



Focus on Floradale

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Floradale Mennonite Church

February, 2020

Comforter-knotting blitz

Floradale donated 26 comforters to MCC's 'Great Winter Warm-up'

By Barb Draper

At Floradale, we participated in Mennonite Central Committee's "Great Winter Warm-up" on Sat. Jan. 11. Barb Draper and Veg Weber were thankful for those who donated comforter tops and to those who sewed pre-cut blocks from M.C.C. We worked from 9 a.m. to about 3 p.m. and completed 15 comforters. Barb did another one at home and took one to her

meetings in Quebec the following weekend.

The women's sewing group who meet monthly also had nine comforters that they completed in December and January to add to our pile. So Floradale donated 26 comforters to the "Great Winter Warm-up" project.

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Barb Draper and Veg Weber were kept hopping keeping comforters set up in the four sets of frames.



Many people came to help including Marilyn Diefenbacher, Lorne Bowman, Florence Jantzi and Kathleen Cober



Mike Giesbrecht and Lester Kehl hold up a comforter they just finished knotting. This top was made by Jane Hesselink.

Thank you to everyone who helped. Thank you to Veg for buying fabric and batting and to Melinda Martin and Laurene Martin who sewed the linings. Thank you to everyone who finished the bindings, including Eleanor Buehler, Melinda Martin, Marilyn Diefenbacher, Lena Martin, Veg Weber and Shirley Shoemaker.

A special thanks to Mary M. Martin and Rita Bauman who provided lunch for those who spent several hours knotting comforters on Jan. 11.



Barb Draper took this comforter along to her historical society meetings in Quebec so that Mennonite historians from across Canada could participate in the "Great Winter Warm-up" on Jan. 18. Andrea Dyck (left) works at Mennonite Heritage Village in Manitoba and Cheryl Isaac and Linda Klassen work at the Mennonite archives in B.C. This comforter top was made by Elvina Martin.



Floradale's finished comforters were on display on Sunday, January 26, 2020.

MCC's Great Winter Warm-up results

By Renata Buhler of MCC

Despite heavy snowstorms in some areas, thousands of people gathered to sew comforters during The Great Winter Warm-up, a comforter-making event organized by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Groups met across Canada, the U.S. and Europe with a goal of creating 6,500 comforters to distribute to people affected by disasters and conflict around the world. This year is MCC's 100th anniversary.

Together, the participants not only met but surpassed the original goal. They set a record of 9,504 comforters donated to MCC!

Throughout the event, participants began to make this experi-

ence their own. One group in the Netherlands had so much fun that they planned to meet and create comforters on a regular basis afterwards. At another event in Winnipeg, Man., one group decided to time themselves in order to create comforters as efficiently as possible.

Stories of the lasting impacts of MCC's relief work also materialized. One of the participants at an event in Germany mentioned that as a child she had been wrapped in an MCC comforter after the end of the Second World War.

In Alberta, a group from the Islamic Family & Social Services Association (IFSSA) heard about the event and wanted to help. "[The] majority of them came

from refugee camps and they still remember the bitter taste of life and the harshness of the cold winter there," said Rola Mustafa, refugee support manager at IFSSA.

The comforters will be distributed along with others collected during the year to bring relief to those affected by disasters and conflict.

"Comforters are an excellent metaphor for the nature of our work around the world," says Rick Cober Bauman, executive director of MCC Canada. "One square of fabric alone cannot keep the cold away, but many pieces connected together produce warmth against the cold."

MCC would like to thank all the volunteers and participants who made this event possible.

MCC relief kits

The congregation was again invited to gather relief kit supplies and put them under the tree in the foyer during the Christmas season. When Merri-Lee Metzger gathered them up after Jan. 5 and took them to the MCC material aid depot in Kitchener, she didn't count exactly how many complete kits there were, but she packed her vehicle full. Merri-Lee also had a donation of \$603 from the profits of her calendar sales to purchase more relief kit supplies. "People are generous with their donations to this project!" said Merri-Lee.



Merri-Lee's calendars



For many years, Merri-Lee Metzger has made calendars with the beautiful photos she has taken of birds, butterflies and other animals. She has been offering them for sale at the end of the year and donating the profits to MCC for relief kits. If you are interested in seeing more of her photos, go to her website: <https://www.merrileesnaturephotos.com/>

Bethlehem Diorama

The Bethlehem village at the front of the church continued to be the backdrop of the children's stories over the Christmas season as the scene changed from week to week. On Christmas Eve the townspeople were lined up for the census (photo right) and Mary and Joseph were found in a shed (see photo below). The story of the Wise Men and of Joseph dream to



flee to Egypt came on the first Sunday of January. The children waved good-bye to Mary and Joseph and the baby as they left for Egypt. Later that morning, volunteers who had helped make the houses and figures packed everything up and stored it in the basement to be used again next year.





Managing Winter



We asked a variety of people to respond to the question of how they manage winter, a time when some people complain about feeling cold and sad. Those who responded all had lots of projects on the go.

Winter projects

By Veg Weber

Winter is a time for me to catch up and work at some of the things I enjoy doing. I like to spend time reading especially on a snowy winter day or a Sunday afternoon. I have many projects on the go with the fabric I have from my mother—quilts, table runners, comforters, etc. When I look at all the fabric my mind starts to dream and plan all the things I can make from it. I try not to dream too long and actually get working on a project.

I am also attempting to finish an appliqued quilt that my aunt had started. Appliqueing was something I had never tried before, so I figured this was a way to learn. If I need a break from sewing or appliqueing then I will knit a prayer shawl.

Of course there are jig saw puzzles calling my name and I have to complete at least one in a winter. Last winter I attempted a 2000-piece puzzle that was given to me; usually I do at least a 1000 piece puzzle.

I try to get out every day for a walk where I can take in the fresh air and the wonders of nature created by the snow, wind and frost. I am so blessed to be able to walk where I can see the river, hear the birds and of course chat with a neighbour along the way.

Winter is also a time when I enjoy entertaining over a meal. There is something to be said to have a warm meal and good company on a cold winter day.

I enjoy the many hobbies I have in winter, but I am always

glad when spring comes and I can spend time outside gardening and catching up with my neighbours.

Winter blaas

By Susan Martin

Winter on the farm is a different type of busy for James and me. It's a time for house and barn renovations. This year has us building a four-season room to house our hot tub. With the big windows it might be a great place to start some seeds and cuttings.

A hot cup of tea and seed catalogues in hand to start dreaming of the 2020 gardening season is also the agenda. It's also the time to check the fruit cellar for the last of the pumpkins and squash and get them cooked up. Our heirloom pumpkins were great keepers from our 2019 garden.

The winter season is also a good time to educate ourselves with a variety of agricultural

events. These events help us grow our sheep business while making friends with similar interests.

In this house January and February are purge months. De-cluttering closets, the dreaded attic which is the catch-all for everything. Willis Freeman's wise advice is that once you have moved it three times its time to go!! Sage advice and it is followed here.



Farmer Susan with Goon and her lamb.



A beautiful snowy day outside Susan's back door.

At Florahills Farm our sheep flock lambs year-round, which means we have a group lambing in Jan/ Feb. Oh what fun to watch and wait for some special ewes like Grace, Goon, Coffee and Latte to have their babies!! It can be challenging to have new life arrive in the winter months, but the reward is greater. The lambs are very resilient. It's always special when our grandchildren stop in to see the newest lamb additions in the barn.

We are truly blessed to live in the part of the world that has four distinct seasons!

Winter is beautiful

By Karen Bender

Winter in Canada. It's beautiful and majestic! I enjoy the winter months and so does our dog Bella. Every evening we go for a walk around the town of Hawkesville. We usually do not encounter anyone along the way as most seem to hibernate.

When our boys were younger we used to spend time downhill skiing at Blue Mountain or Chicopee and also spent evenings outdoor skating at the Community Centre rink in town.

Some years we have been fortunate to take a week's holidays somewhere in the Caribbean. We find this restful and enjoy learning about other cultures. We recently got back from the Dominican Republic. Both of us really love travelling exploring new things and hope once we are retired we can continue that.

For the last 12 years during the month of February, I canvas our town on behalf of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. This takes up many of my evenings to try and find people at home. It also provides more exercise in my schedule and moreover spending time visiting with town folk because when you live in a small town everyone knows you!

Dan and I also like to entertain having friends/family over for dinner or an evening out. Our boys also keep us involved with their busy lives so never a dull moment!

Before you know it, Spring will be around the corner!



Winter activities

By Kathleen Cober

I do not mind winter weather even when I was driving to work. It is a nuisance sometimes, wearing all the extra clothing to keep warm but I still enjoyed the slower pace. It was a good time to work on jigsaw puzzles before the work outdoors needed my attention.

Before winter arrives, I usually have things planned, projects such as sewing and embroidery. This year I was planning on cutting up the scraps of cloth which are in boxes and drawers and making a couple of quilt tops. So far the material is still in boxes and drawers. We will see what happens in February.

My neighbour wonders if I get bored when I spend a quiet day by myself, but there is no such thing as boredom for me. I work at crossword puzzles, play a Scrabble game with my daughter, who lives in Crystal City, Manitoba, and another Scrabble game with my sister-in-law in Waterford, Ont. (We do this online.) And if I have a book to read that will keep me occupied.

I also volunteer at Chartwell, feeding a client twice a week and work in the Tuck shop once a month. If the weather is nasty or if there is a lot of snow/ice I stay home so am not as regular in my volunteer work this time of year as I am from April to December.

Some may ask "Do you miss going to Florida?" and my answer would be "The thing I miss the most is 'coffee time' on the balcony with my friends." I still keep in touch with a few who live in Ontario, Ohio, and Michigan.

Sewing is therapeutic

By Marilyn Diefenbacher

I enjoy winter, the nice fluffy snow and the sun sparkling on the trees and the snow, it is truly beautiful. My grandchildren and great-grandchildren look forward to coming to the farm to go snowmobiling, but I just like to watch from my house window.

My winter activities include scrapbooking, family genealogy, reading, bird watching, cooking and helping the girls with catering. Clarence and I usually put together a 1000-piece jigsaw puzzled every winter, which we sometimes frame. We also help with the Mennonite Heifer Sale—advertising and collecting information for the catalogue.

Many years ago, my daughter Susan gave me a book called *The Quilting Bible*, which explains most of what you need to know to make quilts: measuring and cutting tools like cutting mats, see-through rulers, rotary cutters and how to use them. Around the same time I hosted a 4-H Piecing and Quilting Club in my basement where I helped young 4-H members cut material to make quilt patches, table runners, tote bags and so on. It was fun.

After we sold our cows, I started attending the sewing days at Floradale Mennonite Church and at a later date Laura Bauman got me interested in sewing together patches for MCC comforters. I started slow, but now I usually cut and sew some every week. I find it therapeutic.

A few weeks ago I received my Ontario Seed Catalogue for 2020 in the mail, which makes me think about spring and summer. But I'm not ready for that yet; I'm not done with winter!



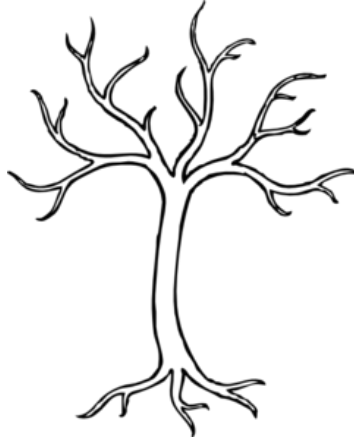
Seasons of the Soul: Winter

On Sunday, Feb. 2, Jim Loepp Thiessen's sermon dealt with surviving difficult times; he compared it to feeling like we need a break from winter. After reading Psalm 88, Jim said that we also sometimes feel like we are a failure.

He referred to the story of a doctor who visited various people dying of cancer and all of them said that their disease was because of sin; they believed they were being punished. This is how the Psalmist feels and we sometimes feel like that too. We feel as though our prayers are not being heard, our self-esteem is in the pit and everything in the world feels like it is our fault. We feel abandoned by our friends. God seems hidden and far away.

It seems as though the Psalmist is struggling with mental health issues.

When we feel this way, when it is winter in our lives, it is not a time to make judgments about our spiritual condition, said Jim. It is not a time to be hard on ourselves. It is also a



hard time for friends because they do not know what to say. By the way, the best thing to say at that time is that we don't know what to say.

Jim told a story about a pastor who asked his parishioner if he could visit him in the hospital. When the person said "no," the pastor asked if he could come and sit with him. Several times in the next months and years the parishioner said that was the best visit he had ever had. "Eighty percent of ministry is just being there," said Jim.

If we are experiencing winter ourselves, we know that taking action to get out of that situa-

tion seems to take just too much energy. We tend to withdraw; we can fight bitterness and panic attacks.

What do we do if winter has us in its grip? We wait for the Lord, said Jim. Waiting is an activity. If our marriage is in winter, we wait. And in winter we need to take shelter in the promises of God. When we do not know how to pray, the Spirit prays for us, says Paul in Romans 8. If you cannot pray, Jesus is praying for you.

It is important to try to help others move out of isolation. To say, "Call me if you need anything" is not helpful, said Jim. But he encouraged everyone to take small initiatives such as a card or a call because those small things matter when others are struggling with winter. Through these small gestures, we can say that we are here. We can draw on the strength of each other.

Jim commented that Psalm 88 does not end on a happy note and the Psalmist is left feeling the whole world is covered in winter's long shadow. But there is hope if we wait for God, if we wait for the dawning of spring.

Potato Bar lunch

By Gloria H. Bauman

The original date for the potato bar lunch was Jan. 12, but because of the weather forecast (which ended up not being as bad as predicted), we decided to postpone it until the following Sunday.

Sunday Jan. 19 dawned with snow, snow, snow! Arriving at the church shortly before 9 a.m., the parking lot had not been plowed, which made us wonder if we should put the potatoes in the oven. As we were debating, the plows showed up and the potatoes went in.

There were around 100 people who braved the elements to come to church and stayed for lunch.



After lunch some stayed to play games and just to chat and enjoy each other's company.

All in all, the day was a success, and the funds raised will be used to help cover costs for the Family Day event and activities on Feb. 17.

Thank you to everyone who was able to join us for our potato bar lunch and fellowship afterward.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Floradale growing project report

In 2019, the Floradale growing project for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank was in the field behind Crossroads Restaurant again. Because of the pile of ground due to construction, only about 20 acres was available, but the harvest at the beginning of December yielded 101 tonnes of high moisture corn. Thank you to Randy Martin of RJM Farms who purchased the corn so that it did not need to be dried. The cornstalks were also sold for bedding with a profit of \$600. Profit on the corn was about \$16,000 but donations from Floradale and the Crystalview congregation, the donation to CFGB was about \$30,000.

The plan for 2020 is to plant soybeans in the same field.



CFGB lunch fundraiser

After a fundraising lunch on Sunday, Feb. 2, Henry Reindeers the Ontario coordinator for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) spoke about a learning tour he took to Malawi in 2018. Henry has been involved in a growing project near Meaford for the past 22 years, but when he moved from being a dairy farmer to cash cropping, he took the opportunity to do this tour.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is the largest of the 15 church agencies that make up CFGB. Thirty denominations are working together to end global hunger.

In 1997 there were 900 million hungry people in the world. That number was reduced to 800 million over the following 20 years, but in the last three or four years, that number is climbing again. It is mostly war and conflict that drives people to leave their homes and move to refugee camps. Another reason for the increase in hunger is climate change. Henry said he was skeptical before going to Malawi, but the people there described the change in rain patterns that are affecting them.

Malawi has a much denser population than Canada and 50 percent of the people live below the poverty line of \$1.90 a day income. About 80 percent are farmers and the average landholding is two acres. Their main crop is corn (known as maize) and it is grown everywhere.

One of the projects Henry visited worked with poor households in 10 villages. He talked about Kolinda David, a woman supporting seven grandchildren and a paralyzed brother. Her corn crop was poor because it was planted late and missed the early rains. She had also been planting corn on the same soil for years and years. Her planting technique was to poke a hole in the soil and plant four or five seeds. Another women said that there was so much hunger that people were stealing from each other and women were resorting to sexual activities in exchange for food.

The CFGB tour also visited another development project that provides training for drought mitigation and conservation. One of the farmers they visited had been taught not to till the soil but to use mulch to prevent moisture loss. They were taught to put one or



Henry Reindeers inspects a cornfield in Malawi. (CFGB photo)

two seeds in each hole, six inches apart with rows 15 inches apart. They were also taught to make their own fertilizer. This farmer's 600 percent increase in crop yield enabled him to feed his family and sell some of his produce.

At another project in Malawi, Henry talked to a farmer who before 2010 was not able to grow enough to feed his family on ten acres. After learning about conservation techniques he took one acre and grew pigeon peas and ground nuts (peanuts). The third year he grew corn again and was amazed and convinced by the success of his corn crop.

The Canadian government matches donations for food assistance at a rate of 4:1 up to a maximum of \$25 million. This is up for re-negotiation next year. Sometimes there are specific programs that provide extra government money.

When CFGB was beginning in the 1980s, the Foodgrains Bank shipped Canadian grain. But the farmers were concerned about the high cost of shipping the grain and the amount of spoilage. Today, the grain grown in Canada in CFGB projects is sold and the money is used to buy products locally. This means the resources are used much more efficiently.

Hello from the Horns!

By Casey Horn

Bryan grew up in the small village of Inglewood in Caledon, with his parents, Ron and Heather, and his three older sisters Stephanie, Maureen and Marlowe. He attended the University of Waterloo for math and ended up staying in Waterloo permanently when he was hired by BlackBerry.

Bryan started there in 2008 by providing over-the-phone technical support to consumers and their BlackBerry smartphones. Bryan then switched to supporting BlackBerry's enterprise customers, acting as a technical liaison between Fortune 100, government, and military customers and several of BlackBerry's internal departments like technical support, sales, and software development.

Currently he manages the North American and Asia Pacific teams who act as technical liaisons with BlackBerry's most strategic customers. In his spare time, Bryan loves golfing and playing hockey, trying out new tech toys, reading and watching new movies and TV shows.

Casey grew up in small town Elmira, with her parents Rick and Sharon Cressman, and her two younger brothers Blaine and Liam. She was a member at Community Mennonite Fellowship before joining Floradale Mennonite Church in middle school.

After high school, she attended Wilfred Laurier University where she majored in history, before spending a year in North Bay attending Teachers' College at Nipissing University. Casey will return to working as a grade 2/3 French immersion teacher in Waterloo at Lester B Pearson PS



Bryan, Aubrey, Logan and Casey Horn

once she completes her maternity leave in early 2021. In her spare time, Casey enjoys playing piano and other musical activities, reading, baking, yoga, and visiting friends.

Bryan and Casey met in 2013 and married in June of 2016. They live on a quiet crescent in the small village of Heidelberg. They have two children, Aubrey who is 2 years old and Logan who is 6 months old.

Aubrey is a busy girl who is constantly on the go. She loves reading books, playing outside, singing, jumping, swimming and taking care of all her stuffies, toys and little brother.

Logan is a very happy baby boy who enjoys watching his big sister's antics and trying out new toys, books and food.

As a family, they enjoy travelling and have loved lazy beach vacations as well as busy tour-filled trips in places like Europe and closer to home in Canada and the U.S. They enjoy playing together both indoors and out,

watching kid-friendly movies and spending time with their family and many friends.

Each month, they spend time as a family visiting Bryan's parents who live in the Kawarthas along the Trent-Severn waterway. They have lots of fun boating, canoeing, and swimming in the summer and doing snow activities in the winter. There are aunts, uncles and many cousins to enjoy playing with while there. Closer to home, they spend lots of time visiting Casey's parents and siblings, sharing meals and having more fun with busy cousins.

Focus on Floradale is published five times each year.

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Welcome to Blaine, Leah and Norah

By Leah Cressman

Hi! We are Blaine, Leah, and Norah Cressman. We recently started attending Floradale but are not totally new faces to many of you. We were married at Floradale Mennonite in 2015 by Pastor Jim and attended The Gathering Church in Kitchener from 2014 until now.

Blaine is the middle child of Rick and Sharon Cressman and attended FMC during his youth. Blaine studied Kinesiology at the University of Waterloo and was actively involved at Conrad Grebel during his time at University.

Since 2015 he has worked at Blount Canada Ltd. in Guelph, as their Health and Safety Coordinator and is also the Ergonomist for Blount International (more widely known by their brand Oregon Tool). Blount is a chainsaw chain and bar manufacturer with over 700 employees... so now you know why he has to work so hard to keep everyone safe!

When Blaine is not working, or busy being a daddy to little Norah, you'll find him and Rick renovating the basement of our family home which we moved to this past August. Norah just was not satisfied living across town from both sets of grandparents, so she insisted on moving into Nana and Papa Cressman's backyard! Blaine also enjoys playing/watching/talking about anything/everything sports-related. He plays on one hockey team and recently took up rock climbing.

I (Leah) grew up in Listowel with my parents, Fred and Rosie Lichti, and two older siblings, Nathan and Katie. My dad was the pastor at Listowel Mennonite



Blaine, Leah and Norah Cressman

Church and my mom was an elementary school teacher. I studied Psychology and Religious Studies at the University of Waterloo and spent a year during my undergrad studying at the University of Sheffield in England and volunteering at a Christian camp in Sheffield after graduating. I was on staff at Fraser Lake Camp for six summers and am passionate about working with youth.

When my dad became pastor at Elmira Mennonite Church in 2010, and my parents moved to Elmira, both my sister and I asked to move back in with them, ending their five-year streak of being happy empty nesters! Thankfully they welcomed us back home, and soon after both Katie and I found our husbands in this promising little town!

I have worked at House of Friendship's Addiction Services since 2011. I am a registered psychotherapist and work as an addiction counsellor for the community counselling program. Outside of work I enjoy teaching fitness classes at the gym in Elmira where Blaine and I met, and leading a Bible study with my sister for high school youth girls. I also enjoy planning family trips, gardening, and setting resolutions every new year.

As for Norah, she is entering an exciting stage of life where she can run, jump, laugh, and

play with her newfound confidence and independence. She loves her dolls, stuffed animals, and exploring (though she will be very quiet and timid around groups at first!). In addition to being drawn to a church where the gospel is preached and faith lived out, we are excited to get involved in a church so close to home. We are looking forward to getting to know the church family better, so we invite you to run alongside us and chat as we try to keep up with our very busy toddler on Sunday mornings!



Special Anniversary

Congratulations to Lorne and Elaine Bowman who will celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary on Feb. 20, 2020.



Special Birthdays



Congratulations to Betty Snip who will celebrate her 90th birthday on March 27, 2020.

Congratulations to Phares Bauman who turned 85 on January 5, 2020.

Mahlon Martin celebrated his 85th birthday on January 31, 2020. Congratulations.

Congratulations to Lena Martin who celebrated her 85th birthday on February 7, 2020.

Birth:

Connor Riley Shoemaker was born January 3, 2020 to Jessica and Brock Shoemaker. He is a grandchild for Randy and Bonnie Martin and Steve and Jenn Shoemaker.



Floradale Mennonite Church slide show from 1969

On Dec. 27, 2019, fifty years after Floradale Mennonite Church produced a slide show telling the Christmas story, it was shown again at the church. About 35 people came for the finger-food potluck lunch and several others joined us to see the slides.

Barb Draper digitized the slides, adding a few so people could see the list of characters. The slides and audio were not of the highest quality, but the guests enjoyed figuring out who everyone was.

If anyone would like a copy of the slides, Barb is happy to share them.



In 1969, in Fred Mueller's stable, Cameron Bauman, Ron Metzger, Glen Martin and Don Knechtel play the role of shepherds. Myrtle and Darryl Chevalier are Mary and Joseph.



Melinda Martin and friends celebrated her 80th birthday at the Crossroads Restaurant on Jan. 14. Her birthday was Jan. 12, 2020. From left: (seated) Elvina Martin, Eleanor Metzger, Melinda Martin, Erma Wideman, Joan Martin, Laurene Martin. (standing) Anita Schroeder Kipfer, Florence Jantzi, Pauline Martin, Marie Uttley, Marj Metzger. (Photo by Elsie Springer)