



ST. DAVID'S
UNITED CHURCH

The Shepherd

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May/June 2009

Muchas Gracias! Merci! Domo Arigato Gozaimas! Dankashein!

How many ways can we say thank you? Well, let's begin with dessert – a little chocolate here, a little fruit and whipped cream there...

If you have taught Sunday school, served on a Committee or Ministry Team, sung in the Choir, helped with the Youth, served on Pastoral Care, helped with Out of the Cold or making sandwiches at the North Shore Lookout Shelter, or rolled up your sleeves to fix up the building...in short, if you have in the last year contributed your time and energy to the well-being of our community, the staff want to say *Thank You!* through the language of dessert.

When: **Thursday, May 14, 6:30**

What: **Dessert in the Lounge**

Who: **By the staff for YOU!**



Hope you can come. Please give Chris a call in the office (922-3961) so we know how many nummy things to bake.



**BE THE CHANGE:
HEAL THE WORLD DAY**
Sunday, May 31st
9:30-1:30

Registration deadline: May 10

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Minister with Children, Youth & Families: Colleen Blair

Minister of Music: Marsha Goold
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Where the Spirit Blows

*The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it,
but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes.
So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.*
John 3:8

The Spirit blows in two significant ways this May, and I'm excited by the as yet unborn potential.

May 31 is Pentecost Sunday, often called the birthday of the Church as it represents the symbolic beginning of the Christian Church. Pentecost (50 days after Easter), celebrates the day the Holy Spirit came in wind and fire, breathed upon the disciples and turned their life and their world upside down. Filled with an intoxicating joy, they spilled into the street and people from foreign countries heard them all speaking in their own language.

I believe the one language that is understood by all is compassion. An act of compassion is the *lingua franca* of the world. An act of kindness, no matter how small, breaks down divisive barriers and helps make a broken world whole.

This May 31, the congregation of St. David's will embody Pentecost. Like the disciples before us, we'll spill into the streets of our community and speak a language all understand, this time, the language of compassion. Joining with the congregations from Har El Synagogue and from the North Shore Baha'i community, we'll work side by side, responding to the call to "be the change that mends the world". After our Sunday service for others, we'll share in a BBQ back at the synagogue.

For those who are not able or are not particularly interested in participating in the "Be the Change, Heal the World" effort, the Rev. Ron Smith will hold a brief Pentecost service in the sanctuary (at the usual time, 10:00). After worship, they, too, will be invited to share in service to others by making sandwiches for those who are homeless. It will be good to know that while some are worshipping God through active service, others will be supporting the common good through prayer. Action & prayer: we need both.

If you want to participate in the Be the Change initiative, please register by May 10th.

The week prior to Pentecost, May 24th, Dan and Colleen (and others?) will be at the Celebration of Ministry service which concludes the BC Conference General Meeting. The meeting itself will begin Thursday evening (May 21) and continue all day Friday and Saturday. The keynote speaker this year is former Moderator of the United Church, the Very Rev. Peter Short. Peter is a gifted speaker and a much respected and beloved leader in the Church. If you have a chance to hear him speak Thursday evening or preach Sunday morning, do come. It will be worth the drive to the Langley Sportsplex, where the meeting and service will be held.

That Sunday is also when I will be officially installed as the President of BC Conference, a significant responsibility that will not only shape the next two years of my life, but also of our ministry. Whether you're able to be at the service in person or whether you're at St. David's that morning, I would appreciate your prayerful support as I serve the broader Church in this way.

The Spirit blows where it will, and breathes into us all new life.

Thanks be to God!

Dan

Marsha's Musings

According to an old song that some of you will know, *April showers bring May flowers*. Yet we've had flowers for what seems like eons! I'm still new out here on the West Coast and it continues to baffle me how we have flowers blossoming as early as February. So the April Showers message doesn't really apply to this region, does it? Yet, the rains seem to be dissipating. And so we enter a time of year when many of us choose to spend our time outdoors rather than inside a building such as a church. As your Minister of Music, I can't offer you very much if you're not at church on a Sunday or at choir practice on a Thursday night. So I've been reflecting on how I can support you as you walk the path in the company of nature. Consider this:

Listen.

*Listen to the sound of the brook trickling.
Listen to the sound of the waves crashing.
Listen to the crunch of your feet in the dry sand.
Listen to the thud of your hiking boot striking the steep earth.
Listen to your breath.*

Listen.

Listen to a bird's song. And listen again. And again.

And when you're ready, pick another bird's song that you hear. And listen. And when you're ready, listen to both songs at the same time. Notice how they work together even though they are completely different.

People are similar. Although we can be very different from each other, somehow when we are in community, it just works. Birds of a feather flock together, it is said. Yet birds so different from each other seem to coexist with remarkable ease. Let us always celebrate our differences yet rejoice in our connectedness.

And should you choose to step into the sanctuary on any given Sunday morning as you take cover from the blazing sun, I will be here waiting for you, ready with my own bird song. I hope you'll sing, too.

Marsha Goold

Minister of Music

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One of the projects for **Be The Change Day** involves providing support for the North Shore Youth Safe House. In advance we are collecting new pajamas for teenagers. These are given to a teen when they arrive at the safe house. We are also still collecting toiletry supplies for personal care kits for women and teens in crisis. All donations can be left in the labeled box in the St. David's library

Children, Youth and Families

Much has happened in the Sunday school since the autumn when we explored the Ecclesiastes text, 'to everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under the heavens...a time to be born and a time to die...'. The Season of Easter and spring itself are wonderful times to remember that we are immersed in the sacred circle of life. Nature surrounds us with daily reminders of hope and new life rising out of the cold and dark of winter and the grief and isolation of Good Friday. From the seeds that are scattered in autumn to the stirrings of growth in the wet and muddy spring, nature reminds us year after year of an eternal truth. We must spend our lives and our love with wild abandon and only in giving it away, will we know the fullness of spring in our lives.

Colleen

Late spring is potlatch time in the natural world, a great giveaway of blooming beyond all necessity and reason – done, it would appear, for no reason other than the sheer joy of it. The gift of life, which seemed to be withdrawn in winter, has been given once again, and nature, rather than hoarding it, gives it all away. There is another paradox here, known in all the wisdom traditions; If you receive a gift, you keep it alive not by clinging to it but by passing it along.

“There is a Season”, from Let Your Life Speak, By Parker Palmer

Youth



Friday, May 8th...Junior youth bowling party. Youth in grades 4-6 will meet at St. David's at 4:30 and from there we will proceed to the bowling alley in North Vancouver. An RSVP is required given that we'll need a reservation and drivers. If you are able to assist with the driving, please be in touch with Colleen. We plan to be back at St. David's at 6. There will be a cost of \$6.50 to cover bowling fees. Everyone welcome!

May 15-18...Senior youth Retreat. Youth in grades 7-12 are invited to participate in the annual May Retreat, held at Camp Fircom on Gambier Island. Registration forms available from Colleen or online at www.vanyaya.com. Please register ASAP!

May 21-24...."Children at Conference"

Children at Conference is a wonderful opportunity for 8-12 year olds to participate in the annual meeting of B.C. Conference, Thursday evening May 21st to Sunday noon, May 24th. Four of our youth attended last year and had a very memorable experience. This is the event where Dan Chambers will be installed for a 2-year term, as president of B.C. Conference. Please be in touch with me for further information and for a registration form. The deadline for applicants is the first of May but I expect there will be a little leeway! (There will be no junior youth gathering on May 22nd due to B.C. Conference.)

Saturday, June 6-Sunday June 7th...Junior Youth Retreat

Youth in grades 5 and 6, active in the Sunday school and youth group, will be on retreat at Gabriola Island. We extend our deep gratitude to Barbara and Brian Hunt for their generosity in hosting this event for the last 15 years!

Friday, June 12th...Junior Youth Group Summer Sendoff...4:30-6 at St. David's

Families and Teachers

Sunday, May 3rd...A very full Sunday!

Sunday School Picture...Communion...

Newborn Kits

Sunday May 3rd, is a communion Sunday when our recent confirmands will serve communion for the first time. Then during Sunday school children and youth will assemble kits for newborn children to be given to mothers in hospitals, clinics and refugee camps. This is a programme of the Mennonite Central Committee whereby newborn kits are sent to assist mothers in giving their children a good start in Bosnia, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, North Korea, Serbia, Russia, and Ukraine. The supplies for these kits are being purchased from the children's weekly offerings. And lastly, on this special and very full day, we'll take the Sunday school picture! Don't miss it!

Wednesday, May 6th...Spring Cleaning Day

Volunteers are welcome to come at 9:15 and help Colleen sort through the Sunday school cupboard. Coffee and treats provided. Let me know if you have an hour or two to spare!

Sunday, May 10th...Prayer Boxes

On and off for the last couple of months, children and youth have been assembling prayer boxes filled with items that we hope will encourage them to engage in prayer. They will be on display in the coffee hour and will go home this day!

Sunday, May 10th...Registration Deadline

May 10th is the registration deadline for "**Be the Change**" Day. Mail, Fax or drop off your registration in person at the church!

Wednesday, May 13th...Sunday School Teachers Potluck

All teachers are invited to a potluck supper gathering at Colleen's in honour of the gift you have been to the children and youth of St. David's, and to me. We will celebrate with one another, your contributions of time, energy and love, and share ideas for next year. Gather at 6:45, dinner at 7 p.m. RSVP to Colleen at 922 3961 or colleen@stdavidsunited.com

Sunday, May 31st...Be the Change Day

"Be the Change: Heal the World Day" is a joint project of three congregations: the Har-El Jewish community, the Baha'i community of West Vancouver and St. David's. It's an inspiring opportunity to work together to be an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling and socially just presence in our local community. There are 14 different projects happening that day, followed by lunch from 12:30-1:30. Participants will meet at 9:30 at St. David's, meet their team leader and go off to their various assignments, meeting afterwards for a BBQ lunch at the synagogue. So on this Sunday, don't go to church...**BE the Church!** Registration forms are available on our website and at St. David's. If you have any questions, please be in touch with Colleen. The deadline for registration is May 10th. This Pentecost, be the change: heal the world! (There is no Sunday School or nursery to allow everyone to participate in **Be The Change Day**.)

Sunday, June 14th... Teachers and nursery caregivers are being honoured and thanked on Sunday, June 14th. Please plan to be here...either to be a recipient of our thanks or to extend appreciation to those who have been involved in this wonderful ministry. We will celebrate the work done by this caring group, both in worship and with sweet treats in the coffee hour.

Inquiring Minds...

...*want to know*. If you're interested in finding out more about St. David's and the United Church of Canada, this series is for you.

Whether you're very new to St. David's or have been coming for some time and now want to find out more about the church and what it means to be a member, we encourage you to come to these gatherings.

When: **Sunday, May 3, 11:30 – 12:15.**

Friday, May 8, 7:00 (dessert gathering at the home of Dan and Janet)

Sunday, May 17, 11:30 – 12:15

Those who wish to become a member of St. David's will be warmly welcomed into the community on **Sunday, June 7.**

The Final 3

The last three Bible Study sessions for this season will be Thursday, May 7, 14 and 28. Hope you can come!



TALENT CHALLENGE

As I write this I am very much looking forward to the MayDay event brilliantly and single handedly organized by Marsha Goold to raise funds for our Out of the Cold programme. I am also looking ahead at our plans for other fundraising events for our general revenue. One event that the Board would like to sponsor is a reprise of the Talent Challenge which was held three years ago. Everyone has some talent, whether it is making cookies, creating a wonderful dessert, holding a dinner party, sharpening knives, making and selling pens, removing rubbish, babysitting, tutoring, leading a hike, making a will..... the list is endless, but you get the idea! Your talent may be offered on a limited basis (maybe you only feel up to making one dessert!) or may be limitless (you are prepared to sharpen knives day after day as long as people bring them forward!) -- whichever way you wish to proceed is welcome and you can set your minimum price for your talent. All proceeds will then return to the church in October when I foresee (but this is far from carved in stone) a wonderful day of reckoning and also the opportunity for those people with gardening or craft like talents (produce, jam, small divided perennials, notelets) to have a table from which to sell their goods and give the net profit to the church.

If you are just jumping to be on board with this scheme, please feel free to phone me at 604- 929-6589 and tell me what talent you wish to offer. Otherwise, await the grand launch in mid-May when we will hound you to SHARE YOUR TALENT.

Sheila Morrison