

**THE LINK** ATLANTIC NCF NEWSLETTER

29 Bedell Ave.

Saint John, NB, E2K 2C1

September 2011

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. This summer, I have been able to spend time with a number of my grandchildren and great grandchildren – most of them are very young and it has been a wonderful privilege to be with them, play again as a little child and see things through the wondrous eyes of little ones. It was such a delight to be with them. Now, I consider how God is delighted when we come to spend time with Him. He wants us to come daily to Him and is always ready to experience our lives with us – to share in all we do and to have us tell Him of our days and our thoughts. What an amazing privilege to have a God who cares and delights in our days. How often we miss out on the wonderful opportunities we have to spend time with Him. Let us resolve to experience more of these joyous times.

Betty Hitchcock

Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art;  
I am finding out the greatness of Thy loving heart.  
Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee, and Thy beauty fills my soul,  
For by thy transforming power, Thou hast made me whole.

O, how great Thy loving kindness, Vaster, broader than the sea!  
O, how marvellous Thy goodness, Lavished all on me!  
Yes, I rest in Thee, Beloved, Know what wealth of grace is Thine,  
Know Thy certainty of promise, and have made it mine.

## Matthew 14: 22-33

22. And straightway Jesus constrained His disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid.

28. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying Lord, save me.

31. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and he said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32. And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

This well known passage speaks about Peter walking on the water to Jesus.

What was Jesus doing just prior to this incident? Vs 23

Is there a lesson here for us in the example of Jesus?

What was happening to the ship? Vs 24

Storms can come up quickly. Have you ever been in the midst of a storm? – on the water or elsewhere? Think about how you felt. Relate as many words as you can that describe the feelings of being in the midst of a violent storm.

What part did Jesus play in this incident? Vs 25, 27. Jesus comes in the storms that we face as well.

What did Jesus say? Vs 27. What do these words mean to us in the storms of life?

Describe the reactions of Peter – what did he say and do? Vs 28, 29

When did Peter run into trouble in this story? Vs 30, 31 Why did he run into trouble? Does this sometimes happen to us?

What was the outcome? Vs 31, 32. 33.

Some storms in our life are internal [instead of the external storm in this story]. Can you think of some internal storms that can happen in life? What about troubled relationships, unforgiveness, dealing with the death of a loved one, financial concerns, facing the loss of a job, dealing with abuse? How does Jesus reach out to us in these internal storms? When do we get into trouble – why? What should we do?

A Reflection: *The Word*, Presence, Inadequate Words  
Hope Graham

*Exhilarating.... Excruciating.... Words....* Words that powerfully move. Nothing visual. Nothing audible. As Eugene Peterson says, "To experience presence is to enter that far bigger world of reality"<sup>i</sup>.

Reading Psalm 119 was an "experience of Presence" for me as I read it in my three-room duplex in Kamakwie last year. The time was 0430 h; the temperature was 28<sup>o</sup> C and I was reading by a single candle in an otherwise pitch black room in a pitch black world outside. This is the most comfortable temperature of the day.

*"You are blessed when you stay on course,*

*Walking steadily on the road revealed by God.... (v.1)*

God help me to be "steady" and on the road—not on a side track or sitting down.

*That's right—don't go off on your own;*

*You walk straight along the road he set....*

*Oh that my steps might be steady,*

*Keeping the course you set;*

*Then I'd never have any regrets....*

*I'm single-minded in pursuit of you....*

*I delight far more in what you tell me about living*

*Than in gathering a pile of riches*

*I ponder every morsel of wisdom from you,*

*I attentively watch how you've done it*

*I relish every thing you've told me of life,*

*I won't forget a word of it. (vv. 3-16)*

My heart is overflowing ... and so are my eyes. How privileged I am to know God, His Love, and to have communication with Him—no words on my part, at least, no words that I have to form into sense. These words, from this psalm, speak profoundly to my heart.

All of psalm 119 is about The Word. The Word, in many translations of the Psalm, is identified in eight terms: *law, testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, ordinances, word, judgements*. Psalm 119 is poetry—originally, Hebrew poetry—at its finest! The 22 stanzas are arranged like an A-B-C of the Hebrew alphabet. A Work of Art. Creativity: a gift of God, as humans are made in his image.

As I imagine in Psalm 119 being sung, I hear faint echoes of Scripture Songs using the King James translation of Psalm 19:7-10:

*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul;*

*The testimony of the LORD is sure making wise the simple.*

*The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart:*

*The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.*

*The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever:  
The judgements of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.  
More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold:  
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*

Wow! Look at all the terms for God's Word, again, in Psalm 19. Now back to Psalm 119:

*Train me well in your deep wisdom (v. 29)*

Wisdom surpasses data, information, and even knowledge, we learn. According to health informatics gurus, wisdom is "the appropriate use of knowledge to solve human problems"<sup>iii</sup> I have so much to learn.

*God, teach me lessons for living  
So I can stay the course  
Give me insight so I can do what you tell me—  
My whole live one long obedient response. (vv. 33-34)*

Oh God, I don't know exactly what that means but I want to trust you with all.

*What you say goes, God,  
And stays, as permanent as the heavens  
Your truth never goes out of fashion,  
It's as up-to-date as the earth when the sun comes up....(v. 89)  
Every word you give me is a miracle word—  
How can I help but obey?  
Break **open your words**, let the light shine out,  
Let ordinary people see the meaning. (vv. 129-130)*

That's for ME!—the "ordinary person."

*Provide me with the insight that comes only from your Word. (v. 169)*

*I love it when you show yourself!  
Invigorate my soul so I can praise you well  
Use your decrees to put iron in my soul.  
And should I wonder off like a lost sheep—seek me!  
I'll recognize the sound of your voice. (vv. 174-6)*

I pray that I may remain within earshot.

The above reflection was submitted by Hope Graham, a Nova Scotia nurse, working as a faculty member at the School of Nursing at St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish. Hope is also a member of the Atlantic NCF Committee.

## Prayer

This is the time of year that students are returning to school. Please pray for those that are entering nursing studies. Pray that they might adjust easily and find joy in their chosen career. Pray that Christian students may find others for fellowship.

Pray for nurses working in nursing schools, hospitals, nursing homes, the community and other areas of employment. Pray that they might bring the love of God to those they serve and might find joy in their service. Pray for those nurses working overseas and away from home and loved ones.

Pray for retired nurses and those just entering retirement – that they might find ways to reach out to others in their communities and feel fulfilled in what they are doing now.

Pray for those working on the national level to institute the new national NCF format. Pray for wisdom as they work and for ease of transition to the new structure. Pray for financial support for this work.

Thanksgiving will soon be here and we all need to consider our lives and give thanks for our many blessings. Actually, we should do this daily. We are so blessed and don't always take time to stop and give God thanks for what He has done and is doing in our lives. Let's make this a habit. I believe that if we begin the days with God and ask Him to show us areas that we should be thankful for during the day, we will see the difference in a very positive way.

Jesus has told us that God hears and answers prayer. Let us come before His throne eagerly and with great confidence. Let us bring praise, thanks, requests, all of our concerns – He will be there waiting for us. And let us listen to Him – let us quiet our hearts and centre our minds in Him. He will do great things. Why not spend some time just feeling His presence and resting in those strong and secure arms? There is no better way to begin and end our day than in the presence of our loving God.

### Submissions for The Link

You are invited to submit articles, letters, poems, etc. to be included in future issues of the Link. Please send submissions to Betty Hitchcock, 29 Bedell Ave. Saint John, NB, E2K 2C1 or email to [betty.hitchcock@rogers.com](mailto:betty.hitchcock@rogers.com)

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<sup>i</sup>Peterson, E. (2002). *The Message* [Introduction to the book of Micah].

<sup>ii</sup>Scripture taken from *The Message*

<sup>iii</sup>Health Informatics Training System, a Web based certificate course offered by Canada's Health Informatics Association (COACH) . Homepage <http://coachorg.com/>