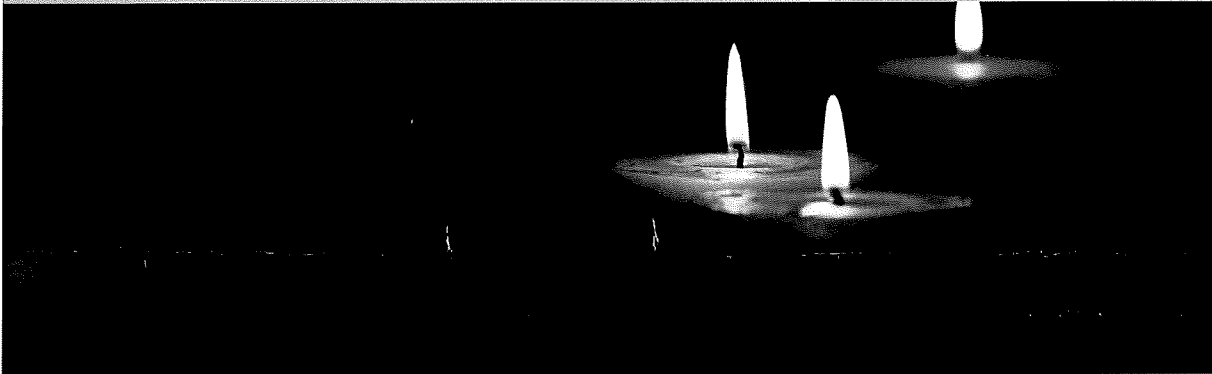


# *Pacific Mountain Regional Council*

PENSION AND BENEFITS  
CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2021



## *A Message For Retired Ministry Personnel*

**Written by Rev. Don Robertson**

Greetings to My Co-Retirees,

This note comes to you out of a sense that has been growing in me that we, who are Retired Ministry Personnel, may have a particular and perhaps valuable role to play in the life of our United Church. Call us "Oldsters" if you will?

I have just finished writing a resource on aging and I was led to think about the role of retired clergy, present and future, in the context of our Regional church. A question and, indeed an opportunity, would be to come together as a group to think about the role of retired clergy.

- Do our years of experience count for something in the context of today's church?
- What of wisdom in these 'elder' years?
- Are we a bridge into history from which we all learn and are tutored?
- Do we have a role to play vis-a-vis the Region, its ministries and challenges?
- And what of our relationship with each other, connections for some that are rooted in decades of ministry but too often lost to the present?

I see this group having an identifiable membership with any retired MP free to join at any time.

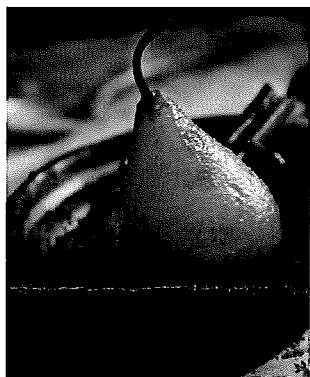
We could meet via Zoom on a monthly basis first to enjoy the conversation and friendship of we who are retired. My love of theology would want to leave room for some theological reflection that might spiral into some insights (wisdom?) for the present and future church. I would also hope for conversation on the relationship of the retired to the church and our place in it. Important from my perspective would be that the group would have a 'recognized place' in the structure of the Pacific Mountain Region.

Our lives now are turning towards Christmas and the compelling mystery of the Creator becoming Creature. In January, with the assistance of Marc Coulombe and the Region's Ministry Personnel Support Team, I will send out an initial invite to go out for a first gathering. Stay tuned for 'next steps'!

May this Season hold gifts for you of love, joy, peace and hope.

**Don Robertson, The Reverend (retired)**

## ***Smells like Christmas in the Kitchen***



### **Only 6 ingredients**

- 750ml (3 cups) cranberry juice
- 125ml (1/2 cup) dry red wine
- 55g (1/4 cup) caster sugar
- 2 whole star anise
- 2 x 7cm cinnamon sticks, halved
- 4 just-ripe beurre bosc pears, peeled

### **Step 1**

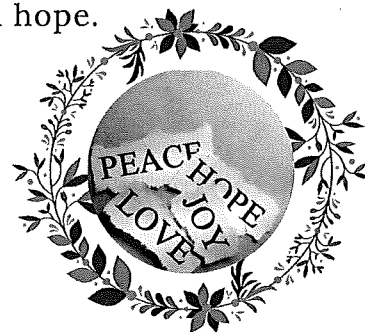
- Combine the cranberry juice
- wine, sugar, star anise and cinnamon in a medium saucepan over low heat. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until sugar dissolves.
- Add the pears and simmer, covered, turning occasionally, for 1 hour or until tender. Remove from heat.

### **Step 2**

- Use tongs to transfer pears to a heatproof glass or ceramic bowl. Increase heat to high and bring the cranberry mixture to the boil. Boil, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until mixture thickens slightly. Pour over pears. Set aside for 10 minutes to cool slightly. Cover with plastic wrap and place in the fridge for 4 hours to chill.

### **Step 3**

- Place pears in serving bowls. Spoon over the cranberry syrup and serve immediately.



# *A Wonderful Christmas Story*

**Submitted by Jane Davidson**

Such a Wonderful Christmas story (author unknown)

I remember tearing across town on my bike to visit Grandma on the day my brother dropped the bomb: "There is no Santa Claus," he jeered. "Even dummies know that!"

My Grandma was not the gushy kind, never had been. I fled to her that day because I knew she would be straight with me. I knew Grandma always told the truth, and I knew that the truth always went down a whole lot easier when swallowed with one of her "world-famous" cinnamon buns. I knew they were world-famous, because Grandma said so. It had to be true.

Grandma was home, and the buns were still warm. Between bites, I told her everything. She was ready for me. "No Santa Claus?" she snorted, "Ridiculous! Don't believe it. That rumor has been going around for years, and it makes me mad, plain mad!! Now, put on your coat, and let's go."

"Go? Go where, Grandma?" I asked. I hadn't even finished my second world-famous cinnamon bun. "Where" turned out to be Kirby's General Store, the one store in town that had a little bit of just about everything. As we walked through its doors, Grandma handed me ten dollars. That was a bundle in those days. "Take this money," she said, "and buy something for someone who needs it. I'll wait for you in the car." Then she turned and walked out of Kirby's.

I was only eight years old. I'd often gone shopping with my mother, but never had I shopped for anything all by myself. The store seemed big and crowded, full of people scrambling to finish their Christmas shopping.

For a few moments I just stood there, confused, clutching that ten-dollar bill, wondering what to buy, and who on earth to buy it for.

I thought of everybody I knew: my family, my friends, my neighbors, the kids at school, the people who went to my church.

I was just about thought out, when I suddenly thought of Bobby Decker. He was a kid with bad breath and messy hair, and he sat right behind me in Mrs. Pollock's grade-two class. Bobby Decker didn't have a coat.

"

## *A wonderful Christmas story continued...*

I knew that because he never went out to recess during the winter. His mother always wrote a note, telling the teacher that he had a cough, but all we kids knew that Bobby Decker didn't have a cough; he didn't have a good coat. I fingered the ten-dollar bill with growing excitement. I would buy Bobby Decker a coat! I settled on a red corduroy one that had a hood to it. It looked real warm, and he would like that.

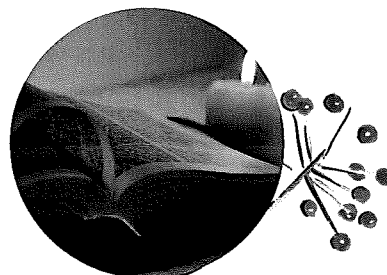
Is this a Christmas present for someone?" the lady behind the counter asked kindly, as I laid my ten dollars down. "Yes, ma'am," I replied shyly. "It's for Bobby." The nice lady smiled at me, as I told her about how Bobby really needed a good winter coat. I didn't get any change, but she put the coat in a bag, smiled again, and wished me a Merry Christmas. That evening, Grandma helped me wrap the coat (a little tag fell out of the coat, and Grandma tucked it in her Bible) in Christmas paper and ribbons and wrote, "To Bobby, From Santa Claus" on it.

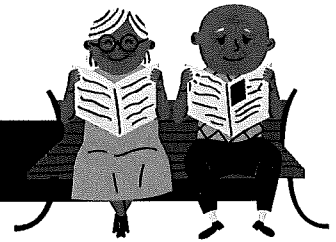
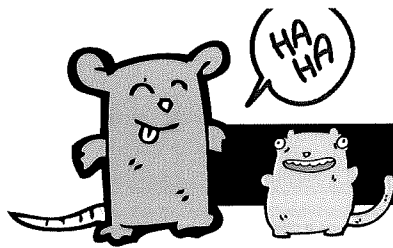
Grandma said that Santa always insisted on secrecy. Then she drove me over to Bobby Decker's house, explaining as we went that I was now and forever officially, one of Santa's helpers.

Grandma parked down the street from Bobby's house, and she and I crept noiselessly and hid in the bushes by his front walk. Then Grandma gave me a nudge. "All right, Santa Claus," she whispered, "get going." I took a deep breath, dashed for his front door, threw the present down on his step, pounded his door and flew back to the safety of the bushes and Grandma. Together we waited breathlessly in the darkness for the front door to open. Finally it did, and there stood Bobby.

Fifty years haven't dimmed the thrill of those moments spent shivering, beside my Grandma, in Bobby Decker's bushes. That night, I realized that those awful rumors about Santa Claus were just what Grandma said they were -- ridiculous. Santa was alive and well, and we were on his team. I still have the Bible, with the coat tag tucked inside: \$19.95.

**May** you always have **LOVE** to share,  
**HEALTH** to spare and **FRIENDS** that care...  
*And may you always believe in Santa Claus*





## Sunday Funnies

1st Year, more than ever, let us all wish  
for peace on earth, good will to all!

Landy Glasbergen  
bergen.com



GLASBERGEN

"Some people call him Santa Claus, some call him  
Kris Kringle, some call him Saint Nicholas.  
Obviously, a victim of identity theft!"

DVD reinder, 11-11

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Thanks to Dod Hengeveld (See Luke 2:1-16)

12-20-2001

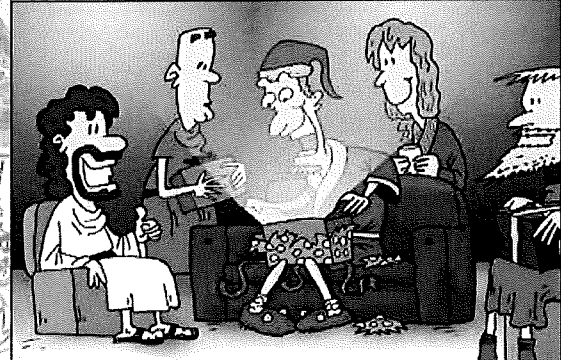
SORRY FOLKS, WE'RE BOOKED SOLID ... GOD  
HIMSELF COULDN'T GET A ROOM HERE TONIGHT

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO SAY  
I'M SORRY?! I FORGOT TO MAKE  
RESERVATIONS AT THE INN, OKAY?



THE REAL REASON IT  
WAS A SILENT NIGHT

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Thanks to Andrew S.

ETERNAL LIFE, MY FAVORITE ... THANKS  
JESUS!

12-21-2007



The First and Last Male Sponsored  
Baby Shower



"Two pair ain't gonna cut it, Joseph.  
I've got Three Kings."

# *Well Aged - Making the most of your Platinum Years*

By Ralph Milton

Old age can be the best of times and the worst of times. It's a lot better than most people realize. Some surveys show that people in their 80s are happier than at any other time of life.

In my book *Well Aged -- Making the Most of Your Platinum Years*, I claim that most people in their 60s and 70s are simply experiencing an extended middle age. Old age begins when health, or some other life event, changes and restricts your way of life. Usually in your late 70s or early 80s.



In the case of Bev and myself, it happened in our early 80s when she was diagnosed with cognitive impairment and I began to have heart problems. So, we moved from our small house into The Dorchester, a seniors' residence here in Kelowna. It turned out to be exactly the right move.

Among other things, I discovered a community of 150 seniors, all of whom had graduated into old age -- the platinum age, I like to call it. Platinum is a good metaphor to describe this time of life. It's softer than gold and more precious.

I've had a delightful time learning about my new friends here. Each one is totally unique. Everyone of them has significant health or personal issue. Most of them are generally happy with life and, with the help of modern medicine, living without significant pain.

I've enjoyed getting to know these interesting people. The whole thing has allowed me to feed my addiction to writing. And I've been able to put my humour collection -- jokes and stories and writings -- to good use.