

## Presbytery Reporter

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2012

News, photos, easy jazz, quotations , poetry from Peterborough Presbytery  
441 Rubidge St., Peterborough, Ont. K9H 4E4.

Submit articles in ARIAL 11 point to:-- [trinityminister@cogeco.ca](mailto:trinityminister@cogeco.ca)

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### A - Some Coming Events 2012

**FEB. 18** "Gay 90's theme" ---a gourmet dinner (beef tenderloin), St Andrew's United Church, 441 Rubidge Street, Peterborough. Time: 6:00 pm, per-person \$25 plus wine (\$5.00 glass). Surprise guest. Tickets call church office 705-745-2722

**FEB. 25-** Brock Missions's winter walk event Invites registrations by UCC teams of five to experience what the homeless face during a cold Canadian winter night. Website link? [icolestnightoftheyear.org](http://icolestnightoftheyear.org)  
Joyce Hodgson [jhodson2@cogeco.ca](mailto:jhodson2@cogeco.ca)

**Feb. 26, 7:00 p.m.** --The Life and Death of John the Baptist, written/directed by Peggy Lockwood, Mark Street United. John laid the stepping stones on Jesus' path, the long-awaited Messiah.

**MARCH 6** -- The UNITED CHURCH WOMEN (UCW) is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2012--the annual general meeting of Peterborough Presbyterial to be held at Norwood United Church (site of the 40th annual general meeting).

June Drain will be guest speaker, well-known UCW member and former Presbyterial and Conference UCW President.

Organizers promise "great music, wonderful food, amazing fellowship and a chance to meet and greet UCW members from all over the Presbyterial." All women from all congregations in Peterborough Presbytery are welcome to come and share the day. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. and the day ends at approximately 3:30 p.m.

### B. Presbytery News Retirees' Christmas at Westdale



Presbytery Retirees met for their annual Christmas dinner at **Westdale United Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>**, organized by Rev. Josephine Mewett. They heard a short production (***Christmas from the Trenches***) written for the event by Rob Ainsworth, read by Gillian Wilson. Show featured (left) Alyssa Bartholomew and Kate Suhr, known for their parts in city productions; Diana McLeod played organ; husband Alex sang *Silent Night*.

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### Joyce Purdon

On January 3, 2012, the life of Joyce Purdon was celebrated at St. Andrew's UC in Peterborough -- a long-time member of Peterborough Presbytery who died suddenly Dec. 30th. Bonnie Davidson for Presbytery referred to Joyce's abilities as chair of nominations to encourage service and enthusiasm for the work of the church. Ken and family are supporting one another with stories and music. Your prayers and shared memories are appreciated. The Reporter will have an article on her life in the next edition -- please send shared memories to the editor.

### Mayor Bennett helps raise \$4,000



#### Mayor Bennett (left) sings out!

Wes Lee and his picking and fiddling buddies entertained about 100 people with country and '60s favorites at Knox United on Nov. 20 in a fundraiser to replace Fairview United's roof lost earlier in a windstorm. They raised about \$4,000 for the small church.

Fairview's minister Rev. Bill Peacock and Peterborough's own Mayor Daryl Bennett were guest soloists. Not everyone knew the Mayor sang so well.

#### Helpful viewing for any aspiring public speaker?

In most churches, those who speak infrequently tend to talk as fast as a country auctioneer and race to the end rather than speak with understanding.

This link connects them to hear Romans 12 being read aloud by James Middleton, brother of Kate, at the wedding of Will and Kate.

**CTRL+ LEFT CLICK to follow link**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3XG8Pc85MTc>

As one who heard him speak said afterwards, "This was certainly the most articulate and beautifully delivered Lesson I have ever heard. The volume, pitch, pace and timbre were impeccable."

"He was not afraid to speak slowly and deliberately, allowing his voice to fill the Abbey and to reach the furthest corner. He was not a reader; he knew the passage by heart. In this way he could engage with the congregation with minimal reference to his text. This should be mandatory viewing for any aspiring speaker."

### News on Peterborough Homelessness Planning

In 2011, the City of Peterborough and the United Way partnered to complete a Community Plan on homelessness, the United Way of Peterborough being the organization administering the federal HSP program (Homelessness Partnering Strategy).

Dorothy Olver, Program Manager - Housing (Peterborough) explains that the HSP calls for renewing a community plan spelling out community priorities; (the partnership was established to complete federal requirements and assist with local planning).

More importantly, to determine future program delivery for the City and County of Peterborough for both the federal program as well as provincial program that the City administers.

Peterborough handles the Ontario CHPP homelessness prevention program (Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program). CHPP was due for review so it made sense that community planning occur to figure out what's in the best interest of the community.

With the Community Plan complete, United Way did a Request for Proposal for its HPS program last November.

The Canadian Mental Health Association (Peterborough) was the successful organization; from April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2014, CMHA Peterborough will continue to deliver street outreach services (two workers) in Peterborough plus a Trustee service using HPS and other CMHA funding.

Submissions received for the HPS program went to Social Services to consider

for the CHPP program; final outcome to be finalized in early 2012.

This community has made great strides in community partnerships and collaboration around homelessness over the last several years.

The HCC (Homelessness Coordinating Committee) consisting of key organizations in the community dealing with homelessness (i.e. *emergency shelters, United Way, police services, housing resources, social services, mental health and addiction services, etc*) meets monthly.

Through HCC, a capacity assessment has been completed, emergency response protocol established and signed, and a service resolution protocol (SRC) developed and signed by all organizations involved.

The SRC has provided significant service delivery for some hard-to-serve, hard-to-house individuals. Where vulnerable people are experiencing persistent homelessness and barriers exist to accessing existing services, SRC puts into motion a "case conferencing model" that pulls necessary service delivery agents around the table to develop individualized plans of action for supporting the individual.

Ontario is expecting all municipalities to develop a 10-year plan on housing and homelessness by January 2014.

Collaboration and service integration that has taken place over the last couple of years should help provide a good foundation for everyone to work from in implementing the 10- year plan, says Dorothy Olver.

### C. Presbytery Reporter Deadline

#### ISSUES 2012 (News deadlines)

Publication follows soon afterwards

<b>April May June</b>	<b>April 15</b>
<b>July/August</b>	<b><u>no issue</u></b>
<b>September/October</b>	<b>Sept. 4</b>
<b>November/December</b>	<b>Nov. 2</b>

### D. Recent travel pix--- from you!



*Yacht Club, Vancouver – Tom Muskett*

### E. Recently seen in the media...

#### **Christmas about culture not religion**

**Belleville Intelligencer, Dec. 16-** Christmas in Canada is now largely a cultural and not a religious celebration local councilor Jodie-Jenkins told Belleville City Council Monday night.

It's true that it's origins are clearly religious in nature but it has grown to encompass an enormous amount of cultural elements which have nothing to do with the religious origin of the holiday, he said.

Christmas trees, turkey dinners, mistletoe, Frosty the Snowman, Santa Claus and stockings hung over the fireplace, are not religious in origin but have developed as part of our Canadian culture, and as such represent no threat to the religious beliefs and practices of the many divergent cultures that make up Canada, he said.

"I can understand curtailing the practice of displaying religious symbols on public property over the holidays (I understand it, although I don't agree with it) but I believe that the move to curtail the display of cultural elements in public places is absurd and constitutes a further erosion of Canadian culture.

"The cultural celebration of Christmas is as much a part of being Canadian, as barbecues in the summer and hockey in the winter."

**P. 4** Since statistics would seem to indicate that less than five per cent of Canadians attend religious services, then it would seem that the majority of those celebrating Christmas do so as a Canadian cultural celebration and not a religious one, he commented.

**Resilience: Build skills to endure**  
*essay by staff, Mayo Clinic (edited)*

**Resilience means being able to adapt to life's misfortunes and setbacks. Test your resilience level and get tips to build your own resilience**

**WHEN** something goes wrong, do you tend to bounce back or fall apart?

When you have resilience, you harness inner strength that helps you rebound from a setback or challenge, such as a job loss, an illness, a disaster or the death of a loved one. If you lack resilience, you might dwell on problems, feel victimized, become overwhelmed or turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse.

**Adapting to adversity** Resilience won't make your problems go away — but resilience can give you the ability to see past them, find enjoyment in life and better handle stress. If you aren't as resilient as you'd like to be, you can develop skills to become more resilient. Resilience means adapting to adversity.

Resilience is the ability to roll with the punches. When stress, adversity or trauma strikes, you still experience anger, grief and pain, but you're able to keep functioning — both physically and psychologically. Resilience isn't about toughing it out, being stoic or going it alone. In fact, being able to reach out to others for support is a key component of being resilient. Resilience and mental health

Resilience offers protection from various mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety. Resilience can also help offset factors that increase the risk of mental health conditions, such as lack of social support, being bullied or previous trauma. If you have an existing mental health condition, being

resilient can improve your ability to cope.

**Tips to improve your resilience**

If you'd like to become more resilient, consider these tips:

**Get connected.** Building strong, positive relationships with loved ones and friends can provide you with needed support and acceptance in both good times and bad. Establish other important connections by doing volunteer work, getting involved in your community, or joining a faith or spiritual community. Visit your city's Newcomer Group.

**Make every day meaningful.** Do something that gives you a sense of accomplishment and purpose every day — a trip on a Mississippi steamboat ?

<http://www.greatamericansteamboatcompany.com/> Set goals to help you look toward the future with meaning.

**Learn from experience.** Think back on how you've coped with hardships in the past. Consider the skills and strategies that helped you through rough times. You might even write about past experiences in a journal to help you identify both positive and negative behavior patterns — and guide your behavior in the future.

**Remain hopeful.** You can't change what's happened in the past, but you can always look toward the future. Accepting and even anticipating change makes it easier to adapt and view new challenges with less anxiety.

**Take care of yourself.** Tend to your own needs and feelings, both physically and emotionally. Participate in activities and hobbies you enjoy. Include physical activity in your daily routine. Get plenty of sleep. Enjoy good music: such as Bills Evans "Very Early" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Fhd689Pwak> -- Eat a healthy diet. To restore an inner sense of peace or calm, practice stress management and relaxation techniques, such as yoga, meditation, guided imagery, deep breathing or prayer.

**Be proactive.** Don't ignore your problems or try to wish them away. Instead, figure out what needs to be done, make a plan and take action. Although it can take time to recover from a major setback, traumatic event or loss,

know that your situation can improve if you actively work at it. **SEE ALSO:---**  
<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/how-to-be-happy/MY01357>

## **F. BOOK REVIEWS (excerpts from)**

**'Divinity of Doubt': Prosecutor Bugliosi Takes on God, Christianity, Judaism, Islam** *Reviewed by David M. Kinchen*

For all those who believe that there is a inverse relationship between intelligence and religious belief, famed L.A. County prosecutor **Vincent Bugliosi** provides ammunition in his controversial book on religion "**Divinity of Doubt: The God Question**".

In a note to Chapter 9, he cites an article in Mensa Magazine (Mensa is the international organization for high-IQ people): "Of 43 studies carried out since 1927 on the relationship between religious belief and one's intelligence and/or educational level, all but four found an inverse connection. That is, the *higher one's intelligence* or educational level, the less one is likely to be religious."

Another study --cited by the lawyer who prosecuted the Manson Family and co-wrote the best-selling true crime book about it ("Helter Skelter")-- measures the religiosity of nations and their dysfunction. It turns out in a study *Evolutionary Psychology*, June 2009, that the U.S. is the most religious of 17 nations, and is also the most dysfunctional-- followed by Australia, with New Zealand and Spain tied for third.

Bugliosi: "This study clearly shows a correlation between religiosity and the dysfunction of a nation. And the lowest rates of dysfunction are found among the most irreligious of countries. I know that Benjamin Disraeli said there were three types of lies -- lies, damned lies, and statistics -- but I don't believe that. Statistics don't lie, although the interpretation put on them may. Moreover, with the terrible history we all know that ardent religiosity has given rise to, we really shouldn't be too surprised by the results of the study."

Bugliosi really lays into Catholicism in Chapter 12 "The Catholic Church: Great, Grand, and Silly" (all of his chapter titles are laced with humor, a quality I've largely found lacking in the most religious of people.) In Chapter 18, "Hey, Look at Us, We're Just as Silly as They Are."

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Bugliosi examines Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism and finds they're just as contradictory and, yes --silly as in fairy tales for adults-- because they're so far-fetched that kids wouldn't accept them. Vince Bugliosi may be agnostic when it comes to the existence of God, but he sounds atheist when it comes down to accepting the religious rules of the game.

Early in the book Bugliosi takes on atheism and the current Big Three writers on atheism ( Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and Sam Harris). Chapter 4 is worth a close reading; my initial impression based on the first reading is that the three "prolocutors" of atheism examined by Bugliosi are not as harmful as true believers or theists. He takes apart their arguments, but my impression is that Bugliosi doesn't consider atheists as harmful as theists-- especially the more fanatic of theists, including Crusading Roman Catholics or convert to Islam or die- by -the sword types. I doubt that Bugliosi will convert either true believers or atheists to his agnosticism, but "Divinity of Doubt" is worth reading by those of every persuasion. For agnostics, it will provide arguing points and reinforce their view that their position is the best available. I doubt that many fundamentalists -- the people who really need a dose of reality -- will read this book, but I'm guessing that quite a few atheists will give it a whirl.

*Vincent Bugliosi received his law degree in 1964, he successfully prosecuted 105 out of 106 felony jury trials, including 21 murder convictions without a single loss. His most famous trial, the Charles Manson case, became the basis of his classic, Helter Skelter, the biggest selling true-crime book in publishing history.*

**"Divinity of Doubt"**

[www.divinityofdoubt.com](http://www.divinityofdoubt.com).

## **G. Some Closing Quotations**

"As for all our planning, the journey is going to surprise us, sometimes with joy, sometimes with sorrow, sometimes with calm, sometimes with distress. This is a certainty." —**Paul Myers**, "Rooster in the Cathedral"

**Christopher Hitchens'** reply when someone argued for existence of an all-seeing God. "It would be like living in North Korea," he said.

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### H. – Music Department (easy listening)

*I Love Paris- by Fitzgerald*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zB4qvSWrtz0>

*The Lovers' Waltz – by Jay Ungar*

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jRyMH\\_4PO3Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jRyMH_4PO3Y)

*Who will comfort me?– Melodie Gardot*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SntJNLeHNS0&feature=related>

## I. LATE NEWS IN:



### "In the Spirit" choir available

Lift hearts and minds? One special choir reportedly did so at a recent concert in Marmora's Trinity United Church.

Bev Templar, director of "In The Spirit" Gospel choir said, announcing "*May your hearts and minds be lifted*" as the 50-member choir launched into harmonized song.

Six years ago, 20 choristers met to sing gospel music and now the choir has doubled, to include members from 12 Peterborough churches.

The choir has sung for celebrations, fundraisers and the joy of singing: at Showplace Peterborough, St. James United, Grace United, St. Alphonsus Church, Gilmour Baptist Church, Mount St. Joseph, Fairhaven Retirement Home, Springdale Nursing Home, Free Methodist Church, St. Andrews United

Church Bancroft. Upcoming concerts at Keene United and Christ Lutheran Church lie ahead

For more information on "In The Spirit's" schedule, call [Bev Templar – 705-743-7521](tel:705-743-7521),; [Carol Allen – 705-745-2554](tel:705-745-2554), or [Sue Franklin - 705-745-3144](tel:705-745-3144).

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### One man and his views

#### Christopher Hitchens: one man's service in the war against delusion

THE GUARDIAN, Dec.18, 2011--Last October, Christopher Hitchens received the Atheist Alliance of America's Richard Dawkins award. This is an *edited version* of his acceptance speech.

"Well, I'm overwhelmed ladies and gentlemen, and I did promise Richard [Dawkins, who presented his eponymous award] that if my voice didn't go to rags, I would try and speak to you a bit if that's all right .

A few years ago a group of us met in my house. I'm afraid we got called the *Four Horsemen*. I have to plead partly guilty of that myself: I thought I'd better come up with something before anyone else did and it was supposed to be the Four Horsemen of the Counter-Apocalypse. But there it is... we got saddled with it. Of course, long may this illusion flourish, it's promoted me to parity with Professors Dawkins and Daniel Dennett and Sam Harris – and I have set my whole life, I'd like to think, against *the spread of delusion*. It is nice to be associated in that company.

How else were we going to reply to the rising menace of Islamic jihad? How were we going to have, for example, to deal with the emergence of probably the most reactionary papacy since the mid-19th century? A very reactionary eastern Orthodox church if it comes to that, as well the eastern Catholic forces now ranged behind the dark and sinister figure of Vladimir Putin? Then one mustn't exempt, of course, the millennial settlers in Palestine who believe that by bringing in as many fanatics of Jewish origin as they can, and forcing out as many Palestinian Arabs as they can, they may bring on the Messiah and indeed the apocalypse—

and look forward to the destruction of our species with relish.

At this present moment, I have to say that I feel very envious of someone who is young and active and starting out in this argument. Just think of the extraordinary things that are happening to us.

Go for example to the Smithsonian museum, to the new hall of human origins which shows among other things, the branches along which three or maybe four, if you count Indonesia, humanoid (shall we say, anthropoid)– species died out within measurable distance of 75,000 years or so. Possibly destroyed by us, maybe not. I know they decorated their graves, we think they probably had language ability, we don't know if they had souls. I'm sorry I can't help you there. We probably assumed that they would have alluded to having some kind of god.

But no [religion](#) has yet pronounced on these cousins and brothers and sisters of ours because they don't fit, there is no way of fitting them into the ridiculous story that makes this tape wind round and round again and lead us to the grand solipsist conclusion that this whole thing is designed with us in mind. But what a wonderful thing to be starting out in this tremendous new field of endeavour. How fabulous it would be if you had a gift for physics to get a job as an intern with Lawrence Krauss, for example, who is just beginning to unravel the idea of the alternative parallel universe.

I suppose I should close now because I've said all I wanted to say for myself... In the meantime we have the same job we always had, to say, as thinking people and as humans, that there are no final solutions, there is no absolute truth, there is no supreme leader, there is no totalitarian solution that says that if you will just give up your freedom of inquiry, if you would just give up, if you will simply abandon your critical faculties, a world of idiotic bliss can be yours.

We have to begin by repudiating all such claims – grand rabbis, chief ayatollahs, infallible popes, the peddlers of mutant quasi-political worship, the dear leader, great leader, we have no need of any of this. And looking at them and their record, I realize it is

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they who are the grand imposters, and my own imposture this evening was mild by comparison..”

***The Hour (2007): Hitchens explains to CBC's Jian Ghomeshi why he believes religion is detrimental to civilization and discusses his book God Is Not Great..***

One quote from that interview follows:---→

---→ “I do know some non-believers who wish a deity existed, who think it would be nice if there was a celestial dictatorship. I can't make myself wish there was one; I think it would be the absolute definition of unfreedom if there was an unchanging, undying, all-supervising all-knowing father who kept you under constant surveillance before you were born, all your life and after you were dead.”. The full interview follows:--

<http://www.cbc.ca/books/2011/12/the-late-christopher-hitchens-on-cbc.html>

***....Another man and HIS views***  
**Cameron calls for return to Christian values as King James Bible turns 400**

**THE GUARDIAN, Dec. 16** – Prime Minister David Cameron has declared that "Britain is a Christian country and we should not be afraid to say so" in a speech to mark the 400th anniversary of the King James Bible.

Cameron told Church of England clergy gathered in Oxford that a return to Christian values could counter the country's "moral collapse" and blamed a "passive tolerance" of immoral behaviour for this summer's riots, Islamic extremism, City excess and Westminster scandals.

His words will delight traditionalists in his party and Christian groups that claim believers are increasingly marginalised Cameron said there were three reasons why the King James Bible was as relevant today as any point in its history.

**"First**, the King James Bible has bequeathed a body of language that permeates every aspect of our culture and heritage. **Second**, just as our language and culture is steeped in the Bible, so too is our politics. **Third**, we are a Christian country. -

**P.8** And we should not be afraid to say so. Let me be clear: I am not in any way saying that to have another faith – or no faith – is somehow wrong.

"I know and fully respect that many people in this country do not have a religion. And I am also incredibly proud that Britain is home to many different faith communities, who do so much to make our country stronger. But what I am saying is that the Bible has helped to give Britain a set of values and morals which make Britain what it is today.



**Ancient copies of the King James Bible are carried during a procession at Westminster Abbey to mark its 400<sup>th</sup> year.**

Mr. Cameron added that while faith was neither a "necessary nor sufficient condition for morality" it could be a "helpful prod in the right direction". "Whether you look at the riots last summer, the financial crash and the expenses scandal, or the ongoing terrorist threat from Islamist extremists around the world, one thing is clear: moral neutrality or passive tolerance just isn't going to cut it anymore." He said people were unwilling to distinguish right from wrong," he said. The absence of any real accountability, or moral code, allowed some bankers and politicians to behave with scant regard for the rest of society. And when it comes to fighting violent extremism, the almost fearful passive tolerance of religious extremism that has allowed segregated communities to behave in ways that run completely counter to our values has not contained that extremism but allowed it to grow and prosper."

As with previous declarations of his belief – once likening it to the patchy reception of a radio station – he told his audience he was a "committed but vaguely practising Church of England Christian" who, while he would stand

up for the values and principles" of his faith, was "full of doubts and constantly grappling with difficult questions when it comes to some of the big theological issues".

Last month the government announced it was sending a copy of the King James Bible, complete with a foreword from education minister Michael Gove, to every school in the country.

## **St. Andrew's red socks deliver**

*by Lyn Miller, Peterborough*

Al Moore remembers from his childhood that one Christmas, his church made **red felt socks** and filled them with gifts for those less fortunate. Forty years ago, Al brought that idea to his new church - ---- St Andrew's United in Peterborough.

He and his wife Leona approached the Columba Couples Club with the project idea, the socks were made made, filled and donated to the Salvation Huge thanks to Jeanette and Terry Northrop, Norma and Jack Evans and Al and Leona Moore. These St Andrew's folk are the remaining members of that once large and active St Andrew's Columba Club (named for St. Columba, a Gaelic missionary monk).

Although the Columba club has long since folded, these three couples continue to spearhead the Christmas Socks project each year. This includes a work bee in November to make the red socks, decorate, label them and distribute the empty socks among the people of the congregation. St. Andrew's people of all ages fill the socks with clothing, toys and other essentials and treats. Approximately 100 brimming socks for men, women, teens and children accumulate each December under the sanctuary Christmas tree. The **red socks** go to the city Social Services Department whose staff deliver them to needy people in Peterborough's shelters, just in time for Christmas.

Thanks so much Terry, Jeanette, Al, Leona, Norma and Jack (and also to the St Andrew's United Church Women who provide the materials to make the socks) for helping all of us at St. Andrew's make Christmas a little happier for others in our community. (*editor apologizes for small type in this article - space was limited*)

<http://www.mykawartha.com/opinion/letter/s/article/1270967--st-andrew-s-red-s>

**END OF EDITION**