



It's the time of year again when the malls fill up, the wallets empty and the letter carrier and couriers are busy seven days a week delivering cards and letters and parcels. The chill in the air is offset by the warmth of the fireplace in our houses (artificial or not!) and the music in the churches and malls. Christmas is nearly here!

Life in Cedar Valley continues to be wonderful. When we moved three and half years ago we wondered what had gotten into us, but now we look forward to every changing season and the change in scenery that comes with it. Walks in the forest, fresh air, bonfires and peace and quiet make us even more thankful for God's provision, every day!



The big news in the Lahn household is that in June 2018 our little baby girl, Bethany will be walking down the aisle to become "Mrs. Tyler Douwes". We couldn't be happier for the two of them. Ty is a great young man who currently coaches trampoline in Cam-

bridge Ontario and has a blind cleaning business (with his Dad). Bethany will be graduating with a Bachelor of Social Work (minor in Psychology) from York this spring and we expect they'll call the Cambridge area their home. Once she moves out, we will then be officially "empty nesters" (except for a dog and three cats)!



The other big change this year has been that Nancy has gone back to work in a couple of part-time positions. After leading a Grief Care group at our church for the past few years she was feeling the nudging of God to reach out to Chapel Ridge Funeral Home in Markham to see if her skills could be used there. As it happened, Chapel Ridge has a satellite office at Shepherd Village in Scarbor-

ough where Nancy's Mom has been living for nearly 5 years. The owner (a longtime friend of ours) immediately hired her on to fill a position there which was being vacated. As a result, Nancy is down at Shepherd Village Monday, Wednesday and Friday helping the seniors navigate the pre-planning process, helping out with any funerals that take place there, and just getting to know and chat with the residents. So many people say that she was made for this job! (She also helps out from time to time in the Markham funeral home with funerals and visitations in the evenings and on weekends).

As if that's not enough, she's teamed up with a friend from church who runs a prenatal education business, and helps by teaching the occasional private prenatal series for couples in the GTA (south to Scarborough and north to Keswick!). This of course this is in addition to leading a ladies' Life Group at the church, as well as volunteering at the Toronto Pregnancy Care Centre, teaching expectant moms.





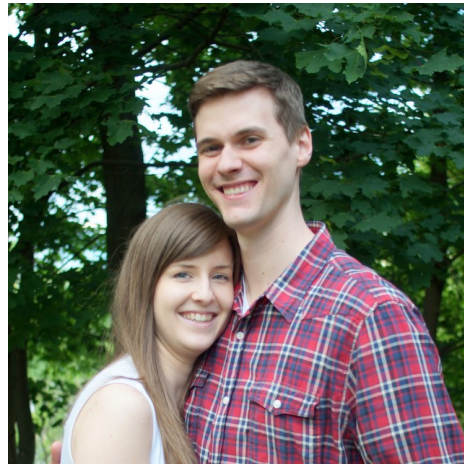
For Murray, work continues to be busy with a couple of clients over the year. In the summer, Murray's work had him travel to Newfoundland for two weeks. Fortunately in the intervening weekend, Nancy was able to fly out to the island (instead of Murray flying home) and we were able to explore a part of Canada, for a few days, that we'd never seen before in our East Coast travels. From mountains to icebergs to arid dry plains, we managed to pack a lot of sight-seeing into three days, and stayed in some of the very hospitable locals' homes using AirBnB.

Murray and Nancy continue to be busy at the church, with "The Hub" (our Sunday morning café), with Life Groups and Grief Care, as well as with the Worship Arts team. 2017 was a time of transition for The Bridge as we searched for a new Worship Pastor, but in September, our new pastor started on staff and has been doing a great job molding the team ever since.

Jordan and Rachel continue to enjoy life in the Brantford area where Jordan has been



teaching in the Public Elementary Schools. Last year he was doing an LTO (long term occasional) position with Grade 3's and 4's and this year he is working in a school in Dunnville teaching Kindergarten. Rachel has been doing well at her job with Clarence Street Dental where she works at the front desk, and more recently advising and explaining to patients about their treatment options and costs.



Tim and Rachel moved into their new home in Barrie last December and have been settling into the community. Tim's position as Chiropractor at Optimum Wellness Centre in Barrie has expanded greatly since joining in the summer of 2016. He continues to network in the community and his patient load has grown significantly as a result. Rachel is continuing her work as an Interior Designer at Onespace Unlimited in Vaughan, so her commute from Barrie isn't the most pleasant, but she definitely enjoys the work and is very good at it too!



Daniel and Jessa moved from their basement apartment in Vaughan back to Brantford last year. Daniel is working multiple jobs in the Brantford area and is contemplating going back to school next year for some further training. He is also playing bass with their church's worship band. Jess is working at part-time jobs at a jewellery store, coaching dance and teaching flexibility while she continues to complete her degree in English and Dance at York University.

Nancy's Mom's health at 93 years old continues to be quite good, although she struggles a great deal with her short term memory. Fortunately, her skill at the piano is locked away in her long-term memory, and she plays weekly for hymn sings at Shepherd Village. She continues to be cheerful and Nancy gets to have lunch with her 2 or 3 times a week with her new job which is great.

*"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord.'" Luke 2:10-11 (NIV)*

These words were addressed to the shepherds who were the first to hear the news of the birth of the Child in Bethlehem. And who was He? He was Emmanuel, "God With Us", and His mission amongst us would change the course of history forever. And yet the shepherds were told, "Do not be afraid..."

Deep down, we all resist change. Our response is often one of fear when life as we've known it is about to change. Even now, as we all stand at the brink of a new year, we know all too well that the world is an ever-changing, insecure and desperately troubled place. And yet, the voice of Jesus speaks clearly – "Take courage, for I have overcome the world."

Let us embark upon 2018 with confidence, not in ourselves or in any security the world claims to offer, but in Christ who alone is the source of true Joy, Peace and Hope.

*Love and Blessings at Christmas. The Lahus*

