](mailto:pastor@dawsoncreeknewchurch.ca).**

# CHURCH CALENDAR

## OCTOBER 2013

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	1 <b>7 p.m.</b> Begin a New Life Group	2	3	4	5
6 <b>11 a.m.</b> Family Service: Begin a New Life	7	8 <b>7 p.m.</b> Begin a New Life Group	9	10	11	12
13 <b>11 a.m.</b> Thanksgiving Service  <b>4:30 p.m.</b> Thanksgiving Service (DeBolt)	14	15 <b>7 p.m.</b> Begin a New Life Group	16	17	18	19
20 <b>11 a.m.</b> Traditional Service: An Easier Kind of Repentance	21	22 <b>7 p.m.</b> Begin a New Life Group	23	24	25 <b>7 p.m.</b> Board Meeting	26
27 <b>11 a.m.</b> Holy Supper Service <b>12:15 p.m.</b> Semi-Annual Meeting <b>4:30 p.m.</b> Worship & Class (Grande Prairie)	28	29	30	31	1	2

**Note: All events take place at the Dawson Creek Church of the New Jerusalem unless noted otherwise**