

TIDELINES

Cadboro Bay United Church

December 2011

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From a Minister's Desk

Making Love Real at Christmas time and throughout the year.

Christmas is the time of year that many charities rely on to tap into people's sense of giving and generosity. While there are indeed natural connections to the Christmas story that encourage self-less giving and the responding to obvious poverty and needs of others, it can be a double bind. Entering into the Christmas story and seeing it through the eyes of poverty is an important aspect. Here we have a poor couple, who by no choice of their own are mandated by the government to make a costly journey for bureaucratic reasons. They arrive in an unfamiliar place and cannot find affordable accommodations. In the throes of bringing new life into the world, they are faced with impossible conditions and into such a baby is born. Those who share their poverty as the working poor (shepherds) are the ones who come and visit and share from their meagre resources. The gospel of Matthew has wealthy benefactors bring extravagant and one time gifts.

We know these stories are not a literal account of what happened historically, but rather point to larger truths. Throughout Advent we will be digging deeper into these mythological accounts. These stories highlight some of our ongoing dilemmas in the human condition and point to the power of hope and possibility. We still deal with the issues of homelessness, poverty, gaps between the rich and the poor, misuse of power, refugees fleeing from persecution and violence - both physical and economic.

Continued on Page 2

Minister's Message continued...

And while at times it may be tempting to simply wait for a miracle to happen that will change everything in an instant, the rest of the gospel narrative and the focus of Jesus' ministry was to address the injustices and preach about the unfolding kingdom of God. Jesus the baby was born into poverty and simplicity. Jesus the man, the teacher, the prophet challenged his community to look differently at the world as it was versus how it could be.

Here in Victoria, in December 2011, in the province of BC there will be children born into poverty. They may be the working poor or they may be those on social assistance. Regardless, the conditions in which they are expected to raise "healthy" children are deplorable. BC continues to have the dubious distinction of having the highest rate of child poverty 6 years in a row. Social Assistance rates are so unlivable in this province and the rules to enable people to lift themselves up from poverty are so restricted, that anyone receiving such will find themselves unable to make ends meet. A single mom with one child gets \$ 1067.08 and with two children gets \$1282.68. Even if you are working full time at minimum wage your take home after deductions would be less than \$1400. On this money people are expected to pay rent, transportation, food, clothing, cleaning product, gifts, utilities, etc. It's simply deplorable!

Often, some of the basic necessities like diapers etc are impossible to provide. Agencies around Victoria who serve this vulnerable population say that they are constantly asked for such. As part of our Advent focus this year, we are inviting you to respond in a practical way by participating in the Angel Gift program and/or by bringing in unwrapped packages of diapers and wipes and placing them under our Christmas tree at the front. But more importantly, we ask you to raise your voice against the conditions that require us to need to provide such in the first place. Write a letter of support to Mary Ellen Turpel Lafond, the Youth and Child Advocacy representative for BC for her hard work in trying to get the provincial government to listen. Write your MP about the deplorable rate of poverty in this province and demand to know what they are going to do that is "new" to address this. Speak out, join advocacy groups, and refuse to be silent any more. Christmas cannot be simply about charity, it must also be about justice.

May Advent and Christmas this year be seen as the invitation it truly is - not simply an excuse to prop up our culture of over consumption and greed but rather a chance to integrate the message of the Christmas story of a child born into poverty. May it be so. - Mark Green

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Sunday School for December

Monty says "There was no stable!"

Yes it is true. Monty has compared the birth stories and is telling the children in the Bible stories of Jesus' birth there isn't even a donkey. Unexpected events like Mary and Joseph's pregnancy with Jesus and the surprise trip to Bethlehem are part of the story in the gospel of Luke but not Matthew. The unexpected arrival of wise men, were part of Matthew's story but cannot be found in Luke's version.



The Bible does not tell a uniform story. But Sunday School this month will explore the unexpected surprises anyway. Every journey takes us to unexpected blessings and dilemmas. A journey turns out more interesting if interesting choices are made by the people on the journey. Mary and Joseph made interesting choices. They probably accepted the time-honoured Bedouin tradition of hospitality to the sojourner. In like manner Sunday School will meet in a 'Bedouin' tent. When Mary and Joseph became refugees fleeing from Herod's assassins again, they probably lodged in desert tents in the Negev. God's love was there in each and every event . . . so that is the focus of our lessons. Come visit the Tent during Coffee time and maybe you too will sense the wonder of the unexpected journey of Jesus' birth. Thank you John MacArthur, Karen Johnsson and Jill Daveron for helping with the Advent program this unit.

Youth Group for December



Jr. and Sr. Youth groups will be meeting two more times in December to top off 2011. Prepare for the usual: challenges, wide games, creations, and good food. PLUS: a Christmas-themed year-end party for each group.

JR'S: Our final two meetings will be on Dec 2nd and Dec 16th.

SR's: Our final two meetings will be on Dec 4th and Dec 18th.

Final Note: New faces are always welcome at Youth Group!

Calling All Angels and Shepherds!

At the 4 pm Family Nativity Pageant on Dec 24th, we are in need to a bunch of shepherds and angels to join the other cast of characters for our Nativity Drama. All ages are needed so if you are planning on being at that service or you simply would like to be involved, please let Mark know or send an email. For those who won't know till last minute, we will have room for extras to be added in on Christmas Eve itself. We will rehearse and hand out costumes on Thursday Dec. 22, at 10 am. Join us then. Thank you.

Ladies Christmas Dinner – December 7th

Women of all ages are invited to join us for a Potluck Dinner, Socializing and a short Christmas Program. Wednesday, December 7th at 6:00pm with Dinner starting at 6:30pm.

We will be collecting gloves, mittens, scarves, toques, socks (no wool please) or cash to support the homeless through Our Place.

Bring a friend, a sister, a mother, a daughter or any special lady – and some food to share. Coffee, tea and juice will be provided and please bring your own plates and cutlery. Contact Kay McQueen at 250-477-4764 if you need a ride.

Come share some laughter, memories and the warmth of our church family!



Movie Night – December 9th



This month we celebrate that Mary and Joseph once travelled to their home country there to experience a miracle amidst a hovel. December's Movie Night offers the same happenings to a New York artist. Filmed over nearly three years, WASTE LAND follows Muniz as he journeys to his native Brazil and the world's largest garbage dump, Jardim Gramacho, located on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. There he photographs an eclectic band of "catadores" -- self-designated pickers of recyclable materials. Muniz's initial objective was to "paint" the catadores with garbage. However, his collaboration with these inspiring characters as they recreate photographic images of themselves out of garbage reveals both the dignity and despair of the catadores as they begin to re-imagine their lives. It is a profound story of incarnational theology in a place no one would think to look for redemption.

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Christmas Crafts, Carols and Cookies – Dec 10th

Christmas is Coming! ... and as part of our ongoing preparations and celebrations we would like to invite our church family members of all ages to join us on Saturday , Dec 10th from 2pm -4:30pm for an afternoon of cookies, crafts and carols. Join us in the church hall where there will be a variety of warm beverages and treats and a chance to visit with others.

Around the edges will be some Christmas crafts where we will make some of the decorations for our tree in the sanctuary. In the kitchen will be some

cookie decorating to enjoy both that afternoon or perhaps to take home. As the afternoon draws to a close, we will head into the sanctuary, hang our decorations on the tree and then join in the singing of Christmas Carols - old and new- that you can choose from the song sheets provided. It will indeed be an afternoon of fun, joy and laughter. We hope you will join us!!



Blue Christmas Service – Dec 18th



This quiet and reflective service is an opportunity for each of us to enter into the feelings of sadness, frustration, regret and disappointment that can accompany this time of year. Through gentle readings and reflections, music and ritual, we will have the opportunity to acknowledge and live into some of these feelings and make room for hope and new life to enter. This service will focus on the themes of loss and change, remembering what has been, dreams

unrealized and experiences of regret. Through the power of ritual, we will have the chance to grieve and let go, and enter gently into a new place ready to experience Christmas anew. All are welcome to attend and you may wish to invite a friend or neighbour who you think might benefit from this experience. Following the service there will be hot apple cider and Christmas treats and a time for meeting with others and sharing in conversation. This service is a joint project with St. George's Anglican and hosted by the Pastoral Care Committee.

A Note from the Gardeners

We have accumulated a mini mountain of dead branches and about 5 bags of pesky weeds which would contaminate our compost, in the back corner of the church parking lot (beside the real compost heap). We would really appreciate some help in getting this debris to the Borden Street compost. If anyone has a truck that can be used for this job or several people have car trunks that can be loaded up we would be grateful to hear from you. We will only ask for help once, promise!!! Thank you - Eileen, Pat and Gordon

Body Language Movement Invites You To...

...take an intentional break from hectic holiday preparations: take a deep breath; centre yourself; discover a mystical sense of peace and relief meditatively walking to the heart of the labyrinth; choose to draw, write, dance, paint, or talk your experience if you wish. This is an experience not to be missed!

Dance and Walk the Sacred Path of the Labyrinth

The Labyrinth is a universal, holistic symbol. People from cultures around the world have been walking labyrinths for eons to still the mind and open the heart. As we follow the winding path to the centre and back out again, we experience healing and a connection to unity in our respective spiritual journeys: *"We are not human beings on a spiritual path, but spiritual beings on a human path"* Lauren Artress

Join us for an afternoon of the Soul



Saturday, December 17, 2011; time: 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

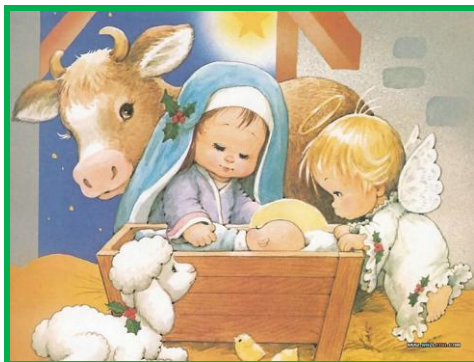
Cadboro Bay United Church
2625 Arbutus Road, Cadboro Bay
Cost: \$20 + tax

For more information: phone: 250-580-6031; email: info@counsellingvictoria.ca

The Cadboro Bay United Church labyrinth is a beautiful, 45' hand-painted work of art and sacred geometry based on the magnificent Chartres Cathedral labyrinth (circa 1200 CE)

Nancy Miller-Stone, Labyrinth facilitator, & **Terence Stone**, Core Connexion® facilitator
See: www.counsellingvictoria.ca

Christmas Eve Services



HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT OUR HOUSE ON CHRISTMAS EVE

If you've been coming to our 7pm family candlelight service regularly over the past 5 years or so, you will know that we've been blessed with a more than capacity crowd. The worship team is thrilled that this service has been meeting the needs of so many in our church family. However, when services get too full or over-subscribed, research suggests that newcomers decide to look elsewhere due to parking challenges and a belief that the worship will be too crowded to be comfortable.

Our 4pm "Christmas for the Little Ones", on the other hand, has not attracted as many young families as we would have liked: it's under-subscribed which means this service lacks some of the energy and excitement that happens when a community gathers together to worship at Christmas. What to do?

The worship team wondered: what if we were to offer two family-friendly services on Christmas Eve? Would that provide our congregation with more options to choose from and at the same time, enable us to welcome our neighbours or any spiritual seekers who come for community on this wonderful night?

We decided that the only way to find out is to go ahead and make some changes which is exactly what we've done: your worship team has created 2 different dramatic offerings designed to allow all generations to enter into the true meaning of Christmas.

Here are the details:

4 PM- FAMILY NATIVITY PAGEANT. If Christmas isn't Christmas unless you can participate in or view a nativity pageant, then this service is the one for you and your loved ones. Through drama, we will tell the story of the nativity; there will be angels, shepherds, animals, the Holy Family, and even a children's candlelight procession. (Rehearsal schedules will be announced soon, but don't worry about fitting this into your already hectic life: we try to keep rehearsals to a minimum so that there is less pressure on everyone.) If you've always wondered what you might do on Christmas Eve if you didn't go to the 7pm worship service, here's an opportunity to find out. Share the Christmas story with family and friends at 4pm, and then the rest of the evening is yours. You may even want to begin some new family traditions on Christmas Eve...start imagining the possibilities!

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7 PM- A CHRISTMAS TALE FOR YOU. “The Christmas Candle” is a dramatic adaptation of a story that illuminates one of Christmas’s central messages. The choir will gift us with seasonal music, and as usual, we will sing Silent Night in the candle’s glow. Certainly there is a timeless charm to this worship, but we also hope there will be a little more breathing room for everyone, too!

Both of these early services will offer your family an enchanting experience of God’s dream of hope, peace, joy and love for everyone. Now for the hard part-making a choice!

And if you’ve never ventured out to our later Christmas Eve service, perhaps this is the year you’ll take it in. The **10 PM “CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION”** will offer the medieval worship service that we re-created last year in our Sanctuary. Guest soloist Katherine Charlesworth, will perform as our cantor. Using a worship format that is over nine centuries old, the mystical story of the coming of Emmanuel will be told, and the Bread of Life and Cup of Promise shared with all.

Now here’s a thought: why not attend 2 worship services this Christmas Eve? Take in the 4 pm service with the younger members of your family; then come back at 10 pm for a quieter, more intimate experience of the presence of God with Us. Now that’s putting the “Christ” back into Christmas!



A Sunday Christmas Day worship service will **NOT** be offered at CBUC. However, if worshipping on Christmas Day is something you enjoy, here are a few services to check out:

St. George’s Anglican (3609 St. George’s Lane)- 10 am
Christmas Day Eucharist

First Metropolitan United Church (932 Balmoral Rd)- 11 am Community
Christmas service of carols with Louise Rose, the Open Doors and her Jazz
Ensemble

Oak Bay United Church (1355 Mitchell St.)- 10 am

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Theology & the Arts – Jan 9th

Beginning Jan 9th to Jan 30th, I would like to invite you to join me on Monday nights from 7:30pm - 9:30pm for an in depth journey as we deepen our understanding of some of the basic yet core beliefs of our Christian faith.

This, however, will be a course very different from any that you have done before as it will require that we find the intersections between art, film, literature, poetry, and any other creative medium as a way of reflecting on some of the great themes. Participants are encouraged to bring film clips, poetry, novel excerpts, pictures of paintings or anything else that highlights the theme of the day to share and also hear others perspectives on such. HOWEVER, if you cannot think of anything to bring, please do not let that deter you from participating. I will have more than enough examples of things to reflect on and will share as necessary, depending on what others have brought. This course has the potential to be challenging and fun and I hope that through whatever intimidation you might feel, you will take the risk to join me. We will be exploring the concepts of Creation/Re-creation/Sabbath, Prayer, Discernment, Hope and Grace. An email will go out to those who have pre-registered with additional information. Please feel free to talk with me if you have any further questions or concerns. I hope to see you there! - Mark



You're In Our Thoughts Program



Pastoral Care for the members of our congregation is a 365-days-a-year matter. At Christmas time many feel lonely, out of touch, and hungry for contact. So, on the second Sunday of Advent, one expression of our caring takes the form of poinsettia plants. These flowers are delivered to those who are shut-in, unable to attend or partake in the Advent preparations at church. The Pastoral Care committee identifies a complete list and then invites everyone to get involved. This is one of those projects of compassion where what becomes true for the folks involved is: You get more than you give. For those who deliver and make visits and for the work for the Pastoral Care Team we all are very grateful.

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Beauty Wonder Compassion

A love story for all times and all peoples

CHRISTMAS EVE at Cadboro Bay United Church

O Come All You Faithful!

4 pm: Family Nativity Pageant

7 pm: A Christmas Tale for You

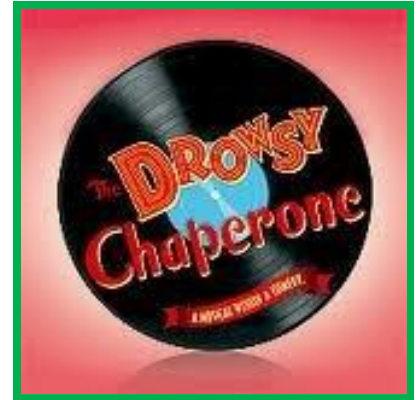
10 pm: Candlelight Communion

Theatre Night – Jan 21st

Theatre Night: Saturday, January 21, 2012 7:00 PM

It's Fun! It's a Good time! It's The Drowsy Chaperone! Five-time Tony Award-winning Canadian musical comedy, this spoof on the musical genre of the 20's pokes fun at theatrics. Come join the laughter at Langham Court Theatre. Cost: \$14.00

Carpooling will be arranged to and from church but if you want to meet us right at the theatre go for 7:30 PM. Register in church office.



Extroverted Spirituality – Jan 31st & Feb 7th



Date: January 31, Feb 7 (two evenings), Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Leader: Ross White

"My spiritual director could not understand why I wanted to spend a whole day hiking on my silent retreat. She finally agreed that if a tree fell in the forest I'd be there to hear it." Sitting still in silence can be very hard for extroverts who

naturally like when things are happening. They say: "God is everywhere ... let's go find out more!" This can sometimes drive their partners crazy. Both extroverts and introverts are invited along to this fun exploration of ways to be yourself ... and maybe discover you are an 'omni'vert.

Get Connected: Join CBUC's on-line Outreach Community!

If you're a person who would appreciate more information and analysis about the most critical issues of our time- If you're looking for local events that will help you connect with others who are trying to walk the path of justice and peace- If you want to participate in on-line actions designed to produce change and transformation- then [click here](#) or email Meghan at meghan@cadbayuc.org and let her know you're interested in joining this new on-line community at CBUC.

Once you've subscribed, you will receive approximately 2 or 3 articles/actions/event notices a week about all kinds of outreaching issues.

Another way we walk the talk at CBUC!

VIRAC – Victoria Interfaith Refugee Assistance Committee

"For I was a stranger, and you took me in"

If you remember from last month's newsletter, almost a dozen people from our community have become active in a new interfaith refugee sponsorship group that is working to bring a Palestinian family to Victoria. The **Victoria Interfaith Refugee Assistance Committee (VIRAC)**, chaired by Ross White, consists of members from Unitarian, Quaker and Anglican communities as well as our own. The immediate crisis that has precipitated the formation of this committee is the closure of the Al Hol refugee camp in Syria.

VOR #180, the official number assigned to the family we will be supporting for a full year, should be arriving in late February or March, 2012. The family consists of a father, age 58, mother, age 55, and 2 sons, age 19 and 21. There are other family members living in Ontario and Nova Scotia - no doubt they will quickly discover the immensity of their new country, Canada!



Anyone interested in helping financially or in kind is most welcome to contact Ross White for more information, or secretary Marya Nijland at philmar@islandnet.com or 250-598-6484. Once we have official confirmation that this family has been approved to travel to Canada, we will be offering our community ways to respond to the needs of this family. Stay tuned!

Here are some photos of Palestinians living in the Al Hol camp: as you will note, the conditions in this camp are poor. One of the sons in our family was kidnapped by a militia group and the family was forced to pay ransom to get his safe return. No doubt they are thrilled to be leaving this dangerous situation.

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Living into Hope



Living into Hope. As we begin Advent there are a number of ways this season for you to live into hope and help others in their hopelessness. The Angel Gifts program provides a gift for those living on the streets for their annual Christmas party at OUR PLACE. Take a card from the tree and buy a gift and return it wrapped to the church by Dec 11. More information is available from those who are helping at the tree to hand out the cards. We will also be collecting, as a way of honouring the Christ child born into poverty over and over again, disposable diapers, wipes, etc. for those whose meager earnings make

caring for an infant a daily struggle between choosing food, shelter or basic baby care needs. Please place unwrapped items under our Christmas tree each week. You will also see from other articles in this newsletter, that we will soon be able to give support to a refugee family that our congregation is involved in sponsoring. Those attending the Ladies Christmas potluck are also involved in providing survival packs for those living on the streets. If you are looking for more ideas of ways to be involved to care for and make a difference for others, speak with one of the staff and we will do our best to connect you up with the information you need.

Recycling old Christmas Cards

After the Christmas festivities are done, please consider donating your used Christmas cards to the Sunday School for next year's Crafts. We need only the front covers, so if you can remove the other parts of the cards and turn them into the church office, we will make good use of them for the coming year. Thank you.

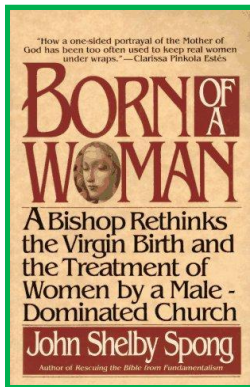
Grandmothers Helping Grandmothers Update

As usual, the muffins sold out at our last sale in record time and we made \$72.50 to send off to the Stephen Lewis Foundation. Since the last Sunday of the month is Christmas Day and the following Sunday is New Years Day, we have decided to have our next muffin Sunday on January 8th

Parents & Tots Update

The Wednesday morning playgroup is going strong! The group will be stopping for Christmas after Dec 14th and will start up again on Jan 11th. There is lots of large muscle play, as well as fine motor skills, social skills and a great time going on in the gym every Wednesday morning starting at 9:30am. Come and join us!

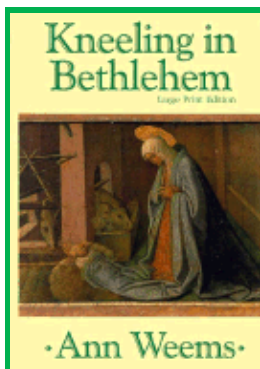
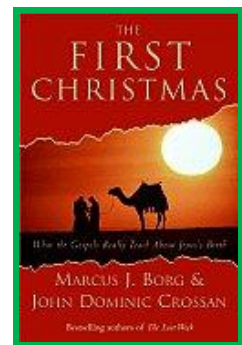
Library News for December



Advent is a time of preparation, preparation for Christmas. It is a time of hope, anticipation and excitement but also a time of peace. As we begin this season of Advent we will be looking at the Christmas story through the lenses of the four themes of Advent – hope, peace, joy and love, and talking about expecting the unexpected.

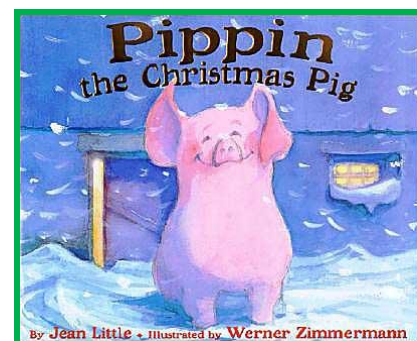
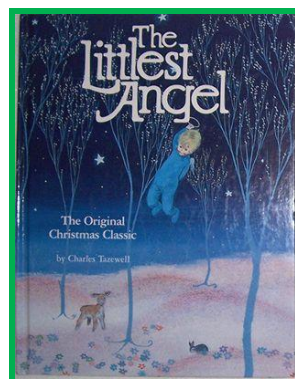
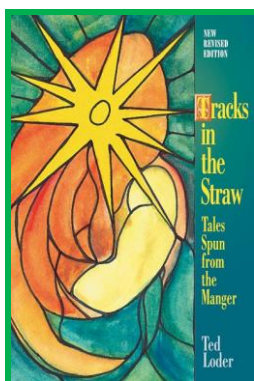
Many of our library books that help us rethink the Christmas story have been highlighted before. Spong's book, *Born of a Woman* and Borg's books, *Jesus and Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, *The First Christmas: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus' Birth* have given us much food for thought.

Two poetry books that may help to create the Advent ambience are Ann Weems' book *Kneeling in Bethlehem* and Ted Loder's book *Tracks in the Straw*. Ann Weems "reflects on the mystery of the Christmas season in a style that is contemporary, reverent, and faith-filled." Ted Loder's book is "a deeply moving, imaginative collection of original stories centered around the birth of Christ, stories for searching souls, to be read with child's eyes".



In Sunday School one of the activities featured will be journeys to the children's section of the library. In the library there is an entire basket of colourful, imaginative stories of the Christmas tale. Most of these books have been featured before but I'm sure they would be delightful to read again at this time of year. Look for *The Littlest Angel*, *Small One*, *Pippen the Christmas Pig* and many others.

Enjoy the Christmas season in a new way this year. A good book can help to create a warm, calm approach to the celebration.



Donation Envelopes for 2012

If you used donation envelopes during 2011, you will automatically receive them for 2012. If you are new to our church family and wish to receive envelopes for 2012, please sign the sheet that is on the table in the Narthex. If you use envelopes and wish to switch to PAR (pre-authorized remittance), please see Meghan in the office and she will process this for you. (You need to fill out a PAR form and leave a void cheque) Donation Envelopes for 2012 will be available for pick up near the end of December. Thank you for your continued support to the life and ministry of Cadboro Bay United. Your contributions make a difference!



Please Note: When using envelopes, please make note of the following:

1. Make cheques payable to Cadboro Bay United Church (and not CBUC)
2. Unless you specifically want to make a cheque payable at some future date (in which case we will hold it until then), use that Sunday's date on your cheque (rather than the following Monday)
3. If you miss one or more Sundays, please put your offering all in one envelope. It is not necessary to use multiple envelopes.

Thank you!!

Sing Your Joy – starts again Jan 9th!

Sing Your Joy presented a fabulous concert on December 2nd – and is looking forward to next season already. For youth and young adults 16-29 – join us on Mondays, starting January 9th, 2012: 7pm at Oak Bay United Church. Dynamic music leadership is provided by Christine Chepyha and Gordon Miller. Any questions – check us out on Facebook www.facebook.com/singyourjoy, or text 250.882.5668.



Choir Notes

Feeling like caroling? Join choir members outside of Cobs Bakery on Oak Bay Avenue Saturday, December 17th at 1pm. And remember, there's always room in the choir loft for people who like to sing – for a month, a season or the entire choir year. As noted by singer Patti Mills, "Singing fortifies health, widens culture, refines the intelligence, enriches the imagination, makes for happiness and endows life with an added zest."





CHRISTMAS



with the

ARBUTUS SINGERS



Sunday December 11 - 2:00 - 3:30 pm
Cadboro Bay United Church 2625 Arbutus Road

Songs include: One Tin Soldier
We Need a Little Christmas
For Unto Us a Child is Born
Ave Maria

**Admission by donation*
Reception to follow

All proceeds to supply
a medical clinic

**The Jolly Nyeko
Foundation Canada**
www.JNFCanada.org

Phone: 250.721.0445

Sponsored by Cadboro Bay United
Church and the

Arbutus Singers

www.arbutussingers.com



Fair Trade Chocolate for Christmas

I have been looking at Fair Trade chocolate again recently. Some of the bigger companies are now using words like 'sustainability' and 'farmer education' to give the impression of using fair practices, but in fact, are still not using fair trade chocolate. If a company is definitely NOT using child labour, they make sure it is clear. It is what they are not saying that tells the story.



There is something new called Utz certified, that looks great when it is promoted on company websites. But if you look closely at what it means, it still isn't fair trade. The bottom line is still getting the lowest priced product for the (greedy) consumer.

Some of the larger companies are slowly moving towards fair trade. For example Cadbury's produces a fair trade milk chocolate bar and even had bags of Halloween treats available this October. Starbucks is also working to improve their practices. Sadly most big chocolate companies are not getting the message from consumers yet, so we need more consumers to switch over to fair trade.

Recently we watched a BBC documentary on Fair trade vs child slave trafficking in the cocoa industry. The reporter went back to the UK and produced a chocolate bar that was labeled as "Child Slave Labour Certified" and he went into the streets to see if people would willingly buy the product. Most people were extremely horrified and shocked!!! In reality, if it is not certified Fair Trade, then it is essentially 'child labour certified'. As one person pointed out, 'it's easier when you don't know about it'.

Fortunately there are more fair trade products available. You can find them in most regular grocery stores now.

The stores currently are filling up with obscenely big displays of chocolate products for our holiday season. Soon people will be filling shopping bags to give away to teachers, friends, neighbours and family. Too bad the kids working on the cocoa farms don't get to have a winter break or even a taste of chocolate.

I made this [slide show](#) and presented it in 2009. I recently checked my slide show for accuracy before we loaded it up on [YouTube](#) a couple of months ago. The facts in the slide show are still relevant. The date on the first slide may seem old, but that just emphasizes how slow the progress is. Wouldn't it be great if it was already badly outdated? I would LOVE that to be true, but unfortunately it is not.

Christina Martinusen

October 2011 Financial Update

While the monthly revenues fell a bit short for our typical fall months, our YTD position remains strong with our givings and other sources of revenue for the ten months ended October 31 coming in well above our 2010 comparative position. While the decreased September and October givings are puzzling we remain hopeful 2011 will be a breakeven year.

A summary financial report and financial information are provided below.

With blessing,

Your Administration Team

SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

For the ten months ended October 31, 2011 Local Church revenues were \$254,085 and expenses were \$278,984 creating a net deficit of \$24,899.

Compared to YTD October 31, 2010, revenues were up \$16,516 or 7%, largely due to increased givings, a successful spring garage sale and increased rentals. For the same ten month period expenses were up \$3,041, or 1%, more than 2010. This was largely due to increased fuel oil and hydro costs offset by lower building repair and maintenance charges incurred for 2011.

This provided a **\$13,475, or 35% decrease in our deficit compared to the 2010** net deficit of \$38,374.

Compared to Budget, after adjusting for seasonal variations, revenues were down \$1,980, or 1%, while expenses were \$11,406, or 4%, less than budgeted. This was largely due to actual costs being lower than budget for fuel oil, hydro and building repair and maintenance. This provided a **\$9,426, or 27%, decrease in our deficit compared to the Budgeted** net deficit of \$34,325.

Summary financial is provided below

YTD Oct 31, 2011 Comparison to YTD Oct 31, 2010

	YTD 2011	YTD 2010	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Revenue				
Local Church	254,085	237,569	16,516	7%
Funds *	39,748	40,562	(814)	-2%
	<u>293,833</u>	<u>278,131</u>	<u>15,702</u>	<u>6%</u>
Expense				
Local Church	278,984	275,943	3,041	1%
Funds *	39,748	40,562	(814)	-2%
	<u>318,732</u>	<u>316,505</u>	<u>2,227</u>	<u>1%</u>
(Shorfall)	<u>(24,899)</u>	<u>(38,374)</u>	<u>13,475</u>	<u>35%</u>

* Funds include Mission and Service, Outreach, and other designated funds

YTD Oct 31, 2011 Comparison to YTD Oct 31, 2011 Budget

	YTD 2011	YTD Budget	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Revenue				
Local Church	254,085	256,065	(1,980)	-1%
Funds *	39,748	19,396	20,352	105%
	<u>293,833</u>	<u>275,461</u>	<u>18,372</u>	<u>7%</u>
Expense				
Local Church	278,984	290,390	(11,406)	-4%
Funds *	39,748	19,396	20,352	105%
	<u>318,732</u>	<u>309,786</u>	<u>8,946</u>	<u>3%</u>
(Shorfall)	<u>(24,899)</u>	<u>(34,325)</u>	<u>9,426</u>	<u>27%</u>

* Funds include Mission and Service, Outreach, and other designated funds.
For Budgeting purposes only Mission and Services were budgeted in 2010.



Greetings from Council - December

As I take time to write this message and add a few more things to my own calendar, I am reminded of the importance of balance, especially at this time of year. It is so easy to get caught up in the preparation and celebrations that we forget to allow time for quiet contemplation that can be so refreshing and energizing. I do hope that each of us look for and find that balance as we journey together through this Advent season.

And as we are now in the advent season, we are being provided with many opportunities to celebrate Christmas with others in many different ways. We have our Angel Gift program that allow each of us to give a gift to someone who lives on the street, and as well, this year we can help provide diapers and wipes to mothers on limited incomes who struggle to provide these necessities for their babes. We continue with our annual poinsettia delivery for those who we care for in our prayers and visits which will take place on the second Sunday of December, and I thank you in advance for helping with those deliveries. The potluck dinner for the women of the congregation on December 7th is fast approaching and a carol sing complete with crafts and cookies (December 10th) is a time for all folks of our community to get together and enjoy the season. These are just a few of the opportunities we have to deepen our connections, and I encourage you to check the website and the newsletter to be sure you don't miss anything. We are indeed fortunate to be surrounded by people who share and care so deeply and generously. And speaking of generosity, our congregation has continued to help ensure that we continue to move toward financial health. We are getting closer to ending this year without a deficit, and I am certain we can pull together to make this a reality.

And finally, although it seems a bit odd saying Merry Christmas so soon, I am delighted to be saying it to my Cadboro Bay United Church family. A very Merry Christmas to all of you and may you all at some point in the season experience the love and warmth of those you hold dear.

D'Arcy Wingrove
Chair of Council

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