

2012 South Niagara Life Centre

And he will be called
*Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.*
Isaiah 9:6



Christmas HOPE

IN OUR WORLD AT UNREST THIS CHRISTMAS, CHRIST
REMAINS HUMANITY'S *ETERNAL PEACE AND HOPE!*

"The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight" - are lyrics regarding Jesus birth in the Christmas carol 'O Little Town of Bethlehem' - as penned by Phillips Brooks (1868).

Hope and fear. Such a wide contrast - or polar ends - of emotion. *Polarities* often present in counselling, in addressing the steady stream of crisis situations coming to us at South Niagara Life Centre for help. *Polarities* present in our world this Christmas - evident in the news by the unrest being reported at Gaza (*not far from Bethlehem*), as nation faces nation under fire.

Unrest and distrust of generations, tracing back through the lineage of Herod the Great to Jacob and Rebekah's fraternal twin sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a pot of stew (Genesis 25) and spawned the generations of conflict among their descendants. A conflict present at the time of Jesus' birth, as evidenced by Herod's massacre of infants, that's still present today. Herod's fear of losing his throne was crippling, and a failed legacy at self preservation *in both genocide and infanticide*. Further, for all his power and ingenuity, the colossal projects Herod spent his time and energies on failed to remain, and today lay in ruin. By contrast Jesus still moves and influences hearts, today, *with His eternal hope*, despite the unrest.

Bethlehem (or 'house of bread') was the fitting birthplace for Jesus, in the light of *John 6:35*, who would become known as the 'Bread of Life' ("*... I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*"), and fill the spiritual void.

The message of Christmas. Kings and shepherds, angels and men, rich and poor, foreigner and citizen, influential and powerless—all *ALIKE* in one unforgettable moment of *community*—for realizing their eternal hope—in the presence of the infant Christ.

This Christmas, in spite of the unrest and terror around the globe, may we all pause and exercise our freedom to come together in the presence of Christ. Rather than spending excess energy and time haggling for presents (*that don't last*) may we spend time with our families, making memories that will last. Further, may we give blessings of charity to others who are hurting, in need of hope, in share our blessings - and the real hope we have that sustains our peace. *Lastly, if you have a need, SNLM is here to help. Please call 905-871-0236.*

God's peace, hope, love, and joy, to you and yours this Christmas,

Mattha Beroud
Executive Director

"*LAY NOT UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES UPON THE EARTH, WHERE MOTH AND RUST CONSUME, AND WHERE THIEVES BREAK THROUGH AND STEAL,*" **Matthew 6:19.** "*IN THIS WAY THEY WILL LAY UP TREASURE FOR THEMSELVES AS A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR THE COMING AGE, SO THAT THEY MAY TAKE HOLD OF THE LIFE THAT IS TRULY LIFE,*" **1Timothy 6:19.**



- **We give thanks** for God's blessed provision **to you** who participate in this mission as donor partners. **Similarly**, I give thanks **to all of our team** here in God's strength, and some **new recruits** divinely directed our way. Together we are serving needs, counselling individuals and saving lives; and in turn saving families. Your provisions of time and resources are crucial (invaluable) to what we witness being accomplished each week.

- **We seek** to inform, through our newsletters, as to how your investments are used through portraying a bigger picture. That is, partnerships are much more than funding *this - or - that*. The reality is, every investment received sustains these facilities and availability of qualified staff - to do two things: 1) to transform lives, and 2) to save lives. **That simple**; all efforts fulfill our mission for helping people resolve life crises, issues, and problems.

Thank you, ALL, for your vital roles in aiding SNLM's mission to continue forward, through this year.

God has directed the lonely, confused, and hurting, our way,

- . . . *people* struggling with a death in their family, or the aftermath of suicide,
 - . . . *others* with serious and terminal illnesses, or mental health issues,
 - . . . *women* trapped in abuse, *men* enslaved by the misuse of sex, and *both* with anger & substance dependencies, *now* compounding their problems
 - **A host are** wrestling with family concerns and / or relationship breakdowns
 - **A majority** are contending with marriage problems, thoughts of divorce, hopelessness, fear, unforgiveness, and depression.
- **God sustained us** when staff were laid off, simultaneously enabling us to assist others experiencing the same.
 - **He has cared** for those openly denouncing faith or church, through food drives this year received by area churches
 - **He continues to teach** and empower us to serve with grace, and to minister without unhelpful judgement, *i.e.*
 - . . . *transforming* negative opinions into volunteers, committed supporters, and consistent referral sources.
 - **He has taught us** to better care for those believing differently; from various faith backgrounds
 - **This year** we have received hundreds of prayer requests / concerns from both clients and our supporters, and we have
- been blessed* with many **miraculous** answers to prayer, as we await answers to others.
- Together** - we do make a consistent difference - a good part - because of many of you.
- **Hurting people have** made spiritual decisions in being drawn to God, and as a result, their families have drawn closer.
 - **Relationships** experiencing a breakdown *and* communication failure, have miraculously been reconciled, through God's grace
 - **God has enabled** us to be better listeners, servants, and counsellors. . .to identify and bring the heart issues in crisis struggles to light, to implement hope, and to witness healings for deep wounds. Thank God.
- The South Niagara LIFE MISSION has been a greater endeavor than anyone in the beginning would have imagined. **Simply**, both dollars and service are what keeps this mission moving forward. Through these, moms, dads, couples, and a multitude of little children (*and over 20 years*) join me in saying, "**thank you**" for serving community. May your Christmas be one filled with the joy, hope, and peace made possible by grace in God's gift to humanity through His son Jesus Christ.

We would like to thank All for this year's aid & Fall Fundraisers & Special Gifts

Community support, time, and third party fundraisers are very greatly appreciated. Thank you Nile Jenkins of Car Connection & Ft Erie Chamber for ongoing awareness & Karen & Terry for the fall Tradeshow. To Garrison UB Church & Trinity Life for initiating *Thanksgiving Food Drives*; and all others bringing in loose items, Thanks to **Intercede International & All Nations Church** for funds raised showing October Baby, to **Christian Life Assembly Church &**

team for the Turkey Dinner); to **Ridgeway Royal Bank** for the Book Sale; **Niagara Community Foundation** in funding new brochures; to **Riverside Community Church**, Women's Christian Fellowship, & **Faith Reformed Church** for your special offerings. Thanks **First Baptist Church & Bethel Pentecostal Church's** consistent monthly support (*allowing SNLM to remain open during layoffs - made possible due to monthly donations*). Thanks **Port of Grace** for space

& Port Colborne B.I.C. Church's team for catering SNLM's 20th Anniversary Roast Beef Dinner (\$13,000.00 for that effort), to F.E. Rotary, to **Joe's valu-mart** Dec.1st Christmas Hamper drive, to **Kathy & Dave Klune** (Realtors), to **Crystal Ridge Community Church, Windmill Point Church of Christ** & all sharing Christmas blessings - adopting our families this year. **May God bless ALL** those missed, for your gifts, & services.

143 Gilmore Road;
Fort Erie, ON L2A2L9
Phone: 905-871-0236
(answer machine after hours)
Email: snlm@snlmcounsel.ca
Founded Opened October 1992

SNLM REGULAR HOURS:
Fort Erie: Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-5:00p.m.
Male Counsel (Fort Erie) Tuesdays & Fridays
Port Colborne: Wednesdays, 1:30 - 4:30 p. m.
& American Express

Canada Revenue Charity #84068 6000 RR001

26B Charlotte Street;
Port Colborne, ON
Phone: 905-650-2363
(emerg: holidays and weekend)
Fax (both locations): 905-871-0928
Incorporated October 2010