



ST. DAVID'S
UNITED CHURCH

The Shepherd

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February 2011

Kundalini Yoga Classes begin in February

Offered by Tara Abernethy, a friend of St. David's.

Kundalini yoga, referred to as the yoga of awareness, is a physical, mental and spiritual discipline for developing and tapping into inner energy and awareness. This will be a 6 week session beginning Feb. 10th and finishing March 31st (no classes over spring break), from 7 - 8:30 p.m. Participants are asked to bring a mat, blanket, and water. The classes will be suitable for people who are advanced practitioners as well as beginners. Cost will be \$12 for drop in and \$60 for the 6 week session. Let us know in advance, if childcare is required.

Please join us on Thursday nights in the lounge at St. David's to experience the grace and divinity that will awaken within you. This practice will connect you to your true self, and help you project authenticity in your relationships, and so much more.

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ST. DAVID'S AGM

Our Annual General Meeting will be held this year on Sunday, March 6th. Please join the meeting after Worship.

Minister: Dan Chambers
Minister with Children, Youth & Families: Colleen Blair

Minister of Music: Marsha Goold
Administrator: Leanne Gilhuis

Reflections...

Through the season of Epiphany as we hear stories of how God's love is revealed in the world, the youth will be exploring Fair Trade as it relates to how we live as people of faith and as a way of revealing God's love in and for the world. We'll be talking about Fair Trade in terms of justice and dignity for all and we'll be doing so within the context of the great commandment that is at the heart of our faith. *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind and you shall love your neighbor as yourself,* thus following up from our theme from the Fall session.



One of the most influential and transformative books I've encountered, is The Soul of Money, by Lynne Twist. Below are some of her ideas that will underscore and augment our focus on Fair Trade. We have two copies of this book in our library (currently on loan to our teachers!), but I encourage you to seek it out if you haven't already read it!

- There is enough! *We often philosophize about the great, unanswered questions in life. It's time we looked instead at the unquestioned answers, and the biggest, most unquestioned answer of our culture is our relationship with money. It is there that we keep alive – at high cost – the flame and mythology of scarcity.*
- When we look at systems of trade that perpetuate and accentuate an ever growing gulf between the developed and developing nations, there is a tendency to think that change is impossible. *'That's just the way it is' is a myth that traps us into feeling hopeless and helpless and justifies greed, prejudice and inaction.*
- *When you let go of trying to get more of what you don't really need, it frees up oceans of energy to make a difference with what you have. Sufficiency isn't an amount at all. It is an experience, a context we generate, a declaration, a knowing that there is enough, and that we are enough.*
- *Change the dream....change the world. "We have dreamed it: therefore it is. I have become convinced that everything we think and feel is merely perception: that our lives – individually as well as communally – are molded around such perception: and that if we want to change, we must alter our perception. When we give our energy to a different dream, the world is transformed. To create a new world, we must first create a new dream."*

-John Perkins, The World Is As You Dream It

My hope is that the discussions we'll have, will encourage and empower youth...that it will help them to know that their choices at home put them in direct relationship with other people and other environments across the globe, and thus, with God, and that the combined weight of our choices can transform the world. We are anything *but* powerless. We are powerful beyond our wildest imagining. So...as we begin this New Year, and may it be for us all a new opportunity to live more deeply into what it means to be people of The Way.

I leave you with the final challenge in Lynne Twist's book.

I challenge you to imbue your money with soul – your soul – and let it stand for who you are; your love, your heart, your word, and your humanity.



Colleen

What's Happening this Month

Sermon theme for February: *Life's Deep Purpose*

The Sunday's in February will give us an opportunity to explore who we are and why we are here as we consider the purpose of our life as an individual and as a community.



Confirmation!

It's been a delight and a privilege to explore questions of faith with several of our youth. They ask sincere questions and have keen insight. On **Sunday, February 13**, we'll celebrate those who choose to become a member of the church through confirmation.

Confirmation is not an end of a faith journey; in many ways, it's just the beginning. As a foundation of faith is laid in childhood, questions percolate as we mature. Confirmation doesn't mean the questions are all answered or that they come to an end, but rather that the youth see the value and meaning of where a good question can lead. Confirmation is a person's choice that our questions of life and faith are asked with reference to the wisdom of our Christian tradition.

I hope you'll be able to come and enthusiastically support our confirmands on Sunday, February 13, and stay for a celebration cake after!

An ESL Opportunity for You and for Free

If you speak English as a second (or third, or fourth) language and want to refine your English speaking skills, you're in luck. Sandy Robertson, a retired, certified ESL teacher, is willing to offer conversation classes for students of different abilities and different language backgrounds. Sandy is a lovely person and a respected teacher. We are blessed!

Hope you can come Thursday evenings, from 7:00 – 8:00pm. in the Grouse Room (upstairs, back hall, behind the sanctuary). **We won't run the class if we have fewer than 5 participants, so please let us know** if you'd like to sign-up. The sessions will begin on Thursday, February 24th.

Where's Dan now?

There are several days in February when I will be away from the church office, fulfilling areas of responsibility as President of the Conference.

Wednesday, February 9th – All day workshop (mandatory, for all clergy)

Tuesday, February 15th – An all day meeting to plan and prepare for a clergy retreat with former Moderator, the Very Rev. Peter Short.

Thursday, February 17th – All day meetings at the Conference Office in preparation for the BC Conference General Meeting in Penticton, this May.

February 18 – 20th – Preaching at the Kamloops-Okanagan Presbytery meeting

February 22-23rd – Leading a workshop for the Victoria Presbytery meeting

February 24th – All day exploratory conversation at VST on how to train leaders and support theological education in BC.

February 27 (after our worship) – March 2nd – Helping to facilitate the Spiritual Care Network Retreat

In order to be ready for these events, I'll take two days for preparation:
Two Thursday's, Feb. 3rd and 10th.

Thank you all for your continued understanding and patience. Serving as BC Conference President is rewarding for me, but it is a volunteer position and, as you can see, adds to an already full schedule. I'll finish serving in this way at the end of the General Meeting, at the Celebration of Ministry service, May 29th. Your prayers of support are always appreciated.

A Note of Appreciation:

It seems to me just a few months ago that I sat down in the office at St. David's for the first time, but in fact, it has been more than a year now. A lot has happened during that year and I have worked hard to acquaint myself with all of the responsibilities of a United Church Administrator. I have also had time to reflect on what being a part of St. David's has meant to me during the past year.

It may sound odd but when I think of my job the first thing that comes to mind is the many fond memories I have that involve conversation and laughter. Oh yes, there's lots of work but when laughter and work can coexist, it creates such positive energy. Along the way, I've also had days that haven't been that great but an encouraging word has never been far away. What a blessing it has been to be welcomed into such a warm and caring church. When I think of St. David's and those who worship here I am reminded of this scripture:

Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. *1 John 4:11-12*

St. David's, you have love one for another, I've seen it on many occasions and expressed in many ways. Not in a polite false kind of way but in the way that shows real concern, real interest in those around you. I have been encouraged so many times by the smiles you have sent my way and how often you have taken time to stop by the office to say hello and ask how I am doing, or how others are doing. You take time to come to the office to help out when I'm sure that there are many more interesting things that could be on your agenda. Through it all I have seen many smiles and heard very few complaints.

As Christians, the love that we have for each other is the highest expression of the grace that has been extended to us. Thank you, I appreciate all that you have given to me.

Leanne

Music at St. David's

Music in Our Speech: An ESL Mini-Series

What?

During the month of February, ESL speakers in our congregation will have a special opportunity to improve their English pronunciation.

When?

Four Sundays in February (Feb. 6, 13, 20 and 27)
11:30 am – 12:15 pm

Where?

The Music Room
(at the north end of the hallway)

Who?

This series will be led by Marsha, our Music Director. She will use her acting, singing, music, movement and TESL training to support ESL learners on their journey.

How?

Stay after Worship, enjoy coffee and conversation in the Lounge and then join us!
For more information, please contact Marsha at 604-809-6708 or marsha@stdavidsunited.com

WANTED:

Anyone who loves to sing ... the Choir would love to have you join them!
Also seeking instrumentalists to offer their gifts during Worship.
Please contact Marsha about the details.
marsha@stdavidsunited.com or 604-809-6708

Children, Youth & Families

For clarification or further information on any of the events listed here or the children and youth programme in general, please feel very welcome to be in touch with Colleen Blair, Minister for Children and Families, colleen@stdavidsunited.com, or by calling the church at 604 922 3200. If you are not on Colleen's Sunday school and/or youth group email lists and would like to be, please be in touch!



Children's Retreat February 25-27th



This retreat is an annual event sponsored by the Lower Mainland United Church Presbyteries. It's aimed at children 8-11 year olds but there is room for twelve year olds. Check with Colleen! I will be participating in the leadership, and I know from past experience that this is a very well planned and deeply meaningful event with excellent leadership. I encourage parents to talk to their children and also to me! The retreat will be held at the Stillwood Retreat Centre at Cultus Lake from Friday, February 25th. to Sunday, February 27th at 1 p.m. We would board a charter bus from St. David's around 5 p.m. approx.

The theme of this year's event is, "Do Not Say That I Am Only..." Registration forms are available at maryn@shiloh-6ave.net, or at St. David's either from me or from the bulletin board outside my office door.

Junior and Senior Youth Group Gatherings

Friday February 11th Youth Events

Junior Youth will meet from 4:30-6 and we will spend part of our time working on a large labyrinth on the floor of the lower hall, and finish our time together with games and refreshments.

Senior Youth will meet from 6:30-8:30. We will complete the labyrinth and then share pizza and check in.

Friday, February 18th....Senior Youth

Out of the Cold...Senior youth are invited to participate with adults in the congregation, in the Out of the Cold dinner for the homeless and disadvantaged in the downtown eastside. If you would like to participate, please contact Cynthia Sedun at csedun@sd45.bc.ca, **by Feb. 11th**. After Feb. 11th, Cynthia will invite volunteers from North Lonsdale United Church to supplement our numbers.

Friday, February 25th...Because Colleen is providing leadership at the Children's retreat, there will be no other youth events this Friday!



Parent Education Events

Friday, March 4th Anxiety and Our Children

A public address on childhood anxiety will be given by Dr. Gordon Neufeld on Friday, March 4th at 7 p.m. in Vancouver. Registration is required and space is limited. For anyone interested in carpooling, let Colleen know and we'll decide a time to meet in the parking lot at St. David's. Register at www.neufeldinstitute.com.



“There is currently an epidemic of anxiety affecting children of all ages. Anxiety can take many forms including obsessions, compulsions, phobias, panic, as well as a host of perplexing seeking and avoidant behaviours. Dr. Neufeld, internationally renowned clinical and developmental psychologist, offers fresh light on this age old condition whether it's the natural, episodic worries of childhood, or more profound and crippling versions of anxiety. Dr. Neufeld offers surprising new alternatives to traditional symptom management and he offers hope to anyone supporting an anxious child.”

Tuesday, March 29th Documentary on Cyberbullying

Parents, teachers and anyone working with youth are welcome to attend a screening of this documentary to look at how cell phones, digital cameras, Facebook and other social media are changing the way teens relate to one another. Join in the conversation along with Sabine Ritson, about how we as parents can help protect our youth and how we can educate them to protect themselves. For reasons that will be obvious on that evening, this event will be for adults only but the dvd will be available afterwards for parents to borrow and watch with the their youth. We'll gather at 7:15 in the lounge for refreshments and begin at 7:30.

Available to borrow Sexy Inc. - Our Children Under Influence

Anyone who missed the opportunity to watch and discuss the NFB documentary *Sexy Inc. Our Children Under Influence*, is welcome to borrow it.

The film looks at the hypersexualization of our culture and the effect this is having on children. Check in with Colleen if you would like to borrow it.

A Note of Thanks!

Though the Christmas and Advent seasons are over, the memories of culinary delights, much loved traditions and special times with family and friends linger and fuel us for the bleak and damp days of winter. For the staff at St. David's the warmth of these memories is accompanied by our sincere gratitude for the time, energy and passion shared by the many volunteers who amidst their own preparations at home, made time for the waiting, the preparing and the celebrating in their church home as well! To all of you who volunteered over these past months, our deep and most sincere thanks!



Postcards From Afar....



" My journey to Mercy Ships began with the death of my husband John, two years ago. Up until his illness, we had been involved in volunteer service for the Mennonite Central Committee. Our plan had been to volunteer for many years. Recently, I came to the conclusion that having to stop this work was "unfinished business" for me. It was at this point of understanding, that I found Mercy Ships.

My goal is to help transform lives through Mercy Ships, an international charity using hospital ships and land-based teams to deliver health care and developmental programs at no charge to the world's forgotten poor. Mercy Ships provides surgical and primary health care, relief aid and community support to some of the poorest countries on earth. Mercy Ships volunteers and staff are dedicated to bringing physical and spiritual hope and healing. Since 1978, Mercy Ships has delivered their life-changing programs with integrity and compassion.

Being involved with Mercy Ships feels like going full circle in my life. Having an adopted daughter with a cleft lip and palate, and having worked for a support organization for facial differences, I feel called to have a small part in these operations for those in need in Sierra Leone. Please give what you can to support this transformational work."

Jane McIntosh

Jane MacIntosh and her husband John were managers at the Ten Thousand Villages, fair trade store in West Vancouver and attended St. David's until they moved to Pender Island. If you would like to be in contact with Jane, her email is janefrompender@gmail.com If you would like to receive updates on her adventure go to www.greenangels.com and click on Pender Jane!



A Little More...

Peace Candles

St. David's has decided to make available to our congregation the "Peace Candle" Our invitation is that members of our congregation or our visitors take one of the Peace Candles and present it as a gift to another congregation so that the desire for peace which is represented by the candle might be symbolized in many churches throughout the world.

The Peace Candle originated in Russia in 1986 where an elderly lady asked a visiting clergy, Dr. Blair Monie, to take a candle as a symbol of peace back to his home church, in York Pennsylvania. That church, upon receiving the candle, decided to make candles available to members of their congregation inviting them to give them to other churches with which they had contact. From there a candle found its way to Wylde Green United Reformed Church in Sutton, England and from there the tradition was passed on to a number of English and Welsh churches. From Wales, the Peace Candle was sent to Emmanuel United in Waterloo, Ontario and from there to other congregations in Canada. And now we pass this light of peace on to you.

Our prayer is that the elderly woman's hope for peace be spread, far and wide as churches in many parts of the world receive these reminders of the vital task of working and praying for peace.

So...if you are travelling over the coming months, let us know and we will provide you with a peace candle and letter, as a gift to another congregation as a symbol of the ongoing struggle for peace in the world.

Our Old Wooden Tables and Chairs

As many of you know, we replaced about 18 of our wooden tables and 80 of our chairs with new, white ones. The new ones are easier to assemble and so much easier to lift! Now we are looking for a home for our older tables and many of the chairs. If you know of an organization that would benefit from them, please let Leanne know in the office.

Community Garden

Have you noticed how Community Gardens are popping up all over Vancouver and the North Shore? If you have an interest in gardening and would be willing to explore the possibility of a community garden somewhere on our property, come in and have a conversation with Colleen!



Outreach

Report of Children of Korogocho Fund: In early 2005, when in Nairobi, Kenya, I visited the offices of ANPPCAN – the African Network for the Prevention and Protection of Children Against Abuse and Neglect. This is an African NGO and the Regional Director, Dr. Philista Onyango, who became a friend of mine.

After meeting with ANPPCAN staff, each of whom is responsible for a particular area of the work, Rozilla Adhiambo, the person on the team who was then in charge of the projects in Korogocho, took me to this poor “alternative community” of over 1 million people. We visited a couple of “Home Day Cares” which ANPPCAN supported, and met with the women who were community leaders. ANPPCAN trained mothers to care for vulnerable pre-school children in their homes, and to alert staff for children orphaned or otherwise not able to attend school because of the fees and school uniforms needed.

One of the international donor groups had withdrawn, so some of us started to raise money to join in partnership with ANPPCAN to keep the Day Cares going and to support sending identified children to school. After the terrible riots following the 2008 elections in Kenya, ANPPCAN did some reorganizing in Korogocho, and now we partner with The Children and Youth Empowerment Network, through their Management Committee and staff member, David Okech.

Since 2005, we have sent over \$17000 USD to Korogocho, through ANPPCAN – and in 2010 we raised over \$6000 CDN. A more detailed financial statement will be prepared for our Annual Meeting, since this is one of the ongoing projects of our Outreach Committee.

In early January, Dr. Onyango wrote:

“Happy New Year and warm greetings from ANPPCAN Head Office.

To begin with, I would like to record ANPPCAN’s appreciation for the support you have tirelessly given towards education of our children in Kenya. We also appreciate the kind of partnership you have accorded ANPPCAN Regional Office. In Kenya, education has been historically the key in removing families from poverty.

Records have it that the majority of Kenyans who have succeeded in life and those who have generated wealth through hard work, have done so through education. So education plays a significant part in people’s lives. This is the impact your efforts will be having on the many children you have supported and still support in Kenya.

ANPPCAN, in particular recognized the importance of education especially as a sure way of preventing children getting into exploitative child labour and has been advocating for free basic education for children in our continent for many years. We have appreciated the support you have been giving us to enable us realize this goal.

