

Christmas Greetings from Loon Lake

Dear Praying Friends,

We want to wish each of you a very special Christmas season. I am sure you are keeping busy just now getting ready for Christmas Day. I hope your day is filled with a lot of good times, but especially with the joy of the Lord in your heart.

We have had a busy and fun December. The first weekend was Bethlehem Walk at the local Baptist church. We participated helping set up and running the souvenir shop in 'Bethlehem'. Our 6-year-old granddaughter helped me most of one evening when Dick was helping with transportation. About 200 people came through each of the two evenings. There were quite a few attending from the First Nation reserve. Some were even participating. One of the men that is a young Christian acted as a Roman soldier, helping with parking, opening doors and giving directions. Just a couple weeks before, Dick was telling him the Christmas story as he was not familiar with it. When his family arrived to go through the Walk, his four-year-old daughter asked where her dad was. Her mom laughed as she told her that the soldier right in front of her was her dad. One young woman who I did the Genesis Process with, sang a solo in the sanctuary one of the evenings. Some of the youth from our church helped out in various ways. It was good to see them get involved in this outreach.



Last week we went Christmas caroling. The youth had baked cookies the week before to take around to the places where we would sing. The eighteen of us sang at the senior's villa and the nursing home here in town as well as going to several homes. The next day we were told by several people how much they enjoyed the music and visit. We were thankful it wasn't too cold as most of the carolers rode around in the back of a pickup. They took turns riding in our van to warm up. We only went a few blocks altogether.

On Sunday we had our church Christmas program and dinner in the evening. We didn't have a big group, maybe 20-25 people, but we had a very nice time. We had a simple program that seemed to turn out better than most we have done in the past. During the scene in the stable, there was a puppet show with a cow, donkey, lamb and rat discussing what had happened that night of Jesus birth. The young people did a great job on the puppet show. Then we had a good turkey supper.

Yesterday we went over to the school on the reserve at 9:30 a.m. to watch the Christmas program. We were invited afterward to stay and eat lunch with the elders and honored guests. Then we stayed to listen to two interactive storytellers that were talking to the whole school in the gym. They told old Cree fables that have been passed down throughout history. It gave us some new insights into the way people here think and believe. We were glad we had stayed. Well, maybe Dick

wasn't too glad when he got called up with some of the kids to be a duck quacking on the pond in one story! So we didn't get home again until after 3:00 p.m. Then we had company until supper time at which time Dick decided we should go to the Christmas play at the school in town as some of the Native children from church attend there. So we took our granddaughter along and went to that program.

Today was the community pot luck dinner at the band office on the reserve. Dick had coffee with the chief and one of the men from church this morning and they wanted us to attend the dinner as they include us as part of the community. So we got in some good visiting today again. By the time Christmas comes, we will need to be on a diet!

Our daughter, Debbie, plans to drive out from BC for the holiday week. Ron and his family are coming up Christmas Eve for the day. They now have a couple boys at Jedidiah House, the foster home Ron is managing, so they need to be around there on Christmas day as he gave the other staff the day off. The first of December Sandy and Kenji returned from Japan where Kenji had picked up a bad infection and has been pretty sick so they will come up in January some time instead of Christmas. We are thankful he seems to be doing somewhat better.



Winter is here and we did have some below 0 F weather in November but right now most of our snow has melted and it was above freezing on Tuesday, actually up to +40. The ice is still about 18 inches thick on the lake so we can tell it is winter, but a very different one so far. We are thankful for our cozy wood stove. And for people who have kindly given us some more firewood.

Thank you for praying for us and for the gifts you have given to help the ministry here. It is exciting to see what God is doing here in answer to prayer.

We trust you will have a good Christmas and may God bless you in the New Year, 2012.

Sincerely in Christ,

Dick and Ruth Browning