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Minister's Message

Greetings

The spirituality of the Christmas season is often overwhelmed by the cultural celebrations and we frequently speak of the ways in which we need to keep the meaning of the birth of Christ in our hearts as we participate in the celebrations. The Easter season is less overwhelmed, but still our culture infringes on the event. Easter is about the foundation of our faith as we affirm again that Christ rose from the dead. However, Lent is ours; the greeting card industry has not found a way to appropriate the Lenten season.

Like Advent, Lent is a season of preparation and journey. We are walking with Jesus to Jerusalem and the events of the last week. Traditionally during Lent we consider the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross and sacrifice something in our lives. One tradition is to give up fat during Lent – the tasty parts of the diet. Shrove Tuesday and the tradition of the Pancake dinner was about using up the fat and other "treats" before the austerity of Lent. For most of us giving up fat for Lent isn't a spiritual activity but just a wise health choice. The idea of preparation is lost in the simple removal of certain habits or items from our life styles.

In our modern busy lives we need a greater intentional practice to prepare ourselves. Maybe there is something else in your life that you need to put aside for the season. Perhaps choose something that is a block to your journey with God. Does driving your car prevent you from noticing Creation? Maybe avoiding prepared and processed foods for the season will remind your body and your soul of your connection and reliance on God's Creation. Perhaps listening to the news burdens your soul such that you are less likely to express your gratitude to God. Choose something unique to your own life. Give up complaining; instead when something bothers you offer a blessing. Or perhaps give up something in order to give time to the Divine. Set aside a portion of each day for prayer and meditation beyond that which you usually do. Be more intentional in connecting with your God.



During Lent we are exploring the theme of pilgrimage in our lives. Questions will be posted at Stations in the sanctuary to stimulate spiritual reflection. We are on a journey together as the people of God. We are followers of Christ and the journey of Lent leads to death and beyond to new life and resurrection.

With you on the journey
Bill Booth

Church Family Fellowship Evening

Held on the third Saturday of the month from 5:30-7:30pm, these gatherings are designed to be welcoming and considerate of the needs of families and all are welcome to attend. We gather together to share a meal, deepen our relationships with one another and participate in a brief time of informal worship. If you would like to attend, please contact Gabrielle McLarty at gabrielle@crescentunitedchurch.com. We are pleased to welcome Cheryl Ballard to lead music for Family Fellowship Worship this year. Next event is on **Saturday, March 17th**.

Fraser Presbytery – Oversight Visit

March 18, 2012

The United Church of Canada requires each Presbytery to regularly visit pastoral charges (congregations) to assess their religious life and overall health. These visits provide a congregation with feedback and advice from fellow members of the Church.

The oversight visit on March 18th will complement and support our plans for our Interim Ministry. In addition to meeting with staff, Presbytery representatives want to meet with the congregation to discuss our vision and purpose, staffing, governance, and spiritual life. The Reverend Tim Bowman from St. Andrew's United Church in Mission will be leading this visit.

Please take this opportunity to engage in the life of our congregation and the United Church of Canada.

Yours in Christ,
Peter Jones – Council Chair

For more information:
<http://www.united-church.ca/local/oversight>

Pastoral Relations – Council Update

In October, our beloved and trusted minister, the Reverend Bill Booth, announced that he will seek a change in pastoral relations as of July 2012. Bill reminds us in his letter to us that a change in pastoral relations provides the opportunity to re-examine the work and life of a congregation.

In December, the congregation approved Council's recommendation that we pursue an Interim Ministry for the next two years. An Interim Ministry is the best course of action because it allows time for a transition after a long-term pastoral relationship, and time for assessing the needs and future directions of the congregation.

A Transition Team has been formed that will select a minister specially trained in facilitating change, and the Team will continue to work with us throughout the Interim Ministry. The Team is comprised of 2 representatives appointed by the Fraser Presbytery, and 3-5 members from the congregation. The following people have agreed to help lead us into the next chapter of our journey:

Interim Ministry Transition Team:

Fraser Presbytery -	Rev. Norm Pettersson
	Liz Winkler
Crescent United -	Val Austring
	Jean Macdonald
	Doris Mowat
	Paul Pieron

There may still be opportunities to add another member of the congregation to the Transition Team, and men in particular are asked to consider this opportunity to help discern our future direction. There will also be many opportunities to assist the Interim Minister and the Transition Team over the coming year by leading and facilitating discussion groups. It is anticipated the work of the Transition Team will be well underway by Easter. We are blessed by their wisdom and willingness to serve.

In faith and hope,
Peter Jones – Council Chair

For more information:

www.united-church.ca/files/handbooks/interim-ministry.pdf



Wanted & Called



We are entering an exciting time at Crescent United Church. One important part of fulfilling our vision and hopes is passionate and capable leadership. What gifts and skills do you have to offer that could be used within the church – either on Council or as part of a working group?

The following Council positions are open for your discernment of the call to serve: Vice-Chair, Member at Large, or Convenor of Communications, Ecological Justice, or Outreach. As well, there are opportunities to serve with all working groups – Christian Development, Communications, Congregational Care, Finance & Property, Outreach, Stewardship and Worship – and many other meaningful ways to serve.

A council member may be approaching you in the near future. Please consider prayerfully how you might be of service.

Exploring Faith and Understanding - A Learning Opportunity for You

Over its history, The United Church of Canada (UCC), has developed four statements of Faith. Only one of these statements was included in the document that set up the means of the union of the three founding churches. The national church wants our opinion about giving the three other statements an equal place in the life of the church. This may sound dry and not that interesting; however, this process can provide us with a fascinating exploration of our faith and our tradition. There will be three opportunities: Saturday March 17th 2:30pm to 5:30pm, Saturday April 21st 2:30pm to 5:30pm, and during our worship service after Easter which will explore themes from the statements. The church council is interested in your thoughts about inclusion of the three additional faith statements in the original founding document.

Here are a few lines from the statements to think about:

From the Basis of Union:

We believe in the one only living and true God, a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His being and perfections; the Lord Almighty, who is love, most just in all His ways, most glorious in holiness, unsearchable in wisdom, plenteous in mercy, full of compassion, and abundant in goodness and truth.

From the 1948 statement of Faith:

We believe in God, the eternal personal Spirit, Creator and Upholder of all things.
We believe that God, as sovereign Lord exalted above the world, orders and overrules all things in it to the accomplishment of His holy, wise, and good purposes.

From the New Creed - 1968

We are not alone, We live in God's world
Who has created and is creating.

From the Song of Faith: 2006

God is Holy Mystery,
beyond complete knowledge,
above perfect description.
Yet,
in love,
the one eternal God seeks relationship.

Just from these four descriptions of God we can see there are interesting changes over time and lots to discuss. Come join the journey of exploration of the faith of the church. Follow this link for more information on the faith statements of the UCC <http://www.united-church.ca/history/overview/webelieve>

Another Learning Opportunity: Membership

In addition to the theological and historical discussions happening around the statements of Faith, the Reverend Bill Booth will also be leading sessions to help you explore the traditions of the United Church of Canada (UCC) and your place within the spiritual community of Crescent United. These discussions will provide you with an opportunity to consider becoming an official member of the UCC. The membership exploration discussions will be taking place on Wednesday evenings at 7:00PM to 9:00PM starting March 7th. We will explore: Scriptures – interpretation and use as a spiritual resource, the Structure, polity and traditions of the United Church, the diverse understanding of Jesus Christ, our call to serve God in the world, and other subjects that you may bring to our discussions.

Who should consider attending: Those new to the United Church, those curious about any of these subjects, those wishing to partake in the Reverend Bill Booth's facilitation of a learning time. Both new folks and folks who have been part of this community of faith for years are welcome.



Penny Drive from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday

Our annual Penny Drive for the White Rock/South Surrey Food Bank will start on April 8th (Easter Sunday) and will end on May 27th (Pentecost Sunday). Bring your pennies (and loose change) to church and place them in the large glass bottle marked Penny Drive on one of the tables in the Narthex. Thanks for supporting this project. Sponsored by the UCW Bayview Unit.



**Jazz Vespers Series
Spring 2012**

The first Sunday evening of each month
- March, April and May - at 7:30 pm.

March 4th - Featuring the "Big Band Sound" of the award winning New West Secondary Senior Jazz Band. Director: Steve Clements. Join us for this evening of inspirational readings and music with a group of Canada's leading youth jazz musicians. Help us support public school music!

April 1st - Palm Sunday Jazz Vespers featuring Lori Barnson - contemporary Christian singer/songwriter with her ensemble. This is not really jazz but very thought provoking inspirational music for everyone. Plan to attend.

May 6th - Vocal Jazz group will lead us in a musical inspirational and thought provoking worship. You will love these singers (4 part harmony - 2 men/2 women).

We hope to see you there!



Fair Trade Coffee (A Way of Doing Business)

You can purchase 300g packages of regular and decaf ground coffee for \$8 each from a self-serve station located in the cupboard underneath the sink counter upstairs across from the offices. We purchase our coffee from Level Ground Trading Co. which has been operating from Victoria, B.C. since 1997. In order to support their 'trash to treasure initiative' you can now RETURN YOUR USED coffee packages to the same cupboard. Level Ground Trading Co. works with Work of Your Hand (a Filipino poverty alleviation organization) and they transform our used packages into beautiful purses, hand bags and wallets. You can learn more about their Good to the Planet initiatives from their web site: www.levelground.com. Please ask Joan Thomlinson or Raquel Merriman if you would like assistance and look for our sales station in the Narthex on Soup Sundays.



Mom's and Tot's Drop-in

A Wednesday morning opportunity for moms to get together for an informal time of connecting and refreshments. Space and supervision is provided for infants and toddlers in an adjacent room. Homemade muffins and fresh coffee are provided.



UCW Crescent United Church



2012 is going to be an eventful year for Crescent United Church Women (UCW). It is the 50th Anniversary of the UCW, a time to Witness, Study, Fellowship and Serve. "**Our Tapestry of Love**" is the theme for the celebrations.

Tuesday, March 20, 2012 - 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Crescent will be hosting the **Fraser Presbyterial AGM and Celebration of the 50th Anniversary**. Short (3-5 min.) humorous anecdotes, stories of caring for those in need, ways in which millions of dollars were raised for Mission and Service are requested. If you are a Chartered Member (since 1962) please submit your name to Pat Anderson (604-535-5652). This is not only a UCW event. All women of Crescent United are invited to mark this special occasion.

Sunday, April 22, 2012 - 2 pm

The UCW is sponsoring the **Hazeltones Singalong** at Crescent United as a fundraiser. The Hazeltones, of Hazelmere United Church, is a talented group of musicians, leading/performing "old" and contemporary hymns. More information will be forthcoming.

Friday, April 27 to Sunday, April 29

UCW BC Conference AGM at Rockyridge Canyon Resort in Princeton, BC - another 50th Anniversary Celebration. This is an opportunity to meet people and rejuvenate spiritually in a fabulous setting. There is a possibility of chartering a bus for people from Vancouver and the mainland. Registration is \$225 - all inclusive.

Monday - Friday, July 23-27

National UCW 50th Celebrations in Ancaster, Ontario, near Hamilton.



World Day of Prayer

This year the service will take place on Friday, March 2nd at 2:30 pm at St. John's Presbyterian Church, 1480 George St., White Rock. All are welcome to attend.

Crescent Credits

This column in the Courier gives us an opportunity to thank and acknowledge the ministry, caring, and work that happens here at Crescent.



In the office we don't know everything that goes on, so we need your help. Please call or e-mail the office with any name(s) you would like to recognize for service:

- Those who helped in the preparation & activities of our Christmas season services.
- Val Thorner, Val Weinert and everyone else who helped plan and take part in the Women's Advent Service.
- Everyone else who helped with the Spirit of Christmas Dinner and service.
- Kathy Cross and Sylvia Uhreen for proofreading the weekly bulletins and the Newsletters.
- Shirley Bourke and Evelyn Grimston who helped in the office with folding bulletins and all those who helped fold bulletins for the Christmas services.
- Thanks to those who share their Outreach Experiences during "Sharing Our Story" as well as those who take the opportunity to read the Minutes for Mission announcements on Sunday mornings.
- The Church Council for their leadership in 2010 and their continuing commitment.
- Choir for learning and presenting new music this fall.
- Those who make sure we have Greeters, Ushers, Readers and Coffee Hosts for Sunday Services.
- Countless others who faithfully carry on the work of the church.

Lenten Lunches 2012



Lenten Meal

Everyone is welcome to come out for a bowl (or two) of soup, a bun and coffee or tea. This is a good opportunity to meet friends from other Churches, and listen to a Lenten message from participating ministers.

All lunches will be held at St. Mark's Anglican Church, 12953 20th Ave., on Thursdays, from 12 noon - 1 pm, beginning February 23rd.

Crescent United, First United and Sunnyside United will host the lunch on **Thursday March 22nd**. Mark this date on your calendar!

Baptisms & Membership Transfers

If you are interested in baptism or transferring your membership to Crescent United Church at our service on Sunday, April 1st please contact the Reverend Bill Booth or the church office at **604-535-1166**.

Family Album

In Loving Memory

Pray the gentle compassion of God be with those families who have lost a loved one.



- ◆ Beryl Stewart, at the passing of her husband, John.
- ◆ Fred Wickens & Kathy Booth, at the passing of Fred's father.
- ◆ The Miller family, at the passing of Helen (Holly) Miller.

Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 9am – 2:30 pm

Friday: 9 am – 12 noon

The office will be closed:

Good Friday – April 7th

Easter Monday – April 9th

Victoria Day – Monday, May 21st

Sunday Lectionary

Readings

are available at the United Church of Canada website:

www.united-church.ca/planning/lectionary



Important Dates to Remember



Season of Lent

February 22 – March 31

Sunday, February 26th - 1st Sunday of Lent

Congregational Meeting - after service

Sunday, March 4th - 2nd Sunday of Lent

Jazz Vespers - 7:30 pm

Sunday, March 11th - 3rd Sunday of Lent

Daylight Savings Time Begins. Change your clocks!

Saturday, March 17th

Remit Study - 2:30 pm

Church Family Fellowship Evening - 5:30 pm

Sunday, March 18th - 4th Sunday of Lent

Soup Sunday & Oversight Visit

Tuesday, March 20th - 4th

UCW Fraser Presbyterial AGM & 50th Anniversary

Sunday, March 25th - 5th Sunday of Lent

Holy Week



Sunday, April 1st

Palm Sunday Service & Baptism - 10:00 am

Jazz Vespers - 7:30 pm

Thursday, April 5th

Maundy Thursday Service - 7:00 pm.

Friday, April 7th

Good Friday Service - 10:00 am

Office Closed

Sunday, April 8th

Easter Sunrise Service -

7:30 am at Blackie Spit

Easter Sunday Service - 10:00 am

Monday, April 9th - Easter Monday

Office Closed

Saturday, April 21st - Remit Study - 2:30 pm; Church Family Fellowship Evening - 5:30 pm

Sunday, April 22nd - Hazeltones Singalong - 2 pm

Sunday, May 6th - Jazz Vespers - 7:30 pm

Sunday, May 8th - Mother's Day

Saturday, May 19th - Church Family Fellowship Evening

Monday, May 21st - Victoria Day - Office Closed

Sunday, May 27th - Pentecost Sunday. Wear Red!

Saturday, June 16th - Church Family Fellowship Evening

Sunday, June 17th - Soup Sunday / Father's Day