



December 2009

AT A GLANCE

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UPCOMING LECTURE TOPICS

The Poetic Imagination

**On Boredom and the
Addiction to Experience**

**On the Empowering
Doctrine of Sin**

**Every Knee Shall Bow?
Looking at Christian
Universalism**

**On Photography and
Self Perception**

L'Abri Canada
2010 Terms

February 18-April 19

May 24-August 2

September 2-November 22

Dear L'Abri Friends and Family,

It is with a thankful heart that I write to fill you in on the latest news from Bowen Island L'Abri. The Fall Term brought a great group of students who were keen to learn and question and pitch in with all that needed to be done. Our lunch discussions were vibrant with questions around gender issues, the church, universalism, hell, and sexuality. There was no shortage in participation and respectful dialogue. Our work projects also progressed to include the refinishing and repairs of the deck and outdoor stairs, and reroofing the cottage, as well as many continued indoor improvements to make the student space more homey. There was a spirit of ownership and cooperation among the students that was infective.

We are grateful for the core group of seven students that stayed through the end of the term. Many others came for weekends and short stays. This was a great increase from last fall when we saw only one or two students at a time for brief visits. We can see God's hand in both seasons, and yet having a core community that brings its own momentum and energy is so key in a small branch such as ours. It was a gift for Clarke and I to hear laughter coming from the student side of the house most nights.



The Friday Night Lecture Series with a community potluck were also a highlight. The students looked forward to the weekly meal where all the workers and a number of guests from the neighbourhood could chat over an informal dinner. This gathering gives the students a chance to host visitors and return the hospitality they have been shown.

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If you'd like to apply as a student please visit our website for more information about our branch and a broader treatment of what to be mindful of as you consider joining us on the island. Alternatively you may call or email us, but keep in mind that as we are often engaged outside of the office, email is usually the more effective form of communication.

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One student writes of her time here:

L'abri, for me, has been a shelter as well as a home. I first came to the Canadian branch with no idea of what to expect. It was a time of transition in my life and I was exhausted. I needed a place to step away, ask questions, and seek community. Little did I know that the people I would meet would be such a source of wisdom, laughter, and hospitality to me over the past few months.



L'abri is a safe place where you are encouraged to speak your mind. You are invited to ask the hard questions and to wrestle with the answers. It was freeing having come from a culture that shies away from confrontation and demands tolerance. It seemed that no matter how hard I thought my questions were, other people had been or were still struggling with similar issues. Most of our lunch discussions would end with someone shaking their head, smiling and saying "I don't know," as we began to realize that we ended with more questions than we began with. We were not alone. The more we asked, the more we were challenged to go deeper.

Relationships were formed through work, study and play. I had no idea that one minute I could be discussing the universalism of Christ and the next be yelling about whether someone was cheating while acting out a word in a competitive game of fishbowl. Work involved anything from jump-starting a truck over and over again to moving wood from one pile to the next and then back. We feasted together, labored together and prayed together. I was relieved to discover how real and human the people I was now sharing my life with were. It is almost impossible to wear a mask when you are spending so much time with one another. People would drop in for a weekend and it would feel like a month had passed. Friendships grew quickly and although it felt like so much happened each day, time flew.



Before I came to L'Abri, I had lost my bearings. I had no gauge of what was important, what I believed, and who this God I was trying to follow really was. I am definitely leaving here with more questions than when I came, but I am also leaving with a desire to follow, to know, and be known by God. My life has in no way been "fixed," but I rest easier in this Grace that comes from Him. Not only have I had a chance to feel loved, accepted, and understood here, I have felt almost adopted into the L'Abri family. I am so thankful for these people and this place that has been my refuge.

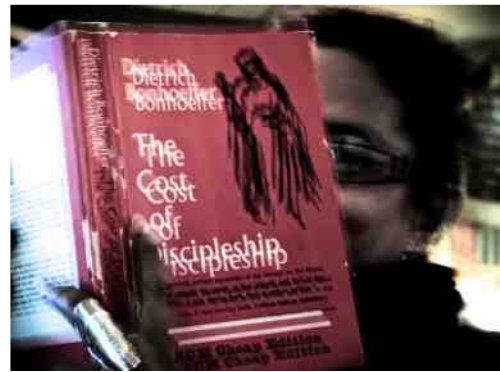


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They did a fantastic job of hosting our Canadian Thanksgiving meal as well, serving twenty-five people. The decorations and food were truly the offering of the whole community.

Looking back, September came and went with several changes. We said goodbye to Andy and Christy Beard and their three children who lived in the Cedar House for a year while helping us by offering their warm Southern hospitality and presence. We miss having them on the property and are so glad that they have remained on Bowen Island and in our lives. Jeff and Carrie Adams have moved from the cottage into Cedar House. They have settled in well, and are excited about the hospitality they can offer from such a beautiful space. The student library has been moved from the basement of Salal House, to two adjacent rooms on the main floor of Cedar House. These rooms are bright and attractive and

an ideal space for study. It is helpful that the students now have the ability to leave one house and go to another. The change in scenery is needed during the cold and wet months of Fall and Spring Term. The final change came in our saying farewell to Jeannie Moburg. Jeannie came to us as a helper in the summer of 2008, and then became a one-year worker. Her welcoming nature and her warm presence was a blessing in the student house, and to the Adams and Scheibes. L'Abri has been a huge part of her life for the past three years, but she felt that it was time to figure out the next step and also be step and also be more available to her four grown children. Please remember her in your prayers during this time of transition.



God continues to bring people to help this branch grow, and this term we had three wonderful 'helpers' (students who want to remain in the community and so agree to work for a term in exchange for room, board, and a small stipend). An extra helper joined us the same week Jeannie left, giving us such a gift, as our meal load would not be possible otherwise. Between Carrie's looking after eight-month-old Gabriel, who is more active everyday, and my moving into the third trimester of pregnancy and experiencing heart irregularities, we were feeling tired! We are thankful to have had understanding and capable helpers.

Lastly, we give thanks for continued financial provision through this fall. This summer we received a sizable gift that along with regular monthly gifts has carried us through until now. Such gifts allow us not only to pay our bills and salaries and make repairs, but also to take on the helpers we need and to be flexible with students who cannot afford to stay but may need more time to work through questions and struggles while in a sheltered community. Please continue to pray for God's provision as we go into these winter months when we don't have the supplement of student fees to meet our operating costs. In the midst of uncertain economic times we thank God that we can continue to open our doors to those who need such a place as this. Pray please especially for the spring term, that those students who need to be here will commit to come.

Thank you again for your care for Canadian L'Abri,
Julia Scheibe

Photos by Jonathan Roberts, Helper at Canadian L'Abri, Fall 2009

Praying Through December 2009

"I call on you, O God, for you will answer me."
Psalm 17:6

Please join with us as we mindfully bring ourselves and our cares to God our Father. Each day is marked with a specific prayer suggestion. Our serving families appear regularly as a reflection of our deep and continuing need for God's daily provision of grace that we might be more like His Son, Jesus.



			December 10 Students			
				Adams Family	Bowen Island Churches	Canadian Board
14 Scheibe Family	15 Day of Prayer for L'Abri England	16 Spring Term Helpers	17 Students	18 Adams Family	19 Bowen Island Community	20 Canadian Trustees
21 Scheibe Family	22 Day of Prayer For L'Abri Netherlands	23 Spring Term Helpers	24 Students	25 Adams Family	26 Bowen Island Churches	27 Canadian Board
28 Scheibe Family	29 Day of Prayer for L'Abri Canada	30 Spring Term Helpers	31 Students			