**The Fish Net**

**www.bostonpresbyterianchurch.ca**

**Rev. Shawn Croll 905-875-2804 / scroll@sympatico.ca**

**Fall 2019**

**Dear Friends,**

**The manse in Colborne where Susan and I lived for seven years was originally built as a retirement house on the property of an apple farmer. Years later when the house was severed from the larger property, seven apple trees came with the property. The trees had not been looked after for years and it was a job bringing them back; pruning, spraying and so on. It was hard work and I soon learned that I was certainly not cut out to be an apple farmer! Having said that though, there was tremendous satisfaction in looking after those trees and being able to just walk out the door and pick a fresh apple right off the tree. The work and effort were certainly worthwhile and it recently occurred to me that there is a parable between this and our spiritual lives.**

**In his letter to the Galatians, St. Paul makes reference to what he calls “The fruits of the Spirit”. They are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. These are the nine qualities that ought to characterize or distinguish our lives as the disciples of Christ. What we have to realize though is that while these qualities are, in varying degrees, present in everyone they do not just spring forth in all their goodness and fullness. Just as an apple tree must be cared for if it is to bear good apples, so our spiritual lives must be nurtured if they are to produce the fruits of the Spirit. There are many ways of nurturing the fruits of the Spirit including regular worship, prayer and scripture reading. Sometimes we may dismiss these activities as unimportant or a waste of time but nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed the importance of these activities was brought home to me by this little story.**

**Years ago a person wrote a letter to an editor questioning whether ministers should really spend so much time working on their sermons. Few sermons are memorable and so he asked if the time ought to be spent more usefully. His letter set off quite a discussion but one person’s response caught my attention. That writer calculated how many meals his wife had prepared over the years. Few of them really stood out in his mind but even so, as he observed, without them he would have starved to death long ago.**

**There is a parallel between this and our spiritual lives. Without such as regular worship, prayer and scripture reading our spiritual fruits wither away but if we nourish them? The impact can be tremendous in our lives and in the lives of others.**

**Wishing you a most fruitful Thanksgiving!**

***Calendar of Events***

**The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper will be celebrated on**

**Sunday, October 6th. In response to the disaster in the**

**Bahamas, a special appeal is being held for Presbyterian**

**World Service and Development. Those who wish to support**

**this appeal are asked to do so by October 6th and to enclose**

**your donation in your regular offering envelope, marking**

**“PWS&D – Bahamas” on the line for “other”.**

**Thanksgiving Sunday falls on October 13th this year. As is**

**customary we will be supporting the local Food Bank this**

**Sunday. If you wish, you may either make a financial**

**contribution in your regular offering envelope writing “Food**

**Bank” on the line for “other”, or donate non-perishable food**

**items.**

**The Ladies Fellowship Group will hold their annual Bazaar on**

**Saturday, November 2nd. Please mark your calendar and plan**

**to come out and support the bazaar as this is the group’s**

**largest fundraiser of the year and many worthwhile charities**

**within our local community and around the world benefit**

**from the funds the group raises during the year.**

**The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper will be celebrated on**

**Sunday, December 1st which is also the First Sunday in**

**Advent. A reminder that communion is available for shut-ins;**

**if you would like to receive communion at home, please let**

**Shawn or one of the elders know.**

**The annual Christmas Pageant, “On the Way to Bethlehem”,**

**will be presented by the Milton Area Christian Churches**

**Working Together at Country Heritage Park from Friday,**

**November 29th to Sunday, December 1st from 6:30 to 8:30**

**each evening. Admission is $5 for those 13 years of age and**

**older, $2 for children 6 to 12 years old, and is free for**

**children 5 and under.**

***Stewardship***

**So far this year we have raised $6139 of the $8000 we promised to give in 2019 to Presbyterians Sharing. At this time last year we had raised $4472.**

***Food for Thought***

**The Carpenter**

**An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house-building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife enjoying his extended family. He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire. They could get by.**

**The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favour. The carpenter said yes, but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career.**

**When the carpenter finished his work the employer came to inspect the house. He handed the front-door key to the carpenter. “This is your house,” he said, “my gift to you.” The carpenter was shocked! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently.**

**So it is with us. We build our lives a day at a time, often putting less than our best into the building. Then with shock we realize we have to live in the house we have built. If we could do it over, we’d do it much differently. But we cannot go back. You are the carpenter. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. “Life is a do-it-yourself project,” someone has said. Your attitudes and the choices you make today, build the “house” you live in tomorrow.**

**Build wisely!**

***Dear Lord,***

***So far today, God, I’ve done all right.***

***I haven’t gossiped, haven’t lost my temper, haven’t been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or over-indulgent.***

***I am thankful for that,***

***But in a few minutes, God, I’m going to get out of bed,***

***And from then on, I’m probably going to need a lot more help!***

***Amen***