

## Merry Christmas and Year End Giving Opportunity

Thanksgivings: reflecting on our past, contemplating our future.

As we continue our search for a church home, we attended a Methodist Church on the Sunday preceding Thanksgiving. The pastor gave us an invitation: "What does it mean to contemplate living in a state of thanksgiving without the lens of comparison?" Without comparison. Saralyn and I thought through our prayers and thanks to God, "for shelter from the rain and cold, for food to eat, for a healthy body and mind and the health of our family." We believe these are all good things, however, most often they seem to be in the context of those who do not have. Whoa. So what does living in thanksgiving mean then? Is it a sense of gratitude? Is this what a joyful spirit is made of? Is it living so much in the present tense so as to erase the regrets and envy of yesterday and the worries of tomorrow? As the end of the year approaches we continue to ponder on this freed thanksgiving.

This has been a year of thanksgiving for us personally. Our best example of thanksgiving that is free from comparison came with the birth of our son, Leon Paul Jantzi, in which our history and our future collided. We have an opportunity to celebrate previous generations and future generations alike. Our baby boy carries the name of his great grandfather Leon. His second name, Paul, comes from another great grandfather, my brother, and Saralyn's late brother. This is our history, but it also impacts our dreams for Leo. Our prayer is that he becomes a gentle man, kind and caring, able to hold life lightly and celebrate it jubilantly; a man who gently and with humor walks a life of faith. Leo has challenged our future not only by giving us bleary eyes, but also by bestowing the mantle of parenthood upon us! Creator God, we give thanks.

When contemplating this last year, we see parallels between our personal life and the life of Camrec. For Camp Camrec this, too, has been a year of thanksgiving. This year we have held the past and future in both hands.

This year Washington Mennonite Fellowship (WMF) celebrated the roots and development of Camrec. As supporters of this place we listened to each other's stories during the 50th Year Anniversary Celebration. Stories were shared of kids pushing a school bus up an icy road, of the first camps and cooking off the back of a flatbed truck, of the youth fundraising to install a furnace in the lodge during the beginnings of frigid winter camping, of campers getting into mischief and even seeing their first live squirrel! We heard many a story reflecting on the importance of fellowship within and between the WMF churches. These stories highlight God's presence throughout the challenges and thanksgivings of Camrec's past.

It is these same stories that give us hope and help us dream about the future of Camrec. Our future will be full of challenges and surely thanksgivings! Phil Whitman, an individual involved in the early years of camp wrote in his "History of Camrec", "Today's events are tomorrow's history. The present stage of our camp building is completed. We are now in need of new people, getting our young people involved in the entire camp program, new ideas, new approaches to new problems."

We invite you now to take a moment and contemplate your thanksgivings for this past year in your own life.

We invite you for a moment to suspend comparisons on how things used to be and wishes you want to see fulfilled. For a time just sit with your thoughts about what Camrec currently means to you. If you are so inclined, we would love to hear some of these thoughts.

The year is coming to a close and the future is replacing the present. What programs will develop to support our younger generations? What about individuals and families in their middle ages? How about meeting the interests and needs of our senior generations? So we ask you to join us in exploring these many questions. Now help us to continue to dream and implement. Share with us your ideas and your concerns, your energy and volunteer time. Share your gifting's in nurturing and teaching children, tending plants, cooking, building, writing, creating art. For it is truly only together that Camrec can move forward. If you have appreciated what Camrec means to you and what it can become in the future please consider Camp Camrec in your year-end giving.

Camrec has started a fundraising effort to build additional staff housing. Contributions are needed both in the general fund as well as towards the new residence.

Finally we leave you with a prayer we say with our son Leo, with campers, summer staff, and during our weekly staff meetings.

May the Peace of the Lord Christ go with you,  
Wherever he may send you,  
May he guide you through the wilderness,  
Protect you through the storm,  
May he bring you home rejoicing at the wonders He has shown you,  
May he bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors.

Merry Christmas!

David and Saralyn Jantzi  
Co-Directors, Camp Camrec