



Photo: Sachigo Lake in the winter

1-800-307-4036

[www.lampministry.org](http://www.lampministry.org)

L.A.M.P.

Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots

L.A.M.P.

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# LAMP

SHARING JESUS CHRIST IN THE NORTH



2023 Advent Devotions

## Introduction and Christmas Greetings

Dear Friend,

We are so glad you've joined us for this season of Advent. Our booklet is an invitation for you to slow down, reflect, and connect with Jesus.

This past year was the first time for many teams, since 2019, that they reconnected face-to-face with the families in the northern community they serve. And it was a summer full of many blessings!

Please share these devotions with your family, friends, or neighbors. To give the gift of Christ to Indigenous communities in northern Canada, please donate online at [www.lampministry.org](http://www.lampministry.org) or call 1-800-307-4036. When you give to the ministry of L.A.M.P., you can have confidence knowing that your gift helps spread the gospel.

God has blessed our ministry, and YOU are a big part of it! Thank you for your support. May you find rest and renewal as we anticipate God's hope, peace, joy, and love during Advent.

*Merry Christmas  
and blessings to you and yours!*

*For unto us a child is born...Isaiah 9:6*



Acting out the Christmas story in Hall Lake, SK.

*Your friends at L.A.M.P. - Lutheran Association of Missionaries  
and Pilots Inc. and LAMP Ministry Inc.*



These words were extracted from a handwritten note of thanks to a LAMP volunteer from this past summer for his visit that would lead to her coming to the faith:

*“One day, you showed up at my doorstep to invite me to VBS, and that has stayed with me into my adult life. You and your crew were always so kind and welcoming to a new face. I appreciate that you introduced me to God in a fun and memorable way.”*

These comments are why LAMP goes to share the gospel. Regular worship services, Sunday school, and other Christian programs are seldom available in the remote, northern communities we serve. The Indigenous population is growing, but the number of local clergy and missionaries is dramatically declining.

More communities than we have teams are asking us to come and reach this generation. We hope to be in 55 communities by LAMP's 55th anniversary in 2025. Please pray with us as we call volunteers to form or become part of a team to share Jesus Christ with God's people in northern Canada.

Thank you for caring. You are a blessing to us. Please call 1-800-307-4036 if you'd like to know more.

## Me, a Magi?

December 24, 2023

**“Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” Matthew 2:2 (NIV)**



One of my favorite things to do in Lac Brochet is to stay up late with some of our team and gaze at the night sky. If the weather is right, the stars are stunning. On a couple of occasions, we've seen the northern lights! We usually save this late-night adventure for the last night as a grand finale.

In Matthew, we read of the magi seeing a “star” that told them the King of the Jews had been born. This is an example of God revealing Himself through nature. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky

above proclaims His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). The wise men were wise enough to seek God through this natural knowledge, but ultimately they found Him in His Word that became flesh, Jesus Christ (John 1:14).

God tells people about Himself through His creation (Romans 1:20) and also through the conscience He has built within us (Romans 2:15). But if we really want to know God, we must turn to the revealed knowledge of Him found in the Bible. After all, the magi didn't precisely know where to find their Savior until the Bible was consulted, and Micah 5:2 led them to Bethlehem.

Let us be like the Magi of old, and having found Jesus by faith, worship Him and tell others about Him. “God of wonders beyond our galaxy, You are holy...The universe declares Your majesty.”

**⇒ Lord, help us declare Your praises and the Good News of our Savior with others. Amen.**

Rev. Dr. Paul Naumann (Michigan)  
volunteer missionary  
Lac Brochet, MB

## Waiting and Anticipating

December 3, 2023

**“I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in His word I put my hope.” Psalm 130:5 (ESV)**

“When is Jesus coming again?” It is an age-old question. Christmas is a remembrance of when Christ first came into the world. But Advent and the state of affairs these days also leave us asking, “When will Christ come into the world again?”

We wonder, “What is God waiting for?” One answer is that God is longsuffering, and His mission must not be complete. Until the end of the age, God's mission of salvation continues for all nations, to the ends of the earth, to make disciples. [Mt. 28:19-20]

Do not be discouraged even if the world seems to be going off its axis at times. Pray that God's Kingdom might come and that He would raise up laborers to usher in the final harvest with Christ's return. Take comfort. God still shows mercy and has plans and a purpose for us to reach the lost in the North. Christ has promised not only to come again, but that He is with us to the end of the age.

As we look upon the babe born in Bethlehem, we know God gathers us to gaze down and see the love, warmth, and Light sent into the world. May we be the LAMP that shines brightly in the coming year, because in each of us shines the light of Christ.

Take hope. Christ has come and still comes to us in His Word and Sacraments. We are given the Holy Spirit to lead, guide, and comfort us until the end...when Christ will return to carry us home.

**⇒ Lord, in this time of waiting, help us to overflow with hope in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Rev. Dr. Steven Schave  
(Michigan)  
executive director  
L.A.M.P. / LAMP Ministry Inc.



## What's in Store?

December 4, 2023

**“For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.” Romans 8:24-25 (ESV)**



In 2022, I celebrated my tenth year of being seconded to LAMP. It's been a blessing to be a small part of such a great ministry to God's Indigenous people in northern Canada. When I first started, I wasn't sure what God had in store. I agreed to one year of a ministry partnership with this thought in the back of my mind.

God did much more than I could imagine! My time serving in the North has graced me with new friends, a wife, and a child. And I've been able to help spread the gospel to people that otherwise might not hear it; to bring hope to some people who otherwise feel hopeless; to see children's faces light up when they're told that God loves them!

This advent season, we wait with hope. As we go through the dark days of winter, we do so with our Light – Emmanuel. And our ministry is only possible because of people like you who have believed in, prayed for, and supported this cross-cultural ministry. You have been and are an integral part of the ministry. May you continue to be filled with hope in Jesus that leads to enduring peace.

**⇒ Dear God, thank You for filling us with Your light and Your hope through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us to trust You with our decisions and future. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

Andrew Anstey (Alberta), missionary pilot  
Mission Aviation Fellowship  
seconded to L.A.M.P.

## Come and See!

December 23, 2023

**“But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people’...So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. [Read Luke 2:10-18 (NIV)]**



When we learn or see something exciting or wonderful, we want to share it with others. “My beautiful amaryllis has bloomed. Come and see!” To my bird-loving neighbor, “We have a great horned owl in our tree. Come and see!”

The shepherds, too, could not help but spread the amazing word that a Savior had been born. They had seen Him with their own eyes, just as the angel had told them!

Over many years of traveling to our northern community, we have encouraged the children to “come and see” Jesus in the songs, the Bible stories, the crafts, and (by God's grace) in us as we worship and joyfully serve Him by serving them. Our prayer is for their faith to grow through the power of the Holy Spirit and for them to know that because of our Savior's sacrifice on the cross and His glorious resurrection, their sins (and ours) are forgiven. We are guaranteed a heavenly home, where we will all truly see Jesus face to face. Come and see!

**⇒ Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of Your Son, Jesus, and that we can “come and see” Jesus in Your Holy Word. Enable us to help others see Jesus until that joyful day when we will see Him in heaven. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Lori Dawkins (Minnesota)  
volunteer missionary  
Shamattawa, MB  
director, LAMP Ministry Inc. board

## His Gifts

December 22, 2023

**“Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him would not be lost but have eternal life.” John 3:16 (ERV)**

Days before our departure for our summer ministry trip to Witset, we received a phone call from the community pastor advising us of two deaths in the community. It was likely that our week of ministry would be affected. There was going to be a Headstone Feast that the pastor needed to attend. An invitation for our team to also attend was extended. After contacting LAMP, we were encouraged to accept the invitation from the community.

At the feast, we were exposed to parts of their culture that were entirely new to us. There was eating, dancing, settling of accounts, and giving of gifts to everyone in attendance. Carolyn asked the woman sitting next to her why we were receiving gifts since we were “outsiders.” She responded by saying, “We don’t leave anyone out.”

What a beautiful picture of our Heavenly Father. He sent His one and only Son to pay the penalty of mankind’s sin to save the whole world. He doesn’t leave anyone out. This is a true gift offered without strings, which we can accept without restraint. During the Christmas season, we celebrate Jesus, the greatest gift ever.



⇒ **God, thank You for freely offering us Your gift of salvation to save us from our sins and allowing us the opportunity to freely accept Your gift. Work in our hearts to want and accept Your gifts of forgiveness and eternal life. Amen.**

Ralph & Carolyn  
Hartwig (Alberta)  
volunteer  
missionaries  
Witset, B.C.

## In God's Time

December 5, 2023

**“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” Matthew 24:36 (NIV)**

We were excited about the opportunity to head back to Shamattawa for an off-season trip after almost three years of not being able to see our friends there. As we moved into the final stages of our planning, we were informed of some medical concerns the community was facing with the end result being our inability to follow through on our plan.

The whole team was very disappointed. We tried to figure out why this barrier was put up to stop our efforts. As the days rolled closer to when we had planned on going, news came back about three polar bears moving around Shamattawa with warnings for the people to stay inside and more news about the school being closed due to heating problems. We realized our plans would have likely been changed, and God’s plan became more clear. We know there will be a time for us to return to Shamattawa, but it will be in God’s time.



There are similarities between Advent and Christmas as Jesus was sent into our world according to God’s plan and exact timing. Just like we can hardly wait to see our friends in the North, we also wait—patiently or not—for Jesus’ return to bring us to our eternal home.

⇒ **Gracious Heavenly Father, we thank and praise You for sending Your Son, Jesus, into the world to take away our sins. Help us to be patient until You return according to Your plan and timing to bring us to heaven to spend eternity with You. Amen.**

David Schneeberger (Minnesota)  
volunteer missionary  
Shamattawa, MB  
President, LAMP Ministry Inc. board

## Not Alone

December 6, 2023

**“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn...” Isaiah 61:1-2 (ESV)**

**You are not alone.** This is the message the faithful of Cross Lake wanted to hear as we went in January during the cold and long winter nights on the heels of pandemic fears and two years of isolation.

It was hard to hear the somber feelings the leaders expressed with tears. Each one felt like he/she was the only one caring for their people with a message of hope. They carried the burden of losing 86 people in 2022 alone.

The devil works hard to isolate the faithful no matter where we live. The time spent in prayer and conversation and on the radio sharing the promise of God’s faithfulness to be with us resonated with the people. They desired to hear it. They tearfully received blessings and reminders of God’s promises kept in the manger of Bethlehem and the ones yet to be fulfilled at His second coming.

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness;” Isaiah 61:10 (ESV)

⇒ **Holy Spirit, fill us with reminders we are not alone. May we share the hope we have and in our sharing, may we be filled with hope and peace in our Jesus. Amen.**

Pastor/pilot Randy Heide (Saskatchewan)  
L.A.M.P. staff missionary



## God Knows Best

December 21, 2023

**“And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” Luke 2:7 (ESV)**

Our team was so excited to return to South Indian Lake in 2022. We needed a couple of team members and prayed for them. And God delivered!

As the date got closer, the community hadn’t sent back written documentation for us to return. We had to have that in order to go. But we only had verbal approval thus far.

The first week of July rolled around, and I couldn’t walk, sit or stand. The doctor said I had two bulging discs in my back. How could that be? No travel for me! I asked for prayers from my northern community, and many prayed for me.

As I watched the happenings in South Indian Lake, I realized we hadn’t picked the best week to return. God knew better than I did. As disappointed as I was, He knew best.

My thoughts turned to Joseph and Mary going to Bethlehem so close to the birth of their child. They arrived and found no rooms available. I wonder what crossed their minds. If there had been room in the inn, would the shepherds have been allowed to worship the newborn King? Yet God had the perfect plan for Jesus’ birth.

I learned that God knows best and is in control. My trial presented the perfect opportunity to strengthen my trust in Him.

⇒ **Dear Lord, thank You for having the best plan for our lives. Help us to keep on trusting You no matter what comes our way and to recognize that You know best. Amen.**

Pam Heiden (Minnesota)  
volunteer missionary  
South Indian Lake, MB



## The Grace of Giving

December 20, 2023

**“Since as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.” 2 Corinthians 8:7 (NIV)**

Do you enjoy watching stories of random acts of kindness in the news? A good news story makes me smile and gives me hope. If it's a social media post, it may receive lots of 'likes.' Sometimes a video even goes viral (quickly amassing millions of views due to social media users sharing it with friends and followers.) Our supreme example of giving is the story of Jesus' birth, which is definitely good news – the best news worth sharing!

Our volunteers (myself included) confirm in their feedback to LAMP that it's not hard to feel compelled to give because of God's grace. Warm relationships have developed between many of our volunteers and people in the northern community they serve. Such an abundance of joy is received in return.

Without Jesus in our lives, where would you and I be today? God instructs us to give or do good for His glory. [Matthew 6:2-4] As you go through this Christmas season, find a way to connect with someone who may find this time of year difficult. Excel in the grace of giving away the love Jesus gave us and kindle a viral hunger for Him in people's hearts.



⇒ **Heavenly Father, thank You for the loving and grace-filled gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Fill our hearts with Your love to share the abundance of blessings You have given us. Amen.**

Catherine Williams (Alberta)  
volunteer missionary  
Hall Lake, SK  
L.A.M.P. executive assistant

## Servant Hands, Servant Hearts...

December 7, 2023

**“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus .” Philippians 4:19 (ESV)**

I often wonder what it was like to be Mary, face to face with an angel who told her exactly what God was about to do in her life. When I answered God's call to serve as a LAMP missionary, there were no angels or clear directions, only a whisper from the Holy Spirit to follow Jesus into the North.

After COVID put a stop to sending our team in to feed the community spiritually, I felt the nudge that God had something else in mind. It was a whisper I could no longer ignore—that helpless feeling I would get when opening a cupboard in the community, and there was one lone can of soup, the only thing on the shelf for a family of eight.

With God's help, the Hall Lake food pantry was established, cupboards built,



and shelves stocked. Volunteers have been trained, staff hired, and 40 needy families registered. Four team members have made three trips (at the time of writing) to deliver replenishments. The timing could have only been God's!

What a wonderful reminder that when Jesus calls us to action, He has a specific purpose and an amazing plan. To Him be the honor and glory!

⇒ **Father, we are grateful for Your plan to bring Jesus to earth. Thank You for showing us to use our resources and downtime during COVID to fill another promise to Your children in the North. Help us to remain open to Your leading. May the food pantry continue to feed hungry mouths and bring hungry souls to know You. Amen.**

Judi Luckhardt (Alberta)  
volunteer missionary  
Hall Lake, SK

## God Sightings

December 8, 2023

**“And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age” Matthew 28:20 b (NIV)**

God is omnipresent, protecting, guiding, and caring for us, but when we see His hand in the little things, I call it “God sightings.” These things encourage me along my faith journey.

Our 2022 VBS lesson for Sucker River was intended to teach the children how to look for “God sightings” in their lives. Those who have taught know that often the teacher learns more than the student. God continually showed us LAMP volunteers that He was ever present during our journey. Our “God sightings” were “an angel” guiding us through the airport, a red-tailed hawk flying (which was part of our lesson), and a box of rocks just waiting for our skit (more perfect than we could have asked for.)

The LAMP trips are not easy as Satan never wants us to proclaim the love of Jesus to others. But, when God encourages me with “God sightings”, I believe I am doing what our Lord has asked of me. Volunteers, myself included, spend a week up North with experiences they never forget.

Where do you see “God sightings” this Advent or in your life? Is He calling you to be part of a LAMP team or as a prayer warrior or financial support to the ministry? Pray on it, and God will guide you.

⇒ **Heavenly Father, thank You for caring for us in everyday things and showing us in “God sightings” Your constant presence. May this Advent season make us more aware of Your never-ending presence and motivate us to share Your love with others. Amen.**

Janet Pratt (Michigan)  
volunteer missionary  
Sucker River, SK



## Coffee Grounds

December 19, 2023

**“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.” Psalm 23:5 (NIV)**

Many of us wake up looking forward to that fresh cup of coffee. Our pastor’s sermon last Christmas Eve reminded us not to be surprised if sometimes we find ourselves chewing on the grounds that slid up the side of the mug on that last warm swallow.

I often reflect on the many hardships facing the isolated northern communities visited by LAMP staff and volunteers each year -- harsh weather, house fires, loneliness, death, and illnesses of many types. It must feel far too often that there are more grounds than coffee!

King David knew God’s blessing comes during struggles - “in the presence of my enemies.” That is when our cup overflows with blessing! Whether the trouble is of our own sinful making or the result of another’s, our Lord does not abandon us. At Christmas, our Heavenly Father’s promise of a Saviour is fulfilled by His Son, Jesus.

Thanks be to our God for His faithfulness! Each day, His blessing makes delicious coffee from the grounds.

⇒ **Heavenly Father, thank You for Your constant presence leading us through times of great struggle. Your words of grace are our guide in this life as we look forward to the blessing of eternal life yet to come! Praise God. Amen.**

Darlene Heide  
(Saskatchewan)  
volunteer missionary  
Cat Lake, ON





## The Greatest Gift

December 18, 2023

**“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given... and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)**

Our team feels called to share the gifts our Lord has given us with the people of Grandmother’s Bay. We reach out in love and friendship to tell about the greatest gift ever given—Jesus, and what he did for us.



I had the blessing of my first trip to Grandmother’s Bay in 2022. A special friendship was made with a boy in great need of encouragement. He was a little child who was hurting emotionally. He was eager to feel God’s love, to hear Jesus loves him, and was moved when we shared that Jesus died on the cross for him so he could have everlasting life.

On our last day, he gifted me a small, beautiful rock. I could tell he took the time to choose the perfect rock. What was he trying to say through that gift e.g. thank you for caring or please come back again?

Our prayers are that the people of Grandmothers Bay and all LAMP communities will come to know Jesus. Pray this Advent season that they will feel HOPE, LOVE, JOY, and His PEACE.

“I wonder as wander, out under the sky,  
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die  
For poor on’ry people like you and like I...  
I wonder as I wander out under the sky  
Out under the sky” (by John Jacob Niles)

**⇒ Lord, as we wonder during Advent, help us see that the greatest gift we can receive is knowing Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. Give us the courage to share this wonderful message with others. Amen.**

Deb Paterson (Alberta)  
volunteer missionary  
Grandmother’s Bay, SK

## See and Hear

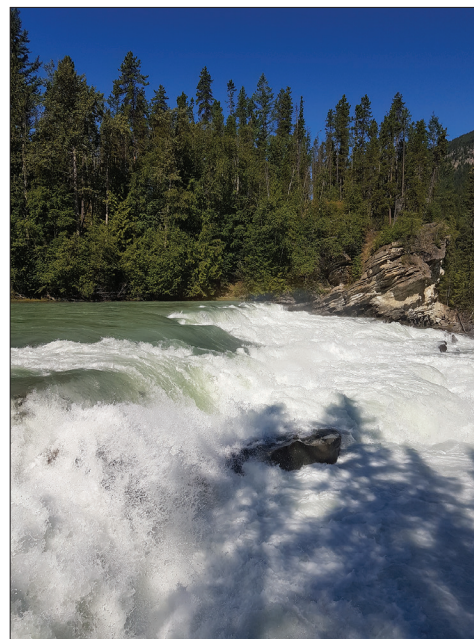
December 9, 2023

**“Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.” Psalm 119:18 (NIV)**

During our team travels to Kitamaat Village, someone always comes up with an idea for a special stop to make along the way. The trip is really a panoramic view of God’s magnificent creation—streams, rivers, lakes, mountains, and lush farmland. Such beauty for us to see. This year our ‘stop’ was a spectacular waterfall—one we had driven past, both ways, for four years! The point is, this time we stopped to SEE and HEAR God’s exquisite display mere meters off the busy highway.

During our summer Vacation Bible School program, we stopped to SEE and HEAR how God has worked in the life of the fire chief in the village. It was such a poignant testimony of God’s constant grace pulling this man out of the abyss of addictions. We had to modify our plans and adapt to unforeseen situations in the Village, but God was still there! Our job was to SEE and HEAR how we could fit into His plan for each day.

During this season of Advent, let’s stop and pray for God to open our eyes to SEE and HEAR—how wonderful He is and what He is doing around us right now!



⇒ **Dear God, please still our hearts and our bodies during Advent and throughout the year so we are truly aware of Your mighty work in our world today. Thank You for loving us so much that You sent Your Son, Jesus, into this world to save us. Amen.**

Kathleen Galbraith  
Robertson (Alberta)  
volunteer missionary  
Kitamaat Village, B.C.

## His Banner Over Me is Love

December 10, 2023

**“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.” Isaiah 11:1 (NIV)**

Years ago when my wife, Lori, and I used to lead children’s music for Sunday School at our church, we learned a song with the lyrics, “He’s the vine and we are the branches, His banner over me is love.” From the simple words of this song, we are reminded of these words from Isaiah.



This takes us back in time to the Garden of Eden when God promised to send a Savior into the world to save us from our sins. He did just as He said He would. He placed His banner of love over each and every one of us. He actually chose “us”

to be His own people. God kept His promise!

Each summer when we return to our respective communities to teach Vacation Bible School, we wear matching T-shirts with a “banner” imprinted on the front. This identifies us as LAMP missionaries, but most of all, our banners share the Gospel message.

As we prepare our hearts and minds during this Advent season, we can be reminded of the reason Jesus came as we look forward to His second coming.

“As a banner of God’s love unfurled, Christ came to suffer loss, that by His death, a dying world would rally to the cross. Come Jesus come, Messiah, lost Paradise restore; lead past the angel’s flaming sword, come open Heaven’s door” (Stephen P. Starke, 1998. LSB 342, v. 3 & 4 Concordia Publishing House.).

**⇒ Lord, as we prepare for Your return, help us to be ready. Give us the boldness and urgency to share Your gospel message with those that don’t yet know You. Amen!**

Leon Dawkins (Minnesota)  
volunteer missionary  
Shamattawa, MB

## The Quiet and the Simple

December 17, 2023

**“Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, praise His name; proclaim His salvation day after day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all peoples.” Psalm 96:1-3 (NIV)**

My husband and I attend a Christmas concert held in two houses built in the 1800s located in the Edmonton River Valley. Their only light is from the many lit candles throughout the main floor of each house. The instruments and singing are all acoustic. Tickets are limited as the houses are small. Three musicians in one house and two in the other. It’s not elaborate, yet it’s peaceful. Sometimes the most beautiful things come from the quiet and the simple.

It’s a long trip to northern Canada. Limited supplies are brought since many volunteers travel by airplane. Most of life’s conveniences are left behind to serve in these remote parts. We don’t have big screens with videos or a worship band leading VBS music or fancy crafts. But the love our volunteers have and their willingness to tell the people in the North about Jesus is limitless.

Songs, Bible storytelling, prayers, and time spent together building new relationships and strengthening old ones. At the time, we don’t always know the impact we are having. But, many times, the most beautiful things in life come from the quiet and the simple.

**⇒ Heavenly Father, thank You for the opportunity to serve Your people in northern Canada in many different ways. As we reflect on the simple manger Jesus was born in, guide and bless us to share Your love with others. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.**

Shelly Teschke (Alberta)  
L.A.M.P. director of mission opportunities



## The Heavens Declare His Handiwork

December 16, 2023

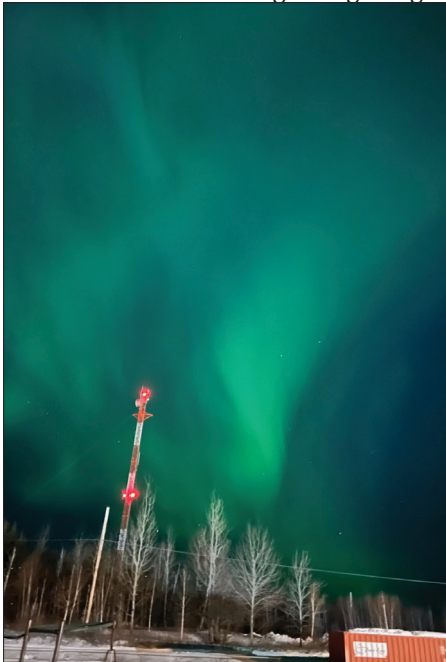
**“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.” Revelation 4:11 (ESV)**

‘Something’ keeps pulling me back to Sucker River in WINTER. I am certain it’s not the ‘balmy -20 F’ temperatures. Although I resisted, God kept telling our team to return by providing teaching materials, new volunteers, and reminding us that it’s all about Jesus and the children!

The children’s faces were familiar. We called some by name, and they even remembered us! Our lessons focused on how God has the power to provide, comfort, forgive, and grant eternal life with Him in heaven.

God gave us a glimpse of that eternal glory. We received a 3:45 a.m. call to say the northern lights were visible. (Yes, we requested this.) A rush to brave the frigid air brought my eyes up to wisps of white light dancing across the sky. So beautiful. When I aimed my camera for a photo, the white lights showed up a glorious green! Two verses came to mind: Revelation 4:3 (the appearance of emerald) and 1 Corinthians 13:12 (now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror...)

Our children’s lesson regarding the gift of salvation through Christ took



on a new perspective. During Advent, we wait with hope. What glory awaits us that we can’t possibly imagine!

**⇒ Gracious God, thank You for glimpses of Heaven shared in Your magnificent creation. Help us celebrate Jesus’ birthday with love and thanksgiving. We look forward to eternity with You in Your most glorious, heavenly Kingdom. Amen.**

Janet Pratt (Michigan)  
volunteer missionary  
Sucker River, SK

## Magnify the Lord

December 11, 2023

**And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior.” Luke 1:46-47 [Read Luke 1:46-56]**

A magnifying glass is used to enlarge things. Many times, elderly people will keep a magnifying glass for reading smaller print. Magnifying things can make them much easier to see. It can also reveal small and minute details that were previously unseen or unnoticed.

Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord.” What a beautiful attitude. Too many people simply want to magnify themselves, flaws and all. Mary wants her life to be used so that people may see God and His grace, love, and forgiveness more clearly. She wants to be used to enlarge Him to others, so that others may see Him more clearly.

May we be inspired like Mary was to be a blessing and encouragement to others. May we seek to be used by God as we serve our northern community (or perhaps, closer to home) so that in and through us, people may see the love, compassion, and forgiveness of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Jesus, shine through us!

**⇒ Lord, John said of Jesus “He must increase while I must decrease.” May we do that too. Help our lives to magnify Your love and mercy. May those who see us, see not our imperfections, but see the power of Your grace and love through us. In Your precious name, we pray. Amen.**

Rev. David Winningham (Michigan)  
volunteer missionary  
Big Trout Lake, ON



## Respond With a Joyful Yes!

December 12, 2023

**“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Luke 1:38 (NIV)**

When you think of joy at Christmas, what comes to mind? Giving gifts? Family? Much of what we associate with joy in this season is dependent upon our experiences.

Mary was afraid when the angel appeared to her. Who wouldn’t be? The angel knew Mary was afraid so he called her by name and reassured her. Mary’s peace came when she said yes to God’s will, and she was filled with joy.

God gave His son, Jesus, to die on the cross and save us from our sins. Just as God knew Mary, He knows us. He sends people into our lives to help us when we’re troubled and who remind us God loves us.

Christmas may include giving gifts and being among family. But, more importantly, our true Christmas joy comes from celebrating the fact that Mary said yes!



As a volunteer, I have faced many challenges and unknowns. But I know God desires us to come alongside our northern friends and share the Gospel. We do not need to be afraid. He calls each of us by name. When we respond with a joyful yes, God will help us serve.

**⇒ Dear God, thank You for sending Your Son and for giving Mary the courage to say yes to Your will. Help us invite others to experience the true joy of the season. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.**

Catherine Williams (Alberta)  
volunteer missionary  
Hall Lake, SK  
L.A.M.P. executive assistant

## How Far Will You Go?

December 15, 2023

**“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men[a] from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose[b] and have come to worship him.’” Matthew 2:1 (ESV)**

How far is the trip? I often get asked this question when people are interested in serving with LAMP. When I tell them it’s two days of driving to the community, most people look surprised—not so much about the distance but the amount of time.

Yet the magi that came seeking the new King spent an estimated three years searching for Jesus. When the magi finally found the Christ child, they offered precious gifts to the King of Kings. In return, the magi received the greatest gift of all, faith in Jesus.

This is often the case when we serve in Indigenous communities. We go to serve and share the message of Jesus. And in return, we receive the gift of friendship.

How far are you willing to go to share the Good News of the Savior? Some volunteers drive for two days, while others travel even further. But you might not need to go that far to share the gospel message this Advent. Perhaps there are people around you right now who have not fully heard the message of God’s redeeming love for all people.

**⇒ Dear Heavenly Father, as You sent Your Son into this world, to live, die, and rise from the dead to forgive the sins of those that believe in Him, may You send us out near and far to share that message with people who haven’t yet heard the Good News. Amen.**

Nathan Schmidt  
(Oregon)  
LAMP Ministry  
Inc. staff  
missionary



## A Wonderful Reason to Sing

December 14, 2023

**“Behold, God is my salvation...Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.” [Read Isaiah 12:2-6 (ESV)]**

We played the boys’ team a few years back and lost. Mainly because half of our team has never played ball. But our boys were bigger now, and a few could hit pretty well.

Our strategy of working to our strengths worked great. John was careful to pitch so the boys could hit. Matt hardly let any balls get by him. Luke had a good arm to throw to second from home plate so base stealers would think twice. The boy’s team and their coach really appreciated having some competition, and we didn’t disappoint.

Generally, the people of Sachigo are fairly quiet and shy. Even playing ball, they don’t say much. But there is this one character named Ricky. He got up to bat and started taunting little John (Pastor Blum) on the mound. “Come on big guy, put one here so I can hit it. Come on big guy, right here.” It was funny. And so good to see.

Why the baseball story? Well, it happened to be the way to the boys’ hearts. At game time during VBS, Matt and Luke played baseball with the



boys. Every day. The boys absolutely loved that and looked forward to it. They became more attentive and more engaged in Bible lessons and music because they knew baseball was waiting for them after.

We sing the national anthem at professional ballgames, but Isaiah teaches us to sing joyfully because our

Savior has come! It’s a wonderful reason to sing at Christmas and throughout the year.

**⇒Lord, thank You for being our strength, our song, and our salvation. Teach us to sing Your praises to others. Amen.**

Pastor Brad Schollenberg (Manitoba)

Excerpt from 2017 Sachigo Lake trip, Edited by Catherine Williams

## His Faithfulness

December 13, 2023

**“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases: his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” Lamentations 3:22-23 (ESV)**

God’s faithfulness became clearer than ever to me in 2017. Our team had made the multi-day trip North for a few years, never knowing where our accommodations would be or what they would be like. We had gotten used to factoring in time to walk to get groceries and in order to hold VBS (with all our gear in hand).

Upon arriving late in the community, we got to the grocery store only to see it closed early. After knocking, a friendly face at the door welcomed us in to buy food for the week ahead.

That year we were blessed with a newer place to stay, but it was farther away from the VBS venue. Mercifully, a woman in a truck gave us a ride after Sunday’s service. She heard our story and arranged for us to have a vehicle for a few days. When we had to return it mid-week, another vehicle was gifted to us for the remainder of the week!



God’s faithfulness was demonstrated again and again that remarkable year we delivered the VBS program “GRACE – God Rescues All Children Everywhere.” God’s ceaseless love, mercies, and great faithfulness are continuous from the days of creation to the promise of a Saviour – Jesus’ birth, death, and resurrection, and His continued care for us delivering His Word in Canada’s North.

**⇒Heavenly Father, during Advent, as we consider Your promises, we look to the baby in a manger as an example of Your faithfulness, the fulfillment of the prophecies–Jesus, Your Son, and our Saviour. All thanks and praise to You, dear God, in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

Juanita Power (Ontario), volunteer missionary  
Weagamow, ON  
director, L.A.M.P. board



# LAMP Communities



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