



The Grapevine



The Newsletter of Shaughnessy Heights United Church

Vol. 6; Issue 3: Advent 2005

The Story Of Christmas

Dear Friends,

Have you ever noticed that the Christmas story begins with an angel and ends with camels? We go from the beauty and mystery of the announcement to the Virgin Mary to smelly beasts in a dark stable. Do you think God could use a script-writer? The story wanders around from Galilee to Bethlehem to Egypt with a cast of odd characters that seem to have nothing to do with each other. In the midst of official oppression, with poor shepherds and rich kings, in a back alley, God comes to be with us in Jesus. You'd think there would be a better way to tell this story! Except that, this is how God always comes—in the mix and the muddle of life, not waiting for the stage to be set and the “right” people to be invited.

The stories urge us to get ready for Christmas and we rush to do a thousand things and still worry that we haven't done enough. It all has to be perfect—but since none of us is perfect, we can always think of something more to do. And some of us face the holiday season with dread, our hearts shadowed by sorrow or pain. Yet Christmas comes, ready or not. Like the child that is born on his own time, we must receive this gift with whatever we have.

I hope your Christmas has more angels than camels this year, but if not, just remember that they are part of the story, too. God comes for us all, new life right in the middle of whatever is going on.

Christmas blessings,
Janet



In Search Of Our Kneeling Places

By Ann Weems

In each heart lies a Bethlehem,
an inn where we must ultimately answer
whether there is room or not.
When we are Bethlehem-bound
we experience our own advent in his.
When we are Bethlehem-bound
we can no longer look the other way
conveniently not seeing stars
not hearing angel voices.
We can no longer excuse ourselves by busily
tending our sheep or our kingdoms.

This Advent let's go to Bethlehem
and see this thing that the Lord has made
known to us.
In the midst of shopping sprees
let's ponder in our hearts the Gift of Gifts.
Through the tinsel
let's look for the fold of the Christmas Star.
In the excitement and confusion, in the merry chaos,
let's listen for the brush of angels' wings.
This Advent, let's go to Bethlehem
and find our kneeling places.

With blessings for the Season,
Cheryl & John Banfield
Chair and Vice Chair, Council

What's Happening: Events & News



Come Decorate The Church! Saturday, November 26

4:00 pm Decorating Begins!
6:00pm Family Potluck Dinner
8:00pm Parade of Lights

The Power And The Grace - WW II Women

This documentary by Vancouver filmmaker and SHUC member, Alison MacLean, aired on Vision TV on Sunday, Nov. 6th. **Alison will present a screening of this 30 minute film in the Lounge after coffee hour (11:30-12:30pm) on Sunday, Nov.27.** A few of the veterans featured in the film will be on hand for conversation and refreshments will be served.



Gifts For Kate Booth House

Gifts for Kate Booth House will be collected again this year. The presents help children (up to 16 years of age) experience the blessings of the season. Please wrap presents and label with a removeable tag indicating age and gender suitability of the gift. Coordinator Ann Thorsteinsson.

A representative from Kate Booth House will be picking up the gifts from the church on Monday, Nov.28th. Please leave your donation at the church office by Sunday, Nov.27th.

Seniors Mark Your Calendars!

December 7, 2005 - The Holly Tea
January 25, 2006 - Seniors Lunch
February 22, 2006 - Seniors Lunch
March 29, 2006 - Seniors Lunch

For further information call Pat Mitchell, Coordinator, at 604-948-4894.

Your Invitation To The Holly Tea

The Holly Tea will be held on Wednesday, December 7th. A carol sing will start the event at 1:30pm in the Lounge, and the Tea follows in the church hall from 2:00-4:00pm. **Watch for your invitation in the mail!**

Donations of goodies and sandwiches for the Tea are warmly welcomed.

If you have a care giver or friend you would like to come with you, please make an indication on the sign up sheets. Everyone is most welcome, we just need to know the numbers.



Is This The Look Of Christmas? An Advent Resource For Families

This year's resource comes to us from the Mission & Service Fund of the UCC - family ideas for each day of the Advent season that will help people analyze materialism while focusing on the true meaning of Christmas.

This helpful material can be found online at: www.united-church.ca/infopac/2005/october/pdf/adventres.pdf or pick up a printed copy at the Action Table on Sundays, or from the info table outside the church office during the week.

Celebrating and Worship

Sunday Worship Schedule

Sunday morning worship services begin at 10:00 am
(Child care, children & youth programs provided)

NOVEMBER 27

First Advent, Communion Service

DECEMBER 4

Second Advent

11:00 am - 2nd Hour on Daycare Constitution Changes

DECEMBER 11

Third Advent, Carols & Reading Service

DECEMBER 18

Fourth Advent, Special Intergenerational Pageant Style Service

DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve Services:

7:30pm Family Worship

11:00pm Candlelight Communion

DECEMBER 25

No worship service

JANUARY 1

New Years Day - A special guest will preach the sermon

JANUARY 8

Epiphany Service



Christmas Worship Services

Sunday, December 4 at 4:30 pm "Into the December Darkness"



As the days grow shorter and gloomier and the holiday lights get brighter, we may feel our spirits sag. What do you need to let go of in order to celebrate Christmas in peace this year? Is there sorrow in your life, or leftover guilt or sadness? Do you feel you got chewed up or burned out at work or in a relationship, or even here at Shaughnessy? Come to a quiet service of reflection and healing; welcome God into the darkness so that the light of Christ may shine.



Sunday, December 11 at 10:00 am Carols & Readings Worship Service

As well as Advent and Christmas carols, music by all of Shaughnessy vocal and bell choirs will be featured in this worship service. Come!

Sunday, December 18 at 10:00 am Intergenerational Worship Service

Our talented youth group has written a Christmas play that will be dramatized by the younger members of our congregation. Join this intergenerational service of fun and anticipation of the Christ Child's birth!



Saturday, December 24 Christmas Eve Services

7:30 pm Family Worship

11:00 pm Candlelight Communion

Sunday, December 25 Christmas Day

There will not be a Christmas Day service at Shaughnessy this year. However, the following United Church congregations are holding services on Christmas Day, and you are welcome to worship at:

University Hill at 10:30 am (6050 Chancellor Blvd)

Canadian Memorial at 10:30 am (1825 W.16th Ave.)

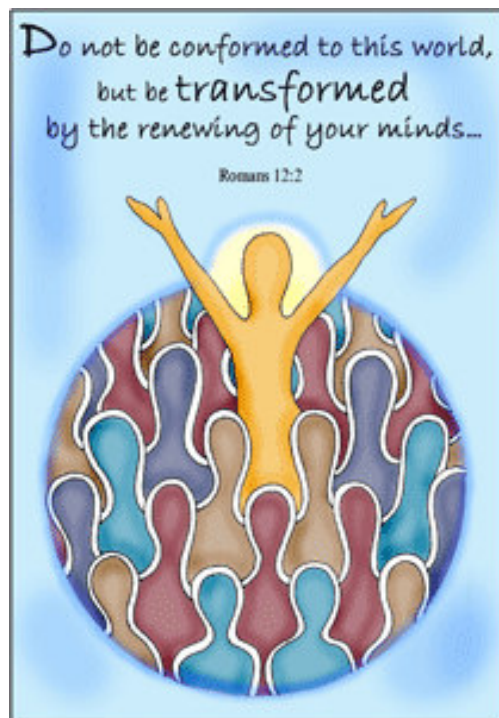
St. Andrew's-Wesley at 10:30 am (1022 Nelson St.)

Ministry Leadership

Be The Change You Wish To See In This World

by Gayle Ansley, Chair of the Transition Team

Following two consecutive second hours held to provide information to and to get feedback from the congregation in regards to what a one-year and a two-year interim would look like, the congregation voted to continue with a one-year interim, on October 30th. This vote served to clarify the original motion voted on in May and will inform Janet and the Transition Team in planning for the remaining eight months until Janet completes her time with us.



One of the aspects of interim ministry is modeling of behaviour we wish to see. In our small group, this means listening to each other with respect and with open hearts and minds, speaking our truth and operating in a clear and transparent manner. For me personally, this is reflected in the words of Gandhi, “Be the change you wish to see in the world”, or as the youth would put it – walk your talk.

This calls us to examine not only how we live our lives, but also how we live our faith. It requires us to know who we are and what we would like to become not only as individuals, but as a part of the congregation, part of the United Church of Canada, part of the world.

The Interim Ministry process is designed to explore these questions. The first step in knowing who we are, is on November 20th as we celebrate the story of Shaughnessy Heights United Church through a process called appreciative inquiry.

In his book *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change*, Mark Lau Branson describes appreciative inquiry as a process that “asks us questions to recall the best of what is known, to give voice to deep values, and to imagine the possibility the future might hold.”

So, as we await the coming of the infant, who through God’s love, changed so profoundly the lives of those that he touched through his teaching, healing, provoking love, let us spend time praying for God’s guidance in this process. Let us listen for the voice of God as we discern what is the change we wish to be in the world.

Building Improvements

by Norman Barr, Chair of Property Committee

Our 25 year old dishwasher has finally given up the ghost. Unavailable spare parts or expensive ones if available forced the issue. The new one costing \$5,000 has a 3 1/2 minute cycle and feeds itself automatically with detergent.

Our lobby entrance is now graced with a chesterfield, which along with a handsome round table and chairs and two other pieces, have been donated to us.

News From The Daycare

by Cathy Lew, Chair of the Daycare Board

There is lots of good news from the Daycare! Our enrollment is full in the pre-school program, and our able educators in the Green and Blue Rooms are busy as ever. The After School Care program is solidly building. We have recently hired two new staff on a permanent basis for the After School Care program to meet the growing demand and keep the program thriving with their enthusiasm and great ideas.

We are working with the Church’s building committee to improve the physical facilities. The grants to daycares throughout the province blessed us as well, and city licensing is giving us much guidance as to an appropriate project for the funds.

Come by and check out the fabulous seasonal decorations and art projects!

Ministry Leadership

Stewardship Of Abundance

by Marilyn Thorsteinsson, Stewardship Committee Member

Out of the abundance of the heart, great things can happen. ABUNDANCE... "quantity more than enough", as the Oxford Dictionary tells us. But listen to the words of St. Paul in his 2nd letter to the Corinthians..... "And God is able to provide you with every blessings in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work". Here at Shaughnessy Church, we are indeed blessed abundantly in so many ways by our church community. The vital ministry and mission of the church is experienced day in and day out through the work of the:

- ♥ ministry staff,
- ♥ volunteers,
- ♥ administration,
- ♥ children's and youth programs,
- ♥ worship and music,
- ♥ outreach,
- ♥ pastoral care,
- ♥ study groups
- ♥ and the ministry of each one of us.

The church is always there for us. The giving of our time, talents, money and prayers ensure that these many ministries continue effectively.

This is an exciting time to be part of the Shaughnessy community of faith. The future is anticipated and if our financial footings are solid, we can move forward "MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST".

Please read your STEWARDSHIP LETTER carefully. Your time, talents, money and prayers will contribute the SHUC MISSION IN 2006. Please pledge and make your personal financial commitment to continuing the living story of God's love in the work and mission of Shaughnessy United Church.

CHRIST
THE SAVIOR
is BORN!

Musings From The Trustee Chair

by Robin B. Leckie, Chair of Trustees

What a joy to attend our services this last summer in our newly renovated Church Hall. Very soon we will be additionally blessed with the melodic tones of a Steinway piano - the gift of a long time member of Shaughnessy, Gertrude Nunn, who died in June. The piano is valued at \$25,000, but is probably worth considerably more. We are very grateful to Gertrude and to all those others before her for establishing our Trust Funds and our buildings.

The Trustees met on October 26 and I am happy to report that our Funds are doing just fine. At the end of September our Endowment Fund was \$1,093,169 while our Special Funds were \$88,125. Likely though there will have been some deterioration in October.

This was my first Meeting as Chair but it is my 15th year as a member of Shaughnessy Heights United Church. As I reflect back in context with our existing difficulties I recall Janet Cawley, at our Trustee Meeting, remarking about our dedicated and hard working Congregation, our close to balanced budget, our buildings and facilities, and our Trust Funds. Not to mention our Sanctuary so popular for concerts and presentations.

I started thinking too of those ministers who have served us in the past 15 years of perceived disarray. Bob Smith the best preacher I ever encountered, George Searcy a friend of mine from VST days, Don Robertson, still a close friend, Sally Harris whom I haven't seen for awhile but who when we do meet always gives me a big hug. And of course my mentor Gordon How, who has allowed us to stay at his home on our visits here when we lived in Ontario. And finally Harry, a truly dedicated and hard-working minister. Incidentally, Rosemary and I had lunch with Harry and Glenys last month in Toronto, and they are both doing just fine.

As an actuary/accountant I do not ignore figures. They are important. But so are people and relationships and dedication and trust. And that is what I see at Shaughnessy. I believe we are and have been very blessed.

Just inside the front entrance of our home, we have hung pictures of our families and ancestors. I have this visual reminder of how much I owe to those that came before. We at Shaughnessy Heights United Church are also blessed by those who came before. I am hopeful our future Congregations will feel the same about us.

Learning, Reaching Out and Caring

The “Busy”ness Of The Season

by Jacinto Baybay, Minister for Children, Youth & Families

One Sunday afternoon in early November I found myself shopping with my four year old nephew at the mall. I couldn't believe that the hustle and bustle Christmas is coming upon us. The Halloween decoration is already put away, and Christmas lights are up. I found myself wondering what happened to the time. October has been a busy month and a learning experience for me.

To start I thank everyone for attending my covenanting service on October 23rd. This was the first time that I have been a part of such an occasion, and you made that experience memorable. The Thanksgiving Family Cluster gathering on October 8th was well attended. We were entertained, a variety of food was shared, and all experienced great fellowship time. I congratulate Elizabeth Kerklaan and the Fall Fair Committee for making the event a success. The Youth group and Shock Group and I really enjoyed decorating and being a part of the Haunted Hallway. We thank all of you who braved your fears and entered the hallway! I also thank David Ansley and the Reach Out Committee for putting on a wonderful event on November 4-6th. The conference inspired many youth, especially those from our congregation, to become compassionate about change in the world. The youth are now talking with the Outreach Committee to find ways to become more involved in Shaughnessy's outreach projects.

The youth group and shock group are going well. In October, a highlight was the night of go-carting and pizza. Currently the youth group is working on a mural downstairs in the youth room. With the support of ministry staff and the Worship & Music Committee, the youth and shock group have been more visible in worship. I thank the Grade 4-6 class for their beautiful disciple mask which they shared in the October 30th service. Just for information, Emma Berringer represented us at the junior youth conference in Naramata during the November 4-6 weekend; and on November 11-13, Niko Anderson, David Munroe and Thomas Saxon represented us at the senior youth conference.

This years Christmas pageant, “Prelude to Hope”, will be held during morning worship on Sunday, December 18. Stephen Ansley and I co-wrote the pageant play. On December 19th the youth and Shock Group will be caroling! So if you are interested in getting a visit from us don't hesitate to contact me. We are hoping to visit some members in care facilities as well. God bless you!

Shaughnessy Family & Youth Events

Saturday, November 26

Hanging of the Greens at 4:00 pm

Church Potluck Meal at 6:00 pm

Come! Enjoy fellowship, friends, fun & food!

(Sign up at the action table on Sundays)

Sunday, December 18 at 5:00 pm

Christmas Festival Celebration Potluck Meal

Youth Group meets every Monday from 7:00-9:00 pm

Shock Group meets every Thursday from 6:30-8:30 pm

(SHOCK - Shaughnessy Heights Outrageous Christian Kids)



All the volunteers say Elizabeth Kerklaan is a joy to work with - and the proof is in her smile!

Photo: Pat McKenzie

Fall Fair Raises \$10,000!

by Elizabeth Kerklaan, Fair Coordinator

A big thank you to everyone for making the Fall Fair such a success. Everyone gave so generously both with their donations and their personal time. The final tally was a profit of \$10,000! If you have any suggestions on how we may do things differently next year, please call me at 604-266-0776 or email me at kerklaan@telus.net. In the meantime, please start saving for next year's Fair!

Reaching Out and Caring



*Reach Out and smile!
Organizers and presenters at
our annual social justice
conference, held at SHUC on
Nov.4 & 5, 2005.*

*From l to r: Our Dave Ansley,
Cathy Campbell (Rector, St.
Matthews Anglican Church in
Winnipeg), Bruce Gregersen
(General Council Minister,
UCC Programs for Mission &
Ministry), and our Jennifer
Lowry.*

Photo: John Banfield

A Letter From Galloway United Methodist Church

Dear Friends in Christ,

I write on behalf of Galloway Memorial United Methodist Church in Jackson, Mississippi, to thank you for your kind donation of \$1095 to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The effects of this natural disaster have been simply devastating and the human needs are enormous. Your gift has brought blessings. More than material relief, it has also touched the hearts of many folk here. The realization that Christian solidarity exceeds all boundaries has been a witness that, in my opinion, the American spirit needs to experience. These are difficult times in the U.S.A. and the knowledge of prayers and love beyond its borders are a soothing balm.

Kindly convey our deep appreciation to all.
Grace and Peace, Rev. Ross Olivier

Thank You Tea Volunteers!

by Phyllis Hayter, Tea Coordinator

Thank you very much to everyone who was involved with the catering at the recent events: Reach Out Conference and the Covenanting Services for our ministers, Jacinto and Janet. The donated food was delicious and much appreciated as was the help to put it together and clean up afterwards.

There were leftover lunch boxes from the conference. Normally these would be delivered to First United Church but for their closure on Saturdays. Instead, the sandwiches and fruit were taken to the "Dugout", a drop in center at the edge of Gastown at Columbia and Powell. The people at the Dugout were pleased with the donation.

I wish everyone in the congregation a very peaceful and joyous Christmas and a happy healthy New Year. Thank you very much to everyone who has helped in many ways this year - you are appreciated!

A Letter From Keith Watt

[Editors note: Keith writes to us from his new home at Morning Bay Vineyard on Pender Island. His letter is too long to reprint in its entirety, but excerpts are printed below. For those who would like to read the complete letter, copies are available from the church office.]

Leavings mean change, a chance for growth, and an acknowledgement of loss which honours that which is passing. Acknowledgement is what this letter is about: acknowledgement of the healing faith of the Shaughnessy community, acknowledgement of our bond, and acknowledgement that I will miss so many things about this wondrous tribe of people.

...this community has enveloped me and my family, no matter who that has included, as time passed, with a love that is affirming and moulding and stronger than in any community I have ever experienced. I would like to acknowledge the presence of that love and its redeeming power in my life and the lives of those most important to me. I will miss Shaughnessy: the leaky roof (we beat that one!), the wonderful gift of music which lives in that congregation, the healing power of people who care passionately about God's world and their role of service in that world.....Go well, wondrous community. Your love transforms God's world.

Information

Book Marks

by Pat Hudson, Librarian

The Friends of the Library acknowledge with thanks the gift from the "Mission of Understanding South Africa 2005" for our Children's collection. Entitled MADIBA THE RAINBOW MAN by Lionel J. Maxim, this biography of Nelson Mandela supports the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund.

ALSO FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: THE LEGEND OF THREE TREES. This book, based on a folk tale, presents a plan from God for all of us (DVD included). WHAT I BELIEVE by Brown & Langley. This is a young person's guide to the religions of the world, written specifically for elementary school children. Eight religions are presented by eight children who explain their beliefs. Both of these volumes are valuable resources. We would like to thank the anonymous donors. **Yes, we do have the latest HARRY POTTER!**

ADULT READING: The "Friends" also acknowledge with thanks 2 books given in memory of Dr. Hugh & Mrs. Alice MacCorkindale by Margaret Dickinson Smith & Family, and Mary & Gordon Christopher and Family: REVELATIONS, PERSONAL RESPONSES TO THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE edited by Richard Holloway. This anthology present to the reader responses from 33 writers, among them A.N. Wilson, The Dalai Lama, Mordecai Richler, and P.D. James. PRISONERS OF THE NORTH by Pierre Berton. This was the authors 50th and final book. It documents the stories of 5 unforgettable characters, a mining tycoon, an arctic explorer, a titled lady, a backwood eccentric, and Robert Service. Loners, all who heeded the Call of the Yukon.

Our thanks to Janet Warner for donating a copy of her history/fiction novel OTHER SORROWS OTHER JOYS: THE MARRIAGE OF CATHERINE SOPHIA BUCHER AND WILLIAM BLAKE. Janet, formerly a professor at York University Glendon Campus, grew up in our church neighbourhood. Many of us knew her as Janet Jabour.

These are just a few of the books that have been added this Fall. Coming soon books by STEPHEN LEWIS, ANN RICE, LYN WHITTALL, and JUDY HAGER.

THREE CHEERS FOR VOLUNTEERS, THE BOOK SALE WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!



Transitions

Deaths

- Margaret Scott on September 12, 2005
- Albert Anthony on November 2, 2005

Weddings

- Ivana Chan & Kahung Cho on October 1, 2005
- Alison Caswell & Stephen Lui on October 1, 2005
- Joanne Yao & Alan Kwoo on October 8, 2005



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The newsletter of

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The editor welcomes your suggestions, comments, thoughts and ideas for The Grapevine!

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