



To God  
be All  
Glory  
&  
honor

May, June, 2019 VOLUME 3 EDITION 4

# *Life With Us*

At Niagara United Mennonite Church

## **Fairest Lord Jesus**

**Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature,  
O Thou of God and man the Son,  
Thee will I cherish, Thee will I honor,  
Thou, my soul's glory, joy and crown.**

**Fair are the meadows, fairer still the woodlands,  
Robed in the blooming garb of spring;  
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,  
Who makes the woeful heart to sing.**

**Fair is the sunshine,  
Fairer still the moonlight,  
And all the twinkling starry host;  
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer  
Than all the angels heaven can boast.**

**Beautiful Savior! Lord of all the nations!  
Son of God and Son of Man!  
Glory and honor, praise, adoration,  
Now and forever more be Thine.**

~ Anonymous/Unknown



*Alleluia.*  
*Christ is risen!*







### Easter and The Eggs

As a child growing up in war-torn Europe, I was fortunate to have my basic needs for food and shelter met. Mom and Dad took good care of my brother and I. However, we rarely, if ever, received special treats. Candies, cookies, fruits – treats associated with special holidays – were not only expensive but were difficult or impossible to find. No candy canes at Christmas time, no chocolate eggs at Easter.

One special holiday stands out in my memory, however. Easter was approaching. My father returned home one day after work with 12 eggs each for my brother and I. And they were coloured eggs too! I have no idea where the eggs came from or how Dad managed to get them. Alfred and I were so excited we could hardly contain our happiness. I had so much pleasure admiring all of the pretty colours- each one more pleasing to my eyes.....and to eat .....!!!!

While I wanted to save the eggs and make them last, it was difficult to eat only one or two. By bedtime, I had eaten 10 of my 12 eggs – hard-boiled eggs. I must have looked green as my tummy did somersaults! I was so sick.

While Dad's special treat for us remains a cherished memory, my appetite for eggs was changed forever. Now I prefer my eggs to be soft-boiled, poached, with whipped dressing in a sandwich – or chocolate!

*Submitted by Lori Dyck*





## Five Senses Plus One!

Who doesn't love spring? When the quiet winter world comes alive again, it's just a feast for the senses! It's as though the Creator is turning a giant colouring dial and nature explodes into the joyful hues of new growth. Windows are open and we hear children playing, frogs croaking, cheerful nesting birds, and people driving by with their car windows open - favorite music blaring. Going outside is a quick step through the door without the tedious task of bundling up. Fresh young flavors of chives, rhubarb and asparagus delight our palate. Blossoms appear, and ahhh - the smell of spring is in the air!

For our family, spring has always been a time for many celebrations. Easter centres the season, but so much else happens too. I counted the events once, and realized that between April 22 and June 23, we have 16 occasions, 9 of which could involve a gift!

A few memories stand out - along sensory lines:

**Taste:** I randomly decided to learn how to bake paska, the year we did extensive renovations on our house. For a few overlapping months, I had 2 kitchens ie. the old one was still operational but awaiting demolition and the new one was already installed. This turned out to be a very useful situation. My neighbour gave me her recipe, (which didn't clearly state how much flour I would need ... uh-oh), and I began my Mennonite heritage baking project. When I grated the lemon and started the yeast, tears came to my eyes, because that combined aroma reminded me so much of my mother baking in our home kitchen years ago.

When I had the liquids mixed, I realized, even as a rookie paska baker, that this was going to require a LOT of flour.... 24 cups, to be exact! The ball of dough was so heavy, I could hardly knead it. When it rose, I was afraid it would take over the entire oven! And when I started to put it onto pans, I used every pan, of every size and shape that I had! There was paska everywhere: on the counters, on the tables and on the desk. It took me all day to get it all baked, setting the pans out to rise in draft-free spaces, running between the 2 ovens, circulating the pans, and placing them on cooling racks. It was a paska factory! When I closed my eyes at night, I could still see that paska! It was tasty though. I still use a *reduced* version of that same recipe.

**Smell:** I guess I'm admitting I'm an old-fashioned girl when I say that I like to hang the laundry outside, especially in the spring-time, because it smells so nice when it comes back in. Sleep is especially sweet on sheets that have dried in the sun. The other smell in the country in the spring, is often that of smoke, as surrounding farmers burn their brush. It makes me smile when I remember my Mom's distress one day when she exclaimed, "Why are they burning brush TODAY!?"

Don't they know it's **laundry day**!?" Always Mondays, in those days.

**Feel:** When you're a child, and you think of Easter, you inevitably think of bunnies. They are so soft and fluffy, and quite hilarious to observe. One spring, my Dad built a rabbit hutch and soon our much-anticipated pet bunnies arrived! So adorable. We sheltered them in the basement for a while until they grew a little bigger. Our cousins came over and we squealed with delight as we chased the bunnies around the basement and enjoyed their antics. I'll never forget though, the heavy sound in my Mother's voice as she came down to the basement later that afternoon, asked us to subdue our excitement, and reported that our Oma had just died! It was Easter weekend. Suddenly, Easter felt so different as we quietly played with our soft little bunnies, surrounded by grieving family on a weekend that was supposed to be all about joy.

**See:** My Dad always said that without fail, apricots will bloom by April 30.

Last year, after a very cold winter, the blossoms were slow in coming. I checked our tree a few times but, for the first time ever, it didn't look like the old rule would apply. But - on April 30, I went out to that tree, looked really carefully, and managed to find a little twig with a few blossoms on it. I quickly took it to my Dad and said, "You were right - again!" I couldn't ever have imagined that day, that it would be the last time he would experience blossom time....

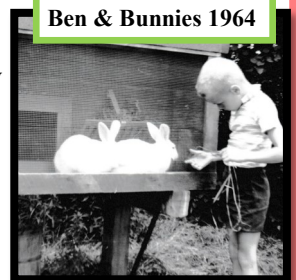
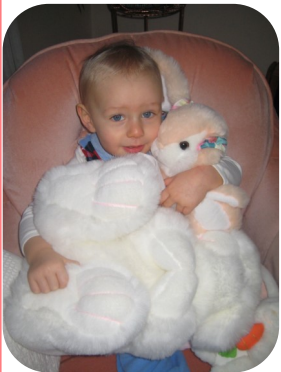
**Hear:** The church choir at Easter has it "hands down" on this sense. For so many years already, and again this past weekend, we were blessed by the words, accompaniment, and exuberance of these songs of praise. Some songs were timeless favorites, and others were newer ones that we've come to love, but all were sung in worship and thanks. What a treasure, this gift of music!

### Plus One: The Sense of Wonder

Underlying all of these sensory experiences and memories, is the incredible sense of wonder that Easter and springtime fills me with. There are so many mysteries I do not understand, and there are so many miracles I cannot comprehend, and yet, nature's cycle continues, and God's love is timeless. As human beings, we create traditions, we learn from the "wisdom keepers" before us, we do our best to teach the generations that follow, but in all things it is still God, in His own time, who enriches our senses and gives us Life. Isn't that wonder-ful?



Bartel cousins Easter 1970



Ben & Bunnies 1964





## A Grandmother's Prayer

Those of us who are grandmothers know the power of prayer when speaking about our grandchildren. Every time another child is added to the family tree, our prayer list becomes longer. We pray for their safety, their health, their career choices, their choice of friends but most of all their spiritual well being.

We all want our grandchildren to make wise decisions so imagine my surprise when my 26 year old grandson Joshua shared with me that he felt God was calling him to do missionary work in Nigeria. "Nigeria" I said, "Isn't that one of the most dangerous places in the world?" I had just finished reading the following headlines on FB: "Nigerian Christians Under Siege—Attack Claims 120 Lives Since February"—At least 120 people have been killed in attacks committed by the Fulani Militia. Nigeria ranks as the 12<sup>th</sup> worst country in the world for Christian persecution.

After much prayer and soul searching, I clung to the verses in Philippians 4:6 & 7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension shall guard our hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

A few months ago another grandson Michael who is teaching at Heritage Christian School in Jordan informed me that he had accepted a teaching position at the Bethlehem Evangelical Academy, located in Bethlehem in the West Bank territory of Palestine, a predominantly Muslim nation. "Bethlehem" I commented, "Isn't that another hot spot in the world today? Surely there has to be a safer place to teach!"

I am constantly being asked if I am worried. I guess it would only be normal to worry but years ago I was given the following quotation; "Worry denies the Holy Spirit the right to lead us in confidence and peace. Worry places undue attention on us." As John Tiessen said in one of his sermons "It's all about where your focus is. It is good to look away from our fears and focus on God."

I have found that when we are faced with a situation that brings anxiety, fear, etc, go straight to the Lord and trust Him to calm our uneasy heart. It is now almost two years since Joshua left to work in the Nigerian jungle. He works with an organization called City Ministries whose aim is to reach out to Muslims and persecuted Christians. Their unit focuses on reaching out to Muslims and Christians in the war torn areas, taking the Gospel into Bokko Haram and Fulani militant devastated areas. Of late, they have been particularly focused in bringing the Gospel to the Fulani, a militant Islamic tribe who have been killing many Christians.

Michael will be leaving for Bethlehem at the end of August. The BEA's mission is to educate Palestinian children from a Gospel oriented perspective and teach them to be rooted and grounded in Christ. The school where he will be teaching has a mixed student body reaching Christians as well as Muslim families.

Life is not without certainties. What I continue to learn is that God cares. He invites us to let go of our fears of the unknown by giving them to Him. We can keep praying for our grandchildren no matter where they are, but knowing that God cares for my grandsons, puts my mind at ease.



~ submitted by Margie Enns



# One Year Anniversary

By: Austin Penner

This month marks the one year anniversary of me living alone. And what a year it has been. As I sit down and reflect on all that has happened this past year, I am flooded with wonder at how much I have changed and what I have learned about what makes me happy. As I look around my apartment, I can't help but to be so grateful for this year of such solitude. Of such rest. Of such simplicity.

This time last year as I was moving in, I wondered if I would like it. I was excited, but also skeptical. There were two clear things I had thought I'd realized in my university years about living:

#1. I would *never* subject myself to living in a basement ever again, and

#2. I would *never* live alone. I was much too dependent on being around people that surely I would plummet into an unrecoverable depression if I lived by myself.

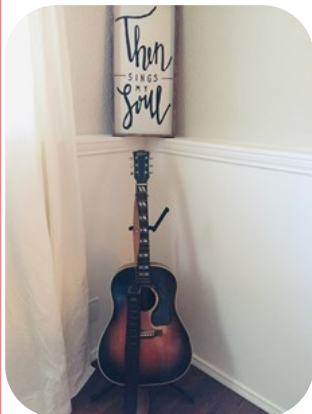
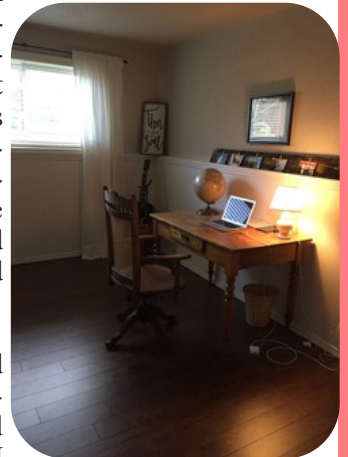
But of course, life led me to May 2018 where I found myself, with the help of Ellery, Mark and my parents, moving into a **one bedroom basement apartment**. All day as my family helped me move my things into my new apartment, I was thinking "Hmmm, why did I choose to do this?! This goes against 2/2 of my living-situation rules...."



My first night in my new apartment came and went. I remember feeling so weird. Like I was on the worst vacation ever, staying in an Airbnb by myself for an inexplicable reason, with nothing to do but to wallow in the reality that yes, this was my life now. Yes, I would be forever alone. Yes, I would be chronically stuck in this fake vacation of a home that didn't feel like home. Mental positivity was clearly abounding...

And now I sit here, May 2019, and I marvel at the growth, memories, and experiences that have resulted from the decision I made to move here. And I am grateful. Never have I ever had such an extended period of time to sit with myself than this year has gifted to me. To connect my mind with my body, and to focus so much on the relationship that I have with myself. At first, I realized that, shoot, I wasn't the best roommate to myself. I was actually a low quality one. I'd say mean and hurtful things to myself. Not only would I insult my living style with thoughts like "you left dishes in the sink again?! If you can't even clean up after

yourself, how are you going to handle the rest of your life? Now it's even harder to clean up and everything's even more baked on...wait hang on, you didn't even let the dishes soak? How lazy are you?!" But I'd get right down to my character with thoughts like "you're just not a good person." How rude!!! I was the worst roommate, and my internal dialogue didn't match the outward appearance I put on for others. But unlike all other roommates in the world who, if they were to suck to live with, you could just move out and decide to not see them again, that wasn't even an option. Turns out you can't just move away from yourself. "okay...", I thought, "well Austin, if moving out/away from you isn't an option (oh how I wished it was), then we're just going to have to get down to business and get serious about improving this relationship." And that is exactly what this year has provided room for. When I lived with others, whether it be family, very dear friends, or random people, I always thought that when I was annoyed, it was because of something they did or didn't do and that it was out of my control. And they probably were legitimately annoying some of the time. But living alone shed light on the fact that a lot of the time, it was *me* who I was annoyed with. When you live with others, it's much easier to pin your irritability on them. Ah man. So bad news, I'm the problem. Good news, this is all absolutely changeable!



So, it was time to find joy. To find joy in who I am and in what I spend my time doing, and to match my inside with what I project on the outside. I've found my groove and positive thoughts flow through my mind regularly and freely now. I have found an awareness of who I am that I didn't realize was possible, and it is so refreshing and grounding. Turns out, we all have complete control over our thoughts, and when we let our thoughts run wild and free into overthinking and negativity, it's purely lazy and indulgent thinking. If we're worried or stressed, we have the capacity to stop those thoughts, to be self-disciplined in them, and to replace them with the best next thought. Which leads to us doing the best next thing. And so on and so forth, until our lives are filled with internal excitement, zest, and joy. On this one year anniversary, I am just so happy for this year of self-discovery. A year marked by learning self-kindness and intentionality. A year that will go down in the books as one of my favourites.



## A fun trip to Newton, Kansas!

Greetings to all of Will's friends at NUMC! He misses you very much, and cherishes your friendship immensely.

A few weeks ago, John and I flew into Wichita, Kansas to visit our American "son" Will Friesen. It was time to check out his new home and community. Will has taken on a new teaching position at Hesston College (Mennonite Church), and relocated to Newton, Kansas. His new "old" house is situated across the street from Bethel College (Russian Mennonite heritage). As a result, the whole community is full of Mennonites, and Will feels right at home. He loves his job, enjoys the countryish surroundings with lots of hiking opportunities, and is positively challenged by the possibilities for renovation of his "new" house from the 50's. One room has already been transformed into a state-of-the-arts bathroom! Lest you think that Will has now taken on carpentry/plumbing/electrical skills in addition to his chemistry and

music interests, he will admit that his input into the new bathroom was mainly in the area of planning, designing, assisting, and prodding toward completion! The main builder was John Wiebe, Will's partner, and a great partner he is! We were privileged to be the first guests to make use of this bathroom—without a doorknob for a day or so!

Will and John have also found a wonderful church in Newton Shalom Mennonite, that welcomes ALL to its membership. Here, Will is able to share his awesome organ and piano skills, and John W. on several occasions has been asked to read Scripture in Plautdietsch. Shalom has the practice of having Scripture read in various languages on different Sundays. We found the atmosphere at **Shalom Mennonite Church** to be very inviting and warm. I was particularly impressed by an announcement that appears in every Sunday's bulletin about the children.

*"To parents of young children; Relax! God put the wiggle in children. Don't feel like you have to suppress those wiggles in church. • Consider sitting closer to the front, where it's easier for your little ones to engage. • Quietly explain the parts of worship and actions of the worship leader, musician, pastor and others who are involved in the service. • Sing the hymns, pray and voice the responses. Children learn their behavior by mimicking you. • On the piano side of the sanctuary you will find coloring sheets, books and toys. Feel free to hang out there or bring items back to your pew. If you have to leave the sanctuary with your child, please feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me"."*

A further statement that I really appreciated was also placed in every Shalom Sunday bulletin:

### OUR WELCOMING STATEMENT

*We embrace all people in the name of Christ. Everyone is a unique creation in the image of God. We are an open and affirming congregation that seeks to follow Jesus. We welcome into full participation in the life and ministry of the church, people of every race, immigration status, culture, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, education, economic status, and life situation. We welcome diverse perspectives as we gather around God's table together.*

We had a great time visiting with Will & John & Utje, with daily coffeetime at Mojo's. Spring had sprung in Newton & we saw the daffodils & tulips burst into colours! We also enjoyed the 250 voice male choir concert at Tabor College.

Mostly, it was awesome seeing Will so happy in his new community!

~ Kathy Rempel



Coffee with friends at Bethel's Mojo's Café.

Will's & John's "thriving" chicken business!



Kansas Mennonite Men's Chorus at Tabor College. Find Will & John in top left corner.

Lovely evening at the "sparkling" fire!





# Raw Carrot Soup Lunch

By: Ellery Rauwerda

On Sunday, April 7, our church community ate soup for a cause - or rather, a few causes! NUMC's "Meal of the Month" featured soup made by The Raw Carrot and served by our Senior Youth. The purpose of the meal was twofold: to fund-raise for our youth and to learn about and support a wonderfully creative social franchise.

The Raw Carrot was started by two women, Rebecca and Colleen, who saw a need in our province. Many people in Ontario are, for a variety of reasons, unable to hold steady mainstream jobs, and are financially supported by the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). While the financial aid is a start, it often does not cover the costs of daily living; many people relying on ODSP live below the poverty line. Another basic need often gets overlooked for those living on ODSP - the need for meaning and value in society. In an effort to address all of these needs, The Raw Carrot was born.

The Raw Carrot makes and sells a wide variety of delicious, artisan soups. They employ people living on ODSP, providing income and purpose in an environment that is accessible to a demographic who may otherwise not have a chance to work. The testimonies of those employed by The Raw Carrot speak to the incredibly positive impact that The Raw Carrot is having on their lives.

Our church had the opportunity to learn about that impact firsthand by hearing the Raw Carrot story directly from Rebecca and Colleen, and by trying three different varieties of soup. The lunch was a great success in a number of ways! The turnout was wonderful - thank-you to all who came out! Our church kitchen's "conservative portion" sized bowls enabled most people to try a few different kinds of soup. Audrey Dau baked buns and some dedicated youth joined sponsors and some impromptu volunteers, to set up for, serve, and clean up from the meal.

Thanks to the generosity of our church family, the youth received just over \$600 in donations. Sales of soup by The Raw Carrot totaled \$750. Perhaps the most exciting outcome of the lunch is the potential for future partnership with this social franchise that is doing so much for those in need right in our own province. The Raw Carrot currently has branches in Paris and Kitchener, ON. It is looking to expand into the Niagara Region in order to further their reach of support for those on ODSP. In order to do this, they need support from the community. Our church is perfectly poised to help, and it couldn't be easier - *Buy Soup, Create Jobs. Simple.* By selling and buying from The Raw Carrot here in Niagara on a regular basis, we can support their work while at the same time enjoying healthy, delicious, ready-made soup.

It is my hope that the lunch we had here on April 7 was the first of many of its kind, that the soup that the Raw Carrot creates will find its way onto more dinner tables, and the work that the Raw Carrot is doing finds its way into our community so that more people living on ODSP can experience financial stability, meaning, and purpose in their lives.

Talk to Ellery if you're interested in learning more about the work of **The Raw Carrot** or how we can get more involved - or even if you just want to order some more of that delicious soup!





## My Amazing Trip: A fulfillment of my bucket list

On Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup> I, along with my daughter Debbie and four other members of our church embarked on a two week tour of Israel and the Greek Islands. I heard about this tour back in January, and when I learned that four of our church community had already signed up I made up my mind to go; so I asked my daughter if she would be willing to accompany me, as I didn't want to go alone. When she agreed to come with me, I excitedly started to plan. I had always wanted to go to Israel but the opportunity never seemed to come. I will just touch on some of the highlights.

Our group consisted of 27 members from Ontario, Alberta and U.S. A great bunch of people! Our tour guide, Gideon Levytam, a Christian Jew was born in Israel and lives in Niagara, just down the street from me.

It was a jam-packed tour of all the important places that we know from the Bible. We toured the Temple Mount, wandered through the Garden of Gethsemane,



stood on the Mount of Olives that overlooks the Temple Mount, swam in the Dead Sea, dipped our toes in the Sea of Galilee and participated in a baptism in the Jordan River of two of our tour members. We saw the valley where David and Goliath fought, and I could go on and on. We had long days of walking, climbing endless stairs and up and down hills and valleys. Israel is all mountainous. We had quite a bit of rain and cold weather, but it didn't dampen the spirits of our group.

After our Israel tour we flew to Athens, Greece, and visited the Acropolis and ancient Corinth and added on a Greek Island cruise that took us to Ephesus, Crete and Santorini. Everywhere we had local tour guides who explained the various sites and ruins.

On April 8<sup>th</sup> we flew back to Toronto from Athens, an 11 hour flight. I am still jet-lagged and trying to digest all the sights and sounds that I experienced. Some people have asked me "what was the highlight of the trip?" I must say that the whole trip was a highlight for me and I thank God for this marvelous experience.

*~ submitted by Lucy Harder*





## Part 1. Jordan

~ by Erv Willms

In the fall of 2018, just before Christmas, we started hearing rumors of a trip to Israel being led by a Niagara on the Lake resident named Gideon Levytam.

Sigrid Wiens, my wife Esther's sister, reported to us that her son Robert's mother-in-law Frieda Krugel (Henry Friesens' sister), was looking for a partner to go to Israel with, as her friend had backed out late in the game, and Sigrid was considering going with her. (ok that's it for the Mennonite game).

Both, Rebecca and Daniel (our oldest and youngest), had been to Israel with YELLA (an MCC Middle Eastern Learning Tour for Young Adults) and had enjoyed it. Part of their experience was to walk the Jesus Trail in the West Bank of Israel. Esther and I and Sigrid, had walked The Camino de Santiago (a pilgrimage trail that ends in Santiago, Spain where the bones of St. James are buried) a couple of years ago. After listening to Rebecca's and Daniel's experiences (they went on separate YELLA trips), I was keen to walk this Jesus Trail as well. However, after a couple of years of letting things slide, and no attempt at doing any planning on my part, and Esther telling me she wanted to do a tour, not figure everything out on our own, I had to admit that the trip Frieda was suggesting looked very interesting.

In this case we would be on a tour led by a local Niagara on the Lake guy, who happened to be Jewish, born in Israel, converted to Christianity, leads a church in Toronto, namely this Gideon Levytam. The itinerary looked good, and it covered most of the well-known sites in Israel. The tour group was on the smaller side, around 25 people (ended up being 28 including Gideon and his wife, Irene). It was well priced, with just about everything included except lunches. As a bonus, there was an optional tour to Greece including Athens and Corinth, plus a short 3 day cruise in the Mediterranean, including biblical stops at Crete, and Ephesus, in Turkey. It was looking better all the time.

So, Sigrid agreed to be Frieda's partner (die miteltern) , and Esther and I signed up, all of us for Israel/Greece/Turkey. Then things got more interesting. I asked my Dad if he'd like to go – "SURE" was his immediate answer. I went to his place, showed him the itinerary, the costs, including the up-charge for single occupancy (none of my siblings had been interested), the Greece Cruise option, and told him to sleep on it. If he was still interested, I'd come over in the morning, and we'd book it. Deciding to let Dad sleep in, I called around 10:00am to see if he was still interested. He must have been keen, because he had already called the agency, booked and paid for everything. He just needed to drop off a copy of his passport. He was ahead of us. "we better pull up our socks" I told Esther.

Dad then mentioned the trip, "Israel" he said, "Imagine, at my age!" to Tante Marg Goerz, who mentioned it to Tante Lucy Harder. After some days of considering things T.Marg decide against going. Lucy had other ideas, however. It turns out Israel was on her bucket list but had never made it to top priority. Then when her husband Johnnie passed away, the idea dwindled, - but now it was alive again. She quickly talked to daughter Debbie. Despite being one of the last to confirm, they were included in Israel and Greece. Well, those of you who know a thing or 2, will know that my Dad and Lucy are cousins, not only that, but, double cousins, according to Debbie. Hmmm - I did say I was done with the Mennonite game, and now this.....can't be helped sometimes, I suppose.

How this double cousin thing works is way beyond my ability to play that game, but you can ask Debbie. It all gave me cause to wonder however, how Frieda liked having her nice Middle Eastern trip, suddenly overrun by Willms'. At this point though, it was too late to worry about it. We were however very happy that the 2 cousins were along and could keep each other company.

While the T. Lucy thing worked itself out to everyone's satisfaction, the rest of us had other, or more crazy ideas. Why not add Jordan to the trip. My son Daniel who at 23, has already done more travelling than I, and I've done a bit, mentioned that the most awesome place he'd ever visited was, Petra Jordan, and we were just a small jump and 1 hostile country away. So, Esther and I started looking into Jordan.

Our travel agent was no help - Jordan scares people. That is when we turned to the Internet and found a web site that we felt ok with, and WE BOOKED A 3 DAY TOUR, all on the web, and all paid for in advance. It included landing in the capital Aman, a tour of Petra, and a night in the desert of Wadi Rum, a huge nature preserve in the desert area, in the southern part of Jordan. Only Nomad or Bedouin people are allowed to access (along with visitors) the preserve. Here we were to partake of an authentic Bedouin meal, and dance, and sleep in nomadic tents and spend the morning on the back of jeeps touring the vast desert. Then a border crossing at Eilat, Israel, way down at the Red Sea, the most southerly and deserted part of Israel, followed by a mad dash up Highway 90 to the Dead Sea and then over to Jerusalem to catch up with Gideon and the rest of the group. It sounded perfect.

I asked Dad about it. He responded with a low German reply that rolls off the tongue rather smoothly and effectively, in that language, but translated comes out as "Since I'm jumping over the dog, I also cleared the trail" or perhaps in English, but not exactly the same, "in for a penny, in for a pound". SO that was that. Our trip was now Jordan/Israel/Greece/Turkey.

Debbie and Lucy did not join in our little trip addition, and we eventually caught up with them in Jerusalem.

But I'm jumping ahead.

March 21 found us clustered around a computer screen, reserving seats for our next day departure. Esther and Sigrid spent a frustrating evening booking and rebooking, as things seemed to forever go wrong. Frieda was supposed to help but she was sick in bed at home. She had earlier in the week helped out a family with some babysitting and had picked up a nasty cold/flu which had already kept her in bed a couple of days.

So, the next day, March 22 found us on our happy way to Aman Jordan with a stop over in Vienna. We were greeted as promised at the airport, before immigration, where our tour guide took our passports, and left us collecting our checked baggage. After returning our passports, we left the airport, never saying boo to any sort of security, immigration, or border control.

Aman, is simply a typical middle eastern city, mostly Arabic, with mosques and spires, and calling to prayer, and any number of restaurants serving pizza, or shawarmas, or humus along with fruit juices and pops. Dusty and warm. We had dinner in town and were happy to get to bed after a long flight, in a 3 star, but very satisfying hotel room and bed. All was well. We were up at 6:00, missed our promised breakfast at 7:00 (due to some miscommunication and were off on our adventure.



Our driver Mohamed was young, but very good. I asked him, that once I was back, what should I tell my friends in Canada, about Jordan. His response was fast. "Tell your friends, Jordan is very safe, and tell them that our faces have an angry look, but that is just a defense mechanism, so that people don't get too close. We are actually very loving and are always wanting to help". Jordan itself has a population of 10 million and has the highest per capital rate of hosting refugees, which make up 2.9M out of their 10M. They come from Palestine (in Israel known as the West Bank), from Iraq, and lately from Syria. According to our



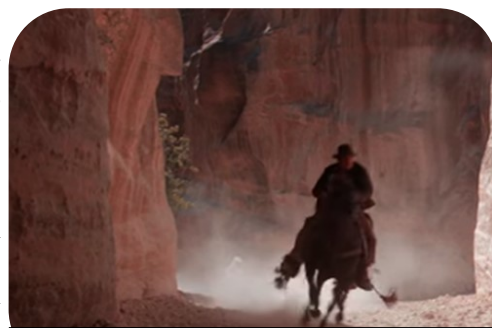
driver, the countries biggest issue at the moment is the 1.5 million Syrian refugees living there, and how to absorb them into their economy.

We drove from the north of Jordan to the south. (it was interesting that just about all our ground transportation, as we were moving up and down the country, in Jordan and Israel, included free WiFi, so I could keep my siblings up to date on our movements and could assure them that all was well with their father) The further south we got the

drier everything became. It looked so dry we never expected to see nomads/shepherds grazing their sheep and goats. According to our driver there was LOTS to eat.

As we approached Petra, the terrain became more hilling, and interesting. Our driver pointed out a hill to us which he said is called Jabal Haroun, or Aaron's Mountain. It is the holiest site in Petra, and one of the holiest in Jordan, venerated by Muslims as the resting place of Prophet Haroun, as well as by Christians and Jews (Haroun is Aaron, brother of Moses). At this point we were on the Jordan side of the River of Jordan, which is the present-day border between, Israel and Jordan. The rift valley runs from above the Sea of Galle, to the Dead Sea, and then all the way to the Red Sea. This is the

deepest valley in the world, beginning at an elevation of 696 ft below sea level and terminating at an elevation lower than 1,300 ft below sea level. On both sides, to the east and west, the valley is bordered by high, steep, escarpments with the difference in elevation between the valley floor and the surrounding mountains varying between 3,900 ft to 5,600 ft. The 12 tribes of Israel lived on both sides of the Jordan.



Mad horse dash out of Petra, by Indiana Jones in The Last Crusade



Petra, known as the Rose city, because of the many colors including a reddish rose color of it's hills and rocks, was all it was promised to be. Many people relate Petra to Indiana Jones and the movie "The Last Crusade", where Indy and his father come riding through a very narrow gorge into an opening to find the "Lost Temple". Well, it was interesting to find out that this is true. It was lost, it was hidden, and for centuries it was obscured from foreigners by local Bedouin, as they feared a return of the nasty Crusaders from Europe.

Petra was in its time a large city on the cross roads of the spice trade. It is believed to have been inhabited as early as 9000BC and peaked in size and power around the time of 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple, when it had 20,000 inhabitants. Its ruling class were desert people who knew how to harvest rain water, and would defeat invaders, by leading them into the desert where only they knew the water sources. The spice trade was very

lucrative. At the time, 1 camel loaded with Frankincense could be sold for \$150,000 in our currency. If you knew where water was, you ruled the trade routes. All north/south and east/west caravans had to pass by Petra and would load up there with water and food stuffs for their journey. Every ravine was dammed, and water was led to underground cisterns. Modern hydrologists estimate that Petra could store over 1,000,000 cubic metres or tonnes of water. Even though all of Petra, and its surrounds looked like the picture above, in terms of moisture, Petra in its hey day, was visited by tourists who came to see the fountains and gardens.

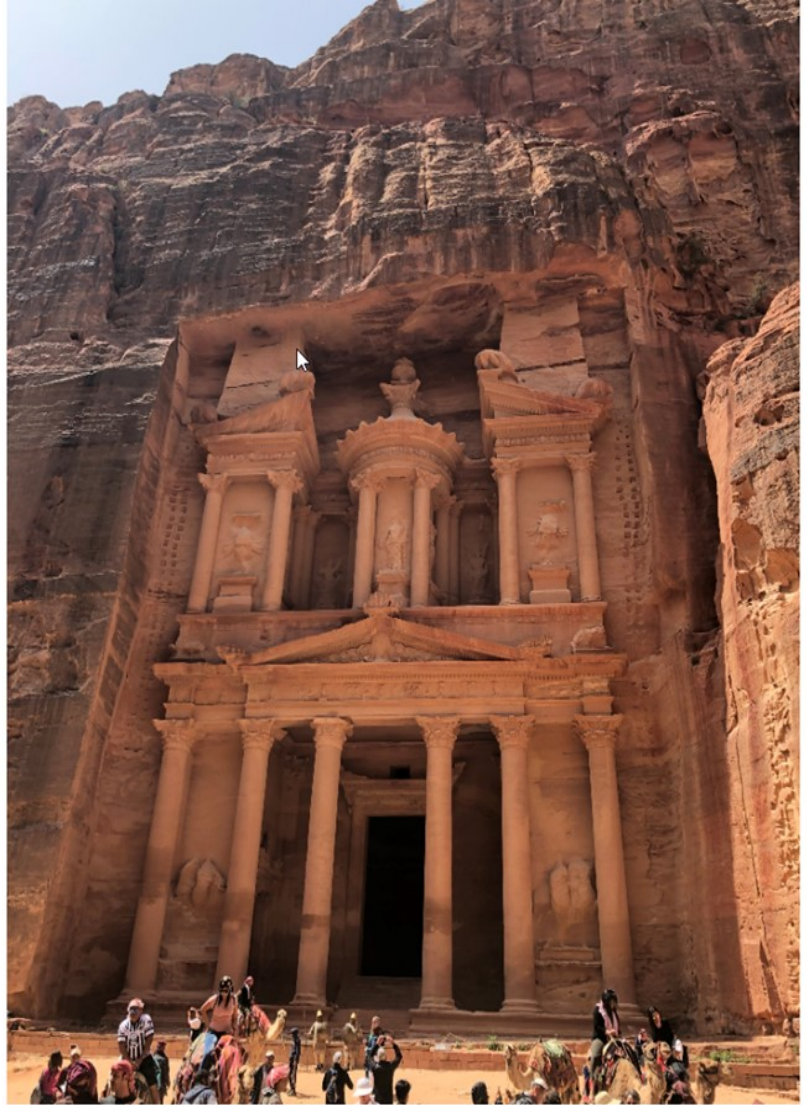
The famous ravine that leads to Petra (the one in the movie) was created by seismic forces millions of years ago, that left wide tears in the landscape. At the start of the trail down to Petra we were met by modern day guards, looking for tourist \$. Also shown in this pic on the left side is the trough that carried water to the city below. The city itself, is accessed through this passage, a 1.2-kilometre-long gorge called the [Siq](#). It has been a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#) since 1995 and In 2007, Petra was voted in as one of the [New7Wonders of the World](#). The Siq has a set of water channels on both sides, a larger one for irrigation, and a smaller one with clay tiles that from a pipe for drinking water. Our guide in Petra, was born to Nomads in the desert around the Petra district and as a child still lived a life of traveling through the desert. His English and knowledge of history was excellent.



It was earthquakes in 350AD, that destroyed the city, and more tragically the dams and cisterns. With no water, the majority of the population quickly left, and the city never recovered. However, it was protected from visitors by the local Bedouin, and was lost and forgotten to Europe until it was rediscovered in the 1800s. The earthquakes did not destroy the tombs which are carved into rock faces.



At first modern archeologists believed their discovery to be a religious site where people were buried. It took many years of digging (the flash floods no longer controlled by the dam/reservoir systems buried the city in debris), until archeologists determined that they were looking at the famous “Lost City of Petra”.



By mid afternoon, we had walked about 13km and were ready to find our driver and continue to Wadi Rum, but we were still deep down in Petra and had to hike uphill and out. So, Dad took a donkey cart ride out, and since there were 2 seats, and Frieda was still very ill, she joined him.

The most famous tomb of Petra, today called the treasury, as it was thought to contain treasure, not bodies.

We were happy to find our driver, a new one, and he took us on to Wadi Rum. This driver explained to me that he was a refugee from the 1967 war, where Israel took control of Palestine. Many Palestinians fled, never to return. Even today, he is not allowed, by Israeli border control to visit the West Bank. He also explained he is a member of the Jabbar tribe, a tribe of some 50,000 people, located in Syria, Jordan and Palestine. He himself has 134 male cousins. After this I asked every Arab I met how large his tribe was. The largest I heard of was 250,000, the smallest 10,000.

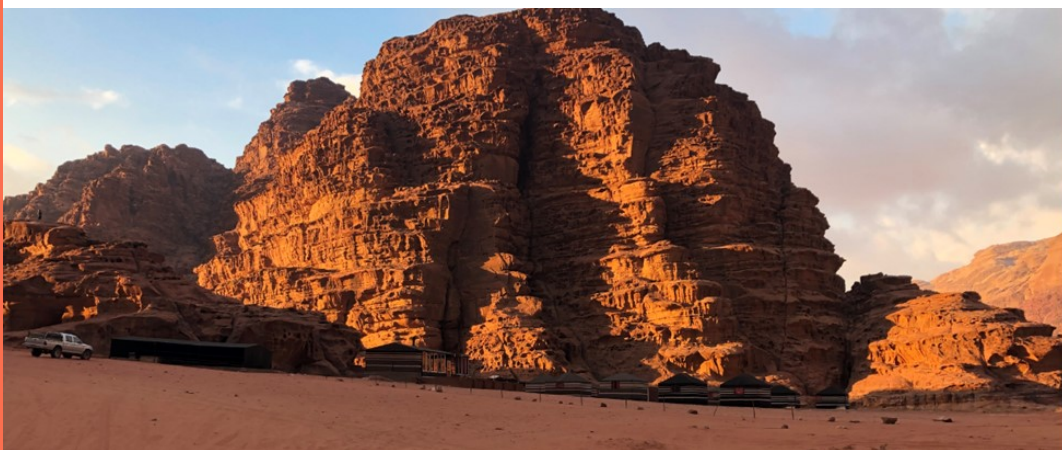


After our long trek at Petra, 13km or so, and still feeling very ill, Frieda was noticed by our driver. I was astounded by his patience and concern. After looking at us with a questioning look, we told him, “She’s ok, just a little sick, but she’ll be fine”, and to ourselves we said, “I hope”. Our driver could not hold himself back however, as he was very concerned. “What do you need?” he asked? “are you cold? My coat? My pillow? A blanket?” He kept asking.

And this really stood out for me. He finally said “I AM YOUR BROTHER – what do you need? A doctor? Medicine? Just tell me I’ll get it for you”. And I truly felt he would have done anything. There is a code in the desert that your guest, gets nothing but the best you have to offer, and he was living it.

Frieda felt she was ok and on we went, but secretly I was concerned – for Frieda and for my Dad. The last thing I needed was for Dad to get as sick as Frieda. I spent some effort after that to make sure there was always some distance between Frieda and Dad. My sister Ruth had reported to us siblings, that on their last trip south with Dad he was sick the whole time with a flu. We did not need a repeat. On the other hand, perhaps he had some good immunity from his previous experience.

Wadi Rum (Wadi means valley, Rum refers to sand or sand storm), is today a nature preserve, run by its Bedouin inhabitants. Only a few years ago, in the 1960s, did they transition (at the governments request) from their nomadic roots and settled down to live in 1 village on the edge of the reserve. It is here that our driver transferred us to our Bedouin hosts, who piled us into a pickup truck (I got to sit in the open back with the luggage), and off we went into the desert. Our host was wearing a heavy



looking, but light, camel skin coat (just about all the locals had the same coat on) that came down to his ankles. I wondered if I was dressed warm enough, but all was fine. In Wadi Rum there are no roads, just endless tracks across the desert. Our driver was shocked, as were we, to see 2 pickups demolished, in a head on collision that had occurred just a few hours prior to our arrival. Apparently, the 2 managed to hit each other, head on, in the white out conditions caused by a sand storm.

We arrived at our camp site, to find a small row of tents for patrons, a longer tent that served as a dining room, and a separate men’s and ladies’ latrine awaiting us. It was a cold, windy evening, and we were looking forward to our dinner and a bed. We were not disappointed. The promised Bedouin meal was buried under sand. In the desert a hole is dug and lined with a circular metal cylinder at the bottom of which are placed coals from a fire. Then they have a B-que like circular tray system, about 2 feet tall and the same in diameter. The tray system has about 4 layers of mesh on which are placed meat and vegetables (onions, peppers sweet potatoes etc). This is placed inside the cylinder above the coals, and whole works is covered with blankets which in turn are covered with sand. If you were not careful, you could forget where the whole thing was, as all you see is a rise of sand. In this way the meal is cooked for some 3 hours, over coals that are starved of oxygen, so they just kind of radiate heat. Then the sand and blankets are removed, and the tray system is brought to the table where it is shared with the whole group. This B-que system must be popular among Arabs, as later in the trip an Israel Arab offered to provide something similar in his back yard. Perhaps a little like we enjoy making asado, when we have time to do so.



Prior to dinner we snacked on some humus and breads, and both sweet and not sweet teas, and chatted with our fellow tent mates. There was a group of 4 from Germany, a brother and sister from England, folks from Spain, and France, and some from the Orient – a total of perhaps 20 – so a nice group to share stories with.



Only Bedouin men work in the tourist trade. Women look after the children or are out in the desert herding sheep, camels, donkeys, and goats along with very old men. Electricity was supplied by solar panels and batteries, using only LED lighting and cooking was done via propane cylinders. All the sleeping tents (not latrines) had propane heaters, but to avoid fires we were asked to shut them down for sleeping.

After dinner and some Bedouin singing and dancing, Frieda, Sig and Dad were beat, and retired to their tents, while Esther and I were escorted out into the desert to see the constellations, and were told how the Bedouin of old (ie 5000BC till 1950) liked to travel at night and be guided by the stars. We got our bearings out there and decided we'd get up early to see the sun rise.

The night was interesting. Our tents were, shall we say, tents. They were sturdy, but in the desert winds they flapped, like a tent, and made noise, like a tent, and were close together, so that even over the flapping noise, snoring, or coughing could be heard from one's neighbors. I would not say that any of us had a restful sleep – but nevertheless a good experience to share with others. It was after all exactly what we signed up for.

Esther and I did make it out to see the sunrise, and after that we were all up for breakfast. (of course Jordan and Israel do not have bacon, so it would be Greece before we would enjoy good crisp bacon, except the bacon in Greece was so chewy, that I quickly gave up on it as well - did I mention I am happy to be home?). With breakfast behind us, (Frieda was still very ill, although she never admitted it or complained – she had next to nothing for dinner the night before and only her tea and a piece of bread for breakfast), we packed up, and off we were on our promised desert exploration on the back of pickup truck.

Our English brother and sister team whom we had chatted with the night before, were cold and were trying to get out of their planned camel ride back to the village. Our hosts were reluctant to change plans and offered instead to fit them out with lovely extra warm camel hair coats. Soon enough we saw them trotting off into the desert. Noticing that Frieda was in need, she too was offered a coat against the cold. We mentioned to her

that she looked Bedouin, which she thought was fine. (this would turn out to be an issue later).

Our German friends were off to Petra that morning. (later that day we heard that a flash flood in Petra had closed down the site – we wondered how they made out).



Where Lawrence of Arabia was shot.

In spite of the cold, Esther, Sigrid, Frieda and I climbed into the open air back of the pickup truck, dad was in the front seat where it was warm and off we went to see what the desert would show us. We went to see the movie shoot scene where Lawrence of Arabia was taken. After that, just off into the desert to wander and look. Frieda, in spite of being very ill was mesmerized by the desert. If you were to ask her today, what her favorite part of the whole Jordan/Israel/Greece/Turkey trip was, without hesitation, she would say “the desert – Wadi Rum”. As we roared across the desert we came upon some nomads from the village, who lived out here about 50km from the village and herded their livestock. Camels no longer needed for transportation, are still valued for milk and cheese and of course their hides.





We were then taken to the desert arch where Esther and I climbed up, very carefully. Esther complained that I always get her into trouble. After the arch, we had one or two more sites to visit. It was cold, so Sigrid and Frieda joined Dad in the truck leaving Esther and me outside to enjoy the fresh air.



The next site was a gorge or fissure in the hills caused by earthquakes, very reminiscent of the gorge leading to Petra. Esther, Sigrid and I wandered up and into it as far as we could. Dad stayed in the truck and Frieda wandered around a bit, at a very slow pace.

The last site was a high sand dune, where we stopped and had a look. Esther and I still having lots of energy, decided to climb it, for the exercise and for the view. The rest stayed below, some in the truck, some at a tea shop, our driver having a smoke. It is our estimate that 95% of men in Jordan smoke.



View from the top of the sand dune: In the desert one can see trucks as well as people on camels. In the far distance one can see our little tent village where we spent the previous night. Scenes like this are often used in movies of life on Mars. The colors are perfect.



After half an hour of viewing the desert from the top of the hill, Esther and I came down off the sand hill found our driver who helped us back up onto the bed of the pickup truck. We rapped the roof of the truck indicating that we were good to go and off we went to the village and the end of our trip. As we looked ahead, over the top of the pickup truck for new wonders, the wind was whipping past us, as the truck picked up speed. It seemed we were moving for a good half minute or more, when Esther heard some yelling in the far distance, behind us and looked around. There we saw a person obviously a Bedouin running, waving, yelling at us? Why at us? What did we do? What did they want? The waving of arms was very frantic.

Then the lights went on. Esther said “that sounds like Frieda?!!!”. We pounded on the roof of the truck till the driver stopped. “Is Frieda in there?” we shouted. “She’s with you” Sigrid’s response.



After we explained what happened, ie Esther and I thought she was in the truck, the driver and Sig, thought she was in the back with us, Frieda settled down and started to feel even worse I think, because all that running and yelling, must have just added to her misery. Never the less as mentioned before, I was happy to hear, that even in Greece, she was still telling people that “the desert was the most awesome part of the trip”.

Well it’s time to wrap up **Part One** of our adventures, the **Jordan leg** of our trip, as from here our Bedouin guide brought us to the village and handed us off to our Jordan driver. He in turn, took us the short distance to Aqaba Jordan, across the border from Eilat, Israel, which sits at the south of Israel, at the Red Sea. Eilat is known for its warm waters and many Israelis come here for a beach vacation.

We crossed the border under tight Israeli security. One can only walk across, and the Israeli side is very intimidating, with very thorough scans, and detailed questions. One Israeli border guard was very curious to know where Frieda had obtained her lovely camel hair coat. Apparently, they are hard to find.

After customs, all was well. We found our Israeli driver, who we think was Arabic, and off we went to Jerusalem to catch up to Debbie and Lucy and the rest of our tour group.

A closing note from Frieda Krugel. Yes, you are correct Erv. I tell everyone my favourite part of the whole trip was the Wadi Rum, it was breathtaking and so serene, and mysterious... God's country. The simplicity of the Bedouin life... took my thoughts back to Abraham and his obedience to follow God's direction for his life and leave his family and home and go where God would provide for him and his family and bring them to the Promised Land. As we are led daily by His Spirit we too can be cared for by our Lord in His Promised Land. We need only to trust Him for our everyday.

~ submitted by Erv Willms

(*can't wait to hear about the rest of the adventure! KR*)



## CELEBRATIONS !

**Congratulations to everyone who is celebrating a special occasion in May, June, July or August!**

**For a number of years, our Life With Us Newsletter has congratulated people celebrating birthdays over 80, and various anniversary dates as well. Unfortunately, time & again we have been informed that we have either missed someone's birthday, or gotten the date wrong. This is somewhat embarrassing for us the editors, and so we have decided to revisit the whole Celebration Theme. We have also been encouraged to celebrate not only the "old" in our congregation, but also the "young" We think this is a really good move. Now the question arises: which milestones do we celebrate? Do we mention everyone's birthday in these particular months? Or just the ones that are really special, like birth, grade one, high school, college, adulthood, voting age, new job, retirement,.....? Once again, with any of these, we could be guilty of overlooking someone, giving out wrong information,..... Please think about the above ideas & send Lani or Kathy any ideas that you think might work.**

*To help us with the celebration information, please check in with Emily in the office to make sure that the NUMC data base has all the correct information about you and your family.*

*In addition to celebrating birthdays & anniversaries, we often celebrate a person's life during a memorial service, after they have passed away. These occasions are usually not a particularly happy time, because we are saying good-bye to someone who will not be celebrating birthdays with us anymore, and we will miss them deeply. As followers of Jesus, we want to be supportive towards the person who has lost someone and show them love. But we don't always know how to approach this hurting person.*

**Below are some suggestions made by grieving people that can help us know how they may feel.**  
(collected by Virginia A. Simpson, PhD - through work with & listening to grieving people)

1. I am not strong. I'm just numb. When you tell me I am strong, I feel that you don't see me.
2. I will not recover. This is not a cold or the flu. I'm not sick. I'm grieving and that's different. I will not always be grieving as intensely, but I will never forget my loved one and rather than recover, I want to incorporate their life and love into the rest of my life. That person is part of me and always will be, and sometimes I will remember them with joy and other times with a tear. Both are okay.
3. I don't have to accept the death. Yes, I have to understand that it has happened and it is real, but there are just some things in life that are not acceptable.
4. Please don't avoid me. You can't catch my grief. My world is painful, and when you are too afraid to call me or visit or say anything, you isolate me at a time when I most need to be cared about. If you don't know what to say, just come over, give me a hug or touch my arm, and gently say, "I'm sorry." You can even say, "I just don't know what to say, but I care, and want you to know that."
5. Please don't say, "Call me if you need anything." I'll never call you because I have no idea what I need. Trying to figure out what you could do for me takes more energy than I have. So, in advance, let me give you some ideas:
  - (a) Bring food.
  - (b) Offer to take my children to a movie or game so that I have some moments to myself.
  - (c) Send me a card on special holidays, birthdays (mine, his or hers), or the anniversary of the death, and be sure and mention their name. You can't make me cry. The tears are here and I will love you for giving me the opportunity to shed them because someone cared enough about me to reach out on this difficult day.
  - (d) Ask me more than once to join you at a movie or lunch or dinner. I may say "no" at first or even for a while, but please don't give up on me because somewhere down the line, I may be ready, and if you've given up, then I really will be alone.
6. Try to understand that this is like I'm in a foreign country where I don't speak the language and have no map to tell me what to do. Even if there were a map, I'm not sure right now I could understand what it was saying. I'm lost and in a fog. I'm confused.
7. When you tell me what I should be doing, then I feel even more lost and alone. I feel bad enough that my loved one is dead, so please don't make it worse by telling me I'm not doing this right.
8. Please don't call to complain about your husband, your wife, or your children. Right now, I'd be delighted to have my loved one here no matter what they were doing.
9. Please don't tell me I can have other children or need to start dating again. I'm not ready. And maybe I don't want to. And besides, what makes you think people are replaceable? They aren't. Whoever comes after, will always be someone different.
10. I don't even understand what you mean when you say, "You've got to get on with your life." My life is going on, but it may not look the way you think it should. This will take time and I never will be my old self again. So please, just love me as I am today, and know, that with your love and support, the joy will slowly return to my life. But I will never forget and there will always be times that I cry.



~ submitted by Martha Bartel



Several weeks ago, John and I attended the memorial service for Helen Bradnam, Alex Bradnam's mom. It was a lovely service with some of Baba's favourite music sung by her grandson, Jonathon being piped in, and an upbeat sermon presented by the pastor. As Alex was reading his mom's life story, I was struck by how many hurdles Helen had to overcome in her life. Alex called her a survivor, and her life sure demonstrated that. Although Helen spent her whole life in a very small geographic area from Alanburg to Thorold to Welland, her life did not follow a simple straight line. It made me think of so many of our parents and grandparents who traveled thousands of kilometres through war time, famine, persecution to finally arrive in the wonderful safe haven of Canada! Sometimes, we as immigrants have the impression that people living in Canada all their lives, must have had a wonderful, peaceful life. Helen Bradnam's life story illustrates so clearly that this was not necessarily the case. Anxiety over survival of her fiancé, finding jobs herself, looking after her two children after her husband died suddenly. All of these obstacles had to be overcome, and Helen, through it all kept her positive outlook and became a survivor. Thank-you Alex for sharing your mom's life story with us.

~ Kathy Rempel

## A Survivor

~ by Alex Bradnam

If there is one word to describe my mother, it is **survivor**. She was a survivor from the moment of birth until the day of her death. Born in the mid, roaring 1920's when Canada was just emerging from the war that was supposed to end all wars. On the day of her birth, her parents were told to have her baptized immediately and then not to feed her since she was born with hydrocephalus, (extra fluid on the brain, enlarging the head) - in those days a death sentence. So my Grandfather, a friend, and an aunt carried her from her birth home in Allenburg to nearby Thorold to have her baptized in a Catholic church there. They were sent away because the priest was having supper. So down the street they walked to an unknown and unfamiliar Anglican Church. The minister invited them in and baptized her immediately. My Grandmother was heart broken to have her first born daughter not survive. But that was not God's plan.

When a Native man came to the house door the next morning looking for work to earn some money, to feed his family, he was greeted by my Grandmother, who was crying. He asked her why she was crying and she showed him baby Helen and told him what the doctor had told her. He told my Grandmother that he was trained by his Grandmother to be a healer and that he could help. With that he went out to the nearby fields and forest picking some wild plants. He told my Grandmother to boil these plants in water, cool the mixture, and feed the baby as much as she could, and then put my mother to bed. The next morning the bed was soaking wet, but the head swelling was gone.

My mother survived!

At the age of four, mom lost her little sister Mary from a snake bite. They had been close playmates, being born only a year apart. She did not understand why her sister could not wake up and play with her anymore. This traumatic experience left her with a stutter. This too she survived and overcame.

In the years to come she survived several serious cases of pneumonia and pleurisy, accidents and injuries, but once again, she survived. At the age of 13 mom finished school and went to work in local canning factories. As a child trying to compete with older adults, she was tall enough at 16 to pass for an 18 year old. As a result, she was able to get a job in a factory in Welland. This was at the Plymouth Cordage factory making rope and twine. But mom soon developed a terrible allergic reaction to the carbolic acid used to treat rope at that time so had to quit that job. She then worked in the Atlas Steel plant in Welland and survived again when a tragic explosion and fire occurred there during the Second World War. She quickly found another job at the General Tire and Rubber Factory in Welland surviving the anxiety and uncertainty of five years of war while her fiancé, my father Fred, fought in Europe, surviving D-Day, and then fighting his way with the Canadian Army through France, Belgium, Holland, and into Germany.

When my dad returned home after the war, he and mom were married here in Welland at Holy Trinity Anglican Church. Mom worked hard, with my father, to build a house and raise a family. My sister Wendy, was born first, with me (Alex) following three years later. Mom stayed home but helped many hours on my Grandparent's farm which was located on South Pelham Street close to where there is now a golf course. My father Fred worked countless hours of over-time at the Rubber Factory to provide us all with the best in life. Mom, meanwhile, survived the worrying times of strikes and factory layoffs that the emerging post-war factories went through. When times got tough and savings ran low, Mom was able to work at Sunset Haven senior's home as a nursing assistant utilizing the training she received as a member of the St. John's Ambulance Corps.

After 25 years of marriage she again had to survive the traumatic and tragic death of her husband, our father, who was injured during an industrial accident which left him in a coma, ultimately dying a month later in hospital in Hamilton from these injuries. Mom went faithfully every day to St. Joseph's Hospital to sit with my father and talk to him and hold his hand for thirty days before he passed. That was a very hard time for us all and took a huge part away from all of our lives. When my father passed, mom had \$40 in the bank. She survived this too by cutting grapes on a farm in St. Catharines and making craft items to sell while continuing to take care of home and family.

Mom insisted that her children go to university so we would never have to face the hardships and the limited choices that she and my father had in life. She pushed us hard to finish our education when many times I wanted to go to the factory life to earn money to help at home.





Mom was so proud of us and our accomplishments. She loved her grandchildren and was always there for their school, sports, and musical events. She believed that it was worth all the effort to survive so much in her life to see her family thrive. Mom was a farmer at heart. She was proud of her yard and big garden at home which grew tasty vegetables and flowers which she shared. She wasn't afraid to turn her hands to tasks that needed doing – from mixing cement to nailing roof shingles, to painting walls, to sewing clothes and drapes.

She enjoyed putting her creative talents to work in doing many types of needlework such as quilting, knitting, crochet, and needlepoint. I remember her spending many hours doing macrame projects recuperating from foot surgery.

Mom even took a night class one year in auto maintenance for ladies, learning how to change the oil and other fluids in her car as well as changing tires. Though she never had to use these skills she was proud to know she could do so if necessary. Mom was also a good cook who enjoyed making food for her family. She took cake decorating and candy making classes, enjoying the results of her practice sessions to share with her family.



Mom took special delight in her great-grandchildren, Aria and Leyton. She loved them so much even though they only knew her as being in her wheel chair in her long term care home. Her smiles and hugs were always there when they came to see her.

Mom spent the last three years at the United Mennonite Home in Vineland where she was loved and known for her bright smile and her determination to have us all take her for walks outside in her wheel-chair in all weather conditions. It just wasn't a day for her unless she had her fresh air, and ride, allowing her to listen to the chickens clucking and the rooster crowing in the farm across the road. She became a well-known sight, travelling the sidewalks in the neighbourhood and going to watch the children play at the neighbouring community park and 20 Valley Public School.

After suffering a stroke, she passed quietly and peacefully at the St. Catharines Hospital site.. Our mother, grandmother and great-grandmother Helen Bradnam will be remembered by us all as a resilient, hard-working survivor, her whole life. I know that she is in heaven now reunited with our Dad Fred and her family members that went on before. God bless you mom and keep safe in the loving arms of our Lord Jesus.



*Alice shared:*

*When I sat with Baba at the hospital in her last days, I sang "Jesus Loves Me" to her. I have since found all the verses to share. This is the perfect song with meaningful lyrics for all God's children from early childhood until we breathe our last breath and are home at last safe in the arms of Jesus. I thought this would be helpful for others in similar circumstances.*

*Although Baba's left arm was unable to function after suffering her stroke, I will always treasure how she used her strong right arm to link her fingers with mine, and, in an endearing gesture, pulled my hand to her lips for a final kiss of affection, not once, but twice. Such resolve!!*



30 Jesus Loves Me

Anna B. Warner Wm. B. Bradbury

1. Je - sus loves me! this I know, For the Bi - ble tells me so; Lit - tle ones to Him be - long, They are weak but He is strong.  
 2. Je - sus loves me! He who died, Heav - en's gates to o - pen wide; He wash a - way my sin, Let His lit - tle child come in. Yes, Je - sus loves me  
 3. Je - sus loves me! loves me still, Tho' I'm ver - y weak and ill; From His shin - ing throne on high, Comes to watch me where I lie.

CHORUS



## Follow-up to last newsletter's article by Harold Neufeld

The last writing was from an article from the May 15, 1939 edition of "The Niagara Advance And Weekly Fruitman". The article was called "Investigation Promised Mennonites By Attorney General" and explained that because of rumours which had circulated about the Mennonite people who settled in the Virgil area, the police carried out searches in the Mennonite churches around Virgil looking for dynamite and weapons. The Advance had thereafter, also started an investigation, concluding that there was no truth that the Mennonite people displayed any pro-Nazi spirit. The Provincial Attorney-General also promised an investigation to find who circulated the rumours and why police conducted those raids.

What follows next then, also from the same issue is "A Mennonite Leader Offers Some Explanation To The General Public" in the form of a letter penned by Mr. Frank J. Andres:

*Sir: Reluctantly, I am writing these lines -but due to the situation which has taken root and grown among a large part of the residents of this district towards the Mennonite settlers, expressing itself in hostile feelings -I beg you to publish the petition which was handed to Mr. McGowan, the Provincial Attorney General at a meeting between Mr. McGowan himself and three delegates of the Mennonite church, Peter Wall, J.A. Dyck, and Frank J. Andres. I do think it is time the people of this district, and especially the fair minded ones and those that understand the full meaning of the phrase "British fair play" are being informed from the right source about the Mennonite church, its beliefs, its traditions, characteristics and policies and the whole history of the Mennonite people. I firmly believe that the better class of people are not participating in spreading unfounded rumours in order to create hostile feelings toward a quiet and harmless part of their citizenry.*

*May I add that if there is an odd one of our settlers, who may not even belong to our congregation, who has expressed himself favourable to Hitler, it is only because Hitler has crushed and stamped out communism in Germany itself. We Mennonites, having recently immigrated to Canada from the Soviet Union, have experienced that same communism. No one knows the Soviet communistic regime as well as the Mennonites do, having gone through the persecutions and tribulations of that ideology. Know that there are thousands of Mennonites in the Soviet Union that have lost their lives by wanton killings in the worst manner imaginable, all the while having been worked and starved to death. The Mennonites left behind in the Soviet Union are not enjoying the liberty and freedom even today, which the communists so widely advocate in all foreign countries. Let no one be deceived.*

*Thanking you, Mr. Editor, I am a true Mennonite.  
(Signed) F. J. Andres.*

~ submitted by Harold Neufeld

## Debbie's Book Corner

### Ties That Bind

The Amish of Summer Grove

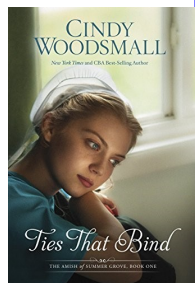
by Cindy Woodsmall

"Twenty year old Ariana Brenneman loves her family & the Old Ways. She has 2 aspirations: open a café in historic Summer Grove to help support her family's ever-expanding brood, & keep any other Amish from being lured into the English life by Quill Schlabach.

Five years ago Quill & her dear friend Frieda ran off together, & Ariana still carries the wounds of that betrayal. When she unexpectedly encounters him again, she realizes he has plans to help someone else she loves leave the Amish.

Despite how things look, Quill's goal has always been to protect Ariana from anything that might hurt her, including the reasons he left. After returning to

Summer Grove, he unearths secrets about Ariana & her family that she is unaware of. His loyalty to her beckons him to try to win her trust – because when she learns the truth that connects her & a stranger named Skylar Nash, Quill knows it may upend her life forever."



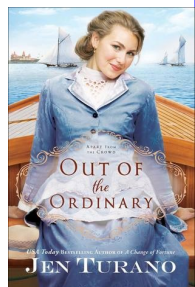
### Out of the Ordinary

Apart from the Crowd

by Jen Turano

"Working as a paid companion may be quite commonplace, but Miss Gertrude Cadwalader's eccentric employer makes her job unpredictable, to say the least. She finds herself carrying out an array of highly unusual tasks, including wearing peculiar outfits & returning items the woman pilfered. But when the wealthy Mrs Sinclair catches Gertrude sneaking around the Sinclair yacht with some of the missing items in her possession, she immediately jumps to the wrong conclusion.

Shipping magnate Harrison Sinclair is caught in the middle of a misunderstanding between his mother & Gertrude, but he can't help coming to his friend's defense. Even as he hopes their friendship might become something more, Harrison is unprepared for the outlandish escapades that seem to follow the lovely, anything but ordinary Gertrude on every turn."

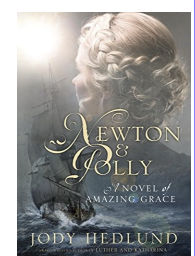


### Newton & Polly

by Jody Hedlund

"Now remembered as the author of the world's most famous hymn, in the mid-eighteenth century as England & France stand on the brink of war, John Newton is a young sailor wandering aimlessly through life. His only duty is to report to his ship & avoid disgracing his father – until the night he hears Polly Carlett's enchanting voice caroling. He's immediately smitten & determined to win her affection.

An intense connection quickly forms between the two, but John's reckless spirit & disregard for the Christian life are concerns for the responsible, devout Polly. When an ill-fated stop at a tavern leaves John imprisoned & bound, Polly must choose to either stand by his side or walk out of his life forever. Will she forfeit her future for the man she loves?"



~ Debbie Fast



## Rudy Wiebe honoured with CMU Pax Award

The award, created to honour people “who lead exemplary lives of service, leadership and reconciliation in church and society,” was given to Wiebe for how “his works have been critical in exposing societal concerns,” and for “the patience and empathy his works awaken,” according to CMU president Cheryl Pauls.

**'I have received many other awards, but to get an award like this from my own community is really important to me,'** acclaimed Mennonite writer Rudy Wiebe says.

Fifty-seven years ago, a young Mennonite author published a book that turned the Canadian Mennonite world upside down. That author was Rudy Wiebe, and the book was *Peace Shall Destroy Many*, the first novel written in English by a Mennonite about Mennonites in Canada. The book, which offered an honest and pointed portrait of Mennonite life on the Prairies during the Second World War, provoked a great deal of anger and pain.

“It was hard on them,” says Wiebe, now 84, of how it impacted some members of his denomination. “It was a tough story.”

In the book, Wiebe explored how Mennonites in the fictitious community of Wapiti, Sask., opposed the war while, at the same time, their church was divided by conflict and broken relationships.

“It was difficult for the older generation to handle,” he says of the book, which he once described as a “bombshell” for many Canadian Mennonites. “They didn’t speak English, they weren’t accustomed to reading fiction, and they didn’t share insider problems with the outside world,” he shares.

The publication of the book was hard on Wiebe, too. At the time he was the new editor of the *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, the official English-language publication of that denomination.

As the criticism mounted, Wiebe knew he couldn’t stay editor of the *Herald*. “I wasn’t fired, but I resigned before they would have fired me,” he says. “There was no question. I couldn’t continue.”

That decision led to a distinguished 25-year career as a professor of English at the University of Alberta, and as an award-winning author of 33 books, anthologies and collections of essays about faith, life on the Canadian Prairies, and about western Canada's Indigenous peoples.

Along the way, Wiebe was a two-time recipient of the Governor General's Award for Fiction; he also received the Writer's Trust Non-Fiction Prize and the Charles Taylor Prize for his memoir of growing up in Saskatchewan. In 2000, he was named an officer in the Order of Canada.

On April 4, Wiebe received another honour when he was given the **Pax Award** from Canadian Mennonite University.

### A Christian writer

Despite how some Mennonites responded to *Peace Shall Destroy Many*, Wiebe never became angry with the church nor lost his faith. Although the mainstream writing world is a quite secular place, Wiebe is quite happy to call himself a Christian writer.

“That means I'm a believer and a follower of Jesus Christ,” he says. “I try to look at the world in the way Jesus tried to teach us.”

That doesn’t mean he has faith all figured out or that he lives perfectly as a Christian. Living faithfully is “sometimes hard to maintain,” he says. His understanding of his faith has also changed over the decades. “We live as Christians in a world that keeps changing,” he says. “You just can’t go plodding along thinking I know what's right and what we’ve been taught for the last 500 years or something like that is the only right thing.

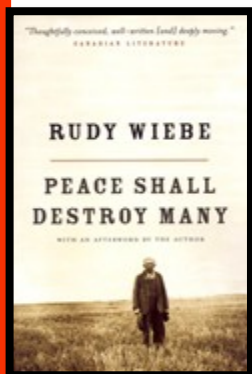
“The world changes, and you need an imagination to understand that. You can't just say that certain practices today are out the window because they didn't exist in Jesus’ time. This is where the imagination and spiritual discernment are important.”

As for whether being so open about his faith has ever hurt him as a writer, Wiebe says no.

“People kept publishing my books,” he says, noting *Peace Shall Destroy Many* has never gone out of print and is still taught in high schools. “There was never any question about what my approach to the story was, and they didn't object my philosophy in life. Nobody objected to me [about my faith] in terms of the publishing world.”



Rudy Wiebe, left, receives the 2019 Pax Award from CMU president Cheryl Pauls, right and English professor Sue Sorensen., left. (CMU photo)



~excerpts taken from Canadian Mennonite & interview by John Longhurst

~ submitted by Kathy Rempel

(*Peace Shall Destroy Many* can be found in our church library)



**Report of Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015**  
**Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future**

Canada's residential school system for Aboriginal children was an education system in name only for much of its existence. These residential schools were created for the purpose of separating Aboriginal children from their families, in order to minimize and weaken family ties and cultural linkages, and to indoctrinate children into a new culture—the culture of the legally dominant Euro-Christian Canadian society, led by Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald. The schools were in existence for well over 100 years, and many successive generations of children from the same communities and families endured the experience of them. That experience was hidden for most of Canada's history, until Survivors of the system were finally able to find the strength, courage, and support to bring their experiences to light in several thousand court cases that ultimately led to the largest class-action lawsuit in Canada's history.



Getting to the truth was hard, but getting to reconciliation will be harder. It requires that the paternalistic and racist foundations of the residential school system be rejected as the basis for an ongoing relationship. Reconciliation requires that a new vision, based on a commitment to mutual respect, be developed. It also requires an understanding that the most harmful impacts of residential schools have been the loss of pride and self-respect of Aboriginal people, and the lack of respect that non-Aboriginal people have been raised to have for their Aboriginal neighbours. Reconciliation is not an Aboriginal problem; it is a Canadian one. Virtually all aspects of Canadian society may need to be reconsidered. This summary is intended to be the initial reference point in that important discussion. Reconciliation will take some time.

**Statement of Anabaptist Church Leaders Presented to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada** at the Alberta National Event, Edmonton, March 2014 Signed by Tim Dyck, General Secretary, Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Douglas P. Sider Jr., Canadian Director, Brethren in Christ Canada, Willard Metzger, Executive Director, Mennonite Church Canada, Willy Reimer, Executive Director, Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, and Donald Peters, Executive Director, Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

We are leaders of a group of Canadian Christian churches known as Anabaptist denominations. Our delegation includes Mennonite Church Canada, the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, the Brethren in Christ Church of Canada, and Mennonite Central Committee.

Many people from our churches have come to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission events, including this one, to volunteer, to listen, to learn.

We acknowledge that we are all treaty people and that we are meeting on Treaty 6 territory, on land that is part of an historic agreement between First Nations people and newcomers, an agreement involving mutuality and respect. Throughout the period of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission events across the country, we have watched and listened with respect, as residential school survivors have told stories with graciousness and courage, sharing experiences of the Residential School Legacy from its beginning.

We are humbled to witness this Truth and Reconciliation Commission event.

As we have listened to your stories, we've added our tears to the countless tears that you have shed. We acknowledge that there was, and is, much hurt and much suffering. We have learned much and we have much to learn.

We heard the wise words of Justice Sinclair encouraging us to acknowledge that all of us, in one way or another, have been affected by the Residential School experience. We recognize that being part of a dominant culture, our attitudes and perspectives made the Residential School experience possible and that these attitudes and perspectives became entrenched in our relationships and in our culture. We regret our part in the assimilation practice that took away language use and cultural practice, separating child from parent, parent from child, and Indigenous peoples from their culture.

We regret that, at times, the Christian faith was used, wrongly, as an instrument of power, not as an invitation to see how God was already at work before we came. We regret that some leaders within the Church abused their power and those under their authority.

We acknowledge the paternalism and racism of the past. As leaders of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ church communities, we acknowledge that we have work to do in addressing paternalism and racism both within our communities and in the broader public.

We repent of our denominational encounters with Indigenous peoples that at times may have been motivated more by cultural biases than by the unconditional love of Jesus Christ. We repent of our failure to advocate for marginalized Indigenous peoples as our faith would instruct us to.

We are aware that we have a long path to walk. We hope to build relationships with First Nations communities so that we can continue this learning journey and walk this path together.

We are followers of Jesus Christ, the great reconciler. We are aware that words without actions are not only ineffective but may also be harmful. We commit ourselves to take your challenges to us very seriously. We will seek to model the reconciling life and work of Jesus in seeking reconciliation with you. We will encourage our churches to reach out in practical and loving ways, including dialogue and expressions of hospitality.

We commit ourselves to walk with you, listening and learning together as we journey to a healthier and more just tomorrow.

*The above article is taken from the official report of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission which is Public Domain, 2015 ~ by Kathy Rempel*



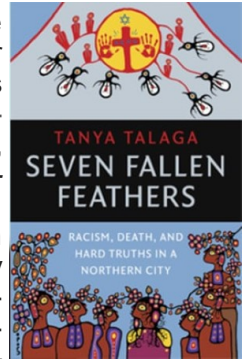
## Tanya Talaga & Indigenous—Settler Relations

Several months ago, John and I attended a Wine & Words event put on by the Niagara on the Lake Library. The featured speaker was Tanya Talaga, author of **Seven Fallen Feathers & All Our Relations**. She gave a very moving presentation through telling the stories of seven indigenous high school students who mysteriously died in Thunder Bay. I had heard about these deaths, but knew very few of the details, so I read both her books and did some further research on the issue of Indigenous and Settler relations in Canada. I have found this to be an extremely worthwhile experience and have learned a lot about the history of my home country of Canada. I would like to share some of this with you, our readers through brief book reviews of Tanya Talaga's books, and further research into the history of Indigenous—Settler relations.



**Tanya Talaga** is an Anishinaabe Canadian journalist and author. She is of mixed Indigenous and Polish heritage. Her maternal grandmother is a member of **Fort William First Nation** and her great-grandmother is a **residential school** survivor while her great-grandfather was an Ojibwe trapper and labourer. An investigative reporter for the **Toronto Star**, Talaga is most noted for her 2017 book **Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death and Hard Truths in a Northern City**.

The book is about seven Indigenous high school students who died in Thunder Bay, Ont. The students were hundreds of kilometres away from home, forced to attend school in the northern city and were ultimately found dead in the region. Talaga's book is a factual, comprehensive and emotional read about the injustice Indigenous communities face on a daily basis.



### CBC interview:

"Writing a book takes a lot out of you. I had to be physically and mentally prepared to get the details right. I remember starting it the day after the inquest [into the deaths of the seven Indigenous teenagers]. That was the end of June of 2016 and I wrote the entire book in a year. I wrote it in chunks; sometimes I would just sit and things would come to me and I would write it down. "Writing it was not easy — sometimes I was just staring at the computer or staring at my cat or staring at the fridge. It's hard, but then something just clicks, like pieces of evidence or information from the inquest exhibits, which are very much the research backbone of this book."

"I think you have to be emotionally invested and the story of the seven students is pretty close to me for a variety of reasons. I was standing with Stan Beardy at the Kaministiquia River and I remember looking at Mount McKay just looming in front of us. That mountain is the spiritual centre for Fort William First Nation, which is where my own grandmother is from. It was like someone smacked me in the gut — I was thinking about my mother's upbringing here and also about all the First Nation children who had to travel so far away.

"I was thinking about being a mother myself. I can't imagine having to send them 500 kilometres away to go to school. I find it incredibly difficult to fathom that we don't have school for Indigenous kids in their communities. This isn't right. I knew I had to write this book. I had to do it."

*Tanya Talaga's comments have been edited and condensed. from CBC interview ~ by Kathy Rempel*

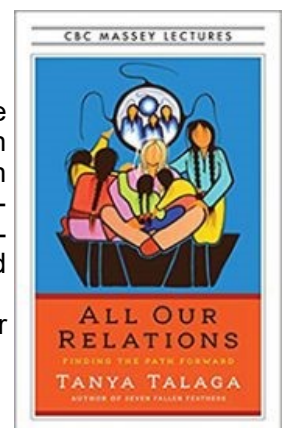
Using a sweeping narrative focusing on the lives of the students, award-winning investigative journalist Tanya Talaga delves into the history of this small northern city that has come to manifest Canada's long struggle with human rights violations against Indigenous communities.

### **All Our Relations: Finding The Path Forward**

In this vital and incisive work, bestselling and award-winning author Tanya Talaga explores the alarming rise of youth suicide in Indigenous communities in Canada and beyond. From Northern Ontario to Nunavut, Norway, Brazil, Australia, and the United States, the Indigenous experience in colonized nations is startlingly similar and deeply disturbing. It is an experience marked by the violent separation of Peoples from the land, the separation of families, and the separation of individuals from traditional ways of life — all of which has culminated in a spiritual separation that has had an enduring impact on generations of Indigenous children.

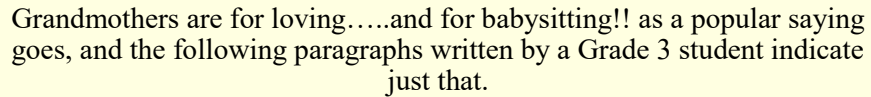
Based on her Atkinson Fellowship in Public Policy series, **All Our Relations** is a powerful call for action, justice, and a better, more equitable world for all Indigenous Peoples.

*from "Speakers' Spotlight" ~ edited by Kathy Rempel*



*The above 2 books will be available in the church library for the next few weeks. Please feel free to borrow them.*





A Grandmother is a lady who has no children of her own.  
 She likes other people's little girls.  
 A Grandfather is a man-grandmother.  
 He goes for walks with the boys and they talk about fishing and  
 tractors and things like that.  
 Grandmothers don't have to do anything but be there.  
 They're old, so they shouldn't play hard or run.  
 It is enough if they drive us to the market  
 where the pretend horse is, and have lots of dimes ready,  
 or if they take us for walks, they should slow down passing things  
 like pretty leaves or caterpillars.  
 They should never say "hurry up".  
 Usually they are fat, but not too fat to tie your shoes.  
 They wear glasses and funny underwear.  
 They can take out their teeth.  
 It is better if they don't typewrite or play cards, except with us.

They don't have to be smart,  
only answer questions like - why cats hate dogs,  
and how come God isn't married.  
They don't talk baby-talk like visitors do,  
because it is hard to understand.  
When they read to us, they don't skip words  
or mind if it is the same story again and again.  
Everybody should try to have one,  
especially if you don't have a T.V.,  
because Grandmothers are the only grown-ups who have time!

(hm, I wonder from what decade this poem comes?)



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