



# Birthday Gift

## Children's Story

Cycle C, Proper 6

**Title:** Birthday Gift  
**Author:** Karen Suderman  
**Church:** St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, St. Jacobs, ON, now serving as a Witness worker in South Africa  
**Text:** Luke 7: 36- 8:3  
**Theme:** Jesus appreciates our gifts of love.

### Gathering Activity:

*Invite all the children forward. Ask them who enjoys getting and giving gifts. Once they have settled into a comfortable position for listening, open your Bible to Luke 7 and say, "Today's children's story is a lot like a story in Luke, where Jesus gets a special gift. Listen for that story when the scriptures are read. Let's take a moment to become quiet so we can listen with our hearts to this story about a teenager, named Greg, and his mom."*

### Wondering Questions:

- I wonder what kinds of gifts are the most special.
- I wonder what kinds of special gifts we can make and give.
- I wonder what kinds of gifts could show Jesus our love.

---

This Children's Story is part of a larger story archive available as a resource to teachers, ministers, and others of Mennonite Church Canada ©2010. Posted by permission of the author. Edited by Elsie Rempel, director of Christian Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada

## Story:

“Hey, Mom, what is this?” Greg asked, holding up a crooked purple and yellow polka-dot birdhouse. Mom looked at it and smiled. “That,” she replied, “is a birthday gift you gave me when you were six years old.” Greg’s eyebrows rose. “Mom,” he said, “I am 19 now. Why would you keep such a silly-looking thing for 13 years? It doesn’t even have a door!” Mom simply responded, “Because it is the best gift you ever gave me. Let me tell you about it.”

Mom picked up the crooked birdhouse and set it on the kitchen table. She poured herself a cup of coffee and a glass of iced tea for Greg. She sat down with a sigh and began her story. “It was a few weeks before my birthday and your father told you that the gifts needed to be really special this year. Kelly had no trouble coming up with a special gift at all. She went right out and bought a bottle of perfume with allowance money she had saved. Your father gave me no hints, but from the way he kept on saying ‘I’d be excited if I were you!’ I knew he had bought the silver necklace I had been eyeing at the jewellery store.”

“You, however, walked around for days looking troubled. You wanted to do something special but didn’t know what to do. Dad and Kelly tried to help you think of ideas, but you didn’t like any of their suggestions.

“Four days before my birthday you woke up with an idea. You got out your allowance money, took your father’s hand and walked out the door. For the next three days you were shut up in the garage. You even put a sign on the door that said ‘No Moms Allowed.’ You poured your heart into your project. At breakfast on the morning of my birthday you wiggled in your chair like you had ants in your pants. You waited until Dad and Kelly gave me their gifts. Then you were off like a shot to the garage to get your gift. It was covered

with an old rag. You set it down in front of me and pulled off the rag with a flourish. There it was, polka-dotted, dripping with glue, crooked, no door, but it was the most beautiful gift I had ever received.”

Greg looked again at the purple, crooked birdhouse with no door and shook his head. “Why was *this* the most beautiful thing that you had ever received when Dad gave you jewellery and Kelly gave you perfume? Those other things were so much nicer than this!”

Mom replied, “This birdhouse is the most beautiful gift that you have ever given me because you made it with such a huge amount of love. You had poured your heart, your love for me, into the birdhouse for days. That made this gift so special. When we give gifts with such love, how nice they are doesn’t matter.”

## Prayer:

Thank you, Jesus, for gifts of love. Thank you for loving and accepting our gifts, no matter the size. We love you. Please take what we offer you and use it to spread your love all around the world. Amen.