



# Words from Wilmot

Editor's note: The theme of this issue of *Words from Wilmot* is "Christian Stewardship"—care for all that we have and all that we are. We invited Nancy Bauer to write the lead article about Bruce Atkinson's stewardship of his talent in music.

## Faithful Stewardship: Bruce Atkinson

A wise man wrote, "Nothing is more noble, nothing more venerable than fidelity. Faithfulness and truth are the most sacred excellences and endowments of the human mind."

In 1942, when he was ten years old, Bruce Atkinson joined the Wilmot junior choir. He remembers a black gown with a white surplice. In 1946 he joined the senior choir. A stewardship of 63 years is a remarkable achievement.

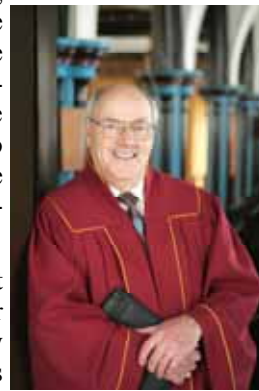
Bruce was surrounded by choir singers: when he joined the senior choir, his brothers Hubert and Ted were already there. He worked at Harvey's photography studio where

Bruce has always loved to sing. "When Hubert came back from overseas after the war, he would start singing while we were traveling in the car. I'd harmonize. It came naturally to me. I didn't have to read the music."

Bruce's first choir director was Dorothy Box, who was also the organist on the Hammond organ. His next director was Mr. Hewitt, then came Tom Morrison, Tim Cooper, and now Stephanie Burgoyne. "I've learned a lot from all of them," he says. "I'm still learning!"

Bruce also sang in a quartet with John Richards, his brother Ted, and Harry Pridham. They would go to quartet festivals. "I'd like to forget some of those." One time in Houlton, Maine, they were so embarrassed by their poor performance that they left their dressing room by the window rather than the door.

Until he retired, Bruce had worked since he was 15 and a half years old at Harvey's Studio, at first part-time while he was in



high school, and then full-time after he graduated. He specialized in framing and in developing prints and film for both amateurs and professionals. The two large collages in the W i l m o t Church parlour are his work.

There is a third string to Bruce's bow, in addition to the music and the photography: his love of airplanes. In 1933, General Italo Balbo, the head of the Italian Air Force, flew his armada of 24 twin-engine flying boats to the exposition in Chicago.

Because the hydro-planes couldn't land on the ground, they planned their itinerary along waterways. They landed in Shediac Bay to refuel and then started up the St. John River on the way to the St. Lawrence.

Three-year-old Bruce was standing outside on the river bank and saw the 24 huge planes flying up the river, followed by several chase planes carrying newspaper reporters. He

(Please see Faithful on page 2)

**"There is a third string to Bruce's bow, in addition to the music and the photography: his love of airplanes."**

his boss was Frank Pridham, a bass in the choir and an avid promoter of church music.

Over the years, in addition to his two brothers, several other Atkinsons have been mainstays in the choir: two of his sisters-in-law, Marjorie Pridham Atkinson and Phyllis Atkinson, as well as two nephews and a niece-in-law.

**A number of Scholarships will be available for people from Wilmot who would like to attend the Dominic Crossan Seminar in April but who cannot afford the cost. Please speak to Marlene, Isabel or Chris if you would like to apply.**

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*Words from  
Wilmot*  
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### Words from Wilmot

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and do not necessarily  
represent the viewpoint of the  
congregation.

### (Faithful Cont'd from page 1)

had never seen an airplane or even knew the word. The impression this spectacle made on the little boy was immense.

When war broke out in 1939, bright yellow training planes were everywhere. Although there were no bases in Fredericton, there were in Chatham, Saint John, Pennfield, Blissville. The Atkinsons lived in a duplex next door to the Scotts. Jack Scott joined the Air Force, became a pilot, crashed and was killed. His death greatly affected young Bruce, who attended the military funeral.

In 1941, an epidemic of polio hit Fredericton. Bruce went to live for the summer with relatives in Chatham. There he could watch the yellow training planes, Fleet Finches, doing loops, see the pilots in their open cockpits.

Hubert joined the Air Force and was sent overseas as a photographer. When he returned, he had many photos

of planes, including wrecks on the battlefields. Bruce has those now.

Not surprisingly, Bruce decided he wanted to learn to fly, and after several false starts, he succeeded in being the first student to graduate from the Fredericton Flying Club, receiving his private pilot's license. He was the president of the club which leased land at the airport, bought two new airplanes from Florida, and hired a good instructor.

Bruce has done aerial photography, in military planes for Base Gagetown, for the Telegraph Journal and for TV news. His subjects have been varied, including the major floods. He is president of the Airplane Historical Society, and according to his wife Carolyn because of this office, their house has become an airplane museum.

Bruce and Carolyn have 2 married sons, Peter and Jamie, and 3 grandchildren.

■ Nancy Bauer

## Stewardship for the Young and the Young at Heart



Winnie Currie, one of Wilmot's longest serving members, elicits a smile from three-month-old Will Strickey. Will's grandmother,

since I was a little girl. I love to visit her," Susan explained.

Susan put the baby on Winnie's lap. "He just settled down in her arms and laughed and talked to her. They really connected."

Will is being taught early to visit as an Elder; he is also being taught the love and care our church members have for the little children of our church family.

■ Nancy Bauer

Susan MacLeod, recently brought him to visit Winnie, who is on Susan's Elder's list and who was a friend of her mother's. "I've known Winnie

## Are you on PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance)?

### Facts about PAR at Wilmot United Church

- In 2001 there were 20 PAR subscribers and in 2004 there were 31 PAR subscribers
- Currently PAR donations represent 20% of total \$\$ to Local, M&S and Capital
- Average givings from PAR are double the average givings of non-PAR families
- Approximately 5 PAR givers raise their contributions annually

If you have automatic payments going from your bank account to pay for such items as insurance, cable TV, taxes, fuel or mortgage, then you understand the PAR principle. It means regular contributions throughout the year (Pre-Authorized Remittance).

Your account will be debited on or about the 20th of the month and your congrega-

tion's account is credited with the amount payable from all members who participate. There is a small administrative fee for each entry and each cheque processed.

How to get started:

1. Decide the amount of your monthly offering.
2. Fill in the Authorization Card and attach a sample cheque from your account marked "SAMPLE" or "VOID".
3. Give both to Marlene at the Church Office—it is just that simple.

Here are a few words from a subscriber to PAR, Lynn Chaplin: "I have been using PAR for having my monthly givings to Wilmot taken out automatically for years now because for me it is convenient; but more importantly it means consistency. I can't always be in church on Sun-

day mornings, and in the summer I am one of the many who take time at a cottage; so I want to make sure that my offering is received. It is too easy to miss a week or two of church and then not put envelopes in the offering plate for the missed Sundays.

"Offerings should not and cannot be a 'pay as you go' commitment; it is not like going to the movies!

"The church is operating 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year and we have commitments and expenses to meet—so consistency of givings is vital.

"I would encourage everyone to be consistent in their givings—and if you wish to have your donations to the church taken out of your account automatically, like many of your other expenses likely are, get a form from the

(Please see PAR on page 8)



*"Where there is great love there are always miracles."*

— Willa Cather

Many, many thanks for the love shown to me and my family these past two months. Because of your generous gifts of support—cards, visits, phone calls, flowers, home-cooked meals, magazines and murder mysteries—I was able to get through a very difficult time.

Sincerely, Kelly D. Higgins



### UCW NEWS

#### April 23<sup>rd</sup> — Spring Rummage Sale

Donations of good used clothing, bedding, toys, books, and kitchenware can be dropped off at the church anytime after April 11<sup>th</sup>. Leave any donations on the stage in the gymnasium. This area is shared by many groups; therefore, we would appreciate your cooperation in keeping this area organized. It is due to the donations of the congregation that these sales are such a success!

#### April 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> — John Dominic Crossan Seminar

We will be looking to the congregation for donations of Muffins and Cookies for this event. The UCW will be organizing the kitchen for breaks and lunch so will be recruiting volunteers to do shifts in the kitchen.

#### May 7<sup>th</sup> — Turkey Salad Take-Out Plate

Tickets will be available at a cost of \$7.00 during Coffee and Conversation and at the church office. More details later.

Christian Stewardship



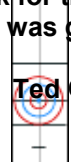
Don't forget to give Marlene your subscription payment of \$14. for The United Church Observer, our church's National Magazine!

Visit their Web Site at [www.ucobserver.org](http://www.ucobserver.org)



On Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 24 people of all ages went curling at the Fredericton Golf and Curling Club, under the able leadership of Walter Patterson. For quite a few of us this was "slipping and sliding" on the ice of a curling rink for the first time. It was great fun!

■ Ted Colson



## Mountain Top Moments . . .

This 2005 Lenten Guide is a compilation of stories shared by members of the Wilmot community, who shared “mountain-top experiences” in their lives. It was designed 1) as a devotional guide; 2) as a scripture-reading guide, so that the entire Gospel of Matthew may be read during the Lenten Season this year; and 3) as an opportunity for people to support the mission and ministry of Wilmot United Church by placing coins on the back page during Lent.

If you have used this Lenten Guide as an opportunity to support the church financially, you are invited to bring the back cover with whatever coins you choose to place on it on Easter Sunday—or any Sunday thereafter.

We hope you found the exercise a worthy way in which to commemorate the Lenten Season this year.

The Information Team

## Book Review: Thanks Giving

GROWING GENEROSITY AMONG GOD’S PEOPLE  
—by Christopher Levan

REMEMBER YOU FIRST READ ABOUT IT HERE!!

At Wilmot, we are blessed to have ministry personnel with such diverse gifts—they are a talented, dedicated and faith-driven team. Team member Chris Levan’s newest book, to be published in April, 2005 by the United Church Publishing House, is a winner in

“Wilmot people who take the time to read the book carefully will discover that our famous ‘boxed-in pews’ are immortalized in this book...”

its fresh approach to meeting the monetary needs of our vision as a People of God.

“This is a book about money and how to invite people to give it... No apologies, no shame.” That’s the opening line in the introduction. This is the pistol-shot start of a roller coaster ride through ten chapters of fresh insights and hard truths about meeting church budgets.

The format is not a manual for running a stewardship campaign as some might presume, but a deeply theological book leading to logical conclusions about our material resources. To quote Chris: “All we have belongs to God, and to use our resources as our personal solace and salvation is a perversion of the original intent of the Giver.”

Wilmot people who take the time to read the book carefully will discover that our famous “boxed-in pews” are immortal-

ized in this book which is sure to have wide distribution.

Quotable one-liners will jump out at you: “*Gambling is ‘synthetic hope’*”; “(Some think that) *It’s like sex; when fundraising appears pre-arranged and well-planned it seems to lose the joyful spontaneity...*”; “*We get ‘Sunday School offerings’ for a Sunday School faith.*”

And catchy coined phrases (or “*Chrisisms*”): “*ethical agency*”; “*scarcity complex*”; “*euphemistic appeals*”; “*the ask*” and “*narrative budgeting*” will stick in your memory bank.

The cover art by Joyce Cosby is imaginative, arresting and evocative, and Chris’ bibliography (the first place where I usually turn before cracking a cover of any prospective book) is impressive.

It seems like Wilmoters should be placing their names on a pre-publishing waiting list at UCRD ([www.united-church.ca/ucrd](http://www.united-church.ca/ucrd)) for this book’s first printing.

Congratulations, Chris, on another fine accomplishment!

■ Lucille Caseley

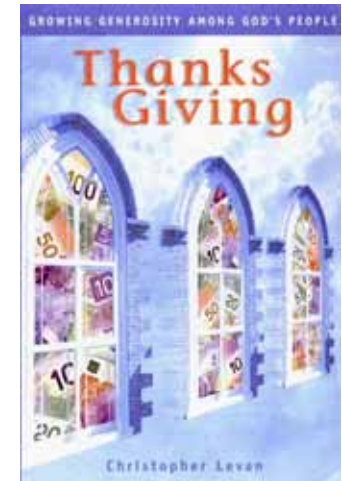
### Other Titles by Chris Levan

The Dancing Steward: exploring Christian stewardship lifestyles

Sin Boldly

God Hates Religion; how the Gospels condemn false religious practice

Living in the Maybe; a steward confronts the spirit of fundamentalism



Knowing Your Ethical Preferences

Give Us This Day; Lenten reflections on baking bread and discipleship



Bill and Sue MacLeod usher Shelley Hagar into one of our boxed-in pews.

## From the Editor...

Stewardship of Time, Talent, Treasure and . . . *Tissue*???

What is THAT all about???

Stewardship of Tissue is stewardship of human body tissue: Organ Donors.

According to Health Canada [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca) the number of Canadians who are Organ Donors is a scant 0.0015%! The decimal is in the right place: fewer than 15 of every million Canadians actually become Organ Donors.

Meanwhile, something like 3,700 Canadians wait patiently for an organ transplant; and every year about 150 of them die—waiting . . .

In New Brunswick, under the province's Human Tissues Act, consent forms make provision for donating any portion of our bodies for transplant (or medical research) at the time of our death. We are encouraged to carry this

signed consent form at all times, preferably next to our personal identification (driver's Licence, e.g.) so that when the time comes, it will be readily available for authorities to identify us as Organ Donors.

The next step—and this is very important—is to make sure our next of kin is aware of our wish, so that our request to be an Organ Donor will be honoured at the time of death.

While this may seem like a rather morbid discussion, try looking at the other side of the coin: virtually everyone knows—or has known—someone who has been, or needs to be, a recipient of organ donation. The life-giving side of the Organ Donors program can be exceedingly rewarding for those who are recipients, or their family or friends.

One little boy we know who has been waiting every day of his 11 ½ years for a liver transplant sometimes wears a T-shirt that says: "Please don't take your organs to heaven; heaven knows that we need them here on earth!"

Is your Organ Donor card filled out, signed, and located next to your driver's licence?

■ Garth Caseley

## Coming Soon to a Church Near You!

In April 2005 we have the privilege of listening to and



learning from a world renowned expert on Jesus. As we enter the lowest and highest experience in our Church

year, death and resurrection, the message which has sustained followers of Jesus for over 2000 years, it seems fitting to have this opportunity.

I remember this time last year when the buzz was about the Mel Gibson movie, *The Passion of the Christ*. It challenged our beliefs, was controversial and captured the

attention of a wide audience... and remember it was a Hollywood Production.

John Dominic Crossan also has a passion for Jesus and like the Mel Gibson movie Crossan's version of the Passion of the Christ elicits strong opinions, controversy and challenges beliefs. Crossan's devotion to understanding the fully human and fully Divine Jesus has taken a lifetime of prayerful study, reflection and courage.

As a house of worship, we continuously strive to learn and embrace the central theme of Jesus, that of Community...it may take on 21<sup>st</sup> century language but in the end it's about breaking bread with our brothers and sisters. The act is intimate and inclu-

sive.

I wonder how many who attend Wilmot saw the movie last year or will rent the soon-to-be-released DVD, uncut? Will their motive be the successful marketing strategy of a well oiled commercial push, their desire to witness an execution in the name of Christ, curiosity toward the visual hype? Regardless, I think many go to learn about an event central to their faith. Like a magnet we are drawn.

In April you have the chance of a lifetime to participate, small or big, in our version of the passion of the Christ. We hope you will attend, all or some, and this is your per-

(Please see Coming Soon on page 8)



### Stewardship on the Spur of the Moment

On Tuesday, March 8, I witnessed one of the thousand points of light. I was attending the first meeting of the Wilmot writers group and when I came into the hall, I saw about 20 people who had been evacuated from their rooms up over Rye's Deli during a fire.

It was raining—a cold miserable rain. Isabel invited them to stay in the hall until the fire chief would allow them back into their rooms. Rye's Deli sent over a pot of soup for their tenants.

Ruth Randall, called in for duty on the spur of the moment, was in the kitchen cheerfully ladling out the soup, making many pots of coffee and tea, micro waving some noodles one of the evacuees had with him. She even made tea for the writers group.

Also helping out in various capacities were Lois Campion, Maurice Lewis and Gabe Gibson. I hope I am not being guilty of hubris, but I am proud of my church and its members.

■ Nancy Bauer

**CREATIVITY SUNDAY**



**Sunday, May 15<sup>th</sup>  
Wilmot United Church  
will celebrate the creative spirit that enlivens our congregation and the Fredericton community.**

**On this day we will host a festival of artistic talent: displays of visual and plastic art, performances of musical and literary art and workshops on creative expressions of the human spirit.**

**After regular worship there will be food and opportunity to explore the displays and join in the workshops.**

**This year the art work will be on display for Sunday morning and afternoon.**

**Contact Gayle MacDonald for more information**

## Where (in the world) is Peter?

It is not often that Sue is able to go with Peter on his travels as United Church Moderator, but this month that is precisely what has happened. For the first three weeks or so in March, Peter and Sue have been in Angola and South Africa.

Before returning home later this month (just before Easter) they will have participated in many discussions with our United Church's "Global Partners" in the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational heritage of The United Church of Canada.

In an e-mail dated March 8, Peter writes, "We are nearing the end of our time here in



hands with every one of them, saying 'Bom dia!' as best we could.

"At the next service, where I was to bring greetings, I was asked (in front of the whole congregation) to preach again. So away I went. Had a great time but I

hardly knew where I was and I was so hot I thought I was going to expire.

"Just getting to these churches through the challenges of driving in Luanda is a major achievement in itself.

"Early tomorrow morning (5:00 am) we are off to

Huambo where we will be for three nights. Then we go on to Lobito...

"I am deeply impressed by

**"I am deeply impressed by the affection in which the people of The United Church of Canada are held"**

Luanda. Have visited 3 schools, 2 churches, had 4 meetings, but none of these words would convey anything like what they might mean in Canada. Am learning by leaps and bounds and finding my eye for the landscape and people changing from initial shock to a deeper appreciation of who is there and what is happening.

"The day after we arrived I was scheduled to preach at a morning service (this was not expected) but I got along alright. There were 650 people jammed into a small church with others outside, looking in the windows. We shook

the affection in which the people of The United Church of Canada are held. This is because of the record of commitment our people have established with the Angolan people. It is a privilege to follow in some small way in their footsteps.

"We are well and greatly appreciating this opportunity to be here although much of what we experience is very hard. 70 percent of Angolans live below the poverty line which is not set at a very high level here in the first place. War has destroyed the country, beginning in 1961 and lasting for 40 years. The evi-

dence of it is everywhere, especially in the wrecked infrastructure. Roads in ruins, nonexistent water systems, power on and off, etc.



"People have a way of coping

and living that is an amazing testament to the human spirit."

In another e-mail dated March 14, Peter writes, "Last day in Angola and we are faring well. In 30 minutes we will gather with the teams from the Angola Council of Churches and from the Congregational Church to do a closing debriefing. On to Johannesburg (South Africa) tomorrow morning.

"I have been preaching and meeting with pastors and visiting churches, mission stations, schools, clinics, training centers. The best thing has been visiting people."

Finally, Peter confesses, "I will think twice before ever again complaining about heat and humidity in Canada."

■ Garth Caseley

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**FIVE IN 0-FIVE**

To accomplish all that we have planned, the congregation agreed at its annual meeting in February to grow the generosity of the church by 5%.

So we're asking you to think of doing

**'05**  
5%

You could ...

- raise your weekly offering by 5%
- give \$5.00 more per week over the next 40 weeks
- make a one-time gift of \$200 over and above your regular offering

If we all do "5 in '05" we will further the mission and ministry of Wilmot United Church and place our church on a firm foundation.

**Thank you so much for your prayerful consideration of this request.**

Kitty Beal  
Chair of the Official Board

Owen Washburn  
Chair of the Committee of Stewards

**Co-sponsored by Wilmot United Church and Rivendell Communications Inc.**



**Cost includes:**

- Airfare from major cities in Canada
- Train Travel (Five Days in Total)
- Tours through Spiritual Sites around France, with Tour Guide/Translator and Facilitator
- Hotel Accommodation
- Transfers to and from Airport and Hotels
- Continental Breakfasts on All Days

**"Wine and Wonder"**  
— Tour of France —  
October 12 — 23, 2005

*A spiritual pilgrimage through France. Travel with Chris Levan, an experienced tour guide, for a 10-day guided tour through some of Christianity's ancient centres of spiritual renewal.*

**Cost: \$3660.00 per person**

**For more information see large colour posters on Wilmot United Church Bulletin Boards OR visit our Web Sites:**

[www.wilmotuc.nb.ca](http://www.wilmotuc.nb.ca) [www.rivendellcomm.com](http://www.rivendellcomm.com)



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Church web site

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WE'RE ON THE WEB AT  
[WWW.WILMOTUC.NB.CA](http://WWW.WILMOTUC.NB.CA)

**HAVE YOU CHECKED  
LATELY?**



*(PAR Cont'd from page 3)*  
(church) office, fill it in  
and be a consistent giver.  
It will make a differ-  
ence!"

■ Carlinda Daigle

**So come on and get into  
the swing of things—  
join PAR!**

*(Coming Soon Continued  
from page 5)*

sonal invitation... prepare  
to be amazed!

■ Joslyn Howatt

**More News from the UCW**

**Soup Committee Report for 2004:**

***We made soup 9 times.***

**Financial Report:**

***Carry over from 2003*      \$66.39**

***Received from UCW*      \$300.00**

***Expenses*                      \$365.22**

***Balance on Hand,***

***December 2004*              \$1.17**

**You are encouraged to continue to submit Sobey's  
tapes.**

***I want to thank Irene Forbes and her mom Margaret  
McConnell, Pearl Searles, Phil Batt, Bertha Rawn,  
Pauline Athey, Fern Kilbride, Roberta Scott and espe-  
cially Ruth Randall who made it possible to get the  
Soup delivered to the Soup Kitchen safely and on time.***

■ Doris Peters

In the past the Lenten tradition for worship  
has been to extinguish one candle each Sun-  
day to symbolize the light that disappeared  
from our world on Good Friday.

This year the Worship Committee agreed to  
try a different kind of liturgy to draw attention  
to our Christian hope in the midst of darkness.  
Each week we have identified "points of  
light" as we light a candle representing a pro-  
gram or campaign to eradicate pain, violence  
or sorrow in our world.

Also, a team of creative visual artists has been  
"flinging out the banner" by adding to a dis-  
play of colour each Sunday, culminating in a  
"star burst of joy for Easter".

This unique concept is an experiment in faith  
and trust, as each team of two artists built on  
the artwork of others.

As we celebrate the Easter Season (the great  
50 days of the Church Year) following the 40  
days of Lent, we will enjoy a tactile and tex-  
tile burst of glory in our sanctuary. Hallelu-  
jah!



**Star Burst of Joy for Easter**

Photo shows Star Burst for the 5th Sun-  
day of Lent

■ Lucille Caseley

**Darkness cannot drive out dark-  
ness, only light can do that. Hate  
cannot drive out hate, only love  
can do that.**

— Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King

