



Greetings from British Columbia

October 16, 2019

Dear Coe Church family,

It has been 50 years since I drove out of Coe to come to British Columbia. And what a blessing you all have continued to be. Not only during that recent time, but so many years before. During my childhood, my work with the youth group and my years of study at Bible College. Your personal letters, gifts, and special visits from you hold great memories for me. Awareness of Michigan and Coe are very much in the minds of people here. Just a week or so ago, a friend said that she met a stranger while on vacation. The stranger said he was "from Michigan" and she immediately put up her hand and pointed to the center. She said "I know someone from Coe."

I want to catch you up on my news. I have just returned from a trip to San Jose, CA, where my younger sister, Jane, and brother-in-law, Jim live. She has been diagnosed with Alzheimers and her husband's family wanted my older sister, Ruth, and me to come for a visit before she is worse. They arranged everything, including flights, hotel accommodation and a car rental. And covered the entire cost. Ashton Eaton, the track and field Olympic gold medalist, is their grandson. He worked it all out for us.

We were able to visit Jane and Jim for six days and had a good visit. I returned on October 11. We stayed at the Best Western and then drove a short distance to their home every day and were able to spend time with Jane for at least eight hours. We shared memories and talked of family and history with her. She enjoyed us and was able to relate to most of the stories, although she didn't contribute her own thoughts. We had seen a change in her and much confusion when we traveled in Michigan last year.

They are staying in their own home for now. Jim is also having some dementia problems, but takes care of cooking and wants to keep Jane there as long as he can. The family plans to bring in a day nurse several times a week to work with Jane and relieve him. Eventually they are looking to have them moved to a care facility in town. Ruth and I were so blessed by the gift of the travel from the family.

On Monday, October 14, we celebrated Canadian Thanksgiving at the Double VM Bible Camp. Because I was away, Lisa and others organized the cooking of the turkey and ham. We served 70 people and it was a good day. The meal was potluck and we always have an abundance and variety of food. This is the 12th year we have had Thanksgiving at the Camp, inviting anyone who does not have family around to share their holiday. Occasionally some friends arrange family celebration over the weekend and then come to the Camp, too. It is also an opportunity to partially winterize the campgrounds. Tables and benches are stored. Waterlines are drained. Supplies are stored or packed down to town, if they would freeze. Firewood is stacked for Snow Camp in February.

Our minister, David Hockley, has been taking a sabbatical this Fall, but he and his wife, and their mothers came out for the Thanksgiving. He grew a beard and that looks strange to us. While he has been away with prayer and studies, we have enjoyed several visiting speakers at the church. And some of the members have taken on tasks to improve the building arrangements and made changes to the bulletin. It is good to see people stepping up to do new things.

We are gaining new young families, too. And a new baby just a few days ago. One woman is organizing a fund raiser event for the church. She asked us Elderberries to help with a bake sale. It is best for me if I stay with baking various flavored loaves. Cakes and pies are not my strong area.

Earlier this summer, we sponsored a luncheon for "seniors" and had a good time. We are hoping to have another event soon but are running into all the seasonal activities that keep people busy. When we do a luncheon, we have been able to include friends from the other churches, too. That gives us opportunity for a

nice visit. I usually can come up with a fun group game or puzzle to challenge them.

The first Sunday in August three of us ladies attended services at the Salmon Arm Church of Christ. Earlier in the spring a young man came into their services and shot an elder and the worship leader. The elder, Gordon Parmenter, has served on the DVM Camp board and did some cabinetry work in our new camp bathroom. It was a shock to the small congregation and all of us who knew him. The shooter had some mental problems over a long period of his teen years and was known and had been helped by the Parmenter family. Several of us attended the funeral service, which brought out over 600 from other churches and the Salmon Arm community. We sang hymns acapella and his son had the service. The worship leader had a leg injury and was still recovering in August.

Keith and Lisa Stump are making final plans to move back to Missouri. He is taking over his father's farm there. They and Kaleb will move early in November, if Keith can get all his tools and machinery gathered and organized for travel. He has made several trips to Missouri and even did some harvesting and cattle work down there. They have purchased a double-wide trailer and it is moved on to his parents' property near Golden City. They will leave such a hole in the church and camp fellowship here. But their youngest son, Levi, who just turned 23, will still be boarding with me. He has a serious girlfriend here and wants to take some training in small mechanics. Their daughter, Deanna, lives in northern Alberta with her husband and two boys. So, there will be lots of communication with them. I will miss having Kaleb, their Down Syndrome son, here during the week. He was 26 on his last birthday and such fun.

There will be a farewell dinner on October 24, which will be open to the churches and the farming community. Keith worked with so many of the farmers and cattle ranchers in the Lumby area. I am scheduled to mash about 20lbs. of potatoes. But we will plan to have the Stumps back for camp activities as much as possible. Lisa has been head cook for so many years and involved in just about every aspect of the camp and church.

Well, it is nearly time for me to go and pick up Kaleb this afternoon from his day care place. He will miss all of his friends there, too. They are all handicapped in some way, but so happy and share with each other. The attendants are so good to them all and they will miss Kaleb's jokes and silliness.

I really enjoy the Coe Church newsletter. I wish we could get something similar started here, I do occasionally publish a little sheet with some church family news and entertaining articles to keep people here and friends and former members up to date. It's my printer mentality, I guess. It keeps us connected and they seem to enjoy receiving it.

I keep busy with camp and church and the Elderberries. I am in good health, too. Yesterday the dentist said my teeth are looking great. And the doctor just takes my blood pressure and says "It's good." My arthritic wrist makes it necessary to type my letters, but you wouldn't get as long of a letter if I didn't type it.

God bless your Fall and I hope the leaves are wearing bright colors. Sit in the sun and think of me.

Love,

Katy Conklin