

“AS ONE THAT SERVES”

Spring 2007

THE HANDSHAKE



The Voice of the National Association of United Church of Canada AOTS Men's Clubs



The 25th NATIONAL AOTS CONVENTION

TO BE HELD AT

Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario

August 17th – 18th – 19th, 2007

THE CONVENTION THEME

“Living Water”

Will be presented by:

Rev. Dr. Wilbert (Wib) C. Cox
(Retired)

Rev. Gary Magarrell
Wellington United Church, Wellington ON

This event will include a
Weekend of learning,
Sharing, inspiration,
Fellowship & entertainment
For church men, spouses and
Family members.



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

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Pg.4 - Financial Statement

*Pg.5 - Craig Watson's
invitation to the National in
Peterborough*

*Pg.6 - Devotion – Gil
Reashore*

*Pg.7 - Central Canada
Regional Round-Up*

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Men's Ministries*

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George Bishop*

*Pg.19 - Regeneration Report
George Bishop*

Download the above Brochure and the Registration Form
From www.aots.ca

Handshake

AOTS, “As One That Serves”, is a church-related movement of men initiated in 1923 and dedicated to promoting Christian fellowship and deepening the spiritual life of men and developing effective programs of Christian service.

The Handshake © is published by the National Association of United Church AOTS Men's Clubs which was established January 8th, 1923, at Kerrisdale Methodist Church, now known as Ryerson United Church, Vancouver, British Columbia.

The Handshake contains news and announcements of the AOTS Men's Clubs and other men's ministry groups as submitted. It is provided to AOTS members twice yearly, by the national AOTS office. The views and comments which are published in the Handshake are not necessarily those of the National AOTS Office.

Photo submissions: If you want your original photo returned, please enclose a stamped, self addressed envelope with your submission.

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Newmarket, ON
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Honorary President	Craig Watson
Past President	Ernest Paddock
President	Garnet Thompson
President Elect	Bill Love
Western Vice President	Roy Jones
Central Vice President	Merle Shepley
Eastern Vice President	Gary Ross
Treasurer-	Ernie Orpin
Recording Secretary-	Ken Lane
National Secretary-	Jim Upright
Church & Community	Jim Lawrence
Fellowship & Membership	Richard Deitriche
Finance	Robert Lewis
Spiritual Life	George Bishop
Const. & Bylaws	Howard Wills
Promotions	Tony Hodge
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The AOTS web page can be found at <<www.aots.ca>>
Webmaster address: <<mark@aots.ca>>

The deadline for submissions to the next edition of the Handshake is
October 15, 2007



What's New?

Just about everything that you are about to read and see! The Handshake has a new editor. He comes fully unqualified, untested, a little unsure of himself, but with a lot of enthusiasm and determination. Maybe it is time for me to introduce myself, my name is Harold Lorenz, I am a transplanted “westerner”. I was born in a small place called Maxstone, Saskatchewan, just twelve miles or so south of Assiniboia. You will need an “old” map to find Maxstone. Since 1958 I've lived in Newmarket, Ontario, a “once upon a time” small town of less than five thousand, and now bursting at the seams with seventy-five thousand souls, and growing everyday.

The “Ground Rules” for submission of articles and hopefully coloured pictures, remain the same and/or changed, depending how I receive articles and reports. I prefer written reports in Microsoft Word or WordPerfect format or regular email. However, feel free to send a nice clear type written copy, as it can be scanned through an OCR program and converted to Word format. Good clear handwritten articles will also be accepted, and I sure hope that your handwriting is a lot better than mine. So, you see, I will accept almost anything that can be deciphered, but, I reserve the option to do some editing to accommodate time and space. Your pictures should be in colour if possible for scanning purposes, and arrive in hard copy or electronic form. Digital pictures on a CD would be just great.

I look forward to receiving your submissions for future copies of The Handshake.

Harold

Changes etc. Email addresses:

Ken Lane – kenneth.lane@sympatico.ca
Wally Macdonald – arwan8@sympatico.ca

President's Message



May I at this time say **"Hello"** to any new members or prospective new members or clubs that are reading this Handshake for the first time.

I ask you to join us in welcoming Harold Lorenz as our new Handshake Editor. We want to thank Ken Lane and Richard Deitriche for making the contact with him. Harold brings computer experience and the enthusiasm to make a great editor.

But while we are welcoming Harold to the job, we must take time to thank Rod Green of Carrying Place for taking on the challenge for the last two years. Rod put together a wonderful Handshake full of articles of interest to us all.

The Handshake can only be a success if we have you, the members of AOTS, sending in info that is of interest to us all. That can be info on upcoming events that are relevant to the date of the release of the next Handshake, information on events that have already taken place, any money raised, what you've done, and/or will do with the proceeds, any new ideas for AOTS etc.

As your President, I must say that I have not accomplished all my "goals" that I had set for myself, but, I do hope that I have contributed something of value to AOTS during my term of office. Personally I know that I surely have benefited greatly from my experiences as your President.

During the last year and half I have had the opportunity to join many clubs at their meetings. In my small way, I believe, I contributed in helping the Picton Club re-establish/re-group itself and now

focus on fellowship within the AOTS family.

Regrettably one club has folded due to decline in church membership and consequently membership in the AOTS.

During our last conference call, a number of the National Executive indicated their desire to "retire" from the group after many years of service. We accept these requests with sincere regret.

Now is your opportunity to "get involved" on a National level. These positions and their job descriptions are listed elsewhere in this edition of the Handshake. Please consider these positions prayerfully and carefully. Some take very little time, others, like the National Secretary is even a "paid position".

It is wonderful that we have in the past year donated over \$7,500.00 to hospital work; gave out three bursaries of \$1,000.00 each to students studying in the field of agriculture for the third world countries. Plus we sponsored over 200 kids for "Kids to Camp" which may amount to over \$50,000.00. Plus we had many clubs donate to different projects in their community and their church. But remember AOTS is not just about raising money it is about fellowship and doing youth work.

May I remind you about the Central Canada Regional Spring Round-Up coming up in April; it is a great way to meet other AOTS men from across your region. See the brochure for this event.

Another important gathering of the men of the AOTS is the **NATIONAL BIENNIAL CONVENTION** to be held in Peterborough, Ontario August 17 to 19, 2007. This is a wonderful time to get to know others from across Canada. And what a wonderful time it will be for all. The convention will be held at Trent University. Information is available on our web site (www.aots.ca) and in this Handshake. The Convention Chair,

Honorary President of AOTS Craig Watson, will be there to greet you. The 1995 Convention, held in Belleville, was under the direction of the same group, and many will remember what a great weekend that was. What a price for three days and two nights, and an even better "deal" for your spouse. Yes, ladies welcome!

At this convention we will have the opportunity to meet and welcome our new National President, Bill Love. Bill has been an AOTS member for many years, and has served the AOTS movement in many ways. Bill will bring with him some new ideas for AOTS and the desire to make a difference.

Please contact me by phone at 613-962-4442 or by e-mail at garn.grace@sympatico.ca and I would be happy to attend any of your clubs and/or functions, if I can work it into my schedule.

Remember, it is not only "what AOTS can do for you" but "what you can do for AOTS."

Garnet Thompson

National President

The Perfect Church

I think that I shall never see
A church that's all it ought to be;
A church whose members never stray
Beyond the straight and narrow way.

A church that has no empty pews;
Whose pastor never has the blues;
A church whose deacons always deak;
And none are proud, and all are meek.

Where gossips never peddle lies
Or make complaints, or criticize.
Where all are always sweet and kind
And all are to others' faults are blind.

Such perfect churches there may be,
But none of them is known to me;
But still I'll work and pray and plan,
To make our church the best I can.

- Author Unknown

Contributed by Edwin A. Henry
Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan
Individual Member

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNITED CHURCH
A O T S M E N ' S C L U B S**

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES

As of December 31, 2006

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

<u>Receipts:</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Budget 2006</u>
Club dues – Current year	\$12,640.00	\$14,000.00
Club Dues – Previous year	105.00	
Members Dues – Current Year	570.00	400.00
Members Dues – Previous Year		
Life Membership	100.00	
Second Mile – Clubs	3,657.00	2,500.00
Second Mile – Members	4,740.70	4,000.00
Donations		
Sale of Supplies	649.25	600.00
Interest – General Fund	1,714.74	1,500.00
Misc. (GST refund)	880.04	500.00
Total Receipts	<u>\$25,056.73</u>	<u>\$23,500.00</u>

<u>Expenses:</u>		
National Secretary	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Office Expenses	685.75	1,000.00
Telephone	56.24	300.00
Postage	761.48	1,000.00
Travel – Secretary		
Travel – National President	930.00	1,500.00
Travel – President Elect		
Travel – Vice Presidents	904.52	500.00
Travel – Conference Presidents		500.00
Meeting – Annual	8,175.11	10,000.00
Meetings – Executive	664.32	1,200.00
Biennial Convention		
Newsletter	2,206.28	2,500.00
Supplies for Sale	1,273.30	
Miscellaneous	603.88	
Outreach		
Total Expenses	<u>\$21,260.88</u>	<u>\$23,500.00</u>

Excess Income over Expenses: \$3,795.85

BALANCE SHEET – Dec. 31, 2006

<u>Current Assets:</u>		\$13,830.87
Bank – General Fund	\$7,101.45	
– Hospital Fund	2,022.22	
– Colnett Fund	1,667.10	
Inventory – Ties	2,116.37	
Accounts Receivable	923.73	
	<u>\$13,830.87</u>	

<u>Investment:</u>		\$101,595.00
General Fund	\$63,095.00	
Colnett Fund	28,500.00	
Youth to Camp Fund	10,000.00	
	<u>\$101,595.00</u>	
Total Assets:		<u>\$115,425.87</u>

<u>Current Liabilities:</u>		\$19,646.61
Members Dues – Advance	165.00	
Conference Emergency Fund	500.00	
Youth Music Fund	1,393.25	
Youth to Camp Fund	11,388.36	
Regeneration Comm. Advance	5,000.00	
Accounts Payable (Newsletter)	1,200.00	
		<u>\$19,646.61</u>

<u>Equity:</u>		\$95,779.26
Balance – January 1, 2005	\$98,475.18	
Adjustment – Regeneration Fund	1,200.00	
	<u>\$97,275.18</u>	
Less – Decrease for year	1,495.92	
	<u>\$95,779.26</u>	

Total Liabilities and Equity: \$115,425.87

PROJECTS STATEMENT – December 31, 2006

<u>Income:</u>		
<u>Colnett Fund:</u>		\$1,265.29
Donation	\$100.00	
Interest	1,165.29	
	<u>1,265.29</u>	
<u>Hospital Fund:</u>		1,442.94
Clubs	\$350.00	
Members	1,087.07	
Interest	5.87	
	<u>\$1,442.94</u>	

Total Income: \$2,708.23

<u>Disbursements:</u>		\$8,000.00
Harry Colnett Fund	\$3,000.00	
Hospital Fund	5,000.00	
	<u>\$8,000.00</u>	
<u>Disbursements over Income:</u>		<u>\$5,291.77</u>

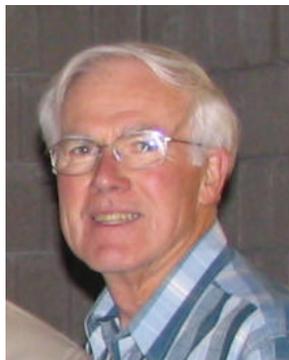
SUMMARY OF DECREASE FOR YEAR

(See Balance Sheet Equity Section)

Projects Statement – Decrease	\$5,291.77
Less – Income statement Increase	3,795.85
Net decrease for Year	<u>\$1,495.92</u>

THE 25th NATIONAL AOTS CONVENTION

PLEASE CONSIDER THIS A PERSONAL INVITATION TO ALL MEN AND THEIR SPOUSES TO JOIN US AT THIS NATIONAL CONVENTION –



I write to everyone across Canada to urge, and encourage all of you to please consider taking a holiday and come to our Biennial Convention which happens to be our 25th Anniversary at Trent University, Peterborough.

We have had many meetings in order to put together and provide a very interesting program for all who attend. The weekend can only be a success with great leadership in devotion, in workshops, in music, qualified theme speaker, dedicated inspirational chaplain and workshop leaders.

We are very fortunate in being able to hold this convention in such a beautiful setting as Trent University, located on the banks of Trent River and Otonabee River in beautiful Peterborough.

Thanks to a very special dedicated group of men in the Bay of Quinte Conference. I feel very confident they

have gone the second mile to provide a weekend of spiritual growth and renewal of many treasured friendships.

A very interesting Ladies Program is being arranged by the men from Peterborough and surrounding areas. It sounds great, I might even try and attend some part during the weekend.

All of us in the Bay of Quinte AOTS hope that each one will put forth an effort to join us on this special occasion.

Thanks to Harold Lorenz, editor for the Handshake, for giving us an opportunity to extend to all a special invitation to come to Peterborough, August 17 - 19, 2007.

Yours in AOTS
Craig E. Watson
Honourary President of National AOTS
Chair of The 25th National Convention

THE 25TH NATIONAL AOTS CONVENTION EXECUTIVE

CHAIRMANCraig Watson
VICE CHAIRWilliam Gilbert
SECRETARYRodney Green
PUBLICITY David Vaughan
REGISTRAR Grant Harrison
REGISTRAR John Babiak

President of Bay of Quinte AOTS Al Anthony
National President AOTS Garnet Thompson
Member at Large Keith Elliott

I extend thanks to all members from various clubs in the Bay of Quinte Conference who have supported and encouraged our group in organizing this Convention.

Theme – “Living Water”
Speaker – Rev. Dr. Wilbert (Wib) C. Cox

Chaplain – Rev. Gary Magarrell

Workshop Leaders Anne Martin
 George Bishop
 Rev. Brian Bigelow
 Ken Lane

Music Leaders – Ken Little and Jim Watson

This is YOUR Convention, come and be a part of it.

Handshake Spring Edition Devotion, 2007

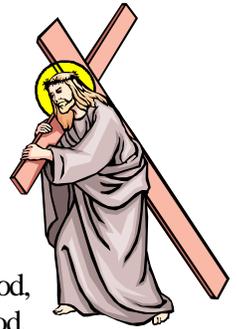
By *Gil Reashore*

“The Victorious Race”

Opening Hymn: VU # 6 “*All The Way My Saviour Leads Me*”

Must Read Scripture: Hebrews 12: 1 – 6 (Key Verses 1 & 2)

Opening Prayer: O God, many voices speak to us. We can be torn in many directions. Merciful God, to whom should we listen? To what should we pay attention? Speak to us with your voice. Help us, God, to listen with our hearts and to open ourselves to your voice that calls us to serve you and others, that invites us to use our own voices to challenge others to this way of life. Speak to us, God. We are listening. Amen.



Lesson: **“SAY GOODBYE TO TODAY, HELLO TO TOMORROW”**

Well another Women’s Curling Sweetie has ended recently with the awarding of the Canada Tournament of Hearts trophy to the defending Canadian Team. All the games leading up to the finals were hard fought, in fact the round robin play ended where teams ended in a dead heat and were forced into an extra playoff round. Losers were dropped by the wayside as winners moved to the next round. We all knew there would be eventually only one winner, one champion team.

Our Christian life may be described in somewhat similar terms, but there is one big difference – we can all be winners. It is God’s desire for us to finish well. Many come into this AOTS Christian organization with great enthusiasm, and then sometimes some falter, while others strive on to achieve their goal.

Well, here in the book of Hebrews, the author gives us the key to finishing the race well when he wrote: “therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great crowd of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

We began this Christian Journey looking to Jesus. Let us continue looking to Jesus. Remember in order to comply with our goals of the organization every step along the way we have to walk and live by faith. For our very source of victory will only come from looking to Jesus as our source of strength. We are to trust Him daily for our victory - that is the secret to Christian living in AOTS.

Remember Jesus was faithful to the end, as with our oath upon membership, we must also be “to the end.” It is to be our way of life. When we were sworn in, accepting membership, we were to be followers of “the Way”. Adopting a whole new way of life. “But we have difficulties” you say. Well, so did the early prophets, but they did not lose heart, they came back each time to the source of that strength, Christ, were renewed, and continued the journey “to the end”. They finished well.

So, where are we today as an organization? Have we lost that will to go back to the source, and get renewed strength to finish well, or are we “at the end?” If there is anything unlike Jesus in your life then why not own up to it and allow God to cleanse the soul. Ask God again to work mightily within you to conform you into the image of Christ. Let us be determined once again that we will finish the race looking to Jesus. Say “Goodbye To Today and Hello To Tomorrow” by going forth in His name. Amen

Closing Prayer: Dear friend, God has blessed us with an abundance of life. God’s promise for the world is filled to the brim and overflowing. God has blessed us with an abundance of hope. He has blessed us with an abundance of truth. Let us go and offer **THE WORD** to the world, along with God’s abundant gifts, for there are more than enough. Let us never forget “God’s love for the world is filled to the brim and overflowing”. Amen.

Central Canada Regional Spring Round-Up

April 20 – 22, 2007

Salvation Army Jackson's Point Conference Centre

1890 Metro Road North, Jackson's Point, ON L0E 1L0

Discerning Moments

What is God Calling Us to Do?

The 39th General Council of the United Church of Canada has been called the *discerning* council of the church. A number of initiatives have been put forward by the church to address the questions:

What is the work?

Why does the church exist?

And

What are our congregations for?

Recently the church launched wonder.cafe, an internet discussion lounge designed to examine moral and spiritual issues in a tradition of diversity and openness.

The Round-Up will feature exhibits demonstrating the various aspects of the wonder.cafe initiative. The Saturday program will focus on the area of intercultural ministry. Saturday's evening program will be highlighted by the performance of the York Regional Police Male Chorus.

Join us for the wonderful program of discernment and spiritual renewal.

Keynote Presenter

Our keynote presenter for the Round-Up is Richard Chung-Sik Choe, minister of Word and Sacrament at Kingston Road United Church in Toronto's Beach area. He has lived in Toronto since 1975 after emigrating with his family from South Korea. He received a Masters of Divinity from the University of Toronto in 1989. After completing an internship in Bay of Quinte Conference he was ordained in Toronto Conference in 1990.

After serving in Hamilton Conference, at Bethesda of Forest Glen United Church, from 1990-1996 he was called to serve as a General Secretary of Ethnic Ministries and to establish it as a national Divisional Unit in 1996. He acted as lead staff for Ethnic Ministries until answering a call at Kingston Road in 2006.

Richard was also active in establishing INFORM (International Forum on Multicultural

Ministry) as part of the World Council of Churches' sponsored programs.

He has facilitated at numerous workshops on cultural diversity at various national and international gatherings. Richard led the developmental work of the church in establishing intercultural ministry as a denominational priority.

AOTS Central Canada Regional Spring Round-Up

Cost \$230 (\$215 Early Bird)

Two nights (double occupancy)

6 meals (Friday evening to Sunday Noon)

Please email request for full registration form.

Download available at www.aots.ca or call

Jim McKibbin 416 699 2986 jim@mckibbin.ca

Ray Cockburn 416 431 6735 raymond431@yahoo.ca

Harold Lorenz 905 895 4894 hwlorenz@sympatico.ca

Weekend Chaplain

Brigadier-General (Ret'd.) David Estey, retired from a 30 year career as a military chaplain, he served in Vietnam, Germany and throughout Canada, including a period of several years as Chaplain General. More recently he served as interim executive secretary for Montreal and Ottawa Conference. He and his wife now live in Newmarket.



"The Music Men"

Jim Watson, on the left, and **Ken Little**, seated, will be providing leadership in "Music and Song" for the Round-Up 2007. They "wowed" us last year, and we are looking forward to their return.

(Jim & Ken will also be at the Biennial Convention).

CHURCH & COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

HARRY COLNETT SCHOLARSHIPS

Three applications were received for two \$1000.00 scholarships. In the committee's opinion, each deserved the award, and as sufficient funds were available, the exception was allowed. The Scholarships were awarded in December 2006.

Ms. Terri Lynn Paulson, of Foam Lake, SK is a fourth-year student in a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture & Bioresources at the University of Saskatchewan. In her application, she said, "My area of interest and life-long aspiration is to be involved in facilitating agricultural development and capacity building in developing countries."

Terri wrote the following after receiving the Scholarship: "I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the Harry Colnett Scholarship I recently received. I was surprised and excited to find a scholarship offered to students interested in international service in food production & distribution in developing countries. Since appropriate, sustainable development of communities is my passion, it is always inspiring to learn of other groups that are supportive of this vocation. Also, because making great sums of money is not usually associated with development work, it is a blessing to be able to help pay for my education. Thank you again for the dedication of your committee to offer this scholarship. I encourage you to continue in this good work so that other students will also be encouraged in their pursuit of similar vocations. I will consider it a blessing and honour to keep you posted on my journey as I prayerfully and passionately pursue this calling. Most sincerely, Terri Lynn Paulson"

Ms. Nicole Vuignier, of St. Claude, MB is a third-year student in Food Sciences in the Faculty of Agricultural & Food Sciences at the University of Manitoba. In her application Nicole said "There is a need for change to

NATIONAL HOSPITAL PROJECT

The National Hospital Project permits the dispensing of \$2500.00 grants yearly to each of the three National Regions (Eastern, Central and Western), providing it is assigned by the fiscal year-end.

In 2006, Keith Elliott made arrangements to present the Central Region cheque to purchase a special medical cart for use in the Prince Edward General Hospital in Picton, Ontario.

eliminate hunger, provide healthier food options, increase agricultural productivity and give everyone equal opportunity to access food no matter their income. I hope to play a role in this change that needs to be brought to global food production and distribution. It will be a worthy challenge." Following receipt of the Scholarship, Nicole wrote: "As one of the award winners of the Harry Colnett Scholarships, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for your generosity in providing this award. Not only does this bursary help me to finance my education, but I also feel honored to be recognized for the hard work I put into my studies. Thank you for making the Harry Colnett Scholarship possible, I will never forget the generosity extended to me! Thank you Jim Lawrence, Rev. Walter Cowan, Don MacKenzie, Ernie Orpin & other members of The National Association of AOTS Men's Clubs. Yours truly, Nicole Vuignier."

Ms. Anne Kellett, of St. John's, NL is in her final year of a MSc degree in the Aquaculture program at the Memorial University of Newfoundland. She also has an undergraduate B.A., as well as a graduate diploma in Aquaculture. In her application, Anne states, "Canada has a responsibility to share knowledge with developing nations. This includes agricultural and aquacultural seed stock, farming techniques, and plans for effective use of land and sea. Education and sharing the wealth of knowledge acquired in developed countries is critical to provide enough food across the globe."

In response to an email that I sent to Anne advising her that she was one of the three scholarship recipients, and that her cheque would be presented by Gary Ross, she emailed this response: "Thank-you to the committee for honouring my work through receipt of the Harry Colnett Scholarship. Your award will certainly be put to good use. Thanks also to you, for your personal and prompt communication in every regard. I look forward to hearing from you." Sincerely, Anne Kellett."

Gary Ross arranged to present the Eastern Region with a cheque for \$2500.00 to help in the purchase of a Urology Laser by the Central West Health Foundation in Grand Falls-Windsor. The Laser being a costly piece of equipment, the Government of Newfoundland is matching contributions.

The Western Region did not submit a proposal for 2006. Jim Lawrence, Chair C&CS



MEN'S MINISTRIES
NETWORK

A Reflection on Male Spirituality

By **George McKibbon**

In the early 90s, my wife and a group of her friends organized a Sunday worship service in our suburban Hamilton church. The worship was centred on a celebration of the freedom they experienced in Christ to pursue their professional and family lives as women. The service involved various stories, prayers, reflections, and a children's quiz show skit. They also called God "Mother."

The response was instant and negative. One man rose at the service's conclusion to say publicly the women erred theologically and were misled. A fellow session elder called me afterwards and enquired as to what I was planning to do to discipline my wife.

Then, and now, it amazes me that a Christian congregation comprised of a mixture of successful professional, business, and academic men and women could respond as they did to a statement of praise offered in worship! I can't think of a group I have known before or since that was so materially and professionally blessed. Yet the response to "God as Mother" was emotional and violent.

My wife, Ann, led the children's skit. The quiz show involved having an announcer ask kids to match various previously selected church members with their professions. For example, the lineup included an older woman who was an eye surgeon, a middle-aged man who was his children's principal caregiver, and a male tenor choir member who was a nurse. Without exception, the kids got it wrong, as they seemed unable to overcome gender stereotyping associated with professions. They could not imagine an eye surgeon who was a mother, a male house-husband, or a male registered nurse. Ann did not organize the game to result in failure or to play a trick on the kids. Sexual stereotyping is much more pervasive than we had imagined!

As we worked through the fallout from the service, two observations appeared clear to me. Notwithstanding the response to the worship service, the women who planned the event had the strength and confidence to continue and survive the turmoil. Conversely, the men were the most vulnerable because men have no positive self-images with which to fashion their lives beyond patriarchal images. While women were experimenting in society with new roles and enjoying the opportunities and responsibilities these bring, men seemed unable to share and adapt. Our faith experience makes these matters worse by its reliance on male imagery and authority. To what sources can we look for support?

Men's Ministries Network: Celebrating, Strengthening & Supporting Men's Groups and Men's Ministries

My father had polio in the 1950s. When he returned from the hospital, he, my brother, and I shared the attic in my grandmother's home. As an adolescent, I was discovering what it meant to be a man, while my father was rediscovering how to live and work in a body that couldn't do the things he had done before his illness. It made for an interesting relationship and shared exploration. I was stronger than he was and helped him, sometimes successfully and sometimes not so successfully, as he made a new life for himself and for my brother and sister and me.

"By his bruises we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). In *The Intimate Connection: Male Sexuality, Masculine Spirituality* (Westminster Press, 1988), James Nelson stresses that, unlike women, men do not experience repeated bodily changes. It therefore often takes a serious illness or disease to help them become aware of themselves in new ways. As I reflect on my father, I loved him because he bore a serious bodily illness well, without malice, and, occasionally, with some humour. Perhaps by refocusing on our weaknesses, whether through circumstances or by intent, men become aware of new ways in which to explore our masculinity and move beyond the patriarchal symbols imposed on us.

In *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming* (Image Books, 1994), Henri Nouwen presents an alternative reflection on the prodigal son that offers men some other images to consider when patterning their lives individually and collectively. What the son asked for (his portion of the estate) was something that would not otherwise have been available to him in that society until his father had died. Consequently, his desire was premised upon his father's death. His father's sharing of his estate represented his acceptance of this self-imposed death. Perhaps these are necessary steps all sons (and fathers) have to pass over if their fathers (and sons) are to be freed. Having spent his share of the estate, the son returns. His father runs down the road to meet him. The patriarch in him is dead and he is free to love his son as a son while his son, having spent his inheritance, is now free to begin to love his father as father.

George McKibbin lives in Hamilton, Ontario, where he is a member of Centenary United Church and Chair of the Congregation. George and his wife, Ann, have three children, who are in university. George is an environmental studies graduate and a planning consultant. He helps corporations, municipalities, First Nations peoples, and other citizens achieve their environmental objectives.

(This essay was originally published in *Women's Concerns*, Fall 2003, pp. 33-34.)

Do you have programs that work and would like to share with others? Do you have a story, a poem or perhaps a prayer you'd like to share? If so, please contact:

Anne Martin
The United Church of Canada
Faith Formation and Education Unit
3250 Bloor Street W, Suite 300,
Toronto, ON, M8X 2Y4 (416) 231-7680 ext. 4023 amartin@united-church.ca

Men's Ministries Network: Celebrating, Strengthening & Supporting Men's Groups and Men's Ministries

MEN'S MINISTRIES NETWORK

A Small Group Program

Recognizing God's Presence in Your Work

Introduction:

This small group program invites men to consider ways in which their work nurtures their spirituality. Work could refer to paid or volunteer work.

Note: Each participant will be asked to bring a personal symbol for their work experience.

The Process:

Groups are encouraged to:

- ? be small groups
 - o groups of 3-7 men are the most effective

- ? develop a covenant during their first meeting; bring the covenant to an end during the last meeting
 - o the length of the covenant will depend on the number of men in the group
 - ✍ allow for one introductory meeting, one closing meeting and one meeting for each participant to present his workplace experiences. If there are 5 participants, a group would covenant for 7 meetings.

Use the following small group process:

Opening: Prayer, song etc.

Check-in: Ask, e.g., how is everyone this evening? Participants respond one by one. No discussion.

Spiritual Practice: try sitting in silence for a few minutes or a guided meditation

Discussion time: one participant presents (see below)

Check-out: Ask, e.g., what's been a blessing during our time together? Participants respond one by one. No discussion.

Closing: Prayer, song, perhaps a communal blessing

Last session:

- ✍ Take a few minutes to evaluate the group's experience together: e.g., What's been a blessing? What's been a regret?
- ✍ Bring the covenant to a close
- ✍ Celebrate the group's time together.

MEN'S MINISTRIES NETWORK

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During the discussion time of the meetings participants will take turns reflecting on their workplace experiences, using the following and/or other questions:

1. What is a personal symbol for your work experience?
 - a. The group may wish to add each man's symbol to the worship table so that by the last session the worship table will include a symbol for each participant.
2. What aspects of your work do you enjoy?
3. What aspects of your work do you dislike?
4. What kinds of relationships do you have with fellow workers?
 - a. Are there any that are particularly challenging?
5. What personal values does your work affirm?
6. What personal values does your work challenge?
7. If there was one change you could make in your workplace to make it a better environment for yourself and others, what would it be?
8. Have you ever experienced God's presence in your workplace? If so, tell the story of this experience(s).
9. Is there a Biblical story or image that reflects your workplace experiences?
10. Is there a hymn or song that reflects your workplace experiences?
 - o As part of the closing the group may wish to sing the chosen hymn or song.

Men's Ministries Network: Celebrating, Strengthening & Supporting Men's Groups and Men's Ministries

Membership and Fellowship Chair's Report

As one looks around our ranks, what you see are mainly seniors and yes we are not getting any younger as the years roll by.

Our Church has a campaign operating at the present time to try and attract younger families. All I can say is **Good Luck!** With prices going up constantly for gas, food and yes even dying, some of our younger folk have to hold down two jobs to help make ends meet.

Some of our clubs are no longer with us, basically due to age and we find we are unable to do the fund raising that we have done for so long. Yes, as we attend either Spring Round-Up or the Biennial Convention there is a time set aside to read off the names of our various club members who have finished their walk in life and their devoted help in club meetings and events.

Even in my own club here in Elliot Lake, we are starting to feel a lot of extra aches and pains from putting up tables, carrying in items for our Annual Yard Sale in support of "Kids to Camp". We count ourselves fortunate to have help from various church members to assist us in our community involvement through these fund raisers.

I pray that our health and your membership can strive to do God's work AS ONE THAT SERVES through the coming spring, summer and fall. We have a lot to do before it is our turn to finish our life's walk and join the biggest AOTS Club with our Lord God who is President in Heaven.

God bless you all across the vast land of Canada through AOTS.

Richard Paul Deitriche – Membership & Fellowship Chair

Spiritual Life and Leadership Column

Daily and weekly Bible readings and resources for Bible study

I have been asked on different occasions for sources for a set of Bible verses for daily reflection. Some that you may wish to use may be found on the internet as follows:

Weekly reflections - www.united-church.ca/devotions/
Daily lectionary readings - www.pcusa.org/cgi-bin/lectiond.cgi
Daily meditations - www.woodlakebooks.com (daily Meditation)
Weekly newsletter - www.logosproductions.com (Ralph's Resource Barrel-Rumors)
Daily devotional - www.upperroom.org/devotional/
Daily Bible readings - www.biblesociety.ca/ (Daily Bible Readings)



Bible study can take many different forms and involve many different methods or processes. Some which I find helpful may be found on the internet as follows:

Pray with scripture - www.united-church.ca/smallgroup/praying.
Bible studies - www.pcusa.org/men/ (Bible Studies)

At Trinity United, Newmarket, in recent years we cannot find enough men interested in Bible study to conduct an all-male study group. If you have some suggestions which have worked for your church or in your club please share them.

We have used "Exploring Faith Questions" successfully in small groups with male and female participation. We are going to next use "Living the Questions" with male and female participants in small groups. This study is intended to allow individuals an opportunity to discuss in a safe environment the questions they have always wanted to ask but have been afraid to for fear of being thought a heretic.

Share your experiences in small group studies using gandh.bishop@rogers.com
George Bishop – Spiritual Life and Leadership Chair

Trinity Newmarket, ON

We have approximately 24 members, meeting monthly, except during the summer. Most of our meetings start with a dinner prepared by our in-house chef, with all members taking part in either preparing the food and/or table setup etc.

Some of our meetings welcome a guest speaker - here is a short list:

- ? A representative from the “Inn From The Cold” program - a program hosted at our church through the winter months.
- ? Rev. J. Paul Fawcett from the Christian Blind Mission – International.
- ? Our own Sean McKinnon informing us of many “backstage” events at the Turin Olympic Games, where he was working for a major television network.
- ? Our new Pastoral Care Minister, the Reverend Phil Rodgers.
- ? A leader from “The Shop” - an initiative run through the “Youth for Christ” program, where older teens who are perhaps not fitting into society “too well” can go, learn about both auto mechanics and Christianity.

“In house” meetings have included a workshop/presentation on the National Church’s “Emerging Spirit” program and of course November’s “Euchre Night”.

December finds us early on a Saturday morning, sharing breakfast together at a local restaurant; May’s meeting brings about the annual Golf Tournament, followed by June’s year-end bar-b-que.

We do manage to squeeze in some other things along the way, trying not to forget the “Serves” part of the club.

Here is a sample of events:

- o Assisting with the ALS BBQ event held at a nearby park.
- o Hosting the Toronto Conference AOTS Fall Rally.

- o Christmas time is busy too...
 - ✍ Serving a full hot roast beef lunch at our church’s bazaar.
 - ✍ Serving a full Christmas dinner, at no charge, to approximately 75 people of the “Lunch At My Place” program which is hosted at our church.
 - ✍ Selling hot dogs and hot chocolate as the Santa Claus parade marches up Main Street, with most of the “profits” going to our Scout group.
- o Painting around the church.
- o Preparing and serving pancakes to 230 people on Shrove Tuesday.
- o Hosting the all-night “Easter Vigil”.
- o Serving an early Easter morning breakfast.
- o Preparing and sharing the full “Father’s Day” Sunday worship service.
- o Preparing and serving coffee after church, four times throughout the year.
- o Assisting with receptions.

Each December we decide on the sharing of our money, this past year, we shared a total of \$1,600 with:

- ✍ The Christian Blind Mission
- ✍ The “Inn From The Cold”.
- ✍ “The Shop”.
- ✍ Boy Scouts of Canada.
- ✍ Camping bursaries.
- ✍ Trinity United Church General Fund.



Our club is vibrant, seeking new men to come and join with us. The club provides for interesting and stimulating discussions, a learning environment, a place of socializing, and a place to be together with friends!

Submitted by *Jonathan Wardlaw*

Drinking from the Saucer (Psalm 23:5)

I don't have a lot of riches,
And sometimes the going's rough;
But while I've friends to love,
I think I'm rich enough.
I'll just thank God for blessings
That His mercy has bestowed.
I'm drinking from the saucer,

'Cause my cup has overflowed.
If God gives me strength and courage,
When the way grows steep and rough;
I'll not ask for other blessings,
I'm already blessed enough.
May I never be too busy
To help another's load.

Yes, I'm drinking from the saucer,
'Cause my cup has overflowed.
Author Unknown

With Thanks to Edwin A. Henry,
Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan

Rothwell AOTS Men's Club – Gloucester Ontario

If you look back to our report for 2005, you will note that this is almost a carbon copy! But I do have to change it just a little as this was the second year for our January Family Winter Carnival, with forty-six attendees. Again we hiked the NCC Trails and Mer Bleue (National Capital Commission Lands) or stayed in and played bridge, followed by a bean Supper.

Our Christmas Party was well attended again. The three craft tables for the children were kept busy and I'm sure they will always remember being bounced on Santa's knee.

Our Treasurer's Report confirmed a successful year with numerous projects during the year, most of which included food – the preparation, serving and clean-up at these activities requires a lot of hard work but the friendships and camaraderie that develop make them all more than worthwhile.

On Easter Sunday we changed our menu from "Pancakes and Sausage" to a "Continental" style breakfast. This provided a pleasant change and less work, and we thank Lindsay Toll for his hard work and planning of the event.

Come to think of it, this report is nothing like last year's, except that we are still very thankful for all the hard work that club members do so cheerfully.

Submitted by *Des Jarman*



AOTS MEN'S CLUB (ROTHWELL UNITED CHURCH) TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2006

Bank Balance as at January 01, 2006		\$1,606.50
Income 2006		
Monthly Dinner Receipts	\$ 253.65	
AOTS Membership Dues	210.00	
Bean Supper	204.00	
Pancake Supper	252.12	
Strawberry Social	255.00	
Easter Breakfast	177.00	
Lunch Room Tinsel Tea	424.00	
Christmas Dinner/Party	858.00	
Bank Interest	0.70	
Total Income		\$2,634.47
Expenses for 2006		
Monthly Dinner Expenses	\$144.75	
AOTS Membership Dues	210.00	
Bean Supper	60.50	
Pancake Supper	51.38	
Strawberry Social	123.50	
Easter Breakfast	144.75	
Mini Golf (Youth)	36.00	
Lunch Room Tinsel Tea	44.33	
Christmas Dinner/Party	707.96	
Sunday Club	50.00	
More Voices Hymn Book	200.00	
Charitable Donations		
Canadian Race Relations	\$50.00	
Lenten Project	200.00	
AOTS Observer on Tape	50.00	
The Mission	100.00	
Centre 507	100.00	
CHEO	50.00	
Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre	100.00	
Camp Kalalla	50.00	
Angola Memorial Fund	100.00	800.00
Total Expenses		<u>2,573.17</u>
Gain (Loss) for 2006		61.30
Bank Balance as at December 31, 2006		\$1,667.80

Respectfully submitted by Neil Johnstone
Treasurer Rothwell United Church Men's Club



Thought for today...

taken from the book "Thoughts From The Diary Of A Desperate Man" by Walter A. Hanrichsen

Establishing your purpose

"We must all die; we are like water spilled on the ground which cannot be gathered up again." 2 Samuel 14:14

If you strip life of all assumptions and presuppositions, and look at it flat on, it would be easy to conclude that it is void of meaning. A man is born, he lives, and he dies. Between his birth and death he is perpetually opposed; nothing comes easily for him. He is not clever, strong, or agile, as he would like to be. (This may be one reason men compete with one another. They cannot meet their own expectations, and take solace in their being better than others.) Circumstances such as disease, accidents, and an unpredictable market rob man of his ability to meet goals completely. People oppose him. They are not nice, and he vacillates between feeling like a victim, and in moments of honesty admitting that he also is not nice to others.

In the course of life, he marries and has a family. He covets for his children a life easier than the one he has experienced. But statistically, he has no more than a fifty- percent chance of seeing this happen. His children may die early, contract terrible diseases, become addicted to drugs or alcohol, or have unhappy marriages. His later years confirm his suspicions regarding the futility of life. If he does not die prematurely, he exits life the same way he entered it; in need of others to feed him, change his diapers, and hopefully give him a little love. When he dies it is as though he had never been. Not only do the following generations forget he existed, the place of his burial ceases to acknowledge that he is there.

You can see why the first job of any religion is to define the purpose. Why are we here? The whole of Scripture asserts that this life is the seedtime of eternity. Our only purpose for living this life is to prepare for an eternity with God. *"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."* (Psalm 90:12). God asks that we steward our most precious resource, time, so that we live wisely in light of eternity.

Let us pray - Eternal God, you have given each of us a purpose. Help us as AOTS men to give one another the nudge we need to use the time you have given us to accomplish that purpose. May we not die with our purpose unfulfilled. Amen.

From *George Bishop* – Spiritual Life and Leadership Chair

Editor's Note:

While the above sets the right "mood", if you would like to send a note or card to our long-time Handshake editor, Ernie Dixon, I'm sure he would appreciate hearing from you.

At the time of "printing" I could not get a phone number to get permission to include Ernie's address, but, if you contact me by email, phone or letter, I will give you the address. Thanks

Ken Lane Explains Life

On the first day, God created the dog and said: *“Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of twenty years.”* The dog said: *“That’s a long time to be barking. How about only ten years and I’ll give you back the other ten?”*

So God agreed.

On the second day, God created the monkey and said: *“Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh. For this, I’ll give you a twenty-year life span.”* The monkey said: *“Monkey tricks for twenty years? That’s a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back ten like the Dog did?”*

And God agreed.

On the third day, God created the cow and said: *“You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves and give milk to support the farmer’s family. For this, I will give you a life span of sixty years.”*

The cow said: *“That’s kind of a tough life you want me to live for sixty years. How about twenty and I’ll give back the other forty?”*

And God agreed again.

On the fourth day, God created man and said: *“Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this, I’ll give you twenty years.”*

But man said: *“Only twenty years? Could you possibly give me my twenty, the forty the cow gave back, the ten the monkey gave back, and the ten the dog gave back; that makes eighty, okay?”*

“Okay,” said God, “You asked for it.”

So that is why the first twenty years we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves. For the next forty years we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next ten years we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren. And for the last ten years we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone.

Life has now been explained to you....

"TIMMINS / PORCUPINE COVENANT MEN'S GROUP"

A group of men came together from five United Churches in the Timmins / Porcupine area in 2003 for fellowship and inspiration for one another as all five churches were struggling and looking for renewal.

Although the churches were talking for several years about uniting, things were at a stalemate. The men broke with tradition and started working together, a very unorganized group, frustrating to work with at times, but the job got done in the end. Average attendance at most monthly meetings is now in the neighbourhood of eighteen to twenty.

Last year, 2006, was a fairly busy year for the organization, as we went on a road trip of 100 kms. and met with a good group of some twenty men at Cochrane United Church. Then a chili meal was provided for some 200 ice fishermen during the March Fishing Derby on a nearby lake. Chili, bun, tea or coffee, was delivered by skidoo for \$5.00. For Easter the group put on a Chicken Supper and all five congregations were invited. Mother’s Day had the group put on a Noon Luncheon and invited all the women, it went over so well it is scheduled for this year again. An early June weekend saw a group of fifteen men going some 40 kms. to do repair work at our only remaining United Church Camp. Several camps had siding put on, one got a new shingled roof, and the Minister’s Cabin was finally straightened. The weekend closed with a service before departing. Finally the group hosted an Advent Supper with all the trimmings, gave away table centerpieces and a men's choir entertained, with some 144 people in attendance.

Submitted by *Gil Reashore*.



Holy Trinity – Elliot Lake ON

“Breaking The Ice”

Thirty-two men from Manitou Conference enjoyed a great weekend of Fellowship and Spiritual Renewal at the “**Breaking the Ice**” (BTI) retreat at Camp Norland on the weekend of February 23rd, 24th & 25th. The theme for the weekend was “**Calling and Covenanting – Journeying with Jesus**” and facilitator Brian Bigelow promoted good discussion as he took us on a historical journey of life before and after the birth of Jesus and to our present era. The calling of Christians to serve over the years was stressed and our present calling to serve is real and as demanding as that of Christians over the centuries. Men from Sudbury (3), Massey (2), and Elliot Lake (7) represented Sudbury Presbytery and were part of this great week-end. Music is always important and John Balfe (North Bay) on keyboard and Gord Hamden (Corbeil) on the tenor sax brought new meaning to old and new hymns and songs of yesteryear. The food is always great and so with the fresh air of the camp, a great week-end in the out doors was again experienced.

Our local Club is gearing up for our *YOUTH TO CAMP* summer project and a great yard sale and several concerts are in the works to finance our sponsorship of these young people to a summer camping experience. Submitted by *Kenneth Lane*

Something To Think About

A group of students were asked to list what they thought were the present “Seven Wonders of the World.” Though there were some disagreements, the following received the most votes:

1. Egypt’s Great Pyramids
2. Taj Mahal
3. Grand Canyon
4. Panama Canal
5. Empire State Building
6. St. Peter’s Basilica
7. China’s Great Wall

While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one student had not finished her paper yet. So she asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The girl replied, “Yes, a little. I couldn’t quite make up my mind because there were so many”.

The teacher said, “Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help.”

The little girl hesitated, then read, “I think the ‘Seven Wonders of the World’ are:

1. To see
2. To hear
3. To touch
4. To taste
5. To feel
6. To laugh
7. To love”

The room was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop. The things we overlook as simple and ordinary and what we take for granted are truly wondrous! A gentle reminder – that the most precious things in life cannot be built by hand or bought by man.

Sometimes we need to be reminded of the blessings that we take for granted.

Author Unknown



Regeneration

The regeneration committee has had some success in making AOTS known to more people through the Men's Ministry Network. However the success has not led to significant increase in numbers of AOTS clubs or members across Canada. Fortunately we do continue to share in the wonderful fellowship of AOTS as we continue to serve our God.

We are called to do more. Perhaps we can develop more rapport with the men in our neighbouring churches, which may not have men's groups, through sharing in some type of project work. It is our intention to bring some ideas in this regard to our National Council meeting and Biennial Convention in August. This will involve discussion of changes in membership structures and introduction of new country-wide projects.

Men's groups are flourishing in several Christian denominations in USA, but not in Canada. A scientifically conducted survey has shown that in Canada there are many men (and women) who are on a journey seeking an understanding of life and a development of their faith, but who are turned off by churches and religion as practiced today. The Emerging Spirit campaign, introduced by the United Church of Canada, is causing some new questions among non-churchgoing people. The Wonder Café generates some basic discussions on faith and life in general. Are we ready, willing and able to talk about our faith with the men who are hungry for more meaning in their lives and who ask difficult questions?

Please share your ideas on membership, projects, questions, etc. with the regeneration committee.

As one that serves, *George Bishop*

gandh.bishop@rogers.com

A O T S – Coast to Coast

50th Anniversary - AOTS Men & Men's Fellowship Camp at Loon Bay, Newfoundland.



Seated L to R: Total of 84 registrations
Gary Ross, Eastern Vice Chair, National AOTS;
Sandy Cull, Chairperson Lewisporte Men's
Fellowship Club; Earnest Paddock, Past President
National AOTS; Harry Oake, Lay Pastoral Minister
– Summerford – Guest Speaker; Rev. Bernice
Spracklin, Minister – Lewisporte U.C. and Chair of
the West District Council; Bruce Bursey, Botwood
AOTS Club; Wilfred Green, Grand Bank AOTS
Club and Wilson Stuckless, Bishop's Falls AOTS
Club.

On June 9 – 11, 2006, 56 men got together at Westhaven Camp in Pasadena, Newfoundland.



The Theme for the Rally was “**Bearing The Burden and Winning the Race**”. **Seated L to R front row:** Horace Gray; Alonzo Normore; Major Jim Cooper; Cyril Noel; Garland Woodford; Garry Ross – Eastern Vice chair – National AOTS; Peter Murray; Alfred Slade – Chair of Westhaven Camp Rally; Max Biles and Lewis Biles.



Can you beat this?

Duncan United Church AOTS reports an Event to honour their oldest member. Donald Morton at 100 Years old, is also the oldest known member of all clubs across Canada.

Congratulations to Don for his many years of active service for AOTS in British Columbia and his own Club in Duncan.

Pictured here is Don at 100 with the youngest member in the Duncan Club, Ian Ferguson, at 17 years of age.

Congratulations to the Duncan AOTS for having a program that attracts such a wide range of men



Holy Trinity United Church – Elliot Lake Installation of Officers – January 7th, 2007

L to R: Rev. Bob Gardner – Honorary President
Rev. Bigelow – Past President
Richard Paul Deitriche – President
Dwight Smith – Vice President
Ken Lane – Treasurer
Robert Astley – Executive Board Member
Stephen Beecroft – Secretary (absent)

The Club meets the second Saturday of each month

